

ticipants in their quest for a thrill. One of the very earliest legends centers around the present site of the city of Honolulu, the largest and most modern of the island group. Here is the strange story of Mamala, taken from the *Legends of Old Honolulu* by Westervelt.

MAMALA THE SURF-RIDER

“Kou” was the ancient name of Honolulu—the place for games and sports among the chiefs of long ago. A little to the east of Kou and inside the present filled land used for the United States quarantine and coal station was a pond with a beautiful grove of coconut trees belonging to a chief, Hono-kau-pu, afterward known by his name. Straight out toward the ocean was the entrance to the harbor, through which rolled the first surf waves of the Honolulu part of the Island Oahu. The surf bore the name “Ke-kai-o-Mamala”—the “Sea of Mamala.” So the sea and entrance to the harbor were known by the name “Mamala,” and the shore gave the name “Kou” to the bay.

Mamala was a chiefess of *kupua* character. This meant that she was a *mo-o*, or gigantic lizard or crocodile, as well as a beautiful woman, and could assume whichever shape she most desired. One of the legends says that she was both a shark and woman, and had for her husband the shark-man, Ouha, afterward a shark-god having his home in the ocean near Koko Head. Mamala and Ouha drank *awa* together and played *konane* (a form of checkers) on the smooth *konane* stone at Kou.

Mamala was a wonderful surf-rider. Very skillfully she danced on the roughest waves. The surf in which she most delighted rose far out in the rough sea, where the winds blew strong and whitecaps were on waves which rolled in rough disorder into the bay of Kou. The people on the beach watching her filled the air with resounding applause when they clapped their hands over her extraordinary athletic feats.

The chief, Hono-kau-pu, chose to take Mamala as his wife, so she left Ouha and went to live with her new husband. Ouha was angry and tried at first to injure Hono and Mamala, but he was driven away. He fled to

the lake Ka-ihi-Kapu toward Waikiki. There he appeared as a man with a basketful of shrimps and fresh fish, which he offered to the women of that place, saying, "Here is life (a living thing) for the children." He opened his basket, but the shrimps and the fish leaped out and escaped into the water.

The women ridiculed the god-man. The ancient legendary characters of all Polynesia as well as of Hawaii could not endure anything that brought shame and disgrace upon them in the eyes of others. Ouha fled from the taunts of the women, casting off his human form and dissolving his connection with humanity. Thus he became the great god-shark of the coast between Waikiki and Koko Head.

The surf-rider was remembered in the beautiful *mele*, or chant, coming from ancient times and called the *mele* of Hono-kau-pu:

"The surf rises at Koolau,
Blowing the waves into mist,
Into little drops,
Spray falling along the hidden harbor.
There is my dear husband Ouha,
There is the shaking sea, the running sea of Kou,
The crablike, moving sea of Kou.
Prepare the *awa* to drink, the crab to eat.
The small *konane* board is at Hono-kau-pu,
My friend on the highest point of the surf.
There is a good surf for us.
My love has gone away.
Smooth is the floor of Kou,
Fine is the breeze from the mountains.
I wait for you to return,
The games are prepared,
Pa-poko, pa-loa, pa-lele,
Leap away to Tahiti
By the path to Nuumehalani (home of the gods),
Will that lover (Ouha) return?"

I belong to Hono-kau-pu,
From the top of the tossing surf waves,
The eyes of the day and the night are forgotten.
Kou has the large *konane* board.
This is the day, and to-night
The eyes meet at Kou.”

It is very pleasing to note that many legends deal with young women who were remembered for their great skill and grace in handling the surf-board. These ancient women were not afraid of the titanic waves, and we read of how they entered contests with the best of the men of their time, not fearing the threatening sea or the dangers associated with competitive surfing contests where an opponent's board might break away and strike or kill other contestants while it was being heaved and thrown about in the surf.

The following legend, is taken from the book *Legends and Myths of Hawaii* by *Kalakaua*. It also deals with a woman, a beautiful woman, and shows to what degree the love of this sport controlled this ancient surfing beauty, how she excelled in it in her youth and how, after many years spent away from the surf, she finally returned to this, her first love.

THE LEGEND OF KELEA

There lived at this time at Lihue, Ewa district, Oahu, a chief named Lo-Lale, son of Kalona-iki, and brother of Piliwale, the reigning *Moi* (king) of Oahu. He was a bachelor and a man of an amiable temper. His brothers and friendly neighbouring chiefs became anxious that he should take unto himself a wife. Apparently no suitable match for so high a chief could be found on Oahu, or none had succeeded in captivating the fancy of Lo-Lale. In this case a bride must be sought for abroad, and a proper canoe, with trusty messengers, was fitted out at Waialua to visit the windward islands and report upon the beauty and rank of the chiefesses there. The canoe first visited Molokai, but not satisfied with their inquiries, the messengers proceeded to Lanai, and being equally unsuccessful there, they start-

ed to Hana, Maui, intending to cross over to Hawaii. At Hana they learned that Kawaokaohele, the *Moi* of Maui, was at that time stopping with his court and his chiefs at Hamakuapoko, regulating the affairs of the country, and enjoying the cool breezes of that district, and the pleasure of surf-bathing; and that with him was his sister Kelea, the most beautiful woman on Maui and the most accomplished surf-swimmer. Hearing this, the messengers turned back from Hana and arrived with their canoe on a fine morning off Hamakuapoko. On that very morning Kelea and her attendants had gone down to the beach to enjoy the surf-bathing. Swimming out beyond the surf, she encountered the canoe, and was at first somewhat surprised at seeing strangers in it, but being reassured by their kindly speech, and being invited to come on board, the messengers offered to ride the canoe through the surf—a sport as exciting as that of swimming on the surfboard. Kelea accepted the invitation and gallantly the canoe shot over the foaming surf and landed safely on the beach. All sense of danger or mistrust being dispelled, the princess accompanied the canoe again out over the surf, and again rode successfully ashore over the breakers, the attendants hurrahing lustily at the brave and fearless style in which the canoe was handled. The messengers, by this time having ascertained who their illustrious guest was, invited her to another trip through the roaring surf. Thoughtlessly she consented, and the canoe pulled out beyond the surf, watching for a good high combing roller of the sea to start in with. At this moment a squall or a whirlwind suddenly struck the canoe, coming from off the shore, and away it sped with its fair and involuntary passenger over the broad ocean. When the storm had subsided, the shores of Maui were far distant and the messengers started for Waialua, Oahu, where they arrived safely.

From Waialua Kelea was taken up to Lihue, where Lo-Lale received her with the regard due to a chiefess of her rank, and as she did not commit suicide, it may be inferred that she became reconciled to her lot and accepted him as her husband. And as no invasion of Oahu was ever attempted to Kawaokaohele, or vengeance enacted for the abduction of his sister, it is probable, though the legend says nothing about it, that the affair was diplomatically settled to the satisfaction of all parties.

For several years Kelea lived with Lo-Lale at Lihue, and bore to him three children named Kaholi-a-lale, Luli-Wahine, and Luli-Kane. But the inland situation of Lihue, at the foot of the Kaala mountains, and far away from the sea, became wearisome and monotonous to the gay and volatile temper of Kelea. She informed her husband of her intention to leave, and reluctantly he gave his consent, knowing well that the prerogatives of her rank gave her the privilege of separation if she wanted it. His grief at parting has been preserved by the tradition in the form of a chant, the following portion of which alone has been remembered :

Aloha kou hoa i ka puali,

Farewell, my partner on the lowland plains,

I ka wai o pohakea,

On the waters of Pohakea,

He luna o Kanehoa,

Above Kanehoa,

He lae ino o Maunauna

On the dark mountain spur Mauna-una.

O Lihue, he hele ia !

Oh Lihue, she has gone !

Honi aki i ke ala o ka Mauu,

Sniff the sweet scent of the grass,

I ke ala o ke kupukupu,

The sweet scent of the wild vines.

E linoia ana e ka Waikoloa,

That are twisted about by (the brook) Waikoloa

E ka makani he Waiopua-la,

By the winds of Waiopua,

Kuu pu - - - a !

My flower

Me he pula la i kuu maka,

As if a mote were in my eye,

Ka oni i ka haku onohi,

The pupil of my eye is troubled,

Ka wailiu I kuu maka. E auwe au-e !

Dimness (covers) my eyes. Woe is me ! Oh !

Leaving Lihue, Kelea descended to Ewa, and skirting the head of the lagoon by way of Halawa, arrived at the mouth of Pearl river opposite Puuloa, and found a crowd of idlers, nobles and retainers of Kalamakua, the high chief of that region, disporting themselves in the surf. Borrowing a surfboard from one of the bystanders, Kelea jumped in the sea and swam out beyond the breakers and joined the company of the other surf bathers. When the surf broke at its highest they all started for the shore, and Kelea excelled them all, and was loudly cheered for her daring and skill. Kalamakua, being at the time in a neighboring plantation heard the loud uproar of voices from the shore, and inquired what the cause of it was. He was told that a beautiful woman from Lihue had beaten all of the Halawa chiefs at surf swimming, and hence the loud and continued cheering. Satisfied in his own mind that but one woman at Lihue could perform such a feat, and that she must be his cousin Lo-Lale's wife, the Maui chiefess, Kalamakua went at once to the beach, and threw his *kihei* (mantle) over Kelea as she touched the shore, returning from another victorious trip through the surf. Explanations followed, and Kelea was borne home in state to the residence of Kalamakua in Halawa, and became his wife. With him she remained to her death, and bore him a daughter, called Laielohelohe, who in early youth was betrothed and subsequently married to her cousin Piilani of Maui, the son of Kelea's brother, Kawaokaohele.

—from *Legends and Myths of Hawaii* by Kalakaua

The inspiration which caused surfing to reach its ultimate pitch of development was the Polynesian desire and delight in gambling. They were great gamblers and would stake their last remaining possession as a wager in a game.

They had plenty of leisure due to the productivity of the islands, and it is only natural that they should look for the most pleasant source of outlet for their energies. They also possessed a keen interest in sports, most of

which centered about water. In sporting events, surfing offered the greatest opportunity to the high chiefs because the higher ranking men were always shown preference at surfing locations when the waves were high and the sea was on a rampage. They were the only ones who could afford the ownership and care of superior boards which allow advantage in competition.

Early legends telling of surfing contests are almost entirely built up around petty or ranking chiefs in connection with some particular wager. One of the most interesting deals with a surfing contest in which Umi, a Prince of Hawaii, was a contender.

THE STORY OF UMI

Umi was a very capable lad but also a swaggering, arrogant youngster of royal birth who felt that he could do as he pleased because his father was the king. We find this lack of reasonableness asserting itself unpleasantly in his later years.

Fearing for the safety of his son, the king caused him to travel incognito when touring the island in search of pleasure or adventure. On one of these trips young Umi, a lad of great physical strength, heard of a surfing carnival being held at Laupohoe near Hilo on the island of Hawaii. He took his party to Hilo and there haughtily let it be known that he excelled at surfing.

His arrogance was naturally challenged with enthusiasm by one of the petty chiefs, Paeia by name. The wager made was a heavy one calling for four large outrigger canoes (total value of approximately \$2,000). But the royal prince treated the wager lightly, meeting it with the assistance of his regal party.

Umi and Paiea paddled out the high surf, pushing their boards through the heavy breakers until they reached the open sea where they spent considerable time maneuvering for the best position. They selected a large wave and paddled madly toward shore. They had chosen the largest wave of the series and it could be seen lifting high into the air, and, at the very