



Ka'ahumanu, Hawaiian Chiefess

Description

Born about 1777, Ka'ahumanu's grandmother prophesied that someday she would be ruler "and all your relatives will bow in your presence." Years later, she became the favorite wife of King Kamehameha I. After the King's death in 1819 and after her conversion to Christianity, as chiefess she fervently upheld the new religion, changed the social structure by ending the kapu system of idols

and gods, and ruled with an iron hand. She died in 1832. When the Lahaina missionary Dr. Dwight Baldwin visited her birthplace at Hana, Maui in 1844, he commented: "And this little cavity in the lava rock is the place where that same noble, energetic, pious woman, whose terrible eye flashed dread upon natives and foreigners, was nursed. We have never seen her like among the rulers of the islands."