



RICHARD KIMBALL

At the foot of Lewers Street, where the sleek and contemporary Halekūlani Hotel stands today, there once stood a very different Halekūlani. Though it was not as grand as today's hotels, it embodied a style of hospitality and grace that reflected an earlier era in Hawai'i tourism. It reflected the style and dedication of the Kimball family that owned it.

Richard Kimball – “Kingie” to his friends – literally grew up at the Halekūlani. His parents, Clifford and Juliet Kimball, leased the property in 1917 ... for \$150 a month. In those early days, Halekūlani played host to celebrities and socialites and rightfully established a reputation as a Hawaiian classic. When the original building was replaced in 1931 Clifford Kimball and Charles Dickey designed a distinctive high-pitched roof for the Halekūlani. This and other architectural improvements gave the hotel a more sophisticated look.

The Kimball family managed the Halekūlani through tumultuous times – the depression era in the 1930s and the second World War. Through it all, Halekūlani always lived up to its name as a “house befitting heaven.”

As tourism in Waikīkī grew in the 1950s and 60s, it was clear to Richard and George Kimball that the property needed to expand beyond its 190 rooms. Without the capital to finance the expansion, the Kimball family sold the property in 1962 after managing it for forty-five years.

Richard Kimball's contributions to Hawai'i tourism went far beyond the management of Halekūlani. After the Halekūlani was sold, Richard and his brother George remained in the visitor industry, building the Waiohai hotel on Kaua'i. In public life, Richard served in the Territorial Legislature from 1936 to 1944, chaired the territory's Parks Board for many years, and was instrumental in reorganizing the Hawai'i Visitors Bureau in the post War years.