**Mahele Letters of Distress**

**Letter One: Kaneohe 1851**

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|  We beg to inform you of our great distress of living, and for you to inform the nobles of the legislature of this government. We are in trouble because we have no firewood and no lā’ī (leaves used to thatch the roof of houses) and no timber for houses, it is said in the law that those who are living on the land can secure the things above stated, this is all right for those present who are living on lands which have forests, but, we who live on lands which have no forests, we are in trouble. The children are eating raw potato because of no firewood, the mouths of the children are swollen from having eaten raw taro. We have been in trouble for 3 months. The konohiki (head man of Hawaiian land division or ahupua’a) with wooded lands here in Kāne’ohe have absolutely withheld the firewood and lā’ī and the timber for houses.  Kāne’ohe - Ko’olau Poko.  |

**Letter Two: Hanalei Kauai 1852**

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| Because of my distress and being sorry about my kuleana (responsibility right, or ownership) situated at Kapukawai, in Hanalei, Island of Kaua’i. This is the reason of my being sorry and my protest, too, concerning the improper survey made by the surveyor on my premises was very much lessened, the places that I worked and raised my crops, pineapple, bananas, onions, yams, pumpkins, watermelons, sugar cane, oranges, replanted and all began to grow again were all pulled up. My taro patch was also taken, piece of kula (plains) houselot and five patches, 3 orange trees bearing fruit and because I was grieved for the loss of my crops and my foreigner who made the survey listened to the lying claim of that foreigner, the foreigner did not buy the place in dispute which was my kuleana, this kuleana was acquired by me from Kaumuali’i (former King of Kauai) because I and my parents lived there from the time I was young, and all my parents are all dead and the land descended to me, their child, and I have been living there ever since and now is the first time it has been taken away without knowing the reasons why it was taken.-This is mine to you, that you direct the surveyor to come and make another survey and have all made satisfactory to all. Kamuka, one of the agents, commanded Loane to settle the matter, but he did not do so being afraid of Kale, this foreigner who took my kuleana/land without any right and I am sorry about my food, you should have pity and have another investigation for the source of my support. Puamana at Kupakawai |

**LetterThree: East Maui 1854**

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| January 13, 1854. . . . Dismiss John T Gower as our Land Agent.. . . It is not right, that when we wish to buy our own lands that he should sell them to foreigners.. . . We offered $1, $2.00 and up to $3.00, the foreigner offered $3.00, and the foreigner got it, it was only $1.50. . . it was a swindle and a lie. . . The sale is conducted like an auction, bids are made, and went to the highest bid. . . The law says that the residents are to have first choice, and itis not taken up, then to sell to outsiders.. . . Because he will not listen, and he will not confer with the natives, he only talks in the foreign language, and the foreigners are the only ones he talks with.. . . Running the price of the land away up to $250.00 an acre for taro land, and we know that he made the bids himself until the price is too high, and the Government gets it, he pays no attention to the HawaiiansFrom us the people in Kaupo, now called Kauao. Kuloku and 61 others. |