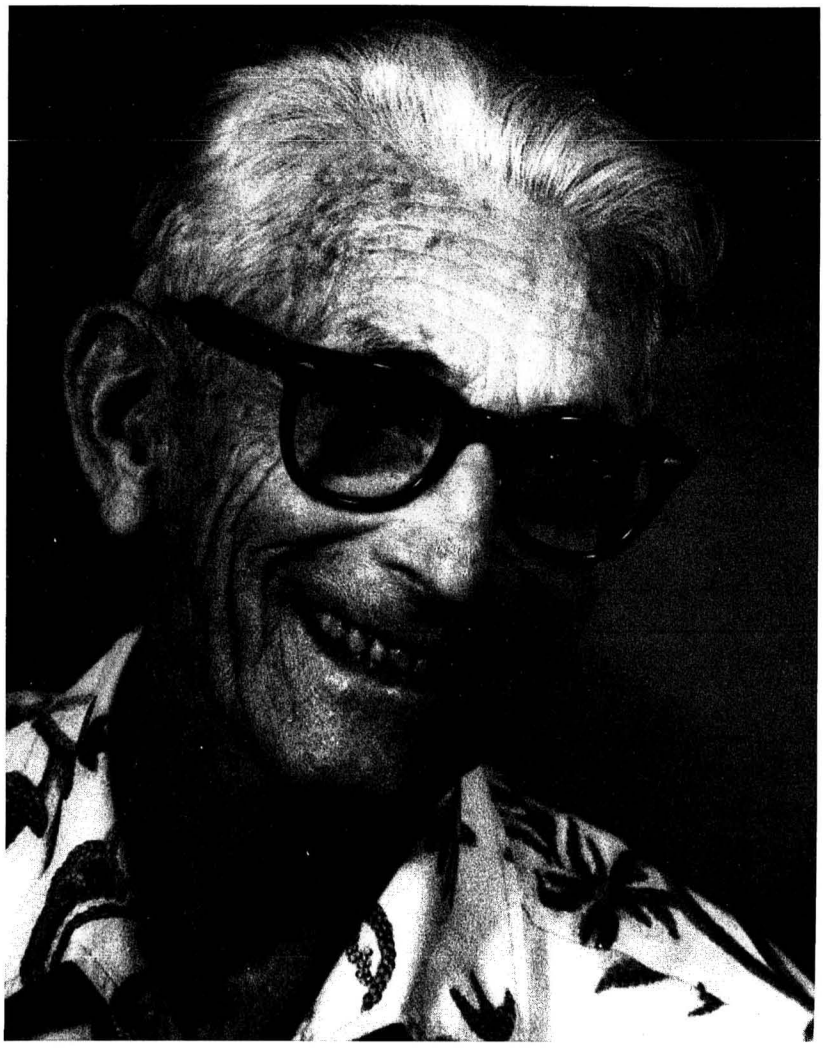


Kenneth P. Emory, late 1980. (Photograph courtesty of Carla Anette, Bishop Museum.)

In Memoriam

KENNETH PIKE EMORY (1897–1992)

KENNETH PIKE EMORY was born 23 November 1897 in Fitchburg, Massachusetts and died peacefully at his home in Nu'uanu Valley, Honolulu on 2 January 1992. His long career spanned virtually the entire history of modern anthropology in Oceania, a history that Kenneth helped to shape. His remarkable explorations and adventures throughout the Pacific islands include cruising windward Moloka'i with Jack London on the *Snark*, epic voyages through the Tuamotu Archipelago, and being virtually marooned on remote Kapingamarangi Atoll in Micronesia. Reflecting his early training with A. L. Kroeber and other pioneers of American anthropology, Emory practiced a holistic, "four-field" anthropology: his published works span ethnography, linguistics, physical anthropology, and archaeology. Emory's "south seas adventures" have been expertly chronicled by Bob Krauss (1988). In my brief tribute herein to the life of this great intellectual explorer and geographical adventurer, I focus mostly upon Kenneth's myriad contributions to the development of ethnography and archaeology in Oceania.

When Kenneth Emory graduated from Dartmouth College in 1920, anthropology was still a young discipline with few academic centers. Except for the brilliant fieldwork of Bronislaw Malinowski in the Trobriand Islands from 1914–1920, anthropological inquiry in Oceania had been limited to fleeting expeditions carried out in the grand colonial manner and armchair syntheses based on little or no direct field experience in the region. This changed abruptly when Herbert Gregory became Director of the Bernice P. Bishop Museum of Honolulu in 1920. Gregory convened the First Pan-Pacific Science Congress; at his urging, the Congress proclaimed the "problem of Polynesian origins" to be one of the pressing scientific concerns of the day. From Yale University, Gregory had obtained a large sum of money to finance the Bayard Dominick Expeditions, organized to support well-trained young ethnologists through extended fieldwork in Polynesia.

Through his Honolulu family connections (Emory's parents had moved to Hawai'i in 1900), Kenneth secured a meeting with Herbert Gregory in January 1920. Obviously impressed with the eager young Dartmouth student, the new Bishop Museum Director offered him an appointment as "assistant ethnologist" at a monthly salary of $75. Kenneth had not trained specifically in anthropology at Dartmouth, and, as he would later tell friends with a glint in his eye, after the meeting he immediately sought a dictionary to look up the meaning of the word "ethnologist!" At the close of the First Pan-Pacific Science Congress (for which he served as an errand boy), Emory was dispatched to Maui to assist Robert T. Aitken in an archaeological survey of ruins in the Haleakala Crater. When Aitken departed for the Austral Islands on the Bayard Dominick Expedition, Emory returned to Haleakala for a

Kenneth Emory chalking petroglyphs at Luahiwa, Lāna'i, 1922. (Photograph courtesy of the Bishop Museum.)

second field trip. The results produced his first scientific paper, "An Archaeological Survey of Haleakala" (Emory 1921), which is a careful description of some 67 sites, mostly terraces and platforms, many of which Emory deduced to be "altars to a special or local deity, perhaps to Lilinoe, Goddess of Haleakala" (1921:257).

After a semester of study at the University of California at Berkeley under A. L. Kroeber, Emory was given another field assignment for the Bishop Museum: an archaeological survey of the island of Lāna'i, which he carried out from July through January 1922. *The Island of Lanai*, published in 1924, is a *tour de force* of salvage ethnography and archaeology, and retains the freshness of its perspective even today. Traveling by horseback, Emory reconnoitered the entire island, achieving an overview of the prehistoric settlement pattern while paying particular attention to religious structures and petroglyphs. His study also incorporated a detailed analysis of native Hawaiian oral traditions and a comprehensive gazetteer and discussion of place names. The protohistoric village of Kaunolu especially attracted Emory's attention, and he mapped the entire complex in great detail (Emory 1924, Pl. II). This is the first "settlement pattern study" in Polynesia, some four decades before a spatial approach would become widely accepted in archaeological method and theory. Kenneth's study of the Lāna'i petroglyphs was likewise comprehensive and thorough, not to be surpassed until the 1970 work of Cox and Stasack.

In 1923, the Bishop Museum undertook the scientific exploration of the leeward Hawaiian Islands, made possible by the minesweeper USS *Tanager*. Unlike Lāna'i,

the remote, tiny islands of Nihoa and Necker had no human inhabitants, yet they exhibited numerous archaeological sites of obvious Polynesian affinity. Emory was assigned the task of surveying these ruins, and of ascertaining their significance to the "problem of Polynesian origins." Although carried out under severe time constraints, Emory's survey of Nihoa and Necker (Emory 1928) was typically thorough and comprehensive. He recognized the existence of prehistoric agricultural terraces on Nihoa and used experimental data on sweet potato production to estimate the possible prehistoric carrying capacity of the island (1928:12), foreshadowing issues in prehistoric demography that would not be seriously tackled again until the 1960s. Emory also noted the formal similarities between the Necker Island temple sites and the *marae* of the Society Islands and Tuamotus, and he drew the significant conclusion that "the Necker culture is a pure sample of the culture prevailing in Hawaii before the thirteenth century, and that prehistoric as well as the historic Hawaiian culture may be considered Tahitian in origin" (1928:122).

It had been something of a disappointment to Emory that, as a junior staff member of the Bishop Museum, he had been assigned archaeological surveys close to Honolulu, while his senior colleagues, for example, Edward S. C. Handy and John F. G. Stokes, had been sent on the important Bayard Dominick Expeditions to such far-flung archipelagoes as the Marquesas and Australs. In late 1924, the opportunity finally arose for Kenneth to realize his dream of exploring the heart of Polynesia. Gregory had convinced the wealthy businessman Medford Kellum to take a scientific party aboard the luxury yacht *Kaimiloa* on an extended cruise through tropical Polynesia. The story of the short-lived expedition is recounted by Krauss (1988:97–111); suffice it to say that scientists and pleasure-seekers usually do not mix well, and the Bishop Museum party found itself deposited on the wharf at Pape'ete, Tahiti on New Year's Day, 1925. Emory, however, could not have been happier, especially as Kellum had provided $1500, a sum sufficient to finance several months of fieldwork in the valleys of the Society Islands.

A projected three-month stay turned into 15 months, during which time Kenneth discovered, mapped, and described more than 200 archaeological sites throughout the Society archipelago. Having just mapped the unusual temples of Necker Island, Kenneth was struck with the similarities to the Tahitian *marae* and focused his attention primarily upon the religious structures of the Society group. In *Stone Remains in the Society Islands*, published some eight years later (Emory 1933), he proposed a tripartite classification of *marae* with culture-historical implications. Although it has been modified significantly in recent years, Emory's classification—and more importantly the detailed survey upon which it was based—still provides the foundation for archaeological work in the Society group.

The ill-fated *Kaimiloa* cruise affected Kenneth's life in yet another way, for during his Tahitian sojourn he fell in love with and married Marguerite Thuret, a French Tahitian *belle*. Kenneth used to remark that the romance may have been aided by Marguerite's inability to speak English and his to speak French, a problem that was overcome when Kenneth learned Tahitian! The honeymoon in Europe gave Emory the opportunity to study museum collections of Polynesian artifacts before finally returning to Honolulu near the close of 1926.

The Tahitian survey only whetted Kenneth's appetite for work in central Polynesia, and he proposed to Gregory a systematic survey of the Tuamotu Archipelago. The Bishop Museum approved the Tuamotu Expedition, which was

carried out from 1929–1930 in conjunction with linguist Frank Stimson and physical anthropologist Harry Shapiro. The logistical difficulties of ethnological and archaeological survey among the scattered and isolated atolls of the Tuamotus cannot be overestimated. Emory had a 27-foot sailboat constructed in Pape'ete: the *Mahina-i-te-Pua*, "Moonlight on the Bow Wave." In the Tuamotus, Kenneth encountered for the first time Polynesians who were sufficiently removed from the influences of Western civilization to have retained vast stores of information on such matters as *marae* ritual and cosmology (Emory 1940, 1947). The *marae* of the Tuamotus were not just abandoned ruins in jungle-choked valleys; the Tuamotuan elders could recount details of *marae* structure and tie them to their genealogies. The results of the initial *marae* survey were published as *Tuamotuan Stone Structures* (Emory 1934), just as an opportunity for further field work arose.

In 1934 the Bishop Museum launched its most comprehensive exploring expedition ever into southeastern Polynesia; the Mangarevan Expedition covered nearly 14,500 kilometers and made ethnological, botanical, malacological, and entomological collections on 56 islands (Cooke 1935:54). While the main party operated from the converted sampan *Myojin Maru*, Emory led a second team from the *Tiare Tahiti* on a comprehensive survey of the southeastern Tuamotus and Mangareva (Gambier Islands). Much of the time was spent on remote Napuka Atoll, where the inhabitants "hold closest to the original Tuamotuan mode of life" (Emory 1935:61). Emory's official report to the Bishop Museum is a modest understatement of work accomplished:

> During 14 weeks on the island I made a survey of the living conditions of the natives. . . . I recorded more than 90 ancient chants and songs on the dictaphone, as well as in writing, and collected nearly 200 ethnological artifacts, including 110 adzes, 31 fishhooks, canoe-making tools, turtle-bone and pearl-shell spades, wooden bowls, a chief's seat, and eel-tooth knives.
>
> I succeeded in obtaining the main genealogies and first-hand accounts of the most important ceremonies on the marae as well as considerable information on many ancient practices. I photographed the natives at such activities as still survive from early days (Emory 1935:61–62).

These dry statistics do not hint at the hardships involved, but a charming book by Emory's field companion, journalist Clifford Gessler (1937), fills in the details, including Kenneth's seeking out a Tuamotuan healer to save Gessler from near-certain death from blood poisoning caused by a coral cut.

Based on the Napuka material, Emory was able to compile a detailed account of traditional Tuamotuan *marae* ceremonies (Emory 1947), to this day one of the most important sources on eastern Polynesian temple ritual. The ethnological collections provided the basis for a monograph on Tuamotuan material culture, authored soon after the Mangarevan Expedition, although not published until many years later (Emory 1975). The numerous dictaphone recordings were turned over to Emory's colleague Edwin G. Burrows, a specialist in ethnomusicology, who used them as the basis for a study of Tuamotuan music (Burrows 1933). Although the Tuamotuan material was Emory's primary interest, his archaeological survey of the surviving *marae* structures of the Mangareva group was also published (Emory 1939), remaining for many years the only source of archaeological data on that key southeastern Polynesian group.

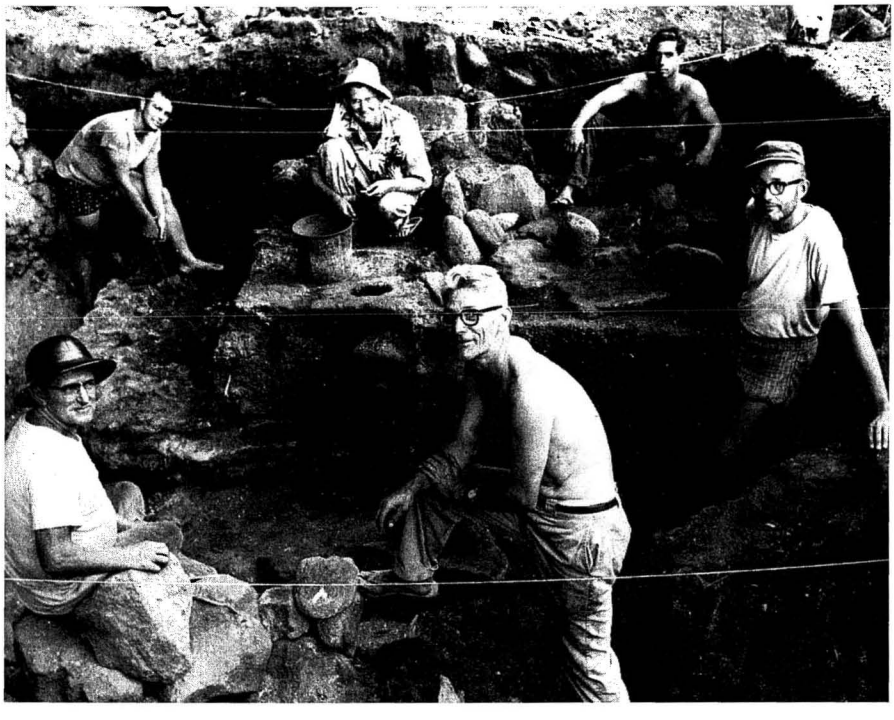
The late 1930s were something of a trying period for Emory, partly because of a

distasteful controversy with his colleague J. Frank Stimson over the interpretation of certain Tuamotuan ritual texts (the story is covered in full by Krauss [1988:247 passim]). Two decades of professional service to the Bishop Museum—and numerous long expeditions to southern Polynesia—had left no time for Kenneth to pursue a long-held desire to complete his academic credentials with a Ph.D. degree. In 1940 he was awarded a fellowship by Yale University, at that time considered the premier anthropology program for Polynesian studies. He passed the oral examination in May 1941 and planned to write his dissertation in Honolulu the following year under the supervision of Peter H. Buck. (Buck was Bishop Museum Director at the time and simultaneously held a Yale professorship.) The surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941 caused these plans to be put aside for the next five years. Emory not only "held down the fort" for the Bishop Museum during those trying years, but provided yeoman service for the U.S. military, training GIs in jungle survival (Emory 1942).

The long-deferred doctoral dissertation—finally submitted to Yale University in 1946—was a ground-breaking application of linguistic analysis to the problem of Polynesian cultural relationships. Emory pioneered the technique of lexicostatistics well before the term and method were advanced by Morris Swadish and other linguists. The dissertation (Emory 1946) was never published in full, but a summary appeared some years later in the *Journal of the Polynesian Society* (Emory 1963).

One outcome of World War II was that the scattered islands of Micronesia, which as an Imperial Japanese mandated territory prior to the war had been largely off-limits to Western researchers, suddenly became accessible. Moreover, the U.S. Navy, as immediate administrator of this vast oceanic realm, was willing to sponsor and fund anthropological research on the indigenous societies. As a part of the Coordinated Investigation of Micronesian Anthropology (CIMA), a Bishop Museum team of which Emory was part spent eight months on the Polynesian outlier of Kapingamarangi. Emory's role was to investigate traditional history, social structure, and religion (Emory 1965). As in the Tuamotus, Kenneth found in Kapingamarangi a strongly traditional Polynesian culture with an untapped wealth of ethnographic material. In later years, he would fondly recall his months of fieldwork on Kapingamarangi, noting that rapid cultural change in the Pacific would make it impossible for future generations of anthropologists to ever experience the traditional Polynesian way of life he had on that remote atoll. The experience was also recorded on a 16 mm color film, which has been renovated in recent years for classroom use.

World War II generated renewed scientific interest in the Pacific islands. Whereas the pre-war decades had been dominated by ethnographic efforts (particularly the Bishop Museum's program of "salvage" ethnography for Polynesia), scholarly attention shifted to the possible role of stratigraphic archaeology in resolving old questions of Polynesian origins and dispersals. E. W. Gifford of the University of California at Berkeley (one of Kenneth's old mentors) carried out excavations in Fiji in 1947 that yielded dramatic evidence of cultural change over a long time span. It was in this exciting intellectual climate that Emory undertook teaching a field class in archaeological methods for the University of Hawaii in February 1950. Kenneth selected a rockshelter at Kuli'ou'ou Valley, O'ahu, as the field school site. The shelter's deposits yielded an unanticipated array of prehistoric artifacts and midden remains. Moreover, a serendipitous development in nuclear physics—the invention of



Kenneth Emory (center front) and Bishop Museum archaeologists at Nunlo'lo Kai, Kana'i, 1959. (Photograph courtesy of the Bishop Museum.)

radiocarbon dating—permitted the first independent assessment of the age of a Polynesian archaeological site.

> While this [excavation] was in progress, in May of 1950, word came of W. F. Libby's momentous discovery of a method for dating charcoal through measuring radioactivity. . . . A sample of charcoal from a fireplace at the lowest level showing human occupation was submitted to Dr. Libby at the Institute of Nuclear Studies, University of Chicago. The sample gave a reading of 946 years, plus or minus 180 years. . . , revealing that the shelter had been occupied since about A.D. 1004. This was the first radiocarbon date from any island in the Pacific and it opened up undreamed of possibilities for reconstructing the prehistory of the area. (Emory, Bonk, and Sinoto 1959:ix).

The date was reported by Libby (1952:95) in his initial list of worldwide samples used to check the effectiveness of the radiocarbon method.

These exciting results catapulted Emory into a new research career in subsurface archaeology that was to carry him through the next two decades. A program of Hawaiian excavations was conceived and funded with support from various foundations (see Emory, Bonk, and Sinoto 1959; Emory and Sinoto 1961). While Hawaiian archaeological sites lacked pottery—that quintessential artifact so useful in constructing prehistoric cultural sequences—Emory found that the bone and shell fishhooks common in many Hawaiian middens exhibited stylistic changes that could be used to construct a relative dating of sites. In collaboration with two young colleagues, Emory produced an exhaustive study of the fishhooks excavated from a series of Hawaiian sites during the 1950s (Emory, Bonk, and Sinoto 1959). The

methodology was quickly picked up and widely used by other Pacific archaeologists.

By the close of the 1950s, the Hawaiian Archaeological Program under Emory's direction had produced a remarkably new view of Hawaiian prehistory, based on radiocarbon-dated stratigraphically associated artifact assemblages (Emory 1959). Kenneth now saw the enormous potential for expanding this kind of stratigraphic work to his old research haunts in Tahiti and southeastern Polynesia. In 1960 he and Yosi Sinoto began archaeological explorations in the Society group, which led to the discovery of the important Maupiti burial ground (Emory and Sinoto 1964) with its early Eastern Polynesian artifact forms. The Maupiti finds displayed close links to Archaic artifacts from New Zealand, such as the Wairau Bar materials excavated by Roger Duff. With Emory's support, Sinoto expanded this new archaeological research endeavor into the Marquesas Islands, and together Kenneth and Yosi outlined a hypothesis of Polynesian dispersals and migrations that became the standard model for the next twenty years (Emory and Sinoto 1965).

Kenneth's active fieldwork career essentially ended with the Maupiti excavations, as he passed the responsibility on to his younger colleague Sinoto. Emory by no means slackened in his pursuit of Polynesian ethnology and archaeology, however. In addition to preparing various papers and monographs for publication, he spent increasing time throughout the 1970s and 1980s in efforts at site preservation, especially in Hawaii and Tahiti. As the respected "dean" of Polynesian studies, Emory's opinions were highly valued by legislators, planners, businessmen, and others in whose hands the fate of the archaeological record often rested.

In recent years, due to health problems, Kenneth was largely confined to his beloved home in Nu'uanu Valley. Nonetheless, he continued to make periodic visits to the Bishop Museum to see his friends and colleagues, and make sure that the work of the Museum was being carried on along the lines he had formulated.

Kenneth Emory's professional career spanned seven decades. During this time the field of anthropology changed immensely. He was a main participant in this field, and was the initiator of many advances in methodology and interpretation. He made significant contributions to the permanent ethnographic record of Polynesia, pioneered linguistic and archaeological methods in the Pacific, and helped to train a cadre of younger investigators who still carry on the research he initiated. He was, as well, a wonderful, warm and engaging person, always ready to regale friends and audiences with stories of his adventures in the "south seas." Among my fonder personal memories of Kenneth is one of him sitting at the Bishop Museum staff table during lunch: he idly picked up a length of twine, tied it into a loop, and almost absent-mindedly began producing Tuamotuan string figures while chanting the accompanying lyrics. I also like to recall the time I came across Kenneth in the swelteringly hot storeroom in Bishop Museum on a summer's afternoon: stripped to the waist and perspiring, he was totally engrossed in classifying a large series of Tahitian adzes according to their cross-sections, checking his latest theory on Polynesian migrations.

Kenneth Emory was loved and respected by all who knew him. His mark on Pacific anthropology is indelible.

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