



Six Months in the Sandwich Islands

Isabella Bird

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This classic of Hawaiian literature offers a charming glimpse at the splendid and fascinating world of pre-American Hawaii.

Isabella Lucy Bird won fame in her own time as the most remarkable woman traveler of the nineteenth century, and Six Months in the Sandwich Isles, in which she describes her sojourn in Hawaii in 1873, is one of the gems of Pacific literature. It is safe to say that no other book about Hawaii surpasses it in fascination. Much of the charm of Isabella's writing is due to her use of personal letters for conveying her her experiences and her impressions. The thirty-one letters that compose the book were written to her beloved sister Henrietta, who dutifully stayed at home in Edinburgh to take care of the household while Isabella was away on her travels.

The book is an authentic record of daily life in Hawaii in the late nineteenth century. It describes a life style during the brief reign of King Lunalilo, not too may years before the sad reign of Queen Liliuokalani ended her dethronement by revolution. Isabella Bird met royalty, missionaries, cowboys, and ordinary, everyday Hawaiians. It is fortunate that she left such a vivid narrative of her Hawaiian Interlude.



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