

Finding Aid for the
Diaries of William Hooper

Kauai Historical Society
Lihue, Kaua'i, Hawaii

MS22

MS 22
.5 c.f. (1 box)

Hooper Diaries, p. 2

Diaries of William Hooper

Abstract

What was to later become Koloa Plantation, started life as the firm of Brinsmade, Ladd and Hooper. Arriving on Kauai on July 27, 1833, Peter Allan Brinsmade, was 25 and accompanied by his wife and child; William Ladd, 26, with his wife and child, and William Hooper, 24, was single. The first two were from Hallowell, Maine, and Hooper from Boston, Massachusetts.

The name of the firm was changed in 1835 to Ladd & Company, and ran the plantation for 12 years. The first diary used the original name of the firm, although it was sometime around 1835 that the name changed to Ladd & Company. In addition to the enterprise at Koloa, the company ran a profitable mercantile operation in Honolulu.

The sugar lands at Koloa were leased from Kamehameha III for \$300 per year for 50 years. Included were 980 acres of land and a mill site at Maulili pond – the lease commenced on July 29, 1835. In addition, they leased a warehouse site at Hanakaape landing, from Kaikioewa, the governor of Kauai.

William Hooper returned to Koloa on the *Velocity*, arriving on January 26, 1835, Hooper's diary begins on Sept. 11. He spent the early months of 1835 overcoming a number of obstacles– the chiefs were not pleased that Kamehameha III had leased the lands and retaliated in a number of ways: refusing to sell food and supplies to Hooper, as well as their refusal to sell seed cane to him. In addition, the local work force was not prepared to do the type of work he needed, and were unaware of the agricultural methods of the era, and Hooper was not familiar with the local terrain and climate. He had no agricultural experience, nor did he know the language or customs of the population.

A labor contract was drawn up between Mr. Hooper and Governor Kaikioewa (Hooper's diary spells his name "Kekeioua") to employ 25 men at \$2.00 per man per month, payable to the chief.

In addition, Kamehameha III and Kaikioewa, received \$.025 per month per man. This system of payment produced a less-than-willing work force, and was soon supplemented with a payment of \$.012 ½ per day to each employee. The men were supplied housing and food (when they worked) for which they reimbursed the plantation at a rate of \$.01 per day. There was a "middle management" system – several head men (Hoki Ko and Kaka) to keep the work going. There were also salaried employees, Mr. Dedman, the carpenter, and several others, who were paid on an annual basis.

Koloa Plantation was the first sugar operation of this size in Hawaii. The system that Hooper developed became the template for all those who followed in the developing sugar industry.

Scope and Content

The diaries consist of three photocopied volumes.

The first covers the very beginning of Hooper's residence on the Koloa lands – September 11, 1835 and ends one year later. It is comprised of 28 oversized leaves, each containing 2 photocopied pages of the diary. Diary entries are consistent from September 11, 1825 through December 18, followed by the next entry dated February 17, 1836, with regular entries again until the final entry dated September 12, 1836. The final leaf lists names of natives “recd from Kekeioua” for work on the plantation.

The next volume begins “No. 2 journal of occurrences on the Koloa Plantation Continued” and is 22 leaves, each containing 2 pages of diary entries. Regular entries begin on September 13, 1836 and are consistent through June 14, 1837. There are several entries in July 1837, three in August 1837 and the last dated entry is for September 26, 1837. The last leaf consists of a short balance sheet.

The final volume has as its cover “Wm Hooper - Diary & memo book of William Hooper formerly of the Sandwich Isles” and is 14 leaves, each a photocopy of two pages of the diary. This diary covers a larger span of time and is not arranged in chronological order: beginning with November 14, 1840, it covers a voyage from Boston ending on May 15, 1841 (leaf 5). The next 2 pages contain a number of observations on the growing of sugar cane in various locations worldwide, cost factors and profit margins. Leaf 7 brings us back to Koloa, and is dated January 22, 1846 and document the changes he saw on this visit – there are several pages devoted to the prison system which had been developed during his absence from Kauai. Leaf 10 has the last dated Kauai entry: 1847 February, as leaf 11 is for October 31, 1847 Oahu en route to San Francisco. There is a break in chronological order as the next leaf begins January 14, 1840 with the entry: “left Oahu for Boston”. The final page is devoted to information regarding the importation of Sisal hemp into Florida as a crop, and is undated.

The three volumes are housed in one archive box, each diary in its own folder.

The inventory list consists of excerpts from each volume to assist users in locating the volumes in which they have an interest.

Kauai Historical Society received the photocopies of the diaries from Mabel I. Wilcox in March 1967. Notes at that time indicate that photocopies were also supplied to the Sinclair Library, University of Hawaii, as well as the Hawaiian Mission Children's Society—which also has a microfilm copy of the diaries. The diaries were written on Chinese paper, and varied slightly in size. Along with the Hooper diaries, Ms. Wilcox donated photocopied logs of the *Velocity*, the ship that brought William Hooper to Kauai in 1835, and the *Kaimiloa*, a ship owned by the kingdom of Hawaii during Kalakaua's reign; and photocopied lease materials, dated 1835

through 1842, involved with the beginning years of the Koloa Plantation.

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Sources of information on Koloa Plantation during this era include:

Alexander, Arthur C. : Koloa Plantation 1835-1935 / a history of the oldest Hawaiian sugar plantation. Second edition. Lihue : Kauai Historical Society, 1985.

Joesting, Edward : Kauai, the separate kingdom. Honolulu : University of Hawaii Press / Lihue: Kauai Museum Association; 1987 c1984.

Excerpts of interest from the 3 volume photocopied diaries:

Volume 1 – September 11, 1835 to September 12, 1836

- Sept. 11, '35 ... obtained from Gov. Kekeioua the use of 25 Kanakas at two dollars each per month.
- Sept. 12, '35 Laid out a piece of land supposed to contain 12 acres to be cultivated with cane.
- Sept. 14, '35 Twenty three of the twenty five Kanakas hired ... made their appearance on the plantation at sunrise and commenced work after breakfast...
- Sept. 15 The Kanakas having discovered the chiefs were to pay them and not me, concluded that "all work and no pay" was poor business, they've spent most of the forenoon in idleness...
- Sept. 19 No Kanakas to work this day. Burnt grass from off the cleared lands...
- Sept. 20 Sunday--passed this day at home, dull as death
- Sept. 22 This day most of the men were employed in removing stone & planting cane ...purchased the cane of Kanakas at the rate of 25 cts the 120 sticks...
- Oct. 1 Employed the twenty men that appeared today on Fish Pond
- Oct. 5 Hoki Ko made his appearance & wants to make a new bargain with me in reference to the hire of the men or rather he wanted to make me give the natives "25 or 50 cts"per day in addition to the 2\$ to be paid the Gov.... I gave them all a discharge at which he appeared a little alarmed...
- Oct. 8 ... spent the day in moving from the chiefs house to my own on the plantation --comfortably settled in the evening -- seven packages of merchandise left in the hands of Hoki Ko for safekeeping
- Oct. 12Monday ... forgot to note the planting of 120 bananas on Friday ...
- Oct. 13Succeeded in hiring one native this day at 25cts others wish to work but dare not...
- Oct. 15I went to the mountains for timber, to prevent thieving, I remained at home all day

Oct. 17... planted 60 pineapples & some onions
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Hooper Diaries, p. 6

Oct. 20... The bananas planted 10 days since and (some of them) now two feet high...

Oct. 25 Sunday, the violent storm which commenced last evening and throughout the night the thunder shaking the very island ...

Oct. 29... at 10 AM the British... *Chevroit* anch[ored] at Koloa ... Chinamen with sugar appointments for Waimea ...

Oct. 30 Kekeioua* made his appearance and took an early breakfast with me – afterwards went to the beach ... the *Chevroit* made preparations to dine with the Capt but Could not come – after dinner went to the beach at 4 clk

Nov. 4 ... continued planting ... cucumbers & cane – made some hen houses

Nov. 5 ... selected a load of lumber

Nov. 7 [received] nearly all the rafters for house

Nov. 14 Natives continue to hoe cane. Masons took down front side of building it being out of plumb

Nov. 19 This morning Kaikioewa with 400 men came on to the Plantation and commenced removing the grass from a tract of land ...

Nov. 24 This morning the gov't men commenced planting but did not finish at 4 clk with finish tomorrow

Dec. 1 Today planted coffee, potatoes, corn ...

Dec. 3 Agreed with two natives to plant a piece of land with yams ...

[No diary entries between Dec. 10, 1835 and Feb. 16, 1836.]

Feb. 17 [1836] Arrived at Koloa from Oahu ... natives had done but little

Feb. 23 This morning called all the natives together to hear their “manao” [thoughts] found some little dissatisfaction – removed it by giving to each a shirt ...

March 2 ... natives to work on land for coffee

March 4 Started early this morning for Waimea to see sugar work under direction of China men ...

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Hooper Diaries, p. 7

- March 9 Moved into new house
- March 18 ... Built blacksmith shop
- March 31 Much rain – stream very high for week past. Hoki Ko promises to plant cane next week
- April 4... Hoki Ko planted the part of the cane field formerly intended for yams
- April 6 Spent the day in coffee field much eaten by the worms ...
- April 8 Planted cucumbers & white mulberry – seed recd from America
- April 18 Commenced building dam found the mud very soft & deep
- May 4 Gave all my natives the remainder of the week to plant for themselves employing transient ones to plant Irish potatoes ...
- May 9 This commenced with 40 men to build a dam ...
- May 14 Continue on dam, which is quite finished
- May 18 Finished dam, now employed in getting up mill. Hope to finish in a week
- May 20 ... today set shaft to water wheel
- May 25 Continue on dam – put the posts for grinding house
- May 31 All hands to work thatching mill house
- June 1 All hands, before breakfast, built cattle pen
- June 7 Building stone wall near mill – watering coffee, hoeing cane
- June 10 ... caterpillars are devouring everything in the shape of vegetation on the plain – set fires to the grass in hopes to kill some of them – they made a clean sweep of cane ...
- June 11 Being Saturday natives to work on their own land – some native has attempted to counterfeit the papers which I issue for dollars ...
- June 20 Men engaged in stripped the dry leaves from cane ...

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Hooper Diaries, p. 8

June 23 Natives in mountains for timber – planted 2200 banana sprouts

July 12... Hoki Ko came & recd the pay for building the dam

July 14 Commenced laying out a road on water side ...

July 15 Men continue on road, which is nearly finished

Aug. 3 Natives engaged in building a hog pen

Aug 12 Continue clearing land – *the shafts are not set operation vastly better than before*

Sept. 12 Just one year today since I commenced work on this plantation, during which I have had more annoyances from the chiefs and difficulties with the natives ... nevertheless, I have succeeded in bringing about a plan, which if followed by other foreign residents, will eventually emancipate the natives from the miserable system of “chief labour” which as ever existed in these islands ...

Volume 2

September 13, 1836 Commence getting stone for boiling house – continue at it all day

Sep. 15 ... planting cane daily as fast as it can be obtained ...

Sep. 22 ... 2 o'clock the *Becket* anchored here carry passenger ... William Peck to take up a residence on the land ...

Sep. 24 This morn, at 3 o'clock started from Waimea in company with William Peck to assist him in getting the order for men from the King executed – found the Governor quite unwell and declined doing anything about the matter ...

Sep. 26 This morning went to water side with natives to get lime stone – P.M. – working oxen, planting cane

Sep. 27 ... Hoki Ko hearing of the sale by natives – expressed his displeasure at it, they through fear would deliver none of it ...

Oct. 4 Today covered the boiling house roof with straw – thatched the water wheel from the sun ...

Oct. 5 Commenced mudding the boiling roof at 4 P.M. quite finished – shortly after the roof fell in ...

- Oct. 10... 4 P.M. ... helped Mr. Peck select from a lot of human bones brought out by the natives, a complete skeleton of a man ...
- Oct. 11 This morning my men went to work for Mr. Peck ...
- Oct. 15 Sat. No work Sat. The men to water side for sand – tending shop, set out fig slips received from Hanalei
- Oct. 18 Commenced this morning to discover the leak in the dam
- Nov. 1 Continue on pots ...
- Nov. 3 Pots & chimney finished – Mr. D[edman] commenced on sugar house doors – plenty of water in brook
- Nov. 4 Made doors to boiling house & sugar house
- Nov. 7 Monday only 7 men came on the ground to work – tried the boiling furnace, found it to smoke badly – made alterations
- Nov. 14 ... the natives commenced cutting cane – at 2 o'clock set the mill in operation – it works well ...
- Nov. 15 Made some improvement in rollers and set the mill in operation at 4 PM.-- ground one hour ...
- Nov. 17 Early this morn started the mill & continued at it all day ...
- Nov. 22 Continue taking in crop ...
- Nov. 23 ... PM. found the mill to leak so bad ... took it down ...
- Nov. 24 ... mill repairing ...
- Nov. 28 Sent to water side 10 bnls molasses
- Dec. 1 Ground 100 lbs ... repaired mill ...
- Dec. 3 Finished the molasses commenced last eve – a few men and some women cutting cane ...

- Dec. 10 Built a new native house – made alterations in the chimney of boiling house ...
MS 22 Hooper Diaries, p. 10
- Dec. 15 ... the grinding stopped for want of water ...
- Dec. 23 Want of water prevented grinding ...
- Dec. 26 Mr. Dedman commenced with the plough – William Peck went to Waimea for cattle – natives cutting & grinding – a visit from the Chinese of Waimea ...
- Dec. 27 Undertake to repair dam
- Dec. 29 Commenced ploughing with two horses did very well
- 1837 Jan. 1 Sunday New years day and a very pleasant one
- Jan. 2 Mr. Dedman employed making ox plough
- Jan. 7 The women of the Plantation stripping cane & assisting in grinding – boiling all day
- Jan. 11 Set the mill to work and afterwards started for Waimea to see the Governor on business arrived home at early eve ...
- Jan. 13 Cleaning mill ...
- Jan. 28 Detected the natives in stealing ...
- Jan. 31 Ploughing with two horses ... 5 natives taken before Hoki Ko for examination – convicted of stealing ...
- Feb. 1 Commenced ploughing with 2 oxen & 2 horses
- Feb. 5 Sunday – writing letters to my relations in America
- Feb. 8 This morning thearrived from Oahu with Mr. Ladd & Capt. Paty as passengers ...
- Feb. 15 ... Mr. Ladd & Paty embarked ... for Oahu
- Feb. 18 Paying off the men - making sugar, repairing harness - handling grindstone, drawing a plan for new water wheel ...
- Feb. 25 ... Mr. Dedman building a model from a plan given him by me for a new water wheel

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Hooper Diaries, p.11

- Feb. 28 ... visited by the Chinamen of Waimea ...
- March 3 Commenced building a fence to keep the horses "mauka"
- March 4 1837 Employed the day in paying off Kanakas - building a model of the new mill ...
On this day Andrew Jackson has probably resigned his office as President of the United States - and probably - Martin Van Buren has taken the oath of office ...
- March 11 Mr. Dedman to work for Mr. Peck ...
- March 13 ... finished ploughing attempted to harrow - but ground too dry ...
- March 15 Commence harrowing - also to build a pen for horses ...
- March 16 Finished the crop of cane for the season ...
- March 19 Sunday ...reading - visiting the sick
- March 20 Getting timber for bridge ... repairing road - bleeding a sick native ...
- March 21 Laid large timbers for bridge - engaged 50 natives for tomorrow harrowing & hoeing
- March 22 Commenced the day with 47 natives ...
- March 26 Sunday - visiting the sick...
- March 28 Holeing for cane - boiling molasses - planting bananas - hoeing
- April 1 Mr. Dedman & self repairing house
- April 2 Sunday - reading, writing & visiting the sick ...
- April 9 Sunday - reading, writing & visiting the sick
- April 10 ... at sundown Capt. Hinkley & wife & Wilson & Beers of the Oregon mission called & later took tea ...
- April 11 Capt. Hinkle & wife called after breakfast - showed Misters Wilson & Beers the plantation

- April 12 MS 22 Started early this morning with Mr, Peck for Waimea – returned at 7 P.M....
Hooper Diaries, p. 12
- April 15 Paying off men – Hoki Ko attempted to extort money from one of my men for breaking a leaf from a coconut tree but was prevented – dined with me
- April 18 Mr. Dedman started this morning for Hanalei ...
- April 21 ... building a new out house
- April 24 ...visiting sick...
- April 26 Planting cane got of Mr. Gulick – a poor lot ...
- April 27 ... natives sick with fever ... at 4 P.M. gave Lai a dose of rhubarb – very sick ...
- April 29 Paying off men – Lai the sick native died last night ... Mr. Dedman to work on the church ...
- May 6 During this week men have been hoeing & planting cane – Mr. Dedman to work on the church
- May 20 ... many men on the sick list ...
- June 10 This week laid out & planted the piece of land in front of house – set up a frame for a carpenter's shop & stone house for tools ...
- June 14 Started for Oahu in the *Opu Pele* with Mr.Peck & 60 natives, landed at Koloa in 8 days not being able to fetch Oahu – remained at Koloa three days & started from Nawiliwili ... overtaken at tea by the *York* and arrived in Oahu 30 June & remained there until 21st July & embarked with Mr. Ladd & family for Koloa on the next day ...
- July 24...Came also on the plantation two China sugar boilers, Tsung & Ameboy, engaged for us in China by Capt. Little
- July 25 Arrived Mr. Titcomb & Mr. Diell & family, also sugar pots ...
- July 29 Keawa came to assist in cooking at 5 dollars per month ...
- Aug. 5 ... Mr. Dedman engaged in ploughing ... Mr. Ladd commenced last Monday building butment for bridge at Maulili – Mr. H. attending to the cane fields & building a new cattle pen. The new Chinamen visited at Waimea – agreed with Antoine for another year at 200 dollars

Aug. 9 This day went to Waimea with Mr. Jarvis ... he objected to erecting a mill at
MS 22 Hooper Diaries, p. 13

Maulili on the ground that he knew not of its being leased to us informed him that we should go on & leave the matter with the King to settle ...

Aug. 12 Long carpenter came to work this week on Wednesday & went with Mr. Dedman in the mountains for timber – today the two building new corral for cattle – Antoine lost 2 ½ days this week with the rheumatism ...

Sept. 26 This day commenced grinding and making sugar on Chinese plan ...

[End of Volume 2]

Volume 3 Title page: Wm. Hooper / Diary & Misc. Book of William Hooper formerly of the Sandwich Islands

Boston, November 14, 1840

Embarked in the Ship *Gloucester* Capt. Easterbrook, for Valp [sic] and Sandwich Islands....

Nov. 16 Got under way ...

Nov. 19 Strong gale from SW... were obligated to throw overboard the deck load consisting of beef, potatoes, guns, etc., etc. ...

Nov. 25 ... passengers recovering from their sicknesses ...

Dec. 1 Today we took the wind from the eastward, which we suppose to be the trades ... Ladies continue to be sick

Dec. 13 ... NE trade and are now becalmed ... **two** ladies still sea sick

Dec. 25 ... crossed the Equator

Dec. 31 ... fine breeze, SE Ladies all well or nearly so

1841

Jan. 6 Anchored in the harbour of Rio de Jan. 51 days from Boston

Jan. 19 Sailed from Rio.

Jan. 30 ...for three days past a very light air from the south ...

Feb. 12 Off Cape Horn

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Hooper Diaries, p. 14

Feb. 26 ... since the 19th we have had the wind from the NW to SW. at one time a gale from the NW during which we lay to 24 hours ...

March 16 Anchored at Valp.

April 15 Left Valp. For Oahu ...

April 20 The average daily progress since leaving Valp has been 124 miles per day

April 29 Crossed the equator toady ...

May 15 NE wind since we took the trade it has blown NE to NNE

[end of page, also end of diary relating the voyage of the *Gloucester*]

[leaf 3-6 is photocopied twice, information from leaf 3-6 follows]

India supplied England with one fifth of the sugar she consumes ... 200 thousand tons can be raised in India and not encroach on other crops - expect 40 thousand tons in 1841 - ... In India, the natives plant and gather the cane ...

[The rest of the leaf is devoted to detailed cost analysis of sugar cane production in India, Jamaica, Trinidad, St. Kitts, Cuba, Puerto Rico, etc.]

Koloa, Jan. 22, 1846 Arrived at this place after an absence of 4 years, yesterday P.M. The hand of man & the effects of nature have not been idle in my absence. Every body seems busy. Carts are going & coming with the fruits of cultivation. The sugar works are in good order ... A good prison has been built - I regret to say that I found in it this morning, 7 females sentenced to four years imprisonment for violation of the 7th commandment. I took occasion to name it to Mr. Payne, the missionary - he thought the law was necessary -

Jan. 29 Visited Waimea, found the taro lands of Waiawa & Hanapepe in a fine state of cultivation. On enquiring the cause was told by the native that it was a consequence of the demand from Koloa Plantation ... for until I came they were unable to get cotton cloth, etc. My reception wherever I went was indeed gratifying.

Feb. 10 Visited the prison in Koloa. Had a long conversation with Koe ... who had the direction of the prisoners - he said there were 16 females in prison all for adultery ... food was supplied by the Govt. ... I asked him if he furnished

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the four year prisoners with clothing and soap. He said no clothing was
Hooper Diaries, p. 15

allowed them by the government – I advised him to insist that he should be allowed to furnish the female prisoners at least with clothes ... and then to require that they wash their clothes every Saturday ... in the course of a long conversation he among other things stated that he did not think there was a converted native on the Sandwich Islands. That many of them made professions but at heart there was no change ... he wound up a long speech by saying that he was not trying his neighbors but what he had stated was his opinion only and observation of the character of the Hawaiians & their habits said he, are fixed, cannot be altered, they are, he said, written within, like writing with ink on a “white shirt” It cannot be worked out – never –

Feb. 21 Mr. Johnson at Waioli observed to me (21st Feb.) that he did not consider that the present owner of Mr. Bernard’s Plantation came by it by fair means ... Visited the building at Waioli called a prison. In the center of this building two holes were dug...might be ten foot square...These holes were made to confine men and women who should be found guilty of illicit intercourse!!! The Prisoners informed me that the government did not supply them with food but They went to their friends for it...

Feb. 26 Reverend Mr. Rowell called. In speaking of Bernard’s Plantation he observed “I consider that the sale of Mr. Bernard’s Plantation to have been conducted in a most scandalous manner.” “There seems” said he, “to be a plan or understanding between the government and that company that nobody but they should have it..”

[Mar. 2] ... In a conversation... he stated that including side hills there was upward of 1000 acres of land ...

1847 Feb. Again at Kauai. The natives are going rapidly, the venereal disease rages through the island – all are effected. They tell me it is brought from Oahu – I asked the Rev. Mr. Payne of the American Missionaries if he attempted to cure the disease. No, he replied, if they get that disease they must cure themselves. Great complaints are heard from the natives against the government for taxes...

Hanalei Oct. 31, 1848 Embarked on board the Chilean brig *Correo de Cobeja* ... for the port of San Francisco ... Passengers 2 French priests ... [and] 5 in steerage, myself in supercargo. Went to the windward of Oahu, beating around the point. Left at 2 P.M. At midnight Oahu was to leeward ...

Nov. 9 ...pleasant weather ... Do not make much progress in French.

Nov. 20, 1848 Arrived in San Francisco

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[leaf 13 below is out of chronological order]

Hooper Diaries, p. 16

Jan. 14, 1840 Left Oahu for Boston in Brig *Lani* Capt. Brewer

March 27 Passed the Cape

May 2 Crossed the Equator

May 20 Arrived at Boston – passage 135 days. The Brig *Thomas Parker* sailed one week before us and mad the passage in 108 days to New York.

[leaf 14, undated]

The U.S. consul at Comprensly [sic] unity to the Secy of State under date of Nov. 23 1834 this “ In reference to Sisal Hemp alone, until the present Sec. of State shall have attentively weighed all the facts and arguments alleged by the subscriber in favor of its production in the U.States, ...his opinion may not be deemed extravagant or absurd...his unshaken conviction that its introduction * will mark an era of as great importance to the agricultural prosperity of our confederation as the invention of the cotton gin”.

* into Florida

Agava Siraluna
Variety Yardqui
(Sisal Hemp)