

**H. Hackfeld & Co., LTD.  
Honolulu Territory of Hawaii**



**Unknown until now knife from the H. Hackfeld & Co., LTD. Located in Honolulu, Territory of Hawaii.**

**Knife has a stanhope of the Hackfeld Building. The company was Agents for the Anheuser-Busch Brewing Association beer.**



**Just For Openers** January-December 2023 **2**



# ***Just For Openers January-December 2023 3***

On September 26, 1849, sea captain Heinrich (Henry) Hackfeld arrived in Honolulu with his wife, Marie, her 16-year-old brother Johann Carl Pflueger and a nephew BF Ehlers.

Having purchased an assorted cargo at Hamburg, Germany, Hackfeld opened a general merchandise business (dry goods, crockery, hardware and stationery,) wholesale, as well as retail store on Queen Street.

In 1850 he moved to a larger location on Fort Street. This store was so popular, it became known as "Hale Kilika" - the House of Silk (because it sold the finest goods available.) As business grew, the nephew took over management of the store while Hackfeld traveled the world for merchandise. The company took BF Ehlers' name in 1862.

Hackfeld developed a business of importing machinery and supplies for the spreading sugar plantations and exported raw sugar. H Hackfeld & Co became a prominent factor - business agent and shipper - for the plantations.

Its shipping interest, manufacturing and jobbing lines developed a web of commercial relationships with Europe, England and the eastern seaboard of the US. German whalers were still sailing the Pacific in the 1850s and Hackfeld bought and outfitted several whalers, brought in Pacific Coast lumber beginning in 1855 and engaged in the trans-shipment trade.

By 1855, Hackfeld operated two stores, served as agent for two sugar plantations, and represented the governments of Russia, Sweden and Norway. (Later the firm or its principals also represented Austro-Hungary, Belgium and Germany.) When Hackfeld left on a two-year business trip to Germany and Pflueger took charge in his absence. (Greaney)

In 1871 Hackfeld and Pflueger both went back to Europe to launch a German affiliate in Bremen. There they placed into service a line of ships sailing under the Hawaiian flag between Bremen and Honolulu with wheat, oil, wool and hides for the Islands and sugar shipments on the way back.

The old Honolulu Courthouse site was advertised for sale at auction in the Pacific Commercial Advertiser of May 9, 1874; H Hackfeld & Co bought it at the upset price of \$20,000. As reported by the Hawaiian Gazette, "It is the best business stand in Honolulu."

Then, the Treaty of Reciprocity (1875) between the US and the Kingdom of Hawai'i eliminated the major trade barrier to Hawai'i's closest and major market. Through the treaty, the US gained Pearl Harbor and Hawai'i's sugar planters received duty-free entry into US markets. Sugar boomed.

In 1881, Hackfeld and Paul Isenberg became partners. Isenberg, who had arrived in Hawai'i in 1858, had extensive experience in the sugar industry, previously working under Judge Duncan McBryde and Rev. William Harrison Rice in Kōloa and Lihū'e.

From that time on Mr. Isenberg was a factor in the development of the Hackfeld business, which became one of the largest in Hawai'i.

Hackfeld became the first Swedish and Norwegian Consul in the Islands. In 1862, he returned to Hamburg, and afterwards to Bremen, where he settled and managed the business of H. Hackfeld & Co. there until 1886, when he retired from the firm. In 1886 Hackfeld sold his interest in the company and returned to Germany; he died there on October 20, 1887.

When the partnership was incorporated in 1897, a new building was erected at the corner of Fort and Queen Streets; it stood there for 70-years.

After the US annexation of Hawaii in 1898, Isenberg returned to Germany to live; however, he retained the role of president, with Hackfeld's son, Johan (John) Friedrich Hackfeld serving as 1st vice president and Isenberg's son, Alexander Isenberg as 2nd vice president.

John later took over; however, he, too, returned to Germany in 1900. His cousin, George F Rodiek, became the executive in charge of H Hackfeld & Co. (Weiner) In 1905, Rodiek built an estate in Nu‘uanu.

A few years later, with the advent of the US involvement in World War I, things changed significantly for the worst for the folks at H Hackfeld & Co.

In 1918, using the terms of the Trading with the Enemy Act and its amendments, the US government seized H Hackfeld & Company and ordered the sale of German-owned shares. (Jung)

The Alien Property Custodian's Office noted, "The powerful German hold on the sugar industry of the Hawaiian islands has been crushed. The control of Hawaii's most important industry has been restored to its people."

"This is the effect of the announcement of A Mitchell Palmer, alien property custodian, that he had completed the Americanization of the H Hackfeld Co, the threat German owned corporation which for years has played so important a part in the sugar situation of the Hawaiian islands."

"Mr. Palmer Americanized this German concern by ... selling the entire assets and business of the German Hackfeld Co to (an) American company, whose stockholders are all loyal American citizens, most of them residents of the Hawaiian islands." (Alien Property Custodian's Office; Daily News Almanac, 1919)

The patriotic sounding "American Factors, Ltd," the newly-formed Hawai‘i-based corporation, whose largest shareholders included Alexander & Baldwin, C Brewer & Company, Castle & Cooke, HP Baldwin Ltd, Matson Navigation Company and Welch & Company, bought the H Hackfeld stock. (Jung) Thus, the German-started H Hackfeld & Co became one of Hawai‘i's "Big Five."

(Hawai‘i's Big 5 were: Amfac - starting as Hackfeld & Company (1849;) Alexander & Baldwin (1870;) Theo H. Davies (1845;) Castle & Cooke (1851) and C. Brewer (1826.))

At that same time, the BF Ehlers dry goods store also took the patriotic "Liberty House" name. In 1937 a second store was opened in the Waikiki area. Eventually there would be seven stores on Oahu, and several more on the other islands.

During the 1970s, Liberty House expanded into California, Nevada and Washington, but the Washington stores were sold in 1979 and the California and Nevada locations were sold in 1984. In 2001, Federated Department Stores Inc bought Liberty House, Hawai‘i's oldest and largest department store chain, and turned it into Macy's.

American Factors shortened its name to "Amfac" in 1966. The next year (1967,) Henry Alexander Walker became president and later Board Chairman. Walker bought the former Rodiek estate.

Over the next 15-years, Walker took Amfac from a company that largely depended on sugar production in Hawai‘i to a broadly diversified conglomerate. After adding so many companies, Amfac sales were \$1.3 billion by 1976, up from \$575 million in 1971. (hbs-edu)

After subsequent sales of controlling interests in the company and liquidation of land and other assets, in 2002, the once dominant business in Hawai‘i, the biggest of the Hawai‘i Big Five, Amfac Hawai‘i, LLC filed for federal bankruptcy protection. (TGI)

The image shows the former Hackfeld, then AmFac building at Queen and Fort Streets (it was demolished in 1970.) In addition, I have included other images in a folder of like name in the Photos section on my Facebook and Google+ pages.

# H. HACKFELD & CO. Ltd.



## AGENTS FOR:

### PACIFIC MAIL S. S. CO.'S STEAMERS:

"China," "City of Peking," "City of Rio De Janeiro."

### OCCIDENTAL AND ORIENTAL S. S. CO.'S STEAMERS:

"Doric," "Coptic," "Gaelic."

### TOYO KISEN KAISHA'S STEAMERS:

"America Maru," "Hongkong Maru," "Nippon Maru."

### AMERICAN-HAWAIIAN S. S. CO.'S STEAMERS:

"Californian," "Oregonian," "American," "Hawaiian," "Alaskan," "Arizonan," "Nebraskan,"  
"Nevadan," and "Texas."

### BREMEN AND LIVERPOOL LINE OF PACKETS.

### PACIFIC GUANO AND FERTILIZER CO.

## HONOLULU REPRESENTATIVES:

Lihue Plantation Co., Kauai  
Grove Farm Plantation, Kauai  
Koloa Sugar Company, Kauai  
Kekaha Sugar Company, Kauai  
Pioneer Mill Co., Lahaina, Maui  
Kipahulu Sugar Co., Kipahulu, Maui  
Hawaii Mill Co., Hilo, Hawaii  
Kukalau Plantation Co., Hawaii  
Oahu Sugar Co., Waipahu, Oahu

EXTENSIVE HANDLERS OF HAWAIIAN COFFEE  
AND DEALERS IN GENERAL MERCHANDISE

## MAIN OFFICES:

# HACKFELD BUILDING

CORNER FORT AND QUEEN STREETS, HONOLULU

## BRANCH HOUSES:

HILO, HAWAII

KAILUA, HAWAII

LAHAINA, MAUI



**Barley Malt**  
**Best Hops**  
**No Corn**

One reason for the superiority of the Anheuser-Busch brews is they contain no corn, an ingredient that cheapens the cost of brewing and injures the quality of the beer. The mark of purity—

**The "A" and the EAGLE**

identifies the products of the

**Anheuser-Busch Brewing Association**

**Budweiser** —"King of Bottled Beers."  
83,790,300 bottles sold in 1902.

**H. Hackfeld & Co., Ltd.,**  
**AGENTS**

## Hilo Business Directory.

### A

**Affonso, Godfrey F.**, editor "A Voz Publica," notary public and conveyancer, Bridge nr. Waianuenue.

Affonso, M. G., merchant, Volcano nr. Waiakea.

**Akana, Mrs. J. A.**, Hawaiian Curios, Front nr. Church.

Amaral, J. P., proprietor City Stables.

**Andrews, Lorrin A.**, Sheriff of Hawaii, office King nr. Pitman.

Andrews, Robert, master mariner and stevedore, H. Hackfeld & Co.

**Anheuser Busch Brewing Ass'n.**, H. Hackfeld Co., Agents.

**Auerbach, R. L.**, manager W. C. Peacock Co. (Ltd.)

Austin, H. C., Ray Bros. & Co.

Aguirre J. P., planter, Hilo S. Co.

Alameda, M. de, engineer, Hilo S. Co.





**Knife with Blades Extended**



**Cigar Box Opener type BB-10 (Bars & Blades) advertising the H. Hackfeld & Co.'s cigar brands: La Insular Manila Cigars and Kona Clear Hawauan Cigars. Note the spelling for Hawaiian is Hawauan.**