PROJECT SCROLL RESEARCH NOTE 2026-20

E Clampus Vitus at Honolulu, 1858, and Mokelumne Hill, 1867–68: the eleven officers of the Honolulu lodge, and a gold-country lodge's year in its town's paper

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SUMMARY

The order's histories say a lodge was called at Honolulu in 1858 without giving a source. The *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* of 16 September 1858 prints the lodge's first slate: E Clampsus Vitus, "which we understand to be a benevolent order, somewhat similar in its character to Odd Fellowship," had elected eleven officers "for the ensuing year," from L. F. Beatty, N. G. H., to E. J. Smith, Treasurer. Among them were J. O. Dominis, Grand Royal Musician, later the husband of Queen Lili'uokalani, and J. O. Carter, Secretary. All eleven were first traced by Seth Slopes in *E Clampsus Vitus Goes International* (2026); the newspaper list confirms his reading. The same paper noted in June 1882 that the old lodge's records were still "in the hands of the former J. H. A. P.," and the *Saturday Press* of 17 March 1883 remembered the lodge as "a huge sell." Nine years later and an ocean away, the *Weekly Calaveras Chronicle* of Mokelumne Hill followed the lodge of its own town through a year: meetings at the Court House with degrees conferred by "the N. G. H. of the State" (April 1867); candidates "very numerous"; a Fourth of July oration by A. P. Dudley before the order; "Lodge No. 1,001" in print (January 1868); a Washington's Birthday ball "for the benefit of the public school" (21 February 1868); and the order in the town's processions with the Odd Fellows and Masons, and on Mexican Independence Day with the Swiss, Mexican and Chilean societies.

THE RECORD

1. ***Pacific Commercial Advertiser*** **(Honolulu), 16 September 1858, p. 2**

> *"E Clampsus Vitus.—This organization, which we understand to be a benevolent order, somewhat similar in its character to Odd Fellowship, has been lately introduced in Honolulu, and is said to be already in a flourishing condition. At a meeting held on Monday evening last, the following officers were elected for the ensuing year: L. F. Beatty, N. G. H.; M. Brown, R. P.; Wm. E. Cutrell, C. V.; C. N. Spencer, C. P.; J. O. Dominis, G. R. M.; M. Raplee, G. F.; J. H. Brown, G. S.; C. W. Vincent, O. H. A. P.; C. P. Ward, J. H. A. P.; J. O. Carter, Secretary; E. J. Smith, Treasurer."*

Library of Congress, Chronicling America · See the record (https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn82015418/1858-09-16/ed-1/?sp=2&st=text)

2. ***Pacific Commercial Advertiser*****, 17 June 1882, p. 3**

> *"It is reported that the 'E Clampsus Vitus' agitation is being renewed ... The records of the old organization are in the hands of the former J. H. A. P., but the emblems are yet missing."*

Library of Congress, Chronicling America · See the record (https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn82015418/1882-06-17/ed-1/?sp=3&st=text)

3. ***Saturday Press*** **(Honolulu), 17 March 1883, p. 1**

> *"Among other good sized jokes was the establishment in this city, in 1858, of a branch of so-called 'Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampsus Vitus,' ... It was really a huge sell, and intended at once to satirize secret orders and to afford, in the initiation of neophytes, unbounded fun to the lovers of a practical joke."*

Library of Congress, Chronicling America · See the record (https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn82014681/1883-03-17/ed-1/?sp=1&st=text)

4. ***Weekly Calaveras Chronicle*** **(Mokelumne Hill), 27 April 1867, p. 3**

> *"The Mokelumne Lodge of the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampsus Vitus will meet at the Court House, this evening, at 8 o'clock. The N. G. H. of the State will be present to confer degrees."*

Library of Congress, Chronicling America · See the record (https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn93052977/1867-04-27/ed-1/?sp=3&st=text)

5. ***Weekly Calaveras Chronicle*****, 13 July 1867, p. 1**

> *"Oration by Hon. A. P. Dudley, delivered before the Ancient and Honorable Order of Clampsus Vitus, at Mokelumne Hill July 4th, 1867."*

Library of Congress, Chronicling America · See the record (https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn93052977/1867-07-13/ed-1/?sp=1&st=text)

6. ***Weekly Calaveras Chronicle*****, 4 January 1868, p. 3**

> *"Every member of Lodge No. 1,001, of the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampsus Vitus, is earnestly requested to attend the regular meeting this evening, to elect officers and make preparations for a grand ball … on Washington's birthday."*

Library of Congress, Chronicling America · See the record (https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn93052977/1868-01-04/ed-1/?sp=3&st=text)

7. ***Weekly Calaveras Chronicle*****, 15 February 1868, p. 3**

> *"On Friday evening next, February 21st, a grand ball will be given at Leger's Hall, for the benefit of the public school in this place. The party, which is to be held under the auspices of the order of E Clampsus Vitus …"*

Library of Congress, Chronicling America · See the record (https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn93052977/1868-02-15/ed-1/?sp=3&st=text)

8. ***Weekly Calaveras Chronicle*****, 26 September 1868, p. 2**

> *The Mexican Independence Day procession: "Engine Co. No. 1; Engine Co. No. 2; Hook & Ladder Co. No. 1; Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampsus Vitus; Swiss Society; Mexican Society …"*

Library of Congress, Chronicling America · See the record (https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn93052977/1868-09-26/ed-1/?sp=2&st=text)

WHAT IT CHANGES

Honolulu moves from a lodge known by its notices and one officer to a lodge with all eleven officers of September 1858 named in a record of the time, confirming Seth Slopes's list. Mokelumne Hill, the lodge the order's histories call its first lasting one, gains a documented year of meetings, initiations and public life in 1867–68 and a gift to its public school in February 1868.

LIMITS

The Honolulu list of 16 September 1858 and the Mokelumne Hill notice of 15 February 1868 were read on the page images; the other items in the machine-read text, several agreeing. The 1883 reminiscence is a memory, signed only with initials. The papers do not say how much the 1868 ball raised.

WHAT WE SEARCHED BEFORE CALLING IT NEW

Chronicling America for every spelling of the order's name (Clampus, Clampsus, Clampsis, Eclampsus, Eclampus, Vitis), 1836–1925, with each Hawaii and Calaveras County hit read; the order's histories (*Then and Now*, 1966; Shumate, 1991; Slopes, 2000, 2022 and 2026).

Our standard for calling a finding new is set out in How we research (projectscroll.com/how-we-research/), and how we weigh each kind of record in Scrollsigns (projectscroll.com/scrollsigns/).

"New" means new to print as far as we can tell. If you know of an earlier publication, tell us and we will credit it here and raise the note's version.

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WORKS CITED

Earlier work, catalogues and databases named in this note, besides the records quoted above.

1. Seth Slopes, *E Clampsus Vitus Goes International*, ed. David Holmes (El Barbareño Publishing, 2026), chs. 5–6 and appendix 2.
2. E Clampus Vitus, *E Clampus Vitus: Then and Now, 1852–1966* (Stockton, 1966). https://ecv13.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Then_and_Now_1966.pdf
3. Seth Slopes, *E Clampus Vitus: Now & Then: The Replete History of ECV* (Murphys: Old Timers Museum, 2000). https://archive.org/details/eclampusvitus0000seth

THE FULL STORY

The finding is set out in context, with the rest of its sources, in E Clampus Vitus: the complete record (projectscroll.com/news/e-clampus-vitus-the-complete-record/). In the discoveries register:

- `honolulu-1858` (projectscroll.com/discoveries/#honolulu-1858)
- `mokhill-1867-68` (projectscroll.com/discoveries/#mokhill-1867-68)

HOW TO CITE THIS NOTE

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