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## Francis I'i Brown

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Francis Hyde I'i Brown descended from royalty and was a larger-than-life figure much of his 83 years. Perhaps no one loomed larger in Hawai'i golf.

Brown died in 1976 at his Pebble Beach estate. In Hawai'i, where he was born and raised and lived most of his life, Brown was known affectionately as Mr. Golf.

He was a champion of historic proportions. Brown captured nine Manoa Cup championships between 1920 and 1934, when the match-play tournament was the most coveted title in the state. To add to his legend, his last Cup came 16 months after a terrifying car accident that left him seriously injured and doctors saying he would never golf again.

He had 14 holes-in-one, shattered course records at Pebble Beach and St. Andrew's — two of the most sacred layouts in golf — and once held the Japan, California and Hawai'i Amateur titles concurrently.

"He was rated by old-timers as the finest player of them all — a truly great champion with heart," Bill Gee wrote in Hawaiian Golf Almanac. "He had spectacular shot-making ability, power and delicate touch on the greens."

Brown called his Big Island retreat Kalahuipua'a after its fishponds. He bought the property in 1932 for \$3,700. It is now the Mauna Lani Resort and the golf courses bear his name. It is where Brown, a Territorial legislator, "replenished his Hawaiian soul in the same ways his ancestors did," according to nephew Kenneth F. Brown.

Brown's soul was sincerely charming. Many said he had a gift for treating everyone — from staff to John Wayne — with the same amiability.

He was often a silent philanthropist, helping many Hawai'i golfers get to Mainland tournaments and supporting them financially.