

J.T. Arundel and Raine Island

The name most often associated with Raine Island by Pacific historians is that of John T. Arundel, whose London based company exploited the guano deposits there from 1890 to 1892.

Born in 1841, Arundel joined the staff of Houlder Brothers, contractors for carrying immigrants to Australia and New Zealand, who had shipping interests in many parts of the Pacific. In 1860 the company sent him to the Chincha Islands, ostensibly to recover from an illness, and there he acquired his life interest in the guano industry.

Some of his enthusiasm rubbed off on the Directors of Houlder Brothers, who reasoned that if Arundel could find and exploit workable deposits of guano in the Pacific Islands they could develop a lucrative business out of shipping it to Europe and America, where a keen demand had developed in the 1860s.

In 1868, therefore, Houlders sent him on a prospecting trip to the islands and later gave their blessing to his returning there as John T. Arundel and Company, to act as their agents in developing guano interests which he had acquired on Starbuck Island.¹

From 1870 to 1890 Arundel's company worked successively the guano deposits on Starbuck, Caroline, Christmas, Flint, Sydney, Canton, Enderbury, Baker and Howland Islands, exhausting all the known and available deposits in the Central Pacific and compelling him to move his interests to the Queensland off-shore islands.²

It was decided to start by mining the guano known to exist on Raine Island, using the European staff then loading the last of the shipments from Howland. These comprised Arundel's cousin George Ellis (with his wife Annie), their son Albert (known as Bertie) and Messrs Gale, Sunstrom and Murdock, who sailed on the schooner Maile (Capt. W.S. Lane), leaving

Howland on August 2, 1890, and arriving at Raine on the 19th after a fine passage of 16 days.³

Meanwhile Arundel was visiting Melbourne, Sydney and the Queensland ports from Townsville to Thursday Island, investigating local shipping contacts and seeking advice on obtaining a labour force for his operations. Hitherto the company had employed Polynesian labourers from Rarotonga, Niue and Hawaii, but what were locally termed kanakas were no longer permitted to enter Queensland territory and he was advised to employ Chinese or Malays instead; though Filipinos were considered the best workers if obtainable.

In the event Arundel decided to book a passage on the Quetta for Java in the hope of procuring his labour there or in Singapore; but fortunately he missed his connection for she struck a rock after passing Thursday Island and only 128 of the 394 on board were saved. As time was now running short he then took local advice and appointed Burns Philp as his agents, who had no difficulty in engaging all the Chinese he wanted for about £2.10.0 a month with food costing 11/- to 14/-; while white overseers, normally to be avoided as 'very troublesome, were obtainable at £6 a month, with food and accommodation.⁴

Arundel took the first batch of 30 Chinese to Raine himself on the schooner Griffin (Capt. German Harry), arriving on the 23rd August, only four days after the Maile, and a week later the cutter Mercury brought 17 Malays:⁵ just in time to save the situation as they proved capable boat workers for loading the guano, whereas the Chinese disliked the sea and refused to wade in water above their knees, but were excellent in the guano diggings and indeed willing to tackle any job ashore.

The apparent absence of potable water proved an initial difficulty. Robinson, of the Jennie Scott, who had lived for some months on Raine in 1879 collecting marine products, had found some indifferent water by digging down to 20 feet 'near the cross', but was eventually forced to get water for himself

and his labour from the mainland.⁶ The Ellis party fared no better at first and had to rely on using a 400-gallon tank and a length of galvanized pipe as a makeshift condenser fired by driftwood.⁷

Arundel, however, was accompanied by a Mr Baker from the Customs Department in Brisbane who, while inspecting the guano operations, was able to point out where there was known to be 'good permanent water under some rocks at one end of the island'. It seems probable that this was the source known today as 'Arundel's well'.⁸

Water caused another problem, as the early 90s are still remembered in Queensland as the years of the big floods and the incessant rain made the guano too wet for shipment; as a consequence heating chambers had to be made to dry the guano. 'The Cleveland Foundry [in Townsville], at work on these, is open night and day pressing through the contract'. By mid-1981 six 'furnaces', as they were called by Arundel, were working daily: it was an expensive business as they burnt nearly 2½ tons of coal a day each and required two overseers and up to 40 men to keep the guano moving.⁹

Regular communication with the outside world was maintained by the 10-ton lugger Speedy, which Arundel had chartered from the well-known Cooktown character German Harry to leave Raine Island each week in time to connect with the coastal steamer from southern ports to Thursday Island at the Piper Island Lightship and return with the mail, passengers and any cargo. The system worked well until the Speedy was wrecked at Raine Island during a storm and had to be replaced by other small craft, notably the 30-ton cutter Lizzie, owned and operated by German Harry himself and large enough to visit Cooktown and other mainland ports as well as Piper Island.

This was the only wreck at Raine while Arundel's company was there, despite the absence of an anchorage nearer than five miles away and the fact that the 1,000-1,500 ton ships which

loaded the guano for Europe (or on two occasions for Melbourne) were all sailing vessels. Their trouble-free record was probably due to the excellent moorings laid by George Ellis in a sheltered position as long as the prevailing south-east trades were blowing.¹⁰

Arundel only visited Raine in person on two occasions: once, from the 23rd August to the 5th September, 1890, to inspect the island and discuss the best way of conducting operations with his cousin George. It was not his custom to interfere with the day to day work on any of his guano islands unless there was trouble, an unlikely event since George Ellis was by far the most experienced island manager in the company service.

The second occasion was on hearing of the sudden death of George's wife Annie, when he stayed on Raine from the 12th July to the 31st August, 1891, to enable his cousin to have a break on the mainland.¹¹

Though an attempt has been made by a New Zealand journalist Aimée Bright, to prepare a biography based on Arundel's diaries they are essentially discrete notes jotted down for his own use, with pages of mathematical calculations, forecasts for months ahead of the probable location of his chartered shipping and details of sermons and addresses he had heard or intended to give, for he was a deeply religious man and had applied to the London Missionary Society in 1872 to be trained as a missionary, only to be told that he was doing a more important work for the church as a prominent Christian entrepreneur and a model employer of island labour.

The whole Ellis family were also devoted Christians and as a result there was seldom any trouble over recruiting or working labour: even on Raine Island the Chinese and Malays were given tracts and gospel stories in their own languages, and the Malays in particular greatly preferred the island life to work on the canefields.

Like other visitors Arundel was fascinated by the lonely beacon and transcribed in his diary some of the graffiti which he found inside the tower:

'27.8.90. Inscriptions inside Beacon -
J.H. Robinson - Gatton - Aug.
A. McCallum - Brig 'Prairie' - 1876.
H.M.S. Challenger - Capt. Nares - Aug. 1874.
H.M.S. Herald - Capt. H.M. Denham - March 1865.
Fresh water at 7 feet. A. Mac.
J. Barnett - New York - Aug. 1876.
H.M.S. Virago - Capt. Bingham - Jan. 1866. 12

After his second departure in 1891 Arundel became immersed in difficulties over Clipperton Island in the far eastern Pacific and ceased to have any direct contact with the operations on Raine, though there were other visitors - notably H.M.S. Egeria and the Hon. John Douglas, British Resident at Thursday Island. The Ellis family, including Albert's elder brother George jun., who had arrived from Howland in November, continued to explore islands on the Great Barrier Reef and in the Gulf of Carpentaria for workable deposits.

The number of workers was scaled down from its maximum of nearly 100 and about the middle of the following year operations on Raine Island were finally terminated with the exhaustion of the remaining commercial deposits, and the staff, labour and equipment were moved first to Rocky Island in the Gulf, then to Lady Elliott Island off Bundaberg, and finally to North West Island and others in the Bunker and Capricorn Groups.

By 1897, with the last of the guano deposits exhausted, the outlook for John T. Arundel and Company looked bleak and it was reconstituted as the Pacific Islands Company to conduct general trading activities in the Gilbert, Ellice and Marshall Islands, which at least enabled it to keep solvent.

Then in 1900, with the discovery of the enormous rock phosphate deposits on Nauru and Ocean Island by Albert Ellis, the youngest of the Ellis team (who was knighted in 1938), all was changed overnight: the trading company became the giant Pacific Phosphate Company (later the British Phosphate Commission); John T. Arundel, often called in later years the Cecil Rhodes of the Pacific, died in 1919 aged 78; he was by then a rich man, and as his friend Lord Leverhulme wrote: 'It is by such as he that the British Empire has been built up'.

References

1. Maslyn Williams and Barrie Macdonald, The Phosphateers (Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1985), pp.6-7.
2. Aimée Bright, Biography of John Arundel, unpublished MS, n.d.
3. Torres Straits Pilot and New Guinea Gazette, Sept.13, 1890; Albert F. Ellis, Adventuring in coral seas (Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1936), pp.62-66.
4. John T. Arundel, Unpublished diaries, entries for Feb.12 and 28, 1890.
5. Cooktown Independent, Aug.23, 1890; Arundel, diary entry for Aug.24, 1890.
6. Arundel, diary for Aug.19, 1890.
7. Ellis, p.67.
8. Brisbane Telegraph, Oct.3, 1890, citing Cooktown Courier.
9. Arundel, diary entry for July 16, 1891.
10. Ellis, pp.95-97.
11. Arundel, diary entries for July 3 and 13, 1891.
12. Arundel, diary entry for Aug.21, 1890.

CHAPTER II.

The visit to England did not eventuate after all and October 1890 found the traveller back in North Queensland. From here he was booked to sail by the Quetta to Java at the end of the month, but through an unforeseen delay at Thursday Island he lost his passage. On the 1st of March, the Quetta struck a rock off Mt. Adolphus Island and went down in three minutes. Of the 394 passengers only 128 were saved.

His stay at Thursday Island was for the purpose of looking into the matter of the pearl and bech-de mer fisheries there, which at that time represented a collective annual value of £100,000. Of Hong Kong Honolulu and Thursday Island, (perhaps the most cosmopolitan ports in the Pacific,) in its season, the last is perhaps the most interesting, with its motley assemblage of white and coloured folk - generally adventurers - from every part of the world. During the working of the Queensland Islets, the chief stayed at Thursday Island frequently and had very high hopes for its future when New Guinea and adjacent lands should be opened up. Here he often met his first missionary friend of Raratonga, Mr. Chalmers now working in New Guinea. From this centre, too, he became familiar with the Solomons, as well as with Cape York district, by this time maintaining very big herds of cattle.

Raine Island was now staffed with Chinese and Malays, and under Mr. Ellis's management houses were built and guano working was pushed forward at a great pace, while the chief from the mainland arranged.

for mails and stores, and a regular service of boats. Meanwhile, Auckland papers note that "The brigantine Lady Mabel has cleared for Howland and Niue under charter to Messrs. Arundel & Co. to load guano for Australian ports." "The Silver Cloud is bound for Howland to load guano for Dunedin." Then "The Maile bound for an extended cruise among guano deposits of the Phoenix and other groups, carries a large buoy for Howland", where Captain Theet was still stationed.

June found the chief in New Zealand intent on the business of chartering small craft to thread the Queensland channels *for most of the island boats were brought from New Zealand* Auckland at the time was famed for its homebuilt ketches, schooners, etc., and in Sydney and Auckland regattas, yachts from North Shore yards were generally successful. *and most* Some of the neatest island craft hailed from these ~~same~~ shipyards. According to the Star 4th July, 1890 "Within the past few months the guano firm of J. T. Arundel Co. has despatched five vessels from Auckland to Howland Island for guano for New Zealand ports. Howland is now perhaps the richest guano depot in the Pacific."

These Central Pacific islands with strong managers under the direction of the travelling representative, were working very well. Old difficulties incidental to the manning of the staff no longer existed, for employees who had once worked for the firm, were always anxious to enlist again. So Kanakas, for work in smaller South Sea centres were easily found.

guano islands was chiefly one of strenuous endeavour; its gala happenings - the arrival of the Vivid, the Ryno, the Lady Mabel, etc. with mails, or the departure of that same little craft with a load of guano when generally all hands made holiday. Rumours of tragedy came from outside the boundary reefs.

On the mainland the chief too led a strenuous life. An August entry shows a week train travel touching Sydney, Melbourne, Newcastle and Brisbane leading to the further journey by boat to Townsville, Cook town and Cairns where he engaged more Chinese labour and looked up Temple Cay and Forbes Island, - neither of importance. His trip ended in a visit to Raine Island - reached after a most difficult passage.

24th Aug. "Arrived here by Griffin yesterday and found the Maile waiting, though on account of the high wind she has not made fast. After an anxious night we went inside the great detached reef, and getting out the big scow, towed it across and made it fast to the shore with a hawser. Then the Maile in her turn, dropped her anchor to stern and so we safely got ashore to a very warm welcome. It was pleasant to meet these friends again".

Assembled at Raine Island were several members of the old white staff - experts who had most expeditiously got the new workings in hand. The travelling manager was here with Mrs. Ellis, whom the chief had not met since her visit to the islands at the time of her son's accident. According to a Cook-town paper, there was now a complete village on Raine Island.

Another August entry.

"Getting near the fall the tides here are very high or very low. The tide last night was so high that it washed right into the blacksmith's shop".

"The Chinese want me to guarantee them against robbery or murder by the Malays."

"Oyster Cay, Bramble Cay, Temple Cay, have no guano, but Oyster has good bech-de-mer fishing." These rocks in Torres Straits were at the time reported by Queensland papers as containing a wealth of guano. Indeed comments by the Australian press during this time of uncertainty, are entertaining. Even the Bulletin which in those days, in the hands of its finest editor was usually accurate, had a paragraph touching "a guano island leased by speculators which has 4,000,000 tons of guano on it!" J.T.A.'s comment on this is merely "Presumably Raine Island."

From the Cook-town Courier.

"By the Jumna Mr. Baker of the Custom House returned from Raine Island via Thursday Island. Raine is half a mile long, by a quarter wide, covered with leguminous shrubs and runners. Fresh water, though not of good quality was at first obtained at two springs which were very poor, but a good permanent supply has now been found. The guano deposit is excellent - several layers of varying depth. Some in the form of soft rock is evidently formed by the action of rain water, percolating the layer and liberating CO₂ thus forming a breccia of shell, lime and guano. The island is covered with birds' nests. Turtle is plentiful."

The navigation of Torres Straits was always difficult. There are two passages - the outer and inner - and the cost of pilotage for the safer and inner route is from £30 to £50. The discussion as to the merits of the two routes led ultimately to a visit from Lord Charles Scott and to official proclamation as to the navigation of the Straits.

A later press cutting tells that a much discussed "patch" is of coral, 550 yards in diameter and rising from deep water. Unfortunately it is below the surface, but is clearly visible when the sun is in certain positions. J.T.A. mentions this "patch" several times in the diary of his voyages in 1890-91. The 1892 report was made by Lieu. Commander Pirie of H.M.S. Patuma.

From Brisbane one voyage lasted the better part of a month, spent chiefly in tossing about the unusually stormy strait. "An awfully dark night" comes the comment, "for a chance of being drowned". The Townsville paper refers to this visit of the proprietor of Raine Island where "work has been hopelessly impeded by excessive rains" (The early 'nineties are remembered in Queensland as the years of the big floods. "Heating chambers", continues the article, "are now being made for the purpose of drying the guano. The Cleveland Foundry, at work on these, is open night and day, pressing through the contract."

The end of June 1891 found the chief at Raine Island again, relieving his friend after the sudden unlooked for death there of Mrs. Ellis. For two months he took charge - again surveying guano fields - again settling disputes among the members of the white staff - again engrossed in measurements of floors (for Chinese

houses this time,) again, when all the guano was dry, restraining his impatience as best he might at the untimely and phenomenal rains. He has not dealt with Chinese labour before and finds himself somewhat at sea in drawing out the first orders for supplies for the Chinese New Year. But by the end of September he is back on the mainland and in Sydney comes the entry. "Doctor says it is influenza and orders rest from work."

The ravages of influenza during the 'nineties throughout the Australian towns gave matter for comment in Stevenson's letters. Certainly the form it assumed in Sydney was sufficiently unpleasant, but it was not the death-dealing visitation that swept Southern lands in 1891 1818. ^{118(?)} And ⁹ in a week the wanderer is about again, and entries from his train or mail-boat or temporary inn note "sermons of Bishop Julius" just heard in Christchurch. "Price paid for bullocks in the open markets" in Brisbane, "rumours", in Hobart, "that X has an island in hand," And from Thursday Island in January 1892 he writes -

"Among the exports from this port for 1891 with pearl-shell representing £78,851, beche de mer, £6,810, tortoiseshell £1,582, guano is credited with £21,648."

In connection with the price of bullocks in Brisbane in 1892, it must be remembered that in that year, Queensland, according to a writer in the Daily News (London) had an increase of 6½ million well bred cattle. In February came news of the wreck of the gallant little Ryno at Flint Island - only 85 tons - but with a record of strenuous work to her credit that would do honour to many bigger and better-known ships. In May from the cabin of the Richmond comes the entry opening half a year of deep-sea sailings. "Just off Ramatonga."

22
23
Friday 22nd August 1890 - 10.20 am On board the Griffin
left Cooktown about 11 am on Wed. 20 inst. after a very
long time clearing up.
①

Sunday 24th Aug 1890.. on board the Maile

Arrived here yesterday.. about 11 am + found to my great
delight that the Maile had arrived on the 19th
+ 30 crewmen from Cooktown + a week later. 17 Malays.

Maile

~~Arr. Raine Is. from Howland~~

Maile (Schooner) (Capt. Lane reporting) 13.9.90

Left Howland Aug 2nd. 1890. Arr. Raine Is. 18th. Aug.

Passengers Mr + Mrs Ellis. Messrs B. Ellis, Gale,
Swanson + Murdoch.

Mr + Mrs Beudel + Mr Baker from Raine Is. to Thursday Is
Ellis's + to probably landed 20th. bad weather.

1891
Jan 1891 received letters from Raine Is. (Cooktown)
Arr. Raine

3rd July 3 wires. Sad news of Cousin Annie's death
on Monday morning. Poor Cousin George + the boys.

p1352

1891
Friday - 3rd July - 1891 - 12.40 midday - arrived this
mq early - found 3 wires - first with sad news of
Cousin Annie's death on Monday morning mq -
evil (?) 29th inst - Poor Cousin George + the boys! -
Seems tel - advised that cutter was dismantled -

p1353

Monday - 13 July 1891 - 11 am - Raine Island - arrived here
about 3 pm early - Bertie came off - poor Cousin
George + Ernest met me at the end of the Jetty. Sad
sad meeting - Had a bath - + then walked up to the Grave -
Service in Eng - attended by all hands - also by
Christensen - Charlie - Carl - + Eklandson -

① 20th Aug 1890 (newspaper cutting)

The Griffin, under ^{the} command of German Harey, cleared
yesterday for Raine Island under charter to a Southern
speculator, who holds the right to take guano from that
locality.

1890
①
I met Mary Griffiths.

Thursday

22nd Jan - 1891 - noon - on board "Woodroffe" - left Sydney 3:15 pm yesterday - - - -

Friday 23rd Jan - 1891 - Queensland Club - Brisbane - - - -

Sunday - 25 Jan - 1891 - 11 am on board "Woodroffe" again - - - -

Monday - 26th Jan - 1891 - anchored off Flat Top - - - -

Wednesday - 28th Jan 1891 - 8 am - Queen's Hotel - Townsville - arrived here ~~off~~ noon yesterday - - - -
Letters from Raine Island waiting my arrival Cooktown Friday must defer decision Victory until then - - - -

1891
Probabilities - Leave Cooktown 3rd 8 pm - Tuesday -
off Digitalup - 4-6 pm - Wednesday
Arrive Raine - 3rd - 5th or 6th - Thursday -
Leave Raine - 5th - 7th -
Arrive Cooktown Monday - 9th -
Leave Cooktown Tuesday 10th
Arrive Thursday Island - Thursday 13th -
Leave " " Saturday 14th -
Victory leave Cousins Sunday - 1st
" Cooktown - Tuesday - 3rd
Arrive Raine - Friday - 6th
Leave " - 7th - or etc - - - -

Thursday - 29/1/91 - 3 pm - at anchor off Port Douglas - - - -
Note! Murdoch arrived per "Cindra" - very bad land -
- - - He left Raine Island Tuesday or Wed 20/1/91 -

Saturday - 31 Jan 1891 - very hot day - Cooktown - 12/1/91 p 1269
arrived here at 1:30 am - yesterday - got ashore abt 7 am -
found letters of Mr Ellis & c - - - -

Wednesday - 1st Feb 1891 - 8 am - another close hot morning - decided taking "Victory" on Patience's terms - - - -
Note wrote as follows to Murdoch - 'I am coming by the Sr. "Victory" direct to Raine Island & leave on Friday - so please go straight to Raine Island at once, & Mr Ellis will give you further instructions - - - -

Arundel Diaries

13 Nov. 1891. Munkitau turning out to be very poor.

D could come in to see JTA about it - thinks he will drop Moore.
D could say Moore has bought Rossan from Ellacott.

ships leave Larkston 3 Nov. and Rome 5 Nov.

JTA arr Rome 13 July 1891 3 p.m. Left Larkston 8 July 9 p.m.

service at grave. address of K. Stables clergy with verses 'A little talk with
Jesus' - middle hymn 'Almighty Father hear our cry' last hymn 'God
moves in a mysterious way'.

Bertie came off the ship. 'Poor cousin George and Ernest met me at the end of the Jetty'
'Dewent?' Same in English and attended of all hands.

next day was cousin George's birthday.

2 funerals burn 1 for coal in 3 days.

4 more funerals asked.

28 Aug. Bertie's 22nd birthday

JTA Left Rome on 'Dewent' 31 August 1891.

~~Address~~ . MS
of Bowen 5410

Arundel Diaries
2nd floor MS
1890 Reading Room

621250 M.S

middle of 1890
to end 1891

Picture of Rame
Is Beacon building
1842

Arundel Dunes

Monday 10 2 90 'may probably have to go to Batavia to see
about labour' 10.30 a.m.
3 7 89

500. Borneo & Java off Jeddah

Wednesday 12 2 90 'Borneo - Had a long chat about labour etc. He much prefers
Chinese - but you can't rely on the people at Luchow & Remanien who say they
can get them - generally not a half turn up - and they have one dead on ground
work because they did not get paid by Left Lake. White men very troublesome -
about £6 a month wages & food extra.

Friday 25 Feb - at Cocktown. Borneo Pilot 30 word 'says we can get lots of
Chinese - but I doubt it - to look into on my return'

Wednesday 26 2 90 Thursday Island. 'Belongs much better than Java as they have been
used to European & not Dutch overseers. Singapore might be more easily called at
than Java.

Thursday 27 2 90 Bowden lead of Borneo Pilot at Thursday I. 'Think we
might get most Chinese at Gavia & see at Cocktown - perhaps 20 islands here -
at about £3 per month'

Tones Straits Pilot 1 3 90 Arrived Feb 25 23. 40th Ave. Gt S & Green from
Sydney, via Jato. Passages 23 Arundell at Stewart.

Friday 28 2 90 60 Chinese available at lower 6-12 rather expect wages 25/-
without food from 30/- to 35/- with food payable (credit) several wages.
at Cocktown 2/10/- to 3/-/- for salt & food which costs 11-14 dollars.

(2)

9.3.90 to land Changsha near Lighter

July 21. 4.90 Mule leaves Howland July 15 arrives Raine Aug 10 2400 = 24 days

16.5.90 Auckland Mule leaves Auckland 19 July Arr Howland 19 June Leaves 19 July
arr Raine 19 Aug

21.5.90 Mule sails 10 a.m.

~~From a note for setting the Mule against at Howland on June 18~~

Tuesday 19.8.90 'Net set by Robertson - of the Jeanie Scott - near Raine Island
in 18.79 - dug for water near the cross - went down 20 feet - through 3 layers of
guano right (?) into the Bed Rock at which the Beaver is exposed - got water but
not very good - impregnated with guano - saw that they preferred getting it from the
mountain'

6/2 'all pretty nearly finished. The Chasman down & signed before W. Burckett'

20.8.90 Left Lighter 11 a.m. on Griffins (Gene Henry)

Sunday 24.8.90 '3/2 - on board the Mule - arrived here yesterday alt 11 a.m.
& found Mule had arrived on 19th

27.8.90 'Description made Beavers

J.H. Robinson Gatter Aug

A McCallum - Brig 'Prairie' - 1876

H2S Challenger - Capt. Davis - Aug - 1874

H2S Herald - Capt. H.M. Denton - March 1865

Fresh water at 7 feet. Amac

S Barnett - New York - Aug 1876

H2S Voyager - Capt. Byngton - Jan 1866

29.8.90 'Commissioner's House nearly through - need then is - Commission wanted us to guarantee them against robbery by delays - or made by them.

Rowe to Floundery - 164

Rowe to Cockton 330

Cockton Independent Aug 23 'On Wednesday the schooner 'Griffin' sailed with 5 Europeans, including Mr. Baker of the Customs Department & 30 Chinese for Bone Island to work on grass deposits there. The island is a small rocky one South East Floundery Island & the deposit will probably be worked out in about 20 months'.

4.9.90 'Difficulty with Commission then about going into the water & later on about the fresh water'.

6.9.90 Left on Friday 'Had discussion with Commission - they want to be paid in cash & out of side on Bone Philip - they found to be very careful with water etc. Got asked for 6/- per week for every additional 5 men but afterwards agreed to give him £2 per week extra for the 30 men now here & 6/- per week for each extra man.'

Water may 12 days = 50 gallons per day. 7 Malaya extra = 60 gallons.
 Dinner takes 4 tubs - helps the mill oil = 1800 gallons.
 Sundry 60 gallons p.d. = 31 days, net 27 and adressed Cassin's Gull.
 Cassin's Gull can make 80 gallons a day with condenser.

8 9. 90 am. Thursday Island.

Texas Straits Pilot and New Guinea Gazette 13.9.90

Scholar Dale (Capt W S Lane) left Herland 2nd August & arrived Bone after a fine passage of 16 days. The buoy is now 130 fathoms for the reef and in 105 fathoms of water, so that a vessel has plenty of room to get away with any wind. The schooner Gaffer arrived on the 23rd with Mr J. T. Ansdell and 30 Chamen from Cooktown and the cutter Maury a week later with 17 Malaya's. Passengers from Herland to Bone Island were - Mr and Mrs Ellis, Messrs. B. Ellis, Gale, Sunstrom and Muddock; and from Bone to Thursday Island - Mr J. T. Ansdell and Mr Baker.

Ditto 20.9.90. H. N. S. Egeria. From Toya 26 days called at Bone Island where Mr Ansdell's party are collecting guano.

Ansdell visits my island's properties for guano

Burkane Telegraph 3.10.90. From Cooktown Cassin 'Mr Baker, of the Carter, returned from Bone Island, via Thursday Island. The party had landed and erected a camp preparatory to setting in to work the guano deposits. The island is half a mile long by a quarter of a mile wide, covered with grasses, Lequinum shrubs and numerous, and fresh water, though not of a very good quality, was obtained by sinking in two places. There is good fresh water under

one side at one end of the island, but the party did not know its existence. The gravel deposits are even better than the speculations expected. There are several layers of the soluble deposit, and at varying depths. The deepest was found in seeking for water, when at 5 feet a layer was met. Some gravel is in the form of a soft rock, evidently formed by the action of rain water percolating through the layers and liberating carbonic acid gas, thus forming a breccia of sea shells, coral and minerals. This is very soluble as a fertilizer. The island is covered with birds' nests, and so thickly that it is difficult to get about among them as the forest birds manifest a decided objection to get out of one's way. Tables also abound.

29 July 1891 Furnaces 'For the 2 $13\frac{1}{2}$ days at 10 tons a day should be 135 tons. Some of the time we have had very wet stuff which makes a difference - though the last 2 days we have dried rapidly - The above of represents $6\frac{1}{2}$ tons. Must be something wrong as no 2 does nearly half as much again as no. 1. No 3 furnace - began last Thursday.

28 8 91 Bertie's 22nd birthday.

31 8 91. Leneo Bone on Descent Reached Lewis on 2.9.91

17 July 1891 George Ellis leaves for a short trip

(?)
Hyphen and Bone June 1 1892

at reduced wages

Thursday 16. 7 91 Furnace - 2 furnaces run down; too cool in 3 days.
 40 men for work at £6 = £240
 2 1/2 tons coal - say 26 days = 65 tons at 15/- = £50
 2 assistants - 8 + 6 + 10 food = £24 = £314 - say £320
 40 tons for day - 26 days = 1040 - say 1,000 tons - 4/- - 1/9 - 7/- = £350.

Call for G.C. Ellis to send to Brand & Co.

Require 3 extra furnaces for present drives ... to be shipped by safety steamer to Peper Island daylight Thursday Island

Furnaces will burn say 2 1/2 tons per day
 Each furnace say 3 1/2 cut x 12 = 42 cut } 2 1/2 tons
 Engine say 5 cut.

Monday 13. 7 91 and Rose 3 h. a. yesterday. Left Lockton Wednesday

Friday 13. 11. 91
 G.C. Ellis (a George) arrived for Herland via Nulakita on Monday night (13 days for Nulakita)
 Nulakita turning out very bad. Passenger on Ryzo (left Tule)

G.C.E. left Dunroary 1 for Ruchy 19 April 1892 & expected back 20 May

June 25, 1891 Mrs Ellis dies

J. T. Arndel

1851

June 1891

✓ August 24 1890 JTA visits Paine (12th visit?)
End of June 1891 " " "

Book IV Ch. 11 p. 1 staying at Paine.
" " p. 4 Aug 24 at Paine.
" " p. 5 Excerpt from Cook-ton's Council.
" " p. 4. George's receipt (see index)
" " p. 6 Floods of early 90 at Paine.

(from end of June to September Arndel on Paine 1891).

p. 13 Paine Island gives way to Lady Elliot

operations ended in 1892 - Ellis 73

J. T. Arundel and Ponce Island

The name most often associated with Ponce Island, ~~is that of~~
Pacific
John Arundel certainly by historians, is that of John T.
Arundel, whose Pacific Lumber Co. ~~was the one~~
exploited the guano deposits on the island from 1890 to 1892.

Born in 1841 Arundel ~~was~~ ~~appointed~~ joined the staff
of Houlder Brothers, contractors for carrying immigrants to Australia
and New Zealand, who had ~~extensive~~ shipping interests in many
parts of the Pacific. In 1860 the company sent him to the
Chukchi Islands, ostensibly to recover from an illness, and there he
~~became~~ ^{his life} acquired ~~an~~ interest in the guano ~~and~~ industry.

Some of his enthusiasm rubbed off on the Directors of
Houlder Brothers who ^{Arundel} ~~he~~ ~~was~~ ~~reminded~~ that if ~~he~~ could find and exploit noble

to deposits of guano in the Pacific Islands they could develop a lucrative business out of shipping it to Europe and America since a keen demand had developed in the 1860's.

In 1868, Haeffel, ^{sent him} Houlders ~~settled~~ Amundel to go on a prospecting trip to the Pacific Islands and three years later gave their blessing to his returning there to acquire as John T. Amundel and company, to acquire and work guano deposits on Starbuck Island and act as their Pacific agent financed by Houlders and other station business interests to act as their agents in developing the guano business.

From 1870 to 1890 Amundel's company ^{successively} worked the guano deposits on Starbuck, Caroline, Christmas, Flint Sydney, Carter, Enderby, Baker and Howland Islands when all known and available deposits in the Central and Eastern Pacific ^{were} exhausted and Amundel moved his interests to the Queensland off-shore islands.

It was decided to start by working the known deposits on Rouse Island using the European staff then - loading the rest of the shipments from Howland. These consisted of Ansel's cousin George Ellis and his wife Annie, Albert Ellis (his son, known as Bertie) and Maria Gall, Swanton and Murchock, who ~~was~~ sailed on the schooner Maile (Capt. W. S. Lane) leaving Howland on 2 August and arriving at Rouse ^{on 19 August} after a fine passage of 16 days. The Ellis's elder son George arrived later from New Zealand.

Meanwhile Ansel was visiting Melbourne, Sydney, Townsville, Cairns, Cooktown and Thursday ^{and other matters} Island, seeking advice on how to obtain a labour force for Rouse. Hitherto the company had employed Polynesian labourers from Paratoga, near a Hawaii but in this new field he was advised that ~~employment of Chinese~~ ~~and~~ ~~that~~ ~~the~~ ~~island~~ ~~was~~ ~~no~~ ~~longer~~ ~~permitted~~ ~~to~~ ~~be~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~Queensland~~ ~~territory~~ and he was advised to employ Chinese or Malays instead, though Filipinos were considered the best but difficult to obtain.

In the event Ansel decided to book a passage on the Quetta for Java on the hope of procuring a labour force ^{or in Singapore} but ~~eventually~~ ~~he~~ ~~arrived~~ ~~his~~ ~~connection~~: ~~for~~ ~~she~~ ~~struck~~ ~~a~~ ~~reef~~ ~~after~~ ~~passing~~ ~~Thursday~~ ~~Island~~ ~~with~~ ~~only~~ ~~128~~ ~~of~~ ~~her~~ ~~394~~ ~~on~~ ~~board~~ ~~saved~~. ^{as time was running out about the then took} ~~and~~ ~~appointed~~ ~~Bernie~~ ~~Phelp~~ ~~as~~ ~~his~~ ~~agent~~, who had no difficulty in engaging all ^{Chinese} ~~the~~ ~~labour~~ ~~he~~ ~~wanted~~ ^{at Cairns and Cooktown for about} ~~£~~ ~~2.10.0~~ ~~per~~ ~~month~~ with food costing 11/- to 14/-.

Ansel took the first batch of ³⁰ Chinese to Rouse himself on the schooner Guffin (Glasgow Harbinger) arriving on the 23rd, only four days after the Maile, and a week later the cutter Mercury brought 17 Malays: just in time to save the situation for they proved capable boat makers for loading the guano whereas the Chinese disliked the sea and refused to wade in water above the beach, but proved excellent labour on the guano diggings and willing to tackle any job ~~whatsoever~~.

about £6 a month, with food and housing, but all decided as 'very troublesome'.

Arundel was also accompanied by a Mr Baker from the Customs Department in Brisbane who examined the operations ashore for the Government and

The apparent absence of potable water proved an initial difficulty.

Before the Terrace Scott, who had lived for some months in Brisbane in 1879 collecting ^{marine products} Tropicus, found some indifferent water by digging down to 20 feet 'near the cove' but was actually forced to get water for himself and his labor from the mainland. The Ellis party found no better and came to rely on using a 400-gallon tank and a length of galvanized iron as a makeshift condenser fixed by driftwood.

Arundel, however, was accompanied by a Mr Baker from the Customs Department in Brisbane who in the course of ^{inspecting} ~~examining~~ the guano operations was able to point out where there was ^{known to be} 'good basement water under some rocks at one end of the island'. It seems probable that this is the source known as 'Arundel's well' today.

Water proved to be Arundel's problem for another reason, as the early 90's we still resided in Queensland as the years of the big floods went and the incessant rain made the guano too wet for shipment. This was a new problem for as the Pacific atoll deposits were situated in the dry equatorial belt where the occasional sun drying of spread guano after a down was all that was needed.

'Work has been helplessly impeded by excessive rains', reported the Townsville newspaper. 'Heating stoves are now being made for the purpose of drying the guano. The Cleveland Foundry, at work on these, is often night and day passing through the contract'. ~~These first three furnaces, as they were called by Arundel, proved insufficient~~

¹ The 'little plain weather cove on the side of the island' had been killed ^{in part} by ~~designer~~ ^{designer} some years since 1869-73.

~~The island was the site of the 3rd expedition~~

By mid-1891 these 'business', as they were called by Arundell, were working fairly; it was an expensive business as they burnt on an average 2 1/2 tons of coal ^{a day} and required two European crew and up to 40 men to keep the gears moving.

Regular communication with the outside world was maintained by the 10-ton lugger Speedy which Arundell had chartered ^{for the well-known hunter 'Green Harry'} at Cooktown to Raine River Island each week in time to connect with the coastal steamer from ^{southern parts} ~~Tranbarrow~~ ^{near parts} to Thursday at the Pike Island Lightship Island ^{and} to return with the mail and ^{passengers and} ~~any~~ ^{luggage}. The system worked well until the ~~the~~ Speedy was wrecked at Raine Island during a storm when and had to be replaced by ^{acquisition of} ~~two~~ ^{other} small craft, until the 30-ton cutter Lizzie, which ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~sent~~ ^{sent} and departed ^{to} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~west~~ ^{west} ~~ward~~ ^{ward} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~island~~ ^{island} ~~at~~ ^{at} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~end~~ ^{end} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~year~~ ^{year} ~~1891~~ ¹⁸⁹¹.

There was the only wreck at Raine while Arundell's company was there, the absence of an anchorage nearer than five miles away and despite ^{the} fact that the 1,000 - 1,500 ton ships which landed the guano for Europe (or on two occasions to Melbourne) were all sailing vessels. ^{This was probably because} Arundell and George Ellis were experienced at laying moorings after 20 years of the ^{truly} work in the Pacific and had chosen a position sheltered during the prevailing south-east trades.

Arundell only visited Raine Island on two occasions in person: one from the 23rd August to the 5th September 1890 ^{to} inspect the island and discuss the best way to conduct operations with his cousin George, the manager: it was not his custom to interfere with the day to day work on any of his guano islands unless asked to, ^{and was seldom done} ~~and~~ ^{and} George Ellis was a more experienced island manager than he was himself.

The second occasion was ^{on hearing of} ~~due~~ ^{due} to the sudden death of ^{George's wife} ~~George Ellis~~ ^{George's wife} when he ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~at~~ ^{at} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~island~~ ^{island} ~~at~~ ^{at} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~end~~ ^{end} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~year~~ ^{year} ~~1891~~ ¹⁸⁹¹ to enable his cousin to have a break in the workload.

* Green Harry and large craft to visit Cooktown and other mainland ports as well as Pike Island.

(1) (including Batic's elder brother George who had arrived from H. Island in November) (6)

Amund's Diaries were essentially notes jotted down, for his own use, with pages of mathematical calculations, and the extended period of ship's duty due to, long years at islands where work was still in progress and details of services and addresses church activities he had attended for he was a deeply religious man and had the London Mining Society offered to be trained as a missionary in 1872 but was truthfully told that he was doing a more important work for the church as Christian entrepreneur and a model employer of island labor.

The whole Ellis family were devoted ~~to~~ Christians too and as a result there was never any trouble over recruiting or working the islanders who were usually enthusiastic to reengage on the expiration of their contracts, as indeed were the non-Christian Chinese and Malays, the latter in particular greatly preferring the island life to work in the canefields.

Like most visitors, however Amund was fascinated by the local legends and transmitted some of the graffiti which he found inside the tower:

J. H. Robinson Gatter Aug.
etc.

as to some boys with cliff-dwellers still in the low Eastern Pacific

~~With his departure from Borneo in 1891 Amund ceased to have any direct contact with the operations there, but the Ellis family kept the other islands in the Great Barrier Reef and in the Gulf of Carpentaria open for possible deposits; the following year operations on Borneo were closed down with the exhaustion of the remaining commercial deposits and the staff, labor and equipment moved first to Rook Island in the Gulf and then to Lady Elliott Island off Bundaberg and other bars in the Banks and Capricorn Groups.~~

By 1897, with the last of the guano deposits exhausted, the outlook for John T. Amund and company was bleak and it was reconstituted as the Pacific Islands Company to conduct general trading activities in the Gilbert, Ellis and Marshall Groups: just struggling to keep solvent.

the number of members was scaled down for its mission of about 100 and

Then in 1900 with the discovery through the
discovery of the enormous rock phosphate deposits on Rongerik and Ocean
Island by
Albert Ellis, the cleric and youngest of the Ellis team,
Island, though the all was changed overnight, the trading
company became the Pacific Phosphate Company (later the British
Phosphate Commission) and ~~Armed~~ John T. Arundel,
after called in later years the Cecil Rhodes of the
Pacific, died in 1919 ^{aged 78. He was by then} a rich man and as his
friend Lord Leachborne wrote, 'It is by such as he the British Empire
has been built up'.

became immersed in difficulties over clifferton still in the far
Eastern Pacific and

1. (1) ^{and} after his departure from Rongerik in 1891 Arundel
ceased to have any direct contact with the operations ~~there~~ on
Rongerik, though there were other visitors - notably H.M.S.
Egeria and later the Hon. John Douglas, British Resident
at Tamsui Island. The Ellis family, including Albert's
~~eldest~~ elder brother George jun. who had married for Howard
in Rongerik, continued to explore other islands . . .

The Phosphateers

John T Arundel, born 1841 died December 1919 (aged 78)

on leaving school entered the office of Houlder Brothers, a shipping company in London with business interests in the Pacific and which held the contracts for carrying immigrants to Australia and New Zealand.

1860 aged 19 visited Church Islands and articles for Houlder

1868 second trip to Pacific for Houlder

1871 aged 30 set off to Pacific with Houlder's blessing as John T. Arundel and Co

1872 asked LMS to be a missionary.

Platz counter;
digging guano, shipping box used to San Francisco, pearl-shell to Esape & Johnson, beads etc
shd-fur and shd-teeth swords and amulets to ^{Waini} ^{in Gilbert, Ellis & Sandells}

1897 Arundel's London-based company acquired additional interests & was reconstituted the Pacific Islands Company with Lord Strathairn as Chairman JTA as Vice-Chairman & Fuller, Dunster & Ellis as Australian Representatives.

Successively worked deposits on Starbuck, Caroline, Christmas, Fanning, Flint, Sydney, Carter, Erdelung, Bala and Howland.

with Howland being deposits of guano in Carter & central Pacific were exhausted and operations were opened off Queensland coast: Bruce Island, Rocky Island (off of Longstone), Lady Elliott, Banks and North West Islands off S. Queensland coast

Nov 1900 - first shipment from Banks 1907 from Howland.

Beacon erected by H M S Fly

Ellis, Administration in Coral Seas

P. 62 - Sailed from Howland in the three-masted schooner Maule (Capt. William Lane). Party numbered 5 - his father in charge + mother. Loaded with most of the island equipment (tools, camp beds, mousing buoys etc.) + personal effects.

(66) When in Raine visited by H. S. Egeria

(66) Difficulty in finding exchange and money

(66) 4 day or two after arrival a schooner came with Amundsen, 5 more mules of the stuff and the first batch of loban. The two vessels had met on time.

(66-67) 9-10 Encephala and about 100 Arctic loban explored.

(67) Rain and one rain - attempt at artificial drying of the phosphate guano made. Experimented but fruitless.

(67) water in fuel, and 400 gallon tank used as boiler + 100 gallons of glycerized tallow to condense the steam. Draft logs for forward.

(75) about 60 Chinese and a few Malays had been engaged at Howland. Malays proved good at boat work (though not as good as islanders) - Chinese as land workers.

(96) Amundsen apparently on a later visit to Raine returned back on the 10-ton lugger Speedy (Bill the Boozer) which went from Raine to the Peper Island Lightship each week to meet the coastal steamer to take delivery of mails and some cargo.

(67) visit by Mrs Douglas, Br. Resident at Thursday Island

Ellis, contd

- (98) Vessels loaded were 1,000-1,500 tons. Skips to west to Ennise except 2 engines for Melbourne (the first supplied by the company for making into superphosphate base).
- (101) 30-ton cutter Lizzie owned & sailed by Geom Henry Clark ~~to~~ in latter part of 1890 to run between Raine and the mainland (usually Cocktown).
- (102) 'Late in 1891' I had visited Cocktown and was returning to Raine Island in the Lizzie. Amund had arranged for the s.s. Quivering to give us a tow...
- (104) Early in 1892 'my brother George' and I went to get ready for operations on Rocky Island.
- (124) In an average the islands off Australia took 2 years each to work out.

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- (1) Raine now stocked with cheese & malsays & under Mr Ellis's management houses were built and game making going ahead. Amund on mainland arranged for mails & stores & a regular service of boats. Gt Fleet in charge at Howland.
- (4) August [1890] - visited Sydney, Melbourne, Newcastle & Brisbane (by train) followed by Townsville, Cairns and Cocktown (by boat). Fine church labour engaged ending in a visit to Raine reached after a difficult passage.
(Quitting re arrival at Raine on 24 August.
Mr Ellis advised Cocktown newspaper says now a complete village on Raine.
Amund arrived on Griffin and found Naoki waiting

(5) Excerpt from the Cook-Town Courier (no date given)

(6) Townsville paper (no date) states 'work has been hopelessly impeded by excessive rains' (the early 90s are recorded in Queensland as the years of the big floods) 'Heating chambers are now being made for the purpose of drying the guano. The Cleveland Foundry, at work on these, is open night and day, passing through the contract'.

The end of June 1891 found Arundel at Raine again relieving his friend after the sudden death of Mr^r Ellis. For 2 months he took charge: surveys grass fields, settling disputes among European staff, measuring floors for these houses.
- phenomenal rains.

By end of September back in mainland.