

LE HUNTE: CRUISE IN HMS 'ESPEIGLE'.

J.R. Le Hunte, Special Judicial Commissioner, report of cruise in HMS 'Espeigle', dated Sydney 10th Oct., 1883.

"3. We anchored off Sophia Island (Niurakita) on the 26th. Captain Bridge and I went ashore in a small canoe (the only one on the island) which came off to us: there is no landing place for boats, and that for canoes is by no means a safe one in anything but the calmest weather. No man-of-war has, as far as is known visited the place before the German man-of-war 'Habicht' passed here in May 1881, but did not communicate. The only people at present on the island were a Native Minister, and a man from Waitupu Island, with their respective families: amounting in all to ten persons.

The Waitupuan represented the 'Company' which had been started by a Mr Williams, at one time resident at Waitupu, for the purpose of trading: one of their operations being the cultivation of this small island which seems to have been unoccupied. We were informed that some of the Waitupu natives had been at work here but had returned to their island, and that some more were expected shortly in a small schooner called the 'Waitupu Lemery' (Le Mele) which belonged to the Company. Their representation here seemed to have great confidence in Williams, how well founded may be guessed from what I shall mention when I come to speak of Waitupu. He shewed us with some pride a flag which Williams had hoisted, and which had to us the appearance of some relic of Masonic paraphernalia. This island is low and flat, at the most about one mile long by three fourths of a mile wide, oval in shape, with an abrupt shore reef, broad steep sandy beach, and a thick belt of scrub surrounding the interior bush; the whole area, inclusive of the beach and scrub, may be roughly estimated at five hundred acres - only a very small portion of which is at present planted with some young cocoanuts and a few bananas. The only full grown cocconut tree we could discover was one very tall one, which is the most conspicuous object in the island. The 'numerous dead cocconut trees' mentioned in the report of the 'Habicht's' cruise are not palms but large branching trees. There are no food producing trees or plants except such as have been planted by the 'Company', and this is but little. There is no water supply except the rain fall, which from the appearance of the soil and vegetation, is probably not great. Great numbers of sea birds breed here, and the people we saw were curing their flesh (as well as that of turtle and fish) by drying it in the sun and smoking it, which may indicate that there are seasons when fresh food is not procurable.

The difficulties of communication which, sufficiently great in themselves, must be largely increased in the case of shipment of produce, must be most serious obstacles to the success of the speculation as a business venture; while the additional facts of there being no ~~fixed~~ permanent supply of fresh water or food, raised a considerable doubt in my mind as to the

propriety of employing native labourers there at all - in fact as will be seen further on it is probable that no more will come, and were there no reason to suppose that the London Missionary Society are likely to send a vessel to visit their teacher there, I should say that the chance of the present residents there ever getting away again are extremely small. It is however possible that the Waitupuans may eventually colonise it and occupy it permanently.

4. We arrived on Sunday 27th May at Nukulailai - the first of the atolls - comprising several narrow, cocoonut covered islands forming a circular figure more or less regular, enclosing a deep water lagoon several miles in length with a proportionate breadth, There being no passage, the ship anchored ~~off~~ on a bank off the northern end of the island. The Captain and I were taken on shore in a canoe by the 'King's' son Timothy Tin, a very intelligent young man, who though he had never been away from the island spoke English very fairly. Landing on the outer reef we carried our canoe across to the lagoon and proceeded to the village some few miles distant. We visited the resident Minister, ~~as~~ a Samoan, and the 'King', as the Chief is generally called amongst these islands. His title is however the only attribute of power he possesses, his actual authority not being as great as the chief of a village in any district in Fiji. The executive Government is vested in a body called the 'Kau-Pulu', which elects its own members, and makes and enforces laws for the Government of the whole community, penalties being fines of articles of native produce or manufacture. The population of this island is now only 140, it being one of those depopulated by the Peruvian vessels which kidnapped the greater portion of the inhabitants of the Ellice Group in 1865. As many as 250 were stated to us to have been taken from this island alone, none of whom - as we found later to be the case elsewhere - had been returned. There is reason to believe from other accounts, that owing to the mortality on board the ships very few arrived at the country where they were destined to be enslaved. The numbers of the population are now however increasing, and the proportion of children we saw gives hope that, if they be spared the infliction of an epidemic disease, these islands may become as thickly populated as before. The Ellice islanders may be described as perfectly quiet and inoffensive, their religious authorities appear to me to be excessively strict in the ordinances which they impose on them. They are related to the Samoans and speak the same language. The exports of all these atolls is naturally mainly copra, with a little sharks fins, tortoise shell, etc. Almost the only trees besides the cocoonuts being pandanus ~~fruit~~, of which there are several kinds, and either bread fruit, or jack fruit, pandanus fruit forms their principal food, they have various methods of preparing it and also of preserving it for use on their voyages, they cultivate sometimes with great labour, various kinds of taro. The water supply is, as a rule, bad and their ordinary drink is cocoonut. 'Toddy' is not so often drunk fermented as formerly, the Kau-Pulu at the

instigation of the missionaries having wisely prohibited its use. There seems to be so few diseases, the climate being dry and healthy. 'The Tokelau-ringworm' is universal. There were no British subjects residing at Nukulailai, but a German trader (Schwanke) has a station at the south end of the largest island which was leased to him for a term of years, and is now the subject of a dispute with the natives who claim that the lease has expired.

We sailed the same evening for Funafuti.

5. We anchored inside the lagoon at Funafuti - another large atoll - on 28th May. The population of this island is at present 174 (of whom a large proportion were children). 300 were stated to have been kidnapped from here by the Peruvian ships. The population reside in one village under the same form of Government as at Nukulailai. There is a remarkably fine Church here, and a resident Samoan Minister - as usual the most important person on the island. There is one native member of the Roman Catholic religion who complains that he is subjected to penalties, which threaten to extend to the seizure of his land, for not attending the Protestant Church. There were two or three traders whose names will be found in the tabulated statement attached, for which I am indebted to the courtesy of Captain Bridge who is sending in a separate report to the Commodore. We found the traders for a large Auckland firm on several islands completely destitute of stores, and even the necessaries of life; the vessels that should have supplied them being many months overdue. Captain Bridge relieved them to the best of his ability, but owing to the great length of the cruise in front of us, that was necessarily but of small assistance to them. One result of their being left in this distress is sometimes, that they are obliged to part with the produce they have collected for their own firm, to a rival one, in order to procure necessary supplies, thereby obtaining a character for fraudulent practices which is not always deserved. A matter was brought to my notice which may not improbably be the cause of difficulty in the future. Many of the traders are living with - and some are married to - native women of the islands ~~the~~ thereby obtaining the usufruct of lands belonging to her as a member of the tribe. Being subject to the local regulations of the Government of the island, fines have in some cases been imposed on these traders for breaches of the laws, and confiscation of the woman's lands have been threatened. In other cases the traders having got into the debt of his employers they have sought to take these lands in satisfaction, and in one case a foreign firm has seized those of the wife of a bankrupt trader the seizure being strongly resented by the tribe to which they belong. In order to avoid this event, the trader has, in one case at any rate to my knowledge, had the lands conveyed by so called 'deed' to the children of the intercourse, or marriage: and considers them now permanently secured to his family. It was admitted that in no case does the power to alienate land from the tribe exist in these islands. Having my instructions from Your Excellency in view,

I refrained from giving my opinion or making any special inquiries into these matters when brought to my notice by the parties interested; but I think it may be useful to report them, in case questions may arise in the future, when they may help in arriving at a solution of the manner in which these purchases originally came about. We found the traders, generally throughout these islands, on good terms with the natives, but in many cases, for various reasons, on sad ones with the Missionary teachers.

6. We anchored at Waitupu on 30th May, landing in a canoe through the surf. There is only one village, a large one with another very large Church. We visited the 'King' and the resident Minister (of the London mission), a very dignified intelligent Samoan. An elderly man with courteous address. From information we received the case of the 'Waitupu Company' and Williams seems to be this. Williams the son of the late British Consul in Samoa, was trading in 1880 at Waitupu as Agent for the German Samoan firm of Messrs. Ruge and Co., from whom he received a large amount of trade goods to be used in purchasing copra etc for them. He then induced one hundred natives of Waitupu to form themselves into a trading Company, and distributed a large quantity of goods amongst them. One of the arrangements was that the number of one hundred should be maintained and if one member died his place was filled by a new one. Thirty members at one time expressed their desire to withdraw but Williams though at times acquiescing subsequently informed them that having once entered into the Company they could not divest themselves of the responsibility they had incurred. He then induced the Company to order from Messrs. Ruge and Co. the schooner of which I have spoken, of 21 tons, which was to cruise about and collect copra amongst the islands. In due course the schooner arrived and was named the 'Waitupu Lemery' (Le Mele) (the meaning of which I did not discover) (Marginal Note: I noticed her name yesterday in the Fiji 'Times' of the 3rd November as having left Levuka for Samoa - 7.11.53). He further brought about the acquisition of Sophia Island, one condition being that one half of it was to be reserved for him. Having asserted that he was the English Consul, he presented the Company with a flag (a blue cross on a white ground with a dove in one corner) which he declared to be the English flag, and which would entitle them to recognition, and therefore I presume to protection, as a British Company. In spite of advice they hoisted this and continued under the impression that what had been represented to them was true, until the Captain of the Mission Vessel 'John Williams' (named after their promoter's grandfather) shewed them an English ensign, and they then discovered that they had been duped. Messrs. Ruge then appear to have pressed Williams, who had moved to Funafuti (where we found his house, a good one, and comparatively speaking expensively furnished, now in the hands of his creditors) for the money which he should have accounted for as the value of the trade he had disposed of, and the price of the vessel. There does not seem to have been any actual rebellious opposition to the King of Waitupu but when he tried to dissuade some of his Kau-puli, who

had joined the Company, from rushing blindly into debt, they were prevailed to listen to Williams and not to him. It is not clear to me what part the resident Samoan Minister took, but having regard to the fact that they are practically omnipotent, I think that there can be little doubt that if they did not support Williams, they did not discountenance his proceedings at this time, although he subsequently appears to have ~~induced eight of them~~ quarrelled with them. Williams then appears to have induced eight of them to sign an agreement by which the 'Company' has undertaken to pay Messrs. Ruge the whole amount of their claims between \$13,000 and \$14,000 within three years: a task which, from what we could learn, is impossible for them to accomplish; eight years being the shortest time within which it was estimated it would be feasible. In default of payment their creditors threaten to seize their lands, which it is not by any means improbable to think Williams gave Messrs. Ruge & Co. to look to as their ultimate security. He himself appears to have become a bankrupt, and having handed everything, including the Company, over to Messrs. Ruge and Co. left the islands, and is now said to be in the New Hebrides or Solomon Islands in charge of some property belonging to some of his relations. We were informed that he had attempted to get up similar 'Companies' on other islands of the Group; but the natives being fore-warned, his attempt was foiled. He is described as of very persuasive address. I cannot say whether he acted in this manner on his own account, or throughout as the Agent of Messrs. Ruge & Co. The only use the Company have had of the schooner, which they say they were never anxious to buy and which is utterly useless to them, is having sent her three times to Sophia Island with twenty or thirty of their number to commence cultivation there. She remains at present in the hands of Messrs. Ruge and Co. pending the completion of her purchase, the Company having already paid \$3,000 on her account are debited with \$6,900 more for the balance of her price and the cost of her maintenance, (although she is employed by Messrs Ruge & Co. collecting copra amongst the neighbouring islands for their own benefit). Messrs. Ruge & Co. have offered to take her off the Company's hands and strike off the amount of \$3,000 from their claim which also includes a sum of \$6,000 for the goods which Williams distributed amongst them, for which they seem to have thought they would not be called upon to pay. In the event of the schooner being taken back the balance of the debt still remaining claimed will be about \$6,000, representing an amount of some 223 tons of copra calculated at the average rate of 2 cents per lb.: ~~the~~ the whole annual export of the island is estimated at less than 45 tons and the whole population at 430, of whom a large proportion are children. The natives seemed to be very apprehensive as to the seizure of their lands, but as the matter concerned a foreign firm, we could give them no ~~special~~ counsel. I have reported this at length, as Your Excellency has already received information as to the existence of the company, and of Williams connection with Sophia Island.

I have stated the whole matter as we received it, and have added nothing to that. Two labour vessels from Fiji - the 'Patience' Captain Plaice, and a schooner sailed by a Mr Moore (of the firm Peats Bros. & Moore) called here this year but obtained no labour.

Gilbert Islands - Arorai 7. We arrived at Arorai on the morning of the 3rd June. Not finding any anchorage Captain Bridge kept the ship under weigh while he and I went ashore, landing not without some difficulty on the outer reef, there being no lagoon or boat passage. Being Sunday the strict rules as to Sabbath keeping did not permit any canoes to come off to us, but we were met on landing by two old men who conducted us to the village - there are three on the island containing a total population of 1,200. They were remarkably well kept, a ~~fine~~ fine broad road connecting them planted the whole way along with young jack fruit and other useful trees. This, as well as several other improvements, is due to the energetic influence of the resident Samoan minister (Samuela) a pleasant intelligent man. We found amongst other things at his place a good saw-pit and workshops where he is training some of the natives in practical carpentering and housebuilding: an example which one cannot help wishing was ~~generally~~ followed generally elsewhere.

8. We found the trader Mr McKenzie, of respectable Scotch family, on very good terms with both the Minister and the natives. He made two complaints to Captain Bridge - one, to the effect that the Kau-Puli (there being no 'King' of this island, each village has a separate and independant Kau-Puli, these confederated enact the laws of General application to the whole community) subjected him to their Sabbath-keeping regulations, and would not permit him the use of a canoe to go on board any vessel that might call there on Sunday. The second complaint was not so much on his own account as on that of a former trader here - this was to the effect that the Kau-Puli had made a law regulating the price of Copra, and had prescribed penalties ~~off~~ for the sale of any below the 'Statutory' price. He requested the Captain's assistance, and quoted similar cases where the intervention of the Officer Commanding a man-of-war had been successfully obtained. Captian Bridge replied that so long as there was no damage wrongfully done to the persons or property of British subjects, who of their own accord resided in these islands, he did not see that there were grounds for interference on his part, with the internal laws of a community who possessed a body competent to legislate for their welfare and capable of carrying their laws into effect; and secondly that in no case would he feel justified, without grave cause, in taking action where a trade transaction formed the subject matter of dispute. He however recommended the Kau-Puli to use a certain amount of discrimination as to vessels which might call on a Sunday, for these might be in want of necessaries of many kinds, and without the assistance of the natives might be unable even to land. In order to shew them that Sunday was as much respected at sea as on

shore he ~~is~~ invited them to come on board his ship, which the Minister at once, and the Kau-Puli eventually accepted.

9. Before re-embarking the Kau-Puli requested us to visit their Council House again for the purpose of hearing a complaint which they wished to make respecting the taking away to Fiji of a married woman about a year ago by Mr Moore, whom I have mentioned, then sailing a cutter the 'rose'. The statement of Jiringa - alias 'Bob' - who had been 4½ years in Fiji is attached. This was corroborated by others. They spoke badly of Moore and very well of Captain Plaice - both had called here this year the former in the 'Minnie Hare'; the latter in the 'Patience' which obtained ten recruits. I informed them that their complaint should be reported to Your Excellency.

10. We landed at Nukunau Island on the 4th June but did not anchor. The natives were more numerous and rougher than those in the Southern islands. Their villages and houses are very inferior to those. The traces of Samoan origin or admixture disappear rapidly as we get further North. One of the resident teachers was, like many throughout the Gilbert Group, a native of the Ellice Islands educated in Samoa. There are six villages forming a confederation, the population is 1618 of whom about 1,000 are Christians. About 20 had gone to Fiji this year in two labour vessels (? 'Minnie Hare' and 'Patience'). We found an American schooner 'Annie Briggs' (Kestel & Co of Samoa) lying at anchor off the Southern end of the island and the trader who resided there came on board. He was Mr Meader, at one time residing with a partner Mr Fox at Korotoga near the mouth of the Sigatoka river in Viti Levu, where they acquired an unenviable reputation. He had a similar complaint to make about the Sunday observance law but the Captain informed him, for the same reasons he had given to Mr McKenzie, that he could not interfere, and moreover as he was not a British subject he could not properly entertain his case.

11. We anchored off Peru Island on the morning of the 5th June. This is an atoll island comprising three confederated districts - Population 2,675 all Christians living in eight villages. About 250 were away at work in Hawaii, Tahiti and Fiji. Three Fiji vessels had called here this year. The 'Midge' recruited 38. The 'Minnie Hare' 7. 'Patience' ~~now~~ none. Fiji appears to bear a good and increasingly better name amongst these islands, the ameliorated condition of the labourers there in recent years being specially mentioned. The average wages earned by the natives of Peru ~~and Hawaii~~ at Hawaii I was informed is \$6 per month, at Tahiti \$8, and as local labour making copra at the stations of the traders, two shillings per diem. The average annual export of copra is about 80 tons.

12. The principal object in calling here was (in accordance with Captain Bridge's instructions) to make enquiry into the case of the plundering of the wreck of the 'Orwell' schooner

belonging to Messrs Henderson and Macfarlane of Auckland, to obtain the restitution of whatever missing property could be discovered in the possession of the islanders, and to inflict on them a fine or such other punishment as might on enquiry appear expedient. Messrs Henderson and Macfarlane were represented here by a Mr Volliero, an Austrian, formerly trading at Bega and NaVua in Viti Levu, and a Mr Prout an Englishman, formerly resident in Tahiti and New Zealand. At Captain Bridge's invitation I accompanied him to the village where the wreck was plundered, and I was glad to be of any use to him on this as on any other occasion. After a short time the Kau-Puli of the district being assembled in their Council House we proceeded there, and by means of the interpretation of Mr Volliero and the resident teacher - a young intelligent man from Nui in the Ellice Group, the Captain investigated the circumstances attending the wreck and her subsequent pillages. As this forms the subject of a special report from him to the Commodore I have not deemed it necessary to detail the proceedings; it will be sufficient to say that the result of the investigation were.

(1) That the master and crew were to some extent to blame for having virtually abandoned their vessel and cargo in the way they did ~~and~~, although it appeared that they did not intend to do so actually.

(2) That the natives were offered a reward if they would save the cargo and were cautioned against plundering, but that nevertheless they did pillage her, and that the other districts in the island shared equally with this one in the transaction, and must consequently be held equally responsible.

(3) That the original claim made by Messrs. Henderson and Macfarlane £1,587.11.0 was excessive - comprising as it did the full value of the cargo much of which was destroyed by the sea when the vessel was wrecked and therefore should not have been charged against the natives. Further that much had never been stolen at all, but was saved from the wreck; and lastly that a considerable portion of what had been taken by the natives had subsequently been restored. Captain Bridge finally decided that all the ~~of~~ districts should pay to the British Government a fine which, while sufficient to act as a punishment for the present, and a deterrent for the future, would not be excessive or impoverish their trade. The amount was fixed at 600 bags of copra, equivalent to 30 tons, to be paid within three years. The value of this amount calculated at a price of £15 per ton in New Zealand may be taken as the equivalent of the amount of compensation Messrs Henderson and Macfarlane claim (when reduced by inspection) was in our opinion equitably entitled to receive. The Kau-Puli were at first inclined to reject the decision on the ground that her pillage was only in accordance with their own usages and custom in the case of abandoned/ vessels. They eventually however decided not to risk the consequences of a refusal - which they were left to imagine no threat or intimation of what might happen being given

on the one hand or any promise being made on the other of any mitigation, though it is our hope that should they faithfully perform the greater part of their undertaking, Her Majesty's Government may think fit to remit the remainder. ¶ An agreement was accordingly then made out in English and their own language, by which they bound themselves and the other districts to pay the above amount, which Captain Bridge directed (in default of any other possible means) to be received by Messrs Henderson and Macfarlane who were to account for it to the Commodore of the station - the question of their receiving any compensation being left for future decision by the proper authorities. I may state that our opinions coincided as to it being preferable to impose a fine to be paid to the British Government instead of an indemnity or compensation to be paid to the claimant in such cases, on this point I shall have occasion to speak more fully further on.

Taputouea (Drummond Island). 13. We anchored outside the lagoon on the 6th June. This is a very long and very remarkable chain of islets running for a ~~of~~ distance of nearly 30 miles in a Northwesterly line with a long lagoon on the West or lee sides. There are eight principal villages with a total population of between four and five thousand, having independent confederated Governments such as I have described. I may remark here that in the Ellice Islands, the Kau-Puli are mostly taken from the younger men of the tribe - they are the 'ovisa-ni-koro' or the village 'police', and the fines which they impose ~~and distributed amongst~~ are distributed amongst them. I am led to doubt whether this was their original or natural form of Government and to think that it was an introduction of the Native Missionaries who found that the younger men were more ready to enforce new laws on the community than the older ones - especially as they reaped the direct benefit of the penalties. This view is not inconsistent with the fact that at Arorai, the Kau-Puli was composed entirely of old men no young person being admitted as a member of it; that at Peru island the present 'Police' Government, to borrow the term by which it is properly called, had but recently supplanted the old Government which was composed of a body of elders who were landholders - this is called the 'Maniap'; and lastly that at Taputouea, the 'Police system' was only introduced a short time ago after the arrival of the Hawaiian missionaries; and, after one trial, as soon as these teachers had departed, had been rejected by the entire community, who dismissing the young 'Police', resorted to their older 'Maniap' Governments. The Northern and Southern portions of the island were formerly at enmity - a fact of which the two Hawaiian Missionaries Larline, and his less ~~culpable~~ culpable brother Kapua, took most iniquitous advantage, leading the North on a religious crusade against the South, massacring, in some cases with gross atrocities, a number of both sexes, estimated in all at 1,500 persons. A journal which was kept at the time was placed in my hands giving an account of what took place and I found no reason to ~~don~~ doubt the facts there stated. Your

Excellency will doubtless recollect the account of this outrage having been published in a London daily paper, in July 1881, as having taken place in Fiji. The society (The American Board of Missions) withdrew these two men, and have not yet replaced them. I believe however that they intend to send others there this year.

14. On account of the seizure, at the time of this ~~crusade~~ crusade, by the natives at the instigation Lalime of some ~~Yakha~~ 'arms' (which turned out on enquiry to be one revolver), and injury to some other property, belonging to a British subject, Mr Garstang, a trader here, (the arms of another trader, a German, having also been forcibly taken from him at the same time) Captain Maxwell, R.N., who visited this island in H.M.S. 'Emerald' in May 1881, imposed a penalty of 5,000 coconuts - somewhat less than a ton of copra - to be paid as compensation to Mr Garstang, by the whole island. Mr Garstang having however received only one payment of 500 nuts from the village where he resides now applied to Captain Bridge to enforce Captain Maxwell's decision. I will not here again detail our proceedings, it is enough to say that we interviewed the 'Maniapas' of the two principal villages and after considerable difficulty, the negotiations occupying two days, they paid the remainder of the indemnity. It is only fair to Mr Garstang to say that he was as anxious as the Captain was to avoid the use of any force - which fortunately was unnecessary. I say most fortunately, for it cannot be doubted that many of the natives regarded the original order as an unfair one, as being of General application it confounded the innocent with those who had taken part in the affair, the districts and tribes being as I have said ~~distinct~~ distinct; and in their case especially, those who were not concerned would feel the order to contribute the more grievous, as the acts for which they were being furnished were those of their enemies. Captain Bridge's action was necessarily limited to enforcing the payment of the indemnity in accordance with the original decision, and it was only the considerate measures he adopted in the performance of this duty that avoided a result which must have been deplored. I do not presume to convey any reflection on the decision of Captain Maxwell, (whom I have the honour to know - and therefore the more - to respect); and I have no doubt that he acted in the only way he could on the information he obtained; but I feel that the greatest care should be taken in making investigations (the difficulties of which are I am aware enhanced by want of reliable interpretation - shortness of time, and impossibility of delay) to discover the actual parties concerned in such a case; and in imposing a general penalty, to see that those punished have shared in the responsibility for the commission of the offence.

15. A few of the Taputouea natives go to labour in Fiji and speak well of it. They were said to dislike Hawai as so many of them have died there. Nor do they speak well of Samoa. The Hawaiian labour vessel 'Julia' called here in February last but obtained no labourers. The natives and traders informed me that in ~~November~~

November 1879, the French labour vessel ~~Buffalo~~ 'Buffon' took away several natives, who recruited as they were led to believe to go to Tahiti, to New ~~Caledonia~~ Caledonia from which none have yet returned. I was only informed of this just before returning to the ship so I was only able to obtain the names of a few from the place I was then at. (Marginal Note: Titibua, wife Tebonaki; Tanakua - wife - Tanameatu; Tarime). I informed them that I would report the case to Your Excellency but could give them no promise of what could be done for them in the matter. Another French vessel the 'Venus', Captain Champion, called here in January 1880 without getting any labour.

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16. I was informed here of the recent murder by the natives of Pleasant Island (lying about 460 miles West of Taputouea) of an Englishman called Mitchell, who had at one time served in the Royal Navy. From inquiries I learnt that this man bore a bad character, and that he had met his death when taking part in a native fight, being then under the influence of liquor. He had been resident there for many years and is said to have in possession at the time of his death of a considerable amount of Gold, which is supposed to have been appropriated by another trader there, not a British subject, who has since left the Islands. Our time being limited the nature of these circumstances did not call specially for a change in the route which the Captain had laid out, and which did not pass anywhere near Pleasant Island. X The Pleasant Islanders, and more especially the women, were described to us as the finest in this part of the Pacific, and their island as exceptionally rich in native food and produce. These attractions have made it a favourite place of call, and drawn there men of various nationalities, of the worst character. The natives freely indulged in liquor and encouraged in every vice, and said to be fast decreasing. A Solomon islander, if I remember right, whom I met subsequently, and who had been a servant of Mitchell's at the time he was killed, stated that the place had become 'too hot for Englishman to go there now'; from which its condition may be inferred to be bad indeed. We sailed on the 7th for Apamama.

Apamama. 17. We called of Apamama Island on the morning of the 8th June and were boarded by the resident Minister, a native of Makin Island. The population is about 3,000 - all christian, Governed by a King, Pinoka, who is by no means a nonentity. He does not allow a trader to reside on A pamama, retaining the trade of the island in his own hands. He possesses a schooner and a well furnished house. A few years ago he successfully put down a rebellion and executed several of the ringleaders, he was described to me as of enormous size being too unwieldy to walk. Finding that he was away at another island (Kurua) which as well as that of Aranuka - both in the vicinity of Apamama - forms part of his dominion, and that there was no European residing here, we did not land; the distance to the shore across the lagoon being too great, and our time being too short to admit of unnecessary delay. Some of the natives here are at work in Fiji.

Three labour vessels from Fiji and one from Hawai, were stated to have called here this year, but no labour was obtained.

Maraki. 18. We arrived at Maraki on the afternoon of the 9th June, and finding no anchorage landed for a short time. This island is a small and probably the most perfect atoll existing - the interior lagoon, a beautiful piece of water some three miles long by one and a half wide, being enclosed by a wooded belt unbroken save for a small boat passage. The natives were on the whole the finest and best looking people we saw on our cruise. The Government is vested in a tribune of elders, but a young lad was pointed out to us as the Chief personage on the island, and we were informed that his father, although not King, had occupied that position before him. The population is about 1,900 of whom 228 are Christians. They were at war with the neighbouring large island of Apaiang; and from what we could make out it seemed that some of their own people had gone over to Apaiang to bring an armed party against the others with whom they had some internal dispute. They were expecting to be attacked at any moment and had their canoes carefully housed on shore.

We visited the resident Missionary, a pleasant mannered Hawaiian, and the only Englishman on the Island, a Mr Byron, who has resided here for a great number of years. He had some complaint to make to the Captain about the wreck of the 'Welcome Home' lost in these islands in June 1877; but he was, to speak plainly, so drunk, that Captain Bridge was unable to find out from him what the particulars of his grievance were. There were two other traders on the island whom we did not see. Several of the natives were at work in Hawaii, Tahiti, Samea, and Fiji, nine had gone this year.

Makini. 19. We arrived at Makini on the 10th June; and again failed to find an anchorage. On landing we found that the 'King' and most of the people had just left for Butaritari, to which this island is tributary. We found a Chinese trader here who had been in Fiji and possessed a certificate of naturalization in that Colony. His name is Ah-Tai. We did not find out the population."

Marshall Islands. Mille. Mr Giles Williams (American) trades for a German firm. Pop. 1,300 - all Christian - no longer have firearms and showed no desire to ~~have them~~ obtain them. None away though some have been to Fiji.

Arno Atoll. Pop. 2 - 3,000. War between the two chiefs of the island had been going on for 4 years - traders complain - bad for trade.

"It is the opinion of several of those we saw that the temporary gain on the sale of arms and ammunition - at a high price - is more than counterbalanced by the ultimate damage to the copra trade. I am inclined to think that the traders for the German firms are not generally of this opinion, for preferring to make large profits

from the demand for arms at the time. I obtained the following list of prices for arms here.

Snider Rifles	£4
Remington	£15
Martini Henry	£20
Winchester	£20
Cartridges - 10 -	\$1
Caps - 100 -	\$1

The amount of copra which the above prices represent to the natives may be calculated at from 1 to 1½ cents per lb., the trader receiving from 2 to 3 cents per lb. from his principal. The average sale of rifles during the war was stated to be in this ~~island~~ island about thirty per annum." Islanders involved in considerable amount of debt to German firms for purchase of arms. Mr Carr, who is Henderson and Macfarlane's agent for this part of the Pacific, who lives at Majuro, and a very respectable and well educated young Englishman, was anxious to stop trade but could not fairly prevent his traders from dealing as long as those of rival firms continued to do so. Thus an official order of prohibition was considered essential.

Capt. Bridge makes peace between King David and Tajurak.

Majuro. H & M's head station. Several Europeans and natives employed from various parts of the Pacific, including 2 Fijians from Ovalau. Both away on 'Mazeppa', gone to Auckland for supplies. Pop. 1,500. Mr Reid one of Carr's traders, acted as interpreter. War there also but Bridge made peace.

Jaluit. H'q of 2 German firms, HERNSHEIM & Co. and ~~Appelle~~ Capelle & Co (now practically absorbed by the German Sudsee Co. of Samoa). Both stations large and good. 2 public houses, 1 kept by a German, Saunders, the other by a negro, Thomas Tilton, both well patronized by trading vessels and natives.

Mr Weiman, ag. German Consular Agent (partner of Capt. HERNSHEIM, the Consular Agent) and Capelle, American Consular Agent, with whom Mr Pfeffer, manager of Sudsee Co. was staying.

Greenwich Island. George Barrows, who traded in the Carolines on his own account, went to reside on Greenwich with his half-caste Samoan wife and 2 natives of Nanouti. Beginning of 1880 Barrows murdered (and also the 2 from Nanouti) by John Rees, a Welshman trading for Capelle & Co. (or by Greenwich islanders at his instigation). Wife, property and trade taken by Rees who left on 'Beatrice'. Details given to Romilly at Matupi.

Nukuor. "We found a very intelligent trader here called Savai, a native of Nukufetau, (Ellice Group) who spoke English well. Transpired that Rees murdered Nonouti natives and islanders

murdered Barrows. He was seized and held under water until drowned.

Native name of Greenwich Island Kapinga-marangi.

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Captain Bridge's Report was published under the title of:-

"Cruise of H.M.S. 'Espiegle', April 24 - October 3, 1883.
Report on certain groups of Islands visited. Report on
Islands of the Ellice, Gilbert (or Kingsmill), Marshall,
Caroline, and Pelew Groups, visited by H.M.S. 'Espiegle',
in May, June, July, and August, 1883".

Pp.1-6 refer to the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, as well as the
table on p.15.

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The table listing population, exports, trades, etc. for each
Island annexed to Bridge's report is the same as the
manuscript table which precedes Le Hunte's - in fact
a comparison shows it is rather more detailed.

AH SAM: MURDER OF ON BUTARITARI 1884

In addition to the correspondence re the charging of Arthur Eury ~~by~~ with the death of Ah Sam to shield relations of the King, there is much further correspondence in HC file 84.15 which contains a letter from Commodore Erskine to the HC dated the 17th January, 1884 and numerous enclosures.

From these it appears that On Chong and Uh Chong of, 223 George Street, Sydney, were in charge of the firm at headquarters.

Also that Randolph was t~~r~~ading in the Gilberts then and went down to Sydney in the On Chong ship 'George Noble' (Capt. Frederick Evers).

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