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THE LAGOON ISLANDS
A HISTORY OF TUVALU 1820-1908

by
Doug Munro

Presented in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

School of History, Philosophy and Politics
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY
November 1982
In memory of

LAUSAVESE SEVE and FAALO LAIPE
ON the western margin of Triangle Polynesia just south of the equator lies a group of nine small islands called Tuvalu (formerly the Ellice Islands). The archipelago trends for 366 nautical miles on an irregular northwest-southwest axis within the area defined by latitudes 5°39'S and 10°45'S and longitudes 176°08'E and 179°52'E (see Maps 1:1, 1:3 & 9:1). The word Tuvalu is a compound term which can be freely translated as "the cluster of eight", so named because the tiny southernmost island of Niulakita was not considered part of the group in traditional times. The other islands, proceeding northwards are Nukulaelae, Funafuti, Nukufetau, Vaitupu, Nui, Nanumanga, Niutao and Nanumea.

All nine islands are of coralline formation and possess the features typical of such environments - low elevation, poor soils and a limited terrestrial biota. They are small even by 'low island' standards with Vaitupu at approximately 500 hectares being easily the largest. Most are atolls, that is a series of typically narrow islets surrounding a lagoon. One of the group's archaic names was in fact the Lagoon Islands. But it was a misnomer because Nanumanga, Niutao and Niulakita are table reef islands with small inland lakes, the relics of former lagoons but now connected to the sea by subterranean channels. Vaitupu falls between these two types: it has the contiguous shape of a table reef island but has two lagoons, one of them tiny, each with narrow openings to the sea. Of the five true atolls only Funafuti and Nukufetau have passages of sufficient depth to permit the entry of European shipping (see Map 1:2). This physical environment had - and continues to exert - a major bearing on Tuvalu culture and history.

The anthropologist Ivan Brady observed in 1970 that: "In the short span of little more than one hundred years, the Ellice Islands have been transformed from a series of petty chiefdoms into an incipient state while pivoting on the axioms of what were once a foreign Church and an imported Administration". The present work deals with the formative years of this process which can be seen to have commenced, after several

1. Brady 1970:45
false starts, during the 1820s when Tuvaluans finally ventured on board European ships and when European seamen finally stepped ashore. The decades that followed these tentative and largely happenstance beginnings bore witness to contacts of increasing frequency and duration as a succession of European influences crossed the beaches of this tiny island world. The early explorers gave way to whalers in 1821 who, in turn, were superseded by traders during the 1850s. From mid-century the pace of events quickened with the traders being joined by the labour recruiter and missionary (notably the resident Samoan pastor) from the 1860s, naval patrols from the 1870s and a colonial administration in 1893, interspersed by the occasional scientific expedition and a brief and disastrous interlude in 1863 when some of the atolls were caught up in the final stages of the Peruvian slave trade. The dominant European influences were commerce, the cross and the flag, with the primacy of trade giving way to missionary supremacy which, in turn, was displaced in local importance by the British colonial administration. By 1908, after a decade and a half of colonial rule, considerable cultural transformations had been wrought within the group from the accumulated pressure of these various outside interests. Those 88 years stand out as the most momentous period in Tuvalu life - the shift from an isolated, independent, self-sufficient and pagan lifestyle to one which was Christian, literate, partially dependent on a range of European imports, involved in a wider sphere of political activity and largely accepting of British and missionary rule. It was upon this dual basis of an outside church and an alien administration that the events leading up to separation from the Gilberts in 1975 and independence soon after in 1978 occurred.

The 9 decades encompassed by the present study saw a change of direction in Tuvalu affairs: it is the period when irreversible trends were set in motion by exposure to new elements and pressures, ideas and artifacts. The people of Funafuti anticipated this on the undated occasion during the whaling era when one of their number was pursued and shot by a party of whalemen for stealing ship's property. The islet upon which he met his death was renamed Te Aafua Fou (The New Beginning).

2. These recent political developments are analysed in Macdonald 1975; Wilson 1978
3. This is actually a mis-spelt mix of Samoan and Tuvaluan: 'a = "the" (Tuvaluan); aafua = "beginning" (Samoan only; in Tuvaluan it means "sandbank"); fou = "new" (in both languages). See below, p.50
But this incident does not accurately reflect the types of contacts which followed. To the contrary the difficulties and upheavals often associated with European activity elsewhere in the Pacific were either absent or muted in Tuvalu. Alienation of land, epidemics, population decline, 'demoralisation', punitive naval action, heavy debts to foreign trading interests, sectarian bitterness and sustained labour recruiting are not persistent themes, though most occurred on a strictly occasional basis. This can be explained largely in terms of the archipelago's limited resource base and smallness of scale - an aggregate area of less than 10 square miles - which rendered Tuvalu unattractive to trader, planter, and labour recruiter alike. Tuvalu was spared the disruptions which could have resulted from a more numerous and demanding European presence. There was, by contrast, a concerted missionary drive, comprehensive in scope and repressive in character. But despite these undesirable features missionization had the highly adaptive function of serving as the ideological cornerstone for community solidarity.

A measure of Tuvalu's unimportance may be gauged from the fact that European vessels seldom visited the group for its own sake but rather as part of wider networks of commercial, religious and political activity. Tuvalu formed a small part of the 'On-the-Line' whaling grounds and a somewhat larger part of the London Missionary Society's Northwest Outstations; to the trading companies involved, the group was a small and insignificant segment of their wider trading networks; while during the colonial era Tuvalu was regarded, for practical purposes, as an adjunct to the Gilbert Islands Protectorate. It is a telling reflection that despite Tuvalu's favourable location in relation to centres of commerce and recruiting, such as Apia, Suva and Auckland, the group was often bypassed altogether by vessels from these ports in favour of more distant but attractive atoll groups such as Kiribati (formerly the Gilbert Islands) and the Marshalls.

Such considerations have led me to adopt a conceptual framework which could be described as "Insular" in its focus yet "Oceanic" in its range. Given that Tuvalu was fast ceasing to be an isolate, containing only what itself had created, an adequate explanation of events within the group in the period under discussion requires that they be located in their wider contexts. In other words an attempt is made to see Tuvalu
as part of a whole as well as in its own right, and in doing so I have kept in mind Spate's warning that "Oceanic" and "Insular" history:

both have their besetting dangers. That of the Oceanic, whether in its older geopolitical or in its new socio-economic trend, may reduce the human story to the unrolling or the interactions of grey impersonal forces ... As for the Insular its practitioners may on occasion not see the Ocean for the Islands, may be content to be marooned in the tight but so safe confines of their little atoll of knowledge, regardless of the sweep of the currents which bring life to the isles. 5

Given this preoccupation with wider contexts, one of the themes running through this study is therefore the constant interplay between outside forces and local events. My interest is not in what the Europeans and Samoan pastors 'did' to the Tuvaluans, but in the interactions between the agents of European expansion and the Tuvaluans. The contact history of every group of Pacific Islands is a story of interplay between foreigners and Islanders, but the outcome of that interplay differs from place to place according to the attractions of the group for foreigners, the response of Islanders to the new situation and a host of varying local circumstances. The Hawaiians and New Zealand Maori were overwhelmed by foreigners; the Marquesans all but destroyed by them; the Samoans deeply influenced but never made subject; and so on. Generally, the people of the smaller groups which lay off the beaten track of foreigners in the Pacific, such as the Loyalty Islanders, enjoyed better opportunities for controlling the effects of the foreign presence. The external forces over which no Islander had control - copra prices in Europe, the frequency of shipping, the raising of the flag - may have shaped the overall political and economic context of Tuvaluan history, but within that context there remained plenty of room for particular and unexpected outcomes which were the product of dealings between individual Tuvaluans and foreigners. The Tuvaluans' options may have been limited, but they were options. There is, then, no real answer to the question: who or what determined the course of Tuvaluan history? We must instead specify which aspect of Tuvaluan history we mean, and at what level of generality,

4. Howe 1980
5. Spate 1978:34
because the answers will be different in each case. A second theme running through this study is therefore of contexts, large and small, and of the history made within them. And the most fundamental of these was the physical context, the atoll environment which imposed such rigid limits on the extent and intensity of European involvement in the group.

This study has been influenced by the nature of the documentary evidence in ways that ought to be made explicit. Unlike Samoa, which was a centre of trade and a focus of international rivalry, Tuvalu was a marginal archipelago. In contrast to the enormous documentation which events in Samoa generated - well over 400 volumes in official German and British sources alone⁶ - Tuvalu's is a far more manageable corpus, and I was able to go some way towards that impossible ideal of consulting every extant written item bearing on my subject. Research was more a problem of rounding-up the somewhat fragmented documentation rather than being overwhelmed by its physical extent. There are two unfortunate lacunae. In the first place a detailed knowledge of Tuvaluan lifestyles and their religious content in pagan times is beyond reprieve since it was not recorded by a Mariner or Cook, or even a Lockerby or Dillon, before the arrival of missionaries in the 1860s. So effective was the missionary onslaught that a generation later it was impossible to obtain such information since Tuvaluans had either forgotten or were unwilling to discuss their "shameful and deplorable" pre-Christian past.⁷ The second gap in the documentation dates from 1909 when a District Officer was placed in charge of the Ellice Islands Protectorate. He was required to direct correspondence to the Resident Commissioner at Tarawa rather than the Western Pacific High Commissioner in Suva, and as a result this correspondence was destroyed in World War II during the Battle of Tarawa.

The meagre quantity of the documentation would matter less if it were better in quality. Overwhelmingly it falls into the category of official reports as distinct from personal accounts. Most of the sources were written by transient missionaries, naval officers and government men who seldom stayed more than 24 hours on any one island before leaving in

6. P. Kennedy 1974:1x
7. Hedley 1896:56; D.G. Kennedy 1931:6
the ships that brought them. The discontinuous nature of the documentary record still allows of a continuous narrative, despite lack of details at certain points. But sources written under such circumstances are inherently impressionistic because the time spent ashore was insufficient to gain an informed insight into what was really going on. Often, too, they are not based on direct observation but simply report what information the resident trader or Samoan pastor, who were frequently interested parties, chose to provide. Missionary sources, moreover, have a further in-built limitation in that the visiting European missionaries were generally concerned, consciously or otherwise, to present "the work" in a favourable light. Failures and difficulties have a tendency to be suppressed or only obliquely mentioned and it is often interesting to compare an official report to the Directors in London with the corresponding entries in that same missionary's diary. Furthermore the visit of the missionary barque or a warship aroused a special excitement quite divorced from the normal routine of everyday life - much like "plane day" at Funafuti airport today when seemingly the entire population of the atoll gathers at the airstrip to watch the arrival of an aeroplane and the disembarkation of passengers. As one onlooker remarked, observation from a trading vessel had the "advantage that ... the natives would be seen as they are, and not as they get themselves up for the passing visit of a man-of-war, a High Commissioner, or an inspecting missionary." But the journals and logbooks of trading voyages have proven particularly elusive; so too have the letters, diaries and reminiscences of resident traders and Samoan pastors in the group. There may well be personal accounts by early pastors in the group, now in the keeping of their descendants in Samoa. It is likely that consultations of such sources, if indeed they do exist, would have contributed to the missionary chapters of this thesis for the better.

The present study has also been written against the background of previous scholarly work on Tuvalu. It is not a large corpus even by the standards of Pacific History so very little prior knowledge of Tuvalu's past has been assumed on the part of the reader. I have therefore steered a course between chronology and analysis with the result that this study contains more descriptive passages than would otherwise be

8. Moss 1889:7
permissable. Until very recently the only major historical work was Barrie Macdonald's Ph.D. thesis, subtitled "British rule in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, 1892-1970". It is an administrative history whose concentration on the Gilberts is a fair enough reflection of the neglect the Ellice received from the colonial administration. This work has since been thoroughly revised and rewritten for publication and appeared in mid-1982 as Cinderellas of the Empire: towards a history of Kiribati and Tuvalu. Although Macdonald draws attention to the "tentative nature" of many of his findings, it is nevertheless a work characterised by its author's depth of understanding and sureness of touch. It is much broader both in scope and time scale than the original thesis, and telling comparisons are often made between the two groups. But again the smaller, commercially less important Tuvalu islands are overshadowed by Kiribati.

Macdonald takes Tuvalu out of the footnotes and into the text of Pacific History but there is still room for a more detailed study focusing directly on Tuvalu and drawing on a wider range of missionary sources.

9. Macdonald 1971
10. Macdonald 1982
11. There are not many island groups whose scholarly literature can be described fairly comprehensively in an extended footnote. The first published works of importance were by-products of the Royal Society's coral boring expeditions at Funafuti, 1896-98, and include a general account of the atoll (Hedley 1896), a short piece on the legendary history of Funafuti (Sollas 1897), and an account of her experiences by the wife of one of the expedition leaders (Mrs David 1899). Until the last 15 years the published works on Tuvaluans have been dominated by sturdy volumes on their material culture - Hedley 1897; D.G. Kennedy 1931; G. Koch 1961. The field of enquiry has since broadened. To Macdonald's 1971 thesis may be added anthropology dissertations by Brady (1970) on land tenure, kinship and community structure, and Noricks (1981) on Miutao kinship and social organization. Brady has also published a number of articles. Anne Chambers (1975) has written a socio-economic survey of Nanumea atoll. Her dissertation on Nanumea reciprocity and Keith Chambers' on Nanumean worldview are both in an advanced state of preparation. Linguistically, considerable progress has been made since D.G. Kennedy published his handbook on the Tuvalu language in 1945 - see Besnier 1981a, 1981b; Noricks 1982; Ranby 1980. Religious history is represented by a Tuvaluan scholar's thesis on the development of an indigenous church (Kofe 1976) and by my own work on Samoan pastors (Munro 1978). Michael Goldsmith's dissertation on the church in Tuvalu is nearing completion. Of related interest is the late Alovaka Maui's thesis which considers a fresh approach for translating (continued on following page)
Although the present study treats the archipelago as a unity, this should not obscure the fact that each island is in itself an individual, unique entity. Present-day Tuvalu is in essence a European political construct upon which a somewhat tenuous unity has been imposed by church and state. In the period under review Tuvaluans were oriented even more strongly to their home islands; they did not consider themselves Tuvaluan or coming from Tuvalu. But these inter-island differences are essentially ones of degree rather than kind and are over-ridden by the relative cultural homogeneity within the group and by the major events occurring more or less contemporaneously throughout the group. It was therefore possible as well as preferable to adopt a thematic approach instead of an island-by-island account of events (except for Chapter 5 where the course of events on each of the three northern islands was so different to warrant each receiving separate treatment followed by comparative summary). As Macdonald points out: "The exercise demands a concentration upon major themes ... and general trends - a concentration", he adds, "that is sometimes difficult to reconcile with the particular concerns of so many small and relatively isolated communities." 12

Yet another difficulty arises from my use of the word "Tuvalu" to cover a time when the archipelago was not known by that name. To do so, of course, anachronistic. However the problem of nomenclature is not solved by the seemingly straightforward expedient of referring to the group as the "Ellice Islands" up to 1975 and thereafter as "Tuvalu". The term "Ellice Islands" only became the generic name of the group in

11. (cont.)

the Psalms into Tuvaluan (Maul 1977). The history of European 'discovery' is unravelled in Naude 1966:53-64, 79-81, 93-94, 107, 115, 119-20, 124-26; Chambers and Munro 1980, and the legendary history in Chambers et al 1978; and especially Roberts 1958. Tuvalu's demographic history is surveyed in Bedford et al 1980; Brady TS; Munro and Bedford 1980. There are also a number of accounts dealing in part or in whole with the relocated community of Yalupuans at Kioa in Fiji - see Bedford 1967 & 1968; A. Chambers 1972; K.-F. Koch 1978; and especially White 1965. Short surveys of culture change are presented in Brady 1975; G. Koch 1962, and a brief survey of Tuvalu history appeared last year in the Historical Dictionary of Oceania - see Munro et al 1981

1841, so it is also being anachronistic to refer to it as such before that date. I know from experience that my solution to the problem will not satisfy everyone but I have chosen to use "Tuvalu" throughout this study, despite valid objections, because that is how the majority of Tuvaluans would prefer their archipelago to be known irrespective of the slice of time being referred to. In the interests of consistency I have also used "Kiribati" rather than "Gilbert Islands" and "Vanuatu" instead of the "New Hebrides".

My use of some other terms also requires explanation. I realise that to distinguish between "high islands" as volcanic and "low islands" as coralline is to over-simplify but do so for ease of expression and also because such confusion does not arise since none of the Tuvalu islands exhibit the features of both. For ease of expression as well as euphony the term "atoll" is used to embrace reef islands as well as atolls proper unless it is necessary to distinguish one from the other. I also realise that the term "culture contacts" has its limitations since whole cultures do not come into contact, and I only use it in the absence of a better alternative.

---

13. Charles Wilkes, the leader of the United States Exploring Expedition bestowed the name "Eilices Group" on the archipelago - see frontispiece map in Wilkes 1845:V. It had previously been the name most commonly applied by European mariners to Funafuti.
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This thesis has not been presented for a degree at any other university. It is my own work and my sources of information have been acknowledged.

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<tr>
<td>ailiki</td>
<td>traditional chief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faatele</td>
<td>traditional song and dance routine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fa'iféau</td>
<td>pastor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fomaisino</td>
<td>magistrate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fa'aapiga</td>
<td>covenant, contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feituau</td>
<td>village sides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ka'aiaga</td>
<td>nuclear household; extended family; or relatives generally - meaning depends on the context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kaikalelefu</td>
<td>debt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kaitaereti</td>
<td>system of land tenure by which lands are jointly owned and worked; literally &quot;eat as one&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kaepule</td>
<td>the group of men who govern the island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>malanga</td>
<td>parties of visitors from one island to another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mana</td>
<td>innate spiritual power; possession of this power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manaeapa</td>
<td>community meeting house (known as at Nanumea and Nanumanga), the venue for public activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meaalofoa</td>
<td>gifts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O le Tasi Faia</td>
<td>the Samoan Bible; literally &quot;The Sacred Book&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>palagi</td>
<td>European</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pulkaapiga</td>
<td>corporate land holding group comprising several ka'aiaga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pulaka</td>
<td><em>Cyclotispora Chlamydonis</em> - a coarse tuber grown in specially constructed pits which reach down to the fresh water lenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tapu</td>
<td>sacred; prohibition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taro</td>
<td>coarse tuber, smaller than</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tupu</td>
<td>traditional chief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ulu ailiki</td>
<td>head chief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>umega</td>
<td>specially constructed pits reaching down to the fresh water lenses in which taro and pulaka are cultivated</td>
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PHYSICAL environment has had a major bearing on the course of Tuvalu culture and history. Compared with the large volcanic islands to the south these tiny atoll and reef island systems have quite limited potentials for supporting human populations. The major environmental constraints are smallness of scale and the infertile porous soils which place severe restrictions on the range of plant life able to survive. Apart from the ubiquitous coconut palms the only other fruit bearing trees are breadfruit and various types of pandanus, both of which are seasonal, banana and pawpaw. Other large trees are the fetau or Alexandrian Laurel (Calophyllum inophyllum) and the puka (Hernandia peltata), both of which are used for constructing the hulls of canoes. The only root crops are taro and pulaka, both coarse tubers which can only be grown in specially constructed pits (umaga) which reach down to the fresh waters lens. The native fauna of Tuvalu is also typical of other atoll archipelagoes being devoid of larger mammals and limited to a restricted range of sea birds (many of which are utilized for food), the Polynesian rat (which is not), turtles, a few lizards and geckos, a limited range of insects including mosquitoes, and the astonishing variety of land crabs which so caught the attention of European visitors.

Atoll environments, however, are not uniformly restrictive. As Captain Cyprian Bridge, R.N., observed when cruising through the Tuvalu and Micronesian archipelagoes in 1883:

'It seems absurd to speak of the fertility of soil apparently composed almost entirely of sand, nevertheless even amongst these coral archipelagoes there are differences. The Marshall Islands have the most

2. For a listing of plants found on Nanumea see A. Chambers 1975:170-73. The vegetation of Funafuti is described by Hedley 1896:20-41.
MAP 1:1
TUVALU
(from Chambers and Munro 1980:168)

Nanumea  179°  178°
6°S  6°N Niuas
6°N Nanumanga

7°  7° Nuk
8°  8° Nukuselu
9°  9° Funafuti
10°  10° Nukulaelas

cartography by Dag Sagafos
These inter-archipelago vegetation differences are a function of rainfall which in those longitudes tends to increase markedly with distance from the equator. Accordingly the northern Tuvalu islands are appreciably drier than those to the south and the wettest months are generally from December to February. But within these parameters the rainfall throughout the group is highly variable from month to month and year to year: there is neither a predictable rainy season nor a dependable dry season. Between 1959 and 1968, for example, Niutao's annual rainfall varied from 46 inches to 136 inches, and Nukulaelae's from 103 inches to 187 inches. In 1961 the mean rainfall for the group exceeded 150 inches and dropped to just over 80 inches the following year. Droughts, both periodic and extended, occasionally occur, especially in the northern islands. At the other extreme it may rain for a fortnight or more almost without break, particularly in the southern islands. The climate is also characterised by consistently high temperatures which seldom fall below 75°F and a high relative humidity. Both are moderated by the southeast tradewinds which prevail most of the year. Strong westerly storms feature between approximately October and March but are no means confined to these months and also vary in duration and intensity from year to year. Hurricanes are rare because of Tuvalu's proximity to the Equator, but they are an occasional threat. The last occurred in October 1972 when hurricane 'Bebe' passed over the southern islands creating some destruction at Nukulaelae and flattening Funafuti.

4. Bridge 1886:553
5. See the isohyet map in Wiens 1962:154
7. Visher 1925:40-41
TUVALUANS are Polynesian in terms of their social organization, material culture, physical type and, with the exception of the Niuan language.

The origin of the Tuvaluans is therefore part of the wider question of the dispersal of the Polynesians throughout their geographic area within Triangle Polynesia, and beyond to the Polynesian Outliers in adjoining Micronesia and Melanesia. Archaeological and linguistic evidence indicates that the ancestors of the Polynesians came from Eastern Melanesia (New Hebrides and New Caledonia) around the thirteenth century BC and settled in Fiji, Tonga and Samoa. Here in the isolation provided by 900 km of water between the New Hebrides and Fiji, they became the founding populations. Here, also, in the process of crossing the andesite line and encountering a marked impoverishment in biotic and geological resources, the culture and language after a millennium of adaptation and change took on those characteristics which allow us to call the result Polynesian... In the next 1,000 years descendants of the initial Polynesians settled the remaining islands of Polynesia, including New Zealand. This expansion led to a further diversification of culture... In other words the Polynesians "did not strictly come from anywhere: they became Polynesians sometime near the middle of the first millennium B.C., after over 600 years isolation..." in one or more of the archipelagoes of western Polynesia.10 Neither, in a similar sense, did the Tuvaluans come from anywhere but rather developed, in isolation, the attributes which mark them off from other Polynesians and allow us, despite internal variations, to call the result Tuvaluan.

There is an unfortunate lack of archaeological date from Tuvalu.11

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8. See Bellwood 1978a; G. Koch 1961:165
10. Groube's (1971:313) claim that Tonga was the cradle of Polynesia is not inconsistent with the Linguistic evidence (Besnier 1961:xxii; Clark 1979:268-59; Pawley and K. Green 1971:28-29) but later archaeological work on Samoa, East Futana and East Uvea has eroded the case for a Tongan primacy - see Bayard 1976:57-58, 62
11. The only archaeological investigations to date were conducted at Vaitupu in the late-1920s by D.G. Kennedy (1931:285-94). His findings were compared with Hedley's (1897) description of the material culture of Funafuti, but no attempt was made to examine wider cultural relationships.
but other types of evidence are available from which to reconstruct, somewhat tenuously, the archipelago's history of settlement. The legend- ary or traditional evidence is certainly subject to the inherent problems of plausibility, mutability and lack of a well defined sequence, but it does make clear that each island has its own tales of origin whose details and claims to geneological depth vary considerably. These variations probably reflect most validly the actual peopling of the group. Whatever the problems of interpretation presented by the Tuvaluans' legends of origin, at least they dispel the notion that the settlement of the group was an overnight development from a single source. The pattern which emerges instead is one of gradual and piecemeal occupation as the individual islands received many small groups of voyagers, purposeful or otherwise, from a variety of sources. Most were from Samoa but Tongan and i-Kiribati raiders harried some islands and sporadic contacts occurred with the Cooks and Tokelau to the east and East Uvea and Rotuma to the south. Some islands, furthermore, were not settled from outside but by established populations within the archipelago. In the circumstances it is worth reiterating the point that the first European mariners to sight the islands were not 'discoverers' in any primary sense but simply made their discoveries for European geography.

Legendary and geneological evidence suggests that most of the islands were settled between the 14th and 18th centuries. Kennedy calculated an early 16th century Samoan origin for Vaitupu and Roberts considered it likely that Vaitupu and Funafuti were settled simultaneously around that date. However, traditions collected by the first missionaries to visit Vaitupu assert that most of the other islands in the group, Funafuti included, were settled from Vaitupu. Support for this contention comes from a Nukulaelae tradition collected in 1871 by the missionary Powell, which states that the island's first inhabitants came from Funafuti, those of Funafuti from Vaitupu, and those of Vaitupu from Samoa. Nukulaelae was also the last island to be settled, probably by mid-18th century.

13. D.G. Kennedy 1931:2-7; Roberts 1958:416
14. Murray 1876:388; Powell 1871 Journal, pp.12-15 (SSJ 160); see also Graeffe 1866:1185
15. Powell, 1871 Journal, p.6 (SSJ 160)
At the other extreme, if 25 years are allowed for a generation, the traditional account for the founding of Nanumaa puts this event around the year 1325.17

These dates are highly speculative. Apart from 25 years per generation being quite arbitrary, dating by genealogies is also hazardous because forebears are sometimes forgotten and so their generations are left out. An example is provided by the listing of historical figures for Nuu in given in the 1920s by Pastor Roma, which indicates that several generations are missing from Roberts' published version.18 Another case in point concerns Nui. The genealogical information collected in the 1940s by Lands Commissioner A.G. Lake points to settlement occurring in 1614, but the atoll was already inhabited when the Spaniard Mendana passed by in 1568.19 The dates suggested by genealogies are certainly conservative, especially in view of archaeological work throughout the Pacific pushing back the accepted time depth elsewhere. Support for earlier settlement dates in Tuvalu come more directly from linguistic evidence which, as discussed below, points to the Tuvalu language splitting from its parent Eastern Polynesian language about 1000 A.D.20 An even earlier split is suggested by Bayard who, on the basis of wider cultural relationships within western Polynesia, "very tentatively" postulates the settlement of the Tuvaluan islands occurring between 300 and 500 A.D.21

The linguistic evidence also points to a predominantly Samoic homeland and with other contacts occurring from a variety of sources and influencing some islands more than others. Briefly, each Tuvalu island has its own dialect, falling into two subgroups which, interestingly, coincide with the more general cultural classification suggested by Hedley at the end of last century.22 On the basis of phonology and the lexicon (including the pronominal system), the southern islands of Vaitupu, Nukufetau, Funafuti and Nukulaelae fall into one subgroup and the northern islands of Nono, Nani and Nanumaa into another. Further analysis, mentioned below, indicates that within these groups the islands of Funafuti and Vaitupu have their own identities.

17. Chambers et al 1978:38
18. "Extract from the journal of Roma", kindly provided by Jay Noricks (see also Noricks 1981:33-34); Roberts 1958
20. Pawley 1966
22. Hedley 1896:8
cluster of Nanumea, Nanumanga and Niutao into another. Niutao’s position, however, is still uncertain since its dialect is phonologically closer to the southern subgroup while its lexicon has affinities with its northern neighbours. This leaves the atoll of Nui where a “Polynesianized” Kiribati dialect is spoken. Legendary evidence asserts that the island was first settled from Samoa but later invasions by i-Kiribati resulted most noticeably in the displacement of the original language, though the Nuians remain very Polynesian in character.

The Samoic origin of the Tuvalu people is evident in the “consensus which Elbert (1953), Green (1966), Pawley (1966) and Dickie (1976) all reached using various comparative methods that led them to diverging conclusions on other questions”. The generally accepted family tree of Polynesian languages (presented in Figure 1:1) stems largely from the work of Andrew Pawley and it depicts Proto Polynesian, the language ancestral to all other Polynesian languages, first splitting into the Tongic subgroup and the Nuclear Polynesian subgroup. The only Tongic languages are Tongan and Niuean. All other present-day Polynesian languages derive from Proto Nuclear Polynesian which further split into Proto Eastern Polynesian and Proto Samoic Outlier. The morphology of all the dialects of the Tuvalu language point to its inclusion in the large Samoic subgroup but its relationships therein are more problematic since Pawley’s Samoic Outlier is “the least clearly defined of the major groups” just outlined. Tuvalu’s position in particular remains anomalous; it is recognised to have close affinities with many of the Polynesian Outliers but the exact nature of these relationships have still to be elucidated. A major step in this direction may be the recent study by Irwin Howard who has reconstructed, on

23. Besnier TSa:2; Noricks 1981:21. The linguistic terms used in this chapter are defined as follows: morphology = study of word formation; phonology = study of sounds of a language; lexical = of the words of a language; phoneme = unit of sound; syntax = study of sentence construction
24. Besnier TSa:2; Roberts 1958:403-04
25. Besnier TSb:4
26. Pawley 1966
27. Pawley 1967
28. Clark 1979:258
29. See Besnier 1981a:xxv-xxvi
FIGURE 1:1
RELATIONSHIPS OF THE POLYNESIAN LANGUAGES

Proto-Polynesian
  /\  
Proto-
Tongan
  /\  
Proto-
Ukrainian
  /\  
Proto-
Russiak
  /\  
Proto-
Eastern Polynesian
  /\  
Proto-
Samoaic
  /\  
Proto-
Outliers
  /\  
Proto-
Central
  /\  
Proto-
Eastern Polynesian
  /\  
Proto-
Marquesic
  /\  
Proto-
Tahitic

source - Besnier 1981:xxiii
the basis of lexical innovations, a Proto Ellicean language that would have been ancestral to Tuvalu, Tokelau and what he calls the "Equatorial Outliers". The evidence, which is based only on features uniquely shared by this proposed subgrouping, seems convincing and if validated by further research would result in a reshuffling of the Samoic Outlier languages as presented in Figure 1:2 (see also Map 1:3). Further refinement of the subgrouping of Samoic languages might also clarify the positions of East Uvea and East Futana in relation to Tuvalu. Bayard has suggested East Futana as "the major contributor to the settlement of ECE [Tuvalu], at least as far as Vaitupu and Funafuti are typical of the group". The legendary evidence does not support this view (which is based on voyaging possibilities rather than linguistic grounds), although some traditional tales from Vaitupu and Funafuti mention arrivals from, and other contacts with, East Uvea. However, it is not the legendary evidence which will ultimately decide such questions but rather its interpretation in conjunction with linguistic and archaeological data together with information on voyaging possibilities, material culture and other cultural traits.

Bayard is not alone in suggesting that the predominance of a Samoan origin in Tuvalu has been exaggerated. Kennedy and Roberts both consider that the Samoan influence in the group in traditional times has been over-emphasised and they attribute this to the Samoan pastors who settled in the group after 1865 influencing local mythology. As a result there were more Tongan and other contacts that even the Tuvaluans were prepared to admit. A notable example concerns the Samoan pastor Sapolu telling S. Percy Smith in 1897 that the Nanumeans came from Samoa when in fact Nanumeans are explicit that their origins are Tongan. The Nanumean dialect certainly indicates the presence of past Tongan influence and this may be seen most clearly in certain shared words, colour-term correspondences, and place-

31. Bayard 1976:50, 81-33; see also Hedley 1896:41-42 & 42n
32. D.G. Kennedy 1931:160; Roberts 1958:409; Sollas 1897
33. D.G. Kennedy 1931:4, 6, 153; Roberts 1958:416
34. Smith 1897; Smith, "Six months in the Pacific", p.115 (AI&M); see also Dickie 1975:23. The 'authorised' version of the Nanumean tale of origin is presented in Chambers et al (1978:32-36) in the Tuvalu language with an English translation in parallel columns. For a different version see Naniseni 1949
35. K. Chambers 1978:94
FIGURE 1:2
THE PROTO SAMDIC OUTLIER SUBGROUP

Proto Samoic Outlier

Proto Futuman

Proto Ellicean

Tongatapu

Fiji

source - 1. Howard 1981:104
name correspondences. At first sight the Nanumeans' claim that their island "grew up from Tonga" seems to be confirmed not only by their own and other northern oral traditions, but by further linguistic evidence: the shared use of the phoneme /h/, whereas the southern Tuvaluan dialects use the phoneme /o/ as in Samoan. For example Proto-Polynesian *aola36 "to flee" is reflected in Tongan as hoa and in Samoan as aola. Nanumea (and also Nanumanga) correspond with the Tongan usage whereas in southern Tuvalu the Samoan form aola is used.

But in fact the presence of the phoneme /h/ does not necessarily indicate a Tongan influence. Instead, it is important to trace the Proto Polynesian phoneme that these /h/ s reflect and in doing so we find that reflection of Proto Polynesian /*h/ as /h/ is unique to the Tongic language. In all the other Polynesian languages by contrast, including Tuvaluan, the proto-phoneme ancestral to /h/ is /a/ and in some cases also /f/. This is a function of Proto Polynesian splitting into Proto Tongic, which contains the Tongan and Nuean languages, and Proto Nuclear Polynesian, the language ancestral to all the other Polynesian languages (see Figure 1:1 & Table 1:1).

### Table 1:1
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>*PROTO POLYNESIAN</th>
<th>*PROTO NUCLEAR POLYNESIAN</th>
<th>GLOSS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*kófo</td>
<td>*kófo</td>
<td>down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*fúhi</td>
<td>*fúhi</td>
<td>bunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*uila</td>
<td>*uila</td>
<td>thunder</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 1:2
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>*Proto Polynesian</th>
<th>*h</th>
<th>*a</th>
<th>*f</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tongan</td>
<td>h</td>
<td>h</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samoan</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funafuti</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nukulaeae</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>ø(h)</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanumea</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>h</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>h</td>
<td>h</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A more extensive table of consonant phoneme correspondences is in Bayard (1976:35)

36. The asterisk is used to denote a reconstruction
As we can see from Table 1:2 the Proto Polynesian phoneme */h/ is lost in all the languages which descended from Proto Nuclear Polynesian; had it been retained in Nanumea the evidence for a Tongic strain would have been far better. Instead, as already mentioned, it is clear that the morpho-syntax of all the Tuvalu dialects, Nanumea included, point to their inclusion (somewhere) in the Samoic Outlier family. This line of reasoning has also been used to show that two formerly controversial Polynesian languages, East Uvean and Niuafo'ou, are also Samoic Outlier despite their strong Tongic features, particularly in the lexicon.

The Tuvalu islands not only received colonists from other western Polynesian archipelagoes but were themselves a source for the settlement of many of the Polynesian Outliers. This view that the "primary" or "decisive" settlement of the Outliers resulted from a retrograde movement of Polynesians, rather than these islands' populations being the "relics" of the original migration into Triangle Polynesia, is supported by quite disparate types of evidence. On the one hand is Bayard's attempt to determine the specific sources of the Outlier populations by analysis of available linguistic and ethnographic data; on the other is the computer simulation of voyaging possibilities by Levison, Ward and Webb. Each is in broad accord that most of the Outliers northward from Tikopia received "primary" settlement as a result of drift voyages from Tuvalu, while the remaining Outliers were peopled from other areas of western Polynesia or from other Outliers. The most recent support for the "blowback" theory of Outlier settlement comes from Irwin Howard's already mentioned proposal for a Proto Ellicean language ancestral to Tuvalu, Tokelau and what he calls the "Equatorial Outliers" (from Nukuoro to Sikaiana). The infer-

37. Dye 1980; Pawley 1967
38. Bayard 1976; Levison et al 1973:57-59; Ward et al 1973. Levison et al's unfortunate choice of (uninhabited) Hulakita as one of the starting points from Tuvalu (the other is Nanumea) may, in the context of a first rate study, be dismissed as a minor blemish. But when applied to the specific case of the Polynesian Outliers, it could have a bearing on their results
39. I. Howard 1981. Howard is dubious of Bruce Bigg's assertion that Tuvaluans and Tokelauans speak dialects of the same language and Besnier (TSa:2) even more so. He points to difficulties in mutual intelligibility, basic morphosyntactic differences, and "the lack of support such a proposal would find in the islanders' ethnolinguistic understanding, among other factors."
erence to be derived from this subgrouping would be that Tuvalu has
played a major role in the settlement of these Outliers since it is,
with Tokelau, the only language of this subgrouping within Triangle
Polynesia.

Archaeological work should eventually contribute to answering
these and other questions relating to Tuvalu and Outlier prehistory with
a greater degree of certainty. However, the oft-expressed regret at the
lack of archaeological data from Tuvalu is tempered by the realisation
that these are unlikely, in the short term at any rate, to clarify the
whence of the Tuvaluans. Rather, they would probably serve to obscure
the sequence of settlement, external relationships and the nature of cul-
tural displacement in much the same manner as archaeological work did for
the northern outlier of Nukuoro by yielding a series of undiagnostic arti-
fact types. As Janet Davidson, the archaeologist concerned, pointed out
her findings led to nowhere in particular in the context of the present
state of knowledge:

It is not yet possible to say whether the
Polynesian colonists on Nukuoro came from a
high Polynesian island, such as Samoa, a
Polynesian atoll such as one of the Ellice
islands, or another Polynesian outlier, and
whether they found Nukuoro already inhabited
by Micronesians, or whether the apparently
Micronesians were the result of later
contacts. At present, viewing the archaeolo-
gical evidence in isolation, it is possible to
postulate contacts and influence from almost
any part of the Pacific with equal plausibility. 40

Nevertheless she ventures to hope that eventually light will emerge from
the end of the tunnel, for: "As comparative data accumulate from the most
vital areas, however, neglected parts of West Polynesia, East Micronesia,
and the other northern outliers, the possibilities must be reduced." 41

It is possible to be more definite about the whence of the Tuvaluans
and certain other aspects of their prehistory. To summarize, the traditions

40. J.M. Davidson 1971:104
Feinberg 1976
of origin from most islands in the group assert that today's Tuvaluans are of mixed origin but preponderantly Samoan. This general picture is largely supported by the linguistic evidence for even if the Samoic Outlier subgrouping is not as homogenous as Pawley's data suggests, the Tuvalu dialect must still be classified as Samoic. The work of the German ethnographer Gerd Koch, in comparing the material culture of Tuvalu with those of other Polynesian archipelagoes, also reveals many unambiguous Samoan characteristics which, moreover, are old and cannot be traced to the post-1865 influence of the Samoan pastors.\textsuperscript{42} Tuvalu material culture also indicates contacts with island groups to the east. A comparison with Tokelau shows similarities in fishing tackle, traditional clothing and ornamentation, household construction methods and also nursing the sick, none of which can be explained in terms other than Tokelau contacts with Tuvalu.\textsuperscript{43} In the case of Nukulaelae, which was probably first settled from other islands in southern Tuvalu, later arrivals from Tokelau introduced innovations in canoe construction.\textsuperscript{44} Subsequent arrivals from Tokelau are also documented in Tokelau oral traditions.\textsuperscript{45} There are also Tokelau traditions of contacts in the other direction, from Nanumanga, which are quite feasible given the prevalence of strong westerly storms at certain times of the year.\textsuperscript{46} However, two-way contacts between Tuvaluans and Tokelauans were so sporadic that their respective languages, which must have originally been very close, drifted apart.\textsuperscript{47} Koch's study of the material culture also reveals that contacts from further afield occurred, notably with the Cook Islands (which he places in the Central Polynesia Kulturprovinz "cultural province"). Pounders for food preparation, for example, were unknown in Samoa, Tonga and Tokelau but used in Tuvalu and these are traceable to the northern Cook Islands of Manihiki and Rakahanga. Other items of Tuvalu material culture attributable to a Cook Island provenance include the use of red dyed ornamental stripes for plaiting mats, certain children's toys, and

\textsuperscript{42} G. Koch 1961:185
\textsuperscript{43} G. Koch 1961:185
\textsuperscript{44} Roberts 1958:417
\textsuperscript{45} Hooper 1975:93; Hooper and Huntsman 1973:376
\textsuperscript{46} Hooper and Huntsman 1973:369
\textsuperscript{47} Besnier 1901a:xxvii
a particular type of braiding needle. Despite the 1500 miles of ocean separating the two groups, drift voyaging possibilities from the Cooks to Tuvalu are also quite feasible given the prevailing wind and current systems.

There were also contacts between Rotuma and Tuvalu but these are more likely to have been purposeful two-way voyages than accidental drift voyages. Parties of Rotumans used to sail to Vaitupu to obtain supplies of a highly fancied white shell and Rotumans suffering from filariasis also-travelled to Vaitupu where they hoped to have their affliction cured.

While the extent of contacts are unknown, groups of Tuvaluans, from Nui as well as Vaitupu, are reported to have been living at Rotuma during the early decades of the 19th century awaiting the opportunity to return to their home islands. It was once thought that such contacts resulted in Tuvaluan features being incorporated into Rotuman canoes, particularly the direct connection of outrigger booms to the float. A recent reappraisal, however, convincingly suggests the direct Rotuman connectives to be relics of ancient Polynesian types, originating when Rotuma was settled by Tongans and Samoans.

The material culture as well as language indicates that the Tuvaluans formed a distinct Polynesian cultural entity despite inter-island variations. To quote from Koch's summary, which was written over 20 years ago:

the Polynesian culture was basically fashioned in an initially small settlement group in the west of the entire region and was then gradually spread from the Tonga-Samoa area over the whole far-flung region. From this basic culture which we can still recognize today in the island world of the gigantic [Polynesian] triangle ..., represented by the material culture common to all Polynesians, special local forms developed later in the various archipelagoes owing to different milieux, unavoidable isolation and further innovations brought

48. G. Koch 1961:165-86
49. Levison et al 1973:81; Sharp 1963:68
50. Sharp 1963:32
51. Dillon 1829:11, 103. I am grateful to Peter McQuarrie (personal communication, 19 May 1982) for suggesting that this shell is *Ovula ovum*, variously known as the white cowrie, egg cowrie, or porcelain cowrie.
52. Wood 1875:208
53. Dillon 1829:11,103; Stackpole 1953:347
54. McQuarrie 1920
in by groups of settlers who arrived later. It appears that the Ellice Islands ... were settled at a late date. Here, essential features of the Samoan local type became fused into a culture owing to the scarcity of the resources, had a retarding and formative effect, a culture which was in part further enriched from the Gilbert Islands in neighbouring Micronesia. 55

Koch’s summary of events in Tuvalu, written over 20 years ago with reference to material culture, downplays the input of Tongan marauders and probably over-emphasises the role of drift voyagers from the Central Polynesia Kulturprovins; otherwise it generally fits with the linguistic and legendary evidence which both point to the settlement of the Tuvalu islands stemming from Samoic, if not Samoan, sources with influxes from several other archipelagoes to the north, east and south. It will be interesting to see how this still skeletal reconstruction will look in another 20 years time, and whether the archaeological evidence (if any) dovetails with the linguistic research already underway.

WHATEVER their origin the first groups of settlers to the Tuvalu islands were confronted with an environment so forbidding and limited in its resources as to be inimical to the establishment of viable populations. The infertile and porous nature of the soil posed difficulties both in horticulture and the provision of an adequate water supply. Moreover, the basic crops of many other parts of the Pacific were not initially available to the first settlers so it is likely that fish and probably also pandanus assumed a fundamental dietary role while coconuts and other introduced plants gradually became established. Breadfruit, for example, a staple in the contemporary diet, did not reach some islands until introduced by missionaries in the 1870s.

The coconut has become such an integral part of the contemporary Pacific landscape that it sometimes takes an effort to remember that it is an introduced crop; or as Charles Medley put it, the idea of a wild

55. G. Koch 1961:180
coconut palm is "as strange as that of a wild peach in England".56 Oral traditions from Tuvalu bear out Hedley's view57 and so do European descriptions of Niulakita, which was uninhabited at the time of early European contact. In 1830 the surgeon on board a passing ship recorded that "the numerous trees impart a verdant and beautiful appearance to this otherwise insignificant coral reef; some of the trees being of lofty growth, causes the island to have a slightly elevated appearance which it does not possess. Among the trees I could only recognise the Pandanus"58 - which is of shorter stature than the coconut palm. He further reported that a party of whalers had landed a few years before and "procured a quantity of turtle and sea birds' eggs", but nothing is said about coconuts.59 Further evidence that coconut palms were planted at Niulakita is provided by an oral tradition which states that a lost party of seafarers from Niutao planted germinating coconuts which they had brought with them.60 The recent intervention of the human hand in the establishment of the coconut is also documented from the Tuamotus, "where in the 1830s it was either rare or non-existent".61 Even as late as the 1930s Pukapuka in the northern Cooks and Gardiner Island in the Phoenix group contained no coconut palms.62 Furthermore Gerard Ward's simulation experiments for testing the likelihood of coconuts drifting from one part of the Pacific to another (he is not concerned with questions of landing and germination) also point to the conclusion "that it is highly unlikely that the coconut could have crossed the central Pacific in either direction as an unaided voyager".63

The poverty of the environment must have posed serious problems for the first waves of settlers to Tuvalu, particularly since most seem to have come from 'high islands'. In order to establish numerically viable populations incest was practised, as was also the case in the ecologically

56. Hedley 1896:22
57. Roberts 1958:409, 416
58. Bennett 1831:137
59. Bennett 1831:138
60. Roberts 1958:420
61. Stoddard 1968:25
63. Ward TS:28
similar Tokelau islands, but abandoned at the first opportunity. Popu-
lation increase, however, was a two-edged sword: it was necessary
to demographic survival yet it threatened that survival by placing too
much pressure in the increasing, but still limited, resources. Accord-
ing to visiting missionaries the Tuvaluans therefore pursued a deliberate
policy of birth control until this was effectively banned by mission
influence in the 1860s and 1870s. Both “foeticide” and infanticide were
practiced with drowning and suffocation by burial reputedly being the most
common methods of putting down unwanted children. According to the
missionary Murray in 1865: “They were genuine Malthusians. They fear that
unless the population was kept down they would not have sufficient food”. Another missionary similarly noted that fear of starvation led the people
of Vaitupu “to make the rule that only two children should be reared in
a family. The life of a third might be redeemed. Not so the rest that
might be born”. However, the problems of population pressure were not so clear cut
as to be remedied by getting rid of set numbers of children from each
household. Too many fluctuating variables had to be taken into account,
quite apart from the general consideration that infanticide when:

practiced by a group solely as a regulatory mechanism to control its size pre-supposes a fairly sophisticated
awareness of demographic processes to appreciate the long-
term consequences of eliminating too many of the new-born
at one time, or even to decide what is ‘too many’ if the
group is not to become extinct.

Even if Tuvaluans were possessed of such a heightened awareness of the
implications of infanticide, there was no constant yardstick against which
they could deploy it because the number of people an island could support
might fluctuate markedly from year to year depending, inter alia, on the
prevalence of drought conditions and the incidence of ciguatera (toxicity)

64. Chambers et al 1978:35n; Huntsman and Hooper 1976:268-69
65. D.G. Kennedy 1931:264; Roberts 1958; George Turner 1884:286
66. Murray 1876:385
67. Gil, 1872 Diary, p.14 (ML B1444); see also D.G. Kennedy 1931:264;
George Turner, 1876 Journal, p.5 (SSJ 168)
among fish in the vicinity. It is more probable that the extent of infanticide was not constant but varied over time according to perceived environmental conditions. In some cases, moreover, a Malthusian motive for the practice was absent, for example at Nanumea where its rationale was to prevent any family from gaining hegemony through strength of numbers.69

Considering the dual circumstances of environmental restrictions and birth control it is out of the question that the Tuvalu islands could ever have supported the 20,000 claimed for the pre-1865 population in official publications throughout the 20th century. A variation of this myth was revived as late as 1977 in a British government Factsheet, which was widely distributed in Tuvalu, where it was argued that the population was reduced from 20,000 to less than 3000 by the depredations of "black-birders" during the third quarter of the 19th century.70 It is worth noting that a population of 20,000 translates into a crude density of about 2000 per square mile which is almost three times the present average density when the population is heavily dependent on imported food supplies. Furthermore, present-day Tuvalu has a greater population density than any other Pacific nation or territory. Newton has effectively demonstrated the absurdity of the 20,000 estimate. Simply by collating the first sets of missionary estimates for 1865 and 1866, and deducting the numbers of Tuvaluans known to have been taken by Peruvian kidnappers in 1863, he calculated that the population of these islands around 1860 amounted to only "about 3000 - the figure to which it was imagined to have been reduced".71

While Newton's 1860 estimate of around 3000 is more realistic than the long accepted 20,000, it is difficult to accept his suggestion that the pre-missionary population "was probably stable at about 3000".72 Warfare and fighting, diseases and mishaps at sea all contributed to a high incidence of premature mortality. Armed combat took several forms: warding off Tongan and i-Kiribati invaders;73 inter-island warfare, such

69. Keith and Anne Chambers, personal communication, 5 Jan 1977
70. Factsheet Tuvalu
71. Newton 1967:202; see also Bedford et al 1980:228, 238
73. Roberts 1950
as Funafuti's attack on Nukulaelae in about 1850; full-scale intra-island hostilities such as the war at Niutao between Pookia and Fuatia; and finally inter-family feuding, such as the incessant conflicts which occurred at Nanumea before missionaries brought peace to the island in the 1870s. The transmission of infectious diseases seems to have been less prevalent. The documentary evidence is extremely scanty but it is on record that an outbreak of dysentery at Nanumanga, which carried away 100 people within a month, was brought by visitors from Niutao during the 1840s. On the other hand mishaps at sea while on fishing trips or inter-island canoe voyages were, if figures from the Polynesian Outlier of Tikopia are at all comparable, a source of continuous mortality among men. Between 1929 and 1952 almost 30% of all deaths among Tikopian males resulted from overseas canoe voyages and such a figure for Tuvalu is plausible given the nature of winds and currents in the archipelago. Numbers of residents on the small Tuvalu islands probably fluctuated quite markedly over time in response to these sorts of processes.

ALL ASPECTS of Tuvalu culture were tempered and shaped by the poverty of the tiny atoll ecosystems. Obtaining cutting tools on an atoll is no simple matter since there is no bamboo or obsidian for knives and no volcanic stone of any sort for adzes. It was therefore impossible for the first settlers to recreate the 'high island' material culture of their original homelands. A by-product of such deficiencies in locally available materials was a remarkable lack of ornamental carving and a roughness of finish to such items as canoes and wooden bowls. Nonetheless the Tuvaluans learned to utilize their environment and fashion from it a highly functional material culture to efficiently exploit land, reef and sea. For example, Gerd Koch recorded 47 different traditional fishing methods at Nukufetau in 1960. That the Tuvaluans' material culture was well adapted to their needs is

74. Hedley 1896:45
75. Roberts 1958:402
76. A. Chambers 1975:47
77. George Turner, 1876 Journal, p.29 (SSJ 165)
78. Borrie et al 1957:240
79. G. Koch 1962:130
illustrated by their selective acceptance of Western technology, a selection which was largely confined to items which could be grafted onto their own material culture so to accomplish the same task as before, only more quickly and with less effort. Despite the relatively undifferentiated nature of Tuvalu culture there was still scope for a wide range of specialist skills ranging from canoe building, midwifery, fishing expertise and gardening knowledge, among others.

Like their material culture, the Tuvaluans developed a political and social system well suited to the ecological and territorial limitations of their small islands. Within the scattered hamlets which characterised settlement patterns in traditional times, the basic economic units were either the single household or the extended family. These combined to form corporate groupings known usually as pukaaiga (but kopiti on Nanumea), which could number up to ten to an island. Joint ownership of family lands (kaisar, literally "eat as one") was the norm since human survival through the exploitation of resources depended on co-operation. Kinship ties were also a major determinant of the networks of reciprocity which ensured that an island's resources were fairly evenly spread. Kinship itself was bilateral but a patrilineal bias obtained in matters of inheritance and succession.

Tuvalu was one of the least stratified Polynesian societies, consisting of only two levels of status (chiefs and commoners), not three as in Tonga, Tahiti and Hawaii. Nor did chiefly status confer the degree of privilege that it did in the more highly stratified societies (though it was enough to free the chief from manual labour), or surround the person of the chief (aliki or tupu) with as much tapu. Another indication of relatively muted stratification was the possibility of marriage between commoners and aliki, even though the preference was for an aliki to choose marriage partners from other aliki lines. Usually too, aliki traced their descent to, and derived their legitimacy from, the island's acknowledged founder. Beyond the district level, each island was governed by a hereditary chief or chiefs. The nature of that leadership varied between islands but common to all were limits on chiefly authority and an emphasis on consensus. Decisions of import were made by a council of chiefs.

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80. This subject is treated more fully in Chapter 8
(fono o ali'ik). The latter was often an island-wide organization and was usually the most extensive political unit in traditional Tuvalu. Attempts were made from time to time by one island to attain hegemony over another but the lines of authority and communication across the intervening ocean were too tenuous for such arrangements to endure.\footnote{Brady 1970:33-60; A. Chambers 1975:55-60; Noricks 1981:30-39}
CHAPTER 2

EARLY CONTACT AND TRADE

TRADITIONALLY, each Tuvalu island was not only politically autonomous but also an economically self-sufficient unit. Since they all possessed the same narrow range of resources there was no scope for the inter-island trading links and networks characteristic of many other parts of the Pacific. While institutionalized visits (malaanga) between islands involved in part the reciprocal exchange of goods, these visits were essentially ceremonial and social; in no way were they comparable either in scale or function with the complex trading cycles found elsewhere in the Pacific. Contacts with Islanders from other groups, moreover, were sporadic.

European shipping contacts in the group broke down Tuvalu's isolation and increased the minimal opportunities for trade. This process was gradual in the extreme and a full three centuries span the chance sighting by the first Spaniard in the group in the mid-16th century and the 1860s when foreign missionaries and traders were residing permanently on most Tuvalu islands. The intervening years may be seen as the period of early contact with the West, and the relationship between Tuvaluans and the new strangers during this time was essentially one of small-scale trading contacts between ship and shore.

THE EARLIEST EUROPEAN MARINERS

BETWEEN 1568 and 1820, when trans-Pacific voyaging was in its infancy, Tuvalu is known to have been visited on six separate occasions by a total of eleven European vessels (see Table 2:1). This phase of the
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vessel(s)</th>
<th>Captain</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sightings</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Los Reyes; Todos Santos</td>
<td>Mendaña</td>
<td>1568</td>
<td>Nui; attempted to land</td>
<td>Amherst of Hackney and Thomson 1901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Jeronimo and three others</td>
<td>Mendaña</td>
<td>1595</td>
<td>Niulakita; attempted to land</td>
<td>Harkham 1904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Princesa</td>
<td>Mourelle</td>
<td>1781</td>
<td>Niutao; attempted to land</td>
<td>Haurelle 1799: 1, 234-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nanume</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elisabeth</td>
<td>Patterson</td>
<td>1803</td>
<td>Nanume</td>
<td>Purdy 1814: 153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca</td>
<td>De Peyster</td>
<td>1813</td>
<td>Funafuti; almost wrecked</td>
<td>Paulin 1947: 35-37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blagonomerevny Otkrytie</td>
<td>Vassiliev</td>
<td>1820</td>
<td>Nukufetau; Blagonomerevny entered lagoon</td>
<td>Lazarev 1950: 163-68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shilsarev</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Early Contact Period lacks coherence. The ships involved were all birds of passage which unwittingly chanced upon Tuvalu islands en route to their respective destinations. All but one were either explorers proper or traders who became explorers by force of circumstance. The odd man out was Francisco Antonio Mourelle in the frigate *La Princesa* carrying secret despatches from Manila to San Blas in Mexico in 1781. The bewildered Spaniard has aptly been described as "an anachronism, as far out of his proper period as he was out of his proper course". The only common thread to bond the Tuvalu experiences of Mourelle and the other earliest European mariners was their inability or unwillingness to initiate trading contacts with the islanders.

Spanish explorers provided the first contacts with the West. The two exploring expeditions of Alvaro de Mendana each made sightings in the group (Nui 1568; Niulakita 1595), but on neither occasion did the opportunity for barter or re-provisioning present itself. Almost 200 years were to elapse between Mendana's second voyage and the arrival of another European, again a Spaniard, when Mourelle chanced upon Niutao, "a very low island, surrounded by a sandy shore, terminating in an impenetrable ledge of rocks, near which I found no bottom with a line upwards of fifty fathoms". "Indians" came off in canoes.

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1. The published account of this voyage and most secondary sources render the Spaniard's name 'Maurelle'. But according to the original Spanish sources, Mourelle's biographer, Landin Carrasco, (1971), and also Langdon (1977) the name is spelt with an 'o'.

2. Maude 1968:35n

3. Mendana's *Isla de Jesus* has been positively identified by Maude (1968:53-60, 79-81) as Nui. It was first thought to be Nukufetau.

4. The general background of Mendana's two expeditions and the details relating to their passage through Tuvalu are too well known to warrant repetition here - see Spate 1979:119-32 for the most recent detailed account. The original Spanish documentation has been published in Kelly 1965:11,4-7, 34-36.

5. Mourelle 1799:1, 234-35. The first Tuvalu island which Mourelle 'discovered' and named *Isla del Cocal* has previously been identified as Nanumanga - see Maude 1968:93; Sharp 1960:150-51. More recent research, based on original Spanish documentation, suggests Niutao as *Isla Del Cocal* - Chambers and Munro 1980:171-81.
negotiating the reef with great difficulty so that they were only able
to bring a few coconuts. Their attempt to tow La Princesse to shore
failed, and after six hours Mourelle gave up hope of securing much-
needed supplies and sailed away. The following day he sighted Nanumea
but made no contact with its inhabitants. It was an unpromising first
attempt to trade with Tuvaluans - a ship's captain desperate for pro-
visions yet only able to obtain 'a small number of cocoas'.

The tempo of European shipping in Tuvalu quickened in the early
19th century with the opening of various trans-Pacific trading routes.
The next vessel to the area was the trading brig Elisabeth from Port
Jackson to Canton in 1809, and Captain Patterson like Mourelle 28 years
earlier sighted the northernmost island of Nanumea without attempting
to land. 6 The Elisabeth was followed 10 years later in 1819 by the
British brigantine Abbeoa (Captain A.S. De Peyster) which was almost
wrecked at Funafuti and passed by Nukufetau without seeing any sign of
life ashore. 7 What is fast becoming a tedious recital of sightings
without disembarkation or even trading contacts was repeated the
following year when a Russian exploring expedition consisting of the
sloops Otkrytie (Discovery) and Blagonamevenny (Good Intent) cruised
through southern Tuvalu waters. Both vessels sighted Nukufetau and
the Blagonamevenny (Captain M.N. Vassiliev) spent a day in contact with
its inhabitants and surveyed the atoll.

From everything we saw, we concluded that this was an
extremely peaceful people. They brought none of their
fruit, such as cocoanuts, with them, nor any examples
of their workmanship, except one mat. Presumably they
came out not to trade with us, but merely to look at
us. Both from this and their lack of interest in the
bits of iron which we gave them, one can conclude that
they had not yet seen Europeans and were not yet
acquainted with iron, that most attractive of all
metals for South Sea islanders. On the other hand,
mirrors, even the very smallest, attracted their
curiosity. One can also conclude that no Europeans
have ever been here from the fact that even having
seen our ship, they apparently had no idea of the

6. Purdy 1814:153
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Captain</th>
<th>Vessel</th>
<th>Name given to Discovery</th>
<th>Present Island Name</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Los Reyes, Todos Santos</td>
<td>Isla de Jesus</td>
<td>Niulakita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1595</td>
<td>Mendaña</td>
<td>San Jeronimo and three others</td>
<td>La Solitaria</td>
<td>Niulakita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1781</td>
<td>Hourelle</td>
<td>La Princesa</td>
<td>Gran Cocal</td>
<td>Niu Tao</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>Hourelle</td>
<td>La Princesa</td>
<td>San Augustin</td>
<td>Nanumea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1819</td>
<td>De Peyster</td>
<td>Rebecca</td>
<td>Ellice's Group</td>
<td>Funafuti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1819</td>
<td>De Peyster</td>
<td>Rebecca</td>
<td>De Peyster's Group</td>
<td>Nukafuti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1821</td>
<td>Barrett</td>
<td>Independence II</td>
<td>Mitchell's Group</td>
<td>Nukulaelae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1824</td>
<td>Duperrey</td>
<td>Coquille</td>
<td>Rocky Island</td>
<td>Niulakita*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1825</td>
<td>Eeg</td>
<td>Pollux</td>
<td>Nederlandisch Island</td>
<td>Niulakite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1825</td>
<td>Starbuck</td>
<td>Loper</td>
<td>Tracy Island</td>
<td>Vaitupu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Chambers and Munro 1980:192

* Most of the other European variant names are listed in Langdon:

* While strictly speaking a rediscovery, these Islands were not placed accurately on the charts until their 19th century 'discovery'
Need of sailors, and did not bring us any food, although they apparently have food in abundance.8

(transl. David Christian)

This episode marks a turning point. It was not only the first extended encounter between Tuvaluans and Europeans but also the last of a series of visits to the group where trading contacts had failed to materialise. With the entry of the next known vessel to the area, a whaler the following year, trading contacts were finally initiated.9 Other exploring expeditions and trading vessels would pass through Tuvalu but from 1821 the most common sails on the horizon were those of the broad-beamed whaler overwhelmingly from the ports of Massachusetts, who were traders of a different sort. The whaling era gave rise to a limited barter trade between ship and shore which regulated inter-racial contacts until superseded by new trading procedures in the 1860s.

THE WHALING ERA

Tuvalu was never an important whaling resort; yet for the four decades after 1821 whaleships came to the area in far greater numbers than all other foreign shipping combined. The paradox can be carried one step further. Whaling activity was an important influence on the lives of Tuvaluans during this period; yet the actions and responses of the Tuvaluans was only one influence - and the least significant - which determined the presence or otherwise of whaleships in the vicinity and the types of activity in which they engaged. These matters were more the outcome of a variety of geographic conditions within Tuvalu working in conjunction with a chain of impersonal forces from without. Whaling in Tuvalu and the culture contacts which resulted can therefore hardly be discussed without reference to a number of exogamous forces. Often inter-related, these include the economics of the industry as a whole,

B. The Vassiliev-Shishmarev expedition’s visit to Nukufetau is recounted in Lazarev 1950:165-66. See also Lebedev and Grekov 1967:197
the level of demand for whale products in the industrialised countries, competition between whalers of different nationalities, the seasonal distribution of whales and their decreasing numbers, and climatic conditions throughout the Pacific.

The first whaleship entered the Pacific in 1789 and by 1810 both American and British whalers were well established on the 'On Shore' and 'Galapagos' grounds adjacent to the South American coast (see Map 2:1). In 1815, with the conclusion of hostilities between the two countries, American whalers rebuilt their fleets and returned to the South Seas. Within a few years new grounds were located and the scope of whaling activity in the Pacific dramatically extended. Pioneer Yankee whaling captains pushed westward into the open equatorial Pacific where the 'Off-Shore' and the eastern half of the 'On-the-Line' grounds were opened up. In 1819 American whaleships began arriving in Honolulu harbour and from that base two further whaling grounds were opened up. The first, and more important, discovery was the 'Japan' ground in 30°N latitude. The other discovery was the western portion of the 'On-the-Line' ground which extended from the Line Islands in the east to Kiribati and Tuvalu in the west.

The 'On-the-Line' ground was occupied by sperm whales. They are deep water feeders and breeders and were especially sought after until the 1860s because their oil was in heavy demand for heating, the

10. "The term whaling ground was used to describe those stretches of water, never precisely defined or bounded, which were most largely frequented by the animals sought. Both the number and extent of these grounds changed from time to time as old ones were deserted, first by the whales and then by their pursuers, and new ones were added by exploration and accidental discovery" - Hohman 1928:148-49. The seasonal nature of most whaling grounds is explained by Townsend (1935:7): "A whaling ground is occupied by whales so long as it is a feeding ground. It continues to be a feeding ground during the season when the animal life on which the whale subsists is most abundant . . . . The migrations of whales from one region to another are influenced by the search for food and the needs of reproduction."

Whaling grounds of the Pacific in the nineteenth century
lubrication of machinery and, above all, lighting. The other type of
whale most commonly taken in the southern hemisphere was the right
whale which, by contrast, was mainly hunted inshore in shallows where
the mothers dropped their calves. Being essentially creatures of mid-
lattitudes they were hunted in the coastal areas of New Zealand and the
temperate coastlands of Australia. These whalers were 'bay whalers',
often living long periods ashore. Bay whalers sometimes sailed through
Tuvalu waters but only when alternating between the coastal right
whaling grounds of different hemispheres. Nearly all the whalers in
Tuvalu were therefore pelagic sperm whalers, a fact which had an
important bearing on the types and frequency of contact between Tuvaluans
and whalers since the latter had no reason to live ashore in groups in
order to catch whales. 12

The presence or absence of whaleships in Tuvalu was also
dependent on the relationship between the major sperm whaling grounds
in the Pacific. Most such whaling grounds were seasonal but the 'On-the-
Line' ground was occupied by sperm whales all the year round. It was
therefore possible to work the ground 12 months of the year and some
whaling captains, who wished to avoid travelling between grounds, took
advantage of this fact. 13 But the ground had several disadvantages
which discouraged the majority of captains from such a course of action.
In the first place 'On-the-Line' sperm whales were generally only of
medium size. 14 This drawback was compounded by the absence of fertile
islands where the water and food supplies might be replenished and also
by the prevalence of westerly storms between October and March which

12. Jackson 1978:97, 134. For the essential points of difference
between sperm whales and right whales as these related to the
whaling industry see Hohman 1928:145-47, 180-81; Jackson
1978:7-11, 48-50

13. Haley 1950:102

14. Bullen 1944:152
often made working conditions impossible. Most captains therefore preferred other sperm whaling grounds which embraced less extensive areas and where bigger whales might be found in larger concentrations.

Accordingly the grounds to the north of New Zealand and in the Tasman Sea were usually worked during the Southern summer months and vacated only when the stormy winter set in. Some whalers then made for the South American 'Off-shore' ground; often they took on board further crew members and 'recruits' (which in whaling parlance means provisions, not men) either at the Bay of Islands or Tahiti. Upon reaching the 'Off-shore' ground they would work westwards across the Equator into the 'On-the-Line' ground. Other vessels made directly for the Equator but easting as far as necessary to offset the prevailing ocean currents. Having gone as far in that direction as required they would then strike for the 'On-the-Line' ground which was worked westward until the Westerly season set in late in the year or early the following year when they might return to New Zealand - or perhaps go north to the 'Japan' ground which was occupied by sperm whales only during the northern Winter months.15

In other words the migratory habits of whales were only one influence on the seasonal wanderings of whalers. The alternation between grounds on an annual anti-clockwise arc as practiced by many vessels involved in the Sperm Whale fishery was calculated also to avoid unpleasant weather and impossible working conditions, to fall in with larger whales, and to make the vest of prevailing winds and currents.

All this is not to suggest that whaling voyages were as systematic and purposeful as is sometimes suggested.16 Whaling captains did not in any literal sense 'follow the whale' on its migratory treks but rather turned up where they knew their quarry was likely to be at certain times of the year. As Richards explains:

The early whaling captains really knew nothing about whale migratory routes — they did not know of isotherms, or seasonal currents or of whales food etc but worked only on 'seasons', i.e. that whales would be at a certain spot at a certain month. There was an enormous amount of aimless meandering involved based on hearsay and guesswork. The big break-through came with Maury's chart in 1847 but even after that for the first decade or so, there was not much system — just hunches. 17

WITH THE advent of whalers European shipping in Tuvalu increased from next to nothing to somewhat of a trickle. By 1825 the last Tuvalu island had been 'discovered' for European geography (see Table 2:2). Even so the group was still off the beaten track and whalship visits were infrequent by the standards of many other Pacific Island groups. The known number of separate whaling cruises where one or more Tuvalu island was at least sighted amounts to 53 American, one British and one Australian (see Table 2:3), sometimes working the group but more commonly just passing through. 18 The actual number would have been closer to 200, probably more. 19 But whatever the figure it is modest

17. Rhys Richards, personal communication, 12 September 1981. See also Hohman 1928:150-51. The first thorough and systematic attempt to define the seasonal resorts of sperm whales and right whales was undertaken by Lieutenant M.F. Maury, first superintendent of the United States Naval Observatory, in 1847. In addition to his wind and current charts he produced another in which the seasonal distribution of the whales were diagramatically represented in 5x21/2 squares — see Hohman 1928:149 & n; Pambu, Series 2:4 (4th Qtr 1980), pp.5-6

18. In reaching these figures I have consulted all the logbooks on the P.M.B.'s New England Microfilm Project which Langdon (1979:156-57) indicates to have a Tuvalu content, and also the published and typescript accounts of whaling cruises which passed through Tuvalu — Jarman 1838:163-64; Pease TS. A further 43 whaling logs have since been microfilmed for the Bureau; these had not been distributed when this chapter underwent its final revision — see Pambu, Series 2:6 (2nd Qtr 1981) pp.1-2

19. Sherman (1965:8-9) has calculated that less than 30% of the logbooks of the American whaling industry have survived. Since American whaleships were so overwhelmingly in numerical superiority it seems reasonable to suggest that the known whaling cruises tabulated in Table 2:3 represents between one-quarter and one-third of the sum total of whaling visits to Tuvalu
when one considers that "some 300 American whalers must have been at sea at any one time from 1820-1835 and some 600 from 1835-60". At its height the American whaling fleet totalled 736 vessels, about 3½ times the estimated total of whaling cruises through Tuvalu down through the years.

Visits from whalers of other nationalities are a small but unknown quantity. British whalers were in the region of Kiribati in the 1830s but of these only one, the Japan, is known to have visited Tuvalu waters. There may have been a few more but certainly not very many. The 1830s in any case were the twilight years of British South Sea whaling. Canadian and French whalers came in even small numbers if they came at all. Australian whalers were more numerous but not by much. Sometimes they were right whales alternating between grounds of different hemispheres. Perhaps the experiences of Captain Edward Cattlin are indicative of the infrequency with which Australian sperm whalers entered Tuvalu waters. During the course of six whaling voyages between 1827-36 he cruised through the group on only one occasion catching four whales and trading for coconuts with men from Nukufetau and "Voytupoo" who came out in their canoes.

Yet claims have been made to the effect that Tuvalu waters, or parts thereof, were a significant whalers' resort. It has been stated,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>SHIP &amp; CAPTAIN</th>
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<th>LOGBOOK</th>
<th>HOMEPORT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1821</td>
<td>Independence II (George Barrett)</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>Nantucket, Mass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1825</td>
<td>Loper (Obed Starbuck)</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>PMB 859</td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Independence II (William Plasket)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1830</td>
<td>Australian (Edward Cattlin)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>ML M55</td>
<td>Port Jackson, N.S.W.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

KEY:  
a party from the whaleship goes ashore at one or more island (excluding Niulakita)  
+ Tuvaluans from one or more islands go out to the whaleship in their canoes  
c party from the whaleship lands at Niulakita to procure supplies of wood and food  

a This Table has largely been compiled from the logbooks of the vessels concerned, and supplemented where necessary from standard reference sources such as Hegarty 1959, Sherman 1955; Starbuck 1878; and Whaling Masters. Criteria for inclusion is the sighting of one or more Tuvalu Island with or without disembarkation  
b Each separate entry represents a visit by a whaleship during the course of a 'cruse'. In whaling terminology there is a distinction between a 'cruse' and a 'voyage' in that a 'cruse' is a segment of a 'voyage'. More precisely a 'cruse' is "A single sailing to a whaling ground and the subsequent return to port to recruit". A 'voyage' is therefore "The entire time from leaving home port to the return, usually including more than one cruse". For a useful glossary of whaling and nautical terms see Garner 1966, 271-76  

c No known logbook, but see Ward 1967, V, 257-60
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<td>d</td>
<td>British</td>
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<td>Loan (H.H. Merchant)</td>
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<td>Gideon Howland (Michael Baker)</td>
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<td>Howard (Alexander Bunker)</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>PMB 831</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>Martha (- Sayer)</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>PMB 876</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td>Fortune (T.S. Bailey)</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>PMB 844</td>
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<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td>Chris. Mitchell (Enoch Ackley)</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>PMB 389</td>
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<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td>Potomac (Oliver C. Swain)</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>PMB 394i</td>
<td>Nantucket</td>
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<tr>
<td>1847</td>
<td>Martha (Henry B. Folger)</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>PMB 399b</td>
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<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td>Abigail (George E. Young)</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>PMB 571</td>
<td>New Bedford</td>
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<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td>Alpha (Joseph W. Folger)</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>PMB 773f</td>
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d No known logbook, but see Jarman 1838:163-64
<table>
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<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td>Harrowsy (G. Pendleton)</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>PMB 846a</td>
<td>Stonington, Conn</td>
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<tr>
<td>+1850</td>
<td>Bouditch (Nelson J. Waldron)</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>PMB 296, PMB 577, PMB 8366</td>
<td>Warren, R.I.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>Falcon (- Smith)</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>New Bedford</td>
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<tr>
<td>+1850</td>
<td>Ganges (Thomas Coffin, 2nd)</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>PMB 727</td>
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<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>Honeo (- Gornham)</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>f</td>
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<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>Swift (- Vincent)</td>
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<td>PMB 367b</td>
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<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>Herald (Charles T. Terry)</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>PMB 867</td>
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<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>Joseph Masseli (E.T. Howland)</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>PMB 372, 380a</td>
<td>Fairhaven</td>
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<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>Phoenix (Perry Winslow)</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>PMB 383a, PMB 389</td>
<td>Nantucket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>Omega (Charles C. Russell)</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>g</td>
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<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>Potomaco (Charles Grant)</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>PMB 384h</td>
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<tr>
<td>1852</td>
<td>Lagoda (- Tobey)</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>PMB 343, 344a</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1852</td>
<td>Oliver Creake (William B. Cash)</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>PMB 832e</td>
<td>New Bedford</td>
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e No known logbook; sighted by Bouditched - see Logbook of Bouditched, 22-23 March 1850 (PMB 577)

f No known logbook; sighted by Ganges - see Logbook of Ganges, 17 Oct 1850 (PMB 727, Frame 69)

g No known logbook; sighted by Phoenix and Potomaco - see Logbook of Phoenix, 11 Nov 1851 (PMB 383a); Logbook of Potomaco, 11, 13 Nov 1851 (PMB 384h)
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<th>HOMESTEAD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1852</td>
<td>Potomac (Charles Grant)</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>PHB 384h</td>
<td>Nantucket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1853</td>
<td>* Plume (Henry Pease, 2nd)</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>h</td>
<td>Nantucket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1853</td>
<td>Canton II (Henry B. Folger)</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>PHB 541</td>
<td>New Bedford</td>
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<tr>
<td>1854</td>
<td>Sophia Thornton (John H. Young)</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>PHB 893</td>
<td>New Bedford</td>
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<tr>
<td>1855</td>
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<td>Commodore Nourse (Lewis H. Lawrence)</td>
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<td>Fallmouth, Mass</td>
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<td>Isaac Houland (Reuben H. Hobbs)</td>
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<td>1855</td>
<td>Potomac (Enoch Ackley)</td>
<td>356</td>
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<tr>
<td>1856</td>
<td>Cones (Charles West)</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>PHB 885</td>
<td>Holmes' Hole, Mass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1856</td>
<td>Brighton (Aber Tupper)</td>
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<td>Dartmouth, Mass</td>
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<tr>
<td>1856</td>
<td>* Edward Cary (Perry Winslow)</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>PHB 383h</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Massachusetts, ship (Thomas Chaffee)</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>PHB 396h</td>
<td>Nantucket</td>
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<tr>
<td>1857</td>
<td>Edward Cary (Perry Winslow)</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>PHB 393b</td>
<td>Nantucket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1859</td>
<td>Louisa (William R. Hathaway)</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>PHB 875</td>
<td>New Bedford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1859</td>
<td>Massachusetts, berk (Daniel B. Green)</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>i</td>
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h: No known logbook, but see Pease TS. & 1962

i: No known logbook; sighted by Louisa - see Logbook of Louisa, 25 March 1859 (PHB 875)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
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<th>HOMEPORT</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>Belle (Roswell Brown)</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>PMB 311</td>
<td>Fairhaven</td>
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<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>Young Hector (Charles H. Hager)</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>PMB 8401</td>
<td>New Bedford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>Elizabeth (Perry Winslow)</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>PMB 290</td>
<td>New Bedford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>Hope (Leonard S. Gifford)</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>PMB 222</td>
<td>New Bedford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>Alpha (William H. Caswell)</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>PMB 372b, PMB 372c</td>
<td>Nantucket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>Horatio (Charles Grant)</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>PMB 250, PMB 820j</td>
<td>New Bedford</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
for example, that the waters a few miles to the south of Funafuti and Nukulaelae were among the locales more highly favoured by 'On-the-Line' whalers.\textsuperscript{28} Another authority, Ivan Sanderson, even goes to the extent of designating Tuvalu as a separate, and important, whaling ground.\textsuperscript{29}

The evidence consulted presents quite a different picture. Tuvalu was avoided rather than frequented and there is nothing to suggest that Funafuti and Nukulaelae were preferred for actual whaling. Although a few whalers either sought or caught whales in southern Tuvalu waters,\textsuperscript{30} whaleships were nevertheless more evident in the north of the group. The majority of whalers on the western margin of the 'On-the-Line' ground confined their operations largely to southern Kiribati, and those who ventured further south for the purpose of whaling (as distinct from passing through Tuvalu) generally went no further south than northern Tuvalu waters, if that.

A rough indication of such can be seen in one of the Pacific Manuscript Bureau's interim indexes to the Pacific ports and islands visited by American traders and whalers in the 19th century where ten pages is needed to index the whalers' visits to Kiribati and less than two pages for Tuvalu.\textsuperscript{31} A more precise indication is C.H. Townsends's analysis of whaling catches in the Pacific from an examination of the logbook records of 1,665 voyages. The positions of sperm whale captures were plotted on two charts, one for April-September inclusive and the other for October-March. They reveal that very few whales were taken anywhere in Tuvalu during the latter period, which is the Westerly season, and that small numbers were taken during the remaining months, mostly in the north of the group in August and September. By contrast large numbers of whales were taken in Kiribati.

\textsuperscript{28} Maude 1968:121, following Beale 1839:188-91
\textsuperscript{29} Sanderson 1968:xxvi-xxvii, 238
\textsuperscript{30} Logbook of Logun, 20, 22 Nov 1828, 30 April 1826 (PMB 859); Cattlin, Logbook of Australian, 26-27 April 1830 (ML MSS 1800); Logbook of Addison, 12 May 1836 (PMB 571); Logbook of Mohawk, 15 Nov 1855 (PMB 380a)
\textsuperscript{31} Langdon 1979:52-61, 156-57
waters all the year round. Townsend’s analysis only served to confirm with greater precision the findings of Maury in 1847, where Kiribati is shown as having twice as many whales in its vicinity as Tuvalu. Given the general lack of whales it follows that relatively few whaleships came to the area and hardly any returned for another season.

In addition the area was not a particularly safe stretch of water for mariners. The low profile of the islands coupled with strong currents and the frequency of sudden squalls posed serious navigational problems. In 1819, for example, the Rebecca “passed almost under the crowns of the coconuts” off the northwestern shore of Funafuti before its crew was able to steer her to safety. Nor were the charts of the area of the sort to inspire confidence. Pacific mariners often gave cartographers inaccurate positions and different names for their sightings, with the result that charts even as late as the 1850s tended to show far more islands than there actually were. In the circumstances

32. Chart A of Townsend 1935, “Distribution of the Sperm Whales based on logbook records dating from 1761-1920, April-September inclusive”, and Chart B of Townsend 1935, “Distribution of the Sperm Whale . . . October-March inclusive”. Both maps are in the endpaper pocket of the issue of Zoologica. It is clear that Sanderson’s identification of a separate ‘Ellice Islands’ grounds rest on a misinterpretation of Townsend’s charts: Sanderson confused Tuvalu with Kiribati. This muddling of Pacific localities should not obscure the fact that Sanderson’s book is an excellent survey of whaling down through the ages.

33. Maury’s “Whale Chart” is most readily consulted as the endpaper maps of Starbuck 1878.

34. Paulin 1947:35

35. In James Imray’s 1847 chart of the South Pacific, for example, the individual Tuvalu islands are well out of position in relation to one another and Niulakita appears in three separate locations under three different names - a portion of Imray’s chart is reproduced in Pease 1962:6. Probably the most accurate early charting of Tuvalu was carried out in 1841 by two vessels of the United States Exploring Expedition; even so some extra islands appear - for the Tuvalu portion of the Expedition’s chart of the Pacific see Chambers and Munro 1980:172. In sharp contrast to this relative accuracy is the map of the Pacific basin drawn and coloured in 1852 by J. Wild, geographer to Queen Victoria and Prince Albert where no less than 17 separate islands are depicted in the region of Tuvalu - Wild’s map is most conveniently consulted in the Jan 1981 and other recent issues of Pacific Islands Monthly, where it is used as the background to an Air Nauru advertisement.
It is surprising that only one whaleship is thought to have been wrecked in Tuvalu - the unidentified vessel whose disintegrating hulk was sighted at Niulakita in 1853 from the decks of a passing Italian schooner. Nevertheless, since whaling vessels of the days were typically large - usually in the region of 300-400 tons - and not easily manoeuvred, their captains had every reason to steer clear of badly-charted, low-lying archipelagoes - unless of course an abundance of whales outweighed the risks as was the case in the vicinity of southern Kiribati.

Besides being dangerous obstacles to navigation the individual Tuvalu islands had few positive virtues from a whaleman's standpoint. A "sandbank about eight foot above the level of the sea ..." is an unpromising sort of place to provision or replenish the water supply. The absence of good anchorages (except at Nukufetau and Funafuti) and other facilities for repairs also ensured that whaling captains would go elsewhere should their vessel be in need of an overhaul. Given the overall lack of attractions and surfeit of dangers it is not surprising that nearly half the known whaling vessels in Tuvalu simply sailed through the group without any type of contact taking place between ship and shore. Some whaling captains quite deliberately avoided contact with Tuvaluans. On at least four separate occasions captains had their crews painting the ship or repairing the rigging within sight of land but without attempting in any way to contact shore. On another occasion inducements from shore were ignored and the whaler sailed past Nanumea without stopping for canoes coming out to meet the ship.

The possibility of desertion provides yet another reason for the 'pelagic perspectives' of the generality of whaling captains in Tuvalu. In the words of one who spent two years before the mast, "a

36. Amegaza 1885-86:11, 343; Laracy and Laracy 1973:1
37. Logbook of Gideon Rowland, 27 Nov 1839 (PMB 863)
38. Logbook of Martha, 23-24 Feb 1844 (PMB 876); Logbook of Martha, 30 Oct 1847 (PMB 3996); Logbook of Oliver Crocker, 26 Oct 1852 (PMB 832e); Logbook of Hope, 15 Aug 1863 (PMB 222)
39. Logbook of Louisa, 27 March 1859 (PMB 875)
40. Richards, personal communication, 12 Sept 1981
seaman’s life is at best a mixture of a little good with much evil, and a little pleasure with much pain. The appalling conditions on board whaleships prompted large numbers of whalmen to desert. Even though a lesser percentage would have chosen such an improbable haven as a small coral atoll, or worse still a reef island, the risk nevertheless remained and seamen did desert in Tuvalu. Since the average American whaling vessel suffered a two-thirds turnover of its original crew (30% deserted, 33% discharged, 4% killed) it is understandable that whaling captains were ever-vigilant against the possibility of needlessly loosening yet more men. Apart from fresh water and to a lesser extent provisions, the islands littering the ‘On-the-Line’ ground were a nuisance as men could jump ship, so best avoided.

Tuvalu in other words was more a thoroughfare than a whalers’ resort. Many of the passing whalers were either on their way to or returning from Rotuma, a fertile high island to the south with facilities for repairs and provisioning. Many Rotumans were eager to travel so their island had the added attraction as a place where extra hands could easily be obtained. Towards the end of each year, moreover, Tuvalu formed a pathway for whalers alternating between sperm whale grounds, most notably those proceeding from southern Kiribati to the southern temperate grounds at the onset of the equatorial Westerly season.

BUT ONE whaling voyage was not a carbon copy of every other and many whalers had contact of one sort or another with shore while in Tuvalu waters. Four types of contact can be distinguished. Most commonly, parties of Tuvaluans would come out in their canoes and barter would then take place between ship and canoes on the open sea. Trade also

41. R.N. Dana 1964:40
42. Eg J. Dana 1935:247
43. Hohman 1928:63-64, 316-17
44. Eason 1951:33, 38
took place with whalers anchored in the lagoons of Funafuti and Nukufetau but without the seamen on board actually going ashore. A limited number of trading exchanges, however, occurred ashore. Lastly, a few whalers sent parties ashore at the uninhabited island of Niulakita which had no coconuts at the time but was known to have a plentiful supply of wood, which was needed for firing the tryworks, and also turtles. "Eggs, Fish, & Birds (see Table 2:3 and also Table 2:5 for a more detailed breakdown of the years up to 1835).

It was not long before the Islanders adopted a positive routine whenever the sail of a whaling vessel was sighted. In 1833, for example, the Japan sighted Nukufetau and

... several canoes came off, with cocoa-nut, which the natives traded for pieces of iron hoop, and fish-hooks. They were the first people I had seen who wore no covering whatever. They had no weapons with them, and were free and unsuspicous; they held up in one hand cocoa-nuts, and the forefinger of the other was hooked in their mouths, exclaiming 'mattaw, mattaw,' meaning fish-hooks ... It is astonishing to see in what weather these poor unenlightened people will venture five or six miles from the land, to obtain a few pieces of iron hoop, a fish-hook, or, the ultimatum of their riches, a knife.45

The people of Nukufetau were not the only ones to take the initiative in trade, as the crew of the Bowditch discovered when passing close by Funafuti in 1849:

... we discovered some native canoes coming up to us for trade. We then brought to, to let them come up. They soon came alongside bringing mats, etc., to sell. We accordingly bought what they had giving in return pieces of iron hoops, glass, pills and other trinkets which pleased them very much. These natives ... seldom ... get the chance to trade with ships coming this way.46

45. Jarman 1838:163-64. 'Mattaw' should be spelt matau, which in the Nukufetau dialect means to fish from a canoe at anchor with a hook and line. Matau in the northern Tuvalu dialects means fishhook; kaalifo is the word used on Nukufetau for fishhook. For an earlier account of Nukufetauans coming out to trade with a passing whaleship see Logbook of Independence II 19 Aug 1827 (PMB 674, frame 667).

46. Logbook of Bowditch (typed abstract), 23 March 1850 (PMB 296, frame 559). See also Logbook of Bowditch, 23 March 1850 (PMB 836d) and Logbook of Bowditch, 23 March 1850 (PMB 577).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUNUMEA</th>
<th>NUNUMANGA</th>
<th>NIUTAO</th>
<th>NUI</th>
<th>VAITUPU</th>
<th>NUKIPETAU</th>
<th>FUNAFUTI</th>
<th>NUKULAELE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1781</td>
<td>Le Princesa sighted the island</td>
<td>1824</td>
<td>Coquille sighted the island</td>
<td>1781</td>
<td>La Princesa sailed to obtain provisions</td>
<td>1825</td>
<td>Loper sighted the island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1809</td>
<td>Elizabeth sighted the island</td>
<td>1826</td>
<td>Independence II ship's boat went within half of shore but didn't meet with kind reception</td>
<td>1826</td>
<td>Loper sighted the island</td>
<td>1826</td>
<td>Loper sighted the island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1824</td>
<td>Coquille didn't stop for canoes coming out from shore</td>
<td>1825</td>
<td>L.C. Richmond sighted the island</td>
<td>1825</td>
<td>Loper sighted the island</td>
<td>1827</td>
<td>Independence II canoes come out to trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1826</td>
<td>Loper sighted the island</td>
<td>1825</td>
<td>L.C. Richmond sighted the island</td>
<td>1829</td>
<td>Loper sighted the island</td>
<td>1829</td>
<td>Loper sighted the island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1835</td>
<td>L.C. Richmond sighted the island</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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Occasionally a whaling captain with the opportunity, inclination, or from sheer necessity, would send his boats ashore. Indeed, the first whaler to enter the Tuvalu segment of the 'On-the-Line' ground did just that. Returning from the recently discovered 'Japan' ground Captain Barrett of the Independence II sighted Nukulaelae and sent boats ashore on two separate occasions "to get some refreshment for the sick". The crew returned with coconuts, both times having been "treated very kindly by the natives who made them presents". But it could be a risky business and few whaling captains were prepared to send parties ashore to obtain supplies. Some seemed to be fearful of a hostile reception ashore, as when boats from the Alpha scurried back to their ship upon "seeing kanakas on the beach".

Even less timorous captains were reluctant to allow their men to leave the ship. In addition to the possibility of desertion there were the strong and unpredictable currents of the area to take into consideration. Whaling masters avoided the risk of being drifted onto the fringing reef by standing well out to sea. But then there was the danger of drifting away from the island and leaving crew members stranded ashore for indefinite periods, as happened with the Planter at Nanumea in 1853. There is every indication that currents and weather combined to determine whether a whaling captain seeking to make contact with shore was, in fact, able to do so. In 1827 the Independence II had difficulty off Vaitupu because "a current setting to the leeward . . . hindered us from getting near the island". Conversely, Captain Winslow of the Edward Cary sent two boats ashore at Nui on a calm day in 1856. Had it been rough he would have waited for the Islanders to come out rather than risk his own boats and the crew's safety on the notoriously wide and difficult reef surrounding the atoll.

47. Ward 1967:IV, 257-60
48. Logbook of Alpha, 19 Nov 1864, p.224 (PMB 372c)
49. Pease TS:5
50. Logbook of Independence II, 19 August 1827 (PMB 674, frame 677)
51. Logbook of Edward Cary, 13 Nov 1856 (PMB 383b)
The point to emerge from these encounters is that the Tuvaluans were generally willing, even eager, to trade with passing whalers but were hampered both by lack of contacts and the inadequacy of the products they could offer in exchange for European goods. Many of the whalers had no pressing need to stop and trade but did so indulgently and with good humour - like those on board the Japan and Bowditch - because they realised the Tuvaluans' peaceful designs and their anxiety to obtain fish hooks and so-called "trinkets". But there was also an element of enlightened self-interest on the part of the whalemen. Not only did these barter sessions relieve the monotony of the voyage but they also provided the opportunity to obtain sought after refreshments such as drinking coconuts to supplement the salted provisions on board. These occasional diversions on the high seas were a means by which a whaling captain could boost crew morale without running the risk of crewmen deserting.

Lack of tension between the "free and unsuspicious" Tuvaluans, especially those to the south of the group, and the whalemen was the remarkable feature of their relationship. It had little reason to be otherwise given the infrequency and brevity of their meetings and, above all, because so few whaling parties actually went ashore. Accordingly, Tuvaluans were spared the disruptive effects normally experienced at whaling ports of call and other resorts where whaling captains allowed their crews what has euphemistically been termed "a run on shore". There are no known cases in Tuvalu of drunken sprees ashore nor were whalers responsible for introducing infectious diseases whether sexually transmitted or not - though they did introduce tobacco. The poverty of resources and the tiny size of the individual islands also discouraged desertions so Tuvalu was also spared the presence of boisterous beachcomber enclaves of the kind found in smallish places elsewhere such as the high islands of Micronesia. These same characteristics also discouraged a succession.

52. Haley 1950:102
53. Logbook of Mars, 21 June 1842 (PHB 876); Logbook of Abigail, 21 Jan 1849 (PHB 571)
of whalers' visits and therefore large inroads were not made into the resources of the Tuvalu Islands as happened at some other better endowed islands, such as Kosrae in the Carolines. 55

Further comparisons with other island groups only serves to emphasise the limited impact of the whalers' presence. Unlike the Rarotongans, impoverished by the decline of whaling in the early 1860s, 56 Tuvaluans never became economically dependent on the whalers. Nor were large numbers of young men recruited by whaling vessels leaving a demographic imbalance and associated problems which occurred in some of the Cook Islands. 57 In Tuvalu, by contrast, such community disruptions were avoided since very few Tuvaluans served on board whaleships. On the other hand no Tuvalu community possessed a pool of English-speakers and so were generally disadvantaged in their future dealings with Europeans - unlike such places as Rotuma and the Loyalty Islands where young men were extensively recruited for maritime commerce. 58 Violence between Tuvaluans and visiting whalers, moreover, was almost unknown. The only incidents to mar the record were the (undated) occasions when a Funafuti man was pursued and shot for the theft of ship's property, either a bucket or a chronometer; 59 and at Nanumea when islanders wading out on the reef to greet an incoming whale-boat were fired upon. 60

Nevertheless the whalers were not without effect. Some whaling captains sailed with their families and these European children were a

55. Caroline Ralston, personal communication. The depletion of local resources as a direct consequence of the demands of whalers and early traders was by no means confined to small islands and atolls. The enormous demand for wood by beche-de-mer traders in Fiji, for example, "saw a dramatic start to the increasing pressure on the group which has continued to the present day" - Ward 1972:118
56. Beaglehole 1957:92
57. Crocombe 1964:69-70
59. Mrs David 1899:183-84; Hadley 1896:17 n; Newell 1895:608n
60. Pease TS:19
source of "great curiosity" to the Tuvaluans: for example a party of Vaitupuans "kissed [Captain Young's child] in their own way putting their noses to its face". It was also known for whalers to transport groups of Tuvaluans from one island to another, with the result that they began to rely on European shipping and soon lost their skills in the dangerous art of inter-island navigation. A more positive effect of travel on board a whaler was that it was likely to increase the range of experiences of the Tuvaluans involved and widen their horizons. When the Planter was taking a group of Nanumeans to Nanumanga in 1853:

we lowered for whales; obtaining but one calf, about 19 feet long, we took him on deck whole. The natives appeared quite observant of all that was going on; two or three took dimensions of the whale by measuring with their hands.

And when the captain of the Planter returned to Nanumea he was obliged to answer questions put to him by "the old chiefs sitting around the King". In a serious and moving intellectual exchange, Captain Pease repeatedly assured them that Europeans did not descend upon them from the sky. Conducting the discussion through a Tongan interpreter whose knowledge of the Nanumean dialect was unfortunately not equal to the occasion:

I then took a coconut, showed them the form of the earth and other planets, how the earth revolved, and how it produces night and day, and change of seasons by its revolutions. I also marked on the nut the supposed situation of America, and on the opposite side the situation of their own island, and showed them how we sailed around the globe to get there, they then wished to know if there were not holes in the sky where the rain came through; I told them that the heat produced by the sun, caused moisture to rise from the earth in cloud form, which when passing near the earth in a condensed state were made by her attraction to fall in rain ... They next wished to know what grew on our lands; what kind of food we had to eat, and how cloth, clothing and various other articles were made.

61. Logbook of Abigail, 21 Jan 1849 (PMB 571)
62. Pease TS:3
63. Pease TS:12-13
It is difficult to assess the cumulative effect of such individual encounters, sporadic and fleeting as they were, especially since the level of contact varied between islands. But there is no doubt that whalers' visits had certain specific, identifiable effects. In the southern Tuvalu islands a combination of whaler and trader contacts had, as will be shown in Chapter 4, the unintended but profound effect of eroding the foundations of the pagan religion and preparing the way for missionary teaching in the 1860s; while in the three northern islands former whalers had an important bearing on the eventual acceptance of Christianity during the 1870s. The barter exchanges between Tuvaluans and the whalers also had far-reaching consequences. The Tuvaluans demanded knives, files, hatchets, bottles and hoop iron in exchange for their produce and so obtained tools with a durable cutting edge, thus saving hours of time in the construction of canoes and dwellings. The fish hooks the whalers handed out had similar appeal. They did not catch more fish but saved the Tuvaluans the task of laboriously fashioning their own wooden or shell fish hooks.

Another result of the trading exchanges was to provide the Tuvaluans with a greater range of edible resources. It is not known whether the (unnamed) seeds and roots and also the chickens given to the Nanumeans by Captain Pease of the Planter flourished. But when Captain Plaskett of the Independence II gave the head chief (ulu aliki) of Vaitupu "two small Pigs" in 1827 he introduced what is now Tuvalu's most important domestic animal and an indispensable feasting food. The offspring of those pigs spread rapidly throughout the group but the immediate nutritional effects which might have accrued for the Tuvaluans were somewhat negated because hogs were in high demand among visiting whalers.

64. See Chapter 5
65. This point is elaborated in Chapter 8
66. Pease TS:14
67. Logbook of Independence II, 22 Aug 1827 (PMB 674, frame 677)
68. Logbook of Abigail, 16, 22 Jan 1849 (PMB 571); Logbook of Belle, 27 April 1860 (PMB 311); Logbook of Edward Cary, 13 Nov 1853 (PMB 383b); Logbook of Elisabeth, 16-17 Sept 1861 (PMB 290, frame 731); Logbook of Fortuna, 4 April 1846 (PMB 844); Logbook of Mohawk, 14 Nov 1855 (PMB 380d)
In sum it has been argued that Tuvalu was more of a thoroughfare for whalers than a resort; that small-scale trading contacts between ship and shore took different forms; that contact between whalers and Tuvaluans were slight compared with elsewhere; but that these contacts nevertheless had their effects.

THE PASSING barter trade was by no means confined to whalers. The expansionary period of the whaling industry coincided with an increase in the number of trading and exploring vessels in the area (see Table 2:5). In the main they encountered the same range of experiences as did the more numerous whalers. Some of these vessels simply sighted islands without attempting to contact their inhabitants - namely the French government exploring expedition in the corvette La Coquille in 1824 under the command of L.I. Duperrey which sighted Nanumanga and then Nanumea, ignoring approaching canoes from the latter place; and the Russian cargo ship Elena (Lieutenant Chromchenko) which sighted NuI in 1829. Other traders and explorers, in contrast, were anxious to make contact with shore, and not only were the Islanders generally friendly and obliging but small-scale trading was inherent in these meetings. In 1841, for example, the Peacock and Flying Fish - a detachment from the United States Exploring Expedition - visited Funafuti and Nukufetau; but it is not stated what the eager Islanders received in return for their wooden fish hooks, cordage, taro, embroidered mats, shark-tooth swords and "war spears and clubs of a very ordinary kind".

69. Duperrey n.d.:145; Duperrey 1827:15; Lesson 1839:446. The original documents relating to this expedition are listed in Dunmore 1969: Garry 1967.
70. Ivashnitzev 1950:210-13 (translation provided by H.E. Maude)
71. Hale 1846:161-69, 90, 358-64; Wilkes 1845:V, 37-45. The unpublished journals of the expedition with a Tuvalu content are Hudson, Journal (PNB 416); Emmons, 1838-1842 (PNB 774); Reynolds, 1840-1842 Journal (Franklin & Marshall College Library); Stuart, 1838-1842 Journal (ML PHN 463); Whittle, 1838-1841 (Alderman Library, University of Virginia). The United States Exploring Expedition is often called the Wilkes Expedition after the officer in overall command. This is a misnomer in the case of Tuvalu because Wilkes was in Hawaii when the Peacock and Flying Fish visited the group in 1841.
Occasionally, however, there were tense moments and volatile scenes. Significantly these incidents did not follow on from the more usual barter situation conducted from the deck of a passing ship, but were the result of more extensive trading arrangements, or attempts at such, transacted ashore. In 1825 a Dutch expedition comprising the sloop-of-war Pollux (Captain Eeg) and the frigate Maria Reygersbergen (Captain Coertsen) sighted Nui. Two boats were sent ashore and their crews became quite alarmed when manhandled by the "athletic and fierce" Islanders who attempted to steal boat hooks, oars and anything else they could lay their hands on.\(^{72}\)

But the boisterous reception of the Dutch at Nui was nothing compared with the experience of a trading vessel's crew who were treated with a familiarity bordering on contempt. In 1850 the Californian trader Rodolph, on a speculative Pacific cruise to gather produce for the San Francisco market, anchored off Vaitupu. The people of Vaitupu then prevailed upon the captain to fetch "their old king [ulu aliki] and several others" who were stranded on nearby Nukufetau in exchange for "200 hogs, & 20,000 coconuts". The missing party was duly returned - and while at Nukufetau the Californians conducted a brisk trade. Then the Vaitupuans reneged and only parted with "2 medium sized hogs & 17 little pigs. Also 633 cocoa nuts". In the circumstances the Americans could do little other than threaten to return one day and settle scores as "we did not have more than one pound of [gun] powder aboard with which to claim our rights". It was also acidly observed that the Vaitupuans were
great thieves, & when they get possession of any article, either by our consent or otherwise, they seem to consider it their own. And if called upon for it, it is with great difficulty we can obtain it back. They hand upon us and fondle us all the time there and steal from our pockets everything they contain. They do this very expertly, & succeed even when we are watching them closely.\(^{73}\)

\(^{72}\) Moll 1826; Ward 1967:V, 206, 208-09. The Dutch published sources relating to this expedition are listed in Broeze 1975

\(^{73}\) Kemble 1966:146
TABLE 2:5
EUROPEAN TRADING AND EXPLORING VESSELS IN TUVALU,
1824-1853

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vessel(s)</th>
<th>Captain</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sightings/Landings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coquille</td>
<td>Duperrey</td>
<td>1824&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>sighted Nanumanga and Nanumea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pollux</td>
<td>Egg</td>
<td>1824&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>sent boat ashore at Nui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria Heygern-berger</td>
<td>Coertsen</td>
<td>1826&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>sighted Niulakita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>Mattinson</td>
<td>1829&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>sighted Nui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elena</td>
<td>Chromchenko</td>
<td>1830&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>sighted Niulakita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophia</td>
<td>Elley</td>
<td>1841&lt;sup&gt;f&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>entered lagoons of Funafuti and Nukufetau; sighted Vaitupu, Niutao and Nanumanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peacock</td>
<td>Hudson</td>
<td>1845&lt;sup&gt;g&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>sighted Nanumanga ? wanted to get provisions at Nui but unable to reach shore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flying Fish</td>
<td>Cheever</td>
<td>1847&lt;sup&gt;h&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>called at Nukufetau and Nui on a labour cruise; unable to obtain recruits (see below,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warwick</td>
<td>Kirsopp</td>
<td>1850&lt;sup&gt;i&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>traded at Vaitupu; brought home Vaitupuans stranded at Nukufetau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Velocity</td>
<td>Lancaster</td>
<td>1850&lt;sup&gt;j&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>sighted Niulakita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portentia</td>
<td>Perry</td>
<td>1850&lt;sup&gt;k&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>traded at Vaitupu; brought home Vaitupuans stranded at Nukufetau</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> Duperrey n.d.:45  
<sup>b</sup> Hol1 1826  
<sup>c</sup> Findlay 1851:997  
<sup>d</sup> Iwashitzev 1850:210-13  
<sup>e</sup> Bennett 1831:197-98  
<sup>f</sup> Hale 1846:161-69; Wilkes 1845:V, 37-44  
<sup>g</sup> Logbook of Warwick, 19, 21-22 July 1845 (PMB 210)  
<sup>h</sup> Howe 1978:30; Haule 1968:268  
<sup>i</sup> Komble 1966:140-46  
<sup>j</sup> Amega 1885:86:243-45
Nevertheless, trading vessels and exploring expeditions were a rare sight and the most significant agents of acculturation to the 1850s were the passing whalers. By the 1860s, however, the depletion of sperm whales combined with the disruptions of the gold rushes and the Civil War, and the substitution of sperm whale's products by kerosine and other materials resulted in a long-term recession in that sector of the industry. Interest then switched back to right whales, which do not frequent tropical waters, because their oil is edible and some of them produced the highly valuable whalebone. The occasional whaler still cruised through Tuvalu, as did the _Havatia_ in 1878, but their day in that part of the world was effectively over. Already, by the mid-1850s, the itinerant whaler had been replaced by another breed of merchant - the resident trader.

**THE COCONUT OIL TRADE**

Most of the earliest visitors to Tuvalu commented on the abundance of coconut palms, but trade in the nuts between Islanders and passing ships was a strictly limited affair. The first shipment of coconut oil from any part of the Pacific was brought to Sydney from Tahiti in 1818 but regular trading for the oil developed only in the 1840s when the previously defective techniques for using coconut oil in the manufacture of soap and candles had been corrected. Some whalers then proceeded to collect often sizeable sideline cargoes of the oil, especially in Kiribati, and in some cases collected more coconut oil than whale oil.

74. Hohman 1928:302-08; Sanderson 1958:250-62; Starbuck 1878:99-113

75. Gordon Jackson, personal communication, 7 October 1981

76. Logbook of _Havatia_, 8 Sept-2 Oct 1878 (PMB 256, frames 521-24); _NZH_, 17 Oct 1878

77. Maude 1968:200, 240

78. Barrie Macdonald, personal communication. The first cargo of coconut oil to Sydney from Kiribati was brought by a whale-ship - Couper 1967:50
However these whalers did not carry out this dual function in Tuvalu. Instead, the local coconut oil was pioneered by trading companies proper and the first such company traders in the group were stationed at Niutao, Vaitupu and Nukulaelae sometime during the mid-1850s. All three men were agents of Robert Towns, a Sydney-based entrepreneur whose shipping interests were involved in whaling and the island trade. Towns's interest in Tuvalu was peripheral. It was no more than an offshoot of his activities in Kiribati which, in turn, was merely a sideline to his involvement in sandalwood trading in Vanuatu. Noting that a competitor was making money from coconut oil, Towns made an entry into Kiribati in 1852 with the ill-fated voyage of the Genii, and from there extended his operations to the Caroline and Marshall Islands, Rotuma and Tuvalu. Periodically one of Towns's vessels was diverted from Vanuatu to pick up the coconut oil collected by his traders stationed in these remote archipelagoes.

A second trading organisation whose vessels were involved in coconut oil in Tuvalu was J.C. Malcolm & Co., another Sydney-based concern, about which little is known. Malcolm too had been active in the Vanuatu sandalwood trade but had terminated this interest in about 1860 and redirected the Pacific side of his affairs to coconut oil. Malcolm's coconut oil headstation was situated in Rotuma and his ships plied Kiribati and Futuna as well as Tuvalu. He ran a smaller-scale trading network than did Towns, who spread his energies in coconut oil too thinly. Yet Malcolm was even less successful than Towns for in the mid-1860s several of his ships were wrecked, including the Margaret Thompson at Nui in 1864. Peter McQuarrie, who

79. Maude 1968:265n
80. On Towns generally see Shineberg 1976
82. Scarr 1973:17-18; Shineberg 1967:131
83. Maude 1981:81
84. Shineberg 1967:113
lived at Nui in 1975 and who speaks the vernacular, gives the following account of the incident:

She stranded at night, driven on to a lee-shore of the Western reef between Taula and another small islet. The captain and crew got the ship's boats into the lagoon the following day, and made for Fanua Tapu, the largest islet. The boat got into trouble amongst the coral heads until the locals went and assisted. I was told that the captain of the vessel had a store on Butaritari in the Gilberts. One informant (Nei Tero) said that drunkeness aboard had something to do with the stranding. They left descendents on Nui.

I did not actually locate much of the wreckage as I did not have Scuba gear with me at the time and the area is a bit rough for diving alone, and a bit too steep for snorkelling. It is doubtful if much remains of the ship as she was on the steep drop-off of the weather reef. Professional divers from the Marine Pacific Company in Suva made a search while they were in Nui in 1975 (salvaging a Korean fishing boat) but they found nothing. I have found balast and most families on Nui have some of these stones (for sharpening knives). I also found a piece of glass which almost certainly came from the wreck, a piece of porthole or deck sky-light. I made a drag with a very powerful magnet through the shallows and picked up some small fragments of iron and coral encrusted rust.

The ship's name was not remembered [by the people of Nui] but the captain's name was given as Wess (it was remembered that one of his crew was an American Negro (or perhaps a Melanesian?)]. My estimate of the date, from the stories told to me was about 1870.

The crew was later returned to Sydney via Rotuma and the affairs of Malcolm & Co were finally wound up in 1867 upon the death of the owner.

The third Sydney-based firm to involve itself in coconut oil

86. Peter McQuarrie, personal communication, 13 August 1977
87. The Empire (Sydney), 13 Jan 1865; SMH, 13 Jan 1865
88. Scarr 1973:36n. I am grateful to Ron Parsons who provided background information on Malcolm & Co
trading in Tuvalu was Macdonald, Smith & Co. Both its genesis and activities demonstrate the extent to which Tuvalu was an offshoot to more important coconut oil interests in adjacent islands and archipelagoes. Charles Smith had formerly been an associate of Richard Randall, who pioneered shore-based commercial contacts in Kiribati when he began trading for coconut oil at Butaritari in 1846. Randall's partnership began to dissolve in 1863 when Smith withdrew and then enticed Macdonald out of the employ of Towns to form their own company. Like Malcolm, their coconut oil network embraced Kiribati, Tuvalu and Rotuma. At least one of their vessels, the E.K. Bateson, was active in Tuvalu until the early 1870s.

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The pattern of trading which had evolved in Tuvalu until 1860s was a variation on an overall Pacific theme. In his study of the contemporaneous Kiribati coconut oil trade, H.E. Maude:

traced a progression of trading procedures from the first barter of the explorer, through the whaling and other vessels in transit requiring provisions and refreshment, the itinerant trading vessels, the whaler-traders with their native purchasing agents, the resident headquarters trader with his rotating oil agents, to the island trader with his fixed retail trade store.91

"These patterns may be found elsewhere", continues Maude, "though complicated maybe by an overlay of factors particular to the area . . ." Local variables in Tuvalu did somewhat modify this sequence. The diminutive size and the marginal agricultural fertility of the islands together with their tiny populations necessarily imposed a low ceiling on the level of coconut oil production. Accordingly there could be no justification for the existence of a trading headstation as at Butaritari nor was there scope for the whaler-traders who featured in Kiribati. In a regional perspective Tuvalu could never be successfully other than a dispensable appendage to an entrepreneur's

90. Vivian, 1871-72 Journal, pp.72, 73, 77 (SSJ 159); Powell, 1871 Journal, pp.8-9 (SSJ 160); Hayter, Basilisk Logbook and Journal, 17 July 1872 (PMB 628)

91. Maude 1968:282-83. See also Couper 1967:50-52
or trading company's activities. Despite the absence of several stages in the Kiribati sequence there is nevertheless that same trend away from casual and itinerant trade towards a more organised, shore-based procedure, involving trading companies maintaining a series of concurrently operation shore-stations (in Haude's term the "fixed retail trade store") manned by more-or-less permanently based traders with the whole operation being serviced by company vessels.

This development became the organisational form for trading throughout the Pacific. It was a conscious response to the dictates of economy and efficiency, calculated to minimise the difficulties of conducting seaborne trade in an extremely dispersed geographic setting. In the first place, the presence of shore-based traders served to stimulate local production. As Couper points out: "Merchants recognised the advantages of having a trader in situ who was always ready to exchange goods for oil and to store the oil until the arrival of a company ship." The second consideration was by far the more important because it made possible the optimum utilisation of ships' time, which was a crucial factor to the fortunes of trading companies. It was for this reason that a trading captain was always a man in a hurry, or as one newspaper thought fit to inform its readers: "The dispatch with which the ship Benvenue discharged her cargo, took her ballast, and sailed, gives evidence that time with some masters is a very precious commodity." Such criteria could obviously not be met under the conditions of itinerant trading where it was necessary for the vessel to lie idly at anchor for days on end at each of the numerous points of loading while the crew went ashore to procure a cargo and quite possibly antagonised the locals in the process. Not only was a ship's time, in a sense, irreplaceable, but ships themselves were costly items of capital equipment which depreciated quickly and operated

93. Couper 1967:51
94. Daily Southern Cross (Auckland), 21 Feb 1876. The reference to ballast indicates another factor to be taken into account. As Couper (1967:148) points out, shipping schedules had to be devised if possible to avoid "the haulage of empty space"
at high risk. Hence their continual utilization and, in consequence, the establishment of a breed of men sometimes known as station-traders.

The only non-Australian company to involve itself in coconut oil trading in Tuvalu was the Hamburg family firm of J.C. Godeffroy & Sohn which established a Pacific agency at Apia in 1857. They entered the scene as Towns and Malcolm were on the retreat but in competition with Macdonald, Smith & Co., and maintained a presence in the group until 1890. Godeffroys were significant in Tuvalu in two respects. They pioneered the transition in dealing in coconut oil to the more profitable and easily handled copra; they were also the first of several large-scale heavily-capitalised enterprises who rapidly dominated the trade in copra within the group. At the same time Godeffroys confirmed trading trends which had been taking hold during the previous decades of European penetration. They and the other large firms completed the process begun during the trade in oil whereby the ship-based methods of the speculative trading captains were giving way to more regularized shore-based contacts. In doing so Godeffroys and the others established extensive networks of trading stations, each manned by a trader tied to the company, embracing several other island groups besides. In that sense Godeffroys and the other firms were no different in broad essentials to their fore-runners - the passing whalers and coconut oil traders - who regarded Tuvalu as only a small segment of their wider spheres of commercial interest.

THE Early Contact Period can largely be explained in terms of expanding commercial relations between Tuvaluans and Europeans. By the mid-1860s it becomes increasingly inappropriate to take such a view despite large company domination of commerce. Trade certainly increased in importance but was overshadowed in local reckoning by a completely different sort of outside influence whose impact far exceeded that of the traders. Christian missionaries entered the
group in 1865 and within a generation had profoundly altered Tuvalu life. Their coming brought down the curtain on the Early Contact Period and ushered in the era of missionary supremacy which remained unchallenged until the assumption of colonial rule in 1892.
CHAPTER 3

PERUVIAN INTERLUDE, 1863

In 1860 Tuvalu was still an almost unknown corner of the Pacific. Traders had been resident in the group for less than a decade; missionaries had yet to come; and overseas labour migration was confined to those few Tuvaluans who had enlisted on European ships, mostly whalers. By the middle of the decade the activities of that pre-colonial trinity of traders, missionaries and labour recruiters finally intersected and Tuvalu lost some of its insularity. Although still a marginal archipelago, Tuvalu was thereafter brought increasingly within the mainstream of rhythms and currents shaping the wider Pacific into a more integrated area. Within the group itself the trading impact intensified; missionary enterprise was revolutionary in its consequences; and the first large-scale recruiting episode was traumatic in its short-term effects. This latter event was the work of recruiting vessels licensed by a South American government and resulted in the worst disaster in the post-contact history of Nukulaelae and Funafuti.

The disaster originated in Peru. Following independence from Spain in 1824 the republic had experienced a general economic decline against a backdrop of corrupt government, numerous wars with its neighbours, political instability, and widespread disaffection.

* After this chapter was first drafted, H.E. Maude permitted me to read the Tuvalu chapter of his forthcoming book on the Peruvian slave trade (since published as Maude 1981). I am also grateful to Professor Maude for corresponding with me on the subject - personal communications of 7 Sept 1978, 1 Feb 1981 and 3 Sept 1981. Although I have depended heavily on Maude for an overall view of the Peruvian slave trade, we are broadly in accord in our descriptions of the Peruvians' activities in Tuvalu. I have therefore not had to revise that section of this chapter in the light of Maude's findings beyond inserting details of the ships involved and the precise dates of their movements within the group, and discussing the question of the number of Tuvaluans kidnapped.
culminating in civil war in 1856. At the heart of Peru's economic difficulties was a chronic labour shortage. Particularly vulnerable to disruptions of its labour lines was the guano industry, a state monopoly which provided Peru with the bulk of its export earnings and government revenue. Although the Peruvian population had risen to almost 2.5 million by 1862 this labour potential could not for various reasons be mobilised, and to make matters worse available manpower was also in high demand by large landowners and small businessmen, and for domestic service.

The obvious answer was to seek labour from abroad and, following failure to attract European immigrants in viable numbers, the Peruvian Congress passed a general immigration order in 1849. It permitted the introduction of indentured labourers of any origin, but since the sponsors had Chinese specifically in mind it became known as the 'Chinese Law'. Chinese labourers were introduced in large numbers but this only offered marginal relief to the guano industry because many of the new immigrants were diverted to other sectors of the economy, particularly the large haciendas. Abuse of the 'Chinese Law', which was reflected by high mortality rates among the Chinese, led to its repeal in 1856; and with the abolition of slavery only the year before the labour problem became desperate. Some Chinese continued to be smuggled into the country but so acute was the shortage of labour that the politically powerful large landowners forced the re-enactment of the 'Chinese Law' in 1861. Their impetus came in part from impending civil war in the United States which led to a local cotton boom with extra acres being made over to the crop to supply America's traditional markets. At least Peru was, for the moment, no longer a monoproduction export economy, but now the guano industry faced even greater competition for available manpower from the agricultural sector.

The first attempt to take advantage of the new 'Chinese Law' resulted in what has since become known as the Peruvian slave trade. Four of the 33 vessels involved in this episode called at various

1. See Mathew 1970; McCall 1976:93-94; Stewart 1951:3-54; Thorp and Bertram 1978:3
Tuvalu islands and kidnapped in excess of 400 unsuspecting Islanders. The initiator of the trade was J.C. Byrne, an Irishman claiming French citizenship, who has been described by one historian as 'Essentially an adventurer bringing misery to those who committed their fortunes to his care'. With his long, if dubious, background in migration schemes in many parts of the world he had no difficulty in persuading the Peruvian authorities to grant him a licence to introduce labourers of both sexes from the Pacific on five year contracts.

Byrne originally intended to obtain these labourers from Vanuatu and formed a company in Lima to that end. He chartered the 151-ton barque *Adelante* which was then fitted out "like a Man-of-War":

We have iron gratings over the hatches and iron gratings divide the hold into three compartments. Two swivels are mounted by the after hatch to sweep the deck, two more are placed on top of the poop, there are two dozen muskets in complete order – besides three blunder busses and our revolvers and bowieknives, cutlasses and ammunition in abundance and to tell the truth she looks more like a Man-of-War than a merchantman.

Departing in June 1862 the *Adelante* first called at Nukuhiva in the Marquesas Islands then Tongareva in the northern Cooks. This casual stop-over at Tongareva proved to be the turning point of the business: the coconut palms on the atoll were blighted and the Tongarevans were willing to recruit not only to escape impending famine, but also to earn the money necessary to build a 'respectably' sized church from imported materials. As Maude points out the Peruvian slave trade's focus on Polynesia rather than Melanesia was quite accidental.

2. Hattersley 1950:102. For a more charitable view see Brookes and Webb 1965:66

3. A town in southern Natal, which was first occupied by settlers he brought out from Britain, still bears his name

4. Barton to Russell, 29 May 1862 (F0 61/203; quoted in J.D. Freeman's copybook of sources on the Peruvian slave trade). I am grateful to Grant McCall for providing me with a xerox copy of Freeman's copybook

5. Quoted in Richardson 1977:213
[Had Byrne] persisted in his original scheme, as approved by the Peruvian Government, the difficulties and meagre financial returns inherent in the project might well have inhibited anyone from making a second attempt anywhere in the Pacific Islands.

But as it now transpired there was no longer any need to engage in a long and expensive voyage to Melanesia to procure a cargo of truculent savages when gentler Christianised Polynesians were available for the asking.\(^6\)

The \textit{Adelante} arrived back in Peru in mid-September with a cargo of over 250 Tongarevans which realised, according to the most conservative figure, a gross profit of about $32,000.\(^7\) Within a fortnight another five vessels had departed from Callao to recruit Polynesians. The success of the \textit{Adelante}'s first voyage, as the United States Consul at Paita lamented, "has stimulated this infamous business to an appalling extent, parties interested seemingly to be wild in their greed for gold, from this system of slave trade".\(^8\)

By the end of the year 24 recruiting voyages had left Callao for Polynesia\(^9\) and it was quite evident that the American Consul's fears of a slave trade were justified, with recruits being taken either by deceit or force. Although the ships involved in the trade had yet to venture as far west as Tuvalu, they had nevertheless ranged over a wide area of eastern Polynesia. They generally avoided the larger Polynesian islands where resident European missionaries and consular representatives could report their activities or warn the Islanders of their intentions.\(^10\) Instead the Peruvians\(^11\) made for

\(^{6}\) Maude 1981 :7
\(^{7}\) Barton to Russell, 11 Oct 1862 (FO 61/204; cited in Freeman's copybook). The United States Consul at Paita put the figure at between $40,000 and $50,000 - see Richardson 1977:213
\(^{8}\) Quoted in Richardson 1977:213
\(^{9}\) Maude 1981:186-87
\(^{10}\) Beaglehole 1957:95
\(^{11}\) For the sake of simplicity the men and ships engaged in the trade are described as 'Peruvians' whatever their nationality or registration. Although most of the vessels were registered in Peru, only four of their captains were Peruvian citizens - Maude 1981:183, 202n
the many smaller atolls and islands whose populations, being concentrated on confined areas of land, could more readily be taken by force or misrepresentation.

IN THE face of embarrassing criticism from within and without, the Peruvian government suppressed the trade in Polynesian immigrants on 28 April 1863. By that time the trade was rapidly winding down but 15 of the ships were still at sea including the four which called at Tuvalu.

Tuvalu was eventually visited because it was one of the few remaining areas in Polynesia where recruits might still be obtained in worthwhile numbers. All the islands to the east with a recruiting potential had by then experienced the Peruvians and were either too depopulated to warrant further attention, or the people were alert to the danger and too much on their guard. Paradoxically the Peruvians had been too successful, and even had the trade not been abolished it would have drawn to a close soon after because the labour reserve of Polynesians was almost exhausted.

This is what Captain Altuna of the 220-ton barque Dolores Carolina discovered in early April 1863. Over two months out of Callao he only had one recruit to his credit, a woman from Rakahanga in the northern Cooks (whom he later married in a bogus ceremony). Soon after the Dolores Carolina spoke to two other vessels involved in the trade, the 173-ton barque Honorio (Captain Garcia y Garcia) and the 220-ton barque Polinesia (Captain Bollo). Both were several weeks out of Callao and still without recruits. The three captains decided to sail together and made for Samoa where a couple of Samoans were grabbed. Heading northwest the three barques are then thought to have called at Fakaofo but 'there were no pickings left'.

They then proceeded to Tuvalu and anchored off Nukulaelae in late May.\textsuperscript{13}

IT WAS the Peruvians' practice to adopt whatever kidnapping device appropriate to the occasion; one captain at Easter Island, for example, threw trinkets on the ground and his crew overpowered the Islanders when they stooped to pick up the booty.\textsuperscript{14} But the most common stratagem was to persuade intended victims to engage in lucrative, short-term contracts to make coconut oil on some other island, after which they would be returned to their homes.\textsuperscript{15} When this was put to the Nukulaelaeans they replied that they could make any amount of oil for sale on their own island.\textsuperscript{16} The Peruvians then lifted their stakes and suggested gold mining, but this appeal to greed was no more successful.\textsuperscript{17} The Peruvians eventually discovered either from or through Tom Rose, a negro beachcomber living on the atoll, that the people were reluctant to leave their island because they were anxiously awaiting the promised arrival of Christian missionaries.\textsuperscript{18} Two years earlier a Cook Islander named Elekana had been cast ashore at Nukulaelae after a drift voyage from his home island of Manihiki. He was a London Missionary Society deacon so once recovered from his ordeal he set about instructing the Nukulaelaeans in the new faith and in the arts of reading and writing. The people already had a desire for Christianity and had also largely abandoned their traditional

\textsuperscript{13} Maude 1981:10, 49, 51, 62, 66, 74-76. The date is calculated from the known movements of the \textit{Dolores Carolina} which arrived back at the Peruvian port of Callao on 14 Aug 1863 after a return passage from Nukulaelae of 105 days - Maude 1981:76

\textsuperscript{14} McCall 1976:96

\textsuperscript{15} Maude 1981:76

\textsuperscript{16} Murray 1865:337

\textsuperscript{17} Graeffe 1867:1162

\textsuperscript{18} Murray 1876:381
religion. Elekana left a few months later for Samoa promising to return with missionaries proper. On the eve of his departure he tore the pages from his Rarotongan New Testament and Hymn Book and distributed the leaves among the people.\textsuperscript{19} They were therefore receptive to the suggestion by Tom Rose, who had acted as a religious instructor before and after Elekana’s arrival, that the Peruvians would “take them to a place where they could learn about God and religion, and after a time take them back to their own land”.\textsuperscript{20} Captain Altuna of the Dolores Carolina then sent “a dignified-looking helmsman” ashore who posed as a missionary.\textsuperscript{21} He told:

> the natives that they were missionary ships and invited them on board to receive the holy sacrament. All the able bodied men went on board in simple faith, and were immediately made prisoners; again the old fiend went on shore and told the assembled women and children that the men had sent for them, and they were also beguiled. The tragedy thus complete, the ships bore away . . . . Two of the men . . . contrived to jump overboard and swim six or seven miles back to land.\textsuperscript{22}

So comprehensive was the deception that the Islanders went on board clutching their pages from Elekana’s New Testament and Hymn Book.\textsuperscript{23} Over two-thirds of the population was kidnapped in this single episode.

The historical sources do not permit a great deal of certainty in reconstructing what happened a day or so later when the three barques called at Funafuti. But it is clear that events on the atoll centre around the action of Jack O’Brien, the resident coconut oil trader.

20. Murray 1876:381
21. Graeffe 1867:1162
22. Moresby 1876:73. Graeffe (1867:1162) states that only one Islander managed to escape in this manner, and that he was from Tokelau. This man was Luisama who is reputed to have got ashore by keeping his head hidden from sight behind a floating coconut shell and so breathing without exposing himself - Judith Huntsman, personal communication, 12 December 1977. Both Moresby and Graeffe obtained their information on the Peruvian raid from Peter Laban, the resident trader
23. Murray 1876:382
Oral traditions emanating from O'Brien's descendants claim that even more people would have been carried off had he not acted decisively against the Peruvians, whereas non-relatives assert that O'Brien assisted the Peruvians in return for a cash bribe. The written sources are equally contradictory. Elekana, who returned to Tuvalu in 1865, states that O'Brien played a similar role to that of Tom Rose on Nukulaelae, whereas the English missionary accompanying him asserts that many more Funafutians would have been carried away had not O'Brien realised the intentions of the Peruvians and sounded a warning. Another person to accuse O'Brien was Alfred Restieaux, a trader on Funafuti during the 1880s and early-1890s, who echoes Elekana's version of events. Even though Restieaux disliked O'Brien, to the extent that he left the atoll when O'Brien returned in the early-1890s, one hesitates to discount Restieaux's word because the manuscripts he wrote in his extreme old age are astonishingly reliable, even when his information is second-hand.

Although contradictory, the weight of evidence eventually inclines against O'Brien. Certainly he had something to hide when he told Robert Louis Stevenson and his wife in 1890 that he was absent from Funafuti at the time of the raid. Even more damning is the account given by a visiting German scientist in 1866:

> The natives of Funafuti were treated just as badly by these Peruvian slave-ships as those in the Mitchell

24. A.G. Lake to J.D. Freeman, n.d. (copy kindly provided by H.E. Maude)
25. Elekana 1872:196-97
26. Murray 1876:385
27. Restieaux, "Recollections of Black Tom, Bully Hayes, D.S. Parker and Jack O'Brien" (RP)
28. Testimony from Seluka Resture, Restieaux's grandson, March 1977
29. Restieaux's Tuvalu manuscripts can be shown to contain very few errors when checked against other sources. Francis X. Hezel (personal communication, 20 July 1980) tells me that his Micronesian reminiscences are similarly accurate
30. Mrs Stevenson 1914:91
Group [Nukulaelae] in that, of the earlier numerous population, only between 12 to 15 men and about 80 women and children are left. Here too they were enticed on board by these sailors under the pretext of belonging to the mission, in which process an Irishman long residence on this island was of considerable assistance to the captain for his family, that is to say, the relatives of his native wife have all remained behind here and he is said to have received a substantial payment.31

Whatever O’Brien’s actions that day, the actual kidnapping procedure was almost a carbon copy of the Nukulaelae deception. Acting under the pretence of being missionary vessels the Peruvians sent their man ashore “in vestiment, bible in hand”, it was later alleged, impersonating a man of cloth.32 It seems likely that the vessel carrying the Polynesians already captured lay well out of sound of shore while the other two did the actual recruiting.33 Almost two-thirds of the population was kidnapped.

Nukulaelae and Funafuti were not the only Tuvalu islands visited by the Peruvians. The Dolores Carolina and her two companions then proceeded to Nukufetau where apparently a miserable total of three men were captured, two of whom escaped at Rotuma and eventually found their way home.34 Another vessel, almost certainly the Adelante on its third voyage, went direct to Nanumea and then to Beru in Kiribati, recruiting at both places.35 It is not known what tactic was employed at Nanumea or the number kidnapped - available figures put it variously at seven.36

32. Von Werner 1889:321
33. J. Dana 1935:169-70
34. Murray 1876:306. However, none of the other sources mention that the Peruvians visited Nukufetau
35. Maude 1981:80. That the Adelante captured the Nanumeans “is far more likely than the hitherto held view that they were taken by one of the three Peruvian ships operating in the southern Tuvalu atolls, who would have had to make a major deviation impossible within the period during which they are known to have been in that Group.” - Maude 1981:91
36. Present day oral testimony gives this figure – Keith and Anne Chambers, personal communication, 26 October 1975
The difference is inconsequential. What is important is that George Holomona, a Hawaiian who had been living on the atoll for the past ten years, realised what was afoot and warned the people. The only Nanumeans captured were those who disregarded the warning.

The actual number of Tuvaluans kidnapped is far from certain. Complications arise in the first instance from the contemporary sources giving conflicting sets of figures, as expressed in Table 3:1.

**TABLE 3:1**

**TAKEN BY PERUVIANS: COMPARISON OF CONTEMPORARY FIGURES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th>NUKULAEAE</th>
<th>FUKAFUTI</th>
<th>NUKUFETAU</th>
<th>NANUME</th>
<th>NUKUFAE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Murray 1876</td>
<td>200+</td>
<td>c.180</td>
<td>3²</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turner 1876</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moresby 1872</td>
<td>400⁵</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moresby 1876</td>
<td>400⁶</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a* Two escaped at Rotuma and found their way back to Nukufetau - Murray 1876:386

*b* In his official report Moresby (1872:163) states that a population of 470 in 1857 had been reduced by the Peruvians to "only 50"; in his book Moresby (1876:72-73) that the population was depleted from 450 to "fifty worn-out people and children"

*c* Moresby (1876:77) only mentions that "more than half the original population had been carried off by kidnappers"

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37. Moresby 1872:165
38. George Turner, 1876 Journal, p.21 (SSJ 168)
39. A. Chambers 1975:49
Moresby's figures are clearly the least reliable and can be safely disregarded. Of the remaining two Maude prefers those provided by the missionary George Turner, largely on the grounds that they are "exact" and therefore "more reliable than the contradictory estimates of Murray and those made by inference by Moresby".⁴⁰ Accordingly he puts the total number of Tuvaluans recruited at 445 - 250 from Nukulaelae, 171 from Funafuti, 21 from Nanumea, and Murray's 3 from Nukufetau.⁴¹ However, the "exact" nature of Turner's figures is not necessarily a guarantee that they are the more accurate. Turner obtained his figures from resident Samoan pastors and it must be doubted whether their information was the result of retrospective enumerations. Turner's figure of 250 for Nukulaelae, the only sizeable discrepancy with Murray's findings, is almost certainly an approximation, or perhaps even a rough guess on pastor Ioane's part. Although Turner was the more careful and reliable observer, his information in this case was second-hand and collected a full 13 years after the event. In view of the conflicting and unreliable nature of the contemporary sources at the Tuvalu end there can be no certainty as the numbers taken from each of those four islands, least of all Nukulaelae.

The number of people kidnapped from that atoll bears closer examination. In the first place Nukulaelae's 1863 *de facto* population is an unknown quantity. Elekana told Turner that the population totalled 257 when he was there in 1861.⁴² A figure of 300 seems more realistic but there is no 'hard' evidence upon which to base this estimate.⁴³ Another point of contention lies in the actual number of people left behind on Nukulaelae by the Peruvians. Again the contemporary sources offer a generous range of options: Moresby said 50; Turner put the figure at 65; Elekana had it at 78; Murray reported it to be "considerably under one hundred"; while his fellow missionary Whitmee stated that only one-quarter of the population was left.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Maude 1981:209
⁴¹ Maude 1981:193
⁴² George Turner 1865:341
⁴⁴ Moresby 1872:72-73; Murray 1876:177; George Turner, 1876 Journal, p.5 (SSJ 168); Elekana 1872:196; Murray 1876:381; Whitmee 1871:11
It is a pity that the evidence for Nukulaelae is so contradictory, because this is the factor which frustrates any attempt to arrive at a reasonably accurate total for the whole group.

Nor can this be ascertained from evidence at the Peruvian end. Working from Peruvian official and British naval sources, Maude estimates that the Dolores Carolina, Honario and Polinesia arrived back in Callao with a total of 353 recruits, the overwhelming proportion of whom were Tuvaluans. It therefore does not matter how the Peruvians 'distributed the recruits between the individual ships', since only a maximum of six of the recruits could have non-Tuvaluan. Thus there is reasonable certainty that at least 346 Tuvaluans arrived in Callao on board the Dolores Carolina and her two companions. It is at this point, however, that attempts at accuracy break down because an unknown number of recruits died during the long return voyage to Peru. Moreover it is uncertain how many of the Nanumeans recruited by the Adelante died on the passage to Peru, or indeed how many were recruited in the first place. Thus the exact number of Tuvaluans recruited, either for individual islands or the archipelago as a whole, will probably never be known. On available evidence the figure can only be put at somewhere between 400 and 440.

It can be said with greater certainty that none of the Tuvaluan recruits ever returned to their home islands, apart from those few escapees from Nukulaelae and Nukufetau. Some died on the passage to Peru. Once there it was discovered that the trade had been suppressed.

45. Maude 1981:189
46. Maude 1981:xxi
47. Maude 1981:82 (one Rakahangan, two Samoans and three Rotumans)
48. Maude (1981:82) suggests that 75 of those recruited by the Dolores Carolina, Honario and Polinesia died on the passage to Peru. This figure is reached by subtracting the number who arrived (353) from 'an approximate 428 recruits on board' when the three barques finally headed for home. However, this latter figure is questionable for the reasons given above. Moreover, Maude gives conflicting figures for the numbers of Polynesians recruited by the Dolores Carolina and its two companions. In one of his statistical appendices he gives a figure of 387 (Maude 1981:187), a discrepancy of 41 from his figure in the text of 428
so they were transferred directly to the repatriation vessels without setting a foot ashore. Even then they were far from assured of a safe home passage: they were now at risk from a smallpox epidemic brought about by the Peruvian authorities prematurely lifting a quarantine restriction on an American whaleship with the disease on board.\textsuperscript{49}

The first vessel to arrive back with Tuvaluans was the \textit{Honario} in late-July, about six weeks after the initial outbreak of smallpox. The Polynesians on board were transferred to the \textit{Barbara Gomez} along other Polynesians and by the time the barque sailed three weeks later one-third of the repatriates had died of the infection. The survivors were eventually put ashore at Rapa where they spread their smallpox with disastrous consequences.\textsuperscript{50}

The Tuvaluans on the other three barques were repatriated by the \textit{Adelante} with equally disastrous results. Smallpox also broke out on board the grossly overcrowded vessel and the captain, instead of returning his charges to their home islands, turned them all ashore at Cocos Island off the Central American coast.\textsuperscript{51} When they were discovered three days later by the whaleship \textit{Active} of New Bedford. By that time well under half of the original complement of 426 were still alive:

They were dying very fast from small-pox, dysentery, and ship fever... a boat went near enough to see the dead bodies lying on the beach, and quite numerous, too. We saw enough to believe that they had small-pox in the most deadly form, and immediately took our anchor and went to sea.\textsuperscript{52}

Despite the appalling high mortality rates 38 survived and were eventually returned to Peru in a Peruvian warship where "they were

\textsuperscript{49} McCall 1976:98
\textsuperscript{50} Hanson 1970:33; McCall 1976:98n, 99; Maude 1981:157-60
\textsuperscript{51} McCall 1976:99; Maude 1981:161-62
\textsuperscript{52} Ward 1967:11, 201-02. Although several of the logbooks of the \textit{Active} are known to exist, the one for her 1860-65 voyage could not be located - see PMB 571
presumably absorbed into the local labour force as no further attempt was made to repatriate them.\footnote{53}

It is therefore safe to suppose that none of the repatriates on board the *Adelante* ever returned to their home islands. Nor does it seem that any of the Tuvaluans cast ashore at Rapa by the captain of the *Barbara Gomes* were reunited with their kinsmen. However, some may have got off Rapa and eventually settled down in other parts of the Pacific, such as the man from Nukulaelae whom Louis Becke, the trader-cum-writer, claimed to have met in the Caroline Islands in 1873. He had left Rapa in a guano ship bound for Liverpool and then spent several years working on board American whaleships before settling down at 'Las Matelotas' (probably Ngulu atoll)\footnote{54} where he married. Despite a desire to return to Nukulaelae, he was required to stay on at 'Las Matelotas' due to family commitments.\footnote{55}

\textbf{THERE} is an element of poetic justice in that Peru extracted no benefit from her labour recruiting forays into the Pacific which, thought the United States Consul in Callao, 'may differ from the African slave trade, but it has very much that appearance, only the subjects of the trade are of considerably lighter complexion than the negro'.\footnote{56} Apart from the embarrassment and international opprobrium, several vessels involved in the trade were lost. At least four were wrecked and a further three were seized by the French authorities at Tahiti.\footnote{57} Of the latter the *Cora* was captured by the people of Rapa who then sailed

\footnotesize{\begin{itemize}
\item[\footnote{53}]{Maude 1981:162-63}
\item[\footnote{54}]{See Hezel 1979:15-16, 20}
\item[\footnote{55}]{Becke 1897:19-20}
\item[\footnote{56}]{Quoted in Richardson 1977:214}
\item[\footnote{57}]{Maude 1981:186-87}
\end{itemize}}
Nor did the trade provide Peru's beleaguered guano industry with any relief whatever. "Contrary to previously published information," writes McCall, "French and Peruvian primary sources sighted mention nothing of any Polynesians working on the guano islands; there is, however, much evidence in the contemporary Lima press for their employment as peons on large haciendas and as domestics in prosperous Lima households". Instead the trade coincided with the beginning of a long-term decline of the Peruvian guano industry, which by the late 1870s had ceased to be a major enterprise. This contraction was due more to the drying-up of the traditional export market than to labour shortages, however severe. The industry was dangerously dependent upon British demand. Taking advantage of its virtual monopoly of the valuable fertilizer the Peruvian government pushed its prices as high as the reluctant British market would bear. British dissatisfaction was compounded by Peru's frequent inability to deliver consignments at the correct time of the year; nor did Peru assist its cause by defaulting on British bondholders. As early as 1857 an English observer commented that the Peruvians, through their irregularities over price and supply, had "done more injury to the sale of their guano than their worst enemies could have wished for". The day of reckoning was not long in coming and by the mid-1860s the development of artificial fertilizers, alternate supplies of cheap phosphatic guano from Africa, coupled with different methods of fertilizer application quickly ended Peru's career.
as a principal guano exporter. The industry then turned to the more minor role of supplying fertilizer for cotton plantations within Peru.

"Considering its short life," writes McCall, "the Peruvian trade and its consequences wrought unparalleled havoc on a number of island populations". The overall effects of the Peruvian raids at Nukulaelae and Funafuti were, to be sure, considerable in terms of personal sorrow, demographic change and temporary community disruption. An indirect indication of such may be gauged from present day Nukulaelaeans' knowledge of their genealogies. The atoll was apparently settled about 1740 by people from the other southern Tuvalu islands. During the course of fieldwork on the atoll (October 1977-March 1978) I collected the genealogies of the entire de facto population and rarely did any extend back before 1860 despite the relatively late date of first settlement. By contrast genealogies from the Tokelau atoll of Atafu, whose first settlement postdates that of Nukulaelae by less than 50 years, are "relatively detailed . . . covering the span of nine generations from the founders to the present day". Atafu only lost about a quarter of its population during the Peruvian raids as compared with the two-thirds or more at Nukulaelae. Clearly the major interruption in the Nukulaelae genealogies dating from the 1860s is directly the result of the Peruvians' activities and indicates how seriously the raid affected the community as a whole.

At the same time the Peruvian visitations at Nukulaelae and Funafuti were perhaps not as devastating as might initially be supposed. In the opinion of A.G. Lake, a former Lands Commissioner:

61. Mathew 1970
62. Thorp and Bertram 1978:60
63. McCall 1976:90
64. A. Chambers 1975:46n
65. Huntsman and Hooper 1976:268. See also Hooper and Huntsman 1973:369-70
It is unlikely that the slave-raids had much long-term effect on native culture at either Funafuti or Nukulaelae. The reason that in this group there are "but snatches of these ancient songs in the few legends that remain" is that the native Mission Pastors completely suppressed the ancient culture of the Ellice Islands. The Pastors achieved an extraordinary control over native life, some of which they still retain. The result was that the old men thought it shameful even to talk about the "pouliuli" (dark ages before the arrival of the mission), so that little of the old culture was handed down to the next generation. This attitude is sometimes still encountered by the stranger today. The position is much the same on all islands whether visited by the slave-raiders or not.67

67. Lake to Freeman, n.d.
MISSIONARY PENETRATION IN SOUTHERN TUVALU

CHRISTIANITY spread through Tuvalu at an uneven rate and there is no one explanation for the conversion process either for individual islands or for the archipelago as a whole. In its broad essentials the conversion of Tuvalu thus parallels in miniature that same process in Polynesia generally. The London Missionary Society (L.M.S.) took over Tuvalu by degrees, from its early successes in the south during the mid-1860s until resistance in the three northern-most islands was broken a decade later. The group has remained a Protestant preserve ever since and the Tuvalu Church (the local successor of the L.M.S.) is an autonomous body organized along national lines. One hundred years ago, however, each Tuvalu island had its own somewhat distinctive local church - a state of affairs which reflected the interplay of personalities on each island as well as more fundamental differences stemming from the fragmented nature of the group itself.

Tuvalu began its formal association with Protestantism as an outpost of L.M.S. enterprise in Samoa.1 By that time the L.M.S. had been active in the Pacific for almost 70 years. Its operations in the area were organized from a number of permanent mission stations, each independent of the others but responsible to the Directors in London.

1. The Samoan connexion was maintained until 1968. Although the transition from mission to church - in name at any rate - was accomplished in the Samoas with the formation of an indigenous arm of the L.M.S. - the Congregational Christian Church in Samoa (C.C.C.S.) - Tuvalu remained subject to (diminishing) Samoan oversight for the next few years. In 1968 the Samoan connection was finally severed with the formation of the Ellice Islands Church (renamed the Tuvalu Church). Nevertheless the Tuvalu Church still has its wider associations. Since 1962 the L.M.S. has been involved in successive mergers culminating in the formation of the Council for World Mission, of which the Tuvalu Church and the C.C.C.S. are autonomous affiliates (see Gunson 1974; Kofe 1976:70-80). More recently the C.C.C.S. has split along political lines to become two separate bodies.
and all under the direct oversight of a handful of European missionaries. Each permanent station also assumed responsibility for spreading the gospel to smaller neighbouring islands and island groups. But the thrust of evangelisation in these outstations, as they were known, was undertaken not by European missionaries but by Polynesian pastors whose work was subject to periodic inspection by one of their European superiors on a deputational voyage in the mission vessel. Thus by 1865 the organizational form of the L.M.S. in the Pacific had been considerably modified; instead of one focal point (Tahiti) there were now several. The doctrinal complexion of the L.M.S. had also changed during this period, from a non-denominational evangelical body to one which was strongly Congregationalist.

The Samoan District Committee of the L.M.S. took life in 1836 when a group of six British missionaries and their wives arrived fresh from England to take over from Cook Island pastors who had preceded them six years earlier. Mission stations were soon established throughout the Samoan Islands:

- each missionary assumed responsibility for his own area, subject to general instructions from London and to the decisions of the Samoan District Committee, a body composed of all the missionaries meeting to settle questions that affected them all... No headquarters station was designated. Moreover, the Committee offices rotated among the missionaries...  

Tuvalu fitted into the L.M.S. scheme of things as part of the Samoan Mission's Northwest Outstations, which began modestly in 1862 when two Samoan pastors were stationed on the Tokelau island of Atafu. Within four years Tuvalu was being drawn within this orbit and further

2. The spread of L.M.S. enterprise in the Pacific before 1860 is outlined in Gunson 1978:11-28

3. Gilson 1970:92. The locations of the various mission stations (or "districts") are given in the map in Gunson 1978:19. The missionaries themselves more frequently referred to the Samoan District Committee simply as the Samoan Mission, and I have followed this usage. It has the advantage that the various missionary "districts" within the Samoan District Committee are not confused with the District Committee itself. To avoid any possible confusion, the lower-case is used to denote the various districts and the upper-case for the Samoan District Committee.
expansion resumed in the early 1870s with the final thrust into southern Kiribati. In Tuvalu (and also Tokelau) the use of largely unsupervised Samoan pastors, the many similarities between the Samoan language and the local dialects, and relative ease of adaptation, translating, preaching and teaching, together with the congregational approach of the L.M.S., had telling effects in shaping distinctive local churches with an overlay of Samoan influences.

FORMAL missionary activity in Tuvalu is usually taken to have begun in 1861 with the arrival of Elekana and his surviving castaway companions at Nukulaelae. Elekana was an L.M.S. deacon at Manihiki in the northern Cooks, and while voyaging between his own island and neighbouring Rakahanga was blown off course and out to sea. A full two months later the party finally made landfall at Nukulaelae, 1500 miles westward. Once he had been nursed back to health, Elekana began preaching the gospel, teaching the people to read, and conducting church services. Far from encountering resistance he was confronted by a receptive audience, for the Nukulaelaans had already heard about Christianity from their resident trader, Tom Rose, and were anxious to hear more about a religion which seemed to offer so much. They had already destroyed many of their ancestral shrines. After two months at Nukulaelae, Elekana took passage to Samoa on a passing trading vessel but was permitted to leave only on condition that he returned with a properly-trained pastor and a supply of books. On his roundabout way to Apia, Elekana called at several other Tuvalu islands - Funafuti, Nukufetau, Vaitupu and Nui - and at each place the inhabitants "charged

4. The Northwest Outstations eventually comprised Atafu and Fakaofo in Tokelau (Nukunonu was already Catholic); all the Tuvalu islands (except uninhabited Niulakita); and five islands in southern Kiribati - Tamana, Arorae, Boru, Onotoa and Nikunau.

5. Elekana's experiences during the early 1860s are well documented in some respects. The best known account is Murray 1876:375-80, 398. The most detailed and generally reliable account is that of Elekana himself which, however, is not well known - Elekana 1872. A further contemporary account is Turner 1865.
me to try and get books and teachers for them too. Everywhere he went in Tuvalu bore resemblance to the state of affairs at Nukulaelae: the people knew about Christianity, mainly from traders who had settled among them and, in consequence, many religious structures had been destroyed and the associated rituals abandoned.

Finally reaching Samoa in September 1863, Elekana then asked the British L.M.S. missionaries to send him back to Tuvalu under their aegis with teachers and books. Whatever their histories say, the first reaction was scarcely one of spontaneous enthusiasm to penetrate Tuvalu. Practical difficulties explain the initial caution, if not tepidity. In the first place there was concern lest entry into Tuvalu might run counter to a comity agreement with their sister organisation, the Hawaiian Mission Society. Transport difficulties provide an even more compelling reason because the L.M.S. at that time was without the use of a ship. But enthusiasm to initiate a new mission field in Tuvalu quickly prevailed. Not only did the prospect of an unevangelized island group awaiting the Good Word strike a responsive chord in the European missionaries, but the saga of Elekana's privations at sea and his remarkable subsequent experiences seemed to indicate 'the wonder-working providence of God in carrying out His plans and purposes'.

The timing of Elekana's message was as important as its content, for the Samoan Mission was in an expansionist frame of mind. Having handed over much of their Melanesian work to Presbyterian missionaries, and with the Samoan situation well in hand, the evangelising zeal of the British missionaries needed new outlets. During the 1850s, with

6. Elekana 1872:175
7. For the relationship between the L.M.S. and the Hawaiian Mission Society see Phillips 1969:32-33, 57. The Hawaiian Mission Society was the Pacific arm of the Boston-based American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions which, like the L.M.S., was a strongly though not exclusively Congregational organization
8. Murray 1865:336. Elekana's saga has been accorded a cherished place in Protestant missionary annals. See Lovett 1899:1, 422-26, which quotes substantial portions from Murray 1876. Other accounts in this tradition include Barradale 1907:185-87; King n.d.:147; Kini TS; Kofe 1976:33-34; Vessey 1960:49-53
the establishment of European missionaries in the Loyalty Islands and at Niue, these places no longer fell within the jurisdiction of the Samoan Mission; but in 1861 the Northwest Outstations came into being with the stationing of the two Samoan pastors on Atafu. Not long afterwards a serious setback was suffered when the sole missionary vessel, the John Williams, was wrecked at Niue and plans for further expansion had to be put into abeyance. Meanwhile, Elekana was enrolled at the theological institution at Malua for training as a pastor. It was not until May 1865 that the Rev A.W. Murray managed to charter a return passage to Tuvalu for himself on the Augustita, a 50-ton German trader, taking with him two Samoan pastors and their wives as well as Elekana. Quite by coincidence the Augustita's itinerary involved those very islands which Elekana had himself visited three years earlier - Nukulaelae, Funafuti, Nukufetau, Vaitupu and Hui.

By 1865 Archibald Wright Murray (1811-1892) was a veteran missionary, having been one of the original L.M.S. party that began work in Samoa three decades before. Yet he had lost none of the enthusiasm and boundless energy of his younger days. An unrepentant triumphalist, he likened the whole Elekana episode to "a Macedonian cry". Even so Murray was nonplussed by what he observed during that pioneering voyage to southern Tuvalu, which resulted in none of the trials and tribulations associated in his mind with pioneering work. It was not altogether uncommon in Polynesia for Christian influences of various sorts to have predated formal missionary activity. This was the situation which confronted him in Tuvalu, about which he could only express utter astonishment. "How different to what is generally found on first visits to heathen lands!" wrote Murray, no doubt recalling his frustrating experiences in parts of Melanesia. "What usually requires years of toil and suffering, and, not seldom, the sacrifice

As Elekana had indicated, Christianity was already flourishing in southern Tuvalu. On each island some, if not most, of the pagan religious structures had been destroyed while several (often unspecified) "heathen practices" had been abandoned, and the Sabbath was being observed after a fashion. Enquiring into the cause of it all he discovered that Christianity had filtered into southern Tuvalu through the tradesman's entrance, so to speak, during the course of the previous decade. The first bearers of the Christian message were not missionaries but coconut oil traders. Even when the traders - both ashore and afloat - had not consciously set out to evangelize, their activities nonetheless served to undermine the foundations of the pagan religion thus preparing a way for an alternative in the shape of fundamentalist Christianity.

At Nukulaelae Murray discovered that several years before Elekana's arrival "the master of a trading vessel, named Stuart, from Sydney, had told them of the true God and advised them to turn from idolatry and worship Him". Murray gave "All honour to the man" and his works. Elekana's account, however, puts a different complexion on the incident, claiming that Stuart had urged the Nukulaelaeans to destroy one of their larger ancestral shrines for quite different motives. The shrine was inlaid with pearlshell which Stuart wanted for sale in Sydney.

They did so, after they had been paid for the shell. They soon got afraid at what they had done, and went to the captain saying, "What are we to do now? that was our god, by which we live." The captain said "That god of yours is no God. God is in heaven, and He sees you turn your thoughts to Him, and He will take care of you." The captain left and the people remained without any god, or without any mode of worship, till Thomas [Tom Rose] came, when he conducted service with them.

12. Murray 1876:393
13. Murray 1876:383. See also Turner 1865:341. Unless otherwise specified, all the brief, unidentified quotations concerning the 1865 voyage come from Murray 1876
Events at Funafuti were even more dramatic.

The ancient religion received its death-blow... from a white trader, [Jack] O'Brien... who accomplished its overthrow, not from any religious purpose, but because the ancient religion took up much of the time which he thought, rightly or wrongly, should be given to collecting copra for him.15

In collusion with three Funafutians, O'Brien proceeded to burn or break up all the important religious structures on the island, "in a literal sense, a necessary clearing away with the debris of the old and apparently inadequate forms so that the incorporation of Western forms could begin".16 O'Brien, like Tom Rose of Nukulaelae, had left the atoll when Murray arrived, by which time Christian services of "some sort" were being conducted by a Tokelau Islander.

Traders had also been at work at Vaitupu and Nui. Murray observed at Vaitupu that "Some foreigner who had been living with them, had taught them the Lord's prayer in English and something in the form of a prayer in their own language". This trader was probably Solomon Heather17 and it may be this man whom an oral tradition credits with burning down all the places of pagan worship on Vaitupu.18 At Nui a recently departed coconut oil trader had been instructing the Islanders for over four years. At both places, said Murray, their "idols had been destroyed", as elsewhere in southern Tuvalu.

Nukufetau was the only southern island where the gospel had not been introduced by Europeans. According to one missionary account, a

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15. Sollas 1897:354-55. See also Hedley 1896:48. Sollas and Hedley were members of a scientific expedition to Funafuti in 1896. They learned these details from O'Brien himself, by then an old man, who had returned to the island only a few years before. The reference to copra is an anachronism; at that time the trade was still in coconut oil.

16. Black 1978:323

17. Maude 1968:265n

18. Alefaio 1979:16-17
Rotuman named Kaitu had been the first to "spread the word". Events in neighbouring islands were then sufficient to spark off an attempt at observing the forms of Christianity. The Nukufetauans had also built a "large chapel" for the Christian god, where they held regular, but rudimentary, services. Much of what they actually knew about Christianity would have been imparted by a high-ranking Nukufetauan called Tauktel (also known as Alesana and Tom) who had once served on the New Hebrides Presbyterian Mission's vessel Dayspring, and who could speak good English.

The Samoan pastors accompanying Murray were landed at the first two islands visited. Nukulaelae received Ioane and his wife Salii, who remained until failing health forced Ioane's retirement in 1888. Matita, the other Samoa pastor, and his wife, were landed at Funafuti, and Elekana himself at Nukufetau (see Table 4:1).

The circumstances surrounding Elekana's posting require clarification. Writing in 1865 Murray claimed that he "reserved" Elekana for Nukufetau because he saw "that there would be more difficulties here than on the other islands", and then went on to credit himself with choosing "the right man for the right job". The following year, however, Murray appraised the situation more realistically:

"The teacher [here at Nukufetau] is unmarried and therefore labours under a great disadvantage since his female flock cannot be attended to properly. Another disadvantage is his imperfect acquaintance with the Samoan language. All the books he uses are in Samoan. This presents serious difficulty to himself and is no small hindrance to his usefulness."

As will be seen, moreover, Elekana went on to blatantly interfere in the secular affairs of the atoll and had to be removed from his posting.

19. George Turner, 1876 Journal, p.11 (SSJ 168)
20. Murray 1865:341
22. Murray 1865:341
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*Table 4.1: Pastors in the Southern Islands, 1865-1875
All Samoans except Elekana (Nukutalaua 1865-1870)*

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<tr>
<td><em>JW = John Wilemore</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>PENI retired due to illness; replaced by PAULO</em></td>
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<td><em>PAULO (wife ill) returns to Samoa in trading vessel.</em></td>
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<td><em>IOANE arrives late in UV</em></td>
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<td><em>IOANE of Nukulaua arrives May</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>IOANE, IOANE of Nukulaua leave for his own island mid-year</em></td>
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In actual fact Elekana was stationed at Nukufetau for no better reason than he was the only pastor left on board the Augustita by that stage of the voyage. Had the vessel visited Vaitupu before Nukufetau, as did most subsequent deputations, Elekana would have been landed there instead, for Murray knew how impolitic it would be to arrive at an island with a pastor on hand yet to sail away without leaving him ashore. That is why he landed Ioane and Saili at Nukulaelae, the first island visited, even though he was aware that its tiny population scarcely justified such an expenditure in manpower at that stage. Nukufetau did turn out to be the difficult island in southern Tuvalu but Murray could not have known this when he parted company with Elekana because he had yet to see Vaitupu and Nui.

In any case Murray now had no pastors left for these two more heavily populated islands, which were the limit of the Augustita's cruise, but he promised they would be sent at the first opportunity. A few months after his return to Samoa it was arranged that the New Hebrides Presbyterian Mission take additional pastors to Tuvalu, and in December 1865 the Dayspring landed Peni and his wife at Vaitupu and Kirisome and his wife at Nui. A year later, in November and December 1866, Murray made his second and last voyage to Tuvalu, this time in the trader Suzanne, and departed well satisfied with progress in the southern islands. He "spent a deeply interesting Sabbath" at Nukulaelae whilst at Funafuti he witnessed "an equally pleasing state of things" and found that "a neat little stone chapel had been built". At Vaitupu "we found the state of things equally remarkable" and at Nui "a work of grace was nowhere more apparent". On all these islands reading matter was in great demand and a desire for literacy prevailed. As for Nukufetau, the laggard of the southern islands, Murray was "sorry" to find the

24. Murray 1876:382
25. Special meeting of the SDC, 19 Oct 1865 (SSL 30); Turner, 21st Malua Report (SSL 30/4); New Hebrides Mission 1866:24; Murray 1876:394-95
26. Murray 1876:397-410; Murray, 1866 Journal, esp. pp.16-17 (SSJ 157)
situation "less satisfactory". Nevertheless he went on to say: "But for the extraordinary progress on the other Islands we should have been well pleased with what we found on it; but it suffered by comparison with them".

Murray gives the impression of headlong forward progress but it is wise to keep the state of affairs in perspective. For one thing it was L.M.S. practice to build up a mass following of nominal followers as quickly as possible. It is this category of adherents to whom Murray is specifically referring when he speaks of the "remarkable" results of his voyages to Tuvalu. A better indication of the southern Tuvaluans' commitment to Congregation practice and belief lies in the number who sought Church membership. Obviously Tuvaluans in the mid-1860s could not be considered for Church membership since they lacked an adequate knowledge of both doctrine and literacy. But even with these obstacles largely removed by the early 1870s, the visiting European missionaries were sparing in whom they admitted to full membership in southern Tuvalu, thus preserving the very real distinction which existed between those admitted to Church and those who were merely "professedly Christian". Moreover Murray sometimes exaggerates the extent to which the traditional religion was on the retreat: he said that the people of Vaitupu had already destroyed all "their idols and renounced paganism" completely by the time of his first visit, whereas the Hawaiian Mission Society missionary who called at the island in 1867 states that only half the population had done so. Nevertheless, nominal conversion in southern Tuvalu was rapid: the visiting missionary of 1873 was "struck with the advance that Christianity has made in so short a time" and in 1881 the missionary deputation reported: "Morally, intellectually and spiritually I believe the Tokelau and Ellice groups are in advance of at least my [own] district in Samoa".

27. The situation becomes complicated after the mid-1870s. By then the Samoan pastors had gained sole control over Church membership and it became easier to gain admission.


29. Davies, 1873 Journal, p.6 (SSL 3/2/0); Phillips, 1881 Journal, p.22 (SSJ 178)
L.M.S. ENTERPRISE in Tuvalu would have proceeded with far more despatch had the Samoan Mission been given the use of the Society's ship rather than having to rely on German trading vessels which were difficult to charter and whose timetables and other arrangements were always unsatisfactory. Murray, for example, had intended in May 1866 to establish a further eight pastors in Tuvalu but this was not permitted by the terms of the Suzanne's charter. Although the L.M.S.'s replacement vessel, the John Williams II, had been in operation for two years by that time, it had not yet called at Samoa. Finally losing patience, Murray drafted a long and angry letter to the L.M.S. Directors in London demanding eight months of the vessel's time each year "to visit the Ellice and other islands to the N.W."., little knowing that only a few days before the John Williams II had been wrecked at Pukapuka. It must have been a sobering moment when news of the disaster reached Samoa.

Murray acted promptly and without referring the matter to London. Invoking the long-established spirit of friendship and comity between the L.M.S. and its sister-organization, the Hawaiian Mission Society, he prevailed upon the Rev Hiram Bingham Jr., to visit Tuvalu, and in July 1868 the Hawaiian Mission Society diverted its vessel to call at Vaitupu and Nui.

Bingham's comparison between what he saw at those two islands (admittedly the most receptive of the Tuvalu islands to Christianity) with the situation in Kiribati leaves no doubt that southern Tuvalu was an 'easy' mission field. "We shall not soon forget this delightful visit:" he wrote, "though the contrast of one year and eight months' missionary labor here with those of six and a half at Apaiang could not be otherwise than - I almost said - painful... Nor could Bingham refrain from

30. General meeting of SDC, 30 May 1866 (SSL 31/1)
31. Murray, Turner and Nisbet, 15 Jan 1867 (SSL 31/1/A). These dissatisfactions are not aired by Murray in his book Forty Years... (Murray 1876:396-97)
32. General meeting of SDC, 5-7 Feb 1868 (SSL 31/6/A); Murray 1876:412
33. Bingham, "First voyage of the new Morning Star"... (ABCFM - MMP 85/308)
comparing the unsatisfactory performances of the Hawaiian pastors in Kiribati, who had to be provisioned from Honolulu with the necessities of life, with the Samoan pastors' successes at Nui and Vaitupu. Further acquaintance would have led him to revise some of his opinions, but his first and only impressions of Samoan pastors in Tuvalu bordered on adulation. Kirisome of Nui, he wrote pointedly, "depends on no provisions from abroad. He seems happy and contented in his work, hardly knowing when he would be visited by an English missionary".

In the event it would be another three years before Kirisome and the other Samoan pastors in Tuvalu were visited from Samoa. From 1868 there followed a dreary succession of deputational appointments to the Northwest Outstations, all but one of which was frustrated by lack of shipping, and then only the Tokelau were visited.\(^34\) The SDC missionaries did not suffer these constraints gladly and Murray especially became increasingly concerned that his pioneering work in Tuvalu would go to waste through neglect. Much of their bitterness stems from their being denied access to the John Williams III. The new mission vessel had been launched in mid-1868 but other L.M.S. mission stations in the Pacific had been granted prior use of the vessel's time. Finally, in September 1870, the Rev S.J. Whitmee departed from Apia in the John Williams, but not before firing off a defiant parting shot to London complaining that the 60 days allotted for his tour of the Northwest Outstations was insufficient.\(^35\)

Whitmee was disturbed at some of the events in Tuvalu during those four years of enforced neglect.\(^36\) The pastor at Funafuti had

34. General meeting of SDC, 5-7 February 1868 (SSL 31/6/A); General meeting of SDC, 23-24 September 1868 (SSL 32/2/A). In August 1868 Murray reported that he "urgently" wanted to visit the Outstations and proposed to charter the Wild Wave for £80, "a moderate sum considering the work to be done" - Murray, 11 August 1868 (SSL 31/6/B). He visited Tokelau in August and September - Murray, 1868 Journal (SSL 31/6/D)

35. Whitmee, 5 June 1870 (SSL 32/5/8)

36. For the published account of this voyage see Whitmee 1871. The official report is far less informative - Whitmee, 1870 Journal (SSL 32/5/E). Further accounts of this voyage are Whitmee, "Recollections of a long life", pp.71-104 (TS in possession of Niel Gunson); Fowler, Logbook and Diary, pp.188-96 (PMB 415)
fallen into some (unspecified) "error which had deprived him of his influence and in consequence of which he had [already] returned home". At Nukulaelae there was still no church building despite the presence of a pastor for five years, but Whitmee did make allowance for the fact that the raid by Peruvian slavers in 1863 had carried off the greater part of the population. Of real concern was the situation at Nukufetau where Elekana was in all sorts of trouble. He had overreached himself by deposing the ulu aiki (head chief) and setting up a man of his own choosing in the position. Moreover, he had actively involved himself in trading with passing ships—a practice forbidden to pastors though indulged in commonly enough—and had also "burdened" the community with an intolerable plethora of "petty laws regulating the most trivial matters of everyday life". Opposition to his authoritarianism and political interference emerged and the island was divided into two factions. Whitmee arrived at Nukufetau well prepared. The Samoan Mission already knew that something was wrong and that Elekana was to blame. Not only had Elekana's letters to the Samoan Mission been self-incriminating, but further evidence against him was contained in letters from the son of the deposed ulu aiki, none other than the widely-experienced, English speaking Taukiei. The European missionaries in Samoa had already decided that Elekana be removed from his posting and his replacement was sent with Whitmee on board the John Williams III.

Otherwise Whitmee was satisfied with what he saw in southern Tuvalu, being "agreeably surprised" to find that the people of Funafuti had "advanced to a state which would put to shame many a village in highly favoured England". Elsewhere in the south he could likewise

37. The only unsatisfactory section of Elekana's account is his version of events at Nukufetau, which is brief. Difficulties connected with translating his account for publication may have allowed some factual errors and misunderstandings to creep in, such as describing the unnamed man (obviously Taukiei) as a Fijian when in fact Taukiei had only contemplated going to Fiji to obtain a pastor—Murray 1865:341; see also Ward 1966:V, 263. Otherwise the Nukufetau section is a blatant whitewash of his activities there (Elekana 1872:198) and is very much at odds with Whitmee's more detailed accounts. Whitmee reacted angrily when he read Elekana's account (Whitmee, "Document relating to the removal of Elekana from Nukufetau", 17 March 1873 (SSL 34/2/8); see also General meeting of S.D.C., 9-18 November 1875 (SSL 34/7/8))
report favourably on progress. The Islanders were building, or had already built schoolhouses, chapels, and houses for their pastors. He warmly praised the "extraordinary zeal and energy of the people of Vaitupu" who, among other things, were building a new chapel to replace the original structure which had been damaged by high seas the year before.38 "One would think they had been Christians for 20 or 30 years instead of 4 or 5", he remarked.39 But, like Murray before him, Whitmee liked best what he saw at Nui, which from the beginning had been the island most receptive to Christian influences. Nui that year easily had the highest proportion of successful candidates for Church membership.

Within two years of Whitmee's visit the situation in the southern islands had largely stabilized. Matters had settled down to a routine and the lotu was entrenched. There were chapels on all five islands, some of them sizeable structures; donations of various types were being received annually, often on a generous scale; children were attending the pastors' schools; no one professed to still adhere to what the pastors called pouliuli ('days of darkness' or 'dark ages'); and Church membership was keenly sought. The pastors were well established - which is not necessarily the same thing as being in control - and their material well-being was looked after by their congregations. By 1872 it could be said that "Unquestionably the Ellice Group Mission is self-supporting",40 and that southern Tuvalu had settled down to a Christian dispensation.

38. Brady 1978:208n.9
39. Whitmee, 1870 Journal, p.3 (SSL 32/5/E)
40. The term lotu, which is widespread throughout Polynesia, is of Proto-Polynesian derivation. Its primary meaning is "system of worship!", but since European contact it has come to apply only to the Christian religion, as is the case in Samoa (Crawford 1977:11, 68). The same applies to Tuvalu, where there is no single English translation of the word. It is a base; therefore the English translation varies according to the context in which it is used - eg koe a lotu a? "What is your religion"; taatou kaa olo ki te lotu "let us go to church"; koe fae te lotu! "let us pray"
41. Gill, 1972 Diary, p.76 (ML 81/444)
IT IS one thing to catalogue the tangible spread of Christianity in southern Tuvalu but quite another to penetrate that abstract realm of attitudes, beliefs and expectations and to account for the acceptance of the overall mission complex in the minds of the recipients. Despite peculiarities between islands the conversion to Christianity in the south had its own particular character and one feature immediately stands out - the economic motive.

The southern Tuvaluans' interest in Christianity, initially at any rate, had a pronounced materialistic aspect. Their attitude towards religion was typically Polynesian - a thoroughgoing pragmatism which led them to favour most the gods who could confer the greatest benefits. For 40 years their islands had been visited by the occasional whaler and explorer (see Table 2:2). This process had quickened since the 1850s with the advent of traders. The cumulative effect of these sporadic contacts was out of all proportion to their numbers. No less than other Polynesians the southern Tuvaluans were profoundly impressed by the vastly superior technology of the newcomers; the big sailing ships in which they came and went were particularly awesome to a people whose ultimate in seagoing craft was the double-canoe. Having observed the worldly wealth, the greater power and the superior knowledge of the earliest Europeans, the southern Tuvaluans could not but speculate favourably on the mana of a god who so endowed his adherents. Belief in mana held great force in Tuvalu\(^42\) and acceptance of the lotu was early seen as providing access to the mana of the Europeans' god and the means by which Jehovah's bounty might be obtained. Ironically, as will be seen, Christianity never became the bearer of worldly wealth. Quite the opposite in fact. The Tuvaluans gave so generously to the L.M.S. that in 1892 a naval officer not unjustly remarked on the price payed by each Tuvaluan "for the privilege of being a Protestant".\(^43\)

This interest in the new lotu was sustained by the arrival of resident traders during the 1850s. Their activities had telling effect, preparing the way for missionary activity proper the following decade.

\(^{42}\) Brady 1975:114

\(^{43}\) Davis, 1892 Royalist Report, p.60 (FOCP 6269)
The manner in which the traders regarded, and often treated the pagan religion further eroded its credibility in the eyes of the Islanders. Jack O'Brien, in dramatic fashion, had desecrated and destroyed ancestral shrines at Funafuti without "proceedings from the next world" being taken against him, as promised by the priestly class on the island. Nor had harm befallen either Captain Stuart at Nukulaelae or the trader at Vaitupu (known simply as Titi in local oral tradition) who likewise set fire to places of worship. The traders who assumed a religious function and imparted their often scanty knowledge of Christian doctrine to Islanders, such as Tom Rose at Nukulaelae, provide yet another example of foreigners' immunity to the sanctions of the pagan religion.

Jehovah's perceived power and efficacy thus had wider implications than the mere desire for worldly gain on the part of the Islanders. It cast him in the role of a potential protector against supernatural retribution. Little is known about the traditional religious system of Tuvalu, but the southern Tuvaluans' lives were dominated by their gods and spirit forces, with whom they had an intimate but uneasy relationship. Certainly many ritual observances were in the nature of thanksgiving, or reciprocity for the gifts of the gods to man on earth. But there was also a large measure of purely placatory ritual, calculated to ward off sickness, death and disasters. Peoples' actions and behaviour were understood to have direct supernatural consequences. There was the constant fear of provoking the wrath of an offended deity, and everyday life was governed by complex prohibitions and forms of appeasement. The southern Tuvaluans thus lived in fear of their deities, and especially those not amenable to placatory rites. Pre-eminent among these was Foilape, the ancestral warrior spirit whose name was dreaded throughout the southern cluster of islands. By the time traders arrived the pagan religion, with its full panoply of ritual, had ceased to be a source of comfort. The Vaitupuans, for example, "were tired of their gods - . . . they were cruel - and that

44. Alefaio 1979:16-17
45. Kennedy 1931:149-52; Alefaio 1979:16
46. Roberts 1957:413-16; George Turner 1884:281-85
if they died under the wrath of the new God then they would not be worse [off] than they were before". In other words the early coconut oil traders contributed to a process already underway at the time of their arrival - the breakdown of the tapu system.

Although the meagre and fragmentary remaining knowledge of the Tuvaluans' traditional religion inevitably gives scope for speculation when accounting for the conversion to Christianity, there is no doubt that their perception of Jehovah as a protector played a major part in the acceptability of Christianity. In addition to being regarded as a means to worldly wealth, Christianity promised to remove an element of fear and uncertainty from people's daily lives by putting them outside the sanctions which formerly obtained. Because L.M.S. enterprise and the rule of the Samoan pastors rapidly degenerated into harsh and petty theocracies it needs stressing that Christianity was initially welcomed as an emancipating force. The new lotu offered a sense of liberation from the repressiveness of the traditional religion. In addition it presented a total, yet still religious, world-view.

It is in the destruction of the pagan religion that the traders' presence assumes its real significance. While the ships in which they came gave a practical demonstration of Jehovah's mana, their activities ashore provided Islanders with tangible evidence that the pagan gods were wanting and that a better alternative was ready at hand. In particular European sacrilege against local pagan religions is a significant factor in the conversion process. In addition to their household deities the southern Tuvaluans worshipped island-wide gods, often ancestral spirits, who commanded universal allegiance. These were the gods who bore the brunt of European sacrilege, and Islanders themselves were frequently involved in this process. More to the point they were seen to do so with impunity. Jack O'Brien's three Funafuti accomplices in the overthrow of paganism on that atoll provide a case in point:

47. George Turner, 1876 Journal, p.33 (SSJ 168)
48. See Powell, 1871 Journal, passim (SSJ 160); George Turner, 1876 Journal, passim (SSJ 168)
they went to the charm-house, took down the Teo, polluted it and put it back. There was a great noise when the deed was discovered, and suspicion fell on these three men and O'Brien. The three men left the island and went to Nukulailai [sic], and of course were thus self-condemned. The spirit master accordingly performed his charms, and told the people that these men were now dead. One of the three men, [was called] Leveri . . .

One day, however, Leveri returned in a ship; the people could not credit it, and said it must be his spirit. Leveri, however, cried out to them in his own proper voice, and they had then no doubt that he was live; they asked him about the other two men, and learnt that they also were alive and well, and meant soon to return. Then there was great uproar, and the people cried, “Burn the devil’s house.” O’Brien did not wait for further orders, but went off with a half-caste and set both the devil’s and the charm house on fire.

One also recalls Captain Stuart’s alleged conversation with the Nukulaeae people, telling them that the shrine they had reduced to charcoal was “no God. God is in heaven, and He sees you turn your thoughts to Him, and He will take care of you”. Neither were the people of Vaitupu, although terrified when Titi burned down some of their ancestral shrines, the object of divine retribution. Such incidents removed fears that European violations rendered the community at large liable to grave supernatural consequences. Instead, it became increasingly obvious to Islanders that Jehovah’s protection extended to them as well, and this was a major factor in the eclipse of their own religious system by the _lotu_.

A further element in the erosion of paganism, though grudgingly acknowledged and frequently condemned by the L.M.S. missionaries, was the proselytising efforts of some of the coconut oil traders. Tom Rose held services at Nukulaeae but the most notable of these missionary traders was Robert Waters who lived at Nui for about four years but departed shortly before the first missionary visit in 1865. Murray was
highly critical of Waters's efforts and behaviour. Taking advantage of his spiritual position within the community Waters took several wives and, reminiscent of subsequent L.M.S. practice in Tuvalu, he instituted a system of fines for breaches of religious discipline, but payable only in coconut oil. Sometime after December 1865, when pastor Kirisome was landed at Nui, Waters returned and attempted to set himself up as before. Unsuccessful in the face of opposition from Kirisome, he returned to "the congenial darkness" of Kiribati with his "three wives". In the eyes of the L.M.S. missionaries Waters was an unprincipled interloper reluctant to step aside once missionaries proper arrived. Yet Waters was also an effective Christian teacher who did the L.M.S. greater service than it cared to admit. Part of his success stemmed from being conversational in the Nui dialect which was reinforced by his use of Hawaiian Mission Society printed matter in the Kiribati language. Murray may well have marvelled "that any good should have come from the teachings of such a man", but when Hiram Bingham Jr. visited Nui in 1867 in the Morning Star he thought it "no more than justice to state that previous to the arrival of a [Samoan] missionary, not a little religious instruction had been given to the people by a Mr. Robert Waters, an English trader". A few days later Bingham met Waters at Onotoa and was favourably impressed, finding him to be a man of more than ordinary intelligence, and quite disposed to favour our object. He had recently succeeded in inducing the natives to give up the use of fermented coconut toddy". There can be no doubt that Waters, reinforcing the desire for Christianity, gave the L.M.S. a flying start on Nui.

Knowledge of Christianity in southern Tuvalu thus travelled far in advance of the first missionary party, but Europeans were by no means solely responsible for this development. Islanders from other parts of the Pacific which had already been exposed to missionary and other European influences were among the first to spread news of the Europeans' powerful god in Tuvalu. There were for example, the Rotuman and the

53. Murray 1876:410
54. Murray, 1866 Journal, p.52 (SSJ 157)
55. Bingham, 'First voyage of the new 'Morning Star' . . .', pp.18, 19 (ABCFM - MMP 85/308)
Hawaiian who first revealed these things at Nukufetau, and their message was confirmed by returnees from the small number of Tuvaluans who went abroad in European ships. Elekana, in other words, was one of the last in a long line of Islanders who imparted such knowledge. The initial spread of Christianity can therefore be related to the pre-contact patterns of drifting and voyaging which carried news, and were reinforced by the arrival of European ships and more frequent contacts. One important development in this regard was the arrival of shore-based traders who, instead of merely talking about the European god, often went one stage further and gave religious instruction. After 1865 the thrust of proselytising was assumed by the L.M.S. but the pre-missionary pattern of dissemination of religious knowledge by Islanders persisted and was to become a significant force in the conversion process.

Murray himself encountered some striking examples of the deliberate part played by southern Tuvaluans in consolidating the lotu as a result of their inter-island travelling. At Nui in 1865 Murray found a group of twenty-four Vaitupuans:

waiting an opportunity to get home . . . We were not then bound for Vaitupu but we took them to Funafuti where they remained till the visit of the "Dayspring" by which they were brought to their own home. A few of them had learned to read a little on Nui, and all were able to read when they left Funafuti. Hence they had the start on their countrymen, and were no doubt a great help to the teacher in the commencement of their labours. 56

Nui, the island in the most 'advanced' state of Christianity, was also the one most commonly visited by other Tuvaluans. The implications of other, more 'backward', Islanders exposing themselves to ready-made Christian influences was viewed with wholehearted enthusiasm by the L.M.S. missionaries. 57 "This island is a centre of influence", wrote one in 1873. "Many strangers come here and return to their homes with the good seed in their hearts". 58

56. Murray, 1866 Journal, pp.18-19 (SSJ 157)
57. Murray, 1866 Journal, pp.54-55 (SSJ 157)
58. Davies, 1873 Journal, p.24 (SSL 34/2/0). This was common throughout Polynesia (see Koskinen 1953). For examples among the New Zealand Maori see Oliver and Thomson 1971:17; Wright 1959:160-61
In addition to Christian teaching, Bibles and other pious literature likewise predated the arrival of L.M.S. missionaries. The southern Tuvaluans' eagerness to obtain religious books even before the missionaries arrived, and their use of such material during religious observances indicates that the printed page for them had a supernatural aspect. At Nukufetau, for example, the Islanders had purchased an English Bible from a passing trading vessel for $5. It was "carefully wrapped up in a cotton handkerchief" and taken out and uncomprehendingly scrutinized during their proto-Christian services. At Nukulaelae too the Islanders purchased an English Bible from a passing ship, and when Elekana arrived in 1861 he was compelled by popular demand to distribute among the people the pages of his Rarotongan New Testament and Hymn Book. This indicates that although the southern Tuvaluans had no clear perception of what a book signified, they nevertheless expected it to accomplish something. That they expected it to accomplish a lot is suggested by the lengths they would go to learn to read when the opportunity finally offered. At Nukulaelae in 1861 there was an insatiable demand for Elekana's services as a teacher:

We then began schools; we met four times every day. I first taught them the names of the letters, and afterwards to form these letters into words. All were anxious to learn; they left off all work, and would do nothing but learn to read. I did nothing but teach them; we had a singing class in the evenings.

On Funafuti in May 1865:

The people set to work at once to learn to read, and during the two days we remained ... about seventeen had learned the alphabet; and when we called again a fortnight after ... between twenty and thirty were about to read a little. I never saw a people apply themselves with such energy and heartiness ...

59. Murray 1876:387; George Turner, 1876 Journal, p.11 (SSJ 168), See also Brenchley 1873:70-71

60. Elekana 1872:148. See also Murray 1876:382; George Turner 1865:342

61. Elekana 1872:149

62. Murray 1876:386
By the end of the following year over half the population had:

learned to read and many of them intelligently & fluently. How some of the elder people accomplished this feat is surprising. They must have laboured hard and with a will.

Murray also reported that in 1866 almost half the population of Vaitupu could read whilst at Nui "many, both old and young, read well, and all, who are at all capable, are learning".

This is not to deny a clear association between printed matter and the ability to read on the one hand, and the *lotu* on the other. However, the southern Tuvaluans were decidedly more interested in some books than in others: as Murray observed in 1866 they wanted "the book" most of all. Religious books, especially the Bible, assumed a supernatural aspect from the beginning. If it is accepted, therefore, that the initial interest in Christianity stemmed from amazement at the Europeans' technological superiority and that this was attributed to these visitors having a more powerful god, then there is no difficulty in also accepting that Tuvaluans pragmatically regarded Bibles as a talisman - their means of gaining access to the mana of Jehovah and the perceived benefits which would follow. It has already been suggested that these include sharing the material bounty of the visiting Europeans and release from the fear of spirits. As Campbell writes, religion in a Polynesian context functioned as "a technology: an instrument for achieving certain material and spiritual ends". To that extent literacy was a consequence rather than a cause of conversion to Christianity. But literacy also reinforced the desire for Christianity and its promotion by the missionaries greatly facilitated the evangelisation of the southern islands. This is not to say, however, that it was the only attraction. When the southern Tuvaluans were furiously learning to read in the mid-1860s literacy may have assumed a primacy,

64. Murray 1876:402, 409
65. Murray 1876:401-02
but essentially it was only one attraction among many.  

Nevertheless literacy was still interwoven with these other elements. The southern Tuvaluans sought in the books which reached their shores an explanation for what was happening to them with the advent of European influences and also to discover how European material benefits might be obtained. The southern Tuvaluans' predicament in the mid-1860s parallels that of the New Zealand Maori three decades earlier:

This struggle to comprehend and command the system of meanings that determined European technological superiority involved the search for a corpus of knowledge which Europeans, in all their dealings with the Maori, had made known to them. At the same time, the Maori wanted to fathom and articulate the meaning of the changes which had transformed their social and cultural world, changes which they had never predicted.  

Much of this reasoning was sheer illusion - conclusions reached on the basis of less than 40 years sporadic contact with a handful of Europeans who were unrepresentative of Western culture as a whole. The millennium never came and these earliest expectations were never satisfied, not at least in the manner originally envisaged. This points to something else: that the attractions which brought about religious change in Tuvalu, and their relative importance, altered over time as the Islanders lowered the threshold of their expectations. On the question of literacy it soon became clear that the Bible was no talisman, but there is no indication that such a revelation gave rise to feelings of 'gross disappointment'. 69 Instead Tuvaluans read their Bibles, if less avidly than before, in order to gain sufficient knowledge of its contents to qualify for Church Fellowship. So despite the lotu not living up to initial expectations, neither was it case aside. The fundamental

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67. Lingenfelter (1967) and Parsonson (1967) provide broad statements on literacy as a factor in the conversion process in Polynesia generally. A critique of Parsonson's "literate revolution" is in Crawford 1977:96-97, 218 & n

68. Jackson 1975:31

69. Parsonson 1967:56
unifying values upon which community solidarity rested were soon enshrined in the new religion, hence the need to attain full church membership.

In other ways too the southern Tuvaluans quietly rationalised the hollowness of their original hopes without letting this extinguish their ardour for the Iotu. Religion was no less important to the traditional culture as it was to become after 1865; and with the erosion of paganism and the breakdown of the tapu system society at large was no longer functionally integrated. Christianity therefore offered, at the time, a complete alternative - not only a wider, yet still religious, world-view, but the return of a stable social order. The Iotu, in other words, was not only instrumental in overthrowing the old order but was ready on hand to replace it. This is particularly evident in the cases of Nukulaelae and Funafuti where the populations of these two atolls were dramatically reduced in 1863 by the Peruvian raiders. In attempting to restructure their communities from the ruins of the immediate past, the survivors turned to the powerful new religion. In short the southern Tuvaluans traded their traditional religion for the one which was identified as the source of the Europeans' power, possessions and knowledge. That is why Murray in 1865 found "an open door and nothing to do but to enter in".

Once the Iotu had been formally accepted in southern Tuvalu the thrust of evangelisation was assumed by the Samoan pastors stationed on each island. Much of those earliest pastors' immediate appeal and effectiveness stemmed from their perceived ability, as accredited representatives of Christ, to end the fear and bewilderment of the ritual void which had obtained since the overthrow of the pagan system. Traditionally, ritual had a prophylactic function and to be without the knowledge to mediate the protection of Jehovah had frightening implications on several fronts of human existence. It is true that many of the earlier traders had

70. See generally Gunson 1978:208
71. Murray 1865:341
held their own services with Islanders, but these were rudimentary in the extreme as Elekana's description of Tom Rose's ceremonies indicates:

On Saturday I went to the village where Thomas lived, to see how he conducted public worship on the Sabbath. They met about 8 A.M. A hymn was sung, and then Thomas read a portion of the English Bible, and afterwards told the people in their own language what he had read. When he had finished doing so, all went away; there was no prayer. This could have been of little comfort to a people accustomed to placating deities and Murray may have had a point when he remarked that Rose's efforts had "only added to their bewilderment".72

The therapeutic approach of the early pastors in southern Tuvalu may be seen in other ways. Since the people were incipient Christians already, practising what little they knew about it "according to their measure of light", there was no need on the part of the pastors to adopt uncompromising and culturally destructive evangelizing strategies - which is not to say they left things as they found them. Instead of weakening community cohesion the pastors strengthened it again; they healed the disjunction in society at large occasioned by the overthrow of the pagan system and the religious void that ensued. Being qualified as spokesmen of the feasible alternative to the pagan system, they restored the flow of ritual power.

That this was accomplished so rapidly can largely be attributed to the ease with which cross-cultural communication occurred. In communicating with southern Tuvaluans the pastors were at a distinct advantage in that the two languages are cognitive. Although Samoan and the southern Tuvaluan dialects are not mutually intelligible, which is often thought to be the case, they are nevertheless more closely related than are most other Polynesian languages; and this similarity of language facilitated everything from a conversion point of view - namely ease of adaptation, preaching and teaching. The close similarity between the two languages also made feasible the use of the Samoan Bible (O le Tusi Fa'ata).

72. Elekana 1872:147
73. Murray 1865:338
for secular instruction as well as for conventional religious purposes. For such reasons the pastors were in a position to evangelize effectively through the spoken word, unlike the Hawaiian pastors in Kiribati who had cultural difficulties too to contend with. And, unlike the earlier European L.M.S. missionaries in Samoa, whose conceptual presentation of the Gospel was incomprehensible to the Samoans for many years, the Samoan pastors' preaching in Tuvalu was both intelligible and relevant. This is most strikingly illustrated in the notion of God the Father being related to the pre-existing Tuvaluan concepts of kinship:

From an ideological standpoint, ancestor worship was lifted out of particular genealogical contexts and put into a more general framework of diffuse kinship. The Ellice people were led by the knowledgeable Samoans to "discover" Jehovah in the context of a hierarchy dominated by a paramount chief. "God the Father" was posited as an older and more powerful ancestor than any the Islanders had known or believed in before, and this hope of influence was predicated to a large extent on an omnipresent kinship bond to all known segments of the existing population. His precise relationship to individuals was incalculable, but the Samoan pastors clarified matters somewhat by insisting that the path to salvation and divine favors ran directly through them and the church orthodoxies.

The southern Tuvaluans' acceptance of the regime of the Samoan pastors thus stemmed not from a blind obedience to the wills of the latter. Rather, it originated from their feeling of inadequacy to cope with the changing situation brought about by the overthrow of the pagan religion. It is against this background that the Samoan pastors were seen as qualified to proceed with the correct rituals which would invoke their more powerful and beneficient god. Speaking of the likes of Tom Rose and Bob Waters, Murray had remarked on the southern Tuvaluans' "readiness to take up with any adventurer who professed to be able to supply the article needed". These words could also apply to the Samoan pastors who followed.

74. Gilson 1970:103-04
75. Brady 1975:122
76. Murray 1865:344
IN SUMMARY Christianity did not come to southern Tuvalu as an isolated influence but as an inseparable part of an overall alien culture. The conversion process was already well underway by the time of the first L.M.S. voyage to the group in 1865: the door was already open, to use Murray's apt imagery. The point to be recognised is that the suddenness of formal conversion was only the result of the groundwork established by culture contacts of the previous three or four decades. In explaining this gradual and drawn out process a composite picture emerges in which the elements are strangely mixed. The conversion process, moreover, is characterised by constant shifts in emphasis in the Islanders' motivations and expectations. At the risk of presenting a picture which is neater than reality, the following sequence is offered. In the first instance the attraction to the lotu was dominated by the hope for material gain, and an element of incipient cargoism creeps into the picture. However this desire for Jehovah's bounty was soon joined, and later displaced, by other considerations. With the arrival of the first resident traders the protective ability of the lotu assumed significance in Tuvaluan eyes. To this was added the attractions of literacy which, in turn, was reinforced by Murray making books available in greater quantity than the occasional Bible purchased from a passing trading ship. With the beginning of formal L.M.S. activity the day of the trader-cum-preacher/teacher as a religious force drew to a close and the Samoan pastors built on their wayward predecessors' groundwork. Cognate languages and the ease of cross-cultural communication by the pastors plus congruence between certain features of Christianity, as they presented it, and the traditional religion, help explain the appeal and acceptance of the Samoan pastors. Moreover, the pastors were locally regarded as competent to end the uncertainties of the prevailing ritual void and to give fresh religious content to the whole of social life. Strictly theological motives are notably absent; the conversion process involved a thoroughly pragmatic change of heart.
CHAPTER 5

MISSIONARY EXPANSION INTO THE NORTHERN ISLANDS

THE L.M.S. arrived at the three northern islands of Niutao, Nanumea and Nanumanga to find that the way had not been "prepared" and that "darkness" prevailed. Local social factors and outside influences had not combined to produce a desire for Christianity, and in the cases of Nanumanga and Nanumea traditional life and religion was intact and regarded as adequate for the fulfilment of society's needs. Two immediate observations may be made about this more difficult situation which confronted the L.M.S. - its evangelising strategy was modified accordingly, and the role of individuals and the inter-play of personalities becomes important in a way that it was not in the 'easier' southern islands.

NIUTAO

DURING the course of his second, and last, missionary voyage to Tuvalu in 1866, Murray called at Niutao and immediately noticed the difference between this island and those to the south, remarking that "we seem to pass from light to darkness". Yet again, Murray's version of events is open to dispute because many Niutaoans had already renounced their pagan customs at the instigation of resident traders. Despite this disruption to the traditional religious system, however, there was no corresponding and broadly-based desire for the lotu as was the case in the southern islands. Only with the greatest of difficulty was Murray able to persuade the people to receive a pastor at some later stage.

1. Murray 1866 Journal, p.27 (SSJ 157)
2. Graeffe 1867:1187
3. Murray 1876:406-07
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<tr>
<td><strong>NANUMEA</strong></td>
<td>Tavita of</td>
<td>Powell</td>
<td>TUILOUAA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Funafuti acts as pastor; he leaves a few months later</td>
<td>ordered off the island</td>
<td>arrives from Hui in trading vessel in Jan.</td>
<td>arrives from Niutao a few months later</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NANUMANGA</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>TIMOTEO</td>
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<td>TIMOTEO</td>
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<td>landed by JW in Sept</td>
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<td>(from Atafu)</td>
<td>taken away on demand of aiki</td>
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<td></td>
<td>landed Oct; first visit of missionary ship to island</td>
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<td><strong>NIUTAO</strong></td>
<td>SIONE (from Niue).</td>
<td>SIONE.</td>
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<td>TAPU leaves for Nanumea to help TUILOUAA</td>
<td>TAPU returns from Nanumea in July</td>
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<td>TAPU</td>
<td>TAPU leaves for Nanumea to help TUILOUAA</td>
<td>TAPU returns from Nanumea in July</td>
<td>TAPU</td>
<td>Only one pastor deemed necessary so SIONE removed in Sept by JW</td>
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He attributed the suspicion with which he was received to the activities of "wicked foreigners". In the early 1860s, about the same time as Bob Waters established himself at Nui, another European arrived at Niutao and he too had assumed a religious function. According to Murray he ruled with a heavy and oppressive hand to the extent of organising an armed party to kill those who refused to attend his services. At this point the aliʻi intervened: he summarily put an end to the trader's influence and choked him economically by forbidding the people to supply him with further supplies of coconut oil. Whatever the veracity of Murray's account, this trader nevertheless provided the missionaries who followed with a measure of unwilling assistance by launching the first assault on the pagan religion. His name was Charlie Douglas and he had deserted from a whaleship. Taking exception to certain pagan practices he also set fire to every flammable religious structure on the Island, thus being styled "the first missionary on Niutao". He also "inculcated the observance of Christmas day and other festivals" on the island. Charlie Douglas departed about 18 months before Murray's visit but in the meanwhile a group of traders and their wives - eight in all - had settled on the Island. According to Murray they "behaved outrageously" until finally the angry Islanders caught them off guard and put all eight to death by drowning. 

4. This incident is not mentioned in Murray's published account (Murray 1876) but only in his official report - Murray, 1866 Journal, pp.36-37 (SSJ 157). See also Gill 1885:17. Powell's assertion that this trader also assumed a religious function at Nui is not substantiated by other evidence - Powell, 1871 Journal, p.32 (SSJ 160)

5. Westbrook, "The first missionary at Niutao" (WP 69); J. Dana 1835:247-48

6. Powell, 1871 Journal, p.32 (SSJ 160)

7. Murray, 1866 Journal, pp.37-38; Murray 1876:407. This incident is mentioned in subsequent missionary accounts - Powell, 1871 Journal, pp.31-32 (SSJ 160); Gill, 1872 Diary, p.27 (ML B1444); Gill 1885:16. Gill's account was taken from Powell who, in turn, got his information from Murray's writings. Their details do not always coincide; nevertheless it is clear that something along the lines described by Murray actually happened - see Thompson to Gordon, n.d., (WPHC 4, encl in 30/1878)
The L.M.S. missionaries put their own interpretation on the religious consequences of such incidents and in doing so blinded themselves to the basic reasons behind the island's reluctance to embrace the lotu - namely opposition to religious change from the island's leadership and priestly class. Nanumanga and Nanumea, where no such incidents involving traders occurred, were even more difficult to evangelise than Niutao. At Niutao, moreover, the sole trader living on the island in 1866 was in favour of the coming of Christianity.

During the hiatus in missionary voyages in the late-1860s Christian influences continued to infiltrate Niutao. According to the missionary Powell

two natives of the island who had sometime been on Vaitupu under the instruction of the teacher Peni, returned home. They were soon joined by five others who had been under the teacher's instruction at Nukufetau, and these were accompanied by two couples from the same place. These conducted Christian worship.

They formed the nucleus of the Christian community that was eventually to follow but for the meanwhile received a hostile response from the priests and chiefs who took measures to suppress their activities. By the early 1870s, with the reinforcing element of annual missionary voyages, the drift to Christianity began, and for the next few years the situation of clearly defined factionalism prevailed on the island with religion reflecting and intensifying pre-existing rivalries. This was a highly visible state of affairs while it lasted with one side of the village being nominally Christian and the other side "heathen".

When missionary voyages to Tuvalu resumed in 1870 Whitmee visited the island and landed two pastors with the intention that one

8. Murray 1876:407
9. Powell, 1871 Journal, p.32 (SSJ 160)
10. Davies, 1873 Journal, p.8 (SSL 3V2/0)
would later go on to Nanumanga. He found that Leto, the so-called "King" of the island, was favourably disposed to the lotu and quite prepared to allow his people to exercise a free choice in the matter of religion. But Leto would take no positive action until he consulted Vaganaa, described by Whitmee as the "chief" of the island, who was "nominally inferior to the king, but really possessing greater power owing to his greater force of character". Vaganaa was at Vaitupu at the time but Leto predicted that he would prove co-operative and Whitmee departed confident that the entire island would rapidly become a Christian preserve.

At first Whitmee's optimism seemed justified. The following year it was reported that clothing laws had been passed, that the islanders were anxious to become literate, that church services and school classes were being held, that a pastors' residence had been constructed, and that the only remaining pagans were four priests and their families numbering 17 persons in all who were "dreadfully opposed to the introduction of the gospel". But in other respects Whitmee had misread the situation. Far from being "on excellent terms with each other" Leto and Vaganaa had a rather strained relationship. According to Niutao tradition there had once been a war on the island between the followers of Fuatia and Pokia and it is likely that Leto and Vaganaa were descendants from each of these chiefly groups. Personal differences between the two men re-affirmed their traditional family hostilities, and with the introduction of Christianity this now assumed a religious dimension.

11. Whitmee 1871:21-23
12. Whitmee 1871:27
13. Vivian 1871-72 Journal, p.85 (SSJ 159); Powell, 1871 Journal, p.36 (SSJ 160)
14. Whitmee 1871:22
15. A measure of support for this contention comes from some of the answers given by old men of Niutao in August 1978 when I asked whether they could tell me about the coming of Christianity to their island. Some informants mentioned Leto and Vaganaa but others thought that Fuatia and Pokia were the reigning aliki in the 1870s.
Their rivalry had repercussions in the conversion process. In 1874 it was noted that:

The greatest difficulty with the work here is that the chief - Vagana - is rather more than half heathen still. He professes to be a Christian but he is jealous of the old king, Leto, who is a church member, and if he is offended at anything he will not attend church, and sometimes even threatens the teacher.\textsuperscript{16}

Although there was seemingly a mass conversion to Christianity following Whitmee's departure, the bubble burst early. The obvious explanation is that opposition from Vagana following his return from Vaitupu undid the good work. Despite Whitmee's hopes that Vaganaa's exposure to Christian teaching would incline him in that direction,\textsuperscript{17} the result seems to have been quite the opposite. It is more likely that Vaganaa noted the extent of the pastor's power and influence at Vaitupu and sought to avert a similar situation on his own island where two pastors had been stationed. To compound his misgivings Leto's house had been converted into a church,\textsuperscript{18} a shrewd tactical move which provided the latter with an additional power base. Vaganaa's return resulted in a resurgence of paganism. In 1872, according to missionary accounts, pagan numbers had risen from 17 to 40 (out of a total population of 417).\textsuperscript{19} Some of the pagan party undoubtedly came from the party of Niutaoans who returned with Vaganaa from Vaitupu;\textsuperscript{20} others would have been his followers and kinsmen who had remained at Niutao all the while. The following year

\textsuperscript{16} Turner, 1874 Journal, p.10 (SSJ 165)
\textsuperscript{17} Whitmee 1871:15
\textsuperscript{18} Gill 1885:12
\textsuperscript{19} Gill, 1872 Diary, p.28 (ML B1444); A naval account mentions that in 1872 "half the people are as yet devil-worshippers" (Moresby 1876:78). All incidental information provided by Moresby, however, must be treated with caution.
\textsuperscript{20} Whitmee, "Recollections of a long life", p.87 (TS in possession of Niel Gunson)
the pagan number was put at 37.21 They lived by themselves apart from the rest of the island.22 The visiting L.M.S. missionaries always strolled through the ‘heathen side’ when they called at the island each year. In 1871 Powell spoke to one of the pagans, a man named Matea, but without very promising results:

Matea asked how Jesus came to earth? I answered that he became man by being born of a virgin. He shook his head, gave a contemptuous smile and said, ‘it could not be true’.23

Three years later Turner expressed the hope that “the time is not far distant when they will cast aside their idols”.24 But on no occasion did a visiting L.M.S. missionary make a concerted attempt in the short time available to proselytise among the pagans. Rather, they concentrated their efforts on winning over the aliki and preaching to the converted. The real work of conversion was left to the pastors; the visiting L.M.S. missionaries consolidated, supported and assessed.

The pagans, by then fewer than one in ten of the population, are not likely to have been a significant impediment to the lotu given that they were segregated from the rest of the island. Yet at the same time Christianity was making little headway. Despite outward signs of progress, such as people being “decently clad” and a brisk demand for reading matter, Niutao was deemed “much behind other islands”.25 The visiting European missionaries discerned the fine hand of Vaganaa behind much of this, and certainly his unstable and wilful personality had done much to promote social disruption to the detriment of Christianity. Even after 1875 when Vaganaa professed a

21. Davies, 1873 Journal, p.8 (SSR 34/2/D). Their number had risen the following year to 45 due to a number of births - Turner, ‘Report of a voyage . . . during 1874’, p.28 (PNB 129)
22. G.A. Turner, 1874 Journal, p.9 (SSJ 165)
23. Powell, 1871 Journal, p.35 (SSJ 160)
24. G.A. Turner, 1874 Journal, p.10 (SSJ 165)
25. Gill, 1872 Diary, p.46 (ML B1444); Pratt, 1872 Journal, p.15 (SSJ 163); Davies, 1873 Journal, p.8 (SSL 34/2/D)
remarkable change of heart and successfully applied for Church Fellow-
ship there was no noticeable improvement in the inner religious
feeling of the island as a whole. By this time, moreover, pagan
resistance had become quite passive and in 1874 Turner found them
to be "friendly but rather shy". Paganism as a force quickly
 petered out after Vaganaa switched horses, but the visiting L.M.S.
missionaries continued to lament the purely nominal character of
Niutaoan Christianity. This general lack of commitment and enthusiasm
for the lotu persisted and Niutao was noted well into the following
decade for its laxity. The reasons for this were perplexing to the
English missionaries and is no less so in retrospect.

The course of Christianity on the island was erratic and
halting but Vaganaa was only partly the cause. It is evident that
the peculiar nature of the overall situation at Niutao also had a
hand in the matter. Tapu and Stone, the two pastors landed by Whitmee
in 1870, immediately met with stiff opposition, if not outright
antagonism, from the pagans who, among other things, refused to help
in supplying them with food. Their plight might have been alleviated
with the gaining of nominal adherents except that their arrival
coincided with the beginning of a serious drought. By 1872 their
predicament was unenviable:

The teachers are kept alive only by a daily portion
of six green nuts and four ripe ones for each family.
Their children sometimes cried for food. No land
was granted for them to cultivate, and they could
only supply their wants by fishing.

Tapu and Stone, the latter of whom lacked the temperament to
act effectively in a difficult outstation situation and were further
disadvantaged by the linguistic problems which confronted them at
Niutao dialect "diverges widely from Samoan" and this affected

26. Nisbet, Diary, 10 Sept 1875, p.218 (PMB 417)
27. G.A. Turner, 1874 Journal, p.9 (SSJ 165)
28. Powell, 1871 Journal, p.34 (SSJ 160)
the pastors' work at every level. Stone would have found things even more trying than did Tapu: he came from Niue and Samoan was his second language. During Tapu's ten month absence at Nanumea in 1873-74 Stone's difficulties would have multiplied. Given the linguistic problems, not to mention the hardship of the two pastors' daily lives, it is hardly surprising that the people of Niutao made "little progress in the acquisition of the Samoan language". To compound the situation Niutao was more heavily populated than the southern Islands meaning the pastors could give less individual attention to pupils. Indeed, a good deal of the peoples so-called "backwardness" and doctrinal indifference in the eyes of the visiting missionaries was a result of their pastors' inability to effectively communicate, and the peoples' difficulty in grasping the strange Christian doctrines when expressed so incoherently to them. When Turner preached to a "well-dressed and attentive audience" in 1874 he was probably also addressing a largely uncomprehending gathering of people.

In 1875 Stone was removed as the L.M.S. regarded the presence of two pastors on a single village as a waste of resources. The following year Tapu requested that he be transferred to some other place. His congregation wished him to stay. Under other circumstances he probably could have coped with the Niutao posting now that the island had settled down to a nominal Christian dispensation, but the years of hardship and frustration had eroded his morale. Moreover Jack O'Brien, the resident trader, and Vaganae were doing what they could to make his life unpleasant.

He was allowed to go and replaced the following year by Nito, another Samoan, who remained for over ten years. Nito's long stay likewise demonstrates the effect that the personality of a pastor can have on the course of evangelisation. From a mission point of view Niutao gradually improved but mainly of its own accord, one

31. Nisbet, 1875 Journal, p.11 (SSJ 167)
32. Turner, "Report of a voyage ... during 1874", p.28 (MHB 129)
33. Nisbet, 1875 Journal, p.10 (SSJ 167)
34. Turner, 1876 Journal, pp.11-12 (SSJ 173)
suspects. Certainly Nito failed to impress his European superiors and towards the end of his long reign the missionary Marriott, who normally bent over backwards to give Samoan pastors the benefit of the doubt, described him as "not one of our brightest men". Certainly he managed to establish a measure of control over Vaganaa but could boast little more to his credit. On the other side church attendances were miserable and his students did not acquit themselves well. The missionary Davies even went so far as to remark that "a general want of intelligence in the whole people was conspicuous". The visiting missionary the following year thought "A great deal of this ... due to want of energy in our teacher & I earnestly exhorted him to devote himself more entirely to his work".

IN ITS basic essentials the L.M.S. strategy for converting Niutao to fundamentalist Christianity conformed with that in the more pliable southern islands. The very first objective on every island in the group was always to obtain the permission of the reigning aliki to permit an ordained pastor, usually a Samoan, to be left behind to evangelise while the English missionaries provided periodic support. In Niutao and the other northern islands, however, it was necessary to expand on that basic strategy and to modify tactics in order to meet the demands of a more difficult situation.

In particular the visiting missionaries sought chiefly patronage throughout the northern islands in a way that was unnecessary elsewhere in the group. A comprehensive evangelising programme was dependent on the goodwill of the aliki, as Vaganaa's disruptive opposition had served to remind the L.M.S. missionaries. They therefore concentrated their initial efforts on the various aliki and followed a set formula in order to win this chiefly favour.

35. Marriott, 1887 Journal, p.13 (SSJ 185)
The L.M.S. approach was both conciliatory and obliging. At no stage were demands pressed too far in the crucial early stages. In the first place the visiting L.M.S. missionaries were at one in reassuring an aliki that Christianity, and more specifically the pastors, would not interfere with their authority and prerogatives. Tied in with this undertaking was the missionaries' express desire that people should be allowed to embrace the lotu if they so chose. At the same time the missionaries undertook that 'liberty of conscience' applied also to the Islander who declined to become a Christian. These earliest assurances were, of course, incompatible with the ultimate objective of the L.M.S., namely the complete overthrow of the pagan system. Once in a position of strength, the mission complex was less tolerant. This contradiction between means and ends was also manifest in the preferential treatment readily accorded to aliki, most notably in Vaganaa's admission to Church Fellowship in 1875. His real 'qualification' was his traditional rank. Other important, though unstated, reasons behind Nisbet's decision to admit him were to neutralise both his disruptive potential and whatever influence he still held with the remaining pagans.

Such an approach involved compromises in ways more fundamental than showing favouritism to a touchy aliki. While the European L.M.S. missionaries deplored the nominal character of Christianity at Niutao, much of it stemmed from their tactic of working through the chiefs in order to quickly gain a mass following. Whatever the short-term gains in casting the aliki in a role reminiscent of the Pied Piper of Hamelin, the long-term implications were disturbing from the European missionary standpoint. This is not to suggest that individual motivations were entirely lacking or that educational standards and knowledge of scripture were uniformly low. When Turner examined the 24 candidates who presented themselves for membership to the Church in 1874 he 'was much pleased to find them much above average'. Nevertheless he admitted only 16 to Church Fellowship.

38. Gill 1886:18; Whitmee 1871:22
39. Turner, "Report of a voyage... during 1874", p.27 (PMB 129)
NANUMEA AND NANUMANGA

ONLY 37 miles apart, these two islands exhibited many striking parallels which set them apart from the rest of Tuvalu. It is these qualities which initially made them the least receptive to the lotus.

Although this is not the case today, in the period under discussion the two islands had a special relationship which was continually being reinforced by inter-island visits and feasting. Linguistic and traditional evidence also points to cultural affinities between the two islands. The traditional religion of Nanumea and Nanumanga likewise set them apart. They worshipped many deities, as did other Tuvaluans, but the similarity ends at this point. None of the other Tuvalu islanders subjected visitors to what traders called "devilling", and the visiting missionaries found these extensive purification rituals tedious in the extreme. Nor did any other Tuvaluans, except perhaps at Niutao, worship the skulls of ancestors. The practice was more pronounced at Nanumanga where the "test of giving up heathenism was the destruction of one's collection of skulls". The phenomenon of skull-worship certainly gave the religion of the two islands a unique aspect. However, another common feature of their religion even more thoroughly distinguishes them from their neighbours: when the missionaries arrived they were the only committed pagans remaining in Tuvalu.

The missionaries' first few encounters with these Islanders were hardly encouraging. At Nanumea, in contrast to the southern islands: "The missionaries arrived to find a functioning, integrated traditional society, whose members saw no immediate advantage to be

42. For the most detailed descriptions of these ceremonies see Pease 1962:7-9; Powell, 1871 Journal, pp.39-45 (SSJ 160)
43. Murray 1876:408; Gill, 1872 Diary, p.70 (ML 81444)
44. George Turner, 1876 Journal, pp.24-25 (SSJ 168)
gained by trading one religion for another. The missionary task was, essentially, to prove the inadequacy of Nanumean culture and the superiority of their own. Murray called at the island in 1866 but they refused to accept a pastor and Murray considered himself lucky not to have been killed. The explanation that he gave was that: "They appear much wedded to their superstitions & strongly adverse to any change at present", and he was correct up to a point. Oral testimony, however, fills out the picture and reveals that Murray's difficulties arose from a failure to make himself understood in the Nanumean dialect. He tried to say words to the effect that he was going to change the life of the island and he used the words "vau o fuli te fenua', which means to turn the island sideways or even upside down. Had he said "fuli ttno" (change the people) he would have been right, but instead he angered the Nanumeans who repulsed him with spears and clubs.

Missionary voyages resumed in 1870 on an annual basis. Unlike Niutao, however, Nanumea experienced nothing in the meanwhile to alter the situation as Murray found it and when Whitmee arrived four years later

45. A. Chambers 1975:50
46. Murray 1876:407-09
47. Murray, 1866 Journal, p.44 (SSJ 157)
48. Te Lama, (Nov-Dec 1972), pp.25-26; Kofe 1976:40-41. Whitmee's (1871:25) oblique statement that Murray's moment of danger "arose entirely from a mistake" lends credence to the Nanumeans' version of the incident, which was retold to Keith and Anne Chambers during the course of their fieldwork on the atoll in 1973-75 - KAC, 24 Jan 1976. A less credible version is provided by the scientist travelling on that same voyage of the Susanna - Graeffe 1867:1190. According to Graeffe, Murray was endangered by the words and deeds of the Samoan pastor he had left behind at Nanumea on a previous occasion. This "simple-minded" missionary agent had tried to terrorise the recalcitrant Nanumeans into accepting Christianity by threatening the destruction of the island by a warship. In consequence an enraged Nanumean tried to kill Murray with a spear, but he was overpowered by other Nanumeans and led away. Graeffe's explanation of motives is suspect because it predates the actual arrival of a Samoan pastor on Nanumea by almost seven years; moreover, this was Murray's first visit to Nanumea. However, it is clear that Murray was in considerable danger at the time.
the island was as strongly pagan as ever. Although courteously received by the aliki Whitmee was convinced that the priests wanted to kill him on the spot.\textsuperscript{49} There were no untoward scenes but the arrival of the John Williams caused excitement and consternation:

They at once went to all their gods, and in a formal manner informed them that a new God was coming to their island, and asked them not to be angry with them on that account . . . . a number of prayers were offered up by the priest. These were to depreciate the wrath of the gods on account of the arrival of a foreign ship, and especially this ship of the foreigner's God. They also prayed that no disease might be brought by the ship to their island; but if a disease was on board it might be taken to Fiji.\textsuperscript{50}

This suggests that one impediment to mission work was the association in the Islanders' minds between sickness and Christianity. However, on this occasion Whitmee was able to persuade the aliki to allow a pastor to be landed the following year and in the meanwhile to permit the residence of Tavita, a man from Funafuti, who was to act in a pastoral capacity. But the aliki was not prepared to allow Nanumeans to become Christians on the ground that "the island would be divided".\textsuperscript{51} Later events would show that his fear was more than justified.

Whitmee achieved less than he imagined. His colleagues Powell and Vivian arrived the following year in 1871 to find Tavita back in Funafuti and the Nanumeans "evasive . . . as to the possibility of a teacher being received".\textsuperscript{52} The priests were as hostile as ever and it was asked whether Christianity would cause sickness. The missionaries persisted. In accordance with established procedure they sought a meeting with the man they thought to be the king of the island by ingratiating themselves with his son, but were ordered off the island. Unrealistically the failure was attributed to a Hawaiian living on the

\textsuperscript{49.} Whitmee, "Recollections of a long life", p.93 (TS in possession of Niel Gunson)

\textsuperscript{50.} Whitmee 1871:24

\textsuperscript{51.} Whitmee 1871:26

\textsuperscript{52.} Powell, 1871 Journal, p.48 (SSJ 160)
island, named Tom Coffin in missionary accounts, who was alleged to have "ruined the work". Since only one Hawaiian is mentioned in any of the missionary accounts it is almost certain that this Tom Coffin is the same person as the George Holomoana of oral tradition, who later made an important contribution in the acceptance of the lotu at both Nanumea and Nanumanga.54

Mission endeavour at Nanumea had certainly gone backwards rather than forwards but the next few years saw some dramatic developments which decisively tipped the balance in the other direction. It is at this point that the documentary evidence and oral testimony appear to be in conflict. Closer inspection, however, reveals the apparent disparities to be largely differences in emphasis and perspective rather than outright fact.

In July 1872 H.M.S. Basilisk (Captain John Moresby) arrived off Nanumea and set in motion the sequence of events that led to eventual acceptance of the lotu. From his hearsay knowledge of the island Moresby had formed a highly unfavourable impression of the Nanumeans.

They are all Devil worshippers and have steadily refused to allow the missionaries to land, which not unlikely has resulted from the pernicious influence of the natives of these islands, who have learnt the worst vices of Europeans, and have been left on this island by whalers and kidnapping vessels.

Europeans when landing on the island should be armed (which is quite unnecessary at any other island of the Ellice Group), as the natives are great thieves and not to be depended upon.55

In view of the Nanumeans "bad reputation", writes Moresby, "we persuaded a few of them to come on board, and fired a few shots to give them an

53. Powell, 1871 Journal, p.47 (SSJ 160)
54. George Holomoana may well have been the "kanaka" steward landed at Nanumea in 1853 by the Nantucket whaler Planter - Pease 1962:13; Chambers et al 1978:33n. In 1863 he frustrated an attempt by Peruvian slavers to carry off large numbers of Nanumeans - see above, p.72
55. Moresby 1872:165
idea of the white man's power". What seems to have finally prompted this piece of warship action was the complaint by the resident trader that the aliki had threatened to kill him. Accordingly a couple of cannon balls were fired into the bush as an object lesson. The Nanumeans viewed the event in a different light and interpreted Moresby's action as a direct result of their having chased Murray away (whereas Moresby's official account makes it clear that this was one factor and only one of many). But in terms of what followed it is the Nanumean version which matters because they believed that if yet another missionary was repulsed a warship would next time bombard their village instead of the bush.

Prevailing fear of naval action had some bearing on the Nanumeans' uneasy acceptance of their first pastor, Tuilouaa. He came of his own volition. Tuilouaa had been stationed at Nui in 1871 to replace the original pastor, Kirisome, who had been sent the year before to Tamana to initiate L.M.S. enterprise in Kiribati. Kirisome, however, returned to Nui only weeks after Tuilouaa's arrival, having laboured unfruitfully at Tamana. But Tuilouaa, an ambitious and strong-willed individual, yearned for an island of his own. At

56. Moresby 1876:80

57. Hayter, "Logbook and Journal, H.M.S. Basilisk", 21 July 1872 (PMB 626). However Hayter was mistaken in thinking that only blanks had been fired. One of the cannonballs remained embedded in a tree in the middle of the bush until the early-1940s when it was cut down by American soldiers stationed on the island - KAC, 26 Jan 1976

58. Moresby 1872:165

59. Nanumean tradition also attests, less convincingly, that Moresby was prevented from bombarding the village itself only by the entreaties of George Holomoana who persuaded him to fire into the bush instead - see A. Chambers 1975:9. None of the extant accounts from the European side mention any such incident - see the previous three footnotes and also Goodman, "Journal of the surgeon, H.M.S. Basilisk", 13-21 July 1872 (PMH). I suspect that embellishments by George's descendants have since merged with the original incident to become the local orthodoxy. George's descendants today number about 200 people, or almost one-fifth of the island's population, and are known as the Kau Hauai [Hawaii]

60. Vivian, 1871-1872 Journal, p.83 (SSJ 159)
the first opportunity he begged the visiting missionaries to station him at Nanumea "but Mr Pratt does not like to force teachers (especially a man with five children) upon an unwilling heathen".61 Tuilouaa then took matters into his own hands by leaving for Nanumea with one of his deacons on the next trading vessel to call.62 Powell recalls his hostile reception at Nanumea:

On the 8th of January, 1873, Tuilona [sic] landed by stealth and went to the house of a trader living on shore. As soon as the people knew it, an assembly was called, and he was led as a culprit to the council, and made to sit exposed to the scorching rays of the sun for two hours during the debate. At length the King addressed him to the following effect:- 'I and my people are determined to have no form of Christianity set up in my land, therefore you must leave immediately.' In the meantime, however, the vessel in which he had only taken passage from Nui disappeared. Many of the people were now furious with rage, and some advised putting the intruder to death.63

According to another missionary account the person who actually ordered Tuilouaa off the island was Lie, one of the aliki.64

But there was a lot more to the introduction of Christianity than the visiting missionaries realised. At this point, according to oral testimony, a powerful toa (warrior) of the island named Teuhia stepped forward and prevailed upon Lie to allow Tuilouaa to remain unharmed. The background to this critical incident was not of the sort likely to have come to the attention of the itinerating European missionaries. Teuhia, who is remembered by present-day Nanumeans as a giant of a man,65 was the brother of Temumuni, who had become a Christian while living at Nui. Upon his return to Nanumea on the

61. Gill, 1872 Diary, p.76 (ML B1444)
62. Davies, 1873 Journal, p.20 (SSL 3V2/D)
63. Powell 1878:202
64. Davies, 1873 Journal, p.21 (SSL 3V2/D)
65. KAC, 24 Jan 1976
John Williams in 1871, Temumuni converted Teuhia and the rest of his family to the lotu.\textsuperscript{56} It appears that Lie was not prepared to sanction the killing of Tuilouaa in the face of opposition from such a powerful toa. In contrast to the situation at the time of Whitmee's visit in 1870, the ački and the toa were now no longer united in their opposition to Christianity. There was, moreover, the nagging fear of naval retribution should another missionary be harmed or repulsed. Nevertheless, the Christian faction was not strong enough for the moment to prevent laws forbidding attendance at Tuilouaa's services and school classes.\textsuperscript{67}

A few months later there was a fresh development in that unplanned and fortuitous sequence of events which marks the introduction of Christianity to Nanumea. Pastor Tapu of Niutao, hearing that Tuilouaa was in difficulty, decided to go to Nanumea himself.\textsuperscript{68} He went by way of Nui taking with him Tuilouaa's wife and children. Within three weeks of his arrival the two pastors were finally conducting services and school classes. When the missionary Davies arrived on the deputational visit in October that year, he found that the 'chiefs altho' still clinging to their idols have granted liberty of conscience'.\textsuperscript{69} It would be more accurate to say that, after the action of H.M.S. Basilisk, the ački were no longer prepared to risk the use of physical sanctions against Nanumeans who showed an interest in the lotu. Their moral authority alone was insufficient to prevent a drift towards Christianity, especially since they lacked the support of the most powerful toa on the island.

In statistical terms 14 adults and their 22 children had "given up idolatry" and between 70 to 80 people were attending the pastors' services.\textsuperscript{66, 67}

\textsuperscript{66} Temumuni's return to Nanumea is actually mentioned in Powell, 1871 Journal, p.50 (SSJ 160). But subsequent missionary accounts do not mention Temumuni, let alone his part in the introduction of Christianity.

\textsuperscript{67} Davies, 1873 Journal, p.21 (SSL 34/2/0); Powell 1878:202

\textsuperscript{68} Turner, "Report of a voyage ... during 1874", p.51 (PMB 129)

\textsuperscript{69} Davies, 1873 Journal, pp.20-21 (SSL 34/2/0)
services, including the Hawaiian George Holomoana. More than any other single development Holomoana's changing attitude towards Christianity reflects the progress of L.M.S. enterprise on Nanumea. Only two years before he had been blamed by Powell for ruining the work; now he was at the forefront of the changes taking place on the atoll. Whatever his religious motivations, Holomoana's change of heart perhaps also stemmed from the realisation that the tide was turning in favour of Christianity and that the new religion would soon become the social and political force it already was in his native Hawaii. He thus developed a symbiotic relationship with the lotu, influencing the course of religious change even as it affected him. Holomoana became influential within the local L.M.S. church and several of his descendants have become pastors.

1873 was a significant and eventful year which saw Christianity make its first decisive breakthrough on Nanumea, and Davies departed quietly satisfied that there seemed 'every prospect of the good work going on'. To assist that end he gave a home passage to Vaganaa and a group of Niutaoans who had been living on Nanumea and distracting the two resident pastors with their 'night dancing and other evil pleasures'. L.M.S. enterprise usually benefitted from Tuvaluans' inter-island visits, but not on this occasion.

The pagan system was finally in retreat. Arriving at Nanumea little more than six months later, G.A. Turner found "things ... in a very much better state than formerly":

The two Kings, eleven of the rulers, and about half the population have embraced Christianity ... the principal idols were destroyed [two months previous] and over 200 were buried. All the Christian party are now clothed. All heathen customs have been given up.

70. Davies, 1873 Journal, pp.20, 21 (SSL 34/2/D)
71. For example the long-serving Pastor at Vaitupu when I lived there in 1978 was a descendant of Holomoana. His name, appropriately enough, was Honolulu.
72. Davies, 1873 Journal, p.21 (SSL 34/2/D)
Schools are held morning and afternoon at which men, women, and children attend. Those who still cling to heathen practices only worship the deities in secret.\textsuperscript{73}

But the lotu was still not as firmly entrenched as this statement might imply. When Turner tried to organize a deputation of Christian Nanumeans to visit pagan Nanumanga in the John Williams, the idea had to be shelved because the ali\textك thought it unwise for any of them to leave their island lest it tempt the sizeable pagan minority to "pluck up courage, and cause further trouble".\textsuperscript{74}

The following year only ten pagans remained and a church was formed with a membership of five. That year also the deputation finally went to Nanumanga.\textsuperscript{75} By 1876 it was clear that Christianity had decisively gained the upper hand. Although a handful of pagans remained, almost a quarter of the population was applying for Church Fellowship.\textsuperscript{76} The L.K.S. was now reaping the benefits of having demonstrated the superiority of the invading religion. Both the purification ceremonies for strangers and the pagan religious structures had been abandoned in 1874 without disaster befalling the island. The traditional religion had been thoroughly undermined but at the same time Christianity was on hand to fulfill both the sacred and secular functions of the abandoned religion. By 1877 the only visible evidence to indicate the pagan past were "two large erect slabs of conglomerate rock remaining on the western side of the village".\textsuperscript{77}

There is a further consideration in the acceptance of the lotu, namely the eventual support of the ali\textك. Once the ali\textك as a body came out in support of Christianity, much of its acceptability among the Nanumeans stemmed from a general desire to end the social

\textsuperscript{73} G.A. Turner, 1874 Journal, p.20 (SSJ 165)
\textsuperscript{74} G.A. Turner, 1874 Journal, p.21 (SSJ 165)
\textsuperscript{75} Nisbet, 1875 Journal, p.25 (SSJ 167)
\textsuperscript{76} George Turner, 1876 Journal, p.25 (SSJ 173)
\textsuperscript{77} Powell 1878:202
divisiveness brought about by two religions living on the same small atoll, and also to preserve the principle of obedience to higher authority. The L.M.S. exploited these sentiments in order to make the early decisive breakthrough. But the same penalty attached to working through the Island's leadership as was the case contemporaneously at Niutao. Christianity was largely nominal in character for many years afterwards and in 1885 the visiting missionary lamented that "The religious indifference of the people seemed only comparable with that of Nikunau" that the most 'backward' of all the islands in the Northwest Outstations.

EVENTS at Nanumanga kept one step behind those on Nanumea but the final capitulation to Christianity was rather less gradual. The background is much the same: the initial approaches through chiefly agency, repeated attempts to land a pastor, the visiting missionaries' anxiety to dodge the purification rituals, their request that Nanumangans who wished to practice Christianity be granted "liberty of conscience" and the initial refusal of the aliki to allow such a thing. Nanumanga was still completely pagan when the John Williams finally called at the island in 1871. There was an unusual slant to that first missionary visit in that Powell and Vivian were accompanied by a son and a daughter of Atapu, the leading aliki of Nanumanga. This arose out of two unrelated and unexpected incidents. Earlier in the voyage at Nukufetau Powell examined several candidates for the theological college at Malua and it is perhaps no coincidence that the only one to be accepted was "a promising young man whose wife [Saleima] is the daughter of the king of Nanomanga". A few days later Powell

78. Newell, 1885 Journal, p.37 (SSJ 182)

79. The John Williams did not call at Nanumanga in 1870. Although Whitmee originally intended to place Pastor Sione from Nine on the island, circumstances intervened and instead Sione was left at Niutao to await an opening at Nanumanga - see Whitmee 1871:22, 23. In the event Sione remained at Niutao

80. Powell, 1871 Journal, p.25 (SSJ 160)
and Vivian agreed to give home passages to two Nanumangans living at Niutao, one of whom happened to be Saleima's brother. 81

But the visiting missionaries were disappointed in their hope that Saleima and her brother would influence their father in favour of Christianity. When Powell was finally granted an audience with Atapu the latter first of all asked, through an interpreter, whether the acceptance of a pastor would result in his lands being usurped. Powell pointed out:

the many advantages which would come to them by the introduction of the Gospel (or Lotu) of Jesus Christ. This was not at all acceptable . . . and only after some time and much talk about the temporal benefits of such a course did we obtain permission to leave the teacher and his wife. The old King however stipulated that the Teacher should not attempt to change their Lotu or religion for, said he, the Gods of Nanomanga have been our Gods for many years and they are the Gods of my Fathers we require no others he may live with us and teach us many things we do not know but not a new Lotu. 82

Clearly the Nanumangans evinced an admiration for the material and technological superiority of European culture, of which the L.M.S. was part. Unlike the case in the southern islands, however, this was not ascribed to the mana of their God. Such was the rationale behind Nanumanga's acceptance of their first pastor, Timoteo from the Tokelau island of Fakaofo, and his wife. 83 He was to serve Nanumangan purposes to the exclusion of those of his Lord and Maker.

These were irreconcilable expectations for both sides and by the time of Pratt and Gili's visit the following year Timoteo had more than outstayed his dubious welcome. There was tension in the air from the moment the two missionaries set foot on the beach. The boat crews were promptly ordered back to the John Williams and Pratt

81. Powell, 1871 Journal, p.35 (SSJ 160)
82. Turpie, "The introduction of the gospel to Nanomanga", pp.3-4 (SSO)
83. Vivian, 1871-1872 Journal, p.101 (SSJ 159); Powell, 1871 Journal, p.46 (SSJ 160)
and Gill were only allowed to see Timoteo after arguing the point at length. He was rather demoralised. His property had been stolen shortly after his arrival and he even had to purchase a house in which to live. On a more spiritual plane he had gained no converts at all. The aliki were still unanimous in their opposition to the lotu: Timoteo was not allowed to teach nor were any Nanumangans allowed to become Christians. Moreover, Atapu wanted rid of Timoteo. He was ill "with an ominous cough, and seemingly far gone with consumption", and no doubt he attributed his sickness to Timoteo's presence. The two missionaries tried to redeem the situation by reading a letter from Salema urging her father to give himself over to Christ, but this only "excited the old man's wrath". "We returned to tea on board the J.W. not a little crestfallen", wrote Gill that evening in his diary. The following day it was finally agreed that Timoteo should remain another year. But neither missionary was hopeful and indeed the following year Davies reported that although Atapu had since died the island's leadership was still staunchly opposed to the lotu, and Timoteo had to leave the island. However, George Holomoana, who had travelled from Nanumea on the John Williams, decided to stay at Nanumanga with a view of trying to persuade the people to accept another pastor.

It is difficult to be sure what happened between Davies' visit in 1873 and the next deputational visit two years later. Nevertheless a shift in the Nanumangans' attitudes can be discerned. Whereas their initial interest in the L.M.S. stemmed solely from materialistic considerations, a negative religious dimension had by now entered the picture. In particular the Nanumangans' militant faith in their system of family and island-wide gods, which so impressed some of the earliest European missionaries to call, was now waning. But fear of them remained and this presented the final impediment to the acceptance of the lotu.

84. Gill, 1872 Diary, pp.21, 69-70 (ML B1444); Gill 1885:19-24; Prett, 1872 Journal, pp.26-28 (SSJ 163)
85. Davies, 1873 Journal, p.22 (SSL 35/2/D)
86. Powell, 1871 Journal, p.39 (SSJ 160); Gill, 1872 Diary, p.72 (ML B1444)
The final capitulation was a dramatic affair. In 1875 the
John Williams left behind the deputation from Nanumea and also loane,
who was without question the most remarkable pastor ever to come to
Tuvalu. Within a year about 40% of the population regarded them-
selves as Christians. Theirs was the only crisis conversion experienced
in Tuvalu and it is fortunate that George Turner bothered to provide a
detailed, if second-hand, account of the event:

On his first sabbath on shore in Sep. last loane had
24 to hear him. On the second sabbath he begged them
to give up working on the Lord's day - and this they
did. On the forthcoming Friday at a conversational
meeting with them about their gods. He said, that
the sacred filler was merely a piece of wood made by
God and perishable, but that the true god never did.
The fish which they revered were made by God for men
to eat - and it was the same with their sacred birds
such as the Areva and Cuckoo. And as for the shooting
star it was not a god, but merely a passing light in the
night; and like all the heavenly lights made and con-
trolled by God. The people were much impressed by what
he said. At midnight he was waked up by two of the
chiefs, who asked him to rise and go with them. They
took him to the bush away from the hearing of every
body and there they talked. They said they had made
up their minds to turn over, but their great difficulty
was how to get rid of their relics and gods. He said
he had no fear of them, and was ready to burn or bury
or remove in any way they liked. This was all they
wanted and they decided to let him be the executioner
on the following day.

The day came - five of the chiefs took their seats
surrounded by all the people, and loane was sent for.
The first thing to be done was to remove from the necks
of these men the sacred necklaces which were supposed
to link them on the special protection of the gods.
It was considered death for anyone to remove them, but
loane stepped forward and broke the fragile net work -
the people staring in astonishment and expecting every
moment to see him fall down dead. The necklaces were
removed, the spell was broken, the weakness of the gods
manifest - and now said he: 'Let us pray', and there and
then he led their thoughts in prayer to the true God.
He was then directed to go and break down the altars in
the temples, remove the skulls and stone idols, and also
the clubs and spears of the gods. Every eye followed
him, many still looking upon him as a dead man. In went

87. Nisbet, 1875 Journal, pp.21-22 (SSJ 167); Nisbet, Diary,
pp.245-48 (PHB 417)
his axe to the two pillars sacred to the "shooting star" god. He handled carefully the skulls as he took them from their places, and respectfully covered them with a piece of Samoan native cloth. Some of the clubs and spears from the armoury of the gods came in handy as a railing for the court house which they decided to use as a temporary chapel. Ioane proposed one of the temples but did not urge it, and next day he had a congregation of 98— all professing by their appearance there that the Lord's day that they had given up heathendom. On the Monday they proceeded with the burial of the skulls and other sacred relics from the temples, and family skull houses. Some of the new converts helped Ioane, and in that grave of heathendom dug in the village malea or place of public meeting they laid 134 skulls - 1 wooden idol 2 stone idols - 14 shell trumpets used in calling assemblies, and a lot of clubs and spears used only by order of the gods. These skulls were kept in the temple and family alters, cocoanuts and other food were daily taken and laid before them, and in cases of sickness in the family or settlement they prayed to the spirits who were supposed still to hover around these skulls ready to answer a call for help.

Much indeed depended on the force of character of those first pastors in northern Tuvalu. The example of Ioane shows that an effective personality can effect a religious transformation in a crisis by verbal and actual demonstration of the world-view and power of Christianity over what was becoming a fragmented and unco-ordinated pagan system. Christianity had finally demonstrated its superiority over the traditional religion, not because it represented a higher form of theological truth but because it was perceived as being more powerful. But to concentrate exclusively on the personality of the pastor is to ignore what had gone before his arrival. Ioane came when the pagan system was finally on the retreat having held out against the missionary intrusion for as long as it could. Only fear of the consequences of rejecting their own religion was holding up the progress of Christianity on Nanumanga. Ioane's first task was to neutralise the anger of the old gods and in doing so to remove the Nanumangans' final objection to embracing a religion about which they knew very little.

88. George Turner, 1876 Journal, pp. 27-29 (SSJ 168). A slightly different version is in Gill 1886:25-26. See too Turpie, "The Introduction of the gospel to Nanumanga", pp.4-6 (SSO)
THE northern islands' eventual acceptance of Christianity diverged markedly from that same process in the south. In the south social organization and traditional religion as a whole unit had already started to disintegrate by the time of Elekana's arrival, probably as a result of European contacts. People were aware of what they lacked and so had diminished faith in their own culture. As Murray discovered on the first L.M.S. voyage to Tuvalu, the south was already won over to Christianity and pastors were welcomed ashore. At Nanumea and Nanumanga, by contrast, religion was a well integrated part of life, satisfactory to its adherents. The initial resistance to Christianity can be explained by the culture system being completely intact, and this partly as a result of the smaller degree of European contact. It was a struggle even to have pastors accepted ashore and even then they were not allowed at first to actively evangelise but could only teach by example. Niutao takes an intermediate position. The traditional culture system had been eroded to some extent but this had not produced any strong desire for Christianity. Perhaps the best way to distinguish the Tuvaluans' response to Christianity is that in the south the missionaries provided a solution to the Islanders' problems whereas in the north they created problems and then provided their own solution. The L.M.S. practice of concentrating on the aliki contributed to another difference between the northern and the southern islands: although the northern Islanders followed when their chiefs converted, their Christianity was nominal in a way that it was not in the south.

However these substantial initial differences between north and south were soon replaced by basic similarities. Once accepted, Christianity was there to stay throughout the group with the church becoming the focal point around which the social and political order on each island revolved. No alternative was available and neither could individuals opt out. In other ways too the differences between north and south gradually faded as the missionary body worked to consolidate its position in the group through the instrumentality of its Samoan pastors. Not only did the religious disparity within the group become blurred as a result of these pressures towards uniformity, but the degree of cultural differentiation between the individual islands
narrowed appreciably. The end result was a blend of Congregationalist precept overlaid by Samoan influences but moderated by its Tuvaluan settling; and today the Tuvalu Church is the most significant unifying link within the country itself.
MISSIONARY CONSOLIDATION
AND THE SAMOAN PASTORS

Once established on each island, Christianity became the dominant local force. Its influence extended over a broad spectrum of Tuvalu life, both religious and secular. Symbolic of this pervasive and continuing influence is the presence of imposing churches, each the dominant structure on its respective island. Similarly, the only monuments in the group commemorate servants of God rather than fallen soldiers: there is one at Nukufetau near the place where Elekana and his companions landed in 1861; another at Nui to perpetuate the name of Kirisome, the island’s first and longest-serving pastor; and yet another at Nanumanga with the names of the island’s pastors, and their wives, inscribed into its stonework. To see these small monuments is to be reminded that Christian culture contacts in the Pacific were largely between Island cultures with European missionaries often playing a restricted and sporadic role.

Tuvalu as a mission field was thoroughly outstation in character. At no time during the 19th century did European missionaries reside in the group; the L.M.S. lacked the human and financial resources for such a strategy. Instead the so-called "Native Agency" was deployed for the task with Polynesian pastors being located on each island and briefly visited on an annual basis by a touring European missionary in the John Williams. As will be seen the "first generation" of pastors, who were overwhelmingly Samoan, had a telling influence on the type of Christianity which emerged in Tuvalu.

It is therefore questionable whether the directive function of the Samoan-based European missionaries was as important as their own histories make out. Rather, the shaping of distinctive atoll churches resulted from interaction between the Samoan pastors and their Tuvaluan congregations. The European missionaries who looked in occasionally were probably never very close to the day to day religious and social processes which went on in their own way, and not necessarily as depicted in L.M.S. reports, journals and letters, or the reminiscences of the missionaries concerned.

1. For listings of pastors who served in Tuvalu see Tables 4:1, 5:1, 6:1 and 10:1
# Pastors in Tuvalu, 1876-91

All are Samoans except Numea (Nanumanga, 1880-89), a Tuvaluan.

- Immoral conduct; recalled to Samoa
- Taken back to Samoa at his own request
- Visiting Nui in contravention of the regulations
- Dismissed for abusing his authority
- Dismissed for trading
- Leave of absence on grounds of ill-health
- Locum tenens
- Leaves on furlough
- Visited another island on a trading vessel; rebuked
- Returns from furlough
- Receives substantive appointment
- Removed for incompetence
- Leaves on furlough; decides to remain in Samoa
- Died suddenly
- Takes the oversight of the work until the arrival of a Samoan pastor
- Taken back to Samoa; infirm

Compiled from the Records of the London Missionary Society

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The work of the pastors proceeded rapidly and with highly visible results in the southern islands, and also in the north once the backbone of pagan resistance had been broken. Forceful and dramatic measures were taken, where necessary, to suppress the pagan religion and to impose in its place a strict moral code. The pagan religious shrines were destroyed or overturned, if they had not already been, and replaced on each island by a church, pastor's residence and school house. The traditional methods of birth control were largely suppressed with the result that the Tuvaluan population climbed steadily for the remainder of the century. Another factor contributing to this population increase was the missionary ban on fighting, warfare and capital punishment for social deviants. Practices smacking of "heathen darkness", such as tattooing and distending the earlobes were no longer permitted. Neither were displays of nakedness in public; rather, people were to be "decently clothed and in their right minds", thereby aggravating the numerous and endemic skin complaints. The ban on nakedness had other results. At Vaitupu all games were abolished for a while to counteract the practice of young women removing and waving their skirts when their brothers won a game of tiká. On a more spiritual plane, a strict Sabbatarianism was enforced. So too was polygamy with the men involved being compelled to discard all but their favourite wives. While Sunday observance was no great inconvenience, the insistence on polygamy resulted in domestic arrangements being greatly disturbed in the short-term with large numbers of women being returned to their own extended families.

The reasons for the Tuvaluans accepting the new regime have been explained in Chapter 4. To briefly recount, they sought access to the mana of a more powerful and beneficent god, on the one hand, through the correct forms of worship and behaviour; on the other, safety from the threat of sanction from their old system of island-wide and household gods. In a sense one set of prohibitions and observances were replaced by another, which were a good deal less severe at that. Moreover the Samoan pastors, who presented themselves as God's representatives on earth, were locally

2. D.G. Kennedy 1931:122
3. Graeffe 1867:1186
regarded as having the requisite knowledge to identify the necessary prohibitions and proceed with the correct rituals to mediate Jehovah's bounty.

Another important change initiated by the pastors was the consolidation of the scattered hamlets on each island into single unified villages. These were divided into two sides (feituu) separated by an open area (malae) on which stood the church. In other words the pastors achieved in Tuvalu what the European missionaries in Samoa had been unable to effect— the bringing together of people into larger settlements. But the Samoans refused to desert their villages in favour of larger mission settlements and so the S.D.C. had to sanction the development of churches at the village level and with it a proliferation of pastors for each small congregation. It was therefore no accident that the new territorial units in Tuvalu corresponded in scale with the Samoan village. Apart from unified villages being more susceptible to mission control than the dispersed hamlets, they could also be harnessed to the L.M.S. system of church contributions.

To that end the pastors encouraged the formation of the feituu as competitive units along the lines already practiced in Samoa and with the same results. As a means for mobilising resources this intra-village rivalry was extraordinarily successful, as testified by the sudden appearance throughout the group of churches built from expensive European materials. The same spirit of competition applied equally to the regular contributions, both in cash and in kind, to the pastors and to the L.M.S. itself. To put these on a perpetual footing the pastors introduced the Samoan practice of setting aside one day each year for households to present their accumulated gatherings. On Nanumea this occurred at six monthly intervals. Te Me, as it was called (after the month of May), was instigated in the absence of directives from the European missionaries, who in fact were pleasantly surprised at the event. As Whitmee reported from Nui in 1870, pastor Kirisome:

5. See Brady 1970: 45-57; A. Chambers 1975:22; Noricks 1981:67-91. The exception is Niutao where two villages stand. They have the appearance of being a single village however, because they cover a contiguous area; each village is divided into two sides.

went to a box and brought out of it a bag of money, which he handed to me saying:— Early this year, I told my people of our custom in Samoa to hold meetings in the month of May to consider the work of extending the Kingdom of Christ all over the world; and that for these meetings we gave money to help in sending the Gospel everywhere. They said to me, why should we not do the same? We have the Gospel now, why should not we help to send it to other people who are without it? He said, he encouraged them in this. They therefore set to work and made cocoanut oil, which each sold to the trader, and we had a missionary meeting. This is the result. I poured the money on the table. It amounted to $40. 9. 0. This was the first free gift of 212 people ... They had known the Gospel of Christ's salvation only four years, and this was proof of their appreciation of it.

Feituu competition was successful as a fund raising device partly because it could be grafted onto the Tuvaluan concept of reciprocity, which demands sharing and generosity and confers prestige accordingly. This is the issue of giving was contested fiercely and at many levels; the evenly matched households within a Feituu strove to outdo one another and the whole island took pride in the size of its donation. In other words Tuvaluans were effectively compelled to make their "free will" offerings to both their pastor and the L.M.S. The pastors, moreover, did nothing to discourage the notion that church contributions and salvation were directly related. At the same time, missionary donations were, in part at least, regarded by Tuvaluans as placatory in the same way as offerings to the pagan deities had once been, and to neglect this duty was to invite disaster. The Manumeans have a tradition to this effect which illustrates one rationale for Te Me. Once the new lotu had been accepted, the tradition goes, the people of the island collected food for their pastor. The aliki agreed to this but later, in about 1890, demanded that half the food should go to him and so the people were forced to break their promise to their pastor. Soon after a severe drought came upon the land; coconuts and other food became very scarce, the sun shone down remorselessly, and even fish and shellfish began to disappear. Eventually the aliki realised his error and

7. Whitme, "Recollections of a long life", p.86 (TS in the possession of Niel Gunson)
8. Brady 1972
relented, allowing the people to make gift offerings to their pastor. Rain fell and the island gradually came back to life. Since then part of Saturday has always been put aside to gather produce to present to the pastor after the morning service the following day.  

The Nanumean tradition also shows that the pastors and their congregations viewed church contributions in quite different ways. To the pastors it was the means by which they could 'legitimately' obtain wealth beyond their needs. When Murray was organising the first L.M.S. voyage to "The Lagoon Islands" he could only find two pastors willing to accompany him and Elekana - "none of the others cared to follow us," wrote Elekana, "because of coconuts being the principal food of these lands". Upon reaching Nukulaelae it took considerable persuasion before one of them finally agreed to be posted ashore, such was their disenchantment at the sight of the 'low island'. In this unpromising land they and their successors put high priority on their material well-being. Just as pastors were cared for by their congregations in Samoa, so too in Tuvalu and for the same reasons. In Samoa, pastors were not permitted by the L.M.S. to hold traditional titles or to work in their own villages. Nor did they receive a salary from the L.M.S. However, the dependence of the pastors on their congregations was offset by the congregations' need for a pastor as God's representative on earth, and so the relationship which developed between the two was in the nature of a feagaiga, a sort of contractual agreement whereby the pastor took care of the congregation's spiritual welfare and they in return attended his material needs. Then, in 1854, the S.D.C. authorised the payment of a separate contribution to the pastors in addition to the usual one for the L.M.S. These were the expectations which pastors held when they started going to Tuvalu a decade later. A similar feagaiga was entered into with their Tuvaluan congregations and as strangers of standing from 'high islands' they became incorporated within the local reciprocity system as permanent meaaloa guests. In their pursuit of material gain the pastors diverted

9. Keith Chambers, personal communication, 26 Oct 1975; see also A. Chambers 1975:24, 143-44  
10. Elekana 1872:117  
11. Elekana 1872:196  
the flow of goods and services away from the aliki to themselves by manipulating the system of church contributions. And like the aliki of pagan times the pastors were freed from manual labour so to give their attention to their spiritual and educational duties, the latter of which was time-consuming in the early years since adults as well as children had to be taught to read and write. In return the Tuvaluans provided for their pastor. As well as feeding and paying him, each congregation erected a pastor's house with unmarried women as domestic help on a roster basis. At Nukufetau in 1872, pastor Sapolu enjoyed the comforts of a "large stone house, and retinue of 23 servants"; a few years later the missionary Davies wistfully opined that the pastors were "better off than many poor hardworked ministers of the old country". The Tuvaluans eager for salvation, were as much concerned about their pastors' standard of living as were the pastors themselves.

For the Tuvaluans the system of church contributions had wider ramifications in that the pastors created single villages divided into two feifo to facilitate their collection. Fund-raising was a cornerstone of the church which, in turn, was the ideological foundation of village (and therefore island-wide) unity and solidarity. Throughout Tuvalu, the church became synonymous with society: each island had one village, and each village the one religion. Paradoxically, the feifo were a primary means by which this feeling of community togetherness, so important in Tuvalu culture, was brought about: although explicitly competitive units they were at the same time a unifying force because their activities centered around the accomplishment of common goals. They began life as fund-raising mechanisms - the secular enabling arm of the new lotu - but were soon incorporated into society at large to provide "the structural basis on which the entire [round of] organised village activities can be played out".

14. The S.D.C. encouraged this practice by not training their pastors in "mechanical arts" on the grounds that: "Past experience teaches us, that the men who give their undivided attention to their work, as evangelists, are by far the most successful, whether in Samoa or the outstations." - General meeting of the S.D.C., 27-29 Oct 1869 (SSL 32/2/6)

15. Pratt, 1872 Journal, p.13 (SSJ 163); Davies, 1880 Journal, p.9 (SSJ 176)

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* published version of the official report. The original is either lost or misplaced, presumably as a result of being sent to the printer
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* selections from official report published. The original is either lost or misplaced, presumably as a result of being sent to the printer.

** no official report was written due to Hill's illness.

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Christianity in Tuvalu had a political as well as a social and economic aspect with the pastors seeking an influence in village affairs exceeding that accorded to their counterparts in Samoa. But whereas pastors in Samoa recognised the position and authority of chiefs, this was the part of the feagafa which they did not generally observe in Tuvalu. The support of the aisiki in the southern islands (Mukufetau excepted) paved the way for the pastors' spiritual authority being translated into temporal power. At Vaitupu in 1865 the uatu aisiki, Fakamus:

so enthusiastically received the first bearer of Christianity and his message that he ordered a house to be built for the missionary and that he be given lands and well cared for, because he came to Vaitupu with no means of livelihood. Furthermore he transferred his chiefly prerogative
of receiving the head of any turtle to the pastor who thereby became his political equal or surrogate. 17

Fakamua, moreover, fined anyone disrespectful of the pastor. 18 The extent to which the traditional authority structure gave way to pastor dominance is dramatically symbolised by Fakamua's grave being buried under the raised walkway surrounding the church at Vaitupu, with only the tip of the tombstone showing. The position at Funafuti was not much different. By 1897 the power of the aliki had been so eroded that a visitor to the atoll remarked:

I tried hard to see the advantage of being a king in Funafuti, but couldn't. The king's hut was not so good as the native pastor's, his clothes were no better than those of his subjects; and his food was the same - cocoa-nut, fish and taro. He had only one voice in the making of laws on the island, and seemed to look up to the Samoan pastor as an authority in things temporal as well as spiritual. He certainly received a salary of five dollars per annum from his subjects (that is, one-tenth of what is considered necessary for the pastor), and he had a fair amount of cocoa-nut and taro land, but less than some of his subjects. Since the island has been under British protection the king is a nominal king only, an ornamental, but not very expensive, head to a nice little republic. 19

In the northern islands, by contrast, pastors took longer to gain an ascendency which, in the event, was often nowhere as extensive as the pastors' powers in the south. Some pastors, such as those on Miutao during the 1870s, were notably ineffectual individuals; but more often their lack of progress on all fronts is more properly attributable to the northern Tuvaluans being less compliant than their southern neighbours. This was due in some measure to the missionaries' arrival because the way had not been "prepared" as it had in the south: far from being anxious to receive pastors, the aliki of the northern islands were only, and with difficulty, persuaded to allow their presence after repeated assurances that the newcomers would not interfere with existing chiefly prerogatives.

17. White 1965:45
18. Gill, 1872 Diary, pp.8-9 (ML B1444)
19. Mrs David 1899:118-19
Subsequent events also indicate that the ali'i of the northern islands were less inclined to share their authority with the pastors than was the case in the south. Thus to gain powers commensurate to the pastors in the southern islands, those in the north were required to be more forcefully assertive. Some were not capable of this but others, such as Emosi of Nanumea, had few compunctions. At Nanumea, contention between ali'i and pastor over the extent of each other's authority persisted into the 1890s, resulting in at least one ugly incident between the two. According to the ali'i's version:

I went to the House of the Samoan Teacher to arrange properly the conduct of the Samoan and myself the King, and enquire into peacefully and in a straightforward manner the work of the King, and the work of the Samoan, so that we could amicably, in performing our respective duties. The Samoan worked himself into a fearful passion lifted up his hand to Smite me, he also spoke haughtily and informed me he the Samoan was the Ruler of the Land, and rudely drove me the King away to my own house. On Sunday 18th September 1892 The Samoan Teacher preached in the chapel he the Samoan mocks me the King violently and informed me before all the people that he would not obey my Government. 20

Nonetheless pastors were in a strategic position to exercise a considerable degree of domination whether or not they enjoyed ali'i support. Given that the church had become a central part of Tuvalu culture, the pastors assumed an indispensable (and privileged) place in island affairs by virtue of their spiritual authority. Moreover the L.M.S. held a religious monopoly throughout the group, meaning that withdrawal from its influence and that of the pastor was impossible. Instead the local L.M.S. church became the cornerstone of island solidarity with the social standing of every adult being dependent upon their being admitted to full church membership. The position of pastors as a group was further strengthened in 1875 when they were finally given sole discretion over the ad-

20. Vaitoru to Thurston, 16 Nov 1892, translated by E.A. Duffy, trader on Nanumea (MHHC 4, 76/1893). This incident may be connected with the Hanumean tale, which was recounted earlier in this chapter, concerning the cause of the drought.
mission and expulsion of church members. The pastors also influenced secular affairs at the highest level since most of the deacons, the men who assisted him with the work of the church, were drawn from the kaupuli. At Funafuti, and perhaps also other islands, the members of the kaupuli were ostensibly elected:

but in reality are nominated by the [mission] teacher who "recommends" candidates. There is apparently about as much freedom of election as is left by a congé d'élire to an English Dean and Chapter. 22

Church discipline, and with it the pastor's position, was maintained by a system of fines imposed by the kaupuli for breaches of the church's moral and 'civilising' code. These ranged, on Nanumanga for example, from 50 cents or 100 coconuts for swearing to $15 or 3000 coconuts for absence from church for three consecutive Sundays. 23 The proceeds of the fines were then divided between pastor, kaupuli and the village police, which tempted the kaupuli "to multiply laws in order to pocket the results of their infringement". 24 Some of the visiting European missionaries dis-approved of the pastors receiving "the wages of iniquity" but the practice continued. In all this the authority of the aliki on each island was downgraded while the kaupuli became an adjust of the church, though not necessarily the creature of the pastor. In other words traditional secular authority remained structurally intact but the character of its legislation was overlaid by a theocratic bias. Accordingly the power of the pastors was actual but not formal.

No less important were the pastor's racial pride, their reverence for fa'aSamo'a (the Samoan Way) and their perception of Tuvaluans as "rough, uncultured boors" who lacked a strongly-defined, multi-tiered chiefly system as in Samoa. Such feelings of superiority and cultural

21. General Meeting of S.B.C., 9-18 Nov 1875 (SSL 34/7/B)
22. Bridge, 1883 Espiegle Report #2, p.2 (RNAS 16)
23. Becke, "Notes on Polynesia" (BP A1373)
24. Maxwell, 1881 Emerald Report, p.2 (RNAS 15); see also Woodford, 1884 Patience Journal, p.17 (Woodford Papers)
26. Hedley 1896:42; see also Horrell 1960:275
chauvinism partially explain the predilection of many pastors to rule the land as well as to preach the Gospel. The most striking example of political opportunism concerned Sapolu who left Nukufetau on account of ill-health in 1879 after 10 years' service on the atoll. A recurrence of his eye complaint prevented his scheduled return but he went back anyway in 1884 under instructions from the Malietoa Government to annex Tuvalu with himself as "Governor". The S.D.C. was horrified. The missionary Phillips, shortly to leave on the annual inspection of the Northwest Outstations, tried to dissuade Sapolu:

but to no purpose. I then requested him to return his Ordination Certificate & to feel henceforth that he was no longer in any way connected with our Mission. Our worst fears were realised on his arrival at the islands. At this place Nukufetau he had at once hoisted the Samoan flag; wished to drive out the King and government & appoint others that would be subservient to himself. He further began fining right and left in the most indiscriminating fashion & threatening with unheard of punishments if the fines were not paid. 

The European missionaries in Samoa disapproved of the Outstation pastors' economic and political opportunism but there was little they could do to prevent it. At the heart of the matter was the lack of regular supervision. The policy was to visit each island annually (see Table 6:2) so that ultimate (European) control from Samoa be retained. On each annual inspection progress was assessed, problems attended to, pastors supplied with teaching materials and provisions until the next deputational voyage, and contributions collected. However, only 60 to 75 days of the John William's time could be spared each year for the Northwest Outstations with the result that the visiting missionary spent less than one-third of that time ashore and the rest at sea. The first missionary to visit Tuvalu regretted that he could only spend a few days on each island; he was fortunate by comparison with those who followed.

27. See Sinclair 1980:30-31
28. Powell, 1879 Journal, pp.1-2, 7, 36 (SSJ 175)
29. Phillips, 1884 Journal, p.16 (SSJ 181); see also Churchward 1887 83-84; Winchcombe, 1881-87 Diary, pp.13-16, 16-27 (ML Safe 1/8)
On the voyages of 1881 and 1885 the missionaries involved actually counted the number of hours spent ashore at each island and then took an average: the results were respectively 18 hours and ten minutes and 23¼ hours per island.

The fleeting and superficial nature of these inspections meant that the S.D.C. was in no position to effectively control the activities of their outstation pastors or even know what was really going on in Tuvalu. Part of the problem, too, was that the European missionaries had limited opportunities to renew their acquaintance with Tuvalu. Between 1865 and 1800 the S.D.C. made 34 deputational voyages to the group involving 19 missionaries, nearly half of whom visited on the single occasion. During this period only two went in successive years and only three others visited on more than two separate occasions. Accordingly, no missionary was able to build up a detailed and informed knowledge of church affairs in Tuvalu. Declining numbers of European missionaries in Samoa also had a bearing on the effective oversight of the Northwest Outstations resulting in the deputation being reduced from two to one in the early 1870s. So as well as the time ashore being too short, the single visiting missionary had to maintain a punishing schedule to get through his work. The European missionaries realised the problem and remedies were suggested from time to time. There was much talk in 1880 about handing over "the expensive Gilbert Group" to the A.B.C.F.M., but the latter was not interested. The limitations of one annual voyage were also acknowledged but the over-riding practical difficulty of insufficient European staff, not to mention the limited availability of the John Williams, put the obvious solution beyond reach. So instead of being properly supervised, the Samoan pastors in Tuvalu were left largely to their own devices. Nor were the pastors very often caught unawares by the arrival of the

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31. General Meeting of S.D.C., 10-14 Jan 1871 (SSL 33/2/D). For listings of the European missionaries who served in Samoa see Goodall 1954: 596-622; Lovett 1899:796
32. See Cullen, Journal, 16 June 1895 (PMB 570)
33. Whitmee to Whitehouse, 23 April 1880 (SSL 36/2/B); Davies to Whitehouse, 28 July (SSL 36/2/B); General Meeting of S.D.C., 8-13 Dec 1880 (SSL 36/2/D)
34. General Meeting of S.D.C., 3 Dec 1890 (SSL 41/4/B)
mission barque; well before the John Williams appeared over the horizon it was known to be in the neighbourhood because pastors gave each other a few days warning by sending messages on the legs of tame frigate birds. 35

Another reason why pastors were able to follow their own bent was because the S.D.C. was disinclined to act decisively against its erring outstation agents. In many cases it was difficult to know how to act or whether to act at all. For example the European missionaries' attitude towards the exercise of temporal power by pastors was one of ambivalence. So long as a pastor's activities were not causing open strife and divisiveness, and so long as the school results and the contributions were satisfactory, a visiting missionary was unlikely to give himself extra work by looking for fault. At one level the issue could be avoided since there is no clear distinction between moral influence and outright secular authority. At another level, there was the problem of reconciling principle with reality. The European missionaries were quite aware that their Samoan pastors were strongly disposed to "play[ing] the despot" yet at the same time the missionaries found this quality to be conducive to success in the outstations. The missionary Newell provided an indirect explanation when describing a Tuvaluan pastor on his way to a posting in Kiribati:

35. Vivian, 1871-72 Journal, pp.84-75 (SSJ 159); George Turner, pp.7-8 (SSJ 168); Gill 1885:17
36. Newell, 1885 Journal, p.16 (SSJ 182)
37. Harriott, 1883 Journal, p.14 (SSJ 180)
Confronted with this dilemma the European missionaries took the line of least resistance: unless something went seriously amiss, as in the case of Elekana on Nukufetau, they would let the ends justify the means and could always argue that a people once "gross and vile" were now a Christian community. Besides, the European missionaries were also wont to play politics, most notably the younger Turner's part in the Steinberger affair in 1876.38

A pastor's position was further strengthened by the S.D.C.'s extreme reluctance to remove an outstation agent from his posting for transgressing the regulations. It was an action taken only as a last resort and whenever possible a replacement pastor would be landed at the time of his predecessor's removal.39 In the first place the dismissal of a pastor was liable to have an unsettling effect on the local church concerned. Of equal relevance the European missionaries could not proceed against an erring pastor without first taking into account the probable reaction of the pastor body in Samoa. They had always resented their inferior status vis-a-vis the European missionaries. The struggle for supremacy was fought on a broad front with the pastors as anxious to expand their power as most of their European colleagues were to restrict them.40 It was a micro-cosm of the Samoans' wider struggle against European domination.

The pastors held the ultimate advantage through sheer strength of numbers and their political will. Two overlapping issues were involved in the question of discipline. First, the pastors' political and economic opportunism were not regarded by themselves as abuses but reflect more differing perceptions between the two groups as to the 'proper' role of a pastor. Second, Samoan pastors were generally reluctant to accept the authority of their European 'superiors', in contrast to the Methodist's Fijian pastors who worked harmoniously with European missionaries.41 The turning point in the power struggle between Samoan pastors and their

38. Gilson 1970:330n, 337n
39. Whitmee 1871:17; General Meeting of S.D.C., 5-7 March 1873 (SSL 34/2/6); G.A. Turner, 1878 Journal, p.12 (SSJ 173); Phillips, 1884 Journal, p.16 (SSJ 181); Harriott, 1895 Journal, p.7 (SSJ 189)
40. See Gilson 1970:134-37
European colleagues came in 1875 when the entire pastor body was ordained and their representatives permitted to attend the S.D.C. general meetings. The pastors then began to have their own meetings out of which emerged the successful demand that one of them accompany the European missionary on the annual voyage to the Northwest Outstations.\(^{42}\)

A decade later their demands had increased to the extent that the European missionaries were complaining that the pastors were openly trying to usurp their authority "to give counsel to native Christians".\(^{43}\) On a more personal note the pastors' delegates harrassed European missionaries who displeased them by levelling charges and refusing to work with the missionary concerned. It was an unpleasant experience.\(^{44}\) In all this the increasing powers of the pastors coincided with the diminishing number of European missionaries, who reached an all-time low of four in 1885.\(^{45}\)

Confronted with an increasingly belligerent and uncompromising Native Agency whose members were quite prepared to put aside their factional and personal differences when confronting their European 'superiors', the latter were loath to provoke further confrontations and therefore proceeded carefully in the matter of disciplining pastors. Accordingly, Emosi of Nanumea was only rebuked when it was discovered that he had concealed upwards of $250 instead of declaring his income to the visiting European missionary.\(^{46}\) With the pastors in Samoa constantly pressing for the reinstatement of erring or incompetent colleagues,\(^{47}\) and with Emosi's misdemeanor being a common enough practice among pastors,\(^{48}\) little would have been gained by dismissing him or even suspending him from pastoral duties. However, there was no leniency on either side when the church's moral code was transgressed. When Emosi's predecessor at Nanumea, Tuilouaa, was known to have committed adultery, other pastors in Tuvalu forced him to resign and their action was endorsed by the European missionaries.\(^{49}\)

\(^{42}\) Annual Meeting of S.D.C., 6-9 Nov 1878 (SSL 35/4/E)
\(^{43}\) Marriott, Newell and Claxton to Thompson, 26 Feb 1886 (SSL 39/2/A)
\(^{44}\) Wilson to Thompson, 25 April 1885 (SSL 38/6/A); Newell to Thompson, 1 Sept 1885 (SSL 38/6/D); Phillips to Thompson, 30 Dec 1885 (SSL 38/6/E); Phillips to Thompson, 1 March 1886 (SSL 39/2/B)
\(^{45}\) Phillips to Thompson, 30 March 1885 (SSL 38/6/B)
\(^{46}\) Newell to Thompson, 20 Nov 1884 (SSL 38/3/C)
\(^{47}\) General Meeting of S.D.C., 19-24 Jan 1884 (SSL 37/5/A)
\(^{48}\) Davies, 1882 Journal, pp.20-21 (SSJ 179)
\(^{49}\) Powell, 1879 Journal, p.9 (SSL 175); Annual Meeting of S.D.C., 6-9 Nov 1878 (SSL 35/4/E); von Werner 1889:321-22
Tuilouaa was the only pastor to fall foul of an immorality charge - though others were suspected - but his dismissal was by no means an isolated case. Despite the risks and complications involved the European missionaries removed over one-third of the first 30 pastors to serve in Tuvalu. Mitita at Funafuti was the first to go, recalled to Samoa in the late-1860s for what was vaguely described as having "fallen into error which deprived him of his influence". He was followed by Elekana at Nukufetau who disregarded the L.M.S. rule forbidding pastors to engage in trading and, more seriously, attempting to overthrow an who objected to his harsh and petty laws. What the missionary Davies described as "arrogance and covetousness" led to return passages for three other pastors during the 1870s, all from Vaitupu. These dismissals contributed significantly to the high turnover of pastors in Tuvalu, for others left through ill-health and a few died at their posting. At the same time, however, the attitudes and expectations of the European missionaries also had a bearing: the 'strong' and forceful men they especially sought for work in the outstations were also the most likely to become laws unto themselves. It was the rare pastor who could get results and still be tolerant, even if they had wanted to be. One such individual was Ioane at Nanumanga, who effected the dramatic overthrow of the pagan religious system on the island in 1875. Without question he was the most remarkable pastor ever to come to Tuvalu. He remained on Nanumanga for another ten years during which time his work received unanimous praise from a succession of visiting missionaries. Yet "he did not forbid his flock to sing and dance, nor prohibit the young girls from wearing flowers in their dark locks". In other words he exhibited that combination of adaptability and Christian conviction which characterises some of the most effective L.M.S. Pacific Islander evangelists.

50. Whitmee 1871:13
51. Whitmee, "Document relating to the removal of Elekana from Nukufetau", 17 March 1873 (SSL 34/2/B); Whitmee, "Recollections of a long life", pp.46-5 (TS in the possession of Niel Gunson)
52. Davies, 1873 Journal, pp.5-6 (SSL 34/2/B); G.A. Turner, 1878 Journal, pp.6-12 (SSJ 168); Powell, 1879 Journal, pp.34-35 (SSJ 175)
54. Becke 1897:146
An equal number of pastors were dismissed for persistent incompetence and "lack of energy". The European missionaries regarded laxness of any sort in a serious light because it invariably retarded "progress". Whitmee spoke for all his colleagues in remarking that "much depends on the right man being found to do the Lord's work in our Outstations."\(^{55}\) But generally matters were allowed to drift until, finally, patience was exhausted and the pastor dismissed. Hikaio at Nukufetau, for example, was described as "a good man and an honest fellow ... but he exercises very little influence over the people".\(^{56}\) After five years of unfruitful service he was returned to Samoa for "His want of progress and the general backward condition of the island".\(^{57}\) If Hikaio was easy going and ineffectual, Emosi at Nanumea was lazy but overbearing. Perhaps he became stale at Nanumea because after six years on the atoll the visiting missionaries began to remark on his lack of energy and ability until finally he was removed.\(^{58}\) Nito at Niutao had a similarly undistinguished record. He was seldom on top of his work and the missionary Harriott confessed his need of patience at Nito's "dullness of comprehension".\(^{59}\) Eventually it was decided to take him away from Niutao because the work became any more chaotic: this was done the year his furlough was due so at least the appearance of a dismissal was avoided.\(^{60}\) When the missionary Clarke arrived the following year with Jeremia, the new pastor, he was under no illusions:

Prior to the service I examined the Sunday School in Scripture. The children were woefully ignorant in this as in all other Subjects. 60 presented themselves for examination with slates, but with many of them it was the merest farce & we felt that Jeremia has [an] abundance of work before him. 61

\(^{55}\) Whitmee to Thompson, 15 Jan 1894 (SSL 42/2/A)  
\(^{56}\) Harriott, 1883 Journal, p.14 (SSJ 180)  
\(^{57}\) Phillips, 1884 Journal, p.16 (SSJ 181)  
\(^{58}\) Newell, 1885 Journal, pp.36-37 (SSJ 182); Goward, 1892 Journal, p.4 (SSJ 189); Newell, 1896 Journal, p.16 (SSJ 190)  
\(^{59}\) Davies, 1880 Journal, p.4 (SSJ 176); Newell, 1885 Journal, p.21 (SSJ 182); Harriott, 1887 Journal, p.19 (SSJ 175)  
\(^{60}\) Special Meeting of the S.D.C., 23 July and 22 Aug 1888 (SSL 40/2/D); Claxton 1889 Journal, p.11 (SSR 3/171)  
\(^{61}\) Clarke, 1890 Journal, p.5 (SSR 3/172)
It was for reasons such as these that the missionaries Powell and Pratt, who disagreed sharply on the pace at which Samoan pastors should assume increased pastoral responsibilities, were in entire accord that "our native pastorate is not yet in a state to be left without the supervision, guidance and constant teaching of European missionaries".  

The frequency of dismissals made for a high turnover rate of pastors on some islands. Yet it is equally common to find long-serving pastors in 19th century Tuvalu: Kirisome worked at Nui for almost 35 years (1865-99), Ioane at Nukulelae for 23 years (1865-88), Tema at Funafuti for 19 years (1870-89), and Jeremia at Vattupu for 15 years (1880-95). Several others stayed 10 years or more at their Tuvalu posting, including Nito and Emosi. This suggests that outpost pastors generally found the experience to be a rewarding one, for apart from the obvious satisfaction of being God's servant, the role of pastor had many other satisfactions to an ambitious Samoan. Even so, Kirisome, Ioane and their contemporaries had to contend with frustrations and disappointments. Perhaps the most difficult part about an outpost posting was the break it involved with their Samoan past, as a pastor had to spend 10 years on his island before qualifying for furlough. It is difficult to determine how much mental strain was endured on this account, but there is evidence to suggest that it could be severe. News of a family crisis back home could have a very distressing effect, as in the case of Tuuaga, who had only been settled at Funafuti for six months, when he heard that his father had been murdered. More common were the sometimes acute feelings of isolation which beset some pastors and their wives. As the missionary Powell observed:

> It seems as much a trial to the Samoan teachers to be cut off from their old associations and friends as it is to European missionaries, and it occasions no little delight to receive a visit from a missionary and the native brethren by whom he may be accompanied.

So despite the extent to which pastors became integrated into their com-

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63. Newell, Diary, 16 Nov 1899 (SSO)
64. Powell, 1871 Journal, p.10 (SSJ 160)
munities they still experienced some deculturation stresses. Another indication that they remained oriented towards Samoa can be seen in Kirisome's concern for his son's future. He approached Powell with the problem whereupon the missionary:

agreed to take his son 10½ years old, to Samoa and try to get him in the youth's class at Malua, or failing that to take him into my own family till an opening occur in the institution. The best of our pastors feel a sense of anxiety about their children, that English missionaries do with regard to theirs. Kirisome and his wife appeared to feel deeply about parting with their son. 65

Extended residence on the same island compounded the problem of isolation, producing a staleness in many pastors; and this can be seen clearly in the case of Kirisome. He seems to have gone downhill rapidly after the late-1880s and in 1892 it was reported:

At Mui, pastor Kirisome, things were not very satisfactory; this old pastor who has done very good service, is getting quite too high-minded and important to condescend to the regular routine work that is still sadly needed. The chapel and the house both good buildings were fallen into utter decay for want of care and attention; the school was good as it always is, but here as in so many islands ... real spiritual life and Christianity were lacking in both pastor and people. 66

The satisfactions, however, far outweighed the frustrations and this reveals itself in two ways. The role of pastor was a family tradition; sons of both Kirisome and Tema, for example, also became pastors in the Northwest Outstations. The second indication that pastors as a group were basically content in their work is seen in their willingness to remain in Tuvalu. Illness sometimes forced a premature retirement, 67 family difficulties occasionally gave rise to a retirement, 68 a few pastors took

65. Powell, 1879 Journal, pp.3-4 (SSJ 175)
66. Goward, 1892 Journal, pp.5-6 (SSR 2/142)
67. Whitmee 1871:15; Powell, 1879 Journal, p.1 (SSJ 175); Marriott, 1895 Journal, pp.11-13 (SSJ 189)
68. Newell, Diary, 18-19 Nov 1899 (SSO)
ill and died, and a large number were returned to Samoa for transgressions or incompetence; but very few left their islands on their own accord. Kirisome and his contemporaries remained on their islands and their sons often followed their footsteps because power over human and material resources were so readily available to a pastor in Tuvalu.

But this does not mean that there were no constraints upon the power of the pastors. The relationship between pastors and people varied between islands depending on the personalities involved but the context in which they interacted also had a major bearing on the outcome of events. In Congregational policy it is what the local church says that tends to determine practice, a situation which was congruent with the Tuvaluans' notions of community solidarity. It was therefore often necessary for the pastors to effect neat compromises for their own survival and so maintain their dominant position by a measure of compliance with popular custom and requirement on each island. The case of Elekana at Nukufetau, for example, graphically illustrates the extent to which a pastor's tenure and the unity of his congregation were tied up with each other. That is why pastors, even to this day, are vitally concerned to prevent outbreaks of factionalism on an island and can therefore be counted upon to assume the role of peacemaker; and should discord continue they take care, if they are wise, not to openly take sides as this will undermine their position. The thankless task of trying to mend deep social devisions was the unhappy lot of Jeremia at Vaitupu in the 1880s. His tenure was secure as he had the support of both the ulu aliki and the S.D.C., but the effectiveness of his pastoral work was greatly curtailed until community solidarity returned. The need for a pastor to retain public acceptability could usually be adapted by the local congregations in building the type of church which they wanted in the end. This process is significant in the emergence of distinctive local churches in many other parts of the Pacific.

Given these circumstances the many contemporary criticisms applied to pastors as greedy and overbearing individuals somewhat misses the point, however correct they may have been by European standards. The con-

69. Claxton, 1889 Journal, pp.11-12 (SSR 3/171); Newell, 1894 Journal, pp.2-4, 17 (SSJ 188); Goward, 1902 Journal, unpaginated (SSL 47)
70. The circumstances are outlined in Chapter 8, in the section concerned with the Vaitupu 'Company'
tributions to the pastor, though grand by local standards, were not seen as exploitative by the Tuvaluans but as material support in return for benevolent concern. Similarly, the pastors' exercise of temporal power per se was not viewed askance by their congregations. As John Garrett points out:

The distinction between temporal and spiritual power is an imported European notion. Throughout the Pacific power is an aspect of a total secular-sacred society. Thus the proposed objection to such behaviour derives from outsiders such as the L.M.S., colonial administrators, and historians. The Tuvalu people did not ... expect 'a separation of powers' such as has become normal in post-Reformation Europe and America ... 71

It was not the exercise of power by pastors but the way in which it was done that sometimes offended Tuvaluans, with the result that strong-willed aliki on Nukulaelae and Vaitupu forced the visiting L.M.S. missionaries to remove pastors who had overreached themselves. 72

Moreover, the strict missionary laws which some visitors viewed with such distaste, 73 were seldom imposed on an altogether unwilling people. Sometimes this was so but as Whitmee noted:

I have often noted in these young Christian societies in the mission field, that public opinion is far more strict than in England. Indeed, a slight inconsistency is sometimes judged and punished as a grave error. Missionaries are by some charged with too great strictness in their dealings with the failings and weaknesses of these recent converts. If those who make the charges took the trouble to enquire, they would find that missionaries generally take the opposite side, and endeavour to modify the severity of the converts themselves towards their erring brethren. But we are oft times obliged to yield to public opinion ... 75

72. Marriott, 1895 Journal, pp.9-10 (SSJ 189); Marriott, 1898, pp.6-7 (SSJ 191)
73. Le Hunte n.d.:16-17
74. Clarke, 1890 Journal, pp.7-8 (SSR 3/172)
75. Whitmee 1871:13
These sanctions sometimes applied equally to pastors; the amiable Makaio was "terribly afraid of his tyrannical deacons who objected to him smoking even within the seclusion of his own curtilage, and otherwise bullied him in behaving exactly as they thought he should". Another example of mission-inspired laws being upheld from within rather than imposed from without concerns the sole Roman Catholic on Funafuti in the 1880s, whom the rest of the island persecuted to the point of distraction. It was not the pastor but his congregation who took the initiative, exercising customary community sanctions against an incorrigible deviant.

The influence of L.M.S. Christianity in Tuvalu was profound as it involved the reorganisation of community life around the church and demanded new behavioural forms necessary to its observance. On the secular side, the church's ban on abortion and infanticide resulted in a steady growth of the population for the remainder of the century. In 1905 when the missionary Davies visited the group for the first time in over 20 years he was struck by the fact that the population had "increased and sometimes doubled" since his initial voyage to the Northwest Outstations. He also observed that there was "a more varied and larger" food supply, and much of the credit for this goes to the L.M.S. missionaries and pastors for introducing new edible plant species. However, the increasing population was also a cause of concern since it put pressure on the system of land tenure and inflated "an already present overall land hunger". Another byproduct of missionary activity was to stimulate local copra production since this was the only means by which Tuvaluans could obtain building materials for their churches and clothing with which to cover their bodies (see Chapter 8). On the other hand the pastors had negligible influence on Tuvaluan material culture, largely because they tended to refrain from manual labour.

76. Becke 1901:51
77. Bridge, 1883 Espèce Report #2 (print), p.2 (RNAS 16); J. Dana 1935: 175-79; Le Hunte n.d.:16. A Roman Catholic catechist had been sent to Funafuti in 1868 but his efforts met with little success. - Elloy 1878:50
78. Davies, 1905 Journal, p.7 (SSL 49)
79. Powell, 1879 Journal, p.2 (SSJ 175)
80. Brady 1974; & 1976
of any sort. Their wives, however, introduced new styles of fans\textsuperscript{81} and, more profoundly, introduced women's committees modelled on those in Samoa which have since become such important institutions in Tuvaluan village life.\textsuperscript{82}

The pastors' influence on the type of Protestant Christianity which emerged in Tuvalu was considerable. They introduced a Samoanised form of Christianity,\textsuperscript{83} though one which was modified by local circumstances. Nevertheless, in this scheme of things the pastors came to assume a dominating position. By the time a British Protectorate was declared over the group in 1892, the pattern of pastor ascendancy in local affairs had been too firmly established to be readily altered: it was against this background that the clash between church and state was played out in the late-1890s and early-1900s.

\textsuperscript{81} Hedley 1897:293
\textsuperscript{82} For a diachronic account of women's associations in Samoa see Schoeffel 1977
\textsuperscript{83} Brady 1970:21-23
DURING THE course of the first missionary voyages to Tuvalu in 1865 and 1866, Murray observed the presence of, or previous occupancy by, traders on most of the islands he visited. Some would have been Towns's and perhaps Malcolm's men; others were tied to Godeffroys, in whose vessels Murray travelled on both occasions. Murray happened to visit Tuvalu during a transitional phase in its relationship with outside commercial interests. Towns had withdrawn, Malcolm was in the process of doing so, while Godeffroys was beginning to take a greater interest in the place. Viewed from a broader perspective, the 25 years following 1865 saw the "emergence of a new economic milieu in the archipelagos" of the Pacific, dominated by large merchant companies mostly operating from port towns within the region. German interests were preponderant with the Godeffroy/D.H.P.G. establishment at the forefront. This was also a period of considerable flux with these larger companies constantly being forced to redefine the scope and nature of their activities in response to numerous shifting variables, especially the presence of competitors and the unstable world price for tropical products. Despite this fluid situation the structural form of trading persisted. But in the 1890s the Island Trade entered a new phase with the challenge to German commercial preponderance by Anglo-Australasian companies, often based outside the region. There was a causal relationship between this latter development and the partition of the Pacific among the

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1. Murray 1876:380-423. See also Graeffe 1867
2. Couper 1967:73
3. Depending on the context, the term "Godeffroy/D.H.P.G. establishment" will sometimes be used - see Gilson 1970:378. In 1879 Godeffroys was declared bankrupt but the firm's Western Pacific interests were vested in another Hamburg company, the Deutsche Handels- und Plantagen Gesellschaft der Sudsee zu Hamburg (D.H.P.G.), which survived as Godeffroys' successor until 1916 when the D.H.P.G. was expropriated in Samoa
metropolitan powers, resulting in the compartmentalization of the island Trade along these new political boundaries.

The central concern of this chapter is to reveal that the pattern of trade which evolved in Tuvalu between 1865 and 1890 was, as before, a function not of local developments but of the international setting in which it operated. Tuvalu itself was seldom of more than marginal interest to "the entrepreneurial agents of the invading system", and significant only in that it formed part of extended trading company networks embracing several other, more important, archipelagoes besides. The individual Tuvalu islands therefore provide microcosmic case studies of the incorporation of peripheral pre-colonial markets into the world economy. Although Tuvalu was not the economic entity it is today, the group as a whole nicely reflects the trends occurring within the wider Island Trade and illustrates the accompanying interplay between island "hinterland", metropolitan "foreland" and "port town".

THE CHANGEOVER TO COPRA

ONE OF the more significant innovations pioneered by Godeffroys was to phase out the trade in coconut oil in preference for copra (known in

4. Brookfield 1973:12
5. Hopkins (1973:4&n) briefly draws attention to the conceptual problems concerning the definition of present-day national units which were not economic entities in pre-colonial times
6. The meaning of these terms follows Spoehr's (1970:412-13) definition: "the Pacific islands as a whole are divided into a number of subregions, each consisting of one or more towns or small centres, surrounded by a hinterland. The town is generally a port, the hinterland is generally an assemblage of islands . . . Port town, hinterland, the subregion which encompasses them both, the totality of these subregions, and finally the forelands beyond the sea to which these subregions are linked by transportation and communication combine to form the geographic framework of contemporary culture change in the Pacific islands."
Tuvalu as popo), the dried kernels of mature coconuts. Quite apart from being less arduous for the islander to prepare, copra was more easily handled and less expensive to transport to distant markets. Once at the overseas factories the copra was then crushed into a cleaner and purer oil than that formerly obtained from those leaky barrels of coconut oil, which eventually emitted a "pestilential smell". Moreover, the by-products were saleable as cattle feed.

The Pacific-wide copra trade was to some extent a continuation and extension of its predecessor. By the late-1860s, when the changeover to copra was underway, the organisational form of European seaborne trade had already evolved into the one which endured well into the 20th century. That is to say, the casual, itinerant trading contacts between ship and shore, which characterised the whaling era and the early years of the trade in coconut oil, had given way to shore-based establishments manned by resident traders tied to companies. This, in turn, led to less speculative and more organized trading contacts with Islanders, run on a larger scale than was possible under the itinerant system of trading.

In one sense, therefore, the changeover to copra simply involved the substitution of one method for another to process the same basic product to distant markets. But at another level the changeover had far-reaching repercussions since it accelerated a series of changes already underway which would alter the map of commerce in the Pacific. The greater profitability of copra and the more rationalised trading procedures, coupled with increases in world demand and market prices for the product, resulted in a marked expansion of business opportunities in the Island Trade. During the 1870s especially, new trading companies appeared on the scene whilst the established ones extended the scope of their activities.

7. Forbes 1875:228
8. S. Firth 1973a:12. Copra was actually first 'discovered' by the French in West Africa but its commercial possibilities were not then realised - Hempenstall 1969:5
None confined their activities within a narrow geographic area but operated extensive networks of shore stations embracing several island groups, and increasingly they entered into direct competition as their boundaries overlapped. Given the scale of their activities in copra alone these companies were of necessity capitalised to an extent previously unknown in the region. Otherwise they failed, as did Thomas Farrell's attempt to break into the Micronesian copra trade in the late 1870s on the strength of three ships and some capital backing from a group of Auckland businessmen.  

These tendencies to large-scale, rationalised trading procedures were reinforced by the inherently inefficient nature of the copra trade. In contrast to plantations, where ideally every nut is utilized for produce or replanting, 'trade copra' was a restrictive undertaking in that the native producer only converted surplus coconuts into copra. At the same time there were inescapable logistic difficulties and high overheads inherent in servicing such extensive yet fragmented trading networks, with numerous small ships collecting numerous small cargoes at each stop-over point. In other words the trade in copra was beset even more acutely than its predecessor by the problems associated with "distance and degree of dispersion of the numerous archipelago islands from their focal points of overseas loading". In order to counteract the constraints imposed by the Pacific's overwhelmingly aquatic environment, and also the vagaries of supply and world demand, the European trader was constantly rationalising his *modus operandi*. Since the organizational form of the copra trade had already been optimised within the limits of existing technology, new measures of cost-efficiency were sought, namely in increasing the scale of one's operations and pushing out competitors in the process. There were casualties. The immediate upshot was the eclipse of the free-lance trading captains on the high seas and the independent traders and small storekeepers in the port towns and outer islands. By the end of the 1870s, if not before, the commerce of the region had come to be dominated by large trading...

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9. There is a considerable amount of information relating to Farrell's Micronesian venture in Young, Private Journal, 15 May 1876-9 Jan 1879 (PMB 21)

companies quite different in character and objectives than their smaller rivals and better equipped to make money out of the dispersed Island Trade. ¹¹

CONSTRAINTS ON PRODUCTION

TUVALU possessed many attributes deemed favourable to successful trading operations - proximity to existing trading routes and centres of trade such as Apia and Auckland; the presence of two atolls with navigable passages and sheltered lagoons which could serve as headstations for the group (like Butaritari for Kiribati and Majuro and Jaluit for the Marshalls); the centralised government of each island (meaning that the islands were not divided into several mutually hostile settlements); and the peaceful nature of the Tuvaluans (obviously an important consideration from the standpoint of the resident trader and the security of his property). Yet Tuvalu as a trading arena was overshadowed by other groups of islands, such as southern Kiribati and some of the Marshall Islands, which were further removed in mileage from transshipment depots, and where intra- and sometimes inter-island warfare frequently interfered with the peaceful conduct of trade. A particular case in point is Truk in the central Carolines, which is volcanic in origin but whose produce is typically that of coral islands. ¹² Chronic warfare on Truk effectively discouraged trading and other European contacts and it was not until 1884 that traders managed to establish a permanent presence. ¹³ By the end of the century 35 traders were living among the belligerent Trukese, whereas their number in Tuvalu only once rose above a dozen. The essential difference between Tuvalu and Truk lay in their productivity. Unattractive from every other point of view, Truk nevertheless produced sufficient quantities of copra to justify the dangers involved. Tuvalu, by contrast, was never commercially important

¹¹. Couper 1967:59
¹³. Hazel 1973:70-71
because it failed to measure up to this one crucial criterion. Even when coconut oil was superseded by the more profitable copra the value of exports was still inadequate and so trading companies took only a marginal interest in the group.

The productivity of each Tuvalu island, and the group as a whole, depended on a complex of variables. Most served to inhibit production. The immediate and over-riding constraints were the geographic fragmentation of the archipelago and the diminutive size of each island, with Vaitupu at approximately 2½ square miles being the largest by far. Small in itself, Tuvalu's copra production was also characterised by variable annual yields, which in turn was partly a function of climate since coconut palms require plenty of rainfall and sunshine in order to bear nuts. Briefly, Tuvalu is situated outside the equatorial dry belt but the three northernmost islands lie on its margins and are therefore more drought-prone than the southern cluster. Rainfall, moreover, tends to increase with latitude meaning that the southern islands have the potential for greater coconut yields per unit area. However, rainfall in Tuvalu typically varies markedly from year to year and affects copra production accordingly. Indeed a 'good' year and a 'bad' year on a Tuvalu island is often measured in terms of precipitation. To further complicate the issue there can also be considerable rainfall differences between two islands lying in similar latitudes during a given year (as, for example, between Nanumea and Nanumanga in 1973-74). This is because the bursting of a raincloud over an island, rather than the surrounding sea, is in itself a chance event.  

The productivity of coconut trees could also be dramatically impaired by rat damage with the sweet *uto* coconuts of Nanumea being especially vulnerable. Possibly, too, some types of coconut trees were more prolific and produced higher quality nuts than others. But there is very little information of this sort, objectively reported and reliable, available. However, if an island contained a large proportion

14. Meteorological services did not commence in Tuvalu until 1931. For selections of rainfall figures since then see Brady 1970:13; Flynn and Makin [1976]:21.
of aging or senile palms (as does Nukulaelae today) its copra potential was also affected, particularly in times of drought-recovery when yields were depressed.

Copra production figures for Tuvalu during the period 1865-1890 are scarce and of doubtful accuracy (see Table 7:1).

**TABLE 7:1**

COPRA EXPORTS FROM TUVALU (in tons) select years during the pre-Protectorate period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1883(^a)</th>
<th>1886(^b)</th>
<th>1892(^c)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nanumea</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niutao</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>c.50 in a good season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanananga</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>&quot;a little copra&quot;</td>
<td>15-20 in a good season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nui</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>c.100 in a good season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waitupu</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>α</td>
<td>c.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nukufetau</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>&quot;a small quantity&quot;</td>
<td>c.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funafuti</td>
<td>c.30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nukulaelae</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>α</td>
<td>c.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(\text{a Bridge, 1883 Expédition Report }\#2 \text{ (RNAS 16; WPHC 4, encl in 172/1883)}\)

\(\text{b Rooke, 1886 Mémord Report (RNAS 17)}\)

\(\text{c Davis, 1892 Royal Visit Report (FDCP 6269). Davis's figures for the northern islands must be treated with more than usual caution since he arrived in the middle of a prolonged drought}\)

\(\text{α Indicates that the Island was visited but the copra production not recorded}\)

According to various German figures, Tuvalu's annual copra production
relative to other islands and island groups in the vicinity was unfavourable (see Table 7:2).

**TABLE 7:2**

**COPRA PRODUCTION IN WESTERN POLYNESIA AND EASTERN MICRONESIA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>LOCALITY</th>
<th>PRODUCTION IN TONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>Tonga</td>
<td>8000–9000⁹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>Samoa</td>
<td>2000–3000⁹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>Kiribati</td>
<td>600⁸</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>Tuvalu</td>
<td>200⁸</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>Fakaofo</td>
<td>60⁸</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>Olosega</td>
<td>100⁸</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>Niue</td>
<td>100⁸</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>Wallis</td>
<td>200⁸</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>Futuna</td>
<td>200⁸</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>Marshall Islands</td>
<td>1000⁷</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>Marshall Islands</td>
<td>1350⁷</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Memorandum of 15 Dec 1883 concerning the D.H.P.G. in the Pacific, encl in Steube, to Bismarck, 16 Dec 1883 (RKA 2791). I am grateful to Stewart Firth for this reference.

b Finsch 1887:524

Although Tuvalu's copra production is comparable to or even exceeds that of some of the localities mentioned above, such comparisons are misleading unless the problems associated with shipping copra exports from Tuvalu are also taken into account. Whereas copra from Tuvalu was dispersed over eight islands, there were fewer points of loading at the more contiguous land masses such as Niue and Wallis.

The social constraints on production were equally telling.
While physical limitations and climatic conditions put a low (but shifting) ceiling on the number of coconut trees and the nuts they produced, the attitudes of the Tuvaluans determined the amount of copra made from those nuts. In the first place it is to be stressed that coconuts were primarily used as a food and only surplus above nutritional requirements was converted into copra. Accordingly the demography of each island needs to be considered. This factor could operate in two ways. Either a population was too large in relation to land area to allow a sufficient surplus of nuts after domestic consumption had been satisfied, or the population was insufficient to provide the labour force to make commercially attractive quantities of copra. Nor did it help that on some islands too many traders competed for too few resources.

Tuvaluans are not, and never have been, avid copra cutters and on that account the traders of last century often accused them of sheer idleness. But as a visiting naval captain pointed out, this "constant complaint on the part of Europeans, that they are lazy and will not work, merely means that the natives are not much inclined to work for them.\[15\] Quite apart from the fact that copra cutting is a tedious business and not likely to be the constant concern of the Tuvaluans, who prefer to opt for a variety of chores during the course of a day to counteract the fu (boredom) inherent in much of their work, the preparation of copra does not readily fit into Tuvalu culture. Traders could not appeal to ambitious individuals to cut more copra than their fellows in the hope of higher rewards. Such acquisitiveness runs counter to the Tuvaluan ethic of largesse and sharing, which is geared to encourage a democracy of poverty. One is expected to share with friends, neighbours, and above all kinsmen. Prestige is accorded to those who are generous, whereas copra production accrues no prestige, least of all if it is for private gain. The ramifications of this sharing ethic is profound in Tuvalu where bilateral kinship operates. Such constraints did not operate when copra had to be produced to underwrite a community venture, such as the building of a new church from imported materials. In these cases prestige accrued to those

15. Maxwell, 1881 Emerald Report (print), p.2 (RNAS 15); also enclosed in Thurston to Rippon, 25 Aug 1893 (CO 225/42/19614)
households which produced the most copra for sale, but such spurs to production were inevitably temporary in duration and few and far between. Otherwise copra was cut to provide for the pastor and to make small-scale purchases from the trader's store.

Despite the inherent restraints on productivity common to all islands, each nevertheless differed considerably from a trading point of view. In this regard a comparison between Nanumea and Nanumanga is revealing. Only three traders lived on Nanumanga during the last third of the 19th century, whereas Nanumea experienced an almost continuous occupancy by traders (see Table 7:3). Both islands experienced lower rainfall figures than most others in the group and neither afforded a safe anchorage to trading vessels which had to stand off-and-on. However, their similarities are overshadowed by their points of difference. Nanumea was much the larger of the two so its productivity per se and its surplus production exceeded Nanumanga's, all things being equal. At Nanumanga, by contrast, the population was smaller but greater in density, meaning a smaller surplus of coconuts beyond subsistence requirements and a less adequate labour reserve to gather the nuts and cut the copra (see Table 9:2).

The southern islands present a different picture because their production was not usually hindered by dry years, droughts and the drought-recovery period. There was no question of pressure on resources, except when hurricanes struck, because populations were low (see Table 9:2) and rainfall abundant. Whereas copra production in the northern islands was often circumscribed by lack of surplus coconuts, it was hampered in the southern cluster by lack of people to cut them. This applied especially to Funafuti and Nukulaelae, whose populations had been more than halved by the activities of Peruvian slavers in 1863. As a result thousands of coconuts were left on the ground to rot or germinate. Traders regarded this as a deplorable waste but the Tuvaluans saw the matter in a different light: had these nuts been needed for domestic consumption or barter they would have been gathered and so used. It should also be mentioned

16. Von Werner 1889:323
that tending their coconut groves is no more a part of Tuvalu culture than was the tedious business of cutting copra. In contrast to the care and attention lavished on their tāko and puāka plants, coconut palms require a minimum of husbandry and nuts were left to germinate on their own accord.\(^{17}\)

A medley of reasons therefore go to explain why Tuvalu's copra production, small and variable in any case, could never reach its full potential. During the 1880s, however, the people of Vaitupu demonstrated something of this potential. Of all the Tuvalu islands, Vaitupu came closest to the trader's ideal. Easily the largest island in the group, and quite fertile by coral island standards, Vaitupu had a low population density yet at the same time one sufficient in numbers to ensure a more adequate level of production. Under duress and stretched to the limit, the island was able to pay off a debt in excess of $13,000 owing to the German firm of H.M. Ruge & Co largely from the proceeds of copra. Community life, however, was seriously disrupted during this prolonged burst of copra production, which explains why there were no more like it.\(^ {18}\)

Ultimately the physical, climatic and social constraints on copra production merged into an inter-related whole. In the case of groups of small islands, such as Tuvalu, producing only miniscule quantities of copra for export and little or nothing else besides, the tendency always seems to be that the various constraints on production interact and so become yet more acute. It is a situation of circular causation. As Couper points out:

a small remote island with difficult landing conditions for most of the year will undoubtedly be charged high freight rates, but is unlikely to receive a frequent shipping service. The stores on such an island are consequently likely to run short of supplies, and in any case they would carry only a limited variety of stock.

\(^{17}\) See also Bedford 1967:28-30; Brady 1970:237-43; Flynn and Makin [1976]:49-52, 115

\(^{18}\) For further details see below pp.237-48
There is thus little incentive to production for the market and a limited amount of cash is earned; this in turn means that trading vessels are even less likely to call. There is in these circumstances a spiral of causation downwards. 19

The small and fluctuating copra production of the Tuvalu islands was therefore in partial response to the vagaries of commercial shipping within the group which in turn was brought about by the irregularities of supply and demand between the native producer and the trader, the variable climate, and the Tuvaluans' reciprocity system. 20

Tuvalu, or rather its individual islands, were therefore unimportant from a trading standpoint. During the days of the coconut oil trade Tuvalu was but a few small links in a chain of trading stations extending both north and south. With expansion following the changeover to copra this network became more extensive and Tuvalu correspondingly less significant. The wider question of why trading companies entered Tuvalu in the first place and then why they maintained a presence in the group had little to do with purely local factors. To the contrary, decisions from the centre in response to developments in the more important segments of the network was the prime determinant of the pattern of trade which evolved in Tuvalu.

Who, then, were these trading companies and how did Tuvalu fit into their overall operations?

GERMAN FIRMS

When the Austrian diplomat Baron von Hübner visited Samoa in 1884 he observed that local trade was principally in the hands of two German firms, the D.H.P.G. and Ruge & Co. 21 The D.H.P.G., the commercial

20. See also Bedford 1967:306; Couper 1967:43
21. von Hübner 1886:II, 360-61
successor of Goddefroys in the Western Pacific, was by far the larger. J.C. Goddefroy & Sohn, a Hamburg shipping company with global connections, became seriously involved in the Island Trade when August Unshelm, the firm's factor in Valparaiso, established an agency in Apia in 1857. He came at a time when commercial enterprise in Samoa was at a particularly low ebb, with a multiplicity of small retail and trading concerns struggling to exist. Too numerous in relation to local resources, they provided each other with too intense a degree of competition for any to be successful. Nor were they sufficiently capitalised to diversify within Samoa or to expand their operations elsewhere in the hinterland. Many collapsed, only to be replaced by others no better able to succeed. Unshelm, by contrast, was heavily capitalised, but appearances could be deceptive. Goddefroy's "unpretentious" Apia offices, one contemporary observed, "gave no indication of the money power in Hamburg behind them!".22

One use to which Unshelm put this massive capital backing was to flood the local market and later the wider region with debased South American currency, known as 'iron money', which immediately added to the difficulties of Goddefroy's competitors, who had no option but to use the ubiquitous coin which they were then unable to redeem at its face value. This was because Goddefroy not only distributed but controlled the money supply of the region since they alone could provide foreign exchange facilities. As Bollard explains, a "two tier money system" soon developed from which Goddefroy emerged as the sole beneficiary:

Almost all the small Pacific traders were committed to using the Goddefroy banking network because they were too small to arrange their own bills of exchange . . . . A two tier money system was developing. Exports were paid for in European currencies and converted to debased dollars before they entered the Pacific. Imports were paid for in silver dollars that had to be reconverted. Goddefroy monopolized both points of currency exchange. This was possible due to their wide trade contacts, their capital backing giving them a monopoly on credit.

23. Trood 1912:31
the relatively non-monetized state of the economy, and the absence of any official financial institutions.24

Godeffroy's Samoan branch also used its "money power" to expand into large-scale plantation agriculture, the obvious alternative to the casual barter trade in coconut oil which was inherently limited by the Samoans' modest demand for European trade goods, however inflated their value. One means to obtain plantations was to extend credit to Samoans at high interest rates with land as a surety. Another was to fuel the Samoans' civil wars by providing guns in exchange for land.25 Within 15 years of their arrival the Godeffroy/D.H.P.G. establishment presided over the largest plantation system in Samoa, whose broad acres made the firm famous throughout the Pacific.26

Well before 1864, when Unshelm drowned at sea, he could boast with good cause that Godeffroy was the leading commercial house in Samoa.27 Whereas in the early 1850s the export of coconut oil totalled

24. Bollard 1981:12. The exchange rate of 'iron money' against the German mark is complicated since Chilean, Bolivian and Peruvian dollars were not at parity with each other and also because they fluctuated in their respective real values. However, £1stg equalled about Chilean $4 (or Chilean $1 approximately equalled £3/16th stg). Chilean dollars were used until 1852 and were valued at 4 marks until 1883 when they were devalued to 3 marks - see S. Firth 1973a:16-17. For the early exchange rates of various South American currencies see J.C. Williams, "Report ... of the general commerce of the Navigator Islands, 31 Dec 1850" (BCS 3/2).

25. Gilson 1970:254-59, 378-79. The Samoans parted with their lands so readily because the two warring factions often claimed the loyalty of members of the same land holding group. This situation was brought about by the Samoan system of exogamous marriage.

26. Statistics for D.H.P.G. land under cultivation are provided by Moses 1973:101n. The typical Godeffroy plantation did not confine itself to monoculture; cotton was grown between the rows of coconut palms and until 1888 was the more profitable plantation crop - S. Firth 1973b:61. In 1882, for example, Godeffroy's Samoan plantations produced Chilean $83,984 of cotton as against Chilean $3,699 of copra - S. Firth 1973b:24.

27. Schmack 1938:140
only 200 tons, by 1864 the figure had risen to 900 tons, some of which had been brought to Apia from other island groups for transshipment. That the trade of Apia was not confined to Samoan produce indicates that Samoa, like Tuvalu, was but part of a wider trading network. Despite the extent of their Samoan holdings, Unshelm and his successors realised that the group itself could not sustain a profitable, long-term enterprise at that point in time. It was also necessary to expand into the islands and archipelagoes beyond, using Apia as the port town through which the lines of communication and exchange between hinterland and foreland could be channelled. At its height in the late 1870s, Godeffroy's Pacific network extended from the Tuamotus in the east to the Marianas in the west and quite overshadowed rival firms' holdings.

The most important single island group in the Godeffroy complex was Tonga, by far the richest source of copra throughout the 19th century, which the firm entered in the late-1860s. Expansion of a different order was that into the smaller, more distant, archipelagoes, most of which consisted of low islands whose physical characteristics precluded the development of plantation agriculture. It was in this sphere that Godeffroy's Pacific branch expanded most rapidly. By the early 1860s stations were established at Uvea, Futuna and the Lau Islands and in 1864 Godeffroy was operating 46 such stations outside Samoa. By this time the firm had expanded into Niue, Tuvalu and the Marshall Islands. As Table 7:3 reveals, Godeffroy dominated trade within Tuvalu, owning nearly all the shore stations. The firm was similarly placed in the Marshall Islands, where it had commenced a

29. J.C. Williams, "Trade report [for 1864]", p.37 (BCS 3/3)
30. Hempenstall 1969:38
31. Spoehr 1970:413
33. S. Firth 1973a:12; Hempenstall 1969:5
34. Schmack 1938:140
35. Hempenstall 1978:16
partnership in 1863 with Alolph Capelle & Co, the agents of Stapenhorst & Hoffschlager of Honolulu. By 1869 Godeffroys had the controlling interest in Capelle’s business.\textsuperscript{36} That same year Godeffroys finally began trading in Kiribati,\textsuperscript{37} but then only on a small-scale and without success. Kiribati was already the major labour pool for Godeffroys’ Samoan plantations, and so the “German flag was well known but not well loved”.\textsuperscript{38} Godeffroys was soon to discover that trade and recruiting could never go peacefully together.

In 1869 Godeffroys also turned its attention to the Caroline islands and established a station at Yap. The island soon became the commercial centre of the Carolines, largely because it served as the stop-over point of the new Cochin to San Francisco run.\textsuperscript{39} The other major development of the 1860s was expansion into eastern Polynesia: having contributed largely to the downfall of the Tahitian-based firm of Brander & Hort in Apia in 1862, Godeffroys were instrumental in displacing them in Tahiti as well.\textsuperscript{40} By the 1870s the first phase of Godeffroys’ expansion was over when traders were placed in the area which later became known as the Bismarck Archipelago. From their base in Moro the German firm later pushed into other parts of Melanesia.\textsuperscript{41}

The environmental limitations of most of these outlying islands largely confined their trading possibilities to a single product - coconut oil and then copra. Other products, such as pearlshell and sharksfin, were exploited whenever possible but there was little scope for diversification. Even beche-de-mer was of limited importance and this despite the widespread distribution of holothurians (or sea slugs) throughout the region.\textsuperscript{42} In the first place the curing of these

\textsuperscript{36} Finsch 1887:524; Firth 1973b:13; Young, Private Journal, 8 July 1876, pp.37-39 (PHB 21)

\textsuperscript{37} Maude 1968:282

\textsuperscript{38} Finsch 1887:524; Moses 1873:102n

\textsuperscript{39} Bollard 1981:7; Hezel 1975:6, 9

\textsuperscript{40} Miss Gordon Cumming 1885:80; Ralston 1977:87

\textsuperscript{41} Moses 1959:47-49

\textsuperscript{42} See Ward 1972:95-99
creatures for the market is difficult. More to the point, demand for the product was confined to Asia meaning that beche-de-mer could only be channelled through Yap with its direct links with Cochīn.

Environmental limitations of a different sort meant that copra had to be obtained through a barter trade conducted by the company's resident agents, rather than by plantation agriculture. However some attempts at the former were made. In 1865 Godeffroys unsuccessfully attempted to establish cotton plantations in the Palaus, while Capelle sought to improve coconut husbandry by leasing several islands and islets in the Marshalls which he then replanted, introducing better strains of coconuts. At Fakafofo atoll in Tokelau, moreover, Godeffroys agreed to collect the produce of a large islet which had been leased to a Portuguese of African descent named Antonio Pereira, while at Olosega plantations were developed by Eli Jennings, an American, with Godeffroys again purchasing the copra. Godeffroys themselves held a lease for 25 years from 1865 to Niuoka islet on the Tuvaluan atoll of Nukulaelae where they introduced their own labourers from Kiribati and Samoa. These exceptions aside, local land tenure systems effectively precluded plantations outside the high islands, especially on small and densely populated islands such as Tuvalu's.

Only on uninhabited islands, such as Niulakita in southernmost Tuvalu, did plantation agriculture and also guano mining occur with any degree of continuity. In the late-1880s Harry J. Moors, the leading American merchant in Apia, bought out Ruge & Co's coconut plantation at Niulakita and sent a small contingent of labourers to mine the tiny island's guano deposits. It would appear that Moors initially engaged

43. Cheyne 1971:196-99
44. Tetans 1958
45. Pollock TS:18
46. Hooper and Huntsman 1973:378
47. Maude 1981:63
48. For a full account see below, pp.231-37
the 7-ton cutter *Martha* to service his Niulakita enterprise and he finally visited the island himself in the 30-ton schooner *Nukunono* in June 1890.

On their arrival at Sophia [Niulakita] they found all the persons on the island in good health. The labourers had a cargo of guano ready for shipment, which Mr. Moors describes as being of fair quality, and he has been offered good prices for all he can ship from the island. It is probable part of the guano will be sent to the colonies for sale. The Nukunono brought back Mrs. Moors, who has been several months on the island, and the two white overseers and their wives. Mr. Moors intends to increase the number of labourers on Sophia and send down another white overseer at an early date.

Eighteen months later 300 tons of guano was ready for loading on board the Nukunono. But following court action against the owner of the Nukunono and an extended visit to his homeland, Moors began to concern himself less with Niulakita. Not only was the island's indifferent-quality guano diminishing, but the inclusion of Niulakita in the Ellice Islands Protectorate, which Britain declared in September 1892, posted a potential threat to his interests there. Diminishing concern eventually became outright neglect and by 1900 his workers at Niulakita had "received no pay and no provisions for three years, and all wished to leave the island . . .".

While most of the trade from outlying archipelagoes was channelled through Apia, it is not generally realised that Jaluit was a secondary entrepôt where copra from the Marshall Islands was transshipped to Europe rather than having the ships involved in its

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49. Samoa Times, 23 Nov 1889, 3 May 1890, 7 June 1890
50. Samoa Times, 21 June 1890
51. Samoa Times, 11 July 1890
52. Samoa Times, 12 March 1890
53. Samoa Times, 11 Feb 1893, 25 Feb 1893, 30 March 1893, 1 April 1893, 20 Jan 1894, Samoa Weekly Herald, 18 Feb 1893
54. See Flynn and Makin [1976]:68
55. Tupper, 1900 Pylades Report, §2 (RNAS 45)
collection making a long haul to Apia. At Samoa itself a succession of diminutive island trading vessels, many of whom had seen better days, discharged their cargoes from the Samoan plantations or abroad into larger vessels bound for Hamburg. These little ships were of various specifications, but none of them was large. For example, a schooner built by Niccol & Son for Godeffroys and launched in Auckland in January 1877 was of 16 tons register with a 42' keel, an overall depth of 13', and a 4'8" hold designed especially for light draught of water (in fact this was stipulated in the contract). The schooner's carrying capacity was 25 tons.

This size of vessel, with admirable sailing qualities, is found to be the most useful class of craft for trading among the various stations that Messrs Godeffroy have planted on the islands of the South Pacific.

Manoeuvrability and lack of draught provided these little ships with a margin of safety when operating among the hazardous low-lying archipelagoes which the cumbersome whalers of previous decades quite lacked.

To relate the foregoing to the theme of large company domination, Godeffroy's Pacific branch developed and diversified so extensively in order to sustain its high level of capitalisation. Sound management and economic efficiency were vital to its success. The firm was, as Brookfield points out, "the model of the vertically integrated, multinational operating corporation that has since been widely replicated". In other words the methods and outlook of the European joint-stock companies which had operated in Asia for the past two hundred years were replicated in the South Pacific.

56. For example the Caesar Godeffroy arrived at Jaluit in August 1877 to collect copra for shipment to Apia - Hezel 1979:134. There are good descriptions of Jaluit in Farrell 1928:204-05; Moss 1889:37-40.

57. During the first week of October 1877, for example, three of the ten vessels in Apia harbour were large ships belonging to Godeffroy. Each brought a general cargo and departed with copra on the return voyage to Hamburg. The ships were in the region of 700 tons apiece - see Samoa Times, 6 Oct 1877.

58. NZH, 8 Jan 1877. See also Morton 1975:127-35.

centuries were now gaining a strong footing in the Pacific. As such Godeffroy's bears comparison with the British East India Company which "anticipated and perhaps even indirectly contributed to the eventual creation of modern business corporations and the abstract concept of the 'firm' as the main regulator through which the whole complex of economic production and exchange could take place".60 Furthermore, the East India Company, by "handling multitude of trading products and operating in an international setting . . . observed rules of behaviour, or economic objectives, and measures of efficiency which differed radically from those of small, individual business partnerships".61 This applies equally to Godeffroy's position vis-a-vis the small, undercapitalised businesses it first encountered in Apia.

In addition to sound management another element was crucial to Godeffroy's success while it lasted - political domination. The first Godeffroy managers doubled as Consul for the North German Federation and then for Germany following unification of the Fatherland. After 1879 the post was filled by career diplomats who, with one exception, aggressively furthered the fortunes of the firm since the whole rationale behind the German presence in the Pacific was to trade. As such Godeffroy was given free rein in developing their plantation into the "total institution" of the Caribbean type, with Weber being described as:

... Licencer of the ships that import the men, owner of the ships; employer; and the only person to whom the men can appeal for redress - Consul, Judge and Jury all in one - what can be expected?62

These linkages between business and the state extended to Germany where members of the Godeffroy family held influence with prominent financiers and politicians.63 At another level the German navy was virtually at the firm's disposal, protecting not only the

60. Chaudhuri 1978:19
61. Chaudhuri 1978:21
62. Young, Private Journal, 15 June 1875, p.52 (PMB 21)
63. Masterman 1936:67; Stern 1977:397-98
plantations in Samoa but the trading stations in the outlying archipelagoes, and also forcing treaties upon islanders giving German most favoured nation treatment. In 1878 the German warship Ariadne with Weber on board called at Funafuti and Vaitupu for that purpose. So while Godeffroys was not the only firm to engage in gun-running and to have managers functioning also as Consuls, British opinion was still that "Germans out here are innocent of morality". Neither Britain or the United States supported their nationals' trading interests to the extent that Germany did, and in Samoa German rule amounted to Godeffroy rule.

In sum, Godeffroys set the pattern that was to follow and the Island Trade

became and remained dominated by relatively large corporations, which had either to be multinational in origin, or else develop multinational linkages in order to operate their role of agency house, growers, traders, shippers, manufacturers and de facto bankers. Vertical integration has been the key to their success, and in times and in places they have taken on a number of non-commercial roles as well; the civil government and military control of colonies have sometimes been assigned to such corporations, and they have at all times exercised considerable political influence if not power.

In 1879, the year the Godeffroy empire collapsed, world copra prices reached their 19th century peak. By that time Godeffroy's Pacific branch, which had been reconstituted in the western Pacific

64. von Werner 1887:320-29

65. [Le Hunte] n.d.:19. Comparison between Godeffroy's and the British East India Company can be carried a stage further since the latter likewise possessed this functional duality. As Chaudhuri (1978:20) puts it: "If there was a perfect example of what we today understand as the spirit of mercantilism, the East India Company embodied it in its policy of harnessing political power to commercial purposes. It was also this aspect of its image that brought the Company much public odium and hostile criticism".

the year before as the D.H.P.G., was facing competition from an increasing number of heavily-capitalised firms within the Samoan Islands. Most confined themselves to land speculation and plantations within the group, but Martin Ruge also entered the Island Trade. Between them these two German firms came to control the greater share of exports from Apia, and perhaps the first thing to strike visitors to that harbour was the fact that German shipping far exceeded that of all other nationalities combined. As early as 1869, well before Ruge entered Samoa, a French admiral had observed what was already the norm and what would continue to be so - that among the commercial shipping anchored in Apia harbour there were "no French flags, like Tahiti, no stars and stripes, scarcely a Union Jack - everywhere was the unmistakable flag of the North German Confederation".

67. In November 1857, only six months after Unshelm's arrival in Apia, there was a stock market crash in Europe and Godeffroys retrenched on all fronts save its Pacific branch. It seems that Godeffroys was too profitable in the Pacific for its own good in that these profits were channelled into ill-advised land and mining speculations in Europe - see Stern 1977:396. Another crash followed, Godeffroys again lost heavily, and the parent firm's financial position was now serious. It borrowed heavily and depended heavily on the Pacific branch to restore its solvency. But the position continued to deteriorate. In its fight for survival Godeffroys reorganised its Pacific branch into two joint-stock companies in 1878 - the Société Commerciale de l'Océanie de Papette, which worked the Eastern Polynesia, and the D.H.P.G. which operated in the Western Pacific out of Apia. But to no avail - in early 1879 the D.H.P.G. was expropriated by the London bank of Baring Bros when Godeffroys defaulted on its debts to that bank. Accordingly none of the D.H.P.G.'s profits were received by the parent company, which was declared bankrupt before the year was out. The D.H.P.G. was eventually brought back under full German control in 1884 with the Godeffroy family holding an 80% interest - see S. Firth 1973b:19-23; P. Kennedy 1974: 22-23, 39; Stern 1977:396-400.

68. Bridge, 1884 Reptigla Report (RNAS 41); von Hübner 1886:II, 363n; Makanam 1872:12; Young, Private Journal, 7 Sept 1875 (PMH 21). There are useful graphs in Masterman (1934:64-65) which show the tonnage of British, German and American commercial shipping in Apia on an annual basis. These graphs exclude the shipping of numerous other nationalities, which can be worked up in the Trade Reports of the British Consul in Samoa (BCS 3).

69. Quoted in Hempenstall 1969:5.
THE OTHER German firm to involve itself in Tuvalu was H.K. Ruge & Co, the representatives of the Hamburg shipping company of Wachsmuth & Krogmann. Like Unshelm before him Martin Ruge crossed the Pacific westwards from Valparaiso where he had been manager of a large merchant house. But instead of going direct to Apia he first settled in Levuka where he bought into the firm of F.C. Hedemann & Co. However, the firm was forced out of Fiji soon after by discriminatory British regulations following the cession of the group. In 1875 Ruge went to Apia where he set himself up in direct opposition to Godeffroy; two years later Hedemann ’erected a large Store and dwelling House’ at Havannah Harbour and opened several other trading stations in Vanuatu.

In certain respects Ruge, Hedemann & Co’s Apia branch was a miniature version of the D.H.P.G. establishment there. As representatives of another large Hamburg shipping company they too could call on overseas capital to aid their expansion, and to that end Ruge too imported large quantities of ‘iron money’. Operating from his Matautu premises at the opposite side of the bay the D.H.P.G.’s headquarters, Ruge built up a business based on a combination of trade and plantations, importing and exporting through Apia, Valparaiso and Hamburg with ships of the parent company. He bought up the plantations of J.C. Williams and established an island trading network along the same lines as Godeffroy’s. He keenly contested the Tongan copra trade and also established a trading post in Uvea. Ruge then turned his attention to expanding into “the islands of the North-West” and in January 1876 he sent the company schooner Levuka (Captain Michelsen) on a secret mission to survey the trading possibilities of the Caroline, Marshall, Kiribati and Tuvalu groups. The schooner called at various islands in the latter three archipelagoes but avoided Tuvalu altogether. Ruge’s follow-up action is something of...
a puzzle, for despite the cruise of the Levuka he never extended into the Carolines, Marshalls or Kiribati. Yet in December of that year T.W. Williams arrived at Funafuti as his agent.75

Although Ruge landed other agents in Tuvalu (see Table 7:3) it was through Williams that the firm made its greatest impact on the group. After 1878 Williams centered his operations on Vaitupu and instigated the formation of a "company" of 100 Vaitupuan shareholders in an attempt to corner the copra market of the entire group. Although the relationship between Ruge & Co and the so-called Vaitupu "Company" is far from clear, the latter obtained on credit from Ruge its trade goods for barter and the Vaitupulemele, a 20½ ton schooner. The Vaitupulemele took over Ruge's Tuvalu run from the 106 ton brigantine Matautu which had previously serviced the entire Ruge trading network.76 Tuvalu thus became a discrete segment of the network with Williams functioning as local manager, though increasingly he acted as though trading on his own account. However, this attempt to monopolise and profit from Tuvalu copra was a disastrous failure. A combination of bad management at all levels and lack of corporate loyalty led to the Vaitupu "Company" accumulating rather than clearing its debts with Ruge until they stood at $13,000. When pressed for payment Williams passed the debt on to the "Company", and the people of Vaitupu were coerced into meeting its debt. It took four years to do so. Ironically, the final payment was made only months before H.M. Ruge & Co went into liquidation in 1888.77

75. Thompson to Gorrie, 10 September 1878 (WPHC 4, encl in 30/1878). T.W. Williams was the adoptive son of J.C. Williams, from whom Ruge purchased his plantations

76. The Matautu made its last visit to Tuvalu in June-July 1880 - see Samoa Times, 24 July 1880. Thereafter she continued to service the Tonga/Uvea run but substituted her Tuvalu activities largely by carrying cargoes of copra from Ruge's Samoan plantations to Apia for transshipment. In addition the Matautu was occasionally chartered by Ruge's competitors, usually within Samoa but on one occasion to Auckland - see Samoa Times, 18 Dec 1880, 22 Jan 1881, 23 April 1881. The Matautu, previously known as the Matchless, was built in Auckland in 1876 - see NZH, 23 Aug 1877; Samoa Times, 9 July 1881

77. For further details see below, pp.237-48
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The surname only of the trader appears in bold typeface in upper case characters.

Details of traders whose names cannot be ascertained appears in the same typeface but in lower case characters.

1) The name of the company the trader represents appears in italics. Sometimes a name that has been abbreviated, for instance, to N. A. Self has been abbreviated to N A Self.

2) Since this Table was compiled from wide range of sources, each entry has been individually referenced. The footnotes appear at the end of the Table.
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1. Horsley 1872:163
2. Graefe 1867:118B; Murray 1866 Journal, pp.28-33 (SSJ 157); & 1876: 66a:05
3. Tio Pincus, 3 March 1868, p.17; Murray, 1866 Journal, pp.52-53 (SSJ 157); & 1876:140
4. Horsley 1872:155; Whitmore 1872:254
5. Horsley 1872:155; Whitmore 1872:235
6. Horsley 1872:155
7. Horsley 1872:155; Powell, 1871 Journal, p.3 (SSJ 160)
8. Powell, 1871 Journal, p.29 (SSJ 160); Vivian, 1871-72 Journal, pp.80, 82 (SSJ 150)
9. Powell, 1871 Journal, p.18 (SSJ 160); Vivian, 1871-72 Journal, p.79 (SSJ 150)
10. Powell, 1871 Journal, pp.9-10 (SSJ 160); Vivian, 1871-72 Journal, p.74 (SSJ 150)
11. Horsley, "Logbook and Journal, H.M.S. Beagle", 21 July 1872 (PMH 625); Horsley 1872:165
12. Gili 1872 Diary, p.48 (ML 6444); Horsley, "Logbook and Journal, H.M.S. Beagle", 19 July 1872 (PMH 626); Horsley 1872:155
14. Gili 1872 Diary, p.8 (ML 6444)
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26. Thompson to Carron, n.d. (FMH 9, encl in 30/1903)
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28. Restieaux, "Recollections of Harry Johnston, trader in Manus", p.1 (MFJ 22/213); 27 Oct 1877
29. Restieaux, "Recollections of Harry Johnston, trader in Manus", p.3 (MFJ 22/213)
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<td>Fragment of letter from Beke to an unknown member of his family, probably his mother, n.d. (PDF 174)</td>
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* Indicates that the source does not mention the trader by name.
NON-GERMAN FIRMS

RUGE and the Godeffroy/D.H.P.G. establishment were not the only trading companies to take a serious interest in Tuvalu. By far the largest of the non-German firms to establish a solid presence in the group were the Auckland-based entrepreneurs Henderson & Macfarlane Ltd, the owners of the Circular Saw Line. Their flotilla of small ketches, scows, schooners and cutters was active in the thriving New Zealand coastal trade; their larger vessels were frequent visitors to Australian and American ports. But the coastal trade had its limitations whilst trading in foreign ports was speculative and fiercely competitive. Looking for other outlets to divert some of its vessels, the firm turned its attention to the Pacific in 1870. The immediate impetus was the increase in Fiji’s white population during the 1860s giving rise to what was described in 1876 as the “increasing Fiji trade”, a busy two-way network of exchange between Levuka and the ports of Australia and New Zealand.

The major thrust of Henderson & Macfarlane’s Pacific activities, however, came to centre in the Cook Islands, especially fertile Rarotonga, and to a lesser extent Tahiti. Their appeal lay in the variety and quantity of products available - oranges, lime juice, pearl shell, cotton and bêche-de-mer, as well as copra. Suwarrow in the northern Cooks was established as the head-station for this area by H.B. Sterndale, late of Godeffroys, because its harbour offered shelter to shipping in a hurricane prone area. The ships which plied between Auckland and Eastern Polynesia also called at Tonga and

78. The following details of Henderson & Macfarlane have largely been extracted from Hallett TS (PMB 62) and the shipping columns of Auckland newspapers, 1876-86. See also the articles on Thomas Henderson in the Auckland Weekly News, 21 May 1881, 3 July 1886. For an economic history of the Auckland region during this period see Stone 1973

79. Daily Southern Cross, 7 Feb 1876

80. For trade between New Zealand and Fiji see Ross 1964:58-59

81. Cowan 1936:84-88
Samoa to offload cargoes of general merchandise and to take on board cotton and copra, since carrying cargoes for others was often more profitable than trading for one's self. Indeed Henderson & Macfarlane were only minor participants in Tonga's flourishing but competitive copra trade; they also had to share the field with competitors in both Fiji and the Cooks. The port of Auckland served a comparable function to Apia's, that of a receiving depot for local and island produce. Large merchant vessels from England entered the port and having discharged their cargoes of merchandise and immigrants then proceeded to receive return cargoes from smaller vessels.

Henderson & Macfarlane began operating in Tuvalu in the late 1870s. In 1877 the firm bought out the Micronesian interests of Thomas Farrell and with this acquisition was now well placed to dramatically extend its overall Pacific operations. In a straight line between Auckland and the Marshalls lies Fiji, Rotuma, Tuvalu and Kiribati. The following year three Henderson & Macfarlane vessels, the Belle Brandon, the Vision and the Gael, set out for the Marshalls, and the last mentioned definitely called at Tuvalu en route. Thus did Tuvalu begin to be frequented by Henderson & Macfarlane's vessels which could collect copra from the group on their return from Micronesia with little diversion to schedules. This northern extension of Henderson & Macfarlane's Pacific operations once again highlights the central fact of Tuvalu as a trading area - the group was unattractive to trading firms and only as part of an extended network was it worthwhile to warrant interest, provided there were not too many competitors. In 1880 the firm had placed agents at Nanumea, Nui and Funafuti, and during the course of the decade Henderson & Macfarlane challenged and eventually supplanted the D.H.P.G. as the major trading interest in Tuvalu.

82. For a contemporary's account of the competitive nature of the Tongan copra trade see P[artsch], "54 years ago", Samoa Herald, 21 July 1933, 28 July 1933
83. Hallett TS:25
84. NZH, 13 Aug 1878, 5 Oct 1878, 29 Jan 1879. J. Dana 1935:61-64
85. Fragment of letter from Becke to a member of his family, probably his mother, n.d. (BP, ML Ab18/5)
THE need for rationalised, large-scale and well managed operations was underlined by the experience of J.S. De Wolf & Co, a Liverpool shipping firm, which entered the Island Trade in 1878 only to withdraw three years later $20,000 poorer. De Wolfs were prompted by ever-increasing world copra prices and the glowing accounts of publicists of the Island Trade to establish an agency in Apia. Under the management of Tom De Wolf, a younger brother of the firm’s principal, De Wolf & Co ran a retail store in Apia and, on the strength of three ships, tried to break into the seaborne copra trade. His fleet consisted of The Venus, a three masted schooner of 191 tons register, the Red Coat, another three masted schooner of 157 tons register, and the 95 ton brigantine the Mana, formerly a Hawaiian recruiting vessel. The latter had been purchased by De Wolf after being driven ashore at Funafuti, then respared and refitted as an island trader.

De Wolf’s three ships made a total of six trading voyages before he wound up his affairs in the Pacific. The general problem was that he spread his energies too thinly and in the process over-extended the working capacity of his vessels. Unable to consolidate his position in one area before moving into another, as Godeffroy’s had done, De Wolf then tried to do overnight what had taken the German firm 20 years to achieve. Before long his ships were trying to service a trading network extending over archipelagoes as far apart as Tonga, the Tuamotus and the Carolines. Clearly, three vessels were inefficient to cope with such a farflung trading network, but neither could De Wolf confine his ships to a narrow geographic area if their holds were to be filled. Ruge was able to do this because he concentrated his efforts in Samoa and Tonga. But since he owned no plantations in Samoa and with the Tongan copra trade so competitive, De Wolf was forced to opt for a dispersed and inefficient trading strategy. He placed a few traders in outlying islands — in Nanumea and Nanumanga for example (see Table 7:3) — but was unable to keep his trading network intact, and this is where the rot set in. Accordingly, De Wolf’s ships were forced to roam far and wide in search of speculative cargons, a form of trading which had effectively died out two decades before. On one occasion he even sent

86. For a detailed account of De Wolfs’ Pacific venture see Munro 1980
the Red Coat in search of an imaginary guano island on the strength of beach rumour in Apia.

The retail side of De Wolf's activities were no more successful. Tom De Wolf arrived in Apia when Samoa was passing through a period of intense political instability, with native wars breaking out in 1879 and again in 1880. The upshot from a commercial point of view was a business recession. Given the stagnant economic situation and the glut of consumer goods on the local market it is hardly surprising that the valuable general cargoes imported by The Venus and the Red Coat failed to sell in Apia. Faced with failure on all fronts De Wolf had little option but to wind up his affairs before further losses were sustained, leaving Apia on board the Mana in early 1881. In a perverse sort of way the inadequacy of the whole De Wolf enterprise and the dominance of German interests were symbolized by the final departure of the Mana. Unable to effect an agress from Apia harbour in the light and baffling winds that January morning, the brigantine had to be taken in tow by the German warship Hyane. Already, De Wolf's one remaining trader in Tuvalu, had entered the employ of Henderson & Macfarlane (see Table 7:3).

The changing pattern of trade and the settlement of traders in the Tuvalu islands is therefore largely explicable in terms of developments in other archipelagoes. This, in turn, was a response to general economic pressures which saw, in the manner outlined above, the emergence of the large merchant companies who proceeded to dominate the Island Trade to the detriment of the free-lance trading captains and the independent, under-capitalised merchants whom Unsheim first encountered in Apia. To sum up this changing situation as it affected Tuvalu, traders began arriving in the group in the 1850s; they were employees mostly of Robert Towns and their presence represented an extension of Towns's coconut oil interests in Kiribati. During the 1860s, while Towns was phasing himself out of Tuvalu, Godeffroy's was in the process

87. "The departure of the Mana", Samoa Times, 15 Jan 1881, 2c
of moving in. The 1860s were the years of Godeffroy's most rapid expansion. Their vessels, returning to Apia from Micronesia, could conveniently call at the Tuvalu islands to add to the copra in their holds. Throughout the 1870s Godeffroy's almost had the group to itself (see Table 7:3). But during the following decade the big German firm began to face increasing competition from Henderson & Macfarlane, whose vessels also called at Tuvalu on their way back from Micronesia, and from Ruge & Co, their main rivals in Samoa. Whereas there were only about half a dozen traders stationed in Tuvalu throughout the 1870s, nearly all of them tied to Godeffroy's, that number sometimes exceeded a dozen in the 1880s. The influence of location is clear: only the rate trader would have chosen a group like Tuvalu with such limited resources had it been situated away from established trading routes. Tuvalu was but part of a wider trading network. In the calculations of the trading companies involved, the group was a fragment of their broader commercial objectives.

**COPRA TRADING IN THE 1880s**

The sequence of European trading activity in Tuvalu during the 1880s is reflected in miniature by events on Nanumea between 1879 and 1881. Sometime in 1879, probably during April, Alfred Restieaux (the D.H.P.G.'s trader on the island) disbelievingly asked Captain Scott of The Venus if he was serious in his intention to add to the number of traders already established ashore.

> of course I am Scott replied I am landing Trade everywhere I have Put a man at Nanomanga a Mr McKenzie from Tahiti I said there are four here now so another will make no difference

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88. It is uncertain when The Venus arrived off Nanumea in 1879, but on the voyage concerned she departed from Apia in February of that year and returned the following February - see Samoa Times, 15 Feb 1879, 6 Feb 1880. The Samoa Times for 15 Feb 1879 reads: "We learn [from the Matautu] that . . . Venus has been at Vaitupu which place she left for Neutau, on the 9th of last month."
I was trading for the Germans Harry Johnstone for Henderson & Macfarlane, Tupou a native for Williams. The King of Hapamama [Abemama in northern Kiribati] had a schooner the Coronet Harry Smith (Flash Harry) Supercargo landed trade with 2 natives and now Larry Sutherland for Scott on an island that would not support one.

The presence of a fifth trading interest on the island aggravated an already impossible situation and the inevitable readjustment was not long in coming. Restieaux explained what happened:

as I saw no Chance of doing any good there I asked to be removed next trip De Wolf had taken their Traders away the King of Hapamama had lost his schooner the Coronet & Williams was neglecting his station so it looked as [though] Harry would have the island to himself that is what he had been working for.

This influx of traders to Nanumea in 1879 followed by their mass exodus, leaving one with the field to himself by 1881, was repeated on a larger scale through Tuvalu during the course of that decade. The 1880s was a period of intense competition between the trading companies operating within Tuvalu, culminating in the withdrawal of all but one. The parallel goes one step further: while Harry Johnstone survived his opposition on Nanumea, the firm to which he was tied (Henderson & Macfarlane) was the sole trading interest left in Tuvalu by the end of 1890.

During the 1880s copra trading in Tuvalu operated within the constraints of increasing competition, falling world prices for the product, and low productivity. Falling market prices began in 1880, and despite occasional good years this trend continued until the end of the century.

89. Restieaux, "A fragment concerning trading in the Gilbert and Ellices and the search for guano islands", pp.3-4(RP). See also Munro 1980:29

90. Restieaux, "Recollections of Harry Johnstone, trader in Nanumea", p.11 (RP)

91. Firth 1973b:83
TABLE 7:4
EUROPEAN PRICE FOR COPRA (per ton)
1879-86: select years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>£22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>£20/10/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>£15 to £15/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>c. £20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>£18/12/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>£15/6/9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>£14/12/3½</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Firth 1973: 15-16

Decreasing world prices were compounded by the intensification of competition among trading companies as others tried to emulate Godeffroy's early successes only to break the near monopoly conditions necessary to that success. As George Winchcombe, Hage's trader on Nukufetau, lamented in 1884:

There is now more Goods on this Island than could be bought by the Natives for the next ⅓ dozen years -

We are 3 Traders . . . and I cannot understand why these people should be continually pressing upon every Captn that comes here, to leave a trader - . . . they are never content . . . This island will only produce for Sale about 30 Tons Copra in a year & how is 3 Vessels going to be supplied, as also to support the traders, - cannot be done, some alteration must surely take place - . . .92

And at Funafuti the following year the missionary Newell reported that the atoll's two resident traders faced additional competition from two

92. Winchcombe, 1881-87 Diary, pp.30-31 (ML Safe 1/8)
other firms whose ship's called for speculative cargoes: "remembering that the whole population is 208", added Newell, "one is not surprised that the traders have a struggle for existence". At the same time the buying price of copra from the Tuvaluans was on the rise in direct consequence of this competition between traders. Whereas a solitary trader could usually set his own price for copra, competing trading interests on the same island almost invariably found themselves raising their buying price in order to attract custom, a trend encouraged by the Tuvaluans. In short, traders were "caught between the Islanders' hard bargaining and a depressed world price for copra". To some extent this stimulated copra production; even so productivity was low not only for the reasons already given but also because Tuvaluans were under no compulsion to produce over and above their requirements in European trade goods and for various contributions to the Mission. Tongans, by contrast, had to make sufficient copra to meet church contributions of potlatch proportions on top of government taxes and trade goods, which helps explain why those islands were the richest copra producing area in the Western Pacific. In Tuvalu, however, an increasing number of traders were competing for an inadequate amount of copra at a time when world prices were taking a downward turn.

The level of competition was eased by the removal of one of the

93. Newell, 1885 Journal, p.44 (SGJ 182). These "other two firms" were probably the partnership of Grevesmuhl & Crawford, and Captain Kostel, both of San Francisco. Grevesmuhl & Crawford imported lumber and general merchandise into Samoa and Tonga, and took on board copra as a return cargo. This firm was also active in Kiribati where it had a head station at Butaritari. Although the firm stationed no traders in Tuvalu its ships occasionally called for speculative cargoes, as did the J.W. Seaver in 1884 - see P[artsch], "54 years ago", Samoa Herald, 4 Aug 1933. Captain Kostel operated a small fleet of vessels out of San Francisco, which included the Pearl, Undine, Sheet Anchor and Pannonia. They called at Apia and Levuka with lumber and provisions and then traded for copra as far afield as the Carolines. In the early-1890s Kostel was working for Crawfords at Butaritari.

94. Firth 1978a:121

95. Memorandum of 15 Dec 1883 concerning the D.H.P.G. in the Pacific, encl in Steubel to Bismarck, 18 Dec 1883 (RKA 2791); Rutherford 1971:34-36
rival interests from the scene with the bankruptcy of Ruge & Co in 1888. Ruge probably broke even in Tuvalu having extracted $13,000 from the people of Vailupu, but elsewhere he was less successful. Part of the problem can be traced to poor management and personal extravagance. Shortly after arriving in Apia he built a handsome house with a wide pathway leading up from the sea harbour which, in the words of one of his trading captains, "must have cost an enormous amount of money". He was also absent in Europe for 18 months from December 1877 instead of taking care of his affairs. The firm also lacked the size and diversity to survive the difficult, competitive decade of the 1880s, and these problems of scale intensified when Ruge was forced to sell most of his Tongan holdings to the Auckland-based firm Wm. McArthur & Co. At the same time his business associate F.C. Hedemann was doing no better in Vanuatu and so their partnership dissolved.

Another factor contributing significantly to Ruge's bankruptcy was competition from the Godefroy/D.H.P.G. establishment. Although Germany controlled an estimated 70% of Pacific commerce, this apparent dominance was far from monolithic with German firms being each others' biggest competitors. During the late-1870s Ruge, Hedemann & Co made significant inroads into Godeffroy's Tongan and Samoan trade and even as late as 1882 Ruge & Co exported 613 tons of copra from Tonga as against the D.H.P.G.'s figure of 1,975 tons. Godeffroy's prosperity was based on lack of serious competition, a happy state of affairs with Ruge, Hedemann & Co threatened to undermine. In particular the treaties of trade and friendship which the Godeffroys' management

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96. Segebrecht 1956:300
97. Samoa Times
100. P. Kennedy 1974:28
101. Memorandum of 15 Dec 1883 concerning the D.H.P.G. in the Pacific, encl in Steubel to Bismarck, 18 Dec 1883 (RKA 2791)
forced on unwilling Islanders, giving German most favoured nation treatment, had the effect of facilitating the activities of the firm's biggest competitors, such as Ruge. By the 1880s this competition between German firms was making the survival of each tenuous. Accordingly Theodor Weber, the Godeffroy manager, blatantly mobilized his political muscle as local German Consul, to obstruct Ruge at every opportunity. The bitter personal antipathies which developed between the two men overflowed into political discord with Ruge opposing Weber's moves for the German annexation of Samoa. As Ruge was painfully aware, German political authority, both in Samoa and at home, did not work in the interests of German commerce per se, but only in furthering the fortunes of privileged companies such as the D.H.P.G. He publically came out in support of every anti-German cause and British Consuls even took him on board visiting Royal Navy vessels so that their captains might hear about German political intrigues "from the mouth of a German". These activities were ultimately counter-productive for Ruge as they resulted in the D.H.P.G. and the German Consul, now a career diplomat, closing ranks even more tightly against him.

Given the circumstances of bed management, the dismal economic climate of the 1880s, and opposition from the D.H.P.G., Ruge's bankruptcy was predictable. He did try to sell his Samoan holding to McArthur & Co in 1885 but negotiations broke down and they bought out Wightman & Co's Samoan interests instead. The coup de grace was delivered in late 1887 when the withdrawal of a large shareholder in Hamburg forced Wachsmuth & Krogmann to close their ailing Samoan establishment. No longer did Ruge and Weber view each other malevolently across the waters of Apia harbour from their respective

102. Stuebel to Bismarck, 17 July 1886 (RKA 2914)
103. Stuebel to Bismarck, 17 July 1886 (RKA 2914)
104. Schmack 1938:281
Meanwhile the D.H.P.G. and Henderson & Macfarlane stuck it out in Tuvalu, each hoping that the other would quit the field. The outcome was largely determined by each firm, of its own accord, redefining the scope of their Pacific enterprises. Henderson & Macfarlane, on the one hand, were in the throes of expanding within the region and in September 1886 their 305 ton three-masted schooner the *Buster* (Captain Peter Theet) departed from Auckland on a seven month cruise "to make for the first time, a complete round of their old stations and to find proper sights for establishing new". In all the *Buster* visited over 40 islands stretching between the Cooks and the Carolines, including some in Tuvalu.

The D.H.P.G.'s position was more complicated, but in essence the firm's eventual withdrawal was in consequence of a series of re-organisations in the face of persistent economic pressures. More than any other firm the Godeffroy/D.H.P.G. establishment encountered difficulties in balancing the scale of their enterprise with their capacity to service it: repeatedly they expanded and diversified in the interests of cost efficiency and spreading their risks only to find themselves over-extended and then forced to contract. The decision to abandon Tuvalu can be traced back to the difficulties of the late-1870s which saw a significant contraction of Godeffroy's trading network when the newly formed Société Commerciale de l'Océanie of Tahiti took over the Eastern Polynesian interests. Further contraction occurred soon after in 1880 when British port-of-entry regulations and customs dues forced the D.H.P.G. to abandon its lucrative holdings in Rotuma, which

105. In the early 1890s, Robert Louis Stevenson (1892:22) wrote a lament of sorts for Ruge: "Beyond, in Matautu, his [the traveller's] way takes him in the shade of many trees and by scattered dwelling, and presently brings him besides a great range of offices, the place and monument of a German who fought the German firm during his life. His house (now he is dead) remains pointed like a discharged cannon at the citadel of his old enemies. Fitly enough, it is presently leased and occupied by an Englishman."

106. Moss 1889; *NZH*, 20 Sept 1886, 2 April 1887
had just been annexed to Fiji. In the interests of expansion and economic efficiency the D.H.P.G. decided to reorganise its overall operations by decentralising, and in 1883 its holdings were divided into three distinct regions. There was the region of Mioko, which comprised its expanding Melanesian interests; the region of Jaluit, which comprised the Caroline and Marshall Islands; while the islands from Kiribati to Tonga, including Tuvalu, were worked from Apia.

The decision most affecting Tuvalu was the firm's new approach to Kiribati where it was decided to abandon labour recruiting (temporarily as it turned out) in favour of trading stations. This meant that company vessels returning to Apia from Kiribati could continue to service the stations in Tuvalu. However, the D.H.P.G.'s position in Tuvalu was becoming precarious. Whereas the firm had traders stationed on almost every Tuvalu island during the 1870s, now the D.H.P.G. was hard pressed to keep this network intact (see Table 7:3). Given the bleak economic outlook for the Island Trade it was becoming ever more difficult to find suitable men willing to remain indefinitely at such unattractive postings. Increasingly the firm's position in Tuvalu hinged on the willingness of its remaining traders to stay at their postings, and also their ability to stay out of debt with their employer. On the wider scene too the D.H.P.G.'s position was becoming increasingly shaky, as reflected by repeated failures to pay dividends, in the German navy's increasing reluctance to protect the firm's plantations and far flung trading stations, and in its unhappy financial position within Samoa.

Persistent economic pressures accelerated rationalisation and in 1887 the firm once again reorganised its activities, this time merging its Micronesian holdings with those of its largest competitor in the area, the German firm Robertson & Herrnsheim, to form the

108. Memorandum of 15 Dec 1883 concerning the D.H.P.G. in the Pacific, encl in Stuebel to Bismarck, 18 Dec 1883 (RKA 2791)
109. See Couper 1967:88
110. P. Kennedy 1974:106, 147n
Jaluit-Gesellschaft of Hamburg. Only two years before Germany had declared a Protectorate over the Marshall Islands and so the Imperial Government gave the new company special concessions in return for bearing the cost of the administration. In what was later to be described as "Government . . . entirely in the interests of the firm" the Jaluit-Gesellschaft turned formal rule to commercial advantage and proceeded to monopolise the commerce of the group. It quickly dominated the copra trade and eventually forced out existing competitors, including Henderson & Macfarlane who withdrew in 1895 when their business taxes were doubled. Although such preferential treatment was against the rules established by the Anglo-German Agreement of 1886, it certainly existed in German Protectorates, the Marshall Islands being a case in point.

The Jaluit-Gesellschaft is of relevance to Tuvalu in that this firm took over the D.H.P.G.'s Kiribati interests, meaning that Tuvalu now formed the northernmost margin of the area of Apia. Whereas the D.H.P.G.'s vessels had once passed Tuvalu en route to the productive Gilberts, the voyage to Tuvalu now took them out of their way. Tuvalu's copra production was insufficient to justify such a diversion. The D.H.P.G. therefore ran down its Tuvalu interests in the late 1880s, abandoned its remaining trading stations in the group, and in 1890 withdrew completely when the lease for its plantation at Nukulaelae expired. Henderson & Macfarlane, like their agent at Nanumea ten years earlier, now had the place to themselves for the meanwhile.

111. S. Firth 1973a:24-25. On the Jaluit-Gesellschaft see also Pollock TS:21-28; Deutsche Kolonialzeitung, 14 Jan 1888, p.13
112. Quoted in S. Firth 1978b:51
113. In 1892, for example, the Jaluit-Gesellschaft exported 1000 tons from the Marshall Islands, Crawford & Co 400 tons, and Henderson & Macfarlane 250 tons - see Davis, 1892 Royalist Report, p.57 (FOCP 6269)
114. S. Firth 1978a:130
115. In 1892, 11 of the 82 traders in Kiribati were tied to the Jaluit-Gesellschaft - see Davis, 1892 Royalist Report, pp.48-50 (FOCP 6269)
THE distributional pattern of company traders in Tuvalu between 1865 and 1890, and the wider economic imperatives underlying their presence in the group, parallels in miniature the trends occurring within the Island Trade itself. The first characteristic of this period, from which so much else derived, was the rise of heavily capitalised trading companies who handled large quantities of copra gathered from networks of trading stations spread over wide areas of the Pacific. Tuvalu, as a small segment of such commercial networks, experienced a succession of company traders whose sequence of occupancy closely mirrored the changing fortunes of their employers. Hence, the heavy concentration of Goddeffroy traders in Tuvalu during the 1870s reflected the firm's commercial ascendancy throughout the wider region. When the D.H.P.G. experienced increasing competition throughout the 1880s, this too was reflected by events in Tuvalu with numerous other interests challenging the D.H.P.G.'s dominance. Similarly, the final withdrawal of the D.H.P.G. from Tuvalu in favour of Henderson & Macfarlane foreshadowed the challenge to German commercial preponderance by Anglo-Australasian companies.

Henderson & Macfarlane's sole occupancy of Tuvalu, which became a British Protectorate two years later, points to another characteristic of the Island Trade - namely the commercial partition of the Pacific along lines corresponding with newly created or impending political divisions. Trade and colonial governments increasingly became intertwined, with commerce either providing or generating much of the colonial administration's revenue, and the latter in return facilitating their own nationals' trading interests to the exclusion of serious foreign competition. This represents a further, more sophisticated, stage in the rationalisation of the Island Trade. Whereas nothing could be done about copra prices and droughts, at least formal political rule could be used to drive out foreign competition and also to increase margins of profit by imposing production quotas on the Islanders. The British were the first to demonstrate these possibilities when their discriminatory regulations forced Ruge, Hedemann & Co out of Fiji and the D.H.P.G. out of Rotuma. The Germans, with their tradition of "Government . . . entirely in the interests of the firm", acted similarly in the Bismarck Archipelago and the Marshall Islands during
the 1880s; and when today's Western Samoa became a German colony in 1900 the D.H.P.G. was accorded preferential treatment by the administration which damaged all other commercial interests whether German or foreigner. It was 17th century mercantilism writ large. The result was to compartmentalise the island trade into discrete, rather than overlapping spheres, of commercial interest coinciding with the political division of the Pacific, and in the process to restrict the free play of market forces and instead to encourage, through state intervention, the growth of large, monopolistic firms such as the Jaluit-Gesellschaft in the Marshall islands, the D.H.P.G. in Samoa and Henderson & Macfarlane in Tuvalu.116

The Island Trade helped to integrate the individual, largely self-sufficient Tuvalu islands into networks of (European) communication and exchange. As will be seen in the next chapter the Tuvalu Islanders were not separate from this foreign trading system but were incorporated at the bottom of the hierarchy, with "the entrepreneurial agents of the invading system" defining the Tuvaluans involvement in what was fundamentally a European enterprise.

116. See Brookfield 1972:12-13; Couper 1967:73-75; Firth 1973a:27
THE profile of a coral atoll alters markedly when viewed from different points of the compass. Similarly, European seaborne trade in the Pacific can be viewed from more than one vantage point. Whereas the previous chapter sought to show (with considerable sacrifice to local detail) what the Tuvalu archipelago meant to the trading companies which dominated the Island Trade, the present chapter intends to show what that same process meant to the various individuals and interests within Tuvalu itself. Or to put it in fewer words, the view from the periphery is not the same as that from the centre. There is an inherent paradox in all this for while Tuvalu was unimportant from a trading company standpoint, the European trading system was important to Tuvaluans. It was a major component in their relationship not only with the trading companies and their resident traders, but also with the L.M.S. and each other. Trade also presented them with a new range of opportunities - most notably a new range of material possessions - but the extent to which Tuvaluans could control the trading system imposed upon them, not to mention the benefits they derived from it, is very much a matter for discussion.

As already mentioned the organisational form of the Island Trade changed from a ship-based to a shore-based operation with a system of resident company traders replacing the speculative voyage. Not only did the presence of company agents ashore, with their goods for barter, stimulate copra production, but it also led to the more efficient utilisation of the time of the ships servicing these company networks of trading stations. This transformation of trading procedures away from occasional barter with passing ships (as described in Chapter Two) to the more durable shore-based operations took hold in Tuvalu during the 1850s, but did not last long in its original form. What began as a straightforward barter arrangement between Tuvaluans and resident traders was significantly modified by the arrival of a third element, the L.M.S.
MISSIONARIES in the Pacific were active participants in the economic processes of each island group they entered. That the first two L.M.S. voyages to Tuvalu in 1865 and 1866 took the return voyage from Samoa on board Godeffrey vessels provides an appropriate enough prelude to the impending missionary involvement in local Tuvalu commercial transactions. On the second occasion the people of Vaitupu purchased from the ship a bell to replace the conch shell which had previously been used to summon the faithful to Christian worship. And even before the arrival of missionaries proper, the people on some of the southern islands had obtained bibles from passing ships in exchange for coconut oil. From the beginning, as such incidents foreshadowed, trading and missionary activity readily overlapped. It led to a good deal of the tension existing between these two supposedly separate occupational categories. Just as missionaries took exception to traders, such as Bob Waters at Nui, assuming an unauthorised pastoral function, so too did traders resent missionary involvement in trade, regarding this as an infringement upon their domain.

The L.M.S.’s involvement in the trade of Tuvalu was largely a matter of economic necessity. Expansion into the archipelago provided an outlet for the evangelising zeal of the Samoan-based European missionaries, but it added to the running expenses of the Society’s Samoan District Committee. It was therefore important that outstations such as Tuvalu pay their own way as far as possible, and in 1872 it was announced that: “Unquestionably the Ellice Group Mission is [financially] self supporting.” In the process of achieving local self-sufficiency the L.M.S. transformed the established two-way trading pattern between traders and Islanders into an inter-related three-cornered trade which has persisted in its basic essentials down to the present day.

Briefly, this new trading pattern worked as follows. Each island made several types of annual donation to the L.M.S., thereby diverting

1. Murray, 1866 Journal, pp.21-22 (SSJ 157); Murray 1876:403
2. See above » P-101
3. Gill, 1872 Diary, p.76 (ML B1444)
a proportion of the island's resources away from its resident trader. Instrumental in organizing this system of contributions (meaalofoa) was the L.M.S. pastor stationed on each island, all of whom received an annual stipend from their congregations. The pastors were strategically placed to exert a telling influence within the new economic order. They encouraged a spirit of competition in the giving of various missionary donations, the object being to outdo neighbouring islands or opposite sides of the village. Some, contrary to regulations, entered into direct competition with traders; others satisfied themselves with obstructionist tactics, such as exhorting Islanders to impose regulations which would inconvenience the local trader.

At the same time, however, the L.M.S. encouraged trade by creating a vigorous local demand for a new range of European trade goods, particularly clothing and building materials for the succession of churches which sprung up throughout the group. At Funafuti as early as 1866 the stone chapel was adorned with imported doors and Venetian windows; a little later the chapel at Vaitupu was replete with a galvanized iron roof, glazed windows, and lights suspended above the French doors, all purchased from a Sydney trading vessel for coconut oil to the value of £100 sterling; while at Nukufetau the church and school house "were furnished with paneled doors and Venetian windows" and the pastor's house with glazed doors and windows on hinges.

From an L.M.S. point of view this three-way trading system was a subtle arrangement which could not but work in its favour. Quite simply, the presence of traders made possible the successful L.M.S. practice of receiving donations from Tuvaluans. Not only did the traders provide the Tuvaluans with cash, which could then be given to the annual missionary deputation, but they also removed any need for the L.M.S. to engage in direct trading contacts with the Tuvaluans (though pastors as individuals could and did). In any case the L.M.S. could not have combined trading with the receipt of donations as a long-term proposition since one activity would

4. Murray, 1866 Journal, p.12 (SSJ 157)
5. Whitmee 1871:14; Powell, 1871 Journal, p.18 (SSJ 160); Bill, 1872 Diary, p.10 (ML 81444); George Turner, 1876 Journal, p.8 (SSJ 168)
6. Powell, 1871 Journal, p.23 (SSJ 160)
At first sight it appears that the Tuvaluans were the arbiters of this commercial triangle in that it revolved around their demand for trade goods and was dependent on the amount of copra they were prepared to produce in exchange for those commodities. In point of fact, however, the overall European trading system was not one in which Tuvaluans could participate except at the bottom of a hierarchy of dependence. This limitation stemmed in part from constraints imposed by their own culture which gave them no knowledge or experience of European business management, much less the necessary capital and connections to engage in the new form of maritime trade. Moreover, Tuvaluan ethics of kinship, community solidarity and
reciprocity run counter to marketing principles and the spirit of private enterprise. Far from being allowed to enter the European market economy on a partnership basis, Tuvaluans were actively excluded except as copra cutters ashore and as deck hands afloat, with the rewards for their labours largely subject to external authorities and controls.

Despite the Tuvaluans' subordinate status and also the disruptive potential of trade, the latter wrought little disruption upon the former. It is not so much that Tuvaluans exercised control over the "entrepreneurial agents of the invading system", but rather that the trading companies and their resident traders placed so few demands upon the Tuvaluan social system. In the first place, Tuvalu's physical constraints discouraged intensive trading operations, plantation development, and large-scale European settlement within the archipelago. In addition, the Tuvaluans imposed further constraints in that they made few concessions to the requirements of foreign entrepreneurial interests, only making copra when it suited them. At a more positive level the Tuvaluans retained a measure of control over the type of trade goods for which they bartered their copra. It is in this sphere that the trading impact is likely to be most revolutionary in its consequence, yet the Tuvaluans neutralised whatever disruptive effect it may have had - in the period under review in any case. Either the European imports were grafted onto Tuvaluans' pre-existing material culture, or were accepted to meet the new range of needs brought about by their acceptance of L.M.S. Christianity.

TRADE GOODS AND TRADE DEMANDS

TRADING contacts between Tuvaluans and Europeans commenced in the 1820s with the arrival of whalers in the group. These initial encounters were irregular and of a casual nature. Most commonly Tuvaluans initiated proceedings, chasing passing vessels in their canoes with barter sessions then taking place on the high seas. Given the infrequency of European shipping within

8. See Couper 1973:246-47
the group and the consequent *ad hoc* nature of trading contacts, it is difficult to determine whether a definite exchange rate or scale of values emerged. But a vague trend may be discerned from the fleeting and fragmentary evidence. In the early-1830s, for example, coconuts and mats were bartered for "a few pieces of iron hoop, a fish-hook, or, the ultimatum of their riches, a knife." Late the following decade by contrast the American whaleships *Alpha* and *Abigail* sailed in company with their crews forging knife blades and iron hoop, but on this occasion the whalemen expected hogs in return. In other words the limited trading contacts between ship and shore was becoming a more established procedure and the exchange rate was drifting in favour of the European.

Nevertheless the Tuvaluans were well satisfied with the results of this passing trade, however much they may have wished that such contacts were more frequent. In short, the Tuvaluans regarded a passing ship as the source of otherwise unobtainable material items which were, in their own way, priceless. On islands of coralline formation it is extremely difficult to find material from which to fashion tools with a durable cutting edge. There is no obsidian or even bamboo for knives and no volcanic rock for adzes: "One might sift the soil from end to end ... without finding a trace of obsidian, flint, basalt, or any pebble or grain of sand for that matter, which is not a fragment of sea shell, sea-borne pumice or coral". The only locally available materials from which to fashion adzes were *tvidaana* shell and turtle carapace both of which were too soft to keep a cutting edge when applied to wood and therefore requiring constant re-grinding - itself a tedious business - and frequent replacement. Sometimes stones of volcanic origin were obtained from the roots of trees drifted ashore but otherwise Tuvaluans had to make do with materials from which it was impossible to obtain a lasting cutting edge. For work of a precision nature, such as surgical incisions, Tuvaluans utilized "the razor edged teeth of certain species of shark. These, when lashed to wooden handles, were found to make very effective lancets". A further

10. Logbook of *Abigail*, 16-22 Jan 1849 (PMB 571)  
11. D.G. Kennedy 1930:1105  
12. D.G. Kennedy 1931:236  
13. Hedley 1896:56  
14. D.G. Kennedy 1931:236-37; see also Hedley 1897:299
limitation was that, apart from specialized instruments such as lancets, it was impossible to fashion tools from local materials which would slice rather than adze and chop.

Hence the attraction and value of the bottles, hoop iron and knives from visiting European vessels, for a durable cutting edge saved hours of onerous toil in the construction of houses and canoes and in the tending of gardens. The demand for European fish hooks was based on a similar time-saving appeal: they did not catch more fish but they lasted longer and did not involve expenditure of time in making. But they did not comprehensively replace the hooks of local manufacture: the standard European fish hook was not a substitute for the more specialized types of Tuvaluan hook, especially those used for trolling and deep sea fishing. 15

In addition there was a local market for ornamental regalia such as handkerchiefs and brightly coloured glass beads. 16 There is a story, perhaps apocryphal, that some of those glass beads found their way into strange places. A visitor to Niutao in 1866, upon being presented with a cooked chicken, found the bird's stomach to be full of them. Apparently the chickens of the island "eagerly seize and swallow beads" to assist with their digestion. 17

During the 1850s the whaler was replaced by the resident trader as the focal point of trading contacts. The trading firms involved kept these shore agents supplied with fairly substantial and carefully chosen selections of trade goods for barter purposes (see Tables 8:1 and 8:2), thus giving the Tuvaluans access to a wider range of products from the inventory of European technology. The acceptance of European goods is always a selective process and one regulated by the perceived needs of the recipient culture. Within the constraint of what was actually available to them, the Tuvaluans' selection and rejection of

15. Hedley 1896:64. For descriptions of fish hooks and fishing techniques in Tuvalu see Hedley 1897:264-78; D.G. Kennedy 1931:12-70; G. Koch 1961:19-44
16. Moll 1826:280; Journal of Bowditch (typed extract), 23 March 1860 (PMB 296, frame 569)
17. Graeffe 1867:1188
European goods was governed by a complex set of utility, novelty and prestige. Depending on situations and circumstances, these influences could be operated independently or together.

The element of utility bears further examination, especially with regard to the introduction of iron into Tuvalu. This had the immediate effect of rendering the traditional adzes obsolete. Although it took time before every adult male owned his own metal-headed adze, this process would have been completed throughout the group by the end of the 1870s at the latest and probably a good deal before. As Charles Hedley, the Australian Museum conchologist, remarked following his expedition to Funafuti in 1896:

"The ordinary form of adze, which every man owns and reckons as his most useful possession, is the plane-iron adze, the "toki" of Funafuti ... The plane-iron adze is the direct descendent of Tridacna adze of olden days, being used and mounted similarly. This tool plays the part in Polynesia which the tomahawk takes in Australia; in a native's hand it does duty for half the tools in the carpenter's kit, a keen edge is always kept on the blade, which is used with skill, speed and accuracy."

The traditional adzes were extinct by the time of Hedley's visit to Funafuti; he had to draw his sketches from models.

The use of iron-headed adzes had a dramatic labour-saving effect, especially in the construction of canoes and dwellings.

The building of a bigger boat once took two to five months because of the imperfect tools. Some of the people were only occupied sharpening shell blades which had become blunt (respectively breaking and crumbling).

18. The traditional adzes are described in Hedley 1897:249-56; D.G. Kennedy 1931:288-93; G. Koch 1961:138-41
19. Hedley 1897:252-53
20. Hedley 1897:249
21. G. Koch 1961:138(transl by A. Buff); see also D.G. Kennedy 1931:73
It was now possible to speak in terms of weeks rather than months. Building a dwelling was no longer quite the major operation it once was and the loss of a canoe not quite as serious as before. This is because the new iron-headed adzes represented a saving in resources other than time itself. If a man engaged atufuga (expert) to build a canoe or a dwelling he was, and still is today, obliged to feed the atufuga, his family, and all the helpers for the duration of the project since the work at hand prevented them from providing for their own families. All this required a major mobilisation of edible resources, as also did the enormous feast held for the atufuga, once the job was done. With the use of metal-edged tools it was no longer necessary to feed so many people or for such a length of time: the making of a canoe could now be undertaken by two men since there was no need for those extra workers solely involved in resharpening the blunted shell adze heads. And just as metal lightened the task of building canoes and dwellings, so it saved time and energy in fashioning smaller items such as paddles and bailers, wooden containers and basins, wooden pillows, and combs.

Canoe building, the construction of dwellings and the manufacture of such smaller items were mens' work. Women derived some measure of benefit from the coming of iron but not much: they no longer had to periodically prepare such a volume of food for a atufuga or for so long, and metal-bladed knives may sometimes have been substituted for such implements as the turtle axes to split coconuts or cut into the soft pandanus bough. Otherwise the preparation of food was largely untouched by the new technology, notably the onerous business of grating coconuts since the shell-tipped blade of the traditional scraper was deemed sufficient for the task. Other realms of womens' work such as weaving mats or making thatch were not affected at all. Iron roofing could have been substituted for thatch but very little of it came into

22. A. Chambers 1975:95; D.G. Kennedy 1931:72-74, 301
24. D.G. Kennedy 1931:74
25. Hedley 1897:252
26. Hedley 1897:262-64
use within Tuvalu despite obvious use for catching rain water. Roofing iron was then, as now, too expensive for the average Tuvaluan to purchase enough for a whole house and in any case it would have rusted away in a relatively short time. At best roofing iron was an expensive luxury, sometimes used for churches but more often for traders' houses.  

27. Powell, 1871 Journal, p.18 (SSJ 160); Moss 1889 35-36.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 8:1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LIST OF TRADE GOODS AND PRICES: NUKUFETUA, c.1884</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COTTON</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>black reeils damaged 20 coconuts or 3lbs copra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>black reeils not damaged 30 12lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red reeils damaged 6 2½lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red reeils not damaged 10 4lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>white reeils 30 12lbs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GINNETS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>large 37½c; 2nd ...[?] 35c; small 25c</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RACE COND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FILES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>37½c and 40s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DRAWING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3½c per yard; 37½c for one piece; 8 coconuts; 3½bs copra</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SALT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1½s per oz; 15 coconuts; 5½bs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COAL TAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>37½c per quart</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BLACK COAT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$2 each</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BLUE CANTON CLOTH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50c per yard</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PADDON</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>37½c per $1b</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SHOT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3½c $1b</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UMBRELLAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1.37½c each</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FELT HAT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1.50c each</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHALE SADDLES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$2 each</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAFEOS sake as before only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.5. $1 per yard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household $1 per 4 yards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey Red $1 per 3 yards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy Blue $1 per 3 yards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MATCHES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4½; 8 coconuts; 4½bs copra</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BIG KNIVES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1 each</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RAZORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50c each</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEAD PENCILS with India rubber top 1½c each</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COPY BOOKS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25c each</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FEELSCAP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1½bs copra; 25 mats for 1 sheet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 mats each</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SMALL ACCOUNT BOOKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1½bs copra; 30c each</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCISSORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30c each</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Winchester, Diary, pp.34-35 (BP, Safe 1/8). Some items, illegibly written in the original have not been indicated in this listing.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dunghy Pants</td>
<td>Gismalet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shirts</td>
<td>Flies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coat</td>
<td>Caps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Pants</td>
<td>Looking Glasses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hat</td>
<td>Hair nets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singlets</td>
<td>Matches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheathes</td>
<td>Scissors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pouches</td>
<td>Ink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bells</td>
<td>Ribbons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powder</td>
<td>Needles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shot</td>
<td>Pencils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish lines</td>
<td>Scent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish hooks</td>
<td>Scented soap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Razors</td>
<td>Salts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluestone</td>
<td>Screws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hinges</td>
<td>Pens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lock</td>
<td>Slate pencils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pencils</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

source: Winchcombe, 1881-87 Diary, p.42 (BP, Safe 1/8)

The uses to which the Tuvaluans put the new technology is as revealing about them as a people as is their acceptance of it in the first place. Their adzes and other tools were unchanged except now plane-irons were attached to the old style handles to perform the same task and to produce the same item as before. Whereas the use of metal-headed adzes resulted in the people of Kambala and Fulago in the Lau group spending an equivalent amount of time to build much larger canoes, Tuvaluans simply made the same-sized canoes of the same design, only more quickly. Paradoxically, the Tuvaluans' large double canoes drifted into extinction at the time iron was being introduced to their islands.

During the course of the 19th century other important aspects of Tuvaluan material culture and technology were only marginally modified by the introduction of European goods through the instrumentality of copra trading. This conservatism indicates that the Tuvaluans had

26. Information from John Young, Feb 1980, June 1982; for the wider background see Young 1982

evolved a very satisfactory mode of life and their material culture
was well adapted to their needs. In the sphere of housing, for example,
it is difficult to envisage how European-style walls, windows and doors
could have represented a functional improvement over the traditional
well-ventilated, open-sided thatched dwellings from which stormy weather
could be excluded by the simple expedient of lowered suspended screens
of traditional design (poilai).

Not only would European building materials have been expensive to buy and difficult to replace, but less
comfortable and functional (except that roofing iron could catch drinking water whereas runoff from a thatched roof is somewhat unpalatable).

At the same time, however, a few of the traditional items used in the
construction of dwellings were substituted. In the joining of beams
the native cord made from coconut fibre (kolokolo and kafa) was replaced
by screws and nails, subject to local availability (see Tables 8:1 and
8:2). But these are minor matters in the overall design and construction
of a dwelling. Imported building materials were largely reserved for
traders' and pastors' houses and especially for churches. In the case
of traders' houses they were used because they were familiar and also
because they could be locked up, and in the case of churches for reasons
of prestige. At Vaitupu in 1866 the people insisted that the pastor's
house as well as the church be weatherboard despite the wishes of the pastor that his home be thatched with pandanus leaf.

The realm of fishing appliances and methods was another area only
superficially touched by European influences. At Funafuti by 1896 the
traditional one-piece wooden fish hook had become extinct and was
replaced by metal equivalents which performed exactly the same function
as before. And whereas the Funafutians, and probably also other Tuvaluans,
pREFERRED to buy European twine (when they could afford it) for their nets
and lines rather than make kolokolo for those purposes, the function
of these implements had in no way changed. In fact, as Hedley observed,
"their mesh and meshing is identical with European modes" and indeed the type of meshing needles on Funafuti was described as "hardly indistinguishable from the one used by English fishermen". In short traditional fishing methods - whether by hook and line, net, trap, or torch and spear - remained intact because they served Tuvaluan needs quite adequately. Accordingly the Tuvaluans were anxious to obtain only a limited variety of fishing equipment such as hooks and twine which were either a marked improvement over their own items or which saved time in their manufacture. Even when a completely new item was used for fishing it still served rather than altered traditional methods. English thread, for example, was frequently used to attach bait to a hook.

Neither were the culinary arts much altered during the 19th century. There was no better way to cook most types of foods than in the traditional earth oven (umu). Its drawback, and one which did not affect actual cooking, was that the flat coral rocks used to form its base disintegrated under heat and therefore required constant replacing. For this reason "any volcanic rock ... brought as ship's ballast ... was eagerly seized upon for cooking stones". The lightened load in the ship's hold was then replaced with copra, while ashore the coconut husks which had accumulated from the copra industry were used to fire the earth ovens. The relationship between copra trading and native cooking may be taken a step further since traders were largely responsible for introducing new food stuffs, particularly flour and rice, which in turn required new cooking methods and equipment. Bread could be baked in a umu but only in bread vessels fashioned from imported, fire-resistant materials. One trader on Funafuti used "discarded kerosine and biscuit tins, since they were deep enough to allow the dough to rise". The different requirements for cooking rice led to a small selection of iron pots coming into Tuvalu; but the assortment of pots and pans, kerosine stoves and imported foodstuffs now to be found in Tuvalu are a develop-

34. Hedley 1896:64; & 1897:276
35. Hedley 1896:64; Woodford, 1884 Journal p.11 (Woodford Papers)
36. D.G. Kennedy 1931:108
37. Hedley 1896:56; see also Mrs David 1899:204
38. J. Dana 1935:187
ment of much later origin. For the duration of the 19th century Tuvaluans overwhelmingly gained their livelihood by subsistence means and so their patterns of cooking and consumption were little changed.

It can be seen that two major spheres of traditional activity - the construction of canoes and dwellings and the gathering and preparation of food - were facilitated rather than altered by the trader impact. While Tuvaluans were satisfied with their mode of life and their way of doing things, they were still anxious to obtain items which were a marked improvement over locally available materials, and particularly cutting tools, fish hooks and volcanic stones. These were then put to the same use to accomplish the same task as before only in less time or with less effort. Sometimes the indigenous object was replaced by the most unlikely of imported objects, as Hedley discovered after he purchased a traditional thatching awl from a Funafutian:

The day after ... I noticed the vendor hard at work with a fresh tool. He was using the handle of a European toothbrush, ground to a point, and observed cheerily that it was quite as good as the one he had sold me. 39

Alterations to items of Tuvaluan material culture were more likely to have been inspired from within rather than imposed from without. To give one example, the canoe styles of some islands have given way to those of others. Whereas each Tuvalu island once had its own distinctive style of canoes, the Vaitupu and particularly the Nanumea styles have come to predominate on most other islands of the group. 40 An exception is Nukulaelae where the Nuitao style has become prevalent. 41 Minor divergences, however, are to be found such as the presence of the two outrigger booms nearest the stern being set close together. This variation, known as lua kiatot, can be attributed to the influence of a group of Tokelauans from Atafu who settled at Nukulaelae during the early decades of the 19th century. 42 The Nuitao influence itself most likely resulted from a group

39. Hedley 1897:292
40. A. Chambers 1975:94; D.G. Kennedy 1931:71
41. There is a line drawing of the Nuitao style canoe in G. Koch 1961:135
42. Roberts 1958:417. MacGregor (1937:116) has a line-drawing of the Atafu canoe showing the positioning of the booms
of Niutaans settling at Nukulaelae in the later 19th century. Their canoe-style rapidly gained acceptance because its all-round qualities rendered it more versatile than either the smaller Nukulaelae canoe (paopao) which had no washrake to help prevent waves breaking inside the canoe, or the larger and more cumbersome vaka tamualua.

Given the principles governing the division of labour in Tuvalu, it was the men rather than women who had their workload lightened by the new labour saving devices. The round of women's work - cooking, weaving mats and making thatch - was barely effected by the introduction of iron. It was therefore men who had the time and the opportunity to become literate while the generation of adult women following the arrival of Samoan pastors remained unversed in the secrets of the written word. But it was not completely one-sided: the lightening of men's work could enable significant numbers of able-bodied males to work overseas without placing an impossible burden on those who remained, and this is what happened after 1900 with the commencement of programmed recruiting for the Nauru and Ocean Island phosphate digs. Time could also be put aside for a new range of tasks, such as copra cutting. It was a case of trade begetting trade: Tuvaluans first made copra in order to obtain the ironware implements which then gave them the time to make yet more copra so they could purchase a new range of items necessary to their participation in L.M.S. Christianity.

THE Tuvaluans' early demand for iron and ornamental regalia such as beads was gradually superseded, but not altogether replaced, by a local desire

43. Testimony from Iosefa Tekiei, Jan 1978
44. The Nukulaelae paopao is now extinct. However, on a one-day return visit to the atoll in July 1978 I noticed that one was being specially built for display at the Independence celebrations. Since it was only half completed I did not take any measurements. This canoe has since been wrecked. The vaka tamualua was resurrected from extinction when it was decided to build one from a puka tree blown down in hurricane Bebe in 1972. Although not completed during my stay on the atoll (Oct 1977-March 1978) the job had been done by the time of my subsequent visit. This canoe has since been chopped to pieces - Niko Besnier, personal communication, 24 June 1982
for a much wider range of items from the inventory of European material culture. These were largely mission-inspired, and they fall into four broad categories - building materials, clothing, books and stationery and cash. From the two available lists of trade goods (presented in Tables 8:1 and 8:2) it is immediately apparent that the demand for European building materials had ceased by the 1880s since imposing churches were by then to be found throughout the archipelago. The one exception was Funafuti where the people were constructing a second chapel on the southern islet of Funafala and replacing their original church which was blown down in a hurricane in late-1883.45 Firearms too are conspicuous by their absence, which is in keeping with the Tuvaluans' generally peaceful nature so frequently commented upon by visiting naval captains.46 Traditional weaponry had fallen into general disuse47 ever since the Samoan pastors had suppressed the periodic outbreaks of violence which had formerly obtained, and the only firearms to be found in the group when H.M.S. Miranda called in 1886 were a few old guns at Funafuti. These had been purchased 15 years earlier by the small Roman Catholic enclave on the island who felt threatened by the hostile Protestant majority. But peace was maintained and by the time of the Miranda's visit the only conceivable use to which those guns could be put was to shoot birds.48

The Samoan pastors also insisted that Tuvaluans be clothed in accordance with prevailing Christian notions of morality. Indeed: "The last organized violence in Niutao occurred around the turn of the century when adherents of the church forced the last male hold-outs not to remove their clothing when bathing".49 The range of clothing which entered Tuvalu was largely limited to long and short trousers, shirts and jackets for men, and mother hubbards, smocks of various designs (tiputa), and headgear for women.50 The amount of clothing, moreover, varied from

45. Davies, 1880 Journal, p.6 (SSJ 176); Marriott, 1883 Journal, p.10 (SSJ 180); J. Dana 1935:220
46. Bridge 1886:554
47. Maxwell, 1881 Emerald Report (print), p.6 (RNAS 15). For data on traditional weapons see Hedley 1897:248-49; G. Koch 1961:175-76
48. Rooke, 1886 Miranda Report (print), pp.10-11 (RNAS 17); Vivian 1871-72 Journal, p.77 (SSJ 159)
50. Mrs David 1899:221-27
island to island. At Nanumanga where there was no trader for years on end (see Table 7:3) clothing of any description was scarce and difficult to obtain,\(^{51}\) while at Nukulaeae periodic shortages resulted from the lack of shipping contacts which in turn arose from the presence of the D.H.P.G. plantation on the islet of Miuoka.\(^{52}\) There was a rough and ready relationship between the productive capacity of an island and the state of dress of its inhabitants, and for that reason the people of Vaitupu were 'better' attired than other Tuvaluans.\(^{53}\) Missionary and naval accounts, however, can be misleading on this point since Tuvaluans were apt to dress-up whenever such vessels called.

Otherwise European garb was generally only sparsely worn, except to church when everyone was decked out in their Sunday best.\(^{54}\) The often-incongruous garb with its "blinding colours" provoked a good deal of Eurocentric comment: Captain Bridge could scarcely credit his eyes when he called at Vaitupu in 1883:

\[
\text{All the natives wear European clothes of some sort. The men put on usually a shirt: the women's dress is peculiar. They wear a long garment of calico, tight around the neck, and reaching in ungirt looseness at the heels. On their heads they put a curious high-crowned hat, cross laced with bright ribbons, exactly resembling the headgear of a brigand at the opera 'Fra Diavolo'. Ladies of a certain age in the Archipelago are inclined to embonpoint; and a crowd of portly dames streaming out of church in their flowing callicos and brigand hats, always many times too small for them, is a sight not soon to be forgotten.}^{55}\]

\(^{51}\) Phillips, 1881 Journal, p.6 (SSJ 178)
\(^{52}\) Marriott, 1883 Journal, p.8 (SSJ 180)
\(^{53}\) Bridge, 1883 Espiegle Report #2 (print), p.4 (RNAS 16; WPHC 4, encl in 172/1883); von Werner 1889:329
\(^{54}\) Davies, 1873 Journal, p.1 (SSL 34/2/0); Marriott, 1883 Journal, p.10 (SSJ 180); Goward, 1892 Journal, p.6 (SSR 2/142)
\(^{55}\) Bridge 1886:554-55. See also Mrs David 1899:23-25; Tolna 1903:155-56. The opera *Fra Diavolo*, first produced in 1830, was written by the French composer Auber
Other visitors were less discreet in their reaction, notably the student members of the Royal Society's 1897 coral boring expedition to Funafuti. In the words of the wife of the expedition leader:

The students of our party suffered agonies from suppressed laughter in church when the girls lifted their tiputas [tiputa], waistless blouses, or chemises, and waved them up and down to send a good breeze underneath. I'm sure I longed to be able to manipulate my own dress in the same way. After church our men would imitate them, and laugh, and though the girls could not see the joke, they were soon too shy to fan themselves this way in public. 56

There were also glamour articles which enjoyed a short-lived and modish popularity. It is on record that an Islander returning to Funafuti brought with him a pair of squeaky boots and excited the envy of the rest of the populace by "squeaking his way to worship". A trader on the atoll, realizing the possibilities of the situation, ordered 14 pairs of such footwear, but:

When my shipment arrived only seven pairs were of the required type; the others, sad to relate, were quite squeakless. The silent boots remained on my hands. Who was fool enough to hurt his feet with hard boots if they could not boast a good squeak to charm the public ear? 57

As this incident underlines the church-inspired demand for apparel and footwear stemmed from reasons of prestige, in contrast to the element of utility which characterised Tuvaluans' desire for iron. However, the distinction between utility and prestige should not be drawn too sharply. Just as a certain amount of prestige attached to the possession of a knife or metal-headed adze, and the ability to use one, so too can clothing be seen to have a utilitarian function. It is true that clothing did not, in a primary sense, have a strictly practical application in the manner of a metal-headed adze which could make something, or a metal fishhook, which could catch something else. Indeed, clothing

56. Mrs David 1899:223
57. J. Dana 1935:172
was not even intended to afford protection from the sun or rain. Quite the opposite in some cases, for if it rained on Sunday the women proceeding to worship would "always run across to church with their precious hats carefully tucked under their tiputas [tiputas] and put them on just inside the church door". Instead, clothing enabled Tuvaluans to participate more fully in the new religious order which had become an integral part of their culture. It is in this sense that clothing, which initially falls into the category of a prestige item, may be said to assume a practical application as well in that its use, in approved ways, was crucial to the religious and therefore the social lives of the Tuvaluans. The utility of clothing, in other words, had a subtle twist; it was not so much a case of the apparel proclaiming the man, but rather the apparel proclaiming the Christian. It thus stands to reason that Tuvaluans dressed-up to go to their limestone-walled churches, which also happened to be the hottest places on each island.

A less desirable effect of clothing was to aggravate the numerous skin complaints which afflicted many Tuvaluans. Clothes were washed infrequently, in contrast with today's situation, and when a change of clothing was needed the Islanders were apt to exchange clothes rather than put on clean garments. When the German warship *Ariadne* called at Funafuti in 1878 its captain reported that the "King" was wearing the trousers that someone else had worn the day before, while the shirt he was wearing yesterday was being worn by a third man. Nor did it help, on Funafuti at any rate, that clothes were washed in "a stagnant pool of green water ... in which most of the women ... also washed [themselves]."

The complex mix of utility, prestige, and also novelty which governed the Tuvaluans' acceptance of Western artifacts and skills is no more obvious than in their readiness to become literate, where all

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58. Mrs David 1899:25
59. For details see Powell, 1871 Journal, pp.16-17 (SSJ 160); Davis, 1892 Royalists Report, p.53 (FOCP 6269); Hedley 1896:69-71
60. Von Werner 1889:326
61. Mrs David 1899:210
three elements combine. Literacy, moreover, gave rise to a need for reading and writing materials - in the same manner that some more tangible items from European culture created a demand for others, such as pipes for tobacco and needles and thread with which to mend cloth. Stationery was a popular commodity with Tuvaluans, which is hardly surprising considering the lengths they went to become literate; and Captain Bridge observed in 1883 that: "No present is more acceptable to them than a few sheets of paper and some pens.... we nearly ran out of ink before we got clear of the group". 62 To meet this mission-inspired demand traders in Tuvalu ordered considerable quantities of stationery from their firms, ranging from foolscap paper, lead pencils and copy books, to slate pencils and slates both large and small (see Table 8:1).

Reading matter was confined to sacred books, such as the Samoan Bible and school texts of the L.M.S. These were distributed by the Mission, usually at cost price but for cash rather than copra since the latter would have smacked of outright trading.

While actual trading was left to the trading companies and their resident agents, the L.M.S. generated a demand for money within Tuvalu which only the various trading interests proper could satisfy. The Tuvaluans did not need the money for themselves so much as for their various contributions to church funds. 63 While the annual donation to the John Williams was usually met in produce (which was then consumed during the course of the voyage) the L.M.S. preferred that other missionary donations, and also the books they supplied, be paid for in specie. If cash was unavailable the L.M.S. was then prepared to accept produce but this arrangement was inconvenient since the goods had to be shipped to Apia and then sold. Practical problems aside, it was embarrassing to the L.M.S. for the John Williams to return from the Northwest Outstations looking as though it had been on a trading voyage.

While the L.M.S. was anxious to receive contributions in cash so as to avoid the appearance of being a trading mission, the various trading interests were concerned to control the flow of money so that its

62. Bridge 1886:554
63. J. Dana 1935:202
use by Islanders would serve to stimulate copra production. Traders could manipulate the money supply in a number of ways. To give an extreme example, the Jaluit Gesellschaft in the German Protectorate of the Marshall Islands had a two-tier price system: the trade goods paid for in copra were twice the price as those purchased for cash. In other circumstances such a system would have depressed copra production with a vengeance, and the Jaluit Gesellschaft could do this only because of its privileged position with the Protectorate administration which enabled the firm to attain a monopolistic hold over the Marshalls. In addition the administration, working through traditional lines of authority, imposed heavy production quotas on the Islanders with the Jaluit Gesellschaft having sole right to collect this copra tax.\textsuperscript{64} The Islanders, in other words, were forced to make large amounts of copra for the firm and accept in return exorbitantly priced trade goods for any copra they made over and above the government levy. This had the added effect of driving cash out of the Islanders' hands, who in turn encountered difficulties in meeting their church contributions.

Such extreme measures were neither necessary nor desirable in Tuvalu, where in any case a more competitive and less controlled situation existed. In these circumstances the trading companies adopted a far more accommodating approach towards missionaries because they realised that the demand for cash for mission contributions provided the Tuvaluans with yet another reason to make copra. Sometimes it was an explicitly hand-in-glove arrangement. During the 1870s, when Godeffroys enjoyed a near-monopoly over copra trading in Tuvalu (see Table 7:3), this firm entered into an agreement with the L.M.S. and undertook to purchase all "Mission copra". Accordingly, Godeffroys' agents in the group were empowered to give orders on their firm to be credited to the L.M.S. in Samoa, and so cornered a sizeable segment of the group's copra output. The L.M.S. also liked this arrangement. Apart from the ethical reasons already mentioned, it enabled the Society to avoid situations such as the one at Vaitupu in 1871 when the visiting missionaries were forced to leave behind a contribution of over 31,000 mature coconuts:

\textsuperscript{64} S. Firth 1973a:24-25; Pollock TS:25-26, 28
The JW. could not take them and it is difficult to know what can be done so as to dispose of them with advantage to the object for which they are given by the people.

Not to be outdone the other trading interests in Tuvalu also sought to turn the system of church contributions to their own advantage. One method was to create circumstances which would multiply the number of times cash oscillated between the resident trader and the Islander with the trader making a profit at each transaction. The trick was to devise a triple pricing system with some commodities from the trader's store being strictly payable in copra, other commodites in mature coconuts and nothing else, and yet further lines of goods in cash only. Trading companies may have employed other methods as well, but this was the system used by Ruge's trader at Nukufetau in the early-1880s (see Table 8:1). The effect was to make it difficult for the Islanders to accumulate their mission contribution since the cash put aside for that purpose had to be diverted to buy required items from the store, payable only in cash. And the only way they could retrieve this money was to work for the trader, making copra from the mature nuts he had purchased by bartering yet another line of commodities. It was a clever though unprincipled system which, by controlling the flow of cash to the Tuvaluans, stimulated copra production by compelling the Islander to deal more frequently with the trader on the latter's terms. Traders sometimes also extended credit to Tuvaluans for their cash contributions to the L.H.S. and charged heavy interest rates. The Society, however, forbade this practice at an early date on the grounds that Islanders placed themselves in a vulnerable position by going into debt with trading interests.

Another, more legitimate, means by which traders could increase business was to transport groups of Tuvaluans from one island to another in return for specified quantities of copra. Yet another category of trade demands were strictly of the 'luxury' type, such as tobacco.

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65 Vivian, 1871-72 Journal, p.78 (SSJ 159)
66 Vivian, 1871-72 Journal, p.82 (SSJ 159)
67 Winchcombe, 1881-87 Diary, 27 March, 8 April 1886 (BP, Safe 1/8); Restieaux, "Recollections of Harry Johnstone", pp.11-12 (RP)
and alcohol. Supplies, however, tended to be erratic and shortages, particularly of alcohol were a fact of life. Most of the alcohol brought ashore was earmarked for the resident traders, most of whom were heavy drinkers. Any which got into Tuvaluan hands would typically have been disposed of in the one drinking session, with the partakers running the risk of being caught and suspended from Church membership. The L.M.S. position on tobacco was ambivalent, depending upon the attitude of the individual missionary or pastor. Pastor Kirisome of Nui, for example, did nothing to prevent his congregation from smoking and when the aليك asked him to forbid the habit "he replied that he himself smoked and could see no harm in it". At Funafuti, too, smoking was almost universal.

As these episodes indicate tensions and conflicts of interest existed between traders and missionaries in Tuvalu which tended to obscure the more fundamental fact that the two groups nevertheless enjoyed a symbiotic relationship. Missionary societies were wont to regard the godless deportment of some traders as a hindrance to their work and individual missionaries frequently regarded traders with considerable distaste - for example Pratt referring to Peter Leban of Nukuleele as a "creature". Traders for their part often cursed missionaries and particularly the Samoan pastors, whom they accused of hindering their business operations and interfering with their private arrangements. But the economic facts of the matter overrode these differences in outlook and temperament and traders and missionaries in Tuvalu drifted inexorably into an implicit, perhaps unholy, alliance to become economically dependent upon each other. On the other hand the presence of resident traders in Tuvalu enabled the L.M.S. to receive sizeable cash donations from the Islanders. On the other hand the Tuvaluans, as newly converted Christians demanded clothing, stationery, building materials, and cash to a degree which significantly stimulated copra production. It was a system geared to the advantage of the trading company and missionary society rather than to the benefit of the native producer.

68. See Gunson 1978:305-06
69. Rooke, 1886 Miranda Report (print), p.11 (RNAS 17)
70. Mrs David 1899:121
71. Pratt, 1872 Journal, p.8 (SSJ 163)
THE barter trade in copra had a variegated but essentially limited local impact for the period before 1892. In the first place it was instrumental in servicing the secular side of the Tuvaluans' involvement in Christianity. But in other ways the result was less positive. Despite the various incentives to copra production just outlined, these were overshadowed by a series of geographic, climatic and social constraints which put a low ceiling on actual production. The Tuvalu islands were thus only of marginal interest to trading companies and so commercial shipping contacts were few. In this situation of "circular causation," the constraints on production tended to interact and as a result the Tuvaluans' rewards for their labours were highly circumscribed. The observations of C.H. Woodford in 1884, who was then Government Agent on board the recruiting vessel Patience, may well apply to Tuvalu generally. During the Patience's five-day stop-over at Nukufetau, Woodford noticed that copra was drying outside almost every house in the village. But despite the impression of steady trading — and indeed most of the population was away at a far islet gathering and husking nuts for copra — the Islanders were far from rich in European goods: houses were built in the same manner and from the same materials as they had been 100 years before, and most fish-hooks were fashioned from tortoiseshell or pearl shell while the lines were of kolokolo. However, nearly all the men were dressed in trousers and shirts, which "impressed" Woodford, and most households possessed a Samoan Bible and an English-Samoan Dictionary. The Islanders were described as being "very greedy" in trading: yet clothes, books, a small quantity of steel fishhooks and some European accessories to their church were all they could show for it.

This is a telling reflection on the extent to which Tuvaluans were excluded from the European trading system, except in lowly capacities. Nevertheless some Tuvaluans were better able than others to exploit what few opportunities presented themselves. Those with some knowledge of English, especially returned seamen, were at an obvious advantage. One man offered to pilot the Patience into the lagoon of Nukufetau:

72. Couper 1967:xxvi
73. Woodford, 1884 Journal, pp.10-19 (Woodford Papers)
He said to the Captain "Dye and bye you pay me" & on receiving an affirmative answer he immediately began to shout orders to the man at the wheel in English. 74

Another English-speaking Nukufetauan ingratiated himself with Woodford:

He came back as soon as we anchored. He brought me from shore on his second visit some Cocoanuts and a basket of shells .... He says he is "my friend". I suppose he means that I am his property so long as we remain here, and that he intends to have the first picking of my fish hooks etc. He warns me not to deal with anyone else as he says they will want to cheat. 75

Though

Even the Tuvaluans' access to the inventory of European material culture was limited both in variety and quantity, their range of preferences was by no means haphazard. The trade items they sought in exchange for their copra either were metal-tipped tools and fishhooks which were then grafted onto their own culture to perform the same task as before, only more efficiently; or else they were the items required to meet the needs of their new religion. It is this second category of trade items which had the greater local impact, both then and later, since their introduction resulted in a self-sufficient technology no longer being able to service the full range of Tuvaluan needs. Missionaries and traders between them, therefore, were instrumental in a variety of wholly-imported items becoming integrated into Tuvalu culture thereby tightening those islands' linkages with, and dependency upon, the world capitalist system. With the partition of the Pacific among European colonial powers - a process to which trading activity actively contributed - new pressures gradually but surely began piling up which resulted in local Tuvaluan resources being far outstripped by an ever-increasing dependency on the world beyond the reef.

Decolonisation then brought another set of pressures which accelerated this ubiquitous colonial legacy in the contemporary Pacific. In the period under review, however, Tuvaluans still gained their

74. Woodford, 1884 Journal, p.12 (Woodford Papers)
75. Woodford, 1884 Journal, p.12 (Woodford Papers)
livelhood overwhelmingly by traditional subsistence means, with imports being firmly tied to copra production and their participation in a cash economy limited to the gathering of mission contributions.

BEYOND THE BARTER SYSTEM

ALTHOUGH a fairly stable mode of exchange, the barter system had its drawbacks for both the European trader and the Tuvaluan copra producer. Certainly the Tuvaluans ran few risks by involving themselves in bartering, unless they ran up debts or sacrificed their subsistence needs in the process. But their rewards were meagre. For the trading interests the barter trade meant uncertainties rather than outright risks, for prices and the level and regularity of supply lay outside their control. These in turn could lead to the inefficient utilization of their ships' time and hence a fall in profit margins. Given these circumstances it is to be expected that attempts would be made on both sides to go beyond the barter system. Accordingly Godeffroy obtained a long-term lease on an islet at Nukulaelae where foreign labourers were imported to establish and maintain a plantation. On another occasion a group of Vaitupuans formed their own trading company. In both instances, and particularly the second, the Tuvaluans involved placed themselves in unfamiliar situations where the safeguards of the barter system were absent, to find themselves worse off than before.

The German Plantation at Nukulaelae

TITLE to land gave traders a greater degree of independence from, and potential control over, Islanders. As Firth points out: "Plantation agriculture was always a tempting alternative to European traders in the Pacific because it left the final say about the production and the price of copra to the European rather than the Islander". But it was not always a practical alternative, particularly on small coral

76. S. Firth 1973a:14
islands where population pressure and the patterns of land tenure combined to discourage the alienation of land to foreigners. Such islands, however, could be rendered suitable for European plantation purposes by a dramatic decline in their populations and concomitant social disruption, and this is exactly what happened at Nukulaelae and Funafuti in 1863 following the raids by Peruvian slavers. These coincided with Godeffroy's first expansionary thrust into the Pacific hinterlands, Tuvalu included. Seizing their opportunity the Germans negotiated in May 1865 with the survivors of Nukulaelae for the lease of their eastern islet of Niuoka (which is rendered on most maps as "Nuwak"). The lease was to run for 25 years at $100 per annum.

Nukulaelaeans today attest that this agreement was reached between their aîiki, Tafalagilua, and the captain of the Godeffroy trading vessel which brought the Rev A.W. Murray on his first visit to the atoll, the Augustita. Upon hearing that the Godeffroy captain intended making an agreement with the Islanders, Murray told Tafalagilua that he would position himself behind the captain and indicate whether the offer should be accepted. When the terms of the agreement were revealed Murray shook his head but Tafalagilua inexplicably disregarded the warning. It is also a puzzle that Murray, who was always willing to give traders a bad press, did not mention the incident in either of his two published accounts dealing with his first visit to Tuvalu.

Nor did Murray mention that the resident Godeffroy agent, Peter Laban, became the local manager of the firm's plantation at Niuoka.

It also seems that Godeffroy tried a similar deal at Funafuti for the 1871 missionary reports state that the firm's resident traders had constructed "a number of buildings a little distance from

77. Sterndale (1874:25) states that the islet in question was at Nukufetau. An indication of the influence of Sterndale's writings is provided by the fact that two other writers, using Sterndale as their source, repeat his error - see Miss Gordon Cumming 1885:81; Lubbock 1931:197
78. Testimony from Lauaki Sei and Tinei Simona, Nov 1977
79. Murray 1865; & 1876:380-84
80. Moresby 1872:163. Laban had already lived at Nukulaelae, from 1857-61. He was away from the island during the Peruvian raid, returning in 1864.
the village which indicate an establishment of some considerable
importance in progress". During the mid- or late-1860s a Godefroy
trader had been reluctantly allowed to erect a trading establishment
on a certain piece of land on condition that the land revert back to
native ownership upon his departure. Instead, he took occupancy of yet
another piece of land in the name of Godeffroy's, expropriating the
produce of its trees. When he finally left Funafuti he transferred the
ownership of the land to his successor, whose business was promptly
boycotted by the irate Islanders. Any lingering hopes to establish
a plantation were ruined.

Meanwhile the people of Nukulaelae were likewise becoming dis-
pleased with their arrangement with Godeffroy's. After the third year
the firm ceased paying the stipulated rent of $100 per year and this
state of affairs would probably have continued had the L.M.S. not
pressured Godeffroy's into honouring their obligation. Godeffroy's then
simply proceeded to pay the rent in kind from the copra output of
Niuoka at their own estimation of its value. This arrangement seems
to have continued throughout the 1870s for it is only after 1880 that
the Nukulaelaeans' church contributions were largely in cash rather than
in kind.

The next round of complaints against Godeffroy's, or rather their
commercial successor the D.H.P.G., came in 1880 when the Islanders
accused the new German manager, Herr Schwenke, of extending his activ-
ities to other islets on Nukulaelae. Whilst the Islanders were still
far from reconciled to the German presence there was nothing they could
do about it: they carried no weapons whereas Schwenke operated under
the protective umbrella of the German navy. When the British warships
H.M.S. Espiègle (Captain Bridge) and H.M.S. Miranda (Commander Rooke)

81. Vivian, 1871-72 Journal, p.74 (SSJ 159)
82. Powell, 1871 Journal, pp.9-10 (SSJ 160)
83. Davies, 1880 Journal, p.5 (SSJ 176); Rooke, 1886 Miranda Report (print), p.10 (RNAS 17)
84. Davies, 1873 Journal, p.2 (SSL 34/2/8)
85. Davies, 1880 Journal, p.5 (SSJ 176). Schwenke was formerly the
Godeffroy agent at Tutuila - Schmack 1938:140
86. Bridge, 1883 Espiègle Report #2 (print), p.1 (RNAS 16; WPHC 4, encl in 172/1803)
called at Nukulaelae in 1883 and 1886 respectively, the Islanders claimed on both occasions that the lease had expired, believing it to be for 25 lunar months instead of 25 years. But the British naval officers were careful to avoid concerning themselves on a dispute which did not involve one of their own nationals. Commander Rooke of the Miranda felt he could do no more than suggest that the Islanders put their case to the German Consul in Apia, knowing full well the futility of such a course of action. 87

Like it or not the Islanders became involved in providing the plantation with supplies of copra in addition to that produced by Schwenke's handful of imported labourers. 88 The presence of the plantation served to discourage other trading firms from establishing an agency at Nukulaelae which in turn resulted in a dearth of outside shipping contacts. The D.H.P.G. thus effectively monopolised copra trading on the atoll, so the Nukulaelaeans had to patronise this firm or else go without cash, clothing and other European items. When H.M.S. Espligle visited Nukulaelae on a Sunday, Captain Bridge noted that all the women "wore some article of European clothing" 89 and during the early 1880s the Islanders were able to donate cash to the L.M.S.

However lack of trading competition meant that Schwenke could set the terms and conditions, with the result that the Nukulaelaeans parted with their copra cheaply and for a narrow range of trade goods. An indication of their lack of purchasing power is provided by Hedley who reported that whereas on Funafuti, by 1896, the use of turtle car-apace for the blades of long-handled shovels "had long been abandoned and their place taken by metal bladed substitutes", the old type was "still surviving and in daily use" at Nukulaelae. 90 On the credit side, young time-expired labourers whom the Godeffroy/D.H.P.G. establishment had brought to work their plantation at Niuoka settled and married the

87. Bridge, 1883 Espligle Report #2 (print), p.1 (RHAS 16; WPHC 4, encl in 172/1883); Le Hunte, 1883 Espligle Report, p.9 (WPHC 4, 159/1883); Rooke, 1886 Miranda Report (print), p.10 (RHAS 17)
89. Bridge, 1883 Espligle Report #2 (print), p.1 (RHAS 16; WPHC 4, encl in 172/1883)
90. Hedley 1897:261
widows of men kidnapped to Peru. This, in some measure, helped the decimated Nukulaelae population towards recovery.

The effects of the D.H.P.G.'s occupation of Niupka were compounded by the visitation of hurricanes during the 1880s. The first hurricane descended upon Nukulaelae in December 1883 with devastating effect. Eight months later the L.M.S. deputation called to find the people going through "a time of deep trial":

A great many houses ... were destroyed. A tidal wave had also swept completely over the island swamping and completely ruining their plantations. Trees had fallen extensively & as their Cocoa Nuts were soon exhausted gaunt famine was staring upon them.... Many a day said our Samoan teacher we have been seeking food all day and found nothing.

Eventually they were reduced to buying mature coconuts from Schwenke's stockpile and when this avenue was exhausted the Nukulaelaeans purchased nuts from the people of Funafuti. Famine persisted well into 1886 when another, less severe hurricane struck the atoll. In September 1885 the missionary Newell found the Nukulaelaeans, for the second year in succession, unable to give donations to the Society or to their pastor. Newell

91. Murray 1866 Journal, p.8 (SSJ 157). In Nukulaelae recollection one of these men, locally known as Stone, was a high-ranking Caroline Islander from Kosrae. After the German plantation was abandoned in 1890 Stone remained behind with his wife, a Nukulaelae lady called Hele. Their descendants are now dispersed through Kiribati, Tokelau, the Marshalls and other Tuvalu islands, since Stone's children tended to leave Nukulaelae - testimony from Moa Apisoloma (Stone's grandson), Isakala Paeniu and Tinilau Lomi. In response to my enquiry Phillip L. Ritter (personal communication 3 Feb 1978) revealed that Stone is still remembered on Kosrae: he came from the district of Tahf on the south coast and was known as Nena Sruhsra, but it is doubtful if he was from a chiefly family as all the chiefs lived at Lelu. Nena (or Stone) and another Kosraean left the island as sailors, probably before 1885 since he was never seen by even the oldest living Kosraeans when Ritter conducted his fieldwork there in 1974. Ritter then goes on to explain the unusual ties of kinship which have ensured a welcome for those of Stone's descendants who went to Kosrae after the Second World War.

92. See McLean and Nunro TS


94. Phillips, 1884 Journal, p.12 (SSJ 181); Newell, 1885 Journal, p.12 (SSJ 182)
attributed the famished state of the people to their inability to exploit the resources of Niuoka, and so too did Commander Rooke the following year. It is also clear, however, that the continued alienation of their land was having a negative psychological effect on the Islanders. For some years they had been claiming that the lease had expired and it was Newell's disagreeable task to inform them that the D.H.P.G. insisted that there were 4⅓ years to go: they had a piece of paper to prove it and therefore refused to budge until May 1890. Apparently:

the disappointment consequent on the information just received ... disheartened the people from putting their energies as they should to meet the deficiency in food. 96

Yet the L.M.S. did nothing to materially alleviate the predicament of a people who had embraced Christianity readily and then contributed generously to mission donations in times of plenty. With only about 150 people living on the island (see Table 9:2) even one shipment of food would have gone a long way. The John Williams could easily have made a return visit to Nukulaelae to land a cargo of produce collected from other Tuvalu islands and also Kiribati but this was never done during the three year period of hardship. The resident Samoan pastor, however, was provided with a plentiful supply of food, thus relieving him "from further anxiety on that score". But the Nukulaelaeans did not view the situation in this light. Instead they regarded the D.H.P.G. plantation at Niuoka as the real cause of their woes. According to Newell:

They are looking eagerly forward to the time when "the lease" shall expire, & speak of it as a kind of golden year which will bring untold wealth. Then they will have a new Church; then their pastor will be cared for; then they will be able to do as they wish. 98

95. Rooke, 1886 Miranda Report, (print), p.10 (RNAS 17)
96. Newell, 1885 Journal, p.13 (SSJ 182)
98. Newell, 1885 Journal, p.13 (SSJ 182)
And when the lease finally did expire, the Islanders gave "a large piece of land in the best part of the island" to the L.M.S. and built a fine church upon it. It is hardly surprising that another attempt to lease Niuoka - this time in 1914 by Captain Allen of the Samoan Trading and Steamship Company - met with the steadfast refusal of the people of Nukulaelae.

The Vaitupu "Company"

THAT the barter system was acceptable to Tuvaluans largely in the absence of any alternative may be seen in the formation of an indigenous trading and shipping company at Vaitupu in the late-1870s. When viewed in a broader perspective it may be seen as one of the many early and unsuccessful attempts by Pacific Islanders to break into the wider commercial system imposed on them from without and to usurp the profits which would otherwise have gone to European trading interests. To this end such indigenous trading organizations, or "proto-cooperatives" as they have been called, sought to assume within their territorial limits the role of entrepreneur (rather than that of mere producer) to the exclusion of the European trading companies and their resident agents.

The Vaitupu 'Company' was launched in 1878 but there had already been incipient moves to form such an organization on the island. The first occurred in the early 1870s when Taukiei, the high-ranking Nukufetauan who had recently returned from abroad speaking good English, planned to buy a trading schooner jointly with theulu aliki (head chief) of Vaitupu. However, this proposed commercial partnership collapsed with Taukiei's enforced departure to Nukulaelae. A few years later, in 1875, dissatisfaction with the existing barter system was expressed when the kaupule at Vaitupu demanded that the price of copra be raised whereupon the traders closed their stores for an indefinite period.

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99. Clarke, 1890 Journal, pp.3-4 (SSR 3/172)
1. See correspondence in WPHC 4, 2063/1914
2. Couper 1968
3. Gill, 1872 Diary, p.13 (ML B1444)
4. Testimony from Melitiana Kaisami, Taukiei's grandson, at Nukulaelae, Nov 1977
5. Nisbet, Diary, 3 Sept 1875, pp.202-03 (PHB 417)
ous trading and shipping organizations often arise out of such boycotts and this event certainly had a bearing on the formation of the Vaitupu 'Company'. The 'Company' was also unexceptional in that it fell by the wayside. Such ventures are accident prone, partly due to the hostility of entrenched European trading interests but also, as Couper points out, because "many local traditions are carried into these new commercial ventures which have a different economic basis.... In effect, a trading system based on cash tended to become inextricably intertwined with another on kinship." The Vaitupu 'Company' shared a further common characteristic of "proto-cooperatives" in that its initiator was a European rather than an Islander.

The man in question was Thomas William Williams who came from a family with longstanding Samoan connections being the brother of one Consul, the son of another, and grandson of the pioneer missionary John Chauner Williams. During 1875 he had been Secretary and interpreter to the Steinberger government in Samoa, but resigned over a salary dispute and in the light of Steinberger's treatment of a member of his family. Fluent in the Samoan language and by all accounts a man of "very persuasive address", Williams arrived in Funafuti in December the following year as agent for Ruge & Co. He had also been instructed by his brother, S.F. Williams, the British Consul in Samoa, to enquire into a land dispute between the people of Funafuti and a trader living on the atoll. Instead Williams posed as an accredited British Consul and continued to do so for some time after. He also turned his family background, which endowed him with an immediate respectability in the eyes of the Tuvaluans, to commercial advantage.

Williams remained on Funafuti a few months before moving to Vaitupu where he formed the organization which one missionary soon after dubbed "The Company". The move involved three distinct stages which were accomplished over the next three years. First, Williams prevailed

6. Couper 1967:100, 126
7. See Gunson 1972
8. Young, Private Journal, 20, 24 Nov 1875 (PMB 21)
10. See Davies, 1880 Journal, pp.7-9 (SSJ 176); Le Hunte, 1883 Espéciâgle Report, pp.2-6, 13-19 (WPHC 4, 159/1883)
upon a group of Vaitupuans, whose number eventually reached 100, to become 'shareholders' in the 'Company'. He provided the newly formed organization with trade goods to the value of $6000, but the 'shareholders' were not called upon to purchase shares or to make any other outlay to secure membership. He then provided a so-called "Director" by posting a Vaitupuan named Kalepo in charge of the new 'Company' store, and then he gave the 'Company' its own flag, one embroidered with "Masonic paraphernalia". The ease with which Williams got his project underway was also facilitated by the cooperation of Ioane, the resident Samoan pastor, who threatened to expel from Church membership all who sold copra to Henry Nitz, the local Godeffroy trader, rather than to the 'Company'.

To consolidate this monopoly Williams then sought freedom of action in shipping produce and to this end he prevailed upon the "shareholders" to purchase on credit from Ruge & Co their own vessel. In September 1877 the 20½ ton schooner Vaipupulelemele, named after an ancient Vaitupu double canoe, was launched at Auckland and put at the disposal of the 'Company', making frequent voyages between the port of Apia and the Tuvalu islands. The delivery of the Vaipupulelemele prompted the "shareholders" to carry Williams' strategy one step further and develop a plantation at Niulakita, the uninhabited southernmost island of the Tuvalu group. Only about 20 years previously a party of Vaitupuans and Nuians on an inter-island voyage were blown off course, eventually reached Niulakita, an island unknown to them, whence the survivors eventually made their way back home. This incident was still fresh in the minds of the people of Vaitupu and oral tradition collected in the 1940s and 1950s is explicit that it was they, and not Williams, who decided to send working parties which transformed the tiny, reef-bound island into a flourishing coconut plantation.

The immediate upshot of the 'Company's' activities was to produce a power struggle and chronic factionalism on Vaitupu. *Proto-

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12. Rooke, 1886 Mānawa Report (print), p.27 (RNAS 17)
13. Roberts 1958:421
cooperatives" are often also protest movements against the resident colonial power structure. The Vaitupu 'Company' was also a protest movement but this time against the traditional power structure on Vaitupu itself. In socio-political terms Vaitupu comprised several puikaaiga (descent groups). Each was headed by an aliki but the position of ulu aliki (head chief) was the preserve of the puikaaiga named Tuaa. The 'Company' therefore became an alternative source of authority and prestige for men without traditional legitimacy to leadership, and gave malcontents of long-standing (such as the lame man Amosa who became a leading figure in the 'Company') a springboard from which to challenge the dominance of Tuaa. Matters came to a head in late-1878 and only the timely arrival of the German warship Ariadne prevented an armed group of 'Company' supporters from killing Viliamu, the ulu aliki - or that, at least, is how the German captain interpreted the situation. Already the island's pastor, Ioane, had been dismissed for his involvement in the affairs of the 'Company.' The following year his successor was returned to Samoa in disgrace for general abuse of his authority and the work of the church entrusted to six deacons who were told "to keep clear of the Company". However, the deacons joined forces with the 'Company', expelled Viliamu from church membership and so themselves were suspended by the missionary Davies when he arrived the next year with Ieremia, Vaitupu's new Samoan pastor. The 'Company' however, which by now enjoyed the active support of the majority of the leading aliki, was firmly entrenched in the affairs of the island and defied the combined efforts of Ieremia and Viliamu to dislodge it.

14. Couper 1968
15. It must be stressed that Vaitupuan socio-political organisation is a vexed question. When the anthropologist G.M. White (1965:167-72) conducted fieldwork at Kioa in Fiji, where a community of relocated Vaitupuans reside, he discovered considerable confusion among informants over the function of the puikaaiga and even over the meaning of the word. See also Brady 1970:74n. I found a similar state of affairs at Vaitupu itself in 1978
16. Gill, 1872 Diary, pp.8-9 (ML B1444); G.A. Turner, 1878 Journal, p.7 (SSJ 173)
17. Von Werner 1889:327
18. G.A. Turner, 1878 Journal, pp.6-12 (SSJ 173)
been thoroughly undermined. The island was bitterly divided and events had reached an impasse.¹⁹

THE 'Company' was more than a Vaitupuan affair. It was Williams' ultimate aim - and perhaps also that of the "shareholders" - to monopolise copra trading throughout the entire group so his efforts at Vaitupu simply represent the first stage of a grander design.²⁰ Although Williams' motives cannot be documented beyond that point, it seems reasonable to suggest that, as local manager of the Ruge network, he used the unwitting capital backing of his employer, who was then on an extended European holiday, and to establish himself in a strong personal trading position in Tuvalu. This having been accomplished, Williams could then buy out of the Ruge network and hopefully keep the momentum going. Williams could see the possibilities of the Tuvalu copra market but only if it were properly organized and effectively monopolised. This explains his anxiety to obtain the Vaitupulemele because the 'Company' could never be a completely independent organization if it had to rely on competitors freighting its produce to Apia. No less importantly Williams also realised that the involvement of Tuvaluans on a partnership level was also basic to success since it would now encourage them to produce ample and regular supplies of copra. It was not simply a point of Tuvaluans being involved at a personal level for as Williams correctly surmised individual entrepreneurship and capital accumulation were socially unacceptable. In short the prevailing local ethic of equality and sharing between kinsmen made entrepreneurship by Tuvaluans impossible and is still effective in hindering would-be entrepreneurs to this day.²¹ Thus an important element in the 'Company's' initial success was its being organized along the lines of a community venture, and this in spite of the factionalism it produced.

¹⁹. Powell, 1879 Journal pp.34-35 (SSJ 175); Davies, 1880 Journal, pp.7-9 (SSJ 176)
²⁰. Bridge, 1883 Espiégle Report #1 (print), p.15 (RMAS 16)
But Williams miscalculated on several fronts. He did not, perhaps naively, anticipate hostility from the L.M.S. and suffered an early setback when the Society refused to break their arrangement with Godeffroys and transfer the purchase of Mission copra to himself or his agents.\textsuperscript{22} More seriously Williams also underestimated the difficulties in placing agents and establishing similar 'companies' elsewhere in the group. The first such reversal concerned Harry Johnstone who accompanied Williams on his initial visit to Tuvalu in late 1876\textsuperscript{23}. The following year Williams sent Johnstone to Nanumea but the two men subsequently quarrelled. Johnstone then broke his connection with Williams and thereafter did all he could to damage the latter's interests\textsuperscript{24}. Williams was no more successful with George Winchcombe whom he stationed at Niutao that same year. Two other traders were already on the island and their competition had pushed the buying price of copra up to 2\frac{1}{4} cents per lb. In the hope of keeping his operating costs stable Williams instructed Winchcombe to keep his buying price at 1\frac{1}{2} cents per lb, but instead of letting the other two "fight it out the damned fool went in too & Paid the same & of course got heavily in debt" to Williams.\textsuperscript{25}

A further series of reversals occurred in 1880. For part of that year he was based in Funafuti but his efforts to establish another 'company' on that atoll were frustrated by Tema, the dictatorial Samoan pastor.\textsuperscript{26} His efforts to establish a 'company' at Nukufetau were likewise unsuccessful, this time because he was so closely associated with Vaitupu. This was unfortunate but understandable in view of what White describes as the "strong theme in Vaitupu culture that the island should constantly aim to maintain its material superiority."\textsuperscript{27} The Nukufetauanans thus regarded Williams' proposals of a 'company' as a means by which Vaitupu might "increase its own pre-eminence"\textsuperscript{28} and, unlike the deacons on Vaitupu, kept clear of involving their island in its affairs. On top of all this Williams received yet another setback in 1880, this time at

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{22} Minutes of S.D.C. meeting, 15-18 Jan 1878 (SSL 35/4/C)
\item \textsuperscript{23} Samoa Times, 27 Oct 1876
\item \textsuperscript{24} Restieaux, "Recollections of Harry Johnstone", pp.5-6 (RP)
\item \textsuperscript{25} Restieaux, "George Phillimore Winchcombe", pp.28-31; G.A. Turner, "Report of a voyage ... during 1878", p.56 (PMB 129)
\item \textsuperscript{26} Davies, 1880 Journal, pp.6-7 (SSJ 176)
\item \textsuperscript{27} White 1965:54
\item \textsuperscript{28} Davies 1880 Journal, p.7 (SSJ 176)
\end{itemize}
Nanumanga where he had arranged to collect a rival trader's copra. He visited the island twice that year leaving behind trade goods on the first occasion. However, the goods were ruined - how is not certain - and Williams soured his relationship with the Nanumangans by charging them $400 for the loss.29

Such reversals irreparably damaged the 'Company's' chances of success. Owing to the purchase of the Vaitupulemele on credit for $9,900, the viability of the 'Company' was dependent on the involvement of other islands. Only a monopolistic archipelago-wide trading network could sustain such a level of capitalisation, for only in these circumstances could Williams' expectations of a turnover of 500-800 tons of copra a year30 be achieved. His inability to interest other islands in the group was undoubtedly the primary cause of the 'Company's' eventual collapse.

Meanwhile difficulties of another sort were arising on Vaitupu. As already mentioned Williams appointed as "Director" a man named Kalepo whose duties involved running the 'Company's' trade store. His idiosyncratic methods are well known on Vaitupu and informants assert that he told customers to take what goods they wanted from his shelves in return for small quantities of copra, never checking what they took or noting down what they brought. Kalepo was another nail in the 'Company's' coffin, pushing it ever deeper into debt. By at least 1881 the 'Company's' affairs were on a shaky footing. At one point some 30 members had become chary about the extent of their debts and would have pulled out had Williams allowed it.31 Vaitupuans today assert that they were cheated and elderly informants told me, just as their grandparents had told Commander Rooke in 1886, that copra shipped from Vaitupu "had not been accounted for".32 Informants also assert that Williams disposed of the copra in Sydney but a thorough check of the official shipping register for that port fails to reveal the presence of the Vaitupulemele.33 Rather the schooner plied

29. Becke to his mother, 8 July, 28 Aug 1880 (BP, A1372); Davies, 1880 Journal, p.12, (SSJ 176)
33. Maritime Services Board, "Register of Arrival and Departure of Vessels" (N.S.W. Archives Office)
between Samoa and Tuvalu (see figure 8:1) while the proceeds of the copra went towards paying off the Vaitupulemele. By 1883 the balance owing was reduced from $9,900 to $6,000.34

FINALLY and belatedly, in 1882, the L.M.S. brought Williams' activities to the attention of the Western Pacific High Commissioner, Sir Arthur Gordon, who expressed considerable concern at "the assumption of Authority under an independent flag, by a 'Company' headed by a British subject... It was then quickly arranged that H.M.S. *Diamond* (Captain Dale) visit Vaitupu and other trouble spots after first investigating a Samoan raid on a European plantation.36 But once at Apia the missionaries advised Captain Dale to omit Vaitupu from his schedule because they had heard that Williams was on the verge of leaving Tuvalu.37 But they were misinformed because Williams continued to ply Tuvalu in the Vaitupulemele until his death a year or so later. He seems to have avoided Vaitupu but was active at Nukufetau where he had the support of the local Samoan pastor.38

By this time the 'Company' was in dire financial straits. Some months before the *Diamond* left for Apia, Williams had called at Vaitupu and informed the "shareholders" that they owed Ruge & Co a total debt of almost $13,000 - $6,900 for the Vaitupulemele and the balance for the trade goods which Kalego had mismanaged.39 Seeing that the tide was turning against both the 'Company' and himself, Williams then urged the "shareholders" to apologise to their long-suffering *ulu aliki*, whereupon the differences of the past were put aside and instead the rest of the

34. Le Hunte, 1883 *Espiegle* Report, p.18 (WPHC 4, 159/1883)
35. Phillips to Gordon, 30 May 1882 (WPHC 4, 135/1882); Gordon to Secretary 18 September 1882 (WPHC 4, encl in 132/1882)
37. Davies, 1882 Journal, p.10 (SSJ 179); Marriott, 1883 Journal, p.12 (SSJ 180)
38. Winchcombe, 1881-87 Journal, pp.12, 17-18, 24-25, 30 (BP.Safe 1/8)
39. The 'official' Vaitupuan version gives the somewhat higher figure of $13,707.56, made up of $8862.20 for the cargo and $6845.36 for the Vaitupulemele - "Tala o te matuaga o te kaifalafu a Vaitupu [ausaga] 1882", NS in the possession of Asuelu Fakamau of Vaitupu
1879 1880 1881

KEY
- At Apia

- Voyaging within the Samoan Islands

- - Haiden voyage from Auckland (called at Niue en route)

- Trading voyage to Tuvalu

source: Samoa Times, shipping intelligence columns

Island decided to help the 'Company' clear its debt. The Vaitupuans had no other choice. Williams had earlier persuaded eight 'shareholders' to sign themselves as guarantors of the 'Company', so when Ruge pressed for settlement of the $13,000 he simply passed the debt on to the people of Vaitupu. On that basis Martin Ruge threatened to take possession of the island unless the debt was paid by November 1887, so the desperate Vaitupuans set to work making copra to clear their debt.40 What the L.M.S. missionaries could not understand was that they still had faith in Williams:

"This unscrupulous fellow has so impressed his beloved Company by his plausible address that they still eagerly look forward to his return and believe that he will be the repayer of"

40. Davies, 1882 Journal, pp.11-12 (SSJ 179); Le Hunte, 1883 Kapeticke Report, pp.18-19 (WPHC 4, 159/1883); Rooke to Thurston, 5 June 1866 (WPHC 4, 165/1886). According to informants on Vaitupu, Ruge threatened to pack the entire population off to Saipan.
their broken fortunes - when he appears their trials will disappear like mist before the morning sun. 41

Ironically Williams is now completely forgotten in Vaitupu historical recollections; instead his actions are attributed to Ruge, known locally as Misi Luki.

The Vaitupuans proceeded to settle their debt with all haste. To this end expenditure was reduced to a minimum: smoking was prohibited, coconuts strictly rationed among families, and the purchase of clothing almost came to a standstill. 42 It took four years of consistent copra cutting to pay off the debt, 43 during which time community life suffered serious disruption. Informants relate how mothers took their babies into the bush and hung them from trees in baskets while they worked. A delegation of Vaitupuans toured the other Tuvalu islands asking for material help, but only Funafuti agreed to assist. By 1885 $7,000 or over half the debt remained to be paid. Payment had taken two forms. First, the Vaitupuans had made copra for Ruge & Co to the value of $5,500 over a two year period. They were also credited with $400 for the sale of Niulakita in 1884. 44 Since 1880 small working parties of Vaitupuans had lived on the island tending the fledgling coconut plantation, had built a "disproportionate ecclesiastical establishment", and in 1882 the L.M.S. had given dispensation for a church member to conduct its services. 45 When H.N.S. Espiegle called the following year the two Vaitupuan families who lived and worked there shortly expected to be relieved. They were not to know that their replacements would be working for Ruge & Co, and not their "Company". 46

41. Marriott, 1883 Journal, p.12 (SSJ 180)
43. The sources conflict on the price Ruge & Co gave the Vaitupuans for their copra, putting the figure at 1 1/2 cents to 2 cents per pound weight. Calculating from these figures it would appear that the Vaitupuans produced in the order of 300 tons of copra to clear their debt.
44. Roberts 1958:422; Rooke, 1886 Miranda Report, p.26 (RNAS 17)
45. Davies, 1882 Journal, p.12 (SSJ 180)
46. See [Le Hunte] n.d.:1-7 for a poignant description of this meeting. The ownership of Niulakita has since changed hands on a number of occasions - see Bedford 1967:appendix IV(o). Although Vaitupu has never regained possession of the island, Vaitupuans have repeatedly
By degrees, however, the Vaitupuans became less inclined to pay off the balance of their debt.\textsuperscript{47} Constant privation was in part responsible for their hardening attitude but they were also becoming increasingly irate with their creditor's handling of the debt. Soon after buying out Williams' debts Ruge visited Vaitupu and compelled the Vaitupuans to sign a statement of liability. He impounded the Vaitupulemele as security but used it for his own purposes and then charged Vaitupu for its costs of maintenance. Finally, and gratuitously, he offered to strike $3,000 from the debt in exchange for the Vaitupulemele even though the schooner cost three times that figure. In desperation a delegation of Vaitupuans travelled to Apia in the early months of 1886 to put their case to the German Consul but Martin Ruge prevented them from seeing him.\textsuperscript{48} A few weeks later the Vaitupulemele went down in a hurricane,\textsuperscript{49} and Ruge continued to apply pressure for the payment of the debt by the due date. The Vaitupuans just managed to meet this deadline with Harry Nitz, the local D.H.P.G. trader and former opponent of the 'Company', paying the last dollar. Ironically the ailing firm of H.M. Ruge & Co went into liquidation only a few weeks later.\textsuperscript{50}

\begin{itemize}
\item since 1895 petitioned for title to Niulakita - see Swayne to Thurston, 15 Nov 1895 (MPHC 4, 390/1895). In the 1940s Niulakita became Crown Land and then operated as a copra plantation by the people of Niutao. The reason given for their decision was that Niutao, as the most densely populated island in Tuvalu, had the greatest claim on Niulakita which could siphon-off a small proportion of the population thus relieving pressure on resources. The people of Vaitupu, who feel that they have clear historical entitlement to Niulakita, have never reconciled themselves to this situation.

\item Newell, 1885 Journal, p.15 (SSJ 182)

\item Informants on Vaitupu told me that the delegates did meet the German Consul, admitted their liability but asked him to waive the debt which he refused to do. However, I am more inclined to accept Commander Rooke's statement of what Vaitupuans told him in 1886, that Ruge "kept them out of his way and they came back without seeing him" - Rooke, 1886 Miranda Report (print), p.26 (RNAS 17). Martin Ruge was an implacable political opponent of the open partnership between the German Consulate and his arch-rival, the D.H.P.G., embarrassing them on many occasions - see Scarr 1980:164-65. In the circumstances it is unlikely that Ruge would have risked the possibility of the German Consul evening the scores by cancelling Vaitupu's debt.

\item Wilson, 1886 Journal, pp.7-8 (SSJ 183); Schmidt to the Board of Foreign Affairs of Hamburg, 21 May 1891 (STAH CI VI #17b 8h)

\item Firth 1973a:14
\end{itemize}
Today the period of hardship and the belief that they were cheated are well remembered on Vaitupu. On 25 November every year begins a series of celebrations known as te aso fiafia (the joyous day) to commemorate the repayment of the island’s kaitalafu (debt). During these celebrations a faatele (traditional song and dance routine) is performed where the actions pantomime the repeated trips of the people to the bush to gather coconuts for copra. And yet even in those darkest days, strangely enough, the people of Vaitupu could still afford to meet their usual missionary donations, only on a slightly more generous scale than was normally the case.

THE RESIDENT TRADERS

COPRA trading was weighted in favour of the various European interests involved, but to present the business in terms of a dichotomy between European and Tuvaluan is to oversimplify. On the European side trade operated at different levels: there was a disjunction between the commercial activities of the L.M.S. and those of trading interests proper; the trading companies were in keen competition with each other; and within those companies themselves a hierarchy operated which reflected the many different levels of involvement possible in the seaborne Island Trade. Although European traders have been presented as a distinct “occupational category,” there was instead great diversity in terms of function and

51. This faatele was performed specially in May 1974 for a visiting United Nations mission then touring Tuvalu in conjunction with the referendum for Ellice separation from the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony. The mission consisted of personnel from the Committee of Twenty-four, which regards colonial government in an unfavourable light. As Keith Chambers (personal communication, 10 May 1977) noted, “It is interesting in retrospect that the U.N. was feted in such a way, with the tale of Vaitupu’s being cheated by Europeans. I had the impression, even though the U.N. had an interpreter present, that the meaning of the dance never became fully clear to them.” See also Chambers and Chambers 1975

outlook between company directors such as Thomas Henderson in Auckland and the Goddefroys in Hamburg and, at the other extreme, their resident traders on the atolls and reef islands of Tuvalu.

The first traders to reside on Tuvalu islands were probably James Harvey at Niutao, Solomon Heather at Vaitupu and Thomas Rossio (better known as Tom Rose) at Nukulaelae. They arrived sometime during the 1850s and were followed by others such as Jack O'Brien at Funafuti, Peter Laban at Nukulaelae and the two unnamed white men who went out to greet the New Bedford whaler Elizabeth at Nui in 1861. It is sometimes uncertain whether these individuals actually arrived as traders or whether they were deserters from whaleships who sooner or later seized their opportunity and engaged as shore-based company agents or as independents gathering consignments of coconut oil for passing trading vessels. Jack O'Brien, reputedly the son of a New South Wales convict, and also Charlie Douglas came to the Pacific as whalemen, made the transition to beachcombing and soon after turned to trade. Such soldiers of fortune were assisted in their endeavours by their linguistic monopoly: only a handful of Tuvaluans had ever enlisted on whaling vessels and so few, if any, Tuvaluans on a given island could speak English with sufficient fluency to act as middlemen in the passing trade in coconut oil.

The remarkable feature of these earliest traders was not their commercial significance but their religious impact in that they paved the way for missionaries who followed. There were those who were largely inspired by the economic consequences of their actions while the motives of others sprang from a contempt for the traditional faith. Even those traders who had no intention of eroding the foundations of the pagan religion usually had the effect of doing so (in the southern islands at

53. Maude 1968:265n
55. Brady 1975:143n
least) for they came not as an isolated force but as part of an overall alien culture which the Tuvaluans perceived as being superior to their own. Briefly, the Tuvaluans observed the worldly wealth and the impressive technology of these sporadic earliest Europeans, whether ashore or afloat; they could scarcely afford to ignore a god who so endowed his adherents (see Chapter 4). Even the actions of Tom Rose and Jack O'Brien in assisting the Peruvian slavers at Nukulaelae and Funafuti respectively in 1863 had the unexpected short-term effect of strengthening the appeal of Christianity: the survivors turned to the powerful new religion to restructure their communities from the ruins of the immediate past (see Chapter 3).

Despite their diversity of social backgrounds the overwhelming impression is that traders were a group of men, dissatisfied and often unsuccessful in other walks of life, who found a refuge on the margins of the Island Trade. Most went into trading in the first place as a last resort after drifting in and out of various occupations, and sometimes in and out of trouble as well, in various parts of the world, ranging from goldmining in Victoria or New Zealand, fighting in a South American revolution, or as a member of the Hong Kong police force. Typically unmarried but sometimes turning their backs on an unhappy marriage, they also leave the retrospective impression of weariness with the uncertainties of a wandering existence, often without apparent purpose and certainly lacking in stability. In this gradual process of an unsettled disposition giving way to the desire for a more settled existence they drifted, often unexpectedly, into the Island Trade, sometimes first as seamen but finally as company agents ashore. There is the suggestion too that one attraction of the latter course was the absence of constant and direct supervision of one's work. Although now more settled in their occupation traders still tended to be men on the move.

56. On the general subject of trader involvement in the destruction of the pagan religion, Michael Goldsmith (personal communication, 16 Aug 1982) suggests that some of the "softening-up" they effected might have been because Tuvaluans saw palagi as a bloc. Instead of being regarded as a discrete occupational category, the traders were perhaps seen as 'missionaries' as well, just as the missionaries proper who followed would have been perceived to some extent as 'traders'.
wearying of one island (sometimes driven away by the inhabitants) and moving on to the next with their dreams of sudden wealth receding ever further into the distance. Thus, most of the copra traders who came to Tuvalu were already identities on other archipelagoes and known by name at least throughout the Island Trade. 57

Whatever their initial diversity in social background, outlook and temperament, traders in Tuvalu were soon forced into a common mould by the inescapable circumstances of their vocation, the atoll environment and the people with whom they shared an island. The traders were the point of contact between trading companies and Tuvaluans, on whom the latter could exert telling pressure so to get a better deal for themselves. The inherent conflict of interest between the two parties led to constant haggling over the price of goods and the value of copra. Boycotting the resident trader or traders was a common enough occurrence on any given island as a means to raise the buying price of copra. Such embargoes on trade were invariably of short duration since the Tuvaluans in the meanwhile deprived themselves of their only access to clothing, stationery and other needed items from the trader's store, as well as cash for their missionary contributions. Traders knew this and were wont to hit back by imposing trade embargoes of their own. Thus the missionary Nisbet discovered during the deputational voyage of 1875 that:

The people [of Vaitupu] had fallen far short of their usual liberality in regard to the teacher's salary. He accounted for this by the fact that the stores had been closed, as the traders refused to comply with the demand of the people for an increase in the price of dried nuts ...

Another such incident occurred at Nanumanga five years later when Louis Becke closed his store following a dispute with a high ranking Nanumangan. Being the only trader on the island Becke was in a strong position to set his own terms and conditions. It was not a situation where Islanders

57. Dana 1935; Day 1967; Mahlmann 1918; Restieux, "Recollections of Harry Johnstone, trader in Nanomea"; George Phillimore Winchcombe ..."; & "About Louis Becke, Bully Hayes and others" (RP); Westbrook, "An old trader in the South Seas ..." (WP B2a); Westwood 1905

58. Nisbet, 1875 Journal, pp.7-8 (SSJ 167)
could play off rival traders against one another: all they could do in the circumstances was to wait for trading vessels to call and conduct business with them. But no vessels came and finally the Nanumangans were reduced to pleading with Becke to resume normal trading operations - or such at least is Becke's version of events. 59

Disagreements over the quality or suitability of the nuts could also force trade to a standstill. When the traders at Niutao refused to purchase green nuts, which are useless for copra, the kaupule was "much aggrieved" and banned trade altogether on the grounds that the traders were acting "arbitrarily and unfairly". 60

Two separate issues were involved in the imposition of trade embargoes by Tuvaluans. They were a device to strengthen their commercial bargaining power and also used as a disciplinary measure against infractions of the local code. Captain Maxwell, who patched-up several such disagreements during the cruise of H.M.S. Emerald through Tuvalu in 1881, remarked that: "the taboo is their only defence against any dishonest trader, and their only means of enforcing good behaviour upon people towards who they are not permitted to use force. Still there is no doubt that it may be, and sometimes is arbitrarily and vexatiously applied ...". 61 Jack O'Brien's confrontations with the kaupule at Niutao during the 1880s provides a case in point: he may well have been the sort of Irishman who felt "a sort of divine commission to fight against Kings and other rulers", but the kaupule were also dispensing justice rather too partially and "making laws having special reference to the poor Irishman whose irascible temper seems to have annoyed them". 62

In other cases too the rights and wrongs of the matter were ill-defined. When Thompson of Nui was fined for squabbling with his wife, he paid the fine but refused to appear before the kaupule for a mandatory scolding and instead remained inside his house behind locked doors. After

59. Becke to his mother, 8 July 1880 (BP, A1372 2)
60. Maxwell, 1881 Emerald Report (print), pp.5-6 (RNAS 15)
62. Marriott, 1883 Journal, p.17 (SSJ 180); Newell 1885 Journal, p.21 (SSJ 182)
the third summons the door was broken down, Thompson dragged bodily
to the council house, and his residence robbed during his absence.
Captain Maxwell arbitrated and was told by another trader on the island
that:

the same thing would have been done to any
native on the island; that the Kaipuli
always enforced obedience to their demands
according to the law; that Mr. Thompson
was made aware of their laws when he first came ... 63

In the end Thompson was quite amenable to reason: he wanted nothing more
said about the stolen $16, only an apology for being manhandled. Maxwell
then suggested repayment of the stolen money and that his door be repaired,
and finally Thompson and the "King" shook hands expressing their hope to
"be better friends in future". 64

The relationship between traders and local kaupule embraced a range
of situations and was one fraught with tensions. But disagreements were
nearly always resolved sooner or later. Each party was dependent on the
other and so it was mutually disadvantageous for trading operations to be
suspended indefinitely. In late-1885, for example, the kaupule of
Nanumea told George Winchcombe and Frank Jackson to leave the atoll the
next time their firms' vessel called, on the grounds that the two traders
were "not good for the people". Jackson departed at the first opportunity
but Winchcombe stayed on and nothing more was said because, on sober
reflection, the Nanumeans realised that they could not do without a trader
on the island. 65

Several complicating factors intervened to varying degrees in
local trading relationships. The Samoan pastors of the L.M.S. frequently
deployed their considerable local influence to damage the interests of a
trader they happened to dislike, to the extent sometimes of instigating
embargoes against that trader. 66 The visiting European missionaries fre-

65. Winchcombe, 1881-87 Diary, p.2 (BP, Safe 1/8)
quently received complaints from traders that the pastors were interfering in trade or acting despotically, but almost invariably these charges were dismissed as being "trivial", "unfounded", or springing from jealousy of the pastor's local influence (see Chapter 6). Not prepared to be dictated to by traders and loath to divert their busy schedules for the sake of aggrieved traders, the visiting missionaries were also concerned to uphold the authority and standing of their outstation pastors. Most European missionaries were also possessed of a deeply-rooted dislike for traders as a group, as distinct from occasional friendships or regard for individual traders, a fact which generally served to prejudice the reception of even genuine complaints. Accordingly the visiting L.M.S. missionaries perceived themselves not as the protectors of traders but quite the reverse: "The 'John Williams' has been a grand check on the doings of unscrupulous Traders", wrote one, while another reported that "As in other voyages so also in this one the evil example & influence of the traders scattered throughout these islands gives the Deputation no small amount of trouble". Their experience of Samoan pastor and European missionary alike largely explains why traders were anti-missionary almost to the man rather than irreligious as such, and the ex-trader Louis Becke had a point in his remark that some traders were indeed "very religious men, although they don't show it".

Some traders, however, showed it in their own way. Alfred Restieaux and George Westbrook on Funafuti so thoroughly hated the island's dictatorial and vexatious pastor that they refused to attend his church services and held their own private devotions on Sundays. Another such expression of their faith and dislike for the pastor led traders on the atoll not to have him baptise their children; they waited instead for the arrival of a warship and asked its chaplain to perform the ceremony.

Traders usually managed to maintain a more polite relationship with the visiting European missionaries, if only because they dealt with them so infrequently. The personalities of individual traders could also

67. Wilson, 1886 Journal, p.14 (SSJ 183); Newell, 1885 Journal, p.46, (SSJ 182) respectively
68. Becke 1905:149
69. Phillips, 1881 Journal, p.8 (SSJ 178)
70. Maxwell, 1881 Emerald Report (print), p.2 (RMAS 15); Bridge, 1883 Espiégle Report #2 (print), p.2 (RMAS 16; WPHC 4, encl in 172/1883)
have a bearing on the outcome. Harry Nitz, the long-serving Godeffroy/
D.H.P.G. trader on Vaitupu, helped in the construction of the island's
new church which he then regularly attended in a manner befitting "a
well conducted man". Others however, such as George Winchcombe, only
served to confirm the missionary stereotype of the dissolute, worthless
trader. As Louis Becke wrote of him:

four years on Niutao and cannot yet talk the
language in fact I had to interpret for him.
such a man to talk, my ears are actually
tingling now, I don't know how much more I
would have suffered if it had not been for a
case of gin I produced and by liquoring him up
freely I got a little respite, he is a fair-
sample of too many island traders fond of liquor
and never happy without some grievance against
the natives, these are the men that give the
missionaries such a pull over all traders - 72

As well as having problems with representatives of the L.H.S.,
traders also had problems with each other and the companies to whom they
were tied. Traders on the same island often provided each other with
companionship, even if in different circumstances those men would not
have been associates. But they were also certain to provide one another
with competition and this could strain a friendship or even prevent one
from developing, especially in the 1880s when falling world copra prices
and increasing competition left many traders heavily in their company's
debt. Nor did the trading companies always act in strict fairness towards
their agents on outlying islands. Feeling the pinch of hard times
Henderson & Macfarlane started charging their traders for shrinkage and
debiting their accounts if, in response to competition, they raised the
purchasing price of copra above a stipulated amount. 73 In 1882 and 1883
this same firm was experiencing difficulty in keeping its far-flung and
probably over-extended trading network serviced, with the result that
many of their traders, including those in Tuvalu, became:

71. Powell, 1871 Journal, p.18 (SSJ 160); Davies, 1873 Journal, p.4
(SSL 34/2/D)
72. Becke to his mother, 28 Aug 1880 (BP, A1372)
73. Restieaux, "Recollections of Harry Johnstone", p.12 (RP)
completely destitute for stores, and even the necessaries of life, the vessels that should have supplied them being many months over due.... 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, in order to procure the necessary supplies, thereby gaining a character for fraudulent practices which is not always deserved. 

On the whole, however, "bondage" to an established trading company was a more secure arrangement than the earlier ad hoc procedure of collecting produce for free lance trading captains who might go out of business the next day and whose treatment of outstation traders often left much to be desired. A case in point is the treatment meted out to George Winchcombe by the notorious Bully Hayes. Hayes landed Winchcombe at Nukufetau in 1872 but without suitable trade or any provisions whatever, and when he returned four months later Winchcombe had only collected four bags of copra. Hayes then invited Winchcombe and his Tuvaluan wife on board his ship where he put a bottle of gin at the trader's disposal. The day ended with the hopelessly drunk Winchcombe being tarred by the crew while Hayes was below raping his wife, and finally the two were dumped ashore and abandoned.

Nor, from a trader’s point of view were the British and German warships which occasionally cruised through the group (see Table 8:3) any more dependable. The actions of Captain Moresby in 1872, who warned the people of Niutao that warship action would result "should they ever be unfriendly to white people", and who proved true to his word a couple of days later at Nanumea were strictly exceptional in Tuvalu. The first of many departures from Moresby's precedents involved W.B. Thompson who was fined and boycotted, and even occasionally assaulted by the people of Funafuti for arrogantly persisting with the notion that his Funafutian wife's family lands be made over to him. Thompson regarded the matter as a test case and called for "powerful and vigorous action against the people of Funafuti" to demonstrate once and for all that Islanders could not "with impunity insult rob and commit Brutal Outrage upon a British subject".

74. Le Hunte, 1883 Baptise Report, pp.10-11 (WPHC 4, 159/1883)
75. Restieaux, "George Phillimore Winchcombe", pp.4-5, 7-10 (RP)
76. Moresby 1876:79-80. See above, pp.122-23
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Vessel (Captain)</th>
<th>Island(s) Visited</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Source(s)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>H.M.S. ROSESE (Bellinis)</td>
<td>Niulakita</td>
<td>4-Oct</td>
<td>1757; St. John, 22 Nov 1870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Funafuti</td>
<td>6-Oct</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Vaipulu</td>
<td>6-Oct</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Funafuti</td>
<td>15 July</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nioulietoe</td>
<td>17 July</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Niu</td>
<td>18 July</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Nunafoa</td>
<td>19 July</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Naimanea</td>
<td>20 July</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nunafoa</td>
<td>21 July</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1874</td>
<td>H.M.S. ROSESE (Coutts)</td>
<td>Nukufetau</td>
<td>2 July</td>
<td>Beaufort, &quot;Voyages of the &quot;Beagle&quot;, vol. 1; H.M.S. 1870-71</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Funafuti</td>
<td>5 Aug 1874</td>
<td>Thompson to Fugah, 9 Aug 1874 (H.N.A. 12/06)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td>H.M.S. RALPH (Fugah)</td>
<td>Vaipulu</td>
<td>6 Aug 2 Aug</td>
<td>Passage to Hobart, 21 Aug 1876 (H.N.A. 12/06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Futuna</td>
<td>8 Aug 2 Aug</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Nukufetau</td>
<td>13 Aug 15 Aug</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>H.M.S. ANTARES (von Werner)</td>
<td>Vaipulu</td>
<td>24-15 Apr</td>
<td>Report (print), 1878; H.N.A. 13/06</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Siafoa</td>
<td>15 May</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Funafuti</td>
<td>15 May</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Nukufetau</td>
<td>15 May</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Niu</td>
<td>15 May</td>
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<td>Nunafoa</td>
<td>21 May</td>
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<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>H.M.S. DARWIN (Manuel)</td>
<td>Nukufetau</td>
<td>25 May</td>
<td>Report (print), 1881; Navo 15/06; H.N.A. 13/06</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nukuapane</td>
<td>26 May</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Funafuti</td>
<td>26 May</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Vaipulu</td>
<td>30 May</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nunafoa</td>
<td>31 May</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>H.M.S. KELLEG (Bridge)</td>
<td>Niulakita</td>
<td>26 May</td>
<td>Bridge, 1883:26-30; Report (print), 1882; H.N.A. 15/06</td>
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<td>Funafuti</td>
<td>27 May</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Vaipulu</td>
<td>30 May</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nunafoa</td>
<td>31 May</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>H.M.S. STACE (Kellistor)</td>
<td>Funafuti</td>
<td>25-27 Dec</td>
<td>Geilgud, 1891:4; Report (print), 1890-91:4; H.N.A. 13/06; St. John, 22 Nov 1870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>H.M.S. BERT (Houlo)</td>
<td>Funafuti</td>
<td>13 June</td>
<td>Moore, 1885:19; Report (print), 1884-85:4; H.N.A. 13/06; St. John, 22 Nov 1870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>H.M.S. OIPOFO (Oropo)</td>
<td>Niulakita</td>
<td>24 April</td>
<td>Russo, 1886:1; Report (print), 1885-86:4; H.N.A. 13/06</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nukuapane</td>
<td>30 April</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Funafuti</td>
<td>31 April-2 June</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nukufetau</td>
<td>3-4 June</td>
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<td>Vaipulu</td>
<td>4 June</td>
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<td>Nunafoa</td>
<td>6 June</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Naimanea</td>
<td>7 June</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nunafoa</td>
<td>7-8 June</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

a. See also Dampier, "British naval vessels in the Pacific islands ...", (Peb 156); Forbes (1849), July-Sept 1870. p.1

b. The Public Record Office in London both the 1872-73 Logbook (LR 515/1872) and the 1874-1875 Logbook (LR 515/1875) but I have not been able to consult these journals – Public Record Office, personal communication, 19 October 1976.

c. As part of your work aims aphere
Although largely the maker of his own misfortunes Thompson did have some valid complaints but these were pointedly ignored by officers of both the Royal Navy Australian Station and the Western Pacific High Commission. Thompson's position as trader on Funafuti thus became quite untenable and he had no option but to leave the atoll. Finally he took passage on Henderson & Macfarlane's schooner Belle Brandon (Captain Frederick Ohlsen).\(^77\) It so happened that Ohlsen was also embroiled in a trading dispute, this time at Vaitupu where he had been menaced by a group of armed Islanders acting under instructions from the local Samoan pastor.\(^78\) When they finally reached Fiji, Ohlsen and Thompson took their complaints to John Gorrie, the acting Western Pacific High Commissioner, who dismissed them out of hand in abusive letters of reply.\(^79\)

Gorrie's verdict was predictable. Notwithstanding his dubious legal competence \(^80\) he was, in this instance, expressing what any other British colonial official would have said in the same circumstances, only more vehemently. Similar sentiments were penned by a colleague in Fiji who considered that nothing was worse than "sending Queen's ships to take up traders' squabbles" and then imposing:

> heavy fines, which it may almost be known beforehand the people cannot or will not pay, and then burning down villages, cutting up canoes, cutting down coconut trees, and, where resistance is in some cases offered, blazing away at the "niggers," - because they have had a row with some loafer who settles himself on them as a trader, and by his own misconduct in some cases where he is a bad lot, or by his want of consideration or discretion in others, where he is only a fool, brings about a row which ends in his house being burnt or his trade stolen, and perhaps in his being chucked into the sea and ducked. \(^81\)

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77. See WPHC 4, encls in 7/1877, 8/1878, 30/1878; encls in RNAS 13/49; G.A. Turner, 1878 Journal, pp6-12(SSJ 173); Winchcombe, 1881-87 Diary, p.21 (BP, Safe 1/8); Scarr 1967:37-38

78. See above, pp.

79. Gorrie to Ohlsen, 20 Sept 1878, Gorrie to Thompson, 20 Sept 1878 (CO 225/1)


81. [Le Hunte] n.d.:14, 33
In short, British official attitudes were no different from those of the L.M.S. missionaries in that they disliked traders as a group and nursed a specific resentment at being dictated to by them. There was also at issue the humanitarian principle that Islanders' rights were to be protected and upheld, and also the practical consideration that imperial resources in the Western Pacific were patently insufficient to deal with more pressing matters, such as the regulation and supervision of the labour trade in Melanesia, without a warship being diverted every time a "trader's squabble" was reported. Another colonial official summed up the situation exactly when he said:

that if traders went in with their eyes open to these places merely for their own gain, they did not deserve the protection of their Government, and that it was better for the Government to say that they would not protect them rather than that they could not, which is in reality the case. 82

Against this wider background the few British naval captains who visited Tuvalu had little scope for active interference in the affairs of the group. Moreover their hands were largely tied in who they could deal with since they had no jurisdiction over Islanders on the one hand or non-British nationals on the other. In the absence of any serious and unprovoked violence against British traders, the naval officers could not act against the Tuvaluans, and in any case none of them (apart from Captain Moresby in 1872) showed any inclination to do so. More specifically, none regarded themselves being obliged in any way to give active support to British traders in the group. Certainly Captain Maxwell was willing enough to listen to any grievances that British traders and kaupule may have had against each other, but he treated the two parties differently: the kaupule was generally given advice which was in no way binding while the trader was "cautioned ... that he was a British subject and was amenable to British law for his acts, whatever they might be, whether he were the instrument of a German firm or any other ...". 83

Captain Bridge was even less inclined to involve himself, offering the convenient argument that "it was not within his power to interfere in the internal laws of an island which possessed a recognised authority in the

82. Romilly 1893:151
83. Maxwell, 1881 Emerald Report (print), pp.4-5 (RNAS 15)
shape of a governing body competent to make and enforce laws for the community.\textsuperscript{84} British traders were vastly dissatisfied with the situation as it stood and Louis Becke spoke for many others when he remarked that "a man in the South Seas now might as well be a Chinaman as an Englishman - for all the protection he will receive".\textsuperscript{85} It is not to be wondered in the circumstances that traders of British nationality sometimes toyed with the idea of changing their citizenship.

The German navy, by contrast, was geared to the protection of German commerce in the Western Pacific and spent an estimated 15 million Marks doing so between 1875 and 1895 alone.\textsuperscript{86} Even so German traders in Tuvalu were, in practice, no better placed than their British counterparts. Certainly the Ariadne called at Funafuti and Vaitupu in 1878 and Captain von Werner imposed trade and friendship treaties giving Germany most-favoured-nation treatment. He also warned the kaupule at both islands that disruptions to German trade and shipping would no longer be tolerated and at Vaitupu he intervened in favour of the local D.H.P.G. trader in a dispute over a piece of land.\textsuperscript{87} But, as Captain Maxwell predicted, the Germans would never succeed in imposing their will on Tuvaluans in the absence of "strong and incessantly applied pressure".\textsuperscript{88} The necessary follow-up action was not forthcoming and the only subsequent German naval visit occurred in 1883 when the Hyane called at Funafuti (see Table 8:3).

In short, the Tuvalu archipelago was too unimportant both from a trading and labour recruiting point of view to justify the regular oversight of the German navy, and without this coercive presence the treaties of trade and friendship fell away to nothing.

\textbf{result}

The end of naval activity in Tuvalu before 1892 - whether it be the British by commission or the Germans largely by omission - was to help the various kaupule in maintaining a show of integrity in the face of pressures from traders on the spot. But the naval captains were only one element in these local dramas - they combined with Samoan pastors, European mis-

\textsuperscript{84} [Le Hunte] n.d.:14
\textsuperscript{85} Becke to his mother, 8 July 1880 (BP, A1372\textsuperscript{2})
\textsuperscript{86} P. Kennedy 1974:106
\textsuperscript{87} Von Werner 1889:320-30
\textsuperscript{88} Maxwell, 1881 Emerald Report (print), p.5 (RMAS 15)
missionaries and the competitive trading situation generally to strengthen the hand of the Tuvaluans in their dealings with their local company traders and, by extension, the wider European trading system itself.

AS WELL as having seemingly every other man's hand turned against them, the resident traders also had to contend with the realities of a hostile physical environment. At least the mosquitoes were not malarial but the limitations of the restricted atoll diet and the doubtful nutrition of provisions supplied by the company ships, if they came at all, made inroads into the traders' health, lowered their resistance to secondary illnesses, and sapped their vitality as well. When Robert Louis Stevenson and his entourage visited several islands of the group in 1890 every trader they met was in poor health, whether it be from food-related complaints such as anaemia and boils or from other ailments such as elephantiasis. Two traders at Funafuti were described as "wretched looking objects" and Stevenson's wife, Fanny, was dismayed when the leprosy-inflicted trader at Niutao, whose "fingers were dropping off", shook hands with her. Moreover, Western medical facilities were non-existent ashore and traders must have spent a good deal of their time simply being ill. On one occasion at least the timely arrival of the John Williams probably saved the life of a sick trader.

Socially and intellectually traders were little better off. Theirs was an isolating vocation. Detached from the mental climate which had shaped their outlook and values, they were now transplanted in a markedly dissimilar social framework where the dull routine of village life combined with the sameness of the scenery and the infrequency of diversions served to depress the senses and impose a tedium on their lives. After several years at the game at Funafuti, George Westbrook spilt out his feelings on paper:

89. Mrs Stevenson 1914:89-106
90. Powell, 1879 Journal, p.3 (SSJ 175)
If you would only bear in mind what a wretched life it is living on one of these sandbanks, no company, no amusements, no Theatres, no Bank Holidays, no beefsteak or fresh vegetables for 7 years, if sick no doctor, no news from home or friends, letters often lost or laid carelessly by, several times I have not received letters until long after written. 91

Forty years later Westbrook had:

every reason to regret my wayward life, living on low-lying atolls. On these isolated places one just dreams one's time away. Time flies before one is aware of it. 92

"Truly", observed C.N. Woodford on his 1884 voyage through Tuvalu and Kiribati, "the traders life on these islands must be fearfully monotonous. Some are unvisited for nine months or a year and the natives are far from cheerful company for an educated man". 93 Actually most Tuvalu islands experienced a far higher frequency of shipping contacts by the 1880s as a direct result of increasing competition in the Island Trade (see Tables 8:4 & 8:5). Passing ships sometimes left behind reading matter, and the arrival of a company vessel was usually an eagerly awaited event as it brought provisions, mail, news of the world and fellowship, but only momentarily. 95 The next day or even before night had fallen the ship had disappeared over the horizon leaving the traders to resume their monotonous, unhealthy and somewhat uninteresting existence.

There was a harsh side to trading. The "heat and tedium, the villainous dazzle and even more villainous mosquitoes", and the inability to get away from one's problems were facts of a trader's life. The pervasiveness of mission-inspired local laws and pastor domination were another bone of contention: often small in themselves, such irritations

91. Westbrook to the Trustees of Henderson and Macfarlane's Estate, n.d., (WP 43)
92. Westbrook to Dana, 14 June 1934 (WP 29)
93. Woodford, 1884 Patience Journal, p.75 (Woodford Papers)
94. Gill, 1872 Diary, p.9 (WL B1444); [Le Hunte] n.d.:15; Woodford, 1884 Patience Journal, p.16 (Woodford Papers); Thurston, 1893 Gilbert and Ellice Islands Journal, p.10 (NAF)
95. J. Dana 1935:197-99
96. Colvin 1911:111,135
TABLE 8.4
EUROPEAN SHIPPING AT NUKUFETAU
May 1881 - Sept 1884

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Vessel</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1881</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 May</td>
<td>Red Coat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 May</td>
<td>H.M.S. Emerald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Aug</td>
<td>Orwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>Ariel</td>
</tr>
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<td>19 Sept</td>
<td>Ariel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Sept</td>
<td>Ariel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>Vaitupulelele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Feb</td>
<td>Nataatu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-23 Mar</td>
<td>Patience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 April</td>
<td>Vaitupulelele</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 May</td>
<td>Vaitupulelele</td>
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<td>15 May</td>
<td>Vaitupulelele</td>
</tr>
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<td>1 June</td>
<td>Nataatu</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 June</td>
<td>Nataatu</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 June</td>
<td>Ariel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-26 July</td>
<td>John Williams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Aug</td>
<td>J.M. Seaver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Sept</td>
<td>Vaitupulelele</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compiled from Winchester, 1881-87 Diary (BP, Safe 1/8)

had a snowball-effect and intruded heavily on a trader's existence. Sometimes the sum total of frustrations and hardships became intolerable and, provoked once too often, traders could react dramatically. The Chinese trader at Niuaro in 1878 reached the limits of his endurance when he was fined for killing a chicken on Sunday. In a fury "he killed it a second time!!!" and when he was dragged off to the maneapa he used the "most filthy language towards the King and chiefs". 97

Given the frustrations of their lives and the basic conflict of interests between traders and Tuvaluans it is not surprising that an undertone of racial antipathy was often part and parcel of a trader's

97. G.A. Turner, "Report of a missionary voyage ... during 1878", p.56
(PMB 129)
<table>
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<td>25 May</td>
<td>Matautu</td>
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<td></td>
<td>18 June</td>
<td>New Zealand vessel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17 Sept</td>
<td>Matautu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21 Oct</td>
<td>John Williams</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>1886</td>
<td>26 Jan</td>
<td>Manila</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27 March</td>
<td>Three Cheers</td>
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<td>6 April</td>
<td>Three Cheers</td>
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<td>H.M.S. Hebridea</td>
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<td>16 June</td>
<td>Matautu</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Sept</td>
<td>John Williams</td>
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<td></td>
<td>30 Sept</td>
<td>Henderson &amp;</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Macfarlane vessel</td>
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<td>4 Oct</td>
<td>Matautu</td>
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<td>1887</td>
<td>19 Jan</td>
<td>Matautu</td>
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<td>2 May</td>
<td>Matautu</td>
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<td>24 June</td>
<td>New Zealand vessel</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20 Aug</td>
<td>Ika Fuka</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>1 Sept</td>
<td>Matautu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12 Sept</td>
<td>John Williams</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Dec</td>
<td>Ika Fuka</td>
<td>Compiled from Winchester.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Dec</td>
<td>Matautu</td>
<td>1881-87 Diary (BP, Safe 1/3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

stock of attitudes, even though most were married to a Tuvaluan. Most
of the time such sentiments were kept well under control since their
business operations in large part depended on local goodwill. But in the
case of an open disagreement and particularly a boycott these latent or
suppressed feelings of dislike and contempt were liable to come explicitly
to the fore.98

The paradox is that station-trading became a way of life. Frank
Thomas had been 27 years in the business before he came to Vaitupu in 1882.

98. Becke to his mother, 8 July 1880 (BP A13722). This side of life is
not recounted in Becke's published account of his 11 month stay at
Manumanga - see Becke 1905:64-104
Normally he was an independent but on that occasion he was in the employ of Henderson & Macfarlane. Another familiar figure in the Island Trade was the "old man-of-war's man" Charlie Douglas, who for over 20 years following his departure from Niutao was to be found on one or other of the Marshall Islands. Tom Day (or O'Day) was another permanent fixture. It was for his benefit that Captain Moresby bombarded Nanumea in 1872. He left the atoll soon after and at one stage was to be found at Nikunau in southern Kiribati. Described as "another of these pitiful old blackguards", he returned to Tuvalu in 1893 as Henderson & Macfarlane's trader at Nanumanga and died the following year at Nanumea.

There were a number of reasons why traders remained traders. It was usually no worse and often a good deal better than anything available to them elsewhere. Many, it will be recalled, were traders to begin with because they could not make a success of anything else they had tried. Those who attempted to break out of the system were usually forced back into it again. Often no richer than the day they started trading and certainly in worse physical shape which only served to diminish their prospects of gaining a livelihood back in Europe or Australia, however much they yearned to go back and settle down with their "own people". A certain ambivalence may also be detected because the island world and the European world each had their attractions and drawbacks. In the end it was a choice between either one or the other, and circumstances usually forced a return to the islands where at least the trader was his own master in the limited sense that his work was not subject to constant oversight. Jack Buckland, who traded at Niutao and Nanumea during the 1890s,

99. Thurston 1880-83:11 (encl in RKA 2836); Bridge, 1883 Espiègle Report #2 (print), p.3 (RNAS 16; encl in MPH4 4, 172/1883.) For further information on Frank Thomas see J. Dana 1935:201-07; Davis, 1892 Royalist Report, pp.61-62 (FOCP 6269)
1. Young, Private Journal, 27 June 1876 (PM5 21); Le Hunte, 1883 Espiègle Report, p.44 (MPH4 4, 159/1883)
2. Hayter, Logbook and Journal, H.M.S. Basilisk, 21 July 1872 (PM5 625); Mrs Stevenson 1914:120-123; Thurston, 1893 Gilbert and Ellice Islands Journal, pp.9-10 (NHF); Swayne to Thurston, 18 Dec 1893 (MPH4 4, 21/1894); Swayne to Thurston, 17 Jan 1895 (MPH4 4, 42/1895)
3. J. Dana 1935:260-67
4. Davis, 1892 Royalist Report, p.87 (FOCP 6269); Swayne to Thurston, 1 Sept 1896 (MPH4 4, 367/1895)
got the best of both worlds in his own singular fashion: he "spent a short period each year in Sydney playing spendthrift on the accumulations of a small funded income and the rest of the year vegetating penniless as a petty trader out in the islands."5

Once they had accepted the reality of their situation traders often then made a virtue out of necessity and developed an ethos and mystique of their own in which they became the sturdy and self-reliant knights of commerce doing their work "faithfully and with a quiet heroism none the less noble that it is unconscious ..., and helping in no small degree the civilization of the natives among whom they dwell."6 The reality, by contrast, was that station-trading was a dead end and so became a way of life by default. It was exceptional for a traders to move into another. Louis Becke got out and eventually used his literary skills to gain a livelihood; even then he wrote mostly about the "world of traders, supercargoes and their native contacts" of which he was once part.7

By the 1890s, however, changes were taking place which gradually whittled down the number of European traders in the various outlying archipelagoes.8 This process of attrition first occurred in Tuvalu and stemmed from Ruge & Co's bankruptcy in 1888 and the final withdrawal of the D.H.P.G. from the group a year and a half later.9 Most of the traders moved on, either to other outlying archipelagoes or to Apia, but a small handful of long-established identities were so 'institutionalised' that they stayed on to serve out their time within the group. When Henry Nitz passed away at Vaitupu in 1905, and Martin Kleis at Nui in 1908, each had spent over 30 years on his respective island, almost without break.10 Jack O'Brien died at Funafuti in 189911 after a turbulent career in the group

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5. Furnas 1951:365 (Apollo edition)
6. Moss 1889:81, 83
7. Maude 1967:225. For a biography of Becke see Day 1967. See also Restieaux, "About Louis Becke, Bully Hayes and others" (RP)
9. The last D.H.P.G. vessel to trade in Tuvalu was the Atafu, which closed down the plantation at Nukulaelae in May 1890 - see Samoa Times 31 May 1890
10. These are the dates given on their tombstones. See also Newell, 1906 Journal, p.17 (SSL 49)
11. Waite 1899:540n
spanning four decades. He arrived in pagan times and stayed on to witness many transformations in the Tuvaluans' way of life. In his twilight years at Funafuti he "constantly expatiated on the good old times when he first came to the island, when the people held feasts, public games, dances, and such-like pleasures, most of which have been put down by the missionaries. He said things were much more lively in those days." Ironically, he himself had helped prepare the way for the L.N.S. by desecrating and then destroying many of the old religious structures 40 years before. 

The last of this group of stayers was Alfred Restieaux. He was typical of the trader who would die in the islands, "perhaps cherishing to the last the fancy of a visit home" but "doomed, I might put it, to remain indefinitely on one narrow atoll". Like O'Brien he said that only his Tuvaluan wife and children prevented his return to somewhere like Sydney. Both were probably rationalising. Heavily in debt to the D.H.P.G. throughout the 1880s he was simply abandoned when they pulled out of Tuvalu. He never traded again but instead went to Nukufetau, his wife's home island, to live out his days in reduced circumstances. His health was not good and his eyesight progressively deteriorated. Although described by visiting naval captains as "doing nothing", Restieaux instead wrote a series of manuscripts which leaves the historian in his debt. With his passing in 1911 an era in Tuvaluan history drew to a close.

12. Mrs David 1899:167
13. See above pp.97-98
14. Stevenson 1900:2; Farrell 1928:351
15. Mrs David 1899:132; Mrs Stevenson 1914:91
16. Dana 1935:189-96; Davis, 1892 Royalities Report, p.31 (FOCP 6269); Thurston, 1893 Gilbert and Ellice Islands Journal, p.8 (NAF); Mahaffey, "Report ... on the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Protectorates, 1909", p.26 (CO 225/86); Samoanische Zeitung, 6 Jan 1912
Well before Restineaux's death the "entrepreneurial agents of the invading system" had wrought considerable change within Tuvalu with some islands being effected more than others. By the time a British Protectorate was declared in 1892, the individual islands of the group had been transformed from self-sufficient economic units to outposts of the Western capitalist system. What began in the 1820s and 1830s as casual barter with the occasional passing whaler was gradually superseded during the 1850s by the development of shore-based procedures as the Island Trade became increasingly dominated by large, heavily-capitalised trading companies. The L.M.S. was a vital part of this process and radically altered the previous two-way trading pattern between Tuvaluans and traders proper into an interdependent three-cornered affair. These developments resulted in Tuvaluans coming to rely on an increasing range of European-manufactured imports. However, this dependency was only partial: despite a formerly self-sufficient technology no longer being able to service the full range of local needs, the Tuvaluans still gained their livelihood overwhelmingly by traditional subsistence means.

In the calculations of the trading companies involved, Tuvalu was unimportant in itself and significant only as a small segment of their networks of shore-stations embracing other, more important, archipelagos. The Island Trade was a one-sided affair with the European interests controlling the shipping and marketing of produce and the Tuvaluans therefore being involved in a situation of unequal exchange. Yet the balance was slightly redressed when they exerted pressure on the resident traders to obtain a better deal for themselves, either by withholding their produce or playing rival traders off against each other.

The final arbiter of the trading relationship was environmental. The small and scattered Tuvalu islands were of little economic significance. Offering no scope for the development of plantation agriculture or for large-scale European settlement, the "entrepreneurial agents of the invading system" were only marginally concerned with the group and so the impact of trade was slight. The Tuvaluans were able to absorb this impact with little disruption overall because it placed so few demands on their social system and left their lands intact.
LIKE most other Pacific Islanders those of Tuvalu encountered labour recruiters and other foreigners who wished to utilize their manpower. Mobile and aggressive Tongan marauders may have taken the first Tuvaluan into bonded servitude long before Europeans knew about either group of islands. The first European recruiters were whalers who first appeared in Tuvalu in 1821. Tuvalu, however, was not a favoured whaling resort and in any case the restricted nature of contacts between ship and shore limited the number of Tuvaluans serving on board the passing whalers to a mere handful. The first Tuvaluan known to have done so was a man from Nui in 1827 and, significantly, he was not recruited at his home island but at Rotuma. Several other Tuvaluans surely followed his example but documentation to that effect is sparse indeed. In 1850 the son of an aliki of Nukufetau was returned to his home island by an itinerating trading ship after having spent many years on board a whaler:

He was quite a small boy when he left home and is now grown up. One of his brothers in the canoe [which came out to greet us] recognized him, & seemed to be overwhelmed with joy, & such a noise & confusion & striking each other on their backs with open hands, & other demonstrations of natural & savage feeling, I never before witnessed.\(^2\)

To these two can be added Taukiei, another high-ranking Nukufetauan, who probably left his island in a whaling vessel and then transferred to the New Hebrides Presbyterian Mission's vessel DaySpring.\(^3\) Another

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1. Logbook of Independence II, 7 Nov 1827 (PMB 674, frame 685)
2. Kemble 1966:142-43
3. Murray 1865:341
possibility is the young man at Nui who greeted Murray in English during his first missionary voyage to Tuvalu.\textsuperscript{4}

Just as the passing whalers were becoming scarce Tuvalu was caught in the final stages of the Peruvian slave trade of 1862-63. Several Tuvalu islands were raided by vessels involved in the business which, in the manner described in Chapter 3, kidnapped almost 400 unsuspecting islanders. Only small numbers were taken from Nukufetau and Nanumea, but Funafuti and Nukulaelae were not as fortunate. At Nukulaelae about 200 from an estimated population of 300 were enticed on board and at Funafuti 180 from a total of about 300 were similarly deceived. None of those who reached Peru ever returned home.\textsuperscript{5}

For Nukulaelae and Funafuti, at least, the Peruvian raids present a sharp contrast to previous recruiting experience. However, missionary and secular authorities would never tolerate the repetition of such a scenario and for the remainder of the century Tuvalu was largely ignored by labour recruiters. This was, on the face of it, a rather anomalous situation given that commercial production in other parts of the Pacific was being hampered by persistent labour shortages.

EUROPEAN plantation agriculture and mining within the Pacific and in Queensland was sustained by large-scale capital investment from without and a heavy labour recruiting programme largely from within. By the outbreak of the First World War well over 1/4 million Pacific Islanders had been indentured onto these plantations (see Table 9:1). Although the exact number of Tuvaluans recruited for the plantation labour lines cannot be determined exactly, it was nevertheless a very small figure - not much in excess of 100. Tuvalu never became a significant 19th century labour reserve for apparent demographic reasons; the total

\textsuperscript{4} Murray 1865:342

\textsuperscript{5} These figures differ from those provided by Maude (1981:82) in his comprehensive study of the Peruvian episode. See above pp. 71-74 for further details
TABLE 9.1

RECRUITMENT OF PACIFIC ISLANDERS FOR PLANTATION LABOUR BEFORE THE FIRST WORLD WAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Total Recruits</th>
<th>Tuvaluans</th>
<th>KIRIBATI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>1863-1900</td>
<td>62,475&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>25&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>166&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji</td>
<td>1864-1911</td>
<td>20,000&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>a few&lt;sup&gt;h&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>c.3,000&lt;sup&gt;f&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samoa</td>
<td>1867-1913</td>
<td>5,764&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>21&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>c.2,500&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>1877-1887</td>
<td>c.2,400&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>a few&lt;sup&gt;i&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>c.1,500&lt;sup&gt;f&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Caledonia</td>
<td>1863-1865</td>
<td>2,000&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>some&lt;sup&gt;m&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Polynesia</td>
<td>1850-1885</td>
<td>1,700&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>none[?]</td>
<td>1,114&lt;sup&gt;75&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German New Guinea</td>
<td>1884-1914</td>
<td>85,000&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British New Guinea</td>
<td>1890-1914</td>
<td>80,000&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central America</td>
<td>1890-1892</td>
<td>c.1,000&lt;sup&gt;f&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>c.1,000&lt;sup&gt;f&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reunion</td>
<td>1857</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>43&lt;sup&gt;74&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* in millions: c.100, c.9,334

<sup>a</sup> Price with Baker 1876:110-16
<sup>b</sup> Newbury 1980:6
<sup>c</sup> S. Firth 1973b:17-18
<sup>d</sup> Kuykendall 1967:127
<sup>e</sup> S. Firth 1976:51
<sup>f</sup> Bedford et al 1980:218
<sup>g</sup> Swayne to Thurston, 17 Jan 1895 (MPHC 4, 42/1895)
<sup>h</sup> Eg Horesby 1872:164-65
<sup>i</sup> Rooke, Mémóra Report, p.12 (RNAS 17); Wilson, 1886 Journal, pp.7-8 (SSJ 183)
<sup>j</sup> Bennett 1976:17
<sup>k</sup> Bedford et al 1980:117. The numbers given in various contemporary sources don't quite gel!
<sup>l</sup> S. Firth 1973:309
<sup>m</sup> Bedford et al 1980:213
<sup>n</sup> Newbury 1956:163; Bedford et al 1980:220

* This Table contains two significant omissions - the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu (for general accounts see Corris 1973: 99-110; Bedford 1973:30-37 respectively). Minor omissions, also due to the unavailability of figures, include Micronesians who worked on plantations within their own cultural area and Polynesians working on plantations in the uninhabited equatorial islands of Polynesia.
population of c.2000 in 1870 rising to c.3500 by 1900 (see Table 9:2) was too small to permit a sustained recruiting programme. To compound this restraint the population was dispersed over eight islands, most of which offered no safe anchorage, and the influential Samoan pastors were generally hostile towards recruiters. Such a combination of circumstances made Tuvalu an unpromising recruiting field compared with some of the Kiribati islands to the north, and this despite their greater distance from areas of employment such as Fiji, Samoa and Queensland. But distance was offset by the larger populations in Kiribati and because the people tended to regard recruiting vessels as a means of escaping their endemic wars and the droughts which frequently afflicted the southern islands of the group. In addition i-Kiribati treated recruiting as a family affair and this provided the plantation owners with women and children who did almost as much work as the men but at lower rates of pay. Recruiters' preference for Kiribati was foreshadowed as early as 1847 when the Velocity and Portentia cruised through several islands in the Western Pacific recruiting labour for Benjamin Boyd's sheep and cattle stations in New South Wales. No Tuvaluan was recruited although both vessels touched at Nukufetau and Nui. They then proceeded northwards and 22 men were recruited from the southern Kiribati islands of Arorae and Tamana. The trend was confirmed 20 years later by recruiting vessels from Tahiti. Between 1867 and 1872 they recruited a total of 687 i-Kiribati for the Tahitian Cotton and Coffee Plantation Company's estates at Atiamono. Apparently no Tuvaluans were taken despite at least one attempt to do so.

For the remainder of the century recruiting vessels flying many flags called at, or simply passed through, Tuvalu and recruited small numbers of people for plantations in Fiji, Hawaii, Samoa and Queensland.

Recruiting vessels from Fiji started arriving in the group by at least the early 1870s. In 1872 H.M.S. *Basilisk* visited Tuvalu during the course of an extended cruise in the Western Pacific to ascertain the prevalence of "skull-hunting and kidnapping" and Captain Moresby reported that most Tuvalu islands had been visited by recruiting vessels from Fiji but that the islanders were by now "too much on the qui vive to be deceived". On several occasions small numbers of Tuvaluans had recruited willingly for Fiji but recruiters at Vaitupu and Nui had more recently been unable to induce anyone to go with them. Some of the reticence at the latter place may have been due to the apparent kidnapping of one man from the island. The only other case of kidnapping Moresby could ascertain was at Nanumea where a Fijian vessel had inveigled half a dozen men into coming on board on the pretence of taking them to a neighbouring island.10

By the time of Moresby's visit the recruiting of Tuvaluans for Fiji had settled down to its established routine. The vessels involved struck for the drought-prone islands of southern Kiribati to recruit and repatriate, and avoided those in Tuvalu unless the supply of water and wood needed replenishing. Often there was no need for such a diversion.11 Otherwise the Fiji vessels usually called at Nukufetau with its navigable lagoon where the small population, relatively high rainfall, and the presence of several wells usually meant that there was water to spare for passing ships in need.12 Sometimes a vessel was in such urgent need of water and wood that its captain felt compelled to call at the drier, reef-bound islands in northern Tuvalu. In 1878 the ketch *Patience* sent a party ashore at Niutao but could only obtain 200 gallons of water. A few days later the tanks and casks were

10. Moresby 1872:164-65. The Nanumeans' knowledge of Fiji in 1870 also suggests visits by labour recruiting vessels - see Whitmee 1871:24

11. Eg Whittard, Logbook of *Rose*, 20-21 May 1880 (GAJ 25); Pinkington, Logbook of *Midge*, 17 April 1883 (GAJ 45); Croft, Logbook of *Minnie Bare*, 27-29 Sept 1883 (GAJ 49); Stevens, Logbook of *Westward Ho*, 16-19 Dec 1891 (GAJ 62).

12. Eg Andrews, Logbook of the *Rosamund*, 27 Nov 1876 (GAJ 5); Lockhart, Logbook of the *Elizabeth*, 8-11 Nov 1886 (GAJ 61); Woodford, 1884 Journal, pp.10-19 (Woodford Papers).
unexpectedly filled to overflowing during a storm at sea. But wood was still needed so the *Patience* called at "Yteku" (perhaps a bizarre rendering of Nukufetau, but more likely to be Vaitupu) where 1100 coconuts were obtained in addition.13

The number of Tuvaluans recruited for Fiji is problematic. Apart from those noted by Moresby there is no sign of any others being recruited or repatriated even though the Government Agents' logbooks contain contract lists. However, the record is far from complete. Only 11 of the 68 surviving official logbooks, which begin in 1876, have any Tuvalu content.14 The period before 1876 is even more sparsely documented: up to 1871 the *Fiji Times* at least noted the departure of labour vessels for the Line, as Kiribati and Tuvalu were then designated, but after 28 April 1871 recruiting vessels were simply noted as going "for a cruise" or "labour cruise" whatever their destination. Despite the slightness of the record it is nevertheless clear that the main consequence of the Fiji recruiters was to slightly increase the scope of trading on some of the islands.

Recruiters from Hawaii, who operated in the Pacific between 1877 and 1887 as a stop-gap measure until further supplies of Asian labourers could be obtained, concentrated their activities in Kiribati and Vanuatu. Only three of the 30 recruiting vessels which sailed from Honolulu during that decade are known to have called at Tuvalu—the *Mana* in 1878, the *Kaluna* in 1883 and the *Maolo* in 1885.15 The journals of these voyages have been lost so nothing is known about the origins of any Tuvaluans who might have been recruited by the *Kaluna* and *Maolo* or the numbers involved. The *Mana* did not have the chance to recruit in Tuvalu; instead, she went ashore in heavy weather on the reef at Funafuti and the 33

15. Bennett 1976:26-27; Munro 1980:30. Dana 1935:197 mentions that another Hawaiian recruiter, the *Stormbird*, called at Funafuti; however the reliability of this book on such points of detail is questionable
recruits on board, all from Rotuma, had to be farmed out among the Funafutians until the captain returned in another vessel to take them away. It does, however, seem that Hawaiian ships recruited a few Tuvaluans in the early years with disastrous results. They "died very expeditiously" and so discouraged further Hawaiian recruiting in the group.

German recruiting also largely by-passed Tuvalu. Until 1880 Kiribati was the principal source of labour for Godeffroy's Samoan plantations. During that time the firm recruited over 2000 i-Kiribati labourers but no Tuvaluans whatever. Neither does it appear that the D.H.P.G., Godeffroy's commercial successor, employed any Tuvaluans on their Samoan plantations. However, its main rival, H.M. Ruge & Co certainly did. In 1886 H.M.S. Miranda called at Nanumea where Commander Rooke learned that the return of 14 men of the Island was imminent. They had been sent by a high-ranking kinsman to work on Ruge's plantations for three years at $3 per month to pay a $330 debt he had incurred with the German firm. What neither Rooke nor the people of Nanumea realised was that the Vaitupulemele, the tiny schooner repatriating the labourers, had gone down in a hurricane only weeks earlier. On board also were seven men from Nukufetau, who had been recruited in May 1884. The missionary deputation to Nukufetau for 1886:

witnessed a scene wh. defies description ... On hearing the news [from us] the shouting yelling and
screaming were dreadful. Some tore their hair, threw things about, got hold of each other and acted in a frantic manner.  

German interests were also responsible for importing to Tuvalu labourers from other island groups when Godaffroy's D.M.C.G. brought in a handful of Samoans and I-Kiribati to work their small plantation at Nukualaeas. German commercial interests also engaged Tuvaluans as plantation workers within their own group when, in the early 1880s, an agent of Ruge & Co sent a party of 10 Vaitupuans to uninhabited Niulakita to establish a coconut plantation. A few years later this tiny island was purchased by Harry J. Moors from the bankrupt estate of Ruge. For a short period in the early 1890s he sent labourers to work the island's guano deposits.  

During the last 30 years of the 19th century labour migration from Tuvalu was by no means confined to the approximate one hundred from the group who cultivated other peoples' plantations. Perhaps an equal number worked, often for shorter periods, on European trading vessels. About a dozen men, for example, enlisted in 1879-80 on the Venus belonging to De Wolf's of Apia; two of the sailors on the Vaitupu-Zemstvo's last voyage were Tuvaluans; and this schooner occasionally took small numbers of men from Nukufetau in the early 1880s.  

22. Wilson, 1886 Journal, pp.7-8 (SSJ 183). One other case of Tuvaluan recruits being lost at sea on their journey home can be documented. In October 1885 an undisclosed number of men from Funafuti arrived in Sydney on board the trading vessel Avoca. Their complaints led to their repatriation in another of that trading company's vessels, the Promontory Felix, which was never heard of again - Govr of M.S.W. to Mitchell, 18 Nov 1885 (WPHC 4, 209/1885); Fiji Colonial Secretary to Mitchell, 3 March 1886 (WPHC 4, 57/1886); SMH, 20 Oct 1885, 23 Jan 1886.  

23. For a poignant description of the workers at Niulakita see [Le Hunte] n.d.:17  

24. See above, pp. 231-37  

25. See "Register of British ships entering the Port of Apia, Samoa, 1878-1886" (BCS 6/3a)  

26. Schmidt to the Board of Foreign Affairs of Hamburg, 21 May 1891 (STAT CI VI #170 9h)  

27. Winchcombe, 1881-87 Diary, pp.12, 17 (Becke Papers, ML Safe 1/8)
completely different category of employment involved the handful of Tuvaluans whom the L.M.S. placed in their training institution at Malua and then posted to Kiribati and later also British New Guinea. No L.M.S. pastor from Tuvalu was given a substantive posting in his own group until the end of the century.

THE ESTABLISHMENT of separate British Protectorates over the then Gilbert and Ellice Islands in 1892, each under a common administration, did not immediately alter the recruiting situation in either group. It did mean, however, that labour recruiting in Tuvalu increasingly became inseparable from the same process in Kiribati. As before the D.H.P.G. continued to recruit in Kiribati in preference to Tuvalu. But by the end of the decade a combination of local circumstances and outside forces had quite altered the nature of labour migration from Tuvalu.

Britain’s declaration of a Protectorate over the Ellice was a follow-on of the same move in the Gilberts a month earlier. The reason for the latter move was to oblige an official German request designed to forestall possible American annexation of a traditional D.H.P.G. recruiting area. Rather than allow German annexation of an area within Britain’s sphere of interest as defined by the 1886 Anglo-German agreement, the British Colonial Office reluctantly sanctioned the declaration of a Protectorate over the group, with the tacit understanding that German recruiting for Samoa would continue as before. But the stratagem failed due to intervention by Sir John Thurston, the Western Pacific High Commissioner. With a view to putting German recruiting from Kiribati on the same footing generally as British recruiting Thurston insisted on an astringent and comprehensive set of conditions. Soon after the D.H.P.G.’s i-Kiribati labourers took an equally decisive hand in the matter. Now under the protective scrutiny of the British Consul in

28. A Tuvaluan pastor’s diary of his work in Papua from 1934 to 1946 is reproduced in Sinclair 1980:79-86

29. Thurston to Cusack-Smith, 25 Aug 1893, encl in Thurston to Rippon, 5 Sept 1893 (CO 225/42/19620)
Samoa they became thoroughly intransigent towards their employer who discovered that 'without the whip, the imprisonment and irons they cannot get the same work out of Gilbert Islanders as before'. Well before the end of 1895 the D.H.R.G. was finding its i-Kiribati plantation workers so utterly unsatisfactory ("lazy, sulky and subject to occasional fits of passion") that it ceased recruiting in the area and the following year repatriated its i-Kiribati workforce down to the last man.

German recruiting had hardly drawn to a close before Queensland interests were expressing an interest in both groups of islands. During the early 1890s Queensland plantation owners were experiencing a labour shortage as a direct result of developments in some important traditional recruiting grounds in Melanesia. The raising of the German flag in the northern and central Solomons had closed these areas to Queensland recruiters and forced them to look further afield. In September 1894 the May departed from Brisbane on a prospecting cruise of Tuvalu and Kiribati and returned with 40-50 men and women from Kiribati and 27 men from Tuvalu. During the course of this exercise it becomes apparent that the Queensland authorities - from the Governor and Premier down to officials in the Immigration Department - were actively helpful to the plantation interests, who were the mainstay of the Queensland economy. Accordingly the authorities worked to facilitate rather than to regulate the local labour trade.

Nearly all the Tuvaluans landed by the May were recruited from the northern cluster of islands which were in the grip of a four-year

33. Swayne to Thurston, 19 Jan 1895 (WPHC 4, 4/1895); de Tolna 1903:164-66; Swayne to Thurston, 17 Jan 1895 (WPHC 4, 42/1895); GVP, 1895, 111:1895. The numbers given in the various sources don't quite tally so these figures should only be regarded as approximate, though near enough for practical purposes.
drought. According to the Government Agent the recruiting in northern Tuvalu:

seemed to be taken rather as a matter of rejoicing than otherwise, as food is scarce, and the people were glad to see so many lusty youths provided for. There was very little sign of regret shown. The chief considered that the islands were overpopulated, and the wages were a great inducement. They recognize the value of money . . . . If the boys we brought over were fairly treated and their reports favourable, I think there is indefinite scope for recruiting there. Ten or fifteen years might be employed in the trade. 34

Tuvaluans in the northern islands maintained their willingness to recruit for the duration of the drought. 35 It is more difficult to determine the attitudes of the Islanders of the southern cluster, which was not affected by the drought, during the same period. In 1892 one of Harry Moor's vessels, the Nukunono, attempted to recruit at Nukulaelae but with complete lack of success. No reasons are given but probably there was a feeling that the atoll's tiny population ruled out any recruiting whatever. By contrast many men offered themselves at Funafuti but demanded $10 a month in wages 'which the captain considered too high, and he came away without any'. 36 Five years later, however, there was a change of heart at Funafuti and the visiting scientist Charles Hedley reported that 'there is hardly a man who is not anxious to travel. On leaving, several of my native Friends begged me to take them to Fiji or Australia upon any terms'. 37

The May discovered that the i-Kiribati attitude towards labour migration was less ambiguous. After their experiences with German and Central American recruiters they were generally reluctant to engage for a place they knew nothing about. All the same the Government Agent was

34. 'A new recruiting ground', Newspaper Cuttings, Vol 52 (ML Q988N)
35. Campbell to Thurston, 7 Oct 1896, Elvis #6 (WPHC 4, 392/1896); Campbell to Thurston, 15 Dec 1896 (WPHC 4, 68/1897)
36. Samoa Times, 12 May 1892
37. Hedley 1897:282
certain that, if the first contingent of recruits were satisfied and sent home favourable reports, 'a very large field for recruiting will be opened up, the scope being practically unlimited'.

His somewhat exaggerated forecast was never put to the test. Shortly after the return of the May Thurston registered a strong protest with the Governor of Queensland against further recruiting in either group. He was no more prepared to have Queensland vessels in the two Protectorates than he had been Germans. Arguing that these islanders, and especially the Tuvaluans, were unsuitable for work on sugar plantations, Thurston then warned that further recruiting in the groups by Queensland vessels would be 'likely to cause grave embarrassment in the administration of the new Protectorate'. He did not elaborate on this point, but he did protest against recruiting of any kind taking place in the 'depopulated' Tuvalu islands, not realising that the opposite was the case in the northern cluster. Thurston clearly hoped to prevent further recruiting in either group and, failing that, to ensure that the recruiting vessels involved could be closely supervised by the Protectorates' administration.

There was little the non-plussed Queensland authorities could do or say in the face of such an unwelcome development. It was impossible to gainsay the nebulous assertion that Queensland recruiters would embarrass the Protectorate administration, but they did put Tuvalu completely out of bounds and further agreed that no labour vessel from the Colony would be permitted to go to Kiribati for the time being. The Lochiel, which had made all its preparation before Thurston's objections became known, was allowed to proceed to Kiribati and returned with 116 labourers. But the Sybil and all subsequent recruiters were

38. "A new recruiting ground", Newspaper cuttings, Vol 52 (ML Q988N)
39. Thurston to Govr of Queensland, 22 Feb 1895 (CO 225/47/5569)
40. Chief Secretary's Office, Brisbane, to Govr of Queensland, 2 May 1895, enc1 in Govr of Queensland to Thurston, 6 May 1895 (WPHC 4, 156/1895)
41. Swayne to Thurston, 25 May 1895, Gilberts #71 (WPHC 4, 211/1895); Swayne to Thurston, 17 Sept 1895, Gilberts #9 (WPHC 4, 369/1895); QFP, 1896, III:189, 191, 195
specifically banned from groups.\textsuperscript{42}

Thurston left the matter in abeyance and no further Tuvaluan or i-Kiribati labourers went to Queensland.\textsuperscript{43} Meanwhile the Protectorates' administration issued orders prohibiting labour recruiting in certain underpopulated islands, including Nukufetau, Funafuti and Nukulaelae.\textsuperscript{44} Nor was the W.P.H.C. any more sympathetic in early 1898 to the application by Grevsmuhl & Co to recruit i-Kiribati for their Samoan plantations; the firm was told to try its luck with the German authorities in the Marshall Islands Protectorate.\textsuperscript{45}

By that time, however, the overall situation had altered. Thurston had been dead almost a year and his successor, Sir George O'Brien, was less dubious and also less informed about recruiting generally. Nor was William Telfer Campbell, the Resident Commissioner of the Protectorates, as averse to recruiting from his area as the High Commission clerks seemed to think. During the late 1890s Campbell was not altogether discouraging to enquiries concerning the possibility of Tuvaluans and i-Kiribati engaging as labourers outside the Protectorates.\textsuperscript{46}

On a visit to Queensland in 1898, shortly before the Tuvaluans and i-Kiribati were due to be repatriated, he was approached by the Premier and a senior Immigration Agent and was surprised to hear, contrary to what he had been led to believe, that "the islanders gave satisfaction" and that Queensland plantation owners were anxious for more to come. He was more obliging than Thurston had been:

I did not of course offer permission which was not in my power to do so . . . but expressed a view

\textsuperscript{42} Govr of Queensland to Thurston, 9 May 1895 (WPHC 4, 158/1895)

\textsuperscript{43} In 1898 the Tuvaluans and i-Kiribati were repatriated - see eg Wawn, Loongana Log, 1898-99 (ML A1477-1)

\textsuperscript{44} Swayne to Thurston, 2 July 1895 (WPHC 4, 266/1895); QVP, 1895, 11:1017

\textsuperscript{45} Minute, dated 24 Feb 1898, on Cusack-Smith to O'Brien, 26 Jan 1898 (WPHC 4, 60/1898)

\textsuperscript{46} Eg Campbell to O'Brien, 9 Feb 1898 (WPHC 4, 136/1898)
that if they were found suitable, and were willing to recruit I did not think there would be any objection to their doing so.\textsuperscript{47}

Moreover it was becoming recognized in both colonial and missionary circles that the northern cluster of Tuvalu islands were overcrowded even though the drought had long broken. On several occasions Tuvaluans from all islands of the group had asked Campbell to find them employment overseas.\textsuperscript{48} Resettlement was seen as one possibility but this never got beyond an idea until the late 1920s and even then only on a small-scale basis.\textsuperscript{49} It was also becoming appreciated that population densities varied markedly between islands and that Nukufetau, Funafuti and Nukulaelae could not bear a heavy exodus of labourers.\textsuperscript{50} The stage was thus set for a fresh departure and in 1900 labour migration from Tuvalu took a new direction when the first contingent of workers was recruited by the \textit{Titus} for the new phosphate works at Ocean Island.\textsuperscript{51}

LABOUR recruiting was a dynamic agent of social change in many parts of the Pacific but the effects of 19th century labour migration from Tuvalu were not profound, either culturally or demographically. Only a small faction of the total population was involved - approximately 600. Most

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{47} Campbell to O'Brien, 24 Feb 1898 (WPHC 4, 189/1898)
\item \textsuperscript{48} Campbell to Thurston, 7 October 1896, Ellice #6 (WPHC 4, 392/1896); Campbell to Thurston, 15 Dec 1896 (WPHC 4, 68/1897); Campbell to O'Brien, 9 Feb 1898 (WPHC 4, 137/1898)
\item \textsuperscript{49} Marriott, 1898 Journal, pp.10-11 (SSJ 192); Campbell to O'Brien, 25 May 1901 (WPHC 4, 102/1901). The later resettlement schemes are discussed in Bedford 1968:49-58; A. Chambers 1972; White 1965. Another form of resettlement - migration between islands - was attempted in the early-1960s when the Colony administration sought to apply the Neglected Lands Ordinance and resettle northern Tuvaluans on surplus land at Nui. The scheme failed in the face of counter-action from the resentful Nuians, who promptly cultivated their "neglected" lands in order to circumvent the Ordinance - Bedford 1967:132-33
\item \textsuperscript{50} Campbell to O'Brien, 9 Feb 1898 (WPHC 4, 137/1898)
\item \textsuperscript{51} Ellis 1936:98
\end{itemize}
were taken within days of each other by the Peruvians in 1863. The balance of labour migration may best be described as a series of infrequent and unrelated events. Although typically small-scale the process did exhibit considerable variety over time. Starting with the Tongan raiders of previous centuries, the business then assumed wider proportions beginning with passing whalers through to mid-century and reaching a high note in 1863 with the Peruvian raids. This was followed by considerably lower-key recruitment for overseas plantations, maritime commerce and even L.M.S. pastoral appointments. Large-scale circular migration is strictly a 20th century phenomenon and dominated by the provision of a workforce for the phosphate digs at Ocean Island and Nauru. This was supplemented after the Second World War by the migration of Colony civil servants to Kiribati - mainly to the administrative headquarters at Tarawa but also a sprinkling of schoolteachers, radio operators and medical personnel to outer islands within Kiribati - and the more recent use of Tuvaluans as seamen, especially for the German merchant marine.

Apart from the push of drought the motivations of the Tuvaluans who recruited for work on plantations and ships is not elaborated in the sources. The desire for travel and new experiences were probably major considerations. Recruiting vessels were also seen by some as a means to escape the restrictions and obligations of village life, or to get away from unhappy situations. On islands as small as those in Tuvalu the latter circumstance could assume overwhelming proportions for the individuals concerned. It is apparent that only the lack of opportunity prevented large numbers of Tuvaluans from recruiting.

The repercussions of 19th century recruiting within Tuvalu were relatively slight. In contrast to areas of heavy recruiting and repatriation, such as parts of the Solomon Islands where a continuous stream of English-speaking returnees brought back new ideas and artifacts, there was no scope for the small number of Tuvaluan returnees to initiate social change on a broad spectrum. Instead the individual Tuvalu

52. Phosphate supplies at Ocean Island were finally exhausted in 1979
communities retained both their insularity and the partial and distorted image of European culture that was imparted by the small and unrepresentative sampling of Europeans who visited their shores. Even had a greater number of returnees been involved it is still difficult to imagine that their influence would have been proportionally greater — unless, of course, they had been instrumental in bringing about sectarian rivalry with all the divisiveness and bitterness that this has caused in parts of the Pacific. Even exceptional individuals of high status, such as Taukiei of Nukufetau, had no lasting influence; he was eventually driven away from his island and although he settled at Nukulaelae his days of prominence were over. It cannot even be said that Taukiei's activities at Nukufetau altered the course of events from the direction they were going anyway. Accordingly, the individual Tuvalu communities were not much affected by the labour trade but instead maintained the character imposed on them by the Samoan pastors who welded the scattered hamlets of each island into a single, unified village where the social contract prevailed — a consensus situation where the word of the toeaina (elders) carried the greatest weight and where young people did not presume to speak out publicly on village matters.

It is apparent from the foregoing that the demographic effects were also slight, except for the Peruvian raids on Nukulaelae and Funafuti in 1863. The demographic implications of this forced migration were profound for both atolls: Nukulaelae lost 80% of its population and Funafuti 60% in one year. Not only numbers, but the population structure was also altered since the Peruvians concentrated on able-bodied men. Thus when the missionary Whitmee visited Nukulaelae in 1870 he found that two-thirds of the adult population were women, while at Funafuti the following year his colleague Powell observed that women greatly outnumbered men and children slightly outnumbered women.55

54. A notable example was Kiribati. In the late 1880s some returned labourers from Tahiti, who had embraced Roman Catholicism at their place of work, petitioned Catholic authorities in Samoa to send a priest to Nonouti. The Sacred Heart Mission responded and quickly gained a following on most islands in the group. Bitter sectarian rivalry resulted — Sabatier 1977:167-83

55. Whitmee, "Recollections of a long life", p.82 (TS in possession of Niel Gunson); Powell, 1871 Journal, p.10 (SSJ 160)
At Vaitupu by contrast, where the Peruvians did not go, a "generation of the aged as well as the young was fully represented".  

Population recovery was rather rapid, however. Although there were only 22 adult males at Funafuti in 1873, by 1883 there was an "enormous" number of children, and in 1892 the population numbered 230 - only 70 less than the 300 estimated to be on the island before the Peruvian raid. Part of Funafuti's population can be attributed to 'an immigrant population from various sources. Colonists from Samoa, the Tokelaus, Manihiki, and other of the Ellices settled in the depopulated village". On Nukulaeae replacement was somewhat slower because the vagaries of European shipping rendered the atoll less accessible to prospective immigrants. In 1892 its population was variously estimated at around 100 - only one third of the pre-Peruvian estimate (see Table 9:2).  

Except for the impact of the Peruvian raids on Funafuti and Nukulaeae, overseas labour migration was not an important variable affecting the course of population change before 1900. As the number of Tuvalu recruits indicates, this small group of atolls and reef islands was hardly "the happy hunting ground of 'blackbirders'" which a succession of Colonial Office reports and later writers have held

56. George Turner, 1876 Journal, p.9 (SSJ 168)  
57. Davis, 1873 Journal, p.2 (SSL 34/2/D); [Le Hunte] n.d.:15; Goward, 1892 Journal, p.3 (SSR 2/142)  
58. Hedley 1896:42  
59. Goward, 1892 Journal, p.3 (SSR 2/142); Davis, 1892 Royalist Report, p.52 (FOCP 6269). It is difficult to accept the statement that 14% of the Tuvalu population was kidnapped by the Peruvian raiders (Newton 1967:201). Whether or not this figure is correct, an overall percentage applied to Tuvalu as a whole is not a reasonable way of looking at the problem considering that different islands were effected so differently. One therefore has misgivings about statements to the effect that Tuvalu 'got off lightly' (Newton 1967:202) when four islands were quite unaffected whereas two others lost the bulk of their populations. Statements regarding the Peruvians' activities should be made strictly in relation to individual islands.
## TABLE 9:2

**POPULATION ESTIMATES, 1865-1911**

*(From Bedford et al 1980:237)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Numerous</th>
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<td>130</td>
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<td>615</td>
<td>456</td>
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<td>493</td>
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**Sources:**
- Murray (1863), SSF
- Murray (1864), SSF 157
- The Premier, March 1868
- Whitmore (1871)
- Viswan (1871), SSF 159
- Gili (1872): ML 1444
- Darby (1873), SSL 34/2/D
- Depuy (1874), SSL 34/2/P
- Turner (1876), SSI 169
- Turner (1878), SSI 173
- Foxwell (1879), SSI 172
- Phillips (1881), SSI 176
- Martin (1882), SSF 180
- Phillips (1884), SSF 181
- Martin (1885), SSF 182
- Martin (1887), SSF 183
- Coward (1892), SSL 3/1-2
- Davis (1992), HAVK Jarens
- Swinsky (1895): WPHC 4, 284/7/1995
- Martin (1895), SSI 189
- Too Spence – WPHC 4, 7/9/1995
- Martin (1899), SSF 181
- Coward (1901), SSF 182
- Turner (1903), SSF 4/4/1995
- Naahy (1909): WPHC 4, 44/1995
- Empson (1911): WPHC 4, 44/1910
Remarkable for its persistence, the claim that a combination of labour migration and measles reduced the race "from 20,000 souls to under 3,000" is not substantiated in the primary sources of the period. Newton was the first to suggest that a pre-1860 population of 20,000 was fallacious. Simply by collating the first sets of missionary estimates for 1865 and 1866, and deducting the numbers of Tuvaluans reported to have been taken by the Peruvians in 1863, he calculated that the population of these islands around 1860 amounted to only "about 3,000 - the figure to which it was imagined to have been reduced".

One can only speculate on the origin of the earlier misconception. It probably stems from an uncritical acceptance of Louis Becke’s statement that pre-contact Tuvalu harboured a stable population of 20,000. A few years later Tuvalu’s population entered a phase of uncharacteristic temporary decline which colonial administrators of the time assumed, in keeping with current theories which held that Pacific populations were decreasing or dying out, to be the norm. The large discrepancy between Becke’s figure and the contemporary population, again in keeping with current demographic theories, was readily attributed to the twin effects of recruiting and disease. Tuvaluans today frequently tell outsiders that ‘blackbirding’ was once common. Here they seem to be confusing the recruiters from Fiji, Hawaii, Samoa and Queensland, who were few in number and whose effect was slight, with the more notorious Peruvians. It seems very likely that oral traditions and inaccurate European secondary accounts have had the mutually reinforcing effect of tarring all labour recruiters with the same brush as the exceptional Peruvians.


61. G.E.I.C., Annual Report for 1934, p.4


63. Becke, Evening News, 25 April 1896. See also Becke 1897:24; Mrs. David 1899:196. How Becke arrived at this figure is a matter for further speculation.
The considerable number of population estimates and counts made over the last 35 years of the 19th century (most are included in Table 9:2) does not bear out the contention that labour recruiting constituted a heavy drain on the Tuvalu population. The interesting feature of these figures is the general, if differential, increase in numbers of residents on each island during a period when most Pacific island populations were believed to be experiencing rapid decline. By the late 19th century the most significant demographic trends were rising levels of fertility and declining mortality—trends which were to become common in other Polynesian populations fifty years later. The reasons for this increase are many—the missionary ban on infanticide and abortion, the absence of warfare, minimal loss of life during hurricanes and droughts, low disease mortality, and the small extent of labour recruiting. Many young Tuvaluans would certainly have gone overseas had the opportunity offered. But recruiting vessels had little incentive to call at their tiny islands, and so relatively few Tuvaluans became involved in the cycle of labour migration, forced or otherwise.

CONCLUSIONS

For the duration of the 19th century Tuvalu was at best a small and insignificant labour reserve; more often it was simply ignored as such. This rather detailed account of that process makes the immediate point that, contrary to received opinion, few rather than many Tuvaluans were recruited during this period. But this is only to state the obvious. Even something as small as the Tuvalu experience can still illuminate the larger movement of which it formed part. Wider implications emerge from this microcosmic study, both historical and historiographical.

In the first place Tuvalu's labour trade experience lends support to the recent trend of opinion among Pacific historians who increasingly recognise that the subject is more than a 19th century British lake. Even when labour migration from Tuvalu is confined to the 19th century it is apparent it was not preponderantly a British
concern: the whalers were almost exclusively American; the Peruvian raids constitute the most significant single episode; Hawaiian and German vessels were involved in obtaining plantation labour. It is also apparent from the numbers of Tuvaluans who recruited as seamen and also as pastors, that difficulties also arise when the labour trade is solely associated with the indenture of labourers to tropical plantations.

In other words the labour trade involved much more than the formula offered by Daryck Scarr who considers that it began in:

1863, when the Don Juan sailed from Queensland to recruit New Hebrideans to work Robert Towns' plantations on the Logan River, almost until 1911, when the Clansman returned to Suva with the last load of Pacific islanders to be recruited for plantations in Fiji.64

Here, the labour trade is entirely confined to Pacific Islanders. Brief mention is made of "recruiting for the nickel mines of Noumea" and of French and German recruiting for their plantations.65 But these are adjuncts to a more pervasive concern with the Islander recruits and their British recruiters and plantations, with the business coming to an abrupt and unequivocal end in 1911. Such an approach grew out of a desire to elevate Pacific history from an aspect of imperial history to a specialization in its own right, island-orientated in focus with the Islanders in the centre of the picture.

Although revisionary at the time of writing, such a view is too narrow both in focus and emphasis. Yet historians of the labour trade have generally been content to remain within these parameters with the result that the topic has gained in depth rather than broadened in scope. Queensland has been the main focus of attention with individual studies becoming ever more specialized, and all at the expense of a synoptic overview of the business on a wider Pacific scale.

Such objections could be avoided by expanding the meaning of the

64. Scarr 1970:225
term 'labour trade' to embrace labour migration generally. This is already implicit in some writings. In Firth's study of German recruitment and employment the business is not confined to Pacific islanders on plantations but extended to include Chinese and phosphate mining. Similar studies centering on German New Guinea also emphasise the point that Asians as well as Melanesians worked on the German plantations. Howe's survey of early recruiting in southern Melanesia reveals that Loyalty Islanders were recruited in large numbers on trading vessels while Corris, whose Solomon Islands study ends in 1914, makes the point that the trade in his area has continued down to the present day; it simply entered a different phase with internal labour migration totally superseding overseas labour migration. More recently Newbury has adopted an interdependent regional approach where the labour trade is seen as 'only one aspect of the region's economic history'. Instead of the trade being explained in terms of culture contact in the sense of the face-to-face relationship between Islanders on the one hand and recruiters and overseers on the other, it is seen as part of a wider, more impersonal, interaction between areas of recruitment and the areas of employment. The labour itself moreover is viewed as a scarce and essential resource not 'contracted independently of the system of production and control' but whose contribution 'cannot be assessed conclusively without reference to the topics of land, capital, business organization, or technology'. Not least of the advantages of this approach, with its emphasis on the wider system of commercial production, is that it avoids the fragmentation of labour along racial lines. Obvious application in this regard lies in the economic history of Fiji where it would overcome the present historiographic disjunction between Indian plantation labourers and their imported Pacific Islander counterparts.

This chapter therefore joins the growing list of studies which recognise that the labour involves more than the recruitment for,

66. S. Firth 1973b
67. Biskup 1970; S. Firth 1976
69. Newbury 1980
employment on, and repatriation from, tropical plantations. A wider conceptual framework seems necessary if the present objections are to be overcome. One way to do this would be to capitalise on the historiographic advances just outlined, then follow the lead given by some geographers, and expand the meaning of the term 'labour trade' to embrace labour migration generally; or better still to realise that the so-called 'Pacific Islands Labour Trade' is but one aspect of this wider phenomenon. Such a frame of reference allows that the business is not confined to plantation work but also includes mining, maritime commerce and other categories of employment involving absence from one's place of origin or domicile. It also admits that others besides Britons were involved as recruiters and employers, nor does it necessarily exclude non-Pacific Islanders from the labour pool which provided the manpower for European commercial activity in the Pacific. Such an approach could have a wide applicability; certainly it is necessary to encompass the Tuvaluan experience and for many reasons - the recruiters and employers included many others besides Britons, only a fraction of the Tuvaluan recruits worked on plantations, the early Tuvaluans at Ocean Island and Nauru worked alongside Chinese labourers, and finally because far more Tuvaluans have been involved in the cycle of labour migration this century than last.

70. Bedford 1973; Brookfield 1973
CHAPTER 10

"GREEN DOTS OF THE EMPIRE":
THE ELLICE ISLANDS PROTECTORATE

Dots only. And if the ship that carries you is running past them in the night, with the steady force of the south-east trades filling her canvas, you would never know that land lay within a few miles, save for the flashing of lights along the low sandy beaches or, mayhap, the dull roar of the beating surf thrashing the reef on the windward side of the island. 1

IN September 1892 Great Britain added a further 10 square miles to her overseas Empire when Captain H.W.S. Gibson of H.M.S. Curacoa declared a Protectorate over all nine Tuvalu islands. With the assumption of British rule a powerful new element entered the scene which, by degrees, fundamentally altered existing relationships between Islanders and foreigners and which gradually gave Tuvalu the basis for a wider sphere of participation with the outside world.

THE DECLARATION OF THE PROTECTORATE

BRITAIN raised the flag over this tiny island world at a time when her avowed policy was to avoid added colonial entanglements. Nor were there any compelling local circumstances to warrant the move. British interests were predominant within the group, but those interests were small and not under threat - a few hundred tons of copra at best for Henderson & Macfarlane and 3000 adherents of the L.M.S. There were no plantations to protect, no labour recruiting of any consequence to maintain or regulate, and no problems of 'disorder' which might otherwise have invited imperial intervention. The group was strategically unimportant; although a coaling station had been established at Funafuti for Royal Navy vessels during the Russian war scare of the early-1880s, that threat had since passed

1. Becke 1897:14
and the facility been dismantled. The decision to declare a Protectorate was quite unrelated to events within the group. Rather it flowed-on from the declaration of a British Protectorate in neighbouring Kiribati: the month before which, in turn, was a function of Great Power diplomacy.

The origin of these wider diplomatic manoeuvrings lies in the 1886 convention by which Britain and Germany agreed to carve the western Pacific into respective spheres of influence. Kiribati and Tuvalu fell within the British sphere along with Papua and the southern Solomons (see Map 10:1). As Bernard Porter notes, Britain and Germany responded to their agreement quite differently: whereas Germany regarded the agreement as a means by which she could annex the islands falling in her part without British objection, Britain saw it as a device by which she could ignore her side without fear of German intrusion. Indeed Germany "religiously confined herself" to her part of the divide, as the German trader Eduard Hernsheim discovered when he asked his government to raise the flag in Kiribati and Tuvalu. However, the presence of other metropolitan interests in the western Pacific created pressures which forced a reluctant Britain to adopt a more positive role within her sphere of interest. The turning point eventually came in 1891 following German disquiet at American activities in Kiribati and particularly at reports that the United States Government was planning to enter into treaties with i-Kiribati chiefs. Disturbed that such a move would result in the D.H.P.G.'s Samoan plantations being cut off from an important source of labourers, Germany pressed Britain to declare a Protectorate over the group with the tacit understanding that German recruiting would continue as before.

The outcome is well known. Lord Salisbury, the British Prime Minister, was cordial to the German request because he needed their diplo-
matic support to counter French opposition to British policy in Egypt. The Colonial Office strenuously opposed the assumption of formal responsibility for an island group with few claims to commercial or strategic significance, but was forced to reconsider when Salisbury proposed as the only alternative that the islands be made over to Germany. To allow Germany to step into the British sphere was out of the question since it meant tearing up the 1886 Agreement and inviting vehement protests from the Australasian Colonies. The Colonial Office and Salisbury’s Foreign Office therefore agreed, for quite different reasons, to have a Protectorate declared over Kiribati and in August 1892 Captain E.H.H. Davis of H.M.S. Royalist raised the flag. He also visited Tuvalu and reported that the inhabitants of all the islands (except Mulakita) agreed “to have Queen Victoria’s flag hoisted ...”.

8. Davis, 1892 Royalist Report (CO 225/39/23076; published as FOCP 5269). For a colourful but somewhat suspect account of Davis’s activities in Kiribati see Farrell 1928: 382-86
9. Davis, 1892 Royalist Report, pp.84-89 (FOCP 5269)
The idea to draw-in Tuvalu was that of the man on the spot, Sir John Thurston, the Western Pacific High Commissioner. Three years earlier Thurston had suggested, as a counter to what he perceived to be German designs in Kiribati, that treaties be entered into with local authorities in Kiribati and Tuvalu “for the acceptance by them of a Resident appointed by or in the name of Her Majesty to aid and advise them in the administration of their affairs”; but his scheme was rejected. With a Protectorate declared over Kiribati, Thurston now saw the French as the danger and warned that they might drive a wedge between Fiji and Kiribati by occupying intervening Tuvalu. On this occasion his promptings were heeded and it was quickly decided that the Queen’s protection should also extend over Tuvalu providing “the natives agree”, and so the Royalist was diverted to the group. But even before that agreement was forthcoming the R.N.A.S. was instructing Captain Gibson of H.M.S. Curacoa to place Tuvalu under British protection, and this he did a few weeks later. Even then Britain’s unwilling rush for new Protectorates was not over. Fearing that recent events might provoke the French into seizing the non-German Solomons, and fearing even more the political implications, Britain felt impelled to declare yet another Protectorate. “The French Govt,” as Fuller of the Colonial Office minuted, “if their hands were forced by a subordinate would be in a difficult position, as they are more terrorised by their Jingoes than even we are by ours”. Once the Protectorates had been declared, however reluctantly, the Colonial Office then had to decide on how they were to be administered, or more precisely the extent of British jurisdiction. Initially the Colonial

10. Paraphrase of telegram from Governor of Fiji to Lord Knutsford, 16 June 1892 (encl in CO 225/38/12151); Thurston to Knutsford (confidential), 23 June 1892 (CO 225/38/18865)
11. Thurston to Knutsford (confidential), 3 May 1889 (CO 225/30)
12. Thurston to Knutsford (private), 22 June 1892 (CO 225/40); Thurston to Knutsford (confidential), 23 June 1892 (CO 225/38/18865)
13. CO. to F.O. (confidential and immediate), 21 June 1892 (CO 225/30/12151); F.O. to CO., 27 June 1892 (CO 225/41/18921)
14. Adm. to C.O., 4 July 1892 (CO 225/40/13597); Meade to Bramston, 6 July 1892 (CO 225/40/18921); Scott to Gibson, 7 July 1892, 14 Aug 1892 (encl in CO 225/40/229b7); Gibson, 1892 Curacoa Report, dated 20 Dept 1892 (encl in CO 225/40/22987)
15. Fuller to Bramston, 8 Sept 1892 (encl in CO 225/40/18921); see also Scarr 1967:254-55; Thompson 1980:145-46
Office had balked at the idea of outright annexation, preferring instead the cheaper option of protection which, hopefully, might only turn out to be a temporary measure. Thurston, however, "had no love for protectorates. They were in vogue as a means of limiting responsibilities and quietening anti-colonial lobbies, but they left much in doubt about the protector's powers. He really did not know what a 'protectorate' was, and could find no lawyer able to tell him." Realising that Protectorate government in Kiribati and Tuvalu would be from the beginning "beset with difficulties in consequence of an inability to enforce its authority over natives and foreign residents alike", Thurston proposed possession instead and gave details on the likely expense of administration and various schemes of administering.  

His proposal may well have been accepted, despite Treasury opposition to the likely expense of such an arrangement, but for its timing; in the meanwhile Disraeli's Conservative government had been defeated in the recent general election and the new Secretary of State for Colonies, Lord Rippon, was avowedly against annexation "even on the smallest scale". He had already been assured by Meade of the Colonial Office that there would be no annexation of Kiribati, only the establishment of a Protectorate, and so had no hesitation in squashing Thurston's proposal to that effect.  

Nonetheless, Thurston's entreaties were not without effect. The Colonial Office acknowledged the force of his arguments in favour of possession but also knew that their options had been closed. Nevertheless, a means had to be found to effectively administer the new Protectorates while at the same time overcoming the objections to annexation. The obvious solution was to abandon the idea that a Protectorate only allowed the administration a degree of influence and jurisdiction over British subjects alone, and instead to adopt the continental type of Protectorate, especial-
ly that of Germany who governed its own Protectorates as though they were annexed territory. Again the timing of Thurston's proposal was significant because there were recent precedents for widening the scope of protection, notably the 1891 Bechuanaland Order-in-Council under the 1890 Foreign Jurisdiction Act. This was the first step in the Colonial Office's implementation of what became known as the "colonial protectorate" - a legal advice which eventually enabled Britain to exercise jurisdiction over both foreigners and 'natives' and so bring her theory of Protectorates in line with the continental models. Both the Foreign Office and the Law Office were initially unwilling, in the early-1890s, to sanction that such authority flowed ipso facto from the bare assumption of a Protectorate; but by November 1892, when the new Pacific Order-in-Council was being drafted, the Law Office gave its consent (on practical grounds of the sort concerning Thurston) for jurisdiction in Protectorates to extend to foreigners. The question of jurisdiction over Islanders was still unsettled but for the moment legal difficulties could be overcome by entering into treaties with the local authorities in Kiribati and Tuvalu. And so in June 1893, shortly after the release of the new Pacific Order-in-Council, Thurston visited both groups in H.M.S. Rapid to inaugurate Protectorates along such lines. The Gilbert and Ellice Islands Protectorates, then, were an interesting advance in British imperial thinking as a stepping-stone in the evolution of the colonial protectorate.

Once returned from the new Protectorates Thurston set about appointing their Resident Commissioner. He had received a number of unsolicited applications for the position but originally he intended to appoint George Peate, a planter who had learnt the Kiribati language from his labourers. However, Thurston now realised that the appointee would

20. Johnston 1973:229-63; Sillery 1965
21. On the origins of British colonial protectorates see Newbury 1973
23. Thurston, 1893 Gilbert and Ellice Journal (NAF). A copy of Thurston's agreements with the "chiefs" in Tuvalu is enclosed in CO 225/42/19625
25. H. Landseer Tripp to Thurston, 1 Nov 1892 (WPMLC 4, 239/1892); Louis Becke to Thurston, 5 Sept 1892 (WPMLC 4, 241/1892); Becke to Thurston 5 Jan 1893 (WPMLC 4, 15/1893); Becke to Thurston, 9 Jan 1893 (WPMLC 4, 25/1893)
26. Thurston to Rippon, 3 Feb 1893 (CO 225/39/1585)
need legal experience to deal with the problems posed by the enormous trading debts incurred by several islands in northern Kiribati. He therefore seconded for a two-year period on a salary of £500 a year C.R. Swayne, a Stipendiary Magistrate in the Fiji service who also happened to share his botanical interests. In December 1893, well over a year after the Protectorates had been declared, Swayne departed in Henderson & Macfarlane's S.S. Archer to take up his new appointment.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL

On his way to Butaritari in northern Kiribati where he established his nominal headquarters, Swayne called at each island in the two groups and on the basis of enquiry and observation he drew up codes of laws for each. The Native Laws of the Ellice Islands... made provision for a range of offences relating to public order ranging from murder and theft to slander and drunkenness, which "supported in principle and codified in fact many of the changes initiated by the missionaries". Attendance at the pastor's schools, for example, was now compulsory, the Sabbath was to be kept holy, and to the church's system of fines was added the administration's, under the guidance and advice of the Resident Commissioner, which was grafted onto the existing kaupule on each island. A single "High Chief" was recognised on each island and made ultimately responsible for good order. Each island was to have a "Magistrate" who would be assisted by a "Scribe", and the kaupule was to hold monthly meetings with these three individuals to conduct the affairs of the island. An "Island Fund" was also to be established and by this means it was hoped that the Protectorate would pay its own way, for the British Treasury had stipulated that local taxes cover the entire cost of the administration and that the new Protectorates on no account be a burden on the British taxpayer.

27. Thurston to Rippon, 2 Sept 1893 (CO 225/42/19616)
28. See the Native Laws of the Ellice Islands, (British Protectorate), 1894 (Suva: Government Printer, 1894) - copy encl in WPHC 4, 1852/1912. See also Macdonald 1971:31n.17
The initial character of the New Protectorate was fashioned not so much by these laws but by local conditions working in conjunction with Treasury parsimony and Swayne's methods of indirect rule. Since there was no possibility of establishing the large-scale European plantation or mining enterprise necessary to underwrite the costs of an extensive administrative structure and a range of government social services, the Ellice Islands Protectorate was instead "run on the cheap". To compound the administration's initial financial difficulties, the local Queen's Tax could not be collected from the northern Tuvalu islands because they were in the grip of a drought. The fragmented nature of Kiribati and Tuvalu added to Swayne's difficulties because his dependence on the Archer and the occasional British warship for transport within and between the two groups meant that his supervision of the local island governments was of a superficial nature. Although Kiribati and Tuvalu were technically two separate Protectorates, Swayne was stationed most of the time in northern Kiribati where most of his energies were devoted to settling the disputes over trading debts. The only time the Resident Commissioner was ever actually resident in Tuvalu was for the six weeks spent at Funafuti in 1895 when he was dropped off by H.N.S. Lizard, proceeding southwards, to await the arrival of the Archer and so be conveyed back to Tarawa.

Working within these constraints Swayne was able to visit Tuvalu on six separate occasions. His programmes and reforms included the establishment of the Queen's Tax and a land register on each island, instructions that a census be taken and provision for public burial grounds. His major concern, however, was in the establishment and consolidation of self-governing local governments, and to that end he spent a considerable amount of his available time explaining the regulations and procedures to the principal men on each island. In some respects this task was simplified by the Samoan pastors having created single, unified villages throughout the group, one to each island, and also by the lack of disorder and sectarian rivalry which characterised many of the Kiribati islands.

30. Details of Swayne's activities in Tuvalu have been taken from his reports to Thurston - see WPHC 4, 21/1894; 198/1894; 42/1895; 216/1895; 367/1896; 390/1895
In some cases Swayne met with difficulties, particularly when the new concepts of property and compensation implicit in his village improvement programmes cause dissatisfaction or confusion:

The King and Council complained in several islands that they met with obstruction from natives in improving the towns and I laid down that the King and his council could make roads and shift houses or extend the town and that they were the owners of all roads, that where they cut down cocoa nut trees they should compensate the owners. 31

In other cases, particularly at Nukufetau, obstruction to government programmes was attributed to less excusable motives:

Some little progress towards improving the island had been made but the people are still the dirtiest, the worst housed, and the laziest in the Group. Pele the pilot and one of the Fonosili [kaupule] is the best man here, but like all reformers he meets with much opposition and his fellow Councillors would much like to dismiss him. 32

At times like these Swayne was inclined to be firm, as at Ibi in 1895 when he dismissed the entire kaupule, including Magistrate, Scribe and aliiki:

for not being progressive enough. The newly elected Tupu alike [and] government are certainly much superior to those relieved of office. Banaba the new Tupu is a very intelligent man and appears to have much more influence than his predecessor. 33

Although the new local governments were intended to fit in with the traditional authority structure, the experiment altered it in unforeseen ways and sometimes even had the opposite effect to what was intended. Swayne - and Captain Davis before him - acknowledged only one "king" or "High Chief" on each island. But ethnographic reality was quite different.

31. Swayne to Thurston, 17 Jan 1895 (MPHC 4, 21/1895)
32. Swayne to Thurston, 15 Nov 1895 (MPHC 4, 390/1895)
33. Swayne to Thurston, 15 Nov 1895 (MPHC 4, 390/1895)
Ruling chiefs were frequently replaced - often because they had lost popular support - and on many islands there were two who were in power, or at least potentially so. In no cases were these rulers seen in any way as "kings" as a late-19th century Englishman (or Welshman in the case of Davis) would understand the term. The reigning aliki, whether singular or plural, were essentially always supported by other aliʻikī who formed the kaupule, all of whom were involved in the formation of island-wide decisions. Swayne's recognition of one "king" only on each island, answerable to him rather than to the rest of the island - led him to regard that person as being more powerful than he actually was. The irony was that while Swayne sought to confirm or even bolster the position of aliʻikī, he and his successors followed policies which reduced it instead. This can be seen most clearly in the appointment of Magistrates who, as the dispensers of justice and agents of the colonial government, tended to become the most dominant local secular figures thus making further inroads into the power of the aliʻikī.  

Yet it is the positive side of Swayne's work in Tuvalu which ought to be stressed. He laid the foundations for a well-functioning system of local government, variants of which have persisted to the present day. The irony is "that the structure which he and Thurston devised to give as much autonomy as practicable to the island governments could be manipulated by a determined resident to give quite minute control over the daily lives of the Islanders."  

Swayne's successor, William Telfer Campbell was that person. Before his appointment in Kiribati and Tuvalu, Campbell had been a Magistrate in the Louisiades Archipelago in British New Guinea, where his work was unsatisfactory to the Governor, Sir William MacGregor. Campbell resigned from the New Guinea service in 1890, ostensibly on the grounds of ill-health but really because the conditions were too primitive. Yet when he applied to Thurston "for a Deputy Commissionership or any other appointment under the Administration of Your Excellency", MacGregor gave him a good reference and Campbell was eventually appointed to Kiribati.

34. Mrs David 1899:126-27; Moricks 1981:38  
35. Macdonald 1902:82  
36. Joyce 1971:151; Roe 1963:240, 243
Had Hacgregor also mentioned that Campbell was domineering, intolerant and vile tempered, the two Protectorates would certainly have been spared his presence. He was the antithesis of Swayne - an apostle of direct rule who could brook not the slightest opposition. Throughout his stormy 12 year reign he was constantly at loggerheads with other European residents, whether they be traders, missionaries or his own staff.

Intensely paternalistic as well as authoritarian, Campbell reduced the island governments into instruments by which he could control, within the limits of his mobility, the daily lives of the Tuvaluans. To that end he was particularly concerned that they be filled by his own appointees, or at least by people of whom he approved and who could see that his instructions were carried out. He therefore deposed entire kaupule with far less restraint than Swayne had exercised and reacted strongly when Tuvaluans persisted in their customary practice of dismissing akiki and kaupule who had lost local support.

One of the most intransigent impediments to Campbell's aim of close central government control were the Samoan pastors in Tuvalu with their considerable temporal authority within local communities and a vested interest in maintaining it. Campbell's problem was that the laws of the Mission held greater legitimacy in the eyes of the Tuvaluans than did his own laws, and an insight into this attitude may be seen in the reaction of a group of Funafutians when members of the Royal Society's coral boring expedition of 1897 hastened to put on clean clothes for the arrival of H.M.S. Royalist (Captain Ranson):

The natives were rather astonished to see us shake off our working garb but we advised them to put on their best clothes too, because, as we put it, "Man-o-war, plenty big boss," but they laughed and said, "Mo, missionali big boss." 40

37. Campbell to Thurston, 10 Aug 1893 and encl (WPHC 4, 183/1893);
Campbell to Thurston, 11 March 1895 (WPHC 4, 125/1895)
38. Campbell's career in Kiribati and Tuvalu is discussed at some length in Macdonald 1982:82-93
39. See Campbell's despatches to the High Commissioner on WPHC 4, 79/1895; 392/1896; 68/1897; 137/1897
40. Mrs Davis 1899:273-74
Campbell had already experienced this attitude. Upon arriving at Nukufetau the previous year in H.H.S. Goldfinch (Commander Ash):

A number of natives requested permission to have dancing in the evening on account of the visit of a man-of-war. I granted permission and on telling the Tupu he asked me if the missionary had given permission on which I assured him that the missionary was not the person to give permission. 41

And the following day at Funafuti:

Permission was asked to hold a dance in the chief village. As a complaint had reached me concerning the action of the Samoan Missionary who had interfered recently, opposing the native government who had given permission for a dance when H.H.S. "Penguin" was at Funafuti I gave permission to have one on the following evening and said I would be present thinking it would be a favourable opportunity to speak on the subject generally. I attended the so called dance, which was a most harmless entertainment, and explained to the people that they could dance at certain times. The Samoan Missionary then inquired if the people were to be rules by the Bible or by the Law, I told him by the Law and that he was not to interfere with the native government or to dictate to them as to what they should or should not do also that if he had any complaints to make as to their conduct he was to make them to the Resident. 42

It was only a matter of time before Campbell clashed with the unco-operative pastors, who disgusted him by their money making techniques, among other things. The particular object of his attention was Kirisome, the only elderly pastor in the group, or "the last of the Dictators of the old style", as Campbell styled him. On one occasion he scolded Kirisome for greediness, noting afterwards that the latter "did not appreciate my kindness in enlightening him as to his position as a Missionary and Foreigner". 43 In fact it was Campbell who was the foreigner and this helps explain why Tuvaluans' loyalties tended to lie with their pastors rather than the colonial government, for the church had long been inter-

41. Campbell to Thurston, 17 Oct 1896 (WPHC 4, 392/1896)
42. Campbell to Thurston, 17 Oct 1896 (WPHC 4, 392/1896)
43. Campbell to Thurston, 15 Dec 1896 (WPHC 4, 63/1897)
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\(^a\) removed by L.M.S. for unsatisfactory performance of duty  
\(^b\) removed by Resident Commissioner  
\(^c\) removal demanded by people  
\(^d\) locum tenens  
\(^e\) died at his post  
\(^f\) retired

*source: Records of the L.M.S.*
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nalised into Tuvaluan culture and the pastors absorbed into village affairs whereas Campbell was an outsider and the representative of an alien institution. From this apparent position of strength Kirisome threw out a direct challenge to Campbell, actively obstructing the island government and exhorting the Islanders not to pay the Queen's Tax. The result was a very one-sided affair with Campbell leaving instructions that the offending pastor be returned to Samoa on the next occasion the John Williams called. The dismayed English missionaries had no option but to comply with this directive and their subsequent complaints to the High Commissioner were dismissed. Campbell was well on his way to establishing his ascendancy over the Mission.

THE CHURCH REORGANISED

Campbell's action against Kirisome was only part of a broader campaign directed at the L.M.S. to improve their performance in the Protectorates, and above all to effectively supervise and control the pastors. For the past two years he had been applying constant pressure on the S.D.C. to appoint a European missionary in each group; he also urged the establishment of a central school in Tuvalu. Probably he got this idea from Goward who, dismayed at the half-hearted manner in which the pastors' schools were being conducted, had suggested in 1897 that the best pupils from Tokelau and Tuvalu be brought to a central school at Funafuti under the management of a resident pastor. The S.D.C. had long acknowledged the undesirable effects of its inability to properly supervise the Outstation pastors (see Chapter 6) but the practical difficulty remained that a European missionary could not be spared to take up such an appointment. What

44. See Brady 1975:124
45. Cooper to O'Brien, 14 Aug 1899, and encls (WPHC 4, 185/1899); French, 1899 Journal, pp.29-30 (SSJ 193); Newell, 1899 Journal, pp.5-6 (SSL 44/5/8); Newell to Thompson, 10 Jan 1900 (SSL 46)
46. Goward, 1897 Journal, pp.2-4 (SSR 4/241); see also Mrs David 1897:4-5
the S.D.C. proposed instead was that Goward become Superintendent of the Northwest Outstations and visit them twice a year, thus doubling the present level of supervision. However his health broke down soon after, the existing system of annual voyages continued, and Campbell's impatience began to make itself felt. To make matters worse the Catholic mission in Kiribati sent three priests to Funafuti in 1898. Their arrival threw a scare into the L.M.S. camp, but the Funafutians remained faithfully to Protestantism and the priests departed after 18 months' unsuccessful effort.

After numerous delays the S.D.C. finally decided, in response to Campbell's promptings, to appoint Goward as resident missionary in the Northwest Outstations and eventually even agreed to provide him with one cottage at Funafuti, another at Beru in Kiribati, and also a small ship. In the event Goward was stationed at Beru and the Northwest Outstations became a separate missionary district under his care. But, as he had foreseen, the Northwest work was too much for one man alone and in 1902 control of Tokelau and Tuvalu reverted back to the S.D.C. as the special responsibility of Newell. The only change to have taken place in Tuvalu was the establishment of a central school at Funafuti along the lines originally proposed by Goward.

Thus Campbell's keen desire to have a European missionary stationed in the group was as far away as ever. Moreover, "the work" in Tuvalu was in a chaotic state. Sana, the pastor at Nui, was taken away on Campbell's orders and the following year the pastors at Nanumea and Vaitupu were removed after serious disagreements with their congregations. There was a "decided retrogression" at Nukulaelae and Funafuti, and fresh

48. Sabatier 1979:315; Agassiz 1913:358-69; Cochet 1900a; & 1900b; Leroy to [?], 17 Feb 1899, and Cochet to Broyer, 23 July 1899 (Catholic Diocesan Archives, Apia); Goward to Newell, 11 Sept 1899 (SSL 45); Newell, Diary, 15 Nov 1899 (SSO); Campbell to Tupu and Kaubure of Funafuti, 6 Jan 1899 (encl in WMC 4, 192/1898); Campbell to Tupu and Kaubure of Vaitupu (copy), 5 Jan 1898 (SSL 45)
49. Special Meeting of S.D.C., 18-19 Sept 1902 (PHB 95); General Meeting of S.D.C., 12-18 May 1903 (PHB 96, frame 334)
50. Goward to Thompson, Nov 1902 (SSL 47)
51. Newell, 1904 Journal, p.6 (SSL 48)
disputes broke out at Nanumea and Niutao in 1904. Problems continued to crop up and the pastor at Nui, whom the S.D.C. had decided to remove, begged to be transferred and the people were glad to see him go. At Nanumanga, by contrast, Newell felt sorry for pastor Asotasi "wasting his time with such a people".

Campbell renewed his efforts to have the S.D.C. station a European missionary in Tuvalu. But this did not come about until well after his departure from the Protectorates in 1908 and even then not for the reasons he propounded, but because European missionaries were necessary to take control of the central schools. Finally, in 1912, Sara Jolliffe arrived at Funafuti to establish a girls' school, named Papaelise. Despite several breakdowns in her health, Miss Jolliffe kept returning to her posting after periods of convalescence until 1920. In 1913 another European missionary arrived when H. Bond James was seconded from the Cook Islands District to take charge of the Motufoua School at Vaitupu, where he remained until 1917. Although the organisation of the church in Tuvalu had been significantly altered, this was never really intended to result in a closer supervision being exercised over the pastors. Lacking their own transport, neither missionary was any better equipped to do this than the old system of annual deputations, and so the little world of pastor domination in Tuvalu continued.

LABOUR MIGRATION AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

LABOUR migration only became a feature of Tuvaluan life in the 20th century with the commencement of a government sponsored programme of circulation
of labour between the group and Ocean Island, the site of a phosphate extraction industry. The first Tuvaluans went to Ocean Island in 1900, and over the subsequent decade the numbers employed in phosphate mining in any given year ranged from between 60 to 120. The period of employment under contract was generally for two years, and the great majority of the migrants were young men. On completion of their contracts, migrants were returned to Tuvalu and a new batch of recruits was sought for work on Ocean Island. In 1906, for example, the S.S.Inger took 42 young men from Vaitupu and returned an undisclosed number to Nanumea.

Circular migration between Tuvalu and Ocean Island had two immediate effects in the communities of their origin. On the one hand a spate of church building in the early years of the 20th century was a function of the cash earned by migrant labour. On the other, Tuvaluans returning from a period of work on Ocean Island brought back a variety of infectious diseases which contributed significantly to a decline in population between 1900 and 1913. Dysentery was a major cause of mortality over this period, especially "a severe epidemic ... which extended throughout the group ... during 1907 and 1908". Manumea, a recruiting base for Ocean Island, was particularly hard hit, and the deaths reported for these two years total 57 and 81 respectively. It may have been much higher for another source puts the figure for 1908 at "about 110". Furthermore, there was a high incidence of infant mortality.

Throughout the first decade of the 20th century there was a tendency for deaths to exceed births, a situation which led some government officials to view the Tuvaluans' demographic future with some pessimism. In view of this concern with population decline it is hardly surprising that provision of medical treatment and improvements in hygiene in the

58. A. Chambers 1975:51n, 99  
61. G.B. Smith Rewse, Annual Report for the Ellice Islands for the year 1912 (WPHC 4, 1442/1914)  
62. Ibid  
63. Newell to Samoan District Committee, 6 Aug 1908 (PMB 417)
villages assumed a high priority in official policy. Annual reports for Tuvalu contain lengthy reviews of the health and wellbeing of the people and some statistics on the causes of death. The most prevalent disease was seen to be consumption in its various forms (later identified as tuberculosis) and it was generally accepted that it "can be placed in the front rank as a cause of death among these people". Although every island had its local hospital, and a larger District hospital was nearing completion in 1912, it was not until patients severely affected by the disease were kept isolated from the general population that the incidence of "consumption" began to decline.

The provision of health services underlines the basic feature of British rule in Tuvalu. However paternalistic and authoritarian it may have been in character, the Protectorate government was nevertheless primarily a benevolent organisation - one that upheld Islanders' rights against foreign intrusion other than its own. In Tuvalu, in other words, the humanitarian strand in British colonial policy was not compromised for the sake of economic development beneficial only to European interests, as happened contemporaneously in resource-rich dependencies such as the British Solomon Islands Protectorate and Ocean Island. Tuvalu contained no worthwhile phosphate deposits, like Ocean Island, and the group's environmental characteristics precluded the development of European plantation enterprise and with it the growth of pockets of European settlement and large company domination, as happened in the Solomons. Development along these lines in the Solomons, moreover, was seen to be inevitable as well as necessary because, in keeping with prevailing demographic theories, the Solomon Islanders, like the New Zealand Maoris and Marquesans, were regarded as a dying race or at least in the throes of irreversible population decline:

Since the people were doomed, administrators turned their attention to the land. It became in their eyes not merely financially desirable but morally mandatory, a sacred imperial duty, to develop the economic resources

64. Mahaffey to Thurn, 11 March 1909 pp.26-27 (CO 225/86)
65. G.B. Smith Rewse, Annual Report for the Ellice Islands for the year 1912 (WPHC 4, 1442/1914)
of Melanesia .... depopulation was .... made the cornerstone of policy. Officials in the Solomon Islands drew what they imagined to be the only conclusion and set themselves to attract investment of capital to secure for the group a prosperous future, but one in which the Solomon Islanders would have no permanent place. 67

The tiny atoll and reef island systems of Tuvalu, by contrast, were rightly seen as holding no future for large-scale European enterprise and so the Protectorate government adopted a protective attitude towards the Tuvaluans and made their interests its primary concern. The Tuvaluans perceived the relationship in this light, and when a United Nations mission from the (anti-colonial) Committee of Twenty Four visited the group in 1974 and asked questions which "were designed to draw out details of [past] exploitation", the Tuvaluans frankly replied that, to the contrary, British rule through the decades had been benevolent and concerned with their interests. 68 Their replies would have been quite the opposite had Tuvalu contained exploitable resources.

67. Scarr 1967:293, 297
68. Chambers and Chambers 1975
IN 1908 Campbell was transferred from the Gilbert and Ellice Islands service and the Protectorates' headquarters moved from Tarawa to Ocean Island where his successors could exercise in situ oversight on the activities of the Pacific Phosphate Company. By this time the Tuvaluans had experienced 16 years of colonial rule, 43 years of missionary activity, and 87 years of trading contacts. In some respects great changes had been wrought on the Tuvaluans and there were many highly usable signs to attest these changes - notably the imposing churches on the centres of unified villages where the slightly raised dwellings were now neatly aligned. Pagans had now become Christians; the formerly politically autonomous islands were now part of the British empire; and the once self-sufficient subsistence economies of each island had now developed linkages with world capitalism and a measure of dependency on the industrialised world. The traditional power structure on each island had been modified and weakened by both the L.M.S. and the Protectorate administration and new foci of local authority in the shape of the resident L.M.S. pastor and the government Magistrate now co-existed with the traditional founts of authority.

Yet by comparison with many other island groups, the rate of change had been gradual and its effects slight. It has been stressed throughout this study that environmental factors imposed rigid limits on the extent and intensity of European involvement in the group. Tuvaluans may have had no say over copra prices or the raising of the flag, but the low level of outside involvement in the group meant that they were in a position to exercise options that would not have been available had, for example, European plantations and sustained labour recruiting been facts of life. Their absence facilitated the preservation of traditional patterns and enabled the Tuvaluans to proceed from a position of relative strength in coming to terms with the new pressures in their midst. From the beginning both church and trade goods became absorbed into Tuvaluan life and thus served, rather than altered, Tuvaluan ends. Many of the
At times ... a canoe will put out suddenly from
the shore-line, its occupants shouting, singing,
laughing in reckless abandon, paddling at random
as though the mere arrival at a destination were
of truly negligible importance compared with the
ebullient joy of present living. Or, at night,
there will be a fishing party, half in play, half
in earnest, their hand-nets slapping on the water,
their blazing torches and shiny brown bodies mirr-
ored on the still surface; or again, in the clear
moonlight, a large fish jumps, out in the distance,
and some minutes later the eddies it set up come
lap-lapping along the shore. At such times one is
close indeed to the spirit of old Polynesia, and
may feel the presence of long-forgotten Tangaloa-
langi on a stealthy visit to a small corner of his
former vast empire. 1
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Grateful thanks are also extended to that friendly, dispersed group of fellow workers in the field of Tuvalu studies who provided references, encouragement and hospitality, who read some of my chapter drafts, who often kept me supplied with necessities and luxuries during my periods of fieldwork and who sustained me in times of doubt. They are, in strictly alphabetical order, Richard Bedford, Niko Besnier, Ivan Brady, Anne and Keith Chambers, Michael Goldsmith, Laumua Kofe, Hugh Laracy, Barrie Macdonald, Roger Mclean, Honor and Harry Maude, and Jay Noricks.

Others too gave of their time to read chapter drafts - Frank Broeze, Peter Curson, Charles Forman, Peter Hempenstall, Gordon Jackson, George Parsons, and especially John Garrett and Rhys Richards - and to provide English translations of foreign texts - A. Buff, Penelope Bok, Beverley Clark, David Christian, Brian Coghlan, Ian Grady and Elspeth Wishart. Also remembered for their practical help are Kristal Buckley, Ian Campbell, Antony Hooper, Judith Huntsman, Tito Isala, Robert Langdon, Mac Marshall, Colin Newbury and Steve Singline.

I spent 10½ months in Tuvalu in 1977-78 and another three months in 1979. At the time I had no savings and would probably never have made it to the field had not my father, Donald Munro, and my aunt, Fay Thomas, provided the necessary finance. They gave generously, especially my father, but the money would never have lasted but for the generosity of
many Tuvalu people who took me into their homes and fed and cared for me. The Rev. Lausaveve Seve at Nukulaelae and Anasone Kilei at Vaitupu shared their homes with me for months on end. Every other fieldworker will appreciate the extent of my debt to both them and their families. On other outer islands I stayed for shorter periods with the families of Teafiula Nui at Niutao and Faalo Lapipe and Pie Palako at Nanumanga. The Rev. Honolulu Pine also provided me with a place to work at Vaitupu. On my frequent returns to Funafuti I stayed with Siliga Kofe, Alesana Seluka, Peter McQuarrie and John Sommerhauser, all of whom I owe a great deal in other respects as well. John and Anita Wilson were also good friends.

Many other Tuvaluans are also remembered with especial gratitude. It was my good fortune at Nukulaelae in having Lenese Telava as my field assistant. I stayed at Nukulaelae for 4½ months, far longer than at any other outer island and my list of thanks are correspondingly large - Isa and Bilin Paeini, Tinilau and Loise Lomi and family, Telava and Alotapu Tevasa, Lipine and Lisepa, Henry Naisali, Toe Samuelu, Kelese Simona, Tupou and Fiamaua Alama, Seve Lausaveve and his sister Loite, to mention a few. At Vaitupu I am especially grateful to Halologa Paulo and his son Ioane, Dr Kalaaki Laupepa and Dr Tomasi Puapua; and at Nanumanga to Kasi ileemia.

Every thesis writer knows what a good typist means, and I had two. June Donovan of Adelaide typed several chapters and Jill Rayner took over when I moved to Tasmania. Grateful thanks go to both for the care and pride they took in their work.

And finally a word of thanks to my kaaiga - to my parents, to my brother Ian and his wife Sharyn, to my sister Lucinda, and above all to my wife Teloma who has lived with this thesis all her married life.

Port Arthur
Tasmania

Doug Munro
LIST OF SOURCES

1. OFFICIAL - MANUSCRIPT

2. OFFICIAL - PRINTED

3. UNOFFICIAL - MANUSCRIPT

4. PERSONAL PAPERS

5. SHIP'S LOGS AND JOURNALS

6. PRIVATE - PRINTED

7. NEWSPAPERS

8. SECONDARY - BOOKS, ARTICLES, THESIS, TYPESCRIPTS

† consulted on microfilm in the Mitchell Library, Sydney, or the National Library of Australia, Canberra

‡ consulted on microfilm in the Department of Pacific & Southeast Asian History, Australian National University

1. OFFICIAL - MANUSCRIPT

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CO225† Great Britain, Colonial Office, Original Correspondence, Western Pacific. London, Public Record Office. Volumes 1, 30, 37-46

GAJ‡ Fiji Immigration Department, Government Agent's Journals. NAF. Listed in Giles 1968:119-20; Scarr 1967:343-46

New South Wales, Maritime Services Board, Register of Arrival and Departure of Vessels. Sydney, New South Wales Archives Office

RKA‡ Records of the Reichskolonialamt. Potsdam, Deutsches Zentralarchiv. Volumes 2791, 2836, 2914
Records of the Commander in Chief, Royal Navy Australia Station. Wellington, National Archives of New Zealand. Volumes 15, 16, 17, 41, 45. The two reports by Cyprian Bridge in 1883 are distinguished thus: Bridge, 1883 Espégle Report #1 (print) - RNAS 16 = H.M.S. "Espégle." - Report of Proceedings on Cruise to Ellice, Gilbert (or Kingsmill), Marshall, Caroline, and Pelew Islands, April to October, 1883; and Bridge, 1883 Espégle Report #2 (print) - RNAS 16 = Cyprian Bridge, Report on Islands of the Ellice, Gilbert (or Kingamill), Marshall, Caroline, and Palaue Goupe, visited by H.M.S. "Espégle," in May, June, July, and August, 1883. (also on WPHC 4, encl in 172/1883)

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