

Notes on

MISCELLANEOUS ISLANDS

ROSE ATOLL - AMERICAN SAMOA

A rather complete account of the topography and vegetation of Rose Atoll is given by William A. Setchell, professor of botany at the University of California, in Carnegie Institution of Washington, Department of Marine Biology, vol. XX, pp. 225-261, June, 1924. The following is a brief summary of his account.

Rose Atoll is situated in lat. $14^{\circ} 32'$ S. and long. $166^{\circ} 11'$ W. and is the southeastermost island of the Samoan group, 78 miles from Tau, being connected with this island and the rest of the Samoan chain by depths of between 5,000 and 10,000 feet, the surrounding water being 15,000 to 20,000 feet.

It was discovered and named by Freycinet, Oct. 21, 1819, who gave a map, profile and description, although he approached to within only 1.5 miles. Kotzebue, April 2, 1824, passed it and named it Kordinkoff Island, making a small chart of the atoll. Dumont D'Urville, Sept. 23, 1838, passed within a mile and described island and atoll. The first recorded landing was made by the U.S. Exploring Expedition, Oct. 7, 1839, with descriptions by Wilkes and Dana. In 1873 charts and data were published by Graeffe (in German) based on observations by Captain Ranzau, who had taken his small vessel thru the hazardous entrance into the lagoon.

Alfred G. Mayor accompanied Gov. Warren Jay Terhune on a visit to Rose Atoll, ~~June 1920~~ June, 1920, who made extensive biological observations during two days, June 5-6. Besides making a report to the Governor, Mayor published on Rose in Science, n.s. vol. 54, p. 390, 1921, and Proc. Amer. Phil. Soc. vol. 60, no. 2, pp. 62-70, 1921.

He described the island as "an atoll, the lagoon being surrounded by a narrow ring of limestone, composed chiefly of lithothamnium, which is everywhere nearly awash at low tide, excepting at the N.E. side, where there is a narrow entrance about 9 feet in depth, out of which a current constantly flows. The ring of limestone which surrounds the lagoon is quite uniformly 500 yards in width, while the central lagoon is about 2 miles wide and appears to have a maximum depth of not more than 8 fathoms. There are only two small islets upon the atoll rim, Sand Islet and Rose Islet." These he describes in some detail.

Setchell discusses the geology and soil: Reef a hard smooth surface veneered with a pink crustaceous coralline, supporting hundreds of large blocks of limestone, about 5.5 ft high, most of which are loose, indicating that the rim once stood 6 to 8 feet higher than at present. The islets are composed of coquina, wave-worn fragments lithothamnium and broken coral, with organic matter derived from decomposed roots of the *Pisonia* trees. Sand Island is devoid of vegetation and organic matter, and the seas must at times break over it, being only 5 feet above high tide. Soil and its bacterial population described.

Climate noted as "warm and moist". S.E. trades from April to November; variable winds during the other months, frequently from W. and N.W. with occasional gales, but few hurricanes.

Few animals: usual sea birds; small brown-gray rat; short-tailed lizard (*gekko*); a few turtles. Numerous fish have long been an object for visits.

Vegetation consists of buka tree (*Pisonia grandis*), *Boerhaavia tetrandra*, and *Portulaca lutea*. Coconuts introduced and planted 1920, and probably before. The trees form a nearly symmetrical dome on the higher parts of the island, which is about 240 yards long (SW-NE) and 200 yards wide. They form a complete canopy with a height of up to 80 feet.

The coral is described in detail.

Discussing the origin of the flora: *Pisonia* transported by birds, the viscous fruit clinging to their feet. *Boerhaavia* and *Portulaca* might also be transported by birds, or by the waves.

Gives technical list of flowering plants and marine plants. Bibliography.

TIME AMONG THE ANCIENT HAWAIIANS

In answer to our inquiry, a few weeks since, for the information about the ancient division of time among Hawaiians and the names of the months and days, a gentleman, who has devoted much time to the study of ancient Hawaiian customs and habits, communicates the following information, which will be new to most of our readers, and should be placed on record:

From the reign of King PAPA, time was divided by the Hawaiians into Makahiki, year; Malama, month; and Po, night. The Makahiki, or year, was subdivided into O Ke Kau, or summer, and O Ke Hooilo, or winter. There were six summer and six winter months. The names of the six summer months were--Ikiiki, Kaaona, Hinaialeele, Kamahoemua, Kamahoehope, and Ikua. The six winter months were--Welehu, Makalii, Kaelo, Kau-lua, Nana, and Welo. Some of these had different names on different Islands. There were thirty Po, or nights, in each month, and were named from the form of the moon; beginning with the new moon. Hiol was the first night, so called from the slender appearance of the new moon. The next was Hoaka, and then Kukahi, Kulua, Kukolu, and Kupau. Then came Olekukahi, Olekulua, Olekukolu, Olekupau. Then Huna, Mohalu, Hua, Akua, Hoku, Mahealani, Kulu, Laaukukahi, Laaukulua, Laaupau, Olekukahi, Olehulua, Olepau, Kaloakukahi. Kaloakulua, Kaloapau, Kane, Lono, Maui, and Maku--thirty in all. From these thirty were separated four, which were Kapu, so there were four Kapu nights in each month. The names of these were Kekapuku, Kekapuhua, Kekapukalua and Kekapukane.--Advertiser.

Hawaii

AGE OF KAMEHAMEHA I--Mr. Kamakau, a native historian, states in the Hawaiian Gazette that Kamehameha I, was born in 1736, hence at his death in May, 1819, he must have been 83 years old. This would make him 43 at the date of Cook's arrival at the islands in 1778, and 58 when Vancouver visited the Islands in 1794. According to this date, His Majesty must have been 78 years old when his son Kamehameha III., Kauikeaouli, was born on the 17th of March, 1814. With all deference to Mr. Kamakau's historical knowledge, we must differ from his statement, and regard as more correct the statement that Kamehameha I. was born in 1753. This would make him 25 when Cook arrived. We should be glad to learn upon what historical data Mr. Kamakau bases his statement. We have read with interest Mr. Kamakau's historical sketch as published in the Gazette. of August 26th.

Hawaii

NECKER ISLAND

HOW BRITISH PLAN FOR NECKER WAS DISCOVERED.

P. 16
On file in the Archives of Hawaii is a letter dated August 8, 1895, and signed by Curtis J. Lyons, Surveyor-General of Hawaii for a long period, disclosing how he learned of the plan of the British officials at Honolulu to seize Necker Island as a British cable station; how he notified Minister of the Interior James A. King of the plan; and how, following receipt of this information, Minister King immediately headed an expedition to Necker Island, and seized it in the name of the Hawaiian Government.

(See Appendix "I").

P. 17
In this connection the compiler has been in possession of a story, for many years, that while a British warship was visiting Honolulu a ball was given in the city, at which many of the British navy officers were present. During a dance, a young lady partner of a British subaltern officer, invited the officer to attend a function a few days later. The officer expressed his regret that he would be unable to attend as his ship was under orders to proceed very shortly to one of the islands to the Northwest, but would return in a short time.

The young lady repeated this conversation to an official of the Government. Putting two and two together, the official decided the matter was of considerable moment, and a consultation of officials was held, resulting in the determination to dispatch a party to Necker to annex it officially to the Hawaiian Government - which was done.

From: "Islands of the Hawaiian Domain", statement prepared by A.P. Taylor, Librarian, Archives of Hawaii (10.1.31). Pp.16-7.

Kennedy's Island

- (1) Kennedy's Island $11^{\circ} 17' S$ & $167^{\circ} 58' E$; Duffport Island, etc.; by Capt
Simpson in the "Tartarus". News from Pat Jackson in Naval Chronicle,
1806, XVI. 195.
- (2) Kennedy's Isel, discovered by Capt Simpson in the "Tartarus", 1801
--- Zimmermann, Australien, 1810, p. 289
--- Hassell, Australien, 1825, p. 419
--- Wommer, Australien, 1832, p. 182.
- (3) Kennedy's Island 2 April, 1828 Tammoko (?)
--- Dumont D'Urville, Voyage de l'astrolabe.
- (4) Kennedy Island
--- Cheyne, Western Pacific, 1855, p. 61.
- (5) Mattoctee (Motu-ite?) or Kennedy Island
--- Findlay, S. Pacific Directory 1884, p. 837.
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KERMADEC GROUP.

Cowan, James. - "Suwarrow Gold, and other Stories of the Great South Sea". London, Jonathan Cape, 1936.

A Chapter entitled "The Isle of Lost Endeavour" pp. 169 - 184 contains a good account of the various endeavours made to settle the Kermadec Islands.

- (1) James Reed and his Maori wife - 1837-1845
- (2) Baker and his Samoan wife - 1840-1845
- (3) Johnstone and his half Samoan wife - 1857-1863
- (4) William Covert and his Strong's I. wife - 1857-1870
- (5) Thomas Bell and family - 1878-1890 ?

In 1803 kidnapped natives landed in dying condition by Peruvian slavers.

In 1887 British flag hoisted and New Zealand government began to squeeze out the Bells.

In the 1890s two attempts at settlement encouraged by N.Z. govt. Both failures.

December, 1917, Count Von Luckner, of the "Seeadler" escaped from Motuihi Island, off Auckland, and was captured on Curtis Island.

Anuanuraro Island.

Latitude 20° 26' South.

Longitude 145° 51' West.

Circular lagoon island without entrance to lagoon: about 4 miles in diameter.

Freehold , purchased by S.R. Maxwell and Company Limited from Taaroa in 1914: cost with about 6,000 trees francs 23,000.

In 1918 4,500 seed nuts and Umi Smith overseer and 5 labourers were landed. In April, 1919, Smith died on the island.

In May, 1919, schooner "Papeete" landed 5,000 more seed nuts.

In end of 1919 labourers removed. It is believed that about 12,000 trees exist on the island. Some trees should now be in bearing.

In his report of 9th June, 1922, Mr. Young estimates number of trees as 8/9,000.

Anuanurunga Island.

Lat. 20° 39' South.

Long. 145° 35' West.

Under French flag as is also Anuanuraro.

Held by S.R. Maxwell and Co., Ltd. under lease for 90 years
from year 1908 at a rental of francs 100 per annum.

About same size as Anuanuraro - has never been planted.

VICTORIA ISLAND.

From Cowan, James - "Suwarrow Gold".

1936

P. 155. Marked as Victoria Island, E.D. Charted position about seven degrees south of the Equator and ~~160~~ 160 west longitude. Some 40 years ago much discussion among island navigators concerning this missing island, and there was an American who claimed to have landed on it. Harry Henderson, of the firm of Henderson & Macfarlane, who cruised all over the South Seas on his trading expeditions, was always on the look-out for new isles which could be made productive by the planting of coconuts. On one of his cruises from Sydney and Auckland, in the firm's steamer "Janet Nioll", commanded by Captain Henry, he passed somewhere about the place where Victoria should have been - but wasn't. R.L.S., his wife and Lloyd Osborne were passengers and Mrs. R.L.S., in her ~~story~~ story of the cruise, dated 1890, made several references to the owner's interest in the romantic isle always just over the horizon. One of her diary entries - 'Mr. Henderson got out the chart and showed us his own islands and the supposed location of Victoria Island, which he is looking for. I offered to toss him ~~for~~ for the latter, to which he agreed. Louis threw up a piece of money, and I won. I have yet, however, to find Victoria'.

A sanguine schooner captain from Tahiti was talking of a search for Victoria Island the other day.
