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THE DEATH OF  
CAPTAIN JAMES COOK

BY GEORGE GILBERT

(From Gilbert's Narrative of Cook's Last Voyage, 1776-1780)



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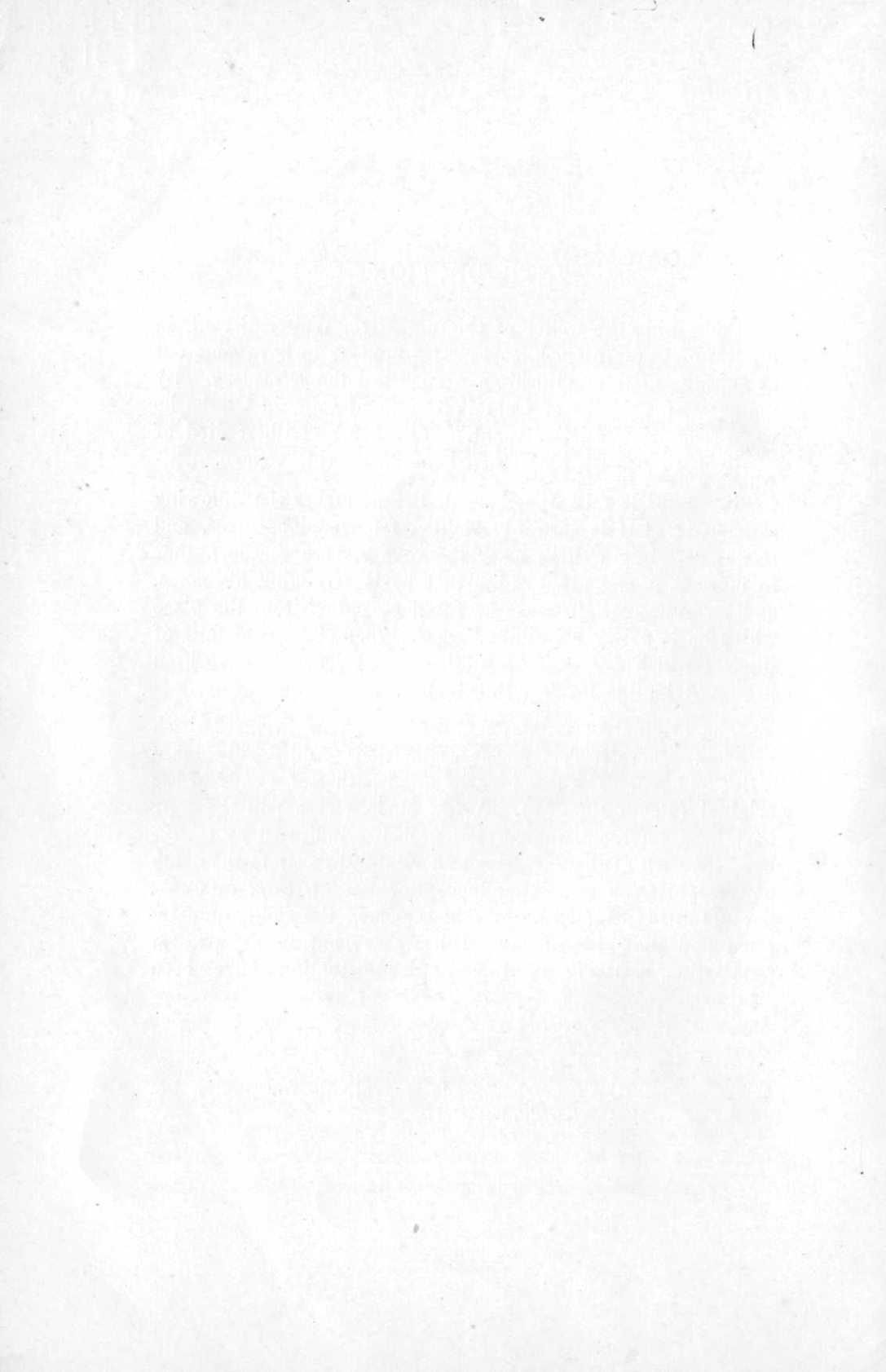
## INTRODUCTION

Concerning the writer of this narrative, Walter Besant, in his life of Captain Cook, says: "He appears to have gone out as master's mate or midshipman on board the *Discovery*. By the successive deaths of Captain Cook and Captain Clerke he was promoted to be lieutenant." (P. 119.) Gilbert died of smallpox soon after his return home from this voyage.

In regard to Gilbert's journal, Besant makes the following statements: "It is certainly written from copious notes, and it was certainly written after the voyage, because the author in more than one place shows that he is arranging his notes, and reserving certain remarks for a second visit to the place which he is partly describing." (P. 173.) "Many details of interest which are omitted in the official journals have been preserved in this log." (P. 119.)

The original of Gilbert's narrative is now in the British Museum, where it is a recent acquisition (Additional Manuscript 38,530). The text here followed is that of a copy of the original (Pages 188-261). A few obvious errors in the copy have been corrected, the corrections being indicated by square brackets. All of the narrative that relates directly to the death of Captain Cook is printed in Walter Besant, *Captain Cook*, pages 143-144, 155-170. Besant corrected the faulty punctuation and the misspelled English words; but in the present publication, Gilbert's spelling and punctuation have been retained.

Hon. A. L. C. Atkinson, a member of this Society, had the narrative copied from the original in the British Museum, and Hon. G. R. Carter has made it available for publication by the Hawaiian Historical Society.





## The Death of Captain James Cook

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On leaving the land we had a very hard gale of wind from the N W which lasted three days, but after that had fine weather all the passage.

About the 23 of Nov. we got into the parallel of Sandwich Islands; and seven or eight degrees to the eastward of them which we did intentionally to discover if there were any more in the cluster to windward of those we had seen before; we now stood to the westward the two ships keeping abreast of one another at two Leagues distance all the day and trying too during the night; after sailing in this manner three days, we fell in with a large Island in Latitude  $20^{\circ} \frac{3}{4}$  No. and Long  $20^{\circ} 51\frac{1}{2}$  East, and about 100 Leagues from Towi; The interior parts are hilly but the shores is of a moderate height and has a very fertile and delightfull appearence; as soon as we had got within a mile or two the Natives came off to us and ventured on board without any hisitation and behaved very friendly; they brought with them the productions of the Island in great plenty; which we purchas'd along side with the usual articles.

\* The joy that we experienced on our arrival here is only to be conceived by ourselves or people under like circumstances; for after suffering excess of hunger; and a number of other hardships most severely felt by us; for the space of near ten months we had now come into a delightful climate were we had almost everything we could wish for, in great profusion; and this luxury was still heightened by our having been at a shorter allowance of provisions this last passage than ever we was at before. Having procured a sufficient supply to last us four or five days, we stood off and work'd up along shore to the S E keeping at the distance of 5 or 6 Leagus from the land; when our stock on board began to grow short, we went close

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\* The quotations printed in Besant's *Captain Cook* begin at this point.

in and traided for more, and then stood off again; this we continued to do for 10 or 12 days, till we weatherd the S E point of the Island which is called by the Natives Mow:wee.

From hence we stood over to a large Island called Owyhee that lies in sight of it to the S W which we made on the N E side it is very mountainous in land, and the shores in general steep; but exceeding fertile. The Natives came off to us in great numbers and behaved in a very friendly manner; we traided with them as usual till we had purchas'd provisions enough for five or six days; which we did in three or four hours and might have got three times as much if we had chose, for the greatest part of their canoes were oblig'd to return to the shore with what they had brought off to us; we then stood off about 5 or 6 Leagues from the Land and worked up along shore, to the S E keeping at that distance till our stock was expended; and then went in and traided for more; as we had done off the other Island; as we were not yet in want of water Capt. Cook perfer'd this method of passing the time to going into a harbour; as it was a great means of saving traide of which he was apprehensive we should not have as much as we might have occasion for—The Discovery having broke an arm off one of her Bower Anchors at the Island of Dessolation; the armourors were employd, while we lay in Lamganorda harbour in working it up for that purpose which was proportionately divided betwixt the two ships and with several spare Iron stores, principally, belonging to the shallope, sarved us for Trade, dureing our stay among the Islands.

After standing off and on for upwards of a month, and having coasted along near  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the Island we began to be in want of water; therefore the master with two boats well arm'd was sent in shore to look for a harbour; and very luckily found a small bay opposite to us which was the first we had seen the least appearence off: but however as this could not be preceived till we came within two miles of it; we very probably might have passed others of the same kind—The next morning (being about the 10 of [January] 1779) we stood in for it, with a light breeze and as we approached near the shore we were surrounded with upwards of 1000 canoes at the mean rate of six people in each and so very anxious were



they to see us, that those who had none swam off in great numbers, and remaind along side in the water both men women and children, for four or five hours, without seeming tired; the decks both above and below were entirely covered with them; so that when we wanted to work the ships we could not come at the ropes without first driving the greatest part of them over board; which they bore with the utmost cheerfullness and good nature jumping from every part of her into the water, as fast as they could, appearing to be much diverted at it, and would come on board again when the business was over—

This bay is situated on the west side of the Island in Latitude  $19\frac{1}{2}$  No. and Long 209 East, and is called by the Natives Carnacoah; It is smal and open to the sea which causes a great swell to set it, and a great surf breaking on the shore, renders the Landing rather difficult—the Bottom of it is a high steep Cliff; but the sides are low and level; with a Town upon each; at least eight times as big as any we had seen before in the South Sea: The Country here is one entire plantation; as far as we could see from the ship which is divided into squares by stones thrown together or hedges of sugar cane; we moored with the Bowers in 10 fathom of water gravel bottom about  $\frac{2}{3}$  of a miles from the Town on the North side, and  $\frac{1}{3}$  from a low sandy beach on the South side; near the bottom of the Bay; which is the only one in it.

We got our observatories and Tents on shore here, as usual, and pitched them upon a large oblong piece of ground wall'd round with stones, two or three feet high, which was held sacred by the Natives, who notwithstanding their curiosity, so great was their superstition, that none but the chiefs dare venture to come upon it so that our people were the less disturb'd by them. The sail makers were sent on shore with the greatest part of our sails to repair they being very much worn; as was all our Rigging which we carefully overhauled here.

We were surrounded every day with a great number of canoes and supplied by the Natives with provisions, in the most plentiful and hospitable manner imaginable. The King of the Island whos name was Terriabee; and several other very powerfull chiefs frequently came on board to visit Capt.

Cook who always received them with the greatest respect. They generally brought with them a large present of Hogs; Fowls: Fruit, etc. for which in return he gave them at different times four or five small Iron daggers; about two feet and an half long, in form of their own wooden ones and made by the armourer for that purpose likewise such other trinkets as they were pleased with; what we was most in want of here was good water that which there is, being in standing pools, and very muddy, and brackish, except some we got from a small spring in a well, at the foot of a rock close to the beach which yielded very little; and tho' it was clear and much better than the other, yet! was rendered brackish from its being so near the water side, we purchasd not less than 10 or 12 punch-eons of excellent salt here; which is principle made by the sun, and was the first we met with during the voyage; this proved a very wellcom supply; as it enabled us to salt down pork for sea, which otherways we could not have done having used all we had on board for that purpose at Otaheite—one of our Seamen died here, whom we intar'd on shore in one of their burying places Capt. Cook read prayers over him in the usual manner; and the natives who were present on the occasion, according to their custom threw a couple of small pigs and some fruit into the grave; which were covered up with him. The latter part of the time we lay in Matavai Bay in Otaheite, and at Amsterdam, one of the Friendly Islands, being five weeks at each; We found supplies of all kinds begin to grow scarce; but that was far from being the case here, for everything was as plentiful the last day as when we first came in; Having got everything off from the shore, in the evening about seven oclock we preceiv'd the house to be on fire that our sailmakers had work'd in which we were in general of opinion they did on purpose thro' some superstitious notion they had among them.

It being now about the 5th of Feb. and the season approaching; after a stay of near a month we sail'd from the Bay with an intention of going to the wester'd to these Islands we had been at before to take in a supply of yams for sea, as they had got none here, but in this we were unfortunately prevented; for after working up along shore to the Northward

a considerable distance against a very strong breeze, we discovered a spring in the head of our fore mast right athwart from one cheek to the other which obliged us to put back to Oarriacoak Bay, to repair it; and having a fair wind for it we got in the next day and moord as before.

We immediately began to unrigg the ship as far as was necessary and having raised a pair of sheers with two main top masts, we got out the foremast which was hauld up upon the beach to be repair'd and the carpenders of both ships were sent on shore for that purpose; the place [our] tents were pitch'd upon before being close to the beach; we set them up again on the same spot; for the people who were at work upon the mast and Mr. King our Lieut. was orderd to superintend this duty, with a guard of about 8 marines for their protection the Observatories were likewise sent on shore with the Astronomical Instruments, and several of our sails to repair having split them while we were out.

The natives did not appear to receive us this time with that Friendship that they had done before; our quick return seem'd to create a kind of jealousy amongst them with respect to our intentions; as fearing we should attempt to settle there; and deprive them of part if not the whole of their Country; This Idea Capt. Cook took every method, to remove, by telling and shewing them the reason that obligd us to come in again with which they apparently seem'd to be very well satisfied; the third day we had been here in the afternoon one of the Natives on board the Discovery stole a pair of Tongs from of the Armourers forge, and got into his Canoe with them; the Alarm being given; several of them began to paddle away as fast as they cou'd; upon this the Master with a midshipman and two men instantly got into their jolly boat and without any arms persued the Canoe they suspected which reach'd the shore long before them and the men had got out and haul'd it upon the beach were several others were lying, the master and midshipman landed amongst a great number of the Natives and were going to seize one of the Canoes when a Chief who was present told them, that it belong'd to him and they shou'd not have it; and indeed it is very probably but they mistook the one the man got into who committed the Theft;

either in putting off from the ship among so many, or in hauling up; but as they still foolishly persisted in attempting to take it away, the Chief lay'd hold of them and gave 'em a severe beating with his hands which the two men; who remained in the jolly boat perceiving, they row'd off to a little distance and got clear; our pinnance that was lying not far off waiting for Capt. Cook with only the Crew in her, who seeing the affair went without any orders to their assistance; but as soon as they came near the shore, the Natives lay'd hold of the Boat and haul'd her up high and dry upon the beach; and broke some of the oars; which oblig'd the crew to take to the water and swim to the jolly boat; The Indians at the same time pelting them with stones; in a little time they were quiet and call'd to the people in the boat to come on shore and that they would let them have the pinnance; which they did with the oars that remained; and likewise releas'd the master and midshipman—about an hour afterward Capt. Cook hearing of the quarrel was very angry and gave our people a severe reprimand for their rashness; he walk'd round with one of the officers to the place where it happen'd and found everything there, very peaceable.

The next morning which was the 14th. of Feby. 1779 at day light the Discovery found her six oard cutter missing that had been moor'd at the buoy which we immediately supposed to have been stolen by the Natives, in consequence of the above quarrel. when Capt. Cook was inform'd of it, he order'd a Boat from each Ship, well arm'd to row off the mouth of the bay to prevent the Canoes from going out, and if any attempt it, to seize, and send them in again; at the same time, propos'd to Capt. Clerke for him to go on shore and endeavour to persuade the King to come on board that he might confine him till the Boat was return'd according to his usual custom in these cases, but he seem'd to express a desire to decline it on account of his health. Capt. Cook said no more about the matter; but went himself with three boats, viz. a six oard pinnance in which he had with him a mate the Lieut. of Marines, and some of his men, a six oard Launch with the 3 Lieut. a mate some marines and a few additional sea men; and a four oard cutter with a mate and the midshipmen that

row'd her; being in all including the crews of the Launch and pinnance about 38 people, with each a musket a cutlass and cartridge Box; — Having landed at the town on the North side of the Bay with the Lieut. of Marines a Sergeant, Corporal, and seven privit men; He ordered the boat, with the rest of the people to lie off, at a little distance, and wait for him; He then proceeded with the marines under arms up to the Kings house which was about 200 yards from the water side; where he found him with several Chiefs and not less then two or three thousand of the natives; after the usual ceremonies had pass'd the Captain invited him to come on board which at first he absolutely refused but after being press'd for some time He seemed inclinable to consent and was thought he would have come had he not been prevented by the Chiefs who would not permit Him: as in all probability they saw into the design—this enraged Capt. Cook very much as he was not accustomed to have his intentions frustrated, by any person; and had but little command over himself in his anger; at this instant a canoe came over from the other side of the Bay and brought the Natives Intelligence that a Chief was kill'd there, by one of our boats firing on shore; upon this they began to arm themselves with spears and [pieces] of the branches of trees that they broak up in a hurry instead of Clubs; and some of the Chiefs had the same [iron] Daggers that we had given them; the Capt. had with him a double Barreld piece one loaded with small shot the other with ball and a [hanger] by his side—they now began to press together and grew rather tumultuous and some in particular insulting him, he beat them with the butt end of his musket which caused them to be still more so; Mr. Phillips, the Lieut. of Marines preceiving this repeatedly told Capt. Cook of the danger he apprehended they were in; and urged him to retire which as if Fate had determined, he should fall he took not the least notice of; but fired at one of them with small shot and wounded him and a little afterwards at a Chief with ball; but missing him killed the man that stood next to him outright, and altho this enraged them to the highest degree, yet! they then did not dare to attack him. at last finding it was impossible to accomplish his disign he ordered

the marines to retreat and was himself following them and possibly would have got safe off had not the people in the boats very unfortunately on hearing the second report of his Musket, began to fire upon the Natives which threw them into a state of Fury; the Marines likewise on shore without orders follow'd their example; and Capt. Cook had no sooner got to the water side and waved to the boats to give over firing when one of the Chiefs more daring than the rest steep'd behind and stab'd him betwixt the shoulders with an Iron Dagger, another at that Instant gave him a blow with a club on the head by which he fell into the water; they immediately leaped in after and kept Him under for a few minuits then hauled him out upon the rocks and beat his head against them several times; so that there is no doubt but that he quickly expired. The Marins likewise at the same time after they had discharged their pieces were closely attacked and not being able to load again the Corporal, and three private men that could not swim were seized and kill'd upon the spot. The Lieutenant, Sergeant, and the other four, leap'd into the water, which was four or five feet deep close to the Rocks, and escaped to the pinnace which was laying within 30 yards of the shore, but by reason of the continual showers of stones that were thrown at them; and the confusion of those people getting in, they could not afford the least assistance to Capt. Cook, and very narrowly escaped being taken; The Launch, that lay close without her, and the cutter that was in shore, at a little distance both keep't up a brisk fire, for the space of 10 or 15 minuits till they were oblig'd to retire; having kill'd and wounded several of the Natives and caused the greatest part of them to retreat; and we were inform'd by the gentlemen in the Cutter who were the last that left the shore that very few of them remain'd by the dead Bodies when the launch and pinnace came away—during the firing on shore we saw a great number of the Natives running away up an adjacent hill at whom we fired five or six shot from our great guns, but our first Lieut. wou'd not allow of any more.—When on the return of the boats informing us of the Captain's Death; a general silence ensued throughout the ship, for the space of near half an hour;—it appearing to us somewhat



like a dream that we cou'd not reconcile ourselves to for some time. Grief was visible in every Countenance; some expressing it by tears; and others by a kind of gloomy dejection; more easy to be conceived then described, for as all our hopes centred in him, our loss became irreparable and the sense of it was so deeply impressed upon our minds as not to be forgot.

Such was the confusion of the people when they came on board that they did not preceive till a quarter of an hour afterwards how many of the marines were missing: Mr. Phillips the Lieut. who behaved with great prudence and courage, received a large wound upon his shoulder by a spear, and one of the privite men was wounded in his cheek close below his eye two inches and a half of the point of a spear having broke short off and was buried in his head; the others had several bruises from the stones that were thrown at them but suffered no hurt of any consequence—dureing this our people on the south side of the Bay, under the direction of Mr. King the 2d. Lieut. were very fortunately reinforced by some of our boats crew that had been rowing off the mouth of the Bay before any disturbance had begun there; being then altogether about twenty-four in number, tho' not above two thirds of them had muskets, on preceiving they were likely to be attack'd they took possion of a burying place that lay near them; which was a large platform of earth thrown up and fenced with stones being about 150 yards in length 60 in breadth and the sides six or eight feet penperdicular all round except a small passage, were not more then two people cou'd go up abreast; nothing could be more conveniently situated then this place; as from thence they cou'd not only protect the masts, Tents, and observatories, which lay between them and the beach and within less then a musket shot; but were secure from an encounter that they wou'd not have been able to resist. The Natives did not venture either to make an open effort to force them from their post; or to come near the tents; but kept up a distant and vigorous attack by heaving a great number of stones from behind the trees, and houses, which lay behind them, by creeping along under cover of these walls, they were able to approach very close to the platform, without being seen and when they thought themselves near enough would

stand up and heave several stones; and then retire for more; this they continued for some time and when any of them fell, another of them wou'd step forth and carry off the body at the risk of his own life. These Indians; use a large thick mat which they hold before them by way of a shield against their own wooden spears; and at the beginning of the attack several of them came to the edge of a pool, within reach of the shot to dip them in the water, and then would hold them up in defiance; thinking by that means to quench the fire of the musket by which they supposed they were killed; but in that point we quickly undeceived them. The Discovery laying nearest over to this side fired several shot on shore which terrified them very much.

After two or three hours; they retired with the loss of six or eight kill'd and some wounded, finding in vain to carry on anything further against our people in their present situation and thinking, I suppose by that means to draw them from it; but they wisely kept possession of their post.

About two hours after the death of Capt. Cook; we went with all the Boats from both ships well man'd and arm'd, and brought them off with the mast and everything else we had on shore, very safe the Natives not daring to molest us. The remainder of the forenoon we were employ'd in getting the mast upon the Booms for the Carpenters to work at; they having done very little to it as yet.

Capt. Clerke now came on board and took the command of the Resolution and appointed Mr. Gore our first Lieut. to that of the Discovery, and Mr. Harvey one of the mates to be Lieut. in his room.

In the afternoon notwithstanding what had pass'd two of the Natives from the Town, on the North side of the Bay had courage to come alongside which was placing great confidence in us and proves the high opinion they entertain of our integrity. One of them was a priest, whom we had often before known to have behaved very treacherously therefore supposed in the present case that he had no good intentions towards us; and so highly were our people exasperated at the sight, that it was with great difficulty the officers could prevent their firing at him. After staying about a quarter of

an hour he returned to the shore; and continued to make these short visits on board every forenoon, and afternoon, for three or four days afterwards; which I believe was to see whither or not we were making any further preparations against them; Mr. King now our first Lieut. was sent off the town on the North side with all our boats well man'd and arm'd to treat with the Natives for the Bodies; carrying a white Flag as a signal of peace for that purpose. They were assembled along the shore in great numbers; with their weapons in their hands and bidding us defiance, in the most contemptuous manner imaginable; for they seem'd to pride themselves very much in having killed our principal Chief; but from what we afterwards learnt they had very little reason; Having lost not less than eight or ten Chiefs and about 20 common men besides several wounded; amongst whom chanc'd to be the greatest part of those who assisted in the murder of our people; they strove much to persuade us to land but without effect one of them was dress'd in Capt. Cooks jacket, and trowsers, and another had his hanger in his hand, which he kept shacking at us, and making use of every threatening and insolent gesticures he could possibly invent. This enraged the sailors to the highest degree—and it was with the utmost difficulty they were restrain'd from firing upon them; finding we wou'd not come any nearer two of them ventured to swim off to us; whom we inform'd that we had no intentions of making an attack but came only to demand the Bodies which to amuse us for the present they said were carried away some distant into the Country; that we cou'd not have them then, but promis'd to bring them off to us, in the morning; therefore perceiving they were not to be procured at that time the boats return'd on board.

We were rather apprehensive that they intended to make an attack upon the ships in the night; therefore took every necessary precaution, to prevent being surprized, by keeping our guns, and swivels loaded, a sentry forward aloft, and on each gangway, one third of the people always under arms, and a four oar'd cutter well arm'd constantly rowing round us at a little distance while it was dark; which both ships continued to do during our stay here.

The next morning the seamen earnestly solicited the Cap-

tain that they might go on shore with their arms to revenge the Death of their old commander, which he did not think proper to permit; as it was not the intention of the officers to persue measures of that kind for a quarrel we had principally brought upon ourselves; but preceiving they were very eagerly bent upon it, he fram'd an excuse to pacify them for the present, by telling them, he could not possibly think of allowing it whilst the ships remain'd in such a defenceless state; but that in two days time when we had got things into a little order they should have leave that that purpose, by keeping them thus in suspense for three or four days their rage began to abate; and tis well he did for had he at first possitively denigh'd them so highly were they incenced against the Natives, that I believe the officers wou'd not have been able to have kept them on board: being rather suspicious that they were assembling canoes round the north point of the Bay a boat with an officer was sent to see who found no apperences of any. The fore noon a canoe with three men in her came off from the north side about half way to the ship where they stop'd and began to throw stones towards us; in which they could not heave half that distance; they could not have no other intention but that of insulting us; one of them all the time very triumphantly kept waving Capt. Cooks hat, over his head till some muskets, were fired at them, and then they instantly put back to the shore.

Our chief object at present, was the Foremast, which the Carpenders of both ships were working upon with the utmost expedition; making new cheeks for it out of a spare anchor stock; In the afternoon seeing a great number of the Natives assemble upon the shore on the north side of the Bay we fired a few shot at them from our great guns which quickly dispersed them.

When the old priest came on board we enquired of him concerning the Bodies; but could get no satisfactory account of them; and when we ask'd him why they were not brought off, agreeable to the promise made yesterday, he said that they had been carried to different parts of the island, and were not yet collected together but that we should have them the next day; which we preceived was only an excuse to keep us quiet;

therefore gave over every hope of having them return'd as judging that they had otherwise disposed of them, and did not wish us to know in what manner—On the 16th. nothing remarkable happen'd till about 9 o'clock in the evening when some people were discovered padding very softly to the ships; it being quite dark; and not knowing how many there might be two or three of the sentrys instantly fired at them, never the less, they persisted coming towards us and finding there was only one small canoe we suffer'd her to come alongside; when to our great astonishment they proved to be two of the natives who had brought with them about five pounds of human flesh which they told us was Capt. Cooks, and that they were sent by a priest, that lived on the south side of the Bay; who had before always treated us with great hospitality; we learnt that [he] and his adherents, still remain'd firmly attach'd to us, but were too few to declare it; to their Countrymen; which was the reason of their coming in the dark, that it might not be known; after giving them some presents, they returned to the shore, having luckily escaped being hurt in approaching the ship this small remains of our unfortunate Commander, which appear'd to have been taken from the inside of his thigh, was all our friend could procure for us, and a great proof of his sincerity; but answer'd no good purpose to us, as the sight of it, struck every one with horror and tended only to disquiet the sailors, by renewing their desire to be reveng'd of the Natives which began to wear off—

Beginning now to be greatly in want of water we were necessitated to go on shore again at all events, and endeavour to get off a sufficiency to last us to some other place; accordingly in the morning of the 17th. we sent the two Launches full of casks to a small well; before mentioned, on the south side close above the beach with other boats, man'd, and arm'd, to protect them. The Discovery also, hauled close in for that purpose—we had not been long ashore before the Natives began to annoy us by throwing stones from behind the Houses; and the well being situated at the foot of a steep Hill they kept rowling large ones down from the top of it which were oftens near doing much mischief; to prevent this, in a great measure, it was determined by the officers to set fire to the

adjacent Houses which wou'd not only terrifie them but hinder their approaching to molest us; as they then would have no shelter from our muskits; therefore when the people went on shore again after dinner, several of them, were given port fires for that purpose, when it was amazing with what alacrity they carried this scheem into execution; the eagerness with which they grasped at this small opportunity of revenge; being so great, that the officers cou'd not keep them in the least order, for they all instantly separated and were guided only by their own impetuosity, setting fire to the Houses, and killing the Natives wherever they met with any; who were struck with such terror at seeing the flames that they made off as fast as they could, and it was very fortunate that they did; for our people were so much scatter'd, that had they made the least resistance they might have cut several of them off, and the rest of us known nothing of it, till this business was over, which was in about an hour when with great difficulty, we collected the people together and stop'd their further progress; during this they had burnt about thirty houses, and kill'd six of the Natives. Two Irshmen concern'd, in the affair, extended their malice even to the dead Bodies, by cutting the Heads from two of them, which they brought down and fixed upon the [stems] of the Boats,—while the houses were yet blazing we perceived a party of them comeing down the hill but upon some of our people firing a few muskets at them they immediately fell flat on the ground and lay still for about five minuits; they then got up, and advanc'd slowly towards us with white flags in their hands, and finding they were not very numerous, we suffered them to approach us; when they proved to be our Friend the Priest, whom I mention'd last with some of his followers coming to entreat for peace for himself and his people; His House being unknown to us, was unfortunately burnt with the others; we carried him on board the ships where we consol'd him in the best manner we could and made him several presents being well convinced of his sincerity to us; when the Natives that came down the hill perceived the two Bodies laying without their heads they set up a most frightfull cry followed with great lamentation, seemed to be more affected at that, then any thing we had done to them,



which must arise entirely from superstition.—I cannot proceed without mentioning an instant of remarkable courage in one of these Indians, who had for some time greatly annoy'd the waterers, by throwing stones at them, from behind the Rocks at last, being closely persued by several of our people, he retreated to a deep narrow cave; and immediately begun raising a small breast work of stones towards the bottom of it, behind which, he placed himself; they searched all round but to no purpose; and tis a doubt whether they would have found him or not, had not he discover'd himself, by throwing stones at them the instant they appear'd. Upon this three or four of them step'd to the entrance of the cave and presented their muskets at him, and at the same time made signs, and told him, that if he wou'd come out, he should not be hurt; when like Aeneas; he return'd an answer with a flying stone, which was followed by others as fast as he could throw them; they then fired at him five or six times at which he seem'd to be not in the least intimidated still persisting in throwing at them; but preceiving that he was much wounded and reesolv'd to fight to the last moment, one of them rush'd in upon him, clap'd a pistol to his breast and instantly dispatch'd him; on examining him we found he had received no less then four balls, in different parts! He was a tall well made handsome, young man, and had the appearance of a chief. We took one of the natives prisoner that was attempting to escape in his canoe, whom we bound hand and foot and put him into a boat that had the head of one of his countrymen on the stem of it. In the evening the boat return'd on board having got a sufficiency of water to last us to Towi; one of the other Islands where we knew we could get plenty; The officers would not permit the seamen to bring the two heads into the ship; but obliged them to throw them into the water alongside—

The prisoner being brought upon the quarter deck, and set down bound as before everybody throng'd round him as is usual in such cases; when it is scarce possible to conceive how strongly every sign of fear was imprinted in his Countenance; he was seized with a most violent trembling from head to Foot: His complexion which was naturally of a light copper, was chang'd to that of a pale lead colour; and he re-

main'd silent, and immoveable; His apprehensions of death in every horrid form; appear'd to be so strong, as not to admit of the least ray of hope to his relief, and entirely deprived him of the faculty, of speech—by his looks which express'd the most exquisite distress he seem to implore for mercy, in a manner so affecting that it excited pitty in every Breast, and all being desirous for it we unbound him he now thought we were going to put into execution what his fears had suggested; and when we return'd him his canoe and told him that he might go on shore he paid no attention to it, for some time; imagining we did it only to insult him in his misery, by tantalizing him with what he had too great a dread upon his mind to believe; but when he found we were in earnest; His excess of joy was then as predominant as his fears had been before; and his gratitude which he express'd in the sincerest manner; was not disguised under a vail of politeness, but flow'd from the heart free and uncorrupted; He had not been long on shore before he came off again, with his canoe loaded with whatever he could procure, as a present to us; for which in return we gave him something of equal value; this he continued to do two or three times a day and became a most faithfull friend.

On the 19th the carpender having finished the mast, after great difficulty it was got in; the hawser we had reev'd for that purpose being so rotten that it stranded in five or six places as we were heaving, and we had no better on board. On the 20th. in the morning a chief that we had not seen before came on board, to negotiate a peace with us; and promised to restore part of the Captain's Body—accordingly in the afternoon Capt. Clerke with three or four boats well arm'd went close in shore on the south side where he concluded a peace with that chief; and brought on board Capt: Cook's head and hands which were all the remains we could possibly procure. the head was too much disfigured to be known but one of the hands, we were well assured was his; from a wound he had formerly received in it which made it remarkable. one of the natives brought about an handfull of small human bones which he said belong'd to the Marines whome they had burnt; we made several enquiries to know if they eat them but cou'd not find the least reason to believe so; for they seem'd to ex-

press as great an abhorrence of such an act as any European. they told us that no part of Capt. Cook was burnt but what became of the remainder of his Body, we could not learn; they also brought off the Double berelld piece he had with him when he was kill'd but they had entirely spoil'd it, by beating the barrels quite flat at the muzzle, we cou'd never get the least Intilegence of the cutter that was stolen, which was the first cause of this unfortunate affair.

On the 21st some of the natives from the south side of the bay brought off provisions and began to traid with us as usual; but excepting the old priest we were seldom visited by any of those on the north side who did not seem so much inclined as the others to come to a reconciliation; yet! from every appearance I make no doubt had we remained there but that in three or four weeks we should have been nearly upon as friendly terms with them as we were at our first coming.

In the afternoon we buried the remains of our much lamented commander; along side with every ceremony due to His Rank: whose name will be perpetuated to after ages and ever stand fore most on th elist of British Navigators.

On the 22d. the ship being riggd again and ready for sea in the morning we saild out of the Bay; having no desire to stay any longer at a place where we had suffered so great a misfortune.—\*and I make no doubt but the principal part of the Natives were much rejoiced at our departure; we stood along shore to the North as we had done before for 10 or 12 Leagues and then bore away from the Island; having now saild round upwards  $\frac{3}{4}$  of it, without seeing any other harbour, or Bay, but that we were in.

After leaving Owyhee, we stood towards three high Islands that lie to the Northwards of it, in the parallel of Maw,wee, and in sight from both; they dont appear to be quite so fertile as the others in the cluster, and seeing no signs of any harbour we did not stop, but after passing close along the SW side of them we directed our course to the NW for the Island we had first seen; in comeing from the Southward, last year; but we being then too far to leeward, could not fetch it, and was obliged to bear away for another, as is there mentioned.

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\*The quotation in Besant's *Captain Cook* ends at this point.

After two days sail, we made the Island and came to an Anchor, in a small open road, on the NE side of it the interior part is hilly the shore low and exceeding well cultivated; but very bare of wood the natives here dont appear to be very numerous; and as soon as we came near the land they ventured, on board, without any hesitation, and were very Friendly; the first enquiry we made was about yams; of which they inform'd us they had plenty and wou'd bring some off to us the next day as these, and water, were now our principal objects, the two Captains went on shore to look for the latter which they found, and in the general opinion of everyone else, that saw it, was good and to be got at without much difficulty. Altho this place appear'd to be in every respect more convenient for our purpose then that we were going to, yet! Capt. Clerke, did not approve of our staying here; and in the evening saild from the Island; which is called by the Natives Oawahoo. It lies in Lat.  $21^{\circ} \frac{1}{2}$  N. Long.  $20^{\circ} 2$  Et and is about NW & W 40 Leagues from the three Islands we pass'd by; after leaving Owyhee being much the largest space in the Cluster.

From hence we stood to the WNW for Towi, which is about 25 Leagues distant; and the next day came to an anchor in Ohamaya road; were we had been before in January 1778. we were visited by the Natives as usual; who seem'd to be very well pleas'd at seeing us again and in a short time the ship were surounded with Canoes, they brought off with them plenty of provisions which we purchas'd, being very acceptable, as we began to be in want of some. The next morning the Launches and some other boats with a party under the Command of Mr. King our first Lieut. were sent on shore having landed, they were received by a great number of the Natives, apparrantly in a very friendly manner; who under pretence of traiding intermixed with them and soon began to be troublesome, by takeing and runing away with whatever they could lay hold off; and one of them even became so daring as to snatch a Baynoet from the side of one of the Marines, which he got clear off with; Mr. King preceiving this judged it too dangerous, to continue on shore any longer with the few people he had with him, and those not all arm'd; He therefore gave over watering and colected them altogether retreated

gradually down to the beach; which they were lucky enough to reach and put off all safe, tho not without great Hazard and difficulty; being oblig'd to fire three or four muskets to keep back the Natives who had followed them close down to the water side, and thrown several stones and spears which chanch'd to do no hurt.

As this was the only place left at these Island were we cou'd get water to take with us to the Northwards we were oblig'd to attempt it again, at any risk; accordingly in the morning the launch was sent from each ships with empty casks and a gang of people for that purpose; likewise four other boats with about 40 men who were chiefly Marines, as a guard for their protection—They form'd on shore in a regular manner, and kept constantly under arms by which means tho' the Natives were very numerous; yet! we kept them at a distance, and very peaceable none daring to come near us, but such as we chose to permit; that we might traid with them; during this they came off to the Ships which lay about a mile from the shore in great numbers and brought on board plenty of provisions of every kind excepts yams which we was most in want of they being very scarce. In three or four days we compleated our water (which was exceeding good) without any further disturbance with the Natives, but finding we could not procure a supply of yams here, as we expected; after a stay of about a week we saild for the Island of Neehow; and the same day came to an anchor in an open road on the lee side of it, where we lay last year. Our whole employment here was in trading for yams which we not only purchas'd along sides from the natives who were very friendly, but had boats on shore every day for that purpose. We enquired concerning two gotes, that we had left with them when we were here before; which I had forgot to mention; and they informed us that after our departure the people of Towi; who are far more powerfull then they in every respect had demanded them; and on their refusing to deliver them up a battle ensued; wherein they being much worsted by way of putting an end to the dispute had killed the Goats rather then the other people should have them.

After using every method in our power to procure yams,

we got only a sufficient quantity to last us three weeks, which was far short of what we wish'd for: or even expected: but finding that we could get no more, and the spring advancing fast: after a weeks stay here and near four months amongst these Islands; on the 16th. of March 1779; we saild for the Northward to prosecute our discoveries another season in search of a passage thro' the Ice above Behrings Straits. As Capt. Cook had given the name of Sandwich to these Islands we first discovered it was now continued to the whole cluster which are nine in number; and extend from  $19^{\circ}$  to  $22^{\circ}$  North Lat: and from  $199^{\circ}$  to  $206^{\circ}$  East Longitude. Owyhee which is by far the most extensive is of a circular form about 25 Leagues across; and is at least eight times as large as Otaheite; it lies exceedingly convenient for the Spanish ships to tutch at in their passage from Acapulca to Manilla; being in the parallel of both and about 980 Leagues distance from the former, and 1600 from the Latter: therefore tis very probably that in a few years, they will have a settlement upon it: The interior parts rises into two very high mountains whos summits are cover'd with eternal snow tho' in so warm a Climate. The shores appear to be everywhere fertile except on the North side which seems entirely burnt up; and bears evident proofs of there having been formerly great eruptions from some volcanoe upon these mountains; but tho' we perceive no smoak arising from them as we have seen on the Coast of America, yet! have reason to believe they still continue in a small degree. Mowwee the easter most Island of the Cluster and the next in extent is 14 or 15 Leagues in extent and 7 or 8 in breadth —Morvokoi Owahoo and Towi; are nearly alike, being circular and about 9 or 10 Leagues across Kahowrowe, Kanni and Neehow are likewise nearly equal in size to one another being about four Leagues each way. These, with a small high Island to the Westward of Neehow and in sight from it call'd Taoura make up the Number.

The productions of these Islands are Bread Fruit, sweet potatoes, sugar cane, plantains, Bananoes, Eddy root, and the Cloth Tree; all in greater plenty then we had ever met with before; particularly the sugar cane which was the largest we had ever seen, and is much superior to that in the West Indies:



One I recollect that after the head was broke off, measured eleven feet in length and eleven Inches in circumference: yams, we got only to leeward and Cocoa nuts that are so very plentiful at all other Island between the Tropicks we found only at Carriacoak Bay; and there exceeding scarce. The Soil here is not so Rich as at the Society and Friendly Islands but the plantations are perportionately much more numerous and extensive; These Indians being more Industrious and improve in Cultivation then any we have seen; the principal part is the Cloth tree, the eddy root, sweet potatoes and yams; the other productions require little or no labour, but grow almost spontaneously. The quadrupeds here are Hoggs and Dogs; The former very numerous but the latter rather scarce; whether there are rats or not as at Otaheite I can't determine, but dont remember ever to have seen any—The few Birds they have are small and only remarkable for their plumage, being chiefly of the Paroquet kind as at most of the other Tropical Islands: Indeed! there is one sort that is very small and all its feathers are intirely red, which I don't recollect to have met with at any other place; Fowls, are very plentiful here and exactly the same, as in England; but we never saw any of their eggs either at these or the Islands to the southward; which is rather surprizing. And I dont know anything else the Natives have got, that they did not bring to sell to us; therefore I suppose they make no use of them, and imagin we would not either, and as we were not in want of them tis probable they was never enquired for; There are very few fish here, and those small and indifferent; yet! the Natives are exceeding fond of them and as often eat them raw as broild; their only method of fishing, that I know of, is with hook and line at which they are very expert, and assiduous—

As we cou'd have no Idea of falling in with these Islands when we were to the south ward we had disposed of all our Cattle there except the two Goats mentioned at Neehow; which was very unlucky; for a breed of Oxen in particular would have been of much greater use here to future Navigators than either at the Society or Friendly Islands, as Owihee is far more extensive for them to exercise upon; and there being plenty of salt to cure them with for sea—

The Natives at these Islands from the lowest computation that can be made of their number, are not less than half a million; being far more numerous than at any others, yet, discovered, between the Tropicks in the Pacific Ocean: Their complexion is a just medium between those of the Friendly and the Society Island, but in every other respect they resemble the former; having the same Robust active and war like appearance; and are entirely free from that Indolent effeminacy so predominate in the latter and altho we had several quarrels with them they are certainly much more civilized, more generous, and sincere, and possessed of a greater share of understanding, than any other Indians, we met with during the voyage.

The women here tho' not so fair as in general as at the Society Islands, yet! are quite as agreeable, if not more so; their Features are regular and beautifull, their Mien gracefull; both in their persons and dress neat; their dispositions mild and cheerfull; and their whole study and endovour to render themselves pleasing to every one; they seem to be fonder of singing and dancing in their own mode than any Girls we have ever seen; and notwithstanding, there is a great degree of lasciviousness in both, yet! it is attended with a peculiar kind of simplicity and Innocence which joind to the customs of the country entirely removes every Idea that can be form'd to their prejudice. In fact, so pleasing is their Temper, so great their vivacity that even an hermit could not help being delighted with them.

The Language spoken at New Zealand the Friendly and Society Island is likewise used here with no very great variation—tho' at such a distance from each other but it agrees nearest with that of the latter.

The Cloth they make here is not so fine as at Otaheite; nor have they got such Quantities of it; yet! it is far preferable as being very strong and equally so whether wet or dry! which must be owing to some difference in the process of manufacturing it; that we are not acquainted with; as I dont recollect that any of us ever saw them at that work. Some pieces they paint of three or four different colours and in a great variety of patterns; which appear'd very beautiful and was what we had not seen before. The men wear no more of it

then what they do at the other Islands; and the women have only one piece wrapt round their waist, which reaches down to their knees leaving their shoulders and breasts entirely bare as at the Friendly Islands.

It is very extraordinary that the hair of those Indians when permitted to grow long naturally forms into separate locks, which are clotted together like the wool of a black sheep, and exactly resemble it; being always of that color; and faded at the ends in the same manner, to a light brown, by the heat of the sun. The men in general cut it all close off on each side preserving only a range in the middle about two inches broad reaching from the forehead down to the neck; which they don't suffer to grow above two inches long, and either curls or stands upright. The women also have theirs all cut off very short except a small quantity along the fore part of their heads which lies flat upon the crown, and is about five inches long with the ends faded as before mentioned; this fashion at first appeared very drole, but custom soon reconciled it to us, and we began to think it looked tolerable well, but not equal to the long flowing locks of the Girls of Otaheite—

Tattooing seems not to be so much practised here, by either sex, as at the Islands to the southward, and the custom of the women not being allowed to eat in presence of the men which is there so strictly observed, is taken no notice of here.

The first time we lay at Carriacoak Bay; some of our Gentlemen formed into parties of three or four together and went up into the Country for a few days taking one or two Indians, with them as guides and attendants. They found the Island neither Inhabited nor Cultivated beyond six or seven miles from the shore; where it began to be very woody, and continued so for a considerable height up the mountains: The ground seemed to be hollow under neath them, in several places, from the resounding of their footsteps as they walk'd along; and they discovered here and there small channels of dryd Lava; with other convincing proofs of former eruptions. They were never in the least molested by the natives but on the contrary always met with great hospitallity and were suffered to go where ever they pleased.

I had forgot to mention before, that one evening while we

were there we displayd the remainder of our fire work on shore in the presence of a numerous assembly collected upon this occasion, who were all greatly surprized and delighted with them, particularly with the sky Rockets which seem'd to excite their admiration more than any of the others.

The java root is more plentiful here then at the Islands to the Southward and is used by the Chiefs to a great excess the method of preparing it is exactly the same, as has been described.

The whole of their Cookery consists in baking roasting and broiling; being intirely unacquainted with boiling anything from having no kind of vessel that will bear the fire for heating water.

The Chiefs here wear on particular occasions a cap of fine wicker work which is very neatly made; and has a very narrow ridge along the middle of it about two Inches high, exactly resembling an antient Helmet; and in the same manner as they have their own Hair, the outside is entirely covered with feathers put on in stripes of four different Colours, viz: red, yellow, green, and Black, which looks very beautifull, and war like; they also wear with it a cloak of fine netting cover'd with feathers of the same Colours form'd into regular squares within one another appearing very elegant.

Owyhee is the only one of these Islands that we have any knowledge of relative to its Government; which seems to be much like that at Tongataboo the largest of the Friendly Islands; from what we can learn, the Regency is Hereditary; and the King altho he has great power and is shewn every kind of respect yet! is far from being absolute of himself; but with the joint consent and assistance of the Chiefs is very much so; by whom those people are kept under more subjection then any we have seen. they are exceeding superstitious; and the priests seem to have great authority over them; but the principles of their Religion I'm quite unacquainted with: we saw several kinds of Images about their Houses, and burying places; but what they esteem most are a sort of household Gods in the Figure of a mans head; which are of slite wicker work and entirely covered with small red feathers; The eyes are represented by two pieces of mother of pearl shell and the opening

of the mouth is furnished with two rows of Hogs teeth; indeed! not only the Features but the whole face is distorted in such a drole and ridiculous manner; that even the Natives could scarce refrain at times from laughing at them; after much persuasion they were prevaild upon to sell some to us; which was very readily purchas'd, as being a great curiosity. The only articles we made use of here, for traid; was Iron, which they are exceeding fond of in any shape; and seem'd to care very little about anything else: They are the only Indians we met with that ever attempted to work it themselves into different forms, agreeable to their own fancy; which from seeing our Armourers on board they accomplished neater then cou'd possibly be imagined by heating and beating it with a stone. The Houses here are more collected and form'd into Towns, and villages, then at the Southern Islands being there very much scatered; They are rather small, and exactly represent a farmers Barn: The roof is thatchd as at the other Island; but they differ in being enclosed all round except a space for a door at one end; and a small hole on each side to admit the light; the inside is always kept neat and clean having generally mats spread all over it—

The small single canoes here are nearly like those at the Friendly Islands with outriggers to them, in the same manner: and both in their form and workmanship are the neatest we have ever seen: — Their dōuble ones, are somewhat larger then the others which are fixt parallel at about four feet distance; by three or four spars extending (with a curve upwards) from one to the other and lash'd down across both; along the middle of those spars they have one or two planks placed; upon which they carry their Hogs, Fruit and whatever they bring off to us; the sailing canoes are in respect to their sails, masts and rigging, much like those at the Society Islands being very Ill contrived, and seemingly as Indifferently navigated— They dont appear to have any here particularly adapted for War as we found at Oteheite.

Several of those Indians who have not got Canoes have a method of swimming upon a piece of wood nearly in the form of a blade of an oar; which is about 6 feet in length, sixteen Inches in breadth, at one end and about 9 at the other; and is

four or five Inches thick, in the middle, tapering down to an Inch at the sides; they lay themselves upon it lengthways, with their breasts about the centre; and it being sufficient to buoy them up they paddle along with their hands and feet at a moderate rate; having the broad [end foremost], and that it may not meet with any resistance from the water, they keep it just above the surface by weighing down upon the other; which they have underneath them; between their Legs: These pieces of wood are so nicely ballanced that the most expert of our people at swimming; could not keep upon them half a minuit without rolling off.

The Chief employments carried on by these people, are Cultivation, Fishing, the Manufacturing their Cloth, and building their Houses, and Canoes; but none of them are laborious except the latter which is very much so; The wood they use for that purpose is rather hard and in general two or three miles from the shore; and there being no metal here the principle mechanical tool, they have to fell the trees, with, and then to cut them into plank, is a stone hatchet; which renders both very tedious; and it is surprising how they manage to make such a number of canoes as they have got under these circumstances.

I had forgot to observe before; that dureing our stay at these Islands; we did not use an article of the ships provisions; but subsisted entirely upon what we purchasd; which was another great help to our sea stock, and refreshed us very much; likewise that we salted as much pork as almost lasted us to England which kept exceeding well, all the time.

We saild from hence with great dissatisfaction; on Account of the Death of our unfortunate Commander; which still lay heavy upon our minds, as being truely sensible of our Loss; this together with the thoughts of the approaching Season to the North! The hardships of the last being still recent, in our Memory; and will never be effaced from mine; renderd us quite dispirited.





