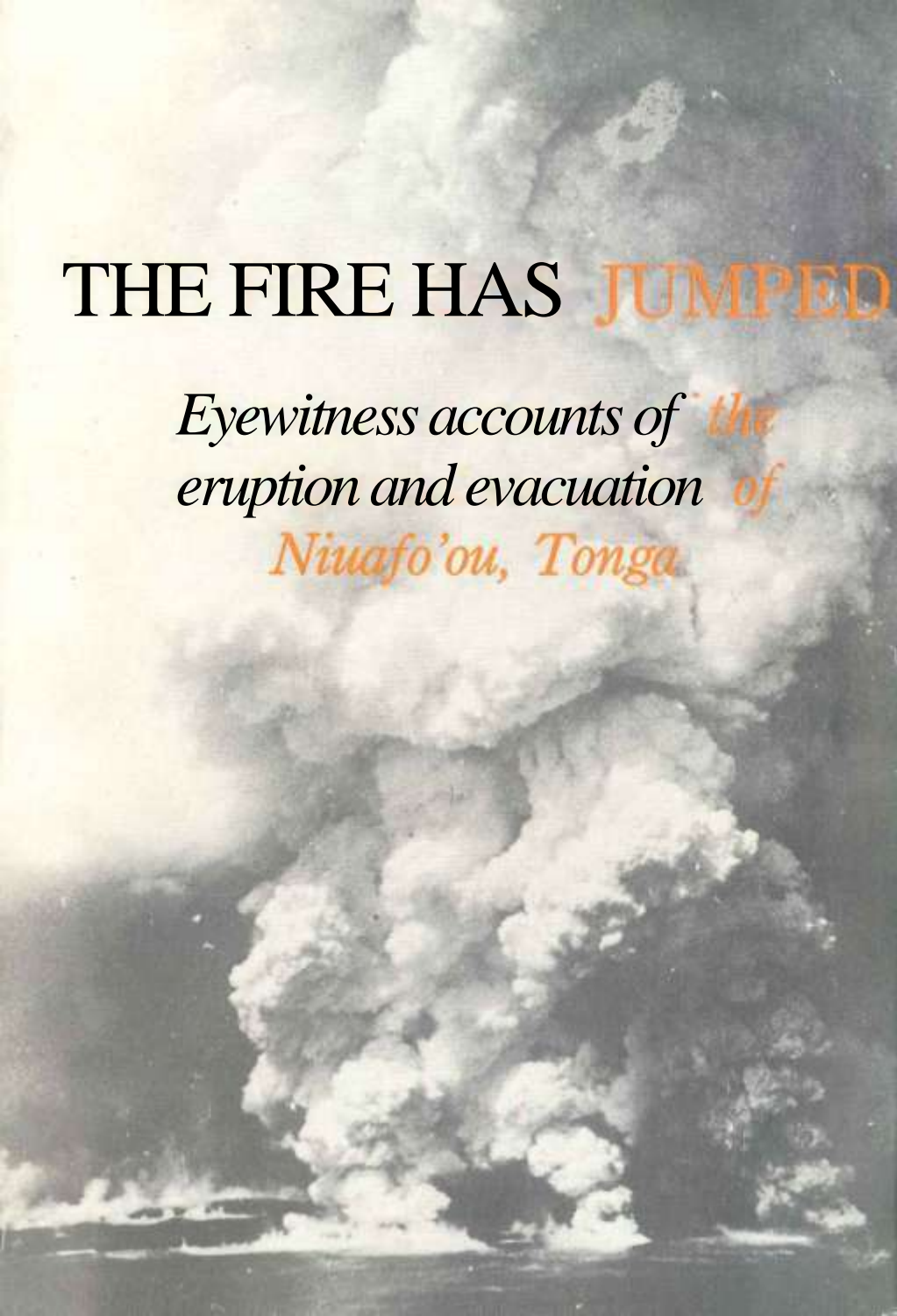


THE FIRE HAS JUMPED

*Eyewitness accounts of the
eruption and evacuation of
Niuafu'ou, Tonga.*



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Eyewitness accounts by:

Pisila Fusitu'a
The Hon. Tevita Fusitu'a
Sister Mary Julia
Palenapa Lavelua
Sione Malekamu Manu
Siaosi Telefoni Ongoloka
Dougal Quensell
Fr Edward Schahl
Moeaki T kai
Luseane Ta'ufo'ou
Tu'alau'eiki

Interviews by:

Wendy Pond
Thomas Riddle
Garth Rogers

Songs by:

Kitione Mamata

Edited by:

Garth Rogers

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This is the first land I have visited where little or no water is; and yet about eight hundred people live here, and refuse to remove to any other part of the Friendly Islands where there is plenty of land, with a cordial welcome, but they prefer a land vitrified and comparatively sterile, without water, and having no harbor or landing-place, and where the sea is generally very turbulent, because, they say, their fathers lived there before them, and there they are buried.

*Missions in the Tonga and Feejee Islands, as
described in the Journals of Rev. Walter Lowry.*
Revised by Daniel P. Kidder. New York, Land
and Scott for the Sunday School Union of The
Methodist Episcopal Church, 1852:47.

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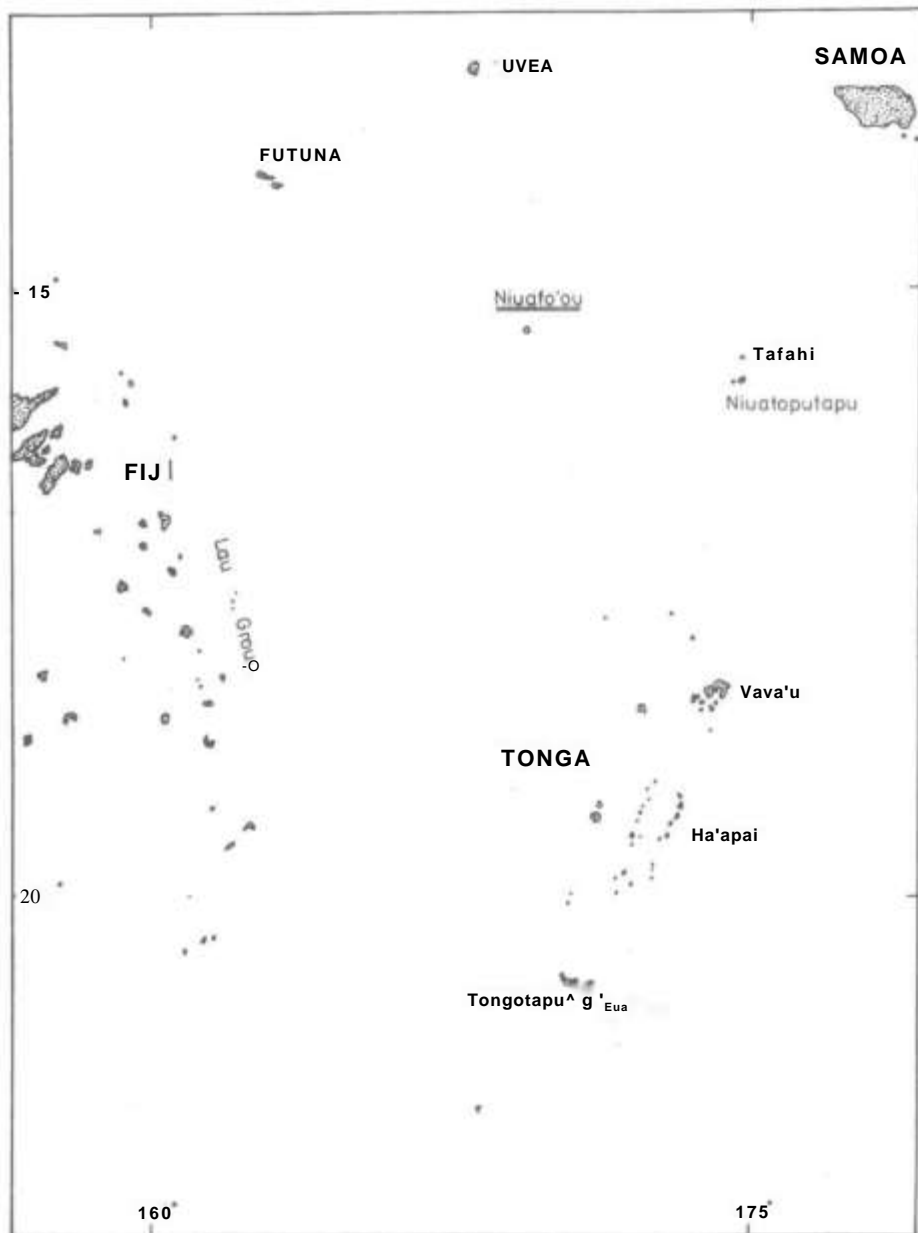
Preface

This book is dedicated to the self-determination and courage of the Niuafu'ou patriots who in 1958 chose life on their own island without any government services whatsoever in preference to social security and bureaucratic services on 'Eua near the metropolis. It was in admiration of these people that I first visited Niuafu'ou in 1967 and later produced this book. 'Of a tu.

It could not have appeared in its present form without the loving care, interest and skills of the following people, whom I wish to thank: Finau Kolo, 'Okusitino Mahina, TJliti Palu, Wendy Pond, Sione Taukei'aho and Edgar Tu'inukuafe for skilful translations; Thomas Riddle for photographs, Sister Mary Julia's diary and accounts by Palenapa Lavelua and Luseane Ta'ufo'ou; Caroline Phillips and Margaret Phillips for drawing maps, Andrée Brett for enhancing some snapshots, Veronica Rudolph and Waireti Tahuri for cheerfully typing some incomprehensible material; Jane Connor for designing the book and giving much encouragement; Mr A. G. Shearer for the magnificent aerial shot of Niuafu'ou on the rear cover; an unknown US Air Force pilot and the Mitchell Library, Sydney, for the cover photograph; the editors of the *Fiji Times and Herald* for permission to reproduce S. M. Manu's account of the evacuation and of *Pacific Islands Monthly* for photographs; Roger Green for suggesting Niuafu'ou in the first place; Wendy Pond, who gallantly steered and navigated a 6.3-metre sailboat there; 'Epli Hau'ofa and Ron Crocombe for encouragement to reproduce these accounts. 'Ofa atu.

There is no standard orthography for the Tongan language; Finau Kolo and 'Okusitino Mahina have grappled with this problem. 'Ofa atu.

Garth Rogers
Auckland 1986



1

Introduction

In September 1946 Niuafo'ou Island, a Tongan outlier, erupted for the tenth recorded time in a little over a century. No-one died, no-one was even reported injured; and unlike the 1943 outburst, which desiccated all vegetation and produced famine, that of 1946 left all gardens and eight of the nine villages unharmed.

The main casualty of the eruption, however, was the capital village of Angah , where government buildings, stores and supplies were obliterated, and government officers and other local residents, including noble Fotofili, were dispossessed of their homes and property.

The Government was faced with a very difficult decision: should Angah be rebuilt and restaffed or Niuafo'ou abandoned?

Several perspectives were expressed at the time on this problem but as it happened the Government decided to evacuate the entire population and relocate them, first in Tongatapu and later in 'Eua Island, where many of them still live with their families. From the Government's point of view this was a safe and responsible decision. The island was renowned for volcanic activity, two villages had been totally destroyed in seventeen years, communications with Nukualofa, the centre of government, were notoriously precarious, and further outbursts of volcanism could obliterate everything.

Yet a majority of Niuafo'ou people had not lost their homes, property or gardens and did not wish in 1946 to leave their homes. Some of these, nearly one-half, eventually returned to Niuafo'ou after an absence of about twelve years to resettle their home sites and rework the lands of their forefathers.

All of the accounts which follow are by participant eye-witnesses and are

included for that reason but not all of them are by Niuafu'ou people. Two of the authors are wireless operators, another a storekeeper, all from other parts of Tonga; two others are Roman Catholic missionaries from Europe and America; one is a foreign researcher. Seven authors are from Niuafu'ou, and all of them put a similar case against the decision to evacuate and in favour of the decision to return. These Niuafu'ou accounts are therefore biased in one direction and justify the return to Niuafu'ou. It should be remembered, however, that the majority of the 1,300 or so people evacuated in 1946-7 have made new lives for themselves and their families throughout and beyond Tonga but mainly in 'Eua, site of the relocated villages on government land. The very first account is by one of those who lost nearly everything in Angah in 1946 and now lives in the relocated village of the same name in 'Eua. It is hoped that the relocated people will produce more poets and historians to maintain their Niuafu'ou identity, for these are in anyone's terms a special people.

Although the eruption and evacuation of Niuafu'ou was hailed at the time as a great sensation and disaster by South Pacific presses, very little has been published on the subject since.* The following accounts are therefore preserved in original language as primary sources in the name of each author.

Garth Rogers



*Kenneth Bain quoted extracts from the diary of Sione Malekamu Manu in a chapter of his book *The Friendly Islanders* which described the eruption and evacuation of Niuafu'ou (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1967, pp. 173-5). James Lewis published an account entitled "Volcano in Tonga" in the *Journal of Administration Overseas*, April 1979, pp. 116-22, from the diary of Moeaki Takai.

Chronology of eruption, evacuation and resettlement

Saturday 7 September 1946 Ketch *Hifofua* left Niuafu'ou for Niuatoputapu and Tonga with magistrate M noa Havea and noble Fotofili having completed annual government audit.

Sunday 8 September A normal peaceful sabbath.

Monday 9 September Full moon; wind SE.

7.00 p.m. Earth tremors in Angah .

7.30 p.m. Radio operator calling Nukualofa then Suva without response, to 8.15 p.m.

8.15 p.m. Angah west on fire, intermittent shakes, one lasting about one minute; evacuation of Angah well under way.

11.00 p.m. Light rain and sand falling on evacuees at Piu and Mokotu heights. Most of Angah on fire including government offices and copra stores.

Tuesday 10 September Father Schahl and two sisters return to Angah to retrieve goods and food. Sisters retire to Pameti's hut at Kolofo'ou, Father Schahl to Piu.

Wednesday 11 September Cone of sulphur (over 200 feet high) deposited overnight by Alelea crater, destroying noble Fotofili's house and wooden hospital.

11.00 a.m. Sione Malekamu Manu and three others retrieve coins from government safes (paper money already burned). Three active fire-holes in Angah itself, nine others along beach.

About midday Plane heard well to north, passing towards west.

Thursday 12 September Extensive landslide noted inside main crater near Piu.

10.00 to 11.00 a.m. Plane heard flying from west to east but well to the north.

Friday 13, Saturday 14, Sunday 15 September Small craters near Utu Palapu still active.

Monday 16 September On or before this date the Government requested aircraft from Fiji to Samoa to investigate Niuafu'ou as radio had been silent from 10 September. RNZAF Catalina circled island once and flew to east about 2 p.m. This plane reported volcanic activity and destruction of part of Angah, sighted RC Priest and SOS distress signal. People on Niuafu'ou knew their plight was discovered.

Tuesday 17 September Hifofua dispatched from Nukualofa with Minister of Lands, noble Havea Tu'iha'ateiho, Niuafu'ou noble Fotofili, Dr Brown, radio technician Mr Small, medical supplies, food.

Radio ZJV Suva broadcast expected arrival date of *Hifofua* at Niuafu'ou (19 or 20 Sept.); message received by Father Schahl, 19 Sept.

Alelea and Kekei craters active but weak.

Wednesday 18 September About noon US Catalina dropped medical supplies, food, cigarettes and message that rescue ship coming.

RNZN offered use of HMNZ corvette *Arbutus*; declined by British Consul to Tonga on 20 September following report from Minister of Lands on Niuafu'ou.

Thursday 19 September Twin-engined land-plane circled island and flew to east about 11 a.m.

Friday 20 September Hifofua arrived about 10.00 a.m. with a US tanker diverted from its course from Tutuila to Noumea. Minister of Lands assessed situation and sent tanker away with a gift of bananas having decided "there is no immediate danger".

All villages except Angah had returned to normal life; all craters were dormant, occasional earthquakes.

Saturday 21 September Unloading *Hifofua*.

Monday 23 September Radio operator resumes two-way contact with Nukualofa from Piu hill using *Hifofua's* transmitter.

Tuesday 24 September Hifofua departed with Father Schahl and Minister of Lands.

Wednesday 25 September Niuafu'ou radio reported all well but earthquakes persist.

Friday 27 September Hifofua arrived Nukualofa; Father Schahl reported to RC bishop, Hon. Tu'iha'ateiho to HM Queen S lote, and told British Consul Johnson he "was quite satisfied that the island must be evacuated as soon as possible . . ."

Saturday 28 September Sister Mary Julia rescues school books from Vatualele Catholic school intending to reopen school under temporary shelter at Kolofo'ou. Earthquakes cease about this date.

Monday 30 September Sometime this week Privy Council inaugurated the Niuafu'ou Evacuation Committee (NEC) under chairman magistrate M noa Havea. Other members included: 'Akauola, noble Fielakepa, lawyer Moulitoni Fisi'ihoi, HRH Prince Tu'ipelehake, HRH Prince Tung , and Queen S lote.

Friday 4 October The NEC could not agree on the need to evacuate Niuafu'ou so it telegraphed orders to Niuafu'ou district officer Peauafi, magistrate Maile Tonga and head policeman 'Esau to conduct a plebiscite to ascertain wishes of Niuafu'ou people.

Saturday 5 October Plebiscite held in Kolofo'ou village; heads of households signed to stay or to leave.

British Consul reported to high commissioner (8 October), "1,078 have elected for evacuation and 288 to remain, Government has today decided to evacuate the whole population and to enforce this by legislation . . ."

Wednesday 9 October Government order for "general evacuation as soon as boats can be chartered", signed by Premier, telegraphed to Niuafu'ou.

Thursday 10 October Government decision announced at Kolofo'ou in general meeting stimulates preparations to evacuate.

Tuesday 15 October Slight tremors felt.

Thursday 17 October Evacuations Ordinance No. 4 of 1946 enacted by Privy Council.

Tuesday 22 October Hifofua with M noa Havea, Fusitu'a, Father Schahl, wireless operator Mr Small and portable transmitter sailed for Niuafu'ou about this date.

Thursday 24 October Hifofua arrived at Futu about noon.

Friday 25 October Father Schahl conducted the first mass in the Angah church since the eruption.

Saturday 26 October Loading *Hifofua* all day, departure deferred until Sunday owing to westerly winds.

Sunday 27 October *Hifofua* sailed from Tapaipau during the afternoon with Sister Superior Marie Angela, Sisters Mary Cuthbert and Mary Julia; arrived Vava'u dawn 29 Oct., Nukualofa' dawn 31 Oct.

Tuesday 29 October General meeting in Kolofou village, where Mânoa Havea made the historic speech: "I believe . . . that evacuation will take place but someone will be crucified for it". Fusitu'a had refused to call the meeting or to address it.

Havea explained that government orders were to pull down houses, mark the house-poles and store them at the beaches; to make copra, weave mats, plait sennit, salt down meats.

November and early December The *Hifofua* plying back and forth from Niuafou to Nuku'alofa with stores, government workers, Angah people. One account is of a sailing from Niukena, Niuafou, with about 200 government officials and Angah people.

Monday 2 December New Zealand Government arranged for MV *Matua* to be diverted from Apia, Samoa, to Niuafou en route to Nuku'alofa, enabling total evacuation of Niuafou in one operation.

Tuesday 17 December *Hifofua* departed Nuku'alofa for Niuafou with Hon. Tu'ihateiho vested with full executive powers to effect total evacuation.

Friday 20 December *Hifofua* arrived off Funga'ana, Niuafou, at dawn, loaded all day, sailed at dusk to Futu where it anchored for the night.

Saturday 21 December MV *Matua* anchored well out from Futu at daybreak with P.M. Ata, Minister of Police 'Akauola and a medical doctor on board.

Loading all day from Tjtuoloa via the anchored *Hifofua* to MV *Matua*, without major injury or accident.

Ketch *Hifofua* sailed south at 6 p.m. followed about 30 minutes later by the *Matua*, which steamed past Angah in the north.

Sunday 22 December *Matua's* arrival in Nuku'alofa delayed to avoid disturbing morning church services. Tongatapu sighted about 3.00 p.m., docked between 4.00 p.m. and 5.00 p.m.

Lorries took evacuees to Vaikeli army camp; all ashore by 8.00 p.m., given tea and three biscuits per head by NEC officials.

Those left behind on Niuafou included Vili Vaka; 'Aisea and his wife Nino, and their daughter Kolokesa and another small daughter; 'Aliki; Fakataha; Moala

Fakatautuki; Hefa and his wife, Selaima, and their daughter 'Olivia; Sione Kaituai; Kepa; Palenapa Lavelua; Luke; Tevita Masalu; Peni Suisui Moala; Makoni Suisui; Taueli; Saula Taukafa; Sione Ti'o; Tali Tu'i.

January 1947 Fiery eruption at Niuafu'ou reported by passing yacht.

Mid-July SDA mission vessel *Laoheni* evacuated Hefa with his wife and daughter, 'Aisea and his wife and two children.

The Evacuation Act No. 11 of 1947 passed by Legislative Assembly.

October 1947 Ketch *Aoniu* sailed to Niuafu'ou with noble Havea Tu'iha'ateiho and Niuafu'ou people to collect goods, housepoles, foods and recalcitrant inhabitants. Departed Sunday evening leaving island uninhabited.

September 1949 Ketch *Hifofua* with noble Fotofili, Sione Mapu and others called at Niuafu'ou to retrieve personal belongings, foods.

October 1949 General meeting at Mataliku addressed by Prime Minister Havea Tu'iha'ateiho explaining resettlement of Niuafu'ou evacuees on 'Eua.

Sometime shortly after Minister of Lands, Prince Tu'ipelehake, and Niuafu'ou elders sailed in *Hifofua* to make first survey of 'Eua lands.

May 1950 First Niuafu'ou families moving into permanent homes on 'Eua.

1950 Government survey of Niuafu'ou with Prime Minister 'Ata, who was chairman of the NEC, noble Semisi Kalaniuvalu-Fotofili, Minister of Police 'Akauola, Robert Wolfgramm, Dougal Quensell and others in ketch *Hifofua* under captain Tippett.

Government school house and dispensary taken to Niuatoputapu.

November 1950 Return of first copra cutters to Niuafu'ou including Asipeli and Tevita Kata from Niuafu'ou, Sangato (lay preacher), Viliami, Luke and Foetai, all from Tonga.

April 1951 Party of about 120 copra cutters under Mo'ungafi of Sapa'ata, including Palenapa Lavelua, Sione Lauaki, Filo Fusitu'a, Tu'u Sakopo, and many others from all parts of Tonga at Niuafu'ou. This party all returned to Tonga with their copra in November 1951.

1957 Total copra from Niuafu'ou was 242 tons worth £10,000. Allocation of land on 'Eua to Niuafu'ou people from this date.

Mid-1958 First decision of NEC to return petitioners to Niuafu'ou. (Petitions signed by Fusitu'a and 608 Niuafu'ou people were presented to the Legislative Assembly as far back as 1948.) Prince Tungi addressed evacuees still at Mataliku: "Either go to 'Eua with government aid or return to Niuafu'ou without."

On 'Eua 247 allotments already allocated to Niuafu'ou people.

18 September 1958 (12 years after evacuation) MV *Aoniu* made first of two voyages to Niuafu'ou to return 39 families.

By 1959 Permanent settlement on Niuafu'ou of over 250 persons.

1959 Government primary school opened in Kolofo'ou.

By 1960 Total families now 46, total population 345 of whom 71 were copra cutters.

1963 Radio station established in Sapa'ata village.

1966 Government primary school opened in Tongamama'o serving three villages in Hahake District.

By 1967 Over 300 adults in 113 households living on Niuafu'ou.

1967 Government copra store opened in 'sia.

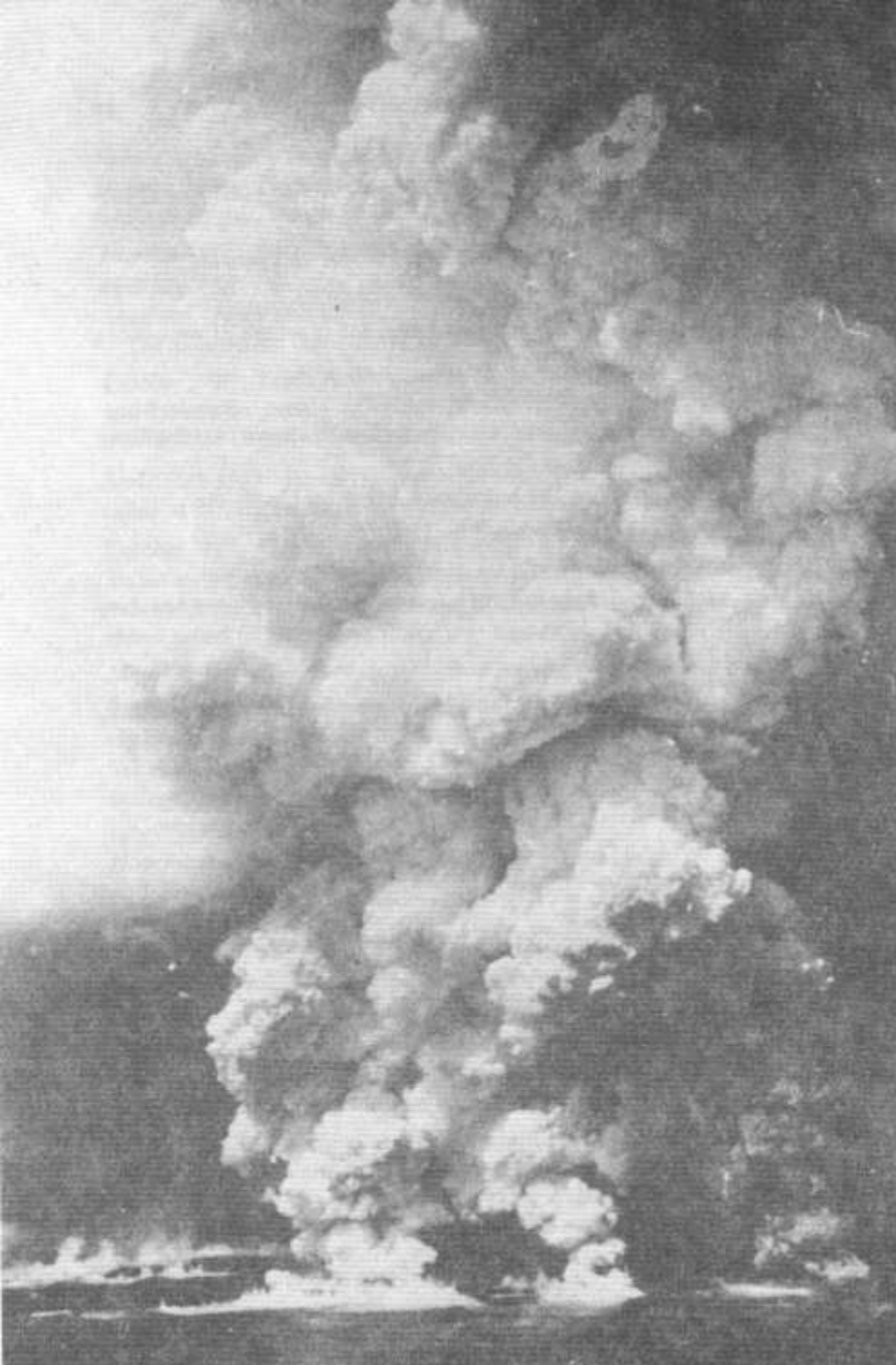
1969 Police stations reopened in 'sia and Futu.

1976 Census of Niuafu'ou recorded 678 inhabitants whereas some 2,108 were living in Niuafu'ou villages in 'Eua.

1980 Airstrip opened on Niuafu'ou.

1981 426 tax allotments distributed to Niuafu'ou people by Minister of Lands, Baron Tuita.





3

Eruption

The first few accounts are all by people who were in Angah at the time of the eruption. The first is by Moeaki T kai, who was bom in Angah , Niuafo'ou, on 23 March 1923. Moeaki was a school teacher, band member and choir master until the 1946 eruption, when he was evacuated with his Fata'ulua wife and children to 'Eua. Since 1968 Moeaki has been district officer for the Niuafo'ou people on Eua, with his eight children scattered from Papatoetoe and Otara, New Zealand, to Nuku'alofa, Ma'ufanga and Ha'apai.

Moeaki wrote an account of the eruption for his children and used this manuscript to make a tape recording for Wendy Pond and Tupou Uluave at Angah , 'Eua, in 1969.

Moeaki T kai's account

This is an account of Niuafo'ou, about what happened in the year 1946. I have gathered together these accounts so that when my children grow up they will be aware of the disaster which occurred there.

The sky was clear that afternoon and also that night. The wind was blowing gently from the southeast and the air was cool over the land on that afternoon. The moon rose in a clear sky and the weather was fine. In the harbour of Ta'akimoeaka there was a dead calm and its angry waves were still.

The beginning of the earthquake — Monday afternoon — 9 September 1946: After our football practice that afternoon, Monday 9 September, at about half past six in the evening, 'Asipeli Kupu came and instructed us that the whole football club would go to 'Alele, that is Fotofili's home in Angahâ, to hold a

football meeting and that all the football teams of Angah would sleep together on that night.

So we dispersed and I went down with Sione Malekamu Manu who was the wireless operator and also the clerk in the Niuafu'ou court at that time. We just went down and climbed up onto the concrete water tank at the Police Magistrate's place, for he lived there together with the clerk. We ate our meal on top of the concrete tank — breadfruit and a small tin of corned beef. While we were eating the moon rose. It was a truly beautiful moonlit night for the moon was full that night and as we were just finishing our meal the drum at the padre's home was struck for our band practice, for I was the band master in the Roman Catholic Church band. Malekamu and I agreed to go to the band practice instead of the football meeting. Malekamu told me to go on ahead and that he would go along to the band practice later. So I went up to our home, and went and had a wash, and while I was washing there was a bit of an earthquake, so I went into the house and while I was dressing there was another small earthquake. That was about eight o'clock in the evening.

I went straight down to the band practice and while I was talking with the bandsmen there was another small earthquake which was a little bit stronger. A fellow called Sione Fu'ikava from 'sia said to me, "We'll be eating a lot of fish tomorrow Moeaki, we'll be pulling in plenty of bonito tomorrow." I said to him, "Hand out the sheet music." Just as the sheet music was being handed out, there was another earthquake. From that moment on the earthquake struck regularly at intervals of about 20 seconds. After the sheet music had been handed out, and as we were starting to stand up, a strong earthquake struck very hard and shook for a very long time, perhaps for a minute and a half. The euphonium player, Fine lavelua, said to me, "Moeaki, let's stop, it's going to erupt, there's no doubt about it, it's going to erupt."

We quickly closed up the band-house and went outside. I looked over and saw that those folk who had been drinking kava with Father Lolesio in his house had dispersed also. I recognised only two of them: Petel N mea, my real grandfather, a man from Uvea, and a man called S lesi Lomu, who is the father of N sio Lomu. I went back home; there wasn't a soul left there. I listened in the direction of Sisi Toutai's house. Sisi was still in there talking so I asked where the people from my home were. Sisi replied that they had already all gone to 'sia. That's a village at the foot of the ridge peak called Piu. So I left right then and went to Sione Malekamu Manu at the residence of the Police Magistrate. But as I was on my way down, the earthquake was continuing and the time then, I estimate, was after eight p.m., but the moon was shining broad

as day and the wind was blowing fairly strongly from the southeast. As I was on my way down to Malekamu I didn't see a single other person in Angah for it turned out they had already gone to 'sia, Kolofo'ou and Sapa'ata. When I reached the Police Magistrate's home, I saw still talking on the verandah the Police Magistrate, Maile 'Etoni Tonga, a man called Sefanaia Vaha'akolo, Malekamu, a Public Works Department carpenter called Lopeti Tupou, the assistant telegraphist, Vili Ha'angana, and a policeman called Tonga. I saw that the magistrate had already put on his pyjamas, trousers and a nightshirt. Malekamu was carrying his short black coat. I told Malekamu to give me his suitcase so I could go on ahead with it as everybody from Angah had gone. The earthquake had not stopped for a moment. It was going on unabated. So Malekamu said to me, "Just carry my coat and my choirmaster's tuning fork." As it turned out, he had decided not to go to the band practice but was carrying his coat and his choirmaster's tuning fork to go to the choir practice in Fata'ulua where he was choirmaster of the Wesleyan Church. Malekamu told me to go on ahead and that he would come later, as he would have a bit of a talk with those fellows and then they would go on to Sapa'ata if the earthquake kept on as it had that afternoon.

I went straight up to Sapa'ata as my grandparents lived there, Petel N mea and Ana Malia Latai. When I got there, they had already gone to 'sia too. 'Atelaite my wife was there and Liku'one, then two-and-a-half years old, and little Lolesio, who was just a baby — Lolesio had been born only 19 days before that night. Young Latai was there, L ata, and David, our eldest boy who was three-and-a-half years old. When I arrived at 'sia, all our household was in the home of a fellow called Halani Mamatuki. 'sia was situated southwest of Angah, but very close by, for there was actually only one tax allotment between Angah and 'Eisia when the eruption occurred.

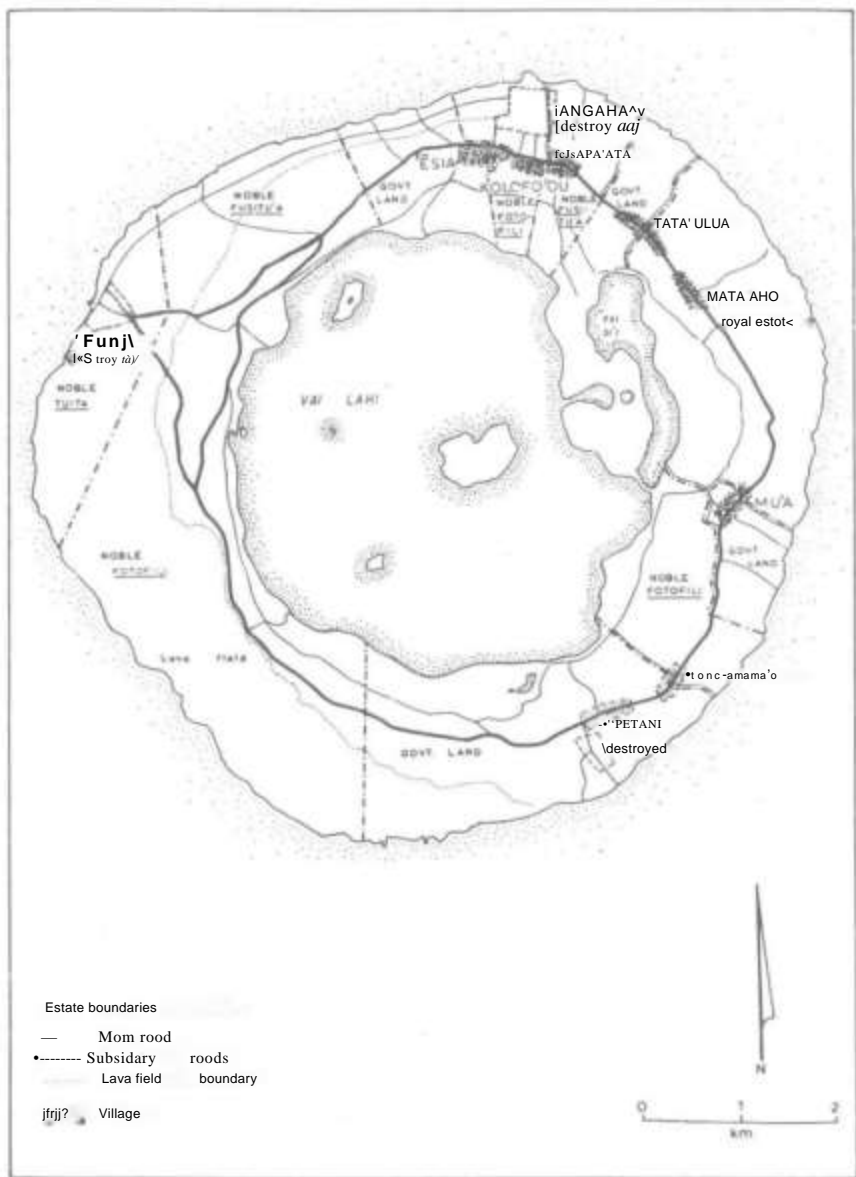
While I was talking with 'Atelaite in front of Mamatuki's house I noticed people going back and forth in all directions in the middle of 'Eisia. I looked up towards the house front of a man called Kalu from 'sia where some men were standing talking. I went up to them and as I was drawing near them an 'Eisia man called 'Atonio Sailosi spoke to me. "Moeaki, you know what, it's going to erupt, there's no doubt about it." Good gracious! 'Atonio was still talking when there was a fantastically loud explosion, and the whole country rumbled terrifyingly and I heard the people, everyone, raising the alarm, and men and women burst out shouting, "It's erupting! It's erupting at Futu!" Shortly after the explosion and the rumbling of the craters, a glow appeared in the sky but one couldn't tell exactly where it was erupting from. At that moment I

thought to myself I would never again see such a terrifying thing for the rest of my life. The whole country was lit up like daytime. When I looked up at the moon it seemed as if it were floating in a sea of blood.

Then I heard everybody shouting to one another and asking round about for their children who had disappeared. Oh dear, the groaning and groaning of the elderly, the crying and continual shrieking to Jesus to please save them. Parents could no longer see or hear their children and the same went for families too. The only thing happening was the explosion and eruption of craters and the appearance of the glow in the sky. The men, women and little children had all fled outside and each one was making his own way and running along the various little paths up to the peak of Piu. I ran down to our home where 'Atelaite and our children were. Just as I arrived, 'Atelaite threw me our bag of clothes and she told me to carry Liku'one. So I reached out and clasped Liku'one in my arms and grabbed the bag of clothes and then I ran to the little path which led from the edge of the bush and so I lost sight of the others from our home.

The really unfortunate thing was that I didn't know the track to Piu, so we just kept going blindly on up through the middle of the scrub, and as we were plodding up the hill I could hear calling and crying back and forth from different places the whole time. I heard a voice crying nearby coming from above right at the place we were going up towards. Of course, I was dead with exhaustion and fear into the bargain for as we were going up, one felt the heat of the fire burning on one's back. For the place from which the fire was bursting out was, I believe, about two-and-a-half miles away from us and I believe for certain that if the wind had eventually blown from the north that night there would be no-one still alive of the people of Angah , ' sia, Kolofo'ou and Sapa'ata for if the wind had blown from the north, the flames and smoke would have come down in our direction and caught the people on the slopes of the mountain, even though it was two-and-a-half miles away. Even if the people had stayed on the mountain, they would have been wiped out if the wind had blown from the north on that night. But fortunately the wind was blowing from the southeast and blowing fairly strongly so the flames and the smoke were deflected to the north and so nobody was burnt or asphyxiated in this terrible disaster.

But, to get back to where I was, we continued straight on up to where the crying was coming from. Then, when we were perhaps only two fathoms away, we came up to the weeping. I had heard correctly; it was the voice of a man. We came upon these two people and I saw clearly they were a Vava'u man



Niufo'ou estates and villages, 1967. G. Rogers

called S misi who was married to a woman from 'esia, 'Emeline Kalu. The man was flat on his back; he could no longer stand up, the combination of exhaustion and great fear. The couple were still young and they had just got married. And there was young 'Emeline, crying and begging S misi please to get up so they could go up to the top in case the fire came and got them. But poor S misi kept telling 'Emeline to try and go by herself because he just couldn't get up again. The reason Semisi was like that was that they had run up the hill. He was out of breath I would think and he was dying of fear as well. For don't think for a minute that the ground was still; the earthquake kept shaking all the time. I don't know about the front line, whether the noise and explosions of the big guns was like that, like the explosions of the craters. The land was ringed with lightning, and one could see all sorts of different colours, flashing and appearing in the sky.

But to get back again to where I was, I went over and told S misi to get up and let's go, but the poor fellow begged me he couldn't manage again to go on again. Of course, we two didn't stop; I just spoke as we went on up, for perhaps the fear I felt was greater than S misi's. So we two just kept on going up and we lost sight of those two people.

As we kept on going up, I felt that I could no longer hold onto our bag of clothes and carry Liku'one, so I threw our bag of clothes into the bush.

As we went up, as time went on, I felt the heat and the scorching of the fire on my back, and as a result another fearful thought occurred to me, that I should throw away my poor little girl and go on myself and survive. Of course, I couldn't see the fire behind me any more, but in my mind the fire was very close to getting us, and from the rumbling of the lava flow it seemed as if it would rush up and get us. But then I decided, I'll carry my dear little daughter and if the fire gets us then we'll just go together but I would have done my duty towards my dear little kid to save her life, and if it were the will of God to wipe out his people then that was that. While all these things were happening I of course had no idea where my wife, our baby, nor our eldest boy, T vita T kai, were and I didn't know where T kai (Tu'ita) was, nor my two poor old grandparents, 'Ana Malia Latai and poor old N mea Kuvalu, for since we had lost sight of each other in 'Esiā, we hadn't seen a single person from our household.

I often wondered whether 'esia was still safe or whether it too had been destroyed by the fire. Of course I was thinking as we climbed up to the ridge top, and I felt that we were close to the top of the mountain, for I had heard the shouting of people and crying from the summit of Piu. So we just kept

straight on to the place where we could hear the crying of the people coming from. And suddenly we came out on the main track which runs round the summit of the mountain. I saw the people going back and forth ceaselessly, up and down this track, and I noticed some people sitting down and weeping silently on the roadside, and some were praying and crying very loudly. Others were trudging around, calling and crying out for their poor children and others of their family whom they had lost sight of. These things were going on in the darkness and in broad daylight because of the glow in the sky from the erupting of the craters and the continual surging of lava flows. The only difference was that this kind of light is red as a result of the glow of the fire in the sky. I glanced up at the moon which was right overhead and it looked exactly like a piece of red cloth waving in the sky. I just sat there and watched silently, depressed that I had not seen a single member of my family on top of the mountain.

At that moment I looked down to the centre of Angah . It looked to me as though it had been completely covered with flames and smoke and I thought to myself that Angah had been completely burned up. I had only been sitting down for a short time with Liku'one when I was startled by a man called Tu'ipulotu Mosese from ' sia, riding a horse and carrying a little baby. He said to me, "Moeaki, take your baby." It was our little baby Lolesio. He had been bom only 19 days when this eruption occurred. Tu'ipulotu told me that he would run down again and bring up his weak old mother. I asked him, "Where's 'Atelaite and Latai?" And Tu'ipulotu replied, "They are coming up the track together right at this moment, they are nearly here." Then I felt a little bit better. So I thanked Tu'ipulotu, for he had come across 'Atelaite and Latai on the road, taking turns to carry the baby, so he had brought it up on the horse. Shortly afterwards, Latai, 'Atelaite and other friends from our home arrived. 'Atelaite was leading T vita by the hand. That was the first time we had seen each other since losing sight of each other in ' sia. They had fled along a different track while we two had come up right through the scrub.

We just rested by the side of the road and wept just like the other people, but we cried because we didn't know where Petel N mea and T kai (Tu'ita) were, and Oloveti had not yet appeared and neither had Pani, the youngest brother of T kai, and Hulu was lost and Lea was still not in sight. So we just sat there with hundreds of people and watched the fire destroying the centre of Angah .

We could see clearly the padre's house, the Catholic Church compound, and the Catholic Church building. We could also see clearly the glow in the hole



Sketch-map of Angah in the 1920s. C. S. Ramsay

in front of the Roman Catholic Church. We could see clearly the church building standing and not burning. As for the nuns' residence, we couldn't determine whether it was burning or not. The destruction of the whole row of government residences in the centre of Angah was clearly visible from the top of the mountain. The different coloured glows in the sky from the two government copra sheds looked frightening also. There were 500 tons of copra in each of these two sheds at the time. We could see clearly too, the two wireless station masts still standing but they were surrounded by fire and lava.

Not one building was still visible of the telegraph office, the post office, the police magistrate's court, the treasury, the police residence and the two prisons, the row of old Morris Hedstrom shops, the new store of Mr Dougal Quensell, the big store of Soakai P lelei, the residence of the police magistrate, and that of the wireless operator. The whole time the waves of lava were breaking in all directions and nothing but the glow and burning rocks could be seen. We could also see the famous harbour called Ta'akimoeaka being buried by the lava flows and some homes of some people were also burned. The Wesleyan Church building could be seen clearly standing there unburnt. Yes, the continuous rising of the waves of lava was to all appearances like a sea of gold in its luminosity, and again and again the craters threw up rocks into the sky which destroyed everything they landed on, turning it into a great desert of rocks. Oh dear, how could it ever fade from memory in the hearts and minds of the Niuafu'ou people, the chiefs of Tongatapu, Ha'apai and Vava'u and every other part of these Tongan islands who were in Niuafu'ou on that night and who saw with their own eyes the astounding events on the ninth day of September 1946. It is impossible to describe the terror of this tragedy experienced by the Queen's people.

This mountain peak Piu is situated to the south of Âlele'uta and 'Ēsia. There is a clear view down from the summit of the mountain to the centre of Sapa'ata, Kolofo'ou, 'sia and all of Angah, and it is a mile and a half from the flag pole to the summit of Piu; so there is nothing in the villages or the surrounding country which one cannot see clearly from Piu. Piu is about 800 to 1000 ft. above sea level [actually 700 ft.]. Looking south from Piu one can see clearly the famous landmark known as lake Vailahi, which is six square miles in area.

But to get back to where I was: We had just been sitting down for a short time on Piu with hundreds of other people just settling down in tears and waiting for advice from the volcano experts as to what instructions they would give when suddenly we were startled to hear a voice calling, "Everybody go to Mokotu — the eruption hasn't finished yet." The experts say that usually when

the lava reaches the sea that is the end of the eruption. It does not continue beyond that, although the craters will continue erupting and throwing up rocks, but the lava flows will no longer occur.

Mokotu is another peak. It is higher than Piu but it continues eastwards from Piu. Perhaps it is about three-quarters of a mile or so away but one follows the ridge top. Piu and Mokotu are one mountain, but there are two peaks, Piu is one and Mokotu is the other. So the people shifted from Piu and we went straight to Mokotu. The time then was perhaps after two in the morning. When this shift was made the land was by no means stable, the earthquakes were continuing, and the craters were still rumbling.

When we reached Mokotu there was another announcement in the Niuafou'ou dialect saying, "Stay here, stay here! Don't go away again, everyone quickly build his own coconut leaf shelter in case salt rain falls. Do it quickly!" All the men worked quickly, each building his own coconut leaf shelter, just roughly built ones, each to protect his family from the salt rain. This kind of rain falls when the eruption is over. It is salt rain and sulphur and this kind of rain is useless for anything, for it is only salt water and sulphur.

Translated by Wendy Pond and Tupou Uluave

Ko e talanoa ki he vela 'a Niuafou'ou 'i he ta'u 1946, na'e fai 'e Moeaki T kai

Ko e talanoa ko 'eni te u fai ia ki Niuafou'ou, 'i he me'a na'e hoko ki ai 'i he ta'u 1946. O, na'a ku hanga 'o fakam 'opo'opo 'a e ngaahi talanoa ko 'eni koe'uhi ke 'i ai ha 'aho 'e tupu hake ai 'eku f nau pea nau sio ki he tu'ut maki ko'eni kuou a'u ki ai. Pea ko hono talateu 'eni:

Talateu

Na'e tafitonga 'a e langi 'i he efiafi ko 'eni, pea mo e p foki, pea angiangi tonga hahake 'a e matangi, 'o mokomoko lelei, 'a e 'ea ki he funga fonua, 'i he efiafi ko 'eni. Na'e hopo hake 'a e m hina 'i langi tafitonga, pea 'afua foki. 'I he taulanga ko ia ko Ta'akimoeaka, na'e nonga 'aupito, pea nonga hono ngaahi peau louloua'a.

Kamata 'a e Mofuike, efiafi M nite, 'aho 9 'o Sepitema, 1946

Hili 'emau ako 'akapulu 'i he efiafi ko 'eni, 'aho M nite, 'aho 9 'o Sepitema taimi haafe 'a e 7 efiafi nai na'e me'a mai 'a 'Asipeli Kupu 'o tala 'a e tu'utu'uni 'e kâtoa 'a e kalapu akapulu ki 'Âlele, ko e 'api ia 'o Fotofili 'i Angahâ, ke

fai 'a e fakataha 'akapulu, mo mohe taha 'a e fo'i tau 'akapulu kotoa 'a Angahà 'i he pô ni.

Na'a mau mâtuku leva pea ma 5 hifo kimaua mo Sione Malekamu Manu ko e faimâkoni ia mo e kalake 'i he Fakamaau'anga 'i Niuafou 'i he taimi ko 'eni. Na'a ma hifo pë 'o kaka ki he funga sima vai 'i he 'api 'o e Fakamaau Polisi, he na'e nofo ai pë mo e kalake foki. Ne fai 'ema kai 'i he funga sima, ko e mei, mo e ki'i kapa pulu.

Lolotonga 'ema kai, kuo hopo hake 'a e mâhina, ko e pô mâhina faka'ofu'ofa mo'oni, he na'e kâtoa 'a e mâhina he p ni. Pea faka'osi'osi atu 'a 'ema kai, kuo tã mai 'a e nafa mei he 'api 'o Pâtele, ko 'emau ako ifi, he ko au na'a ku faiifi 'i he ifi 'a e Siasi Katolika. Ne ma alea leva mo Malekamu ke ma kimaua ki he ako ifi kae tuku ai pë 'a e fakataha 'akapulu ia. Talamai leva 'e Malekamu ke u mu'omu'a kae toki 'alu ange ki he ako ifi.

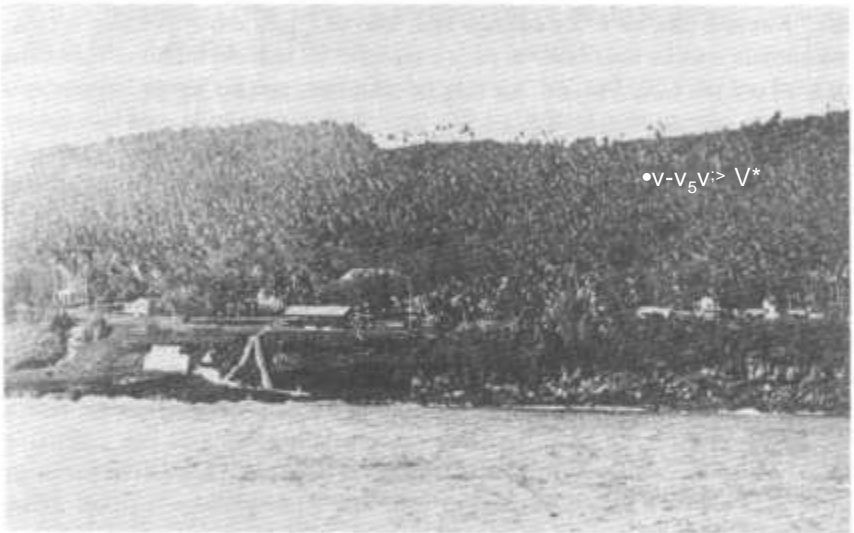
Pea u 'alu hake au ki honau 'api, pea u 'alu 'o kaukau, pea lolotonga 'eku kaukau, kuo lulu 'a e ki'i mofuike, pea u 'alu ki fale, 'o lolotonga 'eku 'ai vala, mo e to e lulu 'a e ki'i mofuike 'e taha, 'a ia ko e 8 efiafi nai ia.

Ne u 'alu hifo leva ki he ako ifi, pea lolotonga 'emau talanoa mo e kau ifi, kuo lulu 'a e ki'i mofuike ia 'oku ki'i lailahi ange. Na'e pehë mai 'e he ki'i motu'a ko Sione Fu'ikava mei 'Êsia: "Te tau kai ika lahi 'a pongipongi Moeaki. 'E toho lahi 'a e 'atu' apongipongi." Pea u pehë atu 'e au ia: "Tufa 'a ç tu'unga-fasi." Kamata tufa ko ë 'a e tu'unga-fasi, kuo to e lulu mo e mofuike 'e taha, pea kamata leva ke hokohoko ai pë 'a e mofuike ia, mahalo ko hono vahavaha ko e sekoni pë 'e 20. Pea 'osi 'a e tufa tu'unga-fasi, pea ko 'emau kamata tu'u hake pë ki 'olunga, kuo tataha 'a e fu'u mofuike lahi 'aupito ia, pea lulu fuoloa 'aupito ia, mahalo ki he miniti 'e taha, mo e kongia nai. Na'e pehë mai 'e he tangata ifi 'ifoni, ko Fine Lavelua: "'E Moeaki, tau tuku, he 'e vela ia, he 'ikai to e faka'alongau, 'e vela ia."

Ne t t puni fakavave leva 'a e fale ifi, ka mau hû ki tu'a. Pea u sio atu ki he m tu'a, na'a nau faikava mo P tela Lolesio 'i hono fale, kuo nau mâtuku mai mo kinautolu. Ko e fo'i toko ua pë na'a ku 'ilo'i pau, ko Petel Nâmea, ko 'eku kui mo'oni ia, ko e motu'a mei Dvea, mo e motu'a ko Sâlesi Lomu, ko e tamai ia 'a Nâsio Lomu. Ne u 'alu hake au ki 'api, kuo 'ikai to e 'i ai ha taha ia. Pea u fanongo hake ki he 'api 'o Sisi Toutai, 'oku kei lea pë 'i ai 'a Sisi. Pea u 'eke atu, pe ko fë 'ia nai 'a e kaume'a homau 'api? Pea talamai 'e Sisi, kuo nau 'osi 'alu kotoa ki 'Êsia. Ko e kolo ia ki he mata hake ki he mo'unga ko ia ko Piu. Na'a ku 'alu hifo leva mei 'api 'i he taimi ko 'eni kia Sione Malekamu Manu, ki he 'api nofo'anga 'o e Fakamaau Polisi. Kae lolotonga 'a 'eku 'alu hifo ko 'eni, 'oku fai ai pë 'a e mofuike ia, pea ko e taimi ko 'eni kuo

u fakafuofua, kuo 'osi 'a e 8 po'uli ia, ka kuo 'aho'aho lelei 'a e mâtina ia 'ene huhulu, pea angiangi m m lohi 'a e matangi mei he tonga hahake. Ko 'eku 'alu hifo ko 'eni kia Malekamu, ne 'ikai te u to e tokanga'i ha taha 'i Angah , t kuo nau 'osi he 'alu ki 'Esia, Kolofo'ou, mo Sapa'ata.

Ko 'eku a'u atu ki he 'api 'o e Fakamaau Polisi, 'oku kei pôtalanoa mai p he fale fakatolo 'a e Fakamaau Polisi, ko Maile 'Etoni Tonga, mo e motu'a ko Sefanaia Vaha'akolo, mo Malekamu, mo e motu'a tufunga 'a e P.W.D. ko Lopeti Tupou, Tokoni Faimâkoni ko Vili Ha'angana, mo e Polisi ko Tonga, Kuo u sio ki he Fakamaau kuo 'osi tui hono teunga mohe 'ona, talausese, mo e kofu mohe. 'Oku to'oto'o pē 'e Malekamu 'a hono kote mutu 'uli'uli. Ne u talaange kia Malekamu ke 'omai 'ene kato leta ke u mu'omu'a mo ia, he kuo 'osi 'a e kakai ia mei Angah he 'alu. 'Oku 'ikai pē foki ke toe m l l 'a e mofuike ia, 'oku hokohoko ai pē ia. Ne talamāi leva 'e Malekamu: "To'oto'o atu pē hoku kote, mo 'eku fo'i ki faihiva." Ta ne 'ai ke tuku 'ene 'alu ange 'ana ia ki he ako ifi, ka ko e toō 5 hono kote 'ona mo e fo'i ki faihiva, ke 'alu ia 'o ako hiva 'i Fata'ulua, he na'a ne fai 'a e hiva 'a e Siasi Uesiliana 'o Fata'ulua. Pea talamāi leva 'e Malekamu, ke u mu'omu'a pē kae toki 'alu ange, ka nau pôtalanoa p mo e kau tama ko , pea nau toki 'alu ange ki Sapa'ata, 'oka toe pēhē ai pē 'a e mofuike 'i he efiafi ni.

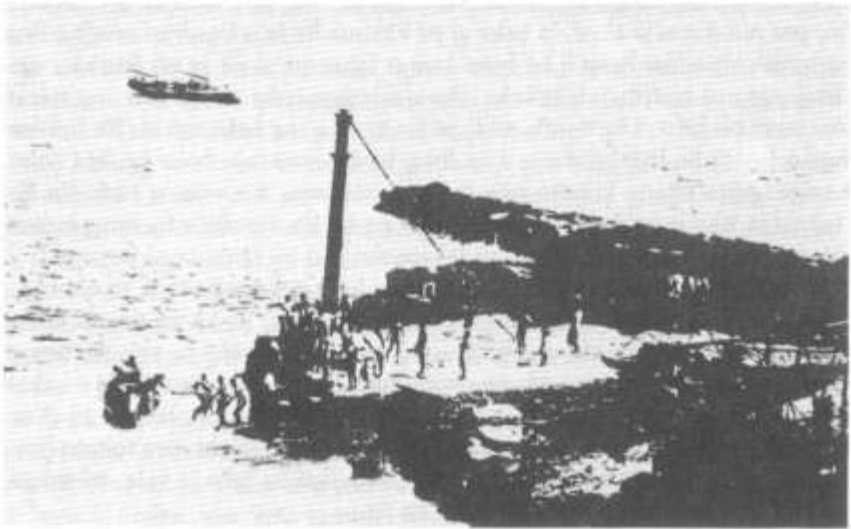


Angah village about 1943. Bill Pinkham

Ne u hake leva au 'o hangatonu hake ki Sapa'ata, he na'e nofo ai pē 'a si'i ongo mātu'a 'eku kui, ko Petelô Nāmea, mo 'Anamalia Latai. A'u atu ki ai, kuo toe 'osi 5 mo kinaua ia ki 'Ēsia, oku 'i ai 'a 'Atelaite, ko hoku mali, mo Liku'one kei ta'u ua mo e kongā, mo ki'i Lolesio, kei valevale 'aupito, ko e 'aho pē ia 'e hongofulu-ma-hiva 'a e fā'ele'i 'o Lolesio he pō ko ia, 'i ai mo si'i Latai, Loata, mo Tēvita, ko 'ema tamasi'i tangata lahi ia, kuo ta'u tolu mo e kongā ia. Na'a ku a'u hake ki 'Ēsia 'oku kâtoa homau 'api 'i he 'api 'o e motu'a ko Halani Mamatuki. Na'e tu'u fakatonga hihifo 'a 'Ēsia ki Angahâ, kae fu'u vâofi 'aupito, he ko e fo'i 'api tukuhau pē 'e taha 'oku tu'u 'i he vaha'a 'o Angahâ mo 'Ēsia.

Taimi na'e to ai 'a e vela

Na'e lolotonga 'a 'ema talanoa mo 'Atelaite 'i he matafale pē 'o Mamatuki, kuo u sio mo tokanga'i 'a e kakai, 'oku nau fe'alu'aki holo pē 'i he loto kolo 'o 'Ēsia. Ne u sio hake ki he matafale 'o e motu'a ko Kalu 'i 'Ēsia pē, 'oku 'iai 'a e kau tangata 'oku nau tu'u pē 'o pōtalanoa ai. Ne u hake atu ki ai, pea ko 'eku fakaa'ua'u hake pē ki ai, mo e lea mai 'a e motu'a 'Ēsia ko 'Atonio Sailosi: "Moeaki, ko te ma'u ki ai, 'e tou vela, kala to e fehalaaki te fo'i me'a ko ia ia". 'Oiauvē, ko e kei fai pē 'a e lea 'a 'Atonio ia, mo e pâ le'olahi faka'ulia



Angahâ landing place, Ta'akimoeaka, about 1943. Bill Pinkham

'aupito, pea 'u'ulu faikehe 'a e fonua kâtoa, pea ongo mai 'a e pâ fakaulu 'a e kakai, 'a e kakai kotoa pë, pea pi kaila 'a e kakai tangata, mo fefine: "Ko te vela, vela, ko te vela 'oku t mei Futu". Taimi si'i pë 'a e pâ mo e 'u'ulu 'a e ngaahi ngoto'umu, kuo 'asi 'a e ulo ia he 'at . Kae ta'emahino mo'oni pë ko e ta'aki mei fe'ia. 'I he taimi ko 'eni, kuo u pehë pë he'ikai te u toe sio 'i ha me'a fakaiifia pehë 'i he toenga 'o 'eku mo'ui. Ne maama kotoa 'a e fonua 'o hangë ha 'aho, kuo u fakatokanga'i hake 'a e mâhina 'oku hangë 'oku tëtë 'i ha 'Oseni Moana Toto.

Na'a ku fanongo leva ki he kakai kotoa pë, 'oku feongo'aki 'a e pâ kaila he fe'eke'aki holo 'a si'enua fanau, kuo 'osi pulia kinautolu. 'Oiauvë, 'a si'i tauto'e si'i kau vaivai, 'a e tangi, mo e tauto'e ai pë kia S s ke 'ofa 'o fakamo'ui kinautolu. Ne 'ikai ha toe felongoaki 'a e mâtu'a mo e fanau, pehë mo e ngaahi fâmihi, foki, ko e me'a pë na'e hoko, ko e pâ pë 'a e ngaahi ngoto'umu ia 'o ta'aki, pea 'asi 'a e ulo he 'atâ, kuo hopo ki tu'a 'a e tangata, mo e fefine, mo e fanga ki'i fânau, 'o nau taki taha 'alu pë mo lele 'i ha fanga ki'i hala ki he mo'unga ko ia ko Piu. Pea na'a ku lele hifo leva au ki 'api 'oku 'i ai 'a 'Atelaite mo 'ema tamaiki. Ko 'eku a'u atu pë ki ai, kuo II mai 'e 'Atelaite ia 'a 'emau tangai vala, mo ne talamai ke u fua 'a Liku'one, pea u ala mai pë au 'o fua 'a Liku'one, mo to'o 'a e tangai vala, pea u lele leva au ia ki he ki'i hala 'oku 'asi mai 'i he matavao, pea mau fepulingaki ai mo e kaume'a homau 'api.

Pea ko e me'a pango mo'oni ia, ne te'eki ai te u 'ilo'i 'e au ia 'a e hala ki Piu, pea ma noa'ia ai pë, 'o hake ai pë kimaua he fu'u lotu vao noa'ia., Pea lototonga 'ema faai hake 'i he hake kuo u fanongo ai pë ki si'i feui'aki, mo e fetângihhi mei he feitu'u kehekehe. Pea u fanongo hake au ia, 'oku 'i ai 'a le'o 'oku tangi ofi hifo, 'i he feitu'u tonu pë ko ia 'oku ma hake atu ai. Ne u mate 'aupito foki 'i he hela'ia, mo e ilifia foki, he ko 'ema 'alu hake ko 'eni, 'oku te ongo'i pë 'e kita ia ki hoto tu'a, 'a e momofi mai 'a e vela 'a e afi. Ka ko e feitu'u ia 'oku puna hake ai 'a e afi, 'oku ou tui ko e maile 'e ua mo e konga homau vâ mama'o, pea 'oku ou tui fakapapau au, ka faifai angë ke angi 'a e matangi mei he tokélau 'i he poo ni, he'ikai ke 'i ai ha taha ia 'e to e mo'ui, 'i he kakai 'o Angahâ, Êsia, Kolofu'ou, mo Sapa'ata, he ka ne angi tokélau foki, 'e tokoto mai 'a e ulo, mo e kohu, 'o ma'u 'a e kakai 'i he ve'e mo'unga, neongo ko e maile 'e ua mo e konga hono mama'o. O, ka na'e nofo 'a e kakai 'i he mo'unga, te nau 'auha pë 'o ka ne tokélau 'a e matangi he poo ni. Kae mâlie pë, ne tonga hahake 'a e matangi, pea angiangi mâlohi, pea tokoto leva 'a e ulo mo e kohu ki he tokélau, 'o hao ai 'o 'ikai ha taha 'e vela, pë fulutâ amakia 'i he fu'u tu'utâmaki fakalilifu ko 'eni.

Kae kehe, pea fai hake pë 'a 'ema ô hake 'a maua, 'o hangatonu pë ki he

me'a 'oku ongo hifo mei ai 'a e tangi. Pea mahalo 'oku toe nai ha ofa e ua, pea ma a'u hake ki he tangi, kuo u fanongo lelei atu, ko e le'o ia 'o e tangata. Ne ma 'asi atu ki he ongo mâtua ko 'eni, pea u sio lelei ki ai, ko e motu'a Vava'u ko Sêmisi, 'oku mali mo e finemotu'a mei 'Êsia, ko 'Emeline Kalu. Pea kuo tokoto 'aupito 'a e motu'a ia, kuo 'ikai to e lava ia ke tu'u ki 'olunga, ko e fakataha 'a e hela, mo e lahi 'a e ilifia. Ko e ongo mâtua ia 'oku na kei talavou pë, pea ko si'ena toki mali pë. Pea ko si'i 'Emeline ê, 'oku fai he tangi mo e kole kia Sêmisi, ke 'ofa 'o tu'u ke na ki 'olunga, na'a a'u mai 'a e vela 'o ma'u kinaua. Kae toutou lea ange 'a si'i Sêmisi ia kia 'Emeline, ke feinga 'a 'Emeline ia ke 'alu ia, he 'ikai ke to e lava ia 'o tu'u. 'A ia ko e tupunga 'o e pehë 'a Sêmisi ko 'ena lele hake 'i he hake, pea 'osi 'a e manava 'o fakataha mo si'ene mate he manavahê foki, he tala'ehai 'oku to e tu'uma'u 'a e fonua ia, 'oku lulu ai pë 'a e mofike ia. Pea he'ilo ki he laine tau, pë 'oku pehë 'a e longoa'a mo e pâ 'a e ngaahi me'afana fonua, 'o hangë ko e pâ 'a e ngaahi ngoto'umu, pea 'uhila takai 'a e fonua, pea te sio ki he fa'ahinga lanu kehekehe, 'oku tapa 'o 'asi he 'atâ.

Kae kehe, ne u 'alu atu au 'o lea ange kia Sêmisi, ke tu'u ke mau ô, kae si'i kole mai pë 'a e motu'a ia, ko ia ia he 'ikai pë ke to e lava ia ke to e 'alu. Ne 'ikai ke ma to e tu'u toki kimaua ia, ne u lea atu pë au mo ma 'alu hake pë kimaua, he mahalo na'e lahi ange 'a e manavahê ia ne u lolotonga fe'ao au mo ia, 'ia Sêmisi. Pea ma 'alu hake ai pë kimaua ia, 'o mau fepulingaki kimautolu mo e ongo mâtua.

Ne fai hake pë 'a 'ema 'alu hake, kuo u ongo'i kiate au, 'oku 'ikai te u to e lava ke to'o 'a 'emau tangai vala, mo fua mo Liku'one. Pea u hanga leva 'e au ia 'o li'aki 'a 'emau tangai vala he loto vao.

Na'e ha'u pë 'a e taimi ki he'ema 'alu hake, 'oku ha'u pë 'a e taimi ia mo 'eku ongo'i ki hoku tu'a, 'a e vevela, mo e momofi 'a e afi, pea ha'u ai mo e fa'ahinga fakakaukau ilifia 'e taha kiata au, ke u hanga a mu'a 'o liaki si'eku ki'i ta'ahine, ka u 'alu au ia ke u mo'ui, ne 'ikai foki te u to e lava 'o sio ki mui ki he afi, ka ki he'eku fakakaukau, 'oku fu'u ofi mai 'a e afi ke ne ma'u kimaua, pea ko e 'u'ulu ia 'a e peau afi, 'oku hangë pë ka 'oho mai 'o ma'u kimaua. Pea u to e pehë pë foki, te u fua pë si'oku ki'i 'ofefine, pea ka ma'u kimaua 'e he afi, pea ma si'i fakataha ai pë a, kae fai pë hoku fatongia ke lava ki si'oku ki'i 'uhiki, ko e haofaki si'ene mo'ui, pea ka ko e finangalo 'o e 'Otua ke faka'auha 'a hono kakai, pea ko hono 'osi pë ia. Na'e hoko foki 'a e ü me'a kotoa ko 'eni ia, 'oku 'ikai te u teitei 'ilo'i 'e taha pe 'oku 'i fe'ia 'a si'oku mali, mo 'ema ki'i pëpë, mo 'ema tamasi'i lahi, ko Tëvita Tâkai ia, pea 'ikai ke u 'ilo'i pe 'oku 'i fe'ia nai 'a Tâkai (Tuita) pea mo si'eku ongo kui vaivai, ko

'Anamalia Latai, mo si'i N mea Kuvalu, he ko e talu p 'a 'emau fepulingaki i 'Ēsia mo te'eki te ma to e sio 'i ha toko taha homau 'api.

Ne u fa'a fakakaukau pē, pē 'oku kei hao koā 'a "Ēsia pē kuo 'osi mo ia 'i he faka'auha 'e he afi. Na'e fai pē foki 'eku fakakaukau mo ma hake pē ki mo'unga, pea u ongo'i pē kuo ma ofi 'aupito ki he funga mo'unga, he kuo u fanongo hake pē ki he p kaila 'a e kakai, mo e fet ngihi mei he tumutumu 'o Piu, pea ma 'alu ai pē 'o fakahangatonu pē ki he me'a 'oku ongo hifo mei ai 'a e fetāngihi 'a e kakai, 'o 'ohovale pē kuo ma 'asi hake ki he hala lahi 'oku lele takai 'i he funga mo'unga, pea u sio ki he kakai 'oku nau fehologoaki ta'e m l l pē, 'i he 'enau fe'alu'aki 'i he fo'i hala ko 'eni pea u fakatokanga'i atu 'a e si'i kakai 'e ni'ihī 'oku nau tangutu pē ki lalo, 'o fetāngihi fakalongolongo pē 'i he kauhala, pea si'i lotu pē 'a e fa'ahinga 'e ni'ihī mo nau tangi le'o lahi 'aupito. Pea ko e kakai 'e ni'ihī, 'oku nau fāiholo pē mo ui pē mo tangi 'a si'enau fanau, mo e fāmili kuo 'ikai te nau femātaaki. Ko e me'a foki ko 'eni, ko e fai po'uli ia ka kuo ho'at m lie, 'i he ulo ki he 'at 'a e ta'aki 'a e ngaahi ngoto'umu, mo e toutou fasi 'a e peau afi. Ko hono fai kehekehe pē, he 'oku lanu kulokula pē 'a e fa'ahinga maama ko 'eni, ko e tupu mei he ulo 'a e afi he 'at . Na'a ku tokanga'i hake 'a e māhina kuo tu'utonu m lie, ka 'oku tatau tofu pē mo e kongā tupenu kulokula 'oku vilingia 'i he 'at . Na'a ku mo'u tangutu pē 'o sio fakalongolongo pē, 'o to'oa hoku loto, 'i he te'eki ke u sio ki ha fo'i toko taha 'i hoku fāmili 'e 'asi 'i he funga mo'unga.

I he taimi ko 'eni, na'a ku sio hifo ki he loto kolo 'o Angahā, kuo hangē hake kuo 'osi fakakafu'i 'aki kotoa 'a e ulo, mo e kohu, pea u pehē ia 'e au, kuo 'osi'osingam lie 'a Angahā ia 'i he vela. Ne ki'i taimi si'i pē 'a 'ema tangutu hifo mo Liku'one, pea u 'ohovale pē, kuo tu'u ai 'a e tangata ko Tu'ipulotu Mosese mei 'Ēsia, 'oku heka hoosi pea 'oku ne fuofua mai 'a e ki'i p p . Pea ne pehē mai: "Moeaki, pukepuke atu 'a ho'omo pēpē. "Ko 'ema pēpē ia ko Lolesio. Ko hono 'aho taha-hiva pē ia 'a hono f 'ele'i, mo e t 'a e vela ko 'eni. Pea talamai 'e Tu'ipulotu, 'e to e lele 'o fakaheka mai 'a 'ene fine'eiki vaivai. pea u fehu'i atu: "Ko fe 'ia 'a 'Atelaite, mo Latai?" Pea talamai 'e Tu'ipulotu: "Ko 'eni 'oku nau fononga fakataha mai pē 'i he hala, kuo nau ofi 'aupito mai." Ne u toki ongo'i leva 'a e ki'i fiemālie 'i hoku loto. Pea u fakam l atu kia Tu'ipulotu, he t3 na'a ne ma'u mai 'i he hala, 'oku toutou fua hake ai 'e 'Atelaite mo Latai 'a e pēpē, pea hanga 'e ia 'o fakahekamai he hoosi. Taimi si'i pē kuo si'i a'u mai 'a Latai, 'Atelaite, mo e kaume'a homau 'api, 'oku takitaki lalo pē 'a ki'i T vita 'e 'Atelaite. Ko si'emau toki femātaaki ē talu 'a e fepulingaki 'i 'Ēsia, pea lele hake kinautolu 'i he hala kehe, ka ma hake kimaua 'i he loto vao noa'ia pē.

Ne mau m l l pē 'i he ve'ehala, mo fetāngihi pē 'o hangē pē ko e kakai, kae tangi kimautolu, he 'oku 'ikai te mau 'ilo'i mo sio kia Petelô Nāmea, mo Tākai pea kei puli foki mo Oloveti, pea kei puli 'a Pani, ko e tehina ia 'o Tākai, pea puli 'a Hulu, mo Lea te'eki ke 'asi mai. Na'a mau toki nofo ai pē, mo e kakai laui teau 'o sio pē ki he faka'auha 'e he afi 'a e loto kolo 'o Angahâ.

Na'e 'asi lelei hake foki 'a e 'api 'o Pâtele, 'a e 'api 'o e Siasi Katolika, mo e Fale Lotu Katolika. Ne 'asi lelei hake foki 'a e ulu 'a e fo'i luo 'i he matafale Lotu Katolika. Kae hâ mahino hake 'a e tu'u pē 'a e Fale Lotu 'oku 'ikai ke vela ia. Ko e 'api 'o e kau taupo'ou, ne 'ikai ke lava 'o mau fakapapau'i pē 'oku vela pē 'ikai. Na'e fu'u 'asi mahino hake pē foki ki mo'unga 'a e 'osi' auha 'a e 'otu nofo'anga kotoa 'o e Pule'anga ia 'i loto Angahâ. Na'e 'asi fakailifia foki 'a e ulu lanu kehekehe 'i he 'atâ 'a e ongo Fale Mataka lalahi 'e ua 'o e Pule'anga, ko e ongo fale ko 'eni na'e 'i ai 'a e taki toni mataka 'e 500 'i he fale he taimi ko 'eni. Ne 'asi lelei hake foki mo e kei tu'u 'a si'i ongo fu'u pou makoni, ka 'oku lolotonga kâpui 'e he ulu, mo e ngaahi peau afi.

Na'e 'ikai ke to e 'asi mai ha fo'i fale 'e taha ia mei he Fale Mâkoni, Pôsiti 'Ofisi, Fale Fakamaau Polisi, Fale Pa'anga, Nofu'anga Polisi mo e ongo Pillsone, 'otu Fale Koloa 'o e Môlisi fuoloa, Koloa Fo'ou, Misa Tūkala Kuenisele (Quensell), Fale Koloa lahi 'o Soakai Pâlelei, 'api nofo'anga 'o e Fakamaau Polisi, mo e Faimâkoni 'oku lolotonga 'a e fefasiaski ai 'a e peau afi ia, he taimi kotoa pē, 'o 'ikai ke to e 'iloa ha me'a 'e taha, ko e ulu pē, mo e maka kakaha. Na'e 'asi foki mo hono tanu 'e he peau afi ia 'a e taulanga 'iloa ko ia ko Ta'akimoeaka, mo e ngaahi 'api nofo'anga pē 'o e kakai 'e ni'ihî ne vela mo ia. Ne 'asi lelei pē mo kei tu'u 'a e Fale Lotu Ueseliana, 'o 'ikai ke vela ia. 'To, ne hangē tofu pē 'a e toutou ake mai 'a e peau afi ha fu'u moana koula 'a e uloulo, mo e toutou laku maka 'a e ngaahi ngoto'umu ki he 'atâ, 'o ne faka'auha 'a e me'a kotoa pē 'oku tau atu ki ai, kae liliu ko e fu'u Toafa Maka pē. 'Oiauvē, 'e toe mângalo nai 'a fe'ia 'i he loto, mo e manatu 'a e tangata Niuafu'ou kotoa, mo e hou'eiki mei Tongatapu, Ha'apai, Vava'u, mo e tapa kehekehe 'o e 'Otu Tonga ni na'e 'i Niuafu'ou he p ko 'eni, ne nau mamata tonu kî he fu'u tau fakalelemoa ko ia 'i he 'aho 9 'o Sepitema, 1946. Pea 'oku 'ikai ke malava 'o fakamatala'i 'a e fakailifia 'o e fakatu'utâmaki ko 'eni ne tofanga ai 'a e kâinga 'o e Tu'i.

Ko e mo'unga foki ko 'eni ko Piu, 'oku tu'u ia ki he fakatonga 'o 'Àlele'uta, mo Angahâ. Pea 'oku sio lelei hifo pē mei he tumutumu'i mo'unga ki he loto kolo 'o Sapa'ata, Kolofo'ou, 'Ēsia, mo Angahâ kotoa, pea 'oku maile 'e taha mo e konga mei he tu'unga fuka ki he tumutumu 'o Piu. Ko ia ai 'oku 'ikai ke toe 'i ai ha me'a 'e puli 'i kolo, mo e fonua takai 'i he'te sio lelei ki ai mei

Piu. Ko Piu, 'oku 'i he fute 'e 800 ki he fute 'e 1,000 a hono ma'olunga mei he fukahi-tahi. Ko e sio fakatonga mei Piu, ko e sio lelei ia ki he m tanga 'iloa ko ia ko Vailahi. Ko Vailahi foki, 'oku maile sikuvea ia 'e 6.

Kae kehe, ne taimi si'i pê 'a 'emau nofo ko 'eni 'i Piu, mo e fu'u kakai 'e laui teau, 'oku nau t lolo 'i he lo'imata, mo fakaongo angi ki he Kau Taukei 'o e Vela, pe koe hâ ha'anau angi tau 'e fai. Pea 'ohovale pê, kuo ongo mai 'a e le'o 'oku uiaki mai 'o pehê: "'Alu kâtoa ki Mokotu, he nofo 'i Piu nei, he 'oku te'eki ai ngata te vela." ('Aia ko e pehê, 'oku kei 'alu pê 'a e vela, 'oku te'eki ke ngata). 'Oku fa'a pehê foki 'e he Kau Taukei, ka toki hifo 'a e peau afi ki tahi, pea ko 'ene toki ngata ia 'a e vela 'o 'ikai ke to e 'alu, ka 'e ta'aki p5 'a e ngaahi ngoto'umu ia 'o laku pê ki 'olunga 'a e maka, ka he 'ikai ke to e 'alu ha peau afi.

Ko Mokotu, ko e tumutumu'i mo'unga ia 'e taha, 'oku toe ma'olunga ia 'i Piu, kae 'alu fakahahake ia mei Piu. Mahalo ko e vahe fâ 'e tolu 'o e maile pea a'u ki ai, ka 'oku 'alu pê 'i he funga mo'unga. Ko e mo'unga pê foki 'e taha 'a Piu, mo Mokotu, ka 'oku 'i ai ha fo'i tumutumu 'e ua, ko Piu 'a e taha, pea ko Mokotu 'a e taha. Ko ia ai ne hiki fononga 'a e kakai mei Piu 'o mau 'alu leva ki Mokotu. Ko e taimi he taimi ni, mahalo kuo 'osi 'a e ua po'uli. Ne fai 'a e hiki fononga ko 'eni, 'oku 'ikai pê foki ke tu'u ma'u 'a e fonua ia, 'oku fai ai pê foki 'a e mofuike ia he taimi ki he taimi. Pea mo e 'u'ulu 'a e ngaahi ngoto'umu.

'I he 'emau a'u atu pê ki Mokotu, kuo toe fai mai 'a e uiaki lea faka-Niua pê 'o pehê: "Nofo, nofo heni, 'aua toe 'alu, pea taki taha ngaahi fakavavevave tono palepale niu, na'a t te 'uha tahi, fakavavevave 'aupito leva." Ne ng ue leva 'a e kakai tangata kotoa ki he taki taha ngaahi 'a hono palepale louniu, 'o langa fakahekeheke pê, taki taha malu'i 'aki 'a hono fâmilî mei he 'uha tahi, he ko e fa'ahinga 'uha foki ko 'eni 'e fai ia 'oka 'osi ngata 'a e vela. 'A ia ko e 'uha tahi, mo e s lifa, pea 'oku 'ikai ke 'aonga 'a e fa'ahinga 'uha ko'eni ki ha me'a 'e taha, he ko e tahi pê mo e s lifa.

Sione Malekamu Manu's diary

The second account is the diary of Sione Malekamu Manu, who was chief wireless operator and clerk to the magistrate's court in Niuafo'ou in 1946. The diary was written in English from notes made during the eruption and lodged with the superintendent of telegraphs, Nukualofa, in 1946. This account was sent by the British agent and consul in Tonga, Mr C. IV. T. Johnson, to the office of the Western Pacific High Commission from where it was forwarded

to the Fiji Times and Herald and published there with some small alterations on 17 October 1946. Pacific Islands Monthly published a similar version in November 1946, but the most accurate transcription is in Kenneth Bain's *The Friendly Islanders* (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1967:173-5). The original transcript, "an exact copy of the document as received by the Superintendent of Telegraphs", is now preserved in *The Western Pacific Archives* (50/46 no. 59a), and this is the version given here.

Monday 9 September 1946

7.00 p.m. About this time or a little before this time that earth tremors were becoming noticeable. Two reports like that of a rifle were heard before tremors. At 7.02 p.m. tremors became frequent but not increase in strength, about 2 to 5 seconds.

7.15 p.m. Took earth and thermometer temperatures, which showed normal, also barometer and barograph.

7.30 p.m. Tremors still on. Thought might as well call Nukualofa on 500 Kcs.

7.50 to 7.55 p.m. Calling Nukualofa on 500 Kcs to answer me on subwave. No answer.

8.00 to 8.05 p.m. Calling Nukualofa again to answer me on subwave, no answer. Tremors become more frequent and increase in strength.

8.08 to 8.10 p.m. Calling Suva Radio to tell Nuku'alofa, to see me subwave. Waiting on subwave, but no sign of Nuku'alofa. All this time didn't think for a moment that anything will ever happen. Some people say these shakes meant "rain", while some other people start to evacuate for the hill.

8.12 p.m. Calling Suva Radio again on 500 Kcs to tell Nuku'alofa see me subwave. No sign of Nuku'alofa. This time noticed big long shake, about one minute or little less, heard window rattle.

8.15 p.m. Copra Inspector called from verandah that something queer is seen. Ran out and to my horror, the western approach to Angahâ is all in flames and smoke, thousands of feet high. Can hear clearly big trees and coconut trees snapping when waves of lava reached them. My estimate as well as many others, was that the fire now is at the end of Angahâ (western) almost at the hospital. Abandoned everything and started for the hill. Fire seems to cover all western approaches, from the sea up to village of Ūsia, so ran towards Sapa'ata village. Joined by teacher outside the station, we started at a slow trot, hoping that the fire will not reach town. Stopped near end of Angahâ (to Sapa'ata) and

had another look at the eruption. Not 5 minutes since we left wireless station, that a big flash of lightning ran from the sea from a northeasterly direction and ends about 100 yards from where we stood (flash ran southeasterly), accompanied by a fresh crater erupting from the sea in front of Quensell's property. We now ran for our lives. On reaching Sapa'ata, the fire looks as if it has reached where we stood not three minutes ago. People ran to the hill, a whole mass of men women children and animals, all struggling up the hill. Whole place brightly lit by fire, moon obscured by fire and smoke. Piu was considered unsafe as it was too close to Angahâ, so all run up to Mokotu point, about a mile from Angahâ. Could see from Mokotu, fire raging at Angahâ. Wireless masts still standing in midst of fire. After about an hour, we went to Piu, where we viewed the destruction of all the Wireless Station, Govt. Offices and quarters, one [crater] at back of our kitchen (about 10 yards away) and one beside Fotofili's house about 20 yards from the office and the same distance from living quarters, not counting other small openings at various places at Angahâ, which spout fire but not lava.

11.00 p.m. Light rain mixed with sand comes down, now became wet and for first time realised that I have nothing else except the shirt and vala which I wore, my only things saved together with office and safe keys and a tuning fork. All other things lost. Later found out that I shared this misfortune with Magistrate, Police Officers, Assistant Operator, Robert Tupou and four other people, also Copra Inspector and two storekeepers. People now start building houses. Back from Piu, wet, found no place to sleep, so went down to Fata-'ulua village and spent an uncomfortable night at Ha'angana's father-in-law's house.

Tuesday 10 September 1946

10.00 a.m. Went to Angahâ. With the exception of the hospital, school house and teachers' quarters, all government property destroyed, together with Copra Board's, Quensell's, Palelei's, Fotofili's, Free Church of Tonga and three other private properties. With the exception of three craters at Angahâ, about nine others are formed from TJtu Palapu to 'Alelea (the crater at the outskirts of Angahâ, about a hundred or two hundred yards from dispensary) all these craters were in line along the beach. 'Alelea erupted to the sea and runs along the beach up to the dispensary. Pule erupted in the sea and runs in a westerly direction, covering the landing place and stopped a little past Quensell's (Copra Board Inspector's residence) facing where 'Alelea ends, leaving an opening of about 20 or 30 yards between them and formed a good safe natural anchorage



Angahâ village before the 1946 eruption. K. M. Woodburn

there facing northward, which is considered to be the best anchorage Niuafu'ou has seen. Lava has extended right out to sea. Whether it will stay or not, will depend on the durability of the lava to stand the force of the waves. The new beach is covered by a rough black sand, and lifeboats can land there with ease.

Wednesday 11 September 1946 About 11 a.m. myself, Mr. Wolfgramm and four other persons managed to pull out small safe from Government Office. We broke this safe and recovered £34 in silver. All paper currency burned. Unable pull out big safe as it was surrounded by hot thick lava and covered by hot, rough, black sand from 'Alelea crater a few yards away. This crater erupted strongly last night, and by morning a big hill has formed there, about two or three hundred feet high. Today with a long stick, I wrote SOS beside

the 'Alelea crater about where meteorological hut stood. [This was where Father Schahl was seen by a plane on 16th.] An aircraft passed well away to north at about noon or earlier. Going westerly, might be from Samoa to Fiji. 'Alelea crater stopped erupting but made an occasional roar like that of a lion, which makes people near it run for their lives.

Thursday 12 September 1946 About 10 or 11 a.m. an aircraft (unseen) passed well out to the north, running easterly (Fiji-Samoa). We prayed that she might come near and report us to Nuku'alofa but she kept a straight course.

13, 14, and 15 September 1946 Nothing happened these days, except one or two craters near Utu Palapu still active, especially at night. Not a day passed without four or five good big shakes.

Monday 16 September 1946 About 2 p.m. an aircraft came from south and circled island once, then went round Angahâ. Everyone happy as we know that this will report us to Nuku'alofa. Tried to morse to aircraft with a 2-cell torch, but no good, as the sun was too bright. She disappeared in an easterly direction.

Tuesday 17 September 1946 All craters in Angahâ died down with the exception of small openings away from erupting area, which erupt smoke and sometimes fire, but not lava. 'Alelea and "Kekei" still active, but weakly. Day was fine as well as every day since 9th.

Wednesday 18 September 1946 About noon, an American Naval Catalina approached from the east and circled the island. She then circled Angahâ, then dropped a first aid box, together with a bag of rice, some tinned beef, and some tea together with seven cases of American K rations. She circled Angahâ many times. Sometimes she came so low, that we could see 3 American sailors (in blue shirt and dungarees) waving at us from side doors of plane. She then disappeared to where she came from.

Thursday 19 September 1946 We distribute food from plane amongst those affected by eruption. Endeavour collect parachute for sending back but found out it has been cut to pieces by some of the Niua people. Food was sent from lenders, U.S.A. Naval Base, Pago Pago, Tutuila, Eastern Samoa. Also written in one of cases "New Zealand ship will call here in 10 days". Day was fine. Father Schahl picked up on his radio that *Hifofua* will be here today or tomorrow. Land transport plane, twin engine, arrived about 11 a.m. circled Angahâ about twice. Now start rain, then she went away to east.

Friday 20 September 1946 About 10 a.m. *Hifofua* arrived, together with

American Tanker (diverted from her course, Tutuila-Noumea) which was ordered to stand by the island in case of an evacuation. After some hours on shore, Minister of Land has the opinion that there is no immediate danger and no further need for ship to remain so after thanking her, sent her away. Now every crater dormant once again and no more shakes felt. Looks as if eruption ends for time being. The day was fine.

Saturday 21 September 1946 Nothing doing today, except unloading of ship. The day was fine.

Sunday 22 September 1946 About 6.30 pm received Acting Superintendent's telegram that I to remain while assistant to leave and take up post at Vava'u. Although have nothing to stop with (two shirts, 1 vala and no bedding). I only here to take and obey orders, so have to stay with pleasure. Heard from *Hifofua's* operator that Minister of Land have ordered *Hifofua's* wireless set to be taken off and put up at Piu hill. Wireless to be taken off tomorrow.

All wireless gear at Niuafou'ou destroyed by lava, together with two big clocks and one alarm clock. Benzine lamp destroyed at living quarters. Wireless masts covered by thick layer of lava, which is about as thick at old Mr Quensell's fence. Wireless room also shared same fate.

Living quarters worse as it was too close to crater. Lava covered up to half of cement tank. No one ever dreamed that we were living and working between two huge craters. If all the craters erupted at the same time, I, Ha'angana Mr. Wolfgramm and the teacher will be trapped inside Wireless room and no hope of escape. Luckily, and for some unknown reason, all the Angahâ craters seemed to wait until we were all cleared from the danger area, then they let everything go. If the eruption occurred between midnight and 6 a.m., there will be many loss of life. Although the material damage caused by the eruption is too great, we, from the bottom of our heart, thank the Almighty God, that through his kindness, and unending Love, no lives were lost.

Sister Mary Julia's diary

The third account of the eruption is written by Sister Mary Julia SM SM, one of the three Roman Catholic nuns living at Angahâ in 1946. Born in Van Buren, Maine, USA, Sister Julia was a missionary in Tonga from 1925 and at Niuafou'ou for seven years prior to the eruption.

Her "Notes on Niuafou'ou . . ." is a copy of a typescript comprising her diary from 9 September to 27 October when she departed for Tongatapu. This copy

was made by Thomas Riddle of Ravenna, Ohio, and is reproduced here in full.

"Tin Can Island". Three Nuns in a coconut hut: seven weeks near a volcano.

1946

9 September A prolonged earthquake from 6.30 to 7.30 followed by volcanic eruption. Craters popped from Kehoi to Pulei. All Angahâ was destroyed — Government buildings etc. Catholic Mission and Wesleyan Church safe. All the people ran on top of Piu. Father carried the Blessed Sacrament. I had a narrow escape.

10 September Came down to the Mission and all day we heard the noise and the muttering thunder and detonation at every entrance. The earth shook all day. Shifted all our things to Kolofo'ou at hut given by Pameti, an old man. In the evening we went to Piu to sleep in a hut just facing the Catholic Mission. It was a terrifying sight to see all those craters popping at the same time. From 12 to 4 am was a real bonfire.

11 September Came down to get some food — stayed all day and never went back to sleep. The eruption stopped but the earth kept on shaking and breaking. The crater in front of the church, the largest opening, sent out flame and smoke.



Angahâ village destroyed, 1946. Tongan photos bureau

People ran back and forth on top of the hill. Very little water. A heart rending scene to see the destruction.

12 September Went to Mass on the top of Piu heights, 885' high [700']. Sister M. Cuthbert and I alone went to Mass. Sister Angela came down to Vatulele and brought more of our clothes and furniture. The volcano is quiet but the earth is still shaking and breaking.

13 September A plane passed over the Island. I rushed to put out my flag of U.S.A. Father stays on Piu Heights but comes often to the Mission. All seem to be waiting for the worst yet to come. We wait, watch and pray.

14 September We hardly know what day it is. In our little hut, 2X2 [two fathoms or about four metres square], stuffed with all sorts of things like a real thieves' den. People are coming from every corner to ask for all sorts of things. We don't give all as we do not know how long we will remain up here. No wireless. All is destroyed.

15 September All went to Piu for Mass. It was a scene. A little coconut shelter facing the Catholic Church with the back of the altar to the Lake where dormant craters are waiting to pop out down below the ever smoking crater. Father's voice was sad and his eyes filled with tears as he pointed to the disaster down below. A living picture tells more than words.

16 September A plane hovered long and low over us. The hours seem like days and the days like weeks. We all seem to be waiting for something that will never happen. We say our prayers, cook our meals, but do not do much of anything else. What a life. Earthquakes every day. In the village — only a Sister and a girl remain.

18 September A plane dropped food from the U.S. Navy Station of Tutuila. A parachute came down — food. A message "will come from N.Z. in 10 days." Let us hope so. Started packing things and shifting. Father heard on his radio that *Hifofua* is coming.

The same old story and the same old way. Volcano is quiet, but the earth quakes and keeps on cracking. Always waiting for something to happen. We stay down because it is too difficult to climb up the heights. A plane passed today. Father came down and stayed at his house. We go twice a day to Vatulele. We have enough water.

19 September We are expecting the *Hifofua* this morning. Many suppositions all are decided to evacuate. It is really sincere. No eruption today. Earthquakes every day. Serves for digestion — after meal tablets. Still sleeping on our deck

chairs with Taipaleti (a girl named after first typewriter on Niufo'ou) on the mats — a good sentinel.

20 *September* Great excitement! A big boat coming on one side and the *Hifofua* appearing on the North side. All are anxiously waiting, the Premier is expected, but I don't think he will come. People come ashore: Havea, Kalaniuvalu (Nobles), Dr Brown, Mr Small for the wireless. Doctor and Mr Small sleep there in the little house.

21 *September* All the people are running back and forth greatly excited as to who will go by this boat. Received a good mail. News from home, and food from our Sisters. Mother General passed over the Tin Can on the Monday [16th] plane. Busy cooking for the guests.

22 *September* Back home to cook for Father and Mr Small. A visit from Father. A talk with our guests. A walk to the landing and what a heart-breaking scene. A good subject for meditation. Home for tea — quiet evening, prayer and bed time. Always waiting.

23 *September* Up early to make flap jacks for our guests. A busy day. Rushing back and forth. The wireless will be put on the heights. Tons of food brought from Tonga will be distributed to all, flour, sugar, biscuits, tea etc. A message came to bring back the food, because had enough in their plantations. What a pity.

24 *September* Went to Church and came back right away. Had a chat with Doctor and Mr Small. Cooked their dinner. Father took lunch with us and left at 3pm. Doctor left at 3.30 and Mr Small at 4pm. The *Hifofua* is gone. Big earthquake during the night.

25 *September* The earth quaked three times. People stay on the heights. We live in our hut. Many are the visitors calling for this and that, especially clothing. Give each school girl a little parcel and all those who had helped in any way. Frightful night. Dressed up at midnight to run to the top — all became quiet again. No rain. All is dry and the people have no water.

26 *September* No news. We all seem to be waiting for our funeral. Gave the Government School Master books and school supplies. Sister M. Cuthbert is not well at all. I am worrying about her. A terrifying shake-up at 11.30. All is again peaceful. Slept on deck chair, a real torment. The chief of [unclear] came to see if we were to start school on Monday, there is no house. The Government School is a crater now covered with lava.



Angahâ landing place destroyed, 1946. Tongan photos bureau

27 *September* Deo Gratias. We are still alive. Dr Semisi sent for baking powder, sugar, to make a pudding etc. Went to Vatulele to give him all I could. Sister M. Cuthbert seems better, [unclear]'s wife came and gave her jam etc. Good news: *Hifofua* has arrived safely in Tonga this morning. The day passed as usual. People at the front door and others at the back asking for IOU things — this one for a shirt and that one for a loin cloth etc., etc.

28 *September* Up with the birds after having been shaken up quite a few times during the night. Went to Vatulele to get books for school. Back in time to get dinner ready. How sad to see the lava field and fuming stones, the choking sulphureous vapors. The scene of destruction. One could say, "Here lies the grave of sins", Angahâ village was bad.

29 *September* After a bad night with horrible pains I found strength enough to rise and walk up the narrow path to Piu Heights for the Station of the Cross. Facing the Lake there, three dormant craters are waiting to pop out; behind, is an old smoking volcano. Brought people old Tongan newspapers to read, visited the sick and came down.

30 *September* Earthquake at 3.00 almost left us lifeless. The people were terribly frightened. Rain all day — a real God-sent gift for the poor people have to come down 850' to get water and take a bath whenever they can find water — even in our bathroom. People are busy making Tongan string with coconut fibre to thatch their houses if they go to Tonga. The women make mats etc.,

etc. All come along to beg for calico or print, baking powder, soap etc., etc. We are glad to see the night come, if only we had a bed to sleep in. School in the Tongan hut — 30 boys, 20 girls. School under a shelter of the Government cement [tank].

1 October School with 37 boys and 27 girls. Earthquake at 2am and many mild shakes during the day. Rain. Went to Vatulele to get a statue etc, to send to Piu Heights also the picture of St Theresa to fix up for her Feast. The Wesleyan Church are busy with their Ember Days. Gave all I could to the Government School and to all who came to beg.

2 October Earthquake at 2 am and many slight quakes during day. Distributed gifts to all the good people who have helped us — Pameti and family, the minister of the Wesleyan Church came with his wife and we gave him clothes. Went to Mission Church to get the relic of St Theresa to take to Piu in the morning.

3 October Up at 4am and went on a pilgrimage to Piu with the picture and relic of St Theresa. We followed the new road. Fixed the altar then visited a dying man, gave him a pillow, quilt, hankie, etc. Came back for school under the cement [tank]. Today, 38 boys and 28 girls sang hymns. Home at 12, dinner at 1pm. Afternoon sewing. No earthquake, all is peaceful.

4 October Plenty of beggars. The children were numerous and very naughty, real little volcanic eruptions. Gave all the school books to our children and the rest to the pupils for the Government School. All is peaceful and the people are busy making rope and mats etc, for Tonga. News from Tonga — all have to vote to find out who want to stay or go. Poor people, how they hate to leave their homes.

5 October A foretaste of the Last Judgement. A meeting of all the population, men, women and children in front of our house near the Minister's place. It reminds me of the Last Judgement. All wish to go. Only 2 [szc] refuse to sign. All getting their little treasures ready. After sweeping the house and the yard I went to the convent for a bath. What a weird place.

6 October Up to Piu for Mass. We brought flowers and candles for Rosary altar. An old man gave a little talk reminding us of the Monday eruption. After Mass, a visit to the sick, a few words to all and back again to 'Esia village. After lunch went to see the steamer passing by but arrived too late for we visited all the craters down the landing. What a scene of destruction.

7 October School and long day of waiting for — what and no one seems to

know. School again and odd jobs after. Sister M. Cuthbert is not well. Sister M. Angela is like busy Martha and spends half of the time at Vatulele. At 3pm old Manuhau, the old man, left us for the Land of Bliss and prepared for the funeral. Went to bed on a chair as usual.

8 October Up at 4am went to Piu for Mass. Found nothing prepared for burial. Funeral Procession down Government trail with the corpse. What a walk. Burial in 'Esia's graveyard. The band played. Half of the population present. Home for a cup of coffee and off to school till afternoon.

9 October Busy with all sorts of work. No school. Went to Vatulele to fill a mattress. Good news from the wireless station. A message from the Premier of Tonga. All to go as quickly [as possible]. A bad shake-up during the night restless on our chairs. What a life.

10 October Town meeting. All turned up again in the Valley of Josephat to hear the reading of the Premier's letter. School all morning. Back home at 12. A nice roasted pork was awaiting us. The afternoon was spent in making patch-work shirts for the boys who bring us food and green coconuts to drink. People are like busy bees, never have they worked so hard. They are getting things ready for the evacuation.

11 October Night dawned with a terrifying electric storm of thunder and heavy downpour welcome by all for there was no water left to do their food and washing. Water all around and in the crater, too, but none to drink. What a calamity. A real nerve-racking night. It is wet so there is no school. Plenty of work to keep us busy while Sister Superior goes down to Vatulele. We boil milk, sweep etc. Many call in for calico etc. Spent the afternoon mending old suitcases for the trip. We simply dread the long nights sitting upright feeling seasick and earthquakes and sulphureous vapors enough to make anyone sick. We wake up at 4, or rather get ready for a cup of coffee followed by prayers and then the daily routine. How we yearn for a boat to come to leave this terrifying land of fire. We will not shed a tear when we leave our custom house and find a bed to stretch our legs.

12 October House cleaning and shifting. At 11am a terrible pain in my back, could hardly walk. Went to Vatulele to stretch on my bed till tea time. Back home to sleep on a chair. Our neighbor, the Minister, brought us eggs. He offered to build us a hut so we could get our beds in. He is very kind. No sleep all night.

13 October Went to Vatulele for our Stations of the Cross and Retreat. Had a good read on my bed near the puffing crater. A real deserted village, all is

sad, but the flowers and plants are growing nicely. It is a miracle to see the Catholic Mission standing alone in the midst of total destruction. How good God is. No news of any kind. Will they let us all die here. No plane — no boat.

14 October No school because all is wet after a downpour and strong wind. Busy all morning shifting trunks from Vatulele under the Tongan kitchen. Had a good bump under the little door almost dropped dead. Life is getting more and more hectic. A very bad night. Thought of death many times.

15 October Another rainy day. All is wet. The boys come to help me to patch the roof made of coconut leaves. Plenty of tins full of holes were brought from Vatulele to fix shelter for my luggage. Tremors are felt, but no real earthquake. No news either. Here we are under the starry sky on the old Volea [vulcan] slope, a few yards from the graveyard where rests dear Sister John, Sister Josephine, Father Petelo, S.M. This is the only quiet spot on Tin Can Is. The people are like busy bees and the children are buzzing all day long.

16 October Sisters M. Cuthbert and Angela went to Vatulele to roast coffee and make cakes. Hurrah!!! Six weeks without any delicacies. In our curiosity shop where we sleep, eat and pray it is far from being appetizing. A tray of food off the old mat where generations had slept. Our legs almost get paralysed. Fiat!! This is like war times!! Volumes could be written of what we see around, horses run back and forth; dogs, and pigs poke their noses everywhere. Flies bite; cockroaches look and pest around. The sea makes a desperate noise and old Vulcan puffs on his fiery land. When, oh when, will the rescue boat arrive. Six weeks of this is more than enough.

17 October Another busy day with rain and sunshine and quaking, still waiting — still waiting — for what? First for the milk boy who came for the saucepan early this morning and never showed up again, and all the while the camp fire was kept aglow and precious kindling chips are burnt. Packing and some more teaching — Visited our neighbor, Matelita, sick in a hut next door. She was our teacher once. I gave her a little sewing utility box. The Wesleyan Church Minister came with a pineapple to thank us for a bit of sugar we gave him. His daughter came in the afternoon with a piece of calico to make a pillow. I gave her a sewing lesson and one of politeness as well. After a dishwashing, Sister M. Cuthbert and I went to the graveyard to say our office with our departed ones. As we walked through the public square, an army of naked brownies came after us all yelling together: "Yes, yes, yes" ["Io, 'Io, 'To", probably referring to the evacuation]. It reminded me of a pool of frogs all croaking. Reading, supper and bedtime — off to dream, but all on our deck chairs. By

the light of a hurricane lamp, the inside of the hut looks like a King's reception room. All those sheets of weekly news artistically cut are pasted on the posts, looks like a real canopy! Sister Cuthbert on her deck chair all wrapped up in blankets looks like an ancient goddess. Sister M. Angela, our Parisian Sister at her side keeps perfect dignity even while sound asleep. And poor Sister Julia behind the door is curled up like an old King's jester getting ready for the next performance. On the mat like a good watch dog snores our girl, Taipaleti. Outside, people keep going back and forth the whole night long, singing jazz and drinking kava. So, this is the life we are leading while waiting for our delivery from the land of EXILE while Father Schahl is away to Tonga.

18 October The sun shines bright in our Tin Can Home; all the darkies are happy and gay; go-lucky as ever. After tea, I went to Vatulele to make the Stations of the Cross and put flowers on the altar. All is peaceful there. When we get near the church we almost choke with the sulphureous vapors we breath. How grateful we feel to the Celestial Court for sparing the S.M. Mission.

19 October All the inhabitants are up and over-excited. Why? A boat is rocking o'er the deep somewhere near Futu. The alarm was given from Piu heights thinking it was the *Hifofua* bringing us a priest. I ran to church to sweep, clean and prepare for Mass. Alas it was a false alarm. Another day of packing and cleaning, and hoping — but the sun set on our anxious hearts. Again, we sat resignedly on our deck chairs for the night's rest.

20 October Up at 4.00 to replace our little cook who took a needed over-sleep while I went to light the fire in the little Tin Can kitchen with the coconut roof. I had no firewood but hoped to light the fire which is a non-easy job. God bless dear old Tan who spied a Sister kneeling on the ground and hastened along with *tome* [Tongan kindling wood] and in spite of his age knelt down and built the fire for me. He even cut the piece of pork so generously given by another neighbor. I fried it for the Sisters' breakfast while the coffee was dripping. Did not go to Piu, but took Taipaleti to Vatulele to rest while I said my prayer. Sister Angela and Sister Cuthbert went up the mountain to worship. I prefer to stay in the valley. Came back at 10.30am. The Sisters had finished their breakfast. So I had a piece of yam etc. Sitting in the shade waiting as ever, no news, no boat, no wireless. No earthquake either. All is peaceful and flowers are blooming everywhere.

21 October School under the shelter. Dried up during the night. Decided to give our girls a surprise — A PANCAKE. It was a Big job, but they all enjoyed it. Three frying pans were kept busy from 10.30 to 1.30pm. Each one got two

big flapjacks with jam enough to forget any quake. All went home very happy after writing a note of thanks to Sister Superior.

22 *October* The school master decided to get even with me and told the children to get ready for a *kaikai* [picnic feast] the next Tuesday — a farewell dinner on Piu Heights.

23 *October* Busy all day packing and expecting the boat. The *Hifofua* with Father and Judge and we have to get ready to sail. Received good news and parcels.

24 *October* Packing and more packing — Old Champion, our stove, still quite good — looking after him for four years in the mission and packed it to evacuate. What a walk they will have to take to Futu. On their backs nine miles away. I pity the carrier. God give them strength — boxes, trunks etc, boys and men of good will to do the work. Night finds us all dead tired sitting on our deck chairs.

25 *October* A lot of to and fro. More shipping but Champion could not follow but stayed in the old kitchen waiting for the evacuation day. Boat is to leave at 4pm Saturday. Not quite ready and the wind is strong.

26 *October* Another packing day. Champion went half-way and came back, no place for him. Our beds came back too. And we are leaving at 7am on Sunday at Tapaipau. All our goods are on the boat so we have no bed to sleep and not much to eat. Captain told us to be on the *Hifofua* at 7am. Poor Mr Small will no doubt stay in Niuafou. Our last night on the Volcano.

27 *October* Up at 3am coffee — packing and a last farewell to the people. Then walk down to trail that leads to Tapaipau. Our hearts were sad at the thought of leaving our dear Mission Field. Left Angah at noon. Mr Small left behind.

28 *October* Sea is quite good. No seasickness. Soon we shall be in Vava'u. Our cabin boy is a real little mother and watches over us. I am all alone in my cabin as Sister M. Angela and M. Cuthbert are on the other side of the saloon. Good night at sea.

29 *October* 6am. We are at Vava'u and shall leave at midnight tonight. All the Sisters were there to greet us. Mother M. Edith got to come with us. Left at 7pm for the boat to go to bed before *Hifofua* left. Off we went midnight.

30 *October* Good sea. Not seasick. Boy treats us royally. Passed Ha'apai. Did not stop. In Nomuka at 7pm — waiting till after 10. I went to saloon to have a chat with the Sisters. Mother Edith stayed on deck in her chair.

31 October Safe in Nukualofa. Mother General and Mother Mark came to greet us at the wharf. Took a lorry and sent our cargo to Ma'ufanga. Went to Nuku'alofa Convent and had breakfast there. Paid a visit to the Bishop. Stayed for dinner and came home in the evening.

"The End of Tin Can Island: Tin Can Blows Its Lid"

Sister Julia's second document, "The End of Tin Can Island: Tin Can Blows Its Lid", was written for Marist Moments, Lent, 1949, and is considerably expanded from the account recorded in her diary. It is included here some 36 years after initial publication for readers in Tonga.

The tragic event occurred on Monday evening, 9 September at 7.30pm, after an hour of earth tremors and quakes and shakes. We had counted 27 really good ones too, enough to make you bite your tongue and frighten anyone — yet, our happy-go-lucky natives remained peacefully on their doorsteps, for the day had been really a hot one. Evening prayer was over at the little Mission Church and we were taking our charges back to the dormitory which serves for a recreation room as well as a school and many other purposes — "4-in-1".

I was on duty for the week and Sister Superior and Sister Cuthbert were in the little convent for the spiritual reading. After lighting the hurricane lanterns and distributing the playing cards, ludo and dominoes, I sat near the door saying my Rosary while keeping one eye on the youngsters. But somebody else was busy too — rocking us back and forth till we were almost seasick. Every time the earth beneath us heaved, the frightened card players dropped all their cards on the mat and made for the doorway, but they were brought back a few times by Sister Superior, who, even though half paralyzed herself with fright, tried to be calm. Eventually, she decided to go to Father's place to find out what he thought of all those pounding thrusts.

Father was making kava on his verandah with a few natives who, looking only towards Piu and 'Ahau where the 1943 eruption had occurred, unanimously declared that there was no danger. Had they glanced northward and noticed how the sky looked over the rocky coast, they would have let the kava bowl drop down at once. Father came with Sister Superior to try to cool down our excited girls who felt that something unusual was stirring in the Tin — or rather under it. They all put away the games and their merry laughter ceased. It is not easy to keep the "comers" up while thinking that the crater under the house could send us up to glory in a wink. We started the Rosary and then sang the

"Ave Maria Stella" and a hymn to St Joseph; then we made invocations to dear Brother Andre who has proved to be a friend in need a great many times. While they were thus busy praying, I went around the room, inside and outside, sprinkling every comer, but even that did not stop the big girls from twisting about like mad ones, their eyes peering desperately outdoors in quest of something.

A crash and a boom-boom was heard behind the house towards the sea. It seemed very near. In a single moment, the room was empty; all had rushed to the gate crying with fear. I came out, too, and saw Sister Angela with a little suitcase, Father running to church and Sister Cuthbert as peaceful and calm as usual, walking on the verandah while reciting her Rosary. As she is still new in Niufo'ou, it was hard for her to realise what was going on. I ran to her and said, "Oh come along and let's pack our kit-bag — something is coming on!" We went to our rooms and got busy pulling a mat from the bed — a blanket — all was tumbling down in the rush. All the while, the "atomic bombs" were popping out at a distance. The noise of the sea, the detonations from the rocky coast — all was deafening. While we were packing, the heat was getting to be unbearable. Mo'unga came rushing in with a load on his back looking like a madman, telling us to hurry up. The fire had jumped and was running our way. There was no time to lose or we would be buried alive. I pulled Sister and off we went but the door was left open and the light on, so we went back and the good Mo'unga kept on yelling "Fai vave!" We locked the door, put out the light, and followed our "angel" on a "flight into Egypt". Father Schahl and Sister Angela were already half-way up the mountain. Father had taken the Blessed Sacrament and was going ahead to put the precious Treasure in a safe spot.

When we passed the comer of the church, I happened to turn my head to look towards the landing. What I saw was enough to turn anyone into an icy ball — a pillar of fire and clouds of smoke with pieces of fire bouncing up and falling on every side. All seemed to be running full speed towards us. Lightning flashed and muttering thunder sounded through the air and continually grew louder. The atmosphere was heavy with the odor of sulphur — a mouthful swallowed while jumping over the fence was choking me. We trudged and trudged along, Sister half-pulling me by a strap which gave way, causing us both to fall. Sister said I was praying aloud, but I don't remember. Taipaleti, our girl (the name means "typewriter") carried the bedding on her head, all the while turning desperately to urge us to hurry. Our angel had left us after putting us on the right path, so we followed the "typewriter" up and up the

steep, sheer perpendicular slope, as difficult to climb as a coconut tree. My throat was burning from the poisonous, evil-smelling fumes, my eyes smarting, and I could go no more — I decided to stop and wait a minute. One of the girls saw me and sent through the air a cry for help, and surely I was having a hard time of it; with every step I was taking forward I would slip back two or three. The shrubs I tried to grasp were too frail and would come up from the ground, roots and all.

Suddenly there was rush, a noise of something rolling down the hill — a boy appeared, loaded down with goods, but extending his hand to drag me up. By the light of the eruption which was like the pillar of fire which guided the Israelites, we staggered up the trail to the heights of Piu, and none too soon. I dropped wearily to the ground but I started up soon enough when I found my head resting on something too soft to be the earth — it was a little baby and the poor thing started to cry. So far gone that I felt this was the end, I renewed my Vows and prepared for death, but Father, who had reached the other side of the lake with the Blessed Sacrament, saw us and sent Gabriel (not the one from heaven, but equally welcome) running towards us, and once again, up we started. A downpour of sulphur and molten lava followed, saved only by our rubber capes from a veritable deluge of sticky lava and sulphur. We were like blind people guided by those dark angels.

The level refuge place at last, we found Father sitting on a mat with his Treasure, and oh, delight of delights, he transferred the Ciborium and the Luna to me. I was thrilled and really can't remember what I told my God as I held Him, Creator of Heaven and Earth, in my poor hands. It was worth it all those seven years of exile in my fiery land — how well He knows how to reward us for the little that we do — this was indeed a hundred times the hundredfold.

Sister Angela must have lived up to her name that evening, for she must have had wings to have ascended that steep hill as she did, with never a sign of weariness nor a word of complaint. Father Schahl was wonderful, going up and down the hill with his boys, who were exhausted too, to make sure that none of his flock was missing. The bewildered, stunned people, some-crazed with fear, moved on around the rim of the lake in funereal silence. The pale light of the moon made everything look ghostly, intermittently lighted by the belching hell down the hill. Mr Vulcan really went to town this time, roaring through his subways and at each stop giving a display of fireworks and his own brand of atomic bombs.

Father came back with a suitcase for the Ciborium and the Luna and then I was only a Sister once more. The three of us attempted to settle down for

the night, and, like vigil lights, surrounded our improvised tabernacle. Impossible to sleep, with one's head repining on a restless earth and one's feet roasting from the heat of the living inferno.

At 6 am the bells of the Catholic Mission pealed joyfully and truly we were glad to greet the day. Miracle of miracles, Vatulele was still standing, untouched, surrounded by craters and smoking lava fields. Father came and uncovered the Ciborium while we knelt on the rim of a sulphurous, vaporous lake, giving to us our Manna in the desert!

From Piu heights we had a view of the village of Angah . Horrible to see, the town had turned into a lava field. The radio station, no trace of it! The post office was a belching crater, the postmaster's house a piece of molten lava. Copra sheds were burning slowly. The landing rock was covered by a new-formed lake. Where was the government school, gone too, under the piled up lava. Scattered along the coast from Pulei to Kekei were craters shaped like Christmas puddings, fire and steam still puffing out of them. But the Catholic Mission with all its buildings was standing without damage! The red hot pumice seemed to have especially respected the walls of the Sacred Heart church, for it was gleamingly white, and where the fiery stones, lava and sulphur had mercilessly destroyed everything in the vicinity, the lava from the crater directly across the road had stopped at the very gate! Who were the saints responsible for this visible, manifest protection? We had invoked the whole celestial court, but we had pasted pictures of St Joseph and Brother Andre on the walls and there was a relic of the Little Hower, sent by Mother Agnes, her own Carmelite Sister, still in the church.

We ventured into the town to try and rescue our belongings, walking stealthily and in great trepidation, fearing at every step to disappear into one of those wide-open fiery mouths belching on every side. At every detonation the earth opened somewhere. Father was already at the Mission and the Sisters were trying to "boil the billy" to get a cup of coffee. Alone, like a straying sheep, I paused in front of the church, whispering a prayer to St Joseph as I regarded the steaming crevices all around. Suddenly, a deafening noise and a stream of red, overwhelming fumes spewed in the air. I thought for a moment I was going to be another "Lot's wife" to be turned into a statue of molten lava. Behind the church another crash was heard and the ground opened at my feet. We were all in real danger, and how we managed to rescue all the supplies we pulled out of the house that day is still a puzzle.

Back to the shelter we came with our poor treasures — everything from clothespins to a drum of kerosene. Father had brought altar wine, the candles

and other church necessities, so that we had only space enough between the doors for two deck chairs where we sat like Queens, dozing through the night with closed eyes but with ears alerted for the first signal to run for dear life.

On the evening of the 10th we decided to go up and sleep at Piu. The natives had kept busy all day building coconut-leaf shelters for all the people of Angah , Kolofou, Saba'ata and 'Ésia. More danger was threatening, so we followed the crowd up the heights. It was a long weary walk for the heat was almost unbearable. We were steaming with perspiration and we really were exhausted when we reached the summit of Piu. The Catholics had their "tents" facing the mission church down below. All the others were at a little distance on another elevation around the lake. However, all seemed to have but one heart and one soul during those tragic days; all helped one another to construct their houses and shared their food. None of them felt brave enough to go to the plantations for fresh supplies.

That memorable night of the 10th of September was to be still worse than the night before. We all went to bed, or rather stretched ourselves on the ground on a mat in that long hut filled with natives of all ages from a three-week-old baby to a grandma. Some played the sentinel's part and watched all night. My companions fell asleep. All of a sudden, there was a noise like half a dozen cannon roaring at the same time and then monster volcanoes buried under the sea began to pour out tons and tons of red hot stones, sulphur, lava and coral. What a sight it was to see fire coming out of the water! A dozen big mouths kept spitting out fire from midnight until 7 am. Wednesday morning. From my ringside seat at the sinister performance, I watched all night. What really interested me was the mission church with all its little lights blinking around; would it disappear suddenly or would morning still find it standing in the midst of devastation? Night wore on — the hours were like days.

At last, day dawned and we all came out and knelt down on the rim of the lake to receive our Saviour. How grateful we were to the Divine Master for sparing the whole population; not one life was lost. Suddenly, as if by magic, the fire stopped and instead there came out of those fiery throats, dark grey and black clouds, folding one layer upon another, then falling on the sides of the ever-growing craters, and that was the end of the fireworks in the public square of Angah . Then all was quiet — ominously quiet — really too quiet to be true. Was it going to erupt somewhere else? No-one knew, and there we were in the middle of the ocean without any means of communication with the outside world — 2000 miles from nowhere. Of course, we had plenty of food in the plantations even if all the stores were burned. Some had lost

everything except what they had on. Nothing could be done but trust in God and wait patiently.

Again, we ventured down to the mission and this time, we went into the church. The fire was not belching anymore so we were bold enough to attempt the rescue of the church goods. We hastened with our work for it was like a furnace inside the church. The candlesticks were all on the floor, the sanctuary lamp down, pictures with broken glasses, vases of flowers upside down, the altar cloth in a terrible state. The statue of St Joseph fastened to the wall was at the edge of the shelf and the wire broken. How it was holding there was a puzzle, for with all the earthquakes it was a marvel that anything was still standing. The church itself was ever rocking, thus making it unsafe to say Mass there.

A little coconut-leaf chapel was erected on the heights and the first Mass was said on the 12th of September, the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary. There on the rim of a dormant crater, the lake with its bubbling water and the three little islands with the craters ready to erupt in front of us, the ever-smoking craters at our back, and the beautiful sun shining over us, we bowed down in prayer. Father said a few words, but the tears and emotion were choking him as he stood facing the lava field with its huge craters in the middle of the once prosperous little town of Angah. Why had we been spared from the devastating fire? All the natives were crying. After Mass we stayed a long time near the little Tabernacle before coming down to the valley below. How long were we going to live like the Israelites in the desert? The poor people had no water to drink. We had to divide it and go sparingly.

On Friday, a plane flew over us. We rushed with the Stars and Stripes to hoist it on the heights of Piu and draw the attention of the pilot. The "bird" passed without seeing us and there we were waiting — ever waiting — trembling on vulcan slopes.

On Sunday, the 15th of September and Feast of Our Lady of the Seven Colors, we had Mass on the mountain. All the Catholics were there. Father's sermon was really inspiring. He had tears in his eyes and he looked sad. Of course, he has to look after a large family.

September 16th: A plane hovered over us and came down very low over the crater and lava field. We waved huge sheets to draw their attention but again, the plane went by and we were left on the rock waiting. The following day another plane came, circled, and then went off again. The next morning, we were all startled by the noise of a plane which soon appeared in view to drop a parachute — a suitcase with first-aid supplies. Many bags of food con-



Angah landing place deserted, 1971. T. Riddle

taining soldiers' rations followed. The plane had come from Tutuila. How very kind of them to help their poor distressed neighbors of Tin Can Isle! The natives were delighted to get that manna from the sky. What a treasure-trove it was; there were even cigarettes, fruit bars, biscuits, cheese, etc., a bag of rice and sugar. It was really a Santa Claus visit.

Friday the 20th, a big boat neared the island with food and supplies sent by the Premier of Tonga. A radio set was put on the heights, but just when all was ready, a terrifying earthquake made our visitors hasten to the boat and never come back to shore. Father decided to return with them to Tonga to find out what was to be done. Seeing that we could still be useful to the poor destitute ones we elected to remain behind. No Mass and no Communion for many long weeks! On Sundays we climbed the mountain to make the Stations of the Cross with natives and in the evening all assembled again for the Rosary and prayers.

Every day in the ensuing month we had earthquakes, many of them at night. We slept in deck chairs, all dressed and ready to run at a minute's notice. We kept busy with school, sometimes under a tin roof used to collect water for the village, sometimes in the Tongan kitchen. Sixty or 70 boys and girls had courage enough to come down the mountain for classes, and as the Government school had lost everything, we shared our books and school supplies so

as to keep all the children occupied. Once we had a "flapjack" party that the children enjoyed very much. Three girls with huge frying-pans busy around the camp fire, turning the flapjacks. While waiting for the "kai kai", Moeaki played games with the children and all made enough noise to wake old Mr Vulcan again, but he didn't awake and kept quiet; there was only a good earthquake to help the digestion. We were beginning to like the shakes, especially after meals — it was worth a peppermint.

Our hut was a real "canteen". Our clients were numerous for all was gratis — medicine and hot coffee for the sick, drinks for children and the grown-ups, too. Remnants and samples so lovingly given us by our benefactors enables us to dress a great many people, regardless of what creed they belonged. It was one big family helping one another.

On Saturday, the 5th of October, a town meeting was called. All assembled in the public square of Kolofo'ou near our hut. It reminded us of the Last Judgment — a deadly silence reigned over all. News had come from Tonga; the natives had to vote so as to find out who wanted the evacuation and who wished to stay on the island. All but 200 voted for the evacuation (out of 1,350). This decision was sent to Tonga by wireless. A few days after, the result came and another meeting was called. Final decision: "General evacuation as soon as boats can be chartered". Order was given to hurry up with the packing. Never had we seen our natives working so hard, making "kafa", the cord to thatch their houses, parts for the new home in the "Promised Land" o'er the sea. All hands were as busy as bees and buzzing like bees, too; all kept singing and making a lot of noise to forget the craters still popping.

Friday, October 11th: A terrifying storm — thunder, lightning and a heavy downpour. The latter was a Godsend as there was no water left anywhere and the people in the newly-built village on the rim of the lake were really to be pitied. They had to carry water up the steep mountain from the village down below. The cement reservoirs were not destroyed but there was no roof or pipes to carry the water in the tanks. We had to go to the Mission morning and evening to distribute the water and then keep the key so no one would take more than his share during the day. Happily, the coconuts were in abundance and helped to quench their thirst. The sulphur in the air made one feel very uncomfortable at times and just to think that water was scarce was enough to make you ever thirsty.

Saturday, October 19th: Great excitement on the rim. A steamer was sighted! Vaka! Vaka! They even blew the bugle and one boy ran down to tell us that the HIFOFUA and a big steamer were near. Thinking it was the expected boat

with father, we ran to the mission church to prepare for Mass. All was in a terrible state and needed a real good house-cleaning. We hastened along and all was ready when the schoolmaster sent down a note from Piu saying that the boat had gone by.

Sunday, October 20th: Again, we walked to the heights and mingled our prayers with those of the natives while waiting for the evacuation boat, so slow to come. In the afternoon, we visited the ruins of Angahâ and climbed to the top of a few craters. Some were still puffing. One has no idea what a crater or lava field is like, unless walking or creeping on them. What a sight of irreparable loss! Yet we feel so grateful to God for sparing so many lives and leaving them the means to live.

The boat finally arrived on Tuesday 24th at noon and what excitement there was on the heights and in the village.

Friday 25th: We had Mass at the mission church, the first since the eruption. All were apprehensive, but had they occupied the place I did in the church and had seen the crater puffing at a few score feet across the road, I am sure many would have taken flight to the heights before Mass was finished.

The good natives were really wonderful, carrying heavy trunks across the lava field to Futu, miles and miles away, on their backs and shoulders. At sunset, there was nothing left in the hut but our little suitcases and hand-baskets. The boat was to come in the morning. At 7am [26th] we had to be ready at Tapaipau. We got up at 3am and by 4am, many natives were already assembled around the hut to say farewell. Father came to bless us and with tears in our eyes, we left Kolofo'ou. It was impossible for us to have Mass and so with heavy hearts we left, following the funeral-like procession of men, women and children down the trail still wet with dew. At every turn of the road, an old man or a good grandma would rush to whisper "good-bye" and turn back crying softly. If it was sad for us to part with the land of our adoption, what must it have been for the natives? However so humble it may be, there is no place like home, even on a vulcan slope.

May God watch over our people of Tin Can and bless all our good friends whose generosity helped us to keep the light of Faith burning until the very end of volcanic Niuafu'ou. Please God, we will begin again soon, following our poor exiles to their new island of 'Eua, to light yet another Sanctuary Lamp in the heart of the South Sea Isles.

Father Schahl's account

The fourth account of the eruption at Niuafu'ou is by Roman Catholic priest Father Schahl, better known locally as P tele Lolesio, who arrived in Niuafu'ou in June 1944, where he resided until the evacuation in 1946. Father Schahl's account was recorded by Garth Rogers on 18 May 1971 in Vaipoa village, Niuatopotapu, some 25 years after the events described.

It was a warm summer's evening in September. I had just taken the evening prayer and was standing on the verandah of my house when Tuita arrived to discuss a forthcoming meeting. I had just decided to make kava when the first tremor shook Angah ; this must have been sometime before 7 o'clock. Tuita's young boy went outside, looked towards 'Eisia and said the bush was on fire. I too looked out but in the opposite direction and saw nothing. Tuita's son began to cry as the second earthquake shook our house, this time for about three to four minutes. Tuita said, "The volcano will erupt tonight". After the third violent shake he departed with his son saying, "Let's leave off; it's already erupting". I hesitated on the verandah undecided whether or not to ask Lomu to mix some kava when the fourth big shake — it kept going intermittently for about 45 minutes from about 7.40 on — urged me to leave Lomu on the verandah and go to the church to prepare to evacuate the Blessed Sacrament. Just then, Lomu's father Sakopo and her brother arrived to summon Lomu, and Saia Leua appeared to offer his assistance. I gave an old trunk to Lomu's son to take to the mountain thinking it would serve as a tabernacle for the Blessed Sacrament. I then took out a suitcase, put my clock and umbrella on the table, called to the sisters and ran to the church to retrieve the Sacrament. Saia took the suitcase, Sister Angela and the others came over and we all left at full speed for Kolofo'ou. I was carrying my clock, umbrella, and the Sacrament in my hands. As we hurried along the track towards Kolofo'ou the fires were burning from the huge crack which stretched from 'isia to the coast off Angah village and the lava was pouring out.

Our leaders lost the cleared path, found a pig track and we ended up pushing through the bush to Piu. There we found the Sisters with the trunk into which I put the Holy Sacrament. We discovered later that others had left in a similar hurry; the jailor, for example, was half-way to the mountain ridge when he remembered the three prisoners locked inside. He returned to Angah , released the three men, and they all fled in great haste.

Many people had already abandoned the summit of Piu in favour of Mokotu (which is about a mile from Angah) because the fires and heat seemed too

close for safety. I saw the Sisters safe on Mokotu before returning with six or seven others to Piu to witness the destruction of government buildings in Angah . No craters had yet formed but lava was flowing from the great crack which ran from close to 'Eisia out to the coast near the western boundary of Angah village and doubled back to the corner of the Catholic church where it abruptly stopped. Sometime between midnight and 1 o'clock that night I asked Saia, "How fares Vatulele?" (the Catholic Mission Station). "It's alright", was the reply but I decided nevertheless to venture down and see for myself. So after overcoming the entreaties of the others to deter I went down accompanied by Saia, Kapele, and one other man to a point near the present hospital in 'Eisia, that is, about half-way from the mountain to Angah village. But the fires were then very close and several big blows occurred over near the Mission station prompting Saia to declare, "Let's return!" So we returned to Piu gathering up a few others on the way and being about 3 am the 10 or so of us lay down to sleep on the ground facing Piu summit and the clean southerly wind.

All the people of 'Eisia, Angah , Kolofou, and Sapa'ata village evacuated their homes that night to camp on the crater rim; only a few families of Mata'aho, Fata'ulua, Mu'a villages left their homes for the safety of the mountain whereas none or very few Petani and Tongamama'o people felt the need to move.

About 10 o'clock the next morning (Tuesday 10 September) a group of us including Sister Julia and one other Sister, went down to view the damage and to try to retrieve some stores, books, clothing and so on. Some boys had preceded us and had managed to ring the church bell but were deterred from sounding the slit-gong by the roar of a fresh outburst near the Catholic church. Yet there were still no craters; only some small blow-holes locally called *ngutu koa*, which like geysers puffed sand and steam into the air, occasionally roaring like a lion. Some boys took delight in poking these vents with long sticks until a great roar from below caused them to shout with fear and flee in all directions. The Sisters retrieved stores and clothing from their undamaged convent, returned to Kolofou village and set up house in Pamenti's building. I gathered up some books, church records and registers, and returned to the people on the mountain. The lava field was still working and open; the craters had not yet begun to¹ form. None of the Catholic buildings were damaged but the government quarters, copra store housing some 900 tons of copra, the post office, police station, jail, magistrate's house (and his books), the private stores of T kala Quensell and that of Peauafi and his brother were partially or completely destroyed.

The craters started on the third day, Thursday 12 September, the day I held the first service in Kolofou village, and the lava ceased to flow. A line of sulphur craters appeared along the northern coast and a huge mound appeared on Kalaniuvalu's allotment enveloping his house, setting fire to the wooden hospital only 20 yards away by sheer heat. The wooden school and most of the remainder of the village was saved by the south wind as were most of the crops but the copra was burning for two weeks after the outburst.

The Catholic Mission remained intact throughout the eruption; the Sisters returning each day for supplies and other materials. I held Mass in a temporary chapel erected between the two government water tanks in Kolofou village and also slept there.

The earthquakes continued intermittently for about three weeks; the people not knowing whether the eruption had finished or not.

A large earthmovement about halfway down the inside face of the crater near Piu occurred about three days after the eruption. The ground slipped away about four to five feet in places towards the crater lake. But life returned nearly to normal, with most people returning to their villages on the eleventh day, except all government services were suspended and no communication was possible with the outside world for 10 days. Angah people had built good temporary shelters and even some houses on the slopes of the mountain where they stayed.

Then, a plane appeared but flew straight over the island. The next day another appeared and as it circled Angah I ran into the lava field waving. We found out later that this plane was flying to Samoa with Sister Mark on board, and, as Tonga had received no radio message for 10 days, the captain had been requested to survey the island. He reported an eruption had occurred on the north side of the island; that the land itself looked alright; that a Catholic Priest had waved from the lava field. The next day a plane dropped emergency supplies from Pago Pago and the Niuafouans knew their plight was known. Meanwhile Father Tremblay had sent a message to Fiji radio concerning the return of the *Hifofua* to Niuafou and we in Niua heard it and learned that the *Hifofua* would leave Nukualofa on Friday expecting to reach Niuafou on Monday. The government ketch had only just left Niuafou on completion of the annual audit and inspection of government affairs, and was thus in Niuauputu when the eruption broke out. It continued to Vava'u and Nukualofa without knowledge of the calamity, but was sent back direct to Niuafou with the Minister of Lands, Havea Tu'ihateiho and some crated bananas. It arrived in Niuafou on Monday morning together with several other foreign ships. Once Havea

was assured there was no immediate danger he sent the bananas to the escorting ships and thanked them for standing by. He was then requested by Nukualofa Radio to return to Vava'u to pick up a rugby team but ignoring this directive he proceeded to send the ship's radio on shore where operator Malekamu Manu was still in his only salvaged clothing: a pair of pyjamas.

I left Niuafu'ou with Havea in the *Hifofua* which sailed direct to Nukualofa, and whilst I reported to my Bishop, the Queen appointed M noa Havea as chairman of the Niuafu'ou Evacuation Committee. M noa and I returned to Niuafu'ou after about one week in Nukualofa by which time 'Esau, the head policeman; Maile Tonga the government magistrate and agent; and Peauafi the District Officer, all acting under Cabinet Orders, had held a plebiscite to determine the people's wishes concerning evacuation. About 1,200 wished to go, almost all those from the northern villages of Hihifo, whereas only P tani and Tongamama'o people wished to stay. It was known after the plebiscite that evacuation would take place but the time and vessel were unknown.

The old people merely said, "If it is the will of God, we will go, if not, we will wait." Meanwhile, the *Hifofua* kept plying back and forth; it took the Sisters some time in November, and each time it took loads of salted pork for the Catholic Mission — one half of the proceeds going to the Captain the rest going to the church.

Orders from the Queen were that houses and goods were to be prepared for transit and stored on the beaches; the R.C. Church and houses were dismantled and stored under iron sheeting at Angah while many people cut down good breadfruit trees to obtain house-poles.

The *Matua* arrived at 6am (Saturday 21 December 1946) and took about 1,230-1,250 people with suitcases, food, bedding; leaving at 6pm for Tonga. People wishing to take dogs either travelled on the *Hifofua* or stayed behind. The *Matua* docked in Nukualofa on Sunday at 5pm and lorries were waiting to take the people to the abandoned army camp at Vaikeli. I went first to Ma'ufanga and later to Mu'a . . .

For two years the Tonga Government did little or nothing to relieve the plight of the people from Niuafu'ou. The government had lost its property in Niuafu'ou; it then lost its head and acted without consideration of consequences.

The Niuafu'ou refugees were given land in Tongatapu to use for food crops but they annoyed landlords by stripping coconut palms of their nuts for drinking thus depriving the landowners of their prime cash income. After working for half an hour in Niuafu'ou it is the custom for each man to drink two coconuts for refreshment; and they continued to do so in Tongatapu.



Noble Fusitu'a and his wife F'isila in Sapa'ata, 1967. G. Rogers

Evacuation

The following composite account, translated directly into English from interviews conducted by Garth Rogers in 1967 with Pisila Fusitu'a, Hon. Tévíta Fusitu'a and Siaoši Telefoni Ongoloka, depicts the traumatic events of evacuation from personal, involved, Niuafu'ou perspectives.

Noble Fustituá and his wife Pisila were the only Niuafu'ou estate-holders resident on Niuafu'ou during the 1940s and they, no less than other Niuafu'ou families, stood to lose almost everything they possessed from the evacuation.

Ongoloka was chief stevedore for the island in 1946 and thus responsible for loading and the safety of the evacuees. As with the Fusitu'as, Ongoloka never condoned nor supported the idea of total evacuation. Here, he vividly recalls the night of the eruption, the public meeting where the decision to evacuate was announced, and then the evacuation itself.

As Captain of our local football team I was speaking to a football meeting in Angah when the tremors started on Monday evening the ninth of September. We all felt uneasy so the meeting was abandoned and we all went home . . .

By about 9 o'clock I was with my family on Piu heights overlooking Angah and the northern coast. Angah village was on fire and the entire place was lit up by white and red lights. There were three centres of eruption on the coast from which spouted columns of pink lava and steam. A crater appeared in the sea just north of the landing place and sucked in all the surrounding sea like a giant whirlpool . . .

On Thursday 12 September a plane flying very high must have sighted our distress signal, a large SOS written in white sand on the black lava rocks of



Futu village after the 1929 eruption. Pacific Islands Monthly

Angah , because another plane dropped a medical-kit by parachute the following day on the charred grounds of Epinesa College, Angah .

The aeroplane dropped about 10 cases of tinned meats and fish and one case of medical supplies with a letter from the Red Cross in Pago Pago stating our plight had been discovered and a rescue ship was coming.

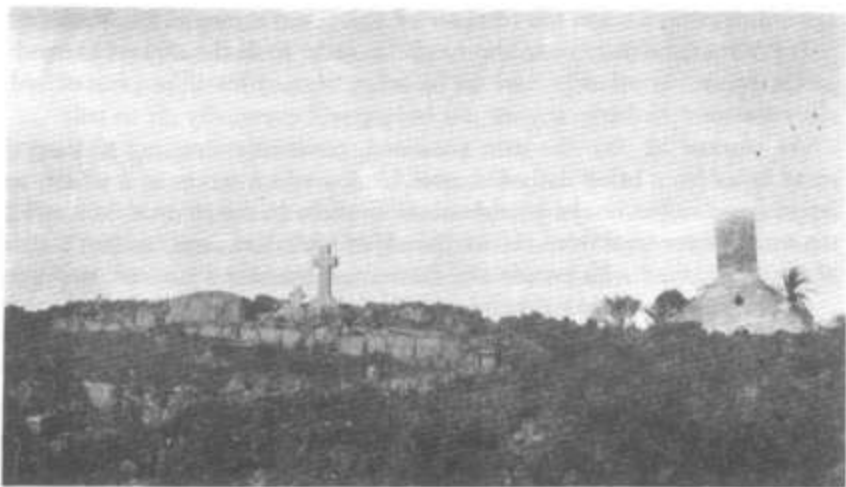
After the eruption at Angah the government workers refused to remain on Niuafu'ou, they all wished to leave. And when Police Magistrate M noa Havea addressed the assembled population in Kolofu'ou to explain the government orders he said, "You can go or stay but government is leaving never to return."

M noa had requested Fusitu'a to call the inhabitants together and inform them of government intentions. Fusitu'a refused so M noa had to do it. This happened in late October at Kolofu'ou village.

Fusitu'a recalled M noa's speech as follows:

Be assured that this is not my wish, but it is the order of the Government that I should come to call you together; I believe and expect that evacuation will take place but someone will be crucified through it.

According to Ongoloka, M noa told the people to take everything with them. Pisila Fusitu'a recalls how the houses were to be pulled down, every housepost



Ruined church and graveyard at Futu, 1929. Pacific Islands Monthly

marked to identify owner and village, and all carried to the shore at Angah ; how animals were to be killed, dressed and salted down for the journey; how mats for house-thatch were to be woven and sennit plaited for house-building.

Ongoloka takes up the narrative just prior to evacuation.

The day set for the evacuation was Saturday 21 December 1946. The sailing ketch *Hifofua* arrived off Funga'ana on the northwest coast at daybreak on Friday 20th and began to load personal effects of people from the northern villages: heaps of mats, baskets of food, live pigs, dogs, and even sacks of oven stones. But great was the sorrow of the people when they saw how many goods could not be loaded.

At dusk, an over-laden *Hifofua* sailed round to Futu and anchored in readiness for the arrival of the *Matua*. Few people had any rest that Friday evening; many were packing belongings, others were preparing baskets of cooked foods, roast pork, fowls, salted meats, vegetables, and many stayed awake, just waiting . . .

A great wailing arose from every graveyard on the island that night as many people prepared to leave their loved ones for the first time in their lives.

At 6 o'clock on the following morning the *Matua* dropped anchor about a mile off Futu as the wind was picking up an onshore swell from the northwest. The *Hifofua* lay about 100 yards off-shore between her main anchor and a long stem-line tied to 'Utuloa (a rocky promontory projecting into the sea at Futu).

The Prime Minister and the Minister of Police were aboard the *Matua*.

The *Matua*'s boats came to shore with an order from the captain to me: No goods, foods, or animals were to be taken aboard his ship; persons only, everyone must embark, anyone disobeying will eventually go to jail.

We worked all day like men possessed, constantly straining to keep the small boats from being dashed against TJtuloa which serves as a wharf, and ferrying passengers on the whaleboats from shore to the *Hifofua*. Meanwhile, the small motor-boat from the *Matua* plyed back and forth hauling a string of tenders packed with people and their small bundles.

Other people were bringing house-poles, tools, boxes and bundles to Futu and storing them in the thatched buildings along the beach where they would wait shipment to Nukualofa.

Some men were executing an order to shoot all the dogs and cats in the villages and at Futu; this was a rather bloody business . . .

It was a very busy and arduous day, no-one stopping to rest or eat. By 6 o'clock the ketch had sailed and the *Matua* was preparing to leave; everyone on board was in low spirits. We knew that a few people were staying behind but did not know who nor how many. People kept milling around the boat looking for family and kin . . .

Tevita Fusitu'a describes the voyage aboard M.V. Matua:

Sunday morning dawned grey with heavy cloud coming from the northwest. Niuafou was out of sight and there was weeping all over the *Matua*. The captain's orders had been that no food was permitted aboard as we were due in Nuku'alofa on Sunday morning at 10 o'clock. As none of us had eaten properly the day before, we were mighty hungry. An order from the Prime Minister Ata, and the Minister of Police 'Akauola, declared the ship would be delayed four hours to avoid disturbing the Sunday Church services in Nuku'alofa. Milk powder and three hard biscuits per person were then distributed . . .

The people will never forget this time . . .

Lorries met the ship in Nuku'alofa at about four o'clock in the afternoon and started to transfer the people to an old American army camp at Vaikeli on Tu'ihateiho's estate. By 10 o'clock that evening the last lorry load pulled into Vaikeli. Shortly afterwards, mugs of tea and three biscuits per head were handed out by members of the Evacuation Committee at Vaikeli. Police were stationed at the gates and we were told that no-one must leave. I was very

hungry and decided to go to Lapaha where my wife Pisila was staying with her brother Fotofili. I walked to the gate and said to the policeman, "Do what you wish but I am leaving now". One of the lorries took me to Lapaha.

There, Pisila received a shock:

My two maids were disturbed by a lorry coming into our yard well after midnight on Sunday, the Sunday before Christmas, 1946. One girl returned to say that Fusitu'a had come but as I hadn't heard about the Evacuation Order and the total evacuation of Niuafu'ou, I couldn't believe it. I sat up, surrounded by my family and beheld Fusitu'a standing in the doorway. After a brief silence he said, "Why are you sitting there staring at me in such wonder?" I thought he had passed away on Niuafu'ou and that this was his ghost returning to me. Fusitu'a then walked into the room and said, "Have you got any food?" We sat together and talked whilst Fusitu'a ate, relieved that he was alive and well but sorrowful that our island and our ancestors were deserted . . .

On Monday morning, Fotofili took bread, flour, sugar and cooked food to our people in Vaikeli . . .

Sione Malekamu Manu's account

Sione Malekamu's published account of the mass evacuation describes the events as seen by an outsider but with sympathy and compassion. It was sent to the Fiji Times and Herald by Premier Ata where it was published on 24 February 1947 under the heading "Tongan writer describes last days of Niuafu'ou".

Niuafu'ou Island, known to the world, and more especially to philatelists, as "Tin Can Island", was evacuated on Saturday, December 21, 1946, following a decision made by the Tongan Government at Nuku'alofa in October.

This decision was based on the assumption that the island was no longer safe for habitation because of the volcanic activity which had broken out with increasing frequency from 1929, when the village of Futu was destroyed.

In 1935 and 1936 the most fertile part of the island was destroyed, the devastated area reaching to the outskirts of the village of Petani. In 1943, another eruption destroyed many homes in the country and nearly all the food crops. Then, on September 9, 1946 came an eruption which wiped out half

the Government centre at Angah , with all the government offices, including the wireless station, and the only two stores on the island.

No loss of life resulted from any of these eruptions though there were many narrow escapes. But after the last eruption, the Government stepped in and ordered the evacuation of the people, fearing that another eruption would involve loss of life.

The islanders believed that all the eruptions were sent by God as a punishment, but only for any wrong-doing or misbehaviour by leading chiefs of the island or the Government, while their own sins would be unnoticed.

After the arrival of the *Hifofua* (the only government vessel in the Kingdom) with the Minister of Lands as investigator for the Government, on September 20, the island was full of rumours that Niuafu'ou was to be evacuated.

This speculation was ended on October 8, when word was received from Nuku'alofa. The news was received with joy by the younger people, but many of the older folk were very reluctant to leave their homes. Some of them approached the Government Representative with a request that they might be permitted to stay behind.

On October 9, a big meeting was held, and the news was given to the people. During the breaking of the news it was interesting to note the expressions of pleasure and expectation that showed among the younger people, while the elders bowed their heads in grief.

Before and after the eruption on September 9, the Government was in the hands of the Police Magistrate, Maile 'Etoni Tonga, who also acted as Governor of the Island, but after the eruption, when all the government offices had been destroyed, and his offices were no longer needed there, he was recalled to Nuku'alofa, where he was reappointed Police Magistrate of the Ha'apai Group.

The second arrival of the *Hifofua* on October 22 brought another Police Magistrate, Salesi M noa Havea, to administer the island. He was in charge of the evacuation of Niuafu'ou as assistant to the Minister of Lands, High Chief Havea Tu'iha'ateiho, who was chairman of the evacuation committee.

Between the departure of Maile Tonga and the arrival of M noa Havea, the island was in the hands of the District Officer, Sosafate Peauafi, and the few government officials who were left there.

After it had been decided that the island was to be abandoned, everyone — men, women and children alike — was busy dismantling houses, weaving mats and baskets, and cutting copra.

Every day was a feast-day. Nearly every house had large quantities of fresh pork, when walking along the roads through any of the villages one's nostrils

would be attacked from all directions by the odour of cooking.

If one's stomach had been empty (impossible in the island at that time) one would have found such a walk a mouth-watering process.

Later, a dispute arose between those who wanted to leave and those who wanted stay. This would have become serious had not the Tongan Government made a very wise move.

It permitted everyone to vote on the question and thus fairly settled the dispute. Of the 1300 people of the island, only about 240 wished to stay, and when the result was known, the minority agreed to leave in accordance with the wish of the majority.

By the end of November, all the houses had been dismantled and the contents taken to the shore. By the second week of December everything had been completed.

The *Hifofua* arrived again on December 17 with the Minister of Lands to direct the actual evacuation. On December 19 and 20, the *Hifofua* was loaded to capacity with the islanders' baggage, tools, cooking utensils, etc.

After she was loaded, the only space left was on the tiny bridge.

On December 20, word was received from the *Matua* (sent by arrangement with the New Zealand Government and the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand) that she would arrive at 6am on the following day. Everybody then moved their belongings to Futu, the scene of the 1929 eruption, four miles from the main town.

The islanders' chief means of transport was by horseback, and those who did not have horses frequently carried heavy loads on their own shoulders.

A stranger to the island would be amazed at the strength of the Niuafu'ou people. An adult can carry two huge baskets of food or copra with ease, while a child can carry from 10 to 20 unhusked coconuts easily.

The embarkation took place at Futu. While the men were busy transporting their family belongings, the women paid their last visits to the graveyards in memory of the loved ones they were to leave behind forever.

One's heart was deeply moved, and one's eyes became misty at the sound of these poor people's mourning over their beloved ones.

Most of the people spent the night at Futu, but a few spent their last night in Niuafu'ou at their own villages.

The beach at Futu (approximately 200 yards long by 60 yards wide) was strewn with men, women, children and all sorts of luggage, from bedding and suitcases to 40lb biscuit tins full of salt pork.

Everyone feared that the sea would be too rough on December 21 as a heavy

thunderstorm was raging to the north. We had been told that the evacuation would be postponed indefinitely if the sea was too rough.

But to our amazement Saturday was a beautiful day and our hopes rose with the sun.

Before dawn, everyone was roused from sleep to join in the last prayer. Every head was bowed as one of the older men asked God for His guidance and help.

At 5.45 the white hull of the *Matua* was sighted, coming in from the east. Now the whole scene, motionless and silent a few minutes before, sprang to life. Men and women rushed about in the final preparations. Children shouted in excitement and pointed towards the big ship, larger than any they had seen. Shouts of "Oh, what a huge ship", could be heard everywhere.

Everyone changed into his or her Sunday clothes, which had been saved for this special day — especially the young girls, of course.

At 7am the embarkation started. Everyone had a number, and each person embarked according to his or her number, each taking a roll of bedding and intimate belongings.

The order of embarkation was from shore to the *Hifofua*, which was anchored about 50 yards out, and then from the *Hifofua* to the *Matua*. The *Hifofua*'s two lifeboats rowed the people from the shore to the *Hifofua*, where they were re-embarked in three lifeboats from the *Matua* which were towed by a launch to the *Matua*.

The object of this system was to save the *Matua*'s lifeboats from damage. They were too big to handle at the open landing place.

All day long everyone worked tirelessly, for at that time of the year the wind is very unsettled, and everyone feared that a shift to the north would turn the landing place into a trough of roaring waves.

But the wind stayed in the south all day, blowing gently, as though an unseen hand was holding it there, and the evacuation went smoothly from start to finish.

At 5.45pm everybody was aboard. Most of the islanders had never been in a ship before, and everyone was full of curiosity about the interior of the *Matua*. The men were good sailors but most of the women and children were seasick.

The *Matua* left Niuafou'ou at 6.30pm heading east, while the *Hifofua* headed west, to clear the island before turning south in the direction of Nuku'alofa, nearly 400 miles away.

As the *Matua* steamed past the island, all the evacuees crowded to the ship's side for the last sight of their beloved island. Farewells were shouted and again the younger people seemed happy to leave, while the older folk stood in silent loneliness. As the island faded in the distance they were all in tears.

All space on the deck was filled as well as some of the saloon passages, especially at night. Thanks to the patience of the stewards, the crew and the officers, the Niuafu'ou passengers were treated with the utmost kindness during the voyage. No-one complained even about the disturbance caused by the crying of hundreds of babies.

Sunday morning and afternoon passed uneventfully, until about 3pm when Tongatapu was sighted. Everyone was full of excitement and the bathroom showers worked overtime as everyone tried to get a shower before dressing in their Sunday best for the disembarkation.

Everyone wanted to see Nuku'alofa, and shouts of "Oh! Land ahoy," were heard as those who had not visited the capital showed their surprise at its size.

At 5.15pm the *Matua* was alongside the wharf, and the women and children were going ashore, while the men unloaded all their belongings.

One by one they descended the gangway to the wharf, where trucks and lorries of all kinds were waiting to take them to Vaikeli, the estate of the Minister of Lands (and headquarters of the Tonga Defence Force during the war) where they were to make a temporary home until a permanent one could be found for them.

Everyone went ashore wearing the customary "ta'ovala" (the mat worn round the waist).



Houses and belongings stacked at Futu awaiting shipment in 1946. Tongan photos bureau

By 8pm all passengers and luggage were ashore. We said goodbye to the *Matua* which had brought us so efficiently from Niuafou'ou to Nuku'alofa. We bowed our heads to that gallant ship and to all aboard her for the great work that was done. May many more years of good service be added to her fine record of help to the native races of the Pacific Islands.

The success of the evacuation was due to many planners and workers — the Premier and the Cabinet; the capable and untiring leaders, such as High Chief Tu'ihateiho and Salesi Minoa Havea; and the New Zealand ship *Matua* and the Tongan ship *Hifofua*. They all share the thanks of the Tongan people for the accomplishment of this great and difficult task.

H.R.H. Queen Salote Tupou III: Speech from the Throne, 1947

Her Royal Highness, Queen Salote Tupou III, referred to Niuafou'ou in the Speech from the Throne to open the 47th session of the Legislative Assembly in Nuku'alofa, 26 June 1947.

You are all aware that since the last session of the Legislative Assembly misfortune endangered the District of Niuafou'ou: although there was no loss of life, for which God be praised, the chief town was greatly damaged and Government buildings were nearly all destroyed. The Government at once realised its duty and made arrangements for the evacuation of the inhabitants from the island. . . . Personal belongings have not all been brought from Niuafou'ou, and the arrangements for their resettlement by Government has not been completed, although I trust that they will be in the near future. Hardships are unavoidable in their present position, and we share with them such suffering as they may have to experience. . . .

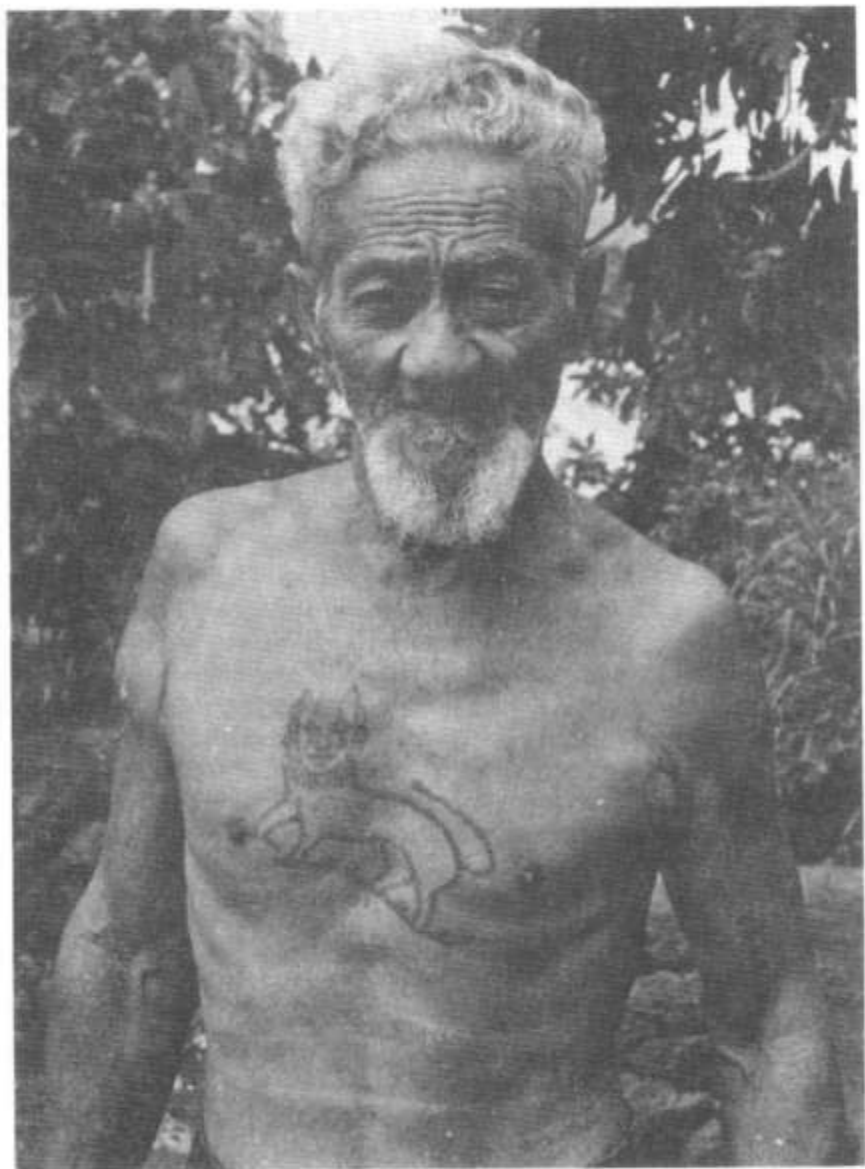
Koe Malanga 'a 'Ene 'Afio ko Kuini Salote Tupou 'i he huufi 'o hono f ngofulu-ma-fitu 'oe Fale Alea 'o Tonga, i Nuku'alofa, i hono 'aho 26 'o Sune, 1947.

'Oku tau 'ilo kotoa, hili 'etau tukutuku 'i he ta'u kuo hili; na'e hoko ha fakatu'u-t maki ke he Vahe Fonua ko Niuafou'ou: Neongo na'e 'ikai mole ai ha mo'ui, 'aia 'oku tau fakafeta'i ai; ka na'e maumau lahi 'ae ngahi fale Pule'anga. Na'e fai leva 'e he Pule'anga hono fatongia 'o alea'i ha founga ke hiki ai 'ae kakai mei Niuafou'ou. . . . 'Oku te'eki mau lelei mai si'enau nga'ota'ota mei Niua; pea te'eki foki mau lelei 'ae ngaue ki honau nofo'anga 'oku 'amanaki 'e he Pule'anga

ke nau 'iai: ka 'oku te fakatauange pe ke vave ha faingamalie ke fakakakato ai si'i nofo 'ae kâinga ni; he 'oku mahino 'oku 'ikai mama'o 'ae faingata'a meiate kinautolu 'i he'enau nofo 'oku lolotonga fai; pea 'oku tau kaungâ mamahi mo si'o tau kâinga mei Niuafu'ou. . . .

Tonga Government Gazette
No. 12 of 1947, 12.9.47
(Official translation)





Palenapa Lavelua, 1971. T. Riddle

5

Recalcitrants, visitors, copra-cutters, the return

When the two evacuation ships departed from Niuafu'ou on Friday 20 December, a small band of recalcitrants chose to disobey the evacuation order for one reason or another and face the threat of eventual imprisonment rather than leave their homeland.

One of these men was Palenapa Lavelua whose account of the eruption, evacuation and continued occupancy of Niuafu'ou was recorded, transcribed and translated by Thomas Riddle in 'sia, Niuafu'ou, in 1977, over 30 years after the events. Additions are from an interview by Garth Rogers with Palenapa in Sapa'a at a village, Niuafu'ou, in 1967.

Palenapa was bom in Sapa'ata village, Niuafu'ou, in 1910, the son of a Niuafu'ou woman and an Uvean missionary. He went to Nukualofa in 1939 where he got a job in Quensell's store but returned to settle in Niuafu'ou in 1945, the year before the major eruption. Palenapa was obliged to leave the island with the recalcitrant remnant in October, 1947 but returned with the first copra-cutters in 1950 and has lived continuously on the island since 1956. He considers the years from 1956 onwards have been the best the Niuafu'ou people have ever enjoyed owing to their freedom of movement, and abundance of copra and foods, the absence of planned government, bureaucrats and government restrictions. Here is his account.

Palenapa Lavelua's account

Palenapa Lavelua 111 begin with the beginning of the eruption. The earthquake shook the earth on Sunday and then came the eruption. The lava shot up below here so we moved to Piu, the highest point on the island, and stayed there on Sunday. On Monday night the crater in Angahâ shot up but the people were already staying at Piu.

We came down from Piu on Monday of the following week. That is, we stayed in the bush on Monday and we were there the following Sunday, shifting back down to here on Monday of the following week.

Thomas Riddle So you stayed there one week?

Palenapa Correct. We stayed to see if the eruption was finished or not. When the people knew that it had stopped they came back down here to the villages.

The government asked the people if they wanted to be evacuated to Tonga or stay here in Niua. They suggested two options: go to Tonga or remain in Niua.

Then came time to sign our names to go or to stay. When we knew the results we knew that the majority of people wanted to transfer to Tonga and that only a few wanted to stay here so the evacuation began.

I voted to stay . . . because I was tired of life in Tongatapu where you have to buy everything and where the cold winters bite.

Before the people sailed in 1946, my mother 'Akahia and my sister T kanga entreated me to accompany them, but I was determined to stay.

The *Matua* anchored on a Saturday to do the evacuation. When the evacuees departed we were left alone. We were told that the boat would go to Tonga and let the passengers off and then the *Hifofua* would come up the next week and get those of us who were left.

The evacuation was done village by village: Angah got on the boat, and then Kolofo'ou, ' sia, Sapa'ata, Fata'ulua and Mata'aho. After the Mata'aho people boarded I hid in the bush.

I trusted two of the men who were helping get people from land onto the boat. We were good friends and close relatives; I went and said good-bye to them. They asked me, "What is this? What does this mean?"

"I'm staying. I won't go." "Come on," one said, "otherwise the Government will do something to punish you."

"No, it doesn't matter. I'm going inland."

We touched cheeks. I am their maternal uncle. I told them, "You journey on, I'm going back up home."

I started on my way and a man by the name of Loveti called me — he gave me his horse and told me to take care of it. I took the horse and continued on my way.

I came up from Futu to Funga'ana where there was a box of mine and a man called Fine, who is my older brother.

I took the box to Sapa'ata and sat down. I began to think about the ship going and my staying here by myself. I took a key and opened a box owned by a couple called Sela and Fine. Inside the box was some sugar, some canned milk and a full bottle of methylated spirits.

I stood up and went to the cement tank outside the house and filled up a bucket with water; it was a small bucket and couldn't have been more than one gallon. I took the bucket and poured it into a big bowl used for making food. Then I took the bottle of methylated spirits and poured it into the bowl. The bottle empty, I put sugar into the bowl until it was almost sweet and then stopped.

I sat down to drink it by myself. I would take perhaps three mouthfuls and then rest; I'd wait a while and then take two or three more mouthfuls. After a while I was drunk. It wasn't so good though because I drank it too fast.

Suddenly I heard a horse running on the road. By this time the sun had gone behind the hill called Piu that is on the edge of the crater, and Sapa'ata was in the shade. I heard the horse running and thought that this wasn't just a horse being chased by another horse. It was only one horse, and when I got a good look I saw that it was carrying Moala Fakataututi. I yelled to ask him where he was going.

I thought that he was fleeing just like I was. It was my belief that we should not go together to the bush lest they come after us and catch both of us. I called to him; he got off his horse and said that the men remaining behind were Peni Susui with his father and son, and Vili Vaka plus some men from the eastern district who had already gone back there.

He continued on his way home and then I was surprised when a man called Hefa walked in front of my house. As he was going down the hill with his daughter, I said, "Hey! Where are you going?"

"We're going over to see Sela VI."

"Where is she?" I asked.

"She's over there with Sioeli."

"Really? I didn't know that."

They went on but in a little while the daughter came back and said, "Pale, Sela said that we should all go to the bush and see the ship coming this way."

But I was drunk.

I sat there and listened. What the girl had said was true — I could hear the ship coming. I went out to where I could possibly see it and sat down.

The ship appeared and then disappeared. That is all I know about that — I passed out.

I woke up Sunday morning when Peni Susui invited me to go with him, Moala and Hefa for a church service. I replied, "All right."

I went back to my house to bathe and put on good clothes and after that we went up to the church. We had our service and then made lunch; all eating from one earth oven.

Tevita Vaitohi, a Fata'ulua man who later came to my house to stay with me said, "There is a basket of salted pork I brought up from Futu hanging up at home."

I went down there and altogether there were 12 baskets of salted pork. Who knows whose pork it was? I saw in Futu after the people had boarded the ship their tins and boxes they had hoped to take but had to be left behind.

Tevita had woven baskets and packed the pork into them in Futu before bringing them up and hanging them from a big tree of ours. I told him, "Let them hang there and if a boat comes back next week we'll take them to whoever they belong to, so that they can make use of them. But right now give me a piece of pork." We baked that piece of pork in an earth oven for our evening meal.

After that, starting on Monday and ending when we were taken away, we all ate many different things. We ate pork, fish, goat, and chicken. Anything that we wanted to eat we got; it was very easy.

The only thing we ever did was wander around. We sat around day after day and made darts out of the ironwood tree to play the old Tongan dart game, *sika*. We made darts daily and played *sika*. When we wanted to have a celebration, we had a celebration.

We had three fields for playing. One was in Sapa'ata; one was in Mu'a and one other was in Tongamama'o. We had our games celebration every Wednesday. On Wednesday the people from the eastern district came here and we played darts in Sapa'ata; we would prepare some food for them. On the next Wednesday we would go to Mu'a and play darts there; they would then prepare some food for us. And on the following Wednesday we would play *sika* in Tongamama'o and they would feed us; all of us would go there for the dart playing.

Other than our games tournaments, the only work we had to do was to find

our daily food and our meat, but the island had plenty of food. Everyday we would find some kind of protein and eat it; after that, without any work to do, we would just wander around. That's why we made darts out of ironwood in order to have something to keep us busy as well as bring us together . . .

We had church services on Sunday, Monday and Friday; the Wesleyan church days. When it was time for church we had church, after that we just walked around. On Friday, the church bell would be rung and we all would go, the same for Sunday and Monday . . .

We were very observant and attentive of the church. We rotated the places we would have our services as with the *sika*: we would preach in the eastern district and next time they would come back here.

We had feasts — we would kill pigs and get fish from the sea for the feasts. There might be only two or three guests but we would eat like we were having a proper celebration. When the people from the eastern district preached here in the western district they would return with a basket of pork. It was the same when a preacher from the western district would go to the eastern side of the island — he would come back with a basket of pork.

It can't be said that we were lacking anything in the way of food — we had both sources of protein and sources of starchy foods. It was very easy for us to get food — we would just look for it in the sea or in the bush. We had animals: chicken, pigs, and goats; anything that we wanted to eat we got. The only thing that we didn't do, that we forbade, was the killing of cattle. We did not butcher a steer because there were only a few of us and it would have been wasted. Moreover we did not have any salt to preserve the meat for a long time. So the cattle were safe, we didn't touch them.

As I said before, finding our protein was very easy. Any kind of protein that we wanted to eat we could get, including *malau* eggs. [The *malau* bird is found only in Niuafou'ou; they bury their eggs in the sand.] When we wanted to eat *malau* eggs we would go up to the crater lake and eat them.

There was kerosene that had been left behind in some of the people's homes. When that was finished we used lard to give us light. There were oil drums that the people had filled with lard in preparation for the evacuation: they had boiled the pig-fat together with the skin and small bones. These drums had been stacked up in Funga'ano and in Futu but when the authorities on the ship forbade anyone from taking cargo on board, those things were abandoned. So when our kerosene ran out we used the lard for our light. One of us would roll a drum up here and use the lard for lighting and when that drum was empty, another drum would be rolled up and that was how we did it right

up until the time they came to get those of us who had stayed behind. We also used the lard to feed our dogs.

There weren't any matches and as we couldn't get any, we got our fire from the crater in Angah . We would go there and come back with a flame to light our fires here. When the fire went out — when we were careless and didn't put more wood on the fire — we would again have to get a torch and bring fire.

We brought ironwood trees to our houses to keep our fires going for weeks at a time. When that was finished we would bring back a torch to light a new fire.

There were 23 of us and in August 1947, the Seventh Day Adventist ship came and took away the two women, three small girls and the man Hefa. We saw them off and then came up from Angah at about four o'clock in the afternoon.

There were then just 17 of us left, all men, and we then decided what we would do: we would go naked. We would set our clothes aside lest a boat come and find us naked, without any clothes.

It was very enjoyable. Only our lay preachers wore anything: they would take either the *si* plant or the *maile* bush and weave the leaves for clothing. The rest of us went completely naked . . .

I had plenty of clothes though, I had my own clothes and the clothes of Sela and Fine that I could wear, but I went along with the nudity.

With the commencement of nakedness we went naked every day. We were once surprised in Sapa'ata when a man from the eastern district rode up on a horse; totally nude. They were also surprised when we would appear naked there; no-one wore clothes. We went back and forth that way. When the ship came to get us we put our clothes back on and departed.

The next boat came in October to take us back. It came with a statement from a man called Havea Tu'iha'ateiho saying that the boat would go to Tonga and then come back to take to prison anyone remaining here. That is why we all eventually went but we had already made our plan to stay for good. Then we heard the orders from Havea that those people who stayed here would do hard labour, so we all left.

If it wasn't for that policy we would have stayed here. We think that when they visited here in 1949 we would have still been here. And when workers for the government and the two nobles came here in 1950 to make copra we would have still been here . . .

On that particular Friday night we went to do a type of night fishing called

t malau off a place called Utamea and then early on Saturday morning we saw a ship. We came ashore and told the men that a ship was coming. After that we went down to Angah to see if the ship was coming here or if it was going to some other place. We discovered that it was a Tongan ship, the *Hifofua*.

They called to us from the sea saying that they were going to Futu. The ship went and anchored there while we waited to learn what was going to happen to us.

We were told by someone on behalf of Havea, to give pigs and other food to the voyagers and then to load the things that were left in Futu onto the ship. We were told to take food to Sapa'ata so that everyone could attend church and eat there. On Monday and Tuesday we were to chase down the dogs and kill them; on Wednesday we would go to the ship and then depart. That was the Government's policy.

So we collected the food on Saturday while the loading was going on in Futu; we were going to come together on Sunday, have church and eat. We were shocked when after dark on Saturday we were told to take the food to Futu, that we would have church in Futu, and that after church we would load the ship and leave.

Not one of us agreed to that! We would stay right here. On Sunday even those of us who were Catholics would worship in Sapa'ata; we would have church in Sapa'ata; have a feast, and then go. And if when we got to Futu the ship had already gone, we would stay. We all agreed to that.

The captain and Moala came and told us, "Take the food to Futu and have church there on Sunday."

We replied, "We will have our Sunday meal and our worship here, and then go to Futu. If you are still anchored when we get there then we will go, but if you have already gone we will stay here."

We had our feast in Sapa'ata. We shot a pig on Sunday and we baked it. After our worship and feast it was still midday so we got on our horses and headed to Futu where they were still loading the ship.

The loading continued on into the night. A copra store there was set on fire to give light and the loading continued into the night.

Those of us who had stayed behind (after the main evacuation) had toiled to build the six little shelters in Futu. Each one was about as big as a copra drying shed, and were filled with different things, the things of the Niua people. Those were the things that they began loading Saturday night and didn't finish loading until 12 or 1 o'clock Sunday night when the boat was ready to leave.

But there was a group of us runaways who had planned to run away again and stay here. We put our clothes in a little box and I went with the key to the ship. There I met up with Moala Fakataututi and Vili Vaka, a Wesleyan minister; they had decided to take me to the ship lest I run away again. When I got to the ship I lay down and the box was left on land. The men I planned to run away with had packed all of our clothes so I went to the ship with just a pair of shorts and no shirt because the rest of my clothes were in the box.

The plan was that after the ship had sailed a little way out, the men on shore would put more coconuts on the fire to make it blaze up and I would jump off and swim to shore.

Then in the last boatload that came from shore came the men who had agreed to say ashore with me, bringing the box I had put my clothes in.

One could have jumped into the sea and swam to the land; it would have been perfectly easy but my clothes were on the ship in the box. If my clothes had been left on land I would have gone back there. I thought about running away with just a pair of shorts, but when they would have rotted away I would not have had any other clothes. If my clothes had been left on land and the rest of the men had come on board I would have run away by myself and stayed here by myself; it would have been all right.

I thought to myself that when the tide was low, without anyone joining me, I would run away again. I thought that after the ship was loaded I would escape. It would not have mattered to me then if I was punished or even killed, as long as I could do what I wanted to do.

I had thought in 1946 when the evacuation was in progress that it would not make any difference to me whether I lived with other people or not. Even if it had been just me it would have been very good. I regretted deciding to leave in 1947; I thought that if only I had planned it alone, I would have succeeded. I would have been able to stay by myself . . .

Living alone my body and soul would be free like Tavi, whom you have mentioned. Tavi and I have the same nature; Tavi is better though because he is a smart and educated man. I know nothing; there is nothing that I am skilled at; just wandering around.

When the ship finally carried me away from Niuafu'ou, I covered myself with a blanket and didn't eat from Sunday until Wednesday of the following week when I was in Mataliku in Tonga . . .

A man by the name of Fine Nikua came to Mataliku and I gave him the gun he had brought to Niua; no-one in Niua had had a licence to use it. I gave him also the bullets that were left. Those of us who had come together from

Niua split up at Mataliku with each man taking his own clothes with him. The meeting that we runaways had planned could not take place now because we were in Tonga.

The man called Mlnoa had said, "Every man who goes from Niuafo'ou to Tonga will go to his own piece of land in Tonga." The people went from Niua to Tonga but they all stayed on *one* piece of land; each man had to make his living by going around working for other people.

Then some of us went to 'Eua in 1949 to get the land ready there, but I spent more time lying down than I did working. I was ill.

After that we were returned from 'Eua to Tonga and then came the big move of Niua people from Tonga to 'Eua. I heard about the men preparing to return to Niua to make copra in 1950 and got out of bed. I went outside and my mother asked me where I was going. "I'm just going to town." I went straight to a man called Mo'ungafi and asked for a work permit so I could come back here. His daughter sent me the work permit; I signed it and came back with the first work scheme.

I began the journey still ill. When we reached Vava'u I surprisingly felt better, and when we reached Niuatoputapu my illness had completely vanished. After I got back here I didn't feel a tinge of illness and I've lived without any medication right up to now.

I now understood how hard living in Tonga was on my body. I couldn't stand the cold there; my body is weak, and I get ill easily. That's basically why I came back here to Niua when the workers came here in 1950.

So I came back with the first party of copra workers in 1950 and each subsequent party until 1952 when I stayed for good, working in the copra making scheme for about 18 months without wages. I just haven't been to Tonga to collect it. I have abandoned it! I don't want it!

In 1950 there were 50 men working government copra for the Government, 50 working for Fusitu'a, 50 for Fotofili, and Tu'ipelehake might have had 10 or more in Mata'aho estate.

There were men only, each one building his own house.

There were men from Niua, Lapaha and West Tongatapu, Ha'apai and Vava'u. I was here when the resettlement took place in 1958 and here I'll stay.

Kau talangata'a, kau 'a'ahi, kau ngaohi niu, ko e Iiuaki

'I he 'aho Falaite 20^o o Tisema, 'a ia ko e 'aho ia na'e mavahe ai e ongo vaka fetukutuku mei Niuafu'ou, ne 'i ai ha ki'i falukunga kakai ne nau 'osi fakapapau kinautolu ke nau talangata'a ki he tu'utu'uni ke fetukutuku, aki pe ha ngaahi uHINGA, o malohiange 'enau ta'efie mavahe mei he fonua na'a nau tupu hake ai 'i he manavahe na'a iku 'onau ng ue popula.

Ko e tokotaha 'o e kau tangata ko'eniko Palenapa Lavelua, 'a ia 'oku 'a'ana 'a e fakamatala ko 'eni kau ki he puna 'a e maama, fetukutuku, mo e hokohoko atu hono nofo'i 'o Niuafu'ou, pea na'e puke, hiki mo liliu 'e Thomas Riddle 'i 'Ēsia, Niuafu'ou 'i he 1977, hili ia e ta'u e 30 tupu mei he taimi na'e hoko ai 'a e 'u me'a ni. Ko e ngaahi fakalahi ('a è 'oku ha'i) ko e ma'u ia mei hano faka'eke'eke 'o Palenapa, na'e fai 'i he kolo ko Sapa'tata 'i Niuafu'ou 'i he 1967.

Palenapa Lavelua Kamata mei kamata'anga 'o e vela. Na'e lulu 'a e mofuike 'aho 'S pate pea puna a i ko e vela. 'O puna 'a e vela 'i lalo ni, mau fetukutuku leva ki Piu. 'O nofo ai 'aho S pate, 'o 'aho ki 'aho Monite. Po Monite, ta'aki leva fu'u ngoto'umu ko 'eni 'i Angah . Kuo 'osi maau nofo ia 'i Piu, kakai.

Pea ha'u ia mei Piu 'i he 'aho Monite uike taha. Nofo ai pe 'uta he 'aho Monite 'alu 'o S pate, toki fetukutuku mai ki lalo ni 'i he Monite uike ko 'e taha.

Thomas Riddle 'A ia na'a mou nofo 'i Piu uike 'e taha?

Palenapa Ko ia. 'O nofo 'o pehê e ngata 'a e vela pea to e fai pe. Pea mahino pe ki he kakai 'oku ngata, pea toko hifo mai kakai ki kolo ni.

'O tala leva e ko 'e he Pule'anga — eke'eke ki he kakai pe 'oku nau fie fetukutuku ki Tonga pe fie nofo pe 'i Niua ni. 'O fokotu'u leva, ko e fo'i me'a 'a ia 'e ua: 'a e fetuku ki Tonga mo e nofo 'i Niua.

'O hoko leva 'a e fakamo'oni 'alu mo e fakamo'oni nofo. 'Ou fie ilo ki he ongo fakamo'oni, 'o tokolahi e fie fetukutuku pe ki Tonga, na'e tokosi'i nofo heni, 'o hoko ai e fetukutuku.

(Na'aku fili ke u nofo . . . koe'uhi na'a ku ongosia au 'i he to'onga mo'ui 'i Tongatapu, 'a ia kuo pau ke te fakatau e me'a hono kotoa pea 'ikai ngata ai ka ko e to e vivili ange 'a e momoko.

'I he te'eki ke folau kakai 'i he 1946, na'e kole fakamamahi mai 'eku fa'e 'a 'Akahia mo hoku tuofefine 'a Tokanga ke mau folau mo kinaua, ka na'a ku fakapapau pé au te u nofo.)

'O toki tau mai 'a e vaka ia ko e Matua 'i he 'aho Tokonaki, 'o fai e fetukutuku. 'Alu e fetukutuku ia 'ikai to e ha me'a 'e taha, ka ko kinautolu pe. Pea tala mai foki e me'a ke fai, ko e tau pe vaka ko é ki Tonga, fakahifo

'a e kakai, pea lele mai 'a e *Hifofia* 'i he uike pe ko 'e taha 'o 'oatu kimaotolu ko 'eni na'e toe.

'Alu e fetukutuku, na'e fakaheka fakakolo: fakaheka 'a Angah 'o 'osi ia, fakaheka 'a Kolofou, fakaheka 'a 'sia, fakaheka 'a Fata'ulua mo Mata'aho. 'Osi pe 'a Mata'aho, pea u toi au he vao. Ki'i falala au ki he ongo matu'a na'a na fai e fetukutuku ki he vaka, 'a ě mei 'uta ki vaka. Mau fehokotaki pe, mau fu'u kâinga 'aupito pe. 'Alu ia 'o mau fai fe'iloaki pea nau talamai. "Ko e h ě me'a ka fail"

"Nofu au, he'ikai te u 'alu." "Ha 'u koe na'a faifai pea hoko ha tu'utu'uni faka-pule'anga kiate koe, 'o ke faingata'a'ia ai."

"'Ikai. Tatau ai pe ia. Te u 'alu au ki uta."

Mau 'uma pe mo e ongo matu'a. 'Oku na fa'etangata 'aki au. Kau talaange, "Mou folau kimoutolu, te u hake au ki 'uta."

Pea u ha'u. Hake au ki 'uta kae ui mai ki'i motu'a ko Loveti — ke u ha'u 'o 'omai 'ene hoosi 'o tauhi. Ha'u leva 'o puke 'a e hoosi ko ia 'o 'alu mo ia.

Ha'u pe mei Futu 'o hifo ki funga 'ana na'e to e ai fu'u puha, puha 'a'aku mo e puha 'a e motu'a ko Fine, oku lâhi ia 'ia au.

Ha'u mo au e ki'i puha ki Sapa'ata. A'u leva pe 'o ta'utu'utu ai, 'o fakakaukau 'eni ki he 'alu 'a e vaka kau nofo toko taha pe. Kii'i leva 'e au e puha 'a e ongo matu'a ko Sela mo Fine. 'O ma'u ai e suka ko e hu'akau, ma'u hake ai mo e fu'u fo'i hina sipiliti.

Tuku hake ki 'olunga, 'alu leva ki he sima he matafale pe, ohu mai ki'i kane vai, mahalo na'e 'ikai ke a'u 'o kalani 'e taha. Ohu'i mai ki'i kane 'o ha'u 'o hua'i he fu'u tini ngaohi kai. Maha ia ki'i kane, hua'i ki ai e hina sipiliti k toa pe. Maha ko fo'i hina ki ai, 'alu leva 'o suka'i. Suka'i ia pea u 'ahi'ahi hake 'oku ki'i melie, tuku leva.

Tangutu leva 'o inu. 'O inu mahalo 'o i'i ma'anga 'e tolu, inu ia. Fuoloa, ohu 'o inu ki'i ma'anga 'e ua pe tolu. Faifai 'oku ha'u kiate au e konaa. 'Ikai ke ifo koe'uhi ko e fu'u fakavavevave 'eku inu.

'Ou fanongo ki he lele 'a e hoosi 'i hala. Kuo faka'au ke puli hifo e la'aa 'i Piu, kae malu 'i Sapa'ata. Fanongo ki he lele 'a e hoosi 'i hala, pea u fakakaukau 'oku 'ikai ha hoosi 'e tuli 'e ha hoosi, pe ko e pehë ko e kai ha hoosi 'e ha hoosi, 'o tukufetuli pe. Ko e hoosi pe 'oku taha. Pea u tangutu fakalelei 'o sio hake ko e motu'a ko Moala Fakataututi. Pea u kaikaila ki ai pe ko 'ene 'alu ki f ?

'Ou sio ke he'ene lele, 'o fakakaukau na'a ko 'ene hola 'o hange ko 'eku hol . Ko 'eku tui ia, he'ikai te ma hola fakataha l ua ki he vao na'a nau omi 'o ma'u kimaua. 'Ou ui hake, pea hifo 'a e siana ko 'eni 'o pehë mai 'oku toe ia mo Peni Susui mo 'ene tamai mo hono foha, pea mo Vili Vaka mo e tamaiki

Hahake, pea kuo nau o hake kinautolu ki Hahake.

Pea puli atu, 'alu e motu'a ia ki hono'api. 'Ohovale pe kuo 'alu hifo e motu'a ko Hefa 'i he matafale pe 'o e fale ko e na'a ku 'i ai, 'o hifo mai ki lalo. Pea u talaange, "Eei! ko ho'omo o ki fē?" Ko ia mo hono ki'i 'ofefine.

"Ma o pe ki he kī a Sela Vi."

"'Oku 'i f "

"'Oku 'i he pe ia mo Sioeli."

"'Io ko 'eku toki 'ilo 'eni ia 'e au."

Pea na o kinaua. Ki'i taimi si'i pe kuo to e h hake 'a e ki'i fefine na'a na o ange 'o pehē ange: "Pale, 'oku talamai 'e Sela ke tau o ange ki 'uta 'o sio ki he vaka 'oku ha'u."

Ka kuo u 'osi konā au.

Tangutu 'eni 'o fakaongoongo 'oku mo'oni e ki'i fefine, 'oku 'u'unu mai e vaka ēne ha'u. H h atu ke tu'a 'o mau hake mai ki he faka'uta ko 'i Sapa'ata 'o tu'u pē ai.

'Asi ange e vaka, 'o to e puli p . Osi ai"eku 'ilo 'aku. Mate leva.

Toki 'a hake pe he pongipongi Sapate, 'oke talamai 'e he motu'a ko Peni Susui ke ma o kia Moala mo Hefa ke fai 'emau lotu. Ou pehē atu: "'Io."

Ma hifo leva ki 'api 'o kaukau. 'Ai hoku vala, pea ma hake leva, ta 'emau lotu. Mau lotu. Fai 'emau lotu 'o 'osi. Pea fai 'eni 'emau me'akai, mau kai'umu taha pe.

'Oku talamai 'e he tamasi'i ko Tevita Vaitohi, tama Fata'ulua, na'e 'alu ange ki 'api kiate au 'o mau nofo ai 'o ne talamai: "'Oku 'i ai e 'u kato puaka masima na'a ku ha'u mo au mei Futu, 'oku tautau atu 'i 'api.'" Ma hifo ki ai, ko e kato 'e hongofulum ua, kato puaka masima kotoa. He'ilo pe ko e puaka 'ahai. Sio ai pe 'i Futu he 'osi ko 'a e fakahekeheka, 'oku kei to e pe fu'u kapa, ko e puha.

Langa kato ia 'o fa'o pe 'i Futu, ha'u ia mo ia 'o tau pe 'i 'api 'i homau fu'u kalosipani. Pea u talaange: "Tau pehē,, fakafokif pe kuo ha'u e vaka he uike kaha'u pea fakafoki pe ke tau mo ia pe ko e puaka 'a hai ke 'ave ke faka'aonga'i. Ka te u to'o leva 'e au haku 'inasi mei he puaka." 'O to'o ia ko 'emau kiki ia 'i he efiafi S pate.

Pea mau toki kai me'a kehekehe leva mei he 'aho Monite, 'o fai mai 'o a'u ki he 'emau fetukutuku. Kai puaka, kai kosi, kai moa. Me'a pe 'oku mau fie kai pea mau kai, faingofua 'aupito.

Me'a na'e fai ko e 'eva pe. Mau nofonofo pe mo 'eva he 'aho ki he 'aho, pea mau nga o hi 'ulu toa leva. Me'a faka-Tonga fuoloa 'a e kakai ko e 'ulutoa, mau t 'ulutoa he 'aho ki he 'aho 'o sika. 'Omau fie k toanga pe he'emau fie k toanga.

'O mala'e faiva leva na'e tolu: taha 'i Sapa'ata, ki'i mala'e taha na'e tu'u 'i Mu'a, ki'i mala'e 'e taha na'e tu'u 'i Tongamama'o. 'Omau katoanga faka'aho Pulelulu. 'Aho Pulelulu pe kuo ha'u e tamaiki mei Hahake 'omau sika 'i Sapa'ata, 'o mau fai talitali kimautolu. Pea 'aho Pulelulu hoko mai pea mau o ki Mu'a 'o sika he mala'e ai, kae fai talitali kinautolu. Pea 'aho Pulelulu 'e taha mau sika ki Tongamama'o, fai talitali nautolu kamau o kâtoa ki ai, sika ai.

Na'e hoko ia ko 'emau katoanga faka'aho Pulelulu. Ko 'emau ng ue na'e fai: kumi pe 'emau me'akai, 'emau kiki. Ka ko e mahu 'aupito e fonua ni ia. Ko e kumi kiki pe he 'aho ki he 'aho, 'osi pe kai ki'i me'akai, 'ikai ha ng ue 'e fai, 'eva pe. Pea mau fakakaukau leva ke 'ai 'ulutoa kemau femo'uekina ki ai mo fakataha ai. . . .

'Io mau lotu pe kimautolu: 'aho S pate, M nite, Falaite, fu'u 'aho lotu faka'Uesiliana. A'u pe ki he taimi lotu ia mau o lotu, 'osi pe lotu mau 'eva ai pe. A'u pe ki he Falaite ta pe lotu mau k toa pe ki he lotu — S pate, M nite . . .

Kamau tokanga 'aupito mautolu ki he lotu. Ko e me'a na'a mau fai ko e femalanga'aki 'o hangê pe ko 'eku talanoa 'anenai, na'a mau malanga atu ki Hahake, kae malanga mai p 'a Hahake ki heni.

Na'a mau fakaafe; tamate puaka, fangota mei tahi, fakaafe. O ha'u foki e malanga pe ko e toko tolu pe ko e toko ua, 'o kai pe ia, hangê pe ia ha fai kâtoanga pe. 'O heka atu e malanga mo e kato puaka ki Hahake, malanga 'oku ha'u ki Hihifo ni, pehê pe 'oka alu ki Hahake, ha'u mo e kato.

Ka 'oku 'ikai pehê na'a mau honge mautolu 'i ha me'a, 'i he me'akiki pe ko e me'akai. Faingofua 'aupito 'aupito e kumi me'a, 'a e kumi 'emau ki'i me'akai. Kumi 'i tahi, kumi pe 'i 'uta ni. Manu, moa , puaka, kosi, ha me'a pe na'a mau fieka'i ai mautolu, pea na'e ma'u pe. Ko e me'a pe na'a mau fai ki ai ko 'emau tapui kimautolu mei he fanga pulu. He 'ikai ke fahi ha pulu ke mau kai he na'a mau tokosi'i, 'e maumau. 'Ikai 'i ai ha masima ke fakamasima 'aki ke fuoloa ha'amau kai mei ai, 'o hao pe fanga pulu, 'ikai ke ala ha taha ki ai.

Kae hangê ko 'eku, lau, faingam lie' aupito 'emau kumi me'akiki 'amautolu. Ha fa'ahinga me'akiki pe na'a mau lava pe 'o kai na'a mau ma'u pe 'e mautolu. A'u pe ki he malau ki vai, mau fiekaia malau pe, na'a mau 'alu hake pe 'o kai.

Na'e 'i ai pe kalasini na'a mau ma'u he 'api 'o e kakai. Pea ko 'ene maha ia ko e ngako'i puaka. Ko e 'u talamu ko ë ne tuku 'e he kakai 'i he teu ko ki he fetukutuku ne 'omi 'o haka ai fakataha ai pe ngako huhu'a mo hono penu. Na'e fokotu'u he feitu'u he ko Fungaano 'i Futu, 'i he teu ko fetukutku. Na'e tapui leva mei vaka ke to e 'ave ha me'a 'e taha, ko e fo'i sino pe, 'o li'aki ai e 'u talamu ia. Pea maha pe 'emau kalasini mau maama 'aki leva e ngako. Ko e me'a ia ne pehê — 'alu pe matu'a teke'i mai ha fu'u talamu — maama

'aki, ki'i maha pe ia, o teke'i mai ha talamu, 'o fai mai 'o a'u ko ki he ha'u homau 'oatu na'e toe 'i heni. Na'a mau to e fafanga 'emau fanga kuli 'aki e ngako.

Na'e 'ikai ha masi, 'ikai ke ma'u, pea mau afi mei Angah , fu'u ngoto'umu. 'Omai 'emau afi, tutu 'emau afi mei ai, tafu 'aki he 'aho ni. 'Aho pe 'oku mate ai — 'ikai ke mau to e tafu kae ta'etokanga 'o mate 'i hano 'ikai to e tafutafu — na'e pau leva ke tutu maama mai 'o afi.

Ka na'a mau fetuku mai 'e mautolu ia e fu'u toa, 'ulu e fu'u toa, 'u fale 'o e kakai 'o tafu 'aki 'emau afi. 'O laulau uike pe vela 'a e fu'u toa. Toki 'osi'osi pe ko ia, 'o fetuku mai 'emau afi, tafu 'o kei ma'u pe 'emau afi.

Na'a mau toko 23 pea 'i 'Aokosi 1947 na'e ha'e e vaka 'o e Siasi 'Ahofitu 'o 'ave ai e ongo finematu'a mo e ki'i tamaiki fefine 'e toko tolu pea mo ha tangata ko Hefa. Na'a mau fakaheheheka kinautolu pea hili ia na'a mau foki leva mei Angah he taimi 4 efiafi nai pe ofi ki ai.

Na'a mau toe toko 17 leva, tangata 'ata'atâ pe, pea ko ia ai na'a mau fakakaukau leva ke fai 'eni: ke mau 'alu telefua kotoa. 'E tuku homau vala na'a faifai pea ha'u ha vaka ko homau 'oatu 'oku mau telefua atu 'o hala he vala.

Pea ko e ifo e me'a ko ia. Ko 'emau matu'a malanga pe na'e 'ai e ki'i me'a, 'ulu si pea mo e maile ne 'ai pe 'o fi 'o vala. Ko kimautilu ia, tamaiki, telefua 'aupito pe kimautilu ia.

Ka ko au na'e faingam lie 'aupito mo e vala. Ki'i vala pe 'o'oku mo e vala 'o Sela mo Fini na'a ku kofukofu, 'ou kau pe au he telefua.

'O kamata leva 'emau telefua, telefua k toa pe kimautilu, 'aho k toa telefua pe. 'Ohovale kimautilu 'i Sapa'ata kuo 'unu'unu mai tamaiki Hahake, 'asi mai 'o heka hoosi holo — telefua 'ata'atâ, 'ikai to e hao ha taha ia. 'Ohovale pe nautolu 'emau 'asi atu kimautilu na'e telefua pe, 'ikai pe ha taha 'e vala. Mau fepehe'aki pe. He ne toki ha'u pe 'a e vaka 'o 'oatu mautolu 'omau toki vala leva ki ai — 'omau 'alu leva ia.

Pea mau hifo leva ki Angahâ 'o vakai pe ko e vaka ha'u ki heni pe ko e vaka 'alu pe. 'O mahino kia mautolu ko e *Hifofua*.

Pea ui mai leva mei tahi 'e 'alu ki Futu. 'O 'alu e vaka, 'o tau ki Futu ka mau fakaongoongo pe koe ha ha tu'utu'uni 'oku fai mai.

'O tu'utu'uni mai leva mei Futu 'e Havea ke 'oange e puaka mo ha me'akai ki he kakai ko 'eni na'e ha'u, mo fakaheka 'a e uta ko 'eni na'e 'i Futu ke 'osi ia pea toki 'omai. 'O talamai leva ke mau tokonaki 'i kolo ni ke mau malanga taha ki Sapa'ata mo kaime'akai ai, pea mau toki tuli kuli he 'aho Monite mo e 'aho Tusite, 'o tamate kuli, pea mau toki fakaheheheka he Pulelulu, pea mau toki foki atu, tu'utu'uni faka-Pule'anga.

Pea mau tokonaki. Tokonaki he 'aho Tokonaki ke 'osi 'a Futu mo hono

fakaheka. Pea mau ha'u, mau S pate mo malanga ōsi pea mau kai. To e 'ohovale pe kuo po'uli e 'aho Tokonaki 'oko talamai ke tukuange kotoa tokonaki ki Futu, pea 'osi pe malanga pea mau fakahekeheka leva 'o foki atu.

Pea kala ke 'io ha taha ia. Nofu pe kimautilu. 'Aho S pate, loto leva 'emau tamaiki Katolika 'i Sapa'ata, ke mau nofo mautolu 'o fai 'emau lotu 'i Sapa'ata pea mau toki o mo kaime'aki ai pe. Mau o atu kimautilu ia, kuo 'alu 'a e vaka ia pea mau nofo mautolu. Pea mau loto k toa ki ai.

Pea ha'u leva 'a e 'eikivaka mo Moala 'o talamai: "Mou o mo 'etau tokonaki 'o S pate 'i Futu mo fai ho'omou malanga."

"Temau kaime'akai mo 'emau tamaiki ko , pea fai 'emau lotu heni pea mau toki o atu. Pea ka 'ikai pea mou o moutolu, pea mau nofo pe mautolu.

Kaime'akai leva mautolu 'i Sapa'ata. Fana puaka leva he 'aho Sâpate 'omau ta'o leva 'e mautolu. 'Osi 'emau lotu mo 'emau kaime'akai, fu'u ho'at pea mau toki heka hoosi atu ki Futu. Kei fai pe fakahekeheka ia.

Fakahekeheka 'o 'osi kuo po'uli, kei fai pe. 'O tutu leva ki'i falemataka na'e tu'u ai 'i Futu 'o maama'aki mo fai pe 'a e fakahekeheka. 'O fai e fakahekeheka mahalo na'e toki 'osi ki he taha pe ko e ua.

Na'a mau hanga 'o fetuku faka'aho Monite mautolu na'e toe heni. Mau ongosia foki he langa fale 'i Futu, na'e ki'i fale 'e ono, lahi pehë, fonu fakalelei he me'a kehekehe, me'a 'a kakai. Ko ia na'e fakaheka ai ko e he 'aho Tokonaki 'o po'uli, pea fai 'o toki 'osi ko e he mehala ki he tahaua pe ko e taha, ko e po S pate 'eni, pea toki folau e vaka.

O toki ha'u e vaka 'i 'Okatopa ko e 'oatu kimautilu. 'O tu'utu'uni 'e he tama ko Havea Tu'iha'ateiho: ko e 'ilonga ia 'e hola heni, ko 'ene tau pe vaka ki Tonga pea 'e ha'u leva 'o kumi ange 'o 'oange ki Tonga ke ng ue p pula. Tupunga 'eni ne mau 'osi ai he 'alu 'ikai to e hola ha taha 'i heni. Ka na'e 'osi fa'ufa'u 'emau to e kau hola 'i Niua ni 'o nofo 'aupito pe ia. Ko 'emau ma'u pe 'a e talanoa ko ia 'a e siana ko Havea: ko e tau pe vaka ki h pea to e ha'u 'o 'oange kau hola heni 'o fakang ue p pula, pea ko e 'osi'anga ia 'o e kakai.

Ka na'e 'ikai ha tu'utu'uni pehë, 'okapau na'a mau nofo pe to e hola heni, 'o pehë na'e mei ha'u e 'a'ahi mai ko he f hiva 'oku mau kei 'i heni pe mautolu, mo e to e ha'u pe ko kau ng ue hihiniu 'a e Pule'anga mo e ongo N pe le 'i he nimanoa, pea na'a mau to e mei kau ai pe mautolu 'i heni . . .

'I he po Falaite ko ia na'a mau o ai 'o ta malau, ko e toutai 'amautolu, fangota heni, ko e ta malau 'oku fai po'uli. Ma ta malau po Falaite 'i he feitu'u he ko 'Utamea, 'omau sio atu ki he vaka he pongipongi Tokonaki. Mau hake mai 'o tala ki he matu'a ko e vaka 'oku ha'u.

Ka na'e 'i ai 'emau kau hola na'e teu hola 'o nofo. Pea mau fa'o vala foki

he ki'i puha pea u 'alu au mo e ki ki he vaka. 'Ou fe'iloaki leva mo e ongo m tu'a ko 'eni 'oku ou lau. Moala Fakataututi, mo e tangata'eiki ko Vili Vaka, faifekau Uesiliana. 'O kumi au ke 'ave ki vaka na'a ku to e hola. Pea mau o ia mo e ongo mätu'a ki vaka 'o t koto ai pe. Kae tuku pe 'a e puha 'i 'uta. Na'e fa'o leva 'e he tamaiki na'a mau alea hola homau vala 'ou talausese mu tu pe ta'ekofu.

Ka 'alu leva e vaka, pea ko 'ene ki'i mama'o pe, pea nau tafu'i 'a e niu ke ulo lahi, kau hopo au mei vaka, hola hake ki 'uta.

Pea ko e vaka faka'osi ange mei 'uta ki vaka pea 'alu e vaka, ne 'osi ange ai e kau tama ko e na'a mau alea nofo heni, 'o 'asi hake fu'u puha hono 'oange.

Na'a ku mei hopo pe au ki tahi 'o kakau hake ki 'uta, pea na'e mei sai 'aupito pe ia ka ko e to ange 'a e vala ki vaka 'i he puha. Kapau na'e kei tuku pe ia 'i 'uta, te ua ha'u au ia ki ai. 'Ou fakakaukau hola mai mo e ki'i motu'i vala pe 'e taha, pea ka 'iloange kuo popo pea 'e 'ikai ha to e vala. Pea kapau na'e tuku pe 'i 'uta e puha kae 'oange 'e nautolu, te u hola au ki ai 'o nofo pe. Te u lava pe au 'o nofo tokotaha pe, sai pe ia.

Lolotonga 'eni mo e mamaha 'a e tahi, 'ou fakakaukau tokotaha pe kiate au 'o oua to e kau ai ha taha, ne u to e mei hola pe au. Pehē na'e 'osi pe fakaheka ia pea 'alu e tama kehe ia kau hola mai au. Tatau pe kiate au pe ko e mo'ua pe 'ikai, pe tamate'i au, sai pe. Sai pe ke u fai pe he ko e fakakaukau pe 'a'aku.

He ne u fakakaukau pehē pe au lolotonga e fetukutuku 'o e fono, tatau pe kiate au pe na'a mau nofo tokolahi pe koau pe. Kapau koau pe na'e sai 'aupito 'aupito pe ia. Kau fakatomala he'emaui fakakaukau tokolahi ko ē hono 'oatu mautolu he f fitu 'emaui feholaiki pea pehē 'e au ia kapau na'a ku fai tokotaha pe na'a ku tonu pe au. Te u lava pe au 'o nofo. . . .

Te u nofo tokotaha pe ke tau'ataina pe hoku sino mo hoku loto, 'o hangē ko Tavi 'oku ke lau. 'Ulungaanga tatau, kae sai foki 'a Tavi ia ko e tama 'oku poto, na'e ako. Fakakaukau pehē noa 'ata'atā pe au, 'ikai poto ha me'a 'e taha, 'eva'ata'atā pe.

I he faifai pea 'ave au 'e he vaka mei Niuafou pea u pūlou ai pe ta'ekai aho Sāpate 'o toki kai pe ki Matāliku 'i he 'aho Pulelulu he uike ko e 'e taha . . .

'O toki ha'u ai e ki'i motu'a ko Fine Nikua, 'i Matāliku, toki 'ave 'iate au e me'afana na'e ha'u mo ia mo e mahafu na'e toe, he na'e 'ikai laiseni ha taha ia. Mau toki movete ai pe 'i Matāliku, takitaha 'alu leva e tama 'o 'ave hono vala. Kuo 'ikai lava 'emaui fakakaukau na'e fai he, kuo mau 'osi 'a'u foki ki Tonga.

Na'e tala leva 'e he tangata ko Mānoa hono hingoa 'o pehē: "'Alu pe tangata mei Niua ni 'o hu ki hono 'api 'i Tonga, ko hono 'api." Kae o atu foki heni

ki Tonga 'o nofo fakataha pe ia 'i he fu'u 'api pe 'e taha. 'Oku takitaha 'alu foki ngoungoue pe mo ng ue totongi holo he kakai 'o ma'u mo'ui me ai.

Pea 'alu atu ko e kimautilu heni 'o to e 'alu ki 'Eua 'o ngaohi 'api. Lahiange eku tokoto 'i 'eku 'alu 'o ng ue. Puke.

Pea 'osi ia pea to e fakafoki mai kimautilu mei 'Eua ki Tonga, kae fai leva e fetukutuku 'o e kakai, fetukutuku k toa 'a e kakai, fetukutuku lahi. Fanongo pe au ki he ngâue mai ki Niua, ha'u ki Niua ni, he nimanoa, he ngaohi niu. M m langa hake pe 'i 'api, kei tokoto puke. Hu ki tu'a pea 'eke mai he'eku fa e pe ko'eku 'alu ki fê? "Alu pe ki kolo ki hé." Hangatonu atu pe au ki he tama ko Mo'ungaafi 'o kole fu'u tohi ngâue ke u fakamo'oni ai kema o mai. 'O fai atu ia hono ki'i 'ofefine 'o'ona 'o li mai e fu'u tohi mo e pepa. Fakamo'oni e pea u ha'u leva ki heni, he ha'u fetuku 'a e ngâue.

Ha'u pe au kae kei puke pe. Mau a'u ki Vava'u, 'ohovale kuo sai hoku puke. Ha'u mei Vava'u ki Niuatoputapu, 'osi'osingam lie 'a e puke ia. Mau ha'u ko e 'o a'u mai ki heni, 'ikai te u to e ongo'i 'e au ha ki 'i me'a 'e taha. Nofu ta'efaito'o ai pe au 'o a'u mai ki he ta'u ko 'eni 'ou mo'ui ai pe. Mo'oni pe mahaki ka kuo 'osi.

Kuo mahino kiate au 'a e faingata'a 'a Tonga ki hoku sino. Fu'u ta'efe'unga mo momoko, sino vaivai, mo ma'u e mahaki ai. Na'e tupunga 'eku ha'u ko e ki Niua ni he ha'u ngâue he nimanoa.

Na'a ku foki mai mo e 'uluaki kau hihiniu 'i he 1950, pea mo e ngaahi ha'u hokohoko kotoa mai 'o a'u mai ki he 1952 pea u nofo ai leva au heni 'ou kau ki he hihiniu fe'unga mo e mahina 'e 18 nai ta'ema'u ha totongi. 'Ikai pe ha to e foki ia ki Tonga ke ma'u hoku vahenga. Li'aki 'aupito pe ia. 'Ikai fiema'u.

'I he 1950 na'e naohi niu ma'ae Pule'anga 'a e kakai tangata 'e toko 50, toko 50 'a Fusitu'a, toko 50 'a Fotofili, pea mahalo na'e toko 10 pe lahi hake 'a e Tu'ipelehake 'i he tofi'a ko Mata'aho.

Ko e kakai tangata 'ata'atâ pe, 'o takitaha langa pe hono fale.

Na'e kau ai e kakai tangata mei Niua, Lapaha mo Vahe Hihifo 'o Tongatapu, kae'uma'a mei Ha'apai mo Vava'u. Na'a ku 'i heni au fe'unga mo e to e nofo'i fo'ou 'o e motu pea te u nofo ai leva.

Tu'alau'eiki's account

This brief account by Tu'alau'eiki of Sapa'ata was recorded and translated in an interview by Garth Rogers in 1967.

I came back to Niuafo'ou in 1954 to cut copra on Fusitu'a's estate. There were

about 300 men from all parts of Tonga on the island, some were living in the villages and some in the bush. Many of them worked in gangs but in Sapa'ata we worked singly, each man having his own drier. One person could cut up to 200 bags a month if he worked hard and used his own horses but it was hardly worth it. In the first place there was a lot of thieving; I once lost 10 bags from one drier. Then, much copra moulded on the beach at Futu due to the infrequency of ships to transport it to Tonga. My sacks were labelled "Fusitu'a" and put in the general pile under a thatched hut at Futu. When it reached Nukualofa the copra was invariably graded second class and the money sent to Fusitu'a. I stayed only one year, cut 100 sacks of copra and received £60 from Fusitu'a. I was satisfied with this return . . . There was no *kava tonga* drunk on the island during this period but plenty of home-brew. There was much fighting as a result. Not many men wore a *vala* (lower garment) and on one occasion we all went to Futu to meet the boat with our *valas* round our necks. Unbeknown to us, the ship had already discharged a contingent of women travellers who were sitting in an open *fale* on the beach. Unfortunately for us we were sighted before we saw them and we all fled with whoops into the bush to adjust our dress . . . Some hunters shot a horse or a cow and salted it down. A horse could be jointed and bring up to 50 sacks of copra if bartered.

Luseane Ta'ufo'ou's account

The following account of personal experiences following the evacuation of Niuafu'ou is by Luseane Ta'ufo'ou, recorded, transcribed and translated by Thomas Riddle in 1977. Luseane was bom in about 1910 in Tongamama'o and married a man from neighbouring P tani village, where she was interviewed as a widow at the age of about 68. She was evacuated from Niuafu'ou in 1946, relocated by government on 'Eua in 1950 but departed with her family for Niuafu'ou in 1958. Her husband Saia died in 1964 and when interviewed she had seven of her total 16 children still living.

I joined Saia my husband in voting to stay [on Niuafu'ou], We had decided to stay. My husband was a man who had lived some time in Tongatapu. He told me, "You know, we would get to Tongatapu and be in a sorry state. We would live very poorly."

But then that man named M noa came here, called a general meeting and told everyone, "If you wish to take a piece of your soil from Niuafu'ou to Tongatapu, then take it and go. You may go Tongatapu, live in a good house,



Luseane Ta'ufo'ou, 1967. G. Rogers

eat three times a day and have everything."

The people signed their names to go. My husband told me, "It isn't true. We will go to Tonga and face hardships." His brother signed to go however, and then came begging. The thing was that the boy had never been to Tongatapu. He begged Saia to please go.

Saia said, "Look here, I don't want to go with my children because I can see the hardships ahead but nevertheless I will go."

M noa deceived Niua, "Take your dried coconut meat with you. Take apart your houses and take them to the beach to ship them."

The Niua people then took apart their houses and churches and took them to the sea. Every man made a lot of copra, dried coconut meat, in his own copra drying shed and then took the copra to the loading place at the beach.

We prepared to go. We prepared all our food to take with us and took it to the boat. The boat anchored off Futu but then we learned that the captain and crew were not going to allow us to take any food on board. It was, after all, a very clean boat and nothing dirty could be taken on. All of the provisions were left behind and we embarked with nothing.

The Niua people embarked on the ship to be taken to Tonga but they were not allowed to bring one single thing. All of their preparations and things were wasted!

When they later returned to Niuafu'ou the pieces of wood and the parts of their houses that were left on the beach were covered with salt and the people who came to work in the government copra making scheme had used them to make themselves little houses. In 1958 the resettlement began and the returnees found their goods wasted and lost.

From the time we jumped from the land of Niuafu'ou to the ship we faced hardships.

When we got out to sea that night the little children started crying — they were hungry. How sad that was. The crew came and distributed biscuits to the poor children. The adults did not eat until they got to Tongatapu.

We got off the boat and went inland [to Vaikeli] where we boiled water in a big drum for our tea. Enough bread for only the women and children was distributed. The men did not get anything to eat — they drank only water.

That was the beginning of the hard life of the Niuafu'ou people in Tonga. Some *kape* [root crop] was given to us but it was very peppery. I could not eat it. We grated the *kape*, mixed it with flour, boiled it and ate it. I ate it, but even yam bread (*tamatama*) is better than that. Such were the troubles of the Niuafu'ou people.

We stayed there until we were told to go to 'Eua. If the government had said, "Take the Niuafu'ou people directly from Niuafu'ou to 'Eua", the Niuafu'ou people would not have left Niuafu'ou. But they tricked us: they said, "Go to Tonga and you will go to a good house and live well there." The Niuafu'ou people went and met with difficulties.

They were then moved to 'Eua and faced even greater difficulties than they had in Tonga. We did not get anything to plant or eat, and it was extremely cold. The people worked with just a little stem of cassava in their gardens and persevered with building up the land.

I said to my husband, "When Niuafu'ou is resettled we'll return there because it is better."

We stayed in 'Eua and heard that Niuafu'ou was to be resettled in 1958. The people would be returned.

"Let's go", I said.

"O.K.", replied Saia.

I told him, "Let's join the resettlement of Niuafu'ou but we should leave our children here in case there is another eruption."

But the children said, "We will have a hard time without our parents. Take us there."

So Saia said, "O.K."

When it came time to go, none of our children wanted to stay behind; they all came. Our daughter who married a Ha'apai man came; she did not want to go back to Ha'apai. The two others from Tongatapu came as well. They all came here and stayed here.

We left our village, our good wooden house, and our tax allotment in 'Eua to come here.

Then Saia died. I was asked, "Will you go back to your house in 'Eua?"

I said, "Saia brought me here and left me here. If I die I'll die here contented. This is a warm island, a place where one can get everything one wants to eat. I don't have to be concerned about saving my cents, going out to the cinema, or getting money."

So I have stayed here and right up until today I have not wanted to go to 'Eua.

From the time the Niua people were first transferred, the government has been this way. [She laughed to blunt the sharpness of her statement.]

It was just a little eruption that caused Niuafo'ou to be evacuated; it couldn't be said that it was a big eruption. The volcanic eruption that destroyed Futu [in 1929] was a big eruption, however. The 1946 eruption came up from the sea and destroyed one half of the main village: the stores, the government offices, and the house of noble Fotofili. The hospital and the other half of the village, however, were not damaged. Because of that little eruption Niuafo'ou was evacuated.

The hardships for Niuafo'ou began when a man came here to weigh the copra. He decided that those who wished to sell copra had to have a permit. Only those who had a tax allotment or a lease on land owned by a noble or the government or some other debt or responsibility to the government could have their copra weighed. If one lost one's tax allotment or lease, one lost permission to weigh, and therefore sell, one's copra. That was the way copra came to be sold and weighed in Niuafo'ou.

After this weighing of the copra the eruption occurred, the government offices were lost along with some of the stores and the house of the noble. The village was then finished. After that came the evacuation and the hard times.

For example, we got to Tonga and for our Christmas meal we had green bananas and jellyfish boiled in a 44-gallon drum. Terrible! I went with my relatives to find the jellyfish to give the meal some protein. How we longed for Niuafo'ou!

Our food that was left here in Niuafu'ou was wasted. Our animals were wasted. We left them here and went into a sorry state. The Government was not able to take care of the Niuafu'ou people.

There used to be many people in these Niuafu'ou villages but there are only a few people here now, since the resettlement. Many people were content to stay in 'Eua, Tonga or Vava'u. Only those of us who much wanted to return have returned.

There wasn't just one kind of house here, but most of the original houses, including the churches, were made of wood, but they were all taken apart. If they had been left standing — if that man who called the general meeting hadn't told us to take them apart for shipping — we would have come back here and they would have still been in good condition. However, after they were taken apart they were taken to the seashore and there they rotted.

Ko e talanoa ko e fai 'e Luseane Ta'ufu'ou

Ko e fakamatala 'eni ki he ngaahi taukei hili hono fetukutuku 'o e kakai Niuafu'ou na'e fai ia 'e Luseane Ta'ufu'ou, na'e hiki tepi ia, tohi mo liliu 'e Thomas Riddle 'i he ta'u 1977, pea mo ha ngaahi liliu si'i pe fakaetita.

Na'e fa'ele'i 'a Luseane 'i Tongamama'o 'i he ta'u 1910 nai, pea na'e mali ia ki ha tangata mei he kolo kaungāapi pe ko Pētani 'a ia ne fai ai e faka'eke'eke ko 'eni lolotonga ko e uitou ia 'i hono ta'u 68 nai.

Na'e fetukutuku ia mei Niuafu'ou he ta'u 1946, ne fakanofonofu ia ki 'Eua he ta'u 1950 ka na'e foki ia mei ai mo hono f mili ki Niuafu'ou he ta'u 1958.

Ko hono mali, ko Saia, na'e mate ia he ta'u 1964 pea 'i he taimi ko ia hono faka'eke'eke na'e kei mo'ui ai ha toko fitu 'o ene fānau kotoa ko ia 'e toko 16.

Neau kau pe au mo toku mali, Saia, ki te nofo. Ne pau pe maua ke nofo. Ko toku mali ko te siana Tonga. Pea tala'i mai 'e ia, "Ilo'i ko te 'alu ki Tonga, faka'ofa. Ko te nofo tu'utamaki."

Tala'i mai foki 'e te tama ko Mānoa ko tana ha'u ko te tala'i mai, "Ko te heka pe 'o 'alu ki Tonga, nofo 'i te fale lelei, kai houa tolu, ma'u pe me'a kotoa."

Fakamo'oni leva te kakai ko ia ke 'alu. Tala'i mai 'e toku mali, "Kailoa ko te tou 'alu tatolu ki Tonga, faingata'a!" Pea ko tonu tokoua na'e fakamo'oni 'alu; pea ha'u leva tonu tokoua 'o tangi mo kole. Ka ne me'a, te'eki ai folau te siana ko ia ke 'alu 'o sio ki Tonga. Kole ke 'ofa ange 'ia Saia ke motou o. Pehe atu 'e Saia," Sio mai, 'oku kala au fia 'alu mo taku fanau he kou sio atu ko te faingata'a 'o te faingata'a kaneongo eau 'alu.

Ha'u foki te siana ko M noa 'o 'alu leva fai tana fono, tala'i mai 'e ia, "Ko koe oku ke pehe ke ohu'i hau konga kelekele 'i Niuafou'ou nei ke 'ave ki Tonga, ohu'i 'o ave." Kaka i 'a Niua: "Ngaohi hau niu ke 'ave, veteki te ngaahi fale 'ave ki matatahi ke uta, ke 'ave." Hanga atu 'e Niuafou'ou veteki te ngaahi fale, falelotu, fetuku ki matatahi. Ngaohi, niu, takitaha pe tangata te fale mataka, fonu lelei, tu'u ki matatahi ko te teu ke 'ave.

Pea teu leva mo matou. Motou 'alu atu ko ia fetuku te ngaahi oho ke 'ave ki te vaka. Tau atu Futu hoko te taimi fakaheka ta'ofi mei vaka. 'Aua 'ave he 'oho. Ko te vaka ia, ko te vaka ma'a, kala 'ave he me'a 'oku 'uli. Pea tuku kotoa te oho pea motou heka. Heka 'ata'ata.

Heka 'ia Niuafou'ou, 'ave ki he, kala 'avange he me'a 'e taha. Maumau! Toki ha'u te ha'u ki mui — taetae te 'u konga papa 'i te 'u fale 'o langa'aki te fanga ki'i fale 'o nofo ai te kakai ne ha'u te ngaue 'a te pule'anga 'o nofo ai 'o ngaohi niu. Pea toki hoko ki te nimavalu toki fakakakai ia 'o ha'u. Maumau te koloa ia 'a Niuafou'ou. Mole noa.

Talu mei te hopo mei te 'utu ki te vaka mo te faingata'a. 'Alu 'i te vaha, tamaiki pehe, efiafi, tangi — fiekaia! Faka'ofa! Ha'u te kau vaka tufa mai pisiketi, ko te mapakupaku 'o si'i kai te fanau. Ta'ekai pe kakai lalahi 'o 'alu 'o a'u ki Tonga. Fakahifo atu ki Vaikeli kuo fakalili mai te 'u talamu vai, ko te ti. Tufa mai te ma fe'unga pe ki te kakai fefine mo te fanau. Hala lelei te matu'a — kala he me'a ke kai, inu vai 'ata'ata. Talu ai mo te nofo faingata'a'ia 'ia Niuafou'ou 'i Tonga. Fai mo te nofo — kape ne 'avange, fisifisi! Kala lava au 'o kai. Tama te kape natu'aki te mahoa'a, liliu 'o ta'o na'a kai. Kae laka ange te tama 'i te kai tunga. Te faingata'a'ia Niua nei.

Pea motou nofo 'i ai, tu'utu'uni ke motou 'alu ki 'Eua. He kapau ne pehe mai 'e te pule'anga, "'Ave 'a Niuafou'ou ki 'Eua," kala 'alu 'a Niuafou'ou ia, kala 'alu ki 'Eua. Ka ko te kaka'i mai ko e, "'Ave ki Tonga, hu pea ma'u te fale, hu nofo lelei." 'Alu ia Niuafou'ou faingata'a 'ia. 'Ave ia ki 'Eua, nofo ai 'ange'ange 'e te faingata'a 'a Tonga ia 'i te faingata'a 'a 'Eua. Kala ma'u he me'a ke to, ke kai, momoko kafakafa. 'Alu te kakai ngaue'i te ki'i kau'i manioke 'i te 'aho. Ngaue'i te kau'i manioke 'o to, fai'aki ia te langa.

Kau ui ange pe ki toku mali, "Ka fakakakai pe 'ia Niuafou'ou ta foki ki Niuafou'ou. Laka pe 'ia Niuafou'ou ia."

Ma nofo ai pe 'i 'Eua, nofo ai pe fanongo 'e fakakakai 'ia Niuafou'ou 'i te nimavalu. Fakafoki mai te kakai.

TJi ange au, "Ta o."

TJi mai ia, "'Io."

Kau tala ange, "Fakakakai pe pea ta foki ki Niua; ta fânau tuku heni, na'a

ta o kae to e vela."

Pea pehe mai 'e te fanau, "Motou faingata'a'ia 'ikai ko te motou ongo matu'a, ko te 'ave 'ia matou."

Pehe mai 'a Saia, "'Io."

Hoko ki te o mai, kala fia nofo tema fanau, ha'u kotoa. Fafine ne mali ki Ha'apai, ha'u, kala fia foki ia ki Ha'apai. Ha'u pe te ongo Tonga. Ha'u 'eni, nofo heni.

Tuku te motou kolo, tuku te motou fale papa, motou 'api tukupau 'i 'Eua. Ha'u matou. Mate 'a Saia. Pehe mai, "'Eke to e foki ki te tou fale?"

"Ne ha'u Saia 'omai au, tuku heni. Kae mate kau nofo heni, fiemalie. Fonua mafana, fonua 'oku ma'u pe te me'a kotoa ke tou kai. Loto 'i te fakakaukau atu ki te seniti, 'i te hele'uhila, ma'u pa'anga."

Pea au nofo ai heni. A'u mai ki te 'aho nei kala fia 'alu au ki 'Eua.

Talu ai e 'ave 'a Niua, pehe'i 'e te pule'anga.

Ka ko te ki'i vela, ki'i vela si'i, na'e 'ave ai 'a Niuafo'ou ia, kala pehe ko te vela lahi.

Vela lahi ia na'e 'osi mole ai 'a Futu, vela lahi ia. Ki'i vela ko e pehē atu pe ki tahi pehe hake 'i kauhala pea mole te fale koloa, mole mo te pule'anga, mole mo te 'api 'o Fotofili, mate ai pe vela. Foi'i vela pe ia, 'ave leva 'a Niuafo'ou.

Ka na'e hulu te fakamamahi'i 'o Niuafo'ou. Na'e ha'u te siana fua niu ki heni. Pea ko te niu 'a Niuafo'ou ne ma'u paasi pe. Ko ia 'oku 'i ai tana tukupau, tana lisi, tana fa'ahinga kavenga ki te pule'anga, pea ma'u paasi. 'E fua pe tana niu ko te 'osi pe tana tukupau, tana lisi, ta'ofi leva ia. Na'e pehe fua niu 'a Niuafo'ou.

'Osi pe te fua niu ko ia to te vela, to pe ko ia to 'o te pule'anga, to'o te 'u falekoloa, to'o te fale 'o te hau'aliki pea mate leva. 'Osi pe ia fetuku 'a Niuafo'ou, faingata'a'ia.

Motou 'i Tonga, ko te kilisimasi, siaine kili ko e uta ange mei Tonga, avange. Vai! Haka pe 'i te talamu 'aumai mo te kolukalu pe. 'Alu pe te motou kainga 'o fua kolukalu 'aumai kiki'aki. Motou manatu mai leva ki Niuafo'ou.

Maumau te me'akai. Maumau te fanga manu. Tuku ia 'i heni kae o faka'ofa. Kala leva 'e te pule'anga tauhi 'a Niuafo'ou nei.

Tokolahi foki te 'u kolo ia, ko te toki tokosi'i pe 'eni 'i te foki fo'ou mai. Fu'u lahi foki te lata atu 'i 'Eua, ko Tonga, ko Vava'u. Ki'i kainga pe 'eni ne fia omai ki Niua nei ne omai.

Ka ne kailoa alasi pehe ne mei lahi pe te fale papa ia a'u ki te ngaahi fa lelotu, kane me'a foki ko te fale papa 'u falelotu ia, ko tonu vete foki. He kapau na'e tuku pe a — te tama fai fonu tala ke vete ke 'ave — pehe ne motou foki mai

kei lelei pe ngaahi falelotu ia. Ko tonu maumau pe ko tonu vete 'o 'ave ki matatahi 'o popo.

Dougal Quensell's account

These reflections on Niuafu'ou are by Dougal Quensell, interviewed in English in November 1970 by Wendy Pond, who then composed the manuscript from which this account is taken.

Dougal Quensell is the son of Walter George Quensell, who opened and managed a store for Burns Philp Ltd on Niuafu'ou in October 1919, and stayed until 1945. Dougal left Niuafu'ou in 1923 for schooling in New Zealand and returned in April-May 1930 just before the Eclipse Expedition arrived . . .

In 1940, Dougal left Niuafu'ou for Nukualofa where he took over Tindall's store and in 1943 married a Niuafu'ou woman.

Dougal made frequent visits to Niuafu'ou and attempted without success to persuade his father to come to Tongatapu. However, in April 1946 Quensell senior cabled his son requesting him to come up by the next boat and help him evacuate, confirming an earlier nine-page letter in which George Quensell expressed the fear that something personal was going to happen to himself. The store was handed over to a local person and father and son left the island just 29 days before the eruption.

When the Niuafu'ou people were evacuated to Tongatapu, the Government asked the villagers of Tongatapu to collect food for the Niuafu'ou people. But the Tongatapu people felt that the Government should look after them, since *it* and not they, nor the Niuafu'ou people, had made the decision to evacuate. The Niuafu'ouans had been brought down against their will. The Government had made a wrong move from the start.

George Quensell's friends at Vaikeli were just about dead. There were 800-900 people in the camp. The evacuation was suicide. Quensell filled up a four-ton truck with talo (over 100 baskets) and three sacks of flour and sugar. The talo lasted two days. Manase L t , a part-Niuan, was a great help to the people. He was stevedore of the Union Steamship Company and in those times the gangs on the ships were all Niuafu'ou people because Manase gave every job to a Niuafu'ou man.

Wendy Pond Why did the Tonga Government evacuate the people of Niuafu'ou three months after the eruption, when all danger was passed?

Dougal Quensell In one lifetime Futu had been destroyed, Angah had been destroyed; the third time, what? What would the outside world say if the people were left there; if a third eruption occurred?

So the Government evacuated the people to safeguard itself against world opinion. It did not in fact want to spend the money on the evacuation, and it did not consider the welfare of the people in making the decision whether or not to evacuate them.

No-one had been killed in the 1929 Futu eruption; no-one had been killed in the 1946 Angah eruption, but Angah was the government village and all government buildings had been destroyed. While the people of Niuafu'ou were prepared to stay in their homeland, the government workers were not prepared to work in a dangerous, isolated, outlying island . . .

Everything which was to be collected and brought down to Tonga in a later boat, was left on the beach at Angah . When I returned in 1950, there were stacks of things rotting . . .

Wendy Pond Tavi has said that the Government, especially Havea Tu'ihaha'ateiho, was annoyed with the Niuafu'ou people for not paying their poll tax.

Dougal Quensell The only money these people had was from copra. The price of copra went very low in the early 1940s when Lever Brothers were boss of the copra. Then the price went up with the war but the Niuafu'ouans couldn't pay taxes because they couldn't market their copra . . .

The Government couldn't pay for ships to come in to load the copra; in Niuafu'ou the expense of loading sometimes equalled the value of the copra . . .

In 1950, the Evacuation Committee decided to send an official party to survey Niuafu'ou. Ata was still premier and head of the Evacuation Committee and it was decided to take the old *Hifofua* under Captain Tippet and government officials only. At 3 pm on the eve of departure, I was in the Tonga Club and heard Captain Tippet talking about the proposed voyage. I had some cows on Niuafu'ou and after promising Ata one dressed beast I was permitted to join the party. There was Akau'ola Minister of Police, Judge M noa Havea, noble Semisi Kalaniuvalu-Fotofili and others.

The *Hifofua* arrived at Niuafu'ou about 5 o'clock in the afternoon and Fotofili having had a bad trip without being able to eat swam ashore with another person to roast some food. Being afraid of sharks I stayed on board and caught a pile of fish. Fish had always been abundant even when the island was occupied; then, some four years later, I got a sore hand pulling them in.

We eventually went ashore at Futu, on to ' sia, Kolofo'ou and Sapa'ata but

there was no sign of a beast. Then half-way along the road from Sapa'ata to the coast at Angah , beside the Sapa'ata graveyard, I shot two beasts, as fat as *hopa* (plantain), and yet another on the beach road at Angah .

We then walked down the main road to Mu'a shooting 46 large pigs by noon. The meat was salted down at Futu. This was the mango and breadfruit season and although the pigs and horses were taking their share the *Hifofua* returned with sacks and sacks of it to Tonga.

Here was a land of plenty while the evacuees in Tonga lived in rags and starvation.

From Mu'a we went down to the beach where there are extensive flat volcanic rocks once used for drying copra. These rocks were covered with literally thousands of wingtips of sea-birds which had fallen prey to the island's dogs.

Even when the island was uninhabited there were known to be wild dogs unseen but heard at night. Robert Wolfgramm had a large Alsatian which had been left behind and fell prey to a boar. But it left many pups which had grown into big dogs. After evacuation, the pigs and fowls multiplied, and together with the horses and cows had waxed fat, but the dogs had become mere skin and bone. From November to March is the '*atu* (bonito) season when seabirds flock to these rocks at Mu'a to feed on the shoals of fish. The dogs were waiting silently until nightfall to fall upon and feed on the birds.

The villages were still evident as clearings in the trees but bush was growing up in them. Housepoles had been taken down and piled up at Angah , identified with paint markings. The weather had rotted the thatch and all that remained of the houses were the stone platforms . . . The tracks had been kept open by stock but the *mo'osipo* grass had grown high in the villages.

Meanwhile the *Hifofua* had gone to Niuatoputapu and brought back a gang of men to dismantle the wooden schoolhouse and the wooden hospital which were both still standing at Angah and then return with them to Niuatoputapu.

The Catholic round Tongan bandhouse was still standing with its sugarcane thatch roof still in good order. The Catholic Mission and church at Angah had also survived the eruption; they had been dismantled, pulled down, and the timber stacked on the Angah landing where it began to rot. Bishop Blanc demanded and won compensation for this from the Tonga Government.

The Niuatoputapu party spent all night baking meat which, together with 13 kegs of salted meat, they returned in the *Hifofua* to Niuatoputapu. The *Hifofua* then returned to Niuafu'ou to collect the official party which had spent between five to seven days on the island.

After the *Hifofua* returned to Nukualofa a Cabinet Meeting decided Tonga

could not afford to leave Niuafu'ou uninhabited, another country might claim the land.

Moreover, the Government wanted copra and Niuafu'ou had once produced 1000 tons of copra a year. So the decision to reoccupy Niuafu'ou was not based on concern for the people. In fact, the Government had been petitioned by Niuafu'ou people to be allowed to return half-a-dozen times. Fusitu'a asked the Government in a petition to let him go back — even if he were killed there — for he had no estate or house in Tongatapu. He was half starving at Mu'a, walking around in rags like anyone off the street.

A *fono* was held by the Niuafu'ou Evacuation Committee where the orders were read out to those desiring to return to Niuafu'ou. They were all to stay in the government village of 'Ēsia, especially the women, while the men were to start replanting their gardens, because there were not enough people for each of the old villages. The general reply was, "Yes! We'll do that." The people were so anxious to return that they agreed to all stipulations.

When they arrived in Niuafu'ou, with horses and pigs, etc., Soane Lino announced through a loud hailer, "All go to 'Ēsia", but the people replied, "We are in Niuafu'ou now", and each one went to his own *api* (former home-site).

The Government has never owned up that it made a mistake and that for the people of Niuafu'ou the evacuation was a very, very bad thing. But the Government and the chiefs of Tonga had protected themselves: no lives had been lost in a further disaster . . .

In about 1963-4 Dougal Quensell made his last visit to Niuafu'ou. He built a house and stayed for about two years ... At a kava party, he went through the families in each village and calculated there were possibly 800 people on the island. The people did not wish to talk about the evacuation.

Never again will the Government move them; there will be no second time.

6

Hiva kakala/Popular songs from Niuafu'ou

Kitione Mamata

Translated and annotated by Wendy Pond

Ko e konga 'eni o e ngaahi fa'u Hiva Kakala 'a Kitione Mamata, ko ha tokotaha Faim koni 'i Niuafu'ou lolotonga o e 1960s. Ko e ū hiva ni na'e fakafasi e he Malau-'o-Vailahi pea na'e hiki tepi 'i Sapa'ata Ī he 1967 'e Garth Rogers

i. Malau 'o Vailahi

Fungani e tala ko e fakatapu
Kae hao he si'ete laulau
Si'i Niuafu'ou mo hono malau
Kei fai atu hono fiema'u

Me'a mai, ka u taki hao mamata
Funga Vailahi, ko si'i m tanga
Faingata'a ka ko hono lata'anga
'Uta'anga si'a sola pea ne laka

Lau ki hono vaku, me'a faingata'a
Hifo 'i lelenga, hake 'i kehenga
Toupili he manako ki hoto 'ofa'anga
Lava kuo fungani efu e lo'imata

'Ofa si'i malau, si'ene kakau
Kehenga Tongatapu, lata 'i vai 'Ahau
Hoko ko ha fe'una ki he 'ilo 'a e Hau
Fakalaka ena ka ke manatu'i au

Tau

Si'i malau 'o funga Vailahi
Inumia he fakalaka 'o taimi
Langa e manatu ki he kuohili
'Oi, na ko si'oto li'aki

ii. Founa Fakahifo mo e Fakaheka

Tapu mo ha'a k vei fonua
H fanga he Aofaki 'o Natula
Kau fai ha ki'i talanoa hua
Tukuange 'o ka fakafiematamu'a

Ne u fehu'i ki he sitivatoa
Founa fakahifo pea mo e fakaheka
Ka loka pea hou leva 'a e taulanga
'E fêfê 'al si'etau mataka?

Tau

"Ko e me'a pê 'e taha 'e lava
Feinga ke toloi'i taimi 'o e vaka"

Takatu'u mai, fai ki he vave taha
Kia ho'o niu, lele 'o tu'u 'i he 'utu fakaheka
Teu ki he laku ki vaka, tali mo ha peau 'e laka
Tu'u fakave'etaha, pea palanisi mo ho'o laka

'O ka ke ka vaivai he fie tangata
Ko hono mo'oni ko e ta'e fie tuitala
'A e sola tuku mu'a e fie taki mamata
He 'e toe houa pea te ke toe tehanga

Tau

Si'oto tufakanga p ke u t kakava
Ka e 'ahai nai ia 'a si'ono ha'aha'a?

Nga'ahoa e mo'ui ni he 'Otu Anga'ofa
Ne taha'i senituli si'oto fakakoloa
Fe'amokaki he lelei, he ngâo'i si'ota kuonga
Hopocate, tukufakaholo ki he lauikuonga

iii. Tin Can Mail

Talangata 'iate au 'o fai ki tu'a atu
'Oua na'a ke taku na kuo te fakatatau
Me'a sai tama ko e fakamanatu
Ki Tonga na ke te kau he lau

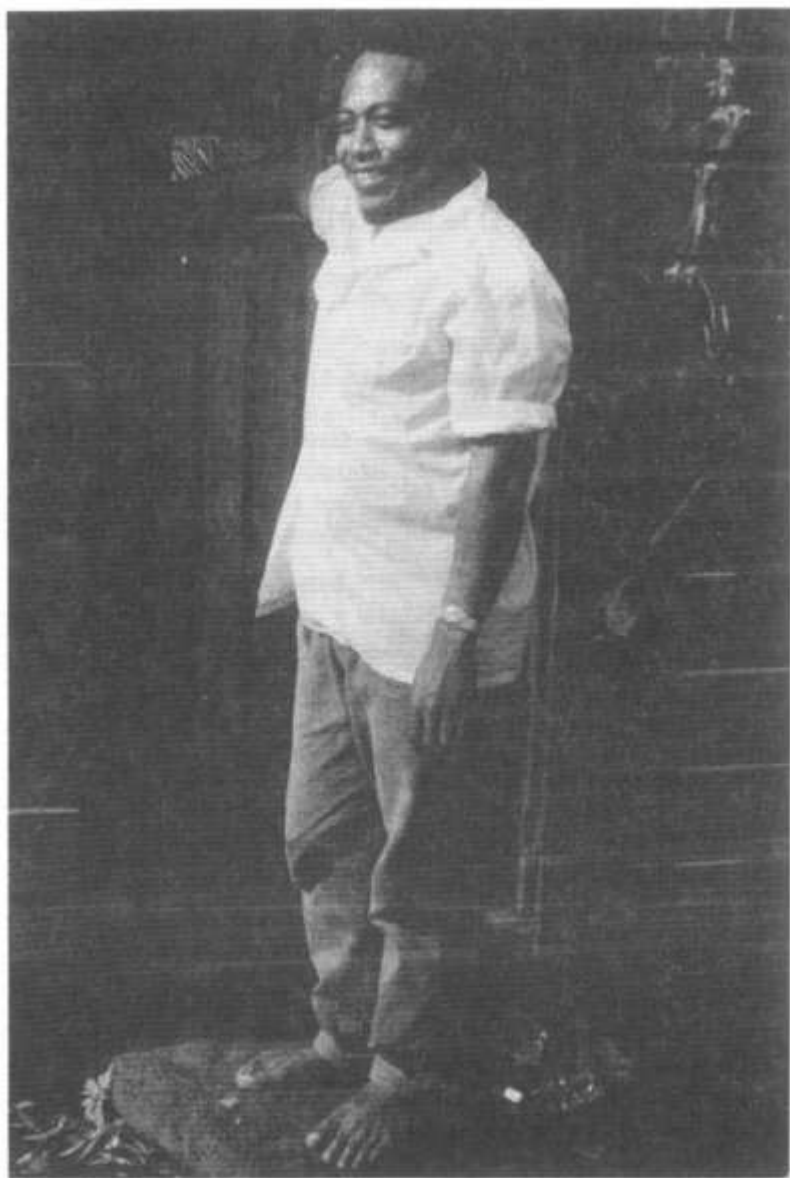
Ka 'aho vaka leva pea te lau matangi
Mariposa pe Monterey ke fakafetaulaki
Tafa'anga ke 'uta he ko hono tahi
Si'ane 'ofa ke tau 'inasi

Fanongo he matangi Tonga fakamafola si'eta koloa
Tuha mo e sola ke kai melie ka u inu 'a si'ono kona
F f hono fuoloa ho'o fakangalongalo'i kita
Taha-tolu e Saame 'a T vita

'Otu Felenitê e si'ota huafa masani
Fotu si'a vülangi ngalo 'oku ta taha 'i he kakala ni
Mo'oni p si'i lea taka 'i Tonga ni
'Io, femolimoli'i ke tau 'inasi

Tau

Tin Can Mail ongona ma'u p
Si'o 'alu na ka te u 'amanaki p
Ki si'a 'aho ho'o toe ha'u ko e langa'i manatu
Ke u 'inasi mai he mon ni ku ou lau
Toli mo fili 'i he si'oto mohu fakamanatu
Si'oto m tanga ko hai kita ni ke lau
Ta nofo p mo 'uta ke pau ki si'ota kaha'u
Pe langa pe na kuo ta si'i ngalo 'i he manatu



Kitone Mamata outside his wireless station, Sapa'ata, 1967. G. Rogers

iv. Ko e F Si'oto Maka Tupu'a

Te u talanoa ke mou mea'i
Ko si'i kakala ni talu mei tuai
Meia Lihau ne u tupu ai
Makamapuhia na'e ui 'aki

Ne u tali ha folofola mei Palasi
Ki Tuva ke u heka ki Tonga lahi
Ne louhi'inima p si'oto fataki
Na'a ko hoto tuha ke u mole ai

Ta'akimoeaka pe'i ke nofo ka u 'alu
'O he 'i he vahanoa matatangi mei tu'a ngalu
'Ou inu he naua mo e fisi'i peau
'Aho vaka p i Futu pea ke toki manatu'i au

Ki he f hina 'o e 'otu vai vela
Funga Ahea, 'Ahofakatau mou 'ave si'eku 'ofa
Ki he Hala S lote mo e Sopa 'o T ufa
He kuo te li'ekina 'i he 'oseni tupu'a

Manatu ki 'api ki si'ono li'aki
Pehe ki Tonga 'eiki ne teu talitali
Si'i efu 'oku tanu ne nau 'ofa'i
Ko si'i fo'ui ni 'e talia nai 'e hai?

v. M hina

M hina! Ko si'i fefine mo 'ene tama
'E kapasiasia he talanoa

Na'a na ki he taulanga he ko Napopa
Ke kaukau'i si'i 'ene tama
'O ne tuku ke ne va'inga 'i he funga maka ki 'uta
Kae 'alu ko e f ngota ma'ana
Pea ne hifo ke t kamakama 'i he pupu'a
'O fokifâ kuo pulonga ha fu'u peau t
'O tafia ai ki he 'ana m moa 'i lalo fonua
'O ne mo'ui, feinga ke foki, kai ke lava

'I he a'u atu 'a hono kumi 'o kinaua
Kuo si'i m l l si'ene tama
Si'i nima pē 'o Māhina, 'asi hake he ava'i maka
Kae ongo mai 'a hono le'o ko e kalanga:
"Ko au ! kei hao p ! mou foki
Kae tuku ke u hoko ko ha faka'ilonga
'O e ngaahi me'a lalahi 'e hoko 'i hotau fonua
Ki ha vela mo e pekia mo e folau vaka"

"Ka u ka kata 'o hangē ko ha ifi kele'a
Pea 'e 'amanaki taumai leva ha vaka
Ka u ka tangi mamahi leva
Pea 'amanaki 'e t e vela
Pe ha pekia 'e hoko 'i hotau fonua
Taumai na'a ke 'iloa si'eku tama
Kae tuku ke u fakama'unga 'eva he talanoa
Si'i Ta'akimoeaka pe'i ke tala fakaholo si'oku ofa"
Ko si'i mātanga ni kuo hoko ko e talatupu'a

vi. Toka 'i Vailahi

'O! Seuke! 'O ka f f nai, ka tonga e matangi?
To'oa e loto ni, vikia 'e he 'atamai, toka 'i Vailahi
'O ka p mähina, ka tafitonga a e langi, pea te 'eva ki ai
Kovi 'eku loi, ko Palataisi 'o ka fotuaki

Tau

'Ehi ho'o laka he teunga'ia hono kakala
Malimali loto hono 'ea ko e 'au'at

He 'Iuv ! si'i m tanga, faiteunga ho anga
Ke me'ite 'a e loto, 'o uesia he vavanga, he taha'i fakalata
Toa, ongo he toafa, lupe, olo he lalata, te'eki fai ha tokanga
Malau, fai ha'o tala, ho pungunga kei kapa, na'a foki t la'a

Tau

Vai-mo'unga 'ena kei fakaholoi to'utangata
Mohuanga si'ana 'aonga he tolu'i-faingata'a



Toka 'i Vailahi: views of the crater lake with its numerous islands. Pacific Islands Monthly

Motu Lahi, Motu Si'i mo Motu 'A'ali
'Aofia ke vakai, mo hono talatalaaki, 'e he ngaahi matavai
'Isa pe ko hai, te ne fa'a tatali, pe loto ke li'aki
Mo'oni p 'a M mani, "ke a'u mo 'inasi", kae f f nai

Tau

Pongia 'a e loto he masani ne ma'ui'ui
Taufa pea ngangatu ho'o lata koe'uhi, koe'uhi 'o ka fotuaki

vii. 'Ofato

'Ofato, ko e mafi 'ofato totolo
Ka fotu 'o ka s s
'Eke 'e ha sola ko si'ene fie'ilo
Fanongo he hake pea mo e hifo
'I si'ono 'eke'i holo pē ko e h hono ifo
Tama 'oua e pehei si'oto kakala manako

'Ofato, afenga 'o si'ete faka'aho
Tu'u he laa tu'u he hako
Ke toli mo fili hao manako 'ene anganofa he taulalo
Viki e lelei ne fakama'unga ki ai 'ete manako
Taha'i kuonga ne lato he foaki 'a e taumama'o
Pohopoho lava, ko ia ko ho fakam l ?

'Ofato, hingoa o si'ete si ngako
'Efinga si'ete 'ilo
Pitenga si'oto ifo, pununga'anga 'o e manako
'Ofa loto 'i si'oto mahu he 'ikai ngalo
Fiu hono kumi holo, tâ na'a te tuku 'i loto
Ki se'ete kopate malu ko e 'akau popo he vao

This is a selection of the pop songs composed in the 1960s by Kitione Mamata, during his term of office as the Niuafo'ou Wireless Operator. The songs were sung by the Malau-'o-Vailahi group and recorded at Sapa'ata in 1967 by Garth Rogers.

i. Malau 'o Vailahi/Megapode of the Crater Lake

Niuafo'ou is renowned for its megapode birds, *Megapodius pritchardi*, fowl-like birds not found anywhere else in Polynesia and prized as game, the birds and eggs accompanying presentations from Niuafo'ou to the royal household. They are preferred to domestic fowls because of their oily flesh and the rich yolk of their eggs. The megapodes are found along the shorelines of Niuafo'ou's volcanic lakes; Vailahi and 'Ahau are named in the poem. They dig deep holes in the warm sand, to depths of one or two metres, and leave their eggs buried, to incubate unattended. Niuafo'ou people recover the eggs by excavating the burial places. The composer notes wryly that the main centre prizes Niuafo'ou delicacies and beauty spots, but ignores her need for modern facilities. Niuafo'ou in the 1960s had only a rutted clay road encircling the island, and for public transport only the Copra Board truck and Noble Fusitu'a's truck. Vailahi, the large crater lake, was reached on foot, by leaving the main road, climbing to the crater rim, and descending to the lake edge.



Eggs of the malau bird from Vailahi. G. Rogers

In the refrain, the metaphor of the megapode depicts Niufo'ou in the twentieth century as a distant and backward outpost of the Tonga Kingdom, having been left out of the Development Projects which have concentrated on centralised development in Tongatapu, the seat of Government. In the past, however, Niufo'ou had its chiefs of rank and renown who married into the aristocratic lines of Tonga.

Protocol embellishes a speech
It's the saving grace of mine
Dear Niufo'ou with her megapodes
Still in popular demand.

Step up, I'll lead your gaze
Vailahi is a fine lake
Idyllic scenes pose problems, but
Transport a tourist and he's happy

Digging them out, that's difficult
Down in the dark, out in the light
Dogging the loved one's choice
Done! with tears rolled in dust.

I adore the megapode's swimming stroke
You're a big smoke, Tongatapu, but I'm at home in 'Ahau lake
Else I'd be an adjunct to the royal repast
Prosper down there and do remember me.

Chorus

Dear megapode of Vailahi lake
Buried in the march of progress
Better not forget our history
Or I'll be the one forsaken.

ii. Founa Fakahifo mo e Fakaheka/Loading and Unloading Procedures

In the 1960s, copra was loaded at Futu from the end of a lava outflow, unprotected from the surge of the sea. A lighter went back and forth between the copra ship and the loading point. The sacks were carried down the beach

and out along the rocks by a team of men supervised by the stevedore, Siaoisi Telefoni Ongoloka. In the last verse, the poet speaks wryly of the abundance which the Niuafou people enjoyed before modern development enslaved them in copra production without returning the benefits of wharf construction or mechanisation.

Deference to all concerned
I take refuge in the Almighty
In telling this funny little story
If I've got a nerve, ignore it.

I questioned the stevedore
Re loading and unloading procedures
If the anchorage is rough, what,
Friend, is to be done about the copra?

Chorus

"There's only one thing to be done:
Try to postpone the vessel's departure."

Look smart, act on the double,
Shoulder your sack, trot to the loading rock.
Prepare to sling aboard, wait for the double-banger,
Take a one-footed stance, stay on balance as you step.

If you don't feel quite up to being a man
Streuth, don't believe what you're told
By an upstart foreigner acting as guide
You'll be dead-beat within the hour.

Chorus

It's my innate talent to sweat
But for whose benefit is it?

I lead a two-sided life in the Friendly Isles
For centuries I was well endowed
Short-fall on wealth under present adjustments
Hereditary slaves for the foreseeable future.

iii. Tin Can Mail

Because Niuafu'ou Island has no harbour, during the hurricane season sailing vessels did not come to load copra or bring passengers, cargo, and mail. However, the S.S. *Tofua* passed Niuafu'ou en route between Samoa and Fiji, and during the 1920s a store keeper, Charles Ramsay, used the Niuafu'ou fishing technique of *fakalukuluku*, swimming with a floating pole, to convey cans of mail to and from the steamer. Soldered, forty-pound biscuit tins were used. The origin of the tin-can mail is described in *Tin Can Island* by C. S. Ramsay and C. P. Plumb, Hurst and Blackett, 1938.

By the 1960s, the Niuafu'ou chief, Hon. Noble Fusitu'a, unofficial postmaster, was sending his outrigger canoe, painted green and pink with an outboard motor, to deliver and collect the tin can mail from the Matson passenger liners, *Monterey* and *Mariposa*. Tongan stamps taken aboard at Suva were sold to passengers between Suva and Niuafu'ou, posted ashore in the red tin can, and returned to the next liner bearing the authentic Tin Can Island postmark. Fusitu'a had built up an intricate gift exchange system with the officers of the liners as compensation for the onerous and unrewarding task of franking hundreds of dealers' letters and for fuel used to deliver and receive the mail. Fusitu'a received bundles of second-hand clothing and items of processed food with the tin can mail, and sent back mats, baskets and other gifts from the people of Niuafu'ou.

In this song, the poet is making an analogy between the gifts from the Matson liners being shared out amongst the Niuafu'ou people by Fusitu'a, and the Development Project aid programmes which the Tonga Government had deployed in the main centres while ignoring the distant Niua islands. Psalm 13 begins, 'How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever?' *Verse 1*. The 'you' addressed is Tonga, i.e. Tongatapu, seat of Government. *Verse 2*. Because Niuafu'ou has no harbour, the reception party had to calculate which coast the Matson liners would stand off, whether Futu or Angah, according to prevailing weather conditions. *Verse 3*. The wind blowing from the south is a metaphor for the Tonga Radio Station, ZCO (now A3Z). *Verse 4*. *Taha 'i he kakala ni* 'together in this collection of sweet-scented flowers': *Kakala* is a metaphor for the incoming wealth of overseas aid and development projects. *Femolimoli ke tau 'inasi* is from the saying: *me'a si'i femolitinoli'i, me'a lahi taki taha kai* 'a little is shared out in small portions; when there's a lot, each eats what he wants'.

Pardon this commoner for speaking from the back bench
Don't think I presume to count myself with you
But it's a good thing for a fellow to remind
Tonga that we are part of the proceedings.

It's boat day and the subject is wind
Mariposa or Monterey, whichever we go to meet
Our outrigger sizes up the sea
And we all have our share of the bounty.

We hear on the southerly broadcasts of aid
Outsiders get the sweetbreads while my drink is bitter
How much longer will you put me out of mind?
David, Psalm Thirteen.

"The Friendly Islands" is our peerless name
At the sight of a stranger you forget our common lot
There's some truth in the saying abroad in Tonga
Indeed, let's share and share alike.

Chorus

Tin Can Mail, received with keen appreciation
Farewell, and I'll look forward
To the day your return jogs a memory
Hoping I'll have a share of that bounty
Pick and choose from our abundant souvenirs
Our beauty spots — who can describe them?
We'll stay at home and consider our future
Anxious lest we slip from recollection.

iv. Ko e F Si'oto Maka Tupu'a/Where is our Ancient Stone?

For some part of the nineteenth century, the leading chiefs of Niufo'ou, Lihau in Hahake, and Ue'ikaetau (Fusitu'a) in Sapa'ata, maintained a state of hostility between the two districts. Lihau selected his followers in war by requiring each man to pass a series of tests. The final test was to walk around the Makamapuhia rock, placing each foot heel to toe, whistling (mapu) on the one breath. The stone was described to Kitione Mamata as being approximately six feet in diameter, one and a half feet high, and made of a very hard clay, taking sbc

to ten men to lift.

Some time after the evacuation of Niuafu'ou in 1946, the Premier, H.R.H. Prince Tungj sent a party back to Niuafu'ou, to recover the Makamapuhia stone. The Government vessel *Hifofua* lay at anchor off Futu; the rock was being conveyed on an outrigger canoe when the canoe capsized. The stone fell into a deep crevice on the outside of the underwater reef and subsequently became covered with sand moved by currents. Its whereabouts is no longer known. There is a feeling that the stone was lost because it should not have been taken away from Niuafu'ou. "The burial ashes they loved" recalls the distress of the evacuees at leaving the land where their ancestors and kin are buried. The impersonal *si'oto* 'one's of the title is the conventional way for the composer to speak on behalf of the Niuafu'ou people. The first four verses are written in the first person of the Makamapuhia.

Tuva is the traditional residence of 'Eiki Fusitu'a of Sapa'ata, the highest ranking resident chief of Niuafu'ou in 1946. *Ta'akimoeaka* "Uprooted" is the anchorage at Angah village, destroyed in 1946. *Futu* is the anchorage at Futu village, destroyed by lava in the 1929 eruption. At the time of composition, in 1967, Futu was the main port. 'Ahea and 'Ahofakatau were settlements destroyed by lava in the 1853 eruption. Hala S lote is a road near the palace in Tongatapu, named after Queen S lote. *Sopu* is a tract on the lagoon shore of Tongatapu, adjacent to the palace. *Taufa* is H.M. Taufu' hau Tupou IV, son of Queen Sâlote. *Tonga Lahi* and *Tonga 'Eiki*, "Greater Tonga", are Tongatapu.

I'll give an account so you may comprehend
This storied object from the past
From Lihau I came originally
Going by the name of "Whistling Stone".

Advice was received, from the palace
To Tuva, that I should transfer to Greater Tonga
My litter struts were simply finger-tips
It may be my due that so I was lost.

Well, Ta'akimoeaka, stay while I venture
Wandering on the high seas, languishing beyond the swell
Gulping the ocean rollers and their spray
On boat days at Futu you'll think of me.

To the pale pandanus of the crater lakes
'Ahea and 'Ahofakatau: you may send my love
To S lote Road and the Sopa of Taufu
For I am discarded in the ocean depths.

Think of its being abandoned back home
And of Greater Tonga, whose welcome waited
Of the burial ashes they loved
Who would say he owned the fault?

v. Māhina

The song retells a well-known Niufo'ou account. Napopa is in Hahake, on the exposed eastern coast. Air, under pressure from the sea's swell, is forced up through the cleft in which M hina's fingers appeared. The sound foretells imminent events, according as it is like the coarse roar of a conch trumpet, or a high, piercing whistle. Ta'akimoeaka is the old anchorage at Angah , unsheltered and ceaselessly disturbed by the waves.

Māhina, poor woman, and her child
This song will tell the tale.

She went to the landing at Napopa
To give her little child a bath
She left him playing on the inshore rocks
While she went and gathered shellfish for him
She had climbed down to catch crabs in the blowhole
A breaker overwhelmed her suddenly
Sweeping her into a dry cave underground
She survived, tried to get back, but couldn't.

When the search party arrived
Her poor child was dead
Only M hina's poor hands appeared through a cleft in the rock
And her voice was heard, calling out
"I'm here, still safe, go back
Leave me to be an indicator
Of major events in our island
Eruptions and deaths and shipping.

Should I laugh like the blast of a shell trumpet
Shortly expect a boat to arrive
Should I wail mournfully
Expect an eruption
Or a death to occur in our land
Oh, would that you had been found, my child
But leave it at this, that I'm a roving subject
Beloved Ta'akimoeaka, keep recounting my love."
That's how this historic site became a legend.

vi. Toka 'i Vailahi/Lingering memories of Lake Vailahi

The song describes the composer's recollections of the peace and beauty he found in the undisturbed setting of the crater lake. The walls of the main crater enclose several lakes, the largest being Vailahi. In Vailahi there are three islands, Motu Vaoa (Motu Lahi), Motu Si'i, and Motu Molemole. A fourth island, Motu 'A'ali, can be seen below the surface and appears when the lake level drops. Vailahi is separated from a smaller lake, Vai Mata'aho, by the wasteland, an area of sand hills and casuarina pines. A path runs along the crater rim, giving views of the lakes and the islands. The inner walls of the main crater are bush-covered; the land along the lake edges is uncultivated and undisturbed by human activity.

The megapode birds are found along the shorelines of the lakes, where they dig deep burrows in the loose soil associated with warm volcanic vents. A single egg is laid in each burrow, at one or two metres depth; the burrow is refilled and the egg left to incubate, unattended by the adults. In the song, the megapode represents the Niuafou people. The composer has mingled evocations of the landscape with current social issues.

The southerly trade brings clear skies and fine, settled weather.

Ah! Goodness! Imagine what it's like when the trade is southerly
Elated at heart, praising of mind, at peace by the crater lake
Should the night be moonlit, should the sky be clear, I would take
a stroll there
Truly, it is one's idea of paradise.

Chorus

Liven your stroll with its perfumed flowers
Be gladdened by its pure stream of air.

Fantastic! Scenic beauties, get done up
Set the heart at ease, moved by the wonder of it, the keenest
pleasure

Casuarinas, whisper in the wasteland
Pigeons, coo in captivity, carefree
Megapodes, speak your mind while still close to your burrows, or
leave without hindsight.

Chorus

Lake of the mountain, there since the first generation
Handy for all sorts of things.

Main island, Small island, Prescient island
Encircled for an outlook, informed by the lake's sources
Ah! who would but linger often, and want to abandon it?
It's true everywhere: "get and share", how else?

Chorus

The verdant beauty of the setting stabs the heart
The peace you found there emanates sweetly because, because
it can appear just like that.

vii. 'Ofato/'Ofato Grub

'Ofato grubs (Niuafou *afato*) are the larvae of large, longhorn beetles, *Olethrius* spp., found in Fiji, Futuna, Samoa, and Niuafou, but not elsewhere in Tonga. The grubs live in rotten wood and are eaten with relish, especially when they are fully grown and fat and have stopped eating preparatory to becoming pupae. *'Ofato* are sent with Niuafou presentations to the royal household in Tongatapu, as a prized delicacy. *Pohopoho lava* is a Niuafou exclamation of surprise.

'Ofato, the champion creeping grub
Appearing amongst crowds
The inquisitive visitor wants to know,
Having heard in the comings and goings
Having asked around, What does it taste like?
Fellow, don't mention my favourite grub.

'Ofato, my diversion at luncheon
Be it fine, be it windy
Take your pick from its compliant lowly haunt
Praise its excellence, the mainstay of my craving
Each generation was satisfied with God's creation
Goodness gracious, was that His gift?

'Ofato, my jar of dripping
My hamper of food
Metropolis of my taste, nest of desire
From love of plenitude, never forgotten
Fed up with searching? Look! I left it here inside
My coolsafe, the bush-felled rotten wood.



7

Conclusion

There is no end to history just as there is no end to telling stories round a kava bowl, and it is obvious from the narratives in this book there is no end to Niuafu'ou people living on Niuafu'ou. It is hoped there will be more history and biography by Niuafu'ou people for these accounts are brief and leave much unsaid.

Concerning the decision to evacuate Niuafu'ou and the anguish it must have caused some of Tonga's leaders of that day, much more can now be said with the comfortable wisdom of hindsight.

There is a proverb which runs: *Lau pē e he lokua ko e moana hono t puta*, which refers to a small fish which believes that the shallow depression in a rock near the sea-shore in which it is swimming is the great ocean deep. So it was, claimed some residents of Niuafu'ou in 1967, with the reaction of the Government to the 1946 eruption. The outburst lasted little more than a day, it destroyed only one village; but as that village was the seat of Government and the home of all government officers, the Nukuālofa Government gave an order for unconditional evacuation.

Several of these Niuafu'ou people declared there was no great danger to life on Niuafu'ou in 1946 once the people were encamped on the hill and the wind backed to the south. And they point to the total absence of deaths or injuries as a result of the eruption as evidence for this view. They argued that the 1943, 1929, and the 1886 outbursts were all of greater severity and more destructive of land and crops than the 1946 eruption yet no-one was evacuated in 1929 when Futu village was destroyed or in 1943 when all vegetation was severely desiccated, and only a few families left the island after the violent steamburst

eruption of 1886 inside the crater lake.

Several Niuafu'ou persons pointed out that the two villages devastated by lava this century, Futu and Angah , were on the perimeter of the island in locations prone to eruption, and in the path of any extensive lava flows; whereas all remaining villages are now inland in areas which have not experienced volcanic disturbance since the island was formed.

Discussion with some of the 'volcano experts' revealed a fine awareness of the different forms of tremor, earthquake and the expected sequences of lava flow, sulphur, ash, and steam production whereas outsiders tended in 1946 to equate all these forms with disaster. Niuafu'ou residents had learned to live with frequent earth tremors believing they could predict the force and severity of a pending eruption by the initial tremors, and knowing that the mountain ridges overlooking the original crater lake are an accessible and safe refuge.

Another argument put forward by Niuafu'ou people in 1967 is that over 15 weeks elapsed between the date of the eruption and the order to evacuate the population, and by that time daily life on the island with the exception of government services was almost back to normal.

Some Sapa'ata and Pētani people claim that the order to totally evacuate the island came as an unexpected surprise; it was known that most Angah people and government workers would be evacuated on the appointed day but compulsory evacuation for all was unforeseen. Those who said in 1967 that they voted to go believed they were expected to go; those who said they voted to stay believed they would be permitted to stay. Few people of the three Hahake villages expected their villages to be totally evacuated, and few of them pulled down houses or transported their housepoles to the beaches. Consequently those who voted to stay, yet were forcibly evacuated in 1946, were still blaming the Government rather than the eruption for their hardships and losses in the 12 years they were away from their homeland. Their argument was that the ballot was an attempt by Government to ascertain the wishes of the people whereas the decision to evacuate the entire island took no account of people wishing to remain. In the final eventuality these people had no choice.

But government officials, visitors, and outside observers interpreted the eruption differently and saw evacuation as a necessity. The Minister of Lands, a Tongatapu noble, told the British Consul on 27 September, "he was quite satisfied that the island must be evacuated as soon as possible." To this estate holder, Niuafu'ou was a problem and a liability to Government. The residents were demanding more and better services (see Petition to Legislative Assembly at Nukualofa on 3 July 1946) including more regular shipping for copra, which

the Government could not supply.

The background to the decision to evacuate is now fairly clear; the Minister of Lands had his mind made up by 27 September on his return with the first relief party. Niuafu'ou with her isolation and heavy yet inaccessible copra supply had become a problem for Government. The eruption had wiped out part of that problem by destroying nearly two years' production of copra but it left Niuafu'ou without a government base and with their wholesale resignation, all government office-holders. The Government was already therefore obliged to evacuate government and mission workers and Angah residents; the neatest solution would be to evacuate everyone. Havea Tu'iha'ateiho therefore took it upon himself to persuade the Niuafu'ou people to abandon their island. By 27 September he told Mr C. W. T. Johnson: [The Niuafu'ou people] . . . have been persuaded there is no alternative . . . they are ready to leave."

Once the plebiscite figures were available it was not difficult for the Minister's "driving force" to persuade the NEC (none of whom were Niuafu'ou people), and later the Queen and TungT.

But it should be stressed that from the point of view of Government it was quite reasonable to evacuate the entire population for their own safety.

At least three other Tongan islands, Tofua, L t , and Fonualei, are active volcanoes and unsuitable for permanent settlement on this account. Niuafu'ou has a long history of volcanism and is one of the most remote of the Tongan islands. Had the island been destroyed by eruption in the years immediately following the evacuation, the evacuation order would now be regarded as a wise and timely act. Had the wind on that evening of 9 September 1946 veered north, a not unusual occurrence during full moon in the trade-wind season, the fumes alone, apart from the heat, falling ash and contaminated rain, could have injured or even killed many people and destroyed all food supplies, as occurred in 1943.

During that outburst, on Sunday morning of the 26 September, an old vent in 'Ahau in the south-west opened up and disgorged lava, ash and sulphur as far as Angah , about 10 kilometres away. Sister Mary Julia described the scene in a journal: "... a downpour of sulphur and lava followed, big pieces of black molten lead' were pattering on the roof of our verandah blowing in our direction . . . and the next day, "the sun appeared like a faint red blot above the thick canopy of smoke which blackened the sky . . . The air was thick with that choking odour of sulphur ... the luxuriant vegetation had changed to brown and to black during the night ... all looked sad and desolate." It is an irony of Niuafu'ou history that according to a 1967 questionnaire, more people took

the opportunity to travel to Tongatapu for educational and work opportunities than from fear or loss resulting from the eruption. It is another irony that apart from a January 1947 outburst reported by a passing yachtsman the island has suffered no natural catastrophe, eruption or hurricane for over 30 years.

The decision to resettle Niuafu'ou

By 1958 Niuafu'ou had become attractive not only to the 600 or so Niuafu'ou people stranded in Tongatapu who did not wish to live in 'Eua, but also to the Government which was seeking to expand industry, development, and exports. In 1957 Niuafu'ou produced 242 tons of copra worth £10,000 and it was known that these figures could be doubled. Moreover, Tonga was about to take delivery of its first modern merchant vessel, the M.V. *Aoniu*, which would guarantee removal of copra from the two isolated Niuaus as well as providing generous passenger accommodation. There was no shortage of young itinerant copra cutters willing to work and enjoy a spell on Niuafu'ou, and there had already been overtures from Fiji offering labour for a similar purpose. But permanent resettlement of Niuafu'ou would resolve what had become an embarrassment to the NEC in Tongatapu, namely the presence of unemployed, landless migrants from Niuafu'ou who had been petitioning Government to return to their homeland since 1948.

This is a document presented to the Legislative Assembly in 1948:

Note the Petition of Fusitu'a and 608 people of Niuafu'ou requesting their return to their homeland as they are in desperate straits in Tongatapu.

The document was submitted to Privy Council for Her Majesty's comment on the decision to resettle the people on 'Eua instead of Niuafu'ou, and was then passed with 17 votes for and two against.

The situation of the three Niuafu'ou estate holders, Fotofili, Fusitu'a, and Tuita, is also relevant here. The new Niuafu'ou settlements in 'Eua were declared government land, the tenants paying rent not to their Niuafu'ou estate holders but directly to the Government. Nobles Fotofili (under his other title Kalaniuvalu) and Tuita held valuable estates in other areas of Tonga and both had lost good lands in the 1929 and 1946 eruptions on Niuafu'ou. But Fusitu'a had land only in Niuafu'ou, his only house in Sapa'ata village, and none of this had been damaged by recent volcanism. Fusitu'a preferred to live in his fine thatched house on his estate at Sapa'ata, growing yams and producing his own copra. It was inevitable therefore that he found himself leader of those who waited 12 years to return to their homeland.

The sentiments of some of these Niuafu'ou patriots are expressed in the following statements:

My family went to 'Eua in 1948 and cleared new land. My father died in 1951, aged only 52; we believe that the cold, the poor food, and the burden of work killed him. My older brothers returned to Niuafu'ou in 1958 and the remainder of the family followed in 1962. Here we intend to stay. If Niuafu'ou blows up again however great the fire and danger, I shall never leave the island. I prefer to stay here and die. *Siaki Tali of Fata'ulua*

My four main ancestors are resting here in Niuafu'ou and they are not transferable.

My family lands are here and they are not transferable.

This is my island and here I intend to stay. *Siaosi Telefoni Ongoloka of Sapa'ata.*

Although this book largely echoes the sentiments of those who have returned to Niuafu'ou, who by 1976 numbered only 678, the great majority of Niuafu'ou people did not return to their homeland but instead made their permanent homes away from it. Moeaki T kai, author of the first account in this book, is one such emigrant on 'Eua Island where the Niuafu'ou population numbered over 2100 by 1976.

It is very likely that the allocation of 426 agricultural allotments on Niuafu'ou in 1981 will encourage more settlers to the island; it remains to be seen how many of these will be Niuafu'ou people.

Garth Rogers



10-76

AND ERUPTING

RESIDENTS' EXPERIENCE

The experience of residents on the island of Niuafoou have been described in the recent volcanic eruption on the island of Niuafoou. A Tongan Government Press Association by Mr. S. Malakam.

Mr. Malakam said that had all the islanders would have secured Zealand radio operator.

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CALL FOR HELP

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MATUA'S MOVEMENTS

The evacuation of inhabitants from the volcanic island of Niuafuoo will definitely not be carried out by the Union Company motor-ship Matua, according to advice received by her Auckland agents. The Matua is expected to leave Suva on Monday for Auckland where it will make a connection with the relief ship.

RELIEF SHIP GOING TO NIUAFOO

(Received September 17, 8.30 p.m.)
A volcanic eruption in the Tongan C
When radio communication is reconnoitred and found parts of
blasted. Violent eruptions and
A Catholic priest and
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the plane. The Government of Tonga
supplies to Niuafuoo
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The island of Niuafuoo, which recently ex-
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stay at their ancestral home be-
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This eruption has been reducing the
population of the island to such an
extent that it is necessary to
import supplies to maintain the
island. The Government of Tonga
has agreed to supply the island with
rice, sugar, and other necessities.
The Government of Tonga has also
agreed to supply the island with
medical supplies and other necessities.
The Government of Tonga has also
agreed to supply the island with
educational supplies and other necessities.

NIUAFOO ISLANDERS
VOLCANIC ERUPTION DEFIED

NIUAFOO ISLANDERS
VOLCANIC ERUPTION DEFIED
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