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CHAPTER ONE

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*MALAITA*

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1. Physical description of the island and its people

The Solomon group of islands forms a double chain southeast of the Bismarck archipelago off Papua New Guinea. Malaita, an elongated collection of mountains and hills rising from a submerged Melanesian land mass, extends 190 kilometers in length but measures only forty at the widest point.<sup>1</sup> Mala, Ngwala, Mwala or Mara appear to be the main dialectal variations of Malaita's original name, which translates "island as land". The "ita" ending may be a mistake, added through a misunderstanding by early Spanish explorers, or the whole word "Malaita" may be a corruption of "Marahiria", meaning "the big island", a word used by a dialect group on the west coast where the Spanish landed.<sup>2</sup> In the nineteenth century Malaita was commonly known as Maratta by both the Europeans and the Melanesian labourers who left there for the colonies.

The Solomons are part of the Pacific "Ring of Fire"; there are several active volcanoes on other islands in the group, but Malaita is free of them.<sup>3</sup> The island has a spine consisting of a rugged massif, flanked by hilly plateaux and narrow coastal terraces interspersed with valleys and swamps. In the mountains, deep valleys have been eroded between narrow razor-back ridges rising commonly to 1,000 meters and in places almost to 1,300 metres. Thousands of rain-fed streams and rivers drain the interior mountains, some navigable by small craft and canoes for a kilometer or so up from their tidal reaches. Around the indented coast are extensive reef-lagoon complexes,

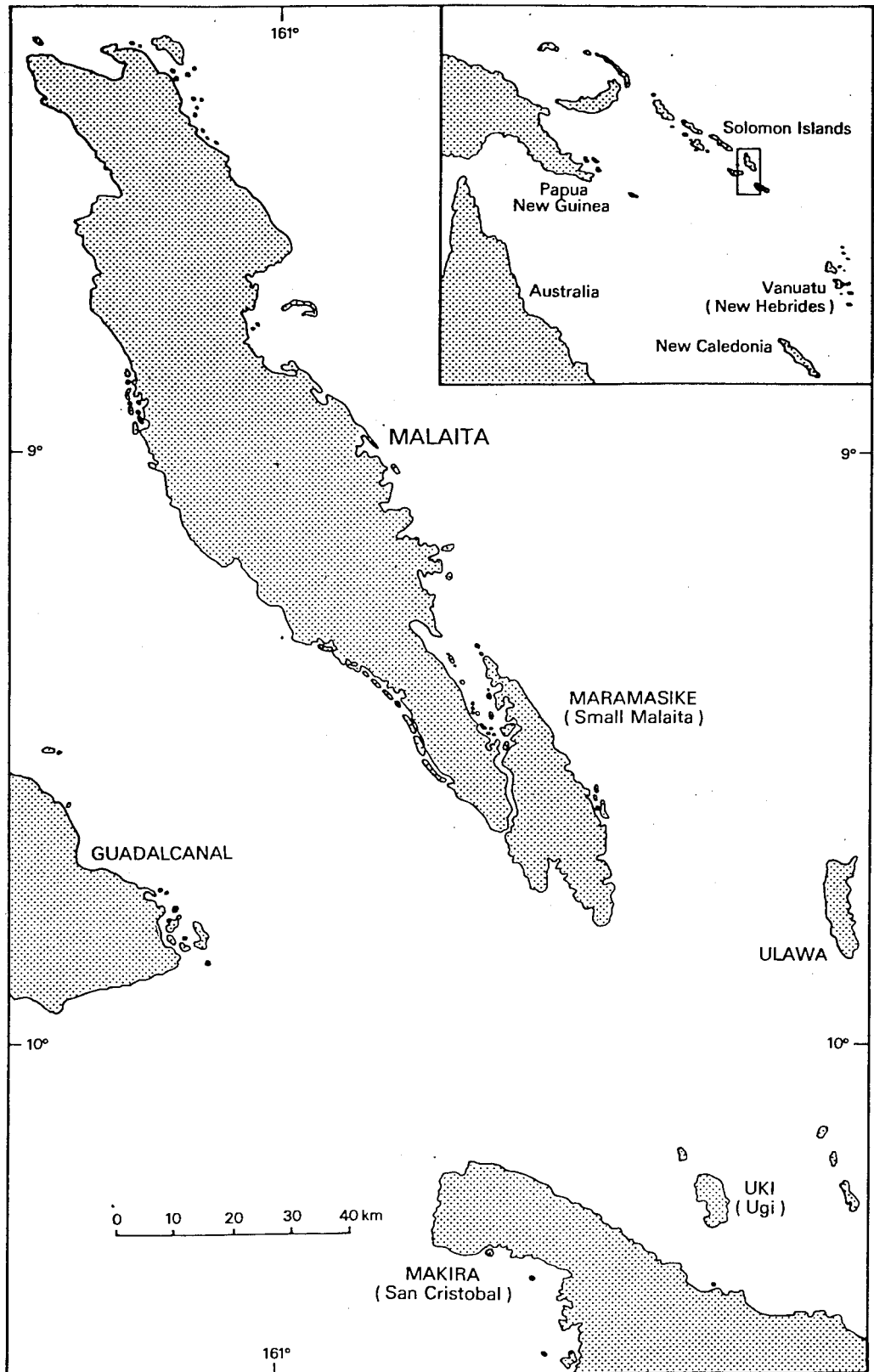
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1. Malaita: Latitude 8°17' to 9°43'; Longitude 160°33' to 161°35'. Strictly speaking there are two islands: Malaita proper and Small Malaita (or Maramasike) separated by a narrow channel, but for all practical purposes they are treated by Malaitans and Europeans alike as one island.
  2. W.G. Ivens, *The Island Builders of the Pacific: how and why the people of Mala construct their artificial islands, the antiquity and doubtful origin of the practice, with a description of the social organization, magic and religion of their inhabitants* (London, 1930), 17-21; C. Jack-Hinton, *The Search for the Islands of Solomon: 1567-1838* (London, 1969) 46-7, 59; letter to the author from Dr D. de Coppet, 13 August 1980.
  3. There may be thermal springs in some parts of the island and quite severe earthquakes occur periodically. H.M. Ross, *Baegu: social and ecological organization in Malaita, Solomon Islands* (Urbana, Illin., 1973), 37.

mangroves, and numerous small natural islands, the largest of which, Dai and Manoba, are contiguous with the north coast.<sup>4</sup> The lithology is dominated by limestone sediments and weathered to leached clayey soils. The hills provide humus-rich dark-coloured clays and leached loams, while the coastal terraces are often formed of weathered limestone, loams, clays and peats. Typical of a high tropical island, there are several distinct zones of vegetation: in the mountains, patches of moss forest and primary rain forest; on the lower slopes, dense secondary bush forest where hardwood forest has been cleared for gardening; and on the coast, sandy beaches, with mangroves and swamps around river mouths, pandanus, Barringtonia and vines predominating.<sup>5</sup>

The climate is wet, hot, humid, and remarkably equable. Because Malaita is near the equator it receives uniformly high solar radiation, and is affected by the intertropical convergence zone or doldrums. The climate is typically maritime, with diurnal temperature variations exceeding seasonal changes. Government figures recorded at Auki show a mean monthly temperature range from 25.2°C in January to 27°C in December. Nocturnal inland temperatures often drop to the mid-tens.<sup>6</sup> Relative humidity is high throughout the year, averaging seventy to eighty-five percent at midday. Rainfall is heavy, though lighter on the coast than in the central mountains. 3,750 millimeters a year is the common fall on the western coastal plain, while the average fall on the east coast is in excess of 7,500 millimeters. Prevailing Trade winds mark the seasons. The southeast Trades blow from April through to September. October to December sees variable winds interspersed with calms, followed by the northeast Moonsoons into the

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4. J.R.F. Hansell and J.R.D. Wall, *The British Solomon Islands: land resources study No. 18. Malaita and Ulawa*, V. 3. Ministry of Overseas Development, Land Resources Division (Great Britain, 1974), 4.11.
  5. *Ibid.*, 11-22; Ross, *Baegu*, 36-40; B.D. Hackmann, 'The Solomon Islands Fractured Arc' in P. Coleman (ed.), *The Western Pacific: island arcs, marginal seas, geochemistry* (Perth, 1973), 183.
  6. M. Cooper, *Langa Langa Ethics* (PhD. thesis, Yale University, 1970), 30 (quoting government figures for 1965); Ross, *Baegu*, 34. Ross recorded 27.8 C as the highest daily temperature at his home in east Baegu in 1966.

Map One: The Central Solomon Islands



early months of the new year. Cyclones occur in the Moonsoon season and can cause major havoc.<sup>7</sup>

At the latest census in 1976 Malaita had a population of more than 57,000.<sup>8</sup> Malaita has always been the most populous of the Solomon islands, but as the first official census was not conducted until 1931, when the population was over 40,000, figures for earlier dates are only conjectural. Indeed, in the 1911 *Handbook of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate* the official estimate of Malaita's population was "anything between 50,000 and 100,000".<sup>9</sup> Early European residents of the Solomons who were familiar with Malaita, felt certain that all of the islands had suffered depopulation during the nineteenth century. Recent writers agree that this is probably true, but that early estimates tended to exaggerate both the original population and the subsequent decline.<sup>10</sup>

As a general classification, Malaitan people are Melanesians: brown skinned, of short to medium stature, with frizzy brown hair. This description belies the many variations: the brown skins vary from quite dark to a light honey shade; hair types vary from dark red to dark brown and even blond, and from frizzy to curly and almost straight. This diversity has led some observers to conclude that

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7. Cooper, Langa Langa Ethics, 30-1; Ross, *Baegu*, 25-6, 33.
  8. Population Census February 1976. Provisional results published in April 1976. Census Office, Statistics Division, Ministry of Finance, British Solomon Islands Protectorate.
  9. C.H. Allen, *Customary Land Tenure in the British Solomon Islands Protectorate*. Report of the Special Lands Commission, Western Pacific High Commission (Honiara, 1957), 17; H.I. Hogbin, *Experiments in Civilization: the effects of European culture on a native community of the Solomon Islands* (London, 1939), 15, 125-132; *Handbook of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate* (Tulagi, 1911).
  10. A.I. Hopkins, 'Depopulation in the Solomon Islands' and C.M. Woodford, 'The Solomon Islands' in W.H.R. Rivers (ed.), *Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia* (Cambridge, 1922), 62-6, 69-77; C.M. Woodford, *A Naturalist among the Head-hunters: being an account of three visits to the Solomon Islands in the years 1886, 1887, and 1888* (London, 1890), 187-8; Ivens, *Island Builders*, 43; W. Howells, *The Pacific Islanders* (Wellington, 1973), 15; H.C. Brookfield with D. Hart, *Melanesia: a geographical interpretation of an island world* (London, 1974), 187-8.

there is a Micro-Polynesian admixture amongst some Malaitans (particularly the lagoon dwellers),<sup>11</sup> but this explanation is only speculative.

Malaitans are divided by dialect and by geographical location. Different dialects are spoken in several areas on the island and by people living in and around each major lagoon. There is also a broad dichotomy between the *wane tolo*<sup>12</sup> (bush people) who live inland and the *wane asi* (coastal people) who lead a maritime existence based on the lagoons. Both have a similar style of social organisation, stressing cognatic descent with simultaneous recognition of agnatic descent plus a preference for patrivirilocal residence, and a religion focused on the propitiation of ancestral spirits, but the *wane asi*'s maritime style has led to adaptations of their economy and society. The *wane asi* live in Lau, Langa langa and 'Are 'are lagoons, at the Sa'a district on Maramasike and at Kwai and Ngwangwasila in east Kwara'ae. Many live on artificial islands, an almost unique environment which they have laboriously constructed in the lagoons, trading the resources of the ocean and the lagoons for the agricultural products of the *wane tolo*. Their diverse economic adaptations set them apart from land dwelling Malaitans, who traditionally lived away from the coast, pursued no maritime activities and concentrated on growing taro and other tuber crops in the upland areas. All *wane asi* concentrate on reef, lagoon and deep-sea fishing as their primary form of production, and in certain seasons hunt porpoises, the teeth of which are also used as currency.<sup>13</sup> Each *wane asi* group has made a distinctive adaptation to suit their water environment: the Langa langa make *bata*, a shell-disk currency called *tafuli'ae* in its final

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11. G.S. Parsonson, 'Artificial Islands in Melanesia: the role of malaria in the settlement of the southwest Pacific', *New Zealand Geographer*, v. 22:1 (1966), 18-21; 'Artificial Islands re-examined - a reply', v. 24 (1968), 192-3; A. Capell, 'The word "Mana": a linguistic study', *Oceania*, v. 9 (1938-9), 95.
  12. Unless otherwise specified the Malaitan words used in the text are as used in Fataleka.
  13. T. Akimichi, 'The ecological aspect of Lau (Solomon Islands) Ethnoichthyology', *JofPS*, v. 87:4 (1978), 301-326; J.W. Edge-Partington, 'Kite fishing by the salt-water natives of Mala or Malaita Island', *Man*, v. 4 (1912), 9-11; Ivens, *Island Builders*, 169-77.

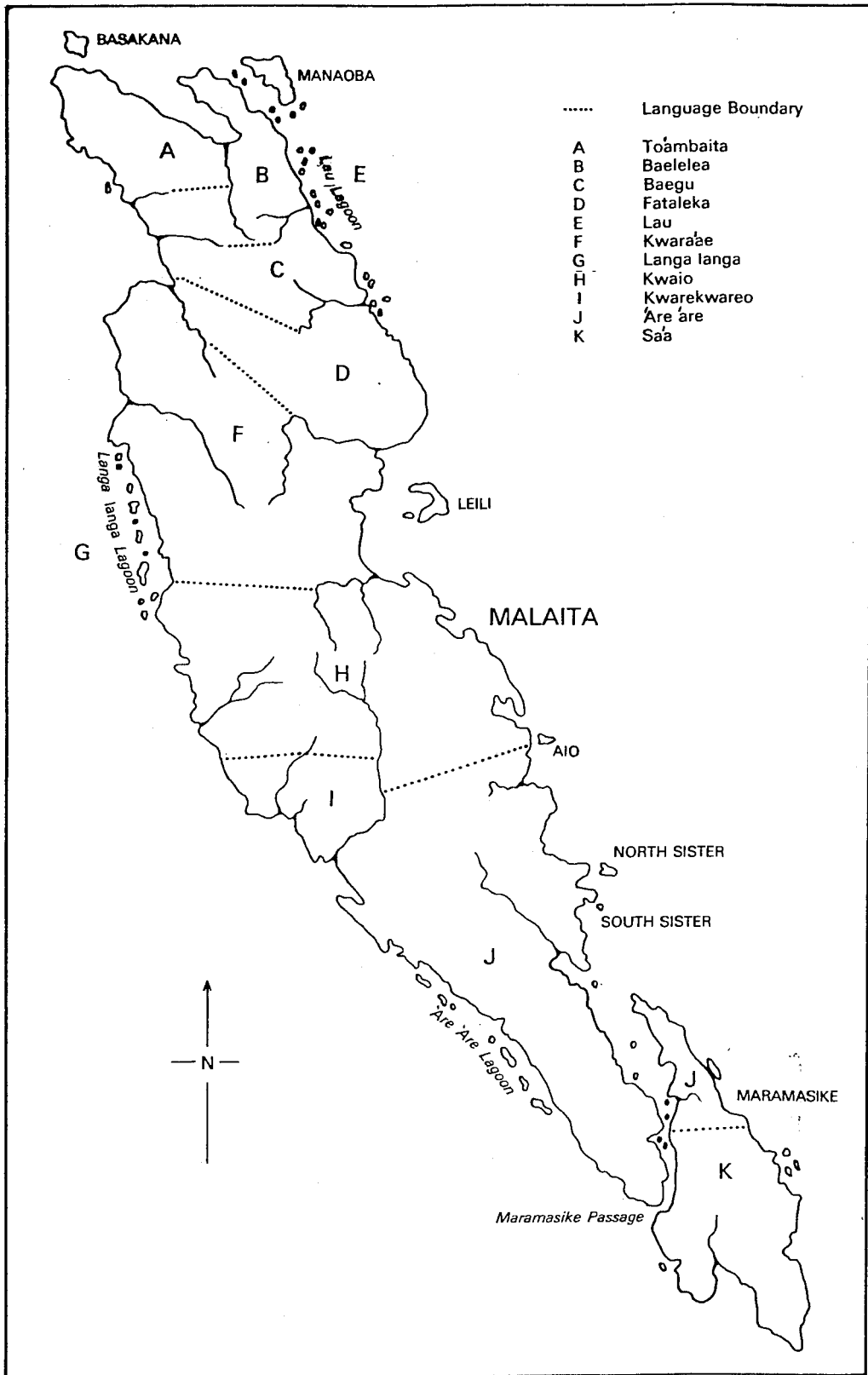
form, for trade on Malaita and on surrounding islands;<sup>14</sup> the Sa'a have developed elaborate rituals for bonito and shark fishing, and trade throughout the southeast Solomons<sup>15</sup>; the 'Are 'are also undertake extensive trading voyages and colonised the Marau sound area at the eastern end of Guadalcanal.<sup>16</sup>

Malaitan languages are thought to comprise a single sub-group within a cluster of southeast Solomons Austronesian languages and to be most closely related to the language of Makira.<sup>17</sup> This cluster itself probably comprises a sub-group of related languages within what is sometimes referred to as Eastern Oceanic or the Heonesian sub-family of Malayo-Polynesian.<sup>18</sup> No adequate comparative analysis of Malaitan languages and related dialect clusters has ever been undertaken. An early missionary Rev. Norman Deck suggested to H.I. Hogbin that there were eighteen dialects and five or six separate

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14. C.M. Woodford, 'Notes on the manufacture of the Malaitan Shell Bead Money', *Man*, v. 8 (1908), 81-4; J.F. Bartle, 'The shell money of Auki Islands', *Corona* (1952), 379-83; M. Cooper, 'Economic context of shell money production in Malaita', *Oceania*, v. 61:4 (1971), 266-276, and Langa Langa Ethics, 54-59; J. Connell, 'The Bougainville connection: changes in the economic context of shell money production in Malaita', *Oceania*, v.68:2 (1977), 81-101.
  15. W.G. Ivens, *Melanesians of the South-east Solomon Islands* (London, 1927), 130-147, 229-240 and passim; W. Doak, *Sharks and other Ancestors: patterns of survival in the South Seas* (New Zealand, 1975), 279-83.
  16. A. Capell, *A Linguistic Survey of the South-western Pacific*, South Pacific Commission Technical Paper No. 136 (Noumea, 1954), 181; QSA COL/A783, Douglas Rannie to Immigration Agent, Brisbane, 19 December 1892, enclosed in letter No. 855 of 1893, Col. Sec. to Governor, 20 February 1893; M. Chapman and P. Pirie et al., *Tasi Mauri: a report on population and resources of the Guadalcanal weather coast* (Honolulu, 1974), 110-1.
  17. This sub-group includes Malaita, San Christobal, Guadalcanal, Santa Isabel and Ngela. R. Levy and N. Smith, *A Proto-Malaitan Lexicon*. Center for South Pacific Studies, University of California at Santa Cruz, 1969; R.M. Keesing and J. Fif'i, 'Kwaio Word Tabooing in its cultural context', *JofPS*, v. 78:2 (1969), 173.
  18. Cooper, Langa Langa Ethics, 37; Keesing and Fif'i, 'Kwaio Word Tabooing', 173.



Map Two: Malaitan Languages Areas



languages, though he seems to have later decreased his estimate to fourteen varieties.<sup>19</sup> Capell defined eleven divisions and Roger Keesing in his 1965 Doctoral thesis made the first tentative attempt at sub-grouping, distinguishing eleven variations: a north Malaita sub-group comprising To'ambaita, Baelelea, Baegu and Lau; Fataleka, with a close affinity to the northern group; Kwara'ae, distinct and unintelligible to the northern sub-group; Langa langa, distinct, though possibly related to Kwaio; Kwaio, distinct, but with possible affinities to Kwarekwareo, 'Are 'are and Sa'a.<sup>20</sup> More recently, Richard Levy and Natham Smith suggested that there are two basic sub-groups, with linking dialect chains and shared phonological and grammatical features cross-cutting each other; Keesing has modified his earlier views in line with Levy and Smith.<sup>21</sup> Perhaps the clearest categorization has come from Harold Ross. Based on linguistically imprecise but practical grounds of whether or not people can understand each other, Ross defined between four and eight languages: North Malaita; Fataleka, Kwara'ae; Langa langa; Kwaio; Kwarekwareo; 'Are 'are; and Sa'a.<sup>22</sup> Fortunately, Malaitans themselves are not as perplexed as the linguists, and the problem is certainly not as great as the early classifications might indicate.

Many of the differences are actually dialects rather than separate languages; differences amplified by the wide-spread use of word taboos.<sup>23</sup> Malaitan languages serve as a means of distinguishing their

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19. Hogbin, *Experiments in Civilization*, 16; Capell, *Linguistic Survey*, 182.
20. Capell, *Linguistic Survey*, 182-3; Refer to Map two and Cooper, Langa Langa Ethics, 35; E.K. Maranda, 'Narrative Structure and Style in North Malaita, Solomon Islands' (Paper given in Palermo, Sicily, Conference on Structures and Genres in Ethnic Literatures, April, 1970), 1.
21. Levy and Smith, A Proto-Malaitan Lexicon, 3. Their division was: North Malaitan comprising Malu'u (To'ambaita), Lau, Kwaio, Langa langa, Kwara'ae; South Malaitan comprising Marau (the 'Are 'are settlement on Guadalcanal) and 'Are 'are; Longgu (a Guadalcanal language which may be of north Malaitan origin).; R.M. Keesing, 'Politico-Religious Movements and Anticolonialism on Malaita: Maasina Rule in historical perspective', *Oceania*, v. 58:4 (1978), 244.
22. Ross, *Baegu*, 48-9.
23. Keesing and Fif'i's article on Kwaio word tabooing is an excellent account of this practice. Also refer to Ross, *Baegu*, 47-52.

users one from the other; dialects and word-tabooing patterns further identify a speaker. Occasionally migrant groups from one language area can be found living in other areas, driven out by warfare or sorcery or as voluntary emigrants for kinship reasons. Thus some groups such as the Lau speakers on Maramasike, or the 'Are 'are speakers at Marau on Guadalcanal cut across language boundaries. But broadly speaking, Malaitans from one end of the island cannot understand Malaitans who live at the other end. Fataleka, where field research for this thesis was undertaken, seems to be a boundary between the languages of the north and south. E.K. Maranda included Fataleka with the north and Keesing noted its affinity with the northern dialects.<sup>24</sup> The Fataleka say they can understand all the northern dialects as well as Kwara'ae to the south, although Kwara'ae has a different rhythm and intonation from their own Fataleka. The consequences of these language barriers are important for recruiters, employers in Queensland, and for the Malaitans.

In the process of recruiting labour, European vessels circled the island and their crews engaged interpreters to communicate their employment offers to Malaitan men and women. Without an accurate interpreter only limited explanation could be made, of the rigours of the trip to Queensland, of the port destination, and the conditions underwhich they were to be employed. Often re-enlisting Malaitans who could understand pidgin English might have explained the exact conditions, but the onus of solving the language problem was on the recruiters not their recruits. This language barrier is important in any thorough assessment of the labour recruiting trade. On the Queensland plantations, people from the various areas of the island were regarded by Europeans and probably by the other Melanesians, only as Malaitans. Today, the Australian descendants of these plantation labourers identify as Malaitans, not primarily as Lau or Fataleka or Kwaio etc. Yet, the relationships formed on the nineteenth century plantations were bound by their language and descent group affiliations.

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24. E.K. Maranda, 'Narrative Structure and Style', 1; Keesing, 'Politico-Religious Movements', 244. Bearing in mind my own linguistic inadequacies, a comparison I made of Ross's glossary of Baegu words and phrases with Fataleka words as spoken around Fakanakafo bay showed only slight differences. Ross, *Baegu*, Appendix C: Glossary of Baegu Words and Idiomatic Phrases, 311-18.

Working backwards to Malaita from Queensland we need to know as much as possible of the differences between the 9,000<sup>25</sup> Malaitan labourers who went there, and any special cultural factors which might have affected their actions on the sugar plantations and farms.

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25. In excess of 9,000 Malaitans were recruited to work in Queensland, but some thousands of them were recruited more than once. This is further discussed in Chapter Three.

## 2. Social Organisation

Malaita's language/dialect areas are divided into territorial districts of 200 to 300 acres,<sup>26</sup> traditionally occupied by descent-based groups. Variations occur, particularly with the water-based territory of the *wane asi*, but the land units of the *wane tolo* can be commonly described. All focus upon a shrine used for ancestral worship, with indefinite merging boundaries marked by natural features such as rivers and rocky outcrops. All territories have names which apply both to the land and to the people entitled to live there. Land rights are not individual but communal, shared by all in the corporate group who can trace a line of descent from the founding ancestor of the territory.

Anthropologists who have worked on Malaita generally describe this corporate association as governed by a cognatic descent ideology with simultaneous recognition of the principle of patrilineal descent.<sup>27</sup> Harold Ross, ethnographer of the Baegu, prefers to talk of three discrete principles: patrilineal descent, which determines land rights; cognatic relationships which unite the extended family for a variety of social purposes; and affinal relationships, created by marriage.<sup>28</sup> Primary rights usually are passed through male links from the real or putative founding ancestor, whose senior male descendant<sup>29</sup> should control the distribution of usufructuary rights to the land. All people who can demonstrate their descent through males or females from the founding ancestor, have a right to live and cultivate in the district. In reality Malaitans relate to the families of their mother

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26. R. Keesing, *Kwaio Descent Groups* (University of California, 1966 (Mimeo)), 15; I.L. Frazer, *To'ambaita Report: a study of socio-economic change in North-west Malaita* (Victoria University, Wellington, 1973 (Mimeo)), 1.
27. Keesing, *Kwaio Descent Groups*, 3 and passim; and *Kin Groups and Social Structure* (New York, 1975), 93; Ross, *Baegu*, 52; Hogbin, *Experiments in Civilization*, 25-6; D. de Coppet, 'Land Tenure in 'Are 'are and on South Malaita' (Manuscript), 5; letter to the author from Prof. I.H. Hogbin, 23 March 1979.
28. Ross, *Baegu*, 137.
29. Ross equates the position to that of Chairman of the Board of a land-holding corporation. Keesing uses the word "steward" to explain the position. Ross, *Baegu*, 140; Keesing, *Kwaio Descent Groups*, 56.

and father in ways more varied and complex than any kinship model.

The main visible activity within the corporate territory is garden cultivation, important for subsistence and as a symbolic link with Malaitan religion. Modern Malaitans have supplemented their diet with some foods of foreign origin (particularly sweet potatoes and a variety of fruits and vegetables), but the basic diet has remained unaltered, depending on subsistence cultivation of root crops. A traditional Malaitan diet consists of domesticated, semi-domesticated (but still owned) and wild foods. Approximately sixty percent of this diet is carbohydrate, mainly from cultivated and wild taros and yams. Less than two percent consists of protein, provided by domesticated pigs and fowls and wild game and fish. Twenty percent is vegetable matter (taro leaves, hibiscus manihot, fern fronds, fungi and other wild plants), and another twenty percent is from fruit and nuts. Coconuts, canarium almonds, pacific chestnuts, bananas, mangoes and sugar cane provide the major delicacies and sources of sweetness in the diet.<sup>30</sup> Malaitans choose their garden sites within territories in which they have primary or usufructary rights. Observing a bush fallow system they grow taro and yams in an area for a year or two before moving to another site. The land cultivated is usually secondary forest, cleared by slash-and-burn techniques which traditionally employed stone implements and fire. Planting is still done with a wooden digging stick.<sup>31</sup>

It is usual for men and women to have separate gardens, emphasising ritual and social divisions between the sexes. First fruit offerings are made to the *akalo* (ancestors) in the shrines, and strict

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30. Appendix Six of this thesis; Ross, *Baegu*, 78-9 and 'Bush Fallow Farming, Diet and Nutrition: a Melanesian example of successful adaptation' in E. Giles and J. Friedlaender (eds.), *The measure of Man: methodologies in biological anthropology* (Cambridge (U. S.A.), 1976), 550-615.

31. Malaitan material culture was based on stone adzes used for axes, flints used for arrow-heads and spear-tips, and wooden bows and arrows, spears and clubs. Quarries were sacred places; stone and wooden weapons and tools were used in rituals and as a sign of legitimacy and power. The significance of Malaitan artifacts, in relation to items of European manufacture is discussed in Chapters Three and Seven. Ross, 'Stone adzes from Malaita, Solomon Islands: an ethnographic contribution to Melanesian archaeology', *JofPS*, v. 79:4 (1970), 411-20; T. Russell, 'The Fataleka of Malaita', *Oceania*, v. 30:1 (1950), 13.

garden rituals are observed. The whole gardening process mirrors Malaitan cosmology. De Coppet has described the 'Are 'are's relationship with land, life and death:

Ce jardin de Mélanésie, espace à la fois horizontal et vertical, est un passage de la vie à la mort et retour à la vie, là où précisément la nature, la société et le mythe se rencontrent et se plient l'un l'autre, au creux de la main et de la tête des hommes.

(This Melanesian garden, an area of both horizontal and vertical dimensions, is a passage from life to death with a return back to life again, at the precise point where nature, society and myth become one and mingle with each other in the hollow of man's hand and head.) 32

Complex symbolic images link gardens, their palisades, sacred plants and crops, with the sea, fish, birds and canoes. The surface is the center of the physical and symbolic worlds, surrounded below and above by ancestors.<sup>33</sup> For the *wane asi* the sea is a garden, to be exploited like the land gardens of the *wane tolo*, the reefs and marine life mingling just as symbolically.<sup>34</sup>

Exercising one's primary or usufructuary rights to belong to a descent group has been the basis of residential mobility in traditional and modern times. An individual may live in many places in a lifetime, even in two simultaneously. Farming methods, shifting agriculture, and the impermanence of leaf houses makes such mobility possible. Exercising these rights carries with it certain responsibilities to propitiate and carry on reciprocal relationships with ancestral spirits, the *akalo*. Malaitans do not separate life into secular and ritual activities: individuals are part of descent groups functioning as a physical focus of their total cosmology within a vast cycle.

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32. D. de Coppet, 'Jardins de vie, jardins de mort en Mélanésie', *Traverses*, No. 5/6 (1976), 177. (The Translation into English is by de Coppet.)
33. de Coppet, 'Jardins de vie', passim; Ross, *Baegu*, 80-5; Keesing, *Kwaio Descent Groups*, 65-6; Hogbin, *Experiments in Civilization*, 18-9, 88.
34. Akimichi, 'Ecological Aspects of Lau', 301-7; Cooper, *Langa Langa Ethics*, 102-112.

Descent groups conduct religious festivals (particularly mortuary feasts)<sup>35</sup> and sacrifices, share food and word taboos, and dedicate sections of their gardens to their ancestors. They also are centers of power, constantly changing sites and sizes, controlling wealth, arranging feasts and marriages, and acting as units in warfare and politics.<sup>36</sup>

Traditional leadership on Malaita had both secular and religious functions, which could be assumed by the same or by different persons. Formal positions of power vary but exhibit some central characteristics: they are almost always held by influential adult males; idealized, Malaitan political organisation was built around a powerful triumvirate<sup>37</sup>:- a priest, a secular Bigman who sometimes also held hereditary status, and a war leader. The major difference in political organisation is a variation from a rigid hereditary system in the south, to a more egalitarian system in the north, congruent with the major north/south language division accepted by linguists and anthropologists.

Typical of the two poles of political organisation on Malaita are To'ambaita in the north, and Sa'a on Maramasike. To'ambaita differentiate three traditional leaders: the *aofia* or *ngwane ni fo'a*, an hereditary priest associated with major sacrifices; the *ngwane inoto* or *ngwane baita*, a centre or Bigman whose fame rested on obligations and sponsorship of feasts, his power often depending more on the dispersal of wealth than on its mere possession; and the *ngwane ramo*, a war leader, assassin and potential focal *ngwane inoto*. Frazer notes that all three positions could be held by one man, although it was

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35. D. de Coppet, 'Cycles de meurtres et cycles funéraires esquisse de deux structures d'échange', in J. Pouillon and P. Maranda (eds.), *Échanges et communications: Mélanges offerts à Claude Lévi-Strauss* (The Hague, 1970), 759-81.

36. Keesing, *Kwaio Descent Groups*, 65-72.

37. Keesing in depicting Malaitan political organisation as a triumvirate of powers, also sounded a warning that:  
 In practice, these type-roles were realized only in partial degree, if at all, in many descent groups. They represented idealized styles of personality and leadership that in reality were seldom fully expressed. In some language groups they could be enacted by the same person, simultaneously or at different phases in the life cycle.

Keesing, 'Politico-Religious Movements', 246.



unusual for a priest to be also a warrior. Both Frazer and Hogbin stress the role of the *ngwane inoto*, stating that some priests are also Bigmen.<sup>38</sup> In Sa'a and southern 'Are 'are leadership is more hereditary and stratified than in the egalitarian north. This pattern is strongest on Maramasike. 'Are 'are land ownership is reckoned bilaterally as in the north. In eastern Maramasike males inherit agnatically and leadership is firmly hereditary, allowing less residential mobility than on the rest of Malaita. In 'Are 'are, although the status of a descent group leader is hereditary, it needs the common agreement of his people to be effective. Positions for priests, warriors and non-hereditary Bigmen also exist in both areas.<sup>39</sup> The *wane asi* of Lau and Langa langa have similar leadership patterns to their *wane tolo* relations, but in Lau there is greater stress placed on patrilineal succession, for *aofia* (head of the descent group) and *fata aabu* (priest), than Hogbin and Frazer discerned in To'ambaita.<sup>40</sup> In Langa langa Cooper mentions the positions of *fata aabu*, *walebaele* (Bigmen) and *ramo*, but no hereditary *aofia*.<sup>41</sup>

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38. The classic definition of a Melanesian Bigman was given by Marshall Sahlins, but his work has since been severely criticized. For Malaita, 'Elota's autobiography edited by Keesing is an accurate depiction of a Bigman, while also remembering a paragraph from Keesing's *Kwaio Descent Groups*:
- "Bigness" in Kwaio society is a matter of degree, and every adult man is a feast giver on some scale. Often descent groups have several leaders of coordinate importance or none active in feasting... With or without "bigmen" Kwaio successfully maintain relations with each other and the ancestors.
- M.D. Sahlins, 'Poor man, rich man, big man, chief: political types in Melanesian and Polynesia', in T.G. Harding and B.J. Wallace (eds.), *Cultures of the Pacific: selected readings* (New York, 1970), 203-215; B. Douglas, 'Rank, Power, Authority: a reassessment of traditional leadership in South Pacific societies', *JPH*, v. 14:1-2 (1979), 2-27; R.M. Keesing (ed.), 'Elota's Story: the life and times of a Solomon Islands Big Man' (Brisbane, 1978); and *Kwaio Descent Groups*, 39; Frazer, *To'ambaita Report*, 13; Hogbin, *Experiments in Civilization*, 61, 106.
39. R.H. Codrington, *The Melanesians: studies in their anthropology and folk-lore* (Oxford, 1891, republished New York, 1972), 48-51; W.G. Ivens, *Melanesians of the South-east Solomon Islands* (London, 1927), 109-29, 242; de Coppet, 'Land Tenure in 'Are 'are and on Small Malaita', 1-5.
40. Cooper, *Langa Langa Ethics*, 57, 86-8, 120, 142; Ivens, *Island Builders of the Pacific*, 84-92, 149; E.K. Maranda, 'The Averted Gift: the Lau myth of the seeker of Exchange' (Manuscript), 4. Maranda notes that in Lau tradition the eldest son becomes *aofia*, the second son *fata abu* and the third son *ramo*.
41. Cooper, *Langa Langa Ethics*, 87-8.

Fataleka political organisation <sup>42</sup> fits comfortably within the expected political pattern of north Malaita, but conforms more closely to that of Lau than To'ambaita or even neighbouring Baegu. In Baegu Ross differentiates: *wane baita*, a general category for important focal males; *wane initoo*, a hereditary position for the senior male in a lineage; the *fata aabu* or *wane ni foa*, an elected priest; and the usual *ramo*, war leader and assassin.<sup>43</sup> In Fataleka the hereditary position held by the senior male in a descent group is titled *aofia*, not *wane initoo*.<sup>44</sup> Communication with the *akalo* is the province of the *fata aabu*, an achieved position depending on knowledge of ritual and genealogies as well as descent.<sup>45</sup> The *ramos*, as in other areas of Malaita, were leaders in fighting. The Fataleka, at least in east Malaita where Russell's research and mine were undertaken, seem to be unique in north Malaita in their stress on hereditary leadership. On rare occasions - twice in twenty-two generations in Bina - a special *aofia* becomes *taniota*<sup>46</sup> or *tatalofaa*, chosen by the *akalo* and especially anointed by the priests. As well, the *fata aabu* of Bina's *bebaita* are known by the special title, *foakali*. The Bina descent group clusters' use of the titles *taniota* and *foakali* is linked to their claim to be pre-eminent, not only in the east but all over Fataleka. Russell accepted this claim as well as the Rakwane

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42. The earliest description of Fataleka leadership was given by Tom Russell in 1950. Although long accepted as authoritative Russell's article is misleading in many respects. This is not through any fault of Russell's, rather he was the victim of political circumstances during the Maasina Rule period on Malaita. Remo Guidieri's recent monograph *La Route des Morts* deals peripherally with Fataleka leadership. Russell, 'The Fataleka', 1-13; R. Guidieri, *La Route des Morts* (Paris, 1980).
43. Ross doubts that the role of *wane initoo* in Baegu is often combined with that of priest, as found by Hogbin in To'ambaita. Ross, *Baegu*, 188-91; Hogbin, *Experiments in Civilization*, 106.
44. The position which Russell calls *wane inoto* was described to me as that of the *aofia*. Russell, 'The Fataleka of Malaita', 6.
45. Russell said that the *fata aabu* became *aofia*. This is certainly true if one looks at the Bina descent chains for these two leadership positions. Refer to Table One of this chapter.
46. There have only been three *taniotas* in east Fataleka: two in Bina/Rakwane and one in Burara. Refer to Tables One and Three.

claim to be the major descent line. As far as I can judge the argument is sound.<sup>47</sup>

This description is of a male dominated society. Anthropologists have usually concluded that Malaitan females are very conscious but accepting of their inferior position in society. Traditionally, menstruation and birth are considered highly dangerous for the rest of the community; on such occasions the women concerned live apart, relying on separate gardens for sustenance. Very little has been written about Malaitan women.<sup>48</sup> Often the anthropologists who have studied them even if not totally ignoring women's power have used a very male-focused interpretation; bound by the intellectual conventions of their day they have often been blind to the complexity of gender and sexual relationships. The surface structure of a small-scale society, immediately interpretable to an observer, is not necessarily the real basis of power and control, nor should society be seen only in terms of economic and political power. Annette B. Weiner in her *Women of Value, Men of Renown* provides new perspectives for assessing Trobriand society and that of wider Melanesia. Weiner and other like-minded writers extend their theoretical framework beyond the surface of social relations:

control and power are exercised by both men and women, but they must be seen operating not merely within the "politics" of social relations.

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47. I was present at the meeting at Kafosafo village in May 1978 when Guere of Rafe was elected as Paramount Chief of east Fataleka; I was privy to discussions on the traditional history of the Bina cluster of descent groups. Bina's history, as presented in the remainder of this chapter, was accepted by the senior males of all major descent groups in east Fataleka. But care is needed. The version of Fataleka descent group history given to Remo Guidieri, collected mainly in west Fataleka, stresses the pre-eminence of the west. CRM 29a: 1-2; Guidieri, *La Route des Morts*, Tables One and Two, 337 and 342.
48. The best is: E.K. Maranda, 'Lau, Malaita: "a woman is an alien spirit"', in C.J. Matthiassen (ed.), *Many Sisters: women in cross-cultural perspective* (New York, 1974), 177-202; and 'Authority and women's position in Lau' (Mimeo) 1969; S.R. Schreiner, *The Kwaiio Pagan Woman of Malaita: the life stories of Gwaalau and Lamana* (Honiara, 1977); P. Maranda and E.K. Maranda, 'La crane et l'uterus: deux theoremes nord-Malaitans', in Pouillon and Maranda, *Échanges et communications*, v. 2, 829-61.

PLATE 1



Orruga, Rosie and Richard on market day on the beach at Fakanakafo bay, east Fataleka, October 1976.

PLATE 2



Rakwane leaders at Bubuleli Council House, east Fataleka, October 1976. (Ishmael Itea on right)

Power extends beyond the social to concepts concerning articulation with cosmic and transcendental phenomena. 49

Weiner urges researchers to consider the power involved in reproduction, up-bringing, nurturance, food consumption and objects of women's wealth previously ignored or under-stressed by anthropologists. She cites the significance to various Melanesian societies of women's grass skirts, net bags, mats, pigs and betel nuts in dowry and mortuary feast exchanges; exchanges sometimes controlled by women.

In some contexts the domestic sphere is a key seat of power, certainly equal to legitimized formal authority, the male domain. At a cosmic level Malaitan society operates almost mathematically, music structurally mirroring society, and gardens structured to duplicate metaphysical beliefs. Social and residential space on Malaita is strictly divided between males and females. House, canoes, villages and gardens are designed so that their shapes and areas are conducive to ordering of male-female relationships. Figure One shows the special spacial divisions within these Malaitan structures. S.C. Rogers in a seminal article on women in anthropological theory hypothesized the following relationship between sexual differentiation and power distribution:

where both ideological and behavioural differentiation exist, a balance of power is most likely to occur. Because men and women are believed to be fundamentally different, it follows that they behave differently. But they are also highly dependent upon each other because they are highly noninterchangeable categories. Assuming that each sex group in this case controls essential resources, one cannot dominate the other, because they are equally interdependent or complementary. Furthermore, because differentiation is stressed on the ideological level, the two groups may not be related hierarchically, because they are perceived as two different things. Rather, they are related

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49. A.B. Weiner, *Women of Value, Men of Renown: new perspectives in Trobriand exchanges* (Austin (Texas), 1976), 12.

Figure One: Sexual divisions in Malaitan villages, gardens and canoes.

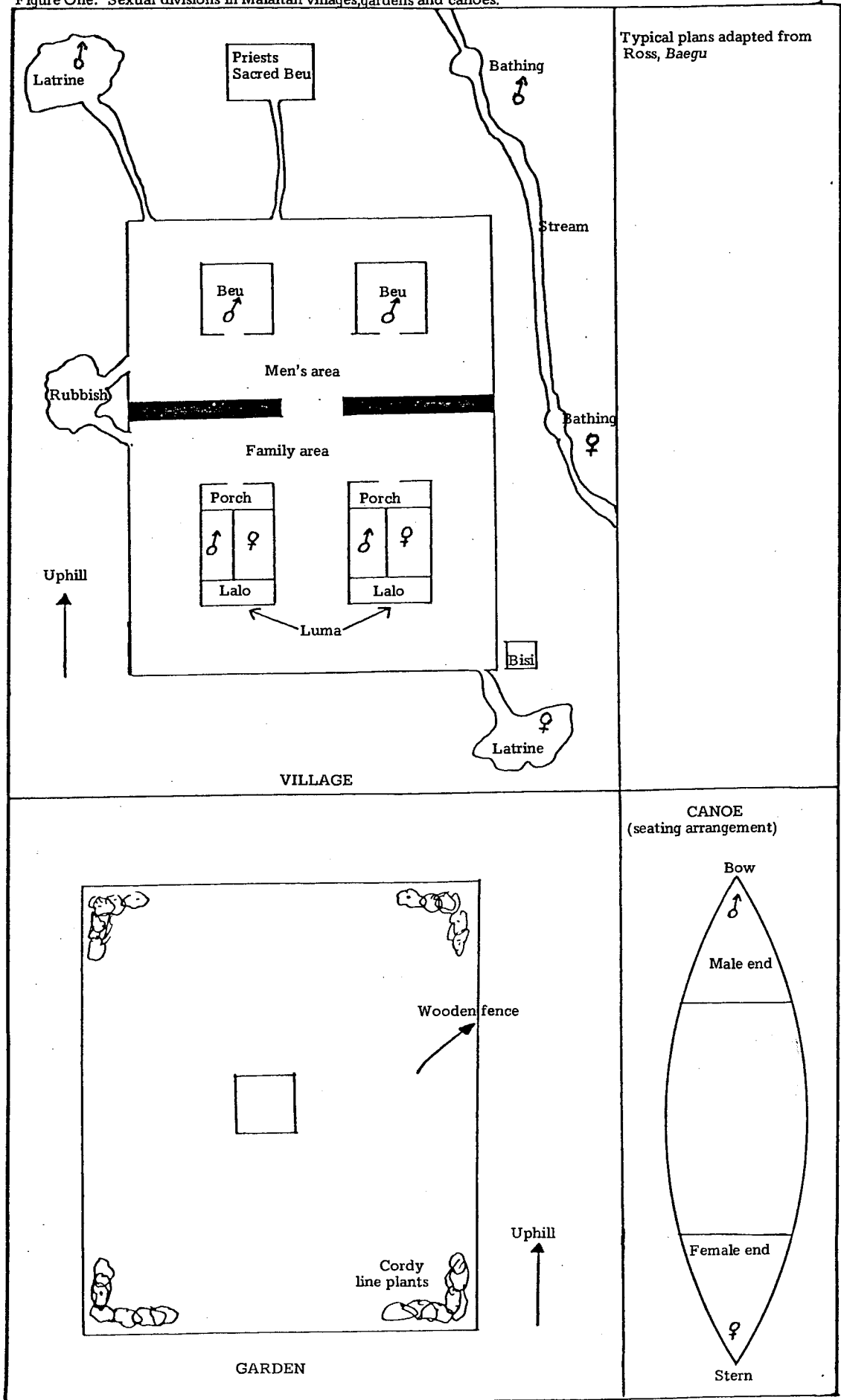




PLATE 3



Feranagono village near Fakanakafo bay, east Fataleka, November 1976.





Gardening in 'Are'are. (Photo by courtesy Dr D. de Coppet)

dialectically, at once opposed to each other, and equally dependent upon each other. 50

Given the element of balance in Malaitan cosmology and society it seems logical to presume that there is more equality between males and females in the balance of power than one would infer from casually observing Malaitan society or reading ethnoscientific literature about life on Malaita. Perhaps future research on Malaita will repair this imbalance.

Section Three of this chapter is a history of one cluster of descent groups in east Fataleka, particularly the Rakwane descent group. Before beginning two caveats must be added. Firstly, feuding and litigation over land disputes are endemic throughout Malaita and are particularly rife in east Fataleka. The view presented here is that of the Rakwane descent group. It would not be accepted in its entirety by other neighbouring descent groups. It is nevertheless a valid perception by one Malaitan descent group of their own history, consciously intertwining myth and fact. It need scarcely be said that nothing in this thesis is intended to lend support to one party in any dispute: the author is, however, acutely conscious of the possibility that any statement he makes on the matter may be brought forward to support land claims at a later date. This is a risk no writer on traditional Malaita can avoid entirely. The main object of this chapter is to try to appreciate what men and women, recruited from Rakwane or some other area of east Fataleka, to work on a Queensland sugar plantation, would have conceived of the world at the moment of stepping into a recruiting boat and leaving their island.

As a second caveat, perhaps the most salient fact to remember in attempting to describe the traditional Malaitan way of life is the

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50. S.C. Rogers, 'Woman's place: a critical review of anthropological theory', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, v. 20:1 (1978), 155-6. Also refer to S.W. Tiffany, 'Models and the social anthropology of women: a preliminary assessment', *Man*, v. 13:1 (1978), 34-51.

amount of change which has occurred on the island over the last century. This is difficult to calculate since even the earliest writers describe Malaita after several decades of contact between Malaitans and Europeans, when thousands of Malaitans had already spent some years working in Fiji or Queensland. Even in 1939 when Ian Hogbin published his classic *Experiments in Civilization*, examining the changing culture of Malaita, it was becoming difficult to describe traditional Malaita. In the 1980s, over four decades later, a sizeable pagan population<sup>51</sup> still remains living in the central mountains, but even they have undergone major changes. Many Malaitans now live outside areas in which they have traditional rights, and there has also been a general move towards the coast. Villages have become larger and more permanent, land boundaries more static. Coconut plantations established over the last few decades and the policies of the Protectorate's administration have meant that the areas controlled by each descent group have developed firm perimeters, rather than the traditional focus on a central shrine. Two significant changes have occurred which are directly related to government influence:<sup>52</sup> tax collection has altered the size of territorial divisions;<sup>53</sup> and Maasina Rule led to the adoption of new concepts of leadership in the central and northern parts of the island, based on the society

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51. In east Fataleka in 1976, out of a total population of 2,068 approximately 110 were still pagan mountain dwellers. Remo Guidieri claimed that there were one thousand pagans still in Fataleka in 1969, out of a total Fataleka population of four thousand. In 1976, for all of Fataleka, my informants could only list between two and three hundred pagans, no great change having occurred in the previous decade. R.I.A. Guidieri, 'Pères et Fils', *Nouvelle Revue de Psychanalyse*, v. 6 (1972), 85; 'Fataa, fa'a, fo'o'a :((Dire)), ((Faire)), ((Parfaire)): conceptualisation et effectuation de pratiques rituelles Mélanésiennes (Fataleka, Salomon orientales)', *Annales: Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, v.31:1 (1976), 220; Solomon Islands Population Census February 1976:- Malaita Ward 17 (Sububonu): 1,052; Ward 18 (Burianiasi): 1,016; Information from Gereā of Rafe and Elu'u, Itea and Luiramo of Rakwane. Elu'u and Gereā are still pagan.
52. Similar government-induced changes have occurred throughout the Pacific. They are well documented for Fiji. P. France, 'The Founding of an Orthodoxy: Sir Arthur Gordon and the doctrine of the Fijian way of life', *JofPS*, v.77:1 (1968), 6-32; J. Clammer, 'Colonialism and the Perception of Tradition in Fiji', in T. Asad (ed.), *Anthropology and the Colonial Experience* (London, 1973), 199-220.
53. Keesing, 'Politico-Religious Movements', 251-2.

of 'Are 'are and Maramasike.<sup>54</sup> Maasina Rule also encouraged the codification of custom. Most Malaitans now keep "Generation Books" to trace their ancestry, no longer relying on memory. The culture of Malaita is far from pristine and it would be foolish for a researcher in the 1980s to infer that the Malaitan view of the past has not been affected by occurrences in the last few decades. But what Malaitans, Christians and Pagans, have done is to incorporate the modern situation into their traditional ideological framework. Social change has meant adjustments to the cosmological cycle, but the cycle continues. Malaitans still do not share our Western perception of reality.

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54. Keesing, *'Elota's Story*. 21-2; and 'Politico-Religious Movements', 51.

3. Bina and RakwaneIfunakulu arrives at Fataleka

1. Oe sa Ifunakulu, sa Moroniaofia, ofoidangi fuamu, mai suluia na, iole ambu oe ni, to na i asi, mai ludangia na, baruiwela oe ne, tao fafalu ta mai, olo nai saena, lualua mela ni, maamu fi laua, fera fine, no ta wane ana. Tao fane na sulia, na dasa i malau ni, tolin i gwauna, uo ambu kernai. Tona no sulia, akalo ambu oe ni, dao to na ana, sa wane mui oe ni, mai loba basia bae ne nau ni.
2. Oe sa Ifunakulu, sa Moroniaofia, ofoidangi fuamu, oe suluia na, iole ambu oe, ka to na i asi. Oko ludangia no baraweke oe ki, oko falula mai, oko olo no i laona, ta igwaigwa mela maanu fii suana, fera i faine nao ta wane ana. Oko ranaa sulia na dasa i malau ki dao na i gwauna uo ambu kerane. Ton no sulia, akalo ambu oe ne, dao ka to na ana, taa wane oe ne, oe loba basia bae ne fuaku.
3. Ifunakulu, Moroniaofia, very early one morning carried his holy canoe to the sea and loaded all members of his family onboard. Then he set out paddling across the ocean. He came at last to an island where all of the rivers were running in flood. His eyes searched the shore but he could see no signs of life. He paddled his canoe up a river, the banks of which were shrouded in mist, and eventually he ascended to the top of the holy mountain. There his *akalo* (ancestors) spoke to him. "This is your new home. Here you will start your new life, making sacrifices to me on the top of this mountain." This is the end of the story-song telling of the arrival of Ifunakulu in Fataleka. <sup>55</sup>

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55. Version one is in archaic Fataleka, provided by Ishmael Itea. Version two is a translation into modern Fataleka by Charles Luiramo. Version three is my own English version of Luiramo's pidgin English. A similar legend which continues this canoe-bourn migration on to Makira can be found in C.E. Fox, *The Threshold of the Pacific: an account of the social organization, magic and religion of the people of San Cristoval in the Solomon Islands* (London, 1924), 9.

Linguists and prehistorians estimate that Malaitans came to their island some thousands of years ago,<sup>56</sup> as part of a large migration from the north. Memory of this arrival is recorded in the legends of the Bina major descent group in Fataleka. The founders of the Fataleka dialect area were Ifunakulu,<sup>57</sup> also named Moroniaofia, and his wife Surialaifafo or Kosuri. Legend says that he brought his family to the then uninhabited Malaita by canoe, paddling up one of its large rivers and finally settling at Safali,<sup>58</sup> high on the central mountain backbone of Malaita. According to Bina's genealogists this was twenty-two generations ago.

Ifunakulu and Surialaifafo had four sons, Fiuabu, Rongoikela, Gome and Niukwao, each of whom became head of one of Fataleka's

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56. R.C. Green, 'Conclusion' in R.C. Green and M.M. Cresswell (eds.), *Southeast Solomon Islands Cultural History: a preliminary survey* (Bulletin 11, The Royal Society of New Zealand, Wellington, 1976), 268; M.E. and R. Shutler, 'Origins of the Melanesians' *Archaeology and Physical Anthropology in Oceania*, v. 2 (1967), 91-9.
57. The name Ifunakulu means that his hair was long and round in shape; Moroniaofia means peace maker.
58. Refer to Map Three.
59. Telescoping occurs with such genealogies and whole epochs may be foreshortened to a single archtypal figure. It is difficult to establish the average length of a generation. D.P. Henige, using data from 737 dynasties from throughout historical time, concluded that 65% of the dynasties had an average length of 25 to 34 years, and 93% fell between 20 and 39 years. In Polynesia generations are usually reckoned as covering 25 years. Murray Chapman, Professor of Geography at the East-West Population Institute of the University of Hawaii has completed extensive fieldwork in the Solomon Islands. Chapman accepts 20 years as the average length for a generation in the Solomons; his estimate has been adopted here.

Keesing says that although the upper portions of Malaitan genealogies, ten and more generations back, fit together with surprising consistency, there is no way of evaluating their historical "truth". D.P. Henige, *The Chronology of Oral Tradition: quest for a chimera* (Oxford, 1974), 85-9, 123; Keesing, *Kwaio Descent Groups*, 41; Personal communication with Professor Murray Chapman, Canberra, 4 September 1979.

four<sup>60</sup> major territorial groups. After a few years living at Safali the settlers moved to Beubaita, later the headquarters of the wider Bina descent group. Worship was not continued at Safali, and Beubaita<sup>61</sup> became the central *beu aabu* (ancestral shrine) for Fataleka. The sons married and settled around Beubaita, founding their own descent groups: Fiuabu stayed at Beubaita, becoming second in the Bina patrilineal descent line; Rongoikela founded Subea; Gome founded Kanole; and Niukwao founded Fusai.<sup>62</sup> As the numbers of their descendants multiplied, the four clusters of descent groups<sup>63</sup> spread out

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60. In a 1976 article Remo Guidieri mentions 9 major Fataleka descent group clusters, but did not name them. In his 1980 monograph Guidieri lists 8: Subea, Langwa, Syuboni, Bina, 'Ota, Lifwe, Kanole and Fusai. Tom Russell identified 8 major Fataleka descent group clusters, which include the 4 major groups (i.e. Bina, Subea, Kanole, and Fusai) accepted by the Bina people. When Russell collected his information, Ishmael Itea was government Headman and Sumu was deputy Headman. Itea directed Sumu to deliberately skew any information he gave to Russell, hence the mistakes in his article. Russell was a government official and obtained his information during Maasina Rule, when Malaitans were suspicious of the government's intentions. R. Guidieri, 'Fataa, fa'a, fo'o'a' ', 221 and *La Route des Morts*, Table One, 337; Russell, 'The Fataleka', 2-3.
61. *Beubaita* means a big men's house, and is the name given to Bina's *beu alea* or sacred house. Ifunakulu's house was called *beu bungua*, a round house built on a center post with eight radiating beams. Bina's historians say that this round design was used for houses until the time of Sufu (Bina 7), when a gable roofed rectangular *beu alea* with eight rooms was constructed. (The number 8 is used all through Malaita for an indefinite number, or to express totality.)
62. Table One lists the descent lines of the four major descent groups, as remembered in Bina. The information in Tables One and Two came from Ishmael Itea, *fata aabu* of Rakwane until 1957 when he joined the Seventh Day Adventist Church. Itea gained most of his knowledge from his uncle Fikui (Bina 19) and from Ilokwa, last *foakali* of Bina. The Bina *foakali* only knew Kanole and Fusai's *aofia* generations up until they began separate worship. Subea's generations are remembered because in the nineteenth century Siua (Subea 17) fled to Luiramo of Rakwane (Bina 18) for protection. He was related by marriage to Luiramo: Olibakwa, daughter of Buli (Subea 3) had married Fuku Toniwane (Bina 5); and Ferelalia, great-nephew of Funusui (Subea 15) had married Sasai, daughter of Gaikonai, son of Idumaoma (Bina 17).
63. The term "cluster of descent groups", suggested to the author by Prof. H.I. Hogbin, has been adopted to differentiate the upper levels of generations from existing "descent groups". Keesing has found that Kwaio descent groups were usually founded 8 to 13

through the mountains. Today, people living in Fataleka identify as descendants of Bina, Fusai, Kanole or Subea. These four peoples spread out from Safali: Subea towards the west coast; Kanole towards the border with the Kwara'ae dialect area; Fusai, north towards the Baegu dialect area<sup>64</sup>; and Bina, east towards Fakanakafo bay and Cape Arascides (Darongongora Point).

Bina claim paramountcy over the other inhabitants of Fataleka and support their claim with a complex justification based on their version of mythological "truth".<sup>65</sup> Equally, the other descent group clusters (particularly Subea) make similar claims.<sup>66</sup> Traditional Fataleka is a linguistic entity, not a political grouping, and because of the fragmentary nature of its political units, it is unlikely that any one group ever controlled more than part of the total Fataleka territory.<sup>67</sup> Within Bina there seems to be general agreement over the order of descent within that major descent group, though not over modern property rights. The following description, of the gradual movement of the Bina people from the mountains down towards the sea coast, illustrates only the history of Bina; equivalent descriptions could be given of Subea, Fusai and Kanole. Bina stand firm on their

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generations ago. Above 13 generations, traditional agnatic and non-agnatic ties link together all descent groups in an area. Generations are often claimed to extend as far as 27 levels from the living. Although "clan" could have been used, Prof. Hogbin decries its use to describe Malaitan society and I have deferred to his judgement. Keesing, *Kwai'o Descent Groups*, 31-2; H.I. Hogbin, review of R. Keesing (ed.), *'Elota's Story* in *Oceania*, v. 50:2 (1979), 157-8 and further correspondence concerning the review in *Oceania*, v.50:3 (1979), 235-6. Letter to the Author from H.I. Hogbin, 23 March 1979.

64. Ross, *Baegu*, 114.

65. CRM 28a:1 (CL).

66. When Dominic Beliga became Paramount Chief of west Fataleka he claimed 26 generations of descent. In a grand mixture of Biblical and traditional history Beliga was attempting to trace the first settlement of Malaita from Noah's flood. *News Drum* 3 September 1976; Dominic Beliga, Taeloa, 6 November 1976.

67. Ross doubts that there was ever such a thing as a Baegu's 'state', although descent groups along the Baegu/Fataleka border are quite clear about which is their dialect area. Ross, *Baegu*, 202; Russell, 'The Fataleka', 10.



claim to be the first and traditionally most prominent descent group cluster in Fataleka. Certainly they dominate the east coast of Fataleka.

The people of Bina explain their pre-eminence and the reason for the separation of Subea, Fusai and Kanole from worship at Bina's *beu-baita* by the following story:

Orobola and Ekeke, sons of Dolaola, brother of Bakwa (Fusai 3), killed Maekwara of Kanole because he swore <sup>68</sup> at them. Fighting then began between the peoples of Fusai and Kanole, during which Orobola and Ekeke broke into the *beu* (sacred house) at Kwaena village in Ambarafi, a descent group of Kanole, from where they stole the preserved body of Gwaubaita, father of Kwaitaka. Kwaitaka offered a reward <sup>69</sup> for the death of whoever had stolen the body. Fiuomea, son of Bakwa (Fusai 3) decided to collect the reward.

Fiuomea knew that Orobola and Ekeke had Gwaubaita's body but rather than accuse them of this, he spread a rumour that they had been secretly having sexual intercourse with some of the women while they were out working in their gardens.<sup>70</sup> The men became angry when Fiuomea told them this and decided to kill Orobola and Ekeke. Ura, a son of Gome (Kanole 1) overheard them and demanded part of Kwaitaka's reward money for his silence.

The *akalo* were angry over the senseless killings and caused a famine; gardens failed, pigs died and many people became sick. Then the *akalo* spoke to their people through the medium of Gomesau, Fiuomea's

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68. Swearing at a person's ancestors, father, pigs, village or bow are still traditional offences on Malaita, for which compensation can be demanded. Russell, 'The Fataleka', 12; H.I. Hogbin, 'Native Councils and Native Courts in the Solomon Islands', *Oceania*, v. 14:4 (1944), 270.
69. It was usual to offer a reward of shell-valuables or porpoise teeth for a desired death. de Coppet, 'Jardins de vie', 17-3; Hogbin, *Experiments in Civilization*, 88-96, 98.
70. Gardens are considered inappropriate places for such activities; and adultery is a very serious offence which was punishable by death. Ross, *Baegu*, 83; Hogbin, 'Native Councils', 275; *Experiments in Civilization*, 96-8; Russell, 'The Fataleka', 12.

brother. Previously only pigs had been <sup>71</sup> sacrificed to the *akalo*; now they demanded a human sacrifice at the Fusai *beu*. A young boy, Iabala, was purchased from Kwakwaru village in east Kwara'ae, and sacrificed as the ancestors requested. The smoke from the sacrificial fire rose from the *beu* and floated across to Bina's *beubaita*, signalling that in future Bina would remain the major descent group; Subea, Fusai and Kanole were to provide *ramos* to carry out the commands of the Bina *aofias*. Fuku Toniwane (meaning house of a thousand people), *aofia* of Bina, was chosen by the *akalo* to become *taniota*. Subea, Fusai and Kanole separated their worship from that of Bina and from this time their generations were no longer kept by the Bina *foakali*. <sup>72</sup>

From the time of this division, generation after generation of Bina people settled further afield in east Fataleka. Map Three and Tables Two and Three \* of this chapter illustrate their slow migration from the mountains to the shore. Bina split into eleven major descent groups whose descendants claim to have separated from Bina's senior male line, seven to seventeen generations ago. Today's descent groups all claim to have as a founding ancestor a son or brother of the senior male descendant of an earlier descent group. The earliest of these eleven groups make genealogical claims going back into mythology, while the most recent separated from Beubaita within measurable time. The Uoilalo and Rakwane descent groups are representative of these two types.

The coastal migration of the wider Uoilalo descent group and its five sub-groups typifies descent groups which trace their ancestry

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\* Table Three is at the end of the chapter.

71. Guidieri claims that the Fataleka *maoma* mortuary ceremony used to include the sacrifice of a human victim, and that this practice continued up until the 1940s. He says that he was able to reconstruct this lost knowledge from information supplied by some of the old pagan men. Knowledgeable men in east Fataleka, such as Itea, Gereia and Luiramo, emphatically deny Guidieri's interpretation, saying that such a death would invalidate the entire ceremony, which continues over several years. R.I.A. Guidieri, 'Peres et Fils'; and 'Fata, fa'a, fo'o'a, 218-9.

72. Information provided by Ishmael Itea and Charles Luiramo.

Map Three: The Bina Cluster of Descent Groups:  
showing their movement from the mountains  
towards Fakanakafo bay

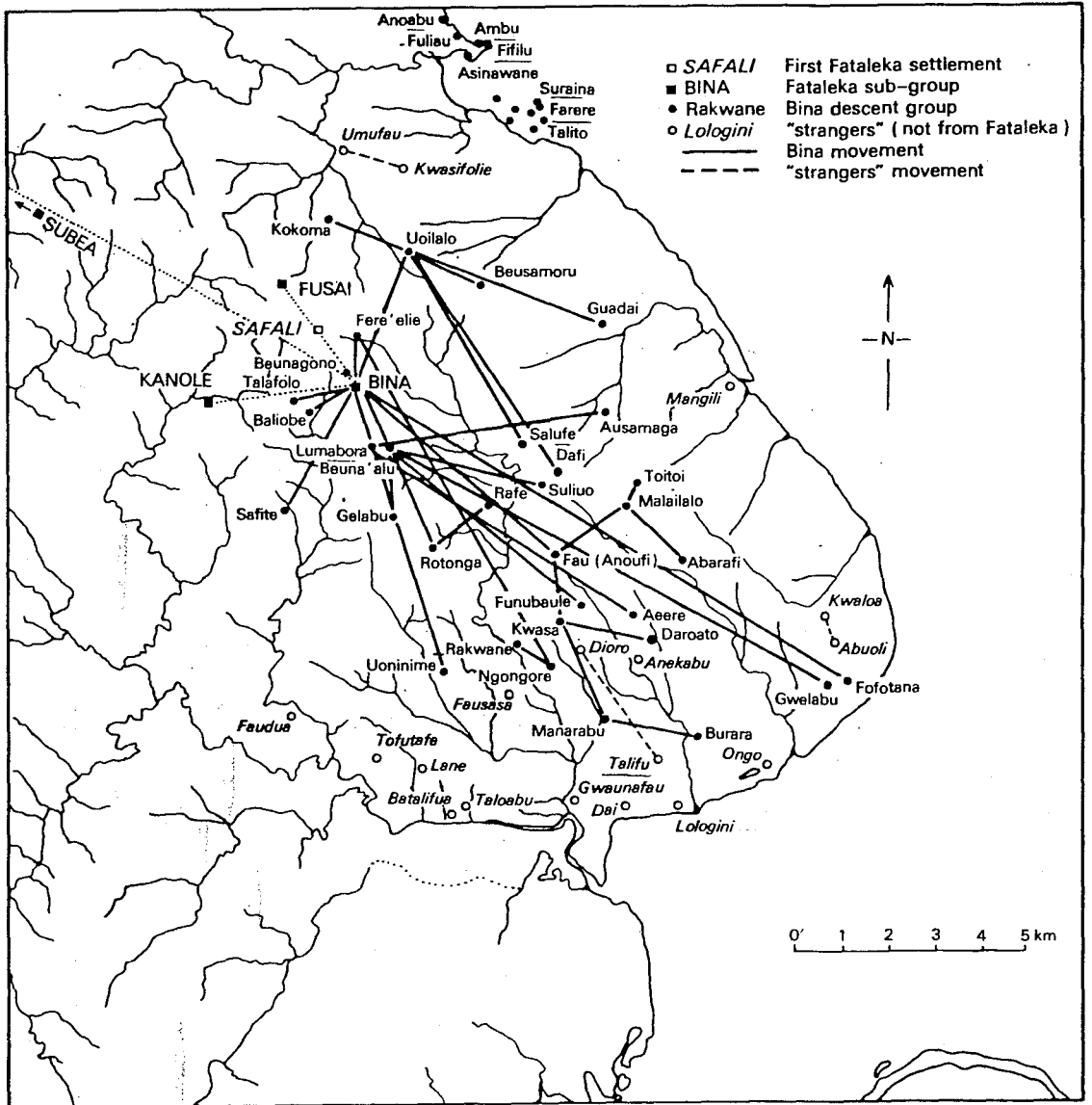


Table OneBINA Generations

<u>Aofia or Taniota (*)</u>	<u>Foakali</u>
1. Ifunakulu	1. Fiuabu ( <i>aofia</i> 2)
2. Fiuabu	2. Kwaluiama ( <i>aofia</i> 3)
3. Kwaluima	3. Umaambu ( <i>aofia</i> 4)
4. Umaabu	4. Fuku Toniwane ( <i>taniota</i> )
5. Fuku Toniwane *	5. Lili ( <i>aofia</i> 6)
6. Lili	6. Sufu ( <i>aofia</i> 7)
7. Sufu	7. Maa (brother of <i>aofia</i> 8)
8. Kafoabu	8. Iaramo ( <i>aofia</i> 9)
9. Iaramo	9. Lauima ( <i>aofia</i> 10)
10. Lauima	10. Aeolia ( <i>aofia</i> 11)
11. Aeolia	11. Lalakwa ( <i>aofia</i> 12)
12. Lalakwa	12. Olitala ( <i>aofia</i> 13)
13. Olitale	13. Doromae ( <i>aofia</i> 14)
14. Doromae	14. Taikona ( <i>taniota</i> )
15. Taikona *	15. Dedeana (brother of <i>aofia</i> 16)
16. Dongamaoma	16. Idumaoma ( <i>aofia</i> 17)
17. Idumaoma	17. Luiramo ( <i>aofia</i> 18)
18. Luiramo	18. Fikui ( <i>aofia</i> 19)
19. Fikui	19. Ilokwa
20. Iluga	
21. Ilisia	
22. Fikui (the future <i>aofia</i> on the death of his father Ilisia)	

SUBEA Aofia Generations

1. Ronoikela
2. Oka
3. Buli
4. Taniau
5. Tokona
6. Tamaa
7. Ete
8. Ridodoa
9. Modo
10. Gori
11. Rabeu
12. Logamae
13. Fauniui
14. Anga
15. Funusui
16. Butaa
17. Siua
18. Amo
19. Sumu
20. Ifuimae
21. Gere

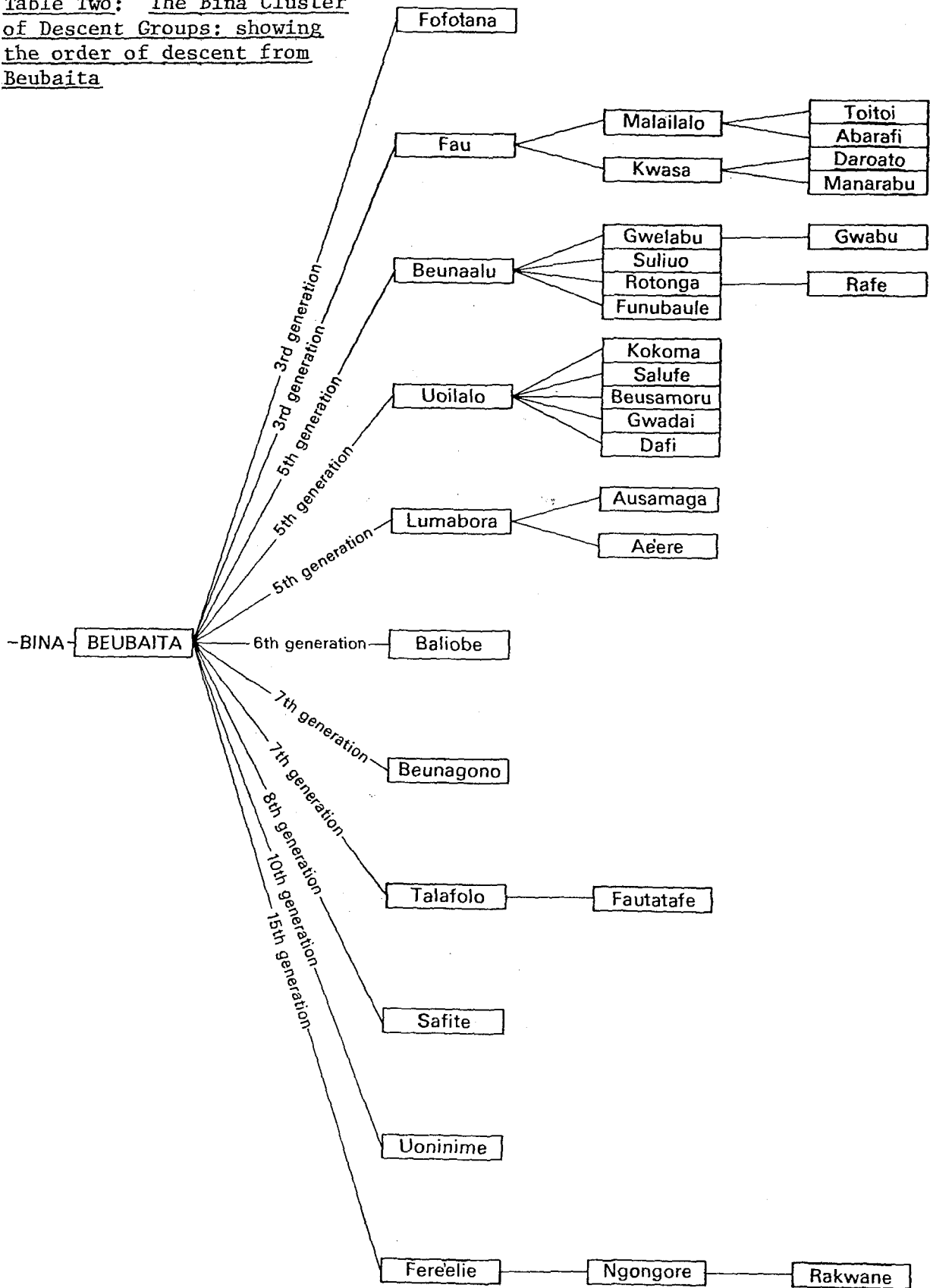
FUSAI Aofia Generations

1. Niukwaoniabu
  2. Rerea
  3. Bakwa
  4. Gomesau
- (Bina informants do not know any further Fusai generations.)

KANOLE Aofia Generations

1. Gome
  2. Ngoraa
  3. Sunibata
  4. Ura
- (Bina informants do not know any further Kanole generations.)

Table Two: The Bina Cluster of Descent Groups: showing the order of descent from Beubaita



back to mythical beginnings. Tonitabu the founder of Uoilalo is recorded as the son of Umaabu, the fourth senior male descendant in Bina's descent chain. Uoilalo's descent chain includes thirteen generations through to Orosi the present senior male descendant. Before the arrival of Europeans over a century ago, five sub-groups had split away from Uoilalo, all worshipping at their own shrines, while also paying allegiance to the Uoilalo *beu*, Uoilalo's priests in turn depending on Bina's *beubaita* for major rituals. Table Two shows the position of Uoilalo and its sub-groups among the wider Bina descent groups.

Rakwane's patrilineal chain is shorter, covering only seven generations from the founder Taikona, to the present senior male descendant, Ilisia.<sup>73</sup> Presuming twenty years to a generation, Taikona left Beubaita around the middle of the nineteenth century, some decades before European labour recruiters first ventured to Malaita. Taikona was fifteenth in the direct senior male line of Bina. While a young man he lived at Fere'elie quite close to Beubaita. He married Launda from Kwasa, and was given the land now known as Rakwane-Ngongore by her father Gwaroia. The couple first shifted to Ngongore but later settled at Rakwane a little further inland.

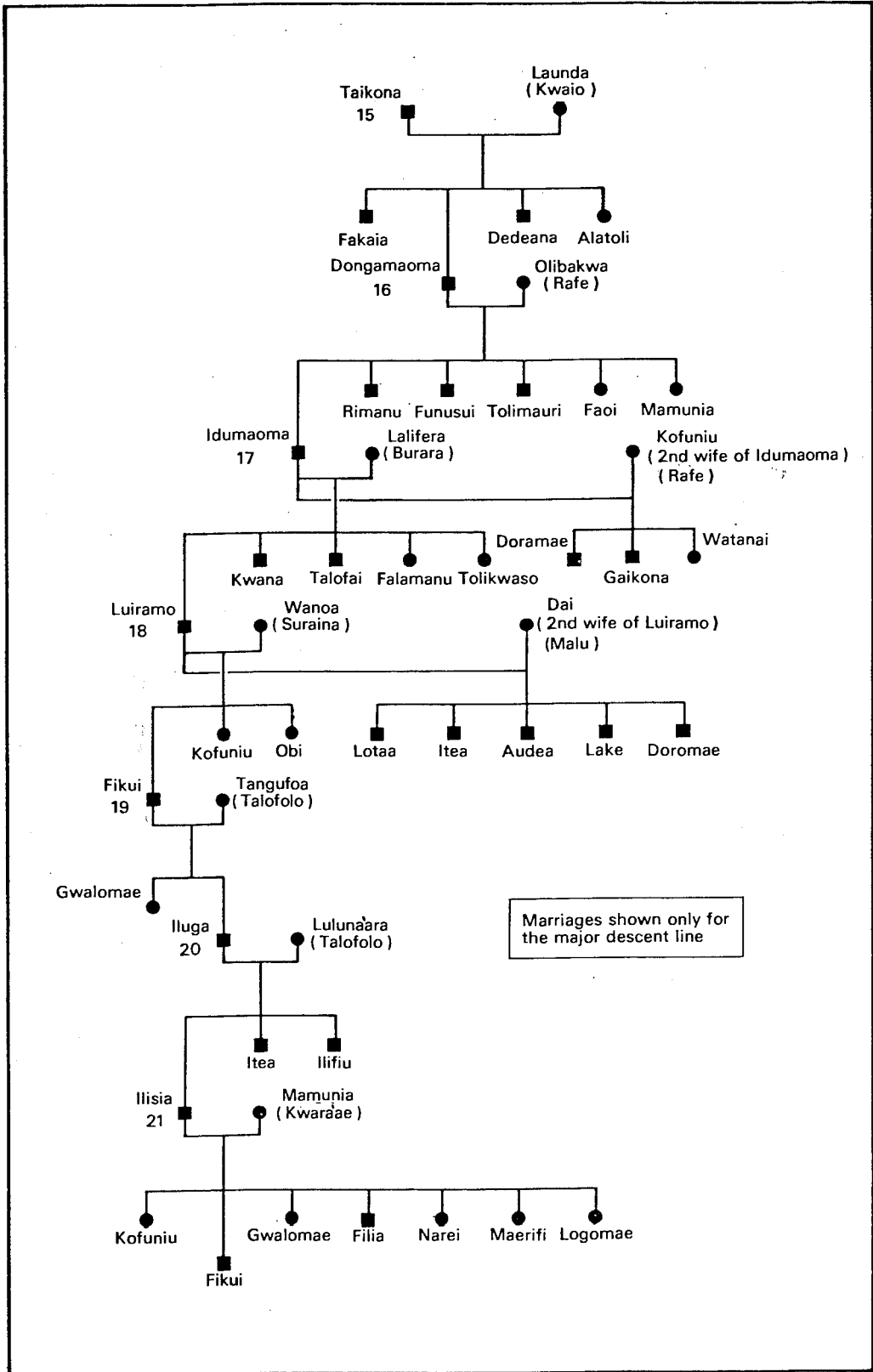
Taikona held sway as *taniota* and *foakali*. By all accounts he was an exceptional man; a true Melanesian Bigman. He and his descendants at Rakwane came to dominate the surrounding descent groups during the second half of the nineteenth century and into the early years of the twentieth century. Taikona and Launda had three sons and one daughter.<sup>74</sup> Fakaia, their eldest son, married but was insane in later life and was not suitable to replace his father as leader. Their second son Dongamaoma took over this position, and the third son Dedeana became *foakali*. Dongamaoma married Olibakwa from Rafe, their family consisting of four boys and two girls. The oldest boy Idumaoma followed his father as senior male in the descent group, also performing the ritual duties of *foakali*.

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73. Table Four lists the descent of the senior male line of Rakwane.

74. Genealogies do not include children who died in childhood.

Table Four: The Rakwane Descent Group.  
Major line : 15 to 21 (Bina)



Malaitan marriages traditionally were often polygynous and probably exogamous.<sup>75</sup> Rakwane marriages in the nineteenth century tied that descent group to neighbouring groups: Kwasa, Funubaule, Rafe, Kanole, Talofolo and Burara; and to the *wane asi* from Suraina, Farere and Talito islets at Ataa, and Kwai and Ngwangwasila islets in Kwara'ae. Marriage exchanges occurred, one descent group obtaining a bride from a neighbouring group, expecting that the favour would be reciprocated. In this way Brideprice<sup>76</sup> circulated physically and the descent groups joined cosmologically. Power focuses intensified when human and land resources united in different combinations. Luiramo, Rakwane's fourth senior male, became one of the most powerful Bigmen in east Fataleka in the late nineteenth century precisely by relying on and manipulating these obligations and exchanges; his prestige was a physical manifestation of Rakwane cosmological power.

Under Luiramo's leadership the Rakwane gained a reputation as the most powerful group in east Fataleka. Malaitans from as far as southwest Kwara'ae, west Fataleka, east Kwara'ae and the Baegu/Fataleka border at Ataa came to Rakwane for protection and acknowledged Rakwane's importance.<sup>77</sup> Today around Fakanakafo bay there are over

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75. Ross says that Baegu descent groups are not now exogamous, but traditions claim that several generations ago they were; collected genealogies partially support this. Keesing notes that the Kwaio were not explicitly exogamous but that their wide bilateral non-marriageable category tended to make them so. E.K. Maranda says that in Lau, exogamy is preferred but not required. Ross, *Baegu*, 149; Keesing, *Kwaio Descent Groups*, 17; E.K. Maranda, 'Woman is an Alien Spirit', 181.
76. Approved marriages begin with formal negotiations between the two families, and a monetary exchange is expected to balance the transfer of rights over the bride's work services, residence and fertility. The payment is traditionally in the form of *tafuli'ae* (shell valuables) and (*lifoia* porpoise teeth necklaces).
77. Salathiel Salana, first President of the Malaita Council and Headman of Kwara'ae from 1966 to 1974 told me that people from southwest Kwara'ae went to Luiramo for protection during inter-district fighting. As previously explained, Siuma (Subea 17) from west Fataleka fled to Luiramo for protection. Kalabet Fugui and Ramfafai from Suraena and Talito artificial islets at Ataa also support this interpretation. Tom Russell's article 'The Fataleka of Malaita' refers to the social precedence and importance of the Rakwane descent group. Salathiel Salana, 15 November 1976; Au, brother of Sumu (Subea 20), 30 October 1976; Kalabet Fugui (Talito) and Ramfafia (Suraena 10), 2 November 1976 and 1 June 1978; Russell, 'The Fataleka', *passim*.



a dozen settlements of Malaitans, designated as "strangers"<sup>7/8</sup> by the local people, who migrated into east Fataleka during the second half of the nineteenth century. Although some of the "strangers" arrived much earlier (Dai came from east Kwaio at Taikona's invitation), many migrated under Luiramo's protection. Often the "strangers" were related by marriage to Rakwane or other east Fataleka descent groups, such alliances usually being further strengthened by marriages in later generations.

Civil disputes are said to have increased in number during the second half of the nineteenth century. Soon after Idumaoma died, Luiramo sent a Rakwane force against Suliuo because of a dispute with Rafe. During this fracas ten men were killed. Many other similar skirmishes occurred. Luiramo's greatest exploit seems to have been Rakwane's involvement in a civil war between Funubaule and Burara. The details of this, involving men and women who worked as labourers in Queensland, make a good cameo study of late nineteenth century Malaita.

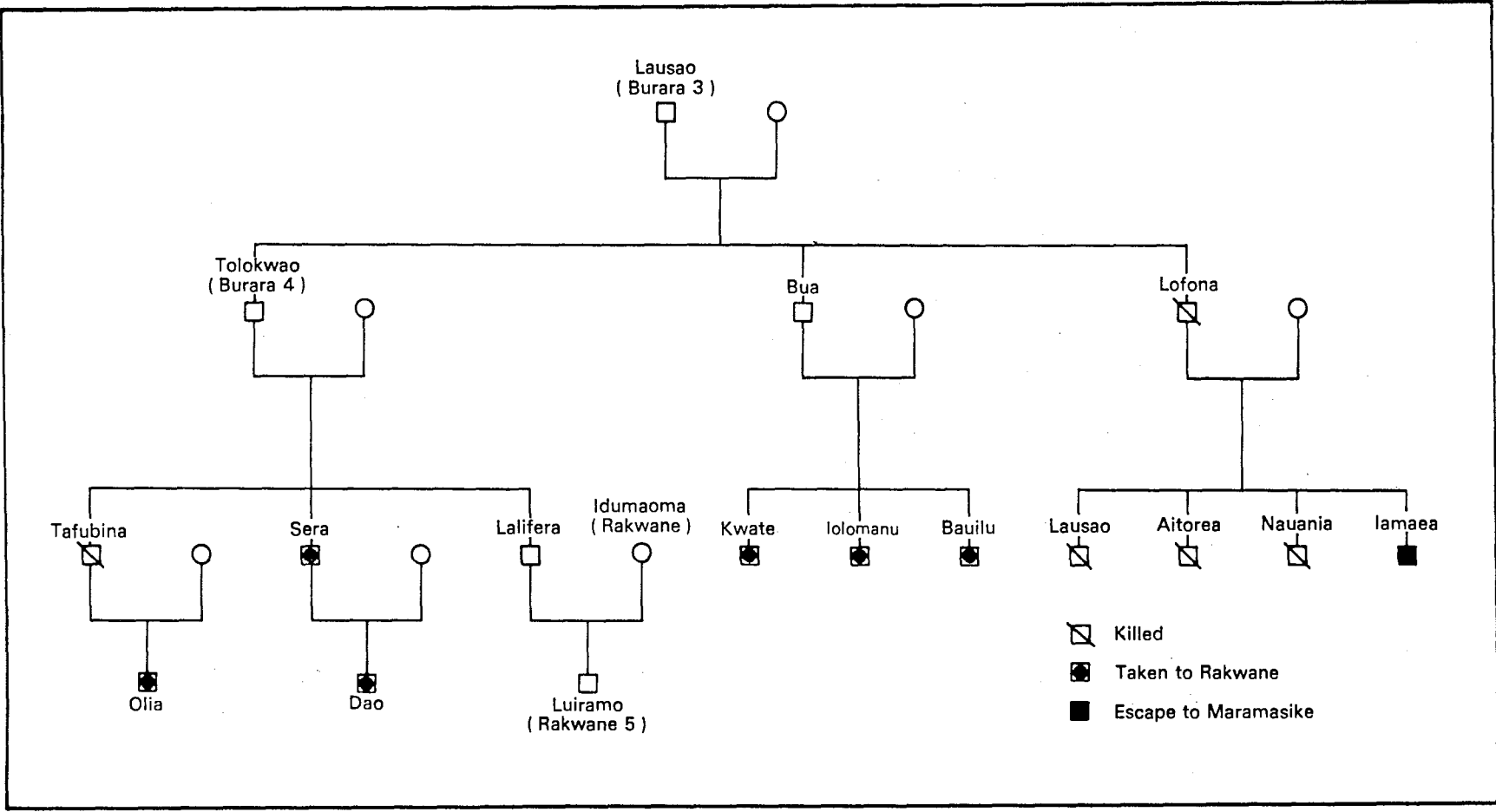
Laeoli, a nephew of Ete (Funubaule 6) died under suspicious circumstances. His father Kowawada, suspecting Aitorea and Lausao of Burara of causing the death, retaliated, with the assistance of men from Suliuo, Faugwalafu (a Subea descent group) and Rakwane. They went to Dariakwa in Burara and fought a battle during which four Burara men, Aitorea, Lausao, Lofona and Nauania, were killed. After this most of the Burara people ran away to Walande on Maramasike, where

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78. Refer to Map Three of this chapter.

<u>"Strangers" Descent Groups</u>	<u>Origin</u>
1. Kwaloa-Abuoli	Kwaio
2. Dioro-Talifu	Kwaio
3. Umufao-Kwasifolie	'Are 'are
4. Ongu	Kwai island (Kwara'ae)
5. Fausasa	Kwara'ae
6. Dai	Kwara'ae
7. Gwaunafau	Kwara'ae
8. Lologini	Kwara'ae
9. Faudua	Kwara'ae
10. Lane	Kwara'ae
11. Balalifua	Kwara'ae
12. Taloabu	Kwara'ae

Table Five: The Burara Descent Group



some of their descendants still live today. Only five old men and two boys continued to live at Burara.

At the time the incident occurred Idumaoma was *aofia* of Rakwane; his wife Lalifera was the daughter of Tolowao (Burara 4). The four slaughtered Burara men<sup>79</sup> and the seven survivors<sup>80</sup> were Lalifera's close relatives. Luiramo, Idumaoma and Lalifera's son, found out about the killings and was urged by his mother to avenge her family. Idumaoma forbade Luiramo to interfere, but he ignored his father and brought the seven Burara survivors back to Rakwane to live there for the rest of their lives.

After his father had died, Luiramo spent many years avenging the deaths in his mother's family, accomplishing the pay-back deaths by stealth as his enemies grew increasingly cautious. First he killed Taa and Tafu from Faugwalafu. Years later he encouraged his son-in-law Faneta of Rafe to kill Afia of Funubaule. He also arranged for and rewarded Erenga (Suraina 7) to kill Kwairamo of Ongo, who had killed Lalifera's brother Tafubina earlier in the fighting. Du'u, *fata aabu* of Burara and one of the men Luiramo had saved, in recognition of Luiramo's friendship gave the Mararabu and Burara worship places and properties to Rakwane. When Du'u died, Luiramo's brother Talofai took over from him as priest as Mararabu and Burara. All of the Burara line, other than Lalifera and those living on Maramasike, died out and the land was linked to Rakwane through Lalifera, making their claims to the land unusual in that it is traced matrilineally.<sup>81</sup>

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79. The fifth, Tafubina, was killed sometime after the first four.

80. Du'u, Burara's *fata aabu* is not shown on Table Three. He was the seventh Burara man who went to live at Rakwane.

81. Only in a case like that of Burara, when a complete patrilineage dies out, can matrilineal kin claim primary rights over land and worship areas. The Mararabu-Burara land has been the basis of several court cases. More detailed discussion about the case and similar cases in other areas of Malaita can be found in: Kwara'ae Local Court Case No. 2/74, Native Land Appeal Case No. 6/75, and Charles Luiramo to Attorney General, Honiara July 1978, File LC/MD/65, Auki Magistrates Office; Allan, *Customary Land Tenure*, 181; Ross, *Baegu*, 168; E.K. Maranda, 'Women is an Alien Spirit', 193.

#### 4. The Eight Isles and beyond

Melanesians, bounded by their island world, originally had a very limited cosmology and a restricted knowledge of the geography of the south Pacific. The parameters of their knowledge affected their initial perceptions of European ships and their crews when they first arrived. Later these same limitations continued to colour Melanesian perceptions of the circular-migratory process in which they participated. Harold Ross's description of the world-view of the Baegu people of north Malaita illustrates the general limits of Malanesian cosmology:

Malaita and the sea around it are the world.  
 This world is flat, as the sea is flat,  
 although Malaita itself is mountainous.  
 Malaita is, of course, the center of this  
 world; however, the universe as a whole is  
 three-dimensional, with the heavens above and a  
 nether-world beneath the flat surface of the  
 earth. People are unsure of its shape. Some  
 old men argue that its border is circular,  
 giving the universe a discoidal or spher-  
 oidal shape. They say, since man can walk or  
 sail around Malaita, it must be essentially  
 circular or oval. Others insist that since  
 men make rectangular (*sic*) houses and gardens,  
 the universe must be quadrilateral with square  
 corners. .... Despite some knowledge of outside  
 peoples, northern Malaita remains the relevant  
 social universe. 82

Very little prehistory research has been undertaken in Melanesia. It is presumed that the first Malaitans formed part of a general migration of people via the Indonesian archipelago into the south Pacific, and that Malaita can not have escaped entirely visits by some of the Pacific sea-going peoples: some early contact with Polynesia has been mooted, but nothing definite is known.<sup>83</sup> The *wane asi*

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82. Ross, *Baegu*, 108-9.

83. A. Chowning, *An Introduction to the Peoples and Cultures of Melanesia* (California, 1977), 16-23. Personal communication with Prof. Roger Keesing, Canberra, 25 February 1977; de Coppet and Zemp, *'Are 'are*, 111.

Malaitans were proficient sea people<sup>84</sup> who adapted economically to their water environment, producing *tafuli 'ae* (shell-disk currency), one of the most important items of trade in Melanesia. John Connell, basing his study on oral accounts and nineteenth century observations, says that Malaitan shell money was traded widely as far as the New Guinea mainland: certainly to the islands of Guadalcanal, Ngela, Makira and Goa; probably also to the Russell and Shortland islands, Choiseul, and further to Bougainville and New Ireland; and occasionally to New Britain and possibly to Samarai on the New Guinea mainland.<sup>85</sup>

Most of this trade was by intermediaries, direct trade by Malaitans probably confined to neighbouring islands. Malaitan trading and raiding parties paddled their largest dugout canoes to "the eight isles". The number eight and its multiples is the greatest force in Malaitan cosmology, numerology, mathematics, music and dance, everyday thinking and speech, and geographical knowledge.<sup>86</sup> The known world is called "the eight isles": more precisely four in the east (Ulawa, Uki, Three Sisters, Makira); and four in the west (Guadalcanal, Ngela, Russel and Gao). Malaita is the ninth unit, bringing totality to their world, assuring stability and plenty. The existence of Ontong Java and Sikaina was also known by Malaitans; they feature in at least one Malaitan epic tale, while an occasional outrigger canoe

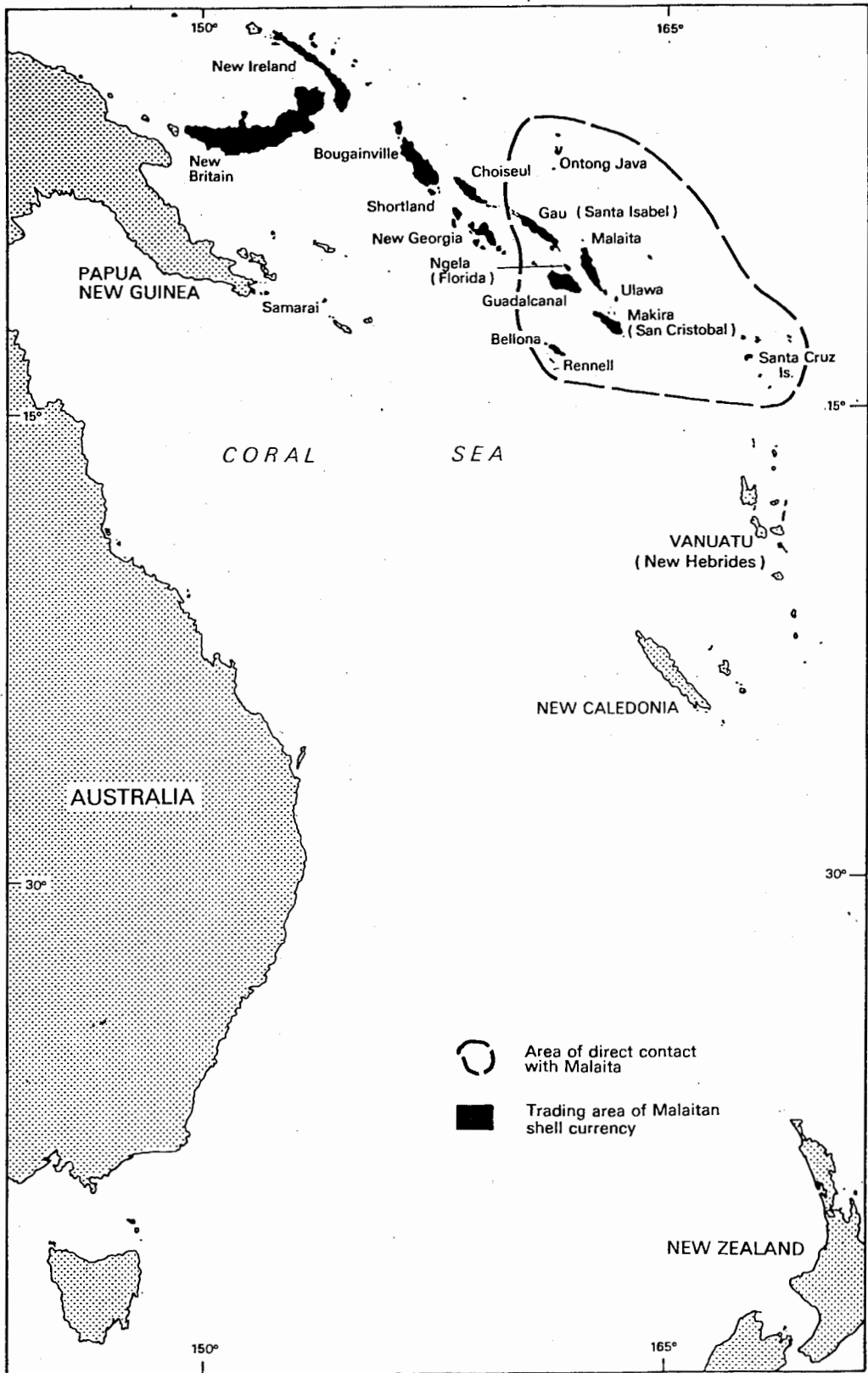
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84. Catoira, a member of Mendana's 1568 expedition mentioned an 'Are 'are canoe twenty-four paces long, seven feet wide, with a storage area built into it. A 1911 reference to 'Are 'are canoes at Marau described them as being more the size of small ships than canoes. D. de Coppet, 'First Exchange, Double Illusion', *Journal of the Cultural Association of the Solomon Islands*, v. 5 (1977), 27.

85. Connell, 'The Bougainville connection', 82-3.

86. In legends Malaitans complete actions eight times, have eight sons, eight genealogical lines or eight territories. In music the minimal structure is made of a series of two pairs of segments played twice ( $4 \times 2 = 8$ ) to which is added the final formular, making nine units. The extra musical unit locks together and assures the totality of the eight segments. Eight represents the greatest force, complete totality: even numbers indicate movement; uneven numbers indicate motionless states. De Coppet and Zemp, 'Are 'are, 111-126; letter to the author from Dr Daniel de Coppet, 2 April 1980.

Map Four: The Malaitan World: "Eight Isles" and beyond



from these islands eventually drifts ashore at Malaita.<sup>87</sup> The main contact with the world beyond Malaita was through the *wane asi* living around the coast. The *wane tolo*, some of whom lived kilometers inland high in the mountains, did not participate in inter-island travel during their lifetime, but after death, they too travel to the islands surrounding Malaita. The Fataleka believe that three days after death a Malaitan's *anoasa* (spirit) goes first to Gaomae (Ramos) island half way between Malaita and Gao, before settling finally on Maumolu Naunitu island close to the southwest end of Gao.<sup>88</sup>

Gao has always been the main supply area of '*ai ni gao* an ebony-like wood used by Malaitans for weapons; trading voyages and raiding expeditions link Malaita and Gao over centuries. East Fataleka legend records that as long ago as the time of Aeolia (Bina 11) many north Malaitan descent groups joined forces to attack the inhabitants of Gao, avenging killings committed in the Falae district of Malaita. In the 1870s and 1880s the Gao people were making regular visits to Malaita, bating canoes and other commodities for Malaitan valuables.<sup>89</sup> There was also constant canoe traffic from west 'Are 'are and Langa langa to the 'Are 'are emigrants living at Marau sound, Guadalcanal. The Marau connection dates from before the first European contact with the Solomons in 1568, but seems to have intensified in the mid-nineteenth century. In 1892 Douglas Rannie, Government Agent on the Queensland recruiting ship *Empreza*, reported that 'Are 'are people had been driven away from Malaita by internecine fighting, re-settling in the Marau area. Marau also seems to have been used as a base

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87. Legends exist about Malaitans fighting with light-coloured people. W.A.T. Amherst and B. Thomson, *The Discovery of the Solomon Islands by Alvaro de Mendaña in 1568* (London, 1901), 141-2; Ross, *Baegu*, 109.

88. Ishmael Itea, 23 October 1976.

89. Ishmael Itea and Charles Luiramo, 10 October 1976; Ross, *Baegu*, 109; Russell, 'The Fataleka', 11; J. Cromar, *Jock of the Islands: early days in the South Seas. The adventures of John Cromar, sometime recruiter and lately trader at Marovo, British Solomon Islands Protectorate, told by himself* (London, 1935), 153-5, 241; J.G. Marwick (com.), *The Adventures of John Renton* (Kirkwall (Scotland), 1935), 37.

from which Malaitans carried out raids on Makira.<sup>90</sup> Makira and the accompanying smaller islands (Uki ni masi and the Three Sisters) were the southern limit of the Malaitan trading and raiding world. Jock Cromar, recruiter on another Queensland ship the *Helena*, claimed that in 1885 he was shown "two great piles of human heads" by the people at Hada bay on Makira; heads from seventy-five east Malaitans who had failed in an attack to seize local porpoise teeth currency. Similar raiding parties operated until the 1920s. Closer still to Malaita is Ulawa, a small island to the southeast, the people of which are culturally and linguistically closely related to the Sa'a of Maramasike.<sup>91</sup>

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90. QSA COL/A783, D. Rannie to IA, 19 December 1892. In letter 855 of 1893, CS to Gov., 20 February 1893; QSA COL/A795, RNAS: Solomon 1894, Corr. Resp. Outr., Com. Goodrich to C. in Chief, 28 May 1894; QSA GOV/A29, IA to PUS CSD; M. Chapman and P. Pirie et al., *Tasi Mauri: a report on population and resources of the Guadalcanal Weather coast* (Honolulu, 1974), 110-1; Cromar, *Jock of the Islands*, 241.
91. Cromar, *Jock of the Islands*, 203-5, 252-3; RNAS: 23, NH & Sol.: 1887, Corr. Resp. Outr., Case 24 of 1887, Captain F.S. Clayton (HMS *Diamond*) to C. in Chief, 5 September 1887; K.G. Green, 'The history of post-Spanish European contact in the Eastern District before 1939', in Green and Cresswell, *Southeast Solomon Islands*, 41. Malaitans would also have been aware of the Santa Cruz islands south of Makira. Occasionally people from Santa Cruz drifted in their canoes to Ulawa and Maramasike. W.G. Ivens, *Dictionary and Grammar of the language of Sa'a and Ulawa, Solomon Islands* (Washington, 1918) 240-1; and *Melanesians of the South-east Solomon Islands*; J. Gutch, *Martyr of the Islands: the life and death of John Coleridge Patteson* (London, 1971), 211.



## 5. Conclusion

The Bina people who lived in the foothills behind Fakanakafo bay and their *wane asi* relations on the artificial islands at Ataa are typical of the inhabitants of Malaita in the nineteenth century. Several conclusions can be drawn from their lives, and the foregoing sections of this chapter, relevant to the recruitment of Malaitan labourers for Queensland's sugar plantations.

First: Blood feuds like that at Burara were part of every-day life on Malaita; similar traditional stories from other areas of the island show the strong power of the *ramos*, the warriors of Malaitan society. By 1904 over 9,000 Malaitans had enlisted to work on Queensland plantations; others had worked in Fiji and Samoa. Many thousands of firearms had returned with them to Malaita, exacerbating inter-district fighting.<sup>92</sup> Rakwane had an armoury of one hundred guns in the early twentieth century, like neighbouring descent groups using them to good effect in fighting. The inhabitants of the lowlands were often placed under considerable pressure during fighting, by attacks from the highland people as well as from the *wane asi*.<sup>93</sup> In consequence some of the main residential descent groups completely died out, leaving their territory open to occupation by superior forces who had previously held only secondary rights to the land.

Second: Although Malaitans possess a fragmented society, divided into numerous language and dialect areas, sub-divided into thousands of small political units, there is still an overall unity to life on the island and there are central Malaitan characteristics. This is important on the Queensland plantations where written records and oral testimony usually do not indicate the exact origin of any one Malaitan. Although an individual's name is often a good indication of the language area from which he or she came, when Christian and European names

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92. In 1908 C.M. Woodford, Resident Commissioner of the Solomon Islands estimated that the inhabitants of Malaita possessed between four and five thousand Winchester repeating rifles. C'W A CRS A1 08/6443, clipping from the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 June 1908.

93. Allan, *Customary Land Tenure*, 181.

were adopted there is often little to indicate whether a person was born in Sa'a or one hundred and ninety kilometers away in To'ambaita.

Third: There has been considerable debate by historians over the exact methods used by the European recruiters and the extent to which Melanesians actually understood the indenture agreements which bound them to work as labourers in Queensland. The time has long passed when any scholar could use "kidnapping" as a term appropriate for the greater part of the period of recruiting of labourers in Melanesia for Queensland, or of the majority of those recruited; but the complex mixture of coercive and voluntary forces which could result in a Melanesian being shipped to Queensland have yet to be fully expounded in any published work. Physical kidnapping was the method of recruitment in only a minority of the cases: "cultural" kidnapping occurred in every case when Europeans took advantage of the Melanesians' small-scale societies to entice them to work as wage labourers in the sugar industry. It is the purpose of the next two chapters to explore these forces in relation to Malaita.

Fourth: Then, as now, there was much mobility in places of residence; then, as now, descent groups died out, important leaders rose and declined. Malaitans from one dialect group might be found living in a different dialect area, having left to avoid feuds or to join relatives. The place at which a Malaitan was recruited is not necessarily evidence of his or her real home.<sup>94</sup>

Fifth: Malaitans are proud, defiant and independent. Among their cultural values the obligations to defend rights and avenge wrongs were very strong. On their own ground, even with traditional weapons only, they were formidable enemies for Europeans - and long before the nineteenth century when they were well-provided with fire-arms. It is not surprising to find that Europeans invariably characterised Malaitans as murderous, cunning and treacherous;<sup>95</sup> but among

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94. This is a reason Malaitans returning from Queensland sometimes asked to disembark many miles from the spot from which they left the island. Refer to Map One, Chapter Three.

95. J. Gaggin, *Among the man-eaters* (London, 1900), 168, 179; J. Cromar, *Jock of the Islands*, 135.

Melanesians, also, Malaitans had a reputation for ferocity unparalleled except perhaps for that of the Tanese in the New Hebrides. Other Solomon Islanders would sometimes refuse to join a ship known to be calling at Malaita.<sup>96</sup> The absurdity of depicting these formidable warriors as the helpless victims of predatory European kidnappers has been pointed out by modern Pacific historians.<sup>97</sup> The nature and extent of Malaitan violence against recruiters and the motives involved will be explored in the next two chapters.

The often violent reaction of Malaitans to the European recruiters made them famous throughout the Pacific. This reputation also followed them to Queensland. At Mackay, Malaitans hold the distinction of being the only group of Melanesians ever to have had an editorial in the local newspaper devoted entirely to their excesses. In 1894 after a European woman was supposedly murdered by a Malaitan the editorial noted their "thirst for blood" and continued:

of recent years the aggressiveness of these boys in the district has become unbearable. Apart from any graver offences of which Malayta Islanders may be suspected, it is notorious that they boast of the immunity with which they can defy their employers and commit crimes. White men who have lived in the district for years, now sleep with revolvers near to hand, and admit the terrorism inspired by this class of boy. 98

The remainder of this thesis concerns the recruitment of Malaitan labourers to work on Mackay sugar plantations and farms, and the lives they and their families led into the early decades of the twentieth century.

Malaitans were the largest group from any one Pacific island to participate in the circular-migration to Queensland: 9,000 out of

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96. P. Corris, *Passage, Port and Plantation: a history of Solomon Islands labour migration, 1870-1914* (Melbourne, 1973), 88.

97. H. Laracy, reviewing *Passage, Port and Plantation* by Peter Corris, *Oceania*, v. 46:2 (1975), 165; P. Corris, reviewing *Wacvie* by Faith Bandler, *The Australian*, 20/21 August 1978, Weekend Magazine, 12.

98. *MM* 22 November 1894.

62,000. They were not necessarily typical of the majority. Although all Melanesian societies had a similarly limited cosmology and geographic outlook, these societies varied enormously and not all were as unchanging or as dogmatic as Malaitan society. But it is this very quality, conservatism, which makes them admirable candidates for a case study of Melanesian adaptation to life in a European capitalist society. Over a century after the first Malaitans arrived in Queensland their Australian descendants still remain proudly Malaitan, when many other Islanders have no accurate knowledge of the islands from which their Melanesian forebears came.<sup>99</sup> The resilience of Malaitan society is what makes this thesis possible; its beauty is in the complexity of the relationship between living Malaitans, their ancestors and their island.

On the recruiting ships on their way to Queensland, apart from those recruited within the same few miles of coast, all Malaitans would be strangers and potential enemies, those from the more distant parts not even fully intelligible. Any of these strangers might have 'tribal' scores to pay off, even covertly by magic. Melanesians recruited from other islands were still more alien. The Malaitan recruit, on the other hand, would be largely cut off from the protection of his *akalo* (ancestors) without priests to perform rites which could protect him among his own people. Much of the food given to the recruit would be unfamiliar and might even involve the risk of inadvertently transgressing food taboos. If women were on board, there was the terrifying risk for Malaitans of coming into contact with one who

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99. To be fair there are other island groups in Queensland who are in contact with their relations in the Pacific. The first Australian Islander family to re-link with their relations seems to have been the Corowas from Tana in the New Hebrides. The original Corowa left Tana in 1890 or 1893; the re-linking occurred in 1963. Since then many families have travelled to the New Hebrides and the Solomons searching for their relations. This is particularly so of Islanders from Tana, Epi, Tongoa, Malaita, Ngela and Guadalcanal.

In the Solomons the major re-linkage has been with Malaita, and Malaitans are also the dominant group of Solomon Islanders living in the Mackay district. *BOHC* 10Ba&b (A&AC); C.R. Moore and P. Mercer, 'The Forgotten People: Australia's immigrant Melanesians', *Meanjin*, v. 37:1 (1978), 98-108.

was menstruating or giving birth, a risk comparable psychologically to that a European might feel if shut up with a leper. Even if told clearly where the ship was headed and why, he or she could have had little conception of the distance to Queensland, the size of the country or the nature of the work involved. Pagan Malaitans, even today, have no real concept of the size of the world compared with Malaita and think of Australia as another island no bigger than those they know in the Solomons.

Malaitan sugar cane (*Saccharum edulis*) was a delicacy grown in small quantities. Queensland sugar cane (*Saccharum officinarum*) was an agricultural staple grown on a scale unimaginable to a Malaitan who had not seen it. Malaitans in Queensland gave it the allegorical name of "hard work", with good reason as will be seen. The voyage to Queensland represented a 'rite of passage' as harrowing as those studied by anthropologists; a rite which the individual had to endure alone without the ritual support and strength provided by his or her descent group.

Table ThreeFOFOTANA

1. Kwalugwaufata, brother of Kwaluima (Bina 3)
2. Funiabu
3. Memenaulu
4. Mabobono
5. Kwadila'a
6. Aranito
7. Tadae
8. Unusulia
9. Makauto
10. Gwaringali
11. Tadae
12. Unusulia
13. Faunini
14. Aubo
15. Fuana
16. Sikwa
17. Justly

FAU

1. Kwalunole (also called Nunuabu or Nunurodo), brother of Kwaluima (Bina 3).
2. Rokoabu

MALAILALO

1. Aubala, brother of Roboabu (Fau 2)

TOITOI

Descended from Malailalo; no further details known.

ABARAFI

Descended from Malailalo; no further details known.

KWASA

1. Alowane, brother of Rokoabu (Fau 2)
2. Afui
3. Bu'u
4. Kaoabu
5. Koma
6. Furikone
7. Lalifoa
8. Gwaroia
9. Batali
10. Ba'a Ba'a was killed and Kwasa's line ended.

DAROATO

- |                                 |            |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| 1. Olofi, son of Afui (Kwasa 2) | 7. Ilisau  |
| 2. Akwa'akwa                    | 8. Rikao   |
| 3. Talebakwa                    | 9. Ilimanu |
| 4. Makunikwao                   | 10. Ilisau |
| 5. Maemauri                     | 11. Rakai  |
| 6. Ilimanu                      | 12. Mea    |

MANARABU

1. Kwailamua, son of Afui (Kwasa 2)
2. Fonea
3. Makunitoa
4. Lausao, moved and started BURARA

BURARA

1. Lausao
2. Bua
3. Lausao
4. Tolokwao (Taniota)
5. Lalifera (female)
6. Luiramo (Bina 18)
7. Fikui (Bina 19)
8. Iluga (Bina 20)
9. Ilisia (Bina 21)

BEUNAALU

1. Toniboso, son of Umaabu (Bina 4)
2. Abusiu
3. Taikona, moved and started RATONGA
4. Aluna
5. Gaikona
6. Karoa
7. Amo, moved and started RAFE

RAFE

1. Amo (Beunaalu 7)
2. Faneta
3. Talofai
4. Laufaka
5. Daofiu
6. Luiramo
7. Gereā (present-day Paramount Chief of east Fataleka)

SULIUO

1. Abesau, son of Abusiu (Beunaalu 2)
2. Kwaiwane
3. Lama'a
4. Udu
5. Keta'a
6. Gwata
7. Iolokwao
8. Remosui
9. Saefafia
10. Tomu
11. Samo
12. Leta

FUNUBAULE

1. Rinakona, son of Taikona (Beunaalu 3)
2. Dafia
3. Boo
4. Osiramo
5. Auga
6. Ete
7. Gwaraniau
8. Rikao
9. Oku
10. Sutea
11. Funusui

GWELABU

1. Fiubasi, son of Toniboso (Beunaalu 1)

Records of their generations are not available.

GWABU

The second movement of Gwelabu.

UOILALO

1. Tonitabu, son Umaabu (Bina 4)
2. Arakwauniabu, started KOKOMA
3. Kwaluali Gao
4. Fauele
5. Agwata
6. Borukona
7. Gaikona
8. Nagi
9. Dadao
10. Nauania
11. Kwateau
12. Sikwaae
13. Orosi

DAFI

Details are not available.

KOKOMA

Details are not available.

SALUFE

1. Dongata, son of Arakwauniabu (Uoilalo 2)
2. Au
3. Dongabeu
4. Gwautalo
5. Maetiu
6. Kerosau
7. Takela
8. Riala
9. Irofoa
10. Maesala



BEUSAMORU

1. Taniau, son of Arakwauniabu (Uoilalo 2)
2. Imanigwau
3. Konafilia
4. Ama
5. Sului
6. Gegesu
7. Aramae
8. Fikui
9. Siuania
10. Fono
11. Siuania

GWADAI

1. Aunitoa, son of Arakwauniabu (Uoilalo 2)
2. Aruomea
3. Taeto
4. Irofoa
5. Taeto
6. Iola
7. Kafula
8. Idu
9. Maeaba
10. Fana

LUMABORA

1. Tonibasi, brother of Fikutoniwane (Bina 5)
2. Koma (moved to AEERE)
3. Tola
4. Siu
5. Gaione
6. Gaita
7. Ete
8. Fuarodo
9. Mea
10. Ilimanu
11. Malekoa
12. Mea
13. Omeana

AEERE

Koma (Lumabora 2) married Toibakwa daughter of Olofi of Daroato who gave him Aeere where they lived.

AUSAMAGA

Tonibasi had eight sons named Koma (Kwalukome), the son of one of them was:

- |                                |             |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Fataburi, moved to Ausamaga | 7. Utu      |
| 2. Kekao                       | 8. Lauomea  |
| 3. Usulia                      | 9. Gwaroe   |
| 4. Ararumu                     | 10. Lauomea |
| 5. Rimalefo                    | 11. Gwaroe  |
| 6. Lauomea                     |             |

BALIOBE

Lili, (Bina 6) lived here.

BEUNAGONO

1. Baekwalau, brother of Sufu (Bina 7)
2. Toiako
3. Etaania
4. Banimae
5. Oilabu
6. Iolokwao
7. Muugo
8. Etaania
9. Manu
10. Oilabu
11. Abo
12. Abuni

TALAFOLO

1. Ma'a, first son of Sufu (Bina 7), but because he left Beubaita his brother Kafoabu became Bina 8. Ma'a remained Foakali of Bina.
2. Tamaofa
3. Kobi
4. Gwasamo
5. Waneetainia
6. Farikoa
7. Bulatala
8. Irofau
9. Laeata
10. Rafia
11. Sabea
12. Elifiu

FAUTATAFE

The second movement of Talafolo.

SAFITE

1. Idufilu, sone of Sufu (Bina 7), brother of Ma'a (Talafolo 1)
2. Ninima
3. Saomela
4. Raunafilu

Safite's people died out: Raunafilu was killed by his grandfather Ninima because he swore at a bamboo water container; his brother Idufilu was killed by Rinakona (Funubaule 1).

UONINIME

- |                                       |            |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| 1. Abeau, brother of Lauima (Bina 10) |            |
| 2. Gwaumai                            | 7. Dongata |
| 3. Iamanu                             | 8. Kara'a  |
| 4. Gaikona                            | 9. Dime    |
| 5. Malae                              | 10. Okubae |
| 6. Luita                              | 11. Mamali |

FERE'ELIE

Taikona (Bina 15) lived here, then he was given Rakwane/Ngongore by Gwaroia father of his wife Launda.

NGONGORE

Taikona lived here briefly, but shifted to

RAKWANE

1. Taikona (Bina 15)
2. Dongamaoma
3. Idumaoma
4. Luiramo
5. Fikui
6. Iluga
7. Ilisia (the present *Aofia*)
8. Fikui

ASNIWANE

1. Toniboso, founded Asniwane as a fishing place.
2. Lau
3. Suluga
4. Talafa, after fighting had caused the deaths of most of the Asniwane, sold the land to Fiufanua of Fifulu.

FIFILU

Toba and his son Fiufanua from Boe boe in east Kwaio were given Fifulu as a reward by the people of Funafou in Lau.

1. Toba
2. Fiufanua, bought Asniwane and moved there.

ASNIWANE

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| 3. Alinatare   |            |
| 4. Iduia   |            |
| 5. Abakwao, his brother Akwai started <u>FARERE</u> and his brother Figui started <u>SURAINA</u> |            |
| 6. Sifo  | 1. Akwai   |
| 7. Suuria  | 2. Tasia   |
| 8. Ngofia  | 3. Akwai   |
| 9. Sifo  | 4. Moledo  |
| 10. Nganga   | 5. Wanega  |
| 11. Liohata  | 6. Maeonga |
| 12. Bufali (female)  | 7. Kaliki  |
| 13. Tenge  | 8. Bibiala |
| 14. Famaea   | 9. Sigili  |
| 15. Tenge  |            |

SURAINA

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| 1. Fugui  |            |
| 2. Mona; his brother Sana started <u>TALITO</u> |            |
| 3. Kwaimae                                      |            |
| 4. Fugui  | 1. Sana    |
| 5. Kwaimae                                      | 2. Lauala  |
| 6. Fugui  | 3. Fugui   |
| 7. Erenga                                       | 4. Akwai   |
| 8. Mae Mae                                      | 5. Tobe    |
| 9. Ramofafia                                    | 6. Tofu    |
| 10. Fugui                                       | 7. Oto     |
|   | 8. Fakaia  |
|   | 9. Faifu   |
|   | 10. Baeoro |

CHAPTER TWO

60 - 98

*MALAITAN RECRUITING : 1871 - 1885*

1. European exploration and government in the Pacific before 1870 .61
2. Malaitans, the Pacific and Europeans 74
3. The recruiting trade : the initial phase, 1871 - 1885 .81

1. European exploration and government in the Pacific before 1870

H.E. Maude in his preface to *Of Islands and Men* aptly described Oceania as the largest single geographical area on earth<sup>1</sup>; it is also one of the most diverse. Scattered across thousands of kilometers of ocean are the islands of Micronesia, Polynesia and Melanesia, lacking any overall unity in language, culture or government. This indigenous diversity was amplified by that imposed by the gradually increasing European presence in the south Pacific: initial exploration, subsequent division into spheres of influence, and the eventual colonization of the island groups. European penetration of the Pacific intensified slowly over several centuries. A sprinkling of castaways and beachcombers inhabited the islands from the sixteenth century onward, but more intensive settlement by traders and missionaries dates roughly from the founding of New South Wales.<sup>2</sup> Directly preceding the labour trade, from the 1830s until the 1860s, the Melanesians of New Caledonia, the New Hebrides and the Loyalty islands were exposed to sandalwood traders. Some Islanders participated in the trade inter-insularly as labourers.<sup>3</sup> However it was the wider trade organised around human migration throughout the Pacific which fully opened Melanesia to Europeans.

The first labour recruiters came from Peru in 1862, taking Islanders as labourers to work on plantations and in mines in Peru.<sup>4</sup> A

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1. H.E. Maude, *Of Islands and Men: studies in Pacific history* (Melbourne, 1968), xi.
  2. Maude, *Of Islands and Men*, Chapter Four: 'Beachcombers and Castaways'; R. Langdon, *The Lost Caravel* (Sydney, 1975); C. Ralston, Pacific beach communities of the nineteenth century (PhD. thesis, Australian National University, 1970) and 'The Beach Communities', in J.W. Davidson and D. Scarr (eds.), *Pacific Islands Portraits* (Canberra, 1973), 77-93.
  3. D. Shineberg, *They came for Sandalwood: a study of the Sandalwood trade in the south-west Pacific, 1830-1865* (Melbourne, 1967); K. R. Howe, *The Loyalty Islanders: a history of culture contacts 1840-1900* (Canberra, 1977).
  4. O.W. Parnaby, *Britain and the Labour Trade in the Southwest Pacific* (Durham, N.C., 1964), 12-4; G. McCall, 'European impact on Easter island: response, recruitment and the Polynesian experience in Peru', *JPH*, v. 11:2 (1976), 90-105.

violent episode, it was halted by diplomatic protest; but it heralded the circular migration of at least 200,000 Islanders, 100,000 of whom went to British colonies around the Pacific during the remainder of the century.<sup>5</sup> The labour trade enabled European colonists in the Pacific to procure Pacific Islanders to work as wage labourers on their plantations. Detractors called it a slave trade, where unwilling Islander labourers were kidnapped to work in harsh conditions for cruel masters: supporters denied these allegations and stressed the favour the European recruiters were doing in civilizing the savage people of the Pacific. This chapter traces the initial years of the labour trade in the Solomon islands, 1871 to 1885, concentrating on men and women recruited from Malaita island. During these years recruiting was often by illegal means, but by the 1880s a gradual transition was in progress, a transition to predominantly voluntary enlistment which prevailed until 1904 when the Queensland labour trade ended.

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5. There is a large body of literature dealing with the labour trade in the Pacific; an historiography of the English language material published on the subject can be found in the introductory chapter of this thesis. The labour trade involved Britain, France and Germany; the main British colonies concerned were Queensland, Fiji and to a lesser degree New Zealand. The most significant sources are: J.M. Ward, *British Policy in the South Pacific, 1789-1893: a study in British policy towards the south Pacific islands prior to the establishment of governments by the great powers* (Sydney, 1948); W.P. Morrell, *Britain in the Pacific Islands* (Oxford, 1960); Parnaby, *Britain and the Labour Trade*; D. Scarr, *Fragments of Empire: a history of the Western Pacific High Commission, 1877-1914* (Canberra, 1967); J.D. Legge, *Britain in Fiji: 1858-1880* (London, 1958); P. Corris, *Passage, Port and Plantation: a history of Solomon Islands labour migration, 1870-1914* (Melbourne, 1973); R.D. Bedford, *New Hebridean Mobility: a study of circular migration* (Canberra, 1973); K.A. Saunders, *Uncertain Bondage: an analysis of indentured labour in Queensland to 1907, with particular reference to the Melanesian servants* (PhD. thesis, University of Queensland, 1974); P.J. Stewart, 'New Zealand and the Pacific labour traffic, 1870-1874', *Pacific Historical Review*, v. 30:1 (1961), 47-59; C. Newbury, 'The Melanesian Labor Reserve: some reflections on Pacific labor markets in the nineteenth century', *Pacific Studies*, v.4:1 (1980), 1-25.

Recruiting of labourers from the Pacific islands to work in Queensland began in the New Hebrides in 1863<sup>6</sup> when sixty-seven Islanders boarded the *Don Juan*, bound for Robert Towns' cotton plantation on the Logan river. In the early 1860s some Queenslanders hoped that cotton growing could provide the infant colony with an agricultural staple, but cotton soon ceased to be Queensland's major tropical crop.<sup>7</sup> In its stead sugar cane plantations were established from the mid-1860s; these similarly required large numbers of labourers to work in the fields and mills. Attempts to import Coolie labourers to work on these plantations failed;<sup>8</sup> for the remainder of the century Melanesian labourers became the major labour supply for these plantations and the smaller cane farms which replaced them.

In excess of 63,000<sup>9</sup> Pacific Islanders were contracted to work as indentured labourers in Queensland between 1863 and 1904. It is

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6. These were not the first Pacific Islanders to be imported into Australia as labourers. Benjamin Boyd brought Tanese to New South Wales in 1847 to work as shepherds. Ward, *British Policy*, 218-9.
  7. R. Towns, *South Sea Island Immigration for Cotton Culture: a letter to the Hon. the Colonial Secretary of Queensland* (Sydney, 1864); *QVP* 1863 (Second session), 397-9; J. Farnfield, 'Cotton and the search for an agricultural staple in early Queensland', *Queensland Heritage*, v. 2:4 (1971), 20-25.
  8. Saunders, *Uncertain Bondage*, 32-55; A. McGrath, "Exile into Bondage": an analysis of Asiatic indenture in colonial Queensland (B.A. Hons. thesis, University of Queensland, 1976), 1-50, 81-94; I.N. Moles, *Indian-Australian Relations, 1788-1901: some problems touching upon Australia's social and economic development which arose out of her contacts with India in the nineteenth century* (M.A. thesis, University of Queensland, 1957).
  9. This figure indicates only the *total* number of Islanders and does not take into account the number of recruits who came to Queensland for a second or third time. The most accurate estimates have been made by Owen W. Parnaby (61,160) and Charles Price and Elizabeth Baker (62,475). The number of labour recruits *landed* in Queensland, as opposed to those accepted for employment, is 62,561. This number is the base of the yearly migration total used in Table One of this chapter, drawn from the *Votes and Proceedings of the Queensland Legislative Assembly* for the 1863-1868 period and from the population section of the *Statistics of Queensland* for the remainder of the period, 1869-1904. Parnaby, *Britain and the Labour Trade*, Appendix; C. Price with E. Baker, 'Origins of Pacific island labourers in Queensland, 1863-1904: a research note', *JPH*, v. 11:2 (1976), 106-121; *QVP* 1868-9, 553-6.



TABLE ONE. Malaitan Migration to Queensland.

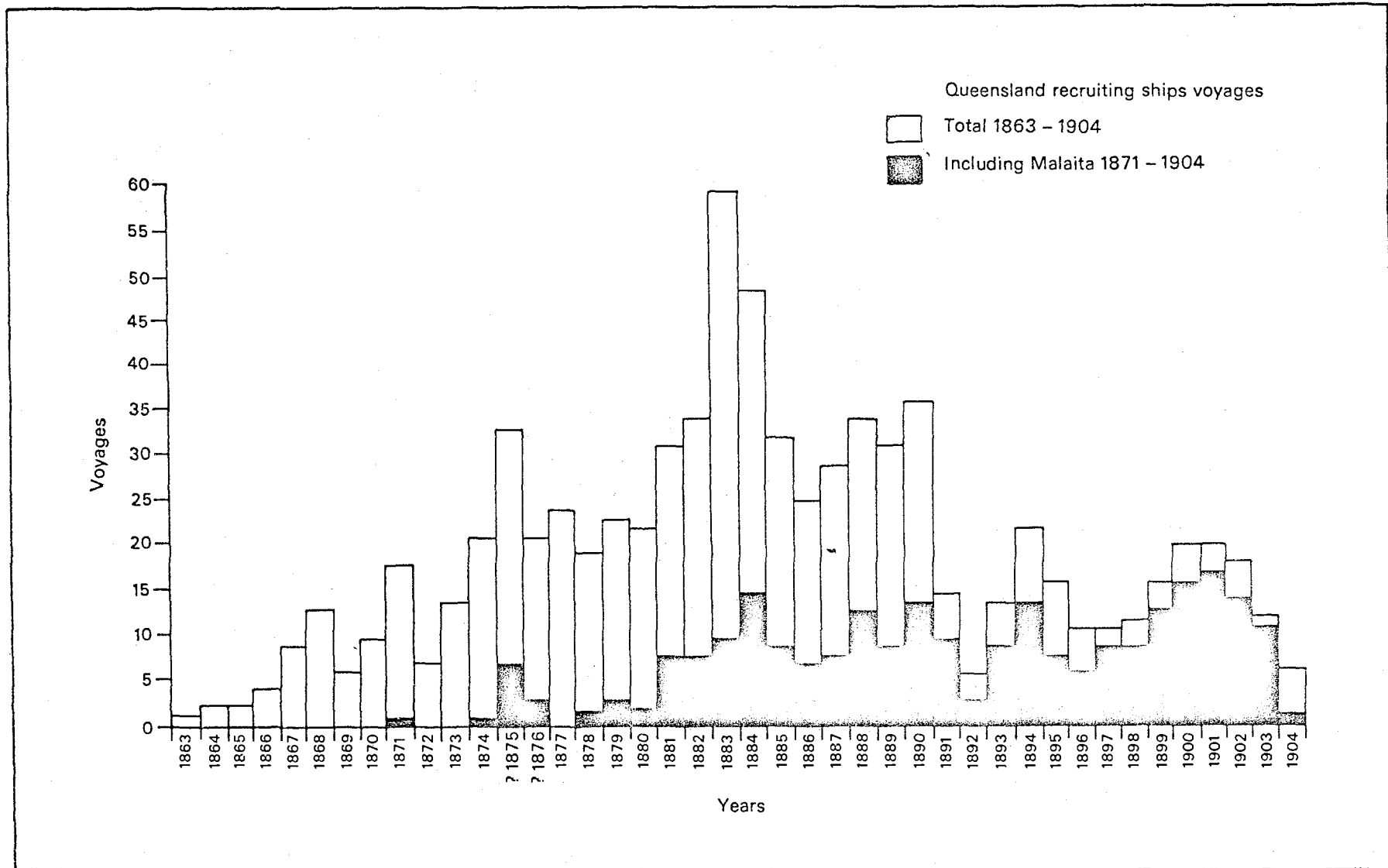
Year	Total number of voyages by Queensland recruiting ships	Total number of voyages by Queensland recruiting ships known to have visited Malaita	Total number of labour recruits landed in Queensland.	Total number of Solomon Islanders brought to Queensland	Total number of Malaitans (* = approx. 1/3 of the total number)	Total number of recruits on ships known to have carried Malaitans to Queensland	Total male recruits	Total female recruits	Total male children on board	Total female children on board
1863	1		67							
1864	2		134							
1865	2		148							
1866	4		177							
1867	9		1237							
1868	13		948							
1869	6		312							
1870	10		638							
1871	18	1	1352	82	12	44	44	0	n.a.	n.a.
1872	7	0	461	0	0	0	0	0	n.a.	n.a.
1873	14	0	994	0	0	0	0	0	n.a.	n.a.
1874	21	1	1503	124	13	52	52	0	n.a.	n.a.
1875	33	7	2682	710	362	459†	310†	2†	n.a.	n.a.
1876	21	3	1688	74	43	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1877	24	0	1986	0	0	0	0	0	n.a.	n.a.
1878	19	2	1421	232	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1879	23	3	2182	242	2*	199	198	1	n.a.	n.a.
1880	22	2	1997	61	11	119	117	2	n.a.	n.a.
1881	31	8	2643	629	257	707	681	26	n.a.	n.a.
1882	34	8	3140	440	32	414	394	20	n.a.	n.a.
1883	59	10	5276	1028	308	892	845	47	n.a.	n.a.
1884	48	15	3265	671	220*	733	666	67	n.a.	n.a.
1885	32	9	1916	516	34*	514	503	11	n.a.	n.a.
1886	25	7	1595	429	47*	453	447	6	n.a.	n.a.
1887	29	8	1988	535	13*	546	523	23	0	0
1888	34	13	2291	1052	164*	984	949	35	0	0
1889	31	9	2032	620	65*	591	569	22	2	0
1890	36	14	2459	1165	109*	1087	1018	69	0	0
1891	15	10	1050	516	65*	678	625	53	0	0
1892	6	3	464	235	29*	295	287	8	0	0
1893	14	9	1211	416	52*	889	854	35	0	0
1894	22	14	1859	945	177*	1217	1169	48	1	1
1895	16	8	1305	577	328	674	646	28	0	0
1896	11	6	782	423	307	475	455	20	0	0
1897	11	9	934	733	529	754	738	16	0	0
1898	12	9	1178	721	596	884	864	20	3	1
1899	16	13	1522	848	560	1145	1118	27	0	1
1900	20	16	1743	884	547	1322	1275	47	2	0
1901	20	17	1726	1151	783	1442	1406	36	2	2
1902	18	14	1139	875	612	997	955	42	0	0
1903	12	11	1038	663	429	946	911	35	0	0
1904	6	1	78	59	58	59	58	2	0	0
	807	260	62561	17656	9186‡	19571†	18677†	748†	10†	5†

‡ 5774  
 \* x 3 = 2931  
 8705

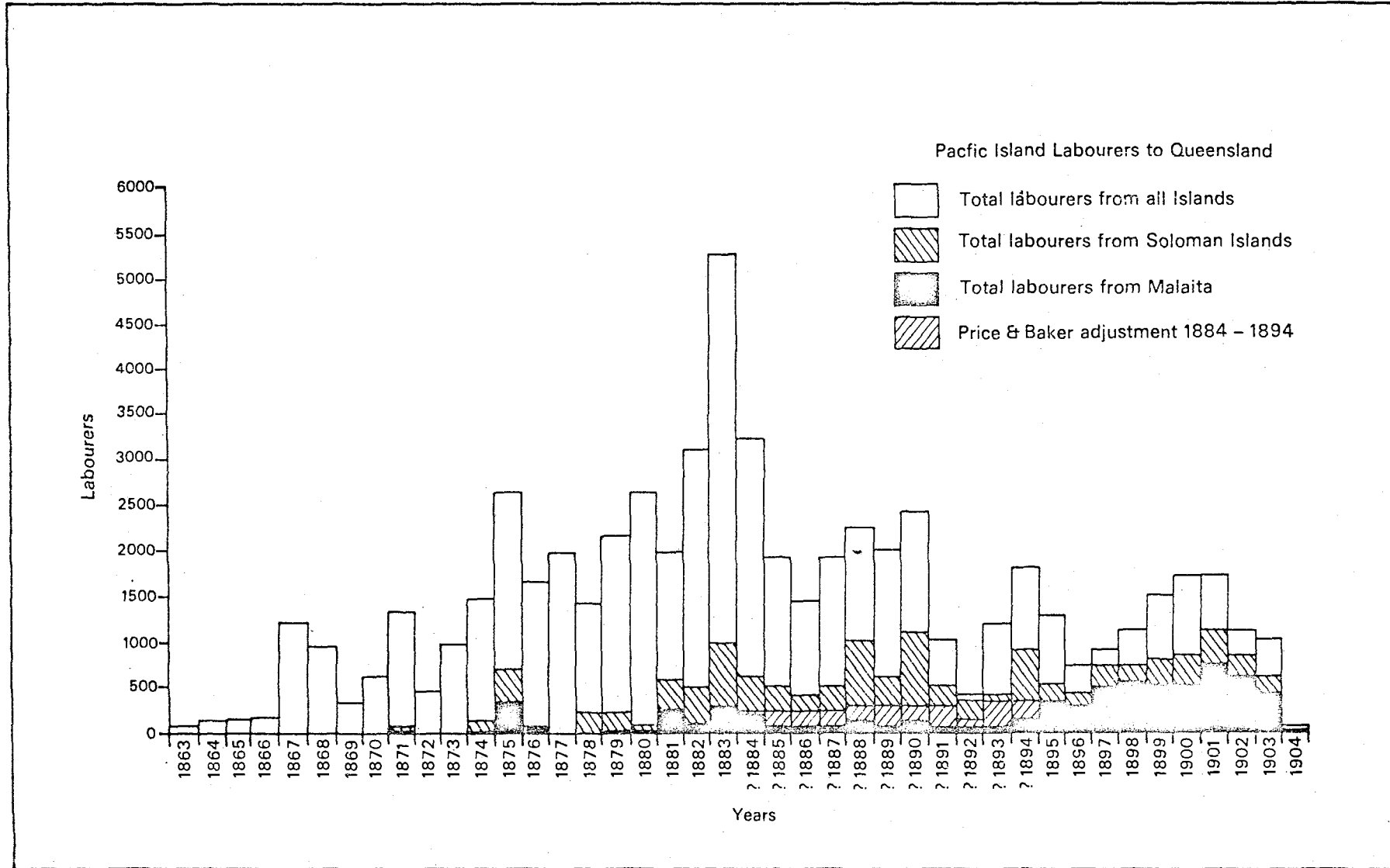
(Price & Baker = 9186)

Source: Statistics of Queensland; Annual Reports of the Dept of Pacific Island Immigration; Price with Baker, 'Origins'.

Graph One : Queensland recruiting ships' voyages, 1863 - 1904



Graph Two : The migration of Pacific island labourers to Queensland, 1863 - 1904



not possible to state exactly how many of them were from Malaita. For many of the years involved (1875-1878 and 1884-1894) there is no exact island-by-island break down available of the total figure, but in a recent research paper by Charles Price and Elizabeth Baker the total Malaitan migration is estimated at 9,187. By their estimate Malaitans were 14.7 percent of the total migration from all islands, and 51.7 percent of all Solomon Islanders recruited. In comparison with the number of recruits recorded from the next most important islands in the Queensland recruiting trade (Epi: 5,084, Tana: 4,241, Guadalcanal: 4,188, Ambrim: 3,464) Malaita was of outstanding importance as a source of labour.<sup>10</sup>

Recruiting ships made 807 round trips from Queensland ports to the islands of the Pacific; at least 260<sup>11</sup> of these visited the island of Malaita. The first of the Fijian<sup>12</sup> and Queensland vessels to recruit in the Solomon islands arrived there in 1870. The first Solomon Islanders brought to Queensland were among the fifty-eight recruits carried to Brisbane on the *Woodlark* on 19 January 1871.<sup>13</sup> The first recruits from Malaita to travel to Queensland were thirteen men taken to Mackay on board the *Isabella* in October 1871, together with thirty-eight other recruits from Guadalcanal and various New Hebridean islands.<sup>14</sup>

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10. Price and Baker state quite clearly that their estimates of island origins "are admittedly rough, and some scholars may well reject them as positively misleading and dangerous". Price with Baker, 'Origins', 108.
  11. This number is a conservative estimate based on a combination of government, company and private records. Further explanation of the sources can be found in the Introduction of this thesis. Refer to Table One of this chapter.
  12. No attempt has been made in this thesis to discuss the Fijian labour trade, in which over 8,000 Solomon Islanders (some of whom also worked in Queensland) were involved. Peter Corris researched the migration of Solomon Islanders to Fiji in his Doctoral thesis, later published as *Passage, Port and Plantation*.
  13. The *Woodlark* brought fifty-eight recruits to Brisbane on 19 January 1871; Corris records that forty-three were Solomon Islanders. *QS'tic*: 1871, 2; Corris, *Passage, Port and Plantation*, 24.
  14. One of the Malaitans died during the voyage to Mackay. *MM* 28 October 1871; *QVP* 1878:2, 39.

Before the first Solomon Islanders arrived in Queensland over three thousand men and women from the Loyalty, New Hedridean and Banks islands had been taken there as labourers.<sup>15</sup> Early recruiting in all these island groups involved a great amount of deception on the part of the Europeans and the majority of the Islanders seems to have been recruited against their wills. As recruiting increased so did the notoriety of the labour trade. Twenty-six Queensland recruiting vessels made forty-seven round voyages to and from southern Melanesia before the recruiters shifted their sights north to the Solomons in 1870. From nine of these voyages reasonably verifiable accounts of kidnapping remain, and for many of the other voyages unproven but seemingly well-founded allegations were made. Eight other cases of kidnapping on ships licenced by the New South Wales government, or on ships known to have been flying British colours are recorded in the same period.<sup>16</sup> Most of these cases were reported by missionaries, based on only a few of the islands, so it is likely that other cases of kidnapping occurred in areas remote from European settlement.

It had always been assumed that British subjects could be tried for offences connected with the labour trade under the terms of the old British *Slave Trade Acts*, or under 1820s legislation which had extended the jurisdiction of the Supreme Courts of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) to the oceans surrounding Australia and New Zealand.<sup>17</sup> As an additional safeguard, in 1868 the Queens-

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15. *QVP* 1868-9, 553-5; *QS'tie*, 1869: Immigration Table 86, and 1870: Immigration Table 1; Howe, *The Loyalty Islands*: chapter nine.

16. The Queensland ships for which verifiable accounts of kidnapping are available in the pre-Solomon recruiting period are: 1867:- *King Oscar*, *Fanny Nicholson* and *Syren*; 1868:- *Spunkie*, *Lyttona* and *Sir Isaac Newton*; 1869:- *Daphne*; 1870:- *Lyttona*; 1871:- *Jason*. *QVP* 1869:2, Report of the Select Committee on the operation of the 1868 *Polynesian Labourers' Act*; Saunders, *Uncertain Bondage*, 58-60; *RNAS* v.21, New South Wales: Report of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into certain alleged cases of kidnapping of natives of the Loyalty islands etc. together with minutes of evidence and appendix, 1869.

17. Ward, *British Policy*, 218-237; *QVP* 1884:2, Report of the Western Pacific High Commission, 945-7.

land government passed the *Polynesian Labourers Act*,<sup>18</sup> an attempt to regulate and control the introduction of Melanesian labourers to the colony. However, it was not long before the abuses which accompanied the beginning of the Queensland and Fijian labour trades made deficiencies in British and Queensland law quite obvious, in relation to offences committed by British subjects on islands in the Pacific.

The provisions of Queensland's 1868 Act were simple, and totally inadequate to control abuses in the recruiting trade. Islanders could only be brought to Queensland on voyages licenced under the terms of the Act. The Master of the ship had to post a £500 bond against kidnapping. Employers had to take out a licence to import the labourers and deposit a £10 bond for each labourer to cover the cost of his or her return passage. Wherever possible the recruiters were to get missionaries or other Europeans living on the islands to sign forms vouching that the Islanders understood their contracts and had volunteered to enlist. Other clauses of the Act controlled conditions on the voyage and provided for further supervision of the labourers during their stay in Queensland, including scales of rations, clothing and a minimum wage of £6 per annum. Contracts were set at three years duration after which the labourers could either return home or re-engage.

The measurement of the ships' passenger carrying capacity remained constant throughout the trade. Although cramped, the average space allocated per passenger was little different from the amount of space allocated to each passenger on contemporary British vessels carrying emigrants to the Australian colonies.<sup>19</sup> Queensland's recruiting

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18. The vast majority of the Pacific Islanders who migrated to Queensland were Melanesians not Polynesians. Regardless, contemporary government legislation and the general literature of the period continually referred to them as Polynesians.
19. Refer to *BPP: Emigration*, v.10, 15-28, Proposed amendments and explanatory remarks in relation to the *Passenger Act*, 1842. The amendment proposed in 1842 was that in voyages not computed to exceed twelve weeks, ten superficial feet be provided for each passenger, if the ship did not enter within the tropics; ships entering between the tropics were to provide twelve superficial feet; on all voyages of more than twelve weeks the space was to be fifteen superficial feet.

vessels were licenced to carry one adult for every twelve superficial feet allotted for their use. The minimum height between decks was set at six feet six inches (two metres); berths were limited to two tiers not less than two feet six inches (0.7625 of a metre) apart. If the between-decks height was above the minimum required, extra passengers were allowed at the ratio of one for every 144 cubic feet of space. In addition, each vessel needed five superficial feet of railed exercise space for each passenger, on the upper deck or poop.<sup>20</sup> The essential differences between passenger comfort on various British vessels carrying migrant passengers in the nineteenth century were the size of the ships and the length of the voyages. Voyages in the Melanesian labour trade were usually for two to three months, any recruit or returning Melanesian spending no more than about half the voyage time on the ship. The ships were usually schooners, barquentines, and brigantines of 100 to 300 tons. British vessels carrying European emigrants to Australia and ships in the Indian Coolie labour trade to the West Indies, Mauritius and Fiji were much larger ships, in excess of 1,000 tons.<sup>21</sup>

On the first occasion when the Acts controlling the Pacific island labour trade were tested the circumstances made it impossible for them to be applied. In 1869 Commander Palmer of HMS *Rosario* seized as a suspected slaver the *Daphne*, a labour recruiting vessel licenced by the Queensland government under the 1868 Act. Palmer was unable to use the 1868 Act because the ship was at that time involved in only insular trade, but instead resolved to order the *Daphne* to Sydney to bring a prosecution under earlier British anti-slavery Acts. No conviction was forthcoming from the Water Police Court, and when the case was tried in the Vice-Admiralty Court, Palmer merely gained a certificate justifying his seizure: the prosecution failed. If it had any effect, the *Daphne* case can only have encouraged further excesses in the labour trade, but the case did force the British government to draft its own comprehensive anti-kidnapping legislation.<sup>22</sup>

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21. H. Tinker, *A New System of Slavery: the export of Indian labour overseas, 1830-1920* (London, 1974), 146-7.

22. G. Palmer, *Kidnapping in the South Seas: being a narrative of a three month's cruise of H.M. ship Rosario* (Edinburgh, 1871); BPP, Colonies: Australasia v. 26, 40-4.

In supporting Palmer's actions the Colonial Office felt that morally, if not in strict law, the recruiting trade was developing into a type of slave trade. As a result the British government pressured the Queensland government into issuing regulations in December 1870, providing for the appointment of Government Agents to accompany all labour trade vessels leaving the colony. These Agents were responsible for the supervision of the recruiting and for the welfare of the Islanders whilst on board. They were paid £10 a month, their board and passage being provided free by the ships' owners.<sup>23</sup> Finance for the appointment of the Agents came from the bond posted for each labourer required by an employer. The Fijian government, in an attempt to control their end of the labour trade in 1874 introduced a similar system of Agents and an Act closely modelled on the 1868 Queensland Act.

Two incidents in the early 1870s enraged the British public and parliament, halted the long-winded legal wrangles between the Imperial and colonial governments, and provoked immediate legislation. During 1871 the brutality of the labour recruiters reached a climax never again equalled: a kidnapping incident followed by a sickening massacre occurred on board the *Carl*, recruiting out of Fiji. In the same year came another incident which at the time was presumed to have been retaliation for kidnapping by labour recruiters: Bishop Patteson was murdered by Santa Cruz Islanders. Patteson, first Anglican Bishop

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23. Parnaby, *Britain and the Labour Trade*, 83-9; D. Scarr, 'Recruits and Recruiters: a portrait of the Pacific islands labour trade', *JPH*, v. 2 (1967), 12-3. The Queensland Select Committee appointed in May 1869 to report on the operation of the 1868 *Polynesian Labourers Act* also suggested that Government Agents be appointed. *QVP* 1869, v. 2, 23-4. None of the logs kept by Queensland Government Agents has ever been published although a limited number have survived. The earliest known log kept by a Government Agent is that of W.G. Farquhar on the *Petrel*, 15 September 1871 to 16 January 1872. Farquhar also kept a log on an earlier voyage, when he was recruiter on the *City of Melbourne* (which was wrecked leaving port), the voyage continuing on the *Mary Campbell*, 10 October 1871 to 17 February 1872. *JCUNQ* (History Department): Diaries of W.H. Farquhar, 7 November 1861 to 17 January 1872. Also refer to C. Edmondson, Introduction to and annotations on the diaries of Government Agent S.M. Smith.



of Melanesia, sailed the Pacific in the mission's ship *Southern Cross*, evangelising and collecting Islanders willing to be trained as missionaries at his Norfolk island headquarters. On 20 September 1871 Patteson was landed alone on Nukapu, a Polynesian atoll north of Santa Cruz. He was later found floating in a canoe, wrapped in a native mat, his skull smashed by a club. Two other crew members also died as a result of attacks at Nukapu on that day.<sup>24</sup> The new legislation partly inspired by Patteson's death was the British 1872 *Pacific Islanders Protection Act*, intended to make certain that kidnapping was covered as an offence, and that British ships so engaged could be seized in the manner Palmer had taken the *Daphne*. For the future all British ships recruiting labour had to be licenced, with a £500 bond posted against malpractice. The 1872 Act also allowed for the use of evidence provided by Islanders, or other witnesses from outside British territory.<sup>25</sup>

Britain and Queensland had adopted a policy of supervision rather than prohibition of the labour trade; a policy aimed at governing the ocean rather than the islands scattered through it. Apart from occasional checks by British naval vessels in the Pacific, this supervision depended on contact with the ships in Queensland's ports, and the honesty of the Government Agent placed on board each ship with uncertain authority over the ship's Master. The legislation was also limited to British vessels licenced to operate out of Queensland and Fiji. This left other British subjects operating vessels in the New Hebrides, either recruiting without a licence or sailing under French colours, and the French and German vessels independently

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24. D. Hilliard, 'John Coleridge Patteson: missionary bishop of Melanesia', in Davidson and Scarr, *Pacific Islands Portraits*, 198-9.

25. *QGS* 1874, v. 2: 35 and 36 Vic. No. 19 (assented to 27 June 1872). An amending Act of 1875 empowered the governments of all Australian colonies as well as the Fijian government to issue recruiting licences. O.W. Parnaby, 'Aspects of British Policy in the Pacific: the 1872 Pacific Islanders Protection Act', *HS* v. 8:29 (1957), 54-65; Ward, *British Policy*, 235-7. Also refer to Appendix One, and to the definition of "kidnapping" in the Introduction of this thesis.

recruiting among the same islands for labourers to work on Samoa or New Caledonia.<sup>26</sup>

*Isabella*, the first labour recruiting ship known to have visited Malaita, arrived in 1871; no other Queensland-based ship visited the island until 1874. Thus every Malaitan taken to Queensland travelled under the protection of the 1868 Act. Each ship carried a government-appointed Agent to ensure no abuses of the law occurred, and, other than the *Isabella*, each ship was bound by the 1872 British anti-kidnapping legislation. If this legislation was effective the Malaitan recruiting trade should have been free of the abuses which had dogged earlier recruiting in the New Hebrides. In fact the initial phase of recruiting at Malaita, as in other islands both earlier and later, was based on extensive use of deception and at least occasional use of force. The attempt to police a labour traffic carried out over thousands of square kilometres of ocean, by means of a handful of naval vessels and with a single ill-paid official on board each vessel of Queensland register would have been futile, but for the action of the Islanders themselves. Their capacity for resisting unwelcome recruiting, and their willingness to accept a steady flow of recruits on acceptable terms, were indispensable in producing a well-regulated voluntary traffic accepted as beneficial by both parties.

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26. Ward, *British Policy*, 237; Corris, *Passage, Port and Plantation*, 27-8; Scarr, 'Recruits and Recruiters', *passim*.

## 2. Malaitans, the Pacific and Europeans

Controlling the nineteenth century labour trade became an unwelcome and difficult task for the expanding empires of Europe. Their problems in policing the trade were enormous; but the effect of the trade on the lives of the Melanesians involved was cataclysmic. Malaitans had known their island as the center of their universe for thousands of years.<sup>27</sup> They communicated with the inhabitants of the surrounding islands but knew little of further islands in the Pacific and nothing of the world beyond. We are accustomed to thinking of the great geographical discoveries of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as effecting a revolution in the view of the world held by Europeans. In reality, while having vast repercussions on innumerable aspects of European civilization, the discoveries did little to change the ideas concerning the shape and size of the earth and of Europe's place in it, already held by educated Europeans. The impact made upon Malaitans' world view by the knowledge brought by sustained contact with Europeans was immeasurably greater.

The Malaitan world, as already noted, consisted of the surrounding "eight isles" and limited knowledge of further islands, from Santa Cruz in the south to the islands off eastern New Guinea to the north. Quite shortly after leaving Malaita a nineteenth century labour recruit would be outside his or her known world; beyond the stability of an exactly ordered existence. Europeans living in Australia, across the Coral sea, were certainly never included in their vision of the universe. The earliest recorded European contact with Malaita was through the Spanish expedition led by Alvaro de Mendaña in the second half of the sixteenth century. On 26 May 1568<sup>28</sup> the expedition reached Uhu on the west coast and took possession of Malaita (which they called Ramos) in the name of Philip II of Spain.

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27. Refer to Chapter One: the Eight Isles and beyond, and to Map Three.

28. The first European contact with Malaitans could have been on 24 May, when the expedition reached Marau sound on Guadalcanal. De Coppet is certain that Marau had been colonized by the 'Are 'are people by this date. de Coppet, 'First exchange, double illusion', 26; de Coppet and Zemp, 'Are 'are, 111.

The expedition continued down the coast on the 27th, passed the western entrance of Maramasike passage to Tawani'ahi'a (Ariel harbour) on Maramasike, before leaving the island and moving on to Ulawa.<sup>29</sup> After Mendaña's expedition the Solomon group of islands vanish into myth until the re-birth of European exploration in the mid-eighteenth century.

The Spanish visit left a permanent impression on the west coast 'Are 'are: a visit by nomadic white-skinned people in large winged canoes, who brought sickness and destruction. Malaitans did not use sails on their canoes and had minimal contact with Islanders who did. The 'Are 'are memory of the arrival of the Spanish is of a time when the sea became ill and carried white blown-out monsters:

one day the Melanesians saw white lumps on the sea, passing by the coast like a new threat of sickness. They were the sails of armoured ships manned by Europeans. These floating monsters swelled like clouds at the whim of the wind. If they came nearer men with white skins could be seen, bustling about in all directions. Above all they were looking for water. Who were they? Living? Dead? Ancestors? 30

The 'Are 'are warriors in a fleet of canoes attacked the ship with arrows. The Spanish fired back, killing some and wounding others. Later while ashore they used an arquebus<sup>31</sup> to shoot a pig, leaving barter deemed equivalent in its place. A ceremonial exchange took place, which anthropologist Daniel de Coppet aptly named a "double illusion"<sup>32</sup>: the Spanish exchanged sailors' caps for short staffs of

29. Jack-Hinton, *The Search for the Islands of Solomon*, 58-61.

30. de Coppet, 'First exchange, double illusion', 23-4.

31. This was probably a lighter version of the arquebus, used without a tripod. D. Shineberg, 'Guns and men in Melanesia', *JPH*, v. 6 (1971), 63-4.

32. De Coppet says that the Spanish offered their capes in exchange for the staffs. My reading of the description of the occurrence in Amherst and Thomson's *The Discovery of the Solomon Islands* is that the Spanish sailors offered their caps not their capes. It is most unlikely that sailors were wearing capes in May in an equatorial climate, and the word in their text is "cap", not "cape". This does not change de Coppet's argument that the 'Are 'are conceptualised the exchanges as symbolic gestures of peace. Amherst and Thomson, *Discovery of the Solomon Islands*, xl.

a type worn<sup>33</sup> by some of the natives, parts of which they thought were gold; the 'Are 'are exchanged a *namo's* (*ramo*) ceremonial stick, a symbol of murder and death, for the peace-offering of their white visitors. The result of this exchange was disappointing for both parties: the ceremonial sticks contained no gold; the Spanish caps were harbingers of an epidemic<sup>34</sup> which followed the Spanish visit, and of further European exploration in the nineteenth century culminating in the labour trade, not the symbol of peace they envisaged.

Explorers and whaling and trading vessels working in the Pacific may have made voyages past Malaita in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but few records have been found to substantiate this.<sup>35</sup> A Lascar seaman, rescued from Malaita in the 1830s, claimed

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33. The staffs were suspended down the wearers' backs on a string around the neck.
  34. The 'Are 'are remember only that there was an epidemic of sickness, not what type of sickness.
  35. Douglas Rannie, a Government Agent, suggested that Malaitans had attacked vessels on their way to China, while they were becalmed off the east coast of the island. Rannie was not correct in saying that Malaita was directly on the China route and it is not likely that any such attacks occurred. He was probably mistaking the 1820s attacks on small trading vessels for attacks on East India Company Ships.

Malaitans might have been trading with Europeans for some decades before recruiting began, but no definite earlier information has been located. In 1871 Malaitans in canoes attempted to trade with the *Ellen* from Fiji. John Renton described Lau people trying to trade coconuts and tortoise shell with Europeans in the early 1870s. A 1879 list prepared for the Royal Navy's Australia Station shows that trading ships working out of Sydney and others based in the Pacific islands were trading with Malaitans.

D. Rannie, *My Adventures among South Sea Cannibals: an account of the experiences and adventures of a government official among the natives of Oceania* (London, 1912), 183; Personal communication with Dr H.T. Fry, Townsville, 12 March 1980; H.T. Fry, 'Cathy, and the way thither' the background to Botany Bay', *HS*, v. 14:56 (1971), 497-510; *RNAS* : 15, Yearly estimate of trade with the Solomon and Admiralty islands and New Britain and New Ireland together with a list of merchant vessels trading in the Solomon and adjacent islands in 1879, by Capt. Purvis, 30 September 1979; Corris, *Passage, Port and Plantation*, 25; Marwick, *John Renton*, 37-8.

to be the sole survivor of twenty men from an English brig captured by Malaitans some years earlier. In the same period Malaitans captured another brig, the *Alfred*, and held its second Mate in captivity.<sup>36</sup> Andrew Cheyne, Master of the brig *Naiad* passed Malaita in 1844 on one of his trading voyages. Bishop Patteson first visited Malaita in 1856, and in 1866 two South Malaitans, Joe Wate and Watehou were taken by the Bishop to his mission station on Norfolk island.<sup>37</sup>

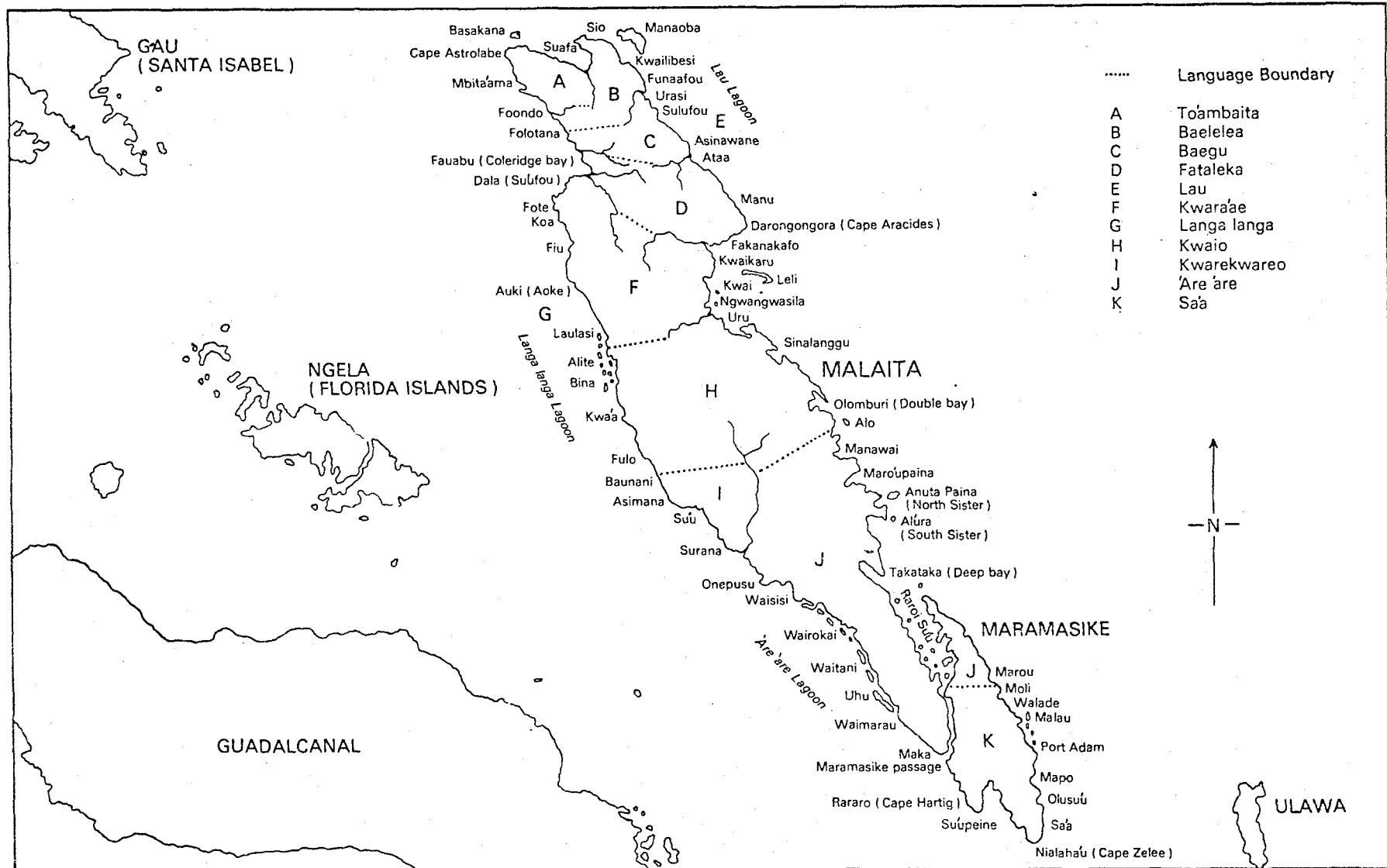
The next European known to have arrived at Malaita was John Renton, a Scottish seaman, who was the only survivor among five deserters from the American guano boat *Renard* in 1868. He and his companions drifted almost 2,000 kilometers in one of the *Renard's* boats, finally landing at Manaoba, off the north-east coast of Malaita. His four companions were killed but Renton became a "guest" of Lau *wane baita* Kabbou and lived from 1868 until 1875 on Sulufou artificial island. During this period recruiting vessels initially ventured to the island, the first arriving in 1871; Renton was finally rescued by the crew of the Queensland recruiting vessel *Bobtail Nag* in August 1875.<sup>38</sup> Unfortunately, although he learnt the Lau language and generally participated in life on the lagoons for eight years, the account

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36. Maude, *Of Islands and Men*, 146; Corris, *Passage, Port and Plantation*, 12-3. One of these survivors would have been a white man remembered as "Doorey" who lived in Lau lagoon about forty years before John Renton, a "guest" on Sulufou artificial island from 1868 to 1875. Marwick, *John Renton*, 23; T.W. Smith, *A Narrative of the life, travels and sufferings of Thomas W. Smith* (Boston, 1844), 203-5.
37. D. Shineberg (ed.), *The Trading Voyages of Andrew Cheyne: 1841-1844* (Canberra, 1971), 316; C.E. Fox, *Lord of the Southern Isles: being the story of the Anglican Mission in Melanesia: 1849-1949* (London, 1959), 167.
38. Renton returned to Malaita as interpreter on a Queensland recruiting ship in late 1875, but never afterwards visited the island. He later became a Government Agent employed to accompany recruiting ships on their voyages. The logs for these voyages were published in Marwick's *The Adventures of John Renton*. Renton was killed in 1878 at Aoba island in the New Hebrides while Government Agent on the *Mystery*. Cromar, *Jock of the Islands*, 78, 216-7, 243; W.E. Giles, *A Cruize in a Queensland labour vessel to the South Seas*. Edited by D. Scarr (Canberra, 1968), 71; Ivens, *Melanesians*, 23-4.

which he left is disappointingly shallow. He did however describe Lau interpretation of the strange new phenomena, large European ships and their white crews:

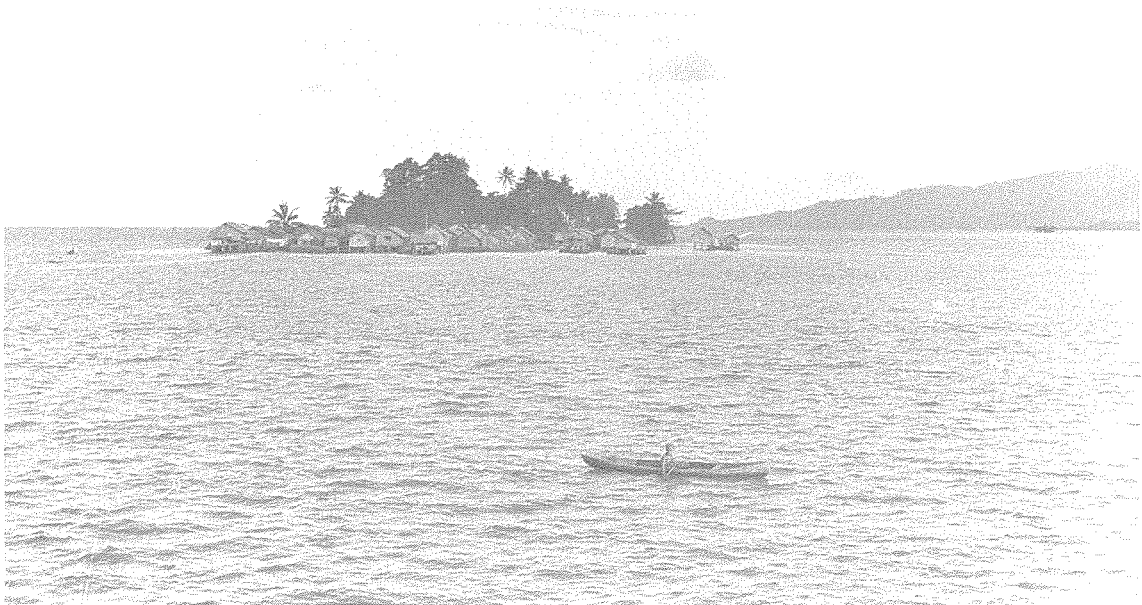
Their conceptions were that the whole human race lived under conditions little different from their own. The white man only presented himself to them as a nomadic race eternally roving about over the sea in his big canoes. If the white man had any island at all, they argued, it must be a very little one - much smaller than their Malayta - their magnificent Malayta - otherwise they would not require to leave it and come trading for yams and coconuts. 39

Map One : Malaitan language areas and major recruiting passages

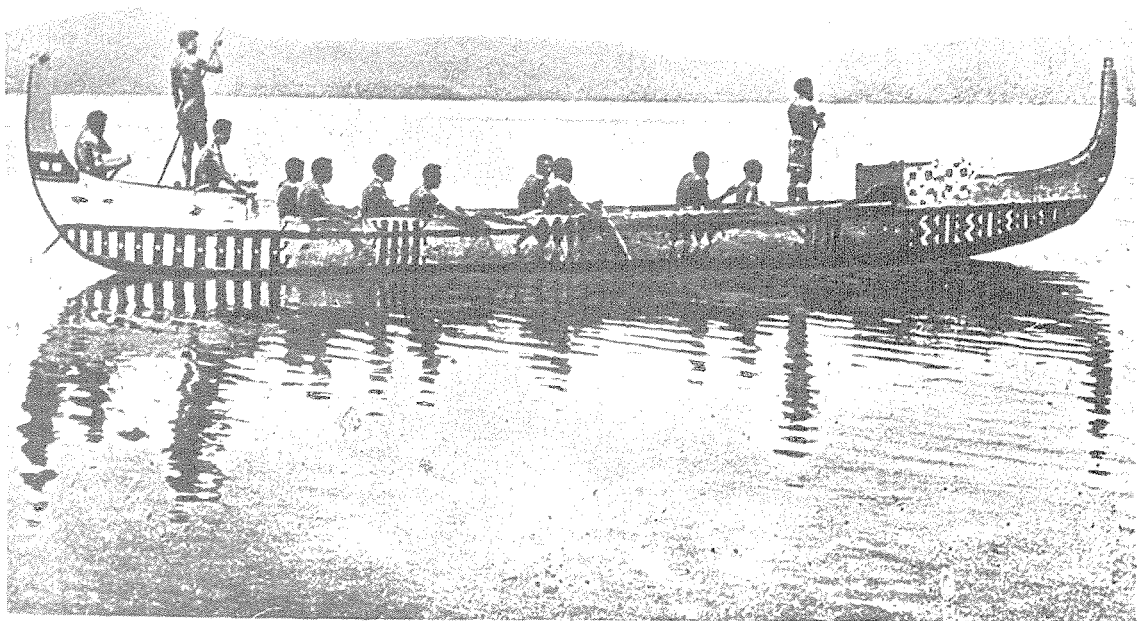




## PLATE 5



a. An artificial islet in Lau lagoon, June 1976.



b. A nineteenth century Langa langa ocean-going canoe. (Photo: Ivens, *Island Builders*, 224)

### 3. The Recruiting Trade: initial phase 1871-1885

Having seen several European vessels passing by Lau Lagoon Renton knew that it was only a matter of time before he would be rescued. Unknown to him, the *Isabella* recruiting for sugar plantations at Mackay visited the west coast of Malaita in 1871. Using interpreters from Makira, the *Isabella* sailed along the west coast of Malaita for four days, managing to take thirteen Malaitans on board. On the first day the ship was surrounded by warriors in canoes, while others lined the shore. On the second day the *Isabella* grounded on Alite reef, "enlisting" three men who came out in canoes to inspect the ship. Four more men were recruited during the next two days, after which the ship moved on to Ngela. One Malaitan died on the voyage to Queensland.<sup>40</sup> Two other recruiting ships are known to have taken recruits from Malaita in 1871, the *Ellen* and the *Carl* from Fiji.<sup>41</sup> The *Ellen's* crew fired on the canoes of Malaitans who had tried to trade, then hauled the occupants on board,<sup>42</sup> but it is the *Carl* which holds the dubious distinction of carrying out the worst case of kidnapping in the entire recruiting trade.

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40. *MM* 28 October 1871; *QVP* 1878:2, 39. The official records show only 6 Malaitans arriving in Queensland in 1871.

41. W.G. Ivens claimed that the Fijian vessel *Marion Rennie* kidnapped Malaitans, including Itei of Sa'a and Amasia of Fuaga in Lau lagoon in 1871, and that the Islanders on board later rioted and killed the Europeans. I know of no other report of this incident, and it seems likely that Ivens probably confused the *Marion Rennie* with the *Carl*. The passages Ivens lists as visited by the *Marion Rennie* are the same as those visited by the *Carl*. Ivens claimed that a man named "Itei" was kidnapped on *Marion Rennie* at Sa'a, but a man of similar name, "Itai" was kidnapped from Sa'a on the *Carl* in the same year.

Ivens, *Dictionary of Sa'a and Ulawa*, 221; A.E. Brewster, *King of the Cannibal Isles: a tale of early life and adventures in the Fiji islands* (London, 1937), 231; Markham, *The Cruise of the "Rosario"*, 121-8.

42. Corris, *Passage, Port and Plantation*, 26. Either the *Ellen* or the *Carl* is described by Renton, kidnapping men off Lau lagoon when they tried to trade coconuts and tortoise shell.

Marwick, *John Renton*, 37-9.

In September 1871 forty-three Malaitans were taken from along the east coast,<sup>43</sup> using the *Carl's* standard method of attracting canoes alongside the vessel, and then dropping lumps of pig-iron, small cannon or harpoons attached to ropes, into the canoes in order to sink them. The Islanders were then hauled on board; those resisting were shot. Soon after their capture the Malaitans attempted to escape. They managed to crawl through the chain-holes in the bows, but deferred their final escape from the ship, preferring to wait on board rather than face the inhabitants of another island. Subsequently, after a disturbance caused by the Islanders in the ship's hold, the crew of the *Carl* shot the majority of their recruits. About seventy dead and wounded were thrown over board. Twenty-five Malaitans survived and were subsequently transshipped with other Islanders at Fiji, to a small schooner the *Peri* which was to carry them to plantations on surrounding islands. On the way they captured the ship, killed the crew, and as the *Peri* drifted aimlessly for five weeks and provisions ran out the Malaitans (mainly Kwara'ae *wane asi* from Leli) ate thirty of the non-Malaitan Islanders. The *Peri* drifted for 2,900 kilometres through the Barrier reef to the Queensland coast north of Townsville, where she was found by HMS *Basilisk* on 5 February 1872.<sup>44</sup> Thirteen of the Malaitans were still alive; eleven of them were eventually returned to their island on board HMS *Dido* in 1873.<sup>45</sup>

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43. According to survivors from this voyage forty-three Malaitans were kidnapped all along the east coast at: Sa'a (2), Malau (2), Aio (1), Singalangu (10), Leli (25), and Manaoba (3). Brewster, *King of the Cannibal Isles*, 232 map and 214, 231-4; for a variety of reports on the *Carl* massacre and the voyage of the *Peri* refer to:

MM 19 July 1873; Markham, *Cruise of the "Rosario"*, 109-19; E.W. Docker, *The Blackbirders: the recruiting of South Seas labour for Queensland, 1863-1907* (Sydney, 1970), 79-84; T. Dunbabin, *Slavers of the South Seas* (Sydney, 1935), 209-19; J. Moresby, *New Guinea and Polynesia: discoveries and surveys in New Guinea and the D'entrecasteaux islands...HMS Basilisk* (London, 1876), 4-6.

44. Moresby, *New Guinea and Polynesia*, 4-6; MM 24 February 1872.

45. RNAS: 21, page 191. Papers ordered presented to the House of Lords, 24 March 1874, containing copies of extracts of correspondence respecting outrages committed upon natives of the South Sea islands, Capt. W.C. Chapman (HMS *Dido*) to Com. Stirling, 24 August 1873; G. Turner, 'Wreck of the Brig "maria" ', *Cummins & Campbell's Monthly Magazine*, August 1932, 43-5.

Kidnapping under cover of voluntary recruiting was common in the Solomons in the 1870s, mirroring the initial phase of the labour trade in the New Hebrides in the 1860s.<sup>46</sup> As had occurred in previous years, the Islanders often thought the men on the big ships wanted to barter European goods for island produce. Well before Renton lived on Malaita the coastal Malaitans were aware that the European ships were a source of iron axes and foreign trinkets and were quite accustomed to barter with the crews of trading vessels. But when they tried to trade coconuts and tortoise shell with the recruiting ships, their canoes were smashed and they were forced on board. John Renton's life was endangered when the first Malaitans were kidnapped along the east coast and their kin sought vengeance. Malaitans kidnapped by Europeans were either never seen again or did not return for two or three years. Malaitan justice demands a death for a death; the death of any European was regarded as fair exchange for a kidnapping.<sup>47</sup>

Typical of many cases is the capture of Taama from Talito artificial island at Ataa by the crew of the *Lady Darling* in 1875.<sup>48</sup> Taama had many relatives among the Lau and the *wane tolo* of east Baegu and Fataleka. His people had lived on Talito for five generations and before that on Suraina; both are completely artificial islands painstakingly built over years using coral rock from the surrounding reefs. Ten generations before Taama his forebears had lived in east Kwaio, but because of sorcery they had been forced to leave their home. They became sea gypsies, paddling south around Maramasike to Langa langa in the west, before rounding the north to Funaafou in Lau lagoon, finally settling at Ataa.

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46. Refer to Section One of this chapter.

47. Marwick, *John Renton*, 37.

For further information on the Malaitan attitude to death refer to Chapter Three: Malaitans and the European mode of production, and to Chapter Eight: Melanesian perceptions of disease and death.

48. QSA PRE/83a-b (*Lady Darling* 17-6-1875).

Note: Wherever possible through this and the subsequent chapter the exact voyage on which any incident took place is indicated in brackets at the end of the reference. The date is the day of arrival in the first Queensland port of call.

PLATE 6



Kalabet Fugui of Talito artificial islet at Ataa, east Malaita, November 1976. In the background are the skulls of his and Taama's ancestors.

In 1875 Taama was in his twenties, married to Afuwata with one child, 'Oto. His livelihood came from the sea. His worship was centered at Asniwane on the mainland cliffs adjacent to Talito, and on the islet itself, where the *beu aabu* (sacred house) contained the skulls of the descent group's more immediate ancestors. Taama would not have been totally ignorant of the European world because he must have known the Scottish seaman John Renton, and a number of European vessels had sailed past Ataa in the early 1870s, particularly the *Carl* and the *Ellen* on which Lau men were kidnapped. Taama never returned to Malaita but over a century later his descendants remember the tale of his kidnapping. The *Lady Darling* sailed up to the edge of the reef at Ataa, and while those on Talito watched with interest, the men on board unfolded big pieces of red calico and shook them over the side of the schooner. Taama was fascinated and along with some other men, went to investigate, against the advice of his elders. He had a reputation as a "hot head" and did not take kindly to advice. Several other canoes went out at the same time, and as they drew alongside the *Lady Darling*, one of the ship's boats appeared from behind the vessel, the crew training guns on Taama and his friends. They sensed danger, but too late. Weights were dropped from the ship's deck to smash the canoe, and in the skirmish that followed shots were fired, killing one man in Taama's canoe. Some of the men managed to escape, but Taama and some others became recruits for Mackay plantations.<sup>49</sup>

Others were kidnapped from their canoes while they were fishing off Malaita:

Some Laulasi men were out fishing on Alite Atoll. A sailing ship came from Queensland. When it saw them, somebody called: "Come aboard". There was a man from Guadalcanal up there beckoning to them. But they had never seen such a huge ship. They paddled their canoes away. The ship followed. They tried to paddle to freedom. "Don't be afraid. Listen friends. Hear me". They ignored these words. A longboard was lowered and it came after them. The Laulasi men jumped out of their canoe. They

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49. Information from Kalabet Fugui, Talito, 2 November 1976, and Ramofafia, Manabulo village, 1 June 1978. *MM* 19 June 1875.

dived and swam in every direction to escape. Again the man called: "Don't be afraid. Come to us." Some listened then and gave up. Others, still fearful, dived and fled. Eventually they tired and were picked up by the longboat. 50

In another case from the 1870s Nekwau and Autoi set out from Lau Lagoon by canoe to travel to Mbita'ama in northwest Malaita. A Queensland recruiting ship came up to them, smashed their canoe and forced them on board. On the voyage to Queensland a fight broke out between Islanders in the hold, which the Europeans stopped by shooting the participants.<sup>51</sup> In other cases unsuspecting Islanders were coaxed out of their canoes, up onto the deck, and encouraged to inspect the ship, particularly its hold. Suddenly they found the hatches clapped on over their heads and the vessel underway.<sup>52</sup>

Malaitans were also kidnapped from the shore. Corris collected an account of the first Kwaio recruiting, which he tentatively indentified as concerning the *Sybil* in the late 1870s, when two Aio islet men, Tobebe and Afio were pursued and captured on the beach:

... Afio and Tobebe ran and ran but it was hard because the crew, I think twelve men in all, chased them. They were caught and held. They were held, everybody had a hand in it, and tied their legs, tied their hands, and put them in the dinghy and took them out to the ship. When the crew put them

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50. This story was told by Jack Kamada of Laulasi islet in Langa langa lagoon. Doak, *Sharks, and Other Ancestors*, 267-8.
51. CRM 25a:1-3, Sandie Kwao (son of Nekwau), Saua artificial islet, 4 November 1976. A similar case occurred on board the *Alfred Vittery* off Malaita in 1883. O.W. Parnaby, 'The Labour Trade' in R.G. Ward (ed.), *Man in the Pacific Islands: essays on geographical change in the Pacific islands* (Oxford, 1972), 137.
52. An incident of this type, concerning the *Heron* in 1883, is described later in this chapter. The son of one European sailor on Queensland recruiting vessels remembers his father describing this method. Dick Satavi, a Fataleka *wane tolo* who lived at Mackay until the 1940s, described his own enlistment in a similar way. He boarded a recruiting ship of his own free will, but just out of interest with no intention of enlisting. The ship sailed and as Satavi could not swim he had no means of escape. C.R. Moore (ed.), *The Forgotten People: a history of the Australian South Sea island community*. From the ABC Broadband radio series first broadcast January 10-12, 1978. (Sydney, 1979), 12-13; BOHC 48a:1 (NJF).

in the ship they put them down below.  
Then they shut them in down below and  
departed, off they went. 53

A similar story is told of Toniia who was kidnapped at Kwai harbour, east Kwara'ae. The recruiters came onto the beach and threw sticks of tobacco on the sand. Toniia was caught as he was busy picking some up.<sup>54</sup>

Some facts about the first decade of the Malaitan recruiting trade to Queensland are quite clear. The early Malaitan recruits were mainly, and for the first decade probably exclusively, male. Calculating from the figures given in Table One, on the 260 voyages known to have included visits to Malaita between 1871 and 1904, only four percent of the total recruits were female; in the first decade of Malaitan recruiting, on ships known to have visited the island, females made up about half of one percent of the total number. Almost certainly all of the men recruited before the *Bobtail Nag's* voyage of 1875, when John Renton was rescued, were kidnapped, and a good number after this date were similarly illegally recruited. The recruits of the 1870s and the early 1880s were predominantly coastal people from the lagoons and bays. Tentative identification of the names of Malaitans recruited in the 1870s indicates that most did live close to the coast, but not all were *wane asi*.<sup>55</sup> This last point only becomes obvious by connecting the ethnographic field research in the previous chapter to the beginnings of the recruiting trade. The *wane tolo* descent groups of east Fataleka/Baegu are closely related to the *wane asi* at Ataa; Baegu and Fataleka bush people

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53. Corris recorded this story in pidgin English at Sinalanggu in 1968 and translated it into English. Corris, *Passage, Port and Plantation*, 26-7.
54. Information from Phillip Fageea at Ambe, east Fataleka, 19 May 1978.
55. Refer to Chapter Three, Table Four: '2,023 Malaitan recruits identified by dialect area, 1871-1904', and to my 'Malaitan Recruiting to Queensland'. A paper presented at ANZAAS, Auckland, 22 January 1979, to be published in *Oral History*, v. 10 (1981).



were recruited at Ataa with their *wane asi* kin as early as 1875.<sup>56</sup>

Kidnapping continued, less frequently, but well into the mid-1880s with the final definite incident recorded in 1894. By the 1880s and 1890s some ship's Masters, Mates and Government Agents had become regular visitors to Malaita and had cultivated personal friendships with Malaitans important in the trade. Some Masters and Government Agents visited Malaita regularly, averaging a voyage a year over periods of up to twenty years; some, three times in a single year.<sup>57</sup> It was not in the long-term interests of these men to be deceptive in their dealings with Malaitans, when they expected to return to the same bays and passages over decades, collecting labourers for the plantations. Each voyage was a business proposition for the ship-owner, the Master (who was often part-owner) and the crew. If a ship or Master acquired a bad reputation (as some did) recruiting would be slow and the gifts given to the recruits kin would have to be larger, lessening the profit. It was in the best interests of the recruiters to foster good relations with the Islanders; indeed on Malaita it was essential, given the ferocity with which Malaitans resisted the advances of recruiters if they felt any grievance towards Europeans.<sup>58</sup>

Significantly, on the four voyages on which kidnapping is known to have occurred at Malaita after 1880, the Masters and Government Agents were new-comers to the island. As a consequence of the incident, or by design, they never returned to Malaita.<sup>59</sup> The four cases

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56. For example, the *Lady Darling* was the third Queensland recruiting ship to visit Malaita. In June 1875 she brought 99 recruits to Mackay: 64 were Malaitans. Among a group of men gathered at Ataa (at least one of whom, Taama (Tamma) is remembered as having been kidnapped), several were *wane tolo*: Toosoolia (recruit number 36), from the Fataleka bush neat Ataa; Atooroo (38), from Fataleka, descended from the Kanole descent group cluster; Mansooa (53) from Fataleka, descended from the Subea descent group cluster; Marroa (61) from Baegu, inland from Ataa. QSA PRE/83a-b; Identification provided by Ishmael Itea, Charles Luiramo and Ramofafia.
57. Refer to Table Two at the end of the chapter.
58. Refer to Appendix Two: Malaitan Resistance against Europeans.
59. Refer to Table Two: H.C. Adrian, A.G. Lynde; J. Meaney, J. Thompson; J. Loutitt, C. Mills; J. Vos, G.T. Olver.

known, involving the *Jabberwock* in 1881, the *Heron* in 1883, the *Ethel* in 1884 and *William Manson* in 1894, are probably typical of other incidents now forgotten. Oral history collected from Malaitans in Queensland suggests that similar cases of kidnapping, or at least involving misunderstanding of the implications of recruiting, occurred in the 1880s.<sup>60</sup>

Netoka, Arfu and two other men were kidnapped on board the *Jabberwock* at Ataa in early 1881, and taken to work at Mackay. On this voyage the *Jabberwock's* Master was H.C. Adrian and its Government Agent H.G. Lynde. It was Adrian's first voyage to Malaita as Master of a Queensland recruiting vessel and Lynde's second and last visit to Malaita as Government Agent.<sup>61</sup> Lynde had previously visited Malaita as Government Agent on the *Sybil* in 1878, the voyage on which Corris suggests men were kidnapped in east Kwáio. The next case known was in 1883 when J.H. Rogers, Mate of the *Heron* is supposed to have enticed some Ataa men into the ship's hold, closed the hatch, then sailed away. The *Heron* made two voyages to Malaita in that year, both with Master J. Meaney and Government Agent J. Thompson. Neither man is known to have visited Malaita again in those capacities. Rogers was later Master of the *Young Dick* when the ship was attacked at Sinalanggu and upward of twenty-five lives were lost.<sup>62</sup> The third case involves the *Ethel*. In 1884 its Master J. Loutitt, Mate G.R. Burton (Barton ?) and Government Agent C. Mills were imprisoned for illegal recruiting; at least three Malaitans<sup>63</sup> were on board. Loutitt and Mills do not appear to have visited Malaita previously.

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60. For one example refer to *BOHC* 1 Ba:2 (HSQ, ONF).

61. Netoka's case is discussed further in the final section of Chapter Three. Adrian is only known to have made one other voyage from Queensland to Malaita, as Master of the *Borough Belle* in 1884. Information from Ishmael Itea, Ambe, Malaita, 10 October 1976; *QSA* PRE/83a-b; *QS'tic*: Population Table 5; Table Two of this chapter.

62. Cromar, *Jock of the Islands*, 311-2; *QS'tic*: 1883 Population Table 5; Table Two of this Chapter; Appendix Two: Malaitan Resistance against Europeans.

63. These men, Lantie, Swarnear and Vraymon later worked at Mackay. W. T. Wawn, *The South Sea Islanders and the Queensland Labour Trade*. Edited by P. Corris. (First published in 1893, re-published Canberra, 1973), 353; Corris, *Passage, Port and Plantation*, 60; *QSA* PRE/83a-b; *QSA* IPI 3/3. Also refer to Table Two at the end of this chapter.

PLATE 7



Portraits of nineteenth century Malaitans. (Photos: Rannie, *My Adventures*, 48, 65, 300)

Ten years after these three cases an isolated incident occurred in 1894 when several Malaitans were kidnapped on board the *William Manson*. The case is atypical: it is the only recorded example of Malaitans abducting their own people and delivering them to the recruiters; and Joseph Vos, the Master, had a large financial interest in the voyage, sufficient for him to offer Kwaisulia (the major Lau passage master) a large inducement for his help - a whale boat in return for providing ten recruits. It was the *William Manson's* second voyage in the labour trade, the first time the ship, Master or Government Agent had been to Malaita, and the kidnapping owed as much to the connivance of Kwaisulia and his cohort Gwaliasi of Sulu-fou as to the Europeans involved. Vos, Government Agent G.T. Olver, the Mate, the recruiter and three seamen were charged with kidnapping, but after a protracted trial the cases were dismissed on a technicality. Obviously guilty, the men were banned from further participation in the recruiting trade.<sup>64</sup>

Historians have attempted to make numerical estimates of the degree of illegality in the total Queensland labour trade. Kay Saunders seems to have come close to the truth in estimating that twenty-five to thirty percent of all enlistments "were in varying degrees illegal, though probably less than 5 percent would have been kidnapped."<sup>65</sup> Saunders also suggested 1885 as the cut-off date between an early increasingly legal period and the later predominantly legal period in the labour trade. Her estimate is paralleled by the statistics for Malaitan recruiting and by what can be reconstructed of the recruiting experiences of individual Malaitans. Approximately<sup>66</sup>

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64. QSA GOV/A26, page 577: Return of licence; QSA COL/A791, In letter 3457 of 1895, OIC PILB to PUS CSD, 26 March 1895; QSA COL/A795, In letter 9662 of 1895, Ripon to Norman, 27 June 1895, transcript of evidence taken at Mackay 23 October 1894; QSA GOV/A27, IPI Caufeild to IA, 9 November 1894; Table Two of this chapter.

65. Saunders, *Uncertain Bondage*, 85.

66. Such calculations are difficult as the data is incomplete. These estimates are based on the statistics presented in Table One and Graphs One and Two of this chapter, supplemented by Price and Baker's estimates. Using Price and Baker's statistics as a base to supplement incomplete figures for the periods 1878-9 and 1884-1894, a multiplying factor of three has been used to adjust the available totals for those years in Table One. Price with Baker, 'Origins', *passim*.

1,800 out of the 9,000 Malaitan recruits arrived in Queensland before the end of 1885; this places twenty percent of all Malaitan recruits into Saunders' period of most frequent illegality; the mid-1880s cut-off date being reasonably supported by evidence presented in this and the following chapters. In the first decade of the labour trade from Malaita to Queensland, about 440 Malaitans were recruited, the majority of them in one year, 1875; this places 4.7 percent of the Malaitan recruits in the category Saunders designated as almost certainly involving illegality.<sup>67</sup>

Malaitan recruiting to Queensland began slowly: thirteen in 1871, none in 1872 or 1873, thirteen in 1874.<sup>68</sup> In 1874 the *Isabella* returned the men taken to Mackay in 1871, the first to complete the round trip from Malaita to the Queensland plantations. From the mid-1870s as more Malaitans began to take part in this circular-migration to Queensland and the other European colonies in the Pacific, it became possible for those who returned home to explain to other members of their descent groups what the three years' absence entailed:

When the men were first stolen they thought the white men had taken them and killed them, and they cried and treated them as dead. The people cried and didn't wash and decorated their hair for bereavement. Then the men came back with guns and knives and axes and showed the people how these could be used in the garden and to kill birds and men. And then the people wanted to go, and the fathers encouraged their sons to do so. 69

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67. Saunders designates the first decade (1863-1874) of the entire Queensland labour trade as the period when recruiting almost certainly involved illegality. The equivalent decade for Malaita is from 1871 to 1879. It would not be accurate to suggest that the entire 4.7 percent who were recruited from Malaita in this first decade were obtained illegally. There was a considerable spate of voluntary enlistment with and following the departure of John Renton from Lau in 1875.

68. Refer to Table One in this chapter.

69. Spoken in pidgin English by Ishmael Itea, Ambe, 10 October 1976.

Scarr, Corris, Bennett and Saunders,<sup>70</sup> the scholars who have completed the most recent research into the Queensland labour trade all reached basically the same conclusion, supporting the pattern which this study has found on Malaita: the initial recruits came from coastal areas where the Islanders had direct access to vessels; recruiting in its initial stages was primarily by deception. Equally, research findings stress that kidnapping is not a continuing theme as the recruiting trade progressed into the 1880s, 1890s and early 1900s; recruiting became a voluntary affair. The change came not from any substantial alteration in European attitudes to Melanese-ians or from better government of the Pacific islands, rather it developed with increasing awareness amongst the Islanders of the real nature and benefits of the labour trade and life on the plantations, an awareness which made kidnapping unnecessary and almost impossible in later years.

To kidnap a Malaitan was a physical act; but the act had vast cosmic consequences. Kidnapping an individual disrupted the metaphysical world of his or her entire descent group and their relationship with neighbouring descent groups. Compensatory measures had to be taken to restore cyclic equilibrium. The loss of an individual was dealt with in the same way as if the loss had been by murder: another life had to be taken and currency had to change hands before stability was restored. Australian Pacific Islanders, descendants of the labour recruits, sincerely believe that their forebears were all

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70. The work of Scarr, Corris and Saunders has been referred to earlier in this chapter. Judith Bennett joined Murray Chapman in 1972, to examine village relocation on the weather coast of Guadalcanal: the influences of the recruiting trade were found to be quite marked, and by combining oral sources with the records of the Queensland Department of Pacific Island Immigration, Bennett was able to reconstruct settlement patterns that were current in the nineteenth century. Bennett's study of the recruiting trade has continued, confined to the plantations within the Solomon Islands, but including the oral testimony of labourers who also visited the colonies in their youth. J.A. Bennett, *Cross-cultural influences on village relocation on the weather coast of Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands c. 1870-1953* (M.A. thesis, University of Hawaii, 1974) and *Wealth of the Solomons: a history of trade, plantations and society, Solomon Islands c. 1800-1942* (PhD. thesis, Australian National University, 1979).

brought from their islands by kidnapping. Chapter Three of this thesis describes how the vast majority of the Melanesians who participated in the recruiting trade did so at their own volition. The overall aim, reconciliation of these two conflicting viewpoints, will be established in the remaining chapters and the conclusion.

Melanesians viewed their physical world and its cosmological surroundings in a fashion divorced from Western perceptions of reality. An individual Malaitan was an inalienable member of a group; he or she did not separate existence into temporal and spiritual realms. The first paragraph of Chapter Three re-introduces the concept of "cultural kidnapping". Melanesians were "culturally kidnapped" from stable cosmological cycles, into which those who stayed in Australia never returned. The result was two separate perceptions of the recruiting trade: European and Melanesian.<sup>71</sup>

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71. C.R. Moore, 'Kanakas, kidnapping and slavery: myths from the nineteenth century labour trade and their relevance to Australia's immigrant Melanesians.' *Kabar Seberang: sulating Maphilindo*, v. 8 (1981).

Table Two: Ships' Masters and Government Agents

known to have visited Malaita

	<u>Masters</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Voyages</u>
1.	D.M. Goodall	1871	1
2.	D. Murray	1874-1876	4
3.	R.J. Belbin	1875	3
4.	W.J. Belbin	1875	1
5.	W. Rosengren	1875-1880	5
6.	A. Tornarus	1878-1897	14 + 3 as pilot
7.	C. Satini	1879	1
8.	R. Keen	1879	1
9.	J. Lynch	1881	1
10.	A. White	1881	1
11.	S.R. Thomas	1881	1
12.	H.C. Adrian	1881-1884	2
13.	T. Davies	1881-1885	8
14.	W.T. Wawn	1881-1894	3 + 1 as Mate
15.	J. Smith	1882	1
16.	H.W. Wigmore	1882	1
17.	W. McQuaker	1882	1
18.	J. Williams	1882-1889	5
19.	F.A. Boore	1883	3
20.	T. Smith	1883	1
21.	J. Meaney	1883	2
22.	D. McDougall	1883-1888	4
23.	A. Finlay	1883-1891	4
24.	S. Smith	1884	2
25.	J. Howie	1884	1
26.	A. Skillen	1884	1
27.	J. Howie	1884	1
28.	J. Loutitt	1884	1
29.	W.G. Weston	1884	1
30.	A. Paesch	1884-1885	4
31.	W.H. Lawrence	1884-1885	2
32.	J.E. Hawkins	1884-1894	2
33.	R. Pearn	1884-1903	26
34.	J.H. Rogers	1886	2
35.	T.W. Arthur	1886	1
36.	H.D. Kerrison	1887	1
37.	W.J. Murray	1887	1
38.	N. Campbell	1887-1888	2
39.	W. Olliver	1887-1891	4
40.	G. Norman	1887-1895	13
41.	G. Callender	1888	2
42.	C.W. Erickson	1888-1891	6
43.	W.R. Reynolds	1888-1903	10
44.	W. Spence	1889-1903	17
45.	E. Rothwell	1890-1891	2
46.	F.F. Malcolm	1890-1902	15
47.	J. Mackay	1890-1903	19
48.	J.P. Doig	1892-1899	6
49.	W. Shearer	1893	1
50.	G. Cater	1894	1



	<u>Ship's Master</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Voyages</u>
51.	J. Vos	1894	1
52.	P. Tornarus	1894-1903	5
53.	G. McArthur	1895-1898	6
54.	J. Anderson	1896-1904	17
55.	J.H. Switzer	1897-1903	9
56.	J.M. Ralston	1900-1901	4
57.	A. Gray	1900-1902	3
58.	A.A. Burns	1901	1
59.	F.J. Dillamcre	1901	1
60.	J. Palmer	1902	1

	<u>Government Agent</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Voyages</u>
1.	G. Ramsay	1871	1
2.	J. Slade	1875	2
3.	F.S. Alliot	1874-1875	2
4.	T.B. Lloyd	1875	1
5.	E.J. de Bovis	1875-1876	4
6.	W.G.S. Andrews	1876-1882	2
7.	H.G. Lynde	1878-1881	2
8.	A.R. McDonald	1878-1881	3
9.	H. Hockings	1879	1
10.	C.J.B. Hutchinson	1880	1
11.	H.H. Robinson	1880-1891	2
12.	E. Knowles	1881	1
13.	T.E. Arnam	1881	1
14.	W. Hore	1881-1883	2
15.	N.J. Aarom	1881-1884	7
16.	W.A. McMurdo	1881-1902	7
17.	L. Gould	1882	1
18.	W.L. Lynn	1882	1
19.	D.A. Gunn	1882-1884	2
20.	C.B. Williams	1882-1886	5
21.	R. Freeman	1883	2
22.	G. de Latour	1883	1
23.	J. Thompson	1883	2
24.	W.F. Cheeke	1883-1884	2
25.	F.W. Galloway	1883	1
26.	A.C. Cecil	1883-1900	14
27.	J.C. Howe	1884	2
28.	W.J. Wallace	1884	1
29.	J.S. Navin	1884	1
30.	J.W. Fowler	1884	1
31.	H.W. Chapman	1884	1
32.	C. Mills	1884	1
33.	C.L. Eastlake	1884	1
34.	A.H. Kessack	1884	1
35.	J.B. Jones	1884-1887	5
36.	A.E.W. Blackburne	1884-1887	2
37.	J.H. Burrowes	1885	1
38.	T.W. Barry	1885	1
39.	J.C. Sherington	1885	1
40.	H.P. Popham	1885-1886	2

<u>Government Agent</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Voyages</u>
41. F.C. Hornbrook	1885-1887	2
42. H.H. Blake	1886-1887	2
43. E. Battersby	1886-1888	2
44. D. Rannie	1886-1892	6
45. J. Cooper	1887	1
46. J.H. Monk-Quintin	1887-1888	3
47. E.W. Young	1888	1
48. W.J. Murray	1888	1
49. T.S. Armstrong	1888	2
50. J.C. Hardwicke	1888	1
51. J.S. Parnell	1888-1889	2
52. M. Mitchell	1888-1891	5
53. A. Thompson	1888-1903	8
54. R. Sinclair	1889	1
55. A.V. Robinson	1889	1
56. J.R. Cockle	1889	1
57. J.E.B. Hammond	1889-1893	3
58. A.H.N. Ussher	1889-1904	19
59. H.W. Looker	1890	1
60. E. Sparks	1890	1
61. W. de Vaux	1890-1896	10
62. J.K. Craig	1890-1903	7
63. J.R. Scott	1891	1
64. F.D. Dunne	1891	1
65. G.T. Olver	1891-1894	2
66. W.H. Lawrence	1891-1900	11
67. S.M. Smith	1893-1903	14
68. F. Gooding	1893-1903	13
69. D. Shepherd	1894	1
70. S.S. Bowles	1894	1
71. J.C. O'Brien	1895	1
72. F.V. Nicholson	1895	1
73. A.C. Pickering	1897-1903	10
74. F.G. Rowe	1899-1902	7
75. A. Forsyth	1899-1902	6
76. W. Meeke	1900-1901	3
77. G. Cater	1900-1903	6
78. B.A. Hely	1901	1
79. G.D. Forrest	1901-1902	3
80. A.E. Crichton	1902	1

Source: *Statistics of Queensland* (Population section) checked with data on the 260 Malaita voyages listed in Table One.

<u>Government Agent</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Voyages</u>
41. F.C. Hornbrook	1885-1887	2
42. H.H. Blake	1886-1887	2
43. E. Battersby	1886-1888	2
44. D. Rannie	1886-1892	6
45. J. Cooper	1887	1
46. J.H. Monk-Quintin	1887-1888	3
47. E.W. Young	1888	1
48. W.J. Murray	1888	1
49. T.S. Armstrong	1888	2
50. J.C. Hardwicke	1888	1
51. J.S. Parnell	1888-1889	2
52. M. Mitchell	1888-1891	5
53. A. Thompson	1888-1903	8
54. R. Sinclair	1889	1
55. A.V. Robinson	1889	1
56. J.R. Cockle	1889	1
57. J.E.B. Hammond	1889-1893	3
58. A.H.N. Ussher	1889-1904	19
59. H.W. Looker	1890	1
60. E. Sparks	1890	1
61. W. de Vaux	1890-1896	10
62. J.K. Craig	1890-1903	7
63. J.R. Scott	1891	1
64. F.D. Dunne	1891	1
65. G.T. Olver	1891-1894	2
66. W.H. Lawrence	1891-1900	11
67. S.M. Smith	1893-1903	14
68. F. Gooding	1893-1903	13
69. D. Shepherd	1894	1
70. S.S. Bowles	1894	1
71. J.C. O'Brien	1895	1
72. F.V. Nicholson	1895	1
73. A.C. Pickering	1897-1903	10
74. F.G. Rowe	1899-1902	7
75. A. Forsyth	1899-1902	6
76. W. Meeke	1900-1901	3
77. G. Cater	1900-1903	6
78. B.A. Hely	1901	1
79. G.D. Forrest	1901-1902	3
80. A.E. Crichton	1902	1

Source: *Statistics of Queensland* (Population section) checked with data on the 260 Malaita voyages listed in Table One.

CHAPTER THREE

99 - 180

*MALAITAN RECRUITING : 1885 - 1904*

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1. "Cultural kidnapping"

It is demeaning to the intelligence of the Melanesian people to presume that they presented themselves to be kidnapped from the same beaches on the same islands, generation following generation, for forty years or more.<sup>1</sup> The majority made a definite decision to leave their islands to spend three or more years in Queensland: on Malaita this applies to as many as eighty percent of the recruits. Their reasons were manifold, but most can clearly be related to existing exchange networks, political and social pressures present in Melanesian society, and to predictable stages in traditional life-cycles which coincided with the requirements of the labour trade. This is not a justification of the trade. Europeans with a more global outlook, and as part of the colonial outreach of the capitalist mode of production, were taking advantage of Melanesia's 'small-scale societies. Often Europeans were not fully aware of their advantageous position; had they known more about Melanesia they would have exploited its people more fully. They always had a cultural advantage over the Melanesians, and although "physical" kidnapping had more or less ceased by the mid-1880s, "cultural" kidnapping continued.

The only valid standard with which to judge the behaviour of nineteenth century Malaitans stems from what can be understood of how they perceived the enticements offered by the labour trade, not the exploitative motives of the Europeans who tempted them away. Malaitans saw positive benefits accruing from their participation in the Queensland and Fijian labour trades, otherwise they would never have continued to leave their island for over fifty years. Nor would they have continued throughout the twentieth century to migrate inter-insularly as the main labour force used in the Solomon islands. Certain aspects of Malaitan society contributed to the smooth operation of the recruiting trade. First, Malaitan life-cycles fitted the needs of the recruiters and enabled Malaitans to participate in the circular labour trade with minimal disruption of society. Secondly, Malaitans made

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1. Also refer to the similar views expressed by Peter Corris and Hugh Laracy: Corris, reviewing Faith Badler's *Waavie* (Adelaide, 1977) in *The Australian*, 20/21 August 1978, Weekend Magazine, 12; Laracy, reviewing Corris's *Passage, Port and Plantation in Oceania*, v. 46:2 (1975), 165.

their decisions to enlist as members of descent groups, not as individuals. They perceived the recruiting trade as part of a cosmological life-cycle, not in European terms. Thirdly, the migration of young, predominantly male Malaitans did not bring Europeans into contact with the entire population of the island. Recruits were syphoned off at bays all around the coast, with the aid of Malaitan passage masters. Malaita remained a cultural bastille, around the walls of which were a series of *porte cochère* through which Malaitans left and returned. Europeans never penetrated its walls. Fourthly, traditional residential mobility and population movements on Malaita assisted the recruiters.

TABLE ONE. Malaitan Migration to Queensland.

Year	Total number of voyages by Queensland recruiting ships	Total number of voyages by Queensland recruiting ships known to have visited Malaita	Total number of labour recruits landed in Queensland.	Total number of Solomon Islanders brought to Queensland	Total number of Malaitans (* = approx. 1/3 of the total number)	Total number of recruits on ships known to have carried Malaitans to Queensland	Total male recruits	Total female recruits	Total male children on board	Total female children on board
1863	1		67							
1864	2		134							
1865	2		148							
1866	4		177							
1867	9		1237							
1868	13		948							
1869	6		312							
1870	10		638							
1871	18	1	1352	82	12	44	44	0	n.a.	n.a.
1872	7	0	461	0	0	0	0	0	n.a.	n.a.
1873	14	0	994	0	0	0	0	0	n.a.	n.a.
1874	21	1	1503	124	13	52	52	0	n.a.	n.a.
1875	33	7	2682	710	362	459†	310†	2†	n.a.	n.a.
1876	21	3	1688	74	43	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1877	24	0	1986	0	0	0	0	0	n.a.	n.a.
1878	19	2	1421	232	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1879	23	3	2182	242	2*	199	198	1	n.a.	n.a.
1880	22	2	1997	61	11	119	117	2	n.a.	n.a.
1881	31	8	2643	629	257	707	681	26	n.a.	n.a.
1882	34	8	3140	440	32	414	394	20	n.a.	n.a.
1883	59	10	5276	1028	308	892	845	47	n.a.	n.a.
1884	48	15	3265	671	220*	733	666	67	n.a.	n.a.
1885	32	9	1916	516	34*	514	503	11	n.a.	n.a.
1886	25	7	1595	429	47*	453	447	6	n.a.	n.a.
1887	29	8	1988	535	13*	546	523	23	0	0
1888	34	13	2291	1052	164*	984	949	35	0	0
1889	31	9	2032	620	65*	591	569	22	2	0
1890	36	14	2459	1165	109*	1087	1018	69	0	0
1891	15	10	1050	516	65*	678	625	53	0	0
1892	6	3	464	235	29*	295	287	8	0	0
1893	14	9	1211	416	52*	889	854	35	0	0
1894	22	14	1859	945	177*	1217	1109	48	1	1
1895	16	8	1305	577	328	674	646	28	0	0
1896	11	6	782	423	307	475	455	20	0	0
1897	11	9	934	733	529	754	738	16	0	0
1898	12	9	1178	721	596	884	864	20	3	1
1899	16	13	1522	848	560	1145	1118	27	0	1
1900	20	16	1743	884	547	1322	1275	47	2	0
1901	20	17	1726	1151	783	1442	1406	36	2	2
1902	18	14	1139	875	612	997	955	42	0	0
1903	12	11	1038	663	429	946	911	35	0	0
1904	6	1	78	59	58	59	58	2	0	0
	807	260	62561	17656	9186‡	19571†	18677†	748†	10†	5†

\* 5774  
 \* x 3 = 2931  
 8705

(Price & Baker = 9186)

Source: Statistics of Queensland; Annual Reports of the Dept of Pacific Island Immigration; Price with Baker, 'Origins'.

2. Fortress Malaita: life-cycles, descent groups and mobility

2.A. Life-cycles

In 1909 Arnold van Gennep published *Les Rites de Passage*,<sup>2</sup> the first significant theoretical formulation on the ceremonies denoting birth, puberty, marriage and death which in varying detail are celebrated in all cultures. Since van Gennep, anthropologists have paid more attention to the ceremonies which incorporate the individual into the group and to the customary routines of life. On Malaita a baby is conceived, passes through life and at death joins as a spirit all of his or her ancestors, remaining in communication with the living, indefinitely. Birth and menstruation are viewed as dangerous pollutants, and at these times women live separately from their menfolk, tabooed from all social activities. No particular rites of passage mark the arrival of puberty for either sex, although females must begin to observe menstrual taboos.<sup>3</sup> Young men particularly are free and enjoy a natural hiatus in their life-cycles in the period between puberty and marriage. Marriages are celebrated with considerable ceremony as they involve reciprocal financial and social transactions between descent groups. The main rite of passage for any Malaitan is the mortuary feast (*maoma*), which for an important person can take many years to complete. Death is not just the climax of life, but also the beginning of the after-life; a phase of the Malaitan cosmological life cycle arguably more important than physical existence.<sup>4</sup>

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2. A. van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (English translation by M.B. Vizedom and G.L. Caffee) (Chicago, 1960).
3. In 'Are 'are puberty for males and females is marked by ritual exchanges of money, leading to minor flirtations. The exchange of the money marks a kind of love contract. Letter to the author from Dr. D. de Coppet, 13 August 1980. A. Chowning, 'Child rearing and socialization' in I. Hogbin (ed.), *Anthropology in Papua New Guinea: readings from the Encyclopaedia of Papua and New Guinea* (Melbourne, 1973).
4. Ross, *Baegu*, 196, 209-16; Keesing, *Kwaio Descent Groups*, 72-4; de Coppet, 'Cycles de meurtres'; Guidiere, *La Route des Morts*.



From birth to puberty Malaitan girls are held in the same regard as their brothers, but girls are expected to assume adult responsibilities earlier than boys. In her early teens a girl will begin working alongside her mother. After her first menstruation a girl has a small ceremony held in her honour and is considered of age. Through her teens a Malaitan girl is valued less than her brother, and is far more strictly controlled. Marriage comes in her late teens. Usually arranged by her parents, the marriage negotiations cover a couple of years and involve the exchange of Brideprice. A woman's dowry is a valuable addition to the wealth of her husband's family; so are her future children and her services in garden cultivation as well as generally around the village.

Politically women are without direct power, but as outlined in Chapter One Malaitan society should not be seen only in terms of economic and political power. The balance between male and female extends past temporal, into spiritual realms. The enormous temporal power of women is often ignored by writers because women have no formal rank. Sisters play an important part in society, advising their brothers. Women are the links between descent groups. A woman's marriage can bring peace between two feuding descent groups, and provide an ambitious father with a useful son-in-law-cum-ally and friend. Women bear children, the future strength of any descent group. Old women, after menopause, are a fund of knowledge and wield great power. Life is a cycle where men and women have a combined responsibility for both birth and ancestor creation.<sup>5</sup> It can be argued that young women are far more essential to the economic, social and religious networks within Malaitan society than are young men; the young men who enlisted to work in Queensland.

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5. Elli K. Maranda argues that women in Lau, through their individual biological cycles of menstruation, pregnancy, and childbirth produce members of the living community, and that to balance this men have instituted their own collective ceremonial cycles which produce members of the community of the dead - the *agalo* (*akalo*). Her argument suggests balance between the sexes rather than equal partnership in a cosmological life-cycle, which is how the author interprets Malaitan society. E.K. Maranda, 'A woman is an alien spirit', 178.

Women comprised less than four percent of all Malaitans who were recruited. Most were discouraged by their own people from leaving the island. The majority of females of recruitable age were married, and (just as significant), they were never desired as labourers by employers, nor were they desired as passengers on the ships. S.M. Smith, Government Agent on the *Sybil* in 1897 made his attitude to women enlisting quite clear:

two women included in this lot, I did not want them but could not get out of taking them. 6

The presence of a menstruating Melanesian woman on a ship could cause problems, and no woman was completely safe from the lusty desires of the male passengers and crew, including the Masters. Towallie from west Malaita claimed Joseph Voss as the father of her child, conceived while she was a passenger and he the Master of the *William Manson* in 1894.<sup>7</sup>

The labour recruits were predominantly adolescent males or men in their early twenties; most were unmarried. Before marriage, young men were not fully productive units within their respective village economics and the work actually required of them was minimal. Traditionally their most useful function was as a fighting force in times of war, but it could also be argued that their value in war was counter-productive. Young men were valued for their physical prowess, but this value was to an extent negated by their exuberant behaviour, often provoking inter-district fighting.<sup>8</sup> During adolescence Malaitan males are unrestrained and do not face any real commitment to the adult world. Commitments and social responsibilities usually arrive with marriage; before-hand gaining experience

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6. S.M. Smith private log, *Sybil* 2 4 January 1897 (*Sybil* 2 30-1-1892). Also refer to K. Saunders, 'Melanesian Women in Queensland, 1863-1907: some methodological problems involving the relationship between racism and sexism,' *Pacific Studies*, v. 4:1 (1980), pp. 26-44.
  7. QSA COL/A795, In letter 10323 of 1895, 1A to UCS. Voss only visited Malaita once as Master on the *William Manson*. (*William Manson* 18-10-1894).
  8. Bennett also noted this possibility in relation to labour recruiting on Guadalcanal. Bennett, *Cross-cultural Influences*, 58.

and freedom of movement are encouraged.<sup>9</sup> Most males do not marry until their mid-twenties. In Kwaio, and possibly more widely in Malaita, a surprising twenty-five percent of all adult males never marry, remain appendages to nuclear families, and never branch off as separate productive units.<sup>10</sup> Thus the absence of an unmarried young man cost his community next to nothing in lost production, and relieved it of a potentially turbulent influence. There was virtually no material loss to offset the gain represented by the recruiter's customary gift and the goods the labourer would bring back as earnings from Queensland.<sup>11</sup>

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9. Ian Frazer, 'Attached but separate: the open-ended element in circular migration', presented at ANZAAS, Auckland, 23 January 1979.
10. Polygyny was practised on Malaita, particularly by *wane baita* or aspirants to that position. This would have increased the number of unattached males available to become plantation labourers. In 'Are 'are, south of Kwaio, many males also remain bachelors, adopting a *ramo* style of behaviour if not actually acting as murderers. They go from one feast to another and one flirtation to another, but do not marry. As well, Bennett makes the point that, although there is no proof that the phenomenon pre-dates the first Solomon census in 1931, at that time there was a significant surplus of males over females.  
Bennett, *Cross-cultural Influences*, 54-5;  
Keesing, *Kwaio Descent Groups*, 17. Letter to the author from Dr D. de Coppett, 13 August 1980.
11. Presuming of course that the labourer returned to Malaita. When Malaitans died in Queensland or chose not to return to their island there was a physical loss to the descent group and a loss to their ancestors; a loss for which compensation was demanded to maintain equilibrium in society.

## 2.B. Descent Groups

Historians writing about the Melanesian recruiting trade have usually been Westerners and have tended to stress the individual motivations in enlisting, ignoring the collective and cyclic nature of Melanesian society. Melanesians saw themselves as part of a descent group, not as individuals. The decision to enlist was often communal rather than personal. Their willingness to leave their island for the communal good has a parallel in Western society at war time. During the two World Wars large numbers of young Australians (to look no further afield) volunteered to serve abroad and continued to do so even when the risks involved became very clear. The most dangerous forms of service, as aircrew, submariners and commandos, never lacked volunteers. When conscription was introduced, the communal will took precedence over individual choice. The labour trade was not a war, but neither was it always a pleasant affair. Even by nineteenth century European standards the work was underpaid, the food and accommodation basic. There was also a fair chance of never returning home, given the high death rate amongst the labourers. A trip to Queensland could be an exciting adventure for a young man with no particular responsibilities, enabling him to return to his island several rungs up the ladder of reciprocity, worldly-wise and ready to choose a wife, free of many of the restrictions and subordinate relationships which his brother, by remaining at home, would continue to endure. But just as a soldier in war time does not volunteer for the sake of receiving a service pension after the war, a Malaitan leaving the island for the first time did not rationalize his or her action in this way. The reward to the Malaitan individual was not the initial motivation.

Another example of European communal decision-making is the migration of people from countries around the Mediterranean to work at industrial centers in northern Europe, or away from Europe to Australia and north America. Southern Italians, Spaniards and Turks leave their small-scale rural societies to work as labourers in industries in Switzerland and Germany. Often several males from one family will, over a number of years, leave their village to

work as labourers in types of employment and under conditions that they detest so as to be able to remit money home, enabling their families to purchase extra farming land. The reward for their labour goes to the family, not directly to themselves. The same applies when they emigrate to Australia and America, but continue to send most of their earnings home or use their money to bring other members of their families out to the new country.<sup>12</sup>

Similarly on Malaita, and more widely in Melanesia, men and women left their islands for the communal good. On Malaita, for example, marriages involved quite considerable Brideprice payments, which the average young man had paid by his elder kin, who in return expected him to bind himself to them in a long-term reciprocal relationship. Some Malaitan males used their plantation wages to gather material possessions, which on return home became the property of the descent group to be used as Brideprice, or bartered for traditional valuables which could be so used. Men left the artificial islets at Ataa, and probably other areas of Malaita, with a marriage pre-arranged, to work in Queensland for three years to collect a box of material possessions for this purpose.<sup>13</sup> They personally benefited by gaining freedom from some of the long-term reciprocal relationships which bound their brothers who had not worked as wage labourers. However this result was not what motivated them to enlist. Rather, they acted for the general benefit of their descent group, obtaining additional currency for exchange by their group with neighbouring descent groups.

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12. C.A. Price, *Southern Europeans in Australia* (Melbourne, 1963), W.D. Borrie and D.R.G. Parker, *Italians and Germans in Australia: a study of assimilation* (Melbourne, 1954); D. Menghetti, *The Red North*. Studies in North Queensland History No. 3 (Townsville, 1981).
13. Kalabet Fugui, Talito artificial islet, Ataa, 2 November 1976. Fugui's father Jiosi Maomania did this when he enlisted in the 1890s.

## 2.C. Fortress Malaita and the passage masters

The concept of Malaita as an impenetrable cultural fortress was introduced at the beginning of this chapter. Although the labour traffic developed so as to become an integral part of Malaitan society, Europeans had only restricted contact with Malaitan people and European influences made only limited impact upon Malaitan culture. Direct physical disturbance by Europeans of life on Malaita was slight until the twentieth century. Even today non-Malaitans, be they Europeans or other Melanesians, seldom visit the center of the island where the most powerful ancestral shrines remain undisturbed. During the nineteenth century traditional life on Malaita continued, obviously changing to incorporate wage labour and circular migration, but reasonably untrammelled by the European presence.

Interpreters and passage masters, the Malaitans with whom recruiters negotiated when they wanted to engage labourers or obtain food, wood and water, were the key men linking the island with Europeans: the guards at each entrance to the island-fortress. Leadership patterns on Malaita vary from district to district and from time to time. Some passage masters were *wane baita* even without the labour trade. Most were lucky to have been early participants in the trade, returning to Malaita with some knowledge of the English language and European customs; knowledge which they put to good use when negotiating with the recruiters. But through the labour trade all of these men became powerful *wane baita*, able to increase their standing and that of their descent groups within the local area. Around the coast they became the most powerful leaders among the *wane asi*, but in general they did not displace traditional leaders among the inland *wane tolo*.

Little is known of the backgrounds of the Malaitan passage masters, except in the case of Kwaisulia who dominated Lau society in the late nineteenth century, and wielded power over all of the people of northwest Malaita. Kwaisulia owed his prominence to his friendship with John Renton and the knowledge he gained by

enlisting as a recruit for the Queensland sugar industry in the 1870s, not to any traditional position in Lau society.<sup>14</sup> It is worth noting however, that the passage masters remembered by the people of east Fataleka all came from descent groups with some historical claim to authority. Over many years Fakanakafo's passage master was Rakwane man Bobi Ledi, son of Rimanu and a contemporary of Luiramo (Bina 18). At Ataa Peter Waimaku and Tom Muldo worked as interpreter and passage master at the end of the last century. Both were from Suraina, the dominant descent group at Ataa.<sup>15</sup>

These men acquired stores of possessions representing enormous wealth, but the indications are that these possessions were treated as communal property, as Malaitan custom required, not as personal property as in European communities. Passage masters must be seen first as initiators of cosmological exchanges with Europeans; exchanges involving members of descent groups operating in Melanesian terms. Recruiters negotiated with the passage masters as individuals; but the passage masters saw themselves as representatives of clusters of descent groups. Passage masters were also a structural link between Malaita and the world beyond the "eight isles". They acted as the bridge between the traditional mode of production linked to exchange cycles and the capitalist mode of production and its component, the circular migration of labour. They were also the forerunners of European government and law enforcement on Malaita.

The passage masters were relied upon by the recruiters as a sort of *de facto* government; real European government of Malaita was not established until the early twentieth century. The Spanish laid vague claim to Malaita in 1568. In 1886 the northern section of the Solomon islands down to a line between Gao and

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14. P. Corris, 'Kwaisulia of Ada Gege: a strongman in the Solomon Islands', in Davidson and Scarr, *Pacific Islands Portraits*, 253-65.
  15. Refer to Tables Three and Four of Chapter One. Information from Ishmael Itea and Charles Luiramo, 13 October 1976 and Kalabet Fugui, 2 November 1976.

Malaita was included in the territory of German New Guinea, but this had little effect on Malaita. It was not until July 1893 that the British physically planted the Union Jack on Malaita, signifying the formal proclamation of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate. The formation of the Protectorate still did not mean real government even in legal theory: when the crew of the *William Manson* were prosecuted in 1895 for kidnapping on Malaita, the island was not considered part of the Queen's dominions nor within the jurisdiction of any European power. C.M. Woodford the first Resident Commissioner of the Protectorate did not begin his work until 1896, even then based at Tulagi on Ngela; the first government station on Malaita was established in 1909, well after the Queensland labour trade had ended.<sup>16</sup>

The British government was tardy in developing a foothold on Malaita; British missions were not. Joe Wate the South Malaitan whom Bishop Patteson took away from the island in 1866, returned to Sa'a in 1877 to establish a mission. Wate initially failed and relapsed to his former worship, but was restored to faith in 1884. Thereafter until his death in 1904 Wate continued to work as a Christian teacher and made Sa'a a safe place for Europeans to visit. The Anglican mission gradually established some influence over several coastal areas around Malaita, but no European missionaries lived permanently on the island until the first years of the twentieth century. Then the Anglicans and the Queensland Kanaka Mission developed a firmer hold, assisted by Malaitans who had been to missions in Queensland.<sup>17</sup> Direct European contact remained limited to the lagoons, the artificial islands, the beaches and short stretches of river. A Malaitan living in the

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16. P. Sack and D. Clark (eds. and transl.), *German New Guinea: the annual reports* (Canberra, 1979), Introduction page x; QSA COL/A807, In letter 6266 of 1894, RNAS: Solomon 1893, Corr. Resp. Outr.; QSA GOV/A28, telegram from Attorney General to CS, 31 January 1895.  
When Woodford took up his duties at Tulagi, Kwaisulia sent him a formal greeting.  
Corris, 'Kwaisulia of Ada Gege', 259.
17. C.E. Fox, *Lord of the Southern Isles*, 152-77; A.I. Hopkins, *In the Isles of King Solomon: an account of twenty-five years spent amongst the primitive Solomon Islanders* (London, 1928) and 'Autobiography: 1869-1943'; F.S.H. Young, *Pearls from the Pacific* (Great Britain, n.d.).



central mountains during the late nineteenth century would have seen sailing ships at a distance and have used some European goods: he might never have met a European face to face. No European ventured into the center of Malaita until the 1900s: in 1902 Thomas Williams, first European missionary at Fiu in west Kwara'ae, walked from Fiu to Fakanakafo and up to Ataa; and in 1905 Florence Young of the Queensland Kanaka Mission became the first white woman to live on Malaita.<sup>18</sup>

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18. Fox, *Lord of the Southern Isles*, 166; Hopkins, 'Autobiography', 109-15;

In Queensland a few European women were married to Malaitan men, but Resident Commissioner Woodford refused to allow the women to return to Malaita with their husbands. Some men returned with their half-caste children: Harry Annia from Ataa did this, leaving his European wife in Queensland, but maintaining contact with her all of the remainder of his life.

QSA PRE/84, A. Morgan, Ch. Sec. Office of Queensland to PM of Aust., 8 July 1905; Information concerning Annia provided by Ishmael Itea and Charles Luiramo, 10 October 1976.

The best description of the problems faced by Europeans trying to travel in the center of Malaita can be found in a recent book on the 1927 Kwaio murder of William Bell, the Protectorate's representative on the island.

R.M. Keesing and P. Corris, *Lightning Meets the West Wind: the Malaita Massacre* (Melbourne, 1980).

## 2.D. Population mobility and circular migration

A fourth factor is also important in explaining why the recruiting trade succeeded so well on Malaita. There was traditionally a high degree of residential mobility on the island, and circular migration is common in a great number of social and economic contexts in Melanesia. The removal and return of thousands of Malaitans over some forty years exacerbated normal population movements and residential fluidity, but mobility did not begin with the labour trade. Melanesian communities were not as static as has often been assumed. Perspective on this early migration can be gained from examining more recent Malaitan migration within the Solomons, Malaitans' reactions to plantation life and urbanization, and more general Melanesian circular migration.

Several research projects are useful for this purpose: Murray Chapman and his colleagues' Guadalcanal Weather Coast Project<sup>19</sup>; Michael Bellam's study of Solomon urbanization<sup>20</sup>; Judith Bennett and Ward Friesen's research into nineteenth and twentieth century labour migration within the Solomons<sup>21</sup>; Ian Frazer's To'ambaita based study of labour migration and rural-urban migration<sup>22</sup>; and Richard Bedford's research on New Hebridean circular migration<sup>23</sup>. Chapman's Guadalcanal project concluded

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19. Chapman and Pirie, *Tasi Mauri* and many publications by Chapman, including: 'Tribal mobility as circulation: a Solomon islands example of micro/macro linkages' in L.A. Keszek and J.W. Webb (eds.), *Population at microscale* (New Zealand, 1976), 127-142; 'Mobility in a non-literate society: method and analysis for two Guadalcanal communities' in L.A. Kosinski and R.M. Prothero (eds.), *People on the move: studies on internal migration* (London, 1974); 'A population study in South Guadalcanal: some results and implications', *Oceania*, v. 40:2 (1969), 119-147.
  20. M.E.P. Bellam, *The Melanesian in Town: a preliminary study of the urbanization of adult male Melanesians in Honiara, British Solomon Islands Protectorate* (M.A. thesis, Victoria University, Wellington, 1964).
  21. Bennett, *Cross Cultural Influences*; W. Friesen, 'Labour migration in the Solomon islands', *Auckland Student Geographer*, v. 9 (1979), 73-83.
  22. Frazer, *To'ambaita Report*.
  23. Bedford *New Hebridean Mobility*.

that historically there was a high degree of movement of three types: village relocation, generally towards the coast, a trend accelerated in the twentieth century by missionaries and administrators intent on simplifying their own tasks; short-term movements by younger members of the community, for periods from a few weeks to a year, for educational and financial reasons, often involving work as wage labourers; and short-term mainly familial moves for only a few days to visit distant gardens, go fishing, participate in social and religious activities and to visit near-by villages.<sup>24</sup> Bellam, Frazer and Friesen report a similar general pattern. Research undertaken for this thesis supports the conclusion that a fairly high level of population movement existed traditionally, and that there were the three categories of movement identified by Chapman; it also points to the existence of a fourth type - long term movements across language areas, usually provoked by internecine fighting and changing kin alliances.<sup>25</sup>

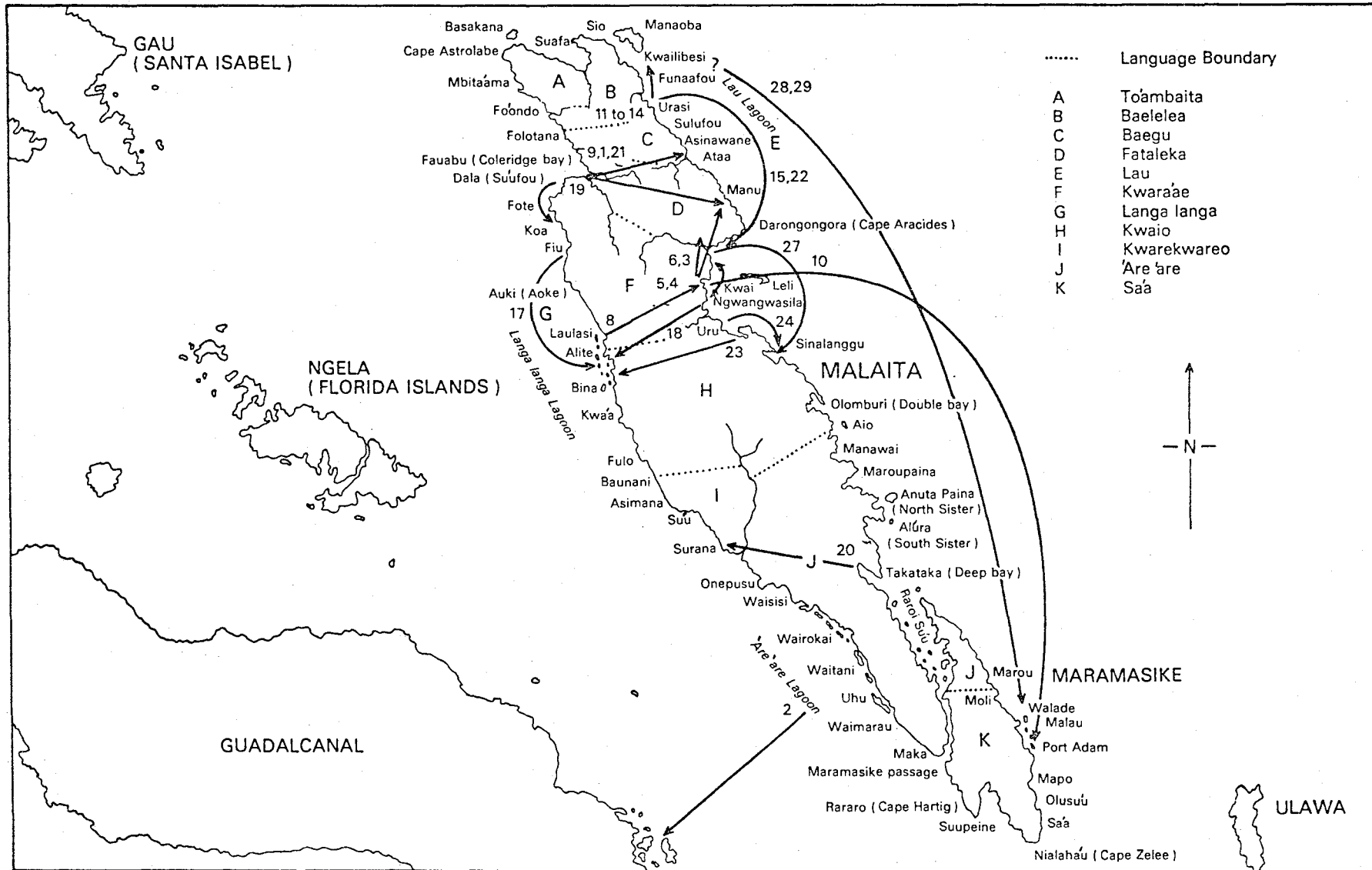
Anthropologists have written about Malaitans as living in 200 to 300 acre descent group territories, giving an impression of a static existence, without much mobility except within the immediate few square kilometers. Late nineteenth century documents show Malaitans to have been much more mobile. From the early 1890s Queensland's Government Agents had to record the exact reason for which any returning labourer was dropped at a passage other than that from which he or she left. Forty such cases, between 1893 and 1902, culled mainly from Queensland government sources are presented in Table Two\*. Twenty-five of the cases are shown on Map One of this chapter. No attempt was made to be selective when the forty cases were collected, yet the majority of them are from north Malaita, particularly along the east coast between Sinalanggu and Fakanakafo. The movements also coincide with the areas of major Malaitan resistance to the re-

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\* Table Two is at the end of the Chapter.

24. M. Chapman, *Population research in the Pacific islands: a case study and some reflections*, East-West Population Institute Working Paper No. 17, Hawaii, September 1971, 18-9.
25. Although Chapman does not stress this fourth type in his September 1971 paper, it is included in *Tasi Mauri*, 3.106.7.

Map One : Showing the changes in residence of twenty-five Malaitans returning from Queensland, 1893 - 1902



cruiters.<sup>26</sup> The movement obvious in Map One (the evidence for which is obtained from documentary sources), is supported by oral testimony on the movement of "strangers" into east Fataleka.<sup>27</sup> From these sources it could be postulated that descent groups in the east coast area from Uru to Cape Aracides were extremely unstable and mobile; whether this area was the most unstable of any on Malaita is a matter for future research and conjecture.

The most common reason given by returning labourers for asking to be landed at a different passage was that their families had moved to a different locality within the same linguistic area. Their movements suggest that boundaries of what today are considered to be dialect areas are not as precise as they appear on the map. This is particularly true of the north Kwara'ae-Fataleka border and the north Fataleka-Baegu border, and for all of the *wane asi*. The only long distance changes in residence are among the *wane asi*: between the Lau of northeast Malaita and those living along east Maramasike; between the west 'Are 'are and the 'Are 'are colony at Marau on Guadalcanal; and between the peoples of the Lau, Ataa and Kwai-Leli-Ngwangwasila area. All four types of population mobility are relevant to the labour trade. The younger males were always mobile and willing to walkabout. Sometimes they were away from their descent groups and therefore away from those who were in primary authority over them, when they were induced to enlist. A case of this type occurred when Kwailiu and his wife Orrani were recruited in west Fataleka: Kwailiu from Rakwane in east Fataleka had gone to Fauabu to pick *ngali* nuts in his wife's descent group's territory during the July-August season. His Rakwane elders would have discouraged him from enlisting if they had known of his intentions.<sup>28</sup>

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26. Illustrated in Table Three and Map Two of this chapter, and thesis Appendix Two.
27. Refer to Map Three of Chapter One.
28. Refer to the last section of this chapter for further details about Kwailiu and Orrani.

Richard Bedford in his study of New Hebridean circular migration noted that in traditional tribal and peasant societies, circulation was probably more common than migration.<sup>29</sup> Malaitans and other Melanesians already regularly participated in circular migrations for trading with and raiding neighbouring islands. Movement, within and outside dialect areas and outside of Malaita, was traditionally quite feasible; Malaitan society already contained mechanisms to deal with breaches of taboos or unusual circumstances encountered in intra and inter-island travel. The labour trade was a vast extension of this mobility, but one which could be accommodated with their life and cosmological cycles. Such an accommodation was never easy, but it was within the realms of possibility and reality as understood by a nineteenth century Malaitan.

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29. Bedford, *New Hebridean Mobility*, 3.

### 3. Malaitans: their akalo and the recruiters

Ever since Melanesians first entered into the circular labour trade, Europeans have advanced reasons for their participation and attempted to estimate their relative importance.<sup>30</sup> The most recent scholarly explanations are by Scarr, Corris, Bennett, Bedford and Saunders<sup>31</sup> whose conclusions are in general agreement. The broad picture they present can be regarded as firmly established, though further research may be expected to reveal need for modifications in detail, especially in relation to particular times and places. There can be no doubt that some labourers were obtained by force, others as a result of deliberate deception or genuine misunderstanding: all such cases were comprehended under the Queensland legal definition of "kidnapping". Some undoubtedly went unwillingly, under pressure from relatives who coveted the recruiters' gifts and the goods brought back by labourers from Queensland. Others undoubtedly needed no pressure from relations but made a personal decision to enlist (though reasoning as members of descent groups). Many, perhaps one quarter, enlisted again after completing one period of indentured service. Among the genuine volunteers, no doubt, many were affected by pressure of circumstances. Some went in company with relatives or leaders; some left on account of food shortages resulting from drought or cyclones. Others wished to avoid internecine fighting, the consequences of a crime they had committed, or to escape a discomfort or danger in their small society.

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30. T.H. Harrison, *Savage Civilization* (London, 1937), 194 (quoting F.A. Campbell's opinion from 1872); R. Steel, *The New Hebrides and Christian missions with a sketch of the labour traffic, and notes of a cruise through the group in the mission vessel* (London, 1880), 407 (F.A. Campbell) and generally 384-419; *QVP* 1882, v.2, 535, N. de Miklouho-Maclay to Commodore Wilson, RNAS; H.H. Romilly, *The Western Pacific and New Guinea: notes on the natives, christian and cannibal, with some account of the old labour trade* (London, 1886), 171-190; J. Inglis, *In the New Hebrides: reminiscences of missionary life and work, especially on the island of Aneityum, from 1850 till 1877* (London, 1887), 198-221; Ivens, *Language of Sa'a and Ulawa*, 217-232; C.S. Belshaw, *Changing Melanesia: social economics of culture contact* (Melbourne, 1954), 33.

31. Giles/Scarr, *A Cruise in a Queensland labour vessel*, 22-3; Corris, *Passage, Port and Plantation*, 45-59; Bennett, *Cross-cultural Influences*, 49-58; Saunders, *Uncertain Bondage*, 74-6, 80-1, 120-4; Bedford, *New Hebridean Mobility*, 25.

There is direct evidence, oral or documentary, of Malaitans enlisting for all of these reasons save shortage of food. Even here the absence of evidence is certainly not conclusive. Cyclones cause serious damage on Malaita every few years and recruiting vessels often found it difficult to buy food.<sup>32</sup> However, all the positive evidence of motives concerns only a few hundred out of the 9,000 recruits from Malaita, so small a proportion that it would be pointless to attempt to determine the relative importance of the different reasons. Chapter Two dealt with the early kidnapping period. The first section of the present chapter outlined the importance of the life-cycles of young Malaitan men and women and emphasized them as members of descent groups rather than as individuals. Pacific historians writing about the Melanesian labour trade have fallen short of appreciating what the trade meant to nineteenth century Islanders. European ideological structures do not provide an adequate explanation; but it has been just such a framework which has been used by most Pacific historians to date.

Circular migration is common in a great number of social and economic contexts in Melanesia. Circular labour migration differs from other forms of migration in that the migrant intends to return to whence he or she left. The cyclic nature of the labour trade has important implications in terms of Melanesian cosmological life-cycles, implications passed over by writers intent on separating the physical and spiritual worlds. Trade, friendship, war, physical activities, possessions and souls are part of one entire cosmological life-cycle. Malaitans did not separate individual from collective desires; nor did they view separately the physical and ideological effects of the labour trade. The Malaitan economy can not be separated from the rest of life, or from what occurs after death. The remainder of the chapter is an attempt to perceive the Malaitan recruiting trade in terms of traditional networks of exchange, linking ancestors to the living. It concentrates on east Fataleka and on individual members of descent groups from that area

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32. Food shortages on Malaita were reported by: S.M. Smith private log *Sydney Belle*, 3 April 1900 (*Sydney Belle* 9-7-1900); Wawn, *South Sea Islanders*, 247 (*Stanley* 25-7-1881); Wawn private log *Para*, 27 July 1894 (*Para* 9-10-1894); MM 16 April 1891 (*May Queen* 9-4-1891); MM 21-9-1889 (*Borough Belle* 19-9-1889).



There were a certain number of men and women who enlisted without fully understanding what they were doing or where they were going, carried away by the excitement of the moment. Some went on board the recruiting ships out of curiosity, perhaps lured purposefully by beguiling recruiters. Others were mere children, as young as twelve, when the minimum legal age of a recruit was sixteen. Although under-age recruits were almost always accompanied by older relations, they themselves would have had a strange impression of the labour trade, and the antics of some of the recruiters.<sup>33</sup>

Aigiselaus Tonarus (a Greek) was Master on at least fourteen voyages and pilot on several other voyages which visited Malaita between 1878 and 1897.<sup>34</sup> Aigiselaus owned his own ship. He, his two sons Peter and Jack, and his brother John all served as Masters, Mates, recruiters and as pilot in the trade at various times over a quarter of a century. All four were of dubious reputation,<sup>35</sup> Aigiselaus

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33. There are several examples of under-age Malaitans being recruited, or of under-age recruits known to have been amongst passengers on ships which visited Malaita:

1876:QSA COL/A225, In letter 2249 of 1876, IA to CS, 4 September 1876 (*Bobtail Nag* 1-9-1876)

1880:QSA CPS 10B/G1, Goodall to IA, 9 August 1880 (*Superior* 7-8-1880)

1881:MM 31 August 1881 (*Janet Stewart* 29-8-1881)

1884:QSA COL/A394, In letter 4680 of 1884, O'Connor to IPI Maryborough, 1 July 1884 (*Helena* 10-5-1884)

1887:Cromar, *Jock of the Islands*, 242-3 (*Fearless* 4-11-1887)

1894:QSA GOV/A26, IA to PUS CSD, 25 January 1894 (*Sybil* 2 11-1-1894)

1897:QSA GOV/A32, IA to S to PMQ, 8 July 1897 (*Rio Loge* 18-6-1897)

1897:QSA GOV/A32, IA to S to PMQ, 6 December 1897 (*Roderick Dhu* 9-11-1897)

34. Refer to Table Two of Chapter Two.

35. QSA GOV/A27, S.J. Lloyd, Inspector of Police, Brisbane, statement issued 17 October 1894, enclosed in CS to Gov., 20 November 1894; QSA GOV/A32, IA to S to PMQ, 25 February 1897 in CS to Gov., 25 June 1897; S.M. Smith private log *Sybil* 2, 10 November 1896, 9 January 1897; Cromar, *Jock of the Islands*, 157-9, 200, 214, 274-5; W.T. Wawn private log *Para*, 8 August 1894.

Tonarus being a caricature of all of the worst aspects of the recruiting trade. Tonarus was Master of the *Helena* in 1885, on his ninth voyage known to have included Malaita. His recruiter Jock Cromar described him as a "droll figure hobbling along in a Greek petticoat":

Captain Turner had met with a number of accidents while mining, and had had both his legs broken and badly set. His hips were askew, and he walked with a slight stoop, carrying in his right hand a heavy stick with which to support himself. 36

Cromar went on to describe Tonarus giving him a lesson in how to attract any curious Melanesian:

It was a funny sight to see the old man standing on the trade box in the boat, grinning from ear to ear, and shooting his arms out in front of him with his fingers extended, then closing his fists and drawing them back to his body as if he were pulling recruits into the boat by the dozen. He laughed heartily as he scattered handfuls of tobacco among the natives, and gave away presents of jews' harps and clay pipes. 37

Tonarus seems to have been a bizarre exception to the norm, it appears that most of the men who worked as Masters and Government Agents at the height of the labour trade were less flamboyant. Certainly Agents like A.H.N. Ussher, A.C. Cecil and S.M. Smith lent an air of stability and sobriety to the trade.<sup>38</sup> But none of them, however good their intentions, really understood Melanesians' actions, even why they enlisted. All European evidence on the trade needs to be used with great caution because of the reasons the writers had to present their own actions, or interests, in a favourable light. Some of the most significant sections of the documentary evidence the Masters and Government Agents left behind are their descriptions of various actions by individual Malaitans, which lacked importance to nineteenth century Europeans, but are easily interpreted using our modern knowledge of Malaitan society.

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36. Cromar, *Jock of the Islands*, 157.

37. *Ibid.*, 161-2.

38. Refer to Table Two of Chapter Two: A.H.N. Ussher made at least 19 visits to Malaita between 1889 and 1904; A.C. Cecil made at least 14 visits to Malaita between 1883 and 1900; S.M. Smith made at least 14 voyages to Malaita between 1893 and 1903.

A few of the recruits were either insane or so unstable as not to be fully responsible for their actions. The problem is to decide whether the recorded cases depict individuals who were unstable in their own society, or who became unstable as a result of enlisting on a European ship, thereby breaking rigid taboos and bonds between their ancestors and themselves. In 1894 Boneyveely was recruited on the *Roderick Dhu* at Uru. As the ship left he jumped over board and attempted to drown himself; after being rescued Boneyveely spent the rest of the day high up in the rigging. He was returned to Uru as soon as possible.<sup>39</sup> In the same year a recruit picked up at Sio harbour by the *Lochiel* showed signs of insanity, attacking and slightly wounding three or four other Islanders.<sup>40</sup> As early as 1879 there was a strange report of a Malaitan stowaway on board the *Isabella*, who apparently sneaked into the hold unbeknownst to the crew.<sup>41</sup> None of these Malaitans seems to have been abducted, but the experience of being abducted was traumatic enough to drive at least one Malaitan to suicide. In 1875 Ah Heenow jumped over board and drowned while the *Lady Darling* was on its way back to Queensland.<sup>42</sup> Despite Master Robert Belbin's blandly perplexed report of the event, Ah Heenow was almost certainly taken against his will and suicided to escape.

Some of those who enlisted were running away from crimes which they had committed against customary law, or had clashed with established order in lesser ways. W.G. Ivens, an early missionary on Malaita was in a good position to judge:

Queensland was a veritable refuge for wrong-doers in the islands; murderers, sorcerers, adulterers, wife-stealers, thieves, discontented wives, rebellious children, all hailed the coming of a labor-vessel as a chance to be freed from the likelihood of punishment or from the irksomeness of home restrictions. 43

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39. QSA GOV/A27, IA to PUS CSD, 14 December 1894 (*Roderick Dhu* 26-11-1894).

40. QSA GOV/A27, IA to PUS CSD, 24 August 1894 (*Lochiel* 8-8-1894).

41. QSA CPS 10B/G1, Goodall to IA, 2 October 1879 (*Isabella* 29-9-1879).

42. MM 25 September 1875 (*Lady Darling* 23-9-1875).

43. Ivens, *Language of Sa'a and Ulawa*, 227.

TABLE THREE: Malaitan Resistance.

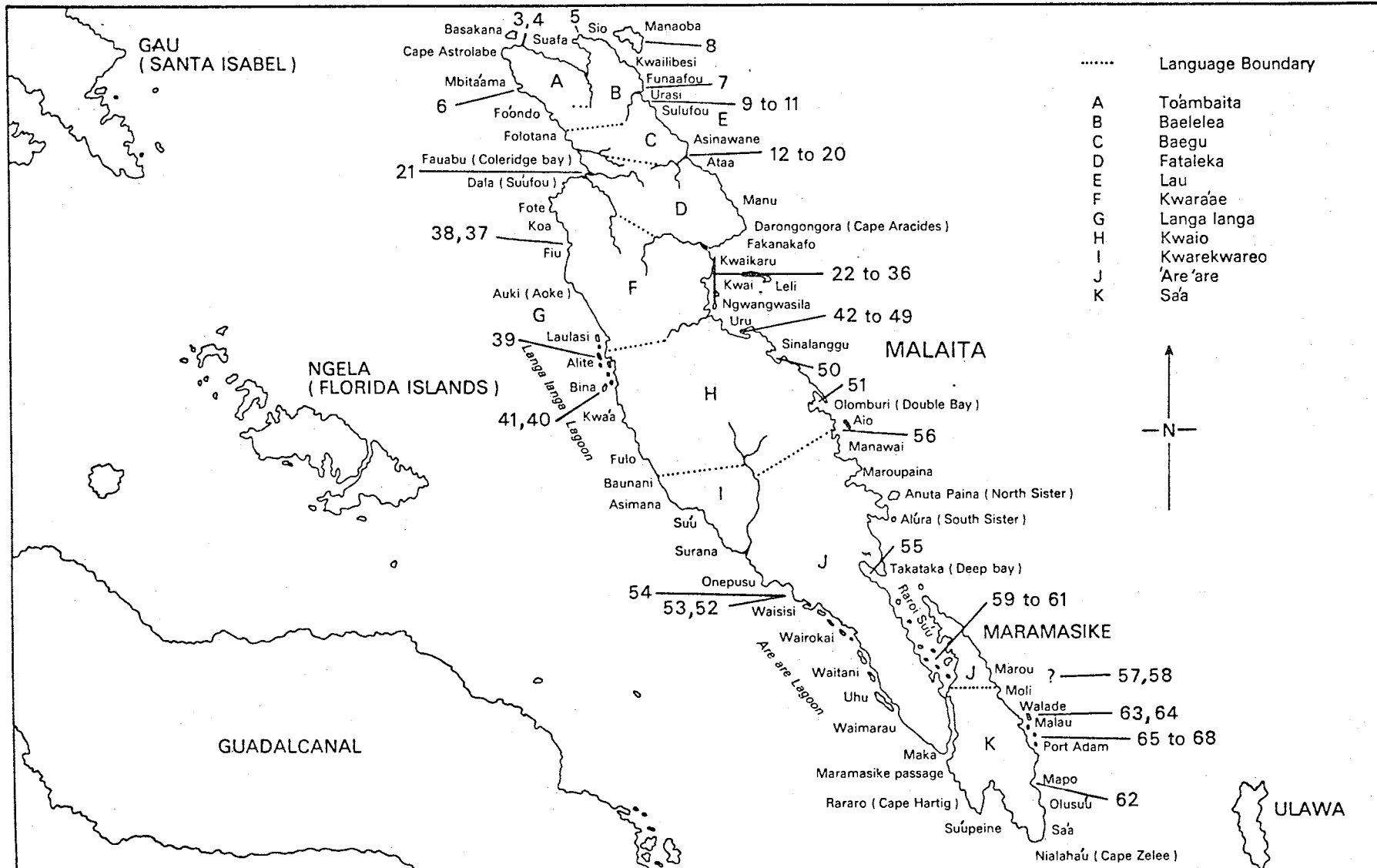
The incidents listed here are drawn from Appendix Two. The sources are Queensland-biased and do not fully represent incidents involving vessels from Fiji, New Caledonia or Samoa. In calculating the total known examples of Malaitan resistance to labour recruiters and traders an attempt has been made to establish the number of examples pertaining only to Queensland (Column J). It should also be noted that Malaitans were not as discerning when attacking a vessel or its boats: they did not care in which colony a ship was based.

Year	A		B		C		D		E		F		G	H	I	J	K
	Malaitans		Europeans		Others		Ships destroyed	Naval investigation and retaliation	Voyages from Queensland to Malaita	Resistance to Queensland vessels	Total examples of Malaitan resistance						
	killed	wounded	killed	wounded	killed	wounded											
1871	25														1		1
1872	12		3		32										0		2 <sup>1</sup>
1873															0	1	
1874															1		
1875	1			1		2									7	2	2
1876															3	1 <sup>2</sup>	1
1877															0		
1878															2		
1879															3		
1880			5		1										2		1
1881															8		
1882			6		3			1							8	1	2
1883															10		
1884	1											1			15	4	5
1885				2		1									9	1	1
1886	20		4	1	1							1			7	2	4
1887															8		
1888	10		3	2		4						2			13	8	10
1889															9	3	3
1890															14	1	1
1891				3		1						1			10	2	4
1892												2			3	4	4
1893				1											9	2	2
1894	1	2	1									2			14	7	7
1895															8	2	2
1896			1									1			6	1	1
1897															9	4	4
1898															9		
1899															13		
1900															16		
1901	2	1	2									1			17	2	2
1902															14	2	2
1903															11		
1904															1		
1905																	
1906																	
1907													5				1
1908																	
Undated			1	1												1	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>16</b>				<b>260</b> (to 1904)	<b>51</b>		<b>64</b>
<i>Queensland proportion of the Total</i>	<b>30</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>13</b>					<b>51</b>		

## FOOTNOTES

- Except for the 1871-71 *Carl/Peri* case the incidents listed all occurred on and around Malaita. Any deaths on voyages to the plantations are usually officially attributed to health problems and no other obvious examples of Malaitan resistance during voyages have been found.
- The *Stombird* was licensed in New South Wales but the labourers it recruited were for the Torres Strait bêche-de-mer and pearl industries.

Map Two : Listing the number of known incidents of Malaitans resistance to Europeans, 1871 - 1908, with emphasis on the Queensland labour trade



Source : Appendix Two

In 1887 the *Fearless* picked up two men on Maramasike who had been accused of sorcery but had managed to escape.<sup>44</sup> From oral evidence in Queensland we know that escape from crimes committed in the islands was not always as easy. Cases are remembered of Malaitans killed in Queensland by someone who had enlisted especially to track down the culprit and take back some of his bones as proof of death.<sup>45</sup> Malaitans were capable of waiting twenty or thirty years until a man or woman returned home from the plantations, in order to claim his or her life in retribution for a crime.<sup>46</sup> Belief in such long term retribution runs deep among Malaitans living in Queensland today. Henry Stephens Quaytucker, an old man living at Mackay, refuses to ever visit Malaita fearing that the punishment for a murder which his father committed in the late 1880s might still be transferred to him.<sup>47</sup> For Quaytucker's father and many others the plantations were an avenue of escape from their strictly controlled society.

Some of those recruited were running away from crimes committed against European law. Malaitans became adept at resisting the advances of unwanted recruiters. Appendix Two and Table Three of this chapter list over seventy examples of Malaitans attempting to kill or repulse recruiters working around the island. The catalogue is incomplete; the sources used are biased towards Queensland and do not fully represent incidents involving vessels working out of Fiji, New Caledonia or Samoa. At least twenty-six Europeans were killed at Malaita while recruiting there for Queensland or Fiji; many other Europeans were wounded; Islander members of the crews were killed and wounded; ships were looted and one was completely destroyed. The result of this resistance was often a visit from a British naval vessel, seeking out offenders and shelling their villages. After the *Young Dick* massacre in 1886, two recruiting ships the *Flora* and the *Helena* gained over thirty recruits at Sinalanggu, running away from punishment for their part in the attack.

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44. Cromar, *Jock of the Islands*, 246-8 (*Fearless* 4-11-1887).
45. P.M. Mercer and C.R. Moore, 'Melanesians in North Queensland: the retention of indigenous religious and magical practices', *JPH*, v.11:1 (1976), 84-5.
46. Hopkins, *Isles of King Solomon*, 172; Ivens, *Language of Sa'a and Ulawa*, 227; C'w A CRS A1 1903/1694, C.M. Woodford to Gov. Cherm-side, 10 August 1902; QSA GOV/A39, IA to PUS CSD, 2 September 1895.
47. For further information on Quaytucker (Kwaitaka) refer to the last section of this chapter. BOHC 33 Ba-1 (HS & ONF).

They preferred three years on the plantations to bombardment from a British Man-of-war.<sup>48</sup>

In some cases couples who eloped to Queensland would not have been permitted to marry if they had stayed on Malaita. An investigation of similar improprieties on board the *Borough Belle* in 1890 provoked the *Mackay Mercury* to comment wryly:

The main conclusion one arrives at from the evidence is that the *Borough Belle*, and probably other schooners in the trade, is the resort of "happy couples" doing a honeymoon. A three years stay on a plantation is, however, an unusual extension of that blissful tour. 49

In other cases men ran away from unwanted wives and lovers: in 1888 W.T. Wawn Master of the *Ariel* recorded that some men had tried to enlist to escape a problem concerning women, but their flight was cut-short and they were killed before they could get to the ship; in 1892 Beer Beer was one of thirteen men who enlisted at Uru on the *Helena*, his reason being the desire to escape from his wife.<sup>50</sup>

Despite the custom of polygyny on Malaita and other islands, Queensland government regulations did not allow a man to enlist with more than one wife.<sup>51</sup> Then after 1884 the government forbade further recruiting of women unless they were accompanied by their husbands and had their chief's consent.<sup>52</sup> Although this regulation was well-meaning it was also quite unenforceable. W.G. Ivens succinctly described the problem:

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48. Rannie, *My Adventures*, 180-2; Cromar, *Jock of the Islands*, 234-6.

49. *MM* 19 May 1890.

50. W.T. Wawn private log *Ariel*, 22 November 1888 (*Ariel* 24-12-1888); *Melbourne Argus* 10 December 1892 (*Helena* 18-11-1892).

51. *Melbourne Argus* 9 December 1892: the case of Roroyie's two wives (*Helena* 18-11-1892).

52. Regulations under *The Pacific Island Labourers Act of 1880*, and instructions to Government Agents, laid on the table of the Queensland Legislative Council, 8 July 1884: Regulation 21.

The recruiting of women was always a source of trouble in the islands. Any native for the nonce might pose as a chief and give his permission for a woman to leave, provided it were made worth his while, and in most of the Melanesian islands it is difficult to find out who is the chief, since there are practically no paramount chiefs.... One has frequently known cases where a man has persuaded a woman to recruit with him, posing as his wife, or vice versa, and no one in authority on shore was questioned as to their real status. 53

Many couples eloped to the plantations and a small number of unattached women may also have enlisted. Some Government Agents refused to believe obviously fabricated claims by couples presenting themselves as husband and wife; most Agents would not accept single women as recruits.<sup>54</sup> Others were less scrupulous. Wattesah, a Malaitan man, claimed to have married Hallatakin' on board the *Hector* on their way to Queensland in the late 1880s, and was quite definite that they had not been married on Malaita.<sup>55</sup> It was always far easier for a Malaitan man to leave his island than for a woman, and the consequences were never as traumatic<sup>56</sup> for a man as for a female, bound by taboos concerning menstruation and birth. The presence of women on board recruiting ships is of far greater importance than their actual numbers indicate, but it is difficult to do more than conjecture at the full effect.

Malaitans regarded European ships as big canoes. Malaitans adhere rigidly to spacial divisions, separating males and females in all aspects of life and within man-made objects like villages, houses and canoes: men belong in front, separated by a neutral area from the women at the rear; in a canoe males sit in the bow, females sit in the stern. Religion demands that women stay in seclusion during

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53. Ivens, *Language of Sa'a and Ulawa*, 223.

54. W.T. Wawn private log *Ariel*, 62 (*Ariel* 24-12-1888); *Melbourne Argus* 15 December 1892 (*Helena* 18-11-1892; S.M. Smith private log *Helena* 18 March 1893 (*Helena* 13-4-1893).

55. QSA DCT 10/N5, 19 August 1895.

56. The taboos associated with menstruation and birth affected men and woman equally; but whereas a man can escape the problem, a woman cannot.



menstruation or birth, and the *bisi* (the hut used for menstruation and birth) is never entered or approached by men. In Kwaio if a man observes a female gathering building materials for a *bisi*, she must discard the materials and start again. In Lau if menstruating women are in a canoe seen by men, the women press close to the bottom to hide themselves from view.<sup>57</sup> Generally these taboos are not applied by Malaitans to females from other islands, although this was not the case during an incident which occurred on the *Lochiel* in 1896, mentioned below.<sup>58</sup>

'Are 'are women are supposed not to use canoes while menstruating. If confronted by accidental breaches of taboos while travelling in canoes 'Are 'are must immediately perform a small purification ritual using shell-currency, making further offerings to appease the ancestors when the shore is reached. Even so they sometimes still become ill and die.<sup>59</sup> Anywhere on Malaita a birth outside the special seclusion area is a calamity; the most deadly of pollution. Elli Maranda in 'Lau, Malaita: "A woman is an alien spirit" ' says that the greatest contempt which a woman can show is by giving birth in the neutral family part of a village. Maranda quotes two examples, one concerning Tanua a Funagou woman married to Kuna, a Fou'eda man, who was jealous of his wife's continued visits to Funafou and beat her regularly:

...she waited and continued to pray, continued to be angry, and the day her child was due she fell ill. And the child shot forth in the house in the village. At sunrise they looked in and saw the child and the houseful of blood. The men of the men's area got frightened, took their canoes and all fled to Maana-afe. They were afraid of dying because a child had been born in the village. Then they performed purification ceremonies. Then they performed *sulu agalo* for

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57. R.M. Keesing, 'Christians and Pagans in Kwaio, Malaita', *JofPS*, v.76:1 (1967), 29-30; E.K. Maranda, 'A woman is an alien spirit', 186. Refer to Chapter One, Figure One: Sexual divisions in Malaitan villages, gardens, houses and canoes.
58. QSA GOV/A31, IA to S to PMQ, 6 August 1896 (*Lochiel* 19-7-1896).
59. Letter to the author from Dr D. de Coppett, 8 January 1980.

this child and its mother Tanua. Those two died...Kuna took three pigs, three shell strings, and made Fou'eda sacred again. Then the men returned to Fou'eda. 60

A birth in a canoe is equally as bad, and the canoe even today would be destroyed.<sup>61</sup>

Malaitan custom regarding spacial division between the sexes caused problems on board labour ships. Malaitan men would have objected to women having access to all areas of the deck, and the women's quarters on a labour ship were not always at the rear of the ship as demanded by Malaitan custom. The women's quarters were not always in the same area on a ship; the between decks section of any recruiting ship was often rebuilt or altered during refitting. On the *Helena* in 1884 the women's quarters were behind the cabin and the forehold, separated by a grating from the men's quarters. In 1892 on the same ship the women's quarters were in the after part of the cabin, entered from a door on the poop deck. On this voyage there were no females returned to the islands and for a period the quarters were empty. Although against regulations, on such occasions the area was usually re-allocated for other uses. The other problem concerned giving women access to the deck above the men's quarters. Malaitan men even today will not walk under women's clothes on a line, or under a house in which there are women. The same taboos seem to have applied on ships: women could not walk on the deck above the men's quarters.<sup>62</sup>

Only two examples have been located which describe births occurring on board ships on which Malaitans were travelling. A Malaitan woman gave premature birth to a still-born child whilst on board the

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60. E.K. Maranda, 'A woman is an alien spirit', 198.

61. E.H.J. Steed, *Impaled: the story of Brian Dunn, a twentieth century missionary martyr of the south Pacific* (California, 1970), 53.

62. QSA COL/A411, In letter 169 of 1885 (*Helena* 1-12-1884); *Melbourne Argus*, 5 December 1892 (*Helena* 18-11-1892); R.A. Herr and E.A. Rood (eds.), *A Solomons Sojourn: J.E. Philip's Log of the Makira, 1912-1913* (Hobart, 1978), 48.

*Sybil* in 1897, but nothing further is recorded.<sup>63</sup> In the second case, although the woman concerned was from Savo island, the Malaitans behaved exactly as one would expect from Maranda and de Coppet's descriptions. The birth occurred on the *Lochiel* in 1896. Nine Malaitan women in the same compartment refused to stay with her, and demanded that she be separated from them for three weeks. The Government Agent solved the problem by giving up his cabin to the woman and her child and the *Lochiel's* Master headed the ship straight to Savo to put her ashore, as he knew that no further Malaitan recruits would come aboard whilst she was there.<sup>64</sup> Menstruation was as severe a problem for any Malaitan to cope with beyond the confines of the *bisi*, one encountered far more often since there were adult females recruited on board seventy percent of the vessels known to have visited or taken recruits from Malaita to Queensland.<sup>65</sup>

The elements which maintained equilibrium in traditional Malaitan society, based on sexual dichotomy and strict regulation of spacial dimensions, were disrupted the moment Malaitans went on board recruiting ships. Voyages were generally of two or three months, but could last up to five months. Depending on the stage of a voyage at which a recruit joined the ship he or she could be on board for one or two months. These voyages presented intense emotional difficulties to Malaitans: having to cope with separation from their shrine-focused territories which linked them to the governing forces of the *akalo*; non-secluded birth and menstruation; strange food, sea sickness and epidemics; enclosed spaces; meeting enemies from other areas of Malaita and strangers from other islands; the European crew and the language barrier. These were difficulties sometimes great enough to lead to suicide or to death caused by angry *akalo*.

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63. S.M. Smith private log *Sybil* 2, 7 January 1897, (*Sybil* 2 30-1-1897).

64. In the event the Malaitan women calmed down sufficiently to allow the mother to return to their quarters on the fourth day after the birth.

QSA GOV/A31, IA to S to PMG, 6 August 1896, (*Lochiel* 19-7-1896).

65. Calculated from the immigration returns from the 260 voyages known to have visited or recruited at Malaita, from Queensland.

The *akalo* control all ritual and ceremonial processes on Malaita. The recruiting trade became part of their cosmological life-cycles; its circular nature made it easy to incorporate within their established intellectual framework. From the beginning Malaitans saw their relationships with the recruiters in terms of their relationship with their *akalo*. Kabbou, John Renton's protector in Lau sought the co-operation and protection of Lau ancestors for the men who enlisted on the *Bobtail Nag* in 1875, explaining to the *akalo* the reason the *Bobtail Nag* had intruded into *asi hara*, the middle lagoon zone in the Lau conception of territorial zones.<sup>66</sup> In Fataleka those who enlisted invoked the protection and forgiveness of their *akalo* to enable them to cope with the presence of menstruating women on board ship.<sup>67</sup> If a ship interfered with a porpoise catching drive, a market day, or in some other way offended against custom, the *wane asi baita* could place a taboo on the ship, placing it outside their system of cyclic exchanges. Recruiters did not understand exactly what had happened, but they knew that if they had been declared taboo their only option was to leave.<sup>68</sup>

When Malaitans enlisted they carried out ritual acts which enabled them to join the circular migratory labour trade into established cyclic relationships linking them to their ancestors. Malaitans were often observed removing all body ornaments, to give with their weapons to kinsmen on the beach, before stepping into the recruiting boats.<sup>69</sup> Some weapons and ornaments are part of a descent group's sacred heritage, not the personal possessions of the individual using them; to wear or to carry such items away would mean placing one's ancestors in danger from pollution, in turn risking their anger and retaliation against the individual or the descent group.<sup>70</sup> While away

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66. *Qlder* 1 January 1876 (*Bobtail Nag* 24-12-1875); Maranda, 'A Women is an alien spirit', 182-3.

67. Ishmael Itea, 14 October 1976.

68. Cromar, *Jock of the Islands*, 151, 222 (*Stormbird* 11-9-1884), (*Helena* 22-10-1885).

69. *Melb. Argus* 8 December 1892 (also in J.D. Melvin, *The Cruise of the Helena*. Edited by P. Corris. (Melbourne, 1977), 30-1 (*Helena* 18 November 1892); Herr and Rood, *A Solomons Sojourn* 175 (at Sio in To'ambaita, 4 September 1913).

70. Letter to the author from Dr D. de Coppet, 2 April 1980.

at the plantations Malaitans were in partial limbo as far as their ancestors were concerned. Most of their duties were suspended and they were in lesser danger from pollution, though usually not completely without protection. Enquiries made in Kwara'ae, Fataleka, Baegu, Lau, Baelelea and To'ambaita make it clear that north Malaitan recruits took small amounts of traditional currency with them to Australia, following a common Malaitan practice. They used the currency in Queensland for small compensatory sacrifices to the *akalo*, bolstered on return to Malaita by further offerings made through the *fata aabu* of their descent group.<sup>71</sup> Clearly the same currency was available if required on the voyages to and from Queensland, in the same fashion as de Coppet described the 'Are 'are's method of dealing with accidental breaches of taboos while travelling in canoes.

The complex multi-dimensional exchanges between man and ancestors continued on board the labour vessels, on the Queensland plantations and farms throughout the entire forty years Malaitans participated in the circular migration, and also among Malaitans who stayed in Queensland. Malaitan society continued to operate in the new milieu, incorporating the capitalist mode of production into their Melanesian cycles and exchanges. Without such intellectual flexibility they could not have survived the experience so well.

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71. Salathiel Salana, Auki, 15 November 1976; Kalabet Fugui, Tatito island, 2 November 1976; Ishmael Itea, Ambe, 13 October 1976; Naridu, Malo area, 4 November 1976; Philip Fageea, Ofakwasi 19 May 1978; Nelson Taetona, Ambe, 6 November 1976; Raraomea, Ataa, 3 November 1976.

#### 4. Malaitans and the European mode of production

Malaitan labourers have been leaving their island, withdrawing from their traditional life-cycles and exchanges, participating in the European capitalist mode of production, then returning to traditional life, continually for more than a century. Labour recruits travelled to Queensland, Fiji, Samoa and New Caledonia in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; labourers have worked on plantations within the Solomons throughout the twentieth century; and now Malaitans work in urban Honiara. Our theoretical knowledge of pre-capitalist societies is poor. Theoreticians have made reasonable progress in developing a critique of capitalist societies, but they have not shown the same ability in dealing with societies where kinship and religion are more important than the accumulation of wealth; where human existence is part of a cosmic cycle with no separation between the physical and spiritual worlds.<sup>72</sup> Anthropologists have usually dealt with the exchange and distribution of items within physical economic networks. They seldom deal with the forces of production - the raw materials, tools, labour and processes -, or with production as part of reciprocal exchanges with ancestors. Many give the impression that the cultures they study remain conservatively static. Few writers have managed to describe the changing dynamics when capitalist and traditional Melanesian modes of production confront each other and come to an accommodation.<sup>73</sup>

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72. Refer to: Emmanuel Terray's excellent analysis of Claude Meillassoux's *L'Anthropologie économiques des Gouro de côte d'Ivoire* (Paris, 1964) in 'Historical materialism and segmentary lineage-based societies' in his *Marxism and "primitive" societies* (London and New York, 1972); C. Meillassoux, 'From reproduction to production: a Marxist approach to economic anthropology', *Economy and Society*, v. 1 (1972), 93-105; M. Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics* (London, 1972).

73. H.I. Hogbin and C.S. Belshaw made some of the earliest attempts: refer to Hogbin's *Experiments in Civilization and Transformation Scene* (London, 1951) and to Belshaw's *Changing Melanesia: social economics of culture contact* (Melbourne, 1954) and *Traditional Exchange and Modern Markets* (U.S.A., 1965). Others followed, including: R.F. Salisbury, *From Stone to Steel: economic consequences of a technological change in New Guinea* (Melbourne, 1962) and *Vanamami: economic transformation in a traditional society* (Melbourne, 1970); D.L. Oliver, *A Solomon Island Society: kinship and leadership among the Siuai of Bougainville* (U.S.A., 1967); S.T. Epstein, *Capitalism, Primitive and Modern* (Canberra, 1968) and

Labour migration is not only an economic activity: it is part of a Melanesian's relationship with his or her total cosmological outlook. But labour is one of the major elements of production; and in the labour trade Melanesians were employing labour as an alternative or complementary form of production, accumulating valuable artifacts for exchange by each descent group. The Malaitan economy is based upon subsistence production and exchange at a market place, the important point of interaction for the *wane tolo* and the *wane asi*. Other exchanges on a physical level take place during rites of passage, involving mainly shell-disk and porpoise teeth currency, pigs and sea and land produce. Brideprice at marriage, and *maoma* rites are the most important of the ceremonial exchanges. Reciprocal gift-giving relationships, exchanges of lives and traditional currency for natural deaths<sup>74</sup> and murders further extend the pattern. All of these exchanges allow metaphysical communication, linking living people to their ancestors, and preserving *mamama* (the Malaitan variation of the Oceanic term *mana*, meaning power and authority, linked to fertility and maintenance of a harmonious balanced society).

In Melanesian society there is no clear distinction between exchanging surplus production and exchanging surplus labour. Through reciprocity a Malaitan can appropriate the labour of others, who though receiving no immediate advantage can see a valuable investment for their future and that of their descent group in providing the labour. Most labour recruits provided an immediate benefit to their descent groups in the form of the gift which the Europeans gave in exchange for taking them away. The labour trade's detractors claimed

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*Matupit* (Canberra, 1969); B.R. Finney, *Big-men and Business: entrepreneurship and economic growth in the New Guinea highlands* (Canberra, 1973).

74. A European cannot avoid the concept of natural death, but it is important to realise that it had no place in traditional Malaitan ideas. Refer to the section of Chapter Eight concerned with Melanesian perceptions of disease and death.
75. H.I. Hogbin, 'Mama', *Oceania*, v. 6:3 (1936), 241-74; A. Capell, 'The word "Mana": a linguistic study', *Oceania*, v.9 (1938-9), 89-96; R. Firth, 'The analysis of Mana: an empirical approach', *JofPS*, v.49:4 (1940), 483-512.

that the recruiters were buying the labourers as one would slaves, but the practice was quite acceptable to Melanesian ideas on compensatory and expiatory payments; even Bishop Patteson exchanged gifts for the scholars he wanted to take away to his Mission. After a period of years those who had been recruited returned home with new material possessions: steel axes, guns and other European curiosities. As individuals their prestige was enhanced, and the goods added to the communal wealth of the descent group, increasing the group's power in overall exchange networks. Consequently, even though the individual lost control of the products of his or her wage labour, they still benefited and generally were well compensated for the loss.<sup>76</sup>

Melanesians had no concept of the value of European coins and bank notes. Their own valuables included feather and shell strings, body ornaments, weapons and pigs; all of which had ritual and spiritual significance, not serving the same purpose as European currency. One common oral tradition among Islanders in Queensland today is that when the original recruits were first faced with choosing between a paper bank note, a sovereign or a half-crown piece they usually chose the half-crown because it was biggest.<sup>77</sup> Later they became more canny in dealing with European currency; if they made a second trip to Queensland, Malaitans negotiated for a higher wage and often requested that in lieu of the gift to their kin they should receive an extra thirty shillings in coin.<sup>78</sup> When European currency was taken back to

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76. Belshaw, *Traditional Exchange*, 11-52; Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics* (London, 1974), 149-183; Ivens, *Dictionary of Sa'a and Ulawa*, 224.

Not every returning labourer managed to get his or her goods back to their descent group. A case in point is that of Robin Ramonea from east Kwara'ae. The ship dropped him at Fakanakafo instead of a few miles south in Kwara'ae. The Fakanakafo men on the beach stole his box, and all Ramonea was left with was his gun and cartridges. He put these to good use some days later when he returned to Fakanakafo and shot Angiladoa, the main person who had stolen his belongings. Ishmael Itea, 24 October 1976.

77. BOHC 37Bb:1(S&FB).

78. For example refer to the voyage of the *Helena* described in the *Melbourne Argus* 10, 12 December 1892 (*Helena* 18-11-1892). The proportion of Malaitan recruits who refused to allow a gift to be given to their kin was probably just as large as the proportion kidnapped or treated deceitfully by the recruiters. To "stealem boy" was to take a recruit by any of the above methods



the islands it was of little use except for trading with Europeans, particularly for guns and tobacco. Even during the first half of the twentieth century European money had limited use or effect in Melanesia. When C.S. Belshaw wrote *Changing Melanesia: social economics of culture contact* in the early 1950s, barter and reciprocity were still the preferred method of exchange.<sup>79</sup>

The recruiting trade affected social relationships and exchange networks connecting the physical and metaphysical world on Malaita. The initial gift from the recruiters to the kin of the person they took away from Malaita could be worth anything up to thirty shillings or two pounds sterling. But its value in European financial terms was quite irrelevant to the Malaitans who received it. Their valuation was connected to the prestige, curiosity value and usefulness of the European artifact within Malaitan society; and with the place of the gift within exchange networks. To illustrate this we will examine the enlistment of one man from Maramasike.

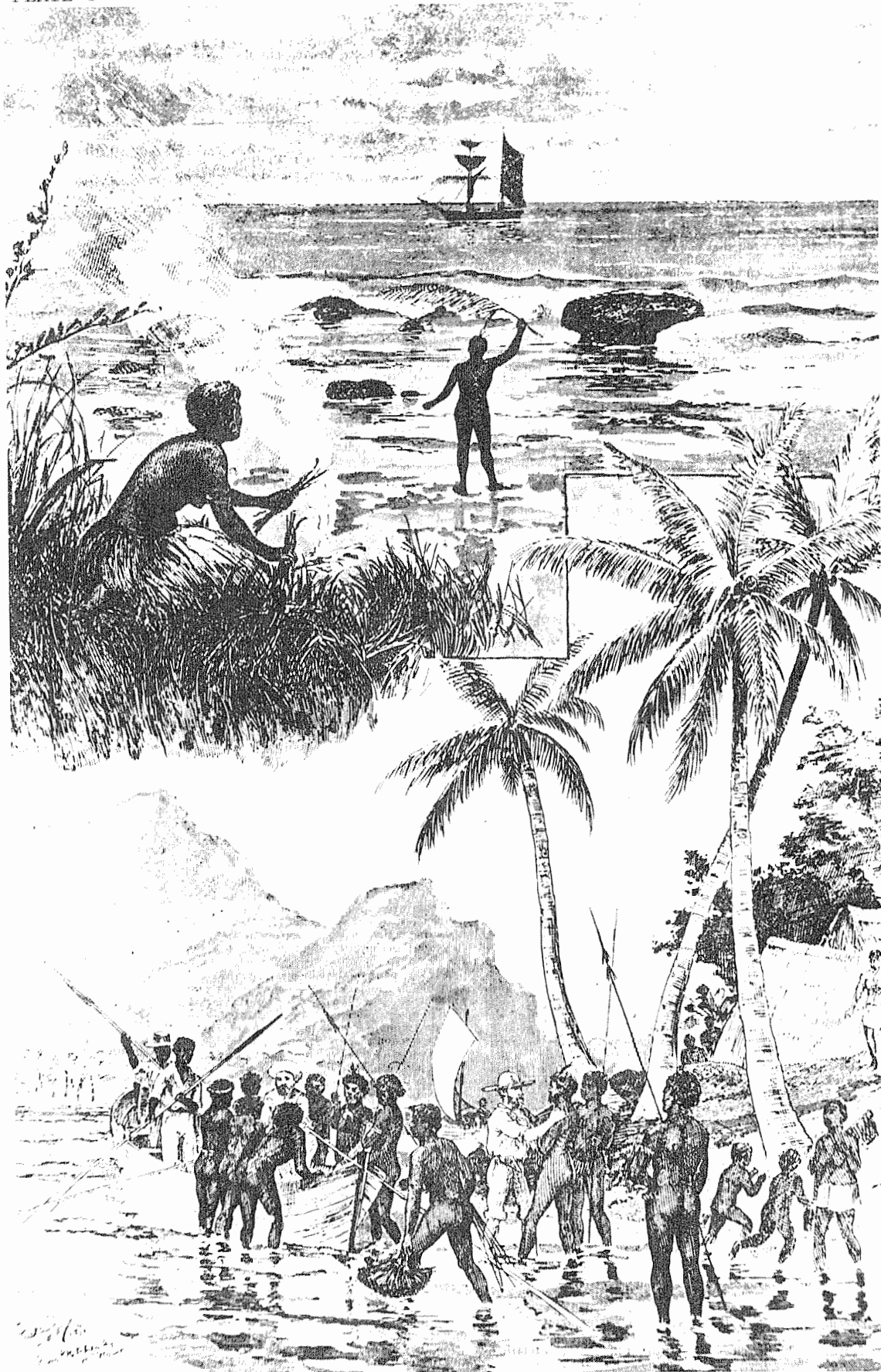
In 1892 the *Helena* made its twenty-fourth voyage in the Queensland labour trade, at least nine of which had previously included Malaita. The first person to enlist was Na loot, a bushman from Sabo, a passage just north of Sa'a on Maramasike. Na loot took off his ornaments and handed them with his bag to another man. As he was unable to swim his friend helped him through the breakers to the recruiting boat. The recruiters continued on to nearby Sabo where they gave Na loot's father the accustomed gift:

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and not leave a compensatory gift. In some cases the recruits who requested that the gift be given directly to them as a bonus to their wage were regarded as having been stolen or kidnapped. This has implications for the oral tradition concerning the recruiting trade. Belshaw, *Changing Melanesia*, 34; C.R. Moore, 'Oral testimony and the Pacific island labour trade to Queensland: myth and reality', *Journal of the Oral History Association of Australia*, v.1 (1978-9), 28-42.

79. Gaggin, *Among the Man-eaters*, 165. One Lau man tried to buy tobacco from the crew of the *Helena* in 1892, using a £10 Bank of Queensland note. *Melbourne Argus* 15 December 1892, (*Helena* 18-11-1892); Belshaw, *Changing Melanesia*, 155. There remains a preference by Solomon Islanders for traditional currencies. Chapman and Pirie, *Tasi Mauri*, 6.112-3.

## PLATE 8



Typical recruiting scenes: an Islander signals a passing recruiting ship; and Islanders enlisting. (Photo: *Queenslander* 9 July 1892)

400 sticks of trade tobacco, (twenty-six to the pound), three axes, two dozen assorted fishhooks, a fishing line, four knives, a belt, a sheath knife, a pair of scissors, a heap of clay pipes, and a dozen boxes of matches. 80

What Na loot's father received was more than mere goods. He saw these European artifacts as a type of assurance - an exchange for the temporary loss of the life of his son. The goods were accepted as compensation in the same way that traditional currency changes hands in compensatory exchanges equalizing murders and deaths in Malaitan society. In return Na loot signed on to work at Bundaberg for three years for six pounds a year plus food, accommodation and a clothing allowance. His only immediate gain was in receiving a strip of bright blue cloth to wear, and a shiny tin medallion emblazoned 'No. 1' to hang around his neck.

A few ships' Masters were willing to pay the gift in traditional currency, which was always better received on Malaita than European goods. In 1885 Aigiselaus Tonarus was offering one Berkshire pig for every recruit at Fiu, and in 1888 W.T. Wawn ruefully recorded that at Sinalanggu "they want pigs for boys."<sup>81</sup> By the late 1880s and 1890s Fijian and Queensland recruiters were using porpoise teeth as gifts to obtain recruits, but noted rapid inflation of their value. Robert Pearn, Master of the *Lochiel*, in 1890 and 1891 bought porpoise teeth at Ontong Java and used them at Malaita. The teeth then cost about one pound sterling a hundred, which made a cheaper gift than trade goods; but where Pearn had been able to give one hundred in 1890 he had to give 200 in 1891. Even so, Pearn got his recruits: Wawn, recruiting at Fiu at the same time as Pearn in 1891 had to give up and sailed the *Borough Belle* off to Guadalcanal.<sup>82</sup> Trade goods were no substitute for traditional currencies.

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80. Melvin, *The Cruise of the Helena*, 31-2 (*Helena* 11-11-1892).

81. Cromar, *Jock of the Islands*, 210, 213, (*Helena* 22-10-1885); W.T. Wawn private log *Ariel* 26 November 1888 (*Ariel* 24-12-1888).

82. Wawn, *South Sea Islanders*, 406, 434 and private log *Borough Belle* 29 March 1891 (*Lochiel* 23-7-1891) (*Borough Belle* 27-4-1891).

Na loot on the *Helena* in divesting himself of his ornaments and bag dis-engaged from his relationship with his descent group and his ancestors. For the intermediate period his father and the other members of his descent group were satisfied with the European artifacts which made their garden cultivation, fishing and fire lighting easier; the tobacco and pipes introduced them to the dubious pleasure of smoking. When Na loot enlisted there were sixty-four Melanesian labourers on board returning home, many to Malaita. Between them they had gathered an exotic collection of the paraphernalia of European civilization:

In value, and sometimes in bulk, tobacco was the most important item. There were cases of the 'weed' weighing over thirty pound for which £5 sterling each was said to have been paid. Parcels of pipes, from the common clay to the stylish briars, and a gross or two of matches were natural corollaries. Assortments of axes, hatchets, cutlery, calico, and coloured handkerchiefs were common to all. Saucepans and billycans were also in evidence. Amongst the uncommon articles were musical boxes, a bundle of score music, bathing pants, gingham, pomatum, fancy soap, and some shells being taken back to where they had been gathered. 83

After three years on the plantations Na loot could hope to bring back similar items. With European money, artifacts and skills he could cog back into his old social networks and begin to re-communicate with the *akalo*. A feast and ritual distribution of the foreign goods would have been arranged: the goods being distributed among all of the people attending, they giving shell-currency in return.<sup>84</sup> Na loot would then have been presented with the body ornaments and weapons previously relinquished, thus completing an exchange cycle linking the plantations to the *akalo*. He could then settle comfortably back into Malaitan society, perhaps marrying, using Brideprice arranged through the accrued benefits from his European artifacts.

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83. Melvin, *Cruise of the Helena*, 7. The mention of shells is tantalizing. They may have been *tafuliae* or cowrie shells (worn on a head-band by leading Malaitans).

84. In 'Are 'are this ritual distribution is called *kikesiha*. Letters to the author from Dr. D. de Coppet, 2 April and 13 August 1980.

One of his most valued possessions would have been a steel axe. Gardening prior to the acquisition of steel tools had been accomplished with stone axes and by burning off undergrowth and trees. The use of steel axes and knives made a vast difference to the process; work which could be completed in one day using a steel axe, took three or four days with stone axes and fire.<sup>85</sup> The introduction of metals to Melanesia, replacing stone and wooden artifacts, progressively liberated men from their most time-consuming tasks, enabling large numbers to travel as labour recruits without endangering productivity. After a few months back on his island it was not unusual for an ex-recruit to feel the urge to re-enlist. One Queensland informant asked his father why he had returned to the colony a second time?

He said, "oh, when you get a bit of Queensland you sort of get it in your blood. When you see them schooners out at sea in full sail coming in, oh, it gives you the urge. You want to go again. So I came out again. 86

Similarly Kwailiu from the Rakwane descent group in east Fataleka re-recruited with his young wife Orrani in the early 1890s. They disembarked at Ingham on the Herbert river and spent the rest of their lives there and at Mackay.<sup>87</sup>

When a man or woman failed to return and was presumed dead by his or her descent group there were several compensatory mechanisms within Malaitan society which could be used to redress the loss. When an indentured labourer died in Queensland, a sum equal to half the wages due together with any credit in the person's Savings Bank account was by law to be delivered to the next-of-kin by the first Government Agent to visit the area; the monies due could be claimed in goods from the ship's stores.<sup>88</sup> This would have been regarded as unsatisfactory by

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85. Time estimate by Ishmael Itea, 24 October 1976; also refer to Bennett, *Cross-cultural Influences*, 53; Salisbury, *From Stone to Steel*, 108-10, 220; Chapman and Pirie, *Tasi Mauri*, 2.16.
86. Moore, *Forgotten People*, 27 (Sid Ober's father came from Oba island in the New Hebrides.).
87. Refer to the biographical section at the end of this chapter.
88. Regulations under *The Pacific Island Labourers Acts, 1880-1892*, No. 46.

any Malaitan descent group: monetary compensation is seen as a poor substitute for an equivalent death. An option was to send another member of the descent group to Queensland to search for the lost one. When Kwailiu and Orrani failed to return to Rakwane, Luiramo<sup>89</sup> sent his elder son Fikui to search for them. Fikui initially enlisted on a ship which took him to Bundaberg and spent almost a decade in Queensland before he found Kwailiu, but failed to persuade the wanderer to return. Kwailiu died in Queensland in 1906, but the Rakwane people never gave up and waited hopefully for him until the last ships from Queensland returning deported Malaitans arrived in 1908.

The only other possible response from a descent group which had lost a member would have been the compensatory death of another person. Many Malaitans enlisted in groups for company and moral support. The non-return of one of them was sometimes compensated for by the death of another person who had left the island at the same time; or the death of some other person connected in some way with the missing individual. Killing a European was also acceptable compensation. The European did not need to be connected in any way with the Malaitan death, which probably explains a number of attacks against Europeans at Malaita and in Queensland, viewed by Europeans as totally unprovoked and quite irrational.

On Malaita death is not the climax of life but part of ritual and exchange processes which give permanence to the society of the living. Disturbing these ritual cycles causes society to break down, so the loss of any individual must be compensated to maintain equilibrium. Daniel de Coppet's account of 'Are 'are views would apply, without need for major changes, to all Malaita. 'Are 'are divide the dead into two main categories: those killed by their ancestors; and those murdered by the living. A murder must be avenged, either by a violent act of retaliation carried out by a relative, or by setting a price on the murderer's head or on one of his or her relatives. After the second murder occurs the family of the first victim give a feast and pay money to the relatives of the last victim, restoring

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89. Refer to Chapter One, Table One: Luiramo was Bina's 18th *aofia*.

social equilibrium and peace, ending the feud. Very rarely will the family of the first victim accept money rather than kill or commission the killing of the second person, as this is to acknowledge inferiority. If a victim is chosen to be murdered as compensation for the loss of a member of a descent group, a reward payment is placed in an area constructed on the ground within their gardens. In 'Are 'are to put a price on someone's head translates as locking the person into the square of a garden of death; shell-currency offered to the murderer is itself seen as a lure which will draw the victim toward execution.<sup>90</sup>

Malaitans who lost members of their descent groups through the recruiting trade posted rewards to try to achieve the death of a European or the destruction of an entire ship in return. Appendix Two cataloguing examples of Malaitan resistance to recruiters must be viewed in the light of the foregoing explanation of the place of vengeance in the overall network of exchange. At the most conservative estimate possible, between seventy and one hundred Malaitans died on the island or on their way to Queensland or to some other colony as a result of resistance on their part or from European retaliation. Calculating from average mortality figures for Pacific Islanders in Queensland 1871 to 1904, probably about 470 Malaitans died in the colony during those years.<sup>91</sup> Many others deliberately chose not to return, lost communication with their families and were presumed dead.

Malaitans were never discerning as to the colony of origin of a recruiting ship when they attacked it or its crew. When twenty Malaitans were killed during an attack on the *Young Dick* at Sinalanggu in 1886, a reward of 100,000<sup>92</sup> porpoise teeth was offered for the

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90. De Coppet, 'Jardins de vie, jardins de mort en Mélanésie', *passim*; and letter to the author, 13 August 1980.

91. This figure is calculated from two sources: Chapter Two, Table One and Chapter Eight, Table Six.

92. Worth about \$10,000 at 1978 values. In 1888 one hundred porpoise teeth were a large enough gift to induce a descent group to allow a member to enlist. Scarr, 'Recruits and recruiters: a portrait of the Pacific islands labour trade', *JPH*, v.2 (1967), 14; Wawn, *South Sea Islanders*, 406, (*Ariel* 24-12-1888).

capture of a ship, and a smaller sum for the life of a single European. In 1888 the *Ariel's* Government Agent T.S. Armstrong was killed on Manaoba island off the northern end of Lau lagoon, because of a reward offered by Kwaio at Sinalanggu. Cromar, recruiter on the *Fearless* saw six Manaobans pass by on their way to collect payment:

...I was recruiting on the shore, when a canoe in which six painted natives passed us at top speed. The paint showed that they were "tambu", and on some evil errand. All the natives remained silent as they went by, and allowed them to pass unmolested. 93

Appendix Two contains numerous other examples of rewards offered for European deaths, and attacks by Malaitans because some member of a descent group had died in Queensland or Fiji. Given the intricate cycles by which Malaitans bound individuals and their society to the metaphysical world, and the major disruptions which the labour trade caused, Malaitans showed admirable restraint in their relationships with the European recruiters. On the occasions when they were hostile Malaitans were trying to prevent their people from being drawn away from Malaita or were reacting to a prior incident for which their social system demanded retaliation to complete a cycle. Unfortunately the Europeans involved did not understand the Malaitan rationale; they viewed the Malaitans' actions as unprovoked attacks by treacherous savages, earning the quite rational Malaitans an undeservedly bad reputation.

Guns were used in many of the attacks by Malaitans against Europeans. The Queensland government tried unsuccessfully from 1878 until 1908 to stop guns, ammunition and explosives from leaving the colony for use on Pacific islands. In 1878 an attempt was made under the *Navigation Act* to limit returning Islanders to one gun and six pounds of powder each. Then in November 1883 the export of guns to the Islands was totally forbidden.<sup>94</sup> Most Malaitans travelling to

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93. Cromar, *Jock of the Islands*, 263.

94. MM 23 March 1878; QSA COL/A378, In letter 345 of 1884: proclamation issued 22 November 1883; Corris, *Passage, Port and Plantation*, 37-8, 103-5.



Queensland did so in a period when it was illegal for guns to be given as trade or for them to import guns from Queensland. In 1884 and spasmodically in later years many Malaitans refused to enlist if they could not bring home a gun. Just after the 1884 ban Jock Cromar had the situation explained to him by a Langa langa man:

Me think you can't catch'em boy...  
 s'pose German man and man-we-we [French]  
 pay'em shoota, him catch'em altogether  
 boy. Man Maratt lik'm shoota too much.  
 You can't catchem boy along tobac. 95

In 1893 S.M. Smith Government Agent on the *Helena* had the problem stated to him bluntly at Olomburi: "No sniders, no boys".<sup>96</sup>

The Queensland ban never stopped Malaitans from getting guns: French and German recruiters continued to give guns as gifts in return for recruits; Malaitans brought guns back with them from non-British colonies, or bought them from traders visiting their island;<sup>97</sup> and they used ingenious methods to smuggle guns back from Queensland. Custom officials diligently searched the departing ships, particularly the Islanders' luggage, and found many guns, and the accompanying gun powder and cartridges.<sup>98</sup> But the Islanders learnt to hide their contraband well: in false bottoms and tops of their boxes; inside rolls of material; cartridges were stuffed into soil around plants and inside concertinas; rifles were hidden in water tanks and even up galley funnels on the ships. C.M. Woodford in 1908 denied a claim that there were about 1,000 Winchester repeating rifles on Malaita;

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95. Cromar, *Jock of the Islands*, 138-9 (*Madeline* 24-3-1884).

96. S.M. Smith private log *Helena* 25 March 1893 (*Helena* 13-4-1893).

97. Wawn, *South Sea Islanders*, 358 and private log *Borough Belle* 28 January 1891; QSA GOV/A28, J. O'Brien to IA, 14 January 1895 (*Lochiel* 30-1-1895); QSA GOV/A27, IA to PUS CSD, 10 October 1894; W.T. Wawn private log *Para* 12 July 1894 (*Para* 9-10-1894); Gaggin, *Among the Man-eaters*, 165.

98. For example: when the *Sybil 2* was searched in April 1897 the Customs Officials found 14 Snider rifles, 2 revolvers, 370 cartridges, 1 bayonet and 21 pounds of powder; one Islander on the *Ivanhoe* in 1903 had 14 Winchester rifles. QSA POL/J29, In letter 2719 of 1897; QSA POL/J29 M 435, In letter 11597 of 1903 (cutting from the *Brisbane Courier* 6 May 1903).

he said that a more accurate estimate was 4,000 or 5,000.<sup>99</sup> Some descent groups could muster one hundred guns if necessary: in 1906 150 men were on a beach just south of Kwai, each with a gun; and at the turn of the century the Rakwane descent group at Fakanakafo bay a few miles to the north had an arsenal containing one hundred guns.<sup>100</sup> W.G. Ivens said that:

It had got to such a pass on Malaita in later years that for a man to be without a rifle was certain death; every able-bodied man carried a gun .... Their test of being a man was the possession of a rifle. 101

European material culture and technology has now changed the entire way of life in Melanesia to the extent, that artifact manufacture has to be taught in schools to preserve the skills. The effect on the social forces of production of the importation of thousands of axes, knives, fishing hooks and guns over a century is difficult to calculate. Malaitan material culture was based on stone adzes used for axes, flints used for arrow-heads and spear-tips,<sup>102</sup> and wooden bows and arrows, spears and clubs. The quarries were sacred places, stone and wooden weapons and tools were used in rituals and as a sign of legitimacy and power. A sacred Malaitan weapon can kill, not because of the physical prowess of its wielder or the strength of its timber, but from the power of the *akalo* within. Cloak-like garments woven with shell beads were worn by Malaitan leaders as a sign of their powers as preservers of the peace, but the power came from the *akalo* not the garment or its wearer.<sup>103</sup> Trading networks enabled the exchange of Malaitan material culture all over the island: Rakwane flints were traded all over north Malaita and

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99. Moore, *Forgotten People*, 27-8 (Sid Ober); Hopkins, *Autobiography*, 92; *C'w A CRS* Al 08/6443 (clipping from the *Sydney Morning Herald* 30 June 1908).

100. *MM* 20 December 1906; Ishmael Itea 15 October 1976.

101. Ivens, *Language of Sa'a and Ulawa*, 227.

102. Ross, 'Stone adzes from Malaita', 411-20.

103. de Coppet, 'Double illusion'; Cromar *Jock of the Islands*, 219-20, Letter to the author from Dr. D. de Coppet, 2 April 1980.

stone artifacts manufactured by the east Fataleka descent groups were exchanged for the excellent bows and arrows produced by the Kwaio and spears from Kwara'ae <sup>104</sup>; Langa langa shell-currency was used by the lagoon-dwellers as their collateral in trade with other Malaitans living inland.

The aura of the *akalo* prevailed traditional Malaita: every action by an individual or a descent group, every item of manufacture, every product of agriculture, hunting or fishing was viewed in terms of cyclic relationships with ancestors. The labour trade, symbolic of the arrival of Europeans, in ways some obvious, some subtle and still unrecognised, changed Malaita and Malaitans. In the late nineteenth century dichotomies developed which divide traditional from modern Malaita: the change from stone to steel; the division between pagan and Christian; the alteration in the base of power and authority from the leaders of descent groups to the Resident Commissioner in Tulagi, and now the Malaitan Provincial Assembly and the independent government of the Solomon islands; and the existence of communities of Malaitans in Fiji and Queensland today - urbanized Melanesians who still maintain traditional rights on the island their forefathers left a century before. The remainder of this chapter deals with two themes: first, variations in recruiting, district by district, 1871 to 1904; second, a study of Malaitan individuals involved in the labour trade: the passage masters and recruits who made the transition from traditional Malaita to Queensland.

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104. Russell, 'The Fataleka', 13; Ishmael Itea and Charles Luiramo, 10 October 1976.

## 5. Overview of Malaitan recruiting: 1871-1904

In excess of 9,000 first indenture contracts were entered into by Malaitans arriving in Queensland. Unfortunately there is no complete list of their names, nor of the exact areas from which they came. But by using several documentary sources<sup>105</sup> 2,815 (30.64 percent) of their names have been located, plus details of the ship's voyage on which they left for Queensland and often the name of the passage or bay where they boarded the vessel. For 2,023 (22 percent) of them enough details remain to indicate the dialect area or coastal area from which the recruits came. Sometimes this information is available in archival registers, but in other cases identification was provided by present day Malaitans during field research in 1976 and 1978. Table Four lists these 2,023 Malaitan recruits: divided into dialect areas; sub-divided into east, west and north coast; arranged chronologically from 1871 until 1904. The major recruiting areas evident from this sample are illustrated by proportional circles on Map Three.

Distillation of over 2,000 examples into one table and one map belies the enormous difficulties involved in compiling the data, difficulties which may well have skewed some of the results. The names were identified over a five year period, 1976 to 1980, by a combination of methods. Approximately half of the names have been identified purely by the passage at which the individuals were recruited. Thus a person embarking at Uru or Sinalanggu has been listed as an east coast Kwaio; a person embarking at Waisisi has been listed as a west coast 'Are 'are. But there are problems attached to such a classification. One obvious conclusion which can be drawn from the earlier sections of this thesis is that dialect boundaries, shown

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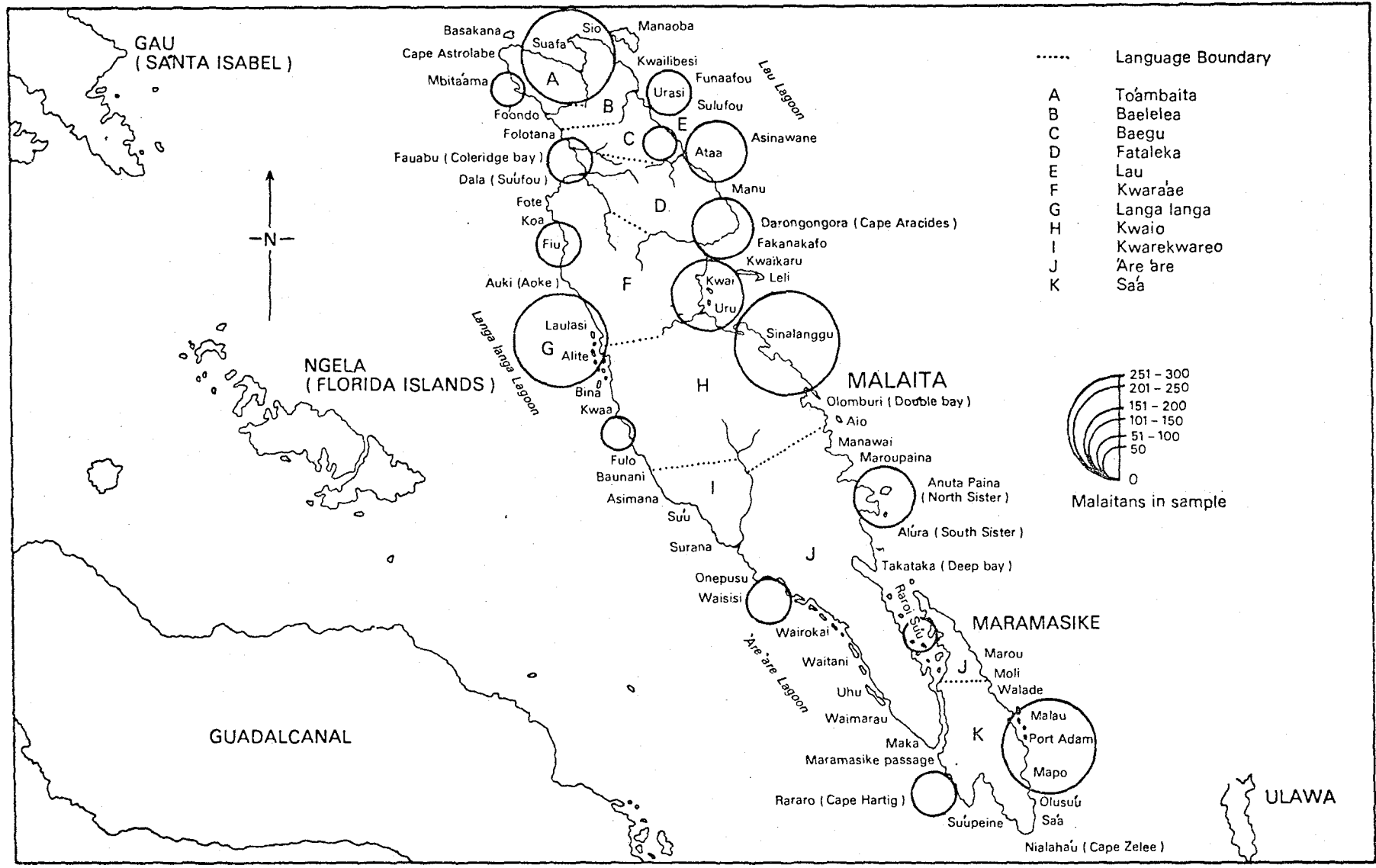
105. The names were collected from the following sources: *QSA PRE/83a-b*; *QSA IPI 12/1*; *QSA IPI 3/3*; *Mitchell A1477-1*: W.T. Wawn's private logs from the voyage of the *Ariel* (arriving at Bundaberg, 24 December 1888), and the voyage of the *Borough Belle* (arriving at Mackay, 27 April 1891); *JCUNQ* (Archives); Register of Pacific Islanders employed on Pioneer plantation, Burdekin district, 12 October 1895 to 22 March 1906; *QSA COL/A422*, In letter 169 of 1885; Melvin, *The Cruise of the Helena* (originally published in *Melbourne Argus* 3 to 20 December 1892).

Table Four :

2023 Malaitan recruits identified by dialect area : 1871-1904 (Approx. 22% of the total number)

Year	South Malaita : general	South Malaita : east	South Malaita : west	Marasapika passage	'Are 'are : east	'Are 'are : west	Kwaio : east	Kwaio : west	Kwara'ae : general	Kwara'ae : east	Kwara'ae : west	Langa langa lagoon	Fataleka : east	Fataleka : west	Fataleka : Faubou	Fataleka : Fakonsakafo	Fataleka : Manu	Basgu : east	Basgu : west	Lau : general	Lau : Ataa	Lau : central	Lau : north	Baelele : general	To'ambaita : general	To'ambaita : north	To'ambaita : west	North end of Malaita: no further identification	Total Malaitans in the sample	Total Malaitans landed in Queensland	Total Melanesians landed in Queensland	
1871												13																13	12	1352		
1872																													0	0	461	
1873																													0	0	994	
1874					5																							5	13	1503		
1875		16			15																							1	1	63	362	2682
1876	6				8																							14	43	1682		
1877																													0	0	1986	
1878																												2	2	n.a.	1421	
1879																												1	2	2*	2182	
1880																														11	1937	
1881											3		2			1										4	19	31	257	2643		
1882																												4	5	32	3140	
1883										5			2			1				2	1	1		5			4	19	308	5276		
1884				2						3		1	2							2	2	3					1	14	220*	3255		
1885				12			2	1		3	1			1														20	34*	1916		
1886				1			1	2		2				1														7	47*	1595		
1887	2						1			2			1															7	13*	1928		
1888	10	5	7	4	8		9			3	1	6	2			1	3				4	4	3	2		1	1	77	164*	2291		
1889	3	5		1			11			1		3	1		2	1					1					4	1	29	65*	3032		
1890	22	4	9	4	2	3	2	1		3	3	7	3		2	2	1	2		1	2	2	5			2	3	82	109*	2459		
1891							3			3		3	1	3	1			1	4				13				3	37	65*	1050		
1892							6		4	1	2	2	2			2					3	1						27	29*	464		
1893							3	1	1	6		6				6											6	40	52*	1211		
1894	6	4	3		4	3	15		1	10	13	24			7	19		2			1			1		23	136	177*	1859			
1895					1		15		2	5	5	13	2			4										8	58	322	1205			
1896	4	5	14				7			1						2			1		4							38	307	722		
1897					3	3	18		1	1	2	15	4		9						1	2			2	6	2	82	529	934		
1898	1	6	4	1	3	4	17	1		10	12	11	1		2	5					5	2				6	91	596	1178			
1899	7	1	14		1	6	26			7	7	8				11		2			2	1			1	17	111	560	1522			
1900	2	20	5		27	19	43	1	1	18		27	1		25			9			5	14	2	2	10	9	1	241	547	1743		
1901	1	6	5	4	11	1	28	17		19	7	6			1	1					24	19	1	1	6	21	179	783	1725			
1902					7	25	21	4		23	8	16				9					7	2	1	1		22	207	612	1139			
1903	20	59	6		6	14	49			47	14	41	9			3		9			18	16	2	6		14	10	343	429	1028		
1904					1	7				12		1										4						43	58	78		
	84	231	72	35	102	89	276	28	10	181	79	203	33	6	49	68	4	30	7	17	93	68	27	18	19	144	3	47	2023	5774+	62582	
		422			191		304			270		203			160			37			205			18		213				*x3 = 2931		
																															8705	
																																(Price & Baker = 9186)

Map Three : The origins of the Malaitan recruits included in the sample in Table Four



so clearly by a dotted line on a map, in actuality blend from one area to another. As well, nineteenth century Malaitans were far more mobile, in moving across dialect boundaries and from one area to another, than anthropologists have ever indicated: Map One of this chapter, showing the changes in residence of the kin of Malaitans returning from Queensland, is evidence of this. On occasions a person from one side of Malaita enlisted while visiting kin living on the other side, or crossed the central mountains deliberately to join a recruiting ship anchored on the other side. Lau people from north Malaita did visit the Lau colony on Maramasike and may have recruited from there, or from some area in neighbouring To'ambaita: in a case mentioned in more detail later in this chapter, Bobongie from Lau is supposed to have enlisted at Mbita'ama in west To'ambaita.

Oral information collected from dozens of Malaitans has been the major source for classifying the remainder of the names.<sup>106</sup> Sometimes oral testimony provided a check on the passages named in documents, but in other cases oral evidence was the only means of attaching district identity to a name with no accompanying passage or bay. Dialect variations make it possible to identify Malaitan names reasonably exactly, although problems arise with similar names in neighbouring districts. As a rough comparison Malaitan names are as easy to identify as the names of the various Scottish and Irish clan groups, though as one would expect, grey areas and uncertainties exist. Malaitans sometimes gave false names to the recruiters, and Europeans often mis-heard and mis-transcribed the given names. To counter this, when identification seemed in any way to be dubious the name was not included amongst the 2,023 sample.

Using oral testimony causes other problems, further skewing the sample. One problem was that as research was carried out primarily in north Malaita identification was much more accurate for names from

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106. The major informants were: Ishmael Itea, Charles Luiramo, Guere, Siau Faoea, Ramosaea, Au, Ledimani, Faulkona and Naridu in Fat-aleka; Salathiel Salana, Kaliuae, Eala Fisua and Raena in Kwara'ae; Gugamae, John Keyes, Ramfafai and Kalabet Fugui in Lau; Lemuel Liolea in To'ambaita; David Kausimae and Ariki Nono'ohimae Erehau in 'Are 'are. Anthropologists Daniel de Coppet and Ian Frazer also assisted in the name identification.

that area. The results are probably skewed toward the north, and in particular toward Fataleka, where most of the information was collected. It was clear that Fataleka informants, faced with a name which could have come either from Fataleka or Baegu, identified it as from Fataleka. The same applies to names from Lau, Baelelea and To'ambaita. It is often impossible to distinguish Lau names from the names of Baegu and Baelelea recruits who embarked from Lau lagoon. On the west coast, Fauabu passage is on the border between Kwara'ae, Fataleka and Baegu, so it is impossible to give an exact origin for Malaitans embarking from there. Even the European recruiters were aware of this. In 1884 Jock Cromar was recruiter on the *Stormbird*, which called at Fauabu (Coleridge Bay):

In Coleridge Bay we anchored at the mouth of the Kware River, and were visited by natives of several tribes who, though living close to one another, were ignorant of each others language and could not converse. 107.

Cromar was incorrect in thinking that the three dialect groups could not understand each other, but he correctly noted distinct differences between their dialects. Table Four can be regarded as accurate, given a pronounced emphasis on north Malaita, and that the Baegu and Baelelea numbers should be higher. With this in mind, the 2,023 person sample, multiplied four and a half times, should give a reasonable approximation of the total pattern of Malaitan recruiting to Queensland.

In the 1870s recruiters concentrated their efforts on the inhabitants of Langa langa and Lau lagoons and the far north and south of the island, along the east coast of Maramasike and the north To'ambaita coast. Many of these Malaitans, taken to Queensland in the first decade of recruiting in the Solomons, were kidnapped. Most were *wane asi* (coastal and lagoon dwellers) not *wane tolo* (people from the upland areas). But as early as 1875 a few *wane tolo* from Fataleka and Baegu had travelled to Queensland with the *wane asi*, recruited on the Fataleka/Baegu border at Ataa, the southern-most passage of Lau lagoon. Recruiting from the lagoons continued throughout the century. By the 1880s



recruiting was very much a voluntary affair, *wane asi* blending with the increasingly dominant *wane tolo* recruits. Aside from Lau and Langa langa the other major lagoon is along the east 'Are 'are coast. Recruits from 'Are 'are lagoon are difficult to tabulate separately from other west coast 'Are 'are, but from the statistics it appears that fewer 'Are 'are left from the west coast than from the east.

Recruiting at Malaita during the first decade, 1871 to 1880, was slow in comparison with the later period: between 400 and 500 recruits out of a total 9,000. By the 1880s recruiting was much more balanced, with recruits coming from all over the island. In an overview of the trade, ignoring particular dialect areas, recruiting was heaviest along the north and east coasts; the east coast, from Sa'a to Manaoba being the most important of all areas. Over the four decades of the recruiting trade the largest number of recruits from any one area of the island seem to have come from the Sa'a district, between Cape Zelee and Moli. The smallest number from the east coast came from the Raroi Su'u area at the eastern end of Maramasike passage. Not many vessels actually ventured right through the passage, the impressive but shallow, narrow waterway separating Maramasike from the main island. Ships sometimes cruised among the islets at the eastern end of the passage, or sent the boats out to search for recruits, but usually they refrained from risking a trip through the narrow western section where ships could run aground, making them prime targets for attack. It was north from Takataka that most of the recruits were obtained. *Wane tolo* from east 'Are 'are, Kwaiio, Kwara'ae, Fataleka and Baegu made up the bulk of the recruits in the 1880s, 1890s and 1900s.

There was a slow transition from recruiting of coastal Malaitans, to recruiting of people living farther inland. By the late 1890s and early 1900s most recruits came from upland areas. Some of the recruits shown in Table Four as from Langa langa and Lau are probably from the hinterland of these lagoons. Even though the island is narrow, forty kilometres across at its widest point, it still took more time to recruit *wane tolo* than *wane asi*. Instead of their previous quick access to the coastal people, recruiters began to wait for several days at one passage, firing a dynamite charge at dusk to signal the bush

people that a ship had arrived. Map Four shows eight voyages around Malaita between 1881 and 1900. Early voyages were usually much like that of the 1881 voyage of the *Stanley* which only stopped at east 'Are 'are, Lau lagoon and north To'ambaita. By the 1890s when Malaita was of crucial importance as a recruiting ground, crews circled their ships around the island, often for over a month, spending a few days at every major passage, sometimes back-tracking to the best areas.

By the 1890s recruiting was very much a voluntary affair and each year Malaitans became numerically more important to the trade. Except for the early 1890s when Queensland's Premier S.W. Griffith threatened to end the labour trade, causing recruiting almost to cease, recruiting of Malaitans steadily increased. From the beginning of 1890 until 1904 at least 154 voyages by Queensland recruiting vessels included Malaita; over 6,000 recruits were embarked from Malaita: two-thirds of the total Malaitan migration to Queensland.<sup>108</sup> Documentary sources from the 1890s are full of indications of the willingness of Malaitans to enlist. In 1892 after a visit to Malaita, Anglican Bishop Montgomery of Tasmania said in a letter to Sir Henry Norman, Governor of Queensland, that he was satisfied that Malaitans enlisted of their own volition.<sup>109</sup> In 1898 William Spence on his eighth voyage to Malaita as a Master in the trade reported that:

The returns tell the natives all about Queensland, and they are very willing to come, without inducement...[and] that a "boy" could not be induced to come, even if he was offered the whole ship, if he did not want to... 110.

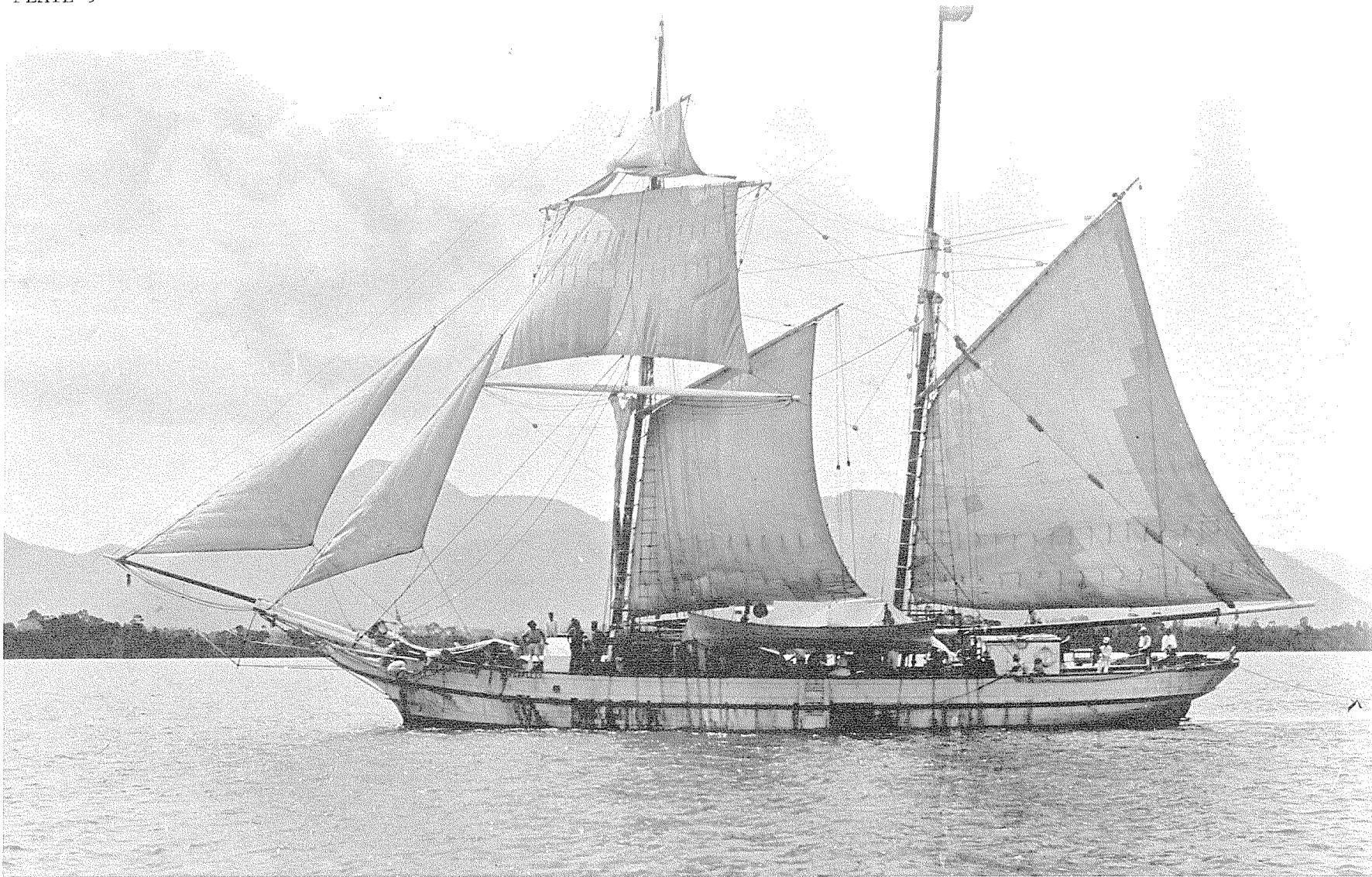
During field work for this thesis oral information was collected on Malaita about 132 Malaitan recruits. The vast majority clearly enlisted willingly. Of the eight-six who were *Fataleka wane tolo*, only two were abducted. When dates can be established, it is clear that all these *Fataleka* people, (other than the two abducted) were recruited

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108. Refer to Chapter Two, Table One and Graphs One and Two.

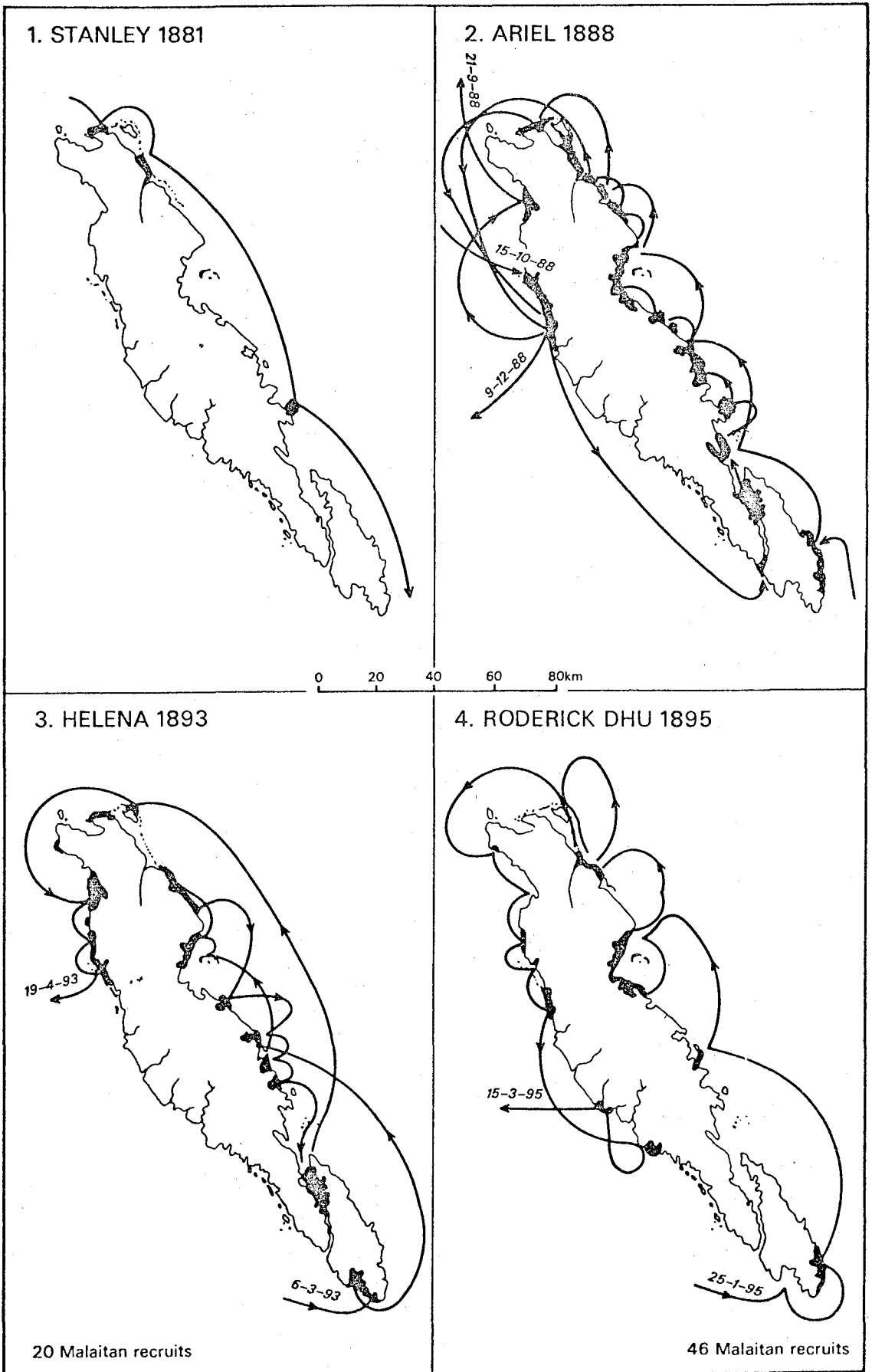
109. *RNAS*: 17, Montgomery to Norman, 14 November 1893, 421.

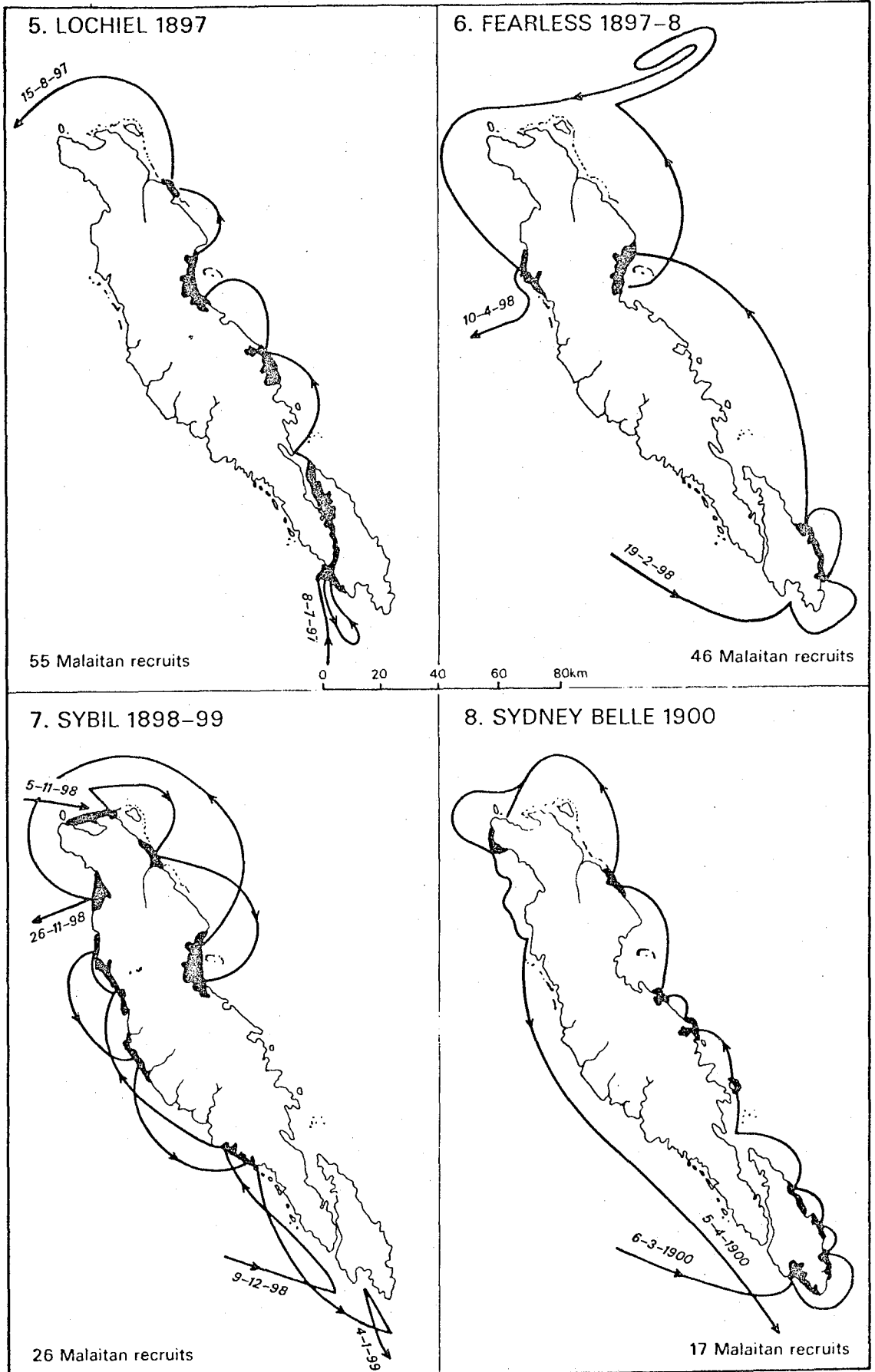
110. *MM* 16 August 1898 (*Rio Loge* 10-8-1898).



The recruiting ship *Fearless*, which visited Malaita on at least twenty-three of its voyages between 1885 and 1901. (Photo by courtesy of the Cairns Historical Society)

Map Four : Eight recruiting voyages around Malaita, 1881 - 1900





Sources : Refer to the end of the chapter

later than 1884, conforming with suggestions made by Peter Corris and the findings presented in Table Four that recruiting was largely confined to *wane asi* before that date. Similarly, informants who provided information on twenty Baegu men are certain that they voluntarily enlisted. The three ex-Queensland Malaitans interviewed by Corris in 1968 had willingly enlisted in the 1900s at the close of the trade.<sup>111</sup>

It will readily be appreciated that a community could spare only a finite number of its young men at any time; it was common experience for a vessel to be refused any new recruits at a passage where numbers had been freely forthcoming on earlier visits. J. Williams Master of the *Lavinia* in 1885 reported to the *Mackay Mercury* that:

a great part of the [Malaitan] coast was visited; at some places the men engaged freely, at others they gave us to understand that we were not wanted. 12.

In 1891 W.T. Wawn Master of the *Borough Belle* recorded the same cry from every passage in 'Are 'are: no boys, "boys gone away".<sup>113</sup> The *Helena* in 1892 was refused recruits at Cow near Waihora in Maramasike passage because the descent group there was already short of warriors and did not want to lose any more young men.<sup>114</sup> S.M. Smith, Government Agent on the *Sybil*, in 1896 wrote in his log whilst at Kwai that they "had a chance of a lot more, but they were pulled away from the boats by their tribe".<sup>115</sup> At any passage recruiters could never be sure they would not be shot at and ordered away instead of gaining labour recruits.

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111. Refer to my 'Malaitan recruiting to Queensland', particularly Table Two; and Corris, *Passage, Port and Plantation*, Appendix 2, 151-4; also refer to Bennett, *Cross-cultural Influences*, Appendix F: Recruits from the Weather Coast to Queensland, 219-230.

112. *MM* 19 August 1885 (*Lavinia* 11-8-1885).

113. W.T. Wawn private log *Borough Belle*, 25 January 1891 (*Borough Belle* 27-4-1891).

114. *Melbourne Argus*, 10 December 1892 (*Helena* 18-11-1892).

115. S.M. Smith private log *Sybil* 2, 18 December 1896 (*Sybil* 2 30-1-1897).

By the 1890s a high proportion of the Melanesian labourers travelling to Queensland were 'old hands', who had previously worked on plantations in Queensland, Fiji, Samoa or New Caledonia. In 1892 after Premier Griffith's *volte-face* from his earlier plan to close the labour trade, Governor Norman paid a visit to the labour vessel *Para* for a first hand inspection of the conditions on board. After this visit he gave instructions that in future the Governor was to receive full reports on all voyages, including details on how many recruits were re-enlisting. Over the remaining decade of the trade, 27.5 percent of the recruits were re-enlisting; the yearly average varying between 35.5 percent and 22.5 percent.<sup>116</sup> No attempt was made to calculate the total number of times an individual recruited, but some Fataleka men recruited on three occasions and in Mackay one Malaitan informant said that he knew of some Islanders who had enlisted on four occasions.<sup>117</sup> Old hands, accustomed to conditions in Queensland and experienced as plantation labourers were much in demand by employers. In return they regularly commanded higher wages: from the mid-1880s until 1904 as much as £12 per annum, double that of a person enlisting for the first time.<sup>118</sup>

Some returning Malaitans failed to locate their families, feared for their personal safety or felt alienated from their island. A few re-engaged without even going ashore from the ship. Nio returned to Malaita on board the *Ariel* in 1888. At first he wanted to be dropped at Port Adam, then at the eastern end of Maramasike passage and finally at Olomburi. Still not finding any friends or family, Nio ended his search and re-recruited. Others supervised the landing of their boxes but refused to land themselves.<sup>119</sup> As Corris pointed out in *Passage*

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116. QSA GOV/A23, CS to Gov., 5 July and 17 October 1892; Corris, *Passage, Port and Plantation*, 49.

117. Ishmael Itea, 10 October 1976; BOHC Bb:1 (NJF).

118. JCUNQ: Pioneer plantation's Register of Pacific Islanders: 12 October 1895 to 22 March 1906. Also refer to Chapter Seven of this thesis.

119. Wawn, *South Sea Islanders*, 405, (*Ariel* 24-12-1888); S.M. Smith private log *Helena* 7 April 1893 (*Helena* 13-7-1893) and *Ariel* 24 February 1894 (*Ariel(Thistle)* 14-6-1894); QSA GOV/A30, IA to PUS CSD, 25 January 1896 (*Fearless* 10-1-1896); QSA GOV/A38, IA to PUS CSD, 6 October 1902 (*Coquette* 6-9-1902).

*Port and Plantation* the years away had alienated these people from their original surroundings; for some the kind of individualism and independence possible on the plantations became a more acceptable way of life than the strictures of existence within a Malaitan descent group.<sup>120</sup> But usually the returning labourers did land with their box of trade goods, enjoyed the excitement of return and the exchanges which took place with their families, re-establishing their suspended relationships with their ancestors.

There is no clear reason for more east than west coast Malaitans to have enlisted. One possibility is that the east coast supported the greater proportion of Malaita's nineteenth century population.<sup>121</sup> A far more probable reason for the large number of east coast recruits is that the preference was European not Malaitan. Only one reason of importance to Europeans is easy to discount: 'Europeans were not trying to escape attacks on vessels or their boats, as the majority of these attacks took place along the east coast. More likely, the preference is the result of a combination of natural advantages and the self-generating nature of the recruiting trade.

The first priority on any voyage was to disembark returning Melanesians so that there was room on board for the new recruits. It saved time and money to embark new recruits as close as possible to where the returns were landed. As well, ships sailing north from the New Hebrides or the southern Solomons were closer in line with the east than the west coast. Once recruiting was established in an area the process tended to become self-generating: as Malaitans left a ship at one passage, others came on board. Long-standing relationships developed between the Europeans, passage masters and interpreters. Ships' Masters and Government Agents preferred to return to an area where previously they had been well received and had good contacts. Often the same ships' Masters, Government Agents, Melanesian passage masters and interpreters stayed in the recruiting trade for decades. It was in the Europeans' best interests to return to the same areas.

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120. Corris, *Passage, Port and Plantation*, 51.

121. This may also have been the case on Guadalcanal. Chapman and Pirie, *Tasi Mauri*, 1.1, 2.8-23.



PLATE 10



Government Agent Douglas Rannie and colleagues. Rannie visited Malaita at least six times between 1886 and 1892. He was later Assistant Inspector of Pacific Islanders at Mackay. (Photo: Rannie, *My Adventures*, 238)

In the last decade of the trade often the entire group of returning sugar industry labourers were Malaitans: likewise the new recruits were predominantly Malaitans. Many ships began to travel straight from Queensland to the Solomons, not visiting the New Hebrides. After July 1897 all recruiting ships arriving in the Solomons had to call at Tulagi on Ngela to pay a recruiting license fee to the Resident Commissioner.<sup>122</sup> Ngela was only a few hours sailing time directly off the west coast of Malaita, yet still the recruiters seem to have gone to the east coast. In the nineteenth century the Pacific islands were not adequately charted. A large number of recruiting ships was wrecked on charted and uncharted reefs and shoals; many others were grounded but managed to have lucky escapes. Ships' Masters often drew up their own detailed charts of islands. W.T. Wawn, a veteran skipper of labour vessels, prepared his own charts of several areas of Malaita.<sup>123</sup> Being wrecked on an uncharted reef on a strange island or coast has never been a mariner's idea of heaven. Masters and Government Agents knew every inch of the east Malaitan coast, enjoying good relationships with the local passage masters and interpreters, who often gave them warnings of planned attacks. Their preference for the area increased as the trade progressed.

Kwaisulia of Urassi in Lau lagoon is the best known of the Malaitan passage masters.<sup>124</sup> Another, Foulanga, had his base in the Walage-Port Adam area on Maramasike. W.T. Wawn was not kind to either man in an 1888 description of them:

There are two chiefs on the coast, Foulanger (Faulanga) of (Wylanger - Wailanga) of or near Port Adams and Kwaisulia of Attargeggay islet a little south of Manoba I. on the north coast who have been made much of by Queensland labour vessels' Captains - receiving large presents and being entertained in the Cabin. These men are simply crimps, who sell recruits to the highest bidder and I firmly believe that Masters and G.A.'s know this.<sup>125</sup>

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122. QSA GOV/A32, IA to S to PMQ, 5 Agusut 1897.

123. These maps are contained in Wawn's private logs in the Mitchell Library: A1477-1. For a detailed description of the Malaitan coast refer to the British Admiralty publication, *Pacific Islands Pilot*, v.1: The western groups (9th edition, 1970), 325-39.

124 Corris, 'Kwaisulia of Ada Gege'.

125. W.T. Wawn private log of the *Ariel*, 4 September 1888.

Kwaisulai seems to have been better liked by Europeans than Foulanga, but the recruiters were willing to put up with any passage master who could organise the labour supply in his area. If a passage master failed to do his job, another was found who could. Jock Cromar, recruiter on several Queensland ships in the 1880s and 1890s did not trust Foulanga, but nevertheless found his friendship useful:

Fulanga ...was a man in whom it was unsafe to place any trust at all. He was treacherous and cruel, and I used the chiefs influence with the natives for the purpose only of obtaining recruits. He could not be made one's friend, nor could he be treated generously, as he was incapable of regarding such an attitude as anything but a confession of weakness. 126

Wawn and Cromar's attitude to Kwaisulia was all together different. They trusted him to the extent of giving his men free run of the ship, and knew that he could be relied upon to save their lives in any emergency.<sup>127</sup>

Kwaisulia had been a friend of John Renton, the Scot marooned for several years in Lau in the late 1860s and early 1870s, and was one of the first Malaitans to travel to Queensland. By the late 1880s Kwaisulia was in his late fifties, "a clean-shaved, spare built, wiry man...proud, sensitive, and taciturn", easily the most powerful person in north Malaita. Kwaisulia continued to dominate the north, particularly the northeast, until his death in 1909.<sup>128</sup> Foulanga died in the early 1890s, his son Peter Sua succeeded him as passage master. Sua had previously worked in Fiji and Queensland, remaining the dominant passage master in east Maramasike well into the 1920s, by then superintending labour travelling to plantations in the Solomons.<sup>129</sup> At

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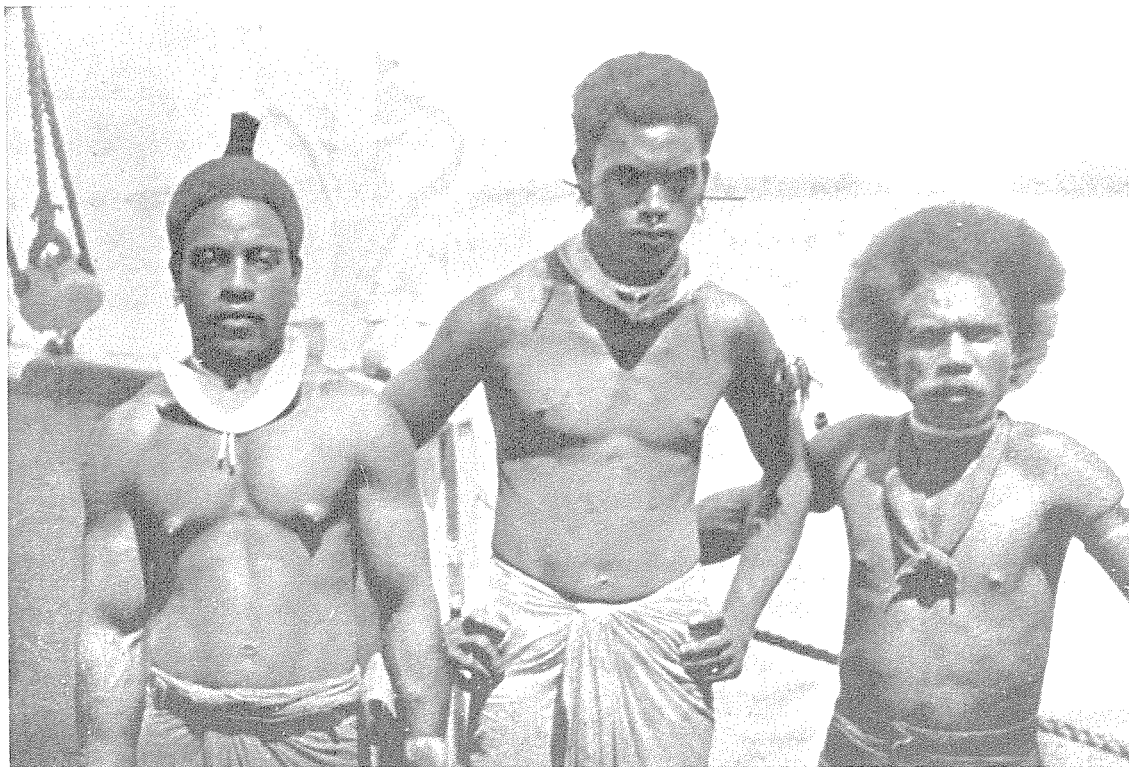
126. Cromar, *Jock of the Islands*, 300.

127. Wawn, *Ariel* log, 5 December 1888 and *South sea Islanders*, 417; Cromar, *Jock of the Islands*, 293-8.

128. *Melbourne Argus* 15 December 1892; A.I. Hopkins, *Autobiography: 1869-1943*, 172-4.

129. *Melbourne Argus* 8 December 1892; H. Norden, *Byways of the Tropic Seas: wanderings among the Solomons and in the Malay Archipelago*, (London, 1926), 96.

## PLATE 11



a. Recruits from Ataa, east Malaita. (Photo: Rannie, *My Adventures*, 80)



b. Islanders returning from Queensland. (Photo: *JCUNQ*: History)

Fakanakafo in east Fataleka, Bobi Ledi, another ex-Queensland labourer, held similar but less important sway as passage master. Ledi was a member of the Rakwane descent group which dominated east Fataleka in the late nineteenth century. Further north at Ataa, Peter Waimaku and Tom Muldo controlled *wane tolo* Fataleka and Baegu and southern Lau recruiting in the last decade of the century.<sup>130</sup>

Men like Ledi and Muldo were not of Kwaisulia or Foulanga's stature but they too profited, increasing their own power and consequently that of their descent group through their relationship with the Europeans. Corris described Solomon passage masters as being:

in a highly advantageous position of having  
a secure power base in their own society and  
a developed understanding of the ways and  
requirements of Europeans. 131

His interpretation and that of other Pacific historians is of the recruits and the passage masters as individuals, not as unalienable members of descent groups and descent group clusters. The recruiters needed their individual local agents: the passage masters used the recruiters to consolidate the power of their descent groups, distributing the European goods they received as payment for their services, widening the power of their descent group in the surrounding areas. Passage masters were marginal men in Malaitan society. They were *wane baita*, the important pivotal position in traditional Malaitan society. But in negotiating with Europeans around the entrances to the Malaitan cultural fortress they used traditional reciprocal relationships and established cosmological cycles to provide human capital for the Queensland sugar industry.

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130. Bobi Ledi was a nephew of Idumaoma, 17th aufia of Bina. Ledi had enlisted and worked in the Mackay district for three years. He returned to Rakwane and married a woman from the Gelabu descent group. Ledi died as an old man in the 1920s. Information from Ishmael Itea, 13 October 1976. Also refer to Table Five: an extended geneological chart of the Rakwane descent group. *Melbourne Argus* 12 December 1892.

131. Corris, *Passage, Port and Plantation*, 66.

## 6. Case studies of individual Malaitan recruits

Short biographies of sixteen Malaitans who left their island to work in Queensland - from whom the majority of Australian Malaitans are descended - form the remainder of this chapter. Valuable though general statistics and attempts to understand cultural and economic networks as part of cosmological cycles may be, they are no substitute for individual case histories. Individual motivations and experiences differ too greatly to enable us to place them all in neat categories. Much of the oral tradition used in this thesis comes from people of Malaitan descent living in Queensland today, and their families on Malaita. It seems fitting that their stories, telling of the recruiting of their forebears be used as the case studies for this chapter; and as a link between Malaita, Mackay and the remainder of this thesis.

### Kulijeri: pre 1877

In the 1870s some Malaitans were recruited to work diving for bêche-de-mer and pearls in the Torres Strait, and also on pastoral properties in Queensland.<sup>132</sup> After 1884 Melanesians were confined to coastal areas producing sugar cane; but more than 1,200 Malaitans reached Queensland before this cut-off date, one of whom was Kulijeri. Kulijeri worked for most of his life for the Hann family of Maryvale pastoral station in the upper Burdekin. His family claim that William Hann personally brought Kulijeri back to Maryvale from the islands. It seems probable that Hann first met Kulijeri in the Torres Strait, when Hann was on a ship on his way back from England via Ceylon in the mid-1870s. Kulijeri's descendants still live in the upper Burdekin area today, the only pastoral-based Islanders known to be of Malaitan descent.<sup>133</sup>

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132. *QSA* CPS 10B/G1, Goodall to IA, 23 December 1875; *QSA* COL/A225, In letter 2116 of 1876, H.M. Chester, Police Magistrate, Somerset to CS, 1 August 1876.

133. *BOHC* 84Ba:1 (GR). I am indebted to Anne Allingham for providing extra information about Kulijeri.

Netoka: 1881

Netoka belonged to the Suraena descent group, descended through Ngalia, brother of Fugui (Suraena 4). He was kidnapped and taken to Mackay on board the *Jabberwock* in 1881 when he was about twenty years old. The story told by his family on Malaita is that Netoka, Arfu, another young man and an older man paddled their canoe out to the ship, beckoned by the crew. The canoe was grappled to the side of the ship, and during the ensuing struggle one man was killed.<sup>134</sup>

On this voyage the *Jabberwock's* Master was H.C. Adrian, on his first trip to Malaita; the Government Agent H.G. Lynde had only previously visited Malaita as Agent on the *Sybil* in 1878, a voyage on which kidnapping is suspected to have occurred. The entire voyage took over four months, the *Jabberwock* arriving back in Mackay in February 1881. Sixty-three male and four female recruits were accepted as indentured labourers. The majority of them were transhipped to A.C. MacMillan's *Airdmillan* plantation on the lower Burdekin. The minority, Netoka among them, stayed at Mackay.<sup>135</sup>

Logomier: 1884

Logomier enlisted on the *Lavinia* in 1884 when he was in his teens, a few months after the Queensland government had banned recruiters from giving guns as trade gifts in exchange for recruits. He was an east Fataleka bushman, one of the first from his area to travel to Queensland. The *Lavinia* was an 119 ton schooner which began to work in the labour trade in 1882. The voyage on which Logomier enlisted was its second to Malaita. Recruiting was slow; the voyage took over five months to complete, as many Islanders were refusing to enlist on the Queensland ships

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134. Refer to Chapter One, Table Three: Suraina. Other information was provided by Ramofafia, Ataa, 1 June 1978.

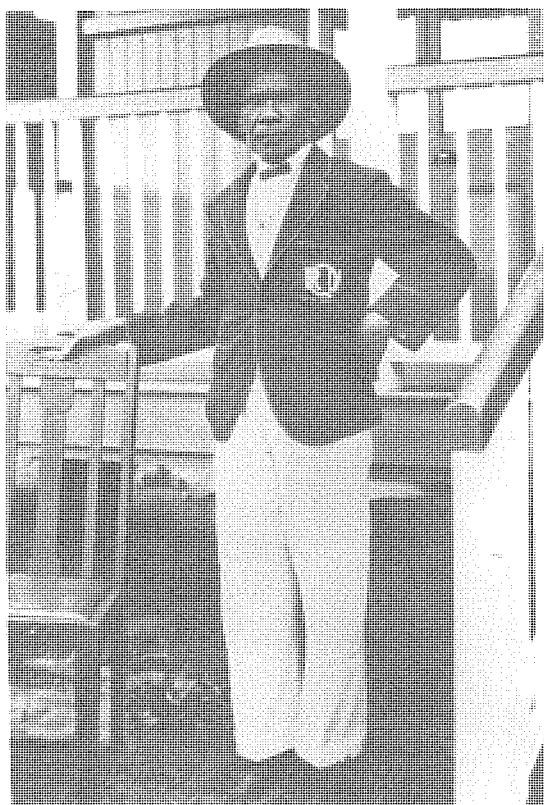
135. *QSA* PRE/83 a-b (*Jabberwock* 26-2-1881): Natokar No. 56; *MM* 12, 26 February, 2 March 1881; *QSA* CPS 10B/G1, Goodall to IA, 1 March 1881.



## PLATE 12



a. Henry Netoka



b. Tom Swali



c. Kulijeri, wife, and family: (L. to R.) Kulijeri, Sadie, Winer, Hilda (wife), Kulijeri jr., and Harry.  
(Photos: *JCUNQ*: History)



without the usual gift of a gun as trade. The men's quarters on board were 8.40m. X 5.68m. with a height of 2.13m.; the area set aside for women measured 2.69m. X 5.68M. with a height of 2.13m. The ship was licenced to carry eight-five Melanesians in that space, but on the voyage with Logomier there were only thirty-eight men and one woman.

An incident occurred while the ship was at Malaita which must have stayed in Logomier's memory all his life. Dynamite charges were often used by the labour ships to kill fish for eating, or as a daily signal to the inland people that a ship was at a nearby passage. On this voyage the Master S. Smith had his left hand shattered by the explosion from a charge of dynamite while the *Lavinia* was at east Malaita. Luckily HMS *Lark* was nearby and Dr Guppy the ship's surgeon amputated the hand. Even so there seems to have been no hurry to return to port. The incident occurred on the 16th May and the *Lavinia* arrived at Mackay on the 6th of September. Logomier lived at Mackay for the rest of his life. In 1906 he married Orrani, the widow of another Fataleka man. Both Logomier and his wife died in the 1919 influenza epidemic.<sup>136</sup>

Kwailiu, Orrani, Fikui and Karai: 1880s

Some Masters and Government Agents returned to Malaita over decades on numerous voyages. The record is held by Master Robert Pearn: twenty-six voyages including Malaita between 1884 and 1903, twenty-four of them on one ship, the *Lochiel*.<sup>137</sup> Europeans like Pearn found it beneficial to remember those Islanders whom they had met before, as any business man would try to do with a client.

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136. *MM* 10 September 1884; *QSA* COL/A408, In letter 8330 of 1884, Shipwright Surveyor, Mackay to IA, 10 September 1884; *QSA* AGS N359: List of Kanakas in the Mackay district in 1913 (the list shows Logomier as having been in Queensland for 29 years); *MM* 18 August, 2 September 1919.

Also refer to my article 'Luke Logomier' in H. Reynolds (ed.), *Race Relations in North Queensland* (Townsville, 1978), 181-94.

137. Refer to Chapter One, Table Two.

One of the Tonarus family, presumably Aigeselaus, did this with Kwailiu, when he visited him while his ship was at anchor at Fauabu, west Fataleka. Kwailiu was actually from the Rakwane descent group in east Fataleka. His age at the time of his death in 1906 was given as forty years, so he was probably first recruited in the mid-1880s. He twice travelled to Queensland: on the first occasion Kwailiu may have been kidnapped but on the second occasion he willingly enlisted. The first time he spent only three years on the plantations, before returning home. He then married Orrani from west Fataleka, and when he met up with Tonarus he and Orrani were visiting her parents area. Kwailiu knew Tonarus, either as the Master of one of the ships on which he had travelled, or from during his years in Queensland. Tonarus greeted Kwailiu as a long-lost friend, gave him presents and persuaded him, his wife, his brother Karai<sup>138</sup> and some of their friends to return to Queensland.

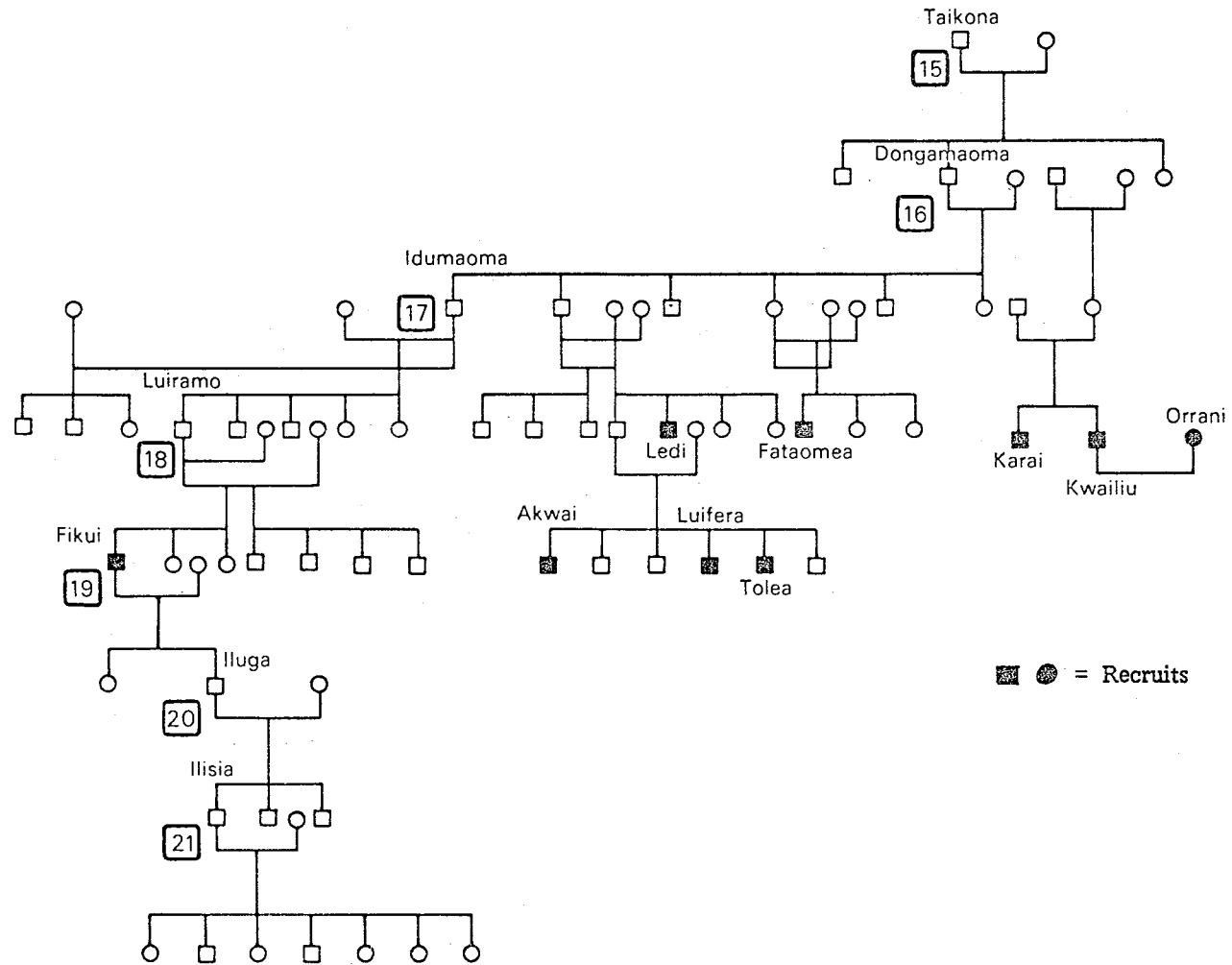
This trip must have been to plantations around Innisfail as the first two of their children were born at the Johnstone river in 1891 and 1893. By 1895 the couple were in Mackay where their next child was born. Kwailiu's grandfather Dedeana had been a powerful *wane baita*, and although his father Luifera had not been as important, changing circumstances meant that Kwailiu was expected to take a leading role in the affairs of his descent group. Eventually the Rakwane leaders sent Fikui, another member of the group, to search for him in Queensland. After initially being recruited to Bundaberg, Fikui found Kwailiu at Mackay but failed to persuade him to return to Malaita. Kwailiu died in 1906 and his widow re-married later the same year, securing her future and that of her five children by a customary marriage to her kinsman Logomier who had been in Queensland since recruiting on the *Lavinia* in 1884.<sup>139</sup>

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138. Karai returned to Rakwane after three years; his descendants live there today.

139. The information about Kwailiu, Orrani and Karai has been collected from various members of the Fatnowna family at Mackay, and from Charles Luiramo and Ishmael Itea on Malaita. Table Five of this chapter shows the relationship of Kwailiu, Karai and Orrani to Fikui.

Table Five : The Rakwane descent group, showing the major line of descent and the members of the group who recruited in the Queensland labour trade



Fiukwandi: 1887

Kavisi Fiukwandi was born about 1865 in east Fataleka and twice enlisted voluntarily to travel to Queensland. On the first occasion he joined a ship at Fauabu in west Fataleka, having crossed the island with a group of men, because no ship had called at Fakanakafo for some time. He returned to Malaita after three years and later enlisted again, from east Fataleka.

The second time Fiukwandi was escaping from internecine fighting. Because of the fighting Fiukwandi's father Simita and his uncle Adoa and their families had been forced to leave their home at Asinamo and move to Fiumali and Nunologe, the home of Fiukwandi's mother's descent group. He was living at Nunologe when he was recruited. One of these occasions was in 1887, as a "Feuquardie" is recorded as having enlisted on the *Fearless* in that year, with Aigeselaus Tonarus as Master. The *Fearless* sailed to Mackay with sixty-seven recruits, and Fiukwandi spent the rest of his life working on plantations and small farms in that district. He married a Malaitan woman Annie Myterrafear, raised a family and died in the 1919 influenza epidemic at approximately fifty-four years of age.<sup>140</sup>

Kwaitaka: 1888

Kwaitaka was born in the late 1860s. His father Gegesu had shifted to Fata Fata village in Kwara'ae, from Beusamoro at Malo in east Fataleka before Kwaitaka was born. Kwaitaka lived in Kwara'ae until he was a young man, when an incident occurred that caused the family to flee back to Fataleka. Kwaitaka's sister had a lover named Kwaikurua, whom Kwaitaka killed. Gegesu and his family fled to the protection of the Rakwane descent group; Kwaitaka hurriedly enlisted at Asniwane on board the *Myrtle* in

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140. Information from John Dere, Fasileta, east Malaita, 26 May 1978 and from members of the Fiukwandi family at Mackay.

MM 8 February 1887 (*Fearless* 9-2-1887).

1888. The *Myrtle's* Master was Aigiselaus Tonarus, veteran of a dozen voyages to Malaita. Kwaitaka and ninety-two other recruits, at least eighteen of whom were Malaitan, were taken to work at Ingham. He later shifted to Mackay and married Lucy Coquash, a daughter of Kwailiu and Orrani, and died in 1919 during the influenza epidemic.<sup>141</sup>

Swali: 1880s or 1890s

Thomas Swali was born in east Fataleka in the Bakwa descent group. He was recruited to Queensland and worked at Maryborough, Bundaberg, Cairns and Mackay. The only documented date early in Swali's life is for a minor Court appearance he made at Mackay in 1899. In 1906 he moved to Nambour with his wife Bugugwala and her daughter Mary. In old age Swali made yearly visits to Mackay and always claimed to be related to the Fataleka families there. Memory of Swali is perpetuated in a Fataleka song. Swali and Kwaikallier (who was from Talofolo and enlisted on the *Sybil* in 1899) were singing customary songs one night in Queensland. Their singing was so raucous that Irofue (from Ataa) gave them a shilling to shut them up, saying:

You two fella sing too good for stop  
long Queensland; alsaem frogs cry cry  
long swamp. Better you two fella go  
home long Malaita for sing. 142

Bikwai and his wife Lil: 1880s

Swali's adopted daughter Mary married Louis, son of Bikwai, a Malaitan *wane asi*. Bikwai was related to the Bobongie and Sippie families from Lau, living at Mackay. In Malaita one informant

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141. Information from Naridu, Malo, 4 November 1976 and from Henry Stephens Quaytucker, Mackay, 23 April 1974. Also refer to *BOHC* 1Ba:1 and *QSA* PRE/83 a-b (*Myrtle* 25-12-1888).
142. *BOHC* 81Ba:1 (MS); *MM* 25 February 1899; Fataleka song provided by Ramofafia, Kulbert Figui and Ishmael Itea, Auki, 30 June 1978.

## PLATE 13



a. Kwaitaka, his wife Lucy Coquash  
Fatnowna and their son Henry.  
(Photo: *JCUNQ*: History)



b. The Bikwai family circa 1915: (L. to R.) Bikwai, Elsie, Ernie,  
Bikwai's wife Lill, and Louis. (Photo by courtesy of Dr Tom  
Dutton)

suggested that Bikwai came from Kwara'ae. If both of these claims are true the only likely amalgamation of the two would be that Bikwai came from the *wane asi* at Kwai in east Kwara'ae. Bikwai's wife (whose Christian name was Lil) told Mary Bikwai (née Swali) that she had been kidnapped from a beach on Malaita, but nothing is known of the manner in which Bikwai was recruited. A photo of the Bikwai family taken in 1915 shows Charles Bikwai and his wife Lil at about fifty years of age, which would mean that they were probably recruited in the 1880s.<sup>143</sup>

Sippie and Gwyner: 1889

Sippie and his wife Gwyner recruited from the far north of Lau lagoon in company with Campini (Captani) in late 1889. They boarded the *Nautilus*, then commanded by Master J. Mackay with W. de Vaux as Government Agent. The *Nautilus* reached Brisbane in early January 1890, from where it proceeded to the Johnstone river. The Sippie family know that their parents also worked in Bundaberg at some stage, before settling at Mackay. Sippie died in 1919, and Gwyner soon afterwards.<sup>144</sup>

Bobongie: 1890s

Bobongie was born about 1873 on one of the artificial islands in Lau lagoon. Today he is claimed by two Lau descent groups: Funaafou and Sekeana. The Funaafou story is that Bobongie enlisted with his friend John Captain (Captani), the man who remained a close friend of Bobongie and Sippie at Mackay. Captani is supposed to have broken a Lau taboo by allowing a woman to walk underneath him while he was in a tree, so the two men decided to leave Malaita. The Sekeana story is that Bobongie was from Sekeana artificial

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143. BOHC 35Ba:1 (II); BOHC 37Bb:1 (S&FB); BOHC 81Bb:1 (MS); photo provided by Dr Tom Dutton, Dept. of Linguistics, R.S. of P.S., Australian National University.

144. PRE/83a-b (*Nautilus* 2-1-1890); BOHC 37Ba:1 (S&FB).

islet but was recruited at Mbita'ama in To'ambaita where he had travelled by canoe to hunt porpoises. Bobongie was not his real name; "Bobongie" means "tomorrow" - the man who always procrastinates.<sup>145</sup>

Whichever story is true, Bobongie first worked at Innisfail and Cairns before coming to Mackay. He was living at Mackay in 1895 when he was baptised at the age of twenty-two. In 1906 he married Joy Kwau, daughter of Kwailiu and Orrani; after her death in 1912 he married Fiukwandi's daughter Emma in 1917. Bobongie died in 1946 aged over seventy.<sup>146</sup>

Kissier: 1887

Kissier-ola was born in Kwaio at Uru on the east coast about 1880, one of the Kwaio *wane asi*. His father was Tolau, and the family line continues in Kwaio today through Kissier's brother Raremai and his descendants. Kissier enlisted at Sinalangu in 1897 on board the *Helena*, accompanied by at least one other Kwaio man. Several men were returned to east Kwaio on this voyage, so Kissier had ample opportunity to ask questions about the ship and its destination. The *Helena* was on its thirty-fourth voyage in the trade, the twelfth to include Malaita. The ship berthed at Bundaberg in June 1897, with eighty-six recruits, three of them females. At a later stage Kissier worked in North Queensland, marrying an Aboriginal woman. Their son Moses was born in 1905 and at about that time the family moved to Mackay. Kissier died during the influenza epidemic in 1919, his wife having died earlier and their son surviving.<sup>147</sup>

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145. BOHC 37Ba:1 (S&FB); John Keyes, Honiara, 26 June 1978; Fatai, of Ngongosila (originally from Sekeana) told this story to Luiramo. Charles Luiramo, 14 May 1978.
146. BOHC 37Ba:1 (S&FB); BOHC 41Ba:1-2 (HB); BOHC 50Ba:2 (HB&ONF).
147. Information from John Keyes, Honiara, 26 June 1978; BOHC 34Bb:2 (ONF); BOHC 50Bb:2 (HB&ONF); BOHC 55Ba:3 (NJF); QSA PRE/83a-b (*Helena* 24-6-1897); QSA GOV/A32, IA to S to CS, 14 July 1897: App.: Extract from log of Government Agent W.H. Lawrence: MM 1 September 1919.



Table Two:      A selection of Malaitans who wished to return to a different passage: 1893-1902.

Name and Ship and date of return to Malaita	Passage or village From:            To:	Reason given
1. Hosureah <i>Helena</i> 1893	Fauabu / Ataa	Descent Group (D.G.) driven out by fighting
2. Erisemoro 1895	Tolassela / Marau sound	his friends had shifted there
3. Fournah <i>Roderick Dhu</i> 1895	Assimmie / Manu	his D.G. had shifted there
4. Lisilia <i>Roderick Dhu</i> 1895	Kwai/Fakanakafo	afraid to land at Kwai because of fighting
5. Quemy <i>Roderick Dhu</i> 1895	Kwai (Aosa)/ Fakanakafo	his D.G. had shifted there because of fighting
6. Toetarlo <i>Roderick Dhu</i> 1895	Assimmie/ Fakanakafo	afraid to return to Assimmie
7. Nosy <i>Roderick Dhu</i> 1895	(Kwai) Saladon/ Fakanakafo	his D.G. had shifted there
8. Taffyear <i>Roderick Dhu</i> 1895	Alite (Quimanoo- Kwaimanfu ?) / Kwai	his D.G. shifted to east side of center mountains
9. Mandula <i>Roderick Dhu</i> 1895	Fauabu/Manu	his D.G. fled across the island because of fighting
10. Lousa	Kwai/Pt.Adam	his D.G. had shifted there
11. ? <i>Lochiel</i> 1895	Urasi/different part of Lau	had only been visiting Urasi
12. ? <i>Lochiel</i> 1895	Urasi/different part of Lau	had only been visiting Urasi

Name and Ship and date	Passage or village From: To:	Reason given
13. <i>Ibid.</i>	<i>Ibid.</i>	<i>Ibid.</i>
14. <i>Ibid.</i>	<i>Ibid.</i>	<i>Ibid.</i>
15. <i>Ibid.</i>	Urasi/Fakanakafo	found his D.G. there
16. Lefeor <i>Fearless</i> 1896	"Quipara"/ another passage close by	D.G. came to get him by canoe
17. Lingwan <i>Fearless</i> 1896	Fiu/Langa langa	his D.G. driven there by fighting
18. Dalaver <i>Fearless</i> 1896	Kwai/Langa langa	his D.G. picked him up there
19. Qualawee <i>Fearless</i> 1896	Dala/another passage 6.5klm. south	his D.G. picked him up there
20. Marowa <i>Fearless</i> 1896	Takataka/Wairaha	from the center of Malaita; did not care which side he got off the ship
21. Lohemia <i>Sybil 2</i> 1896	Fauabu/Ataa	his D.G. have come over from the other side of Malaita
22. Melonbuey <i>Sybil 2</i> 1896	Urasi/Fakanakafo	his D.G. driven there by fighting
23. Engoh <i>Helena</i> 1897	Uru/Bina	his father Quelah was visiting there
24. Tillenato <i>Helena</i> 1897	Uru/Sinalanggu	wished to land
25. Tafoela <i>Rio Loge</i> 1897	<i>wane tolo/</i> New Hebrides	afraid to return so went to mission
26. Mieuva <i>Fearless</i> 1897	Sinalanggu/ at a near by passage	his brother was there

Name and Ship and date	Passage or village From: To:	Reason given
27. Dalayonah <i>Fearless</i> 1897	Fakanakafo/ Sinalanggu	his proper passage is Sinalanggu
28. ? <i>Fearless</i> 1898	other end of Malaita/Walade	afraid to land at proper passage
29. <i>Ibid.</i>	<i>Ibid.</i>	<i>Ibid.</i>
30. ? <i>Rio Loge</i> 1902	to a mission station	met friends and asked to go ashore there
31. <i>Ibid.</i>	<i>Ibid.</i>	<i>Ibid.</i>
32. <i>Ibid.</i>	<i>Ibid.</i>	<i>Ibid.</i>
33. <i>Ibid.</i>	<i>Ibid.</i>	<i>Ibid.</i>
34. ? to <i>Ivanhoe</i> 40. 1902	Tulagi	refused to return to Malaita

References for Table Two:

1. QSA GOV/A25, IA to UCS, 24-7-1893: App. A. Extract from log of GA, 18-3-1893 (*Helena* 13-4-1893).
2. QSA GOV/A29, IA to PUS CSD, 2-9-1895.
3. QSA GOV/A28, IA to PUS CSD, 29-5-1895: Extract from log of GA, 3-2-1895 (*Roderick Dhu* 15-5-1895).
4. *Ibid.* 4-2-1895.
5. S.M. Smith private log *Roderick Dhu*, 4 & 13-2-1895 to (*Roderick Dhu* 15-5-1895).
- 9.
10. QSA COL/A795, In letter 10323 of 1895, IA to UCS, 28-8-1895: Extract from log of GA, 21-6-1895.
11. QSA GOV/A28, IA to PUS CSD, 14-2-1895.
- to
- 14.
15. S.M. Smith private log *Sybil 2*, 29-12-1896 (*Sybil 2* 30-1-1897).
16. QSA GOV/A32, IA to S to PMQ, 22-2-1897: Extract from log of GA, to 12-11-1896 (*Fearless* 11-1-1897).
- 20.
21. QSA GOV/A31, IA to S to PMQ, 26-8-1896 (*Sybil 2* 26-7-1896).
22. QSA GOV/A32, IA to S to PMQ, 25-2-1897 (*Sybil 2* 30-1-1897).
23. QSA GOV/A32, IA to S to CS, 14-7-1897: Extract from log of GA, 12-5-1897 (*Helena* 24-6-1897).
24. *Ibid.*
25. QSA GOV/A32, IA to S to PMQ, 13-1-1897 (*Rio Loge* 28-12-1896).
26. QSA GOV/A32, IA to S to PMQ, 5-8-1897 (*Fearless* 16-7-1897).
27. *Ibid.*
28. S.M. Smith private log *Fearless*, 3-3-1898 (*Fearless* 16-5-1898).
29. *Ibid.*
- 30.
- to QSA GOV/A38, IA to US CSD, 6-10-1902 (*Rio Loge* 16-9-1902).
- 33.
- 34.
- to QSA GOV/A38, IA to US CSD, 8-10-1902.
- 40.

Map Four sources:

1. *Stanley* (1881) Wawn, *South Sea Islanders*, 242-50 (*Stanley* 3-8-1881 to 22-12-1881).
2. *Ariel* (1881) Wawn, *South Sea Islanders*, 401-21 and his private log of the voyage (*Ariel* 26-7-1888 to 24-12-1888).
3. *Helena* (1893) S.M. Smith's private log of the voyage (*Helena* 22-2-1893 to 13-7-1893).
4. *Roderick Dhu* (1895) *Ibid.* (*Roderick Dhu* 3-1-1895 to 15-5-1895).
5. *Lochiel* (1897) *Ibid.* (*Lochiel* 27-3-1897 to 29-8-1897).
6. *Fearless* (1897-8) *Ibid.* (*Fearless* 18-12-1897 to 16-5-1898).
7. *Sybil*. (1898-9) *Ibid.* (*Sybil* 11-10-1898 to 27-1-1899).
8. *Sydney Belle* (1900) *Ibid.* (*Sydney Belle* 12-2-1900 to 9-7-1900).

CHAPTER FOUR

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*MACKAY : THE PLANTATION ERA  
1860 - 1885*

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## 1. The Explorers

From the top of the range surrounding the Pioneer<sup>1</sup> river and its tributaries, the first European explorers looked down on rich alluvial plains sloping away to the sea. On a Wednesday in the middle of May 1860, John Mackay, a young Scot from the New England district of New South Wales, stood on a peak in the Clarke range at the western end of the valley:

we had a fine view of the surrounding country. Looking coastwise we observed an immense tract of level country; unbroken save by an occasional hill or peak, extending away in one expanse to the sea-coast. To the north there appeared a practical gap, the ridges nowhere abrupt. 2

To the southeast was Connors range; to the north, Eungella and the continuation of Clarke's range. The western slopes of the escarpment form catchment basins for the Isaac and Burdekin rivers. To the east were the upper reaches of the Cattle, Black waterhole, Blacks and Stockyard creeks, which unite to form the Pioneer river. The whole valley stretching eighty kilometres west to east, was the pastoral haven they had hoped to discover.

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1. The river originally was named after John Mackay. Because a river at Rockingham bay (now the Tully river) had been similarly named, after an officer on HMS *Pioneer*, when the ship visited the embryonic settlement in 1862, the name "Pioneer" was substituted for Mackay. John Mackay's surname was given instead to the tent township at the mouth of the Pioneer river. H.L. Roth, *The Discovery and Settlement of Port Mackay, Queensland* (Halifax, 1908), 45; D. Jones, *Cardwell Shire Story* (Brisbane, 1961), 14.
  2. John Mackay's Diary 16 May 1860, in Roth, *Port Mackay*, 34. Mackay's diary from 16 March until 6 July 1860 was published in Roth, *Port Mackay*, Chapter 5, 29-39. The other members of the expedition were John Macrossan, Hamilton Robinson, Andrew Murray, Giovanni Barberi, John Muldoon, Donald Cameron, and Duke, an Aborigine. Further descriptions of the expedition can be found in *MM Jubilee 1912*, *MM Centenary 1962* and in John Kerr's *Pioneer Pageant: a history of the Pioneer Shire* (Mackay, 1980), 1-8. Andrew Murray's diary from the expedition was published in *MM* 8 to 16 August 1960; also refer to *MM* 18 October 1960.

By 1860 the country behind the Pioneer valley had become known and rapidly selected. The coast had been explored, but the fertile valley, protected by a ring of heavily timbered mountains, screened from the sea by shoals and mangroves, was still in Aboriginal hands. The same qualities that attracted pastoralists also suited the Aboriginal inhabitants. Aborigines had lived in the valley and on the islands off the coast for thousands of years. The north Australian coastal region ranks first, in comparison with drier areas in the south or inland, in terms of the needs of a traditional hunter-gatherer economy.<sup>3</sup> The Pioneer valley's water courses, coastal mangroves, fertile grassed plains, and the rainforest at the end of the valley, provided bountiful food and shelter for the Aborigines. The climate is pleasant though humid and frosts are rare: the mean shade temperature in the early years of European settlement was 17°C minimum and 27.5°C maximum; the average annual rainfall was 1,730 millimetres falling over 130 days.<sup>4</sup>

In June 1770 James Cook and his crew on the *Endeavour* were the first Europeans recorded as having visited the coast around Mackay. Cook named several capes and bays in the vicinity, even naming Point Slade a few miles from the mouth of the Pioneer, but was unaware of the existence of the river. From the 1790s ships began to use the

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3. N.A. Loos, *Aboriginal-European Relations in North Queensland, 1861-1897* (PhD thesis, James Cook University of North Queensland, 1976), 13-4, and Chapter one, 10-34 *passim*; Roth, *Port Mackay*, Appendix 3: 'The Aborigines of Mackay', 77-81; N.B. Tindale, *Aboriginal Tribes of Australia: their terrain, environmental controls, distribution, limits and proper names* (Canberra, 1974): Map enclosure, Australia NE sheet. The tribes of the Mackay district were: the 'jaro on the islands off the coast; the 'Gia on the coast north of Cape Conway; the Juipera along the coast from Cape Conway to Cape Palmerston; the 'Wiri and the Biria at the western end of the Pioneer valley. Refer to Map Two of this chapter.
  4. The temperature readings were collected at E.S. and C.C. Rawson's The Hollow (Abington) cattle run between 1876 and 1880. The only earlier figures were collected by J.E. Davidson at *Alexandra* plantation in 1868; these show a 13°C minimum and a 29°C maximum. The rainfall readings also were recorded at The Hollow. H.L. Roth, 'The climate of Mackay', *RSNSWJ* (1881), 21-39. Also refer to: Rankine & Hill, *Consulting Engineers, Mackay Regional Study: land use and demography forecasts* (March, 1971), 10; Ullman & Nolan, *Consulting Engineers, Mackay Region National Estate Study* (1975), 3-9; *Rainfall in Queensland* (Brisbane, 1947), 38-9.



coastal route inside the Barrier reef, exploring the coast and as a route to the East Indies and beyond.<sup>5</sup> Mercantile and naval vessels plied along the coast; today their names remain on unexpected reefs, passages and shoals which they discovered. Doubtless some called for 'refreshment' - principally water and wood - but there is little direct evidence. Some were merchant ships with cargoes bound for India or China. Others were famous naval vessels, and on board yet others were the men remembered by Australians as early coastal explorers: Captain Matthew Flinders on the *Investigator* in 1802; Lieutenant Philip King on the *Mermaid* and the *Bathurst* in 1819, 1820 and 1821; Captain J.L. Stokes on HMS *Beagle* in 1839; and Captain F.P. Blackwood on HMS *Fly* in 1842-3.

The most detailed accounts of such early visits come from the explorers. HMS *Fly's* 1843 visit was the first known meeting between the local Aborigines and Europeans. The incident occurred eighty kilometres south of Mackay; both parties were inquisitive but distant and made no real contact. The naturalist on HMS *FLY* was J. Beete Jukes. His description of the coast between Broad sound and the Whitsunday passage, Sarina to Proserpine, is the type of laudatory accolade that edged on the land explorers:

After twice circumnavigating Australia, and  
visiting all its Colonies, especially those

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5. For details of these voyages refer to: Roth, *Port Mackay*, 1-14; D. Jones's three books, *Trinity Phoenix: a history of Cairns and district* (Cairns, 1976), 1-10; *Cardwell Shire Story*, 1-14; *Hurricane Lamps and Blue Umbrellas* (Cairns, 1973), 1-16; G.C. Bolton, *A Thousand Miles Away: a history of North Queensland to 1920* (Canberra, 1963), 1-23; Kerr, *Pioneer Pageant*, 1, 35; Loos, *Aboriginal-European Relations*, Appendix A: 'The inner and outer routes along the North Queensland coast'.

There is a possibility that the North Queensland coast was visited by the Portuguese and Spanish, two centuries before Cook's famous eighteenth century voyage, but many researchers hotly dispute this view.

K.G. McIntyre, *The Secret Discovery of Australia: Portuguese ventures 200 years before Captain Cook* (Adelaide, 1977); R. Langdon review of *The Secret Discovery of Australia* in *JPH*, v. 14:3 (1979), 186-8.

of the southern coast, I look back upon this tract between 22° and 20°, with still higher expectations than before, and certainly have never seen any part of Australia near the sea of equal fertility, or of nearly equally pleasant and agreeable aspect, or combining so many natural advantages. 6

Before John Mackay gazed over the valley in 1860, two exploration parties had passed close by to the west behind Clarke and Connors range. Ludwig Leichhardt passed that way in early 1845 on his way to the Gulf and Port Essington; the following year A.C. and F.T. Gregory reversed Leichhardt's path and travelled south through the Mackay hinterland. Permanent settlement began slowly edging north in the 1850s.<sup>7</sup> The Archers established Gracemere on the Fitzroy river in 1854-5. Conner and Fitz took up Rio on the Dawson river in 1856. In 1857 William Landsborough tendered for Fort Cooper, southwest of the Pioneer valley. Dan Conner moved from the Dawson in 1859-60, opened up Princhester, Willangie, Marlborough and Collaroy, and gave his name to the range which walls the

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6. J.B. Jukes, *Narrative of the Surveying Voyage of HMS Fly: commanded by Captain F.P. Blackwood, R.N. in Torres Strait, New Guinea, and other islands of the eastern archipelago, during the years 1842-1846; together with an excursion into the interior of the eastern part of Java*, volume One (London, 1847), 51.
  7. More detailed reports of the early settlement of the Leichhardt, Port Curtis and Kennedy districts are available in the works of McDonald, Allingham, Roth and Nilsson. As well, the reminiscences of early settlers, published in the *Jubilee Mackay Mercury* in 1912, provide a wealth of information. The two studies directly concerning the first years of the three pastoral districts, by McDonald and Allingham, concentrate on southern Port Curtis and Leichhardt, and north Kennedy. The 1859-69 extension of the pastoral frontier to the Nebo district and across the ranges into the Pioneer valley awaits further research.

L.L. McDonald, Land Settlement in the Northern Districts of Port Curtis and Leichhardt, 1853-1869 (M.A. Qual. thesis, University of Queensland, 1975), 14-26; A. Allingham, 'Taming the Wilderness': the first decade of pastoral settlement in the Kennedy district. *Studies in North Queensland History* No. 1, James Cook University of North Queensland (Townsville, 1977), 1-14; Roth, *Port Mackay*, 15-22; J.A. Nilsson, History of Mackay: the sugar town, 1862-1915 (B.A. Hons. thesis, University of Queensland, 1963), 1-5; *MM Jubilee 1912*.

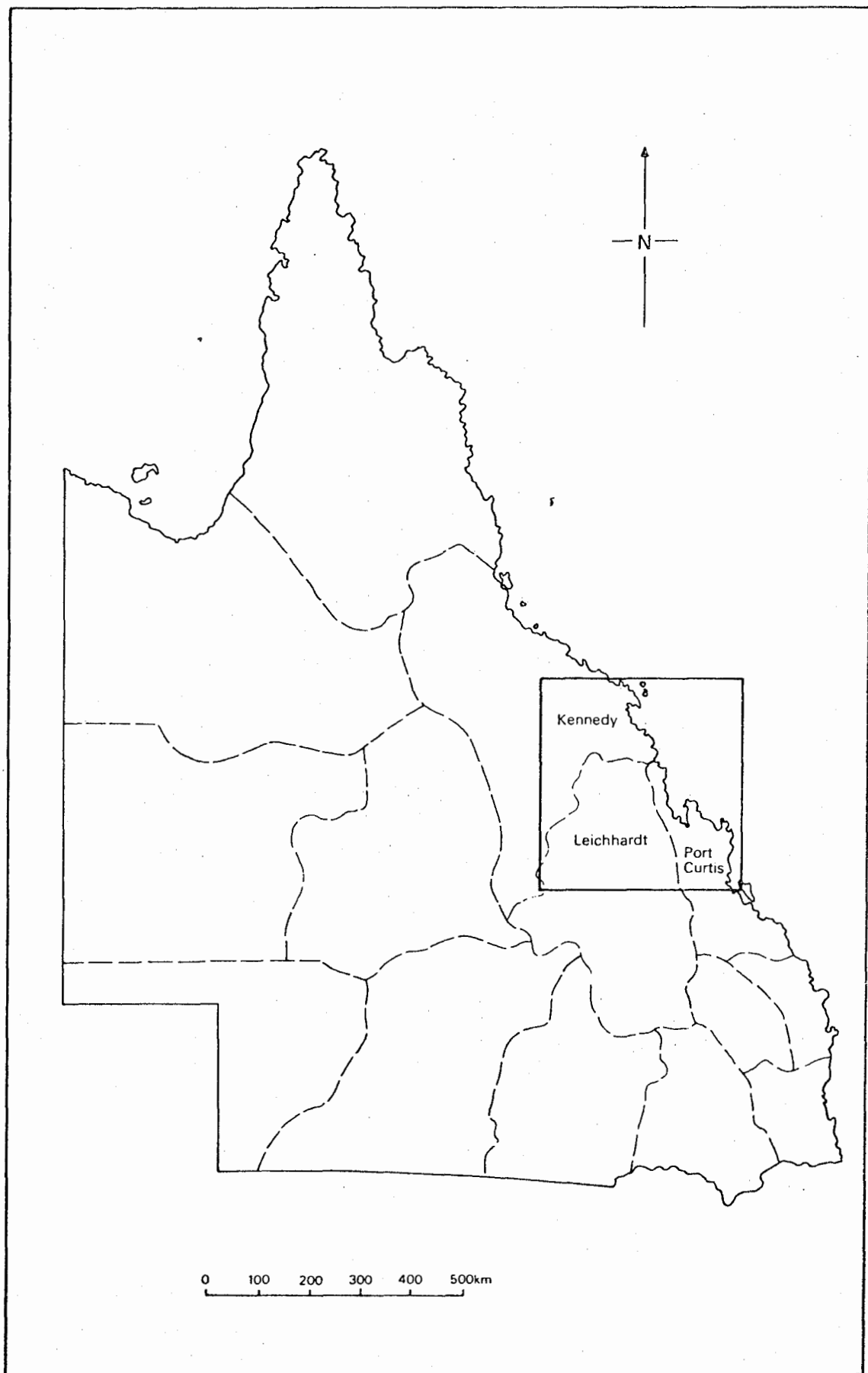
Pioneer valley.<sup>8</sup> Also in 1859, J.A. Macartney settled Waverley, present day St Lawrence on Broad sound, and A.T. Ball stocked Wandoo and Hazlewood just south of the Pioneer valley.

These runs were all in the Port Curtis and Leichhardt pastoral districts, declared open for settlement in January 1854 when Queensland was still part of New South Wales. The Kennedy district which includes the Pioneer valley was thrown open in November 1859. When the first Queensland cabinet took office at the beginning of 1860, they rescinded the proclamation, aiming to stop southern speculators from grabbing the land without any intention of settling there.<sup>9</sup> Kennedy was finally opened for selection from the beginning of January 1861. The new government hoped that the fourteen month delay, and the terms of the 1860 Land Act would encourage bona fide settlers.

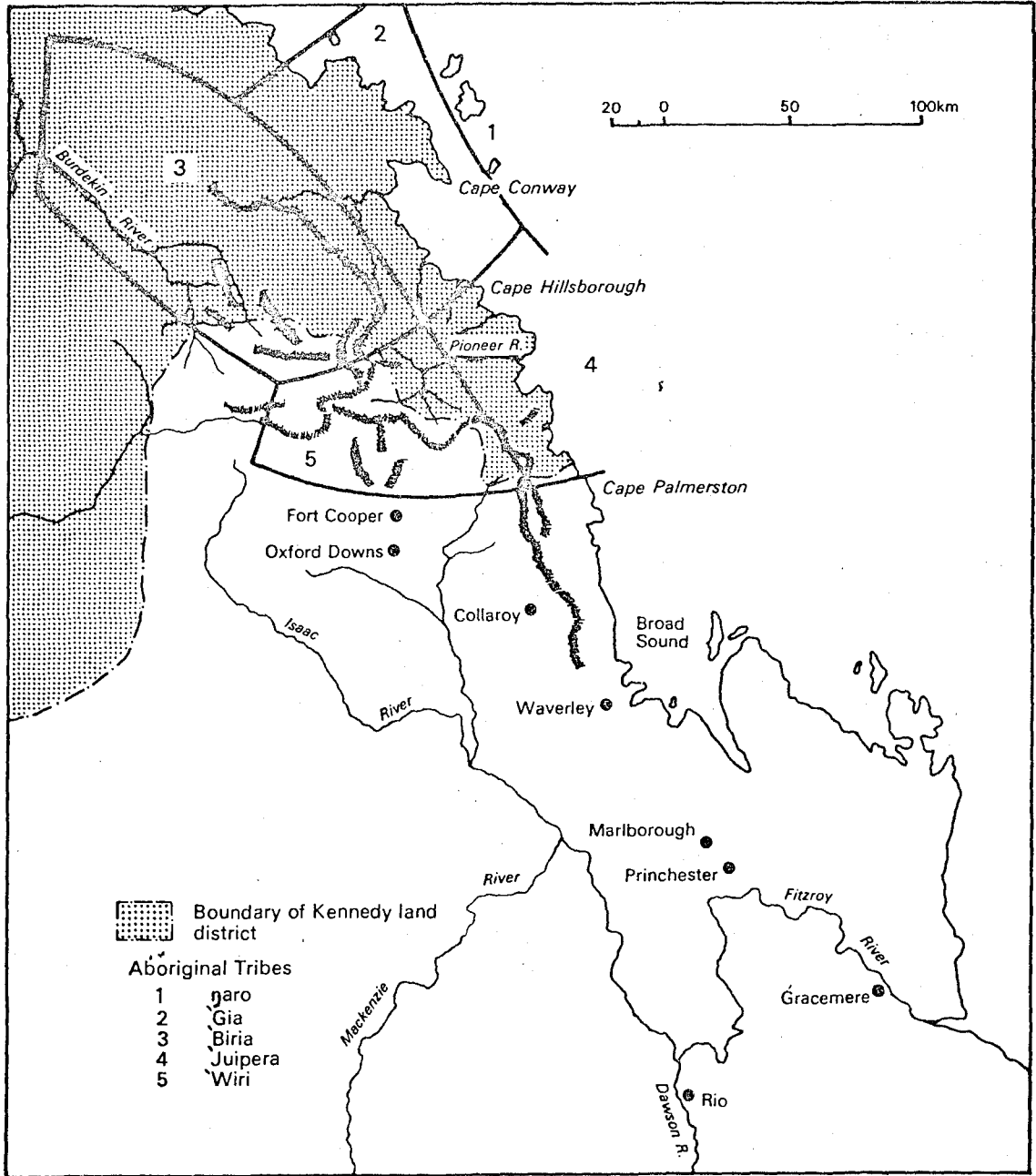
Of the 1860 Land Acts, the one relevant to the early settlement of the Pioneer valley is the *Act for Regulating the Occupation of Crown Lands in Unsettled Districts*, commencing in October 1860.<sup>10</sup> It offered the pastoralist a fourteen year lease: for the first four years the rental was ten shillings per square mile; over the next five years, depending on the run's acreage and carrying capacity, the rent rose to a maximum of forty shillings per square mile; for the last

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8. The range has become known as "Connor's" but Dan Conner always spelt his surname with an "e". There seems to be some doubt as to who established Marlborough: Conner or Biddulph Henning. *MM*, 12 January, 2, 20 February, 21 April 1980: letters to the editor from C.R. Moore, J.H. Williams and P. Prideaux.
  9. Their fears were aroused by G.E. Dalrymple's 1859 expedition to the Burdekin river. J. Farnfield, *Frontiersman: a biography of George Elphinstone Dalrymple* (Melbourne, 1968); Bolton, *Thousand Miles Away*, 17-8.
  10. 24 Vic. No. 11, *QVP* 1860; Regulations under the Act, *QGG* 1859-60, v. 1, 495-7. For discussion of the Act refer to : Report and Evidence presented, from the Select Committee on Crown Lands Acts of 1860, *QLCJ* 1862, v. 4; Allingham, *Taming the Wilderness*, 17-38; McDonald, *Land Settlement*, 27-42; B.R. Kingston, *Theory and Practice in the Pastoral Settlement of Queensland, 1859-1869* (B.A. Hons. thesis, University of Queensland, 1963).

Map One : Pastoral districts of Queensland



Map Two : Central Queensland, 1860



five years the maximum rent possible was fifty-six shillings per square mile. The runs were to cover from twenty-five to a hundred square miles, but there was no limit to the number of contiguous runs which could be held by one individual who complied with the stocking regulations. The selections had to be stocked within nine months; failing this, any person who put stock onto the land could legally claim ownership. Allingham, in her study of North Kennedy, noted that in comparison with other colonies, the conditions which selectors were required to meet under the 1860 Act, were considered as quite generous.<sup>11</sup>

The members of Mackay and Macrossan's expedition chose large blocks of land in contiguous runs, covering the entire valley on both sides of the river. On returning to Rockhampton they tendered for the land; though initially rejected, their applications were accepted in early 1861.<sup>12</sup> Of the four applicants, only John Mackay returned to

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11. Allingham, *Taming the Wilderness*, 18.

12. Mackay said that the rejection was because the river and its valley were unknown, but it seems more likely that it was because the proclaimed opening for selection of Kennedy by New South Wales had been countermanded and delayed by the Herbert ministry in Queensland. Mackay first selected the run named Greenmount (originally included the area later known as Abington or The Hollow) and later Cape Palmerston. John Macrossan selected what was initially named Shamrock Vale (later called Balnagowan), but was later allowed to transfer his application to the Abington run, west of Balnagowan. Andrew Murray selected Cape Palmerston but never took up the land, it passing then to Mackay. Hamilton Robinson selected land to the west of Balnagowan. Giovanni Barberi selected land on the coastal side of Balnagowan, but died in 1861 before he could stock it. The party selected three blocks of land for John Mull-  
doon on Bell's (Black's) creek.

The complicated pattern of leases, which changed hands frequently in the 1860s, is yet to be fully researched.

John Kerr has made a useful beginning in *Pioneer Pageant*, 6-18.

Also refer to Roth, *Port Mackay*, 39; *MM* 17 April 1962; *QGG* 1862, v. 3, 615; and to the following archival material:-

*Greenmount*:- QSA TRE/17, 327, 274, 231 and CLO/N18, Application 391.

*Shamrock Vale*:- QSA CLO/N18, 389; TRE/17, 329.

*Balnagowan*:- QSA TRE/17, 335, 230; LAN/AF354; CLO/N46, 32.

*Abington*:- QSA CLO/N18, 389; TRE/17, 397, 329, 230, 176; TRE/21, 47.

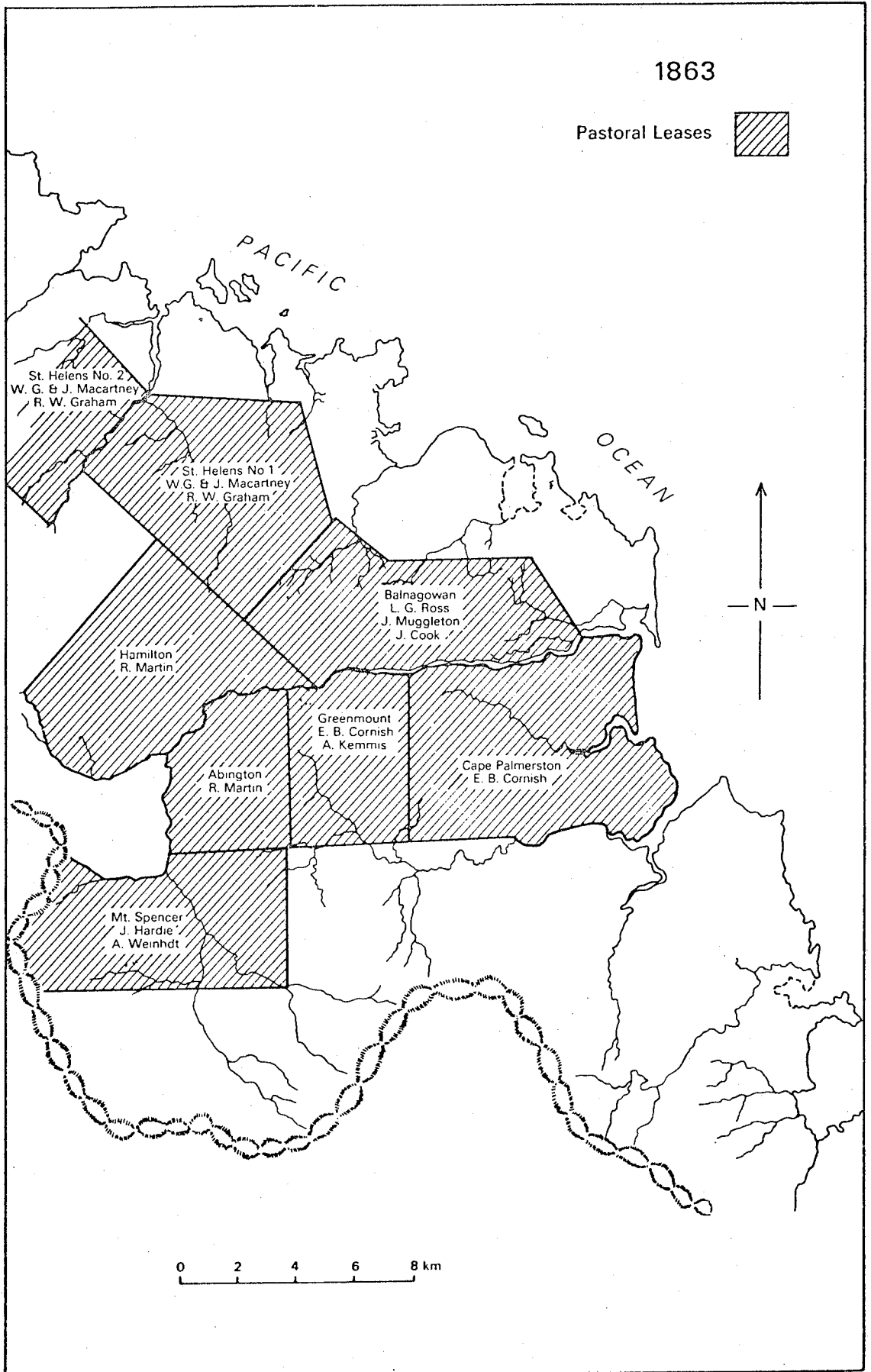
Map Three of this chapter is an attempt to illustrate the European land divisions in the Pioneer valley in 1863.

settle. In an unfortunate partnership with James Starr, a southern squatter, he stocked the Greenmount run in February 1862: together with Cape Palmerston the partners controlled 175 square miles. Unknown to Mackay, Starr was in financial difficulties: his insolvency also ruined Mackay, who was forced to dispose of his interests and left the district in September 1862, its founder, briefly its largest landowner, and its most unfortunate settler, still only twenty-two years old.<sup>13</sup> Cape Palmerston was bought by E.B. Cornish from Fort Cooper over the range, and Greenmount passed to Starr's mortgagee who sold the cattle and disposed of part of the run to E.B. Cornish and Arthur Kemmis.

Even before John Mackay had left the valley, other settlers had begun to arrive. At the valley wall thirty kilometres south of Abington, Richard Spencer had taken up Mt Spencer early in 1862.<sup>14</sup> L.G. Ross, J. Cook and J. Muggleton were on their way to settle at Balnagowan.<sup>15</sup> A camp had been established near the mouth of the Pioneer river, which later grew into the township of Mackay.<sup>16</sup> In 1863 W.G. and John Mcartney and R.W. Graham took up all of the coastal land from Mt Blackwood to the Andromachie river, generally known as St Helens.<sup>17</sup> Robert and

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13. John Mackay left Australia in 1865, and became Master on a variety of ships trading in the Pacific, including several engaged in recruiting Melanesian labourers for work on Fijian and Queensland plantations. He also owned a plantation in Fiji. In 1883 he returned to Queensland as Harbour Master at Cooktown, and was transferred to Brisbane in 1889 in the same position. At his death in 1914 he was Chairman of the Queensland Marine Board. *MM* 13, 14 March 1914; *MCCA*: R.H. Mackay Manuscript.
  14. Mt. Spencer was also known as Bong Bong or The Retreat. *MM Jubilee* 1912, 10 (James Ready); Kerr, *Pioneer Pageant*, 13; *QSA TRE/17*, 345, 231; *CLO/N46*, 108.
  15. *MM Centenary* 1962, 6; *MM* 17 April 1962.
  16. *MM Jubilee* 1912, 11, 14-5, 21; *MM Diamond Jubilee* 1922, 13 September 1922.
  17. For an interesting account of the Macartney's northern pastoral interests, refer to the manuscript prepared in 1956 by eighty-seven year old Alexander Miller Macartney. *MCCA*: Macartney Manuscript (1956); *St. Helens* Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4:- *QSA TRE/17*, 498, 375-8, 233-4, 194; *TRE/8*, 260; *TRE/22*, 97; *TRE/21*, 50; *TRE/11*, 378, 216: *QGG* 1886, part one, V. 38, 747.

Map Three : The Mackay district, 1863





James Martin settled on the Hamilton, Hopetown and Abington runs between 1863 and 1865.<sup>18</sup> In late 1864 Henry Bell and Richard Atherton took up land around Plane creek, and in 1866 John Walker settled the Homebush area.<sup>19</sup> Over the next few years all available land in the valley and along the coast was settled by pastoralists. When Mackay was gazetted as a port in December 1862 it consisted of "a few tents and temporary iron humpies",<sup>20</sup> but the township grew quickly to meet the needs of the pastoralists. The sheep and cattle runs in the back country, and the cattle runs in the valley, relied on the new port as a convenient landing place for their supplies, and for shipping their produce.

In 1869 pastoralism dominated the Mackay district: eight<sup>21</sup> major pastoral holdings occupied the entire Pioneer valley, except for an area excised from Cape Palmerston and Balnagowan runs in order to provide urban land for Mackay and agricultural selections around it. Here, along with maize and tropical fruits, some sugar cane was already being grown. By 1883 pastoralism had been supplanted by sugar cane throughout the valley, surviving only in an arc of foothill country. Pastoralism was banished, but not pastoralists: they were prominent among the first plantation owners. The process by which an expanse of cattle country became "Sugaropolis" is in detail immensely complicated, but the broad picture can be presented fairly simply: its salient features are summarised in Maps Three to Six, showing the major property boundaries

18. Roth, *Port Mackay*, 55;  
*Hamilton*:- QSA TRE/15, 329, 104; TRE/17, 396, 418, 195; CLO/N20.  
*Hopetown*:- QSA CLO/N46, 93.  
*Abington*:- MM 17 April 1962 (quoting Surveyor General's Department, v. 330, folio 59); MM 21 April 1980.
19. A.E. Munro (comp.), *The Sugar Fields of Mackay, North Queensland* (Mackay, 1895), 47;  
*Plane Creek*:- QSA CLO/N46, 48; TRE/17, 434, 233.  
*Homebush*:- QSA TRE/17, 328, 205; CLO/N46, 110.
20. *MM Jubilee 1912*, 2, 12 (G.F. Bridgeman). Bridgeman said that by September 1862 bullock drays were hauling supplies across the range to properties as far afield as Peak Downs and Bowen Downs.
21. The eight major pastoral holdings were:  
 Greenmount; Abington/The Hollow; Homebush/Cape Palmerston;  
 Plane Creek/Cliftonville; Mt Spencer/Bong Bong; Hamilton/Hopetown/Pelion; Balnagowan; St Helens/Jolimount/Bloomsbury.

in the Pioneer valley in 1863, 1869, 1877 and 1883.<sup>22</sup>

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22. There are numerous inadequacies and inconsistencies in the various descriptions of the ownership, acreage and boundaries of these properties. Pastoral boundaries changed from year to year, and properties were cannibalized as freehold land was alienated. Descriptions of boundaries in the 1860s were often rather vague, including references like "a tree marked X, three and three-quarter miles to the south west".

The plantation boundaries are more exact and reliable, but they are no indication of how much land was actually used for cane cultivation, nor is it possible to indicate how many other separate but nonetheless substantial pieces of land a planter may have owned in the district. The maps are as accurate as possible, given the circumstances outlined above.

## 2. The Pastoralists

The Mackay district in the nineteenth century was often called "Sugaropolis",<sup>23</sup> the major sugar producing area in Australia; but its history, particularly in the initial years of European settlement in the 1860s, is bound to pastoral interests. Although sheep were the predominant stock on Queensland's early pastoral properties, large cattle herds were beginning to be established in the 1860s. Cattle had an advantage over sheep in the more distant areas of the colony. They could be driven for long distances more easily than sheep, and less labour was necessary to supervise the herds. The climate and surrounds of wet coastal areas like the valley of the Pioneer were not well suited for sheep, which were liable to suffer from footrot and lung worm; as well, the spread of spear grass through pastures ruined fleeces and killed the sheep. When properties in the Port Curtis and Fitzroy districts were stocked in the 1850s, many owners used both sheep and cattle; when moving to the Pioneer valley, pastoralists chose to stock their runs with cattle. Cattle did not pay as well, but they were a safer investment.<sup>24</sup>

It is necessary to obtain a clear picture of changing pastoral holdings in the Pioneer valley and its hinterland, to understand the growth of the sugar industry. The resources of the two industries were fully inter-twined: freehold land owned by pastoralists was used as collateral to obtain finance from government and private sources to establish mills; individuals who made their mark in the 1850s, 1860s and 1870s as owners of pastoral runs, often turned their skills and finances to overseeing plantations and managing mills. Pastoralists entering the sugar industry were often just diversifying their interests, retaining at least a foothold in pastoralism. Their bushcraft was as useful in the pioneer years of the sugar industry as it had been

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23. G.C. Craig, 'Mackay the sugaropolis of Queensland', *Victoria Review*, v. 4 (1881), 82-90.

24. For further discussion of the general trend to replace sheep with cattle throughout the Kennedy district in the 1860s refer to: N. Corfield, *The Development of the Cattle Industry in Queensland, 1840-1890* (B.A. Hons. thesis, University of Queensland, 1959), 34-43; Allingham, *Taming the Wilderness*, 103.11.

on pastoral properties. These practical gentlemen of the bush, pastoralists and planters, controlled the land, the economy, the politics and the law of the frontier. They were the ruling class of frontier society.

Pastoral runs were leased on the understanding that the land was subject to periodic revision and reclamation by the Crown. By 1897 all the runs of the 1860s in the Mackay district had been opened for freehold occupation, mainly by small-scale agriculturalists growing sugar cane. However, pastoralists in the valley retained varying acreages of freehold land even after their cattle leases had been resumed. Most turned at some stage to growing sugar cane; several tried to start private sugar milling companies, or held controlling interests in government-sponsored farmers' mills.

The intimate and complex relationship between pastoralism and the plantations is illustrated in Table One<sup>\*</sup>: a summary of twenty-four cases of individuals, who held substantial pastoral interests and also invested in Mackay sugar plantations.<sup>25</sup> No attempt has been made to trace all the pastoral interests of the men listed; the Table may well be incomplete in this respect: but it includes many of the main pastoral properties in Mackay's hinterland, and seven of the eight major pastoral runs in the Pioneer valley. Table Two illustrates the pastoral connections from a different point of view, using the plantation as a unit. A plantation is defined by function, not by size, ownership or tenure: it is an area of cane land operated as a unit and possessing its own mill. While a mill might also crush cane from outside the plantation, the rule that for every mill there is one plantation has no known exception.<sup>26</sup> No plantation mills were estab-

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\* Table One is at the end of this chapter.

25. Table One is based on the owners of the plantations; managers with pastoral backgrounds have not been included. The pastoral interest is both as manager and owner, as it is often impossible to differentiate the proportional involvement of a manager and his financial backer. Both practical and financial pastoralism need to be indicated as precursory to plantation life.
26. That is, of course, until the establishment of central mills. Refer to the preface to Appendix Three, at the end of this thesis, for further definition of these key terms.

Table Two: Pastoral investment in Mackay plantations

Plantation		Date mill first crushed	Date of known pastoral in- vestment	Absentee or resident owner (AO or RO)
Pioneer	1	1867	1881	AO
Alexandra	2	1868	1880	AO
Meadowlands	5	1870	1878	RO
Branscombe	6	1871	1882	AO
Barrie	7	1872	1875	AO
Lorne	8	1872	1873	AO
Miclere	9	1872	1877	RO
Nebia	10	1872	1871	RO
Cedars	12	1873	1871	RO
Dumbleton	13	1873	1868	RO
Inverness	14	1873	1871	RO
River	15	1873	1874	RO
Balmoral	16	1873	1873	RO
Te Kowai	17	1874	1874	RO
Richmond	18*	1874	1869	RO
Palms	19	1881	1880	AO
Beaconsfield	20	1882	1872	RO
Victoria	22*	1882	1869	RO
Habana	24*	1883	1878	RO
Ashburton	30	1883	1881	AO

The plantations are listed in order of establishment. A full list can be found on Graph Two of this chapter and in Appendix Three at the end of the thesis.

\* Refer to footnote 27 of this chapter.

Sources:

Table One of this chapter.  
Appendix Three to this thesis.  
Sloan & Co. Records.  
MM 5 June 1869.

lished after 1883: thirty plantation mills were established between 1867 and 1883.

Twenty of these, with pastoral connections, are listed in Table Two in chronological order of the dates they were first put in motion. In seventeen instances the plantation proprietor also owned, or had previously owned, pastoral property: in two the proprietor was, or had been, a stock and station agent; in the final instance the plantation had previously been a dairy farm.<sup>27</sup> Table Two indicates the importance of sugar relative to pastoralism from 1871 onwards. In six of the first eight plantations, all with mills functioning by 1872, the pastoral connection was established after the plantation became functional and the owners, with one exception, were non-resident. In fourteen of the remaining twenty-two plantations, the pastoral connection was established, with only one exception, at least as early as the mill began crushing: all but two of the owners were resident.

Similar patterns of pastoral involvement probably can be found in other sugar districts, particularly where pastoral pursuits predated the establishment of a sugar industry. For example, at Bundaberg, major planters like Tooth and Cran, Forrest, and the Youngs, all transferred their interests from the pastoral industry to cane growing. Tooth and Cran of *Yengarie* plantation pursued a course very similar to Hyne and Bridgeman of *Balmoral-Meadowlands* at Mackay: both partnerships had invested in cattle runs and boiling down works, before making a change to sugar production.<sup>28</sup> Many of the men involved in establishing Mackay's sugar plantations, like Hyne and Bridgeman, were experienced pioneers of the pastoral industry: considerable pastoral capital and managerial expertise backed the establishment of at least two-thirds of Mackay's sugar plantations.

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27. George Smith of *Victoria* and *Marian* plantations, and the McBryde brothers, later of *Inverness* and *Richmond*, were stock and station agents. In the case of E.M. Long's *Habana* plantation, the land was initially used for a dairy farm, and reverted to that use after the mill closed. *MM* 5 June 1869; *MM Jubilee 1912*, 19-20.

28. J. Nolan, *Bundaberg: history and people* (Brisbane, 1978), 99-104; Refer to Table One of this chapter: Cases 4 and 14.

### 3. The Planters: 1865-1885

#### A. The Beginning: 1865-1868

In an overview of a century of sugar cane growing in the Mackay district the question who planted the first cane is trivial, but it still excites local passions. John Spiller usually gets the credit, on the basis of his own claim, made in 1877, to have planted his cane on the first day of June in 1865.<sup>29</sup> This claim has never been successfully contradicted; certainly it was never contradicted by T.H. Fitzgerald who some say deserves the accolade.<sup>30</sup>

Spiller and his partner John Creese selected land on the north bank of the river in June 1865,<sup>31</sup> and named the plantation *Pioneer*. It was also Spiller who in May 1867 brought the first Melanesian indentured labourers to the district; and in November the same year crushed the first Mackay cane at *Pioneer*, in a primitive wooden-rollered mill worked by horses. Spiller had previously worked on a sugar plantation on the north coast of Java near Surabaya, and brought cane plants from there to Mackay. He recognised the potential of the rich alluvial plains of the river, selected land, planted his cane, built a grass humpy, planted maize and cotton as quicker maturing crops, and settled down to wait.<sup>32</sup> Sixteen years later in 1881

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29. Roth, *Port Mackay*, 59-60; H. Finch-Hatton, *Advance Australia* (London, 1885), 154; C.H. O'Brien, 'The history of the Australian sugar industry: Mackay district', *ASJ* v. 43:4 (1951), 281; *MM* 22 December 1965, 15 April 1967; Kerr, *Pioneer Pageant*, 27.
30. *Qlder* 14 April, 2 June 1877, 5 June 1880. Strangely, Spiller did not make this claim when writing about sugar growing at Mackay in 1868. E.B. Kennedy, *Four Years in Queensland* (London, 1870), 172; *MM* 10 December 1907, 17 August 1970, 4 July 1873; J. Kerr, Brief account of the history of each of the sugar mills in the Mackay district (first published in the *North Queensland Register* November 1975 to July 1978), (bound into one volume in the Delamothe Collection, *JCUNQ*), 6; *SJ&TC* v. 7 (1897), 62.
31. The core of *Pioneer* was 719 acres fronting the river. Part of this land remained in Creese's name until 1869. *QSA* LAN/215, Selections 33 & 34; *QVP* 1866, 1461; Thesis Appendix Three; *Pioneer*.
32. *BA&NZ* Mail 9 May 1901, Supp. XII (E.S. Rawson); *MCCA*: Macartney Manuscript; Kennedy, *Four Years*, 172; *Qlder* 30 June 1877; Roth, *Port Mackay*, 60.

Spiller sold *Pioneer* for £95,000, while retaining *River* plantation nearby, and in partnership with Henry Brandon, having begun to establish a new *Pioneer* plantation on the Burdekin river.<sup>33</sup>

Spiller was not the first to recognise the possibilities of growing cane in the valley. In 1864 Thomas Henry Fitzgerald had been employed by the Queensland government to survey the towns of Mackay and Eton and the surrounding land at the mouth of the Pioneer river, for agricultural selections. The coastal ends of the land first chosen as the Cape Palmerston and Balnagowan runs were resumed and surveyed for closer settlement. Fitzgerald who had qualified as an engineer and surveyor in his native Ireland, lived in New Zealand for twenty years before moving in 1862 to Queensland. Impressed by the rich agricultural land he found while surveying Mackay, he obtained some of Spiller's cane plants, and planted half an acre close to the present center of Mackay.<sup>34</sup>

The plantation land eventually to be owned by Fitzgerald was first applied for in 1865 under the terms of regulations adopted in 1864 to promote the speedy establishment of sugar and coffee plantations.<sup>35</sup> Fitzgerald, inhibited by having surveyed the land, did not make any initial applications when the choice land along the river was first leased in 1864 and 1865. Nevertheless he soon acquired the best of it, having used friends as dummies to apply for the land, and controlled over 3,000 acres along the river from the time of its first

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33. QSA COL/A334, In letter 1542, MacKinnon & Co. to CS, 18 March 1882; R. Connolly, *John Drysdale and the Burdekin* (Sydney, 1964), 39; Thesis Appendix Three: Pioneer, River.

34. *The Australian Encyclopedia* (Sydney, 1958), v.4, 92; *ADB 1851-1890*, v. 4, 79; *MM Jubilee 1912*, 2 (G.F. Bridgeman).

35. Under the 1864 Regulations, land in blocks of 300 to 1,280 acres within ten miles of the coast or any navigable stream could be leased for no more than three years at one shilling per acre. Provided at least twenty shillings per acre had been expended in those years in cultivating sugar or coffee, and not less than one twentieth of the land had been planted, the land could then be acquired permanently at one pound sterling an acre. *QPD* 1864, v. 1, 301-3; *QVP* 1865, 1219.



use in 1865.<sup>36</sup> In using his official position to further his own interests, Fitzgerald was not breaking the law; he does not even seem to have departed from the standards of his day. Anne Allingham encountered similar cases concerning G.E. Dalrymple, the first Commissioner for Lands in the Kennedy district in the 1860s, and D.B. Waterson noted the same occurrences in the early settlement of the Darling Downs.<sup>37</sup>

Fitzgerald began to employ European labourers to clear his land, starting with what was to become *Alexandra* plantation. In 1867 he entered into partnership with John Ewan Davidson, a young well-educated Englishman who had first visited Mackay in August and September 1865, where he met both Fitzgerald and Spiller. In his journal for 13 September 1865 he noted:

Rode out with Mr. Fitzgerald in the evening  
to the incipient sugar plantation...<sup>38</sup>

Davidson made his first attempt at cane growing in 1866 at *Bellenden* plantation on plains just south of present day Tully.<sup>39</sup> After less

36. In 1868 Fitzgerald admitted having used dummies. He owned the land on which *Alexandra* (1868), *Meadowlands* (1870), *Te Kowai* (1874) and *Palms* (1881) were established.
- A.J. Boyd, *Queensland* (London, 1882), 85; *MM Jubilee 1912*, 10, 14, 21; Nilsson, *History of Mackay*, 22 (a); *MM* 11 November 1868.
37. Allingham, *Taming the Wilderness*, 26; D.B. Waterson, *Squatter, Selector, and Storekeeper: a history of the Darling Downs 1859-93* (Sydney, 1968), Chapter Three: 'Rents, resumptions and rackets'.
38. *JCUNQ* (Delamothé): J.E. Davidson, *Journal for 1865-1868*, entry for 13 February 1867.
39. He had also applied for a block of agricultural land at Mackay, but chose instead to concentrate his efforts on *Bellenden*. Life on the ill-fated *Bellenden* plantation is described in Davidson's *Journal* and in Charles Eden's *My Wife and I in Queensland*. Eden claimed to have been "John Ewen's" partner, but this is doubtful; there is no proof of it in Davidson's *Journal*.  
*QVP* 1868, 1461, Application 77, 20 March 1866;  
*QSA* LAN/215, Selection 48;  
C.H. Eden, *My Wife and I in Queensland* (London, 1872), 289-90, 338-41;  
*Davidson's Journal*, 20 March 1866 to 25 January 1867.

than a year at *Bellenden*, a year in which Davidson's partner returned to England, one-third of his cattle herd was drowned, and he spent an unpleasant Christmas day up a gum tree when cyclonic rain caused his badly chosen river flats to flood, he finally decided to cut his losses and headed back to Mackay in early 1867. Fitzgerald had land but no capital, Davidson capital but no land; together they erected *Alexandra* mill and distillery, which Davidson managed while Fitzgerald became the local member of parliament.

*Alexandra* had the first steam-powered sugar mill in North Queensland. Its commencement marked the beginning of the northern sugar industry and heralded the end of pastoral dominance in the Pioneer valley. In mid-September 1868 the mill crushed the first cane.<sup>40</sup> The *Mackay Mercury* proudly described its "three massive rollers, each 2 feet by 4 feet", and firmly announced that *Alexandra* could not be matched anywhere in Australia.<sup>41</sup> E.S. Rawson, a proprietor of The Hollow, farther up the valley, looked back, over three decades later, and described the event:

There was a gay time at the opening of that mill. There were not many of us in the district then, but we all went and cheered ourselves hoarse as the rollers slowly revolved and the first sticks of cane went through and came out in shapeless fibre on the other side. 42

The existence of *Alexandra* allowed agriculturalists with small holdings a chance to plant and sell sugar cane.<sup>43</sup> Many switched from maize

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40. Spiller brought Mr Booth out from Java to help erect his mill in 1867. Although Spiller and Creese did crush cane at *Pioneer* in 1867, the device they constructed was more in the nature of an experiment and not a commercial venture. Roth, *Port Mackay*, 60.

41. *MM* 23 September 1868, re-published in 24 December 1892; Kerr, *Sugar Mills*, 1.

42. *BA&NZ Mail* 9 May 1901, Supp., XII.

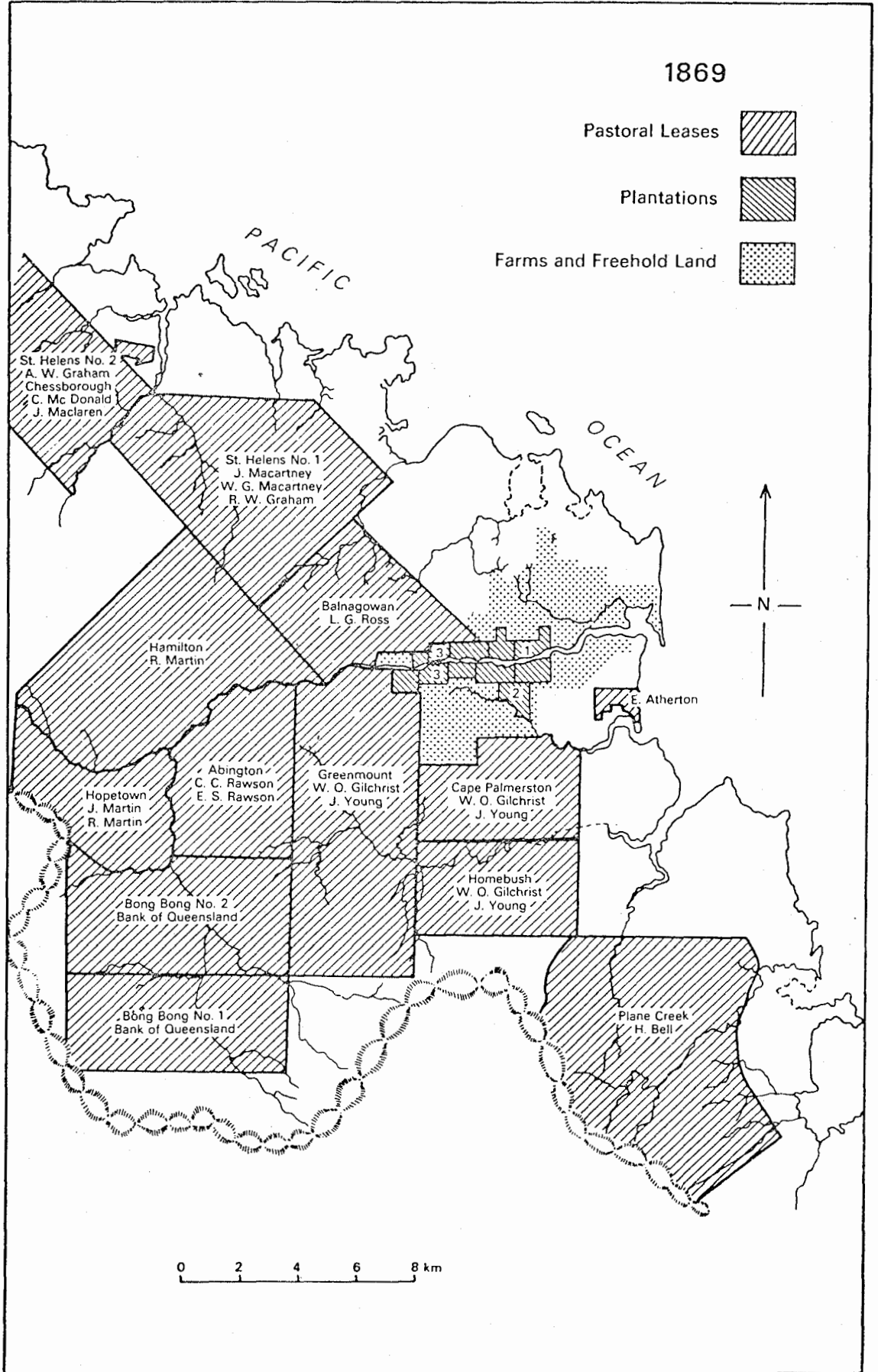
43. This chapter has been given over entirely to the large scale plantations with steam-powered mills, which dominated the nineteenth century economy of the district. Even today the plantations are remembered as the place-names of Mackay's outer suburbs and its surrounding rural areas. But accompanying the plantations were a considerable number of large estates without mills and also many smaller farms, which grew cane but sent their crops to the plantation mills and to the later farmers' central mills. Their

to cane. The cane acreage began to expand and a sugar boom began. The boom was short-lived, lasting only until 1875, when rust partially destroyed the new found agricultural staple.

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presence, alongside the plantations, is of more relevance to the next chapter; all discussion of them will be postponed until then.

Map Four : The Mackay district, 1869



### 3.B. Overview 1865-1885

Graphs One and Two in this chapter illustrate the two phases of plantation growth. In terms of the definition of a plantation adopted in this thesis (an area of cane land with a steam-powered mill operating through more than three consecutive seasons), thirty plantation mills began operating in the Mackay district before 1884. After the beginning, with *Pioneer's* primitive mill, and *Alexandra's* relatively sophisticated steam-powered crushing apparatus, fourteen other plantation mills began their operations between 1869 and 1874. Then the industry paused for six years, to recover from the setback caused by rust, before continuing on with extraordinary rapidity. Twelve more mills commenced operations between 1881 and 1883; eight of these commenced in 1883. In 1884 Mackay's farmers and planters had over 19,000 acres of sugar planted, an amount not to be equalled in the next ten years. The years 1883 to 1885 represented the peak of the early sugar boom: in 1883-4 there were twenty-six mills functioning; in 1884 19,320 acres of land were planted with cane, and 14,064 of these acres of cane were crushed the next year; the 21,604 tons of raw sugar manufactured in 1885 was not to be surpassed until 1893.

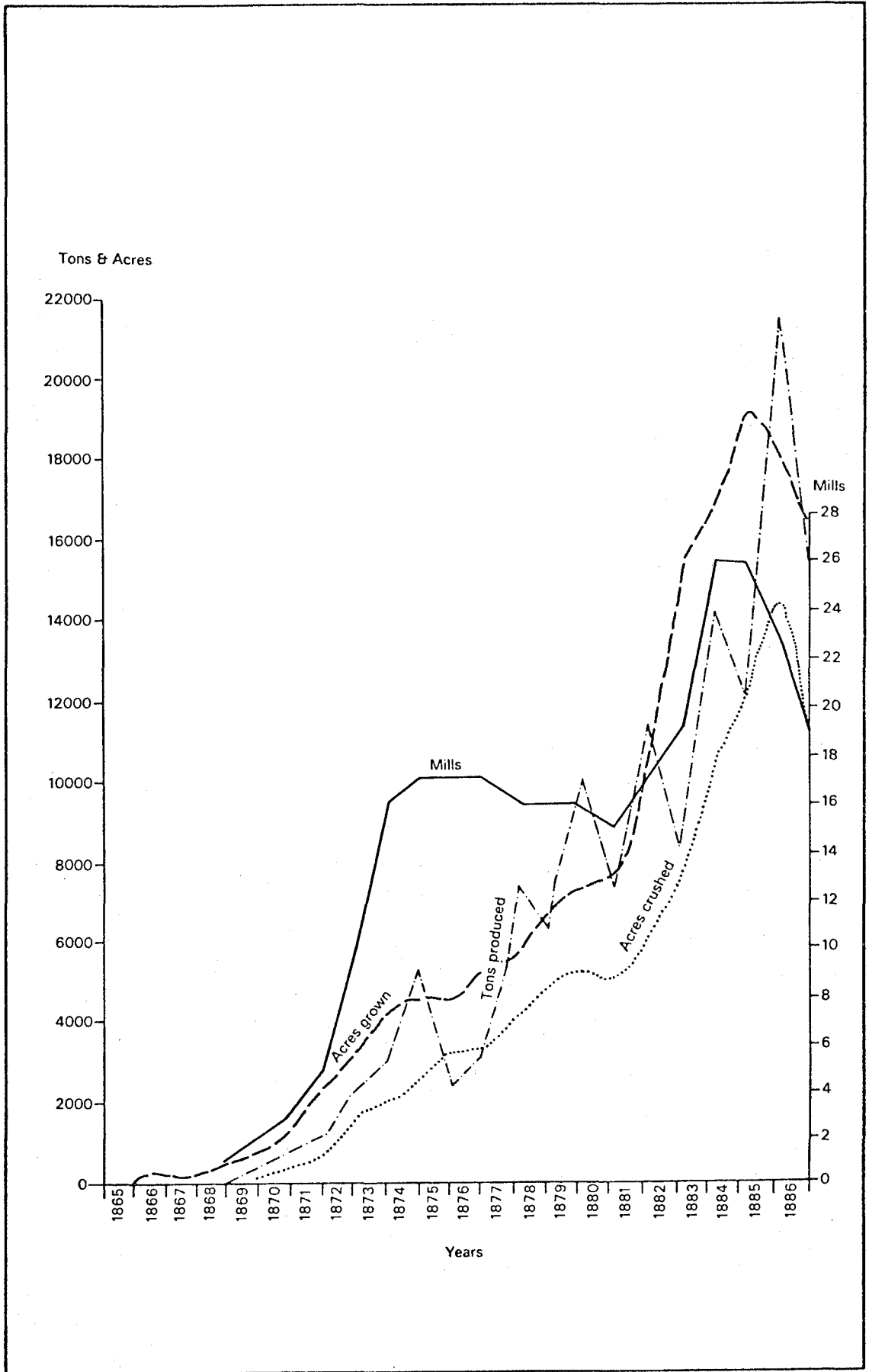
The Mackay district in the mid-1880s produced almost one-third of the colony's total crop. Table Three and Graph One express Mackay's sugar cane acreage and sugar tonnage from 1865 to 1886. Graph Three represents Queensland's total cane acreage and sugar tonnage over the same period. Mackay had no rival for its title of "Sugaropolis". By the 1890s sugar cane was cultivated along the Queensland coast, north and south of Mackay, but no other area was as important as Mackay to the colony's sugar production, as the small bar-graph insert in Graph Three clearly indicates.

TABLE THREE

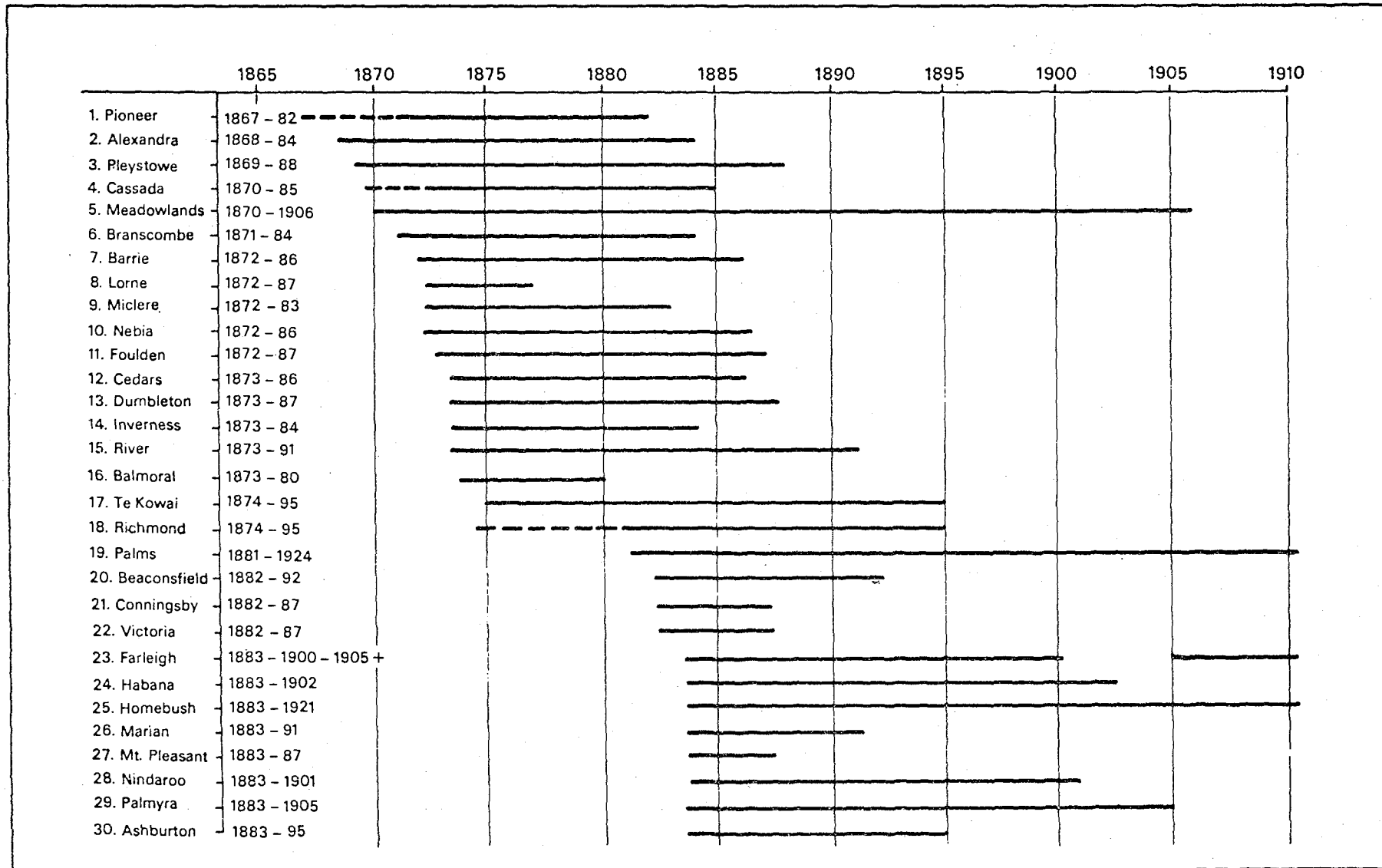
## Mackay district agricultural production: 1864-1886

Year	Sugar cane grown acres	Sugar cane crushed acres	Sugar produced tons	Steam mills in opera- tion number	Grain produced acres	Potatoes produced acres	Gardens & fruit produce acres	Total land under crop acres	Cane as a percentage of total %
1864	8 perches	0	0	0	3	2	27	32	0
1865	20	0	0	0	20	0	0	44	45.4
1866	267	0	0	0	114	1	3	660	40.4
1867	248	0	0	0	261	11	53	1079	22.9
1868	414	n.a.	110	1	261	14	45	818	50.6
1869	919	284	393	2	329	35	47	1343	68.4
1870	1413	538	819	3	233	25	74	1764	80.1
1871	2493	880	1329	5	217	51	93	2868	86.9
1872	3436	1857	2500	10	313	70	76	3909	87.8
1873	4543	2278	3252	16	386	59	145	5163	87.9
1874	4927	2909	5480	17	457	43	103	5578	88.3
1875	4844	3490	2577	17	587	138	127	5732	84.5
1876	5568	3615	3412	17	985	162	170	6939	80.2
1877	5768	4362	7643	16	808	178	145	7916	72.8
1878	6823	4630	6465	16	616	149	150	7812	87.3
1879	7440	5463	10073	16	598	196	109	8404	88.5
1880	7880	5277	7472	15	445	186	143	8713	90.4
1881	10629	6499	11580	17	532	154	114	11506	92.3
1882	15210	8039	8321	19	530	216	159	16171	94.05
1883	17039	10641	14252	26	466	264	96	17910	95.1
1884	19320	12391	12023	26	445	383	116	20309	95.1
1885	18532	14604	21604	23	629	380	105	19616	94.4
1886	16165	11466	15511	19	579	343	115	17237	93.7

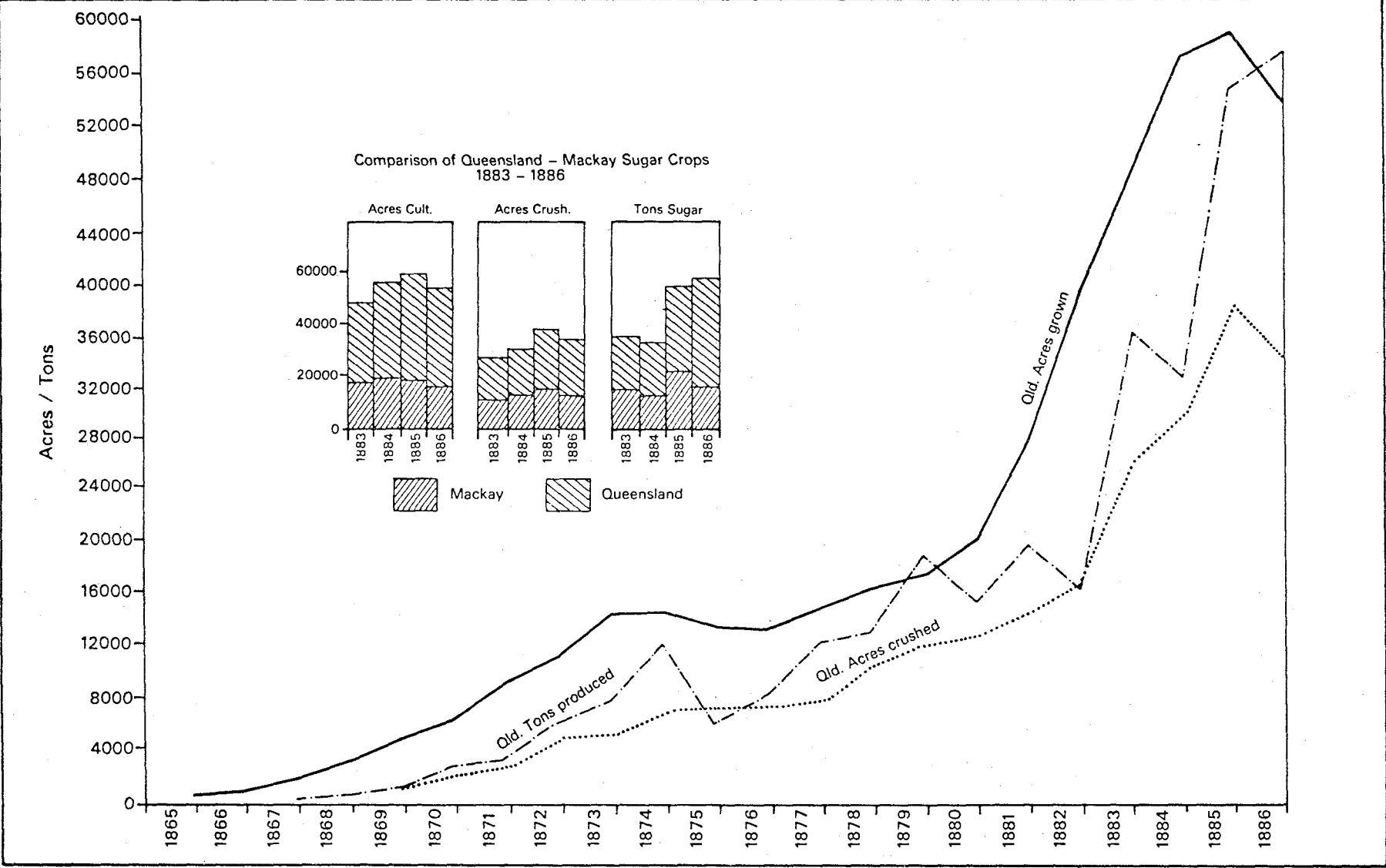
Graph One : Mackay sugar production, 1865 - 1886



Graph Two: Mackay plantation mills operating for more than three seasons, 1867 - 1910







Graph Three : Queensland sugar production, 1865 - 1886. With an insert graph comparing the Mackay district sugar crop with the Queensland total crop, 1883 - 1886

3.C. 1868-1875

The best land along both sides of the river bank, closest to Mackay, had been taken up for growing cane before 1870. The Sugar and Coffey Regulations of 1864 - which encouraged the selection of large blocks of land of 320 to 1,280 acres - were incorporated in Clause Sixty-four of the *1868 Crown Lands Alienation Act*. The 1868 Act allowed more cane land to be selected in forty to sixty acre block agricultural and homestead leases. There was another significant change: one-tenth instead of one-twentieth of the land selected, had to be cultivated before any application was made for the title of the land.<sup>44</sup>

When the new Land Act was introduced in 1868, the early settlers tried to grab what land they could along the river and neighbouring creeks. Wrangling and bitterness over applications for this prime land continued into 1869,<sup>45</sup> but by the end of that year initial agricultural land settlement patterns had stabilized. Map Four gives a picture of the valley in 1869, almost a decade after the arrival of Europeans. Many of the pastoral runs of the early 1860s had changed lessees by 1869, and several had been sub-divided. Large parts of Balnagowan and Cape Palmerston had been resumed to make space for agricultural land. Fitzgerald, as government surveyor, chose for closer settlement. The St Helens run to the north of the river remained intact, and the back reaches of the valley were completely covered by pastoral leases. Near the coast, two additional runs, Homebush and Plane Creek, had been selected; both gave their names to later sugar mills. Just over 900 acres of cane were growing along both sides of the river and three mills, primitive *Pioneer* and steam-powered *Alexandra* and *Pleystowe*, were operating.

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44. 31 Vic. No. 46, *QCS* 1874, v. 1, 565-6;  
*QSA LAN/P61*: Register of Applications under the Crown Lands Acts of 1868; C.A. Bernays, *Queensland Politics During Sixty (1859-1919) Years* (Brisbane, 1919), 314-5; Boyd, *Queensland*, 58-62.
45. *QSA LAN/215*; *QSA LAN/P61*, entries 1, 3 & 4;  
 T.H. Fitzgerald and A. Hewitt were still arguing over land in 1869, a year after their applications had been made under the 1868 Act. *MM* 24 April 1869.

Before sugar established itself as a mono-culture, a variety of crops were experimented with: arrowroot, cotton, maize, sweet and English potatoes, wheat, barley, oats, rice and sugar cane. Spiller and Creese grew all of these on *Pioneer* in the 1860s.<sup>46</sup> Mackay was not singular in this respect; agriculture in Queensland was at an experimental stage. Early on, great hopes were placed in cotton<sup>47</sup> production, and the 1864 Regulations which encouraged the settlers to plant sugar cane at Mackay, also encouraged them to consider coffee growing. Table Three illustrates this transition. Maize production at first rivalled that of sugar cane, but was soon outstripped. Between 1868 and 1869, significantly the years when the *Alexandra* and *Pleystowe* mills began operation, sugar cane acreage doubled, from 414 to 919 acres. From 1869 the agricultural future of the district was assured; sugar was well on the way to becoming a mono-culture. Of the crops grown experimentally in the early 1860s, the only survivors were those which could serve the needs of the plantations. Grain crops continued to be grown, but as green fodder and hay for cattle and horses associated with the plantations. Sweet and English potatoes, vegetables and fruit were also grown, to feed the plantation workers, as subsistence crops by small-scale agriculturalists, and for the steadily increasing market available in the towns of the valley. All of these pale to insignificance beside the meteoric increase in the acres under cane. In 1865 the district boasted twenty acres of cane. Ten years later, in 1875, there were 4,844 acres of cane. By 1885 this figure had quadrupled to 19,320. Most of this increase occurred between 1880 and 1884 when the district's agricultural acreage more than doubled.

As sugar cultivation increased, it became obvious that the pastoral runs closest to the coast had to be further decreased in size. Balnagowan run on the north side of the river, and Greenmount and the consolidated Cape Palmerston-Homebush runs on the south bank, impeded the extension of the sugar fields to the west along the river and to the south and north away from the river. In the late 1860s and early

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46. *MM* 8 July 1868, 4 March 1905, 13 September 1922; *Qlder* 30 June 1877.

47. J. Farnfield, 'Cotton and the search for an agricultural staple in early Queensland', *Queensland Heritage*, v. 2:4 (1971), *passim*.

1870s these runs were all considerably truncated, the land being re-allocated for agricultural selection.<sup>48</sup> Other factors also limited and shaped the spread of cane land. The 1864 Regulations and the 1868 Land Act which governed the selection of cane land, limited such land to within ten miles of the coast or any navigable stream. The Pioneer river became the center focus for the valley's cane land. The rich alluvial soil was perfect for sugar cane and the growers and millers used the river for transport and as a water supply. The mills needed water to operate; wells were not always reliable and the best source of water was the river and adjacent creeks.

The first plantations were along the river, but until the river was first bridged in 1877 it presented a barrier to plantation development on the northern side. The town of Mackay was on the southern bank, and so were all of the early plantations except *Pioneer*. The next seven plantations established after *Pioneer* were all along the south bank of the river or along nearby creeks: *Pleystowe* (1869) and *Broncombe* (1871) were along the bank of the river; *Alexandra* (1868), *Cassada* (1870) and *Lorne* (1872) were bounded by Baker's creek; *Meadowlands* (1870) was beside lagoons close to the river; and *Barrie* (1872) was situated on Sandy creek. Spiller and Creese at *Pioneer*, faced by Fitzgerald's dummied control of the best land on the southern bank, were the only early planters who opted for the next best land on the northern side of the river, despite the inconvenience. However it was not long before other mills joined *Pioneer* on the northern bank. In 1872-3 four plantations were established along the northern bank, a balance for the existing plantations on the other side. *Nebia* and *Foulden* were opened in 1872 and *Dumbleton* and *River* in 1873.

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48. *Greenmount*:- QSA TRE/17, 327; Map Five: 1877.  
*Cape Palmerston-Homebush*:- QSA TRE/17, 328; In 1871 5,680 hectares were resumed from Cape Palmerston as an Aboriginal Reserve, in a short-lived experiment to turn local Aborigines into useful citizens. R. Evans 'Queensland's first Aboriginal Reserve: Part One - The promise of reform', *Queensland Heritage*, v. 2:4 (1971), and 'Part Two - The failure of reform', *Queensland Heritage*, v.2:5 (1971).  
*Balnagowan*:- QSA LAN/AF354, Bowen Lands Office to Under Sec. of Public Lands, In letter 6326, 14 August 1869 (Map enclosure); QSA LAN/P61, entries 15 & 16; QSA LAN/215, selection 28.

Their proprietors realised that it would only be a few years until a bridge was built, and the high prices then offering for sugar were enough to make even the most cautious agriculturalists turn a hand to cane growing.

The Pioneer river is tidal as far up stream as Dumbleton. Early residents on the north side had to ford the river at low tide, and use barges and boats to ferry their produce down to Mackay, the port. Before a bridge was constructed a significant number of people were drowned every year,<sup>49</sup> while attempting to cross the river. These deaths together with the growing needs of the north side plantations, led to agitation in the district in the early 1870s to build a bridge. F.T. Amhurst, owner of *Foulden* plantation and the local member of parliament, succeeded in getting the government to allocate money for the purpose. Finally, in 1877, the bridge, over 300 meters long with 180 meters of extra decking over low ground, was completed at a cost of £20,000.<sup>50</sup>

The next extension of cane land was to the fertile low hills a few kilometers north of the river. Greenmount and Balnagowan runs blocked any further expansion to the west and the lower reaches of the river were already encircled by plantations. The first plantations to be established under what was named the hill system of cultivation were *Miclere* in 1872 and the *Cedars* in 1873. Another plantation, *Inverness*, was also established in 1873; adjoining *Cedars* it was well away from the river, but on flatter ground. Especially in the first few years of cultivation, exceptional crops were obtained from these low hills. In 1874 the *Mackay Mercury* described *Cedars* cane as the

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49. At a conservative estimate at least thirty Europeans were drowned while attempting to cross the Pioneer river before 1877 when the bridge was completed. Included amongst those drowned were several prominent early settlers: Charles Walker of *Dumbleton* plantation; John Paget (whose brothers later built *Nindaroo* plantation); and Louis Ross, a partner in Balnagowan run from 1862. *QSA* JUS/N 1859-1882 (Inquest Index); *MM* 19 April, 17 May, 24 May, 12 July, 12 October, 8 December 1873, 12 June 1875; *MM Jubilee 1912*, 15.

50. *Qlder* 7 July 1877. Photos of the construction of the bridge are held in the Photographic Collection, History Department, *JCUNQ*: Mackay Photos 17 February 1977, nos. 22-7.

finest in the district, and attributed its quality to the rich scrub soil. In the same year Mackay's inhabitants were amazed by a report of cane growing twenty feet high on newly established *Richmond* plantation, across the road from *Cedars*.<sup>51</sup>

Two more plantation mills were built on the south side of the river in 1873 and 1874, the last mills constructed in the district until 1881. In 1873 *Balmoral* was begun within the boundary of the town of Mackay, in the Parish of Howard, adjoining *Meadowlands*. The following year, T.H. Fitzgerald in partnership with A.T. Ball, established *Te Kowai* plantation. Prior to *Te Kowai* Fitzgerald had concentrated his efforts on *Alexandra* (in partnership with J.E. Davidson), on his parliamentary career 1868 to 1869, and on *Meadowlands*. Fitzgerald had owned the *Meadowlands* land since 1869; he built the mill in partnership with E.B. Kennedy and C.J. King in 1870.<sup>52</sup> He had controlled the *Te Kowai* land since 1865, waiting his chance to develop it. When the *Te Kowai* mill was completed in 1874 it was second in size only to *River*. It had the capacity to produce over 1,000 tons of sugar a year and also housed a distillery. Fitzgerald returned to parliament as the member for Bowen (the electorate which included Mackay) from 1873 to 1875, and must have left most of the day-to-day organisation of *Te Kowai* to his partner and to his mill manager.<sup>53</sup>

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51. *MM* 23 May, 13 September 1874; refer to Thesis Appendix Three.

52. Kerr, *Sugar Mills*, 4; *MM* 6 August 1870.

53. *MM* 17 July 1878; Kerr, *Sugar Mills*, 8; *MM* 4 September 1875, 26 August 1876.

3.D. Rust: 1875 - 1876

Almost 5,000 acres of cane were under cultivation in the district in 1875, and seventeen major mills were ready to crush. During the early months of the year the rainfall had been more than twice the average,<sup>54</sup> and the planters and small farmers were looking forward to a good crop. In the middle of 1875 a disease, commonly named rust, began to appear on the canes. The Uredineau, or rusts, are among the most widespread and destructive of the world's parasitic fungi. Common in cereals, grasses and bamboos, they are more usually associated in Australia with wheat.<sup>55</sup> Many of their characteristics are conspicuous to the naked eye. The first symptoms the cane growers in 1875 noticed were leaves turning yellow; and in cross-section the canes showed red streaks, which over two to three weeks worked their way down to the roots, causing the whole plant to wither and die. Insect parasites on the roots and fungoid growths on the leaves sometimes accompanied the other symptoms. Different cane varieties were affected in various ways. At least eighteen<sup>56</sup> cane varieties were growing at Mackay in 1876 and only two, Small Ribbon and Bourbon were badly affected, but unfortunately these varieties were a large part of the crop under cultivation.

Writing about the effect of rust throughout Queensland's sugar regions, G.C. Bolton noted that it seems to have been least marked at Mackay; and that only one major planter, Fitzgerald, had been bankrupted by the poor cane harvests that followed. Other writers, such as Dorothy Jones, have followed Bolton's lead.<sup>57</sup> While it is true that many cane growers in other districts were worse afflicted, Bolton underestimated the effect of rust on the Mackay district. A decade after the calamity the *Mackay Mercury* described the effect of

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54. Table Three; *Rainfall in Queensland*, 38-9.

55. *The Sugar Cane*, v. 18, 1 July 1886, 385; D. McAlpine, *The Rusts of Australia: their structure, nature, and classification* (Melbourne, 1906); G.B. Cummins, *The Rust Fungi of Cereals, Grasses and Bamboos* (Berlin, 1971).

56. *MM* 8 July 1876.

57. Bolton, *Thousand Miles Away*, 77; Jones, *Hurricane Lamps*, 102.

the disease more accurately:

It must be borne in mind that the district, up to that time, was standing on one leg, and when that leg became paralysed the consequences can be better imagined than described. 58

The effects were twofold: there were significant long term changes in the ownership of plantations and in the finances that backed them; and thereafter cane growers took a more scientific approach to their farming techniques and the cane varieties which they used.

Of the plantation owners, six are known to have become insolvent directly after the rust outbreak: T.H. Fitzgerald, A.T. Ball, Donald Macdonald, and the three Robinson brothers.<sup>59</sup> Fitzgerald because he expanded too fast, Ball because his fortune was tied to Fitzgerald, and the Robinsons because their *Lorne* plantation was too small to have been viable. In each of the two years after the rust first appeared, 1875 and 1876, sugar production was half what it had been in 1874. Growers were busy re-planting their fields with hardier cane varieties and had little cane to send through the mills. Consequently town business suffered in proportion to the loss of the cane growers. For the itinerant workers of the district the northern goldfields held greater allure than Mackay, and many of the town's houses were left vacant. The Mackay correspondent for the *Queenslander*, writing in February 1876 lamented that:

we sadly want some fresh industry to put a little life into Mackay, which is fast becoming a regular sleepy hollow. 60

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58. *MM* 1 May 1886.

59. *MM* 2 November 1872, 29 January, 26 August, 23 September 1876; *ADB 1851-1890*, v.4, 79. Donald Macdonald was a partner in *Inverness*. J.W. Cran, manager of *Foulden* plantation also became insolvent. *MM* 17 February 1876. Charles Fitzsimmons of *Nebia* was £8,000 in debt when he died in February 1876. *QSA CPS* 10B/G1, Goodall to IA, 11 February 1876.

60. *Qlder* 1 January 1876.



Table Four:

## Modification of Plantation Ownership at Mackay

1874 to 1877

Chron. order of estab.	Year of first crush	Plantation	1874 Owners	1877 Owners	tons of sugar prod.
1.	1867	<i>PIONEER</i>	J. Spiller	AJS Bank	750
2.	1868	<i>ALEXANDRA</i>	J.E. Davidson T.H. Fitzgerald	J.E. Davidson	570
3.	1869	<i>PLEYSTOWE</i>	A. Hewitt C.E. Romilly	(no change)	400
4.	1870	<i>CASSADA</i>	J. Donaldson R. Donaldson P.F. Smyth,	(no change)	150
5.	1870	<i>MEADOWLANDS</i>	T.H. Fitz- gerald	AJS Bank	700
6.	1871	<i>BRANSCOMBE</i>	G.N. Marten E.M. Long	G.M.H. King	400
7.	1872	<i>BARRIE</i>	D. Jack & Sons	Sloan & Co.	250
8.	1872	<i>LORNE</i>	H.J. Robinson F.R. Roninson A.V. Robinson	Sloan & Co.	NIL
9.	1872	<i>MICLERE</i>	M. Carroll J. Avery	(no change)	250
10.	1872	<i>NEBIA</i>	C. Fitzsimmons Gausen	Sloan & Co.	300
11.	1872	<i>FOULDEN</i>	F.T. Amhurst Pocklington	(no change)	500
12.	1873	<i>CEDARS</i>	M.H. Black H.B. Black	Sloan & Co.	300
13.	1873	<i>DUMBLETON</i>	A.H. Lloyd C. Walker	Sloan & Co.	300
14.	1873	<i>INVERNESS</i>	Macdonald bros. J.W. Stuart A.T. Ball (?)	G. Raff & Co.	160
15.	1873	<i>RIVER</i>	Long & Co.	AJS Bank	800
16.	1873	<i>BALMORAL</i>	W.H. Hyne G.F. Bridgeman	(no change)	350
17.	1874	<i>TE KOWAI</i>	T.H. Fitzgerald A.T. Ball	Sloan & Co.	1050
18.	1874	<i>RICHMOND</i>	A. Cumming H. McCready	A. Cumming	?

SOURCES FOR TABLE FOUR:

Thesis Appendix Three; *MM* 19 December 1877; *Qlder* 5 January 1878.

The 1877 tonnage figures indicated here add up to 7,230, leaving 413 tons of the official 1877 figure unaccounted for. This is because they are December figures and not the total 1877 figures. The missing *Richmond* figure was probably less than 100 tons.

Map Five : The Mackay district, 1877

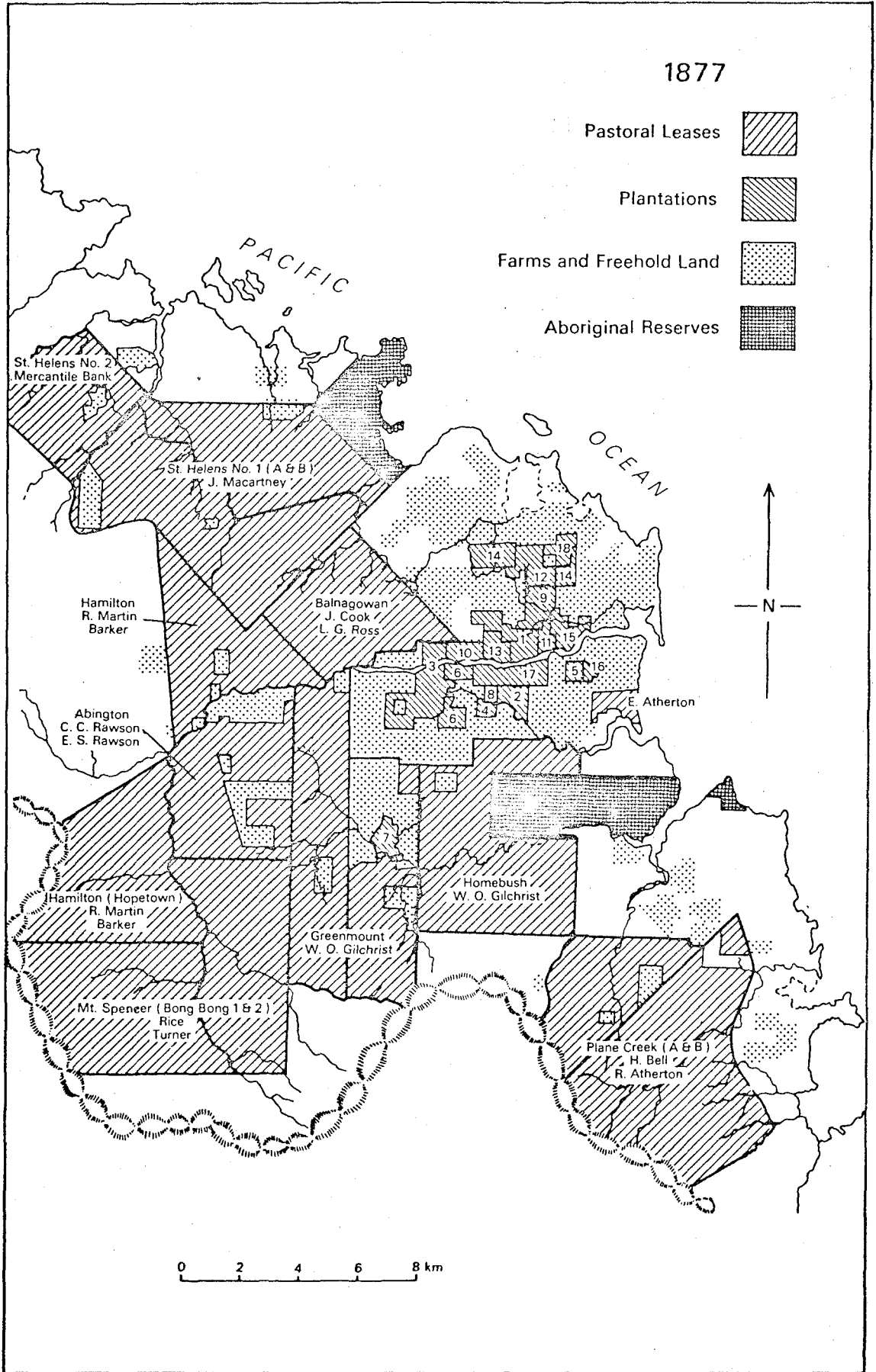


Table Four in this chapter depicts the changes in ownership of Mackay plantations between 1874 and 1877. On the left of the Table are listed Mackay's plantations in 1874, the year before the rust attack, in order of establishment, with the year each mill first crushed cane. Under the name of each plantation is a list of its owners in 1874, all of whom have at least one partner resident on the plantation. The right hand column represents the situation in 1877. By 1877 thirteen of the eighteen plantations operating in 1874 had experienced some change in ownership: ten of the plantations were controlled by banks or financiers; two had experienced a modification in the resident partnership that owned the plantation; and one had a new resident owner.

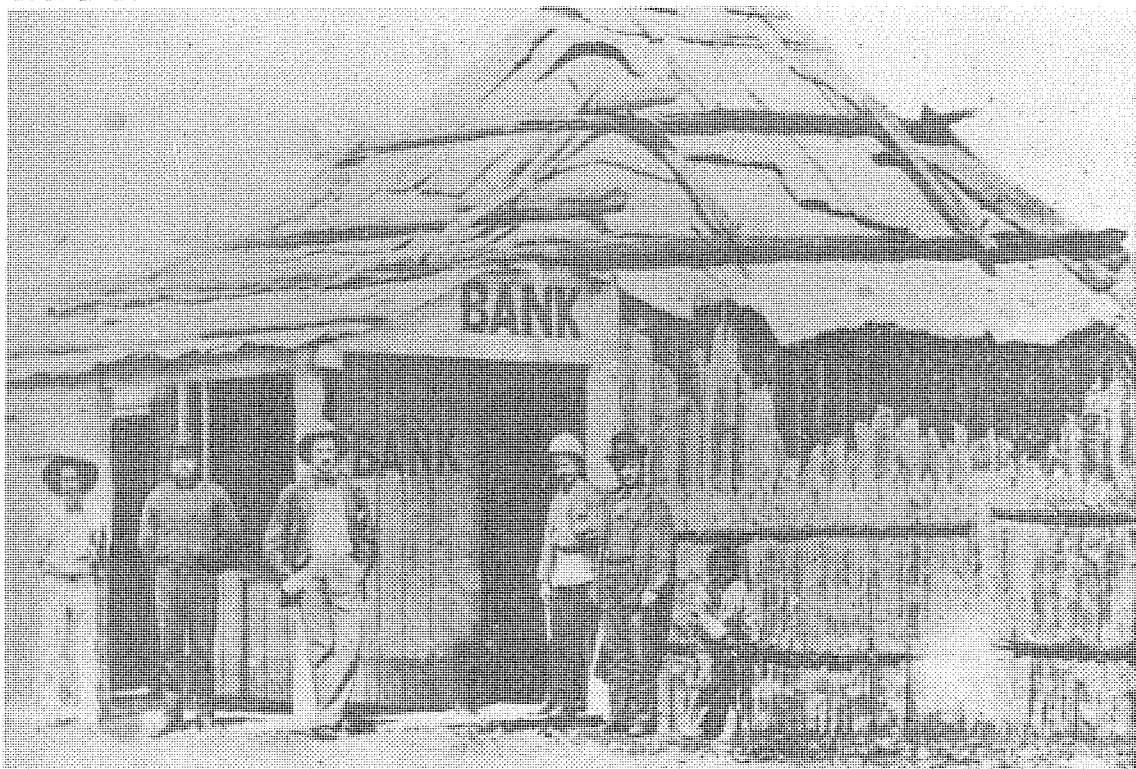
Southern financiers had dislodged the resident owners in ten out of eighteen cases. The planters had borrowed money to establish their mills, and their finances were too precariously balanced to stand even a mild set back. William Sloan & Co. had complete control over *Te Kowai* and *Lorne* as Fitzgerald and the Robinsons were deeply indebted to them. Fitzgerald owed £7,000 to £8,000 to his creditors in January 1876.<sup>61</sup> Sloan & Co. had also lent money to David Jack of *Barrie* plantation, and to M.H. and H.B. Black of the *Cedars*; for some years they controlled these plantations as well. *Nebia* was purchased by Sloan & Co., in 1877 after the death of Charles Fitzsimmons, its resident partner. Lloyd and Walker of *Dumbleton* had been lent money by Sloan & Co. in 1872 when they were establishing their mill, and like Fitzgerald, lost control to Sloan in 1875.<sup>62</sup> Other financiers also held mortgages over Mackay plantations. After Sloan & Co., the Australian Joint Stock Bank was the major mortgagor at Mackay in 1870s. By 1877 this bank had foreclosed on Fitzgerald at *Meadowlands* and on E.M. Long & Co. the owners of *River*, and had temporary control of *Pioneer*. Similarly, George Raff & Co., Brisbane

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61. *Ibid.*

62. The records of William Sloan & Co.'s Mackay operations 1875-7 were found in a city building in Mackay in 1974. Copies are held by Sugar Research Institute, Mackay, and in the Library Archives, JCUNQ.  
MM 21 March 1974.

## PLATE 14

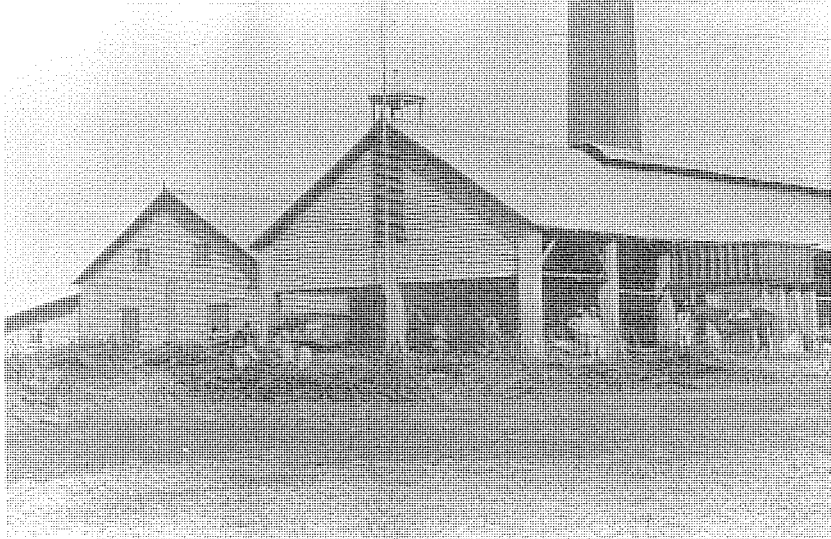


a. The Australian Joint Stock bank, Mackay, 1866. (Photo: *JCUNQ: History*)



b. The Australian Joint Stock bank, Mackay, constructed in 1881 (now the Commonwealth bank). (Photo: *JCUNQ: History*)

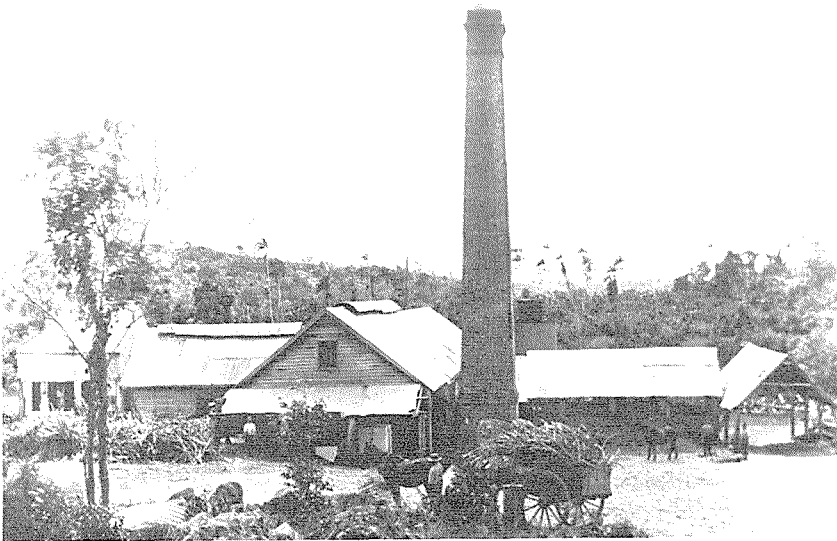
PLATE 15



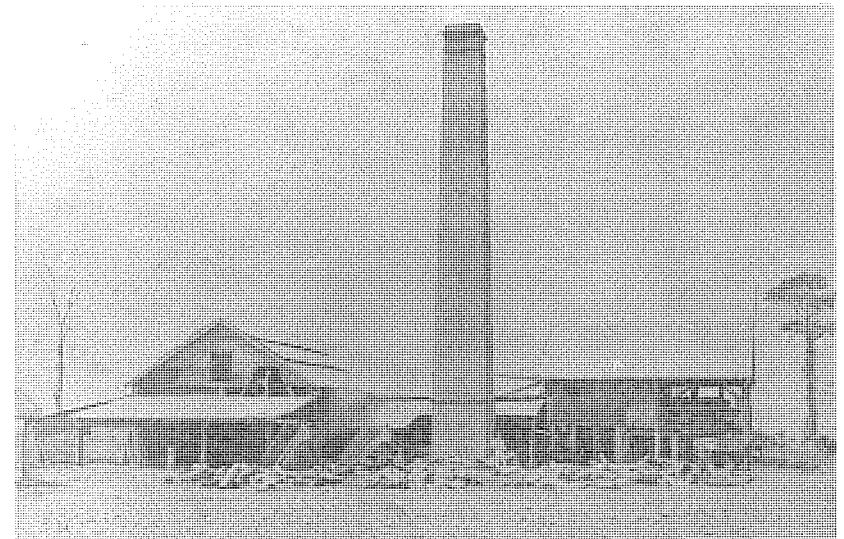
a. *Foulden* mill (1872-87) (Photo: JCUNQ: History)



b. *Melere* mill (1872-83) (Photo: JCUNQ: History)



c. *Richmond* mill (1881-95) (Photo: JCUNQ: History)



d. *Nebia* mill (1872-86) (Photo: JCUNQ: History)

merchants, had foreclosed on the Macdonald brothers of *Inverness*.<sup>63</sup>

For some planters the loss was permanent. Others, for instance David Jack at *Barrie* and M.H. Black at the *Cedars*, were eventually able to discharge their indebtedness. Nevertheless, the havoc caused by rust was more significant than Bolton realized. The 1875-6 rust outbreak led to a centralizing in the ownership of Mackay's plantations, and a phase of amalgamations which continued over the next decade. The initial phase of plantation development, controlled by resident owners, was passing. By December 1876 the district had recovered and high prices encouraged a quickening confidence amongst investors. Another lesson learnt from rust was that too little attention had been paid to cultivation techniques.<sup>64</sup> Much of the problem came from cane varieties unsuited to the climate and local conditions, the habit of planting cane in oblique holes rather than furrows (thus inhibiting root growth and water-logging the base of the plant), and lack of care in maintaining soil fertility. All in all, a salutary lesson had been learnt.

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63. *MM* 31 October 1877; *Qlder* 11 August 1877; Waterson, *Queensland Parliament*, 155.

64. The best contemporary report on the rust outbreak was made by Professor Liversidge, of the University of Sydney, based on his investigations at Maryborough.  
*Qlder* 13, 20, 27 May, 3, 10 June 1876;  
*MM* 1 July 1876.

#### 4. Local Government and transport systems

In the 1860s numerous Trusts were established to administer Works Department funds allocated for roads in the Mackay district. Then in 1869 the Mackay township was proclaimed a municipality, beginning a more rational approach to local government and the construction of roads and bridges. In 1871 and 1872 separate Roads Boards were established to serve the settlers on each side of the river. The two Boards, combined in 1872,<sup>65</sup> began in earnest to lobby for a bridge across the Pioneer, which was completed in 1877. In 1879 the Queensland government passed the *Divisional Board Act*; one of the seventy-four divisions of the colony was the Pioneer Division, covering all of the coastal land from the O'Connell river south to Cape Palmerston, inland to the ranges, exclusive of Mackay Municipality. The Pioneer Divisional Board met for the first time in March 1880, with the Mackay Municipality, controlling local government in the Pioneer valley forward to the present day.

As settlement advanced, communications improved. Roads were established along both sides of the river in its lower reaches, servicing the plantations along the banks. This river bank road continued along the south bank farther up the valley to The Hollow and Hamilton runs. Another road branched to the south at Walkerston, passing through Eton and west across the range to Nebo and beyond. On the north bank of the river, a road wound through the hills at *Miclere* and north past Jolimount and St Helens stations. One road came more directly across a river ford at *Foulden*, through the small town of Hill End (Glenella) and on to the *Cedars*, *Inverness* and *Richmond*. On the south of the river the roads went slightly more inland via Walkerston and Eton, until after Baker's and Sandy creeks were bridged in the 1880s. All through the area a network of minor roads and tracks linked the sugar properties, and as a field of cane is no great im-

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65. The Roads Board was abolished in 1876, control passing to the Engineer of Roads, Northern Division. For a more detailed account of local government in the Pioneer valley refer to John Kerr's *Pioneer Pageant: a history of the Pioneer Shire*, particularly to Chapter Eight: Local Control.



pediment to a traveller on foot or on a horse, much of any journey could be across country. The roads were for the drays that hauled the sugar packages to the port of Mackay, and supplies back to the plantations and further west to the cattle properties. The only useful navigable waterway in the area was the Pioneer, which in its lower reaches was used for a limited amount of transport. Regular ferry services took passengers and goods across and down the river. Lack of bridges over the river and the creeks was a difficult problem when transporting the tons of machinery contained in even the smallest mill; accessibility to the port limited the spread of the plantations.

The transport of goods was limited to roads and the river until the arrival of steam railways. In the form of tramways on the plantations, these began to appear in the early 1880s. The older plantations had tramways added to them. Spiller built a horse-drawn tramway at *Pioneer* in 1879; M.H. Black did the same at the *Cedars* in 1880. The first tramway locomotive used at Mackay was built at a local foundry in May 1880, for Spiller's *Pioneer* plantation. Then throughout the 1880s other planters followed his lead. The government railway, initially from Mackay to Eton with a branch line up the valley to Mirani was not completed until 1885.<sup>66</sup>

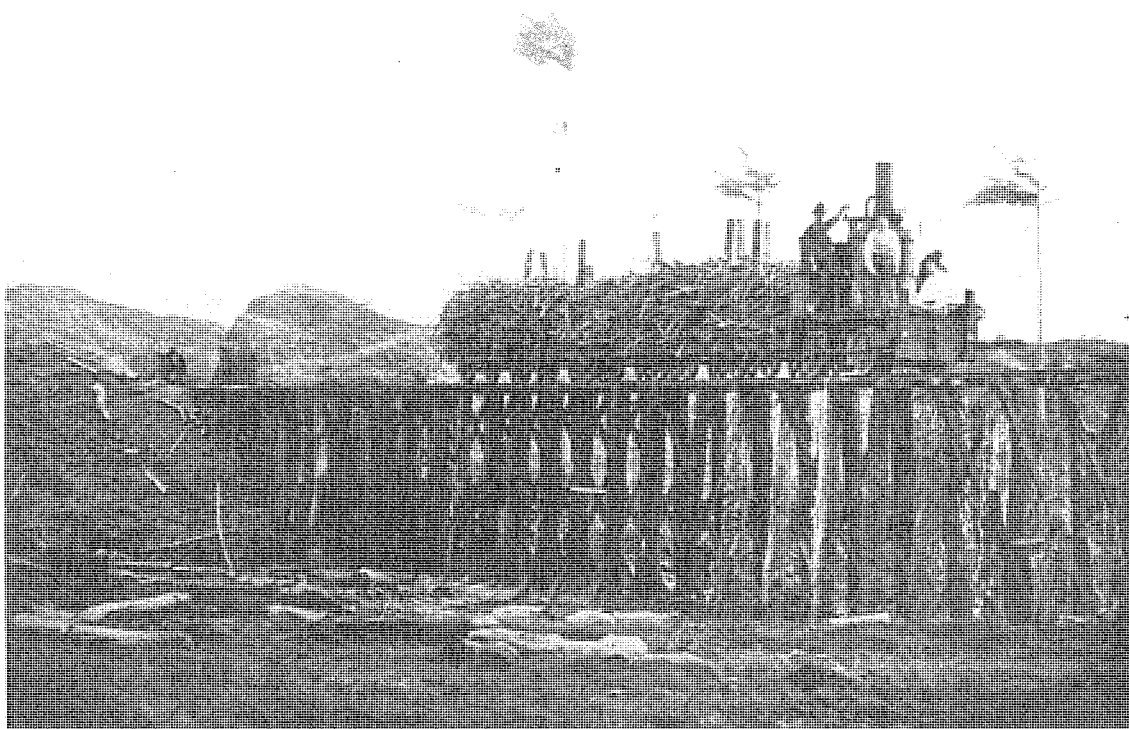
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66. Kerr, *Pioneer Pageant*, 71, 76-7, 90-8, 100; *Qlder* 15 June 1880; *MM* 1 September 1880, 3 August 1881.

## PLATE 16



a. John Spiller and friends with *Pioneer's* first locomotive, built by Robertson's Foundry, Mackay, May 1880. (Photo: *JCUNQ: History*)



b. John Spiller's newly completed *River* tramway in 1880, and "Emma Ruth", built by John Fowler & Co., Leeds. (Photo: *JCUNQ: History*)

## PLATE 17



a. Aborigines at Mackay in the 1870s. (Photo: *JCUNQ*: History)



b. Mackay Town Council in 1870. (Photo: *JCUNQ*: History)

5. Southern investors and the boom: 1881 - 1883

No new mills were established at the end of the 1870s, although cane cultivation continued to increase fairly evenly. Then from 1881 until 1883 the increase in mill numbers and in acres of cane was dramatic: from fifteen mills in 1880 to twenty-six mills in 1883, with the cane land under cultivation and the amount of sugar produced doubling at the same time.

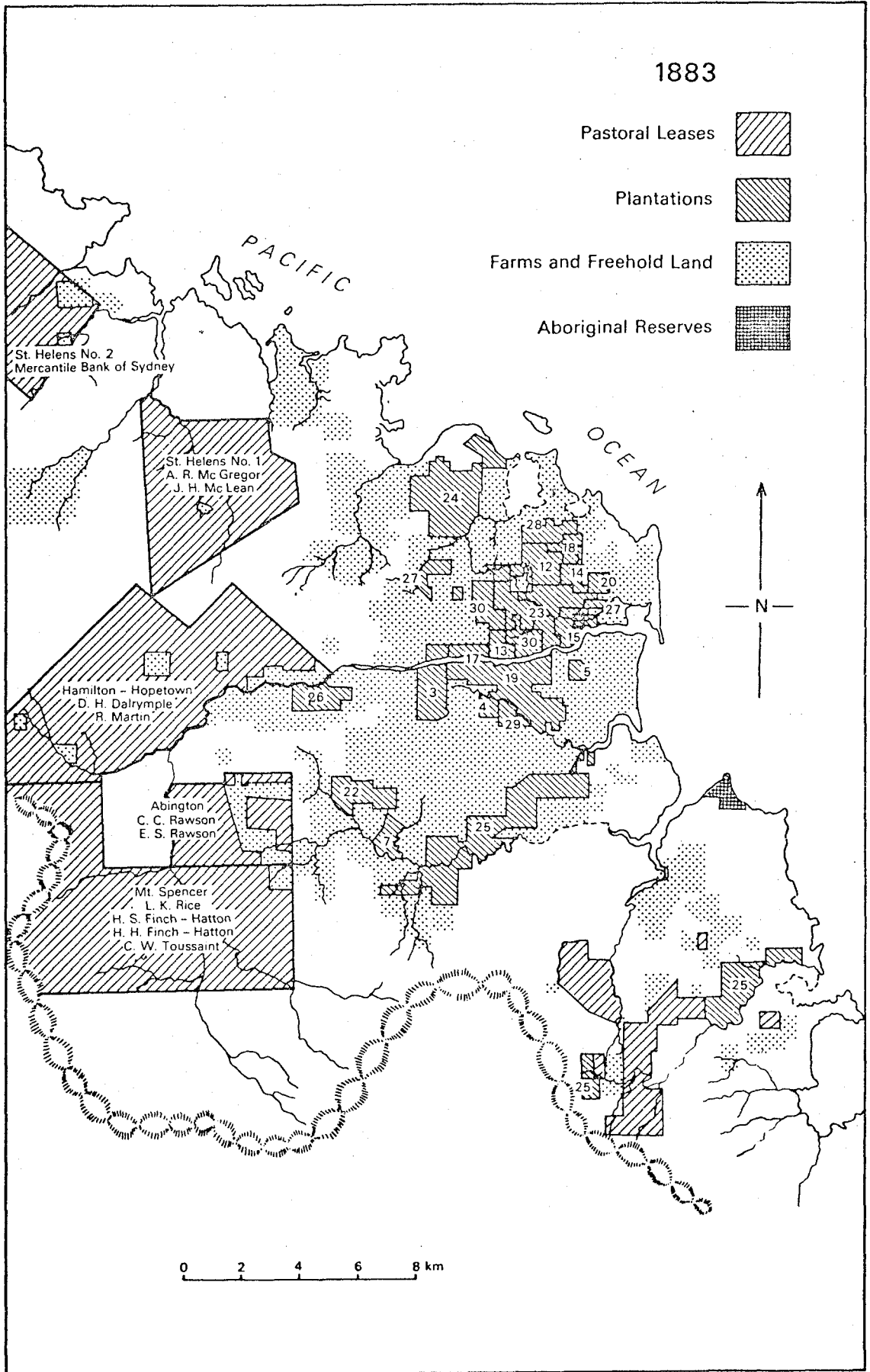
The big news in the district was the establishment of *Palms* and *Homebush*. *Palms* was built by the Melbourne-Mackay Sugar Company Ltd.<sup>67</sup> in 1881. J.E. Davidson (*Alexandra*) combined his resources with R.J. Jeffray representing Sloan & Co. (*Te Kowai* and *Nebia*), and G.M.H. King (*Branscombe*). In partnership with J.S. Hill and E.W. Ehlers, London financiers and sugar agents, they floated the Melbourne-Mackay Sugar Company, with a capital of £500,000 to construct *Palms*, and to run the other plantations. Davidson assumed the role of managing director on a yearly salary of £1,500, plus his share of the profits. *Homebush* was built in 1883 by the Victorian Sugar Company, a subsidiary of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company (CSR).<sup>68</sup> The company bought up over 16,000 acres of land in the Parishes of Chelona, Homebush, Eton and Hector, 10,000 of which, in one chain of holdings between Sandy and Baker's creeks, became *Homebush* plantation. CSR had for some years been buying Mackay's sugar crops for this refineries, but they opted for direct involvement when they erected *Homebush*, the district's largest mill. With its 5,000 ton capacity *Homebush* out-classed *Palms*

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67. Melbourne-Mackay Queensland Sugar Company Limited: Memorandum of Association, 31 March 1880; Melbourne-Mackay Sugar Company Limited:- Memorandum of Association, 31 March 1882. The legal documents for the company are held in the Blake and Riggall Collection, Melbourne University Business Archives (MUBA).

68. The complete records of Homebush mill are contained in Deposit 142 (C.S.R. Ltd.), Archives, Research School of Social Sciences, The Australian National University. For descriptions of *Homebush's* initial land holdings at Mackay, refer to Deposit 142/3182, Schedule of Deeds, 2 April 1887, 23 July 1888. CSR had intended to establish two mills, one at Homebush and one on Sarina inlet, but only *Homebush* was built.

Map Six : The Mackay district, 1883



by 3,000 tons, and made the older mills look as primitive as had Davidons's *Alexandra* in comparison to Spiller and Creese's *Pioneer* a decade and a half before.

With the obvious confidence displayed by CSR and the Melbourne-Mackay Sugar Company, and buoyant sugar prices, southern investors began to pour money into the district: twelve mills (including *Palms* and *Homebush*) were established in quick succession between 1881 and 1883. *Palms* in 1881 was followed in 1882 by *Beaconsfield* and *Conningsby* on the north side of the river, and *Victoria* out near *Barrie* on the Walkerston-Eton road. In 1883, the peak year of the boom, eight mills began operations: *Farleigh*, an amalgamation of the land of *Foulden* and *Miclere*, with a new mill added; *Habana*, between Reliance creek and the coast; *Homebush*; *Marian*, forty kilometres down the valley; *Mt Pleasant*, bordering *River* plantation; *Nindaroo*, just north of *Cedars* and *Richmond*; *Palmyra*, on Baker's creek behind *Alexandra*; and *Ashburton*, built in the hills of *Pioneer* plantation.<sup>69</sup>

In 1870 J.E. Davidson claimed that £50,000 were invested in Mackay's plantations. In 1884 the figure was £2,000,000.<sup>70</sup> The capital used to establish the plantations of the 1860s and early 1870s was from England (brought out by pioneer planters like Davidson and Amhurst), pastoral capital from areas neighbouring Mackay, and local bank finance, particularly from the Australian Joint Stock Bank.<sup>71</sup> Significantly, William Robertson and Henry Brandon were both managers of this bank at Mackay, and were later partners in various plantation ventures.

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69. For further details about each of these mills refer to Graph Two and to thesis Appendix Three.

70. MM 20 August 1870, 21 June 1884.

71. MM 13 September 1922 (R. "Dolly" Dunne); G. Blainey, *Gold and Paper: a history of The National Bank of Australasia Limited* (Melbourne, 1958), 155-6; S.J. Butlin, *Australia and New Zealand Bank: The Bank of Australasia and the Union Bank of Australia Limited 1818-1951* (London, 1961), 121, 124, 133-4, 178, 185.

Northern settlement occurred in the 1860s at a time when capital was readily available for pastoral investment, as a result of the 1850s gold rushes. Some of this capital flowed directly on to the 1870s plantations. Tables One and Two, illustrating the presence of pastoral capital in the establishment of many of the plantations is evidence of this. In the early 1870s Australian banks which had accumulated funds in London, were using them to invest in Australia, to take advantage of attractive interest rates. As well, in the 1870s and 1880s many Anglo-Australian business houses were lending English capital for use in a wide range of investments in Australian pastoral and agricultural industries. By 1880-4 investment in the sugar industry had almost out-stripped pastoral investment. In 1884 over £6,000,000 were invested in the Queensland sugar industry, one-third of this amount at Mackay.<sup>72</sup>

Melbourne capital played a key role in the expansion of the Mackay sugar industry. It was prominent in relation to the successful plantations, and was also behind other mills, mooted but never actually established.<sup>73</sup> The Melbourne investors who sought to further their fortunes at Mackay were not in the first rank of that city's capitalists. They were dwarfed by financial giants like James Munroe, W.L. Ballieu, and Theodore and Benjamin Fink: nevertheless they were not mere small-time punters. In the frenzy of Melbourne's 1880s business boom, R.J. Jeffray of Sloan & Co. built 'The Exchange' in Collins street, where the two major Stock Exchanges did their trading from 1881 until 1889, and where William Sloan & Co. had their offices.<sup>74</sup> Sloan & Co. had early pastoral connections throughout Victoria and New South Wales. Their financial interest in Mackay dates from 1872 when they began to lend money to planters. By 1873-4 they had purchased a wharf, arranged for a ship to trade regularly between Melbourne and

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72. A.R. Hall, *The Stock Exchange of Melbourne and the Victorian Economy 1852-1900* (Canberra, 1968), 86; G. Serle, *The Rush to be Rich: a history of the colony of Victoria 1883-1889* (Melbourne, 1874), 49; MM 21 June 1884; A.R. Hall, *The London Capital Market and Australia 1870-1914* (Canberra, 1963).

73. Refer to thesis Appendix Three and Table Three of Chapter Five for details about these mills.

74. M. Cannon, *The Land Boomers* (Melbourne, 1967), 48; Hall, *Stock Exchange*, 82 (plate 2); G. Davison, *The Rise and Fall of Marvellous Melbourne* (Melbourne, 1978), 25-6.



Mackay, were agents for vessels recruiting Melanesian labourers for the plantations, and were agents for ten of the district's plantations.<sup>75</sup> Rust gave Sloan & Co. the windfall of hapless insolvent planters, and the booming sugar prices of late 1879 and early 1880, when sugar processed by vacuum pans fetched £42 a ton in Melbourne,<sup>76</sup> was enough to prompt the formation of the Melbourne-Mackay Sugar Company and the building of their *Palms* mill. Sloan & Co. continued to grow. In 1885 it became the Union Mortgage & Agency Co., which, after absorbing some other smaller companies, became Australian Estates Ltd.: this survived until taken over by CSR in the 1970s.

The first plantations established in the 1860s required only small capital investments, coupled with a resilient pioneering spirit on the part of the local plantation owners. By the 1880s large amounts of money, provided by southern and overseas capitalists, were invested in Mackay's plantations, and the owners and managers needed business acumen, not pioneering zeal. The economy of the Mackay district was tied to capitalist enterprises elsewhere, and to fluctuating world sugar prices. Mackay's resident planters wielded economic, social and economic power within their local domain, but they were insignificant forces on a wider plane. This becomes clear in relation to changing sugar technology and the wider economic and political decisions which forced change on the Queensland sugar industry in the late nineteenth century. Mackay was inescapably bound to changing circumstances beyond local control.

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75. *MM* 27 September 1873, 20 June, 18 July, 25 July, 19 September 1874; *JCUNQ*: Sloan & Co. Records, 1875-7

76. *MM* 14 February 1880.



## 6. Plantation society

European settlement of North Queensland created a fascinating and unique society in the tropics. Today in the coastal sugar towns Europeans of Anglo, Teutonic, Scandinavian and Latin origin mix with the Aboriginal people, Torres Strait<sup>77</sup> and Pacific Islanders, and a variety of Asian peoples. Much of this racial and ethnic diversity is the result of migrations dating from the plantation era outlined in the first half of this chapter. Europeans established a sugar mono-culture, modelled on the plantation mode of production used in overseas cane growing areas. From the 1860s to the 1880s cane growing and sugar manufacture were carried out as a unit; a production method which required a large, cheap and tractable labour force. Many nineteenth century Europeans were convinced that they would degenerate if they laboured hard in the tropical heat and humidity; they considered that such labour was best provided by coloured races, whom they deemed intellectually inferior but physically better adapted for the task.<sup>78</sup>

The owners of the pastoral runs and plantations formed a powerful male clique; the ruling class of the European frontier in the Pioneer valley. Their capitalist ventures shaped the early decades of European settlement in the region. Pastoralists and planters owned the major blocks of property in the valley; they directed commodity production, and they controlled the law, politics and society in the valley. Their way of life has often been compared to that existing in the southern United States of America before the Civil War. Kay Saunders in her Doctoral thesis compared the lives of the Melanesian

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77. Today a large number of Torres Strait Islanders live on the Queensland mainland; this is largely a post World War Two phenomenon.

78. H.L. Roth, 'The influence of climate and soil on the development of the Anglo-Australian race.', *Victorian Review*, v. 2 (1880), 840-49; R. Cilento and C. Lack (eds.), *Triumph in the Tropics: an historical sketch of Queensland* (Brisbane, 1959); P.P. Courtenay, 'The white man and the Australian tropics; a review of some opinions and prejudices of the pre-war years' in B.J. Dalton (ed.), *Lectures on North Queensland History: second series* (Townsville, 1975), 57-66.

indentured labourers on Queensland's plantations with America's slave plantations.<sup>79</sup> In G.C. Bolton's assessment plantation life in Queensland was "unlike the social pattern elsewhere in Australia" and in the tradition of planter paternalism found in other British colonies.<sup>80</sup> Allusions are often made to the planter's spacious homes and gentlemanly way of life, as if they had intended to establish rural manorial dynasties served by coloured labour. Their support for the separation movement which sought to make North Queensland a separate colony from Queensland south of the tropic, is usually seen in this light.<sup>81</sup>

Historians have begun to delve into class analysis and the relationship between class and power in Australian society.<sup>82</sup> Some of the best writing on the subject has come from R.W. Connell and T.H. Irving in their historical arguments concerning the development of a ruling class in Australia.<sup>83</sup> Connell and Irving define capitalism's ruling class as being based on the private ownership of productive resources, including farming, manufacturing, mining and retailing: the ruling

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79. Saunders, *Uncertain Bondage*.

80. Bolton, *Thousand Miles Away*, 87-9.

81. R.G. Neale, 'The New State Movement in Queensland: an interpretation', *HS*, v.15:4 (1951), 210; I.N. Moles, *A Brief History of the Separatist Movements in North Queensland* (B.A. Hons. penultimate thesis, University of Queensland, 1955), 66-71; C. Doran *Separatism in Townsville, 1884-1894* (B.Ed.-B.A. Hons. thesis, James Cook University of North Queensland, 1978), and 'Separation movements in North Queensland in the nineteenth century', in B.J. Dalton (ed.), *Lectures on North Queensland History: third series* (Townsville, 1979), 85-99.

82. R. Gollan, *Radical and Working Class Politics: a study of eastern Australia, 1850-1910* (Melbourne, 1960); R.A. Wild, *Bradstow: a study of status, class and power in a small Australian town* (Sydney, 1974); J. Rickard, *Class and Politics: New South Wales and the early Commonwealth 1890-1910* (Canberra, 1976).

83. T.H. Irving, '1850-70', in F.K. Crowley (ed.), *A New History of Australia* (Melbourne, 1974); R.W. Connell, 'Logic and politics in theories of class', *ANZJS*, v. 13 (1977), 203-11; and *Ruling Class, Ruling Culture: studies of conflict, power and hegemony in Australian life* (G.B., 1977); R.W. Connell and T.H. Irving, *Class Structure in Australian History: documents, narrative and argument* (Melbourne, 1980).

class' power over the economy, politics and society of a region resulting from their control over property and commodity production. Unfortunately, it is beyond the scope of this thesis, an analysis of Mackay's Melanesian society, to explore European society except where it is relevant to the Melanesians. Nevertheless there were enormous changes in class relations and in the style of property ownership and sugar production in the Pioneer valley between 1860s and the 1900s; changes affecting the attitudes of Europeans to the Melanesians. A brief outline of the dynamics of European society is thus essential to any discussion of Melanesian society in the valley.

The owners of Mackay's plantations, related pastoral properties, and auxiliary enterprises had a monopolist hold over the land and economy, at least until the mid-1880s. The remainder of this section of the chapter will examine a series of questions about the ruling class:

What were the class and geographic origins of the leading propertied families?

What was their relationship to formalised power: in the form of the British, colonial and local government; and the administration of the legal system?

What was the class, racial and sexual hierarchy in the Pioneer valley in the nineteenth century?

Without extensive research in British county and church archives, and in other British colonies, it is difficult to gauge the exact pedigrees of Mackay's plantation owners. While brief references to their origins can be found quite easily in church marriage registers, obituaries and biographical listings, such references can be misleading. Professional status is not always easy to interpret: an English "farmer" could own the local manor house or come from more humble origins; a clerical position could just as easily be a sinecure as an actual position. Nevertheless, certain common ground emerges. The plantation owners are male, and can be classified into resident and non-resident groups. Sixty-five family names of owners, partners or share-holders in Mackay's plantations are contained in Appendix Three of this thesis; just over half of these are known to have resided for

some period on their plantations.

Neither working class nor aristocracy, the resident owners were male, mainly British born and predominantly from middle class landed, merchant and industrial backgrounds in the British Isles. Table Five\* lists seventeen plantation owners. Their fathers' professions are given variously as landowners, farmers, clergymen, civil servants or officers in the armed forces, merchants and manufacturers. Although a few came from Scotland and Ireland, most were from southern and midland English counties and appear to have stronger urban than rural connections. Some were university educated and most had been to good private schools; J.E. Davidson of *Alexandra* and F.T. Amhurst of *Foulden* were Oxford graduates.<sup>84</sup> While none of the resident owners was a member of the peerage, several were extremely well-connected and had access to the British parliament and bureaucracy. For example, Amhurst's father was High Sheriff of Norfolk, and M.H. Black of the *Cedars* had useful family connections in London.<sup>85</sup>

Not all of the plantation owners came direct from Britain or via one of the other Australian colonies. As the plantations developed, a considerable number of their owners, mill managers, engineers and sugar boilers came to Mackay from overseas sugar producing areas. John Spiller, coming from Surabaya in Java, was the first Mackay planter to have prior experience in growing and milling sugar cane. In the 1870s others came from overseas sugar areas: the Macdonald brothers of *Inverness*, were originally from Trinidad in Cuba, and Andrew Cumming and Hugh McCready of *Richmond* and *Palmyra* were from St Vincent and St Kitts respectively. Cumming had owned a plantation there, and McCready had nineteen years of experience in the West Indian sugar industry. They began *Richmond* with a primitive mill in

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\* Table Five is at the end of the chapter.

84. J. Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses: the members of the University of Oxford, 1715-1886* (Reprinted Liechtenstein, 1968), 21, 343.

85. L.G. Pine (ed.), *Burke's Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Peerage, Baronetage and Knightage* (London, 1956), 53-4; CRM 1a :1 (EMB) and CRM 3 (EMB).

1874, but at the same time both worked as managers of other plantations.<sup>86</sup>

Table Six<sup>87</sup> contains a series of examples of Mackay's connection to overseas sugar producing areas. Owners, managers, engineers, overseers, farmers and even labourers found their way from the West Indies to Mackay. Mauritius provided two of the most competent of Mackay's mill managers, J.L. Duval and D. Dupont. Sugar boilers, engineers, managers and estate owners at Mackay can be traced back to Fiji, Demerara and Java. These connections were maintained to some extent when plantation owners visited other countries, and through exchanges of visits with relations from these areas. Mackay's sugar producers were never isolated from overseas developments. Apart from personal experience and contacts, they read overseas sugar literature, contributed articles themselves,<sup>87</sup> and visited other areas to keep abreast of the rapid changes occurring in the industry.<sup>88</sup> The connections

\* Table Six is at the end of the chapter.

86. Table Six: Examples, 5,6,8 .

The partnership was dissolved in 1877, when McCready began to farm his land on Baker's creek and constructed *Palmyra* mill. Cumming died at the new sugar lands on the Johnstone river in 1882. Thesis Appendix Three: *Richmond* and *Palmyra*; QSA COL/A211, In letter 1791 of 1875, A. Cumming evidence to Inquest, 30 June 1875; *MM* 7 February 1874, 16 March 1881; *MM Jubilee* 1912, 28.

87. Several copies of *The Sugar Cane*, a leading sugar journal from the 1880s have survived at Mackay. The *Mackay Mercury* produced its own sugar journal, *The Sugar Journal and Tropical Cultivator*, from 1883 to 1902. This journal was distributed locally and overseas, and received correspondence from other sugar areas. Edmund Denman of "Etowrie" estate corresponded with a sugar journal in Demerara. Henry Ling Roth lived at Mackay in the 1870s and 1880s and was the district's most prolific writer. He contributed scientific papers to *The Sugar Cane* and produced numerous publications pertaining to sugar cane.

Interview with Mr Ned Denman, Richmond, 6 May 1979: H.L. Roth, *A Guide to the Literature of Sugar: a book of references for chemists, botanists, librarians, manufacturers, and planters...* (London, 1890), and 'On the animal parasites of the sugar cane', *Sugar Cane*, v. 17 (1885), 183-90 and v. 18 (1885), 85-8.

88. Milling techniques used in Queensland during the 1860s and 1870s, were actually several decades behind developments in the Caribbean sugar industry. This incongruity is further discussed in the conclusion to Chapter Five.

between Mackay and Java, the West Indies, Demerara, Mauritius and Fiji are as significant to the history of the industry as the direct ties between the plantations and Britain, the Australian pastoral backgrounds of some of the planters, and the absentee southern investors who dominated plantation finances in the 1880s.

The most practical cane growers and millers at Mackay in the 1870s and 1880s were the men who came via overseas sugar producing areas, but few were complete novices. Some of the sugar plantation owners and managers had received managerial and agricultural training in Europe before arriving in Australia. William Hyne of *Balmoral-Meadowlands* was a graduate of the Royal Agricultural College at Cirencester, England. David Jack of *Barrie* had received formal agricultural training in Scotland.<sup>89</sup> As mentioned earlier in this chapter, many had begun as pastoralists in Australia, though this was no guarantee of their abilities as agriculturalists. Similarly, those trained under European conditions would also have had to adapt to tropical agriculture. Others gained their training as managers and overseers on plantations or estates at Mackay or in other Queensland districts. Only a minority of the plantation owners and managers arrived at Mackay with no prior agricultural or practical Australian frontier experience.

The non-resident plantation owners were also male and British; predominantly middle run investors from London and Melbourne, who wanted profits without having to visit the wilds of tropical Queensland. Charles Fitzsimmons of *Nebia* had a partner who lived in England and never visit Mackay. F.T. Amhurst of *Foulden* had a partner who visited Mackay briefly in the early 1870s but seems never to have returned.<sup>90</sup> In 1881 Amhurst died, his property inherited by his brother William A.T. Amherst; *Foulden* then passed to their uncle Sir John B. Lawes who used the land as part of his *Farleigh* plantation. Lawes

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89. *MM* 2 October 1875, 25 May 1881.

90. *QSA* CPS 10B/G1, Goodall to IA, 11 February 1876; *MM* 1 April 1871; Thesis Appendix Three: *Nebia* and *Foulden*.

never visited Australia.<sup>91</sup> Pastoralists and merchants from Victoria invested in *Marian*, *Victoria* and *Pleystowe* in the 1880s but they seem never to have visited Mackay and certainly never lived there.<sup>92</sup>

The ruling class of frontier Mackay graded itself socially by pedigree, wealth and education. Quite naturally in such a small European enclave it was this same group of landholders who also controlled local European society, politics and the administration of the legal system. This is easily illustrated with three examples. In Table Seven<sup>\*</sup>, of the forty-eight members of the Pioneer Shire Council who served terms during the nineteenth century, fourteen were plantation owners. The majority of the Council's members in the same period were planters, cane estate owners, plantation managers, pastoralists, and major shareholders or officials of the central mills. In Table Eight<sup>\*</sup>, out of forty-two Justices of the Peace resident in the Pioneer region in 1883, forty-one have been identified: twelve owned, had financial interests in, or managed plantations; twelve owned pastoral properties; three were bank managers; three were government officials; and twelve were Mackay businessmen. Table Nine<sup>\*</sup> shows the names and occupations of Mackay's parliamentary representatives over the first forty years of European settlement. During the nineteenth century the parliamentarian was almost always a planter, or in one case a leading pastoralist cum town businessman. The only exceptions were two solicitors elected for short terms, and the proprietor of the *Mackay Mercury*.

Mackay's elite had a wide circle of political contacts in Queensland, the other Australian colonies, and in Britain. Charles Fitzsimmons who established *Nebia* plantation in 1872, from 1868 had an

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\* At the end of the Chapter.

91. MM 16 April 1881, 4 March 1937: *MCCA*: Manuscript information provided by Baroness Alicia-Margaret Rockley, niece of F.T. Amhurst, September 1936. F.T. Amhurst always spelt his surname with a 'u' following an old family spelling. His brother and most other members of the family used 'e'. *Burke's Peerage* (1956), 53-4; Thesis Appendix Three: *Foulden and Farleigh*.
92. *ADB*, v.3, 185-6; v. 5, 102-3; v.5, 316-8; v.6, 46-7; Thesis Appendix Three: *Marian, Victoria and Pleystowe*.

interest in the land on which the mill was built; he was a member of the Queensland Legislative Assembly from 1860 to 1868. George Raff owned *Inverness* plantation from 1877 until about 1883; Raff had been a Queensland parliamentarian over the years 1860 to 1870.<sup>93</sup> Francis R. Murphy, a shareholder in *Pleystowe* from 1882 into the 1890s, was the member for Barcoo from 1885 until 1892. George Fairbairn, another of the 1882 *Pleystowe* shareholders, had previously been a member of the Legislative Assembly of Victoria from 1864 until 1866. Sir James Loromier and William Robertson also had shares in *Pleystowe*; both were long-serving members of the Victorian parliament. Edward W. Knox, the controlling force behind CSR's *Homebush* plantation, was a member of the Legislative Council of New South Wales for fourteen years of the time he had milling interests at Mackay. John Blyth was a shareholder in *Pleystowe* while President of the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce during the 1880s. These politicians and businessmen were able to aid the development of Mackay's plantations and the sale of the sugar crop.<sup>94</sup>

Mackay's planters and the extended ruling clique had no shortage of powerful friends in Britain. William Gladstone, England's long-serving Prime Minister, had two grandsons living at Mackay.<sup>95</sup> One of Gladstone's contemporaries in the House of Commons, William A.T. Amherst, held the West Norfolk seat from 1880 until 1885. In 1881 Amherst inherited his brother's *Foulden* plantation, which he passed to his uncle Sir John B. Lawes, famous English agriculturalist and owner of *Farleigh* plantation.<sup>96</sup> In the late 1870s and early 1880s the Hon. Harold Finch-Hatton was a partner with his brother in Mt

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93. Waterson, *Queensland Parliament*, 57-8, 155; Thesis Appendix Three: Nebia and Inverness.
94. *ADB*, v. 5, 316-8; Waterson, *Queensland Parliament*, 133; *ADB*, v. 4, 147-8; v. 5, 102-3; v.6, 46-7; Thesis Appendix Three: Pleystowe; *ADB*, v.5, 38-9; Thesis Appendix Three: Homebush; *ADB*, v. 3, 185-6.
95. *MM Jubilee 1912*, 15; *HTMR* 15 April 1882; *CRM* 3a :1 (EMB); *JCUNQ* (Delamothe): Cook-Atherton Collection, information contained in notes by Vida A. Cook, circa 1947; interview with Mrs Loraine Gladstone-Belbin, Townsville, 12 June 1980.
96. *Burke's Peerage* (1956), 53-4, 1280; Thesis Appendix Three: Foulden and Farleigh.



Spencer station; both of their names appear on the 1883 list of Justices of the Peace (Table Eight). Harold Finch-Hatton returned to England in 1883 and stood unsuccessfully for the House of Commons in 1885, 1886 and 1892; finally returned as a Conservative in 1895, he served until 1898. He was Chairman of the London committee of the North Queensland Separation League and always acted as a loyal watchdog for North Queensland's interests in Britain.<sup>97</sup> Mackay's planters wrote straight to the Queensland Colonial Secretary if matters displeased them; and they were equally adept at going over the Colonial Secretary's head and writing direct to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.<sup>98</sup> When writing failed and a physical presence was necessary in London, the planters arranged it: in 1887 M.H. Black, Mackay's parliamentarian, was sent to London by the North Queensland Separationists to plead their case; and the leading plantation owners frequently returned home to Britain, for personal, business and political reasons.<sup>99</sup> The Mackay Planters' Association, formed in 1878, had as elite a membership as many a good London or Melbourne club, and a comparable amount of power and influence.<sup>100</sup>

Quite obviously the ruling class of the plantation era included a much wider group of families than those who actually owned major blocks of cane land; pastoralists, mill managers, sugar estate owners, and leading town merchants and civil servants were also part of this group. Inter-marriage and business and personal relationships further united these families. They had firm notions of sexual, class and racial hierarchy, in part transplanted from the British Isles, but

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97. *Burke's Peerage* (1956), 2331-5; *ADB*, v.1, 292; *Australian Encyclopedia*, v. 4, 63; Finch-Hatton, *Advance Australia*; *QSA TRE/17,231*.

98. For examples refer to *QSA COL/A772*, In letter 1536 of 1882, J.E. Davidson to CS, 24 March 1882 and *QVP* 1884, v.2, 927-8, J.E. Davidson and R.J. Jeffray to The Earl of Derby, 9 July 1884.

99. *Qlder* 5 February, 20 August 1887; J.E. Davidson of *Alexandra* plantation and later Managing Director of the Melbourne-Mackay Sugar Company, aside from time spent in the southern colonies, visited England in 1871, 1877-8, 1884-5 and 1895. *MM* 28 January 1871, 15 September 1877, 9 February 1878, 4 April 1885, 20 April 1895.

100. *JCUNQ* (Delamothe): The minute book of the Mackay Planters' Association, 15 March 1878 to 26 August 1884.

allowing for the contingencies of frontier life. Titled British aristocrats usually took precedence over the many wealthy land owners with good connections. Not for nil was the Pioneer valley named the aristocratic corner of Queensland in the nineteenth century. The district hosted many illustrious visitors and needed no bunyip aristocracy when it had a resident Earl and Baronet, and heirs apparent to British titles. Sir John and Lady Catherine Macartney founded St Helens run in the early 1860s and stayed in the district throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>101</sup> The Hon. Henry S. Finch-Hatton took up Mt Spencer station in the 1870s, and as previously mentioned, was joined for a few years by his brother the Hon. Harold H. Finch-Hatton. H. S. Finch-Hatton married Anne, daughter of Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry J. Codrington in 1882, succeeding his father as 13th Earl of Winchilsea in 1898.<sup>102</sup>

For a time one of the Finch-Hatton's closest neighbours was the future 3rd Marquess of Normanby. In 1878 Lord Henry Phipps, elder son of the new Governor of Victoria, the 2nd Marquess of Normanby, bought Hopetown run from James and Robert Martin and lived in the valley for some time.<sup>103</sup> Twenty years later another young aristocrat came to live at Mackay; some say for the good of his health and his country. George F.A. Seymour, Earl of Yarmouth and later 7th Marquess of Hertford owned a mixed farm, growing some sugar cane, on the north side of the Pioneer river for a few years just before the turn of the century. Yarmouth was a gay young bachelor fond of fancy dancing but did not leave a good reputation behind him in Mackay, particularly after he wrote a deprecatory reminiscence about the district for the London *Leader* in 1902. Mackay society was not impressed, despite his rank.<sup>104</sup>

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101. *Burke's Peerage* (1956), 1393-4; *MCCA*: Macartney Manuscript.

102. *Burke's Peerage*, 2331-5.

103. *Burke's Peerage*, 1983-5; *QSA TRE/17*, 232; *Mitchell*: ML MSS B 1322-1, B1322-3: Diary of James Martin, 5 January to 21 March 1878.

104. *Burke's Peerage*, 1089-93; *MM* 8 October 1896, 20 February 1897, 28 January 1902; *CRM* 3a:1 (EMB) Letter to the author from M.A. Lawrence, Secretary to the Marquess of Hertford, 7 July 1975.

Sons, cousins, brothers and scions of the British nobility and armorial families were commonplace. William A.T. Amherst who maintained his connection with the district through his uncle Sir John B. Lawes of *Farleigh*, was elevated to the peerage as the 1st Baron Amherst of Hackney in 1892.<sup>105</sup> J.E. Davidson of *Alexandra* was a scion of the Davidson's of Tulloch castle, Dingwall near Inverness in Scotland.<sup>106</sup> James and Robert Martin, and E.S. and C.C. Rawson, early pastoralists with later sugar interests were of good and ancient pedigree, as were the Paget brothers of *Nindaroo*. On his distaff side Graham A. Turner of the Ridges and Bolingbrooke station was a Finch-Hatton, and was equally well connected on his father's side.<sup>107</sup> Charles F.N. Armstrong, manager of *Marian* plantation in the early 1880s was the youngest son of Sir Andrew Armstrong Bart. of Gallen Priory, King's County, Ireland; but is better known as the husband of Nellie Mitchell, later Dame Nellie Melba.<sup>108</sup>

From the point of view of this ruling European elite, Mackay society was classifiable into several levels: themselves, the owners of the land, the capital and the means of commodity production; a group of small landowners who had no power over production, the group who later rebelled and formed the vanguard of the movement to establish co-operative central mills; the wage labourers who worked for both of the above groups but had little say over their wages or conditions of employment, the group who formed the base of the trade unions and the Labor party in the 1890s.

Control of the land, capital and public decisions of the ruling class was very much a male preserve. Women, even if their personal capital was involved, are seldom named as joint owners of the land on which the plantations were built. Amongst the early settlers in

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105. *Burke's Peerage*, 53-4, 1280.

106. A.C. Fox-Davies (comp.), *Armoial Families: a directory of gentlemen of coat-armour* (London, 1929, reprinted 1970), 505.; Roth, *Port Mackay*, 56.

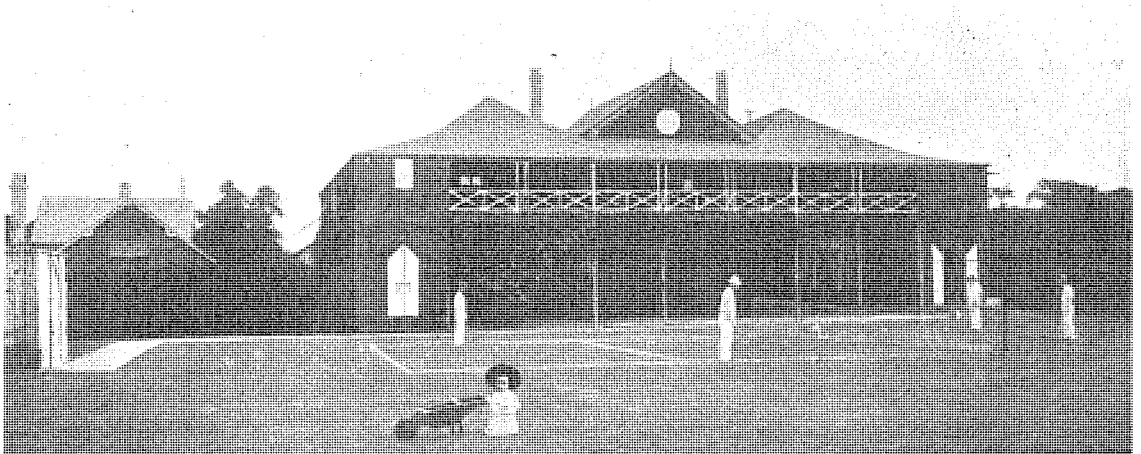
107. *HTMR* 26 May 1896; *CRM* 1a:1 and *CRM* 3b:1 (EMB); *MM Jubilee 1912*, 4.

108. J. Hetherington, *Melba: a biography* (Melbourne, 1967), 26-36.

## PLATE 18



a. Spiller's *Pioneer* plantation house which was used until 1878.  
(Photo: Roth, *Port Mackay*, 61)



b. "Fryerne", G.H.M. King's *Branscombe* house, built in 1883 but  
destroyed by fire in 1888. (Photo: Roth, *Port Mackay*, 66)

North Queensland, two women, Lucy Gray and Rachel Henning, left substantial diaries and letters recording the day-to-day lives of the women and children of the frontier. Unfortunately no comparable sources exist for the Pioneer region. The diaries which have survived are all by males: men like John Ewen Davidson and James Martin, who upheld the prevailing gentlemanly but deprecatory attitude of their age to the role of women in society. Neither was this attitude confined to the ruling class. Ole Matsen came from Denmark to Mackay as a plantation labourer in 1872 and by dint of hard work became a small-scale cane farmer by the 1880s. In 1896 he recorded in his diary a typical self-perception of a European male at Mackay in the nineteenth century:

The first morning in the new-year finds me at five o'clock, all by myself, the onkieuh one awake, out of a number of fourteen persons all told, I am the "head of the family" although my charming little wife often raises a dispute, thinking that she has a right to that distinction however we get on smothley enough and never have any quarrels, we are blessed with three strong healthy boys and one little girl, the pet of the family besides the family of six there is four visitors sleeping upstairs my Wife's youngest Sister and her husband, a newly married couple yet enjoying their Honeymoon, a young niece of ours, and a stockman from the backblocks, besides those already mentioned I have a ploughman and three South Sea Islanders. 109

The owners of the capital and the land were thought superior to their landless workers, and the European males felt superior to the females of their own class. Race added an additional tier in the hierarchy. Europeans in colonial Queensland inherited racism as an underlying doctrine of British colonialism, bolstered in the nineteenth century by the deterministic theory of Social Darwinism.<sup>110</sup> In the

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109. *JCUNQ* (History): Ole Matsen, Diary Two, 1 January 1896. Matsen's original spelling has been preserved in this and other quotations from his writing.

110. Loos, *Aboriginal-white Relations*, Chapter Twelve: 'European racial thought and action in North Queensland', 697-776; H. Reynolds, 'Racial thought in early colonial Australia', *AJofP&H*, v.20 (1974), 45-53. R. Evans, 'Racism and colonial Queensland', in Evans, K. Saunders and K. Cronin, *Exclusion, Exploitation and Extermination: race relations in colonial Queensland* (Sydney, 1975), 341-72.

multi-racial society of the plantation era Europeans felt racially superior to the Aborigines, Asians and Melanesians who lived and worked alongside them in the valley. This class, sexual and racial stratification, based upon European modes of pastoral and agricultural production, shaped the society which exists at Mackay today. But clogged into this complex of wheels geared for capitalist production were similar social structures from alien cultures relating to different modes of production. The first and most fatal cultural clash was between the Aborigines and the Europeans.

The Aboriginal owners of the land initially were curious about the white invasion of their territory and made overtures of friendship to the colonists,<sup>111</sup> overtures which were rejected, and answered with bullets as the Aborigines were beaten back away from the fertile river flats and slowly subjected to racial genocide. By the end of the nineteenth century the Aboriginal community of the Pioneer valley had been reduced to a few hundred destitute dispossessed souls living in "the Blacks camp" on the fringe of Mackay.<sup>112</sup> Their civilization and its hunter-gatherer mode of production proved incompatible with European settlement. As historians Noel Loos and Henry Reynolds have shown more generally for North Queensland, Aboriginal resistance to the European settlement was a quite significant element in controlling the advance of the frontier;<sup>113</sup> equally it was quite

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111. *JCUNQ* (Archives): Diary of Abijou Good, 28 February to 6 November 1863; *MM Jubilee 1912*, *passim*; J.E. Davidson's journal, 18, 23 September 1865, 7 July 1867; Loos, Aboriginal-white Relations, Appendix C: 'The initial pattern of contact in the Townsville and Mackay section of the Kennedy pastoral district', 845-9.
112. As the *Mackay Mercury* noted in its issue of 6 May 1890: "200 will have received blankets in return for the country of which they have been deprived". The only substantial piece of historical writing on the lives of the Aborigines in the Pioneer valley is Raymond Evans' two-part article: 'Queensland's first Aboriginal Reserve: part One - The promise of reform and part Two - The Failure of reform' in *Queensland Heritage*, v.2:4&5 (1971).
113. Loos, Aboriginal-white Relations, Appendix B: 'Settlers and their employees reported killed as a result of Aboriginal resistance in North Queensland between 1861 and 1897'; H. Reynolds & N.A. Loos, 'Aboriginal resistance in Queensland', *AJofP&H*, v.22 (1976), 214-226; Reynolds, 'Settlers and Aborigines on the pastoral frontier', in Dalton, *Lectures on North Queensland History: series one*: and 'The other side of the frontier', *HS*, v. 17 (1976), 50-63; also refer to Reynolds, *Race Relations in North Queensland*.

futile in the Pioneer valley where Europeans purposefully set about covering the Aborigines hunting grounds with sugar cane.

Aborigines were occasionally used as labourers in the sugar industry,<sup>114</sup> but they never were willing to accommodate their life style to the regular wage labour needed by the cane cultivators. Instead the cane land was farmed and the mills operated by immigrant labourers from Europe, and by Asians and Melanesians. Malays, Javanese, Chinese, Singhalese, Indians and Japanese all worked at Mackay, the majority as labourers and others as market gardeners, tinkers, shopkeepers and boarding house proprietors. Although there to serve the needs of European commodity production, Asians continued to maintain their own cultures within the dominant European society.<sup>115</sup>

Melanesians found themselves in a similar position to that of the other non-European groups. They had been brought to Queensland by Europeans who wanted their labour; but their motivations in accepting the inducements of the recruiters were deeply involved with their own exchange cycles and the reciprocal relationships between their ancestors, themselves and the natural world.<sup>116</sup> As traditional Melanesians they did not perceive the European society in which they worked in the same terms as the planters and small farmers who employed them. From the point of view of the ruling European elite, as landless, savage pagan black men and women they belonged in the lowest strata of society. From their Melanesian point of view they had their own leaders, their own perceptions of power and authority, their own attitudes to sexuality and race, and their own attitudes to land ownership and production.

1883 was the peak year of the plantation era, for its politics and society, as well as its economics. Two decades later the owner-

114. Roth, *Port Mackay*, 81.

115. A. McGrath, *Exile into Bondage*; C.R. May, *The Chinese in Cairns and District* (PhD. thesis, James Cook University of North Queensland, 1978); K. Cronin, 'The yellow agony', Part Three of Evans, Saunders and Cronin, *Exclusion*.

116. Refer to Chapters One to Three.

ship of the capital and resources of the district had radically altered; so had the society in which the Islanders had to live. Inevitable class movements took place, even though pockets of resistance clung to the old order through into the early twentieth century. The reasons for these changes are outlined in the remainder of this chapter and in the next. The final sections of this chapter will examine the ramifications of changing milling technology and the economics of being a frontier entrepreneur.



## 7. Rollers and pans: the milling process

When *Alexandra* first opened in 1868 it was the first steam-powered mill in the district. Cane was brought from the fields by horse and cart, piled in the mill grounds and fed through the single set of rollers by hand. The megass, the cane fibre left after the sugar had been extracted, was then collected and laid out in the sun to dry. The sugar juice collected was heated and mixed with lime, after which the clear juice was drawn off, while the residue was collected for the rum still. The clarified juice was boiled in large coppers, constantly raked and skimmed to remove impurities. A large dipper on a crane arm then decanted the resulting syrup into four open granulating pans in which it was heated and agitated.

After some granulation, the syrup was drawn off and run into underground cooling chambers, where it remained for twenty-four hours and became a solid mass of sugar. Molasses, the residual syrup, was syphoned off and collected for the distillery. After cooling, the solid block of sugar was dug out of the underground vatts, by hand, and put into two centrifuges, making 800 to 1,200 revolutions a minute. The molasses ran out through fine copper gauze into storage tanks, and the dry sugar collected at the base of each centrifuge. Once again labour was needed to dig the sugar out of the centrifuges, and to carry it to the curing room and thence to the sugar store to be bagged. Graded by colour and crystal quality, the sugar was taken to the port by bullock dray. *Alexandra* produced an average of 300 tons of sugar a year in this way.<sup>117</sup>

*Alexandra* is a fair example of an early mill; many other mills were not as well equipped. The key person in the mill was the sugar boiler, on whose competence the success of the operation rested. More often than not the sugar boiler's tools of trade were a piece of litmus paper to test the acidity of the cane juice, and his eyes. Molasses was a by-product of the milling process but with incompetence, it often ranked with sugar as a major product of the mill, and one for

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117. *MM* 24 December 1892, quoting *MM* 23 September 1868; *Qlder* 26 May 1877.

which there was no use other than in a distillery.<sup>118</sup> The quality of the sugar and its final colour were fully in the hands of the sugar boiler:

A typical mill of the period was one I saw just before 1883. It was thought a large one and had a capacity of, I should say, some 1000 tons. It started late in the season on a crop capable of producing in those days about 300 tons, but which nowadays [1893] would give at least 500. The sugar boiler was the sole boss of the whole concern. No one was supposed to know more than he, and in the light of experience I am inclined to think that no one knew less. The sugar he made was a deep unhealthy green. This he explained away for some weeks, but at last another boiler was believed in more than he and took charge and made sugar that was not so green. 119

The economics of the nineteenth century sugar plantation as a production unit is extremely difficult to grasp. Changing milling technology led to a chaotic situation with various types of sugar factories, producing different qualities of sugar, at different costs. In the milling, labour shortages, fuel shortages, changes in the weather and the competence of the staff all affected the final product. In the fields, irrigation, fertilization, different cane varieties, and the change from manual cultivation to the use of animal-drawn and steam ploughs, all had direct bearing on yields. The same labour-intensive approach to cane growing continued all through the nineteenth century, while the supply of cheap labour lasted and field machinery was relatively primitive. Inside the factories, change is more easily discernable as scientific method came to the fore. The industry grew in North Queensland in a period of rapid world wide advances in scientific knowledge, affecting agricultural and manufacturing techniques.

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118. *Sugar Cane*, v. 17 (1885), 643-4 (James McHenley, Mackay analytical chemist); *MM* 4 March 1882. It was claimed that in the milling process of the 1860s and 1870s, up to 40% of the sugar in the cane was lost by the mill.  
*SJ&TC*, v.2 (1893), 284-5 (Alpha).

119. *SJ&TC*, *ibid.*

The variety of the owners' backgrounds, mixed with variety in the sophistication of their mills and the expertise of the overseers and managers, partly explains the success or failure of their operations. The standard of technical competence of the mill staff improved slowly over the decades, but even in the 1890s some millers still had not realised the necessity of employing a competent sugar chemist to supervise the chemical quality of the sugar produced.<sup>120</sup> Apart from expertise, two major mechanical improvements were made to the production methods in the 1870s and 1880s: the cane was put through a second set of rollers to extract a greater amount of sugar juice; and the open pan boiling of the syrup was superseded by boiling in a vacuum.

By the mid-1880s, when modern large-scale mills like *Homebush*, with its initial 5,000 ton capacity, were built, cane was brought to the mill by tramway and locomotive, and placed onto a carrier belt to feed a double set of rollers. In 1883 when the last new plantations were erected, only *Homebush* and *Ashburton* had double sets of rollers, but other mills soon followed suit. In the 1890s as mills were further modernised, maceration and pulping of the cane and diffusion of the juice was added to the process, and more immediate use of the megass in the furnaces was introduced. But in the 1880s, doubling the rollers was the major advance in the extraction method.

On Graphs One and Two the line showing the tons of sugar produced in the colony as a whole, and in Mackay, shows quite extreme variations. There are several reasons for this, including low sugar yields from ratoon crops and the weather. The technical inefficiency of the various mills would have exacerbated the other reasons. Graph Four indicates the dates when double rollers and vacuum pans were added to the plantation mills.

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120. QSA WOR/142, Press Cutting Book (The article was published on 26 February 1895, and was a reply to a *SJ&TC* article reported in the *Brisbane Courier*, but the name of the newspaper is unknown). *Racecourse* and *North Eton*, the first two government sponsored farmers' mills employed no sugar chemists at this date.

Double sets of rollers were added to *Pleystowe* in 1884, *Meadowlands*, *Palms*, and *Habana* in 1886, *River*, *Farleigh* and *Nindaroo* in 1887, and as a hopeful ornament to the dormant *Victoria* in 1891.<sup>121</sup> Only the most efficient single roller mills survived into the 1890s without changing to double rollers. *Palmyra*, described in 1886 as "an admirable model of a single-roller mill", kept crusing with single rollers until 1894 when a triple set of rollers was added.<sup>122</sup> The other major change in milling technique was the substitution of vacuum pans for open pans at the granulating stage of the operation. The vacuum pan was invented in 1813, eventually supplanting entirely the system of boiling the sugar liquor in open pans. The higher the boiling temperature, the more the resulting crystals will discolour. In open pans used before the vacuum pan was invented, the temperature of the boiling sugar liquor was at least 121° C., whilst in a vacuum pan 65° C. was sufficient. The adoption of the vacuum pan was an enormous advance, as white sugar could never be properly obtained from open pan boiling.<sup>123</sup>

Technically, the sugar milling process used in Queensland during the 1860s and 1870s was two decades behind that used in the Caribbean. Cuban plantations began installing vacuum pans in the 1840s; but none were installed at Mackay until the 1870s. Amhurst and Pocklington installed the district's first vacuum pan in their *Foulden* mill in 1872. Similarly, Long & Company fitted their *River* plantation mill with vacuum pans when it opened in 1873. Fitzgerald and his partners followed their lead at *Meadowlands* in the same year, and at *Te Kawai* in 1874. Three mills converted to the vacuum process in the second half of the 1870s: *Pioneer* in 1876, *Alexandra* and *Nebia* in 1879. The Donaldson brothers installed a vacuum pan at *Cassada* in 1880, and *Pleystowe* and *Richmond* followed in 1882. All but two of the mills built in the 1880s had vacuum pans when they

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121. Further information is contained in thesis Appendix Three.

122. *QVP* 1886, v.2, 22. *Palmyra* was described by W.O. Hodgkinson in his report on the possibility of establishing government-sponsored central mills.

123. G. Fairrie, *Sugar* (Liverpool, 1925), 15-9, 154-7; R.W. Beachey, *The British West Indies Sugar Industry in the late 19th. Century* (Oxford, 1957), 69.

first opened. The exceptions were John Avery's *Conningsby*, built in 1882, which was a small mill with single rollers and no vacuum pan, and the Paget brothers' *Nindaroo*, which began crushing in 1883, but had no vacuum pan until 1887.<sup>124</sup>

The critical importance of advanced technology by the 1880s is dramatically illustrated in Graph Four. Of thirty mills established by 1884, nine had single rollers and no vacuum pan. None of these survived into the 1890s: *Lorne* closed in 1877, *Cedars*, *Miclere* and *Barrie* closed in 1886; and *Dumbleton* and *Conningsby* closed in 1887. The final provocation for a mill closure was sometimes an amalgamation, or rationalisation on the part of a company owning two or more. The first amalgamation was that of *Balmoral* with *Meadowlands* in 1880. In 1882 *Pioneer* was replaced by *Ashburton*, built on the same land in 1883. *Inverness* was closed in 1884, when that plantation was incorporated in *Richmond*. *Branscombe* and *Alexandra* became redundant in 1884: owned by the Melbourne-Mackay Sugar Company, which also operated *Nebia* and the large new *Palms*, the two older mills were no longer needed. *Lorne*, a single roller open pan mill was taken over by Sloan & Co. in 1877, after the rust outbreak, and had its land absorbed into the Melbourne-Mackay Sugar Company. By 1879 its mill engine was being used at *Te Kowai* to run a chaff-cutter.<sup>125</sup> *Miclere*, another single roller open pan mill, was purchased by Sloan & Co. in 1877, after the death of its owner; it was sold to Sir J.B. Lawes in 1882. Lawes built *Farleigh* in 1883, and closed *Miclere* in 1886, though he used the land and continued to operate his *Foulden* mill until 1887.

*Cassada* was closed in 1885. It was surrounded by larger mills which could offer better prices for farmers' cane, and the plantation only had 400 acres of its own cane land. The mill was small and James Donaldson, the owner-manager, was incompetent.<sup>126</sup> *Cedars* closed in 1886.

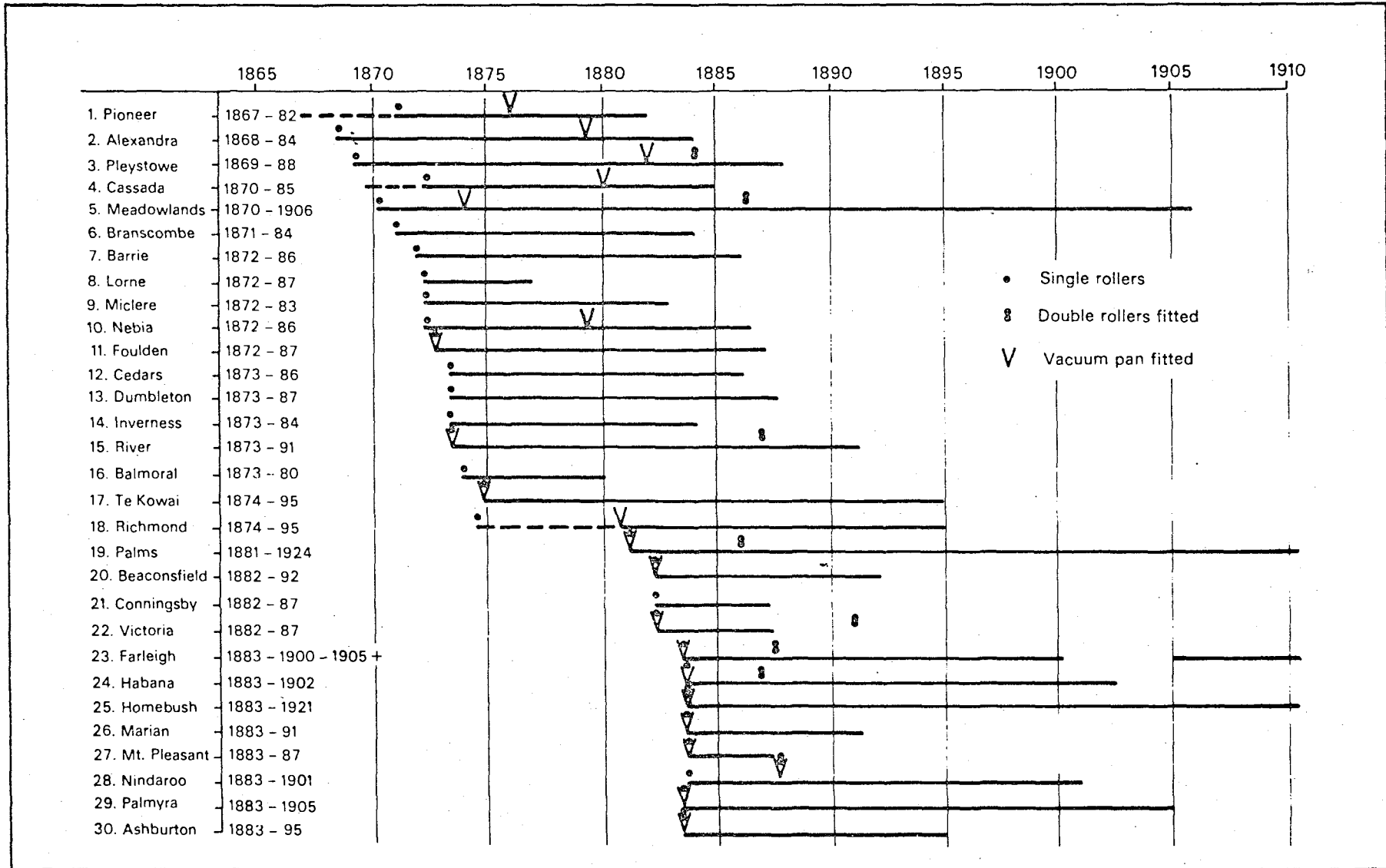
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124. M.M. Friginals, *The Sugarmill: the socioeconomic complex of sugar in Cuba 1760-1860* (New York, 1976), 101-27; refer to Graph Three and Appendix Three.

125. *MM Jubilee 1912*, 19 (A. McClanachan).

126. Refer to Appendix Three for further information. In the case of *Cassada*, Ole Matsen was an overseer there from 1879 until 1882. He gave the following opinion of James Donaldson: "I was not satisfied to play second fiddle to Mr. James Donaldson as I know what sort of manager he was." (Ole Matsen, Diary One). R.D. Dunne worked

Graph Four : Milling technology in plantation mills at Mackay : indicating the dates at which double rollers and vacuum pans were installed



Its owner M.H. Black had opted for a parliamentary career and could no longer live on and supervise the running of his plantation. Black was no doubt well aware that his 1873 vintage single roller open pan mill was no longer worth operating. Similarly outdated, *Dumbleton* closed in 1887. *Barrie*, on Sandy creek at Eton, had single rollers and used the open pan process. Close by, *Victoria* was built, complete with vacuum pan in 1883, and in 1886 *North Eton* began operations under government sponsorship. Both *Victoria* and *North Eton* were central mills, taking cane from farmers who had previously supplied *Barrie*. Their construction signalled the end of what had always been a marginally profitable operation at *Barrie*, which finally closed in 1886. *Nebia* closed in the same year as *Barrie*. *Victoria*, opened in 1882, was intended to rely solely on farmers' cane, but when *North Eton* began crushing only half a mile away in 1888, *Victoria* soon closed. *Pleystowe*, the third mill erected in the district, had double crushing and a vacuum pan, but closed in 1888 after a series of bad seasons.<sup>127</sup>

Ungovernable circumstances could just as easily explain the demise of a mill as any logical reasons. W.S.C. Adrian had to close his *Mt. Pleasant* plantation after a chain of unfortunate events. *Mt. Pleasant* was a small single roller mill on the north side of the river, built complete with a vacuum pan in 1883. The mill had a 600 ton capacity, and with only a few hundred acres of his own cane, Adrian intended to accept cane from his neighbours. Realising that any open pan mill was obsolete, Adrian had a vacuum pan constructed especially to his order. While the vacuum pan was being fitted into place, it was dropped onto the main engine bed, suffering severe damage itself and destroying the bed. Adrian was grief stricken, allegedly furthering the destruction by getting drunk and galloping his horse into his cane, setting fire to his crop.<sup>128</sup>

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with Matsen at *Cassada* over the same years and supported Matsen's opinion of Donaldson. *ASJ*, 7 March 1924, 765; *QSA* J5/1877, Greenmount portions 102-4, 107-9; Map 6 of this chapter.

127. Refer to Appendix Three; *MM Jubilee* 1912, 28; *Sugar Cane*, v.21 (1889), 60.
128. *MM* 18 July, 18 August 1883; *Qlder* 21 October 1882; Kirwan, *Sugar Industry*, 1.

Recovering from these mishaps, Adrian did reasonably well for two years, but in 1886 an excessively wet season ruined his harvest, lowered the sugar content of his cane and that of his suppliers, and added considerably to his operating costs. This and the lack of Melanesian labour at the time, forced him to use expensive and less reliable European labourers. The extra expense broke him and 1877 saw him several thousand pounds in debt. The financial accounts of Adrian's floundering enterprise have survived. *Conningsby, Victoria* and *Foulden* which all closed in the same year as *Mt Pleasant*, probably faced similar circumstances. A.P. Ashdown, manager of the Mackay branch of the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney described Adrian's plight:

Mr. Adrian's...management during the past year [1886], taking everything into consideration has been as good as that of any of his neighbours, and more successful than that of many of the other planters in the district ...His management has been characterized by a rigid economy, and the disastrous result of his efforts has been due to the force of circumstances, which he has combatted and controlled to the best of his powers and ability.

.... The results of his efforts will compare favourably with that of any other Estate in the district, similarly situated, both as regards expenditure for the year, and the return of sugar per acre... Not a single plantation in this district, I believe, has managed to pay working expenses during 1886.... 129

As Ashdown pointed out at length, the misfortunes which broke Adrian affected many other producers. He could not know at the time that he wrote that these problems heralded the end of the second boom period in Mackay's sugar industry. The prosperity of the years 1883 to 1885 had depended upon good seasons, high sugar prices, and cheap and reliable labour. This combination was not to prevail again until the mid-1890s.



## 8. Frontier entrepreneurs

In its first twenty years the sugar industry was dominated by large plantations, which combined cane cultivation with milling and even refining sugar. The planters monopolized the milling process: farmers were often at their mercy when negotiating a price for their cane. Some of the plantations were almost total institutions in themselves and could operate independently of their neighbours and surroundings. The Colonial Sugar Refining Company is the supreme example of a company that owned its own plantations, procured its own labour, milled its own cane and refined its own sugar. Their *Homebush* plantation was a small part of the total company. The Melbourne-Mackay Sugar Company was next in size in the district, owning a slice of prime cane land between Walkerston and Mackay. Other plantations were not as large and independent, but all practised economies of scale. Ralph Shlomowitz's several articles on the Queensland sugar industry provide a searching analysis of the economic determinants which shaped and re-shaped the industry. As Shlomowitz says:

There were many avenues through which plantations could reap economies of scale, namely, in borrowing funds, in purchasing supplies and indentured labour, in training indentured labour, through the gang system of organising labour, in supervision of indentured labour, in transport indivisibilities, in milling indivisibilities, and in marketing sugar. 130

Yet even this description of the advantages accruing to the planters falls short of the actual breadth of the Mackay planters economic hold on the district. Plantation owners never confined

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130. R. Shlomowitz, 'The search for institutional equilibrium in Queensland's sugar industry 1884-1913', *Australian Economic History Review*, v. 19:2 (1979), 100; also refer to Shlomowitz's 'Melanesian labour and the development of the Queensland Sugar industry, 1863-1906', *Research in Economic History*, December, 1980 (issue in press); 'The market for indentured Melanesian labour in Queensland, 1863-1906: an economic analysis' and 'The market for time-expired Melanesians in Queensland, 1884-1906: an economic analysis', *JPH*, (in press); 'Markets for Melanesian labour in Queensland, 1863-1906' (Manuscript, October 1979, 98 pages.)

themselves merely to growing and milling sugar cane. Their economic base was wide, and they relied on control of subsidiary enterprises and unrelated occupations to spread their risks. Essentially, the planters were business men who had wide-ranging interests, of which producing sugar from cane was an important part. Today we accept that a business man or company may have multiple financial interests. It is not surprising that plantation owners were unwilling to stake their entire fortunes upon the vagaries of climate, labour supplies, and sugar prices. Mackay's plantation owners had investments in land, a variety of sugar products, shipping and port facilities, pastoral properties, mining companies, and town businesses. Many of the plantations had absentee owners who viewed their sugar land as part of an investment portfolio, not a life-style. Some of the resident planters also had southern and overseas business connections, while others pursued professional careers alongside their plantation activities. They were frontier entrepreneurs.

An obvious reason for the range of economic activities with which the planters were commonly involved lies in the uncertainties of the sugar market. The prices which mills received for their products varied constantly, with quality and market conditions. W.H. Paxton & Co. at Mackay negotiated to buy the entire sugar crops of various plantations for CSR. CSR exactly delimited the terms under which the company would buy sugar, and although planters were often locally regarded with awe and respect, they were of no importance in the eyes of the sugar buyers.<sup>131</sup> J.E. Davidson, local manager of the Melbourne-Mackay Sugar Company on a salary of £1,500 a year (before profits), held almost lordly sway over the district, but he impressed CSR not at all when he tried to get them to pay £23 a ton for his company's entire 1882 crop. Although CSR was generally willing to pay a little more for Mackay sugar, against the slightly cheaper sugars from Java and Mauritius, to reduce competition against sugar produced from CSR's own plantations, they firmly rejected Davidson's offer:

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131. CSR 142/3171, Mackay Queensland OUT: letters to Agent W.H. Paxton, Q.L. Deloitte to W.H. Paxton, 14 September 1880, 4 August 1881.

... we can not pay anything like the price Mr. Davidson asks. At about £20.10/- in sacks, for whole crops, open pan; or £22, £17.10/- & £15.10/- in sacks for Firsts, Seconds and Thirds, separately, I think we could give about 10/- per ton more for vacuum pan sugar; but over these prices we can do much better in Java and Mauritius. You must not forget that it takes fully £3 to land the sugar at our Refinery when allowance is made for loss in weight and paying nett cash in Mackay as compared with the long credit for our Eastern purchases. 132

So much of the business records relating to plantation activities in Mackay have been destroyed or lost that it is very doubtful if it would now be possible to piece together an accurate financial history of one planter or plantation: certainly it would be out of the question to write a detailed financial history for the Mackay district in the nineteenth century. However, there do survive a large number of fragmentary documents which provide evidence of a rather random selection of financial transactions. From these it is possible to give some idea of the range of business activities in which a planter commonly engaged. The effect is to create an impression of the planter's life very different indeed from the picture of aristocratic self-indulgence often conveyed by popular writings.

Selling sugar was obviously the most important money-making activity of any plantation, but the sugar market was always precarious, and many other entrepreneurial activities were attempted. Land investments in various forms were also mainstays of the Mackay planters' fortunes. Some planters owned several plantations, in succession, or all at the same time. In the 1890s some had interests in mills established under government central mill legislation. Others owned large areas of land in the district, other than their plantations, or made money by sub-dividing their sugar holdings for small farms, whilst retaining control of the mill. Yet others had land investments in other areas of Queensland, even establishing, or attempting to establish sugar plantations in other areas.

Andrew Henderson was one of Mackay's first settlers, with business and plantation interests covering three decades. Before coming to Mackay he worked as an overseer on Newstead station at Brisbane. He arrived in 1861, opened the first store in the hamlet and was also part-owner of an early hotel. In the mid-1860s Henderson and his cousin James Robb contracted to plough the first land tilled on *Alexandra*, for cotton. A few years later he owned a fifty acre farm on the lagoons at the edge of what is now west Mackay. Before "River" estate had a mill of its own Henderson was its managing partner. He sold "River" to Long & Co. in 1871 and himself built *Beaconsfield* plantation mill in 1882. Henderson operated *Beaconsfield* until his death in 1892, simultaneously owning a large area of land at Wallingford down the valley.<sup>133</sup>

E.M. Long and his partners<sup>134</sup> bought the "River" land from Henderson and his partners in 1871, and erected a mill there in 1873. Edward Maitland Long, the son of an English Archdeacon, arrived in the district in 1870. He had previously worked on sugar plantations in southern Queensland, first with Captain Hope at *Cleveland* plantation near Brisbane and then at Maryborough. Before purchasing the "River" land, in August 1870 he bought "Branscombe", Spiller's only large land holding south of the river.<sup>135</sup> In partnership with his brother George and George Nisbet Marten, E.M. Long built a mill at *Branscombe*, which first crushed in 1871. George Long died in 1873, in the wreck of the recruiting schooner *Petrel*, which the Longs owned in partnership with Amhurst and Pocklington of *Foulden* plantation. In 1874 or 1875 Marten bought out Long and took over control of *Branscombe*.<sup>136</sup>

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133. There is evidence that Henderson's cousin Robb operated a primitive two-horse mill on a farm on the lagoons in 1871. Henderson may also have had some connection with this. *MM* 27, 29 September 1892; *MM Jubilee 1912*, 21 (James Robb); Kirwan, *Sugar Industry*, 1; Appendix Three: River, Beaconsfield.

134. His partners were probably his brothers George and William.

135. *MM* 10 August 1905, 6 August 1870. The proceeds of this sale probably helped finance Spiller's steam-powered mill at *Pioneer*, erected in 1871.

136. *MM* 17 April 1875, 21 April 1878; Kerr, *Sugar Mills*, 5; Roth, *Port Mackay*, 59, 66; *QSA LAN/215*, Selection 40; *QSA CPS 10B/G1*, Goodall to IA, 3 December 1873; Appendix Three: River, Branscombe, Foulden.

E.M. Long then concentrated on *River*, the second mill in the district to install a vacuum pan. In 1877 Long & Co. lost *River* to Sloan & Co. after the rust outbreak in the cane. By 1878 E.M. Long had established a dairy farm at "Habana", and in partnership with William Robertson, built *Habana* mill in 1883, operating it until 1901. In the 1890s Long was a member of the Pleystowe Land Syndicate Ltd., which purchased the closed *Pleystowe* plantation, and was instrumental in re-opening the mill in 1895 as a farmers' mill operated under the 1893 *Sugar Works Guarantee Act*. In the 1880s he had a financial interest in *Clunes* plantation on the Burdekin river. He also owned many smaller areas of land in the Mackay district and from the 1880s began to sub-divide *Habana*, leasing and selling land to other cane growers. Long died in 1905, aged sixty-three.<sup>137</sup>

The land dealings of John Spiller have already been mentioned. After founding *Pioneer* plantation, Spiller bought *River* plantation from Sloan & Co. in 1878. He sold *Pioneer* in 1881 and later in the 1880s sold *River*. In partnership with his bank manager Henry Brandon, he started *Pioneer* on the Burdekin river which they in turn sold to John Drysdale in 1882. It is possible that Brandon was also a secret partner in both *Pioneer* (at Mackay) and *River*. Spiller owned numerous smaller parcels of land around Mackay, as did Brandon, and it is impossible to unravel the full extent of their land interests.<sup>138</sup> It was quite usual for the settlers to hold land as a speculative investment, to be sold when the price was right, or when finance was needed for some other project. Spiller did this with his "Branscombe" land, and Hugh McCready did the same when he erected *Palmyra*. *Palmyra* cost McCready £8,499 to erect in 1883. In 1882 Hugh McCready, as agent for his brother David, sold CSR a 2,000 acre block for their *Homebush* plantation for £10,000.<sup>139</sup>

137. MM 31 October 1877; Kirwan, *Sugar Industry*, 8-9; Munro, *Sugar Fields*, 61; JCUNQ (Delamothe): J.H. Peak, A history of the Burdekin (Manuscript), 6; Lowndes, *South Pacific Enterprise: the Colonial Sugar Refining Company Limited* (Sydney, 1956), 29-30.

138. MM 17 August 1878, 3 March 1887, 15 December 1880, 26 October 1881, 14 March 1893; Kirwan, *Sugar Industry*, 6; Connolly, *Drysdale and the Burdekin*, 39-40; QSA J5/2: 1925.

139. QVP 1886, v.2, 23: CSR 142 /1226, Homebush OUT, Knox to Stuart, 7 April 1882 (telegram); CSR 142/3182, Schedule of Deeds of Freehold Properties, 2 April 1887.

Land and plantations changed hands often at Mackay. T.H. Fitzgerald's land dealings have been scrutinized in an earlier section of this chapter. Alfred Hewitt bought the *Pleystowe* land in 1868, and opened his mill there in 1869. But prior to this he had an interest in Davidson and Fitzgerald's *Alexandra* plantation.<sup>140</sup> William McBryde failed in an attempt to establish a co-operative mill, the Mackay Sugar Crushing Company of 1869. By 1873 in partnership with Hector Finlayson he owned "Glenalbyn" estate, which they sold to Spiller in 1880. They then bought neighbouring *Inverness* plantation from Raff & Co., with a partner F.W. Poolman. Next they purchased *Richmond* plantation from the family of the late Andrew Cumming, and modernised its primitive mill. *Inverness* was closed, and *Richmond* operated until 1895, though McBryde still owned some of the land as late as 1902. McBryde and Finlayson also attempted to start a large new plantation (Seaforth, near Cape Hillsborough) in the early 1880s, but restrictions on labour supplies stopped further development.<sup>141</sup>

No plantation was static for long in its acreage, the size of the mill and variety of its products, or the type and extent of its internal transport system. Acreages varied dramatically: in 1883 *Cassada* had 400 acres of arable land; *Homebush* had 10,000 acres. Planters often leased land from each other, sold crops to each other and to varying extents bought cane from surrounding small-scale farmers. After cutting, the cane was loaded into horse or bullock drawn trucks in the fields, sometimes on portable railway lines, then taken to a siding of the main plantation tramway to be carried to the mill. Speed was essential as cut cane rapidly loses sugar content. The transport factor in the sugar industry is important to the whole organisational structure of the industry. Ralph Shlomowitz in his major paper on the economics of the Queensland sugar industry pointed out several of the implications of transport in relation to the industry: firstly, that transport considerations are incentive to reserve land closest to the mill exclusively for planting sugar cane; secondly, there is

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140. *MM* 1 July 1868.

141. *MM* 3 February, 30 October 1869, 27 September 1873, 17 April 1880; *Pughs* 1884, 396; *Pughs* 1887, 87; *MM* 14 October 1902; *MCCA*: Macartney Manuscript.

incentive to co-ordinate the flow of cane from various farming units, to keep the mill constantly supplied; thirdly, says Shlomowitz, the optimum size of the mill is constrained, *inter alia*, by transport considerations.<sup>142</sup>

Tramways made transporting the cane from the fields to the mill much easier. Planters installed portable and permanent tramways on their own land and extended tramways into new cane areas to secure the cane of growers in the vicinity; though investment in, or the extension of a tramway was not always successful. In 1886 the owners of *Victoria* built a tramway to Joseph Antoney's large selection to enable him to send cane to their mill. Unfortunately for them, Antoney became a shareholder in the new *North Eton* central mill erected in 1887, and *Victoria* lost his cane.<sup>143</sup> Many miles of tramways snaked all over the district. Other tramways were contemplated but never completed. In 1899 E.M. Long considered extending *Habana's* tramway as far as Seaforth, but old age, his involvement in *Pleystowe*, Federation and the concomitant halt to the labour supply from Melanesia, seem to have made him change his plans. Instead he closed *Habana* in 1902.<sup>144</sup> As well, milling techniques and the products differed from plantation to plantation. *Pleystowe*, *Te Kowai*, *Lorne*, *Alexandra* and *Balmoral* all had rum distilleries.<sup>145</sup> *Richmond* was the only Mackay mill able to refine its own sugar; and *Richmond* and *Foulden* produced golden syrup as a by-product.<sup>146</sup> Sloan & Co. controlled the patents to the Icery process, which used sulphurous and phosphoric acid to improve the quality of the sugar. The Icery process was adopted by

142. Shlomowitz, *Markets for Melanesian labour*, 5-6.

143. Kerr, *Pioneer Pageant*, 94,98; Appendix Three: North Eton.

144. Queensland Legislative Assembly, Seaforth Estate, further correspondence relating to, 1899. Tabled 20 December 1899. B.C. Dupuy to Surveyor General, 16 March 1899; Appendix Three: Habana.

145. *MM* 23 September 1868, 5 February 1870, 4 July, 31 October 1874; Kirwan, *Sugar Industry*, 2; M. Stubbs Brown, *The Secondary Industries of Queensland 1875-1900* (B.A. Hons. thesis, University of Queensland, 1961), Appendix 12: 'Sugar manufactories and rum distilleries'.

146. Kerr, *Pioneer Pageant*, 59.

*Meadowlands*, *River*, *Pioneer* (Mackay), and *Airdmillan* on the Burdekin, as well as in Sloan's Melbourne-Mackay Sugar Company mills.<sup>147</sup>

Some planters also owned ships and wharfs, used to bring Melanesian labourers to and from the plantations, to export sugar and carry goods to and from Mackay. At various times some of the ships which recruited Melanesian labour were owned<sup>148</sup> by Mackay planters. The Rawson brothers, who later set up the North Queensland Sugar Estate Company, owned the *Fanny* in the 1870s. F.T. Amhurst of *Foulden* was the owner of the *Isabella* and part-owner of the *Petrel* with the Long brothers of *Branscombe* and *River*. Robert McBurney, the town's government medical officer and part-owner of *Marian* plantation, at one time was also part-owner of the schooner *Lavinia*, as was E.M. Long. The *Noumea*, the *Jabberwock* and the *Borough Belle* were owned by *Branscombe*, which also owned the brigantine *Hector*. T.H. Fitzgerald of *Alexandra*, *Meadowlands* and *Te Kowai*, and Alfred Hewitt of *Pleystowe* at different times owned the *Lady Darling*. In 1873 the *Mystery* was owned by Hewitt and his partner Romilly, one of the Robertson brothers of *Lorne*, Lloyd and Walker of *Dumbleton*, and Fitzsimmons of *Nebia*. The Melbourne-Mackay Sugar Company owned the *Lady Belmore*, and CSR, the owners of *Homebush*, chartered and owned their own recruiting vessels.<sup>149</sup>

T.H. Fitzgerald owned Victoria wharf at Mackay in 1873. Sloan & Co. owned a wharf at Mackay in 1881. The Rawson brothers owned a wharf and seventy-five metres of river frontage in the town in 1887.<sup>150</sup>

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147. MUBA: Blake & Riggall, Sloan & Co. records: Queensland and Fiji Letters Patent for the Icery Process, 8 December 1882, 13 September 1883; *Qlder* 10 November 1877; *MM* 13 September 1884.

148. Often only one name is given as owner of a recruiting ship, but it seems that the ships were usually owned in six or eight shares. The case of the *Mystery* in 1873 (quoted below), owned by six Mackay planters, is probably typical.

149. Saunders, *Uncertain Bondage*: Appendix One: *Fanny*, *Isabella*, *Lavinia*, *Jabberwock*, *Borough Belle*, *Hector*, *Lady Darling*, *Lady Belmore*; *MM Jubilee 1912*, 23 (Pilot Williamson); *MM* 1 April 1871, 12 October 1872, 21 April 1878, 27 June 1891; *CSR* 142/3276-3294: Kanakas, Papers re shipments; *QSA* CPS 10B/G1, Goodall to IA, 19 January 1880; *MM* 19 July 1873; *MM* 5 April 1882; *MM* 25 October 1873.

150. *MM* 30 August 1873; MUBA: Blake & Riggall, Agreement to form the Melbourne-Mackay Queensland Sugar Company, 31 March 1880; *Qlder* 4 June 1887.



Sloan & Co. and CSR chartered ships to transport Mackay's sugar products to the southern refineries, and both usually negotiated to buy the total sugar production of one or several plantations. In 1883, for example, CSR purchased the entire outputs of *Pleystowe*, *Conningsby*, *Palmyra*, *Nindaroo*, *Dumbleton*, *Cedars*, *Beaconsfield* and *Barrie* plantations.<sup>151</sup>

Planters owned pastoral property and related businesses. F.T. Amhurst in 1874 owned part of Murray and Macartney's Jolimount cattle station, and Lloyd and Walker owned *Dumbleton* plantation and Cotherstone station.<sup>152</sup> C.F. McKinnon, who bought *Pioneer* plantation from John Spiller, owned pastoral land in New South Wales,<sup>153</sup> and as previously mentioned Sloan & Co. had extensive southern pastoral interests. W.H. Hyne of *Balmoral*, the Rawson brothers, David Jack of *Barrie*, and Charles Romilly of *Pleystowe* all operated bucheries.<sup>154</sup> Hyne and Bridgeman owned the Walkerston Boiling Down Works for a few years in the 1860s,<sup>155</sup> and E.M. Long operated *Habana* as a dairy, before, during and after its time as a plantation. In 1905 G.F. Bridgeman of *Meadowlands* was involved with E.M. Long in the Mackay Bacon Curing Company which operated at "Habana".<sup>156</sup>

The variety of their business interests was boundless. T.H. Fitzgerald was always willing to try his hand in any new enterprise. In 1873 he had a financial interest in the Mt Flora copper mine, west of Mackay. Another planter, Andrew Henderson of *Beaconsfield*, had mining interests at Mt Vince.<sup>157</sup> The Rawsons operated in Mackay as

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151. CSR 142/3171, Deloitte to Paxton, 18 June, 5 July 1883.

152. MM 27 June 1874; *MM Jubilee 1912*, 11 (G.M. Hess).

153. MUBA: Blake & Riggall, Deed of partnership, C.F. Mackinnon, W. Crellin, E.F. Yencken and Mrs Tripp, 16 October 1878.

154. MM 13 September 1922 (R.D. Dunne); A.J. Coyne, Mackay Sugar Industry (Manuscript), 3; Munro, *Sugar Fields*, 61; MM 15 September 1880, 1 April 1905.

155. Kerr, *Sugar Mills*, 4-5; MM 28 May 1870.

156. Appendix Three: Habana; MM 26 January 1905.

157. MM 8 November 1873; letter to the author from Mr J.F. Glen, Mackay, 13 May 1980.

agents for planters and squatters and as auctioneers; so did George Smith who was a partner in *Marian* and *Victoria* plantations.<sup>158</sup> H.B. Black left his partnership with his brother Maurice on *Cedars* in 1877 and with another partner founded the *Mackay Standard* newspaper.<sup>159</sup> Further to the list can be added the Rawson brothers' firm Rawson & Clayton, Australian agents in London, and Sloan & Co.'s partnership in the Melbourne Telephone Exchange Company.<sup>160</sup>

Some planters also had professions. Several represented the district in the Queensland Legislative Assembly and Council: T.H. Fitzgerald; F.T. Amhurst; W.H. Long; M.H. Black; and W.T. Paget.<sup>161</sup> Robert McBurney was a medical doctor, partner in a plantation, and also part-owner of a recruiting ship.<sup>162</sup> F.T. Amhurst had been called to the bar in England, and in 1875 was admitted as a barrister in Queensland.<sup>163</sup> Henry Brandon seems to have pursued simultaneous careers as a bank manager and a planter. But the most usual auxiliary occupation for a plantation owner was as manager of another plantation in the same district or in some other region of Queensland. Hugh McCready was a partner in *Richmond* from 1869 to 1877; but during this time he was also manager of *Pleystowe* (1869-73) and *Te Kowai* (1875).<sup>164</sup> Robert Donaldson, partner with his brother in *Cassada* was *Te Kowai*'s manager for a period in the 1880s.<sup>165</sup> In 1887, W.H. Hyne of *Meadowlands* sent one of the Paget brothers of *Nindaroo* to oversee the establishment of his 1,200 acre property at Clump point, north of Rockingham bay.<sup>166</sup> Even more common were cases of estate owners augmenting

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158. *MM* 21 February 1883; Table Eight.

159. *MM Centenary* 1962, 55.

160. *MM* 21 October 1886; *MUBA*: Blake & Riggall, R.J. Jeffray's papers: Agreement to form the Melbourne Telephone Exchange Company, 19 July 1888.

161. Waterson, *Queensland Parliament*, 57, 3, 15-6, 143; *MM* 29 March 1873, 16 March 1878; Table NINE.

162. *MM* 16 March 1899; *mm Jubilee* 1912, 23 (Pilot Williamson).

163. *MM* 18 September 1875, 4 March 1937.

164. *MM* 7 February 1874; *MM Jubilee* 1912, 28; Appendix Two: Richmond.

165. *Pughs* 1886, 490; Appendix Three: Cassada.

166. Jones, *Cardwell*, 237-8.

their incomes as plantation managers. J. Costello of "Millicent" estate near *Habana* was manager of *Branscombe* in 1874 and of *Meadowlands* in 1877. Edward Denman of "Etowrie" estate at various times managed nearby *Inverness*, *Richmond* and *Miclere*.<sup>167</sup>

Just as there is a great diversity in the range of activities planters engaged in, so also is there in the importance of the plantation among their total interests - for some the plantation was of quite minor importance. When Sir J.B. Lawes died in 1900, the *Times* weekly edition described his Rothamsted Agricultural Experiment Station in Hertfordshire, and called him "one of the greatest benefactors of agriculture - perhaps the greatest - the world has seen". His £140,000 *Farleigh* plantation did not even rate a mention.<sup>168</sup> But for other planters it was their other investments which were minor. Many of the planters had previously transferred their finances from pastoral properties to the sugar industry. Those who invested in the boom years of the early 1880s in hope of a quick profit, were usually badly disappointed. The plantations never guaranteed riches or even financial success - as many failed as succeeded. Luck, as well as good management, capital, and technological advances, was an element in the fortunes that were made.

The plantation mode of production was labour intensive, each plantation needing a cheap and reliable labour force to work its fields and mill. Planters were under considerable restraint in respect to the sources and methods of recruiting Melanesian labour, as well as the manner in which the labourers were treated on the plantations. Legislation and regulations passed by the Queensland government controlled, restricted, and for a while almost halted the migration of Melanesians to work as indentured labourers in the colony. Each plantation's human capital investment in Melanesian labour was as important to the success or failure of each plantation as investments in transport systems or new milling techniques. Once the labour trade was

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167. *MM* 26 December 1877, 17 February 1883, 14 March 1893, 1 November 1907; Kerr, *Sugar Mills*, 4; *CRM* 4 (R&AD).

168. *SJ&TC*, v.10 (1900), 166 (obituary of J.B. Lawes); *MM* 16 February 1892; Appendix Three: Foulden, Farleigh.

organised, several categories of Melanesian labour emerged, each with different levels of productivity, as evidenced by the different wage rates prevailing. Employers had the choice of employing newly arrived recruits, recruits returning for a second visit to Queensland, re-indentured labourers already in the colony, and time-expired labourers free to work without indentures. Chapters Six and Seven detail the categories of Melanesian labour and the different wage rates they received. Chapter Eight provides detail on Melanesian health problems and their mortality rate. Differing susceptibility to disease might also have been a factor taken into account by experienced plantation managers. Large plantations were presumably in the best position to select the more productive workers, and also to get the best out of new recruits by putting them alongside experienced workers from the same language area or island. Selection and management of a labour force can be confidently postulated as one of the variables which accounted for the success or failure of any plantation venture.

The foregoing chapter has chronicled and analysed the complex array of circumstances which determined the success or failure of any plantation, and pointed out the futility of concentrating upon the plantations in isolation from the wider Mackay, Queensland, Australian and world context. After riding high in the mid-1880s, for a variety of reasons the plantations were beset by doldrums in the late 1880s. During the 1890s most were sub-divided, their land leased or sold to European small scale cultivators. Chapter Five continues the history of the European side of the Queensland sugar industry at Mackay, but tracing the lives of European labourers and small-scale farmers from the 1860s through until 1925, by which time plantations had ceased to exist, and Melanesians workers, all either deported or banned from the industry. The Australian sugar industry began with the plantation era. The modern industry, based on small farm cultivators supplying co-operatively owned central mills, developed over the next four decades.

Table One:

The relationship between pastoralism and thePreface:Mackay sugar industry

The men listed in this Table may have held substantially more pastoral runs than are named here. The dates given for the pastoral interests are the earliest dates for which the pastoral connections can be established; where possible a final date has also been included. The column indicating a sugar interest applies only to plantations, estates and farmers' mills in the Mackay region.

The Bosanquet brothers (Case 7) and the Rawson brothers (Case 21) are dealt with as a single unit, as they always operated together. In the cases concerning the Atherton brothers (Cases 1 and 2) and the Walker brothers (Cases 23 and 24) the brothers have been listed separately, as although they had some joint interests, they usually operated separately.

NAME	PASTORAL INTEREST	SUGAR INTEREST at Mackay
1. Edmund Atherton (brother of 2)	NSW Plane Creek Midlothian Cliftonville 1866+	<i>Plane Creek</i> 1893- Shareholder
2. Richard Atherton (brother of 1)	NSW Plane Creek Howard Park Kelvin Grove Woonon 1864+	<i>Plane Creek</i> 1893 - Shareholder
3. A.T. Ball	Wandoo Hazlewood Bolingbroke Tierawoombah Blue Mt. Colston Park 1859-1873	<i>Te Kowai</i> Plantation 1874-1876 Bankrupted
4. G.F. Bridgeman	Fort Cooper North Greenmount Cape Palmerston Homebush Lake Elphinstone Walkerston Boiling- Down Works 1859+	<i>Meadowlands</i> Plantation <i>Balmoral</i> Plantation

NAME	PASTORAL INTEREST	SUGAR INTEREST at Mackay
5. Henry Bell	Plane Creek 1864+	<i>Plane Creek</i> 1893 +
6. M.H. Black	S.A., Vic. & N.S.W. 1852-1867 Eaglefield Lake Elphinstone Lenton Downs Burton Downs 1867-1871	<i>Cedars</i> Plantation 1871-1899 Died 1899 Mill closed 1886
7. E.B. Bosanquet G.S. Bosanquet	Colston Park 1878	"Brightly" Estate 1879 +
8. M. Carroll	Pastoralist before arrived Mackay: district unknown	<i>Miclere</i> Plantation 1877-1881 Died 1881
9. J. Cook	Balnagowan Wandoo Spring Vale Warra 1862 -	Pleystowe Land Synd. 1892-1901 <i>Pleystowe</i> 1894-1901 Died 1901
10. D.H. Dalrymple	Hamilton Hopetown Pelion 1879-1890s	<i>Cattle Creek</i> 1904-1912 Died 1912
11. C.F. Fitzsimmons	N.S.W. 1824-1860 Lotus Creek 1860-1870 Claverdon 1870s	<i>Nebia</i> Plantation 1871-1876 Died 1876
12. A. Henderson	Newstead Station Callaroy 1860-1862	<i>Beaconsfield</i> 1872-1892 Died 1892
13. J.G. Hess	Lake Elphinstone 1865 Suttor Creek (Still J.G. & G.M. Hess in 1904) Fulbourne Block 1878	"Cassel Park" Estate 1886-1904 Died 1904

NAME	PASTORAL INTEREST	SUGAR INTEREST at Mackay
14. W. Hyne	Walkerston Boiling Down Works 1870 Fort Cooper North 1889	<i>Meadowlands</i> Plantation <i>Balmoral</i> Plantation 1870 - 1902 Died 1902
15. R.J. Jeffray	Through W. Sloan & Co. had interests in southern pastoral holdings, and with W. G. Walker through Aust. Land & Invest. Trust Ltd. Also connected with George Fairburn Pastoral Co. & Richard Goldsborough. 1875-8.	Partner with Sloan & Co: Wharf at Mackay Shipping Agents <i>Dumbleton</i> Plantation <i>Nebia</i> Plantation <i>Cedars</i> Plantation <i>Barrie</i> Plantation <i>Te Kowai</i> Plantation <i>Palms</i> Plantation 1873-1913 Died 1913
16. A. Kemmis	Greenmount Fort Cooper Oakenden 1860s	Oakenden Sugar Co. (mill purchased but never erected) 1882-1887
17. A.H. Lloyd	Blue Mt. Cotherstone (meat & bullocks for <i>Dumbleton</i> ) 1860s-1880	<i>Dumbleton</i> Plantation 1868 - mid 1890s 1887 mill closed
18. J.B. Macartney	St Helens Jolimount 1863-1880	Purchased large block of sugar land to pro- duce for Seaforth Plantation (never eventuated) 1880s.
19. C.F. McKinnon	N.S.W. pastoral interests	<i>Pioneer</i> Plantation <i>Ashburton</i> Plantation 1881-1893
20. R. Martin	Hamilton Hopetown Abington 1863-1882 Mandarana 1879 - 1898	"Mandarana" Estate cane & cattle 1879-1898 Died 1898

NAME	PASTORAL INTEREST	SUGAR INTEREST at Mackay
21. E.S. Rawson C.C. Rawson	The Hollow - (Abington) 1866-1897	North Queensland Sugar Estate Co. Ltd. 1884-1891 + (Land owned into twentieth century)
22. C. Walker	Cotherstone 1867-1880	<i>Dumbleton</i> 1869-1880 Died 1880
23. J. Walker (brother of 24.)	Homebush 1866-1870 Greenmount 1879-1883	Sugar Selections Nos. 44 & 66 1866
24. W.G. Walker (brother of 23.)	Fort Cooper 1862 Walkerston Boiling Down Works 1867/8-1870	Financially connected to R.J. Jeffray of W. Sloan & Co., through Aust. Land & Invest. Trust Ltd. 1878, and Sugar Selections Nos. 44 & 66 in 1866

Sources:

1. Munro, *Sugar Fields*, 27; Cook-Atherton Family Records in the Delamothe Collection, *JCUNQ.* (q.v. No. 5).
2. *Ibid.*
3. Waterson, *Queensland Parliament*, 57; *MM* 31 December 1906, 22 November 1873, 25 March 1876; *MM Jubilee 1912*, 14; *Qlder* 1 January, 22 April 1876.
4. *MM* 22 October 1870; *MM Diamond Jubilee 1922*; Appendix Three: Meadowlands & Balmoral. (q.v. No. 14).
5. Munro, *Sugar Fields*, 47; *MM Centenary 1962*, 9; *QSA CLO/N46*, 48; *QSA TRE/17*, 434, 233; Appendix Three: Plane Creek.
6. Waterson, *Queensland Parliament*, 15-6; *MM* 19 August 1899, 13 July 1867; *MM Jubilee 1912*, 2, 11; Appendix Three: Cedars.
7. Munro, *Sugar Fields*, 53; F.E. Hiscocks, *New District Atlas of Queensland* (Brisbane, 1878), 3-4; *MM* 17 May 1879; *HTBR*: 3 February 1878.
8. Kerr, *Sugar Mills*; Appendix Three: Miclere.



9. Munro, *Sugar Fields*, 27; Kirwan, *Sugar Industry*, 8-9; *MM* 19 April 1902, 22 January 1901; Balnagowan: footnote 12 of this chapter.
10. Waterson, *Queensland Parliament*, 43; *QSA TRE/17*, 195, 232.
11. Waterson, *ibid.*, 57-8; Hiscocks, *Atlas*, 3-4; Appendix Three: Nebia.
12. *MM Jubilee 1912*, 2, 21; Appendix Three: Beaconsfield.
13. Munro, *Sugar Fields*, 43; *MM* 17 July 1886, 15 March 1904; Hiscocks, *Atlas*, 3-4.
14. *MM* 10 October 1889, 28 May 1870; Appendix Three: Meadowlands & Balmoral.
15. *The Pastoral Review*, No. 23 (1913), 556; *MUBA*: Blake & Riggall.
16. J.W. Bull, *Early Experiences of Life in South Australia and an Extended Colonial History* (London, 1884), 411; *MM Jubilee 1912*, 11-2; *QSA TRE/17*, 327; Appendix Three: Oakenden.
17. Roth, *Port Mackay*, 56; Appendix Three: Dumbleton.
18. *MCCA*: McCartney Manuscript.
19. *MUBA*: Blake & Riggall: Deeds of partnership of C.F. Mckinnon, W. Crellin, E.F. Yencken & Mrs Tripp, 16 October 1878; Appendix Three: Pioneer & Ashburton.
20. *MM* 26 March 1898; *BOHC* 36Ba:1 (ONF); *QSA TRE/17*, 481, 232.
21. *The Sugar Cane*, v. 16 (1884), 571; Appendix Three: NQ Sug. Est. Co. Ltd.; *MM* 26 March 1898.
22. *MM Jubilee 1912*, 11; Appendix Three: Dumbleton.
23. *QSA LAN/215*; *QSA TRE/17*, 231, 328; *QGG* 1878:2, 605. (q.v. No. 24).
24. *QSA LAN/215*; *MM Jubilee 1912*, 11; *MUBA*: Blake & Riggall. (q.v. No. 23).

Table Five:

Mackay resident plantation owners and their wives: their  
father's profession and place of residence

OWNER'S NAME	PLANTATION	FATHER'S PROFESSION	FATHER'S RESIDENCE
1.			
F.T. Amhurst	<i>Foulden</i>	Landowner & High Sherriff of Norfolk	Kent Norfolk Middlesex
2.			
J.S. Avery and wife E.L. (née Edgar)	<i>Miclere Conningsby</i>	Clergyman  Merchant	England  Scotland
3.			
H.B. & M.H. Black	<i>Cedars</i>	Book- publisher (A&C Black Ltd.?)	Scotland
4.			
J.E. Davidson	<i>Alexandra M-M S Co.</i>		Westminster Middlesex
5.			
Lizzie (née Yates) Donaldson, wife of James	<i>Cassada</i>	Iron- merchant	Glasgow
6.			
T.H. Fitzgerald and wife Jessie (née Wilson)	<i>Alexandra Meadowlands Te Kowai</i>	Farmer  Parliamen- tarian	Carrickmacross, County Monaghan New Zealand

Table Five cont.

7.

C. Fitzsimmons	<i>Nebia</i>	Farmer	Cavan, Ireland
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8.

A. Henderson and wife Lydia (née Jackson)	<i>River Beaconsfield</i>	Farmer  Linen- Manufacturer	Scotland  Ireland
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9.

W.H. Hyne	<i>Balmoral Meadowlands</i>	Farmer	Devon
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10.

D. Jack and wife Sarah (née Hobday)	<i>Barrie</i>	Farmer  Silk Manufacturer	Scotland  Manchester
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11.

E.B. Kennedy and wife Edith (née Coverley)	<i>Meadowlands</i>	Diplomat  Civil Servant	England  Bengal
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12.

C.J. King	<i>Meadowlands</i>	Clergyman	Kent
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13.

G.H.M. King and wife H.R.M.M.G. (née Tate)	<i>Branscombe Palms</i>	Captain R.N.  Clergyman	Sussex  Devon
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Table Five cont.

14.

A.H. Lloyd	<i>Dumbleton</i>	Landowner	York
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15.

G.L. & W.H. & E.M. Long	<i>Branscombe River Habana</i>	Archdeacon	England
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16.

W.T. Paget	<i>Nindaroo</i>	Merchant	Covertry
and wife Mary Jane (née Downing)		Clergyman	Leeds
and wife Alice (née Haden)		Med. Doctor	Adelaide

17.

A.V. Robinson and wife Sophia (née Waterson)	<i>Lorne</i>	Army Major  Overseer	Lydd, engl.  Rockhampton town council
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Sources:

1. *MM* 16 April 1881; *MCCA*: Rockley; Waterson, *Queensland Parliament*, 3.
2. *HTMR*: 6 May 1879.
3. *MM* 19 August 1899; *Dictionary of National Biography*, v. 2, 567-8.
4. Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses*, 343.
5. *MM* 7 August 1880.
6. *ADB*, v. 4, 179; *MM* 2 July 1901.
7. Waterson, *Queensland Parliament*, 57.
8. *HTMR*: 27 September 1871.
9. *HTMR*: 17 November 1875.
10. *HTMR*: 16 March 1883.

Table Five sources cont.

11. *MM* 24 July 1875.
12. *MM* 2 November 1872.
13. *MM* 21 February 1883; *HTMR*: 17 February 1883.
14. *HTMR*: 26 March 1883.
15. *MM* 10 August 1905.
16. *HTMR*: 26 June 1875, 8 August 1884; *MM* 3 July 1875, 30 April 1889.
17. *HTMR*: 17 November 1883.

Table Six.

Connections between Mackay and overseas sugar cane  
producing areas.

(West Indies/Mauritius/Fiji/Demerara/Java)

INDIVIDUAL	MILL/POSITION	OVERSEAS ORIGIN OR CONNECTION
<u>West Indies</u>		
1 W. McLean	<i>Homebush</i> Manager 1885	Previous plantation experience in the West Indies.
2 J. Spiller	<i>Pioneer River</i> owner	E.S. Rawson claimed that Spiller had plantation experience from the West Indies as well as Java.
3 J.E. Davidson	<i>Alexandra Palms</i> owner	Davidson visited the West Indies on his way to begin life as a sugar plantation owner in Queensland.
4 J. Dow	<i>Alexandra Meadowlands Palms Ashburton Racecourse</i> construction engineer. Dow was also superintending engineer of many other Mackay Mills.	Dow received his training as an engineer in mills on St Vincent in the West Indies.
5 A. Cumming	<i>Richmond</i> owner	Cumming came from the West Indies to Mackay. He had owned a sugar plantation on St Vincent.
6 H. McCreedy	<i>Alexandra Richmond Palmyra</i> manager and owner	McCreedy had spent 19 years working in the sugar industry on St Vincent and St Kitts.

Table Six cont.

INDIVIDUAL	MILL/POSITION	OVERSEAS ORIGIN OR CONNECTION
7 D. Macdonald	<i>Inverness</i>	Donald and Caroline Macdonald were from Trinidad, Cuba.
8 W. Nicholson	<i>Meadowlands</i> overseer 1882	Nicholson was from Santa Rose Estate, Cuba.
9 ?	<i>Pleystowe</i> overseer 1870	Of West Indian origin.
10 M.H. Black	<i>Cedars</i> owner	Black's wife Euphemia was from Jamacia.
11 W. Coakley	farmer	Coakley was a West Indian negro.
12 John	1892	A West Indian was tried in the Court for assault.
13 James Sparks	1878 labourer	Sparks was born in Barbados, and married Roto, a Melanesian.
<u>Mauritius</u> 14 J.L. Duval	<i>Nebia</i> 1880-2 <i>Te Kowai</i> manager	Duval was originally from Mauritius and left Mackay to work in Fiji.
15 D. Dupont	<i>Te Kowai</i> 1875 manager	Dupont was from Mauritius, returned to there in 1876, and then back to Mackay
16 J.R. Paddle	<i>Mt Pleasant</i> worker	Paddle was the son of a Mauritius sugar planter.
17 Mr Merandan	<i>Homebush</i> 1883 visitor	From Mauritius

Table Six Cont.

INDIVIDUALS	MILL/POSITION	OVERSEAS ORIGIN OR CONNECTION
18 H. Garreau	<i>Alexandra</i> 1883 visitor	Garreau, from Mauritius, was introduced to J.E. Davidson by E. Knox of CSR. He wanted to invest in the Queensland sugar industry.
<u>Fiji</u> 19 R.D. Dunne	<i>Cassada Palmyra</i> 1891 manager	Dunne first worked at Mackay in the 1870s, then he worked in Fiji, but returned to manage <i>Palmyra</i> when McCready was in England in 1891.
20 A. Kemmis	"Brightly" estate owner	Kemmis's three daughters married Europeans in Fiji in 1885, 1889 and 1892. One of these men owned a plantation.
21 Capt. Mosley	<i>Homebush</i> 1883 visitor	Mosley was a Fijian planter who visited Robertson, manager of <i>Homebush</i> .
<u>British Guiana</u> (Demerara) 22 E. Denman	"Etowrie" estate owner	From 1864 to 1867, prior to living at Mackay, Denman was head Overseer on an estate in Demerara.
23 ?	<i>Pioneer</i> 1892 sugar boiler	The man had fifteen years experience as a sugar boiler in Demerara.
<u>Java</u> 24 J. Spiller	<i>Pioneer River</i> owner	Spiller came from Java to Mackay in 1865.
25 Mr Booth	<i>Pioneer</i> 1867 erected the mill	Brought from Java by Spiller.



Table Six cont.

INDIVIDUALS	MILL/POSITION	OVERSEAS ORIGIN OR CONNECTION
26 Mr Alterieth	<i>Pioneer</i> 1870 mill super- intendant.	Alterieth was from Java.
27 Javanese Servant	<i>Pioneer</i> 1865 + servant	Spiller brought a Javanese servant with him in 1865.

A rough culling of the register kept at the Mackay District Hospital revealed a number of individuals born either in the West Indies or Mauritius.

Refer to the entries for:

John Ceaser                   (30-10-1892) (2-4-1903) Probably No.12 in Table.  
Silver                         (12-12-1894)  
Richard Hart                 ( 5-9-1895)  
Alfred Thompson             (14-11-1898)  
Charles Gabriel              (28-7-1904)  
Letord Hermann              (22-1-1907)  
Jenry Richards               ( 4-12-1908)

Sources:

1. *South Australia, Proceedings of Parliament*, v. 2 (1895): Report of the Northern Territory Commission, 145.
2. *BA&NZ Mail*, 9 May 1901, Supp. XII (E.S. Rawson) Appendix Three: Pioneer, River.
3. *Brisbane Guardian*, 4 November 1868.
4. J.E. Davidson Diary, 27 March 1869; *MM* 29 October 1870; Sloan & Co, Mackay Records, Dow to Sloan & Co. 14 July 1877; *MM* 31 March 1877; *MM* 23 March 1881; *MM* 23 August 1890; *MM* 17 September 1925; Kirwan, *Sugar Industry*, 6; *MM Jubilee 1912*, 9, 12-3.
5. *MM* 5 February 1879; *HTMR*: 29 November 1879; *MM* 30 July 1975.
6. *MM* 17 July 1878; *MM Jubilee 1912*, 28; *MM Jubilee 1912*, 8-9 (A. McClanachan); *MM* 23 October 1869, 6 November 1878.
7. *MM* 17 October 1877; Catholic Baptismal Register, St Patrick's Church, Mackay, 29 March 1875.

Sources for Table Six cont:

8. *MM* 13 December 1882.
9. *MM* 20 August 1870.
10. *ADB* 1851-1890, v. 4, 169-70.
11. Ole Matsen Diary 7; *MM* 16 March 1881.
12. *MM* 15 October 1892.
13. *HTMR*: 24 November 1878.
14. *MM* 27 September 1875, 4 February 1880.
15. *MM* 4 September 1875, 26 August, 2 September 1876; *Qlder* 22 April 1876.
16. *MM* 8 August 1883.
17. *CSR* 144/1227 (OUT), Knox to Robertson, 28 May 1883.
18. *CSR* 144/1226 (OUT), Knox to Davidson, 8 March 1883.
19. *ASJ*, 7 March 1924, 765; *MM* 15 January 1891.
20. *MM* 31 January, 4 February 1885, 15 June 1889, 23 April 1892.
21. *CSR* 144/1227 (OUT), Knox to Robertson, 11 October 1883.
22. *MM* 14 March 1893, 30 July 1975.
23. *MM* 13 December 1882.
24. Roth, *Port Mackay*, 59-60.
25. *Ibid.*
26. *MM* 28 March 1905.
27. Roth, *Port Mackay*, 60.

Table Seven.

## Chairmen and Members of the Pioneer Shire Council in the 19th Century

	NAME	YEARS	PROFESSION
1	Adrian, William Simpson Crawford	1886-90	Planter
2	Armstrong, Rowley Rutherford	1896-1903	?
3	Atherton, Edmund	1891-98	Pastoralist- major FM. share- holder.
4	Bagley, William	1885-95	Merchant
5	Bell, Henry	1883-95	Pastoralist major FM. shareholder
6	Black, Maurice Hume	1880-81	Planter
7	Brown, James Phillips	1889-91	?
8	Brown, William	1885-87	?
9	Burbank, Alfred H.	1887-89	Surveyor
10	Cartner, Alexander Downie	1890-94	Plantation manager
11	Coyne, David	1895-98	FM. share- holder
12	Dalrymple, David Hay	1880-88	Pastoralist major FM. shareholder
13	Davidson, John Ewen	1880-99	Planter
14	Donaldson, Robert Edward	1883-89	Planter
15	Du Couret, Francois Louis	1895	FM. Secretary
16	Finlayson, Hector Mackenzie	1883-85	Planter
17	Hack, Sam	1898-1901	?
18	Harney, John	1889	Small farmer
19	Hyne, William Henry	1880-83	Planter
20	Inverarity, Willoughby	1890-96	?
21	Jane, Henry John	1882-86 1894-97	Estate owner
22	Kable, Henry Charleton	1886-88	FM. shareholder
23	Kemmis Arthur	1880-84	Pastoralist- planter
24	Kippen, Robert	1894-95	Small farmer
25	Lacy, Dyson	1880-81	Pastoralist

Table Seven cont.

	NAME	YEARS	PROFESSION
26	Lloyd, Alfred Hart	1885-96	Planter- pastoralist
27	Long, Edward Maitland	1880-81 1897-1900	Planter
28	Macgregor, Adam Roy	1885-90	Pastoralist
29	Mackenzie, Alexander Richard	1888-91	Planter
30	Markey, Daniel	1898-1907	? <i>Farmer</i>
31	Martin, Robert	1880-83	Pastoralist
32	McBryde, John	1881-83 1890-95	Planter
33	Merchant, Isaac	1892-94	?
34	Neill, Richard	1895-1906	?
35	Nicholson, John Christopherson	1899-1902	FM. shareholder
36	Paget, Walter Trueman	1883-90 1901	Planter- politician
37	Rawson, Edmund Stansfield	1880-82	Pastoralist
38	Raymond, Percy Algernon	1884-85	?
39	Ready, Michael	1895-1906	FM. shareholder
40	Robertson, Henry E.	1898-1900	?
41	Robertson, Williar	1890-92	Planter
42	Rolleston, John	1889-96	FM. shareholder
43	Shannon, R.	1896-1902	Pastoralist
44	Smith, Alfred	1891-95	Planter
45	Swayne, Edward Bowdick	1895-98	Small farmer
46	Walker, Robert	1881-85	Plantation manager
47	Webster, Charles	1882-86	Merchant
48	Willock, Charles Johnstone	1888-89	?

Source: John Kerr, *Pioneer Pageant*, 226-7.

FM. = Farmers' mill.

(Profession provided by the author)

Table Eight.Justices of the Peace in the Pioneer region in 1883

<u>NAME</u>	<u>PROFESSION</u>
1. Ashdown, Edward Parker	Bank manager
2. Black, Maurice Hume	Planter-politician
3. Brandon, Henry	Bank manager
4. Bromberg, Herman	Merchant
5. Brown, Cornwallis Wade	Pastoralist
6. Cook, John	Pastoralist
7. Dalrymple, David Hay	Pastoralist-pharmacist
8. Davidson, John Ewan	Planter
9. Dutailis, Charles Robert	Auctioneer-agent
10. Finlayson, Hector Mackenzie	Planter
11. Finch-Hatton, Henry Stormont	Pastoralist
12. Finch-Hatton, Harold Henage	Pastoralist-miner
13. Goodall, William Robert	Magistrate
14. Harney, John	Pastoralist-agriculturalist
15. Harper, Dudley Marshall	Auctioneer
16. Harpur, Richard Donovan Speer	Merchant ?
17. Hewitt, Alfred	Planter
18. Horsey, Thomas Knibb	Auctioneer
19. Hyne, William	Planter
20. Keeley, Charles	Publican
21. Kemmis, Arthur	Pastoralist-planter
22. King, George Henry Maitland	Planter
23. Lacey, Dyson	Pastoralist
24. Long, Edward Maitland	Planter
25. MacCartney, Edward Robert Norfor	Sub-collector of Customs
26. Macdonald, Alexander Rose	Inspector of Pacific Islanders
27. Macrae, Mark Reginald	Plantation manager
28. Marsh, William	Merchant
29. McBurney, Robert	Medical doctor-planter
30. Paxton, William Henry	Merchant-agent
31. Rawson, Charles Collinson	Pastoralist-auctioneer-butcher
32. Rawson, Edmund Stansfield	Pastoralist-auctioneer-butcher
33. Reid, Alexander	?

Table Eight Cont.

34.	Reid, Edward Vincent	Bank manager
35.	Rice, Lionel Knight	Pastoralist
36.	Robinson, Henry John Goodwin	Plantation manager
37.	Sharp, John Howard	Merchant
38.	Smith, George	Agent-auctioneer
39.	Thomson, Archibald	Auctioneer
40.	Toussaint, Charles Walter	Pastoralist
41.	Walker, Robert	Plantation manager
42.	Webster, Charles	Merchant

Sources:

*QGC* January-June 1883, 69

*Pughs* 1883, 351

*MM Jubilee* 1912

*MM* 14 April 1883: Quarterly Electoral List

Table Nine.

Parliamentary representatives of the Pioneer Region 1867-1915(Before 1867 Mackay was included in the Leichhardt area)

T.H. Fitzgerald	1867-1869	Mackay plantation owner ( <i>Alexandra</i> )
E. MacDevitt	1870-1873	Brisbane barrister
T.H. Fitzgerald	1873-1875	Mackay plantation owner ( <i>Alexandra, Meadowlands, Te Kowai</i> )
F.T. Amhurst	1875-1877	Mackay plantation owner ( <i>Foulden</i> )
H.R. Beor	1877-1880	Brisbane solicitor
F.T. Amhurst	1878-1881	Mackay plantation owner ( <i>Foulden</i> )
M.H. Black	1881-1893	Mackay plantation owner ( <i>Cedars</i> )
D.H. Dalrymple	1884-1904	Mackay pastoralist and pharmacist ( <i>Hamilton-Pinnacle</i> )
J.V. Chataway	1893-1901	Mackay newspaper proprietor
W.T. Paget	1901-1915	Mackay plantation owner ( <i>Nindaroo</i> (closed in 1900) )
A.J.W. Fudge	1904-1907	Mirani farmer
E.B. Swayne	1907-1935	Farmers' representative

Sources:

Waterson, *Biographical Register of the Queensland Parliament; Queensland Parliamentary Handbook* (Brisbane, 1977).