



**Figure 5.1** *Naturels de Rotuma (Natives of Rotuma)*. Duperrey 1826.

## 5 Expanding Horizons

Beachcombers...were strangers in their new societies and scandals to their old. They left behind them the roles that made their world orderly and its gestures meaningful. On the beach they were no longer the sailors, the husbands or even the men that those roles made....On the beach, they needed to assume roles recognizable to their new world....This new world could not be the one they left: it lacked all the essential ingredients. It could not be the world on which they had just intruded: none could be born again so radically. So on the beach they experimented. They made wives, children, relations, property in new ways....But they were not bound by the rules of their new world. By breaking its rules and not suffering for it, they weakened its sanctions, made absolutes relative to their condition.

Greg Denning, *Islands and Beaches*, 1980

Captain Edward Edwards in HMS *Pandora* made the first recorded European citing of Rotuma in 1791 while searching for the mutineers of the *Bounty*. According to the accounts of Captain Edwards and the ship's surgeon, Dr. George Hamilton, the Rotumans received the vessel cautiously. They approached in canoes prepared for combat, but the *Pandora's* crew eventually overcame their reluctance with friendly overtures and presents, and successfully negotiated for water and other supplies.<sup>1</sup>

Six years later, on 16 September 1797, the missionary ship *Duff*, under the command of Captain James Wilson, called at the island. The *Duff* was headed for China after dropping off missionaries in Tongatapu. Reluctant to trade, it being a Sunday, the crew engaged in only a minimum exchange with a few Rotumans who came to meet the vessel in canoes. Wilson sailed along the north shore from east to west, and noted the anchorage off Maka Bay, but chose to

sail on. An account compiled from the journals of the officers and missionaries on board is of interest for the details it contains despite the brevity of the encounter:

The main island far exceeds in populousness and fertility all that we had seen in this sea; for in a space not more than a mile in length we counted about two hundred houses next to the beach, besides what the trees probably concealed from our view; this was at the east end, and there was reason to think almost every part of it equally well inhabited. In the shape and size of their persons we could distinguish no difference between them and the Friendly Islanders, except that we thought them a lighter colour, and some difference in tattooing, having here the resemblance of birds and fishes, with circles and spots upon their arms and shoulders; the latter are seemingly intended to represent the heavenly bodies. Two or three of the women we saw were tattooed in this last way; at Tongatapu they keep the upper parts clear of all tattooing. The women here wear their hair long, have it dyed of a reddish colour, and with a pigment of the same, mixed with cocoa-nut oil, they rub their neck and breast. The men who were on board appeared to have much of the shrewd, manly sense of the above people, and many of their customs. One of them made signs, that in cases of mourning they cut their heads with sharks' teeth, beat their cheeks till they bled, and wounded themselves with spears, but that the women only cut off the little fingers, the men being exempt from it; whereas at Tongatapu there is hardly man or woman but what has lost both.

Their single canoes (for we saw no double ones) were nearly the same in all respects as at the Friendly Islands, being of the same shape, sewed together on the inside, and decorated in the same manner seemed not so neat and well finished. The only weapons we saw were spears curiously carved, and pointed with the bone of the sting ray. The natives expressed great surprise and curiosity at the sight of our sheep, goats, and cats. Hogs and fowls, they said, they had in great plenty, which, added to the evidently superior fertility of the islands, and the seeming cheerful and friendly disposition of the natives, makes this, in our opinion, the most eligible place for ships coming from the

eastward, wanting refreshments, to touch at: and with regard to missionary views, could one or two young men, such as Crook, be found willing to devote their lives to the instruction of perhaps five or six thousand poor heathen, there can hardly be a place where they could settle with greater advantage, as there is food in abundance; and the island lying remote from others, can never be engaged in wars, except what broils may happen among themselves.<sup>2</sup>

One suspects that this account proved alluring to ships' captains and missionaries alike. The attraction of such a fertile island, promising a bountiful reprovisioning opportunity, surely must have appealed to the captains of whaling ships and other European and American vessels that plied this part of the Pacific with increasing frequency during the first half of the nineteenth century. Indeed, Rotuma became a favorite port of call for whalers seeking provisions, beginning in the 1820s and lasting until the decline of the industry around 1870.

### Renegades and Beachcombers

The first record of a person from a European vessel taking up residence on Rotuma was from the Sydney brig *Campbell Macquarie*, which called at Rotuma in 1814 for provisions. Peter Dillon, who visited Rotuma in 1827, reported that an old Sandwich Islander by the name of Babahey, whom he knew and had sailed with, had asked to be left ashore and was granted permission by the *Campbell Macquarie*'s captain. He was told that Babahey had died eight years previously, leaving a daughter behind.<sup>3</sup>

Lesson, who arrived at Rotuma on the French corvette *Coquille* on 1 May 1824, was told that two months earlier eight men from the ship *Rochester* had deserted and were still on the island. The story behind the desertion was related by Lesson in a footnote:

This vessel rounded Cape Horn, sailed up the coast of Chile and Peru, stopped at Truxillo, went on to the Marquesas where it made contact with the natives, dropped anchor at Tonga-Tabu and then on to the shores of New Zealand and an anchorage at Island Bay. The crew had long been justified in complaining of the captain. He had killed one man on the coast of Peru

and committed another murder at Island Bay. A meeting was called on board, consisting of five or six whaling-ship captains and presided over by Mr. Williams, a missionary. Each sailor took an oath on the Bible and the transcript of the trial was forwarded to England. The "Rochester" then left New Zealand, heading for Fiji, Mowala and the western islands. They made contact with the natives, keeping chiefs on board for days at a time without causing the least friction with the islanders. Arriving at Rotuma, they met a large school of whales and cruised in the vicinity for 15 days. When they sent boats ashore they were well received and went into several villages without insult. Several sailors deserted but when the captain put five of their chiefs in irons they delivered up the deserters. But his behavior had been so barbarous and he had pushed folly so far as to threaten to blow up the ship, that on the day of departure, at ten o'clock that night, eight men, including the third and fourth officers, let down a whaling dinghy with some books and instruments aboard. They rowed all night and in the morning, being out of sight of the ship, they set sail back to the island. As soon as they arrived they were surrounded, their instruments broken, their clothing torn off and the pieces used to decorate the islanders' heads. They were given matting to wear and were eagerly invited into the chiefs' houses. They became increasingly delighted with the kindness of their hosts, however, no one would allow them a woman until they had had enough time to know if they liked living on the island. Twice they went to the king with their request. He gathered his Council and gave them some public women to help them be patient. Finally, after a month, they assembled all the nubile girls from the villages they were living in, and those chosen seemed very proud. We must attribute this desire to possess Europeans to a feeling of inferiority and curiosity, because the natives of Rotuma confess that they are very ignorant.<sup>4</sup>

Four of the English sailors who had deserted the *Rochester* came aboard the *Coquille*. According to Lesson they were dressed "like the savages," in nothing more than a piece of matting around their waists. They had been tattooed in Rotuman fashion and were smeared with turmeric powder. One of the men, whom Lesson identified as "Williams John"

from Northumberland, a cooper by trade, asked and received permission to join the ship. He was described by Lesson as a gentle man of honest nature, good sense, and some learning, and provided most of the information about Rotuman life and customs in Lesson's account. The other deserters, Lesson wrote, chose to remain on the island.

Lesson went on to report that two liberated convicts whom they had picked up at Port Jackson begged insistently to be left on the island. He commented that the Rotumans vied for the chance to receive them into their families and carried them ashore in triumph.<sup>5</sup>

Three years later, Dillon met two of the deserters, Parker and Young, whom he reluctantly employed as pilots and interpreters. In contrast to John's account of abused crewmen escaping a tyrannical captain, Dillon relates an alternative account told him by a Captain Bren, master of a whaler. According to Bren, when the *Rochester*, under the command of Captain Worth, arrived at Rotuma for refreshments,

the crew were mutinous and disorderly, and gave the captain and his officers much trouble in preserving order on board. Several of them attempted to desert, but were prevented by the captain's vigilance. While laying to off Rothuma on the whaling station, the captain's brother-in-law, a young man named Young, who had charge of the watch on deck, with the carpenter's mate, Parker, and four others, lowered down a whale-boat with all her whaling tackle, robbed the ship of her arms and various other articles, and made off to Rothuma, where the natives received them kindly. Each married two or three wives, according to the custom of the country, and have now large families growing up.<sup>6</sup>

Dillon reported that three of the deserters (presumably including John) had since left the island, but that three others from a ship that recently anchored off the island had replaced them.<sup>7</sup>

The number of deserters and escaped convicts from Australia who took refuge on Rotuma increased significantly over the next couple of years, and in May 1830, Captain William Waldegrave of HMS *Seringapatam* wrote the following to Governor Ralph Darling of New South Wales:

I beg leave to state that I was requested by several Masters of Merchant Vessels trading amongst the

Feejee and Friendly Islands, to go to the Island of Rotumah...to take away thirty English persons,<sup>8</sup> one half of which were said to be Convicts, the other half deserters from British Merchant Vessels. [They are] residing on that Island to the terror of all Merchant Vessels Visiting that Island, in their habits were such so to excite the Natives to evil; their intention was supposed to be to seize upon some small Merchant Vessel and commence Piracy.<sup>9</sup>

Darling asked Commander Sandilands of the sloop *Comet* to undertake the task of removing these Englishmen from Rotuma, but circumstances did not permit.

The tensions created for ships' captains by these renegades are vividly conveyed in the log of the brig *Spy* by Captain John Knights:

there are at least *twenty convicts* among them who are *dangerous fellows*. I was aware of this, as I knew Captain Eagleston had landed an English sailor here the voyage previous, by his request, and paid him and these rascals murdered him the first night for his money which was tied round him, in gold. Besides, I had been frequently cautioned by several English captains, if I stopped here, to admit none of them on board. I had *never* allowed any sailor from shore to come on board at New Zealand and here I gave my mate strict orders to the same effect. Several were alongside the first day but were ordered off. The next day twelve or fourteen were alongside in the different canoes with the natives and in spite of the mate, two came on board. I soon drove them over the bow with a few cuts with a ropes-end, as they knew my previous orders and *were insolent*.

The next day I was under the necessity of going on shore to purchase a lot of yams, and on landing on the beach I was met and surrounded by *nine* of these *vagabonds*, part of them entirely naked. They saluted me with "You threatened to flay *me* if I came on board your ship." I answered that I did and *would either* or *any of them* who did so contrary to *my orders*. They told me then, with much insolence, "*We were on equal terms* and to do *it then*." Being armed with loaded pistols and a dirk, which they had not seen, I drew a *pistol*, cocked it and then *assured them solemnly*, if a *hand* was raised or an *impediment* put in my way of

proceeding, I would silence *at least* a pair of them and then proceeded through the gang without seeming to take further notice and finished my business. When I got back to the boat with the yams, these fellows were still about but not game enough to run the risque of attacking me. I must confess I did not feel very easy, while on shore, and I well knew that the least signs of dread or moving from the purposes of my visit would, in all probability, be the *finishing of me*. Consequently I was *not* a *little* happy on getting once more safe on board.<sup>10</sup>

Eventually, however, if we are to take Litton Forbes's narrative of "Old Bill's" experience at face value, the beachcombers took care of the problem by killing one another. Forbes visited Rotuma in 1872 and sought out white men on the island. He found an old man named Bill who claimed to have settled on Rotuma some forty years before, when he was about twenty years old. Bill said that at the time there were over seventy whites on the island,

all, with scarcely an exception, runaway convicts from van Diemen's Land and Botany Bay....One of these men had managed to extemporise a rough still, and the daily occupation of himself and fellows was distilling "grog" from the shoots of the cocoa-nut trees. As might be imagined, these lawless men, freed from every restraint and inflamed by drink, abandoned themselves to every excess, scaring even the savage natives by the wildness of their orgies. Desperate conflicts with each other, and with the natives, gradually thinned their numbers, and old Bill assured me that of all the seventy men were on the island when he first landed, there was not one who escaped a violent death....At length he found himself the sole survivor of a bygone generation.<sup>11</sup>

Old Bill took on the role of intermediary between ships' captains and Rotumans and thereby gained influence with both. He also became something of an entrepreneur:

He could procure either seamen, or labourers, or provisions, or firewood, as the case might be, better than any other man in Rotumah. If allowed to have his own price he would see that no one else cheated you, and most shipmasters were glad enough to agree to his terms, and thus prevent further misfortunes. In his old age Bill had taken to purchasing cocoa-nut oil, and had



amassed a good deal of money in this way, though what use his wealth could be in such a place no one, probably not even himself, could tell.<sup>12</sup>

An Englishman by the name of Emery also acted as a go-between (and pilot) for visiting ships. More is known about him than about Old Bill, thanks mainly to the log of the ship *Emerald*, captained by John Eagleston, which visited Rotuma in 1834 and again in 1835. Emery had taken up residence on the islet of Uea, about 3.25 kilometers off the northwest coast of the main island (see map, p. 62). He had been an officer on the English whaler *Toward Castle*,<sup>13</sup> which called at Rotuma around 1829 (in 1835 Emery told the officers aboard the *Emerald* that he had been there about six years).

Joseph Osborn, an officer aboard the *Emerald*, wrote that Emery was treated as a chief by the sixty or so people living on Uea, and that he was fluent in the language. He had married a Rotuman woman and built a wooden house after the English fashion, which was admired by his European visitors for its comfort and neatness (including pictures and furniture, English cooking utensils, and books).<sup>14</sup> Cheever described it as "well furnished & somewhat tastefully decorated."<sup>15</sup>

Emery gained a reputation for reliability and was sought out by ships' captains, but this put him at odds with the beachcombers, who were envious of his popularity. He had to be cautious, but Uea is a natural fortress with a very difficult landing, which Emery guarded with a twelve-pounder cannon mounted on a swivel.

Not only white men arrived on Rotuma's hospitable shores during the early part of the nineteenth century. In addition to castaways from the Ellice (Tuvalu) and Gilbert (Kiribati) Islands, and no doubt other islands in the vicinity, a variety of non-Europeans borne by European vessels ended up there. In 1829, Boki, paramount chief of the Hawaiian island of O'ahu, along with several other chiefs, organized an expedition to collect sandalwood in the New Hebrides (Vanuatu). Boki, who had accompanied Kamehameha II on an excursion to London in 1823, was heavily in debt and evidently saw this venture as an opportunity to make his fortune by selling the sandalwood in China. He set out with two schooners and a total complement of four hundred men. On the way one of the vessels, the *Kamehameha*, stopped in Rotuma, leaving a few of its passengers ashore.

When the London Missionary Society vessel *Camden* called at Rotuma in 1839 the crew found some natives from

Aitutaki in the Cook Islands, as well as a group of New Zealand Māori who had arrived aboard a whaling ship. The missionary John Williams, who was aboard the *Camden* and is credited by Rotuman Wesleyans with introducing Christianity to the island (he allowed two Samoan teachers to disembark there), reported that the Cook Island and New Zealand Māori were Christian and had built a little chapel for their own use.<sup>16</sup>

The *Velocity*, a labor-recruiting ship out of Sydney, stopped at Rotuma sometime before mid-nineteenth century and, according to Walter Lawry's account, forty natives from the island of "Uea" near New Caledonia jumped ship and swam ashore.<sup>17</sup> The *Velocity* tried to retrieve the men, to no avail:

The Chief was applied to, in vain, to give them up. He said he would not meddle with it; he did not bring them there, and should not interfere one way or the other. The Europeans then resorted to harsh measures, with a view of compelling the Chief to send back the escaped natives. A scuffle took place between the parties, and some were shot, on both sides. The vessels thereupon sailed without the men, whom they had brought from their homes.<sup>18</sup>

There were others, including an Indian from Madras by the name of Antonio encountered by the Catholic missionary Father Pierre Verne on his visit to Rotuma in 1847, and a man known as West India Jack who in 1879 claimed to have been on the island for fifty-five years.<sup>19</sup> In addition, Rotuman oral histories include reference to Australian Aborigines, Solomon Islanders, and at least one Chinese man who married a Rotuman woman.

### The Impact

An assessment of the impact of these early visitors must begin with a consideration of their numbers. According to Robert Langdon's study of American whalers and traders in the Pacific,<sup>20</sup> between 1825 and 1870, the logs of sixty-three whalers recorded calling on Rotuma, many of them multiple times; most stayed for a day or two, some for as long as two weeks. This does not take into account whalers from other countries or American whalers whose logs were incomplete.

In addition to the whalers, a variety of other vessels called at Rotuma, including labor recruiters, missionaries, and

traders. Narrative accounts of these early visitors frequently mention encountering other vessels visiting the island at the same time, or ships that had recently departed from Rotuma. It seems reasonable to assume that for much of this period ships were appearing at the rate of at least one or more a month, although there were no doubt significant annual and seasonal variations.



**Photo 5.1** Examples of imported clothing styles, 1913. A. M. Hocart. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

Estimates of renegade seamen residing on the island at any given time range from around 30 to between 70 and 100.<sup>21</sup> The numbers surely fluctuated over time, but the higher figures are poorly documented and are probably unrealistic. There was also a lot of circulation, with vessels at times dropping off some sailors and taking on others who decided to leave Rotuma after having stayed a while.

The degree to which Rotuman women were available to renegade sailors is not entirely clear. The English renegade John described a system of temporary marriage in which a young girl would marry a sailor for the duration of his stay in exchange for presents to her parents and chief,<sup>22</sup> but Lesson's account of the *Rochester's* deserters, cited earlier, suggests that Rotumans were unwilling to provide wives for deserters unless they verified their intentions of remaining on the island. In the meantime, they were provided with "public women." This suggests a Rotuman classification of

unmarried women into two categories: those without sexual experience, whose restricted status required a man to make a long-term marital commitment to gain sexual access, and others known to have had sexual experience, who were free to indulge in sexual liaisons at will.

Indeed, young women who were considered virgins had a special place in ancient Rotuman society. They were key participants in kava ceremonies and were distinguished by the way they wore their hair. Prior to marriage they were required to cut their hair close and plaster it with a mixture of burnt coral and the gum of the breadfruit tree, a practice that earned them the name of "whiteheads" from European sailors. After marriage the cement-like mixture was removed and women were allowed to grow their hair long (see photo 4.13).<sup>23</sup>

Virgin brides were able to contract more favorable marriages, so they were well guarded by their male kin and chiefs,<sup>24</sup> who stood to benefit economically, politically, or both from such unions.<sup>25</sup>

It seems likely, therefore, that most of the renegade sailors had only limited access to Rotuman women, and then only if they were in a position to provide benefits in exchange. Their offspring were probably quite limited and may well have been stigmatized by being born to single, lower-status women. But several of the foreign sailors—Williams John, Emery, and "Old Bill" among them—evidently married and had substantial numbers of progeny. Charles Howard, an English sailor from Yorkshire, was another settler (see photo 5.2). Howard arrived at Rotuma in 1836 and married twice, first to a Rotuman woman from Haga, Juju; after she died, he married a Gilbertese woman residing on the island. He is reputed to have founded a large family, and today a considerable number of Rotumans claim to be his descendents.<sup>26</sup> Later in the nineteenth century came a stream of traders, several of whom married Rotuman women and raised large families. Among the surnames they passed on are Morris, Olsen, Gibson (see photo 5.3), Foster, Kaad, Whitcombe, Missen, and Croker.

It appears that these men infused more than their share of genes into the Rotuman pool, in part, perhaps, because their offspring appear to have had somewhat greater immunity to diseases, like measles, that proved lethal to so many Rotumans.<sup>27</sup>



**Photo 5.2** Charles Howard. © Fiji Museum.



**Photo 5.3** Alexander and Annie Gibson. *Gibson family album.*

## Rotuman Sailors

That Rotuman men were eager to leave their home island aboard European vessels, and took every opportunity to do so, is clear from the reports of nearly all of the early commentators.<sup>28</sup> Europeans praised the qualities that made Rotumans desirable sailors. The remarks of Joseph Osborn, aboard the whaling ship *Emerald*, are typical:

They love to visit foreign countries & great numbers of them ship on board the English whaleships....On board a ship they are as good or better than any of the South Sea natives: diligent, civil & quiet, 3 very necessary qualities. They soon learn to talk English & there is but few of them but what can talk a few words.<sup>29</sup>

John Eagleston, captain of the *Emerald*, echoed Osborn's sentiments. "They make good ship men," he wrote, and "for a trading vessel are preferable to any of the other natives which I am acquainted with, they being more true & faithful & more to be depended on."<sup>30</sup> He noted that he had had a number of Rotumans aboard as crewmen in the past, as well as other islanders, but found Rotumans to be the best.

Some forty years later Litton Forbes wrote:

The men of Rotumah make good sailors, and after a few years' service in sea-going vessels are worth the same wages as white men. Scarcely a man on the island but has been more or less of a traveller. It is no rare thing to find men who have visited [Le] Harve, or New York, or Calcutta, men who can discuss the relative merits of a sailors' home in London or Liverpool, and dilate on the advantages of steam over sailing vessels. Thus the average native of Rotumah is more than usually capable and intelligent.<sup>31</sup>

W. L. Allardyce, who was on Rotuma about this time, commented on the shift in traveling destinations resulting from the demise of the whaling industry, as well as the social price paid by those who stayed at home:

Nearly all the men on the island have at one time or another been to sea, and while in the old whaling days Honolulu and Behring [Bering] Straits formed the goal of their ideas, the sailors of the present day must needs visit New Zealand, Australia, China, and India, while others still more ambitious are not satisfied till they

have rounded the Horn and passed the white cliffs of Dover. The few who have never been to sea at all have often to endure a considerable amount of banter at the expense of their inexperience.<sup>32</sup>

### From a Rotuman Point of View

One cannot help but be curious about how Rotumans digested their early experiences with Europeans. Unfortunately information is scanty because most of what we know is through the writings of Europeans. Rotuman stories about their ancestors' naiveté in early interactions with Europeans survive in the custom of *tē samuga*, in which individuals are teased by reference to the humorous actions of their ancestors. Thus some people are nicknamed "buttons" after a woman who mistook coins given her by a ship's captain for buttons and complained because they had no holes in them; others bear the appellation "shake hands with the mirror" after an ancestor who tried to do just that when he first saw a full-length mirror; and best known of all, the nicknames "biscuit" or "biscuit planter" refer to an incident in which a woman who found hardtack biscuits to her liking attempted to plant one to see if she could grow her own. But we know little about the attitudes Rotumans held toward Europeans, although a Rotuman saying, *fā asoa* (assistant), holds a clue. According to Elizabeth Inia, the saying refers to a foreigner who in the past acted as assistant to the chiefs to do their work. She wrote that the saying refers

to renegade white sailors in the nineteenth century who used their practical knowledge and skills to help the chiefs of Rotuma. Nowadays can be said of people of foreign parentage (including part-Rotumans) who do not properly follow custom but try to help. The phrase excuses them for their inappropriate behaviour. However, if said to Rotumans it is an insult, implying that they are not really Rotuman.<sup>33</sup>

Indications are that Rotumans rapidly became accustomed to white men and their ways, and that whatever novelty or awe the newcomers may have held for them in the early years wore off quickly. The Rotumans' treatment of the beachcombers suggests that they made clear distinctions between those who were transient and up to no good (they ignored or ostracized them) and those who were prepared to take on the responsibilities of citizenship (they incorporated

them into community). Eason remarked that "the word for a European, *fafisi*, became a term of opprobrium and insult" among Rotumans,<sup>34</sup> but may have been more in the context of accusing one another of violating custom than of characterizing the behavior of white men as such.



**Photo 5.4** Comic dance at a wedding, 1913. Teasing people about their forefathers' misadventures with European visitors is a common theme of comic performers. A. M. Hocart. *Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.*

Our guess is that Rotumans recognized character differences among Europeans as they did among themselves, and acted accordingly. We suspect they extended the principle of autonomy to encompass Europeans, by which we mean that they put little pressure on them to conform to any preconceived or stereotyped set of expectations. By treating white men as individuals rather than as representatives of a category (*the white man*), Rotumans took a significant step in defending their own autonomy insofar as this treatment implied a resistance to granting individuals special status on the basis of race or ethnicity alone.



## Notes to Chapter 5

Our account of the success of Rotuman sailors aboard European vessels in this chapter was adapted from Howard's 1995 article, "Rotuman Seafaring in Historical Perspective."

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<sup>1</sup> Thompson 1915, 64–66, 138–139.

<sup>2</sup> Wilson 1799, 292–294.

<sup>3</sup> Dillon 1829, 102–103. In his account of Duperrey's visit to Rotuma in 1824, Lesson reported that Rotumans had given the title of *sau* to an African black, an escaped convict from New South Wales who arrived on the brig *Macquarie* (Lesson 1838, 419). Dillon's account is more credible since he actually knew the man and correctly identified the vessel (see *Journal of Pacific History* 1966, 78). We regard as problematic the assertion that Babahey occupied the position of *sau*.

<sup>4</sup> Lesson 1838, 415–416; translated from the French by Ella Wiswell.

<sup>5</sup> Lesson 1838, 416.

<sup>6</sup> Dillon 1829, 99.

<sup>7</sup> The ship may well have been the whaler *Independence*, which visited Rotuma shortly before the *Research*, Dillon's vessel.

<sup>8</sup> Eason stated that the number of convicts and runaway sailors numbered between 70 and 100, but cited no sources. He also claimed that "it is recorded that as many as nine whalers were at anchor there together" (1951, 35). We have no idea from where he obtained his information.

<sup>9</sup> *Historical Records of Australia*, Series I, volume 16, page 49.

<sup>10</sup> Knights 1925, 193–194; italics in the original.

<sup>11</sup> Forbes 1875, 224. Forbes's own narrative belies this statement. He later made reference to "an old white man" of threescore years who had been stranded as a youth on Rotuma following a shipwreck. The man reportedly had been taken off by a passing vessel only to be wrecked again some years later at nearly the same spot, and then was taken off by another vessel but left on shore again by the ship's captain (Forbes 1875, 229)

<sup>12</sup> Forbes 1875, 225.

<sup>13</sup> Cheever referred to Emery in one place (1834) as "first officer," in another (1835) as "mate." Captain John Knights of the brig *Spy* and Robert Jarman on the whaling ship *Japan* referred to him as "second mate" (Knights 1925, 192; Jarman 1838, 162).

<sup>14</sup> Osborn 1834–1835.

<sup>15</sup> Cheever 1834.

<sup>16</sup> Prout 1843, 562.

<sup>17</sup> The reference is no doubt to the island of Ouvéa in the Loyalty Islands (New Caledonia), although Eason thought that they more

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likely came from Wallis Island (ʻUvea) to the east of Rotuma (1951, 37).

<sup>18</sup> Lawry 1850, 219–220.

<sup>19</sup> Westbrook 1879, 8.

<sup>20</sup> Langdon 1978, 128.

<sup>21</sup> Historical Records of Australia, Series I, volume 16:49; Eason 1951, 35.

<sup>22</sup> Michelena y Rojas 1843, 167.

<sup>23</sup> Bennett 1831, 202; Lucatt 1851, 159–160.

<sup>24</sup> Lucatt reported that the chiefs "have the absolute disposal of the young women born upon their estate, and their sanction is necessary before they can be given in marriage" (Lucatt 1851, 159–160).

<sup>25</sup> See Inia 2001 regarding ancient Rotuman marriage rituals confirming and celebrating virginity.

<sup>26</sup> Eason stated that he remained on Rotuma until his death in the 1870s (1951, 36), but according to the caption under a photo of Charles Howard published by Russell (1942, 236), he was last heard of in Sāmoa about 1881.

<sup>27</sup> Using registry data between 1903 and 1960 from Rotuma, we calculated the survival rate beyond the age of ten years old for individuals with these surnames and compared it with the survival rate of all Rotuman births. The survival rate of children with these surnames was 84.9 percent (N=192); the survival rate of all children was 74.5 percent (N=9,253).

<sup>28</sup> For example, see Bennett 1831, 480.

<sup>29</sup> Osborn 1834–1835.

<sup>30</sup> Eagleston 1832.

<sup>31</sup> Forbes 1875, 226.

<sup>32</sup> Allardyce 1885–1886, 133. Gardiner also commented on the disgrace endured by Rotuman men who had not been to foreign lands (1898, 407). He speculated that although it was not uncommon for a hundred or more young men to leave the island in a year, not more than one-third ever returned (1898, 497).

<sup>33</sup> Inia 1998, 7.

<sup>34</sup> Eason 1951, 35.