"QUIXOTIC AND UTOPIAN": AMERICAN ADVENTURERS IN THE SOUTHWEST PACIFIC, 1897–1898

Hugh Laracy
University of Auckland

The islands of the Pacific have long attracted escapists and adventurers from abroad. Mostly they have gone to Polynesia, and the bulk of scholarly commentary on the topic is concerned with that region. Even so, others have been tempted by Melanesia. Two such expeditions were those of the *Percy Edwards* and the *Sophia Sutherland,* which left San Francisco for New Guinea and the Solomons, respectively, in 1897. They involved 116 fortune seekers and were very well publicized at the time but have hitherto escaped the notice of historians. Yet, although they were total failures, they are not without considerable significance. This article tells the story of the two ventures. It also examines their wider significance by locating them within the tradition of Pacific escapism and by relating them to features of the society from which they derived. A discussion of myth and a survey of publicity cohabit with descriptions of individual behavior and experience.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the waters and islands of the Pacific, except for the highlands of New Guinea, had been stripped of the geographical mystery that for two and a half centuries had lured adventurers from Europe. Captain Cook had seen to that. Yet a Siren enchantment persisted. A century later the region still retained the power to excite the imagination of dreamers and optimists (if the two may be distinguished), along with the ambitions of opportunists, and to draw them hence to indulge escapist hopes of finding satisfactions not available in their home countries. Such was the case with the two parties of fortune seekers, numbering 116 men in all, that, quite independently of each other, left San Francisco for the southwest Pacific in 1897. Although hitherto unnoticed in the historical literature—one might reasonably have expected to find them in a popular book such as *Rascals in*

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Paradise—they fit into an imaginative context that not only has been well frequented but also is well studied. The attention of commentators has particularly, and quite properly given the volume of traffic they attracted, been directed to the islands of Polynesia.[1] The filibustering expeditions of the *Percy Edwards* and the *Sophia Sutherland,* however, indicate that variations on familiar themes may also involve less familiar territory.

In *A Dream of Islands* Gavan Daws has described how five notable visitors to the South Seas, including Herman Melville and Paul Gauguin, looked for fulfillment and for an understanding of their inner selves. Daws comments that "[i]t is unquestionably in Polynesia that the great oceanic pull is felt most strongly, away from continents, from civilization, toward ease, voluptuousness, warm beauty of place and people." Of his subjects, he says: "Whatever they want, whether it is dominion over others or liberation from a civilized self, whether they surrender to the South Seas or impose civilised controls on themselves and their islands, it is here that they come into their kingdom."[2] Running through the tradition of imaginative infatuation with Polynesia, dating from Bougainville's account of his visit to Tahiti in 1768, is a note of eroticism mingled with descriptions of a socially and physically congenial environment.[3] In such a place individual exotic intruders would not only be safe but could live their dreams within a setting of indigenous compliance (the need for an armed overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893 notwithstanding). A vast sojourner literature is evidence of that. While retaining its particular allure (indeed, it does so yet), Polynesia by the late nineteenth century had also been drawn within the range of a more prosaic body of European understanding by *palagi* (foreign) commerce, Christianity, and colonization, which were already well established there. Apt to stimulate fancy but occupied by institutional artifacts from a pervasive European culture, Polynesia might still attract explorers of the mind and of the emotions; but argonauts of a more robust sort, like those of 1897, needed to look elsewhere. That is, to the less hospitable Melanesian islands of New Guinea, the Solomons, and the New Hebrides.

There, endemic malaria and the well-marked indigenous hostility to strangers forced visitors to consult their stamina and their mortality rather than indulge their more delicate sensibilities. There, in the 1890s, missionaries were still largely a novelty, and commerce was commonly carried on from the decks of ships by well-armed Australian traders. The hands of the colonial regimes lay very lightly indeed. There, to cite a widely publicized incident that occurred in the Solomons in 1896, the Austrian explorer Baron Foullon Von Norbeck and three of his party were killed by local inhabitants for trespassing on Mount Tatuve on the island of Guadalcanal. The *San Francisco Chronicle* reported the story in detail under the heading "Slain by South

Sea Cannibals."[4] These southwestern islands lay beyond the pale of gentle romantic fancy and were seemingly neglected by familiar authorities. It was in their direction that dreamers and malcontents, ignorant of the prevailing conditions of life, might more appropriately, and with fewer misgivings, look for the chance to impose an order of their own, to do their business in their own way. If there was a quarter of the Pacific in which anything might still be possible, it was in Melanesia. A New Guinea setting, for instance, seems in the last quarter of the nineteenth century to have licensed a more than usual degree of inventiveness in travelers' tales; it was suitable for *voyages imaginaires* involving men with tails, giant tigers, and rivers with sands of gold. But it was not just armchair adventurers who viewed Melanesia as a *terra nullius,* a kind of no man's land awaiting the whim of whomsoever sought to subjugate it.[5] A similar assurance prevailed among the expeditions to be considered here.

Nor were these expeditions without swashbuckling precedents. The unbalanced Spaniard Pedro de Quiros founded a knightly Order of the Holy Ghost during a brief visit to what is now Vanuatu in 1606; the carpetbagging Charles St. Julian, scheming to create a Hawaiian empire that extended to the Solomon Islands, in 1859 created the Order of Arossi, with himself as Grand Commander; in 1876 the buccaneering Italian museum collector Luigi D'Albertis plundered villages along the Fly River by firing rockets into them to scare away the inhabitants; and between 1879 and 1882 the French swindler Marquis de Rays dispatched a thousand soon-to-be-disillusioned people from Europe to New Ireland to found there the tragically ill-conceived Free Colony of Port Breton.[6] More pertinently, late in 1896, the usually staid *San Francisco Chronicle* gave extensive coverage to reports from New York about an American named John Fletcher Hobbs who had formerly been involved in the Australia-based labor-recruiting trade and who in 1890 had purportedly become "king of a cannibal island" called Ilika, said to be in the New Hebrides. The occasion of this publicity was Hobbs's marriage to Ella Collins, the daughter of a New York tailor. Prosaically, he then took his new "queen"—as she was dubbed by the *Chronicle*—to live not in Ilika (a playful rendering of Malekula) but in Newberg, South Carolina.[7] As if to affirm the "otherness" of the Pacific, in October the *Chronicle* also published a long description of a sea monster caught by an officer of the *Navarro,* a ship engaged in the Clipperton Island guano trade.[8]

The *Percy Edwards*

About the same time an item similar to the Ilika story in its invocation of exotic royalty and its vision of power and enrichment, but one that was to

have markedly more serious consequences, appeared in William Randolph Hearst's distinctly unstaid *San Francisco Examiner.* In a style typical of the sensationalist "yellow press," of which it was a prime example, the *Examiner* told how, early in 1896, an American vessel, the *Big Bonanza,* under one Captain Adolf Bergman, was becalmed in New Guinea waters near the St. John or Hermit Islands of the Admiralty group when it was "besieged" by "thousands of women clamor[ing] for husbands." The islands had been named Los Eremitanos ("Hermits") by the Spanish voyager Francisco Antonio Mourelle, who had charted them in 1781 but had not landed there. The Frenchman d'Entrecasteaux described them in 1792. The origin of the name St. John remains enigmatic and occurs in none of the sailing directories.[9]

According to the *Examiner*'s dramatically illustrated report headed "A South Sea Island of Many Women and No Men," allegedly emanating from Adolf Bergman and said first to have been published in Sydney (where extensive research has failed to uncover it), warfare with neighboring islands had killed many of the men, even though the women had fought alongside them, led by their warrior queen and current ruler, Piea Waar. Sometime later, with women already outnumbering men by ten to one, most of the remaining men had been taken away by recruiters to work on plantations in South America, leaving "nearly two thousand women . . . and only a hundred old men." Formerly, "the natives [who] are of the same race as those [of] the Solomon group [were] even fiercer than the Bushmen who a few weeks ago slaughtered Baron von Norbeck and several of the crew of the Austrian training ship *Albatross* on Guadalcanar Island." But, the *Examiner* went on, such was no longer the case.

Despite the lack of equivocation in its telling, the story was thoroughly fictitious. Only the islands, a small cluster, are real. South American recruiting never touched Melanesia, and the description of the women is a richly exotic imaginative indulgence. It mingles Amazonian mythology with the promise of unlimited primal satisfactions for lucky males. Its feasibility, though, is putatively attested by quotations from various presumed authorities.[10] Thus, the highly colored narrative of an itinerant British official, H. H. Romilly, is drawn on to illustrate New Guinea savagery. And—borrowing from Polynesia—Herman Melville's account in *Typee* of the approach of the appropriately named vessel *Dolly* to Nukuhiva in the Marquesas is cited to confirm the likelihood of Bergman's story of his reception at St. John: "We sailed right into the midst of these swimming nymphs," wrote Melville, "and they boarded us at every quarter. . . . All of them at length succeeded in getting up the ship's side where they clung dripping with the brine and glowing from the bath, their jet-black tresses streaming over their shoulders, and half enveloping their otherwise naked forms. . . . The ship taken, we could not do otherwise

than yield ourselves prisoners, and for the whole period that she remained in the bay, the *Dolly* as well as her crew were completely in the hands of the mermaids."[11]

The conflation of this soft-porn romantic Polynesian stereotype with hints of the more severe Melanesian model imparted a titillating appeal to the St. John Islands. Piea Waar was said to be "a very remarkable woman." "Tall, muscular and of a commanding presence, she would attract attention anywhere. As she is the absolute monarch of all she surveys . . . she would be a great prize for the lucky man who might win her dusky heart and not bloodless hand. [Besides,] since the disappearance of all the men on the islands her nature has become greatly softened."

"Any young men looking for an easy, indolent life" could "do no better than accept" the hospitality of "the dusky queen's domain." For their part, the women were charmingly devoid of jealousy, and "like the Samoans and Gilbert islanders, they have well-rounded forms and are of a temperament that is fostered by the warm sun of the tropics." Moreover,

> They had nothing to say about the suffrage question, nor did they discuss the temperance problem. Not even the most worldly wise wished to exact a promise that her chosen one would stay home o'night and not run around to the other islands, talking politics. They promised not to gossip if only someone would marry them right away.
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> "I had," said Bergman, "a hard time preventing that army of women from carrying off my entire crew. The only way I could escape was to promise to return with a shipload of gay young beaux, who would permit themselves to be petted and fed on coconuts and yams until the end of their days." . . . [Indeed] it would really be a paying proposition for a company of benevolent Christians to charter a vessel and send to St. John's a consignment of the unemployed to become husbands for the lovely women of the sea-girt isles. For every husband delivered the Queen would be willing to exchange a ton of coconuts or anything else that might be preferred. There is in this proposition a magnificent opportunity to make a fortune that should not be overlooked.[12]

Nor was it. A week later, the *Examiner* enthusiastically publicized a plan proposed by one L. J. Reinhart, a native of New Mexico, to found a colonization company to take over the St. John Islands "and there set up a happy little republic, free from strife, and want, and care, and with all the comforts that man could desire!" The twenty-eight-year-old, a carpenter by trade but unable

FIGURE 1. **"Queen Piea Waar of St. John's." This is a fanciful, romanticized image showing a purportedly Melanesian dignitary adorned with an assortment of items of Polynesian provenance.** (*San Francisco Examiner,* 22 November 1896)

to get regular work, was looking to a form of utopian socialism as an escape from painful economic straits. Reinhart suggested that "fifty or sixty sturdy young men like himself" should purchase $25 shares in the company, which would then buy a schooner to transport them all to the St. John Islands:

> There are plenty to be had that will answer our purpose for less than $1000. Provisioning the vessel will be a small matter, and with the surplus we can purchase implements to develop the soil of the islands for our living. The islands are productive and we can get plenty to eat and plenty to wear out of them, and that is all we can get here with the hardest kind of labour. There we can marry; here we cannot. The native women are clamouring for husbands, and why should not we accept the inducements they have to offer and settle on their islands.
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> There we could support a wife; here we cannot. Their dress is simple and they have no ambition to outshine each other in gaudy feathers, like the women here. Their country is fertile. The women want us, and why should we not accept such a paradise when it is offered, and accept a comfortable and easy life instead of one of drudgery and false hopes and ambitions?[13]

Already, so the *Chronicle* reported, ten men had decided to join a Reinhart expedition. Of them four were waiters and the others laborers, a cook, an upholsterer, and a boardinghouse keeper. Six of them resided at a boardinghouse at 675 Mission Street. According to the same report: "The natives of the island have been always known as cannibals and the sailors mentioned this as a reason why the offer was reluctantly declined. But the visitors were assured by them that their days of human flesh eating were over. Men were too scarce to be sacrificed in any such vulgar way."[14]

Spectacular as they were, the attractions of what the newspapers, beginning with the *Chronicle* on 20 November 1896, quickly styled "the Adamless Eden" soon had to be played down by Reinhart and his backers in favor of the more mundane benefits offered by his scheme. In the same issue of the *Chronicle*, Reinhart reportedly declared that his enterprise derived not from the report of the husbandless women but from

> dissatisfaction with the condition of the labor world and the desire to lead a peaceful existence without having to struggle day and night for bread and butter. He wants to form a republic on co-operative lines. He says as it is in the South Seas the islands support the natives with very little work. By combining forces and pooling resources this

> proposed band can have all the comforts of life with little labor. . . . On first landing they will build a fort and then take possession of the tillable ground. With them they will take seeds and fruit trees and Reinhart says that in a few years they ought to be exporting great quantities of South Sea Island products.

In a public lecture on his scheme Reinhart declared: "It requires an ordinary carpenter eleven years to make $4779, but down in the islands there would be liberty and great chances. There is good timber, fishing is splendid and general opportunities are unequaled."[15]

Steadied by such claims, the venture thus retained its momentum while changing its character. As with modern advertising, it seems that sex was useful for attracting attention but that decisions to act were determined by more substantial considerations. Accordingly, the scheme was not discredited by the arrival of the *Big Bonanza* on 29 December 1896, carrying a load of coal from Nanaimo in Canada, with the news that the original story was untrue. Adolf Bergman was no longer with the vessel. His brother Alex was now in command. Two of his old crew, though, were still aboard, although only one of them spoke English. He said that "the *Big Bonanza* did not stop at the St. John islands at all. She merely passed close by. A crowd of natives—all men—put off in boats and boarded the bark, begging, stealing and trading as the opportunity offered. No women came, nor did Capt. Bergman or any of his men go ashore."[16] Yet even this statement is open to doubt. According to the New York *Maritime Register,* which reported the *Big Bonanza*'s movements, it is unlikely that the vessel went south of the equator from the time it reached Nagasaki from Philadelphia on 15 February 1896 until it put into San Francisco eleven months later.[17] Could the crewman have been mistaken in his geography?

Significantly, the *Examiner* did not deign to publish the crewman's disavowal. Like the other newspapers, though, it did continue to follow the development of the scheme closely, but in tones that remained exultantly enthusiastic, treating the affair as a rollicking and worthwhile adventure, one destined to provide "husbands for the dusky belles" of the "Adamless Eden of the South Seas."[18] It displayed none of the reserve or irony that occasionally crept into the more matter-of-fact reports of its competitors. It was, for instance, not the *Examiner* that reminded its readers of the fate of the Marquis de Rays's adventure, or likened the enterprise's prospects to those of the failed New Australia expedition that left Sydney in 1893 to found a communist settlement in Paraguay, or referred to the schemers as "lotus eaters," or spoke of "another utopia in the South Seas where every mother's son is to be a monarch, subject only to his own whims!"[19] Instead, in benign contrast, it likened them to "Altrurians," the admirable folk featured in a recently pub-

lished and widely read utopian romance by William Dean Howells; they were people who lived in conditions of true and harmonious equality.[20] Undeterred by any unflattering comments, be they hostile or jocular, Reinhart's followers, it seems, were not even unsettled by the opinion of J. Rhodes, once a Sydney-based bêche-de-mer trader aboard the American brig *James Burney,* that the waters they proposed venturing into were home to "the most treacherous beings existing!"[21] Given the widely attested readiness of nineteenth-century migrants to take extreme risks, such insouciance may, though, be viewed as merely reckless rather than unreasonable. In addition to those just mentioned, other cases in point—among many—are those of the Scottish Highlanders who went to Nova Scotia in 1817 and on to New Zealand in 1853, and the company of Germans led by Elizabeth Nietzsche (sister of the philosopher) who settled in a Paraguayan wilderness in 1886.[22]

In any case, Reinhart's scheme had taken a firmer and ostensibly less Münchhausen-like shape by 21 January 1897, when what he called the United Brotherhood of the South Seas was formally incorporated for the purpose of setting up "a co-operative colony." He was chairman of an eleven-strong board of trustees, and forty-six prospective colonists had already paid $50 a share to join. Moreover, arrangements had been made to buy a thirty-one-year-old, 189-ton former whaling vessel, the barquentine *Percy Edwards,* that had been laid up in Oakland Creek for the past two years. The *Examiner* ran a lengthy account of these proceedings under the heading "Yo! Ho! for the Manless Isle and Its Languishing Maidens." Reinhart, meanwhile, had also announced two notable changes. The destination was no longer to be the St. John Islands but the Solomons, specifically Bougainville, and possibly New Guinea; and a more conventional purpose was stated: commercial development, unrelieved by any touch of erotic exoticism. "In two years or so," he said, "we expect to have established such conditions as will allow of our returning to San Francisco to marry women of our own nationality!"[23] Even so, despite the semblance of pragmatism—which extended to taking an abundant supply of firearms—the assumptions on which Reinhart was operating were naive to the point of negligence, not least in expecting that whatever political authorities they might encounter in the Pacific would welcome the Brotherhood. In January 1897 he stated loftily: "At my earliest opportunity I will pay an official visit to the Governors of [British] New Guinea, Fiji and Matupit [i.e., German New Guinea],with whom I will enter into treaties that will, if conceded, be decidedly to our advantage."[24] The British and German consuls in San Francisco, whom he later consulted, were less complacent and stressed that the implementing of any settlement scheme would require the consent of the colonial authorities, who were already firmly established in the parts of the Pacific toward which Reinhart was heading.[25]

By late February the *Percy Edwards* was ready to depart. A sworn affida-

vit presented to, and duly certified by, the British consul, J. W. Warburton, affirmed the legality of the operation but did not allay the consul's doubts about the venture proving successful. The document, dated 24 February 1897, stated:

> L. J. Reinhart, President, and E. A. Coe, Secretary, of the United Brotherhood of the South Seas, a Corporation, being duly sworn, each for himself, says: That they are officers, as aforesaid, of the United Brotherhood of the South Sea Islands, a Corporation, and as such are familiar with the facts stated herein; that the United Brotherhood of the South Sea Islands was organized for the purpose of colonizing some suitable island of the South Seas, and establishing a trade with the inhabitants of the South Sea Islands. To carry out this plan the Corporation has purchased a ship of 189 tons, and provisions suitable for the undertaking, and have a supply of seeds and farming utensils.
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> The members of the Corporation now number ninety-eight men, the majority of whom are citizens of the United States, and have each been chosen with a view of selecting only men of good character and habits. The money subscribed for the use of the Corporation and the paid-up stock represents about 10,000 dollars, which has been invested by the Corporation in fitting out the ship and buying supplies for the expedition.
>
> The Corporation is incorporated under the laws of the State of California for the sum of 20,000 dollars, and each member of the said Corporation holds a certificate of stock from the said Corporation.[26]

Within that month the price of a share, and with it a place on the vessel, had risen to $125, and all available places had been taken. On 25 February 1897, crowded with 101 men aged between twenty-one and sixty-three, but with an average age of about thirty-six, many of them originally from the Midwest and of German descent, the *Percy Edwards* sailed from San Francisco, clearing for Fiji. It was well supplied with tools, seeds, and machinery, and every man was armed.[27]

Launched during a period of severe economic downturn in California, as elsewhere in the nation, the time was right for such an enterprise. Reinhart claimed to have received 1,800 inquiries from men interested in going with him, and a constant theme among those he attracted was the desire to find an easier and more prosperous life and a gentler economic system than that which was available to them in America.[28] Such was the burden of thirty-six letters published in the *Examiner* under the heading "Why They'd Sail with

Reinhart." It was left to the more critical *Chronicle* to quote the entirely pragmatic reason of a less visionary man: "I was out of work but I had $100. I put that into the company. Even if we find no place satisfactory for a colony, we shall have a voyage of six months. I could not live here six months for my $100. So it's economy to make the trip."[29] And the *Call* was disdainful of the whole business: "It is the strangest voyage that ever was planned. . . . There is a disorder and vagueness about it that is inspiring in these days of business and hard common sense. The men seem for the most part to be boys that have cavorted about with unsuccess, and prefer a beautiful uncertainty to a plain and prosaic reality."[30]

Such views were encouraged by variations in the stated destinations. On leaving San Francisco, Reinhart announced that Funafuti in the Ellice (or Tuvalu) group was the favored spot. Eighteen days later at Honolulu, the captain, thirty-two-year-old Julius Peterson, who had been aboard the *Hesperian* when she was wrecked off Maui in 1886, mentioned an island in the Fiji group as a possibility and the likelihood of a visit to the New Hebrides.[31]

For their part, the colonizers still seemed happy enough at that point. They had an extensive library; by day they played cards, checkers, and chess; and each evening the musicians among them put on a concert.[32] After leaving Honolulu on March 15, they attempted unsuccessfully to land at Fanning Island to effect repairs, then carried on to Fiji to obtain firm advice on where best to settle. Meanwhile, the predictions of those who had said that the party lacked leadership and a common purpose strong enough to hold it together were beginning to come true. Reinhart was replaced as president by a man named W. M. Shaw, and Captain Peterson was said to have assumed the power of a czar, which was scarcely surprising when drunkenness and brawling had become rife and when people with luxuries were refusing to share them with their fellows. When the vessel anchored at Levuka in Fiji on April 11, disillusion and dissension were complete.[33]

Nor was the mood improved after a deputation went to Suva to call on the acting governor, Sir Henry Berkeley, four days later. Berkeley spelled out the implications of what Reinhart had already been told in San Francisco. That is, the islands of the South Seas were nearly all under the protection of France or Britain or Germany, and nowhere would they be permitted to set up a colony on the lines envisaged in the Brotherhood's prospectus. In the southern Solomons, for instance, a resident commissioner had just been appointed and regulations were being drawn up to raise revenue, control land sales, and maintain law and order. German-controlled Bougainville would, likewise, be closed to them. Moreover, went on Berkeley, since they were working men without capital to buy land, there was little scope for them anywhere in the region and certainly not in the Solomons, where "the country

was quite unsettled and the climate malarial." "The best place for settlement," he admitted, "was Fiji but even there . . . the conditions were not favourable for a white working man. The people who worked here were the black races. The white man could not labour in the field [in the sun]. He could be employed as mechanic, carpenter or bricklayer, but the demand was limited and the big mills had their regular staff." Possibly, he suggested, there were better opportunities to be had in New Zealand. There, he thought, the government was willing to assist respectable working men such as themselves.[34] To reinforce the point, two days later, a naval officer from HMS *Lizard,* which had been sent from Sydney to intercept the *Percy Edwards,* delivered a letter to the colonists, informing them that they were prohibited from settling anywhere in the British domains without permission from the high commissioner.[35]

With that rebuff, news of which reached San Francisco a month later, the expedition broke up. Existing divisions had also been augmented by a sharp split over whether to engage in the labor-recruiting trade, and there was increasing dismay at the fate of the Austrians on Guadalcanal.[36] Meanwhile, the voyage of the *Percy Edwards* had not gone unnoticed in London. In July the Foreign Office firmly stated that no colonizing expeditions would be permitted to settle in British territories.[37]

After the *Lizard*'s visit, eight men quickly set out for home independently, most of them via Auckland or Sydney. The first two, one a stowaway, completed the trip on July 29, when the steamer *Alameda* arrived in San Francisco from Auckland. Forty-four, though, chose to stay and try their luck in Fiji, mostly as agriculturalists on land owned by established interests (Humphrey Berkeley and J. Crocker, respectively). Some were on a banana-growing project at Viria on the Rewa River, and others were on a coconut plantation at Savusavu Bay on Vanua Levu. Reinhart found work near Levuka, building a bridge. The rest of the Brotherhood, forty-nine in number, left Fiji in the *Percy Edwards* on May 25, bound for New Zealand. Four days out the ship ran into a storm that sprung the main mast and forced a change of course to the nearest port. This port was Noumea in French-ruled New Caledonia, which was reached on June 4. There, the remnant agreed to sell the *Percy Edwards.* By the end of July most of them had departed for Sydney. The main exceptions were sixteen men who, accepting an offer of assistance from the governor, Paul Feillet, a keen promoter of settlement in the colony, took up 250 hectares of land at Poum at the northern tip of the island. There they styled themselves the "Lafayette Colony of New Caledonia." "Such," concluded the U.S. consular agent at Noumea in his exhaustive report on the whole affair, "is the short and epic history of this Quixotic and Utopian adventure, began under such romantic and imaginative auspices to end in so prosaic . . . a manner!"[38]

Beyond that, little more is recorded of the Brotherhood. Presumably, most of its members eventually made their way back to the United States; two of them were reported drowned in Fiji in August 1897. James R. Drigg, first mate of the *Percy Edwards,* was "a destitute seaman" in Apia in March 1898 when the U.S. consul returned him to San Francisco aboard the *Alameda.* The Lafayette Colony did not last. The *Percy Edwards* was sold at auction in Noumea on 17 July 1897 for Fr 5,000, about US$1,000. Renamed *La Jeanette,* it was lost in the New Hebrides in 1899.[39]

The *Sophia Sutherland*

Despite the well-publicized collapse of the *Percy Edwards* expedition—notably more so in the *Call* and the *Chronicle* than in Hearst's *Examiner*—other adventurers were not deterred from seeking their fortunes in the islands toward which the Brotherhood had ventured. Even as woebegone and bitter "Altrurians" were struggling back to San Francisco, complaining about having been swindled, another party was preparing to leave. From the start, though, there were no idealistic pretensions about this one. It was unequivocally profit-seeking, yet no less quixotic. Indeed—as would be revealed—it was fraudulently so.

On 7 August 1897, appended to a long item about the *Percy Edwards,* the *San Francisco Chronicle* announced that the *Sophia Sutherland,* under the command of the "irrepressible Captain Alexander McLean," was preparing to set out "ostensibly on a trading cruise" on behalf of "the newly formed South Sea Commercial Company." Not mentioned was the fact that the expedition had been organized by one Niels Peter Sorensen, a thirty-nine-year-old Dane who had once spent three years (1867–1870) in the U.S. navy but who had only recently been released from prison in Queensland after serving eight years of a ten-year sentence for crimes of violence and robbery committed during a trading visit to the Solomon Islands in 1885.[40] In mid-1897 Sorensen arrived in San Francisco planning to raise money for a pearling operation in the Solomons. Apparently sensing the rising gold fever, he quickly turned his scheme into a primarily mining venture, powerfully representing the Solomons as a mineral treasure trove par excellence.[41]

This change was not without some authority. Findlay's sailing *Directory,* which Sorensen had read in prison, reported an abundance of copper on Rennell and Bellona (although that was a geological impossibility since the islands were constructed of pure coral). Besides, a legend of gold deposits had been attached to the Solomon group since its discovery by Spanish explorers in the sixteenth century.[42] Early in 1897, in Sydney, Sorensen had been one of several rival speculators proposing schemes for mining on Rennell.[43] Later that year, in San Francisco, he promised a "solid cliff of pure copper"

on Rennell and inexhaustible reefs of quartz gold on Guadalcanal. His assured manner and the characteristic abundance of detail with which he presented it plus the pearl on his finger and the gold samples he displayed gave a sheen of veracity to his tale. Even so, it is extraordinary that he succeeded not only in finding sponsors—eight businessmen, including E. B. Pond, a former mayor of San Francisco—to invest $16,000 in the scheme, registered as the South Sea Commercial Company, but also in inducing fourteen men to come with him, especially McLean.[44] After all, the Klondike gold rush had just begun, on July 15, when a group of prospectors staggered off the steamer *Excelsior* at San Francisco, "carrying bulging suit cases, carpet valises, leather saddlebags, even cartons of jelly jars—all full of gold." Ten days later the steamer *Umatilla,* licensed to carry 290 passengers, sailed from San Francisco with 471 aboard, including the young Jack London, bound for Alaska.[45] As for McLean, a sailor renowned for his exploits as a seal hunter and his indifference to the law, he was one of the most formidable and swashbuckling figures on the Pacific seaboard. He was destined to find literary fame as the model, imaginatively enhanced, for Wolf Larsen, the flawed superman in Jack London's novel *The Sea Wolf* (1904), although not as explicitly as claimed by the *Advertiser,* which promoted the identification in 1905 when reporting an illegal sealing voyage that McLean had made to the Bering Sea in the *Carmencita.*[46]

The *Sophia Sutherland,* which was also the vessel that London had sailed in on what was to be for him an inspirational seal hunt in 1893, departed San Francisco for its South Seas El Dorado on 4 September 1897. It had a complement of fifteen, including a mining engineer, who were expecting to return "in three years . . . with more gold than the luckiest miners of the Klondike." Not surprisingly, therefore, like Reinhart they ignored the efforts of the British consul, who, following recent instructions from the Foreign Office, tried to dissuade them from going.[47]

The vessel reached Apia on October 9. There the U.S. consul, William Churchill, and a trading captain named John Strasburg, both of whom knew Sorensen's nefarious reputation well, warned McLean to be wary of him. But the die was already cast. After calling briefly at Suva (October 25–29) to allow McLean to consult British officials about conditions in the Solomons, the *Sophia Sutherland* reached Tulagi in the Solomons on November 8.[48] There, after he, too, had warned McLean not to trust Sorensen, Charles Woodford, the resident commissioner, issued prospecting licenses. For nearly two and a half months, during which time McLean prudently refused to allow Sorensen to take the steam launch and go off pearling or trading by himself, the *Sophia Sutherland* visited various spots on Nggela, Guadalcanal, Makira, and Rennell. As it happened, rich sites allegedly once well known to

Sorensen were no longer recognizable. That on Rennell, he said, must have disappeared in an earthquake. No less predictably, of sixteen quartz samples tested when the ship returned to Tulagi in mid-January 1898, only one showed a trace of gold.[49] To save Sorensen from the threateningly homicidal anger of his companions, at this point McLean put him ashore on Gavutu, leaving money with Woodford to pay his fare on the six-weekly steamer *Titus,* which was leaving shortly for Sydney.[50]

For two more months the *Sophia Sutherland* explored rock formations in the Solomons, until March 19. Then, with nearly everyone suffering severely from malaria, McLean turned for the Golden Gate, via Samoa. Even so, four hopefuls decided to stay behind, preferring to make their own ways home. Perhaps they were wise to do so. After battling headwinds and an outbreak of scurvy, which killed four men and incapacitated all on board except McLean, the *Sophia Sutherland* put into Apia on May 11. From there news of the debacle reached San Francisco on June 2. After two months in Apia and with a crew that now contained only one of the original complement, on July 9 McLean put to sea once more. He reached San Francisco on August 31.[51] Among the crew, reported the *Chronicle,* "were H. Sickles and J. Sutherland, two members of the *Percy Edwards* expedition. They were in full sympathy with the folks of the *Sophia Sutherland* as they, too, had left home to follow a phantom, not Sorenson [*sic*] gold mines, but an equally visionary Adamless Eden."[52]

Sorensen, meanwhile, had arrived at San Francisco on June 19, talking still —but now to more skeptical hearers—of the mineral wealth of the Solomons. He also claimed to have been cruelly mistreated and then abandoned by McLean and, hinting at a just retribution, told of how from the deck of the *Titus* he had last seen the *Sophia Sutherland* lying damaged near Oscar Svensen's station at Marau Sound on Guadalcanal. (In fact, the vessel had been heaved down for careening.) Prudently, Sorensen left town a few days before McLean's return.[53]

But that is not quite the end of Sorensen's story. In July 1908, taking his place in an enduring succession of fabulists, he turned up in New York promoting a scheme to recover a mythically vast amount of gold from the *General Grant.* This was a Britain-bound ship from Australia that had sunk in the Auckland Islands, south of New Zealand, in 1866. (The twenty-fourth in the disreputable—and seemingly inextinguishable—line of *General Grant* schemers was, incidentally, convicted of fraud by a New Zealand court in February 1998.)[54] Unfortunately for Sorensen in 1908, his nemesis was at hand in the form of the former consul William Churchill, who was at that time an assistant editor on the staff of the *New York Sun* newspaper. Churchill supplied information for an article recounting something of Sorensen's ad-

ventures in the Pacific and denouncing him as a fraud. Sorensen replied with a $100,000 libel claim. When the case eventually came to court in March 1911, his past was raked over in detail and reported on at length in the *Sun.*

In these proceedings McLean at last had his revenge. He was then living in Canada and was reluctant to enter the United States, where he was wanted by police on account of his unauthorized voyage from San Francisco in the *Carmencita* in 1904. Accordingly, he gave evidence by deposition on behalf of the *Sun,* affirming Sorensen's record of chicanery. In the course of his deposition, he also rebutted strenuous efforts to identify him as a real-life model for the vicious Wolf Larsen. After a hearing that lasted a week, the jury declined to uphold Sorensen's claim. New York proved to be no more obliging to him than the South Seas had been.[55]

Sorensen was likewise unsuccessful with another *General Grant* scheme in New Zealand in 1912. He also failed in a series of attempts from 1912 to 1930 to profit from his alleged ownership of Mono or Treasury Islands in the Solomons, which he claimed to have bought during his trading expedition in 1885.[56]

Aftermath—and Reflections

Sorensen, the incorrigible opportunist, died in penury in Brooklyn, New York, on 3 February 1935, at the age of eighty-seven. He had at least achieved longevity. "Sea Wolf" McLean drowned while drunk in Vancouver in 1914. Churchill, a Yale graduate, acquired a reputation as a Pacific scholar and died of tuberculosis in New York in 1920. As for Reinhart, the utopian socialist, at last report in May 1897, he was seen hard at work pulling on a cross-cut saw, with a Fijian on the other end.[57] After that he vanished from the historical record. The term, though, that had helped publicize his *Percy Edwards* expedition had not been entirely forgotten. In 1908 the *New York World* headed its report of an Independence Day function at the normally women-only Martha Washington Hotel to which 125 men had been invited with the dramatic announcement, "Men Actually Enter an Adamless Eden."[58]

After 1898, despite the incursions of a few scientific expeditions and some literary travelers, such as Jack London, and a trickle of missionaries and the annexation of eastern Samoa, American awareness of the Pacific declined. It was not until August 1942, when U.S. marines landed on Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands in the war against Japan, that the south Pacific again attracted any appreciable degree of public attention in the United States.[59] Subsequently, that, too, has faded in intensity. Still, the romantic view of the "South Pacific" lingers in the consciousness of many through the Broadway musical of that name, notwithstanding the contretemps roused by Derek Freeman's assault in 1984 on the utopian account of life in Samoa published by Margaret

Mead in 1928—and quite unbeholden to the publicity once accorded the voyages of the *Percy Edwards* and the *Sophia Sutherland.*[60]

Flawed in conception and futile in execution, and having no discernible impact on the Pacific Islands, those voyages are, nonetheless, significant in ways that extend well beyond their own inherent measure of human interest. They are footnotes that illuminate various other histories. For instance, within America's overall involvement with the Pacific, they are dramatic episodes in the still inadequately chronicled tale of the shipping links that from the 1840s through to the 1960s connected San Francisco firmly to Sydney and Auckland. They also reflect something of the spirit of dissatisfaction and protest that arose in late-nineteenth-century America in reaction to the abuses of the new industrial order. This reaction had already found persuasive literary expression in popular utopian novels such as Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backwards* (1888) and Howell's *A Traveller from Altruria* (1894), and in blueprints for social reform such as Henry George's *Poverty and Progress* (1879). Indeed, George's book had grown out of his own experiences in the San Francisco area. There he saw the extremes of poverty and wealth side by side. From that disparity arose frustrations that could drive Edenless Adams to buy into ill-conceived schemes such as those of Reinhart and Sorensen. The appeal of such schemes was especially strong in the late 1890s, when the lofty and widely influential illusion of Manifest Destiny was fostering other, officially sanctioned, adventures in American expansion—in the Caribbean, the Philippines, Guam, Samoa, and Hawai'i.[61]

APPENDIX: MEMBERS OF EXPEDITIONS

Percy Edwards

Departed San Francisco

Anderson, Edwin
Anderson, Martin
Ayres, Harry
Barrome, T. O. (F?)
Bartlett, Louis
Belt, Eli
Benecke, H.
Berger, Emil
Bernhardt, E. H.
Black, R. G.
Blussom, August
Boehme, B. G.
Bolitho, Henry
Brenan (Brunnan?), W. H.
Bryan, Ross
Cobb, B. S.
Coe, E. A.
Cole, Frank
Conway, T.
Dawson, Thomas
Drescher, H.
Driggs, James R.
Early, J. T.
Ehlert, E. H.
Enfield, W. E.
Farren, John
Finch, Frank
Garrick, A.
Gleason, Charles
Goodman, Gills
Haack, John
Henrys, Charles
Hintz, R. F.
Hohnsbein, F.
Holbeck, George

Holt, George
Hornung, Henry
Huff, W. F. (R?)
Jelka, Antone
Johnsen (Johnson?), Arthur
Kendall, William
Killgore, P. B.
Klaiber, John
Landgreen, Edward
Landrath, F.
Larsen, Chris
Lentz, Emile
Lukowich, S.
McInerney, John
McKenzie, David
Mammen (Hammen?), A. S.
Marquardt, Henry
Marshall, S. S.
Melvin, William
Meyers, P. A.
Miller, Arthur
Miner, A. H.
Mitchell, John D.
Mittman, Edward
Mounts, L. F.
Nelson, Frank
Newman, Fred
Norwood, Frank
Olsen, Charles
Olsen, John
Olsen, Julius
Neilsen, Peter
Petersen, Charles
Petersen, Julius
Porter, Frank
Pretchel (Pritchel?), Nic
Rapp, Henry
Reinhart, L. J.
Rivers, Edward W.
Rothermel, Dr. Julius
Rubin, F.
Rummel, Frank (Patrick?)
Ryan, Frank
Scheible, George
Schiellrup, Sophus
Schmidt, William
Shaw, W. M.
Sheen, William
Sickles, George W.
Simon, William
Smythe, F. W.
Snyder, A. F.
Sordenberg (Sorenberg? Soderberg?), Victor
Sorenson (Sorensen?), Charles
Spanning, George
Stade, H. A.
Steier, John
Sutherland, J. M.
Taylor, H. S.
Taylor, Thomas
Turner, George
Wilcox (Willcocks?), George
Williams, F.
Williamson, P.
Young, Harry R.
Ziepser, Arnold

Subscribed to the expedition but did not embark

Comber, W.
Harrison, F. A.
Marner, A. S.

Sources: *San Francisco Chronicle,* 12 June 1897; see also note 38.

Sophia Sutherland

Departed San Francisco

Berge (Borge?)
Cunath (Kunath?), E.
De Witt, Arthur
Gingg, H. C.
Goldsmith, J.
Greenwood
Headburg
Higgins
Kohn (Cohen?), Al

Lampe	Nicholson, Joseph	Smadeke
McLean, Alexander	Olsen	Sorensen, N. P.

Returned to San Francisco

Higgins
McLean, Alexander
Plus a new crew recruited in Samoa, which included H. [*sic*] Sickles and J. Sutherland, from the *Percy Edwards*

Source: *San Francisco Chronicle,* 28 July 1898, 12.

NOTES

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1. James A. Michener and A. Grove Day, *Rascals in Paradise* (New York, 1957). Neil Rennie ignores Melanesia, in *Far-Fetched Facts: The Literature of Travel and the Idea of the South Seas* (Oxford, 1995).

2. Gavan Daws, *A Dream of Islands: Voyages of Self Discovery in the South Seas* (New York, 1980), xii–xiii.

3. O. H. K. Spate, *The Pacific since Magellan,* vol. 3: *Paradise Lost and Found* (Sydney, 1988), 95–98, 237–263.

4. *San Francisco Chronicle,* 23 October 1896; *San Francisco Call,* 23 October 1896.

5. Gavin Souter, *New Guinea: The Last Unknown* (Sydney, 1963), 3–13, 24; Nigel Krauth, ed., *New Guinea Images in Australian Literature* (St. Lucia, 1982), 1–11; Sidney Spencer Broomfield, *Kachalola: Or, The Early Life and Adventures of Sidney Spencer Broomfield* (London, 1930), 231–300, 306–307. For further comments on this characterization of Melanesia, see Donald Denoon, "Black Mischief: The Trouble with African Analogies," *Journal of Pacific History* 34, no. 3 (1999): 284–285.

6. O. H. K. Spate, *The Pacific since Magellan,* vol. 1: *The Spanish Lake* (Canberra, 1979), 136–137; Marion Nothling, "Charles St. Julian: Alternative Diplomacy in Polynesia," in *More Pacific Islands Portraits,* ed. Deryck Scarr (Canberra, 1978), 28; also *Pacific Commercial Advertiser,* 10 May 1884; Souter, *New Guinea,* 9–10, 30–43.

7. *San Francisco Chronicle,* 18 July, 6 September, 31 December 1896. In 1897, in a reverse variation of this story, the *New York Herald, Boston Herald,* and *San Francisco*

Bulletin all reported the fiction of "a Maori princess named Tono Maroanu, who is searching for an Anglo-Saxon husband." *New Zealand Herald,* 21 November 1997 ("100 Years Ago").

8. *San Francisco Chronicle,* 11 October 1896.

9. Alexander G. Findlay, *A Directory for the Navigation of the South Pacific* (London, 1863), 640; Andrew Sharp, *The Discovery of the Pacific Islands* (Oxford, 1960), 147. Ruy Lopez de Villalobos probably saw the Hermits in 1545 and named them La Caimana. The name of his ship, *San Juan,* may be the origin of St. John. Sharp, *Discovery,* 31.

10. Guy Cadogan Rothery, *The Amazons in Antiquity and Modern Times* (London, 1910). A hint of exotic possibilities in the wider neighborhood of the Admiralties is conveyed in the title of a book by an Italian traveler about Enggano, an island off the southwest coast of Sumatra, where women's important social role bordered on creating a "matriarchal society." E. Modigliani, *L'Isola delle Donne: Viaggio ad Engaro* (Milan, 1894). See also H. E. Maude, *Slavers in Paradise: The Peruvian Slave Trade in Polynesia, 1862–1864* (Canberra, 1981).

11. Herman Melville, *Typee: Narrative of a Four Months Residence among the Natives of a Valley of the Marquesas Islands* (New York, 1846), chap. 2, quoted in the *San Francisco Examiner,* 15 November 1896 (Sunday magazine), 21.

12. *San Francisco Examiner,* 15 November 1896 (Sunday magazine), 21. For Romilly, see *San Francisco Examiner,* 22 November 1896, and his books *The Western Pacific and New Guinea* (London, 1877), *From My Verandah in New Guinea* (London, 1889), and *Letters from the Western Pacific and Mashonaland* (London, 1893). For South American labor recruiting, see Maude, *Slavers in Paradise.*

13. *San Francisco Examiner,* 22 November 1896.

14. *San Francisco Chronicle,* 20 November 1896.

15. *San Francisco Call,* 18 December 1896.

16. *San Francisco Chronicle,* 30 December 1896; *Hawaiian Star,* 2 February 1897.

17. *New York Maritime Register,* October 1895–January 1897. Examined at Historic Documents Department, San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park, Calif.

18. *San Francisco Examiner,* 22 January 1897.

19. *San Francisco Call,* 18 December 1896, 22 January 1897, 24 February 1897; *San Francisco Chronicle,* 24 January 1897. For New Australia, see Gavan Souter, *A Peculiar People* (Sydney, 1968).

20. *San Francisco Examiner,* 24 January 1897. William Dean Howells, *A Traveller from Altruria* (New York, 1894).

21. *San Francisco Chronicle,* 21 February 1897.

22. Neil Robinson, *To the Ends of the Earth* (Auckland, 1997); Ben MacIntyre, *Forgotten Fatherland* (London, 1993).

23. *San Francisco Examiner,* 24 January 1897. *San Francisco Call,* 24 February 1897, contains a detailed description of the *Percy Edwards.*

24. *San Francisco Examiner,* 24 January 1897.

25. *San Francisco Call,* 25 February 1897.

26. Warburton to Salisbury, 25 February 1897, CO 225/53(2). The reference is to the Colonial Office (CO) series for the Western Pacific, Public Record Office, Kew, consulted on microfilm reel 2332 (item 26), National Archives of New Zealand, Wellington.

27. *San Francisco Call,* 24, 25, 26 February 1897; *San Francisco Chronicle,* 24, 25, 26 February 1897. There are conflicting reports about the number of those aboard the *Percy Edwards.* Both the *Call* and the *Chronicle* of 26 February 1897 put the figure at ninety-nine, but a detailed list later issued by A. L. Atwood, the attorney for the Brotherhood, contains 101 names. *San Francisco Chronicle,* 12 June 1897.

28. *San Francisco Call,* 25 February 1897; *San Francisco Examiner,* 21 February 1897.

29. *San Francisco Examiner,* 21 February 1897; *San Francisco Chronicle,* 26 February 1897.

30. *San Francisco Call,* 25 February 1897.

31. *San Francisco Call,* 26 February 1897; *Hawaiian Star,* 15 March 1897.

32. *Hawaiian Star,* 15 March 1897; *Pacific Commercial Advertiser,* 16 March 1897.

33. *San Francisco Call,* 1 September 1897; *San Francisco Chronicle,* 3 June 1897.

34. *Fiji Times,* 24 April 1897.

35. *San Francisco Call,* 31 July, 27 August 1897; *San Francisco Chronicle,* 12 June 1897; Bridge to Western Pacific High Commission, 5 and 13 May 1897, 176/1897 and 186/1897, Inwards Correspondence General (now listed as series 40), Records of the Western Pacific High Commission (WPHC), Public Record Office, Kew, consulted on microfilm at the University of Auckland Library.

36. *San Francisco Examiner,* 2 August 1897; *San Francisco Chronicle,* 2 August 1897.

37. Foreign Office to CO, 10 June and 9 July 1897, CO 225/54(i).

38. For an extensive account of the expedition's arrival in Fiji and a list containing the names, locations, and intended destinations of its individual members, according to a letter written on May 16, see *San Francisco Chronicle,* 12 June 1897. For a later and more accurate statement of their whereabouts, see the report on the expedition and its fate by the

U.S. agent at Noumea: S. Reichenbach to J. Sherman, 29 June 1897, U.S. Consular Despatches: Noumea, T91, U.S. National Archives, Washington, D.C. For the expedition's arrival in Noumea, see *La Calédonie* and *La France Australe,* 5, 6 June 1897. Other details in this paragraph, deriving from letters and interviews with returning members of the Brotherhood, are drawn from the following: *San Francisco Examiner,* 31 July, 2 August 1897; *San Francisco Call,* 30, 31 July, 27 August, 1 September 1897; *San Francisco Chronicle,* 30 July, 2, 8 August 1897. For Feillet, see Denis Marion, *Encyclopédie de la Nouvelle-Calédonie,* vol. 5 (Histoire 1884–1894) (Noumea, 1984), 22–34.

39. Reichenbach to Auditor, 8 September 1897, U.S. Consular Despatches: Noumea, T91, U.S. National Archives; *San Francisco Chronicle,* 7 August 1897; L. W. Osborn to Dept. of State, 23 March 1898, U.S. Consular Despatches: Apia, T27, U.S. National Archives; *La Bulletin du Commerce de la Nouvelle Calédonie,* 16 December 1899.

40. "Serensen [*sic*], Nelson P.," Box 249, RG24, Records of Bureau of Naval Personnel, U.S. National Archives; *Brisbane Courier,* 2, 3, 8, 10 April 1886; E. Grey to U.S. Ambassador, 19 November 1915, MP32/16, Inwards Correspondence General, WPHC. For a comprehensive account of Sorensen's career, see Hugh Laracy, "Niels Peter Sorensen: The Story of a Criminal Adventurer," *Journal of Pacific History* 35 (2000): 147–162.

41. *San Francisco Chronicle,* 2 June 1898.

42. Alexander G. Findlay, *A Directory for the Navigation of the Pacific Ocean* (London). The first edition (1851) is silent on the matter, but subsequent editions (1863, 1875, 1877, 1884) all state, "It is said that copper ore is abundant on them." The origin of the story is unknown, but, contrary to Kuschel, it clearly predates 1885. Rolf Kuschel, "Early Contacts between Bellona and Rennell Islands and the Outside World," *Journal of Pacific History* 23 (1988): 197.

43. Inwards Correspondence General, 12/1897, 87/1897, 90/1897, 91/1897, WPHC; Foreign Office to CO, 12 February 1897, CO 225/53(2).

44. Woodford, "Report on Solomon Islands, January 1897–March 1898," enclosed in WPHC to CO, 28 September 1898, CO 225/55(1); Woodford to Escott, 2 September 1912, enclosed in WPHC to CO, 22 November 1912, CO 225/106(2); *San Francisco Chronicle,* 5 September 1897, 28 July, 1 September 1898; *San Francisco Examiner,* 1 September 1898; *New York Sun,* 16 July 1908, 29 March 1911.

45. Joyce Milton, *The Yellow Kids: Foreign Correspondents in the Heyday of Yellow Journalism* (New York, 1989), 173; Franklin Walker, *Jack London and the Klondike: The Genesis of an American Writer* (San Marino, Calif., 1966), 49.

46. *San Francisco Examiner,* 15 June, 6, 7, 11 September 1905; Earle Labor et al., *The Letters of Jack London* (Stanford, Calif., 1989), vol. 2, p. 492. For more subtle accounts of Larsen, see Carolyn Johnston, *Jack London—An American Radical?* (Westport, Conn., 1984), 83–85; Peter Murray, *The Vagabond Fleet: A Chronicle of the North Pacific Sealing Schooner Trade* (Victoria, B.C., 1988), 142–143; Andrew Sinclair, *Jack: A Biography of Jack London* (New York, 1977), 94–95; Franklin Walker, "Afterword," in Jack London, *The Seawolf and Selected Stories* (New York, 1964), 344–345. London knew McLean only by

reputation, and McLean firmly rejected any close identification of himself with the character of Larsen.

47. Warburton to Salisbury, 14 September 1897, CO 225/54(1); *San Francisco Chronicle,* 5 September 1897.

48. Deposition of Alexander McLean, 11 March 1911, pp. 14–19, *Sorensen* v. *Sun,* New York Supreme Court, index reference 5917 (1911). Note: the records of this case are indexed under "Sorenson" [*sic*]. *New York Sun,* 29 March 1911; *Fiji Times,* 27, 30 October 1897. Joske to WPHC, 26 October 1897, 503/1897, see also 504/1897, Inwards Correspondence General, WPHC. Joseph Theroux, "William Churchill: A Fractured Life," *Hawaiian Journal of History* 29 (1995): 97–123. William Churchill, "Samoan Letters" (TS), New York Public Library, deals with matters of philology rather than with his experiences in the Pacific.

49. Woodford, "Report on Solomon Islands"; Woodford to WPHC, 14 July 1913, CO 225/119(2); *San Francisco Call,* 1 September 1898; *San Francisco Chronicle,* 2 June 1898.

50. Woodford to WPHC, 14 July 1913, CO 225/119(2); *New York Sun,* 29 March 1911.

51. *San Francisco Examiner,* 1 September 1898; *San Francisco Call,* 2 June 1898; *San Francisco Chronicle,* 2 June, 28 July, 1 September 1898.

52. *San Francisco Chronicle,* 1 September 1898.

53. *San Francisco Call,* 21 June 1898; *San Francisco Chronicle,* 1 September 1898; Deposition of Alexander McLean, pp. 107–110.

54. Keith Eunson, *The Wreck of the General Grant* (Wellington, 1974); *Sunday Star-Times,* 29 January 1995, 22 February 1998.

55. Deposition of Alexander McLean; *New York Sun,* 29 March 1911.

56. Eunson, *Wreck of the General Grant,* 141–143; Inwards Correspondence General, 1479/13, 1972/13, 494/14, 2596/14, 2275/15, 32/16, 421/16, 1837/25, 202/30, WPHC; Escott to CO, 22 November 1912, CO 225/119(2); Woodford to External Affairs, 2 September 1912, A1/1, 12/21196, Australian Archives.

57. Peter Saunders, aka Peter Sorenson [*sic*], 8 February 1935, age ninety, death certificate no. 4002, Brooklyn, N.Y.; *San Francisco Chronicle,* 7 August 1897.

58. *New York World,* 5 July 1908; *New York Herald,* 4, 5 July 1908.

59. For discussion of some of these American contacts with the Pacific, see A. Grove Day, *Pacific Islands Literature: One Hundred Basic Books* (Honolulu, 1971), and *Mad about Islands: Novelists of a Vanished Age* (Honolulu, 1987); Hugh Laracy, "Maine, Massachusetts, and the Marists: American Catholic Missionaries in the South Pacific," *Catholic Historical Review* 85 (1999): 566–590. For an account of a latter-day (1959–1961) American attempt "to establish a model community on a beautiful Pacific island," see Lillian Otter-

man, *Clinker Islands: A Complete History of the Galapagos Archipelago* (Bradenton, Fla., 1993), 211–230.

60. Margaret Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa* (New York, 1928); Derek Freeman, *Margaret Mead and Samoa: The Making and Unmaking of an Anthropological Myth* (London, 1984); Derek Freeman, *The Fateful Hoaxing of Margaret Mead: A Historical Analysis of Her Samoan Research* (Boulder, Colo., 1999).

61. For general discussions of American interests in the Pacific, see Donald D. Johnson, *The United States in the Pacific: Private Interests and Public Policies, 1784–1899* (Westport, Conn., 1995); and Julius W. Pratt, *Expansionists of 1898: The Acquisition of Hawaii and the Spanish Islands* (Gloucester, Mass., 1959).