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Cultural Resource Impact Assessment and Negotiation, Archaeology, Writing, Training

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Sir Ian Thomson
1/4 Fettes Rise
Inverleith
Edinburgh EH4 1QH
Scotland

Dear Sir Ian,

Thank you very much for your letter of August 2nd. I'm delighted to learn that you're still with us, albeit in Scotland. The people at the Fiji Museum seemed quite sure you'd gone to your reward, but perhaps that was a euphemism.

I appreciate your advice, and perhaps I can impose on you for a little more. We've gone through Sir Harry Luke's *From a South Seas Diary*, but would dearly like to find the full diary from which the published book was excerpted. I wonder if you'd have any idea where we might start looking for it?

We are in touch with Harry Maude and Eric Bevington, both of whom have been very helpful. We're currently in communication with Foua Tofiga, who worked with you and was with you on the (to us, anyway) famous voyage of the *Viti* in 1941. Some of our people spent time in the WPHC archives last year, and collected a massive amount of information, including the documents I alluded to in my letter to your son. There are actually two major files: one found in Tarawa that contains what appear to be Gallagher's copies of wireless messages, and the other from the WPHC archives. The latter comprises a file very carefully maintained by Henry Vaskess, made up of messages and minutes detailing the discovery of bones, a woman's shoe fragment, and a sextant box on Gardner Island in mid-1940. Mr. Gallagher, who thought they might be Earhart's remains, reported the discovery when he arrived on the island in September, and at Sir Harry's direction shipped the discoveries to Fiji (via Tarawa, where they were for a time impounded by the Medical Officer Mr. Isaac, who took the occasion to quarantine the harbour). In Fiji the bones were analyzed by Dr. Hoodless and the sextant box examined by Mr. Harold Gatty. The bones are last

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documented in 1941 in the possession of Dr. Hoodless, while the sextant box is last reported in the late 1940s, when Mr. Tofinga recalls seeing it in Mr. Vaskess' office.

If we could locate the bones, of course, we hope that modern biochemical studies could establish clearly whether they are or are not Earhart's. The sextant box is reported to have had numbers on it similar to some on a box known to have been owned by Fred Noonan, Earhart's navigator. Whether its recovery would tell us anything, we don't know, but it would certainly be interesting to examine.

We very much appreciate the referral to John Eric Pery-Johnston, and have asked some of our colleagues in New Zealand to see if they can track him down. I had heard the last name from people at the Colonial War Memorial Hospital, but only that, and the prospect of trying to find a Mister Johnston somewhere in New Zealand was pretty daunting. His full name and probable age will be a great help.

One other request. Are the original photographs from your book on Fiji in the '40s and '50s available anywhere for detailed perusal? One of my colleagues just asked about this; I doubt if she expects to be able to find the Nikumaroro bones pictured strolling down Victoria Parade, but there's something she wants to check. Thanks in advance for any advice.

Thank you again, and please excuse my error in consigning you to the hereafter.

Best wishes,