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Extract from a Report from the Captain of
H.M.S. "LEITH" dated 18th September, 1937.

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REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS+

ISLAND CRUISE-SECOND PART.

38. P.M. the 18th August, after our arrival at Suva, I oiled ship 287 tons, shifting berth to the south end of the jetty at 0600 on 19th August, and later I went to stay at Government House.

39. On Friday, the Commodore Commanding, New Zealand Station called officially on His Excellency, the Governor of Fiji, who returned the call, and at noon I again shifted berth to the North end of the jetty. The Governor very kindly arranged a motor picnic for the Ship's Company. This was organised in parties on three different days.

40. A series of dinners and dances were held before H.M.S. "ACHILLES" left on Monday, 23rd August. The ship gave an "At Home" on 24th August, and I had a lunch and dinner party on board on 25th August.

41. I was under orders to sail for Canton and Hull Islands to establish a Government station on Canton Island, which was to relieve the party from H.M.S. "ACHILLES" which was there, and to take stores to and instal a W/T station on Hull Island. This entailed a considerable amount of stores to be embarked, as material for the living quarters and two huts, water tanks, wireless complete, as well as stores for four months were to be taken to Canton Island with about 3. tons of stores for Hull Island.

42. Mr. Rostier and Mr. Langdale, with one Gilbertese handyman, were the personnel for Canton Island. Hull Island was already occupied by Mr. Jones and natives working copra for Messrs Burns Philp (South Sea) Company, Ltd.

43. On the morning of the 26th August, I again shifted berth and during the day completed embarking stores, sailing in the evening, His Excellency, The Governor, very kindly coming down to the ship to say goodbye.

Six native carpenters were lent to me to assist in erecting the huts on Canton Island and these proved invaluable.

44. Arriving at Hull Island on Monday, 30th August, I landed the wireless stores and a party to assemble the set. Provisions and stores which we had brought for the Island were also landed and I embarked about two tons of salvaged cases from the wreck of the Burns, Philp, Schooner "Makoa". I also borrowed a very useful surf boat to assist landing gear at Canton Island. A demolition party landed to improve the Boat passage. By dark the wireless set was functioning satisfactorily, so I proceeded to Canton Island, arriving next morning. The landing of stores proved more rapid than expected as I found that my motor boat could tow in and out of the passage at all times except one hour each tide when the current was strongest. All hands worked from dawn to dusk and by the Friday evening, 3rd September work was completed and wireless communication satisfactory. This I consider was good going, as in four working days a house and two huts were assembled and painted, wireless masts erected with their stays anchored in cement, about 30 tons of material landed, including 12 tons of fresh water which had to be hand pumped to the tanks near the buildings, as well as re-embarking "ACHILLES" stores.

45. During the night of Wednesday, 1st September, the ship swung round towards the reef, so I weighed and lay off, anchoring again next morning. To prevent this occurring again, I veered my Kedge anchor over the stern with 30 fathoms $2\frac{1}{2}$ " wire out, the stern of the ship being then over deep water. About 1600, the ship swung round, the anchor grounding. However, instead of it taking up gradually as expected, it must have caught on the vertical face of the reef and the slight pitching of the ship parted the wire almost at once. Efforts with a water-glass and dragging failed to locate the wire which bears out the supposition that the anchor on being released fell down into very deep water.

Owing to the current, depth of water and sharks, I did not send divers down.

46. After leaving Hull Island for Canton Island W/T communication had failed, so on Friday, 3rd September at 2000 I sailed for that Island to readjust his W/T and return his boat which I had borrowed. Mr. Jones' knowledge of W/T., both technical and operative, is small, but with practice he should improve. Having rectified minor faults in his set, returned his boat, and repaired the engine of his motor boat, I sailed for Apia, arriving there a.m. 7th September.

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