

Easter Island ship logs

Ship Log of Edward Davis, 1687

Captain Edward Davis was an English pirate and possibly the first to discover Rapa Nui, though he never disembarked at the island.

Lionel Wafer

Narrator *Lionel Wafer* who cruised with *Captain Edward Davis* gives the following account.

Bound to the southward, in latitude 12 degrees 30 minutes and about 150 leagues off the coast, experienced a shock of earthquake, that was afterwards found to correspond with the destruction of Callao by earthquake. Having recovered from our fright we kept on to the southward. We steered south-and-by-east-half-easterly, until we came to latitude 27 degrees 20 minutes south, when about two hours before day we fell in with a small, sandy island and heard a great roaring noise, like that of the sea beating upon the shore, right ahead of the ship. Whereupon the sailors, fearing to fall foul upon the shore before day, desired the captain to put the ship about, and to stand off until the day appeared; to which the captain gave his consent. So we plied off till day and then stood in again with the land, which proved to be a small flat island, without any guard of rocks. We stood in within a quarter of a mile of the shore and could see it plainly, for it was a clear morning, not foggy or hazy. To the westward about 12 leagues, by judgement, we saw a range of high land, which we took to be islands, for there were several partitions in the prospect.

This land seemed to reach about 14 or 16 leagues in a range, and there came great flocks of fowls. I and many more of our men would have made this land and have gone ashore on it, but the captain would not permit us. The small island bears from Copiapó almost due east 500 leagues, and from the Galapagos, under the line, 600 leagues.

Ship logs of 1722 voyage of Jacob Roggeveen

Jacob Roggeveen was the first European to set foot on Rapa Nui and did so in 1722.

Official log of Mr Jacob Roggeveen

Transcribed, translated, and edited by Bolton Glanvill Corney. Published in 1908.

Translated from the German of CARL FRIEDERICH BEHRENS: *Der wohlversichtete Süd-Länder y das ist: ausführliche Reise-Beschreibung um die Welt.*

5. Our lat. by reckoning was 27 degrees 4 minutes South and the long. 266 degrees 31 minutes, course West ½ South, distance 7 miles, the wind Nor'-Nor'-West to Sou'- West, breeze unsteady, with calms, also thick weather and showers. Saw a turtle, floating weed, and

birds. About the 10th glass in the afternoon watch The African Galley, which was sailing ahead of us, lay to to wait for us, making the signal of land in sight; when we came up with her, after four glasses had run out, for the breeze was light, we asked what they had seen. On this we were answered that they had all very distinctly seen a low and flattish island lying away to starboard, about 5 ½ miles off, to the nor'ard and west-'ard. Hereupon it was deemed well to stand on under easy sail to the end of the first watch, and then to lie to and await the dawn. This being decided, the necessary information was given to Captain BOUMAN, who was astern; and to the land the name of *Paásch Eyland*, because it was discovered by us on Easter Day. There was great rejoicing among the people and every one hoped that this low land might prove to be a foretoken of the coastline of the unknown Southern continent.

6. Had a light breeze out of the South-East, and East-South-East, Padsch Eyland lying West by North 8 to 9 miles from us. Laid our course between West by South and North- West, in order to run under the lee of the Island, and so avoid the dangers of a lee shore. At noon the corrected course was West, distance 10 miles, lat. by reckoning 27 degrees 4 minutes South, and long. 265 degrees 42 minutes. In the ninth glass of the afternoon we saw smoke rising in several places from which we concluded that there were people dwelling on the same. We therefore thought it would be well to consider with the Captains of the other ships whether it were not needful to undertake an expedition ashore, to the end that we might gain a fitting knowledge of the interior of the country. On this, it was decided that both the shallops of the Ships A rend and Thienhoven, well manned and armed, should proceed inshore, and find out a convenient place for landing a party from the boats, and also to take soundings. This decision being come to, we stood off and on for the night with our Ships. Which Resolution is as follows: —

COUNCIL of the Commanders of the three Ships sailing in company held on board the AREND, in the presence of the undersigned.

Monday the 6th of April, 1722.

The President submitting that we had now arrived within a distance of some two miles of the Sandy Island, the which lies in an Easterly direction from the stretch of coast (as yet out of sight) which it is one of the objects of this Expedition to discover, and as we have seen smoke ascending in several places, from which it may reasonably be concluded that the aforementioned Island, although it may be shown to be sandy and barren, has nevertheless human inhabitants; now, therefore the President moves that it would be culpable to proceed in a careless and negligent manner, and that we should stand off and on for to-night with our ships, and that on the arrival of daylight we send close in to the land two well manned shallops, properly armed (that we may be in a state of defence in case of any hostile meeting), and show all friendliness towards the inhabitants, endeavouring to see and inquire what they wear or make use of either as ornaments or for other purposes, also whether any refreshments in the way of green stuff, fruit, or beasts can be procured by barter. Which motion having been discussed, the same is by common assent approved and adopted: and it is farther decided that both the shallops of the Ships A REND and Thienhoven, shall proceed at daybreak, and that The African Galley should follow as close to the land as possible and prudent, covering and defending the said shallops (should need arise). Resolved and attested in the said Ship and on the day above mentioned. (Signed): Jacob Roggeveen, Jan Koster, Cornelis Bouman, Roelof Rosendaal.

7. The weather was very variable, with thunder, sheet lightning and showers. The wind unsteady from the North West, and occasional calms* so that our shore expedition could not be undertaken with any prospect of success. During the forenoon Captain BOUMAN brought an Easter Islander on board, together with his craft, in which he had come off close to the Ship from the land; he was quite nude, without the slightest covering for that which modesty shrinks from revealing. This hapless creature seemed to be very glad to behold us, and showed the greatest wonder at the build of our Ship. He took special notice of the tautness of our spars, the stoutness of our rigging and running gear, the sails, the guns — which he felt all over with minute attention — and with everything else that he saw; especially when the image of his own features was displayed before him in a mirror, seeing the which, he started suddenly back and then looked towards the back of the glass, apparently in the expectation of discovering there the cause of the apparition.

After we had sufficiently beguiled ourselves with him, and he with us, we started him off again in his canoe towards the shore, having presented him with two strings of blue beads¹ round his neck, a small mirror, a pair of scissors, and other like trifles, which seemed to have a special attraction for him.

1) The original has *coraelen*, meaning beads.

But when we had approached within a short distance of the land we saw distinctly that the account of the *Sandy and Low Island* (so described by Captain *William Dampier*, in accordance with the statement and testimony of *Captain Davis*, and of the narrator *Lionel Wafer*, whose log of this and other discoveries the aforesaid *Dampier* has made known through the press, and inserted as a prominent feature in his book, which comprises all his own travels and voyages) was not in the least in conformity with our find; and that neither could it be the land which the aforementioned discoverers declare to be visible 14 to 16 miles beyond it and stretching away out of sight, being a range of high land, which the said *Dampier* conjectured might be the extremity of the unknown Southland. That this *Easter Island* can not be the *Sandy Island* is clear, from the fact that the sandy one is small, and low; whereas *Easter Island*, on the contrary, extends some 15 or 16 miles in circuit, and has at its Eastern and Western points — which lie about five miles from each other — two high hills sloping gradually down, with three or four other smaller hills about their bases which rise above the plain, so that this land is of moderate elevation, and raised above the force of the sea.

The reason why, at first, when at a farther distance off, we had regarded the said Easter Island as being of a sandy nature is that we mistook the parched-up grass, and hay or other scorched and charred brushwood for a soil of that arid nature, because from its outward appearance it suggested no other idea than that of an extraordinarily sparse and meagre vegetation; and the discoverers had consequently bestowed upon it the term sandy.

It may therefore be concluded, in the light of the foregoing explanation, that this Easter Island now discovered will turn out to be some other land lying further to the Eastward than that which is one of the objectives of our Expedition: or else, the discoverers must stand convicted of a whole bundle of lies in their reports, told by word of mouth as well as in writing.

8. We had the wind South, South by East, and Sou'-Sou'-West, with a reefed topsail breeze, unsteady. After breakfast had been served, our shallop was well manned and armed, and likewise the shallop of the Ship THIENHOVEN, now close in with the land; and having

received their orders, they reported that the inhabitants there were very finely clad in some stuffs of all kinds of colours, and that they made many signs that we should come on shore, but as our orders were not to do so, if the Indians should be present in large numbers, that was not permitted. Furthermore, some thought they had seen the natives to have plates of silver in their ears, and mother-of-pearl shells as ornaments about their necks. By sundown, having come into the roadstead, between the Ships Thienhoven and The African Galley, which had already brought to in readiness for us, we let go our anchor in 22 fathoms, coral bottom, at the distance of a quarter of a mile¹ from the beach; the Eastern point of the Island bearing East by South, and the West point West-Nor'-West from us.

1) About six furlongs.

9. A great many canoes came off to the ships: these people showed us at that time their great cupidity for every thing they saw; and were so daring that they took the seamen's hats and caps from off their heads, and sprang overboard with the spoil¹; for they are surpassingly good swimmers, as would seem from the great numbers of them who came swimming off from the shore to the ships. There was also an Easter Islander who climbed in through the cabin window of The African Galley, from his canoe, and seeing on the table, a cloth with which it was covered, and deeming it to be a good prize, he made his escape with it there and then; so that one must take special heed to keep close watch over everything. Furthermore, a shore party of 134 men was organised to make investigations for the purpose of reporting upon our mission.

1) The edited Journal here has a footnote to the effect that the posterity of this generation were not less thievishly disposed than their fathers, and refers to Cook's, De la Pérouse's, and Kotzebue's accounts of their respective experiences with them in this respect.

10. In the morning we proceeded with three boats and two shallows, manned by 134 persons, all armed with musket, pistols, and cutlass; on reaching the shore the boats and shallows kept close together in order to lay down their grapnels, leaving twenty men in them, armed as above, to take care of them; The African Galley's boat, was mounted besides with two carronades in the bows. Having seen to all these arrangements, we proceeded in open order, but keeping well together, and clambered over the rocks, which are very numerous on the sea margin, as far as the level land or flat, making signs with the hand that the natives, who pressed round us in great numbers, should stand out of our way and make room for us. Having got so far, a corps de bataille was formed up of all the seamen of the three ships, the Commodore, Captains KOSTER, Bouman and Rosendaal leading, each at the head of his own crew. This column, three ranks in width, occupying a position to the rear of the others, was covered by one half the soldiers under the command of Lieutenant NiCOLAAS Thonnar, constituting the right wing; and the left, made up of the other half of the military, was led by Mr MARTINUS KEERENS, Ensign. After thus disposing our forces we marched forward a little, to make room for some of our people who were behind, that they might fall in with the ranks, who were accordingly halted to allow the hindmost to come up, when, quite unexpectedly and to our great astonishment, four or five shots were heard in our rear, together with a vigorous shout of *'t is tyd, 't is tyd, geeft vuur!* [It's time, it's time, fire!]. On this, as in a moment, more than thirty shots were fired, and the Indians, being thereby amazed and scared, took to flight, leaving 10 or 12 dead, besides the wounded. The leaders of the party, standing in front, prevented those in advance from firing on the fugitives; demanding, moreover, who had given the order to shoot, and what had induced him to do so? After a little while the assistant pilot of the ship Thienhoven came up to me saying, that he, with six other men, was

the hindmost of the party; that, on one of the natives laying hold of the muzzle of his piece to snatch it from him, he struck him a blow; and, further, that another Indian had attempted to strip the jacket off one of the seamen, and that some of the natives seeing our men resist, picked up stones, using threatening gestures as if to pelt us with them, whereby, from all appearance, the firing on the part of my small troop was brought about, although he declared that until then he had given no orders of the least kind. This was, however, no time for hearing other versions of the affair, and that much had to be deferred till a better opportunity. After the astonishment and terror of the natives were somewhat allayed, on their seeing that our hostilities were not persisted in, they were given to know by signs that the victims had threatened to make an assault upon us by stone-throwing, and the inhabitants, who had been just in front of us all the time, approached our leaders again; in particular one who seemed to be in authority over the other headmen, for, giving a general direction that everything they had should be fetched and laid before us, including fruit, root crops, and poultry, the order was promptly obeyed with reverence and bowing by those round about, as the event proved; for in a little, while they brought a great abundance of sugar-cane, fowls, yams¹, and bananas; but we gave them to understand through signs that we desired nothing, excepting only the fowls, which were about sixty in number, and thirty bunches of bananas, for which we paid them ample value in striped linen, with which they appeared to be well pleased and satisfied. By the time we had fully investigated things, and especially their cloth stuffs and the dyes of them, and also the supposed silver plates and mother-of-pearl, it was found that they were made up of pieces patched together; that is, that the wraps worn on their bodies were composed of some field-product, sewn three or four ply in thickness, yet neat and trim, which material (as called in the West Indies) is a sort of Pieti further, that the soil of the country (as we saw in several places) was red, and yellowish, into the which when mixed with water they dip their garments and afterwards let them dry, which shows that their dye is not fast, for when felt about and handled one finds the colour come off on one's fingers, not only after touching new articles but also from old and worn ones. The plates imagined to be of silver were made out of the root of some vegetable, — as one might say in Holland, of good stout parsnips or carrots. This ear-ornament is roundish, or oval, having a diameter of about two inches² measured through the widest section, and one and a half inches across the lesser; being three inches, at a guess, in length. To understand how these supposed silver plates are fixed in the ears as ornaments one must know that the lobes of these people's ears are stretched, from their youth up; and their centre is slit open, in such wise that the lesser rim of the plug, being stuck through the opening in the lobe, is then pushed on towards the thicker end, which accordingly faces towards the front, and completely stuffs the opening³. Furthermore, the mother-of-pearl which was seen as a neck pendant is a flat shell of the same tint as the inner lip of our oysters. When these Indians go about any job which might set their ear-plugs waggling, and bid fair to do them any hurt, they take them out and hitch the rim of the lobe up over the top of the ear, which gives them a quaint and laughable appearance⁴.

1) *Ubasworteln*, a coined hybrid word; from the Malay *ubi*, a yam, and the Dutch *wortel*, a root.

2) The term used by Roggeveen is *duymen*; literally thumbs or thumb's breadths, but the common Dutch expression when inches are meant, of which eleven go to the foot.

3) For Behrens' account, see Appendix I. He states Their ears were so long that they hung down as far as to the shoulders. Some wore white ornaments in the lobes as a special embellishment.

In M. de la Pérouse's narrative there is no mention of the ear slits, nor of the ear

ornaments; nor even any general description of the natives. But his visit, which took place in 1786, only extended over a few hours; and his vessels were at anchor there only one night. His portrayal of the Easter Islanders is usually accounted the best; but the travelled and intelligent reader will find it difficult to concede this compliment, especially if he have read the younger Forster's description, and will incline to consider La Pérouse's account as much overrated in worth as it is charming in expression. Cook's and Forster's remarks on the ear ornaments are here given: —

Both men and women have very large holes, or rather slits, in their ears, extending to near three inches in length. They sometimes turn this slit over the upper part, and then the ear looks as if the flap was cut off. The chief ear ornaments are the white down of feathers, and rings, which they wear in the inside of the hole, made of some elastic substance, rolled up like a watch-spring. I judged this was to keep the ear at its utmost extension. I do not remember seeing them wear any other ornaments, excepting amulets made of bone or shells. Cook, Bibl. no. 16.

Their ears were remarkable for the great length of the lap, which frequently hung on the shoulder, and was pierced with so large a hole, that the extremity could be tucked up through it. In order to bring it to this size they wore a leaf of a sugar cane, which is very elastic, rolled up in it like a scroll; by which means it was always on the stretch. Forster, George, Bibl. no. 21.

4) This habit is mentioned by Cook, and by Forster: see the last preceding footnote.

These people have well proportioned limbs, with large and strong muscles; they are big in stature, and their natural hue is not black, but pale yellow or sallowish, as we saw in the case of many of the lads, either because they had not painted¹ their bodies with dark blue, or because they were of superior rank and had consequently no need to labour in the field. These people have also snow-white teeth, with which they are exceptionally well provided, even the old and hoary, as was evidenced by the cracking of a large and hard nut, whose shell was thicker and more resisting than our peach stones. The hair of their heads, and the beards of most of them, were short, although others wore it long, and hanging down the back, or plaited and coiled on the top of the head in a tress, like the Chinese at Batavia, which is there termed condt.

1) Meaning tattooed, doubtless.

What the form of worship of these people comprises we were not able to gather any full knowledge of, owing to the shortness of our stay among them; we noticed only that they kindle fire in front of certain remarkably tall stone figures they set up; and, thereafter squatting on their heels with heads bowed down, they bring the palms of their hands together and alternately raise and lower them. At first, these stone figures caused us to be filled with wonder, for we could not understand how it was possible that people who are destitute of heavy or thick timber, and also of stout cordage, out of which to construct gear, had been able to erect them; nevertheless some of these statues were a good 30 feet in height and broad in proportion. This perplexity ceased, however, with the discovery, on removing a piece of the stone, that they were formed out of clay or some kind of rich earth, and that small smooth flints had been stuck over afterwards, which are fitted very closely and neatly to each other, so as to make up the semblance of a human figure¹. Moreover, one saw reaching downwards from the shoulders a slight elevation or prominence which represented the arms, for all the statues seem to convey the idea that they were hung about with a long robe from the neck

right down to the soles of the feet. They have on the head a basket heaped up with flints painted white deposited in it².

1) Some of the gentlemen who travelled over the island, and examined many of them, were of opinion, that the stone of which they were made was different to any other they saw on the island, and had much the appearance of being factitious. Cook, Bibl. no. 16.

2) Roggeveen's description of the statues seems to show that he never got close to one of them, but saw them only from a distance of some hundreds of yards. His 'basket' was doubtless one of the coronoid cylinders of tufaceous rock by which most of the figures were surmounted.

It was incomprehensible to us how these people cook their food, for no one was able to perceive or find that they had any earthen pots, pans, or vessels. The only thing which appeared to us was that they scrape holes in the ground with their hands, and lay large and small flint pebbles in them (for we saw no other kinds of stone): then, having got dried litter from the fields and laid over the pebbles, they set fire to it and in a little time brought us a boiled fowl to eat very neatly wrapped round in a kind of rush, clean and hot. Though they were thanked by means of signs, we had quite enough business in hand to look after our people so as to keep order among them, and prevent any affront being offered; and also that in the event of any struggle occurring they should not allow themselves to be taken by surprise, for although these people showed us every sign of friendship, yet the experience of others has taught us that one may not put too much trust in any Indians, as recounted in the Journal of the *Nassau Fleet*, which lost seventeen men on one occasion through the willingness of the natives of *Terra de Feu* to help being mistaken for a proof that they were well disposed.

We then, being baulked from making any sufficiently detailed inquiry, concluded that they must have large hollow flint-stones under the soil, which hold water when they set about boiling anything, and that afterwards they arch it over with stones on which to light the fire, and thus boil their food by means of the heat thrown downwards, until tender. It is also very remarkable that we saw no more than two or three old women, those were wearing a garment reaching from the waist down to below their knees, and another slung on the shoulders: yet so that the skin covering their pendant breasts was bare. But young women and lasses did not come forward amongst the crowd, so that one must believe the jealousy of the men had moved them to hide them away in some distant place in the island¹. Their houses or huts are without any ornamentation, and have a length of fifty feet and a width of fifteen; the height being nine feet, as it appeared by guess². The construction of their walls, as we saw in the framework of a new building, is begun with stakes which are stuck into the ground and secured straight upright, across which other long strips of wood which I may call laths are lashed, to the height of four or five, thus completing the framework of the building. Then the interstices, which are all of oblong shape, are closed up and covered over with a sort of rush or long grass, which they put on very thickly, layer upon layer, and fasten on the inner side with lashings (the which they know how to make from a certain field product called *Piet* very neatly and skilfully, and is in no way inferior to our own thin cord); so that they are always as well shut in against wind and rain as those who live beneath thatched roofs in Holland.

1) They either have but few females among them, or many were restrained from making their appearance, during our stay," says Cook, u for though we saw nothing to induce us to believe the men were of a jealous disposition, or the women afraid to appear in public, something of this kind was probably the case. Cook, Bibl. no. 16.

2) The largest house I saw was about sixty feet long, eight or nine feet high in the middle, and three or four at each end, its breadth at these parts was nearly equal to its height. Cook, Bibl. no. 16.

These dwellings have no more than one entrance way, which is so low that they pass in creeping on their knees, being round above, as a vault or archway¹; the roof is also of the same form. All the chattels we saw before us (for these long huts admit no daylight except through the one entrance-way, and are destitute of windows and closely shut in all round) were mats spread on the floor, and a large flint stone which many of them use for a pillow. Furthermore they had round about their dwellings certain big blocks of hewn stone, three or four feet in breadth, and fitted together in a singularly neat and even manner²; and, according to our judgment, these serve them for a stoop³ on which to sit and chat during the cool of the evening.

1) The door-way is in the middle of one side, formed like a porch and so low and narrow. as just to admit a man to enter upon all fours. Cook, Bibl. no. 16.

2) They are built, or rather faced, with hewn stones of a very large size; and the workmanship is not inferior to the best plain piece of masonry we have in England. They use no sort of cement; yet the joints are exceedingly close and the stones morticed and tenanted one into another, in a very artful manner. Cook, Bibl. no. 16.

A remarkable circumstance was the junction of these stones, which were laid after the most excellent rules of art, fitting in such a manner as to make a durable piece of architecture. Forster, G., Bibl. no. 21.

3) The word in the original is *stoep*. There is no synonymous expression in English, though 'porch', 'threshold', or 'piazza' each corresponds in a way. In the United States of America, and in the South African colonies, the Dutch term has been adopted; and is now written 'stoop'. It means the paved space adjoining the front door of a house, where on fine evenings the inmates are wont to sit in chairs or on benches.

It only remains to say, in concluding the subject of these dwelling-huts, that we did not see more than six or seven of them at the place where we landed, from which it may clearly be inferred that all the Indians make use of their possessions in common, for the large size and small number of their dwellings give one to know that many live together and sleep in a single building; but if one should therefore conclude that the women are held in common among them, one must naturally expect depravity and bickering to ensue.

Finally, as to their seagoing craft, they are of poor and flimsy construction; for their canoes are fitted together of a number of small boards and light frames, which they skilfully lace together with very fine laid twine made from the above-mentioned vegetable product *Piet*. But as they lack the knowledge, and especially the material, for caulking the great number of seams of their canoes, and making them tight, they consequently leak a great deal; on account of which they are necessitated to spend half their time in baling. Their canoes are about ten feet long, not counting the high and pointed stem and stern pieces. Their width is such that, with their legs packed close together, they can just sit in them so as to paddle ahead.

It was now deemed advisable to go to the other side of the Island, whereto the King or Head Chief invited us, as being the principal place of their plantations and fruit-trees, for all the things they brought to us of that kind were fetched from that quarter, — inasmuch as the

Northerly wind which began to blow made our anchorage a leeshore: the more so because we had not many people on board the Ships, who could get help from us if necessary in the event of the wind waxing strong; moreover, the boats and shallops being filled to the utmost with men, these would in such a case not have been able to get back on board, either by reason of the heavy sea on the beach or of its becoming impossible for them to row. Therefore it was deemed well to pull off at once in good order, the which was presently put into practice. Having arrived on board we resolved to sail another hundred miles farther to the Westward so that by thus doing we should punctually follow our Instructions and the Resolution adopted in reference to them, in all details; although, before doing so, we should make a short Cruise away down Eastwards, to* see whether we could discover the *Low and Sandy Island*; for, in the event of our finding it, the first portion of our cruise in the South Sea would necessarily terminate, as having accomplished its purpose: the contents of which Resolution are: —

COUNCIL of the Commanders of the three Ships sailing in company, held on board the Ship *Arend*, when the Shore Expedition had been despatched and accomplished with three boats and two shallops, well armed and manned.

Friday the 10th of April, 1722.

The President having called together the Commanders of this Expedition, to the end that each one should submit his ideas and opinions concerning the newly found Island, namely, whether in view of this discovery the Resolution considered and adopted by this Council on the 2nd inst. should be punctually observed and fulfilled: or whether, on the contrary, we should proceed on our course another hundred miles Westwards, inasmuch as this land discovered² (being called by us *Padsch Eyland*, because it was sighted and discovered on Easter Day) can not be said to be a small, low, and sandy Island, covering as it does an extent of sixteen Dutch miles in circuit and being fairly high land³, the which was lying 8 or 9 miles away from us when *The African Galley* made the signal of land in sight. As this distance may with safety be deemed correct, seeing that it took us the whole of the following day, with a fresh breeze blowing, to get within a couple of miles or so by eventide. Nor can the aforementioned land be termed *sandy*, because we found it not only not sandy but on the contrary exceedingly fruitful, producing bananas, potatoes, sugar-cane of remarkable thickness, and many other kinds of the fruits of the earth; although destitute of large trees and domestic animals, except poultry. This place, as far as its rich soil and good climate are concerned, is such that it might be made into an earthly Paradise, if it were properly worked and cultivated; which is now only done in so far as the Inhabitants are obliged to for the maintenance of life. And furthermore, it is quite improper to give this discovery the name of a *range of high land*; if one supposes that by ill luck we sailed by the *Low and Sandy Island* without seeing it, the which is not probable, as our course was directed in such wise that we should inevitably have sighted it if so be that this *Easter Island* is the land which is described as being a range of high land. Therefore one may conclude with good reason that this Easter Island is some other land than any we are seeking, and that one part of our voyage is made good; since it fails to present those characteristics which belong to the land we hope to meet with. The President submits all the above remarks to this Council for consideration, in order to avail himself of its opinions as may be proper.

1) By a curious coincidence, La Pérouse's visit was also made on the 10th of April: sixty-four years later.

2) The parenthesis is misplaced in the Dutch Journal, as edited, where it occurs before the word *omdat*, 'inasmuch.' It should obviously be after the word 'discovered' as now translated.

3) The highest peak of Easter Island attains 1767 feet. Two others are 1327 and 1323 feet, respectively, above the sea. Cook says, "The hills are of such an height as to be seen fifteen or sixteen leagues."

Whereupon, all these points being attentively noted and maturely weighed, it is unanimously resolved that, indisputably, the above-mentioned Easter Island does not in the least conform to the description of a range of high land, being of only moderate elevation; that, also, it is absolutely impossible that the finer metals should occur here, as we learned by experience from ocular inspection, that the Inhabitants are without any such, and employ as coverings and ornaments only certain produce of vegetable origin; and that they understand sewing these handsomely and neatly together three or four ply in thickness "for the sake of warmth and strength. Furthermore that they plait together as ornaments some feathers of the domestic fowl (of which last very few were seen, however) so as to form a circlet worn on the head, and the painting of their faces, and other parts of the body as well, with regular and well proportioned designs after such a manner that one side of the body is in conformity with the other, also some flat shells worn as neck ornaments, and the slit in the ear-lobes plugged with some kind of root (shaped like our parsnips) for adorning the ears. Further, that we have not seen the small, low, and sandy Island which must be the outlier and true sign of that land we are in search of; therefore it is by unanimous assent agreed upon and declared that we continue the course West along the parallel of 27 degrees of South latitude until we shall have sailed another hundred miles, and on arrival there, we are to be guided by circumstances and to take such action as may then be deemed proper.

So resolved in the Ship and on the day above stated. (Signed) Jacob Roggeveen, Jan Koster, Cornelis Bouman, Roelof Rosendaal.

This resolution being carried and signed, Captain Jan Koster suggested, by way of discussion, that it should be a very easy and simple matter to ascertain whether the above-mentioned *Easter Island* is really the land we are aiming after and towards which we have directed our course, if we were now to make only a short Cruise by sailing 12 miles Eastwards, and that the ships should keep two miles apart from each other, but at the same time resume close company if it should happen that a *low and sandy island* should be sighted, which would establish the truth that the aforesaid *Easter Island* is the land we have been minded to discover. And in case we get no view of the said Sandy Island that then also the before-named *Easter Island* must of necessity be some other land (although lying right in our track) than that towards which our expedition is directed. Furthermore, that if the Sandy Island should be discovered, a Northerly course should be shaped in order to get into the steadier and stronger trade-wind, for the furthering of the second item in our Voyage: since the first would fulfil itself, and thereby terminate, on our meeting with the Sandy Island before mentioned. All the which being considered, was approved and adopted by common assent.

So resolved and determined in the Ship and on the day of the foregoing Resolution. (Signed) JACOB ROGGEVEEN, Jan Koster, Cornelis Bouman, Roelof Rosenpaal.

11. The wind this day was Nor'-Nor'-West and Nor'-West, with a topsail-breeze and rough sea. We laid out the best bower, and sent down the fore and main yards. About the fourth

glass of the first watch the ship *THIENHOVEN*'s working cable parted; and, being hailed to know if she wanted assistance, they answered 'No'.

12. The working cable of *The African Galley* carried away about dawn, through which misfortune both ships got so much nearer the beach before they were brought up by another anchor, that if they had then dragged, or the cable had parted a second time, they would inevitably have suffered shipwreck: for, as there was not time enough to sheet their sails home by the wind, the Ship or both Ships would have foundered against the rocks, by reason of the strength of the wind and the heavy rollers setting shorewards. The danger of the other ships caused us to decide to get a spring on our own cable, so as to be able to fill our sails in case of emergency, and be ready to claw off the lee shore and thus endeavour to save the ship and ourselves: to which end we swayed our yards aloft again so as to be all ready to put to sea whenever needs should demand. But the wind shifting with a rain squall from the Nor'- West to West, saved us from this extreme measure. We all weighed our anchors, therefore, and made sail together; with the setting of the sun, the East point of the Island bearing Sou'-West by South, and the West point Sou'-West by West, six miles distant.

13. We were in the latitude by observation 27 degrees 7 minutes South, and the longitude 265 degrees 56 minutes by reckoning; the corrected course was South-East, 4½ miles, the wind between Nor'-Nor'-West and South by East, with unsteady airs and rain squalls. After *Easter Island* bore West by North from us, we steered due East, the weather being very bright and clear all the while. When we had left the land so far behind that it could scarcely be made out from the mast-head, we sailed on another three miles farther notwithstanding, in order to be quite certain of covering the whole distance between the Sandy Island and Easter Island; but, not sighting the same, we decided to wear ship in order to proceed on our voyage to the Westward. We therefore signalled our consorts to alter their course, and to steer West, expressing our hope that a good discovery of a high and wide-stretching tract of land should result after a little while.

[*End of the Extract from Roggeveen's Journal.*]

NOTE by the editor: The explorers' wish was destined to be disappointed; and the subsequent pages of the Journal contain nothing pertinent to the present subject. No land was sighted on the course due West, along the parallel of Easter Island; and, on the 21st of April, Roggeveen called another meeting of his officers, including this time in their deliberations the Chief Pilots. He concluded that Easter Island must be identical with the so-called Southern Continent of Davis, Wafer, and Dampier, and that the range of high land they were now in search of must be visionary. In finally reviewing the *pros* and *cons* of their statements the phlegmatic Dutchman slyly declares that nothing more remains to be said than that these three (who were Englishmen) must have been rovers from truth, as well as rovers after the goods of the Spaniards.

Such is the official account written by Mr Jacob Roggeveen, the Commodore of his expedition — an account which, little known as it appears to be even at the present day, should long since have relegated the clap-trap story of the *Tweejarige Reize* to the realms of legend, and have eclipsed the claims of the more sober-minded but not wholly authentic narrative of Sergeant-Major Carl Friederich Behrens. We may now judge Roggeveen in a new and true light; and must commend his conduct of the expedition as careful and conscientious, instead of loading him, as has been done in the past, with charges of inhumanity and ruthlessness. Honour is due to him as the first European to visit and

explore Easter Island; and as having succeeded in that object with fewer data available than had many of his successors, who nevertheless failed in the quest.

B. G. C.

Another narrative of Jacob Roggeveen's visit

Translated from the German of CARL FRIEDERICH BEHRENS: *Der wohlversichtete Süd-Länder y das ist: ausführliche Reise-Beschreibung um die Welt.*

From here¹ we set our course for David's Land, or a part of the South Land, W.N.W. This land seems to have been discovered in 1680 by Captain Davids, when in command of an English buccaneering ship², as related by Mr Dampier and one Waffer³ in their narrative. Ten miles westward of Joan Ferdinando we saw the island Little Ferdinando. It was likewise uninhabited; but appeared to be less fertile than the other, and withal much smaller. There seem, however, to be a great quantity of wild goats [*stein-böcke*] on it, and I should say they must be more easy to shoot here than upon the other island, as it is not so mountainous. I did not examine whether there is any good harbour here in which one may anchor.

1) i.e. the larger or landward island of Juan Fernandez.

2) The Bachelor's Delight, 1687.

3) Lionel Wafer.

We made good way day by day, as the S.E. trade-wind was very favourable to us, and attended us throughout most parts of the South Sea. At last we attained the latitude of 28°, and longitude 251°, in which position we expected to fall in with the land. We saw numerous land birds, among which were many tropic-birds [*pfeil-sterten*]⁴. And they also thought that we had really seen land. Moreover the wind began to falter [*vagiren*] and shifted round towards the W., which, on coasts where the trade-wind prevails, is always a sign that one is not far from land. Still, to the great surprise of our Admiral, we saw no Davids Land, so far; and it is my belief that either we overran it, or that there is no such land there. This at any rate is certain, that all the coast lines of the South Lands stretch for the most part East and West, or East, N. and West-South (*sic*); which may be a principal reason why this South Land has remained undiscovered by many [navigators] hitherto. One approaches the land on a W.N.W. course, and with a N.W. one leaves it behind altogether, which I ascertained by comparing the [positions of] all the Southern Lands already discovered and constructing a chart whereon it is clearly shown that navigators have passed in the near neighbourhood of land or, with a N.W. course have sailed right away from it.

4) Phaeton aether eus.

We continued on another 12° to the westward of the longitude above mentioned, and had land birds and sea-fowl about us every day, who kept company with us until we at last sighted an island, on the 6th of April, being our first Easter Day¹ at which we were heartily pleased. And because it was on the day of the glorious resurrection of Our Lord that it appeared to us we at once named it Pasch Land, or 'Easter Land'. [It was] about eight miles in circumference². Our African galley had got close in with the land and reported that the place appeared to be very fertile; moreover, that it must be inhabited, as smoke had been noticed rising in several places.

Next day we stood in with our ships to look for a harbour, whereupon one of the natives came off in a small skiff [*schiffgen*] to meet us some two miles off the land. We took him aboard our vessel and gave him a piece of linen cloth to wrap about his body, for he was quite naked; and we offered him beads and other trinkets, all of which he hung round his neck together with a dried fish. He was very cleverly and regularly painted with all sorts of figures: he was of a brown tint, and had long ears which hung down as far as his shoulders as if they had been stretched to that length by being weighted, after the fashion of the Mongolian Moors. He was fairly tall in stature, strong in limb, of good appearance, and lively in mien, as well as pleasing in speech and gesture. We gave this South Lander or foreign visitor a glass of wine to drink; but he only took it and tossed it into his eyes, whereat we were surprised. I fancy he thought that we designed to poison him by its means, which is a common usage among Indians. Thereupon we dressed our new guest in garments and put him on a hat, but he was evidently very ill at ease in clothing. We also regaled him with food; but he was quite ignorant of the use of a spoon, knife, or fork. After he had taken his meal our musicians treated him to a specimen of each one of their instruments; and whenever any person took him by the hand he began at once to caper and dance about. We were much pleased to see his enjoyment; but we did not come to an anchor that day, and therefore let him go back to the shore with the aforesaid presents to acquaint his friends in what manner he had been entertained. But he parted from us unwillingly: and held up his hands, cast his glances towards the land, and began to cry out loudly in these words, *O dorroga! O dorroga!* He was not at all disposed to return to his skiff, but preferred to remain with us that we might convey him ashore in our ship. I make no doubt that, by means of the aforementioned exclamation he was appealing to his god, as we could see great numbers of heathen idols erected on shore.

1) They had sailed from Holland on Aug. 1st of the foregoing year, 1721.

2) German statute miles must here be meant.

We remained close under the land all night until towards morning, when we stood in in a S.E. direction towards a bay or indentation in the coast to anchor. The natives swam off in the water in thousands; some with small dinghies or skiffs brought us uncooked and baked hens, together with many roots; while on the beach they were running up and down like deer. Some were seated in groups of fifty¹ or a hundred, and looked upon our ship with wonderment: some out of mere curiosity, but others were desirous of finding out what design had brought us there. They kindled many fires by their idols, either by way of offerings or for the purposes of prayer. In the early morning we looked out and could see from some distance that they had prostrated themselves towards the rising sun and had kindled some hundreds of fires, which probably betokened a morning oblation to their gods. We thereupon got ready to effect a landing, but just then our former visitor came on board together with many others of his people, bringing us a quantity of dressed fowls and roots. One amongst these was an entirely white man, who was wearing white chocks of wood in his ears as large as one's fist, and bore a very devout appearance, so that we took him to be an idol priest. By some misadventure one of the natives who were on board the vessels got shot, and this must have caused a great consternation amongst them, for they all immediately sprang into the water and some swam away towards the shore, but others made off in their skiffs with all possible haste. We then with 150 men, soldiers as well as seamen, proceeded in the name of God ashore: and among them there was present our Admiral himself, by whom I was given command of a section of the party. I was the first who, at the disembarkation, set foot on the island. The inhabitants pressed round us in such crowds that we could scarcely pass along, so that we had to force a way through them; and, because some of them went so far as to lay hold of our arms

(weapons), they were fired upon: by which they were direly alarmed, and dispersed, but collected again in swarms, though keeping some ten paces in front of us, believing that they were already out of range of our weapons at that distance.

1) This number is given in figures, but owing to a defect in the type only the o is printed. It means presumably 50.

Many of them were shot at this juncture; and among the slain lay the man who had been with us before, at which we were much grieved. In order to obtain possession of the bodies they congregated in great numbers, bringing with them presents of various kinds of fruits and vegetables, in order that we might the more readily surrender to them their slain. The consternation of these people was by no means abated: even their children's children in that place will in times to come be able to recount the story of it. They kept up an uncommon yelling: women as well as children brought palm branches, red and white streamers, and various kinds of fruits, Indian figs, large nuts, sugar-cane, roots, fowls, — alive, boiled, and roast. They even flung themselves at our feet, displayed the streamers in front of us, and prostrated themselves on their knees before us, presenting their palm branches as peace offerings. They also made tender of their womenkind, asking whether we would accompany them into their huts, or had rather take them off to the ships. However, we did them no ill, but made a present to them of a piece of gaily coloured linen print between fifty and sixty ells in length, which they measured fathomwise more than a hundred times over. We also distributed coral baubles, small mirrors, etc., by which they might be assured that we were their friends. After that they brought us more than 500 live fowls, which were like those of the Vierlanden, this time without any boiled or roast ones, together with many roots, some red, some white, a good lot of potatoes which tasted almost like bread, and which are used by these people in the same way; and some hundreds of sugar-canes, great quantities of *pisang*¹, being Indian figs as large as a cucumber a span in length and of proportionate thickness, with a green rind. When one peels this off [the pulp] tastes like figs, or as sweet as honey: there are sometimes as many as a hundred on a single bunch. The leaf is from two to three feet broad and from six to eight feet in length, It is with these that our first parents should have covered themselves in Paradise after their unfortunate Fall, because it is almost the largest and strongest leaf which one meets with in Morning and Evening lands.

1) *Pisang* is the Malayan generic term for the banana.

No animals were met with, as far as we penetrated on this occasion, except sundry species of birds; but there may be many other animals farther in the interior of the country, as the natives seemed acquainted with pigs when they saw some on board our ships.

The natives prepare their meals in pots made of clay or earth. Each household appeared to us to have its own.

The houses were from forty to sixty feet [*schuh*] long, six to eight feet [*schuh*] in width, and of similar height, set up on wooden stakes, daubed over with luting and covered in with palm leaves. As regards their subsistence it appears that it must be procured by tillage of the soil, as we saw it everywhere planted and bearing crops. Moreover the fields or lands were all measured off with a cord, and very neatly cultivated. At the time of our visit all their crops were maturing: the fields and trees were in full bearing, and I feel sure that if we had explored this country right through many good things would have been met with, since we were there in just the best season of the year.

No remarkable furniture was found inside their houses, except some red and white coverlets [*decken*] which they often use as apparel, and also for sleeping under. These coverlets felt like silk, to the touch, so that one could almost conclude they had looms by means of which they made them themselves.

These natives were universally blithe and merry, well-built, strong in limb, not exactly slender, yet nimble on their feet; friendly and pleasant in manner, but submissive withal, and also very timid. Most of them, when bringing any object such as fowls, or other produce, would cast it all down before us and retire with all possible speed, and go their way without ceremony.

As for their complexion they are brownish, about the hue of a Spaniard, yet one finds some among them of a darker shade and others quite white, and no less also a few of a reddish tint as if somewhat severely tanned by the sun. Their ears were so long that they hung down as far as to the shoulders. Some wore white ornaments in the lobes as a special embellishment. They were painted on their bodies with wonderful birds and animals, although some were handsomer than others.

The women had their features streaked for the most part with a red pigment, which is of a much brighter shade than any we have anywhere else seen or found; but we do not know from what they make this beautiful colour. The women were all clothed with, red and white wraps [*decken*]; and each had a small hat made of straw or rushes. They sat down before us and disrobed, laughed, and were very friendly. Others called from a distance from their houses and beckoned us with the hand to come to them; and there was, in the place where we were standing, a village of about twenty houses.

The people had, to judge by appearances, no weapons; although, as I remarked, they relied in case of need on their gods or idols which stand erected all along the sea shore in great numbers, before which they fall down and invoke them. These idols were all hewn out of stone, and in the form of a man, with long ears, adorned on the head with a crown, yet all made with skill: whereat we wondered not a little. A clear space was reserved round these objects of worship by laying stones to a distance of twenty or thirty paces. I took some of the people to be priests, because they paid more reverence to the gods than did the rest; and showed themselves much more devout in their ministrations. One could also distinguish these from the other people quite well, not only by their wearing great white plugs in their ear lobes, but in having the head wholly shaven and hairless. One of them was with us on board the ship as above related. They wore a head-dress of white and black feathers which were just like storks' feathers: so that we thought it likely that some of the storks in migrating from Europe at their accustomed season must rest here¹. As the evening was drawing near we returned all together on board our ships, intending to explore the country better on the next or third day. It was not possible to determine whether these people have a king, as there are no great distinctions between them; save that the eldest among them wore white feathers on their heads, like ostrich feathers in appearance, and carried a staff in their hands. But one could perceive that each household was independent, wherein the most elderly of its men took the lead.

1) Here intervenes a long, speculative, and uninformative dissertation on the migration of storks, quite irrelevant to the narrative.

This island is a suitable and convenient place at which to obtain refreshment, as all the country is under cultivation and we saw in the distance whole tracts of woodland [*ganze Wälder*] It should be possible to grow corn all over it, and even to plant vineyards, which might be very serviceable in the event of a new discovery of the South Land. We got a gale from the West here, so that we lost two anchors and were forced to put to sea: and it might easily have happened that we had all been stranded with the three ships, and so have sojourned with the natives of the island. I have often felt thankful that if such had really come to pass the people of this island appeared of such a disposition as to be easily brought to the Christian Faith.

We cruised for some days yet round about here, and made courses on every point of the compass; but there was no David's Land to be seen. We therefore headed away towards Schouten's foul water [*schlecht wasser*] to the Westward in the intent to discover some land.

Ship logs of 1770 voyage of Captain Don Felipe González

These are the logs of the voyage of Spanish Don Felipe González by orders of His Excellency Señor Don Emanuel de Amat, viceroy of Peru. The voyage left Lima, Peru, with H.M. (Her Majesty's) ship San Lorenzo, under command of Commodore Don Felipe González, and the frigate Santa Rosalia, under Captain Don Antonio Domonte. Rapa Nui, at that time called Island of David, was during this expedition annexed to Spain. This annexation was quickly forgotten by Spain because of Rapa Nui's distant location, as well as because Spain couldn't see any gain from owning this island.

Officer Don Francisco Antonio de Agüera y Infanzon, Chief Pilot

Transcribed, translated, and edited by Bolton Glanvill Corney. Published in 1908.

Thursday, 15th. At five o'clock in the morning we made sail, getting all the canvas on her, *en vuelta de uno*, the horizon being cloudy; but at half-past seven it cleared up, and we sighted land ahead. Being fully confident that there was more than lay in the N.W. we continued in search of it. Notwithstanding we were as much as 8 to 10 leagues distant we were able to make out that it was not mountainous, but of moderate height, and not timbered. The extent of horizon it occupied was 45°, that is, from N.N.W. to W.N.W., between which points there was visible an indentation of the coast with a distinctive landmark in the centre, consisting of two pap-like eminences [*tetas*] or peaks rising above the rest of the outline. At ten o'clock, being then from S to 6 leagues from land, the most northern part of the island bore N.N.W. 5° N.W. At noon I got an observation of the sun in 27° 13' of latitude, being by my calculation in long. 267° 2'. At that hour the southern point of the island stood out clearly, and was bearing W.N.W. 5° W., and the northern one N. 5° N.W. Our position was then about 3 leagues off the shore, whose soil we noticed to be covered for the most part with green scrub, one species of coarse bush standing prominently above the rest so as to give an appearance like pyramids on the beach, as if symmetrically set up. These were also dotted in a scattered fashion about the country inland, which appeared to us to be fertile, as we observed no broken ground, nor precipices, nor stony places throughout it, but various valleys, and plains forming the mountain plateaux as it were, and quite covered with greenery as far down as the sea-beach, showing the fertility of the country. As soon as we came close up with the southern point

already mentioned the Commodore began to find the wind baffling, working along shore towards the N. at a distance of a league from the land, in which we made out the bay already mentioned, from which a great smoke was made to us at three distinct parts of it: from this we concluded it to be inhabited, but without having been able to distinguish any person, nor make out any village, house, shanty, or hut, either on the beach or anywhere close by. At half-past ten in the afternoon, having come up with the North point and being about two miles distant from the land, we observed a troop of people composed of eighteen persons who were walking briskly along the summit of a high ridge, where they all collected together and sat down, remaining in this wise while we passed in view about a gunshot off. We noticed some of them clothed in garments like a poncho or cloak, coloured: at the first sight we thought they were European soldiers, but having approached within a mile of them we became satisfied that they were natives, all of them unarmed, and some nude, wearing plumes on their heads.

Being at this position the eastern point of the island bore West, true bearing; and on working out the distance run since the observation at noon I found myself in lat. $27^{\circ} 2'$, and that should be the true position of the east point of David's Island, as far as the latitude is concerned²; and in respect of longitude, inasmuch as I found myself at noon to-day to be in $267^{\circ} 2'$ from Tenerife, and as we had been sailing with very slight deviation on the same meridian there remained but one mile difference, allowing for our being that much off the land. I therefore say that according to my calculations as worked out during the passage, the most eastern point of David's Island is placed in $27^{\circ} 2'$ of latitude S. and in $267^{\circ} 1'$ longitude from Tenerife, thus bearing with the Isle of San Lorenzo off the Callao W.S. W. 6° S. and E.N.E. 6° N.E., distant 625 leagues of 20 to the degree; and being 38° West from the meridian of Copiapo, and consequently 680 leagues distant from the Chilian continent. The profile of the island facing eastward extends about 14 to 16 miles, and the southern and northern points lie E.N.E. and W.S.W.²

1) The actual position is $4 \frac{1}{2}$ miles more southerly and 22 miles more easterly, taking Cape O'Higgins as the point referred to.

2) These bearings should probably be reversed, or the words 'Southern' and 'Northern' interchanged. The real direction is S.W. by W. and N.E. by E. true bearing, presuming that the N.E. and not the N.W. point is meant; but the latter is in fact the northernmost headland.

Having sailed past the northernmost point we came into view of another bay which indented to the W.N.W., which seemed more convenient than the first: we laid the yards aback and the Commodore lowered his boat, sending her in armed to the said bay and signalling us to do the same. At half-past four in the afternoon our boat went away with Don Juan Bentuzal Moreno, Captain of Batallones, and the midshipman Don Joseph Morales, escorted by twelve soldiers, one serjeant, and two corporals equipped with ammunition. The coastal pilot of the frigate and a pilots mate also embarked, with the instruments of their craft and headed for the bay, where the boat from the Commodore was already taking soundings. We remained under reduced canvas, making short boards off and on, awaiting the return of the exploring party, who, at sunset withdrew, we on board reaching in beyond the centre of the bay to meet them. We saw numbers of natives on the beach. The anchorage they found is wholly unprotected, and the bottom is of bad quality. We passed the night under easy sail, and at times hove to, keeping abreast of the bay.

1) 'Juan Bentuza ' is evidently a copyist's error for Buenaventura.

Friday, 16th. At sunrise I observed the variation of the needle, and noted 2° 30' to the N.E. At 5 the Commodore lowered his boat and despatched her ashore as soon as he arrived, in quest of anchorage, and we did the same under short canvas; and, lowering all our boats into the water, we passed within about a mile of the eastern point of the bay and saw a considerable number of natives posted on the heights, who collected nearer to the middle of the bay as we sailed towards it, so that by the time we let go there must have been more than 800 people, divided in batches, all wearing cloaks of a yellow colour or white. There was not the least appearance of hostility, nor of the implements of war about them; I only saw many demonstrations of rejoicing and much yelling.

At 8 o'clock in the morning we came to an anchor in this bay in 18 fathoms, gravel, coral, small shells, and fine sand. We moored East and West with one anchor to the E. and a kedge to the W. We saw some natives swim off and pass on board of the Commodore; the rest remained on the sea beach, in loose cloaks, shouting with delight and giving other signs, all intended to make us aware of their docility and of their desire to come on board or to see us on shore. At midday the two launches of both ships started (by the Commodore's orders), commissioned to examine and explore the whole circuit of the island, which up to this time we had understood to be a short one. To this end combatant officers, pilots, marines and the necessary seamen were embarked, with six days provisions, while the Commodore was making arrangements as to the mode of communicating with the natives, and for giving effect to the orders he bore. We have ascertained that what we took for shrubs of a pyramidal form are in reality statues or images of the idols which the natives worship; they are of stone, and of such a height and corpulence that they look like great thick columns, and as I afterwards ascertained in examining them and taking their dimensions the entire body is of a single block, and the crown or head-dress of another: there is a small concavity on the upper surface of the latter in which they place the bones of their dead, from which it may be inferred that they serve at once for idols and funeral pyres. But it is difficult to understand how they can have set up such superb statues, and maintained them properly balanced on so many small stones as are placed in the base or plinth which sustains their great weight. The material of the statue is very hard stone, and therefore weighty; having tried it myself with a hoe it struck fire: a proof of its density. The crown is of a different stone which is plentiful in the island; but I have not seen any like that of the figure: its workmanship is very crude. The only feature in the configuration of the face is a rough excavation for the eyes: the nostrils are fairly imitated, and the mouth extends from ear to ear, as shown by a slight groove or excavation in the stone. The neck bears some similitude; arms and legs are wanting, and it proceeds from the neck downwards in the form of a rudely fashioned trunk. The diameter of the crown is much greater than that of the head on which it rests, and its lower edge projects greatly beyond the forehead of the figure; a position which excites wonder that it does not fall. I was able to clear up this difficulty on making an examination of another smaller statue from whose head there projected a kind of tenon, constructed to fit into a sort of slot or mortice corresponding to it in the crown; so that by this device the latter is sustained notwithstanding its overlapping the forehead. That a people lacking machinery and materials for constructing any should be able to raise the crown or headpiece on to a statue of such height causes wonder, and I even think that the stone of which the statues are made is not a product of the island, in which iron, hemp, and stout timber are absolutely unknown. Much remains to be worked out on this subject.

On taking geometric measurements of the tallest statue occurring along the beach of this bay I found that it was 52 Castilian feet 6 inches in height, including the crown, which has 4 feet 8 inches of the same measure, but it must be mentioned that there are others of still greater height in the eastern part of the island. According to the observations of the exploring party there are others widely distributed about the country-side in the interior, which are about 2 or 3 *estados*¹; and, besides these, innumerable others were met with consisting only of a pyramid or cairn of stones awkwardly piled together, on whose apex was set a round stone washed over with white earth, so as to produce a resemblance to a human skull, from which it may be seen that they have their tombs in these. The sculptured statues are called Moáy by the natives, who appear to hold them in great veneration, and are displeased when we approach to examine them closely.

1) 1 *estadal* = four varas, or 11 ft. 1 ½ inches. These statues were therefore, roughly speaking, half the size of the one measured near the beach.

They have another effigy or idol clothed and portable which is about four yards [*varas*¹] in length: it is properly speaking the figure of a Judas, stuffed with straw or dried grass. It has arms and legs, and the head has coarsely figured eyes, nostrils, and mouth: it is adorned with a black fringe of hair made of rushes, which hangs half-way down the back. On certain days they carry this idol to the place where they gather together, and judging by the demonstrations some of them made, we understood it to be the one dedicated to enjoyment, and they name it Copeca.

1) 1 *vara* = nearly a yard.

This afternoon the natives who were on board the Commodore returned ashore, and our boats followed afterwards with some of the officers and others. Some natives also came on board the frigate, and we made them presents of trifles in the way of clothing and trinkets. We found them to be a very poor and lowly people, whose possessions help to make them so importunate in begging that they become really too annoying. No ornaments of gold, silver, jewellery, or any other metal, nor any kind of clothes or hardware, were seen among them; from which it may be inferred that they have¹ at present no interchange of goods with any European, Asiatic, or American nation. Their physiognomy does not resemble that of the Indians of the Continent of Chile, Peru, or New Spain in anything, these islanders being in colour between white, swarthy, and reddish, not thick lipped nor flat nosed, the hair chestnut coloured and limp, some have it black, and others tending to red or a cinnamon tint They are tall, well built and proportioned in all their limbs; and there are no halt, maimed, bent, crooked, luxated, deformed, or bow-legged among them, their appearance being thoroughly pleasing, and tallying with Europeans more than with Indians. I believe, from their docility and intelligence, that it would be easy to domesticate them and to convert them to any religion which might be put before them.

1) There are some defects in the transcription of the original MS. here, but the sense is plain.

This day and the ensuing night the wind remained very light, from N.E. to N. The heat did not make itself felt much during the daytime, and at night there was little wind or dampness. There are some eddies¹ of current, which enter from the eastward and discharge themselves to the West.

1) The MS. has here *revozas*, perhaps a copyist's error for *reflugos*.

I began to take soundings of the bay this afternoon, and the bottom we met with is not of the best for ensuring the safety of the ships, consisting merely of gravel, sand, shells, coral, and much rock occurring here and there all the anchorage, especially from the 20 fathom lines.

Saturday, 17th. The wind held light from N.E. to N. Today great numbers of natives of both sexes came on board of the two vessels; we found them very straight forward and agreeable, most of them brought plantains, roots, chickens, &c, and readily offered the wretched scraps of clothing and other goods they had about them, until reduced to a miserable loin-cloth of fibre or cotton or some such stuff, with a diadem or crown or plume of cock's feathers or dried sea-weed. The women use the same garments, and, by way of distinguishing their sex, cover the head with a curious construction of palm-leaf [*ojas*] or fine rushes. They are, like the men, importunate at begging; but they all of them yield with the same frankness whatever they possess, and the women go to the length of offering with inviting demonstrations all the homage that an impassioned man can desire. Nor do they appear to transgress, in this, in the opinion of their men; for the latter even tender them by way of paying us attention. As we had no opportunity of enquiring into the methods they observe in regard to marital affairs [*propagation*] it can only be inferred that the women whom we saw are held in common among them, although we noticed that the older and more important men retain some preference in the matter, as these are always the ones who accompany and make offer of them, and to whom the women render obedience, and not to the younger men, with whom we have never seen them in company. So that one notices a more modest behaviour among the youths and young women than among the elders.

The girls are by temperament modest, since with all their nudity they always manage to cover the breasts &c. as much as possible. The women we saw were much fewer in number than the men; from which it may be supposed that they make use of them in common, or hold their alliances secret, and I think that the more likely because on the afternoon when we came ashore, when passing near to a small hut, we saw some eight women or so all youthful and not bad looking, accompanied by an old man who only allowed them to expose their heads to look at us. They are all, as a rule, of agreeable aspect and shade of colour, which they modify by means of a very fine pigment of vermilion or red lead, with which they daub their features, although they do not all make use of it. The principal men, or those in authority, paint the whole of their bodies with some herb, or liquor, having a bright red hue, drawing great numbers of lines, pyramids, cocks, and most hideous masks [*rostros feisimos*] but all disposed in such order and symmetry that it would require the most dexterous pencil to imitate them. In particular they figure on the back a maze of convolutions with so much skill that it excited our wonder, not a dot nor a line from right side to left side wanting in regularity. - On the vacant parts of the abdomen they depict two fearsome monstrosities [*rostros horrorosos*] which they call *pare*, and I believe they look on them with veneration, but they do not like one to touch them with the hand.

The young people do not paint themselves in this fashion, only a few of them have a collar of the same colour traced round the neck, and depending from it the figure of a small animal resembling a toad, or frog, which they call *cogé*.

The principal men, as well as the women, are extremely addicted to beg, and take with gladness whatever comes to their hands, without making any return; they show no resentment if deprived of their spoils: they are quite content with old rags, ribbons, coloured paper,

playingcards, and other bagatelles. Everything of a bright red colour pleases them greatly, but they despise black; they are so fond of taking other people's property that what one man obtains another will take from him, and he yields it without feeling aggrieved: the most he will do is to resist a little, then he loosens his hold of it and they remain friends.

It appears as if among themselves their goods are held in common, and I believe they conceal as much as they can get possession of below the ground, for we never saw afterwards any of the things we gave them. We treated them with every consideration, and gave them whatever they asked for. Many of them pronounce with clearness *Ave Maria: Viva Carlos Tercero, Rey de España*. The men are generally of large stature, very many exceeding 8 ½ spans [palmos] of Castile¹ [in height]; most of them attain 8 spans, and there were two whom out of curiosity we measured, one of 9 spans and 2 inches², and the other 9 and 3 ½ inches³, all their limbs being of proportionate dimensions. The quality and *timbre* of their voice is adapted to pronounce any language with facility; theirs being very similar to Arabic; although for harshness and resonance it is on a par with that of the Lazarones of Naples.

1) The Castilian *palm* or span is equal to 8 1/3 inches. 8 ½ *palmos* therefore express 6 feet, less an inch.

2) 6 ft. 5 ins.

3) 6 ft. 6 ½ ins.

We never saw their bravery put to the test, but I suspect they are faint-hearted; they possess no arms, and although in some we observed sundry wounds on the body, which we thought to have been inflicted by cutting instruments of iron or steel, we found that they proceeded from stones, which are their only [weapons of] defence and offence, and as most of these are sharp edged¹ they produce the injury referred to.

1) Obsidian.

I made a bow and arrow, duly strung, by way of experiment, and on handing it to one of those with the scars he instantly stuck it on his head as an ornament, and then hung it round his neck with much joy, being totally ignorant of its use and effect. They did the same with a knife and with a cutlass, which they took hold of indifferently by the point or by the hilt.

They seem to me to have ministers or priests for their idols; because I observed that on the day which we erected the crosses, when our chaplains went accompanying the holy images, clothed in their cassocks and pelliz, chanting the litanies, numbers of natives stepped forward on to the path and offered their cloaks, while the women presented hens and pullets, and all cried Maca Maca, treating them with much veneration until they had passed beyond the rocks by which the track they were following was encumbered.

Sunday, 18th. The natives continued to gather on board in greater number than on the preceding days, so that on this day there have been more than 400 in the frigate. What with men and women they collected in such crowds that it became necessary to send away some in order to make room for others, as we could not contain them on board. To-day at noon I observed the latitude of this bay with the greatest care, which I found to be 27 26'; and I began on this same day to make a sketch of it, with an outline and views and exact soundings, in order to construct as accurate a chart of it as possible, and one that might serve as a guide and

record for the future; though it must be stated that, on account of certain impediments, it was not possible to fix a base-line on shore for trigonometric operations.

Monday, 19th. At 10 in the forenoon our launches came in sight from the eastern part of the island, and our long-boat was told off to give ours a tow, as she had the wind ahead. The Commodore did the same for his. Our launch arrived alongside at one o'clock in the afternoon, with all her people, after having sailed entirely round the island; and the following account was by this means obtained.

The island extends to about 50 miles in circumference; but no harbour capable of affording shelter to a single vessel of moderate burthen was met with. The whole of the shore-line is beset with reefs, cliffs, and rough ground, without containing any spot fit to beach a boat at. On penetrating inland in a few places they met with many natives, with whom they held intercourse, and they observed in them the same manners, customs, and ceremonies as in those of this bay; experiencing among them the same disposition to theft. They saw no kind of wild nor domestic animal, excepting hens and some rats. The fields are uncultivated save some small plots of ground, in which they sow beds of yuca, yams, sweet potatoes, and several plantations of plantains and sugar-cane: but all very tasteless, as if from want of cultivation. They did not find any metal, nor any ornaments of that kind in the natives' habitations. All this account tallies with the observations we have gathered in this bay, on whose slopes, and on those throughout the island, not a single tree is to be found capable of furnishing a plank so much as six inches in width; but there are plenty of shrubs or brushwood of a sort little more than an *estadal* in height, which offer little obstruction to one in passing as they are not dense and have no prickles. Its trees are very similar to mimosas and tamarinds. Of fruit-bearing trees I have seen only some very small figs, but so different from ours that they are recognisable as such only by the scent of the leaf, and the white juice which exudes from them. It is certain that they bear fruit, because the natives were eating some dry figs on board, which we gave them from those of Mendoza, and they called them *gecgy*. The island is destitute of every kind of bird: not a single bird has been seen in it. Even the marine species do not settle on its shores nor fly within sight of it: the same is the case with regard to beetles, insects, &c.

1) An *estadalox estada* is equivalent to four *varas* of about 33 inches each, i.e. 11 feet.

Most of the natives of the island dwell in underground caves, or in the hollow of some rock, the entrances to which are so narrow and inconvenient that I have seen some of them introduce themselves in the opposite manner to what is natural, beginning by projecting their feet and the head last. The more polished or powerful persons, whether in virtue of their age or of authority, are held in esteem. These inhabit small huts covered with reeds [*titora*] and constructed in the form of a large tunnel, in whose bilge or bellying portion [*vientre ó barigd*] is the entrance, after the manner of a trap-door for cats' egress, so narrow that only one man can pass in or out at a time, and that with effort. Others (whom I believe to be their ministers) occupy dwellings close to the statues; these are built of earth below, but with an entrance way or porch of very roughly hewn and clumsily set up stones, after the fashion of a wall, with a certain number of steps for passing from one platform or surface of ground to another on different levels. It is known that they work the stone, on which may be seen several different figures, squares, oblongs, arcs [*rumbos*], triangles, and trapezia, by means of another stone of harder substance than the mass, and the same method is followed, I believe, in fashioning the statues.

On the afternoon of this day during a rain squall with little wind from the S.W. our cable parted, having chafed completely through against a coral rock, fragments of which came up embedded among the strands of the two broken ends. We spent the evening in making ready for the succeeding day, on which we were to formally disembark and take possession of the island, and to erect upon it three crosses which had been got ready for the purpose on board the Commodore.

Tuesday, 20th. The day dawned with the horizon overcast, the wind light from E.S.E. with occasional gusts; but the Commodore decided to carry into effect the projected expedition notwithstanding, and to this end 250 men, troops and seamen, were detached to go ashore, well armed and under the command of Don Alberto Olaondo, senior lieutenant and captain of marines, with other officers and subalterns, and instructions to pass inland towards the western side of the island in order to make a reconnaissance of the country-side thereabouts, and to draw the attention of the natives in that direction while the three aforementioned crosses were being set up on three hillocks which are at the eastern end.

This precaution was not taken through any fear that the natives might offer opposition to the execution [of our project] but only in order to avoid the tumult with which they proceed about all their operations, as they would have been so much in our way as to considerably retard us. While the launches and boats conveyed the first section of people to the shore, the second batch was being got ready, consisting of a similar number, and commanded by Don Buenaventura Moreno, senior lieutenant and captain of marines, with the necessary officers, amongst whom I was included by the Commodore's order, for the purpose of establishing proper marks and bases for the construction of the most exact plan and truest coast-line of this bay, and for fixing the positions of the most noticeable heights of the island.

When the boats of the first party returned we set out in the same order, escorted by troops from this frigate, accompanying the three crosses with colours flying and drums beating. In this manner, and in excellent order, we arrived at a small bay which lies to the eastward, and had been selected for the disembarkation as possessing the only convenient expanse of beach in all the roadstead. We landed here without meeting with any obstacle, and were received by a considerable gathering of natives, who manifested much merriment, with a great deal of yelling. On the party forming up, together with those bearing arms, we set out on the march, accompanied by the natives, who lent a willing hand in carrying the crosses, singing and dancing in their fashion as they went. We made the whole circuit of the bay with some pains, for the ground was rough and rugged, although level, a great retinue of natives collecting round us all the while as far as the foot of the rise, where the most part of them quitted us on account of the troublesome and protracted nature of the ascent. At half-past one we arrived at the place at which the crosses were to be set up, and this was concluded with full rejoicings, after the benediction and adoration of the holy images, by the whole concourse of people, on seeing which the natives went through the same ceremony. On the crosses being planted on their respective hilltops the Spanish ensign was hoisted, and the troops being brought to 'Attention!' under arms, Don Joseph Bustillo, junior Captain, took possession of the island of San Carlos with the accustomed ceremonies in the name of the King of Spain, our lord and master Don Carlos the Third, this day, the 20th of November, 1770. The procedure was duly witnessed with the proper formalities; and for the greater confirmation of so serious an act some of the natives present signed or attested the official document by marking upon it certain characters in their own form of script. Then we cheered the king seven times, next to which followed a triple volley of musketry from the whole party, and, lastly, our ships saluted with 21 guns. The function being concluded, and all hands mustered up in marching order, we

returned to the same place where we disembarked, and where our launches and boats were in attendance. In these we were conveyed on board, and all the officers in succession thereupon offered their felicitations and congratulations to the Commodore, who then fixed the following day for their departure from the bay, in consequence of his mission there being now happily concluded.

Wednesday, 21st. At 11 o'clock in the forenoon (being all ready to get under way and expecting the Commodore to make the signal) our cable parted close to the ring of the anchor; and the wind being fresh we made sail in order to avoid being driven on to the rocks or risking another anchor. As soon as we had gained an offing we hove to to await the Commodore, who joined company with us at two o'clock in the afternoon, and we set our course W. J N.W., coasting along the north side of the island and proceeding in search of the other one shown on the Dutch chart of Warn Keullena 1 in the same latitude. At four o'clock the western point of the island of San Carlos bore S., distant about 4 leagues, and I took my departure from that position, fixing the latitude as 27 16', and the longitude 266 50'. At sundown the said point bore S.W. J S. 2 We continued all night with a moderate breeze from E. and E.S.E.: backing at times.

Sub-Lt. Don Juan Hervé, First Pilot, or senior Navigating Officer, of San Lorenzo

Transcribed, translated, and edited by Bolton Glanvill Corney. Published in 1908.

On the 15th at five in the morning we made all sail, and at seven o'clock we sighted an island to the N. W. of us, from 8 to 10 leagues distant. We headed for it, and upon finding ourselves within some three leagues of its Eastern coast we saw it to be all bold and rock-bound, on account of which at noon we decided to bear up for the Northern side and see whether we might find any harbour round there. At this time our position was ascertained by observation to be in lat. 27° 15' S. and long. 264° 20', so that the other point¹ should be in 27° 06' of lat. South, and therefore 34 10' to the westward of the meridian of Callao, measured by the arc, or the equivalent of a chord of 30° 30'. On this island we bestowed the name of San Carlos, being that of the reigning king.

From the 6th of November 82, which was the day on which we sighted the petrels, until we reached the island of San Carlos, we steered W. a distance of 86 leagues, and the terns were seen for the same distance at the same time.

1) i.e. the N.E. point of the island.

2) This may be a copyist's error. The day on which the petrels were recorded was the 10th. Agiiera mentions them on the 12th as having been met with on the previous day, in his journal. Gonzalez himself does not mention them in his log.

From the 13th of the said month, when we saw so many birds, and amongst them the white ones and the first of these, we continued sailing W. for a distance of 32 leagues; and from the time we saw the sandpipers [*chorlitos*] as far as the island we sailed 10 leagues, so that when we saw them the island lay to the N.W. of us, 13 ½ leagues off, for which reason we sailed on that course after having sighted the sandpipers and the island: these remarks are interesting only for navigators.

On the 15th, after bearing up at noon in quest of a harbour on the north side of the island we noticed, as we closed in with the land, that there were people on shore who were making signals to us by means of smoke, in several parts of this new land; and when we had rounded the north-easternmost point, called after San Felipe, we saw a bay which appeared might prove a good harbour, being then about half a league distant; and we lowered a boat into the water. I embarked in her with Don Alberto Lesuda¹, Captain of Marines, a serjeant, six men, the boat duly equipped, and all hands provided with their respective arms, proceeding with the precaution and care appropriate to the business in hand.

1) The officer here meant by 'Lesuda,' and in a place where cited farther on as 'Leonda,' is Don Alberto Olaondo, whose substantive rank was that of Teniente de Navio, or a senior Lieutenant in the Navy, although, by a not unusual complication of dignities in that service he was also a Capitan de Infanteria, or as we should say, an officer of Marines. He subsequently received promotion, and in 1779 when war was declared with England he commanded the *Atlante*[^] a 70 gun ship of the line which formed one of the fleet under the Marque's de Casa Tilly assembled in the Bay of Cadiz to oppose Rodney. His old Easter Island comrades Don Antonio Domonte, and Don Buenaventura Moreno, were also present there, commanding the San Eugenio and the San Nicolas respectively, each of 70 guns. [Travieso, Bibliog. no. 50.]

We went in to take soundings of the bay without being acquainted with the character of the natives, or whether they possessed canoes or not. We left the ship at a quarter past three in the afternoon, and proceeded to take soundings shorewards. We got no bottom until quite close in, where I found thirty fathoms; and from thence to the beach a very foul bottom of rocks, gravel, and coral; from thirty to forty fathoms I found coarse sand, but with a few large round stones: this might serve [to bring up in] nevertheless for a short time, while searching for a better anchorage.

At the time we set about taking soundings the frigate's boat came along for the same purpose, in which was Don Buenaventura Moreno, Captain of Marines, similarly armed and equipped; and when we drew close in to the shore taking soundings, we saw several natives of the country on the beach shouting to us in their language, of which we understood nothing. These were naked, and painted, body and face. When I had made an examination of the bottom I returned on board my ship, and the other boat to hers: I explained the quality of the ground to the Commodore, and having arrived somewhere about 6 o'clock in the evening he decided not to move away from the place until the following day¹.

1) This sentence, taken by itself, sufficiently proves that the author of this journal was an officer of the San Lorenzo, and not of the frigate.

On the 16th at half-past five in the morning I started away from the ship's side in the cutter, and proceeded to take up a position where the boat anchorage was, to serve as a mark for the ship, which came in and let go in 35 £ fathoms, coarse sand; and having laid out another anchor in 50 fathoms, she swung to with 28 under the keel, same bottom. The leading marks for this position are the small saddle-shaped hill bearing S. 3° W., with Cape San Lorenzo E. 1/4 S.E. 3° E. by the needle, which in this locality has 3° of variation N.E.

While acting as a beacon as above stated and awaiting the arrival of the ship, three of the natives swam off, [their bodies] painted in various colours, and keeping near the boat, shouting constantly, until one of them came at last so close as to present me with a morsel of

yam: I gave him some biscuit and tobacco, all of which he accepted. He carried his provisions in a satchel neatly plaited of fine straw. When the ship came to an anchor these three went off ashore again, but returned with another swimming and making straight for the ship, on board of which they climbed with much agility, shouting all the while and exhibiting much gayness of spirit. They ran about freely from stem to stern, and full of mirth, climbing about the rigging like sailors. [Our people] played the *coxa* and fife to them, and they began to dance, evincing great pleasure. They were given ribbons, shirts, trousers, seamen's jumpers, and small gilt metal crosses: they accepted them all with gladness, the biscuit they received without remark until they saw our people eat some. It pleased them well and then they asked for it, and applied themselves freely to the consumption of salt pork and rice, &c.

On the said 16th of November we embarked at one o'clock in the day, Don Cayetano Lángara, senior lieutenant, Don Pedro Obregon, midshipman, a serjeant, a corporal of marines, a gunner, some marines and myself, in the launch, fully armed and equipped for service, with orders to make a complete circuit of the island in company with the *Rosalía's* launch, with her officer Don Demetrio Ezeta, senior lieutenant, each one fitted with a swivel gun in the bows. We set to work to take soundings, giving names to the points, bays, &c, as shown on the plan of the island. At half-past six in the evening we brought to in a cove which we called after Lángara: we tried to effect a landing but this was not practicable as the sea was breaking with such force all along the shore, which was rocky at all points; and during the remainder of the day the only place we found fit to land at was the cove of San Juan, as it had a sandy beach. We did not disclose our presence there, in order not to lose time. We considered that it must have a plentiful supply of fresh water, because we saw there more gravel [*chacaras*] than in any other part of the island. We also found the best anchorage for ships.

On the 17th of the said [month], day dawned with the horizon clear, and a moderate breeze from the Eastward. At five in the morning we got under way in both launches and made sail towards the Cape of San Antonio. Half a league before reaching the cape we came abreast of a point, off which were a quantity of rocks or boulders sticking up out of the water; and saw that two little canoes were coming out from among them with two men in each, making for the *Santa Rosalía's* launch; so we waited for them in order that they might join our party. They gave the people of the said launch plantains, Chili peppers, sweet potatoes and fowls; and in return our men gave them hats, *chamorretas*, &c, and they went off contentedly with these to the shore. These canoes are constructed of five extremely narrow boards (on account of there being no thick timber in the country) about a *cuarta*¹ in width; they are consequently so crank that they are provided with an outrigger to prevent them from capsizing; and I think that these are the only ones in the whole of the island. They are fitted together with wooden pegs in place of nails. Then we passed on to examine the rocky islets to which we gave the name of 'Lángara': they lie S.W. 1/4 S. from the cape of San Cristoval, the seaward one being about a mile off that headland, and the inshore one in between. They are about half a cable apart the one from the other, and we found 26 fathoms there, rocky bottom. The middle one resembles a high church tower; we attempted to gain a footing on it, but found it little accessible. We passed on to the outer one, where we succeeded in landing, and on which we found two large masses of seaweed, many black flints, some sea urchins and small crabs, eggs of sea-gulls and their fledgelings. On these rocks alone did we see any sea-gulls, and excepting fowls we saw no other kind of birds on either of the other islets, nor on the island of San Carlos, either small or large, wild or domesticated. The islanders breed these fowls in little runs scraped out in the ground and thatched over.

1) A *cuarta* is a quarter of a *vara* or yard, and may be roughly translated a 'span'.

Having made an investigation of these islets we pursued our course along the coast, at times under sail, at other times under oars; and, the wind holding contrary, at three o'clock in the afternoon we stood in towards a smooth patch of foreshore about a league away to the N.E. of Cape San Francisco. Here we decided to bring up for the night in a small bay which appeared to us to be a suitable place for the purpose, and to which we gave the appellation of the Cave, because there was one adjoining the beach at this place with furrows in it of various tints, from which the natives gave us to understand by signs they obtained the pigments with which they paint themselves. This bay is only suitable for launches. We all went ashore to eat our dinner, which we carried with us for that purpose, and some hundred or so natives came to look on, offering us fruits and hens. The officer, Don Cayetano de Ldingara, issued orders to our people that no one, under pain of a severe flogging, should accept any article from the islanders without giving some equivalent in return, or something of greater value than that which they received, since it was known there was a disposition to exchange articles; and such in fact was put into practice.

When we sat down to eat we noticed that they all withdrew, and that only one remained, as if to watch; I ordered my servant to give this one a little cooked rice and salt pork, all of which he ate and found much to his taste. When we had finished dinner we betook ourselves for a stroll on the island: our people were again warned to do no injury to the natives nor to their plantations. When we had walked up the slope of the beach we found all those whom we had previously seen, and we passed over in a body without saying anything to them until they, putting aside their shyness, came close up to our people and conducted us to see a long dwelling-house which was about a quarter of a league off. This house was 27 paces in length, $2\frac{1}{2}$ *varas* high at the centre, and $1\frac{1}{4}$ *varas* at the ends, more or less; and at the middle part was a doorway 1 *vara* in height. It was framed on some six poles of 4 *varas* long, and a span 1 in thickness. After having shown us this sumptuous edifice, they began to sing and to dance by way of paying us a compliment and being very happy at seeing us. We walked about two leagues, and at that distance (throughout which many islanders accompanied us) we saw a plantain garden which stretched about a quarter of a league in extent, and was about half that distance in breadth. There were other small plantain gardens, and several plantations and fields of sugar-cane, sweet potatoes; taro, yams, white gourds, and plants like those whose leaves are employed at the Callao for making mats. We saw a root which they chew and daub their bodies and limbs all over with: it is good for yielding a very fine yellow dye². At dusk we made back to our launches to stay the night, without our peaceful relations with the natives having been in any way disturbed, which may be attributed to the order which the officer gave our men not to give them any offence, backed by the threat of a flogging, without which our marines and seamen would have destroyed these poor wretches' plantations.

- 1) *Un 'xeme'* i.e. *jeme*, the distance from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the forefinger.
- 2) No doubt this refers to turmeric — a common plant in most Pacific islands.

The morning of the 18th broke fine, with the wind from North: we continued along the coast, which is all surfbound, sounding as we went. At 8 o'clock the frigate's launch, not being able to make any headway against the wind, put into a small bay to wait for it to calm down; and we ourselves reached the Bell Cove¹ under oars at 5 in the afternoon, in order to stay there the night. We stepped ashore there and some islanders came to receive us, but a shower of rain made us turn back to our launch for the night. On that side of this cove towards the headland of San Felipe a rock shaped like a bell juts out from the shore, and from this the cove derives its name.

1) i.e. Bell Cove = *Caleta de la Campana*.

We made sail at daybreak on the 19th with the wind at N. and fine weather, for the headland of San Felipe, where we were joined by the other launch, who reported that they had no news. At this time we were battling with the current, against which we were not able to make any headway with the oars, and which was running to the eastward. The frigate's launch, being smaller than ours, was able to get along better than we, and those on board seeing us contending against the persistence of the current, sent us the cutter with a fresh crew to relieve our men, who were done up. Yet the current made itself felt with such force that after pulling from 9 a.m. until 6 o'clock in the evening we had scarcely made one league of distance from Cape San Felipe. At this hour, however, God favoured us with a thunder squall accompanied by rain and a change of wind from N.W. to S.E., which brought us alongside at half-past seven o'clock, thus terminating our expedition without other adventures than already related.

We were satisfied that the roadstead in which we lay at anchor is the best the whole island affords, excepting that of San Juan, to which we did not remove, as we should so soon be leaving this country again, inasmuch as there only remained for us to take possession of it in the name of the King.

On the 20th, at daybreak, all the seamen bearing arms embarked in the launches and cutters of both vessels, under Don Alberto Olaondo¹, Captain of Marines, with his party of marines and those from the frigate, who together made up 250 men. All these proceeded towards the interior of the island to survey the country. Our Commander [*segundo capitan*] Don José Bustillos², went with another body of marines and seamen, and the two chaplains, who conveyed with them three crosses to be erected on three hill-tops which, as may be seen on the Plan, exist at the N.E. point of the island.

1) 'Leonda' in the MS.; evidently Capt. Olaondo is again meant.

2) 'Jose Gustillo' in the MS.; evidently Josef Bustillos is intended.

A great number of the native inhabitants received them on landing, and offered to assist our officers in the disembarkation, which, in fact, they did; and took charge of the three crosses, which they carried up to the said hills: the chaplains chanting Litanies, and the islanders joining with our people in the responses, *ora pro nobis*. At the moment of digging the hole on the centre hill, a fine spring of fresh water broke out, very good and abundant. The crosses being planted the party fired three volleys of musketry, and the ships replied with twenty-one guns each to the joyful shout of *Viva el Rey*. The islanders responded with our own people; they pronounce with such ease that they repeat whatever is said to them just like ourselves. This undertaking being achieved we all returned on board.

It need not be said that the islanders were terrified at the noise of the gunfire and musketry: that must happen to people who have not used or seen such inventions.

The women made use of wraps or cloaks: one which covers them from the waist downwards, and another about the breasts. There are others also who wear only a rag or strip of some root, which they place in front like the men. They have several very low and small huts, and some like the one first mentioned.

Throughout the island, but especially near the seabeach, there are certain huge blocks of stone in the form of the human figure. They are some twelve yards in height, and I think they are their idols. They could not bear to see us smoke cigars: they begged our sailors to extinguish them and they did so. I asked one of them the reason, and he made signs that the smoke went upwards; but I do not know what this meant or what he wished to say.

I fancy that the cloaks or wraps of the said islanders are made from the fibres of stems of the banana plant, which, when dry, they put together as may suit their purpose¹: it is not woven, but is joined together by strands of the same material which they thread on bone needles of the size of a cloak-maker's needle. They make fishinglines of this same fibre, as well as nets after the fashion of our small nets; but of little strength.

1) The material was really the white inner bark of the paper mulberry tree (*Broussonettia papyrifera*) and the thread used for attaching the segments together was probably made from the *Hibiscus tiliaceus* bark. A Spanish naval officer may well be excused for falling into this error, as the employment of the fibre of *Musa textilis*, known to him as *abacá* and to ourselves as 'Manila hemp' would doubtless have come under his observation in the Philippine Islands; and perhaps his running rigging may have been made of it even in those days.

They have very little wood; but if they were to plant trees there would be no lack of it; and I believe that even the cotton plant would yield, as the country is very temperate: and wheat, garden plants, pot-herbs, &c. They dye their cloaks yellow.

The number of the inhabitants, including both sexes, will be from about nine hundred to a thousand souls: and of these very few indeed are women, — I do not believe they amount to seventy — and but few boys. They are in hue like a quadroon, with smooth hair and short beards, and they in no way resemble the Indians of the South American continent; and if they wore clothing like ourselves they might very well pass for Europeans. They eat very little, and have few needs: they do altogether without liquor of any kind.

On the 21st at noon we put to sea from this Island of David: we sailed some 70 leagues to the Westward to see whether any more land lay in that direction.

On the 23rd we hauled to the Southward until we reached the lat. 38° 30' and long. 263° 31', where we arrived on the 29th. On this track, on the 24th, in lat. 29° 30', long. 261° 30' at 6 in the afternoon, we saw ten or twelve white birds, and terns, and again some godwits, an indication of some island. The Commodore decided not to search for it at this juncture, deeming that the time was already short for going to Chiloe, and intending to look for it on the return voyage as the latitude was one in which the quest might be pursued at any season of the year.

From the longitude of 263° 31' we stood away East as far as 281° along the parallel of 38 ½°, without meeting with any sign; and from that position we proceeded to Chiloe.

Easter Island ship logs: James Cook, 1774

James Cook was the third european to disembark at Rapa Nui.

James Cook's journal from his Easter Island visit in 1774

This text has been extracted from the book *A Voyage Towards the South Pole and Round the World, Volume 1* from the year 1777 by James Cook, in which he publishes his own journal that he kept during his second voyage around the world in the years 1772 - 1775 with the ships *Resolution* and *Adventure*.

Author: James Cook

Comments: Marcus Edensky

CHAPTER VII

Sequel of the Passage from New Zealand to Easter Island, and Transactions there, with an Account of an Expedition to discover the Inland Part of the Country, and a Description of some of the surprising gigantic Statues found in the Island.

1774 March

At eight o'clock in the morning, on the 11th, land was seen, from the masthead, bearing west, and at noon from the deck, extending from W. $\frac{3}{4}$ N. to W. by S., about twelve leagues distant. I made no doubt that this was *Davis's Land*, or *Easter Island*; as its appearance from this situation, corresponded very well with Wafer's account; and we expected to have seen the low sandy isle that Davis fell in with, which would have been a confirmation; but in this we were disappointed. At seven o'clock in the evening, the island bore from north 62 W., to north 87 W., about five leagues distant; in which situation, we sounded without finding ground with a line of an hundred and forty fathoms. Here we spent the night, having alternately light airs and calms, till ten o'clock the next morning, when a breeze sprung up at W.S.W. With this we stretched in for the land; and by the help of our glass, discovered people, and some of those colossean statues or idols mentioned in the account of Roggewein's voyage. At four o'clock p.m. we were half a league S.S.E. and N.N.W. of the N.E. point of the island; and, on sounding, found thirty-five fathoms, a dark sandy bottom. I now tacked, and endeavoured to get into what appeared to be a bay, on the west side of the point or S.E. side of the island; but before this could be accomplished, night came upon us, and we stood on and off, under the land, till the next morning; having sounding from seventy-five to an hundred and ten fathoms, the same bottom as before.

On the 13th, about eight o'clock in the morning, the wind, which had been variable most part of the night, fixed at S.E., and blew in squalls, accompanied with rain; but it was not long before the weather became fair. As the wind now blew right to the S.E. shore, which does not afford that shelter I at first thought, I resolved to look for anchorage on the west and N.W. sides of the island. With this view I bore up round the south point, off which lie two small islets, the one nearest the point high and peaked, and the other low and flattish. After getting round the point, and coming before a sandy beach, we found soundings thirty and forty fathoms, sandy ground, and about one mile from the shore. Here a canoe, conducted by two men, came off to us. They brought with them a bunch of plantains, which they sent into the

ship by a rope, and then they returned ashore. This gave us a good opinion of the islanders, and inspired us with hopes of getting some refreshments, which we were in great want of.

1) Anakena.

I continued to range along the coast, till we opened the northern point of the isle, without seeing a better anchoring-place than the one we had passed. We therefore tacked, and plied back to it; and, in the mean time, sent away the master in a boat to sound the coast. He returned about five o'clock in the evening; and soon after we came to an anchor in thirty-six fathoms water, before the sandy beach above mentioned. As the master drew near the shore with the boat, one of the natives swam off to her, and insisted on coming a-board the ship, where he remained two nights and a day. The first thing he did after coming a-board, was to measure the length of the ship, by fathoming her from the taffarel to the stern, and as he counted the fathoms, we observed that he called the numbers by the same names that they do at Otaheite; nevertheless his language was in a manner wholly unintelligible to all of us.

Having anchored too near the edge of a bank, a fresh breeze from the land, about three o'clock the next morning, drove us off it; on which the anchor was heaved up, and sail made to regain the bank again. While the ship was plying in, I went ashore, accompanied by some of the gentlemen, to see what the island was likely to afford us. We landed at the sandy beach, where some hundreds of the natives were assembled, and who were so impatient to see us, that many of them swam off to meet the boats. Not one of them had so much as a stick or weapon of any sort in their hands. After distributing a few trinkets amongst them, we made signs for something to eat, on which they brought down a few potatoes, plantains, and sugar canes, and exchanged them for nails, looking-glasses, and pieces of cloth.

We presently discovered that they were as expert thieves and as tricking in their exchanges, as any people we had yet met with. It was with some difficulty we could keep the hats on our heads; but hardly possible to keep any thing in our pockets, not even what themselves had sold us; for they would watch every opportunity to snatch it from us, so that we sometimes bought the same thing two or three times over, and after all did not get it.

Before I sailed from England, I was informed that a Spanish ship had visited this isle in 1769. Some signs of it were seen among the people now about us; one man had a pretty good broad-brimmed European hat on, another had a grego jacket, and another a red silk handkerchief. They also seemed to know the use of a musquet, and to stand in much awe of it; but this they probably learnt from Roggewein, who, if we are to believe the authors of that voyage, left them sufficient tokens.

1) Don Felipe González in 1770.

Near the place where we landed, were some of those statues before mentioned, which I shall describe in another place. The country appeared barren and without wood; there were, nevertheless, several plantations of potatoes, plantains, and sugar-canes; we also saw some fowls, and found a well of brackish water. As these were articles we were in want of, and as the natives seemed not unwilling to part with them, I resolved to stay a day or two. With this view I repaired on board, and brought the ship to an anchor in thirty-two fathoms water; the bottom a fine dark sand. Our station was about a mile from the nearest shore, the south point of a small bay, in the bottom of which is the sandy beach before mentioned, being E.S.E., distant one mile and a-half. The two rocky islets lying off the south point of the island, were

just shut behind a point to the north of them; they bore south $\frac{3}{4}$ west, four miles distant; and the other extreme of the island bore north 25 E., distant about six miles. But the best mark for this anchoring-place is the beach, because it is the only one on this side of the island. In the afternoon, we got on board a few casks of water, and opened a trade with the natives for such things as they had to dispose of. Some of the gentlemen also made an excursion into the country to see what it produced; and returned again in the evening, with the loss only of a hat, which one of the natives snatched off the head of one of the party.

Early next morning, I sent Lieutenants Pickersgill and Edgecumbe with a party of men, accompanied by several of the gentlemen, to examine the country. As I was not sufficiently recovered from my late illness to make one of the party, I was obliged to content myself with remaining at the landing-place among the natives. We had, at one time, a pretty brisk trade with them for potatoes, which we observed they dug up out of an adjoining plantation; but this traffic, which was very advantageous to us, was soon put a stop to by the owner (as we supposed) of the plantation coming down, and driving all the people out of it. By this we concluded, that he had been robbed of his property, and that they were not less scrupulous of stealing from one another, than from us, on whom they practised every little fraud they could think of, and generally with success; for we no sooner detected them in one, than they found out another. About seven o'clock in the evening, the party I had sent into the country returned, after having been over the greatest part of the island.

They left the beach about nine o'clock in the morning, and took a path which led across to the S.E. side of the island, followed by a great crowd of the natives, who pressed much upon them. But they had not proceeded far, before a middle-aged man, punctured from head to foot, and his face painted with a sort of white pigment, appeared with a spear in his hand, and walked along-side of them, making signs to his countrymen to keep at a distance, and not to molest our people. When he had pretty well effected this, he hoisted a piece of white cloth on his spear, placed himself in the front, and led the way, with his ensign of peace, as they understood it to be. For the greatest part of the distance across, the ground had but a barren appearance, being a dry hard clay, and every where covered with stones; but notwithstanding this, there were several large tracts planted with potatoes; and some plantain walks, but they saw no fruit on any of the trees. Towards the highest part of the south end of the island, the soil, which was a fine red earth, seemed much better, bore a longer grass, and was not covered with stones as in the other parts; but here they saw neither house nor plantation.

On the east side, near the sea, they met with three platforms of stone-work, or rather the ruins of them. On each had stood four of those large statues, but they were all fallen down from two of them, and also one from the third; all except one were broken by the fall, or in some measure defaced. Mr Wales measured this one, and found it to be fifteen feet in length, and six feet broad over the shoulders, Each statue had on its head a large cylindric stone of a red colour, wrought perfectly round. The one they measured, which was not by far the largest, was fifty-two inches high, and sixty-six in diameter. In some, the upper corner of the cylinder was taken off in a sort of concave quarter-round, but in others the cylinder was entire.

From this place they followed the direction of the coast to the N.E., the man with the flag still leading the way. For about three miles they found the country very barren, and in some places stript of the soil to the bare rock, which seemed to be a poor sort of iron ore. Beyond this, they came to the most fertile part of the island they saw, it being interspersed with plantations of potatoes, sugar-canets, and plantain trees, and these not so much encumbered with stones as those which they had seen before; but they could find no water except what the natives twice

or thrice brought them, which, though brackish and stinking, was rendered acceptable, by the extremity of their thirst. They also passed some huts, the owners of which met them with roasted potatoes and sugar-canes, and, placing themselves ahead of the foremost party (for they marched in a line in order to have the benefit of the path), gave one to each man as he passed by. They observed the same method in distributing the water which they brought; and were particularly careful that the foremost did not drink too much, lest none should be left for the hindmost. But at the very time these were relieving the thirsty and hungry, there were not wanting others who endeavoured to steal from them the very things which had been given them. At last, to prevent worse consequences, they were obliged to fire a load of small shot at one who was so audacious as to snatch from one of the men the bag which contained every thing they carried with them. The shot hit him on the back, on which he dropped the bag, ran a little way, and then fell; but he afterwards got up and walked, and what became of him they knew not, nor whether he was much wounded. As this affair occasioned some delay, and drew the natives together, they presently saw the man who had hitherto led the way and one or two more, coming running towards them; but instead of stopping when they came up, they continued to run round them, repeating, in a kind manner, a few words, until our people set forwards again. Then their old guide hoisted his flag, leading the way as before, and none ever attempted to steal from them the whole day afterwards. As they passed along, they observed on a hill a number of people collected together, some of whom had spears in their hands; but on their being called to by their countrymen, they dispersed, except a few, amongst whom was one seemingly of some note. He was a stout well-made man, with a fine open countenance, his face was painted, his body punctured, and he wore a better _Ha hou_, or cloth, than the rest. He saluted them as he came up, by stretching out his arms, with both hands clenched, lifting them over his head, opening them wide, and then letting them fall gradually down to his sides. To this man, whom they understood to be chief of the island, their other friend gave his white flag, and he gave him another, who carried it before them the remainder of the day.

Towards the eastern end of the island, they met with a well whose water was perfectly fresh, being considerably above the level of the sea; but it was dirty, owing to the filthiness or cleanliness (call it which you will) of the natives, who never go to drink without washing themselves all over as soon as they have done; and if ever so many of them are together, the first leaps right into the middle of the hole, drinks, and washes himself without the least ceremony; after which another takes his place and does the same. They observed that this side of the island was full of those gigantic statues so often mentioned; some placed in groupes on platforms of masonry, others single, fixed only in the earth, and that not deep; and these latter are, in general, much larger than the others. Having measured one, which had fallen down, they found it very near twenty-seven feet long, and upwards of eight feet over the breast or shoulders; and yet this appeared considerably short of the size of one they saw standing; its shade, a little past two o'clock, being sufficient to shelter all the party, consisting of near thirty persons, from the rays of the sun. Here they stopped to dine; after which they repaired to a hill, from whence they saw all the east and north shores of the isle, on which they could not see either bay or creek fit even for a boat to land in; nor the least signs of fresh water. What the natives brought them here was real salt water; but they observed that some of them drank pretty plentifully of it, so far will necessity and custom get the better of nature! On this account they were obliged to return to the last-mentioned well, where, after having quenched their thirst, they directed their route across the island towards the ship, as it was now four o'clock.

In a small hollow, on the highest part of the island, they met with several such cylinders as are placed on the heads of the statues. Some of these appeared larger than any they had seen before; but it was now too late to stop to measure any of them. Mr Wales, from whom I had this information, is of opinion that there had been a quarry here, whence these stones had formerly been dug; and that it would have been no difficult matter to roll them down the hill after they were formed. I think this a very reasonable conjecture, and have no doubt that it has been so.

On the declivity of the mountain towards the west, they met with another well, but the water was a very strong mineral, had a thick green scum on the top, and stunk intolerably. Necessity, however, obliged some to drink of it; but it soon made them so sick, that they threw it up the same way that it went down.

In all this excursion, as well as the one made the preceding day, only two or three shrubs were seen. The leaf and seed of one (called by the natives *Torromedo*¹) were not much unlike those of the common vetch; but the pod was more like that of a tamarind in its size and shape. The seeds have a disagreeable bitter taste; and the natives, when they saw our people chew them, made signs to spit them out; from whence it was concluded that they think them poisonous. The wood is of a reddish colour, and pretty hard and heavy, but very crooked, small, and short, not exceeding six or seven feet in height. At the S.W. corner of the island, they found another small shrub, whose wood was white and brittle, and in some measure, as also its leaf, resembling the ash. They also saw in several places the Otaheitean cloth plant², but it was poor and weak, and not above two and a half feet high at most.

1) Toromiro, lat. *Sophora toromiro*, locally known as *Toromiro*.

2) Paper mulberry, lat. *Broussonetia papyrifera*, locally known as *Mahute*.

They saw not an animal of any sort, and but very few birds; nor indeed any thing which can induce ships that are not in the utmost distress, to touch at this island.

This account of the excursion I had from Mr Pickersgill and Mr Wales, men on whose veracity I could depend; and therefore I determined to leave the island the next morning, since nothing was to be obtained that could make it worth my while to stay longer; for the water which we had sent on board, was not much better than if it had been taken up out of the sea.

We had a calm till ten o'clock in the morning of the 16th, when a breeze sprung up at west, accompanied with heavy showers of rain, which lasted about an hour. The weather then clearing up, we got under sail, stood to sea, and kept plying to and fro, while an officer was sent on shore with two boats, to purchase such refreshments as the natives might have brought down; for I judged this would be the case, as they knew nothing of our sailing. The event proved that I was not mistaken; for the boats made two trips before night, when we hoisted them in, and made sail to the N.W., with a light breeze at N.N.E.

CHAPTER VIII

A Description of the Island, and its Produce, Situation, and Inhabitants; their Manners and Customs; Conjectures concerning their Government, Religion, and other Subjects; with a more particular Account of the gigantic Statues.

1774 March

I shall now give some farther account of this island, which is undoubtedly the same that Admiral Roggewein touched at in April 1722; although the description given of it by the authors of that voyage does by no means agree with it now. It may also be the same that was seen by Captain Davis in 1686; for, when seen from the east, it answers very well to Wafer's description, as I have before observed. In short, if this is not the land, his discovery cannot lie far from the coast of America, as this latitude has been well explored from the meridian of 80 to 110. Captain Carteret? ? carried it much farther; but his track seems to have been a little too far south. Had I found fresh water, I intended spending some days in looking for the low sandy isle Davis fell in with, which would have determined the point. But as I did not find water, and had a long run to make before I was assured of getting any, and being in want of refreshments, I declined the search; as a small delay might have been attended with bad consequences to the crew, many of them beginning to be more or less affected with the scurvy.

No nation need contend for the honour of the discovery of this island, as there can be few places which afford less convenience for shipping than it does. Here is no safe anchorage, no wood for fuel, nor any fresh water worth taking on board. Nature has been exceedingly sparing of her favours to this spot. As every thing must be raised by dint of labour, it cannot be supposed that the inhabitants plant much more than is sufficient for themselves; and as they are but few in number, they cannot have much to spare to supply the wants of visitant strangers. The produce is sweet potatoes, yams, tara or eddy root, plantains, and sugar-canes, all pretty good, the potatoes especially, which are the best of the kind I ever tasted. Gourds they have also, but so very few, that a cocoa-nut shell was the most valuable thing we could give them. They have a few tame fowls, such as cocks and hens, small but well tasted. They have also rats, which it seems they eat; for I saw a man with some dead ones in his hand, and he seemed unwilling to part with them, giving me to understand they were for food. Of land-birds there were hardly any, and sea-birds but few; these were men-of-war, tropic, and egg-birds, noddies, tern, &c. The coast seemed not to abound with fish, at least we could catch none with hook and line, and it was but very little we saw among the natives.

Such is the produce of *Easter Island*, or *Davis's Land*, which is situated in latitude $27^{\circ} 5' 30''$ S., longitude $109^{\circ} 46' 20''$ W. It is about ten or twelve leagues in circuit, hath a hilly and stony surface, and an iron-bound shore. The hills are of such a height as to be seen fifteen or sixteen leagues. Off the south end, are two rocky islets, lying near the shore. The north and east points of the island rise directly from the sea to a considerable height; between them and the S.E. side, the shore forms an open bay, in which I believe the Dutch anchored. We anchored, as hath been already mentioned, on the west side of the island, three miles to the north of the south point, with the sandy beach bearing E.S.S. This is a very good road with easterly winds, but a dangerous one with westerly; as the other on the S.E. side must be with easterly winds.

For this, and other bad accommodations already mentioned, nothing but necessity will induce any one to touch at this isle, unless it can be done without going much out of the way; in which case, touching here may be advantageous, as the people willingly and readily part with such refreshments as they have, and at an easy rate. We certainly received great benefit from the little we got; but few ships can come here without being in want of water, and this want cannot be here supplied. The little we took on board, could not be made use of, it being only salt water which had filtered through a stony beach into a stone well; this the natives had

made for the purpose, a little to the southward of the sandy beach so often mentioned, and the water ebbed and flowed into it with the tide.

The inhabitants of this island do not seem to exceed six or seven hundred souls, and above two-thirds of those we saw were males. They either have but few females amongst them, or else many were restrained from making their appearance during our stay, for though we saw nothing to induce us to believe the men were of a jealous disposition, or the women afraid to appear in public, something of this kind was probably the case.

In colour, features, and language, they bear such an affinity to the people of the more western isles, that no one will doubt they have had the same origin. It is extraordinary that the same nation should have spread themselves over all the isles in this vast ocean, from New Zealand to this island, which is almost one-fourth part of the circumference of the globe.

Many of them have now no other knowledge of each other, than what is preserved by antiquated tradition; and they have, by length of time, become, as it were, different nations, each having adopted some peculiar custom or habit, &c. Nevertheless, a careful observer will soon see the affinity each has to the other. In general, the people of this isle are a slender race. I did not see a man that would measure six feet; so far are they from being giants, as one of the authors of Roggewein's voyage asserts. They are brisk and active, have good features, and not disagreeable countenances; are friendly and hospitable to strangers, but as much addicted to pilfering as any of their neighbours.

Tattooing, or puncturing the skin, is much used here. The men are marked from head to foot, with figures all nearly alike; only some give them one direction, and some another, as fancy leads. The women are but little punctured; red and white paint is an ornament with *them*, as also with the men; the former is made of turmeric, but what composes the latter I know not.

Their clothing is a piece or two of quilted cloth, about six feet by four, or a mat. One piece wrapped round their loins, and another over their shoulders, make a complete dress. But the men, for the most part, are in a manner naked, wearing nothing but a slip of cloth betwixt their legs, each end of which is fastened to a cord or belt they wear round the waist. Their cloth is made of the same materials as at Otaheite, viz. of the bark of the cloth-plant; but, as they have but little of it, our Otaheitean cloth, or indeed any sort of it, came here to a good market.

Their hair in general is black; the women wear it long, and sometimes tied up on the crown of the head; but the men wear it, and their beards, cropped short. Their headdress is a round fillet adorned with feathers, and a straw bonnet something like a Scotch one; the former, I believe, being chiefly worn by the men, and the latter by the women. Both men and women have very large holes, or rather slits, in their ears, extending to near three inches in length. They sometimes turn this slit over the upper part, and then the ear looks as if the flap was cut off. The chief ear-ornaments are the white down of feathers, and rings, which they wear in the inside of the hole, made of some elastic substance, rolled up like a watch-spring. I judged this was to keep the hole at its utmost extension. I do not remember seeing them wear any other ornaments, excepting amulets made of bone or shells. As harmless and friendly as these people seemed to be, they are not without offensive weapons, such as short wooden clubs and spears; the latter of which are crooked sticks about six feet long, armed at one end with pieces of flint. They have also a weapon made of wood¹, like the *patoo patoo* of New Zealand.

1) Cook is referring to the *paoa*; a short club with two faces carved at both sides by the handle.

Their houses are low miserable huts, constructed by setting sticks upright in the ground, at six or eight feet distance, then bending them towards each other, and tying them together at the top, forming thereby a kind of Gothic arch. The longest sticks are placed in the middle, and shorter ones each way, and a less distance asunder, by which means the building is highest and broadest in the middle, and lower and narrower towards each end. To these are tied others horizontally, and the whole is thatched over with leaves of sugar-cane. The door-way is in the middle of one side, formed like a porch, and so low and narrow, as just to admit a man to enter upon all fours. The largest house I saw was about sixty feet long, eight or nine feet high in the middle, and three or four at each end; its breadth, at these parts, was nearly equal to its height. Some have a kind of vaulted houses built with stone, and partly under ground; but I never was in one of these.

I saw no household utensils among them, except gourds, and of these but very few. They were extravagantly fond of cocoa-nut shells, more so than of any thing we could give them. They dress their victuals in the same manner as at Otaheite; that is, with hot stones in an oven or hole in the ground. The straw or tops of sugar-cane, plantain heads, &c. serve them for fuel to heat the stones. Plantains, which require but little dressing, they roast under fires of straw, dried grass, &c. and whole races of them are ripened or roasted in this manner. We frequently saw ten or a dozen, or more, such fires in one place, and most commonly in the mornings and evenings.

Not more than three or four canoes were seen on the whole island, and these very mean, and built of many pieces sewed together with small line. They are about eighteen or twenty feet long, head and stem carved or raised a little, are very narrow, and fitted with out-riggers. They do not seem capable of carrying above four persons, and are by no means fit for any distant navigation. As small and mean as these canoes were, it was a matter of wonder to us, where they got the wood to build them with; for in one of them was a board six or eight feet long, fourteen inches broad at one end, and eight at the other; whereas we did not see a stick on the island that would have made a board half this size, nor, indeed, was there another piece in the whole canoe half so big.

There are two ways by which it is possible they may have got this large wood; it might have been left here by the Spaniards, or it might have been driven on the shore of the island from some distant land. It is even possible that there may be some land in the neighbourhood, from whence they might have got it. We, however, saw no signs of any, nor could we get the least information on this head from the natives, although we tried every method we could think of to obtain it. We were almost as unfortunate in our enquiries for the proper or native name of the island; for, on comparing notes, I found we had got three different names for it, viz. Tamareki, Whyhu, and Teapy. Without pretending to say which, or whether any of them is right, I shall only observe, that the last was obtained by Oedidee, who understood their language much better than any of us, though even he understood it but very imperfectly.

It appears by the account of Roggewein's voyage, that these people had no better vessels than when he first visited them. The want of materials, and not of genius, seems to be the reason why they have made no improvement in this art. Some pieces of carving were found amongst them, both well designed and executed. Their plantations are prettily laid out by line, but not inclosed by any fence; indeed they have nothing for this purpose but stones.

I have no doubt that all these plantations are private property, and that there are here, as at Otaheite, chiefs (which they call *Areekes*¹) to whom these plantations belong. But of the power or authority of these chiefs, or of the government of these people, I confess myself quite ignorant.

1) The correct term is '*ariki*'.

Nor are we better acquainted with their religion. The gigantic statues, so often mentioned, are not, in my opinion, looked upon as idols by the present inhabitants, whatever they might have been in the days of the Dutch; at least I saw nothing that could induce me to think so. On the contrary, I rather suppose that they are burying-places for certain tribes or families. I, as well as some others, saw a human skeleton lying in one of the platforms, just covered with stones. Some of these platforms of masonry are thirty or forty feet long, twelve or sixteen broad, and from three to twelve in height; which last in some measure depends on the nature of the ground; for they are generally at the brink of the bank facing the sea, so that this face may be ten or twelve feet or more high, and the other may not be above three or four. They are built, or rather faced, with hewn stones, of a very large size; and the workmanship is not inferior to the best plain piece of masonry we have in England. They use no sort of cement, yet the joints are exceedingly close, and the stones morticed and tenanted one into another, in a very artful manner. The side-walls are not perpendicular, but inclining a little inwards, in the same manner that breast-works, &c. are built in Europe; yet had not all this care, pains, and sagacity, been able to preserve these curious structures from the ravages of all-devouring time.

The statues, or at least many of them, are erected on these platforms, which serve as foundations. They are, as near as we could judge, about half length, ending in a sort of stump at the bottom, on which they stand. The workmanship is rude, but not bad; nor are the features of the face ill-formed, the nose and chin in particular; but the ears are long beyond proportion; and, as to the bodies, there is hardly any thing like a human figure about them.

I had an opportunity of examining only two or three of these statues, which are near the landing-place; and they were of a grey stone, seemingly of the same sort as that with which the platforms were built. But some of the gentlemen, who travelled over the island, and examined many of them, were of opinion that the stone of which they were made, was different from any they saw on the island, and had much the appearance of being factitious. We could hardly conceive how these islanders, wholly unacquainted with any mechanical power, could raise such stupendous figures, and afterwards place the large cylindric stones before mentioned upon their heads. The only method I can conceive, is by raising the upper end by little and little, supporting it by stones as it is raised, and building about it till they got it erect; thus a sort of mount or scaffolding would be made, upon which they might roll the cylinder, and place it upon the head of the statue, and then the stones might be removed from about it. But if the stones are factitious, the statues might have been put together on the place, in their present position, and the cylinder put on by building a mount round them, as above mentioned. But, let them have been made and set up by this or any other method, they must have been a work of immense time, and sufficiently shew the ingenuity and perseverance of these islanders in the age in which they were built; for the present inhabitants have most certainly had no hand in them, as they do not even repair the foundations of those which are going to decay. They give different names to them, such as Gotomoara, Marapate, Kanaro, Goway-too-goo, Matta Matta, &c. &c. to which they sometimes prefix the word *Moi*¹, and

sometimes annex Areeke². The latter signifies chief, and the former burying, or sleeping-place, as well as we could understand³.

1) Mōai.

2) 'Ariki.

3) *mo* - to or to be able to, *ai* - exist, which makes the real significance to be able to exist or so that he/she can exist. Though, since the moai statues are burial stones for the deceased chieftains, Cook's translation isn't very far from the truth.

Besides the monuments of antiquity, which were pretty numerous, and nowhere but on or near the sea-coast, there were many little heaps of stones, piled up in different places along the coast. Two or three of the uppermost stones in each pile were generally white, perhaps always so, when the pile is complete. It will hardly be doubted that these piles of stone had a meaning; probably they might mark the place where people had been buried, and serve instead of the large statues. The working-tools of these people are but very mean, and, like those of all the other islanders we have visited in this ocean, made of stone, bone, shells, &c. They set but little value on iron or iron tools, which is the more extraordinary, as they know their use; but the reason may be, their having but little occasion for them.

Easter Island ship logs: Otto von Kotzebüe, 1816

When Russian admiral Otto von Kotzebüe visited Easter Island in 1816 he expected a warm welcome as when La Pérouse visited the island 30 years later. He was met with hostility and was only able to disembark a few people at Anakena beach for a short while.

Admiral Otto von Kotzebüe's journal from his Easter Island visit in 1816

Author: Otto von Kotzebüe

Comments: Marcus Edensky

We had reached this island on the 8th of March, at three o'clock, A.M., within fifteen miles, and, at daybreak, we saw it distinctly before us. After having doubled the south point, we directed our course along the west coast, at a small distance, to Cook's Bay, where we observed columns of smoke ascending, which was probably a signal to the inhabitants of the interior of the country that a ship was approaching. At noon, when we were quite near to Cook's Bay, we observed two boats, each manned with only two islanders, who rowed up to us. I was in great hopes that these people, who had placed so much confidence in La Pérouse, would give us likewise the same hearty welcome, which, to my great astonishment, was by no means the case. They approached us with fear and distrust, within gunshot; showed us some roots at a distance, but could by no means be persuaded to approach nearer to the ship.

The structure of the canoes, of which we saw several, and which contain only two persons each, correspond exactly with those mentioned by La Pérouse; they are from five to six feet long, and about one foot in breadth, made of narrow boards joined together, and furnished on both sides with an outrigger. La Pérouse's opinion is, that the islanders, for want of wood, will soon be quite at a loss for boats; but he is mistaken: it is true we did not discover a single tree

on this island, but they build their canoes of driftwood, which the current brings in great quantities from the coast of America.

The bottom being very bad in many places in Cook's Bay, I sent Lieutenant Schischmareff to find out, by means of the lead, a more convenient anchoring-place, during which time I kept the *Rurick* under sail. The islanders, who had hitherto always followed the ship, conversing aloud, and seeming to be very good-humoured, hastened on shore when they saw our boat put out, which surprised me the more as the inhabitants of Easter Island had previously placed so much confidence in navigators. However, the ship only appeared dangerous to them, for as soon as our boat approached the shore, a number of savages swam up to it, laden with taro roots, yams, and banana fruits, which they readily exchanged for little pieces of old iron hoops. Some dealt very honestly, others cunningly, and one even attempted to obtain something by force. To deter the others from being infected by his bad example we fired some small shot at him, which, however, did not prevent them from practising their thievish arts.

On a signal given by our boat, that they had found a good anchoring-place, I made a couple of tacks to reach the point, and cast anchor in twenty-two fathoms, on a fine sandy bottom. The sand-bay lay S. E. 45° of us; the two rocks were hidden behind the southern point. Our boat now returned, without the islanders venturing to follow it. As it was my intention to land, I had two boats manned for the purpose, and we left the *Rurick*, seventeen in number, at three o'clock in the afternoon. A great number of savages had assembled on the beach; they cried, and capered, and made the most singular motions, and seemed to wait our arrival with impatience; but as they had chosen for their rendezvous the only place where the surf would permit our landing, we could not venture to leave our boats, before they had made room, which they could in no wise be persuaded to do. Amidst laughing and joking they obliged us to put off from the shore, and even pursued us in the water; but this did not seem dangerous, as they were all unarmed. We had scarcely left the shore, when hundreds swam round our boats, who exchanged banana-fruits and sugar-cane, for old iron; at the same time making an intolerable noise, as they all spoke with great vivacity at once; some of them appeared to be very witty, as at times a general and loud laughter arose.

The spectators on shore, who at last got tired of this scene, amused themselves with pelting us with stones, to which I soon put an end by a few musket-shots. By this I also lost my cheerful company in the water, gained the landing-place, and hastily put some of my sailors on shore. Scarcely had the savages perceived this, when they surrounded us with still more importunity. They had painted their faces red, white, and blue which gave them a terrific appearance, danced with the most ridiculous motions, and contortion of the body, making such a terrible noise, that we were obliged to hold our ears in each other's ears to avoid it. I can imagine the impression which Lieutenant Schischmareff, who saw me for the first time, and who was surrounded by so many monkeys for this new scene, must have had. I even my ideas, though was previously acquainted with the inhabitants of the South Sea. I ordered to disperse them, and to get some room, I had knives thrown among them; but, notwithstanding this, I felt a stone strike my hat. I gave orders again to fire, and this at length enabled me to get on shore.

My first business here was to look for the large and remarkable statues on the beach, which were seen there by Cook and La Pérouse; but, notwithstanding all my research, I only found a broken heap of stones, which lay near an uninjured pedestal; of all the others not a trace remained. The distrustful behaviour of the islanders, led me to think that some Europeans had had a quarrel with them, and revenged themselves by destroying the statues. It struck me,

as something very singular, that in all this bustle on shore, and in the water, we did not see a single woman, of whose importunity preceding voyagers have so often complained. This observation confirmed me in my opinion, that the Europeans must lately have committed many excesses here.

1) The moais had been covered with sand.

After I had fully convinced myself, that these islanders would not allow us to enter their country, we tried to retreat to our boats, which, besides, were insecure in the surf; but even now we were obliged to protect ourselves from their importunity by several musket-shots; and it was not until they heard the balls hiss about their ears that they left us at peace. We gave them some more iron, and then hastened back to the *Rurick*, as our stay, under such circumstances, would only be loss of time, and every hour was valuable to me.

The inhabitants seem to be all of a middle stature, but well made; mostly of a copper colour, very few being tolerably white. They are all tattooed; and those who are so over the whole body, have the appearance of chiefs. We saw here the stuff made of the bark of trees¹, which is manufactured in most of the South Sea islands, for some of the men wear short cloaks of it; and the women, who stood at a great distance, were entirely wrapped in it². To judge by the vivacity of these people, they seem perfectly contented with their situation; they are probably not in want of provisions, as they brought us a considerable abundance of banana-fruit, yams, sugar-cane, and potatoes; and do not neglect cultivation, as we saw the hills near the bay entirely covered with fields, which, by their various green, afford a very agreeable prospect. The seeds which La Pérouse gave the islanders have probably not succeeded, as they did not bring us any of their fruits; we also looked in vain for the sheep and hogs which he left there: a fowl was offered us for a large knife, but was taken away again when we refused the bargain; a proof how much they value these animals, and how few they have of them. Their habitations are exactly the same as described by La Pérouse, and the long house, as marked in his map, still stands, as well as the stone-hut on the shore. In general, I believe, that since the time he was there, with the exception of the disappearance of the remarkable statues, no change has taken place; and of these we saw two, after we had doubled the south-point, but they were of little consequence. At our departure from Easter Island, the inhabitants again pelted us with stones, which they threw after us with the loudest cries, and I was very glad to find ourselves, at seven o'clock, with no bones broken, on board the *Rurick*, and under full sail.

1) Paper mulberry, lat. *Broussonetia papyrifera*, locally known as *Mahute*.

2) Not many years before, women walked bare-breasted, as can be seen in drawings from La Pérouse's visit in 1786 (30 years earlier). The fact that the women were covering themselves up would suggest that women in recent years had been raped or taken as slaves by outside visitors.

A piece of intelligence, which explains the hostile behaviour of the islanders, and which was given me in the sequel at the Sandwich islands, by Alexander Adams, I will now communicate to the reader. This Adams, an Englishman by birth, commanded, in the year 1816, the brig *Kahumanna*, belonging to the king of the Sandwich islands, and had before served on board the same brig when it was called the *Forrester*, of London, as second in command to Captain Piccott, (Piggot) who sold it to the king. The captain of the schooner *Nancy* from New London in America, whose name Adams did not mention to me, employed

himself in the year 1805, in the island of *Massafuero*, in catching a kind of seal, which we call in Russia, kotick (sea-cat). The skin of this animal is sold at a high price in the markets of China, and therefore the Americans try to find out their haunts in all parts of the world. This animal was accidentally discovered, and immediately hunted in the hitherto uninhabited island of *Massafuero*, which lies west of Juan Fernandez, where criminals are sent from Chile. But as this island afforded no safe anchoring-place, the ship was obliged to remain under sail; and as he had not men enough to employ part of them for the chase, he resolved to sail to Easter Island, and to steal some men and women, to bring them to *Massafuero*, there to establish a colony, which should regularly carry on the seal fishery. In pursuance of this wicked design, he landed at Cook's Bay, where he endeavoured to seize upon a number of the inhabitants.

The combat is said to have been bloody, as the brave islanders defended themselves with intrepidity; but they were obliged to yield to the terrible arms of the Europeans; and twelve men, and ten women, fell into the merciless hands of the Americans. Upon this, the poor creatures were carried on board, fettered for the first three days, and not released until they were out of sight of land. The first use they made of their recovered liberty, was, that the men jumped over board; and the women, who attempted to follow them, were prevented only by force. The captain made the ship lie to, in hopes that they would return on board for refuge, when they were threatened by the waves. He, however, soon perceived how much he had been mistaken, for the savages, used to the water from their infancy, thought it not impossible, notwithstanding the distance of three days' voyage, to reach their native country -, and at all events they preferred perishing in the waves, to leading a miserable life in captivity. After they had disputed for some time, as to the direction they should take, they separated; some took the direct way to Easter Island, and the others to the north. The captain, extremely enraged at this unexpected heroism, sent a boat after them, which returned after many fruitless efforts, as they always dived at the approach of the boat, and the sea compassionately received them in its bosom.

At last the captain left the men to their fate, and brought the women to *Massafuero*; and is said to have afterwards made many attempts to steal some of the people from Easter Island. Adams had heard this story from the Captain himself, which was probably the reason he did not wish to mention his name: he assured me that he had been to Easter Island, in 1806, but was not able to land, on account of the hostile behaviour of the inhabitants: he said, that the ship *Albatross*, under the command of *Captain Winship*, had met with the same fate in 1809.