

P R E S E N T S

U L I T H I  
E N C Y C L O P E D I A



V O L U M E   T H E   F I R S T



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- An Exclusive Presentation -  
- of -  
- WVTY's -  
- Special Projects Division -

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WVTY Administrative Staff:

Officer in Charge:::

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Program Supervisor:::

S/Sgt. Gordon R. Phillips

Chief Engineer:::::

Sgt. Frank N. Bernato

Continuity Director:

RT 2/c Alton B. Fuller

Chief Announcer:::::

Y 3/c John E. Rohwer

---

Western Carolines Radio Officer:

Captain Samuel J. Roley

\* \* \* \*

Francis B. Wilson  
810 W. Elm  
Lodi, Cal.  
95240



## Foreword --

This book is based on material presented in "Ulithi Encyclopedia", the Sunday evening series of talks broadcast by Armed Forces Radio Station WVTY. The great demand for copies of the radio script brought about this book as a "Command Performance".

The material is herein presented very much as it was originally broadcast. The material is arranged in manner of interest rather than by topic.

It is proper to say that this book has been edited by a Ulithian, Hatae, third ranking native of Fassarai, with whom Dr. Marshall Wees went over the original proofs, correcting them and adding much to them.

For assistance in the preparation of "Ulithi Encyclopedia" the author wishes to express thanks to Dr. Wees, Fassarai Medical Officer, for his voluminous notes on Ulithi folk; to Lt. (jg) Ray Erickson for permission to use his notes on Ulithi fauna and flora. Thanks also to Chaplain Norton, Lt. (jg) George Read, the mimeograph crew of the Ulithi Port Director's Office, and to Hatae for invaluable editorial assistance.

*John Loudon Vollbrecht*  
John Loudon Vollbrecht  
Lieut. (jg), USNR



DEDICATED TO

KING JEEG

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# Chapter One #

1.

One day in early February, 1945, reading some highly interesting articles on the natural life of Ulithi Atoll written by Lt. (jg) Ray C. Erickson, a program idea was born. Mr. Erickson consented to give his material to W V T. Y on the condition that we give the radio talks ourselves. A hard bargain, indeed. This first chapter contains mostly material first published by Mr. Erickson.

To begin, let us lay the ground-work for more discussions of life on ~~Ulithi Atoll~~. The following is some information taken from one of Ray Erickson's articles titled "The Birth of a Rock".

"Our Rock" started millions of years ago when someone decided there would be an urgent need for a place for the Navy to drop its hook and have a beer, so that "someone" got right on the job. A long underwater mountain range extended east and west near the Equator at that time, and since there were several volcanic craters near the surface of the ocean, one of them was selected as the foundation for a seawall around our lagoon. Appropriate chits were signed and large working parties or colonies of small animals were put on a permanent rock-building detail. However, the Navy system of organized construction hadn't been conceived at that historic time, so there was plenty of "sacking out", and to this day the rock barrier between the islands has not been built up.

If you decide to take a swim off Ulithi, don't forget to take a look at the bottom where you will see the coral colonies still growing and forming more island material. Billions of little animals



are still working overtime to build more island ... guess they never got the word when the islands were completed!

In addition to coral, the islands are composed of sea shells and dead skeletons of many other animals. Some of these carcasses are too small to see--or even believe. These shells are cemented together by the growth of living coral and ocean salts to form a hard substance known technically as coral conglomerate. When exposed to the surf, rain, air and sun coral breaks up and forms a light sand which does not, unfortunately, adorn the Navy's swimming beaches at Ulithi.

While living on various islands of Ulithi we were often surprised to wake up in the morning to find that the previous night's rain had formed a swimming pool in the middle of the island. Those swimming pools are standard issue equipment on all atolls. The oblong bowl shape of the Ulithi islands is the result of sand and small rocks being blown and washed up from the water's edge, forming a ridge around most of the island. This ridge is usually grown up with a pure stand of coconut palms. The darker soil found around the centres of the islands was produced by decayed plants, and supports most of the other types of tropical vegetation.

Except for the noonday heat, the climate at Ulithi is far from unpleasant. The natural environment is most hospitable to human life. The islands can grow enough food to support a limited population, but, you may wonder, what kind of people would find a useful life on such tiny dots of land in the remote wastes of the vast Pacific. You'll be surprised to know that the entire Caroline Island group



boasted a population of 30,915 at the last census. The natives ... (we will call them natives, although they are migrants from Asia in the 13th Century)... have for centuries found a good life here at Ulithi. The Ulithians are a civilized people, living under a beneficent social system that was established long, long ago. Their government is basically democratic.

The King is elected for life from the community's most respected men. A new King does not necessarily have to be the oldest man. The King is the people's choice, but men only are allowed to vote. Woman suffrage at Ulithi is yet waiting for an island Susan B. Anthony. We might mention, however, that to our knowledge, this is the only place in the world where a King, nominal as such, is elected and not a hereditary monarch. But even though the King is the direct and duly commissioned representative of the people, he is King in every sense of the word. The present King, King Ueg, is a friendly and intelligent man who has endeared himself to all of us Americans who have had the good fortune to meet him.

Various islands have Chiefs of their own, each Chief being a sort of Senator or Congressman, and above these Chiefs stands Ueg, King of all Ulithi.

Chiefs of some of the islands are Ken, who was Chief of Falalop, Hälen, Chief of Asor, and Māho, Chief of Fassarai.

(Pronunciation note: Hälen = Hah-len;  
Māho = Mäck; Ueg = Wehrk; Hatae = Hottie.)



Missionaries touched these shores many years ago, and the sign of the cross has ever since stood prominent in native villages. The people of Ulithi are mostly Catholic and deeply religious. They have erected more than one fine church to their God. For seven years prior to the American occupation of Ulithi there were no Christian missionaries in the islands, but, even without objective guidance, the Ulithians have continued in their Faith. Since the invasion, the natives are visited each week by Chaplain Norton of the Marine Corps who conducts services for them, and the Padre is the very most welcome of their American visitors.

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If you did not have the good fortune to put ashore at a native settlement, you may wonder about the appearance of these little-known people. They are medium in stature, darker than Polynesians. In fact, they are Micronesians, a race distinct from all other races of peoples. They are a hardy folk, and their Doctor Wees explains their hardiness as "Survival of the Fittest". Years ago infantile paralysis swept the Atoll. Many died and about twelve of the present natives are paralyzed in either their legs or arms. King Ueg himself suffers paralysis of the legs and must be taken about the island in an old Japanese ammunition cart which his friends in the U. S. Navy have remodelled for him. It is a fortunate note that the United States Navy medical service is fast improving the health of these people. Again, it is correct to say that they are hardy and supple. Almost any of them can walk up a tall coconut palm as effortlessly as you or I would walk up a flight of stairs.



Years before preventative medicine was introduced, epidemics were common to Pacific Atolls. Even a disease such as measles, ordinarily a not-too-serious ailment, struck the Fijis in 1914, catching the people with no resistance to this continental malady; and caused many deaths. So it is with these island peoples. They are strong because only the strongest have survived.

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One afternoon in December some Navy men were surprised that an elderly native refused some candy offered him. His remark, "No like ... like coconut!" And good reason, too. The native diet for centuries has consisted of food raised almost entirely on the atoll .... and most of their food is nutritive. The coconut palm is their staff of life. They eat the meat and drink the milk. Why distill water when cool natural jugs of rich coconut milk hang in green clusters just waiting to be picked? (This, says Dr. Wees, is an author's idealization. Coconut milk cannot well be substituted for water). The sprouted stems of the young coconuts also make fine eating. The Ulithians grow and eat taro, melons, calabashes, breadfruit, papaya and a few bananas -- small tasty ones. Natives raise poultry -- a lively and healthy bantam strain. These fowl, like the majority of the atoll's creatures, were imported. We'll speak more of animal migration to Ulithi in a later chapter.

The American stomach is in many ways more hardy than the Ulithian's digestive organ. Not long ago a number of natives had an unfortunate reaction from



eating too much "pogey bait" (candy) and many were ill. Wonder what they think of K-rations?

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Seeds imported from America do not flourish in Ulithi soil. The M. A. A. of one of the outfits on Asor planted some tomatoes. They grew -- tall, strong plants ... like Jackson's beanstalk, and they flowered as you've never seen tomato plants flower -- but when the fruit appeared it couldn't even look respectable next to a pee-wee marble. Unless some soil-improving substance is introduced, stateside plants will continue to flower -- and then show fruit the size of a mib.

Roast pig is a favorite dish with the natives, and for many centuries before and after Bobo burned down China so that Charles Lamb could write a dissertation on it, the natives of Ulithi enjoyed tasty dinners of roast pork. It was our impression that the pork was cooked in luau fashion, but this is not entirely correct. Doctor Wees hereby gives you the proper receipe for Roast Pork ala Ulithi.

"The pork that is not cooked in kettles is placed between woven coconut mats and placed about two feet above smoking coconut husks. In this way they cure the pork. Other pork is wrapped and cooked under hot stones."

Native flour is sometimes made from imported rice, but shredded coconut is added to the dough. To bake bread, the dough is wrapped in a taro leaf and baked over hot stones.

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6-A.

Ulithi native handicraft is something to marvel at. Their homes and public buildings are made entirely of wood and palm thatch (nails being a late innovation), but their very impressiveness is not outdone by any marble or granite structures erected by other more complicated civilizations. (See Plate "B", page 28).

A high gable is the keynote of Ulithi architecture with sharply sloping gracefully curved roofs. These dwellings are cool during the hottest parts of the day. Clean coral floors, functionally arranged interiors. And their engineering is sound. These buildings will withstand any storm. We recommend that at your next opportunity you stop over to take a look at the attractive native village on Mog Mog ... and don't forget to take another look at the community bath, a quiet deep pool in the palm forest, with a rock border and wide stone steps going right down into the water. The Romans were not the only people of this world to build magnificent public baths.

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Another note of interest on Mog Mog is the native cemetery. Christian graves are marked with crosses, and here and there you will see the Latin inscription, "I. N. R. I.", and just below it a second inscription -- in Japanese characters.

Doctor Wees adds some interesting notes on native burial customs.

"As for the names on the graves, the Spanish Padre gave them Christian names and in marking the



graves this name is used. The Ulithi name only being used when alive. (See page 9 for more about the Spanish period in Ulithi history).

"When one dies the Mother and Father immediately shave their heads, and all members of the family detour around the place where the person died for three months.

"All of the dead person's belongings are placed in a box with him .... When the grave is ready to close the other natives step up and toss some green leaves or flowers in the grave. Then all turn to and fill in the sand.

"In the absence of the Padre one of the natives leads the prayers which might be likened to a symphony. The harmony of their chant is something to be heard and cannot be described."

(Native music will someday be broadcast by WVTY when portable recording equipment arrives.)

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The native clothing problem is rather simple. The men wear only a breechcloth and the women a single skirt of material woven from coconut fiber. The grass skirts here, as elsewhere in the Pacific, also a strongly prevailing fashion in female dress. Outside influence has not brought forth any additional modesty among the natives as some have thought. The Ulithians are naturally ver moral and modest. They do not uncover before each other. A man will not uncover before another man, nor a woman before another woman. When a child approaches the age of five, the girls begin to wear grass skirts or a cloth which Doctor Wees likens to a shower-sarong, and the boys don their



"G" string or "Hoe" which is usually of a bright color. Prior to the age of five, clothing is usually not worn.

Shoes are not worn .... because all of G o d ' s chillun here have shoes ... for all practical purposes given them at birth. The Ulithians are able to walk barefoot over the roughest coral and climb the tallest tree without difficulty. Fallen arches, and other foot ailments are so rare that a native chiropodist would of necessity starve to death.

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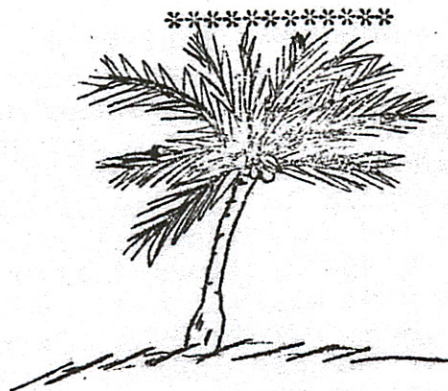
Ulithians have a love for color and design which is well illustrated by their own bodies. Many of them are tattooed, the tattoo being more decorative than significant. A man most proud of his tattoos is Maho, formerly Chief of Fassarai. Maho is an exception to the rule that most of the natives are provincial because he has travelled far in his lifetime, but loves these islands and has made his retirement here. Maho has been in China and Japan, served for a time on a German merchant ship, has flown over this island group in a plane, and received his impressive tattooing in HongKong. He speaks many languages including good English, but before we become biographical, let us return to our discussion of tattoos. It is said that the Japanese tattooed many natives as a means of identification, but the body designs most striking are complete band-stripes that run at right-angles to the direction of a tiger's stripes -- from head to toe. These body-long stripings are usually in a dark blue.



There is one native on Ulithi who possesses the art of tattooing. It takes several months, says Doctor Wees, to get a complete body paint job. However, this beauty treatment is permanent and in the long run takes no more time than your wife does to become glamorized in her stateside beauty salon.

So famous were Ulithi tattoos at one time that natives used to travel from Yap to Ulithi to be ornamented.

In the Marshall Islands the Japanese discouraged the practice of tattooing. It is said that aside from identification tattoos, the Japanese tried to stop the practice at Ulithi. This sounds reasonable because the older people for the most part display tattooing while the younger folk are almost entirely unmarked.



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## Chapter Two

7.

By 25 February a number of W V T Y listeners had taken a keen interest in the program, "Ulithi Encyclopedia." The increasing fan mail gave us the impression that the listeners felt that this program announcer was an authority on Ulithiana. With such complimentary mail there was nothing to do but to become an authority, or, more modestly, to find an authority to answer the listeners' questions.

The search for information led us to Lt. (jg) George Read of the Civil Affairs Office who made it possible for the "Encyclopedia" to present detailed information on every phase of Ulithiana.

With the help of the Civil Affairs Office we can spice our story here and there with statistics. Let us turn now to the last census of Ulithi, that of 1935.

In 1935, a typical tween-wars year, forty-seven natives lived on Asor Island. Fassarai was home to sixty-seven natives, Lossau supported 39 persons, and Mog Mog had a population of ninety-five. In discussing Ulithi we will include the single island of Fais, 48 miles East of Ulithi, and the isolated island of Falalop, although neither of these islands belong to Ulithi Atoll in the strictest geographical sense. These two islands were formed separately from the Atoll of Ulithi. Now, let us return to the census. Falalop had the largest native population, one hundred sixty natives and one Japanese resident -- the only Japanese on Ulithi in 1935. Of course it is common knowledge that since 1935



many -- too many -- Japanese came to Ulithi, and left. The Japanese were at one time mining phosphates on the island of Fais, but in 1935 the census figures showed 334 natives and not Japanese on Fais. Natives today are living peacefully in their own homes on Fais, Fassarai and Lossau.

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The word "Ulithi" is so unusual that the average person doesn't quite get used to writing and speaking it until he has been in the area for a week or more. When Jimmy Durante did part of W V T Y's dedicatory program from Hollywood he asked, "U-litti... what kind of a name is dat? U-litti! Yeah, now I remember. Dat's da home of Umbriago, da great U-litti genius!" Schnozzola could have worked up an even more super act had he known some of the other names to be found on older maps to mark the spot in which we find ourselves today.

The group of islands that we know as Ulithi is also known as "The Mackenzie Islands". The entire atoll is sometimes referred to as "Mog Mog", "Mogumogu", "Mokomok", "Ouluthy", "Uluti", or even "Urushi." Fais alone has eight distinct names for its mile-and-a-half spot of land, each name being entirely correct. They are: "Fais", "Astrolabe", "Feis", "Feys", "Fuhaesu", "Huhaesu", "Tromelin", and "Woaje". The names stem from various language roots, Portuguese, Spanish, English, native and Japanese.

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Ulithi was discovered, as far as we can tell from existing records, by Diego Da Rocha, a Portuguese skipper, in the year 1526. Da Rocha is the man who discovered Yap in the same year. Just to place the date more firmly in your mind, let us mention that Ulithi was discovered five years before Magellan's discovery of the Mariannas.

During the century and one-half following the discovery of Ulithi the only visitors to the islands were Spaniards with the exception of Sir Francis Drake who visited Ulithi in 1588.

It is felt that of all the servicemen arriving at Ulithi less than one tenth of one per cent of them had ever heard of Ulithi before the war began. The Western Carolines were known to geography students mainly as Yap and Anguar. The author was a student of economic and anthropological geography at one time and during a number of years of study never ran across the islands of Ulithi. Two hundred years ago these islands were even more lost to the world. The Spaniards of those days, world promoters of the first order, ignored Ulithi. Only the Spanish missionaries found their way to the atoll. In 1731 a joint attempt to missionize and colonize Ulithi was made by Spain, but at sometime between 1731 and 1733 the missionaries were driven out by the natives. Two Jesuit fathers had established a mission on Falalop along with a small lay colony. One of the fathers left Falalop to go to the Marianas for provisions. When he returned he found his colleague murdered along with eight Spaniards and four Filipinos. An unpleasant story, true, but the fact remains that the Ulithians were later converted -- almost to a man -- and have since become the most admirable of Christians.



This unfortunate incident at least served to give Ulithi some publicity, and, not too many years later the islands were visited by the French explorer, Duperrey, the Spaniard Don Luis de Torres, and the Russian scientist, Lütke, whose data on the islands is valuable even today.

Ulithi became well known to whaling ships in the early 19th century. There seem to be few or no whales in these waters nowadays, but one hundred years ago the waters from Ulithi to the Bonins were happy hunting grounds for whalers.

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A popular question has been "Were there ever cannibals on Ulithi?" The only mention of cannibalism we've heard came from Maho, Chief of Fassarai. Maho spoke rather jokingly about his grandfather, and claimed that his ancestor's people practiced cannibalism (that would be roughly eighty or ninety years ago). But there was a twinkle in old Maho's eye as he told this little story, and we're inclined to believe that Ulithi was never a cannibal settlement. There are no other records extant today which give any indication that cannibalism was ever practiced at Ulithi.

Doctor Wees checked again on the cannibal story and assures us that it is entirely a myth -- than man-eating was never practiced at Ulithi.

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## Chapter Three #

11.

**M**aterial found in this chapter is the result of miscellaneous conversations with fellow G. I.'s and a few personal observations.

The Medical Staffs of the United States forces have done a fine job in ridding Ulithi of insects. The atoll never had anopheles, the malaria mosquito, but they did have plenty of noisome little insects that didn't spread disease but could make a person very uncomfortable. It seems that Ulithi was never as infested with insect nuisances as the other Caroline Islands, but it is nevertheless an area once noted for tropical bedbugs, ticks, red bugs, day and night mosquitoes, centipedes, scorpions, head lice, biting ants, spiders, and lamp-bug beetles. Giant lice appear to have been pretty well exterminated but at as late a date as February this year a few giant lice were still making a living on Mog Mog.

Ulithi boasts three types of ants. Giant red ants known officially as South Sea Giant Red Ants have been observed on Asor in small numbers. Asor seems to be the home of most of the black needle ants, and Sorlen seems to be especially well populated with the species known popularly as the small red biting ant.

The lamp-bug is an interesting pest. If you haven't had the pleasure of meeting this insect character, we don't recommend that you go out of your way to do so. The lamp-bug beetle and the giant myriapods (millipedes) both discharge a dark brown foul-smelling liquid which burns on contact with the skin. Nasty, but nothing serious. And, even after spinning this insect horror story, it is yet possible to say that



Ulithi is fairly insect free. Most of the harmful insects are found in great numbers on Palau. The truth is that it's a ten-to-one chance you would enjoy sleeping without mosquito netting much more at Ulithi than you would on some summer night in New Jersey or Biloxi ... or Oahu!

In observing the animals and reptiles on Ulithi, it may be hard to believe that the only land creatures indigenous to the Western Carolines are the rat and the bat, especially the fruit bat or so-called "flying fox". All other creatures were brought to the atoll from the continents. The lizards may be an exception. It is hard to determine whether they are native or imported. Lizards are, however, standard equipment on most Pacific islands.

Reports have it that on Palau there are crocodiles -- genuine crocodiles, but Ulithi, and Sorlen and Falalop in particular, seem to take the blue ribbon for the longest and fattest lizards. The giant lizards are known as monitor lizards and on Sorlen one was captured which measured nearly five feet from its snout to the tip of its tail. One of the mates on Sorlen kept this mammoth lizard as a pet and led him about the camp on a leash. The skin of these lizards is of a fine grain and would bring a top price on the leather and hide market, but there doesn't seem to be much future in the business because the magnificent creatures, at least on Ulithi, are apparently headed for complete extinction through more or less natural causes. Then, too, mechanical fly-control measures lately instituted are depriving the lizards of their chief source of food -- insects. Also, the clearing of underbrush has driven them to the tree tops.



The monitor lizard has powerful sharp claws which can inflict a considerable wound on a man, but his bite is not to be feared. They are cannibal creatures and it is interesting, if slightly revolting, to watch one of the monsters make quick work of a rat. The lizard has a typical reptilian hinged jaw, and unhinges it to accomodate large morsels of live food. Correction: The eating of rats by lizards is not cannibalism, but large lizards make a lunchtime habit of eating smaller lizards. The rat, lizard, bird or insect which the monitor catches is swallowed whole and is digested by powerful digestive juices in the creature's stomach. The monitors have served to reduce the rat population materially, and their sticky flashing tongues account for innumerable flies. A large monitor has a tongue sometimes eight and nine inches long which lashes out in lightning strokes to catch insects. A reasonable estimate would be that one large monitor catches from three to four hundred flies per day. These creatures are beneficial to man and orders have been issued that they not be molested.

The small lizards you see are geckos which are related to the monitor lizards in somewhat the same relation that a tiger is related to a house-cat. They, too, clean up an amazing number of flies and insects. The gecko, and the more rare chamelion-type of lizard, are welcome guests in Ulithi dwellings and are entirely harmless.

There are no snakes in Ulithi. The Saint Patrick of the Western Carolines did, however, overlook a couple of insignificant species of snake on Palau. A few snakes do inhabit the surrounding ocean, coral snakes and the snake-like conger eels. The coral snake is poisonous and the conger eel has a bite as dangerous as that of a barracuda.



The lizards, by the way, are fairly good swimmers, and when pursued will often take refuge in the ocean.

An interesting feature of the smaller lizards is the detachable tail. Seize a gecko by the tail, and, snap! it's off -- and there you are, holding the tail! The appendage will wriggle in your fingers for a moment or so because its nerves are still alive. This device serves to baffle the average pursuer of lizards. Even after centuries of this game, a larger lizard who is chasing a gecko will stop and stare at a tiny tail left wiggling in his path. They fall for this gag every time, but perhaps they're not so foolish as we think, because they at least have the tail to lunch on.

Consulting Ray Erickson's published articles once more, we learn that the geckos have suction toes for assistance in navigating overheads, that the gecko is able to match its skin color to that of its immediate surroundings in a manner of camouflage, and that this little fellow has a soft bird-like chirp by which it communicates with its mates. Erickson also identifies the skink, the most common of Ulithi lizards, a small specimen which has toes and claws and is marked with several prominent stripes or colorations. The most common skink is the azure-tailed skink which is most often observed around trash heaps. These are small and wear a bright blue -- welding-torch-blue tail.

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## Chapter Four #

15.

This chapter should impress the reader as enlightened in its approach. Here we slide into narrative to tell you of a visit to the native island of Fassarai.

It was our good fortune to be included in a party of naval visitors to Fassarai. The Civil Affairs Office sends a group to Fassarai each week to take care of necessary business. Tourist traffic is not permitted and, except for these official weekly visits the natives are left happily to themselves on their own native soil.

Fassarai is longer than most of the islands of Ulithi -- and narrower. From the lagoon side it appears to be a tremendous island, about a mile and a half long, and, to its native residents, it is a tremendous island. All of it is not inhabited.

Chaplain Norton of the Marines, the spiritual mentor to the people of Fassarai, spoke of the island's true size in the natives' conception of size. He remarked that to these people the islands are "the world", and that all the rest of us are merely "outsiders". Few of the natives (except for one or two who have traveled on the continents of the world) have any conception of the world whatever ... and how could they? For the Ulithians to have a true conception of the world is as difficult as it would have been for you or I to have had any true conception of these islands had we known only the life of a small part of the civilian United States. That the natives are



friendly, hospitable and not in the least afraid of us Americans and all our strange contrivances speaks well for their inherent imagination and intelligence.

The landing party assembled and we went ashore on an island which looked very much like the South Sea Isles that Hollywood dreams up. A mild surf rolled in on the lagoon side; a powdery sand beach took a short run up to a thick growth of shoreline palms; brown natives and round-waisted girls looked out from the trees and native huts. A few lazy black hogs browsed about in the underbrush and paid no attention to the newcomers. A small fire smoked in the village. It was hard to imagine that this seeming Nordhoff-Hall creation had ever been touched by the outside world.

Chaplain Norton headed the landing party. The natives in but a few short months had come to love the Padre dearly, and as Father Norton walked up the beach a crowd of little children gathered about him. We were reminded of Jesus saying "suffer the little children to come unto me" as more smiling Ulithi children skipped down to the beach to meet the Chaplain. Some were naked, others wore little grass skirts. Then each child stood reverently, most of them with their hands behind their backs, to receive each an individual blessing from the Padre. Fathers in breechcloths proudly carried their infant sons and daughters to the Navy Priest that they might be blessed. This, then, was surely not a Pagan settlement, nor with such a sincere display of fidelity be other than the most Christian civilization in this world of 1945.

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Along the shore of Fassarai, drawn up into the forest, their sharp bows projecting seaward, we saw a number of graceful native canoes. They were all of a standard design ... as standardized as the model "A" Ford, although the first boat of this type was built hundreds and perhaps thousands of years ago. For centuries the Ulithians have known the advantages of mass production, or let us call it standardization. The canoes are to be seen in all sizes, from minute model canoes, toys that you can hold in your hand, to large seagoing thirty-passenger craft. And every hull is of the same shape, painted with the same design in the same color scheme: Black hull, black gunwales, and a double orange stripe running the entire length of the boat just below the gunwale, making an artistic fork at bow and stern. Both sternposts and stems are forked in the shape of a lizard's tongue. The craft are of the outrigger type, the outrigger being designed with all the dynamics and finesse of a seaplane wing float.

Unlike Rarotongan craft, Ulithi canoes are made of planking and not hollowed-out tree trunks. We had the good fortune later in the day to watch the natives at work making finished lumber. A coconut palm is cut down. No planing machines, no saws, no hammers, no nails. A hatchet is the only tool used in making lumber. Let's devote a paragraph to the Ulithi hatchet.

The hatchet used here is an unorthodox tool. It more or less resembles a hoe because the blade is at right angles to the handle. Again, standardization. The hatchets come in all sizes but are all alike. We noticed most of the distinguished older men of the community wearing hatchets. These men



wear their hatchets rather than merely carry them as you or I would. The blade is hooked over the right shoulder and not the left (perhaps a native uniform regulation). Doctor Wees adds:

"It is not just the older men that 'wear' the hatchet or 'putch-a-gul' ... Since the 'G' string has no pockets it is carried over the shoulder to prevent being dulled or cutting somebody."

The same hatchet that is used for felling huge trees is used to make the daintiest model canoe.

The Doctor notes that "canoes are made from hollowed-out trunks for the keel and planks are fitted and tied in with rope made from coconut to complete the sides. The trees are few on Ulithi that would serve as a keel, thus most of the canoes were purchased in Yap at the nominal price of \$50.00 -- and that is a lot of coconuts!"

To make lumber the natives strip a felled tree of its bark and hew it square by hand ... and you couldn't do a neater job with a rotary saw. Measurements are taken, not with a ruler, but strictly by seaman's eye, and the boards cut to the proper size.

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The Ulithians have never gone in very strongly for the manufacture of textiles, but the sails often used on their canoes will outlast many a high grade canvas. The sails are made of intricately woven pandanus leaf, each leaf being cut and



folded to a quarter-inch width and then laced and relaced to form a wind-proof matting that won't be affected too much by salt water. These sails are surprisingly light and amazingly strong. Pliable, too. They may be rolled and unfurled with ease. Canoes such as these once sailed to Ulithi from Asia. (It might be mentioned that coconut lumber is too likely to rot to make good canoe material. The breadfruit wood is better adapted to this use).

Referring to statements on page 15, Dr. Wees says that "any of the natives educated on Yap can tell you about the other countries. Now since our coming here January 6, they will tell you about Frisco, Washington and New York. They even can mention Saginaw, Michigan. I wonder why? (Confidentially, Doctor, it's perhaps because it's your home town!). Each evening twenty or thirty of the younger natives gather at our tent to learn English."

This, we might add, sheds additional light on the subject of the natives' world-concept, but in no way controverts Chaplain Norton's observation.

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While visiting Fassarai we were most impressed by the community spirit of the people and the courtesy shown to visitors. Hatae conducted our tour about the island. The Ulithians are at the time of this writing fast learning English, listen carefully to every word spoken to them, and, in most cases will understand. Their answer may be in gesture, or, and this will surprise you, it may be in well-phrased English.



Hatae is a keen listener and a good conversationalist in matters pertaining to the progress of the war. He explained local politics to us, too, pointing out quite graphically that the top man in Ulithi politics is a superior king located in Yap who controls the kings of the outlying atolls. It was not any difficulty in understanding Hatae that prevented us from getting a clear picture of local administration, but it was the very complication (or perhaps novelty to us) of the system that forced us to plunge into an investigation and analysis that proved more baffling than an attempt to figure out the administrative functions of two dozen city commissioners in Brooklyn, New York. A later chapter will deal in detail with "Ulithi, its Civics."

The natives understand our part in the war. Hatae said that afternoon, "Amereecahn on Yop." "No," we corrected him, "American not on Yap". But Hatae only smiled obligingly, and bowing his head slightly as he turned to us announced, "Amereecahn on Yop ... by and by!"

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THIS IS THE PACIFIC OCEAN NETWORK



## Chapter Five #

Down on the island of Fassarai every courtesy is shown the Americans. Walking down a road it is not unusual to find the people considerately stepping aside to let you pass. There is always a smile and a salute from the natives who meet you. To receive a salute you need not be an officer. The natives salute enlisted men with equal enthusiasm. Very amusing and impressive in its character was a salute received from a little brown two-year-old. He was in his mother's arms. Mother was too preoccupied with her infant transportation problem to manage a salute, but the little fellow lifted a baby arm to salute us. That youngster will grow up to be a career man. What do you think?

Scuttlebutt has it that the Japanese taught the natives to salute, but with us there is no compulsion to do so, and the tribute is given without reserve in the utmost sincerity. Others say the Germans taught the natives to salute, and this is the truth. The salute was part of the Germans' work when they inhabited the island. It was then that the natives were forced to salute. It has now passed down to a friendly greeting, used by the natives in greeting each other.

The Ulithians have a simple method of settling all questions of rate or rank. Dr. Wees tells us that an officer is known as "Captain" regardless



of rank. Those not wearing a cap or enlisted men are known as "seaman seconds". The origin of this polarity-concept of rank is not known.

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Strolling through the cool shade of old breadfruit trees we found a winding forest path that took us into the uninhabited tip of Fassarai which is nearest the rest of the atoll. There we discovered a forest bathing pool in a somewhat swampy depression. Stone steps led down into it and the water seemed to be fairly fresh. The Doctor writes that "the bathing pools are for the women and small infants. They are brackish water and it is more of a beauty plunge than a bath. Coconut oil is poured into the water and then the dip.... They then rub their bodies with coconut oil perfumed with flowers." For a real cleaning the natives bathe in the ocean.

In late years barrels of fresh water have been brought ashore during dry seasons to provide the necessary fresh water for drinking and cooking. There have been years when dry seasons have been a great set-back to Ulithians. For centuries the only supply of potable water on Ulithi has been rainfall. We say "only" rainfall. Figures for rainfall in the Western Carolines show as many as 156 inches per year. This figure, from readings taken over a 19-year period. Compare this to New York which has a rainfall of 41 inches per annum or, if you've believed those stories that Ulithi is the most rained-upon spot in the world, compare that mere 156 inches of rainfall to that of the world's wettest area, the island of Fernando Po off the West Coast of



Africa -- 400 inches and more! Rainfall in the Western Carolines varies from the figure mentioned to as low as 100 inches in some spots. At certain times of the year it has been necessary for the natives to collect and store water. Water pipes are apparently unknown. The natives "pipe" water from the trunks of trees by means of wisps of palm leaf strapped ingeniously about the tree and aimed to drip into a receptacle.

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We've mentioned the roaming black hogs to be found on Fassarai. Hogs and chickens were introduced partly by the Germans and the Japanese. The Germans, by the way, ruled Ulithi from 1899 until 1914. (More about that period in government will appear in a later chapter). Some of the hogs we saw were not natives of Fassarai, but ex-residents of Falalop. Some hogs left behind on Falalop were adopted by the Marines. In a few months they had become pets of the officers and enlisted men, but, like the cat that sharpened her claws on Aunt Hester's best overstuffed, the hogs had to go. The porkers were getting in the way of operations, rooting in traffic lanes and in general behaving like a fifth column in pork. The last straw was sunk when a spotted shoat nosed into the C. O.'s laundry and spilled the wash. After this outrage, the Marine Corps livestock was crated up and sent on a seasick journey down to Fassarai. So much for stock-farming on Ulithi.

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Opinions differ upon the subject of "How important is Time to the Ulithian?" We will discuss both points of view.

The Ulithians, very religious people, as we've mentioned before, measure time from Sunday to Sunday. (Because of Chaplain Norton who can reach the natives to conduct services only during the week -- on Wednesdays, the natives have accepted Wednesday as their day of worship). Their easy civilization does not concern itself much with date and time groups, because there is little in their schedule that must meet a deadline -- with the exception of religious services. Here Dr. Wees insists, and rightly, that time is figured very closely, that the Ulithians know the various feast and fast days of the Church.

Perhaps it would be more nearly correct to say that Ulithi folk know what time it is, but are, as a rule not too much concerned about it. Says the doctor, "Tell them to be at the sick bay at 10 o'clock and you will find them sitting out in front when 10 o'clock rolls around. They can tell you the days of the week. How they do it I do not know -- for the native store does not issue calendars advertising aspirin."

It is our lately-formed opinion that the natives learned the more precise details of Time from Americans and earlier continental visitors -- and they have learned it well.



Talking to Hatae we discussed outrigger canoe schedules between Yap and Ulithi. Again, an example of the local concept of time. (Let us say 'attitude' towards time, the 'concept' being not unorthodox as we know it). Hatae reported, "To Yop, one sun. Two sun come back". The extra day on the return trip being necessitated by prevailing winds and currents. As far as regular runs were concerned there were none. Hatae explained the operation of the canoe-dispatching department saying, "We need? They got? We go." A simple formula. Transport, supply and demand all coordinated in a simple statement, "They got? We need? We go." Julius Caesar never said anything more profound in "I came, I saw, I conquered". The native philosophy is far from lackadaisical; it is merely informally practical.

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There are two villages on Fassarai: The village at the landing in which the King lives, and a smaller village farther up the island where live the people of Falalop. About thirty people live in the upper village. The Falalop folk now living on Fassarai mix freely with the other natives but rather like the section of the island which King Ueg has allotted to them.

The lower village has a few suburbs which string out in single dwellings and small garden farms along the road leading to the upper village. That road, by the way, is rather wide and bordered with stone. It was built years ago by the Germans.

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The three-hundred or so residents of Fassarai maintain a downtown shopping district, too. There is a little store, complete with bookkeeping and sales counter -- salesgirls, too. The shop sells native handicraft and the art level of this merchandise is high.

Hand-carved statuary is their greatest artistic achievement. Carving is done in wood. The style is bold -- and, according to the art standards maintained by the best stateside academies of sculpture and painting -- fits right into the modern American period even though the Ulithi artists have been making the same designs without modification for hundreds of years. Dr. Wees notes that the carving was learned in Yap and that the characters are Yap people or their old Pagan God or "Dieus".

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Some Ulithi housekeeping notes: The natives do not go in for chairs and tables, but rather sit cross-legged on the deck. This really isn't as uncomfortable as you might imagine -- after you get accustomed to it, and you never have to worry about offending your guests for lack of proper furniture.

The lack of house furnishings gives an impression of vast roominess in Ulithi dwellings. However, where you or I would spot the davenport or sofa, the Ulithians make a habit of parking their canoes.

Safes, cabinets, dressers, bureaus and all that superfluous furniture is taken care of -- at least in function -- by immensely large woven hand bags which

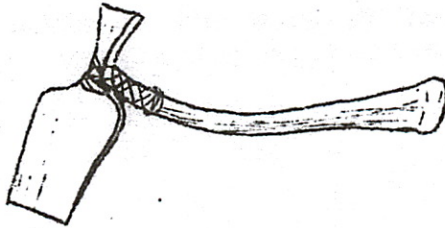


most natives carry. All valuables and immediate necessities are carried in these carryalls and each owner takes meticulous care of this bit of equipment. This method of caring for valuables is a sure-fire guard against theft, but it would ordinarily be quite unnecessary because the people of Ulithi are an honest folk and theft is unheard of. There is no record of theft at Ulithi. Believe it or not, in all the population of Ulithi there is not a single thief.

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If you happen to put ashore at Asor you'll find the island inter-faith chapel of great interest. This imposing edifice was built with the combined efforts of the Navy and the natives, but, aside from the fabric roof, the design is predominantly Ulithian. The interior and altar are predominantly thatched. This structure is perhaps the most photographed buildings in the Pacific.

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With Chapter Five we come to the end of the first volume of "Ulithi Encyclopedia" which is, despite our odd page-numberings, 36 pages in length.

There is more to be written about Ulithi -- much more -- but in the interest of satisfying the immediate demand for knowledge of Ulithi, we'll stop at this point and rush these first pages to the mimeograph.

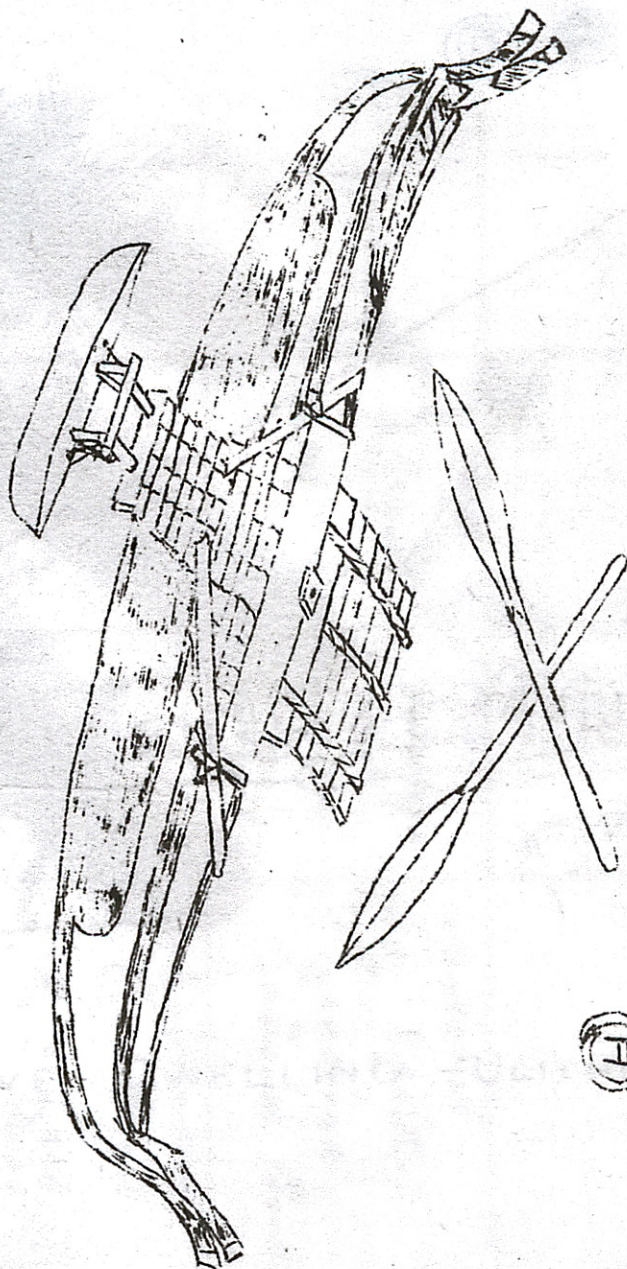
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Your comments on the work up to this point will be greatly appreciated.

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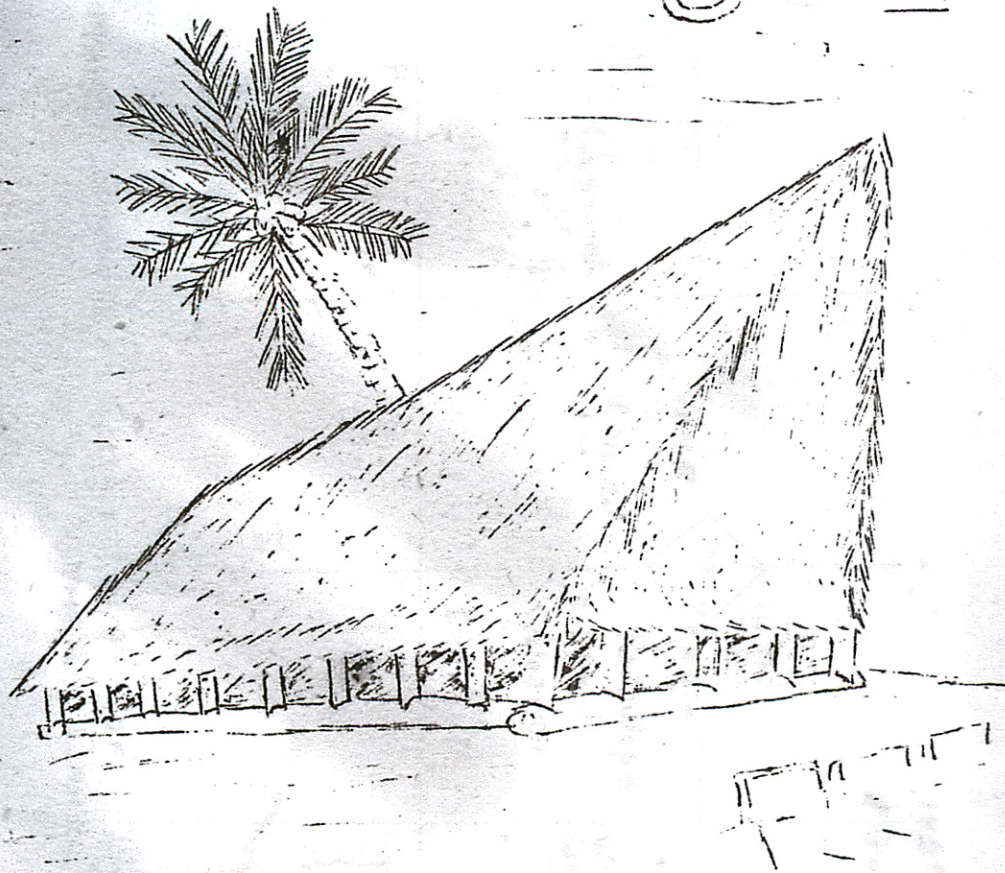
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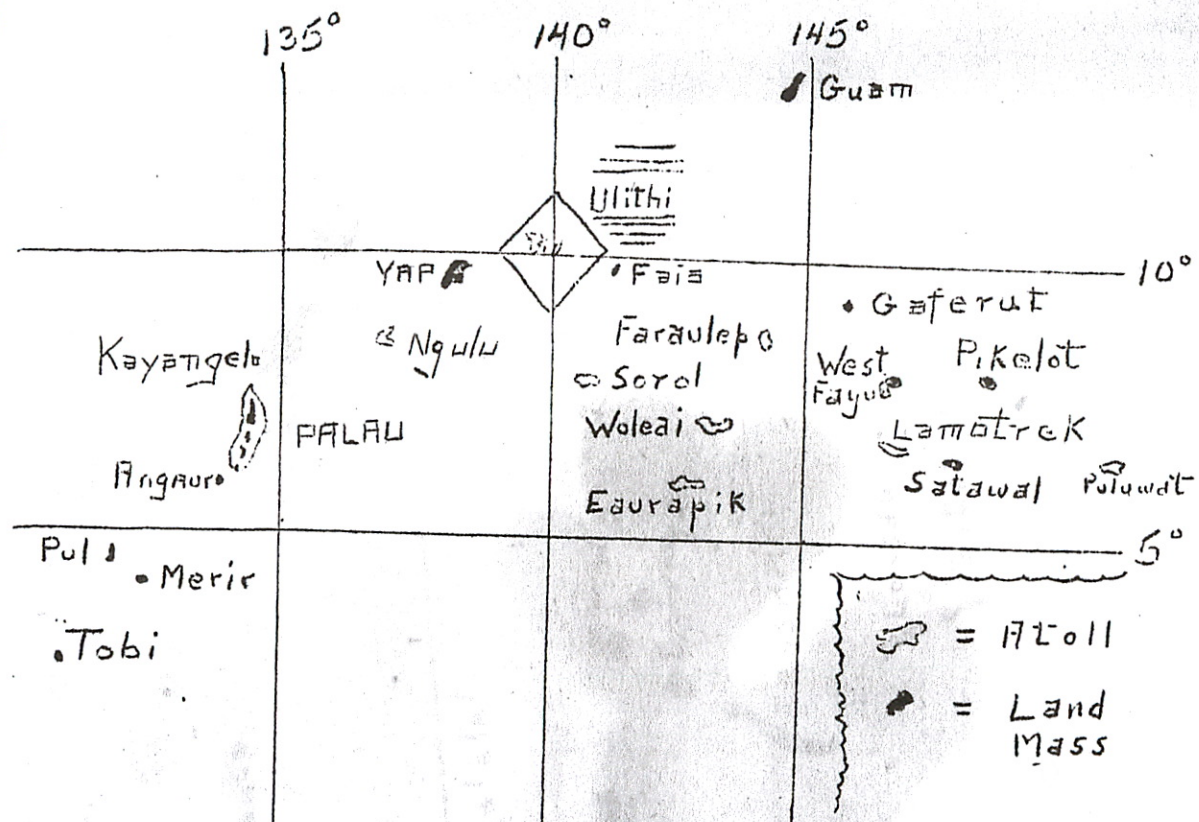
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28.



~ NATIVE DWELLING - ULITHI ~





MAP SHOWING LOCATION OF ULITHI  
AMONG OTHER CAROLINE ISLANDS



30.

