

Raraka; but as it proved dark and squally, we stood to the northward, and about one o'clock we were surprised by seeing a signal from the Peacock, of danger close aboard, under the lee. I immediately tacked, and we soon cleared it. It proved to be the reef of Kawahe, over which the surf was breaking violently. The Peacock was so close to it, that Captain Hudson felt himself obliged to stand on his course rather than run the risk of missing stays, and continued to run along it for several miles, until, by its trending to the westward, he was enabled to clear the danger.

On the 1st of September, at daylight, we found ourselves between the two islands, and the Peacock was out of sight; but two hours afterwards, she was again seen. I made signal to the Porpoise, and despatched her to examine the southeast side of Raraka, and thence to follow on to the westward as far as Krusenstern's Island, passing along the south side of Nairsa or Dean's Island. I then despatched the Peacock to the north end, and the tender to the south end of Kawahe, to secure meridian observations, whilst the Vincennes was employed in surveying its eastern shores. The wind was well adapted to our object, and at sunset we met off the north end, having completed our work. The current was tried, but we found none. The wind was fresh from the eastward, with occasional squalls. On the morning of the 2d, I determined to land the naturalists on the newly-found island, and for this purpose made signal to the tender to come within hail. My ship was lying with her main-topsail to the mast, and forging ahead about a knot an hour. The tender came up on our lee quarter, and luffed in an awkward manner, directly across our bow. Her mast just escaped coming in contact with our jib-boom. I at once ordered all the sails of the Vincennes to be thrown aback, which stopping her way, prevented the dreadful accident of running the tender down. It was a most miraculous escape.

We landed on Vincennes Island, and obtained the usual observations. Its south point is in latitude $15^{\circ} 59' 48''$ S., longitude $145^{\circ} 09' 30''$ W. It was found to be sixteen miles long by ten wide; its greatest diameter lying north and south. It is a narrow annular ridge, consisting of many blocks and slabs of coral, which give a clinky sound when struck. The coral shelf seemed to dip in one place at an angle of 15° , forming a ridge, which was so low that the tide was beginning to flow over it before high water. There is an opening into the lagoon on the southwest side; on its southeastern part is a high clump of trees, looking like a knoll at a distance. The rest of the island is covered with a growth of bushes, ten or twelve feet high. The blocks and slabs above spoken of were very much water-worn, and were strewn