

I was unable to account for, till towards evening, when I learned from Passed Midshipman Reynolds (whom I had landed on the island during the forenoon, unarmed, for the purpose of making some arrangements for trading with them, on the following day, for pigs, yams, &c., and at the same time to obtain such information in regard to said chiefs, as would be actually necessary to the success of my plans) that the news of our cruising, together with the object we had finally in view, had preceded us four days, with the additional embellishment that the ship was to follow us and destroy the island.

This was voluntarily told to Mr. Reynolds by a Mr. Heath, the only foreign missionary upon the island, who asked Mr. Reynolds if he would authorize him to contradict the report, and thereby quiet the apprehensions of the natives, who were very much alarmed, and continually coming to him to learn the truth.

This unfortunate rumour knocked all my plans in the head, and left me but little hopes of future success. I, however, came to the conclusion that if the said chief still remained upon the island, that the only other plausible plan for getting possession of him would be by taking him forcibly from his house during the night, or from the beach while employed trading during the day; and to this end I had the schooner removed the following day to the opposite side of the island, and sounded out a passage in the reef leading to her from abreast Pea's house.

At a suitable time, I landed with Passed Midshipman Harrison and a boat's crew near his house, and commenced trafficking, the natives gathering about in great numbers, and appearing less suspicious than upon the day previous, yet many of them with their arms. Having spent much of the day in this manner, without seeing any thing of said chief, although many others were present, I left Mr. Harrison to trade, while I strolled about the island.

Having visited the most probable places for meeting with him, I at last went to his house, which contained nothing but women and children; and from information subsequently obtained from a coloured man (who had lived eight years on the island with a chief by the name of Matetau), convinced me that Pea left the island soon after our heaving in sight; but in what direction he had gone I was unable to learn. This putting an end to my last hope, I returned to the schooner, and commenced working to the northward, to meet the ship at the appointed rendezvous.

On the morning of the 1st of March launched a boat to examine what appeared to be a ship passage leading through the sea-reef around Savaii: it proved to be a boat passage only.