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PACIFIC ISLANDS

VOLUME IV

WESTERN PACIFIC
(NEW GUINEA AND ISLANDS NORTHWARD)

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Fig. 1. Main shipping routes in the Western Pacific in 1939

Distances are approximate, in nautical miles. The main through routes are shown by a solid brown line; the principal short-distance routes linking mainland territories with neighbouring islands or groups are shown by a pecked brown line. Trans-Pacific services from Australia and New Zealand, and many local services, are omitted. West of New Guinea only main trends are shown. Based on official and commercial sources.

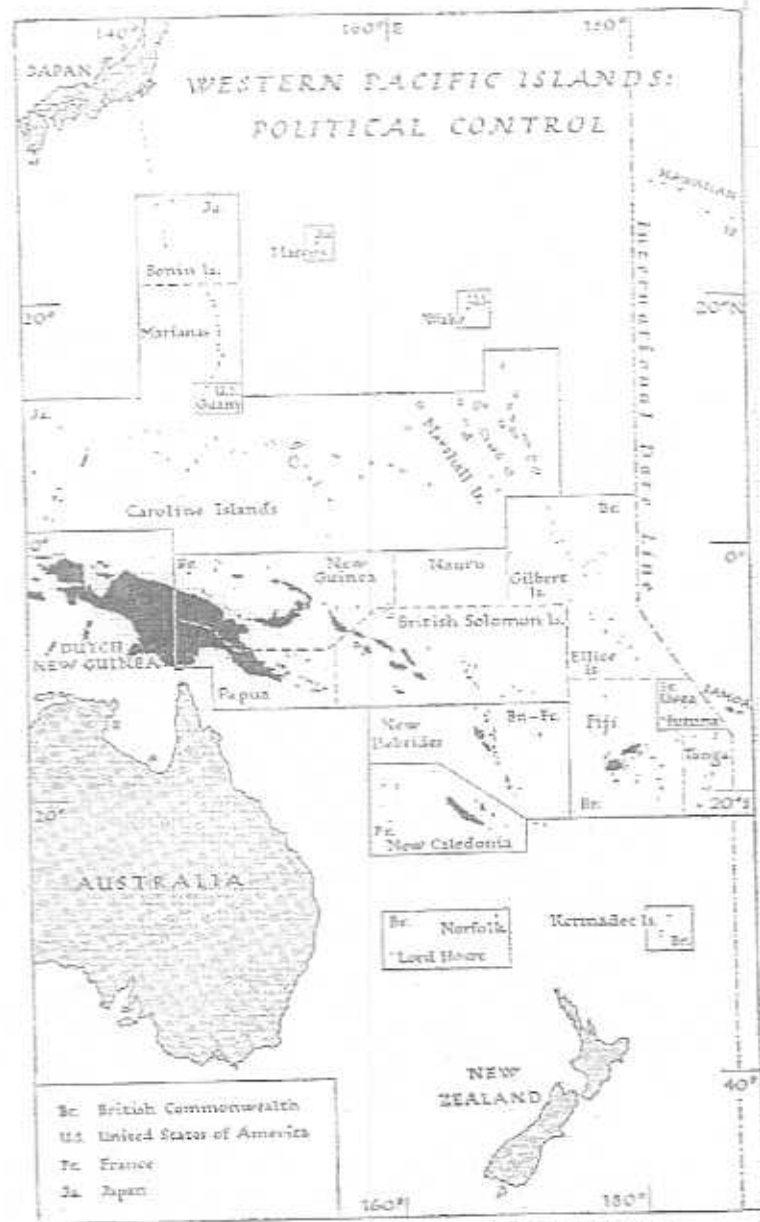


Fig. 2. Political control of the Western Pacific islands in 1939

The lines separating the various groups do not necessarily indicate extent of sovereignty. The open rings (as in the Marshall Islands) represent major atolls.

channels through the mangroves and two quays, each used exclusively by the two moieties into which the village is divided. The stone paving on the paths of the villages usually stops short at the limits of the settlements.

Social Organization

As elsewhere, the basic social unit is the family, consisting of a man, his wife, and their children. But family ties are extended considerably, and each family is part of a well-developed clan system. Each clan is supposedly descended from a common ancestor, frequently an animal. Taboos exist against the eating of the totemic animal, but these are treated seriously only in Palau. Clans are not limited to narrow district boundaries; their members are scattered in small numbers over many parts of the Caroline and Marshall islands. Villages or island communities are made up of numerous subsections of clans with counterparts in other islands. Clan affiliation is important to the natives for many reasons. Travellers feel sure of shelter and sustenance when visiting an island where there are some of their own clan. Marriage is exogamous—i.e., it can be contracted only between people of different clans. Rank and status are obtained through membership of noble clans. Land is frequently owned on a clan basis and work is generally organized among people of a particular clan. The clans are governed by chiefs, whose relative importance is discussed below (p. 331). Except in the four south-western islands of Merir, Pulo Anna, Sonsorol and Tobi, descent is through the female line. In former times a man lived with his wife's clan, but this rule is being broken up under Japanese influence. In Yap, patrilocal residence is general. Divorce, contracted on the wish of either partner, is frequent, but a sum is usually paid in compensation if either party remarries. Strict fidelity is expected of married couples, but no great value is set upon the premarital chastity of either sex. Girls who have served for a period in the young men's houses are not regarded as less desirable wives than other women.

Clubs and Societies

In the west Carolines the men's clubs attain considerable development and are housed in large well-built ceremonial buildings. Every man belongs to a particular club according to his age and position in the village. Each club is presided over by the senior man of the highest ranking clan using that particular club. In former times they formed a sort of garrison since the young men, who always slept in them, were

on many additional islands; and a number of new industries have been built up. In the Marianas a flourishing sugar industry has been created, and fishing and the collection of a variety of marine products have been developed on a large scale—notably in the Palau area. The value of production in most of the major industries in 1938 was as follows: agriculture and livestock, 4,872,000 yen; forestry, 4,018,000 yen; fishing, etc., 5,622,000 yen; manufactured goods (including sugar), 28,909,000 yen. Figures for mining are not available for 1938. In 1935 the products of mining were valued at 3,500,000 yen. (In 1935 the yen was valued at 1s. 1½d.)

MINERALS

Phosphate (Plates 92-3, 101-2)

Deposits of phosphate were discovered in the island of Angaur in 1903, but it was not till 1908 that the Deutsche Südsee-Phosphat-Aktien-Gesellschaft obtained mining concessions. Mining started in the following year. A railway track was laid down and an iron loading-bridge was built to lead out to ships moored in deep water. Production increased rapidly from 8,761 tons in 1909 to 54,000 tons in 1913. After the war all the German company's property was acquired by the Japanese government and worked by them as a state undertaking. In 1936, however, the workings were handed over to the newly formed South Seas Colonization Company. Further survey work led to the discovery of phosphate deposits of varying quality in the neighbouring islands of Peleliu, Tobi, Sonsorol and Pulo Anna; on Fais, Gaferut (Grimes island) and Ponape in the Carolines; Ebon in the Marshall islands; and on Saipan, Rota, Tinian and Agrihan in the Marianas. The largest reserves are on Angaur. The deposits are not entirely in the hands of the South Seas Colonization Company. The deposits on Gaferut are owned by the South Seas Trading Company and those on the Marianas and on Peleliu by the South Seas Development Company, whose principal interest is in sugar. In 1941 the islands which were being worked for phosphate were Angaur, Saipan, Peleliu, Ebon, Sonsorol, Rota and Tobi. The production figures for 1939 were: Angaur, 143,420 tons; Peleliu, 26,303 tons; Fais, 43,821 tons; Tobi, 4,269 tons; Saipan, 20,679 tons; Rota, 43,049 tons. No information is available for phosphate production in the other islands. Some of them may not have been mined in 1939. The total production for 1939 from the available figures was 281,541 tons. Compared with the 1939 figure for Ocean Island and Nauru (1,277,188 tons) this total is small, but that for Angaur alone is comparable with that

trochus shell. The value of dried bonito exports even exceeded the values of copra and phosphate in subsequent years.

Available statistics show that imports were divided between rice and padi, sugar, alcoholic liquor, cigarettes, oil and wax and their products, textiles, timber and machinery (Fig. 72). Import values in 1927 were: rice, 492,000 yen; sugar, 189,000 yen; cigarettes, 163,000 yen; oil, wax, etc., 179,000 yen; copra, 53,000 yen; timber, 309,000 yen. Imports of all these items, except copra, increased steadily, the rate of growth keeping fairly close to that of the Japanese immigrant population. Copra, imported in small quantities from the Gilbert islands for re-export to Japan, remained a small item and served only to augment the large supplies grown in the mandate. Machinery, not listed in available sources, became an increasingly valuable import from 1936 onwards. In 1935 it had amounted to 462,000 yen.

The proportion of trade with foreign countries is negligible, only 4.7% in respect of exports and 3.5% in respect of imports being with countries other than Japan.

COMMUNICATIONS

Sea Communications

Owing to the exclusive policy of the Japanese government, no foreign ships call regularly at the ports in the islands, and it is a rare occurrence for foreign ships to be given permission to visit them. The needs for communication are of two kinds—direct communication with Japan, and communication from east to west within the islands. Saipan, with its considerable development of sugar production, and Palau, the administrative centre, are the points for the concentration of services and the principal exporting centres (Fig. 66). The main trans-oceanic services suit this plan admirably. The Nippon Yusen Kaisha, which receives a subsidy, runs four services. The first is the Saipan line, which runs 24 times a year from Kobe *via* Moji, Yokohama and Fushimito to Saipan, Tinian, and Rota, returning *via* Fushimito, Yokohama and Osaka to Kobe. The East-Round line runs 10 times a year, following the same route to Saipan, and continuing to Truk, Ponape, Kusaie and Jaluit. The West-Round line operates 20 times a year, following the same route to Saipan, then continuing to Manado in the Celebes, *via* Yap, Palau, Angaur and Tobi, and returning *via* Davao, Angaur, Palau, Yap and Tinian to Saipan, thence by the usual route to Kobe. The East-West Connecting line runs 6 times a year, from Kobe, Moji and Yokohama direct to Palau,

Chapter XVII

THE CAROLINE ISLANDS

Palau Group: Islands South of Palau: Yap Area: Truk Area: Ponape Area

The Caroline islands (Figs. 73, 83, 88) are scattered over a wide area of sea. They extend from approximately lat. 3° to 10° N and from long. 131° to 163° E. They are treated here in four groups, centred upon Palau, Yap, Truk and Ponape respectively. In each section of the Chapter the islands of major importance are described first.

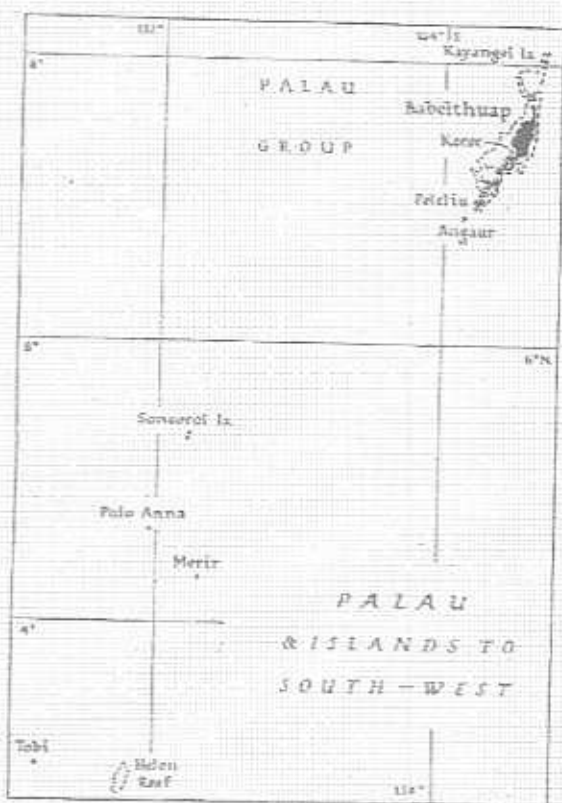


Fig. 73. The Palau group and south-west Caroline islands. Based on official sources

ISLANDS SOUTH OF PALAU

SONSOROL

Sonsorol, also known as Sonsol and as St Andrews, lies approximately in lat. $5^{\circ} 19' N$, long. $132^{\circ} 13' E$, 150 miles south-west of Angaur. It is a single island of coral, densely wooded and surrounded by a reef from 200 to 600 yd. wide. It is only about 1 mile long from north to south. There were 153 natives and 7 Japanese living on the island in 1935, in a village on the west side. There are three wells containing brackish water. Drinking water is obtained by catchment. An auxiliary schooner from Palau called four times a year before the war. A W/T station communicating with Angaur was built in 1941.

BANNA

Banna is a small inlet surrounded by a fringing reef immediately north of Sonsorol. Strong currents flow through the intervening strait. Banna is uninhabited.

PULO ANNA

Pulo Anna (lat. $4^{\circ} 40' N$, long. $131^{\circ} 58' E$) is a small coral island about 42 miles south-south-west of Sonsorol. It is densely wooded and was, in 1935, inhabited by 19 natives. The schooner visiting Sonsorol included Pulo Anna in its itinerary.

MERIR

Merir (lat. $4^{\circ} 20' N$, long. $132^{\circ} 19' E$), also known as Warren Hastings island, is a flat coral island about 1½ miles long, surrounded by a fringing reef. Anchorage can be obtained on a bank extending northward from the island and boats can land over the reef on the south side at high water and possibly also on the west side. The only water supply is that obtained by catchment. The population in 1935 comprised 171 natives and 9 Japanese. Copra is prepared in small quantities for export.

TOBI

Tobi, also known as Lord North island, lies in lat. $3^{\circ} 00' N$, long. $131^{\circ} 10' E$, about 104 miles west of Merir, which it closely resembles. A channel cut through the fringing reef provides access to a small pier and there are two or three mooring buoys. Water is collected in cisterns.

The normal population is under 200, including a few Japanese. Phosphate deposits were being worked in 1940. Small quantities of copra are produced.

Nippon Yusen Kaisha steamers of the West-Round line (p. 356) called about

THE JAPANESE MANDATED ISLANDS

4 times a year, and there are numerous native canoes. The construction of a W/T. station was authorized in 1940.

HELEN REEF

Helen reef (lat. $2^{\circ} 52' N$, long. $131^{\circ} 47' E$), about 35 miles east of Tobi, is an atoll about 13 miles long from north to south, consisting of a single thickly wooded but normally uninhabited island on a narrow reef, which is awash at half-tide and encloses a lagoon. A pass on the western side gives access to the lagoon which has possibilities as an anchorage. The island was uninhabited in 1935, but there are a few buildings.