

Australia, New Zealand, and Pacific Islands Map



Fiji Map



Samoa Islands Map

SAMOA ISLANDS

To Swains Island
200mi
320km

To Hawaii
2600mi
4700km

To U.S. mainland
4800mi
7700km

SOUTH PACIFIC OCEAN



AMERICAN SAMOA

TUTUILA

Aunu'u Is.
Pago Pago

Ofu, Olosega, Ta'u

MANU'A ISLANDS

To Tahiti
1500mi
2400km

Rose Atoll

United States Territory

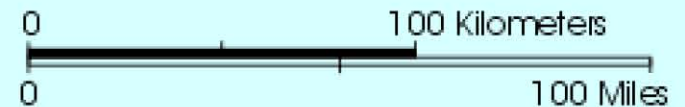
Samoa

To Australia
2500mi
4000km

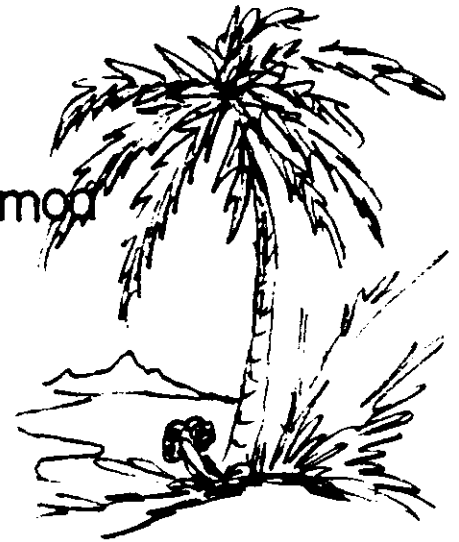
To Fiji
800mi
1200km

To New Zealand
1800mi
2800km

THE EQUATORIAL DATE LINE



The Gathering of Oral Genealogies in Samoa



FATHER TO SON METHOD OF TRANSMITTING GENEALOGY

For many generations, Samoan genealogies have been handed down from father to son. The father will repeat to his son the names of his ancestors so that eventually, after much practice, the boy will have memorized his whole genealogy. When the Samoan patriarchs teach their sons their genealogies they generally keep to the direct line and this causes some difficulty inasmuch as brothers and sisters on each generation are left out and complete families are hard to locate. Some families have their own traditional poems which depict hunting, fishing, wars, and special events, and some include important persons associated with these events. These are also memorized and act as a means to preserve their pedigree.

Not all members of the family are taught the family genealogy. Usually only the one who is the candidate to hold the title of matai (chief) is taught the full pedigree, while the other members of the family are only expected to know portions of the lines. Some families have endeavored to record these pedigrees in family record books as it is very important that the genealogies be preserved since they have a great effect on ownership of land titles, rights, and privileges. As a result, these records are well cared for because if they get into the wrong hands the true heirs may lose all rights to these important things.

THE INSTIGATION OF THE ORAL GENEALOGY PROGRAM IN SAMOA

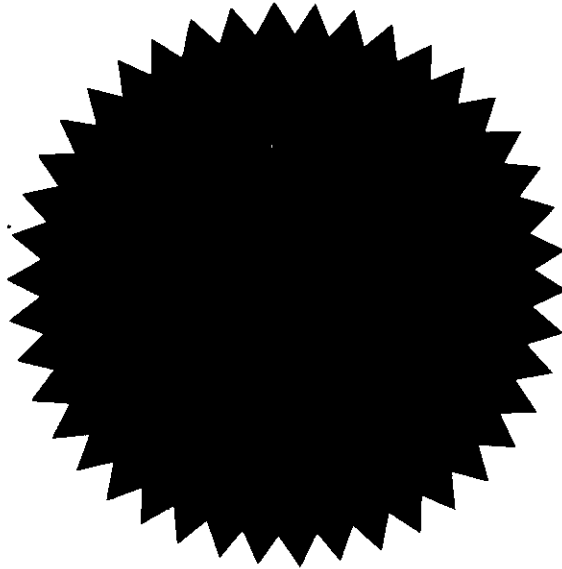
Many people have pondered over the feasibility of instigating an oral genealogical recording program in the Pacific, but in most islands it was just too late for consideration. However, in Samoa it was known that some matais (chiefs) could still recite their ancestry but this culture was fast dying out. Some persons discouraged such a project by stating these types of genealogies are very inaccurate, but when asked to prove their statements, they were unable to produce evidence to do so. With the idea in mind of recording as many genealogies as possible so that in the future sufficient pedigrees would be available for proper comparison and evaluation, further investigations were conducted.

Mr. Kenneth H. Slack, working on a Shell Foundation grant, was assigned to visit certain libraries in the Pacific. While in Apia, Western Samoa, he had the opportunity to hear an old chief recite his genealogy and was able to tape it. Excited over the possibility of developing a recording program in Samoa he reported his findings to the Genealogical Society.

Another contact, Dr. Harold Johnson, director of the Church College of Western Samoa was also able to make some future recordings. With the interest growing, the management of the Society assigned Derek F. Metcalfe, research specialist in the Research department, to visit Samoa and make a survey to determine the possibility of commencing a full-time recording program among the Samoan people.

On his return, his findings were evaluated and it was decided to instigate a trial program under the direction of Mr. Mulivai Purcell. Commencement date was set for September 1, 1967.

Since 1967, 200 pedigrees have been recorded. In due course these genealogies will be bound and placed in the Society Library in Salt Lake City for availability to patrons.



MAJOR GENEALOGICAL SOURCES
IN SAMOA

BY
J. J.

THE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Series E, No. 3

THE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS, INC.

GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH IN SAMOA.

TABLE A

MAJOR SOURCE AVAILABILITY BY CENTURY

TYPE OF RECORD	CENTURY		
	9-18th	19th	20th
1. Newspapers			
2. Census Records			
3. Deeds			
4. Land Claims			
5. Land and Title Court Records			
6. Civil Registration			
7. Probate Records			
8. Church Records			
9. School Registers			
10. Samoan Family Genealogies			

MAJOR GENEALOGICAL SOURCES FOR RESEARCH IN SAMOA

TABLE B

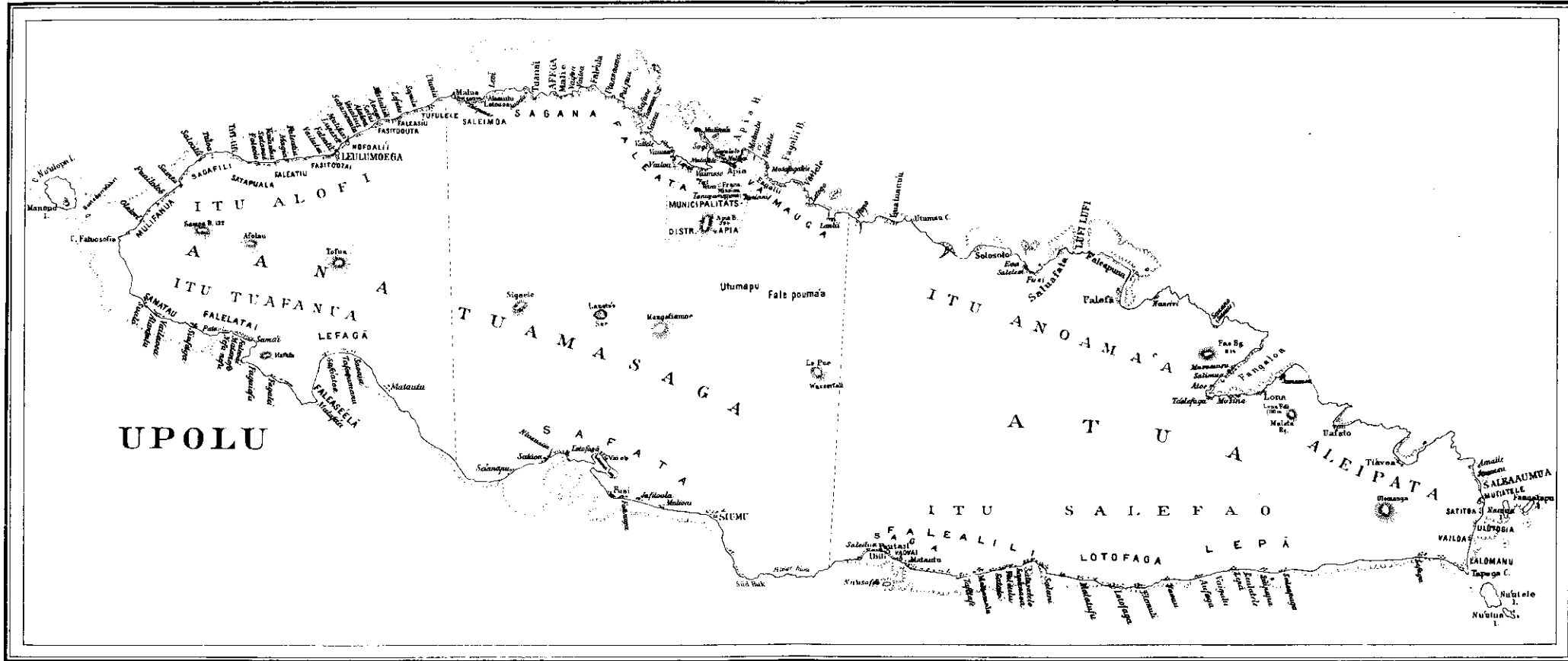
TYPE OF RECORD	PERIOD COVERED	TYPE OF INFORMATION GIVEN	AVAILABILITY
1. NEWSPAPERS			
Western Samoa	1901 to present	Obituaries, births, marriages, deaths, shipping lists	Nelson Memorial Public Library Apia, Upolu, Western Samoa; various libraries, private collections
American Samoa	1964 to present	Obituaries, births, marriages and deaths	American Samoan Government, Court House Building, Pago Pago, American Samoa 96920
2. CENSUS RECORDS			
Western Samoa		<i>None available</i>	
American Samoa	1900 to present	Names, relationships, ages, places of birth, citizenship 1900 to 1910 contain only information relating to military naval personnel Local censuses were taken in 1900 and 1912 and then every ten years starting with 1920	Whereabouts of 1900 and 1912 returns are unknown; 1920 to 1950 at the Bureau of Censuses, Pittsburg, Kansas, U.S.A., 1960 at the Bureau of Censuses, Jeffersonville, Indiana, U.S.A.; information released only by special request
3. DEEDS			
Western Samoa	1893 to present	Names of owners, mortgagees and lessees, dates and deeds and transfers, places of residence, description of land	Director of Lands, Apia, Upolu, Western Samoa
American Samoa	1900 to present	Same as above	Territory Registrar, Court House Building, Pago Pago, American Samoa 96920
4. LAND CLAIMS			
Western Samoa	1893 to present	Proof of ownership; names, dates, places and relationships	Director of Lands, Apia, Upolu, Western Samoa
American Samoa	1900 to present	Same as above	Territory Registrar, Court House Building, Pago, Pago, American Samoa 96920

TYPE OF RECORD	PERIOD COVERED	TYPE OF INFORMATION GIVEN	AVAILABILITY
5. LAND & TITLE COURT RECORDS			
Western Samoa	1893 to present	Names, dates of court hearings and transfers, places of residence, pedigrees of proof of ownership	Lands and Title Court, Apia, Upolu, Western Samoa
American Samoa	1900 to present	Same as above	Territory Registrar, Court House Building, Pago, Pago, American Samoa 96920
6. CIVIL REGISTRATION			
Western Samoa	1870 to present	Births, marriages, deaths: Names, dates, places, occupations, parentage, ages, residence; marriages record from 1870, births and deaths from 1900; some early births, marriages and deaths of foreigners with foreign parentage are recorded with consulates.	Registrar General, Apia, Upolu, Western Samoa
American Samoa	1900 to present	Names, dates, places, occupations, parentage, ages, residence	Registrar of Vital Statistics, Pago Pago, American Samoa 96920
7. PROBATE RECORDS			
Western Samoa	1870 to present	Names of testators, places of residence, places where property situated, relationships	Registrar, Supreme Court, Apia, Upolu, Western Samoa
American Samoa	1900 to present	Same as above	Clerk of the High Court, Court House Building, Pago Pago, American Samoa 96920
8. CHURCH RECORDS	1830 to present	Names, dates, parentage, residence, ages, relationship of persons being christened, married or buried; information varies	At the church's head office; diaries of missionaries, family possessions, local libraries and mission libraries of the various denominations
9. SCHOOL REGISTERS	abt. 1830 to present	Names of students, their dates of birth and enrollment, places of birth and residence, parentage	Various schools
10. SAMOAN FAMILY GENEALOGIES	9th cent to present; some earlier	Pedigree containing names, some dates, some places of residence, relationships; discrepancies often found in earlier records, which date back as early as A.D. 80	Some handwritten, some recorded on tape, and others on film (Genealogical Society); family possessions, local libraries <i>Die Samoa-Inseln</i> , 2 volumes, by Dr. A. Kramer, Surgeon-major in the Imperial Navy, published Stuttgart, 1902; The Polynesian Society, P.O. Box 8016, Wellington, C.I., New Zealand

NOTE: It is the custom in Samoa that an individual may be known by several names and he could be recorded in the official records by any one of the names used. Therefore, care should be taken when accepting a connection because of the multiplication of names and all possibilities should be considered.

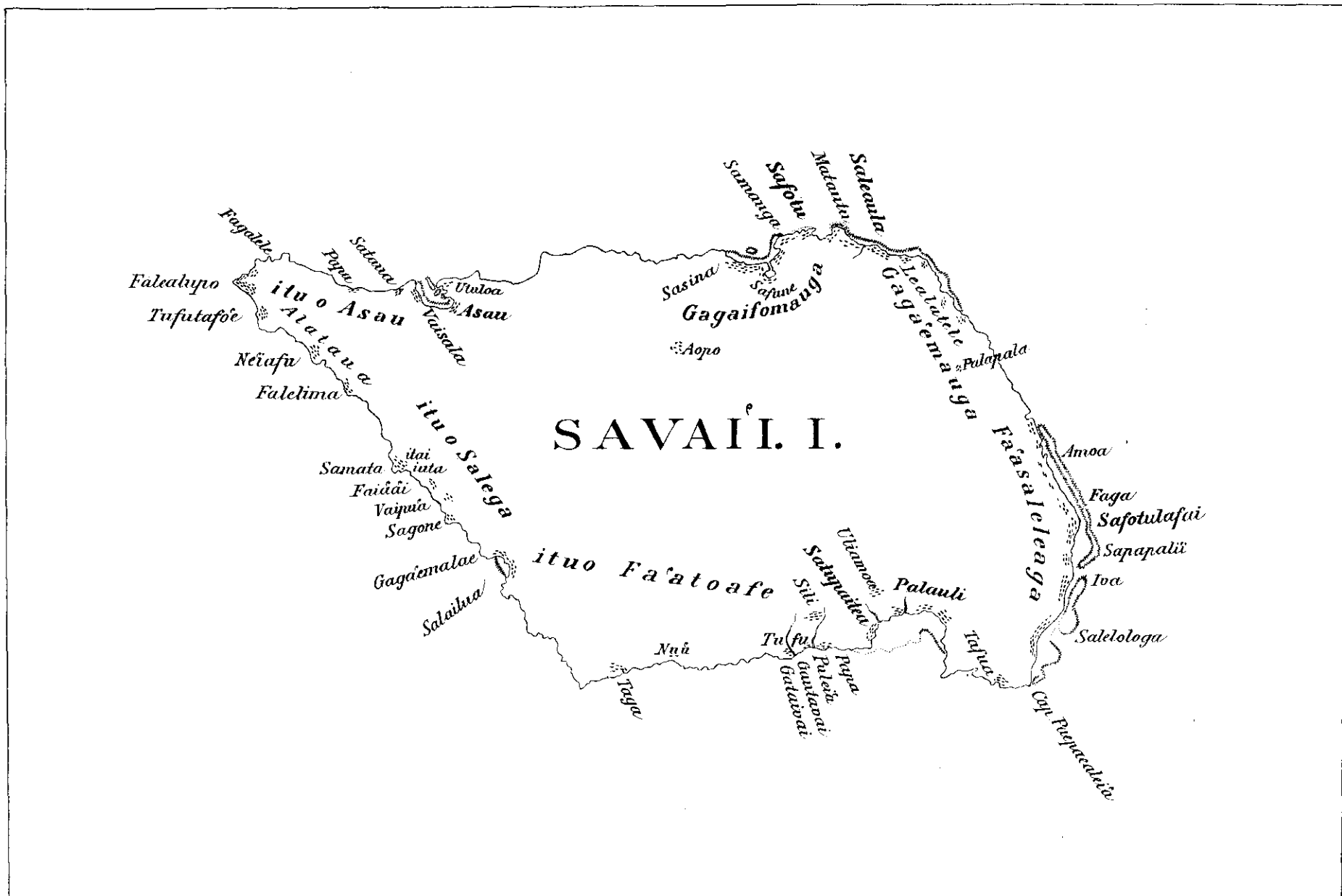
When conducting research in Samoa it is helpful to contact elderly living relatives who may be able to recite their ancestry back many generations. This source is of great assistance when used with other available written records.

WESTERN SAMOA



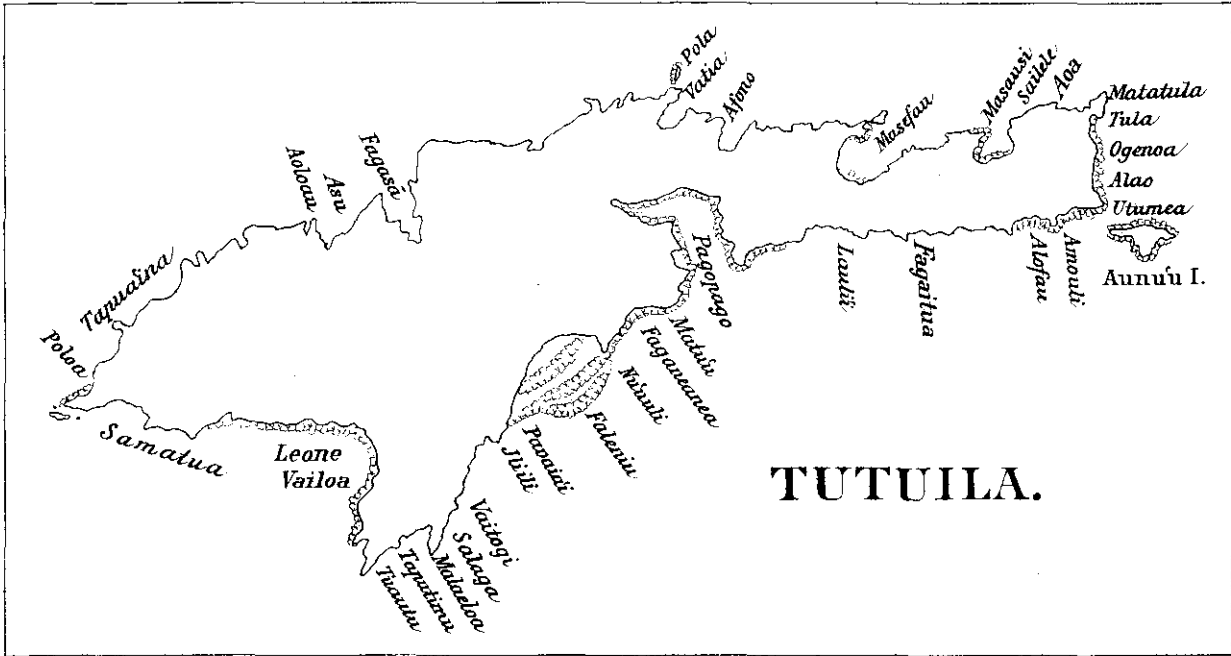
Upolu.

WESTERN SAMOA

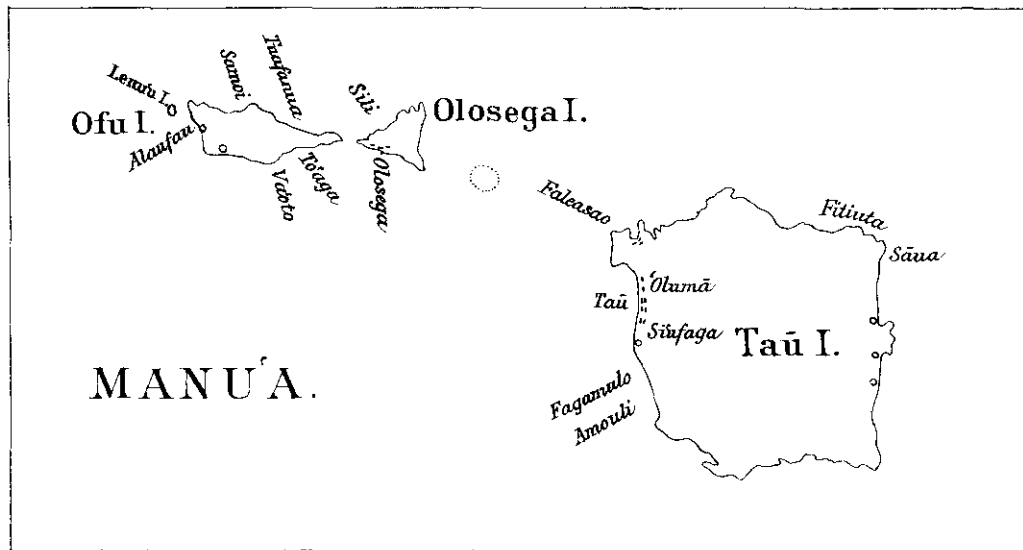


Savai'i.

AMERICAN SAMOA



Tutuila



Manu'a.

Tahiti Map



Tonga Map



Samoa, Tonga, Tahiti, and Fiji Resources

Samoa Genweb Page

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~samoawgw/>

Genealogy Today Tonga Resources

<http://www.genealogytoday.com/genealogy/planet.mv?Location=Tonga&level=Country&gc=TON>

Tahiti Genweb Page

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~pyfwgw/tahiti/>

Fiji Genweb Page

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~fjiwgw/>

Cyndi's List-U.S Territories and Possessions

<http://www.cyndislist.com/territor.htm>

Cyndi's List Asia and the Pacific Links

<http://www.cyndislist.com/asia.htm>

Royal Genealogies of Fiji, Tonga, Hawaii, Tahiti, and New Zealand

http://www.uq.net.au/~zzhsoszy/files/gg_index.html