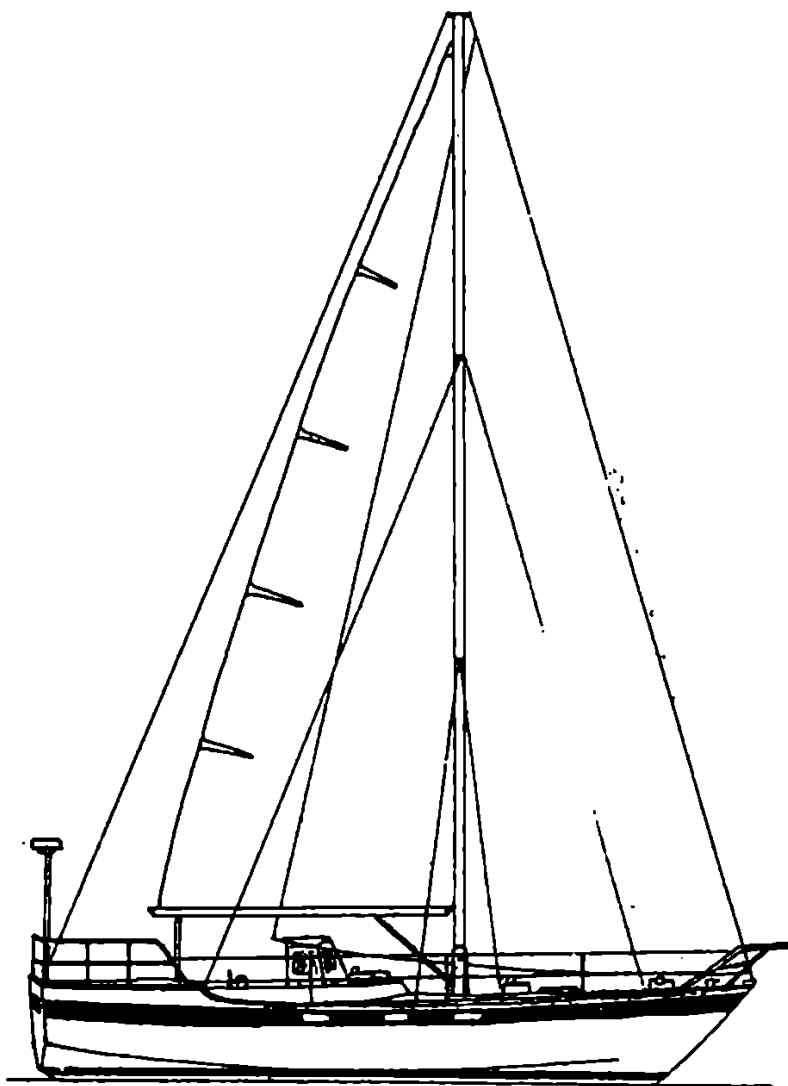


MIGRANT CRUISING NOTES

FIJI



A CRUISING YACHTSMAN'S NOTES ON
SOME OF THE FIJI ISLANDS

BY

PHIL CREGEEN

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FIRST EDITION

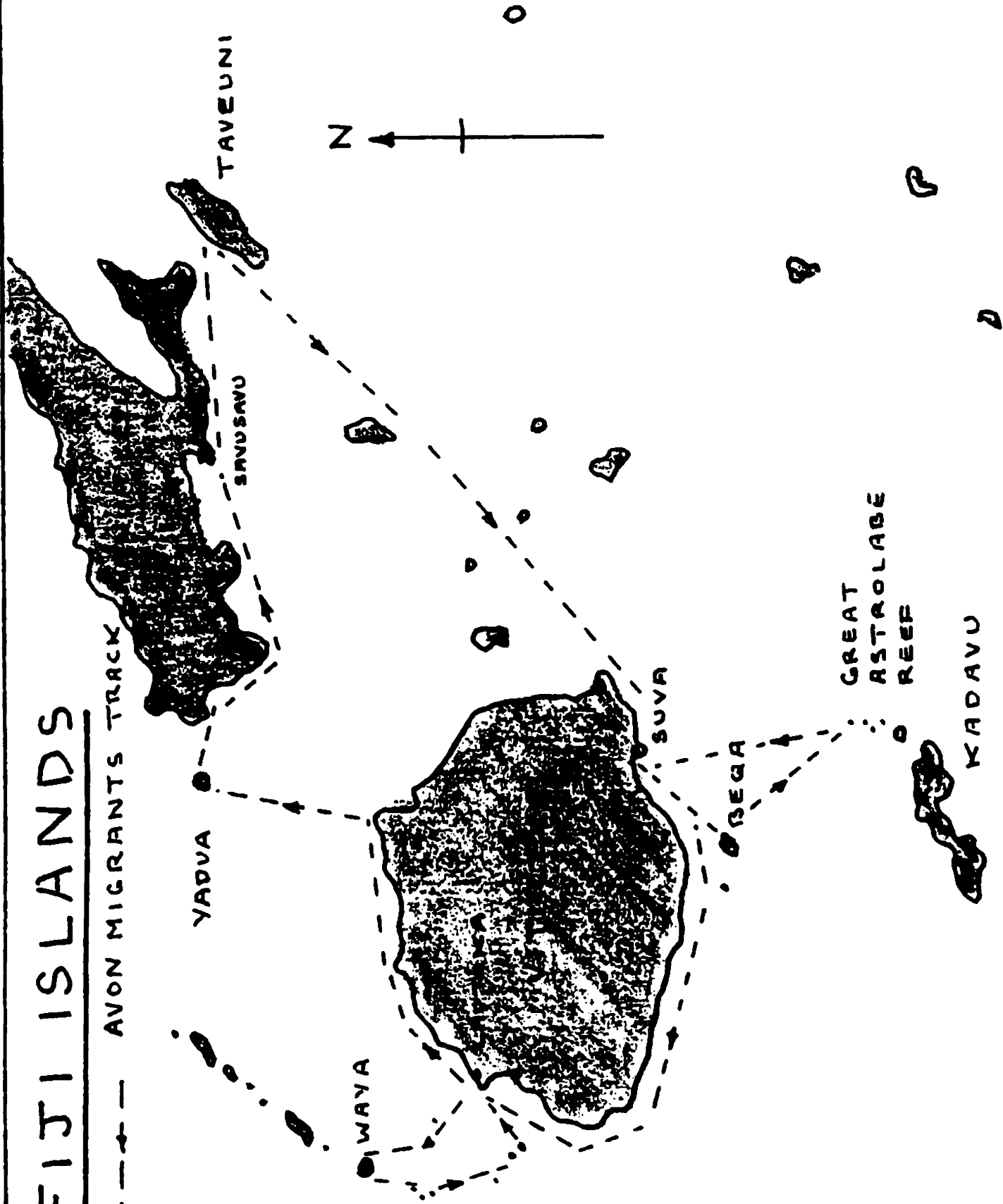
January 1993

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These notes are intended for use with the appropriate navigation charts. Every effort has been made to describe conditions accurately. However, the author makes no warranty expressed or implied for any errors or omissions in this publication.

FII ISLANDS

---+--- AVON MIGRANTS TRACK



PREFACE

The Fiji Islands provide exotic and varied cruising grounds for the yachtsman. Large mountainous islands with tropical forests, surrounded by small islands and coral reefs form numerous anchorages to be explored. The people invariably extend a warm and friendly welcome to the visitor and the two predominant races, Fijian and Indian, ensure a kaleidoscope of cultural experiences.

These notes are based on our experience and observations during our cruise of Fiji in our 36ft steel sloop AVON MIGRANT in July to November 1992. Their purpose is to provide current information and fill in gaps in existing documentation. The areas covered are Suva to Beqa and Kadavu, Lautoka to Waya and Musket Cove, Lautoka to Yadua, Savusavu, Somosomo and Rabi. It is not a comprehensive guide nor is it intended to replace existing charts, pilots or guides. Information on Naqaiqai Bay and Rabi was provided by Peter Marshall of "Whiteshell".

The sketch plans and information contained in this guide are not intended to be used for navigation but to serve as an aid to selecting suitable and interesting anchorages. The appropriate Hydrographic Department chart should be used at all times. However, recognising that these notes may be more up to date than charts carried by some yachts, navigation and pilotage information has

been included where considered appropriate. Sketch plans have not been made from detailed surveys but are based on BA charts and our own observations.

On older BA and US charts place names are spelt phonetically. In these notes the correct spelling has been used with reference made to the old spelling to aid identification.

At the time of writing, Fiji had suffered two cyclones in the 92/93 season which may have changed features described in these notes.

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REFERENCES

The following publications provide good marine and general information on Fiji:

1. PACIFIC ISLAND PILOT Vol II
2. A YACHTSMAN'S FIJI by Michael Calder, The Cruising Classroom 1987.
3. THE YACHT HELP BOOKLET A free annual booklet produced by YACHT HELP, PO Box 13107, Suva, Fiji.
4. SOUTH PACIFIC HANDBOOK by D Stanley, Moon 1989
5. FIJI A TRAVEL SURVIVAL KIT by R Kay, Lonely Planet 1990
6. BEQA ISLAND OF FIREWALKERS Published by the University of the South Pacific.

CHAPTER 1

FORMALITIES

ENTRY

There are only three ports of entry to Fiji Suva, Lautoka and Levuka. Yachts must not stop at outlying islands before entering at one of these three ports. Fiji maintains a vigilant marine surveillance organisation. For the period of the Tonga and New Zealand to Fiji Regatta Savusavu was made a temporary port of entry for regatta participants.

The current formal entry regulations are clearly laid out in the free "YACHT HELP" booklet (Ref. 3). Entry involves the following authorities: Health, Customs, Agriculture, Port Security and Immigration. Copious forms have to be completed so this can take a long time. Normal working hours are: Mon. to Fri. 0800-1300, 1400-1630 (1600 Fri.) and outside of these hours overtime charges will be incurred. The following attendance charges are made: Health F\$33, Security F\$34. at all times.

On arrival at the port of entry call "---- port control" on VHF Ch 16 to request clearance instructions. You will normally be directed to the Quarantine Anchorage out of working hours and then to the main wharf to await clearance. Until cleared no one other than port officials should be allowed onboard and no crew member may go ashore other than

the skipper to complete formalities. All firearms and high duty goods (alcohol and tobacco) must be declared. Firearms will be taken into safe custody and dutiable goods in excess of allowance may be stored in bond until departure.

Offices are located as follows:

- SUVA Customs, Agriculture and Port Security at Port Authority Building on Kings Wharf. Immigration and Health on the left towards the top of Toorak Road, (take Mark St from the market and continue up the hill).
- LAUTOKA Customs, Port Security at: Queens Wharf Immigration, on the left 200 metres down Tavewa Avenue, (past the Post Office and Fire Station)
- LEVUKA Customs at Queens Wharf.

CRUISING PERMIT

With the exception of the four main islands Viti Levu, Vanua Levu, Ovalau and Taveuni, yachts wishing to visit outer islands must obtain a permit from the Ministry of Fijian Affairs. This is best done in Suva as the Lautoka office may only issue permits for the Yasawa and Mamanuca Groups. In Suva the permit may be obtained from the Provincial desk, 2nd floor, Native Land Trust Building, Victoria Parade, (next to Government Buildings).

We were not required to provide a detailed itinerary, but make sure that you list all the islands that you may wish to visit. The permit in the form of a letter of introduction will list the islands and period for which it is valid and it should be shown to the Taragi at each village you visit. You will also be briefed on protocol and customs to be observed in rural areas. At the time of our visit no permits were issued for the Lau Group unless the skipper could produce a written invitation from an inhabitant of a particular island.

On departure from any port of entry in Fiji it is necessary to clear out with Customs. This entails filling out another set of forms and you will be required to show your permit from Fijian Affairs for visits to outer islands. On arrival at the next port of entry again check in at Customs.

FIJIAN CUSTOMS

"Sevu sevu" is an important Fijian custom that requires all visitors to a village or island to seek out the Turagi ni Koro or Chief and make a presentation to him. For a visiting yacht a 1/3 Kg. of Yagona, from which the local Kava or grog is made, is considered appropriate. In return the Chief will welcome the visitors to his village offering his protection and all reasonable assistance and allow free access to adjacent beaches, waters and reefs which are considered village property. In less frequently visited villages the "sevu sevu" is conducted with solemn ceremony where a village man acts as spokesman for the visitors. If the presentation is made late in the afternoon when the days work is done you may be invited to join the menfolk in a bowl or two of grog. It is a great way to break the ice and make friends with the villagers.

Fijian villagers love to make gifts to their visitors but custom also requires a reciprocal gesture. We found tinned food, cigarettes, books, magazines and clothing were greatly appreciated.

Fijian dress code is modest. To avoid giving offence it is best to cover up bare flesh when visiting a village for the first time. The villagers will readily tell you what is acceptable.

DEPARTURE

When the time comes to depart from Fiji calls should be made to the following authorities:

Suva Immigration, Port Security and
 Customs.

Lautoka Customs, Port Security and
 Immigration. (reverse order!!)

Once final clearance has been given it is not permitted to stop at any other Fijian island.

CHARTS OF THE FIJI ISLANDS

Chart numbers are British Admiralty, (U S numbers in brackets), Fiji Hydrographic Unit charts are prefixed F. Metric charts are suffixed M.

No	Title	Scale	1
103	N'goloa Harbour (now withdrawn)	24,200	
167(83608)	Kandavu Island and Passage	142,000	
377M	Approaches to Labasa	25,000	
378M	Savusavu Bay, Nakama Creek	50,000	
379(83597)	Bligh Water Eastern Portion	150,000	
381(83611)	Bligh Water Western Portion	150,000	
382(83597)	Vanua Levu Central, Makongai, Koro	144,000	
384M	Ravi Ravi Point to Mali Island	50,000	
385M	Yaqaga Island to Ravi Ravi Passage	50,000	
386M	Yadua Island to Yaqaga Island	50,000	
387M	Vatia Lailai to Viti Levu bay	50,000	
389M	Lautoka to Vatia Lailai	50,000	
416	Taveuni, Lomaloma, Exploring Islands	150,000	
440(83594)	Fiji Is. Eastern Group (northern)	351,000	
441(83582)	Fiji Is. Eastern Group (southern)	348,000	
488	Suva to Tanavuso point	100,000	
495	Sau Sau passage to Ringgold channel	100,000	
745M	Kadavu to Suva Hbr. (replaces 167)	150,000	
845(83602)	Kandavu passage to Kuata island	142,960	
905(83584)	Suva to Levuka and adjacent islands	143,000	
1244M	Levuka harbour	10,000	
1247	Matuku	24,200	
1248	Totoya	24,200	
1251	Ngau island, Mambulitha reef	36,300	
1252	Moala	36,300	
1660M(83605)	Suva harbour	12,000	
1670M	Lautoka harbour, Nandi waters	75,000	
1673M	Western approaches to Suva harbour	50,000	
1674M	Eastern approaches to Suva harbour	50,000	
1682M	Bega	50,000	
2691	Fiji islands	800,000	
F5M	Yasawa Group	150,000	
F51M	Somosomo strait to Rabi channel	50,000	

CHAPTER 2

NAVIGATION IN FIJI
-----CHARTS AND PILOTS

Fiji is generally well covered by BA, US and Fijian charts. Most are fathoms but are being replaced by metric.

A comprehensive list of charts is on the opposite page. Fijian charts may be obtained from the Hydrographic Department, Freeston Road, Walu Bay, Suva.

In some cases the metric charts lack the detail of the old fathom charts. For example BA745 the metric version of 167 has no detail of Beqa lagoon and 1682 is needed, whereas 167 fathoms is sufficiently detailed for navigation.

The only coverage of the Yasawa Group is F5 or an out of print series of Pickmere Charts.

Not recommended, but if like many other cruising yachtsmen, you use old or photocopied charts it is a good idea to colour them in with crayons to highlight land, reefs and shoal waters. In addition to making the hazards stand out it is a good way of familiarising yourself in detail with the area of interest.

Remember when plotting satellite derived fixes corrections must be made for chart datum or errors in the original survey. Corrections are given on new charts but are often unknown for the older ones. Avoid satellite assisted groundings by terrestrial fixing in coastal waters.

Fiji is covered by the BA Pacific Island Pilot Vol. II and from a yachtsman's perspective by "A Yachtsman's Fiji" by Michael Calder. We produced these cruising notes to update and fill in some gaps in the latter.

HAZARDS

The Fiji group of islands is an area of many reefs and isolated coral heads. Except when passage making in known open water navigation should only be undertaken by day and in conditions of good light. A good lookout must be maintained at all times and in confined waters the lookout should be posted in the rigging or bow. Polarized sun glasses are invaluable for spotting coral. Close to the larger islands the water is sometimes turbid due to sediment carried to sea by the larger rivers. Water clarity usually improves on the flood tide.

TIDES AND TIDAL STREAMS

The tidal range in Fiji waters is between 1.4 and 2.5 metres with two highs and two lows each day. The Hydrographic Department publish a Fiji Almanac and tide tables are also included in the Yacht Help Booklet.

The Ocean current through the Fiji group is west to southwest at about 0.5 to 0.9 knots from March to November. However strong tidal streams may be experienced between islands and reefs. For example friends reported an alarmingly strong southerly set north of Totoya. In sailing from Taveuni to Suva we experienced about 1 knot of favourable current. In Somsomo Strait the rate can be as much as 3 knots.

NAVIGATION AIDS

Lights are unmanned but are generally well maintained.

Buoyage System IALA System A (combined cardinal and lateral red to port) is in use at the main ports.

Pile Beacons are used to mark passages, channels and isolated dangers within the reefs. In some areas many are now missing completely or the top mark is missing. Where possible the degree of reliance that can be placed upon these beacons is indicated in the text.

Top marks/-

Top marks

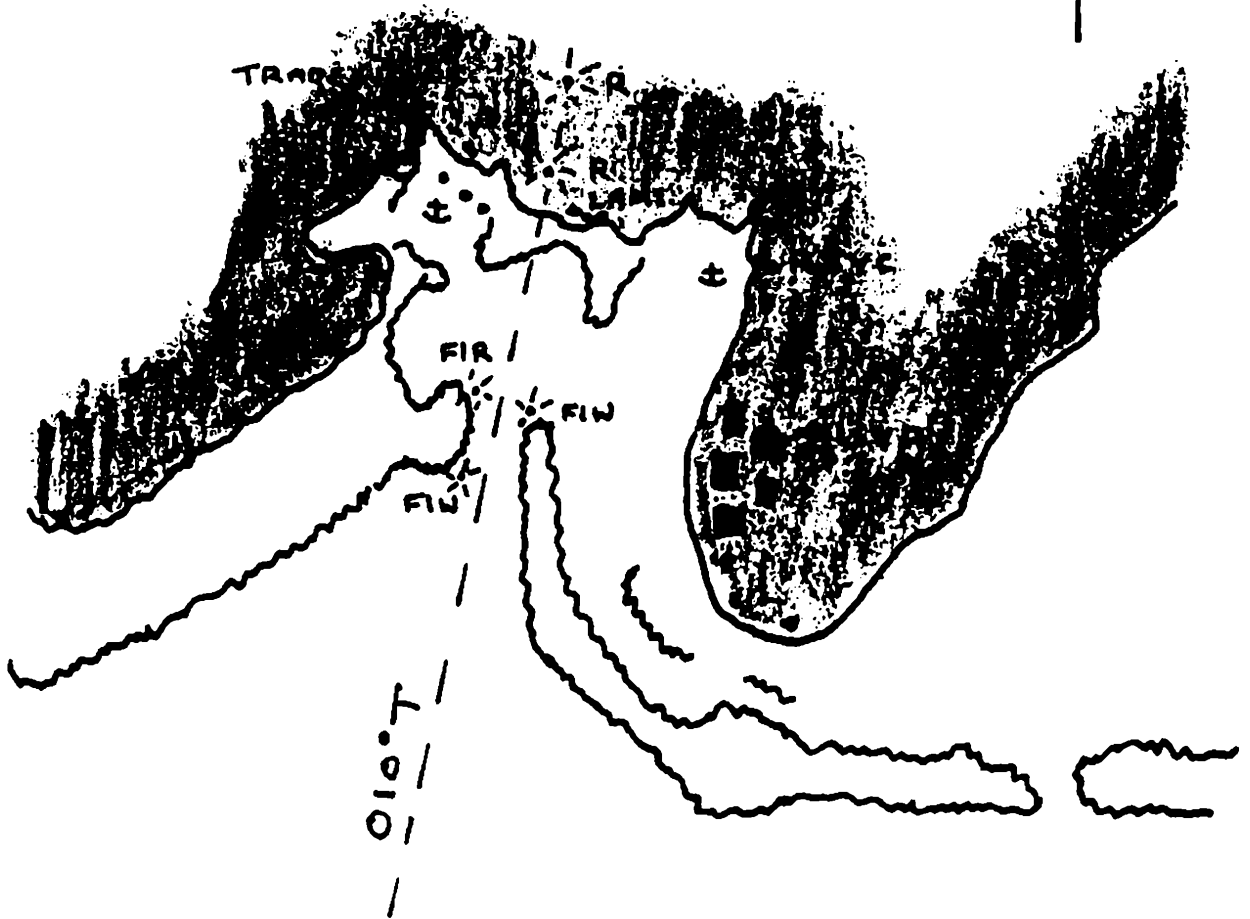
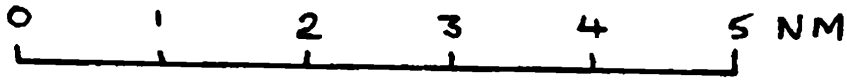
White triangle point up ---- pass to seaward

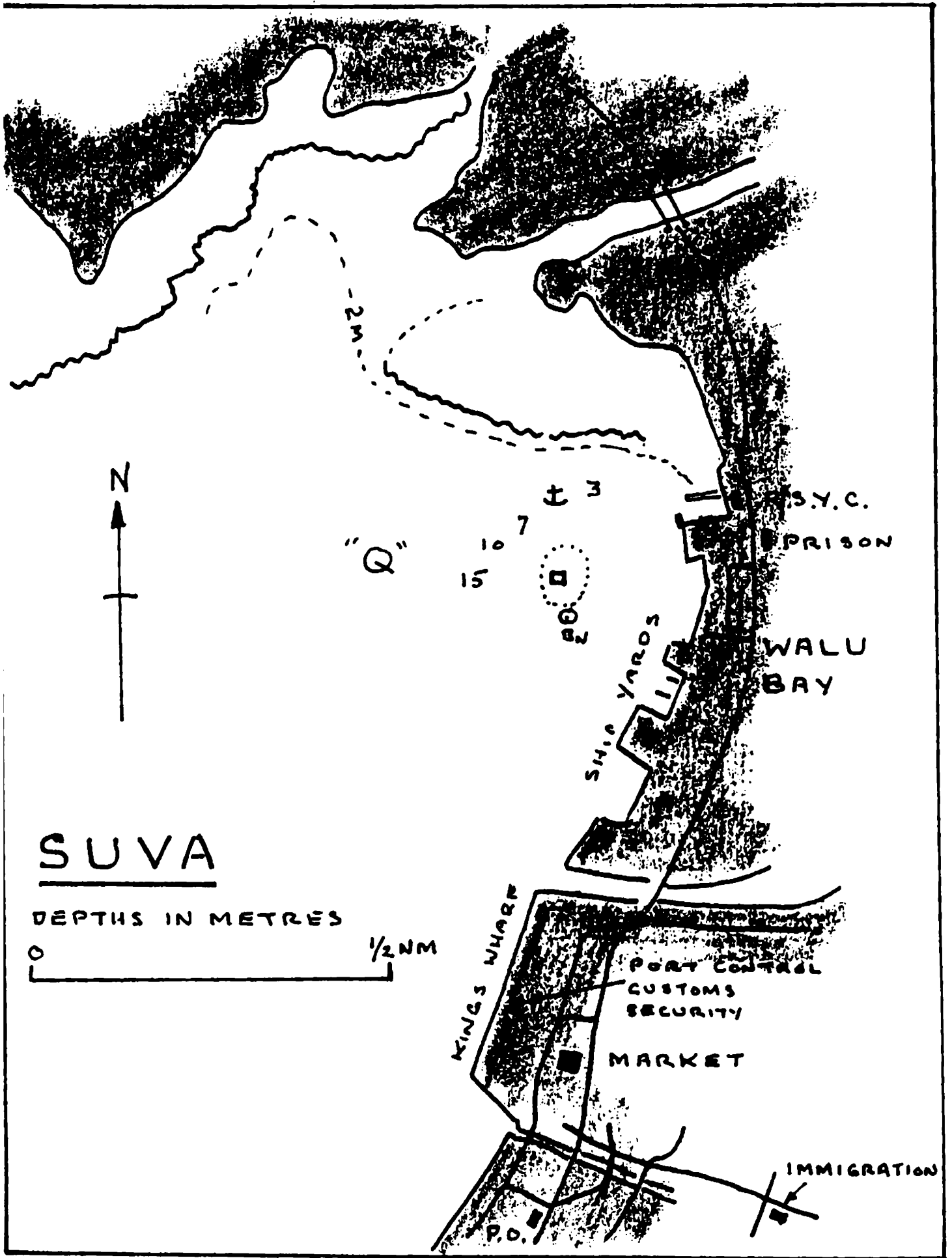
Black triangle point down pass to landward

White diamond ----- pass either side

Day-Glo Pennant ----- points to clear channel

SUVA APPROACHES





SUVA

DEPTHS IN METRES

0 1/2 NM



"Q"

15 10 7 3
⊕ 3
⊕ 2

P.S.Y.C.
PRISON

WALU BAY

SHIP YARDS

KINGS WHARF

PORT CONTROL
CUSTOMS
SECURITY

MARKET

P.O.

IMMIGRATION

ROYAL SUVA YACHT CLUB

The anchorage is north and west of the shoal patch, marked by a small building on stilts, in 4 to 10 metres mud bottom. It is well clear of larger vessels using the harbour and provides adequate shelter in all but strong SW sector winds.

The yacht club make a charge of F\$11 for single yachtsmen and F\$22 for two or more for use of club facilities which include bar, restaurant, showers, hand laundry, fuel, water and dinghy dock. There are also a small number of stern to pontoon berths for an additional fee. Yachts may also dry out alongside the club wall for bottom scrubbing but there are no haul out facilities suitable for cruising yachts. We found the staff both friendly and helpful.

The club also operates a mail drop and Fax. service.

RSYC, PO Box 335, Suva Fiji.
Tel. 679 312921, Fax. 304433.

Most marine related industries are located in Walu Bay which is a few minutes walk from the yacht club on the way into town. Here you will find LPG, batteries, marine paints, marine electronics, sailmaker, dive shop, Hydrographic Dept., outboard and various light industrial hardware outlets.

NOTES

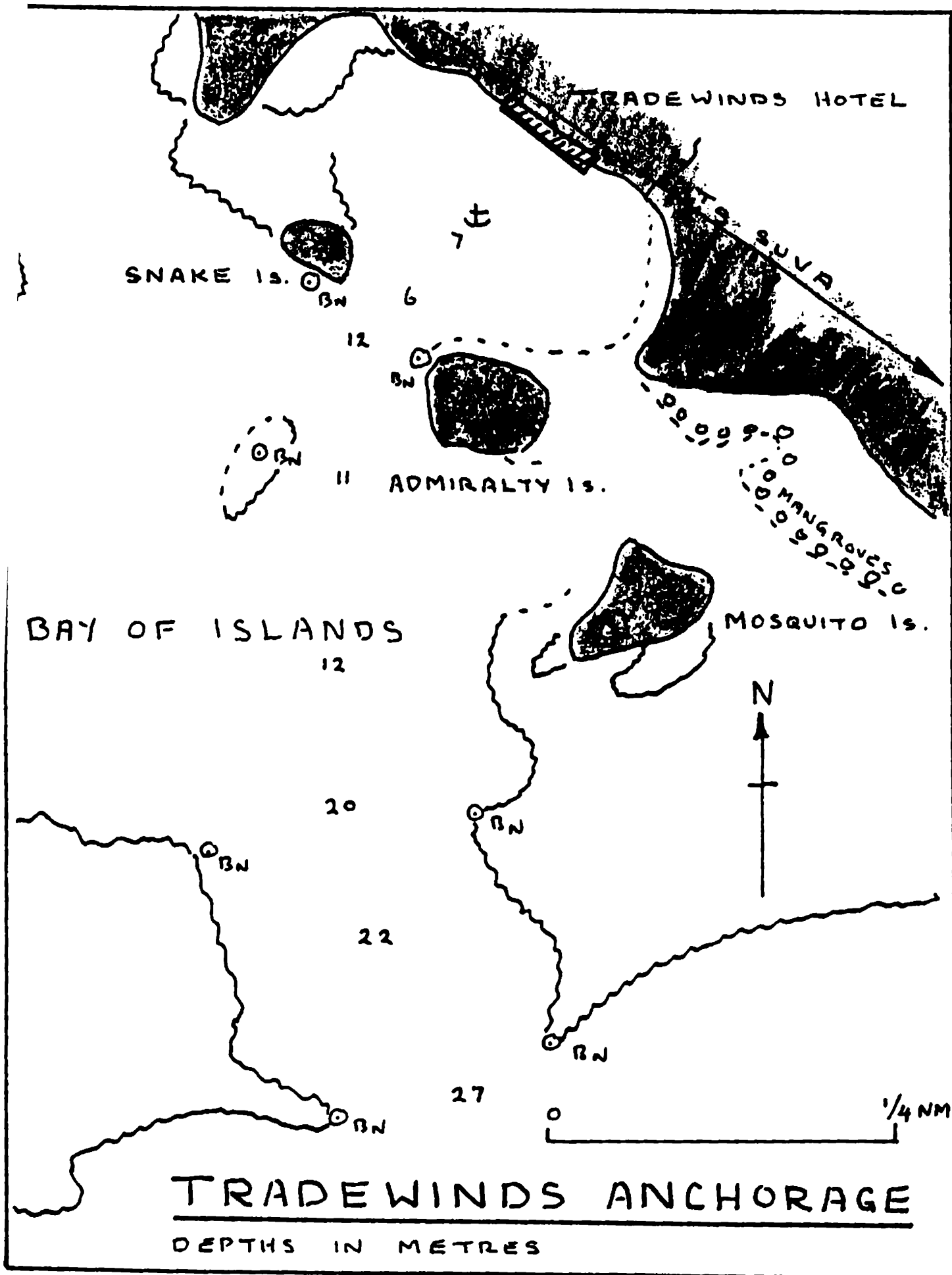
Suva town centre is about a 20 minute walk from the yacht club. There is a frequent bus service for 25c fare to the bus station adjacent to the market. Empty taxis returning to town will also take you for the bus fare. The taxi fare from town to the club is F\$2.

Fiji's capital city is a lively and interesting mixture of races, modern and old colonial architecture, supermarkets and small Indian stores, cheap and expensive eating places. For more information visit the Fiji visitors' Bureau across from the Post Office or pick up the Moon or Lonely Planet guide book. The Fiji Museum in Thurston Gardens is well worth a visit.

A word of warning, watch out for the Fijian "sword sellers". These gentlemen will engage you in friendly conversation while carving your name on a cheap and nasty wooden sword which they will present to you expecting an exorbitant payment. A polite "no thank you" before they produce their wares will save embarrassment.

At the end of August the Hindu fire walking ceremony is an impressive spectacle. This is a religious ceremony not a tourist gimmick.

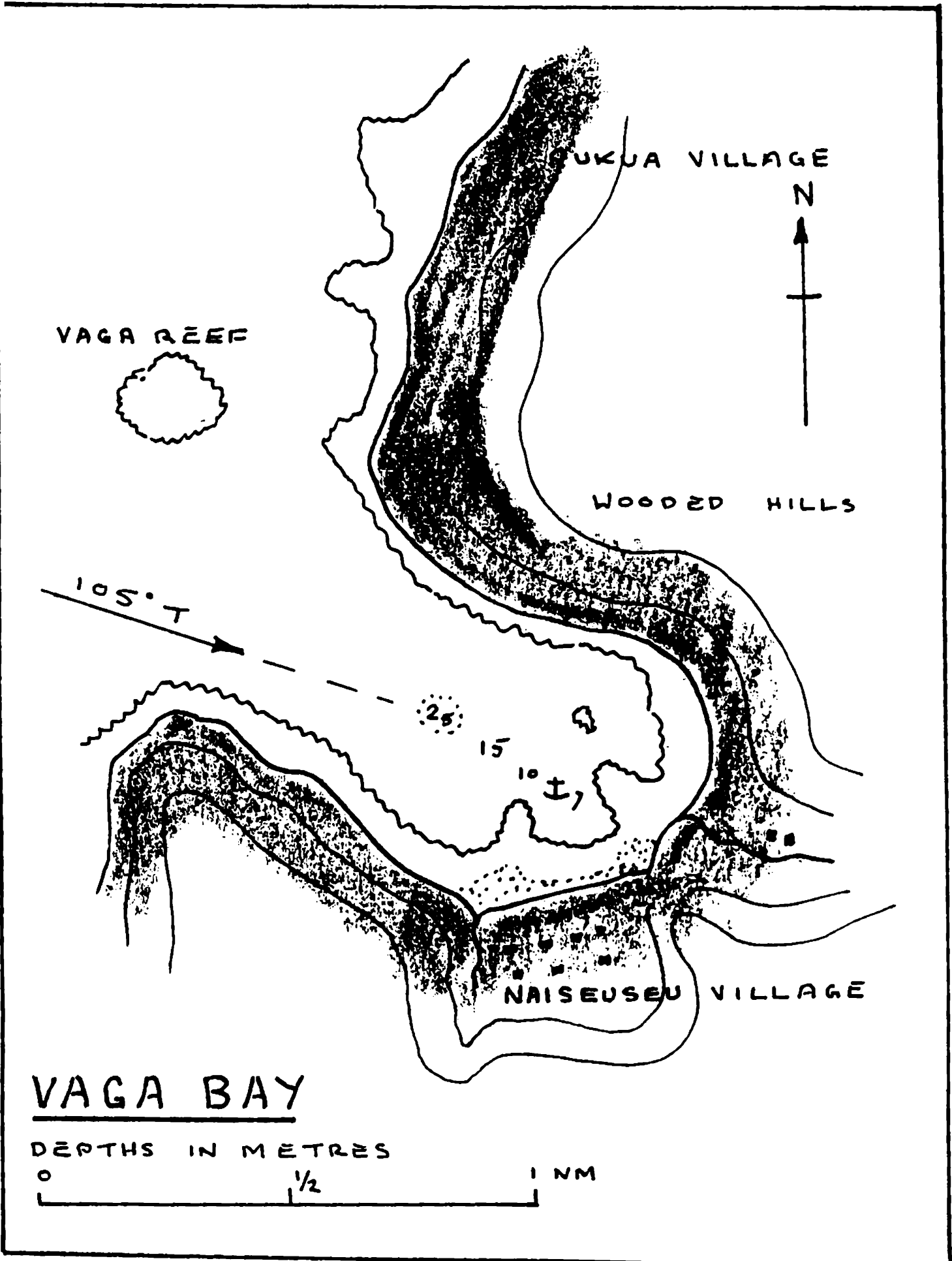
Should you require dental treatment we can recommend Dr. S Khan Tel. 311423.



TRADEWINDS ANCHORAGE

The pass into the Bay of Islands in the NW part of Suva Harbour is marked by four beacons. Entry into the anchorage is between Snake and Admiralty islands. Anchor in front of the hotel in 7 metres, where shelter is found in all wind directions. There are a number of permanently moored yachts and fishing vessels in this bay.

There are no fees for anchoring here but apart from water we understand there are no facilities. The small town of Lami is about half a mile away and there are regular buses to Suva.



VAGA REEF

UKUA VILLAGE

N

WOODED HILLS

105° T

25

15

10

NAISEUSEU VILLAGE

VAGA BAY

DEPTHS IN METRES

0 1/2 1 NM

BEQA (Mbengga)

CHARTS: BA 167, 745M, 1682M

Approaching from Suva we found the beacons at Sulphur Pass missing. By following the directions in "A Yachtsman's Fiji", taking a course of 216 deg. True on the conspicuous saddle at the east end of Beqa the pass was easily negotiated.

Once inside the reef a course was made to Maluma Bay. This bay is deep (25 metres) but we found an anchorage a short distance south of Labuti village on the west shore in about 11 metres. We did not stop here.

In Beqa lagoon most of the beacons are missing. By keeping 0.5 NM off the north shore and 1 NM off the west shore all dangers were avoided.

VAGA BAY

We entered this bay on a heading of 105 deg. True with Yanuca (Yanutha) Island astern. There is no beacon on Vaga reef which lies in the north half of the mouth of the bay. We anchored in 7 metres between two arms of the reef at the head of the bay north of the village of Naiseuseu. The best place to land a dinghy is on a small mud bank to the left of a rock outcrop at the head of the bay north of the village.

The village of Naiseuseu has a population of about 100 and was established in 1962, the site having previously been abandoned towards the end of the last century. We found the villagers friendly and hospitable. During our stay we were taken to witness a fire walking ceremony in Rukua village.

Our visit coincided with a period of strong easterly winds and we were frequently struck by strong gusts coming down from the high hills, but the holding proved to be very good.

For further reading on this fascinating island, "Beqa Island of Firewalkers" published by the University of the South Pacific (Ref. 6) is available for a few dollars in Suva bookshops.

GREAT
ASTROLABE
REEF

D'URVILLE CHANNEL



USBORNE PASS

165° T

HERALD PASS

120° T

VANUAKULA

B₄ 0

DRAVUNI

NAMARA

ALACRITY PASS

QASIBALE

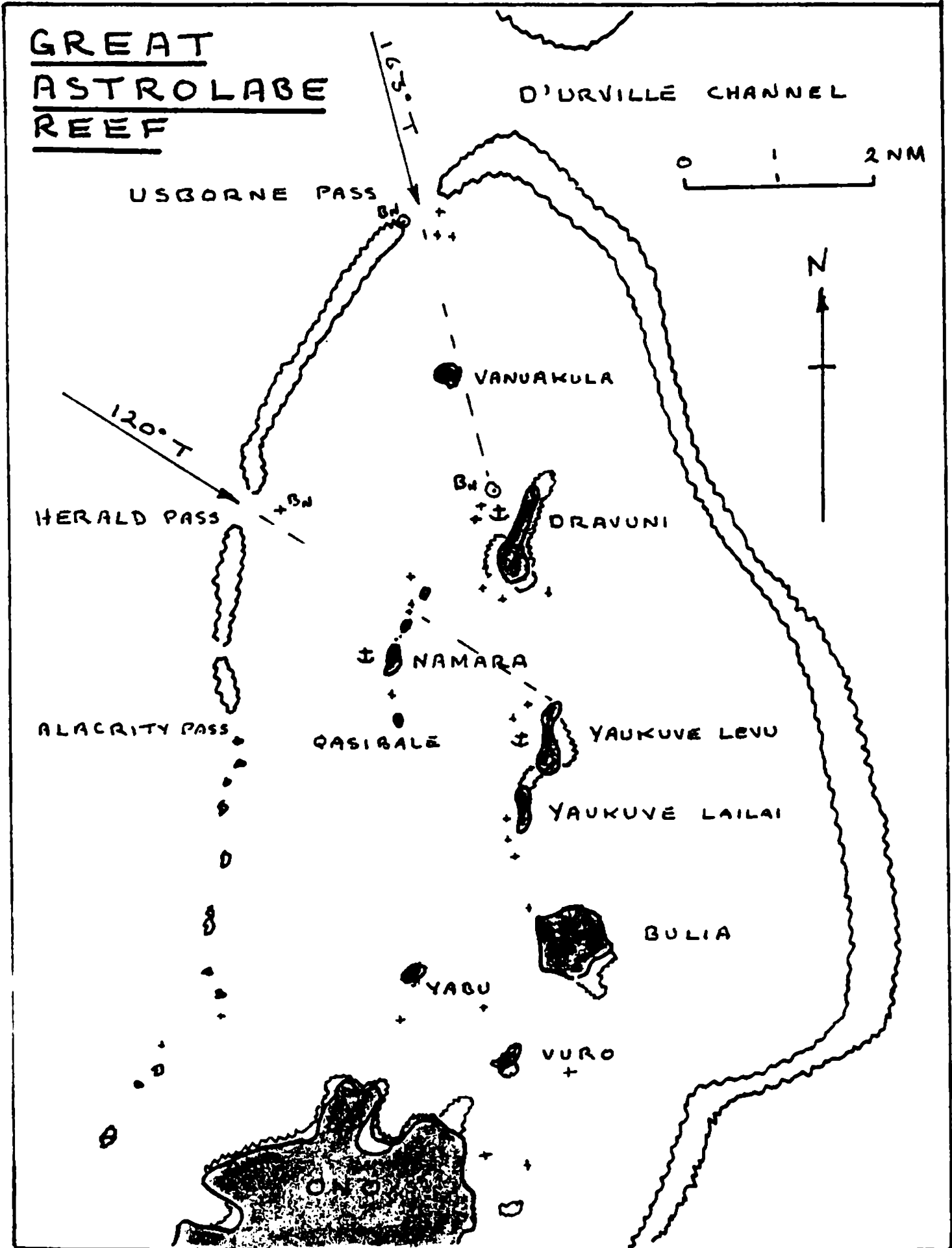
YAUKUVE LEVU

YAUKUVE LAILAI

BULIA

YABU

VURO



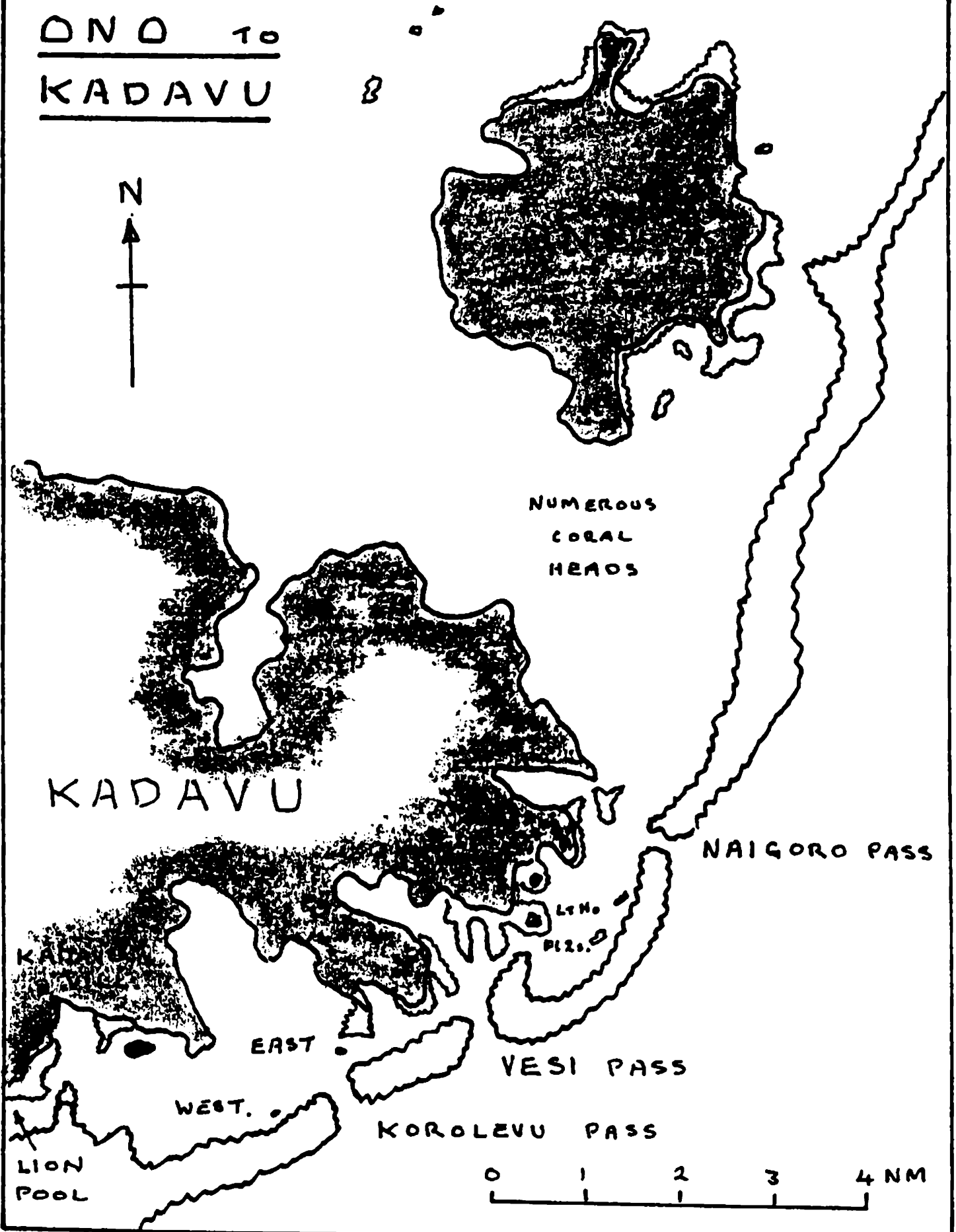
GREAT ASTROLABE REEF

CHARTS: BA 167, 745M.

An enclosed area of water 10 by 7 miles lies within the reef north of Ono. There are villages on Dravuni and Bulia and several uninhabited small islands which provide good anchorages and shelter from the prevailing easterly winds. The water is 20 to 40 metres deep with numerous isolated coral heads which we found to be as shown on the chart. It is advisable to sail this area only in good light with a lookout posted.

Approaching from Suva or Beqa, Solo lighthouse on North Astrolabe Reef provides a good fixing mark. To enter the reef through Osbourne Pass make a heading of 163 deg. True with the LHE of Vanuakula in line with the hill at the south end of Dravuni Island. The west side of the pass is marked by a beacon and there are coral heads to watch for on the east side. Herald Pass may be entered on a heading of 120 deg. True with the north end of Yaukuve Levu positioned mid way between the tiny islets of Yanu yanu sau and Yanu yanu i loma. Inside the pass to the north of the transit a coral patch is marked by a beacon.

ONO to
KADAVU



NUMEROUS
CORAL
HEADS

KADAVU

NAIGORO PASS

L.H.O.
P.L.S.

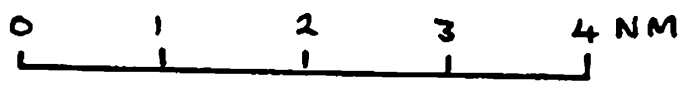
EAST

VESI PASS

WEST.

KOROLEVU PASS

LION
POOL



While in this area we anchored at Dravuni, Namara and Yakuve Levu before proceeding east of Ono to the south coast of Kadavu. In good light conditions the passage presents no problems. The narrow part east of Ono is marked by a beacon on each side and we found all the charted coral heads visible. Around the east and southeast end of Kadavu the passage is well marked with beacons and is described in detail in "A Yachtsmans' Fiji".

After a visit to Kadavu village we exited the reef at Korolevu passage. This passage is 200 metres wide and a heading of 323 deg. True leads in from seaward. The inner end of the passage is marked by a beacon on each side. The pass may be further identified by West Islet which lies inside the reef 0.75 NM to the west and East Islet which is 0.4 NM to the east.

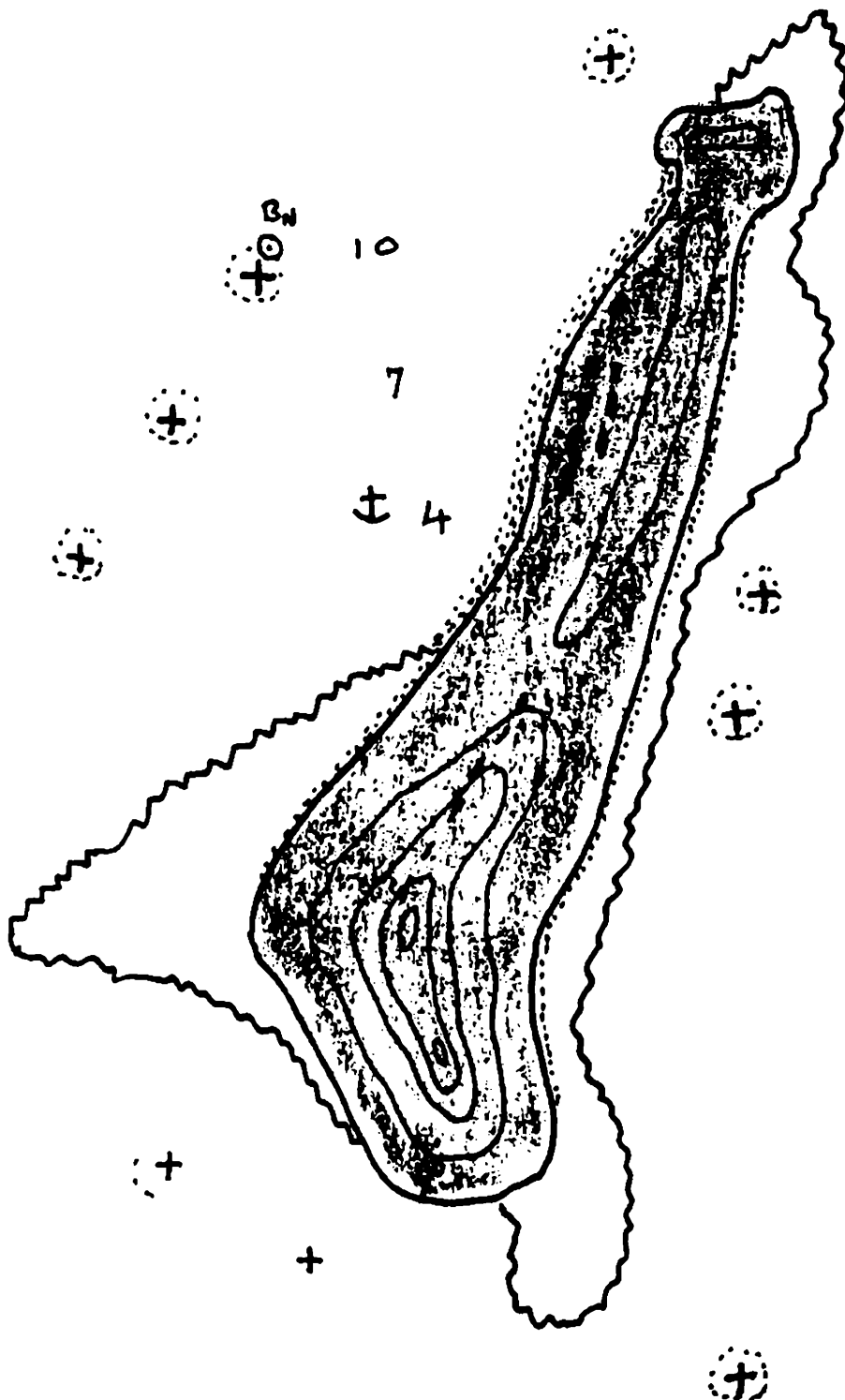
From Korolevu pass we sailed due west to Galoa Harbour. There are no beacons here but the reefs are clearly visible and funnel you into the pass between Esk and Pearl reefs. Once inside the pass there is an unmarked coral patch to be avoided and a course may be laid for the SW corner of Galoa island.

After our visit to Galoa we returned to Namara this time passing west of Ono before sailing to Suva.

DRAVUNI ISLAND

DEPTHS IN METRES

0 1/2 NM APPROX.



DRAWUNI (Ndravuni)

We anchored here in 4 metres sand bottom off the beach on the west side of the island. Most of the dark patches appeared to be weed although there are three coral heads 0.25 NM to the west of the island, the northern one marked by a beacon.

The villagers here own the adjacent islands so you should first call here to present your *sevu sevu*. The village is clean and prosperous due to a regular income from monthly cruise ship visits. A walk to the top of the hill at the south end of the island provided a panoramic view over the reef and islands.

NAMARA ISLAND

DEPTHS IN METRES
0 1/2 NM APPROX

YANU YANU SAU



+

/ +



YANU YANU-I-LOMA

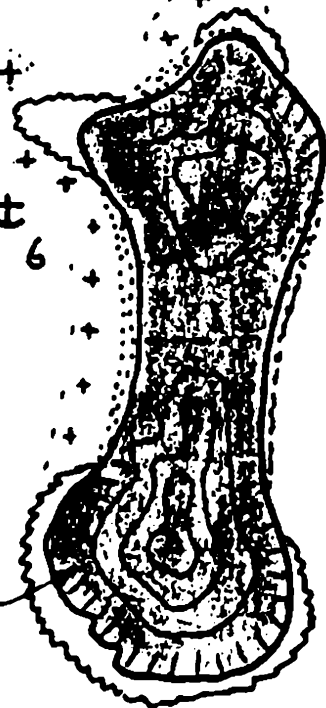


10 ± 6

NAMARA



CAVE



QASIBALE



NAMARA

On the west side of this island there is a small bay where an anchorage may be had in 6 metres, sand and coral patches.

This small uninhabited island has lovely sandy beaches and good snorkelling around the NW end.

On Qasibale (Nggasimbale) island to the south is the remains of a fortified native village.

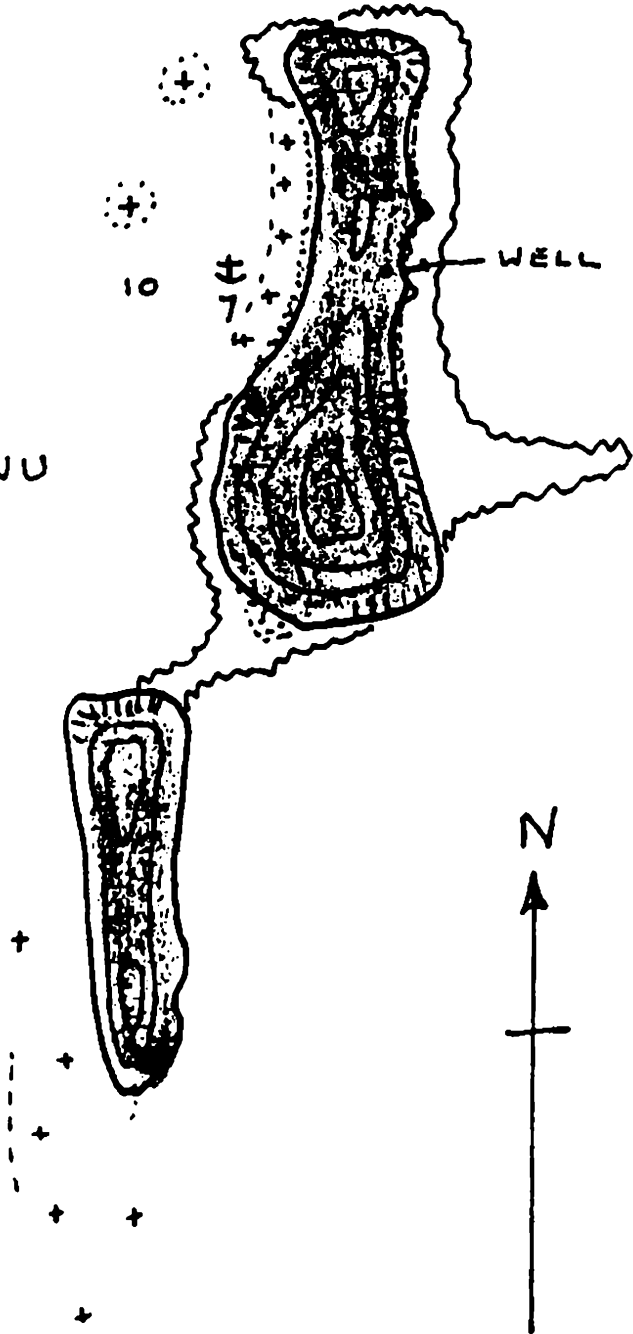
YAKUVE LEVU

DEPTHS IN METRES

0 1/2 NM APPROX.

YAKUVE LEVU

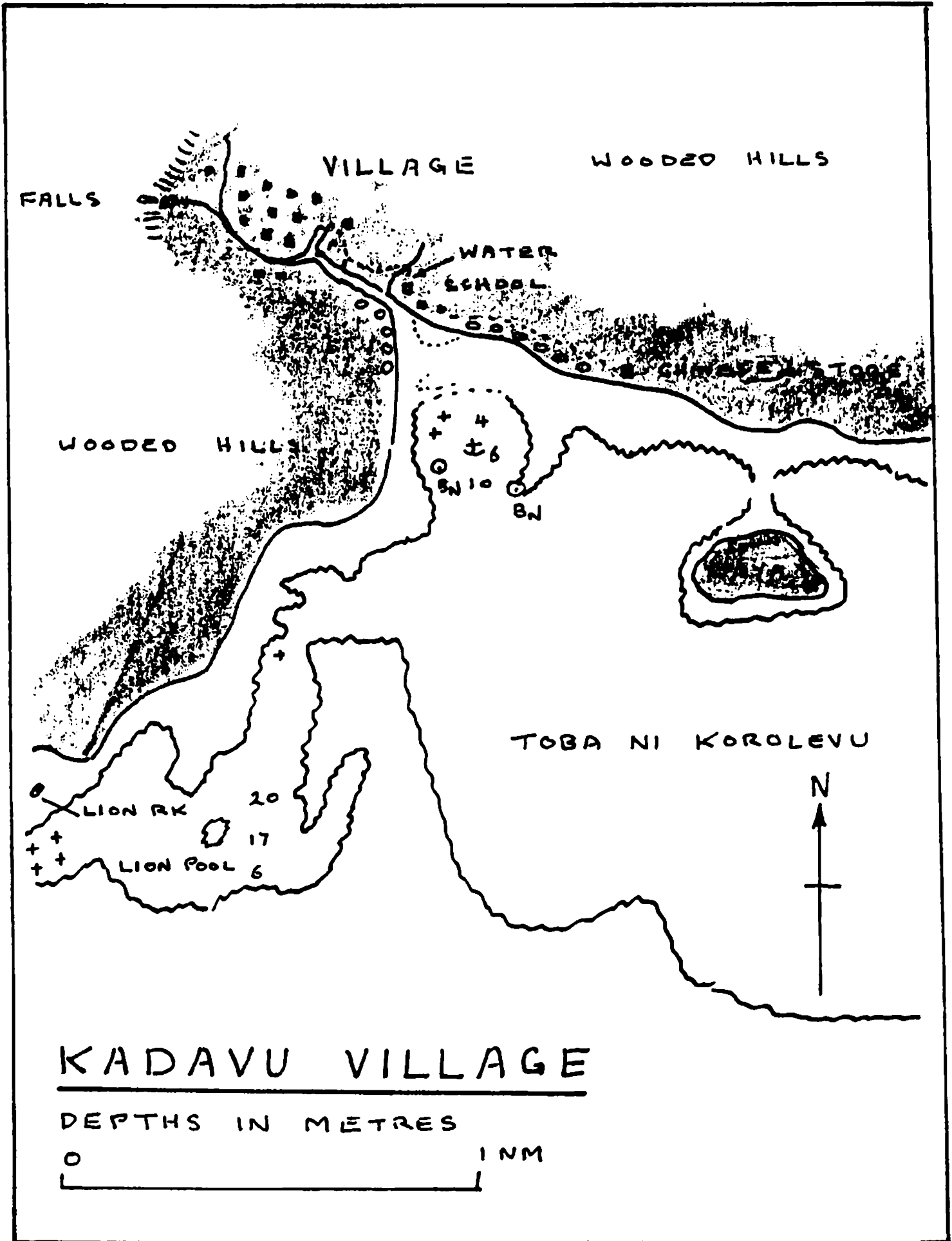
YAKUVE LAILAI



YAUKUVE LEVU

On the west side of the island anchor in 7 metres sand bottom. There is a large coral head 0.25 NM off the beach.

This island has some good sandy beaches but we found the water not as clear and the snorkelling not so good as at Namara. On shore there is a house, livestock and plantation which belong to a family in Dravuni. At the time of our visit no one lived there. A path leads from the house across the island and through the plantation to a small stone walled well.



KADAVU VILLAGE

DEPTHS IN METRES

0 1 NM

KADAVU (Kandavu)

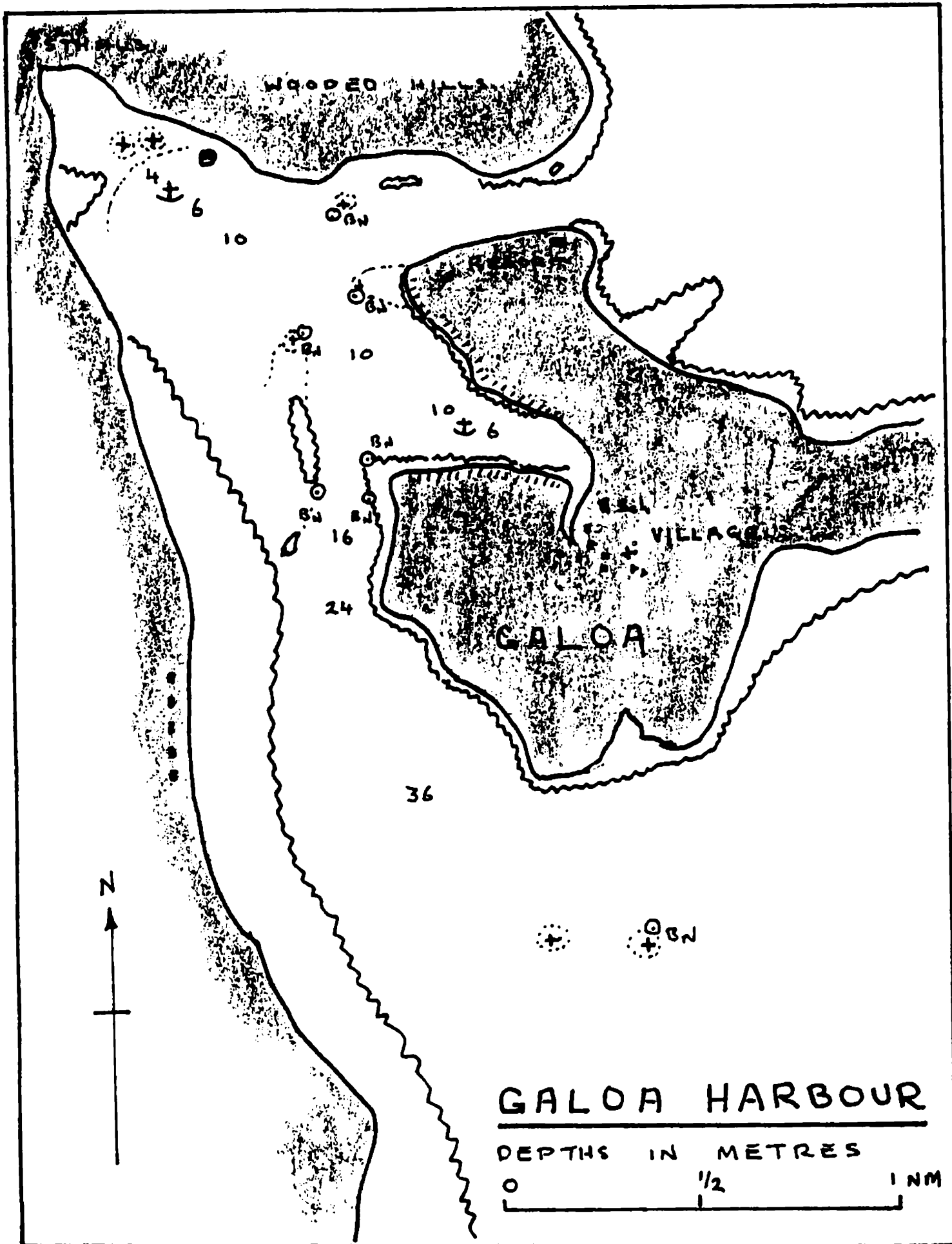
CHARTS: BA 167, 745M.

KADAVU VILLAGE

This anchorage lies in the NW arm of Toba ni Korolevu. Approach around the west end of Waya island and pass between the two beacons to anchor in 6 metres, mud bottom. From this point the bottom shoals quickly towards the mouth of the river and the water is murky.

At high water it is possible to take a dinghy up river as far as the village but otherwise land at the school. Here we were warmly welcomed by the Taragi and soon made friends with several of the villagers. At the falls there are some super deep pools where we were invited to bathe fully dressed (swimming costumes are not allowed) and do our laundry. The villagers, when asked, were keen to sell fruit and vegetables and there is a small but well stocked Chinese store half a mile east of the school. Water may be obtained from a tap at the school on request.

Southwest from the anchorage is Lion pool named after a lion shaped rock that the locals call Qaralami. In good light the channel through the reef is easily negotiated and it is possible to anchor in 6 metres on the inside of the main reef to enjoy some good snorkelling.



GALOA HARBOUR

DEPTHS IN METRES

0 1/2 1 NM

GALOA HARBOUR (Ngoloa)

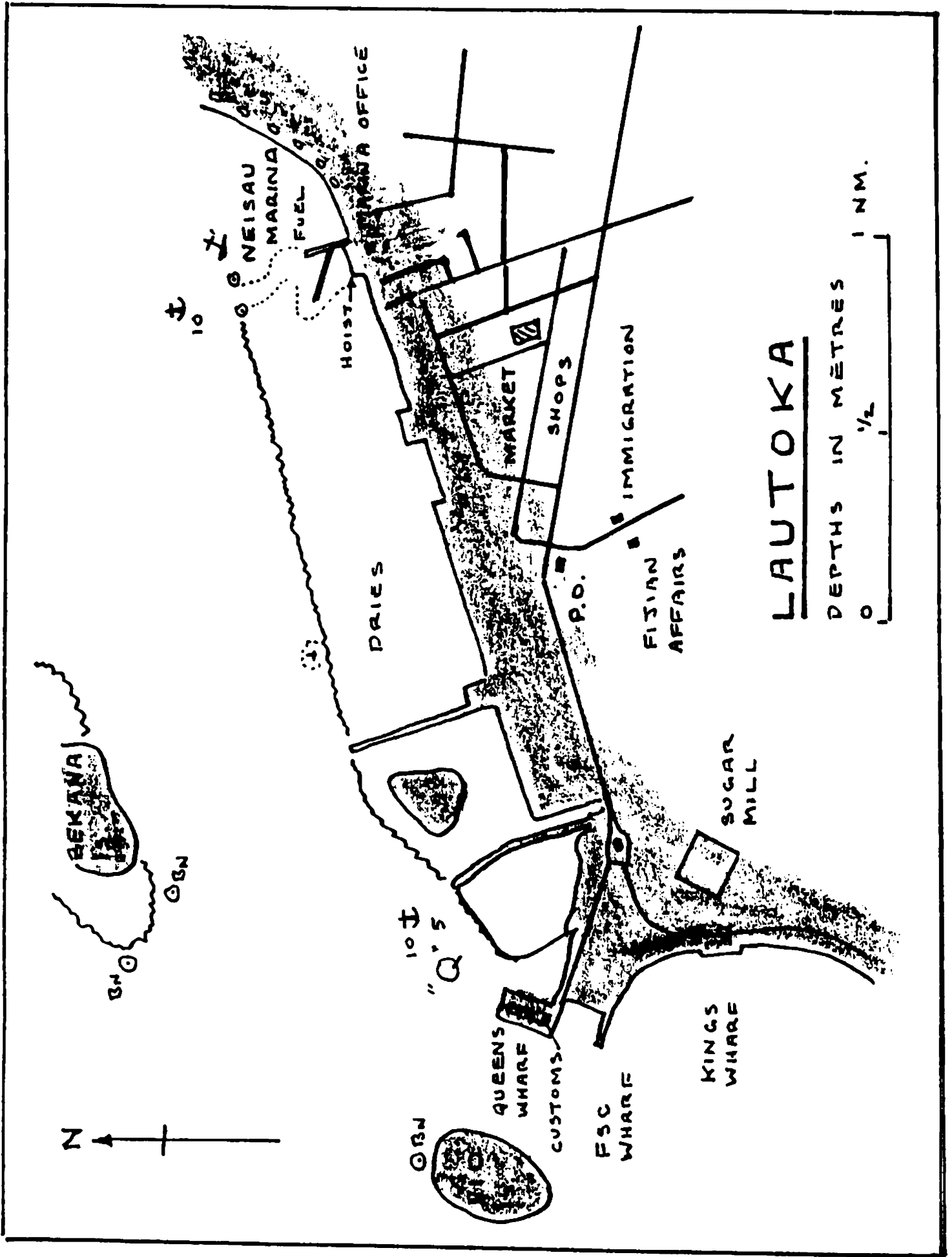
CHARTS: BA 167, 103, 745M.

Having negotiated the broad pass between Esk and Pearl reefs we continued around the SW corner of Galoa and along its western shore where the channel is well marked by beacons.

We anchored at the head of the bay south of the isthmus in 4 metres mud bottom. After the first night we were invited to visit the village on Galoa and moved to anchor in the creek on the west side of the island. Here we found the depth 6 metres with mud bottom. The village lies around a bend in the creek and is not visible from the anchorage.

Our stay here proved to be one of the highlights of our cruise thanks to the family which befriended us.

At the north end of the island there is a small resort where yacht crews are welcome. A two mile boat ride away is Vunisea where there is a Post Office and several small stores. The Sea reef 3 to 4 miles to the south provides good snorkelling, but there are strong currents flowing across the reef and it is possible for a boat to get trapped inside the maze of reefs on the ebb tide.



LAUTOKA

DEPTHS IN METRES
 0 1/2 1 NM.

LAUTOKA

CHARTS: BA 845, 1670M, US 83602, F5

Lautoka is a port of entry. Yachts arriving from a foreign port should call "Lautoka Port Control" on VHF Ch 16 and request instructions.

Customs will be found on Queens Wharf and the Immigration Office is in town a short distance down Tavewa Avenue, past the Post Office and Fire Station.

It is possible to anchor just to the east of Queens Wharf, but most yachts anchor off Neisau Marina about a mile further east.

NEISAU MARINA

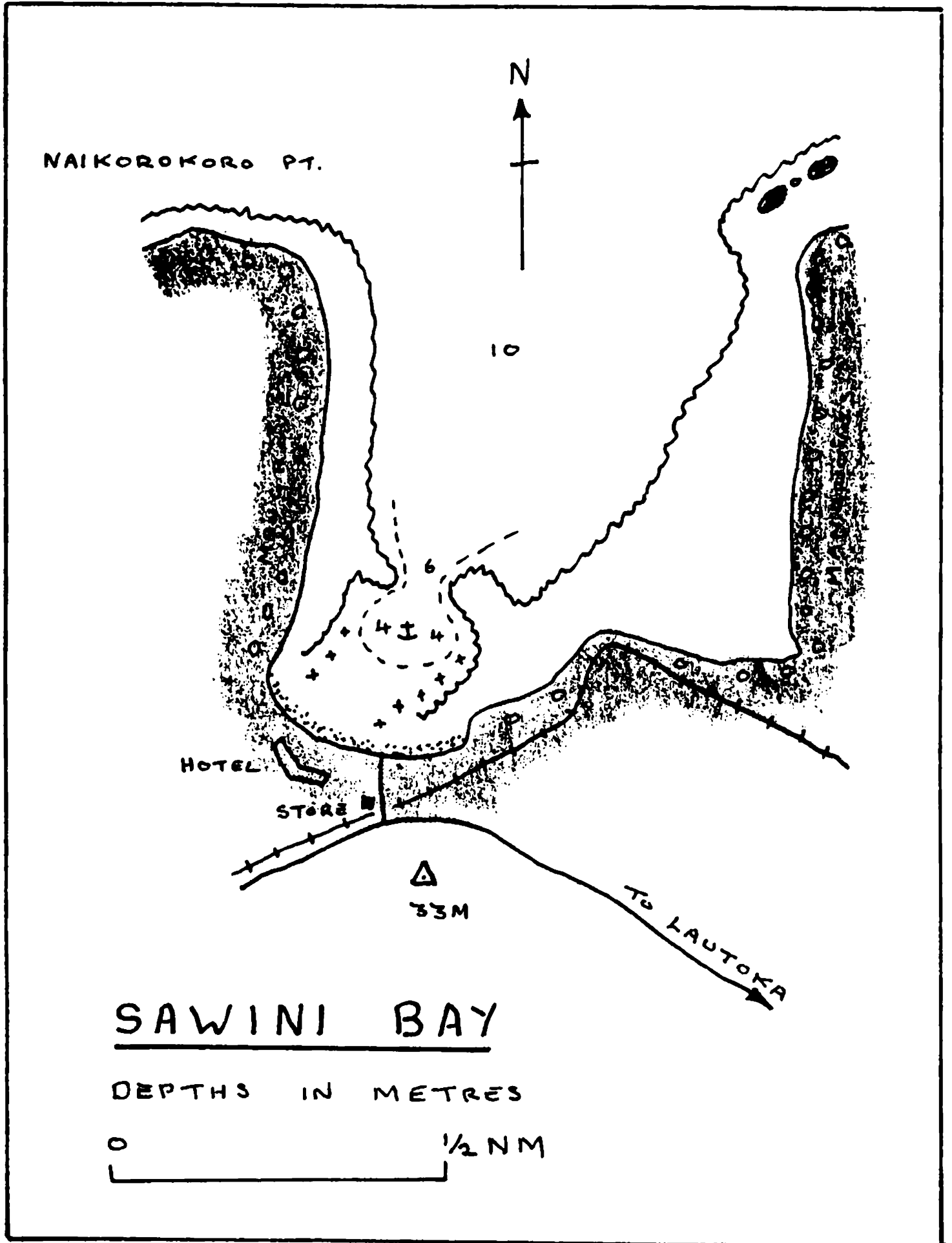
The marina offers pontoon berths, 63 tonne travel lift, a range of refit work, fuel, LPG, water, electricity, bar, showers and laundromat. Yachts at anchor were charged F\$2.50 per day to use the facilities while a pontoon berth was F\$10 per day for a 36 ft boat.

A mail drop and Fax service is also provided:

c/o Neisau Marina, PO Box 3831 Lautoka, Fiji. Tel./Fax:663807

This new marina complex has a friendly atmosphere and helpful staff.

Unfortunately it was reported in the Fiji Times that the business had gone into receivership in mid October '92. It is to be hoped that this excellent facility will be back in operation for next season.



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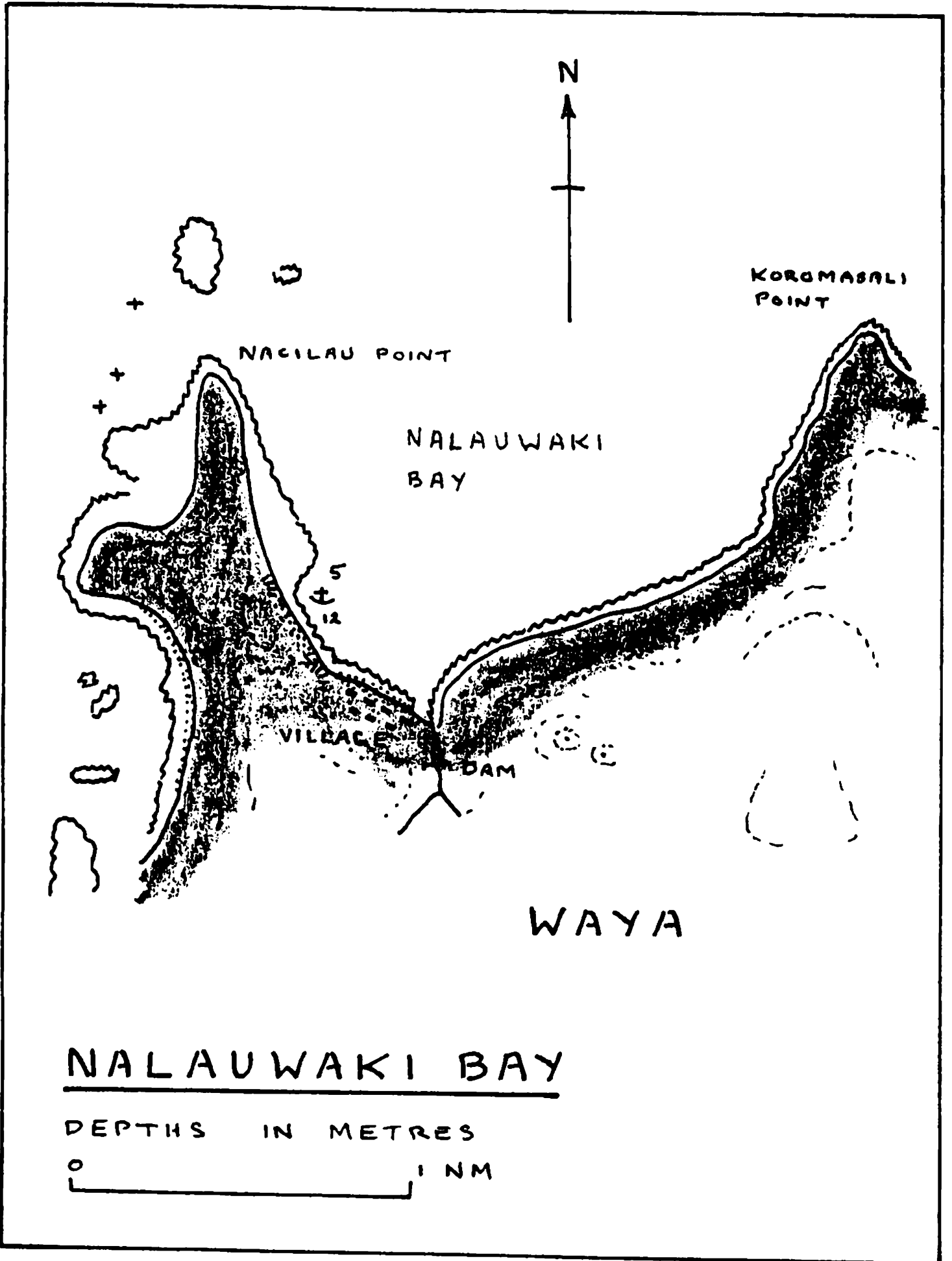
Lautoka town centre, only 10 minutes walk from the marina, is Fiji's second largest city and is the main centre of the sugar industry. There are banks, supermarkets, a vegetable market and a good range of shops. Although there are no specialist marine stores there are good hardware stores and small workshops for electrical and mechanical repairs.

Eating out we enjoyed the Indian food at Hot Snaxs, opposite the market and pizza at the Lautoka Hotel.

SAWINI BAY

This anchorage lies 3.5 miles southwest of Vio island and is a pleasant spot to get away from Lautoka. The bay has clean water, a sandy beach, a small hotel and store where essential groceries may be obtained. There is a two hourly bus service to Lautoka. The bay lies within Lautoka port limits so there is no need to check out with customs.

Just over one mile SW of Vio island there is a coral patch from which the beacon is missing (due west of the beacon on the reef that extends from the shore) otherwise the approach to the bay is open and clear of dangers. Anchor inside the two arms of the reef at the head of the bay in 4 metres sand bottom.



YASAWA AND MAMANUCA GROUPS

 CHARTS: F5, BA 845, US 83602

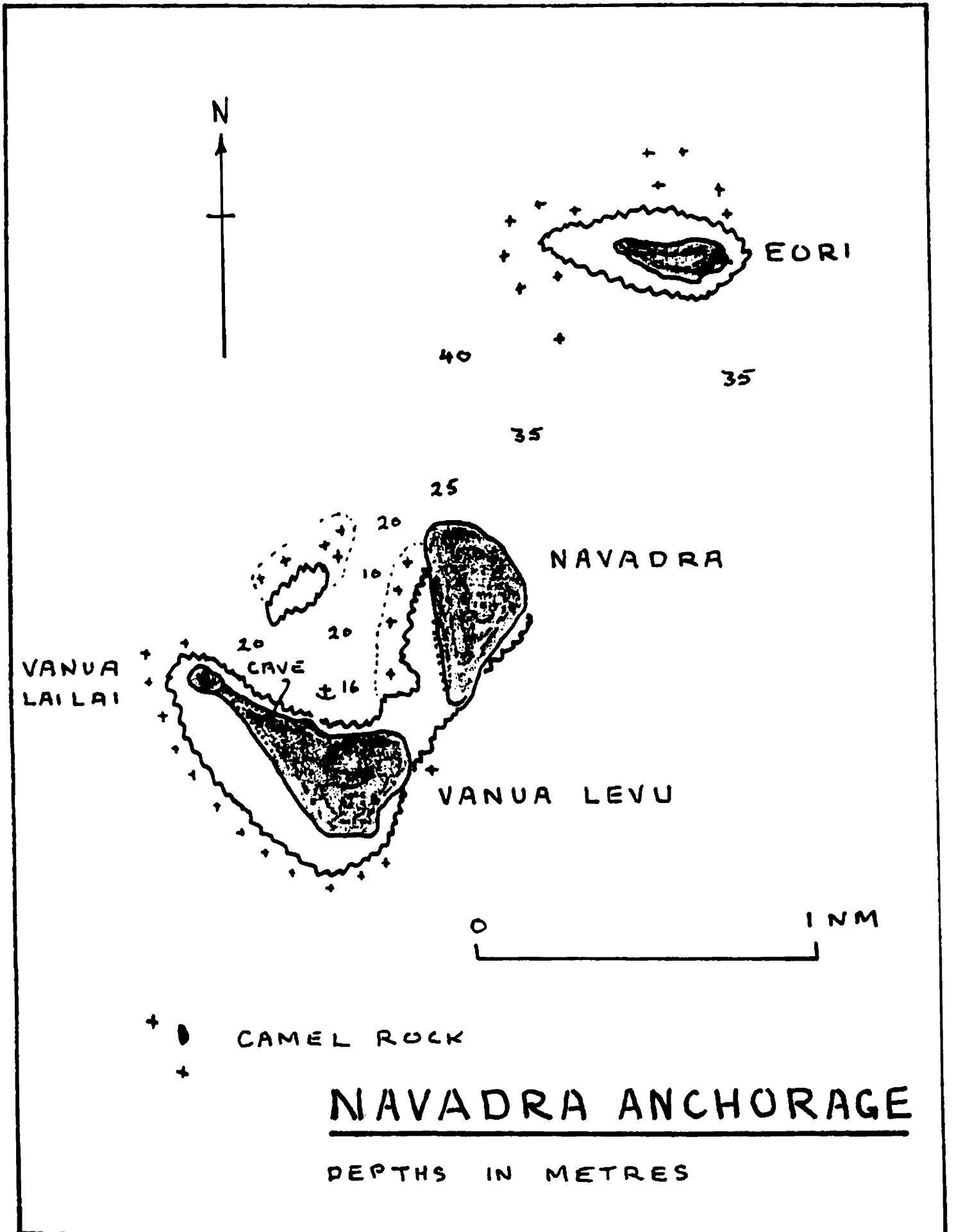
From Lautoka we sailed to Nalauwaki Bay on the north side of Waya island, from there south down the west side of Waya to Navadra (Navandra) Island and then on to Musket Cove at Malolo Lailai. We found this route to be as charted with the exception of Malolo where there is a well marked passage inside the reef along the southwestern side of this island.

These anchorages are all described in detail in "A Yachtsman's Fiji".

WAYA NALAUWAKI BAY

 Passing between Koromasali point and Windy rock we entered this large open bay and anchored off the beach northwest of the village in 12 metres sand bottom. There is a fringing reef along the shore line so it is best to land near high tide. Although sheltered from the prevailing winds the swell sometimes came into the bay making it a little rolly.

Ashore the village had a number of traditional bures and tin canoes made from a sheet of corrugated iron are used for fishing. A path leads from the village over the western peninsular to a long sandy beach where a small resort is planned. The high rocky hills of Waya provide some spectacular scenery.



NAVADRA ANCHORAGE

This anchorage lies in a bay formed by Navadra, Vanua Levu and Vanua Lailai islands. There is a reef across the mouth of the bay with a passage to east and west of it. We entered through the east passage and anchored in 16 metres sand bottom off the rocky headland mid way along the north shore of Vanua Levu. This anchorage was well sheltered from the wind but the swell came in making it roily.

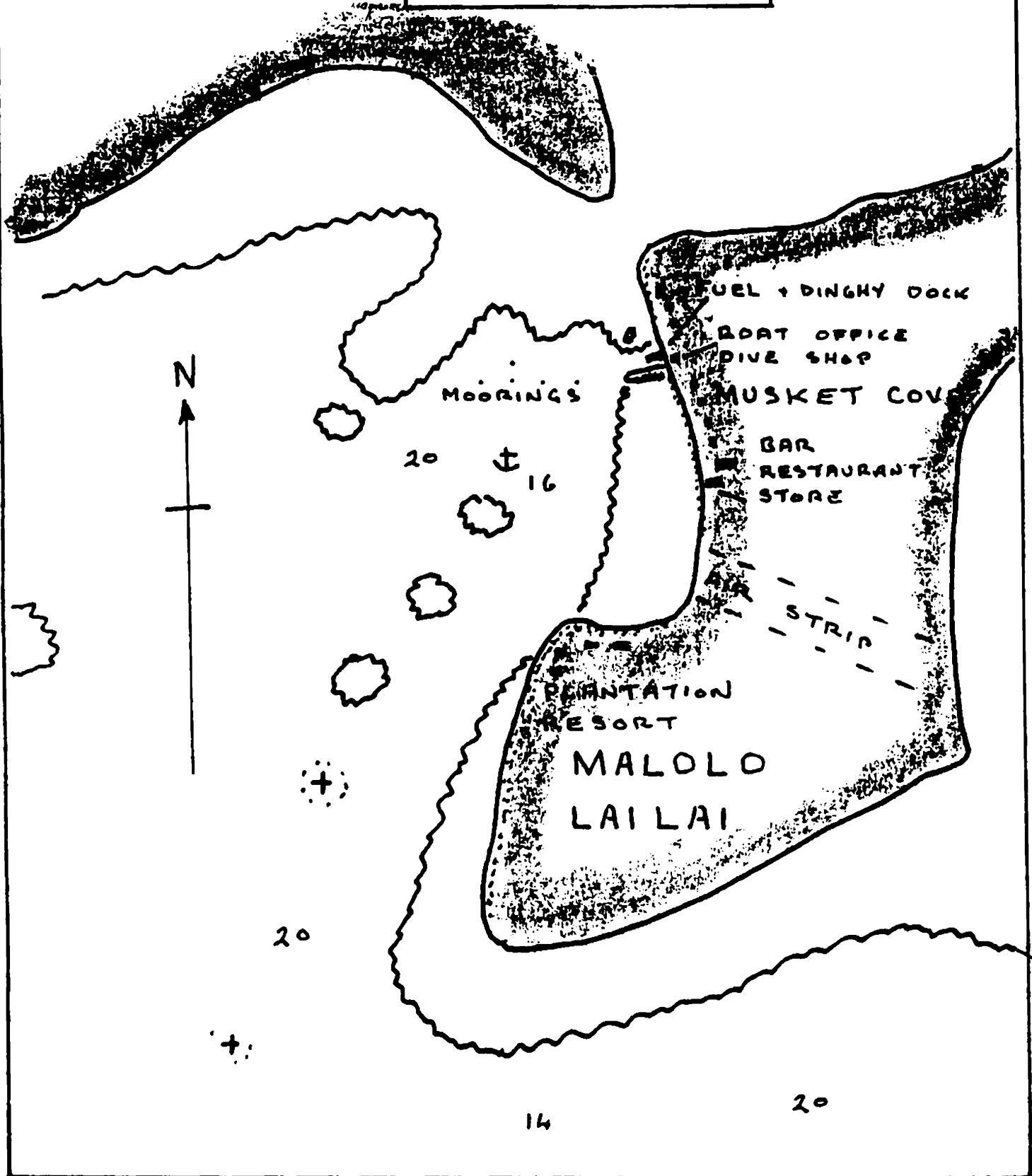
These uninhabited islands have some good beaches and clear water. There are goats on Vanua Levu and in a cave at the base of a large rock there was evidence of recent human habitation.

MUSKET COVE

MALOLO

DEPTHS IN METRES

0 1/2 NM



MALOLO LAILAI - MUSKET COVE YACHT CLUB

Approaching from the north we entered the pass north of Qalito (Nggalito) and passed west of this small resort island and Malolo. The passage inside the reef was well marked by beacons and even in poor light and strong wind the reefs were clearly visible. The more usual approach is from the northeast around the southern end of Malolo Lailai where again the reefs are well marked by beacons.

The anchorage lies in a bay in the lagoon to the west of Malolo Lailai and north of the airstrip that crosses the island. The depth is 16 metres and there are about 20 moorings for rent. Musket Cove Yacht Club offers life membership to skippers who have arrived from a foreign port for F\$!, crew members pay F\$5. Facilities include fuel, water, LPG, store, bar, restaurant, showers, toilets and use of resort facilities. The club provides a mail drop and Fax service:

c/o Musket Cove Resort

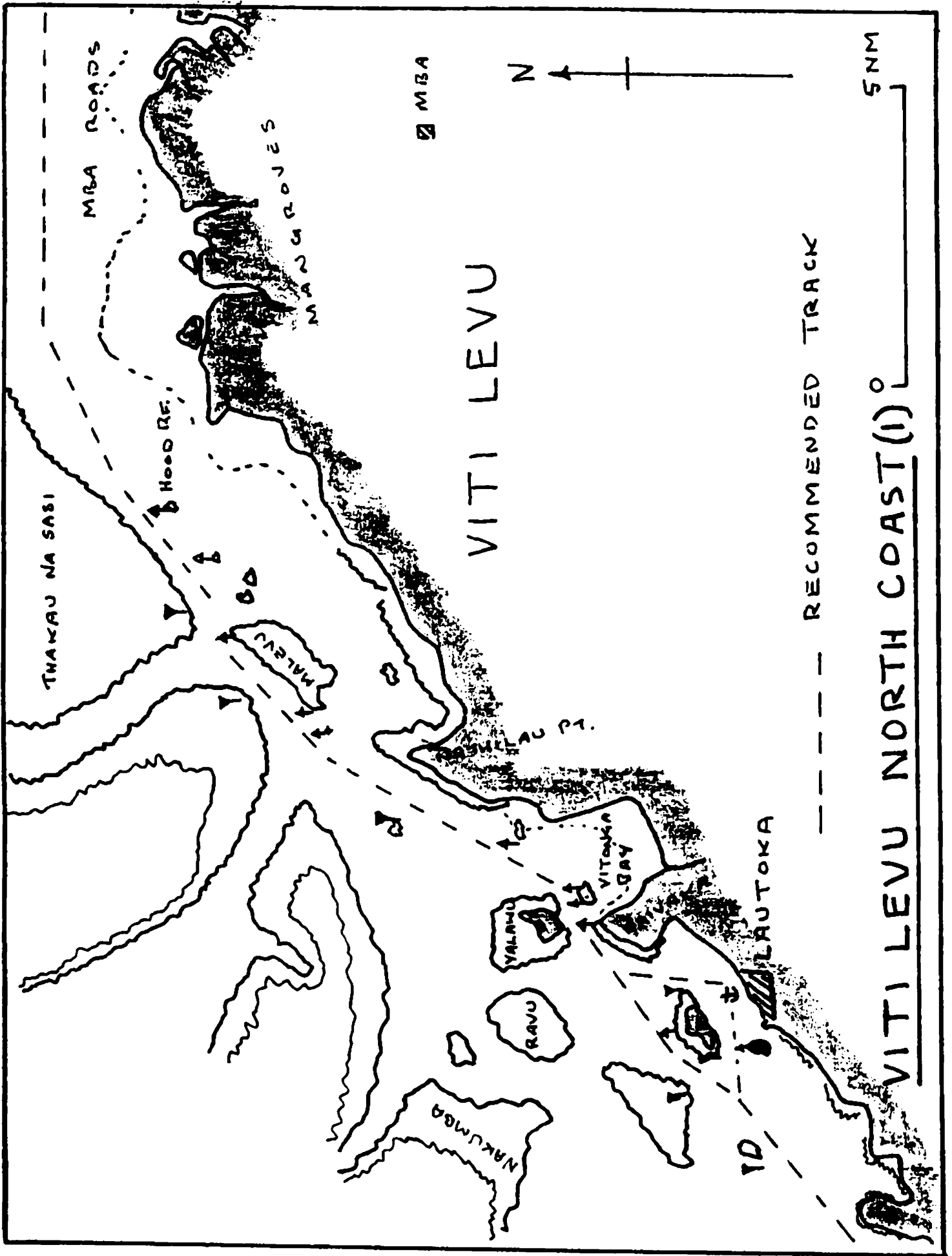
Private Mail Bag

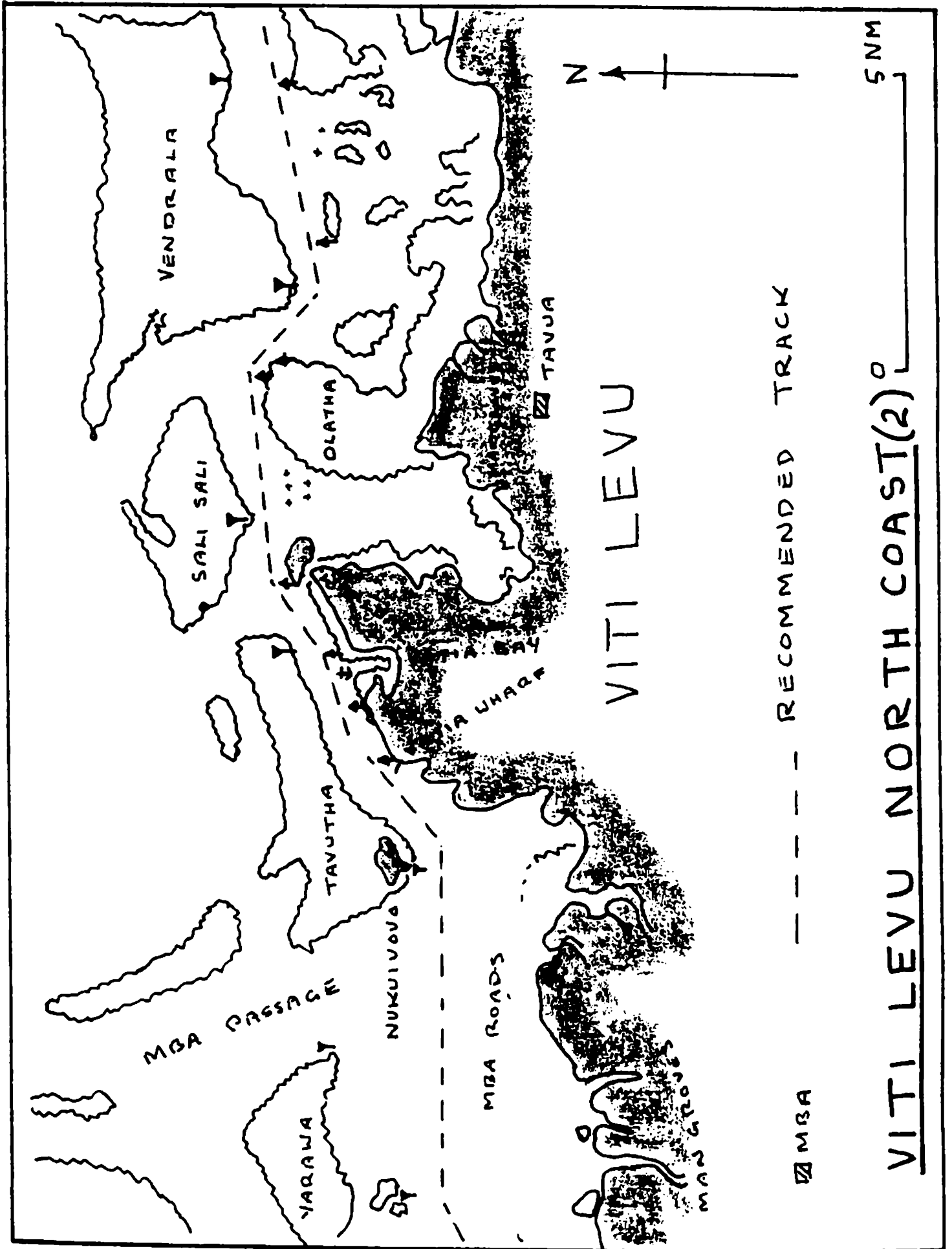
Nadi Airport

Fiji

Tel. 679 662215 Fax: 662633

This is also the location for the Fiji Regatta and start of the Musket Cove to Port Villa Yacht Race early in September each year.



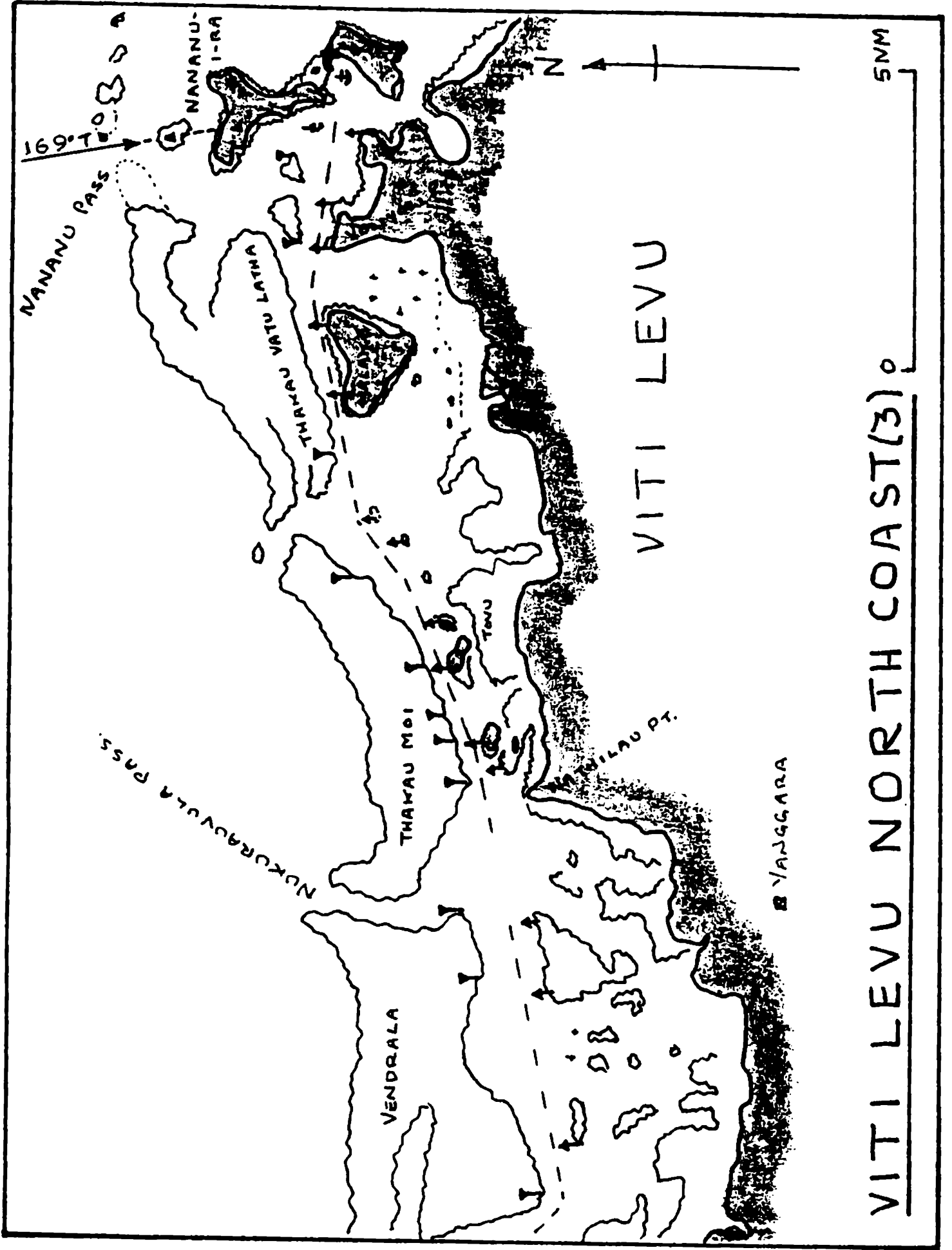


VITI LEVU NORTH COAST(2)

RECOMMENDED TRACK

MBR

5 NM



VITI LEVU NORTH COAST(3) 0 5NM

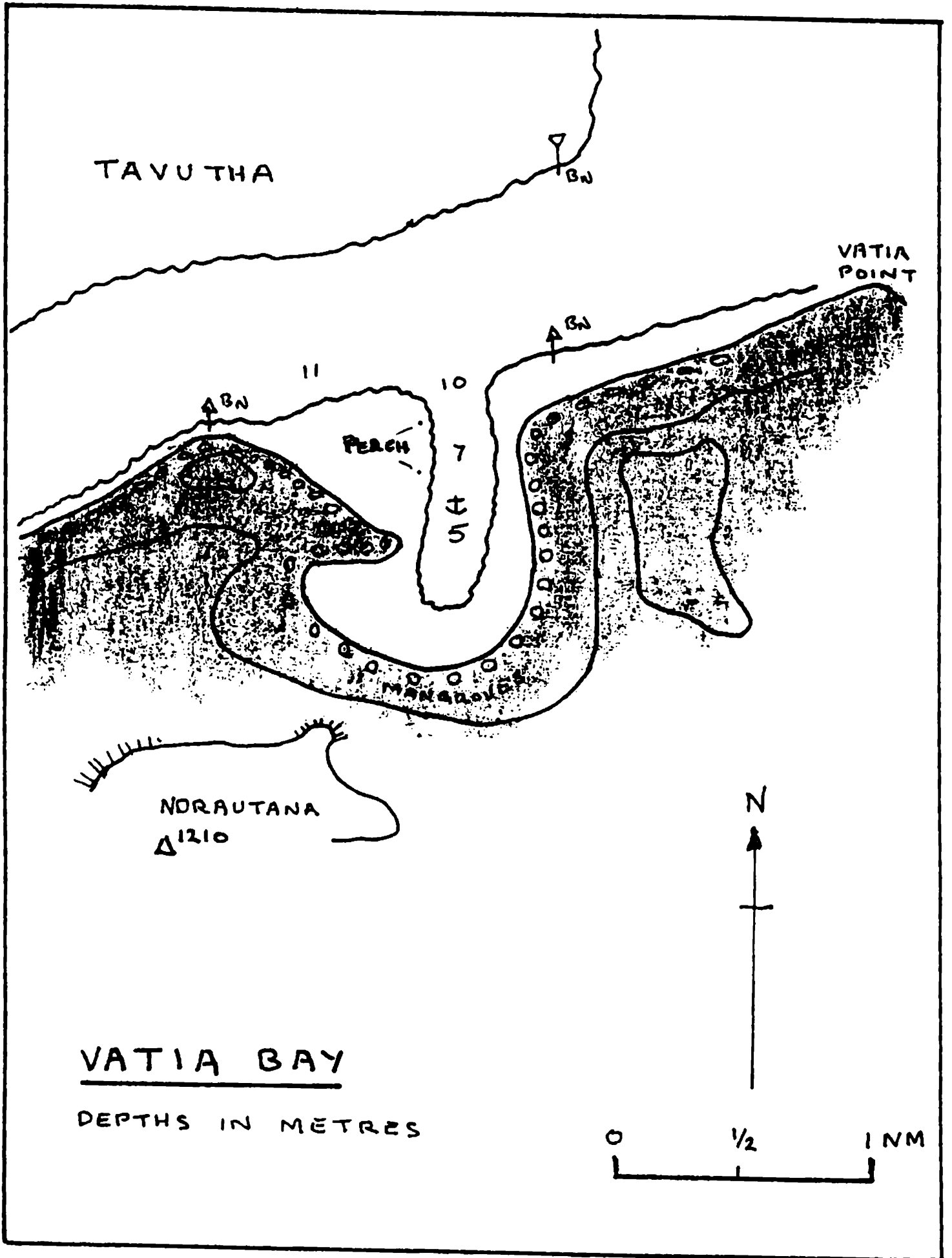
VITI LEVU NORTH COAST
-----**LAUTOKA TO NANANU PASSAGE**
-----**CHARTS: BA 381, 387M, 389M, US 83611**

The inshore passage between Lautoka and Nanau Passage is approximately 58 miles. The recommended route inside the outer reefs is as shown on the charts by dotted lines.

We found most of the beacons to be in place except for one at Davy Rk. south of Sali sali and two at Nananu Passage. At low tide all the reefs were clearly visible and the channel depth ranged from 10 to 30 metres.

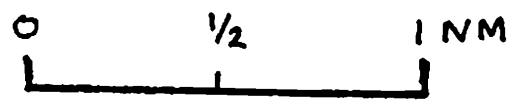
Normal coastal navigation techniques should be employed using beacons and topographical features. Beacon hopping is NOT recommended as in some instances the distance between beacons is several miles making it difficult to spot the next one.

During our stay in Lautoka we found the wind generally calm overnight with a fresh westerly breeze from late morning to early evening. Along the north coast of Viti Levu we experienced easterly winds which freshened in the afternoon. Travelling from west to east we therefore chose to motor the whole way, makin overnight stops at Vatia Bay and Nananu-i-cake. (Nananu-i-thake).



VATIA BAY

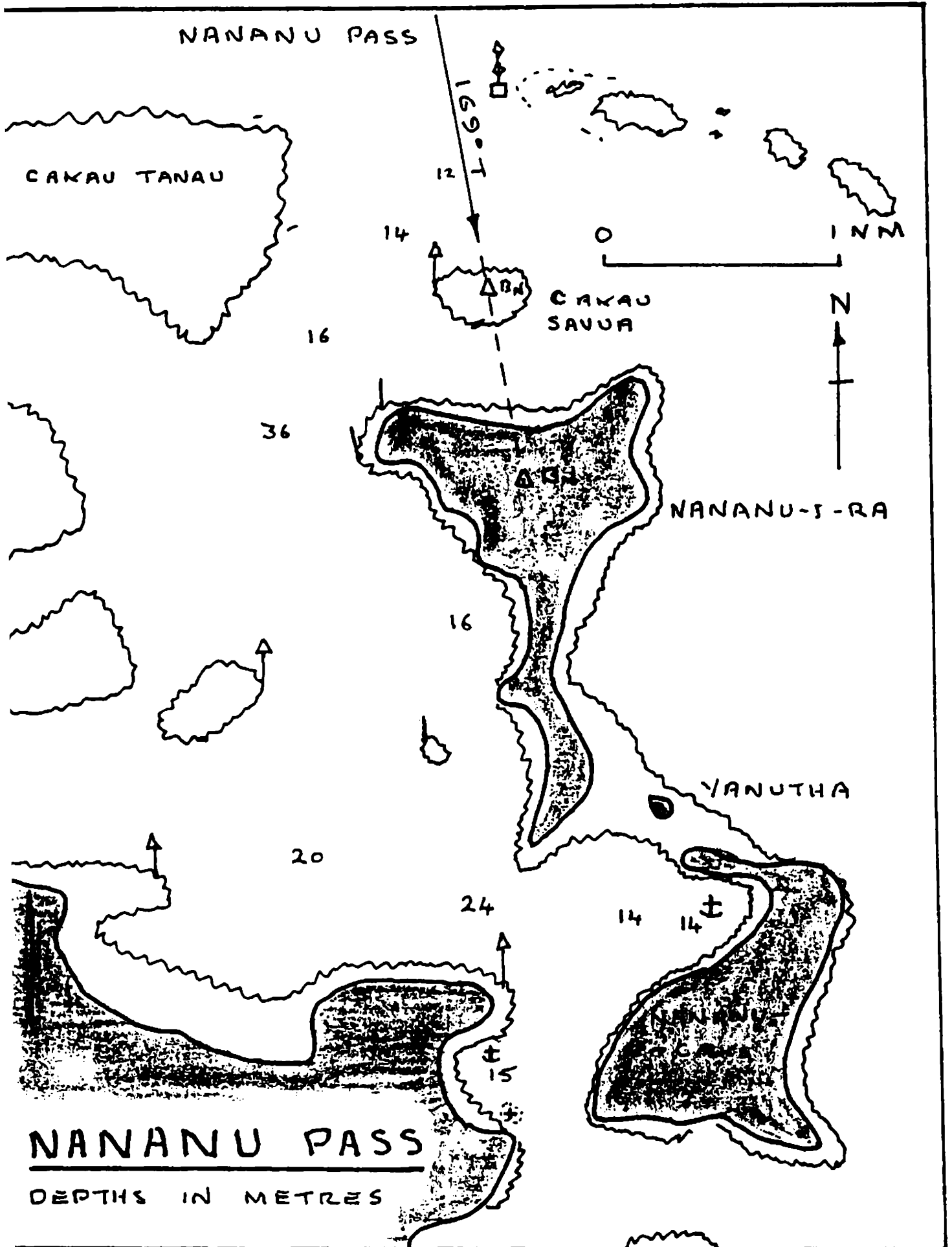
DEPTHS IN METRES



VATIA BAY

Approximately mid way between Vatia Wharf and Vatia Point this bay provides a good overnight anchorage. The navigable part of the bay runs from north to south with depth decreasing from 10 to 5 metres. The surrounding reef was visible through the cloudy water and the reef edge on the west side is marked by two perches.

We found good holding in 5 metres sand and mud.



NANANU-I-CAKE (Nananu-i-thake)

A snug anchorage is to be had in the bay at the northwest end of Nananu-i-cake. The holding is good in 14 metres sand bottom.

In westerly winds a more comfortable anchorage may be had in the small bay to the southwest in 15 metres.

The adjacent islands appear to be privately owned and we did not venture ashore. There is a resort on Nananu-i-ra.

NANANU PASSAGE

Approaching from Bligh Water the passage is marked by a large white cylindrical buoy having a top mark of two diamond shapes which are bent over at 90 degrees. A course of 169 deg. True on leading marks lead just west of the buoy. The front mark is a white triangle mounted on a tripod on Cakau Savua and the rear mark a red vertical band on a white rectangular board on Nananu-i-ra. Binoculars will be needed to spot the leading marks. Beacons shown on the chart at the pass were missing.

Once through the pass the inner passage leads west of Nananu-i-ra and is marked by beacons.

YADUA ISLAND

CHARTS: BA 379,386M, US 83597.

Ten miles west of Vanua Levu and a 25 mile broad reach north across Bligh Water from Nananu Passage, Yadua Island proved to be a magical spot for us.

On the western side of the island Cukuvou (Thukuvou) Harbour provides shelter from all but westerly sector winds and good holding in 12 to 15 metres, sand bottom. Reefs extend from both points of the bay towards the centre. Approach should be made just north of the centre line of the bay on a heading of 110 deg. True taken on the small red light house on the ridge east of the bay. Anchor in the southern half of the bay in 14 metres.

A trail leads from the centre of the south beach over the ridge south of the light house and across the island to the village. The hike takes 90 to 120 minutes each way. The village has many traditional bures and is well worth a visit. After presenting our sevuvu we received a friendly welcome but were subsequently left in peace by the islanders.

There is excellent snorkelling along the outer reefs and Nautilus shells may be found on the beach of Talai Bay. Landing is prohibited on Yadua Tabua as it is a wild life sanctuary.

NOTES

VANUA LEVU SOUTH COAST

YADUA ISLAND TO TAVEUNI AND RABI

CHARTS: BA 386M, 378M, 382, 416
US 83597, F51

From the north coast of Yadua Island a course of 105 degrees True taken on Naicobocobo Point (Naithombothombo Pt) at the east of Vanua Levu leads clear of all dangers. At this point entry is made to the inner passage around the southwestern end of Fijis second largest island.

We found most beacons in place although many had no top marks. Those missing included: the reef to port 1.5 mile SE of Naicobocobo Pt., the outer reef SW of Nabouwalu and the reef extending 1 mile from the mainland at its southern tip mid way between Nabouwalu and Solevu Bay.

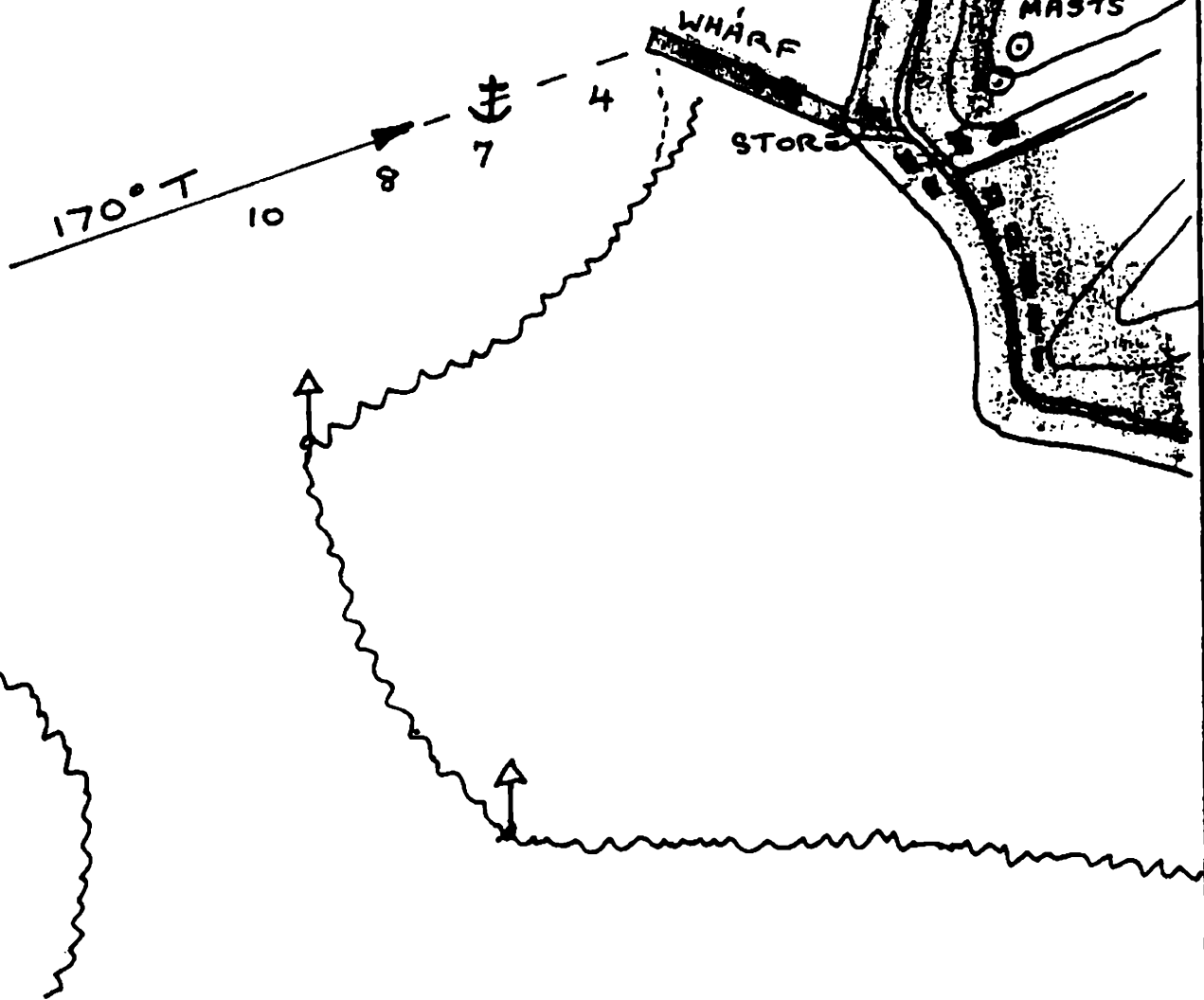
On the 73 mile passage between Yadua and Savusavu there are several overnight anchorages: Bua Bay, Nabouwalu Bay, Soleva Bay, Nadi Bay and Navatu Bay. We chose Nabouwala as it provided shelter from the prevailing SE wind near the half way point.

At Nasonisoni Passage beacons were as shown on the chart but without top marks.

Entry into Savusavu Bay at 1.5 mile wide Point Passage is straightforward and the

NABOUWALU BAY

DEPTHS IN METRES



Point Reef Lighthouse is clearly visible for several miles.

From Point passage to Somosomo Strait the south coast of Vanua Levu is steep to outside the barrier reef and there are no offshore dangers. We made overnight stops at Galogalo passage and Fawn Harbour and Somosomo. Somosomo Strait is 1.5 miles wide and presents no problem except a strong tidal stream of up to 3 knots.

At Somosomo a serious dental problem necessitated a hurried return to Suva. Notes on Naqaiqai Bay and Rabi were provided by Peter Marshall who spent several months in this area aboard his yacht "Whiteshell".

NABOUWALU BAY

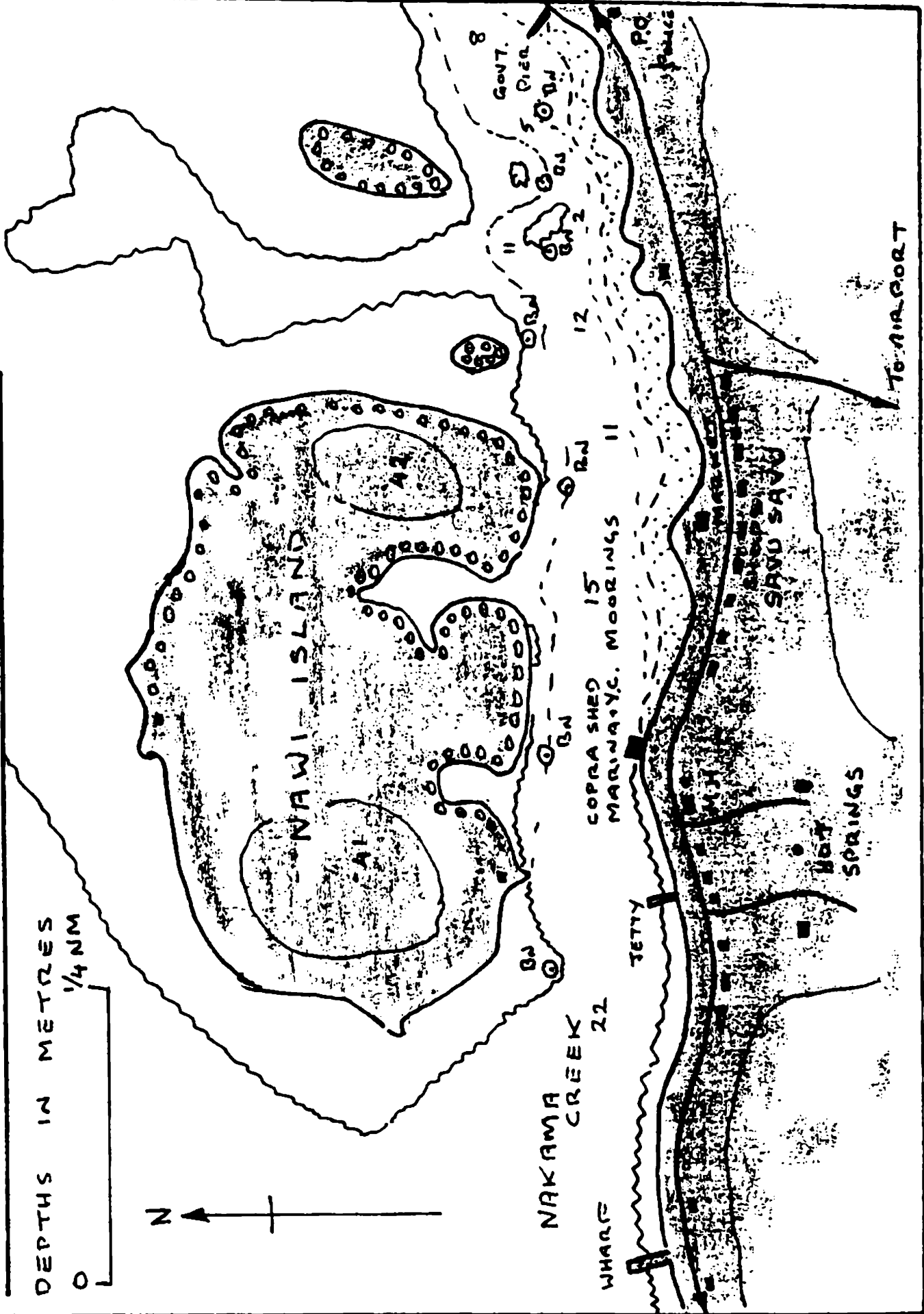
Approaching on a heading of 070 deg. True taken on the end of the wharf we anchored in 7 metres about 200 metres off the wharf. Do not obstruct the end of the wharf as the daily ferry service to Viti Levu docks here.

South of the bay the end of the reef is marked by two beacons but the beacon is missing from the offlying reef. The channel between these two reefs is narrow but straight and deep.

Ashore there is a small store. A bus service runs to Labasa, journey time 5 hours.

NAKAMA CREEK SAVU SAVU

DEPTHS IN METRES
0 1/4 NM



SAVUSAVU

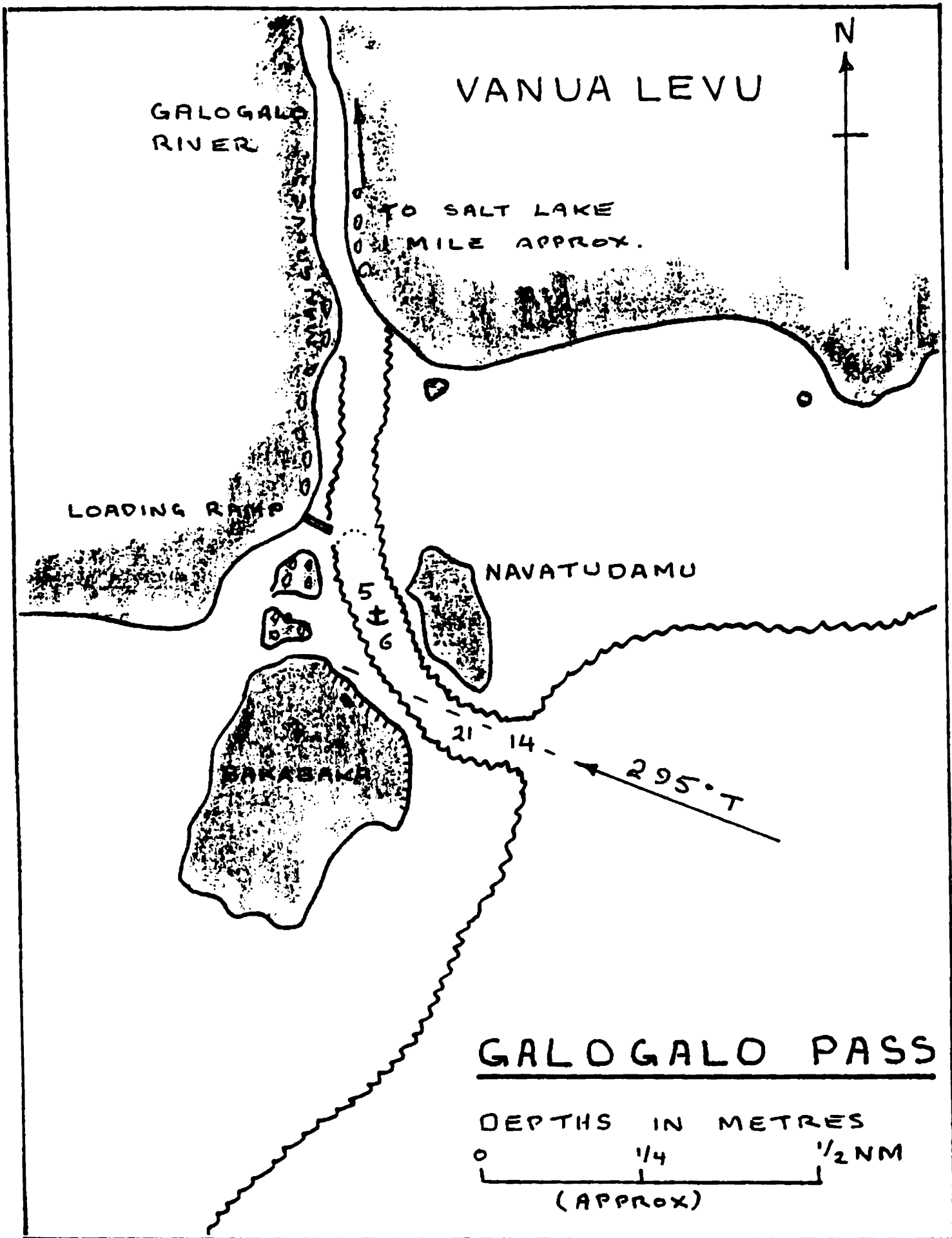
CHART: BA 378M

Entry to Nakama Creek presents no problems. Once past the main wharf stay in the middle of the channel. Beacons without top marks were in place along the north side.

Space to anchor is restricted by moorings. The channel is narrow and steep to. Anchor in the middle in 15 metres mud bottom. To the east of the Copra Shed there are a number of moorings which may be rented for F\$5 per day.

The Copra Shed contains Marina Office, Yacht Club, Cafe, Bakery and Travel Agency. The marina offers an alongside berth for F\$10 per day and showers, water and dinghy dock for F\$10 per week for yachts at anchor.

In this one street town there are banks, a Morris Hedstrom store, various Chinese and Indian stores, market and filling stations. Half a mile east of town is a Post Office and Police Station. To the rear of MH store is the rather untidy hot springs where locals cook their vegetables.



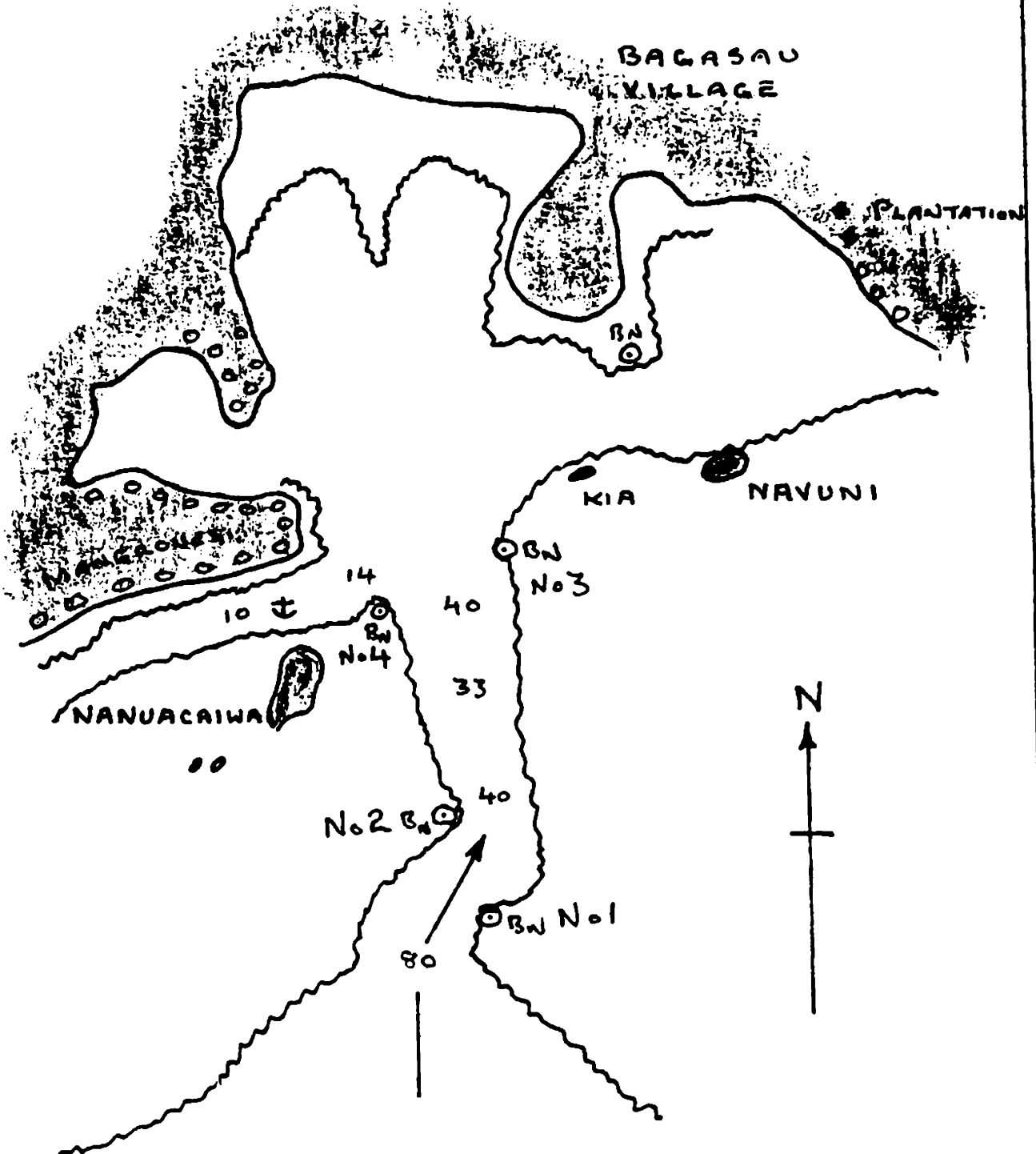
To see the interior of Vanua Levu a 3 hour bus ride to the hot and dusty sugar town of Labasa is an interesting trip. From the lush vegetation and copra plantations of Savusavu Bay the road winds over the mountains to the dry sugar cane growing region of the north. There are four buses a day but the last one leaves Labasa at 1615. Be at the bus stand at least 30 minutes before departure as the bus fills up quickly.

GALOGALO PASS (Ngalu Ngalu Passage)

About 16 miles east of Point Passage this anchorage is a narrow inlet at the mouth of the Galogalo River. Approach on a heading of 295 deg. True with the north end of Bakabaka Island just open on the south end of Navatudamu Island. Once close to the reef we found the channel easy to follow and anchored between the two islands in 6 metres. On the ebb tide the water is murky. Swinging room is limited by reefs on each side.

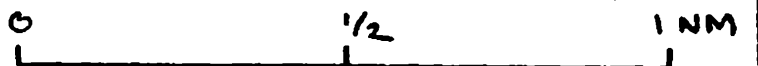
A dinghy trip may be taken up the river to the salt lake a distance of about 1.5 miles. Half way there is a short narrows under a bridge where the current defeated our 2HP outboard even though we went on a rising tide. I think just before high water would be the best time.

VANUA LEVU



FAWN HARBOUR

DEPTHS IN METRES



FAWN HARBOUR

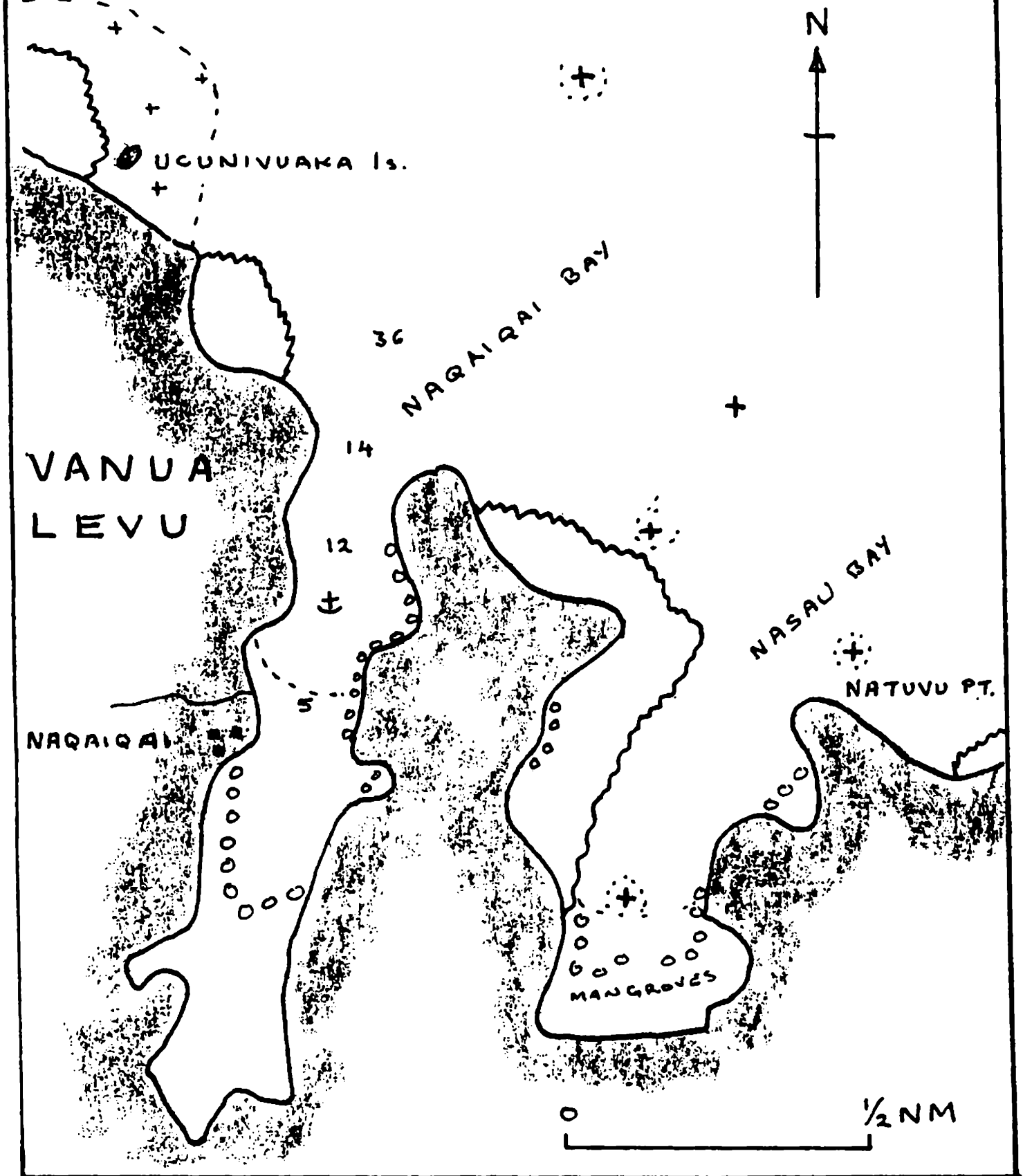
Twenty seven miles east of Point Passage this is a large harbour with a choice of several anchorages. Approaching the reef on a northerly heading Naikasa Passage is marked by four beacons. No 1 inside the reef edge is left to starboard followed by a dog leg to starboard to leave No. 2 to port. Nos 3 & 4 mark the inner end of the 200 metre wide and 30 metre deep passage. Although the water is a little murky we had no difficulty in identifying the reefs.

We anchored in the channel to the west behind the main reef in the lee of Nanuacaiwai in 10 metres sand bottom. The water was clear enough for snorkelling and there were some interesting shells to be found on the reef flats at low tide.

"A Yachtsman's Fiji" describes the entry in more detail and an anchorage off the plantation house in the northeast arm of the harbour.

NAQAIQAI BAY

DEPTHS IN METRES

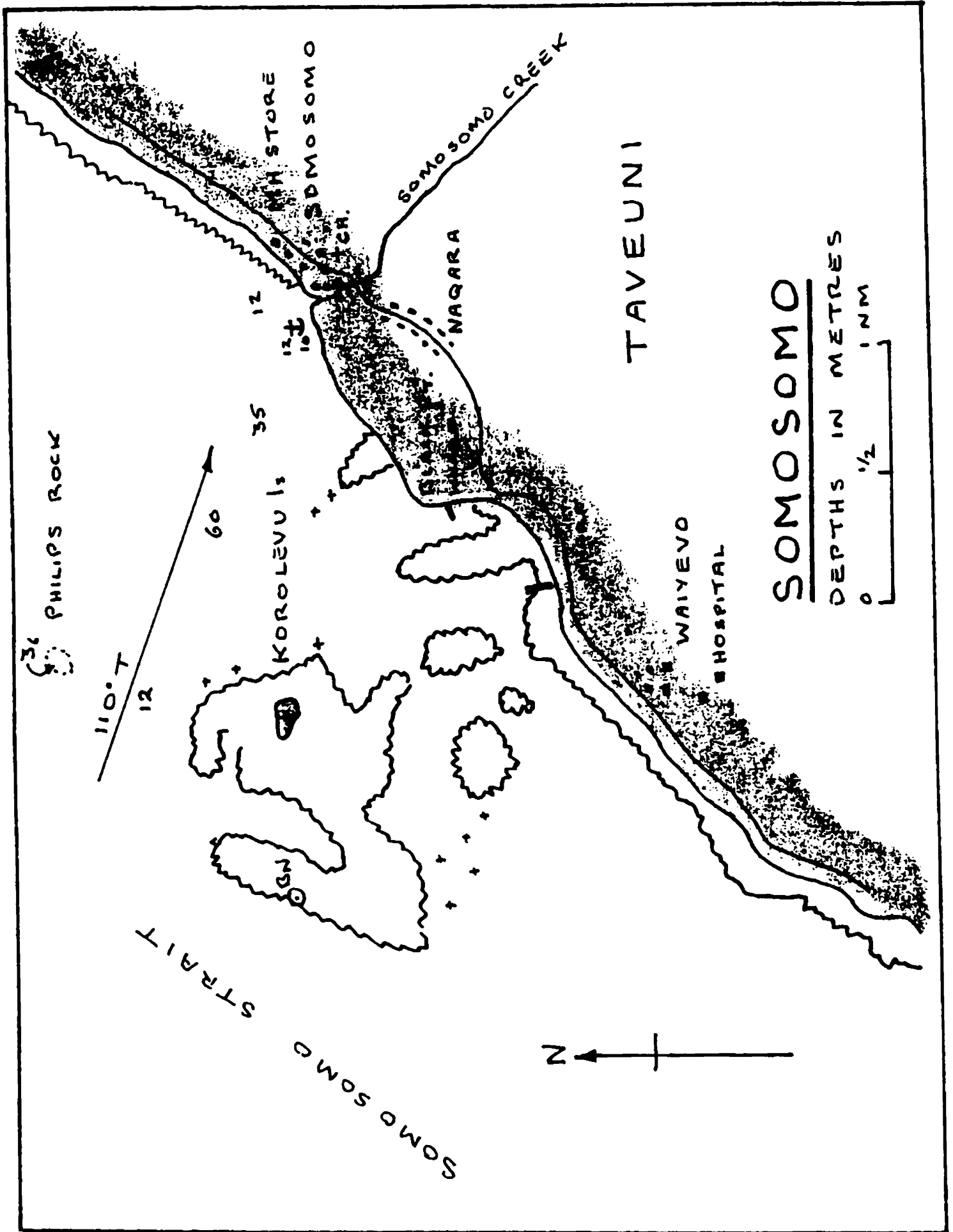


NAQAIQAI BAY (Nanggaingai Bay)

CHARTS: BA 416, F 51.

Half a mile west of Nasau Bay (described in "A Yachtsman's Fiji") this bay offers better protection and good holding in a mud bottom at 2 to 12 metres. There is room for half a dozen yachts to anchor in 6 metres.

Good snorkelling was found off the beach between the bays and on the coral patches lying up to 1.5 miles offshore. Tony and Margaret who live near Natuva point welcome visitors to their vanilla plantation.



TAVEUNI

SOMOSOMO

CHARTS: BA 416, F51

Heading north east through Somosomo Strait we continued a mile beyond the beacon due west of Korolevu island. From here a heading of 110 deg. True lead over a 12 metre shoal between Philips rock and the reefs around Korolevu island. The beacons on the reefs to the NNE of Korolevu and north of Black point were missing.

Approaching the village we anchored off the black sand beach just west of Somosomo creek in 10 metres.

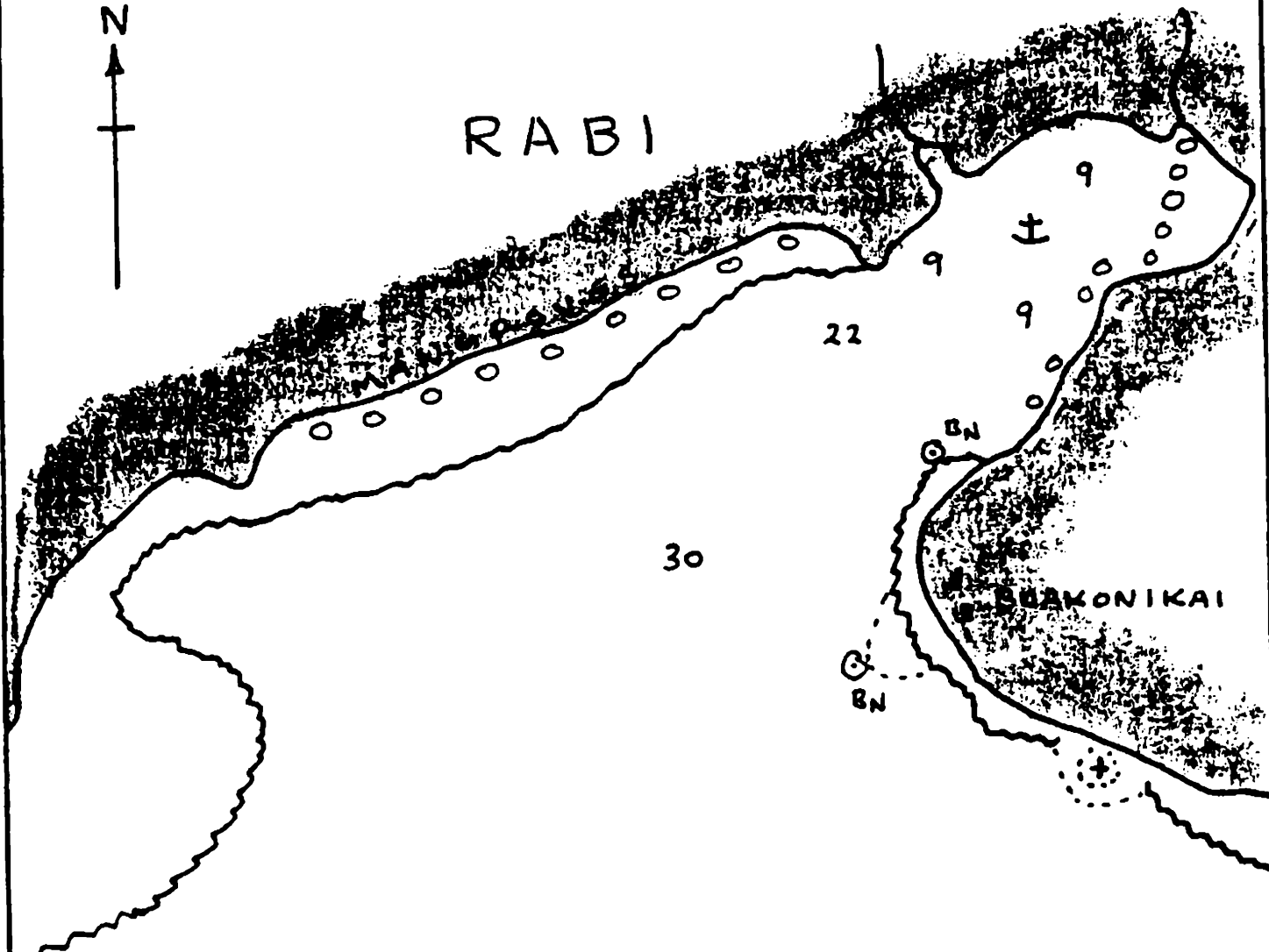
Somosomo the capital of Taveuni is a typical Fijian village with modern houses and two churches. At the east end of town there is a small Morris Hedstrom store. A short walk to the west is the multi-racial village of Naqara where every building appears to be a store or business. There are even two small motels and a car rental agency.

KATHERINE BAY

DEPTHS IN METRES



RABI



BAKONIKAI

BN
BN

30

22



9

9

9

9

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RABI

CHARTS: BA 416, F 51

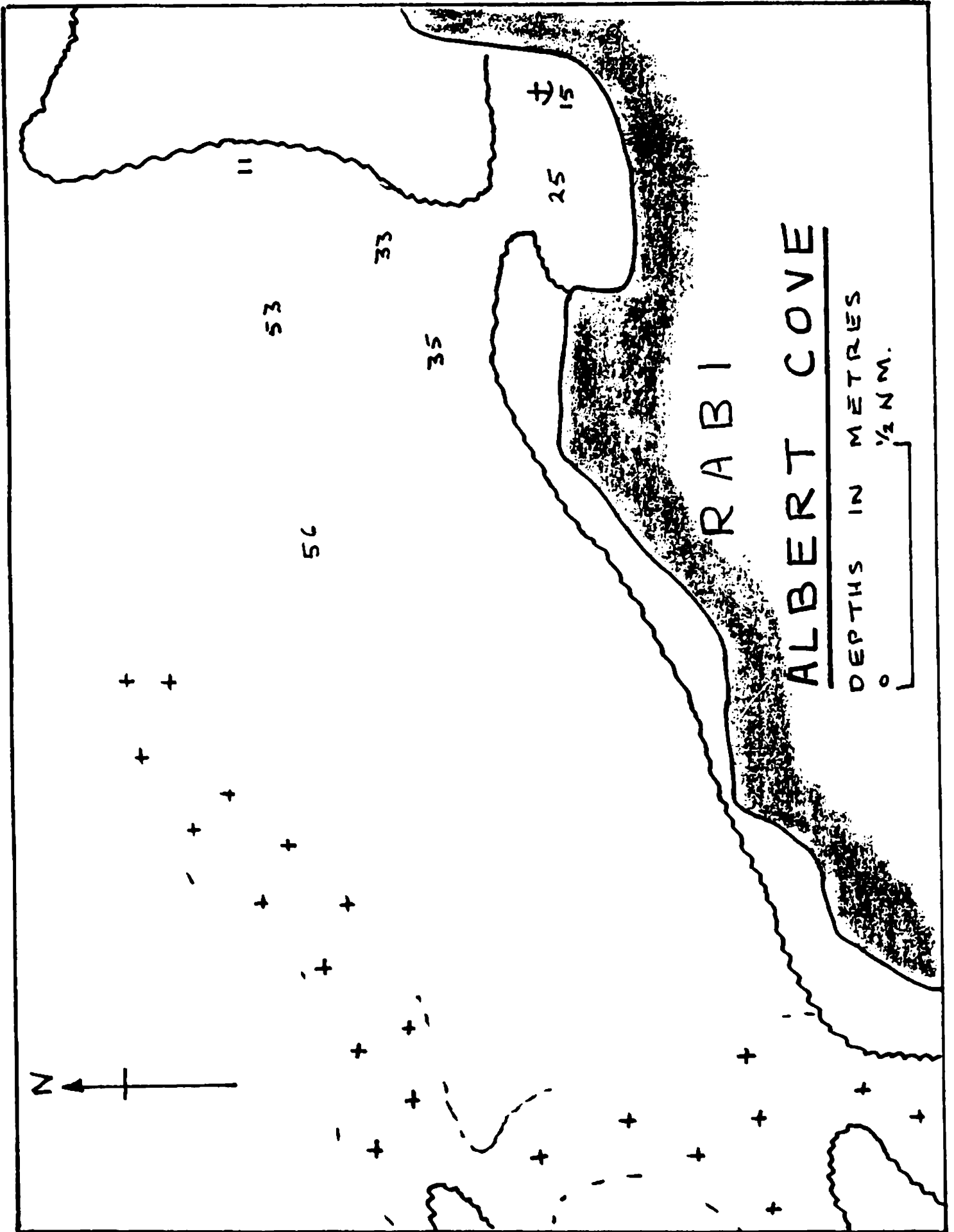
This island is populated by Micronesian Banabans resettled from Ocean island in Kiribati which was dug up to supply phosphates to the "civilised world".

KATHERINE BAY

This anchorage lies at the southern end of Rabi and provides protection from all but SW winds. Anchor in 5 to 7 metres mud bottom towards the head of the bay.

An old dock with copra shed gives access to Baukonikai village where you should report to the village policeman or warden.

Good snorkelling was found off the reef at the west point of the bay.



ALBERT COVE

Situated at the northern end of Rabi approach through Georgia channel. The reef 2.5 miles to the west off Elizabeth cove is continuous and then breaks up into large coral heads which are clearly visible in good light conditions. The reef to the north of Albert cove is continuous and provides a good lead in to the entrance.

Anchor in the NE part of the cove where sand patches will be found in depths sloping from 8 to 15 metres.

Villagers from Elizabeth cove have gardens near the beach and fish the adjacent reefs.