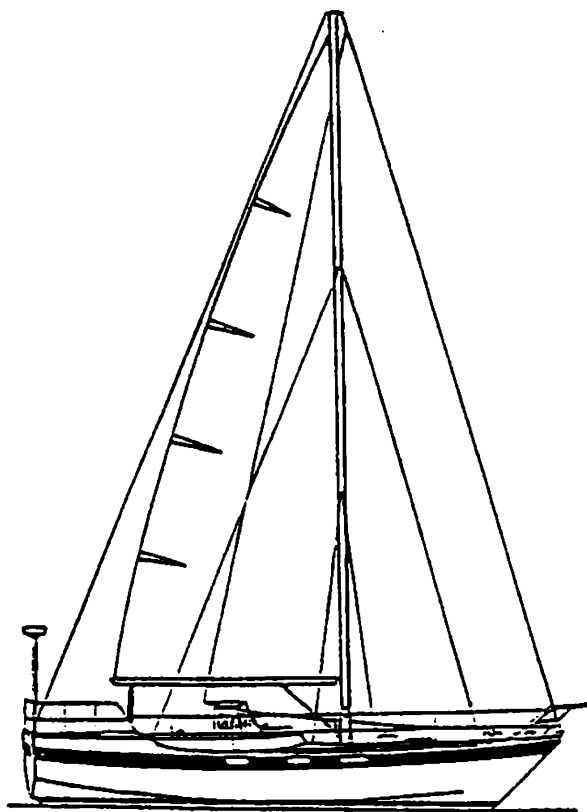


MIGRANT CRUISING NOTES  
**SOUTHERN NEW  
CALEDONIA**

A cruising yachtsman's notes on the Southern Part of  
New Caledonia, Noumea to the Isle of Pines.



By Phil Cregeen

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**A CRUISING YACHTSMAN'S NOTES ON  
THE SOUTHERN PART OF NEW CALEDONIA  
NOUMEA TO ISLE OF PINES**

**BY**

**PHIL CREGEEN**

**FIRST EDITION**

**November 1996**

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**These notes are intended for use with the appropriate navigation charts. While every effort has been made to provide accurate and reliable information the author makes no warranty, expressed or implied for any errors or omissions in this publication.**

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Five Avon Migrant Cruising Guides: for Fiji, Micronesia, Ha'apai Group and Southern New Caledonia by Phil Cregeen; and



Vanuatu by Bob Tiews and Thalia Hearne.



The New Zealand Marinas Guide by Boat Books Ltd.



TideComp Windows tide prediction program for all South West Pacific ports to the year 2010.



The MetService Yacht Pack by Bob McDavitt; a meteorological almanac for use with weatherfax and for general forecasting in the region.



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**BY THE SAME AUTHOR**

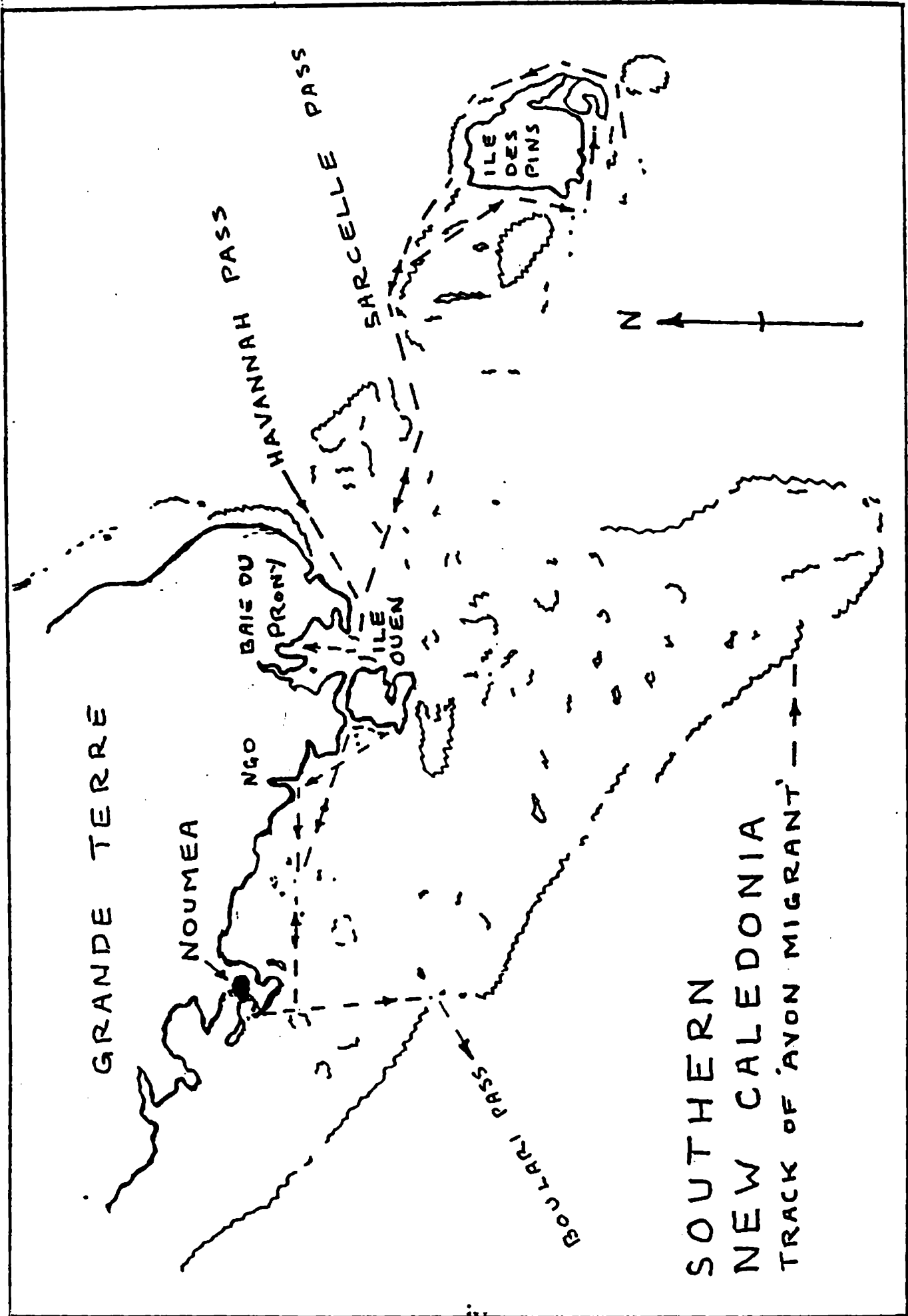
**A YACHTSMAN'S GUIDE TO HA'APAI**

**MIGRANT CRUISING NOTES - MICRONESIA**

**MIGRANT CRUISING NOTES - FIJI**

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

My thanks to my wife Pam for her assistance in preparing these notes and to my daughter Michelle for the artwork. Thanks also to Keith and Terry Marshall of *Sammy Ley* who shared the experience and encouraged me to write this guide.



GRANDE TERRE

NOUMEA

NGO

BAIE DU PRONTI

ILE OUVEN

HAWANNAH PASS

SARCELLE PASS

BOULARI PASS

ILE DES PINS

SOUTHERN  
NEW CALEDONIA  
TRACK OF 'AVON MIGRANT'



## **PREFACE**

**New Caledonia is a large country by Pacific Island standards and has much to offer the cruising yachtsman. It has first class marina facilities and secluded anchorages, a sophisticated city and rural villages, beautiful scenery and barren lands wasted by mining. While one could easily spend a whole season exploring Grande Terre and the offlying islands, most cruising yachts stop only for a few weeks at the end of their Pacific Island cruise. This guide is written for them.**

**These notes are based on our experiences and observations during our cruise to New Caledonia in our 11 metre steel sloop *Avon Migrant* in September and October of 1996. Their purpose is to provide current information for the cruising yachtsman. The area covered is from Noumea to Ile Ouen, Baie de Prony and Isle de Pins, the areas most visited by short stay cruising yachts.**

**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. They are based on existing charts and our own observations.**

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **FORMALITIES**

### **ENTRY**

Noumea is the only port of entry for New Caledonia. Yachts should not stop at any outer island or anchorage until they have cleared in at Noumea. There are no charges for clearing in or out.

Fly flag "Q". When about one hour from Noumea harbour call Port Moselle Marina on VHF Ch 67. The marina VHF is manned from 0700 to 1800. The marina will give you further instructions. These will normally be to proceed to the visitors dock inside the marina. This is the last pier of pontoon docks on your starboard side and is marked with a yellow cross and a large "visiteurs" sign. Marina staff will normally assist with berthing. Once secure the skipper should report to the "Capitainerie", Harbour Masters Office at the end of the visitors pier. The harbour master will call Quarantine, Customs and Immigration Officers to attend at your boat. The officials are polite and helpful and will process you quickly, but it may be protracted if several yachts arrive at the same time.

If you arrive outside of normal working hours anchor outside of the marina and call in the morning. (See Noumea Anchorages)

Quarantine may remove fresh fruit and vegetables. In our case the official removed bananas from Vanuatu. Customs will impound firearms until your departure.

The length of stay you are allowed in New Caledonia will depend upon your nationality and the visa requirements. It is

recommended that you check the requirements before departing for New Caledonia. Customs will normally allow a yacht to remain for a maximum period of 6 months.

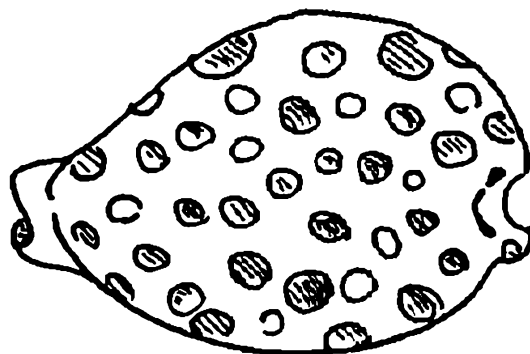
Once entry formalities are complete you are free to go ashore and cruise within the country without need for further permits.

The first night at the marina is free for overseas yachts. If not remaining in the marina you should depart by 0900 next morning. Depending on the numbers of yachts arriving you may negotiate to remain at the visitors dock.

## DEPARTURE

Within 24 hours of your intended departure or on Friday for yachts leaving at the weekend, the skipper should present his ships papers to:

Customs,	4, Rue Felix Ruseil.
Immigration	Port Autonome, 36, Ave James Cook
Harbour Master of Port Autonome,	as above.



## CHAPTER 2

### NAVIGATION

#### CHARTS AND PILOTS

New Caledonia is well charted and covered by BA, DMA and French charts. New BA charts are generally corrected up to the date of sale, but DMA charts are earning a reputation for being well out of date. French charts that we examined were up to date. Sadly many of the new metric charts lack the detail of old fathoms charts and it is worth consulting these old charts to determine possible routes and anchorages within the reefs. The west coast of the Ile des Pins is an example of this.

For the area covered by this guide refer to the following charts:

#### British Admiralty 1996

No	Description	Scale	Date
936	Nouvelle Caledonie (S E part)	1: 500,000	11/93
2906	Ile des Pins to Canal Woodin	1: 75,000	8/91
2907	Canal Woodin to Passe du Uitone	1: 75,000	8/91
480	Noumea	1: 15,000	12/94
2925	Plans in Nouvelle Caledonie		
	Havannah to Woodin	1: 30,000	3/91
	Baie de Kuto	1: 35,000	

#### USA DMA 1992-93

82683	Nouvelle Caledonie (S Part)	1: 300,000
82697	Ile Ouen to Ile des Pins	1: 59,500
82694	Monte Dore to Port Boise	1: 59,500
82689	Approaches to Noumea	1: 59,600
82690	Noumea Port	1: 15,000

French

7052S Noumea to Ile des Pins

6933S Baie du Prony to Ile des Pins

New Caledonia is covered by the Admiralty Pacific Island Pilot Vol. II and from a yachtsman's perspective by "Cruising In New Caledonia" Second Edition 1996, published by Noumea Yacht Charters.

### **NAVIGATION AIDS**

Lights, buoys and beacons are IALA System A (combined cardinal and lateral, red to port) and are well maintained.

### **GPS**

New charts indicate any corrections that need to be applied to satellite derived positions when plotting on the chart. On the old fathoms version of BA 2906 and 2907 we found a correction of about 0.3 minutes needed to be added to Longitude, however I recommend that you confirm this for yourself by visual fixes.

### **TIDES AND TIDAL STREAMS**

There are two high and two low tides per day with a maximum range of about 1 metre.

Outside of the barrier reef the South Sub-Tropical Current sets to the west at about half a knot, its influence is strongest between Grand Terre and the Loyalty Islands but it may be reduced by prolonged westerly winds. South and west of New Caledonia this current is mostly blocked by the barrier reef.

Tidal streams inside the barrier reef set generally north-west and south-east along the coast. However, at the barrier reef the flow is in and out through the passes. At Havannah Passage and Sarcelle Passage the tidal stream is strong and can reach up to 5 knots, with heavy overfalls and eddies especially when the wind is counter to the flow. In Canal Woodin the tidal stream sets east and west at 3 to 4 knots.

## **WEATHER**

The cyclone season is from December to March and each year some part of New Caledonia feels the effect of a cyclone. During these summer months the climate is warm and humid.

In winter (June to September) the climate is more temperate with temperatures around 18 to 24 ° C. There is no dry season and rain can be expected at any time of year.

The predominant winds are south-east trades but these are interrupted at irregular intervals by fronts and troughs moving across from Australia which can produce strong westerly winds.

Inside the barrier reef the trade winds are greatly affected by land and sea breezes. Around the south-east coast of Grande Terre the general daily pattern is as follows:

Overnight	Calm or light south-east wind
0800/0900	Moderate south-east wind strengthening
1100 to Dusk	Strong south-east wind.

Thus the tactic for sailing to the south lagoon is to leave at first light and motor as far as possible before the wind strength gets too strong to make the passage uncomfortable. You may wait a long time for a westerly.

## **WEATHER INFORMATION**

### **VOICE:**

**NOUMEA RADIO** broadcasts weather reports in French as follows:

For West, East and South Lagoon at 0630 and 1830 local. Announced on VHF 16 and broadcast on VHF 22 to 28 depending on location.

Ocean Area forecasts are broadcast at 0330Z, 0500Z, 2000Z, 2330Z on 4366khz and 0100Z, 0400Z, 2300Z on 8731 Khz.

**FM RADIO STATIONS** Broadcast weather reports in French as follows:

RFO 89 Mhz at 0755 and 1830 local

RADIO DJIIDO 97.4 Mhz at 0730, 1030, 1400, 1600, 1900 local.

**TOWNSVILLE RADIO** broadcasts the high seas forecast at 0033Z and 1233Z on 12,365 Khz USB.

**ARNOLD** broadcasts weather for the south-west Pacific at 0400Z on 14,318 Khz USB.

### **FAX:**

**WELLINGTON** broadcast Analysis and Prognosis charts for the south-west Pacific at 0315Z, 1515Z, and 1600Z, 2345Z respectively on 5807, 9459, 13550, 16340, Khz USB.

**MELBOURNE** Broadcast Analysis charts covering Australia and New Caledonia at 2015Z and 0845Z on 5100, 11030, 13920, 19690, 20469 Khz. USB

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

On arrival at Port Moselle we were given a little free booklet entitled "Pavillon Jaune - Yachting guide of Port Moselle". It is full of useful information about Noumea.

#### **CHANDLERY**

There is a well stocked chandlery in Rue de General Mangin, where you will find marine hardware, diving gear and French charts.

#### **CURRENCY**

Money used in New Caledonia is the CFP (Communaute Francaise du Pacific) Franc, (1F.CFP = 00.055 F.FR fixed). In September 1996 exchange rates were as follows:

GB £ 1 = 138 F.CFP

US \$ 1 = 91 F.CFP

NZ \$ 1 = 63 F.CFP

Aus \$ 1 = 72 F.CFP

Major credit cards are readily accepted at many retail outlets. We obtained cash using a credit card at the main branch of Westpac on Avenue du Marechal Foch.

#### **DUTY FREE**

Duty free stores should be ordered two days before your intended departure, for delivery onboard after you have cleared out at Customs. We purchased our duty free supplies from Saint Honore Duty Free, 39, Rue de Sebastopol, Noumea. See Ron at Port Moselle berth B 29 for a price list, if he hasn't already given you one.

## **FUEL**

Diesel and Petrol may be bought at the fuel docks in Port Moselle or CNC Marinas. We did not see any source of Diesel in any other place we visited. Petrol can be bought in cans at Vao in the Isle of Pines.

## **HAUL OUT**

This can be arranged at the CNC marina and in 1996 the cost was 3,000 F.CFP per metre, (see page 22).

## **HOSPITAL**

The General Hospital is at the end of Rue du General Mangin on Avenue Paul Doumer.

## **LPG**

French Butane cylinders (with snap-on connection) may be exchanged at various outlets around Noumea and also in the Isle of Pines. To fill your own cylinders take them to:

S J Cheval, Rue Jules Ferry, opposite the cruise ship berth two blocks past Casino supermarket (look for the Mazda sign). Or SOGAPAC in Rue de Verdun, behind Casino supermarket.

## **LANGUAGE**

Being a French colony the common language of the country is obviously French. We found that many of the French people spoke excellent English, especially in establishments catering for overseas visitors.

## **MAIL**

Inward mail may be collected from Poste Restante at the Post Office but a charge of 65 F.CFP is made for each item. Better to have you mail forwarded to Port Moselle Marina, (see page 22) where it will be held for your arrival.

## **PEOPLE**

The population of New Caledonia is split about half indigenous Melanesians (Kanakas) and half French colonists, with a smattering of other European, Asian and Pacific races. Our encounters with all races were pleasant but sadly there is not the same interaction between locals and cruising yachts as one finds in other Pacific islands.

## **PROVISIONS**

The choice of provisions in Noumea is probably the best in the Pacific Islands. Prices are certainly higher than say Fiji, but some basic food items such as bread and vegetables are reasonably priced. We found that the Casino supermarket on Rue Jules Ferry offered a good choice and was convenient to the Port Moselle anchorage. There is also a Casino supermarket close to CNC Marina. However there are others to choose from.

The market at Port Moselle (open 0500 to 1100) offers a good selection of fresh fruit and vegetables but prices of fruit are high compared to other Pacific countries.

## **PHOTOCOPY**

Port Moselle Marina Office can make A3 and A4 photocopies.

## **SHIPPING AGENTS**

We received goods from West Marine in the USA and used DHL couriers. Their office is at the west end of the block of shipping agents in a building adjacent to Port Autonome Harbour Office, 12 Rue Commandant Babo, Tel 27 55 70. We found them to be both helpful and efficient.

## **TIME**

The time zone of New Caledonia is UTC plus 11 hours .

## **TRANSPORT**

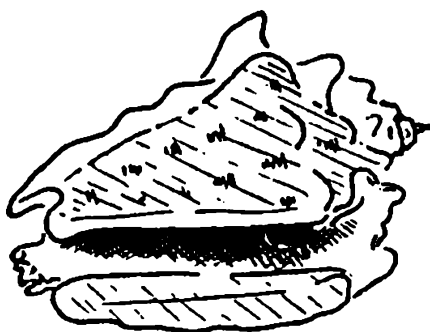
Getting around Noumea is straightforward and inexpensive by bus. They depart at frequent intervals from the bus station which is just north across Avenue de la Victoire-Henri Lafleur from the market. City buses are on the left and country buses on the right.

## **TOURIST INFORMATION**

The Touris Information office is on Rue du Gouv. Sautot close to the junction with Rue d' Austerlitz.

## **WATER**

The public water supply appears to be clean and safe to drink. Water may be taken on at the marina berths or fuel docks. At Kuto Bay in the Isle des Pins there is a tap at the small stone jetty, where it is relatively easy to ferry water in cans. At high tide it is possible to moor bow to this jetty and fill up by hose. Around Baie du Prony there are several fresh water streams but I would not consider this potable water.



## CHAPTER 4

### ANCHORAGES AND DIRECTIONS

#### NOTE:

Anchorage where we dropped our hook are marked on the sketch charts by a whole anchor, those that we investigated but did not anchor, or those where we saw other yachts at anchor are marked by a half anchor. I consider them all to be "overnight anchorages" but you must use your own judgement to decide if they are safe for the expected weather conditions.

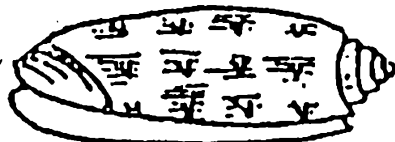
All depths are in METRES

All headings are deg. TRUE.

There are some variations in the spelling of place names between charts and the various references. An example of this is Uameo, Ouameo, Uamaeo.

#### MARINE RESERVES

In the South Lagoon there are a number of Marine Reserves where there are restrictions to access and fishing. For more information refer to the leaflet "Guide des Reserves Marines" which may be obtained from the Port Moselle marina office or Tourist Information.



## **PART I**

### **NOUMEA**

#### **APPROACH TO NOUMEA**

For yachts making their first arrival in New Caledonia it is recommended that the approach to Noumea be made through **Havannah Passage** when coming from the north or east and **Boulari Passage** when coming from the south or west. Both of these passages are well marked by lights and beacons. We entered by the Havannah and left by way of Boulari Passage.

#### **Havannah Passage**

The tidal stream through this passage can reach up to 5 knots with heavy overfalls and eddies, especially when wind is counter to the stream. It is thus recommended that you time your arrival to coincide with the start of the flood tide, which will then assist your passage all the way to Noumea. The distance from the pass to Noumea is about 40 miles.

The pass is 1.25 miles wide and a least depth of 10 metres. A course of 247 deg. True taken on the white leading marks leads through to Cap Ndoua. There is a white light house (fl 2 sec.) on the reef north of the pass which can be seen at 12 miles. At night the three leading lights on Cap Ndoua can also be seen at about 12 miles.

Recif Ioro, which is marked by a light beacon at its seaward end, may be passed on either side, then round Cap Ndoua at a safe distance. Leaving the sectored white and green light beacon on Recif du Prony to starboard enter Canal Woodin

which is steep to and clear of dangers. A sectored white and green light assists passage through Canal Woodin.

From the west end of Canal Woodin the recommended route is to the sectored light on tiny Ile Porc Epic and then due west to round Ile Aux Canards. There is a starboard hand channel buoy south-west of this island from which a course may be shaped to Petite Passe into Noumea Harbour.

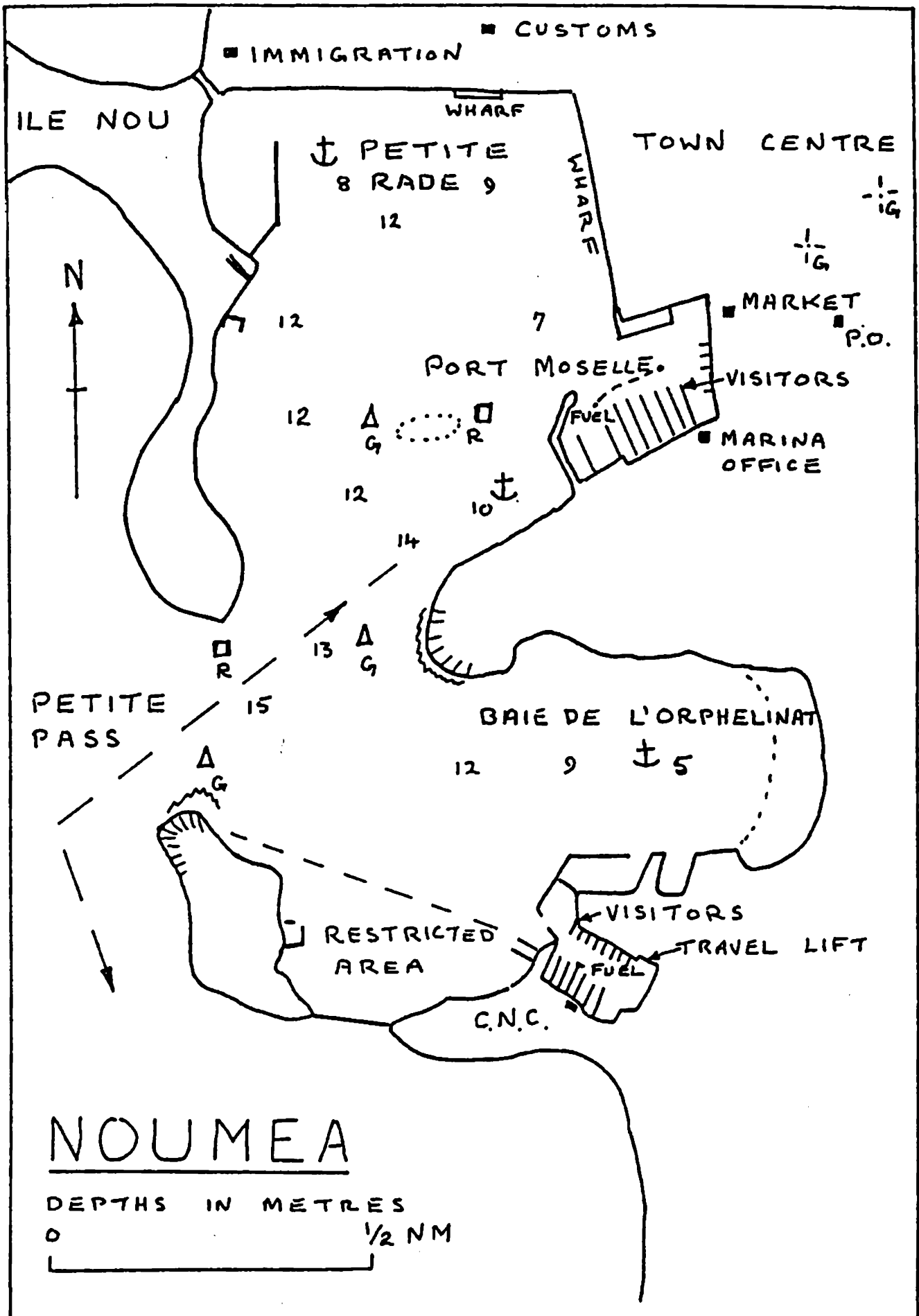
### **Boulari Passage**

There are in fact three passes through the reef at this point, but the northern one is the only one marked by lights and beacons. The location of the pass is best indicated by the white 53 metre tower of Amedee light house (fl (2) 6 sec.) and a conspicuous wreck stranded on the reef about 5 miles west of the pass.

To enter the 0.4NM wide pass align the white tower in front of Amadee light house with the main tower on a heading of 050 deg. True. Once inside the pass round Recif Tabu leaving the red and white sectored beacon to port. Then steer a course of 356 deg. True for Ile aux Canards following the buoyed channel to Petite Passe into Noumea.

I have found no reference to significant tidal streams at this pass but there is a general set to the west.

The distance from Boulari Pass to Noumea is about 13 miles.



## **NOUMEA**

Marinas and anchorages for yachts are situated in that part of the harbour lying to the south-west of the town and entered through Petite Passe.

Yachts arriving from overseas should proceed to the new Port Moselle Marina (see Entry Formalities). Two fixed green leading lights lead through Petite Passe on a heading of 055 deg. True, between red and green channel buoys. Steer west of the yachts at anchor. You may safely pass between the red buoy east of Banc de L' Infernal and the end of the breakwater.

### **Port Moselle Marina**

The visitors berth is the last pier of pontoon docks on the starboard side and is marked with a yellow cross and a large "visiteurs" sign.

The first night at this marina is free for yachts arriving from overseas and all entry formalities are completed here. Depending upon availability of berths you may negotiate to remain at the visitors berth for a number of days. Charges in 1996 were 1540 F.CFP per day for an 11 metre yacht and 2600 F.CFP per day for 17 metre yacht.

The marina provides the following services:

- pontoon berth, water, electricity 220v, toilets & showers, mail, fax and telephone, garbage disposal, dinghy dock,
- fuel dock and laundromat at the end of breakwater

Yachts at anchor may use the marina facilities for a charge of 400 F.CFP per day.

Office hours are: Mon. to Fri. 0800 to 1200, 1330 to 1730,  
Sat. 0800 to 1200, Sun. 0800 to 1000. Monitor VHF 67

Address:

Port Moselle Marina  
BP 2960  
98846 Noumea  
New Caledonia  
Tel. 687 27 80 95  
Fax. 687 27 71 29

**Cercle Nautique Caledonien (CNC), Yacht Club and Marina**

This marina is situated in the south-east corner of Baie de L'Orphelinat. The entrance is between the French Navy wharf and the fuel jetty. It has some berths available for visiting yachts, tied stern too a wooden fronted jetty just inside the entrance. The following facilities are provided:

yacht club, restaurant, toilets, showers, fuel, water,  
travel lift.

Charges in 1996 were 600 F.CFP per day for a berth, first two days free. Haul out 3,000 F.CFP per metre.

Call at the office to arrange a berth or call on VHF 68.

Address:

Cercle Nautique Caledonien  
BP 235  
Noumea  
New Caledonia  
Tel. 687 26 27 27  
Fax 687 26 28 38

## **Anchorage**

Yachts are permitted to anchor in the following areas:

- a. Port Moselle, west of the marina breakwater, inside a line drawn from the end of the breakwater to the green starboard hand buoy off Point de L' Artilleria, in about 10 to 12 metres.
- b. Baie de L' Orphelinat north and east of CNC Marina in 5 to 10 metres.
- c. Petite Rade, in the north-west corner, in 8 to 12 metres, but only in order to shelter from westerly winds.

## **The Town**

By Pacific island standards Noumea is a modern bustling town that should be able to provide for all your needs. Prices of goods and services are expensive, apart from a few basic food items, when compared to prices in Fiji or New Zealand.

The commercial area lies generally to the east and north of Port Moselle. The Capitainere will provide you with street maps and a small pocket guide on arrival.

Banks, P.O., market and supermarkets and a chandlery are all within easy walking distance of Port Moselle Marina. There is also a shopping complex close to CNC Marina. Public buses serve all parts of the town from the bus station across Avenue de la Victoire Henri Lafleuar from the market.

## **Places of Interest**

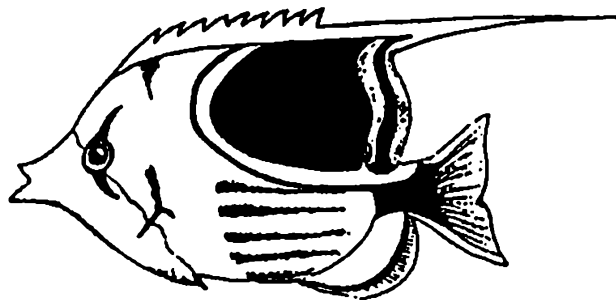
Guide books will provide you with information on all the things to see and do. We found the Lonely Planet guide very good and enjoyed visits to the following:

**Museum**, entry free, close to PO east of Port Moselle

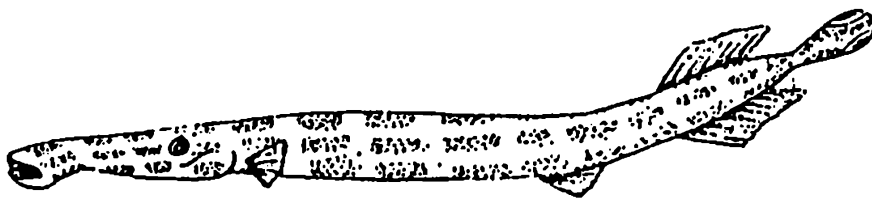
**Aquarium**, entry 610 F.CFP, at Anse Vata, bus No6

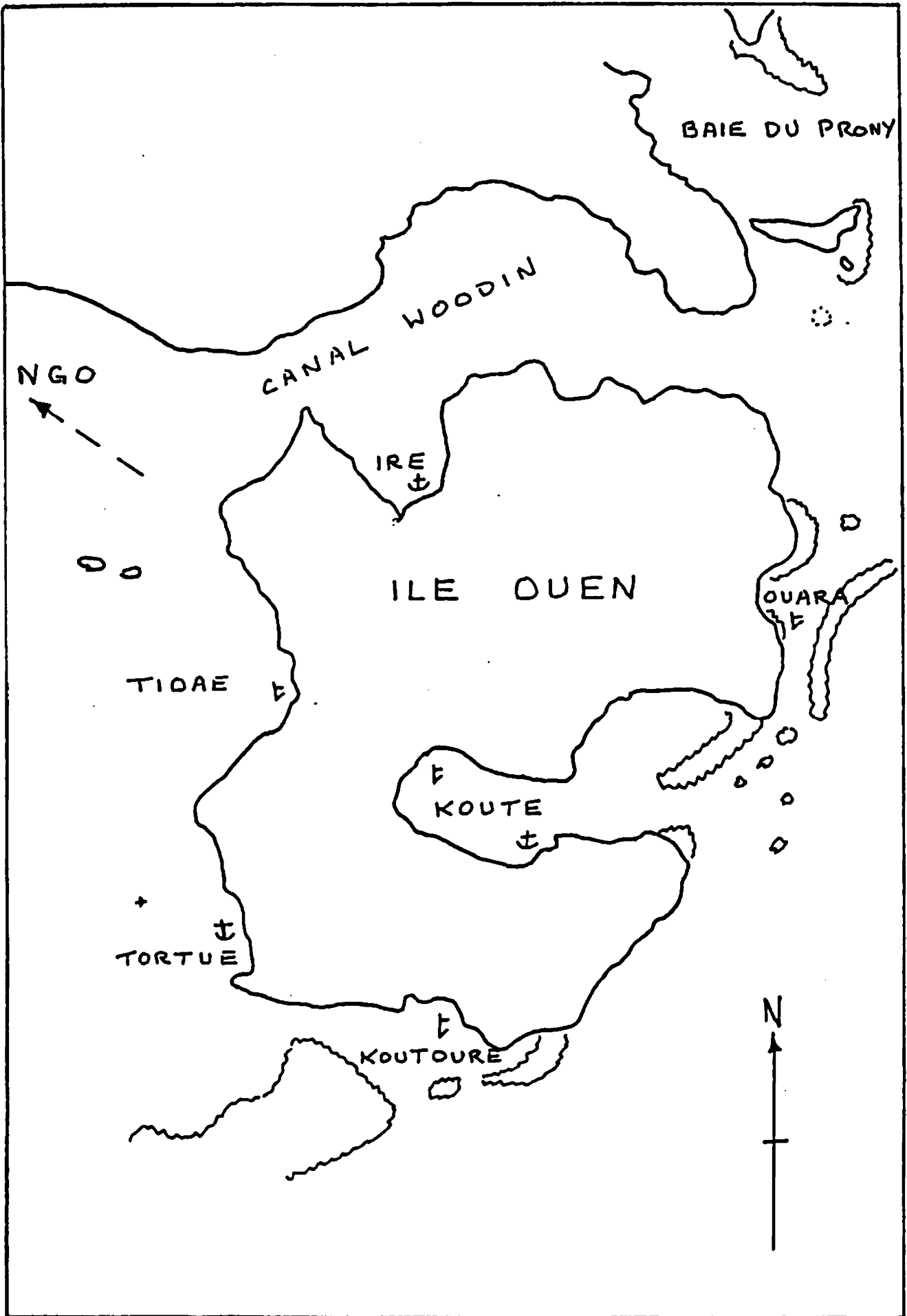
**Forest Park**, entry 330 F.CFP, bus No 12 and walk last 1 km.

**Societe Le Nickel**, phone to arrange a free tour of smelter. A minimum number of 8 people is required and you must hire your own minibus. This cost us 700 F.CFP per person for half a day..



## NOTES



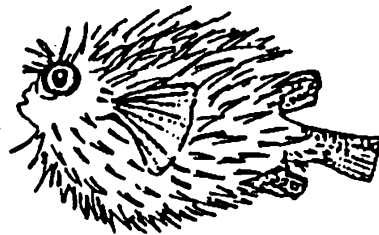


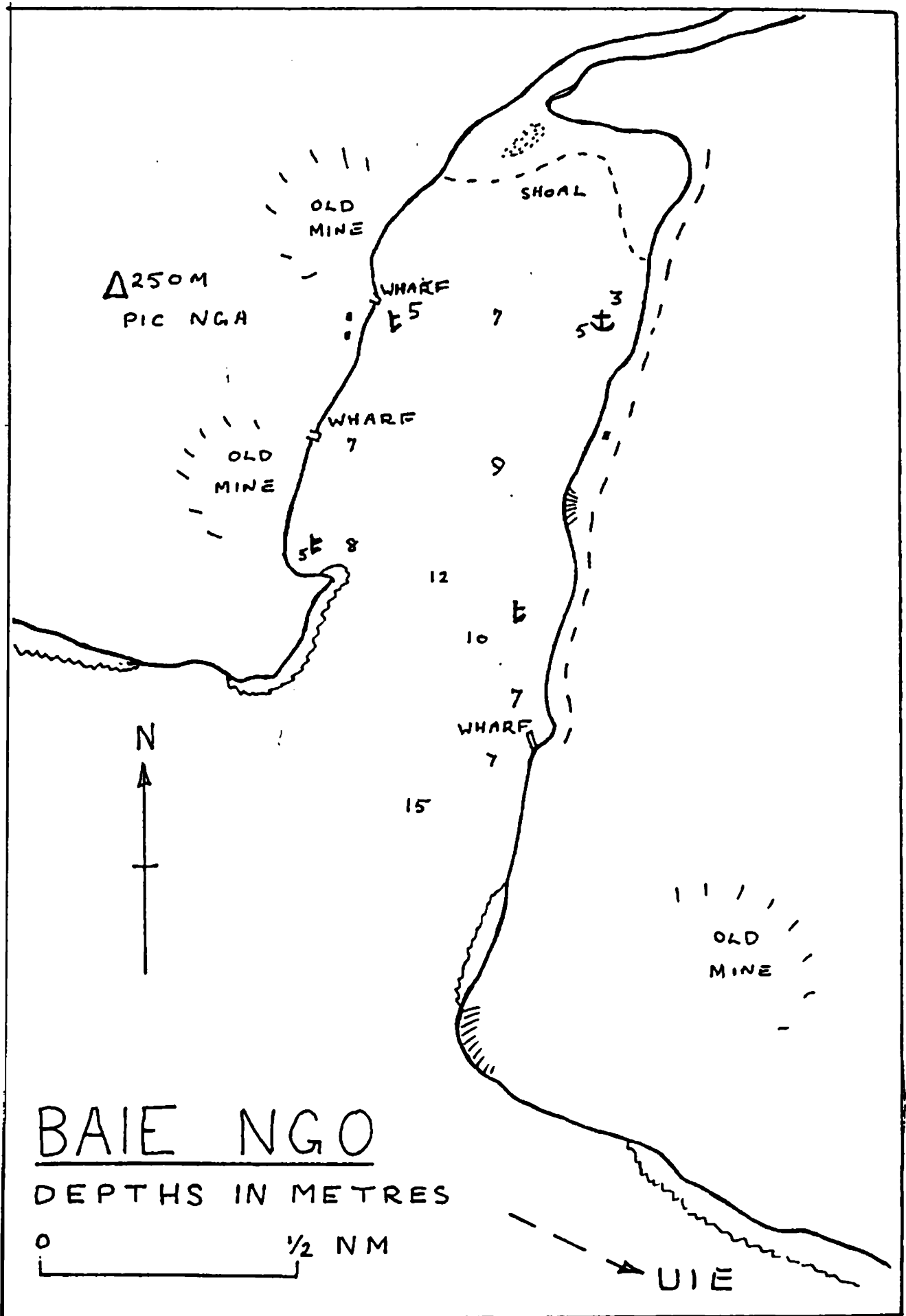
## PART II

### BAIE NGO TO ILE OUEN

Baie Ngo lies due east and about 18 miles from Noumea. This is a reasonable distance to achieve in the early morning before the wind and seas build up. Once south of Ile Aux Canards, sailing a course of 090 deg. True along 22° 20' S Latitude, will bring you to this bay. The reefs and banks on either side of this track are marked by beacons and buoys.

Eight miles to the south-east is Ile Ouen which lies off the southern end of Grande Terre and is separated from it by Canal Woodin. It is a barren land covered in scrub and heavily eroded in places. On the eastern side at Baie de Ouara there is a small Melanesian village, and in the south-west corner a small resort. There are a number of sheltered anchorages around the coast of the island.





## **BAIE NGO**

This bay provides good shelter from all but southerly winds and even then shelter can be found in the south-west cove. From the south the bay can be identified by white scar on the hillside to the left and behind it the conical hill Pic Nga (250 M).

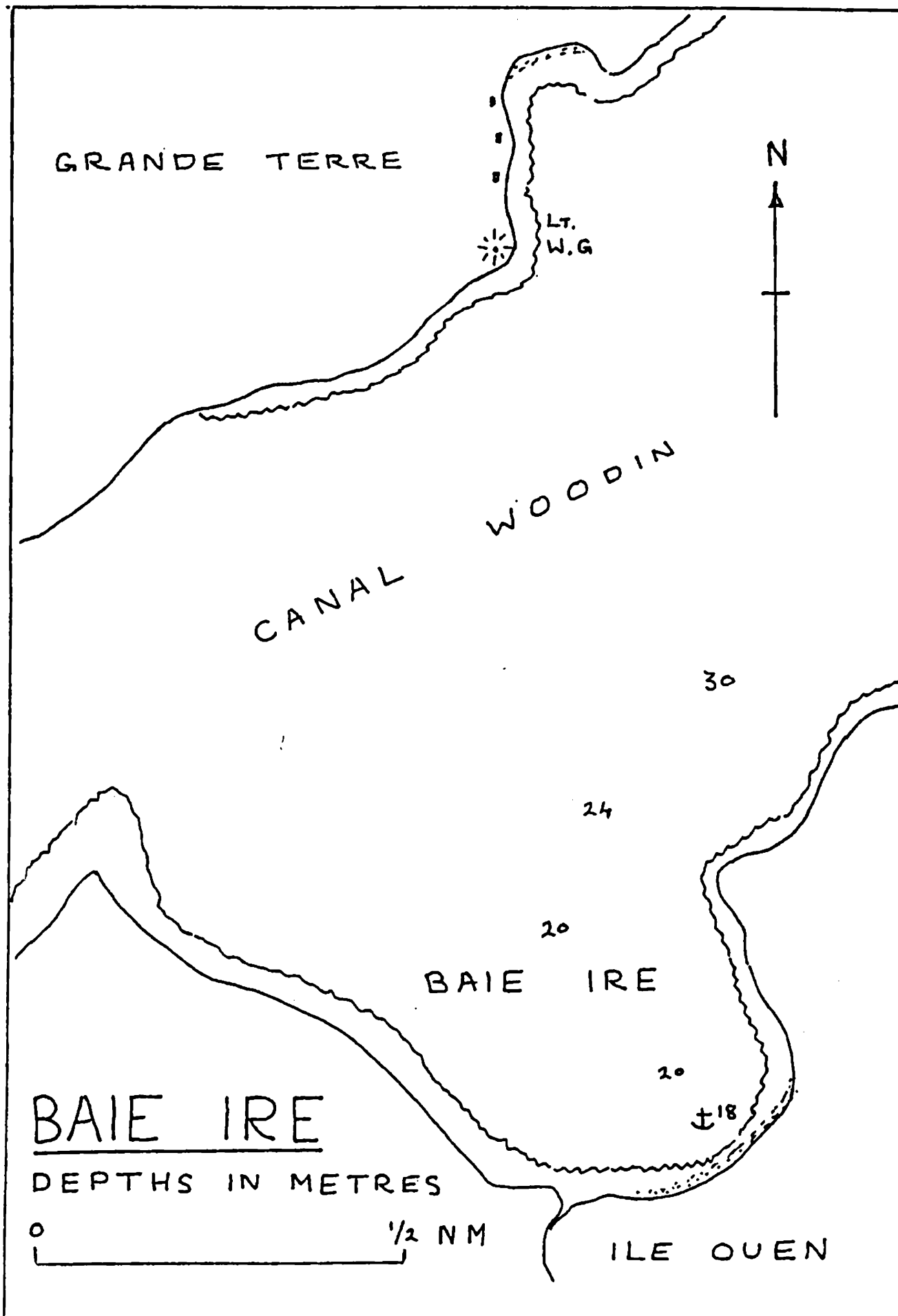
The bay is clear of dangers and the depth decreases steadily from 15 to 5 metres, but shoals towards the head. We anchored on the east side towards the head of the bay in 5 metres, mud bottom. In a very strong easterly wind we found good protection, but strong gusts funnelled down the valley to the north. A more sheltered anchorage appeared to be just north of the ruined wharf on the east side of the bay.

In southerly winds the cove in the south-west corner offers reasonable protection.

There is evidence of old open cast mining all around this bay. At high tide it is possible to take a dinghy up the river but it is quite shallow.

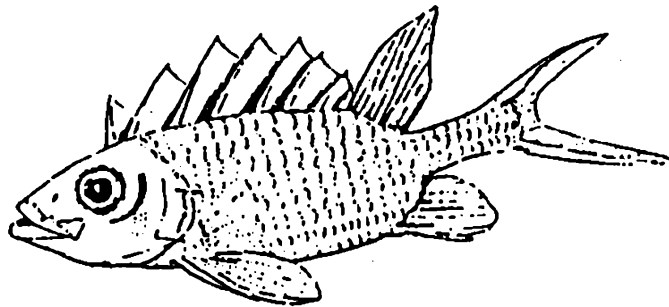
## **BAIE UIE**

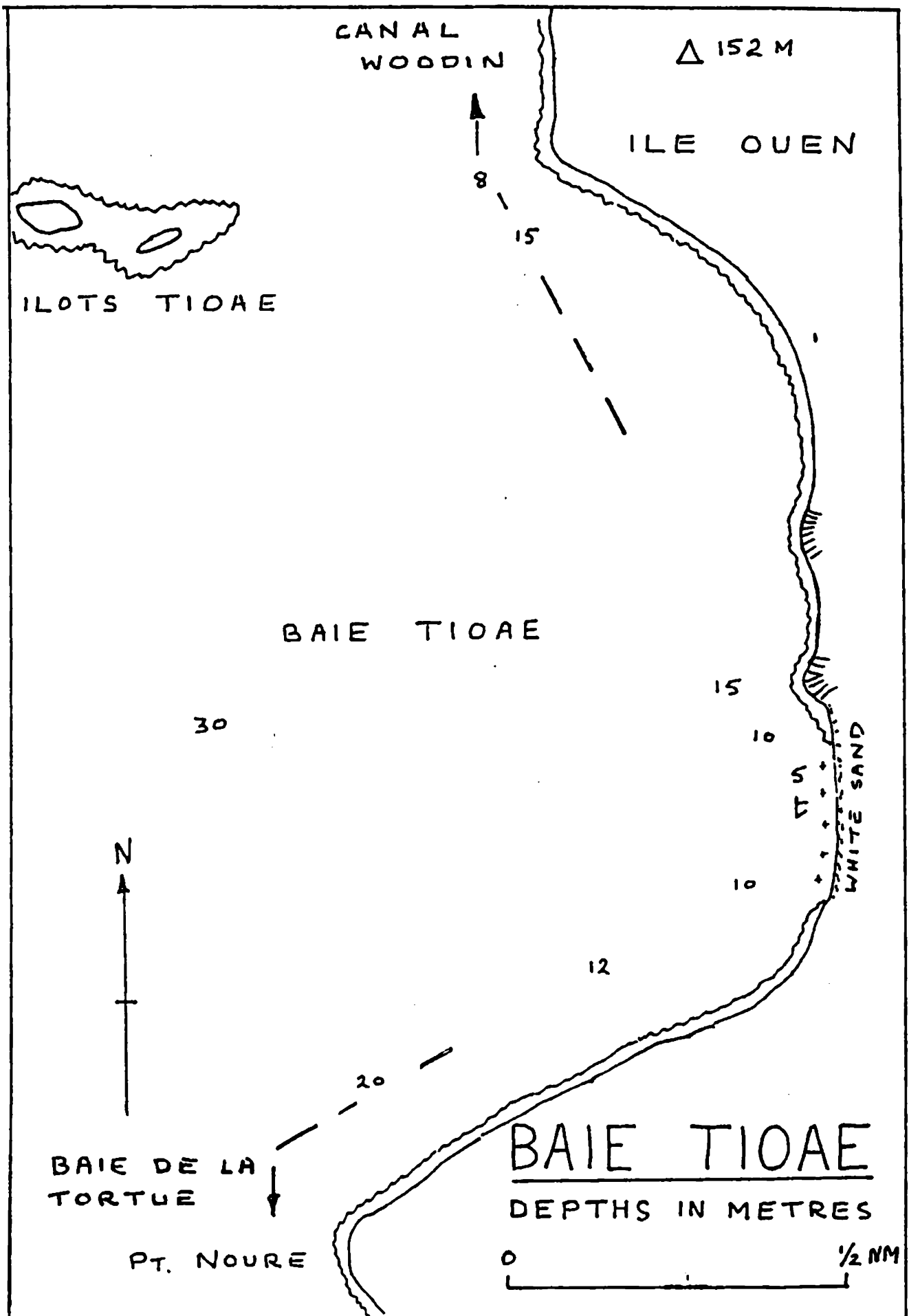
We did not visit this bay but it would appear to offer good protection from all but westerly sector winds. It is clear of dangers except for a narrow fringing reef and shoal water of 1 metre at the head. An anchorage may be found in 4 to 7 metres.



## **BAIE IRE**

This anchorage lies at the west end of Canal Woodin. Apart from a narrow fringing reef it is clear of dangers. We anchored in the south-east corner in 18 metres, mud bottom. Close to shore the bottom rises rapidly to 1 metre.

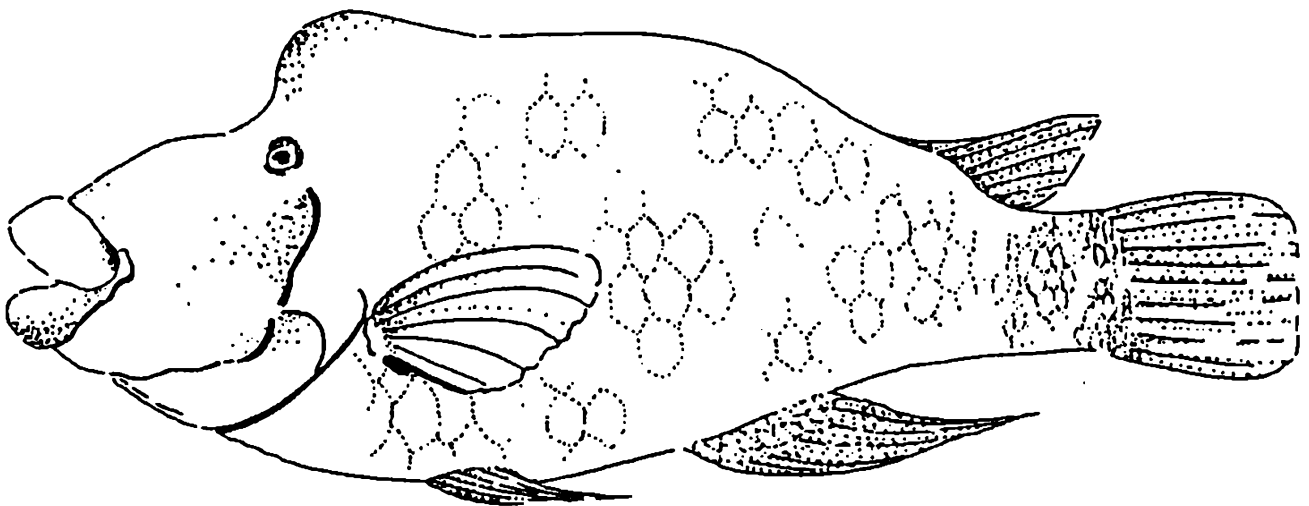


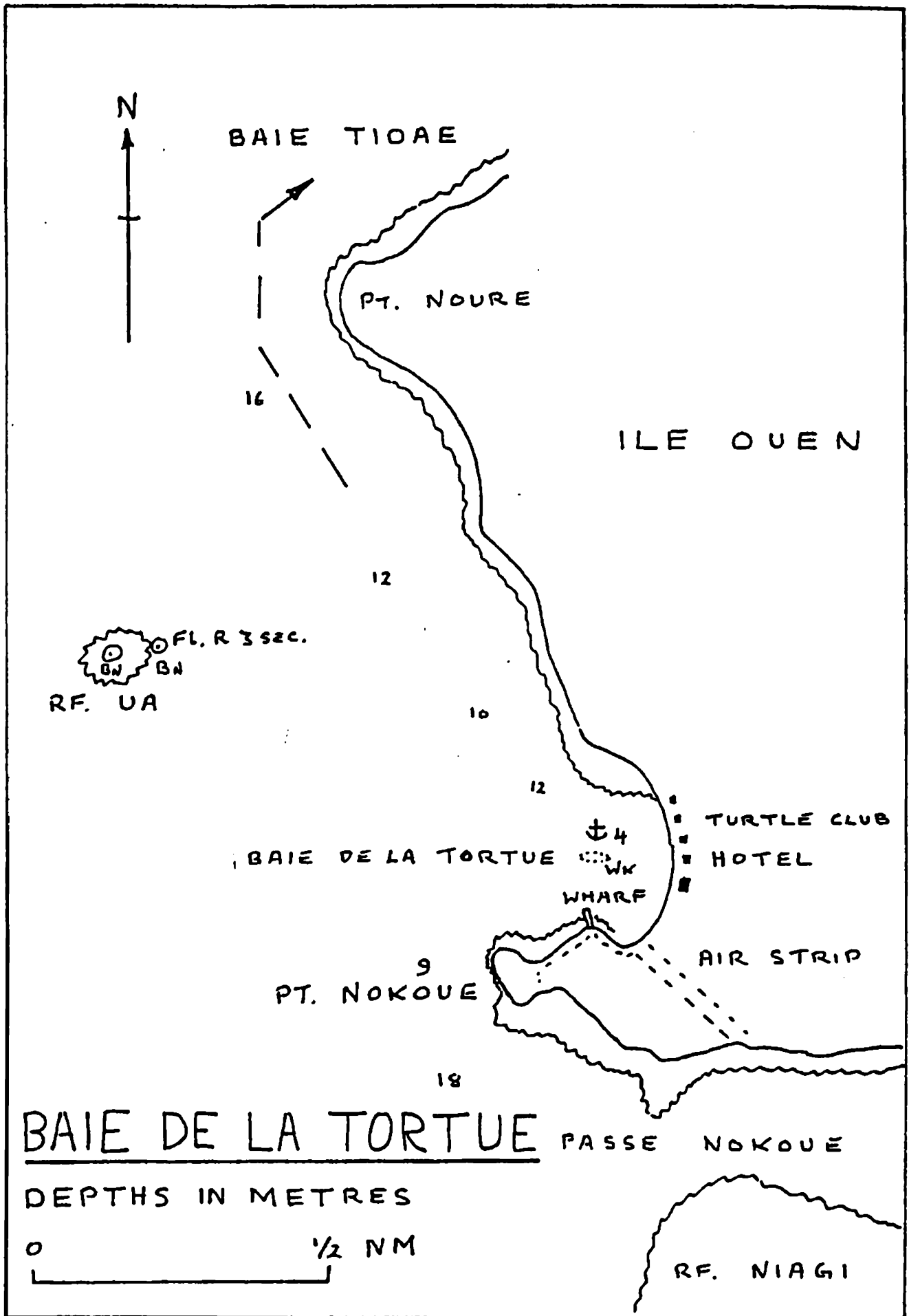


## **BAIE TIOAE**

We approached this bay from the north between Ilot Tioae and Ile Ouen. The bay is open to the west and clear of dangers.

Anchor in the southern half of the bay, off the white sand beach in front of the valley, in about 5 metres, sand bottom. Close to the beach there are some coral heads.





## **BAIE DE LA TORTUE**

From the north or west the only danger to be cleared is Recif Ua which lies about 0.7 NM north-west of the anchorage. This reef is marked by a beacon (Fl R 3 sec).

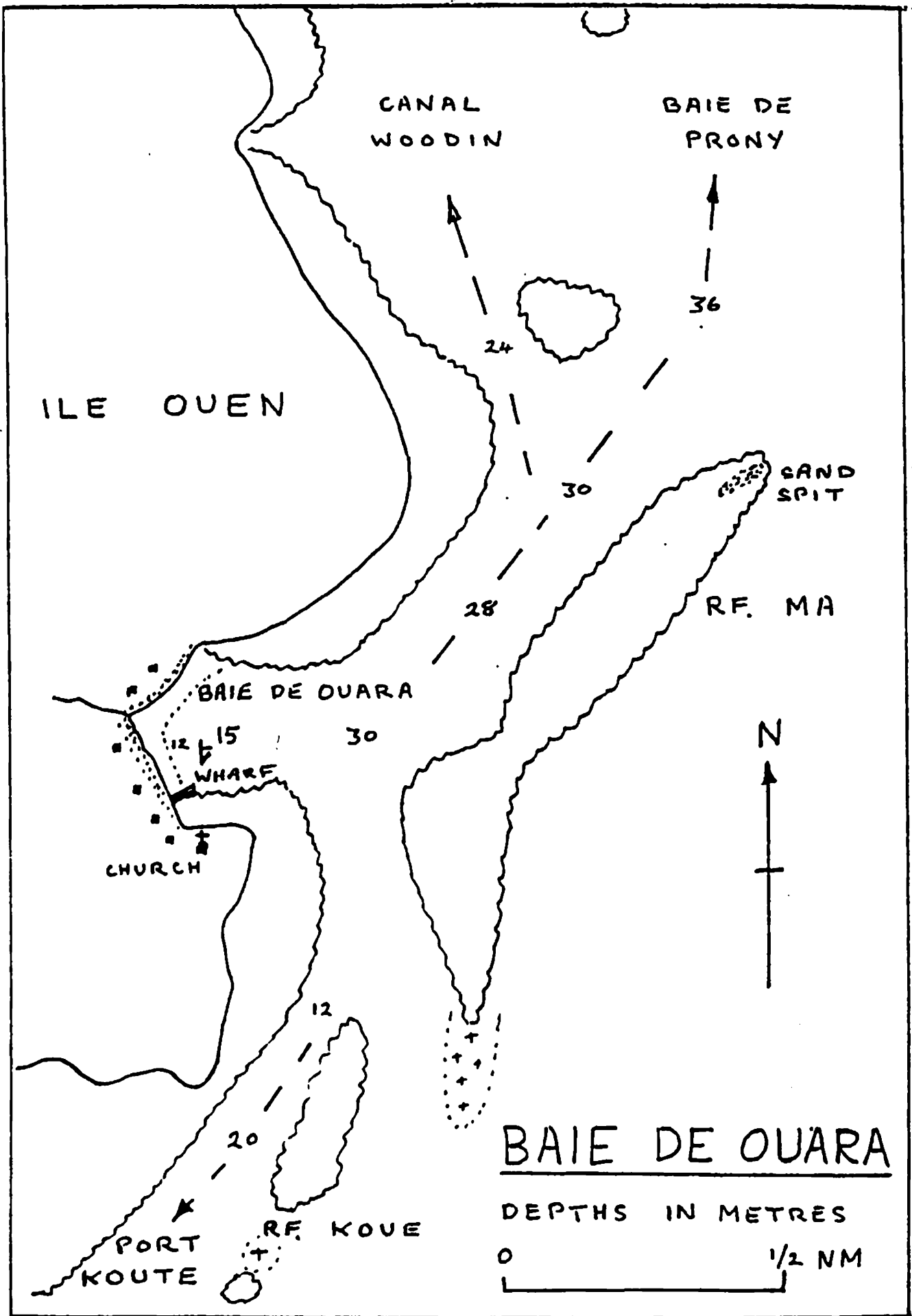
The bay has a small fringing reef to north and south and a sand beach at the head. On the south side is a wharf. We anchored near the middle of the bay in 5 metres, sand bottom. Note that a sunken launch, which has the appearance of a coral head, lies on the bottom in the middle of the bay in 5 metres. It is not a hazard to your boat but could foul your anchor.

At the time of our visit Turtle Club Hotel was closed.

## **PASSE NOKOUE & PORT KOUTOURE**

We did not use this pass ourselves due to unfavourable weather for eyeball navigation. It is possible for a yacht to pass around the south end of Ile Ouen passing between the island and Recif Niagi. From the west round Point Nokoue at a safe distance and head east but note the reef extending to the south from the next headland. The depth decreases from 10 metres down to the shallowest part of 2.4 metres south of the end of the airstrip. Continue east into Port Koutoure watching out for the isolated coral patch off the north-west corner of Recif Niagi. Exit through the gap between Recif Niagi and the western end of the chain of reefs extending from the southern point of Ile Ouen. The Pilot advises that the tidal streams through this passage are very strong.

Anchorage may be found in the north-east corner of Port Koutoure in about 10 metres.



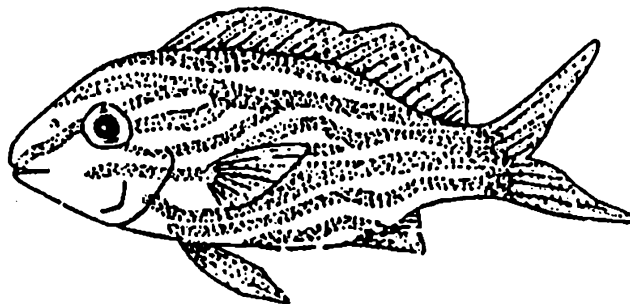
## **BAIE DE OUARA**

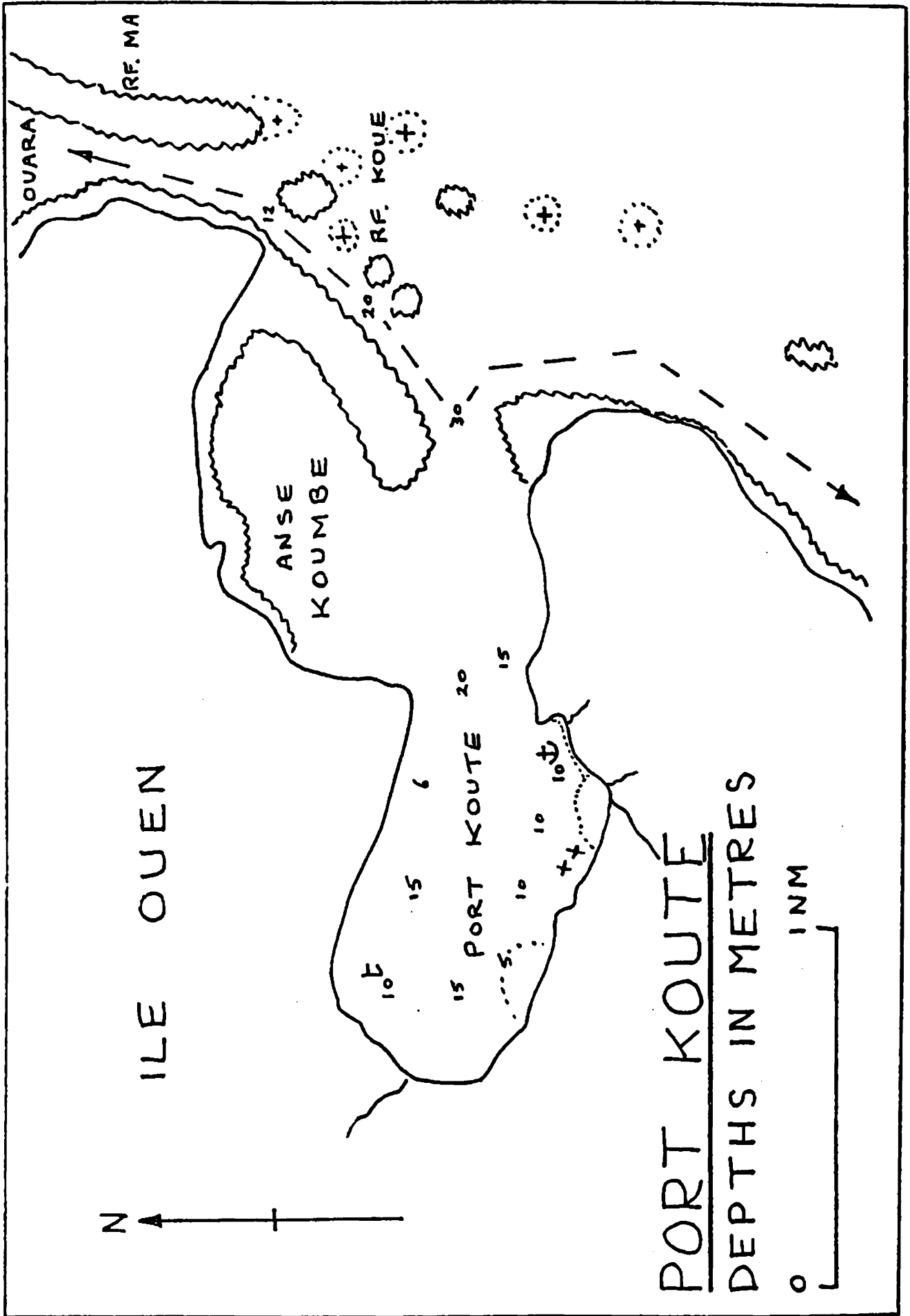
We approached this bay from Baie Du Prony, steering for the sand bank towards the north end of Recif Ma. As we closed Ile Ouen the reefs were clearly visible and we entered the 30 metre deep channel inside Recif Ma.

The anchorage is towards the south of the bay in front of the church and north of the wharf. Anchor in 15 metres mud bottom. The bottom shoals rapidly from 12 metres.

Although open to the east the bay is protected from the wave action by the off-lying reefs, but a little swell gets in.

There is a small Melanesian village ashore. Ask permission from the chief before wandering around.





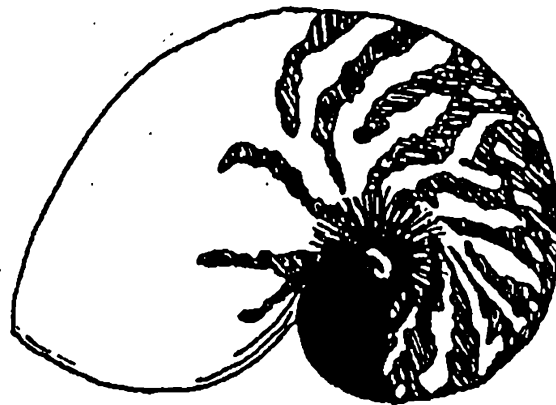
## **PORT KOUTE**

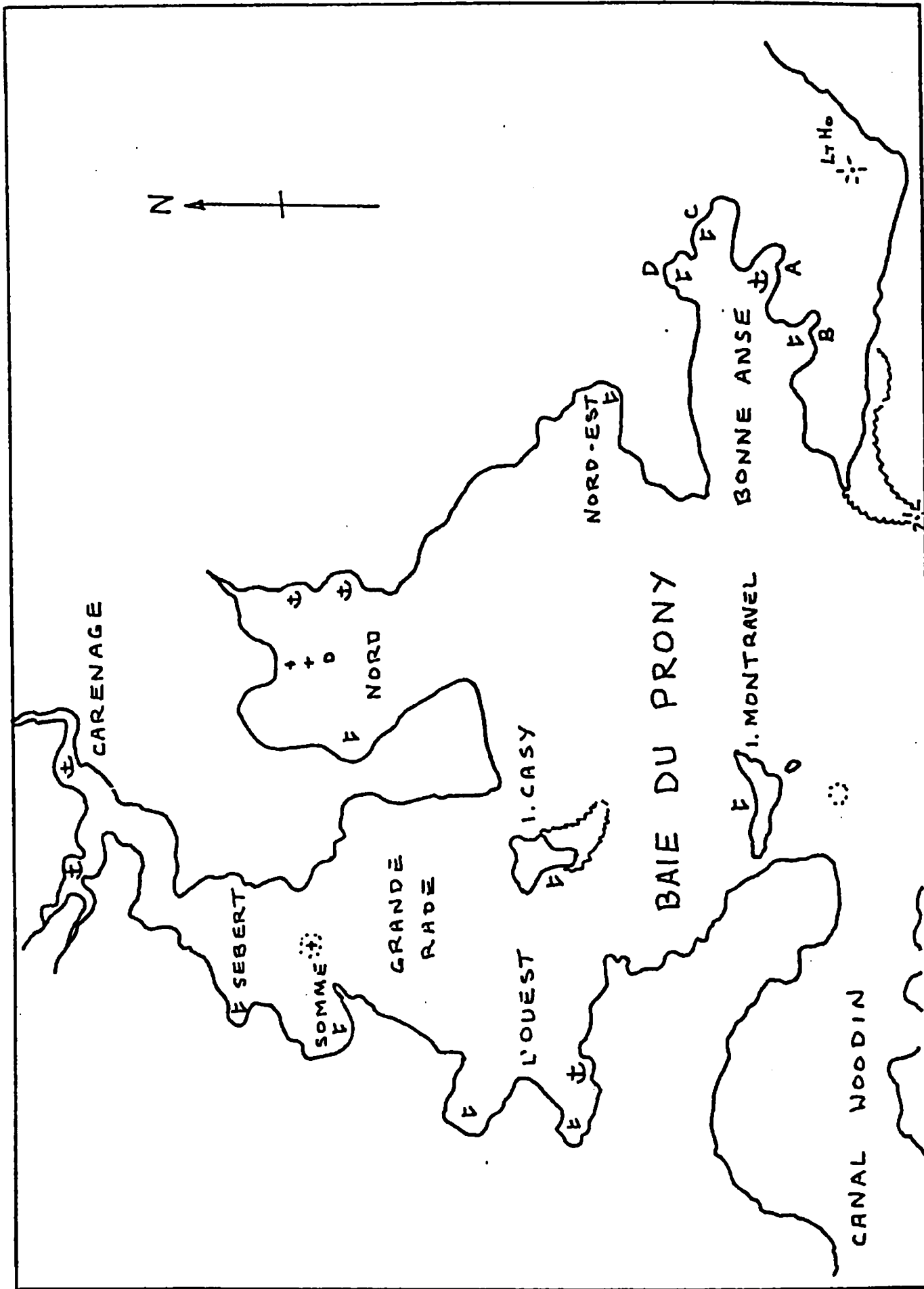
We approached this bay from the north via Baie de Ouara and followed the channel inside Recifs Ma and Koue and around the reef that blocks the northern part of the bay. Approach from the east requires great care because of the reef and coral heads that lay across the mouth of the bay. A southerly approach should be made close to the shore of Ile Ouen, rounding the fringing reef extending northwards from the southern point of the bay.

Anchorage may be had at the head of the bay off the low lying land in 10 to 15 metres.

The most sheltered anchorage is in the cove half way along the south shore. We anchored in 10 metres, mud bottom, off the red sand beach. Along the shore to the west there is a sand spit off the mouth of the stream and beyond that some coral heads.

The landscape around the bay is covered in scrub and heavily scarred by erosion. This is a good place to catch up on some boat projects. Along the shore line to the east we found many Nautilus shells, but only one out of forty was whole.





## **PART III**

### **BAIE DU PRONY**

Baie du Prony lies at the southern end of La Grande Terre and is surrounded by a barren and mostly empty wilderness. It is a body of water 5 miles long and 6 miles wide and around its shores there are numerous small coves and bays where a yacht may find a safe anchorage.

Ashore the land is mostly covered by secondary scrub and the landscape heavily scarred by past mining activities and water erosion of the reddish brown earth. Hidden in this wilderness are relics of penal settlements and mining and logging operations. A well marked and signposted tramping trail links many of these sites around the north-west part of the bay. For more information obtain a copy of the leaflet "Le Circuit Pedestre de Prony" from the Tourist Information office.

Baie du Prony is entered through a 1.75 mile wide passage between Recif du Prony to the east and a shoal Basse Moziman to the west. The waters of the bay are generally 40 metres deep and steep-to but water clarity is often poor. Many of the headlands have small fringing reefs and major reefs exist at:

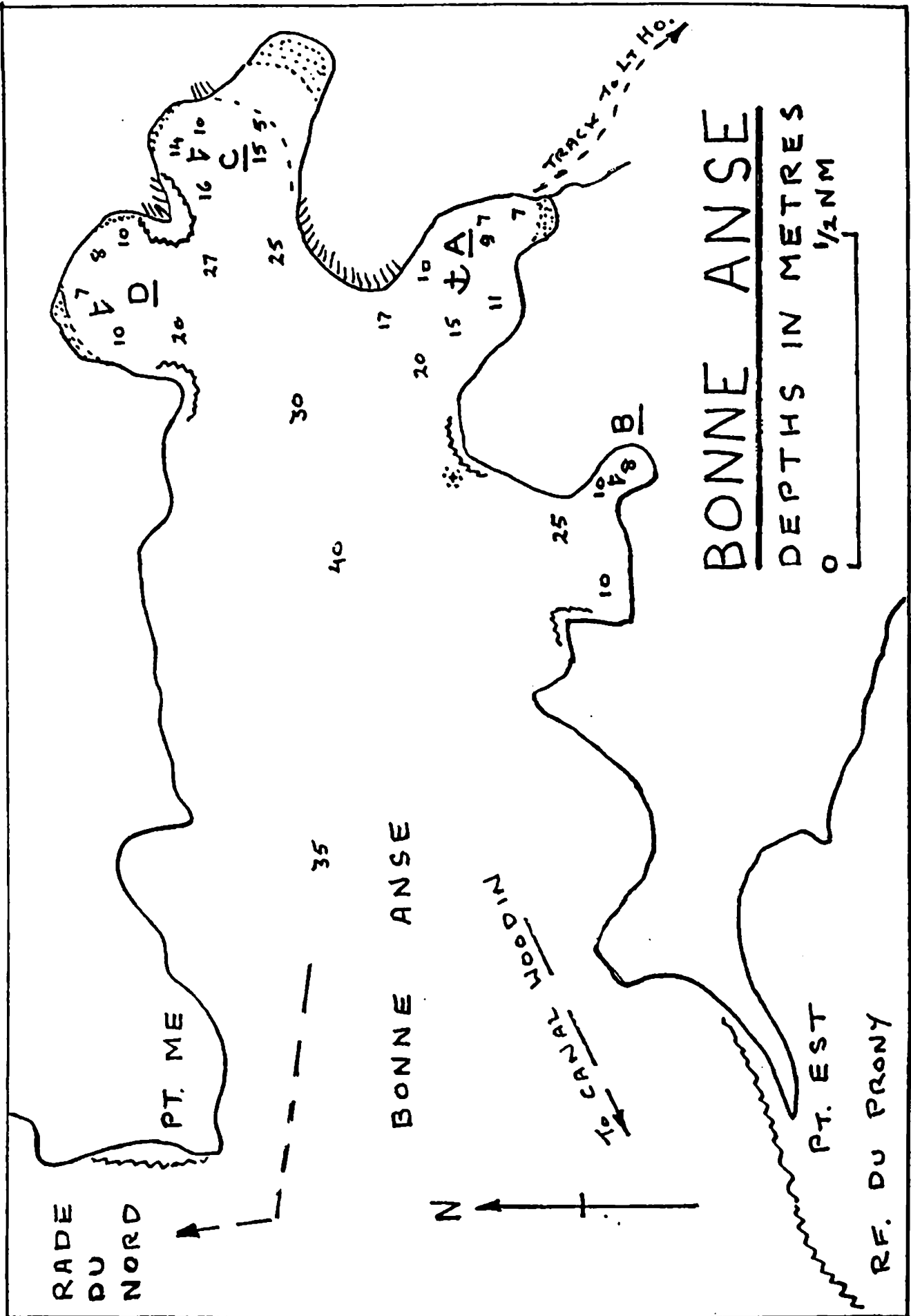
Recif du Prony south-west from Point Est

South-east from Ilot Casey

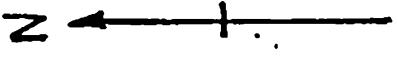
North of Ile Gabriel

Recif de L'Aiguille in Grande Rade (Red Buoy).

Most of the anchorages here are close to shore in depths ranging from 8 to 15 metres. The holding is good in red mud/clay and shelter can easily be found to suit any wind direction. The biggest drawback of this area is the red mud. It stains dinghy painters, shoes and feet when ashore and paintwork if you don't wash off the anchor chain.



**BONNE ANSE**  
 DEPTHS IN METRES  
 0 1/2 NM



## **BONNE ANSE**

This first inlet to the east of Point Est provides a choice of four well protected anchorages to suit all wind directions.

A - We spent two nights at the second deep cove along the south shore. We anchored in 11 metres, rocky bottom, not especially good holding, but perfectly sheltered from strong south-east trades. A total of seven yachts shared this anchorage.

From the head of this cove a track leads up to the lighthouse at Cap Ndoua from where a grand view is obtained over the southern lagoon. The stream running into the cove has been dammed to provide a small clear water pool.

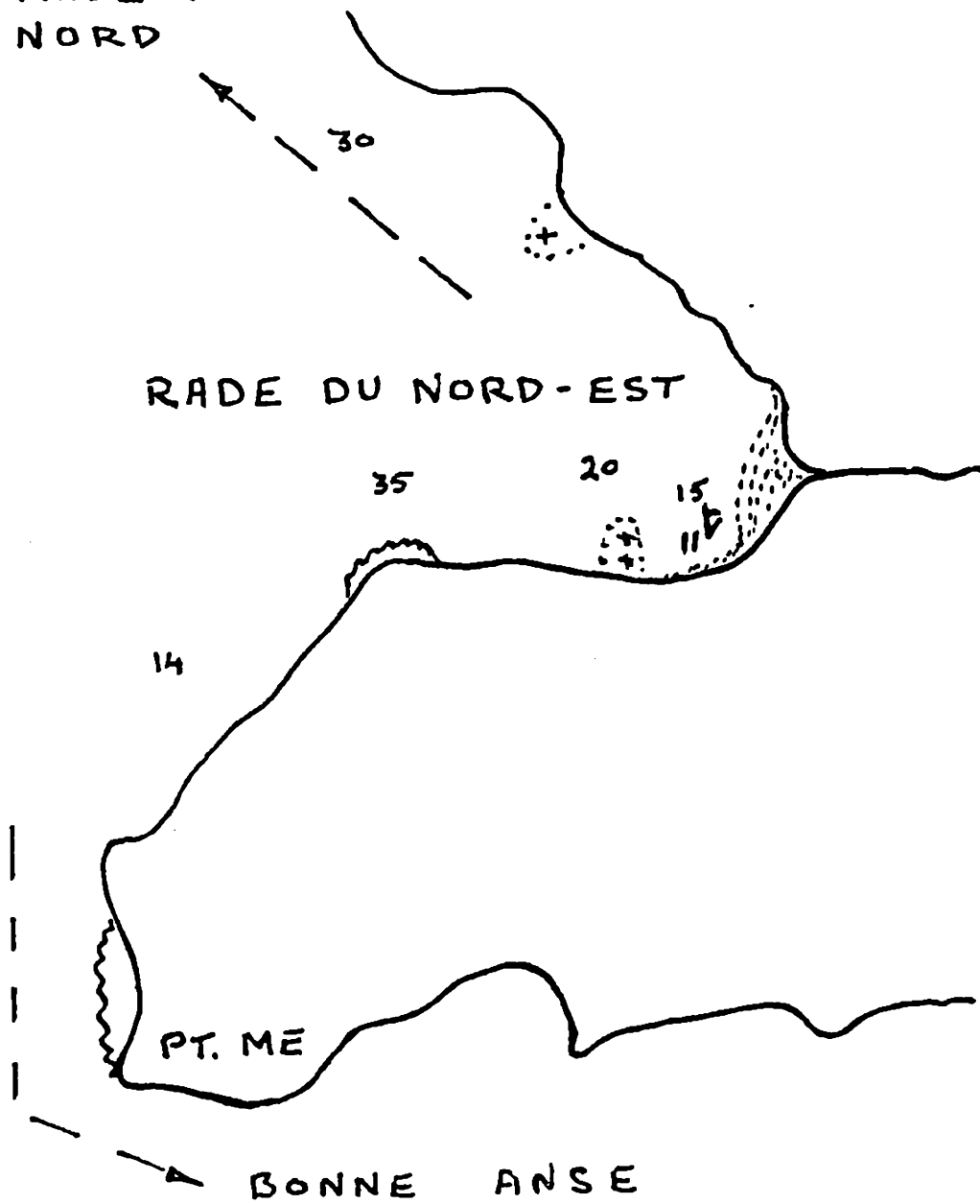
B - The small cove in the south-east corner of the bay to the west has room only for 1 or 2 yachts to anchor in about 8 metres.

C - The south-east arm of the cove at the east end of Bonne Anse shoals rapidly from 5 metres in the middle and should be avoided. Anchorage may be found in the north-east arm in 10 to 14 metres.

D - The northern cove offers anchorage in depths ranging from 6 to 10 metres.



RADE DU  
NORD



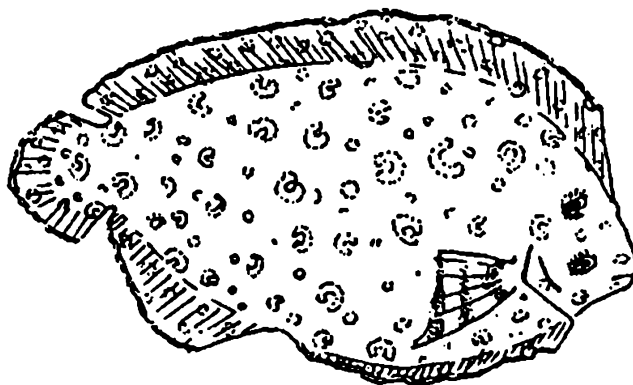
# RADE DU NORD-EST

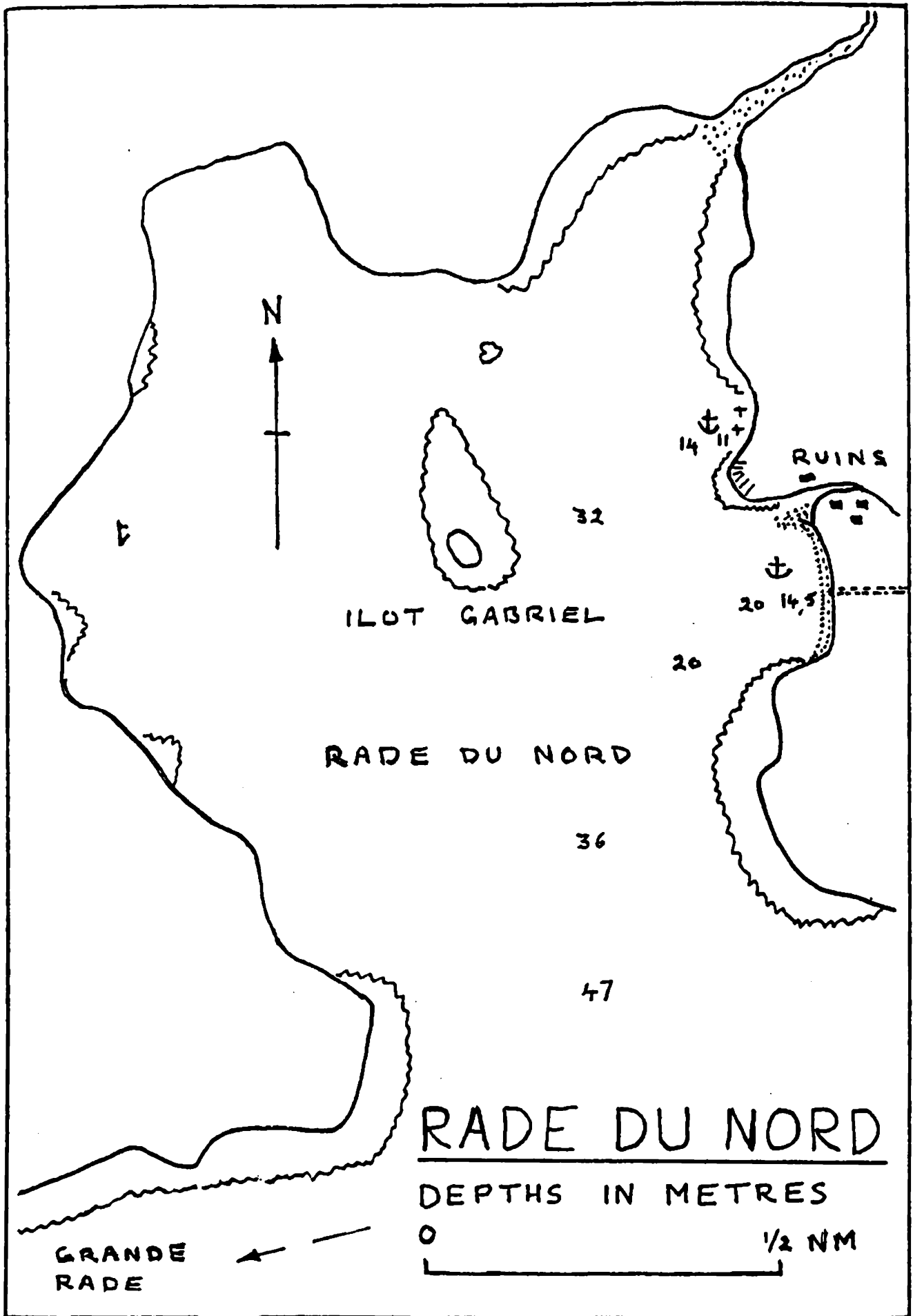
DEPTHS IN METRES



## RADE DU NORD EST

Heading north from Bonne Anse around Pointe Me we entered the south-east corner of Rade du Nord Est. We did not stop here, but an anchorage may be found in 11 metres just to the right of the stream that runs into this corner of the bay. A little further west we noticed some coral heads extending northwards from the shore.





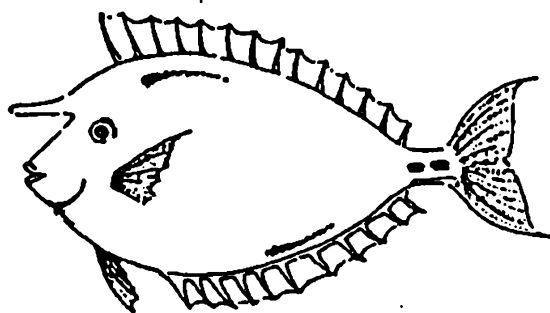
## **RADE DU NORD**

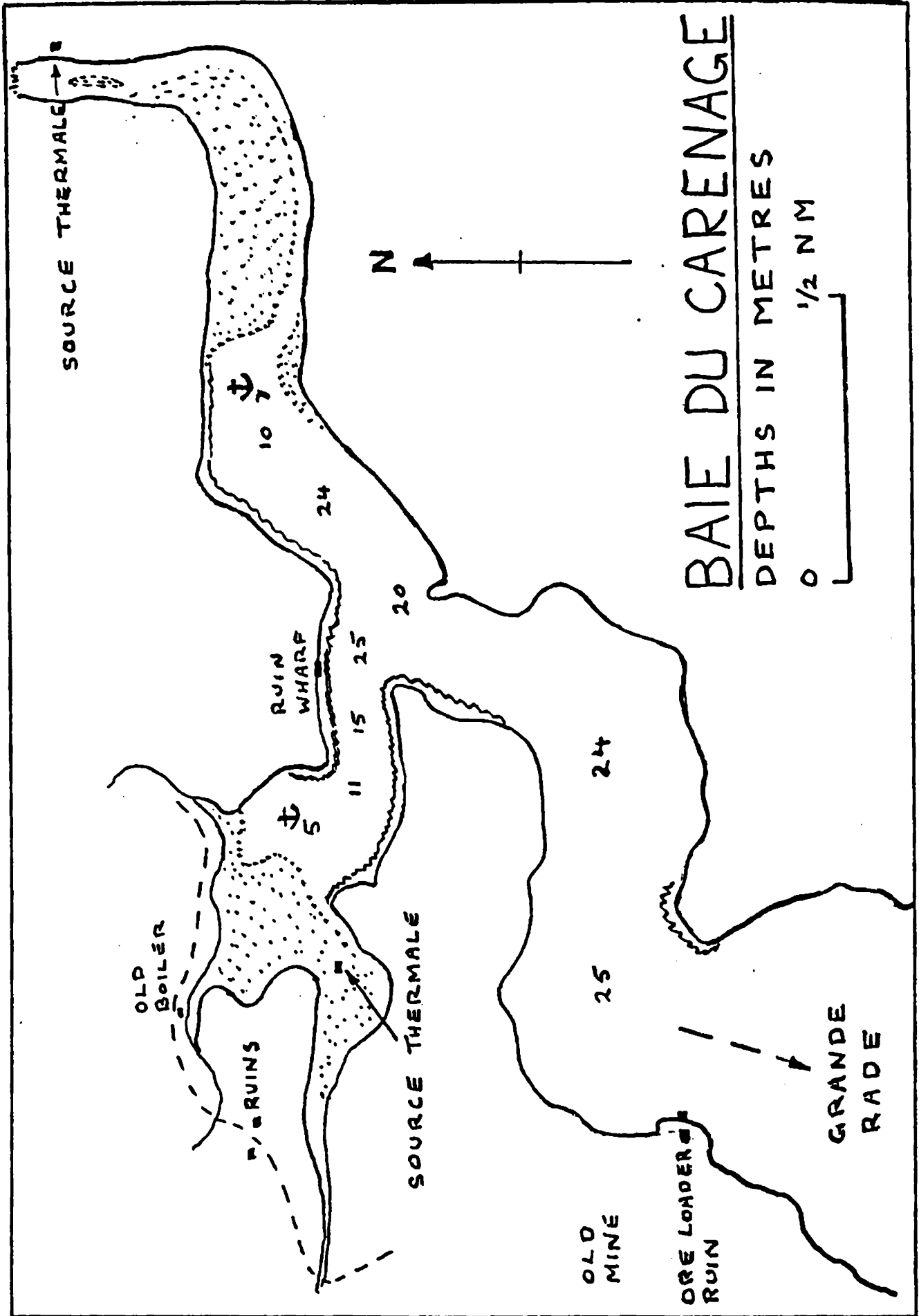
The Eastern Anchorage is in the bay due east of Ile Gabriel. Depths range from 5 to 20 metres, with a mud bottom. There is a sand bar extending into the bay from the river mouth in the north-east corner and coral off the headland to the south.

This anchorage was crowded during our visit and so we re-anchored in the next small bay to the north, which was not quite as sheltered, but satisfactory in 11 metres mud bottom. There are a number of coral heads closer inshore.

Ashore there are the ruins of a Penal Settlement. A path leads from the ruins along the right bank of the river to a cascade. From the few remaining piles of an old wharf and rusting machinery a causeway leads through the bush to the river. At high tide you can take your dinghy up this river or the one in the far north-east corner of Rade du Nord.

In westerly winds an anchorage may be found off the beach due west of Ile Gabriel in about 8 metres. Look out for coral heads closer in shore. We did not visit this anchorage.





## **BAIE DU CARENAGE**

Sailing around the peninsula that divides Bay du Prony from the north we passed east of Ilot Casey into Grande Rade. Reefs extend off both corners of the peninsula, the western one marked by a beacon with a yellow cross (a marker for the marine reserve around Ilot Casey). 1.5 miles north of Ilot Casey is the pinnacle reef L' Aiguille marked by a red buoy. At the northern end of Grande Rade are the two very sheltered anchorages of Baie du Carenage. As you enter the inlet notice on the west shore the concrete tunnel and wharf of the old iron ore loader and behind it the site of the opencast iron ore mine.

The east anchorage is in 7 to 10 metres, mud bottom, just before the inlet bends to the right. It shoals rapidly at the bend.

From here access may be gained to the tramping trail to visit many of the old mining sites. A special treat for cruising yachties is a dip in the warm thermal bath which lies on the right bank of the river a little below the cascade. Take the right fork and look out for the small white terrace where you land. Alternatively go to the cascade and follow the sign posted footpath.

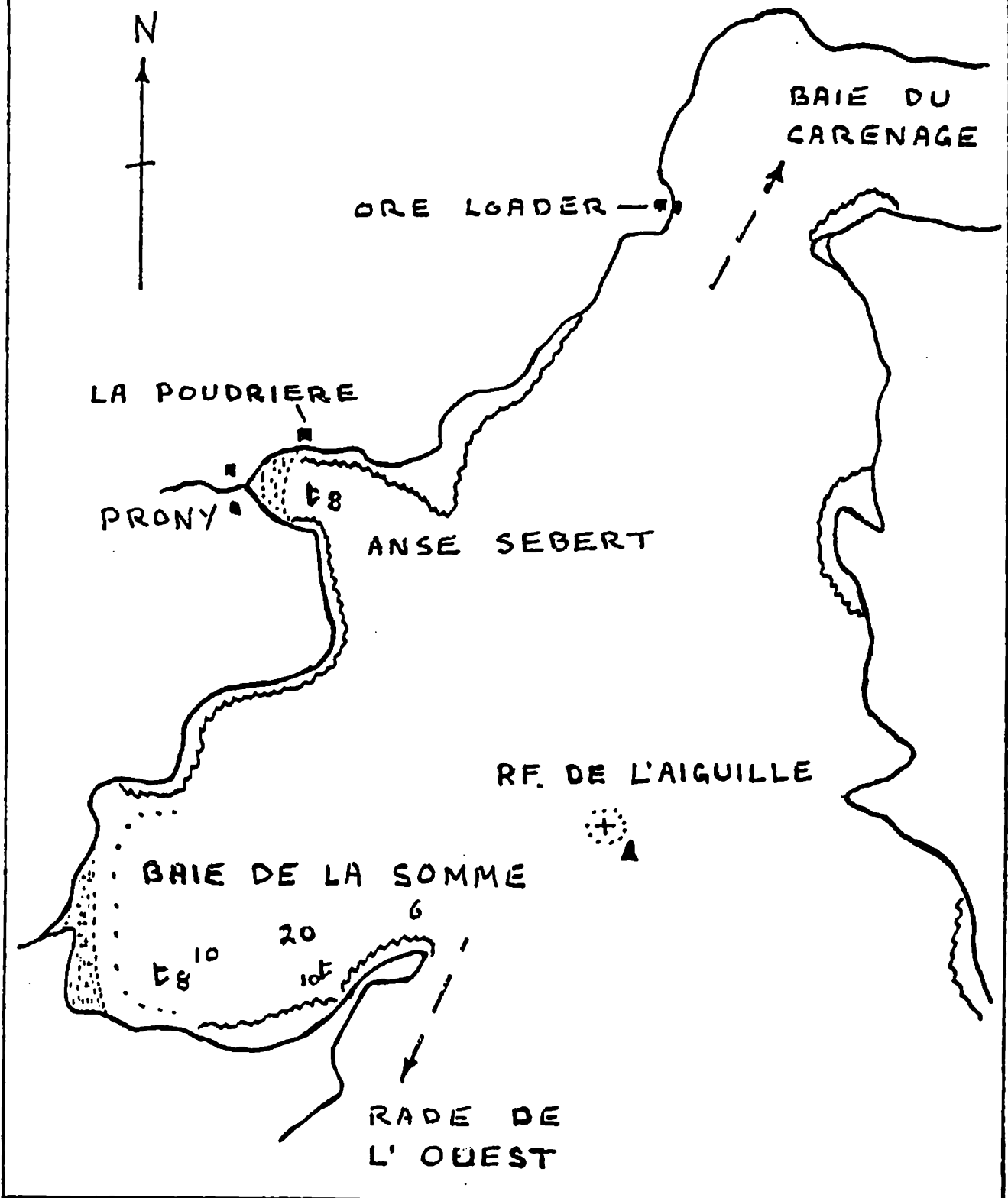
The west anchorage is in 15 to 5 metres, mud bottom. The most sheltered spot is around the bend to the right, but watch out for the shoal off the mouth of the two rivers which was marked by a number of sticks in 1996.

In the mouth of the left hand river, Riviere Bleue de Prony, there is another thermal spring which is uncovered at low tide, but not suitable for bathing. Here also easy access is gained to the tramping trail and a number of penal colony and mining relics.

# ANSE SEBERT + BAIE DE LA SOMME

DEPTHS IN METRES

0 1/2 NM



## **ANSE SEBERT**

Approaching from the north give the northern point of the bay a wide berth as a coral reef extends nearly 0.25 miles to the SSE. From the south the coast may be closed as the fringing reef extends only 50 metres.

Anchor in the southern part of the bay in 8 metres. This bay is open to the prevailing south-east wind but the fetch is only two miles.

Ashore in the village of Prony there are a number of Penal Colony ruins, a fresh water source and the restored Poudriere (Powder Magazine).

## **BAIE DE LA SOMME**

Approach to this bay is clear of dangers except for Recif de L'Aiguille which lies 0.4 NM ENE of the southern headland and the reef that extends northward from the tip of the southern headland.

Anchor towards the south-west corner of the bay in 10 metres or in the south-east corner in 10 metres. This anchorage is protected from the south-east trade winds.



# RADE DE L'OUEST

DEPTHS IN METRES

0 1/2 NM

SOMME

RED SAND

15

10

30

10

12



RE. AUZILE

RADE DE L'OUEST

15

8

15

10

FALLS

ILE CASY



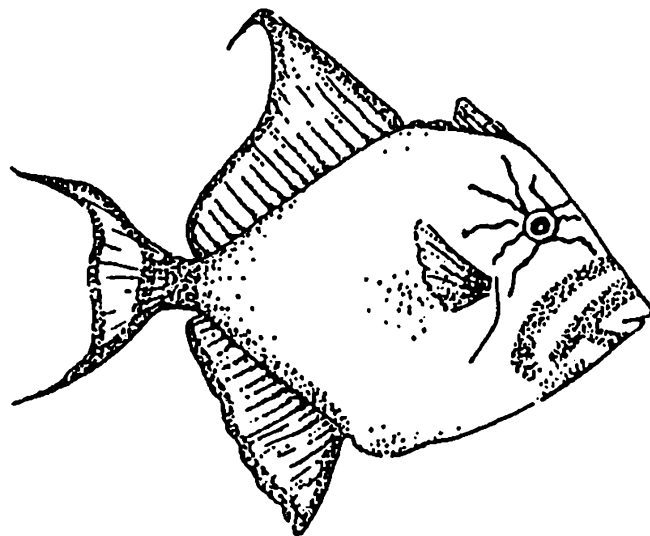
## **RADE DE L'OUEST**

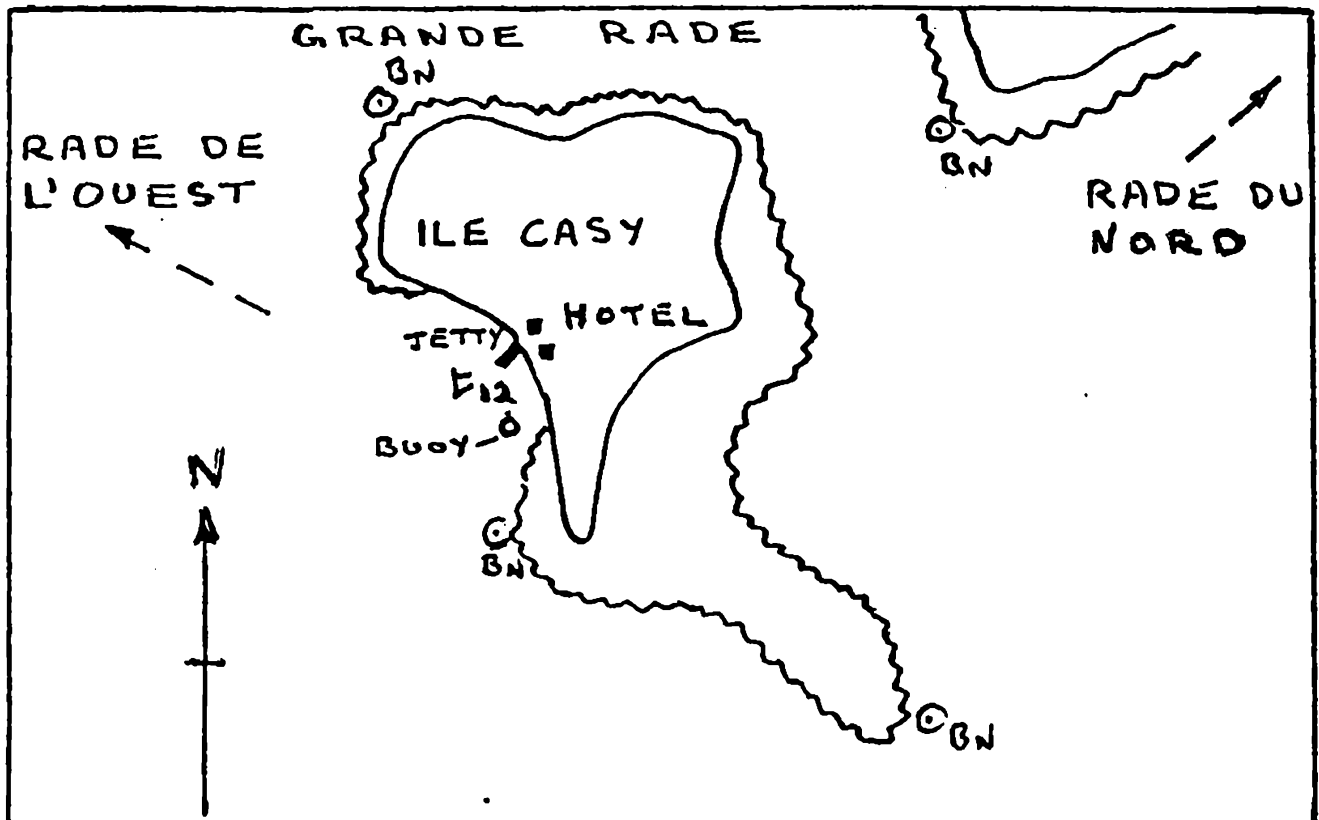
Approaching the northern or southern bay look out for Recif Auzile which lies about 0.25 NM east of the dividing headland. There are small fringing reefs at the point of each bay.

North Bay, anchor in 10 to 15 metres off the red sand beach. This anchorage is open to the south-east wind.

South Bay offers only a little more shelter from the south-east wind. The anchorage at the head of the bay is in 15 metres. There are two small bays along the southern shore of the bay which offer better protection.

We anchored in the eastern small bay, to the left of the stream in 10 metres, mud bottom. There is a fisherman's camp ashore in the trees, to which fresh water has been piped from the small falls further up the stream.

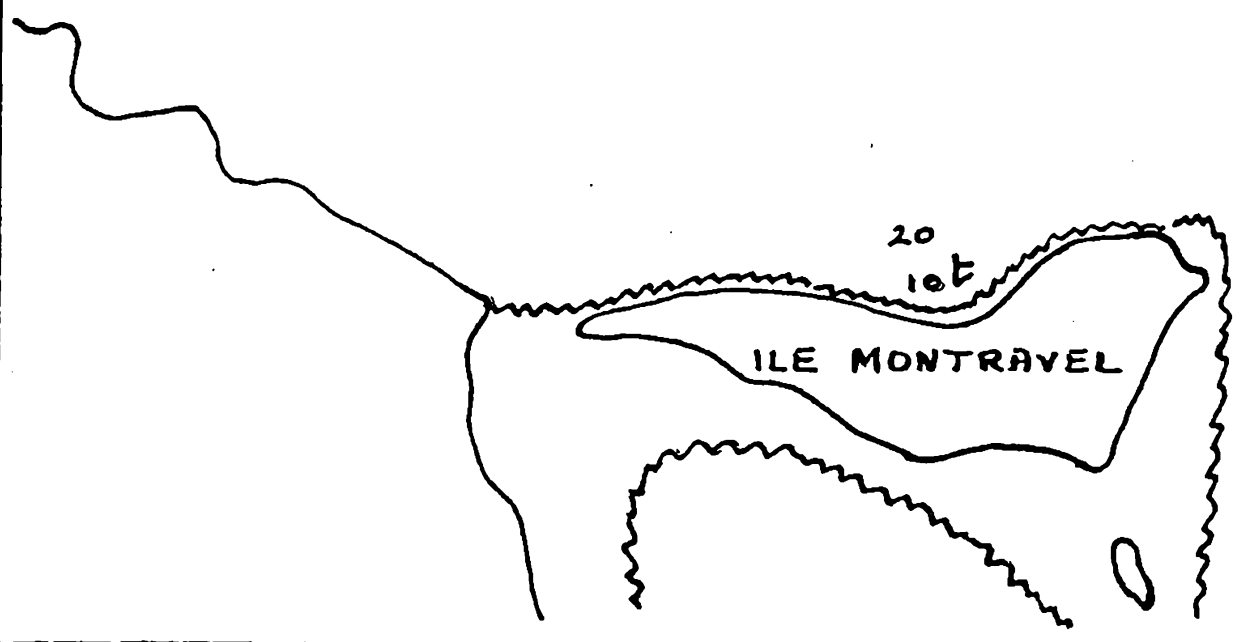




## ILE CASY + ILE MONTRAVEL

DEPTHS IN METRES

0 1/2 NM



## ILE CASY

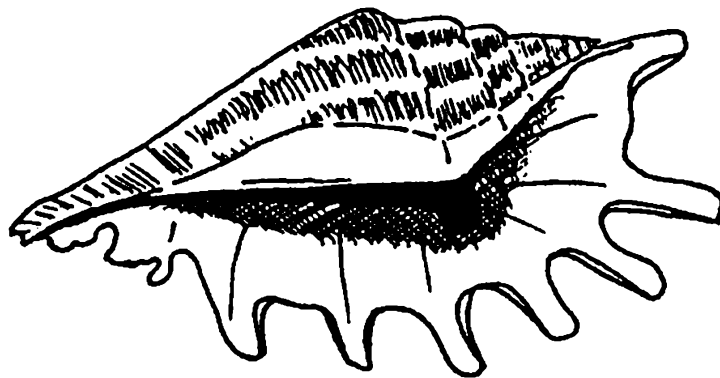
This island is a Special Reserve within the area marked by four yellow beacons with a yellow X top mark. The anchorage is on the south-west side in 12 metres, sand and coral. South of the jetty is a white mooring buoy in 15 metres. Close inshore are a number of small white buoys. The island provided adequate shelter from the south-east trades.

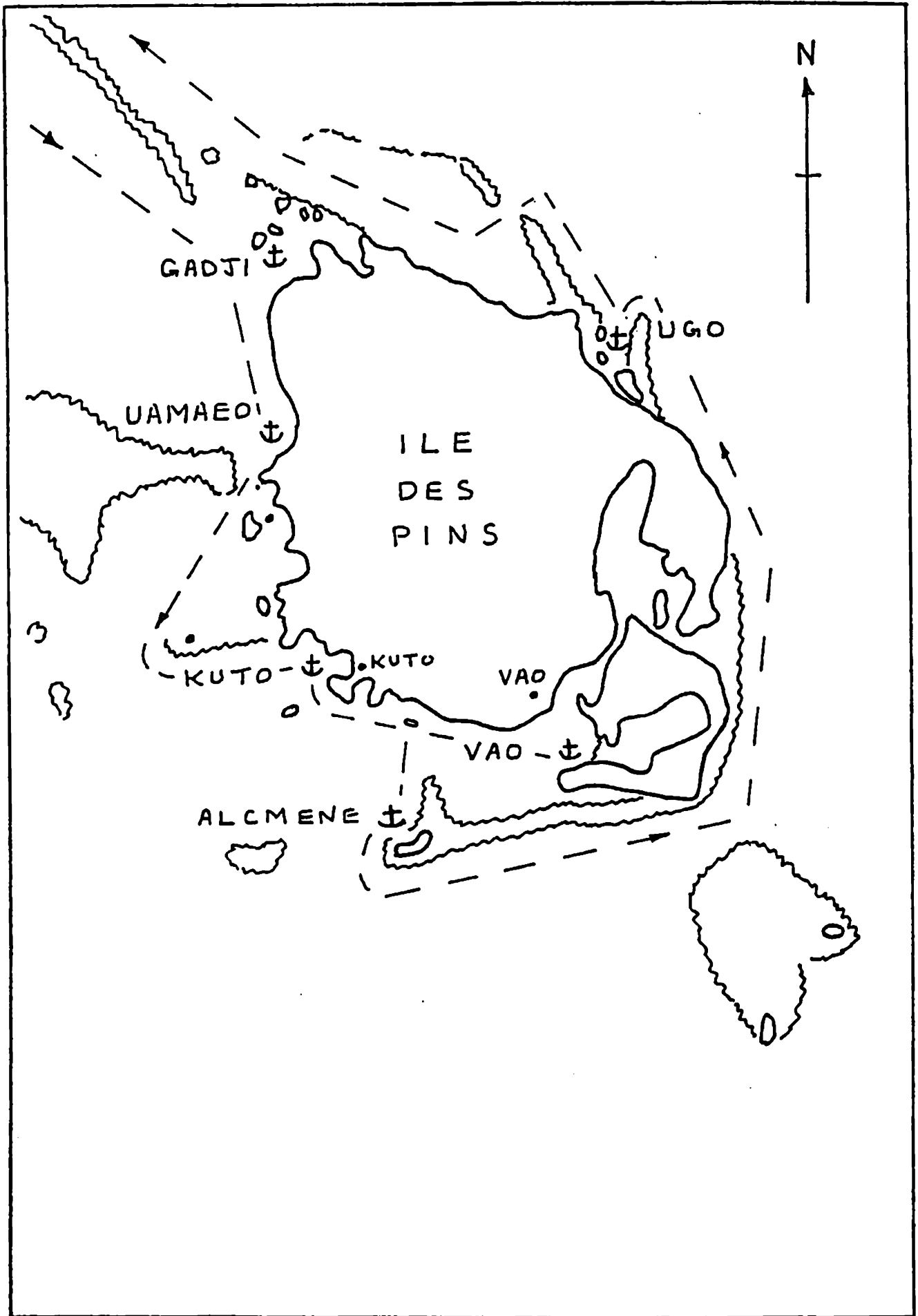
Ashore is a small hotel and restaurant.

## ILE MONTRAVEL

The anchorage here is mid way along the North shore of the island, opposite a dip in the sky line, off a white beach. Anchor about 50 metres from the shore in 10 metres, sand and coral.

The island provides satisfactory shelter from south-east winds.





## **PART IV**

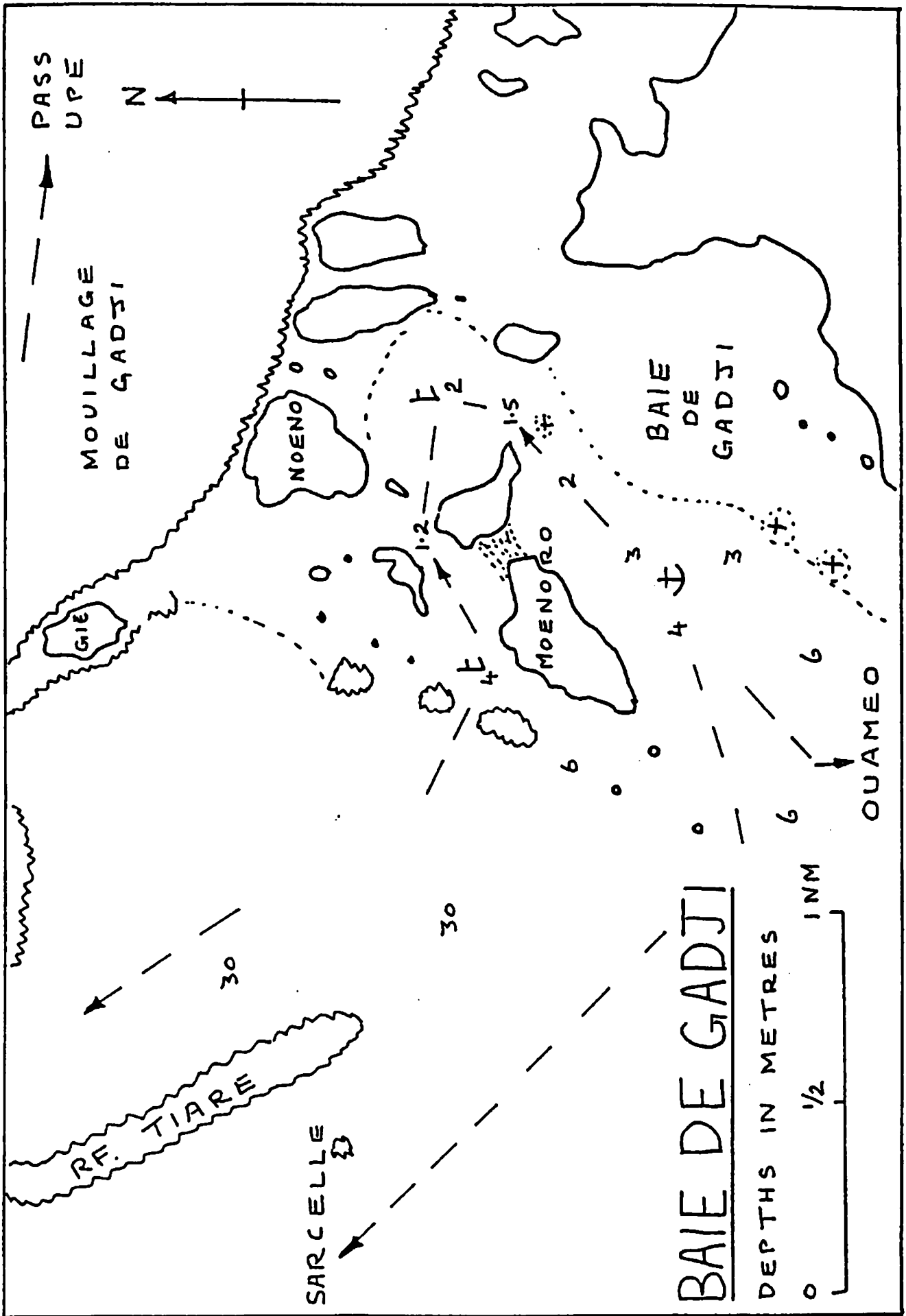
### **ISLE DES PINS (KUNIE)**

The Isle of Pines is a very picturesque island to cruise around. The eroded limestone shoreline is fronted by white sand beaches and turquoise water over shallow sand anchorages. Along the coast are many of the famous pine trees and inland pockets of dense bush and scrub.

Ashore there are a number of buildings and ruins dating from the missionary and penal colony days. There are inlets to explore by dinghy, numerous reefs to snorkel and limestone caves.

Getting there can be a problem, as generally the passage is to windward. The best strategy is to leave the southern end of Grande Terre at first light before the wind strength builds up. However, much of the route is protected by reefs so the seas do not get too big.

Our route out and back was through Passe de la Sarcelle. Within the lagoon we found no difficulty identifying the reefs where the seas broke. Using the various small islands as heading markers we sailed from Canal Woodin towards Ile Nouare and then towards Ndie, which will be in line with Pic Nga on Kunie. The tidal stream through Passe de la Sarcelle can be very strong, so plan your timing here for a favourable flow or slack water. We went through on the ebb and experienced heavy over-falls towards the outer end. The water is smoother and the current less along the south side close to Recif Neuika.



We re-entered the lagoon between Recif Uite and Recif Tiate and continued inside the latter to Baie de Gadji. For our return trip we used the Passe de Upe and Passe de Gadji along the north coast of Kunie and continued outside the reefs to Passe de la Sarcelle.

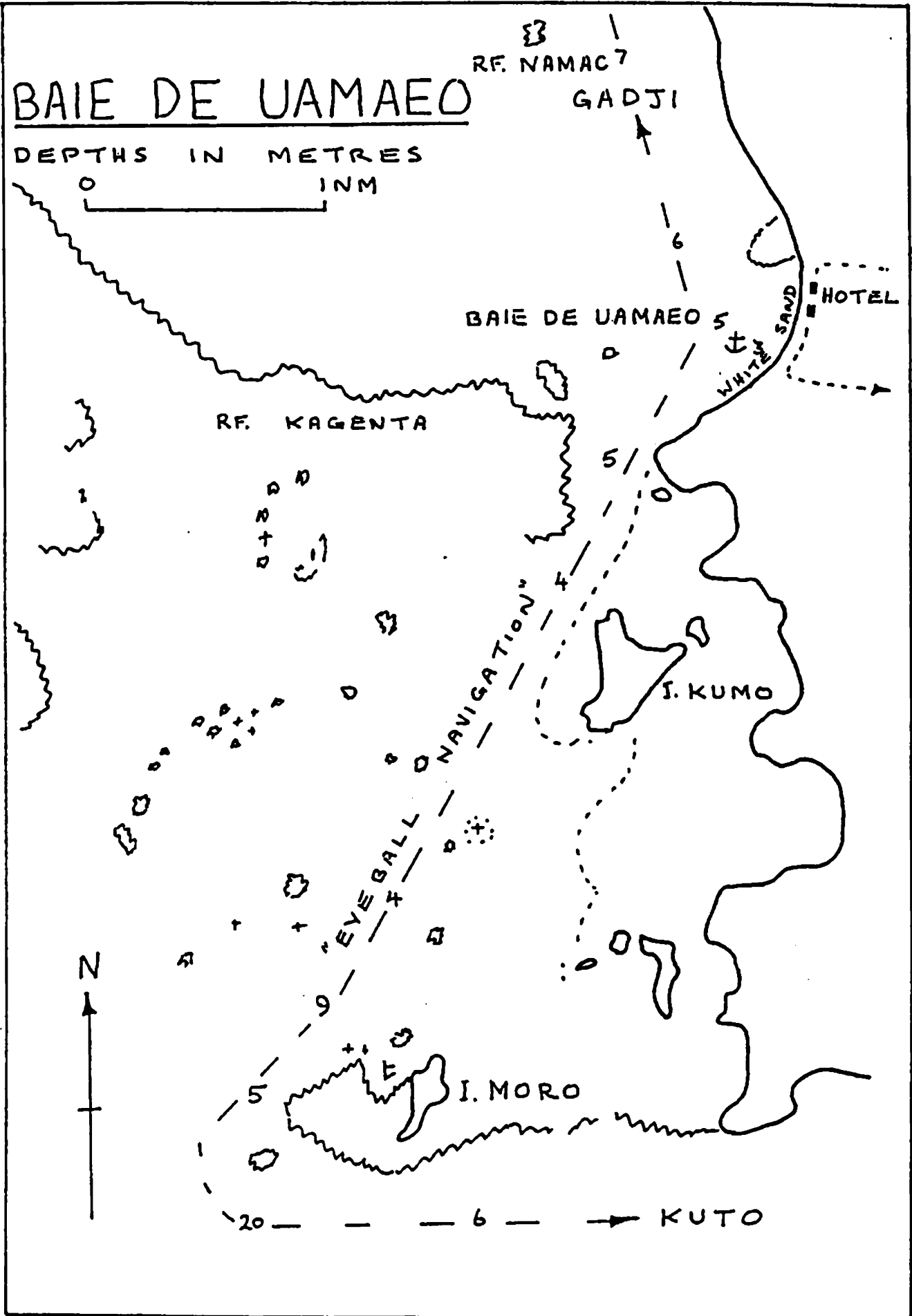
An alternative route is north of Ile Ugo and then between the reefs Peo 2&3 and Recif Mbe and on to Ile Infernal, which is high and round and covered in trees. From Ile Infernal a course may be laid into Baie de Kuto between Ile Moro and Ile Bayonnaise. Watch out for Banc de Nae which lies south-west of Ile Bayonnaise. In normal conditions this route will be directly into the wind.

For both routes a good lookout must be maintained and a careful check kept on your position due to imperfect charts and the effects of currents on dead reckoning.

### **BAIE DE GADJI**

Approaching from the north-west we rounded the three rock islets that lie south-west of I. Moenoro and anchored south of this island in 4 metres, sand bottom. There is an alternative anchorage on the north side of I. Moenoro in 3 to 4 metres. At high water it is possible to enter an inner anchorage south of I. Noeno where there is about 2 metres, but there is only 1.2 metres in the entrance at low water.

We found good snorkelling along the reef-drop off north of I. Noeno.



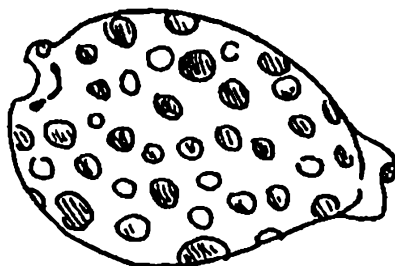
## **BAIE DE OUAMEO**

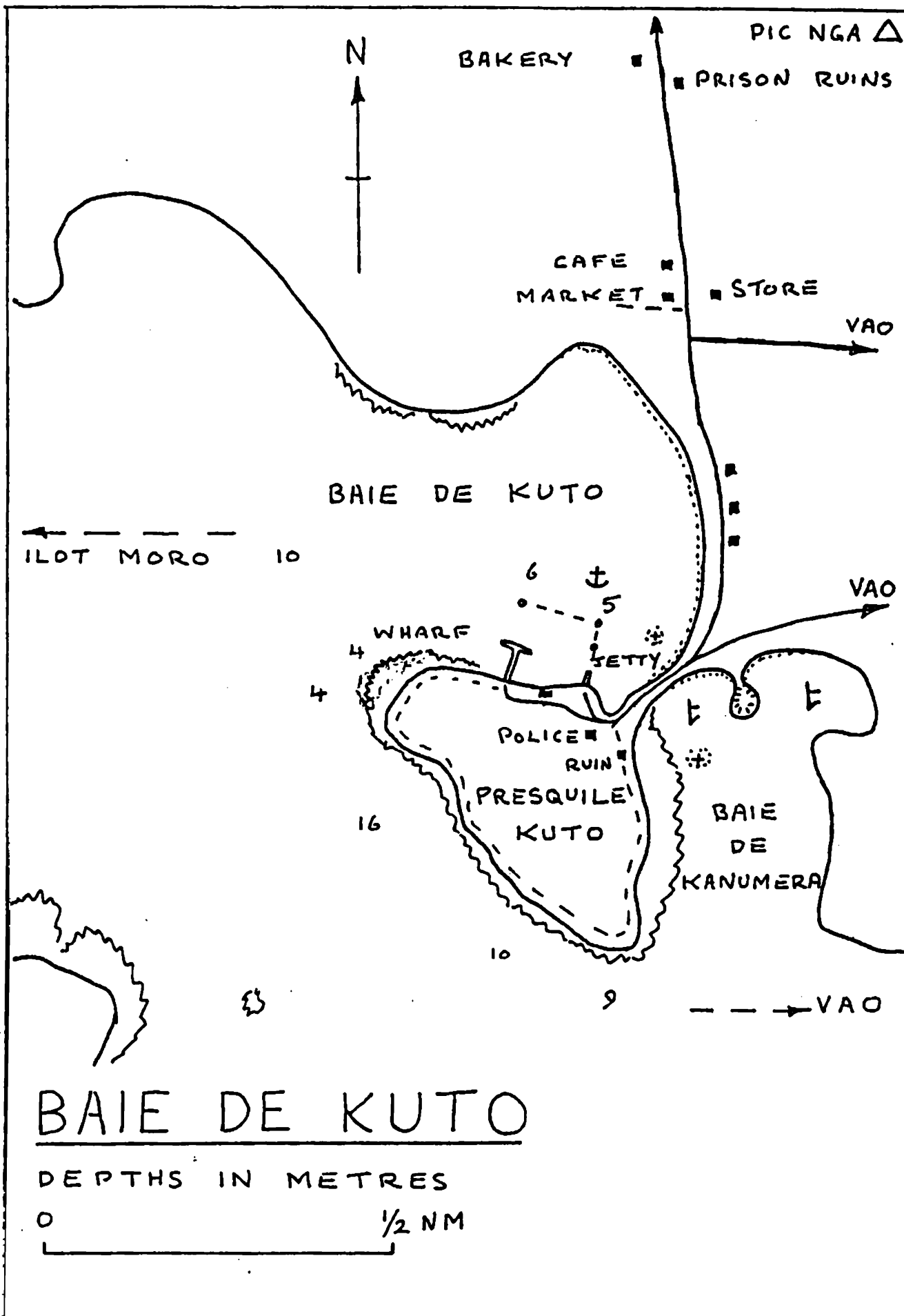
The only danger about half way between Gadji and Ouameo is the small Recif Namac, 0.6 NM offshore. We had an interesting snorkel around this reef. Otherwise the route is clear and about 5 to 8 metres deep.

A coral patch extends from the beach in the northern part of the bay. We anchored off the beach to the south of the small resort in 4 metres, sand bottom.

The "Kodjeue" resort has a restaurant, but you should book in advance to eat there.

From this anchorage we hiked to an interesting limestone cave, known as Paradise Cave or Grotte de la Troisieme. From the beach south of the resort a track leads inland for about 2 Km. At the T junction turn right heading south along the main dirt road (in the bush just before this junction are some ruins dating from the penal colony). About 2 Km along this road as it enters a wooded area there is a track off to the right beside a house. Follow this track into the woods until you reach a small turning area, where a path leads off to the right. The cave is a short distance along this path. It has two large connected caverns with clear pools in the bottom and a number of small tunnels and chambers filled with stalactites.





## **BAIE DE KUTO**

The route south from Ouameo is not difficult but should only be undertaken in good light conditions as it is not well charted and there are many coral heads.

Passing around the headland at the south of the bay we set a course of about 210 deg. True to pass west of I. Moro and the reef extending south-west of it. It was necessary to alter course several times to avoid coral patches but they show up well against the sand bottom. The average depth was about 4 metres. Once the reef south-west of I. Moro is rounded the approach into Baie de Kuto is clear of dangers.

Approaching from the south the easiest entry would be by way of Passe Nokue, east of I. Infernal and around the west side of I. Bayonnaise.

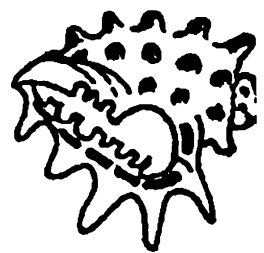
Note that there is a prohibited anchoring zone around the wharf, which extends north and west from the small jetty and is marked by three yellow buoys.

We anchored just north of the prohibited zone in 5 metres, sand bottom. There are several coral patches close to the beach. The best dinghy landing is at the small jetty where there is a fresh water tap and a rubbish bin.

Along the road leading north from the bay is a small grocery store, cafe and vegetable market. The market is open on Wednesday and Saturday from 0600 to 0800. There is a bakery about 500 metres further along the road.

On the peninsula there are a number of relics from the penal settlement. The red roofed house was the home of the

## NOTES



Governor and the present day Gendarmerie was the home of the Medical Officer. Across the entrance to the peninsula can be seen the wall built to keep the prisoners out of the administrative area. Behind the wall are a number of ruins. A path starting at the main wharf provides a nice walk all the way around the peninsula.

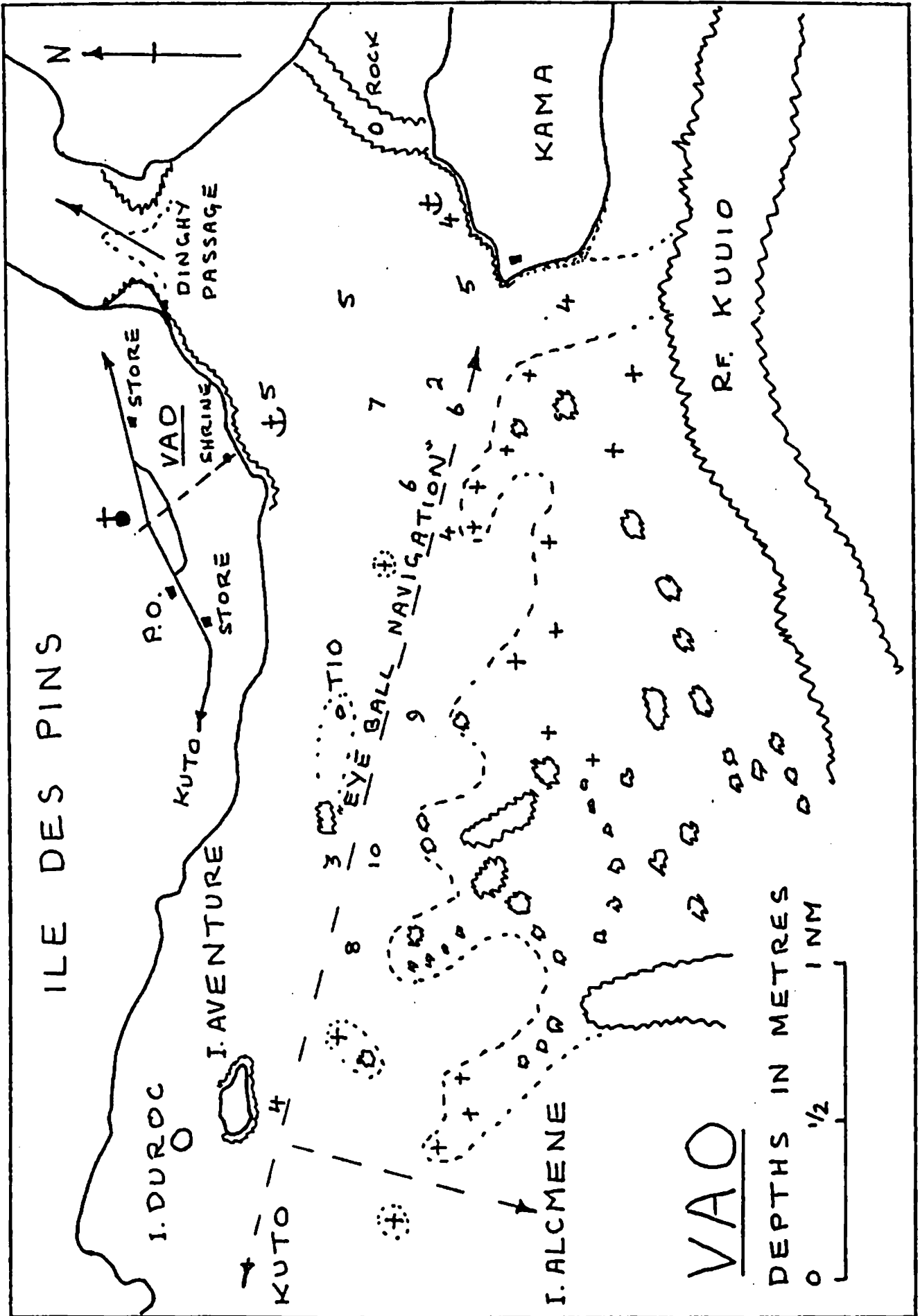
Remains of old prison buildings are across the road from the bakery and in the bush around it. About 1 Km beyond the bakery a track leads off to the right, follow this for about 600 metres and take the track to the left which takes you to the cemetery where about 260 convicts are buried.

A climb to the top of Pic Nga (268 metres) provides a grand view over the whole island. To find the track to the summit take the right hand road leading around the head of Baie de Kanumera. At the junction turn left and follow the road for about 400 metres. Just before you reach two tall pines on the right you will see a track to the right. A faint red arrow painted on the road will confirm that this is the right track.

### **BAIE DE KANUMERA**

Approaching from the west pass between I. Bayonnaise and Presqu'île Kuto and round up into the bay allowing for the small fringing reefs. From the south approach through Passe Alcmene with I. Duroc in line with Pic Nga on a heading of 020 deg. True. Once past the chain of coral heads across this track alter course to enter the bay.

Anchor to east or west of the large limestone rock in about 4 metres, sand bottom with weed patches (poor holding in weed). In strong south-east winds the swell comes into this bay and Baie de Kuto is preferred.



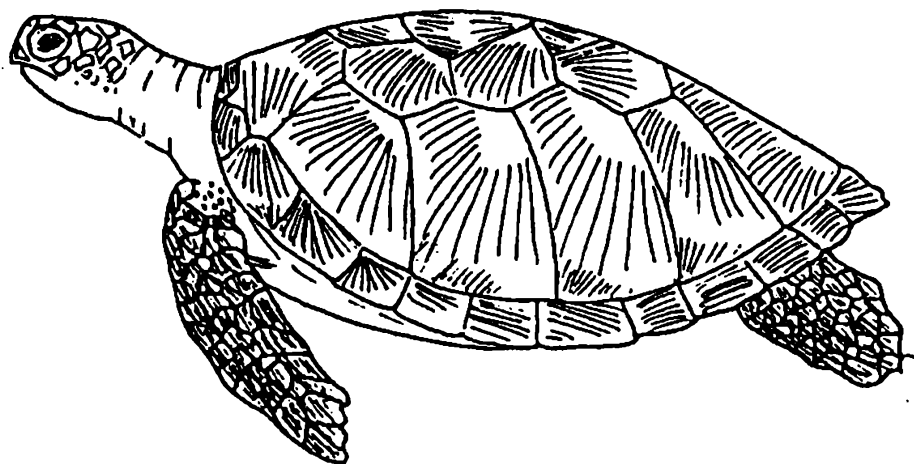
## **PORT DE VAO**

Approaching from the west around Kuto peninsula we steered a course of 105 deg. True for the end of Kama peninsula. Passing south of Ile Aventure and Tio rocks we found the depth about 6 to 8 metres and all the coral patches clearly visible.

We anchored in the lee of Kama peninsula in 4 metres, sand bottom. From this anchorage we sailed across to Vao for our visits to the village. Taking a line on the church we anchored in 5 metres, sand bottom in front of the shrine to St. Maurice.

A track leads from the shrine, which is surrounded by a pallisade of carved logs, to the village. At the tar-sealed road turn left for the P.O., Medical Clinic and grocery store with petrol pump. Keep straight on for the Church and Catholic Mission School. Turn right for a second small store, craft kiosk (third road on the left after Lourdes Shrine) and Baie des Pirogues.

By Dinghy you can explore Baie de Gu and Baie de Upi. and snorkel the reef south of Kama.

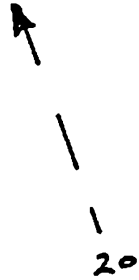


# ILE ALCMENE

DEPTHS IN METRES

0 1/2 NM

KUTO



12

5



WHITE SAND

PINES

SCRUB

ILE ALCMENE



PASS NOKANHOUI



## ILOT ALCMENE (ILOT BROSSE)

We approached this island from the north. From a point south of I. Duroc we eyeballed through the chain of coral heads south of that island. Coming to the west end of I. Alcmene we entered a small sand bottomed lagoon that lies within the submerged reefs north of the island.

There is room for two yachts to anchor here in 5 metres. A coral patch inside the entrance to this lagoon has about 2 metres over it and a smaller one to its east has 4 metres.

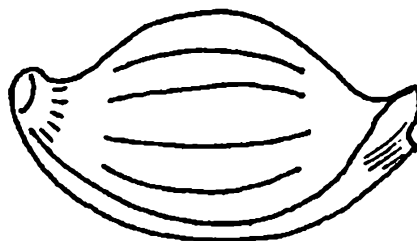
The island has a fine white sand beach around its eastern half. The best snorkelling we found was among limestone gullies at the west end, but there was very little live coral.

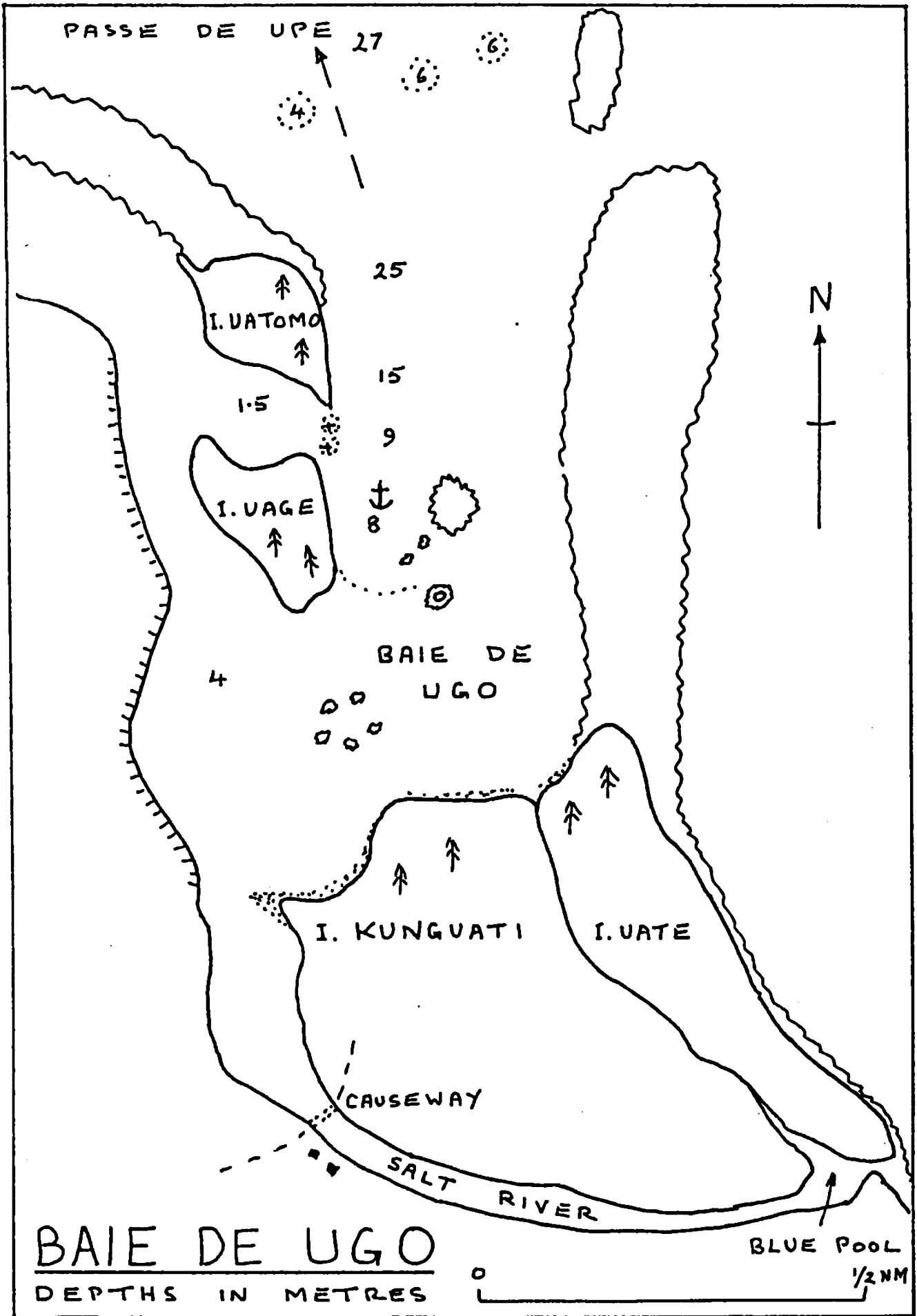
## PASSE NOKANHOUI

Departing from I Alcmene we gave the reef off its west end a wide berth and then headed east outside of Recif Kuuio.

We experienced no problem going through Passe Nokanhoui in moderate south-east winds, but there were some small overfalls east of the pass. The Pilot advises small craft against using this pass in strong trade winds.

From here we sailed north to Baie de Ugo.





## **BAIE DE UGO**

From the south continue on a northerly course outside the reef until Pic Nga bears 210 deg True then head into the bay on this heading. From the north following outside Recif Aventure leads into the bay. Across the northern part of the bay there are several large coral heads in about 25 metres with 3 to 4 metres over them.

Continue south to anchor between I. Uage and the coral reef east of it in 8 metres, sand bottom. South of here the bay shoals to less than 2 metres. Although protected from the seas by the outer reef we found this anchorage a bit roly.

At high tide it is possible for a yacht to work in to an inner anchorage in 4 metres, by passing east around the small limestone rock. However the swell appeared no less here and one is then trapped until the next daylight high tide.

At high tide you can explore the saltwater river to a blue pool at its far end. From the causeway that crosses the saltwater river a road leads inland to the main round the island road.

## **PASSE DE UPE & PASSE DE GADJI**

Departing from Baie de Ugo we followed outside the reef to Passe Upe which is about half a mile wide and 40 metres deep. The reef is well defined by breaking seas.

We continued across Mouillage Gadji and exited through Passe de Gadji close to Ilot Gie. Note that the outer reef to the north is not well defined and may not be breaking, although the pass is a mile wide.

## REFERENCES

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