

LOST IN SAMOA: A TALE OF ADVENTURE IN THE NAVIGATOR ISLANDS

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Lost in Samoa: A Tale of Adventure in the Navigator Islands by E. S. Ellis

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E. S. ELLIS

**LOST IN SAMOA: A TALE
OF ADVENTURE IN THE
NAVIGATOR ISLANDS**



Frontispiece. "'WHO'S THERE?' 'I AM!' REPLIED THE YOUNG AMERICAN" (p. 201.)

LOST IN SAMOA:

*A TALE OF ADVENTURE IN THE
NAVIGATOR ISLANDS.*

BY

E. S. ELLIS,

AUTHOR OF "BOY PIONEER SERIES," "GREAT RIVER SERIES"
ETC. ETC. ETC.

WITH EIGHT ORIGINAL ILLUSTRATIONS BY GORDON BROWNE.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	I
CHAPTER	
I. LOOKING OUT TO SEA	4
II. THE BEACH COMBERS	8
III. DUKE AND DORA	13
IV. A DARING DEED	18
V. A STEALTHY BLOW	25
VI. A LOST PRIZE	31
VII. ON SHORE AGAIN	38
VIII. THE EAVESDROPPER	44
IX. BETWEEN TWO FIRES	52
X. AN OPPORTUNE ARRIVAL	56
XI. A SECRET OF THE SEA	61
XII. OFF SHORE	68
XIII. SCANNING THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA	74
XIV. A WISE QUESTION	80
XV. UP THE MOUNTAIN PATH	86
XVI. MATSE AT HOME	92
XVII. AN ALARMING DISCOVERY	99
XVIII. A VOICE ACROSS THE WATERS	106
XIX. TIEFO	112

CHAPTER	PAGE
XX. PURSUIT	119
XXI. THAT'S THE BOAT	126
XXII. A SUSPICIOUS PROCEEDING	132
XXIII. BLIND WORK	138
XXIV. A MESSAGE FROM THE BEACH COMBERS	145
XXV. OPENING NEGOTIATIONS	151
XXVI. THE ULTIMATUM	157
XXVII. THE CONSPIRATORS	161
XXVIII. AN UNEXPECTED ALLY	167
XXIX. A PISTOL SHOT	174
XXX. A CHANGE OF BASE	180
XXXI. A CRITICAL SITUATION	184
XXXII. IS THAT YOU, EV ?	191
XXXIII. SOMETHING HIT	196
XXXIV. THE BESIEGERS	202
XXXV. THE BESIEGED	207
XXXVI. SEVERAL DISCOVERIES	214
XXXVII. STRANGE PROCEEDINGS	218
XXXVIII. HOW MATSE MANAGED IT	225
XXXIX. RAISING OF THE SIEGE	231
XL. CONCLUSION	237

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

"WHO'S THERE?" "I AM!" REPLIED THE YOUNG AMERICAN"	<i>Frontispiece.</i>
"DUKE PLUNGED FROM THE ROCK"	<i>To face page</i> 21
"THEY STUDIED THE DIAGRAM"	" 63
"UP THE MOUNTAIN PATH"	" 86
"THE CONSPIRATORS"	" 161
"I'LL FIX YOU!"	" 179
"EVAN SAW THE TRIO OF RAGGED HATS"	" 221
"I THINK I'VE GOT IT!"	" 243

LOST IN SAMOA.

A Tale of Adventures in the Navigator Islands.

INTRODUCTION.

AMONG the many romantic islands of the South Sea may be found a number of men whose early history is unknown. The most unwelcome subject to them is that relating to themselves, for the good reason that it may threaten their personal safety. A great many are fugitives from justice, and some have been guilty of crimes which would make the arm of the law eager to reach them. You will meet them all through the Pacific islands, and it need not be said they are not the kind of people you would want for friends.

England stopped transporting her convicts to New South Wales in 1840. It ceased at a later date in Van Dieman's Land, and did not end in West Australia until 1868. Some of the crimes for which the convicts were banished to those far-away islands were trifling—such as poaching and petty thieving. Not a few of the leading and wealthy citizens of

Australia to-day are men whose fathers or grand-fathers were convicts or ticket-of-leave men; but, though the fact is known to nearly every one, it isn't prudent to refer to it in argument. While Australia's system of balloting is the best in the world (and there are measures now under way looking to its introduction into various States of our own country), the elections over there are marked by the same personal abuse as those in this part of the world. It is safe to say anything you choose about a political opponent, so long as you make no slur on his ancestry or his descent. No matter how true it may be, it is criminal libel. Only a few years ago, a public speaker had to pay fifty thousand dollars for calling his opponent the son of an "involuntary emigrant" from England.

Many of the escaped convicts and ticket-of-leave men scattered through the South Sea Islands, taking possession of lonely tracts of land in that vast waste of waters, and keeping clear of the civilisation which was soon on their heels. In 1804 twenty-seven convicts captured a small schooner, and escaped from New South Wales to the Feejee Islands, where they were the first white persons to settle. Had they possessed enough sense to avoid quarrelling among themselves they might have continued masters of the Feejees, but they wrangled all the time, and when Commodore Wilkes touched there in 1840 he found only two of them alive.