A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIALS FOR LEONE,
ISLAND OF TUTUILA, AMERICAN SAMOA

DECEMBER 1985

Prepared for: Government of American Samoa
Department of Parks and Recreation, Pago Pago,
American Samoa, 96799

Prepared by: Joseph Kennedy
Archaeological Consultants
of Hawaii, Inc. 3060 Huelani
Dr. Honolulu, Hawaii 96822
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A BRIEF REVIEW OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK IN AMERICAN SAMOA AND LEONE VILLAGE</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A DISCUSSION OF THE PRELIMINARY SURVEY</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A: LEONE TRENCH PROFILES FROM FROST</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX B: SELECTED PHOTOGRAPHS FROM LEONE</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

In early September of 1985, Archaeological Consultants of Hawaii, Inc. conducted a very brief surface survey of selected areas in the Village of Leone, Island of Tutuila, American Samoa. The purpose of this examination was to make a preliminary assessment of archaeological potentials in this part of the island and to comment on possible impacts to these cultural resources that may come as a result of future development.

In the course of the survey it was learned that the American Samoan Government is exploring the possibility of building a harbor in Leone. Should these plans be realized, there are several areas of concern for our survey, although brief, indicates that archaeological potential in the area is quite substantial—especially considering the need for further archaeological work in Samoa in general, and Leone Village in particular.

Archaeological work in Samoa is not without its problems. For the sake of keeping the record straight, as well as by example, it should be known that twelve working days were needed to secure our baggage and equipment from Honolulu. This left myself and an assistant archaeologically 'unarmed' and in need of fresh clothing for 2 weeks, but not idle. This time, and more, was needed to arrange the proper permissions from a number of different agencies and individuals. I suppose that it is a curious form of luck that these two 'sentences' ran concurrently. Future researchers may well count on similar types of situations and should expect, and if possible accept, the possibility of spending a month in the field for a few days of survey work.

I would like to thank the Coastal Zone Management people for their support, Mr. Bill Satale and Stan Sorensen of the Department of Parks and Recreation, Bill Ayres and Dave Eisler of the University of Oregon for providing a place to live, my assistant, Mr. Jacob Kaio for his patience, and finally, the Office of Samoan Affairs and the people of Leone Village for their cooperation.
A BRIEF REVIEW OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK IN AMERICAN SAMOA AND LEONE VILLAGE

While the Samoas have been 'worked' extensively by anthropologists over the years, there has been relatively little archaeological work to accompany it. As early as 1930, Sir Peter Buck makes mention of archaeological sites in American Samoa yet it would be an additional thirty years before William Kikuchi would arrive to conduct the first systematic examination of some of these sites. Kikuchi, a graduate student at the time, was soon joined by Yoshiiko Sinoto, who, together with Kenneth Emory and others, outlined the need for archaeological work in American Samoa at the Tenth Pacific Science Conference. The University of Auckland and Jack Golson had already begun research in Western Samoa as early as 1957.

On October 14th, 1962, Sinoto and Kikuchi began their work and between the 19th and 23rd of the same month conducted some survey work in the Villages of Vailoa, Vailoatai, Lealal, Amaluia and Leone. In addition, a total of 12 sites were selected and tested excavated, 9 on Tutuila and three on Ta’u. For the purposes of this report, it is interesting to note that 5 of the nine sites tested (Tu-1 to -5) were put down in Leone. They are described by Emory and Sinoto (1965) as

...house foundation mounds and exposed fireplaces in the village or in banks along the beach. All cultural deposits observed in the sites proved to be postcontact. Metal nails and glass pieces were found throughout the deposits. Only one adz was recorded from the excavation.

The famous Leone petroglyphs on the Papaloa rocks are mentioned as are whetstones found in a stream in Leone as well as on the beach.

A ten year impasse went by before the arrival of Janet O. Frost who conducted some subsurface examinations of sites in American Samoa. Like Kikuchi and Sinoto, Frost conducted some limited test excavations around the island of Tutuila and placed a number of test pits in Leone. She tested two house foundations within the modern village and found both pre and postcontact layers. The earliest level was underlying one of the mounds and yielded a radiocarbon date of A.D. 1394+80. There was also a burial present in this level and its discovery is said to have ended the examination.
Between Kikuchi and Sinoto and Frost, Edmund Ladd’s small survey of ‘Olovalu Crater near Futiga appears to represent 100% of archaeological activity in American Samoa. Across the channel in Western Samoa, however, large and well-organized archaeological investigations were being carried out by Green (1969), Davidson (1969), Jennings (1976, 1980), and others. It is from these efforts that our basic understanding of Samoan prehistory is derived.

A good first effort to close the gap in archaeological information between Western and American Samoa was undertaken by Jeffrey Clark and the Bishop Museum in 1980. Clark attempted to make a comprehensive survey and listing of known sites in American Samoa and did succeed in compiling a substantial document. Clark lists a number of sites in Leone which include the two mounds excavated by Frost (As-Tu-5), a single, square stone platform located on Mulimanga, the west ridge of Leone (As-Tu-30), a platform site on Sina ridge, east of Leone (As-Tu-31), a single, deep ditch located on the mountain path from Leone to Asu Village (As-Tu-35), a cave or rock overhang above Leone Junior High School (As-Tu-36), The Tagata-matau Adze-Quarry (recently the object of a very interesting study conducted by Helen M. Leach and Daniel C. Whitter) (As-Tu-39), The Papaloa Petroglyphs perviously reported by Kikuchi (1964), (As-Tu-40), an earthen structure located in a pig pasture in Leone (As-Tu-33), a buried stone wall in Leone (As-Tu-44), whetstone sites (As-Tu-50, 52, 54), and three springs located behind the village (As-Tu-55). A total of thirteen sites.

In addition to the sites listed by Clark, there are a number of additional house platforms scattered throughout the village, often in between contemporary fales. Of course this list does not count, nor could it, the probability of earlier structures and deposits located under these present dwelling units.

Beyond this, there is geological evidence of a general lifting of the island of Tutuila in the east and gradual sinking in the west. During the course of this survey, I was assured by several people that the present shoreline at Leone is a full 100 meters inland from its location at the end of WWII.
The archaeological implications are clear. There is a possibility of submerged cultural resource material, and possibly even very early sites at Leone. It should be remembered that the site at Mulifanua in Western Samoa was quite a distance off shore and under a three foot limestone cap in 3 meters of water. It is from this site that significant Lapita pottery information was gathered and also the place where the earliest radiocarbon date in Samoa was recorded.

A DISCUSSION OF THE PRELIMINARY SURVEY

As mentioned in the introduction to this text, most of the allotted time in Samoa was spent waiting for baggage and equipment or attempting to coordinate meetings designed to secure permissions. Three days after obtaining permission to do the work, it was time to leave; the money reserve was exhausted; spent on per diem and transportation.

A somewhat happy postscript to this story presents itself in the quality of survey work that we were finally able to accomplish. In the company of Chief Avegalio, and in his truck, my assistant and I were guided throughout the village and valley and given friendly access to all parts that were of interest to us. It may be said that this time with the chief and other members of the community was worth the wait. As it should be, I believe, it would be next to impossible to do this job, or any other, without the close cooperation of the Samoan chiefs and people.

In our tour of Leone we attempted to relocate some of the sites listed by the archaeologists who came before us. Some, like the petroglyphs, were easy while others, like Frost's, (whose dissertation was taken from the island before our arrival), were very difficult.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the visit were the number of abandoned house platforms that were scattered throughout the village. They appeared near the ocean and near the end of the village on the inland side. Most were noticed in between modern dwellings—both fales and western-type houses.
Leone is a large village by Samoan standards, with roughly 3000 inhabitants and 200 matai or chiefs. It is also the location of a number of historic and proto-historic buildings and monuments that fall within the archaeological provenience. Primarily these are religious structures erected by early Roman Catholic and London Missionary Society congregations.

Leone still boasts a large and active Roman Catholic and Protestant population and anyone who has visited the island would agree that the church plays a very substantial role in the lives of the Samoan people. This was quite evident in our conversations with the people in Leone.

As mentioned earlier, one of the easiest sites to identify in Leone is the petroglyph field on the Papaloa rocks fronting the village, about 30 meters offshore. It should be noted that there are but a total of three sites in American Samoa that feature petroglyphs and one set is located on the island of Ta'u.

In 1964 when Kikuchi published his petroglyph observations in Leone he reported that the Samoans were surprised to hear that their ancestors made rock carvings and was even told that they were part of Samoa's 'pagan past' or perhaps the work of other Pacific Island people. He also placed the Leone petroglyphs in a 'prehistoric' category due to the absence of any post contact designs. Now, just 12 years later, it is no longer possible to make that statement. When the rocks were examined on this trip, all three were also full of modern markings. Lovers names enclosed in a heart, autographs, epitaphs and obscenities were all present. Except for a few distinctly Samoan affectations, these could be the markings found on walls throughout the urban world. A modern reflection, or continuation based on the intent of the originals.

Mixed in among the now more prevalent modern carvings are what is left of the prehistoric ones. Many are in a state of rapid disrepair due to wave action and one must wonder as to their antiquity. The modern ones placed on the same rock sometime in the past twenty years already show signs of noticeable wear. The Papaloa rocks themselves are made of soft ash tuff and seem especially susceptible to this type of wave disintegration.
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I would like to begin this section with the statement that I am fully aware of the limitations imposed on a 'Conclusions and Recommendation' section of a report detailing the results of three days of work. However, having said that I would like to point out that the present archaeological situation in Samoa makes nearly any thoughtful effort a first step and a welcome addition to the literature.

Beyond this, what is NOT known about Samoan prehistory must be considered when evaluating even the most modest efforts. Clark estimates that the total number of excavated meter squares in American Samoa to be under the minimum necessary to properly evaluate a single house site.

This information is presented not as a prelude to suggesting that the whole of Leone Village pass through an archaeological screen in some misguided attempt to 'solve' Samoan prehistory in a single stroke. It is, rather, an attempt to present the reader with the important concept that everything in Leone is archaeologically 'new' or barely touched and that there are an awful lot of data archaeologists would like to have control over. There are many questions that need to be answered.

As far as Leone Village and its archaeological future are concerned, I should think that any effort would be best set in the context of, ideally, a master plan or else some sort of coordinated, problem-orientated framework. I do not see this as an especially imposing task for at this stage of the game, I think it is appropriate to paint with the broad brush.

Without question, the first field step to be taken regarding any specific, potentially impacted area would be the production of a usable survey map showing the location of archaeological sites and their relationship to the surrounding area. Subsurface mapping through the method of systematic test pitting or boring would be useful. This process may also go a way towards obtaining in situ radioisotope samples from stratified sites—a goal which should be high on the preliminary priority list, for now.
In the case of Leone Village, any impacted coastal area should include an examination of the offshore potentials, be they in the form of sunken villages like Mulifanua or shipwrecks. I do not believe that the importance of maritime archaeology has been addressed in Samoa and the significance of the Mulifanua site has been mentioned earlier in this report.

It will be important that any work done in any part of Leone be undertaken with a mind to other important and surely related sites. I think of the presence of the Tataga-Matu adze quarry located in the back of this valley as a good example.

It is a fact of life for the archaeologist that, except in rare cases, study areas are most always determined by modern ownership, financial concerns or some modern practicality. These select areas receive archaeological attention through the vehicle of the Environmental Impact Statement or some like-document. Because of American Samoa’s association with the United States, we may be certain that this situation will continue and that a great deal of upcoming work will be of a contract nature. Accordingly, it is important that these contract efforts help to play whatever role they can in pursuit of larger archaeological issues. To this end, I would recommend that any future work done at Leone be judged heavily on research design.

Finally, it is probable that future archaeological work will be carried out near or in occupied villages where such activity will be considered unusual at best, surely a lively topic of conversation and the object of much scrutiny. For these reasons alone, it will be essential that the archaeologist be prepared to establish a working relationship that is acceptable to the ancestors of the group one wishes to study. I have the feeling that this old saw is especially true in Samoa.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Buck, Peter 1930
_Samoan Material Culture_. B.P. Bishop Mus.
Bull. # 75, Honolulu

Clark, Jeffrey 1980

Davidson, Janet 1969
_Samoa Settlement Pattern Before 1840_.
_Journal of the Polynesian Society_ 76 (1) 44-48

Emory, K.P. and Sinoto, Y. 1965
_Preliminary Investigations in Polynesia_.
Ms. on file at anthropology dept. B.P. Bishop Mus. Honolulu

Frost, Janet 1976
_Summary Report of Archaeological Investigations on Tutuila, American Samoa_.
_NZ Archaeological Assoc. Newsletter_ 19 (1) 30-37

Green, Roger C. and Davidson, Janet M. 1969
_Archaeology in Western Samoa Vol. 162_.
Auckland Institute and Museum, Bull. 6x7

Jennings, J.D., Holmer, R.N., Janetski, J.C. and Smith, H.L. 1976
Excavations on Upolu, Western Samoa. _Pacific Anthropological Records_. B.P. Bishop Museum. Honolulu

Kikuchi, W.K. 1964
Figure 9: Leone Trench Profiles: a. North profile of Structure No. 1, b. North profile of Structure No. 2 (scale: 3 cm = 1 m).
APPENDIX B
A Portion of the Leone Petroglyphs