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**A Voyage To New Guinea, And The Moluccas, From
Balambangan: Including An Account of Magindano,
Sooloo, and other Islands; And Illustrated With Thirty
Copperplates, Performed In The Tartar Galley, ...**

Forrest, Thomas

London, 1779

Chapter VIII. The Island Bunwoot is granted to the English - Transactions there; and Description of it - Sail for Tubuan - Mr. Baxter sets out to visit the Gold Mine at Marra; but immediately returns.

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CHAPTER VIII.

The Island Bunwoot is granted to the English—Transactions there; and Description of it—Sail for Tubuan—Mr. Baxter sets out to visit the Gold Mine at Marra; but immediately returns.

AFTER I had been some time at Magindano, and found that the country produced much gold and wax, also an excellent kind of cassia, perhaps cinnamon, (of which I brought thence two boxes from Rajah Moodo, one for his Majesty with a letter, another for the India Company with a letter, which have been delivered) I wished to find near the main land, some island, which should have behind it a harbour, and on it room sufficient to establish a fort and warehouses. The island Ebus or Bos, twenty miles from Magindano river, seemed in every respect to correspond with my idea: it has been already described. I had visited this island, as has been said, with Dattoo Enty, and was told I might have a grant not only of it, but of a portion of land on the opposite main.

1775.
August.

I had not then visited the island of Bunwoot facing Magindano river; but when I had seen it, I found it in many respects superior in situation to Ebus, as being near the capital, and to those on whose friendship more dependance might be had than on that of the Illano princes. Yet I did not ask a grant of it, apprehending the favour would be too great.

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At



1775.
September.

At last, as I believe they learnt that I wished for it, a kind of proffer came from themselves; and Rajah Moodo said, about three weeks before this reconciliation, that he would give Bunwoot to the English, not doubting but the Sultan would acquiesce. I expressed my sensibility of his many marks of favour to myself, and assured him, it would be a greater satisfaction to the English to settle near him than in the Illano districts, where, although he had the sovereignty of all islands, and as far inland as a horn can be heard from the beach, the Illanos had much power, on which we could not depend; while we could well depend on his protection.

On the 3d of *September*, the Sultan, Chartow, and Uku, Topang's brother, came to dine with Rajah Moodo, and his father Fakymolano, at Rajah Moodo's house. I was not invited to the repast, but had victuals sent to my apartments. I observed that Topang was not there.

After dinner, I was sent for. The Sultan informed me, that he and Fakymolano, Rajah Moodo, and all their relations, had come to a resolution of granting the island Bunwoot to the English Company: I thanked him. He then asked me if I intended sailing to Balambangan directly, or if I chose to stay till they should send a boat thither for intelligence.

Considering that the monsoon was far from being so turned as to enable me to sail direct thither to avoid the Sooloos, also, that I had not yet got the grant of Bunwoot, I paid him the compliment, that I would obey his commands in the matter. I perceived this pleased

them

them all. They advised me to stay till the return of the boat; but, upon my expressing a desire to visit Bunwoot before the boat went for intelligence about the English, and, while she was getting ready, a mantery and some foldiers were ordered to accompany me.

1775.
September.

Next day, *September* the 4th, I failed for Bunwoot; but, the wind being contrary, after I got over the bar, I put into a creek close to the north side of Timoko hill.

On the 5th, standing over towards Bunwoot, I saw the Spaniard under sail passing to the northward of that island: he was attended by a small vessel. And, on the 6th, the mantery being rather tired of the excursion, I returned to Magindano to get my letters ready for Balambangan, having heard that the English were returned thither from Borneo, with some men of war; and that they intended proceeding to Sooloo to demand satisfaction for Dattoo Teting's taking of Balambangan.

On the 12th, the Sultan, Fakymolano, and Rajah Moodo, signed and sealed a grant* of the island of Bunwoot to the English East India Company. This I forwarded with my letters to Balambangan on the 21st. But the boat finding nobody there, proceeded to the town of Borneo Proper, near which the English were at the island of Labuan, about fifteen miles from the mouth of the river of Borneo. My servant Matthew, who was entrusted with the packet, delivered it to Mr.

* The grant was wrote in Spanish by Abderagani, a native of Pampanga—once a slave, who, by turning Mussulman, had obtained his liberty.



1775.
September.

Herbert. I also inclosed to Mr. Herbert the Sultan of Sooloo's letter to me. The boat had thirty men, and mounted a three pounder, with six brass rantackers: she had outriggers.

On the 24th, I was informed that the boat bound to Balambangan had failed from the river's mouth. As I had promised to stay till her return, I proposed, in the mean time, to go over to Bunwoot, and survey it. So we filled our jars with river water, and got all else ready.

On the 25th, Rajah Moodo, who had before borrowed six of the galley's muskets, asked of me other four; for which he sent me four very indifferent. With this I readily put up, as, whenever I went from the river, I had some of his armed soldiers on board, who behaved with civility on all occasions.

Tuesday the 26th, westerly winds. Came on board four of Rajah Moodo's soldiers, with their arms, to attend me to Bunwoot. On the 27th, fine weather. Cast off, and rowed down the river: came to close to the south shore within the bar. There we saw several wild hogs feeding at low water: they were not shy, and might easily have been shot; but I did not choose to bring pork on board. On the 28th, westerly winds, with some rain. Got over the bar at nine P. M. being driven out by a strong ebb tide.

The 29th. Fine weather. At eight in the morning, ran between the islet Tagud Tangan and the main island of Bunwoot: measured Tagud Tangan, and found it a hundred and twenty yards long, and a hundred

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hundred and ten yards broad. Laid the vessel ashore, on a smooth hard beach. Saw a number of wild hogs. On the 30th, variable winds. Went in the boat, and found a harbour within a mile of the north part of the island. Planted on the island Tagud Tangan seventeen vines, some ferry or lemon grass, some parsley and clary, which I got out of Rajah Moodo's garden. Sailed out with the night tide, and sounded frequently; but had no ground, with eighty fathom of line, within a mile and half of the island.

1775.
September.

October the 1st. Sailed round the north end, and along the N. W. or outer side of the island: had pretty regular soundings within less than a mile of the reef of coral rocks that stretches from the north end of it. Saw two spots of coral rocks off the outside of the island, with three fathom water on them. Fine weather, with regular land and sea breezes. At noon, ran into a creek among the coral rocks off the north end of Bunwoot.

The 2d. S. W. winds. Weighed in the morning: passed over the rocks, and came into a sort of bay, where I landed, and went a hunting the wild hog, without success.

On the 3d, fine weather. Afloat in the morning: went farther round into a land-locked bay, and moored the vessel, in eight foot high water, muddy ground. Dug a well ashore, in black mold and clay, mixed with stones. It soon filled with rainwater; but we found no springs. Saw many turtle doves on the high trees, but few other birds, except some gulls on the shore.

On



1775.
October.

On the 4th, variable winds and calms. Built an attop covering over the after part of the vessel; also cleared some ground on the N. E. point of the island, and began to built a house ashore.

The 5th. Employed in surveying. On the 6th, had variable winds, with thunder, lightning, and rain. Found in the wood some lime trees, and one jack tree full of fruit; but the property was claimed by a Badjoo fisherman, who kept his station near us, and daily supplied us with fish. To day Mr. Baxter caught a pig, weighing about six pound, which the Mindanoers entreated us to eat, and not to be ceremonious: this was civil. On the 7th, variable winds, with rain. Mr. Baxter, assisted by some people and a dog, caught three fine roasting pigs.

On the 8th, variable winds, with rain. Inclosed a piece of ground, and planted in it some vetches. Built also a shed house on the N. E. point of the island.

On *Monday* the 9th, hoisted English colours on the N. E. point, and saluted them with nine guns. To day came from Tukoran a prow, told us two English ships were cruising off Sooloo.

The 10th. Variable winds. Hauled the vessel ashore, and breamed her bottom. In the garden the vetches were all sprung. Employed surveying; some in fishing, and some in looking out for pigs.

During the 11th, 12th, and 13th, employed in the same manner. On the 14th, came over from Tetyan harbour, a person who called himself

himself

himself brother to the Rajah of Balambangan: I presented him with a pocket compass. Next day, the 15th, I went with him round the island, and found its circumference about seventeen or eighteen miles. The Dattoo, for so we called him, stopt to show me a spring at the S. W. part of the island: it was but a small one. In our excursion, we found very pleasant walking under the shade of the tall trees, as there is no underwood. We frequently roused some black hogs, but never got near them.

1775.
October.

To day, the 16th, we discovered a small spring by the White Cliff, which is remarkable, and may be seen from Mindano Bar. Measured the top of the hill, near which we lay. It commands the harbour, to which it presents an almost perpendicular front, about a hundred foot high, within a small distance of where a ship may lie in five fathom water, muddy ground. I found the summit a flat of a hundred and twenty yards long, and twenty-six broad: an excellent fortification might be built on it. I called it Ubal Hill,* from a four fruit so named, I found there. The hill and valleys adjacent, are equally clear of underwood. From this to the 23d, I was very a greably employed in surveying the island; fishing sometimes, and often hunting the wild hog. Of this species, we should have got many; but unfortunately I had only one dog, who was not able to stop them: they made nothing of carrying away a musket ball. We perceived no animals on the island, but hogs, monkeys, guanos, and some snakes, about eighteen inches long, with brown spots, which, we were told, were venomous.

* See the circular view.

Before



1775.
October.

Before I proceed, may be expected a more particular description of an island, where I spent my time so pleasingly.

The island Bunwoot is about eighteen miles round: * its greatest breadth lies towards the S. W. and its opposite end tapers towards the N. E. till, at that extremity, it is not above half a mile across.

The island is almost entirely covered with tall timber, free from underwood, except that in some places are ratans, creeping along the ground, and a certain plant, (byonos,) which resembles a vine. It creeps also along the ground, and twists about large trees: the largest part of the stem is about the size of a man's leg. The Mindanoers cut it into pieces, about a foot long, which they bruise with a mallet upon a piece of hard wood. Thus bruised, it discharges a white juice in great quantity, which serves all the purposes of soap. Here grows a kind of rose wood, called narra, many dammer trees, and the tree that produces the gum, called curuang.

Towards the N. W. side of Bunwoot, are many mangrove trees, extending, however, only in a slip along the shore, with a few clumps like islands. These are all in the salt water. From among them, you spring immediately upon the firm land, by a rocky step, in most places, three or four foot high; there being no fresh water swamps which communicate with the sea. This circumstance makes the island very healthy, as the Mindano people allow, and I have experienced; the soil being mostly, from half a foot to a foot of black mold, upon stones and rocks; and it is said to be very fruitful.

* Plate XVIII, XIX.

On



On the N. E. end of this island, are few or no mangroves, and in the bay between Ranten Dattoo, and Tagud Tangan, the ascent becomes a little steep, whereas, on the N. W. side, the ascent is gradual: here grows a tree, the leaves of which are as tender as spinage; it is called Badoo.

1775.
October.

From Rantin Dattoo to Telaga point, the island is both broadest and highest. Here you ascend by a gentle slope, to the most elevated part of the island, which I take to be between two and three hundred foot above the sea. The island from the S. W. appears like a wedge, or what seamen call a gunner's coin.

If the island has few springs, it contains many ponds of rain water, frequented by a number of wild hogs, which afford excellent sport, when hunted by two dogs at least: for one dog will not stop them. The hogs are very swift, but not so large and formidable as some on the island Magindano. On Bunwoot the hogs are numerous, but have no gardens, or rice fields to feed in. Their food is wild fruits, and what they pick up on the shore at low water, where they always attend in numbers. Those we caught had no fat; but those we got on Magindano were plump enough, though not to compare with tame hogs. Travelling in the woods here is always cool, through the shade of the lofty trees.

There is no danger for ships any where about the island, but what may be seen; except off the seaward side of it, where are some coral rocks, with two and three fathom, at the distance of two miles. A ship may come in at either end*, and anchor to leeward of the island,

* Plate XIX. Circular View.



1775.
October.

in the S. W. monsoon; or to windward of it, in the N. E. monsoon. For then the water is smooth, and it never blows from the N. E. but it sometimes blows during that monsoon from the N. W.

In the bay between Rantin Dattoo and Tagud Tangan, the water is rather deep; and within twenty fathom, the ground is foul. But farther, a mile short of the N. E. part of the island, a reef projects about a cable's length from the shore. This proves an effectual shelter against the S. W. swell, and forms a kind of harbour, with three fathom and half, close to the dry coral rocks, at low water spring tides. †

Some shaggy islets lie a little distant from the S. W. part of the island, with no passage between them and the island: keep therefore a cable's length without them.

As I found such multitudes of hogs, I conceived an idea, that settlers on this island might be well supplied with provisions, by the following method. The island being narrow, a wall might be built across, to separate the hogs from that quarter intended for cultivation; fruit trees, of different kinds, should then be planted where the hogs are allowed to range, such as the nanka, the durian, &c. The hogs would then multiply and fatten, affording a never failing stock of good meat. There are also great quantities of fish.

By the 23d, we got up to town; and found, that, during our absence, a stout wooden bridge had been built over the Melampy, from Rajah Moodo's fort, to the Sultan's palace.

† Plate XVIII and XIX.

On



On the 29th, I sailed, with the wind easterly, about twenty miles to the southward, for Tubuan river; not far from which, I was told, had been formerly wrought a gold mine: the place was named Marra. We had regular soundings to the southward of Mindano bar, from five to thirty-five fathom, being then abreast of Timoko hill, and one mile from the shore. We got into Tubuan river just after sun set, and lay aground at low water: four of Rajah Moodo's soldiers attended us.

1775.
October.

On the 30th, winds from the S. W. Gathered the seeds of a grain, called in the West Indies calalu, and by the Malays kulitis, which grew here in great plenty. I intended to carry them over to sow on Bunwoot. Dammed up a part of the river, which kept the vessel afloat at low water. The people, in wading ashore, hurt their feet very much with a kind of small prickly periwinkle, that stuck to the pebbles.

On the 31st, winds from the S. W. Caught many thousands of a small kind of fish, called Yap. These yap cling to pieces of bark put into the river, and are so caught. Whilst we lay here, though the season for the N. E. monsoon, we generally had a sea wind in the day; and in the night, the wind blew always very cold down the valley. On the 2d of *November*, I sent the gunner amongst the Haraforas, to purchase provisions; on the 3d he returned, having been civilly treated by them; and many of those mountaineers came to Tubuan that same day, bringing on rafts of bamboos, pumpkins, potatoes, &c. which we and the people of the village purchased from them. One

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of



1775.
November.

of the Haraforas having killed a wild hog, conducted me to the place, and sold me a quarter. In carrying it to the vessel, he covered it with plantane leaves, having occasion to pass near the house of a Mindanoer, that nobody might see it. On the 8th we breamed the vessel's bottom. The same day, I set out with an officer of Rajah Moodo's, called Papinshan, to visit the gold mine at Marra; but came back at night, finding the fatigue of travelling too great.

On the 9th, Mr. David Baxter, offering to go to the gold mine, I left him to explore it, and failed in the evening for Bunwoot; where, on the 10th, I found the Datoe formerly mentioned, brother to the Rajah of Balambangan, making salt. On the 11th I sowed many different seeds in the island; such as, Calalu, Papas, wild sage, and many Jack and Kanary seeds. In the evening failed for Mindano, intending to proceed soon for Borneo; but not without leave of Rajah Moodo.

On the 13th, hauled ashore at Mindano, to stop a leak. Recovered by Rajah Moodo's assistance, two slave boys, one my own, one the mate's, which had run away, and been gone three months. On the 14th, I sent the boat to Tubuan, to fetch Mr. Baxter. On the 15th, he returned, the people who promised to go with him to the gold mine, having failed him. On the 16th, Rajah Moodo ordered Papinshan and some others to accompany Mr. Baxter thither. On the 17th I failed again for Tubuan; but, not being able to get in that tide, I proceeded to Leno harbour. On the 19th, many Haraforas came on board with provisions. On the 20th, I left Leno harbour, and returned

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to Tubuan river. Sent the boat to found, who reported thirty and forty fathom, sandy ground, at about a quarter of a mile's distance from the bar. On the 22d, Mr. Baxter set out for Marra, and returned the 26th.

1775.
November

On the first of *December*, I sailed for Magindano, where I arrived on the 3d. From the 9th of *November* till now, fine pleasant weather, and generally N. E. winds.

C H A P .

The coast to the left of the bar of the Paganay, looking down the river, is called *Bawan*. So they say, they say *Bawan* is going to the left, as we say, going from London to Newmarket, is going to the northward, and from Newmarket to London, is going to the southward. After passing the mouth of two creeks on the left, there without the river, where salt is made, you come to *Timote Hill*, which looks at a distance like a bowl, bottom up, and tick-like to the water. A hill at the bottom of it is the salt-works of *Kidagay* in that side. From *Timote Hill* to *Timote Point* is a good sandy beach. *Timote Point* is rather low, but not flat. Midway appears behind the hill of *Kapalangan*, being clear of wood, it is covered with green grass, which makes

