



NEW ZEALAND
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NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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 A LANGI SITE ON KAPA ISLAND, VAVA'U, TONGA

L.E. Thompson

SITE DESCRIPTION:

This site which I located in 1960, is situated on the main ridge down the centre of Kapa Island, about half a mile north east of Falevai village, opposite a deep bay on the western side of the Island. The precise location can be determined from the survey peg number 29064, which is shown on the 4 chains blocksheets No. 213/155 and 213/156 covering this area.

The structure, which I have provisionally termed a "Langi", since it somewhat resembles a Langi type "B" in McKern's classification, is a raised rectangular mound of earth only, surrounded by a ditch, with an entrance or ramp at each corner. It appears as if the material from the surrounding ditches has been thrown inward to raise the central area, which is approximately 80 feet square.

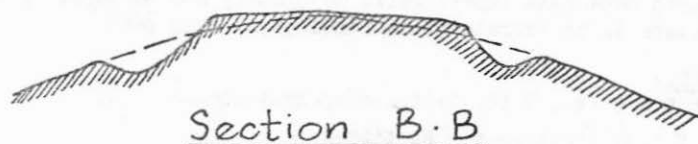
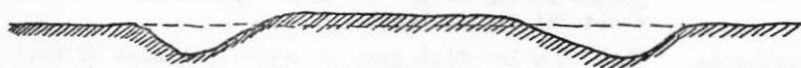
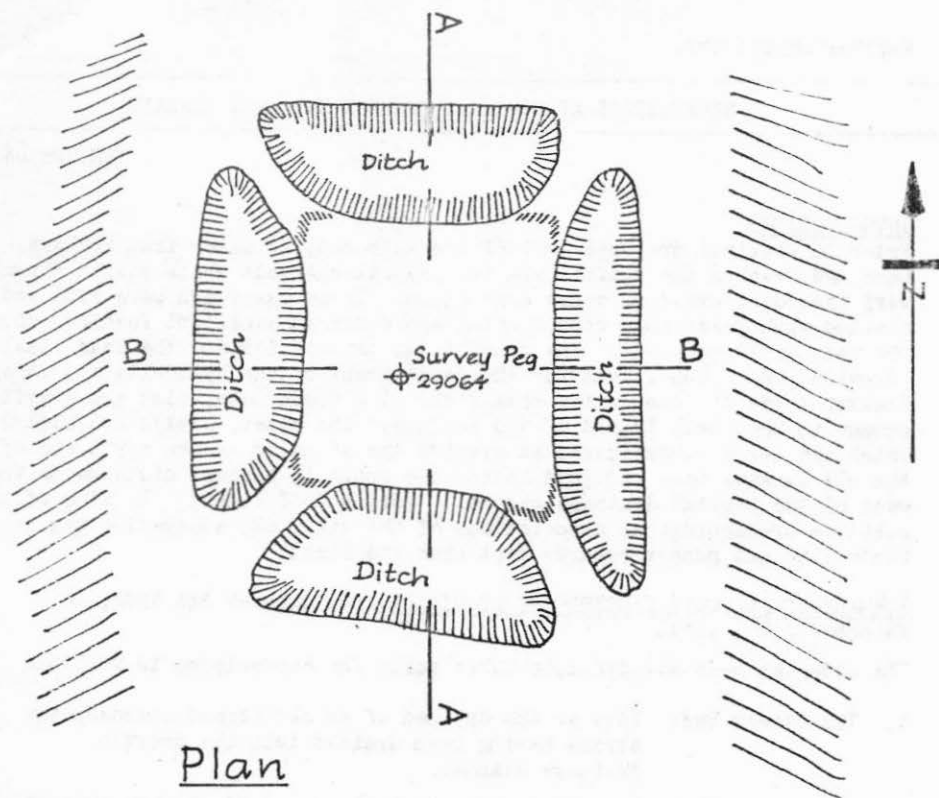
The site commands views on both sides of the island, although now largely obscured on the western side by groves of coconuts. The site itself is covered with bushes and some coconut palms.

To reach this site from Neiafu, the principal town of Vava'u, one must travel by launch to either Falevai or 'Otea villages, thence by the walking path between the two to the head of the bay mentioned above, and then strike inland to the top of the central ridge.

Reference:

"Archaeology of Tonga" - W.C. McKern, 1929.

(McKern subdivides grave mounds into two types : a) fa'itoka, chiefly graves; and b) langi, royal graves. Golson remarked that insufficient correlation exists between form and function for the field worker to be able to rely upon simple field identification of monuments. J.B. Palmer suggests that the relationship between the langi recorded by Thompson and the New Zealand pa may be more real than apparent. Editor.)



Plan of Langi on Kapa Is.,
Vava'u Tonga

