

middle nine and a half fathoms, decreasing thence gradually in all directions to the shore. The form of the lake is nearly circular, and it has a subterranean outlet. The hill in which this crater is situated is conical, and there is a low knoll at some distance to the south of it, which is the only other elevation in the neighbourhood, above the general height of the ridge.

The border of the crater is clothed with the usual forest foliage of these islands, which, however, exhibits here more than usual beauty, being decorated with the finely worked fronds of the arborescent ferns, in widely-spread stars, and the graceful plumes of a large mountain palm.

The poets of the island have appreciated the beauty of the place, and allude to the perpetual verdure which adorns the banks of the lake, in the following line :

“Lauuto’o e le toi a e lau mea.”

“Lauto, untouched by withered leaf.”

There is a legend connected with this lake, that has more of poetic beauty and feeling than one would have supposed to exist among so rude a people. It is as follows :

Many generations since, during a war between Upolu and Savaii, a number of war-canoes from the latter island crossed over to attack Ulatamoa (or, as it is now called, Ulumoenga), the principal town in the district of Aana. At the time of their approach, two brothers, To’o and Ata, chanced to be paddling their canoes in the channel between the reef and the shore, and before they could reach the land were attacked by a party of Savaiians. After a valiant defence, Ata was overpowered and slain, while To’o narrowly escaped the same fate.

Overwhelmed with sorrow at the loss of a brother whom he tenderly loved, To’o retired to a neighbouring mountain, and burying himself in the darkest recesses of its forests, made them resound with his bitter lamentations. At length in his wanderings he came to the summit, where, stooping down, he scooped out with his hands a vast hollow, and, leaning over its brink, suffered his tears to fall in until it was filled. The lake thus formed has ever since borne the appellation of Lauu-to’o.

The regard of To’o for his brother’s memory was further evinced by his adoption of Ata’s name, conjoined to his own as his family