SOUTH PACIFIC STORIES - TIMELINE of Major South Seas Writers' Visits

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Year	Author	Locale(s)	Details
1842–3	**Herman Melville**	Nuku Hiva (Marquesas), Tahiti	Sailed from Nantucket in 1841, aboard the whaler *Acushnet*. Deserted ship in July 1842 at Nuku Hiva, spent four months in the Typee Valley, then traveled to Tahiti and Moorea until late 1843. These experiences inspired his bestselling works during his lifetime, Typee and Omoo.
1866	**Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens)**	Oahu, Maui, Hawaii	Arrived March 1866 by steamer from San Francisco on assignment for the *Sacramento Union* newspaper. Stayed four months, traveling across Oahu, Maui, and the Big Island. His now-famous dispatches became Letters from Hawaii (1872). He fell in love with "the loveliest fleet of islands anchored in any ocean" and also rose to fame soon after.
1872	**Pierre Loti (Julien Viaud)**	Tahiti	French military officer, writer/adventurer and bon vivant who wrote Le Marriage de Loti, introducing Paul Gauguin and others to the exoticism and beauty of Tahiti.
1889–94	**Robert Louis Stevenson**	Hawaii 1889; 1889–94: Tahiti, Tuamotus, Marquesas, Samoa (where he lived and died)	Arrived Honolulu Jan 24, 1889, with his family; stayed six months, for health reasons, residing at Waikiki. Departed for Tahiti and Marquesas in June 1889, via the Tuamotus, and reached Samoa in December 1889. Purchased land in Apia (then German Samoa) in 1890 and lived there until his death in 1894. His experiences informed many short stories, novellas, essays, and travelogues.
1891–1903	**Paul Gauguin**	Tahiti 1891–93 &1895–1901; Hiva Oa (Marquesas) 1901–03	Arrived in Papeete, Tahiti, in June 1891 seeking artistic inspiration and escape from European society. Lived primarily in Tahiti until returning briefly to France in 1893, then sailed back permanently in July 1895. Moved to Hiva Oa in the Marquesas in 1901 for greater isolation, where he lived until his death on May 8, 1903. Produced iconic works depicting Polynesian life, all the while living a mostly unhappy, depraved and pugilistic life. He wrote a moving descriptive tribute to French Polynesia, Noa Noa, illustrated with his own woodblock prints.
1907–09 **1914–16**	**Jack London**	Hawaii (Oahu, Maui, Molokai, Hawaii) Nuku Hiva (Marquesas), Tahiti/Society Islands, Samoa, Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands Hawaii (Oahu, Maui, Kauai, Hawaii)	Began his *Snark* voyage with his wife and soulmate Charmian in April 1907 from California, stopping in Hawaii and then sailing through the South Pacific for over 2 years, including the Marquesas, Tuamotus, Societies (Tahiti, Bora Bora, Raiatea), Samoa, Fiji, Vanuatu, and the Solomons, where illness forced him to abandon the journey and return (via Sydney) to his Beauty Ranch in Sonoma County's Valley of the Moon in 1909. A wealth of short stories, several novels, numerous essays, and his famous The Cruise of the Snark account resulted from this adventure. Returned with Charmian for wo extended stays in 1914 and 1915-16 - becoming a *kama'aina* - "one who belongs." He was deeply affected philosophically by Hawaiian lore and culture.

1916	**W. Somerset Maugham**	Hawaii, Tahiti, Samoas, Fiji	Traveled to French Polynesia in 1916. Then visited both Samoas. His experiences shaped several short stories in The Trembling of a Leaf (1921) and his novel The Moon and Sixpence (1919) based loosely on the life of Paul Gauguin.
1920–1943	**Charles Nordhoff & James N. Hall**	Tahiti primarily; Tuamotus, Cook Islands	Arrived in Tahiti in 1920 after World War I service and settled permanently, writing about island life. The duo co-authored The Bounty Trilogy (1932) - historical *fiction* which became the basis for 3 Hollywood blockbusters based on history's favorite mutiny. (Stay tuned for my lecture on the real story of the timeless psychodrama of the mutiny on the Bounty).
1941	**Ernest Hemingway**	Hawaii (Oahu, Hawaii Island)	Visited in February 1941, staying briefly on Oahu and the Big Island. This sole, secretive Pacific trip, amid personal turmoil, is explored in Ernest Hemingway in Hawaii (2017)
1944	**James A. Michener**	Stationed in Espiritu Santu in Vanuatu (then New Hebrides); traveled on assignment to New Caledonia, Fiji, Solomon Islands	Served as a U.S. Navy Lieutenant and naval historian during World War II. His wartime observations of island cultures and military life formed the basis for Tales of the South Pacific (1947), which won the Pulitzer Prize and two of its chapters became the basis for the hit musical *South Pacific.* He later visited Hawaii and wrote an epic sweeping history, Hawaii, one chapter of which was made into the epic film of the same name.