Taim Bilong Kiap

A Personal Recollection

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Title: Taim Bilong Kiap: A Personal Recollection
Subject: Four years as a Patrol Officer in Papua and New Guinea during the early 1960s

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Introduction

The following extract is from *Una Voce* No. 4, December 2003. *Una Voce* is the Journal of the Papua New Guinea Association of Australia Inc (formerly the Retired Officers Association of Papua New Guinea Inc.):

KIAPS OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA - The Post-war Era
[Kiap is the Pidgin word for a Patrol Officer]

A tribute to those who followed in the tradition and footsteps of the pre-war 'outside' men in penetrating and establishing law and order in the primitive areas of Papua and New Guinea by Nancy Johnston

Dame Rachel Cleland wrote: After all, when you saw a twenty year old boy with perhaps five policemen keeping 30,000 warring tribesmen in happy harmony, you were just astounded at the thought, 'how does he do it!'

After World War II, when peace came to Papua New Guinea, many of the towns and other signs of development had been destroyed, native villages and gardens were devastated and plantations damaged or neglected. The job of reconstruction lay ahead, as well as the task of establishing good relations with the native people. There were primitive areas to be manned, and blank spots on the map that had to be brought under government control - places where cannibal warriors still practised all sorts of evil deeds.

Young Australian men, some not yet twenty years old, were selected and trained to serve in the Australian Administration as patrol officers (kiaps) with the Department of District Services and Native Affairs. DDS & NA was a trail-blazer department, its kiaps manned the primitive areas or explored and opened up others, and when an area came under control, members from other departments and agencies, missionaries and commercial people moved in. Health was usually the next department into an area, then Agriculture and Education followed and when outstations became towns, the Police Department sent in its European officers to handle police duties.

Until this happened, the kiap was the representative of all arms of government in his area. His main responsibility was law and order, he was given police powers as a member of the Native Constabulary and made a Magistrate of the Court of Native Affairs. He worked long hours and was on twenty-four hour call, seven days a week. As well as district administration, familiarising himself with the people and the country, patrolling, court work and suchlike, the kiap needed a range of knowledge to be a 'Jack of all trades'. He had to plan and supervise the building of roads, bridges, houses, airstrips, wharves and hospitals and as records had to be kept and reports written, he needed to be a competent clerical person. His ultimate aim was to build an orderly, prosperous and unified people living in peace and harmony, with independence from Australia the long-term goal. In the main the kiaps did not abuse the powers they held; pride gave them the integrity to handle their role and earn respect.

Not all kiaps had the same experiences; they went where they were sent - some places were extremely dangerous, some not so dangerous and others were considered 'safe'. Patrols took them through a diversity of country and experiences - some young kiaps faced dreadful situations in the ultra-primitive areas where they lived and patrolled. Some 'outside' kiaps put their lives on the line several times during their long patrols - they faced the potential danger of being killed with poison-tipped arrows, spears, or axed to death, as well as the threat of accidents and sickness, including malaria and scrub typhus. They experienced food shortages and faced the continual torrential rain, the blazing hot sun, and the freezing temperatures in the swirling mists in the mountain areas; they faced the peril of crocodiles, deadly snakes, massive bush pigs and the discomfort of millions of mosquitoes as well as wasps, spiders, scrub mites and leeches. There was nothing glamorous about patrolling; it was simply hard, dirty and uncomfortable work.

In some areas the kiaps undertook dangerous climbing, with their police and carriers (burdened with patrol equipment), going through precipitous limestone gorges, climbing cliffs and picking their way along narrow ledges in 'broken glass' country. They spent weeks, sometimes months, living in clothes wet from sweat, rain, and crossing and re-crossing flooded rivers. Some raging rivers formed ferocious whirlpools sucking down anything near them.

And there were traps, serving as a sign they were not welcome in the area, and needed to 'watch their back'. Some faced warriors fighting one another with bows and arrows, and the kiaps stationed on the PNG/West Irian border at the time of illegal incursions by political refugees from Irian Jaya faced the weapons of the Indonesian para-military. In the 60s/early 70s, their work was 'classified' and this could be the reason so little is known about the dangers these young men faced.

Peter Ryan, the editor of 'The Encyclopedia of PNG' wrote: The enterprise, dedication, honesty and sheer bravery of the district staff, the 'kiaps',...were remarkable. ...the exploration and the pacification of millions were achieved at the cost of a few skirmishes. The law came, without which any general softening of life is impossible. In any event, I make no apology for this candid tribute to the kiaps, who wrote one of the most honourable pages in this country's history. [from 'Some Unfinished Business from the Second World War' printed in the Sept 1995 issue of 'Quadrant']

It is my belief the kiaps who penetrated and patrolled the hostile primitive areas, and the young ones who were posted to isolated and dangerous outposts in the early postwar years, and those who later worked on the PNG/West Irian border, did not get the acknowledgment they deserved from the Australian Administration. Some gave their lives (Gerald Szarka and 21 year-old Geoff Harris, to name a couple, were brutally murdered near Telefomin), many gave their youth and some their health, physical and otherwise, and some have injuries and scars that will last a lifetime.

Many kiaps spent decades working for the Administration to make PNG a better place for having been there and they left without fanfare or thanks or official recognition. During peacetime young Australians are recruited into the armed forces, some see overseas service for maybe six months, with the advantage of modern benefits, communications and extra pay. When they return they are feted whether or not they saw or heard a shot fired in anger, and the Australian government gives commendations and medals. You may recall 'Bravery Not Recognised', the postscript to an item by Tony Try, 'Life on the Border', in Una Voce No. 3, September 2003.

And let us not forget the indigenous police of the Royal Papua and New Guinea Constabulary. They made it possible for a handful of men to do so much in controlling large areas of the country for the benefit of its people; it would not have been possible for the kiaps to accomplish what they did without their help. Adrian Geyle wrote: There would not be an ex-patrol officer who served in Papua New Guinea who had less than the highest regard for the men of the Royal Papua & New Guinea Constabulary who came under their command; and after an exploratory patrol, Bill Johnston wrote: The Royal Papua & New Guinea Constabulary (as it was called from 1952) was an essential part of the system of Government. The patrolling officer may have played the role of leader, the force keeping the group together and working as one, but he would have got nowhere without the effort and strength of these men; a few could ever equal them in the world. It was a unique partnership, in that the patrolling officer relied on them for so much and they relied on him for just as much in a different way. They were, on the whole, magnificent loyal men. Sergeant Gonene said he knew the kiaps were young, but he tried to brief them or give them advice about things. He tried to be confident in himself so the young officers would have confidence in him and get that strength.

And as we do with the wartime Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels, we should not forget the contribution made by the carriers and interpreters who accompanied the patrolling officers. Bill Johnston recorded in one report: They gave their best and they were tough men who never complained they were being pushed beyond their limit. I tried to make them part of the team and did not regard them as beasts of burden.

Only a few people know of the contribution the kiaps and their native police and carriers made, and it seems that there never will be any other recognition of their work except from this few. I wonder if the people who went to live and work in Papua New Guinea appreciate the fact that the pre-war 'outside men' and the postwar kiaps made it possible for them to be there.

It is more than fifty years since those early postwar days and the kiaps from that era are passing. In Una Voce No. 2, June 2003, the deaths of six ex-kiaps were recorded - Mert Brightwell, Doug Parrish, Peter Broman, Campbell Fleay, Bill

Kelly and Phil Hardy; and many have gone before them.

(The Dept. of District Services and Native Affairs had several name changes as the country developed)

Map of part of Papua and New Guinea showing the larger towns and the areas mentioned in this story

Chapter 1

I take up my story with these notes, which are reminiscences and are not necessarily in chronological order. They constitute some of the more memorable incidents from my time in Papua and New Guinea, together with some explanations of the more mundane day-to-day occurrences. But first a little background history of the country.

Geographically Papua New Guinea is one of the youngest of the world's countries. The main geographical feature is a very rugged series of mountain ranges running the whole length of the island, a distance of some 1,500 miles (2,420 kilometres). They reach a maximum height of 15,617 feet (4,760 metres) on the Indonesian side of the border, and 14,793 feet (4,509 metres - Mt. Wilhelm) in Papua New Guinea. The mountains have not been worn away by erosion and present a very rugged appearance with deep steep sided valleys and many fast flowing rivers. A further series of mountain ranges, parallel to the main range, lies closer to the north coast. These ranges have various names along their lengths. At some places the mountains rise from a very narrow coastal plain. Surrounding the island of New Guinea is a great diversity of other islands, some of considerable size. New Britain for instance is 14,600 square miles (37,825 square kilometres) in area. The climate is tropical with heavy rainfall over most areas. An exception to this is Port Moresby which lies in its own local dry belt and receives only 38" (965 mm) of rain a year. By contrast, Gasmata in New Britain receives 243" (6,172 mm or over 6 metres). There are two seasons; the drier from May to November, when the wind is from the south-east, and the wetter from December to May when the north-east monsoon blows. The hottest temperatures are also a feature of the monsoon, and the high humidity makes this season very unpleasant. The temperature varies, not with the seasons, but with changing altitude. In the mountains the temperature can be quite pleasant, even cold at high altitudes. The first time I ever saw snow was in Papua New Guinea, admittedly from a distance. It was on the summit of Mt Wilhelm, the highest mountain on the eastern half of the island. The highest peak on the Indonesian side is even higher and has a permanent glacier on it.

The Territory of Papua and New Guinea in the early 1960s, although administered as one unit since April 1942, was actually composed of the Trust Territory of New Guinea (originally the Mandated Territory of New Guinea, and mandated by the League of Nations in 1921 to be governed by Australia) and the Australian Territory of Papua (originally called British New Guinea until 1906, and a Possession of the Crown). It covered a land area of 183,540 square miles (475,500 square km). The Portuguese named the huge island of New Guinea 'Os Papuas' in 1526-27 when Don Jorge de Meneses, sailing a new route to the 'Spice Islands', accidentally came upon the north coast. *Papuas* means frizzy-haired in Malay.

The name 'New Guinea' was given to the island by Ynigo Oritz de Retes, a Spaniard who formally took possession of the western half in 1545. It was Luis Vaez de Torres's voyage of 1606-07 along the south coast that proved New Guinea was an island, and did not extend below 10º south latitude. However nearly 40 years prior to this in 1569 Gerardus Mercator with his son, Rumold Mercator, published a world map, the first map to show New Guinea, on which the island is clearly depicted as being separated from *Terra Australis* by a strait. The Dutch annexed the western half of the island in 1828.

On 16 April 1846 Lieutenant Charles Bamfield Yule from the survey cutter HMS *Bramble* took possession of the country at Cape Possession, north-west of Port Moresby, about half way between that town and Kerema. This act appears to have been forgotten during the next four decades. During this period there was a considerable amount of political bickering between Germany, Britain and the Australian colonies (particularly Queensland). Not satisfied with the lack of response from the British government to its pleas the Queensland government took possession on 4 April 1883. The Queensland Premier, Sir Thomas McIlwraith, sent the police magistrate from Thursday Island, Henry Chester, who raised the Union Jack. However this move was bitterly criticised by the British Government, who repudiated the act of annexation until a change of policy 18 months later.

On 6 November 1884, with a German claim over the north east, the British again laid claim (Commander Erskine of the Royal Navy raised the flag at Port Moresby), this time to the south east section to prevent the complete German control over all the area east of the 141º meridian of longitude, the eastern border of Dutch possession.

Due to a misunderstanding the British flag was first raised in error, prior to this declaration when, on 23 October 1884, Hugh Romilly, the British Deputy Commissioner for the Western Pacific, laid claim at Port Moresby.
While Papua had been annexed, the north-eastern part was German Territory until very early in World War I. On 11 September 1914 the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force led by Colonel William Holmes landed at Blanche Bay on the north-east tip of New Britain. They advanced towards Rabaul and, after some skirmishes in which 6 Australians were killed, the Germans surrendered on the same day. This was the first action, and the first casualties, of Australian troops in World War I. There was an exception to the surrender, Captain Hermann Detzner. He had been leading a party of surveyors near the border with Papua and did not hear of it. An Australian patrol officer, George Chiholm at Nepa, sent a message to Detzner requesting his surrender. Detzner refused and spent the war hiding, mainly in the mountains behind Sattelberg, later surrendering at Finschhafen at the war's end. The military occupation of what had been German New Guinea remained until 9 May 1921, when the League of Nations gave the mandate for the Territory to the Commonwealth of Australia.

One of the notable things about Papua and New Guinea when I was there was that many of the early explorers were still alive. Much of the country was newly explored. In fact parts were still unexplored. Mick Leahy for instance, was one of the first men, with his brother Dan, to go into the densely populated Highlands. This was only in the mid 1930's. I knew Mick; he ran a dairy at Zenag, not far out of Lae up the mountains a bit, on the road to Wau. Dan ran sheep on a farm up in the Eastern Highlands. People like Keith McCarthy, Horrie Niall, Ivan Champion, Jim Black and others who had explored and patrolled in pre-war days were all still working. These were the equivalents of Australia's explorers of the nineteenth century such as Burke and Wills, John Forrest, Giles and Eyre. The European history of contact, particularly away from the coast, was very recent and in some cases exploration was still ongoing.

At the time I went to Papua and New Guinea in 1961 there were still unexplored areas and people who had never had contact with Europeans or the outside world. Among the indigenous population there was no one with a university education and, in fact, few with full high school education. The Australian Government through the Administration of the Territory of Papua and New Guinea was rapidly rectifying this, so that by 1966 the University of Papua and New Guinea had been established and was holding preliminary courses for 57 students, of whom 37 went on to commence university degree courses in 1967. There was no cohesion between language groups (there were over 700 distinct languages, not just dialects, spoken among the approximately 2 million known population) or even villages. Any person speaking a different language was considered an enemy and not to be trusted.

The physiology of the people varied as much as the languages. There were people who averaged only a little over 5 feet (1.5 metres) in height, others averaged 6 feet (1.8 metres) and more, and those who spoke Polynesian (from islands east of Bougainville) and had pale brown skin, to the people of Buka with their very black skin. One thing that was common to most, however, was the chewing of betel nut, or *buai* in Pidgin. This nut, from the palm *Areca catechu*, was chewed, together with slaked lime and the leaf or stem of a plant (*Piper betle*). The lime was carried in a small gourd or section of bamboo. After the betel nut had been chewed a little, the lime was introduced into the mouth by dipping the leaf, or the chewed and frayed end of the stem, into the lime then into the mouth. The resultant mixture of betel, lime and leaf turned the saliva blood red and, as it increases the flow of saliva, a lot of spitting was done. This left red blobs of saliva on the ground, and on the footpaths in towns. The lime gradually rots the teeth, and older adults who have chewed betel for most of their life often are left with only brown stumps of teeth. I believe it produces a mild euphoric feeling, but only when used fairly continuously.

Due to the very rugged, mountainous terrain and high rainfall very few roads had been built in the country. Even by 1972 there were only about 5,000 miles (8,000 km) of roads in the whole of Papua and New Guinea, and 80% of that was of a poor quality. Only about a quarter of the population of New Guinea even spoke Pidgin. However because of pressure from the United Nations and despite protests from both the Australian Government and, more importantly, from the people of the Territory themselves, they were going to be given self-government long before

they were fully capable of properly carrying it out. The European population was about 20,000 with a further 2,600 or so Asian people. It was a time of old and new, and very, very interesting, although also very frustrating at times.

I started off as a Cadet Patrol Officer in New Guinea in 1961 at the age of nineteen. After leaving school at the end of 1959 I worked for Dalgetys in their insurance section. At that time Dalgetys was the biggest wool and stock firm in the world. I found that insuring crops, barns, haystacks and tractors was pretty dull work, and being stuck in an office all day made it much worse. I saw an advertisement in the paper for Patrol Officers in Papua and New Guinea and wrote to the address in Canberra. The Department of Territories wrote back explaining that an officer from the Administration of the Territory of Papua and New Guinea, as it was then known, would be coming to Perth to interview applicants and that they had made me an appointment. I was interviewed by Harry West, accepted and, in a short time, sent to Sydney to attend the Australian School of Pacific Administration (ASOPA). This was on Middle Head near the Army Intelligence Headquarters and the Royal Australian Navy submarine base, called HMAS *Penguin* I think. ASOPA began in Canberra as the Australian Pacific Territories Research Council in the aftermath of World War II, and two years later, in 1947, was renamed and moved to Mosman, where it was when I attended. The principal in 1961 was C.D. Rowley.

The training at ASOPA lasted four weeks and during that time some of us from interstate were boarded at a private hotel in North Sydney, quite close to the north end of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Another guest at the hotel was an American, the world yo-yo champion. He was sponsored by Coca-Cola, and was extremely clever with his yo-yos. He could play with four at one time, all going in different directions. The course at ASOPA included languages, First Aid, firearms, health, history of Papua and New Guinea, anthropology, law, etc. It was a very condensed and intense introduction to these subjects. Most of our learning was to be 'on the job'. Our only relaxation was to go to Adam's Tavern, the basement of the Adam's Hotel, where they had the best of Australia's jazz bands playing. The place used to be packed with barely even standing room. Great jazz from such bands as the Ray Price Quartet, Graham Bell, etc.

After four weeks we were flown to Port Moresby via Brisbane in a Douglas DC6B aircraft, which used to make a regular daily run to Port Moresby and Lae, and return. When we got to Moresby we were housed in what was referred to as the old QANTAS Mess. This was a large, fairly old building with an immense central room surrounded by other, smaller rooms, and with a front verandah. This faced the harbour and as the Mess was up the side of a hill the view was spectacular. We stayed there for about four weeks before being sent to our various postings.

During this period we received more training similar to that received at ASOPA. We were tested for tuberculosis and given anti-malarial tablets and lectures on the problems of malaria, typhoid fever, scrub typhus, hook worm, etc. There were many serious diseases in New Guinea! The anti-malarial tablets in use then were either Camoquine, Chloroquine or Nivaquine. I was given a bottle of 500 Camoquine. At two tablets per week this bottle was going to last me a fair while! Training was also given in weapon handling and the use of firearms. Weapons were carried by Patrol Officers on most patrols, partly to shoot an occasional bird for some fresh meat, but also as defence from attack. These firearms were usually a .38 revolver and a 12 gauge shotgun. The Police who accompanied patrols were also armed; they carried .303 rifles. One of the weapons for which we were given instruction was the Owen sub-machine gun. Having served a few years in the Citizens Military Forces (the equivalent of the present day Army Reserve) I was well acquainted with this weapon. In fact I thought it a very good weapon for use in the jungle and thick bush and had become very proficient in its use. I knew that when firing bursts of fire on automatic that the barrel of the gun kicked up. I had learned that the most accurate way to use the Owen was, instead of firing bursts, to flick the trigger and so fire one or two shots at a time, re-aiming between times. Consequently when it came to firing it on the range, and when everybody put in a small amount of money to be won by the best shot, I won. Others just blazed away as though they were Al Capone, and got few hits on the targets.

Another aspect of our training was an introduction to surveying. The practical side of this course took us up into the mountains behind Port Moresby to a place called Sogeri where we

camped in tents at a large rubber plantation called Koitaki.

On the way to Sogeri we crossed the Brown River near which was a plantation of teak trees. These had been planted some years previously as a trial, and appeared to be growing well. We passed close to the Rouna Falls, a waterfall on which had been built an hydroelectric generator to supply electricity to Port Moresby, and also had a look at the first part of the famous Kokoda Track, along which many Australians fought, and many died. Now it is walked by many people of all ages as a tribute to those soldiers, but no-one these days would suffer the hardships of 1942.

The memorial at the southern end of the track read:

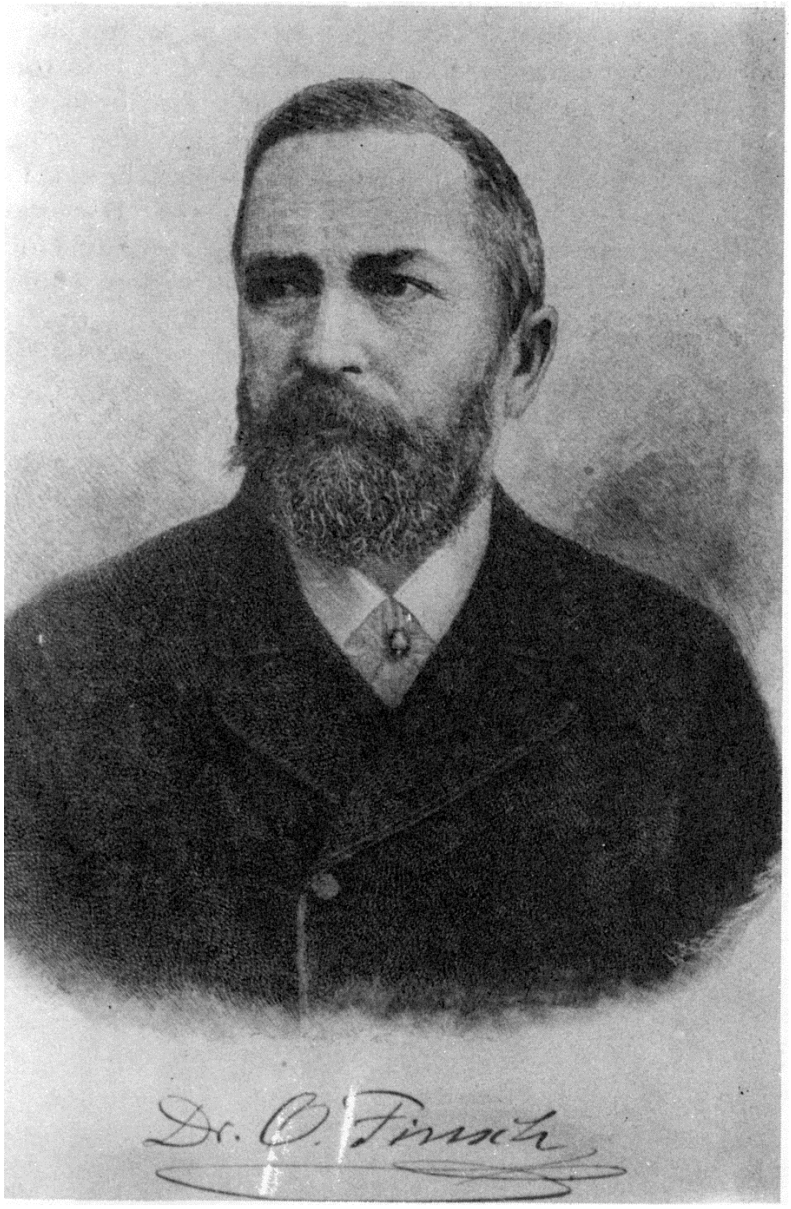
IN MEMORY
OF THE
AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES
WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES
ON THE KOKODA TRACK
JUL–NOV 1942
to strive to seek to find
not to yield

The Cadet Patrol Officers were a mixed bunch from most states of Australia. They included another Western Australian named Daniel Bastion Van Ravensway Claasen and a chap from Queensland called Reid. He was a state gymnastics champion and could do a handstand, balance there on one hand then do press-ups on that one hand while hand standing. Also with us, although he joined at Port Moresby, was Julian Chan, later to become Sir Julian Chan, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea. He was, I believe, the first Papua New Guinean to become a Patrol Officer.

Port Moresby has a picturesque harbour. In the middle is Gemo Island on which was a leper or Hansen's disease colony. The village of Hanuabada lies within the harbour. This is a large village built on stilts over the sea with the houses connected by walkways. Naturally there were lots of canoes, in fact all of the coastal and island areas of Papua and New Guinea had canoes. They were an essential means of transport and trade. Most of those along the southern coastline of Papua were *lakatois*; catamaran type craft made by fastening two, or sometimes more, ca-

Some of the Cadet Patrol Officers outside the QANTAS Mess at Port Moresby. The dark skinned man on the right is Julian Chan, later to become Sir Julian Chan, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea

noes side by side. They are reasonably fast, very stable and capable of carrying a quite large load of people and cargo. On the northern coasts the main canoe used was a single outrigger type, while on the Sepik River they used mainly single hulled canoes without any stabilising outrigger. In all cases the basic canoe was made from a hollowed log to which was added, in the case of the larger sea-going canoes, one or more strakes of wood planking to raise the topsides. These were tied on with sennit (plaited or braided cord) made from coconut fibre or coir. Almost all the larger sea canoes had one or sometimes two masts with sails. The smaller canoes and those from the Sepik were paddled, or sometimes poled.



Dr F.H.O. Finsch (1839-1917)

Chapter 2

At the end of four weeks we were all posted to various places throughout the territory. There were 15 Administrative Districts, 6 in Papua and 9 in New Guinea. Each of these was divided into a number of sub-districts. These sub-districts were in turn subdivided into Patrol Post areas made up of a number of census divisions. I was sent to the sub-district office at Finschhafen, a small settlement on the eastern coast of the Huon Peninsula. Finschhafen was named after Friedrich Hermann Otto Finsch (1839-1917), an ornithologist, ethnographer and explorer who visited New Guinea on a number of expeditions during the 1880s. His task had been to find suitable

The two mountain guns at Finschhafen

places for the Germans to establish colonies, and in doing so he explored a great deal of the northern coastal area from the Huon Peninsula to the Sepik River. The Germans explored the coastal areas but did not often venture into the interior of the country as the Australians did in Papua and in New Guinea after World War I.

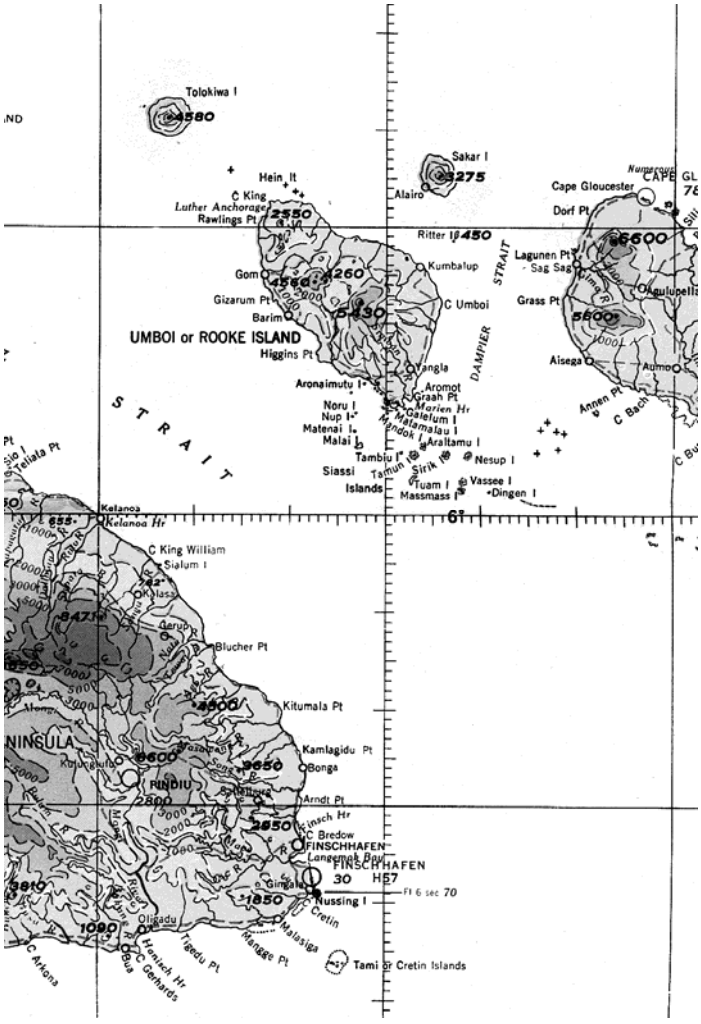
Finschhafen was a sub-district of the Morobe District, in the Trust Territory of New Guinea. The non-indigenous population of Finschhafen was about 35. The Assistant District Officer was James Patrick Sinclair, a veteran of many long and well-known patrols, and something of a legend among young Patrol Officers in New Guinea. He was a very keen and accomplished photographer and has since written and illustrated many books on Papua and New Guinea, one of which mentions me. I was very lucky to have him as my first boss in New Guinea. Finschhafen was just south of Langemark Bay (the mouth of the Mape River), on a small point called Gagidu. It had briefly been the administrative centre of German New Guinea before Rabaul became their headquarters, Finschhafen having been abandoned due to serious problems with malaria.

Finschhafen was a pretty place with the settlement strung out along the shoreline. My house, which I shared with two other single men, was only 15 yards (15 m) from the low limestone cliff that was the edge of the sea. The sea at that point was less than 5 feet (1.5 m) deep but only 100 yards out it dropped off to very, very deep water. The two others who shared with me were Hugh Mehner, a PWD plumber from the Wuvulu Islands north of the Sepik, and Ian Lightfoot, a Medical Assistant. In New Guinea Medical Assistants were well-trained nurses (all male) who maintained First Aid posts in towns, and sometimes patrolled to villages teaching Aid Post Orderlies first aid and health and hygiene. Aid Post Orderlies (APOs) were villagers with training in First Aid who were given a basic medical kit and treated minor ailments in their village.

Finschhafen is about 6º 30' south of the equator, and at this latitude the weather pattern was very predictable. There was a wet season and a not so wet season. Finschhafen averaged about 198 inches of rain a year, that's a fraction over 5 metres! The temperature remained the same day after day and the only variation to the normal light breezes was an occasional line squall. These were like miniature cyclones or very short gales or storms. A line squall would suddenly strike out of nowhere with winds up to 70 or 80 knots, although usually more like 60. It would blow hard with driving rain for about half an hour then the sun would come out, the sky would return to blue with the usual white clouds and the wind drop to a gentle breeze. These line squalls were not very common and I only ever remember about four or five of them in the time I was in Papua New Guinea. During one of these squalls a coconut flew virtually horizontally from a palm tree, across my roof, knocking off the pipe vent that stuck up, and finished up some 20 m away.

A full-grown coconut like that is very heavy for the wind to blow around!

The people who lived at Finschhafen were mostly government employees. The administrative office was a modern building on stilts with a flagpole out the front. I found two Japanese mountain guns in the jungle. Having cleaned these up, I painted them white and placed one each side of the flagpole. Mountain guns were artillery pieces of about 2 inch (50 mm) bore with very short barrels and compact construction to assist manhandling them in mountainous terrain.



Map showing the Siassi Islands with the east end of the Huon Peninsula at lower left and the west end of New Britain at upper right.

My first patrol was with a Patrol Officer named Tom Harris, north from Finschhafen along the coast. My main recollections of this patrol are the limestone terraces covered in *kunai* grass (*Imperata cylindrical*) growing to a little over 6-7 feet high. The tracks were narrow, they received little breeze and were very hot and dusty. Miserable conditions for walking, but we were only out about a week. *Kunai* grows very densely and usually on limestone areas where there is little soil and the water soaks away quickly; in places that trees and most scrub won't grow. The terraces on the Huon Peninsula are the remains of ancient coral coastlines that have been gradually rising at the rate of up to one inch (2.5 mm) a year. There are more than twenty of the terraces rising up to a height of 600 feet (over 180 m) above sea level.

Another patrol I was on later that year was quite a contrast. This was a patrol to the Siassi Islands between the Huon Peninsula on the mainland of New Guinea and the western end of the island of New Britain. Dampier Strait, discovered by William Dampier who sailed through it from north to south in March 1700, separates the islands from New Britain, which Dampier named *Nova Britannia*. Dampier actually landed on New Britain at the village of Ruakana. His attempts to trade with the local people for food and water resulted in the offer of only coconuts, so his men stole what they wanted. However, Dampier was careful to make payment for these items, and sent ashore "… *2 Axes, 2 Hatchets, 6 Knives, 6 Looking glasses, a large Bunch of Beads, and 4 Glass-Bottles*." Dampier was supposed to explore the east coast of Australia but turned back here due to the poor condition of his ship, the *Roebuck*, which later sank at Ascension Island on the voyage back to England. Dampier's proposed exploration of the east coast would have pre-dated James Cook's by 70 years. Antoine D'Entrecasteaux also sailed through the Dampier Strait, but from south to north, in 1793 after cruising in the Huon Gulf. He was searching for evidence of the La Pérouse expedition which disappeared in 1788. The strait separating the islands from the mainland of New Guinea is the Vitiaz Strait, acknowledged as the most turbulent waters around New Guinea. The two prevailing wind systems (SE Trades and NW Monsoon) meet here and are funnelled between the mountains of the Huon Peninsula and those on Umboi Island. Combined with strong currents, this causes exceptionally rough seas.

A survey was being conducted into tuberculosis amongst the islanders, and Dr. Andre Becker and his Papuan assistant, H. Tamarua, were to X-ray the people as part of the study. I was to act as interpreter and to advise the islanders what was

happening, as well as to carry out normal patrol duties. We were away 16 days on board the government coastal boat the *Morobe*. This was a 66-foot (20-m) long, ex-Australian Army wooden trawler, with a small amount of accommodation and a hold capable of taking 50 tons of cargo. Her master was Geoff Hall, an ex-Royal Australian Navy man. The doctor set up his X-ray machine and a portable generator on the deck near the stern. Constable Anton of the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary accompanied the patrol.

The Siassi Islands consist of a main island, Umboi or Rooke Island, two volcanic islands to the north, Tolokiwa and Sakar, and a host of small coral islands to the south. Umboi is about 30 miles (48 km) long, lying north-west to south-east, and a bit under 16 miles (26 km) wide. The mountains in the centre rise to 5,430 feet (1,655 m). Both Tolokiwa and Sakar are almost perfect volcanic cones rising out of the sea. Tolokiwa had four villages and Sakar just the one, all on the coast. Despite being only 5 miles (8 km) in diameter Tolokiwa Island rises to 4,580 feet (1,396 m) and the similarly sized Sakar Island is 3,275 feet (998 m) high. The string of coral islands to the south covers quite a large area strewn with reefs. These reefs were absolutely teeming with sea life.

Each day we would sail from 2 to 4 hours, anchor at a village and then I would go ashore in one of the canoes from the village. My task was to explain about T.B. and X-rays, and also general matters normally discussed on patrol. These include law and order, local government councils, health and hygiene, the arbitration of complaints, etc. The rest of the day was my own to go swimming and fishing while the people paddled their canoes out to the *Morobe* and had their X-rays. At Lab Lab on the main island of Umboi the X-ray equipment was taken ashore and set up in a large village. People then came from some of the surrounding villages to have their X-rays taken. It was a very relaxing patrol!

At one stage we were travelling along doing about 10 knots, *Morobe's* best speed, when the largest canoe I had ever seen passed us. It was doing a good 12 knots according to our skipper. It was the normal sort of canoe dug out of a very large log with the sides extended up by planking. There was an outrigger to windward and two masts with crab claw shaped sails. There were about 8 or 10 adults on the canoe and what must have been a dozen kids on the outrigger keeping it down in the fresh breeze. On reaching our destination at Tami Island we anchored along side the canoe, which proved to be one foot (300 mm) longer than the government vessel, i.e. 67 feet (20.3 m). Later the villagers hauled it up onto the beach and I found that I could just walk upright under the beams joining the hull to the outrigger. This made them 5 feet 8 inches (1.72 m) above the bottom of the hull. The outrigger itself was a single, shaped log about 30 feet (9 m) long, tapered at each end. This was in November 1961 and I have never seen a bigger canoe or even one approaching the length of this one. The vast majority of the canoes that I saw in this area were 25 -30 feet (7.5-9 m). Steering was achieved with a large paddle near the stern. There was a fireplace made of sand and stone on a platform above the canoe hull and the sails were plaited from palm fronds. This canoe was used for trading voyages among the Siassi Islands and to New Britain, and the mainland coast of New Guinea as far as Madang and even further west. One of the main trading cycles was to sail from the Siassi Islands to Sio on the mainland to buy the clay pots for which Sio was famous. These pots were then taken across to New Britain where they were traded for dogs. The dogs were taken to Siassi where they were sold for food. I was given some dog meat here. It was much like mutton in looks and tasted fairly bland. The dogs were virtually vegetarian as their main food was coconuts. The owner would break open a nut and throw it on the ground for the dog to eat. The only time they got meat was if they were lucky enough to get the bones of a bird, pig or fish thrown to them, and there certainly wasn't much left on any bones.

While at anchor one evening in a small bay on the coast of Umboi we were witness to a display of more flying foxes, also known as fruit bats, than I thought possible. As the sun went down literally thousands of them took flight from where they had been roosting on one side of the bay, and headed south above and in front of the moored boat. With the vivid sunset behind them it was an awe-inspiring sight. The captain shot a few with a shotgun so that his crew could cook and eat them as they are considered very good food. They were quite large with a wingspan of over a metre and might have made good eating if they had been thoroughly cooked. As it was, I did not fancy any as they were cooked only a lit-

The camp at Sogeri. Note the 'beds' made from a sleeve of canvas and bush poles in the tent on the left.

M.V. Morobe *at the Dregerhafen wharf*

Tolokiwa Island

Aramot island

tle longer than it took to burn off their fur (and all the lice that it contained).

We left for this patrol from Dregerhafen, a small settlement and port a few miles south of Finschhafen. Dregerhafen was a well-sheltered little port, very beautiful and with the only undamaged wharf in the area. There had been a Royal Australian Navy base, named HMAS *Tarangau*, at Dregerhafen from early 1946 until about mid-1949 when it was transferred to Manus Island. There was a large boarding school at Dregerhafen run by the Education Department for children from the Huon Peninsula. About 5 feet (1.5 m) out from the bow of the *Morobe*, in the 10-12 feet (3-4 m) of water at the wharf, was an unexploded 500-pound bomb, clearly visible, lying on the bottom. On the voyage to the Siassi Islands we came upon a crocodile about 15 feet (4.5 m) or a bit more in length, swimming strongly towards the islands. At this stage we were about 15 miles (25 km) from the coast and with about the same still to go to the nearest islands.

Apart from in the vicinity of the mouths of the bigger rivers the sea was exceptionally clear among the Siassi Islands. When anchored in 40 feet (14 m) of water it was possible to see the rust flakes on the anchor chain lying on the seabed. The island people could all swim from a very early age and the sea provided most of their food. The men tended to have large chests and shoulders due to paddling canoes and swimming, and the people on the whole were well fed and pretty healthy. The seas were very, very prolific in food such as fish, crayfish, large mangrove crabs, oysters and other shellfish.

Aramot Island was only one acre in area but there were 400 people living on it. The houses were so close together that you could only get between them by turning sideways. The inhabitants were attempting to slowly increase the area of the island by placing coconut shells on the beach at the water's edge to trap the sand. They obtained their water and vegetables from gardens they maintained on the main island (Umboi), some 1½ -2 miles (2.5-3 km) away, where they had some form of agreement with the people there. We tried to persuade them to shift to the main island to have more room and to be near their gardens and water, and the Administration offered to buy them land there. They would not hear of it, stating that their ancestors had always lived on Aramot and so would they.

The patrol finished earlier than anticipated as extremely rough weather experienced while sailing to Tuam wet the X-ray unit, causing it to short circuit. We anchored at Mandok so that attempts (which proved unsuccessful because of rough seas in the anchorage) could be made to fix the problem. We then sailed for Aramot, a more sheltered anchorage. However here the anchor dragged during the night and we were compelled to sail to Malai, where again there were unsuccessful attempts to fix the machine. As the main object of the patrol could not be carried out because of the defunct X-ray machine, it was decided to return to Finschhafen. We brought 45 people back with us on the *Morobe*. They were to be more thoroughly examined at Butaweng Hospital, near Finschhafen, as probable tuberculosis sufferers.

During one day's run in the *Morobe* we saw a school of well over 100 dolphins near the boat. Many of them were jumping 10 feet (3 m) or more out of the sea. Another day we saw three waterspouts in a row some little distance away. Although they got quite close to us at one point, and we could hear the roaring noise they made, we did not feel the effects. Another day we sailed through a small waterspout. It was wet, windy and noisy but no more powerful than a decent willy-willy. The three waterspouts however were far bigger and I would not have liked to go through them! This was a very interesting patrol and certainly the easiest I ever went on. I would like to visit that area again and see what changes have occurred over the years.

I mentioned earlier that there were about 35 people living in Finschhafen. Some single men from Public Works Department occupied the nearest house to mine. It was about 50 yards (50 m) away and late one night I was woken by a noise. My whole room was glowing red. I looked out and saw that the PWD house was on fire. I woke the others and we went to see if we could help. There was nothing we could do as the house was well alight and we had no piped water at Finschhafen, only a water tank for each house.

A head count was quickly carried out and one of the occupants could not be accounted for. There was a bit of a panic as it was thought he must still be in the house. The others said that he had not escaped through either door or, as far as they knew, through a window. However a little later he was found wandering around, somewhat

dazed and clutching his mattress. After much questioning it appears that he got himself and his mattress through the bathroom window (while not even half awake), although all he could remember was someone yelling "Fire". He woke up outside with his mattress. The particular bathroom window was very small and not really big enough for a man to get through, let alone with a mattress!

The house was on stilts like many of the houses in that country, and stored underneath was a 44-gallon (200 l) drum of kerosene used for lighting. There was no electricity at Finschhafen and we all had kerosene pressure lamps. With the heat one of the bungs blew out and a great column of flame shot up about 12 feet (3.7 m). This lasted for close to half an hour, by which time there was nothing left of the house but the roofing iron. Next morning when we examined the ruins we found there were still 9 inches (225 mm) of kerosene left in the bottom of the drum, despite the fact that the fire had been hot enough to melt the glass from the windows and the duralium kitchen table and chairs.

Finschhafen had been a very big base during the latter part of World War II – one of the biggest in the Southwest Pacific. I have heard Australians who were there in late 1944 claim that there were about a million American servicemen in Finschhafen (and, it was claimed, three-quarters of them were Negro, and every one was driving a truck!). Although these figures are an exaggeration, the Americans certainly built a great number of roads, a big airstrip, and at least three hospitals each capable of taking 500 patients, and some massive wharves at Langemark Bay, the mouth of the Mape River just north of Finschhafen. These wharves were where the Liberty ships were unloaded. They brought vast quantities of war material from America, off-loaded it then went to a large barge moored in the middle of the bay. Here they took on fuel oil for the return trip to the United States. The barge was connected to the storage tanks on shore by an underwater pipeline. The remains of the barge, wharves, roads, etc. were still there in the early 1960s.

The airstrip at Finschhafen was the one built by the Americans. It was made using *koronas*, i.e. dead coral from the shore, Marsden matting (steel plates interlocked) and live coral dredged up, placed on the strip, rolled and watered with sea-water for many days. It was originally 9,000 feet (2,750 m) long and had been used as a bomber strip, but a small river had cut off part of one end. It was still more than long enough to take a DC3 and similar size aircraft while I was there, and the surface was very hard and had little damage. I spent some time working at the airstrip after it was decided to build a new house for the Patrol Officer at Pindiu, a patrol post up in the mountains behind Finschhafen. Everything to build the house had to be flown in to Pindiu, even the sand to make the cement in which the pipe stumps of the house were set. There were 23 tons of material and it was taken up, little by little, in a De Havilland Otter. I had to supervise the loading, making sure the plane was not overloaded but ensuring that everything went and was securely tied down. It took three days, with the plane doing about six trips each day.

The bridge built from scrap metal across the Mape River

The Otter aircraft had what was to me an odd way of landing. Instead of landing horizontally or slightly tail down, it landed with a decidedly nose down attitude, raising the nose and dropping the tail at the very last minute. It looked a bit dangerous when viewed from the ground, but considerably more frightening when viewed from the co-pilot's seat when I did a trip to Pindiu on the plane on one of its final runs.

Loading the last of the building material for Pindiu

Most of the roads made during the war were overgrown by jungle, but one was kept open. It only went a mile or so north to the Mape River and a few miles south to Dregerhafen. The northern section crossed a small river over which the Americans had built a one-lane bridge of steel with a wooden decking. I went with some PWD men to replace the timber decking as the bolts had caused the wood to rot around them and the planks were now loose. The rest of the wood was in excellent condition. However it, and the woodwork of all the buildings the Americans built here and at Lae, was Oregon or Douglas fir, shipped from the USA on Liberty ships. It has always been a mystery to me why they should have shipped this timber out when there were thousands of square miles of ideal timber right on the spot.

A missionary from the Lutheran mission at Heldsbach on the north side of the Mape River, had built a suspension bridge to allow the mission people to go to Finschhafen. This was an engineering marvel. It was built entirely of scrap metal left over from the war, which he had found around the area. On each bank of the river he erected a tower made from old water pipe. Between these he slung steel cables anchored firmly to large pieces of scrap steel buried in the ground. The decking of the bridge was made from Marsden matting, the steel sections used by the Americans in airstrip building, and old wire netting prevented anyone falling off It was not wide enough or strong enough for a car to travel on, but was capable of being crossed by a motor bike.

A short distance from Finschhafen, at Nugudu on the north bank of Langemark Bay, lived Ted Foad. Ted was a trader who had a small boat in which he traded along the coast and out to the islands for trochus shell, copra, cocoa and anything else he could lay his hands on. He had been a miner in New Guinea prior to the war. He took part in fighting in the Morobe District and spent the latter part of the war as a skipper of small ships. After the war he went to Lae and bought a boat, which he took to the American slip at Nugudu for repair work. The Americans were about to demolish the buildings and throw anything moveable into the sea. Ted persuaded them to leave most of it, and he finished up with some very large plane hangers connected to the sea by slipways up which PBY5 Catalina flying boats could be hauled, tools, spare engines, a perfectly good air/sea rescue launch about 60 feet (18 m) long and piles of other gear.

In 1961 Ted decided he should retire and leave New Guinea. He removed the three big Packard petrol engines from the rescue launch and replaced them with two Volvo diesels. He then proceeded to fit the boat out as a luxurious big-game fishing boat with which he intended to retire to the Great Barrier Reef and take people fishing. He invited the whole of Finschhafen to a cruise and barbecue for its maiden voyage. This was around Christmas 1961. The vessel could sit on 28 knots with ease and her top speed was quite a bit higher. However Ted had New Guinea in his blood, and not long after the work was

finished he started using the vessel for trading. All the luxury was buried under heaps of smelly copra and bags of stinking trochus shells, the woodwork and veneers faded and split. Ted was full of yarns of the early days in New Guinea and of wartime experiences and he was a great story-teller. I wish I had recorded them.

Ted's best mate was Jack Smith who owned one of the only two stores in Finschhafen, the other being owned by a Chinese man, Eric Seeto. Jack and Ted had been partners in the past and I think they were still partners when I knew them in 1961 and 1962. It was Jack who told me the story of Ted. The boat Ted was using for trading was a replacement for one that had sunk in front of his house some years earlier. The mast of that boat was still sticking above the water when I was there. I think it may have been the boat he first bought in Lae after the War. It was evidently still in pretty good condition and lying in only about 15 feet (4.5 m) of water. Someone offered to buy it from him so that it could be salvaged and repaired. Ted, who wasn't short of money, wouldn't have a bar of it. He said that it was the boat he made his money with and nobody was getting it, he would rather see it rot. So there it stayed and, I presume, eventually rotted away.

There was a golf course at Finschhafen that zig zagged down the airstrip with the holes on alternate sides. If a game was in progress when a plane was due to land the Department of Civil Aviation bloke would lean out of the radio hut and yell. Everyone would move off the fairway/ airstrip until the plane had landed, then continue the game. When it was time for the aircraft to take off the same thing would happen. The main hazards were the numerous coconut palms that lined both sides of the runway. The particular danger of them was that, should your ball lodge in one, to get it out one had to brave the *korakum* ants that lived in the palms. These were very fierce ants with an extremely painful bite. It was usually safer to leave the ball in the coconut palm than to try and retrieve it.

One of the men who worked for DCA there was Roy Miller (nicknamed, naturally, "Dusty" Miller) and his main job was maintenance of the airstrip and the generators which supplied power for the radio and the Direction Maintenance Equipment that DCA had placed there to aid aircraft navigation. He had a letter of appreciation from the RAAF for helping rescue the crew of a crashed aircraft at Wau in October 1960. The Wau airstrip was 3000 feet (915 m) long and 300 feet (91.5 m) higher at one end than the other. Planes always landed at the lower end. The RAAF pilot had never flown into Wau before, and when attempting to land evidently did not allow enough for this slope. On realising this he tried to gain height to go around again. The airstrip was too steep and the DC3 had insufficient power for this manoeuvre, and it crashed into the runway. The plane broke in half and caught fire. Dusty assisted, along with others and at considerable risk to themselves, in saving the entire crew of about a dozen Air Force personnel. What was left of the plane was bulldozed off the strip into a gully when it had finished burning. The remains were still there when I passed through in 1961.

There was also, at the lower end of the Wau airstrip, a Bristol Freighter. This plane had landed all right, but the pilot had turned it at the top of the slope facing down ready for the take-off. The pilot had applied the brakes and he and the rest of the crew got out. The brakes didn't hold and the plane went careering down the strip to finish up as a wreck in the ditch at the bottom.

The first flight into Wau was made in 1927 by E.A. Mustar in a DH 37 biplane as part of the first gold-rush to that area. This was later followed in the early 1930s by the famous Junkers of Guinea Airways, which flew 3,000 ton dredges bit by bit from Lae to the goldfields. These aircraft could carry three tons for the 45 minute trip from Lae to Wau, which became in 1934 the busiest airports in the world.

Flying conditions were extremely poor in New Guinea. In those days there was no instrument flying allowed. If you couldn't see you didn't go! A combination of poor or incorrect maps (or some areas not mapped at all), very high mountains whose heights were only very roughly guessed, and cloudy, rainy weather with poor visibility made flying very hazardous. The state of some of the airstrips didn't help matters either! The Wau airstrip, a grass airstrip with its 1 in 10 slope was one of the busiest and most important. Many of the strips at the patrol posts were shorter, steeper and, in one case, so rocky as to require a high winged Cessna, as any low winged plane would get its wings ripped off by the rock outcrops that stuck up on each side of a

The swimming pool at Butaweng

very narrow runway. That strip was at Tapini in the mountains of the Port Moresby District.

Just north of Finschhafen was the town swimming hole. On a small river was a low waterfall falling into an almost circular pool in the limestone country. It was about 30 -35 yards (30-35 m) in diameter and varied from about 5 feet to about 10 feet (1.5-3 m) in depth. Because of the limestone through which the river flowed the water was a green colour. A couple of diving boards had been built, and the pool, at a place called Butaweng, was a favourite place for the entire population of the town to relax.

The other favourite spot was The Club, a building with a bar, open on three sides, cool and airy. Everybody went there and it was the social heart of the community. There was a concrete tennis court alongside. After one line squall a large *kwila* tree (*Intsia bijuga*) was blown over and fell onto the tennis court. Labourers were employed to remove it and soon after a man from the Tami Islands, off the coast south of Finschhafen, approached me. He had obtained sections of the fallen tree and wished to take commissions for carvings, for which the Tami Islanders were justifiably famous (*kwila* was highly prized for carving). I agreed and ordered a flat dish like a serving plate, which was presented to me quite a long time later. Carving by the Tami Islanders was a long affair as the wood used was initially very green when work was started. The article was roughly carved to shape then left to dry for some weeks. Further, more detailed, carving was done then it was left to dry some more. This process was repeated a number of times until the final fine carving was completed, by which time the wood was thoroughly dried. The article was sanded using sharkskin and then polished by rubbing with a pig's tusk, which smoothed the surface and raised the natural oils in the wood to enhance the surface finish. The plate I received was in the shape of a sea eagle with the handle on one side formed by the eagle's head holding a fish in its beak, and on the other side the eagle's tail formed another handle. It was a beautiful piece of work that was later destroyed when my house in Kalalo burned down.

Prices for drinks were cheap. At that time the common drink in New Guinea was rum and Coke. A nip of rum was 1/3d (13 cents) and a can of Coke was 2/- (20 cents). The rum came from the West Indies and was highly over-proof, and the Coke from California. The rum was

called Negrita but was referred to as 'Black Lady' in New Guinea because of the silhouette of a West Indian woman with headscarf on the label.

I learnt to speak very good Pidgin quite early on and was complemented on my proficiency in the language by an influential New Guinean. When I first left New Guinea I found that, having spoken Pidgin much more than English in the last 18 months, that I had to translate, in my head, from Pidgin to English before speaking. In Papua and New Guinea ordinary English was interspersed with Pidgin words in everyday conversations. Words like *guria* for either thunder or earthquakes, *bokis ais* for refrigerator, *manki masta* for cook boy, and the various forms of *wara* for water, etc. It took some time before these sorts of words left my speech. The word *wara* for water was interesting in that the variations were based on English but had changed their meanings somewhat. *Sol wara* meant seawater, *hot wara* meant just that but *col wara* was fresh water, not cold water; that was *ais wara*. Also *hot wara* became that as soon as it was put into a kettle, even if the kettle had not yet been placed on the stove. So you could get the statement that the hot water wasn't hot yet!

In the early part of 1962 a total eclipse of the sun occurred and New Guinea was the ideal place in the world from which to view the phenomena. Scientists from all over the world flocked to Lae and set up telescopes, cameras and so on down near the Voco Point small ships wharf. There was a large grassy area with just a few coconut palms on it close to the sea. The only problem was that the local people still remembered the Japanese brutalities of seventeen or eighteen years earlier. The government had to bring 200 extra police from Port Moresby to protect the Japanese scientists. In Finschhafen things were different. At about this time the Americans were testing an atom bomb, which they exploded in the atmosphere after firing it to a height of about 20 miles (32 km) in a rocket from Johnston Island in the Pacific, south of Hawaii. People from one of the more radical religious sects had gone around preaching that God was going to put out the sun because of the sins of the world, particularly that section of the world called New Guinea. They also connected this in some way with the atom bomb test. The result was a semi-panic before the eclipse, with massive sales of kerosene for lamps, during which all available stocks were bought, together with the gathering and storing of food from their gardens. When the eclipse actually started there was even more panic, which I and other Patrol Officers tried to suppress, with only partial success. The ending of the eclipse a short while later saw normalcy reappear with the sun, but the government banned that particular sect from Papua and New Guinea shortly afterwards. The eclipse was an interesting event; it got dark and the stars came out, all the fowls and dogs went to sleep, it grew noticeably cooler and when the sun reappeared the roosters all crowed as they normally did each morning.

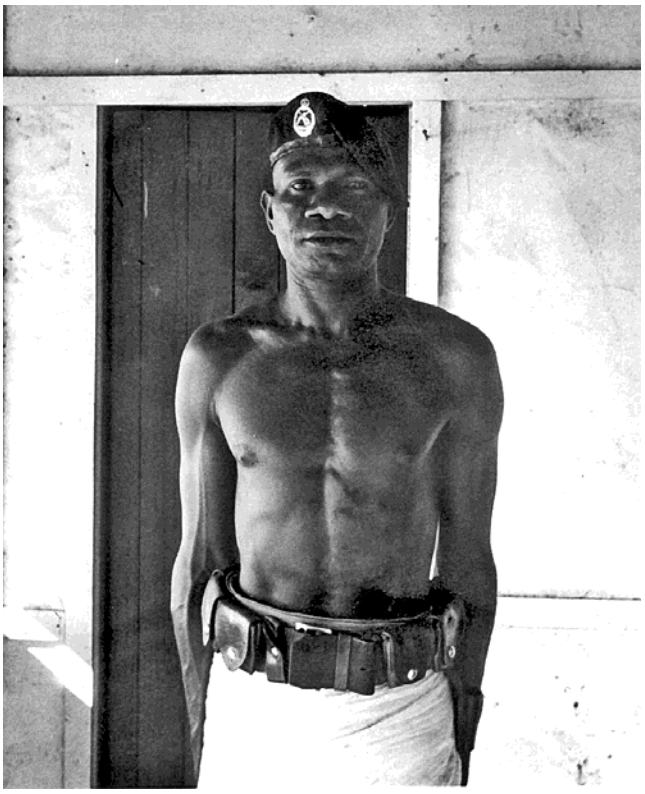
In January 1962 I was given the task of building a road from the coastal village of Siki, north of Finschhafen, to the Lutheran mission station of Sattelberg. Sattelberg is German for Saddle Mountain and it consists of two peaks each 3,300 feet (1,006 metres) above sea level and separated by a col or saddle at a slightly lower elevation. The mission station at Sattelberg was nearer the eastern peak. This road was supposed to eventually join Pindiu Patrol Post to the coast but I don't think it ever reached Pindiu. It certainly hadn't by the time I left the Territory. The road as far as Sattelberg was some 8 miles (13 km) long and rose about 3,200 feet (975 m) above sea level. The idea behind it was that the village people from the interior could more readily and cheaply bring their coffee to the coast for sale if there was a road. The two methods of getting coffee out were by either villagers carrying it on their backs and walking over rough tracks to the coast, or having it flown down to either Finschhafen or Lae; this latter a fairly expensive exercise.

I had with me as my assistant, Assistant Patrol Officer Leana Gari. He was one of a small group of indigenous people who were training at Finschhafen to become Patrol Officers. Assistant District Officer Tim Terrell was training them, and they were the first Papuan and New Guineans to be trained for this work. For equipment and labour I had a D4 bulldozer and driver, a Thames Trader dump truck and driver, a Ferguson tractor and trailer and permission to employ a maximum of 70 labourers. These labourers were each paid 15/- ($1.50) per week. I spent 34 days working on the road from January to March 1962.

After a short break to allow the labourers time to go to their villages and plant and tend their gar-

dens I spent another 48 days from April to June again working on the road. One of the police I had accompanying me during this period was Constable Zanza, a fine man and a credit to the Police Force. Another was Constable Mera Wekanatau.

The road followed a foot track that joined Sattelberg to the coast. There had been a great deal of fighting in this area during the latter half of 1943. This campaign saw the capture of Finschhafen from the Japanese on 2 October 1943. On 23 November a South Australian sergeant (SX7964 Sergeant T.C. Derrick V.C., D.C.M., 2/48 Battalion) won a Victoria Cross during the attack on Sattelberg, which was occupied by an estimated 12,000 Japanese troops of the 20th Division, lead by Lieutenant-General Katagiri. The citation for the Victoria Cross states that he had single-handedly reduced ten enemy posts. These posts were in fact well camouflaged bunkers, roofed with logs and earth, and with firing slits for weapons.



Constable Zanza on the veranda of the haus kiap at Siki

The landings for the attacks on the Japanese at Finschhafen and Sattelberg had been made by men of the Australian 9th Division, transported by American landing craft on to the beach near Siki, code named Scarlet Beach, on 22 September 1943. The landing had been opposed, not by the 350 Japanese troops reported by General Douglas MacArthur's intelligence units, but by 5,000 well positioned Japanese. The allies lost twenty killed, sixty five wounded and nine missing on the first day of the assault. The author David Dexter in *Australia In The War Of 1939-1945: Volume VI: The New Guinea Offensives* (Australian War Memorial, Canberra, 1961, p 451-2) states:

> *The target, Scarlet beach, lay in a small indentation in the coast, making a well-defined bay with definite headlands. It was about 600 yards long and 30 to 40 feet wide with good firm sand which would take L.S.T.s. At the northern end of the sandy beach was the mouth of the Song River and at the southern end a small headland and then a small cove into which Siki Creek flowed.*

About halfway to Sattelberg is the village of Jivevaning. First captured by the Australians on 25 September, it changed hands five times until its final recapture by the Australians on 5 November. The importance of Jivevaning lay in its position at the meeting place of a number of tracks, and in the uninterrupted view down the coast to Finschhafen and Dregerhafen. A little further up the mountain was a feature called Pimple Knoll, another of the many places in this area over which hard fought battles raged. It was the tactical start point for the final attack on Sattelberg by the Australians. This attack was supported by artillery and five days of bombing, and included the use of Australian Matilda tanks, although, because of the rugged terrain they were restricted to the main track, so that the final push was made by the infantry. The battle for Sattelberg lasted eight days of intensive fighting, and the hillsides were littered with unexploded ammunition, half filled trenches and war relics of all kinds. The Australians lost 49 killed and 118 wounded during those eight days, from 17-25 November.

The mangroves just off the beach and in the surrounding jungle were full of more relics of the war including a great many Alligators (I think that was what they were called). These were American amphibious vehicles with rubber tracks that acted like paddle wheels in the water and like tank tracks on land. I think they were also called Buffaloes. They were armed with a Browning .5-inch machine gun on a swivelling

mount with a shield, and carried troops and supplies ashore. The ones left there had obviously been shot up and had only just made it to the shore or a few yards inland. There must have been about 25 or 30 of them, still with their guns. The Japanese counter-attacked by air, sea and land trying to recapture Finschhafen and prevent the taking of Sattelberg. It took until 25 November to capture Sattelberg, which was totally destroyed in the battle.

The *haus kiap* where I lived at Siki was right on the edge of the beach and when not working I spent a great deal of time swimming in the warm waters of Siki Cove. While here I saw the local people capture a very large green turtle, which provided a feast for the whole village, including me. Another feast that one of the labourers had was when he caught a green tree python. It was a very small snake but he wanted it for tea and had no refrigerator to store it in until evening, so he could not kill it. Had he done so then it would have started to putrefy almost immediately and become inedible. He lifted his shirt, wrapped the live snake around his waist, tied its head to its tail and covered it over by pulling his shirt back down. This way it was protected from the sun and kept alive. He worked for the rest of the day like that, and ate the snake that night. Because there was no means of preserving meat the people in the villages had what would seem a callous attitude to animals meant for food. A bird that was shot and wounded would have both legs and wings broken so that it could not fly or run, and was then tied in the shade until just before meal time, when it would be killed and cooked. Similarly other wounded game was as a necessity kept alive until just before being eaten.

Also near the coast were the areas where the USA and the Japanese had dug up their war dead after the war to take them home. I think this was in about 1947 for the USA and 1955 for the Japanese. The American cemetery was a mass of open graves that had held 11,000 bodies. Human remains from the war were still often found when I was in New Guinea and, in fact, it was part of my job to act as agent for the various War Graves Commissions (Australian, American and Japanese) to locate any war dead. The appropriate authorities were then notified and the remains sent to them for return to their own country and reburial in a war cemetery.

Later I moved from Siki to Jivevaning, and it was here that I nearly had a serious accident. In building the road it was necessary to clear the jungle back some 25 yards (25 m) from the road edges to enable the sun to dry the road as much as possible. This area had 16½ feet (5 m) of rain a year. After the cut down material had dried it was burnt. While doing this one day an explosion occurred. I think it may have been a 3-inch mortar bomb set off by the fire. The labourers and I had been rushing towards the site as the fire had reached a fowl house and we wanted to put it out. Consequently we were very close to the explosion when it happened. Everybody dived for the only cover, the drainage ditch dug along the edge of the road. This ditch was only about 2 feet (600 mm) wide and 12-18 inches (300-450 mm) deep. The local people were far more used to explosions and war than I was, so I reacted much more slowly, finishing up on top of the pile of wriggling bodies with shrapnel, sticks and stones whistling very close around me. The explosion was only about 15 yards (15 m) from us and the stump of a tree was blown about 10 or 12 feet (3-4 m) straight up in the air. Needless to say the hen house burned down, and I set a half dozen of the labourers to rebuilding it the next day.

The road was surfaced with dead coral and limestone found near the coast. This was called *koronas* and was the remains of the ancient shorelines that formed the prominent terraces along

Wounded being carried from Sattelberg (photo: US Army)

The tractor and trailer used on road building. My cook, Alugi, is on the left with the blue shirt and Constable Mera behind him holding a crow-bar.

Tree python caught by the man on the left for his dinner

A sign at Pimple Knoll on the way to Sattelberg. This sign was just off the track up into the mountains and had been placed there by the army after the battle to show following troops what had taken place.

the coast north of Finschhafen. It was spread over the clay and soapstone of the hills and then compacted down to provide a harder surface. We had a quarry of *koronas* not far inland from Siki. The Americans had originally used this quarry during the latter part of the war to surface the many roads and the airstrip they built around their base at Finschhafen.

Between Siki and Finschhafen was a bombed out coconut plantation lying along the beach. After the war a man named Jim Hoile obtained the salvage licence for scrap metal in that area and collected it all on the remains of the plantation. There were low loaders for carrying tanks, graders, bulldozers, generating plants, motorcycles, mobile kitchens and the occasional artillery piece - hundreds of items. For some reason he gave up before selling the scrap and nobody took up his licence, so the scrap remained there, gradually rusting away. The place had gained a name, Hoile's Park, and it was there I found a road grader (made in Chicago, Illinois) that I greased and oiled up and then used, towed behind the bulldozer. It had a four metre wide blade and a platform at the back with some large wheels that were used by the operator to change the angle, tilt, etc. of the blade. We used this to grade the road. There is a photo of the machine in the book *Rust in Peace* (Adams, B., 1975, *Rust in Peace: South Pacific Battlegrounds Revisited,* Antipodean Publishers Pty. Ltd., Sydney, p 89). The photos on pages 87 and 88 are of Hoile's Park and the photo on page 82 shows the mountain guns I set up at Finschhafen. Page 83 has a photo of the remains of a landing barge at Scarlet Beach. The condition of the barge is very much worse than when I first saw it in 1962. The wreck of the ship shown on pages 30-31 is the one near which I was swimming when I lost the gold ring given to me by my parents.

Later we made another trip to Hoile's Park when the A-frame of the bulldozer was broken. I contacted Finschhafen for a welder to come up and repair it. Bill Carter from the Public Works Department said that it would be easier to get a replacement frame and blade from Hoile's Park. We dumped the frame and blade, drove the bulldozer down to the area and, after a short while, found one that fitted, dropped in the pins that held it to the bulldozer and it worked perfectly. The surprising thing was that the steel had so little rust on it even though it had been out in the open for something like 16 or 17 years. This was because of the very high rainfall that ensures clean air and therefore very pure water, and even a lot of water, if very pure, will not rust steel quickly. That scientific fact was courtesy of Dr. Ian McLeod from the Conservation Department of the Western Australian Museum!

I initially spent 34 days on that road and then a later period of 48 days. The work finished in early June 1962 as the rains had come and the labourers had to return to their villages to tend their gardens during the forthcoming months. I was the first of a number of Patrol Officers and Cadet Patrol Officers to work on that road.

It was while working on this road that I had to conduct my first coronial inquest. One day a group of men from a nearby village came to report the suicide of a young woman. They took me to the spot, some distance from the village in some fairly dense bush. The young woman had climbed a tree on to a solid branch. She then tied one end of a piece of cloth round her neck with the other end tied to the branch and jumped. She had been missing for some hours before a search had been started and as soon as her body had been found I was notified. I immediately looked for signs of life but she had been dead for some hours, and the body was cold and fairly stiff. The people would not touch the body so I had them make a stretcher out of bush poles and vines and placed this on the ground under the hanging woman, whose feet were only about half metre from the ground. I then got someone to climb the tree and cut the cloth where it was tied to the branch while I ensured that her body fell onto the stretcher. After getting the men to carry her back to the village I examined the body to ensure that there were no signs that would indicate that death was caused by anything other than the hanging. I then held an inquest to ascertain whether she had committed suicide, and if so, why. It was soon clear that it was a case of suicide, the exact reason I have now forgotten, but from memory it was to do with being spurned by her boyfriend and consequent ridicule by some of the villagers. I later had to investigate a similar suicide when I was stationed at Kalalo. However this latter case was far worse in that the event had occurred some three or four days prior to my involvement, and the woman had been left hanging for that time.

I carried out a number of patrols in the Finschhafen Sub-District both along the coast and

inland. These patrols varied from two to four week's duration.

A typical bush material house for the visiting patrol officer. It was called a haus kiap.

Note the bamboos leaning against the wall. These were used as buckets to carry water for cooking, drinking and washing from the nearest stream or river

The back of my house in Lae.
My bedroom was behind the two water tanks on the right, and the 'living room' and kitchen were to the right of the back steps.

The wreck of the Tenyo Maru *just offshore from the end of the Lae airstrip, marked by the white barrier just to the right of the road.*

The wrecked landing barge on the beach at Lae

Singin Pasom and No-um, Tul–Tul and Luluai of Wampangan village in the Wain area north of Lae.

Chapter 3

After about 18 months I was transferred to Lae, still in the Morobe District and situated not far from the mouth of the Markham River. Lae was one of the bigger towns in Papua and New Guinea with a population of 2,396 non-indigenous people in 1963, of whom some 700 or so were Chinese. Quite a few of the stores in town were Chinese owned; the ones I mainly remember, because I used to go there, were Seeto Kui's and Kam Hong's. However the two main stores for most goods were W.R. Carpenter and Company Limited and Burns Philp. It was the headquarters for the Lae Sub-District under A.D.O. Kerry Leen who became my boss. It was also the District Office for the whole of the Morobe District under District Officer Desmond Norman Ashton. Des Ashton was known as "Mr. D.N.A." because of both his initials and his reputation in ruling the Department in that district. Very firm and strict but fair. Des Ashton was an ex-Navy man and a very keen sailor. He owned a yacht named *Lahara* which had been built by Jock Muir, the famous Tasmanian boat builder, from Huon Pine, and which was launched on 8 December 1951. Des took second place on handicap in the 1951 Sydney-Hobart Yacht race only a few weeks later with this yacht.

The District Commissioner in Lae was Horrie Niall (later Sir Horace Niall), an old New Guinea hand from well before the war. The District Commissioner was the senior Public Officer in a district and responsible for the running of all sections of the Administration within his district. Horrie Niall had been a Patrol Officer when Errol Flynn came to New Guinea and he spoke very disparagingly of Flynn. Everybody who met him liked Niall and he made a good District Commissioner. His office was in the same building as the D.N.A. office. On occasions when my cook-boy, Alugi came to check what I wanted at the shop or for tea, he was waylaid by Horrie, who had known him many years before, and the two spent hours in Horrie's office recalling the good old days.

On one occasion I found a use for Alugi beyond the normal run of domestic chores. On one patrol into the Naba my hair had grown very long. This was most uncomfortable in the tropical conditions, so I asked Alugi to cut it for me. Not having taken any scissors with me, the ever resourceful Alugi used a pair of sharp secateurs (normally used for pruning coffee trees) which he borrowed from an obliging villager. The resultant haircut was short, but rather ragged.

Lae was an interesting town, built on the edge of the sea with mountains coming down close to town. The airstrip ran from the very edge of the sea straight through the middle of town to the foot of the mountains. During my stay there the daily flight from Australia via Port Moresby would land at 9.30 am. The aircraft was a four-engine DC6B and, because the airstrip was fairly short, the pilot had to reverse the pitch on the propellers and rev the motors to help brake the plane. The whole town shook and windows rattled when this happened. In the sea a couple of hundred metres offshore and directly in line with the centre of the strip was the wreck of the *Tenyo Maru,* a 6,980-ton Japanese mine layer, that had been bombed during World War II and had made a run for the shore. Her captain got her to that position and ran her bows on to a reef and so saved her from sinking altogether. She was a landing mark for the aircraft, particularly in heavy weather when the cloud, rain or fog would reduce visibility. Some wag put a toilet on her bow and she became the only public toilet in Lae, if you were prepared to brave the crocodiles and sharks to get to her.

Just along the coast near Malahang was another Japanese shipwreck. This ship, the *Maiyoku Maru*, about the same size as the *Tenyo Maru*, had also been badly damaged and had run for the shore. In this particular spot however there was no major offshore reef and she had hit the beach at full speed. She was all on shore with her bows in the jungle and her stern about a metre from the water's edge at low water and with high water just touching it. The groove she had ploughed in the sea bottom was still there in the coral and sand. When I went to look a man had driven his Landrover and trailer there and was in the process of trying to cut up the big bronze propeller shafts into lengths so he could get them into his trailer. He had been doing this for a long time and had made little progress on the shafts that were nearly half a metre in diameter. I have since read that this was the Jim Hoile I mentioned earlier, and that he eventually succeeded in cutting the whole ship to pieces for the scrap metal. There were many other wrecks around Lae, including a quite large American landing craft.

Lae had a big and beautifully maintained War Cemetery with 2,804 Australian and British soldiers buried there. It was a very calm and neat place. Close by was the Lae Botanical Garden housing what was then one of the biggest and best collections of orchids in the world. They had been collected from all over the world, and some were extraordinarily beautiful.

Just near the sea front at Voco Point, where the small coastal vessels wharf was situated, was a large hill called Mount Lunaman. During the Second World War the Japanese dug tunnels into the base of the hill (and many other places around town) which criss crossed beneath the streets and houses of Lae. They were about 15 feet (4.5 m) wide and 10-12 feet (3-3.5 m) high. Shafts lined with 44 gallon drums rose through the rock of the hill to enable fresh air to enter the tunnels. Some of the tunnels were used for headquarters, some for stores and part as a large hospital. In September 1943 when the allies attacked Lae many Japanese took refuge in these tunnels, some of which went for 2 miles (3 km) or more. Attempts by both the Australians and Americans to get them out proved futile and very costly in casualties. The entrances were therefore blown up and the Japanese entombed inside. The number is not known but there were many hundreds. When rebuilding Lae after the war some of the tunnels were opened to see if equipment for the new hospital being built could be salvaged from the Japanese hospital. The stench was so bad that they feared an outbreak of disease and hurriedly sealed them up again. They were still sealed when I was there, although I did go into a few where the entrances were partly open due to the blockages being washed away or moved by earthquakes. However one couldn't go too far, as there were roof collapses which blocked the way. The furthest I went in to one tunnel was probably 200 yards (200 m) or a little more. There was also the worry about booby traps left by the Japanese. It was commonly thought that the Japanese would set booby traps when they found that they were trapped so as to avenge themselves on anyone who came in to the tunnels at a later date. After one earthquake a section of road in front of my house suddenly had a 15 foot (4.5 m) square hole about 10 feet (3 m) deep in it where one tunnel had collapsed.

The house I lived in was originally built during the war by the Americans to house some of their officers. It had four bedrooms, a lounge room about 30 feet by 20 feet (9 m by 6 m) and a 20 feet (6 m) square kitchen with a walk in freezer (no longer working). The house had a wooden frame with asbestos outer walls, a corrugated iron roof and a lining of tarred and painted paper. The ablutions were in a separate building. Four of us shared this house, all single men. Myself, the senior postal clerk, Trevor Grant, a postal clerk named Athol Zirbel, and John Strasser, a PWD carpenter. John was an Hungarian who had escaped from Hungary after the 1956 uprising with a price on his head. He had an almost fanatical hatred of communism and the Russians. He was very good at both chess and table tennis. In fact he had been East European Junior Champion of both. We played a lot of table tennis but I was never very good.

Trevor Grant was instrumental in my getting the gold Omega Seamaster wristwatch which I still have. He had obtained the address of a firm in Hong Kong who sold Omega watches and was ordering one for himself. He suggested I order one at the same time as they were very cheap compared to the price in Australia. We put in a joint order sometime in the first half of 1962. The watches arrived by post on a Sunday morning. They should have been checked by Customs on the Monday morning and we, after paying customs duty, would have been given them. However Trevor was Chief Postal Clerk, which made a difference. Sunday morning we were at the Lae Club. Trevor left the bar, went across to the post office, let himself in and collected the two watches. Back at the club we had a look at the watches and Trevor said that he would check to see if they really were water-proof as claimed. So he dropped his into the half glass of beer he had left when he went to pick up the watches. It stayed in the beer the rest of the morning and proved that it truly was water, or at least beer-proof.

One of the firms in Lae was E & G Serafini. They sold many things including records, and I built up a very good and probably fairly valuable collection of records from them. Mainly jazz, and including some pretty old and rare ones, which all disappeared in smoke when my house at Kalalo burned down. One of their other activities was a soft drink factory, Serafini's Aerated Waters, which we called Serafini's Overrated Waters. I also bought my Ruger .22" rifle from Serafini. The other weapon I owned was a Spanish Starr brand .22" semi-automatic pistol. This I

bought from another officer who was leaving for Australia. My Government issued arms were a 12 gauge shotgun and a .38" revolver. When I left Papua and New Guinea I sold the Starr pistol to another officer but brought the Ruger rifle with me. When going through Customs at Brisbane on entering Australia, my luggage with the rifle inside, was not searched. These were pre-drug days and things were pretty slack. When I went to the Police in Western Australia to get a permit to buy ammunition, they demanded to see my firearm licence. I explained that I didn't have one as I had bought the rifle in New Guinea. This stumped them and they asked what had Customs said when I brought it in. I truthfully said, "Nothing. They didn't say a thing." So they licenced my rifle and gave me a permit to buy the ammunition to go with it. Things would be vastly different today.

Another firm in Lae was Lucas & Ducrow who were an earthmoving and transport company. I was told that they started off with two big bulldozers bought from the Americans at the end of the war for $5 each. Evidently you could buy almost anything for that sort of money. Most vehicles were taken out to sea and sunk but a few Australians bought trucks, jeeps, etc. and hid them in the bush or somewhere until they were discharged from the Services and could go back and collect them. Most "owners" did not return and there were many jeeps and trucks rotting and rusting away in the jungle just outside some of the towns.

A business I did deal with a lot, both while in Lae, and also by mail when at Finschhafen and Kalalo, was Otto Brabant's Lae Photography. Otto did the developing and printing of all my black and white film and colour prints. This included the film from the Minox B camera that I had for a while. A beautiful camera, the miniature spy camera of movie fame, easy to carry in a pocket and it took very good photos considering the small size of the negative. I bought it from Otto, and regret very much getting rid of it before I left the Territory.

About 40 kilometres up the Markaham Valley from Lae was Nadzab. The allies built a very big airfield complex here after they routed the Japanese out of Lae. In fact I heard on the radio that it was the biggest airfield (not airport) in the world. According to the radio programme there were 26 miles (41.6 km) of runway. I don't know if this was correct but there were certainly many runways for fighters, bombers and transport planes, all connected by big taxi-ways. I went there a few times and the amount of bits and pieces lying around was astounding. There was a long ridge of dirt about 2 miles (3 km) long, over a 100 feet (30 m) wide and 50 feet (15 m) or more high under which were aircraft that they couldn't be bothered taking into Lae, loading on a ship and dumping at sea. They just ran a bulldozer along to break the tails then buried them. One of the things we found was the front part of a fighter plane's windscreen. This was a laminate of glass and Perspex well over an inch (25 mm) thick. It was bulletproof and I forget how many layers were involved, but they were only very thin layers, maybe a sixteenth of an inch (1.5 mm) thick. I understand that the scrap metal has since been salvaged.

There had been a big drop of parachutists here on 5 September 1943 as part of the attack on Lae. In fact in that attack there were 302 planes; 96 were C47s (Douglas Dakotas) carrying 3 battalions of paratroops and supplies, led by six squadrons of B25s (North American Mitchells) with machine guns and fragmentation bombs for strafing. These were followed by six A20s (Douglas Havocs, also known as Bostons) laying smoke and the whole surrounded by dozens of fighter aircraft. Following were B17s (Boeing Fortress) dropping supplies and a number of B24s (Consolidated Liberators) and more B17s dropping bombs on nearby Japanese positions.

One weekend a small group of us took a Landrover and headed inland from Lae. There were four of us in the vehicle, which had no roof, and which also had the windscreen folded down on the hood, as you could do on a Landrover. The track we were driving on was very rough and we bounced over rocks, tree roots and sloshed through large puddles of mud. Ahead we saw what looked like just another tree root and drove over it. It was thick enough to make the vehicle bump a bit, probably 4 or 5 inches (100-125mm). To our horror a very large snake reared up out of the jungle on the edge of the track. We had run over its body and not a tree root as we thought, and its head when it reared up was level with ours as we sat in the back of the Landrover. The two of us in the back yelled and the driver accelerated up the track. We stopped a few yards further on and cautiously went back to investigate,

but the snake had disappeared. Pythons of that size are pretty rare, even in New Guinea.

I forgot to tell about the airdrop another Cadet Patrol Officer (Peter Ingram) and I packed for and went on. At about the time I joined there had been a large massacre in the mountains. The story of the massacre gives an insight into the Kukukuku people who lived in the mountainous area around the border between Papua and New Guinea near the upper waters of the Tauri River. The people from the large village of Manbanyi, together with some allies from neighbouring villages, sent word to the small and remote hamlet of Yaba that they proposed sending a trading party to Yaba. They also suggested that, since the trading party group were now under the control and protection of the white man's government, this visit would be an opportune time to carry out a census so that the government would know how many people lived in Yaba. Travelling secretly the group arrived at Yaba where all the population were waiting to allegedly be counted for the census.

Twenty-nine of the people from Yaba were murdered, including eleven children, with the bodies being left piled in a heap. It was a month later before the news got to the government about the massacre. Immediately word was received, two large patrols, one from Menyamya and one from Kerema, were sent out to catch the killers. They had been out for weeks and were urgently in need of supplies. Peter Ingram and I were detailed to pack supplies and load them on the plane ready to be dropped to the patrol.

We went to the airstrip at Lae and were shown how to load the bags of supplies. No parachutes were to be used; it was to be a free drop. First, half the rice from a 120-pound (55 kg) bag was emptied out. Then some tins of meat and a pair of boots or a few packets of breakfast cereal would be packed in the half a bag of rice. The top was folded over and sewn down, making a tight package. This was then placed inside another empty rice bag whose top was also sewn up, but allowing lots of space around the package. When these hit the ground the inside bag would burst but the rice would cushion the tins, etc. while the outside bag would contain everything. We packed and then loaded three tons of these bags of supplies onto a DC3 aircraft. This plane had the large double door removed from the side. We were then informed that we were to go on the flight.

After taking off and flying up into the mountains where the two patrols had met and set up a camp, we were strapped into the aircraft by a wire leash from a belt around the waist which was fastened to the aircraft opposite the open door. This enabled us to just reach the doorway. The drop site was in a small valley surrounded by tall mountains and with a grass covered area that was the actual drop site. We stacked as much of the load as possible near the doorway and then the plane came in at about 200 feet (60 m) above the site. Just before we got to the site the aircraft turned sideways so that the door faced downwards and away went the stuff we had put near there, helped by some judicious shoving with our hands and feet. The plane would then straighten up and go round in a circle while we stacked another load near the door, which was again dropped by tilting the plane on its side. This happened many times before all the cargo was dropped to the waiting patrols. We were told later that it was the most successful airdrop ever in Papua and New Guinea, with the only damage being to one of the two bottles of rum we had packed being broken. It had soaked into the rice so it wasn't even a complete loss! Everything else had landed without damage.

The two patrols, after seventy days of hard patrolling, eventually arrested fifty-four tribesmen. This was done without any bloodshed. I do not know what the results of the subsequent court cases were. The patrol from Menyamya was under the leadership of Assistant District Officer J.L. Hastings and consisted of Cadet Patrol Officer J.R. Hicks and sixteen police; the Kerema patrol was lead by Assistant District Officer A. Carey, and included Patrol Officer Tom Steen and Cadet Patrol Officer J.F. Viser, with twelve police. A tragic sequel to that incident occurred shortly afterwards. Patrol Officer Tony Heriot and Cadet Patrol Officer J.R. Hicks were ordered to set up a patrol post at Kaintiba. Patrol Officer Fergus Anderson was to take over as O.I.C. and, in November 1961, he reached the Tauri River en route to the station, swam across the river and discussed the situation with Heriot and Hicks. He then attempted to swim back with a rope in order to get his patrol across. He was swept away in the fast flowing river, his head struck a rock, and he disappeared. His body was never found.

Boana and its airstrip from the air.
The drop into the valley at the far end of the strip is 2,000 feet (610 m)

Cadet Patrol Officer Rod Campbell giving a talk to villagers at Wampangan village, Wain.
The man with the hat is Singin Pasom, the Tultul for the village

Women with goitre at Tewep village in the upper Wain area

Akandang village. This is a typical small village in the mountainous Naba area.

Patrolling from Lae was varied and very interesting. I did patrols along the southern coast of the Huon Peninsula towards Finschhafen, into the mountains north of there and along the coast past Salamaua and to the mountains behind that small peninsula. In fact my 21st birthday was spent on the coast between Lae and Finschhafen in the pouring rain, having just crossed the Buso River, which came down in massive flood only minutes after we hurried across. It was carrying boulders as big as a room or bigger in its swirling waters and it could be heard from a couple of miles away. I can still remember sitting alone in the haus kiap at Waganluhu by myself, eating cold bully beef, with a paw-paw for sweets, and watching the rain pour down as it only can in the tropics. What a birthday! On that particular patrol I had started off by leaving Lae in the M.V. *Malisa*. After being put ashore at Bukaua village I then patrolled the coast from villages fairly close to Finschhafen back along the coast towards Lae. I was picked up in Tali village by Land Rover at the completion of the patrol. The M.V. *Malisa* was one of the many small coastal vessels, usually around 55-66 feet (17-20 m) in length, which plied along the coast. A number of them were ex Army or Navy workboats left over from World War II. In New Guinea *malisa* is the pidgin word for barracuda, and not a girl's name.

Sokam village where I badly cut my finger

An interesting note is that there are a lot of rivers flowing to the south coast of the Huon Peninsula with similar names. There are the Buso, Busu, Busa, Bulu, Bupu, Bunga, Buhem, Bulum and Bukang rivers along a stretch of coastline only about 40 miles (65 km) in length. Just a little closer to Lae was the Butibum River, and the Busi River (named Markham River in May 1874 by Captain John Moresby of HMS *Basilisk*). The power of these rivers can be illustrated by the fact that during World War II when the 2/28 Battalion made a crossing of the Busu River on 9 September 1943 in the advance to capture Lae, thirty men were swept away, thirteen of whom drowned, and the battalion lost twenty five percent of its automatic weapons and about 80 rifles.

My first patrol to Salamaua was in September 1962, with Patrol Officer Robert (Bob) Cleland, who was the son of the then Administrator of Papua and New Guinea, Sir Donald Cleland. It was a short patrol (only 15 days) and mainly along the coast. It was undertaken to hold elections for the new Salamaua Local Government Council then being established. Routine administration matters were also carried out, as they were on every patrol. This included court hearings, dispute arbitration, checking health, crops, etc. Again the M.V. *Malisa* was used, this time to get the patrol from Lae to Salamaua (about two and half hours sailing) and then back to Lae at the end of the patrol. The small Lutheran Mission launch *Kuli* and canoes were also used on a number of occasions to travel between villages on the coast on this patrol. One of the patrol objectives was to select a site at Salamaua to erect a Council House for the Salamaua Local Government Council. Although a tentative selection

was made it was necessary to check maps back at Lae, as many companies that had buildings in Salamaua pre-war still owned the land they had been on.

Salamaua was a very interesting place. Prior to World War II it had been a District Office, a quite sizeable town situated on a long, narrow point of land named Parsee Point, and the jumping off place for those prospectors and miners walking into the Wau and Bulolo goldfields. This walk took the prospectors about a week to cover over very rugged terrain. The town had been wiped out by bombing during the war as the Japanese had set up a big base there, and there were still a lot of their antiaircraft guns lying about, as well as many other relics including a couple of sunken ships not far offshore in shallow water. One was only half of a ship, the other half presumably having been blown off and sunk in deep water. It was while going for a swim near these wrecks to wash off the sweat of a long walk that I lost the gold ring that Mum and Dad had given me before I left home. I was very upset over this loss, and searched for it for a long time without any luck.

The hinterland was very mountainous and a lot of fighting had taken place at places like Bobdubi, Komiatum, Mubo, Lababia Ridge, Waipali and Guadagasol. These names would be well known to historians of the New Guinea campaigns of World War II. There were many large bomb craters made by 1,500-pound bombs, which were now filled with rainwater and used by the local kids as swimming holes.

The track from Wau to Guadagasol was known as the Black Cat Track, named after the Black Cat Mine south of Mount Missim. At Guadagasol it joined with another track, the Busaval Track, and from there the track went through Mubo and Komiatum to Bobdubi and down to the coast at Salamaua. In recent years the Black Cat Track has become a place to trek for those with an interest in the history of Australia's involvement in Papua New Guinea during World War II, similar to the treks along the Kokoda Track. The tragic incident with one such trekking group in September 2013 occurred towards the Wau end of the Black Cat Track.

There was gold to be found in the rivers and creeks in this area, even right on the coast, as most of the rivers flowing to this section of the coast have their headwaters near the Wau/ Bulolo Goldfield.
The largish river which came out near Salamaua, was called the Francisco River, and on one patrol I used it to raft back to the coast instead of walking. Although this proved a little less tiring it was a bit hair-raising and certainly was not a comfortable ride. The raft was made from bamboo and small saplings all lashed together with vines and rope made from the bark of trees. It saved us some hard walking, but a lot of it was over some pretty fast rapids. It was while coming down the Francisco River that I saw some of the local people washing for gold, and also saw the little bottles and jars with the small nuggets that they had found.

The Francisco River was the starting point for the first ever crossing of New Guinea. In August 1895 two Germans, Otto von Ehlers and Wilhelm Piering, with a party of over 40 police and carriers left the mouth of that river with the intention of crossing to the south coast of Papua via the Lakekamu River. The expedition, which was carried out for adventure rather than exploration or science, had underestimated the nature of the country they were to traverse. Food ran out and dysentery and starvation took its toll. A number of the expedition members died and then the two Europeans were killed by some of the carriers. Cannibalism took place, and in late October about 20 starving and sick men arrived on the south coast. A few more died in hospital but the 15 who survived were the first men to cross New Guinea.

Further along the coast from Salamaua was a small timber mill run by the Lutheran Mission at Sawet. An Australian, Peter Beck, was in charge and I stayed there overnight during most patrols to this area. Because of the large amount of fighting which had taken place in the area he was having great difficulty finding suitable timber for the mill. Most of the trees were full of bullets and pieces of shrapnel from bombs, shells and grenades and this had resulted in many broken saw blades. It was so bad that it appeared the mill would have to close unless he could get a supply of "clean" timber relatively close by. He ran a small vessel, the *Kuli*, to assist in hauling logs that he purchased from local villagers along the coast to the mill, and this was also used to transport the patrol from Sawet to the next village. Malalo mission run by the Rev. Erickson was also in this area, near the coast north of Sala-

maua. There was a mission school at Malalo, but it taught in Yabim and was only just starting to teach a little English. Two villages to the north of Salamaua and close to each other named Lutu Busama and Awasa Busama were, at first glance, almost the picture-book ideal of tropical paradise. There were thatched bamboo huts on beautiful, clean white sand beaches (a rarity in the parts of New Guinea I went to) with coconut palms leaning over the sea. I say almost because, like so many ideal looking places, things were not all they appeared. Malaria was prevalent, as it was in most coastal areas, there were a number of other diseases that people caught, and the humidity could be extreme.

Two areas that I patrolled on a number of occasions were the Wain and the Naba. These were side by side on the southern slopes of the Saruwaged Ranges north of Lae. To get to the Wain the patrol would be taken by truck up the Markham Valley to Taporan village. It was then a five-hour walk into the first village, Ningiet, in the Wain. The Wain had a population of just over 5,000 people in 27 villages and covered an area of about 205 square miles (530 square km). In the centre of the Wain was a Lutheran Mission run by the Reverend Gustav Bergman at Boana, with an elevation of 2,800 feet (855 m). It had a small airstrip and I flew in there occasionally. This was fairly hair-raising, as the pilot had to pick the correct valley to go up. There were a number of similar valleys and they were not wide enough to turn a plane in, so that if you picked the wrong one it was impossible to turn and come back. The mountains in the Saruwaged Range rise up to a height of 14,473 feet, or 4,411 metres at Mount Bangeta. The airstrip at Boana ended at a 2,000 foot (610 m) drop so that when taking off the pilot just ran down the grass until suddenly the ground dropped away and you were flying 2,000 feet above the river below.

I made a number of visits to Boana, both while on patrols and also short visits (the latter mainly by aircraft), as I had to select and survey blocks of land on which the Administration wanted to build a Patrol Post and a school in the future. This process also included investigating the ownership of the land and any 'economic' trees on the blocks. I note from my Field Officer's Journal that, while the area for the school only had one mango tree on it, the bigger area had 31 trees of various sorts classed as 'economic'. The two blocks were 15 acres (6 hectares) for the patrol post and 3 acres (1.2 hectares) for the school, the blocks being owned by people from two different villages, Wampangan and Banzain.

Gustav Bergman kept a herd of seventeen head of cattle, 40 sheep and made his own bread, butter and cheese, and while I was on patrol in the area he would send out a new loaf of dark, German rye bread with some home made butter and cheese every four or five days. His vegetable and fruit gardens were set up as an example to the local people and produced beautiful crops.

The most influential person in the Wain (after Gustav Bergman) was Singin Pasom of Wampangan village. He was a Tultul or government appointed interpreter, and he held great authority among the villages. This influence came from two sources. Firstly his own commanding presence and secondly his power as Bergman's right hand man. The Lutheran Mission held considerable power and authority in those areas where there had been fairly long term contact, and Reverend Bergman had been in Boana since he set up the mission station there in 1932, apart from the war years when he was interned in Australia. The author Peter Ryan in his book *Fear Drive My Feet,* about his time as a soldier behind enemy lines in that area during the Second World War, mentions going to Boana. In Bergman's empty house he found a large quantity of literature and tracts on German Nazism.

Many of the villages higher up the mountain range to the north of Boana had very high rates of both goitre (mainly in the women) and mental deficiency or cretinism. Goitre is caused by a lack of iodine, which is usually present in salt. There was no salt in these villages and this caused the disfiguring swelling in the necks of the sufferers. There is a relationship between the mental deficiency and the goitre but I do not know what this is. It was however very noticeable, and I made special note of it in my Patrol Report for the patrol I made from 12 November to 10 December 1962.

On one patrol into the Wain I took Rod Campbell, a Cadet Patrol Officer, on his first patrol. Nothing outstanding happened except for some injuries to both of us, which slightly curtailed the patrol. About three or four days before we were due to finish I badly cut my left index finger while cutting up a pineapple. I took a slice off the side down to the bone; in fact it included the

Cadet Patrol Officer Bob Matheson crossing a better standard log bridge in the Wain

skin sort of covering over the bone. Rod said we should head straight back and get medical attention, but I said that it would be okay for a few days while we finished the patrol and did all the work required. A couple of days later in another village Rod decided to take the shotgun and get some pigeons for fresh meat for our evening meal. It was drizzling rain (as it so often was in the mountains) and he took aim at some birds almost directly overhead in a large tree. The recoil of the gun caused the butt to slip off his shoulder and the gun slipped in his wet hands. The result was that the hammer hit him just under the eye, digging into his cheek to a considerable depth. When he came back to the haus kiap with this wound I could see that it could be very serious. I immediately got things packed and we headed down the mountains to the Markham Valley. We eventually got to Lae and went to see a doctor.

Luckily Rod had not damaged his sinus, which is what the doctor first thought might have happened (I had been more concerned about his eye as the wound was very close to it), but he did re-

Crossing the Buang River between the villages of Hanobman and Bangdap in the Naba. The man on the right is Alugi, my manki-masta

Momsalom village in the Naba. This was a big village. The regularly planted trees are coffee trees, grown to produce a cash income

quire a few stitches. The doctor then got me to take off the bandage that was on my finger. His comment was "You've left me bugger-all to work with, haven't you?" He couldn't stitch the wound, but just removed the 'proud flesh' and dressed it. We both had to make daily visits to him to have dressings changed and progress checked up on for about a week. I still have a large scar on the finger.

The knife with which I cut myself was one I had obtained from England soon after going to Papua and New Guinea. A good knife was an essential on patrol. The knife was made by George Wostenholm & Son Limited, Washington Works, Sheffield, England, and had their brand (I*XL) engraved on the blade together with their name, address and the words "Original design by Colonel James Bowie". The blade was 10" (254 mm) long and 1¾" (47 mm) wide, with a thickness of ¼" (6 mm). It had a stag horn handle and leather sheath, and I kept it very sharp. It was an extremely good all round knife, useful for cutting up pineapples but big and heavy enough to use cutting your way through bush. I had sent to England for this knife as I had a pocketknife made by the same company and was impressed with both its construction and the quality of the steel, which took a good edge and kept it. I carried this knife on every patrol and I still have it, one of my fondest souvenirs.

A temporary knife I saw made and used fairly often by men from the villages was manufactured very quickly from bamboo. A piece of bamboo 12-14 inches (300-350 mm) long would be cut, and then split longitudinally so that a piece about 1¼ inches (32 mm) wide resulted. From the long edge of this a narrow piece was split off in such a way that it left an extremely sharp edge formed by the hard outer skin of the bamboo. The way it was split off also meant that this edge was similar in shape to a hollow ground knife. This knife could be made in less than a minute and was used to butcher pigs, cut bark to make temporary ropes, and many other uses. If the edge got dull it was the work of a few seconds to split off another narrow sliver, exposing a fresh, sharp edge. In some of the more remote areas where the only steel knives were often large machetes, which were not suitable for some tasks, these bamboo knives were in regular use.

While at one particular village in the Wain I went to the creek near the village and was intrigued by the "sand" in the bottom of the creek.

The creek was about 15 feet (5 m) or so wide and not much over ankle deep. It started at a small waterfall some 15-20 feet (5-6 m) high and flowed for about 100-120 feet (30-40 m) and disappeared over another small waterfall. I scraped up a cigarette tin full of the coarse, heavy dark grey "sand" off the bottom of the creek and took it with me. I hung on to it even when I returned to Australia. When I went to Marble Bar and saw the tin being mined there it reminded me of the sample I had collected in New Guinea. I got it out and examined it. It was not tin but, after being sent for assaying, proved it to be very high -grade lead ore. The specimen was very little worn by either water or rolling along the creek bed so that the main load must have been quite close by. It was also very pure and had comparatively little in the way of other material in it.

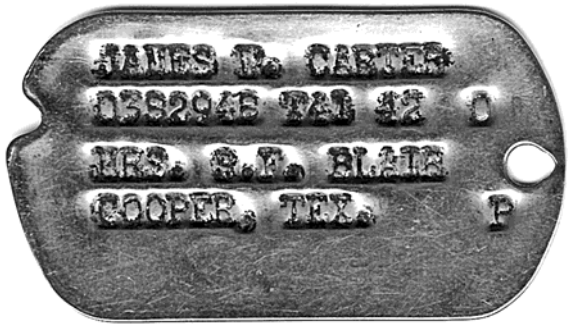
Part of the fuselage and tail fin of the P47 Thunderbolt

The Naba, in contrast to the Wain, was a less developed area and some of the villages higher up the slopes of the Saruwaged Range were quite remote with very little contact apart from the occasional Patrol Officer. Many of these higher villages were on very cold, steep and rocky terrain on which it was hard to grow food or any income producing crops. These people were therefore very poor, and at their request moves were being made to shift them to more productive land at a lower altitude.

There had been even less contact during the pre-war years, and virtually none with the outside world during the war. During one patrol to this area I talked to the villagers in the evening about the war and its effects. This was pretty standard practice for me as it really hadn't been so very long since they had been involved one way or another. As part of my work I had to act as agent for the various War Grave Commissions - Australian, American and Japanese. I was asking whether any fighting had happened near this particular village. There hadn't been any but an old man remembered a plane crashing further up the mountain. This obviously jolted other memories and the story came out. A single engined aircraft had been flying from the north i.e. from the other side of the mountain range, when it suddenly burst into flames and crashed. They said that there had been no other plane around, and of course no anti-aircraft fire. I presume the plane had been badly damaged by enemy action, and on its way back to Port Moresby this damage caused the plane to catch fire. Some people had gone up the mountain to find the plane, and having found that the pilot was dead, left him and the plane alone and went back to their village. They wanted no involvement with foreigners and their wars. I asked them to take me there the following day, to which they agreed.

We left early the following morning and it took nearly all day to find the remains of the aircraft. It was well up the mountain and there was a lot of very exhausting climbing involved to get to it. Initially the only signs were a few bits of aluminium in amongst the jungle growth. After clearing some of the bush away I could see the plane, or rather part of it. In hitting the ground it had dug a large hole. Over the years the rain had

washed dirt in to fill the hole leaving the tail and wing tips still sticking out. There were quite a few pieces of wreckage scattered about. I took a couple of photographs and determined that the plane was a U.S. Air Force Republic P47 Thunderbolt. We had neither the tools nor the time to



Dog tag belonging to James W. Carter

dig for the pilot's remains, but I did find a dogtag half buried in the mud and forest litter. The name on it was JAMES W. CARTER, the numbers on the second line read 0382948 T41 42 0, the next line read MRS. S.T. BLAIR (presumably his next of kin), with the bottom line COOPER, TEX. And a P, (possibly his religion (Protestant?).

On my return to Lae I should have reported the find, but from later investigation it appears I didn't. At that time I had served my first term in New Guinea and was going home to Western Australia on leave. In my haste to type and submit my patrol report before flying out I must have failed to write a separate report for submission to the American authorities concerned with missing servicemen. A copy of the letter from the Director, J.K. McCarthy, to the District officer in Lae, D.N. Ashton, acknowledging receipt of the patrol report was sent to me at my Perth address.

In 2013 I wrote the story (including some photographs) of finding this aircraft for *Una Voce*, the journal of the Papua New Guinea Association. I was subsequently contacted by two men, Bob Piper from the Military Aviation Research Services in Canberra and Richard Leahy, a pilot who had spent most of his life in New Guinea and whose main hobby had been searching for World War II planes. He has discovered a lot of them. Between the three of us we tried to work out which aircraft it was, and exactly where it was. The dogtag I had found did not belong to the pilot, as the letter T and the numbers 41 and 42 indicated he was a technician. He presumably lost the tag in the aircraft while servicing it.

I could remember some of the numbers painted on the tail of the plane, and after some research by Richard and Bob it was considered that the pilot might be 1st Lieutenant Henry W. Frinter who disappeared in a P47 in that general area on 4 August 1944. Richard is of the opinion that the plane is south of Mount Bangeta, the tallest mountain in the Saruwaged Range at 13, 473 feet (4,107 m). In September 2013 I wrote to the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command at Hickham Air Force Base in Hawaii advising them of the find and the conclusions regarding the identity of the pilot and the possible location.

The P47 was a big plane for a single-engine, single-seat fighter, in fact the largest ever built at the time it flew in New Guinea. It weighed in at 14,600 ponds (6,640 kg) compared with 5,280 ponds (2,400 kg) for a Supermarine Spitfire. When the first P47s arrived in England in 1943, RAF pilots banteringly suggested to the American pilots that they could take evasive action by undoing their harness and dodging about inside the cockpit!

Besides Rod Campbell, mentioned earlier, I took another Cadet Patrol Officer, Bob Matheson, on his first patrol. This also was a patrol into the Wain. This was in November and December 1962 and we were out 29 days. Bob had worked for IBM in Melbourne before coming to Papua and New Guinea. He was quite a big man and a bit overweight. He lost a considerable amount of the excess weight before we'd even finished the patrol. He was always cheerful and did not complain, but he found the mountain walking pretty hard going. I believe he did not stay in the job very long, and he and his wife, Wendy, returned to Australia soon after.

Most bridges that were built by the local people were just trees felled across a river or stream, often with little in the way of improvements. Some were just a bundle of bamboos tied together with vines and dropped across a creek or small river. In fact on patrol we would quite often make such a bridge to cross a creek if the situation warranted it. In this area, however, some bridges were made of cane in the form of a suspension bridge. On this patrol we crossed the Bunbok River near its junction with the Busip River over the best-constructed cane bridge I saw

in Papua and New Guinea. It was completely made from ten lengths of liana vine each about 1 inch (25mm) in diameter, the bridge being suspended from four of these twisted in pairs to form two ropes. The decking was four more lengths lashed side by side, while half way between the main ropes and the decking was a rope on each side forming hand rails. The ends of the liana vines were all firmly anchored to trees just back from each river bank, and then passed over H-frames made of bush timber set in the bank.

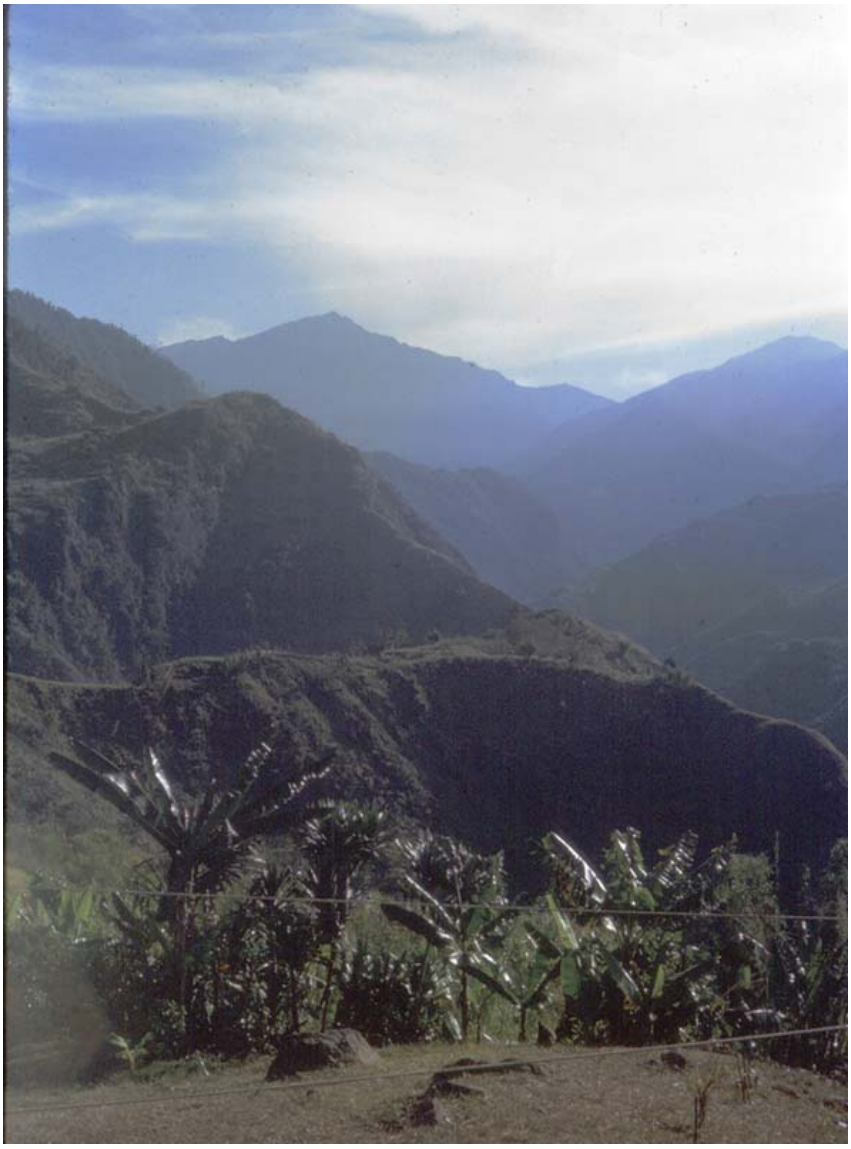
One of the most unpleasant patrols I made into the Naba was as a result of the death of a woman in a fairly remote village. First reports said that she had died of some disease (I forget which), but within a week or so rumours were around that she had been poisoned. I was detailed, with a couple of Police constables, to go and collect the body and bring it to Lae for forensic medical examination. By the time we got to the village the woman had been buried for two weeks. We dug up the body, wrapped it in canvas (in those days there were no such things as body bags) and carried it slung on a pole for two days back to Lae. They were certainly two of the worst days in my time in New Guinea. I don't know the outcome of the examination, as I went on leave to Australia soon after.

When not away on patrol one of the jobs I was required to undertake was to go to the local market or *bung* which was held every Saturday morning in Lae. My job was to keep an eye on things, making sure no squabbles got out of hand, listen to any complaints, and generally gather information about what was happening out in the villages from the people who had bought their produce to town to sell. One particular Saturday I was driving the Landrover to the market when I noticed that all the people walking there and returning were on one side of the road (there were no footpaths). They were crowding and jostling for room, yet the other side of the road had no one on it. A little further down the road I came across the reason. There were two Kukukukus walking hand in hand towards the market. These people were the most feared in the whole of Papua and New Guinea - with justification. They were small in stature but had a fearsome reputation for fighting and killing. Kukukukus came from near the patrol post at Menyamya and were first contacted in the early 1930s. The Director of the Department of Native Affairs when I was in New Guinea, J.K. McCarthy, carried two scars from arrows that the Kukukukus fired into him in 1932. A few years later he met one of the men who had shot him. This man congratulated Keith McCarthy on surviving the arrow he had shot into his stomach. They enjoyed fighting and would fight each other if there was no stranger around to war with. These two little men, walking down the road in Lae, had the rest of the local population very, very nervous and keeping as far away from them as possible.

One of the stories I heard about the reputation of the Kukukuku people was told to me by an acquaintance who owned a plantation on the Papuan side of the border not far out of Port Moresby. He employed 200 Goilala people as labourers, and found they were very good workers. In Papua the Goilalas have a similar reputation to the Kukukukus. The owner thought that maybe the reason that his workforce was so good was that they had channelled the energy they normally used in fighting into their work. Under his theory the Kukukukus should also make good workers. He therefore contacted a recruiter and requested some Kukukuku labourers. Twenty duly arrived by plane at Port Moresby and the planter drove down and picked them up in his truck. As he drove back through the front gate of his plantation with the twenty men in the back of his truck his complete labour force of 200, plus their wives and children, took to the bush refusing to come out of hiding until he had sent the twenty Kukukukus back to Menyamya. Kukukukus are short (typically not much over 5 feet (1.5 m)) mountain bred people. At that time they wore bush material clothing with invariably a bark cloak usually suspended from their forehead, which was shaved. They were never seen without their weapons!

Quite early during my time in Lae my extensive knowledge of Pidgin was recognised, by me being given the task of translating the maintenance instruction manuals for two Massey Ferguson tractors (a MF 35 and a MF 65) into Pidgin for use by PWD employees.

A job I had in Lae in September 1962 was to arrange a fresh water supply for the village of Butibum, about 4-5 miles (7-8 km) from Lae, near the mouth of a sizeable river, also named Butibum. However there were quite a few villages further upstream and the water in the river was therefore not fit for human consumption. I found that the village church had a corrugated



The mountain in the centre distance is
Mt Bangeta, 13,473 feet high.

Taking off from Port Moresby in the very early morning with the USAF B29 just visible in the background at right

iron roof that would make an ideal catchment for an underground rainwater tank, with a hand pump for the people to get the water. I had to get from the Health Department the minimum daily requirement for water, multiply by the number of people in the village and then find out the length of the longest dry period. The Meteorological Department advised me that the longest Lae had ever gone without rain since records were commenced in 1937 was 21 days. This gave me the size of the tank I needed, and so I could work out how much cement was required for the concrete. On pricing this I found that I could get it for £19 per tonne from Japan, £21 per tonne from Germany, but it would cost £26 per tonne to get it from Brisbane! This was due to the extremely high shipping costs between Australia and Papua and New Guinea, due I was told to the seamen still getting paid wartime danger money.

Very few Australian goods were to be seen for sale in New Guinea – they were too expensive. I remember I could get 1½ lb. (0.7 kg) tins of really good quality Canadian ham for fractionally less than a ¾ lb. (0.35 kg) tin of Australian bully beef (called *bulmakau* in Pidgin). The cars were all English (Rovers and Minis) or French (Peugot) or German (Mercedes Benz), all much cheaper than a Holden. The Landrovers were English not Australian.

At this time, while working on the provision of a water tank and pump for Butibum village, I had also to investigate the feasibility of building a small dam on a river to supply the village of Yalu, also fairly close to Lae, with a reliable and clean water supply. A patrol officer was expected to have a variety of skills!

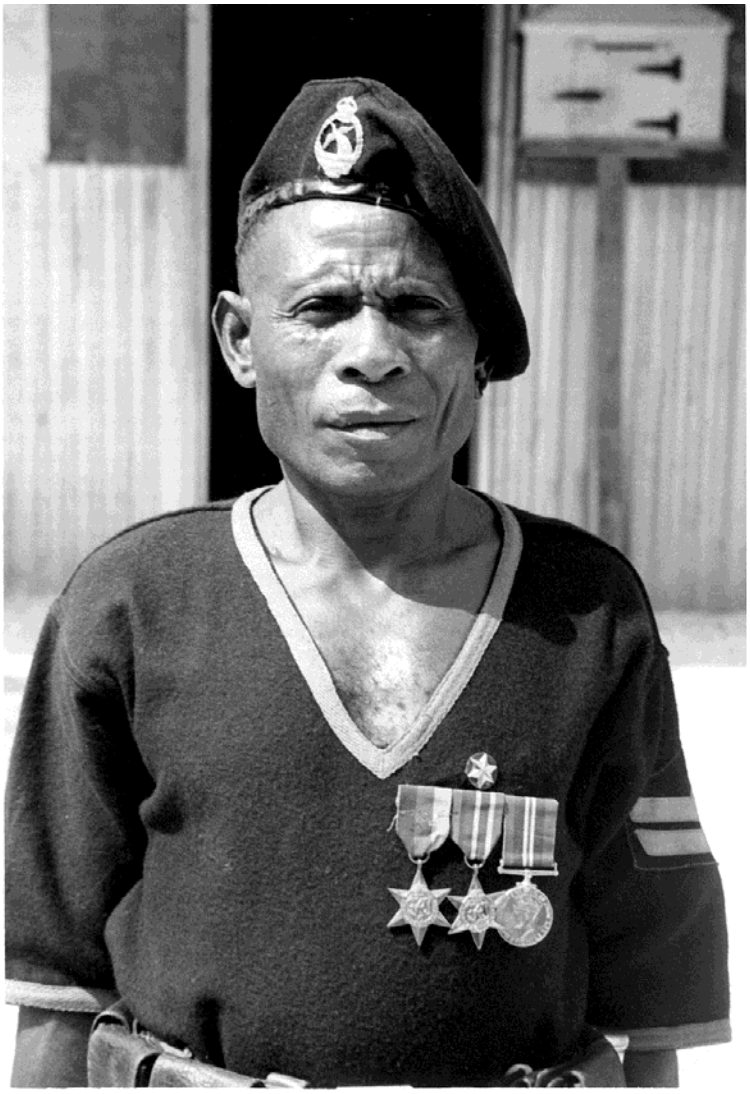
One of the men who made a fortune in the scrap metal salvage business after the war was a Western Australian, Wally Jackson, whom I knew reasonably well when I was in Lae. I believe he had played football for Subiaco at one time. He went to Papua and New Guinea comparatively late and bought his £1 ($2.00) salvage licence. His area covered part of Siki Cove. The old hands scoffed at him, saying that he was too late and that the scrap metal business was no good as the earlier people had collected it all. He found 80,00 empty 44-gallon drums already on the beach (the scrap steel was worth £7 ($14) per tonne put on a beach to be picked up from the sea). He then bought a licence for an area alongside Jackson's Airfield at Port Moresby. He was really laughed at then as they said "Well, you might have got stuff around Finschhafen because it is remote, but there is nothing left around Moresby". He found another 30,000 drums in the scrub right alongside the strip. With the money from this and his other salvage finds he went into the peanut farming business in the Markham Valley, and owned the biggest peanut farm in the Southern Hemisphere when I knew him.

One time when I was out talking to him we happened to be sitting on the big bags of peanuts in the shed where they were hulled and stored. These are like wheat bags and are sewn up at the top, and would be a similar weight, around 110 pounds (50 kg). I was idly pulling peanuts out and munching on them and he said "Do you like peanuts?" I said, "Yes". He turned to one of his labourers and said, "Get the Kiap a box of nuts". I was handed a beer carton full of peanuts. There was probably about 40 pounds (18 kg) of nuts. We roasted them in the oven back in Lae and had them in just about everything including stews, as well as just on their own.

It was from Lae that I went home to Western Australia on my first leave. We used to get 3 months leave after 21 months service. I offered to find my domestic servant/cook, Alugi, a job while I was away, or pay his fare to his home on Umboi Island. He chose the latter so off he went on the boat after I had promised to send for him when I returned from leave. The pidgin expression for the domestic servant/cook whom all Europeans employed was *manki-masta.*

Chapter 4

I arrived back in Lae from leave some three months or so later and within 20 minutes of entering my house there was a knock on the door. It was a stranger who said that Alugi was on the boat back from Umboi but wouldn't arrive until tomorrow, as it had been delayed. In the mean time he would act as *manki-masta*. This meant that Alugi had actually left Umboi before I had left Perth. As he didn't know when I was due back, I questioned the young man to find out (a) how Alugi had known I would be back then and, (b) how Alugi had got in touch with him regarding acting as cook for me. He could give no answer other than he just knew. The next morning Alugi was on the doorstep ready for work. He couldn't tell me how he knew when I would be back or how he had got a message to his friend either. This was not the only case of interchange of information through unexplained means that occurred there; or later when I was at Marble Bar in Western Australia.



Senior Constable Zowa in uniform. Photo taken just before he received his second Ten Year Service Star

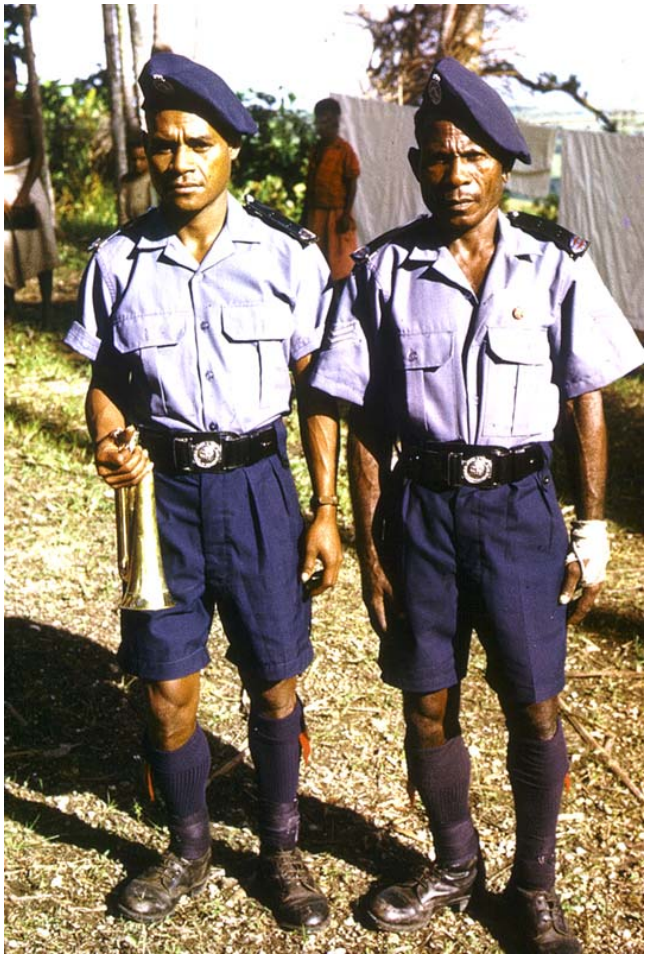
On my return from leave I was posted as Officer In Charge of the Patrol Post at Kalalo near the north coast of the Huon Peninsula. Kalalo's population consisted of myself, Bob Blanch who ran the small school, Bob's wife Gloria who as a qualified nurse ran the small aid-post, my clerk, Yuni Bakai Suma, and seven Police men (plus their families). The Police were:

No. 5059B Senior Constable Zowa
No. 6777 Senior Constable Julyikum
No. 8336 Constable Oiufa
No. 8673 Constable Mayam
No. 9330 Constable Iong
No. 9848 Constable Apai
Constable Pil

I have no record of the number of this last, and youngest, member of the Police. Pil was the bugler, so that as well as his regular duties he played the bugle calls every morning and evening at the raising and lowering of the flag.

The Police were members of the Royal Papua and New Guinea Constabulary, at that time one of only three 'Royal' police forces. The other two were the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Royal Malaysian Constabulary. The RPNGC wore a uniform of a *laplap* or *sulu* and short-sleeved jumper made from royal blue serge edged with crimson. This was practical, especially in the mountains, as it remained warm when wet, and wicked away sweat. A crimson cummerbund, leather belt with ammunition pouches, a bayonet and scabbard and a royal blue serge beret with a brass badge completed the uniform. It was replaced in 1964 with a far less practical uniform of light blue shirt, dark blue shorts, dark blue beret with metal badge, dark blue socks, all of synthetic polyester, black belt and black boots with puttees. This uniform required far more upkeep, was not warm when wet (as was the case so often on patrol) and did not soak up sweat. The first recipients of these uniforms did not appreciate the boots, as they had had no previous experience with such constrictive footwear. It was not popular, although that may have altered later as new recruits were employed. Although from various parts of the terri-

Six of the seven police at Kalalo wearing the original uniform



Constables Pil and Zowa in the new police uniform

Yuni Bakai Suma, my clerk at Kalalo

My house at Kalalo prior to the fire

Photo taken by the missionary from up the mountain of my house after the fire had almost completed its destruction

tory and of various degrees of ability, the one thing in common with all the policemen I had dealings with was their pride in being members of the constabulary.

The station was 2,500 feet (765 m) above sea level and a road of sorts ran 4½ miles (7 km) down the mountainside to the beach. Here there was a small, semi-sheltered anchorage called Wasu, and my airstrip, which ran parallel to the beach and which could take the smallest Cessna aircraft that came once a fortnight. The reason that the airstrip was parallel to the beach was that the coastal plain here was only about 250-300 yards (230 – 275 m) wide; then the mountains went straight up. The fastest I ever did the 4½ miles downhill in the Landrover was three-quarters of an hour. I had 10 labourers with picks and shovels working full time maintaining that road. The Landrover was always in four-wheel drive, and due to the slippery mud/soap stone nature of the very steep road it always had chains on the back wheels. When we drove up the mountain we used to put at least two 120-pound (55 kg) bags of rice on the bonnet to ensure the vehicle wouldn't tip over backwards on the steeper sections. The average rainfall was over 16½ feet (5 m) per year so things were always damp, and sections of the road were often partly washed away. As a result of having chains constantly over the tyres, despite doing very little mileage the tyres wore out (or rather were chewed up by the chains) quite quickly. I also broke a number of springs, which had to be ordered from Government Stores, and which on arrival my versatile clerk, Yuni, replaced. I got a complaint from someone at Government Stores when I ordered yet another set of tyres and back springs. I explained the situation but was obviously not believed. The particular officer said that he was flying to Saidor in the near future and would call on me to check what I was getting up to with the Government vehicle.

He duly arrived a few days later, and I took him up the road to the Patrol Post in the Landrover, not forgetting to first load a couple of bags of rice onto the bonnet. When we got to Kalalo he turned to me and said "Whenever you want new tyres or springs you'll get them. If there are any complaints just refer them to me." I drove him back to his plane, and I had no further problems with Government Stores!

Besides the men working on the road I also had seven labourers down at the airstrip. Their job was to keep the grass short. This was done by hand using sareps. Sareps were long pieces of steel sharpened at one end with a handle on the other end, and bent to look like a letter J. They were used like a scythe and it was a full time task to keep the grass cut.

Across the eastern end of the airstrip ran a small river, the Kiari. It flowed very fast down the mountain then widened out to about 80 yards (75 m) when it hit the narrow plain. It was quite deep except at its mouth where a bar crossed at about chest deep. Stretching offshore from the mouth was an extensive shallow reef. Three people were attacked by crocodiles at this river in the eighteen months while I was at Kalalo. The first attack was on two women crossing the river at the mouth, using the bar to walk across. The crocodile grabbed one woman and swung round hitting the other with its tail. The latter suffered bad bruising and the loss of a fairly big patch of skin on her side over her ribs. The woman taken was never found, although after treating the injured woman, we made a very thorough search for her. Only a couple of weeks after that incident the crocodile attacked again. This time it was a man standing in knee deep water on the reef at the river's mouth. He was fishing with a multi-barbed fish spear. The crocodile came up behind him reared up and bit into his shoulder. The man poked his spear into the crocodiles face area and it let him go. He staggered up to the Patrol Post, Gloria Blanch put 54 stitches in his badly lacerated shoulder and we sent him by plane to hospital in Lae. We again hunted for the crocodile but without success.

I had to cross this river every time I went on patrol to the east of Wasu, and the only way across was by wading in chest deep water over the bar. I always felt very apprehensive crossing this river (in fact I felt apprehensive crossing most rivers in New Guinea) and the "mad rush by the mob" method was used in the hope that the crocodiles would be more scared than we would. This meant everybody shouting, splashing and making as much commotion as possible while crossing in a group so as to scare the crocodiles (we hoped).

There was a crocodile hunter further along the coast and I sent word to him with a request that he come to Wasu to try and catch the crocodile. He arrived a few days later and set a number of

hooks. Crocodile hunters in New Guinea tended to use hooks with chain traces and steel wire lines instead of shooting, as there was more chance of recovering the crocodile. Skins were very valuable and a shot crocodile often sank, and could be washed away by a swiftly running river. He came up to Kalalo a day later to show me the results of his efforts. He had a couple of skins from crocodiles eight or ten feet long but the big one had got away. One of his hooks, like a big fish hook but made from at least half inch (13 mm) stainless steel had been almost straightened, and there were teeth marks gouged in the steel as though done with a hammer and cold chisel. The pilot who flew the small plane in each fortnight said that he had seen the big crocodile a few times as he flew over the river, and he estimated it to be about 22 feet (6.7 m) long.

There were two mission stations near Kalalo. Just down the mountain about half a mile (¾ km) was a leprosy hospital at Etep, run by a Lutheran mission nurse from America. The nurse, Erna Mathias, had been working with the lepers there since 1947, when she established the hospital. Some 500 feet (150 m) higher up the mountain from Kalalo, and also about half a mile to walk, was a Lutheran mission station at Ulap, run by a German, Frederick Wagner. Fred had a wife, Lydia, and five children. There was also a Lutheran school near there, at Gatop, run by an American missionary named Ted Ager, and his wife May.

Fred came from southern Germany where the wines are made and his hobby was wine making. He used to make wines from anything and everything he could find, and he was good at it. I had a standing invitation to go there for tea every Sunday and I went fairly often when I wasn't on patrol. Fred would always bring out his latest experiment in wine making for us to sample. He enjoyed good cigars and never tried to convert or preach to me, and those evenings were very enjoyable. He had served in the German artillery during the war and had spent some time as a prisoner–of–war in England. He spoke highly of the British and never regretted his time as a POW.

Fred ran a small sawmill for timber to maintain the mission, hospital and school buildings, and he had found a few trees that appeared to be balsa wood. Certainly if they weren't balsa they were identical in properties. He had taken up making model gliders using this wood and built many, some with wingspans up to 8 feet (2.5 m). He would launch these from his front veranda, which looked down the mountain to the sea, and had advised all the local villagers that he would pay a reward to anyone who found a plane and returned it to him.

The other European living at Gatop was Lionel Hopkins, a young Canadian from Saskatoon. He was spending 12 months assisting at the school as part of his training to eventually become either a Lutheran missionary or a mission teacher. Saskatoon is evidently one of Canada's coldest parts. He said that the coldest he had experienced was -28ºF, that's 60ºF below freezing! He found New Guinea a bit too warm and humid and suffered a lot.

A small Cessna aircraft came every second Friday and brought mail and a little fresh meat, butter, cheese and bread. There was no electricity on the patrol post and my small refrigerator was a kerosene model that was not particularly efficient, so I couldn't store very much fresh meat, butter, etc. For most of the fortnight I lived on tinned meat. There was not the variety of tinned meat available then as there is now, but my favourite of a poor lot was Pecks Braised Steak & Onions. You could do more with it than with other meats. I still do not like tinned meat very much! There were two routes this plane could take to get to me. If the mountains were clear of cloud it could cross them via a pass at about 10,500 feet (3,200 m) whose width was about as wide as the plane's wingspan plus about 30 feet (10 m) or so extra on each side. This took half an hour from Lae to Wasu. If there was cloud then the plane had to go right around the coast via Finschhafen and that took about two and half hours. In a letter I wrote to the family in 1964 I complained that I had not had any bread since 15 May, but that when bread did arrive on the next plane, on 8 June, it was already four days old. Weather had prevented the plane from even taking off from Lae, and my bread had sat in the plane at the Lae airstrip for four days before they got it to me. However I had fresh vegetables and fruit bought from the surrounding villages, although the variety of vegetables was small, mainly yams and taro.

For Christmas and my birthday Mum use to send me a homemade fruit cake (and Mum's homemade fruitcakes were delicious). After cooking the cake Mum would leave it in the cake tin,

which had a lid she would put on. She then sewed the tin in calico and wrote my name and address on that and posted it off to me. This was a practice that Mum had done during and just after the War to send cakes to relatives in England who couldn't get the fruit, etc. to make good cakes. When I opened the tin the cake never lasted long! That was the only cake or sweet food I got out on the Patrol Post.

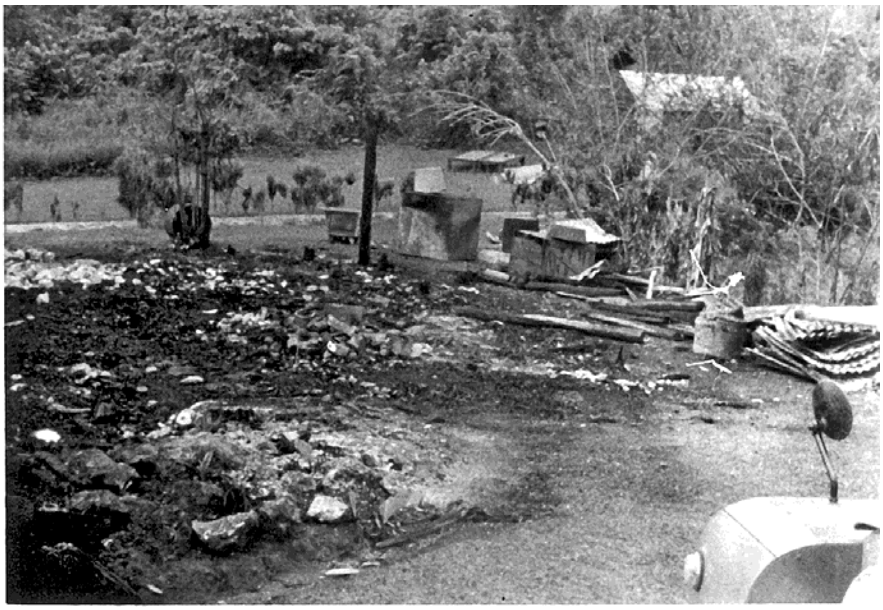
The anchorage at Wasu with the coastal trader Vitiaz *at anchor*

The mountains mentioned were the Saruwaged Range. Kalalo was on the north slope of the range that had a maximum height, according to the map, of 13,473 feet ((4,107 m). A slightly later map gives the height as 13,520 feet (4,121 m). This was Mt. Bangeta, the fifth highest mountain in the territory.

However while I was there the RAAF sent some helicopters up to practice high altitude landing and take-off. One of the pilots told me that they landed on a flat area about 400-500 feet (120-150 m) below the summit of Mt. Bangeta and he claims that they were at 14,000 feet (4,270 m) there! None of the maps of New Guinea were accurate and the Australian and American governments were mapping the country while I was there. The Australian Navy was charting the coastal waters, the Australian Army surveyors were mapping the coastal strip and the US Air Force was photographing the rest at night using infrared film. This was done from World War II B29 Superfortresses fitted with the appropriate aerial cameras. The reason it was done using infrared film was that this was the only thing that could see through the cloud. It was carried out at night because the heat during the day affected the clarity of the picture. The cooler nights were much better for infrared photography.

The area I had under my control while at Kalalo included the Kelanoa, Sio, Uruwa and Yupna census divisions. This totalled a population of 8,000 people for whom I was responsible. Not long after I arrived the Kalasa census division was added to my responsibility. This brought to 11,000 the number of people I had to care for. I turned 22 years of age soon after arriving in Kalalo! I was a Magistrate, a commissioned officer of Police, gaoler (I had a prison at Kalalo), Treasury agent, Post Office, Commonwealth Bank agent, Coroner, Meteorological Bureau reporter, arbitrator for any and all problems, surveyor, War Graves Commission agent, builder of

roads and airstrips, Coastwatcher, census taker, Government pay officer, tax collector, doctor, etc., etc.



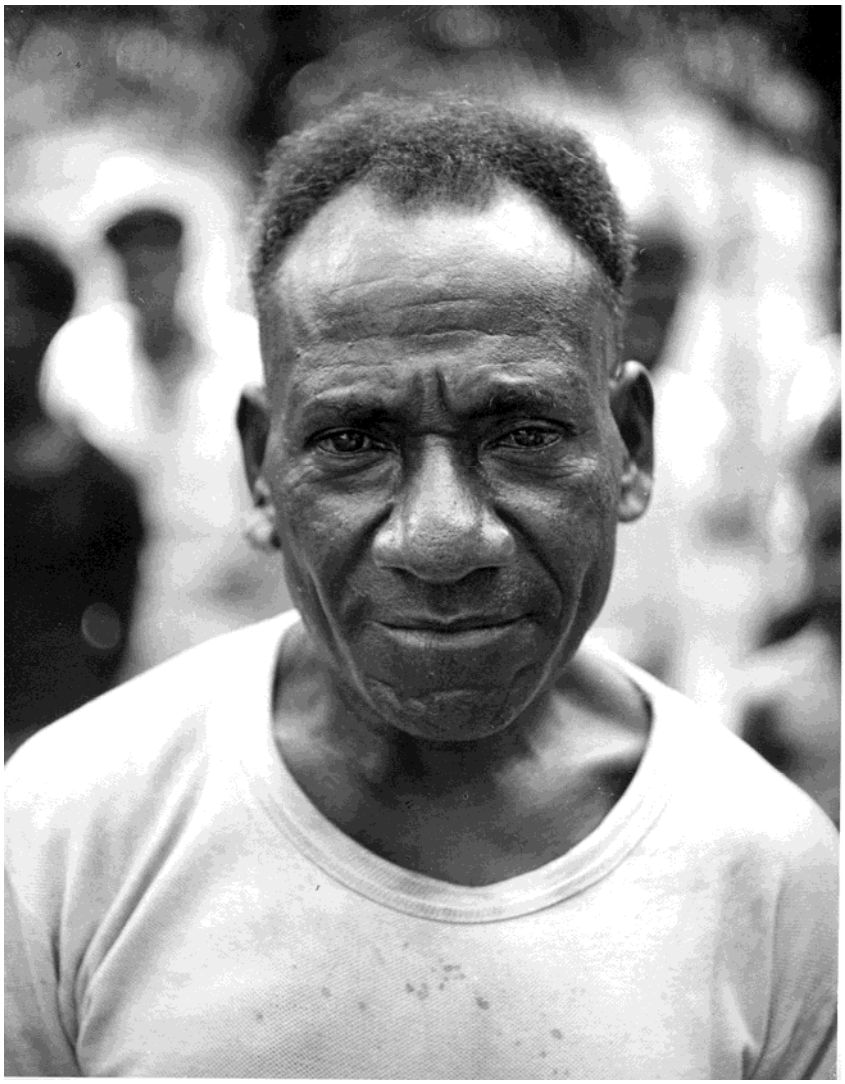
What was left of my house after the corrugated iron from the roof was taken away.

One of my jobs was to obtain land for a school at a village overlooking the coast near Sio. This was very involved, as in New Guinea although you may own land you don't necessarily own what were called the "economic trees" that were on that land. Whoever plants the tree owns it, irrespective of whose land it is on. Also with the passing on of land from fathers to sons over many, many years a quite small area of land can become broken into dozens of individually owned plots. In this case the 2½ acres (1 hectare) the government required for the school was owned by about a dozen different people with another twenty or so people owning trees on the land. Economic trees had, as their name implied, value for their timber, their fruit, their leaves as thatching, in fact their use for just about anything.

Negotiations started only after I had done a survey of the land, marked its boundaries and marked and noted every tree. Land was the most important item in a New Guinean's life. It dominated everything; without it he had nowhere to grow his food and, unless he could arrange to rent some land, he was likely to starve. Land disputes caused more problems than anything else did, and fights over land ownership were common. Consequently negotiations over the purchase by the Government of land were protracted, heated and not always satisfactory on either side. When I was there only the government was able to purchase land. Private companies and individuals who were not Papuan or New Guinean could only lease land. This was so that when independence was granted all land could be handed back to the people without dispute over ownership. If you wanted to run a plantation of some sort you leased the land. When independence came, if the locals wanted the land back the lessee could hand it back without loss of ownership.

In Papua and New Guinea the Government Stores Department was the supplier of almost all our requirements on the Patrol Post apart from personal clothing and my food. From office stationery to water tanks, newsprint to kerosene, tinned meat and bags of rice to nails and screws. They had a catalogue, a copy of which was held on the patrol post, and it was just a matter of sending in a request by radio for whatever was required, quoting the item and its number and the quantity. The material would then be sent out on the next boat or plane depending on size and urgency. The bags of rice, cases of tinned meat, bags of flour and packets of tea that I ordered for the Police would be sent once every six months by the Government coastal boat *Morobe* to Wasu, where I would store them in a locked shed near the end of the airstrip. It was these bags of rice that I put on the bonnet of the Landrover to prevent it tipping backwards when driving back up the mountain to Kalalo. I would also contact Burns Philp (New Guinea) Ltd or Steamships Trading Co. Ltd, the two main stores in Lae, and get my own supplies of non-perishable foodstuffs sent on the same boat. These would be such items as cases of tinned meats, cases of tinned fruit, tinned butter, tinned cheese, powdered milk and so on.

At one time while at Kalalo I got a replacement short wheelbase Landrover from Government Stores on the *Morobe.* To get it off the vessel, which had no crane, and onto the shore with no jetty was a very tricky undertaking. I knew it was coming and had got the labourers and Police to build a raft from 44-gallon drums and bush timber in the water at Wasu. The Landrover was



A man from Sio village

just tied to the deck of the *Morobe* (it only just fitted) and after untying, it was a very delicate matter of rolling it off the deck onto the raft, which was less than a metre lower in the water. This, the most hazardous part of the exercise, was carried out successfully, accompanied by a vast volume of shouting, gesticulating and contrary instructions from everyone there. The raft was towed ashore until it grounded then the vehicle driven off into the water and up onto the beach safely.

Wasu was also the place where I received a severe sting from what I think was fire coral while swimming. I had gone down from Kalalo either to meet the fortnightly plane or to pick up bags of rice and cases of tinned meat from the storage shed at the end of the airstrip, and decided to have a swim. While swimming I suddenly felt an intense and agonising pain on my left side. I had brushed against some coral so I presumed it was this that had caused the sting. It felt as though I had been struck by a piece of red-hot steel, and I came out of the water with three long blisters, parallel with my lower ribs on the left side of my chest. The pain and blisters lasted for some weeks. The blisters slowly turned to three pale brown coloured scar-like stripes of skin which took 9 to 10 months before they began to fade. I still think I brushed against some fire coral, although I may have been stung by a box jellyfish.

One of the common occurrences in New Guinea, which I never quite got used to, were the earthquakes and earth tremors, called *guria* in Pidgin. Earth tremors were an everyday happening. Hardly felt, there would be a rattling of crockery in the cupboard, ripples on the top of a cup of coffee and the slight movement of doors or hanging light bulbs. A definite earthquake that could be heard and felt happened about every fortnight or so, and a severe earthquake occurred about once every two months. The most severe that I experienced was one which measured 7.4 on the Rigter Scale, which happened early one morning while I was asleep in my bed in Lae. It threw me out of bed onto the floor, knocked over my dressing table and bookshelf, and sent everything in the house crashing to the floor. When I stood and tried to get out of my room the floor was moving so much that I couldn't walk and had to crawl. Outside things were just as chaotic and a big section of the road in front of the house opened up as one of the Japanese wartime tunnels collapsed. The bearers of the tank-stand holding my water tank were 9 inch by 6 inch (225 mm by 150 mm) hardwood and many of them snapped, leaving the tank in a precarious position.

I had a similar thing happen to my water tank when a severe earthquake hit Kalalo. It was probably just as high on the Rigter Scale as the one in Lae but I did not hear what the severity was. My water tank, which was near the corner of my house, disappeared into a large hole caused by the earthquake collapsing an under-

ground cavern with a river running through it. Later when I managed to extract the tank it had squashed down and only held about 600 gallons (2,700 l) instead of its original 1,000 gallons (4,500 l). It had ripped a portion of the guttering used for water collection off the edge of the roof, and I had to get some more, including soldering equipment, from Government Stores. That was my first go at soldering, when I repaired the guttering and the tank. It was not a neat job but the repairs held which was vital as that was my only water supply. It was not even piped into the house. To get water for washing, showering, washing up, cooking, etc. I had to make a trip with a bucket outside to the tank.

The worst result of an earthquake for me was when I had, as a coroner, to investigate the death of a young woman in a village not too far from Kalalo, who had been asleep in her hut when an earthquake struck. The ridge pole down the centreline of the roof snapped and one end hit her in the throat. It was 3-4 inches (75-100 mm) in diameter and the jagged end very nearly decapitated her. One of the more gruesome investigations I had to carry out.

One could always tell when an earthquake was coming as everything would go quiet. New Guinea is normally a noisy place with bird calls and insect noises all the time. Somehow these creatures knew and took shelter. There would be this deathly hush then this rumbling sound that grew louder and louder as it got closer, and then the ground would start to tremble then shake. It was a very scary experience.

I had a lucky escape while at Kalalo when lightning struck a tree close to the house. It was a big tree, probably over 60 feet (18 m) high and it shattered and pieces flew everywhere. One piece about 5 feet (1.5 m) long came straight through the wall of my house just a few inches above my bed. It hit the far wall, damaging that but not going through. If I had been in bed I would have been killed or very seriously injured. The tree looked as if a bomb had hit it and so did the side of my house.

One of the many interesting things that happened during my 18 or so months at Kalalo was the discovery of a submarine in which the Japanese commander in the southwest Pacific, Admiral Yamamoto, was nearly killed. I had been reading one of the volumes of the Official History of the Australians in the Second World War published by the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. In it there was the story that an Australian fighter plane returning from a sortie spotted a Japanese submarine proceeding on the surface, and dived down, straffing it with the last of its ammunition. The submarine was carrying Admiral Yamamoto to Rabaul and was so badly damaged by the straffing it could not dive. A number of crew were killed and wounded and the submarine made for a river up which the Japanese had a staging base. This was near Nambawira on the Goaling River. Here the Japanese had a major supply depot and wharves, and loaded landing barges with supplies and troops for the front line. It was in fact the main Japanese supply base for the whole Finschhafen area. The submarine hoped to find sanctuary here from further attacks by aircraft called in by the attacking plane, and also possibly get repaired. It did not quite make it and sank just offshore at the mouth of the river. Yamamoto was not injured and travelled on to Rabaul by plane where he was subsequently shot down and killed.

During my patrolling along that section of the coast I had crossed a river some way inland from its mouth where there were the remains of wharves, buildings, etc. which the local villagers said had been a Japanese supply depot and landing barge loading wharf. It seemed to be in the right position to be the one mentioned in the Official War History book. I had not been down to the river mouth as the track between villages crossed the river well up-stream near the ruins of the depot. On my next patrol I queried the villagers who lived just to the east of the river as to whether any of them knew anything about a submarine that had sunk near the river.
"Sure," was the reply, "It's still there. Would you like to see it?" They then went on to explain that the submarine had sunk in shallow water, and part of it still appeared above water level.

As there were no tracks to the mouth of the river and the beach was non-existent in parts, we paddled there in a canoe. About 25-30 yards offshore was the rusting conning tower of a submarine sticking up above the water. We went to have a look and could see the whole of the vessel with the conning tower and a small portion of the hull above water. There were holes that looked to have been made by cannon shells but otherwise it was rusty but in fairly good condition. This would have been in 1964.

The villagers then showed me where, on the small beach at the river mouth, the Japanese had put their dead, and the small caves where they had put the wounded in the shade. These were very small caves, not much bigger than would take one or two men lying down, in a low two metre high limestone 'cliff' on the inland edge of the beach.

The war was ever present in New Guinea. At one time I had a bag with the skeletons of a number of Japanese soldiers under my house at Kalalo. As I said before, Patrol Officers acted as War Grave Commission agents and reported war dead to the Australian, American or Japanese authorities as appropriate. The local people had shown me these remains so I collected them (equivalent to about two and a half bodies) and any possible identifying material, and reported them to the Assistant District Officer in Finschhafen, who would then have informed the Japanese war graves authority. However before they could do anything about them my house burned down when I was out on patrol, and the bones reduced to ashes among the ashes of my home. I lost virtually everything I owned in that fire, including a very good collection of records (mostly jazz, some quite rare), except for the small amount of clothing, bedding and kitchen gear I had taken with me on the patrol.

That same fire damaged some firearms I had found as well. These included two Japanese rifles, a Japanese carbine and an American sniper's rifle complete with telescopic sights. The sights of this latter had been rendered useless by mould between the lenses, some of which were cracked, but the rest was in fairly good condition. The butt had the name 'Elsie' carved in it plus nineteen notches.

I had intended to be away from the patrol post for only four or five days so I had left my kerosene-powered refrigerator on, with instructions for one of the Police constables to check it each day. The patrol was to go to investigate a report that two men had been killed trying to break open a bomb with axes to get at the explosive to use for fishing. The village was only one and a half to two days walk away. As a coroner this sort of investigation was part of my job – not one I liked. Nothing had been touched and already the accident was about four days old. One man had been bending over the bomb with his axe, the other standing some yards away, when it exploded. From my questioning it appears it was probably a 250-pound bomb, and there wasn't very much or any very big pieces of the man who had being doing the hacking. His mate was mostly all there, but in several pieces. In that climate four days is a long time for things to go off, and that was one of the worst sights and jobs I have ever had. There was a case in one of the then remoter parts of the highlands of Papua and New Guinea where villagers found a 500-pound bomb, dropped presumably by a damaged aircraft needing to lighten its load to get back over the mountains. There certainly weren't any Japanese in that area. Not having seen a bomb before, the villagers looked on it as a giant egg or similar. They dragged it back to the village and tried to open it by building a big fire around it. Very few survived.

My other experience with exploding bombs while based at Kalalo concerns the village of Roinji, on the coast to the west of the patrol post. On my first patrol there, the people reported some unexploded bombs very close to the village. In fact one was right in the middle of the village, a 250-pound bomb wedged about 8 feet (2.5 m) above ground level in the fork of a tree. The tree had actually half grown around the bomb. The other two consisted of two 1500-pound bombs, one lying in the long grass 50 yards from the edge of the village. The other was buried in the beach with just a bit of the tail fin showing and lapped by the sea at each high tide. A 1500-pound bomb is very impressive! It is about 7 feet (2.1 m) long and 2 feet (600 mm) in diameter and the steel around the nose is nearly 2 inches (50 mm) thick.

When I got back to Kalalo I radioed a request that "Bomber Brown" be sent here to dispose of the bombs. "Bomber Brown" was a Sergeant Brown of the Australian Army Engineers whose job was going around Papua and New Guinea blowing up wartime munitions that were found. It was full time work and he was kept very, very busy.

It was some months before he could get to my area, but when he did we went to the village and he had a close look at the bombs. The one in the tree he said he could do nothing about except explode it; and the same with the one buried in the beach. The one lying in the grass he said he might be able to defuse and proceeded to belt the rust off the fuse area with a very big shifting

spanner! I was backpedalling rapidly when he decided that it was too rusty to get off, and that this particular bomb would also have to be exploded.

It was explained to the people of the village that to explode the bombs would completely demolish their village. They of course knew this and were well aware of their power from first hand observation. The war was very severe around this area. Their concern was that the bombs might explode, particularly the one in the grass as that grass was occasionally burned off. They said that it would not take them long to rebuild their houses. These were naturally all native material houses, thatched roofs with woven bamboo walls and split palm floors. The cost to build was nil except for the expenditure of some labour and every one helped each other. The people collected their belongings and were sent a mile along the coast so that they would be safe.

Sergeant Brown then put a small charge near the tail fin of the bomb in the tree and we backed off trailing the wires from the detonator to a safe point behind some large rocks and fallen logs a very great distance from the village. The explosion virtually flattened the village. The next one to go was the one buried in the beach. I had never before heard or seen a bomb of this size go off. The amount of dirt and debris that went up into the air and the height it reached was enormous. When the second of the 1500-pound bombs was exploded the same sort of column of debris hurtled up hundreds of feet. As it stopped rising and started to fall back down, I heard what I thought was a jet aircraft coming in low and fast. This was the time when Indonesia was fighting the Dutch for the western part of New Guinea, and we often had Indonesian fighter aircraft stray across the border. I said that I hoped whatever aircraft it was he didn't get close to that debris or he could suck stuff into the engine with possible dire results. Sergeant Brown said that it was not a jet aircraft but a piece of shrapnel coming down.

We pin pointed where the piece eventually landed, and after a bit of searching we found it – a piece of steel about 2 inches (50 mm) thick and the size of a saucer. We must have been over 500 yards from the bomb and that piece of shrapnel landed only a few yards from our position. The holes from the big bombs were about 40 feet (12 m) across and almost that depth.

It was at a village in the Uruwa, up in the mountains inland from there, I saw a large shock absorber from an aircraft undercarriage with markings on it showing it had been made in the USA. It appears one of the men had found a crashed aircraft higher up in the mountains while out hunting. Questioning revealed it to be a Consolidated B24 Liberator, as it had "four engines and two tails". The remains of the crew were still inside, but this was my last patrol to that area and I had to return to the patrol post fairly quickly, so I hadn't time to go and inspect the wreckage and recover the bodies. When I got back to Kalalo I duly reported it and I presume a recovery team was sent out later.

Another interesting aircraft find was on the coast close to the border between my area and that of Saidor sub-district further to the west. This was a small Japanese twin-engine bomber with a remotely controlled machine gun in the tail. The bomber had been shot up and this caused the starboard engine to catch fire. The plane had made a belly landing on an area of kunai grass just inland from the beach. It was in very good condition with the fire having gone out so that the damage, apart from the shell holes, appeared to be mainly limited to the burnt out engine, bent propellers and a crumpled belly. I am sure any crew not killed in the initial attack would have survived the landing. There was a twin machine gun turret in the nose and one on top of the fuselage behind the cockpit, and then this single remotely controlled gun in the tail. All were in good condition and there was ammunition lying around in the aircraft.

Some years later back in Australia I read about the Papua New Guinea Government collecting war relics for their museum and wrote to them regarding this plane. I received a reply some months later saying that they had found the aircraft, but that Australian Army surveyors in that area had used it for target practice and it had caught fire and was so damaged as to be not worth recovering.

At Sio village on the coast east of Kalalo was the remains of a Japanese patrol boat. It was on the reef more or less straight in front of the village and only in a bit over ankle deep water. These patrol boats had steel keel and stem and stern, but wooden planking. The planking was almost all gone, what wasn't burnt was eaten by teredo worms. The two engines were still there with

their big, copper exhaust pipes and mufflers. The 20 mm cannon was also lying there with dozens of rounds of ammunition, all corroding badly, scattered around.

My Senior Constable at Kalalo, Zowa, came from Sio village and while I was there he was presented with his second Ten Year Service Star. This was in 1964. His story of the war was very interesting and quite gory. He told it to me, and his Service Record confirmed the story. Because of the atrocities committed by the Japanese soldiers in his village he took his bow and arrows and walked across New Guinea and enlisted in the Police. This was a stupendous walk as only someone who has seen that country with its mountains and jungle can appreciate. At the time he was a young man but it still must have taken great strength and stamina as well as a great deal of courage.

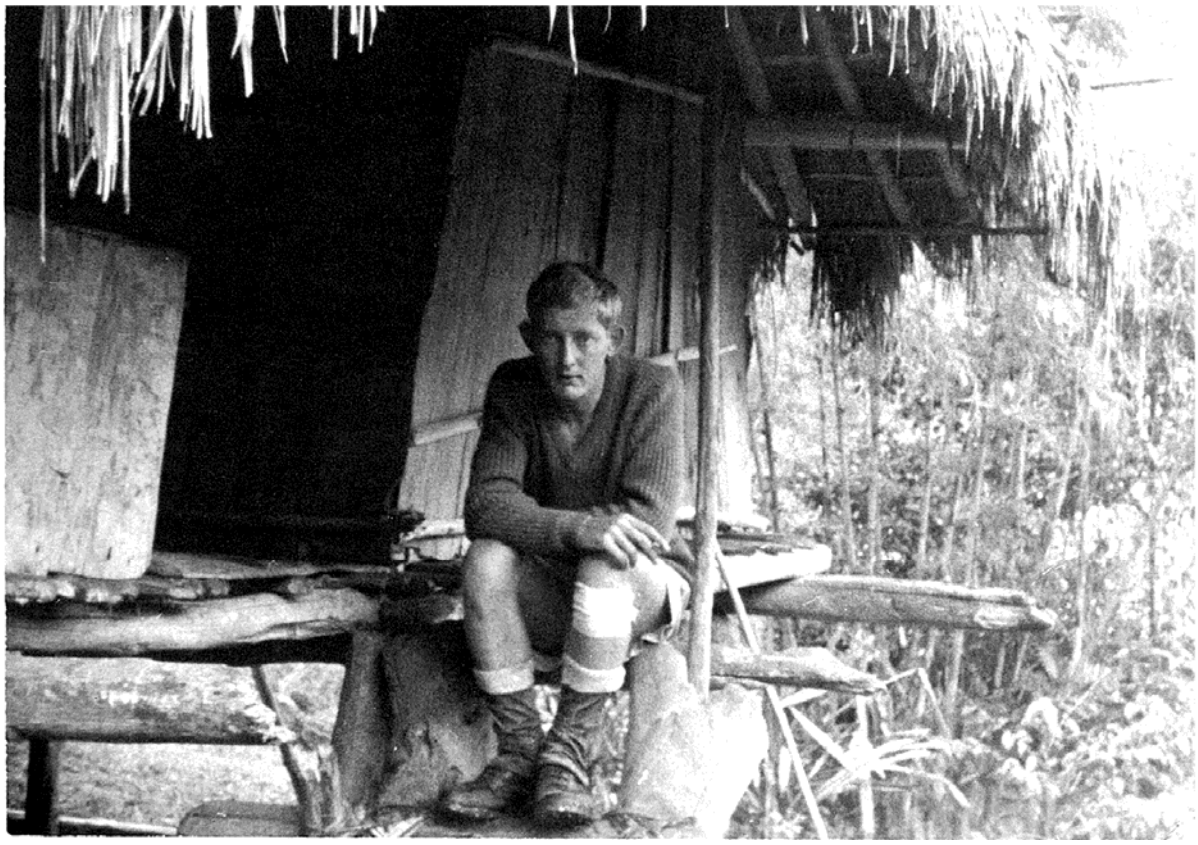
After his basic training, including becoming very proficient with the rifle, he was told he would be sent out with other recent recruits to guard lines of carriers taking supplies towards the front lines. His reaction was "I joined up to learn how to kill Japanese. That's what I expect to do." The Police higher echelon said "No way. You are a very junior, very quickly trained constable and you won't be going to the front until you have more experience." Zowa went absent without leave. He left all of his police uniform and equipment behind, took his bow and arrows and walked back over New Guinea. Near his village he shot and killed, over a very short period of time, seven Japanese soldiers. He cut off their ears, walked back over New Guinea and presented himself at Police Headquarters with the statement (and the ears) saying "I did this with bow and arrows. I don't have to get as close with a rifle." They gave in and he went to the front where he acquitted himself very well. He was barely 5 feet 2 inches (1.58 m) tall but despite this lack of height he had great presence. He was somebody who stood out. He was utterly loyal and immensely proud of his membership of the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary. I relied on his good judgement a great deal.

Zowa out of uniform.
The headdress consists of cassowary feathers held by a head band that contains cowrie shells and dogs' teeth. The dangling bits are made from seeds and dogs' teeth.
The necklace also contains cowrie shells and dogs' teeth

An interesting point regarding the war in Papua and New Guinea is that Australia's greatest maritime disaster occurred during World War II when the Japanese ship *Montevideo Maru* was sunk on 1 January 1942. On 22 June 1942 over 1,000 Australian prisoners were loaded aboard this vessel by the Japanese at Rabaul on the island of New Britain. 845 were military personnel and included prisoners of war from the 2/22nd Battalion, the 1st Independent Company, the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles, an anti-tank battery, an anti aircraft battery, a coastal defence battery, a small group of RAAF and a detachment of the 2/10th Field Ambulance. Also taken

on board were 206 civilians of whom all but a small group were Australian. The small group was the Norwegian crew of the ship *Herstein* that had been sunk at Rabaul. Some of the service personnel in Rabaul had escaped capture, and some of those who escaped made it back to Australia. However 160 were captured at Tol Plantation on New Britain and executed by the Japanese. My father was a member of the army patrol that found the remains of these victims when the Australian Army landed in New Britain later in the war.

The Japanese had not marked the *Montevideo Maru* to indicate that it was carrying POWs and on 1 July 1942, off Luzon Island in the Philippines, the American submarine USS *Sturgeon* torpedoed and sank the ship. There were no survivors among the 1,051 prisoners of war or the civilians. In February 2004 a polished black granite monument to the victims of the disaster was dedicated at Ballarat, Victoria, along with a general memorial to all Australian POWs



Me sitting on the steps of the haus kiap at Bawan Village in the Uruwa

Chapter 5

During my period at Kalalo I had a few "medical experiences" which are worth mentioning. One occurred when I was on Patrol in the Urawa and Yupna census divisions to the west of my post. At one village I was shown a man who had been in a fight and had an arrow in his right thigh. The shaft of the arrow had been broken off but the barbed point was very deep inside; in fact lying alongside his thigh bone. It had occurred a couple of days before and was obviously turning septic. None of their bush medicines were doing any good, and the arrowhead needed to come out or the wound would rapidly kill him. I always took a first aid kit with me on patrol but it was very limited. I certainly had no anaesthetics. He wanted something done, and I knew that it would be too late for him if he had to go to Kalalo and get a plane from there to the hospital in Lae. It would have taken at least five days to walk to Kalalo, certainly much longer if he had to be carried on a stretcher. This was highly probable as he was already having great difficulty in walking. As usual I was completely out of touch with anywhere else while on patrol as we did not carry radios, so I could get no advice from a doctor. I decided to have a go at getting the arrowhead out.

This required an operation. I had a sharp scalpel, a pair of tweezers, a needle and cotton (for sewing on buttons and repairing tears in clothing), some sulpha powder (my only anti-biotic), some methylated spirits (for lighting my lamp) to wash and disinfect the wound and some rum as a sort of anaesthetic! I first poured a large mug of rum and gave it to the patient, telling him to drink it as quickly as possible. I had already explained to him that this was the only "anaesthetic" I could give him. I then washed the wound with the methylated spirits and commenced cutting down through the muscle of his thigh towards the thighbone and the arrowhead. I was scared that I might cut an artery and that he would bleed to death, so every cut was only a millimetre deep. Eventually, after literally cutting down to his thighbone, I managed to get hold of the piece of arrow and pull it out. There were numerous splinters of wood and bone (the arrowhead was partly bone) that also had to be cleaned out. I washed the gaping wound in methylated spirits, packed it with sulpha powder, sewed a couple of stitches to keep it more or less closed and put a bandage on it. I then detailed some men to take him to Kalalo as quickly as possible so that Gloria Blanche could check him and get a plane to get him to hospital. During the whole operation the patient just sat there watching what was going on and never once complained, or even gave any indication that it hurt. I am proud to say he made a complete recovery. It was some time later that I started to wonder what would have happened to me if the patient had died during the operation. I would have been in considerable danger then!

Another medical matter resulted in me delivering a baby. A woman was brought in to Kalalo on a stretcher from a village high up the mountain range. She had been in labour for three days plus the day and a half it took to walk to the patrol post. I immediately radioed the hospital in Lae and explained the situation, requesting that a plane with a doctor on board be sent. I then put the woman in the back of the Landrover and started down the road to the airstrip. I had just got to the bottom of the hill, some 150-200 yards from the strip, when it was obvious the baby was arriving. So was the plane which I could hear making its approach run. I told the police constable who was with me, to get down to the plane and get whoever was there up to me as quickly as possible. By the time the nurse arrived I had delivered the baby and there was little for the nurse to do but tidy up. She said that she would take the woman and baby back on the plane to hospital in Lae and said, "I'll give her something to keep her quiet on the plane". Delving into her medical bag she pulled out a shifting spanner! Seeing my jaw drop she hastily explained that this was for opening oxygen bottles and she was looking for a hypodermic needle and sedative. Again my "patients", mother and baby, made perfect recoveries.

The incident of my operation on the man's leg brought out the fact that the people generally showed little reaction to pain. They naturally felt the pain but, because most other people in the village gave them little sympathy, they did not show much reaction. This was combined with the men's idea of toughness and the "macho" image of strength and fortitude. A typical example is of the man who came to my house on a Sunday full of apologies for disturbing me on my day off. He had been cutting firewood down at Wasu and had sliced nearly through his ankle. He had strapped the foot up to the bottom of his leg with some vines and walked from the beach

to a height of 2,500 feet (765 m) above sea level along 4½ miles (7 km) of very rough road to me to get help. He had cut right through the ankle, which was only held on by a bit of skin and flesh on the outside. We hastily radioed for a plane and he was sent to Lae. He survived but I think he lost his foot. Sewing severed limbs back on wasn't as common or as possible in those days, particularly in little remote towns like Lae in New Guinea.

As to my own health, I had four or five attacks of malaria while in New Guinea, of which at least two were while I was out on patrol in remote country and not able to contact anybody who might be able to help. It became a matter of taking a couple of Camoquine tablets and going to bed to sweat it out over the next 24 to 36 hours. The initial symptoms were unmistakable; firstly an ache in the small of the back in the area of the kidneys. This ache was followed by a feeling of being very cold, and despite wrapping oneself in blankets there was just no way you could get warm. Excessive shivering and copious sweating followed, because despite feeling very cold, you actually had a very high temperature. At the conclusion when the attack had run its course it left the patient feeling very, very weak and light headed and very thirsty. It was not a pleasant experience!

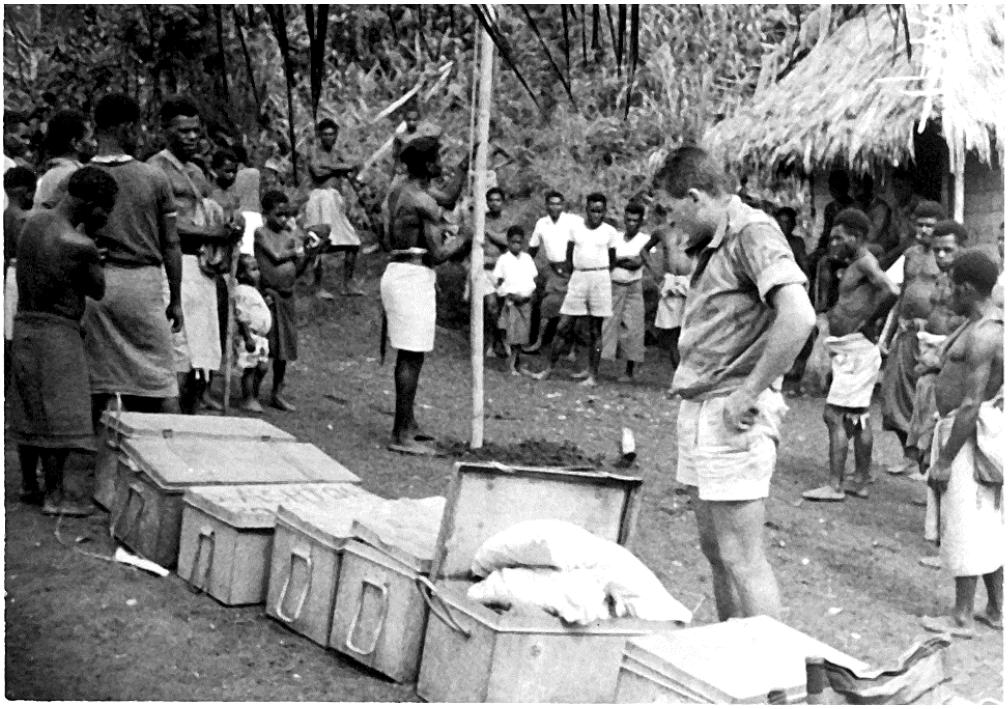
My last malarial attack occurred not in Papua and New Guinea but in Victoria, Australia. I was in the Australian Army, having applied for and been accepted at the Officer Training School at Portsea in Victoria. There were two Officer Training Schools in the Australian Army at that stage, Portsea and Duntroon. I had continued to take the anti-malarial tablets for about four weeks longer than the six weeks recommended after leaving New Guinea. In early May 1965 I started to get the tell tale symptoms while out on the rifle range some two miles from the barracks. Immediately I knew what it was and requested permission from the officer in charge of the detail to allow me to return to barracks and attend the Regimental Aide Post. Reporting to the R.A.P. sergeant in charge I asked him for some anti-malarial tablets as I had disposed of mine some two and a half months after leaving New Guinea. He wouldn't give me any without having tests for malaria first. Despite my assurances that I definitely had malaria, that I had suffered attacks before and knew what it was, I was told to go to my room and wait for the results of the tests on the samples of blood he had taken from me. Some three or four hours later, by which time I was a real mess, he came to the barracks and said that I had got malaria and that I was being taken to hospital. I was taken by Landrover to HMAS *Cerberus,* a Naval Base, and the nearest Defence Services hospital. I spent five days there taking various tablets and giving blood samples every hour, twenty-four hours a day for the five days. The blood was collected by cutting the tip of a finger with the point of a scalpel and collecting three or four drops of blood on a microscope slide. With 120 cuts on the ends of my eight fingers they were pretty tender when I left the hospital. I was assured that I would never get malaria again after this treatment. I believe they were only partly right, because I have definitely had the preliminary symptoms on a few occasions since then.

Apart from these malaria attacks and a few tropical ulcers on my legs I maintained good health. I took particular care of my feet, a Patrol Officer's vital assets! They were constantly wet with sweat and water from rain and rivers, and many officers suffered severe tinea and foot rot. I bathed mine with methylated spirits at the end of every day while on patrol and always changed into clean, dry and quite thick socks every morning.

When I was in New Guinea it was an offence to practice sorcery (called *poison* in Pidgin) – there was actually a law against it. However it was still carried out, but it was very hard to ever convict someone as the sorcery was normally carried out without anybody, apart from the sorcerer, being present. I had a case in the Yupna where a young woman in her early twenties died of sorcery. I knew who had committed the offence and how, but I could not prove it. In many respects it is similar to the so-called "pointing the bone" that many Australians have read about. The sorcerer obtains a part of the person he wishes to harm. It could be a piece of hair, faeces, finger nail clippings, or, as in this case, a grass skirt which had the woman's sweat impregnated in it from constant wearing. Alone and away from prying eyes the sorcerer waved the skirt in the smoke of a fire and chanted a curse. He then dropped the skirt in the fire where it burnt. The victim was not told directly of the curse but soon heard of it from other villagers. In the case I am referring to the young woman sat down in the corner of her hut and went into a trance. I ar-

rived at the village on a normal patrol only a few hours after she had gone into the trance. I was told that she was dying and why. I attempted to bring her out of the trance, including slapping and shaking her, but to no avail. I put a cigarette lighter close to her face and her eyes neither moved, nor did her pupils close down. She died 24 hours later. It was the same sort of death, brought about by the will of the victim that occurs with Aborigines who have been cursed.

Some months later in May 1964 I was discussing this with an American anthropologist, Tom Harding of Ann Arbor University, Michigan, who was working for a while in Sio village. He said that the only successes that he had heard of for this type of self-induced death had occurred in the Northern Territory. There the medical staff had given the victims/patients a general anaesthetic, so putting them to sleep. When they awoke it was as though the curse had been fulfilled – they had died, but due to some stronger magic had come back to life. This was not always successful. I had no anaesthetic, general or otherwise, so I could have done nothing even had I known of the possible cure.



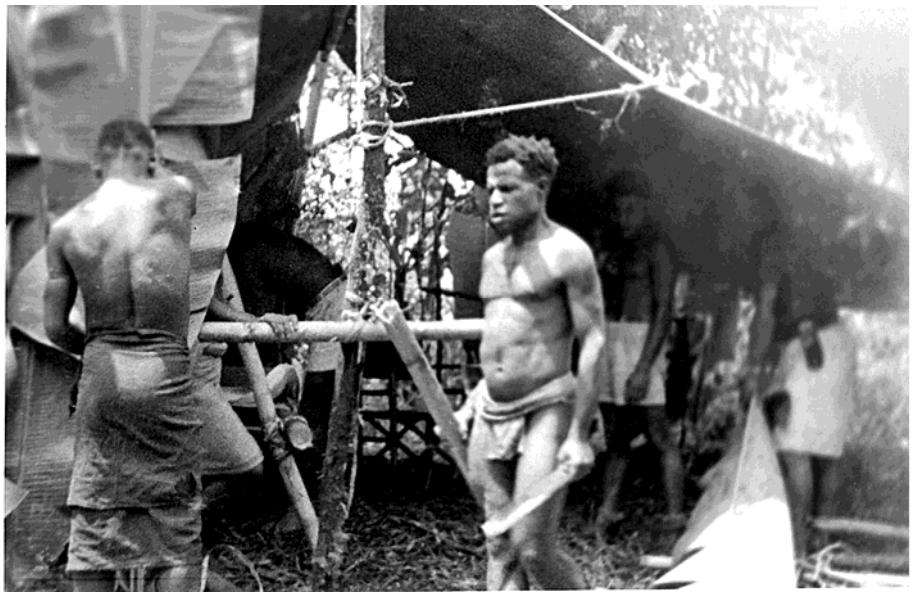
Cadet Patrol Officer Rod Campbell checking the patrol boxes before setting out from a village in the Wain.
The police constable is lowering the flag prior to packing it away

The Pidgin word *tambaran* means the spirits of ones ancestors, who have to be continuously placated to prevent them causing mischief or evil. One of the best known and most visible signs of this were the great *haus tambarans* that were so typical of the Sepik River region. These enormous houses with their towering upswept roofs were the men's cult houses where the ancestral spirits live. I came across a different type of visible *tambaran* at Dinagat village in the Uruwa. This was an almost life size figure made from sticks, cane, grass, flowers and feathers. I was told that it represented the spirits of the ancestors and was used in ceremonies to placate them. How it was used or how often I did not find out. I have never seen any other figure like this, although they may occur elsewhere in Papua and New Guinea.

I cannot remember what was the required percentage of time to be spent on patrolling your area, but by the time I had spent two years in New Guinea I had been out on patrol for a total of 290 days and a further 180 field days. Field days were short patrols of a few days' duration for such things as surveys, court hearings, coroner's inquests, and so on. During this time I had worn out 6 pairs of boots! The constant dampness rotted the leather and the stitching, despite taking a great deal of care in drying them and waterproofing them with dubbin. Also the rough terrain in many areas would cut the soles, sides and stitches of the boots. They just fell to pieces. We were given £9 ($18) per year as a boot allowance. At that time a reasonably good pair of boots cost just under £6 ($12) a pair. When I was at Finschhafen and later at Lae, where I was under direct supervision of an Assistant District Officer, I would receive patrol instructions and be told where and when I was to patrol. When I had my own Patrol Post at Kalalo it was left to me as to when I went, but I had to get around my area twice a year. Any special patrols extra to

the normal patrols would be ordered by my A.D.O. as required; or if special circumstances arose I would go out for a few days to investigate matters. The short patrol where I was away from Kalalo when my house burned down, was the sort of thing that occurred every so often. As Kalalo consisted of four census divisions with a total population of 11,000 people and as everything was done on foot there was a lot of walking to do. My patrol area also included the highest village known in New Guinea at that time (8,100 feet (2,470 m) above sea level) in the Yupna Census Division, so there was a great deal of hard climbing as well. As a sideline to the above statement; Keith McCarthy, the Director of the Department of Native Affairs, and a legend in Papua and New Guinea for his patrols into rugged, unexplored country starting in 1927, said to me "I wouldn't stick my big toe into that bloody place!" It appears that I may have been only the third European to ever go into the Yupna area. A missionary had entered the region in 1938, and disappeared. The local people claimed they shot arrows at him and scared him away. Whatever happened, he was not seen again. During World War II the local people had massacred a party of seven Japanese soldiers, escaping over the Saruwaged Ranges from the allied invasion of Lae, and their bodies had been tossed over a cliff. A landslide was then caused to cover them up. On my first patrol to that area I was shown the spot and told the story by the people involved. The Patrol Officer from Kalalo from whom I took over the station was the first to go in there since the war, and he went only once. I did three patrols into the Yupna, the first in November and December 1963, the second in February and March 1964 and the third in May 1964.

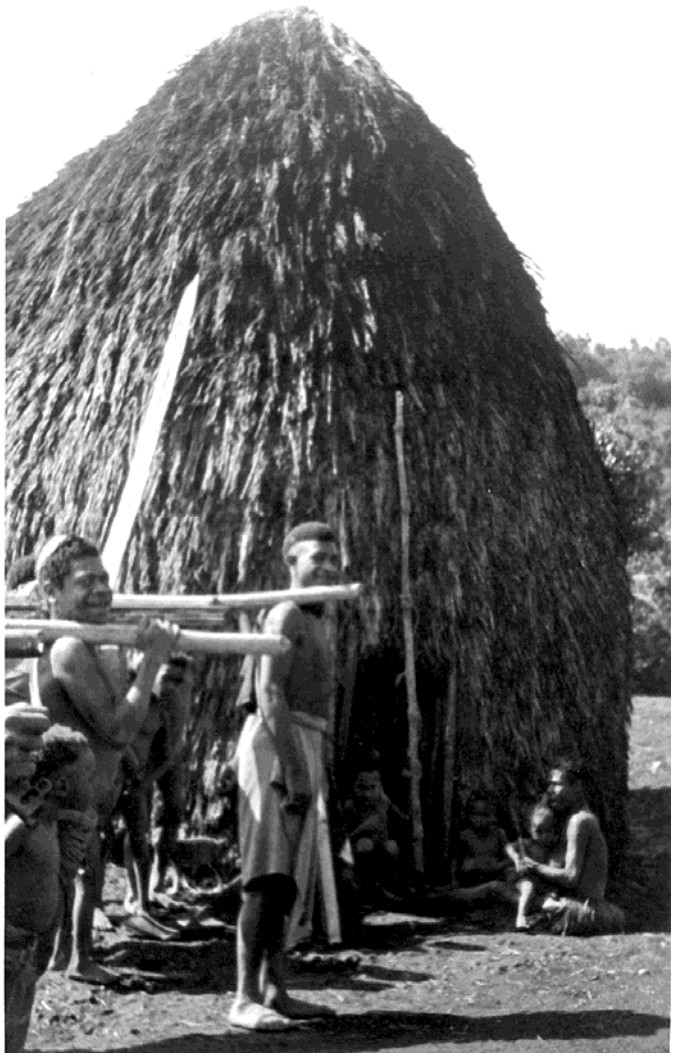
To reach the first village in the Yupna required a two-day hard climb inland from the coast from just near the mouth of the Yupna River. The first day was six hours walking and the next day seven and half hours. Part of the climb on the second day was a stretch of pathway along the sheer face of a 2,000 foot (610 m) high cliff that formed part of the eastern side of the river valley. The path was 200 feet (60 m) from the top, and the 1,800 feet (550 m) below was slightly undercut to the river. The path was barely wide enough to put two feet side by side and Trevor Downes, the previous Patrol Officer, had told me that when he went along that section of track he had crawled on his hands and knees the 200-250yards. I walked – but very carefully! At the end of the first day a bush material camp was made in the jungle, although I must admit that I took a tent fly to ensure that I had a dry place to sleep.



Setting up the tent fly during the walk into the Yupna. The man with the machete is wearing a bark breech-cloth or malo.

The next day was a seven and half hour's walk/climb to the first village. The people from this area had so little contact with the outside world that, apart from the occasional machete and axe head traded from coastal people for tobacco and game, they had virtually no European materials or tools. Their clothing consisted of a bark breechcloth, called a *malo*, and bark cloak for the men and grass skirts for the women. There was hardly a soul who spoke Pidgin, and I had to use an interpreter all the time. I would speak in Pidgin and he would interpret into the local language.

The houses that the people built in the very highest villages of the Yupna were made out of grass in the shape of a beehive. The walls were very thick and the doorway only about three feet high. At night the family would take their dogs, fowls and pigs with them into the house, block the doorway and stoke up the fire inside. As there

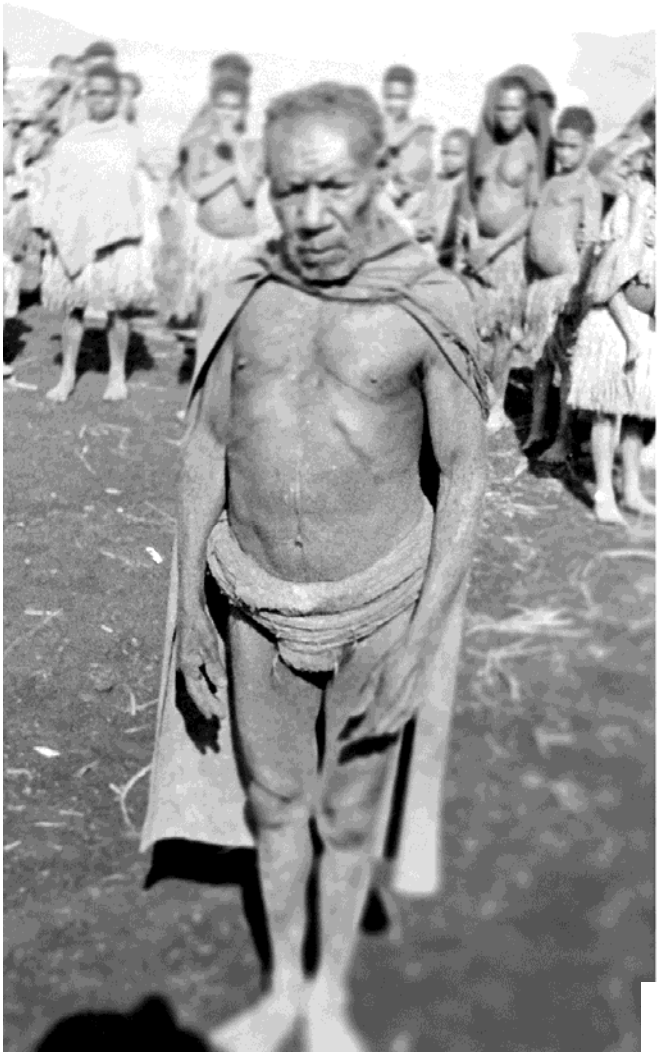


A beehive shaped house high in the mountains of the Yupna

was no chimney or even a hole for the smoke to get out it became rather stuffy in there, to put it mildly. However it was the only way they could keep warm. It was also the cause of a lot of chest problems, including tuberculosis, which was very prevalent in those mountain areas. After patrolling in the Yupna it was a seven-hour climb up to 11,000 feet (3,350 m) then down again into the Uruwa to patrol that area before heading back to the coast and then back to Kalalo.

The remoteness of the Yupna, and the lack of knowledge and contact with the outside world can be illustrated by the story of the 'corn smut'. Corn was a common crop in villages throughout a lot of Papua and New Guinea. It was an important food for many people. A missionary foolishly smuggled in some popping corn from America, against quarantine regulations. It so happened that this corn had corn smut or some such disease, which had the capacity to devastate the corn crops in Papua and New Guinea. The Agriculture Department swung into action and had Agricultural Officers visiting virtually every village to check out the corn crop. If the disease was present then the crop was burned to prevent it spreading. The remote, mountainous terrain of the Uruwa and Yupna made the use of a helicopter necessary to ensure swift action. The helicopter pilot and the Agricultural Officer were based for the few days at Kalalo, where they had brought in some fuel for the helicop-

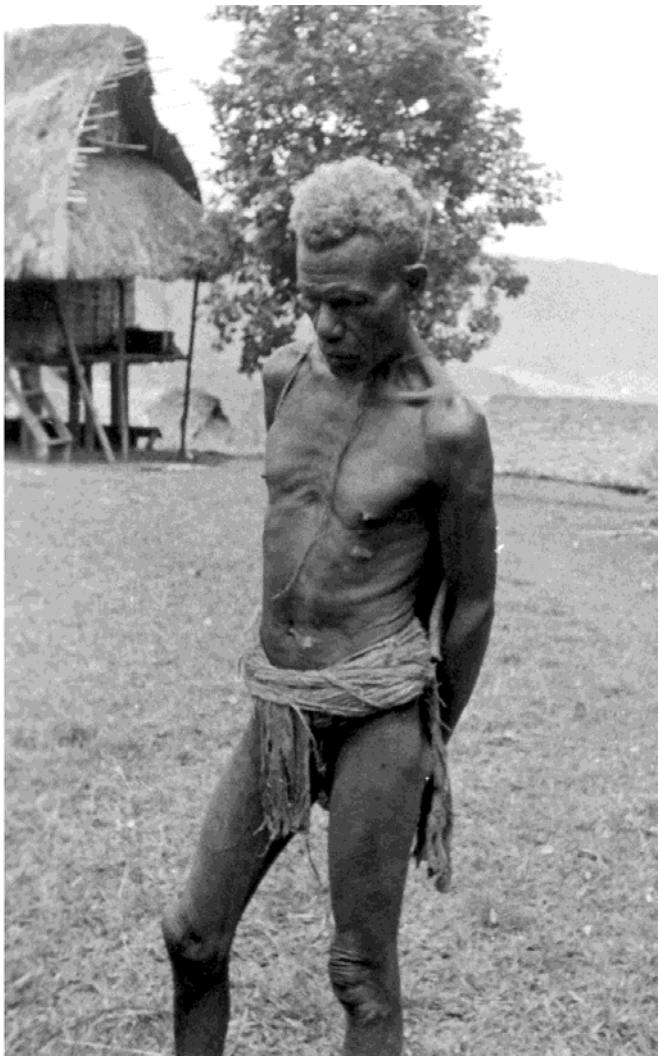
A more typical house at a lower altitude



ter. They said that in the whole of the Yupna they had not seen a single person. Every villager had run terrified into the bush when the helicopter appeared, as they had never seen anything like that before. The helicopter landed near the deserted village, the Agricultural Officer examined the crops, and then they flew to the next deserted village. They found no smut in the area, and they saw no people.

In August 1964 I was brought in to Lae for a course on Local Government and then sent to Kaiapit to do a short two week patrol in that area during the first half of September. At the course in Lae the Patrol Officers tended to let their hair down a bit after months of isolation in the various patrol posts. One of the Patrol Officers attending was Tom Steen who, at the completion of the course, was going to Australia on leave. The evening before he left, some of us got his suitcase, took out all his clothes and replaced them with some rocks and dirt. The next morning a very hung-over Tom Steen was poured onto the plane to Australia, together with his suitcase. We posted his clothing down to his Australian address. I am not sure what happened at the Customs inspection in Brisbane, but things were much slacker then and he got into no serious trouble. On another occasion when Tom and I were heading by plane to some course or conference, he arrived with a small bag in which he had a toothbrush and six cans of beer; all he needed for a stay of three or four days in Lae!

Two men wearing bark breechcloths and one with a bark cloak, Yupna



Chapter 6

A typical patrol started with me deciding that I needed to go to a certain area. I would then get old patrol reports (if any) and work out how long I could expect the patrol to last, whether it would be better to take two police constables or just one, and anything at all that might help the patrol run smoothly. I would then advise the Assistant District Officer in Finschhafen by radio of my intentions, giving him the area, my expected date of departure and roughly when I would be back. I would then consult with my Senior Constable as to which police would go with me. Food for me, the police and my cook-boy would have to be organised. This often meant waiting until the next fortnightly plane so that I could get extra cartons of tin meat, in particular, and other foodstuffs. We had to carry sufficient food to last us for the duration of the patrol – this could be up to seven weeks (my longest patrol) but averaged about four weeks. The police were fed the same food that they were issued on the Patrol Post i.e. rice and tinned meat, flour, tea and sugar plus whatever local fruit and vegetables I could buy. This food together with clothes, spare boots, a 'bed sail' (an explanation later), my 'office' (pens, diary and census books), bedding, crockery and cutlery and cooking pots and pans, towel and toiletry gear, etc. were all packed into patrol boxes. These were galvanised tin trunks with a large handle at each end so that a bush pole could be poked through to enable two men to carry the box. As well there was a pressure kerosene lamp, a five gallon (22.5 litres) drum of kerosene and some methylated spirits for the lamp, a folding card table and a folding chair (my office furniture), occasionally a tent fly if we had to camp out, in fact everything to be self-sufficient for the whole period of the patrol. It was necessary to be self-sufficient, as I would be out of contact for the duration of the patrol. I could not carry a radio. The radio at Kalalo which I used to contact Lae and Finschhafen, was very large, very heavy and needed a large tractor battery to operate, together with a petrol-driven generator to charge the battery. It would have been extremely difficult to carry and operate, and would have required a number of extra carriers in the patrol. Two-way radios in the early 1960s, at least those with the capability of sending and receiving messages over the distances and in the type of country I was patrolling, were a far cry from today's easily portable radios.

Another decision to be made was the amount of patrol advance I would take, and what other payments to pay carriers would be required. The Patrol Post had what was called a station advance that was kept in a small safe in my office. In the case of Kalalo this was £600 ($1200 in present day money). This was used to buy the vegetables and fruit for the Police constables and their families, pay the labourers (I had ten on the road and seven on the airstrip), pay my clerk/typist, and use as a patrol advance. As a branch of the Commonwealth Bank this could be added to if one of the local trade stores banked their takings. This was fairly rare (there were very few stores near Kalalo and their income was such that they would bank maybe once every ten months to a year). At the end of each month I would do a balance and send any excess to the Treasury Department in Lae. If I was short they would send me enough to make up the £600. This total amount was in 1/- (10 cent) pieces except for about £20 ($40) worth of 3d (2 cents) and 6d (5 cents). An amount was taken from the safe as a patrol advance to pay carriers and buy food while on patrol.

In many areas, however, money was of no use to the population as there was nowhere to spend it. Under these circumstances I would take a bag of salt, some trade twist tobacco and what was called newsprint. This latter was sheets of newspaper but without any printing on it. It was used as cigarette paper to roll both the trade tobacco and the locally grown tobacco (known as *brus* in Pidgin) into cigarettes. The standard payment for carriers on patrol when I was in New Guinea was 1/- (10 cents) an hour or its equivalent in salt (a heap of about a handful placed on a leaf the carrier grabbed from a nearby bush) or tobacco (a half stick plus one page of news print). This trade twist tobacco looked like sticks of licorice, black in colour, about 8 inches (200 mm) long and came in cellophane wrapped packets labelled "26 sticks to the lb." In the mountains salt was the requirement of almost every carrier as they grew their own tobacco, and salt was unobtainable except a small amount obtained by trading with coastal people. They did make a form of salt by burning a particular vine, then dissolving the ash in water. When this was dried the resulting grey coloured powder was slightly salty to

the taste. Payment for food was the same except that the 3d and 6d were used to buy food from those who wanted money.

As the amount of food, clothing etc. was more than the Police and I could carry we needed carriers, and these would be requested to come to the Patrol Post from one of the nearby villages on the day the patrol was to start. They would then carry the patrol gear to the first village, be paid and then go home. The next day the people from the village I was in would carry the gear to the next village, be paid and go home, and so on. An average patrol of myself, two Police constables and my cook-boy out for four weeks would require about 20 carriers, as they were not allowed to carry more than 40 pounds (18 kg) per carrier or 80 pounds (36 kg) per patrol box with its two carriers. Every day except Sunday was a working day while on patrol, and walking times varied from a half an hour to eleven and a half hours to be walked in one day, with an average of a bit over four hours each day. Normally we would start walking about 7am. This meant that everything was packed into the boxes after breakfast was eaten, then carriers were allocated and they tied the poles into the handles of the boxes. So 5.30am was a fairly normal time to get up each morning while on patrol.

The walking varied from very rugged, steep mountainous terrain to swampy coastal areas where one could be up to chest deep in muddy water among mangrove trees, or along beaches. Very few of the beaches were white sand (hard to walk on for long periods), most were broken coral and limestone or, on one particular occasion near Salamaua, very dense, black sand. Whether this was a mineral sand or just black volcanic sand I don't know, but there were quite a few kilometres of it on this particular stretch of coast. The walking was sometimes through thick secondary jungle, where it was sometimes necessary to cut a path through the undergrowth if the track was little used and had not been properly maintained. Other places would be in primary jungle with many tall trees and not much heavy undergrowth, which was easier walking. In the higher parts of the Uruwa and Yupna there were large areas of kunai grass, as there was on a few of the coastal parts where limestone replaced soil. Walking at lower altitudes in kunai was hot and often dusty, out in the open sun. The climbing, through whatever sort of vegetation, was usually steep and everything was made more unpleasant by the prevalence of leeches. They would normally collect on the legs and feet, although occasionally they would drop from bushes onto neck, shoulders and back. At one place in the Uruwa the two policemen I had with me, and the carriers, all of whom had bare feet, had so many leeches underneath and in between their toes that they could not bend them to get a grip in the muddy track we were climbing. Every so often we would stop and they would scrape the leeches out with knives, while I would burn them off my legs and arms. They even penetrated the lace eyelets in my boots. That evening I had everyone thoroughly wash their feet in methylated spirits, and I then put antiseptic ointment on the dozens of small wounds that the leeches had left, to prevent infection.

Many villages would welcome the arrival of the patrol with a singsing, and often a fowl or, less often, a pig would be killed and presented to me. The singsings would go on for many hours, and I think were really just an excuse for the people to get dressed up a bit and have a good time.

The first work involved when arriving at a village consisted of setting up camp, then usually I had a shower and changed into dry clothes, as we would all be wringing wet with either sweat or rain or both. Setting up camp was easy in those villages with a *haus kiap* and a *haus polis*, as these were houses built by the villagers for visiting patrols. Most villages had these and they varied from very, very basic constructions to some quite elaborate houses with nice views. All were built, like their own houses, from local bush materials. These were usually plaited bamboo walls, grass or sago palm frond roofs and split palm or bamboo floors. Normally there was a small building (usually just a roof with maybe one or at most two walls) adjacent to the *haus kiap* which was the kitchen, and then there was a deep pit latrine. Water was provided in lengths of bamboo that had the nodes, apart from the bottom one, punched out. These were about 6½ feet (2 m) long and 4-6 inches (100-150 mm) in diameter and held about 2½-3 gallons (12-14 l). My bed would be made using the bed sail referred to earlier. This was just a sleeve of canvas about 6½ (2 m) long and about 2½ feet (0.75 m) wide. Two poles would be cut and pushed through this and the ends of the poles then tied to two X's made of two crossed poles at each end. I would sleep on this (no mattress), with a blan-

ket or two over me in the mountains where it was cold.

By the time this had been done, and we had eaten if it was about lunch time, the village officials (*Luluai* and *Tul-Tul*) would have gathered everybody in from their gardens, etc. I would then carry out a census by reading the names from the census book and adding and deleting for those born and those who had died. Marriages were recorded in the book, as were the whereabouts of those absent from the village, such as people working on plantations. The reasons for deaths were noted and a head tax was collected from those required to pay it. After this, court cases were heard, coroner's inquests held where necessary, disputes arbitrated, talks were given on various subjects including local councils, self government, health and hygiene, the law, the planting of cash crops, etc. At night after tea I would be host to many of the village men, and various matters would be discussed over cups of tea (they liked them very sweet) supplied by me. A favourite topic, both to them and me, was the war which had impacted so greatly and so recently on them. It was during these informal discussions that questions regarding the whereabouts of any war dead were raised, as well as anthropological matters and anything of general interest to me or to the villagers.

I should explain the terms *Luluai* and *Tul-Tul* used in the above paragraph. A *Luluai* was a government appointed official who was the senior government representative in a village. He was given a peaked cap with a large red band on it and had authority to order the villagers to do certain communal work and to oversee that orders given by the Patrol Officer were carried out. This might include such things as maintenance of tracks between villages, better latrines for improved sanitation and health, ensuring carriers were available for patrols, and so on. He was normally a fairly old man who already had some authority. In many cases he could not speak or understand Pidgin so a *Tul-Tul* was also appointed. He was usually a younger man who acted as interpreter and second-in-command to the *Luluai*. He had a similar cap but with two thin red bands on it.

These elaborate headdresses are being worn at a sing-sing in a coastal village to welcome the patrol

Another subject that was discussed at each village was that of money, the desirability of banking rather than hoarding money and, towards the end of my time in New Guinea, the pending introduction of decimal currency. In New Guinea the standard monetary coin was the shilling (to be replaced by the 10 cents on 14 February 1966). This coin was called *mak* in Pidgin, a carry-over from the German *mark* from before 1914. Many people still had German marks and would often swap them for shillings. I collected a number of marks over the years. Also still in use then were the 'holey' New Guinea shillings, sixpences and threepences that had been minted up until 1945. The New Guinea coins, which included one penny and halfpenny coins, were not minted in very great numbers, and only in eight different years (1929, 1935, 1936, 1937, 1938, 1943, 1944 and 1945). The hole in the middle was to enable a piece of string to be threaded through and the coins strung around the owner's neck. This was necessary when most of the population at the time had no pockets.

Related to the coins were monetary notes issued by the Japanese forces during World War II, and usually referred to as "occupation money". Japan printed notes in the currencies of the countries they presumed they would defeat. These were used during the period they were in the occupied countries. For New Guinea they printed notes of sixpence (6d, called ½ shilling), 1 shilling (1/-) and 1 pound (£1) to replace Australian currency. This was used, on occasions, to pay for food taken from villagers. However most times, according to my informants, the food was taken with no compensation. In fact there are many tales of atrocities being carried out by the Japanese against anyone who objected to having their pigs and food stolen.

Most Europeans in New Guinea spoke a little Pidgin, mostly out of necessity, but few spoke it well. I spoke very good Pidgin; in fact a senior New Guinean complemented me on my fluency. I spoke much more Pidgin than English in my last eighteen months in New Guinea, and found that on my return to Australia I was thinking in Pidgin, and had to translate from Pidgin to English in my head before I spoke. As part of the interview and assessment by the Army in Brisbane for my application to attend Portsea Officer Training School, I had to stand before the other candidates, as did each of the others in turn, and talk for five minutes about me, my life, my work, hobbies, etc. I got some strange looks while I was talking and it was only after I sat down that I realised that much of what I had said had been in Pidgin! By the way Pidgin is correctly called neo-Melanesian; it is not a bastardised form of English but a language that existed before Europeans arrived. It was used as a trade language and adopted many German and some English words after the arrival of the Europeans, and also includes some Malay words. Its grammar is Melanesian. Over time the meanings of many of the adopted foreign words has changed considerably.

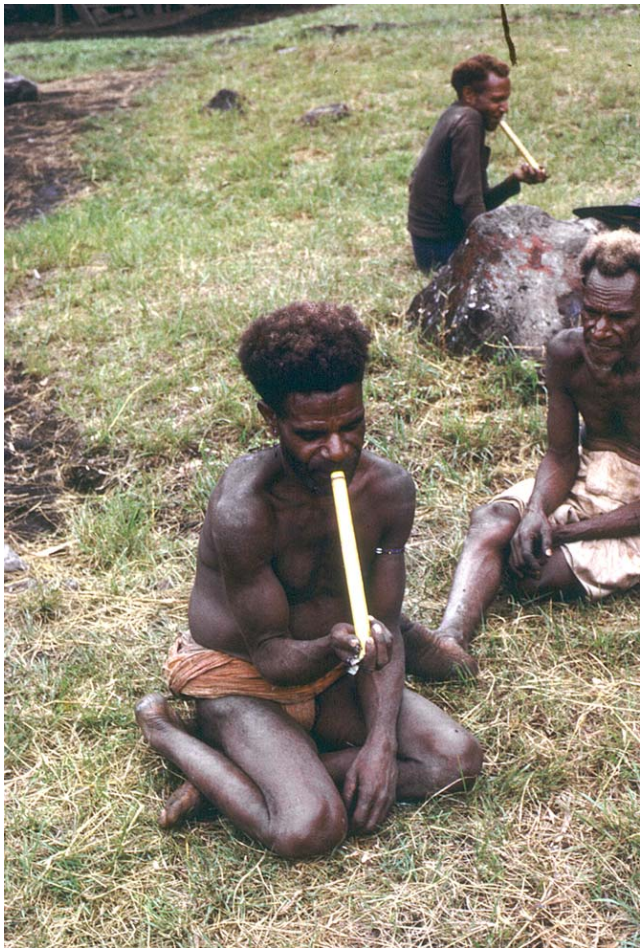
Apart from the patrol to the Siassi Islands mentioned earlier, all my patrols required walking, either along the coast and through swamps and mangroves with an occasional beach, or up very rugged mountains. A couple of times a small part of a coastal patrol would be on a canoe, but this was very rare. I preferred the mountain patrols because, although the walking/climbing was much harder, the temperature was cooler and the people had had a much shorter period of contact with civilisation and were therefore more interesting to me.

To illustrate how rugged and steep the mountain country was I will describe an incident during a patrol I carried out in the Saruwaged Range. Almost all villages in mountainous areas of Papua and New Guinea are built on mountain tops or ridges so that they can be more easily defended. At one village I could yell across the valley to the village I was heading for the next day and tell them I was coming, and to clean up the *haus kiap*, get some water and firewood, etc. The next day it took me 5½ hours to walk down and then 6 hours to climb up to get there. 11½ hours walking to get to somewhere close enough to yell across and be understood! On patrol in the mountains we worked on a change of elevation of about 1,000 feet (300 m) an hour when climbing, and going up or down didn't make much difference to that time. All patrol distances were always recorded as hours of walking, as distances in miles or kilometres were meaningless in that type of terrain.

A dangerous time on coastal patrols was river crossing. Most of the rivers had crocodiles in them, and these were the true saltwater variety, large and mean. The standard practice on coming to a river was, if it wasn't more than chest deep, to get everyone together then all rush

An armband woven from orchid roots and decorated with cowrie shells given to me to buy a wife.

Bone dagger (length 335 mm)



Man dressed in bark breech cloth smoking a bamboo pipe

Alugi in the full dancing dress of a Siassi Island man at the Lae Show

The tambaran at Dinagat village

A typical sing-sing to welcome the patrol into a village in the mountains at Kemen village in the Naba

across, shouting and splashing as much as possible. Deeper rivers or very fast flowing rivers were bridged with logs or bamboo bridges if they were not too wide, or crossed in canoes.

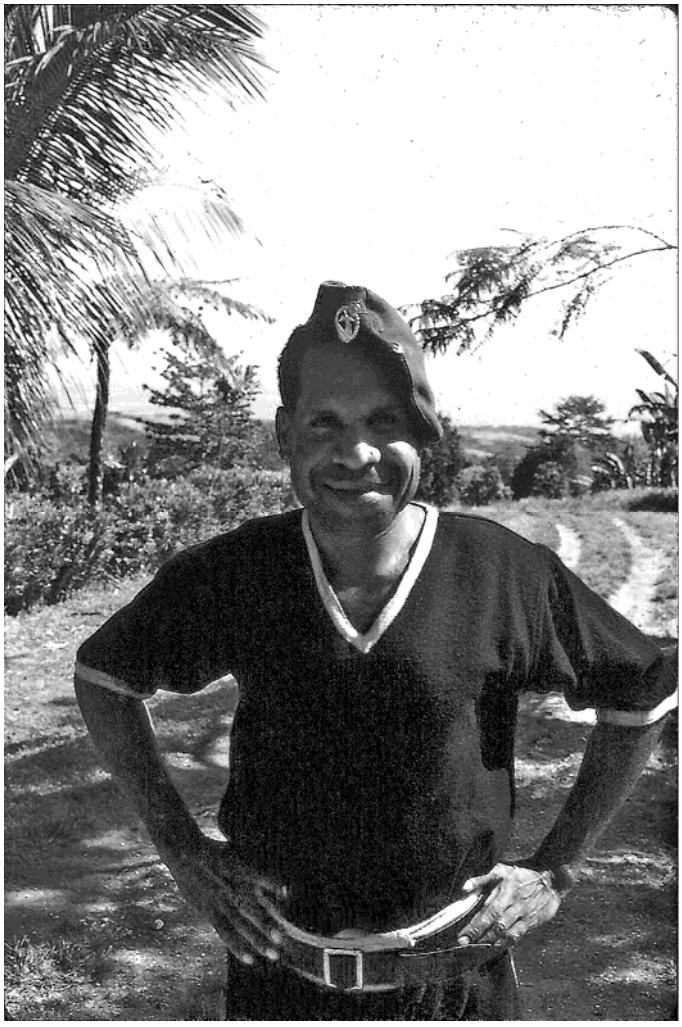
In the mountains the rivers and streams were usually not very deep but often very fast flowing, rocky and with steep banks. These were bridged by logs or bamboos if there wasn't a bridge already there. The few places that already had bridges were often ones that had been built of liana or cane in the form of a suspension bridge tied to trees on each bank, although some were just trees chopped down to fall across the river. The liana bridges were very suspect as they were just tied and plaited together and you had no idea how old the cane was, or how long since anybody had decided to do any repairs. Log and bamboo bridges were very slippery, especially bamboo as the hobnails on my boots would not dig into the hard outer surface of the bamboo. Log bridges soon grew a covering of slippery moss on the rotten bark.

An incident involving a log bridge is worth telling as it resulted in one of the few times in New Guinea where I was concerned for my own safety. It happened high in the mountains of the Uruwa. A man from village 'A' (I can't remember the names of the villages in this incident), with a population of about 200, had been out hunting and had slipped while crossing a log bridge. He fell headfirst about 80 feet (25 m) onto the rocky bottom of a dry ravine and was killed instantly. His body was found by someone from village 'B', population about 90, who retrieved it, took it to their own village and sent word to village 'A' that so and so had been killed, and could they come and collect the body. The people from village 'A' immediately decided that the victim had been killed by someone from 'B' and came down, all armed and intent on getting revenge. The population of the smaller village took to the bush and the armed men entered a deserted village. They inspected the body and claimed that he had been axed (his head was split open by the force with which he hit the rocks and to some extent it did look a bit like an axe wound). I was on patrol at the next village down the mountain, and some men from village 'B' came down to get me to save them from the warriors who wanted, as was standard practice there, to have a general massacre. I got my two Police constables and hurried up the mountain. By that time the warriors had heard I was coming, and, knowing that they hadn't much time, started saying things such as, "Just give us one man to kill to settle the account for the one you

killed and we'll then leave you in peace". As can be expected, no one volunteered. The villagers from 'A' returned home saying that after the Patrol Officer (me) had gone they would be back to extract vengeance.

I examined the body, heard the story, went to where the body had been found and determined that it was definitely an accident. The natural mistrust of the New Guineans, their habit of blaming every death, no matter how caused, on another person and their love of a fight were the causes of the confrontation. It took me nearly two days to get the two groups of villagers to sit down in a more or less neutral place and discuss the matter. It took a further three days of verbal confrontation and almost fighting to get a grudging truce. I had a 12-gauge shotgun and a .38" revolver, my two Police constables had a .303" rifle each. We had limited ammunition. I was in between two groups who were fully armed with bows and arrows, knives, machetes, clubs and axes, and most of whom wanted to fight.

In this particular region many of the older men grew beards, and when they became agitated they put the ends of their beards in their mouth and chewed them. Every so often one of the men would start to chew his beard. His eyes would glaze and he would go into a sort of trance, he would stand up and start waving his weapons. I believe it was a true berserk experience. It would stir many others and the only thing we could do was that I would nod to one of the constables who would walk over and hit the man very hard, nearly knocking him out. The man would lift himself from where he had fallen, shake his head, look around in a dazed manner, then concentrate on the ongoing arguments once more. He appeared not to know what had happened to him. This had to be done a number of times, and I believe it was the only thing that stopped the outbreak of general warfare, with the two policemen and me in the middle. A truce was all I could get, and I left with the threat from village 'A' that once I was out of the area they would be down to exact revenge on village 'B'. At least they had enough respect for the Administration that they waited until I had gone. My Police and I certainly didn't amount to any real threat to the villagers. The particular constable who did the thumping was Oiufa (pronounced Koiyupa), a big, well-built man from the upper Markham Valley. He was a cheery, happy go lucky but very loyal and trustworthy Policeman. That happened on my last patrol to the Uruwa, so I had no way of finding out what happened later, but I know that fighting and at least one death would have resulted. The New Guinea "pay back" makes the Sicilian vendetta appear like child's play.



No. 8336 Constable Oiufa

On returning from a patrol the first thing was to get on the radio and advise the Assistant District Officer of my return. The patrol post would be inspected to ensure that the Police had maintained things as I had set down. I then had to type a Patrol Report which consisted of a day to day diary, an introduction and then separate sections on such subjects as administration, health, law and order, agriculture, tax, etc. One of the sections required was a report on the possibility of building roads and airstrips in a particular area. This was to try and ensure that the local population could have a means of getting any cash crops to a market and so earn an income. This also encouraged more visits by Agriculture and Health officers to the advantage of the people. There was always a report on the Police constables accompanying the patrol, and one on the

Senior Constable Zowa with a kundu. Note the dogs' teeth, cowrie shells and pigs' tusks used as decoration. The plumes in the headdress are from the cassowary. The breech-cloth is made of bark.

village officials with whom I had had dealings. Separate reports were often written for the information of the Agriculture Department, Health Department, War Graves Commissions, and so on, if the particular matter was important enough to warrant more than the normal section in the Patrol Report. A copy was put on file at the patrol post and a number sent to the Assistant District Officer in Finschhafen for his comments and forwarding on to the District Officer in Lae, and the Director in Port Moresby, who would make comments, some of which would occasionally filter down to me. I would normally then get on the radio to Lae to order fresh food to be sent on the next plane. In between times I would read any mail that might have arrived while I was away on patrol, particularly mail from home. I would have to do some bookkeeping, balancing the Station and Patrol Advances, and showing where the money had been spent while on patrol.

One of the many tasks on the Patrol Post was to act as the local Commonwealth Bank. In the case of Kalalo this was required very infrequently as there were only a couple of trade stores in the area who would use the facility. On one occasion this caused considerable consternation in Lae and resulted in me getting into trouble from the Post Master General's Department, for whom I was also agent. A store-owner from the mountain area behind the Patrol Post brought in his profit for the last couple of years - £2,000 ($4,000). What was different about this amount, but quite standard for New Guinea, was that it was all in 1 shilling pieces with the occasional 3 pence and 6 pence. As my station advance at the time was almost exactly the required £600 it meant that the whole of the banked money had to be sent to Lae on the next plane. Always when sending or receiving money in this way it was sent Registered Post. This was very good when money was sent to me because, being coin, it was heavy and required lots of stamps. I used to take these off and every so often I would send them to a stamp dealer in Brisbane and receive a nice little payment in return. Even as used stamps some of the New Guinea ones were worth almost as much as their face value, for instance the 10 shillings Rabaul Harbour one was worth 7 shillings and 6 pence. After a considerable time spent counting this money and wrapping the bundles of 20 one shilling pieces in £1 cylinders, it was all parcelled up and put in a mail bag. This required five men to get it on the little single-engined Cessna aircraft that came each fortnight, and I believe weighed close to 300 lbs (about 136 kg). I received a very angry radio call the next day from the Post Master in Lae stating that mail bags must only weigh a maximum of 40 lbs (18 kg), and that I had nearly caused irreparable hernias in a couple of his staff, and not to ever do that again!

Earlier I mentioned the pass in the Saruwaged Range at about 10,500 feet that the fortnightly plane could come through if there was no cloud. I was returning from Lae on one occasion (I was actually returning from an Army organised series of flights to Port Moresby and Brisbane for interviews regarding my application to go to the Army Officer Cadet School at Portsea in Victoria) when, in the middle of that pass the one engine on the Cessna stopped dead. Evidently the pilot hadn't put on the carburettor de-icing or something. We had enough momentum to get us through the pass and then we started to go down and down, with the pilot frantically pumping things and pulling knobs. There is literally no flat ground anywhere in those mountains, and we had come awfully close to the ground before the engine spluttered to life and we gained some height to make it down to my airstrip at Wasu. The flight a few days before from Lae down to Port Moresby had been fairly hair-raising also. It was in a C47, the military version of the DC3, with no lining and the seats consisting of small bits of pipe jutting out from the side of the fuselage with canvas seats slung between them. The cargo was tied down to the floor in the middle of the aircraft. You leant back against the outside skin of the plane, facing inwards, and without insulation the noise was almost deafening. Over the Owen Stanley Range we flew through a hailstorm, and that really was deafening in the extreme. There was a great deal of lightning as well and it was a very, very bumpy ride. It was a most unpleasant flight for the ten minutes or so that the storm lasted.

The small plane which brought my mail each fortnight belonged to Laurie Crowley. Laurie ran his own small airline business out of Lae, and I flew with him or one of his pilots on a number of occasions. I think it was Laurie who first stated that there were old pilots and there were bold pilots but no old bold pilots. He didn't always follow this saying. I was flying with him at one time to a small airstrip in the midst of high mountains. When we arrived over the airstrip the whole narrow valley was filled with cloud. I

said something along the lines of "I guess we'll have to go back." However Laurie said that we would cruise around for a short while and see if we could get a break in the clouds. A few minutes later he spotted a small break through which could just be seen one end of the strip. He immediately dived the plane, and then had to pull up very, very quickly once through the clouds, at the same time turning with the wings vertical to stay inside the valley and not hit the surrounding mountains. It was very scary but a great piece of what I would call 'bold' flying.

Another incident involving flying in Papua and New Guinea occurred when I was staying at the Pacific Islands Regiment headquarters at Taurama Barracks, just outside Port Moresby. As part of the assessment for my application to attend Portsea I stayed at the barracks for a couple of days to have medical and psychological tests before flying on to Brisbane for further tests and interviews. At Taurama I was billeted in the Officers' Mess. It so happened that while I was there some Neptune reconnaissance aircraft from Queensland had been doing navigation exercises, which consisted of flying from their Queensland base north to the coast of Papua and New Guinea, east along that coast, then returning more or less the same way. They would normally not have landed anywhere before returning to base, but one suffered a serious engine problem and had to land at Port Moresby. The crew were also billeted overnight at Taurama Barracks while a replacement engine and maintenance crew was flown up from Australia. The following morning the pilot got up early before breakfast to check the plane, which had been left unguarded (presumably against regulations) but locked at the airstrip. He came back white faced and shaking, saying "They'll kill me! They'll kill me!" Somebody had painted, in white letters about 3 feet high, on the side of his Royal Australian Air Force plane the slogan of the local brewery (South Pacific Lager):

BE SPECIFIC, SAY SOUTH PACIFIC.

The last I saw of the crew was them all hightailing it out to the airport to remove the offending paint before officialdom caught up with them.

Talking of flying reminds me of when I was at Finschhafen and HMAS *Melbourne*, the Australian Navy's aircraft carrier at that time, went past on her return to Australia from exercises in South East Asian waters. The first we knew of it was being buzzed at extremely low altitude by some of the planes. They were low enough so that their wind knocked twigs and leaves off the taller trees. We all rushed outside wondering if the war had started up again. The aircraft carrier was just over the horizon and couldn't be seen, but we could hear the planes taking off, and they immediately appeared above the horizon. For the next hour or so the small group of us at Finschhafen were given a most spectacular air show. We went down to the airstrip and watched from there. There were Gannet aircraft with their contra-rotating propellers, and the Sea Venoms, the naval version of the Vampires, a twin boomed jet fighter. They would fly the length of the airstrip at a height of about 50 feet (15 m), but upside down, they would do loops and dives and so on. The Department of Civil Aviation bloke was in radio contact and he would stick his head out of the radio shack and ask us what we would like them to do next. We would say some stunt and he would go back into his shack and half a minute later the stunt would be performed. As one group of planes finished and started to head back to the carrier you would hear another group take off, and a couple of minutes later they would be doing tricks for us. It was a great show.

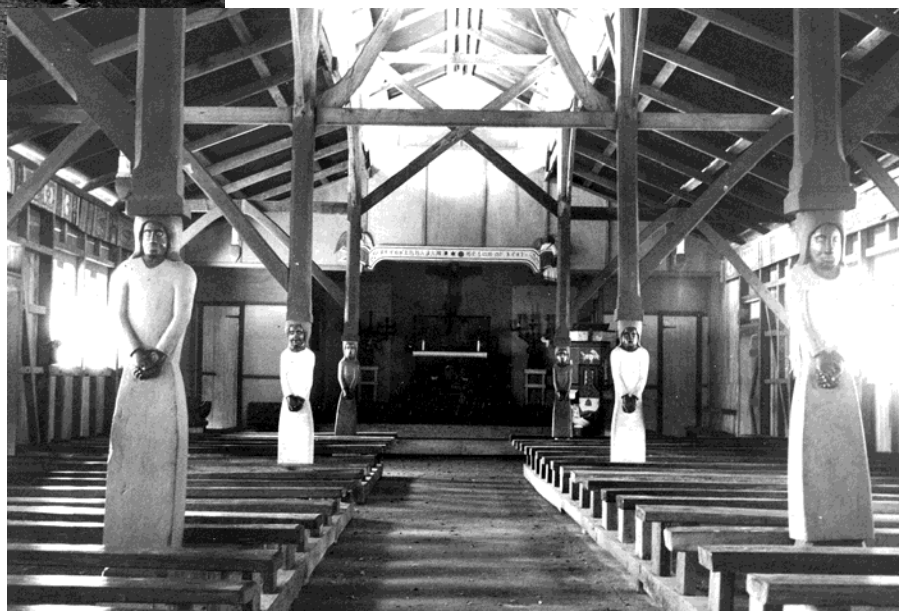
Chapter 7

The art and decoration shown by the people in Papua New Guinea varied considerably. In the areas where I served, there were some people in the very highest parts of the mountains who appeared to have very little in the way of decoration. In most places however there were some very flamboyant costumes that were worn when a sing-sing was held. The main decoration usually appeared in the elaborate headdresses, all of which included many feathers. These were from birds of paradise, cockatoos and cassowaries. With bird of paradise headdresses the whole bird is skinned and the skin, complete with plumes, wrapped around a long thin piece of springy bamboo. This sways during dancing, highlighting the fantastic feathers.

Necklaces were often decorated with pigs' tusks, dogs' teeth, cowrie shells and various types of seeds. The bark clothing was often decorated with paintings, and belts and armbands were woven to include cowrie shells. These shells were from the money cowrie (*Cypraea moneta*) and were highly prized. Most men wore an armband on the upper arm. Normally this would be used purely for decoration, but when going out to fight it was used to hold a dagger. During a sing-sing the armband had *tangket* leaves poked in it. *Tangket* (Liliaceae *Cordyline terminalis)* is the Papuan New Guinean equivalent of the olive branch. When a sing-sing is on and everyone is wearing *tangket* leaves, there is no fighting. It is also planted to mark the boundary of a person's land. Another use of it is to be tied to someone's property as a warning that there has been a mag-

Carved post supporting the verandah of the church at Nasingalatu. They carvings were painted white and red

The inside of the church at Nasingalatu



ic ritual performed which would cause serious problems to any would-be thief.

Another item often receiving embellishment was the *bilum* or net bag. For every-day use they were usually left plain but those carried at ceremonies were often very elaborate. *Bilums* were woven from cord made from the bark of *Gnetum gnemon,* the tree called *tulip* in Pidgin. Beating the inner bark with a wooden mallet, and then rolling the resultant fibres on the thigh created the cord. The weave used to make a *bilum* was without knots and allowed the bag to expand in all directions, making it ideal for bulky loads. The hourglass shaped drums from the Morobe District, called *kundu*, were carved from New Guinea rosewood (*Pterocarpus indicus*), also decorated, usually with carvings and often with dangling strings of seeds and beads. These drums varied in size from small ones about 14-16 inches (350–400 mm) high to some that were twice that length. Along the northern part of the Saruwaged Range and on the north coast of the Huon Peninsula the drumhead (which was only on one end of the drum) was made from the skin of a large lizard, and often had small blobs of beeswax stuck to the centre. I was told the wax ensured that the drum had a good resonance when struck. A *kundu* was carried by the handle, which was part of the drum carving, and struck by hand. A *garamut* was a different sort of drum in that it was a slit-drum or slit-gong, a large, hollowed-out log lying on the ground, which was struck pile-driver fashion with a stout pole.

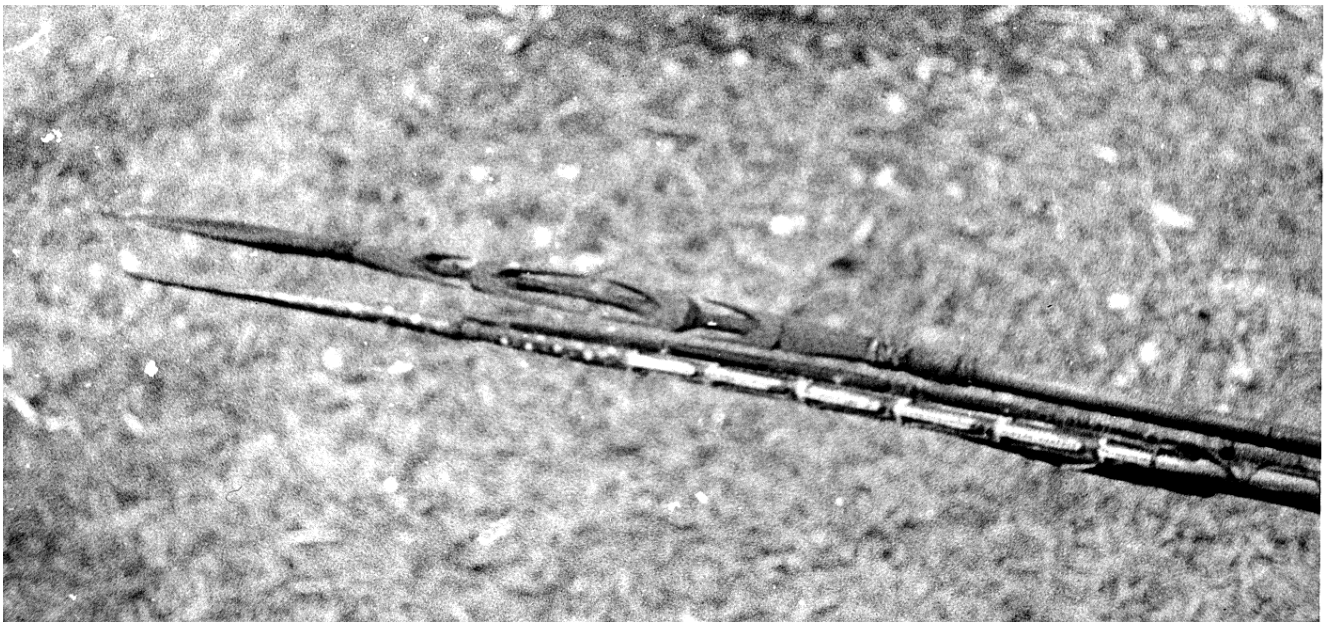
On the Huon Peninsula there was a form of carving which had been used in ceremonial houses and, as most of these had disappeared with the coming of the missionaries, was still sometimes used on churches. The lower parts of the supporting posts of the building were carved in the form of either kneeling or standing human or semi-human figures. A very good example was at the Lutheran church built by the people of Nasingalatu, on the southeast tip of the peninsula. This had kneeling traditional figures outside, and standing figures representing Biblical figures on the inside. I believe these are correctly called telamon or atlantes (the plural of atlas; that is a column in the form of a male figure used to support the upper part of a temple).

I brought back to Australia a number of artefacts from New Guinea, including two armbands plaited from orchid roots and decorated with cowrie shells. The larger of these was given to me to help me buy a wife. This particular type of arm band was used as part of the bride price paid in this area, and the locals considered that I should use it to buy a wife when I returned to Australia, as I was getting "too old" to be single. I brought back some *bilums*, both plain and decorated, and some pig's tusks. I had a couple of headbands including a very elaborate and well made one which had both cowrie shells and dogs' teeth as part of the decoration. I also brought back a *kundu* and a dagger made from a shinbone. Senior Constable Zowa and the other policemen at Kalalo gave me the *kundu* and the more elaborate headband as going away presents when I left New Guinea. When I returned to Australia I had placed the dagger in the inside pocket of my jacket, as I thought that if Customs saw it they would not let it through. It poked up almost into my chin but no one either noticed or bothered to find out what it was. Some of these items can be seen being worn by Zowa in the photographs of him, and on the title page.

When I was at Portsea Officer Training School I had some 60 or more arrows and four or five bows, which I had brought down with me from New Guinea. However the authorities had required them to be stored in a shed some distance away from the barracks. They had disappeared from the storeroom, where most of our civilian gear and suitcases were also stored, when I went to pack prior to leaving Portsea. The arrows, which in Papua and New Guinea were never fletched, were of two types – broad pointed arrows with arrowheads made from bamboo, used mainly for hunting, and those with arrowheads made from black palm (*Caryota* sp.), many with elaborate barbs, used mainly for fighting. Some of these fighting arrows also had bone points. The bone points were fastened insecurely to the very tip of the wooden arrowhead, so that should the arrow hit an enemy the bone would easily break off and be left in the wound. As the bone still had rotten flesh on it the wound would soon turn septic and eventually cause death.

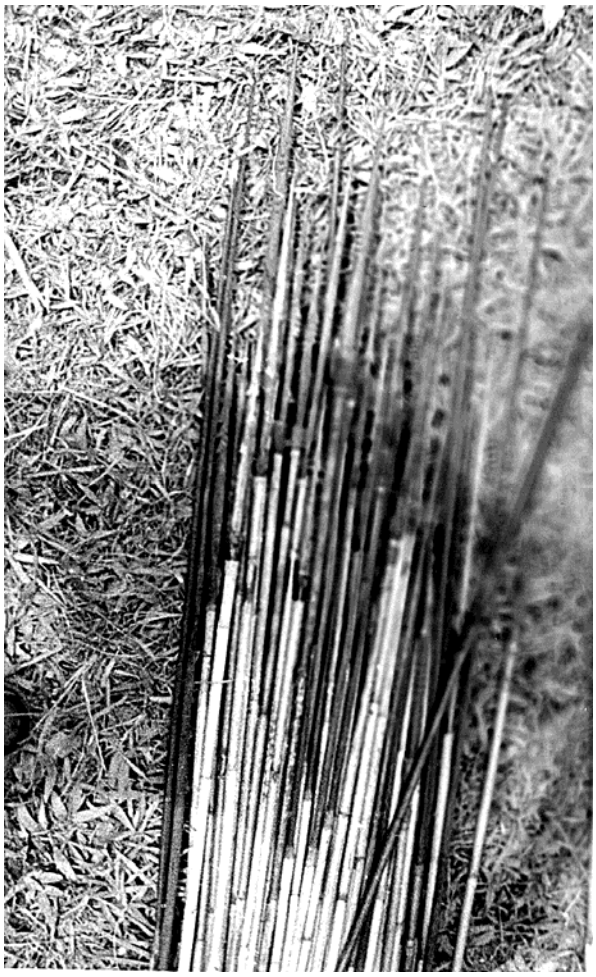
Bamboo arrowheads were leaf shaped and incredibly sharp along the edges. They were meant to slice through muscle and particularly blood vessels, causing copious bleeding and so weaken the animal quickly. They were also used on occasions for fighting. The bows were all about 5-6 feet (1.5-1.8 m) in length, made from black palm with strings made from the outer skin

of bamboo. The strings were about ⅜ inch (10 mm) wide and very strong. They had to be strong, as the bows were so powerful that they had to be aimed as the string was being pulled back. Very few could pull the string back and then hold it there while aiming.



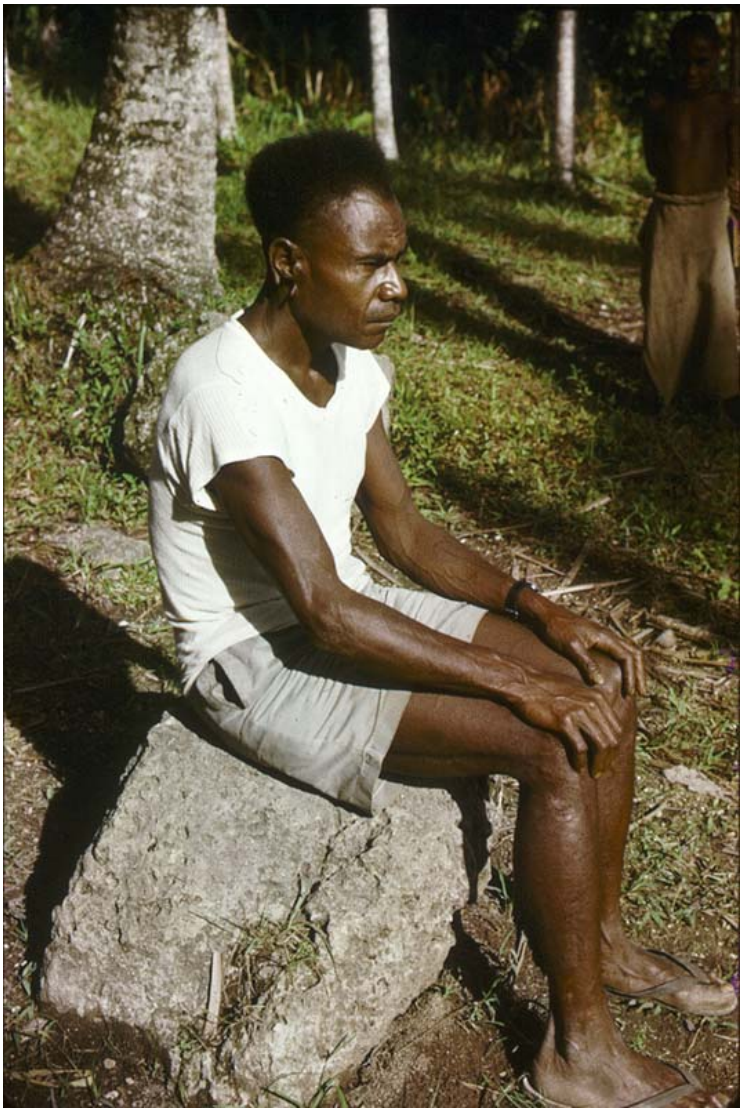
Some of the more elaborate arrowheads from black palm. The top one has a bone point on the end of the palm arrowhead

About 30 arrows with broad bamboo arrow-heads used mainly for hunting animals



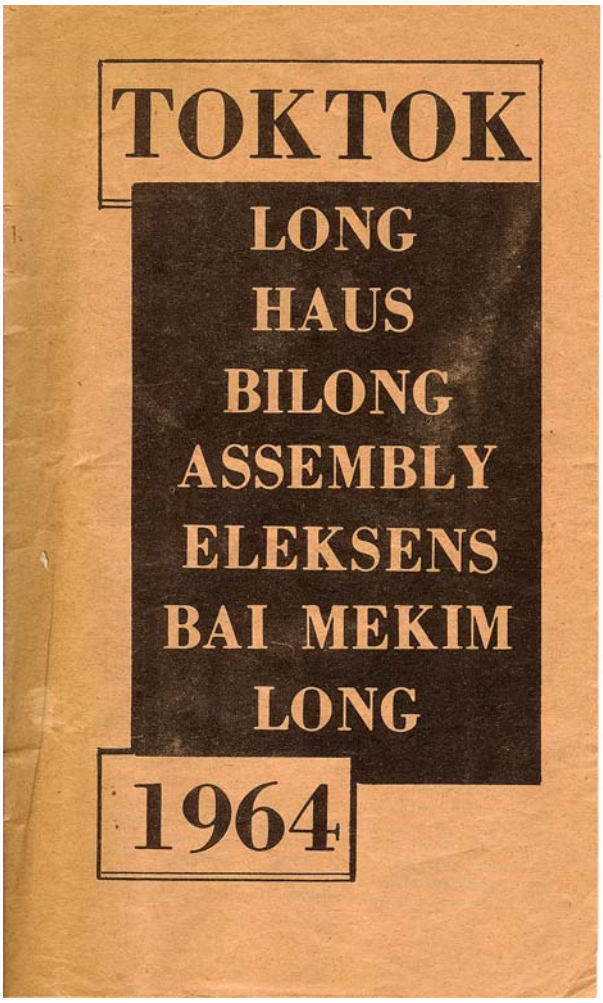
Fighting arrows with black palm arrowheads.

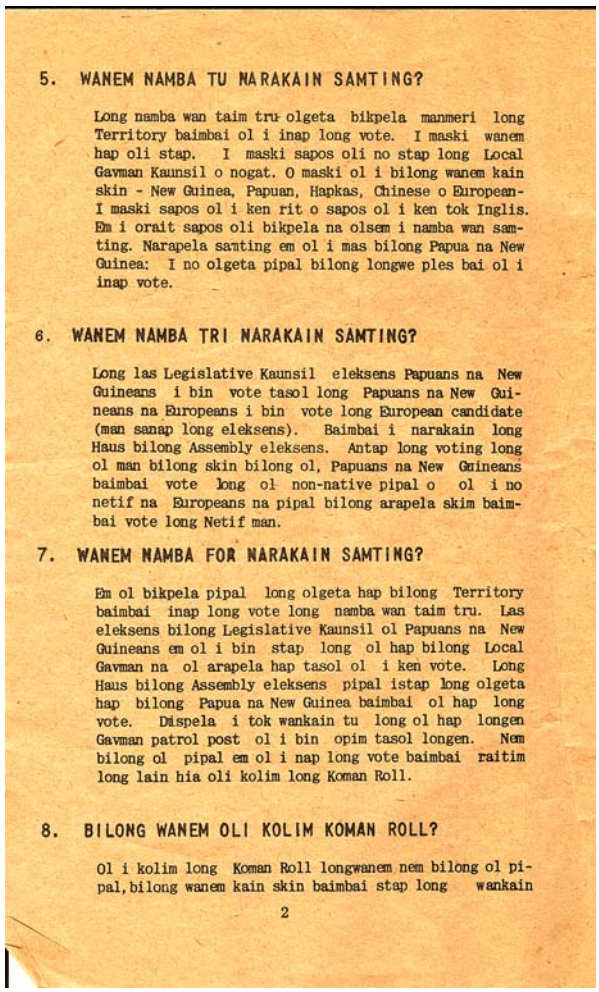
The two coins at the top are German 1 mark, the coin below that is a 2 mark
Below that are the two sides of a New Guinea shilling and a threepence (left) and a sixpence (right)



Alugi, my manki-masta or cook who came from the Siassi Islands.

Japanese occupation money from World War II





5. WANEM NAMBA TU NARAKAIN SAMTING?

Long namba wan taim tru olgeta bikpela manmeri long Territory baimbai ol i inap long vote. I maski wanem hap oli stap. I maski sapos oli no stap long Local Gavman Kaunsil o nogat. O maski ol i bilong wanem kain skin - New Guinea, Papuan, Hapkas, Chinese o European- I maski sapos ol i ken rit o sapos ol i ken tok Inglis. Em i orait sapos oli bikpela na olsem i namba wan samting. Narapela samting em ol i mas bilong Papua na New Guinea: I no olgeta pipal bilong longwe ples bai ol i inap vote.

6. WANEM NAMBA TRI NARAKAIN SAMTING?

Long las Legislative Kaunsil eleksens Papuans na New Guineans i bin vote tasol long Papuans na New Guineans na Europeans i bin vote long European candidate (man sanap long eleksens). Baimbai i narakain long Haus bilong Assembly eleksens. Antap long voting long ol man bilong skin bilong ol, Papuans na New Guineans baimbai vote long ol non-native pipal o ol i no netif na Europeans na pipal bilong arapela skim baimbai vote long Netif man.

7. WANEM NAMBA FOR NARAKAIN SAMTING?

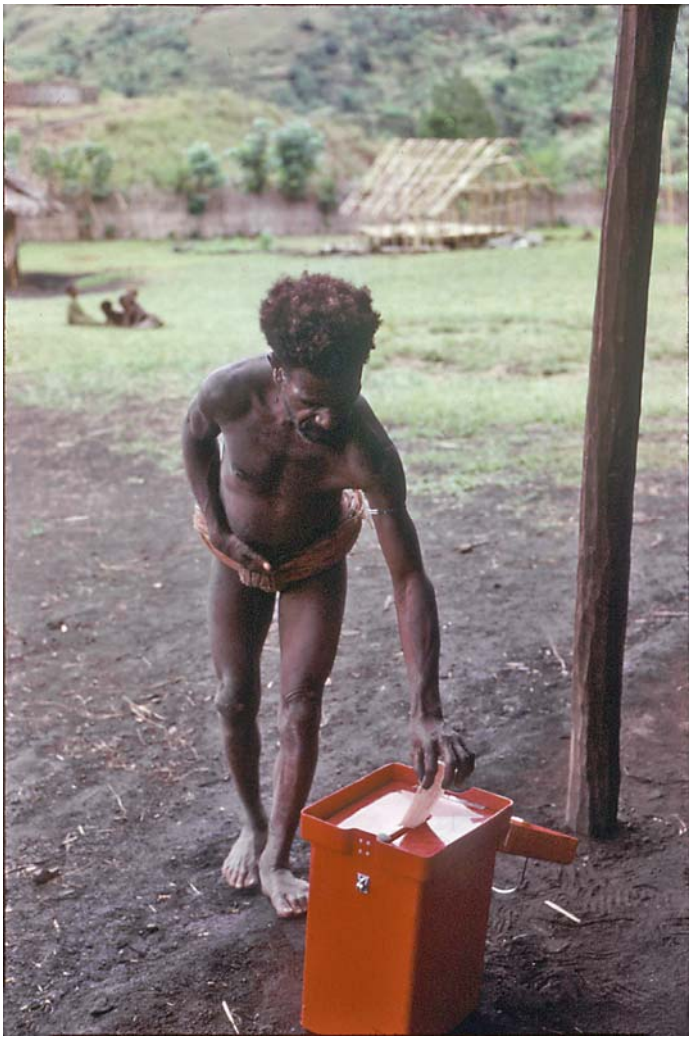
Em ol bikpela pipal long olgeta hap bilong Territory baimbai inap long vote long namba wan taim tru. Las eleksens bilong Legislative Kaunsil ol Papuans na New Guineans em ol i bin stap long ol hap bilong Local Gavman na ol arapela hap tasol ol i ken vote. Long Haus bilong Assembly eleksens pipal istap long olgeta hap bilong Papua na New Guinea baimbai ol hap long vote. Dispela i tok wankain tu long ol hap longen Gavman patrol post ol i bin opim tasol longen. Nem bilong ol pipal em ol i nap long vote baimbai raitim long lain hia oli kolim long Koman Roll.

8. BILONG WANEM OLI KOLIM KOMAN ROLL?

Ol i kolim long Koman Roll longwanem nem bilong ol pipal, bilong wanem kain skin baimbai stap long wankain

2

Above. The cover and an inside page of a Pidgin pamphlet explaining the elections



A man in a malo *(bark breech cloth) voting in theYupna*

TERRITORY OF PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA

Telegrams
Telephone
Our Reference.....
If calling ask for
Mr.....

Department of Native Affairs,
District Office,
L A E ... Morobe District.
11th May, 1964.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Mr. Peter Thomas Worsley joined the Administration of the Territory of Papua and New Guinea in July 1961 as a Cadet Patrol Officer and was shortly thereafter posted to the Morobe District where he has since served as a member of field staff of the Department of Native Affairs.

At the completion of his cadetship and promotion to Patrol Officer in July 1963 Mr. Worsley was transferred to the Patrol Post at Kalalo as Officer-in-Charge. Since then he has carried out several long and arduous solo patrols in an eminently satisfactory manner.

As a Patrol Officer, Mr. Worsley is required to undertake a variety of tasks calling for the exercise of energy and initative. All tasks entrusted to him have been tackled with enthusiasm tempered by good sound common sense. This young officer uses his initative, is reasonably decisive and is always ready to accept full responsibility for his decisions and actions.

During the period of nearly 3 years that Mr. Worsley has worked under my control I have been impressed by his sincerity and undoubted loyalty and can recommend him to any person or organisation requiring the services of such a person.

(D.N. ASHTON)
District Officer

The reference I received from the District Officer, Desmond Norman Ashton.

DNA:JGC

TERRITORY OF PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA

Telegrams
Telephone
Our Reference P.2085
If calling ask for
Mr.

Department of Native Affairs,
District Office,
L A E ... Morobe District.
3rd March, 1964.

Mr. P.D. Worsley,
Patrol Post,
KALALO

Dear Peter

I was pleased to note in gazette number 11 of the 27th February, 1964 that you have been appointed a Magistrate for the Court of Native Affairs. Congratulations.

As a Magistrate you will now be called upon to exercise your judicial powers and it should be unnecessary for me to remind you that you must be extremely careful in exercising your new authority. Always remember that you are dealing with human beings and never let outside matters or personal feelings cloud your judgement.

It is not for me, as your District Officer, to tell you what sentences you should impose as a Magistrate but I feel that I should point out that many young officers sitting on the bench are all too prone to inflict excessively heavy sentences, quite frequently out of all proportion to the gravity of the offence. I trust that you will give your full consideration to any penalties which you, as a Magistrate, are required to impose.

Should you be in any doubt on any matter concerning the exercising of your powers as a Magistrate, please do not hesitate to contact me or your Assistant District Officer for advice.

(D.N. ASHTON)
District Officer

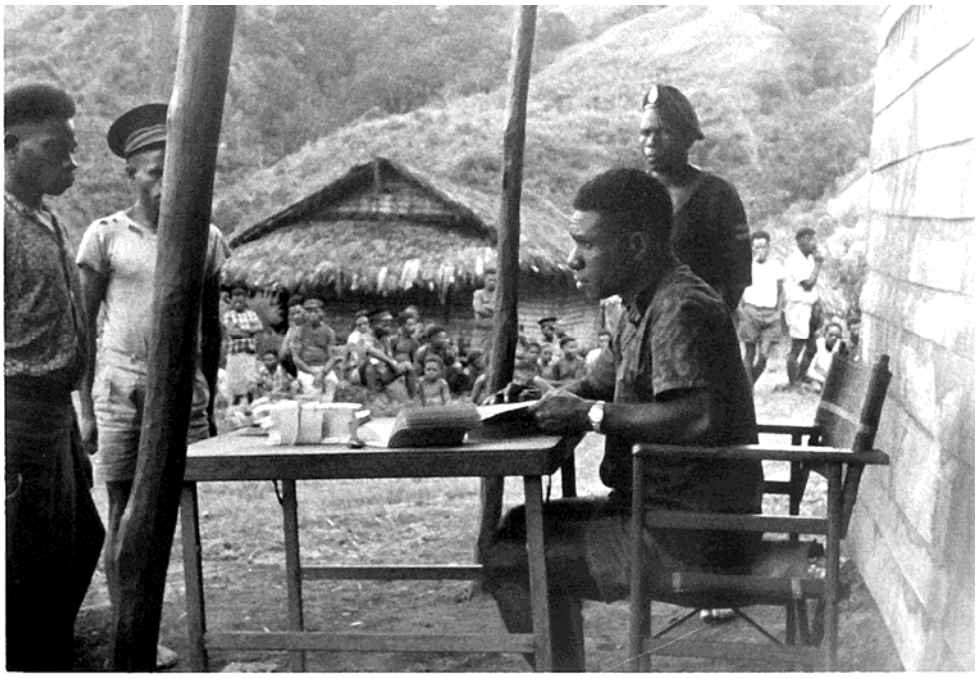
Advice of my appointment as a Magistrate for the Court of Native Affairs.

Chapter 8

In 1964 the first general elections for the House of Assembly were held in Papua and New Guinea. It was a very busy time for Patrol Officers, as we were the local Presiding Officers for the elections. This meant firstly patrolling the whole patrol area to explain the elections, representative government, preferential voting, and even what and where Port Moresby was in some cases. Then came the elections themselves. This meant another patrol to every village to allow people to vote. We carried ballot boxes (red plastic) and ballot papers with us and stayed at each village long enough to let everyone vote. Many brochures and pamphlets were produced in Pidgin to help educate the people on voting, something totally alien to many of those people whose contact with Europeans was relatively recent. Those with longer contact had begun to form local councils and, as this involved election of councillors, Patrol Officers had already explained this idea to many.

Because virtually nobody in my area could read or write the vote was conducted by whispered ballot. In fact many in the Uruwa and the Yupna could not even speak or understand Pidgin. This meant that I would call a name from the census book, that person would come up to me and whisper the name of their preferred candidate, which I then marked on their ballot paper, then their preferences. It was a pretty slow job as so many of them in my area still didn't have much of an idea of voting, and none had any idea of the preferential system.

Just prior to all of this I had to go to the Sub-District Office at Saidor, west along the coast from my Patrol Post, to receive full instructions from the Assistant District Officer there who was the Returning Officer for the Rai Coast Open Electorate. His name was Francis Joseph Martin and he was my boss for the elections, even though Saidor was in the Madang District, not the Morobe. An interesting sidelight to this was that when I got on the little plane that was sent to take me to Saidor the pilot said that we had to look out for a yacht that the Administration in Port Moresby were anxious to track down. It so happens that we found the yacht anchored in a small bay at the mouth of a river. We buzzed over it at very low altitude to confirm that it was a 38 foot (11.6 m) ketch of a certain colour, etc. and the pilot radioed its position to Port Moresby via Lae. The story was that the owner was an American who was sailing around the world. He had stopped at Port Moresby and got a job with one of the government departments as some sort of clerk. Came pay day and, because his surname was Lee, the pay clerk presumed he was Chinese. At that time the Chinese in Papua and New Guinea were considered to be local, and got paid a lower salary than expatriate Australian officers. He became very indignant, would not accept any apologies and jumped on to his yacht and sailed away. The problem for the government was that he didn't just leave; he sailed round the coast preaching and urging the overthrow of the government. He was actually wanted by the Police for sedition, a very serious charge, when we located him. He was eventually



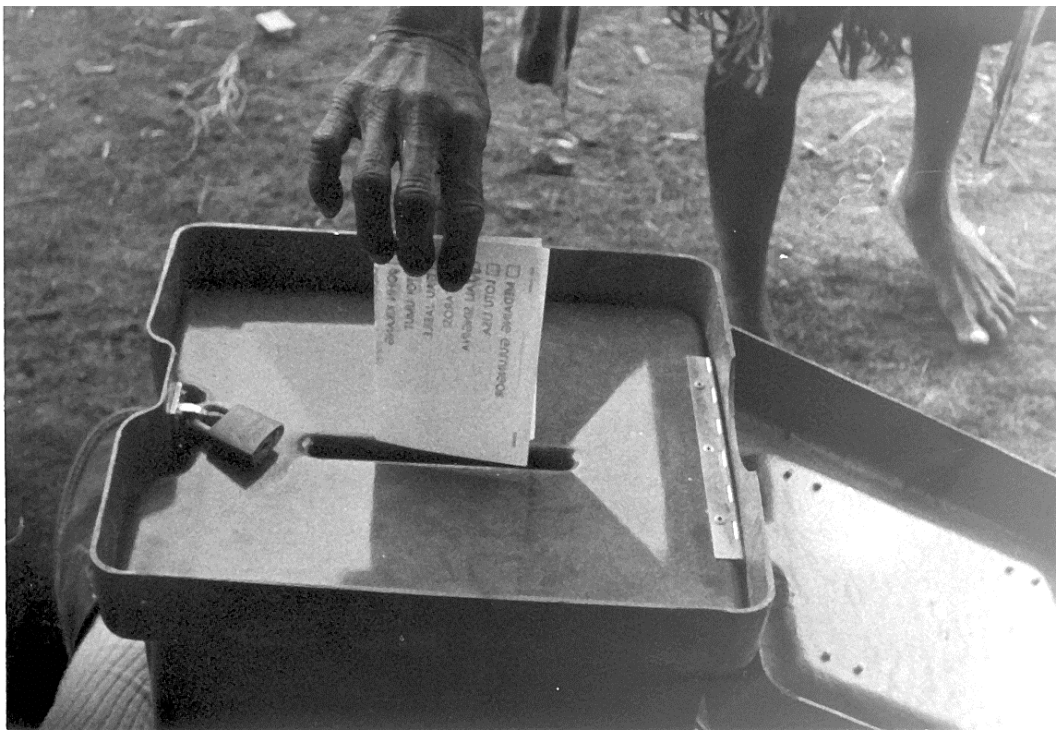
Voting at Dinagat in the Uruwa. The poll clerk is my clerk, Yuni Suma with Senior Constable Zowa standing behind

caught and appeared in court in Port Moresby, but I don't know what sentence he received.

Before the 1964 elections I had talked to Stoi Umut, a local trade store owner, about the elections and convinced him to stand, as I thought that he would be a good candidate. He won and so became a member of the first House of Assembly. Stoi was a very intelligent and influential person in the area and, despite the enmity that existed between various village and linguistic groups, he was widely respected by many people. His knowledge of voting and politics was as limited as everybody else and, like many of the other candidates, he made wild promises to those who would vote for him, but I hoped he would learn much while he was in Port Moresby. Some of the promises made by candidates included a big American car for every family although there were no roads, apart from the 4½ miles to my airstrip, in the whole electorate. There was also no chance of there ever being any roads in the rugged mountains that formed the major part of the electorate. Most of the voters had never even seen a vehicle and didn't know what a car was. Others made promises of vast quantities of rice or taro or other food for those who voted for them. This of course was all part of the "big man" culture of Papua and New Guinea where much of a man's influence is gained by how many pigs he kills and distributes in the yearly ceremony. It was just transferred to the elections.

In 1964 increasing pressure from the United Nations made it obvious to me that self-government would be granted to Papua and New Guinea within the next ten years or so. At about that time the Administration started to have discussions about what would happen to expatriate Australian government employees when independence came. Proposals were sent to officers for discussion and comment. The proposal for me was that, despite giving some few years of dedicated, very hardworking service under difficult, remote and sometimes dangerous conditions, I would receive a plane ticket to Perth and £240 ($480). This was the equivalent of a little over seven weeks' salary. It wasn't much reward, and so I decided that I should try another career while I was still young. The job of Patrol Officer was so varied and included so many different tasks that it did not prepare you for employment in Australia. 'Jack of all trades but master of none' was an apt description.

In mid-1964 I applied to enter the Australian Army as an Officer Cadet at Portsea in Victoria. I was unsuccessful in that application but, because I had only just missed out, I was advised by the Army to re-apply for the 1965 intake. This I did later that year and I was accepted, along with two New Guineans – Kwago Guria and Ray Mou. These two were the first New Guineans to attend an officer training school. The first person from Papua to be selected had been Edward Ramu Diro in 1963. The Pacific Islands Regi-



Ballot box in use

ment, headquartered in Port Moresby, had previously only had soldiers and non-commissioned officers from Papua and New Guinea, as well as Australian specialist non-commissioned officers. All the commissioned officers, except Diro, were Australian Army personnel when I was in New Guinea. The first I heard of my acceptance was while I was on patrol. It was mentioned as the main item in the Pidgin news on the ABC from Port Moresby that Kwago and Ray were the first New Guineans to be selected for officer training, and as an aside that I had also been selected Before I left, the local population organised a *sing-sing* to farewell me, attended also by the Police and other people at Kalalo, and the nearby missionaries. It went on all night, as was usual with most *singsings*. It was at this farewell that I was presented with the elaborate headband and the *kundu* by Senior Constable Zowa, on behalf of the Kalalo Police detachment. I left Papua and New Guinea in January 1965.

A night time photo of some of the dancers at my farewell party

GLOSSARY OF PIDGIN WORDS

Ais:	Ice, or cold (of water).
Bilum:	A net bag for carrying every thing from firewood and yams to a baby.
Bokis ais:	Refrigerator or ice-box.
Brus:	Home grown tobacco.
Bulmakau:	Cattle, or beef meat.
Bung:	To get together; also a market place
Col:	Cold, or fresh (of water).
Garamut:	A large slit drum or slit gong made from a hollowed log.
Guria:	An earthquake or earth tremor. Also to shake or tremble.
Haus kiap:	House in a village where visiting government officers stay.
Haus polis:	House in village where a patrol officer's police stay.
Kiap:	Patrol Officer.
Korakum:	Large fierce ants.
Koronas:	Ancient coral/limestone found on land.
Kunai:	Tall growing grass (*Imperata cylindrica*), but can also be used for grass generally.
Kundu:	An hourglass shaped drum.
Kwila:	Prized wood for carving (*Intsia bijuga*)
Laplap:	A waistcloth or wrap around skirt. Any piece of cloth or rag.
Luluai:	Government appointed headman of a village.
Mak:	One shilling (from German *mark*)
Malisa:	Barracuda or sea-pike.
Malo:	Bark breechcloth.
Manki-masta:	A cook/personal servant.
Singsing:	Dancing, particularly related to a festival.
Tabak:	Tobacco.
Tambaran:	Spirits of the ancestors.
Tul tul:	Government appointed assistant to a *Luluai*, usually acting as an interpreter.
Wara:	Water.

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The National Emblem of Papua New Guinea

Recognition Award

commemorating 25 years of Independence
Papua New Guinea

awarded to:

Mr R T Worsley

For contribution in services to the development of Papua New Guinea

PAPUA NEW GUINEA
SILVER JUBILEE

16th September, 2000.
Date

Sir Silas Atopare GCMG KStJ
Governor-General