# Sepik II

# The Winds of Change 1885-1941

LAURIE BRAGGE

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#### Preface. Sepik book II. The winds of change 1885-1941

The Sepik region of New Guinea — known for magnificent carvings, lofty ritual houses, hard-to-access swamps and mountain peaks — is the locus of impressive linguistic and cultural diversity. The catchment of the Sepik river is 77,700 square kilometres, roughly comparable to that of the river Seine in Europe. The Sepik runs 1,126 kilometres, slightly less than the Rhine (which is 1,320 km long). Swamps and hills make travel across the Sepik basin a hard task; very different languages are often spoken on different sides of the same mountain. Nowadays, the Sepik river basin is home to just under 700,000 people. They speak about 200 distinct languages, from at least twenty different families, as unlike as English and Telugu. This unparalleled diversity goes back thousands of years. The histories of peoples and, through them, their languages survive in the oral tradition and the lore supplemented by precious written records — patrol reports, memoirs, and other accounts. Laurie Bragge's Sepik books are a valuable contribution to those.

Starting from 1884, a new era dawned on the Sepik region. In November 1884, the German flag was raised on the north coast of the New Guinea mainland and the Gazelle Peninsula in New Britain, proclaiming the beginning of German colonial rule. The northern part of the mainland, encompassing the Sepik region, came to be called The land of Kaiser Wilhelm, *Kaiser Wilhelmsland*. In 1885, the Sepik river itself was named *Kaiserin Augusta Fluss*, by the German scientist and explorer Otto Finsch, in honour of Augusta Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein (1858-1921), the last German empress and the spouse of the Emperor Wilhelm II. German exploration, and exploitation, of the treasures of the Sepik region, and the whole of New Guinea, marked the beginnings of colonial exploits, followed by the advent of the Australian Military administration in 1914 and ensuing political, linguistic, and cultural transformations.

In his Sepik Book 2, Laurie Bragge addresses the tumultuous start of the new era, from 1885 to 1941, as 'the winds of change' swept across the basin of the mighty Sepik. Based on his firsthand experience as a patrol officer and conversations with the elders back in the 1970s, and forays into anthropological and historic literature, Laurie creates a formidable sourcebook on the colonial history of the Sepik region. The historical accounts are interspersed with Laurie's own reminiscences and notes, and translations from various sources.

The volume consists of three parts. Part 1, 'The German New Guinea era', spans the history of colonial expansion from the early beginnings in 1885 until the outbreak of The Great War. The nineteen chapters of this part address, inter alia, the early exploration of the Sepik River, the German labour recruitment, the bird of paradise trade, and also the destruction of traditional religion and culture, and the introduction of Catholicism, which brought about changes in spiritual values. Laurie embarks on an account of the well-known expedition commissioned by German Department of Colonial affairs under the leadership of District Officer (Bezirksamtmann) Mining Engineer (Bergassessor) A. Stollé, with the participation of a botanist, an ethnographer, a zoologist, and a geographer (1912-13). The expedition became known as 'The Behrmann expedition', thanks to a comprehensive report by the geographer Dr Walter Behrmann (1882-1955), later a professor of geography at the University of Frankfurt am Main (published in 1922 in Berlin). Their main base was established near Malu, one of the five major villages of the Manambu people in the Ambunti district in the East Sepik province (more details are in my The Manambu language of East Sepik, Papua New Guinea, Oxford University Press, 2010, pp. 17-20). They took interpreters and carriers to work for them. Among these were Yuanai (a member of the Maliau clan, into which both the anthropologist Simon Harrison and myself were later adopted), and Dangwan. Back in 2004 when I visited Malu village, the oldest living Manambu man, Duamakwa; y (who was in his eighties), remembered meeting Dangwan, and recalled stories about the

Germans and their interest in traditional headhunting. The history described by Laurie lives in people's memories. Dr Richard Thurnwald (1869-1954), a prominent ethnographer of Austrian extraction, and later Professor at the Free University of Berlin, joined the expedition in late 1912, and continued on to explore the treasures of the Sepik, until his interment in 1914. Three chapters in this part of Laurie's book focus on Dr Richard Thurnwald's work and discoveries in the Sepik. We get a general picture of what German explorers undertook, and what they encountered.

Part 2, justly called 'Turmoil — transition from German to Australian New Guinea and from War to Peace', consists of four chapters. The focus is on the fate of the Sepik region during World War I and the role of the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force, the administration of the region, and the shaping up of the Trust Territory of New Guinea in what is now 'former' German New Guinea. During the upheaval, internal migrations took place: Chapter 22 deals with how the modern-day inhabitants of Korogo, one of the major Nyaula (Iatmul)-speaking villages, had to leave their ancestral land Nyaurengai, and what one can learn about that based on various reports, including Laurie's own notes.

Part 3 contains 26 chapters dealing with the Australian Civil Administration in the region, from 1922 until 1941. We find an array of topics — from the expropriation of German property and repatriation of German nationals to Japandai migrations and the events leading to the Japandai massacre in 1923 (the topic of Laurie Bragge's very informative anthropological essay 'The Japandai migrations', pp. 36-49 of *The Sepik Heritage: tradition and change in Papua New Guinea*, edited by N. Lutkehaus, C. Kaufman, W. E. Mitchell, D. Newton, L. Osmundsen, and M. Schuster, Durham, N. C.: Caroline Academic Press). We find discussions of oil exploration in the Sepik, a comparison of Melanesian Cargo Cults and early Christianity, the gold rushes, and the demise of head-hunting, to name just a few topics in this smorgasbord of detail. Chapter 48 offers a brief assessment of the Australian administration

up until 1941 when the Second World War reached the New Guinea shores. Was it a period of 'Australian history in which Australians would find little to be proud'? Or was the situation more complex, if Australia's performance were viewed 'against the realities of the day'? The last chapter delves into maritime history, with an outline of the boats of the Sepik and New Guinea coastal region (in tabular form). The appendices contain a list of characters, spirits, and gods, German place names applied to New Guinea settlements, and acronyms used.

This sourcebook contains a wealth of information on many a topic from numerous walks of life within the Sepik Basin, from 1885 until 1941. It will no doubt provide a factual foundation for scholarly research in the colonial history and traditions of the people of Papua New Guinea, and serve as a first point of call for everyone interested — not the least members of the numerous Sepik communities eager to reconstruct the mosaic of their ancestral migrations, exploits, and histories throughout the dark ages of colonial rule.

Distinguished Professor Alexandra (Sacha) Aikhenvald Australian Laureate Fellow Director of Language and Culture Research Centre James Cook University, Cairns



# Sepik 2 Chapter 1 Colonial influences.

"...the whole history of our Colonies shows that they had been originally acquired by the voluntary and spontaneous actions of Captains, Government officers, travelers and commercial adventurers, necessarily without the knowledge of the British Government, by whom they were afterwards accepted and taken over..."

Lord Carnarvon - British Colonial Secretary 1874-18781

Colonialism is a subject that amazes and horrifies most fair-minded people with its arrogance and exploitation of the resources of the colony. The "resources" included the indigenous people themselves, their tribal lands and environment. Colonies were usually established in places remote from the mother country. Colonialism involves unequal relationships between colonizers and the colonized population, the imposition of a foreign religion and economic systems that saw anything of value exploited on behalf of the mother country. As this story relates to New Guinea and its Sepik River region, I have focused only on the colonial history involved directly and indirectly with it.

In 1793 the British East India Company claimed possession of parts of Eastern New Guinea but the Crown did not recognize the claim.<sup>2</sup> Edward Belcher of H.M.S. Sulphur passed through New Guinea waters in 1840 and expressed a low opinion of the economic potential of the region<sup>3</sup>. From 1820 onwards there had been German traders in the Pacific.<sup>4</sup> And their presence consolidated when Godeffroy and Son opened an office in Apia, Samoa in 1857. Around this time, Copra came into demand and trade in the Pacific flourished Then on 24<sup>th</sup> August 1828 the Dutch claimed the area of New Guinea west of the 141 degrees one minute and 47 seconds East Longitude [This obscure map reference presumably sought to deny any other colonial power access to the magnificent harbour of Humboldt Bay on the north coast]. The first Dutch settlement in West New Guinea was in Merkusoord/ Fort Du Bus in 1828, which was abandoned in 1836. The first permanent administrative posts at Fakfak and Manokwari were not set up until 1898 <sup>5</sup>. Hollandia, the capitol of the colony was initially established as a base for the Dutch German border expedition of 1910.

In 1853 the French annexation of New Caledonia just 800 miles east of Brisbane and the arrival there of 120,000 French convicts between 1864 and 1880 shook the sense of security of settlers in the Australian colonies. The first positive Australian interest in New Guinea was given in June 1867 with the establishment of the settlement of Somerset in far north Queensland and the formation in Sydney an association of business men called the New Guinea Company to explore New Guinea as a field of commercial and colonial enterprise. The response from the British Colonial office of Sept 14<sup>th</sup> 1867 was so chilling that it killed the project.<sup>6</sup>

King Leopold of Belgium was in the market for a colony, but his advisers told him his own government would have nothing to do with colonies as they were considered to be bad business. Having recently failed to lease the Philippines from Spain, in July 1875 he summoned the British Ambassador to Brussels and sounded him out regarding the setting up a colony in New Guinea. He advised that the British government had no intention of colonizing New Guinea, but knew that -

the Australian colonies have got it into their heads that New Guinea is part of Australia. They mean to have it one day...and would be mad with rage at seeing a foreign flag planted there.<sup>7</sup>

King Leopold's aspirations for New Guinea were thus discouraged and he finally established his colony in Africa's Congo region, with horrific consequences for the Congolese people as described in Adam Hochschild's "King Leopold's Ghost".

In 1879 the Marquise De Rays of France advertised widely through Europe for colonists to settle 'Nouvelle France' a reportedly bustling new colony established by two previous expeditions. A total of 340 colonists from Veneto in Italy each paid 1,800 francs in gold. They sailed in the ship *India* and arrived in New Ireland on 14<sup>th</sup> October 1880 to discover that 'Nouvelle France' was a scam from which the Marquise received over 7 million francs from a total of four voyages. One hundred and twenty-three colonists died before the survivors were rescued by Australian authorities.<sup>9</sup>

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#### What was the international legal status involved in taking colonies?

A quick scan on the previous page suggests until the 19<sup>th</sup> century at least, Kings, Ship's Captains, Marquises, Trading Companies, European Governments and no doubt others, were free to roam the world, window shopping for colonies.

Amazingly, this appears to be an accurate assessment. The attitude of European law, at least since 1493, when Pope Alexander granted the King of Spain full ownership of all lands west of a line through the Atlantic, which at that time had not been in the possession of a Christian King or Prince. The line was adjusted in order to allow Portugal to claim Brazil, where it had established interests.

Based upon this it became a principle of colonial law that all lands in areas not governed by sovereigns recognised by international public law and became the [private] property of the crown [state] which annexed such an area as a colony<sup>10</sup>. At the Berlin conference, which was convened on 15 November 1884, the representative of the United States sought to have this principle abolished by moving "that the rights of indigenous tribes to dispose of their hereditary lands should be guaranteed". The motion was not carried as it raised many delicate questions the Conference would not be able to answer. The German chairman, the Assistant Secretary of State, Busch pointed out "This did not mean that the German Government was unwilling to protect native land rights in German colonies, but rather it hesitated to formally adopt a general principle without a detailed discussion of its practical consequences."

The attending representatives of fourteen nations continued their conference which was aimed at regulating European colonisation and trade in Africa. What followed was the scramble for African colonies by Germany, Britain, France, Portugal, and Italy [Belgium was already established in the Congo]. Eastern New Guinea and the Bismarck Archipelago were colonised in the same era

Being unable to identify a New Guineas scholar with the eloquence of Nigeria's Peter Enahoro, I am forced to quote from his from his book "How to be a Nigerian" on the topic of what it meant to one whose lands were colonised:

"Eventually something had to be done about Africa, for the African Chieftains (middlemen between the producers of human merchandise and consumers of slavery) were constantly warring amongst themselves, wasting the produce in the process and disrupting the flow of trade. The good people of Europe decided that this threat to their economy could not be tolerated much longer."

In relation to Nigeria, Enahoro said:

"Today [mid-20<sup>th</sup> century] the conglomeration of tribes assembled compulsorily at the 1884 Berlin conference is assigned as Nigerians – for want of a substitute collective noun...The search for the Nigerians is in progress. Optimists say that before this century is out the experiment that started in the 19th century will produce such a people."

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The book was written soon after Nigeria's independence from Britain in 1960. The century was therefore the 20<sup>th</sup>.

Meanwhile, in April 1883 McIlwraith, the Premier of Queensland ordered Henry M Chester, the Police Magistrate on Thursday Island to go to Port Moresby to –

"take possession of all that portion of New Guinea and the Islands and isles adjacent thereto, lying between the 141<sup>st</sup> and the 155<sup>th</sup> meridians of east longitude in the name and on behalf of her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, her heirs and successors."

This was proclaimed in Port Moresby on 4<sup>th</sup> April 1883.<sup>12</sup> The area of New Guinea described is all of mainland and offshore Islands east to Dutch New Guinea. This annexation was undertaken for two main reasons:

1. Fear by the Australian colonies of invasion from European powers. For instance, in the 1870s Cooktown in Far North Queensland feared a Russian invasion largely because of the Palmer River Gold rush which was then in full swing. The colonial government in Brisbane responded by sending one bronze cannon, several cannon balls and a soldier with a rifle to defend the colony's north<sup>13</sup>

Indeed, Russian moves were afoot:

Russian scientist Nicholas Mikloucho Maclay, who studied in Astrolabe Bay, New Guinea north coast, between 1971-1883, while visiting St Petersburg was invited by the Czar to the palace at Gatchina to discuss with him and the Minister for the Navy, the location of a suitable harbour for the establishment of Russian naval station. Maclay's third voyage to Astrolabe Bay was arranged in great secrecy so as not to raise suspicions...in view of the interests of other powers – England, Germany and the Australian colonies. But history overtook Maclay's secret mission; the timing coincided with Queensland's announcement of the annexation of Non-Dutch New Guinea.<sup>14</sup>

2. The Queensland sugar industry was in its infancy and required a sizeable source of cheap labour which "Black-birders" were bringing in from New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, New Hebrides and elsewhere. Black-birding was initially not far removed from slavery<sup>15</sup> but in later years "indentured laborers" were recruited and delivered under more regulated recruitment procedures and many laborers returned for second and third contracts.

In July1883 the British Colonial Office disallowed the annexation of Eastern New Guinea on the basis that colonies (such as Queensland) could not have their own colonies. Despite receiving intimations that the German Government was about to embark on a program of colonial expansion, the British Government failed to recognize the serious nature of German colonial ambitions. <sup>16</sup> As Lord Derby, the Colonial Secretary became suspicious of German intentions in the Pacific, he wanted to establish a protectorate in south east New Guinea without informing Berlin, but he was convinced by others that it was better to let them know, so a message was sent that outlined the proposed boundaries of British New Guinea.

The reply from Berlin dated 27<sup>th</sup> September 1884 said that Britain's intentions to extend its authority to any part of the New Guinea north coast came as a surprise and that it would have to reserve its attitude on the matter for the moment.<sup>17</sup> On 4<sup>th</sup> October 1884 the British cabinet approved the annexation, but in order not to offend Germany it limited the boundaries to the South-East coast. Instructions were sent by Lord Derby to Sydney on 9<sup>th</sup> October to establish the new protectorate with boundaries from the Dutch NG border along the southern coast line as far as East Cape. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October 1884 Commissioner Romilly read the proclamation of the Protectorate in Port Moresby.

On November 3rd 1884 Germany proclaimed a protectorate over the north coast of New Guinea as far west as Dutch New Guinea. Like Britain, Germany was initially reluctant to become involved in colonialism, but there were over-riding circumstances, which are described in the next chapter. In response, Britain, now seeing the need to protect her Australian colonies proclaimed on 6th November 1884 a protectorate over South East New Guinea, to be known as British New Guinea.

The British flag was raised in New Guinea at Port Moresby twice in 1884; unofficially on 23<sup>rd</sup> October by Romilly who had mistaken his instructions from the High Commission, and officially on 6<sup>th</sup> November by Commander Erskine of the Royal Navy. <sup>18</sup>

There were some fundamental differences between British and German New Guinea concerning dealings in native land.

In April 1885, an Anglo-German compromise established lines on the map to delineate the British and German colonies boundary<sup>19</sup>. These lines were drawn across totally unexplored country in the same way as the Dutch New Guinea boundary.

Indications of Australian opinion of Britain's failure to prevent the German annexation were expressed in the 1885 session of the Victorian colonial parliament where it was stated:

...the action of Lord Derby in connection with New Guinea and the Islands is one of the most melancholy and marvelous illustrations of political imbecility that has ever been recorded in history.' It was suggested that in compensation Britain should purchase Dutch New Guinea for Australia, but even that would not remove the formidable neighbour that was now established to the north.<sup>20</sup>

In 1901 the six Australian colonies became known as States in the Federation as the Commonwealth of Australia. In 1905 the Commonwealth Government passed the Papua Act; to provide for the acceptance of British New Guinea as a territory under the authority of the Commonwealth Government. Then on 1st September 1906 British New Guinea was passed over to Australia and re-named Papua. At the outbreak of World War 1 in Sept-Nov 1914 Australian troops occupied German New Guinea .

In another German colony things went quite differently – things that would have far reaching impacts on the Administration of New Guinea in years to come. General Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck determined that the East African colony of Tanganyika, adjacent to British colonies of Kenya and Uganda would not be so easily taken. He would fight a war he could not win, <sup>21</sup>but in so doing he would keep large numbers of allied troops out of the European conflict. The German colonial administration of Tanganyika was very well advanced for the era in which it existed. Africans were being well educated, and the German military trained and armed indigenous Askari troops.

In October 1905, the Steamer Seestern had transported one hundred and fifty New Guinea natives to German East Africa for military training.<sup>22</sup>

Von Lettow-Vorbeck's command of strategy and terrain allowed him to operate in East Africa for the duration of World War 1. In New Guinea, an Australian named Colonel Walstab was an admirer of Von Lettow-Vorbeck and his tactics. He wrote a manual called "The Blue Book" that described what was to be done if New Guinea was ever occupied by an enemy power; which of course it was.

The next would-be colonial push came from Japan, whose initial target was the oil wells of the Netherlands East Indies. See Sepik 3 – The Sepik at War

It was fashionable for Colonies to gain their independence after a valiant and inspirational patriotic struggle in the traditions of the American War of Independence. Papua New Guinea's road towards Self Government and Independence was far more conservative as this story shows – with the primary force for PNG Independence being the Opposition leader and later Australian Prime Minister of the day; Gough Whitlam. The consensus of the Sepik people (and many others in PNG) as Independence Day 16th September 1975 approached was "We are not yet ready."

We tend to associate "colonialism" with European interests occupying and exploiting 'native' lands and peoples, but Sepik history as recorded Sepik 1, 2 and 4 makes it clear that colonialism in New Guinea has been an exploitive force since long before the arrival of the first Europeans. Populations such as the Souli Moganai, Bodif and Amei were wiped out and their lands taken in the remembered past. In more recent times we have records of Nyaula tribal colonization of Islands in the Chambri Lakes from the 1930s onwards. Then we have the Mianmin claim on the Suwana tribal lands by right of conquest after the Suwana massacre, cannibalism and abduction of surviving Suwana women of 1959. These are current examples of what has been happening in inter-tribal conflicts in the Sepik since the beginning of time; this surely is colonialism in anyone's language.

# **End Notes Chapter 1**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> D.C.Gordon, PhD. The Australian Frontier in New Guinea 1870-1885. Columbia University Press New York 1951 P11

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Gordon L.Rottman – World War 2 Pacific Islands Guide - Greenwood Press 2002 Page 152

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> P.G.Sack Land Between Two Laws ANU Press Canberra 1973 P61

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> P.G.Sack 1973 P63

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Internet: History of Netherlands New Guinea [Irian Jaya/West Papua] p2

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Gordon Donald Craigie Columbia University Press 1951 p 80-83

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> T,Packenham – The scramble for Africa – Clay Pty Ltd 1991 P13-14

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> A.Hochschild - King Leopold's Ghost. Boston Houghton, Mifflin 1998.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Wikipedia De Reys Expedition p 1-2

<sup>10</sup> P.G.Sack 1973 page 132

<sup>11</sup> P.G. Sack 1973 P133

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River Advertiser [no date]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Historic monument on the Cooktown waterfront, which included the said broze cannon

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Mikloucho-Maclay – New Guinea Diaries 1871-1883 – Kristen Press Inc Madang 1975 pages 306-7

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> C.Moore – Kakaka, a history of Melanesian Mackay. Unstitute of PNG Studies, Port Moresby 1980, p 197.

<sup>16</sup> G.D Craigie 1951 p 245

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> G.D Craigie 1951 p 247

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea Vol 1 Page 115

Whitaker, Gash, Hookey & Lacy – Documents and readings in New Guinea History – Pre-history to 1889. Jacarandah Press 1975 P459.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> G.D Craigie 1951 p 271

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> J.R.Sibley – Tanganyikan Guerrilla – Pan Books London 1973

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> The World at War – German New Guinea 1873-1919 page 2

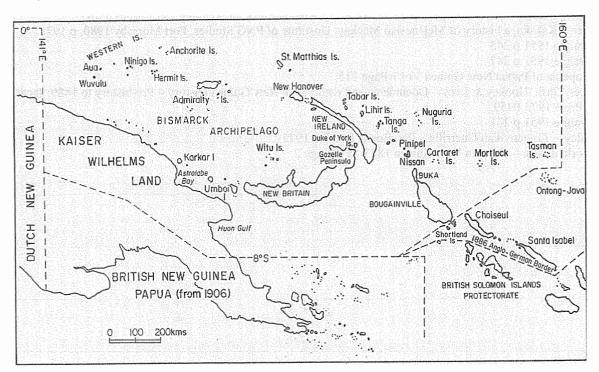
# Chapter 2 Servicing Samoa's Needs – Establishment of German New Guinea

#### Writer's Note:

The focus of this broader historical narrative is the Sepik District and its people, but in order to understand the German colonial impact on the Sepik, it is necessary to describe the circumstances under which German New Guinea, of which the Sepik is part, came about. Between 1886 and 1899, German New Guinea was administered by the Neu Guinea Campagnie, and subsequently by the Imperial German government until the outbreak of war in 1914. With typical Germanic attention to detail, 27 lengthy Annual Reports were written during this period. These reports were translated and edited by Peter Sachs and Dymphna Clark, and the resulting document, 426 pages in length, was published under the auspices of the Australian National University in 1978.

The title of this chapter, and the one following, provides only modest service to the contents, and my bold attempt at brevity has done little justice to the subject. As recorded in the End Notes, I have frequently referred to the voluminous Sachs and Clark document, in addition to other sources, including Stewart Firth's excellent book *New Guinea Under the Germans*. I trust the reader will understand the difficulty in condensing all this material into a story, and that by necessity these two chapters can be little more than a summary of the early European activity in New Guinea.

In the beginning of 1884, Germany had no colonies and by the end of that year they had Togo, Cameroun, East Africa, South West Africa, New Guinea and the Marshall Islands (in 1885) — with more to come. The sudden interest in New Guinea had its roots in Samoa, where the German firm of Johann Cesar Godeffroy und Sohn of Hamburg had, in 1857, established its base for trade throughout the Pacific. Their primary focus was in supplying Europe with coconut oil. Godeffroy und Sohn went through stages of development including plantations which required large numbers of labourers. Unprecedented competition for labour in the Pacific in the 1880s meant "New Guinea began to be noticed in Berlin because it affected the fortunes of Germany in Samoa." <sup>2</sup> In fact, Johann Cesar Godeffroy & Sohn and Hersheim & Kompanie had established trading posts in the Bismarck

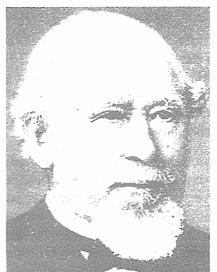


Archipelago back in 1873.<sup>3</sup> In August 1875 George Brown, an English Methodist missionary had arrived in the Duke of York Islands ... By the end of 1878, the mission had seven stations in the Duke of York Islands, eleven in adjacent New Britain and five on adjacent New Ireland, with 26 Polynesian teachers and their families.<sup>4</sup> In April 1878 four mission teachers were killed and eaten while trying to penetrate the Gazelle Peninsular. The other mission teachers saw themselves confronted with the decision 'either to fight and fight well or to withdraw altogether from these islands at once' [Powell 1883, 125]. They decided to carry out the first punitive expedition in New Guinea. Brown reluctantly accepted command, but as he wrote to Weber on 6<sup>th</sup> July 1878, he was fully satisfied with the effect of the expedition. "... It was sharp, short and very decisive and so had a very beneficial effect upon [the natives]. They accept us now as they never did before and I am very sure that we occupy a better position with them than we have ever done." <sup>5</sup>

In November 1884, the Germany flag was raised on the Gazelle Peninsula on New Britain, and at Madang and at Finschhafen on the New Guinea mainland north coast. Britain became aware of this on 17<sup>th</sup> November 1884. The colony was named the Protectorate of the Neu Guinea Compagnie. The northern portion of the mainland, east of Dutch New Guinea, now became known as Kaiser Wilhelmsland, New Britain became Neu Pommern, and New Ireland became Neu Mecklenburg and the Duke of York Islands – Neu Lauenburg. When other Island groupings, listed below, were added later, Kaiser Wilhelm land and the Bismarck Archipelago became known as "The Old Protectorate."

# A History of Kaiser Wilhelmland.

Godeffroy und Sohn was in financial trouble and in 1878 floated a new company called the



Deutsche Handles – und Plantagen-Gesellschaft (DH&PG). Then in December 1879 Godeffroys declared bankruptcy. There was long standing rivalry between German, American and British interests in Samoa, and Samoa was now in danger of passing into British hands if the British chose to buy DH&PG shares at the deflated prices of the day. Berlin banker Adolph von Hansemann stepped in with a 20-year loan of 1.2 million marks. In the process of doing this Hansemann took an interest in Mioko Harbour, the Godeffroy base in the Duke of York Islands [in what would be named the Bismarck Archipelago] and in 1880 suggested a plan to Chancellor Bismarck to establish a colony of German New Guinea - Bismarck rejected the plan outright.

<u>Opposite</u> - <u>Adolf von Hansemann</u> - photo courtesy of S. Firth - 'New Guinea Under the Germans'

Under the pressure of the Australian colonies seeking to have Britain annex the Solomon Islands, Marshall Islands, Gilbert Islands and New Guinea, [France already held New Caledonia was taking an interest in New Hebrides] Germany could see that something must done, or Samoa would be cut off from sustainable sources of cheap labour. In seeking a way for Germany to acquire colonies without also incurring imperial expense, Bismarck reviewed Hansemann's proposal and gave it his secret approval on 20<sup>th</sup> August 1884<sup>7</sup> and the annexation was undertaken in November 1884. Between October 1884 and May 1885 Otto Finsch, ornithologist, ethnologist and pioneer of German colonialism, made five explorations between East Cape [in what became British New Guinea] and Humboldt Bay [in Dutch New Guinea] on the north coast of New Guinea.<sup>8</sup>

Then on 15<sup>th</sup> October 1885 the Marshall Islands became a German colony. An April 1886 Anglo/German declaration resulted in Tonga, Buka, Bougainville, the Shortland Islands, Choiseul,

Santa Isabel, Ontong Java and Nauru becoming part of the German Pacific possessions. In 1899/1900 Germany purchased the Mariana and Caroline Islands from Spain.

<u>Writer's Note:</u> The geography involved in these epic Pacific Ocean acquisitions north and south of the equator is quite breath-taking. For example, Samoa, New Zealand and the island of New Guinea very roughly form an equilateral triangle. The distance from Apia the capital of modern Samoa, to Madang on the NG north coast is 4750km, a distance of heroic proportions in the days before radio, in the maritime era of sail and early steam.

Bismarck was not interested in New Guinea for any other reason than Samoa was dependent upon New Guinea labour. From 1885, an average of 458 labourers per annum <sup>9</sup> arrived in Samoa from New Guinea. Samoa's labour problems were thereby solved. Under its charter the Neu Guinea Compagnie [NGC]:-

- 1. Had exclusive right to take possession of 'unowned land.'
- 2. Could purchase or lease land from New Guineans
- 3. Except for foreign relations and justice, NGC had all the sovereign authority vested in the Kaiser.
- 4. Had the guaranteed protection and support of the German Imperial Navy.

Land Rights. The first annual report on German New Guinea [1885-87] stated the following :-

"The exclusive right, vested in the Company [NGC], of occupying ownerless land and acquiring land from the natives, came into effect on the date of the proclamation of the Imperial Charter. This guarantees the Company's right to acquire free of charge all land which was not acquired by white settlers before that date by legally valid titles, or is not owned by natives whose rights are to be respected. Land acquisition of the former kind have been made only in the Bismarck Archipelago [mainly in Neu Pommern (New Britain) on the Gazelle Peninsular, on the Island of Neu Lauenburg (Duke of York Group) and in part of Neu Mecklenburg (New Ireland) and of the Solomon Islands. Their extent and legality are however still subject to examination and decision in accordance with the procedure laid down in the Imperial Ordinance of 10<sup>th</sup> July of this year. In Kaiser Wilhelmsland there are no white settlers at all except for those established by the Company, and no title-deeds belonging to third parties.

The extent to which natives own land had not yet been determined even approximately, as by far the greater portion of the Protectorate awaits detailed exploration. However according to observations made to date, the native population is neither very numerous not characterized by close social cohesion. It may therefore be confidently assumed that there are large areas of uninhabited and unclaimed land which falls within the domain of the Company, and that there are stretches of free land situated between the native settlements, largely covered with forest, which are available for occupation by the Company. It may be stated without exaggeration that by far the larger part of the whole territory falls into that land available for occupation by the Company by virtue of its special privilege, quite apart from its exclusive powers to acquire by agreement land in possession of natives." 10

In summary for Hansemann, New Guinea was real estate and he was the developer. In accordance with an agreement with the Imperial Government of Great Britain of 6th April 1886... the territories lie between 141° and 160° E long and between the equator and 8° lat. The area of the German part of New Guinea, named Kaiser Wilhelmsland is roughly estimated to be 179,000 sq km; The estimated area of the Bismarck Archipelago together with the larger and smaller islands with in it...is 52,000 sq. km. and that of German Islands in the Solomon's group 18-19,000 sq.km. The total area therefore being about 250,000 sq km or 4,460 square miles, roughly equal to 46% of the area of the German Reich. 12

Gustav von Oertzen was appointed German Commissioner for New Guinea.<sup>13</sup> Eduard Dallmann with five Germans and 37 Indonesians arrived in Finschhafen on 5<sup>th</sup> November 1885 and set up camp at what was to become the capital of Kaiser Wilhelmland. Vice Admiral Georg Freiherr von Schleinitz, the first administrator arrived in Finschhafen with his family in June 1886. The NGC did not prove to be the commercial success that Hansemann expected. There were several reasons for this:-

- 1. Von Schleinitz' imposition of military discipline was not well accepted by NGC staff and he argued with head office and his services were terminated in early-1888. Von Schleinitz was replaced by Reinhold Kraetke.
- 2. Land acquisitions saw the wrong people paid and resulting in bad relations developing with the New Guineans particularly in the Madang area. Most land was acquired by fraud or deceit or at best by mutual misunderstanding.
- 3. The use of the Navy to enforce the law and to protect settlers and punish natives by punitive expedition was not very successful because the Navy was free to accept or reject requests from NGC. Navy personnel, while happy to bombard villages from the sea were less prepared to pursue and punish fleeing natives on land. As for the natives, when they saw a ship approaching they simply went bush.
- 4. After the expenditure of over three million marks the Protectorate of NGC was declared open for settlement in September 1888 with land for lease or sale, but there were very few takers. NGC discovered that people would accept paid work but were less interested in buying land.
- 5. Hansemann believed that New Guinea plantations required an Indonesian or Chinese labour force as he had no faith in New Guineans. His negotiations with the Dutch for his preferred employees initially proved successful.
  - a. 1888 The Kaiser-Wilhelmsland Plantagen-Gasellschaft was formed in Hamburg for the purpose of growing cocoa and coffee on a plantation at Jomba.
  - b. The NGC opens a new tobacco plantation at Stephansport on Astrolabe Bay south of Freidrich Wilhelmshafen [Madang]<sup>14</sup>
  - c. NGC abandoned its experimental tobacco plantation after small pox decimates its workforce.
  - d. October 1891 -NGC established tobacco plantations in the Jori River area at Erima with capital of 2.4 million marks. 450 Chinese, 324 Malay and 664 Melanesians worked the fields. Another 173 Javanese and 87 Chinese filled semi-skilled positions. 15
  - e. An Influenza epidemic struck in December 1891 and the death rate was very high without precise figures being known. 16
  - 6. As is examined below, NGC's focus on Kaiser Wilhelmland rather than the Islands of the Bismarck Archipelago was a serious strategic error. Faced with these set-backs, Hansemann sought help from the German Government and Bismarck agreed that for the three years from November 1889 the Reich would administer Kaiser Wilhelmsland at NGC expense. Fritz Rose was appointed to the job and arrived in Finschhafen in late 1889 and took over from Reinhold Kraetke on the 1<sup>st</sup> November 1889.

Rose quickly found himself at cross-purposes with the NGC. Among other things, he introduced legislation to ensure medical supervision of labour recruits and in response NGC asked the Colonial Office to restrain Rose's 'bureaucratic tendencies;' interference with labour practices was not in NGC interests. Misfortunes hit the Company in 1891/2 - a storm wrecked phosphate mining facilities on Mole Island, the steamer *Ottilie* was wrecked and the hulk *Norma* was sunk with a large stock of uninsured goods aboard. In 1891 more than a third of the white population of Finschhafen died of malaria, and when a steamer arrived there the survivors demanded evacuation. A temporary

camp was set up at Stephansort [Bogadjim – south of Madang] while the new capital was established at Friedrich Wilhelmshafen [Madang].

Native reaction to bad land dealings, thefts from gardens, brutal treatment of labour and general dissatisfaction with the German presence saw missionaries Acheidt and Bosch murdered along with overseers and labourers. Rose found to his frustration that neither the Company nor the Navy could provide a vessel for a punitive expedition and when one was finally provided the natives vacated the scene before a shot could be fired. He did not discover precisely who killed the missionaries or the plantation people. He destroyed villages in the vicinity as the likely settlements of the people responsible. His patrol police went ahead of him and shot people indiscriminately, including women and children No witnesses were captured alive to be question to establish some idea of the facts.

Far from the villagers being introduced to Western notions of jurisprudence, it was the colonizing power which was adopting Melanesian customs of warfare and retribution, sending raiding parties to kill small numbers of the enemy and burn property. <sup>17</sup> In September 1891 Rose asked for 50 police rather than 24 and a Police master to be stationed in Northern New Ireland. NGC rejected every request disclaiming all responsibility, and demanded that protection at government expense should be provided to Germans as it was in East and South West Africa.

The government responded by stating that Rose' punishment of natives was 'generally successful'. When Rose left the colony in 1892, he offered his advice as to how better relations might be achieved between the settlers and the natives in the Astrolabe Bay area. He suggested a survey of the settlements in the area was essential ...so the Germans would know who the villagers were and what land they occupied, the definition of reserves, the settlements of disputes and so on. To him it



was unthinkable that the administration should leave the villagers to themselves and intervene only sporadically. He felt that village officials should be appointed who could be consulted about the acquisition of land and the settlement of disputes. These recommendations were ignored at the time.

<u>Opposite</u> - German military personnel with local N.G. police / militia AWM #AO2544

In September 1892 with the end of

Rose' tenure, NGC again took control of the colony. The new administrator was Georg Schmiele. He, like Hansemann, had little faith in New Guineans as developers of their own land and he needed an influx of people of 'higher standing' He looked to the Dutch East Indies and Sumatra's tobacco industry for these. Sickness and the high death rate from 1893 onwards brought smaller rather than larger crop yields of tobacco. In the last two years of its existence, the Astrolabe Compagnie lost a total of 1,312,837 marks because of low tobacco prices in Europe, drought, and the inability to acquire a robust labour force. The revenue on opium imported for the coolies amounted to nearly half of all tariff revenue at that time. The death rate continued to be incredibly high and the Astrolabe doctor observed ... every tropical colony has to be manured with human bodies before it can bear fruit. 18

### The Ordinance proclaimed on 1st August 1894 relating to the minting of New Guinea coins.

Quite a long chain of events led up to the Coin Ordinance. As a result of the association with Australia, immediately after the inception of the New Guinea Company and for a number of years afterwards, it introduced British currency which gained acceptance. The German and other trading establishments operating in the Bismarck Archipelago had also become accustomed to using it as legal tender and for accounting purposes.

On the other hand, the contracts with officials and the importation of many goods from Germany and the accounting system used by the Board of Directors stipulated the use of German currency. The weight of these circumstances led to the introduction, as early as 1887, of the Reichsmark as the basis of financial computation in the Protectorate, and of the validation of German



coins – <u>below</u> - with the exception of the fivemark coin, as legal tended. Substantial quantities of these coins were periodically delivered to the pay-office in the Protectorate.

The situation changed when the shipping service to Cooktown had to be abandoned and was replaced with a service to Java and later Singapore. The recruitment of Malay and Chinese coolies, and the importation of tools and implements for plantations opened the door

wide to the silver dollar current in Singapore, and the Dutch guilder, in addition to British currency.

This resulted in a confusion of coins in commercial transactions, and due to the frequent and often sudden fluctuations in the price of silver, to rather serious unreliability in the accounting system. Although German coins were still being imported, coinage requirements had, in the main to be met by the purchase of British currency in Singapore. In order to remedy the abuses arising from this situation, as early as the beginning of 1891 the Board of Directors had requested permission to mint its own coins...and be identical in shape and form with German coins, but redesigned as New Guinea coins. However, this proposal met with objections from the German Treasury and could therefore not be implemented. Thanks to the support given by the [German] Foreign Office, it met with a better



reception when it was modified...to rule out confusions with coins of the German Reich.<sup>19</sup>

<u>Above:</u> #7-19 In 1900 stamps picturing the Kaiser's yacht, "Hohenzollern" were issued for Germany's colonies; typo graphed, engraved and without watermark



**#1-6 First Stamps** German New Guinea became a German Colony November 17, 1884. German stamps were used until 1897 when the first paper with a "lozenges" pattern. German stamps were overprinted "Deutsch-Neu-Guinea."



Some of the 1900 stamps were re-issued in 1914 on watermarke These were printed and sold in Berlin only.

After Hugo Rudiger served a brief tenure as administrator in 1895/6, Curt Von Hagen was appointed administrator, but was killed by a Buka policeman in 1897. Next a young lawyer, Albert Hahl took over as acting Administrator until Hugo Skopnik was appointed on 11th September 1897.

#### Review: The New Guinea Islands under German colonial rule 1885-1899.

Within the Protectorate of NGC there were two different forms of colonialism operating. The first was the disaster of Kaiser Wilhelm Land; colonialism that was the direct creation of Berlin based colonial planners who lacked Pacific experience. The origins of the second form of colonialism; that of the Bismarck Archipelago were the tried and true methods that had their origins in the Pacific. In the Bismarck Archipelago plantation and trading population, Germans were in the minority. Most of these people had Pacific experience from elsewhere. 'Queen' Emma Forsyth, a mixed-race Samoan, had been in Tahiti, Samoa and the Marshalls before coming to the Gazelle Peninsular of New Britain. Her sister Phebe Coe was on the Gazelle Peninsular also with husband Richard Parkinson, a long term Godeffroy employee. Eduard Hernsheim had established his trading operations on Nusa Island in 1880. There were just a few hundred of these people, including missionaries and Chinese living in the New Guinea Islands. They ignored NGC and relied upon the village people for their livelihood and trade.

NGC established stores in the Archipelago and when these stores were attacked, the NGC called in the Navy to conduct punitive expeditions. The old Pacific hands quickly called for punitive actions to stop as they were disrupting peaceful commerce. The labour trade with Samoa continued. At the suggestion of the company Deutsche Handles – und Plantagen-Gesellschaft [DH&PG], a proclamation of August 1885 required that labour could only be taken outside the New Guinea borders for employment on German plantations. This stayed in force until 1914. From 1885 to 1913 5,746 labourers were recruited. The average mortality rate of labour on DHPG plantations was 10% during the term of their engagement.

# The transfer of sovereignty of German New Guinea to the German Government on 1st April 1899

Kaiser Wilhelmsland was proving to be an utter fiasco in colonization; one of the greatest disasters of late 19th century colonialism.20 As early as January 1885 Hansemann was trying to withdraw from the colonial administration and to have the imperial charter revoked. Negotiations to transfer sovereignty to the German government were finalized in March 1899 when an agreement was signed that provided for:

1. German Government to pay NGC 10 annual amounts of 400,000 marks to be spent on economic enterprises in the interests of the Colony

- 2. NGC to take possession of 50,000 hectares within three years of signing.
- 3. NGC granted exclusive mining rights in the Upper Ramu River area.

Hansemann's decision to concentrate on 'Kaiser Wilhelmsland' - the mainland rather than the New Guinea Islands - had major consequences: -

- Malaria and other illness were more prevalent on the mainland of 2,802 New Guinea Island labourers sent to the mainland between 1887 and 1903 1,129 died during the period of their contract. Moreover, the Reichstag accused NGC of 'pure mass murder' of coolies. NGC admitted that many died, but that had not been NGC's fault. 21
- The mainland offered fewer chances for trade. The prosperity of the old Pacific hands was based upon trading with local natives for copra and employing them as labourers, but with few exceptions, NGC relied upon outside labour.
- Punitive expeditions by the Navy were not an effective form of Government control. The Coastal people were as independent in 1899 as they were in 1885.<sup>22</sup>

#### The Ramu River.

<u>Writer's Note:</u> While the Ramu River is located in the Madang District, its mouth is very close to that of the Sepik. Also, an apparent ancient course of the Ramu River continued on at the present site of Annanberg Mission and followed the present course of the Keram River, joining the Sepik's right



bank a little upstream of Angoram. The Keram was also known as the "Little Ramu". I am taking the liberty of tracing the history of the Ramu together with the history of the Sepik because the Lower Sepik - Keram and the Ramu Rivers provided vital access to, and egress from, the Sepik during the Japanese occupation during World War 2. The Ramu River was discovered in 1886 by Vice-Admiral Freiherr von Schleinitz after returning to Finschhafen from an expedition to the nearby Sepik. Schleinitz called the Ramu, *Ottilien* after his ship the *Ottilie*.

# The Ramu Expedition.

Herr Tappenbeck who had been appointed leader together with an Australian gold-miner, were to travel as far upstream as possible in the paddle-steamer *Herzogin Elizabeth*. If they reached the middle or upper reaches, a temporary station was to be established for the mineralogical investigation of the Bismarck Range. The prospects of finding precious metals there seemed good...the British had made important gold finds in the Mambare River region which had the same geological structure...<sup>23</sup> According to the

1898-99 annual report, a station had been established in the interior 140km from the coast... Dr. Lauterbach arrived on 4<sup>th</sup> October 1899 by the *Herzogin Elisabeth* at the Ramu station, in the interior, which was occupied by Hans Rodatz. On 14<sup>th</sup> October, the expedition continued upstream in 19 canoes to prospect Creek 11 which had shown traces of gold, but the water level was too high to allow further prospecting. Preparations were made to continue the expedition in the dry season expedition.<sup>24</sup>

A German syndicate headed by the Disconto-Gesellschaft in Berlin was granted an exclusive gold-prospecting concession for the southern part of German New Guinea, such as was already held by the Neu Guinea Compagnie in the Ramu region. The gold finds in the Ramu region still inspired high hopes. So far there had been no attempts to dig for gold in the southern half of German Neu

Guinea.<sup>25</sup> The 1901-02 German New Guinea annual report noted:-... The Ramu expedition has not yet attained its objective of establishing the presence of alluvial gold in payable quantities in the bed of the Ramu River. It is unlikely this objective can be achieved without considerable reinforcements to the manpower available...In a flash flood in October 1901 the steamer Herzogin Elisabeth was wrecked on the upper Ramu River. The base camp was moved 200 km further upstream and was accessed by an overland track from Stephensort [Bogadjim]<sup>26</sup>

The 1902-03 German New Guinea annual report stated the Ramu expedition had abandoned its Upper Ramu station and planned to access the area from the Markham River. After this entry the annual reports were silent on the Ramu Expedition. Writer's Note: The upper Ramu did subsequently prove to be rich in gold – see Chapter 47

Gold and border issues. Gold was the lure which led to the establishment of a German Police Post in the Morobe district. Miners had been panning for alluvial gold in northern Papua since the 1890s and as the deposits became exhausted, they had moved across the un-surveyed border between Australian Papua and German New Guinea... Australian officials had even been appointing village officials on the German side of the border. Australia formed a Boundary Commission with Germany. Hahl chose a man with long experience of gold prospectors in Australia, Hans Klink [who we met during the Ramu expedition] ... Unlike Wau and Bulolo after the rich gold strikes of the 1920s, Morobe did not become the centre of a gold-mining industry. <sup>28</sup> The Annual Report noted:-

" ... The dispatch at the end of 1908 of an expedition to survey the German-British border to the southeast of Kaiser Wihelmsland marked the beginning of the process of fixing the land frontiers of the Protectorate. The expedition was wound up in the middle of the year of 1909. Unfortunately, the results have been less than satisfactory. The leader of the German border expedition soon became so ill that he had to leave the area without completing the assignment.<sup>29</sup>

# The administration of German New Guinea 1899 to 1914

- On 1<sup>st</sup> April 1899, the German Government took over the civil administration of the colony from the unprofitable NGC. The Government headquarters was established at Herbertshoe [Kokopo].
- On October 12 1899. The Caroline [Karolinen-Inseln] and Palau Islands [Palau-Inseln] became an administrative sub division of German New Guinea.
- On November 17 1899. The Mariana Islands [Marianen-Inseln] become a sub division of German New Guinea.<sup>30</sup>
- On April 1 1906. The Marshall Islands [Marshall-Inseln] were incorporated as part of German New Guinea.<sup>31</sup>

The first governor of German New Guinea under the Imperial Government was Rudolf von Bennigsen who took office on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1899. He was said to initially be of the opinion that the mere sight of him and his entourage would engender respect for the Government. His opinion changed following murders in the Admiralty Islands. He requested fast armed steamer and trained police stationed at strategic points throughout the old protectorate. Northern New Ireland had been a problem area. His stationing of District Officer [DO] Franz Bulaminski at Kavieng in 1900 was credited with working wonders.

NGC now sought the 50,000 hectares to which it was entitled under its agreement with the State. The Colonial Office denied Bennigsen's authority to restrict the NGC land claims. This issue arose because an official called Boether, during a visit to Hansa Bay, Wewak and Aitape, observed that most of the NGC land had been acquired by fraud and that NGC had acted with 'direct unscrupulousness' in its land dealings. Some acquisitions had been made from maps without even going ashore. Boether's zeal was not appreciated by either NGC or the Colonial Office. The Colonial Department said ... contracts as they are made with natives of the kind living in Kaiser Wilhelmsland can never bear rigorous juristic examination ... and that officers of the imperial administration should be guided by considerations of fairness to the Company, which might otherwise fail to acquire the land reserved for it under the transfer agreement of 1899.<sup>32</sup> As 20 tons of copra was produced in the



Bismarck Archipelago for every one ton produced on the mainland, the new colonial headquarters was established at Herbertshoe [Kokopo – East New Britain]. It would then be transferred to Rabaul in 1910.

Opposite – photo of New Guinea Company native police troop at Friedrich - Wilhelmshafen in 1899. Note ammunition pouches – sarongs were dark red and hats brown.... Internet

#### **End Notes Chapter 2**

<sup>1</sup> S.Masterman – The origins of international rivalry in Samoa 1845 – 1884 -George Allen & Unwin 1934 London P63

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> S.Firth New Guinea under the Germans – Web books 1986 p 13

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The World at War – German New Guinea 1873 – 1919 page 1

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> P.G.Sack - Land Between two Laws ANU Press 1973 Page 66

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> P.G.Sack 1973 Page 68

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> S.Firth 1986 p 20

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> S.Firth 1986 p 16-17

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> S.Firth 1986 p 20

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> S.Firth 1986 p 16-17

<sup>8</sup> Wikipedia

<sup>9</sup> S.Firth 1986 p 19

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> German New Guinea Annual Report 1886-7 - P Sack and D.Clark ed and translation 1979 Page 13/14

<sup>11</sup> S.Firth 1986 p 23

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> German New Guinea Annual Report 1886-7 – P Sack and D.Clark ed and translation 1979 Page 3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> The World at War – German New Guinea 1873 – 1919 page 1

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> The World at War – German New Guinea 1873 – 1919 page 1

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> The World at War – German New Guinea 1873 – 1919 page 2

<sup>16</sup> S.Firth 1986 p 35

<sup>17</sup> S.Firth 1986 p 34

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> S.Firth 1986 p 36

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> German New Guinea annual report 1893-94 - P.Sack and D Clark ed and translation 1979 Page 87

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> S.Firth 1986 p 38

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> S.Firth 1986 p 40

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> S.Firth 1986 p 43

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> German New Guinea annual report 1896-97 – P.Sack and D Clark ed and translation 1979 Page 135

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> German New Guinea annual report 1899-99 – P.Sack and D Clark ed and translation 1979 Page 167=168

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> German New Guinea annual report 1900-1901 P.Sack and D Clark ed and translation 1979 Page 219

German New Guinea annual report 1901-02 – P.Sack and D Clark ed and translation 1979 Page 234
 German New Guinea annual report 1902-03 – P.Sack and D Clark ed and translation 1979 Page 242
 S.Firth 1986 p 94-5

German New Guinea Annual Report 1909-10 – P Sack and D.Clark ed and translation 1979 Page 305
 The World at War – German New Guinea 1873 – 1919 page 2
 The World at War – German New Guinea 1873 – 1919 page 3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> S.Firth 1986 p 69-71

#### Chapter 3 The Discovery and early exploration of the Sepik River

The discovery of the Sepik River by European navigators is credited to William Schouten in 1616<sup>1</sup>. The first reported exploration of the mouth of the Sepik was conducted by Captain Benjamin Morrell of the brig Margaret Oakley in July of an unspecified year in the mid-1830s [The Margaret Oakley commenced her voyage from the Hudson River in March 1834, but crewman Thomas Jefferson Jacobs neglected to include dates of the events he described in his 1844 book *Scenes Incidents and adventures in the Pacific Ocean*. He described the discovery of the Sepik, without naming it:

Next day we saw coloured water ahead, and first supposed it to be a shoal, but it proved to be the water from a large river that here emptied into the ocean, and coloured it for fifteen to twenty miles to seaward. We anchored at the mouth of the river, and the next day explored it twenty miles in the squadron. We saw no natives or inhabitants. The country was low and alluvial, and covered with a stately growth of trees. We encountered much flood wood...<sup>2</sup>

He [Captain Morrell] had more of less given up on interior explorations, though he did explore the mouth of the Sepik River and sailed up the vast Mambramo.<sup>3</sup>

In September 1884, Anthropologist and Zoologist Dr. Otto Finsch sailed aboard the steamer *Samoa* from Sydney to Mioko harbour in the Duke of York Islands. He had been commissioned by the newly formed NGC to find suitable sites for settlement in that part of New Guinea soon to be known as Kaiser Wilhelmsland. Finsch made five voyages from Mioko on the *Samoa*, which was under the command of Captain C.Dallmann. On the last trip in May 1885 Finsch noticed discolouration of the sea water and went inshore to investigate. Four oarsmen rowed him about thirty miles upstream in a whaleboat Finsch named the river Kaiserine Augusta after the German Kaiserine.<sup>4</sup>

In 1886 Dallmann was also rowed up the Kaiserine Augusta River for ten miles in order that the river depth could be tested with a lead line for its suitability for navigation by Steamers. In 1886 Governor von Schleinitz with a team of scientists including U.M.von Hollrung, Dr. C.Schrader, C.Hunstein and F.Grabowski, commenced at 18 month exploration of the new Colony. This included two voyages up the Sepik River. In June and July 1886 the steamer *Ottilie* went two hundred miles upstream, at which point the river became too shallow. von Schleinitz then proceeded a further three days upstream by steam launch and whale boat to where the river breaks through a range of low hills above where Ambunti would later be established [the feature known as the Yambon gate]. On his return journey to Finschhafen von Schleinitz discovered the mouth of the Ramu river, some fifteen miles along the coast east of the mouth of the Kaiserine Augusta River. He named the river *Ottilie*.

The German New Guinea Annual Report of 1886/87 noted: An Expeditions set out for the Augusta River, in June of this year, with instructions to establish a post at a suitable point on the middle reaches of the river, where it issues from the mountains, for the purposes of investigating the river basin, according to brief reports so far to hand, this has been done, but more detailed reports have not yet come in. <sup>7</sup>

With the river carrying more water than in 1886, Dr. C.Schrader was able to take the *Samoa* 380 miles upstream to a point beyond Wogamush where the *Samoa* ran aground. Once refloated the Samoa returned to Finschhafen, leaving C. Schrader, M.Hollrung and C.Hunstein at a settlement they knew as Zenap. [Chanapian]. This camp was recorded as Augusta Station 1.8 They discovered a river entering the Sepik from the south and named it the Frieda River after Schrader's sister.9

The Chenapian elders I interviewed on 19<sup>th</sup> February 1974 [during Ambunti Patrol 11a/1973-74] spoke of many things, but did not mention Schrader's visit. This is probably because that story had been told on the two previous evenings at Kubkain, the next village downstream. On 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> a fluent pidgin speaker called Nesukwak, who was prompted by Kubkain elders, told how:

The ancestors ran away when the Germans came. The name SOK was made to refer to Europeans, and the word HALHALBOL was made to describe the ship - HALHAL for the water and BOL for the vessel itself. The Germans came and made camp at Woni'il.

They came first and tied up at our bush called Walkid and they threw a bomb [dynamite?] into the water and all the kinds of fish in the water were killed and drifted on the water. Two grandfathers Naianbwel and Bigsibo went close to the ship.

Interestingly the ancestors' observation of the Germans unpacking the axe heads, which were apparently strapped together. The unpacking is remembered and told as part of the ritual of how the ancestors received these wondrous new items:

The axe heads were joined together and they cut it with a saw and then hit it with a piece of iron to separate one axe head from the rest. They gave a steel axe head to each of these ancestors. They collected the fish and cut them with the new axe blades and brought the fish to the village. But the people of the village were suspicious 'We will not eat these fish. We do not know of such things, throw the fish away" they said "We do not want to be harmed.". The two ancestors ate the fish, but the others did not.

The [German] party went on to Woni'il. Above the mouth of the Chenapian barat [channel] you will see a hill some way inland from the Sepik. It was on the Sepik back then, but the ground has built up again since. They made a big camp and lived there. They gave gifts and made friends. This was the first trip up river by the Germans. 10

The Samoa returned six weeks later and took Schrader's party down to Malu where they established Augusta Station 2 on the right bank of the Sepik River near the present day Malu village. At first the natives were friendly, but then for reasons not understood they broke off all contact. No untoward incidents occurred and no records of anthropological value resulted. The party made botanical collections. The only report on the expedition was reportedly written in 1888 by Von Hollrung. 12

Writer's Note: The quote from the Annual Report of 1886/87 of the instruction to establish a station in the middle reached of the Kaiserine Augusta River puts into context the elder's statements of the durations spent at both Chenapian and Malu by the 1886 expedition.

The Sepik elders had quite a lot to say about their experiences of the Germans, but a careful read of the interviews indicates that only the Kubkain material listed above, related to the Schleinitz, Schrader party. While the party was at Augusta Station 2 they named the mountains visible south of the Sepik River the Hunstein range.

The 1897 labour recruiters accompanied by government officers visited the Middle Sepik region and Felix Von Lushon wrote a report on the expedition. The Sepik River was then not visited by the Germans for 21 years<sup>13</sup>. Then in 1908 another recruiting party visited the Sepik in the *Siar*. This expedition was accompanied by the Swiss Anthropologist Schlagenhaufen. <sup>14</sup>. Also on board were Anthropologists Richard Neuhauss and Richard Schlecter and Madang District Officer Hanns Schulz<sup>15</sup>.

In 1909 Otto Reche of the Hamburg Sudsee Expedition under the leadership of George Thilenius brought a number of Geographers, Anthropologists and other academics. Thilenius was the editor of the papers the expedition produced.<sup>16</sup>

The 1909-1913 Joseph N Field South Pacific Expedition actually commenced with a 1908 flying two month visit to German New Guinea by Curator of Anthropology of the Field Museum of Natural History, George A Dorsey. Dorsey convinced the Museum Directors to send assistant curator Albert Burell Lewis to Melanesia. Governor Hahl invited Lewis to travel with him in the steamer *Sandakan* to Finschhafen – Stephansort – Friederich Wilhelmshafen – Alexishafen – Potsdamhafen and Eitape where they arrived on 27<sup>th</sup> September 1909. Lewis' Aitape, Sissano and Hollandia adventures are described in the Chapter concerning the establishment of Eitape.

In June 1910 Lewis spent time around the mouth of the Sepik River at Watam and the Murik Lakes at Djepop [presumably Darapap] where he was allowed a glimpse of sacred figures and masks, but was denied access to the two haus tambalas. Lewis boarded the steamer *Siar* which entered the Kaiserine Augusta River on 9<sup>th</sup> October 1910 and at noon that day the *Siar* reached Singarin, but the [unnamed] Captain's primary objective was to recruit labour, so did not allow any trading for artifacts and only few shore visits by Lewis. To Lewis observations labour recruits were not forthcoming. The journey went as far as Yambon. At Malu on 12<sup>th</sup> October Lewis noted:

Most of the men [were] naked, some with belts, woven, and with shell rings on them. Woven arm rings numerous, some with shell rings; also woven bands covered with small shells over the top of the head; a few simple feather ornaments. Some men painted red in patterns especially on the face. Others black or white around the eyes. Hair short. No recruits taken at Malu

On 13th October after two hours steaming at Yambon, he observed:

Many of the natives out in canoes, eager to trade. Men naked, women with short grass skirts... Culture here evidently quite primitive — very different from lower down the river...stopped at Awitip [Avatip]...culture seems a little higher than higher up the river.

On their way downstream the Siar anchored off "Simar" [the map position indicates Tambanum]. The people there would not let Lewis into their houses or even to approach what appeared to be their haus tambaran.. On the 16<sup>th</sup> October the *Siar* left the river headed for Potsdamhafen.

# The 1910 German/Dutch Border expedition.

This expedition established Hollandia [the future capital of Dutch New Guinea] as its base for defining the border between the Dutch and German New Guinea colonies. The

German expedition leader was Dr. Leonard Schultze – Jena. The expedition was able to proceed 600 miles up the river to a position well into the mountains.

# The 1912-13 Department of Colonial Affairs expedition.

This expedition which was in the field for 18 months is described in Chapter 15. The excellent German map of the Sepik River which appears in *Im Stromgebiet des Sepik* by Dr. Walter Behrmann – Berlin 1922, was the work of three expeditions:

- 1910 German/Dutch expedition. Upper Sepik
- 1912/13 Department of Colonial Affairs expedition Lower and Middle Sepik.
- 1914 Dr. Thurnwald Sepik headwaters and source

Dr. Thurnwald, who joined the Behrman Expedition late, stayed on when the main expedition departed in September 2013. Dr. Thurnwald conducted his own explorations which are described in the following chapters:

Sepik 2 Chapter 16. Dr. Richard Thurnwald's discoveries in the Upper Sepik

Sepik 2 Chapter 17. Dr. Richard Thurnwald in Telefomin and the Yellow River incident 1914/15

Sepik 2 Chapter 18. Dr. Richard Thurnwald's exploration of the Sand and North Rivers and his final surrender.

#### **End Notes Chapter 3**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>G.Souter – The Last Unknown. Angus & Robertson Melbourne 1963 Page 19 & 71

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Thomas Jefferson Jacobs – Scenes incidents and adventures in the Pacific Ocean. Harper & Brothers, 82 Cliff St New York 1844 – reprint 2013 Isha Books New Delhi Page 302

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> James Fairhead – The Captain and the "Can nibal" Angus & Robertson 2015 Page 244

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> G.Souter 1963 P71

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> A.J.Marshall and B.H.Beehler – The Ecology of Indonesia series IV. – Periplus edn Singapore 2007. P 35.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> G.Souter 1963 P73.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> German New Guinea Annual Report 1886-87 – Sack and Clark 1979 page 6

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> A.J.Marshall and B.H.Beehler 2007 p 35

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Personal communication from Dr Christian Kauffman at Ambunti 1972/3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Bragge Sepik Research notes Vol 19 p 450-451

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> G.Souter 1963 p 74

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Personal communication from Dr Christian Kauffman at Ambunti 1972/3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> S.Firth 1986 P 95-6

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Personal communication from Dr Christian Kauffman at Ambunti 1972/3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Ed.& annotated R.L.Welsch.- An American Anthropologist in Melanesia – AB Lewis and the Joseph N Field South Pacific Expedition 1909-1913 – University of Hawaii Press 1998. P145/6

Personal communication from Dr. Christian Kaufmann over dinner at Ambunti on 26<sup>th</sup> May 1973 – as recorded In Bragge Sepik Research notes Vol 20 p3-4.

# Sepik 2 Chapter 4 Land acquisitions in German New Guinea.

This chapter needs to be read in conjunction with Sepik 1 Chapter 7 The nature of precontact land tenure, and that portion of Sepik 2 Chapter 1 Colonial Influences that discussed the 1884 Berlin Conference motion that "the rights of indigenous tribes to dispose of their hereditary lands should be guaranteed;" a motion that was not carried.

Against this background, the aim of this chapter is to examine the situation in Kaiser Wilhelmsland and the Bismarck Archipelago; lands inhabited by indigenous people What happened to these people and their traditional land tenure rules under the influence of colonial capitalism, in which the Land and Labour aspects relied upon New Guineans and only the Capital was provided by the German colonialists.

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#### Primitive and Western Law

By the time New Guinea was entering the colonising phase of its history, it was a widelyaccepted principle by colonial powers, that the native inhabitants of a colony should remain governed by their traditional or "primitive" laws until they had "advanced" enough to live under the laws of the colonising power.1

But given that the undefined "traditional laws" involved tribal warfare, cannibalism, sorcery, blood feuds, tyranny and anarchy, colonial administrators intervened to establish "law and order." This was a necessary pre-condition for white settlement on acquired New Guinea lands; Capitalism in the form of land, labour, capital and German enterprise were the reason for establishing the colony - the commercially viable exploitation of tropical production.

Anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski noted that in regard primitive law *There must be in all* societies a class of rules too practical to be backed up by religious sanctions, too burdensome to be left to mere goodwill, too personally vital to be enforced by any abstract agency. This is the domain of legal rules, and I venture to foretell that reciprocity, systematic incidence, publicity and ambition will be found to be the main factors in the binding machinery of primitive law.<sup>2</sup>

Malinowski shows a way of comparing primitive law and western law without defining law – by looking at two basic sociological functions of law:

- 1. The way order is maintained in western and pre-contact NG societies are basically the same. Both societies have a body of obligatory norms of social behaviour.
- 2. The main differences are found in the restoration of order. The idea of social balance is as central for Primitive law as is the idea of justice is for Western law. Its effects can be seen most clearly when war breaks out between different groups. Whereas the state thrives on enforcing the law within its domain and on winning victories over other states, the primitive group can frequently not afford either. In primitive societies victory, cannot be the basis of peace. Instead social balance had to be restored. The victors cannot claim compensation, but each side must have to pay blood money – the victors usually pay more because they killed or wounded more of the defeated. Primitive law is not a battle between right and wrong...it aims to restore social balance.3

<sup>1</sup> This was the writer's experience as described in Sepik 4 Chapter 54 Highlands Warfare in 1974 trying to resolve warfare in the Western Highlands. The compensation for the dead needed first to be paid and order restored between allies. It worked like this: If group A lost one or more dead in fighting enemy C, they called in their first ally - B. Then if B lost one or more dead in the fighting - A was required to compensate B before any wider compensation was negotiated with enemy C

Looking ahead for a moment - German laws were passed in association with the annexation which created the protectorate and later the colony of German New Guinea. These laws documented and regulated the rights of settlers and others against the background of the uncertainties of primitive law. Given the rights of Christian European powers to colonise, there was no legal requirement to consider the "primitive laws" of the indigenous people.

Nevertheless, the colonial land ordinance, once passed, went as far as distinguishing between "owned" native land and "ownerless" land. But as we saw in Sepik 1 Chapter 7 the concept of "ownership of land" in the western sense was and still is alien to the traditional or primitive land law. We now begin to see the logic of P.G.Sack's book title <u>Land between two laws</u>.

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# The sequences of colonial land acquisitions and related intrigue in German New Guinea.

# #1 Land acquisitions in the Bismarck Archipelago before New Guinea became a colony

The following examples provide a picture of how land acquisitions were negotiated between settlers and the indigenous people. There were many more acquisitions than the cases shown.

- A. Reverend Brown was "adopted" by Topulu in the Duke of York Islands. The mission station land at Port Hunter was purchased by Brown. The land was surveyed in the presence of "all the chiefs who had any claim to the land" ...after the offered price had been shown to them...the land was bought and Brown got a "properly executed conveyance" for it from Topulu and his brothers Waruwarum and Naragua. "having to pay three claimants for the land, the aggregate price was more than it was really worth, but we all felt it best to let the natives see that we wished to act fairly and honestly with them" [1908. 90]<sup>4</sup> Rev. Brown continued buying land in the Duke of Yorks, the Gazelle Peninsular of New Britain and in New Ireland
- **B.** Pacific traders E.Hersheim and his brother bought about 6,000 acres in northern New Ireland to establish plantations. Hersheim registered his land purchases in his own office in Matupit as he was German Consul for the Bismarck Archipelago.<sup>5</sup>
- **C.** The Marquise de Ray's representative Rabardy, bought more than a million acres in southern New Ireland for a pound of tobacco, 25 clay pipes and a few handkerchiefs from Maragano, who had been chased away from his village and therefore had no right to sell the land. De Rays had already purchased 7 million acres for cash.<sup>6</sup>
- **D.** H.H.Romilly of the Western Pacific High Commission, who investigated the punitive expedition following Kleinschmidt's murder...claimed that T. Kleinschmidt had purchased Utuan Island by paying only one chief as a matter of course the Island did not belong to the chief, but to a tribe and the tribe did not consider they had sold it.<sup>7</sup>
- **E.** Thomas Farrell and Queen Emma bought all the land they could get their hand on. In the Duke of York Islands and the Gazelle Peninsular.<sup>8</sup>

The view that the natives of NG had no concept of ownership of land as such and that all uncultivated land was ownerless was probably widespread among early settlers... This difference was of little practical importance as those who shared Hersheim's view, still purchased the "ownerless land", partly because they wanted to have a purchase document visa vis other Europeans...and in order to maintain friendly relations with the natives. What is important, however, is that all Europeans knew their beautiful deeds were meaningless pieces of paper for the natives and the acquisition of land was a process which really began when the land was occupied.

... When Europeans began to buy large areas of land, which they did not take into use, the natives simply had no idea what was going on... Settlers, rather than trying to enlighten them, kept them in the dark. They preferred to conceal from the natives the consequences of their signed cross made upon a deed... They were not strong enough to insist on their rights... they prepared the ground by making paper claims – establishing 500 claims over some 700,000 acres – the largest of nearly 400,000 acres by Farrell and Queen Emma. 9

The main activity of the Imperial Commissioner Oertzen was the preliminary registration of these claims. Having registered claims of German nationals on a voluntarily basis since late in 1884. Oertzen issued on 19<sup>th</sup> Feb 1886 regulations which made it compulsory for all Europeans to present their titles for examination and possible registration.

Farrell and Oertzen were accused of collaborating that some registrations were rejected as having already been registered by Farrell. Hersheim claimed That Farrell is again behind the scene with his Samoan girls and champagne. He bribed that poor fool Van Oertzen...Queen Emma realised what was wanted and brought out a number of nice approachable nieces and cousins from Samoa who did not fail to make Ralum the centre of attraction for all unmarried employees of NGC. Queen Emma herself, 'like the Empress Elizabeth of Russia, could accomplish miracles in love making and drinking...According to local tradition it is not impossible that Queen Emma's female weapons had something to do with this invariable result [alleged collaboration]. <sup>10</sup>

**F. Dr. Otto Finsch's acquisitions on behalf of the Neu Guinea Kompagnie** Finsch had the north-east coast of the New Guinea mainland to himself in his efforts to acquire land for the NGC on "the biggest possible scale" ... He stopped trying to buy land, instead, taking ownerless land in possession... In Frederich Wilhelmshafen [Madang] Adolf-Haven [Morobe] Deutschlandhafen [Finschhfen], Dahlmannhafen [Wewak] and Angriffshafen {Vanimo] and at the mouth of the Kaiserin Augusta River, and between there and Wewak.

For all his acquisitions Finsch used elaborate forms which had been issued by the NGC... named headmen sold and transferred to the D.H.P.G<sup>2</sup>. in the names of their villages and tribes, acting for themselves, their heirs and successors certain lands – shown on the attached sketch – which had been attached hitherto their full and inheritable property, including the foreshore, riverbanks and all reefs and Islands within the distance recognised by international law, as well as all rights, claims and prerogatives of any land attached there to. The sellers also confirmed that they had already put the purchaser into possession of the sold property and declared that they would only possess it for the purchaser. They further explicitly agreed to the sold property being registered in the name of the purchaser as well as being placed under the protection of the Reich. In this context, the sellers renounced all public and sovereign rights, including all mining rights, they had with regard to the sold property. Finally, the sellers agreed that the purchaser entered into possession and acquired ownership of all land between the Dutch border and the Huon Gulf "which can at present be shown to be neither owned nor occupied by natives"

Considering this form, one can only admire the genius of Finsch who certified on 17<sup>th</sup> October 1884 in Constantinhafen that the documents had been read and translated to the sellers [ seven of] who had affirmed in his presence that they had fully understood the contents, comprehended and concluded the contract and received the purchase price [about \$15 in trade goods] and were fully satisfied.

...It was of course impossible to prove that the natives who signed the document were the owners of the land or that they understood the meaning of the document. Only actual occupancy

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Recall from Chapter 2, Godeffroy and Son was bankrupt and a loan from banker Hansemann allowed the company to restructure as D.H.P.G. [Deutsche Handles und Plantagen Gesellschaft].

could guarantee the possession of the acquired land...Presumably realising the problems, NGC dropped all claim to lands acquired by Finsch in Kaiser Wilhelmsland.<sup>11</sup>

To give the document additional weight, the acquisition was "registered" at the nearest national consulate. <sup>12</sup> It would have been well over a million acres had NGC not dropped all land Finsch acquired in Kaiser Wilhelmsland.

G. Johann Kubary purchases – Madang District. Between 1887 and 1889 Johann Kubary sailed the coast from Constantinhafen to Freiderich Wilhelshafen [Madang] "purchasing" most of the coastline of Astrolabe Bay, an area of 32,780 hectares. Most of these purchases were carried out in a cavalier manner, judging even by the standards the New Guinea Kompagnie set itself.

From the people of Bilbil Island, south of Freiderich Wilhelshafen, Kubery presumed to buy all the mainland coast between the Gogol and Gum Rivers. The transctions were concluded not be careful surveying and the signing of contracts, but by Kubary sailing along the coast in his pinnace, noting the names of river mouths and prominent features without at any time landing. Kubery then distributed a trivial amount of trade goods to the Bilbil Islanders.

This process was repeated with the Islanders of Jabob [Yabob] between Bilbil and Freiderich Wilhelmshafen. From them Kubery purchased all the land between Gum River and Freiderich Wilhelmshafen, using his boat to note features, dispensing trader goods and then fastening a [piece of paper to a coconut palm to conclude the sale.<sup>13</sup>

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#### Establishing a Colonial Law and the establishment of the NGC monopoly on land acquisition.

"The statute regarding laws for the administration of the Colony" was passed and came into force 16<sup>th</sup> April 1886. The Neu Guinea Kompagnie [NGC] was to pay for the administration of the colony. This was the beginning of colonial Law in German New Guinea. On 20/7/1887 the "Imperial Ordinance regarding the Acquisition of Ownership and the Changing of Land in the Colony of the Neu Guinea Kompagnie" was enacted. This came into force on 1/10/1887 and formed the basis of NG law until 1/4/1903. 14

The 1887 ordinance made special provision for the land acquisitions Europeans claimed to have made prior to annexation. Since the imperial charter of 17/5/1885 had given NGC exclusive right to acquire land, the 1987 ordinance had first to fix precise dates after which land acquisitions by other Europeans were to be invalid. The date chosen was 27/5/85, the day the Imperial charter was published.

Rules under section 7 and 10 required that ... Land acquisition the NGC made in exercise of its monopoly were governed by "<u>Directions regarding the acquisition of Land by the Neu Guinea Kompagnie"</u> issued on 10/8/1887. The rules differentiated between the direct and indirect acquisition. The NGC agent had to determine:

- 1. Was the land cultivated or otherwise in use by natives
- 2. Was it marked in a traditional way as belonging to an individual or community
- 3. Whether, because of this, ownership of land was claimed by certain persons

After investigation, the land was to be taken into possession by NGC it had to be marked and certified. The certificate needed to state.

- 1. Position and approximate size of the land
- 2. Possible natural boundaries, and
- 3. The number and kind of marks used to manifest the taking of possession

4. A sketch map showing as precisely as possible the position of the land and boundary marks. 15

# Doctor, Albert Hahl, lawyer, Imperial Judge and then Governor of German New Guinea.

Dr. Hahl's 18-year career in German New Guinea saw the German Colony flourish, while at the same time he studied Tolai customs and learned the language. Soon after taking up his post as Imperial Judge in January 1896 Hahl began to explore the area of Tolai settlement, learning the language... He wrote "According to the deeds... the natives had sold all their land including their settlements... [But they now claimed] they had not understood the meaning of these documents and they had also not thought the Europeans would stay and use the land for plantations."

#### Colonial land acquisition impact upon traditional land tenure.

A key factor that changed the way the indigenous people looked at their land was that it had become an economic asset, whereas it was rarely, if ever seen as such before the Europeans came... [viewed as an asset] Land ceased to be viewed as living space and become "property". The traditional "ownership" concept also altered in that the only "living" indigenous population was making land deals – the spirits and the dead and the as-yet unborn were not involved, as they would have been in traditional considerations of land tenure.

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# Indigenous attitudes to land alienation.

The natives regard the early sales of land as one of the worst evils the "Whiteman" introduced. At the time of the sale they did not realise what consequences it would have on them. They were only interested in the firearms and ammunition they got for the land and which gave them superiority over their enemies. But now that the guns are confiscated by the administration and they have to leave their hamlets and move together in small reserves, their embitterment is great. More than once they have tried to regain possession of their land by force and to murder all foreigners. [Kleintitschen 1907]<sup>16</sup>

Writer's note: There were also benefits: based upon my experience of newly contacted people, the former owners of alienated land also recognised positives in having "outsiders" as their neighbours; positive outcomes such as the punishment of offenders by western law, thereby circumventing consequences of traditional pay-back, local employment, sales opportunities for garden and ocean produce, access to western goods, new ideas, new skills, medical aid, education and related experiences.

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Dr. Hahl's development plan was concerned with both expansion and intensification of Government influence. The main aim was the opening up of the interior of Kaiser Wilhelmsland – stations on the Sepik Ramu and Markham, also the opening up of New Britain beyond the Gazelle Peninsular. Also, stations in strategic positions including one at Wewak and Vanimo.

Dr. Hahl placed important emphasis on Public Health...It was clear in 1914 that German NG was an economic and administrative success. The European population was over 1,600 Trade amounted to \$1,600,000 with exports exceeding imports. A company was about to start dredging for gold in the Waria River area.

Kaiser Wilhelmsland development depended upon establishing plantations, whereas the Bismarck archipelago, was, at the time of annexation mainly based upon trading with natives. In 1910 a Forsyth Limited Liability Co and a capital of \$200,000 was formed and shortly afterwards

transformed into a share company, the H.S.A.G. [Hamburg South Sea Company] ...New capital was invested into a number of Companies founded by German interests.

During 1912/13 Governor Hahl was in a strong bargaining position and not at all keep to grant tax and other concessions...On the contrary he became seriously worried about the speed with which Australian and even British capital invaded German NG...A Buka and Bougainville trading Company and Burns & Philp's Walter Lucas gained a first substantial foothold by acquiring about 8,000 acres in Bougainville...<sup>17</sup>

According to the annual report of 1911-12 it became now one of the main duties of the Administration "to investigate in each case. Whether a transfer of land was compatible with the interests of the natives to make sure that there was enough land remained for a strong sand healthy native population."

Land and interracial relations. Although over alienation was not seen as a danger, the alienation of land to Europeans was often made responsible for native unrest — Examples included the Madang uprising of 1904 and unrest on the Gazelle Peninsular in 1893 and Madang again in 1912

When the natives "sold" their land around Blanche Bay at the time of Annexation, it did not influence their life at all. They continued to live on the land and use it as before. By 1893 the European plantations had grown so much that the first natives were expelled from their hamlets and pushed further inland. But there were other reasons for growing unrest...the behaviour of plantation labour... rape of Tolai women, theft etc<sup>18</sup>.

Native "conspiracies", it appears were not so much a result of particular wrongs particular natives had suffered at the hands of particular Europeans, but attempts of the natives to get rid of the Europeans, whose presence threatened their traditional way of life. They were preventive measures rather than acts of revenge, attempts of an organism to expel a foreign body which were bound to happen at certain stages during the process of colonisation. <sup>19</sup>

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#### Land acquisitions without Government Control

Commander Erskine's proclamation of the Protectorate of British New Guinea on 6<sup>th</sup> November 1884 promised to protect native and rights<sup>20</sup>, where as in New Guinea the Imperial Ordinance of 20/7/1887 only reserved the right to restrict the ownership of land acquired by Europeans "to protect the natives or other public interests. Neither did the Reich nor the NGC acquire a "basic title" to all the land in New Guinea as the British Crown [probably] did with the annexation of Australia.

German's rights were transferred to NGC by Imperial Charter...no other person could acquire ownership by the occupation of "ownerless land". The issue as to whether land was native owned or ownerless was a major issue for the legislation, but was effectively meaningless as the NGC and the German administration could not have any realistic understanding of any of the many forms of PNG traditional land tenure.

The Imperial Ordinance of 20/7/1887...was [apparently] based upon the assumption that there was a traditional system of land law in NG which was essentially the same as that of Germany...The theory of evolution of law...that primitive law was not basically different from Western law but less sophisticated... there is only one law, the law of mankind. Differences around the world are differences in development...The introduction of Western law into NG was a gift of a more highly developed law than their own.

Based on this theory the legal draftsmen knew the basic concept had to be there, and that was all that mattered since the concept of "ownership" used in the Ordinance... [after all] the concept of "ownership" formed part of each and every legal system.

The legislative draftsman distinguished between "ownerless" and "Native" land, but defined neither...the [NGC] Agent was instructed to investigate which requirements had to be fulfilled to make a permanent transfer of land valid according to native custom but the draftsmen shrank from taking the consequences. They did not direct that the transfer had to be valid according to native custom. Instead they withdrew into the safer ground of German law. German Law alone was to decide if a transfer of land was valid...<sup>21</sup> In short no one knew what to do about traditional law.

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When the Reich took over from the NGC on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1899, the NGC held about 500,000 acres of land, compared with Queen Emma's 330,000 acres. This brought the total European land claims in German New Guinea to about 950,000 acres.<sup>22</sup>

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The need for native reserves: Dr. Hahl negotiated with Queen Emma and Geisler the NGC manager and reported that Both appreciated the need for setting aside native reserves and were prepared to cooperate. In his role as Imperial Judge, Dr. Hahl wrote I consider it necessary that special regulations be enacted for the final setting aside of land for natives. Shortly after Dr. Hahl wrote this report Administrator Ruediger resigned and Hagen, his replacement was preoccupied...It was not until December 1897 that the NGC Board of Directors received a detailed report on native reserves from Hagen's successor Skopnik...

The Board discussed the topic after establishing the general principle that NGC possession is to be protected, it went on to note that:

It is clear that this [legal] approach can inconvenience those who have acquired large areas of land and that the greediness and the limited capacity of the natives to understand our legal concepts can cause tensions and disputes. To prevent this an amicable agreement should first of all be attempted... If this proves impossible, it may become necessary to enact regulations to protect the natives... This prospect will probably make the settlers more inclined to ... settle disputes by agreement. The Board agreed ... Hahl should submit a further [Ordinance] draft.

Dr. Hahl's new draft of 15 September 1898...could be created by amicable agreement or, if this proved impossible, by confiscation...These rules applied to all European land, whether acquired before or after annexation. New land acquisitions could only be registered after the rights of the natives had been secured.

**NB 1** the NGC board at this time was about to sign a second agreement with the Reich [7 October 1898] and thus had a good excuse to leave decisions to the Imperial administration to deal with the problems of native land rights.

**NB 2** As Imperial Judge, Dr. Hahl's jurisdiction related only to the Bismarck Archipelago, not Kaiser Wilhelmsland.

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Imperial Judge Boether informed the NGC manager in Frederich Wilhelmshafen on 15 November 1901 that he had ordered to have NGC cancelled as owner of the Njuhi Islands acquired by Luecker in July 1898, as an on the spot examination showed the contract to be void...Boether refused with costs on 30 November 1901 to register eleven land acquisitions of together about

100,000 acres that Luecker made around Berlinhafen. The examination on the spot "proved in every case that the agreements were for material reasons not valid in law." ...Boether's also refused registration of NGC's claims to about 25,000 acres in Hansa Bay, 6,000 acres in Potsdamhafen, 4,000 in Adelberthafen and 2,000 in the vicinity of Wewak. NGC challenged these decisions in a letter to the foreign office...Boether shortly afterwards returned to Germany.<sup>23</sup> Whether or not this return home was a direct result of the NGC complaint is unclear.

Whereas Boether had refused to recognise any land acquisition which was not valid in law. For Dr. Hahl the legal validity of a land acquisition was largely irrelevant as long as sufficient land remained for the natives. He was not so much interested in how the land was acquired, but in how the land was divided between Europeans and natives...Dr. Hahl may have felt that it was impossible to acquire land in New Guinea in accordance with German law, or that, even if it were possible, such an acquisition would not be just, or that justice was not a suitable criterion for "justification" of European land acquisitions if the colony was to develop.<sup>24</sup>

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When the Reich took over the administration of German NG on 1 April 1899, it inherited the land laws of the NGC period based upon the Imperial Ordinance of 20 July 1887...the basis of a new set of land laws was the "Imperial Ordinance regarding Rights to Lands in the German Colonies" of 21 November 1902. It was based on the view that land owned by Europeans should be governed by German law, that native and should be governed by traditional law. Dr. Hahl issued regulations under the 1902 Ordinance which tried to keep the law out of the question of native reserves. The regulations were issued on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1904. The land acquisition regulations of 1904 replaced the NGC form of 1887, which in turn had replaced the form issued to Finsch in 1884. The 1904 regulations main difference from the earlier forms in that the latter included questions dealing with the protection of native interests.

Whereas the NGC had tried to enact detailed and binding regulations, now almost everything was left to the Governor. At least in theory.

By 1909 a draft for a detailed set of principles for the Transfer of Land further clarified policy. It was not until 24 April 1912 when the draft was published. The new principles were again revised 18 months later 1 January 1914.

The land laws of the NGC period made no provision for the creation of native reserves ...the 1902 Ordinance gave the colonial governments a free hand to create native reserves in the form that they regarded as most suitable. It appears that Hahl at first decided to calculate native reserves on the basis of 5 acres per adult male. The certificate issued by NGC in 1903 stipulated 2.5 acres per head of population. The 1909 draft added that these 2.5 acres had to be suitable for planting taro or coconut palms

The acquisition of land was still not a legal transaction but a complex historical process – although the social, political and economic motives had essentially changed since pre-contact days. There was layer upon layer of deeds, agreements, registrations, tentative arrangements, gifts and payments, surveys and exchanges of land, but if the situation became critical, they were not tested in court but new negotiations were started...The gap is still there, almost as deep as ever, and land in New Guinea remains between two laws<sup>25</sup>.

Concluding Comments No 1- from Dr. Hahl's perspective: Near the end of 1913 I called the Commissioners and District Officers together in Rabaul. At the time it appeared as if the long years of struggle to persuade the coastal and Island people to adapt to the new order which had overwhelmed their world had achieved their objective: blood feuds and headhunting had been

stopped. The villages and clans deferred to the authorities appointed from among their own number and had learned to put to economic use their hereditary lands, now guaranteed to them in perpetuity

Naturally we had to anticipate occasional reversals for a considerable time in the future, and to be armed to deal with them. But firm foundations had been laid for raising the standard of living and fighting disease. However, our sphere of influence was still inadequate. New urgent tasks arising from economic trends and population problem were facing us. This meeting of the seasoned and responsible leaders in the remoter districts had been called to discuss these.<sup>26</sup>

Concluding Comments, No 2 - A 21<sup>st</sup> Century review: Dr. Hahl's vision and application of his wisdom saw German New Guinea bloom as a colonial success. It became the "prize" in the eyes of Australia's Prime Minister Hughes and of Walter Lucas of Burns Philp. The expropriation of German properties and transferring ownership of them to Australian ex-servicemen who lacked the skills to manage copra plantations, earned the expropriation period of 1920-1927 the title *A Prodigy of Wastefulness, Corruption, Ignorance and Indolence.*<sup>27</sup>

Copra<sup>3</sup>, the highly sought-after tropical product, that drove German's 19<sup>th</sup> century colonial expansion in the Pacific, by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century its market share had declined due to the development of the petroleum industry and of detergents. This decline, coincided with production loss as the palms aged. In order to remain economically viable, many plantations ceased employing indentured labour and left copra production to the people of adjacent villages, the former landowners. They sold the copra back to the plantations, for cash which was spent in the plantation's retail outlets<sup>28</sup>.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the departure of colonialists from Germany, Australia, Japan and, in 1975, Australia, for a second time. The New Guinean people, once judged as being *not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world* weathered the imposition of the sacred trust imposed upon Australia by the League of Nations mandate and had taken over the responsibilities of for running their own sovereign state, *together with any problems there may be*.

One such problem certainly must be the inheritance of confusing land legislation, which continues to try to apply solid Western legal interpretations to the flexibility of many and varied systems of Melanesian land tenure.

#### **End Notes Chapter 4**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> P.G.Sack – Land Between two Laws, ANU Press 1973 Page 5

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> B.Malinowski – Crime and Punishment in Savage Society – Kegan Paul, Trench Trubner & Co Ltd New York 1926 Pages 67-8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> P.G.Sack 1973 Pages 16-17

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> P.G.Sack 1973 Pages 116

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> P.G.Sack 1973 Pages 118

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> P.G.Sack 1973 Pages 118

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> P.G.Sack 1973 Pages 119

<sup>8</sup> P.G.Sack 1973 Pahe 120

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> P.G.Sack 1973 Page 124-126

<sup>10</sup> P.G.Sack 1973 Page 125-126

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> P.G.Sack 1973 Page 142

<sup>12</sup> P.G.Sack 1973 Page 122-124

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Peter J. Hempenstall – Pacific Islanders under German Rule; A study in the meaning of colonialism ANU Press 2016 P 167

<sup>14</sup> P.G.Sack 1973 Page 127

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Copra was used in the manufacture of soaps, margarine, explosives, cosmetics, perfumes and related products.

- 15 P.G.Sack 1973 Pages 129-130
- 16 P.G.Sack 1973 Pages 107
- <sup>17</sup> P.G.Sack 1973 Pages 104
- <sup>18</sup> P.G.Sack 1973 Pages 107
- 19 P.G.Sack 1973 Pages 109
- <sup>20</sup> Melanesian Law Journal Vol 16 Page 57
- <sup>21</sup> P.G.Sack 1973 Pages 135
- <sup>22</sup> P.G.Sack 1973 Pages 142
- <sup>23</sup> P.G.Sack 1973 Pages 152-154
- <sup>24</sup> P.G.Sack 1973 Pages 171-172
- <sup>25</sup> P.G.Sack 1973 Pages 176-186
- <sup>26</sup> A.Hahl Governor in New Guinea edited and translated by P.G.Sack and D.Clark ANU Press 1980 P146-147
- $^{\rm 27}$  Peter Cahill in the Journal of Pacific History Vol 32 No 1 June 1997 pages 3 28
- <sup>28</sup> Personal observation of the writer.

# Sepik 2 Chapter 5 Labour recruitment.

#### Labour Recruitment.

A common theme, throughout the German colonial administration, the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force [ANMEF] and the later Australian civil administration periods, was the constant need for large numbers of labourers to keep up the production of the plantations and the mines. The plantations were primarily producing copra, while it was phosphate mining in Nauru and elsewhere in German times, and gold mining in the Australian pre-World War 2 era.

As indicated in Chapter 2 the NGC had little faith in New Guinean labour and sought Malay and Chinese labour with disastrous results. Local New Guinea labour was recruited and sent to work on plantations and in mines without an adequate safe guard of industry regulation. In particular, no law existed to stipulate rations to be issued to labour on plantations Hahl battled to get the 1909 Labour ordinance on the books. On the basis of medical advice Hahl proposed to increase rations...the arguments for and against went to Berlin. Rations were not increased and remained at the 1909 level until the end of German rule. The 1909 meat ration was a quarter of what Queensland employers were required to give Pacific Islanders in the days of the Queensland labour trade. <sup>1</sup>

Hahl also forbade contract extensions – Forsyth Co had a habit of this and kept labourers away from home for 6 years. Hahl also now required labour recruiting parties to be accompanied by a European. In the beginning of 1914 Hahl imposed recruiting restrictions on villages near Aitape. The Aitape communities, with a population of about 800 stood in the path of recruiters going inland. Having lost all their young men to the plantations, they took up arms against the government. Hahl thought the situation similar to that in west New Britain in 1912; the villagers must be collected together again; the young men must be able to return home so marriages could take place in order to maintain the population. He hoped a year's labour recruiting closure would be enough.<sup>2</sup>

The Sepik would become known as the labour pool for New Guinea plantations and mines, but this was mainly after the German colonial period. The 1912/13 "Behrmann expedition" reported on the large populations that were easily accessible from the Sepik River. Stewart Firth noted:

German recruiters worked the lower reaches of the Sepik in the years before the war and Angoram was built in 1913. Sepik labour recruiting in German times can have been little influenced by government regulation because even the Madang District officer Ernst Berghausen, took villager recruits by force.

In December 1913, beginning a stay of 2 years in the Sepik, the Anthropologist Richard Thurnwald describes in his diary the violent progress of Berghausen up the Sepik as far as Malu near Ambunti. Heavily addicted to morphine Berghausen was said to have recruited where ever he was not sick with fever or stupefied. He was unknown to the river people and none volunteered to go with him, so he sent police to fetch recruits whether they resisted or not. He locked the recruits in the dark cramped storeroom of the steamer "Kolonialgesellschaft" like a slave trader, he had 17 people cooped up in there...Forced recruiting is suitable after fighting. But when conditions are peaceful the people become irritated and many of the murders of the past few years which have taken place in this region of this district office are in part no doubt attributable to this ill-considered and blunt procedure.

Travelling upstream Thurnwald encountered villages planning to avenge the loss of kinfolk by eating the "two white pigs" who had abducted them. <sup>3</sup>

In commenting on these described incidents, historian Peter Sack noted that Thurnwald did not accompany Berghausen during the recruiting trip mentioned and that "diary" was in fact a series of letters written to his fiancée. Further, that the description of recruiting was written in the context of a 'bloody engagement' between Thurnwald's police escort and Sepik people some distance above Malu which had left three people dead. While Sack's criticism of Firth's work runs for several pages<sup>4</sup>, it would appear that the tactics attributed to Berghausen run parallel to those described by Sepik elders both on the north coast as well as in the Middle Sepik.

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Interim Conclusion – German New Guinea Labour matters. During Dr. Hahl's Governorship, labour recruitment and management issues saw a balanced improvement in terms the welfare of the labourers, the communities from which they came, and the copra productivity upon which the labour was employed. As with Dr. Hahl's progressive plans for exploration and development of the colony, labour issues were placed on hold with the outbreak of World War 1.

#### 000000000

The 1921-22 report to the League of Nations: In a long section entitled *Native Labour* the indentured labour system was described in detail, with comparisons with the indentured labour systems of the adjacent colonies of Papua and the Solomon Islands.

Criticism of German recruitment of women – [the subject on the next chapter] – was described as a most reprehensible practice<sup>6</sup> as it used females to induce natives to sign on for a second term. The social issues of women returning to their new husband's home districts were discussed as were breaches of the traditional marriage customs that such marriages caused. To address these issues the report noted that The Administration has under consideration that, if a married man is recruited, his wife and children must accompany him<sup>7</sup>. While this "consideration" read well in the annual report to the League of Nations, it was never implemented. The scale of the additional cost burden it would have imposed is evident from the following figures:

During 1921-22 11,171 natives were recruited, an increase of 1,559, over the number in 1920-21...The total number under contract on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1922 was 26,619, a somewhat smaller figure than the previous year when 27,728 were employed.

The deferred wages system: Wages were usually paid monthly. Not more than one third [unless the Administrator authorized another proportion] of the wage was paid as the wages became due; the balance was held by the employer and paid at the expiry of the contract.<sup>8</sup>

**Report on ...Natural Resources – Native Labour.** The report argued that of TNG's censused population of 166,721 in 1920, which, when added to the estimated population of the Ramu, brought the total population figure to about 170,000. Of this, the report argued, the fit adult male population aged between 14 to 45 years<sup>9</sup>, would amount about 72,000 men., and given that those suitable to be indentured labour range between 14 and, say 30, about a third would be too old,

and also given that a certain number would be required to remain in the villages to attend to gardens, etc, that the number available for use on plantations would be about 32,000. <sup>1</sup>

In spite of the indentured labour figures quoted earlier, the report noted that in 1921, 30,949 men were indentured. The report noted that as approximately 140,000 acres were under cultivation this meant each labourer would be responsible for 4.5 acres, which rose to 5 acres when some 3,000 labourers, were taken into account, who might be expected to be employed on duties other than plantation related.

The report concluded that as the area of plantations [not to mention the labour requirements of the mining industry which would soon become relevant] increases, more labour would be required and that this would need to come from districts "which have not yet been opened up". This of course was the logic behind Dr. Hahl's 1914 exploration and development plan.

In order to avoid a decrease in population several factors have to be considered: -2

- 1st. Recruiting must be under a rigid system of control.
- $2^{nd}$ . Only a proportion of healthy males should be recruited from each village.
- 3<sup>rd</sup>. That the Government select recruiters in each district who have a knowledge of local conditions and the language.
- 4<sup>th</sup>. That after a native has served his period of indenture, he be encouraged to marry.
- 5<sup>th</sup>. That natives generally be given tuition is schools specially provided, for training in various trades, etc., previous to their being indentured. <sup>10</sup>

Viewed from a 21<sup>st</sup> century standpoint, what stands out both from Dr. Hahl's 1914 perspective and the early Australian TNG administrative standpoint; the TNG population was viewed primarily as a resource to maintain the colony's productivity. Any reference to any "welfare" related benefit for the natives was less humanitarian in nature, than a requirement to maintain a healthy and increasing supply of indentured labour.

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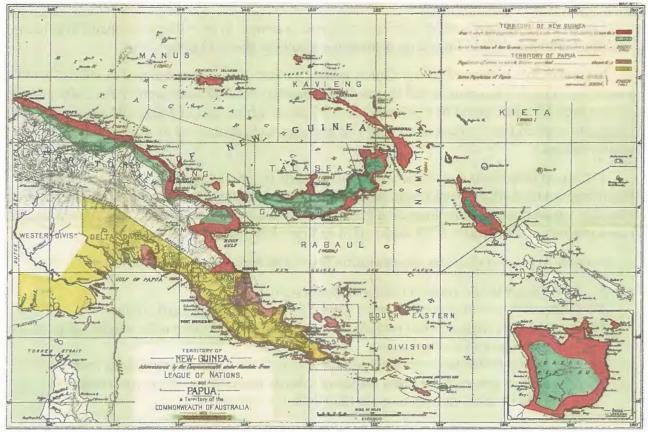
During the period of ANMEF administration of former German New Guinea, while the need for labour recruitment continued, but, as might be expected, supervision of recruiters, by inexperienced Australian officers and men, was minimal. Few natives of the Bismarck Archipelago offered their services as labourers as they had their own coconut groves to manage and the Chinese were more interested in trading and entrepreneurial activities.

Recruiting was conducted mainly on the New Guinea mainland with large firms, particularly in Madang, offering a fixed price for each labourer *caught from the bush*<sup>11</sup> and delivered there.

Former German New Guinea effectively consisted of a narrow coastal strip accessible by shipping upon which settlements and plantations had been established. Behind that coastal strip was the semi-explored and unexplored hinterland and its often-large native population, which was generally largely ignorant of the outside world.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> During the writer's posting to Gumine in the then Eastern Highlands in 1962, he had some limited involvement in managing recruitment issues for the Highland Labour Scheme [HLS], and later in the Sepik, the monitoring of labour absenteeism from village communities. Both for the HLS and Sepik villages policy allowed a maximum of 33% of fit adult male absenteeism, before consideration would be given to closing an area to recruiting. In practice, this was largely a theoretical exercise. The writer at no time closed an area to recruiting.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> While these words may have read well in the League of Nations headquarters they bore so little relationship with the reality of the realm of TNG labour recruiting in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, to be laughable.



1921-22 Annual report to League of Nations Map

[Red] Area in which Native Population counted and under effective control

[Blue] Area in which Native Population estimated and under partial control

[No colour] Unexplored country – entered by recruiters at their own risk to operate outside the law if they so chose.

As indicated elsewhere, Middle Sepik informants did not differentiate between the German colonial period and the AN&MEF administration. This is not surprising as the recruiters they met in this period including many Germans, such as Fritsche at Avatip in 1918. Recruiters in the AN&MEF period sent Iatmul river men and others with guns into the Sepik Plains to recruit labour. Gaui, an elder of Sengo explained the following case to me in February 1973:

The first Luluai [at Sengo] was appointed by the Germans, [he was] Tubigumban. He was the recognized fight leader. Gugundimi was the Tultul. The Germans [or was it AN&MEF?] came to get labour and they shot down some of our people; they shot Jimarawan, the [accompanying] Sepiks said "shoot him, he is running away". We heard that it was a Sepik boats crew with the Germans who shot him. They took recruits out to work. The recruits [from here] were Gugundimi and Masugundimi. They also took two Jamas to make four. They took them tied up in ropes so they could not run away, but Mogomeli did escape. <sup>12</sup>

The Sawos language group of the Sepik Plains was the traditional enemy of the Iatmul so they used their access to firepower to do more than assist with labour recruitment; they used it in warfare against their old enemy and in the process enhanced the pre-existing state of hegemony they had held for generations over the Sepik Plains people.

Initially recruiters had to be European or people with the same rights as Europeans. These included Japanese, but not Chinese who were not permitted to employ native labour before 1916. On 26<sup>th</sup> November 1915 Administrator S.A. Petherbridge passed an ordinance that removed the special privileges enjoyed by Europeans by removing the "native status" of Asians and making them subject to the same courts.<sup>13</sup>

People "not of good character" [a term which was not defined] were not granted recruiting licences. This was expected to prevent trickery or coercion. But once most recruiters were Chinese, the regulations were relaxed to allow Chinese business men "of good character" and planters to be licenced to recruit labour. In accordance with section 29 of the Native Labour Ordinance of 1923 a recruiter's licence cost £50, which allowed recruitment access to approved recruitment areas. Recruiting was hard and dangerous, but profitable work, particularly when the recruiters entered unpacified areas and places outside those approved for recruitment. It is noted that Raphael Chow Chen On from Wewak accompanied Bill MacGregor on recruiting journeys in the Sepik in 1937. 
G.W.L. Townsend describes the procedures required by the 1923 Labour Ordinance as follows:

when a labour recruiter brings in recruits to be signed on for a three years' indentured labour contract he first presented them to the Medical Assistant for examination. If the Medical Assistant was not available, they were signed on by an officer who included the notation "No medical officer available." As the labour usually went by ship direct to the plantation involved, which might not be visited by patrolling Government medical staff for two years at a time, the medical examination frequently did not amount to very much.

Recruits were then brought to the District Office where the recruiter filled out a form giving the names of the recruits, their village, the names of their next of kin, the place where they were to work, their rate of wages and the place where they were recruited. The signing on officer was to satisfy himself as to the correctness of these particulars and the willingness of each native to enter into the contract.

The difficulties facing a conscientious officer were many: It was most likely that the recruiter had not visited all the villages where the labourers came from, but had sent his "boys" in to do the recruiting. Then about ninety percent of those recruited would not understand any words of Pidgin English except those that the recruiter's "boys" had drilled into them. His own name, his village name and "Mi laik wok" were all that was required of a recruit. If a native could not speak Pidgin English, it was the duty of the recruiter to provide an interpreter, which he somehow always did from among his five or six local assistants. Between them they managed the hundreds of languages of the Sepik and wider TNG, which was naturally very convenient, if somewhat remarkable.

Next came the witnessing by the "signing-on" officer of the placement of the recruit's thumb print on edge of the contract paper. The recruiter then paid a one shilling for the Government's blessing of the contract and, if the compulsory issues of a blanket, bowl, spoon and trade box were correct, the recruited could take them off.

The largest employer of native labour at that time was the Expropriation Board which had taken over all German plantations and enterprises. Although it was a Commonwealth Government agency, the instructions were that it was to be treated as a commercial enterprise. However, in the matter of recruiting the Expropriation Board was relieved of the responsibility of providing a trade box, which indentured labourers used for safe keeping their belongings. At the time of "signing on" the contract was endorsed "box to be issued

could be prosecuted for any labour offence except physical assault without the Administrator's consent. The system was one of a thinly disguised system of forced labour. <sup>15</sup>

Although Medical Assistant Stan Christian may have held stronger views on labour recruiters than some, his views probably reflected what most administration people thought of labour recruiters before World War 2. Stan told the writer in Minj in 1974:

[Recruiter] Johnny Young<sup>3</sup>, a nasty bit of works. Great big tummy and belt hanging down; a great fat chap...He used to bring his recruits to me [for medical inspection] and I'd knock them back and he'd argue. Yes, he was a recruiter...just before the war. We had a lot of picturesque recruiters up there [i.e. in the Sepik]. One chap built himself a big tower. Was it Bill Stower? He reckoned if you were 30 feet above the ground the mosquitoes did not get you. Another chap used to do conjuring tricks, and got around in top hats. Idiotic sort of things, but Young was just nasty...

There was a lot of class distinction in those days too. Not between natives and Whites, but between us Government people and the others. A lot of them you just would not have in your house; a lot of them were just not worth bringing in. Shanghai Brown? [This in answer to my question] There were several Browns, but they all belonged to the same class: Recruiters: which meant that they were people I just did not want to know. If I had to examine their labour it meant that I suspected them of trying to put something over me. <sup>16</sup>

In an interview the writer conducted with Mr. J.K.McCarthy in 1974, he told the following story concerning labour recruiting. One Jock MacKay had been a Patrol Officer in 1921 and he was never promoted. He was approached in in 1948 if he would accept employment recruiting labour.

Mackay wrote a magnificent letter in reply – something like All my life, I have regarded recruiters as the lowest thing on earth, now you are offering it to me at double the salary you ever gave me as a patrol officer. He ended by saying "You can stick it up your...

Yours Faithfully
J.B.MacKay<sup>17</sup>

Not all recruiters were bad, at least in the opinion of a young zoologist and adventurer who found himself in Aitape in 1936. A.J.[Jock] Marshall. He wrote the following of a labour recruiter he accompanied on a patrol south of the Torricelli Mountains:

Wally Hook was a recruiter. His profession...was probably the most strenuous, and certainly the riskiest in a country notorious for its dangerous professions...It is the recruiter, collecting black labour for white tropical enterprise, who stands about the best chance of dying with his boots laced.

All the way through our trip Wally had "bought boys". His special technique of "buying" consisted of lying reading in the haus kiap until the tentative cough of a prospective recruit sounds at the door. If nobody coughed Wally moved to the next village and then the next until someone did.

If the prospective recruit has his parents' permission to go away to work, Wally writes down his name phonetically, also that of his father and the Luluai, presents him with

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> We meet Johnny Young again in Sepik 4 Chapter "Wicked" Angoram -The Port Royal of the Sepik?"

about fifteen shillings worth of silver or goods, and so he is 'bought.'. On the outward journey, the boys were generally left in the village to be collected on the return.

In addition to the customary 15/- payment the recruit is given a scarlet laplap [loin cloth], a blanket, an enamel bowl and other sundries and a box to keep them all in. All this is done under the strictest government supervision; every raw bushman is signed on and fingerprinted by a medical officer, who gives the native every chance to return to his village if he wants to.

There is also the sense of adventure – seeing the sea for the first time and going to the coast where they can collect shells which are so important to them in most of the important periods of life. Here too was the opportunity for a youth in disgrace to spend a safe and profitable time living it down...

Recruiting is a profitable profession if you are successful...between five and ten pounds per head for recruits from plantations and mining companies. Ten years ago, when labour was at a premium, £15 per boy was not a record price in the pioneer days of the gold fields. In a single trip, an experienced recruiter often obtains as many as seventy kanakas...I saw Wally reject two sturdy boys...He said that already too many young men had left that community...it would be time to recruit more when some of the absentees returned.

As we passed on towards the coast, a growing retinue of dismal farewellers followed ... The old mother...the little woman and the kid sister all sobbing noisily. 18

There was another recruiter in Aitape's small community in 1936, one Charlie Gough. Marshall described him as one of the "seven citizens" of Aitape who he did not specifically name<sup>4</sup>, but who by deduction were Wally Hook, ADO JK McCarthy, an unnamed Patrol Officer, radio operator Claude..., M.B.Arthur Medical Assistant, Jim...Manager of Oil Search Limited and Charlie Gough. Also, present, but not qualifying as members of the "Seven" a few German Catholic Priests, and the Chinese traders – Ning Hee, his wife and children and Kui Hing. Marshall continues his story:

. In pub-less Aitape Charley Gough's store was an admirable substitute...a low wood and iron shack built under drooping casuarina trees by the river. Gough, about 50 years old made and lost a fortune at Edie Creek [gold field] and arrived in Aitape broke to become Wally Hook's partner and got back on his feet. <sup>19</sup>

At the end of Marshall's story, on the 11<sup>th</sup> September 1936 the Aitape community, almost in disbelief, received news of Charlie Gough's untimely death. J.K. McCarthy takes up the story:

Although Charlie Gough's store in Aitape was a fairly prosperous one, Jack Thurston's recent gold strike at Yamil in what would become the Maprik sub district again stirred his need to prospect for gold. Gold eluded him on his trips to the Womsis and Urat areas. But the price for labour recruits had been pushed to £10 per head by the gold rush at and around Edie Creek and his prospecting trips had familiarized him with the Aitape inland area and he had friends there who, for a fee, could help.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Marshall's book makes observations about illegal trade in bird of paradise feathers, observations concerning harems of beautiful Ninigo Island girls on German plantations and the like, which might have been libellous if associated with specific named persons

Paying natives to assist in persuading their fellow men to go to work was legally forbidden and the use of chiefs and village officials was specially frowned upon. Any recruiter who broke the law in this way was liable to heavy penalties...But it was a law that was almost impossible to enforce. Surely there was nothing to prevent a present being given to a friend? "What's the use of having friends in the villages if you can't use 'em?" grinned the wily Gough.

J.K.McCarthy was on patrol in the area during Gough's last recruiting drive:

I spoke to Charlie Gough as I passed through Malabas village on the way to Ilahaup, the last village before the "uncontrolled" area began. South of Ilahaup the villages were untouched by the civilizing influences of the white man and only official patrols could enter. Charlie had already been out from Aitape for some weeks, and his recruiting trip so far had been no more successful than his gold prospecting. He was heading further south...

A few days later Charlie Gough walked into Ilahaup as I was walking out. Again, he was surprised to see me. He wasn't quite so friendly, for he had there with him a medical tultul, a village official appointed by the Administration. Charlie knew he shouldn't have had the tultul in his party.

"You can't use him as a recruiter" I said "Buzz him off back home..."

"Of course, I will," grinned Gough, and he made a great show of saying farewell to the native. I had no doubt that as soon as I got out of sight back would come the tultul and there was nothing I could do about it. I reminded him that he was on the border of the uncontrolled area and I left.

Next morning, we were at the village of Amon, ready to move off again towards the coast, when a rumour reached me... Charlie Gough had been killed... We met remnants of Gough's party. Gough was dead and four of the ten natives who had been with him were severely wounded by spears and arrows... We attended to the wounded as best we could and sent them back to the coast with a constable. We got the full story from the others.

The medical tultul had indeed returned to Gough after I left, and he had suggested to Gough that as he was friendly with the nearby villages in the uncontrolled area that he visit them alone and try to recruit men. Gough in the meantime would wait at Ilahaup.

At Leihinga within the prohibited country the tultul persuaded a youth named Lanuwan to return with him to Gough's camp. The boy was about fourteen years old and Gough was delighted...he gave the boy an axe, a knife and a piece of calico to seal the deal...Lanuwan's absence was quickly noticed at Leihinga. His father was angered when he learned that his son had gone. To add to his anger the people of Leihinga were quarrelling and unfriendly with those at Gough's camp at Ilahaup. He set off at once for Gough's camp and from the surrounding bush called to his son. Young Lanuwan heard his father's orders and ran to him. He took the presents that Gough had given him. Charles was very annoyed about this; the trade goods had a value of something like twelve shillings and six pence.

"No damned boy puts it over me" he roared.

Perhaps his anger made him forget that Leihinga was forbidden ground to him. Charles Gough had five shot guns and he gave them to his carriers. He handed them two cartridges apiece and kept for himself his remaining weapon, a Winchester .44. In the late

afternoon, Gough reached the outskirts of the village of Leihinga and across the track a tree had been felled and two spears planted before it. It was a clear sign of hostility. Some of Gough's boys became nervous.

"Let us go back, master. These kanakas mean to fight – and there are many of them," they said. Gough cursed them for cowards; uprooted the spears and climbed over the fallen tree. A man's voice from the bush now called upon them to go back. But Gough was a determined man.

"Either the boy returns to me, or you return the axe and the knife" he roared in reply, and he marched forward at the head of his party. The first spear whistled through the air as he reached the clearing in front of the haus tambaran, and it was followed by a shower of arrows. Gough fired and was speared in the thigh. He half fell to the ground but he still fired. His carriers were still with him but they only had two cartridges each and soon their shotguns were useless.

"More cartridges in my pack" gasped Gough. They were his last words. A man rushed at him and his spear took Gough in the neck. As Gough fell his carriers broke and ran. But they were not followed, for the attackers now had a helpless target, and they continued to fire arrows into the body of the white man.

McCarthy decided his four police were insufficient for him to mount an investigation. Instead his party walked north and reached the coast midway between Aitape and Wewak. They headed east, and at Dagua found a small ship at anchor. The ship took them to Wewak. Twenty-four hours later a patrol of DO "Kassa" Townsend, McCarthy and Cadet Patrol Officer Kyngdon returned to the area to investigate. Leihings was found to be deserted. Gough's body was buried. Arrests were made and McCarthy gave evidence at the trial:

...my evidence was meant to help convict them, but I hoped it would in fact let them off lightly, for it would show that a father's love for his son was probably the real reason for the killing...I felt there was a certain sympathy in Chief Judge Wanliss' attitude as he listened. ...The Chief Judge brought in a verdict of manslaughter. In sentencing the Leihinga men to five years' imprisonment he said he would be prepared to recommend their earlier release... Two years later the men were released.

I asked for, and got the job of taking them back to their village, and what rejoicing there was. I do not think that old Charlie Gough, who still sleeps by the great haus tambaran at Leihinga, with his grave tended by the people who killed him, would have wanted it differently.<sup>20</sup>

A unique insight into 1930's recruiting; A letter from J.M.Wood recruiter based at Yakamul, dated 1st June 1938 and addressed to Ted [Fulton] and Len [Tudor] [gold miners at Yamil]

Mr. Wood explained that he was in financial difficulties and needed a loan of £100 to tide him over. His letter reads in part:

Since I had that attack of pneumonia in Wewak I have been hindered by ill health..., and have not been able to carry out the usual recruiting trips which carried me in the past, copra too, has played a great part in it as I have not had the advantage of the high prices that came in the North West [Monsoon] season, this combined with hinderance from the Government, has put me behind.

My first trip to Maprik was successful, but it all went to reduce Carpenter's account, which I contracted to get sufficient stores to carry me over the North West.

My second trip was a decided failure, around Wosera. I arrived just after Moy, the PO had shot a village up. A chap named Fayl had had trouble with his boys in another direction, his boys getting out of control and raping marys [meris being the pidgin word for women]. On top of that I met Jack Bannigan...a couple of days after his boys shot a kanaka, so you can imagine what recruiting would be like in that area after they had finished...<sup>21</sup>

**Writer's Note:** It was not learned whether Mr. Wood received his loan. He was not repatriated to Australia and died of natural causes in the mission hospital on Kairiru Island after the Japanese had occupied it.<sup>22</sup>

Kwonji of Burui also spoke of recruiting at the time of the Yamil gold rush.<sup>23</sup>

The prospectors used to come upriver and go through here [Burui] to Maprik. But the Woseras were still fighting, particularly at Sirangwanda. I went with police and Mr. Hoopman [Harold Woodman] to bring the peace<sup>5</sup>...Sepiks at this time became recruiters. They used to take trade goods in and buy labourers to work on the coast. The Yamanumbus, Korogos and Japanaut used this as an opportunity to kill people. They would take them out [as recruits] and kill them on the way. I found out about this and reported it. Kemerabi also heard about it and hid the talk and did not report it.

From Yamunumbu Wingaui killed one and so did Mondo, who was hanged at Ambunti. From Korogo we did not get a clear story and they got away [with it]. They said the missing men ran away. The Korogos used to go inside to Giniambi, Torembei, Namangoa and Kwimba. The men who used to recruit were Nipmawan and Pangamoi. They are dead now... The Yamunumbus killed the Kwimbas. The Yamunumbus who did this are also dead. They were Winauwi and Mapwandambwi. They also killed a Burui man who was sleeping on a bed [at Kwimba?]. I reported it and the man was gaoled. They did not take heads. This occurred before the Jamas and Sengos were hanged.

So why kill these people and thereby forfeit their monetary value as recruits? In terms of economics the logical answer has to be that the killers had a higher priority to be met. GWL Townsend explains what that higher priority probably was:

...I would sit among the old men of the village and argue the Government's position and point out...law and order did not include head-taking or war between neighbours...Just as strongly the elders would point out, perfectly logically as far as they were concerned, that there was now an increasing number of young men in the village who had not taken their heads and therefore could not get married or take their place as adults in the community.<sup>24</sup>

In summary, native labour issues through the administrations of Germany, the AN&MEF era and the pre-World War 2 civil administration were characterized by recruiters and recruiting practices which earned for themselves a bad reputation, although, in the minority there were "good recruiters" such as Wally Hook at Aitape. And as indicated in Sepik 3, *The Sepik at War*, the District Office Clerk Len Odgers spent part of his duty time in paying off indentured labourers from distant plantations and the mines. Immediately following the war District Officer Horrie Niall set his administration four main points of policy focus. The 4<sup>th</sup> of these was to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Harold Woodman was ADO at Ambunti in 1927-28 before the Sepik gold rush. I have no doubt that Mr Woodman and Kwanji undertook law and order duties, but that was before the gold rush of the 1930s.

Pay deferred wages to labourers who had been working in other districts and had been unable to return until the war ended.

At the outbreak of war in PNG in 1941, there were over 5,000 Sepik men working mainly as indentured labourers on plantations and mines in other districts, most of which were overrun by the enemy.<sup>25</sup>

# **End Notes Chapter 5**

- 1 S.Firth 1986 p 123/4
- <sup>2</sup> S.Firth 1986 p 132
- <sup>3</sup> S.Firth 1986 p 96
- <sup>4</sup> P.Sack Phantom History, rule of law and the colonial state. Division of Pacific & Asian Studies ANU 2001 P56-61
- <sup>5</sup> S.Firth 1986 P 132
- <sup>6</sup> 1921-22 Annual report to the League of Nations Page 53 clause #204
- <sup>7</sup> 1921-22 Annual report to the League of Nations Page 53 clause #204
- 8 1921-22 Annual report to the League of Nations Page 57 clause #233
- <sup>9</sup> 1921-22 Annual report to the League of Nations Appendix B Page 75
- <sup>10</sup> 1921-22 Annual report to the League of Nations Appendix B Page 75
- <sup>11</sup> P.Cahill Needed but not wanted Chinese in Rabaul 1884-1960 CopyRight Publishing Co Brisbane 2012 p100-101
- <sup>12</sup> Bragge Sepik Research notes Vol 18 p 198
- <sup>13</sup> C. Rowley. 1958 p80-81
- <sup>14</sup> P.Cahill 2012 p 101
- <sup>15</sup> G.W.L.Townsend District Officer Pacific Publications 1968 P51-2
- <sup>16</sup> Stan Christian Interview in Minj in 1974. Bragge Sepik Research Notes Vol 19 P 537-8
- <sup>17</sup> Bragge Sepik Research Volume 19 interview with J.K.McCarthy P 553
- <sup>18</sup> A.J.Marshall The Men and Birds of Paradise William Heinemann Ltd London 1938 P 66-70.
- <sup>19</sup> A.J.Marshall 1938 P 73-77
- <sup>20</sup> J.K.McCarthy Patrol into Yesterday F.W.Cheshire Publishing 1963 P165-171
- <sup>21</sup> Letter provided by Elizabeth Thurston Ted Fulton's daughter. Item 118 Reference Vol 3.
- <sup>22</sup> L.W.Bragge Sepiki 3 The Sepik at War Chapter 45 page 201
- <sup>23</sup> Bragge Sepik Research notes Vol 18 p 187
- <sup>24</sup> G.W.L.Townsend District Officer Pacific Publications 1968 P152-3
- <sup>25</sup> L.Bragge Sepik 4 Coming to Grips with the Future. Chapter 1 The transition back to Australian civilian administration 28th February 1946 to October 1946.

#### Chapter 6 Labour recruitment with a difference.

James Lyng, a former captain of the AIF, who served in occupied German New Guinea noted how in Rabaul:

The line of demarcation between different races is...far sharper drawn. When the day's work is done each race retires to its own distinct world, the Asiatics having no time for the Kanakas – the European having no time for either.<sup>1</sup>

The reality in German New Guinea was apparently quite different to Lyng's [and probably the official] view of things, with evidence indicating a widespread "blind-eye" tolerance of sexual relations between European men and native women.

Lajos Biro, a Hungarian naturalist and ethnographer was in and around Friedrich Wilhelmshafen [Madang] from 1896 to 1902. He was not formally affiliated with the NGC, but his long-term residence in the German community gave him intimate knowledge of the bureaucracy on a day to day basis. In particular, he wrote about "Papuan Wives and European Husbands" in which he noted that his NGC associates were required to be unmarried when recruited but who established "marriages of convenience" in the colony. Biro himself took three "wives" in the Madang region. His affectionate descriptions [and photographs] of them and his negotiations with their relatives are fascinating and perhaps unique in the literature. <sup>2</sup>

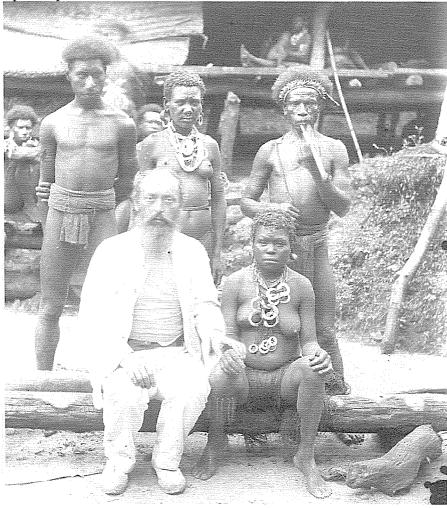


Photo of Lajos Biro and his third wife [from Bilbil] - date between 1896-1901. Courtesy Michael Hamson - New Guinea Art from Astrolabe Bay to Morobe Page 33 - 2016

Biro's observations were not an isolated instance; in mid-May 1910 visiting American anthropologist Albert Buell Lewis of the Joseph N. Field South Pacific Expedition, had occasion to visit Manam Island. His description of the visit not only involved such a "wife" of an NGC official, but also reflected the young lady's own self-perception and independence:

The cause of the trip to Manam was interesting. On the *Gabriel* with me there came, from Friedrich Wilhelmshaven a native police boy — an "*unter-officer* with a letter from the kiap¹ to Mr. Richter that he should assist him to get a certain native woman [hardly more than a girl] as wife. This woman had formerly been the wife of Herr Fabricius, the NG Co agent at Potsdamhafen. Fabricius had left about a month before and the woman had returned to her village. The police boy had given the woman 10 marks to be his wife. This she had taken, with that understanding, but later had apparently repented and gave the 10 marks to someone to return to the policeman — he had not yet received it. Also, the cook at Potsdamhafen had given dogs teeth to the girl's father seeking her hand. Richter went to Manam to find her and see how the case stood.... She wanted neither the Police boy or the cook...The decision was that both the 10 marks and the dog's teeth should be returned by the following Monday.<sup>3</sup>

In the Eitape District there was mention of women from both Sissano and Ninigo in the Western Islands being involved in *domestic relations* and *harems*: <sup>4</sup>

Sissano plantation owner Fritz Schulz who established his plantation at Maindron west of Sissano after Eitape station was opened, and who died unexpectedly in 1910

...was said to have domestic relations with various indigenous women<sup>5</sup>. It is evident from both Lewis [1910] and Churchill [1909] that Schulz spoke the Sissano language and was on close and interactive terms with the Sissano and Warapu communities among whom he lived.

In 1936 the old timers remembered

...the days when Aitape was Berlinhafen...days of forced labour and plantation harems of pretty Ninigo Island maidens (West Islanders) – days of soaring copra prices and feather fortunes from bird of paradise.

There are three important historic linkages of this chapter:

- (a) The depopulation of New Ireland.
- (b) The development of the German Creole language Unserdeutsch
- (c) Sex relations on the pre-war gold fields and in post-World War 2 PNG

#### A. The depopulation of New Ireland.

1910 investigations showed the population of New Ireland was on the brink of serious decline and Hahl was concerned. Census figures showed the population to be 56% male and 44% female. Of a sample of 2,564 women more than half were childless and only 146 had more than 2 children – whereas older woman had given birth to 6 and 8 child families.<sup>6</sup>

The Germans believed the New Irelanders were dying out the two main reasons:

• A fanciful Social Darwinism theory of the "degeneration of the race" due to alleged prolonged incest within mutually antagonistic villages. This is an interesting reflection of the racial views of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, which are reflected in Lyng's writings.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Probably G.Berghauser. Richter appears to have replaced Fabricius as NG Co agent at Potsdamhafen earlier in 1910.

- Widespread disease and the recruitment of woman. People lacked resistance to pneumonia and other lung diseases. Also, the spread of gonorrhea, particularly in women after service with whites. New Ireland was the only place where women would sign indentures as cheap labour, servants and concubines.
- Between 1905 and 1907 475 New Ireland women went to work on the Gazelle Peninsular and Madang. One hundred and fifty more were sent to Samoa and elsewhere in the "Old Protectorate". Labour contracts meant that many of these women were absent from the village at the peak of their reproductive age and in many cases, were made sterile by venereal disease. Hahl sought to stop recruiting women throughout German New Guinea and to extend medical services.

The colonial office supported Hahl in this, but settler opinion was divided – some companies plus government officials in Madang and Aitape argued that stopping the flow of single women to plantations would stop labour from entering indentures ...male labour had to be given the opportunity for sex with plantation women. Berlin felt bound to listen to the settlers...Hahl now proposed the prohibition to cover northern New Ireland and New Hanover, not the whole of German New Guinea. Then during the meeting, he agreed with some planters that New Hanover and the Islands of New Ireland be left open as sources of village women for the whites<sup>8</sup>.

Meanwhile Kieta's district officer reported a "shocking decline" in the population of "contro

lled" villages. In 1911 Hahl told the Government Council that recruiting unmarried women would be outlawed throughout the old Protectorate – it was not tolerated in any neighbouring colony. The general prohibition became law in 1913<sup>9</sup>.

Clause 205 of the 1921-22 Report to the League of Nations on the Trust Territory of New Guinea discussed this topic as follows:

*Under the German Administration a most reprehensible practice had arisen of using* female natives as an inducement to natives to recruit of to sign for a further term after completion of an original contract. Most of the European and Samoan women, wives of the planters, had several single native women in their employment and these were given as wives to natives to induce them to make a new contract. No cognisance was taken of any native customs and as the marriage code is most of the native tribes is strictly defined, all marriages being exogamous and any connection between members of the same clan being considered incestuous, it is easily understood that on return of the parties of the marriage to their district, there was much discontent and trouble. Further, in many cases, women had accompanied their husbands to work on the plantations, the husband had died and the woman then remarried to another labourer on the plantation, no notice being taken of any marriage custom. It is the custom of many of the native tribes of the Territory that when a man dies his wife becomes the wife of the brother of the deceased husband. On the plantations marriages were frequently brought about between natives not even belonging to the same district. On completion of the contract the man and wife would proceed to the District of the man's home; in a few months, tiring of her, he would take a woman of his own district, and the unfortunate native, who probably had been forced to marry against her own will, would degenerate into the village prostitute. The Administration is now dealing with this difficult question, and careful control is being exercised over all cases of remarriage on

plantations. As a rule, the wife of a deceased labourer must be returned to the place where she was recruited. [s.26 930 – Laws III., P. 155]. The use of single women for the purpose of recruiting has been stamped out, and the greatest discrimination is exercised in the granting of permission for European women to employ single females for household or nursing purposes. <sup>10</sup>

# B. The development of the German Creole<sup>2</sup> language – Unserdeutsch [Our German]

As might be expected, European sexual interaction with "Melanesian wives" and "concubines" resulted in the birth of mixed race children on New Guinea plantations and trading establishments. Professor Craig Volker takes up the story:

In 1897 Catholic Missionaries established a school for these children at Vunapope. It is not clear to what extent the school began as a boarding school...until 1903 there were problems with children being away from school for long periods to attend festivals with their mother's families...[so] it was organized to permit visits home only on holidays [thus] loosening the ties the children had with life in their mother's villages...

The students were not allowed to use Tok Pisin at school and were taught in German... the [Unserdeutsch] language began when students started putting German words into Pidgin sentences, and in the dormitories the students would consciously make up new words and expressions using the words they learned in class...given the students relative isolation in the dormitories, this modified Tok Pisin stabilized quickly and remained a favorite vehicle for communication...

With the Australian invasion, nearly all the children's German fathers were repatriated and only very few took their children and indigenous wives with them to Europe. Most took their wives to their home villages and placed their children with the mission school...With the permission of the new authorities the school began a policy of having mixed-race children from Catholic villages taken into school as early as possible. These two developments meant that the school developed rapidly with between one and two hundred students at any given time in the interwar years.

...the medium of instruction changed from German to English...the old text books in German continued to be used for a number of years and students continued to receive lessons in German grammar and handwriting...

As the students became adults they tended to marry other former students. Unserdeutsch was usually used at home, while Normaldeutsch was used with the missionaries...Tok Pisin remained the lingua franca with other New Guineans.

The demise of Rabaul Creole German: After World War 2 the teaching of German was prohibited and the school was reorganized to conform with an Australian syllabus. Teaching sisters were brought in from America. When PNG became Independent in 1975, most Creole German speakers, being of mixed race were eligible to claim Australian citizenship and most moved to Australia. About 1,000 of them live in South East Queensland as a tight-knit

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> A **creole language** is a stable natural **language** developed from a mixture of different **languages**. Unlike a pidgin, a simplified form that develops as a means of communication between two or more groups, a **creole language** is a complete **language**, used in a community and acquired by children as their native **language**.

community...Today Creole German is spoken only in families in which both parents grew up speaking the language. <sup>11</sup>

### C. Sex relations on the pre-war gold fields and in post-World War II PNG.

Elsewhere in this manuscript, the pre-war exploration for gold in the Sepik and two gold rushes are described: Jack Thurston's 1936 discovery in the headwaters of the Ulahau River near Yamil, and Reg Beckett and George Eichorn's 1941 discovery at Mt Garamambu in the Chambri Lakes. Of the many miners on the Yamil field, several had their European wives in residence. This and the "no-nonsense" leadership of Jack Thurston may have been the reason that no evidence has been found of Sepik "wives", "concubines" or "companions" of miners on the Yamil field.

There were no European wives on the Garamambu field to stir any sense of decorum among the miners there; moreover, their supply base at Angoram was immediately downstream of Kambaramba village, which thrived on traditional prostitution<sup>3</sup> [See Sepik 4 Chapter 27 "Wicked" Angoram – The Port Royal of the Sepik?]. An important character in *Sepik 3 – The Sepik at War* was Bill Macgregor who established a long-term relationship with a Mensuat village woman called Weinak. His amicable relationship and dealings with Weinak's father and brother forewarned him and facilitated his escape from the approaching Japanese. In 1943 <sup>xii</sup> the Kambaramba women of other miners were captured by the renegade police and taken to Sambugundei Island in the Chambri Lakes after the miners were murdered in the Salumai/ Korosameri River area; they were presumed killed in the raid that exterminated the renegades.

Sepik 5 DDS&NA Instructions, Policies, Guiding Principles and Support Documents describes the enactment of the Native Women's Protection Ordinance [NWPO] in 1951, and the colourful debate in the Legislative Council which repealed the ordinance in 1962. The law had proved to be both ineffective and discriminatory. Despite the repeal of the NWPO, sexual relations with PNG females remained a disciplinary offence for European members of the public service.

The double standard concerning sexual relations between the races in German New Guinea remained alive and well in pre, and post, World War II Australian New Guinea.

#### End notes Chapter 6

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> P.Cahill 2012 p 64 quoting L.J.Lyng – Our New Possession.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> G. Vargyas – Data on the pictorial history of North-East Papua New Guinea. Pacific Studies Vol 12 No 2 – March

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> R.L.Welsch. ed. An American Anthropologist in Melanesia: A.B. [Albert Buell] Lewis and the Joseph N. Field South Pacific Expedition 1909-1913 - University of Hawaii Press Honolulu 1998 p 240/1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> A.J.Marshall. The men and birds of paradise – Published by William Heinemann Ltd London 1938. P 77

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> R.L.Welsch. ed. 1998 p 150

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> S.Firth 1986 P 124/5

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> J.Lyng – Our New Possession [late German new Guinea] – Melbourne Publishing Co 1920. P 140-217.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> S.Firth 1986 P 126

<sup>9</sup> S.Firth 1986 P 127

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Report to the League of Nations on the Administration of the Territory of New Guinea 1921-22 Cause 205

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> C. Volker - The birth and decline of Rabaul Creole German - Linguistic Society of PNG

xii L.W.Bragge - Sepik 3 The Sepik at War [unpublished] Chapter 19

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Angoram and Kambaramba are discussed in detail in Sepik 4 Chapter 28 "Wicked Angoram" the Port Royal of the Sepik?

## Chapter 7 The Bird of Paradise trade.



Greater birds of paradise displaying – Life on Earth Page 192 – David Attenborough
Birds-of-paradise are members of the family Paradisaeidae of the order <u>Passeriformes</u>. The
majority of species are found in <u>New Guinea</u> and its satellites, with a few in the <u>Maluku Islands</u> and
eastern <u>Australia</u>.<sup>1</sup>

Trade in Bird of Paradise feathers is at least 5,000 years old. By 4,000 years ago, trade reached the Middle East. This time frame equates to the arrival of the Austronesians in Indonesia and beyond. The evidence indicates -5,800 years ago - betelnut (areca catechu) in Ramu. 5,000 evidence of pigs and made pottery – technology from SE Asia. Trade was both ways – sugar cane (Saccharum officinarum) from NG reached Asia 5,000 years ago. Obsidian – 2,000-3,000 years ago – from Talasea excavated in Sabah 3,000 km away. Bird of paradise were in demand and were part of this trade with Asia.<sup>2</sup>

Archaeology at Lake Sentani near Hollandia discovered a large number of bronze axes. These artefacts date from just before 2,000 years ago, until about 250 AD. During this period, Asians are known to have sought bird of paradise feathers.<sup>3</sup>

Crew of "Victoria" the only Magellan ship to survive the first circumnavigation of the world brought 5 bird of paradise skins to Europe in 1522.4

### Barter and trade.

The Asian clove trade was based entirely on barter. Favoured imports into the Moluccas and Banda in 1512 were cloth, metalwork and porcelain... Chinese traders provided blue Chinese porcelain dishes and cups, silver, iron Chinese coins, ivory and beads<sup>5</sup>. Of the bird of paradise skins acquired for export it is impossible to know what percentage of skins were acquired directly by

outsiders hunting and what percentage was acquired by barter with the indigenous population. It seems safe to assume that the generally good relations experienced in the Sepik between hunters/traders and the indigenous population, indicates amicable commerce between the parties.

# Indonesien, Nordküste von Papua, Kette aus gelben Wickelglasperlen, ca.

1500 bis heute



Q. Vorderseite

Denomination: Prägeautorität:

Prägeort:

Prägejahr:

Gewicht in Gramm:

Durchmesser in mm:

Material:

Eigentümer:



Q. Rückseite

Kette aus gelben Wickelglasperlen

Unbestimmt

Unbestimmt

1500 n. Chr. - 2000 n. Chr.

120

30 Andere

Sunflower Foundation

Wickelglasperlen werden seit dem 16. Jahrhundert hergestellt. Diese spezielle Form ist bekannt als Melonenperlen. Der Name leitet sich von ihrem Aussehen ab.

Am Sentanisee in Papua, einer Provinz von Indonesien, sind Melonenperlen ein wichtiger Bestandteil des Brautpreises, zusammen mit Steinäxten, Glasarmreifen und Glasohrringen. Dort werden Melonenperlen auch für andere zeremonielle Zahlungen gebraucht. Ausserdem dienen sie für Kompensationszahlungen und um Streitigkeiten beizulegen.

Item 155 in the Bragge collection: 1 string of 100 Melon Beads and one of 24 Melon Beads. These were purchased in Hamadi Market Jayapura, where they were said to be 16<sup>th</sup> century chinese beads traded for bird of paradise feathers. They came in a bark pouch which is in the glass cabinet with the stone collection



Having decided that New Guinea had little economic potential the Dutch promoted the Sultan of Tidore as suzerain on their behalf... In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the Dutch only allowed Chinese traders from Ternate and Tidore to trade in new Guinea. They were permitted to do so on the grounds that they would not trade in nutmegs. The Chinese were permitted to trade for massoy bark. Slaves, ambergris, trepan, turtle shell, parrots and birds of paradise. In return for these goods the indigenous population were given iron tools, chopping knives, axes, red and blue cloth, beads, plates and bowls.<sup>6</sup>

In 1704 the Sultan of Tidore's control was of the Islands off the tip of New Guinea, and by 1848 as far east as the current PNG border.

Dutch were driven to protect their interests as others also showed interest. In 1910 Hollandia was established as the base for the German/Dutch border markers. Hollandia on the excellent harbor at Humboldt Bay became the capitol of Dutch New Guinea.

Traders and bird of paradise hunters did not again become active in the Humboldt Bay area until the 1880s. The first collections in the area were by Naturalist Rosenberg on the boat Etna – border expedition 1858.<sup>7</sup> In the 1890s a number of Chinese, Ternatians and Tidorese established as trading station on Metu Debi Island at the entrance between Yotefa Bay and Humboldt Bay. Bird of paradise skins were. Scarcely a month passed during the boom years when there was not some conflict between the local people and bird of paradise hunters. There were eight reported clashes between native people and bird of paradise hunters in German New Guinea. See attachment 1

Prior to 1907, two Chinese traders were reported to have exported 12,000 skins every 3 months. When Australia occupied German NG some German planters and traders moved and settled in Hollandia and continued their bird of paradise trade.<sup>8</sup>

By the 19<sup>th</sup> century milliners in Europe used Bird of Paradise feather them in fashionable hats. By 1900 the quest for Bird of Paradise feathers was compared to a Gold rush. In the period 1901 to 1910 the United Kingdom imported £20 million worth of plumage<sup>9</sup> [not all bird of paradise]

Birds of Paradise became the thing on lady's hats and the prices climbed so high that it became feasible to finance the development of a copra plantation by hunting them. Governor Hahl quickly realised the possibilities. He not only raised export duties and fees for shooting licence, making bird of paradise the second largest source of local revenue, but he also issued licences only under the condition that the holder brought 125 acres of per year under cultivation. <sup>10</sup>

The bird of paradise export figures from German New Guinea are officially recorded as:

1909 exports of 3,268 bird of paradise skins worth 65,360 marks

1910 export of 5,706 bird of paradise skins

1911 export of 8,779 bird of paradise skins

1912 export of nearly 10,000 bird of paradise skins worth 500,000 marks. High prices and easy profits have been a strong incentive to take up the business. Europeans have hired natives to hunt the bird and many of the small plantation owners have financed their farms with bird of paradise profits. If is feared that that the birds may soon become extinct if hunters continue to decimate the stock and it is therefore foreseeable that hunting of birds of paradise will be completely outlawed in the near future.

1913 The bird of paradise hunting season has been closed for most of the year. <sup>11</sup> Nevertheless it was estimated 80,000 skins were exported from Dutch & German NG in 1913. <sup>12</sup> These plumes have adorned heads in Asia, the Middle East, Europe, America, Australia and New Zealand. <sup>13</sup> Although there was no European market after the 1920s, the Asian market remained and the Humboldt Bay hunters and traders remained active.



Photos from Wikipedia

#### Regulation:

- Germany introduced hunting permits, closed seasons and conservation areas. In 1891 an
  ordinance was passed requiring bird of paradise hunters to have a licence. By 1891 there were
  full time European bird hunters the Geissler brothers who hunted in the Astrolabe Bay and
  Huon Gulf areas. In 1892 there were 14 applications for licences. The plume boom of 1908 saw
  the price for plumes increased between 3 and 4 time. In 1908 revenue raised from licences was
  600 marks and in 1909 it had risen to 20,000 marks.
- With the boom in the bird of paradise trade Governor Hahl raised export duties and the fees for shooter's licences, making birds of paradise the second largest source of local revenue, but he also issued licences only on condition that licence holder brought 125 acres of land per year under cultivation.<sup>14</sup>
- British New Guinea passed the wild birds protection ordinance in 1894, but this applied only to the watershed of Port Moresby harbor and the Islands of Samarai and Daru.<sup>15</sup>. Later two rare birds of paradise found on Fergusson Island were also protected
- Australia prohibited bird of paradise hunting in Papua in 1908 with the Wild Birds Ordinance<sup>16</sup>.
- Australia occupied German NG in Sept 1914. Until a peace treaty was signed and the future sovereignty of German NG determined, international law did not allow the Australians to change legislation except in cases of military emergency. The law allowed licenced hunters to shoot birds of paradise in the Mandated Territory from May 1915. Australia monitored bird of paradise hunting as it meant certain citizens had firearms. The military Administration took steps to control these through licensing.<sup>17</sup>
- The European boom ended in the 1920s after Britain passed its Importation of Plumage [Prohibition] Bill.
- With the granting in 1922 of the League of Nations mandate for Australia to Administer the territory a prohibition on bird of paradise hunting was imposed, but bird of paradise skins continued to be smuggled into Dutch New Guinea, until 1931 when bird of paradise hunting was prohibited in the Hollandia area.<sup>18</sup>

 1966 Fauna Protection Ordinance PNG protected bird of paradise hunting except by traditional methods.<sup>19</sup>

Indonesian and Chinese Traders in 1880s traded as far east as Tarawai and Walis islands. Richard Parkinson in 1900 met Tarawai Islanders who had been to the Moluccas. A Chinese trader was established on Tarawai and introduced steel to Kairiru.

In 1904 Governor Hahl sought Dutch assistance to prohibit entry of Indonesian and Chinese bird of paradise hunters from Hollandia and Ternate. This was achieved by end of the decade concerning border on the coast, but not inland. Indonesian hunters and traders usually returned to the same areas year after year. They tended to stay in one locality for a while, perhaps a month, and trade goods such as beads, tobacco, knives and cloth for bird of paradise skins hunted by local people. In 1910 Leonard Schultz-Jena observed Indonesian bird hunters providing local people with guns to shoot birds for them. Some hunted birds themselves. The good relationship these hunters seem to have had with many inland groups seems to suggest that they paid villagers for the right to hunt on their land. Indonesian hunters in the Amanab area used muzzle loading muskets. The old men relate that if the hunters ran out of shot they used pebbles and powder instead. The people in the Waina Sowanda area south of Imonda also describe flintlock muskets.<sup>20</sup>

The Sepik inland areas along the Dutch New Guinea border were effectively unexplored until 1956 when two patrols explored the border region. Aitape patrol 3/1956-7 a/ADO W.T.Brown and PO B.Ryan of Vanimo sought to follow the border south, and Green River patrol 2/1956-7 – PO R.Calcutt sought to follow the border north to meet Messrs Brown and Ryan. [See Sepik 4 Chapter 17]. Both patrols encountered populations of Malay speakers; the Dutch administered to the edge of linguistic groups, rather than the 141<sup>st</sup> degree of longitude - the actual border.

In the eyes of Tobadi and other Humboldt Bay based hunters, their route inland to hunt birds of paradise was the Tami river which enters the Bismarck Sea just west of the international border with its eastern tributaries rising in former German New Guinea. Similar routes obviously existed from Dutch New Guinea into Australian Papua. It is not surprising then that:

- PO Ivan Champion, while in the Upper Fly River area, noted *Prior to 1920 used to come over from Merauke in Dutch New Guinea hunting the Bird of Paradise. In that year, former residents of Papua, named Drechsler and Bell, were murdered by the natives living on the Fly some miles below where we were now. Patrols were sent out from Daru and from a Dutch post from Assike. It was proved that they had been murdered in Dutch Territory. In Papua, the Bird of Paradise is protected, though it could be legally hunted in Dutch New Guinea.<sup>21</sup>*
- ADO [Aitape] Oakley in 1932 and Alan Marshall report the presence of Indonesian traders south and west of Lumi.<sup>22</sup>
- ADO Robinson 18<sup>th</sup> July 1934...people from the village of Kelnom [Yellow River area] were met. One of the Kelnom men spoke Malay and was able to converse with Constable Wankra. He told us about five months ago, two Malays and a party of natives were in the area shooting bird of paradise. He was with them for two days.<sup>23</sup>
- PO J.D.Martin reported in Dreikikir Patrol report No 5/1951-2 The word "Tuan" is used throughout the area for "White man". The natives appear to have any idea of the origin of the word, which of course is Malay. <sup>24</sup>
- In early 1970s old people in Dreikikir...could still remember when the first Indonesian and Chinese traders and hunters came. They worked out of trading posts at Yakamul, Suain and Ulau.<sup>25</sup>
- Amanab Patrol Report no 2/1964-5, which was led by the writer, noted: *The first contacts were made* [with the Amanab people] *early in the* [20<sup>th</sup>] *century by Dutch bird of paradise hunters.*

Two expeditions are remembered by the old men. One entered the area from the Kwomtari area...The party which consisted of one European and several and several natives...made friendly contact and passed through the area without incident. The second party, which was made up of natives entered the area from the West.<sup>26</sup>

Table 18 below was copied from Dr. Swadling's Plumes from Paradise

Table 18: Plume hunters attacked whilst shooting in German New Guinea.

year	who and where
1907-8	Indonesian hunter was killed in Hatzfeldthafen area and his firearms seized. Germans made a punitive expedition.
1908-9	Umlauft and New Guinean assistant were shot at with arrows while in Rai Coast mountains. Escaped without injury.
1909-10	European hunter was killed by Wamba people in hinterland of Herzog Range on the right bank of the Markham River. Punitive expedition killed 40 people and burnt several villages.
1912 June	Peterson had been a medical assistant for the New Guinea Company for about a year, when he decided to go bird of paradise hunting. He was killed inland of Madang. A punitive expedition from 21-26 June arrested the main culprits, killed 5 men and burnt Bemari village. Police were left to carry out further punitive measures.
1912 July	Three Chinese and 10 New Guinean assistants employed by the Hansa Bay planter Gramms were killed by Kagam tribes inland of Hansa Bay. A punitive expedition was made.
1912 August	Alfred Miculicz before becoming an independent bird of paradise hunter had been a planter in the employ of the German New Guinea Company. He was killed on the right bank of the upper Ramu 8-10 days walk from Alexishafen. Miculicz was one of a group of 3 European hunters and their assistants who had been involved in 4 fights with inland communities.
mid 1913	Two Europeans were attacked in the hinterland of Laden. Shot at with arrows whilst bathing in a stream. Rifle fire made the attackers flee.
1913 July	Indonesian and 2 New Guinean assistants were killed in hinterland of Sarang. Their rifles were voluntarily sent to the coast and given to government officers.

**Sources**: Anon 1912d: 139; Ebert 1912; Preuss 1912: 123; Sack and Clark 1979: 277, 292, 322, 354; Sack and Clark 1980: 9-10; Schillings 1912.

# Illegal bird of paradise hunting during the AN&MEF administration 1914-1921 and later.

When posted to Aitape as a very junior officer in late 1921 G.W.L. Kassa Townsend noted some mysterious activity, into which he was wise enough not to enquire too closely. He later learned that boxes the patrol officer was careful not to get wet, contained 300 bird of paradise skins and plumage - bound for market in Hollandia.

Captain Oliver John Thompson transferred over to the civil administration on 9<sup>th</sup> May 1921 and served as the first Australian civilian District Officer at Aitape. His subjection to a Board of inquiry, found that he had systematically engaging in trafficking in bird of paradise trade for personal gain. He was found "guilty of disgraceful and improper conduct while District Officer at Aitape"

This case is examined in full in Chapter 26.

#### **End Notes Chapter 7**

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<sup>1</sup> Wikipedia
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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Swadling P – Plumes from Paradise PNG National Museum and Robert Brown and Associates 1996 p51-2

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Swadling P 1966 page 206

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Swadling P 1966 page 64

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Swadling P 1966 page 31

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Swadling P 1966 page 113

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Swadling P 1966 page 212/13

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Swadling P 1966 page 213/14

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Swadling P 1996 page 90

<sup>10</sup> P.G.Sack, 1973 page 104

<sup>11</sup> The World at War 1873-1919 pages 3-5

<sup>12</sup> Swadling P 1996 page 91

<sup>13</sup> Swadling P 1996 page 17

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> P.G.Sack – Land between two laws – ANU 1973, Page 104

<sup>15</sup> Swadling P 1996 page 264-265

<sup>16</sup> Swadling P 1996 page 267

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Swadling P 1996 page 255

<sup>18</sup> Swadling P 1996 page 216

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Swadling P 1996 page 104

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Swadling P 1966 page 219-221

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> 1.F.Champion Across New Guinea – from the Fly to the Sepik. Landsdowne Press 1966 Pages 105-106

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Swadling P 1996 page 244/45

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Robinson E.D. Aitape Patrol Report S.D No 1/1934-35

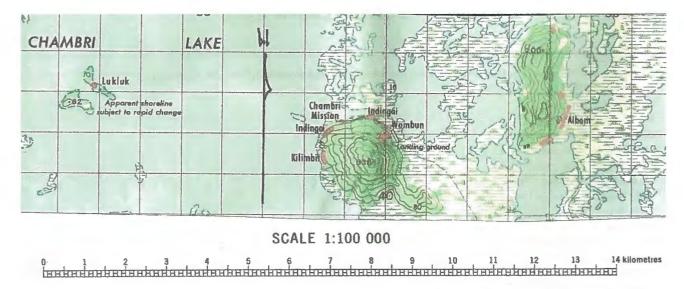
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Martin J.D. Dreikikir patrol no 5/1951-2

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Swadling P 1996 page 243

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Bragge L.W. Amanab patrol report 2/1964-5 -area study page 2

# Chapter 8 Differing impacts of contact with the outside world on the Chambri stone adze and Aibom pottery industries of the Chambri Lakes

This Chapter continues on from Sepik 1 which described how the communities living on two mountainous Islands in the Chambri Lakes supported two essential industries to the Sepik of the stone age. The people of Chambri Island manufactured and traded essential stone adze blades and monoliths to the whole Sepik community for miles around, while Aibom produced a broad array of pottery, which was prized throughout the Middle Sepik.



Contact with the outside world impacted these two Sepik industries in very different ways. Introduced Steel axes and knives abruptly made the stone adze industry redundant, while Aibom pottery remained in strong demand down to the present day. But the economic issues of supply and demand were far from the end of the story. The long-enjoyed prestige that the manufacturers of, and traders in essential trade commodities made both the Chambri and Aibom communities were kept immune from the violence of the headhunting communities that surrounded them. For as long as either community could remember, they had not needed to fight. As a result, the men of both communities had developed neither fighting skills, nor the headhunting mentality necessary to survive in the Sepik in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

However, as we saw in Sepik 1, when Kilimbit was attacked by Manabi, the three Chambri villages banded together to defeat them and successfully mounted a surprise attack on the Manabi settlement on Timbunmeri Island.

#### What changes did contact with the outside world bring?

Aibom. The key change, in fact, was not due to contact with the outside world, it was the "Iatmulisation" of Aibom, which commenced before that contact. The old Aibom language <a href="Aunumbuk"><u>Aunumbuk</u></a> was replaced by Iatmul as described variously in Sepik 1 as a peaceful process of Iatmul women marrying into Aibom and the resulting children being raised to speak the mother's language, and a more violent process indirectly involving the on-going war between the Parembei Iatmul and the enemy Nyaula Iatmul. It was because of this war that the Parembei taught the Aibom to fight. The reality, no doubt, rests somewhere in between there passive and violent extremes.

In terms of the manufacture and trade in pottery, contact with the outside world, brought little apparent impact. Aibom pottery remained an essential commodity throughout the middle Sepik. Aibom hearths allowed cooking fires to lit and tended safely within highly flammable thatched housing. The three-day fish for sago trading cycle, plus longer term food security, required, and

continues to require, vermin proof sago storage jars, and the array of saucepans and serving platters remained essential in every household. Photos of some such items appear in Sepik 1.

The introduction of unbreakable metal saucepans did not pose a major threat to the fragile ceramic saucepans from Aibom. The wide consensus of opinion among the people the writer interviewed was that food cooked in clay pots tastes better than that cooked in metal. But there was an unanticipated challenge to the Aibom pottery industry commencing in 1977 when salvinia molesta, an <u>aquatic fern</u>, native to south-eastern <u>Brazil</u> found its way from someone's gold fish bowl into the Sepik River allegedly at Angoram.

Salvinia molesta. found a perfect propagation environment in the Sepik River, where it was said to double its area of surface coverage every two to five days. It amazed some commentators that the weed, spread upstream against the current. This seemingly incredible achievement was explained in terms of headhunting logic, while headhunting is a thing of the past, the hatred behind it lives on, and found current expression in clandestine late-night visits to the lakes and waterways of upstream enemies and the pouring of buckets full of the weed into the water. In this way salvinia reached the Chambri Lake and its waterways, and soon, physically blocked canoe access to Aibom.

Clay pottery continued to suffer breakages in households throughout the Sepik, but now, because of Aibom's enforced isolation, replacements were unobtainable. The people had no alternative but to buy, use and get used to metal saucepans, which did not need regular replacement. I understood from Aibom informants that after salvinia molesta was controlled by an introduced insect predator, that the trade in pottery resumed, but not at the pre-salvinia molesta level.

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Chambri: As told in Sepik 1, an ill-advised killing and beheading of a Parembei man called Yebieli resulted in warfare with a former friendly village – Parembei, which resulted in the three Chambri communities fleeing into exile. Wombun went to Korosameri River area while Indingai went to the Changriman, Mari Yambiyambi, a sago camp called Tonagwan and Mensuat.<sup>2</sup> tribal areas in the mountains fringe of the southern extremities of the Chambri Lake.

Changriman elders recall<sup>3</sup> They [Chambri] came here twice when in retreat from their war with Parembei. In doing so, we married Chambri women and the effect of this was to make close relations between us and Chambri. The text then lists six Chambri women by name who married into Changriman plus 16 children and many grand-children.

Writer's note. Although my informants had no apparent concept of the duration of their exile, it was evidently for many years. Chambri's choice of a place to which to flee was no doubt facilitated by the fact that there was an established sago/fish bartering relationship between the Chambri communities and their southern neighbours. While in exile Chambri no doubt continued to provide fish and their hosts continued to make and trade sago.

#### 000000000

Informant Wabi/Menuabai<sup>1</sup> of Arinjone, a Nyaurengai colonized Island in the Chambri Lake continues the story after the Chambri people has been driven into exile. *My grandfather Kanauwi was concerned about* [the Chambri people being pushed off their land and into exile]. *Chambri was our friend and our source of trade for mosquito baskets.* [Note the former essential trade in adze blades no longer rated a mention]. *He took a canoe and came in and saw Parembei had occupied the Chambri village sites. They* [Kanauwi and others] *saw this and returned to Nyaurengai and prepared to fight Parembei. They pushed Parembei off the Chambri lands. If my grandfather, Webei and* 

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Wabi was born in 1932 according to the census register.

Wolisambang [leaders of the Nyaurengai warriors] had not fought them off, the land would now belong to Parembei.

He [Kanauwi] then made a house at Chambri and sent for his family at Nyaurengai to come and live there. Five houses were built by the Nyaulas. The Parembeis came back and tried to retake the ground, but they did not succeed.

Then Kanauwi set about finding the Chambri... they sought them out and brought them back, but they ran away again in the night...he went and brought them back three times to resettle them. He worked at this for four years. In the fifth year, the Germans came [presumably the Behrmann expedition of 1912-13]. All this time my grandfather lived at Chambri. Then, only the Wombuns remained at the Korosameri River. My grandfather made magic...and this made the Wombuns come back

My grandfather made a house on Arinjone Island while resettling the Chambris, when the Germans came... Then the [Australian] Government came and gave a luluai hat to Kanauwi<sup>4</sup>

Writer's note 1: There were explanations other than magic that saw the Wombuns return to Chambri Island; fear of being implicated in the annihilation of a community called Plangambi, for which five Kamanimbit men were hanged in Ambunti in 1930.<sup>5</sup>

Writer's note 2: Wapi's story may well have embellished the role of his grandfather's generation in the re-settlement of the Chambri, as in later years there was a dispute with Chambri over the ownership of Arinjone Island, and in the light of that Wapi no doubt wished to lay some favourable historic foundations.

The Chambri informants made no mention of the arrival of steel and what that did to their stone adze trade. In all probability steel arrived in trade from distant trade partners, long before the first white man was seen. This was the case with the stone adze makers of the Upper Leonard Schultze River. [Sepik 1 Chapter 50]. The Chambri memory of that time seems to be dominated by the war with Parembei, which, by deduction was only possible after the arrival of steel made the previous all-important stone adze trade redundant and lifted the embargo on not attacking Chambri.

Wombun has a slightly different version of exile story. After describing a protracted war in which Chambri found allies in the Nyaula villages, with the exception of Korogo, which was dismissed as being like a half-cast<sup>2</sup>. Other claimed Chambri allies<sup>3</sup> were Kamanimbit, Kararau and Kabriman. Parembei allies were daughter villages Kanganamun, Malingai and Yentchan<sup>6</sup>: The Parembeis came and burned our haus tambarans. This was when our fathers [generation] lived at the Korosameri River [the Kabriman & Mameri areas]. It was not as if Parembei had chased them there. It was that they were tired of fighting Parembei. They went to the Korosameri to build up their population in peace for a while, as they were facing extinction if they stayed at Chambri... The Parembeis stole our garamuts and dug up our long monoliths and took them back to Parembei on rafts<sup>7</sup>

The Wombuns living at the Korosameri River came back here [to Wombun] to collect mangoes and coconuts and go back. Indingai and Kilimbit [the other two Chambri villages] went to Changriman, only Wombun went to Kabriman. Just Aibom stayed. They were not our real friends and they were half-friends with Parembei.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Korogo's apparent divided affiliation is understandable – see Sepik 2 Chapter 19 which describes how not long before this time, Korogo was expelled from its mother village Nyaurengai and threw itself on the mercy of the enemy Parembei and paid for its right to survive in Parembei territory with payment in young Korogo girls

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> In terms of military functionality, the Parembei alliance was the better, being made up on a mother village and daughter villages, which existed in physical close proximity with each other. The Chambri allies on the other hand were spread over such a wide geographic area that they are not recorded of ever combining in a common force against Parembei.

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**Post Script.** The interaction between Nyaula and the Chambri which saw the latter returned to their Island, so recently reclaimed from the enemy Parembei, provides some level of understanding why, a decade or so later, when Kandingei found itself involved in a dispute over sago market access into the Sepik plains, that Chambri offered them access to Timbunmeri Island, a decision they later regretted – See Sepik 4 Chapter 8 *The Iatmul tribal colonization of the Chambri Lakes*.

# **End Notes Chapter 8**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Internet

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Bragge Sepik Research Notes Vol 19 Page 394

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Bragge Sepik Research Notes Vol 19 Page 363

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Bragge Sepik Research Notes Vol 19 Page 394

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> L.W.Bragge – Ambunti Patrol report No 5/1973-4, Appendix N, page 47

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Bragge Sepik Research Notes Vol 19 Page 324

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> When I mentioned this to Deborah Gewertz she was surprised. She believed the Wombun spirits associated such important objects would have deterred Parembei from removing them.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Wombun Local Government Council and other Wombun elders – Bragge Sepik Research notes Vol 19 page 324

## Sepik 2 Sepik 2 Chapter 9 The arrival of the Chinese and introducing Chu Leong.

In February 1887, a trial group of trained Chinese workers were imported from Singapore to supervise work on tobacco farms at Finschhafen and to test their endurance of the New Guinea climate. When this recruitment appeared to be successful, hundreds more Chinese recruits arrived in 1888. The recruitment of Chinese met with a number of difficulties; The Singapore and Dutch East Indies authorities were reluctant to allow recruitment for work in German New Guinea and such recruitment happened only under stringent conditions. Australia, with its white Australia policy, was concerned about any mass movement of Chinese to German New Guinea. Asians were not permitted to enter the adjacent British New Guinea.

The first Chinese recruited in China itself came from Canton, Hainan, Fuchow and Kwangrung arrived in late 1896. In 1900 NGC established a resident recruiter in Hong Kong and 200 recruits acquired from Swatow came to New Guinea. Malaria and Beriberi took their toll on the NGC labour force with 300 Chinese as well as German and other lives being lost in Finschhafen, reulting in the station being abandoned in 1894 and closed in 1899.

The 1912-13 annual report noted that the Chinese population had increased from 926 to 1,141. Low taxes encouraged tailors, shoemakers, barbers, carpenters and other trades people. By 1913/14 less than one in seven of the 1,377 Chinese in the "Old Protectorate" was a labourer <sup>1</sup>

Chinese indentured labour was also used in phosphate mines in German Abgaur and Nauru Some found their way among the north coast in Aitape District as Traders and bird of paradise hunters as early as 1900. Chinese such as Ah Tam of Matupit were craftsmen, boat builders, and above all else entrepreneurs. Their legal status was non-indigenous natives. Ah Tam was granted a 17 acre lease in Rabaul – Chinese business houses were located there. In 1904 he was permitted to employ three Japanese prostitutes in his drinking saloon at Mapupit on the condition that the girls underwent regular medical checks.<sup>2</sup>

Ah Tam had the sole licence to import opium until Johnson was instructed to withdraw it in 1918. Ah Tam also charged levies on Chinese gaming houses.

Without the Chinese the Old Protectorate might have looked very much more like Papua to investors. By Sept 1914 Chinatown had a busy centre with over 1,000 inhabitants. Contact with home was maintained through the Norddeutscher Lloyd shipping service. After September 1914 it was possible for Chinese business to escape the complete financial control of German business houses. AN&MEF census Feb 1917 showed 1,452 Chinese, a figure which probably included Malays. There were more "Chinese" in the former German New Guinea colony than Germans & British combined.

Chinese business financial independence of German business houses was further helped by the establishment of a Commonwealth Bank branch in Rabaul. Chinese copra traders and recruiters were important to the economy – most were employed by European firms. Chinese in plural society such as existed in German New Guinea were not popular with either Europeans or natives because of their success; they become very wealth citizens without forsaking their cultural standards.

To this end Chinese recruiters were scapegoats in reports to League of Nations for unscrupulousness etc and for bribing officials. As Chinese business flourished Petherbridge decided to control it through the March 1917 *Control of Chinese trade order*. The order required of Chinese

traders only a duty of between 5% and 20% to be paid. This discriminatory order was withdrawn after only 23 days.<sup>3</sup>

This introduction to the Chinese arrival and presence in German New Guinea is intentionally brief as it is intended merely as an introduction to the Chinese of the Sepik District and in particular to introduce Chu Leong.

Born in Canton in 1888 Chu Sai Leong went to Rabaul in 1913 and worked for Ah Chok. He came to New Guinea as he had relatives there. Early in his career he spent some time on German Nauru, where he opened a bakery. In 1914 he went to the Aitape district, shooting birds of paradise, and he later became a ship builder in Madang. In 1922 he took charge of the schooner *Niu Wiu* and spent two years trading around Manus in this 52 ft. vessel for her Chinese owner. He then bought a 26-ft cutter and went shelling along the coasts between Madang and Aitape.<sup>4</sup>

McCarthy mentions an enquiry into a ship under Chu Leong's control lost after hitting a reef, as a result Chu Leong lost his master's certificate. In 1928 he entered the Sepik as a trader, set up three trade stores and built a 45-ft vessel for himself naming her the *Winon*. The Administration relented and Chu Leong had his master's ticket again. He ran a most reliable service between Madang, Bogia, Angoram and the Upper Sepik and claims to have reached uncontrolled tribal lands some 450 miles up that river. He also took Oil Search parties into the uncontrolled areas of the Upper Sepik.

When the administration moved its base from Marienberg to Angoram in 1933 Chu Leong moved his commercial operations there as well. His business interests included tailoring, with a few sewing girls from the Catholic Mission. Sepik River people also tell how he bought and sold sago; there was a ready market as sago seldom grows close to the Sepik River itself. The age old sago fish trade is described in Sepik 1.

Alois Kawan was a respected elder of Yamuk, a Tarawai Islander who came to the Middle Sepik in 1933 with the Catholic Missionaries. Alois said:

Chu Leong was first at Marienberg Mission station and saw mill. He used to obtain trade from Masta Bobby¹ and got goods from his store...Masta Bobby had a small ship and he used to go to Madang and bring cargo back. Later, when Angoram was established Chu Leong established himself there as well and later many other traders came and established themselves. Master Bobby worked and then he died, leaving Chu leong. They were the first two traders on the Sepik. Wewak had not been established at this time. Marui was not established when Chu Leong came. I have been here forty years and he was here before me. He built his ship *Winon* at Marienberg...His wife was a Korogopa woman [Actually she was from Kiwim – upstream of Korogopa]. His children went to school at Alexishafen.<sup>5</sup>

Anna Chu's uncle Wamo of Angasi [Banaro area] of the Keram River asked Masta Tripinga [Chu Leong had lost two and a half fingers while building the Winon] for credit to buy a suitcase. He was allowed this credit sale, Wamo brought saw-logs to Angoram regularly for sale, but now he did not come back to Angoram to pay his debt. Chu Leong sent word not to bring more logs, instead Wamo should bring his younger sister for the trader to marry.

This was not agreeable to Wamo as there was an expectation that bride price would be paid for the younger sister...Wamo added that he would rather be dead than allow Chu Leong to marry his younger sister! Anna described the wedding arrangements:

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "Masta Bobby" was presumably Bob Overall, local trader at Marienberg at that time.

My uncle finally agreed to bring Mum down. Wamo and his two wives and children came to Marienberg with Elekama [Arikin Apotapu], my mother. She was fifteen and dressed in traditional bridal costume of strings of beads and a brand new Pulpul [grass skirt]. Mum was terrified and cried all day and night and wanted to go back with her brother. Mr. Father said 'Don't be scared. I won't hurt you or touch you. I am going to look after you just like a daughter until you reach marriage age.' Mum was relieved when he told her this. When Mum was nineteen Pop took her to Madang and they got married in the district office.<sup>6</sup>

Stan Christian, Medical Assistant, who accompanied the 1924 patrol to Ambunti had the following to say of Chu Leong:

He was very very good to us people. He would bring goods and charge us freight. He would pick up copra along the coast and take it to Madang...He would bring stuff up the river when the Government ships did not come.<sup>7</sup>

J.K/McCarthy said of him: He mended everything from typewriters to Tilly Lamps...he was also a tool maker for, given a file and a few other tools he could make spares out of any old metal that was lying around.

#### **End Notes Chapter 9**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> P.Cahill 2012 p 1-24

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Firth 1986 p 117

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> P.Cahill 2012 P 1-24

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> B.Hilder – Sepik Trader of the Old School – Pacific Islands Monthly Feb 1962

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Bragge Sepik Research notes Vol 18 p 287

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Anna Chu – The Kapiak Tree – Maskimedia Ravenshoe 2008 p 9-10

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Bragge Sepik Research notes Vol 19 p 537

#### Chapter 10 Establishment of the Catholic Mission in the Sepik.<sup>1</sup>

Roman Catholic Mission on 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 1896 formally erected the Prefecture Apostolic of Wilhelmsland and entrusted its care to the Society of the Divine Word, a mission society founded in Steyl, Holland in 1875. The SVD founder Father Arnold Janssen knew that by accepting this mission would require the personnel and funds necessary to establish the Catholic Church Kaiser Wilhelmsland. Lack of financial support was a recognized cause of the failure of previous ventures. For Example:

French Marists from New Zealand arrived on Rooke [Umboi] Island on 13/5/1848 with the aim of establishing the Catholic Church on the mainland before the arrival of other Europeans. Sickness, death and the high cost of obtaining supplies from Sydney made them leave 12 months later. Then Italian members of the Institute for Foreign Missions, Milan came to Rooke Island on 23/10/1852. Two and a half years later they too were forced to leave – for the same reasons as the Marists.

Father Janssen contacted the *Pious Work for the Propagation of the Faith* at Lyon – the only fund collecting agency for the Catholic Church at that time and requested an annual subsidy to defray costs. He described Kaiser Wilhelmsland as:

[having] 'only 100,000 to 150,000 inhabitants who speak perhaps 30 languages [who] keep to themselves rather distant and secluded from Europeans, they never-the-less are disposed to work for Europeans in exchange for wages. This being the case, we have no alternative but to establish large plantations."

Father Janssen's short description demonstrates two signs of the times:

- 1. The almost complete lack of knowledge of the extent or nature of the indigenous population.
- 2. The Kaiser Wilhelmsland pragmatism of understanding the need for substantial and self-sustaining funding sources.

On 13/8/1896 for first SVD missionary landed at Friedrich Wilhelmshaven. Fr Eberhard Limbrock aged 37 had been chosen and arrived with 2 priests and 3 brothers.

Neu Guinea Compagnie [NGC], by imperial charter signed in Berlin by Kaiser Wilhelm on 17/5/1885 had received a monopoly in the acquisition of free land and was endowed with sovereign judicial rights. Before sending his missionaries to New Guinea Fr Janssen contacted Adolf von Hansemann, chairman who assured him the mission upon arrival could acquire 10 to 15 hectares at Friedrich Wilhelshaven [Madang]. Janssen suggested establishing the Mission in Friedrich Wilhelmshaven [Madang.]

Fr. Limbrock dealt with Kurt von Hagen, Commissary Administrator for Kaiser Wilhelmsland, who agreed to sell the land, but not for a mission as the Rhemish Mission Society [Lutherans] had established a mission in there 9 years earlier.

At this stage, Fr. Limbrock met a genial gardener from Berlin named Ludwig Kaernbach who had started working for GNG Co in 1887. He went into business for himself on Seleo Island in Berlinhafen in July 1894. He described Berlinhafen as *heavily populated* and contained *the only copra district of any significance on the whole northwest coast of New Guinea*.

Kaernbach invited Limbrock to come and establish his mission 275 miles up the coast on Tumleo Isl, near Seleo Isl. Limbrock accepted. As fate would have it, Kaernbach died within six months from fever. The NGC bought Kaernbach's property and made Berlinhafen a sub district and in July 1897 put I. Leucker in charge.

Limbrock's land acquisition plan of 20/7/1897 to acquire 80 hectares at Lemieng was reversed by Leucker. In response Limbrock appealed to Dr. Karl Herzog, a catholic member of the NGC board, and had a newspaper article published with the by-line "Mission Friend" in which he described the NGC land monopoly in Kaiser Wilhelmsland. NGC changed its decision: Limbrock was able to purchase the 80 hectares and also expended his Tumleo Island holdings by 30 ha.

Then on 21<sup>st</sup> April 1899 Luecker advised Fr Limbrock that the NGCo's property reached "from Suain to Arop and from Murik to Friedrich Wilhemshafen, including the adjacent Islands." This effectively meant that all available land in the region that was not occupied or needed by New Guineans had been purchased by the Company. On 1/4/1899 the German Government took over NGC's sovereignty rights. As the new Governor – Rudolf von Bennigsen passed through Berlinhafen to take up his new post Fr Limbrock explained to him his need for land. Bennigsen replied "We are not in favour of the mission acquiring much landed property."

Father Limbrock appealed to Canon Hespers for help. Canon Hespers was a Catholic priest assigned to the Cologne Cathedral and, in addition, was a board member of the Colonial Department in the foreign office of the German Government. Limbrock received no reply.

In early October 1899 Herr Joseph Loag sought out Father Limbrock. Kurt von Hagen had been killed in 1897 and Loag was now head administrator of the NGC. Loag wanted Limbrock to open a mission in Hansa Bay opposite Manam Isl about 10 miles to the east of Potsdamhafen. Loag suggested a SVD storehouse at Potsdamhafen, but not a mission. Fr Limbrock wrote again to Canon Hespers:

Whereas in Potsdamhafen the natives appear quiet and peaceful, the numerous inhabitants of Hansa Bay have a reputation for ferocity, bloodthirstiness, and some of them for cannibalism. But since very much copra can be made there, the New Guinea Company would be pleased if we went to Hansa Bay first to transform the savage spirits of these people – I do not know by what formula – into gentle lambs. On the other hand, the Company wants us at a distance from Potsdamhafen, so that it can retain there its monopoly on everything...

Limbrock argued that the large local population at Potsdamhafen and the mission work force would require a mission. He went on:

I therefore insisted on getting 100 hectares of land bordering on the coast for 500 metres [at Potsdamshafen] ...Besides, it is only through our moral influence on the Hansa Bay natives, that we shall gradually be able to achieve something. And so first they have to become acquainted with us. On our party, we have to be able to converse<sup>2</sup> with them, at least with the help of interpreters. Therefore, a settlement in their vicinity is indispensable. For only after they have come to hear about us, will we be able to achieve something by appearing among them and talking with them. Our settlement on Tumleo has proven the logic of this clearly enough...But if we go immediately to Hansa Bay without the natives knowing enough about us, they will then treat us like every other foreign intruder and will do their best to drive us out and kill us, without the Company or the mission profiting in any way what so ever

This is why we laid down as a condition for a second station at Hansa Bay that we first be allowed to make a settlement at Potsdamhafen and get a hundred hectares there...

Governor von Bennigsen and Herr Loag gave their approval but Canon Hespers again did not reply. In a letter dated 5/2/1900 to Prinz von Arenberg, a member of the Reischtag. Father Limbrock wrote in part:

We hope that the proceeds of the plantations that we are bringing into being will provide support for the missions, at least in part, and will help defray our larger expenses

...In Germany, there is opposition to so very much money leaving the country for mission work. Moreover, missions are steadily increasing in number...from where therefore, is the money supposed to come, is we in the colonies are not able to be allowed to look after our own support? What is supposed to happen if a depression comes or a war breaks out?...

If the mission is to be able to survive and carry out its work, then it is absolutely indispensable that it have the means to exist...It would be fitting, then, for the German Government...to hand over to us free of charge – several thousand acres of land in this South Seas Colony...until now, after much strife and all kinds of paper work we have been able to acquire about 100 hectares...Therefore I would urgently and humbly request Your Highness to be so good as to take up this matter with the competent office so that without further obstacles we be allowed to acquire a thousand hectares in a suitable place for our mission. And if we cannot receive gratis or at a low price as much land as we need, then in spite of our poverty and even though we are working only for the country, we shall be satisfied if – for the balance – we have to pay no more than other Europeans.

After some added comments, he continued:

In other Colonies of Germany, as far as I know...the Christian Missions are freed from paying all duty, up to a certain amount. But here we have never yet received this consideration, not even for our Mass wine. Even in pagan China all the goods meant for the Missionaries could be imported without duty. There should be hardly any difficulty, therefore acquiring the same privileges for us here.

Father Limbrock told Prinz von Arenberg that the mission would be most highly indebted to him for his gracious and efficacious mediation, because

This problem of getting the mission established on a material basis is a question or life of death.

Again, there was no reply. And in correspondence with Fr Janssen Limbrock suggested Canon Haspers and Prinz von Arenberg had been idle and had "very little time for our affairs." But Limbrock was wrong.

Because he now believed he could get no help from Europe Fr Limbrock sailed in the *Moresby* to Herbertshohe and paid yet another visit to Governor von Bennigsen, who at first authorized 50 hectares, but let himself be persuaded to authorise 500 hectares on the coast from Eitel Friedrichhaven [Ulingan – which is a coastal bay about 30 miles east of Potsdamhafen] and Potsdamhafen for which 500 marks had to be paid. Later Bennigsen or his successor would give an adjacent 500 hectares under the same conditions. Fr Limbrock got this in writing. The second 500 hectares could not be obtained until the first was cultivated and the Government had the option to buy back the land if left uncultivated. Limbrock chose 500 hectares immediately east of Potsdamhafen. It was named Prinz Albrechthaven [Bogia]

Herr Oskar Stuebel, Director of the Colonial Department in the Foreign Office sent Prinz von Arenberg the following:

Your Highness a long time ago placed at my disposal Prefect Apostolic Limbrock's text of 5<sup>th</sup> February last year, now being returned, wherein complaints are made of the difficulties created for the Steyl Mission by the Government in Herbertshoehe and by the New Guinea Company. Excerpts from this text were sent to the Honourable Governor von

Bennigsen and to the Directors of the New Guinea Company, in order to give both the opportunity of expressing themselves regarding the correctness of the facts indicated and the supposed unfriendly attitude towards the Mission.

In the exposition received from the Company it is stated that until now it had not failed in cooperating with the Mission. And even when judicially there existed the obligation to hinder the allotment of pieces for the Mission of its land, it had nevertheless still declared itself prepared to enter into proper transactions for handing over land for Mission settlements. Hence, the needs of the Mission ought thereby to be served.

In his turn the Governor von Bennigsen believes that he has always done his best to promote the Steyl mission and in the enclosed copy of his letter of 13<sup>th</sup> April of last year he expresses the most unreserved praise for it. And also, in particular, he has given unflagging support to the Reverend Prefect Limbrock both in word and deed.

As for the latter's wishes concerning the granting of land can be recognized as justified, there has been promised to him a maximum of 500 hectares at the price of one mark per hectare. The Mission has also been authorized to work on this land before registration of ownership is completed. The Governor has also promised similar pieces of property for the establishment of Mission stations.

The latter at the same time has assured the Reverend Prefect, that he would grant more extensive areas, as soon as the area now apportioned to him should be cultivated.

Hence, there is not anywhere a confining of the Mission expansion through the refusal of land. But the Governor does maintain the view that it should not give away extensive areas without having a guarantee that the land will be placed under cultivation, and a guarantee as to when this will take place. The Mission's fear that in time to come it might not be able to acquire land needed for its purposed has no basis in the foreseeable future, and especially so for the reason that the involvement of European workers and European capital in Kaiser Wilhelmsland is still limited to a very small amount.

Furthermore, the acquisition of native land is reserved exclusively to the Government, which therefore in proportionally large measurer will and can be concerned with the needs of the Mission. This land monopoly of the Government earlier made it necessary to declare invalid the land purchases made in May of the previous year on the Schouten and Gressien Islands.

Finally, as regards the granting of preferential tariffs for the Mission in New Guinea, I intend to bring into effect there, directives similar to those which prevail in the other protectorates. I hope that in this point the wishes of the Reverend Prefect can soon be realized. With the expression of particular respect, I am, Your Highness' devoted, Stuebel.

On 17<sup>th</sup> August 1901 Prinz von Arenberg forwarded the above letter to Father Janssen, leaving it to his discretion as to whether or not he wished to inform Prefect Apostolic Limbrock of its contents.

Questionable contracts of purchase and sale previously entered into by the New Guinea Company with the natives had to be investigated and many such contracts throughout Kaiser Wilhelmsland were subsequently declared invalid by the Government. This brought down the wrath of the Company on the head of Governor Hahl, and as far as Berlinhafen was concerned upon the head of Father Limbrock. The reason for this was that at Father Limbrock at the Government's request had supplied a priest interpreter who knew local languages. As was to be expected, the

majority of the land purchases made in the Berlinhafen area by the New Guinea Company were declared null and void.

Father Limbrock informed Father Janssen on 13<sup>th</sup> October 1904 that during a visit to Tumleo, Governor Hahl promised that a police post would be erected in Berlinhafen in 1906. For ten years, the missionaries had had no police protection, although tribal murders were being repeatedly committed in the immediate vicinity. Hahl concern may have been prompted by the killing on 13<sup>th</sup> August 1904 at St. Paul Catholic Mission in the Bainings area of Bismarck Archipelago of five nuns, three brothers and two priests.

Just two weeks before the Bainings murders a similar plot had been planned in Friedrich Wilhelmshafen where the plan was to kill all whites, but information from friendly natives allowed the bloodbath to be avoided.

The final visit to Berlinhafen by the North German Lloyd shipping service occurred in October 1904. Economic realities forced the company to adjust its schedules to visit only Herbertshohe and Friedrich Wilhelmshafen while servicing the growing trade between Australia and Japan. From then on Berlinhafen would be serviced only by NGC vessels.

On one of his trips to Herbertshoehe via Friedrich Wilhelmshaven Father Limbrock learned in confidence that the Protestant Mission had failed to gain a foothold on Ruo [Rivo] Island and that the land opposite on the mainland at Friedrich Karhaven was available for purchase, having been taken neither by the NGC nor by the Rhenish Mission Society. Furthermore, as the ringleaders of the planned attack on Friedrich Wilhelshafen had been from Siar and Kranket Islands where the Rhemish mission was working and had its headquarters, there was woe on two fronts. There was local unrest over the fact that the ringleaders were to be executed. The Rhemish mission was at that time in disarray as Herr Bergmann, their elder had died and his successor Herr Hoffmann, had returned home in ill health and was not expected to return.

Father Limbrock consulted Governor Hahl on the possibilities and after receiving an oral promise, he was able to inform Father Janssen in a letter dated 5<sup>th</sup> November 1904:

I have just received a letter from the Governor which authorizes us to acquire 10 hectares on Ruo Island for our settlement. He also stated that he is forwarding to the Colonial Department of the Foreign Office our request for an additional 500 or 1,000 hectares. May God the Holy Spirit also add his blessing.

With bananas and pieces of bread in his pocket Father Limbrock and two brothers tramped through the bush north of Friedrich Wilhelmshaven. The natives at Ruo Island thought they had deceived Father Limbrock by saying that there was no water on their land at Friedrich Karlhaven. But his real reason for not choosing this land was that he had discovered a much better place at Alexishafen. It was 15 kilometres north of Friedrich Wilhelmshafen and the local people on Sek Island indicated they would welcome European settlement and would sell land. Development at Alexishafen was rapid. By October 1905 a priest was running a school on Sek Island – with 23 students. The sawmill originally intended for Bogia was installed there and commenced operating on 5th December 1905 and by 1st September 1906 Limbrock reported he had 15 hectares planted with 1,500 coconut palms and four hectares planted with 1,800 rubber trees.

In October 1905 in Herbertshoehe, Father Limbrock again met with Governor Hahl and reported the outcome to Father Janssen:

[Governor Hahl] ...said we should keep up our excellent work of founding stations and extending our plantations. He said he would be happy to authorize land purchases for us anywhere, and said he would even set land aside for us. All we have to do is pick it out etc.

He also said that he would do his best to see that we get a place in Friedrich Wilhemshafen itself. Of if this does not succeed he himself if necessary will give us some of the Government's property there. Thanks to God a thousand times for this.

Meanwhile at Eitape [Aitape] in Berlinhafen on 19<sup>th</sup> October 1906 a police station was set up as promised.

Father Limbrock wasted no time in taking the Governor at his word. He presented a report dated 14<sup>th</sup> September 1905 outlining specific requests for land. In another report dated 8<sup>th</sup> December 1905 he spelt out his ideas on what the Governor might do for the cultural and economic development of the New Guinea mainland.

As a result of these two reports Father Limbrock said the total property of his Prefecture Apostolic now rose to:

Over 3,000 hectares of land, namely: 1,000 hectares at St Anna [opposite Tumleo Isl.] 300 hectares in Dallmanhafen [Wewak], 70 hectares in Monumbo, 1,300 hectares in Bogia 500 hectares in St Michael, and a few hundred hectares scattered here and there. Here in St Michael [Alexishafen] we are to get at least another 500 hectares – that is if God wills.

On Sunday, 26 July 1903, feast of St Anna, Brother Eduard Irlenbusch visited the mainland from Tumleo to the land Father Limbrock had received for a plantation. That land came to be called St Anna. The following day Brother Eduard and 20 New Guineans started work there. Eduard had arrived two months earlier and could not speak the language. They worked in cutting down the trees "in this primeval forest" which were so high, he said, "no ordinary shotgun could reach the birds in the tree tops.". By Christmas 1903 he had about 35 labourers and a large area was ready for planting; an area that continued to expand until his death on 11th May 1905, at Tumleo, from Blackwater fever,

Brother Ferdinand Nienhaus took over and by September 1906 reported that 4,650 coconuts had been planted [46 hectares] and 4,900 rubber trees. Brother Nienhaus had been in Kaiser Wilhelmsland since 1898 and had been responsible for starting both Monumbo and Bogia plantations. He operated St Anna plantation until 1921. Later he was in operated Boiken plantation before dying at Alexishafen in 1927.

In Father Limbrock's first progress report on plantations dated 8 September 1906 he reported that 284 hectares had been planted with 28,650 coconuts and 67 hectares planted with 28,550 rubber trees. The herd of cattle had increased to 100 head and there were also 20 horses.

The quest to discover gutta-percha stands and harvest latex. After being in Kaiser Wilhelmsland for some months, Dr. R.Schlechter arrived in Berlinhafen on 9 April 1902 for an expedition into the interior to see if he could find gutta-percha trees. "Contrary to all expectation." Father Limbrok said he had found thick stands of gutta-percha trees, "first in the Bismarck Mountains and then in the plains and mountains of the Astrolabe Bay."

In 1908 Governor Hahl wrote to Father Limbrock that he would be receiving an official communication on instructing the natives in gutta-percha culture "but instead of sending them to Dr. Schlechter as I suggested" he said "it would be ideal if your brothers could themselves get this knowledge from Herr Schlechter."<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Schlechter's gutta-percha quest was funded by the *Kolonialwirtschaftliches Komitee*, an organization set up by German Colonial Society to encourage the production of useful in the colonies raw materials. Schlechter was awarded a prize of 3,000 Marks by the committee...Gutta-Percha was ideal for use in submarine electrical cables...Superseded by the invention of wireless telegraphy,

gutta-percha was another failed hope for the Germans in New Guinea, total exports from the Old Protectorate in 1913 being worth a mere 7,000 Marks.<sup>4</sup>

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The 1913 Conference of Mission Superiors. A conference was held at Vunapope near Rabaul from 8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> December 1913 which included The Bishops of New Britain, Bishop of the Marianas and Carolines, Prefecture Apostolic of Mainland New Guinea [Father Limbrock], Prefecture Apostolic of North Solomons, the head of the Marshall Islands mission and three additional priests. Their tenth resolution stated that each of the ecclesiastical areas represented should do its utmost to start plantations "so as to make the mission as financially independent as possible from Europe"

Seven months later, on 28<sup>th</sup> July 1914, World War 1 broke out and all financial aid for New Guinea was cut off...On 14<sup>th</sup> September the German Government and German troops at Rabaul surrendered to Australia and a "caretaker" administration began which lasted until 1921. Then German planters were dispossessed, sent home, and Australian soldiers received their plantations. The Christian missions, because of the "Miscellaneous Provisions" in part XV, Article 438, of the Treaty of Versailles with Germany, were allowed to retain their property.

## The Mission ship Gabriel.

The *Gabriel*, a steamer obtained by the mission in 1910, receives pride of place. But for Father Limbrock, for whom the frontier was economic, and shipping represented a great deal of trouble and expense. Nevertheless, the Gabriel's monthly round of the eighteen mission stations held the mission together.



The "Gabriel", the mission boat captained by Father Loerks before he became Bishop Photo by courtesy of Father Geoff Brumm.

In September 1914, the Governor of German New Guinea surrendered to Australian troops and, in the same month, Father Limbrock was surrendering the reins as Prefect Apostolic, half a dozen times to Father Janssen, who did not accept it. After Father Janssen's death on 15<sup>th</sup> January 1909 the resignation was eventually accepted and Father Limbrock for whom the frontier served as a priest in the Sepik until his death in Sydney on 31<sup>st</sup> May 1931.<sup>5</sup> Father Limbrock was succeeded by Father Andrias Puff who served as administrator until the arrival of Bishop Wolf in 1923, who was based at Alexishafen .We will meet Bishop Wolf again in Sepik 3 Chapter 42 as a prisoner aboard the Dorish Maru.

## Opposition to the continued presence of German missionaries in New Guinea:

A Mr. G.J.H. Garrett, officer in charge of the native and Asiatic prisons in Rabaul, arrived in Sydney on 21<sup>st</sup> July 1922 and the next day the SYDNEY MORNING HERALD ran an interview in which he stated that "the dismissal of the German missionaries" was "necessary for the success of the Territory."

Similar charges had been made endlessly, even prior to this, so on the 7<sup>th</sup> June 1921 Father Puff...sat and penned a letter to the first Administrator of the Mandated Territory, Brigadier General E.A.Wisdom, at Rabaul. It was a month after the civil administration of the Mandated Territory had commenced. He could no longer be silent about charges being made against the mission, he said. The charges were being aimed at plantations, which had proved to be an aid both in spreading Christianity and in raising the social standard of the people, he said.

"The natural development of the mission" he said "suggested plantations...as the best means of getting contact with the distant and diverse linguistic groups of natives, of making them acquainted with our institutions and purposes, and of facilitating the mission's task of institution and education.

"In the beginning plantations were even necessary," because they "formed for the mission a natural, sure protection against sudden attacks by these suspicious warlike people. Seeing the missionaries surrounded by many labourers, and not being without protection, they did not dare to attack.

"It is true, the mission's first task is to spread the faith. But like every colonist and business firm, the mission has a right to regular productive work. The missions have the obligation to help the native tame his wild nature, overcome illness, and learn order and obedience. Now the plantations, workshops and all educational establishments of the mission are good schools for these purposes. The missionaries work for charity and for the benefit of the country, and so our work should not be less esteemed than that of businessmen.

"Funds are necessary to support of mission work. But the natives here are very poor. And so, we have to help ourselves or be a burden to Christian countries. For even though great sums are collected annually for all the missions of the world, the funds we receive do not cover our budget...and so we must help ourselves. The war and the present sad state of the world have proven the necessity and usefulness of plantations. The proceeds are used only for the maintenance of our mission and for the continuation of mission work right here in the colony...and so the plantations are an advantage to this country and its people. The proceeds of business firms and planters, on the other hand go out of the country and are invested elsewhere. As Mr. Lucas, a member of the Royal Commission, [see Chapter 25] has pointed out the capital and the profit of the missions remains right here.

"It can be argued that mission plantations hurt business firms and planters, but only if you agree that every planter in the world hurts every other planter. Are there no equal rights? There is envy and jealousy...and the rumour is spreading that the mission is prejudicial to recruiting. The mission like the Government, is opposed to illegal recruiting.

"Some charge that mission schools are a means for the mission to grow rich, and so these schools give offense... The mission however does not demand tuition for its schools. On the contrary, it is obliged to give clothing, food, lodging, and even must pay out wages, in order to be "allowed" and "enabled" to train youth in various handicrafts... Youth do not realise the need for study, and so we must reward them for their efforts. And so, the specter of the mission growing rich by its schools is automatically excluded.

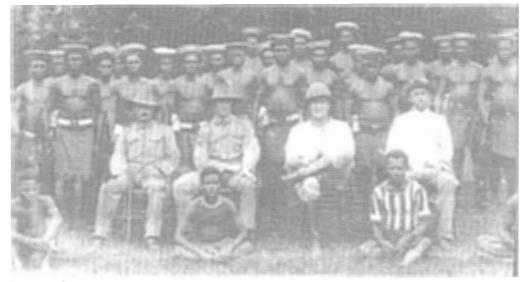
"Let me quote the following lines which Father Limbrock wrote to the former German Governor:

'If the envy of other business firm asserts that such educational establishments are a material advantage for the missions, it would be recommended that a public request be made, that all such business enterprises should found such and similar educational establishments. The more the better! And if they so desire, and if they so desire, we shall be ready to put at their disposal any number of Sisters, Fathers and Brothers for the supervision and direction of these schools and for teaching in them. The only condition is that free board and lodging be provided for them, and that they be granted full freedom, time and opportunity to conduct their religious exercises and to conduct the work that is proper for them as missionaries... Whatever gain and profit there may be, we shall gladly leave to the business firm that undertakes the happy enterprise.'

There may have been a reply from Brigadier-General Wisdom, but I have been unable to trace it.

**The acquisition of the Stella Maris.** Father Loerks sailed for Europe on October 6<sup>th</sup> 1926 to negotiate the building of a new steamer... the "Gabriel" was no longer completely seaworthy. Loerks was successful, as the "Stella Maris" arrived in Madang on June 15<sup>th</sup> 1934... Meanwhile Father Loerks was appointed Prefect Apostolic of Central New Guinea.<sup>6</sup>

Concluding comments: Until after World War 2, the only Christian Mission in the Sepik District was that of the SVD Roman Catholics. As we shall see Catholic priests explored much of the District ahead of the Administration officers and that Patrol Officer and later District Officer "Kassa" G.W.L.Townsend relied heavily upon guidance from Father Kirschbaum who established Marienberg Mission station in 1913. Although, during World War 2 it might be thought that German missionaries might succeed in claiming neutrality or an alliance with the invading Japanese, they suffered such heavy losses that in the post war period the mission had to restructure and invite another Catholic Order into the Sepik to make up missionary numbers in order to continue their work.



Patrols into the Sepik District. Kassa Townsend has his leg crossed. Father Kirschbaum is in white next to him. Photo by courtesy of Father Geoff Brumm.

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**Post Script 1.** In Defining a good missionary, Father Janssen once said of Father Limbrock: ...he is both devout and practical minded and both of these qualities are very necessary. And also, he will interest himself with those things which will be necessary for the support of the mission.<sup>9</sup>

**Post Script 2.** This chapter reads as if Father Limbrock engaged himself primarily with expanding mission influence, establishing new mission stations, land dealings and plantation developments. But he did much more than that. An example in point was the need to make a decision about what language the mission should use. Dr. R.W.Wiltgen takes up the story.

His first five mission stations had been in five different language areas. "We constantly direct our efforts towards having children from as many different language groups as possible at our central school." he said...By 1908 there were children from 11 different language areas in the central school at Tumleo. And if you include also the language groups represented by our workers, Father Limbrock said "then we have people on our stations from at least two dozen different languages." He considered them to be two dozen doors into that many linguistic areas.

And how did he settle the language problem in this central school? He studied the advisability of using a single native language, or English, or Pidgin English, or the Malay language introduced by the Dutch in the Dutch East Indies, or also Volapuek, a kind of Esperanto invented in Germany in 1879. Although Malay would have been easy to learn, he believes that it would serve as an avenue for Mohammedanism to enter German New Guinea, and so he opposed it. He finally decided that the only sensible thing to do in German New Guinea was to make German the universal language since the natives should acquire a world language, with an abundant literature, which they could use for conversing with Germans in their country. As early as 1902 he said that in the Tumleo school, "with the exception of the daily religious class, only German is spoken in all other classes."

## **End Notes Chapter 10**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This chapter is based largely upon Rev. Dr. R.W. Wiltgen's presentation "Catholic Mission Plantations in Mainland New Guinea; Their purpose and origin". to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Waigani seminar – the history of Melanesia [1968]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Dr. R.W. Wiltgen 1968 page 25

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Firth S. 1986 Page 163

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Dr. R.W.Wiltgen 1968 page 27

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Lorna Fleetwood - A short history of Wewak 1985 Wirui Press Pages 17 & 18

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> See Sepik 3 Chapter 25 Epic evacuation of missionaries overland from Sepik to the Highlands 3/4/1943 => and Sepik Non-combatants murdered at sea.

<sup>8</sup> See Sepik 4 Chapter 7 The return and increased diversity of Christian Missions in the Sepik

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Dr. R.W.Wiltgen 1968 page?

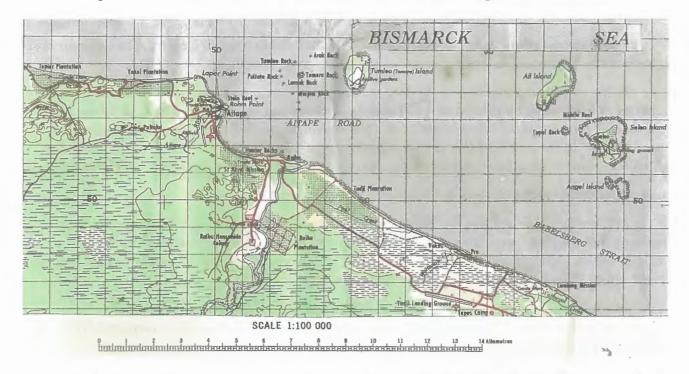
## Chapter 11 Berlinhafen and Eitape [Aitape]

The reader will benefit from reading this chapter in conjunction with:

Chapter 2: Servicing Samoa's needs - Establishment of German New Guinea

Chapter 6: The discovery and early exploration of the Sepik River

Chapter 10: The establishment of the Catholic Mission in the Sepik



Berlinhafen is the anchorage in the relatively sheltered waters between the mainland and the offshore Islands: Tumleo, Ali, Seleo and Angel, later known as "Aitape Road". It was discovered and named by Otto Finsch during his exploratory voyages of the North coast between October 1884 and May 1885<sup>1</sup>.

Friedrich Herman Otto Finsch was an ethnographer, ornithologist and explorer for the New Guinea Kompagnie [NGC]...He was famous for conducting two expeditions in New Guinea, in 1879-1882 and 1884-1885. Finsch was secretly commissioned by the NGC to assess the potential of the Island for colonization and commercial exploitation. During his trip on the Samoa with Captain Dallmann he visited Mioko [Duke of York Islands off New Britain], The Gazelle Peninsular and virtually the whole coast of Kaiser Wilhelmsland and seems to have names the myriad of rivers and harbours they encountered, including the Kaiserin Augusta [Sepik] River. He was also at the official flag raising at Matupit that proclaimed formal annexation in November 1884. Finsch had been writing about New Guinea since 1868.<sup>2</sup>

The first recorded German settler in Berlinhafen, as recorded in Chapter 9 was Ludwig Kaernbach, 'a genial gardener from Berlin' and former NGC employee who went into business for himself on Seleo Island in July 1894. It was he who encouraged Father Limbrock to establish the Catholic Mission on Tumleo Island in 1896.

The German New Guinea Annual report for 1896-97 noted after the untimely death of Ludwig Kaernbach and the purchase of the property by NGC:

The purposes and functions of the establishment founded on the island Seleo in Berlinhafen are...those of a trading station. The native name Seleo has been adopted by the Nautical Section of the Navy Office in place of the former name Sainson. In particular copra, either produced on the

station's own land or traded in by the natives of the surrounding area, is exported to Singapore, but attention is also paid to other natural products – trepan, tortoiseshell and pearl shell.

Herr Lucker has been appointed manager of this establishment, assisted by Diack, a former assistant to the trader Karnkeck. Six trading posts have been established on the mainland and on neighbouring Islands, manned by Chinese or Malays. They received no regular remuneration, but deliver the products they collect to the station which credits them with the price and supplies them with the necessities of life. The balance is paid when the goods are sold...

The station is also engaged in the purchase of land and recruiting labour...The German Post Office has also approved the establishment of a postal agency there...<sup>3</sup>

In the course of a tour which the area manager Lucker carried out within the trading district allocated to him, partly on the chartered Steamer Captain Cook and partly with the sail boat Seleo, from the 30<sup>th</sup> October to 10<sup>th</sup> November 1898, labour was for the first time successfully recruited from Lemieng. In the course of this voyage a trading post was opened at Arrop [Arop]... from this station it is planned to conduct barter trade...mainly for Copra at Arrop and Sussano [Sissano]<sup>4</sup>

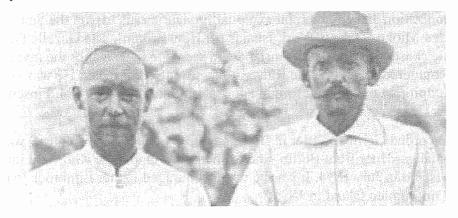
# Land acquisitions along the Sepik Coastline.

We saw in Chapter 9 that on 21<sup>st</sup> April 1899 Lucker [also spelt Leucker] advised Father Limbrock that the NGC property extended from Suain to Arop and from Murik to Friedrich Wilhelmshafen, including the adjacent islands. This effectively meant that all available land and land not needed by New Guineans had been purchased by NGC.

In Chapter 2, also in 1899 we saw that an official called Bother on a visit to Hansa Bay, Wewak and Aitape declared that most of NGC's land had been acquired by fraud and that NGC had acted with "direct unscrupulousness".

The outcome: The Colonial office over ruled Bother's report stating contracts made with natives of the kind living in Kaiser Wilhelmsland can never bear rigorous juristic examination and that officers of the imperial administration should be guided by considerations of fairness to the Company, which otherwise might fail to acquire the land reserved for it under the transfer agreement of 1899<sup>5</sup>

**Below left** Hans Klink – the first kiap at Morobe. **Below Right** Hans Rodatz<sup>1</sup> the first kiap at Aitape – Courtesy Stewart Firth – New Guinea Under the Germans. Page 114



Hans Rodatz -District Officer, was a former employee of NGC. Rodatz established Eitape as a government station in October 1906 and remained there until 1911. He was a former Prussian army

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> We met Hans Rodatz as a member of the Ramu Expedition in 1899

officer, who came to Kaiser Wilhelmsland in 1897 and took part in the Ramu River Expedition [Chapter 2]. In 1901 he prospected up the Waria River...then he entered the civil service.

After opening Eitape, he made several tours of inspection between the Dutch Border and the Sepik River; his new area of responsibility. He appointed the first Luluais and Tultuls in most of the coastal villages and is generally recognized as having brought most of his district under Government influence if not control<sup>6</sup>. For the first-time people were prepared to sign up as labour recruits in large numbers. "but initial resistance was fierce and Governor Hahl reinforced the station with a schooner and extra police in 1907.<sup>7</sup>

The German New Guinea annual report 1906-07 reported. The establishment of Eitape Government Station near Berlinhafen has brought about a complete reversal of the native situation in the north west. It has proven possible to punish several refractory tribes and to relinquish the natives in gratifying numbers for public works connected with the construction of the station, of bridges and roads.<sup>8</sup>

**Writer's note.** As the last Colonial expatriate kiap in charge at Aitape, the writer finds the last para to be an over simplistic and sought more detail on what the first Aitape kiap was facing and how he dealt with it. I found the following:

On the Aitape coast villages were simply too big and their warriors too numerous for 50 police to manage<sup>9</sup>. It was an unstable colonial order which the Germans bequeathed to the Australians in 1914. Aitape District was an object lesson in the limits of German power. It was 'very difficult for the station to gain any influence or to achieve recognition of its authority' according to the annual report 1907/08. The Germans were openly challenged to fight and the troop was exposed to ridicule. Among a number of punitive expeditions led by Hans Rodatz against coastal, inland and hinterland peoples was a June 1908 expedition against the Sissano. The most powerful group on the Aitape coast; able of putting a thousand men under arms from eight villages. Sissano women also joined in battle carrying and collecting arrows to be handed to warriors and removing the dead and wounded...

Hearing from a trader [Schulz] that the Sissano had killed 15 neighbouring villagers Rodatz demanded the culprits be handed over. When no one appeared, he put police into the area pursuing the Sissano into the sago swamps...the police killed three before Rodatz called it off, sending word for the warriors to stop fighting. Within a few days many of the hostile Sissano were again cutting copra for sale to the trader and Rodatz congratulated himself on having 'shown the kanakas that they would be discovered by the troops even in the bush and sago swamps. But as Rodatz was to learn a successful pursuit was the merest beginning of control.

In...newly established Aitape...relations with the natives improved at the end of the year covered by the report [1907-08]. The natives there are completely uncivilized, have had only very little contact with Europeans and are extremely warlike. They are of fine physical physique and never step outside their houses unarmed. The feuds between the coastal and mountain people have forced the former to combine together with larger villages. One can walk for hours along the shore without meeting a single village and then one comes upon house upon house, village upon village for hours on end. But this alliance against a common enemy has not made their relations with any more peaceful. The individual communities within a large village usually live in a state of feud and fight the bloodiest battles with each other.

There are usually two grounds for hostilities, disputes about women and allegations of sorcery. According to them a native never dies a natural death, but has always been bewitched. The sorcerer is sought out and then a vendetta begins and is handed on for generation after generation. When the number killed is equal on both sides, peace is frequently concluded, to be broken again at

the first opportunity that offers. The natives acknowledge no authority. Although some of the old men exert a certain degree of influence...In these circumstances it is difficult for the station to achieve recognition of its authority. It was openly challenged to fight and the troop was exposed to ridicule. Armed intervention was necessary: in the hinterland of Eitape against the mountain villages if Siaute, Peest [Pes], Marok and Eitjerap [Aiterap]; to the west of the station against Mallol [Malol] (on three occasions); To the east of the station against Karssau [Keresau], Muschu, Kerassin and the mounta



**Sissano warriors circa 1890**– two wearing cuirasses as protection against arrows. Photo from S.Firth's New Guinea under the Germans – Web Books 1986.

Murder of five men from Tjakur village Kairiru Island. The murders were reported to District Officer Rodatz by Father van den Hemel, who was working at Dallmanhafen in1907. Radatz commandeered Murina, belonging to recruiter Rudolf Wahlen, and sailed to Dallmanhafen with two local warrant officers and twelve men. The murdered men had been fishing in a canoe. The murderers came from the Island of Kerasan [now known as Karasau] ...Rodatz was unable to catch any of the murders...so he destroyed the villages, the canoes and the plantations of Karesan and Teresing as a warning that the German Government did not condone wanton murders. 11

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At least 23 Sepik Copra Plantations: Throughout the German colonial era many plantations were established along the Sepik coastline, with priority given to suitable land adjacent to the District's three harbours or anchorages: Berlinhafen, [Aitape], Angriffshafen [Vanimo] and Dallmanhafen [Wewak]. Trying to identify them all is difficult, so some will have been missed in this documentation.

A. <u>Eleven Berlinhafen plantations</u> Seleo Isl, Tumleo Isl, Ali Isl. Lemieng, St Anna, Tepier, Yakoi and Tadji, {see map above} plus, off the map Maindron [Sissano], Drimboi [Yakamul] and Suain

As mentioned in the previous Chapter, in 1894 Ludwig Kaernbach established a copra plantation and trading post on Seleo Island and encouraged Father Limbrock<sup>2</sup> to establish his mission station on nearby Tumleo Island. Father Limbrock quickly acquired land and established plantations:

1897 80 acres at Lemieng and 30 acres on Tumleo Isl. In 1903 1,000 hectares at St Anna [Mainland adjacent to where Aitape would later be established].

Fritz Schulz – planter and trader at Maindron [Sissano] Schulz probably came to Kaiser Wilhelmsland in about 1890 as a sailor. Later he worked independently and for the NGC as a trader for several years. In 1900 he was trading copra in the Nubia [Hansa Bay – Madang Province]. After the opening of Eitape station in 1906 he settled just west of Sissano at Maindron, where he was the most westernmost European resident before the Dutch border.

Schulz spoke the Sissano language, had good relations with the villagers and was said to have had domestic relations with various indigenous women on the coast. His premature death in January 1910 was attributed by his contemporaries to his occasional bouts of heavy drinking. But some Sissano people claimed he was killed by the Sissano people presumably by sorcery.

Schulz played an important role in assisting government officers and scientists visiting Sissano, many of whom stayed with him. He is known to have aided Dorsey, Friederici, Lewis and Neuhauss. In each case, he was a source of basic ethnographic information on Sissano and nearby communities. He also kept Rodatz, the kiap at Aitape informed of village affairs and the illegal activities of bird of paradise hunters. Like other traders, he played a key role in local politics of the Sissano and their neighbours and was an important middleman between villagers and Government<sup>12</sup>

**Tepier Plantation.** [a few kilometers west of Aitape] had been established by two German brothers at an unspecified date prior to 1914. They had traded copra, pearl shell and bird of paradise plumes. When the war came the brothers departed across the border into Dutch New Guinea<sup>13</sup>.

**Tadji Plantation.** The writer has been unable to locate any information as to who established the large copra plantation at Tadji. Tadji received numerous mentions in later history because the Japanese established a war time airstrip there, and in the post-world war 2 era the Government High School was established on what had been Tadji plantation land.

Yakoi Plantation. Shown on the map and seen by the writer, no other details known

**Drimboi Plantation.** It is assumed, but not known that Drimboi plantation was planted in German times. The only mention of Drimboi was that recruiter and trader J.H. Wood owned of it in 1938

Suain Plantation. Established when the Catholic Mission was opened there

B. <u>Eleven Dallmanhafen [Wewak] plantations</u> Wirui [Catholic mission] Brandi, Boram, Moem, Walis Isl, Karawap, Boiken, Rabuin Isl, Tarawai Isl, Muschu Isl, Kairiru Isl plantations.

In 1903 The Catholic Mission acquired 300 hectares at Dallmanhafen [Wewak] - Wirui.

**Boram, Moem and Brandi plantations** On 15<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1912 Governor Hahl *authorized a M.Penber of Eitape to purchase a large number of Hectares at Dallmanhafen. Thus, the Brandi, Boram and Moem plantations were established under the management of a Mr. Boiker. An area near [Cape] Wom and misnamed Rabuin was also purchased by M.Pember, but was not cultivated. We* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>Father Limbrock was also responsible for acquiring many land holdings and establishing mission stations and plantations in the Madang district during this period.]

know a little about the running of the plantation at Boram Sir Pita Simogun as a boy and worked there until World War 1. The plantation covered the whole of the Boram peninsular and the area covered by the present Wewak airport ... There were about 100 labourers on the plantation... The plantation house was built on Boram point behind the present nursing sister's quarters. <sup>14</sup>

**Boiken** Plantation was established when the Catholic Mission station was established.

Muschu, Kairiru, Walis, Tarawai, Rabuin Island Plantations and Karawop Plantation. No found documentation concerning their establishment

## C. One Angriffschafen plantation Vanimo.

There was a German trading post at Angriffschafen and with it an extensive plantation.<sup>3</sup>

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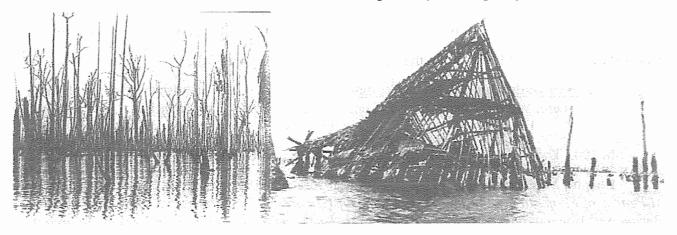
**Recognition for the SVD Mission** Also in the 1906-07 annual report Father Limbrock, based at Tumleo's achievements were recognized: The Catholic Mission of the Holy Spirit displayed extraordinary energy, increasing its staff and extending its existing stations, particularly the central station at Alexishafen. At this central station, a plantation is being established on a large area of land and work continues steadily on the construction of the buildings intended to accommodate the new members of the mission. <sup>15</sup>

# 16th December 1907, a magnitude 7.016 Earthquake formed the Sissano Lagoon.

The annual report of 1908-09 describes the devastation as being caused by the North-West Monsoon<sup>17</sup>. With the passing of time a clearer picture emerged. The Department of Minerals & Energy in reporting on the 1998 Sissano tsunami noted the following concerning the 1907 event.

On 16<sup>th</sup> December 1907, at 03.35 am a strongly felt earthquake shook Aitape. The quake was followed by continuous light earth tremors lasting for 2 hours and 38 minutes.

The report gives the direction of the initial shock as northwest-southeast. The earthquake caused widespread damage between Arop and Sissano. An Island called by the locals "Warapu", sank into the sea drowning some children. After the earthquake, only the roofs of the houses stuck out of the water. As shown house photos below by German naturalist Professor Neuhauss in 1910. Dead tree photo by Anthropologist A.B.Lewis.



According to German reports, the Aitape region had not experienced any significant seismicity since colonization by Europeans began.

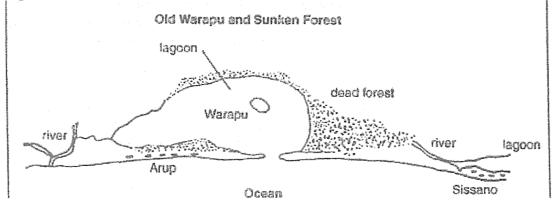
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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Personal observation L.Bragge – The plantation was still in existence in 1964 when I first went Vanimo

**Writer's note.** There were two more serious seismic events in the Aitape District in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and reports of a third 6,000 years earlier.

- 1. A major earthquake in the Torricelli mountains in 1935. The construction of the Sepik Highway through the Torricellis in the mid-1970s showed that the structural integrity of the mountains was so severely shattered that over-night, long sections of newly constructed road would drop up to two metres. This presumably indicates that such earthquakes have been a regular occurrence far back into history.
- 2. **The Sissano tsunami of 17**<sup>th</sup> **July 1998**. It is stated that elders interviewed after this tsunami remembered stories of similar events in Sissano oral histories.

According to A.B.Lewis the belt of dead forest was about three miles wide.



The magnitude of this earthquake was 7.0 as measured by the Japanese researcher Abe [1981] after reviewing the few available Seismographs of that particular event.

Dr. Albert Hahl noted. The practical assistance which the District Officer was able to arrange for the natives in distress in this devastated area proved far more effective in winning them over permanently than any display of force...I visited these areas when I travelled on foot along the coast from the border in 1908 to become acquainted with all the individual villages, and was escorted by a large throng of natives – the old distrust had completely disappeared. 18

## 3. A tsunami 6,000 years ago claimed the "oldest known tsunami victim?



A mysterious partial skull unearthed in Papua New Guinea in 1929, that once was thought to belong to an extinct human species, now turns out to have another unique distinction. Scientists believe it belongs to the eldest known tsunami victim...new examination

of sediments where the 6,000-year-old skull was found, detected hallmarks of a tsunami, with a composition remarkably similar to remnants of the deadly 1998 tsunami that lashed the same area.

The skull was found near the town of Aitape, about seven miles inland from the PNG north coast...The Aitape skull speaks volumes about the long-term exposure of human populations along the world's coastlines and how such events in the past will have undoubtedly had fundamental effects on human migration, settlement and culture. <sup>19</sup>

Sepik 4 Chapter 57 picks up on a possible fundamental effect upon Warapu/Sissano culture. Given that there were three gigantic, life taking seismic events during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and given also that Warapu/Sissano elders recall from their oral histories that such events happened also in the past, is it not reasonable to suggest that perhaps three+/- gigantic seismic events occurred along this seismically sensitive coastline, per century, back through time to 6,000 years ago and beyond then to the very beginning of time? Might it not then follow that the Warapu/Sissano elders and custodians of oral history and ritual life believe that; -

An extremely powerful deity lives on or under the Warapu/Sissano lands, and waters; a deity which periodically wreaks Armageddon-like havoc upon the Warapu and adjacent peoples and lands...unless it receives annual sacrifices from within the Warapu community. And that the loss of loved ones is accepted by the Warapu community as part of a religious ritual, required to placate the hunger of the deity, and as a necessary part of the price of their cosmic existence?<sup>20</sup>

## The progression of visiting Scientists to the Eitape District

Writer's note. As mentioned elsewhere there was a great difference between the German and the Australian exploration of New Guinea. Germany's exploration was done primarily by scientists and missionaries, whereas Australia's exploration was done primarily by Patrol Officers who seldom has any specialist training, and of course missionaries and labour recruiters who usually left no available maps or reports of what they did or where they had been.

The diary of Anthropologist A.B.Lewis who visited Eitape, Berlinhafen and Sissano and the coast as far as Hollandia in 1909, offers an insight into the world of Germany's scientist/explorers. A.B.Lewis stayed with planter Fritz Schulz at his plantation at Maindron [Sissano] and noted other academics who had stayed there included Dorsey, Freiderici and Neuhauss. His diary also provides details of other scientists and their work<sup>4</sup>. **End writer's note.** 

George A. Dorsey and Albert Buell Lewis. In 1908 Dorsey, anthropology curator of the Joseph N. Field Museum of Natural History, in Chicago made a whirlwind round the world and spent two months in German New Guinea, including Aitape and Sissano. Upon his return, he recommended to the Museum administrators that all kinds of magnificent and rare specimens could still be acquired at reasonable cost. The result was that junior curator Albert Buell Lewis was sent on a South Pacific expedition 1909-1913, of which some months in 1909 were spent collecting and documenting artefacts in the Eitape district.<sup>21</sup>

<u>Carl Georg Eduard Friederici.</u> Friederici had a keen interest in cultural and linguistic diffusion, particularly, the so-called Malayo-Polynesian [Austronesian] migrations and pre-Columbian contacts between the new world and Polynesia...In November 1909...he made a trip into

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> In this chapter, the writer limits the description of these scientist's broad qualifications and experiences to those related to Berlinhafen and the Aitape District

the Torricelli Mountains and walked from Eitape to the newly established station of Hollandia in Dutch New Guinea.<sup>22</sup>

<u>Professor Richard Gustav Neuhauss</u>, was a physician, physical anthropologist and photographer who spent the years 1908-10 in German New Guinea, among his wider travels in Oceania. He made a trip up the Sepik River on the NGC vessel *Siar*, together with anthropologist Otto Schlaginhaufen and Botanist Richard Schlechter. He also spent time on the Aitape coast including at least six weeks in Sissano.<sup>23</sup>

<u>Doctor Fredrich Richard Rudolf Schlechter</u>, made two trips [1901-2 and 1907-09] to German New Guinea in quest of Gutta-Percha/caoutchouc [native rubber]. His expeditions included the Berlinhafen hinterland. After his Sepik river trip with Neuhauss he came to Aitape and with Fr Kirschbaum, Otto Schlaginhaufen and Police Master Stuben conducted further research in the Torricelli Mountains.<sup>24</sup>

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The Annual report of 1909-10 noted that Luluais and Tultuls had been appointed in practically all coastal villages, but this had not so far been possible in the mountain villages except in isolated cases. Pacification had been more or less achieved...and that no there is scarcely ever a need to use armed force. A year later, despite steady progress in the Eitape district, there was an incident at Leitre [a coast village midway between Eitape and Vanimo] when villagers offered hostile opposition to a police troop when they were ordered to give up two shot guns which had belonged to bird of paradise hunters. The people have not settled down completely and have rebuilt their huts [built on piles in the lagoon] which had been destroyed. The two guns were later handed in.

In Sissano in 1909-10, 183 men women and children were successfully vaccinated...In Warapu, a village which has always shown hostility, men were successfully recruited for Government service. It is still not possible to collect any tax in any part of the District. In its place the natives perform compulsory labour. The natives comply when requested by the station without raising any difficulties...<sup>26</sup>

# Bird of Paradise Hunting. [see also Chapter 6]

Hunting for birds of paradise has grown in importance. High priced for almost effortless profits has acted as a powerful inducement to engage in this occupation, which became associated with a whole series of unfortunate features, reminiscent of a kind of 'gold fever' on a small scale. On the other hand, a number of small planters established their plantations on the basis of hunting for birds of paradise. This had the support of Hahl, who allowed shooter's licences to be issues provided the licensee brought 125 acres into cultivation each year. The actual hunting is usually done by coloured hunters in the employ of Europeans. In framing regulations to control hunting operations, the Government has endeavoured to take these various factors into account. A number of restrictions have been introduced. In the light of the constant expansion of this type of hunting a number of further restrictions are in preparation.<sup>27</sup>

The Annual report of 1912-13 noted that – more stringent conditions have been imposed... for the protection of the birds. The closed season has been extended from 1 November to 15 May and three large reserves established, so that the preservation of all species appears guaranteed.<sup>28</sup>

## Breaking down of Law and Order.

In [1911-12] the Eitape District, in Maurik [Murik, at the Mouth of the Augusta River] the Tultul was murdered. The investigating officer was resisted with an open show of force. In April 1912 natives of Orat [Urat – Dreikikir area] killed some natives of Damon. The former offered violent resistance to the police with spears and arrows. In July 1912, a Malay living on the coast at Leitre was threatened with bush knives. When a police troop appeared, the natives fled into rugged,

broken country. In September 1912 when pursuing absconding labourers, the police sergeant was hard pressed in the villages of Pes [inland from Aitape station] and a coloured policeman who was carrying a message was murdered.<sup>29</sup>

In 1911 Hans Rodatz was replaced as District Officer at Aitape by a Mr. Schrober in 1911<sup>30</sup>. In the beginning of 1914 Hahl imposed recruiting restrictions on villages near Aitape. The Aitape communities, stood in the path of recruiters going inland. Having lost all their young men to the plantations they took up arms against the Government. The villagers must be collected together again, the young men must be able to return home so marriages could take place in order to maintain the population. He hoped a year's closure would be enough.<sup>31</sup>

Writer's Note: A full documentation of the life and times of District Officer Hans Rodatz in the Eitape [Aitape] District, or of Planter Fritz Schulz would make excellent reading apart from providing valuable historic knowledge.

# **End Notes Chapter 11**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Wikipedia

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Robert Walsh - An American Anthropologist in Melanesia 1909-1913 – Book 2 2002 Page 58

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> German Annual Report 1896-71 – P.Sack and D Clark ed and Translation 1979 Page 135

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> German New Guinea annual report 1893-94 - P.Sack and D Clark ed and translation 1979 Page 143

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Stewart Firth – New Guinea under the Germans – Web Books 1986 Page 69-71

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Robert Walsh - An American Anthropologist in Melanesia 1909-1913 - Book 2 2002 Page 140

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Stewart Firth – 1986 Page 97

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> German New Guinea annual report 1906-07 - P.Sack and D Clark ed and translation 1979 Page 266

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Stewart Firth – 1986 Page 93

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> German New Guinea annual report 1907-08 – P.Sack and D Clark ed and translation 1979 Page 279

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Hans Rodtz "Report by the District Officer of Eitape 1907" P 10 Translated by John J Tschauder, and as reported by Lorna Fleetwood 1985 P10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Robert Walsh - An American Anthropologist in Melanesia 1909-1913 - Book 2 2002 Page 150

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> A.J.Marshall Men and Birds of Paradise – William Heinemann Ltd London/Toronto 1938 P 233

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Lorna Fleetwood 1985 P11

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> German New Guinea annual report 1906-07 – P.Sack and D Clark ed and translation 1979 Page 269

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> I.D.Ripper & H Letz - The Sissano Lagoon [Aitpe] Tsunami - Dept of Minerals & Energy Geological Survey -

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> German New Guinea annual report 1907-08 – P.Sack and D Clark ed and translation 1979 Page 292-3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Albert Hahl – Governor in New Guinea – Frundsberg Verlag in Berlin 1927 – ed. and translation by P Sack and D. Clark ANU 1980 page 120

www.theguardian.com/science/2017/oct/25/skull-tsunami-papua-new-guinea-oldest-victim

<sup>21</sup> L.W.Bragge Sepik 4 Chapter 57 unpublished

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Robert Walsh - An American Anthropologist in Melanesia 1909-1913 – Book 2 2002 Page 70

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Robert Walsh - An American Anthropologist in Melanesia 1909-1913 – Book 2 2002 Page 63

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Robert Walsh - An American Anthropologist in Melanesia 1909-1913 – Book 2 2002 Page 121

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Robert Walsh - An American Anthropologist in Melanesia 1909-1913 - Book 2 2002 Page 146

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> German New Guinea annual report 1909-10 – P.Sack and D Clark ed and translation 1979 Page 306

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> German New Guinea annual report 1910-11 – P.Sack and D Clark ed and translation 1979 Page 323

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> German New Guinea annual report 1911-12 – P.Sack and D Clark ed and translation 1979 Page 346

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> German New Guinea annual report 1912-13 – P.Sack and D Clark ed and translation 1979 Page 366

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> German New Guinea annual report 1912-13 – P.Sack and D Clark ed and translation 1979 Page 355

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Lorna Fleetwood – A short history of Wewak – Wirui Press 1985? Page 12

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Stewart Firth – 1986 Page 132

# Sepik 2 Chapter 12 Administration of New Guinea Under Dr. Albert Hahl to 1914

Two years after the transition from company to German government administration, Governor Bennigsen left the colony of New Guinea in ill health in mid-1901 and Albert Hahl took over from him in an acting role on 10<sup>th</sup> July 1901, and was confirmed in the position on 2<sup>th</sup> November 1902. After the tenure of ten administrators and governors under a mixture of NGC and government rule over the previous 16 years, Albert Hahl would govern German New Guinea until April 1914 and bring a sense of stability to the administration of the colony. He had graduated from the University of Wuerberg where he studied law. He transferred to the Kolonialabteilung of the Foreign Office and was posted to New Guinea. He arrived in Herbertshoe on 14<sup>th</sup> January 1896. He was 28 years old and without any colonial experience whatsoever when he was appointed Kieserite Richter (Colonial Judge). Soon after Hahl's arrival he found that the settlers had developed *certain authoritarian*, *tyrannical attitudes*, and necessarily so, since survival was largely a matter of every man for himself; ... the greater the distance from the seat of government, the more inclined were they to the club-law in their relations with the natives [quoting Hahl 1937]. There were also strained relations between NGC established at Herbertshoe and the 'big three'.



<u>Above</u> - Dr. Albert Hahl 1896 - photos courtesy of S. Firth— 'New Guinea Under the Germans' The 'big three' were:

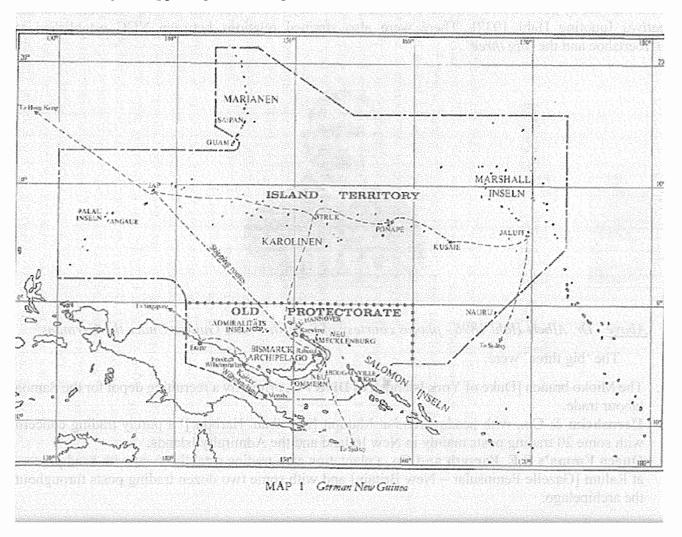
- 1. The Mioko branch [Duke of York Islands], of **DH&PG**, primarily a recruiting depot for the Samoa labour trade.
- 2. **Hernsheim & Co.**, with headquarters at Matupit [in Rabaul Harbour]' a purely trading concern with some 20 trading posts mainly in New Ireland and the Admiralty Islands.
- 3. Queen Emma's E.E. Forsyth and Co, a plantation cum trading establishment with headquarters at Ralum [Gazelle Peninsular New Britain] and with some two dozen trading posts throughout the archipelago.

Firth<sup>1</sup> summed up the native situation Hahl inherited as follows: Tolai people came to welcome the Germans as generators of a new order of plantation based prosperity. Madang hated the Germans as land thieves. Admiralty Islanders treated Germans as foreigners who should be killed, ignored, imitated, but certainly not obeyed. Buka people admired the Germans and were eager to serve as police. Northern New Irelanders were initially hostile to traders before making peace and obeying orders.

Hahl's authority over colonial policy was limited by the fact that the Colonial Department viewed the priority in New Guinea as the need for rapid economic development by private plantation companies – the role of the German New Guinea administration was to be their servant. To this end

he had to refer any regulations concerning commerce, land or labour to Berlin. In addition, his budget now contained the annual instalment of 400,000 marks compensation for NGC – money that he could not touch.

Hahl sought to establish control over the native population in part by enacting regulations on 18th November 1903 that required people to undertake up to four weeks forced labour per annum on such projects as road networks. The murder of 10 Catholic missionaries in 1904 by Bainings people, of inland New Britain, appears to have been a result of local resentment. Hahl's approach to pacification was similar to that of MacGregor in British New Guinea. He believed in a show of force...one of his earliest expeditions was against the people of Selapui Island near Kavieng – pirates whose raids were paralysing the trade on the south coast of New Ireland. Hahl disembarked and wanted to parley, but the villagers showed no inclination to discuss matters, in fact they were extremely unfriendly. So, we had to shoot so as to prevent losses on our side. Ten villagers were killed before they realized that all resistance was futile. [quoting Hahl 1937]



<u>Above</u> – Map copied from Governor in New Guinea by Albert Hahl ANU Press 1980 Page 2+

On 17th August 1904, his control measures on Siar Island saw six Madang men executed by firing squad for seeking to drive out Europeans occupying their land. The Madang people never reconciled themselves to the German presence. In 1905 Hahl introduced another control measure by appointing Luluais (village officials) in the mainland after earlier appointments in the Islands. Luluais had the

powers of village policemen with minor magisterial powers. The Luluais also had responsibility to ensure that young men signed contracts as indentured labourers.

The establishment of Government stations provided another extension of control. Kieta was established in 1904 then Namatanai and Aitape in 1906. Land policy was improved - land would still flow into settler's hands under regulations which put an end to outrageous land claims of the past and established a safety valve of native reserves. Land for plantations was of little use without an appropriate supply of plantation labour. There were cases of serious over-recruiting which was having adverse impacts on village life. [see Chapter 4 for a particular case in point]. To ensure sufficient labour without adversely impacting upon village life, Hahl needed a budget to explore new country and bring the people who lived there under control to be accessed as a labour pool. However, there was never sufficient money for the exploration he needed.

**Population figures:** January 1\* 1904: Kaiser Wilhelmsland, approx. 100,000 Melanesians and 113 Europeans including 98 Germans; Bismarck Archipelago, approx. 200,000 Melanesians and 320 Europeans, including 203 Germans<sup>2</sup>. In October 1905, the Steamer Seestern transported one hundred and fifty natives from New Guinea to German East Africa for military training<sup>3</sup>.

**Missionaries:** If NGC had had its way the only missionaries allowed into the colony would have been German-speakers sponsored by German Mission Societies; once in, the missionaries would have been required to support the colonial authorities, accustom the villagers to regular work and teach them manual stills, horticulture and farming<sup>4</sup>. However no Catholic Mission society existed in Germany because at the time they were forbidden under the anti-Catholic *Kulturkampf*, which ironically saw most German Catholic missionaries trained in France. As for exclusively German-speaking missionaries, by the time NGC became involved there were already missionaries in New Guinea of French, Dutch, English, Samoan, Fijian and Tongan descent that outnumbered the Germans<sup>5</sup>. Seven missions worked in New Guinea in German times:-

Methodists: who established themselves in the Duke of York Islands in 1875

Catholic Mission of the Sacred Heart: New Britain 1882

Neuendettelsau Lutherans: Finschhafen 1886

<u>Lutherans of the Rhenish Mission Society:</u> Bogadjim 1887 Catholic Holy Spirit Mission of the Divine Word: Aitape 1896

Catholic Society of Mary: German Shortland Islands 1899

Protestants of the Liebenzell Mission: Manus 1914.

Only two of these missions came to German Melanesia for patriotic reasons. The Liebenzell Protestants were financed by army officers who wished to support a mission, and the Rhemish Lutherans who were active in German South West Africa and who advocated the annexation of New Guinea, saw its Christian and patriotic duty combined in accepting the government invitation to go to New Guinea<sup>6</sup>. Hahl also inherited conflict between mission establishments. The Wesleyan [Methodist] and the Roman Catholic [Sacred Heart] missions were involved in a private war of their own. In January 1891, an edict of the Imperial Chancellor divided the Gazelle Peninsular into two spheres of influence: the Wesleyans, established since 1875, were assigned the western half and the missions of the Sacred Heart (active on the Peninsular since 1882) the eastern half...Unlike a similar arrangement in Papua, there was no "gentleman's agreement."

**Control and Labour:** Just as vital to the plantation colony as land was cheap labour. In 1909 recruits on Hernsheim plantation were undeveloped boys sent by their villages as all the full-grown warriors were needed to fight local wars. The Germans diminished this New Guinean independence by extending control. Luluais were made responsible to ensure that young men signed on. They were required to build roads and later to earn money in order to pay tax. Between 1900 and 1914 the number

of New Guineans employed casually or under contract rose from about 3,000 to about 20,000. New Government stations were established as follows Namatanai in 1904, Kieta in September 1905, Eitape in 1906, Morobe in 1909. Manus in 1911 and police posts at Lae and Angoram in 1913<sup>8</sup>

German New Guinea favouring Australian markets: The German New Guinea Annual Report of 1907-08 noted: Australia is the nearest and best market for buying consumption goods of all kinds, such as meat, both fresh and tinned, fat, butter, flour and fruit, and for importing horses, however the importing of Australian cattle appears to be less successful. This tendency to favour Australian markets for the purchase of goods will be reinforced steadily as the small and medium operators recently established in the business ventures of the Protectorate usually have no connections with the mother country, but can obtain goods from Australia quickly and on credit...Australian products are mainly building and commercial timbers, livestock, meat, fish and animal products of all kinds; plants, cuttings and seeds, Black and brown coal and briquette, petroleum and other mineral oils, tapers, candles, soaps...9

Extending the Colonial Order 1907-1914: By 1914 German New Guinea was ranked among the leading copra producing countries in the Pacific worth over six million marks in 1914. NGC had 8,288 of its 138,000ha under coconuts, rubber, cocoa and sisal by 1913. Native copra remained "by far the bigger proportion" of tonnages as late as 1909. Control followed rather than preceded the scores of planters who came to NG and much government time was spent dealing with clashes between tribesmen and Europeans on the frontier. Hahl accepted as inevitable that police would have to kill villagers for the sake of colonial order. In October 1912, local unrest included conspiracy against Germans in Madang, fighting in Lower Ramu, and armed resistance to Germans at Aitape. Pacification was Hahl's first priority and 75% of the spending on police, the government steamer and officials was for the protection of colonists. Control was slower to establish, more complicated to maintain and less effective than Hahl anticipated.<sup>10</sup>

The loss of the Steamer Seerstern: After a long period of waiting and a vain search, it is estimated as certain that the Government steamer 'Seerstern', which had entered drydock in Brisbane in May 1909 and left Brisbane again on 3 June 1909 under the command of Captain Meinken, sank on its voyage to Herbertshoe [Kokopo]. There cannot be anyone in the Protectorate who is not grieved by the loss of this fine ship and the death of the crew consisting of six whites, fifteen Chinese and eighteen Melanesians. We owe profound thanks to the Imperial Navy, the Norddeutcher Lloyd and the Australian Authorities for their very generous assistance in the search for the vessel. 11

The Hamburg 1908-10 Sudsee Expedition: Georg Christian Thilenius, director of the Hamburg Museum, coordinated the Sudsee expedition scientific expedition to the German administered territories in Micronesia and Melanesia. Members of the research group were: Friedrich Fulleborn, Augustin Kramer, Paul Hambruch, Otto Reche, Ernst Sarfert and Wilhelm Muller-Wismar. Over 15,000 objects and artefact were collected and brought back to Hamburg to be documented into 23 volumes<sup>12</sup>. In 1909 the expeditions steamer *Peiho* completed its first exploration of the Kaiserine Augusta [Sepik] River.<sup>13</sup>

Oil Discovery at Matapau on the Sepik coast 1910: In 1910 the Germans were attracted by oil seeps at Matapau near Aitape [actually midway between Aitape and Wewak]. The Reichstag voted 120,000 marks for a scientific investigation of the area. This amount was increased to 500,000 marks. According to reports a drilling rig was actually en route from Germany on the declaration of war in 1914.

**Other events in 1910:** In January, the seat of Government was moved from Kokopo to Rabaul. In November, the survey ship *Planet* took part in a punitive expedition against the tribes of the Finisterre Mountains near Madang.<sup>14</sup>

The German Dutch Border expedition of 1910: The German-Dutch New Guinea border was the 141<sup>st</sup> Meridian. A Dutch advance party went up the Sepik River first, starting in the steamer *Pionier* and then, as the water became shallower, using a steam launch and, still later, several canoes manned by Indonesians. Once the party had shown that the upper river was passable, the main body of the expedition followed – A Dutch section under Captain J. Luymes and a German one under Professor Leonard Shultze of Jena University. The furthest point reached was about 600 miles from the sea. <sup>15</sup> In April 1911, the patrol boat *Komet* was launched in Bremen to replace the *Seestern*. The *Komet* was regarded as not being large enough to deal with recent incidents of native insubordination and the murder of Europeans <sup>16</sup>. In February 1912 the Stolle expedition, with its ship the *Kolonialgasellshaft*, began exploration of the Sepik River. The expedition [with the exception of Dr. Richard Thurnwald who continued his exploration] returned from the Sepik in 1913, having mapped the Sepik River from the Dutch Border to its mouth <sup>17</sup>. This expedition is discussed in detail in Chapter 15.

.....

The short history of German New Guinea combines many of the worst features of colonialism. Out of the commercial disaster of the NGC and changing administrative policies emerged an excellent Governor in the person at Dr. Albert Hahl who received positive assessments from across the spectrum of those who knew him:

- "Always ready to help the private [enterprise] people." Mrs. Lulu Miller, granddaughter of Oueen Emma.
- Even those in the "big three" who opposed him, acknowledged his capacity to get things done.
- Dr. Philofer, a Lutheran missionary praised him for having restrained some of his field staff who felt that the mission stood between them and the people.
- Dr. Brown, founder of the Wesleyan Mission in the Bismarck Archipelago, a sworn enemy of Germany, admitted that Hahl took a fatherly interest in the natives.
- Old Tolais of the Gazelle remember him as pren tru belong mipela. [our true friend.] 18

# Marienberg and Angoram - Dr. Hahl's Planned Exploration of New Guinea's Interior

In terms of exploration, no German administrator compared with Sir William Macgregor, the first Governor of British New Guinea [1888-1894]. In German New Guinea, exploration was seen as a means to an end – access to additional human labour pools and rapid economic development. Scientific expeditions had explored and mapped the large river systems, so there was an awareness of what lay between the coastal strip and the Central Range well to the south. Governor Hahl planned a systematic opening up of the country behind the coastal ranges taking advantage of the access to the interior provided by the colony's rivers. This was to be achieved by establishing Angoram on the Lower Sepik in 1913 and at Lae [Burgberg] on the Markham in 1914... The new stations at Lae and Angoram were to serve as bases for the chain of posts to connect the Markham via the Ramu with the lower Sepik.<sup>20</sup>

### Dr.Hahl wrote:-

"At the beginning of 1914 the Advisory Council met to draft a comprehensive plan of action. For a total outlay of seven million marks spread over a considerable period, I hoped to be able to pacify the interior of Kaiser Wilhelmsland by establishing bases on the Upper Waria, the central Sepik, the Ramu and the Markham to incorporate this region in a regular system of administration and colonial economy. This campaign had been launched from three separate points, from the Morobe station into the Upper Waria valley, by the Neuendettelsau mission in the Markham valley, and from

Angoram station in the lower Sepik. Approximately one quarter of the total annual expenditure was to be used to improve the medical service. The maintenance and increase of the native population were to remain the prime consideration in every new initiative.

The elaboration and discussion of these plans lasted into the spring of 1914. For me and my family the time was now approaching for us to return home again, and this time it was for good. From now on I proposed to devote myself to working – for Germany – for the future of the country, which in eighteen working years I had come to hold dear."<sup>21</sup>

Writer's Note: Dr. Hahl's exploration plans of course were curtailed by the outbreak of the First World War [4<sup>th</sup> August 1914] which happened very soon after he and his family disembarked back in Germany. His plans, which reflects his brilliance as an administrator, are worthy of closer examination.

## Administration and execution.

- 1. Dr. Hahl set up the plan for future exploration in New Guinea and handed over the execution of it to his successor, Dr. Haber in mid-April 1914. Dr. Hahl's apparent intention back in Germany was to ensure that Germany did its part to support the plan.
- 2. The plan itself made use of exploratory information provided by the 1908-09 German-British Border Commission's findings, those of the German-Dutch Border expedition of 1910 and of the 1912/13 Stolle/Behrmann expedition's excellent mapping and identification of the inland access via the Keram River to the Ramu, which made Angoram on the Sepik such a strategic location.
- 3. The plan placed its focus on the natural access to the inland provided by the Sepik, Keram, Ramu, Markham and Waria Rivers.
- 4. Dr. Hahl involved the Christian missions in his plan; the Neuendettelsau mission in the Markham and the SVD Catholics in the Sepik.
  - a. As we see in other chapters, Father Kirschbaum, Father Limbrock, Father Puff and others were already renowned Sepik explorers. Although I had not heard that mission motivation was in any way a result of Dr. Hahl's plan, they certainly implemented it even after the outbreak of World War 1. Missions were also the prime providers of medical care.
- 5. The focus on medical services for the native population proved to be a clever and successful strategy in winning over the people throughout the exploration of PNG.
- . The focus of increasing the population was also aimed at ensuring a reliable on-going supply of plantation labour.
- 6. Gold: Given the inland focus of the exploration plan, it seems very likely that the Wau/Bulolo gold fields would have been discovered earlier than they actually were.

The Catholic Mission: On 29 June 1913 the first Sepik River mission was founded at Marienberg (English Mary-Mount), from which the mission planned to move with the government into the interior. Catholics now numbered 4,200 converts, and the mission personnel included 27 priests, 24 brothers and 44 sisters. In line with the mission involvement in German New Guinea's exploration plans for the interior, the mission planned to restructure its own organisation in New Guinea. At Father Limbrock's request, Rome divided the mission in 1913 and entrusted the western portion (Malol to Vanimo) to the Picpus Fathers (the community of Fr Damien, the leper priest). However, the war prevented the first Picpus missionaries from arriving and their area (which had only two stations of Malol and Sissano) remained under SVD care.

Limbrock's resignation as Prefect Apostolic: Fr Limbrock's resignation as the Prefect Apostolic was accepted in September, the same month as Governor Haber surrendered German New Guinea to Colonel Holmes of the Australian Expeditionary Force. Fr Andrias Puff became the administrator of both missions until the arrival of Bishop Wolf in 1923. Father Limbrock's leadership in the mission's work in the Sepik and Madang districts [Chapter 10] was every bit as important to Dr. Hahl's leadership in the Protectorate of German New Guinea. However Father Limbrock's efforts had taken

their toll and he had been seeking for some years to continue his role not as Prefect Apostolic, but as a parish priest. It is understandable that the uncertainty and turmoil of the outbreak of war saw his resignation accepted.

Both Angoram government station and Marienberg mission station played important roles in the Sepik for decades to come. The immediate story of events concerning there two stations is continued in Chapters 23 and 24 which describe the take-over of German New Guinea and the AN&MEF administration of the former German colony through to 1921. The outbreak of World War 1 totally changed the history of New Guinea and one is left to ponder what New Guinea's history might have looked like had Dr. Hahl's exploration plans been carried through to their conclusion.

During July 1914, the tele-radio station at Bitapaka began operations<sup>25</sup>. On the outbreak of World War 1 in August 1914, questions of naval communications and strategy drew immediate attention to the whole German maritime empire straddling the equator north of Australia and adjoining Papua in the south and Dutch New Guinea in the south west. On 6th August 1914, a telegram from His Majesty's Secretary of State to the Governor General of Australia invited the Commonwealth to Act:-

"If your Ministers desire and feel themselves able to seize German wireless stations at New Guinea, Yap in the Marshall Islands and Nauru...we should feel this was a great and urgent imperial service. You will realize, however, that any territory now occupied must at conclusion of war be at the disposal of the Imperial Government for purposes of an eventual settlement."

Also on 6th August 1914 the German seat of Government was moved<sup>26</sup> from Rabaul to Toma, 12kms inland and therefore out of naval artillery range. A fifty-man defence force was organized among the German settlers and ordered to refrain from any action other than the defence of the wireless station at Bitapaka. On 12th August, Australian warships entered in Blanche Bay. The Germans refused to disclose the location of the radio telegraph station. On 11th September, the Germans destroyed the wireless station at Bitapaka. On 14th September 1914 shelling of Kokopo and Rabaul commenced - 600 Australian troops began marching towards Toma. News was received that Governor Eduard Haber was requested to enter into negotiations - on 17 September he agreed to surrender the colony.

On 28<sup>th</sup> June 1919, Germany signed the Treaty of Versailles and ceded all claim of sovereignty over New Guinea. Chapter 23 takes up the story of World War 1 and the Australian Naval and Military administration of former German New Guinea 1914 – 1922

**Post Script:** The current chapter focusses primarily on the history of German New Guinea. Also of critical importance is the history and German land acquisitions and their impact upon the people. That topic is covered in Attachment 1, which should ideally be read in conjunction Sepik 1 Chapter 33 *The Nature of Pre-contact Land Tenure*.

## End Notes Chapter 12

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S.Firth New Guinea under the Germans – Web Books 1986 P 6

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The World at War – German New Guinea 1873-1919 P 2

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The World at War – German New Guinea 1873-1919 P 2

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> S Firth 1986 P 136

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> S Firth 1986 P 137

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> S.Firth 1986 P 138

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Peter Biskup 1968 p 5

<sup>8</sup> S.Firth 1986 p 84-5 and 92

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> German New Guinea Annual Report 1907-08 – Peter Sack and D.Clark ed and translation 1979 P 286

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> S.Firth 1986 P 92-3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> German New Guinea Annual Report 1909-10 – Peter Sack and D.Clark ed and translation 1979 P 305

<sup>12</sup> Wikipedia Georg Thelinius

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> The World at War – German New Guinea 1873-1919 P 3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Frank Rickwood – The Kutubu Discovery – Brown, Prior, Anderson, 2000 p 42

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Gavin Souter – The Last Unknown. Angus & Robertson 1965 reprint P 115

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> The World at War – German New Guinea 1873-1919 P 4

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> The World at War – German New Guinea 1873-1919 P 4

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Peter Biskup 1968 p6

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> P.G.Sack – German New Guinea Bibliography ANU 1980

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Encyclopedia of PNG 1972 P 490

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Dr. A Hahl

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Encyclopedia of PNG 1972 P 496

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Patrick Matbob – Fr Eberhard Limbrock – Leader of the first SVD mission in New Guinea Jan 2001

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Patrick Matbon – Jan 2001

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> The World at War – German New Guinea 1873-1919 P 4

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> C.D.Rowley. The Australians in German New Guinea 1914-1921. Cambridge University Press 1958 P 2

## Chapter 13 Destruction of traditional religion and culture in the Bien River area.

This chapter needs to be read in conjunction with Chapter 44. *The Bien River traditional revival of the 1970s* in Sepik 4, which continues the story being told here.

During the dry season of 1991 the writer was employed as Field Manager at Angoram of the Anderman Smith & Co oil exploration seismic program. My job took me by helicopter to remote villages and labour camps. I was the interface between the Co and the village people; I resolved disputes and misunderstandings, recruited labour, assessed and paid compensation, recorded line cutting, bridging, drilling, surveying, seismic recording daily progress, delivered rations, calculated and paid wages. I was responsible for over three hundred people employed on some twenty labour crews spread across hundreds of square kilometers of the Angoram landscape; it was a hectic time.

In July1991 my work took me to Agrant Ombos and Oremai villages on the Bien River in the Porapora area south of Marienberg mission station. While there my attention was drawn to a number of beautifully carved and weathered old posts strewn around the villages. These works of art had obviously been there for a very long time. I set about trying to unravel the story of who made them and why.

As my work for Anderman Smith allowed, I indulged my interest in tribal art and asked about the posts. The village elders told the following story:<sup>1</sup>

Imborop on the Ajirap River was the mother village of the currently existing Porapora daughter villages of Oremai, Agrant, Ombos, Akaian and Nyaut. In 1991 all that remained of Imborop were some old posts and aged coconut palms. Imborop is said to have been created by God – [the Christian God indicated.] This statement, in itself, reflects the impact of Christian teachings in the Porapora area by 1991.

The named villages are of the Aion language group, which with the Kambot, Gorovu and Adjora languages make up the Grass language family and stock, being one of five language stocks of the Ramu Super Stock<sup>2</sup>

While geographically close to Angoram and Marienberg, these villages are classified as "remote"; being on the middle and upper reaches of the Bien River and its tributaries they can be reliably accessed only during the wet season. For much of the dry season Bien River access is blocked by low river levels and by miles of floating water weed blockages.

Each of the Aion language villages originally had a haus tambaran. Each honoured a founding cult hero. The cult heroes associated with haus tambarans in ancient times at Imborop before the mother village broke up were:

Haus Tambaran	Cult	Totem	Comment if needed
Name	Hero		
Umpingunting	Obain	Saun	Saun = Osprey
Agrant, Oremai,	Ompain	Parrot	
Urambang,			
Ogom			
Ungebar	Jaen	Crocodile	
Agrana	Agrap	Flying Fox	

The traditional religion of the Aion language speaking people, like the mythology of most Sepik cultures was rich with spirits, totems and ancestors with powers and ritual needs that were required to be observed in order for the people to exist and thrive in their wetlands and grass country environments. In the light of later chapters on the "Sepik Old Testament" and the "Sepik New Testament" the following brief list ancestral beings and their powers indicated a mixture of mythical spirits and pre-contact ancestors and a glimpse of historic events.<sup>3</sup>

Imagine if you will, yourself as a member of a pre-literate Christian society, given a sacred task by a supreme religious figure, to depict through art, the Christian bible, in order, not only to please God so he might forgive you and ensure your salvation, but to ensure the bible stories were not lost forever to Christianity. That is the context in which this immense artistic endeavor needs to be assessed. The pity of it, is that no one from the academic world knew this was happening, so properly trained people were not able to properly document a unique religious phenomenon as it unfolded.

**Urija** is a water spirit that makes the people sick if they wash naked in the river – such sickness is caused by a sorcery spell. The cure is to leave food and traditional wealth at the water's edge in homage to Urija. Such sickness most often strikes strangers to the area.

Oriarem is another water spirit with powers similar to those of Urija.

**Bebe** is the flying fox, a cosmic creation hero of the Imborop ancestors. Bebe came and gave the ancestors life and the subsistence food sources before flying away. The cult hero Ompain carved Bebe's image in the original haus tambaran both to honour Bebe and to ensure sustained future food supplies.

**Ukemba** is the ancestral canoe made by Ompain. Ompain paddled from Imborop where no waterway had previously existed and thereby created the Singemba channel through the Oremai bush – he cleared the new channel and he made it navigable for the people to go and come.

Anejo is the word for woman. She represents all things female and the mother figure image.

Akur is a cult hero, famous for making war shields. He died at Imborop.

Yota is a spirit woman in the water.

**Panjuai** is a cult hero of the flying fox clan. He is like God and came into existence when the world was created. He came and fought and killed the "first" people who occupied the land before the Aion. He captured the current clan lands for his descendants. He lived and died at Imborop.

**Angokra** is an ancestor of the Jimi clan, which has the cassowary totem. He was the enemy of the flying fox clan and as such came and married into the Flying fox clan.

**Wakir** is a snake spirit that can fly. It has the super-natural powers of a super being. My informants explained that Wakir's story was very long indeed and could not be told in the short time available. Reading between the lines Wakir's story was presumably not for the ears of some of the people present at that particular discussion.

Gakir is the frog that comes with the floods. He is happy and a good environmental spirit.

**Airamei** of the Saun clan was an elder who died long ago. His grand-children are still living (in 1991) and are now in their 70s.

**Baki** is a woman and a parent/mothering spirit – a clan totem.

**Ormap** is a tambaran pig and the originator of all pigs.

**Andonei** was a "tambaran" from Imborop that was brought to the Urumbang haus tambaran. This tambaran figure was buried in a "grave" by the Missionaries when they came.

**Ambakrap** is a female mother ancestor who was killed by Atjam who was a person from the same family as Ambakrap. Someone stole Atjam's wife who was called Ejemoi. In his rage Atjam killed Ambakrap with a black palm stick called "Kambram" used for beating tapa cloth.

Concurrent with these spirits, ancestral cult heroes, their totems and the myths, legends and rituals that went with them, there was another important and presumably more recent cultural story, which I immediately recognized as a version of the "Two-Brother" story. This involved legendary brothers Dengara and Imburup. Such "two-brother" legends are common throughout the Sepik and Madang Districts. In Madang District the brothers were named Kilibob and Manup.

I [The writer] debated with myself where to record this legend in the Sepik manuscripts. I decided against putting it in Sepik 1. From the beginning of time until 1885 or first contact because the two-brother legend clearly reflects an adaptation of the Cane and Abel story of the Old Testament and therefore does not belong in chapters pre-dating "first contact"

My assumption that this story has been "adapted" into Aion culture does not discount the traditional religious importance of it any more than many Christian beliefs are not discounted by Western congregations. Sepik's elsewhere than among the Aion have indicated that while they know their ancient stories involve improbable events, they regard them with respect combined with a similar level of scientific doubt with which Sepik and Western Christians regard "Jonah and the Whale." Such stories are not discarded in isolation, but rather, are accepted as part the whole religious package handed down from ancient times, when miracles and other such improbable events may have happened. The story of Dangara and Imburup as told by the Oromai elders in 1992<sup>4</sup>:

In the beginning of time there were two brothers Dengara was the elder brother and Imburup was the small brother. Once when Dengara was away at the coast, his wife Kumanja and small brother Imburup went to the bush to cut sago. Kumanja was using a coconut shell on a stick to ladle water to wash the sago pith. Imburup took a small piece of panggal [sago frond bark] and carved some beautiful designs on it. He set the panggal adrift and floated down to where Kumanja was working and she scooped it up from the water and saw the beautiful designs.

"Where did this come from?" she exclaimed.

"I made it" Imburup replied. Kumanja was enchanted and she told Imburup

"I want you to carve a beautiful design like this on my breasts." But then she said.

"No, my husband Dengara will see my breasts. Carve your designs around my vagina".

Kumanja and Imburup committed adultery and then Imburup carved his designs around her vagina. The pain made her ill and she went back to the camp and told her mother-in-law she was ill and they she would stay in the mosquito basket in the house.

When Kumanja's husband Dengara arrived home and asked for his wife, his mother told him she was ill and staying in the mosquito basket. He was hungry from his journey so he asked that some sago be prepared. His wife prepared the food, but she also picked the scabs from the wounds where Imburup had carved his designs and put them in the sago. Dengara ate the food but the scabs caught in his teeth and he asked himself

"What is going on? All is not as it seems."

He made a spell which caused a strong wind to blow and the house fell down. Kumanja was exposed in the wreckage and Dengara saw the marks around her vagina and he knew his brother Imburup was responsible. He said nothing, but Imburup knew his brother had found out and was planning his death.

Dengara called many people together to help him make a large sacred house. He gave the job of digging the postr hole to Imburup and Imburup realized this hole was intended to be his grave. To avoid the death he expected he did two things. First, he dug a side tunnel in which he could take refuge. Second, he filled coconut shells with betelnut spit and he put them in the bottom of the hole with pig bones.

When it came time to lower the post into the hole Dengara told Imburup to go down into the hole and guide it. "Don't worry" he said "You will be alright."

"You are not wrong" said Imburup as he crawled into the side tunnel. The great post dropped into the hole and there was a loud cracking sound as the pig bones smashed and the betelnut spit splashed like blood from under the post.

Imburup and Dengara's mother mourned the loss of her younger son. Dengara told her to forget him "He died because he sinned with my wife. Forget him." But mothers mourn and she continued to mourn by wearing a widow's shawl to show her grief.

Meanwhile Impurup was in the ground tunneling away from the house that Dengara had built. During a wild storm a banana tree was uprooted and from under it Imburup came back to the surface of the earth and went away to a distant place where he lived alone and made gardens. He had the power to turn himself into an eagle and fly on high and so it was that he saw his grieving mother as she paddled her canoe in search of fish. He was sad that his mother felt his loss so badly.

"How can I communicate with her?" he wondered.

He swooped down from the sky and his talons took the shawl from her head and he flew away with it. Amazed the mother saw the eagle fly away and then she saw the shawl drop from the talons. She paddled her canoe home and told the strange story of the eagle to Dengara and the others. "I saw where it fell" she said "Tomorrow I will go and look for the shawl.

Impurup had purposely dropped the shawl at his garden, which was now full of ripe fruit and vegetables. He turned himself back into a man and when his mother came to retrieve her shawl he crept up and held her firmly so she would not run away.

"Mother it is me Imburup. Do not be afraid." Soon she was calm again and she listened to the story of what had happened.

"I am alone here" he said "Take as much from the garden as you want and speak secretly to my wife and bring her to me here. I need her." The mother understood and said she would bring his wife the next day.

But there was an evil female spirit called Grimangei who lived in the ground and ate banana skins and fish bones that people discarded; and she listened to peoples plans. The old lady took garden produce back with her and spoke secretly with Imburup's wife.

"Your husband, my son lives. Tomorrow I will take you to him." She said.

But the earth spirit Grimangei was listening. She went to the canoe place and took Imburup's wife's paddle and hid it. In the morning the two women went to the canoe and the old lady sat in the bow Imburup's wife was confused. "Mother, wait. I must have left my paddle back at the house" She hurried back to look for her paddle and when she was out of sight Grimangei pushed the canoe out into the water in Impurup's wife's voice she said – "Let's go".

The old lady did not look back and they set off and when the old lady realized her mistake she was unable to turn back because evil Grimangei would kill her. And so they arrived at Imburup's garden he said.

"That is not my wife." He said "That is just a foul spirit." Then the old lady explained what had happened..

Impurup lived with Grimangei and built they built a great haus tambaran. When it was completed Impurup called his brother Dengara to come and join him. When Dengara and others came they heard many voices in the haus tambaran talking and singing in many languages one in each of many rooms. When they looked they saw no people, only the carved images of the haus tambaran. The evil spirit Grimangei went through the haus tambaran and struck each image to bring it to life.

They loosened the soil around the posts and the whole haus tambaran lifted and turned itself so the fire place of the east was in the west and the fire place of the west was in the east. The haus tambaran then flew away and scattered the people of the many languages to inhabit the earth as they do today. The old mother turned into a grass Cuckoo called Gul and flew away and the world became what it is today.

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To the writer's hearing the village name and that of the ancestor after whom it was named were slightly different Imborop ancestral village and Impurup, the younger brother. There could be a variation in pronunciation of the same word between the numbers of informants the writer interviewed. Alternatively the slight difference might be intentional.

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Marienberg Mission station was opened by Father Kirschbaum in 1913. Then soon after World War 1 an unnamed priest from Marienberg came to the Aion villages. He had a young girl with him. Her name was Gop/Erempa and she came from Agrant village. She is still alive (in 1991) as a very old woman. The priest gave her the matches and told her to burn the haus tambaran at Dugum [the ancestral village from which Ombos developed]. At Akaian and Imborop the priest himself burned the haus tambarans.

Writer's note. It is assumed that the use of the girl Gop in this manner was to demonstrate that had there been effective spirits, gods or tambarans in or associated with the haus tambaran as the people believed, then surely these supernatural beings would have acted against this mere female child who had no traditional standing to even approach the sacred house. As the priest expected, the girl showed no ill effects from what she was ordered to do and the haus tambaran burned to the ground.

All (sacred) objects were seized by the mission personnel and either buried of burned with the haus tambarans themselves. The burial of sacred objects reflects the missionary's desired outcome that with the coming of Christianity, the tambaran and all values related to it were dead and now buried. The understanding among the village population was that those that were buried must remain buried as to dig them up would cause sickness and death to those involved. The people remember two additional names of mission workers - who actively assisted in this were Bell and Sowap.<sup>5</sup>

The Sepik annual report for 1930/31 dated 1/7/31 reported that the Porapora villages were visited by the Government for the first time that year. Seven villages were visited and the people were found to be very friendly<sup>6</sup>.

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Marienberg Mission station was also a Police Post at that time. From this is seems clear that the Mission made contact with the Bien River villages before the Government.



A rare Porapora figure which escaped destruction.

Collected between 1964 and 1967 and now in the Richard Aldridge collection Perth, Australia. Carbon dating of this figure is from between 1521-1591 or between 1623-1663.<sup>7</sup>

End Notes Chapter 13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Bragge Sepik Research notes Vol 26 p 102-121

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Laycock D. Sepik Languages Checklist and Preliminary Classification p 76-77

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Bragge Sepik Research Notes Vol 26 page 102
 <sup>4</sup> Bragge Sepik Research Notes Vol 26 page 110-113
 <sup>5</sup> These names mean nothing to the writer.
 <sup>6</sup> Bragge Sepik Research Notes Vol 20 page 22
 <sup>7</sup> Michael Hamson – Oceanic Art San Francisco 2016 pages 18-19

# 'Sepik 2 - Chapter 14 Catholic mission continued, and Changes in Sepik Spirituality.

In Chapter 10 we learned about the Herculean determination of Father Limbrock in establishing and expanding the SVD activities in the Sepik and Madang Districts, and we met Father Loerks, Captain of the *Gabriel*, and future Bishop. This Chapter introduces two more priests and the important roles they played in Sepik history; Franz Kirschbaum and Andrias Puff

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## Father Franz Kirschbaum

1882-1939: Catholic missionary from the Society of the Divine Word [SVD] at Steyl [Holland]. He came to New Guinea in about 1908. Upon arrival in the Sepik he was stationed at Tumleo Island. His early focus was on the villages west of Berlinhafen. He learned the local language and established the mission station at Malol in 1909.

During this period Father Kirschbaum accompanied anthropologists Otto Schlagenhaufen and Friedrich Richard Rudolf Schlecter and Police Master Stuben on an expedition from Aitape into the Torricelli Mountains.<sup>1</sup>

On 4<sup>th</sup> October 1912 Father Kirschbaum accompanied Father Limbrock on a crossing of the Prince Alexander Mountains from Boiken to make initial contact with the Yangoru Boiken people in the vicinity of Mt Hurun, otherwise known as the sacred Mt Turu. As discussed in Sepik 4 Chapter 47, even before initial contact, the traditional religion of the Yangoru Boiken had begun to take on a form of Millenarian spirituality. This developed through stages to reach a climax on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1971 in the form of the Mt Turu cargo cult.

Father Kirschbaum maintained contact with the Yangoru and during 1921/22 names the Tou<sup>1</sup> language family, which he discovered to include at least the Abelam, Wosera, Boiken/Yangoru, Boiken/Kwusaun, Manambu, and Iatmul languages. <sup>2</sup> As mentioned in Sepik 4 Chapter 25, Dr. Don Laycock acknowledged Father Kirschbaum's original discovery in his 1962 thesis and 1965 *The Ndu<sup>2</sup> Language Family*.

In 1913 Father Kirschbaum established the Marienberg mission station on the lower Sepik River and lived there for more than twenty years as the first European settler to live on the Sepik. His work among the local villages was the first significant contact these people had with the outside world and his knowledge of the Sepik and its people was unrivalled. District Officer Townsend relied heavily upon his knowledge and advice.<sup>3</sup>

As indicated in Sepik 2, Father Kirschbaum assisted to private expeditions to the Sepik River: The 1928 expedition seeking disease resistant strains of sugar cane and the Crane Pacific Expedition of 1928-9 on behalf of the Field Museum of Natural History.

Father Kirschbaum was killed with two other priests in a plane crash at Alexishafen on  $6^{th}$  August 1939.

#### Father Andrias Puff.

Writer's Note: I have been unable to locate biographical details for Father Puff. This leaves me with the sense that he was one of those indispensable people who was always there, ever reliable, but who did not stand out from the crowd. I need to document the little I know of him as his name, whenever it did appear, was important to Sepik history.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> He used the Boiken word Tuo – meaning "man" as the name of the language family

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> "Ndu" also means man and Dr. Laycock preferred it to Tuo as his found that it had a wider application.

In 1904 Pioneer missionary Father Andrias Puff wrote that of the [SVD] missions seventeen stations only three shared a common language with the station next to them.<sup>4</sup>

In September 1914 Father Limbrock resigned as Prefect Apostolic. Father Andrias Puff became the administrator of the mission until Bishop Wolf arrived in 1923.<sup>5</sup>

Father Puff was still at Alexishafen when the administration sent an expedition up the Sepik to investigate the Japandai massacre: In March 1924...Father Puff...at Alexishafen agreed that the Gabriel would be placed at our disposal for transport only – not to be used in any offensive action... Father Loerks was to remain in full control of the vessel as master.<sup>6</sup>

In 1933 Father Puff established Marui mission station on the only land in the Iatmul tribal area which was not subject to seasonal flooding. On 7<sup>th</sup> December 1933 District Officer Townsend conducted the land investigation at Marui<sup>7</sup>. This was to have repercussions in the immediate years after World War 2 for two reasons:

- 1. ADO Ormsby [with justification] regarded the Iatmul as the tribal group on the Sepik River most likely to cause trouble for the Administration and their neighbours, and as such it was a priority for him to establish a Government post in their midst, and the best site was Marui.
- 2. Two missionaries had been stationed at Marui immediately pre-war. Father Hansen had not survived the war and Father Cruysberg survived by walking out to Wabag with a party of Nuns escorted by Captain Searson and Sergeant Danny Leahy of ANGAU. Despite the fact that government buildings had been built at Marui by the time Father Cruysberg returned, the mission, not the administration, retained the high ground at Marui.

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## Sepik traditional spirituality and the response to the introduction of Christianity.

Writer's note: My personal understanding of traditional religion was greatly assisted when Professor Sachiko Hatanaka introduced me Peter Henry Buck [Te Rangi Hiroa's] Anthropology of Religion – Yale University Press 1939. This brilliant study, in less than 100 pages, analyses the creation and ultimate destruction of Polynesian traditional religion.

I was also very impressed with Theo Aerts [SVD] excellent 1979 article *The Birth of a Religious Movement: A Comparison of Melanesian Cargo Cults and Early Christianity*.

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The teachings of Father's Kirschbaum, Puff and many other priests in the early stages of Sepik contact with the outside world had a very profound impact on the custodians of Sepik oral history and religious beliefs – the Sepik elders of the day. The early stages of contact in the Sepik carried with it an illusion; while the Sepik people knew nothing about Christianity, they knew a lot about religious beliefs. The highly developed sophistication of Sepik art was evidence of that.

The people became such great artists over the vastness of time by the creation of images of their gods, totems and ancestors plus rituals and ceremonies required to ensure the desired outcomes in human and soil fertility; in love, in hunting, in fishing, in warfare and an endless list of other endeavours.

Not surprisingly the elders quickly recognised Christianity for what it was – religion! They saw similarities and differences with their traditional religion. At one stage I was told the missionaries nearly got it right. The man's name was not Jesus, it was Mai'imp and it was not bread and fishes, it was sago and fishes. But apart from that...

# Mission quests to obtain a "clean" religious slate upon which to inscribe the Lord's message.

In many cases throughout the Sepik, missionaries sought to destroy traditional religion, by burning the "Churches" of the people – the cult houses or "haus tambarans" and sacred objects. This tactic is described in detail in Sepik 2 Chapter 13. The photos below show a Sepik North Coast cult house being burned, not by missionaries in this case, but during a Government punitive expedition in 1910.8





Responses to such destruction varied greatly. Among the Yali people of Irian Jaya in the late 1960s, destruction of traditionally sacred objects resulted in the murders and cannibalism of six missionaries. [See Sepik 4 Chapter 41] Reactions in the Sepik were less violent, but never-the-less, "clean religious slates" were not forthcoming.

The Christian teachings were interpreted in terms of long-standing traditional beliefs. A typical example related to the worship of, and reverence paid to ancestral spirits, who are believed to reside among the living. Ancestral spirits were and continue to be believed to be all knowing and custodians of knowledge, including that of the origins of western goods – "the cargo" to which westerners have access and New Guineans do not.

Not surprisingly, news that Jesus returned from the dead after three days greatly interested the elders, who wanted the power to do that, and to return to life with the secrets of the cargo!

It was hoped by the Sepik elders, that a close association with the mission and its Christian teachings would explain these things. When this did not eventuate, the belief circulated that not only the missionaries, but all Europeans, knew the secrets of the origin of the cargo and had a vested interest in not sharing these secrets with the Sepik people. Cargo Cult, became a new religion for many Sepik peoples. The Mt Turu cult of 1971 is an example

# "Sepik Old and New Testaments".

The story of Jonah and the whale was recognised as being just as unlikely to be repeated in the modern times as was the myth depicted in Iatmul haus tambaran finials; a human woman mating with a crocodile and giving birth to two eagles with crocodile tails. Such ancient myths were classified by Sepik elders as "the Sepik Old Testament". Known and remembered pre-contact history, on the other hand, was classified as "the Sepik New Testament." Many of the chapters in Sepik 1 *From the beginning of time to 1885 or first contact* deal with the "Sepik Old and New Testament" oral histories of Sepik informants.

The Sepik "New Testament" was often recorded in the Middle Sepik in long lengths of knotted string<sup>9</sup> – which might typically record the number of heads taken in wars over a particular area of disputed land or the number of people killed in defending property rights.

Such knotted strings were supported by oral history story telling as a way of passing religion and historic knowledge from one generation to the next<sup>3</sup>. The art in the haus tambarans was another way – visual representations in paintings and sculpture reminded the community daily of their religious beliefs and obligation.

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On another level the typical community response concerning traditional religion among the new Christian true believers, was one of shame and fear:

I cannot tell you about the traditions of magic spells of women in Enga before the Whites came. When the missions arrived, we gave up these works of Satan. When I was baptised, I took an oath never to let these evil words come from my lips again and I swore to forget what we did in the past. If I tell you these things I might die. 10

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Oral history is the responsibility of the elders, the senior age class in Sepik society. Age classes of lesser seniority are allowed knowledge of edited versions of oral history – usually not inclusive of important secret names. The problem the elders sought to avoid in having the writer record and publish their stories was that each time an elder died, so too did part of Sepik history; that part not passed on prior to death. In the Engan example above – Women were generally excluded from sacred knowledge.

## The ebb and flow of Sepik Spirituality.

From that which is recorded or far in this chapter, it becomes clear that matters of traditional spirituality, the spirituality that Christian teachings sought to introduce, and the inevitable blending of both are, or can be, matters of great complexity. The outcomes can range from murder and cannibalism as occurred in Irian Jaya, to the acceptance of the new spirituality, albeit filtered through traditional beliefs to produce unanticipated outcomes.

The writer considers himself fortunate to have been able to record the motivation of Ninga of Bien village who instigated the Bien River cultural revival, as described in Sepik 4 Chapter 43. Without this record, a huge exercise in traditional spirituality and the creation of vast array of beautiful tribal art depicting it, would have been lost to our knowledge.

The writer has knowledge of two unexpected and unexplained Sepik responses to Christian teachings. As in the case of the Bien River cultural revival mentioned above, it seems likely that in each of the cases below a local leader was somehow inspired and caused his community to act. Sadly, we will probably never discover the motivations and thought processes behind either case:

# #1 The Tablet<sup>4</sup> - Volume July 1932 at Page 26 xi tells how:

Kirschbaum, S.V.D., a missionary with twenty-six years in New Guinea to his credit, recently presented the Holy Father an interesting collection of superstitious objects sent by the natives of the vicariate of Central New Guinea as an act of homage to the Father of Christendom. Most of the specimens will find their way to the Lateran Missionary-Ethnological Museum as a permanent testimony to still another triumph of the faith in the remote Islands of the Pacific Ocean. The story connected with the gathering of the objects is an interesting indication of the actual state of the Catholic mission in this remote field of the apostolate.

During his mission labours, Father has founded many schools for the natives, and the beneficiaries are now insistent in Kirschbaum their demands that permanent mission stations be established because they claim that a new era has begun for them and all wish to become Catholics. A recent excursion made by the mission superiors along the banks of the Sepik River furnished evidence of this enthusiasm for the Catholic religion. Many tangible proofs of this were furnished by the natives in various villages along the course of the voyage. In the village of Moagendo [Magendo] the natives, during the visit by the missionaries, brought out from the Tambaran [spirit house] a great quantity of superstitious objects, heaped them on the beach and set fire to the lot – because they were no longer of use. Father Kirschbaum regretted seeing the destruction of so many extremely interesting objects, which could serve for missionary and ethnographic studies, and requested the natives not to destroy them. Several delegations from villages near Magendo and from villages along the banks of the river waited on him, and inquired what disposition they could make of these objects of superstitious cults. "If you are serious in your intention of breaking away from these customs" replied the missionary, "give them the idols to me; I will take them to Europe, and present them to the Pope."

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The Tablet is a long standing Catholic weekly newspaper.



Soon a strange procession of canoes began to arrive in Marienberg, the missionary's residence. Every village in which the missionary had established a school, sent a load of idols and decorations from the Tambaran...Forty canoes brought the strange collection...the people sent a message begging him to return once more to the various villages – they would present him with other precious remembrances, the most sacred and precious they possessed. Happily, the mission steamer *Stella Maris*, arrived at Marienberg at the time to make a trip up the Sepik. Brother James, Captain of the steamer, took Father Kirschbaum, the natives and their canoes aboard and set out from Marienberg. The first stop was Magendo. This time the ancients brought Father Kirschbaum to the Tambaran...a long procession of men and women, young and old carrying to the *Stella Maris* those objects, once so adored and feared. The scene was repeated at Moim, Bin [Bien], Singalli [Singarin] and Kopar followed the same example of Magendo...

The initiation of some youths came to a curious end when the ancients arrived, loading the young men with the sacred objects from the Tambaran and sent them off to the landing where the ship would pass. The Luluai and Tultul<sup>5</sup> distinguished themselves in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The article mentions *The members of the Luluai and Tultul tribes...* indicating that the writer of the article was not aware that Luluais and Tultuls were government appointed village officials. The article was, therefore, presumably written by a third party, who lacked Sepik knowledge, from a letter of notes prepared by Father Kirschbaum?

particular, welcoming the change joyously and re-affirming their desire. "We want to be Catholics."

The Aion language-speaking communities described in Chapter 12 are geographically close to the Lower Sepik villages – Moim to Kopar. It follows that both the earlier cultural destruction, and the shift to Christianity must both have been known throughout the region. Lack of documentary notes leave to conjecture how, and if, these events were linked; which surely, they must have been.

Additionally, as mentioned Chapter 31, this transition to Christianity coincided chronologically with the administration's campaign to eradicate Sepik head hunting by convicting and then hanging offenders. The hanging of 10 Middle Sepik men at Ambunti in 1930 was publicised throughout the Sepik.



Japandai figure collected by Father Kirschbaum 1925-1930 – 500mm x 80mm

### #2 Two comments from G.W.L.Townsend's diaries.

18/9/1933 At Kaminimbit...Complaints re mission teachers threatening to show women in the men's house. Told them to use necessary force to reject.

12/1/1934 Lutsner promised to look into allegations that Catachists are giving "poison<sup>6</sup> talk."

The writer is occasionally frustrated by the briefness and lack of entries in the Townsend diaries. These two entries are listed, as they may shed light on #3 below. Kaminimbit in particular, is geographically adjacent to Parembei, and may be evidence of a trend in mission worker's activities, which, in association with the community experience of the hanging of head hunters, at the time, contributed to the abandonment of traditional religion in favour of Christianity.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> "poison" in this sense almost certainly means the type of killing sorcery, that is distinct from "Sanguma" killing sorcery

**#3 The Parembei village book records** indicate that Parembei village was regularly visited by a/DO George Ellis [Angoram], PO L.T.Howlett as well as by ADO Hodgekiss from Ambunti, and TNG Administrator McNichol. Entries reflecting an unexpected acceptance of Christianity, are as follows:

11<sup>th</sup> October 1939: The natives have been instructed to build a church in accordance with the Administrator's wishes and the converted haus tambaran is to revert to a haus tambaran. The new church has been marked 62' by 22' and work is to commence at once. Sgd G.W.Ellis a/DO.

15<sup>th</sup> October 1939: Tultul reports that a start has been made on collecting timber for the church.

Sgd T.W.Howlett PO

14<sup>th</sup> January 1940: Work on the church has progressed, although slowly. Need to hasten work and complete it. Village clean and orderly. Sgd G.W.Ellis a/DO.

20th April 1940: Visit per Osprey. J.Hodgekiss, F. Clune, W. Ramsay McNichol.

**29**<sup>th</sup> **September 1940:** ...place dirty and housing poor...Village has now been cleaned under supervision. I do not expect shaven grass, but I do not permit coconut shells, husks, waste food, night soil and decaying matter to be deposited in the immediate vicinity of dwellings. This [rubbish] must be constantly destroyed.

The church has been completed. There now appears to be a reaction about going back to the haus tambaran, subsequent to the mission holding a service therein. Sickness visited the group, and from what I have been told, there is now a prejudice in the direction of the haus tambaran. The belief is that the sickness came from there... Sgd H.Moy PO.

Sadly, no patrol reports or other documentation, concerning these events, appears to have survived the Japanese occupation of the Sepik and Rabaul.

Writer's note 1: "Tambarans"; and other sacred spirits, are noted throughout Sepik oral histories as requiring respect, homage and strict adherence to ritual practices, in exchange for spiritual protection and the foretelling of the future. Tambarans are believed to inflict death or illness punishments for contravention of the established norms of the community and particularly as related to the sacred house.

It follows that abandonment of traditional religious practices of the haus tambaran, in favour of Christian church services; and then reversion to traditional religious rituals therein, presented a spiritual problem for traditional believers. In the Parembei case sickness befell the people, who believed the sickness was caused by the haus tambaran spirits; a punishment for their lack of respect for the tambaran and misuse of the sacred building.

Writer's note 2 In terms of the *Winds of Change*, the Sepik people must have been confused that the two key change agents then interfering in their cosmos – The Mission and the Administration, appeared to be pulling Sepik spirituality in opposing directions; Elders must have pondered:

Why is the Administration seeking to reinstate the authority of the Haus Tambaran; something the missionaries strongly opposed since they first arrived?

*If the Administration and the Mission have differing opinions on this – who is right and why?* 

The assumed Parembei community discomfort with conflicts of this spiritual nature, also appear to be evident in the poor state of village and sanitary maintenance of the village. The writer believes there are two aspects to this:

- 1. The conversion of the haus tambaran to a church would have been perceived by the community, as unthinkable; nothing less than an abandonment of life as they knew it! Low community morale, as recorded by PO Moy, can presumably be attributed to this spiritual confusion.
- 2. The illness, was probably caused by the unhygienic state of the village, ergo, the haus tambaran may, as the people claimed, have caused the sickness, albeit indirectly.

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**Conclusion.** During the years preceding World War 2 in the Lower and Middle Sepik there is evidence of swings in the spiritual beliefs of the people towards the apparent acceptance of the Catholic faith and the turning away from traditional religious beliefs.

What is missing is an understanding of exactly what and/or who initiated these swings. Sepik 4 Chapters 43 and 44 describe "Cultural Revivals" with swings against Christian values. It presumably follows that there will always be an ebb and flow of Sepik spiritual beliefs.

# **End Notes Chapter 14**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Robert L.Welsch ed An American Anthropologist in Melanesia 0 University of Hawai'i Press 1998 Page 145

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> D.C.Laycock - The NDU language family - ANU Canberra 1965 page 185

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Personal communication with Stan Christian in Minj 1974

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Michael Edward Brown ed – Fighting words – language policy and ethnic relations in Asia M.I.T. Press 2003 Page 297

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Patrick Matbob – Father Limbrock – leader of the first S.V.D. mission in New Guinea – January 2001

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> G.W.L.Townsend – District Officer. Pacific Publications 1968 page 95

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> G.W.L.Townsend's personal diary 1933

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> D.Reimer – Von Kokos Zu Plastik – Buchhandeisausgabe 1993 page 117

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> J.Wassmann – Nyaura Space and Time – In Sepik Heritage – Carolina Academic Press 1990 Page 32

Alome Kyakas, Polly Wiessner – Inside the Women's House – Enga women's lives and traditions – Robert Brown & Associates 1992. Forward page 6

xi See Bragge Reference Volume No 11 item No 381

## Sepik 2 Chapter 15 The "Behrmann Expedition" 1912/1913.

This expedition was commissioned by German Department of Colonial Affairs under the leadership of Mr. Stolle, who had also accompanied the 1910 German-Dutch Border expedition, he was a mining engineer. Her Stolle lead the 1912-13 Kaiserin-Augusta-Fluss-Expedition, which was sponsored jointly by the Colonial Office, the Konigliches Museum of Berlin and the Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft. As Dr Behrmann was the only expedition member to publish a report, the expedition became known as the "Behrmann expedition".<sup>2</sup>

Writer's note: While I have a copy of Dr. Behrmann's Im Stromgebiet des Sepik, I am not literate in German, and neither can I locate an English translation of it. I therefore asked a German speaking friend, who provided the brief translation of Dr. Behrmann's book. The description of the Expedition's activities can be easily followed by referring to the expedition's excellent map which appears on the last page of this chapter.

The writer was fortunate to have the opportunity of interviewing Dr. Christian Kaufmann, renown Swiss Anthropologist, over dinner at Ambunti on 26<sup>th</sup> May 1973. He described for me the various German expeditions to the Sepik River. His comments and points of clarification concerning the "Behrmann expedition" appear throughout this chapter. The translation of Dr. Behrmann's story<sup>3</sup> follows:

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### Participants in the expedition were:

Dr. Roesicke<sup>1</sup> - Ethnographer.

Dr. Thurnwald – Ethnographer [he joined the expedition later and stayed on after it departed See the next three Chapters 20, 21 and 22.

Dr. Buergers - Medical Doctor and Zoologist.

Dr. Behrmann – Geographer.

Mr. Stolle - Head of Expedition and Mining Engineer.

Mr. Ledermann – Botanist

Mr. Tafel – in charge of police detachment.<sup>2</sup>

The expedition arrived at the mouth of the Sepik on 28<sup>th</sup> February 1912 at 5 pm. Next day continued up river and after three days reached Malu where a base camp was set up. [Malu would have been chosen as the 1886 Von Schleinitz expedition had a base camp there.]

During the expedition's month or so at Malu, after crossing a small lake the party visited Zuckerhut mountain. [Zuckerhut mountain was found on Behrmann's map to be Mt Garamambu, the site of Beckett's gold discovery of 1941].

Dr. Kaufmann added: The Behrmann Expedition also camped for a while at Ambunti. Townsend's District Officer, mentions their camp site. [when Townsend and others investigated the Japandai massacre in 1924.]

The expedition headed up river in quest of the Frieda River, which had been named by Schrader in 1886. They established a Pioneer Camp [site not identified, but downstream of the May River/Sepik junction] and from there explored the May River and named a mountain DER STEIN

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Dr. Kaufmann said: Dr Roesicke was the expedition's anthropologist known to the Sepiks as "Waskei", a lawyer. His only report appeared in the German Ethnographic Journal in 1914. He died in 1919 of Spanish Influenza. His notes were lost in a bombing raid in World War 2. He worked mainly in Malu.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Police master Tafel was based in Angoram in late 1914 and resisted capture when Rear Admiral Cumberledge party captured Angoram – shots were fired, but Tafel was captured unharmed.

[the Rock] and the last advance upriver to name PFINGSTBERG [Pentecost Mountain] on Pentecost Sunday in May 1912.

[In 1942 the Thurston Expedition, in seeking to escape the Japanese, retraced the German expedition's route to the junction of the Left and Right May Rivers, and from there continued on to Telefomin and into Papua to follow the Fly River downstream to Daru. The Thurston Expedition is documented in full in Sepik 3]

At this point Mr Stolle broke his leg and the expedition returned with him to Pioneer Camp. After a few days in camp, [The expedition apparently without Mr. Stolle] headed off again, down river to check the Frieda River, but found no people there. The expedition had to turn back when Mr. Schatteburg, the boat's engineer, died suddenly and was buried near where the Frieda emerges from the hills.

This location was close to where the Frieda airstrip would later be established to facilitate the exploration of the vast low-grade copper deposit discovered there in the late 1960s [Sepik 4 Chapters].

In 1938 Patrol Officer John Black discovered the Nenatamun people a little further upstream of where Schatteburg was buried and among them he found a man called Aboya, who had been one of five carriers who had fled from Behrman's party presumably in the Frieda River area. The Nenatamun found them stealing from gardens and fired arrows into each of them Aboya, alone survived his many wounds and was adopted into Nenatamun society. Aboya told Black he remembered almost nothing from his previous life. Black concluded Aboya was probably from the Madang coast. Aboya was quite content to remain, so Black gave him and axe and other gifts and left him where he found him.<sup>4</sup>

Next, followed the exploration of the April River. After four days travelling up river arrived at the foot of Pyramid Mountain, named Camel-back Mountain and Landslide Mountain, visited the village of Wogumasch [Wogamush – at the mouth of the April River].

Then travelled up the Leonard Schultze River as far as Schichtberg [a mountain of layered sand stone]. [The writer recognises this point as being in the Taiwari tribal area.]

In June 1912 back to the base camp at Malu. The steamer Kolonialgesellschaft was sent back to the coast to try and find a replacement for the decease engineer. During the absence of the ship the expedition spent a lot of time in Malu observing village life.

Some smaller trips were taken up the SUED and SUEDWEST [South and South-West Rivers] [these rivers on Ambunti map in the 250,000 is known as the Black River on which Wagu and Yigei of the Bahenimo language group are located, and the Hunstein River] and ascending Mt Hunstein. Returning from the mountain, news arrived that the steamer had returned with a replacement engineer [Mr. Fiebig]

In 1970 the people of Wagu remembered the expedition's climbing of Mt. Hunstein and were adamant that heavy metal containers they had carried up were left in the forest at the top.

In early September return to the April River and establishment of the April River camp as a base for the advance into the central cordillera. Arrival at the camp site on 15<sup>th</sup> September 1912 (until 20<sup>th</sup> November).

The location of this camp marked on Dr. Behrmann's map by a red triangle immediately west of Mt. Hunstein. This camp site would have been chosen as it was the highest point of navigation on the April River. Thirty-one years later in 1943 Captain James

Taylor camped in the same location and hid his ships the *Osprey* and the *Pat*. It was there in August 1943 that a Japanese patrol ambushed and killed Lieut. Barracluff and several members of his party. [Sepik 3 Chapter 33.]

From the base camp to ETAPPENBERG [Staging Mountain] and camped there for three weeks to carry out various observations. Then further on STEILBERG [Steep mountain]. Here good views of the ROESICKEBERG (Roesicke Mountain), [Shown on Behrmann's map as the New Guinea Central Range east of the April River headwaters] the SARGBERG, (Coffin Mountain) SCHARFER BERG, (Ridge Mountain) BUCLELBERG, (Hump-back Mountain) – allegedly all part of the central range watershed. On 13<sup>th</sup> November, alone to the top of the watershed, then quick return to April River base camp and to the other expedition members [Apparently Behrmann conducted this leg of the journey without European company.

This leg of the expedition followed the April River tributary called the Bamali River due south to the top of the Strickland/Sepik Divide – the PNG Central Range. The final exploration of this area was not undertaken until the 1960s and 1970s Sepik 4 Chapters 37, 44 and 46.

On 20<sup>th</sup> November 1912 the expedition returned to base at Malu. There was more exploration of the South-East River, then there [about late November or early December] was a visit by the German warship *Condor*. In the evening when relaxing with crew members in the ship's mess, news arrived that a carrier was killed while on a hunting trip not far away.

At first it was suspected that somebody from Malu or Avatib [Avatip] was responsible, but both these suspicions proved groundless. The local people, however, pointed to KUOME [Kwoma]. After two days a punitive foray against Kwoma was mounted. On the way there, a confrontation occurred with 70 or so Kwoma warriors. A volley was fired into the air with one shot aimed. The warriors scampered with their wounded getting away as well. In the village at the meeting house, cut down a coconut, a betelnut and a banana palm and killed a chicken and a pig, and then burned down the meeting house [haus tambaran] after removing all ethnically valuable items, and [burned down] a normal house.

Dr. Kaufmann said. The Expedition's Waskuk [Kwoma] collection of art was lost. There are descriptions of wonderful sculptures, but they never reached Germany.<sup>5</sup>

After all the hard work, [the punitive party] had a rest at the edge of the village, eating the pig and helping themselves freely to coconuts and betelnut. Next day arrived back at base. Afterwards there was no more trouble [from the Kwoma] until the loss of German control over the area in 1914.

Writer's note: The Kwoma next appear in our story, in Sepik 2 Chapter 35 The murder of Constables Belova and Luwitis at Waskuk in 1929.

So far, all the rivers explored met the Sepik coming from the south. The most promising river to the north appears to be a river shown on the excellent map of the earlier [1910] Dutch-German Expedition, but only the mouth of the river was mapped.

Going up river again, now in (early?) December, we passed the spot where we established the Pioneer Camp and stayed for some time. Beyond the mouth of the May River we entered country unknown to us, but since we had excellent [1910] maps, this posed no problem.

At the mouth of the NORDFLUSS [North River] was only one metre deep and further up it became impossible to proceed by boat. Instead [of further exploration of the North River, we] ascended Meander Mountain to check the surrounding areas.

With mail from Germany, arrived news that the expedition was to be extended from 12 to 18 months. As well Dr.Thurnwald joined the expedition and was to work in the Lower Sepik area. The big task still awaiting us was to explore the Lower Sepik and the area between the Sepik and Ramu Rivers.

Dr. Kaufmann also stated. Dr. Thurnwald made two traverses. Pagwi due north to the coast around Boiken was first- into the Kunai [grasslands] and Maprik. Then south from around Wewak to Timbunke. These traverses are marked on Behrmann's map as dotted lines.

Behrmann also had a camp at old Korogo [Opposite Yentchanmangua] and possibly fought the Korogos. Thurnwald reported seeing the Korogos returning from a headhunting raid. <sup>6</sup>

Writer's note: The following notes are controversial but are included here as they are what the elders state to be the truth. An unnamed Korogo elder continues:

I was a small boy when the Germans first came<sup>3</sup>. The police with the Germans put on a pantomime to show that if they shot us with their muskets [rifles] we would fall down dead. One Korogo said they were lying and he speared a European among the party. In response, they shot us and broke our canoes. They killed five men – Yimbanduma, Taun, Wobojui, Kuman and Inugumeri and five women, making a total of ten.

The Germans went away and when they came back they appointed village officials. They appointed my father and gave him a stick and told him to have the stick with him whenever he approached the Germans, so they would recognise him. He also has a laplap [loin cloth] he had to wear.

They went again and came back again and they brought a big gun and shot an Erima tree to show its fire power. They became our friends. The Germans gave us our first iron. They went to Singimbit and made camp there [on the right bank of the Sepik roughly opposite Yentchanmangua.] One German called Waskei [Roesicke] went with Korogos on a raid against Malu. A woman was killed and the German was with the Korogos as they sang their way back down river. The German knew of the headhunting as they had taken her head and it was in the canoe with him.

They gave us rifles to shoot Miambei [a Sawos village in the Sepik Plains] and later Yamuk [another Sawos village]. They, [the Yamuks] were in their haus tambaran cutting skin and all the initiates were upstairs. The skins had been cut oiled and they were all asleep after singing all night. The men were down stairs. The Korogos went stealthily into the enclosure [the haus tambaran was enclosed with a fence during initiations] and into the haus tambaran. The alarm was given and the lads were shot as they came down. The men ran away - some were shot others speared. The Germans did not accompany us that time.

As we Korogos were returning the Yamuks speared Manabimoim. They carried him back to the canoes and he survived. As Yangubungu of Korogo opened his mouth to yell a barbed spear hit him in the cheek and came out the other cheek – holding his jaw open wide. They broke the spear off on both sides of his face. He walked back to the canoes with a piece of spear still jammed in his mouth. They got it out later.

Back at the camp the German Waskei saw the heads and said 'Goodpela!' He sent us again to shoot Sarem [another Sawos village]. Yongun shot one Sarem. They saw him fall,

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Presumably prior to the Behrmann Expedition.

but when they got to where he should have been, he was gone and only a lizard was there to be seen.

Then they went to Sengo. The Sengos were out in the dry season catching fish in the grass. The raiding party was made up of Korogo, Yambunumbu and Japandai warriors. As the raiders approached them, the Sengos said they did not want to fight, but one of them threw a spear. The raiders shot them with rifles and speared them in the grass. Many Sengos died. This fight was over land.<sup>7</sup>

Writer's note: The use of firearms by the Nyaula Iatmul communities against their traditional enemies the Sawos villages of the Sepik plains is mentioned in the interviews with both Nyaula and Sawos elders. There is no doubt in the writer's mind that these stories are true. The alleged involvement of Roesicke may have been as the Korogos tell it, or, possibly, the firearms may have been provided for the purpose of hunting game and used for head hunting without the prior knowledge of the Germans.

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The translation of Dr. Behrmann's book continues:

The first month of 1913 saw the exploration of the TOEPFERFLUSS (Potter River) system. Very artful pottery was seen at TSHIMONDO [Chuimondo] and KAAMBA [Kambot] villages. Due to fuel and food shortages, we had to run back and start a second advance. We proceeded further upstream approaching the Ramu River. However not being equipped properly this time for marching through swamp areas, a visit to the Ramu had to be postponed until April/May when the expedition ascended the LEHMFLUSS (Clay River) as well.

Then on the second time up the TOEPFER River, Behrmann went across to the Ramu, reaching it at Nirapalli after 3-4 km march through swamp. On the Ramu there was no more swamp, but firm ground with coconut plantations around the villages.

The TOEPLER is now known as the Keram River. It was also known as the "Little Ramu" and was probably once the actual course of the Ramu River. The ability to easily and secretly enter the Ramu far upstream from the sea, [where Annanberg Mission was established] was of strategic importance during world War 2. It was a key access and egress route for Australian ANGAU and Coast Watching parties between the Sepik and the Australian controlled Central Highlands during the early period of the Japanese occupation of the Sepik.

The name "Potter River", based upon the "artful pottery" the Behrmann expedition observed at Chuimondo and Kambot, came as a surprise to the writer, who was a regular visitor to both villages in the 1990s without seeing any evidence of a local pottery industry.

From the Ramu the Expedition moved back to the Clay River, where a small camp had been set up in support of an advance south into the Schrader Range in the second half of April 1913... Where the Clay River became unnavigable a further camp was established at the end of April. Between 1<sup>st</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> May 1913 a group camped on Rain Mountain and went on further into the Schrader Mountains. There they were attacked early one morning by hostile local people. Behrmann left the wounded in the care of the Doctor and returned to the camp on the Clay River, with the intention to attempt of crossing from the Sepik [at Angoram] to the sea (Murik).

The first stage was to Ganian [Gavien], where the people spoke the same language as in Angoram, but unknown to the latter. At Murik, the group was welcomed by the local Tultul and enjoyed being on the sea again after 15 months in the Sepik swamp. After a couple of days at Murik,

the expedition returned to Angoram and from there with the steamer to the mouth of the Sepik. From there on foot in one day to the Ramu River, returned to the Sepik and the steamer and back to Malu.

At the end of July 1913 travelled up-river from Malu for 12 days to near the mouth of the North River and advanced into the West Range, Rocky Peak and White Wall. Then back to the Sepik and further upstream to the Dutch border and the October River, where we found two smaller tributaries, the Hauser and Bergfluss (Mountain River) – August River. Then the return journey starting on 16<sup>th</sup> August 1913 and arriving at Malu in mid-September.

Then it was time for winding up and packing. It was the end of the expedition. Departure from Malu was on 20<sup>th</sup> September and out of the mouth of the Sepik on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1913.

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Dr.Kaufmann mentioned the following points of clarification, concerning Dr. Thurnwald's explorations after the remainder of the expedition departed:<sup>8</sup>

- 1. He used Batak [Indonesian Hill people] carriers.
- 2. He spent some months in the middle Keram River area in the Banaro tribal area
- 3. After his capture he had a choice of a prison camp or going to the USA. He went to the USA, but had to leave there in 1917 when the USA entered the war.

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**Some notes on Behrmann's excellent map:** There were at least three major contributors to this map. In chronological order they were:

- 1. The German-Dutch Border expedition of 1910, the German portion of which was led by Dr. Leonard Schultze of Jena. They mapped the Sepik River's course from around the Sepik and May River junction, upstream into Dutch New Guinea and back into Kaiser Wilhelmsland to a point well inside the mountain country.
- 2. The Behrmann Expedition, as described in this chapter, mapped the lower and middle Sepik River and tributaries as far upstream as the Sepik/May junction with a number of land explorations as well.
- 3. Dr. Thurnwald mapped the Sepik from where the German-Dutch Border map ended to Telefomin, near the very source of the Sepik River

#### End Notes Chapter 15.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Encyclopedia of Papua New Guinea Vol 2 Page 492

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Personal communication from Dr Christian Kaufmann over dinner at Ambunti 26<sup>th</sup> May 1973.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> This translation appears as item 126 in Research Volume No 4

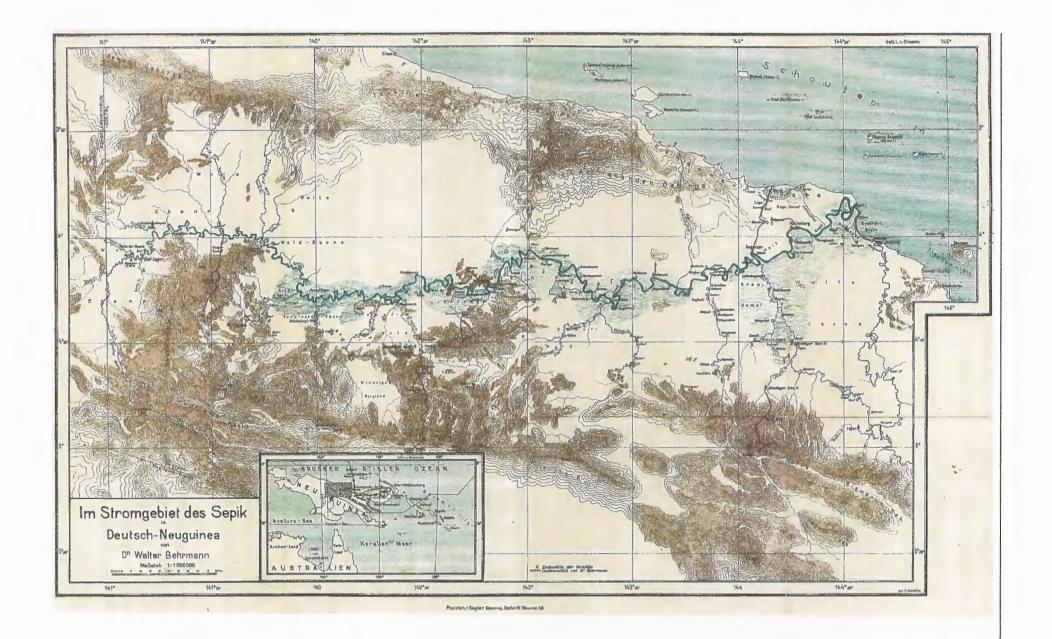
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Bill Gammage – The Sky Travellers. Melbourne Uni Press 1988 P 123

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Bragge Sepik Research volume 20 page 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Bragge Sepik Research volume 20 page 4

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Bragge Sepik Research volume 18 page 114-115

<sup>8</sup> Bragge Sepik Research volume 20 page 4



## Sepik 2 Chapter 16 Dr. Richard Thurnwald's Discoveries in the Upper Sepik.

**Writer's Note:** Chapters 16, 17 and 18 are produced from two translations provided by Barry Craig of the South Australian Museum. These translations are referenced as:

Thurnwald 1914: uscngp.com/papers/26

Thurnwald 1916: uscngp.com/papers/27



Dr. Richard Thurnwald and his patrol in the Aitape area in 1914

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The German Sepik expedition 1912/13 was joined by ethnographer Dr. Richard Thurnwald in late 1912 after the expedition had been in the field for nearly a year. When the expedition departed from the Sepik on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1913 Dr. Thurwald stayed on to conduct further exploration in the Upper Sepik.

His powers of observation, clarity of recording and excellent mapping are all the more important as his exploration records laid a foundation that would be critical in the later development of Upper Sepik cultural contacts and history described in these pages. These include;

- 1. Petroleum exploration: the establishment of Green River airstrip in 1938 and two petroleum explorations in the Upper Sepik and August Rivers in the mid-1950s.
- 2. The discovery of the "Min" world and it's turbulent history through the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 3. Second world war events: the Thurston expedition through Telefomin, war time airstrip works in Telefomin and the Mosstroops operations out of Yellow River.
- 4. The Yellow River massacre of 1956.

5. The Indonesian conquest of Dutch New Guinea in 1962 and subsequent border issues with the Territory of New Guinea.

Dr. Thurnwald's account of his journeys and discoveries were published in German in Berlin in 1914 and 1916. A translation of both accounts into English was commissioned by Barry Craig in the late 1960s. The English titles are:

- 1. Discoveries in the basin of the upper Sepik. *Mitteilungen aus den deutschen Schutzgebieten* 27: 338-348, 1914 Berlin.
- 2. Dash to the source of the Sepik River and the sources of the Sand and North Rivers as far as the Coastal Range *Mitteilungen aus den deutschen Schutzgebieten* 29: 82-93, 1916 Berlin.

The current chapter is drawn from the first of these two documents. The next Chapter, drawn from the second document covers his dash to the source of the Sepik river and the discovery of the "min" world.

## 1. Thurnwald expedition from Lower Sepik to Yellow River base camp.

On the fifth of December [1913], we set off [from Karajundo base camp near Marienberg] with a long, heavily-laden train of canoes tied together and pulled by two boats and the pinnace. On the canoes were oil and gasoline, as well as most of the native lads. The boats were laden with rice and tinned food and trade goods; the pinnace carried instruments, clothes and linen; the whole looked like a floating gypsy camp. A crate served as a seat and a case as a dining table. Behind each crate lurked malicious hordes of mosquitoes.

From early morning to late afternoon the motors chugged along. Many days we travelled for ten or eleven hours without a break. Only evening brought relief from sedentary immobility when the men pitched camp overnight on the bank. We progressed slowly against the current which had been rising steadily since the beginning of this year's early rainy season. When we drew near to villages canoes appeared with painted, gesticulating natives who wished to exchange yams, sago, ethnological items, or human skulls for iron in the form of knives or axes.

A particular incident marked the reception in the village of Angerman [Angriman just down-stream of the mouth of the Karawari River]. I have a certain experience in receptions and was used to different types; here, however was something new.

The night before we had camped below the village and the news of my arrival had been spread in advance by two men from the village I had with me. The next morning, when our cavalcade appeared on the river bank in front of the village, all the innumerable inhabitants were waiting there — men, women and children. Two big masked dancers were also standing there with their reed fringes reaching to the knees [similar to those of famous Dukduk masks of the Gazelle Peninsular], with rattles on their wrists and ankles, and giant combs swaying on their heads. They were blowing, on short flutes, sounds like stylized pig squeaks. Here pigs seem to play a specific role in the beliefs of the people [as giant dancing masks in the form of pigs also show].

From the moment I stepped onto land, everyone began to dance, like a mechanical theatre into which you had dropped a coin – the men, women, children and masks. In addition, they were singing while the masks were squeaking on the flutes. The masks danced towards the great spirit-house and looked around to see if I was following. I followed them with a great crowd of people and entered the spirit-house. All the village men who had come with us fetched their flutes and now an ear-splitting squeaking concert began, as though there were five hundred pigs.

The reception had its antecedents: when I came through here in October, upstream on the way to Marui five people from this village had joined me voluntarily. I took them willingly because one can learn all sorts of things from such passengers en route. They had especially enjoyed teaching me their dances. When I began the march to the coast [Marui northwards via the Abelam tribal area around Maprik, then across the Prince Alexander Mountains to the Bismarck Sea] they accompanied me inland for a short while but returned the second day. The pinnace and the boat went back downstream without me. Naturally they thought I had been killed. Now, however, I returned alive and from the other side. They thought there was something uncanny about this.

Incidents like the reception described brought variation to the monotonous journey. So too did one of the engines from time to time, when it tried to entertain through its obstinacy, efforts that, however, were not always appreciated. So we proceeded between flat reedy banks, clumps of trees and sparse woodlands, with distant ranges appearing at rare intervals. Even above Malu the river was still almost as wide, but the woods became thicker on the banks and many of the numerous twists and bends of the river passed right by the foot of the hills.

Often the days were burning hot, sweltering and heavy. Threatening violet-grey clouds, traversed by downy woolly-white formations, appeared in the western and northern skies. The dark masses formed themselves into a curtain that crept nearer and nearer. Only in the south did the sun shine innocently. The sky seemed cut in half into day and night. Vertical curtains showed us what was happening elsewhere and what could be expected from the approaching black army that swallowed up more and more of the sunny, silvery cirrus clouds.

Suddenly a whirlwind would break loose and lift the tents that had been spread out on the boat over the cases as a protection against the sun and the rain. We had to hold them down with heavy oars. The river water splashed up and the boats rocked about considerably. Here and there lightening rent bloody wounds in the monstrous darkness that tried to seize us with its dark cloak. Thunder danced around or smashed into the chaos of sounds in a frenzied symphony that broke out around us. Rain rattled down from the heavens, drowning the noise of the motors. Unexpectedly ice-cold winds swept from the right, from the left, from in front, from behind, so that the men's teeth chattered. Such density of vapor arose that we could scarcely see the next boat in the cavalcade. It would rage thus for an hour. Throughout, the rain abated rhythmically and then got stronger again. The water streamed from the heavens for hours and the skies remained cloud-covered even longer. A refreshing coolness follows such thunderstorms but only for a short while.

The next day at the same time, the same weather would be inflicted upon us. Sometimes the rain lasted into the evening and the night would not calm the downpour from above. Sometimes the weather broke loose with twice the strength. The men had often to be awoken to empty the boats and canoes that has filled with rainwater. Then the mornings were often grey and cloudy and the day passed grey and rainy. Thus, the wet season closed in upon us.

We travelled upstream for almost three weeks. At Christmas, we reached a conical hill on the bank of the river that seemed suitable for the establishment of a base camp for the intended exploration [Dr. Thurnwald named it Christmas Hill]. One could have thought oneself transposed at this time to the dull and gloomy December days of Germany, when rain falls from a grey sky. Since we wanted to build the camp first, we postponed the festival for two days and celebrated it after half the roof of the camp house had been covered with wild sugar cane. Thus, on the second festival day we gave presents. These were laid out on two tarpaulins and consisted of clothes, knives, glass beads, paints, pipes and tobacco. The men

obliged by singing which I recorded on my phonograph. It was not a good thing, at such a time, for one to think about home.

# 2. Dr. Thurnwald's exploration westward; Upper Sepik, October and West Rivers

Even before the New Year, we had progressed so much that we could set out on our first exploration westward. Our next goal was the October River, which we navigated upstream in the motor boat for two days. This river comes out of the Dutch part of New Guinea and opens into the Sepik at the point where the latter changes its course from northwards to eastwards as it flows out of the central range. From the October River I followed the Sepik upstream in the pinnace for another three days. A day's journey from this junction I found the West River – a tributary likewise coming out of Dutch territory. I navigated it in a motor canoe, that is, three canoes tied together on which was attached an engine. This unique craft was capable of easily overcoming strong cross-currents. The West River forked after a few kilometres into a south arm and a north arm, both of which soon became torrents.

From the top of the Papua Hills near the mouth of the West River an impressive panorama of the surrounding ranges can be seen. From north to south runs the broad flat valley of the Sepik – roughly 25 kilometres wide, enclosed by low mountain ranges that further on rise to quite a height – in the east up to 1500-2000 metres and in the west to 2500-3000 metres. However, the main range lies to the south where there are mountains at least the same height as the western range, also with low foothills spreading out before it. On a clear afternoon, one could see the outline of the Coastal Range 40 kilometres away, easily seen from Christmas Hill. The Coastal Range was at the most 15-20 kilometres from Christmas Hill, encroaching far inland at that point.<sup>1</sup>

The banks are similar all along the upper course of the main river – steep and wooded on the outside of the curves, while on the inside, sandbanks or wild sugar cane [pitpit] and behind young forest with numerous breadfruit trees. One frequently comes across signs of alterations in the river's course – new breaches and devastated woods, the mouths of old streams, and lagoons. Above the mouth of the West River, the branching of the watercourse is conspicuous. The sandbanks and islands visible at low water are flooded at high water, which often raises the river level two or three metres overnight. Then a river a hundred metres or more wide rushes downstream with uncanny speed, carrying before it giant trees, weathered trunks, branches and sticks. During the flood, which lies heaped up in huge deposits at the mouths of stream, on sandbanks, and on the corners and curves, is carried away and deposited in other places. New breaches are torn through, old ones barricaded up. Thus the river continually changes its course and its appearance.

The settlements in this region consist of isolated houses such as are known in British New Guinea, especially like those reported by D'Albertis on the upper Fly River. Sometimes further downstream two or three of these houses may be seen close to each other. This reminds one of the community dwellings on the Gazelle Peninsular and South Bougainville. However, whilst in these other places the inhabitants always build more than one house, here everyone sleeps pressed together in usually the one house.

The houses, often 20 to 25 metres long and 10 to 15 metres wide, are most imposing from a distance, because they are often 10 to 15 metres high and look like town houses; however, they aren't at all. One is soon surprised how poorly built they are. Two things are particularly striking: first, a whole forest of posts, innumerable thin saplings seven to ten

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> What Dr. Thurnwald could see to the north was the southern edge of the Border Mountains; the coastal range [the Bewani Mountains] are over 100 kilometres north of the West River.

metres high that support this living space, over which is erected a low roof of sago leaves. The houses are built high, not on account of floods but for security against attack. Steep scaffolding supports the house which is as unstable as a house of cards. The other peculiarity of these buildings, that is characteristic of the whole region of the upper Sepik and its tributaries, is the following; The floor and roof-support posts of the house are not forked at the top [as everywhere else] in order to support the cross-beams; the cross-beams are merely tied to the posts with rattan. Thus the cross-beams, on which rests the floor of the house, have no other point of support than the often carelessly tied rattan, that slackens as it dries out and later breaks or is gnawed apart by rats.

For the European who wishes to climb into such a house, the ladder offers the first gymnastic exercise. Of course, the rungs of the ladder also are fastened with rattan. In order to save work, the rungs are placed far apart from each other and they slide about and are found in all positions other than the correct horizontal one. Having climbed to the house successfully – often one notices only afterwards that one side of the ladder is rotten and only one of the two poles leans against the floor above – new problems present themselves. The floor above made out of thin branches, is laid over with bark which may be displaced or rotten, and the stranger who does not know the geography of the house is in continual danger of disappearing down one of the unseen holes. Actually, these are useful for protection against malicious attacks, I was informed proudly.

First one enters a verandah that in many houses is only a kind of balcony projecting out, but in others is almost as big as the inner room. At the end opposite the entrance is another verandah of similar size. The rectangular room between is enclosed by walls made of the mid-rib of the sago palm leaf, or sheets of bark. Sometimes this middle room consists of a gallery which one enters first, while one or two metres further on the middle room opens out. Square fireplaces are arranged symmetrically on both sides of the house – four, six, eight or ten on each side. They are arranged along the same lines on the verandahs as well, as far as there is room. These fireplaces are surrounded by a construction of vertical poles to which are attached shelves and hooks for storing or hanging up possessions, supplies, weapons and dead relatives. The latter are resting in great netted string bags. Previously they had been rolled in bast<sup>2</sup>, hung under the roof, and allowed to decompose in the house. Thereupon the bones, especially the skull, are packed in a string bag together with a couple of personal belongings – penis gourd, pipe and similar things – and hung up in the house. Special value does not seem to be attached to these remains, for people were always willing to exchange something from the past for something useful in the present and offered the bones of beloved relatives more than anything else.

Under the smoke-blackened roof are put the trophies and memorials to good meals – skulls of pigs, crocodiles, wallabies, cassowaries, possums, bandicoots, flying foxes, shells of the tortoise, vertebra from snakes, and whatever else might have been dished up as a dainty meal. The fact that the house is also filled with all kinds of living creatures, the spoilt European finds superfluous. The fleas, however, are black, not red. The nose is also uncomfortably affected. Garbage is simply dropped beneath the house, a neglect seldom observed in the south seas.

The house provides relatively little space for the numerous inhabitants. People sleep together on the floor without any covering under or over them and are kept warm through the often cool nights by body heat alone. There are often special platforms erected in the houses; men sleep either on these or in the gallery. The women sleep under the platforms or in the

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Bark?

middle of the room. Compartments for the men alone, or men's houses found everywhere, else in New Guinea, are not found here. Meeting places are in the clearings under the trees.

The lifespan of the houses described is short. The posts, often not even de-barked, rot quickly. The roof splits into two at the ridge and the separate parts begin to slip slowly downwards. The rain forces into the house through the cracks but the inhabitants do not seem to be easily disturbed by this. The floods soak the floor, the poles warp, but one still sees people climbing up the ladders and smoke rising from the broken-down roof. From my observations, a house would hold out three or four years. Deserted, it soon becomes overgrown with creepers or collapses like a house of cards.

The construction of new houses claims a considerable part of the activity of the natives. New houses are frequently built in old clearings where a garden lies fallow, for the making of a new clearing, especially the felling of the giant trees – is a difficult task. A man once proudly showed me his work, a thick trunk about one and a half metres in diameter, surrounded by scaffold. He had worked for months with his little not very regular, stone axe, blow after blow until he saw the giant fall. Usually they leave the big trees standing and content themselves with felling little ones.

The places where a house has been are often used as gardens again. The frequent renewal of houses, though usually at nearby sites, involves a great deal of moving about within a relatively local area.

Many of the utensils used in the lower and middle regions of the Sepik are lacking here, especially the production of clay pots that are quite artistic in the middle Sepik, the large sleeping baskets that provide protection against mosquitoes, and the large slit gongs, elsewhere very common. They do possess good hand drums in the hour glass shape. The spear is lacking among the weapons; apart from large daggers made from the leg bones of the cassowary, they use bows and arrows. The bows may be drawn by either hand.

Much care is devoted to the manufacture of arrows for whose tips different materials are used – bone, betel palm wood, but most especially bamboo in which artistic barbed hooks are cut. Almost always one meets men equipped with bows and bundles of arrows. The mutual trust between sovereign house communities seems to be no greater than between sovereign states. Burnt-down houses, wounds, warnings and permanent readiness for fighting are sufficient proof of this.

If the inhabitants of this district do not differ much from those further downstream in their lust for fighting, they are significantly weaker in their artistic accomplishments<sup>3</sup>. These are almost exclusively limited to personal decoration.

Mostly one sees netted bands of string of round or oval seeds (*Coix lacryma jobii*) that are fastened around the forehead, neck or chest. The vertebra of snakes, or bones from the flying fox, strung on plant fibre, serve as loin belts. The men's hair is often braided into one or more plaits. The men wear penis gourds, the women short grass skirts, otherwise the same decorations as men. Their bodies, usually covered with filth, are frailer than those of the inhabitants of the middle region, who look very sturdy for New Guinea. Further, their physical type shows differences that are quite marked locally.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Craig notes that Dr. Thurnwald does not mention the carved and painted shields of the area, collected by Schultze Jena in 1910 and by members of the Sepik expedition of 1912/13. Nor does he mention that the arrows and smoking equipment are often beautifully decorated with pyro-engravings or designs etched with rats incisor.

On our way to the mountains, the natives hid themselves, frightened by the appearance of the rattling motor craft. However, they appeared on our way back after they had seen than nothing had happened and found the presents I had left by their houses according to my custom. In the places where I had left these presents, I could be almost certain that with my reappearance the people would line up on the river bank with food. They brought sago, sugarcane, roasted breadfruit kernels, betel-nut, pieces of baked fish or pork, and tobacco. They smoke with long hollow gourds or thick bamboo pipes into whose distal opening they have inserted a thin bamboo pipe holding a cigar.

According to my preliminary investigations the whole area covered by this expedition belongs to one linguistic group with slight local divergences, and represents a cultural unity as well.

### Dr. Thurnwald's exploration of the lower August River.

I extended my explorations south along the main tributary [The August (Yapsie) River] bordering the north south part of the Sepik valley. It comes out of the foothills of the central highlands and flows into the Sepik a little below the October River. I could navigate its lower course for a day with the pinnace and motor boat. Then, however, I came across rapids with such frequency that I could proceed no further with the motors. With sixteen of my lads I climbed into the canoes I had brought with us, on which I stowed provisions and luggage and continued the journey upstream.

In our four canoes we had a hard time struggling against the current that rose daily, gradually flooded the banks and rushed violently through the rapids. Torrential rain poured from the heavens every night. Squalls suddenly roared down from the mountains, breaking off branches and rotten trees, making our sojourn in the tents during the pitch-black nights very tense. Resigned to fate, we awaited the blow from above. Instead misfortune came from beneath. One dull morning I woke to find the river flowing under my bed; however, we were able to get everything into the relatively dry canoes.

There was naturally, no question of paddling. We punted ourselves forward in the weaker currents with long poles, and through the ever increasing rapids, tangled piles of driftwood and gravel banks, we had to drag the canoes with rattan ropes. If the water was too deep we had to pull ourselves forward close to the bank by grasping overhead branches, fallen trunks, or the wild sugarcane. It was often safer, if more time consuming and exhausting, to cut a rough path along the thicker overgrown bank and tow the canoes. Much care was required when changing from one bank to the other, for then we had to paddle, the water being too deep for punting. Invariably, the current dragged the canoe downstream in spite of our earnest paddling and was in danger of striking anchored driftwood. We therefore had to choose very carefully a place for changing banks. Where giant trees and branches threatened us in the middle of the winding course of rapids, I preferred to unload the canoes and repack them on the other side of the critical spot.

Sometimes the river splits into a network of channels. Sometimes swollen into a mighty river it rushes past a steep slope. The flood water gnaws continuously at one or the other bank and softens the ground so that here and there the roots of trees are deprived of support. It sends runners into the land like feelers, digging channels, carrying away humus, depositing sand in its place and covering the earth. Pools of water remain everywhere after the heavy rain and the land becomes a morass. The forest wastes away as too much water and too little humus causes old trees to die. Their pale weathered trunks tower upwards like corpses' fingers as though imploring heaven to save them. Thus the water seeks out a new bed in one place while it brings sand and gravel to another, upon which wild sugarcane

sprouts. Little trees begin to grow, until a young forest thrives in which breadfruit are certainly not lacking.

Lateral excursions towards the mountains led through tall thick forests. Here 'big city life' prevails; a wild competition for 'a place in the sun'. A few trees as high as the heavens, then many middling careerists and, finally, innumerable miserable existences. All are striving towards the light. They grow too close to one another for expansion width-ways, so they have to grow upwards to maintain their life. In the crowd, room for living is narrow and development to fullness impossible. But even the giants that tower to the sky are constrained – not by the little fellows but by the parasites. These climb up them, embrace them, choke them, drain them and spread a network from tree to tree. Neither the pandanus nor the Doric columns of the eucalypts are spared. Beware when a giant falls! It drags innumerable others with it into its grave, like an old chieftain at whose death thousands of slaves are slaughtered. Patches of light in the dark forest remain its epitaph for a long time.

There is a great deal of animal life in the endless forest. The Hornbill, whose ponderous beak droops a little, flies with a mysterious whirring noise that reminds one of a bullroarer, through which the natives enable the spirits to talk. Cockatoos flutter squawking from tree to tree; or there is a heavy beating of wings as the frightened Crown Pigeon sweeps through the branches. The Cassowary drums as though beating on a great wooden slit-gong; the monotonous call of the Leatherhead sounds like someone saying a hundred times over in Saxon dialect 'O, ja ja, so; O, ja ja, so.'...

I repeatedly came upon natives here. On the lower course of this, the Berg River<sup>4</sup> are many settlements, always isolated houses. Further upstream, the small houses, likewise isolated are usually built somewhat hidden away from the river's edge. As sago leaves are lacking, the roofs are covered with leaves of the so-called pseudo-palm. From these, sago starch is also prepared since above the mid-course of this river the true sago palm is no longer to be seen and neither is the coconut palm planted. Even tobacco is lacking here.

Next to the pseudo-sago, breadfruit plays the chief role in nourishment. In addition, there are bananas. yams, tapioca and taro. Apart from pigs, animals of the forest such as possums, bandicoots, large lizards. flying foxes and especially snakes are all used as food. The natives collected sago and breadfruit in great amounts, especially for exchanging with the much-desired glass rings. To this end they were unafraid of plunging into the swollen raging river. They look for a couple of suitable logs among the driftwood on the bank, jump on them in order to break them loose, drag them out, fetch vines and bast from the forest and tie the logs together into a square raft, on top of which they attach another construction in which the bundles of sago flour are placed. Then the whole is pushed into the water, one hand holding onto the raft and the other paddling it into the river, rushing down with tremendous speed. They float as far as possible and are carried downstream for quite a distance until they are washed ashore at a bend of the river. Other natives plunge into the water, riding on logs; canoes are not possessed up here. Chattering from the cold, they creep out of the chilly water and, trembling with exhaustion and excitement, approach the camp warning of their enemies in the mountains, who lurk behind the trees armed with bows and arrows and cut off the heads of those they shoot.

The people on this river belong to the same linguistic and cultural group as the inhabitants of the region visited on my exploration westwards [The Abau]. Apparently, there are also connections across the wide plains to the bank of the Sepik, which runs parallel.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Which is what Thurnwald called the August river.

The journey back proceeded quickly. The river had risen even higher and the canoes shot through raging rapids in foaming water piled up with driftwood. Sometimes we covered in half an hour what had taken us almost a day when travelling upstream. Dr. Thurnwald's map indicated he did not get more than 8 kilometres upstream [south] of the August Sepik junction, Craig suggests he may have gone further.

## 3. Thurnwald's first northern exploration: the Hauser and Green Rivers

The first of my two northern explorations started from the Hauser River, whose mouth I found not far downstream of Christmas Camp. The greatest number of settlements in this district is found not on the banks of the broad open Sepik where each house is visible but on this tributary where a settlement can be hidden behind each of its innumerable bends., One must not assume that there are settlements only on the banks of the main river where they can be easily reached. The seclusion of these dwellings afforded the advantage of greater security from the never-ending tribal feuds and [conflicts arising from the frequent] migrations caused by the short life span of buildings.

The Hauser River, which I named thus on account of the many isolated houses on its banks, flows in a west east direction roughly parallel to the October River and must come, like the later, from the Dutch part of New Guinea. It was high water when I navigated it [commencing on February 24<sup>th</sup> 1914] and I could travel for a day and a half in the motorboat. I could have continued the journey even further but preferred to investigate the region north in German territory. Therefore, I turned off into a tributary opening into the left bank that, thanks to high water, I could navigate in the motorboat for another half day. Here the high water had flooded the banks extensively, so that it was difficult to find a place to camp overnight.

An unexpectedly changed picture was revealed the next morning. The boat and canoes appeared to have been swallowed up by the earth. The water had fallen by three metres overnight and they lay below on the dropped water level, from, which logs of driftwood towered like threatening cannons. The river dropped hourly and the boats had to hasten on their journey back in order to be able to slip between the logs and over the sandbanks.

I continued upriver with three canoes and fifteen men. The Green River – so called on account of its clear green water – flows from a northerly direction to begin with, then from the northwest, and finally from the north again.

The weather became hotter and hotter. The dryness of the air, the burning heat of the sun, and the coolness of the nights were remarkable. Soon the mountains [the Border Mountains] became visible. These are the mountains from whose western and northern slopes the Dutch border river — The Tami River — originates. Through rapids, at first over gravel then over oily-smooth rock beds and between mountain slopes, it continued. The water was crystal clear. Even in the deep pools between the rapids, every little stone and fish could be seen. I was astonished to find crocodiles even here.

In the tall forest on the banks, houses were often seen, isolated here as well, according to the custom. Often the tall houses were made more stable by being built beside or on one or two trees. The construction is thus given good support. Quite different are the tree-houses that are often found here and are shelters placed in the treetops. These have a special use – they are erected for hunting animals for food. The natives lie in wait for birds in order to shoot them with bow and arrow, or they set traps for possums.

On the middle course of the Green River, I got a surprise one day. We were punting upstream in the canoes, as usual, when we heard the familiar cry: 'O iabO, o iabe' coming from the dark forest. This is a protestation of friendship, A crowd of natives clambered down the slope armed as usual with bows and arrows and, wading into the water, hurried shouting after the canoes. We stopped and they approached. The surprise was that these people are surprisingly light skinned, of roughly the same shade as is found in the Caroline Islands, on Yap or Ponape; and had brown beard and hair. I offered two white rings and soon they carried up yams and bananas from nearby gardens and thus friendship was sealed through an exchange of presents. I also found many light skinned people among those I met upstream. On the Sepik and October Rivers, I had likewise seen occasional light-skinned people. I could not consider them albinos. It was also out of the question that their skins were a result of ringworm. I can only assume that there had been some sort of foreign infusion in the past.

The attitude of the above-mentioned people also suggested that I was dealing with people of a different disposition. In contrast with the dullness of the inhabitants of the Upper Sepik and of the tributaries flowing west and south of it, the people on the Green River revealed a greater vivacity, curiosity and interest. The status of the women was also noteworthy. They appeared here always together with the men, whilst in other places they were usually hidden or ran away at the approach of strangers. Indeed, on the Hauser River, the roles of the sexes seemed to be exchanged completely. The women initiate the conversations, carry up the sago, yams and tobacco to exchange for the glass rings, with which they decorate the little children. The men stand by and smoke their pipes or are ordered about here and there by their women.

The reception in the next district was of a different kind. Suddenly a man with drawn bow and arrow at the ready was standing in front of a canoe travelling close to the bank and was aiming at us. As I usually did in such situations, I waved to him and showed him a ring. This is unexpected, but indicates the peaceful intentions of the visitor. In this case it resulted in the man relaxing his bow and then smiling confusedly and taking the ring. Thereupon he called to his relatives in the neighbourhood, who soon appeared if somewhat hesitantly. As we travelled on, many more came up and accompanied us, running continually along the river bank. They threw themselves upon the glass rings as though they were gold, like tigers on their prey, and I had to take care in trading that each one got his just reward and that over these valuables they did not strike each other dead before my very eyes. They did not desire the inconspicuous iron goods.

In spite of all the flattery and amiability, it was expedient to keep on one's guard, especially as the next day even more people appeared from the neighbouring district, so that finally over fifty people were staying at the camp. [Carig notes that Thurnwald's map indicates that by this time he was in the Kambriap area]. They all accompanied me on the way back as far as the boundary of their settlements and broke into a wonderful rhythmic howl of farewell which does 'a-u, a-u, au, au,qqqq-uhhh' At the boundary, the others were waiting and brought me further and bid farewell at their borders in the same way.

Apart from the abundance of coconuts, I also found almonds there, which I had not found anywhere else in the interior of New Guinea. The headmen, who usually appear with two wives, seem to have a more influential role here than in other places. The language of the Green River is totally different from that of the upper Sepik. Although the decorations are richer, especially in the use of cassowary and bird-of-paradise feathers, and all objects are more skillfully made, a clear-cut cultural difference is not immediately apparent.

Craig notes that the people of the Upper part of the Green River are Yuri speakers. The Yuri language is an isolate. Languages to the north belong to the Trans-New Guinea phylum, whereas ABAU language of the Sepik mainstream and lower sections of tributaries belong to the Sepik family languages.

### 4. Dr. Thurnwald's second northern exploration: the Yellow River.

My next exploration [in March 1914] led me to another watercourse that I found further downstream from the mouth of the North River, and I followed it towards the northern coastal range. This river with medium current, consists of limy yellow water; therefore I called it the Yellow River. It flows in endless meanders through terraced land crossed by low hills ten to forty metres high and sloping towards the Sepik. If you look northwards from a height near the river these hills are scarcely noticeable. The Yellow River is the easterly branch of tributary, the other branch being further to the west. [This westerly branch is known as the Sand or Kaigu river] It [The Yellow River] forks into two branches, one of which comes directly from the north with cold water [this was the one I followed], whilst the other [the Sibi] comes with warm water from the east and apparently reaches this junction after a wide detour around the mountains through the plains. Both branches have their source in the southern slopes of the Torricelli [Mountains].

The journey upstream in canoes was monotonous. Between high forested banks and sandbars covered with wild sugarcane, then by steep-sloping banks ten to fifteen metres high, close to which the river has cut a channel. Kunai grass as I'd found on my coastal journeys from Marui [Pagwi] to Aitape on the higher ridges, I saw here on the hills but not in significant amounts.

The settlements have quite a different character here. One comes across actual villages with houses built in groups in a defined area. There are particular houses for men, and the houses are not built in the unskilled manner that I discussed above. The buildings, erected on posts one to two meters high, are not particularly artistic but at least they rest upon thick solid supports. The other cultural items are also richer and carved wooden figures and large standing slit gongs are found. The villages do not always lie accessible to the river but are frequently somewhat inland. One can differentiate between lower and upper village groupings that speak different dialects of one language that is also different from that of the Sepik where the Yellow River joins it.<sup>5</sup>

I came upon the inhabitants of the highest village so unexpectedly that they started a howling that sounded in the distance like the howling of native dogs, but the rings had their quick, calming effect here too, so that friendship was promptly established. Finally, they brought a palm frond and counted on it for me 23 sections to signify as many days; after these, I should return. I marvelled that the people could count as high so easily, for on the upper Sepik there is often difficulty going further than three! Whether the number of days was in any way connected with the moon I could not say.

They tried to explain to me some sort of connection between myself, the white shining [shell] rings and the sun and the moon. Whether they look me for the man in the moon, or the son of the sun, or were planning to eat me in three weeks, I do not know. Perhaps my next visit there will clarify this.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Craig: The lower half of the Yellow and Sand Rivers is inhabited by Namie speakers of the Middle-Sepik Sub-Stock of languages; the Abau language of the upper Sepik mainstream is of the Upper-Sepik Sub-Stock, as is the BOUYE language of the upper reaches of the Yellow River.

On the return downstream, the natives were again numerous and brought breadfruit, yams and sago. With 'flags flying' – my lads had hoisted their loin cloths onto the punting poles – we returned to the base camp at [Meander Mountain] and began the journey back to Karadjundo. [the base camp on the lower Sepik]. Everything had gone smoothly and without loss.

The journey home did not proceed very quickly. Contrary to expectations we had only a weak current with us. The rain in the mountains had stopped by now and the water-level was dropping. The north-west and south-east winds seemed to be struggling for dominance. We saw how the north-west wind drove the clouds over the coastal ranges while even at this time [mid-March], the south easterly seemed to be settling down in the Central Highlands. In the land lying between, now one, now the other, got the upper hand. Only below Malu was a stronger current felt.

The strongest current I observed was in January at the Christmas Camp, when the mass of water from the first great rainfall rushed down the river, bringing with it huge amounts of driftwood that often filled the whole width of the river all day and made navigation very dangerous. The rainiest months were December and February. January was clearer and March brought a change and was relatively dry. The rain fell mostly at night; the mornings were usually dull, with the afternoons and evenings bright and clear.

An estimation of the population in the territory visited is difficult. The number of villages and people is frequently under-estimated because many hidden settlements are overlooked and the natives hide themselves at the first appearance of strangers. Only on the journey back, or on repeated visits, were a surprising number of people to be seen.

I can only consider the population seen on the banks of the rivers, but doubtlessly the land between them is not uninhabited. To give a rough number as an indication, I would make the following estimations: October River, 800; West River, 100; Berg [August] River, 400; Lower Hauser River, 500; Green River, 800; Yellow River, 1200. From these estimates, it is obvious that the greater numbers are found north of the Sepik in the direction of the Coastal Ranges. The mountains, although by no means uninhabited, are naturally sparsely populated. On the plains, the numbers seem to rise as one moves east-wards, that is to say the area [the Prince Alexander Mountains] that I found in October last year, to be extremely densely settled. But I must temporarily refrain from giving an estimation of the area between.

The above-mentioned districts are more easily accessible from the banks of the various rivers than from the coast. The means of transport on these rivers must be by canoe for a long time to come. The main stream can always be navigated with motor craft.

As far as the culture of this inland region goes, special investigation must be made. When one thinks of what the interior of the Great Sunda Islands, especially Java, produces, we may also hope in spite of all the differences – the chief one being the quite different workskills of the indigenous population – that the regions of this great interior will not remain unused. As a beginning, timber could be considered as a profit-making venture, for the rivers afford relatively easy means of transportation. Finally, one should not forget that the less humid climate with cool nights is healthier than the coast.

Dr. Thurnwald's final paragraph reflects an explorer's considerations of how his discoveries could be exploited for the benefits of the colony of German New Guinea. Hindsight shows that at the time he wrote these words the world was on the brink of World War 1, which would end the short lived German colonial empire forever. Oblivious to world history that was about to happen, Dr. Thurnwald prepared for his next expedition; to discover the headwaters source of the Sepik River.

# Sepik 2 Chapter 17. Dr. Thurnwald's "Dash to the source of the Sepik River" [ see Maps 4 & 5]

As we saw Dr. Thurnwald's exploration of the October, West, August, Hauser, Green and Yellow Rivers were undertaken during the wet season of 1913/14. Wisely he delayed his journey into the mountains to the Sepik headwaters until the dry season. He described this exploration in his "Dash to the Source of the Sepik River" which was published in Berlin in 1916. Barry Craig arranged the translation from German. The translation is part of the document referenced as Thurnwald 1916: uscngp.com papers 27. Dr. Thurnwald describes his journey thus:

During the European spring and summer months [April to September], the weather on the Sepik is clear and dry. The high mountains in the south, usually covered in mist or cloud, now gleam blue in the sunshine. That was my goal this time – the mountains which up till now have hidden the source of this great river.

The journey to the foot of the mountains was a month and a half away from my main camp [Karadjundo in the lower Sepik], time enough today to go around the world if the most advanced methods of transport are used. But most of this journey had to be carried out in canoes or on foot. I recounted the first part of the journey by boat, as far as Christmas Camp, in my last report [1914].

As my Base Camp for this journey, I chose Meander Mountain, immediately downstream from the mouth of the Yellow River. I could not reach as far upstream with the pinnace and motor boat as I did in 1913, due to the low water level of summer. We therefore had to give up the more comfortable journey in boats several days earlier. Driftwood deposits and gravel banks were present everywhere among the rapids.

The canoes we brought with us were now put to use between the mouths of the October and West Rivers. Many of the men in our company were inexperienced in the use of simple single hulled canoes for, on the coast, canoes with outriggers are used. Other men, coming from the forests inland, were totally unaware and afraid of the water. Based on my last experiences, I had equipped all canoes of my fleet with a construction in the front in order to prevent water streaming into the bows of the canoes in the rapids.

The journey progressed easily enough by paddling or punting as far as the 'Pinnacle Camp' (which I had reached in the pinnace during the high waters of January). From here on the difficulties began. Whilst the river had so far been flowing as a single stream hemmed in by forested banks, it now became wild and disrupted. The water split out into an enormous number of channels, here dividing, there flowing together. In among them, giant islands of boulders and sand were deposited, upon which pitpit [Saccharum spontaneum] spread and young forests sprang up.

The banks are uncertain, for the water tries here and there to break through the old boundaries and washes sand into the forest where white corpses of trees stand out, a sure sign that there the forest is doomed to destruction. Meanwhile in another place, a new forest is springing up on silt deposits. The Islands and channels change their positions with each high water.

The water flows more strongly through this network of branches than further downstream. Here we had to tow the canoes along the bank. Often a tree trunk or the mouth of a channel barred our way and we had to change banks. That was the chief difficulty because of the strong current and the obstacles that usually lurked on the other bank as well. If the canoe met one of the logs stuck in the water or if we failed to hold it with rattan ropes, an accident was certain.

Here great deposits of logs, branches or wood were piled up in the river, having been washed gradually from one deposit to another by flood water. Great tree trunks floated down in the water; tall trees, stuck in the sand stood out of the water like cannon barrels. Sometimes we had to chop the trunks apart with an axe in order to pull the canoes forward; now and then a driftwood deposit obstructed the way so that the canoes had to be unloaded and pulled around empty. Again, and again, a new deposit of wood, a new course of the water of a difficult position of the banks presented exceptional difficulties or set a new problem to be solved. Every maneuver had to be directed, every stroke of the paddles watched. Only when they felt themselves to be continually watched did the men devote the necessary attention to avoid accidents. Every hour was full of tension for the next obstacle and full of concern that the men would use all their strength to execute the necessary maneuvers. In the maze of channels, it was often difficult to maintain one's sense of direction and often one or other of the canoes would get lost.

So, we passed day after day, concentrating our entire attention and all of our strength to get through this monotonous, barren landscape. There were no native settlements anywhere in this vicinity.

A crocodile hunt broke the monotony. My canoe had been driven onto a log in the water and tipped over. We plunged in and were dragging the equipment out, piece by piece, when suddenly a man shouted 'bukbuk he stop long water' (A crocodile is in the water). He had mistaken is at first for a piece of wood among the other trunks and branches.

First panic! Then discussion. Finally, a plan for catching the animal. We prodded the spot with sticks to make sure the crocodile was really sound asleep. A long piece of rattan was fetched, and a noose slipped around the hind leg of the animal. When the man who had attached the noose returned to the river bank, we pulled the monster out. Only then did he wake and start thrashing around with his tail. A few shots killed it and later we had the rare pleasure of roast crocodile, which tastes rather like turtle. Hunting also provided us with the occasional Crown Pigeon, usually present in great numbers. Here and there we got cassowaries, wallabies and wild pigs.

The mountains, often shrouded in mist till late afternoon, seemed to get further and further away, like the apple of Tantalus. Finally, we lost all sense of the distance we had covered and began to doubt our estimations. Imagine my delight, therefore, when I came unexpectedly on the so-called 'Mountain Gate' one midday. Two low hills from ten to thirty metres high, guarded the entrance to the sanctuary of the mountains. The river flowed through a gorge no wider than twenty metres, into a world where it immediately spread itself pretentiously over the inextricable maze of channels that I hoped now lay behind us. It formed a great whirlpool at the foot of the hills as though considering its next step into the wide plain.

Overcoming the river at this point was as difficult as hurrying along with it on the way back. Behind this outer 'Mountain Gate', the hills stood back and we arrived in a basin about ten kilometres wide and thirt-five kilometres long<sup>2</sup>, covered with channels, gravel bars and pitpit. The current was stronger here and therefore there was not so much driftwood piled up.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Tantalus – a mythical Greek king condemned to stand up to his chin in water that receded whenever he stooped to drink; and fruits hung above him which always evaded his grasp.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Craig: Thurnwald's estimate of the extent of this inner basin is exaggerated; it is about 13 kilometres long but he has the width right at about 10 kilometres.

A long narrow gorge, the 'inner Mountain Gate' [Craig: The Zweifel Gorge - named by the joint Dutch-German Border marking expedition of 1910 is just two kilometres west of the present day Yapsie airstrip] led into the heart of the range. The change in altitude was still gradual here, the next line of hills being no more than 150 to 200 metres high. However, at the bends in the river steep cliffs had been cut from the ridges.

Trees and logs were no longer the inconvenience; the difficulties were now of another kind. In a few dozen metres the river rose two, three and even four metres and the canoes had to be hauled through raging rapids with much effort. Sometimes we had first to empty them to pull them forwards. The men stood on flat rocks in the rushing waters, keeping upright with great difficulty, hauling on lengths of rattan or shoving the sides of the canoes. Again we had to unload the canoes on sharp corners and hairpin bends of the river, or where the riverbed was covered with great boulders. Sometimes it was necessary to pull the canoes forward from up on high steep cliffs. Every hesitation or slip by the men wading in the water of climbing on the high wet cliffs above allowed the canoe to be driven back or threatened to smash it against the boulders or cliffs. Only intense devotion to every detail guaranteed our 'luck' in continuing safely.

Every day the valley was wider until it was several hundred metres broad. This basin is similar to that between the inner and outer mountain-gates, but on a smaller scale. Here and there, different-sized tributaries flowed in and it was here that I saw the last sago palms. We had left the coconut and betel nut palms far behind by the vast network of streams. The breadfruit trees, which further downstream grew in great numbers on the inside banks of the river bends, became rarer.

Two native houses stood quite isolated in front of the inner mountain gate. They were the last houses situated on the river bank – cubical buildings erected on five metre high stakes with round roofs like open umbrellas. Further upstream, houses were discovered only on the slopes of the mountains. In the valley the river had carved through the mountains, there were no traces of natives apart from occasional overnight huts, rarely trodden paths, and sparse gardens of bananas, taro, yams, sugarcane and tobacco.

Most notable, however, were the suspension bridges of ratten which spanned the river in narrow places, usually from a projecting rock and often at a height of ten or more metres above the river level. On the other side, a ladder usually led to a carefully secured bridgehead. The suspension bridge itself usually consisted of three lengths of rattan, one of two centimetres thick, woven into a strong rope. At shoulder height, two such ropes were secured to right and left and fastened to the lowed centre rope every metre or so. Thus a kind of net was formed within which the 'tight-rope' walker was steadied when it began to sway at his step. Higher up in the mountains where the distances to be bridged are less, long saplings were chopped down and tied into a narrow bridge scarcely wider than one's foot. However, these bridges were easier and safer to us than the rattan suspension bridges as they do not sway.

Bridges were built because the river rises dramatically after the frequent flooding downpours or rushes down with such speed that it is virtually impossible to cross with rafts, as I observed...on the August River. Naturally canoes are not made by people up here.

The valley narrowed into a gorge, the slopes became steep and sharp so that we had to be on the lookout for flat places to spend the night. The rock walls became higher and only by all manner of mountaineering did we succeed in pulling the canoes forward along the walls if there was no handy sand bank in the middle of the river. The rapids became regular waterfalls and the stones monstrous rocks, between which the water rushed from one rocky

wall to the other in sharp zig-zags. Rapids followed rapids so that it became more and more difficult to pull the canoes through the raging foam.

We passed the point which Professor Schultze reached in 1910 with his Dyaks and their canoes, but I was able to continue my canoe journey for another one and a half days. [Craig notes this was at about 141 degrees 17 minutes east longitude] The faster the current the longer the time it took to get anywhere. Finally, we had practically only rapids in front of us so I decided to end the canoe journey.

Of the five canoes with which I had started out, two had been smashed on the way and a third had drifted off on the very first day after our arrival at this 'Canoe Camp' and got into distress in a whirlpool. However each time we were able to save most of the equipment.

From the 'Canoe Camp' I sent men out immediately to establish food depots. Meanwhile, (21<sup>st</sup> August to 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1914) I set out to investigate the surroundings of of the camp, close to which we found an excellent harbour for the canoes in a small dead channel near a rock wall. A few of my men began cutting a new canoe for the journey back.

Below the camp, a rattan suspension bridge linked two mountain paths. We had passed many of them on our way up here. They were the only sign of human activity apart from a few distant gardens here and there on the mountain slopes. So far we had not seen any people during the whole of the canoe journey into the mountains.

Climbing the 'Moss Mountain' [Mossy Ridge] south of the 'Canoe Camp', I met a few people unexpectedly.<sup>3</sup> They took to their heels and sounded a wooden trumpet as a warning to their people. On various paths I laid out presents of rings knives and beads, but they remained untouched. They fearfully avoided the suspension bridge below the camp ever since I fastened to it a flag made out of bits black red and white calico; it is probably still there today. They preferred to wade through a ford in the raging water far down stream.

'Bamboo Mountain' north of the camp [a southerly ridge of the Drei Zinnen or Three Pinnacles] provided an excellent vantage point. The long valley of the Sepik lay upstream, its ridges drawn forward like curtains as far as the central range, which stretched in an east-west direction some 50 kilometres away. I could see it spread out in the sunshine before me, as though on a relief map.

It was a good thing that I had established advanced depots, for the carriers could not be expected to carry more than 15 kilos of rice or beans in the mountains. In a middle- sized canoe about 10 metres long, manned by four people we could transport seven cases of rice or beans at thirty kilos each, ie. 210 kilos. Four men on foot could carry only 60 kilos. Thus, we were able to carry nearly four times as much in the canoe. That is why I continued with the canoes as far as possible.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1914, I set out on the actual exploration. We could use the river valley only on the first day. We kept to the bank but here too the steep walls forced us several times to wade up to our chests in water against the current. The next day, however, we found ourselves blocked by high walls on both sides of the river and a rocky peak that looked like a ruined castle. We had to make our way upward along a torrential water course full of casuarinas [Craig: Casuarina River/Ok Iugum, flowing from the south into the Sepik and forming the border between the Amtanmin and Unanklimin parishes of the Atbalmin] in order to reach the main valley once more, crossing a mountain top we called 'Snake Mountain' [ the ridge between Casuarina River and the Sepik]. On the way, we came across a

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Craig suggests these may have been people of Wimerapmin or Amtanmin parishes of the Atbalmin

well-trodden native path which petered out in the river valley. Further on, we continued over gravel banks, sticking to weathered, broken slate cliffs, along the slopes, over wet slippery logs bridging torrents and over landslides falling away from slopes that were getting steeper and steeper. The valley got narrower and narrower; the water raged between high walls and over giant rocks. Suddenly we found ourselves at the top of a 100 metre drop, which we had to descend in the rain in order to cross a torrent. Then, on the other side we had to climb a height almost as steep.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> day we reached the last depot [on the 8<sup>th</sup> September in the vicinity of the junction of the Donner (Ok Elip) and the Sepik.] We waded from the left to the right bank and found there an old native overnight hut from which a good path led along the ridge. From there on we preferred to travel along the ridge, working our way along the right bank, Travelling along the ridge had the additional advantage that we could see better where we were going and we had a good view of the area.

The ridge continued upwards. From the valley north of it [Eliptaman], steep ridges 500 to 600 metres high stood out, behind which more peaks rose out of the mist, especially to the north east. In the afternoon as we journeyed south – east, we could see giant, bare rock mountains lying before us at the far end of the valley, rising up in a huge arc swinging around to the south. The slopes of rock of these giants glowed red in the setting sun, like the Dolomites in the Alpine glow. Would we ever reach them? They seemed so far away!

The next day the ridge led us even higher. The ground was covered with layers of moss a metre or so thick. Mossy shreds hung down from the trunks and branches of the trees. We looked through the forest as though through the green curtains of a theatre. We moved forward slowly, each step sinking deep down as though into snow.

We climbed up a mountain torrent coming down from the east between rubble, lost the path, found it again, followed another torrent, climbed across a landslide and reached a half burnt forest. The locals [Sepkialikmin parish of the Telefol] had set fire to the forest to make a garden clearing. Again we had a view to the south and could see that we were already very close to the rocky giants we had seen earlier. After a lengthy reconnoiter, I decided to continue along the spur over a huge ridge lying in front of us.

The last few nights have been very chilly. In the morning the temperature was about 15 degrees C. My carriers got quite cold as they were used to temperatures rarely below 23 degrees C. They did not have much use for the clothes I had distributed earlier but preferred to sit by the fire and burn holes in the tents, rucksacks and shirts. On the summit of the big ridge we crossed shrouded in mist, it was 9.8 degrees C at 6 am.

We descended into a valley [probably Okfektaman] that opened out directly opposite the 'Giants' [Iltigin]. Here we came across a remarkably well trodden path with a large overnight hut nearby. Its roof was covered with pieces of bark and inside was stored firewood, dry moss tinder, rattan ropes for friction fire-making, and bamboo tubes for carrying water – the usual equipment of the huts we came across scattered here and there in the forest. I found several such huts built among the roots of wild ficus trees.

Of the twenty men I had brought along with me from the 'Canoe Camp', I had sent several back one by one as the load of provisions they carried were used up. From here on I kept fifteen carriers so as to feed as few mouths as possible. Further, to stretch out the march to the utmost, I reduced rations to half from now on.

From the new shelter huts and abandoned fireplaces, pig falls, cassowary enclosures, the remains of meals of cooked fruits etc, we concluded that the local people were close by now. Often, we noticed from the remains of the fires that someone had left the spot a short while before. The path along which we climbed was so well used that it suggested a densely populated area.

We came to a comparatively low, broad ridge which reached eastwards as far as the deep gorge the Sepik had cut at the foot of the 'Giants'. A rocky crag, overgrown with ferns, stood 200 metres above the river at the end of the ridge and provided a far-reaching panorama. In front of us to the east stretched a valley some five to ten kilometres broad and about 30 kilometres long. It increased in size at the far end and ends like a hand with finger-like valleys branching out in all directions. Three came from the east [the Sepik Headwaters], one came from the south [the Nong] and one from the north [the Sol]. In the north – east corner the massif of the Victor Emmanuel Range is enthroned with mighty attendants on its northern side. It is separated from the neighbouring high mass of mountains in the south east corner of the valley by the finger shaped valleys. A broad, short valley in the shape of a thumb, rising steeply towards a pass in the south east, cuts into this mountain mass with steep cliffs. We called this rather high southern mass of mountains 'South Block'. It was probably this which D'Albertis saw in the north from the Fly River and gave the name Victor Emmanuel Range. Over time this name has shifted more and more to the north on the maps.

A uniform 300-400 metre high range [the Behrmann Mountains] mark off the southern limits of the valley. Behind this ridge stretches a second row of mountains about 100 to 200 metres higher [The Hindenberg Range – actually around 1000 metres higher] the valley [Nongtaman] enclosed by these two ridges opens out towards the 'Thumb Valley'

Behind the bare foothills of the 'Giant' [the 'Bald Head'}, opposite the 'Steer's Head' on the other side of the Sepik gorge, a broad valley flows in from the west [Ilamtaman]. It winds around to the south-west making a show of the pointed, jagged tops of its diadem-shaped crown in the background. Behind us in the north-west, the valley of the great river [Sepik] slopes down. The mountains that seemed high further down now appear shrunken like dwarfs. Even the valley bed is high up here. Behind the heights around the valley of the great river, mountains tower upon mountains in the west and south.

The view north of the valley was partially blocked by the green walls of the ridge we had been walking along for the past few days. These heights are connected with the outer foothills of the Victor Emmanuel Range. The big valley lying in front of us looked like a moderately-sloping valley bed from afar. But we soon found out that it consists of low, broad waves of hills cut steeply into by watercourses from the north. These flow into the Sepik, which has dug itself into the southern side of the valley. In many spots we saw columns of smoke rising, some in the valley and some on the slopes, a sure sign that we would meet people here. The low forest, bamboo or fern was being burnt. Brown and yellow slopes could be seen, covered with burnt wood or bare, loamy earth.

We climbed down the ridge. The cool air around midday was about 18 to 20 degrees C. Between the scanty bush and the real grass we could stroll along as we do at home on the edge of fields. At intervals we passed through old, tall forest again and crossed deep cut water courses, then climbed up again onto heights overgrown with bamboo, through which the path led on. The thin bamboo stems were so densely packed that we often pushed through them with difficulty, bent double under the stems spread out over the path like pointed gothic arches.

As the path emerged from the bamboo thicket, we found ourselves unexpectedly in front of a village of five houses.<sup>4</sup>. A little boy with a big stomach and a lot of dirt on him eagerly chased after a butterfly. I stood there and waited a long time before he noticed me. He caught sight of me, stared for a minute then ran away with a cry of horror..."

A man, just coming out of a house, fled into the forest howling with fear. The doorways of occupied houses were hastily barred. Behind the village, another man came out of the forest with bow and arrows, stared for a while and rushed back downhill. Deep silence reigned in the circle of village houses. I went up, knocked at the doorways and spoke, putting knives, glass beads and rings – the usual presents - in front of the houses in which I suspected there were people, But in vain; nothing stirred.

Meanwhile, I examined the houses. They were cubical buildings, with walls being three or four metres long and erected on 250mm to 500mm high posts. The walls were fabricated from poles lined up next to each other or from halved saplings. [Craig noted that vertical poles are a feature of the walls of men's houses [tinum-am] whereas vertical split timbers walls are a feature of women's houses [unang-am].

In the front or along the sides there was a narrow verandah for stacking firewood, taro shoots or banana suckers, and the bamboo water containers. One gained entry to the smoke blackened huts through a narrow opening hardly a square metre in area...I went into a few huts that stood empty and had a look inside. In the middle was a square fireplace [above] which was constructed a rack of sticks for hanging up net bags and for drying tobacco leaves, etc. This is customary elsewhere too. Along the walls under the roof were a few bows and arrows, but otherwise the hut was empty. These small huts had the advantage of offering good protection against the cold nights. A fire would be lit in the middle to provide warmth and the people would lie down close together, side by side.

The largest structure of them all was somewhat apart from the others. A hedge of red and yellow-leafed ornamental plants had been grown in front of this...Later I found such spots in other villages up here. The people won't set foot on them. My men were prevented from crossing these places and if I deliberately walked into these places, I was allowed to continue. As I strode up to this place, a little bearded man with bow and arrows stepped out from behind the big house and indicated that I should not approach it. I waved him over to me, however, and walked carefully up to him so as not to give the hesitant fellow a fright, and stretched out my hand to him. Then he did likewise. I was not a little surprised that he looked me in the eyes, as in European fashion, took my right hand and pressed it and added half-questioningly: 'Afino, afin, afino afinka'. As I later found out, this meant roughly 'I friend, you friend, we all friends', a form of greeting which I was from now on to experience every time up here. [Craig: This building with its ornamental plants was almost certainly a sacred place - haus tambaran or cult house. Craig states that nowhere does Thurnwald mention carved and painted door boards [amitung] these are usual on all houses, but particularly on cult houses [Yolim]. Concerning the greeting – Craig notes that with reference to P & A Healey's [Summer Institute of Linguistics] Telefol Dictionary [1977] The closest word found there was finan-in, Finano = fear, be afraid]

To confirm my good intentions by deeds, I wanted to give the man presents. I offered him first a knife, then glass beads, then white rings. But he declined everything with apprehension and withdrew shyly. Scarcely had I approached half a step than he stormed away, yelling; but upon my calling him he stopped again, waved me back, calling out

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Probably an Atemkiakmin parish settlement of the Telefomin.

something to the people hidden in the houses, and disappeared into the bushes. Then the doorway of one of the houses was opened and two young men crept out, one after the other, both unarmed. They came up to me, shook hands with me, smiling in a friendly way, then ran off as fast as they could, happy to have carried out the greeting without coming to any harm. After a while another man and two boys emerged, shook hands with me and charged away after the greeting ritual. I could not attract them back to me either by calling out or by offering presents.

The people were very small but, despite their shyness, seemed intelligent. They wore rattan loops [oltil] wound several times around the hips and the usual [gourd] penis-sheaths [kamen]. Their hair was bound at the back into two long plaits. Many woolly tufts of hair are first bound with two strips of rattan; these are bound into two long plaits with broader rattan strips and then smeared with red clay. [Craig: This type of headdress is called mafum and is a marker of the fourth stage of Telefol male initiation.]

Then I stood alone in the village again waiting for the remaining youths to approach, took photographs and left, as I saw that all my efforts to entice people back were in vain. I made camp for the night further down along the creek.

After we broke camp next morning I noticed that many people followed us. We passed extensive gardens. As we approached these the people yelled at us in great fright. When we climbed a hill the crowd followed us in the distance climbing a neighbouring bare hill. There appeared to be 40 to 50 men armed with bows and arrows, their heads decorated with bird of paradise feathers and cuscus fur. They remained at a distance of several hundred metres. I didn't let myself be disturbed and kept on photographing and examining the landscape. When we continued on, they followed.

After some stopping and calling out, they approached so close that I felt I could risk another attempt at offering presents. Finally, I succeeded in persuading one of them to accept a few rings; then a second and a third man. Now that one or other of them stood there with a white glass ring or with glass beads on his chest, without feeling bewitched, suddenly everyone wanted to have something, and more and more people turned up until I was surrounded by 80 to 100 people. With my fifteen carriers, tired from the long exhausting trek, I was in a situation that called for caution. However I wanted to make use of the opportunity to replenish the scant rations of my team. By appropriate gestures I got the people to bring taro and yams, which they did willingly, they added sugar and tobacco as well.

Then several old headmen came hesitantly up ro me. One of these took the lead and brought us to another village. From there we climbed down along a mountain stream to where the Sepik River frothed between cliffs and boulders, it's waters only 5-10 meters wide. There we made camp in the presence of our guides. [This would have been around the  $16/17^{th}$  September near the bridge that carries the track across the Sepik River between Urapmin and Telefomin.<sup>5</sup>]

There was no end to the amazement when the 'houses' (tents) were conjured into existence and the carriers showed off their warm blankets, the trees fell under the knife and axe, the tin cans were changed into food, and I took off my shoes and clothes (which they thought to be skin) in order to bathe in the 17° Celsius water. We could hardly get them away from the camp. Wasn't this after all rather fabulous for these people who until then had never even heard of the existence of the white men? Into the midst of their normal routines bursts a strange apparition as from another world with inexplicable things, for the comprehension of

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Barry Craig foot note.

which they lacked any foundation or precedents. The appearance of the white man was indeed more unusual than lightening or an earthquake; the spirits of the other world had appeared in person. As we did not carry bows or arrows and they were unaware of our firearms we appeared to be unarmed. We seemed to bring about supernatural effects directly without any other means, by word or deed, like a spirit or a divine entity.

The people sprang ahead of me with branches and wiped over the path with magic gestures. As I was leaving one district, usually combining two or more villages, they asked me to make a circle above my head with a moss sponge full of water and to squeeze out the water whilst facing the district, as if it was being washed clean of an evil spirit in this way. They continually tested their belief in my reality by grasping, pressing and tugging at me; I just hoped they would not try any unexpected experiments with their arrows.

Thus, we moved on, from village to village in close succession. We had left behind the river and its wooden bridge across a narrow spot barely 5 meters across, where the river forces its way between two cliffs. The inhabitants of a district only ever followed us up to their border; on the other side their neighbours stood ready to receive me and thus I was handed from one district to another. We crossed ridges covered with well cultivated gardens and over wide grassy areas with small clumps of trees. Constantly, people turned up from various directions and greeted me with handshakes and the assurance of friendship 'fin,afino'

One evening about 200 men had gathered around my camp. A lot of villages were named and the directions in which they lay were indicated to me. In many places, one could see smoke rising from the cooking fires of the evening meals. To estimate the population of this wide valley would be difficult from my superficial enquiries; my impression was that this mountain tribe has at least 5000 to 6000 people.<sup>6</sup>

The people I met and whose measurements I sometimes took, seldom exceeded the average height of 140-150 cm. They were quite small but looked healthy. I noticed neither ringworm nor grille nor deformities – only coughing and eye diseases. The latter may arise from sitting around the smoky houses in which the fire is kept going for warmth during the cold nights (the thermometer usually registered a low of 12 degrees C. here.) The fact that they have to tolerate the cold at night whilst naked must have a hardening effect on the children but it is also the cause of the widespread coughing. It is not clear whether this is connected with the small stature of these people.

Judging by the relationship between the number of houses and the number of people in a village, a most thorough use is made of the floor space of these little houses for sleeping. These houses shelter 10 to 15 people – men, women and children, who lie about at night in no apparent order, keeping each other warm. Craig observed that men usually sleep in the men's house, only sleeping with the family in the garden houses.

Their bodies may be washed by rain but otherwise not at all. It is not surprising that there are swarms of black fleas. They do not possess blankets; the closest substitutes are the short cassowary pelts which they attach to net bags [tiyaap men] and carry on their backs.

Cultural heritage of this small tribe is limited; apart from bows and arrows, I saw no other weapons<sup>7</sup>. Otherwise, they use stone axes<sup>8</sup>; digging sticks for planting bananas, taro and yam shoots; Bamboo containers; decorative bands set with *coix lacryma* [Job's tears] seeds,

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> This would seem to be an over estimation - Telefomin population probably did not exceed 2,000.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Craig: They also made and used black palm clubs, [bial sanam] stone disc clubs [tingi], shields [atkom], and rattan cuirasses [nam]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Craig: Stone adzes, not axes; two types -fubi [from the west] and mok [from the east]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Craig: Probably sweet potatoes, not yams.

similar to those all the way down the river; many possum and cassowary skins as head decoration; armbands of woven rattan [dangkanok] and the above-mentioned waist-bands [oltil]. There are no coconut or betel [areca] palms, or breadfruit trees. Pottery is unknown. However as for domestic animals, I saw dogs and pigs. There must be many possums and cassowaries. Thus, the diet, all in all is not bad – the well cultivated and extensive gardens demonstrate that.

We found ourselves at the foot of the Victor Emmanuel range. The following day we reached one of the headwaters of the Sepik, here cutting through a deep gorge. Once again we plunged into the forest – layers of moss a metre thick, in which one's feet sinks, are spread across the ground, with thousands of moss veils and streamers festooned from trees like festival garlands.

From a height, we gazed back to the other end from where we entered the basin. The numerous adjoining valleys all invite me to explore; the mountains and passes all invite one to climb them; but that would have been a task for which my provisions were no longer sufficient and which was not envisioned at the beginning of this journey. The decision to return was heard by my fifteen faithful men with more jubilation than it was made by me. [In the 1960s Telefomin elders informed Barry Craig that Thurnwald's most easterly camp was immediately east of the site of the Telefomin Sub District Office. It seems he crossed the Sol River and walked east towards Falamin territory and returned the same day, on 19<sup>th</sup> September 1914]

When I returned through the village areas, people were not exactly delighted with my reappearance. They had hoped to be rid of the dangerous apparition and now here is was again! Brandishing their bows and arrows they stormed after my party with much shouting, deceiving themselves that they were chasing me before them in this way, pretending they had won a victory. But it was enough for me to turn around and the entire howling mob would come to a halt; if I took a few steps towards them, they all raced away as if driven by the Devil. Meanwhile my exhausted, weary carriers stumbled on quietly.

Then the people followed us secretly. When I unexpectedly came into the vicinity of a garden, a great shouting broke out; they apparently feared I would fall upon their garden. However I succeeded in attracting several shouters and gave them presents to bring us taro and sugar cane from their garden. Fear of a stranger brought out emotional reaction after another; they began to dance and jump about with joy, like a puppet on a string. As we continued on our way, an argument began among the people; first the 'Revolutionary' party among them gained ascendancy, then the "Conservatives'. From then on our path through the area was smooth and friendly.

In the evenings, the inhabitants of local villages came up and sat together with my carriers and conversed with them, each party speaking his own language and otherwise making himself understood by signs, bartering things with each other. They offered my carriers arrows and decorative objects, whilst the carriers made them happy by giving them strips of red calico or glass beads.

So, we finally parted from each other in peace and great friendship. On the return journey, I repeatedly shortened our way considerably especially as I could now make full use of the main track which we had discovered late and could avoid the long journey over the ridge. Still, we had to climb 150 metres down a most unpleasant cliff. Exhausting forced marches followed so as not to run out of provisions before arriving at the first depot. That

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Craig: undoubtedly the Sol river.

finally worked out to the last grain of rice! As none of us had any superfluous fat to drag about, our progress was prompt. We found the depot in good condition. We saved ourselves much trekking over ridges by swimming down the wide stretches of river, though we had to be very careful of the boulders and rocks of plunging rapids. Once when a crocodile emerged next to me, I gave up this method of travelling. I had not expected to find any crocodiles so far up in comparatively cold water...

We all hoped to find supplies of rice and beans at the 'Canoe Camp', so as to be able to eat well again. But when we arrived there on the 27<sup>th</sup> September, we were bitterly disappointed. The provisions I had ordered had not come. The men who had been waiting at the 'Canoe camp' had had to look for leaves and fruits – especially a type of fern in the forest – in order to stay alive. They looked as might be expected from such a diet.

What were we to do then? A long way further on, there were some sago palms. Fortunately, I found another tin of cocoa and tins of soup in a trunk, though this was not much for 22 men all-told. We had another two days travelling ahead of us before the life-saving sago palms and those days demanded a great deal of attentiveness to guide the canoes with rattan ropes through the innumerable rapids. But we finally managed. Further down, we had not only sago, but good hunting – a cassowary and a pig were brought in on the same day. We were over the worst!

The canoe newly made there was admittedly rough-hewn, but it was cut from such a large, strong tree that it did not suffer the slightest damage, though it repeatedly struck rocks in the whirlpools. The huge sides made it possible to rush through the one to one and a half metre waves of whirlpools, even at the risk of charging against rocks or tree trunks. Therefore, I used this canoe to

reconnoiter the waterway in advance. So we shot down the valley over rocks and logs. Even so, on this downstream journey we still had to unpack the canoes several times in order to guide them over especially difficult spots.

The inner and outer mountain gates lay behind us but still there was trace of the men who were to have brought the provisions. Again, we found large quantities of sago palms suitable for extracting starch. Whilst my men extracted supplies of sago starch, I undertook a brief survey of the tributary called the Dutchman [Ok Soi], which flows from the west into the upper part of this multi-branched section [of the Sepik]. This river, very broad at the mouth, soon divides into three comparatively small tributaries, probably originating in the nearby mountains.

We continued our journey downstream and managed to emerge from the multibranched river without mishap. We glided downstream on the broad, quiet river. On 6<sup>th</sup> October, we came to the 'Papuan Camp' [Just inside Dutch territory] above the mouth of the West [Nobe] River. There we saw paddles stuck in the sand bank at the edge of the river; there were canoes there. Soon the men appeared; they had made themselves at home there. They had been attacked several times by the natives and had to return once to the Meander Mountain camp with a wounded man. During another attempt [to move upstream] they were again attacked so they didn't dare to venture any further, but barricaded themselves in at the 'Papuan Camp'. It was a kind of natural fortress on a hill, which they fortified still further with felled trees. They had enough to eat so they waited there comfortably with the supplies which we had bitterly missed. Now at last we had rice and beans.

Here I heard the first dark news of the great events which, meanwhile, where rocking the world, I was told 'Master, plenty new, English he calabash him [capture, hold] all ship

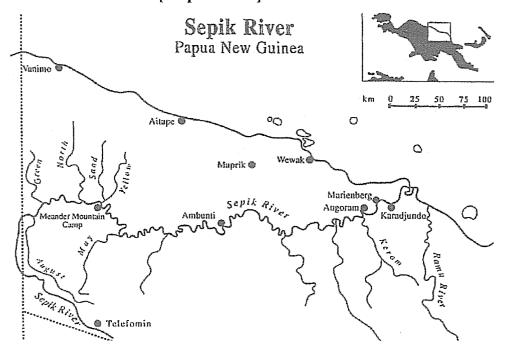
belong German'. At first the significance of this news was lost on me. Did this mean there had been an outbreak of plague or cholera, in Hong Kong or Singapore? Or was it war? Japan against America? Or Germany against England?

So, we set off downstream, past the stretches where my men had trouble with the natives. The inhabitants of the big houses [each capable of sheltering a whole village full of people] had almost entirely disappeared; probably they were hiding in the forest, observing us from the river bank. This time they did not dare to attack because of the presence of a white man. As compensation for the attacks on my men, I restricted myself to taking away some pigs, sago and breadfruit, which had been heaped up for a feast.

On 9<sup>th</sup> October, I finally arrived at Meander Mountain with my whole company safe and sound and learned, in a fragmentary way, what had been happening in Europe.

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Sepik 2 Chapter 18 Dr. Richard Thurnwald's exploration of the North and Sand Rivers and his final surrender. [Maps 3 and 4]



Dr. Richard Thurnwald arrived back to his Meander Mountain camp in the Yellow River area from his Telefomin exploration on 9<sup>th</sup> October 1914. Having just learned of the outbreak of World War 1, he had decisions to make. He now continues his story:

## Exploration of the Sand and North Rivers – arrival of the AN&MEF

The news I received at Meander Mountain was such that I decided immediately to continue my activities according to my original plan. I gave up the idea of penetrating right through to the coast, so as not to fall unexpectedly into the hands of the English. I decided therefore to extend my exploration to the coastal ranges only and to return along the same route.

Last year when I travelled up the Yellow River, I noticed another river almost of the same size flowing into it a few kilometres above its confluence with the Sepik River. I wanted to explore this river [The Sand River, also known as the Kaigu], so I devoted the rest of the month of November [commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> November] to this journey.

In the beginning the water level was high and we proceeded comparatively quietly and easily along the countless windings of the forested banks. The river flowed from the due north through the vast plain between the coastal range and the Sepik River. Later the water level dropped and our canoes were running aground on sand banks. We would punt forward for several hundred metres and suddenly jerk to a halt on sand again; we could not see the bottom through the muddy water. We went on for days like this. We only met a few natives along the banks. Only a long way up the river did a few creeks flow in. The journey became even more difficult; again, and again the canoes had to be pulled over the sand which was becoming more coarsely grained. Finally, I gave up and we proceeded on foot along the bed

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This was on 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> November, just above the junction of the Sand and Kinim [named by Thurston Waldbach or Forest stream].

of the river until we reached the mountains. I climbed up several peaks which provided a view in different directions...

During these forays [19th-21st November 1914] I came across natives, who initially withdrew shyly, but who, the following day, would appear in greater numbers armed with bows and arrows and short spears, wearing woven Cuirasses decorated with cuscus skins and bird feathers. We exchanged gifts and separated in peace.

I commenced the return journey, proceeding very slowly as we continually encountered sand banks. Along the middle reaches of the river large numbers of natives appeared and they provided ample supplies of breadfruit and sago.... Undoubtedly among these people there were some who knew me from my journey up the Yellow River last year and they treated me with friendliness.

I devoted December to exploring the North River. I had myself taken up to the mouth of the river in the pinnace and here embarked into our canoes [13th December]. I went upstream rapidly at first; the banks were quite high and appear dry... with occasional swampy stretches. A few kilometres above the confluence of the North and Sepik Rivers, a tributary flows into the North River [the Horden (Bapi) River] comes almost exactly from the north-west.

After a few lonely days, we reached a densely populated area. Here again I was struck by the number of people with light skins and brown beards. If these and the Green River people were albinos, then the large numbers could only be explained by a long period of inter-breeding which strengthened the spread of albino characteristics among the population. Of course, these lighter variants might also be explainable by racial influences of which we know nothing...

The villages of the natives are situated both on the mountains here and inside the curves of the river. The settlements consist of half a dozen to a dozen houses built on low supports with special men's rooms the type of construction is similar to that found on the Yellow and Sand Rivers, but differs from the communal houses erected on tall poles along the upper course of the main [Sepik] river...the natives here wear basketry cuirasses covering their hips, chest and backs.

Thus, in the middle reaches of the North River we arrived at some hills ... They were of coralline limestone<sup>2</sup> ... the steep slopes are heavily weathered and cleft and often difficult to climb. From these peaks, one gets a splendid panoramic view of the northern coastal range ... and to the great mass of the central ranges of New Guinea to the south. It is a feature of all of the rivers that I discovered here ... that they first break into an extensive network of channels among pebbly reed covered islands after emerging from the mountains onto the plains, and then only many kilometres downstream collect into a single riverbed ... the river banks become lower and closer... Thorny rattan vines grow abundantly in these frequently flooded places and serve as a warning to take care.

A slight rise finally provided a place to set up our "Canoe Camp" [on Christmas Day 1914]. Then we began our journey on foot once more, upstream along the bank of the river. ... We passed several villages and saw many others, with tell-tale coconut palms, on the mountains. Almost every day we got visitors to our camp.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> These are the Yagroner Hills. Craig noted that these hills are locally known as Senu. The people of Upper Senu are Fas speakers. Those in the Lower Senu are Kwomtari speakers.

We forged deep into the mountains where the North River splits into two tributaries. First, we followed the eastern one and a narrow tunnel-like gorge forced us to make a detour over a mountain and back to the stream... Everywhere there were native settlements.

We then went westward obliquely across the range to hit upon another tributary – we followed it downstream for a while and then climber Silvester Mountain. This allowed a wide view. In the south-east the great plain. In the south the central range extends to the high Dutch mountains [The Star Mountains]...

Heavy rains and storms the next day – New Year's Day 1915 – caused me to hasten my return, as my course lay along the river bed and high water could endanger me or even cut off my return. However, we arrived back at the "Canoe Camp" safe and sound and in good spirits. We continued our journey from there in moderately high water. On the way, we received ample provisions from the natives who everywhere appeared quite friendly. I did not need the depot I had set up at the commencement of our journey on the lower reaches of the North River. However, I was not a little astounded to find the depot had vanished!

As it turned out, this was the first greeting the English had sent me. Major Martin [of the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force - ANMEF] had travelled up in his canoe, as I later heard, for the purpose of destroying this depot to cut off my return. He had been told of this by my men. This action at any rate showed "military astuteness and boldness." His intention was to cause me to vanish into the stomachs of the natives! Well the natives had provided me better than that, and thanks to the provisions they offered me, I arrived safely at the main camp at Meander Mountain.

Another surprise was in store for me, for meanwhile war against my expedition had been undertaken with five ships and five hundred men who had succeeded in storming my camp; everything considered not worthwhile removing was chopped into small pieces. Thus, I found myself robbed of my pinnace and boats and deprived of gifts for barter and provisions. I had no choice now but to set out on my return journey down the Sepik by canoe.

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## The quest to capture Dr. Thurnwald.

In late 1914 a story was told by a German Prisoner of War held at Holdsworthy near Sydney, that an armed German 'merchant cruiser' was hiding up the Sepik River. Commander Claude Cumberledge accompanied by Colonel Samuel Petherbridge and members of his 'Tropical Force', proceeded to the Sepik River. The destroyers Yarra and Parramatta were left at the mouth of the river, while Cumberland and Petherbridge, aboard the HMAS Nusa and the HMAS Warrego, proceeded to Catholic Mission at Marienberg. The missionaries there said there was no such German ship on the Sepik. There were only police officer Tafel, a detachment of native police, and medical officer Wolfrum at Angoram. Doctor Richard Thurnwald and his engineer Fieberg conducting scientific and exploratory work hundreds of miles further upstream.

After a trip back to Madang, Cumberledge returned to the Sepik with the four Australian ships to search for Thurnwald, When Commander Cumberledge was warned not to risk his destroyers in unchartered waters, he transferred himself, Major Martin [District Officer from Madang], Lieut Wilson and several natives onto the small *Nusa* and continued upstream and eventually sighted a white boat, One European [Engineer Fieberg] and thirty or forth natives camped nearby. The leader Dr. Thurnwald was reported to be further upstream with a party in canoes. Cumberledge then returned downstream taking the European with him. Major Martin and two police remained at the camp to await and bring back Dr. Thurnwald.



Above: HMAS Nusa. Below: former German colonial yacht at Thurnwald's camp Upper Sepik. December 1914 [AWM H12583 top and AWM H12579 bottom]

Cumberledge and party then returned downstream taking Fiebig with him. Major Martin and two police remained at the camp, but after a week of fruitless waiting for the scientist, Martin had all

the remaining stores loaded onto Thurnwalds launch and two large flat bottomed river boats, and returned downstream to Angoram, leaving Thurnwald, with very few provisions, to make his way 800 miles back to civilization as best he could.

Arriving ignominiously by canoe at Angoram weeks later, Thurnwald found temporary accommodation at the mission [Marienburg?]. He learnt the details of the pillaging of his provisions and equipment, his ethnological notes and crated collections [including ten skulls], trade goods, clothing, medications etc., by Australian military personnel at both his Sepik depots. What was left at the nearby depot of Karadjundo was further ransacked by local natives. However, with some assistance, including that of Father Kirschbaum, Thurnwald was able to retrieve some of the lost items.

Dr. Thurnwald arrived in Madang shortly after, coincidently when the New Guinea Administrator Colonel Petherbridge was visiting. The latter recorded,..."Dr. Thurnwald was in great distress when I saw him and was literally in rags and almost bootless. I instructed the District Officer at Madang to attend to his immediate wants ..." Thurnwald followed up this interview with a formal letter to the Administrator, outlining recent events, making it clear that he was most unhappy at the interruption of his expedition which was scientifically valuable and not in any way of a military nature. He also complained about the pilfering and destruction of his possessions, and lodged an itemized list together with a claim for financial compensation which included 350 pounds for ethnographic items.

**Writer's Note**: – Most of the information in this section is drawn from Barry Craig's 1997 Paper entitled 'The Fate of Thurnwald's Sepik Ethnographic Collections'. Dr. Craig sums up the events following Dr. Thurnwald's being detained by Australian authorities ...

In early 1915, Thurnwald began the campaign to regain possession of his collections, a process that involved a contest between bureaucratic and scientific interests set against a background of enmity for the defeated Germans and assertion of Australian independence from Great Britain". In brief, some of those events are described here:-

Thurnwald and Captain Ogilvy [the new DO, having replaced Martin] established a good rapport, and the German managed to explain to the District Officer the nature and importance of his undertaking, and to get his support. Finally, in March 1915 with a request from Thurnwald for the continuation of his explorations, Ogilvy informed his superiors in Rabaul that he had given Thurnwald permission to reside with the Catholic [German] missionaries at Marienberg. Ogilvy added ..."I am of the opinion that he is a perfectly genuine gentleman, wrapt up (sic) in scientific research work".

This goodwill however wasn't shared by Commander Cumberlege, who took umbrage with Thurnwald's claims and tried to discredit him, strongly denying there had been any looting. This hostile attitude was supported by the Secretary of the Naval Board – consequently Thurnwald only received 25 pounds compensation for the use of his pinnace.

He carried out more cultural research with informants from the Keram River whilst consolidating the remnants of his collections. The ethnographic material commandeered by Major Martin, 52 large crates in total, was stored on the Madang waterfront, evidently in the care of the Nueguinea-Kompanie and with the intention of these crates somehow being shipped back to Germany. Almost a year after his apprehension on the Sepik,

Thurnwald was given approval to depart from New Guinea in November 1915 en route via Sydney to San Francisco in neutral America. In his possession was 40 small boxes. At this stage there is some doubt as to whether the 52 large boxes and the 40 smaller boxes comprised the whole

of Thurnwalds collections. Some evidence suggests two consignments of Sepik ethnographic material, which possibly had been Thurnwalds, were dispatched firstly to Rabaul by DO Ogilvy in 1916, and another consignment forwarded privately to the Australian War Museum in Melbourne at an undisclosed date.

Administrative complexities engulfed the collection of 52 crates still in Madang in 1921, when the Expropriation Board examined the status of the collection, deemed it to be the property of an enemy national and therefore should be confiscated. Others disputed this definition, and argued the collection should be released, to be shipped to Europe as per Thurnwald's request. In August 1921, Administrator Wisdom suggested a comprise – the collection should be sent to the Australian Museum [in Sydney] "... for safe custody, overhaul and inventory" until final decisions were made. It was determined that the volume of the collection was 983 cubic feet, roughly the volume of a modern standard shipping container. Amid this uncertainty, it emerged that 600 of Thurnwald's photographs had been developed in Australia, and copies were to be provided to the Administration.

The collection was finally despatched to Sydney and arrived in late September. [1915] However it was in poor condition, having been ... "ravaged by borer beetles, white ants, cockroaches and silver fish ... all the expedition tags, except about a dozen, were either wholly eaten or indecipherable. The pottery was badly smashed ... etc" Inventories were made, all items were disinfected and destroyed items discarded. Notably there were no stone headed clubs which, it is reasonable to assume, had likely been purloined as souvenirs by military personnel and others.

Considerations of what to do with the collection then took an unexpected turn, with the intervention of the British Colonial Secretary, Winston Churchill. Through the Australian Governor General, he wrote in support of a German government request on behalf of Dr. Thurnwald to have his collection forwarded to Germany. Despite Churchill's plea however, Mr. Lucas of the Expropriation Board was unyielding – under international law, he claimed, the collection belonged to Australia. The question of money entered the debate – who should pay for what, under which circumstances. There followed another round of high level correspondence, again involving Churchill who sent a covering note attached to a German letter containing further detail of the status of the collection to the Governor General in April 1922. With some Australian academic support and that of senior Australian bureaucrats added to the German argument, at the end of August 1923 the Australian Cabinet conditionally approved the return of Thurnwalds collection to Germany.

Understandably the Australian Museum was not happy and tried to retain some of the collection as 'duplicates'. This manoeuvre was unsuccessful, although there is evidence that it may have received some pieces from the collection at a later date. When the collection finally arrived in Berlin in December 1925, the original 52 crates had reduced to 25, with further damage to the contents. The reduction in crate numbers would have been explained, at least in part, by repacking at the Australian Museum. There was also an unsubstantiated report of another batch of 11 crates having been sold to an American Museum by Australians.

Following Dr. Thurnwald's arrival in America in 1916, Marion Melk-Kock's Paper of 2010 'Remembering Bernard Juillerat – Visiting the Banaro after Richard Thurnwald' provides some further scanty information on Thurnwalds collections, with more emphasis on sound recordings, photographs, drawings, sketch maps and linguistic and other field notes, in addition to geological and ethnographic specimens. At the University of California at Berkeley, Thurnwald was embraced by fellow German academics and was invited to deliver lectures. When America entered WW1 in April 1917, Thurnwald was again classified as an enemy national and was obliged to leave the country. Again, he had to leave behind elements of his collections which included "... 47 boxes, 3 boxes with photographs, and seven boxes with notes, as well as valuable maps and collections."

This material then evidently became scattered. Some of it remained with academia and museums in America, some found its way into private collections, was lost in transit, some was finally returned to Germany. Despite 49,000 marks which had been raised for storage and transportation, one consignment of 'ethnographica' [which included photographs and phonographic wax cylinders] which arrived in Berlin in 1922 from San Francisco, had had components stolen, "… apart from 33 mediocre pieces much damaged by moths and worms [which were] declared worthless"

Unfortunately, a complete archive of Richard Thurnwald's work has evidently never been compiled, nor did he ever publish a comprehensive overview of his scientific work on the Sepik River.

## Sepik 2 Chapter 19 Surveying the Kaiser Wilhelmsland land boundaries.

The documentation of Kaiser Wilhelmsland land boundaries can be progressively traced through the German New Guinea annual report entries, which are as follows

**The 1886-87 boundary description ...** in accordance with the agreement with the Imperial Government of Great Britain of 6<sup>th</sup> April 1886<sup>l</sup>. The territories lie between 141° and 160° East Longitude and between the equator and 8° South Latitude...

The 1909-10 Expeditions. The despatch at the end of 1908 of an expedition to survey the German-British border to the south east of Kaiser Wilhelmsland marked the beginning of fixing the land frontiers of the protectorate. The expedition was wound up in the middle of 1909. Unfortunately, the results have been less than satisfactory. The leader of the German border expedition soon became so ill that he had to leave the area without completing the assignment.

The 1910 German-Dutch expedition. On the other side of the Kaiser Wilhelmsland, in the west, A German-Dutch expedition has been at work since February 1910 for the purpose of determining the border there. Here too, extraordinary difficulties have been met with in carrying out the assignment, but have been successfully overcome.

Both expeditions are of great importance for extending our geographical knowledge of Kaiser Wilhelmsland, which has been greatly furthered by a number of voyages up the Kaiserine Augusta River. Particular mention should be made of the voyage of the Peiho with the expedition of the Hamburger Wissenscaftliche Siftung on board, and of the cruiser Cormoran. Observations made so far indicate the population is fairly dense in the country covered by these expeditions.<sup>2</sup>

Writer's Note 1 It was not until 1956 that the Australian administration found it necessary to explore the border country east of the 141° border line with coordinated patrols from Green River and Vanimo patrol posts. See Sepik 4 Chapter 17.

Writer's Note 2 The area of the Kaiser Wilhemsland border with Papua yet to be explored in 1914 would have provided both extraordinary difficulty exploration, and incredible discoveries. Commencing at the western end, the border extends south-south-easterly from where the 5° south line of latitude intersects with the 141° line of longitude. This point is located in the Star Mountains on the slopes of Mt Scorpion 3,386 metres and Mt Capella 3,393 metres. The writer had the incredible experience of a flight from Telefomin, among these peaks and beyond into Irian Jaya in 1967, searching for a crashed MAF Cessna<sup>1</sup>. Mounts Scorpion and Capella were snow clad at that time; a fact which seemed incredible at a location just 5° south of the equator.

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The border line east of the Star mountains passes close to where Dr Thurnwald discovered Telefomin and the source of the Sepik River in 1914. From there the border crosses the Victor Emmanuel Range and the Strickland River to enter the commencement of the densely populated highlands region; the Duna tribal lands [the future Lake Kopiago patrol post area] thence south eastward through Huli tribal lands [the future Tari and Koroba sub districts]. But up until 1914 and a couple of decades afterwards, these were merely lines on maps aimed at dividing the Island in half between Germany and British New Guinea. This border line continued south-south-east through the unexplored central ranges until it reached the 8° south line of latitude. The border then followed this line eastward until it reached the coast and beyond.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Cessna was never found. It presumably flew flown into the Hindenburg wall between Olsobip and Telefomin.

The Kaiser Wilhelmsland/Territory of New Guinea side of the border at that time and through the military and early civil administration was also the borders of the Sepik district [from Dutch New Guinea to approximately the Mt Hagen area, The Madang District [the headwaters of the Ramu River around the where Kainantu would later be established] and the Morobe District as far as the 8° line in the Waria River area.

As the 1909/10 expedition had commenced surveying westward from the coast, so it was logical that the next attempt to map the Kaiser Wihelmsland/Papua border should seek to pick up where that earlier survey was abandoned.

The 1914 Border Expedition and the experiences of Captain Detzner. Captain Hermann Detzner, an army officer, had been sent to New Guinea by the German Government to survey the border between Kaiser Wilhemsland and Papua.



Writer's note. I tried to write this chapter from an English translation of Detzner's 338-page account of his experiences *Vier Jahre unter Kanniblen* published in Berlin in 1920, but found his flowery writing and lack of specific dates, made the task impossible. Happily, the English translation has appended to it several pages with the caption: the following article is from an unknown source, by an unknown author at an unknown date, but is reproduced here for the information of the reader of this English translation... This account provides a succinct account of Captain Detzner's adventures together with occasional commentary from the unknown author's perspective. My reading of Gavin Souter's The Last Unknown 1963, suggests that he also made use of this text. The unknown author wrote:

**Captain Hermann Detzner:** born in Speyer. Austria. He was of small build, charming, vain and a perfect gentleman.

1907-1909 Jola Eross River Expedition in the Cameroons. 1914 Papua New Guinea.

At the outbreak of World War 1 he was in the vicinity of Mt Chapman, near the Papua New Guinea border, checking the 1909 Anglo-German Commission's findings. On returning to Germany after the cease-fire he worked as an Archivist and wrote for Journals.

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Detzner's [1914] party: Konradt [Policeman], 25 native police, 45 carriers, 2 cooks, 1 interpreter. Detzner learned of the outbreak of WW1 at the base camp on the Bubu river near Mt. Chapman, eight days walk to Morobe.

For three and a half months the fatherland has been engaging in war – a war of life and death, and it was immediately clear to me – with its hated rival England, while I had wandered aimlessly in the interior of New Guinea, an Island on the other side of the world.

Detzner knew his duty and decided to attack Nepa [Papuan goldfields. On 11.11.1914 he decided to return to the coast. Instead of retracing their steps they travelled along the Langimar – Watut divide and followed the Watut river to its junction with the Markham. Here they built rafts and floated down the river to the Lutheran mission at Gabmudzug [Nadzab]...

Detzner was not nearly so important figure as he felt himself to be, but his bull-headed chauvinistic behaviour during the war strikes just the right note on which to close the story of Kaiser Wilhelmsland. Long after the Kaiser's flag had been hauled down along the cost it kept flying over savage hamlets in the interior.

The book he published in 1920 leaves the reader in no doubt as to the spirit that animated Detzner. Its title page carries a quotation from one of Rainer Maria Rilke's early poems "The Lay of the Love and Death of Cornet Christopher Rilke"

Be proud; I carry the flag, Be free of care: I carry the flag, Love me: I carry the flag –

The Lay of Christopher Rilke, a cornet in the Austrian Heyster Regiment of Horse during the seventeenth century, epitomizes the self-conscious patriotism that was all the rage in pre-war Germany, and which Detzner, carrying the flag in the Cameroons and later in New Guinea, shared with all his loyal Germanic heart.

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Starting at the mouth of the Waria [River] in March 1914, Detzner worked his way along the border as far as the Watut headwaters, and in October, not realising that war had been declared, he and his German companion Sergeant Konradt, led their party of 200 police and carriers a few miles over the Papuan border near the Lakekamu gold field. News of the war had by then reached the Australian station at Nepa, and when the Australian in charge. Patrol Officer George Chisolm, heard of Detzner's arrival he quickly assembled a party of three miners, three native police and five carriers, and went out to demand the Germans' surrender. Looking down from a distant ridge, and doubtless impressed at its numerical strength, Chisolm decided it would be unsportsmanlike to open fire without warning in case the Germans had not heard of the war. He captured some stragglers and sent the following written message to the camp:

To the officer in charge of the German forces. I have to inform you that war has been declared between Great Britain and Germany on August 4, 14. In order to avoid unnecessary

loss of lives I advise you to come as soon as possible to the Nepa camp at the Lakekamu Goldfield which you will reach after five days march and to surrender there with all your men. You will be treated as an officer and a gentleman. Two native policemen and carriers I took along as prisoners of war,

Chisolm, Officer in charge of The British force.

Cornet Rilke would never have surrendered, and neither did Captain Detzner. He had planned to follow the border as far west as Dutch New Guinea, but then he hurried back to the coast, reaching Morobe station on 24<sup>th</sup> November.

Although the German forces had surrendered, Morobe had not yet been occupied by Australians, and Detzner and Konradt relaxed in the company of two German officials there – Klink, the District Officer and Banik, the Chief of Police. "For the first time in nine months, we could sit at our ease in a European house, cut our unkept beards, and put on white uniforms again."

This interlude did not last long. In early February [1915], Konradt and Banik, both suffering from malaria, were captured at Malolo outstation by an Australian detachment. Detzner and Klink took to the bush and hid near Finschhafen until 15<sup>th</sup> March, when a motor-boat arrived in the harbour. Klink then decided to go to Rabaul and surrender, but Detzner, determined to remain at large as long as possible, took a party of loyal police and carriers – "boys of Kaisa Wilhelm" – into the mountains behind Sattelberg, a cold and foggy Neuendettelsau [mission] station where Christian Keysser and his wife had been working for the best part of twenty years. When natives told him that Detzner was suffering great privation, Dr. Keysser considered it his Christian duty to provide him with food and clothing provided he took no action against the Australian forces.

For the next four years Detzner remained in hiding either high in the mountains around Sattelberg or at another refuge near Death-adder Bay on the coast, or when hiding palled, travel into the interior where he could indulge the fancy that Germany still ruled Kaiser Wilhelmsland.

"Singing our marching song. Ich hab' mich ergben mit Herz und mit Hand, we marched through the Saruwaged [a southern branch of the Finisterres at the base of the Huon Peninsular] where flags made of red and black loin cloths flew over every village," he wrote. One wonders how "Ich hab' mich ergeben" sounded from the throats of Detzner's natives as they toiled up and down the blue Saruwaged, but there can be no doubt that he sang it with feeling: -

I have surrounded myself with heart and With hand to you, land of love and life, My German Fatherland!
My heart is aglow, loyally devoted to you. You land of the free and pious, magnificent Land of Hermann!
O God, raise up my young heart-blood to fresh, Joyful life, to free, pious courage!
Let me gain strength in heart and hand, to Live and to die for the holy Fatherland!

This allusion of the mighty Hermann, who had defeated the legions of Rome in the Westphalian forests, may have held special significance for Detzner, but there were no enemy legions in the forests of the Saruwaged. The closest the enemy came to Detzner was when a Papuan patrol led by Patrol Officer Humphries, passed within fifteen minutes' walk of his hideout at Death-adder Bay. Humphries who replaced Chisolm at Nepa, heard from natives on the Waria that a German had forced them to supply him with food, but he took the culprit to be a German settler on a recruiting expedition.

This is the only point at which Detzner's wanderings can be confirmed by independent testimony. The Neuendettelsau missionaries certainly knew something of his whereabouts, but beyond their rather guarded comments after the war, the only source of information is Detzner himself. If he really did all that he claimed to have done, he could have been the first white man to reach the great unsuspected valleys of the western highlands. The German geographical society at first took Detzner at his own estimation, and awarded him its coveted Nachtigal medal, but after protests by the Neuendetteldau mission this award was revoked.

According to his own account, Detzner made several unsuccessful attempts to reach the neutral territory of Dutch New Guinea by land. The second of these, in 1916, came closest to success: travelling northwest along the upper Markham, he crossed the Bismarck Range and continued in a north-westerly direction along its southern slopes towards what he called "The Hagen Mountains". Before the grumbling of his carriers obliged him to turn back. Detzner estimated that he had the 145th meridian east. The route shown on his map passes the present site of Chimbu [Kundiawa] and goes north-west as far as Kerowagi. "The Hagen Mountains were there before us" he wrote "and the Sepik depression was 200 kilometres away, a distance now too great for us to cover. But I found consolation in the thought that I had penetrated into regions that no white had ever visited...I would like to establish the fact that instead of encountering uninhabitable mountain wildernesses in this region I have discovered a rich agricultural district of wide open valleys, inhabited by natives of a Semitic type, which may be taken to represent the original Papuan stock."

It may be true – as one Lutheran, the Rev. F.O.Theile, has said – that Detzner's book was "so much fiction, and cannot be taken as a reliable record of anything." The awkward fact remains, however, that valleys he described in 1920 were actually discovered in the early 1930s. Certainly his description of them was vaguer than one would have expected from a surveyor. The drawings that illustrated his book are of Kukukuku natives rather than the distinctive Wahgi people, whom he would have seen had he reached Kerowagi and his estimates of the native population fell short of the numbers later discovered. But perhaps the most telling argument against Detzner's claim is that none of the natives contacted in the 1930s along his alleged route had ever seen a white man before. Far from being forgotten, the first sight of a white man was actually remembered and preserved in story. When Europeans first reached the Upper Sepik by way of the western highlands, for example, they found that the natives there could describe in detail the arrival by river of the Behrmann expedition in 1913. But there were no such memories near Chimbu.

In all probability Detzner based much of his book upon conversations he had with Lutheran explorers, and upon his own glimpses of distant grass country. It is not unlikely that from the peaks of the Watut-Langemar region he looked north-west and saw some of the grasslands south and southeast of Kainantu. The Lutherans may have known full well that he did not reach the western highlands, but if any of them had broken the oath of neutrality by helping him they would not have been able to speak candidly without admitting their breach of faith. This would have explained the bitterness that existed between Detzner and the Neuendettelsau mission, which was rightly proud of their own exploring achievements.

Even though he must be denied credit for having been the first to penetrate the highland valleys, it is difficult not to feel some admiration for Detzner's quixotic years of defiance and self-denial. "Masta" his long-suffering native police used to say "Em tru I ting bik-pela pait I ting long taim pinis." [I think the war has been over for a long time]. But for four years the hiding and marching continued. "A few newspaper pages blown in [presumably from Sattelberg] brought encouraging news of the brilliant defeat of Rumania," wrote Detzner, "of the success of the U-boats, but also of the enemy's hopes for massive help from America. There is no sign of an end to it." Backwards and forwards he travelled through his private German domain, singing *Ich hab' mich ergeben* and showing the flag. "The German flag waves everywhere," he wrote "It greets us when we

march into the high mountain villages, and waves goodbye when we leave...the whole New Guinea interior seems predestined for the German way of life, for the three main colours that the Papuans use to adorn their skins at festival times or during battle are the colours of the German flag."

At last, a long-awaited messenger arrived from Sattelberg...the war was over. Next day, Detzner received a letter from Sattelberg, confirming the news. "Certainty" he wrote "Peace! Back to people of similar mind. Once more to be able to talk and to be spoken to in one's native tongue! It is too much all at once.

On 21<sup>st</sup> November 1918 Detzner sent a letter to Finschhafen, announcing his presence to the Australian authorities, and was ordered by the district officer, Captain M.J.Dillany, to come in and surrender. As he prepared to leave Sattelberg dressed in his carefully preserved white uniform and sun helmet, a young native girl [so Detzner wrote] handed him a purse of silver coins and delivered the following improbably speech:

"Accept this little sum and take it to the big man in Germany who takes care of us all. Tell him it is our modest contribution to a monument to be erected to all the German warriors who fell on the field of battle after having fought and suffered not only for white Germans, but for us coloured Germans too,"

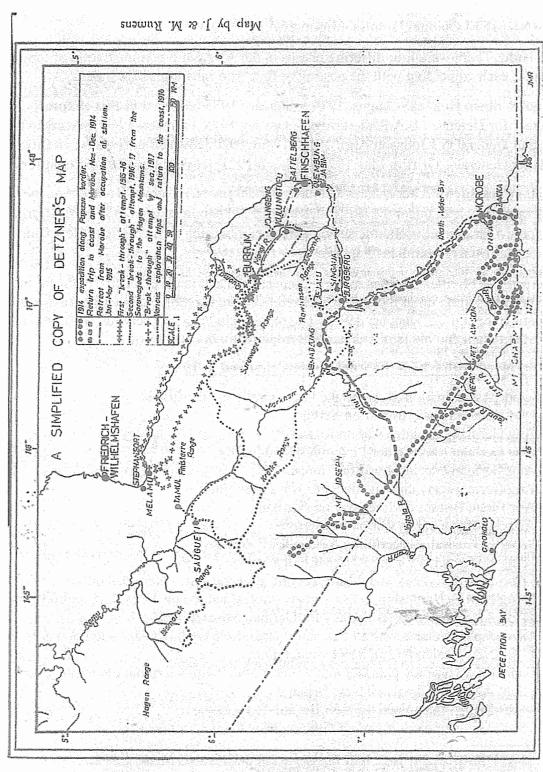
At first Detzner refused to believe the Kaiser had fled to Holland and that revolution had broken out in Germany, but at Morobe to which he was taken from Finschhafen, he was shown telegraphic messages which convinced him that Central Powers had collapsed completely. From Morobe he was taken to Rabaul. The Administrator Major-General G.J.Johnson, at first allowed Detzner to continue wearing his uniform, but later withdrew permission on the grounds that, because feeling against Germany was still high, he could not guarantee that Detzner's uniform would not be insulted. Otherwise Detzner was treated well in Rabaul and on the ship, that eventually took him to Sydney, where he was interned briefly, before being repatriated to Germany. "Soon after we left Rabaul" he wrote "some of the Australian officers going on leave asked me to have a drink with them in the smoker before the gong sounded for lunch."

Captain Detzner concluded his book with a characteristic peroration ["Do you realise, German people – yes you must! – that on material grounds you must recover the colonies that were taken from you...?"] But the Germans did not return to New Guinea.

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**Detzner's concluding admission<sup>3</sup>:** I wish to state that my book Vier Jahre unter Kannibalen contains a number of misrepresentations regarding my journeys in New Guinea. The book in question is a scientific report in part only: it is primarily a fictional account of my experiences in New Guinea and owes its existence to the unusual circumstances prevailing in Germany at the time of my return. Some of the journeys I had actually undertaken were not described at all, on the other hand, it contains passages which do not correspond with facts.

Thus in 1914, during my attempt to cross Kaiser Wilhelmsland from East to West, I did not reach Mt Joseph. The attempted break through attempts did not take place. I ascended the Saruwageds not in 1915, but in 1916 and not alone [when I wrote my book, I thought it best not to reveal this fact]. I have deposited a corrected version of my book in the library of the Geographical Society. Sections which have not been struck out or corrected I hold to be true... Detzner's statement was followed by a brief announcement that he had earlier resigned from the Geographical Society.



JONEMAL OF THE PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA SOCIETY

# **End Notes Chapter 19**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> P. Sack and D.Clark – ed & translation German New Guinea The Annual Reports Academy Press Brisbane 1978.

Annual Report – 1886-87 P 3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> P. Sack and D.Clark 1978 Annual report 1909-10 P 305

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> P.Biscup – Hermann Detzner: New Guinea's First Coast watcher. Journal of the Papua and New Guinea Society Vol 2 No 1 1968 Page 21 quoting *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft fuer Erdkunde 1932 page 307-8* 

# Sepik 2 Chapter 20 World War 1 and the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force [AN&MEF] Colonel Holmes administration 1914-1915

Writer's Note: There were four differing phases in the AN&MEF administration of former German New Guinea, each coinciding with the posting of four Administrators. They were:

- Colonel William Holmes August 1914 to January 1915 [covered in this chapter]
- Secretary for Defence S.A.Petherbridge January 1915 January 1918 [See next chapter]
- Brigadier General G.J.Johnson April 1918 to May 1920 [covered in the next chapter]
- Brigadier General T.Griffith May 1920 to March 1921. [covered in the next chapter]

<u>Introductory comment</u>. After a shaky beginning under the Neu Guinea Kompagnie, the German New Guinea colony had, under the skilled leadership and administration of Governor Dr. Albert Hahl, become a far greater economic success than neighbouring former British New Guinea, which by then was known as Australian "Papua".

In early 1914, after 18 years in New Guinea, Dr. Hahl made extensive plans for the exploration and opening up of the colony's interior, before handing over as Governor to Johann Karl Emil Eduard Haber on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1914,<sup>1</sup> The plans included a self-serving<sup>1</sup> focus on health care for natives. Dr. Hahl and his family departed for Germany in April 1914.

## The speed with which the world events changed in 1914<sup>2</sup>:

- 28 June Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria.
- 28 July Austria declares war on Serbia
- 1 Aug Germany declares war on Russia
- 2 Aug German troops enter Luxemburg and France
- 3 Aug Germany declares war on France.
- 4 Aug Germany invades and declares war on Belgium
- 4 Aug Great Britain declares war on Germany
- 5 Aug Austria declares war on Russia
- 10 Aug In Australia recruiting for the A.I.F. opens.
- 11 Aug Enlistments for the AN&MEF begins.
- 12 Aug HMAS Sydney and destroyers raid Blanche Bay New Britain
- 12 Aug H.M.S. Hampshire puts German wireless station on Yap Isl. [Carolines] out of action.
- 19 Aug AN&MEF departs Sydney for German New Guinea.
- 23 Aug Japan declares war on Germany. Japanese navy blockades and bombards Tsingtao<sup>2</sup>.
- 30 Aug New Zealand occupies German Samoa.
- 9 Sept HMAS Sydney puts German wireless station on Nauru out of action.
- 11 Sept AN&MEF lands on New Britain.
- 13 Sept British flag raised on New Britain
- 17 Sept Terms of capitulation of German New Guinea signed.

The 1914 assessment of military risk of the German presence in the Pacific. The assessment involved a combination of three closely linked elements.

#1 The German Pacific squadron. At the beginning of the war the squadron consisted of cruisers: *Scharnhost* [the flagship of Rear-Admiral von Spee], *Gneisanau*, *Ebden*, *Leipeig* and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "Self-serving" in that New Guinea's plantation based economy required a huge, strong and healthy labour source. Land and Labour were key colonial assets to be exploited to sustain the colony's economic development

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Wikipedia: In 1897 Germany occupied Tsingtao in Shandong Province – China. 1898 China granted the Kiatschou Bay Concession to Germany. Germany fortified and occupied Tsingtao as a German Colony until 1914.

*Nurnberg* together with the smaller cruisers *Cormoran* and *Geier*. A formidable opponent to the Australian Navy<sup>3</sup>.

#2 Strategic nature of German possessions in the Pacific. Australia suspected Germany's real purpose in New Guinea was to build up her power in the Pacific. New Guinea gave her a base within easy steaming distance of Australia. Her next strategic requirement would be a base within striking distance of New Zealand. It was argued that she acquired that in 1900 when Germany gained control of Samoa.

In the north Pacific in 1897 Germany occupied Tsingtao on the Chinese coast, and established a naval base there. Then, in 1899, Germany purchased the Caroline, Marshall, Pelew and Mariana Islands, which formed a connecting link between Tsingtao and New Guinea and Samoa. Apart from military bases, given the dependence on the shipping of the day on coal, these territories provided the capacity for strategically located coaling stations across the Pacific.

#3 Wireless Stations. Germany's strategic position in the Pacific was greatly strengthened by its chain of wireless stations at Samoa, Nauru, New Guinea. Yap, Angaur [Om Palau Island] and the naval base at Tsingtao. This put the German Pacific outposts in direct touch with Berlin.<sup>4</sup> It was not surprising, therefore, that on 6<sup>th</sup> August, two days after Great Britain declared war on Germany, that the British Secretary of State sent a cypher telegram to the Governor General in Australia. The telegram said, in part:

If your Ministers desire and feel themselves able to seize German wireless stations at Yap in the Marshalls, [Yap Island is in the Carolines, not the Marshalls] Nauru and New Guinea, we should feel that it was a great and urgent Imperial service. You will however realise that any territory now occupied will be at the disposal of the Imperial Government for purposes of an ultimate settlement at the end of the war. Other dominions will act in a similar way on the same understanding, in particular, suggestion is being made to New Zealand in regard to Samoa.<sup>5</sup>

<u>The Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force.</u> With remarkable speed, by 10<sup>th</sup> August, enlistment began for the AN&MEF – six companies of the Royal Naval Reserve and a battalion of Infantry. They boarded the ferry-steamer *Berrima* at Cockatoo Isl. Sydney Harbour and departed for New Guinea on 18<sup>th</sup> August 1914. Tye expeditions main purpose was to destroy German wireless stations, to garrison Rabaul and Herbertshohe [Kokopo] and occupy Angaur, Yap and Nauru.<sup>6</sup>

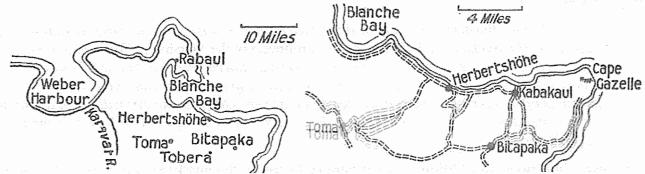


The Officer in charge of the AN&MEF was Colonel William Holmes, a Boer War veteran. Their route took them to Palm Island off Townsville for military exercises, then into Port Moresby followed by a rendezvous off Rossel Island in the Louisiade Archipelago before proceeding to New Britain. Other ships that joined the *Berrima* on this voyage were the *Sydney, Kanowna*<sup>3</sup>, *Encounter, Melbourne, Aorangi, Upolu, Australia, Protector, Submarines AE1 and AE 2, Parramatta, Warrego, Yarra, Star of England, hospital ship Grantala* and the French vessel *Montcalm*. <sup>7</sup>.

<u>The situation in German New Guinea at the outbreak of war.</u> On 5<sup>th</sup> August, a message was received in Rabaul that war had broken out. The message was received by the Bitapaka wireless station, which was still under construction, but which functioned by using a temporary wireless mast. The message had come via Nauru.

Governor Haber did not receive this news until 11<sup>th</sup> August; he had been on a visit of inspection to mainland New Guinea. At Morobe, it was the Captain of the *Komet* that passed on the news as well as information that two British cruisers were nearby. Haber left that night on the *Komet* for Rabaul. He landed at Matupit at 3.45am 14<sup>th</sup> August. He learned that on the 12<sup>th</sup>, landing parties from Australian destroyers destroyed the telephone system at Rabaul and Herbertshohe and made inquiries as to the location of the wireless station. No information had been given about the location.

Haber learned that the seat of Government had been moved as soon as the outbreak of war had been known, to Toma – inland of Herbertshohe. Haber immediately set out overland for Toma.



Maps copied from Pages 38 and 43 of Official History of Australia in the war of 1914-18 Vol 10

German New Guinea had neither a standing army nor any force constituted to resist invasion. The Governor, just days before the declaration of war, received powers to call up for active service, men belonging to the reserve. When all available reservists in New Britain had been called up, the armed force of the Protectorate consisted of two officers of the German Army active list, seven *Landwehr* [Militia] officers and fifty-two NCO and men plus 240 native soldiers. They were positioned as follows

Bitapaka wireless station: Code name Bebra - 8 white and 60 native soldiers under Capt. Wuchert.

Hertertshohe: Code name Luttich – 10 white and 140 native soldiers under Lieut. Mayer.

Toma and its approaches: [numbers not specified] Code name Samoa

Vunadidir Observation post: 8 white soldiers

**Observation post NW of Herbertshohe:** 2 white and 6 native soldiers.

**Bitapaka wireless station.** While the Australian was in Port Moresby, fifty men were transferred from the naval unit on *Berrima* to the *Sydney* in preparation for an assault on Bitapaka Wireless station. On 11<sup>th</sup> September 1914 the Sydney send a party ashore at Herbertshohe with a letter from Rear Admiral George Patey, addressed to the Governor, politely inquiring whether he intended to surrender control of the colony. The acting Governor was not there, so the letter was given to a

<sup>3</sup> The Kanowna was sent back to Townsville when the firemen mutinied after the ship left Port Moresby en route Rossel

civilian to deliver. Meanwhile the German flag was replaced with the Union Jack on the District Office flag pole at about 7.30 am 11 September 1914.

Australian troops under Sub Lieut. C.Webber landed at Herbertshohe and advanced inland on the Toma road. Lieut. Bowen and his party landed at Kabakaul Bay and advanced inland towards Bitapaka. Three Germans were quickly captured and taken back to Kabakaul with a message to send reinforcements. Able Seaman Williams was shot from the bush. He is believed to be the first Australian to be killed in World War 1. In all two Australian officers and four men were killed with one officer and three men wounded<sup>10</sup> in the capture of Bitapaka. On the German side one White NCO and approximately thirty native soldiers were reported killed.<sup>11</sup> On 15<sup>th</sup> September submarine A.E.1 was lost at sea with all hands off New Britain – the wreck has found in December 2017.

#### The terms of capitulation

On 12 September *HMAS Melbourne* arrived in Blanche Bay and reported that on the 9<sup>th</sup> she had destroyed the wireless station of Nauru. At 3.00 pm 13 September, the British Flag was hoisted in Rabaul. The terms of capitulation of New Guinea were signed at Herbertshohe on 17 September.

The terms of capitulation specified that the military occupant was not the sovereign power. There was only limited power to make legal and administrative changes. Germans of the civil administration, after taking the oath of neutrality were to be released to return home of to stay in their own positions on their old salary to keep the peace and look after the settlers. Business men and planters who took the oath could remain in business.

As Holmes believed German New Guinea would become a British colony he saw it as his duty to ensure as little damage as possible, and with as interference as possible with existing customs and methods of administration and with trade and commerce. He wanted German residents to continue their vocations in a peaceful way.<sup>12</sup>

The Cox Affair The 1914-1921 Administration of German New Guinea might have been far more effective had it not been for the bad relations between European Planters and the Australian Wesleyan Mission in New Guinea. The immediate accusations related to the missionaries encouraging plantation labour to desert. Irrespective of the truth or otherwise of that accusation, it was quite clear that the Australian Methodists<sup>4</sup> did set their indigenous clientele against the Germans. The head of the mission was Reverend William Henry Cox, a Briton who had taken the oath of neutrality before the German administration and had therefore been allowed to go free. This did not prevent him making himself available to the Australians when they arrived and revealing German military secrets. Although the specific details were not known, rumours were sufficient to provoke some plantation owners and one evening, while drunk they lay in wait for Cox and beat him up.

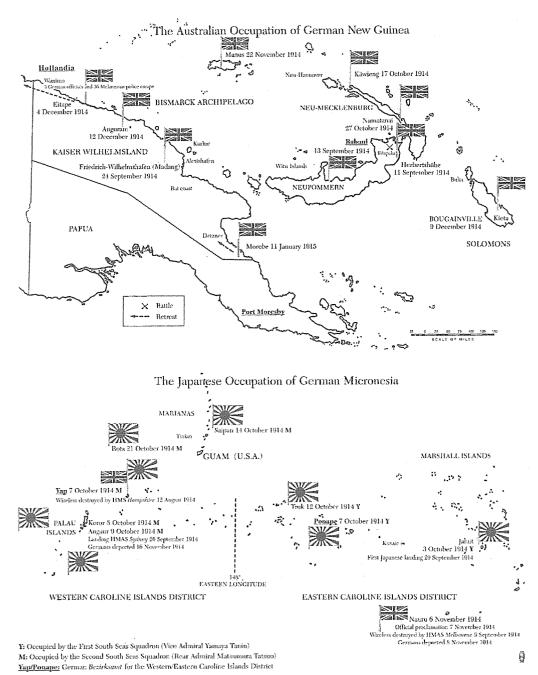
Holmes, who was now the Administrator of former German New Guinea, upon hearing of this, ordered a public whipping of the four offenders on 30 November 1914. On his express orders, all German men in Rabaul had to attend. The missionaries were invited to attend and all the Australian occupation troops were there with bayonets fixed and arms presented. The Union Jack was hoisted, the national anthem was sung and three cheers were given for the king. Then the punishment was administered<sup>5</sup>. The accused were secured by manacles and leg irons and unable to move received twenty-five or thirty lashes of the whip.

The day after the whippings every German official who had agreed to remain in the Australian service under the terms of capitulation, resigned<sup>13</sup>. While it is difficult to imagine how

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The *Wesleyan* Church is one of several branches of *Methodism* that parted ways with mainline *Methodists* in the mid-19th century, due to disagreements ...Wikipedia

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Two other accused, one a Belgian, were whipped on 5<sup>th</sup> December 1914

Australians and Germans could have successfully worked together, given the terrible news for both sides that would soon be coming out of the Western Front, the fact remains that the Cox incident denied the AN&MEF men with 30 years of New Guinea experience and local networks. As German law was to be administered until the war's end, such experience would have been of extreme value.



Maps copied from H.J.Hiery's The Neglected War Pages 46 & 48

Although the executive and administrative authority in the protectorate had passed into British hands, to constitute effective military occupation in accordance with international law it was necessary for the AN&MEF to actually take possession and establish its authority throughout the Protectorate. <sup>14</sup> North of the equator, by this time, Japan was doing just that.

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As described below, Madang surrendered on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1914. Among the instructions given by Holmes, before leaving Madang to Major Martin [officer in charge of the Madang Garrison] were to secure the arrest of principle German officials and to construct defences against boat landings.

One of the ships against which such defences were to be provided was at that moment actually hiding at Port Alexis [Alexishafen – just 12 miles away from Madang]. This was the converted merchantman *Cormoran*<sup>6</sup>, which had on 10 August, been sent by Rear Admiral von Spee to raid Australian commercial shipping. It was to Alexishafen that the Madang District Officer had fled when the AN&MEF had arrived.

Cormoran sailed the same day for Yap, where on the night of 29<sup>th</sup> September she embarked most of the garrison with the intention of making a surprise attack on the Australians at Madang. With this purpose, on 30<sup>th</sup> September she departed Yap for Alexishafen. The planned attack on Madang did not eventuate. It was understood that the commander of the Cormoran was dissuaded by the District officer that, as the Governor had capitulated, the German residents would have to bear the consequences of any breach of the terms of the capitulation.<sup>15</sup>

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## Extracts AN&MEF Lieut. Clarence Hansby Read's Diary.

The following first-hand descriptions are included here, firstly to describe how a recently enlisted young Australian officer experienced German New Guinea, but also to show what the German settlers, after taking oaths of neutrality, endured while dealing with AN&MEF personnel.

- 23 September 1914 The *Berrima, Sydney, Encounter* and *Montcalm* sailed for Frederich Wilhelmshafen [Madang]. Under the threat of the ships' guns the town surrendered. Lieut. Read was included in the garrison of 172 that disembarked in Madang. Their duty was to take charge of all boats and regulate all shipping trade to the port. With the garrison in place the Australian ships returned to Rabaul
- On 25 September 1914 at Mr. Hoffmann's plantation a 40ft boat, the Lili, was commandeered. Its engine had been disabled so the jib and mizzen were hoisted and it was sailed back to Madang.
- By 29 September' 1914 the Madang police detachment was under garrison control. The decision was taken to give them back the rifles and swords which had been confiscated when Madang was occupied. NCOs were appointed from within their ranks.
- On 1 October 1914 at Siar Island an immense mission bell was commandeered to be taken and installed in Rushcutter's Bay, Sydney.
- **On 4 Octobe**r **1914**, there was a church parade at which German Father Ricken officiated for the Catholics and Major Martin conducted the service for the Protestants.
- On 9 October 1914, Major Martin, officer in charge of the Madang garrison, learned that the consent of the government [now his responsibility] was required to approve marriage ceremonies. He was soon to find that divorces were almost as common as marriages.
- On 10 October 1914 took an armed party in the Lili to the Alexishafen Catholic Mission station. ...raised a white flag being desirous of a peaceful entry...formed the opinion that almost the whole district was controlled by the Catholic Mission. There was a very fine machinery plant and a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> The Cormoran was originally the Raison, a Russian vessel captured by the Ebden shortly after the outbreak of war.

small army of boat builders there... took possession of about thirty rifles and shot guns and a motor launch called Ramu. The Fathers at Alexishafen were... "most hospitable."

On 12 October 1914 at Kranket Island the AN&MEF took possession [by permission of Rev. Blumin] of a church organ for the AN&MEF church services. Lieut Read noted of his work:

It is mighty hard work trying to make the German residents understand our requests, and the continuous waving of arms and nodding of heads, facial contortions and anxious expressions are very laughable [when it is all over]. While it lasts one perspires copiously and feels like a fired shell – liable to explode at any minute...

17 October 1914 – To Alexishafen to arrest three Brothers of the mission, accused of ill-treating a Manila man in their employ. The victim came with us to identify the offenders. At first the Brother in charge refused our demands, but when he saw our rifles and determined attitude that we meant business he caved in and our passenger list was increased by five for the return trip. It seemed rather ungrateful to make a hostile entry after their kindness last week – but What do you do? The brothers were cautioned against a repetition of the offence and the matter was closed...

I am afraid we have all become ...kleptolunatics. [kleptomaniacs?] We see an article which just suits the needs of the garrison and we take possession thereof...We found a nice whaler this afternoon...in our usual lordly way we tore a leaf from our notebook and gave a receipt for it... My particular penchant is boats and I no sooner clap my eyes on a suitable craft than I clap my hands on also: - ergo, exit boat...

- 21 October 1914...at Alexishafen...the Major made enquiries into the case of a native who had been well neigh hacked to pieces by savages at Dampier [Karkar] Island...we will despatch a punitive expedition, as having taken over the Government of Deutsch New Guinea it becomes our duty to punish evil doers. Bragge Note. Bad weather intervened and the diary does not indicate whether the punitive expedition eventuated.
- **1 November 1914** *Yesterday afternoon the garrison held a water carnival the 200-yards handicap was won by Bragg of H company.*<sup>7</sup>
- 17 November 1914 While at Alexishafen I had a novel experience. The natives of Sek Island have been making "alaruins & excursions" into the hills on the mainland. Their objective was two-fold, they much desired some meris who had taken their fancy and they were in need of food...It was my unpleasant duty to remonstrate with them and to point out that the British King was now the "big fella chief", they must obey his orders. My beardless face did not impress them very much; they said I was only a "child"; but when I lit a match and threatened to burn their "devil house" down about their ears they were much more disposed to listen…we left with good wishes on either side.
- **22 November 1914**... The Father Superior was ordered by the Major to have the Gabriel come to Alexishafen for use by the troops. This was ignored. Last night I issued an ultimatum to him, the last part of which read:

Failing its appearance in Alexishafen by 5 o'clock on Wednesday morning next, I will be compelled to shut down your works. Please advise your workmen that anyone attempting to enter the workshop after 6 pm Tuesday is liable to be shot.

27 November 1914...on the south side of Dampier [Karkar] Island...we noticed a large sailing boat coming in our direction...a European sat in the stern sheets. This proved to be Herr Schmidt, whose plantation was raided a few weeks ago. Herr Schmidt was wounded by an arrow and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Private Harold Leslie Bragg - a relative of the writer – both descended from convicts William Bragg and Ann Rumsby

one of his boys was murderously hacked by a tomahawk and subsequently died of his injuries. Herr Schmidt came aboard and piloted us through the reef. He took us to the missionary's house and we arranged temporary use of his [the missionary's] launch, which will henceforth be called Rheno. Ate dinner with the missionaries.

28 November 1914...Now having four vessels at our disposal – Lili, Davapia, Witu and Rheno, the Major decided to send an expedition to the north coast and investigate matters at Aitape 260 miles away. Lieut Read was in charge of the sea leg of this expedition... The Gabriel was captured at Potsdamhafen on 3 December. In Lieut. Read's words. The Gabriel...resembles Noah's Ark, being extremely top heavy. On 30<sup>th</sup> December, he corrected his first impressions: the Gabriel...is not so bad after all, for, although she carries plenty of top hamper, she behaves very well at sea.

The stores and passengers were loaded from Lili, Davapia and Rheno onto the Gabriel. The three vessels then returned to Madang, while the Gabriel continued on to Aitape via Dalmanhafen [Wewak]. On 4 December, the Gabriel anchored off Aitape and stores were offloaded for the garrison which will consist of Captain Morrison, Lieut. Chambers and 50 infantrymen.

On 6 December 1914 at Dalmanhafen the oath of neutrality was administered to Father Prefect [Limbrock] and another Father, who had been the captain of the Gabriel [Father Loerks]. Three hours after leaving Dalmanhafen the Warrego and Parramatta were met as they set off up the Sepik River in search of a reported German raider hidden somewhere upstream.



Australian War Memorial Ploto – flag raising Angoram 16/12/1914

On 14 December 1914 HMAS Warrego, Paramatta, Yarra and Nusa departed from Madang

for the Sepik River and on the 16<sup>th</sup> December1914 landed Lieut. Chambers, late of Aitape garrison and 12 native police landed to establish the Angoram garrison and raise the Union Jack. They pursued and arrested German Police Master Tafel and about thirty native police who fled the station<sup>16</sup>.

On 20 December 1914 Lieut. Read was back in the Wewak area where at Boram he administered the oath of neutrality to the Boram plantation owner Mr. Kempten. The same was done

at Karawop plantation. Next day they visited Ali Island after visiting various mission stations on the way. Lieut. Read noted.

Without touching on the religious aspect, I would like to say...the native communities under Mission influence are a thousand times cleaner and healthier than those continuing their lives under the old conditions.

On 22 December 1914 at Aitape, Captain Morrison came aboard as he wanted to see Agrigg'Hafen [Angriffshafen - Vanimo]. En-route, a punitive party was put ashore at Malol, where a missionary had been attacked a few nights previously. Lieut. Read was disappointed in Angriffshaven as there were no boats there for him to commandeer. Back at Malol the punitive party re-boarded with three prisoners.

Meanwhile plans were being made in Australia to occupy German possessions in the north Pacific; plans which would profoundly impact upon the AN&MEF administration of New Guinea.

The North-West Pacific Expedition. Colonel Holmes had been under instructions, apart from his New Guinea commitments to also occupy the German possessions north of the equator, and indeed he on 9<sup>th</sup> September, had submitted plans to do that. Unfortunately, the admiral was unable to spare ships to deliver the AN&MEF so far from base. Rear Admiral Patey wanted to keep his ships available to seek out the German Pacific squadron. Holmes abandoned that part of his plan.<sup>17</sup>

On 12 October, the British Secretary of State for Colonies informed by cypher message advised that the Japanese Government was active in the north Pacific and prompted Australia to honour the commitment to take control of the German possessions north of the equator. Further delays continued as a "Tropical Force" was assembled. Finally, on 14<sup>th</sup> November, Samuel Petherbridge<sup>8</sup> was given instructions by his Minister Senator Pearce. The instructions were:

The Government desire you to proceed with the troops being sent to occupy the Islands recently held by Germany north of the equator. <sup>18</sup> Detailed instructions followed.

Petherbridge, having accepted the assignment was, on 21 November appointed "Australian Commissioner for the Pacific". In the course of communications with Britain, Australian authorities were surprised on the 23<sup>rd</sup> to receive the following from the British Government.

With reference to your telegram of 21<sup>st</sup> November it would be discourteous and disadvantageous to the Japanese if we turned them out of Angaur when they are helping us in every way with their Fleet throughout Pacific and in convoy Australian contingents. Japanese are now erecting a wireless station on Angaur which they wish to use in connection with their fleet movements. <sup>19</sup>

In response, to queries the British Government sent instructions that Petherbridge delay sailing. Then on 3 December the following was received from London:

...with reference to your cypher telegram 25<sup>th</sup> November and to previous telegrams as to the occupation of German Islands in the Pacific, as Pelew, Marianne, Caroline Islands and Marshall Islands are at present in military occupation by Japan who are at our request engaged in policing waters North Pacific, we consider it most convenient for strategic reasons to allow them to remain in occupation for the present, leaving the whole question of the future to be settled at the end of the war. We should be glad therefore if the Australian expedition would confine itself to occupation of German Islands south of the equator.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Acting Secretary for Defence

The primary object of the North-West Pacific Expedition had thus suddenly disappeared. Petherbridge gained permission to sail to New Guinea with new instructions to cooperate with Holmes to prevent residents escaping from New Guinea and to blockade the Sepik where a rumoured armed ship was reported to be. This of course proved not to be so.

The arrival of Petherbridge and his troops, not unexpectedly created uncertainty for Holmes who sent his query to Melbourne:

As I have received no notification cancellation of my appointment as Administrator am doubtful of my position on arrival here of Colonel Petherbridge. Does he succeed me immediately as Administrator of all late German possessions now under my jurisdiction, or am I to continue until six months<sup>9</sup>' service has expired...?

While confusion continued to reign, Holmes sent another telegram on 28<sup>th</sup> November.

Personally, I would prefer to be permitted to return to Australia with the troops of my here, beyond merely garrison duty, is now at an end... command at the expiry of their six months' period of service, as it seems to me military work

On 6 January confirmation was received of the appointment of Petherbridge as Administrator. Holmes then resigned as commander of the AN&MEF and Petherbridge was to take up the office on 8<sup>th</sup> January and departed from New Guinea on the 9<sup>th</sup>.<sup>21</sup>

The change over for forces of course required with withdrawal of the garrison that Holmes had established. Lieut. Hansby Read takes up the story:

On 6 January 1915, Major Martin returned on the Parramatta bringing with him the garrison from Angoram. On 9 January the Siar arrived with the Aitape detachment and on 13 January the remainder of the Madang garrison came aboard

On 18 January 1915 Lieut Read disembarked with other troops from *T.S.S. Navau* in Sydney – to the beat of the police band and the cheering crowd.

Whereas Colonel Holmes men had been engaged in military action to capture German New Guinea, Colonel Petherbridge and his troops had the task of administering the captured colony.

#### End Notes Chapter 20

<sup>2</sup> S.S.K. Mackenzie Official History of Australia in the war of 1914-18 – Vol 10 – The Australians at Rabaul Angus and Robertson Sydney 1939. P xv

<sup>1</sup> Wikipedia

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> S.S.K Mackenzie 1939 Page 4

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> S.S.K Mackenzie 1939 Page 4

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> S.S.K Mackenzie 1939 Page 6

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> S.S.K Mackenzie 1939

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> This shipping list is collated from S.S.K.Mackenzie's 1939 book and the diary of Lieut. Clarence Hansby Read.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> S.S.K Mackenzie 1939 Page 46

<sup>9</sup> S.S.K Mackenzie 1939 Page 30

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> S.S.K Mackenzie 1939 Page 73

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> S.S.K Mackenzie 1939 Page 74

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> C.D.Rowley – The Australians in German New Guinea 1914-1921- Melbourne University Press 1958 p 4-5

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> The AN&MEF enlistment were for a six-month duration.

H.J.Hiery – The Neglected War – The German South Pacific and the influence of World War 1 – University of Hawaii Press 1995 Pages 36-37
 S.S.K Mackenzie 1939 Page 86
 S.S.K Mackenzie 1939 Page 88-89
 S.S.K Mackenzie 1939 Page 172
 S.S.K Mackenzie 1939 Page 148

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> S.S.K Mackenzie 1939 Page 148

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> S.S.K Mackenzie 1939 Page 155

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> S.S.K Mackenzie 1939 Page 158

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> S.S.K Mackenzie 1939 Page 160

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> S.S.K Mackenzie 1939 Page 184 &189

## Sepik 2 Chapter 21 The AN&MEF administration of former German New Guinea - 1915-1921

# 1. The Administration of S.A.Petherbridge – January 1915 – January 1918.

This Chapter needs to be read against the background that experienced German Officers who had agreed to take oaths of neutrality to and serve with the Australian military administration, resigned en-masse on 1<sup>st</sup> December 1914 in light of the Cox affair. Then Holmes troops six months of New Guinea experience was also lost when they were replaced in January 1915 by the North-West Pacific troops. Six of Holmes officers who held important departmental appointments stayed on. Among these was Captain G.O.Manning, the officer in charge of Native Affairs. He had previously had experience in Papua.

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## The troubled transition from Holmes to Petherbridge.

As Holmes troops were boarding to return to Australia, Petherbridge heard that property belonging to the German New Guinea government or to individuals was illegally taken aboard the *Eastern*. To prevent any re-occurrence of what he believed to have happened is Petherbridge ordered in part:

"1. The attention of all ranks Naval and Military Expeditionary Force is directed to para 72 page 247 of *Manual of Military Laws*, which reads as follows:

72, Everything that is captured with prisoners and is not included under the term "personal belongings" becomes the property of the belligerent Government, and not of the individuals or units capturing them.

The order went on to state that the baggage of troops returning to Australia would be searched. Soon after this Petherbridge wrote to Minister for Defence... I was threatened with mutiny. Some of the officers considered that their personal honour was impinged.

Shortly afterwards the subject of looting at Rabaul received wide publicity. Holmes investigated and convened a general court-marshal for the trial of several NCOs and men were charged with robbery with violence and stealing or receiving stolen goods. The longest resulting sentence was four years.

All baggage of returning Australian troops was searched, resulting in certain packages being retained by the authorities. A court of enquiry was convened. The court found no evidence of general looting...those found with appropriated articles were said to honestly believed they had the right to take souvenirs of their campaign. <sup>1</sup>

Writer's Note: Looting and souvenir taking should not have come as a surprise. After all, troops on a six-month assignment to capture an enemy colony guarded only by a handful of rapidly recruited militia, and then returning home as national heroes, needed evidence of their achievement - a Narcissistic reflections of self.

## From Hahl's planned exploration of New Guinea to AN&MEF neglect of rural New Guinea

Whereas Governor Hahl had, in 1914, planned the exploration of the interior of New Guinea through the use of his experienced staff, and mapping of the River systems, the AN&MEF approach to patrolling remained that of a garrison in hostile territory.<sup>2</sup> The most common reason for patrolling was to deal with "trouble" rather than any plan to progressively bring areas and tribes under control.

When Petherbridge took over as Administrator the Aitape garrison consisted of one officer, ten NCOs and men and ten native police. At Angoram there was a Sergeant, four men and thirty-five native police. By early 2015 two of the Angoram garrison died of malaria and the remainder were badly infected so the decision was taken to abandon Angoram.<sup>3</sup>

The attitude of outstation based AN&MEF staff was shaped by their boring role of awaiting the outcome of the war and maintaining uneasy relationships with the German settlers who stayed on after signing neutrality agreements. There must also have been a consciousness of malaria; a disease for which at that time there was no effective treatment. Malaria laid low many, and as in Angoram, randomly killed some men from within their ranks

It is also important to try to capture some sense the media coverage and Australian public attitudes of the day, which was certainly not conducive to amicable relations between New Guinea's German settlers and the AN&MEF occupation force. "The war to end all wars" was coloured by unpleasantly racist public opinion, as reflected in Norman Lindsay's *Bulletin* cartoon of 19 July1917:



The Australian public was diverting its attention from the terrible war news coming out of the war in Europe, by imagining all the wealth that might be awaiting Australia in New Guinea, a colony they expected would be theirs to exploit. Prime Minister Hughes advocated that former New Guinea should become an Australian colony. In late 1920, he appointed Dr. Campbell Brown to lead a scientific expedition to take stock of what New Guinea possessed. The expedition was a failure. Others were also eyeing the wealth they might extract from a post war New Guinea;

- James Burns and Walter Lucas of Burns Philp planned that Burns Philp would take over the Pacific Copra Trade. In so doing Burns Philp became known as the *Octopus of the Pacific*. <sup>1</sup>
- Plans were afoot to set up the Expropriation Board to confiscate and sell German properties to British subjects. Walter Lucas became chairman of that Board.
- Former AN&MEF Captain Brearley<sup>2</sup> and associates, formed the Colonial Exploration & Development Co, to seek oil and precious stones in the Sepik<sup>5</sup> His obvious target: the German discovered oil seep at Matapau between Aitape and Wewak. This did not eventuate: Anglo Persian Oil Co had started exploring in Matapau and they had Prime Minister Hughes support<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Personal observation in PNG 1961 - 2011

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> District Officer and garrison commander in Aitape in early 1915

**Shipping:** In addition to the shipping mentioned as commandeered in the previous Chapter, German shipping taken for use by the AN&MEF including the Siar, Komet which was re-named H.M.A.S. *Una, Lorangau, Carola, Nusa, Meklong* [below], *Sumatra and the Madang*.



On 9 November 1914 the *Ebden* destroyed H.M.A.S. Sydney at Cocas Islands. On 8 December 1914 *Scharnhorst, Gneisenau* and *Leipzig,* recently of the German Pacific squadron, were sunk in the battle of the Falkland Islands. On 6 August 1917 the Australian passenger steamer *Matunga* was captured by the German raider *Wolf.* 8

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The responsibilities of the District Officer Under the German administration, the District Officer [Bezirksamt] was responsible for policing and administering justice within the legal limits. He was also responsible for the supervision of the recruitment of labour, and labour inspections. He was responsible for the collection of head tax, which varied from between two and ten shillings from each male native who was not serving on an indenture. The District Officer had some discretion, and taxes were not raised on tribes who were not regarded as under control, and who, as a result had not had the opportunity to be legally recruited for service.<sup>9</sup>

It is important to record this, as AN&MEF officers would now be required to serve as District Officers and perform these functions, but without the experience of their German predecessors.

There was one major alteration to the rules; under the German administration it was the practice to approved employers to inflict corporal punishment on their employees. The first "Native Labour Regulations" which came into force on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1915 continued the system. But then on 14<sup>th</sup> August 1915 this provision was repealed with corporal punishment only to be applied by a Government Officer appointed by the courts. Then in March 1919 legislation absolutely abolished corporal punishment of natives in the Territory of New Guinea.

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S.S.Mackenzie's Official History of Australia in the war of 1914-1918 – Vol X – The Australians at Rabaul, noted that the military administrative during 1915, 1916 and 1917 attained constructive consistency because of Petherbridge as administrator. He had a flair for administration and he was a "man of the world" in his outlook. With AN&MEF personnel he was very popular. Even the German colonists came to look to him and his officials for just interpretation of the terms of capitulation. His administration was cut short by malaria from which he died on 25<sup>th</sup> January 1918. 10

The altered status of the Chinese. Petherbridge's ordinance of 26 November 1915 adjusted the legal status of the Chinese community from that of "native<sup>11</sup>". The Chinese had originally been brought to New Guinea by the Germans as labourers. Then as their cultural orientation, which was totally different to that of the indigenous people, led them into the world of commerce, their changed status required legal status adjustments that allowed, among other things, that offences such as bribery could be dealt with by the courts.

**Financial regulation.** Petherbridge sought to have the Commonwealth Bank commence operating in New Guinea. This was intended to rectify the problems of the dual currency system then operating. The German New Guinea mark equated to an Australian shilling. The question of exchange rates came up. Also, the big German firms each had their own international banking arrangements, which made it difficult to insure New Guinea produce was not reaching the enemy. Lucas of Burns Philp reported that his firm had been approved by the Commonwealth Bank as its sole agent in New Guinea. Petherbridge opposed Burns Philp's attempted "monopoly creation".

A branch of Commonwealth Bank was established in Rabaul by the Government Gazette proclamation of 16 April 1916. German banking laws and regulations were suspended and the Commonwealth Bank had a monopoly of banking business.

#### The administration of the Sepik 1914-1917.

The District Officer at Aitape was responsible for the administration of the Sepik. With the closure of Angoram, native police were detached and posted at Marienberg to protect the missionaries. <sup>12</sup> The closure of Angoram was to have far reaching consequences. It left the way open for abuses by labour recruiters and the resumption<sup>3</sup> of tribal fighting, although in relation to two instances of tribal fighting this had nothing to do with the closure of Angoram.

Instance No 1. Chapter 22 The Expulsion of Korogo from Nyaurengai.

Instance No 2. Chapter 26 The Japandai Migrations.

In both these instances, because the information used by the writer, came primarily from Sepik elders, it is impossible to identify precise dates. In the Japandai case there were three migrations from the Nyaula Iatmul village of Japandai to the Upper Sepik Yambon area [two migrations] and the Yessan area [one migration]. The first Japandai migration occurred during or just before the AN&MEF administration. Captain Olifent heard that 200 people<sup>13</sup> had been killed by Avatip, Yambon and other communities. The writer's research indicates that 19 were killed<sup>14</sup>. [68 were killed during the second migration in 1923/4].

**Aitape staff.** Although no complete list is available, the following indicates that AN&MEF District Officers in charge of the Aitape District, and support staff were rotated in and out of remote outstations at frequent intervals. On February 22 1915 Lieut. Charles Woodhall Brearley was posted to Aitape as District Officer and OC of the Aitape Garrison. He apparently stayed a few months only and was terminated from the service due ill health – Malaria on 2 June 1916<sup>15</sup>. On an unspecified date, Lieut. Victor Bolton Pennefather was posted to Aitape and on 13 December 1917 he was posted from Aitape back to Rabaul.

In August or September 1916, the Madang District Officer Walter Balfour Ogilvy conducted a patrol on the motor schooner *Genoa* and travelled up the Sepik. It seems this expedition was primarily a private adventure<sup>16</sup>, which contributed little to the history of the AN&MEF of the history of the Sepik.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> "Resumption" implies that the Sepik had been brought under control and that because of the closure of Angoram this situation reverted. It is safer to assume that at this time the Middle and Upper Sepik tribes had never been under control.

Birds of Paradise, an undercover investigation. Petherbridge had authorised under cover work close to Hollandia, Dutch New Guinea, which was the only market for bird of paradise plumage. His task was to obtain information on cross border smuggling networks. George Butterworth Jackson from the wireless network, posed as a trader and shooter. In order to secure his cover, he purchased ninety-five bird of paradise skins. It is not known what information that Jackson's undercover investigation revealed.

On 1 November 1913 birds of paradise, crowned pigeons and cassowaries were declared protected species. The protection was until 15 May 1915, during which time a German Ornithologist was to make a study and report as to whether the birds needed protection or not.<sup>17</sup> After 15<sup>th</sup> May the AN&MEF authorities again allowed the shooting of the birds. As importation of plumage into Australia was prohibited, most of the bird of paradise skins were believed to be taken across the Dutch border illegally. In early 1916, the Administrator estimated that about thirty thousand were waiting in the colony to be exported. Petherbridge reportedly stated *The question is one of sentiment as it affects birds, but while war continues to be waged against human life, its importance seems rather obscure.* <sup>18</sup>

TABLE 2. Number of Birds of Paradise Killed in New Guinea under the Australian Military Administration

	Number of Birds
YEAR	of Paradise killed
1914-1915	c. 3-5,000 <sup>a</sup>
1915–1916	c. 30–40,000 <sup>b</sup>
1916-1917	$125^c$
1917–1918	not known
1918–1919	$100^{c}$
1919–1920	34,704°
1920–1921	5,811°
1921-1922	$6,000^{d}$
TOTAL	c. 80–92,000

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup>Estimate; includes white herons and crowned pigeons.

H.J.Hiery 1995 book, the writer found to be heavily biased against Australia, noted that German settlers could also now hunt but ammunition available to them was limited due to wartime regulations. At the end of the European War, Melbourne insisted on stopping bird hunting in New Guinea. A ban that was to come into force on 2 March 1921 was cancelled by the military government. Instead it raised the export duty from £1 to £2 per bird. Then in Mid-November 1921 the export duty was reduced to ten shillings per bird in order to allow the last officers of the military government to export the birds they had killed as cheaply as possible on their departure. Although there was a national law prohibiting the import to and transit through Australia, of birds of paradise, the birds were shipped through Sydney to France and South America where they could be sold legally. <sup>19</sup> On 31

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>h</sup>Estimate; see Chap. 2, nn. 21 and 22.

Figures based on export duty duly paid (£1 = 1 bird);
Memorandum Officer in charge of Trade and Customs, E.
Featherstone Phibbs, Rabaul, 17 July 1920; AAC: A 1–23/
18422. For 1916–1917 and 1918–1919 these figures certainly show only a tiny fraction of the actual number of birds killed.

dAdministrator Wisdom, Rabaul, 18 November 1921, to the Office of the Prime Minister; AAC: A 518/1–A 846/1/77.
According to official statistics (AAC: A 1–23/18422) export duty was paid on only 2,354 birds.

December 1921, the export ban came into force – nonetheless, another 1,279 birds were exported in the new year.<sup>20</sup>

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Petherbridge's re-organisation of the AN&MEF was the pattern of Government Departments which was carried over into the civil administration. Not the least of this was district administration and supervision of native affairs.

When Petherbridge fell ill he handed over on 21<sup>st</sup> October 1917<sup>21</sup> to S.S.Mackenzie, Judge of the central court to be acting Administrator. Mackenzie in turn handed over to Brigadier Johnson

## The Administration of Brigadier General G.J.Johnson April 1918 to May 1920

The Johnson administration was summed up by Rowley 1958 P32 as follows:

Though Johnson expected to remain until the civil administration was stablished, his services were terminated in May 1920. This was not a surprising decision in view of his attitude in the matter of penalties for offences by native labourers. In March and April1919 he was being strongly attacked in the Australian press...He seems to have crossed swords with Lucas of Burns Philp. In the House of Representatives "Prussian Tyranny" was alleged and "Unmerciful" flogging of natives. Johnson's reply to this and to alleged misuse of government vessels for pleasure trips, horseplay and undignified conduct at Government House, reveals a man quite out of his element.

Much that happened in the Johnson era was reminiscent of the Neu Guinea Kompagnie period.<sup>22</sup>

A Norman Lindsay cartoon reflected and contributed to the anti – Johnson public opinion.



"Staining the Australian flag," by Norman Lindsay. (The Bulletin, 27 February 1919)

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## The administration of the Sepik during the Johnson Administration

The frequent changes in the staffing of the Aitape District continued. In June 1918 District Officer [Captain] Hunter was stationed in Aitape. Two German recruiters were killed in the Sepik in May or June 1918 because of interference with a local woman. District Officer - Hunter led two punitive expeditions, but the Sepik people did not settle down as unrestrained recruiting continued. In yet another expedition in November 1918 at least at least twelve Melanesians were killed<sup>23</sup>.

Reported chaos in the Aitape District worried Johnson. He passed on to the secretary of Defence on 7 June 1918 a report from the Aitape District Officer [presumably Hunter]:

British prestige in this district is at a very low ebb, for several reasons, the principle one being that District Officers in the past...have not considered it necessary personally to make patrols to get in touch with the natives. The German District Officers, on the contrary, made a special point of this, and I have heard very uncomplimentary comparisons between German and British occupants of the position.<sup>24</sup>

One step towards increasing patrol activity was taken in September 1918 with the opening of a police post at Vanimo [Anggrifshafen]. Vanimo was to be a base for patrolling both by canoe and on foot. This had actually been a recommendation since 1914.<sup>25</sup> Meanwhile staff at Aitape continued to be changed in and out at frequent intervals. Lieut. V.B.Pennefather was posted back to Aitape [presumably as second in command] on 2 November 1918. Captain James Harry Smith Olifent was posted from Rabaul to Aitape on 5 November and took over from Walter Balfour Ogilvy<sup>26</sup> on 20 November 1918.<sup>27</sup> V.B.Pennefather was again posted to Aitape on 11 March 1920 after leave in Australia as support for Captain Olifent who was in ill health was evacuated to Cairns where he died on 30<sup>th</sup> May 1920. On April 23 1921 Captain Kenny was in charge at Aitape.<sup>28</sup>

In September 1918 Johnson met recruiter Fritsche in Madang. Fritsche complaint of being attacked 250 miles up the Sepik. Hiery 1995: adds: Although Johnson was aware that the behaviour of the recruited had caused the disturbance – he [Fritsche] did not deny that he shot between twenty-five and thirty Melanesians – the Administrator simply accepted that it was only the Melanesians who had to be brought to see reason<sup>29</sup>.

Apart from the Fritsche issue...there were also reports of inter-village fighting "well up-river", and elsewhere the inhabitants of twelve small river villages were suspected of murder and cannibalism<sup>4</sup> had been put to forced labour. And at Avatip a small boat had been attacked and seventeen of the attackers shot<sup>5</sup>. The District Officer at Aitape, Captain J.H.S.Olifent recommended a show of force and in 1919 Johnson organized an expedition up river. The expedition led by Olifent travelled up river in a steamer [SS Sumatra] armed with a three pounder and two machine guns and accompanied by several military men and seventy-five native police<sup>30</sup>. Although it was not intended to be a punitive expedition, Olifent was told to make a demonstration in every village and asked to inquire into disputes. Olifent decided that the villages of Yambon, Malu and Avatip had been aggressors in intervillage fighting [Fighting in relation to the first Japandai migration] and dealt with them accordingly: At Yambon, the villagers were driven out and the village shelled. Houses including the haus tambarans

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> During the 1930s there was debate between Anthropologist Margaret Mead and District Officer E.D.Robinson ["Sepik Robbie"] – see chapter 44, as to whether there was cannibalism in the Sepik Robbie argued "No" and was eventually proven wrong. In the latmul, and Manambu areas [Avatip, Malu and Yambon] cannibalism was limited to rare instances of ceremonial cannibalism eg of powerful leaders being eaten to capture their strength.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Avatip people tell their story differently (see below)

were burnt. 150 people were arrested of whom 40 were released for lack of evidence; the rest were put to forced labour.<sup>31</sup>

Writer's note 1. In relation to punitive expeditions, the writer's Sepik elder informants believed the AN&MEF actions were by Germans, not Australians.

Writer's note 2. There were important differences between the punitive expeditions led by German officials and those led by the AN&MEF. Under Hahl there was a purposeful policy of pacifying New Guinea; of extending its borders and meeting any opposition to European rule with the use of force.

The AN&MEF punitive expeditions, on the other hand, was not based upon a policy of pacification, they tended to be the outcomes of ad hoc decisions rather than the result of long term planning and as we shall see they brought reprisals.

**Post Script.** Even in German times punitive measures were often regarded as ineffective tools in native administration. Although the immediate post World War 1 Australian civil administration continued to exercise German tactics including punitive expeditions, this gave way to a policy known as "Peaceful Penetration" of uncontrolled areas. Hostage taking, destruction of property and punishments were forbidden, in favour of the slow introduction of the rule of law, and, where possible, the establishment friendships and working relationships.

Not all of the old hands agreed with this change of tactics. Medical Assistant, Stan Christian, a wonderful gentleman, told the writer in 1974 that he preferred the old ways, for the reason that the people better knew where they stood.

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The elders of Avatip and Yau'umbak villages recall two punitive expeditions which they attributed to the Fritsche incident, which was described for the writer by Parnek of Avatip.

The German ship came up river first to Malu. They killed chickens and [stole and] ate yams and mamis there. The Nyaulas [being the western dialect of the Iatmul, and enemies of the Manambu of which language group Avatip and Malu village people belong.] came with them and a spy of ours, a visiting Avatip man, heard talk that next morning they would go down to Avatip to get a young girl of ours. [The Nyaula head hunting leader] Kemerabi was with them. Having heard this talk the Avatip man came back to Avatip village at night. He called the Avatip men together and threw down ginger in the haus tambaran [akin to throwing down the gauntlet]. The arrangement was made that women children and others would run and hide, from the Germans and Nyaulas who were expected to burn the village.

The strong men decorated themselves and made themselves ready to fight. In this preparation, the seasoned warriors told the men. 'If your brother falls in the fight, do not think of him – fight on - think only of the enemy.

The Avatip warriors hid in the pitpit beside the channel and waited. The ship came into the channel and tied up. People came ashore. The Avatip leader Ruman talked to the Nyaulas who were accompanying the Germans [warning them] but they did not go away.

The Avatip men talked and decided to try and capture the ship when it tied up in the Sepik at Avatip. People called out from the ship for women, coconuts, pigs, yams and mamis. Our fathers replied that the pigs, coconuts, yams and mamis were in the Kaminjam haus tambaran. They called to

the people on the ship to come inside and get them. But they called back 'No you bring them and bring them with the women. Kuginjimp of Avatip kept calling until eventually a European, some police and the Nyaulas came ashore. The Avatips attacked before they had their balance on solid land ashore. Kaigunmeri speared the European. [Lisindu of Malu states that it was Yowanmeri who speared the European]. The people scrambled back aboard and went down into the hatches.

The ship was up against the river bank and the Avatips tried to burn it with torches, as we singe the hair off a pig. They ship which by now was bristling with spears, would not catch fire. One man went close to look into a port hole. They fired from inside the ship and he was shot in the face. His name was Kalimbank. Nylak and Yuarimi were each shot in the stomach and died. The Avatips had thus found out about the power of firearms and they decided that they could not just leave the ship there, so Yuwanbiar dived into the water and lifted the anchor off the bottom to set the ship adrift.

On 15<sup>th</sup> November 1972 during Ambunti Patrol no 8/1972-3 one of the assembled elders at Korogo told how:

I was a small child when the "Germans" [actually AN&MEF] came. The police with the Germans performed a pantomime to demonstrate that if they shot us with their firearms we would fall down dead. One Korogo man said that they were lying and he speared a European. In response, they opened fire and shot us and they broke our canoes. The men they shot were Yimbunduma, Taun, Wobojui Inugumeri and ... – five men, five women [were also shot] making a total of ten.<sup>32</sup>

## Parnek continues his Avatip story:

The Germans [AN&MEF] went away and came back about a year later and burned Avatip. As the ship came up river it tried its guns at Japanaut, [Japanaut is not far upstream of Korogo] and we heard it. The people wanted to go to the protection of sago stands but the Tambaran [our god] said 'Something will come to Avatip today. You must not go to the sago,' The tambaran rocked the canoes so they could not go...we heard the gun fire and we knew the fight was coming, so we ran away to the bush. The Germans killed my mother and brother [Map and Tinimbir] at this time...the old woman was sitting in her house when a shell exploded in the village. Also Tambilkabi was shot as he walked along the riverbank. His body fell into the water.

They came ashore and burned the main haus tambaran first. Its name was Oigumbagaramp, then a second haus tambaran and then the village houses. The Germans went up river next morning and burned Malu. At this time, we took our canoes and fled to the Amagu River and stayed for many months there at Kaiuk, Amagau and Kamatip [these are village names]. We did not go near Avatip at this time as we were greatly afraid of the new wild men with guns. Then our father Marawul said "My place is over there. That is where our lake and yams are." He spoke with his two cousins Magasaubi and Numbunmi, and they together with Marawul's brother Gulman came and camped at Yibirimbak. The others followed and camped at Yau'umbak; they came back from the many places where they had been hiding in the bush and built houses and recommenced their village life again at Avatip and Yau'umbak.

Informant Yagi of Yerikai continued the story:

They [the "Germans" AN&MEF] fought with all the villages on the way – Avatip, Malu and Yambon and then they came to our place. They shot six men at Yerikai, but they did not have a fight at

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> The pidgin words used were *Gan ipaia, lapun meri sindaun long haus...sindaun algeta* literally. 'Gun fired, the old woman sitting in the house... sat down for ever.'

Garamambu as we learned about guns here and as a result Garamambu made peace with them. One of the Yerikais shot a policeman of the "Germans". The arrow hit him in the groin, but did not seem to do any damage. He pulled the arrow out and said he was OK, that the arrow was blunt. Later after they had climbed a mountain he urinated blood and died. They put him in a canoe and took him back.

The fight [against Yerikai] was at the back of the mountain behind the present Yerikai village. The Malus brought them in here. The "Germans" had made peace with the Malus, who told them that they had been fighting with Yerikai and that Yerikai had won and the Germans came in with them, walking overland to get here.

## Parnek continues his Avatip story:

The Germans came and burned the place down a second time. Kuginjimp, who had called the Germans and Nyaulas to come ashore [the first time] had settled in Yau'umbak. When the village was burned, he was the only one not to run away. We believe the Nyaula men with the Germans said 'That is the man who lied to us before' They shot him. He was the only person killed on this occasion. This time [having again fled] we stayed in the bush only two or three months before we came back and rebuilt Avatip. It was not too long after that the river changed its course away from Avatip and we moved the village to the present site which is called Yentchangai. 33

Johnson reported to the Department of Defence: [The great aim of the expedition was to carry law and order into those regions most remote from the influence of the administration. I am happy to say that owing to the zeal and tact of the O.C...this intention was carried out in full.<sup>34</sup>

## Lower Sepik, punitive action in 1920, by Captain Olifent and Administrator Johnson.

In February 1919 as Captain Olifent was making his way upstream on the *Sumatra*, to deal with the Manambu and other upstream communities, as described above, he took the opportunity to take punitive action in order to impress upon the Moanget and Meiam [Moim] communities, the need to stop tribal fighting. These communities had recently attacked Angoram village.

In January 1920, in response to a report from Marienberg mission station that Moim warriors had raided and killed nine mission natives, District Officer Olifent, together with Administrator Johnson went to the Sepik on the *Sumatra*. They went to Moim, forty-eight Kilometres upstream of Angoram, to conduct a punitive expedition to reinforce the need of a cessation of tribal fighting. Olifent's action against Moim had to be limited to merely burning the village as the Administrator had only limited time available. So, with the village alight, the *Sumatra* departed from the Sepik

Moim's response to the burning of their village was described in a message dated 27<sup>th</sup> February 1920 from the missionary at Marienberg:

...the people of Mongendo [Magendo] and Moin [Moim] have united with those of the villages of Kambrinda, Gunduma and Tumbonum [Tambunam], proceeded down river and destroyed the village of Angoram, killing twenty-nine women and children including the Chief Luluai of the Sepik, and the Luluai and Tultul of Angoram. Thirty men, women and children, more or less seriously injured, took refuge at Marienberg.

Lieut. V.B. Pennefather went on the *Siar* to the Sepik to take the necessary punitive action. His two reports on this patrol have apparently been lost. By this time, Brigadier General Griffith was the Administrator. He expressed his confidence that Pennefather's patrol 'has helped eradicate these tribal troubles which unfortunately arise from time to time.' 35

## The Administration of Brigadier General T. Griffith May 1920 to March 1921.

Major General Griffith, who replaced Brigadier Johnson as Administrator, was regarded as a fair man with high loyal and unselfish principles. And his administration of New Guinea reflected the thoroughness and industry for which he was renown. Four months after taking up office the *Expropriation Ordinance* [see Chapter 27?] issued through him by the Commonwealth Government deprived him of much of his influence. When it came time to sign on for another term as Administrator of former German New Guinea, Griffith declined and accepted the position of Governor of Nauru. He was succeeded in April 1921 by General Wisdom<sup>37</sup> just a month before the end of military rule.

May 9<sup>th</sup> 1921 End of Military occupation of German New Guinea. General Wisdom continued on as the Administrator to manage the transition from military to civilian rule. An obvious source of staff for the civil administration of the League of Nations Trust Territory of New Guinea were the officers and men of the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force and returned Australian serviceman from the War in Europe and the Middle East.

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Writer's Note: In an impossible dream, I would like to have seen Sepik explorers and enemy aliens Father Kirschbaum of Marienberg mission, and his 1915 guest Richard Thurnwald, guide the Sepik efforts of the AN&MEF. At the very least, I imagine a conclusion to this chapter, penned by Father Kirschbaum, would provide historic insights of immense value, as to what might have been had his experience, so readily available at Marienberg, been called upon. Father Kirschbaum was to become a valued adviser to George Townsend, Sepik Patrol Officer and later District Officer.<sup>38</sup>

## **End Notes Chapter 21**

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<sup>1</sup> S.S.Mackenzie 1939 Page 195
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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> C.D.Rowley – 1958 p 19

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> S.S.K Mackenzie 1939 Page 214

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> H.J.Hiery The Neglected War – University of Hawai'i Press 1995 P 107

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> National Archives of Australia item code No 1612651

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> H.J.Hiery 1997 P 107

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> S.S.Mackenzie 1939 Page xv

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> S.S.Mackenzie 1939 Page xvi

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> S.S.Mackenzie 1939 Page 226-227

<sup>10</sup> S.S.Mackenzie 1939 Page 336-344

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> C. Rowley, 1958 p 80-81

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> C.D.Rowley – 1958 p 19.

<sup>13</sup> B.Craig, R.Vanderwal and C Winter 2015 Page 91

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> L.B.Bragge - The Japandai Migrations -in Sepik Heritage Carolina Academic press 1990 page 41

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> NAA Item bar code 3115248 Capt C.W.Brearley service record item 2 of 39

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> B.Craig, R.Vanderwal and C Winter – War Trophies or Curios – 2015 Page 28

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> H.J.Hiery 1995 P 283 Note No 17

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Petherbridge 12 January to the Minister of Defence, and 13 September 1915 to the Controller of Trade and Customs re Information about smuggling of birds to Dutch New Guinea.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> H.J.Hiery 1995 P 49, quoting Administrator Wisdom to Prime Minister's Office 29 April 1922

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> H.J.Hiery 1995 P 49, quoting a memo from the Secretary to Prime Minister's Office 7 July 1922

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> S.S.K Mackenzie 1939 Page 242

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> H.J.Hiery 1995 P 89

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> H.J.Hiery 1995 P 88

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> C. Rowley. 1958 p 43

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> C. Rowley. 1958 p 43

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> B.Craig, R.Vanderwal and C Winter 2015 Page 35

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> NAA: B2455 page 58 of 103

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> H.J.Hiery 1995 P 292 Note No 117 <sup>29</sup> H.J.Hiery 1995 P88-89

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> B.Craig, R.Vanderwal and C Winter 2015 Page 91

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> R.May and S Latukefu ed: Papua New Guinea: a century of Colonial Impact 1884-1984. 1989 P 122

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Bragge Sepik Research notes Vol 18 p 114

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Bragge Sepik Research notes Vol 18 p 50

B.Craig, R.Vanderwal and C Winter 2015 Page 36
 B.Craig, R.Vanderwal and C Winter 2015 Page 117

S.S.Mackenzie 1939 Page 344
 S.S.Mackenzie 1939 Page 360

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Personal communication with Medical Assistant Stan Christian – Bragge Research volume 19 page 538

# Sepik 2 Chapter 22 The expulsion of Korogo from mother village Nyaurengai [1917/18?]

During Ambunti Patrol no 8/1972-3 in November 1972, the assembled elders at Korogo spoke of their migration to the present-day Korogo site. The impression I gained was that the Korogo sector of the Nyaurengai "mother village" did not suddenly become unacceptable to the remainder of the Nyaula population, rather, unacceptability was something that developed over a long period, possibly even generations, involving incidents and counter-incidents of which only the last was explained in full:

We [Korogo ancestors] made an overland track to the Nyaurengai lagoon. During the night, the raiding party went, and at dawn, was in place by the lagoon. Two Nyaurengai women had made a fence in the shallows for their fish baskets. When they came to check the baskets, they saw the canoes of the Korogos and thought it was a crocodile...

They came closer and saw the raiders, but by then it was too late., One was speared and they threw her body into a canoe. The other paddled clear and out into the lake, back towards Nyaurengai. The Korogo canoes followed trying to catch her. The Korogos called *Frednya!!* – the name of a tambaran and her paddle broke causing her canoe to drift uselessly on the lake. They speared her. <sup>1</sup>

... [as a result,] the Nyaurengais came and tried to kill my ancestor and his people. Five men guarded the door of the house in which they took refuge and kept the Nyaurengais away for two days and three nights. The five men were Woibei, [who was the grandfather of the 1972 Councillor of Nyaurengai], Kanaumeri, Yaglimbanga, Lantimi and Meribendi. The five then suggested that our ancestors had better find a better place to hide. The five led them into the bush where they stayed for three months.

They did not go to the village and they lost their spirit and their personal adornment. They had no sago to eat and had to live on pitpit. A Japandai man, whose descendant is Usenogwei, took them to Japandai<sup>1</sup> and kept them in the bush between Japandai and Yamunumbu, then later they came and made camp opposite Yentchanmangua. Now there were just three of them. There were few trees there, and pitpit, mud and water. They also had no garamut drum, so used a tree as their garamut for sending messages..

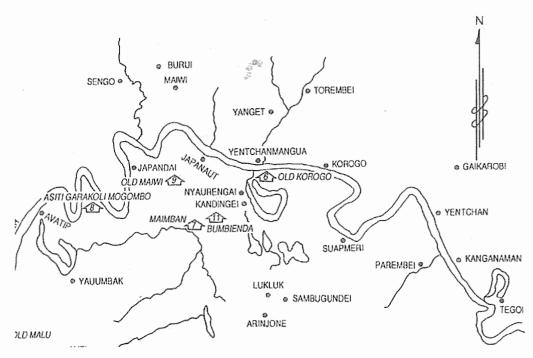
Two Parembei men, Wolimbela and Baniawagan came seeking croton leaves for a singsing and the three killed them and then planted the place at Korogo. [meaning they established the village; usually achieved by planting human remains, heads or even living people in the "king" post holes of haus tambarans.]. They beat out their news on their make shift garamut and all the people of the Sepik heard it. Some Korogo refugees still hidden in the Japandai bush heard it and said to themselves *If those three can kill men what are we doing still hiding here?* 

They built a raft of timber and built a stockade on it. Inside the stockade they put all the people plus building materials; limbum, morata etc. The men stood outside the fenced area

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> It was this refuge provided by Japandai and the gift of a girl called Patjo to Japanese appointed "Captain" Mamber that tempered Mamber's anger against Pro-Australian Luluai Kemerabi and Australian recruitment of Baras and others as Special Constables in 1943.

with their weapons and started drifting down river. The Japanauts<sup>2</sup> saw them and came out in their canoes to fight. The Sepik was blocked with canoes. The spears struck the stockade and the defending Korogos were prepared to die there and then. They lived through the battle as the raft drifted on, only to get the same treatment from Yentchanmangua. They survived that as well and went ashore at Korogo – opposite and a little downstream of Yentchanmangua.



This placed Korogo in the forefront between the Nyaula villages and the enemy Parembei and this was why, at the time, Korogo was tolerated by the other Nyaula villages; it was their defence against Parembei<sup>3</sup>

Douglas Newton's notes continue the story<sup>4</sup>

Korogo used to be opposite Yentchanmangua. They fought Parimbei, Malingai, Suapmeri, Yenchan and Kanganaman in the time of the founders of the village. In the next generation, they had become a big place, and the other Nyaulas were jealous of their claims to land. Nyaurengai, Kandingei, Yentchanmangua, Japanaut, Yamunumbu and Japandai took the excuse of a quarrel over women to raid Korogo. They killed two women and a child. On a second raid while the Korogo were sleeping after a festival, they killed a man, Poshi, in the bush; and in the village two men Tambamowi and Namianggauwi, and a woman Andjibuliawi, and perhaps three or four others.

In revenge, Korogo killed two people from these villages, and moved to the Kubulagwa round-water [lagoon], downstream on the left or north bank and about half a mile inland. Only a few people were left in the old place.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> There is some confusion here – Japanaut is downstream of the Korogo village site opposite Yentchanmangua. There are two possible answers – the came up river to fight, or, a,s is more likely this happened when Korogo moved down into Parembei territory; a journey that would have entailed passing Japanaut village

Yamuk and Torembei were already allies of Korogo. Korogo sent women to Malingai and Yenchan, making allies of these villages as well.

The six [Nyaula] villages assembled - Nyaurengai, Kandingei, Yentchanmangua, Japanaut, Yamunumbu and Japandai, wanting to raid Korogo. They all came and slept at the foot of the trees in the bush Kubulagwa. They wanted to surround us. They came by the waterway that goes to Torembei in order to surround us.

Now they [Parembei] took my father Mangganawan. They went to Parembei, put him in the upper story of a ceremonial house. Beiambandiwanda and Tarambanggur, two men of Parembei put him there. Then all the men of the Parembei villages, Malingai, Kanganaman and Yenchan came together. The two men beat the slit gong [garamut] and talked to all the assembled men. They said *Are you enough to finish all these men who are in the Kubulagwa bush?* The two men spoke so.

And the Parembei said We can kill them. Twice we have gone up river and finished them. The Parembei got up, made this talk, took betelnut, each man held one betelnut. Then the two uncles Beiambandiwanda and Tarambanggur got up and said Mangganawan, you come down now, the Parembei can raid them. The two set up the ladder of the ceremonial house so Mangganawan could climb down. So, they did not kill him [the Parembei Iatmul are the enemy of the Nyaula Iatmul, of which Korogo was a member.]

Then the two got up and said *I think we will take this man and go up river, we can take them and put the women, the pigs and their property in the new place. We can put them in the prow of our canoe.* The two spoke so. Then all sang [in preparation for] the fight to come. They took this man and brought him here [to Korogo]. They went inland to Kublagwa.

Our fathers stayed in the middle of the canoe, all the women they out in the prow of the canoe. The men of the six enemy villages threatened to fight. But the men of Parembei. Malingai, Kanganaman and Yentchan went inland. They stood in the prows of the canoes and put the women in the prows of the canoes to protect them. Others loaded the property, others loaded the pigs. Everything helped to strengthen this place. The Parembei were too strong for the Nyaula to finish us.

The men in the villages allied to Korogo came in the low water time. First, they went to Yentchanmangua, killed many people, burned the ceremonial house and many other houses and looted the village. They made a second raid against Japanaut. They then made a third raid and killed two people at Nyaurengai. After this the Ambunti station was set up by the Government, and the fighting came to an end.

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Douglas Newton's version of events appears to be a general's strategic view. The story I recorded in Korogo during Ambunti Patrol No 8/1972-3 is perhaps more how the front-line warriors and potential civilian victims and young-girl peace offerings to the enemy, saw it unfold:

Land was the reason for the fighting. Yamuk and Torembei made camps too close to us so we went and drove them back. All the Nyaula groups with Maiwi and Burui attacked Korogo, when we lived near Yentchanmangua. They killed Boswei, Bensemboliawi, Tambamoi and Namiagaui that day and they went back. In the late afternoon, they beat the

sides of their canoes and said tomorrow we will come here and finish this place, burn all the houses and kill all the people, pigs and dogs. Then they went back.

The Korogo leader Wunjingowi considered the situation and decided to evacuate. The Korogos threw a pig into their haus tambaran and threw a stone axe in after it. They ate the pig and then Maigindimi, [Dambwi's father] picked up the stone axe and went and started clearing the bush at Kubulagwa. Wunjingowi ordered the destruction of Korogo, and in the night, they came down river in canoes with their salvaged gear. A few men remained at Korogo, but the bulk of the population moved down river to the lake behind where Korogo is now.

My father, Walmeri, Tamusimeri, Wabi, Manki remained at Korogo with Suat, Munjingowi, Patgowi, Mungano and Ivungamei. The raiders came and saw the few men present and said that they had the rest of the people hidden in the houses. The fighting started and the Korogos were driven back. At Kubulagwa they made houses in the bush and slept out in the open.

When the Parembeis, Suapmeris, Kanganamans, Yenchans and Malingais came to the lake near where the school is now. The lake was full of canoes. The Korogos called out to them You are our enemies. Before when we lived we came and killed you and now we are rubbish. We will not send our women and children into the bush. If you want to finish us off come and do it now.

The Korogo people lined the lake edge. Us children sat on the ground with our mothers behind them. The enemy canoes approached and the paddlers struck a rhythm with their paddles against the sides of their canoes as they came towards us. They called the names of our surviving leaders.

Patgowi? - Yes! Wonjigowi? - Yes! Kasimeri? - Yes! Suat? - Yes! Mungunu? - Yes! Are you alright?

No, we are not alright. If you want to finish us now it is OK. We have left our land and we came like pigs and dogs. You can finish us now if you wish.

[The enemy replied] No we have not come to fight. We fought back and forth in the past, but now this fight is finished. You have come like pigs and dogs and we take pity and will not kill you. We have come to make friends with you.

They started to come inshore but the Korogo leaders asked them not to come quickly, but to wait. The Korogos hurriedly selected young girls from within their midst. They cut their hair and decorated them with whatever wealth they had. They gave three girls to Parembei, one to Yenchan and two to Malingai. When the Korogos were ready they called *Canoe from Parembei – come inside first*.

The canoe slid through the grass and up against the bank and they pushed one of the girls into the canoe. They called for a second canoe from Parembei and they pushed a second girl into the canoe. They called for another canoe and pushed a third girl into it. The three girls given to Parembei were Tangambinogwi, Wungionbu and Konbinbinogwi. The two for Malingai were Yarimaimange and Nambaimange and the Yentchan girl-gift was Ambinyamange. No girls were given to Kanganaman as they were half friends already.

The child of the third girl given to Parembei is Kabandam, a hospital orderly who is also known as Koma.

This was the time the Germans had come and gone back [1914/15], but the Australians had not yet come. It is assumed that the Yentchanmangua and Japanaut aggression which forced Korogo to migrate, at their own peril, into enemy Parembei territory occurred around 1917/18.

Father Krispen [Cryusberg] of Marienberg found us hiding in the bush and reported to the Australian administration. [In response] the Australians came and burned the haus tambaran at Yentchanmangua. Pigs, dogs, garamuts, sleeping baskets, sago and all sorts of other possessions were loaded into canoes and sent down to us. They went to Japanaut and did the same. A Japanaut man called Solu wanted to oppose this and wanted to fight. He was shot. The other Japanauts saw this and ran away. The Japanaut haus tambaran was burned in the deserted village. Afterwards [in 1924] the station at Ambunti was established.<sup>5</sup>

Sometime around September 1918 word reached the Administrator, Brigadier General G.J. Johnson that there was trouble on the Sepik... Johnson ordered Captain Olifent, the District at Aitape to prepare an expedition to travel up the Sepik in the Steamer Sumatra with the objective of impressing the natives with the necessity of stopping tribal fights.<sup>6</sup>

On 28<sup>th</sup> February 1919 the Sumatra arrived at Korogo [Karagu was Olifent's spelling] and Ascertained that the people were in continued dread of the combined villages Awatip [Avatip], Maloe [Malu] and Jambun [Yambon], which people made periodic trips down river and murdered and beheaded large numbers.<sup>7</sup>

Punitive actions were taken against Avatip, Yambon and Malu, but as the instruction was to give a demonstration in every village, this included Yentchanmangua and Japanaut.

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**Post Script.** Korogo remained aloof and watchful of its neighbours. The arrival of the Japanese was apparently seen as a blessing by young Korogo leaders like Mamber [See Sepik 3 Chapter 38] and Korogo village became known as "Little Tokyo". As late as 1974 I was receiving reports at Ambunti that Timbunke was considering reprisals against Korogo for the Timbunke massacre and distribution of Timbunke widows and girls among Iatmul villages as spouses and courtesans, [Sepik 3 Chapter 48] in which Korogo men played an active part.

#### End Notes Chapter 22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Bragge Sepik Research notes Vol 18 p 117

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Bragge Sepik Research notes Vol 21 p 15

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Bragge Sepik Research notes Vol 18 p 114

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Douglas Newton presented his Iatmul notes [15 A-4 typed pages] to the writer at

Ambunti with a note that I may use them as I saw fit. Bragge Sepik Research notes Vol 21 p 187 -189

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Bragge Sepik Research notes Vol 18 p 115-116

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> C.D.Rowley – Australians in German New Guinea. Cambridge University Press 1958 – page 202-3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> B.Craig, R.Vanderwal and C.Winter – War Trophies or Curios Melbourne Museum 2015 – Page 91

# Sepik 2 Chapter 23 Shaping the Trust Territory of New Guinea – the 1919 Royal Commission into late German New Guinea and the League of Nations Mandates.

## J.Lyng's 1916 publication – Our New Possession – late German New Guinea.

Mr. Lyng's publication served to whet Australian appetites to exploit the German New Guinea colony they soon expected to be theirs. Lyng wrote in part:

In comparing Papua with German New Guinea, we must admit, in some respects the latter is ahead...this colony has shown a sustained progress, much to credit due to the late Governor Dr, Hahl...who combined an earnest desire for developing the Possession with a strong sense of justice towards the native population...Exports from...German New Guinea...in 1913 amounted to £402,013, against £123,140 from Papua, while the export of copra from the two possessions compared as fifteen to one.<sup>1</sup>

There were several steps to be negotiated before German New Guinea would formally come under Australian Authority:

## #1 The Versailles treaty and the fate of Germany's Pacific Colonies.

On 24 January 1919 representatives of the victorious powers met at the Quai d'Orsay, France to discuss the former Germany colonies. Of the twenty-six representatives, there was 9 British empire, 5 American, 5 French, 4 Italian and 3 Japanese.,

American President Woodrow Wilson and Prime Minister Lloyd George of Great Britain pointed out that everyone agreed that it was out of the question that the colonies be restored to Germany.



"The True Controller." President Wilson and the idea to have a mandate system as seen through Australian eyes. (Melbourne Punch, 6 February 1919)

Lloyd George advocated that Australia and New Zealand annex the Pacific colonies. This was supported by Australian Prime Minister Hughes and New Zealand's Prime Minister Massey, both on the basis of protecting their homelands from foreign invasion. Baron Makino presented Japan's claims to Micronesia was to protect the inhabitants and to endeavour to better their

conditions. He also pointed out the local people were too primitive and their languages too diverse to allow "Self-Determination."

Woodrow Wilson outlined the central points of his proposed mandate system under the authority of the League of Nations, which was yet to be founded. Hughes, in particular opposed Wilson and orchestrated a media campaign in favour of direct annexation and against mandates. The discussions also found difficulty in trying to justify how Japan could be refused a mandate as generous as that to be granted to Australia and New Zealand. On 30 January Britain suggested a compromise. Australia, New Zealand and South Africa would accept the mandate suggestion provided that they be allowed to apply their own laws in the former German colonies. They would report annually to the League of Nations and keep slave and arms trading out of the territories under their control and not allow the indigenous people access to alcohol. On 17 January 1921, the League of Nations granted the mandates but official copies were not received by Australia, Japan and New Zealand until late April 1921, which was also the date when the German colonial period in the Pacific ended.<sup>2</sup> All these mandates were of the "C" category.

# #2. The 1919 Royal Commission into late German New Guinea

It was not surprising, after the signing of the treaty on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918, to end World War 1 and the receipt of the mandate document on 6 April 1921, that the victorious allied countries commenced arranging for the expropriation. In Australia, the matter was discussed in a report of a Royal Commission which the Australian Government had appointed on 12 August 1919 to visit New Guinea and, among other things, to inquire into:

- a) The nature and extent of privately owned property, and
- b) The action necessary for the transferring to, and retaining under, British ownership of such property in the event of a policy of resumption being decided upon.

The personnel of the Commission consisted of Judge Murray, Lieut. Governor of Papua, Chairman., Atlee Hunt, then Secretary of the Department of Home and Territories, and Walter Lucas, Islands manager for Burns Philp and Co.

Lucas, Hunt and Chairman Murray travelled from Port Moresby to Rabaul in late August 1919 and for a period of weeks took evidence from AN&MEF officers who were engaged in production, and missionaries. The Commissioners travelled widely gathering evidence. Each of the Commissioners had New Guinea backgrounds, and none of them had the impartiality normally expected in a Royal Commission.<sup>3</sup>

The three men Commission disagreed with each other on almost everything, so in addition to the Royal Commission report – Chairman Murray submitted a minority report.<sup>4</sup>

# On the question of repatriation of German Nationals and expropriation.

There was complete disagreement as to the methods to be adopted in expropriating the owners of large business...Murray recommended that the property of the big businesses and their subsidiaries be nationalised and be carried on by the Commonwealth government in the public interest. A management board of three experts [in plantations, storekeeping and 'general business'] be appointed. If the Commonwealth decided to expropriate all German plantations, plantations of over 400 hectares should also be nationalised, Smaller plantations should be leased out.<sup>5</sup>

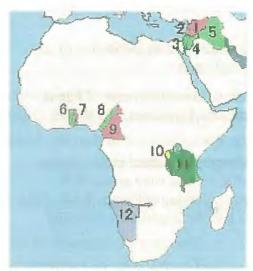
Lucas and Hunt opposed nationalisation on the basis that the Commonwealth would lose money and that it had no right to participate in primary production. They advocated that the German plantations be offered for sale to private firms or individuals.

All agreed that those Germans on small plantations, with 'good' records might remain...The value of the prize depended upon copra production, and good plantation managers would be needed. The majority report recommended all German Missionaries be expelled on the grounds that as typical Germans' the missionaries would embarrass Australia before the League of Nations by "discrediting the Administration, impugning its justice, instigating native disaffection and unrest. This recommendation exceeded the Commission's terms of reference and was at least partly contrary to Article 483 of the Treaty.

On the question of the future administration of late German New Guinea: Judge Murray recommended that the New Guinea be administered under the Papuan Government. He attributed poor AN&MEF administration of former German New Guinea to German theory, accepted without question by inexperienced army officers. The 'efficient and severe German system' had impressed itself upon them and the impression is particularly noticeable in the native policy...the system which the Australians found there, and which they naturally continued, was different from that which we found in Papua, and on one point of difference was more humane...even under Australian rule...was to regard the native mainly as an asset, and not to consider the well-being and development of the native race for its own sake as being one of the principle objects to be aimed at by the administration.<sup>7</sup>

The Royal Commission's majority report recommended that New Guinea be administered separately and not in combination with that of the Australian colony of Papua.

# #3 League of Nations Mandate over late German New Guinea – granted 6 April 1921.



Mandates in the Middle East and Africa, which included: 1. Syria, 2. Lebanon, 3. Palestine, 4. Transjordan, 5. Mesopotamia, 6. British Togoland, 7. French Togoland, 8. British Cameroons, 9. French Cameroun, 10. Ruanda-Urundi, 11. Tanganyika and 12. South West Africa



Mandates in the Pacific. 1. South Pacific Mandate, 2. Territory of New Guinea, 3. Nauru and 4. Western Samoa

The Royal Commission report was not tabled in Parliament until 21 May 1920 at the same time the government announced of Lucas as technical adviser on matters connected with expropriation. Lucas became chairman of the Expropriation board had direct access to the Prime Minister and was soon the real power in the Territory.<sup>8</sup>

A League of Nations Mandate was a legal status for certain territories transferred from the control of one country to another following World War 1. The mandate system was established under article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations. There were two core principles of the mandate system –

- No annexation, and,
- a "sacred trust of civilization" to develop the territory for the benefit of the native people.

The process of establishing mandates involved two phases.

- 1. The formal removal of sovereignty of the state previously controlling the Territory.
- 2. The transfer of mandatory powers to individual states within the Allied powers.

## **Types of Mandates:**

A class - Territories formerly controlled by the Ottoman empire.

B class – German former territories in West and Central Africa

C class – South West Africa and German former Pacific colonies.<sup>9</sup>

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#### The Commonwealth response to Royal Commission reports.

In November 1920, six months after the tabling of the Royal Commission's reports in parliament, Bowden MHR asked the Minister for Home and Territories, whether now that the Royal Commission had considered the organisation of the Administration, disposal of German property, and other 'political and material' matters, it was proposed to have another Commission report on the best means of conserving native interests, in order to carry into effect, the principles of the sacred trust

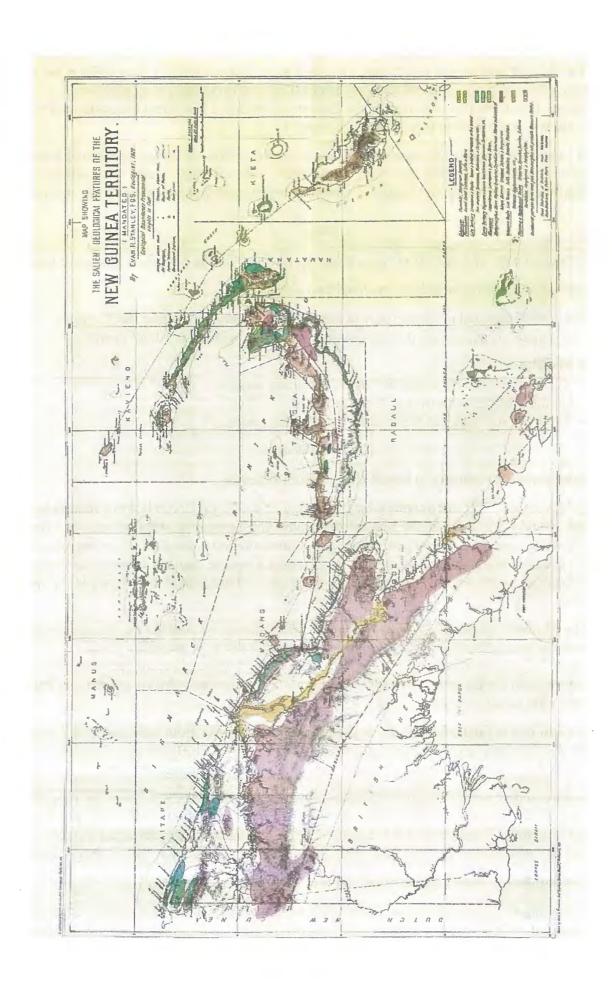
The Minister, Alexander Poynton responded *It is considered that the experience already gained with the administration of native affairs in Papua obviates the necessity [for a Commission]*<sup>10</sup>. This statement coincided with the rejection of Murray's recommended joint administration with Papua, so it is difficult to see how "the experience already gained...in Papua" might benefit the administration of TNG

Lack of native [and other] policy at the time of the handover from military to civil rule of TNG after the 1<sup>st</sup> World war was overshadowed by the Expropriation Board as well as the Commonwealth government's preoccupation with the seizure of European property.

Failure to deal with native policy had consequences as early as 1923, when the press raised issues concerning native labour. The Prime Minister had an investigation made of alleged forced labour and floggings. This occurred at the same time as Australian image damaging charges concerning the treatment of Germans and mismanagement of plantations by the Expropriation Board.

# #4 Conclusion: In lay-man's terms what did the Mandate system mean?

Following a 1927 tour of New Guinea with Sir Charles William Cla nan Marr, Minister for Home and Territories, M.P. Sir Thomas Henley published *New Guinea and Australia's Pacific Island Mandate* in which he made statements reflective of the Australian opinions of the day. On the question of Mandates, he wrote:



Those who talk about the insecurity of the mandate to Australia had better understand what a "C" mandate stands for. A "C" mandate and annexure are, for all practical purposes, the same thing...Now, while "A" and "B" mandates are very restricted and somewhat complicated, the "C" mandates are simple [Ask Japan how they read their "C" mandate for the Caroline Islands]. Australia is being governed by a charter of Government from England with less legal personal ownership than Australia has in New Guinea, and nobody suggests that our right, title and interest will ever be challenged.

...the "C" mandate for German New Guinea is conferred on "His Britannic Majesty" to be exercised on his behalf by the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia...New Guinea, and those Islands in the Pacific are not only an integral part of Australia, but an integral part of the British Empire<sup>11</sup>.

For the purposes of this chapter, Sir Thomas' views are useful of show Australia saw its relationship with New Guinea. Sir Thomas would no doubt have been astounded to learn that within two decades:

- 1. Japan would have used the strategic advantage of its "C" mandate to initiate the Pacific War.
- 2. That both the British "Empire" and the League of Nations had each been superseded, and,
- 3. Within five decades, New Guinea would no longer be an "integral part of Australia", but, having exercised its right under the mandate to self-determination, had become an independent sovereign state.

# **End Notes Chapter 23**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> J. Lyng, Captain., late A.I.F. Our New Possession – Melbourne Publishing Thomas Co. 1916 Page 233

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> H.J.Hiery 1995 Chapter 6 p 202-225

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> C.D.Rowley 1958 P296

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> S.S.Mackenzie – Official History of Australia in the war of 1914-18 Angus and Robertson 1939 p 355-6

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> C.D.Rowley 1958 P305-306

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Commonwealth Gazette 15 and 30 September 1920

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> C.D.Rowley 1958 Page 297

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> C.D.Rowley 1958 Page 319

<sup>9</sup> Wikipedia

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> C.D.Rowley 1958 Page 312

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> T. Henley – New Guinea and Australia's Pacific Islands Mandate- John Sands Ltd Sydney 1927 Pages 73-77

# Sepik 2 Chapter 24 The Expropriation of German properties and repatriation of German Nationals from former German New Guinea.

Following the Australian invasion of German New Guinea in August 1914, Colonel Holmes of the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force signed the Proclamation of Occupation, on 12<sup>th</sup> September 1914. Clause 3 of which reads as follows:

"The lives and private property of peaceful inhabitants will be protected, and the laws and customs of the colony will remain in force so far as is consistent with the military situation."

As such, German companies and individual settlers had reason to believe that they and their properties were safe, and they continued, during the occupation period, to maintain and develop their properties in good faith – with 134,000 acres planted with coconuts by 1918.<sup>2</sup>

New Guinea and Germany's other Pacific colonies were effectively on hold awaiting the outcome of the war. If the war was won by Germany, the terms of the peace treaty would presumably have seen Germany resume control of her colonies.

Germany did not win, and the Peace Treaty signed in Versailles on 28<sup>th</sup> June 1919 set out, in five of its articles - how the former colonies, properties and German nationals therein, were to be managed.

**Article 9** local laws and customs will remain in force as far as is consistent with the military situation.

**Article 119** Germany renounced in favour of the principal Allies and associated powers all her rights and titles over her colonial possessions.

**Article 120** all moveable and immoveable property belonging to the German Empire [In New Guinea] was transferred to the Australian Government. <sup>3</sup>

**Article 122** the government exercising control over such territories may make such provisions as it thinks fit with reference to the repatriation from them of German nationals and to the conditions upon which German subjects of European origin shall, or shall not be allowed to reside, hold property, trade or exercise a profession in them.<sup>4</sup>

**Article 297** of the Treaty granted Australia the power to "retain and liquidate the property rights and interests" of German nationals and companies.

The liquidation shall be carried out in accordance with the laws of the Allied or associated State concerned, and the German owner shall not be able to dispose of such property, rights or interests, nor to subject them to any change without the consent of that State.<sup>5</sup>

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Australian and New Guinea legislation was required to put these articles into action.

The Commonwealth's **New Guinea Act 1920** authorised the Governor General to accept, on behalf of Australia, the mandate issued by the League of Nations.

1. The TNG Expropriation Ordinance 1920 section 4 provided that the properties of German firms, companies, persons and deceased estates be vested in the Public Trustee. This ordinance also required the administrator to appoint an Expropriation Board to manage the vested properties.

Section 12 that until the property is delivered to the Board or an authorised person, the current German national owner/manager shall hold the property in trust for the Public Trustee and shall comply with any directions given by the Board or an authorised person.<sup>6</sup>

- 2. The **Treaty of Peace Regulations 1920-1922** required that as of 20<sup>th</sup> January 1920 the net proceeds of disposal of property were to be charged to the compensation payments provided for by the Treaty. This compensation was to be sent to Germany to compensate the disposed property owners.
- 3. The TNG **Deportation Ordinance 1920** was issued on in April 1920.

Meanwhile, Australia convened a Royal Commission on 12<sup>th</sup> August 1919. The Commission was to visit the captured territory and inquire into:

- The nature and extent of privately owned property.
- The actions necessary for the transferring to, and retaining under British ownership of such property, in the event of a policy of resumption being decided upon.

The 1919 Royal Commission is discussed in full in the previous chapter.

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Two individuals were important to the remainder of this Chapter, and indeed, in Walter Lucas' case, important to the 1919 Royal Commission: Walter Lucas and Frederick Jolley.

## Walter Henry Lucas.

Walter Lucas was born in Sussex on 1869. In 1893, he joined the Australasian New Hebrides Co [ANH] and competed with the French for the local copra trade, [experience] which provided him with serviceable yarns and a baptism in ruthlessness.<sup>8</sup> In 1896 Burns Philp and Co took over ANH.

Lucas returned to Sydney in 1901 as Burns Philp's Island Manager. He established a long-standing rapport with Arthur Atlee Hunt, the then private secretary to Prime Minister Barton. Through Hunt, Lucas negotiated a Commonwealth subsidised mail contract for Burns Philp in 1902, renewed in 1907. In 1906 Atlee Hunt used Lucas to oversee the repatriation of Pacific Island labour from Oueensland plantations in accordance with the White Australia Policy.

In 1912 Burns Philp was appointed Australian agent for the British Government for the Solomon Islands and related Pacific duties were overseen by Lucas. When German New Guinea was surrendered in 1914 Lucas returned to trading. He gave evidence to the Inter-State Commission in 1916 on shipping and in August 1919 with Atlee Hunt and Sir Hubert Murray, was a member of the Royal Commission on late German New Guinea.

In May 1920 Prime Minister Hughes appointed Lucas as technical adviser to the Australian Government on Pacific islands matters, and in January 1921 he was appointed Chairman of the Expropriation Board. He arrived in Rabaul with accountants and plantation supervisors, mostly exservicemen. the Chairman was hailed as "Lucas and his Twelve Apostles". 9

## Frederick Reidy Jolley 1883-1956.

Frederick Jolley was born in Prahran, Melbourne, Australia on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1883. He served as a manager and accountant for "Queen Emma's Forsyth Gesellschaft, he was owner of Raulawat plantation, which he transferred to his wife Mabel [nee Von Frege-Weltzian] upon their marriage in 1915. He also served as British Consul in Rabaul.<sup>10</sup>

He and other British subjects were arrested by German authorities in Rabaul on 6<sup>th</sup> August 1914. They were released two days later and arrested again on 12<sup>th</sup> August. With the exception of Jolley, they were released on parole. Jolley said he would not give his parole unless he was allowed to return to his plantation at Raulawat on Weber Harbour. Governor Haber would not agree to this and sent him to Kavieng in New Ireland with instructions to the District Officer to give him proper treatment befitting an ex-Consul.

Jolley was accommodated on a plantation, twenty miles out of Kavieng and was released when the AN&MEF took control of New Ireland. Jolley joined the A.I.F. as a Captain. He became deputy Chairman of the Expropriation Board and briefly replaced Lucas as Chairman when he retired in 1925. Frederick Jolly's story continued towards the end of this chapter.

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# The complexity of implementing that, which the Peace Treaty articles made look simple.

The best way to understand this complexity is to view it against a set of historic dates:

28th June 1919. The signing of the Peace Treaty at Versailles.

10th January 1920. Ratification of the Peace Treaty

20th January 1920. The Peace Treaty regulations come into force

17<sup>th</sup> December 1920. The mandate over New Guinea conferred on Australia.

January 1921 Walter Lucas appointed as Chairman of the Expropriation Board

6<sup>th</sup> April 1921. A copy of the mandate instrument reached the Commonwealth

9th May 1921 The end of military rule and commencement of civil administration.

# The chronology of events:

**1915.** Following the occupation of German NG the Federal Parliament war committee acknowledged that the Commonwealth had "promised to give preference to returned soldiers in respect of general employment" 11.

**August 1919.** Cabinet decided upon the expropriation of certain properties in late German New Guinea to be placed under the management of the Expropriation Board pending the establishment of civil administration.

The Public Trustee's power was not conveyed in the Act, only in regulations. New Guinea was not yet a territory under the control of the Commonwealth, but in order to expedite a settlement... Public Trustee delegated his powers to the Administrator.<sup>12</sup>

## Writers Note: Two observations are required here:

- 1. New Guinea was not yet a territory under the legal civil control of Australia, but it was under Australian military control. Placing these key companies under Expropriation Board management was presumably classed as a strategic military necessity.
- 2. The "certain properties" were presumably the biggest German firms, as listed in the Expropriation Ordinance 1920:<sup>13</sup>
  - a. The New Guinea Company.
  - b. Hamburgische Sudsee Aktien Gesellschaft
  - c. Hernscheim & Co A.G.
  - d. Mioko Commercial and Plantation Co Limited
  - e. Heinrich Rudolph Wahlen G.m.b.H
  - f. Norddentscher Lloyd Bemen
  - g. Bremer Sudsee-Gesellschaft m.b.H
  - h. Forsyth Kirschner & Co

19<sup>th</sup> August 1920. Department of Trade and Customs to Public Trustee – advice No 1: Herewith the Expropriation Ordinance 1920, which you are asked to make operational as soon as possible. The ordinance presents three main features:

- 1. The expropriation of German property.
- 2. The automatic vesting of such property in the Public Trustee
- 3. The appointment of a board<sup>1</sup> to manage or otherwise deal with the property.
  - The Trustee has no power until the mandate is granted.
  - The amount to be credited to the German national involved [for his expropriated property] is the value of the property as at 10<sup>th</sup> January 1920 the date the peace treaty was ratified.
  - As the Trustee is in Melbourne, the Administrator is asked to act as his delegate.
  - Property valuations are required as of 10<sup>th</sup> January, and the date of expropriation.

27<sup>th</sup> October 1920 Crown Law Officer Rabaul communicated with the Chairman of Expropriation Board on the topic of a possible objection to the power to bring about expropriation.

By virtue of article 297 of the Peace Treaty, all property rights and interests belonging at the date of the coming into force of the Treaty, of German nationals or companies controlled by them, may be "retained and liquidated", and such liquidation <u>shall</u> be carried out with the laws of the Allied or associated state concerned.

At present we are administering German law as amended by our local ordinances which of course are signed by the Administrator...to all interests and purposes General Griffith is the German Governor and as such administers German law – so that the Expropriation Ordinance is a German measure and in consequence the Commonwealth Authorities being the state concerned, are not carrying out the terms of the Treaty or the Peace Act, in as much as they are not expropriating German interests according to Australian law. <sup>14</sup>

Writer's note. This situation applied until 9<sup>th</sup> May 1921 when military occupation ended.

12<sup>th</sup> April 1921. Administrator to Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department, on the topic of What is to be done with the expropriated properties? Alternatives suggested included Government retention and operation of the properties, lend-lease, sale of freehold, and soldier settlement [20 years finance of 75% of the purchase price at 5%]. Whichever alternative is chosen, a valuation methodology needed to be decided upon urgently, to determine the amount Australia needed to credit to Germany to pay the dispossessed owners.

The Administrator made three economic observations – the valuation methodology must be acceptable beyond doubt in Europe, current low copra prices allow purchase of property at the bottom of the market and agreement with Lucas *that this is not a country for a poor man to make a start in.*<sup>15</sup>

An interim conclusion: Dr. Albert Hahl, who, as Governor of German New Guinea was primarily responsible for shaping the colony from an economic disaster, into a commercial success, must have

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Walter Lucas Chairman. Other board members: F.R.Jolley, former British Consul, C.I.H. Campbell, Commonwealth Bank Manager, Rabaul, C.J.W. Gillan, Treasurer elect for the Administration, P.Deane, Custodian of expropriated properties [Deane was replaced by J.R.Collins in March 1923]

watched the expropriation activities in despair. He stated "given the close fusion of business and politics in Australia...Mr. Hughes [Prime Minister] and Mr. Lucas will retire from the scene of their disastrous activity only when the booty is firmly in their pockets." <sup>16</sup>

# ......9<sup>th</sup> May 1921. The changeover from Military to Civil administration......

As of 9<sup>th</sup> May 1921 the "Public Trustee" became known as the "Custodian of expropriated property" and German New Guinea became known as the Territory of New Guinea. The complexities described above continued into the civil administration era:

13<sup>th</sup> May 1921 Secretary Prime Minister's Department to Attorney General. Our Expropriation Ordinance, Clause 4 vests expropriated properties in the Public Trustee as of the date of prescription. Advice No 1 to the Public Trustee of 19<sup>th</sup> August at para 6 distinctly states the properties are vested in the Public Trustee as from 10<sup>th</sup> January 1920... Germans are claiming credit from the date of prescription. For example:

Mr. E Hoff has an account with the New Guinea Coy. On 31<sup>st</sup> August 1919 his account was in credit £28/17/- in addition his plantation was estimated to be worth £60,000. His assets at 10<sup>th</sup> January 1920 were £60,028/17/-. On 1<sup>st</sup> September 1920, the date of prescription [of his property] his debit balance with the New Guinea Coy stood at £15,074/5/-and by 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1921 this debit amount increased to £19,398/1/-. If Mr Hoff was to be credited with his assets as at 10<sup>th</sup> January 1920, without deducting the amount of his subsequent debit, the Public Trustee would lose the sum of £19,398/1/-. <sup>17</sup> This situation and its implications received Chairman Lucas' full attention:

# 9<sup>th</sup> July 1921 Lucas to Secretary Prime Minister's Department:

SOS Must have immediate amendment Expropriation Ordinance vesting property in Custodian as and from  $10^{th}$  January 1920. Court cases now pending. Hurry Up. Sgd. Lucas. <sup>18</sup>

12<sup>th</sup> May 1922 Crown Solicitor to Attorney General. Re Sarang Plantation: ...it is desired to mention that the transfer of freehold land appears to follow German law in TNG.

I have no knowledge of German law, and as this matter involves the transfer of lands, any further deeds or documents or action necessary to vest the land in the custodian should be prepared and taken locally by law officers who understands the German law applicable to the matter.

The assignment would be valid so far as it is governed by English law but may or may not be good as far as it is governed by German law.

Also pointed out the need for the Custodian to be incorporated. 19

**24<sup>th</sup> March 1924** Crown Solicitor to the Custodian. In March 1922 Crown Solicitor pointed out the Custodian is not a corporation, therefore, cannot hold freehold lands in his private capacity...having regard to the magnitude of the interests involved and the serious consequences of any legal flaws in titles or procedures, suggest that the Attorney General's Department be requested to examine the whole of the steps taken to vest properties in the Public Trustee and later in the Custodian of expropriated properties, with a view to having any weakness remedied. <sup>20</sup> This was done via Regulation 34.

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**Writer's note:** In summary, The Public Trustee, later known as the Custodian had the expropriated properties vested in him. Until the 10<sup>th</sup> January 1920, being the date of ratification of the Peace Treaty, the properties and personal possessions of German settlers belonged to them and were subject to expropriation. As of 10<sup>th</sup> January, former German property belonged to the Australian Government, with its value, [once a method of valuation was agreed upon and the funds raised] to be

delivered to the German Government for distribution to the former owners. The expropriation board employed mainly Australian ex-servicemen to replace German plantations owners and business managers. In accordance with the Deportation Ordinance 1920, the owner or manager and his family were deported.

## Dual Bureaucracies in New Guinea 1920-1927: The Administration and Expropriation Board.

No clear distinction was made between the functions of the administration and of the board. They even duplicated facilities such as hospitals and serious competition existed between them. The Expropriation Board was the de-facto authority in TNG. It had more staff, and virtual autonomy as Chairman Lucas had more-or-less direct access to the Prime Minister.

Typical of Administration/Board relations was disagreement concerning the delegation of the authority of the Custodian. For example, Lucas' communication to the Custodian:

There is a danger of the Administrator in New Guinea exercising his powers as a delegate of the Custodian which may not be in the best interest of the Custodian. I recommend that the Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department inform the administrators of Papua<sup>2</sup> and New Guinea that you do not propose to delegate to them any of your powers.<sup>21</sup>

The situation in Rabaul in 1921: As we learned in Chapter 27, George "Kassa" Townsend signed on with the Expropriation board in Melbourne and travelled to Rabaul with Walter Lucas and General Wisdom on the *Melusia* in March 1921 to take up their respective positions, two months before end of the military occupation. Mr Townsend made some vivid observations of the situation as he saw it at that time:

I got to know a young couple from Kavieng...The husband had been a tutor on a large sheep station in Queensland and to a neighbouring property came the girl he was later to marry, to be a governess. After a year or two they decided to marry and to take advantage of the offer of the German Government of New Guinea to provide land for settlers.

One day I saw them at one of the regular auction sales, which the Board held to dispose of the private effects of those expropriated...I asked her what they wanted to buy, not knowing that their own possessions were being sold...Her face crinkled up, and tears were not far off. "Just a silver brush and comb" she told me "I can do without them, I suppose, but they are what my husband bought me for a wedding present, and I have nothing else he gave me except my wedding ring."

This, I thought to myself, is not expropriation, this is looting. I quickly passed the word around, and when the husband made his initial bid of five shillings...there was no advance from anyone. I made an appearance at one more sale, but the faces of the German men and women there, sad and desperate, drove me away.<sup>22</sup>

# The impact of German inflation: Mr. Townsend continues:

The husband and wife I spoke of finally received what amounted to £21 for their nine years bringing a plantation into bearing; a plantation we valued at £17,000. The failure of the mark was a German affair, but the method of expropriation was ours, unjust and hate-breeding...

## Repatriation of German nationals: Mr. Townsend continues:

There were 200 Germans in Rabaul...awaiting repatriation. The Australian Government decided to send them to Batavia from whence they were to return to Germany by Dutch ships. The Sumatra was to take them [The Sumatra] ...a ship designed to carry not more than fifty...

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> There was apparently one expropriated property in Papua.

The men had a farewell dinner in Ah Chee's hotel... [Ah Chee] prepared the dinner that night but refused to accept any payment from his guests. There was a great deal of beer drunk with the meal — and after it — the smouldering resentment against the Australian administration broke into flames. Some were for taking their women off the ship, others for going to Government house in a body, still others, I fancy for tearing Rabaul apart...

Someone began to play a piano, and then there burst from over 100 throats "The watch on the Rhine." Then there were other songs, and soon to our relief, it was clear that the self-appointed leaders of the German gathering had got things in hand again.<sup>23</sup>

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## Property valuations, and land titles.

As properties were expropriated the former owners were asked to provide a certificate detailing a description of buildings and plant area planted and unplanted and number of trees... but such certificates were nothing more than an estimate, which allowed some cross referencing based upon a value placed on each producing coconut palm. It was also agreed that there was little point in placing values on anything, as inflation in Germany rendered compensation "a valueless cheque on a bankrupt Government."

The Expropriation Board decided to allow supply and demand determine the value of the properties involved — via sale by tenders and auctions. Although this methodology was fine in theory, there was a major practical problem with it; As of May 1921, when German law was repealed, there was no clear and undisputed inventory of plantation that could be sold. The rights of the natives needed to be protected and certainty established as to whether any particular parcel of land was freehold or leasehold and then there was the matter of defining the boundaries.

Despite these problems, the Expropriation Board went ahead and advertised 30 plantations, three Rabaul stores, and 9 Rabaul residential blocks. The advertisements appeared in New Guinea, Papua, Australia and the United Kingdom. But with no titles there was next to no interest and only one tender was received.<sup>24</sup>

The answer to the titles problem appeared to be in the Torrens Ordinance of December 1922. Torrens title is a system of land registration, in which a register of land holdings maintained by the state guaranteed an indefeasible **title** to those included in the register. Land ownership is transferred through registration of **title** instead of using deeds<sup>25</sup>.

Unfortunately, the Surveyor General informed the Administrator that he would not accept any German survey as correct. To hasten registration the Administrator decided to accept German surveys. The Custodian anticipated that most of the properties would be sold to returned servicemen with 20 years to pay for them, and that any survey required for Torrens registration would be finalised long before then...But this work was still under way when the Japanese occupied the Gazelle Peninsular in 1942.<sup>26</sup>

## Two critical observers of the Expropriation Board and its activities.

#1 Sydney Daily Telegraph reporter, Murray Ellis. He reported that floggings that had been banned in 1919 were still being conducted in 1923. The government appointed A.S.Canning, an exmagistrate to investigate and refute this. A delegation of four members of parliament to investigate. Their report if, indeed it was written, cannot be located...meanwhile in 1921 the 9,000-acre Kalili plantation on New Ireland was described as the best in the Islands<sup>27</sup>, but by 1923 it was reported that *A glance at it beggars description*. The roads were swampy, the drainage channels had fallen in and regrowth four metres tall was choking the palms.<sup>28</sup>

#2 Colonel John Ainsworth, Chief Native Commissioner in Kenya was appointed by the Australian Government to make an administrative survey in the Trust Territory. He reported that the administration had no settled policy to develop TNG and in village affairs. He recognised the Expropriation Board was effectively the de facto almost a regular government concern; employing more than 300 Europeans.<sup>29</sup>

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#### Some consequences of giving priority to ex-servicemen in TNG.

Cabinet's 1915 decision to favour ex-servicemen in post war employment, and Hughes promise of "New Guinea for the returned serviceman", were supported by the community as a whole as a reward for their war-time service and sacrifice on behalf of Australia. Unfortunately, survival of "the war to end all wars", did not equip these men to understand tropical agriculture, management of copra plantations, or of New Guinean indentured labourers.

In line with policy, the Expropriation Board employed ex-servicemen as its representatives to take over from experienced German national managers/owners. Of 562 staff engaged up to 16/10/23 only 291 were still employed at that date.<sup>30</sup> In the public service, the policy of employing ex-service men continued until 1925, when belatedly, a system of wider recruitment and cadetships commenced.

A visiting Australian MP reported plantations everywhere are falling into state of neglect... they certainly do not reflect credit upon the Administration on behalf of the League of Nations.<sup>31</sup>

Efficient copra production requires employing an appropriate sized labour force to harvest the nuts as they fall, cut and dry the copra while controlling vegetation regrowth between the palms so the nuts can be easily collected. In the writer's experience in Milne Bay, this was achieved by a quota system: a labourer was required to fill a specified number of copra bags with husked half nuts per day. These were then collected and taken to the copra dryer. Fallen nuts which are not collected produce shoots and begin to grow and are not only lost to copra production, but add to the obstructive regrowth.

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## German Mission properties

The scramble to acquire former German properties resulted in claims on properties developed and owned by the missions which had been established by German Christian groups. The mission properties, which had been developed for the purpose of providing the revenue necessary to finance the work of the churches were now critically important – the war cut off all funding from outside.

The mission properties found protection in Article 438 of the Treaty of Versailles:

The Allies and associated powers agree that where Christian religious missions were being maintained by German societies or persons in territory belonging to them, or of which the Government is entrusted to them in accordance with the present Treaty, the properties which these missions or missionary societies possessed, including that of trading societies whose profits were devoted to support of missions, shall continue to be devoted to mission purposes...<sup>32</sup>

## Three acceptances of Tenders for expropriated properties and the role of the big firms.

The first group of properties were offered for sale by tender in Melbourne on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1926. Of 45 plantations offered 41 were won by ex-servicemen, who had been either employed in the military occupation of by the Expropriation Board. They took possession on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1926. Most of these acquisitions received financial help from either Burns Philp or W.R. Carpenter and Co. This

help involved signing trading agreement to sell their production and to buy their merchandise from the financing company concerned. This reliance on the big firms was further supported by the maritime nature of the copra industry – many remote coastal plantations required coastal shipping to get their produce to market. Burns Philp in particular was in the business of coastal shipping.

Even former acting Administrator and historian, Judge Seaforth Mackenzie won Matanatar, Ravalien and Ablingi plantations.<sup>33</sup> S.S.Mackenzie had the honour of being the author of Volume 10 of the Official History of Australians in the war of 1914-18, it is the writer's opinion that his taking advantage of Expropriation Board tender system and the easy finance available to ex-servicemen, was less than honourable. As so many other ex-servicemen were doing the same thing, perhaps it was the system itself, which should be judged as less than honourable

The second and third groups of properties were offered in late 1926 and were finalised in July 1927. The price of copra fell soon after the plantations had been bought and many new owners were unable to meet their payments. This allowed the two big companies to take over some plantations.

It was widely suspected that Burns Philp and W.R.Carpenters used dummies to push the price beyond the capacity of tenderers who were not under obligation to them. The tendering was open with the offer prices being make known, so tenderers were able to submit amended tenders<sup>34</sup>.

An agreement was signed between Burns Philp, W.R.Carpenters and Colyer Watson, a late arrival [1930s] on the TNG scene. The agreement provided that each company would not deal with the other's clients. The agreement disclosed that: <sup>35</sup>

Burns Philp had 113 clients with 175 plantations W.R.Carpenters had 154 clients with 163 plantations, and Colyer Watson had 43 clients with 54 plantations.

There were questions in parliament concerning dummying in the tendering for expropriated properties, to which the Minister for Home and Territories responded *The Government has no control over agreements between Australian Soldiers and companies, firms and persons financing them.* <sup>36</sup>

Burns Philp also benefited from the Navigation Act 1920 which specified that only Australian ships manned by Australian personnel were permitted to carry cargo to and from Australian Ports. Burns Philp was apparently the only Australian Co capable of providing overseas and coastal services for New Guinea.<sup>37</sup>

## Frederick Jolley exits and then reappears as a player in TNG Affairs.

In 1925 Lucas resigned as chairman of the Expropriation Board. He was replaced by Frederick Jolly, until the Cabinet decided to dismiss him because of his eccentric behaviour, where upon Jolley went to England, leaving some suggestion of corruption in his wake.

It was alleged that he took 'valuation figures of plantation properties' and had suborned a Board clerk into gathering other figures with a promise of a 'large cash bonus and a job on the plantations'. These were placed with a friend of the clerk in Sydney, from whom they were removed by the New South Wales police.<sup>38</sup>

On 21<sup>st</sup> March 1926 the Melanesian Company submitted a tender of £2,200,000 for all the properties in TNG and Papua offered for sale by the Custodian. Investigation revealed the Melanesian Company advised by Frederick Jolley and Financed by the Hamburgische Sudsee Aktien Gesellschaft. This tender was disallowed under the provisions of the Peace Treaty.

Jolley, then serving as Rabaul manager for the Melanesian Company and four other Australian ex-servicemen purchased fourteen privately owned plantations and various business properties, which had not been expropriated, the total value of which was £414,000. The Administrator was convinced the properties were acquired by "dummying" with Melanesian Company money. The Melanesian Company collapsed in 1930 and Burns Philp and Carpenters acquired its holdings for £40,000, plus book debts. <sup>39</sup> Frederick Jolley died on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1956 at Cremorne NSW Australia.

# 1927 - Approaching the end of the Expropriation Board.

Following the dismissal of Frederick Jolley, in 1925 Lieut. Colonel J.H.Peck, CMG, DSO was seconded to the Commonwealth Treasury as chairman of the Expropriation Board. Despite his brilliant military credentials, he lacked the experience to guide the Board through the final disposal of properties. There were accusations that a private individual had signed Board letters, which Peck denied. His demise as chairman came after these accusations were proven correct<sup>40</sup>.

When the properties had all been sold and the Board's activities were being wound up, patriotically, on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November 1927. It was decided the Custodian's interests were to be managed by a delegate of the Administrator. A.J.Egan was appointed and arrived in Rabaul in late 1927.<sup>41</sup>

The continued involvement of the Custodian was necessary because the properties remained his responsibility until the financial repayments were completed; effectively mortgage repayments. The records maintained in Rabaul, and in 1939 most were lost when the Custodian's office was destroyed by fire. 42

The financial situation was that £2,127,882/6/6 was paid to Germany in 1930 for expropriated properties purchased by Australians. The Board's operations, supposedly financed through the operations of expropriated properties after they became Australian owned on 19<sup>th</sup> January 1920 and prior to their sale to successful tenderers came to a deficit of £702,032/-/-. In simplistic terms, this figure could be regarded as a financial measure of the disastrous performance of the Expropriation Board.

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The passing of time tends obscure the ugliness of some episodes in history; episodes such as TNG's Expropriation Board history 1920-27. In the 1990s the writer recalls driving from Wewak to Aitape and passing through the remnants of Karawop plantation near Boiken. Some palms were still visible in the orderly rows in which the German planter set them out: others had been destroyed by the 1945 bombardments that drove the Japanese 18<sup>th</sup> army out, as Australian troops moved in to retake Wewak.

The outstanding feature I saw in the 1990s was the forest of grey-green casuarina trees, which had started their lives as regrowth between the palms when the plantation became neglected. I pulled over to the side of the road and allowed the little I knew of Karawop to wash over me...A Mr. Cox had owned the plantation in the late 1930s and when he died his widow stayed on, trying to manage ... District Officer Townsend was worried about her and made a point of visiting whenever he was in the area. Townsend and others became concerned when a Mr. Corrigan became involved at Karawop, but Townsend was reassured by Mrs. Cox that she needed Corrigan's help. Mrs Cox eventually married him<sup>43</sup>.

The wind was picking up and I broke out of my revere. The wind in the swaying trees around me brought a ghostly whispering from the casuarina foliage. The old plantation had shared my

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Purchased on Melanesian Co behalf in the names of private individuals.

memories of the past, and now I could safely move on. As I drove away the plantation continued its whispering – so much more had happened at Karawop that passing humans would never know.

# **End Notes Chapter 24**

- <sup>1</sup> S.S.Mackenzie Official History of Australians in the War if 1914-18 Vol X the Australians at Rabaul Angus and Robertson page 77.
- <sup>2</sup> C.W.Rowley 1958 pages 188-9
- <sup>3</sup> B.Jinks, P.Biskup and H.Nelson ed. Readings in New Guinea History. Angus and Robertson 1973. Page 232
- <sup>4</sup> National Australian Archive A1781, A188 part 2 page 303 of 347
- <sup>5</sup> National Australian Archive A1781, A188 part 2 page 303 of 347
- <sup>6</sup> National Australian Archive A1781, A188 part 2 page 340 of 347
- <sup>7</sup> P.Cahill "A Prodigy of Wastefulness, Corruption, Ignorance abs Indolence" The Expropriation Board in New Guinea 1920-1927. Journal of Pacific History Vol 32 No 1 [June 1997] Page 4.
- <sup>8</sup> Margaret Steven Australian Dictionary of Bibliography Lucas, Walter Henry [1869-1954]
- <sup>9</sup> Australian Dictionary of Biography
- 10 P.Cahill 1997 P 4
- <sup>11</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers The War: Returned Soldiers. Recommendations of Parliamentary War Committee on employment 1915
- <sup>12</sup> National Australian Archive A1781, A188 part 2 page 297 of 347
- <sup>13</sup> National Australian Archive A1781, A188 part 2 page 345 of 347
- <sup>14</sup> National Australian Archive A1781, A188 part 2 page 283 of 347
- <sup>15</sup> National Australian Archive A1781, A188 part 2 pages 218-221 of 347
- <sup>16</sup> Stewart Firth 'Albert Hahl, Governor of German New Guinea, in James Griffin (ed) Papua New Guinea Portraits -The Expatriate experience Canberra 1978 Page 46
- <sup>17</sup> National Australian Archive A1781, A188 part 2 page 202 of 347
- <sup>18</sup> National Australian Archive A1781, A188 part 2 page 155 of 347
- <sup>19</sup> National Australian Archive A1781, A188 part 2 page 86 of 347
- <sup>20</sup> National Australian Archive A1781, A188 part 2 page 68 of 347
- <sup>21</sup> National Australian Archive A1781, A188 part 2 page 88 of 347
- <sup>22</sup> G.W.L.Townsend Townsend's first draft of District Officer pages 14 and 15
- <sup>23</sup> G.W.L.Townsend Townsend's first draft of District Officer pages 16-18
- <sup>24</sup> Yarwood Vane & Co New Guinea: Report on expropriated property and businesses. H.J.Green Government Printer Victoria 1924.
- <sup>25</sup> Oxford dictionary
- <sup>26</sup> P.Cahill 1997 P 12-13
- <sup>27</sup> Bassett Letter from New Guinea p 23 as reported by P Cahill 1997 P 14
- <sup>28</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates 1923vol 103
- <sup>29</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers 1923/24 Vol 4:report by Colonel John Ainsworth. quoted by P.Cahill 1997 P 16
- <sup>30</sup> Yarwood Vane & Co 1924 P8 as reported by P.Cahill 1997 P 9
- <sup>31</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates Vol 103 1923.
- 32 Rev. Dr. Ralph W.Wiltgen, S.V.D. Divine Word Missionary Catholic Mission Plantations in Mainland New Guinea Their Origin and Purpose Page 27 Second Waigani Seminar The History of Melanesia
- <sup>33</sup> List of New Guinea Properties sold by the Custodian of expropriated property as at 1<sup>st</sup> January 1928
- <sup>34</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentery Debates 1926 vol114 as reported by P.Cahill 1997 Page 17
- 35 Buckley and Klugman, as quoted by P.Cahill 1997 P 26
- <sup>36</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates Vol 117 1927-8 as reported by P.Cahill 1997 Page 19
- <sup>37</sup> P.Cahill 1997 P 23-4
- <sup>38</sup> Smith's Weekly 4 September 1926 as reported by P.Cahill 1997 Page 16
- <sup>39</sup> P.Cahill 1997 P 21
- <sup>40</sup> P.Cahill 1997 P 19
- <sup>41</sup> Report of the Auditor-General 1927/28 Page 29
- <sup>42</sup> P.Cahill 1997 P 22
- <sup>43</sup> G.W.L.Townsend's diaries 1930

# Sepik 2 Chapter 25 An inauspicious start to the Australian Civil Administration of TNG

**Introduction:** The AN&MEF occupation of Aitape 1914-1921 saw a rapid rotation of District Officers and Garrison Commanders, including Captains Morrison 1914, Brearley 1915, James Harry Smith Olifent 1919 and Hunter 1921. During this period, Lieut Victor Bolton Pennefather had multiple postings to Aitape, apparently as 2.1/c

In charge at Angoram was Lieut. Chambers in December 1914. When Angoram closed and Marienberg opened in 1915 the only name of an AN&MEF officer posted there was Patrol Officer Wilkins in 1921. Wewak had been opened in 1919. Deputy District Officer Jim Appleby was stationed there with Patrol Officers "Shark-eye George" and Freeman. Vanimo, also been opened in 1919 with Police Master Pole stationed there. Pole wisely failed to return from leave in England to face charges of serious misconduct. He was replaced by Walter Hook.

A fair summation of the AN&MEF administration of the Aitape district was that it was very poor, if not disastrous, with inexperienced Australian servicemen obliged to enforce German law, using punitive expeditions to "punish" native communities for wrong doing. This did far more harm than good in terms of law enforcement and the establishment of law and order a good working relation. The village elders interviewed in this period wrongly attributed the punitive expeditions conducted in this period to the German administration.

The civil administration commenced on 9<sup>th</sup> May1921, with District Officer [former AN&MEF Captain Oliver Thompson in charge at Aitape.

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What might have been. Governor Hahl's 18 years in German New Guinea ended in 1914, within months of the outbreak of war. His balanced management of the New Guinea economy, the often difficulty planter's community, labour recruitment and management, and native welfare generally, brought New Guinea from disaster under the New Guinea Company, to the status of a flourishing colony, which compared more that favourable with the neighbouring Australia's Papua – former British New Guinea.

Moreover, Dr Hahl had detailed plans for the exploration and development of German New Guinea, which involved the establishment of both Angoram government station and Marienberg mission station in 1913. Dr. Hahl's plans were of course terminated by the outbreak of World War 1.

What was. As indicated in Chapter 19 the AN&MEF military occupation of former German New Guinea was disjointed and focussed on maintaining plantation productivity until the outcome of World War 1 was known. With victory, the Expropriation Board was established to implement the clauses of the Treaty of Versailles related to expropriation of Germans properties and to implement Prime Minister Hughes promises to reward Australian ex-servicemen.

There proved to be a significant difference between German nationals building their futures as planters under good governance of a German colony; and Australian ex-servicemen with no plantation experience, who were in the right place at the right time to acquire long term finance to become planters. An early indication of this impending disaster came from the Expropriation Board itself. Given that German New Guinea was an economically viable colony in 1914, the Expropriation Board monopoly should have also been very profitable and not the financial disaster it became. There were of course other complicating factors including the war itself, the collapse of the copra price and the onset of the great depression.

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In February 1921, George William Lambert Townsend, a twenty-four-year-old veteran of World War 1 in Egypt, Gallipoli, France and Belgium, called at Victoria Barracks in Melbourne, where he was invited to dine with Brigadier General E.A.Wisdom. Wisdom who was about to take up his appointment as Administrator of the League of Nations Trust Territory of New Guinea, offered him a job as a patrol officer. As the Expropriation Board was the only body recruiting at that time, Wisdom gave Mr. Townsend a note to Walter Lucas, Chairman of the Board. Lucas read the note and employed him as a "General Assistant", he would later transfer over to the Administration. He sailed to Rabaul, on the *Melusia* on 13<sup>th</sup> March 1921. Also on board was Brigadier General Wisdom and Expropriation Board Chairman, Walter Lucas.

While in Rabaul, as a Expro' Board General Assistant, Mr. Townsend was allocated a small office of a German former cashier. The word "Kassa", which appeared above the office door, became Mr Townsend's nickname throughout his New Guinea career.

The Rabaul that Mr. Townsend experienced in 1921, involved horse drawn carriages, riding stables, and just two automobiles. The Australian troops of the AN&MEF were known as "the garrison". Otherwise known as "The Coconut Lancers". Several pages of cryptic notes in Mr. Townsend's diary¹ sketch for us indelible images of critical issues of the day:

- Germans in charge of stores
- Chinese Stevedores strike sacked went trading
- RSL<sup>2</sup> "Comrades" took advantage. £10 per store rent.
- Sale Expro. effects household properties, wedding gifts. MacHutchinson striking some goods off the list. [So, the German owners could reclaim them [?]].
- 1922 Madang Rev Bloom at Kranket [Island in Madang harbour] the Kaiser's photo glowered down from a three or four-foot frame.
- Dowd killed recruiting, bones in kerosene case on schooner. Burial after dark. Grave blasted out of rock coral. [Madang?]
- *Madang no telephones ruined by expeditionary force.*

See more such tips of forgotten history icebergs after Mr. Townsend reached Aitape – below

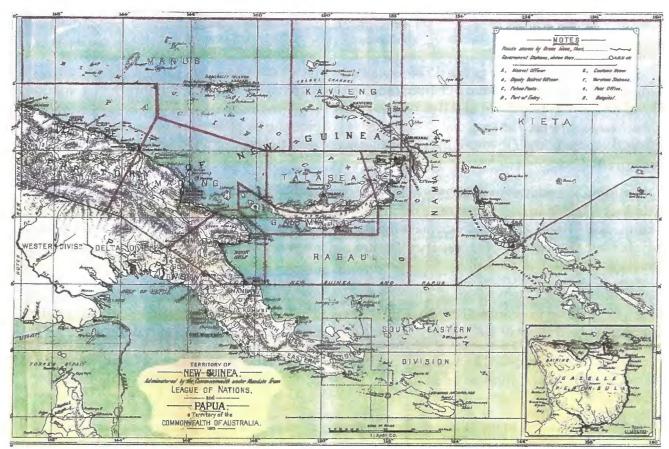
Mr. Townsend was instructed to report to the Rabaul Harbour Master, in order to gain experience before being posted to an outstation<sup>2</sup>. It was decided on 21<sup>st</sup> December 1921, that his first posting was Aitape on the New Guinea's mainland's north coast.

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The 1921-22 Annual Report to the League of Nations provides snapshots of what the Australian civil administration inherited from the German New Guinea administration. In the writer's view, several of the claims made – if not untrue were substantial exaggerations:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The notes cover 12 pages in his 1933 diary – on spare pages, apparently as memory prompts for his manuscript from which "District Officer" – published in 1968 six years after his death.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> RSL – Returned Services League



**The Territory of New Guinea** in 1922 was divided into 10 Districts which were Rabaul, Kieta, Kavieng, Namatanai, Manus, Talasea, Gasmata, Aitape, Madang and Morobe.

## **Kiap and Police Strength – 1921-22**

STATION	DO	DEPUTY DO	PO	NCO	NATIVE CONSTABLES
AITAPE	1	2	3	6	44
GASMATA	1	-	1	3	17
KAVIENG	1	1	1	3	22
KIETA	1	1	2	5	40
MADANG	1	-	1	5	35
*MANUS	1	?	?	4	31
*MOROBE	1	?	?	4	26
NAMATANAI	1	-	1	3	27
*RABAUL	1	?	?	12	138
TALASEA	1	_	1	.3	17

<sup>&</sup>quot;\* Indicates no detail available and a presumption that every District had a District Officer.

**Territory Population:** 

1914			1921		
Enumerated	Estimated	Total	Enumerated	Estimated	Total
152,075	78,000	230.075	187,517	63,500	251.017

<sup>&</sup>quot;There remain large areas for which no count or estimate has been made."

**Public Health:** ... Previously little attention was given to the conditions of living of the natives, except by the missionaries, and on plantations; but, on the establishment of Civil Administration, instructions were issued to District Officers to induce the natives, gradually and without causing

undue hardship, to form village communities, in place of living in scattered huts, to construct healthy houses...The old custom of burying the dead under houses has been forbidden and cemeteries have been laid out.

Medical staff at the end of 1922 Consisted of 18 Medical Assistants, one dispenser, two sanitary inspectors, one sanitary engineer and an extensive native staff. In addition, the Expropriation Board had a medical officer, and five medical assistants. The Board also had hospitals at Rabaul, Vito, Manus, Maron, Kavieng and Kieta, besides hospitals on its plantations...Besides being in medical charge of their districts, the medical officers have the duty of training native medical orderlies.<sup>4</sup>

**Education:** The education of natives is in the hands partly of the Administration and partly of the Missions. The report mentioned the Education Ordinance of 1922, as well as the Native Taxes Ordinance of 1921, which had provision for an education tax not exceeding 10 shillings per year, and payable into the Native Education Trust Fund. Such moneys were to be expended on the general and technical education of the natives. <sup>5</sup>

Land and Forests: The total area of the Territory was about 57 million acres. Of this the Germans had sold or leased to people other than aboriginal natives 702,000 acres, of which the Neu Guinea Compagnie held about 369,880 acres...During the military occupation, no lands were sold.

Of the area acquired by settlers from the natives about 70 "native reserves", for the use of the former native owners, were set aside by order of the German Government, a total area of about 32,000 acres.

The Land Ordinance 1922 has come into operation, which provides, generally speaking, that natives have no power to sell, lease or dispose of their land to any private purchaser, but may sell or lease only to the Administration. Policy of how "Crown" lands may be disposed of had not been decided at the time of writing the 1921-22 report.<sup>6</sup>,

**Public Finance:** The collection and payment of public moneys are regulated by the Treasury Ordinance 1921-1922, which introduced a system of control and accounting based closely on that in force in the Commonwealth.<sup>7</sup>

A summary of public revenue collected in TNG for the financial year1921-22 appears as follows:<sup>8</sup>

 Taxation:
 £135,785 - 16 - 11

 Public Services and Undertakings
 £ 88,624 - 10 - 01

 Other Receipts
 £ 28,893 - 04 - 09

 Appropriations former years
 £ 4202 - 08 - 05

 Total
 £257,506 - 00 - 02

Total expenditure 1921-22 £261,566 - 03 - 09

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## The commencement of civil administration in Aitape

On the date of the hand over to the civil administration - 9<sup>th</sup> May 1921, Mr. Townsend was still in Rabaul. The transition from military to civil rule eventuated in the Aitape District, which then included the Sepik region, when Captain Oliver John Thompson, an AN&MEF officer stationed in Rabaul transferred over to the civil administration on 9<sup>th</sup> May 1921 and was posted to Aitape as the first Australian civilian District Officer.

"Civil" rule in the Trust Territory of New Guinea was to be 100% financially self-supporting, whereas the AN&MEF administration had been subsidised to the extent of £1,000,000 per annum<sup>9</sup>.

Although it was called the "civil" administration, it continued to be conducted by military men until and beyond 1925, when a cadetship system was recruitment and training was introduced to include other than World War 1 veterans. The military orientation and values that remained with the Department of District Services and Native Affairs were a by-product of AN&MEF experience. This was reinforced through World War 2 with service in the Australia New Guinea Administrative Unit.

Five months after taking over as District Officer, Thompson was required to look into the reported misbehaviour of Police Master Pole at Vanimo. On 15 and 16 October 1921, Mr. Thompson took evidence in Aitape, and on 20, 21 and 24 October 1921 in Vanimo. Reports indicated that the Police Master had been sending his native police out to the local villages to procure women for him. While the police were away on one such errand, Mr. Pole allegedly assaulted a wife of one of his constables. Also, a Dutch Official from neighbouring Humboldt Bay [Hollandia] complained to officers of a visiting Australian ship that Police Master Pole had even sent police across the international border, seeking women for him. Mr. Pole went on leave to England and, wisely, did not return, but he did demand from England, the discharge money that he considered was owed to him 10.

Patrol officer Walter John Hook took over as Police Master at Vanimo. He had served over three years in the New Zealand Expeditionary Force, before joining Australia's Tropical Force on 30 October 1919. After serving in Rabaul, he was transferred to Aitape on 11 March 1920. Mr. Hook appears repeatedly in our story of events associated with Aitape during the 1920s, 30s and early 40s.

There were two matters in addition to the reported misbehaviour of Police Master Pole that Mr. C. Luhofs, the Governor of Dutch New Guinea, reported in a letter addressed to "The Protector of. Natives – Rabaul, cc DO Aitape"

1. **Germans fleeing across the border.** The Governor apologised that he received instructions just once a month, by steamer from the Governor General of the Netherlands East Indies. So, it was that a request from the Australian Government to detain certain Germans had not reached him before they had passed out of his district.<sup>12</sup>

These Germans had liquidated the assets they could, and had fled Australian jurisdiction with whatever wealth they could they carry with them.

**Writer's note:** At that time [1921] the Governor of Dutch New Guinea still had his headquarters at Manoekwari [Manokwari] in Geelvink Bay at the far west of Dutch New Guinea, and Hollandia was staffed by an NCO, who due to proximity to the International border, and matters associated with it, was replaced by a "Deputy Resident" – equivalent to a Deputy Governor.

The status of Hollandia was further upgraded to capital of Dutch New Guinea and played two important parts in our Sepik history. In April 1944, there were simultaneous American landings on the Japanese held New Guinea north coast, at Aitape [Persecution Task force] and Hollandia [Operation Reckless].

Then in 1962, Indonesian forces drove the Dutch out of West New Guinea. This brought the remote Australian administered PNG international border with West New Guinea into high focus, and was a key reason for the division of the Sepik District into "West Sepik", with headquarters at Vanimo, and "East Sepik." With headquarters at Wewak.

2. The reported murder of two Australian bird of Paradise hunters. The murders were stated to have happened on the Upper Fly River in Australian Papua close to the Dutch border. Lieutenant Governor Murray of Papua and the Governor General of the Netherlands East Indies had communicated on the issue. No details of the alleged murders were discovered.

The Governor General wished to prohibit Australian hunters from entering areas in which Dutch authorities had little control. It was a case of easily identifying a problem with no easily identifiable solution.

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Mr. Townsend saw Aitape, upon his arrival in late December 1921 as two houses, a gaol and police barracks and plantation lands. He noted that there was a by-monthly shipping service and a radio transmitter. District Officer Thompson, and Deputy District Officer Jim Appleby - stationed at Wiwiak [Wewak] were on patrol on the Sepik River when he arrived.

He was met by Radio Operator Ossie Egan, [a successor to George Butterworth Jackson of the undercover Bird of Paradise mission fame, Patrol Officer Wilkins, Chief Clerk Noel Tracey Collins and Medical Assistant Brendon Bradley. He noted in his diary snippets of conversation, which when reviewed nearly a century later are tips of icebergs of lost historic knowledge:

- A patrol officer at Wewak called "Shark-eye" George.
- [Father?] Schafer at Yakamul destroyed carvings and hand rails on the haus tambaran. He and Thompson each have something on the other.
- Military ranks still in use in Aitape. [after the commencement of civil administration]
- Booklet Instructions to DOs presumably a predecessor to the Dept. standing instructions.
- Blackford's picture shows in Hollandia beer 2/- [two shillings]
- In German times Aitape had horses, goats and cows.
- By 1922 the Catholic Mission had established twelve mission stations
- Police runner from Vanimo Bill Townsend³ broken leg to Aitape in 35 hours on betelnut. [Presumably carried on a stretcher and sedating his pain by chewing betelnut].
- Chinese and white recruiters in and out of the bush 30 or 40 miles apart signed in all from where they came out.

**Writer's note:** The Aitape hinterland [Maprik, Dreikikir, Yapunda, Maimai and Lumi areas] was unexplored. The origin of the labourers who were recruited were apparently signed on as belonging to the coastal village where the recruiters emerged from the bush.

• Sissano: a Chinese prisoner was in charge at Sissano. He had "married" the women he was "doing" four years for raping. He sent a weekly runner to Aitape with oysters, shrimps and fruit.

Mr. Townsend sheds light on this strange case.

The Chinese was a local trader who had been in a relationship with the woman from which a two-year-old child had been produced. A domestic row between the two ended with the Chinese being arrested and brought before the District Officer on a charge of rape. The sentence of four years apparently came as a shock to the woman, who had expected her "pound of flesh" from their domestic row to come in the form of cash compensation.<sup>13</sup>

As explained in Chapter 11, when Eitape [Aitape] was established in 1906, Hans Schulz established a small copra plantation at Maindron – at the western end of Sissano village. Schulz died in 1910. It was to this plantation that the prisoner was sent as the Manager. The woman and child [and certain prospects of another on the way] insisted in accompanying him, so they set up house again. As might be expected the Chinese took up trading with the Sissano people with goods from Ning Hee's store in Aitape. When it was suggested he take up a trading licence as required by all traders he replied that he did not need to – he was "Government", and so impossible to over-rule<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The writer is unable to establish who Bill Townsend was

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#### Mr. Townsend continues:

Another Patrol Officer now appeared on the scene. He was stationed at Vanimo near the Dutch Border...Later...when I was a fully-fledged District Officer, he was a labour recruiter in my district. The patrol officer/labour recruiter in question was Walter Hooke. Mr. Townsend continues:

He, with carriers and police had come in from the bush, through Kampoam, and not down the coast. This seemed a little odd to me at the time, but I did not spend long thinking about it...I was asked to make up some boxes of stores to go back with my colleague to Vanimo and I had stores to go to Sissano...

When we set out the following morning the Vanimo PO was extremely anxious that none of the boxes got wet when crossing streams and rivers and I dutifully took particular care that this did not happen. His own police were set to keep pace with those boxes and if a lashing broke or needed attention, they looked to it immediately... Twelve months later in Madang I learned what was in those boxes... They contained 300 skins of Bird-of-Paradise, which were disposed of over the border in Dutch New Guinea. <sup>15</sup>

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The return of the District Officer's 1921-22 Sepik Patrol. A police runner arrived from Wewak, ninety miles down the coast to announce that District Officer Thompson and his Deputy were on their way. Several days later, Messrs. Thompson and Appleby arrived on horseback. They came in ahead of a patrol of 150 men – prisoners, carriers and police. Kassa Townsend issued rations and tobacco and empty kerosene tins to use as cooking pots.

Among the cargo carried by the patrol were Sepik sleeping baskets, spears, bows and arrows and an array of carvings. Whether these were collected as war trophies or curios<sup>4</sup> is not known. The last Kassa Townsend knew of them, they were locked away in the Government store.

The purpose of the patrol had been to conduct a punitive expedition against the Iatmul village of Kararau<sup>16</sup>. Exactly what Kararau natives had allegedly done as not recorded. Mr. Townsend noted that this was the last hit-and-run punitive effort of the Sepik River.

# The accounting for AN&MEF equipment taken over by the civil administration.

Soon after District Officer Thompson's return from patrol Radio Operator Egan came to the office and asked him if he wanted to receive a certain radio message, or would he prefer to see a copy of it first. Thompson decided to see the copy which was a central administration request for a complete accounting of all buildings, furniture, tools, livestock etc. in the District; these were deemed to be the assets of the military forces and would appear as the first debit on the civil administration slate. The radio also requested an immediate cash estimation of everything at Aitape. The methodology as to how the cash estimated were to be achieved were not stated.

Thompson then announced that he was leaving the station on patrol tomorrow and he would appreciate it if Egan could deliver the original message after his departure. He then told Collins to acknowledge receipt of the message and reply that the DO was on patrol. The task of submitting values fell to Mr. Townsend, and for Marienberg police post he relied upon a report by Patrol Officer Wilkins, who's list was not lengthy.

PO's house barracks, store – native materials – top price

£ 3-00-00

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Barry Craig, Ron Verderwal and Christine Winter's 2015 book War Trophies or Curios seeks to unravel and identify an array of art pieces collected during the First World War occupation of German New Guinea.

400 gallon water tank		£10	0-00-00
Stretcher – saggy		£	05-00
10 rifles – Lee Enfield say		£2	-10-00
10 bayonets [three-cornered against Hague conve			
not say anything]			
Hurricane lamps, broken stove etc.		£	05-00

The report ended by pointing out that no attempt had been made to put a value on the police or [Wilkins] himself – for the reason that he did not think the police were worth any more than he was; and as for himself, he as not worth a bob [shilling]. When was he getting his relief?

Writer's Note. My research indicates that Mr. Wilkins does not feature again in Sepik history, neither did "Shark Eye George" of PO Freeman. AN&MEF men signed up for employment in the civil administration or the Expropriation Board, but did not stay very long.

#### Mr. Townsend continues:

To the best of my recollection the final figures I submitted for the District were approximately these:

Aitape Station [European material buildings]	£2,000-00-00
Vanimo Police Post [Native material buildings]	£15-00-00
Wiwiak <sup>5</sup> Police Post [Native material buildings]	£20-00-00
Marienberg Police Post [Native material buildings]	£10-00-00

That is to say £2,045-00-00 for all the building stores and equipment, stores and equipment in the District which was then reckoned at just over 30,000 square miles of Territory

The total administrative staff for this huge area was:

1 District Officer

1 Deputy District Officer

3 Patrol Officers

2 Medical Assistants

1 Clerk

but [this was] an improvement over the position in German times, when the District Officer had but two police masters and one medical assistant.<sup>17</sup>

The work of District Officers – Aitape: The coast, the principle islands, The Sepik and its lower tributaries were patrolled during the year.

The system of Government control through village luluais and tultuls was largely extended during the year...natives come into the station with social problems, village problems, and in fact issues concerning all aspects of village life...Natives from remote parts which have not been visited by a patrol officer or white man...have visited the station and put forward a representative to be appointed as Luluai, notifying their desire to be included under Government control...

Government protection removes the dangers from hostile tribes against which every village had formerly to prepare...The coastal natives have the copra trade established to a certain degree... Every effort is being made to stimulate trade...already in this district natives are in possession of small coconut plantations of up to 500 trees...Native plantations cover about 4,000 acres with about 200,000 trees. Native copra to the amount of 100 tons has been exported during the year.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Wiwiak [Wewak] Police Post was established in 1919/20. Marienberg, which was a police post after Angoram was closed in 1915, was officially recognised as being established as a Government station in 1922/23.

Two aspects of the 1921-22 civil administration, as described by Mr. Townsend, demonstrated just how ill prepared outstation staff were to actually administer their districts.

Aspect No 1. The lack of a statutory authority for court hearings of crimes of a summary nature. Mr. Townsend commented to Senior Clerk Collins that the only law they had was the Queensland Criminal Code, which related to indictable offences, but that there did not appear to be any statutory authority for the hearing of summary offences, which came before the court on a regular basis.

He was told that he would be quite in order to apply charges that had been used before, and if a query was raised, he was to refer to the earlier case as a precedent. In the event an offence came up that had not been referred to before, he should apply common knowledge – common law. He could not go far wrong if he kept the Ten Commandments in mind. The safe guard was that a monthly return of the Court Register was sent to Rabaul, and if anything was out of order, a telegram would soon be received to put the matter right. <sup>19</sup>

Writer's Note 1: The Queensland Criminal Code was adopted in Papua in 1902 and in TNG in 1921. Unfortunately, the 1921 adoption was from Queensland, and not from Papua, so there were variations in the application of the Law in places such as Telefomin where the Papuan border passes through populated areas. In 1966, the writer, charged someone with carnal knowledge of an underage girl. That age of consent in 1966 was 14 years in New Guinea and 17 years of age in Papua. The Judge asked the girl to raise her arm, and as hair was growing there, – the Judge's ruled that she was not under age.

Writer's Note 2: The Regulation Act [Papua] of 1908 [later known as the Native Regulation Ordinance – NRO] set out the procedures for hearing summary offences, and penalties as they applied in Papua. Had Chairman Hubert Murray of the 1919 Royal Commission won his argument that the Trust Territory of New Guinea be jointly administered with Papua, the NRO would have now applied in New Guinea. In 1924, the Native Administration Regulations NARs were passed for use in New Guinea; finally providing the legislation necessary for the hearing of summary offences. Not surprisingly, the NARs bore a close resemblance to Papua's NROs.

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Aspect No 2. The lack of enforced financial procedures. Patrols went out to collect tax. The rate was ten shillings per male adult. Mr. Townsend described a three-day collection of 1921-22 head tax he undertook from Aitape. As tax collector, he had a wide authority to give tax exemptions in cases he saw the need. Upon his return from Patrol the reconciliation showed that he had collected £86. This included £20 in German New Guinea marks<sup>6</sup>, which would be withdrawn from circulation.



#### TERRITORY OF NEW GUINEA - Head Tax 1930-31: 10/-

This specimen was found in 1972 along with broken clay smoking pipes when road construct works excavated a hillside immediately below Ambunti Sub District Office – passing through where office rubbish had apparently been dumped and burned for decades. The metal used is aluminium – partly damaged by fire

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> A mark was valued at a shilling. As late as the 1960s the Pidgin word for shilling as "mark" – writer's observation.

Senior Clerk Collins now took up the commentary.

You brought back £66 in real money. I have £30 in the kitty – that's £96. But out of that we have to pay the police £6 and the labour £4. I've £22 in money orders I'm holding for recruiters. Thompson wants £40; Collins wants £20. Egan wants \$20 and his monthly take at the radio station was only £3 -so we have to divvy up £17. Brendon Brady wants £20 and he was shrewd enough to go to Ning Hee, and persuade him to remit £20 to Rabaul so he has to get his £20. Now what do you want – seeing we have nothing left? $^{20}$ 

Clearly the lack of adherence to the provisions of the aforementioned Treasury Ordinance of 1921-12; left the early civil administration open to misappropriation. Former Director of the Department of District Services and Native Affairs, Mr. J.K.McCarthy takes up the story with mention of an Englishmen called Wilder Nelligan:

He was a District Officer at Talasea...His idea of collecting tax was that men <u>and</u> women paid ten bob [shillings] [The law required only men to pay]. Having collected the tax, he put the money on the table and divided it into three lots with his cane and would say "Well this is for me, this is for the government." And he would put it into a box. And then he would say to the people "And you can have the rest back for your trouble collecting it." The people thought this was wonderful.

Things got very bad. He was up on a charge, and he poisoned himself at a place...in the West Nakanai. The natives paddled the body back. He suicided in 1923. The headstone is still at Talasea.<sup>21</sup>

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In addition to these two aspects concerning the need for better administration efficiency, there were two newspaper articles describing events of such embarrassment to the Australian Government image with the League of Nations, that they were discussed in the Senate, where corrective measures were decided upon. These 1924 newspaper articles came just six months apart.

# #1. Melbourne Age newspaper 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1924

As indicated in the next chapter, Mrs O'Brien's story of seeing 68 dead bodies and a considerable number wounded when she arrived at the camp of the Malu tribe the very morning after a head hunting raid, although only party true<sup>7</sup>, made sensational reading. It caused debate in Australian Commonwealth Senate on 28 March where in response to a question, the Minister for Home and Territories Senator Pearce said that the only reports so far received were hearsay, but an expedition had been sent to investigate...<sup>22</sup> "Kassa" Townsend with three other Europeans and forty police made up that expedition. Chapters 26 & 27 describes the facts behind, and the investigation into the Japandai massacre.

The Australian Media also took a strong interest in the reports that vast areas remained unexplored. There were also media comparisons between New Guinea and Papua and questions were asked why the Territory of New Guinea administration had not drawn upon the experienced personnel of the Papuan Administration. This of course, was what Papuan Lieutenant Governor Murray had argued in his role as Chairman of the 1919 Royal Commission on Late German New Guinea, but his

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Mrs. O'Brien heard the story at Tambanum village about 100 miles down-stream of Malu sometime after the event.

arguments were rejected by his fellow commissioners. This secondment as probably also in response to the second newspaper article [below]

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# Papuan Resident Magistrates E.M.Bastard and R.A.Woodward posted to Aitape and Ambunti.

There can be little doubt that the Australian Minister for Home and Territories Pearce, requested Lieutenant Governor Murray of Papua to provide two experienced Resident Magistrates<sup>8</sup> to be posted to Aitape and Ambunti in the newly created Sepik District in 1924. Mr. Townsend recorded it thus:

On Sir H.Murray's advice two Papuans were "loaned" to TNG. E.M.Bastard to Aitape and R.A. Woodward to Sepik<sup>23</sup>. Concerning the Sepik: the idea was that when Walstab had completed his punitive expedition, Woodward would take over as District Officer. For several reasons- Walstab being the principal one – the expedition never did become punitive... when Woodward finally arrived I handed over the station to him and, following orders he had brought, found myself transferred to Wewak as Acting Deputy District Officer, working under Bastard at Aitape<sup>24</sup>.

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# **#2 BIRDS OF PARADISE SHOT**

Officer found guilty by Board of Inquiry

An Argus newspaper article dated Saturday September 20<sup>th</sup> 1924 reported:

Recently a Board of Inquiry was appointed by the Administrator of New Guinea to investigate certain charges relating to the export of birds of paradise made against Oliver John Thompson, former District Officer at Aitape in the mandated territory of New Guinea.

G.F.Pearce, Minister for Home and Territories, on Friday presented in the Senate the report of the board, which stated that the charge against Thompson was found to be true. According to the report, the evidence showed conclusively from the beginning, of 1923 until June, July of the same year, Thompson was systematically engaging in trafficking in bird of paradise trade for personal gain. It was stated that he employed both natives and Chinese, former members of the native police, and in one case, a prisoner under his charge, as well as natives living in their own villages, to shoot these birds and bring them to him. "When they" were "unwilling", the report continues "he persuaded them and coerced them and went so far as to threaten them with imprisonment if they did not act in accordance with his wishes. By his instructions, the birds, when shot, rolled up in limbum, the leaves of the betelnut tree – in order to conceal them and brought thus concealed, to his house. At his house his native servants, and in one case at least, a native policeman, by his direction treated them and packed them in boxes. The boxes were then placed in a back room and kept until he had an opportunity to take them to Hollandia in Dutch New Guinea, where they were sold by him to Chinese. On one occasion, they were taken to Vanimo a station in Aitape, close to the Dutch border, and there sold to a Chinese who came for the purpose from Hollandia and who returned there with them. Thompson made use of administration boats manned principally by members of the native police force."

The evidence, it is stated, also proved that Thompson acted in concert with other Europeans, officers of the Expropriation board and of the Administration. It is stated that Thompson's actions

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> On page 108 of District Officer, Mr Townsend indicates one was a Resident Magistrate and the other an Assistant Resident Magistrate.

rendered it impossible for him to administer his district; lowering the authority of the Government in the eyes of Europeans, natives and Asiatics; and incidentally, in all probability, destroyed the [faith?] by the Dutch authorities and people of Hollandia in the honesty of the British Administration, for they could hardly have been ignorant of what was taking place.

The Board which consisted of Judge I Wanliss, and Messrs J.H.Hunt and J.F.Cashman, therefore found the charge against Thompson, that he be found "guilty of disgraceful and improper conduct while District Officer at Aitape" was true.

## **End Notes Chapter 25**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> G.W.L.Townsend – District Officer – Pacific Publications Sydney Pages 17-21

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> This is an indication of the lack of training in 1921 – what could be learned about outstation life from a Harbour Master's office.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> 1921-22 Annual report to the League of Nations – clause 248 page 61

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> 1921-22 Annual report to the League of Nations – clauses 255-266 PP 63-66

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> 1921-22 Annual report to the League of Nations – clauses 302-311 pp 88-90

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> 1921-22 Annual report to the League of Nations – clause 342 page 96

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> 1921-22 Annual report to the League of Nations – clause 375 page 99

<sup>8 1921-22</sup> Annual report to the League of Nations – pages 102-108

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> G.W.L. Townsend's first draft *Kassa's story New Guinea* -The basis of the 1968 District Officer P xi

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> H.J.Hiery 1995 P 292 Note No 117 quoting reference AAC: A 5-NG 24/1437

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> NAA: B2455, record summarised as item 770 Bragge Research Volume 24

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> G.W.L. Townsend's first draft Kassa's story New Guinea -The basis of the 1968 District Officer P 76-7

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> G.W.L.Townsend 1968 P 62

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> G.W.L.Townsend 1968 P 62

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> G.W.L.Townsend 1968 P 63-65

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> G.W.L.Townsend's first Draft of District Officer Page 58

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> G.W.L.Townsend's first Draft of District Officer Page 86-87

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> 1921-22 Annual report to the League of Nations – clauses 393 - 399 pages 109-110

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> G.W.L.Townsend 1968 P 59-60

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> G.W.L.Townsend 1968 P 59

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Bragge Sepik Research Notes Volume 19 pages 548-49 – personal communication from J.K.McCarthy 24 June 1974

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> L.W.Bragge. The Japandai Migrations. In Sepik Heritage – Carolina University Press 1990 p 45

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> G.W.L. Townsend's personal diary – a note on spare pages in 1933 diary.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> G.W.L.Townsend 1968 P 108

#### Chapter 26 The Japandai Migrations.

**Writer's Note:** In Sepik 1 Chapter 52 I hypothesized that an examination of four current Sepik land tenure systems, may show how Sepik land tenure evolved. I will briefly revisit these as they explain events described in this chapter:

Type #1 "Rei" groupings. Semi-nomadic extended families who are not far removed from preagricultural hunter gatherers. Research<sup>1</sup> indicated that in the Sepik Strickland divide environment for example, such groups could not exceed a theoretical group size of 28 people as this was the maximum number that could be sustained by food they could gather in that environment and still return to the safety of their communal dwelling by nightfall.

Type #2 Small village structures with a single haus tambaran. Typical of the Bahenimo language group of the Hunstein mountains. The social structure is of simple clans which lead a sedentary village life style and use a single haus tambaran. On any given day the people will be absent hunting, gathering and sago making on remote land holdings – a "Rei"-like life style with a sedentary base.

Type #3 Complex villages with multiple haus tambarans and related village residential wards. Typical of the Wongamusen villages<sup>2</sup>. A landowning clan "Papa Bilong Giraun" invites Type #1 and #2 groups to join them on their strategic Sepik River bank location as allies in conflict with other type #3 communities. Those invited, in exercise user rights only over the land they occupy.

**Type #4 "Nimba" [enclosure] structures of mother and daughter villages** such as Parembei, Nyaurengai, Torembei, Avatip and others. There are type #3 villages which have so over-populated, that daughter villages break away. Land tends to be disputation with the "Mother" claiming her traditional land boundaries and the "Daughters" claiming sub divisions. Each Nimba group tends to be endogamous. Warfare is elevated to Nimba levels for EG Parembei Vrs Nyaula.

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From the beginning of memory, Yambon [see figure 1] has attracted wanderers. Because it was where the Japandai ancestors saw their future, I will start the Japandai story there.

Five Yambon informants<sup>3</sup> told of Yambon myths and legends of ancestors coming from underground and from lakes part human, part totemic animal and part stone beings. The first and most important ancestor was Apwimendi, who originated at a hill called Ianimbunimbir. Nine, of an unknown number of ascending generations to Apwimendi, were recorded; suffice it to say that Yambon claims a long history on the land around Ianimbunimbir. The stories tell of the wandering ancestors gathering together, for example: 'They met an ancestor of Garu<sup>4</sup>'s called Yandunmis. They told him they had brought a language for him to use...the language that we all now speak (Manambu). His old language is now lost.<sup>5</sup>

Not all the ancestors came with such sacred gifts. Sangai of Yambon reported 'My ancestor Kagaramar<sup>6</sup> made a canoe and was curing it by burning the new wood...the fire burned the yam and *mami* (a specific species of yam) gardens of the Avatips. He thought it best to go to Yambon.' Outside opinion on Yambon's mixed heritage is not always favourable. According of Nauwi Sauinambi of Bangwis.

Yambon ancestors came from up near Swagup and Alakai, some came from Garamambu. They did not paddle canoes, they just hid and had sing-sings when they used to oil their bodies with tree sap...<sup>7</sup> If a man makes trouble, he would leave his village and go to live with another village. A mixed village is a poor village.

This and other comments about forming into clans indicated to me that Yambon probably consisted wandering peoples assembling into sedentary clan groupings suggested to me they may have been Type #1 Rei groups who came together into a single village Type #2 grouping.

At this time, not far downstream Type #4 the Manambu speaking "Mother" village Avatip was fragmenting and small neighbours such as the Amei and Dau were being annihilated with survivors absorbed. The language change and the statement that these people did not previously use canoes indicates radical changes in Yambon lifestyle under the influence of the Manambu who eventually [see below] absorbed Yambon as a daughter village.

The first of several large migrations to Yambon had its origin at Parembei. Gaui of Sengo told that story as follows:

The reason why our ancestors moved was that crocodiles were finishing all the young men and women. My ancestor killed all our pigs and said 'If we stay here we will be finished.'...They married off all single girls... They doubled canoes and paddled upstream

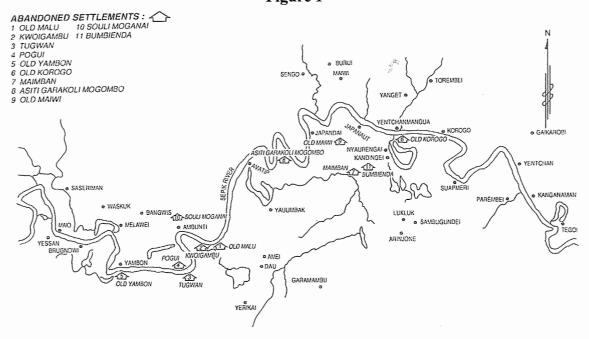
...They went ashore at Yambon and the Yambons wanted to fight them... the Parembei visitors hastily broke camp and went down river. In their haste, they left two young women behind. Damdagwa and Mabisaunogwi were asleep and were accidently left.<sup>8</sup>

**Writer's Note:** An area of land near Malingai was pointed out to me as the place where the Sengo ancestors had lived. I believe this was a residential ward similar to the sections described by Coffier. (1991)<sup>9</sup>. Sengo is this regard I would classify as a daughter village breaking away.

Why did the Sengo ancestors choose Yambon?

The Iatmul people of whom the Parembei/Sengo are part, saw the centre of their world as the Sepik River. The Iatmul consist of three Type #4 groupings: From the upstream end the Nyaula nimba from Japandai downstream to Korogo meets the Parembei nimba from Suapmeri to Kanganaman which in turn meets the Woliagwili nimba extending from Kararau to Tambunum. To these three Iatmul groupings, I would add an Ndu family but 'non-Iatmul' nimba; the Manambu based on Avatip village upstream of Japandai – see fig. 1.

Figure 1



For the Sengo ancestors to obtain land in any of these four areas would have involved the sort of life or death confrontation the Korogo migrants would soon experience<sup>11</sup>. Yambon being a small

group without alliances at that time apparently seemed an attractive option. Then, unable to settle on the banks of the Sepik River at Yambon, the Sengo ancestors moved back downstream and inland through the swamp plains waterways opposite Japandai and settled there.

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The next move involving Yambon started at what is now Avatip. According to Kwatauwi/ Vivigamei of Avatip.

When Asiti [The Manambu ancestral village] over-populated we made Mogombo and Garakoli villages nearby. The ancestors stayed there a long time and through many fights, and the waterways silted up and left Asiti, Mogombo and Garakoli too far inside...When Yabsit<sup>12</sup> came and started Avatip...we divided the people and set up Malu and Avatip. Big brother to Avatip, small brother to Malu. All the clans were represented in both places. Malu is the name of the mountain, [upon which the village was established] but the people there are Avatips.<sup>13</sup>

My inspection of the ancient Asiti-Mogombo-Garakoli settlement sites, revealed a continuous residential area extending for about two miles along the levy of a now dry water course. The abandoned Asiti-Mogombo-Garakoli site is similar to Nyaurengai-Kandingei as it existed in the 1970s. Lisindu of Malu continues the story:

Upon arriving at Malu my ancestors saw fires at Ambunti which indicated enemies close by...The enemy was called Souli Moganai.

Nauwi Sauinambi of Bangwis explained.

The Malu, unable to paddle their canoes close to shore for fear of arrows, attempted a raid but withdrew when one of their men lost an arm trying to open the Souli Moganai stockade gate. [He reached into the stockade to open the gate. The people inside grasped and cut off the arm] The Souli Moganai [Kopom-Nggala is the Kwoma name for Souli Moganai] cooked and ate the arm and the Malu sought Kwoma help...

Lisindu of Malu described the outcome

Waskuk [the Kwoma] killed them all...we Malu wanted to fight too, but when we came in the morning the fight was over.

This outcome was bad for Malu as Nauwi explained.

Our men patrolled the river bank from Malu to Melawei. We prevented the river people collecting bush materials...cutting sago or hunting. Trespassers were shot to the extent that Malu would not paddle on this side of the river...They had no land with sago on it, so...were forced to trade with the bush people [Kwoma.]

The Souli Moganai apparently had a number of garden hamlets between the Melawei lagoon and Mt Ambunti. Their main village was the stockade village on top of Mt Ambunti. According to Nauwi it had a single ceremonial house called Mankap. I therefore suggest that this was a Type #2 simple one simple one ceremonial house village. I think it is fair to say the Souli Moganai fate was sealed by the Manambu expansion to Malu. The Kwoma moved against the Souli Moganai when they learned of Malu intentions to take the Souli Moganai lands; they simply got in first.

That failure to control sago resources necessitates trade is a common feature of the riverbased communities [See Ambunti patrol reports 8/1972/3; 13/1972-3; 5/1973-4 and Gewertz 1983.] Lisindu again takes up the story:

Malu met again and it was decided they should extend our land holdings further up river by destroying Yambon.

Karandaman of Malu gave the reason for this fight as the murder of two Malu men by Yambon. He went on:

Domogwai's ancestor [of Malu] said 'Their big man Kugiaweni [of Yambon] send me a tanget [Croton leaves used to send a massage] 14 '...he will come tomorrow to trade' ... He came and they speared him with a paddle. He cried out... 'Do not kill me quickly... They are hunting at Ianimbunimbir...for a feast over killing the Malus." Lusindu continues:

They were smoking the pig meat when the Malus arrived...two or three [Yambons] survived. These are the ancestors of the present Yambon people. Malu settlers went and established a camp at Yambon to protect their newly conquered lands.

Yambon considers this an overstatement. I agree. According to Garu of Yambon.

Yambon by this time had developed into clans which claimed the land...The clans came and set up camp on the point where the Summer Institute of Linguistics is now, because the Malus had established a camp at Mt Malu. [Garu's story of the Kugiaweni and the fight generally confirms the above. He went on:]

Next morning the Yambons went down and saw the bodies of their relatives, they met the Malu force and fought with them.

Both Malu and Yambon versions then agree that Yambon abandoned their village in favour of a succession of bush camps. The writer's assumption is that Yambon reverted to Rei type foraging groupings for this period. This required a revision of my understanding of the Malu "conquest" of Yambon. Yambon's language changed to Manambu, but this seems to have happened some thirty or forty years<sup>15</sup> prior to the existence of Malu. Also, the Malu settlement on Yambon land reflected a division within Malu as much as it reflected a desire to acquire land. This division came from Malu's failed attack on Garamambu, south of the Sepik River.

Karandaman explained that a Malu elder called Sangurandaman who was angry over a bride price, put a curse on the raid - 'this line will be finished at Gumbanawur'.

All the fights of the past the Malus had won, but they lost this fight against Garamambu because of Sangurandaman's curse...Benjindum<sup>16</sup> came back to Malu defeated...He said 'No, I will not live more at Malu, I will go upstream.' He made camp where I live now [three miles upstream of Ambunti, near Tugwan, Pogoi and Yambon's ancestral place Ianimbunimbir].

The writer's information was that even at that time Garamambu was a "mother" village, with a daughter village - Yerikai. Garamambu stories tell of the crushing of two small groups Amei and Dau, between the Garamambu and Manambu mother villages, and the absorption of the survivors.

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Another migration was about to take place, this time from the Nyaula daughter village Japandai. The situation Japandai was about to enter involved a divided Malu that had recently tried and failed to land both north [the Souli Moganai incident] and south of the Sepik [The disastrous raid against Garamambu] and failed to press home its advantage against Yambon, still hiding in the forest.

# The first Japandai Migration 1890 +/- to 1913 +/-.

Opinions vary as to why the Japandais migrated. Yakabus Kami of Maiwi said. 'In fear of fighting from Maiwi.' Kwatauwi of Avatip said 'They had it in their minds to migrate.' Kwonji of

Burui said 'The Nyaurengais went up to Japandai and stole their women and pigs and made sorcery and native customs against them.' Karandaman of Malu said 'We wanted them to come...because they were our trade source of pottery and baskets. Between friends...trade is cheap and easy, between enemy's prices are high and trade slight'.

Informants from Japandai and Brugnowi [a "grand-daughter" village we discuss in the next chapter] told how the migration had its genesis in events concerning Maiwi village. Malingot/ Ongwinjambi<sup>17</sup> of Brugnowi described how his great-great-grandfather, Gumbeli of Maiwi killed a man who had committed adultery with his wife. Gumbeli and his brother fled to the protection of Japandai. Then some time afterwards:

Maiwi [a daughter village of Nyaurengai<sup>18</sup>] wanted to attack Nyaurengai and they came up river to give ginger [to seek an alliance with] Avatip. The Japandais saw the war canoe coming...and said 'Don't bother to go to Avatip, we will help you.' They gave Maiwi a long tanget, [meaning the setting of a date far in the future]. The Maiwis went home. The Japandais then prepared a short tanget and gave it to Yessan, Maio and Saseriman, and their warriors came to Japandai.

Yakabus Kami of Maiwi takes up the story:

A mourning ceremony was being held at Maiwi. The day was marked in advance and the Japandais were advised. The Japandais took ginger up near Ambunti...the people mourning were not suspicious...there were no enemies around...Near dawn...a woman climbed a coconut tree and she called 'Maiwi enemies approach.' They called back 'Maiwi is safe, we have no enemies'. 'Is that so?' she said. She was unable to change their thinking so...climbed down...took her children and belongings and paddled them in a canoe to the middle of the lake...the spears did not miss. Maiwi was badly beaten.

Yakabus told of the Maiwi survivors flight to Japanaut and then across the Sepik towards Burui. Malingot mentioned follow up raids and compensation paid for the death of a Saseriman warrior fighting for Japandai. He went on:

After the fight Gumbeli and Japandai men Paligumban and Avagien moved up river to obtain new land...[They] settled at Kwoigambu...near the Malu rest house. Gumbeli gave four women to Malu. [to seal this deal]

The reason for the migration was probably the unlimited hostility shown against a fellow Nyaula people. Nyaurengai and other Nyaula people members could be expected to take revenge. Karandaman had the following to say about the Japandai settlement on the Malu land Kwoigambu.

The Japandais came to live near the waterway to Yerikai. A Malu man [called] Winjimba washed sago and fenced the sago off. A pig of a Japandai man, Avagien ate the sago. The Malu came and speared the pig. He said 'Ah yes, I speared the pig because it ate my sago. The sago was well fenced, but the pig broke down the fence...I would not have speared the pig if the sago was unfenced.' The pig owner agreed with this and cut the pig up and gave it to the Malus to eat...The Japandais then got up and said 'We will not live here.'

# Malingot's story continues:

Then [Gumbeli]...went upstream beyond Yessan to Kusai lagoon; then he came back to settle at Yessan. But Paligumban was afraid of the Swagup and Waskuk people. He felt they [the Japandai migrants] were too far from home...so they drifted down to Pogui...Malu's ancestor Benjindum was there. As mentioned, at this time the Yambons had been attacked by Malu and were wild in the bush. Our ancestors saw the footprints of a man...Malu said it was

their enemy Yambon, and suggested that Malu and Japandai lay an ambush...but my ancestor said 'No we will become their friends' They found the Yambons and established them at Suaigai. Then they called out for more Japandais to come...and make camp opposite Gumbeli's camp, Pogui, at Tugwan. Gumbeli gave two women [Mangandawa and Tugwanmangiwanga] to Yambon with shell money to make friends.

Yambon did not acknowledge Japandai assistance, asserting that the Malus invited them to come and live at Malu and they finally came and set up camp at Tugwan.

The Malu/Japandai debate about the Yambon future is fascinating as in retrospect Japandai took the course which was eventually to do them the most harm. Malingot went on:

Gumbeli's [Japandai] group made its first market at Mino and then at Dwagup near Waskuk. Then our ancestor [Gumbeli] decided he should have a separate market from the combined Malu/Japandai market. He arranged a private market at Tirim... [Benjindum who did not like this] gave ginger to Waskuk to kill Gumbeli. Gumbeli met the Waskuks, and they told him of the plot against him...So Gumbeli gave them ginger to kill Benjindum.

Tangets were exchanged and confused...both tangets indicated the same day for Waskuk to kill Gumbeli...and Benjindum. The Waskuks attacked and killed them both.

Malingot continues...There was a payback. Japandai, Malu, Yessan and Maio fought the Waskuks at the Dwagup market site and the Waskuks were beaten. Japandai had their sing-sing at Tugwan and Malu had their sing-sing at Malu.

It seems significant that, with Benjindum [of Malu] dead, activity for Malu people again centred on Malu, not Tugwan. Warfare and a victory against the Kwoma [Waskuk] would seem to have re-unified Malu. Karandaman told how his father used Saseriman intelligence reports to attack Waskuk people gathering fish and tortoises in the Waskuk lagoon at low water. After killing these, they killed Waskuk women and children in Waskuk gardens until driven back to the water by Waskuk warriors, who had the advantage of the higher ground. Malingot picks up the story, apparently, some months later:

An argument [about fishing and gardening rights] developed between Japandai and Yambon. Yambon gave ginger to Malu and Waskuk. The men [of Japandai] were away and the fight came in their absence...They killed two elders...two children and a woman... In the afternoon, the Japandai men returned and found the village burned, and the dead. They slept outside and then prepared food and double canoes and drifted downstream to Japandai.

The Yambon version of this fight, as told by Garu stated...Yaunimbir, the wife of Jaimbendu, was at the mouth of the waterway and Yeramai [of Japandai] exposed his penis to her. [So] Malu and Yambon killed the Japandais.

Nauwi Sauinambi's Kwoma version which is somewhat similar...Jaimbendu of Yambon had a wife...who was like a prostitute. She was the mistress of a [Japandai] man Nagwanmeri...Malu agreed to ferry the Waskuk men to the fight<sup>19</sup>. The survivors went down river on rafts and broken canoes. My ancestor then took Yambon to their present site and set them up there.

It is difficult to say exactly when Yambon became recognized as a Manambu daughter village. Yambon is a case like Aibom and Suapmeri in the Parembei nimba of an alien group being absorbed rather than wiped out. In seeking Malu assistance to remove Japandai [who had so recently argued with Malu for the continued existence rather than the annihilation of Yambon]. Yambon seems to have acknowledged its position as a Manambu village.

Leadership, in my opinion, was the key to the initial success and ultimate failure of the first Japandai migration. Gumbeli established his group securely at Tugwan. He became a peace maker who brought Yambon out of hiding and argued successfully against Malu's plan to annihilate them. He developed trade, which obviously developed into a fluid interchange between half a dozen villages, in at least three language groups<sup>20</sup>

Benjindum of Malu was a leader of apparent equal status to Gumbeli. Without the division, he created in Malu it is doubtful that the Japandai's would have succeeded as they did. But with Gumbeli's and Benjindum's leadership gone the fabric unraveled.

The combined Japandai losses from the two fights against the first Japandai migration were compiled by Malingot and the Brugnowi people as: nine men, seven women, and three youths, fourteen of them Japandais and five Maiwis.

## Garu Jam said:

When we lived at Tugwan the Germans came up. The Germans went back from Ambunti [1913] and the Yambons moved to the old place [south of the Yambon gate]<sup>21</sup>

Townsend [1968: 97] indicated in 1924 that the Japandais had been there ten to fifteen years before. The end of the Tugwan settlement, then, dates to about 1913.

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# One of the reasons for the 1919 punitive expedition against Avatip, Malu and Yambon.

District Officer Aitape, Captain Olifent, sent the following telegram to Administrator Johnson in 9<sup>th</sup> March 1919.

Your C.154 Jan 24<sup>th</sup> re Sepik (stop) Completed patrol which extended from 3<sup>rd</sup> Feb to 7<sup>th</sup> March inclusive (stop) Large supply of native weapons and curios per Colquhoun (stop)... Reason Sepik trouble absence of regular supervision natives boasting generally that the Government has ceased to exist (stop) All villages now assured to the contrary (stop) Demonstrations thoroughly effective... Worst case discovered was murder of 200 at Jamanum by combined villages Awatip and Malu and Jambun (stop) Full report first mail. [Captain J.H.S.] Olifent.

Writer's Note: While the place name *Jamanum* is unknown, these killings can only have been the nineteen Japandais and Maiwis and an unknown number Waskuks and others killed in the two battles involving the first Japandai migration. It does not come as a surprise that the exaggerated number of 200 were reported as murdered.

# Between Migrations 1913+/- to 1922+/-

An undated land file at Ambunti contains documentation of an interview with two Japandai elders, Wagi/Banduwan and Mariandei/Kaneiman, according to whom:

More than half the Japandais went upriver to settle at a place called Tugwan... The Tugwan settlement lasted for some time, perhaps as long as a generation. [When the Tugwan survivors reached Japandai] the permanent Japandais suggested that the Tugwan Japandais go and settle at Maiwi. The permanent Japandais were having some trouble with Korogo, Yentchanmangua and Nyaurengai. The Tugwan Japandais went to Maiwi, but...were...badly treated so...returned to Japandai.

Malingot elaborated on this:

We retreated to Maiwi. We did not think of the old fight against Maiwi, but the Maiwis made sorcery against us and killed us to pay back for the fight we made against them years ago.

The Japandai 'pay-back' for Tugwan was aimed at Malu. It started with a raid, which according to Malingot burned a hamlet called Manji. The next raid killed four women tending fish nets at dawn. Following this four people were killed while rolling sago logs near Lake Kwoigambu. Malu was feeling the pain...They said 'We were not the source of the ginger. Yambon is the place where the fight started.' Malu gave us a war canoe called Kabandingei and said... 'Go in this canoe and kill Yambon. 'The Malus gave the Japandais a tanget to mark the Yambon market day with Saseriman. This intelligence provided Japandai with a target.

They ambushed for this trading party and fought at Yambon on the way back down stream. At Tugwan they decorated themselves and sang their way down stream. Malu asked 'How many did you kill?' We replied 'Seven' Malu replied 'Good you have ended the fight now.' Malu explained that they had been afraid and that women and children would die of starvation [had the war continued].

Malingot told of two more raids against Yambon, resulting in four additional deaths before the peace was made. Malu, Avatip and Yambon informants were not asked directly about these raids or the gift of the war canoe. No informant from these villages offered acknowledgement or details.

# The second Japandai migration 1922+/- to 1923.

According to Malingot of Brugnowi:

There was interchange and movement back and forth. Malu and Yambon came and invited us to come back and live at Yambon at the old place south of the Yambon gate.

The old land file documentation of the interview with Japandai elders, Wagi/ Banduwan and Mariandei/Kaneiman is more specific:

They [Japandai] stated there [Japandai village] for years and the population grew. The Tugwan branch wanted to return to Tugwan, but the permanent Japandais did not want to reduce village strength. However, an influential man of the Tugwan faction went to Yambon and discussed matters with an influential Yambon man [Mangoimeri of Japandai spoke to Kwanggambi of Yambon about forty years ago.]<sup>22</sup> Both these men were in their prime and of considerable standing in their communities. Mangoimeri proposed that the Japandai people return to the Yambon area. Kwanggambi was agreeable...but suggested that instead of settling as a unit on their own land that they come to Yambon and settle into the village and be absorbed in the Yambon community...Mangoimeri went back to Japandai and the move was arranged.

Malingot and other informants had little to say about the second migration beyond that it 'was quickly followed by a big fight that finished Japandai.' The Yambon version of what happened as told by Garu Jam, was as follows:

[Japandai] asked if they might come back and live with Yambon again. Our fathers agreed, but said. 'You must not behave as last time'. They came back but they behaved as they did before. If our women went anywhere they made to kill them. The same with small parties of men. They disputed our rights to use the lagoons. Yuwandu sent ginger to Waskuk, Avatip, Nyaula, Nyaurengai, Malu and they came and finished the place ...few survived to return to Kambaramau [the name of the Japandai home village]. Their bodies were thick like

dead fish in the water. The priest Father Kirschbaum [at Marienberg] saw the bodies and sent word to Madang.

In another discussion Garu added:

We took no prisoners. Some men thought of taking children to raise as their own, or young girls or women to take as wives. But they feared...if they did...later when they grew up they would know where their place was and go back and leave the Yambons. Plenty of men caught such people and hid them, but others found them and they were killed. There has not been a third fight against Brugnowi<sup>23</sup> because we are at peace now and our children are growing up well and we know if the fight came we would be running in the bush and our children would die of starvation as they did in the past during fighting times.

The Malu version as told by Lusindu is as follows:

The [Japandai] commenced disputing the Yambon right to fish in lagoons. The Yambon big men...sent ginger to our fathers at Malu. The problem of the Japandai presence had concerned us for some time. We sent tangets down to the big men of Nyaula, Sugundambri and Yabisaun<sup>24</sup>of Nyaurengai/Kandingei. They came in their big war canoes. The combined force went and finished them [Japandai]. We beheaded them and threw their bodies in the river.

The Avatip involvement was described by Kwatauwi:

Parakau of Avatip and Yabisaun of Japanaut<sup>25</sup> were friends; although they were of different groups they came to see each other on business...this is the sort of relationship through which ginger is passed to start a fight...Yambon did not send the ginger to Avatip... it came to Avatip from Nyaula. In this fight, we did not take heads. The bodies went into the water. Avatip was happy to fight because they [Japandai] were on Yambonjandu, which is Yambon land, part of Avatip land.

Both the Malu and Avatip statements indicate a degree of proprietary interest in Yambon land. The need to remove the Japandai is in keeping with Yambon being part of a Manambu nimba. Malingot said of the survivors:

Few were able to escape by canoes or floating logs on the Sepik. The Malus came out and fought them as they drifted by. At night-fall they came to the passage leading to Avatip and waited until dawn when Noganmeri...called out to the Avatips of his clan... 'Will you fight us? If you will, [then] come and kill us now. Yambon killed us and few of us are left.'

The clan associations described by Wassmann<sup>26</sup> are significant here; the survivors were able to seek protection from clansmen in Avatip on the day after warriors from that village had taken part in the massacre. Later we will see Tegoi people of the Nyaula nimba seeking clan association protection from the enemy Parembei nimba. Similar clan associations exist between Iatmul and Sawos villages and I would assume throughout the whole Ndu language family. Malingot continues his story:

The Avatip garamuts [slit-drums] were beaten and Avatip canoes came out to get them and ferried them down. They pulled out the broken spears and arrows and fixed our wounds... movements on the river were at night. Malu and Yau'umbak [another Manambu daughter village] were still after us.

Kwatauwi of Avatip enlarged on this:

We were sorry for them and took them ashore and put oil and banana leaves on their wounds and cut their skin with bamboo knives to let the bad blood out... When they were repaired, we sent them down to their old place Kambaramau [Japandai].

Malingot told a story or some less fortunate survivors

Bumbienda was the place from where the Japanauts came and fought us. This is inland from the present Japanaut, on the Chambri side of the swamp. The Bumbienda haus tambaran [ceremonial house] was called Jriabei. Captured Japandai children; Dumisen and Jumibangwa, were about nine years old. Sugurap, a child of Yabisaun's [attacked] one with a spear; his father killed him...This was done so the child could wear black paint and be initiated.

When the children were dead they were placed one in each of the major post holes of the haus tambaran and the posts put in on top of them and the ground is called after them, by their names. This gives the ground power. This is how we establish ownership. If we have named land in this way it is ours and no-one can touch it. If we are trying to win new land and a fight starts, we must always return to the old place with a name.

# Indirect consequences of the massacre. #1 the Tegoi migration from Yentchanmangua

Opinions on the action against Japandai within the Nyaula nimba were mixed with some strongly in favour and some strongly against. Two major migrations resulted; Gwolai of Tegoi tells of the Tegoi migration:

Men of Japanaut...and Nyaurengai killed the Japandais. Four of our fathers... [of Samiangwat clan Yentchanmangua village] opposed this attack on Nyaula people by Nyaula people. They said 'Japandai was a good place; they were our source of paddles and canoes. Why did we kill them? Their opposition was clear and open and it was evident that they intended to back [avenge] this fight.

Two [cousins from Seliambu clan] said 'We are few who think this way...we cannot pay back this big fight...It would be better if you went back to where you buried Bonguwan [an ancestor killed by Korogo and buried in his widow's village of Kaminimbit in a burial plot purchased with a girl called Malinjoa] Maimbwan agreed with this idea. The two cousins prepared a double canoe...They left in the night and said nothing to the village as a whole. Maimbwan changed his mind and decided to try his luck at Kanganaman...They had plenty of clansmen there; Samiangwat, Naua, Masam...At dawn the next day the Kanganaman leader Malingingin...sent talk to Parembei, Malingai and Yentchan to come. 'Our enemies are here – Nyaulas from Yentchanmangua; come and kill them.' It was a challenge to the whole Parembei [nimba]...They all came including Aibom. Malingingin had a great understanding of the Parembei people. Also, Malingingin made magic so that the strength of the Parembeis for fighting would be gone...The Parembeis said, 'No we will not kill them, we will give them sago.' It is a custom that if a clan gives food to people they are making a truce.

Gwolai explained a later dispute caused them to shift from Kanganaman to settle at Tegoi.

The Tegoi migration and associated facts reflect the repeated mention Nyaula people fighting other Nyaula people. This indicates the considerable social and political upheaval the incident caused within the Nyaula village communities. The accepted code within Nyaula is strictly limited hostility, whereas the Japandai massacre was outside that accepted code.

Indirect consequences of the massacre. #2 Nyaula colonization of the Chambri Lakes<sup>27</sup>

According to Weindumbanga of Lukluk Island, a grandson of Yabisuan;

While living at Bumbienda... Yabisaun went with the Yau'umbaks and participated in the Japandai massacre. Some other Japanauts went also. The Nyaurengais were very angry about this as [Japandai] people were of our language and were a good source of paddles and canoes...but the Japanauts protected them [the killers].

To be safe Yabisaun left Bumbienda, which was close to the way the Nyaulas came and went, and went to [a more remote place called] Mambangaui.

Weindumbanga went on to talk about the development of sago trade with Garamambu and the eventual settlement of Sambugundei and Lukluk Islands in the Chambri Lakes. Another view was offered by Maganjui of Nyaurengai:

I put the Japanauts at Lukluk. The Japanauts went to kill the Japanais...The Nyaulas got up to kill the offending Japanauts in a payback. I went with my elder brother and collected the offenders Yabik, Wabiengaui, Gumbiangan [of Japanaut] and from Nyaurengai Ambaimeri, Kamburi, Kubeliwan, Mondindimba, Ambundimi, and Kanabimeri and took them to Maiban [known as Maimban to the Avatips and presumably Mambangaui to Lukluk] on the Yau'umbak waterway into the Chambri lakes. We did this because they were our family and we wanted to help them. We cleared the bush for them. Later we took them to Sambugundei Island, and then when they killed the miners at Korosameri<sup>28</sup> [River], they ran away and we put them at Lukluk.

There was a third Japandai migration; the subject in part, of the next chapter. In conclusion of this chapter it needs to be noted that two major battles – Japandai and their Kwoma allies attack on Maiwi and the later combined attack on the Japandai migrants at Yambon by Malu, Yambon, Avatip, Yau'umbak, Kwoma, Japanaut and Nyaurengai caused major and widespread unrest in the Middle Sepik region. The cause of the unrest were two serious breaks with a tradition which required that daughter villages within a type #4 social grouping of mother and daughter villages that warfare must be limited in nature because the groups involved were all of the same "mother" village – they were allies who should save their all-out aggression for a "true" enemy such as the Parembei Nimba. Breaches of such a tradition carried far reaching consequences as witnessed in this chapter.

## **End Notes Chapter 26**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S.Hatanaka and L.W. Bragge – Isolation, Habitat and Subsistence Economy in the Central Range of New Guinea – Oceania Vol 44 Sept. 1973 pages 38-57

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Sepik River villages between Swagup and the junction of the Sepik and May Rivers

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Bragge Sepik Research Notes Vol 18 P1-9 [Sangai, Garu/Jam, Tagapwi/ Mebukumban, Anton/Yuwandu and Kungwian/Maimban]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Garu was the leader and elected Local Government Councillor of Yambon in 1970

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Informant Tagapwi/Mebukumbi. The language change is reckoned to have occurred in about the year 1830 by use of a simple genealogy and allowing 20 years for each ascending generation.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Kagaramar's departure from Avatip was reckoned to have happened in about 1890

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Bragge Sepik Research Notes Vol 18 page 62

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Bragge Sepik Research Notes Vol 18 page 197

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Coffier C. Sepik River Architecture: Changes in Cultural Traditions. Fig 1 P493 Sepik Heritage 1990

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> This is will described by Jurg Wassman in The Nyaura Concepts of Space and Time. In Sepik Heritage 1990

<sup>11</sup> See Sepik 2 chapter 21

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Yabsit's descending generation to the present (1970) Yabsit-Bwiandimi-Pelam-Komasungwa-Naukwan-Olimal-Wama (child). Assuming Yabsit was forty five and Olimala fifty five the settlement date would be about 1860. Another opinion is based on the fact that Gutubu was one of the first Malu settlers: Gutubu-Kamai-Irembu-Dangwan-Lisindu. Assuming Gutubi was forty and Lisindu sixty, the settlement dates to about 1870.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Bragge Sepik Research Notes Vol 18 P 40.

14 According to Nauwi Sauinambi 'fastening a tanget' is the same as sending a note. The number of croton leaves marks the number of days until a planned action is planned to happen. If you have trouble in your place you would take wild taro, ginger, cook black face paint, bamboo shavings from sharpening a spear and wrap them up and give them [With the sharpened spear] to an enemy group. This means...'If you are true men you will come and destroy this place'. You had to give it to a man of power in the place. This man will decide whether to attack or let it go. He may report back to the village to be destroyed...'We have received this bundle...but we have been good friends in the past so look after this man [ or fix the problem] or we will be obliged to come and kill you.'

A group receiving such a bundle usually rejoices...everyone likes to fight...if I received such a bundle I would take it to the haus tambaran and...I would throw it on the floor at the foot of one of my kin. He would pick it up. This is acceptance of the invitation to fight. He may not pick it up if he has relatives in the village. He will allow another to pick it up. The person who accepts the invitation divides the contents of the bundle and tie their portion to the spear they will use in the fight. The black paint supplied will be put on their faces. When the fight is over and the survivors see the ginger on the spears, they will know the source of the fight has come from within their own village. The man who sent the bundle may...live with the aggressors, or he may pretend not to know. If he is discovered, he will be killed. The man who sent the spear he had sharpened will expect that spear to kill his specified enemy in the village.

- <sup>15</sup> The Yambon language change: Yanbunmis-Paligumban-Kawapi-Jugunbendi-Eimangauwi-Kitimbai-Jam-Garu. Assuming both Yanbunmis (Also known as Yingunmis) and Garu were fifty years of age, the language change occurred in about 1830.
- <sup>16</sup> Benjindum's settlement of Yambon land: Kabaigumban [killed in the Garamambu fight]-Kungweinmeri [a small child when his father died]-Karandaman [born 1905]; thus, the settlement took place 1890-95.
- <sup>17</sup> Malingot is quoted a number of times in this Chapter. See Bragge Sepik Research notes Vol 18 pages 89-105
- <sup>18</sup> Informant Yakabus Kami of Maiwi Bragge Sepik Research Notes Vol 18 page 189
- <sup>19</sup> The Waskuk and other Kwoma people at that time had no canoes or water mobility. "Kwoma" means hill people.
- <sup>20</sup> Japandai spoke Iatmul, Malu spoke Manambu and Waskuk spoke Kwoma. A possible fourth language was Yessan.
- <sup>21</sup> The Yambon gate is a geographic feature where the Sepik River narrows to less than 100 meters in width between two Ridges. The water passing through this confined space is very turbulent.
- <sup>22</sup> The interview with Japandai elders, Wagi/Banduwan and Mariandei/Kaneiman is undated, but the forty year reference suggests the interview occurred in the mid 1960s.
- <sup>23</sup> The present day village of the Japandai/Maiwi migrants.
- <sup>24</sup> Yabisaun as we shall see features significantly in Sepik 3 in the 1942 murder of gold miners, support for the renegade police who raped and pillaged the Chambri Lakes villages and eventually in the killing of two renegade police.
- <sup>25</sup> A village of the Nyaula nimba.
- <sup>26</sup> Wassman J The Nyaura concepts of space and time in Sepik Heritage 1990 ed Letkehaus et al p 19.
- <sup>27</sup> Also see Sepik 4 Chapter 8 The Iatmul tribal colonisation of the Chambri Lakes
- <sup>28</sup> See chapter 17 Sepik Book 3 The Sepik at War.

# Sepik 2 Chapter 27. The 1924 investigation of the Japandai Massacre.

This Chapter follows on from Chapter 26 which describes the massacre and two migrations of Japandai village people that lead up to it.

## Australian involvement 1924 =>

The Melbourne newspaper *The Age* on March 3<sup>rd</sup> 1924 reported tales of horror brought back from New Guinea by passengers on the Steamer *Martaran*.

Mrs. O'Brien, a woman who has travelled extensively in New Guinea, visited the Sepik River District and there it was alleged she witnessed the result of a frightening massacre of sleeping blacks. Mrs. O'Brien arrived at a camp of a Malu tribe on the morning after the atrocities had taken place. It was then learned that a tribe of kanakas had made a friendly visit to the Malu tribe from Avanky and Yambu. But in the middle of the night they had set upon their hosts and murdered them in their sleep. Mrs. O'Brien saw 68 bodies scattered around while hundreds of spears and stakes pinned them to the ground. There were 37 survivors but all had been frightfully mutilated. These included 15 men 12 women and 10 babies.

Mrs. O'Brien said that such stories never reach the outside world, and were scarcely credible but the things she had seen in the space of a few months she would not care to see again, during the remainder of her lifetime.

Her story caused debate in the Australian Commonwealth Senate. In *Senate debates* for Friday March 28, 1924, we read:

Senator Grant asked the Minister for Home and Territories.

- 1. Has the Minister received information to the effect that during a night attack by one native tribe upon another on the mainland of New Guinea 68 Kanakas were killed and a considerable number wounded?
- 2. If so, will he inform the Senate what steps, if any, have been taken to punish the participants.

Senator Pearce: The answers are:

- 1. The only information so far received is based entirely upon hearsay. The informants had no personal evidence to offer and did not even visit the scene of the alleged tragedy. They claim however to have seen some of the survivors of a tribal fight which is stated to have taken place two months earlier on the Sepik River valley outside the area under effective government control.
- 2. An expedition in the charge of an experienced District Officer consisting of four Europeans and 30 native constables, has been dispatched to the Sepik River to make an investigation, and, if possible, to arrest the culprits and bring them to trial. The expedition is in no sense punitive and one of the objectives is to establish a permanent government station, 250 miles up the river as a preliminary step to bringing the surrounding area under control.

What Senator Pearce did not spell out was Australia's political embarrassment as a newly formed Commonwealth of six former colonies trying to explain how 68 heads had been taken in territory for which Australia was responsible under its recently granted mandate from the League of Nations.

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# The Police investigation and the establishment of Ambunti station.

Whenever a patrol or expedition departs, it does so with a set of instructions [ideally written, but sometimes oral], as to what outcomes are expected to be achieved. Such instructions not only tell patrol members what to do, but also may provide protection for them.<sup>1</sup>

For this expedition the instructions effectively came directly from the Minister for Home and Territories. The expedition was instructed to:

- 1. Go to the scene of the crime and investigate it.
- 2. If possible arrest the culprits and bring them to trial.
- 3. The expedition is in no way to be punitive.
- 4. Establish a Government Station 250 miles up the Sepik River.

The writer has received similar patrol instructions to go into uncontrolled country to investigate murders [Sepik 4 – Chapters 38 – West Mianmin restricted area and 53 – North Hewa] and so knows the thoughts and emotions that were no doubt going through the minds of the expedition members:

- 1. Excitement at the prospect of going into the unknown.
- 2. The typical military sensation of a level of fear, given the enormity of investigating the massacre of 68 people, which was tempered by "do or die" discipline.
- 3. The need to come to grips with the instruction concerning punitive actions. The Minister's Government "instruction as at odds with the policy which existed until 1921 and the German trained native police applied punitive measures as a matter of course. It was evident from Townsend's *District Officer* that each expedition member understood and expected the expedition to be punitive.
- 4. The single most important next step was to gain more information about what lay ahead.

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The Europeans involved with the expedition were:

Colonel John Walstab. District Officer, Kavieng, was to be in charge, with the powers of Deputy Administrator.

Patrol Officer, G.W.L.Townsend, acting District Officer of the Manus District. He was to serve as Deputy District Officer on the expedition.

Patrol Officer, E. Feldt – later of 'Coast watcher' fame during World War 2 Medical Assistant Stan Christian, a descendant of Fletcher Christian of the *Bounty*.

In line with the policy of the day, all four had served in World War 1. They were accompanied by a detachment of fifty native police, twenty more than the Minister had mentioned.

The expedition was transported in two small ships; the *Aloha*, the government ketch stationed at Aitape, and the S.V.D. ship *Gabriel*. Mission administrator Father Puff, from Alexishafen insisted that the *Gabriel* be used for transportation only and not be used in any offensive action and that the Captain, Father Loerks was to remain in control of the vessel at all times. Under these conditions the mission chartered the *Gabriel* to the administration for £20 per day<sup>1</sup>. The ships met a Marienberg; *Gabriel* Potsdamhafen in the east, and *Aloha*, with Feldt on board from Aitape in the west. Father Kirschbaum came aboard the *Gabriel* and provided some background information the expedition so badly needed:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> If a hazardous undertaking is ordered, the documentation of that instruction can be used as evidence, in subsequent inquiries of why, for instance, warriors may have been shot in the course of carrying out that lawful instruction.

All the middle river villages lived in a state of hostility with one another. They maintained sentry posts on either side of each village, and all had prepared 'hide-outs' behind their villages to which women and children could retreat in times of attack. Occasionally two villages would combine in attack on a third in a raid for 'heads', but the 'partners' might be raiding each other before the year was out.

Every young man had to have procured an enemy 'head' before he could be accepted as an adult in the village or before any woman would accept him as a husband. Sometimes if a very old man had a very young son, the father might commission a raiding party from his village to bring back a live captive. Then in the safety of village the youth could do to death the captive and so be entitled to wear the flying fox skin around his loins, the mark of a man who had taken his 'head'<sup>2</sup>

At to the massacre which was the subject of the current expedition, Father Kirschbaum explained:

Japondai [Japandai village] had so grown in numbers that they felt strong enough to spare a number of families to take up...land where they once lived but had been hunted from 10 to 15 years before. To do this they had to go upstream about 40 miles, passing their old enemies the Avatips and the Malus and stopping within sight of other enemies, the Jambons. [Yambons]. They chose a time for this migration when they knew the men of these villages would be occupied away from the river; and so...arrived safely...and commenced building new houses. Several months went by without any sign of displeasure and, indeed, it is easy to see why the Japondai began to feel they were going to get away with it. Their feeling of security was strengthened even more by the unusual behaviour of the Jambons who...began to send them gifts in the form of timber and other building materials. They did this by constructing log rafts and sending a lone man in a canoe to call out to the Japondai and point to what was floating downstream. The Japondai, no doubt wary at first, eventually relaxed their guard and became careless and when one day, a number of rafts appeared spread out over the surface of the river, some of the men put out in canoes to collect them as usual. These were therefore helpless spectators when the Avatip and Malu allies of Jambon attacked from the rear of the village...in all 28 Japondais lost their heads.

Father Kirschbaum recommended the expedition go to a place between Malu and Yambon. This was the only place that offered dry land upon which to camp and had been a camp site of the 1912 "Behrmann" expedition. He also recommended the expedition collect a man from Korogo village who had worked for Behrmann.

The apparent conflict between what is said by Townsend and the people's story concerning the number of heads taken, may, I think, be attributed to two causes

- 1. In such a primitive situation, without adequate interpreters it would have been nearly impossible to establish what happened.
- 2. Townsend and others no doubt wanted the matter taken out of the political arena as quickly as possible so they could get on with establishing the station and making friendly contact with the Ambunti people.

The Brugnowi<sup>2</sup> village people list of dead from the raid on the second migration shows sixty-eight; fifteen men, nineteen women, fifteen girls, eighteen youths and one small boy. Sixty of them were Japandais and eight were Maiwis. I have no doubt the number was sixty-eight, not twenty-eight as Townsend [1968] has it. The sixty-eight were listed by name, sex age and village for me in 1972

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See below, there was a third "Japandai" migration which established Brugnowi village

and also the number mentioned in the 1924 news-paper article and the Australian Senate debate, neither of which I saw until 1983.

I believe the list of dead was compiled by the survivors immediately after the incident, as would be done in preparation for reprisals. There is conformation that Mrs. O'Brien was not in Malu the morning after and wandered around making her own count. G.W.L.Townsend's personal diary for 1924:

Mrs. O'Brien of Millilat [A Madang Plantation] was on *Gabriel* with mission sisters at TAMBANUM [100 miles downstream of where the killings took place] when they heard of the massacre and spilt it to the newspapers in Sydney – hence the expedition. *Seemingly, an almost endless chain of headless bodies had been observed floating downstream, and if the lady had not observed the bodies herself, she had spoken with many who had.<sup>3</sup>* 

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The ships left Marienberg, and days later, reached Korogo, there, they located the man to whom Father Kirschbaum who had accompanied Dr.Behrmann in 1912 and could lead them to the dry land camp site, known as "Ambun, amundi". It was only years later that Townsend discovered that "Ambunti" was not a place name, but a description, which meant... a long way further up [the river]<sup>4</sup>. By then the name "Ambunti" was on maps, where it remains to the present day.

Anthropologist Ross Bowden corrects Mr. Townsend's statement as follows.

In District Officer 1968;99 Townsend states incorrectly that the name "Ambunti" derives from a latmul expression meaning something like "A long way up river"... When Kwoma destroyed the Gaya village and routed its inhabitants, they adopted many names of the vanquished group. For instance the Gaya name for the southern part of the Waskuk Range was Abudi [= Ambunti]. See chapter 34 for full details of the demise of the Gala [Kompong Ngala – Souli Moganai]

Near Avatip the *Gabriel* encountered unexpected river conditions, which Mr. Townsend described thus:

The Gabriel was caught in the edge of a giant whirlpool which took in half of the river and stretched over to Avatip village a quarter of a mile away... [Gabriel]then went over on a list, as the whirlpool was a saucer with the edge some ten to fifteen feet lower than the sides. At the very centre was a hole from which came a perpetual sucking sound and I saw a reasonable sized piece of timber which was whirling around suddenly stand on its end and disappear.<sup>5</sup>

It is not known what caused this incredible whirlpool, which no longer exists near Avatip. Mr, Townsend continues: I looked back and was astonished to see the surface of the whirlpool alive with canoes which appeared to skim across the troubled waters like "boat-men" on a still pond. The Avatips had come out to the river to see what we were going to do...their last visitor and the only one until we came, was at once attacked. He was Fritsch...a German recruiter in 1921.

The ships continued upstream passing Malu to arrive off the high ground of "Ambunti" mountain late in the afternoon on a date not recorded, in early April 1924. It was decided to land next morning, so *Gabriel* anchored thirty yards offshore. Near midnight a shot rang out, when a sentry took a floating log to be an attacking canoe; clearly nerves were on edge.

Mr. Townsend was chosen to lead the landing party. He was more concerned about possible "friendly fire" from the police lining the rails of both decks – providing "cover", than about any warriors who might be waiting in ambush ashore. Not surprisingly, there were no warriors waiting

ashore. When their camp was set up, Colonel Walstab gave a radio message addressed to the Administrator to Father Loerks to deliver to Madang.

This was a progress report which would eventually inform the Australian public that everything was under control and the offenders would surely be brought to book.

Camp security and procedures involved rolls of barbed wire which had been rolled out around the camp perimeter a la Western Front. Empty food cans were attached to the wire to trigger warning noises should anyone blunder into the wire, or attempt to enter the wire. The police were then to each fire five shots in the direction of the "enemy." The outcome of this was bullets going in every direction. This so terrified everyone in camp that the procedure was changed to lighted hurricane lamps being hung on the wire – at least this would allow the police to fire in the right



Ambunti station 1928 – first camp<sup>6</sup>



Ambunti station mid-19607s

Gradually canoes appeared with the paddlers watching the camp. Calls to these people brought only the response of arses being shown in the caller's direction. Colonel Walstab needed to make a sortie against the local villages, before the end of the month, in order to have something to report to the Administrator, and via him to the Australian public.

Walstab and Townsend departed under cover of darkness in two canoes for Yambon. There was evidence of sentries, who made their escape. The village itself had been deserted for about two weeks. The expedition became somewhat of an anti-climax after that and the and the press began to lose interest. It was at this stage that the Papuan Officers Bastard and Woodward were posted to the Sepik and Mr. Townsend found himself posted to Wewak as acting Deputy District Officer, responsible to District Officer Bastard at Aitape.

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No arrests were made for the Japandai massacre and no one came to trial. Townsend, when reposted to Ambunti, months later, warned the people of the consequences of headhunting should it happen again, but as they did not know the law there would be no punishment on this occasion. Garu Jam of Yambon explained how his people understood the handling of the situation:

The kiap came to teach Yambon the law. We scattered, some to Yessan, some to Waskuk, some to Melawei and Saseriman...and we stayed a long time in the bush. Vaginap the Luluai of Avatip spoke with us and tried to grease the Yambons ...They took two men to Ambunti, Ganbank and another who ran away. Ganbank came back without being gaoled. Then they took two more to Ambunti – Yebindu and Marikwat, and gave them salt and rice and other things...They made peace like this and became friends...and brought them back to Yambon.

# The Third Japandai Migration 1926+/- to date

Reference to Townsend [1968] indicates that the third Japandai migration occurred prior to Townsend's posting to Kavieng in 1927. Malingot of Brugnowi's story continues:

We wanted to go and fight again to pay back our defeat...but kiap Townsend came...At the Yessan invitation to once again go up river, there was varying opinion in Japandai...some said enough of our people had been killed up there. Nine men got up, including Tultul Imingaui, and made camp at Brugnowi. We purchased the land from

Yessan...The Japandais and the Yessans saw kiap Townsend at Ambunti and he said the Yessan talk was OK. They gave us land and they cleared the bush and made houses for us without floors, [just] a roof over our heads...The nine Japandais prepared payment for the land and gave it to the Yessans. There were two heaps of pay plus a pig and a dog, and they cut the pig and the dog up for food and distributed the pay to Yessan. The Yessans got up and killed four women, Kimbeinmange, Yambunwun, Ambai and Wanio, to make Brugnowi a strong place. The land deal was settled. We needed a lake to fish and find food in; Ailambari they...purchased, Juigogo, an island, they paid for. They sold this land to us. Lombugu and Banglaga lakes also we purchased. The tributaries and waterways we have purchased. We will eat together without boundaries, was what Yessan said.

Yessan ruefully confirmed this. Yingir said:

Brugnowi was our mistake. We invited them to come and live on our land. We sent them decorated lime gourds as gifts down to Japandai, after the Yambons had twice defeated them, and they came at our invitation.

The land-file record of the interview with Japandai elders Wagi and Mariandei ends:

With the Government established at Ambunti the Japandais again went upriver and settled where they are now...The Tugwan migrants feel they have a strong claim through their payments and their previous heavy losses. Just after the war [World War 2], fighting broke out between Yambon and Brugnowi over hunting rights. The Yambons were sent to jail in Angoram for their part in it.

The final Brugnowi list of dead contains five names: two men and three women killed at Lake Swotawit upstream from Yessan after the war with Japan. Sepik 4 Chapter 9 *The Swagup head hunting raid of February 1952* describes this incident.

Reports of conflict between Yessan and Brugnowi over the years include District Court deposition dated June 23, 1954, to the effect that seven Brugnowis and seven Yessans were gaoled for riotous behaviour and sentences to two to four months each. The dispute was over canoes and trees, with Brugnowi offering compensation and Yessan refusing to accept it. A Japandai village book notation from 1960 records Japandai fears that Brugnowi would plant tree crops on their former lands, their concern being that they [Brugnowi] would not be able to retain their present lands if the matter went to court. There fears are typical of the "mother" village fearing that the daughter will make claims within the boundary the Mother hers.

In Ambunti Patrol Report No 11 1967/68 patrol officer Rudi Treutlen wrote:

Yessan Maio own the land upon which Brugnowi live. The Yessan Maio describe the Brugnowi as thieves and rogues, who encroach upon land and water rights without permission and ignore *tambu* [taboo] signs. There are also some marriage disputes mainly brought about by customary differences. Brugnowi work on a reciprocal gift exchange while Yessan Maio have a one-way payment system...Brugnowi is prepared to make a special effort...to get back on a friendly footing...Feeling is high and Yessan Maio would like to push Brugnowi back to Japandai.

In Ambunti Patrol Report No 4 1968/69 Assistant District Officer John Corrigan [accompanied by cadet patrol officer Frank den Ousten] asserted that:

Brugnowi do not hold any land apart from that of their village site and acquire their food, building materials and canoe timber from other villages. They have a reputation for living off their wits and are much 'sharper' than their immediate neighbours, especially

Yessan Maio, who have lost considerable numbers of young girls to the more sophisticated Brugnowi men...trouble arises due to different attitudes to bride price.

In Ambunti Patrol Report No 8 of 1972/73 I reported;

This Brugnowi land has now been registered with the Lands Titles Commission [LTC] for hearing. As a result, the Brugnowis have sent two families back to Japandai to guard their land holdings there.

Brugnowi's 'just in case' strategy greatly interested Avatip. As a result, Avatip sought to register a Lands Titles Commission claim over all Japandai lands on the basis that this land was abandoned by their owners when the third Japandai migration went up river.

There is an age/old animosity between Japandai and Avatip, which most recently, saw loss of life on both sides in the closing stages of World War 2 – A number of men from Japandai and other Nyaula village, who had been appointed "captains" by the Japanese were lured to Avatip with Japanese soldiers where they were killed by Avatip and Malu village people. In reprisal Constable Nonguru of Japandai, on an intelligence mission from Captain RR Cole in Maprik killed a number of people at the Avatip settlement of Lavongai. These actions are described in chapter 60 of Sepik 3

Kiaps Bruce Robertson and Geoff Swainson represented the parties before Lands Titles Commissioner Page during Ambunti patrol No 15 of 1972-73. Summarized, the LTC decision states:

The land belongs to Brugnowi. Yessan Maio retain sago gathering and hunting rights. Originally nine Japandai families came at the invitation of Yessan Maio to live. Others came later. Payment was made for land and various rights.

Yessan Maio evidence told of various earlier migrations from the Nukuma area through Tongwinjamb, Mino and Melawei then back to Yessan. Maio is the same group as Yessan, but living on the other side of the river. Yessan Maio came to live with the ancient group Naiuri who took them in five generations ago, just as the Yessan took in Brugnowi in the 1930s.

In the District Court on March 12, 1973, five men were each fined \$10 for carrying offensive weapons in a public place following, and in relation to the LTC hearing. Forty-Four Yambon and Malu men, some wearing black face paint – [war paint] were intercepted, by the writer on the Ambunti airstrip and sent back the way they had come [without charge, provided they departed immediately, which they did]. This is the last document on my Japandai file but I doubt that it is the end of the story.

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# **End Notes Chapter 27**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> G.W.L.Townsend – District Officer. Pacific Publications Sydney 1968 Page 95

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> G.W.L.Townsend – first draft from which Judy Tudor produced District Officer p 127

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> G.W.L.Townsend – first draft from which Judy Tudor produced District Officer p 126

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> G.W.L.Townsend – first draft from which Judy Tudor produced District Officer p 130

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> G.W.L.Townsend – first draft from which Judy Tudor produced District Officer p 131

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> National Geographic July-December 1929 page 217

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> G.W.L.Townsend – District Officer. Pacific Publications Sydney 1968 Page 65

# Sepik 2 Chapter 28 – Kemerabi<sup>1</sup> – Townsend's ambassador to the Sepik Plains tribes and Kwonji his interpreter.

**Introductory Comment:** Two Middle Sepik men played very important parts in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century history of the Sepik District. But for the interviews with Sepik elders of the 1970s, their stories, like so many others, would never have been recorded. In order to understand the historic context of who they were and what they did, we need to briefly review some even earlier Sepik history.

As we saw in Sepik 1 *The Ndu Migration Myths*, told how after the creation of the universe at Mebinbit, all speakers of human languages scattered to populate the world. Of these languages, seven<sup>2</sup> used the word "Ndu" to mean "man". One of the seven; the Sawos language, is still spoken by the inhabitants of the region where the place of the creation – Mebinbit was thought to have existed.

As the Sepik embayment of ancient times, between the central and coastal ranges infilled with sediment and the Sepik River cut its course through the marshes, another of the Ndu language group emerged. The Iatmul speakers migrated from the Sawos area to occupy the Sepik river banks soon after they formed. Through the ages an extremely complex relationship developed between the Sawos and the Iatmul peoples. Both groups lived on a subsistence diet and sago and fish, and each group depended upon the other in a three-day trade cycle to allow this balanced diet to be maintained.

The Iatmul area is subject to such extreme variations in seasonal water levels that Sago palms will not grow on their land, but they have an abundance of fish. Further away from the river and the extreme water level fluctuations, the swamps of the Sawos region has an abundance of sago. The Iatmul women paddled their canoes up waterways into the fringe of the Sepik plains to market sites where they trade their fish for sago that the Sawos women have produced and brought to the market.

The complexity of the intertribal relationship is that while the women traded, the Iatmul and Sawos men were and are enemies and conducted periodic headhunting raids against each other.

From this background, we need to examine two such head hunting raids that shaped the lives of a Iatmul man called Kemerabi of Japandai and a Sawos man called Kwonji of Burui.

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**Kemerabi of Japandai.** When Kemerabi was very young, his parents took him to cut sago inland from north of the Sepik River near present day Pagwi patrol post. The Burui people, who lived one hour's walk further inland, sent ginger [the fight totem plant], to Jama, requesting Jama warriors to come and fight alongside the Burui men to kill these intruders.

A palm had been felled and Kemerabi's parents were processing the sago when the Burui/ Jama warriors attacked and killed them both. The raiders did not see the boy Kemerabi, who had hidden among the fronds of the fallen palm. Once the enemy warriors had gone, Kemerabi made his way back to the Sepik River, where he was found by some Maiwi people who took him in and delivered him safely to Japanaut village, where his parents had lived and where his brothers were.

Kemerabi lived at Japanaut until after he was initiated in the haus tambaran known as Mandagaui. But even before initiation he accompanied raids against the Burui people to avenge the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "Kemerabi" was the pronunciation of name used by his son Nonguru and colleague Kwonji in their interviews with the writer during the 1970s. Stan Christian who knew him in the 1920s and 1930s knew him as "Kemeradi."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See Sepik 4 Chapter 25 for details of the NDU language group

killing of his parents. He fought the Burui people whenever the opportunity presented itself. He was married man when the Germans arrived in the Sepik.<sup>1</sup>

Kemerabi befriended the Germans visitors, presumably of the of the 1912/13 Stolle/Behrmann expedition and on at least one occasion made use of a German firearm on a headhunting raid against the plains' Sawos spearers. On one occasion, whilst raiding Sengo his party was accompanied by a Yambunumbu man who reported that a Yambunumbu woman was married in Sengo. The raider's plan was to use that fact to their advantage

Sengo village was surrounded by a strong stockade, which the raiders quietly approached under cover of darkness. The Yambunumbu man called out in Iatmul language to the woman inside the stockade, saying that he had come alone to see her. Unwisely, the women opened the stockade gate to him. Kemerabi accompanied the rush of raiders into the stockade, he fired the gun he was carrying to strike terror into the hearts of the fleeing Sengo people. There were other successful headhunting raids and Sengo was only saved from extinction by the arrival of the Australian civil administration.<sup>2</sup>

The 1919 punitive expeditions described in these pages were remembered as follows by Kemerabi's son Nonguru:

While we were still at Japanaut, Australians came up river in a ship to investigate our fight with Korogo<sup>3</sup> [Sepik 2 Chapter 22]

The Australians burned the haus tambarans of each of the offending villages. Only one man was killed by the Australians and that was his own fault. [Instead of remaining hidden he exposed himself] and was hit by a cartridge on the sand bank you see at low water above Japanaunt. See Map No 2.

Meanwhile, Kemerabi was having troubles of his own at Japanaut, which caused him to initiated a fight in his own village. A feature of the fight was the restricted use of violence; one does not kill within one's own village, as this would weaken village strength against outside *real* enemies. The weapons used were just pieces of timber, which made a statement by causing pain, bruises and abrasions, but without causing death. The cause of the fight was that Kemerabi believed Japanaut people were making sorcery against him. As he planned the fight he sent his child Nonguru and Nonguru's mother to Japandai, which had recently been vacated by the upstream migrations described in Chapter 26. From then on Kemerabi's family lived in Japandai.

A probable reason for the sorcery was that Kemerabi and his family were regarded as Chambri people rather than true Japanauts; outsiders. Two generations earlier a Nyaurengai man called Alaminja, who had no sons met Kemerabi's grandfather Abwandambwi. Who was then a youth, while he was fishing and brought him to Nyauregai. Abwandambwi grew up in Nyaurengai as Alaminja's son and married there. A son was born and was named Wisambwi. Wisambwi's own son Kemerabi grew up in Japanaut.

Another probable reason was what the western world calls the "Tall Poppy Syndrome". Kemerabi was developing a reputation as a headhunting leader which made him stand out among his age class peers at Japanaut. This was not a good thing for someone regarded as an outsider.

As for the Burui victims of Kemerabi's on-going aggression, they denied killing his parents, claiming they were killed by Sengo and Manja warriors.<sup>3</sup> If Kemerabi heard this, he certainly did not believe it. The Burui community remained his mortal enemy.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See Chapter 19 The Korogo expulsion from Nyaurengai

In the fighting against Burui, Kemerabi had led raids that wiped out a Burui settlement called Jila and then he conducted two raids against a settlement called Kamdambo. He was in the process of planning a third raid, when Sabiogwan, a Burui man called out to some Yambunumbu women [of the latmul tribe] who were fishing from the safety of their canoes on the lake at Maiwi. He asked them to get word to their ally Kemerabi at Japandai to come to that place next day to meet with him.

The Yambunumbu women told their husbands who, in turn, delivered the message to Kemerabi at Japandai. Next morning Kemerabi went in a canoe with his classificatory mother sitting in the steering position. The fact that he brought the old lady suggested that he did not expect trouble. His brothers came in a second canoe, each man was armed with a large bundle of spears. They stayed in their canoe off shore while Kemerabi went in and climbed the river bank carrying his spears in readiness for whatever may be awaiting him.

Sabiogwan, the Burui man, who had summoned him, came forward, also armed with spears and accompanied by his teenage daughter. When Kemerabi approached, Sabiogwan made a show of throwing his spears aside. Kemerabi did he same, even though there were many Burui people following behind the man and the girl. When they were close, the man turned the girl around to show the bark of a sago palm with sago needles, hanging from her neck along with shell wealth as might appear in a bride price payment. The sago bark and needles signified the sago camp where Kemerabi's parents had died, while the shell wealth suggested marriage.

The girl, now facing her father, was pushed by him so that she stumbled backwards against Kemerabi. Communication between Sawos and Iatmul languages is limited, but between actions and words the message was clear. "Kemerabi. Now I have given you my daughter are we at peace?". That was how the Burui people brought Kemerabi's war against them to an end.

The girl's name was Burinja. She later had a daughter who would eventually be the mother of Baras<sup>4</sup>, who served as a reserve constable with Captain James Taylor in the Sepik during 1943 in coast watching actions against the Japanese. Baras was an important informant and participant in events described in Sepik 3 *The Sepik at war*.

This did not end Kemerabi's head hunting days. He was also the enemy of the Manambu speakers of Avatip, Malu and Yambon villages, and when Iatmul warriors from Nyaurengai participated in the Japandai massacre of 1923, he set an ambush for their return down river. They avoided this by returning home via the Yau'umbak canal into the Chambri Lakes.

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**Kwonji of Burui** A raiding party of Nyaurengai and Japanaut warriors ambushed Burui people on land called Kragamei, which is adjacent to the Wereman channel that drains the Sepik Plains into the Sepik River - [Map 2]. Gauimeri of Burui had taken his daughter Yambeli there to catch fish. While some Burui people were killed in this raid, Gauimeri survived. Kwongamgauwi and his younger brother Sameibanga, warriors of Japanaut captured Yambeli who they held on high for Gauimeri to see; taunting him.

When Gauimeri returned home to Burui he declared in his sorrow - "Sorry they have taken my eldest daughter." He expected the Japanauts, to kill and eat her. His strongest wish was that he might retrieve her bones and give them a proper burial at Burui. His grief was great.

The Japanaut people planned to take Yambeli up onto the high roof of the haus tambaran and throw her down onto the waiting spears below. Such ceremonial killing was part of the ritual for the consecration of the haus tambaran. But the brothers saw that she was a fine child and they decided that rather than killing her, they would keep her and raise her as their daughter; but obligations to the wider Japanaut raiding party and to the haus tambaran ceremony had first to be met.

Although it was the brothers who caught her, they needed to pay. They gathered two pigs and shell wealth and gave it to the other members of the raiding party, who then agreed that now she was theirs. To finalise recognition of the adoption two spears were planted upright in the ground. The Japanaut people assembled and the girl was made to crawl between their legs, after which they provided food for her to eat. The spears were then broken and re-planted in the ground. The assembled people predicted that in the years to come Yambeli would have two sons. One would be an orator and the other would be a quiet man; the prediction continued that after the sons, she would have daughters, the bride price for whom would off-set the purchase price, the brothers had paid to save Yambeli.

Yambeli was raised at Japanaut. In due course, she married a man called Mopai, and as predicted her first two children were boys – Kwonji and Sagat, followed by daughters Kwandang and Gwolai. Yambeli taught Kwonji to speak her own Sawos language, in addition to him learning the Nyaula dialect of Iatmul – his father's language.

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# The involvement of Kassa Townsend in Middle Sepik affairs.

As the investigation of the Japandai massacre got underway in 1924, the Australians went ashore at Japandai and met Kemerabi, who they obviously knew by reputation as the Sepik's leading head hunter.

Mr Townsend established his relationship with Kemerabi and took him to Madang. The Japandai people believed they had killed Kemerabi and they mourned his assumed death. But he was not killed – in Madang he was shown the gallows. In very simple and direct terms Kemerabi learned that he had a choice – continue his old ways and end up being hanged for murder; or use his reputation and influence to bring peace to the tribes of the Sepik plains. Whilst still in Madang Mr Townsend appointed Kemerabi as Luluai of Japandai village. They returned together from Madang to the Sepik on the ship *Arawa*. <sup>6</sup>

Back in Japandai the Australians asked Kemerabi<sup>4</sup> many questions about the Sepik and the tribal wars in the region. They also asked about the Germans and what they did. They asked if he had an eldest son – Kemerabi's first child was a girl. Presumably in order to protect Nonguru, Kemerabi indicated that Kwonji was his son. Kwonji, then a young child, was encouraged to board the ship to have a look around, and once aboard they cast off and left Japandai for Ambunti.

Kwonji recalls that Ambunti was overgrown bush and otherwise the German camp site there was just as they had left it. A wire enclosure was constructed and a tent placed over it. This was where Kwonji lived while they taught him Pidgin, so he could become the Government interpreter<sup>7</sup>. He was presumably also selected to be trained as he was the only person then known who could speak both Iatmul, the language of the Sepik River, and Sawos, the language of the Sepik Plains.

The "abduction" of Kwonji must have been done with Kemerabi's approval, as although Mr. Townsend makes no reference to Kemerabi in his book District Officer. The expedition's medical assistant Stan Christian remembered him well.

We used to get around in the Osprey and Kemeradi [Kemerabi] would be in board with us. He used to come with us to see fair treatment was given. He was our guarantee. He was very good that way. For some unknown reason, he wanted us [whereas] the other people

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> How they communicated with Kemerabi at that time is unclear as Kemerabi reported never did learn to speak Pidgin.

naturally did not want peace; they did not want us at all. But he was apparently pretty far sighted... $^8$ 

Following his return from Madang, Luluai Kemerabi commenced going to every place where there was unrest, on the Administration's behalf. He became the bringer of peace and of the word of the Whiteman's law. Part of his activity in new communities was to burn the war spears and leave the people only with the spears they used for hunting game. He went through the whole of the Sepik Plains doing this and when he reached the land of the Abelam people at Maprik, he met a man who became a close friend – Malaningi of Saula village. Malaningi helped Kemerabi complete the pacification of the Sepik Plains. Once this was done, government patrols went into the Sepik Plains.

Kemerabi then went into the Chambri lakes region and again burned the spears and brought the word of the Whiteman's law – particularly to Yerikai and Garamambu. He did the same among the Manambu and was instrumental in having Vaginambu appointed as the first Luluai of Avatip.<sup>9</sup>

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As for Kwonji he recalls that as he grew older, the fighting on the Sepik eased:

I came down to work in the inland area. I was given knives, axes, beads, cloth etc [trade goods]. I heard my mother's language being spoken and I handed out gifts to make friends. The people saw me and realised that I must by Yambeli's child, the girl they thought had been killed. My lost relatives threw their spears aside and embraced me as their relative and friend. 10

While Kwonji was still meeting lost relatives and making friends, he sent two "tangets" to the Jama people, so he could meet them, but they did not respond to him. He went in search of the Jama people but they were not to be found. He recalled that Father Puff<sup>5</sup> alerted him to the sound of the Garamuts and he learned that the drum messages told how Jama and Sengo warriors had attacked the Wosera people. Kwonji then learned what he could about the raid and reported to Mr. Townsend. Kwonji continues:

The [investigation] patrol came into Burui and we went on to the scene of the crime. The bodies were spread around rotting... [Mr Townsend] said to me "I think you should go to Rabaul and tell the Judge about this...I want these people to understand they must not fight... [The patrol] went and arrested five Sengos and one Jama...two and a half months we worked on this...!!"

Mr. Townsend's book District Officer<sup>12</sup> describes the facts revealed by the investigation as:

The Sengo people had called for a market and several unsuspecting hamlets had let their women folk go with escort. As they were going along a narrow path through some long grass, heads bent under the burdens on their backs, they were speared by men in ambush and their heads then hacked from their bodies. Some women escaped, one or two with slight wounds, but eight or nine women and children were killed... Eventually eight men were brought to trial in Rabaul and five were convicted and sentenced to death...

In time, I received the warrants to carry out the sentences by hanging. From the hamlets of the murdered women we obtained labour to cut and erect the pit drop gallows and five policemen were the actual hangmen at the mass drop. Two thousand people, many of whom had not seen a European before, attended the hangings, which took place on the exact

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Father Puff established Marui mission station about one hour's walk from Burui in 1933, thus indication a probable time lapse of up to a decade from when Kwonji was taken to Ambunti as a child. But there is confusion about the dates as GWL Townsend's book District Officer, although notoriously imprecise concerning dates, states on page 164 that the murders and hangings occurred in the 1920s.

spot on the track where the murders took place. The [hanged] bodies were handed over to the relatives for burial. 13

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The Japandai village book apparently mentioned Kemerabi's pro-Australian stance. Captain James Taylor removed the book from Japandai in 1943 so the advancing Japanese were denied access to it. This assumption is based upon the fact the village officials of Yau'umbak, Avatip, Yindungei, Jiginimbu Torembei and other village books were all left in possession of their village officials – Taylor took only the Japandai book. <sup>14</sup>

The gradual establishment of law and order which is touched upon in this chapter, is discuss

The investigation of the Japandai Massacre and the establishment of Ambunti. Each of Kemerabi, Kwonji, Baras and Nonguru played key roles throughout the Sepik during the war years as described in Sepik 3.

# **End Notes Chapter 28**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Informant Nonguru of Japandai – son of Luluai Kemerabi. Bragge Sepik Research vol 18 page 85

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Informant Nonguru of Japandai – son of Luluai Kemerabi. Bragge Sepik Research vol 18 page 86

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Informant Kwonji of Burui. Bragge Sepik Research Vol 18 page 172

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Informant Nonguru of Japandai – son of Luluai Kemerabi. Bragge Sepik Research vol 18 page 86

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Informant Kwonji of Burui. Bragge Sepik Research Vol 18 page 172

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Informant Nonguru of Japandai – son of Luluai Kemerabi. Bragge Sepik Research vol 18 page 87

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Informant Kwonji of Burui. Bragge Sepik Research Vol 18 page 168

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Stan Christian – Bragge Research volume No 19 Page 519

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Informant Nonguru of Japandai – son of Luluai Kemerabi. Bragge Sepik Research vol 18 page 87

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Informant Kwonji of Burui. Bragge Sepik Research Vol 18 page 170

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Informant Kwonji of Burui. Bragge Sepik Research Vol 18 page 170

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Put together by09990 Judy Tudor six years after Kassa Townsend's death.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> G.W.L.Townsend District Officer – Pacific Publications Sydney 1968 Page 162-164

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> P.K.Moloney – Angoram Patrol Report 5/1946-7 – See Bragge Sepik Research vol 20 Page 73

# Sepik 2 – Chapter 29 The work of New Guinea's European Medical Assistants [EMAs].

Until the mid-1960s it was not unusual that DDS&NA patrols were accompanied by a European Medical Assistant [EMA]. Typically, the patrol officer revised the census, after which the people would make their way over to EMA's table where an outdoor clinic was set up and everyone received a health check. The EMA, when not on patrol, was in charge of the out-station hospital. In my personal experience, the EMAs were replaced on patrols by indigenous medical orderlies in 1966 and the limited number of EMA's were re-assigned to administrative tasks at headquarters.

I was fortunate enough to meet former EMA Stan Christian and conduct a long interview with him at Minj in the Western Highlands in 1974. Mr. Stan Christian was a descendant of Fletcher Christian of Bounty fame. He served in World War 1 with the 14<sup>th</sup> General Hospital Reinforcements. In 1922 in Rabaul he undertook six months training to qualify as an EMA in the Trust Territory of New Guinea. He, along with Colonel Walstab and patrol officers E.Feldt and G.W.L.Townsend, were assigned to conduct a punitive expedition<sup>1</sup> in 1924 against the perpetrators of the Japandai Massacre.

Mr Christian spent about two years [1924-26] in Ambunti on the Sepik River, He was then stationed in Kavieng and in 1937 at Aitape. He found himself in charge of the Public Health Department throughout the Sepik in 1938. After leave and with the outbreak of war, he tried to join the Australian Army, but was ruled to be too old. In June 1942, he joined the Papuan Administrative Unit, which was later incorporated into ANGAU, which was commanded by his old friend and colleague G.W.L.Townsend.

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**Medicine as the peace maker.** The use of modern medicines among primitive people worked wonders in terms of public relations. Mr. Christian explains how on one occasion he found himself in a confrontation at Malingai village in the Middle Sepik:

Things were fairly tense. I finally talked them into letting me give one or two of the children injections. I particularly picked cases of secondary yaws, not primary or tertiary, which are slow to heal; secondary improves in a couple of days...A week or two later we went back there [and] they absolutely mobbed us. They would not even let us have breakfast ...insisting on more injections...so I gave out something like ninety injections.

Townsend used to say that I could go in when no one else could. Once we had given injections it did not even occur to us to put out a guard.<sup>1</sup>

This was in the 1920s, long before Penicillin, so I asked Mr. Christian what drug was used to cure yaws back then. He said Neo Osphenamine, a yellow powder in glass ampules. We mixed it with distilled water and injected it...It worked very, very quickly.

**Writer's note:** In initial and early contacts situations, my patrols encountered people suffering from yaws. Treatments with penicillin brought very rapid results and paved the way for community good will for follow up patrols.

**Treating spear and arrow wounds.** Mr. Christian continues [Townsend] brought back the wounded for me to treat. But I had to get Kassa Townsend to give the anaesthetics for me, and he did not like it...he was not keen on the sight of blood. We did some thirty operations together. Of course, I could not do anything until we gave the person anaesthetic – knock them out with ether. Anaesthetics were very primitive in those days – No intravenous and the jobs were too big for just local anaesthetics.

The operating theatre at Ambunti was a little house with panggal [Sago frond stems] walls except on the front. The operating table was built inside a cheesecloth room to keep the mosquitos out. It was very hot in there. We had boys outside sterilising and preparing instruments for me.

The training of Medical Tultuls. The village officials were Luluais, Tultul and Medical Tultuls [the equivalent of Aid Post and Hospital Orderlies of later days].

Mr. Christian: The qualification to be a Medical Tultul was the ability to speak pidgin. Very often there was friction between Public Health and Native Affairs... [as often the only person in the village who could speak pidgin was the medical tultul] he would be dragged along on patrols to interpret when he should be doing medical work.

**Myself:** The Tultul now is the village interpreter. It must be because of this.

**Mr. Christian:** Must be! It was a rule that they [Medical Tultuls] must come in once a month and bring their supplies with them to get new issues. It meant we could keep in contact with them. And if they were having difficulties, we could cheer them up – that sort of thing... We used to teach them to talk pidgin at Ambunti. Townsend had a policeman who was a fulltime teacher of pidgin.

Myself: By the time you left, how widespread was the coverage of Medical Tultuls?

Mr. Christian: From the mouth of the River to Yambon [approx. 280 miles]. And then branches off to each side — Nyaurengai — Kandingei and down to that prostitute village — Kambaramba, then in from Pagwi/Marui. They would come in for training, and when they seemed to be returning to village life, we brought them in for re-training. But it was very limited. You would have them all sitting down and show them what a packet of lint or bandages looked like and we would teach them in pidgin. They would learn it like a sort of a song. "Lint, bandages, Kus² medicine, Iodine, wool." They learned what things were for — Castor Oil...

**Medical supplies:** I had wonderful stocks. I used to get cotton wool and lint in hundred weight bales... twenty or thirty bales of each...unlimited supplies of medicine, cough mixture probably about 50 gallons. Castor oil; a dozen four-gallon tins of it. Empty bottles would come in by the gross – to supply those things [to medical tultuls]

**Sulphurs?** Sulphurdimidine<sup>3</sup> and the like, were not yet invented. The first one to come out was sulphurpyridine. We did not get that until the late 1930s in Aitape.

#### **Treatments:**

Wounds and sores: In the old days, a great thing was hot fomentations. You got a piece of lint and rang it out in boiling water while it was wrapped in a towel. Then you placed the lint on the sore, as hot as the patient could bear it, then place some cotton wool on top of that to keep the heat in. It must not be too wet or the sore would get boggy. The heat would draw it out...the heat hurries up the white cells clearing out the muck and puss in the wound.

**Dirty arrow wounds:** We would be fairly drastic, swab it out with pure carbolic and then neutralise it with absolute alcohol. The chap was under anaesthetic so he would be alright. Things would go septic. It would take quite a while to heal; it very rarely healed by first intention – particularly with arrow wounds.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Cold/ Flu

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> A diarrhoea treatment

Writer's note. Arrows with bone tips were made in such a way that when the arrow was pulled out, the bone tip came off and remained deep within the body, usually guaranteeing death by septicaemia

**Diarrhoea:** We used Epsom salts and bismuth mixtures mainly – clean them out.

**Tropical Ulcers:** They brought out the most wonderful treatment for tropical ulcers. You swabbed the whole thing out with a saturated solution of condies crystals, and it burned it absolutely, tanned it and cured the patient

# The wartime [World War 2]:

# **Experiments with Penicillin**

**Mr. Christian:** I did not come in contact with penicillin until 1944 or 1945. The reason I came in contact with it then, was I was doing some work with the Americans. I used to let them come and work in the native hospitals in Lae<sup>4</sup> and on Gemo Island, Port Moresby. I remember them treating a native with Yaws. It would have cost about £100 to treat just one patient back then. They wanted to experiment you see. It cleaned this chap right away.

One of the Mayo brothers from the Mayo clinic was there. There was also a Major Hardy and a few of his crack brain surgeons. They came over and did all sorts of work for us and all they wanted was a bit of lunch and a bit of fishing or something like that.<sup>2</sup>

# Concerns about Malaria in the Highlands.

The exploration of the Highlands between 1933-39 revealed a huge, previously unknown population. General Blamey wanted to recruit soldiers from there to fight the Japanese. ANGAU objected to this plan as it was believed that malaria would kill them as they presumably had no natural immunity to malaria.

Mr. Christian was sent to the highlands to conduct a malaria survey. He found the highlands to be free of the disease, except for a few cases around Kainantu and Mt Hagen. As a result, the plan to recruit soldiers from the highlands was scrapped.<sup>3</sup>

We traced the malaria mainly over two trade routes. One going over into the Jimi River [Bragge note: Even as late as the mid-1970s this trade route was used to bring black-palm into the Highlands for weapons manufacture] and the other going over into what we called the "salt" country through Koge. There seemed to be strong evidence that the malaria came over those routes. The people used to go down there to get their salt, those great big buoy looking things...<sup>5</sup> They took their own carriers and every one of them came back with malaria.<sup>4</sup>.

The Australian Army had a huge agricultural place called "Corn Farm". The Americans used to come in and take DC3 loads of vegetables off to Manus and elsewhere for American and Australian troops. People were flown in and out of Corn Farm. My tests revealed 30% malarial infection rates at Corn Farm itself, but nothing in the areas around it.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Immediately after Law was liberated from the Japanese, Mr. Christian was placed in charge of the construction of the first military hospital at Lae.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> To the writer's knowledge this is the only record "buoy-looking things" of salt carried into the highlands

# Two cases of intercession in the Kokoda campaign.

As an ANGAU Lieutenant Mr Christian mentioned two occasions when he interceded with officers on behalf of troops and Papuan carriers during the Kokoda campaign.

Intercession on behalf of troops. Mr. Christian observed that the diet of Australian troops was reliant totally on army rations and could be significantly improved by the inclusion of some local greens – particularly "tulip" [two leaf] which is rich in iron and abounded in the local rain forest. The response to this suggestion was in the negative; something about *Not eating that native rubbish.*<sup>5</sup>

The welfare of carriers. The maintenance and support of Australian troops during the Kokoda campaign depended upon a constant stream of Papuan carriers who delivered rations and supplies and carried wounded troops. Mr. Christian discovered that once the army received whatever was carried in, the carriers were sent back without food or supplies; the back leg of the journey was "unproductive" to the army. Mr Christian ensured that food was supplied for the carriers return journey to Port Moresby, making himself unpopular with the army in the process.<sup>6</sup>

# Cultural traits that determined issues of medical treatments. In the highland areas

The writer concludes that Mr. Christian's era was still dominated by awe among primitive people at the "power" of modern medicine to cure ailments which until that time were either incurable, or fatal. Later, there came a stage of acceptance of the miracle of modern medicine in which cultural traits influenced the way medical treatments were applied.

Example 1. 1970s - Extraction of arrows from wounded Huli warriors in the Southern Highlands. It can be argued that the Huli people were never brought fully under Government control. During my time as ADC Koroba in the mid-1970s, the occasional tribal fights between Huli groups were far less frequent than the present day [2017] when the Huli region is declared war zone.

Against this background it was not surprising that in the early 1970s arrow wounds from tribal fights made regular appearance in the hospital queue for treatment at Tari hospital. I learned that the Doctor at Tari informed one group of wounded warriors that his duty was to treat the sick. But they [the warriors] were not sick! They chose to engage in tribal warfare, arrow wounds, therefore, were something for which, they, themselves were responsible! Therefore, he would not treat then – except for the payment of K100 per arrow extracted.

The warriors discussed this situation and in the process learned that a mission sister at a nearby mission hospital would pull arrows out for K10 each. The Huli warriors preferred to pay K100 for each wound to be treated – their logic: It was better to be treated by a man.<sup>7</sup>

**Example 2. Training** In the 1990s the mission hospital at Kapuna<sup>6</sup> in the Kikori area of the Gulf Province of Papua, also took over the running of Kikori government hospital. One of the benefits that this allowed was that whereas male midwives could not be trained at Kapuna for local cultural reasons, Kikori cultural values were more relaxed and allowed male mid-wives to be trained there.<sup>8</sup>

Example 3. Primogeniture Infanticide In 1964 the writer conducted a patrol accompanied by EMA Peter Rooke [later Doctor Rooke]. The patrol was to a remote area east of Green River Patrol Post. Between Mr. Rooke and myself, as mentioned in Sepik 4 Chapter 33, we discovered that a custom

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Kapuna native hospital is unique in the writer's experience. While doing a tour of inspection with the Doctor in charge I realised something was different about Kapuna hospital. I paused and said aloud – "it is the smell'. The Dr. said "There is no smell!" That was it – of all the native hospitals I had ever visited – this was the first I detected no characteristic 'hospital" odour.

existed, involving primogeniture infanticide. I.E. The belief was that young women did not know properly how to make the first child; it was a sort of a practice run. The evidence indicated that first child was usually murdered by the mother soon after birth. On the basis of my report, an Anthropologist visited the area to investigate. In discussion with her later, she said she needed more time with the Nagu people to reach any solid conclusions.

I believe we achieved our objective – the custom was so widely examined on two consecutive patrols that the people were hopefully made sufficiently aware of government disapproval.

A census tool used in all revisions of census was that any woman or girl who appeared to be pregnant, had "preg" and a date such as "7/64" – month and year, noted against her name in the census register. The next census revision would enter the new birth, or inquire into the infant's whereabouts if it was not present

# End Notes Chapter 29.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Bragge Research Volume 19 Page 524

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Bragge Research Volume 19 Page 542-3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Bragge Research Volume 19 Page 519

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Bragge Research Volume 19 Page 545

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Personal communication with Mr. Christian.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Bragge Research Volume 19 Page 518

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Personal recollection

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> L.W.Bragge personal communication with Kapuna hospital staff

# Sepik 2 Chapter 30 The Karius and Champion expedition – Fly to Sepik - first attempt 1926/27.

This chapter and the next relate to the famous "North West Patrol" which followed the Fly River to its source, crossing the central dividing range and then following the Sepik River from its headwaters to its mouth; a south to north coast crossing of New Guinea at its widest point.

To understand why such a potentially life-threatening expedition was necessary we need to understand the fundamental difference between the policies established by Governor William Macgregor in British New Guinea - later Australian Papua, and those of German New Guinea - later the Australian Trust Territory of New Guinea. Macgregor's primary aim was to explore his colony and establish law and order. The economy of the colony was largely left to private enterprise – gold miner and plantation developers. A measure of the success of any particular exploration was whether it resulted in the award of the Patron's Medal of the Royal Geographic Society in England.

German New Guinea policy, on the other hand, was driven primarily by the commercial needs to exploit the resources of the colony. The exception was the scientific expeditions which were sponsored, usually by commercial interests.

The "Karius and Champion" journeys of 1926-27 and 1927-28 have been well documented in Ivan Champion's *Across New Guinea*, <sup>1</sup> and Jim Sinclair's *Last Frontiers*<sup>2</sup>. The intention of the present chapters is to focus primarily on the contacts both expeditions had with Sepik and related "Min" peoples and the patrol techniques involved in the days before airdrops.

But first I will record a snippet of history concerning the North-West Patrol. In 1968-69 while serving as OIC of Bolubolu patrol post on Goodenough Island in the Milne Bay District, I had the good fortune to meet and befriend a former Papuan Kiap called Clem Rich, who then owned Nuatutu copra plantation near the patrol post. Clem said that when Charles Karius was planning the North-West Patrol he had been rowed in a whale boat from Samarai to Misima to ask Clem to be the second officer on the patrol. Clem¹ told me that he side-stepped an important place in PNG history by declining. He said that he told Karius "Don't be stupid. I don't want to get killed." According to Clem, Karius was rowed back to the mainland and then approached Ivan Champion.

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On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December 1926, the patrol left Port Moresby in the *Elevala*. With Karius and Champion were 12 members of the Royal Papua Constabulary. From Daru the expedition was accompanied by Assistant Resident Magistrate Lambden in the shallow draft *Minnetonka*. The *Elevala* was unable to proceed beyond a point a mile upstream of the Elevala River mouth. From there, on the *Minnetonka* would ferry the patrol and its supplies as far up stream as it could go, which turned out to be only eight miles further upstream. That site was too low lying for the base camp so Karius walked upstream and selected camp site No 2 on the Palmer River five miles above Palmer junction. The tedious task was then to move all the stores to the camp No 2. This was done in relays and once achieved the task was to move everything to camp 3 and so on.

The relaying of stores had started on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1927 and three months later everything was at camp 10 on the Palmer River, just 107 miles upstream...in so doing they had covered 1,000 miles.<sup>3</sup> Camp 10 was at the foot of the Blucher Range. Karius and Champion searched in different directions for a way across this limestone barrier. Sergeant Gegera found a way to the summit of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Clem also prided himself on being British rather than Australian, having been born under the Union Jack in Samarai (actually at Kwato mission station), British New Guinea in 1905. He went on to say he had a brother – Mac Rich had also been a Kiap and that Mac was the "good" Mr. Rich.

Blucher range and camp 11 was set up there. Karius returned from his first exploration sortie while Champion relayed the rations from camp 11 to camp 12 and to camp 13 on the Palmer. Karius returned with news that he had found a large river flowing in a north easterly direction; a river he thought might flow into the Sepik. Both Karius and Champion had separately made contact with small groups of "Min" people. Champion described his contact thus:

On my way to No 13 camp...on reaching the Palmer I was surprised to see a crowd of strange natives on the opposite bank who waved and shouted at us. At the camp Corporal Iari showed me a large heap of taro which, he said, had been brought in by ten men the day before. They had marched to the camp in a line, and had solemnly put this offering at the Corporal's feet...

I got a tomahawk and went to the river bank and beckoned them over...Their appearance was extraordinary. Their sole article of dress consisted of a reddish coloured calabash bean [on the penis]; the calabash being held in a vertical position by a thin cord of native twine passed around the waist. The calabashes were from 6 to 18 inches in length, some straight some curling up and back towards the stomach...The tips of the men's noses were pierced with two holes into which were placed either horn shaped beans, cassowary quills, the hooks from flying fox wings or small pieces of bamboo, cylindrical in shape and from these various articles hung bright coloured stones or pieces of river shell.

In stature, the men were from 5ft 3 inches to 5 ft. 7 inches and in a colour of light bronze. The hair was worn short and round the forehead was a band of Job's beads supporting a chin strap of the same material.

Approaching me cautiously, and quivering with excitement or nervousness, they said some words in their language and pointed to a remarkably shaped mountain to the north west across the river, thereby indicating that their village lay in that direction...<sup>4</sup>

Karius had found a river running to the north east and he believed it led to the Sepik. The plan was that Karius with a small mobile party would make a dash for the Sepik with twenty-one-day supply of food. Champion was to lead the remainder of the patrol back to Daru by rafting after it was safe to do so. Karius and his party departed on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1927 – his second sortie. [see below]

Champion now considered his own position. He had a two months' supply of rations, five police and some carriers. Karius had gone to the north east taking the strongest police – Sergeant Gegera, Corporal Iagi, and armed constables Aruru, Iawogo, Dogio and Kiopi<sup>5</sup> and the strongest carriers. The area to the north west was unexplored and the people he had met were from the northwest and moreover they were friendly. Champion decided to take the time to try to communicate with these people and gain their confidence. He learned river names - Wok Tungom, Wok Luap and Wok Feneng.

Champion decided to leave armed constables Pakai, Paru, and Bwanaki to look after the base camp while he and armed Constables Bego and Lagi, 6 16 carriers went to explore with enough food for a fortnight. The Wok Luap appeared to go towards the northwest so he decided to follow it.

They left on 10<sup>th</sup> of May and crossed the Tungom at its junction with the Luap then followed the left bank of the Luap upstream and with local guides. At one stage when Champion indicated the direction he thought he wanted to go the guides pushed him back saying *Setamanmin! Wok Wungop!*". Then patting their chests, they exclaimed together *Unkiamin! Unkiamin!* From an elevated position Champion realized the Luap was in fact the headwaters of the Palmer. They continued on and crossed a divide at 7,000 feet with a mountain the natives called Faim towering above. They descended into the watershed of another river system and Champion was unsure if it

was the Fly River headwaters or the Sepik River headwaters. He learned that the river was called "Bol".

The guides brought the patrol to a large village in which the leader hit the ground with a clenched fist and said "Bolivip, Bolivip, Bolivip" – the village name was Bolivip. From then on Champion refers to this man as the Chief. The word "Seno" was said repeatedly and was taken to mean "friend". The Chief offered a cigar of native tobacco in a bamboo pipe, which Champion accepted and handed on to his police to smoke. Champion asked Wok Feneng? The leader replied "Bol Feneng" and clasped his hands together – clearly the Bol joined the Feneng.

The police started erecting tents near a lone house with some carved and painted boards on the outside, but were stopped and asked by the locals to select another site:

This puzzled and interested me so I went to the Chief and pointed to the house with a questioning look. He appeared very solemn, looked to see if the women were watching, and then leaned over and whispered.

"Amawk, Amawk"...He indicated that the men foregathered there with great feasting of taro, and then, putting his closed fists to his mouth. He blew through them and explained that they left the feast blowing some kind of horn or conch shell – what it was I do not know – and then went to fight the Faiwol people.<sup>7</sup>

Facing page 66 of Champion's *Across New Guinea* is a photo of the amawk. It was a haus tambaran similar to, but larger than the one the writer inspected at Divanap, Oksapmin area in 1966 [see Sepik 4 chapter 36, which includes a photo]

Champion beautifully described his interaction with the Bolivip "Chief". <sup>8</sup> Champion had retired to his tent, but the headman followed and said:

"Seno! – Imam?" (Taro?) I nodded, whereupon he went to the other end of the village and addressed his people for many minutes. I could see that he was telling that we had come a long way and were hungry; that we were their guests and they were to bring food. Soon it arrived...

...the Chief, bearing a string bag came and sat beside me on my bed. He took from the string bag a very large taro, and holding it up for my inspection slowly turned it round and round to show its good points, at the same time explaining it was grown by him and that it was for me. He put it down and produced another and talked of it; then another, and so the performance went on until there were at my feet six of the finest taro I had yet seen. He put down his bag and gazed into my eyes; slowly his glance stole towards my pile of tomahawks², rested on them for a moment then looked at me again, without move or word, but his eyes were the appealing eyes of a dog. I took the hint, got up and brought one of the tomahawks and gave it to him. Nine savages out of ten that I have known would have snatched it immediately and have ran outside to show it to his friends; but not he, he did not even look at it, but continued to gaze at me, without saying a word, and without changing his expression, but he could not disguise his eyes – they thanked me more eloquently than words.

## Soon afterwards:

...the Chief [was] holding a beautiful headdress of bird of paradise feathers. He displayed them on his head, held them up for my inspection, then offered them to me; all this

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> "Tomahawks" used by patrols in trade were usually "three quarter" axes. The handles were quickly replaced with hardwood handles about a metre long

without a word, but his eyes – what a wonder, he was at expressing himself with them – said "For you"

Champion explains that he declined because it was against the law for Europeans to own bird of paradise feathers. Soon after he described yet another interaction with the Chief:

I was outside the tent fly and I saw a number of natives talking with the police and apparently discussing me, for every now and then they would look towards me and say something. Then some of them including the chief came over and spoke to me, evidently asking me something. The chief held his hands on his breast. Seeing the puzzled look on my face he pointed to a group of women who were standing on the opposite side of the village...and looking at me as if seeking an answer.

I was embarrassed. Was he asking me, in public too, to select one of the women myself and take her with me... Was this their custom? And how would they regard a refusal... They were all around me now, and I could see they were eagerly awaiting my answer. I thought quickly and pointed to the women and shook my head, then pointing to the south I nodded affirmatively, trying to convey to them that I did not want a woman because I had one to the south.

There was a general buzz of conversation, and the Chief brought forward a boy of about ten years of age. He had a very light skin – I had noticed this youngster before on account of his intelligent and well featured face. The Chief took one of the youngster's arms and held it alongside mine, comparing the colour; there was very little difference for I was sunburnt. He pointed to both of us, then to me, and then to the women and shook his head... The Chief pointed to the child again and then to the women and shaking his head pointing to the west – and explained the child had been found by a hunting party... They pointed to the boy again and to the sky and then to me and to the sky. It suddenly dawned on me. They boy had no mother; he was not born of they; he had dropped from the sky! And they were asking me if I had arrived on earth the same way. I was about to tell them that I was born in the usual way, but it suddenly struck me that my prestige and power might decline, so I said I had come from the sky.<sup>9</sup>

Next day Champion started to lead his patrol to the Feneng River and as he went he pointed to the Dap Range and asked if there were any people in that direction. After some questioning in difficult sign language, Champion was told that the Kelefomin and Feramin lived there. He was unable to find out what river they lived on...They camped the night at a sago camp near the Bol River.

I sat with my bush friends, endeavouring again to learn the name of the river to the north on which the Kelefomin and Feramin lived, and at last after a great deal of questioning they told me the *Takin* and that it flowed north. Surely it was the Sepik!<sup>10</sup>

The people of Bolivip declined to accompany Champion's party further towards the Feneng River for fear of the Faiwolmin [Faiwol people], who they indicated by grasping the sky-child's arm and making to bite it, were cannibals who would eat them. After the Bolivip men returned home Champion's party reached the Feneng River at its junction with the Bol the next day. Further exploration revealed the gorge which was the mountain gate of the Fly or Feneng River. They made their way back to Bolivip, where they were made very welcome:

I was amazed at the sight before me. Two big fires were blazing, before which the carriers sat surrounded by the natives of Bolivip. Some of the carriers were giving in sign language a graphic account of their wanderings, and others were sitting with their backs against posts, arms folder, eyes half closed, waiting eagerly for the succulent morsels of hot

taro, which their Bolivip friends were actually placing into their mouths. Surely my men must have thought they had entered paradise.<sup>11</sup>

Before leaving Bolivip, Champion established that there was a track from there to the Takin River. He wished he had learned then when he first arrived at Bolivip. His party was now in no condition to attempt that route, so he led them back the way they had come. Champion decided to start rafting from the camp 10 site on the Palmer River. They made three large log rafts. The rafting journey commenced on 15<sup>th</sup> June 1927. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of July they reached the village of Weriadai and learned that Karius had passed down the river a month before having come down the Strickland. Karius and left three canoes there after buying better ones. Champion's party lashed these canoes together and continued on their way on 11<sup>th</sup> July. During that night they met the Elevala and Minnetonka with Karius on board – looking for them.

Champion recorded his movements and activities and eventually submitted a patrol report as Appendix A to Karius' North West Patrol Report. While he may have been judged to have exceeded his instructions of returning directly to Daru, he firmly believed that he had identified the route linking the Fly headwaters with the headwaters of the Sepik. Later in 1927 the second North West Patrol tested Champion's belief.

## Karius journey to the River to the north.

Barry Craig, the long-standing expert on the "Min" people and co-editor of *The children of AFEK*, using Karius' diaries compiled a document entitled '*How Karius found a river to the North': the first attempt to cross New Guinea from the Fly to the Sepik.* <sup>12</sup> (uscngp.com/papers/37) As indicated in the text above, Karius made two sorties, which Craig has reconstructed in detail and upon which I will touch only lightly here:

**Sortie No 1**. 17<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> April 1927.

Karius and party departed from camp 11 on the southern side of the Blucher Range and reached camp 13 at the junction of the Luap [Palmer] and Tungom rivers. On 18<sup>th</sup> he then followed a branch of the Tungom he called the 'White River' east for several hours. On the 19<sup>th</sup> he turned north and crossed a ridge and again reached the Tungom where he camped in a small settlement, the occupants of which ran away in the night.

Karius diary entry of 20<sup>th</sup> April caused Craig to note "Something is seriously wrong here" and it was not possible to accurately locate Karius' position. On 21<sup>st</sup> the patrol continued northerly for four hours and came upon a large village which Craig concludes to have been a Baktamanmin village in the Wangop (Murray River) area. There he paid an 18-inch knife for a pig. Barth (1975:269) notes that the Baktamanmin recall giving a pig to strangers but claim they got nothing in return.<sup>13</sup> From there he returned the way he came to camp 13 where he again met up with Champion.

Sortie No 2 1-22 May 1927 – This was his planned dash to the Sepik via the river to the north.

On 1<sup>st</sup> May Karius and party re-traced their first Sortie steps as far as the Tungom and White River junction. The diary of 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> does not report daily progress. At this point Craig notes "a gross inconsistency between his map and his report"

On the night of the 4<sup>th</sup> the party overnighted in a large village. On 5<sup>th</sup> Karius left three sheaf knives and a small tomahawk as payment for the use of the houses in which they slept. Although Karius' account became confused, Craig concluded, at this point that Karius' party were following the I-bang and Wangop [Murray] Rivers downstream towards the narrow gorge through which the river passes at the east end of the Blucher range. Karius named this the Devil's Race, and apparently thought he was already on the Strickland River.

From the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> the patrol passed through some very rough country to reach a river junction, which Craig concludes was the Awel River junction with the Wongop. Karius followed the Awel northward to arrive at the top of a range with a saddle between two mountains at an altitude of 7,350 feet. He noted that there was very broken country ahead with a river running to the north. He thought this was possibly the way to the Sepik but as he had insufficient supplies he resigned himself to retreating down river to the Fly and Daru.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> May the patrol continued down what Karius thought to be the Strickland, but which was the Wongop [Murray] On the 15<sup>th</sup> Karius' diary reads;

Moved off at 6 am travelling south and south-east. Very rough country and many water courses. Came onto a large stream 10 am. Deep, swift-flowing and unfordable. Followed this stream which I called the "Murray River" downstream for a mile, then coming to a deep narrow gorge. A light suspension bridge made of lawyer cane, at this point. Three hours occupied in crossing. Made camp 4.20 pm.

...they were now on the east side of the "Murray". Karius did not realise that this was the river he had been following southwards for many days. 14

On 16<sup>th</sup> May Karius decided to make rafts and travel down the river. The rafts were completed by noon on 17<sup>th</sup> and they departed at 1pm but one raft was destroyed almost immediately. Two more rafts were made and the party again commenced their journey on 18<sup>th</sup> at 1.30 pm but an hour and a half later the rafts met trouble and some equipment was lost. They continued on overland.

On 20<sup>th</sup> May it was noted that the river was fairly quiet so rafts were again built that day on 21<sup>st</sup>. On 22<sup>nd</sup> May the patrol commenced rafting at 6 am...they reached the junction with the Strickland River at 2.30 pm. There was another incident and some more equipment was lost.

After stopping to make sago for a couple of days they reached Everill Junction on 3<sup>rd</sup> June and Madiri Plantation on the 9<sup>th</sup>.

Karius' report concluded in part:

...although we did not get onto the course of the Sepik River. I am certain we got to the watershed". 15

## **End Notes Chapter 30**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Champion I.F. Across New Guinea from the Fly to the Sepik River. Constable London 1932 and Lansdowne Press 1966.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Sinclair J. Last Frontiers. Mauri Pears & Bill McGrath via Pacific Press Qld. 1988.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Champion I.F. 1966 Page 34

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Champion I.F. 1966 Page 42-43

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Sinclair J. 1988 page 55

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Sinclair J. 1988 page 58

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Champion I.F. 1966 Page 77

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Champion I.F. 1966 Page 78-80

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Champion I.F. 1966 Page 81

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Champion I.F. 1966 Page 84

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Champion I.F. 1966 Page 89

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Craig B. uscngp.com/papers/37

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Craig B. uscngp.com/papers/37 Page 10

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Craig B. uscngp.com/papers/37 Page 19

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Craig B. uscngp.com/papers/37 Page 21

# Sepik 2 Chapter 31 The Karius and Champion expedition – Fly to the Sepik second attempt 1927 1928

The first expedition came back to Port Moresby, arriving on 17<sup>th</sup> July 1927. Karius decided to make a second attempt while their memories were still fresh and their tracks were still showing. The first expedition had used lowland carriers who were unaccustomed to mountain country. For this reason, Karius sought 36 men from the mountainous D'Entrecasteaux Islands. He was actually able to recruit 32. He also planned to make this number up to 100 men to assist with relaying rations as far as Mt Blucher. The additional men would allow rapid progress to Mt Blucher from where the additional men could return downstream.

Interestingly, Constable Bego, who had also accompanied the first attempted crossing from the Fly to the Sepik conceptualized their expedition as crossing from Papua to New Guinea in quest of a large river there a river he called the "Rabaul River". 1

Permission was obtained to recruit 26 prisoners from Port Moresby gaol, and it was hoped to get the remainder in Daru. They were also to be accompanied by J.E.Brien, the Customs Officer at Daru. The expedition left Port Moresby in the Elevala on 17<sup>th</sup> September 1927 with 14 police, 32 carriers and 26 prisoners. The Resident Magistrate at Daru had recruited 24 carriers making a total of 82 and Karius was satisfied with that.

On 21<sup>st</sup> September Champion left Daru in the Minnetonka to buy canoes with which to take the carriers up the river. After a diversion and delay caused by the investigation of a cannibal raid on Weridai village by the Suki people the Elevala and Minnetonka again got underway and on the 5<sup>th</sup> of October 1927 with the aid of high river levels the Elevala arrived at Turtle Bank, which was well above the Elevala junction they had reached in 1926. The ships continued on to a point, five miles below Palmer junction where there was high ground to establish their base camp.

As the stores were unloaded Karius went ahead to set up Camp No 2 at Surprise Creek. Camp No 3 was at the Black River and camp 4 was on the opposite side of the Black River to Camp 3.

On 5<sup>th</sup> November Champion bid Brien farewell and set off with six police and 80 carriers for Mt Blucher and spent the night at the old camp No 10. Next day they passed the old camp 11 and arrived at old camp 12 and the next morning went beyond old camp 13 and made camp at the junction of the Luap and Tungom Rivers. At daylight next morning carriers returned to the Black River with three police to bring up more rations.

Karius arrived on 13<sup>th</sup> November from the Black River and reported that Brien, and four police and fifty carriers had rafted down river to Turtle bank where the *Elevala* was waiting. The party to cross to the Sepik now consisted of forty-five men; Karius and Champion, six police<sup>1</sup>, 10 prisoners, a cook and 26 D'Entrecasteaux carriers. The loads were packed to contain 40 pounds each – the rice was carried in special waterproof duck bags. The final dash across to the Sepik would have to be achieved on 14 days rations, which would be brought up by carrier relays to the starting point.

But now the planned starting point – Bolivip - was brought into doubt by six men who came into camp and recognized Champion. They told him that the Faiwolmin had raided Bolivip and now Bolivip no longer existed. The Bolivip people had crossed the range to the Luap watershed.

Despite promises of reward the people were reluctant to carry bags of rice in the direction of Bolivip and that once mention was made of going to the Takin there were suggestions that a better

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Police were: Sergeant Joriga, Lance Corporal Jigori, armed Constables Arura, Agoti, Bego and Bariji.

route was via *Setamnmin*; that the Bolivip route was rugged, rocky and with no water or food. A full understanding was not helped by the communication gap.

The patrol pushed on and it became evident that the reported *Faiwolmin* raid which caused Bolivip to cease to exist was a falsehood; so why were they being discouraged to go to Bolivip? They reached Bolivip and found the village was still there. Champion was re-united with the Chief and from him learned that there was no taro and his people were hungry. This point was emphasized when a pig was offered for sale, but the owner refused to accept a tomahawk in payment. Champion, Karius and the police were confused by this and could not understand the local language explanation, except that is contained the regular use of the word Imam [taro]. It was Karius who suggested it might be local custom to give garden produce with the pig and questioning revealed this to be so.

They were asked to stay for two days and so taro would be found. But as to leading the patrol to the Sepik this appeared to be out of the question. They were told the crossing would take five days, through rocky country with no food or water along the way. Champion offered the Chief a steel adze and he was tempted and finally agreed to lead the patrol to the Takin. Champion continues:

The question arose again of our descent from the sky. We could see that they were endeavouring to find out if Karius and I were both of the same origin. They asked by many signs who had arrived first, and the old men discussed it again among themselves and shook their heads implying that it was beyond them.

Seeing that we were determined to go to the Takin they asked if we were coming back to Bolivip, and receiving a reply in the negative, their faces took on a troubled look. 'Where were we going?'

'Down the Takin'

Then followed an earnest discussion amongst themselves, they went over the names the Chief told us lived on the Takin. He supplied them again asking for confirmation from two old men...Carefully they went over them; one giving a name which the others had forgotten. Added to those which the Chief had already given us were *Feramin*, *Lukeomin*, *Kefalmin*, *Aptelmin and Karikmin*. It seemed they knew little of these tribes and that they visited only the *Feramin* and *Kelefomin*. <sup>2</sup>

This discussion and interaction provides a fascinating insight into the Bolivip perception of their cosmos, as they perceived it in 1927. Firstly, they needed an explanation for the origins of the only Europeans they had seen. They satisfied themselves that like the light skinned parentless boy mentioned in the previous chapter, Europeans must have come from the sky. Secondly the plan to travel down the Takin would remove their new friends from the "Min" world as they knew it.

A pig was brought and a small amount of taro was placed on the ground around it. This was the appropriate way to welcome the return of friends, although the whole countryside must have been scoured to find the taro. The Chief put his arms around Champion and led Champion to this food offering, evidently, he deeply appreciated the fact that Champion had returned to Bolivip as promised.

Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> November 1927 dawned as a dull day. As the patrol broke camp, the Bolivip people displayed dismal faces. They implored the patrol not to go saying there were no water and no food. The Chief said there were no Bolivip men prepared to carry and that he too was not coming and he wanted us to stay and then return to the Luap. Champion continues:

Suddenly a thought struck me, and I ran down to the bags of rice, pounded them and cried "ung, ung!' (food food); pointed to the range and patted my stomach; that I ran to the

carriers who were carrying rice; it was 'ung' too. The carriers ate it, we ate it and the Bolivips could eat it too...The Chief's doubts fled, we had food and we had that adze.<sup>3</sup>

The patrol left the village and twenty minutes later began to climb. The guides went straight up. The patrol was no longer walking, but clambering and clinging to whatever root or tree trunk was within reach. Champion and Chief, three police and three Bolivip carriers were at the front of the patrol with Karius bringing up the rear. At the first stop they counted eleven Bolivip men who were accompanying the patrol. During this break Champion established that the Chief's name was *Tamsimara*.

Champion's aneroid showed 6,500 feet and the air was cold. They continued on to the north and were soon in moss forest. When the patrol descended into the valley of the Amil river where there were waterholes and a cave with a smoke blackened ceiling. The guides indicated the patrol should spend the night there. It was here that the Bolivips had their first lesson in eating rice.

At dawn on the 28<sup>th</sup> November they continued up the Amil until a near vertical wall was encountered. While the Bolivips could climb it, laden carriers could not. Ladders were constructed the carrier loads were hauled up on rattan ropes. They continued on through moss forest and at one stage two Bolivips climbed pandanas palms to harvest nuts, which served a midday snack. Then around 4 pm they started looking for a camp site. Tamsimara had been urging them on and he brought them to a bush house, which he said belonged to the Feramin. He said there was no water, and would be none until sometime next day. The carriers ate cold rice and the Bolivips who had been hunting during the day has grilled cuscus and bandicoot as well. They camped by the Feramin hut at 8,300 feet.

They set out early on the 29<sup>th</sup> with the intention of cooking food at the first water they encountered, but when they found a pothole with water in it they satisfied themselves by drinking then continuing on. The limestone country was pitted with sink holes, and one carrier fell into one and injured his arm. At Mid-morning they came to the junction of two tracks. The guides indicated one came from the *Setamin* tribes living on the Wongop River. Soon afterwards they found themselves at the junction of the Dap and Victor Emanuel Ranges. It was here that the guides suggested that they make camp. Water was available not far below and tomorrow they would cross the divide and descend towards the Sepik – they were warned tomorrow would be a long day. The altitude of this camp was 8,159 feet. It proved to be a very cold night.

On the 30<sup>th</sup> November, they set out in the rain and after an hour were at an altitude of 9,000 feet at the top of the Feneng/Takin [Fly/Sepik] divide, but due to the mist and rain it was difficulty to see more than 50 yards in any direction. Eventually the rain ceased.

Out into the bright sunlight we stepped to gasp at the sight below us...several thousand feet below us was a great basin surrounded by mountains...It was the promised land...The Takin was flanked by a grass plain about eight miles broad...Numerous fires denoted the presence of many villages.<sup>4</sup>

The patrol descended quickly into the valley via forest and grassy spurs; the limestone now behind them. Champion noted:

At one of our resting places Tamsimara confided in me that the Feramin would provide dances and pigs for our benefit, and the old rascal hinted that the ladies of the district would be at the disposal of such distinguished visitors.<sup>5</sup>

Again, the Bolivips wanted to know if the patrol followed the Takin downstream, how they would get back to the south from whence they came. Tamismara asked if they would travel through the air. Champion thought it best to answer in the affirmative. They arrived at the bank of the Takin

at 1.25pm and made camp there at an altitude of 4,735 feet above sea level. The Takin or Sepik was 25 yards wide and two to three feet deep at that point. The Bolivips asked to be paid as they wished to return home next day. The payment was done with due ceremony with bush knives and tomahawks.

Tamsimara then left his belongings in the care of the patrol and went to find the Feramin. He returned at 4 pm with a stranger:

He led the trembling man up to us and showed him how to shake hands. Our first thought was to tell him to return to his village and get others to bring us food which we wanted more than anything else. He promised to do so.

Next day the camp was filled with Feramin people being shown around by their Bolivip friends who explained what different objects were for and how fire could be lit by striking small sticks and so on. Tamsimara spoke with Champion for the last time, introducing to him young men and telling him if he came again to Bolivip and if he, Tamsimara was dead this man would have taken his place. He was also scornful of the small offering of Feramin taro and the failure to offer a pig and he then told the Feramin the same. He called his men together and they left immediately for Bolivip.

The patrol plan to have the Feramin guide the patrol to Telefomin was problematic because these two communities were at war. Eventually two guides were provided at the promise of a large knife each. A little more taro was supplied, but it was clear that, like Bolivip, the Feramin were going through a hungry period.

From 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1927, to conserve their food supply the patrol went without midday meals. This was the start of the patrol's dash down the Sepik before their food supply ran out. At daylight on the 3<sup>rd</sup> one of the guides showed up and led them through a Feramin village and across some river flats, but a mile further on the guide would go no further saying he would be killed. They continued on generally following the Takin downstream. They walked into a large village before being noticed. The patrol was able to make friends by handing out tobacco. In the process of doing so they learned that the word "Seno" which they understood to mean friend was replaced with "Avino".

Some of these new friends walked with the patrol and when:

Suddenly we heard the peculiar croaking of frogs, a variety of high and low notes from behind, and then from our left and in front. We looked back to find the croaks were from men; it was the assembly call of the Kelefomin. On our left the grass plain dipped down steeply onto a wooded ravine and from this ravine came running men. They halted when they saw us, then dashed back calling the peculiar frog cry. It came from all sides. Men were arming themselves and circling in front. They could not make out what we were...and following intermingled...were their own people...Those with us could restrain themselves no longer, but burst into loud laughter and shouted derisively at those in front. Then we saw the armed men call to small boys who ran out and took the bows and arrows to the houses. <sup>6</sup>

Champion noted the fact that the grass plain could be easily converted to aircraft use and aircraft could allow an easier exploration of this obviously populated area; exploration that the current patrol, sadly, did not have time to accomplish. They learned from the *Kelefomin* [Telefomin] that to the north were the *Meianmin* [Mianmin] and ahead of them were the *Aptelmin* [Atbalmin].

The patrol followed the Sepik downstream along its right bank. They encountered the *Karikmin* who were located where the writer met the *Sepkialikmin* in 1966 and 1967, so I assumed them to be the same group.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> December 1927, the patrol reached the junctions of two streams, which Karius identified as the final bifurcation of the Sepik, shown on the map drawn by Dr. Thurnwald. "It is safe to say" he wrote "that I have at last connected with the most southerly or highest point arrived at by expeditions travelling up the Sepik."<sup>7</sup>

The first of these Karius called the Grey River because of its colour. When they checked Thurnwald's map they saw that it was the Donner. The second river was identified from Thurnwald's map as the East River, better known on later maps as the "Clear" or the "Fak" River. Of the former German administration and German maps of the Sepik Champion noted:

During and since the war, accusations have been made against the German Administration that the natives under its control were treated with cruelty and injustice. We were now travelling over country which two German expeditions traversed in 1910 and 1914, and the behaviour of the inhabitants shows that they could not have been ill-treated; otherwise we should have met with great hostility or found deserted villages.

The German explorations in New Guinea have been carried out with thoroughness as a study of their maps will show, but the personnel of their exploration always comprised scientific men, whereas exploration in our own territory...has been left to the officers if the Papuan Administration...<sup>8</sup>

They met no people on the right back of the Sepik after crossing the East [Fak] River and before they crossed a cane suspension bridge to the Sepik's left bank, which would have placed them into Atbalmin territory. Therefore, contrary to some later patrol reports Karius and Champion do not seem to have met any Mianmin people.

Champion's excellent reporting becomes somewhat curtailed during this section of the patrol because his knee developed a seriously painful infection and he had to be carried in a stretcher and he was in an occasionally delirious state. It is interesting to note how he was taken across this bridge over the Sepik River:

This bridge was 120 feet long and 40 feet above the water... A single length of lawyer cane, an inch in diameter formed the foot-way of the bridge. It was securely tied at each end to strong trees; a scaffolding of thin saplings lashed together formed supports for the two handrails, one on each side about four feet above the foot-way...

The problem was getting me across it. I could not move unless I was in my stretcher, and only two men could carry me. Lance Corporal Jigori and Armed Constable Aruru were selected for the task. They suspended the ends of the stretcher from their shoulders and holding on with their arms they got me across the swaying bridge. It took half an hour to accomplish it.<sup>10</sup>

They made friendly contact with several groups inland from the south side of the Sepik River and were able to trade for good quantities of sweet potatoes and bananas. Not long after this, the country was becoming flatter and they came upon a stand of sago palms. Camp was made there and sago production was commenced and continued the following day. With their stomachs full and sago to carry with them they continued on.

They crossed the Brucken and Hoffnungs River tributaries of the Sepik and on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1927, they passed beyond the Zweifell Gorge out onto flat plains country; their mountain walking was now behind them.

After three hours fast travelling the following day, Champion who was walking at the rear of the patrol heard shouting ahead and assumed that Karius had encountered hostility. Champion and the police hurried forward to assist. Champion continues:

Karius had taken the village [a large house on the bank of a creek] by surprise. He had gone on ahead with carriers and three police and had been about to cross the creek when the natives saw him. They did not wait to descend the ladders of the house but men jumped fully armed with bows and arrows and in a line three deep drew up on the bank of the creek 12 feet above Karius and the police. Arrows were fitted to bow strings and drawn. Karius, advancing slowly, called "Seno! Avino!" and any other peace words he could think of, at the same time waving his arms in a token of friendliness. It was a tense moment. One of the natives suddenly relaxed his strained attitude, calling something to the rest and immediately the line broke, the men executed a dance, re-formed again, and changed their shouts of defiance to calls of welcome. I often think of the blood that might have been saved if savages on their first contact with Europeans could have had the good fortune to meet such men as Karius.<sup>11</sup>

The house was 35 feet long by 27 feet wide and was built on slender poles nine feet above the ground. The house had no walls. Once friendly contact was established they traded freely. When the patrol parted from these people, Karius gave an 18-inch knife to the man who had saved the situation during the initial confrontation.

That afternoon one of the carriers collapsed and could no longer walk. He was helped along until they caught up with the rest of the patrol which had reached another village where they made camp. Next day they followed a creek which they hoped would take them back to the Sepik, but they made camp again in a sago swamp and decided to make sago. It was the 25<sup>th</sup> of December 1927 – Christmas day. They later discovered the creek they followed was the middle reaches of the Hollander River.

Once back on the Sepik, via a route Karius cleared the day before, they made camp again and immediately recommenced making sago from a stand they found there. They calculated their map position as 2 miles below a narrow part of the river that Dr. Schultze called the "Mountain Gate". They continued downstream through insect infested swamps and during this time entered Dutch New Guinea. They stayed three days while the exhausted patrol members made enough sago to last the patrol for the next eight days. Soon after they found a stand of suitable trees and for five days they felled trees and built five rafts. It was 17<sup>th</sup> January 1928 and ahead of them were 300 river miles to Ambunti.

Their map shows the location of the launching of the rafts was several miles upstream of the junction of the West River with the Sepik. The rafts once launched travelled at an estimated six or seven miles per hour. They camped that night at an old garden with a derelict house. Later men appeared in two canoes. They indicated the patrol was welcome to the food in the old garden. They also said "Moot! Moot!" but this meant nothing to anyone on the patrol.

The patrol feasted on coconuts and bananas baked in the ashes. The sick carrier was now very weak and he died as the sun set. He was buried during the night in a banana grove and his grave disguised with old leaves in the hope his body would escape being eaten by the local people after the patrol departed.

The rafts were underway again at dawn. Soon after 7.15am a rifle shot was heard and was assumed to have been fired by a Malay bird of paradise hunter. The rafts drifted around the next bend in the Sepik and there, 500 miles up the river the Elevala waited at anchor. Champion recalled:

Jim Ritchie was the ELEVALA's engineer, he was very capable, and quite a good navigator, too. He'd brought the ELEVALA round from Port Moresby himself, and up the Sepik. He told us he had been three weeks at anchor, waiting for us, and he was going to leave the next day...and then we came...<sup>12</sup>

# **Post Script:**

As a concluding comment to this and the previous chapter James Sinclair stated

"After failing to get through in 1926, Charles H.Karius, Assistant Resident magistrate in the Public Service of the Territory of Papua, succeeded the following year, in leading a second expedition from sea to sea across the Island of Papua or New Guinea at its widest part by way of the headwaters of the Fly and Sepik Rivers.

"In recognition of this feat Karius was awarded the Patron's Medal of the Royal Geological Society." When Karius received the medal he showed it to Champion and he said "you know, this should be yours." 14

## End Notes Chapter 31.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Champion I.F. 1966 Page 73 & 162

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Champion I.F. 1966 Page 143

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Champion I.F. 1966 Page 147

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Champion I.F. 1966 Page 162

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Champion I.F. 1966 Page 162

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Champion I.F. 1966 Page 171

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> G.Souter – The Last Unknown Angus and Robertson 1965 P162

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Champion I.F. 1966 Page 197-198

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Neville R.T. Telefomin Patrol Report No 2/1956/7

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Champion I.F. 1966 Page 183

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Champion I.F. 1966 Page 194-195

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Sinclair J. 1988 page 81

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Champion I.F. 1966 Page Preface by I.F.Champion – Kambisi Papua 1929

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Sinclair J. 1988 page 83

### Sepik 2 Chapter 32 – The impact of hanging executions on the custom of head hunting

The officers of the Territory of New Guinea civil administration in the 1920s and 1930s were under instruction to bring the Sepik under control, to stamp out inter-tribal fighting and the practice of headhunting. The police investigations involved arresting offenders and putting them on trial in the Supreme Court in Rabaul. In later years after several Judges had been appointed, the trials were conducted in places other than Rabaul with the Judges and associated legal officers travelling on court circuits.

The investigating officer and/or his colleagues then had the grizzly task of actually carrying out the death sentences. Although in that period, capital punishment was accepted by all the civilised nations, and although those who ended up on the gallows were from villages where the rules were known, the effect of executing someone was profound on all concerned.

The process of criminal justice in those days was like something out of the Middle Ages. The primitive defendants were taken from their villages to Rabaul, and months later, after the court had pronounced them guilty, they were brought back to the place of the crime, and a gallows was erected, and they were hanged before an audience, which had been rounded up from far and wide, <sup>1</sup>

**Two initial impressions:** After interviewing some 200 Sepik elders, the writer was left with two initial impressions concerning the Middle Sepik views on the impact of hanging executions on the custom of head hunting.

- 1. That hanging the offenders turned off head hunting like turning off a tap; an abrupt end to a long-standing and traditionally important custom.
- 2. That hanging condemned men horrified the Sepik people. They were used to killing on the spur of the moment in the heat of battle, but they considered such killing to be a very different thing to the cold-blooded hanging people many months after the committing of crimes of which they were convicted. To the Sepik people executions by hanging were barbaric.

The need to revise these impressions: The best evidence of any event comes from reliable witnesses who were on the spot at the time and recorded their observations. In this case District Officer Townsend noted:

I was always struck by the lack of personal animosity [the people displayed] towards myself and my police. They were "agin' the Government" for the very good reason that Government interfered with some of the customs which they wished to preserve, such as head-hunting and the settlement of arguments in their own way. I was determined to stop them. So, it developed into a game, the rules of which they understood very quickly and as quickly turned to their own advantage.

They learned that they could make all their preparations — even let their intentions be known abroad — and that, according to the rules of the Government, which I followed, I would be unable to take any action against them until a raid or a fight had actually taken place. On several occasions I arrived at a village to discover they were making new ceremonial carvings in connection with a projected head-hunting raid or tribal war. I was even permitted to see them and the sago palm leaf that was bring sewn together to partition a part of the Haus Tambaran for one of their nefarious purposes.

I would sit among the old men of the village arguing the Government position...which did not include either head taking or war between neighbours...Just as strongly, the elders would point out, perfectly logically as far as they were concerned, that there was now an increasing number of young men in the village who had not taken their heads and therefore could not get married or take their place as adults in the community. <sup>2</sup>

Mr. Townsend's comments make it clear that the custom did not end abruptly, like the turning off of a tap, and, that there was much more to headhunting than simple killing and decapitation.

Sepik 1, Chapter 13 explains the traditional importance of headhunting. It had deep rooted significance in the traditional religion of the Sepik people involving initiation into adulthood, the right to marry, the stabilising of the earth, the naming of, and establishment of the power base of haus tambarans and more. Such a deep-rooted custom which shapes the people's perception of their cosmos cannot be quickly or easily eradicated. Therefore, the impact of hangings on head hunting needs to be examined over a longer time frame, and in terms of five separate executions involving a total of 24 men executed.

# 1930 - At Ambunti the hanging of 10 men.

The Director of District Services and Native Affairs, J.K.McCarthy, who was a patrol officer at Ambunti in 1930, was of the view that public hangings of convicted head-hunters did not greatly hurry the end of the custom of headhunting in the Sepik. Sudden death was not much of a deterrent. A primitive man does not fear death when it is upon him... At the 1930 hanging of seven Kamindimbit men at Ambunti Mr McCarthy noted that the leader said from the scaffold to the crowd below I am not afraid to go and meet my forefathers for I am a man who has killed his enemies.<sup>3</sup>

Hanged with the seven Kamindimbit men at Ambunti in 1930 were three others, two men from Yabunumbu village and Owun of Korogo village.

Owun's son Yuinumba had killed the man, who was captured by Owun and brought back to Korogo village for his son to kill. The crime might have gone undetected except for a dispute over a woman at Korogo, and that was why the police were led to the headless body. With the men standing on the gallows, the Kiap<sup>1</sup> said *You prisoners tell what you will to your Luluais and Tultuls so everyone can hear you.* To the assembled people *You people on the ground hear what these men have to say.* 

The Korogo elders clearly remembered Owun's words and recited them to the writer half a century later — The government is going to kill me for killing men. I gave the man to my child to kill and now I am going to die for this. When I am dead take the rope back and give it to my son and my people and let them know that this must signify the end of fighting and killing on the Sepik.

Also, vivid in the memories of the Korogo elders was the experience of constructing the gallows and the hanging itself. We went to the bush and cut strong timbers. We erected a long scaffold on the river bank at Ambunti, near where the stone shows at low water. The trapdoor or place where the bodies were to fall was a long plank with hole bored through it and a rope attached. This was to be pulled out from under their feet.

The prisoners were lined up along the plank with the nooses around their necks...After everything was said...men took their positions along the rope attached to the trap. The kiap whistled and the plank was pulled out from under them and they fell down...They were all dead, hanging there, except for one Kamindimbit whose rope broke and he fell down onto the stones of the river bank. The Doctor went down and looked at him and said he was still alive, so they took him up and hanged him again... and this time he was properly dead.

The kiap drummed the message into the people [that this was to be the end of head hunting] and finally asked where the people wanted to bury their dead. Did they want to bury them here of to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This would have been District Officer Eric Douglas Robinson, otherwise known as "Sepik Robbie"

take them back to the villages...The bodies were loaded into canoes and taken back to the villages and buried...They took the hanging ropes as well.<sup>4</sup>

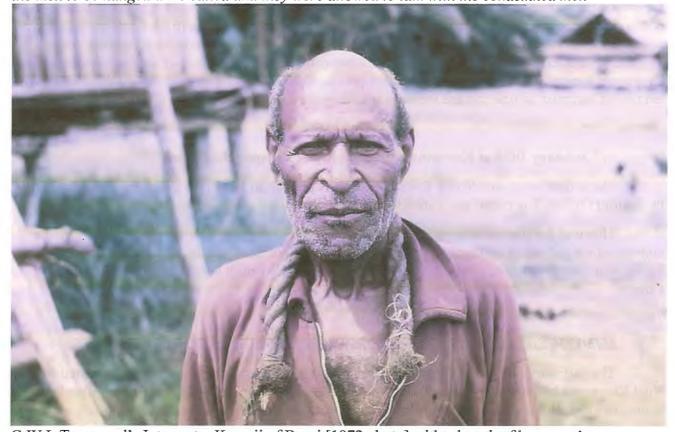
Writer's note. I found it significant that the people clearly remembered the Owun's words, but that no-one recalled the Kamindimbit leader's words as quoted by J.K.McCarthy [on the previous page]. This could be taken to shows that the stronger message delivered from the gallows was the need to end head hunting.

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# May 1934 at Jama in the Sepik Plains the hanging of 1 Jama and 6 Sengo men.

On 26<sup>th</sup> September 1933, Mr Townsend examined the site where a combined Jama Sengo ambush had killed a Wosera market party. Mr. Townsend's personal diaries indicate that on 11<sup>th</sup> April 1934 the Supreme Court in Rabaul condemned one Jama man and six Sengo men to death. His diary then indicates he conducted a patrol spanning the dates 15<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> May 1934 to conduct the executions.

As the patrol passed through Marui mission station Father Puff approached Kiap Townsend ...and he agreed that Father Krisbal [Cruysberg] and I²could baptise all the men to be hanged. ...We schooled them about the talk of the bible and how they had done wrong and should be sorry for the wrong they had done. We did this work of baptising until lunch time. Then we marched up into the kunai. [to where the executions were to take place]. The people made shelters, and carriers brought food and tents. The Government fed all the people who came to see the man hanged. The relatives of the men to be hanged were called and they were allowed to talk with the condemned men<sup>5</sup>



G.W.L.Townsend's Interpreter Kwonji of Burui [1972 photo] with a length of hangman's rope.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Alois Kawan was a Waris Islander who served as a Catachist with the Catholic mission and was resident in Yamuk village when I met him in 1970

Kwonji attended this execution and described it thus: ... All the Luluais from Tambanum up [i.e. the whole of the Middle Sepik] came to the hanging. We [that is] the Luluais and police planted two posts and fastened a bearer across them to which the hanging ropes were attached.

Their [the prisoner's] legs and arms were tied and their eyes were blindfolded. A ladder was put up and a rope was fastened around the chest of each man to be hanged and a winch pulled them up and the hanging ropes were put around their necks. The ropes used to pull them up were let go and they fell to be hanged at exactly 9.00 am. The hanging ropes were short and when they fell they did not reach the ground. They turned around and swayed on the ropes; their tongues came out and their eyes bulged.

We waited until they were dead, then cut them down and the people took the bodies home.<sup>6</sup> The six men hanged were...from Jama, Sambumbeli; he was Jama's fight leader. From Sengo; Yageleli, Ambeli, Tomeli, Gungundimi – he was a tultul, and one other.<sup>7</sup>

If we had not done this, then the law would not be enforced now. The Government way is best: find out the talk properly, find the guilty party, and when all the talk [evidence] is clear...punish him.

The old way was no good; send ginger, allies come and you kill all the people, irrespective of whether they are individually responsible for the original offence or not. That is no good. Following and because of the Sengo/Jama hangings...the fighting in the kunai [The Sepik Plains] finished at that time.<sup>8</sup>

District Officer Townsend noted that after use, the hanging rope was still perfectly good, but the crew of Aloha, the boat used on the occasion of the Sengo hangings, flatly refused to have it on board. I therefore ordered that the rope be cut into foot lengths, one to go to each village haus tambaran as a reminder to the warriors of the Government's prohibition on head hunting. Mr. Townsend selected Constable Bauge and four other constables to visit each of the haus tambarans of the people present, and also some that had not previously been visited by patrols – to distribute lengths of hangman's rope and the message it told.

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## 1st January 1935 at Kuvinmas, the hanging of 5 Kopagalion men.

These men were arrested by District Officer Robinson in 1933 [see Chapter 40 and executed by District Officer Townsend and Patrol Officer Keogh.

This was the final execution of Middle Sepik men. There were, however three additional factors, which the writer believes contributed to the ending of head hunting in the Middle Sepik. These were the hangings of Constable Sipei and of Ludwig Schmidt and the role of the Catholic Church.

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## 25/3/1936 Ludwig Schmidt hanged for murdering four Highlands men.

The full story of Ludwig Schmidt's actions is recorded in Chapter 44. He was arrested in the Yuat River area by ADO Colin MacDonald of Ambunti after rampaging through the highlands from Kainantu to Mt Hagen. In Rabaul, he was charged with the murders of four Mt Hagen men, who were among many others he had shot between 1932 and 1935. He was found guilty and hanged in Rabaul on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1936.

With the White Australia policy still in force, the Australian public was outraged that a European should be executed for the killing of natives. He went to the gallows never-the-less.

## 1936 Constable Sipei hanged for murdering ADO Colin MacDonald at Ambunti.

In late February 1935 Assistant District Officer Colin MacDonald of Ambunti, was murdered by a native policeman. It so happened that in this month we had received the first three pedal-radio sets to be sent to the district...one was sent to Ambunti...six days later, the first word I received over the new instrument was that MacDonald...had been killed.

...when I reached Ambunti I found the police constable, Sipei, under guard at the hospital. He had shot MacDonald just before dawn one day while the latter was in bed; he had then tried to commit suicide by stabbing himself and then jumping from a tree. He failed in both attempts and eventually stood trial. He tried to plead "guilty" but the court would not accept that plea...He was eventually found guilty. From that time until he was hanged, he never spoke another word. 9

Why did Sipei kill MacDonald? Sipei was angry about his dog. A Yambon man had thrown the dog into the river and it had come ashore at Ambunti. Sipei took it and looked after it. The Yambon man came and claimed his dog and the kiap gave it to him. Sipei felt he had not been given a proper hearing... <sup>10</sup>

Although the writer has been unable to find documentary evidence to support the following, the administration officers in the Sepik would certainly have conducted education campaigns concerning the executions of Schmidt and Sipei. The campaigns would emphasise the fact that the same law applies to all including Europeans and the constabulary.

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#### The role of the Catholic Church.

The writer believes that, without wishing to understate the Catholic mission work in any way, that with the enforced end of head hunting in the Middle Sepik, that the Catholic Church found itself in the right place<sup>3</sup> at the right time; a viable alternative when a viable alternative was desperately needed<sup>4</sup>. I believe the Sepik people turned on-masse to Christianity, at that time, as it offered Sepik societies a way for their young bachelors a ceremonial and lawful way, witnessed by the missionary's God, to marry eligible women and to procreate. Three snippets of evidence suggest that this might be so:

1. Baras of Japandai married Kawiambu in the Catholic Church in 1941 or 1942. The writer's extensive discussions with Baras indicated that the important thing in Baras' memory was the wedding ring on Kawiambu's finger as a sign of their marriage bond<sup>11</sup>. Baras mentioned the church marriage as something of special importance to him and reflective of being different from traditional marriages. Unfortunately, I did think to ask about the transition from the need to take a head to qualify to marry to the use of a Church marriage ceremony. Nor did I ask how wide spread Christian marriages were, or when they commenced in the Middle Sepik.

Baras, as I recall, did not have initiation scars; no doubt in his view, his [and many others] transition to manhood was his excellent loyal service as a special constable supporting Australian coast-watchers behind Japanese lines in the Sepik.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Mission stations were established at Marienberg in the Lower Sepik in 1913 at Marui in the Middle Sepik in 1933, and elsewhere. Father's Kirschbaum [from Marui] and Puff and Kirschbaum at Marui were active throughout the whole of the Lower and Middle Sepik villages before the administration presence was felt.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> A strange, but relevant parallel was the inclusion in the Native Administration Regulations of Adultery as a criminal offence. It was a viable alternative to the traditional obligation and inevitable legal consequences of killing a wife's lover – let the court deal with it and gool the offender.

2. As discussed in Chapter 14, the abrupt, and seemingly unexplained, wish in the Lower Sepik villages in 1931-2 to be rid of traditional sacred objects and customs, and, to becomes good Catholics.<sup>12</sup>

The administration widely publicised the hangings and the need to eradicate headhunting. It would come as no surprise to the writer that hangings in the Middle Sepik had such a major impact in the Lower Sepik – lessons learned, and no-doubt some satisfaction, with news of the administration's deadly action against an aggressive and greatly feared upstream community.

3. Also, as discussed in Chapter 14, The conversion of a haus tambaran at Parembei into a church only became known through five entries spanning 11/10/1939 to 29/9/1940, in the Parembei village book. These entries related to an instruction by the Administrator that a separate church was to be built and the haus tambaran allowed to revert to its original purpose. The entries also cover reported consequences attributed to the power of the haus tambaran.

The village book entries do not specify when the haus tambaran was converted into a church, but clearly it was before October 1939 when corrective action was ordered. It seems logical that the executions of 1930, 1934 and 1935 may have been a significant contributing cause to the conversion to Christian beliefs and of a haus tambaran [the traditional church of the Sepik people] to a church.

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Concluding comments: Much in this chapter is based upon surmise, leaving us in need of sound research, if it is not now too late. The writer had access to the right elders at the right time, to ask questions which would have easily provided the important answers that now elude us.

Three final topics require brief mention:

### 1. The complexity of social adjustments, with which the elders were left to deal.

The senior age classes of Middle Sepik societies, being the custodians of Sepik oral history and the sacred and ritual life of their communities, must have faced huge problems when the administration enforced the prohibition on head hunting. What this did, was to remove the main-stay of traditional religion upon which initiation into manhood, marriage and much of the Sepik perception of their cosmos relied. It is difficult to imagine a parallel in Western society with such far reaching consequences.

My reading of Sepik anthropology texts, has, so far not revealed any academic writings on this important subject. The elders I interviewed in the 1970 agreed that the elders of the 1930s understood that there were many things to do with their contact with the outside world, for which their perception of the traditional Sepik cosmos could not explain. In part at least, they sought the answers they needed in their understanding of the bible. To date the writer has attributed the roots of Sepik cargo cult thinking to this. It now, also, seems likely that serious consideration was given to abandoning traditional religion in favour of Catholicism.

In retrospect the steps of destroying and abandoning traditional sacred objects and converting haus tambarans into churches might be seen as the extreme swing of a pendulum set in motion as a reaction to the end of head hunting. But with the passing of time and the uncertainties of the local interpretation of World War 2 in the Sepik, the pendulum swung back towards traditional values.

Modifications to the initiation practice was necessary made. See Sepik 4 Chapter 51. While headhunting itself has stopped, Head hunting mentality and bloody-mindedness continues to dominate Sepik thinking particularly in relation to long-standing land disputes.

### 2. At least two high-profile murder cases that did not result in executions.

The murders of Constables Belova and Luwitis at Waskuk in 1928 [Chapter 35] resulted in the case being dismissed at the Preliminary Hearing of the case <sup>13</sup>. In the case of the murders of Patrol Officer Neil Campbell Elliott and Constable Aipaum at Wanali in 1939 [Chapter 48] the Judge found the circumstances extenuating and imposed sentences of imprisonment <sup>14</sup> rather than death sentences.

**Writer's note:** As indicated in earlier chapters, there have been occasions when I found Mr. Townsend's account of events to be at odds with alternate reports of the same event. Whereas Mr. Townsend states the Judge imposed sentences of imprisonment, the Sydney Morning Herald of 29/9/1939 noted Sentences of death were passed today on two natives convicted of having murdered Patrol Elliott last month.

Chapters 35 and 48 reveals in both these cases, it was illegal or at least inappropriate actions by the deceased which resulted in their demise and in each case, the unnecessary deaths of a number of Sepik people.

# 3. Head hunting continued in the "uncontrolled" Upper Sepik.

At the outbreak of World War 2 the Lower and Middle Sepik regions were classified as "under administration control" with the last "controlled" village being Yessan. <sup>15</sup> The Sepik River above Yessan was "uncontrolled". In the post war years there were two significant head hunting raids as described in Sepik 4 Chapters 9 and 16.

Chapter 9 The Swagup head hunting raid of 1952 [actually in late 1951, but investigated in 1952] Chapter 16 The Yellow River massacre of 1956. [mainly about long-standing traditional rivalry and cannibalism, but heads were taken.]

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This chapter's coverage of the impacts of hanging executions on the custom of Sepik head hunting has recorded what we know, what we suspect and many questions the writer would have asked my now departed, Sepik friends, had he realised he would eventually write this manuscript.

### **End Notes Chapter 32**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> G.W.L.Townsend District Officer – Pacific Publications 1968 Page 164

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> G.W.L.Townsend 1968 P 152-3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> J.K.McCarthy – Patrol Into Yesterday 1963 – F.W.Cheshire Melbourne P 52

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Bragge Sepik Research Notes Vol 18 interview with unnamed elders of Korogo, Page 117

 $<sup>^{\</sup>rm 5}$  Bragge Sepik Research Notes Vol 19 interview with Alois Kawan of Marap Page 284

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Bragge Sepik Research Notes Vol 18 interview with Kwonji of Burui. Page 171

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Bragge Sepik Research Notes Vol 18 interview with Kwonji of Burui. Page 172

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Bragge Sepik Research Notes Vol 18 interview with Kwonji of Burui. Page 171/2

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> G.W.L.Townsend 1968 Page 223

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Bragge Sepik Research Notes Vol 18 page 83 – Interview with Nonguru/Kemerabi, who was then MacDonald's cook

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> L.W.Bragge – Sepik 3 The Sepik at War Chapter 43 *The capture and fate of Constable Baras and party*, unpublished.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Catholic newspaper "The Tablet" Vol July 1932 Page 26

<sup>13</sup> J.K.McCarthy 1963 Page 59

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> G.W.L.Townsend 1968 Page 243

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> L.W.Bragge – Sepik 3 The Sepik at War Attachment B The Thurston Expedition P 2, unpublished.

## Sepik 2 Chapter 33 Two American expeditions to New Guinea and Papua 1928/29.

Two separate American expeditions visited Papua and the Trust Territory of New Guinea in 1928 and 1929. The first of these was an expedition sponsored by the United States Department of Agriculture to seek disease resistant strains of sugar cane. The second was the Crane Pacific Expedition.

## #1. A 1928 expedition seek disease resistant strains of sugar cane.

The primary source of information on this expedition was a National Geographic article by Dr. E.W.Brandes, entitled "Into Primeval Papua by Sea Plane" in volume LVI No 3 of September 1929. The article is sub titled "Seeking Disease Resisting Sugar Cane, Scientists Find Neolithic Man in Unmapped Nooks of Sorcery and Cannibalism" is, for two reasons, somewhat disappointing as a record of early Papua and New Guinea history because:

- 1. It lacks hard facts such as the dates, places and people's names and the make and model of the sea-plane they used.
  - a. Regarding dates, the mention of "July 21st" on page 286 is attributed to 1928 as the article mentions Champion's crossing New Guinea, which was achieved in January 1928, and the publishing of the September 1929 National Geographic article.
  - b. On page 332 it is noted that the expedition arrived back at its starting point in Washington DC point just 200 days after our departure. The actual time spend exploring in PNG was about 3 months and an educated guess suggests this was between June and September 1928. The expedition flew about 10,000 miles in that time.<sup>1</sup>
- 2. The style of the article verges on sensationalism by highlighting headhunting, sorcery and cannibalism and of course "pygmies" at Lake Murray and elsewhere. Passages of the text, in the style of the day, are offensively judgmental to 21<sup>st</sup> century readers e.g.

Put yourself in our place: face to face with naked wild man at the very dawn of reason, barely groping as yet from brute instincts and abysmal urges, his elemental appetite as yet untampered by the softening conventions of the life struggle as we know it.<sup>2</sup>

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This expedition was led by E.W.Brandes, PH. D. as the principal pathologist and the author of the 1929 article. Other expedition members included Dr. Jacob Jeswiet, Dutch sugar expert and world authority on the improvement and culture of the sugar cane plant, Mr. C.E.Pemberton, a seasoned explorer and Mr. Richard C.Peck, sea plane pilot.

The reason the search for disease resistant strains of sugar cane was directed towards Papua and the Trust Territory of New Guinea was that sugar cane probably originated in New Guinea.<sup>3</sup>

The expedition commenced its collection of sugar cane specimens along the Papuan coast from Samarai then westward through the Gulf of Papua to the Fly River and Lake Murray. The supply ship *Vanapa* was chartered to transport men, fuel and supplies to a base camp which was established on the Strickland River. Assistant Resident Magistrate Ivan Champion and a detachment of native police were "detailed by the Government to guard us."<sup>4</sup>

On August 24<sup>th</sup> 1928 the expedition flew from Port Moresby via Buna to Lae and the next day flew to the Sepik where they met Father Kirschbaum, and Brother Joachim at Marienberg mission station. Father Kirschbaum was the common denominator between the two expeditions

described in this Chapter. Brother Joachim had been a butcher before he became a missionary and



Marienberg Mission station, Lower Sepik 1928<sup>5</sup>

he turned his hand to making cassowary sausage for the expedition. Father Kirschbaum accompanied the expedition upstream on a flight to Ambunti, which Brandes noted as having a European population of three; "the District Officer and his two assistants" each of whom he neglected to name. Deduction suggests they were DO Harold Woodward PO Jack Read and EMA Richard Squires.



**Ambunti Patrol Post 1928**<sup>6</sup>

From Ambunti they flew upstream and over the Dutch border to the headwaters of the Mambramo River and then back to follow the Sepik downstream. Then at a point not accurately identified by



The expedition's sea plane at Ambunti.7

Brandes, he reported:

On this trip a wild sugar cane of considerable interest was discovered. The flesh from rind to centre, was a deep garnet-red, and the plants were unusually vigorous, but deficient in sugar. This was one of 130 varieties of cane taken back to America.



Making cane joints ready for their long voyage to America.

Of the Sepik people Brandes noted:

In one village near Ambunti neither men nor women wore coverings of any description<sup>9</sup>...They are of an extremely bestial type...On the other hand, the material culture of some of the Sepik natives is of a high order. Despite this they are cruel, blood-

thirsty savages under the skin, and a short time before our arrival a group from one village raided another and secured 23 heads as trophies.<sup>10</sup>

This headhunting raid Brandes mentioned was the Japandai massacre of 1923/4 as described in Chapter 25. Brandes' descriptions of the Sepik continue at "Jaurangei" [Nyaurengai]:

The main feature of the village is a series of three great structures, spaced about 500 feet apart, in a straight line through its centre. These are the House *tambarans* or club houses of the men of different clans...Unlike the dubus houses of the Fly or the ravi of the Papuan Delta country, they are not dormitories, but are for ceremonial and other meetings, and are used also as the repositories for sacred objects.

These buildings are about 50 feet high and 150 feet long...the posts that support the roof at either end are carved like totem poles to represent men and beasts from base to peak...<sup>11</sup>

The expedition returned to Marienberg and then flew along the coast to Samarai and from there to Port Moresby – then by ship to Sydney and on to Vancouver and finally to Washington:

In quarantine greenhouses at Arlington Farm, across the Potomac from Washington we planted our cane collection. A fair proportion of the varieties which survived the trip are now vigorous young plants. Those which failed to survive the long trip are being replaced from our intermediate depot of duplicate plants propagated in Sydney.

About 130 distinct varieties of sugar cane, selected with a view to disease resistance and adaptability to conditions in the Gulf States, resulted from this expedition. It remains now to test these plants under conditions of commercial cane culture in the South. Superior varieties will eventually be developed by a series of carefully controlled tests and distributed to sugar planters.

It is conceivable that some of the varieties propagated on a commercial scale will eventually reach proportions gigantic in comparison with the limited amounts found in their native habitat. Thus, we see that races of plants like races of people, may migrate from one part of the world to another to multiply and replenish the earth. <sup>12</sup>

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### #2 The Illyria in the south seas – The Crane Pacific Expedition 1928/9.

The brigantine yacht *Illyria* was built at the Lussinpiccolo shipyards in Italy from where it sailed for New York in September 1928. The *Illyria* was 147'6" long. The height of the foremast was 116' and the mainmast 128'. She was of 356 gross tonnage and she carried 10,000 square feet of sail. She also had an auxiliary diesel engine of 300 horse power.<sup>13</sup>

Cornelius Crane received the *Illyria* as a reward from his father Richard Teller Crane Junior for his university graduation in 1927. At first Cornelius intended to take a group of friends on purely a yachting cruise. But as the *Illyria* had ample accommodation and as her owner was fond of hunting and fishing, it was decided to take experts in zoology, natural history and make a scientific expedition on behalf of the Chicago field museum. The expedition circled the globe between November 1928 and October 1929. The expedition collected over 18,000 specimens. The Crane expedition is particularly significant for its photographic record.

The expedition personnel; the "gentlemen" to accompany Crane included:

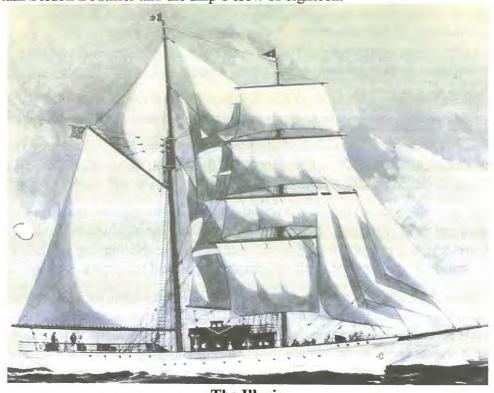
Karl Patterson Schmidt a herpetologist from the Field Museum's Zoology Department. Dr. Albert W.Herre – an ichthyologist from Stanford University

Walt Alois Webber – artist.

Frank Wonder – skin dresser

Medical Dr. William Lorenzo Moss from the staff of Harvard University
Charles R.Peavy of Mobile Alabama – Crane personal friend.

Sidney N.Shurcliff of Boston – Crane personal friend and Photographer
Murry Fairbank – Crane personal friend and mechanical engineer
Captain Seldon Boutilier and the ship's crew of eighteen.



The Illyria

Virginia-Lee Webb article Official/Unofficial images: Photographs from the Crane Pacific Expedition 1928-29 provides an excellent description of what motivated Cornelius Crane in planning his expedition:

...he decided to mirror his multidisciplinary expedition to follow parts of the route taken by Charles Darwin in 1831 and his "co-environmentalist" Alfred Russell Wallace...Crane's education and relationship with the Field Museum made him aware of expeditions that went to the Pacific before him, especially to New Guinea. George Dorsey of the Field Museum had gone on a world tour in 1908 that included what was then German New Guinea. The collecting possibilities inspired Dorsey to raise funds to send Albert Buell Lewis to the area between 1909 to 1913. On the Joseph N. Field Expedition, Lewis collected approximately 14,000 objects and made 2,000 photographs, 1,500 of which are now in the Field Museum. Crane also wanted to visit New Guinea, not to specifically follow the course set by Lewis, but to go to areas that had not been systematically visited by Europeans or Americans since the German colonial expeditions of the pre-war period. New Guinea was where Crane felt he could still visit "unknown and undiscovered" places. <sup>14</sup>

As the focus of the present pages relate to the Sepik District, the expedition activities elsewhere are not covered here. The expedition arrived in Rabaul on 26<sup>th</sup> April 1929 where it was recommended that the expedition access the interior of New Guinea by going up the Sepik River. Crane was advised to seek out Father Kirschbaum, who they located at Alexishafen. Father Kirschbaum agreed to guide the expedition in exchange for transporting three tons of provisions and 15 local people back to Marienberg.

The *Illyria* arrived in Marienberg on 9<sup>th</sup> May 1929 and the expedition went then to Bien village, where the women of the village ran away as the all-male expedition entered the village. Father Kirschbaum facilitated the photography and managed to get both men and women to stand in line to be photographed.<sup>15</sup>

From Bien, they went to Darapap in the Murik Lakes before re-entering the Sepik and heading to Iatmul areas of the Middle Sepik; visiting Tambanum, Timbunke, Kanganaman and reached Malu on 16<sup>th</sup> May 1929. On the 18<sup>th</sup> the expedition approached Wogamush and Kubka. At these villages, they were not permitted ashore but photographed from the Illyria. They also traded with men who came out to the Illyria in canoes. On the 19<sup>th</sup> May they entered the May River where they were unable to get village names. Later research indicated they probably reach Pekwe village <sup>16</sup>, close to where May River Patrol Post would be established in 1956.

From May River, they turned back down stream and entered the Keram River, visiting Kambot, Korogopa and Geketen villages on 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> May 1929. Father Kirschbaum and another priest Father Girards had visited all these villages. They had seen and photographed the feather-work that decorated the decorated the architecture on certain occasions. When Crane arrived the large feather-displays were down, but the architecture, carving and painting enthralled them. In Kambot they photographed the underside the painted gables that extended over the entrance.

Flash photos were taken of the house interiors. Flash photo are especially valuable as they show the inside these extraordinary buildings. Flash photography was also very dangerous to make; one person held the flashgun with the exploding gunpowder while a second person opened the shutter on the camera to expose the film. Together the many photographs form a very complete record of the way Kambot village looked on 24-29 May 1929.<sup>17</sup>

The trip up the Sepik was the last official leg of the expedition. From there the scientists dispersed to different locations and Captain Boutilier brought the *Illyria* back to Massachusetts after a voyage of 11 months. Virginia-Lee Webb concluded her article by noting:

Because of the insight, social position, and above all the wealth of one young man and his family, we now have a photographic record with supporting documentation of the way New Guinea looked to several Americans during the month of May 1929...The Crane Pacific Expedition can now be added to the transitional period after the German colonial presence and before the visits of Margaret Mead, Gregory Bateson and others.<sup>18</sup>

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Other early American private expeditions to the Sepik [and culturally related regions].

- 1. 1908 George Dorsey Anthropology Curator of the Field Museum of Natural History.
- 2. **1909 1913** Albert Burell Lewis Field Pacific Expedition, as described in Chapter 10 *Berlinhfen and Eitape [Aitape]*.
- 3. 1936 Archbald expedition of 1936 as described in Chapter 48.

#### **End Notes Chapter 33**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Garamut – blog 11/3/2009

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> E.W.Brandes – Into Primitive Papua by sea-plane. National; Geographic Vol LCI, No 3 September 1929 P 332

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> WWW.Kew.Org Saccharum Officinarum (Sugar Cane)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> E.W.Brandes – Into Primitive Papua by sea-plane. National; Geographic Vol LCI, No 3 September 1929

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> E.W.Brandes 1929 P 313

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> E.W.Brandes 1929 P 317

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> E.W.Brandes 1929 P 317

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> E.W.Brandes 1929 P 325

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> This reference relates to the Kwoma people of the Waskuk Hills

<sup>10</sup> Brandes 1929 P 325

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Brandes 1929 P 329

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Brandes 1929 P 332

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Sidney Nichols Shurcliff – Jungle Islands; the "Illyria in the South Seas. G.W.Putnam's Sons. New York 1930 – abridged version Page 17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Virginia-Lee Webb of the Metropolitan Museum of Art – Official/unofficial images: Photographs from the Crane Pacific expedition 1928-29 - Pacific Studies Vol 20 No 4 December 1997. Page 106

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Virginia-Lee Webb 1997 Page 113

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Virginia-Lee Webb 1997 Page 119<sup>17</sup> Virginia-Lee Webb 1997 Page 119

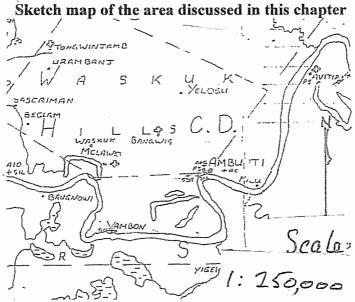
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Virginia-Lee Webb 1997. Page 121.

### Sepik 2 Chapter 34 The murders of Constables Belova and Luwitis in Waskuk in 1928.

### PART 1: NOTIFICATION OF THE MURDERS.

On 28<sup>th</sup> November 1928, the acting Administrator of the Trust Territory of New Guinea sent a telegram to the Commonwealth Government in Canberra which read:

DISTRICT OFFICER HAS RADIOED ADVICE TWO NATIVE POLICE MURDERED SEPIK STOP. AWAITING HIS WRITTEN REPORT...¹



Four months went by before the file was updated as with the following<sup>2</sup>.

The two police were murdered on 6<sup>th</sup> November 1928 at Waskuk village near Ambunti. Waskuk was considered to be under control and the police were sent there from Ambunti to supervise village improvements, which the natives had commenced under instruction by the District Officer.

The District Officer immediately took a patrol to Waskuk where it was met with hostility, but access to the village was obtained without a shot being fired. The villagers fled and repeated attempts to get in touch with them, initially, failed. Eventually, through the medium of a Waskuk woman who was captured by the police patrols which scoured the neighbourhood, two men were persuaded to come in.

They told the District Officer that the murders had been committed by only a section of the village and that the murderers and their friends had sought refuge with a tribe further in the interior [whom] they reported to be hostile to the Government. The remainder of the people, so these men informed the District Officer, wished to return to their homes, but were afraid. The two men were sent back to their friends with the Tultul and some men of Avatip and told to assure them they had nothing to fear. Shortly afterwards, the Waskuk people commenced to come in.

The District Officer had, by this time, discovered the tracks to the two villages, where the section of the Waskuk people, responsible for the murders, had taken refuge. Both villages were visited in turn and friendly relations were established, but the refugees retired still further into the interior, and up to the present they have not been apprehended.

Another patrol will shortly be despatched in an effort to arrest the murderers and bring them to trial.

Sgd Wisdom, Administrator

On 25<sup>th</sup> September 1929, the Prime Minister's secretary sought an update<sup>3</sup> to which Administrator Wisdom replied in part<sup>4</sup>:

I enquired into this matter at Ambunti on the 24<sup>th</sup> August, during my annual visit.

I ascertained that the patrol mentioned in the final paragraph of my memorandum C.A.827 of 23<sup>rd</sup> April last [Bragge note: "April" should read "March"] was duly despatched, and remained in the area for over three months, but with no success of even getting in touch with the fugitives.

Before I left Ambunti I instructed the Assistant District Officer in charge to personally take a patrol into the area...and to leave no stone unturned in his efforts to find the murderers and bring them to justice.

Owing to the infrequency of opportunities of despatching mail from Ambunti, it may be some little time before I receive his report, but as soon as it is to hand you will be advised further on this matter...

On 14<sup>th</sup> December 1929, Administrator Wisdom's C.A. 827<sup>5</sup> provided the following additional information to the Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department:

I now wish to advise that the officer in charge has been able to get in touch with the Waskuk people, and eventually succeeded in lining them. [lining them" means conducting a census].

The natives stated that the actual murderers had been killed in the course of tribal fighting, but this is improbable, and is regarded as native subterfuge. Having got the people back it is the intention of the District Officer to allow them to settle down before proceeding with further investigations.

Part of the armament of equipment of the murdered men was brought in and handed over by the Waskuks themselves.

Several men of the tribe asked to be allowed to accompany the patrol back to Ambunti – this was permitted and they will be maintained there until they have acquired a knowledge of "pidgin" ...

You will be advised in due course of any further developments...

On 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1930<sup>6</sup> the Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department again prompted for information and was informed on 18<sup>th</sup> June 1930 that mail to and from Ambunti were infrequent and often unreliable and that no reply had as yet been received...<sup>7</sup>Then on 26<sup>th</sup> of August 1930, H.Page the Government Secretary in Rabaul reported:

...a patrol recently visited the villages, and without any resistance, apprehended and brought back in to Ambunti six of the seven men said to have been implicated in the murder. The seventh man is dead according to reports.

Order has been restored in the neighbourhood, and about 20 men voluntarily accompanied the patrol back to Ambunti, and 14 of them remained as casual labourers. Nearly two hundred lined for census on the last day of the patrol's stay in the villages...

## PART 2: THE TRUTH BEGINS TO EMERGE

**Writer's note:** Our story appeared to be headed for a fairy tale ending, until Administrator Wisdom again visited Ambunti and made some important discoveries which he reported to the Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department on 23<sup>rd</sup> October1930<sup>8</sup>.

Upon my arrival at [Ambunti] during my recent tour of the Territory it was found that the case [against the alleged murderers] had been heard and the accused bad been discharged on the ground of insufficient evidence. There was, however, ample evidence to show the Waskuk tribe committed the murders.,

It now appears that during the endeavour to effect arrests, it is certain that six Waskuk natives were shot by the police in self-defence, whilst the Waskuk natives state that during the period they were evading capture, they lost a number of their people in tribal fighting and in other ways. They have already made false statements, and they are in a state of mind when they would say anything, so that any statement made by them must be accepted with caution.

I explained to them that the trouble between them and the Administration was now finished, and pointed out that the Administration was able to deal with them if they disobeyed its laws and advice. They were also assured, that provided they conducted themselves properly in future, they would have the Administration to look after them as well as the neighbouring natives.

The Luluai of the Waskuk people who had accompanied the party, stated that the people now realised the power of the Administration and would obey the commands of the Administration. He also stated that there would not be any more "killings" by his people.

I am of the opinion that this is a case where no further action should be taken against the Waskuks, and our next step will be to gradually bring them under control.

Sgd Wisdom, Administrator.

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As might be expected the Prime Minister's Department was not ready to regard this matter as closed. A single page chronology of the reported events was compiled from the murder date of 6/11/1928 to 23/10/1930. This was presumably an information sheet for Cabinet<sup>9</sup>. This sheet was dated 13/11/30 and on the same date J.C.McLaren, Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department, in his reply to the Administrator<sup>10</sup> requested clarifications:

"...it is believed six Waskuk people were shot by the police in self-defence..."

No account of the circumstances connected with the shooting of those natives appears to have reached this Department, and I am to request that a statement concerning the occurrence or occurrences, together with a copy of the report of any enquiry which has been held in connection therewith, may be furnished for the information of the Minister.

I am to request also that in every case in which hostilities have taken place between officers of the Administration or native police and other natives of the Territory, particulars thereof be furnished as early as practicable, and that whenever it has not been clearly established in the first instance that casualties sustained by the natives resulted from measures taken against them in self-defence, adequate investigation of the circumstances shall be made, and notes of the proceedings communicated in due course for submission to the Minister...

Administrator Wisdom replied to the Secretary with a six-page report referenced C.A. 827 and dated 13<sup>th</sup> December 1930<sup>11</sup>, which stated in part: I quote hereunder, a report on the facts of such occurrences, made after enquiry by the Superintendent of Police.

"I perused the District Court proceedings in the case against the alleged murderers [who were discharged on the grounds of insufficient evidence]. I read the police investigation by Warrant Officer McCarthy [Patrol Officer]; I interrogated Officer Ross [Patrol Officer],

and subsequently, in Rabaul, Inspector Merrylees [Assistant District Officer], whilst certain members of the native constabulary made reports to me...

"From different sources, reports, allegations and rumours were to the effect that:

- 1. The two police were murdered in revenge for one of them raping a Waskuk woman.
- 2. Assistant District Officer Woodman placed a police post at Waskuk, which was there for some considerable time with no European Officer in charge. During this time, native police shot certain Waskuk natives.
- 3. Patrol Officer Ross was subsequently placed in charge of the post at Waskuk, and whilst he was there three other natives of Waskuk were shot by native police who were scouting.
- 4. In all, 8 Waskuk men were shot by the police; 5 before Ross came and 3 afterwards.
- 5. Four Waskuk people were killed in tribal fighting.
- 6. Twenty-one [21] of the Waskuk people died in the bush.
- 7. One native constable claims to have collected 27 heads at Waskuk, and several other constables were carrying on their lime sticks the Sepik River symbols that they had "killed their men" and had human heads to their credit.

"The sympathies of the present staff are with the Waskuk people, and, although I am sincerely convinced that Robinson, the "Magistrate" sitting on the case, was quite impartial, yet Robinson the "District Officer", in his desire to see the Waskuks who were accused of murder, properly defended, weakened the police case of Robinson the "Inspector of Police" in allocating the officer who had made the police investigation, to the defence, instead of the prosecution. However, his treble duties made the position most difficult, and I am absolutely certain he had no ulterior motive and I do not consider any official cognisance should be taken of the matter.

"The story that one of the murdered native police raped a native woman at Waskuk, and that this was the cause of the murders, appears to have been universally accepted, but from information I obtained, there are strong grounds for suspicion that the murders were pre-meditated and there is doubt in my mind whether the rape ever occurred. However, whatever the cause, the murders did occur, and Waskuks were the murderers.

"In regard to shooting of natives by the native police, the non-commissioner officer who was left in charge of the post at Waskuk [after my pointing out to him, that as Superintendent I was his "Chief" and should protect him], was painfully open and frank. He said that Woodman left him there with instructions "to look after his police". He said the natives approached the post twice and wanted to fight. This he reported to Woodman, who came on a visit and said they were to go out and look for the natives and make friends if possible, if not, to capture and fight if necessary. They went out and spears were thrown at them. They then shot. Five Waskuks were killed. He said he was not afraid as they had thrown spears first. He said he reported the matter to Woodman, who was not cross with him. After Ross came he shot one Waskuk in self-defence, and reported this to Ross. I asked Ross if this was true and he said it was, and that he had reported it to Merrylees, then Assistant District Officer at Ambunti. I saw Merrylees and he said Ross did report it, and that he [Merrylees] entered the report in the station diary [since destroyed in the fire.] Ross said that he instructed the police that when scouting, they could shoot to save their lives. I have no evidence other than statements made by the Waskuks to MacCarthy, that two other men of their tribe were shot by police, but there is definite evidence that all 8 were shot.

"The statements made by the Waskuks that 4 were killed in tribal fighting and that 21 died in the bush, apparently accepted by MacCarthy as true, must be regarded with, to say the least of it, the greatest caution...what really happened will never be known until they settle down.

"It would appear that prior to the Waskuk murders Woodman reported to the Administrator...that he had placed small police posts <u>in villages under control</u>, which were liable to attack from villages not under control...

"However, when the Waskuk murders occurred, Woodman, despite District Standing Instructions, which definitely lay down that, under no circumstances are native police to proceed to a <u>disturbed area</u> unless under the command of a European officer, left a strong native police post without any European officer at Waskuk.

"Unfortunately, all Ambunti reports were destroyed in the fire that occurred some little time ago, but according to the Warrant Officer Beckett, [the gaoler-storeman at Ambunti], the following is the sequence of events:

- 1. 6/11/1928 Two police killed at Waskuk.
- 2. 7/11/1928 Assistant District Officer Woodman visited Waskuk and remained there until 24/11/1928, with two NCOs and 10 Constables.
- 3. 14/11/1928 to Mid-January 1929, 1 NCO and 9 Constables only at Waskuk.
- 4. Mid-January 1929 to Mid-May<sup>1</sup> 1929 Patrol Officer Ross, in charge Waskuk Police Post of 1 NCO and 8 Constables. For one week, this detachment was increased to 16 other ranks.
- 5. Mid-May to end June. 1 NCO and 10 native police only at Waskuk until withdrawn by Assistant District Officer Merrylees.

### Central Administration records show:

- 1. A radio was sent to Woodman on 27/11/1928, reading MURDERS POLICE STOP WITHDRAW ANY NATIVE POLICE POSTS FROM VILLAGES NOT UNDER COMPLETE CONTROL. Sgd GOVSEC.
- 2. A reply was received: ONLY POLICE POST ESTABLISHED NOW AT WASKUK IN MY ABSENCE
  STOP ALL OTHERS COMPLETED TASKS AND WITHDRAWN PRIOR TO
  MURDERS STOP IS YOUR INSTRUCTION INTENDED TO APPLY TO
  WASKUK AREA."
- 3. To this the following answer was sent:

IF WASKUK NOT UNDER COMPLETE CONTROL AND IF POST NATIVE POLICE ONLY IT MUST BE WITHDRAWN

"When the Administrator was on the Sepik on his recent tour, a number of Waskuks were induced to come to Yambon to see him, and the following is an extract from the trip report:

"The Administrator told the Waskuk people that the 'cross' that had been going on between them and the Administration had finished...

"It is recommended that no further action be taken in regard to the Waskuks. They have been adequately punished, and that any attempt to make further enquiries for some

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> PO Ross states that it was 4<sup>th</sup> June when he was withdrawn.

considerable time, will only frighten them and unsettle the area, whilst nothing can be gained. The native police story that they shot in self-defence would be impossible to disprove."

The practice of posting native police in villages liable to attack from neighbouring tribes, was instituted by Woodman, when acting District Officer in the Sepik. Sometime before the police murders, on one of my trips, I noted a great improvement in certain villages which I visited. Particularly Yambon and Brugnowi, and the three villages Yessan, Maio and Naiuri. On previous trips I was never able to see more than a few of the men, no women or children appeared. On this trip, nearly, if not all of the men women and children appeared, and the improvement in the villages and people was most marked.

This was largely due to the posting of police [in some cases with their wives] in the villages. I was so impressed that I did not attempt to stop the practice. The District Officer no doubt took my attitude as a tacit acquiescence and continued the practice. The idea was to post two police in village nearest the probable line of attack; one to assist the peaceful natives, and the other to proceed to Ambunti and get help. Incidentally, however, the association of the police with the natives gave them greater confidence in the administration, and had a civilising effect as shewn. Should a clash have occurred, and in such country such clashes are inevitable unless we are to leave the country alone, and leave those natives who have come, or are coming, under our influence — and whom we have undertaken to protect — to the tender mercies of the wilder bush natives, then the responsibility would have been mine, and so as far as the retaining the practice of these posts is concerned I must also accept the responsibility.

It was never intended, however, that this practice was to intended to vary the District Standing Instructions in connection with disturbed areas mentioned in the report of the Superintendent of Police, yet a perusal of the radiograms quoted in such report seems to indicate that the Government Secretary [in light of the murders] wanted to make certain that the District Officer had not misconstrued my tacit acquiescence, and that the District Officer had [as suggested by his frank admission in his radiogram] done so.

Your observation that no account of the circumstances of the shooting of these natives appears to have reached your Department is quite correct. No account of the shootings reached me until my last visit to the Sepik, when the Superintendent [who accompanied me] reported what he had found out to me, and upon which my memorandum C.A. 827 of the 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 1930, was based...

At first glance, it might seem that the several officers who were in charge of the Sepik District from the time of the murder of the police to the time if my last visit to the area, fearing censure, or worse, deliberately suppressed information...thinking to save themselves, but on examination this does not appear to be the case...

A report was despatched from Ambunti on the 28<sup>th</sup> November 1928, and another on 8<sup>th</sup> December 1928 [these formed the basis of my memorandum C.A. 827 of the 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1929] and Woodman was the relieved by Merrylees on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1929, before the Waskuk affair had been finalised...

I have been informed on several occasions by the Superintendent that from his observations throughout the Territory, that owing to strict adherence to firing only in self-defence, the majority of the officers of our field staff are becoming afraid of shooting at all, and I have noticed when perusing patrol reports, several instances of patrols, after having arrows fired or spears thrown at them, when they had every justification for retaliating and to press forward to occupy the hostile area, falling back and leaving the hostile tribe in the belief the "Government" was afraid of them. I can only

assume that this was due to the feeling that they were running the risk of trouble if they opened fire, as I do not question the personal bravery of the officers concerned.

I mention this reported feeling because both Merrylees and Robinson were in the position of bringing trouble on Woodman, and that, merely on rumours or that statements of the native police that they had shot in self-defence, they were loth to make any report to the matter until they had got in touch with the Waskuks to verify the facts that natives had been shot, particularly in view of the danger of possible exaggeration by the native police.

This is further borne out by the fact that it was only a short time before my last visit that such contact was established with the Waskuks as to enable the obtaining of any detailed information from them being possible, and, on my arrival, the matter was immediately brought to the notice of the Superintendent...

The entry of Mr. Merrylees in the station diary, I do not regard as sufficient, nor can I defend the holding back of any information or rumour in cases of this nature, nor any delay in furnishing the same to me.

In light of the investigation by the Superintendent...there is no evidence which would justify us in believing that the police story of self-defence is not true. The native police have been carefully taught that they are not to fire unless their lives are actually in danger, and we have numerous instances that show the police have refrained from using their rifles even to the point of being wounded, and to the extent that they feel sure no Whiteman would go.

The fact that the police boasted of having killed does not in any way indicate that they went after a kill. As is shown by the Superintendent..., this sort of boast is made in case of attack by natives on himself and his police when he was present, and there was no doubt of the necessity to fire in self-defence.

I agree with the Superintendent that the statement of the Waskuks as to the number of that tribe who were killed in tribal fighting or who died in the bush, "must be regarded with, to say the least of it, the greatest caution, but I must point out definitely with the policy of endeavouring to affect arrests of murderers who are still wild savages, in difficult country, and surrounded by their natural enemies, instances will be found to occur, in which certain losses in the above directions will be sustained.

I note your request that in every case in which hostilities have taken place, between officers of the Administration, or native police, and other natives, particulars be furnished as early as practicable, and would point out that this has been our practice.

In regard to cases where it has not been established in the first instance that casualties sustained by the natives resulted from measures taken against them in self-defence, it has also been our practice to make adequate investigation of the circumstances.

In future, as desired, any such proceedings will be communicated for submission to the Minister.

Sgd. Evan Wisdom, Administrator

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**WRITER'S NOTE:** I have included Administrator Wisdom's response in detail, as I wish to place a different interpretation on what he communicated.

### **Background:**

1. From 1914-1921 the AN&MEF was required to apply German New Guinea law in the administration of former German New Guinea. The native police they used were inherited from

- the German administration and were accustomed to conducting punitive expeditions both for the German and then for the AN&MEF administrations.
- 2. The policy of using punitive expeditions continued into the Australian civil administration at least as late as 1924 when the Japandai massacre was investigated and in the process Ambunti station was established.
- 3. As the Superintendent and the Administrator would well know from their decade of New Guinea experience, primitive people, including those arrested for murder, are remarkable honest and willing to talk about what they have done and why. From the writer's experience from many murder investigations, and from Marik's statement below the theme of *needing to treat certain Waskuk statements with the utmost caution* was a useful fiction against people who had no opportunity to state their case with any real expectation of being believed.

Against that background, it seems reasonable to assume that acting District Officer Woodman posted police to Waskuk without a European officer in charge, either with instructions to institute punitive actions against the Waskuks, or, upon the unspoken expectations that the police would take it upon themselves to avenge their murdered colleagues. Although not recorded as such – the removal of Woodman from Ambunti suggests that Administrator Wisdom also saw it that way.

**Writer's note:** I interviewed J.K.McCarthy, during his retirement at his home in Mt Eliza in the early 1970s. It is evident from what he said that Mr. Woodman did not easily accept his removal from Ambunti. Mr. McCarthy said:

H.E.Woodman was District Officer of the Sepik and they sent in a fellow called Gregory to relieve him, but Woodman refused to hand over. So, Gregory established another "District Office." It was very convenient for recruiters...Then they got them both out and made Robinson in charge. <sup>12</sup>

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### PART 3: THE MURDERS AND THE AFTERMATH AS THE WASKUKS SAW THEM.

In 1970-71 I, the writer, interviewed Marik/Kalapaj, a Waskuk elder and he explained that following the Japandai massacre of 1923/4, Waskuk took in Yambon refugees who had fled from the investigating parties. Marik [below] continued his story<sup>13</sup>:



After the [Japandai massacre] trouble with the patrols was over and the Yambons went back to Yambonjandu, the trouble with the two police occurred. Two police came to

Waskuk with Karandaman [Tultul of Malu village]. My father, Kalapaj accepted them and told our people to feed them as they might give us axes and other gifts [in exchange]. The women took sago to them; the first lot of sago was delivered and eaten and then the woman Nambalum took the second lot of sago to the police. They grabbed her and raped her. Karandaman told them not to, and said it was big trouble.

[Bragge note: Waskuk people traditionally went completely naked. But in the Waskuk case the display of female flesh was in no way a sexual invitation; far from it, the Kwoma people of whom the Waskuks are part, have proven to be among the least promiscuous in the whole Sepik region.]

Nambalum's husband was Faifu. He and other Waskuks came down and killed the two police. They also tried to kill Karandaman, but he ran away and brought the talk back to the kiap.

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Karandaman of Malu confirmed this story, except that he knew the police as Biris of Kavieng and Barauwa of Madang. Karandaman went on to say the kiap had sent the police to Waskuk to get food. He added<sup>14</sup>:

Barauwa had sex with the woman Nambanump [Nambalum]. Only the one policeman played with her. I said "Let's get out of here" They did not hear my walk and the men of the place came and surrounded us. They speared the two police in the haus tambaran. I went back to the kiap with two Yambons, [both now – 1970, dead.] – Gaui and Ungweindu.

I told the kiap about the trouble with the woman and the deaths of the two police. The kiap made sure that I had food and a mosquito net, then he sent word to Malu for ten canoes and to Yambon for ten more canoes. We all went and made ten houses and erected five tents at the Waskuk market site. It rained heavily as we went up, and the Waskuks were waiting for us. Two police guarded the Kiap, Doctor [Medical assistant] and myself. We were in the lead. The rest of the line of natives with us had police interspersed throughout.

The Doctor was the first to see the ambush. The Doctor and the kiap had their pistols out and the kiap called to me "Talk to them..." I did so, and they replied "We are not pigs or dogs and you will not capture us easily". We talked back and forth and I told the police "Do not shoot quickly — wait for the spears to come first". The Waskuks then ran away.

We found the hats of the Luluai and Tultul and those of the two dead police on a bench. We found the bodies of the two police in a latrine...we buried the two police and later returned to exhume them. The police funeral was accompanied by a rifle fire salute. The kiap shot a large pig and while the Yambons were singing the hair off the pig, the haus tambaran accidently caught fire. Everyone thought the fight had started...people were available and put the fire out.

We suggested to the kiap that we natives could also stand guard with spears. After some time, the kiap marked me and ten Yambons and ten Malus and twenty-five police to stay there. The kiap and carriers then left.

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Marik Kalapaj of Waskuk continues his story:

[After] the kiap went back and left the police and village natives, they hunted us. Village people of Yambon, Malu, Avatip, Saseriman, Tongwinjamb and Urumbanj took the opportunity to kill our people.

<u>Yambon</u> send tangets to Malu to pay back the killing of Wironimba [a woman killed years before by Waskuk] and they killed her killer Kabongaui, and also Kwasump, Agawen and Kubalump. [a total of 4]

**Avatip** killed Simeiwur, Fitaga, Kaumbos [f], and one infant [a total of 4].

<u>Urumbanj, Saseriman and Police</u> killed Ulagawen, Kamandu, Kanda'ap [f], Ambau [m/child], Umgweibnuk [f/child], Waliamber [f/child], Limbus [f], Misigo, Wiagindu, Sangiamba [m/child], Kwangi, Jonimber [f], Yandum, Ungusikebeger [f/child], Nouraka [f], Gau'ariimbwia [f], Yatos [m/child], Nambangai [f/child], Huikulum, Wogwiyena [m/child] and Waiwos [f/child]. [A total of 21]

We cannot be completely sure exactly who killed each one of these people, because we fled from the patrol and we were hiding in scattered groups throughout the sago and in the Yelogu area. The police and village hunting parties would kill anyone they saw.

At this time, we were all "Waskuks" and now we are broken into Waskuk, Bangwis and Melawei. Bangwis ...the group of clans that are now called Bangwis broke away in the fighting. They went to the police post [presumably Ambunti] through their leaders — Luluai Abingamba, Tultul Latai, Sauinambi and Labakauwi and said "We are not Waskuks, do not kill our people. We are Bangwis. [But] some of the so-called Bangwis were also killed, so finally Bangwis also ran away and hid from the police parties. Melawei is ours we and Melawei are all Waskuks.

After the initial scattering of the Waskuk natives made their way to the friendly Yelogu area. [From Yelogu] they worked their way back via the present Bangwis site and thence to the site where Melawei is now and finally to Waskuk. This took about a year all told, until we were settled at Waskuk again. We did not use the old village site, but made a new one. The Bangwis group were with us, but they lived down below while we Waskuks lived on the hill. Some of our hunting and gathering parties lived at Melawei.

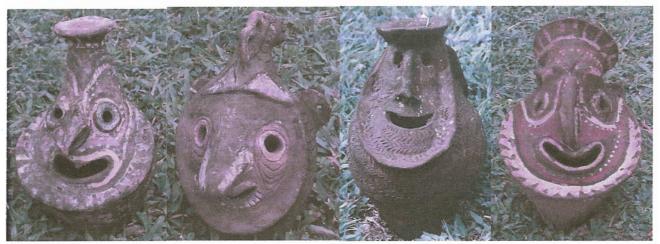
The Waskuk leader was then my father Kalapaj [full name Fugolumkalapaj]. He set about paying back the killing of our people by our neighbouring villages, while the police were still hunting us. His fighting force, although depleted by the deaths of a number of our men, still consisted of: myself - Marikwulumbank, Serangwamba, Alui'iuasa'i, Weifukyumbungu, Nauramankamandu, Soramangwoi, Yagoman, Warameisa and Yapmungwia and also the Bangwis men – Labakaui, Sauinambi and Ambangagilambei.

They attacked Urumbanj first. They met and killed a mother and two children on a bush track in their way to wash sago. The children killed were both girls, one was called Hongwinapi, but the name of the mother and the other child I do not know.

They then raided Saseriman. The Saseriman people were in two camps; most were at the main village, but a party of them was camped at Lat near Kulimapai point hunting and washing sago there. The raiders hit them and killed Juium, Kukwal [f] and Wurimbi [m/child]. The Saseriman quickly sent a peace offering of four Yena masks whose names are Manjerigaias [male], Manjeriga [male], Alalyer [female] and Logusuwar [female].

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The use of the present tense indicating the masks were still held by Waskuk at the time of the interview with Marik.



The Photos above are typical Yena masks, which can be in clay [These are clay, examples], wood or actual human skulls. They are not the four named masks, but photos taken by Bragge 1970-72. The Yena ceremony is the third of a sequence of Kwoma tribal Yam fertility ceremonies. See Sepik 4 Chapter 45 for photos of Yena "Heads" in use during a the 1973 Yena ceremony at Waskuk.

The significance of the gift of masks was to represent the handing over of heads. This more of less means "Have the heads, without having to kill to get them."

[At this time] in our village, trouble was brewing between the Waskuk and Bangwis clans. A Bangwis man called Nilingai killed a Waskuk child by sorcery. Nilingai was then killed for doing this. Talk was going back and forth and the Bangwis became afraid we might kill more of them so they moved out of our area and made a separate village at their present site.

The kiap had previously marked village officials for Waskuk from the Bangwis sub group. Now the kiap came back and appointed separate Waskuk officials. No action was taken by the kiap concerning our raids against Urumbanj and Saseriman and the killing of Nilingai. We told him [the kiap] that when the Government was paying us back for the deaths of the two policemen, these other villages had killed our people, and we were right in paying them back. We agreed not to pay back Yambon, Malu, Avatip and Tongwinjamb, and to live in peace with them and the Government from the time our officials were appointed.

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The breakup of the Waskuk community into three separate villages – a long term outcome of the murders of police in 1928<sup>15</sup>.

# Waskuk clans

Waskuk	<u>Bangwis</u>	Melawei.
KILAPIWANI	NAUITEK	KELAVA
SIMBIRAGAUWANI+	INTAKAUK	SIMBIRAGAUWANI+
KUIMBUKWANI+	AUNO	KUIMBUKWANI+
NUGASAMBAUWANI	URUMBANJ	
KILISUHAMIGWA	HIPO	
MANGIRIHAMIGWA ++	MANGIRIHAMIGWA ++	
GWISEMBI	GILEI	
GEI	WASUNGO	

# Legend

- + indicates a clan common to both groups. [separate entities]
- ++ indicates with clan members in both groups [a closer relationship that +]

# **End notes Chapter 34**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Australian National Archives NAA: 518, C841/1 Page 26 of 26

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> A two-page report referenced C.A. 827 and dated 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1929 from Central Administration Rabaul, to the Secretary, Prime Minister's Department. NAA: 518, C841/1 Pages 23/24 of 26

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Reference A 840/1. NAA: 518, C841/1 Page 22 of 26

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Rabaul reference C.A. 827 of 11<sup>th</sup> October 1929 NAA: 518, C841/1 Page 21 of 26

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> NAA: 518, C841/1 Page 22 of 26

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> NAA: 518, C841/1 Page 16 of 26

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> NAA: 518, C841/1 Page 15 of 26

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> NAA: 518, C841/1 Page 13 of 26

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> NAA: 518, C841/1 Page 12 of 26

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> NAA: 518, C841/1 Page 11 of 26

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> NAA: 518, C841/1 Pages 5-10 of 26

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Bragge Sepik Research volume 19 page 550

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Bragge Sepik Research volume 18 pages 57-58

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Bragge Sepik Research volume 18 pages 22-23

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Bragge Sepik Research volume 18 page 58

# Chapter 35 <u>Case Study – the Birth of a Religious Movement:</u>

# - A Comparison of Melanesian Cargo Cults and early Christianity.

This case study draws heavily on Father Theo Aerts' [SVD] excellent 1979 article, the title of which I have borrowed for this chapter. Some of Aerts' Melanesian examples touch lightly on post World War 2 'cargo cult' experiences, which are beyond the chronological scope of Sepik 2 – The Waves of Change. This exception is acceptable as firstly his examples relate to areas of Melanesia other than the Sepik and secondly, Aerts' analysis facilitates an excellent understanding of both the origins of 'cargo cult' and their religious context. It also provides a foundation for understanding aspects of the great upsurge of such cults in the Sepik as described in Sepik 4 – Coming to Grips With the Future. Part B of this chapter records the scant knowledge we have of Sepik cult movements in the period before 1942.

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The common and misleading term 'cargo cult' is a label that has been applied to the whole spectrum of Melanesian attempts to understand the modern world in terms of their pre-contact cosmos which once explained everything for them. Theo Aerts of the Divine Word Mission discussed alternative names for such movements. Among the several names by which religious movements are known, the term 'messianism' is one of the most widely used. It has however different meanings and referred originally to:

- 1/ a Jewish type of expectation connected with a future king or 'anointed one', but already in Jewish history it might be used for ...
- 2/ eschatological dreams or expectations of the end [in Greek *eschaton*] in which there is no saviour. From this well known background derives it extension, by sociologists, to ...
- 3/ all kinds of **nativistic** or **revival** movements, some of which are religious only to a minor degree. Another common name is '**millenarism**' or '**chiliasm**' [after the Latin or Greek work for 'Thousand', referring to a blissful time lasting a thousand years<sup>2</sup>].

To this collection of terms we can add two more: the Pidgin phrases kago bilong ol tumbuna<sup>3</sup> or more commonly wok bembe. Such movements have existed in parts of Melanesia since the earliest contacts with the Europeans and outside influences. The Manseren or Koreri cult of Manokwari and Biak may have its roots as far back as contact with the Spanish in 1527 and the Dutch [Schouten] in 1616. On PNG's Rai Coast in 1971 Russian scientist Mikloukho-Mclay was Kilobob and Manup<sup>4</sup> recognized as Kilibob from the two-brothers myth of

The first such movements in the Sepik, of which records can be found was the Four Black Kings cult also known as the Walman cult of 1930/31. [The Walman region relates to the villages close to the east of Aitape-Chinapelli, Vokau, Lemieng and Pro]. Theo Aerts provided an interesting comparison of it with early Christianity. He wrote:-

<u>Description</u> of the **Four Black Kings** or **Walman cult**: In an older SDV mission periodical Brother Bartholomew wrote: '... last year (1931) one 'King' appeared in the bush at Kep<sup>5</sup>. Three more Black rascals imitated him. People say that the 'King' spontaneously shot up out of the ground like a mushroom. A mass of natives made a pilgrimage to the four 'Kings'. Father Dingels too went to meet them. They came towards him, walking in a single file and muttering between their teeth all

kinds of nonsense. They looked terrifying, and Father Dingels could not get anything out of them: they were totally impervious.

The first 'King' only said that his mother, who died long ago, was staying in the mountain of Kep and made all sorts of things for the natives. The white men however, took these things and sold them to others. The second 'King' gave himself out to be a medicine man. All those who received medicine from him would never get sick; neither would they die. They promised the people everything possible: pots, canned foods, drums of petrol; everything would just come out of the ground. It was reported from Aitape that the people of Walman<sup>6</sup> actually smashed their pots to pieces and then waited tensely for new pots, meat, canned foods, etc. to appear from the soil.

Therefore, when four prophets arose near Aitape promising that all Europeans would leave the Territory within a few months, people took notice of them, especially as these men claimed that government had no power over them, nor the police or village officials. The prophets claimed to be 'Kings'; they had been miraculously born and possessed supernatural powers. When the Europeans left, they said, all the property they left behind would accrue to the natives and the crops would grow by themselves. Cooking pots should be destroyed as they would be replaced by new and better ones soon.

The Black King movement was also reported from Wewak, where the four 'Kings' declared that the ancestors made all the cargo, but that Whites illegally deprived the natives of the goods ... Since the 'Kings' also acted against the Australian government and told the people they did not have to pay and taxes, the administration sent four policemen to arrest the four 'kings'. Here in Wewak they were sentenced to three years exile on the island of Hasamatia, in British New Guinea [Papua]<sup>1</sup>.

The situation has deteriorated to such an extent that our catechists in Possau, Sassoja<sup>7</sup> and other places had to close the schools. Several people have presented themselves to ransom the imprisoned 'Kings'. The superstition of the pagans is so deep that, when I commented on the absurdities, they told me: '...you just wait, a great deluge will sweep over the place of the government [in Wewak] and everyone will be destroyed'. Others warned: '...don't talk against the Four [Kings] because they hear everything, and it will be bad for you. Overnight your head will turn back to front, so that you would have to walk backwards'. Up to now however, I still have my face in front.<sup>8</sup>

Was there a 5<sup>th</sup> Black King? In 1941 Teni of Tauwetei near Lumi proclaimed himself to be the *Black King of Wapei* and led a prominent movement in the Lumi area. His message was that the white men had long robbed the Wapei people of the cargo sent to them by their ancestors and that he would correct this great wrong. He was jailed for a month in Aitape in December 1941 and the cult was thought to have died. But in late 1943 the cult was again active with Teni and his followers now proclaiming that the invading Japanese were the ancestor's agents who would drive the white men out and deliver the cargo to the Wapei people. Apart from being a cult leader, Teni was a Japanese 'captain' who attempted and failed to capture Lieut. Fryer and party and deliver them to the Japanese army at Aitape.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "The Hasamata Islands in British New Guinea" were discussed with Papua expert, Chris Warrillow, who knew of no such place. He and I also agreed that the Territory of New Guinea administration did not exile people to Papua [ formerly British New Guinea. We assumed Hasamata was Gasmata on the **island** of New Britain.

### Theo Aerts comparison of the Four Black King cult with early Christianity:

The narrative not only contains a lot of details about the emergence and impact of an early cargo movement, but also indicates how it was judged by outside observers – presumably German missionaries. For them the movement was the work of some rascals [Gauner], an example of superstition [Aberglaube] and nonsense [Unsinn]. With this attitude it would not be worthwhile at all to compare the movement with the birth of Christianity. It is however possible to have a more detached approach and to essay an appreciation for the point of view of those immediately involved, and this we will do in the following pages.

We will then take into account many other messianic movements from Melanesia. Each of them has its own structure and physiognomy [indicator of character]; some are more secular than religious. We shall however keep the concept broad enough to include the common features and therefore think it justified to extract from many movements some points of similarity with what the New Testament tells us about the beginnings of Christianity. The parallels adducted will show us the mechanisms operating in the formation of religious groups [Part 1], even when they are silent about the motives and aims which animate the respective movements [Part 2]. When describing the resemblances each time we give #a - some relevant facts from the New Testament, and #b - subsequently proceed with the comparative material from Melanesia.

# 1/ The Traditional Background

#a. ... The beliefs and expectations of a messiah touch historical ground with the divine promise given to King David; he was told by the prophet Nathan that Yahweh himself would raise one of his descendants to supreme power, and that "his throne would be established forever". In times of later hardships such as during the Syro-Euphraimite War about 740BC, the prophet Isaiah confirmed the promise to Ahaz, the fainthearted king of "the house of David", who received the famous sign that already "the maiden was with child and will soon give birth to a son she will call Immanuel. But it was particularly after the Babylonian exile, when all nation's hope was gone ... that the expectation of a national Deliverer come to life again and moved the Jewish people, for some centuries, with ever new variations of the messianic hope ...

... the New Testament warns its readers against some false messiahs, while the historian Jopephus provides us with the names of some of the Zealot Messiahs, such as Judas of Galilee, Menachem and Simon bar Giora during the final revolt against Rome [131AD]. It was clear that the expectation of a messiah and his incarnation in historical fugures were really something 'traditional' in Judaism. This heritage was not lost even with the destruction of the temple and the final dispersion of the Jews over the world; such catastrophes only made some adjustments necessary. So that the Messiah was no longer a military hero who would establish Jewish hegemony, but rather the spiritual leader who, one day, would reassemble the scattered communities and reconstitute a national home. Then God's plan of a Golden Age would finally come to be realized. In Christianity another adaption took place in which the Messiah had indeed come, and Christians knew themselves to be His people.

**#b.** The glory of ancient kings is not part of Melanesian culture, but here too, we find a traditional background in some of the myths which can explain the ever-recurring appearance of new mass movements. One famous myth in New Guinea [Madang District] is that of the two brothers Kilibob and Manup. According to the old story the two brothers have different characters; one as a rule is wise and benevolent, while the other is foolish and malicious. The latter is responsible for many of the harmful things in the world; the former appears well intentioned and is actively concerned about

the needs of mankind. He makes e.g. the first woman, teaches the proper way of building houses, the making of fences, the planting of gardens, etc. According to other versions, the brothers mediate in 'bringing' or 'giving' musical instruments [drums etc.], tools [axes, sage beaters ..], weapons [spears, clubs, bows ..], or all kinds of useful plants such as coconut, sago, taros, sugar cane etc. An important social element in these stories is that different groups of native society receive different gifts; this then explains the inequality of status and the mutual relations based on them.

It is only one step further to the transfer of these intertribal differences of the past to later experienced differences between locals and Europeans. The first group would be related to the darkskinned brother, the other group to the light skinned one. The first would have received bows and arrows, while the other would have got guns; the first would have learned how to build ordinary canoes, the other to construct overseas cargo vessels. The Madang area with a tradition of cargo movements starting as early as 1871, that is, with the arrival of the Russian scientist Mikloukho-Maclay, is the home of the 'two-brother' myth. No wonder then that the Russian scholar was seen as one of the two brothers, the skilful Kilibob [1871-1900]. When later interpreted along the lines of the myth, it resulted in the foolishness of Manup and was also accepted as such [1900-1914]. Then for a time little concern is shown for the traditional story of the two brothers; at the same time however, Biblical tales catch the attention. Yet even how the behaviour of Ham, one of Noah's sons, is interpreted according to the Manupo model, thus explaining why Ham's descendants were sent to New Guinea and lack the European cargo [1914-33]. In a further upsurge, the movement was diversified, in some of its forms with a syncretistic [combining of different religions, cultures or school of thought] identification of the crucified Jesus with Manup who was asked to return to New Guinea, and in other places an identification with God with Kilibob, while Manup becomes an incarnation of Satan [1933-45].

In the following recrudescence of the cult, under Yali [who we meet as Sgt. Major Yali war hero in Chapter 49 of Sepik 3 *The Sepik at War*], Kilibob becomes the New Guinea God, with another identification of Jesus with Manup [1948/50]. The example of the Yali Movement, in which the cult keeps coming back at least five times, is not unique; a longer examined case is the Koreri movement on Biak and Numfor [in former Dutch New Guinea] which had, between 1855 and 1957, up to 45 ups and downs. A short description of the Yali case will however suffice for our purpose and illustrate how a movement fits into its own cultural framework.

#### 2. The Historical Occasion.

#a The previous considerations showed that Judaic as well as Melanesian messianic movements are deeply rooted in the respective spiritual heritages of the people; they may fade away, but will suddenly reappear with renewed force. For this they need an appropriate spiritual or historical occasion.

Jewish messianism was strengthened each time by the external situation becoming unbearable. For instance, in the time of the young King Ahaz [c740BC] when the smaller kingdoms of Syria and Israel [of Ephraim] had joined forces to shake off Assyrian domination and set out to convince the as yet unwilling little state of Juda, for Ahaz no human escape was possible. Consequently, conforming to its fame, Assyria would wake up one day and wipe out the subjects in revolt from the political scene. Against such a constellation the prophet Isaiah advised the King of Juda to resist the solicitations of the Syro-Ephraimite coalition and trust only in Yahweh. God would assist his people, and the soon-to-be-born would be the visible sign of Yahweh's unfailing care for his people.

Something similar happened in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes IV [175-163BC], when political independence was lost and a religious persecution oppressed the Jews. The imperious foreigner Antiochus could draw upon 'a set of renegades who led many people astray'. He came to Jerusalem and stripped the temple of everything and later forbade everyone to follow their own customs. Hence many Jews sacrificed to idols, profaned the Sabbath and left their sons uncircumcised. This led eventually to the Maccabean Revolt. However, the hope of a national theocratic State was not achieved, because the new leaders assumed both religious and political powers, which was very much against the convictions of the pious Jews. Nevertheless, the messianic movement remained alive and found ever new sympathisers to fight the political powers, which meanwhile had changed from Syria to Rome [63BC] with the appointment of the half-Jew Herod as King of Juda.

The situation of foreign oppression, national insufficiency, and religious expectations was 'the appointed time' for Jesus to come and started his mission among 'those who labour and are overburdened' and bring them his messianic rest. That social, political, economic, religious and other factors weighed heavily upon Jesus' contemporaries can easily be seen in the care of the social outcasts, in the uncertainty caused among the nationalist zealots, in his pleading on behalf of the poor, and above all in his association with tax collectors and sinners and other rabble who 'know nothing about the law'.

The spread of Christianity in the Roman Empire is another instance of the impact of messianic aspirations in times of unsettled social order. Before the advance of Rome's rule, there were independent people around the Mediterranean Sea; they lost their freedom and their territories and became places of recruitment for Roman slaves. The latter organized some revolts which did not really succeed. The message of Christianity however was accepted by them, and from the lower classes it spread out to penetrate the whole of ancient society. Again and again we see then an upsurge in messianism in the Judaeo-Christian tradition. It seems that, whenever life's burdens become too heavy, people were ready to throw themselves on the first available sign of hope, even when this sometimes led people astray by following 'false messiahs'.

#b. The birth of nativistic movement occurs often in a time of political non-freedom, economic under-development, and the breakdown of traditional beliefs, as happened among the Jews. Since the traditional world view is characterized by an integrated experience, it is sufficient that if one of the pillars collapse, the whole building crumbles. The change for instance from 'stone to steel' caused not only economic consequences among the Siane of the Eastern Highlands of New Guinea, but by reducing man's working time, allowing people to dedicate themselves to other fields of custom, having no direct connection with technology. As a consequence, new ways were opened to enhance one's status which, in a Melanesian context, is not without repercussions on traditional religious values<sup>10</sup>. The changes among the Siane took place even before European contact and left no record of a religious revolution, still they show the force of obvious non-religious factors on the spiritual values of the people. That similar circumstances can cause a cargo movement, at least in its germinal state, was in fact witnessed among the Usurufa in the Central Highlands who were contacted not much later.

<u>Writer's Note:</u> The Siane example is taken to mean that steel axes were traded into the Siane area some time before the Europeans themselves arrived. This often happened. Not stated in Aerts' account is that in such cases, a wondrous new technology such as a steel axe does not appear among stone age people in isolation. The traders who brought the axes in would be questioned as to where

such a wonderful thing had come from, who had made it, how, and innumerable related queries. The understanding or interpretation of the information which was conveyed in such cases would have contributed more to influencing traditional religious values and thought than the clear technological superiority of steel over stone. Such interpretations paved the way for belief outcomes typified by this statement by an Egan woman:-

I cannot tell you about the traditions and magic spells of women in Enga [province] before the whites came. When the missionaries arrived, we gave up these works of Satan. When I was baptized, I took an oath never to let these evil words come from my lips again and I swore to forget what we did in the past. If I tell you these things I might die<sup>11</sup>.

Or alternatively, when I pointed out several German manufactured porcelain dogs teeth [introduced as a trade item during the German colonial period] in a necklace of genuine dogs teeth, and asked where they came from and why they were different, I was told that they were from a 'Masalai [spirit] dog'. I asked whether they were more or less valuable than the others, and was told, 'No, the same'.

## Father Aerts continues his story:-

It follows, from the examples given, that potentially greater forces are unleashed when e.g. schools or mission actively strive to introduce new sets of values, that an open clash between the two systems become inevitable. However, a cargo cult does not always result. It is still a mystery why on some occasions objective factors and subjective expectations work together to start a movement and why, in other cases, it does not happen, but instead resignations and acceptance occur. There must somehow be a point of no return to be crossed. What is certain is that some circumstances, as described above, post outbreaks of new religious movements; they are not however the all-explaining causes.

Familiarity with Judaeo-Christian history and the fact that most cargo cults are known to be post-Christian phenomena, has led to a belief that they derive from a misunderstanding of the Gospel message. This is probably not true, because the yeast of economic, social and political pressures goes a long way to explain such movements, and those pressures initiated, outside Christianity and even in pre-Christian times, outbreaks of messianic movements. The wrong impression may be well due to the fact that Christian missions deliberately chose the groups to work with, that is, those who were in many respects deprived. Again, the missions were interested in report of their work, while information is lacking from non-mission areas. Finally, the missions alone are not the agents of change; they come as part of a broad impact, which was not sufficiently recognized by the missionaries themselves, and thus influenced the reports they left behind, on which the wrong impression is often based. The disturbing results that a change from 'stone to steel' produced are therefore a welcome reminder to avoid any narrow or one-sided explanation in describing the origin of a cargo movement.

<u>Writer's Note:</u> It is necessary to offer my understanding of the answer to Aerts ... mystery why on some occasions objective factors and subjective expectations work together to start a movement and why, in other cases, it does not happen.

We are speaking of two separate groupings of religion; Christianity on one hand and an array of traditional religions on the other. If we accept that religion can be defined as that which explains everything that society does not know from scientific means; or some similar definition, which at its foundation that equated 'religion' with the 'supernatural'. Then, if we accept that 'supernatural' as

defined in the Oxford dictionary as ' ... events, forces or powers that cannot be explained by science or the laws of nature, <sup>12</sup>' there is a clear difference in the scientific knowledge, and therefore what remains to be explained by the religion, or European educated missionaries and that of their stoneage congregations. It is also clear from discussions with Sepik elders, that traditional religious were not wiped clean from the Sepik's view of their cosmos by being ' shown the light' of Christianity; rather, the new religion and its values were interpreted in the light of the old. The scientific knowledge of the European missionaries included such things as:-

- 1/ The discovery and manufacture of gunpowder and the development of firearms
- 2/ The gradual evolution from stone age to bronze age to iron age
- 3/ The evolution of propulsion from wind power, steam power, to the development of the internal combustion engine as used in ships and the later development of outboard motors
- 4/ The preparation and preservation of food by the canning process
- 5/ The development of the printing press and the world-wide proliferation of print media
- 6/ Medical research and the development of modern medicines
- 7/ An endless array of related scientific achievements

To the former 'stone age congregations' all these issues were not passed down through the generations as matters of scientific knowledge, but things of the supernatural – requiring religious explanations. So why not just explain and demonstrate the science involved? The answer again comes back to traditional religious questions and answers long lodged in the 'stone age congregation's' belief system – which might be summed up as:-

'Why does the white man have these wonderful things and we do not?' I believe the common denominator here is that 'cargo belief' as explained above remains present in all Melanesian cultures. In most cultures the beliefs remain dormant until activated by the rise of a messianic leader who is prepared to lead them to the cargo. But Melanesians are ever alert for an accidental slip-up by Europeans. For example, an SVD mission school teacher told me that if, in the course of a lesson, he takes the students through pages A to D in a text, then jumps to page H, the students will later go back and look for the cargo secrets in page E to G.

Aerts continues his story :-

#### 3/ The Person of the Founder:

#a Within a favourably historic setting, messianism usually comes to the surface through the efforts of a definite founder ... Hence, the young movement offers a guarantee against vague rumours of salvation or doom which constantly sweep the world. Its impact is therefore greater and allows for immediate control, especially on the part of those who possess the traditional authority.

Before his divine call, the Founder usually lives a hidden life and is not particularly noticed. He often comes from an inconspicuous background, a 'district of pagans', and a place about which people ask 'whether anything good can come from it'. Sometimes, as in the case of Paul, there is some notoriety [because he persecuted the Church] ... Still as regards his background, the Founder may be looked down upon as 'just the son of a carpenter' or as in the case of Peter and John – as 'people without any schooling'. This did not improve until Jesus's life had run its full course,

because his shameful death became 'to the Jews an obstacle that could not get over', to the pagan's madness, as Paul so aptly summarized it in his First letter to the Corinthians.

The beginning of the Leaders public life is often marked by a vision or some other type of divine commission, often after a time of isolation away from other people. We see this this with John the Baptist who 'lived in the wilderness until the day he appeared openly to Israel' and also with Jesus who, after having grown up in Nazareth, is marked as a favoured son of God at his baptism, and then retires for 40 days and 40 nights into the desert, before starting to preach all over Galilee. Similar starting experiences occur also amongst some of his followers, before they begin their new life. A good example is the case of Paul who on the road to Damascus 'saw' the Lord, an experience different in kind from all the other visions he would be granted later in life. Paul too had his 'retreat' for a few days in Damascus, but it is not sure whether the '14 years in Arabia' had the same function, or whether they were rather the first pastoral experience before becoming 'the Apostle to the Gentiles'.

The passages about all these incidents are not admittedly pure historical reports, being coloured by the Christian theology which was after all the way these early believers viewed their origins; still they lack nothing in historical probability. The same can be said of other elements concerning the person of the Founder, for instance, the multiplication of honorific titles given to him, such as Messiah, Lord, Saviour, Son of God, etc. which are so typical of a veneration which Jesus did not demand himself, but which his followers spontaneously bestowed upon him.

#b It is a commonplace that leaders of messianic movements are simple people who start their mission with an unusual experience. This is known to have happened to Evara [1920] and later Filo [1942], who are both at the origin of a cargo movement in the Mekeo District [Papuan coast and inland – west of Port Moresby] and who both claimed raptures and revelations<sup>13</sup>. It is reported that Anhhanitha, in the Koere Movement [1938] in former Dutch New Guinea, who was visited by a 'man' who cured her and said he had chosen her to be 'the messenger and leader of life that will not end'<sup>14</sup>, It is true again of Tokeriu, the Milne Bat prophet [1893] who told the people that he had visited Hiyoyoa, that is, the other world, from where he received his new message<sup>15</sup>. More recently examples are found at the start of the Paliau movement on Manus [1946].

After the initial experience, there are often signs that the enthusiastic people draw their leader into a role he initially was not willing to assume. The life of Yali [1945-55] is a case in point. Initially he was successful in starting a Rehabilitation Scheme to overcome the material and social chaos left behind by World War 11. Yet his implicit acceptance of cargo ideology was not shared by the people who, already at an early stage, understood his aims exclusively in terms of the cargo myth. Frustrations from outside – as the failed mission to Port Moresby – but not less the growing enthusiasm of the people … and the conscious efforts of others [e.g. of Gurek, his 'theological secretary'] eventually made him an intermediary with the deities and the spirits of the dead. <sup>16</sup>

## The Preaching of the Kingdom

#a Typical likewise of a messianic movement is that of the conscious content – that is, what is preached about ... a message given by a higher authority. Therefore, John and Jesus announce the coming of 'the Kingdom of God'. With these words they place themselves in the tradition of old Testament prophets, but above all they pass on their message as not coming from themselves. Again, when Jesus requires people to 'believe the Gospel' or 'the Good News', he refers to the prophesies from the old, and interprets the whole of the messianic activity in the light of the traditional

expectations. This is also the tenor of Jesus reply to the Baptists question, and of many other passages as well.

The new message is radical; accepting it demands a clean cut with the past; hence the disciples have to leave behind 'the boat of their father' and throw 'everything' overboard. When this is done they become members of the new in-group who will know the mysteries, as distinct from 'those who are outside who do not understand'. This initial break with the past opens the road not to laxity but on the contrary to a life of high moral demands such as to 'love one's neighbour as oneself' to forgive not seven times but 77 times, or even to avoid every single evil thought. The Sermon on the Mount is the best synthesis of this life in the Kingdom, culminating in the superhuman ideal '...to be perfect as the heavenly Father is perfect. From this point of view, one can also understand Jesus' outspoken preaching against the ruling classes of Pharisees and Sadducees; especially telling is his indictment of the Pharisees and scribes...

Besides the moral demands, particular attention should be paid to the eschatological [that part of theology concerned with death, judgement and destiny] note in Jesus' teachings. In line with other Old Testament descriptions, he will tell that the Kingdom will break through amid a total destruction of the old order, with the darkness of the moon and the falling of stars and such premonitory signs as earthquakes and wars, famines and persecutions, and an upsurge of all kinds of lawlessness. Even the calculation of such calamities has left its traces in the tradition, although the text adds that 'day and hour' remain unpredictable.

#b In cargo cults the 'founding visions and dreams imply that the prophet is back up by a higher authority. According to the traditional frame of mind, this is either an ancestor or one of the cultural heroes, who in days long past provided for all the needs of the people. Since the people now feel so frustrated, they have again learnt to heed the word of this authority from beyond. The coming of a better time, occasionally referred to as the millennium [i.e 'the Kingdom of a thousand years'] is often linked to the rejection of 'the old ways', but it is not clear how far back this past time goes.

There are cases in which a clear break refers to the *pasin kanaka* [traditional ways of the past]; this happened with the Vailala Madness [1919-1931 Gulf province Papua] where old ceremonies of piercing children's noses and ears was stopped, hair was cropped short, and even the wholesale destruction of masks and other cult paraphernalia was witnessed. At the same time 'modern customs' were practices such as setting up of tables, inclusive of table cloth and flowers, the erection of wireless poles with operating booth etc<sup>17</sup>. The same happened in the Namatanai and Paliau Movements where people not only started eating at tables, but quickly rejected traditional regulations about exogamy, bride price, etc. Other examples of the same tendencies are found in the Ava-Ava [Fiji 1937] and the Letub Movements [Madang 1939].

The rejection of the past can also refer to the recent past, that is to European customs already adopted, which then means a complete natavistic revival of the *pasin belong bipo* [the old ways]. Examples of this are found in the Tokeriu Movement in Milne Bay [1893] where match boxes and pocket knives were discarded and armbands of leaves were again worn. Probably the most famous case occurred in the New Hebrides between 1945 and 1951, with the Cult of the Malamala [naked] folk in Espiritu Santo. Some of the prescriptions were to take off loincloths, leaf coverings and head necklaces, to destroy all property taken from the white man, to burn down all the present houses etc. That some of the measures inspired by this approach also had economic consequences, was seen in the Bougainville Movement in 1935, until eventually a real famine sobered the enthusiasts.\(^{18}

Rejection of the past is not a once-for-all action, but rather the beginning of a new morality. As a rule, this new kind of behaviours is aimed at strengthening the community life and eliminating the customs and institutions which formerly occasioned friction and conflict. Henceforth the same standards would apply to men and women, and groups which were previously at variance will now work together. Sometimes it is said that the new morality is imposed 'to please God'. If one admits that Melanesian morals are mainly socially oriented and not God-oriented, we would then meet here a non-traditional element, probably to be ascribed to Christian mission influence.

Connected with ... expressions of a clean cut with the past, is the intolerance against those who do not join the movement. That is not only against the sceptic Indigenous people, but mainly against the ruling class, and in this instance, the mission and the civil administration; hence the pronationalist and anti-White manifestations of several messianic movements. Sometimes such aggressive attitudes form part if the imminent world conflagration in which the sky would fall upon the earth [as in the Filo movement of 1932], or the mountains would be flattened to form one great fertile plain – as in the Braining unrest in New Britain [1929] and the John Frum movement in the New Hebrides about 1940. The resurrection of the dead and their joining with the mortals on earth might also be part of the last day. Calculations about the time when all this might happen are also frequent, although in some cases play-back of Biblical elements might be suspected. There are however instances where traditional myths show their influence once again. Whatever the origins of the single details, they all join together to make to cargo talk a convincing and otherworldly new teaching.

#### The role of miracles.

#a The impact of the new message upon the people is greatly enhanced by Jesus' impressive deeds for the benefit of others. This refers to his healing of sicknesses and diseases, to his victories over evil spirits [exorcism]. In addition, there are the wondrous deeds of the Founder himself, such as walking on water and of his transformation of the mountain. Even if these are not seen as fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies, as is usually done by the Gospel writers, they are still characteristic phenomena of a new religious movement. Miracles not only appear in the Master's life, but he also gives his disciples the power to do the same, and even greater works than He did. One cannot doubt that the profusion of miracles and signs, by underlining the words spoken, explains on the one hand why 'masses of people' followed the Jesus movement and of a while stopped his enemies from taking action because 'they were afraid of the crowds'. In the end however, the decisive step could not be avoided any longer, and so the rulers preferred to let one man die for the people, to save the whole nation from being destroyed.

Reports about miracles are not absent from Messianic movements outside the Bible ... we often find healings, as in the Papuan movement led by Maine [1912/1919] and Evara [1919/31]<sup>20</sup>, the West Irian movement under Pamai [1928] ... Extreme examples in the same line may be seen in the cases of coma, death and resurrection which took place, e.g. during the Paliau movement. Even a miraculous feeding is reported in connection with the Mambu movement [Madang District]. In this case the prophet distributed rice and fish allocated by the ancestors; the rice was said to have been brought by plane, the fish to have been caught in the river. This detail was of special importance since saltwater fish had been given, so the people concluded that the very riches of the sea were available in the fresh water of the creeks.

Miraculous events also happen to the cult members themselves. This category can include the revelatory visions and dreams referred to earlier, in addition there are reports of shaking as in the Vailala Madness in Mekeo and the Noise Movement on Manus<sup>21</sup>, and of 'speaking in tongues' as in the Mekeo disturbance and other cults as well. Some exceptional incidents occurred in the Koreri Movement where people believed that the body of Angganitha was 'transformed' at night with a marvellous light, while her house was miraculously lit and some people saw great lights in the tops of the trees<sup>22</sup>. That such a profusion of extraordinary happenings was a great stimulus to heightening the excitement and in obscuring the aims of the movement must be beyond doubt. The followers became assured that the new era was about to break through – and led them to destroy goods and gardens and pigs. For the authorities the excitement predicted trouble; hence it resorted to punishments for 'spreading false reports' and in more extreme situations, to torture and death by Japanese during their occupation in World War 2<sup>23</sup>.

As time passed the miracles remained well remembered. F.E. Williams who reported the Mekeo disturbances and who, after a decade or so went back to see the lasting results, testifies that at the time the people regarded the past as 'a brief age of miracles' in which the earlier prophecies had come true and wondrous incidents had taken place. In many cases, hesitations had evaporated and people 'remembered' having seen the mast and the lights of the cargo vessel, or having heard the noise of the engines and the rattle of the anchor chain. Even though a certain disillusionment had set in since no cargo had actually arrived – the belief in the cargo myth had remained, maybe not as something still to come, but as something real from the past. No doubt the memories of these happenings were to influence some future events, some of which may still not have occurred.

# Active Proselytist [to convert someone from one religious belief or opinion to another]

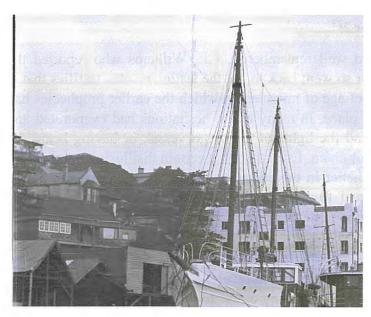
#a The spread of a movement is fostered not only by the miraculous deeds of the Founder and of his disciples, but also by their active collaboration in winning others to their new way of life. Among the contemporaries of Jesus there is some evidence of Pharisees engaging in missionary work and 'travelling over sea and land to make a single convert'.

#b Although there are cargo movements ... whose originators are not known from existing reports, we should normally reckon with a prophetic figure or Founder. This person is often not alone, but has specific assistants. Against a traditional background, such a development is most unusual, since each ethnic group has its own set of norms and know that others have theirs as well. Nobody then would think of proselytizing among his neighbours, so that if this ever occurs, one can easily suspect a non-indigenous influence.

Active proselytizing occurred in spreading the Vailala Madness. Its Founding Father was Evara, an old brisk intelligent man and 'obviously an outstanding personality'. He was assisted by Kori 'the Paul of Papua' and helped by, among others, one Harea of Haruape, who made some inspection tours of the neighbouring villages. In the Filo Movement, the Foundress was equally helped by a man or a girl chosen from each village to lead their people; the following quickly reached almost 2000<sup>24</sup>. For Yali we can establish a whole political organization, although in the beginning there was also some trading in the 'copyright' of the Kilibob – Manup myth, which was not the property of the inland villages beyond Madang. Finally, in the Tanna Movement in the New Hebrides, there was a number of messengers called 'ropes of John Frum' after the mysterious person who started the movement. It is largely due to their efforts, but also through the continued action of those who had been arrested and sent into exile, that the cargo ideas spread from Tanna to neighbouring islands. It is obvious that the systematic work of some people tends to stabilize an

otherwise loose movement, although there are also cults that start well such as the Marching Rule on Malaita [1944] or the Bougainville Movement of the years 1935 – 39.

We can conclude our comparison as we begin, stressing once again the vitality of religious movements which do not cease to have ever new leases of life. The fact that the promises are not fulfilled within a reasonable span of time, that the awaited cargo or the end of the world does not come, has no great effect on this vitality. This is a stern rebuke for those Biblical scholars who believe that in the New Testament the delay of *Parousia* [Jesus second coming] was the most upsetting factor in early Christianity. These scholars underestimate the strength of faith that on one occasion proved to be the rock to rely upon, and on which one can fall back, generation after generation. *End of Case Study* ...



<u>Opposite</u> – MV 'Stella Maris' [larger ship] – mission boat of SVD in New Guinea, photo in Sydney c.1930 – courtesy NLA

# PART B – The scant records of Sepik 'cargo cult' prior to World War 2

The documentation of Sepik pre-war messianic movements is scant. The reason for this is attributed in part to the loss of records during the Japanese occupation from the then existing Sepik District stations of Wewak, Aitape, Angoram, Ambunti and Maprik, and the SVD Mission stations. The primary reason for the lack of records however is believed to be the relative lack of facts to report; that

messianism, cargo or 'natavistic' movements in the Sepik were only starting to emerge.

Perhaps the earliest recorded sign was as recorded in Worsley p. 109-110: A German labour recruiter Pfiel observed the 'widely held native conviction ... that the foreigners were merely temporary visitors and would soon depart' was a reasonable observation in view of their past experience as ... after the Second World War one native ruefully remarked: We do not understand. We are just in the middle. First the Germans came ... and the Australians pushed them out. Then the Japanese pushed out the Australians. Later the Americans got rid of the Japanese. It is beyond us. The following year a startling development took place. The elders of Moagendo [Magendo] took the missionary into their sacred spirit house and offered him the finest of the sacred spirit figures which were then dragged by procession onto the mission vessel Stella Maris. 25

<u>Writer's Note</u> – the abrupt desire of the Lower Sepik people to give up the traditional religious art and become Catholics is discussed in other chapters in this narrative.

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The presentation of 'cargo cult' as a new religion, together with Father Aerts detailed analysis in this chapter, prompted the writer to search for pre-war administration records of cult activity in the Sepik, which might add to Father Aerts contribution.

As G.W.L. Townsend's book *District Officer* [1968] and his personal diaries from 1927 to 1942 are silent on the topic of cargo cult, it is not known whether this reflected a lack of prewar cults, or a lack of interest in cults on his part. Some mentions of cult activity from other sources include:-

- 1. In 1930 there was the 'The God the Father' movement at Suain.<sup>26</sup>
- 2. Patrol Officer J. Preston White [year unknown but probably 1940-42] wrote a patrol report that mentioned a cargo cult on You Island off Wewak.<sup>27</sup>
- 3. King of Wapei cult 1941 Tani of Tauwete near Lumi told his followers that the white man had long robbed the Wapei of the cargo sent by their ancestors. He was jailed for a month in dec. 1941. Then on 2<sup>nd</sup> Sept. 1943 under Tani's directions the Seinum people attempted to capture Lieut. Fryer and party of ANGAU and hand them over to the Japanese at Aitape. Tani taught that the Japanese would rid New Guinea of the white man so the ancestors could deliver the cargo.<sup>28</sup>
- 4. During early to mid 1943, Captain Taylor reported from behind Japanese lines outbreaks of 'Vailala Madness' along the Sepik coast. [ref. Bragge LW Sepik 3 unpublished]

Elsewhere in the Sepik History narrative there is a detailed description of the Mt. Turu cargo cult which had its roots as far back as 1912 and probably earlier. [It seems clear that although there were some pre-war cargo cults, they were not as widespread as post-war cults such as Mt. Turu which became world news.

The true believers in cargo cults, as with any religion, cannot be easily persuaded to forego their beliefs. During the Mt. Turu manifestation and that of other cults, it has been discovered that expatriates are powerless to educate people about the illogical and sometimes harmful aspects of cargo cults. This is because part of their belief is that expatriates know the secrets of the cargo and have a vested interest in not sharing the secrets with PNG citizens. The recommended action for Administration officers to take in relation to the Mt. Turu cult was to maintain contact with the people and patiently explain the facts in a low-key manner, and to refrain from taking any aggressive or enforcement action until a law was broken. Only then could a prosecution take place. In the case of the Mt. Turu cult, as predicted, the cargo did not appear and in due course, although there were still true believers out there waiting for the next prophesy, things settled down and the Sepik returned to normal.

# **End Notes Chapter 35**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Theo Aerts SVD – The birth of a Religious movement; a Comparison of Melanesian Cargo Cults and Early Christianity – Verbum 51/D m 20 1979 P 323-344

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Aerts T. 1979 P 1

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Mihalic Fr. F Introduction to New Guinea Pidgin – Jackarandah Press undated

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Aerts T. 1979 P 3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The location of Kep is not known to the writer, but is assumed to be inland of Aitape

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> The Walman or Valman language group includes Chinapelli, Lemieng, Pro and Vokau – immediately east and south east of Aitape,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> In the coastal Boiken area west of Wewak.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Aerts T. 1979 P 1 & 2

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> L.W.Bragge – Sepik 3 The Sepik at War unpublished Chapter 38

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Cf. K.Birket-Smith, Feasts of Medit in East Asia abd Oceania, Folk [Copenhagen], 1965, 23-37. Also R.M.Berndt, A Cargo Movement in Eastern Central Highlands in Oceania 23, 1952-53, 40-65, 137-158, 202-234.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> A.Kyakas & P.Wiessner – From inside the women's house – Enga Women's lives and traditions. P 6

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> This discussion is more detailed in [Bragge] Sepik 1 Chapter 3 "Understanding the evolution of a traditional religion –a Case Study". Unpublished

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Cf See respectively P.Worsley 80-81,88 and C.S.,Belshaw, Recent History of Mekeo Society: Cargo Cults in Oceania 22,1951/52 P 5-8

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> F.C.Kamma, Koreri Messianic Movements in the BiuK-Numfor Culture Area 1972 P 158

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> P.Worsley – The trumpet shall sound – 1970 P 61-64

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> P.Lawrence. Road belong Cargo 1964 P 138-9

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> F.E.Williams – The Vailala Madness and other essays [1923] & C.Hurst & Co London 1976 P 331-393

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> P.Worsley - 1970 P 128-129

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> C.S.Belshaw - Oceania 1951/2 P5

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> E.W.P.Chinney & H.C. Haddon – Five Religious Cults in British New Guinea – Hibbert Journal 15 1916/17 P448-463

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> P.Worsley – The trumpet shall sound – 1970 P 198

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> C.F.Kamma 1972 P 159

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> C.F.Kamma 1972 P 179

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> C.S.Belshaw Oceania 1951-2 P 6-7

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> P.Worsley – The trumpet shall sound – 1970 P 210-211

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> P.Worsley – The trumpet shall sound – 1970 P 209

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Mentioned in Len Odgers' war time diary

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> L.B.Bragge Chapter 37 – Sepik 3 The Sepik at War - unpublished

# Sepik 2 Chapter 36 Oil Exploration in the Sepik.

In 1910 an oil seep was discovered in a creek at Matapau, rear the coast, midway between Aitape and Wewak. At one stage the Germans had reportedly bailed out 40 gallons of the oil in a 24 - hour period<sup>1</sup>. The German colonial administration was keen explore and develop the resource and the Reischtag voted 120,000 marks for a scientific investigation. This amount later increased to 500,000 marks. According to reports, a drilling rig was en route to New Guinea when world war 1 broke out.<sup>2</sup>

Following the surrender of German New Guinea, the government geologist of Papua, Evan Richard Stanley [1885 – 1924] was given permission to explore the northern coastline of New Guinea and in 1916 he submitted a report on oil occurrences in former German New Guinea. This report was followed in 1917 by a report by Captain Macintosh of the AN&MEF on both the Matapau and Wakip<sup>1</sup> seeps.

Meanwhile on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1915, Lieut Charles Woodhall Brearley found himself appointed temporary Captain and Officer in Charge of the Aitape Garrison, and District Officer in charge of the Aitape District. He suffered from malaria and was terminated as unfit on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1916. He was obviously very interested in the Matapau seep, from between 1918 and 1925 a large file accumulated concerning the Colonial Exploration and Development Company which sought a licence to search for oil. The syndicate consisted of Captain Charles Woodhall Brearley, Lieut. James Gillies Syme Stewart, Private Malcolm McLellan Stewart and driver Duncan Syme Stewart.

A stream of letters to the Prime Minister's Department, failed to produce the requested licence<sup>3</sup> for reason that becomes apparent below. The Australian Government had other plans for the Matapau seep.

In July 1919 an agreement was signed whereby the Australian and British governments would each provide £50,000 for the Anglo Persian Oil Company to conduct oil exploration in Papua New Guinea. This followed the incredible success of New Zealander William Knox D'Arcy's discovery of oil at Masjid-i-Suleiman in Persia.

The interest in petroleum exploration stemmed from the Matapau seep discovered in TNG in 1910 and the seeps in the Valiala River area of Papua discovered in 1912.<sup>4</sup> After the £100,000 British/Australian agreement contribution was exhausted, the British Government withdrew, as the exploration to that time showed Papua and New Guinea was not going to be another Persia. The Australian Government took over the British share and contributed another £25,000, and authorised Anglo-Persian to continue its exploration.

In 1923 The Federal Government opened TNG to private enterprise exploration for oil.<sup>5</sup> This sparked a rush of private enterprise companies to explore for oil.

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#### Mandated Development Company.

Between 1924 and 1926 Mandated Development Co drilled six shallow bores – between 70 and 765 feet in depth. They between 1929 and 1932 the same company drilled three more bores – between 60 and 1,331 feet in depth.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Wakip is in the Madang District

## Ormildah Oil Development Company.

The company name was created from the first letters of the surnames of each of the Sydney based company founders: **Orwin, Miller** and **Davis.**<sup>7</sup>

The Ormildah expedition left Sydney in January 1925 under the command of Colonel Munroe and accompanied by Geologist Dr. H.I.Jensen.

Ormildah had been heavily influenced by a German report and drilling plans submitted by a Dr. Schlenzig involving both private consortia and the Reischtat. Ormildah had acquired a licence of an area along the north bank of the upper Sepik from Chenapian upstream to slightly west of the junction of the Sepik and Yellow Rivers.

When the expedition reached Rabaul they acquired a copy of Leonard Schultze map of the Sepik. At Marienberg they met Father Kirschbaum, and from him learned that Dr. Schlenzig had been the mining warden in Rabaul and that he had not actually visited the Sepik. From Marienberg the expedition the expedition proceeded to their licence area in February 1925. Jansen was unimpressed and suggested Munroe seek a licence over the Marienberg area. Munroe sailed to Rabaul and acquired the Marienberg licence.

Ormildah drilled at Marienberg spudding the well at Banan [about 6 km west north west of Marienberg mission] in August 1925 and drilled to a depth of 2,705 feet. Marienberg 1 had a number of gas shows that led to short term excitement:

1/8/1927 Depth 1718 feet "Gas coming from the bore and we are of the opinion oil." 4/8/1927 Gas smelt strongly of kerosene 13/8/1927 On 8<sup>th</sup> August – depth 1880 ft gas still coming up between 6" and 8" casing<sup>8</sup>.

At 2,705 feet the casing jammed and broke and the well was abandoned on 30<sup>th</sup> March 1928.<sup>9</sup> Geologist Jensen recommended Marienberg 2 be drilled on the Gavien Dome to the west. Ormildah' new Managing Director agreed with the recommendation, but did not have the funds to implement it. For the next half century Marienberg 1 was the deepest well drilled in the Sepik Basin.

Ormildah obtained leases at Roma in Queensland and in New Guinea worked closely with Oilsearch Ltd until 1939 when the company was declared defunct and was struck from the register<sup>10</sup>

#### Oil Search Limited.

Oil Search Limited which had been exploring for oil in Queensland, was incorporated in Papua New Guinea in April 1929. The company had established a headquarters at Matapau. Geologists who examined the Matapau seep subsequently established that there was no reservoir and the oil had reached the seepage after travelling many miles along rock faults.

Indeed, samples the writer collected<sup>2</sup> at Matapau and also from a seafloor seepage off Lemieng village, over 60 kilometres away, proved to be of the identical chemical composition, so originating from the same source.

Geologist G.A.V.Stanley and others joined Oil Search when the joint work by Anglo-Persian and the Australian Government ceased that year. G.A.V.Stanley and Surveyor Harry Eve mapped 300 sq. miles around the Matapau seep between August 1930 and May 1931.

In 1938 Oil Search had a permit over 1,300 square miles from the Dutch Border to 50 miles east of Wewak. This area was bounded in the north by the Bismarck Sea and in the South by the Sepik River. As is the norm in the petroleum industry, Oil Search needed partners to share the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> While working for the Louisiana Land and Exploration Company in the early 1990s

exploration costs, and of course the benefits from any discovery the exploration made, and this resulted in the formation of the Australian Petroleum Co.

# The formation of Australian Petroleum Company [A.P.C.]

In 1938, Oil Search Limited, Anglo-Persian and Stanvac [Standard Vacuum of New Jersey] formed APC, which took over all Oil Search Permits, on the basis that each company owned one third, on the basis of which Anglo-Persian<sup>3</sup> and Stanvac agreed to an extensive exploration program.

In the Sepik APC covered approximately 6,500 square miles with geological reconnaissance and 7,422 square miles by aerial reconnaissance. No test well was drilled.

As Oil Search wished to conduct exploration in uncontrolled areas of the Sepik District, it was necessary that an experienced administration officer involved. District Officer Townsend allocated James Hodgekiss. Of Hodgekiss Townsend wrote:

...for this class of work, there was no one superior to Jimmy Hodgekiss. His understanding of native thought and his acceptance of solitude and isolation were both absolute<sup>11</sup>.

During 1938 Oil Search showed a lot of interest in the petroleum potential of the Maimai area. A police post and airstrip were established there. The 1938 petroleum exploration also resulted in a police post being established opposite the Yellow River junction with the Sepik and also one with an airstrip at Green River.

Despite a huge amount of petroleum exploration in the pre-World War 2 period, no payable petroleum was discovered in the Sepik. Exploration continued in the post war period, as described in Sepik 4 Chapter 15 without a discovery being made.

Eventually payable petroleum was discovered in the "Fold belt" near Lake Kutubu in Papua. With Chevron as operator, on 27<sup>th</sup> March 1986 a well on the Iagifu anticline produced nearly 8,000 barrels per day. Chevron undertook an extensive drilling program with 22 wells drilled and \$340 million invested before it was decided to go to the production stage. Petroleum Development Licence No 2 was issued and 18 months later, in mid-1992 production from the "Kutubu field" commenced. The writer was employed by Chevron as Community Relations Coordinator for the export pipeline in the Gulf District, and retired as Oil Search Community Relations Manager in 2007.

As for the Sepik and adjacent Madang districts petroleum exploration continued through the 20<sup>th</sup> century and into the 21<sup>st</sup> without any commercial discovery being made.

## **End Notes Chapter 36**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> G.W.L.Townsend 1968 P 195

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Frank Rickwood OBE – The Kutubu Discovery – Book Generation Sydney 2000 Pages 42, 46 and 50

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> N.A.A. Code Number 1612651 Colonial Exploration and Development Co

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Bureau of Mineral Resources, Geology and Geophysics [BMR] Report No 41A Summary of Oil-Search activities in Australia and New Guinea to June 1959. 1960 Page 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> P.G.Purcell – Marienberg 1 Sepik Basin. First PNG Petroleum Conference 1960 Page 430

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> BMR 1960 page 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> P.G.Purcell – Marienberg 1 Sepik Basin – P430

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> P.G.Purcell - Marienberg 1 Sepik Basin - P436

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> P.G.Purcell - Marienberg 1 Sepik Basin - P429

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> P.G.Purcell - Marienberg 1 Sepik Basin - P438

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> G.W.L.Townsend 1968 P 224

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Anglo-Persian later became British Petroleum BP

# Sepik 2 Chapter 37 The tracking down of W.A. [Bill] Macgregor

**Writer's Note:** This chapter serves to introduce Bill Macgregor, an important character who features in Sepik History as told in:

Sepik 2 – The Winds of Change 1885-1941

Sepik 3 – The Sepik at War 1942-1945

Sepik 4 – Coming to grips with the future 1946 - 1975

W.A. [Bill] Macgregor, known throughout the Sepik as the red-headed 'Masta Mek', was held in awe by the Sepik elders I interviewed. While he is a central, if often reluctant figure to Sepik events before, during and after World War 2 there is very little written about him; less than was written about his brother Roy, the owner of three Madang plantations and at least two coastal vessels.

Of Bill Macgregor G.W.L.Townsend said.

Bill started his Island career as an overseer on a coconut plantation in the Solomons just after World War 1 and had become involved in a riot of Malaita plantation labourers and was charged with manslaughter or something of the sort...he was acquitted... He had gone to New Guinea shortly afterwards...He had been a recruiter on the Sepik River and was the first man to explore the Sepik Plains on horseback. He aroused my envy by his exploration of the Karawari-Arafundi Rivers...in 1929/30 he penetrated right into... the Highlands – the first European to do so.

He made an excellent map of the route he had taken. He allowed me to inspect this but not to copy it.

Macgregor made his map available to Jim Taylor who, in 1939, followed that route to re-enter the highlands during the Taylor and Black Hagen-Sepik patrol of 1938-9. During the war this same route was used repeatedly by ANGAU parties avoiding the Japanese.

Of Bill MacGregor J.K.McCarthy said.

His history was, he was a very good horseman, supposed to have been a horse breaker in the First AIF. A tall bloke; good looking fellow, much better looking than his brother [Roy]. A typical Australian bushman. You know a country bloke...He was always well turned out, a spotlessly clean bloke.

The rumour was that he had been in the British Solomons, before he ever came to New Guinea after the first World War, was chased out of there, I don't know, recruiting or something.

Qn. Chased out by the native people?

Ans. No by the Government I heard, now whether that was fact or not I do not know. I saw him in Lae...1948-9 I was there...He was keen on square dancing.

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Bill Macgregor died in his sleep on his 58<sup>th</sup> Birthday, 12<sup>th</sup> September 1954, at Baiyer River in the Western Highlands<sup>ii</sup>. His friend and Sepik identity Peter England said in his tribute:

In the 1914-18 war Bill, with his brother Roy rode with the Light Horse in the campaigns that made the emu feathered cockies famous throughout the world...then there was a story of some trouble in the Solomons...around 1928 he came over to New Guinea. He

did short times with an oil Company, with the Expro. Board as a plantation inspector, then joined Reg. Beazley in a recruiting venture on the Sepik.

Bill could not be long without his beloved horses. He landed a team of pack and saddle horses at Marienberg with the idea of using them on his recruiting trips. This was not a success...The Sepik is far from ideal for horses.

In the early thirties, he put in a few years as a plantation manager at Serang. Later, about '35 he tried his luck, with some success on the Maprik gold fields. Later still he worked gold on the Maramuni and at Garamambu. He was there when war broke out.

He joined up again and, attached to various branches of the Allied forces, gave valuable and distinguished service throughout the Pacific campaign. When the fighting was over...Bill put in about 12 months as a District Services Officer and played his part in rehabilitation and reconstruction. But the bush called again, and in a 40ft work boat he bought from the Disposals Commission, he went back up the Sepik prospecting. He tried the Karawari but with poor results.

Then he was offered the job of establishing an experimental cattle station on the Baiyer River for the Agriculture Department. He took it - even Bill was starting to feel it was time he settled down. He was back with his horses and his cattle again. Starting from nothing he built up the station: houses, stores, fences, yards, pastures. He got together a herd of first class stock...And he died, in the bush that he loved surrounded by the work of his hands.

There is another side to Bill, too. Just as he worked hard, he played hard. There are legends of Bill, south on leave, bluing up his cheque in typical bushman style – and some of Bill's cheques were pretty substantial ones. A suite at one of Sydney's leading hotels, a valet, a chauffeur-driven limousine standing by day and night. Champagne, night clubs, theatres, parties – whatever Bill did, he did in a big way. Although, he was always a bushman he was also a playboy; a gallant, famous breaker of hearts.

In his younger days, he was said to be the handsomest man in New Guinea, Errol Flynn chucked in. There is a story of a lady anthropologist who came to the Sepik to devote herself strictly to the study of native culture...

**Writer's Note:** In 1974 I interviewed G.W.L.Townsend's widow at Buderim Queensland and she mentioned a book written about Bill Macgregor by a lady called Peggy Matches who she met in Kavieng in 1927. Of the book Mrs. Townsend said.

Oh look, it was gossipy...but quite amusing...she fell for him you know – he was that type...a big tall solid sort of man.

I eventually found *Savage Paradise* by Margaret Matches – published in 1930. Ms. Matches apparently intended that no one would identify Bill Macgregor or Reg. Beazley, his partner, from her writing. But with Mrs. Townsend's insight I knew that "Jim" was Bill Macgregor and "Brearly" was Beasley. By cutting through the romance her story provided some sound information [possibly mixed with a little fiction] which I summarized as follows:

He was 34 years old, Australian born, had been to university, had been a jackaroo, soldier, gold miner, horse breaker, explorer, recruiter and at one time a dancing instructor.

One day he blew into Madang from a plantation 180 miles up the coast [Serang plantation?] ...his cobber Brearly was a good sort too.

Jim and Brearly were taking horses to go recruiting in the Sepik inland of Marienberg. They had been waiting for months for transport and were beche de mer fishing in the meantime on a plantation up the coast. A Burns Philp ship of 190 tons, the *Nuloa* took them to Marienberg.

Jim was tired of enforced idleness, he loved the jungle...he could get £20 per head for recruits who would be carriers for the gold fields...It would be a six months expedition. They planned to take two or three months supplies, leaving the rest at Marienberg...Jim was confident that they could take horses into the hinterland and each horse would equal six or eight natives as carriers. There was more to it than recruiting. Jim had a notion that he knew where to locate oil deposits...he knew where there was blue clay and blue clay could mean diamonds.

The foredeck carried Jim and Brearly's eight horses, flocks of ducks and chickens, a sow and hog, some goats also about fifty kanakas belonging to the recruiters. Everyone at Marienberg had been very discouraging, even Father Kirschbaum. He knew the stuff of which these two pioneers were made but he knew equally the madness of their undertaking.

Finally, from the Chapter "Goodbye Jim"; set on the ship at Marienberg:

Now, quite suddenly, I found myself caught in the steel vice of his arms, and his lips were against my throat. And, almost as suddenly I was freed again, and this lank bushranger who feared neither crocodiles nor cannibals stood waiting for what might befall him now... 'I don't want to be alone. If I go below, I will get drunk' 'Getting drunk might be good for you Jim." 'All right Goodbye..."

He stood looking at me, a forgotten shag of red hair hung over his forehead. I hated to see him go.

Writer's concluding note: Bill Macgregor's adventurous life in the Sepik is glimpsed only through the memories of long departed Sepik elders, and of his colleagues of yesteryear, plus occasional world war 2 reports. As a researcher of half-forgotten Sepik documents, an ideal for me would be to stumble upon a cache of Macgregor diaries that recorded all the adventures and misadventures of his incredible lifetime.

## **End Notes Chapter 37**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>i</sup> Personal communication with Mr McCarthy – 24<sup>th</sup> June 1974. Bragge Sepik Research Notes Vol 19 Pages 550-551

# Sepik 2 Chapter 38– The Kamasiut of the Hunstein Mountains Attack J.K.McCarthy's patrol 1930.

The very best information sources for this chapter `yt666frrdd, is J.K.McCarthy himself and the Sepik communities who interacted with the Kamasiut. I met with Mr McCarthy at his residence in Mt Eliza, Victoria in June 1974. Although the interview was far ranging and lasted for several hours Mr. McCarthy had nothing to add about the Kamasiut¹ [the Kumchua, as he knew them] than what he wrote in *Patrol Into Yesterday*. He was however, very interested in my story of the annihilation of the Kamasiut in 1943, during the Japanese occupation. [See Sepik 3 Chapter 22] Mr. McCarthy's Patrol Into Yesterday records the "Kumchua" incident as follows:

The Kumchua incident...could have been worse if not for the presence of a courageous policeman, Sergeant-Major Maru. As it was, it was bad enough.

The Kumchua people were unknown. They had raided the village of Garamambu, which had been contacted by our patrols only once, and the Garamambu were now appealing to us for protection. With six police under the Sergeant Major and Constable Wana, we set off in three canoes on the long trip to the magnificent Chambri Lakes. There was water as far as the eye could see, but the lake was shallow and covered with water lilies. Thousands of heron and wild ducks live on these great lagoons. Flocks of egret, safe now from the feather trade had been prohibited to the European and they could not be shot, rose and circled slowly as our canoes approached Chambri...

As we approached Garamambu we found we had company. No less than thirty canoes loaded with warriors, had accompanied us, intent on being on the winning side of any fight that might occur and thus bagging a few free heads. There was much argument and hard words before they were finally talked out of this old trick, and the canoe fleet departed for Chambri with the occupants muttering.

Garamambu was a large village but nobody had stayed to greet the patrol. Every human being had deserted the place; the only things moving were the bone thin dogs, which howled dismally at us, and the well-fed pigs rooting around the houses. Fires still smoked, however, so the inhabitants had only just departed. We lit fires and prepared to camp for the night.

A few hours later the Garamambu started to drift in. By nightfall several hundred had returned to their houses. They were a timid people but eventually the headman gave us details of the killings.

The Kumchua were their neighbours; they were a wild tribe, sometimes friendly and sometimes hostile and their mood, at any given time could not be depended upon. A few weeks previously they had waylaid two men, two women and a small girl of Garamambu, killing all five. Some Garamambu men had found their headless bodies lying in the swamp, although the killings had not been witnessed.

I made every effort to see the men who had found the bodies, but it was fruitless. Clearly these murders were merely one in a series of raids occurring between the two peoples, and it was impossible to know who was to blame. The Garamambu at present had the advantage because they were able to call on the assistance of the Government.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>I have recorded the name as Kamasiut rather than Kumchua because "Kamasiut" is the phonetic spelling of the name as I heard it in a number of interview

I decided the wisest thing to do was to ignore the report of the murders, go to the Kumchua and attempt to make peaceful contact. The headman of Garamambu gave me the usual warning as we prepared to strike inland through heavy jungle; "The Kumchua have threatened to kill any white man who visits the.!"

Despite this the Garamambu did not intend to miss anything; painted and plumed and fully armed, they soon began to follow us. They were no longer the timid shy folk of yesterday, and not for the first time I was exasperated at the unoriginality of native thinking.

Yet there was something amusing in their antics, too. I stopped the patrol until the Garamambu caught up.

"There you are", I said waving to the front of the patrol "You may all go first." They were horrified at the very idea. They frankly admitted they were terrified of the Kumchua! I ordered them to return to their village, and for the rest of that day they lurked well to the rear. We could not get them to disappear completely.

The first Kumchua hamlet was Iba. It had twelve houses and from the signs, it had been deserted for several days. In some of the houses there were skulls, and a few of them had been newly taken. There were also bundles of human bones hanging from the roofs. Charms hung from a pole that was stuck in the middle of the path that led from the place.

At this point I had the uncomfortable feeling that we were being watched from the bush. Whether the unwanted Garamambu warriors felt this too, or whether the signs in the hamlet were too ominous for them, I don't know, but after taking a quick look at the forbidding hamlet they at last disappeared in the direction of their own country.

We posted guards that night and slept uneasily. We discovered the second hamlet of the Kumchua next day. It was five miles off. We crossed a flooded sago swamp during our approach, and from there we saw four or five men carrying spears and bows appear for an instant near the houses. Then they were gone.

Our shouts that we were friends brought us nothing but echoes.

There were the usual dried skulls and bones in the houses but outside the larger ceremonial house there was the fresh head of a child. There was no way we could tell if it was the head of the Garamambu child.

Our interpreters continued to shout that we were friends, that we did not want to fight. There was no answer from the surrounding gloom. All was silent.

Two hours later the uncanny silence was suddenly broken by the screech of cockatoos, the alarmists of the bush. It meant that men were moving out there in the jungle.

We waited. Ten yards from me, without warning, two men appeared – pig tusks through their noses, their bodies and faces painted, their loaded bows drawn tight ready to fire. Then they were gone, silently and instantly.

There was a shout from the jungle on the other side of the hamlet. The Kumchua were on that side. "They are all around us kiap." Said the corporal. They were all around us, but apart from the glimpse I had had, we could not see them.

The interpreters called out again. This time there was an answer – hoarse and angry jeers and shouts from the surrounding bush. We did not have to understand the words to know that we were unwanted.

The light began to fade as evening came on. We waited. There were more jeers from all sides. Then there was silence. We called back. There was no answer. It was beginning to grow dark now, and I realised finally what the Kumchua were doing – they were carrying on a war of nerves.

The pattern of sudden yells broke out again. They came from unexpected quarters, and I felt the strain increasing. My knees started to tremble. I hoped, earnestly, that none of the police could see them. I decided I had to do something active. I called to two constables to join me at the edge of the clearing where I had seen the two Kumchua men disappear. But there was nothing so see there.

From the surrounding bush there were more jeers.

To Sergeant-Major Mari, with thirty-four years of service in the police, the situation was nothing new. He had seen many German and Australian Patrol Officers in the same situation, and now he started to calm things down. He carefully finished lighting his pipe, and called to Boko: "I think the master would like a cup of tea. Make one while we wait."

I did want a cup of tea, and took the subtle advice and waited.

"When they come, they will come from all sides" Maru warned later, in between the shouting which was now getting louder and more frequent, apparently building to a climax.

Our few police had been posted to cover all easy points of approach, and from down the track where corporal Wana and constable Moi waited, tensed, a group of warriors suddenly appeared. They advanced swiftly with their bows and arrows at the ready and did not bother to take cover.

"Stop!" shouted corporal Wana, waving them back "Don't come closer." On they came. There was an explosion from the corporal's rifle as he fired two shots in quick succession. The men turned and ran.

"Quick!" I yelled and raced down the track after the fleeing men, accompanied by two police. At once we came to a high spur that overlooked the hamlet and within easy arrow range of it. There was no sign of the men, but thankfully the strain had been broken; we now had something besides voices to visualise.

The spur, I realised, would be a good place to pepper the camp from at night, so I left Wana and Moi to hold it while I hurried back to the huts.

There was a double explosion from the other side of the hamlet as I entered. I saw a Kumchua drop to the track, shot through one side.

He had been the leader of the silent attack from that direction when he was spotted by Sergeant-Major Maru, just as he was about to release an arrow. Constable Jeremei had fired. We moved the Kumchua's body.

It was soon dark, and for the first time in many hours it was now silent. We waited, but the Kumchua were gone. I sat down bitterly disappointed. The death of the Kumchua man was unavoidable, but it meant that the task of making friendly contact would now take a long time<sup>i</sup>.

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As it turned out, the Kamasiut, or Kumchua were never again contacted by the Government. As reported in Sepik 3, Kamasiut aggression to all neighbours resulted in the neighbours retaliating to a point where the Kamasiut were said to have been exterminated. But then as we saw in Sepik 4 in

October 1971, Garamambu people reported that they believed there were Kamasiut survivors in their remote Hunstein lands who again presented a threat to Garamambu. I set out to investigate during Ambunti patrol No 6/1971-72. The investigation in the villages which annihilated Kamasiut failed to provide sufficient evidence to justify a patrol into the Kamasiut country. This decision appears to have been the correct one as there has been no evidence of Kamasiut survivors in the years since. Interestingly, by 1971 none of the Kamasiut neighbours had claimed the Kamasiut lands – they, at least seem to believe there may still be living Kamasiut people up there.

# **End Notes Chapter 38**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>i</sup> J.K.McCarthy 1963 Pages 59-62

# Sepik Book 2 Chapter 39 "Sepik Robbie" - Eric Douglas Robinson



Eric (Wobbie) Robinson, Marienberg 1931

Writer's Note: The pre-World War 2 history of the Sepik featured two outstanding Patrol Officers both of whom later became District Officers – G.W.L. "Kassa" Townsend and E. D. "Sepik Robbie" Robinson. Both fought in WW1. Until Townsend's diaries 1927 – 1942 were transcribed, no documentation had been found that suggested either of these individuals even acknowledged the existence of the other, let alone each other's worthy Sepik achievements. They were completely different characters: Mr. Robinson was known to be "an easy-going chap", whereas, indications are that Mr. Townsend was quite the opposite.

Regrettably, many gaps remain in the record. The chapter below attempts to capture the essential elements of "Sepik Wobbie" (he spoke with a lisp). Most remarkable of all – none of my informants among the Sepik elders made mention of him, or even seemed to have a name for him. That aside, he was a most remarkable individual in the early days of Sepik administration. The photo above is borrowed from J.K. McCarthy's *Patrol into Yesterday* – 1963, page 68/9.

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Eric Douglas Robinson was born in Doncaster Yorkshire in 1897. At the age of 15, as the youngest in a family of 12, he was brought to Australia. At the outbreak of World War 1 when he was barely 16 years old he enlisted in the Australian army. He managed to do this by claiming claimed his birth certificate – back in England! - showed he was 18<sup>1</sup>.

He fought in France, where he was gassed and wounded. After the war, he studied to become a pharmacist, but being unable to become apprenticed, he applied to the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force [AN&MEF] for a job in New Guinea as a medical assistant. Although he had no medical experience, he was accepted after a Colonel Holman saw Mr. Robinson's AIF discharge papers, presumably deciding that war service provided an entitlement to the job. He was given medical training and worked initially in the Baining Mountains of New Britain and later in Bougainville.<sup>2</sup>

Stan Christian, another medical assistant of the day, takes up the story:-3

'Sepik Robbie was a medical assistant originally. When I first came to the Territory, he came about the same time... [Then] in 1926 I relieved him at Kieta [Bougainville District]. Just when he transferred over to District Services and Native Affairs I do not know. He went to the Sepik not very long after...' [the unsaid words relate to Mr. Christian involvement with Messrs Walstab, Townsend and Feldt in the 1924 Japandai massacre investigation – see Chapter 29]. In fact Mr. Robinson transferred over to DDS&NA in 1928.<sup>4</sup> Mr. Christian relates Mr. Robinson's career and personality as he knew it:-

'He was a very good, easy going chap who could not pronounce his "Rs". He was a good medical assistant and he turned out to be a good patrol officer obviously because he was very fair. He would not be as harsh as Townsend... Nothing in the world would get him upset or annoyed... But if he got instructions to hang people I guess he hanged them. Part of his job.'

The writer's research found no direct evidence that Mr. Robinson was involved in hangings apart from the fact that the 1930 hanging of ten men, occurred on the Sepik River bank at Ambunti while he was the DO stationed at Ambunti. By implication he conducted the executions. Mr. Christian continues:-

'He left the country and went south and took over a hotel; his mother-in-law's hotel. He came back again and it was this second time where Colin Simpson mentions him in his books. Then just a few years ago he came up here and was a clerk at Mt Hagen...' [This must have been the late 1950s? - Mr. Robinson – died in Sydney in 1961. Also Mr. Christian was apparently unaware that Mr. Robinson won a Military Cross in Bougainville in 1943/4].

Mr. Robinson was stationed at Ambunti as the acting District Officer in charge of the Sepik District when J.K. McCarthy was posted there as a patrol officer<sup>5</sup> in early 1930 - during the 1929/30 financial year. Mr. Robinson's predecessor had been Harold Woodman who was DO Sepik from late 1927 at least until February 1929<sup>6</sup>. Mr. Robinson wrote the 1930/31 and 1931-32 Sepik annual reports and conducted a 1933 murder investigation patrol to Kuvanmas in February 1933. He was a/DO at Aitape on 19<sup>th</sup> July 1933 when he handed over to District Officer Townsend when the Aitape and Sepik Districts were again amalgamated. Without firmer dates, this indicates he was the District Officer in charge of the Sepik from 1929/30 until and including 1932/33.

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When J.K. McCarthy arrived at Marienberg in 1929/30 en-route to his posting at Ambunti, he learned that the DO was in the lower Sepik at that time to investigate a reported gold strike in the Yuat River, a southern tributary of the Sepik River. Messrs. McCarthy and Robinson went to the miner's camp on the Yuat River in the *Osprey*. There they met Willie Williamson, the finder of the gold, George Eichorn, his son Freddy, with their launch [*Pat?*] and Alf Belfield, with his launch the *Bluebeard*. J.K. McCarthy takes up the story:-

'While the investigations into the goldfield were going on, a little drama was being played out...The natives had been watching with great interest...and what they saw annoyed them. An arrow or two would occasionally come whistling in from the far bank...

"Definite signs of disappwoval" exclaimed the District Officer "I'd better try to meet them and explain matters before someone gets hurt". But Robinson's efforts at contact were unsuccessful and small groups of warriors would continue to appear on the opposite bank and jeer and shout insults before letting an arrow go in our direction.

One day this happened while Alf Belfield was lying in his Bluebeard reading... The deaf Alf did not hear the yelling or see the arrow which came into the nearby camp...But young Fred Eichorn, aboard his launch tied up below Belfield's both heard and saw. "I'll teach those fellows a lesson". he called out ...

The young miner got a small box and in it he placed three sticks of dynamite. He judged the distance and the flow of the stream and set the fuse accordingly so the box would explode near where the shouting natives stood...Instead of floating downstream an eddy took the box the other way... "Alf! Alf!" He yelled "Watch out for that box Alf!"...Eichorn grabbed a rifle and fired at it in the wild hope that it might explode before it reached the moored launches.

The shots had no effect on either the box or Alf Belfield's eardrums...There was a terrific crack as the dynamite exploded. "What the bloody hell!" roared Belfield... Roaring with laughter, Robinson could only point to the natives on the other bank. They were rolling in joy - all their enmity forgotten. A little later they sent word over for Eichorn to repeat the performance... Robinson consoled Eichorn by calling him "Fweddie the fwiendship maker."

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One of Robinson's district duties was an appointment as mining warden, and it was to be his decision whether a goldfield in the Yuat River area was officially declared or not. After some days of washing gravel in dishes and a sluice box, the warden was satisfied and declared the "goldfield". Mr. McCarthy noted:-

'But to this day [1963] I don't understand why they [the prospectors] were so pleased. No further work was attempted and that "goldfield" still remains untouched.<sup>8</sup>'

Mr. McCarthy relates an additional story, without which no "Sepik Robbie" chapter could be considered complete :-

'A leech that fed on poor Robinson caused an internal abscess and this nearly cost him his life. There was no doctor on the Sepik and it was only through the efforts of Jim McGuigan, the medical assistant, that he was kept alive until a schooner reached the hospital in Madang... The nature of his wound even appealed to his sense of the ludicrous and when he lay, bone thin and pallid, awaiting the schooner for Madang, he insisted that he would raise the question (at the highest level) of officers patrolling in leech-infested grass country being issued with "a certain kind of wubber goods."

The Sepik District at that time was administered from two government Stations – the District headquarters at Ambunti, and Marienberg police post. Apart from the native police, the Sepik district at that time had a total of five staff members:-

a/District Officer E.D. Robinson at Ambunti Patrol Officer J.K. McCarthy at Ambunti Gaoler/Storeman R. J. Beckett at Ambunti European Medical Assistant J.H.L. McGuigan at Ambunti Patrol Officer A.H. Ross at Marienberg.

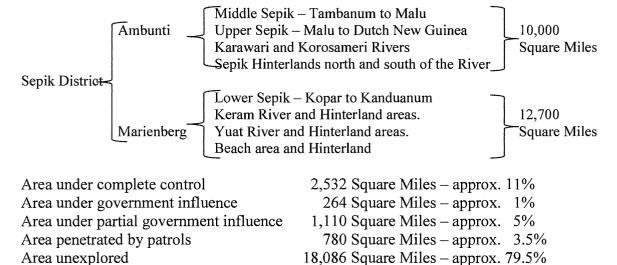
**Staff changes** which were recorded: Mr. I.D. Lyon, Cadet Patrol Officer, left to take up duties in Rabaul.

Mr. G.M. Keogh PO arrived from Rabaul to take up duties at Ambunti Mr. J.K. McCarthy was transferred from Ambunti to Marienberg to take over from Mr.

Ross who went on furlough.

The Sepik annual report for 1930-31 - The Sepik District boundaries in 1930/31 had changed only slightly from those declared in 1924; now, rather than the north bank of the Sepik River, the Aitape/Sepik District's boundary was the foothills of the Prince Alexander, Torricelli and Bewani Mountains<sup>10</sup>. The western boundary remained as the Dutch New Guinea border, and southern boundary was Papua. At this time James L. Taylor and the Leahy Brothers had not yet made their highlands exploratory patrol west from the Upper Ramu – [Kainantu] in March 1933. Bill Macgregor's 1929 [Akmana expedition] exploration of the Yuat and Maramuni Rivers, looking for gold, made Macgregor the first European to discover the dense population of the New Guinea highlands. This was not widely known, and not taken into account in the population estimates below.

The details and statistics for 1930-31 provided below are fascinating reading for officers who knew the Sepik in later years. The reality of so much country remaining unexplored was reflected in the meagre tax collection and the limited staff numbers. The resources available were sufficient to do little more than administer the area already under government influence and occasionally to visit nearby "new" groups. The Sepik District in 1930-31 was divided into eight divisions – four administered from Ambunti and four from Marienberg:



A total of 29,117 people had been censused. This was noted as a large increase in these census figures of the previous year. £1,178/10/- had been collected in head tax, an increase of £94/10/- on the previous year.

The non-indigenous population of the Sepik was listed as:

Europeans	13 males
Chinese	2 males
Malay	1 male
Half cast	1 male
Total	17 males

A total of 11 patrols were conducted from Ambunti during 1930-31. Two issues from previous years needed attention - Waskuk and Kamchua. A further three patrols were conducted from Marienberg, resulting in a third issue of note.

1. "Waskuk" – the Kwoma people: The murder of two police had been committed at Waskuk village in 1929 during DO Woodman's time in charge of the Sepik District. Subsequent events were recorded in the annual report thus:-

'As a result of the murders, the villages [Waskuk, Bangwis, Urumbanbj and Tongwinjamb] were abandoned - their villagers lived in the bush for 18 months. Today they are all back in their villages. The area was visited by patrols early in the year and friendly relations were established with the natives...'

Writer's Note: The facts as explained by the Waskuk people and documented in Sepik Book 2 Chapter 34 are more complex and bloody than indicated above. Good work by Messrs Robinson and McCarthy during 1930-31 restored relations between the Waskuk Hills people and the administration. Also in 1932, acting PO W.J. 'Jack' Read conducted patrol # A9-1931-2 to the Waskuk villages covering the period 20<sup>th</sup> April to 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1932.<sup>11</sup>

## 2. "Kamchua" [Kamasiut] of the Hunstein Mountains: The annual report states :-

A patrol was conducted via the Korosameri and Wima Rivers and then overland to Malu village ... 'The main objective of the patrol was to investigate the reported raiding of Garamambu people by the inland natives and to hold an inquest on a Kamchua native who was killed by a government patrol in April 1930. Although contact with the Kamchua people was not affected, and no inquest held, friendly contact with neighbouring villages were made.'

**Writer's Note:** As an inquest was planned it is evident that this patrol was conducted by Mr. Robinson, in his capacity as coroner. The country crossed would have been a southeast to north-west crossing of the southern hinterland of the Chambri Lakes through the country of the Yambiyambi, Changriman, Mari, Milae and Yerikai/Garamambu peoples. See Map No 2.

A decade later this area would be known as the southern extremity of the Garamambu gold field. Sepik Book 2 Chapter 39 describes the April 1930 attack on Mr. McCarthy's patrol. Sepik 3 Chapter 22 describes the 1942/3 annihilation of the "Kamchua" or Kamasiut people by their neighbours when the rule of law, established by the Australian administration, quickly eroded during the Japanese occupation.

3. Pora-Pora: Mr. McCarthy's patrol between 13<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> October 1930<sup>12</sup> is described in the Sepik annual report as follows:-

'The Pora-Pora situated to the south of the Marienberg Police Post was visited for the first time during the year. Seven villages were then visited and all the natives proved to be very friendly and a first census was obtained. It is hoped that Government influence will quickly spread in this area as several of the natives have been into Marienberg Police Post.'

Writer's Note: As we saw in Sepik Book 2 Chapter 13, these villages had previously been visited by Catholic missionaries from Marienberg.

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The Sepik annual report for 1931-32. This four-foolscap page report's update of the 1930-31 information provided above need not be recorded here as the 1931-2 information is little changed from the previous report. The report also mentions an influenza epidemic which the medical staff estimated killed between 700 and 800 people. Sadly, primitive people with no natural immunity regularly suffered heavy losses from influenza which was presumably introduced from contact with

outsiders on previous patrols. In the writer's experience this occurred among uncontacted and recently contacted people in the Om River system in early 1966 and in the upper April River system in 1970.

The estimated population of country not under control was 30,000. Given that the area "not under control" included the Abelam tribal area of Maprik in the Sepik, and what would become the Western Highlands and Enga Districts, this was a gross under-estimation.

**Labour recruiting 1931-32:** 'Very little labour recruiting has been done in the district during the year, a total of only 303 male recruits leaving the District for work in other parts of the Territory, of these approximately 60% had worked before...mostly plantation work

Mining 1931-32: During the year several small parties of prospectors worked the upper reaches of the Karawari and Yuat Rivers, but with no reported success. At the present time [July 1932] there are no prospectors on the river.

**Staff:** E.D. Robinson ADO proceeded on furlough in July 1931, and was relieved by J.L. Taylor ADO. Mr. J.L. Taylor<sup>1</sup> was transferred to Salamaua in December [1931] and handed over to Mr. A.J. Sansom PO. E.D. Robinson returned from furlough and took over the district in January 1932.

Although Ambunti in the 1930s was one of the most remote stations in New Guinea, the District Officer did entertain occasional guests, as he explained to Colin Simpson:-

'I [Colin Simpson] said, "You say these people weren't cannibals."

Robbie said that none of the people he knew on the Sepik and its tributaries ate human flesh. There was, he admitted, a lot of disagreement with his opinion. Margaret Mead, the anthropologist, said there was cannibalism. Robbie was "vewwy fond of Margawet", but he had never been able to find any evidence that any of these Sepik tribes were cannibals. He used to argue with her about it when Dr Mead and another eminent anthropologist, Gregory Bateman, stayed at the house-kiap, when Robbie was District Officer at Ambunti. An eminent German anthropologist stayed there with him, too. Dr Felix Speiser had come ashore in torn-off shorts, and from the pocket of a filthy shirt had taken out a gold-rimmed monocle. <sup>13</sup>

**Writer's Note:** In the Sepik cannibalism argument, the facts show Margaret Mead's view to be correct. See Sepik Book 1 Chapter 14 "Cannibalism".

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In 1932 Mr. Robinson conducted a patrol from Ambunti to the Dutch New Guinea border and approximately 10 miles up the Yellow River. It was reported as patrol report A4 of 1932-33 - Sepik District. The patrol was in the field from 7<sup>th</sup> September to 16<sup>th</sup> October 1932 - it was accompanied by three members of the New Guinea constabulary<sup>2</sup>. The patrol objectives were :-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> ADO J.L. Taylor appears repeatedly in Sepik history. He led the 1938/9 Hagen Sepik patrol which is described in Sepik Book 2, Chapter 49. When World War 2 broke out, Mr. Taylor was ADO in charge of Aitape, was shot and wounded by renegade police in the Angoram incident of 20<sup>th</sup> March 1942 [Sepik Book 3 Chapter 14] and operated behind Japanese lines until August 1943, when he was flown out from Lake Kuvanmas. [Sepik Book 3 Chapters 25-34]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> On 19<sup>th</sup> October 1932 in a memo entitled <u>Number of Police taken on Ambunti Patrol A.4/1932-33</u> Mr. Robinson explained that he took so few police as he expected to meet the Aitape patrol whose personnel numbers were expected to fill the MV Osprey to capacity.

- 1. To afford transport to the patrol party of a/DO Aitape [Ward Oakley] from Yellow River to Ambunti.
- 2. To conduct my [E.D. Robinson's] third visit to the Upper Sepik and to extend Administration influence.
- 3. To select a suitable site for the establishment of a Government Post.

The patrol, which travelled on *MV Osprey*, reached the mouth of the Yellow River on 10<sup>th</sup> September, some days before the anticipated arrival of the Aitape patrol. The patrol then continued on to the Dutch New Guinea border and returned to the mouth of the Yellow River on 14<sup>th</sup> September 1932. On the 15<sup>th</sup> Mr. Robinson and party went overland to the village of Mirijambi, 10 miles up the Yellow River, where it waited until the 19<sup>th</sup> for the Aitape patrol. Each night a large fire was lit in accordance with instructions from a/DO Aitape.

Village people from far and wide visited Mr. Robinson's party at Mirijambi and as none knew of any approaching Aitape patrol, Mr Robinson rafted down the Yellow River and set up camp at the foot of a mountain known locally as Kojabu. The patrol waited there until the 1<sup>st</sup> October, each night lighting signal fires on the top of Kojabu Mountain. From that altitude of 1,050 ft. ASL with an uninterrupted view of the country for miles around, there was no responding signal from the Aitape patrol. Mr. Robinson concluded the Aitape patrol was not in the vicinity and so returned to Ambunti, arriving there on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1932.

Having received no word from Aitape by the 6<sup>th</sup> October, Mr. Robinson returned upstream to the mouth of the Yellow River only to find that the Aitape party had still not arrived. A native from Mauromb, two days inland from Mirijambi village reported that on or about the 20<sup>th</sup> September the Aitape patrol had visited his village and stated that they were returning to Aitape. Mr. Robinson then returned to Ambunti arriving on 16<sup>th</sup> October 1932.

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In his 19<sup>th</sup> October 1932 memo to the Director of District Services entitled <u>Recommendations</u> for Future Activities – <u>Upper Sepik</u>, Mr. Robinson mentioned that in August 1932 a number of Yellow River natives, at the end of their contracts as indentured labourers, had been returned to their homes from Alexishafen mission [Madang District]. His memo continued:-

'I thought how useful they would be...in opening up the upper river...I was convinced what a splendid opportunity there is now of bringing these people under control, then of working downstream to Ambunti and so bring the main river under control.

All these time-expired boys are young and keen and can only speak a little pidgin...if the river is to be opened up, now is the time to operate in the area, should it be left, then all these boys will shortly lose all the teachings of the "White Man" and lapse into their old state...In view of this I wish to recommend:

- 1. That the land known to the natives as the Kreiwar-r mountain, situated on the right back of the Sepik River opposite the mouth of the Yellow River, and rising to a height of approximately 150ft be appropriated by the Administration...
- 2. That one European Officer with 20 Native Constabulary and indentured labourers or long term prisoners be sent to establish a post on Kreiwar-r mountain...
- 3. If I could be relieved of duties on the Lower Sepik for a few months...I could establish the post...I now know the area fairly well...[after] a few months with these people I should at least have a fair amount of their confidence and the Post could then be taken over by a Patrol Officer...'

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In his 19<sup>th</sup> October 1932 memo to the Director of District Services entitled (1) <u>Upper Main Sepik Natives</u>; (2) <u>Yellow River Natives</u>, Mr. Robinson recorded his observations of the area and people whose area he had patrolled:-

'The Sepik River has now been patrolled from the mouth to the Sepik-Dutch Border. From the mouth to Yessan, which is approximately 20 miles above Ambunti, the main river is now under complete control; from Yessan to the Dutch border the natives are not yet under Government influence...although not yet under Government influence all seem quite prepared to be friendly, but naturally, as yet are more of less timid. The Yellow River people tell me that these main river people are cannibals. I cannot vouch for this as the only reason the Yellow River people give for this it that whenever the main river people kill their enemies they always take away the body...<sup>3</sup>

From Wogamush to just above Yellow River there is not one native who can speak pidgin...Just above Yellow River is the village of Ibari...here are three natives who have just completed three year contracts at Alexishafen mission...27 men and one woman of the Yellow and Sand Rivers also returned from Alexishafen, speaking a little pidgin... There are no "club houses" – [haus tambarans] as on the lower Sepik River; they have a "house boy" where all the married and single men sleep. Women have their own houses which the men may visit during the day...

Marriage is by sister exchange only. Should a woman run away with a man without the permission of her parents, both the man and the woman, when caught, are dealt with in the following manner – the woman's parents and relatives assault the man with sticks and clubs and administer a sound thrashing, then the woman is held and speared with barbed arrows from the thighs down to her feet. Neither of them are killed.

These people are not head hunters. When a man kills an enemy, he cuts off the victim's left arm at the elbow joint. Failing this he cuts off a finger from the left hand. It was explained that the left hand or arm is always taken never the right as the right is the bow pulling hand...the arm or finger is proof of their kill...

There are few coconut trees and no pawpaws in the whole of the areas...On my return visit I took up the following food stuffs and distributed them among the natives for planting: pawpaw, pineapple, corn, yams and kaukau [sweet potato]. I also took six coconuts which I planted on the proposed site for a post (Kreiwar-r Mountain). I did not give them to the natives to plant as they have little high ground that the floods do not touch. I brought a small Monkey [youth] back with me to teach him pidgin...later he will be of great help in bringing his own people under control.

Sgd. E.D. Robinson a/District Officer.'

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The Yellow River post was established by PO Jim Hodgekiss in 1936. Acting DO of the Aitape District, J.K. McCarthy patrolled overland from Aitape to Yellow River in July 1936<sup>14</sup> and met Mr. Hodgekiss at Yellow River base camp. J.K. McCarthy describes the meeting:-

'He told us he had waited at his base camp for us for the last three weeks. His normal station was Ambunti and this base camp did not have an officer posted to it.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> This local logic proved to be correct as is shown in Sepik Book 4 Chapter 25 *The Yellow River Massacre 1956.* 

His arrival there hadn't been quite as peaceful as ours had been. He had turned up during a fullscale battle between the Mariyami [Mirijambi?] and the villages of the Sepik. Hodgekiss had simply announced that he intended to camp on their battle-ground and that he advised everyone to cease fire and go home. The warring sides watched Hodgekiss' party pitch their tents, then shrugged their shoulders and took his advice. Jim Hodgekiss was a splendid man among primitive natives, and it was easy to imagine him puffing on his pipe unconcernedly as he went about his business in the middle of the war. 15'

The proposed Yellow River post was not established in response to E.D. Robinson's recommendation. Oil Search Ltd had been pressing for years for permission to get into the uncontrolled territory accessible from there. It was necessary to have an experienced Government officer within reach of their activities and for this class of work there was no one superior to Jimmy Hodgekiss. His understanding of native thought and his acceptance of solitude and isolation were both absolute. Hodgekiss, in association with Oil Search Ltd., also opened Maimai and Abau [Green River] posts and airstrips in 1938. Of these remote stations only Green River was re-opened post-World War 2.

The Sydney Morning Herald -26/1/1933 on page 9 carried an extensive article which quoted from Mr. Robinson's Upper Sepik and Yellow River patrol report.

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Writer's Note: The following report is particularly interesting as it describes a patrol conducted by E.D. Robinson ADO and is addressed to the acting DO of the Sepik, who was none other than E.D. Robinson. This was a mechanism of getting a report into the system to be forwarded from District level to Territory of New Guinea headquarters in Rabaul. In this case it was an important report as it officially records the circumstances under which a native was shot and killed by the patrol as it defended itself from attack. It reads:-

Sub District Office Ambunti, Sepik District 9<sup>th</sup> March 1933

The acting District Officer, Sepik District

Subject:

Report of investigation re tribal fighting at Kuvanmas.

Reference:

Patrol Report A.7/1932-33

As a result of a report that natives of Kupagalion had raided the village of Kuvanmas, I visited this area during Patrol No. A. 7/1932-33.

Obtaining carriers from the main river I proceeded to Kuvanmas arriving on the 29<sup>th</sup> February 1933. It was my original intention to hold a Coroner's Inquest on the body of the woman who was killed during this raid, but although the natives gave me all the information and helped me in every possible way during the inquiry, they were very much averse to my taking out the body. As these natives are only under partial influence I refrained from exhuming the body and proceeded to Kupagalion on 20<sup>th</sup> February.

The village of Kupagalion is located on top of a mountain about 800 feet tall, we arrived at the foot of the mountain at 1.15 pm. We were first seen by two women who at once raised the alarm. Immediately a large body of men came running down the mountain towards us heavily armed with

spears, bows and arrows and carrying shields. They halted at a distance of about 60 yards from us. Several spears were thrown which landed in the middle of our party but did not hit anyone.

Through my interpreter I told them that we had not come to fight, and then continued to advance. A native who proved to be the leader and slightly in advance of the others quickly threw three spears one after the other, all of which would have wounded Constable Wari had he not quickly dodged aside. I told the police to refrain from firing and fired a single shot from my revolver over his head which had no deterrent effect. He was now about 20 yards from Constable Wari and myself and as he fitted an arrow to his bow with other natives close behind him, I instructed the police to fire one round at him.

**Writer's Note:** In a 1952 interview with author Colin Simpson, Mr. Robinson described this confrontation slightly differently:-

"I never did mind spears so much. Arrows you just can't see to dodge, but a spear you can see coming. I told my police not to fire. But we were dodging spears and then the arrows started coming and there was only one thing to do. I shot the leader dead – right through the heart.<sup>17</sup>"

As a result of the volley the man fell to the ground. Just at this time a woman with two children came upon the party from behind. I told the interpreter to tell the natives that we were on a friendly mission and sent the woman and children to join them. They had only retreated a short distance up the mountain and it was obvious that this action on our part surprised them. We then called for water for the wounded man who was hit in the upper right arm and right thigh, breaking the femur. This brought a quick response; the natives brought a long bamboo of water and put it in the middle of the road. We got this but it was too late for the man as he died very shortly after.

After a long parley between the interpreter and the natives, we at last succeeded in establishing friendly relations. We then explained that we had only fired in self-defence and with their permission we gave a demonstration of the power of the rifle upon one of their shields. Camp was made at this spot and during the remainder of the day over 20 men and youths visited us bringing coconuts, betel nut etc. as presents for which we paid in small trade.

The following day we visited the village and whilst we were examining the club house "House Tamboran", the men asked us to come outside as they wished to present their women folk. Between 20 and 30 women of all ages were standing there — all very friendly and not the least bit afraid. I then took the opportunity to explain to the natives that there must be no more fighting otherwise the Administration would take very severe action. They assured me that now they understood there would be no repetition and through the interpreter sent a peace message to Kuvanmas accompanied by suitable presents for the Luluai.

**Writer's note:** Although not mentioned in this report, Mr. Robinson's patrol must have conducted a murder investigation and made five arrests. As described in Chapter 34, in accordance with the death sentences passed in the Supreme Court, D.O. G.W.L. Townsend, P.O. Keogh and Medical Assistant Squires executed these five men by hanging them at Kuvenmas at 4pm on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1935. Mr. Robinson continues:-

We then left the village with a general feeling of goodwill and returned to where the Osprey was tied up, a distance of between two and three hours walk. On our arrival, we were much surprised to find that about 20 unarmed men and some women had followed us down. To these we gave numerous trade goods which were much appreciated by them.

I am quite satisfied with the result of this expedition as what might have turned into a very serious situation was averted with the loss of only one life, and friendly relations appear to have been established between Kuvanmas and Kupagalion. Under separate memorandum I am forwarding a recommendation for the appointment of a Luluai at Kupagalion.

E.D. Robinson.

Assistant District Officer'

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During the same patrol on 25<sup>th</sup> February Mr. Robinson was invited to a latmul initiation ceremony at Angriman village. Mr. Robinson wrote:-

'As it was a very great compliment, also an undoubted sign of good faith to be invited to their most important function, I decided to attend. 18'

Writer's Note: Mr. Robinson's ability with, and acceptance by, primitive people as described in Patrol Report A7/1932-33, in the writer's view, places him on a par with Ivan Champion and his relations with the Bolivip people - see Sepik Book 2 Chapters 30 and 31. Mr. Robinson gave author Colin Simpson the following advice, which accurately describes the writer's own experience in earning the respect and friendship with the Sepik leaders and the conduct of interviews with them in the 1970s.

'Firstly you must regard the native as a respectable human being. If you start thinking of him as "just another bloody kanaka", you're finished. Secondly, you've got to be patient. If you are getting a native to explain some custom to you, he will repeat himself time and again. If he sees you getting impatient at this repetition he will lose interest: he will see that he has no chance of telling the story his way. If it's a court case, and he is being charged with some crime, never lose your temper. You've got to be fair with him, and never let him down by making some promise you can't or you don't keep. You can generally reply on a native to keep his word to you on any matter that is important. And he sets great store by any promise you make to him<sup>19</sup>.

Mr. Robinson's excellent description of this initiation ceremony at Angriman appears in Sepik Book 4 Chapter 51 where the changes in Iatmul initiation through time are described by comparison of Iatmul initiation ceremonies conducted in 1933, 1961 and 1974.

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At some point between late February – at the end of his Ambuni patrol No A 7/1932-33, Mr Robinson was transferred to Aitape as the a/DO of that District. Plans were afoot to again merge the Aitape and Sepik Districts. On 19<sup>th</sup> July 1933 he handed over as District Officer to G.W.L."Kassa" Townsend, who had arrived in Aitape per the *Montoro* the day before.<sup>20</sup>

The merging of the Sepik and Aitape Districts in 1933 resulted in the existence of one less District, and therefore one less District Officer position. Mr. Robinson held the rank of Assistant District Officer/acting District Officer, whereas GWL Townsend had been confirmed in the rank of District Officer Grade 1 on 15<sup>th</sup> May 1931<sup>21</sup> – when serving in Manus. There was no doubt as to who would be the DO of the merged Sepik/Aitape Districts. Logic suggests that Mr. Robinson continued on at Aitape in the role of Deputy District Officer, but no documentation has been found to confirm this.

Townsend's diaries note the following concerning Mr. Robinson:-

- **2<sup>nd</sup> August 1933.** *To Seleo [Island]* on a matter [the nature of which was not disclosed] concerning Mr. Hoddinalt and his Chinese wife.
- **3rd August 1933** Robinson wants to see Cobb and Wood on law matters. [Cobb and Wood were each copra plantation owners -Karawop plantation west of Wewak and Drimboi plantation at Yakamul respectively- and both were also labour recruiters].
- 9<sup>th</sup> August 1933 Hodgekiss, Woodville [District Clerk] and Robinson to dinner. Robinson to try to complete annual report [1932-33] by getting Sepik figures.

[Writer's Note: The 1932-33 annual report did not include the Aitape District – the merging of Aitape and Sepik districts officially took effect in the 1933/34 financial year.]

# Sepik Robbie's Marriage The Sydney Morning Herald 23/11/1933 reported:

'Mr. Robinson met Miss Patterson, of Dorchester, Martin-road, Centennial Park<sup>4</sup>, while on leave. They were married in St. John's church Darlinghurst last Thursday [21/11/1933], by the Rev. Mr. Lucas and the bridegroom will have to return to the Sepik River today by the steamer MacDhui, leaving his bride behind him. Later when her husband is transferred to one of the permanent posts closer to Rabaul, where she will have the company of other white women during his periodic trips into the interior, Mrs. Robinson will join him.<sup>22</sup>

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Mr. Robinson apparently resumed duty at Aitape in early December 1933. Townsend's diary noted the following entries re Mr. Robinson:-

8<sup>th</sup> February 1934 Letter from Robinson – his patrol finished – he plans to finish about September [Does this mean resign his employment?]

**10**<sup>th</sup> **April 1934** *Robinson and Hepburn [Cadet Patrol Officer] collecting Island Tax* [presumably the Aitape Islands – Tumleo, Ali, Seleo and Angel].

17 April 1934 Robinson at Bombita [Dreikikir area south of the Torricelli Mountains]

5<sup>th</sup> June 1934 Robinson by 'Thetis' to Nigiar to make arrangements concerning a singsing. Then to Womsak keeping behind the main range [i.e. the Torricelli Mts.]

**In August 1934**, Mr. Robinson led Special Patrol Report No S.D. [Sepik District] No. 1/1934-35. It is described thus:-

Sub District Office. Wewak 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1934.

The District Officer Wewak.

## Special Patrol Report No S. D. 1/1934-35.

Area Patrolled Overland from Aitape through the Wapi area to the headwaters of the Yellow River, then down the Yellow River to the Sepik River. Thence per motor launch *Osprey* down the Sepik River to Tumbungu [Timbunke], thence overland from Tumbungu to Wewak. With reference to maps in this volume, the journey commences at Aitape on Map 3, crosses the Torricellis onto map 4, then traverses maps 2 down the Sepik River, before going overland across Map 1 to reach Wewak.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Robert Cruikshank a PO as well as being a nephew of "Miss Patterson" reports that the correct address was Robertson Road Moore Park.

<u>Objectives of the patrol</u> To inspect a reported gold field on Wini Creek. To explore Wini Creek to the south with the objective of proving it to be the headwaters of either the Yellow or the Sand River.

<u>Personnel</u> E.D. Robinson, ADO, Mr. E. Gallet of <u>Gallet Exploration Co of New Guinea</u>, two NCOs, seven constables, one Medical Orderly and 34 carriers.

**Duration** 7<sup>th</sup> July to 31<sup>st</sup> July 1934.

The prospecting of Mr. Gallet's area of interest on Wini Creek was conducted on 13<sup>th</sup> July Mr. Robinson reported:-

'...the box was put in and worked throughout the day. Bottom<sup>5</sup> was not found until 3.30pm. At 4.45pm the box was taken out and cleaned, this yielded about a pennyweight of good looking coarse gold. This has been forwarded by the District Officer to the Warden at Wau... It was considered this was not a payable proposition and the area was not declared a goldfield. Mr. Gallet decided to carry on with his prospecting activities in other parts of the creek.<sup>23</sup>'

The patrol followed the creek downstream until 18<sup>th</sup> when people from the village of Kelnom were met. One of the Kelnom men spoke Malay and was able to converse with Constable Wankra who also spoke Malay. The report continues:-

'[The Kelnom man] told us we were definitely on the Yellow River and pointed out the direction the Sand River was running. Also he told us about five months ago two Malays and a party of natives were in the area shooting Bird of Paradise. He was with them for two days. [The Bird of Paradise trade is described in detail in Sepik Book 2 – Chapter 7].

20<sup>th</sup> July...from here [a small kunai plain] we could see Kojabu<sup>6</sup> Mountain on the Sepik River. It is situated just south of the Yellow River [junction with the Sepik]. This greatly heartened the police and carriers who were doubtful of our success in finding the Sepik River; when I explained to them in 1932 I had made my camp at the foot of this mountain when waiting the arrival of Mr. Oakley and Mr. Eve [of OSL] on their overland patrol from Aitape, they were delighted...

23<sup>rd</sup> July...we arrived at the foot of Kojabu Mountain after crossing the Sepik in Mirijami canoes and made camp. Here the natives told us by signs that the kiap of the Sepik had gone up the Sepik River and would be back in four days.

24<sup>th</sup> July...Mr. Keogh returned from upstream on the Osprey at 3.30 pm and we proceeded downstream at 7.35 pm by bright moonlight and kept running all night.

25th July. Steamed all day and arrived Ambunti at 9 pm.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> July the *Osprey* brought Mr. Robinson's patrol to Timbunke from where they travelled overland to Wewak via the kunai plains of Shuembo [Suimba], Chimbian, Worligum [Waligum], Wamba, Yamungu, Japaraka, Baliwama [Paliama], and Passam. The grass plains gave way to forest at Japaraka. This overland exploration identified a direct route between Wewak to the Sepik at Timbunke. This route was used, in reverse, in February 1942 by PO J. Hodgekiss to establish No 2 supply base at Yamungu [Yamundo as it was spelt in 1942] as DO Jones made evacuation preparations on behalf of the civilians awaiting the Japanese invasion – see Sepik Book 3 Chapter 7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> "Bottom" in this context refers to bedrock. Alluvial gold, because of its density, settles through the gravel and accumulates on the "bottom".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Kojabu was the site of Dr. Behrmann's 1913 camp and that of Dr. Thurnwald in 1914-15. It was also a camp site used by the Moss Troops between September and December 1943.

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Townsend's personal diaries make the following additional mentions of Mr. Robinson:-

8<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> February 1935. Messrs Townsend, Robinson and Hepburn [Cadet] involved in a store stocktake.

22<sup>nd</sup> March 1935 Thetis to Aitape, Robinson, Weldon & McCarthy to relieve Kyle

**25**<sup>th</sup> **March 1935** Now proposed Oakley relieves me – coming in July – and then Robinson goes then – July – Rigby relieves Robinson

Sometime in 1936/7<sup>24</sup> [There is no record that he actually returned from his leave which commenced in July 1935] Mr Robinson resigned from the Administration. He returned to Sydney and he took over the management of "Nell's" mother's Piccadilly Hotel in Kings Cross Sydney. After the declaration of war in Europe, Mr. Robinson volunteered for the CMF [Citizen Military Force] at Burwood, Sydney on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 1941 and was given the Service No. N36787. When he was accepted into the AIF for overseas service in 1942, he was assigned a different regimental number - NX 102725. He served in the No 4 Salvage Unit until 13<sup>th</sup> July 1942.<sup>25</sup>

The Sydney Morning Herald on the 10/9/1942 announced the death of Mrs Robinson:-

ROBINSON – September 9, [1942] in a private hospital in Darlinghurst, Ellen Madelaine Robinson, dearly beloved wife of Eric Douglas and dear daughter of Mrs H.M. Patterson and dear sister of John, aged 40 years.

Mr. Robinson served in the AIF from 14<sup>th</sup> July 1942 until 8<sup>th</sup> April 1946. The following section is not intended to describe his war service<sup>7</sup> as it was not related to Sepik history, rather to reflect the personality of Sepik 'Wobbie'. Author Eric Feldt takes up the story:-

"Wobbie", Captain E.D. Robinson AIF...veteran of the last war, and assistant district officer who had left New Guinea to keep a pub in Sydney, had gone to Milne Bay in time for the battle...He had fair hair, now 'gwey', blue innocent eyes and the expression of a child who had never yet seen any evil in the world, a paragon of all the forgivable vices. 26

Feldt continues – with reference to the Bougainville campaign :-

'Wobbie' and Jack Read were old friends who had served together on the Sepik years before. Some months previously when writing to Read, I had mentioned that 'Wobbie' had been in the Battle of Milne Bay 'but I didn't know how the old bastard had got into a combat unit at his age'. The letter was still in Read's camp and 'Wobbie' duly read it. He protested in terms of shocked horror. How could I, how dare I, say such a thing. It was intolerable, and a signal should be sent at once. Not about the terms of endearment, which he did not mind in the least, but the word 'old.'<sup>27</sup>

Feld continues:-

To cover the Torokina landing, the Coast Watchers prepared three parties... 'Wobbie' Robinson's was one. He had been in Sydney and had more than sampled the ambrosia there. He proclaimed that he was fit as a fiddle, actually the lush pastures had made him more nearly resemble a 'cello. There was some query whether, at his age, it would be fair to ask him to undertake another

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> For those interested in his war service, Mr. Robinson's "Report on Coast Watching 1943-1945" <sup>7</sup> makes excellent reading.

trip so soon, but 'Wobbie' became so indignant that the subject was hastily dropped and he was designated as the leader of the northern party on Bougainville.<sup>28</sup>

'Wobbie', who had been a medical assistant once, was kept busy giving injections of N.A.B. All natives have yaws<sup>8</sup>, and N.A.B. is the recognized specific and one of the few medicines in which the natives really have faith. Having been without treatment for two years, the natives were suffering badly and several hundred injections were given. For this the natives were really grateful.<sup>29</sup>

'Wobbie', after a severe bout of malaria, bloomed again, and went to New Britain some months later. 'Robbie,' returned from Torokina, was found to be suffering from a vitamin deficiency, and was ordered to eat lettuce and drink beer. "That young doctor will go a long way in his pwofession" said 'Robbie' 30'

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Captain Robinson won the Military Cross for his work on Bougainville. The citation reads :-

'Was in command of an Allied Intelligence Bureau party which landed at Sipai Mission, West Coast of Bougainville Island, on the night of  $27^{th}$  October, 1943. After establishing an observation post, he set up W/T communications with Lunga. He also organised a network of scouts covering enemy positions at Soreken, Buka, Numa Numa, Teopasino from which he secured valuable Intelligence; this contributed largely to the successful landing at Torokina.

Attacked by strong enemy forces at various times, Capt. Robinson was forced to keep his O.P. [observation post] mobile, yet his reporting of enemy air and warship movements enabled allied fighters and bombers to intercept and prevent enemy movement aimed at smashing our shipping at Torokina. By great courage and expert leadership, this officer maintained his observation post until 28<sup>th</sup> February, 1944, when he was instructed to withdraw elsewhere.'

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Mr. Robinson was in the Torokina area on 25<sup>th</sup> May 1945, and on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1945 he took over the leadership of Lieutenant K.W.T Bridge's party after the lieutenant became ill and was evacuated. When Lt. Bridge returned to duty, Captain Robinson handed over to him, and on 10<sup>th</sup> July 1945 he left Bougainville by plane to take up duty at Finschhafen [we meet K.W.T.Bridge again in 1947 in Sepik Book 4 Chapter 3, as ADO of the Maprik sub district]. On 21<sup>st</sup> August 1945 Captain Robinson 'returned to Australia from service in New Guinea' and on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1945 he was promoted to the rank of Major<sup>31</sup>.

A medical examination conducted on 28<sup>th</sup> February 1946 gave Major Robinson who was then aged 48, a classification of B2.<sup>32</sup> A B2 rating classifies a person as medically fit for sedentary duties only. Mr. Robinson was demobilised from military service on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1946.

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During 1945 he married Marjorie Westmoreland of Melbourne. <sup>33</sup> When released from AIF service on 8<sup>th</sup> April 1946, his love of the Sepik saw he and Marjorie retired to Angoram, where he opened a trade store and became a labour recruiter. Angoram Administration monthly reports of the period noted the following:-

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> This appears to be an over-statement.

<u>Commerce</u> 'Mr. E.D. Robinson recruiting on behalf of the Production Control Board obtained approximately 40 recruits from the upper river for work in Rabaul. These are at present being employed casually pending the arrival of transport to take them to New Britain. If Mr. Robinson continues to get recruits, as he probably will, it is expected that P.C.B. will provide a regular service to Angoram and Marienberg. This might provide the Administration with an extra method of shipping supplies to Angoram.<sup>34</sup>

About five years later, in early 1952, the Ambunti sub district experienced two unfortunate incidents which saw Mr. Robinson and Marjorie posted there. The incidents involved the deportation of Ambunti Patrol Officers Cahill and Gilbert and incarceration of Medical Assistant Creighton in Australia on rape charges. Also there was the attack by Swagup warriors on the patrol of Messrs. Doolan and Orwin. See Sepik Book 4 Chapter 9. Author Colin Simpson wrote:-

'He [Mr. Robinson] was in charge of Ambunti station 20 years before I met him there — temporarily in charge again. He had returned after 10 years away from District Services, to the quiet job of a Government clerk. Then, a month before I got there, an unsavoury staff incident saw the Patrol Officer removed, and Robbie was sent up to "hold the fort". 35'

The last mention of Mr. Robinson in the Sepik files appears in the Ambunti monthly report of September 1953 in which he is listed as the Clerk in Ambunti sub district office with J.W. Macgregor [son of prospector WA Macgregor] as the patrol officer. Mr. Robinson divorced Marjorie<sup>36</sup> who married Freddy Eichorn [who features throughout Sepik Book 3 *The Sepik at War*].

Rod Nobel, a Cadet Patrol Officer at Angoram in 1954 remembers Mr Robinson in retirement as a thorough gentleman<sup>37</sup>. Mr. Robinson died in Sydney in 1961.<sup>38</sup>

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'Sepik Robbie' was clearly a down to earth, endearing character with a wry sense of humour. Like Jim Hodgekiss and Ivan Champion, his ability to understand and gain the respect of primitive people earned him the reputation as one of the all-time great "Kiaps."

A question lingered in the writer's mind for some time as to why in the immediate post war period, Sepik Robbie was not called upon to play a greater role in the Sepik. Men of experience were in such short supply at that time that prospector Bill Macgregor was appointed for some time as a Patrol Officer. Perhaps Robbie simply wasn't interested in resuming his career with the new Administration.

The post war administration looked to younger men of the day – Mr. H.R. Niall, the first post war District Officer had a Departmental Seniority date of 19/7/1927<sup>39</sup>. The "old hands" were called in only when short term emergencies required them to hold the fort. For instance, Hodgekiss served in Vanimo following the 1949 suicide of OIC. Sims, and Robinson took over at Ambunti in 1952 after the 'unsavoury incidents' involving Messrs. Cahill, Gilbert and Creighton. The postings and duties required of both senior men reflected their depths of experience, while being sedentary in nature as befitted respected elders of the kiap tradition.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> See Sepik 4 Chapter 6.

# **End Notes Chapter 39**

- 1. Reported Gold find Wini Creek C.Gough
- 2. Dredging claims pegged by E.Gallet

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Simpson C. *Islands of Men.* Angus & Robertson 1955. Page 50

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Simpson C. 1955 Page 50.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Mr. Christian was interviewed in Minj by the writer on 6/4/1974 – Bragge Sepik Research Vol No 19 page 534

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Simpson C. 1955 Page 50.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> McCarthy J.K. Patrol Into Yesterday . F.W.Cheshire publishing 1963 Page 44

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Pacific Manuscripts Bureau issue No 35 – April-June 1974 lists 11 Ambunti patrol reports by spanning the period 19<sup>th</sup> October 1927 to 13<sup>th</sup> February 1929. P14-15. PMB 602 (4)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> McCarthy 1963 p 46-48

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> McCarthy 1963 p 46

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> McCarthy 1963 p 76

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Annual Report of the Sepik District 1930-31 page 1

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Pacific Manuscripts Bureau item 1309 NG patrol reports and related documents 1921-1940

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Pacific Manuscripts Bureau [PAMBU] issue No 35 page 16 PMB 616 (1)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> C. Simpson - PNG Visit part 6 - Sepik Robbie - page 4

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> PAMBU no 35 Page 14

<sup>15</sup> J.K. McCarthy 1963 - page 163

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> G.W.L. Townsend - District Officer, 1968 page 224

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Simpson C. 1955 Page 55

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Robinson E.D. Anthropological Notes – Initiation ceremony – Patrol Report A.7/1932-33 of 9<sup>th</sup> March 1933

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Simpson C. 1955 Page 51-2

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> G.W.L. Townend's personal 1933 diary.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> G.W.L. Townend's personal 1933 diary – a summary chronology of Townsend's career

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Sydney Morning Herald 23/11/1933 Page 12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Robinson E.D. letter of 12<sup>th</sup> August 1934 from Sub District Office Aitape to Secretary for Lands and Mines Rabaul

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Simpson C. 1955 Page 50

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Personal communication with Robert Cruikshank, who has Mr. Robinson's service record

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Feldt E. *The Coast Watchers* – Oxford University Press 1946 page 213

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Feldt 1946 p 273

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Feldt 1946 p 300-301

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Feldt 1946 p 307

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Feldt 1946 p 313

<sup>31</sup> NAA reference NX102726

<sup>32</sup> NAA reference NX102726

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Simpson C. 1955 Page 51.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Ormsby R. G. Angoram monthly report January 1947.

<sup>35</sup> Simpson C. 1955 Page 50.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Personal communication with Robert Cruikshank.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Personal communication with Rod Noble in 2016/17

<sup>38</sup> David Wall 6/5/2009

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Permanent staff listing as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 1952. "The Stud Book" page 1

### Sepik 2 Chapter 40. Sepik Plains Exploration.

The writer was fortunate enough to meet and interview Kassa Townsend's widow in 1974. Mrs Townsend gave me Kassa's diaries for the years 1927 – 1944 and a copy of a manuscript he wrote, which is entitled "Kassa's Story of New Guinea." Six years after his death in 1962, Judy Tudor wrote "District Officer", based primarily on what Kassa wrote in his manuscript.

In writing this chapter I relied heavily upon both the manuscript, which I quoted in *Italics*, and the diary's cryptic comments and all-important dates. In so doing I found conflicts between what the manuscript and the diary reported. As the diary was presumably written on the days in question, I accepted its accuracy over that of the manuscript and of Judy Tudor's "District Officer" to as accurately as possible, document the exploration pf the Sepik Plains.

Upon his posting back to Aitape in July 1933 Mr. Townsend became acquainted with Oil Search Limited staff members, who were stationed at Matapau. Mr Townsend takes up the story:

It was the maps that Oil Search were plotting that captured my interest. The map of the district I was working on was based upon the annual report map. At a scale of 1: 2,483,000...an area of 30,000 square miles, which could be covered with the palm of my hand. If I was to patrol and explore some of this area, I would need a good base map...I was not striving for absolute accuracy...after all, my headquarters at Aitape, according to a ship's captain, were twenty miles further out to sea than shown on the chart...

In discussion with officials of Oil Search Ltd., Messrs Montgomery, and Stanley, the geologist and Eve, the surveyor, we worked out a scheme which I then submitted to the Administrator in Rabaul. Briefly...I would lead the patrol...the Administration would supply the police and carriers and...sufficient rice for the journey...we would take a Government Native Medical Orderly. Oil Search would supply a surveyor, whose work in the form of a plane-table survey, would be made available later to the Administration...Oil Search was to supply all European rations...



Our route, on the map, would be something like an "M", the two feet of the letter resting on the coast at Wewak and Aitape. From Wewak we would go to the river, come back to Bainyik...retrace our steps to the river at a point some miles upstream from our previous point of departure and then make the long leg to Aitape...for over two months we would be out of communication entirely.\(^1\)

The patrol planned to use horses for four reasons:

- 1. Both Townsend and Eve preferred to ride than walk.
- 2. To astound the native people, giving them something other than white intruders to think about.
- 3. The ability to see further on horseback in open grasslands
- 4. To demonstrate why paths between villages should be improved.

Mr. Townsend rode his horse, called *Mango* from Aitape to Wewak, where the second horse, named *Chestnut*, was acquired. Harry Eve was already in Wewak. Also waiting in Wewak was Sergeant of Police Baugi, of whom Mr. Townsend noted:

Sergeant Baugi, a Sissano, came in from Angoram...Baugi had joined the police force shortly after the Australian occupation of New Guinea in 1914, and had even served as a Corporal on Nauru Island, at a time when New Guinea labourers were indentured there for the phosphate mines. He was a typical "old soldier", experienced, wily, shrewd, and utterly without fear. If he had one failing...Baugi had a wife adjacent to every government station...<sup>2</sup>

**P.S.** After the allied landing at Aitape ex-Sergeant-Major Baugi reported for duty and was taken on as a Special Constable in May 1944. Between May and July 1944 special constables led by Baugi accounted for 65 Japanese stragglers...Baugi personally accounted for 13 of the enemy. He was awarded the Loyal Service Medal on 6<sup>th</sup> November 1944.<sup>3</sup>

# THE FIRST LEG OF THE LETTER "M". Wewak to the Sepik River at Marui.

10<sup>th</sup> February 1934. After a late start, the patrol left Wewak and got only as far as Sauri the first night. Sauri village is high on the Prince Alexander Mountains and overlooking Wewak township, Muschu and Kairiru Islands and the Bismarck Sea. In early 1942 Sauri was the fall-back position chosen by the then District Officer Jones, when Wewak was abandoned as the Japanese approached.

11<sup>th</sup> February 1934<sup>4</sup> In terms of the Sepik 2 manuscript maps, the patrol moved south west, climbing to the top of the Prince Alexander Mountains, then proceeding south west from map 1 to map 2 onto the Sepik Plains east of Yangoru. Mr. Townsend continues:

Travelling easily...by way of Ambarauri, Numoikum and Paparam villages, we arrived at Tangori<sup>1</sup>, to find quite a concourse awaiting us. Volunteers for carriers. Luluais...men who wanted to travel in new country under the shield of Government [but who carried their weapons just in case.]

Impossible to ride horses [at times], but can be led.<sup>5</sup> ...At one place we dropped into a gully, up the far side of which there was no way to scramble. We solved this difficulty by passing long lengths of lawyer cane under the horse's belly, passing both ends to the natives on the top of the bank and hauling the animal up bodily.

During the day it was intensely hot travelling through the grass and the bush was welcome to all but Eve. The grassland gave him nice long shots with his instrument, but the bush his sightings were reduced to a few yards; and the constant set up and levelling of the plane-table became tiresome...<sup>6</sup>

Piam is wrongly situated on existing maps... Neither Mango nor Chestnut will eat this grass [kunai]. At 4.30 pm pitched tents and erected houses for boys. Bought yams and bananas with razors and matches. Woman are clothed, men have leaf coverings. Everyone is very frightened of the horses. The people here knew Webieli [Tultul] of Parembei.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Tangori is a Boiken speaking community, south of the crest of the Prince Alexander Mountains, south west of Wewak and north east of Yangoru.

12<sup>th</sup> February 1934. There was a crowd of natives from Sasoiya and other places who were curious. The patrol left Tangori heading towards Sasoiya, but then turned south to Niumindogum. The horses were sent on a different route, via Piam, which proved to be a better route.

13<sup>th</sup> February 1934. To Haramo village – traversing small areas of Kunai grass and a great deal of bush country. Then on to four houses of the Haripmor with the main Haripmor village a half beyond, across kunai – 14 houses – 1<sup>st</sup> section Ligniwur [hamlet], 2<sup>nd</sup> Section Kasimba [hamlet], third section Wihama [hamlet of 7 houses], 4<sup>th</sup> section Peliwuk...Rode horses all the way

14th February 1934. Today the patrol entered unknown country. Gravel soil.

We were now traversing large undulating grass plain...From the horse's back, where I sat comfortably shaded by my umbrella, I could see ridge after ridge falling to the south. Wind rippled the grass like waves and drifting cloud shadows kept us company.

The changing light and my being in a half dose, made me unaware of what was happening until my horse suddenly stopped. I opened my eyes to see and then hear a Constable bring his right hand to the stock of his shouldered rifle in a smacking salute.

"Kiap" he said "the sun is dying." ... I saw that he was shivering. Following the direction of his outstretched hand, I saw the sun in eclipse. The entire [carrier] line had halted and turned to look back at me. I quickly told the constable to call out for the trek to resume and that there was nothing to be frightened of, as this was just a funny little habit the sun had of hiding now and then, and that soon it would be clear. The constable did as he was bid; but his tone of voice made it clear that he was merely repeating what he was told and that did not necessarily reflect his own opinion. Behind me I heard my cook tell someone that it was always like this in the grass country, as the sorcerers living here were very powerful.

About a half an hour later, on a ridge which ran athwart our path, we saw some ten natives...busily waving coloured cloth...Baugi said "they want to be friends with the White Man" he told me "so they are waving something that you will recognise. It is possible that they have a line of spearmen hiding under the ridge; but I doubt it. If they have," he added with a grin, "You will see them first from up there on the horse."

As we drew near the waiting natives moved away some 20 yards on either side of the track and half turned their backs. "It's the horse" said Baugi "they are frightened of it." ... One of the carriers we had brought with us could understand the language so we appointed him interpreter. We were told that the path we were following...led to Kiniambu, which lay on either side of a stream.

The track...led between two houses built of sago leaf with their sides sloping down to the ground. They were about 30 feet long<sup>2</sup>...As we wound between houses and clumps of trees, natives could be heard calling on all sides, but only occasional glimpses of them could be had. We finally came into the usual clearing before the "House Tamboran" or men's house...The "House Tamboran" was some 40 by 80 feet long and built some eight to ten feet off the ground. Beneath were the slit gongs made from tree trunks and five to six feet in length and up to three feet in diameter. The slit was two inches in width and ran to within six inches of each end. Each gong had been hollowed out by fire controlled by blowpipe and water. The sticks with which the gongs were thumped, on each side and near the slit, were about four feet long and two to three inches in diameter... We were to hear these gongs when six miles away the following day.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> This style of house is typical of the Wosera and Abelam area. A photo of such houses appears in Sepik 4 Chapter 47

I remained on Mango. As from the saddle I had a better view of the surroundings, and we were still uncertain of our reception. There was tremendous Excitement on all sides and faces peered at us from the bush and from under and behind houses... Mango became restive and made a loud complaint. At once there was absolute silence, and then absolute bedlam from the hidden villagers. Ten minutes later the first two bold men came from hiding carrying tanget [croton] leaves as a sign of peace. Baugi talked to them, giving them knives and tobacco and with signs convinced them of our friendliness.

Five minutes later most of the men had come out into the open...Judging that all would now go merrily, I swung down from the horse. With loud cries of amazement, those nearest me shrank back and many of the women again went into hiding...I realised that many of the natives, never having seen either a European or an animal larger than a pig, were unable to distinguish between the animal and myself and consequently, had been dismayed when I had "taken myself to pieces" before their eyes.

Baugi had the two animals led around the square and myself mounted and dismounted several times, much to the wonderment, and relief of the villagers.

Within half an hour the people were mixing freely with the police and carriers and then Baugi distributed gifts in exchange for the fruit and vegetables which had been given us. One small boy howled unmercifully when Mango snatched spinach from his arms before Baugi got around to him, but his tears dried quickly when he was presented with a small loincloth of red print. He at once bolted off with it, lest Mango take that too.

Eve and I had our meal in the square by the light of our hurricane lamps, surrounded by dozens of natives who watched with absorption our consumption of every mouthful. Our ending of the meal by drinking steaming "hot water" caused much amusement...

"Here are a couple of new graves under the House Tamboran'. Eve told me, then added "Had they been newer it would not have mattered."

The New Guinea Administration Regulations forbade the burial of bodies in the village, but on this occasion on my first visit to a community, it would only be politic to point out that such a practice was undesirable for reasons of health; and that as we felt rather strongly about it, we would be unable to accept the hospitality offer that we should use the House Tamboran...I could rely on Baugi to mention the graves when talking to the village men

Eve and I chatted for a time and then made ready for bed. This was what many of the men had been waiting for...The burning question was whether we were as other men under our coverings. Did we perhaps have tails?<sup>7</sup>

Townsend diary entry 14<sup>th</sup> Feb continued. The eclipse caused much talk but no consternation locally. The stream at Kiniambu was said to flow to Nangusup [Nogosop] and on to Yentjan [Yentchan] after breaking into small streams. Road through the grass, many wet patches and we crossed two patches of bush. Horses bogged, rested for a while...Wonderful view of the coastal range. Here Mr Townsend recorded half a page of local language. A check of Laycock's Classification of Sepik Languages reveals that Kiniambu is a Boiken language, and so is presumably located in the Yangoru District.

15<sup>th</sup> February 1934. We travelled through bushland to a small place called Mikin, which the people themselves call Mogabu, where the patrol was met by the Luluai and Tultul of Pungaimbit. Then on to Kumbingai [Kumbiwingei], Naugotimbit [Nogotimbi], Kausimbi, Numungwa [Namongoa]

Writer's note No 1 the last four named villages are familiar having been patrolled by the writer in the Ambunti District's Sepik Plains Division. Laycock lists all four as being of the Sawos language group. Mr. Townsend continues:

[We came to] ... a patch of sago swamp. It was only 50 yards through, but there were several patches which were five or six feet deep, which neither the carriers with their poles and boxes, not the horses, could negotiate. An added difficulty was that the track lay between close growing palms, all with their savage thorns covering the trunks and leaves [Writer's note – sago thorns grow on the under-side of the sago fronds.]

A foundation of criss-crossed sago fronds – thorns down was laid...Mango followed the straight narrow break exactly. The ...mare commenced to sink out of sight...her head stretched a foot above the watery bog...A Constable and a carrier stripped off their clothes and slipped into the hole on either side of the mare, dragging cane with them. Three canes were passed under the mare and then began the task of lifting her out... [once out] she lay unmoving, even when being washed and scraped. After half an hour she was whipped to her feet, but remained groggy for the rest of the day.

That afternoon we got as far as Aulimbit, a village in touch with the Sepik River.

16<sup>th</sup> February 1934. To Kausimbi [Tultul Ambatungwi], through old Kumbingai...Two "finishtime" labourers met us while most people ran away. On to Slei No 2.

Aulimbit lined [village census] at Slei on 9/6/1932 [Reed]. First visit [presumably to Aulimbit] by a/Patrol Officer Reed on 19/11/1932 from Kumbuntu [This village in not known to the writer, neither is it listed by Laycock.] Patrol Ambunti No 6/32-33.

17<sup>th</sup> February 1934. Left Slei No 2 about 8 am and travelled on a good road to Numumgoa [Namangoa]. This was the place I visited in 1925 owing to their killing of Tolembei [Torembei]. Medical Assistant Stan Christian was with me – chased and chased without result. They [the 1934 guides] wanted to take us to Chaos³, but we determined upon Numumgoa. There we lunched. We were misdirected by a Numumgoa guide who led us in a circle. We finally camped on the grass between Yanget and Wereman.

18<sup>th</sup> February 1934. Broke camp good track to Burui...towards Bunjim [Bensim] at first, then to within 200 yards of Burui itself. Met police constable Avingameri and three Jama men. Sent the Jamas back for heads.

[As indicated in Chapter 31, Jama and Sengo warriors had conducted a headhunting raid against a Wosera market party. On 26<sup>th</sup> September 1933, Mr Townsend examined the site where the ambush had taken place. Mr. Townsend's personal diaries indicate that on 11<sup>th</sup> April 1934 the Supreme Court in Rabaul condemned one Jama man and six Sengo men to death. His diary describes his patrol spanning 15<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> May 1934 to conduct the executions.]

The patrol arrived at Marui mission on the Sepik where they were met by Bother Joachim and one other. Bathed and slept.

Some years later [1936], when gold had been found at Maprik, and I had commenced the Marui-Maprik motor road, Burui was to be the police post to replace Ambunti.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> "Chaos" may mean "Sawos" the language of the Sepik Plains. I understood that it indicated Torembei, or one of the several Torembei villages.

# TIME AWAY FROM THE PATROL ON OTHER DUTIES.

- 19<sup>th</sup> February 1934. Jerry Keogh, ADO Ambunti had his launch Osprey with him, which was just as well for he told me there were matters at Ambunti, some 30 miles upstream and at Angoram, 200 miles downstream, which needed my attention. In fact, the break suits us well. Eve wanted to spend a few days "tying in" to Behrmann's map of the Sepik. Moved to Yambunumbu [opposite Marui] in the afternoon.
- 20th February 1934. A day spent mapping and visiting the Screw [Amagu] River.
- 21st February 1934. Left at 9.00 am, impossible to shift earlier. Met Overall [a trader based in Angoram]. Keogh and I steamed downstream at 10 knots, keeping in the current...when darkness fell we drifted in company with floating logs and islands of grass. At Angoram we met [Reg] Beckett [Government clerk and storeman at Ambunti] who was recruiting in the "Boina" and [Tom] Yoemans who was prospecting for Bulolo Co. [Bulolo Gold Dredging]
- **22<sup>nd</sup> February 1934.** Arrived Angoram 8.00 am. Inspected housing. Inspected police and rifles, one very dirty Bloxham's neglect. [Bloxham had been OIC in Marienberg and had transferred to Angoram when that station re-opened and Marienberg closed as a Government Station.] Instructed Bloxhan to get more stone and sand for the [water] tank. It seemed that buildings were still in the process of being moved from Marienberg.
- **23<sup>rd</sup> February 1934.** At 5.00 am returned up stream. We turned into the Korosameri River, where Keogh had recently had some success in getting back some heads from Kabriman village. We inspected Yesambit [Yesimbit] and Tongwinbit villages and both assured us they had no head hunting expeditions planned for this season. As one old man complained "How can we with you people popping in all the time..."
- 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> February 1934. Conducted census. Reached the Sepik at noon. Ambunti at 2 am, then upstream at 9am. Camped a mile short of Kubkai [Kubkain]. Went with them to Wogamush.
- **26**<sup>th</sup> **February 1934.** Upstream to Zenap [Chenapian] very friendly. This was where Oakley [ADO Aitape] and Eve got to [this presumably refers to an Aitape patrol which reached the Sepik.] Down to Kubkai and Wogamush, arriving Ambunti 11 pm.
- **27**<sup>th</sup> **February 1934.** Conducted an inquest on a murderer who was shot whilst escaping. Mr Townsend's inspection indicated that he considered Jerry Keogh to be slack in his office work.
- 28<sup>th</sup> February 1934. Picked up Father De Bruyn, who wished to accompany me to Maprik. We proceeded downstream, then overland and slept at Burui.

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## THE SHORT SECOND LEG OF THE "M" Sepik River at Marui north to Bainyik

1<sup>st</sup> March 1934. As Eve and I intended to go as far as Bainyik only – he had to tie on to a previous trip [conducted by Geologist G.A.V.Stanley] to there from the coast – we expected to be back to the Sepik in about a week...A dozen of Keogh's police should also go with us, giving them knowledge of the country in which they may have to work.

Father De Bruyn rode the mare when we moved off, passing through Jama and Wosera... We camped in the open just short of Wosera... about an hour later, a torchlight procession could be seen and heard as it made its way towards us... On arrival they were seen to be carrying three pigs and quantities of native foodstuffs. For each pig, we made a gift of a small axe, and distributed mirrors, beads, cloth and salt for the foodstuffs. Some hours passed while the pigs were killed, cooked and

distributed, and it must have been midnight before our new friends departed, with our promise to visit them on the morrow.

**2nd March 1934.** The village was large and attractive, being broomed clear and having crotons and other painted leaf shrubs planted around the houses. Here too, was the first House Tamboran which departed from the River style of being built well off the ground. This one reminded me of a giraffe sitting down propped up on its fore-legs. The walls, the body of the animal as it were, the long ridge pole – made of sections lashed together and rising to a height of 40 feet – was the backbone of the animal from head to tail. The "neck" was the tall false front...gaily painted with figures of men women and animals. Ornamental tassels and chains of wickerwork hung and swung in the breeze.

3<sup>rd</sup> March 1934. ... Soon we got to the Screw River and followed it upstream for the rest of the day, meeting the Mingo<sup>4</sup> people but not entering their villages. Patrol camped within sight of Bainyik.

**4th March 1934.** Left horses and most of the gear in camp. At Bainyik in an hour, where Eve "tied-on" to within 200 feet of G.A.V.Stanley's survey from the beach. Leaving Father De Bruyn, we commenced our return. Some evidence that recruiters Cobb and Corrigan have been here – several men claim to have worked at Muschu Island.

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## THE SHORT THIRD LEG OF THE "M" Bainyik to the Sepik/Screw River junction

5<sup>th</sup> March 1934. The route taken was a new road to Yambino and Wodjula<sup>5</sup>...people very timid. Carriers were guided to Mainja [Manja]. Camped by a small stream, three miles short of Jama. The old Luluai is very friendly. His meri bringing sago and pitpit fritters. I ate a little to show how good it was. She was delighted with salt [gift/payment].

6<sup>th</sup> March 1934. To Jama, then to Yamini, which is part of Mainja. Lunched and then on to Sengo. All the way to Sengo we found the road much improved, though some of the log crossings were more ornamental than useful.

Sengo village, we had defences of swamp and palisades. The swamp had been bridged, but even for the horses they had not been willing to enlarge the small entry hole in the main gate defence. The villagers came out through the hole to see the horses and we went in through it to see the village. I remarked that it was very nice and clean and a warrior with me said that if they did not keep it like that they would all be sick. I think that was the first time I had ever heard a villager say anything like that; giving a health reason for cleanliness.

Sent Sergeant Maru back [presumably to Marui and on to Ambunti?] His legs are quite gone.

Writer's note: At Sengo, we have the last mention of the horses and assume they were taken by handlers back to Marui mission station. Confirmation in diary entry of 10<sup>th</sup> March below.

7<sup>th</sup> March 1934. At Sengo until lunch. There being no road to Kaiuk, to Japandai, where slept. [NB Unpublished narrative indicates the patrol overnighted in Avatip. Japandai is assumed to be correct.]

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## THE FOURTH LEG OF THE "M" Sepik Screw River junction to Aitape

 $8^{th}$  March 1934. At 4.00 am to Avatip – breakfast – Eve was to commence his survey to Avatip from the junction of the Screw with the Sepik. Canoes from Avatip took us to [and up] the Screw. Logs and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Mingo is not a name known to the writer, nor does it appear on Laycock's list

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Neither village name appears on Laycock's list

swift currents prevented us going [beyond] a little further than the old village site of Kaiuk. We went ashore where we were told the track to Bandongai [Bangwingei] commenced.

Two Kaiuk natives with us. Camped near the edge of the Bandongai road. Mosquitoes which had been bad earlier in the day were now scarce, but leaches were bad. Goura Pigeons and a Tree Kangaroo indicated that game was plentiful.

9th March 1934. Four canoe loads of food [from Avatip] arrived during the night. Police and ten Avatip line cutters at work. The road is fairly open, but with a fair amount of kanda [cane]. Met Kambek<sup>6</sup> people several times on lagoons and at other times. Passed the camp sites of earlier patrols to Bandongai, which left from Avatip. Slept in the bush at the junction of two rivers. Kambek half a mile ahead. I congratulated myself on leaving the horse at Marui with the mission fathers. He would never have gotten through this country without tremendous delay.

10<sup>th</sup> March 1934. Came up to Kambek and crossed above the junction and between the forks for some time [Writer's note. Presumably the Yimmi/Screw junction near Biananumbu]. Lunched at a billabong. Old Bandongai is in two sections and has not been occupied since Taylor's visit...

Writer's note: Jim Taylor took over from Sepik Robbie and was at Ambunti from July - Dec. 1931.

Moved on to four houses behind heaped fallen limbs with a typical banis [enclosure] gate. Bought a little sago before moving on half a mile to cross a stream and make camp. The Luluai turned up. Bush mocca [bites] around each ankle and waist – treated with iodine.

11<sup>th</sup> March 1934. Moved to old Ambunkina [Ambuken] but heavy rain held us up. Lost half a day.

12<sup>th</sup> March 1934. To Ambunkina. Old place re-occupied since abandonment of place when raided by Taylor. [The Ambunti files have no record of what this action by Taylor was about.]

Arrived at 10.00 am but could obtain no information on roads. Sent two police out with Eve's boys to scout. They came back at 4.30 pm to retort the only road was to Tongwinjamb. These people use pig skin shields. They also use plank [wooden] shields.

The Tultul of Avatip spoke with the Kaiuk men, who can also speak the local language. Old men are anxious to know if we have come to fight. The women remain in the houses and are without clothing. People were frightened of electric torches. They deny there are any roads. The water here is filthy - had one cup of tea, but could not face more.



Of the village men, some had unusual keloids around nipples and navel as shown above.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Kambek is not a name known to the writer, nor does it appear on Laycock's list

13<sup>th</sup> March 1934. Started off on a road to the east to get back to the Yimi River. Eve went first, while I started the cargo, meanwhile, Eve found a new road to the north, which he followed. Then the village men appeared with spears; their enemies are the Masalaga [Kwanga speakers] of Apamigo, Apeigu, Bogamasi, Kumalagor and Amudjagwa ahead on this road.

Lunched in a wood and sent back extra carriers with Constable Mouse, also all villagers except three who wanted to come. Continued on and finally camped, not far short of village. The three accompanying men then went back. Ambunti mountain was visible to the south and Sapau behind Chinnipelli was visible to the north.

We had no interpreters for this country. Though we had gathered it was inhabited by the Masalaga, who were said to be very bad folk.

14<sup>th</sup> March 1934. We had a good start, walking through kunai for a mile and then into bush. Near midday we were heard and, we in turn heard two men in a garden, but we did not see them. They ran and called out, so did we. Over the ridge and down onto a flat by the Yimi river.

Natives came in, in numbers apparently, calling. We used the Kaiuk interpreter, but he was not understood. We crossed the stream and went up the ridge... We were followed. At the top of the ridge we found three old deserted houses. As we continued on down the ridge, the rear party was attacked at close quarters. Suprimeri shot one and Pasengon shot another. Eve examined the bodies. Two more men attempted to spear the party. One was shot by Suprimeri and the other ran away.

Shot natives.

1 of Apeigu village.

2 of Masalaga.

Then Yuaka fired at another native with spear poised. He missed and the man ran away. About 100 yards on, in the village, Tolamai shot a native attempting to spear a carrier:

This made a total of four shot. I did not actually see any of the bodies, being at the head of the line. Eve was at the rear, where the trouble was.

1970's PS While visiting Ambuken on patrol, during an investigation into a dispute between Ambuken and Bongoimasi over over land called "Abakia", I interviewed Samako/Farumu of Masagana. From the story he told I realised Masagana was the community that Mr. Townsend called Masalaga; People who attacked his patrol on 14/3/1934. Samako said:

Masagana originated from a hole in the ground called UNGUG-GEIAMARAGA on the land called Abakia. Masagana was an unfortunate group whose numbers were reduced by internal fighting and by sorcery made by Masagana females. The main external enemies of Masagana were Bongoimasi and Amaki. Masagana was in a mother daughter relationship mother to a small group at Tongwinjamb called Numbahapa.

Masagana was a separate group before the war. During the war the Japanese came up the Amagu [Screw] river, destroyed our village and killed two women before going overland to Ablatak.

After the war the kiap made the remnants of Masagana move and live with Ambuken. This necessitated moving off the old Masagana lands.

Both Boigoimasi and Masagana came from the hole and originally lived together. After leaving the hole, the combind population lived at MELEBORSUAKAMI and there they fought over women. The two villages split; Bongoimasi were of Yam/Mami subsistence and went up into the Dreikikir area. Masagana were of sago subsistence, and went to the sago...

15<sup>th</sup> March 1934. Women and men wailing and crying during the night. In the morning we broke camp and moved on without seeing anyone or anything. The patrol kept on the ridge and passed through very extensive gardens, and on down the spur to a village. Some women who were cooking ran away. We mapped through. Outside the men's house we saw bonbons and betelnut, there was a singsing that night of which we heard the garamuts. In a croton plant in the middle of a garden I planted a knife [a gift].

There was an incident and [Constable] Rohru was nearly speared. We met an old man to whom I gave a knife. He invited us home but we declined as our way was in the opposite direction. Maprik natives with us, could heard a little of the language, but could not get any names. The houses here are very close together and on rocky ground...Very small coconut palms along all ridges. We also saw yams, aibika, sugar and bananas.

16<sup>th</sup> March 1934. Eight men came along at 6am and we gave them matches. They are from a village ahead of us. Also some men from behind, where Rohru was threatened yesterday came along with us. These included Pisia, an old man, who claimed to be Luluai of Kubriwat, and a lot of men. Today they are all very friendly and remained with us until we got to a stream where we lunched...

After receiving the matches, we handed out, these people told us in unmistakeable signs that Masalaga had sent word by garamut that we had fought and they had lost four men. Our new friends signed that to fight was foolish. To carry axes etc was good. I gave a plane iron to an old man and his friend looked at his own portion of a knife and threw it on the ground in disgust. Among the crowd I saw a beer bottle cap hanging from a lime gourd spatula.

Pisia consented to go on to Womgrir [an Urim speaking village], but after an hour he cleared out. The patrol continued upstream [on the Yimi] until 5 pm when we made camp.

17<sup>th</sup> March 1934. At 6am, a native called Mawel of Poklo [a Kwanga speaking community], who had been an indentured labourer at Salamaua, came in with a Kubriwat man. A little later Wanambok of Poklo came in wearing a Luluai hat. We continued in upstream until after lunch when we left the river – turning westward and crossing a divide and descending to a large stream [Writer's note, this would be the Kean River, a headwaters stream of the Yimi – later to be the boundary between the Dreikikir and Nuku administrative areas]. We then ascended to Womgrir and made camp. Womgrir people brought in taro.

18<sup>th</sup> March 1934. We followed a small stream, climbing steeply, then left the stream and continued climbing, high and steep. Then along a ridge top through several hamlets to where the Tultul was, then continued on. We had good views of the country to the right and left and to the rear. We could see Karimambu [Garimambu] Mountain. The women here are naked. We bought food for lunch and for the night meal. The House Tamborans are like cow bells. [This description means nothing to the writer.] I lit an old house near the tents; a mistake as we were smoked out for nearly two hours,

19<sup>th</sup> March 1934. At 7.00 am I sent Constable Yuaka to Aitape. We mapped to Womerau, where we lunched. Then we moved on to Mamul where we waited for over an hour and a half for the carriers to catch up. Sepik River men are dreadful on mountains. We moved on to Morandin where we camped on a beautiful ridge.

20<sup>th</sup> March 1934. The patrol moved to Sengi, where heavy rain and carrier reluctance were experienced. Moved on to Yapunda where we camped. Mail arrived from Aitape in the afternoon.

21st March 1934. The patrol moved an hour upstream...Lunched at the foot of the Lipan pass. There was a heavy down pour which flooded the stream. The carriers made us camp there and waste the afternoon.

22<sup>nd</sup> March 1934. Crossed the divide first thing and continued downstream all day. The carriers are really played out. Lunched and camped by the bed of the stream. Some natives camped on the opposite side of the stream and had to wait for hours for food as a fresh flood came down carrying timber and rolling stones.

23<sup>rd</sup> March 1934. We continued downstream. Kopoam community had cleared sections where the track left the stream and to cut off points [river bends], to just above the junction of the Lipan and Nigiar Rivers, and across the Nigiar to some work houses where we lunched. Slept at Kumsi

24th March 1934. To Aitape. The patrol was stood down and patrol gear cleaned up and stored.

# **End Notes Chapter 40**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> G.W.L.Townsend Kassa's story of New Guinea [unpublished] from which Judy Tudor wrote District Officer. P 300-307

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> G.W.L.Townsend unpublished Page 309

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> ANGAU War Diaries award citation 6/Nov 1944

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> NB Neither Mr Townsend's unpublished work, nor Judy Tudor's 1968 "District Officer" contained dates. I was able to obtain these dates from Mr. Townsend's personal diary.

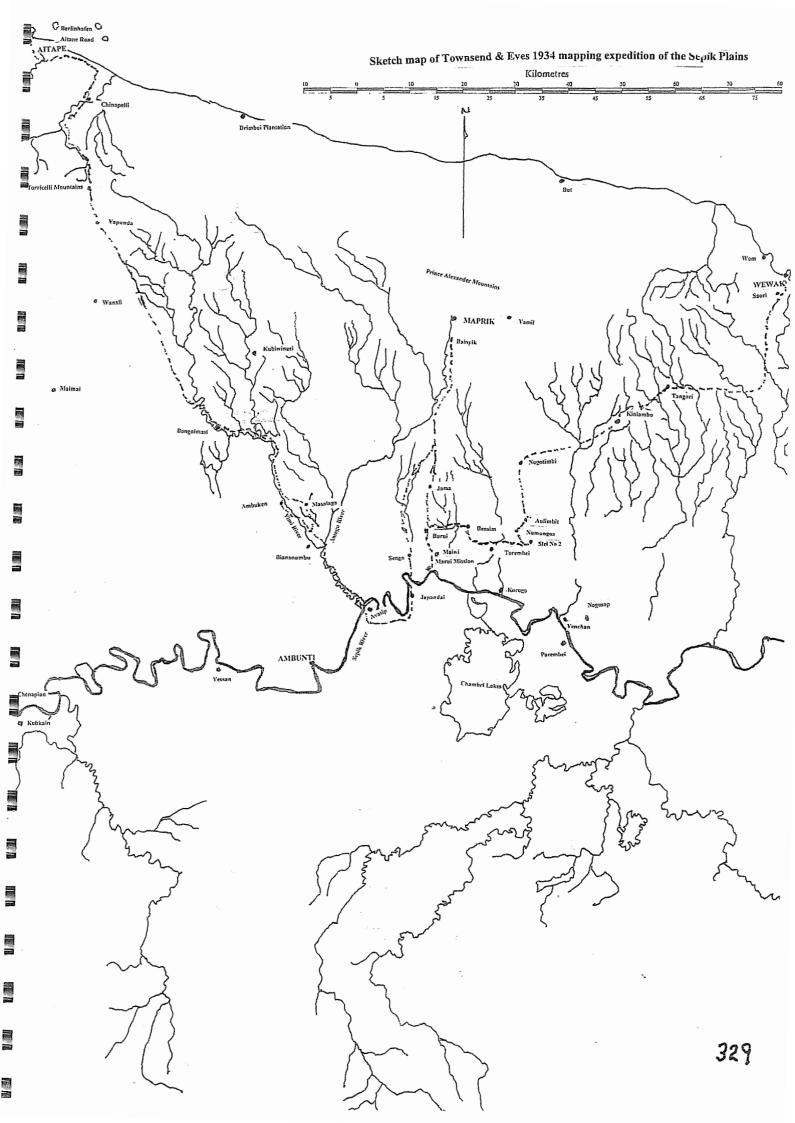
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> G.W.L.Townsend personal diary entry

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> G.W.L.Townsend unpublished Page 315

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> G.W.L.Townsend unpublished Page to and including 326

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> This comment is the only one the writer has seen to indicate Burui was a replacement for Ambunti. ADO Ormsby, immediately after the war, sought unsuccessfully to replace Ambunti with the Catholic mission land at Marui – the only area in the latmul tribal area that is not subject to flooding.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Bragge Sepik research notes Vol 21 page 152





## Sepik 2 Chapter 41 The Aitape/Sepik civil administration – mid 1930s to World War 2

In February 1933 G.W.L.Townsend and family went on leave from Salamaua and in July that year were posted back to Aitape, where Mr. Townsend took over as District Officer from "Sepik Robbie." Mr. Townsend explains how he had sought the posting:

...in July 1933 I had learned that the Districts of Aitape and Sepik were to be merged again and I let it be known that a posting there would suit me well.  $^{\rm I}$ 

Whereas Ambunti was, at that time, a single man's posting, Aitape was classed as a married posting and the newly combined "Aitape" District had its headquarters in Aitape. The District field staff consisted of Jim Hodgekiss at Vanimo, A.A. [Bill] Bloxham at Marienberg, engaged in transferring the Government station back to Angoram, and Patrol Officer Kenneth Hewitson Thomas at Wiwiak [Wewak]. Stan Christian was in charge of Public Health; Jack Woodville was the District Clerk and W.O.Allen was in charge of police and gaols. The mail boat came every six weeks, but it no longer called at Aitape, instead it came to Boram plantation a few miles east of Wewak.

Commercial activity in the Aitape District at that time consisted of 10 copra plantations, the mission sawmill at Marienberg and the Oil exploration company, Oil Search Limited, based at Matapau<sup>2</sup>.

Based upon the assessment of 23 Sepik Copra plantations established during the German administration, as discussed in Chapter 11, it is assumed the ten mentioned by Mr. Townsend were those which were still operating with resident management: which I assume to have been Boram, Moem, Brandi, Karawop. Boiken, Suain, Tadji, St Anna, Tepier and Vanimo.

**Tepier Plantation.** The Expropriation Board took control of Tepier, but as it was so small and as the copra price fell, the plantation became neglected. Writer and naturalist A.J.Marshall managed Tepier during the mid1930s and noted. *It was a pity these splendid pioneers* [i.e. the German brothers who established Tepier] *lost their properties, especially as many of the returned soldiers who got them had no more idea of running a plantation than building a battleship<sup>3</sup>.* 

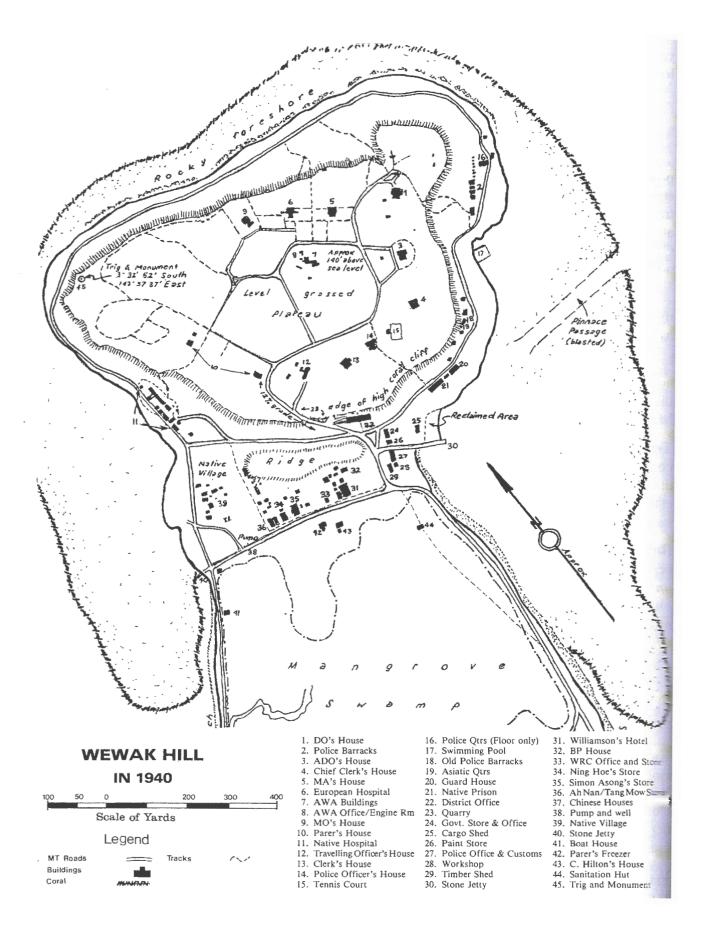
**Boram Moem and Brandi plantations.** The German manager Mr. Boiker was removed and probably deported and an Australian Mr. E.S. Eisfold took over as manager of all three plantations on behalf of the Expropriation Board – until all three were sold to R.M. "Dick" Glasson in 1927 and on 26<sup>th</sup> March 1928 half of these properties were assigned to E.S. Eisfold who now became part owner rather than just manager. The plantations remained in the hands of these two men until 1937, when they were purchased by Burns Philp <sup>4</sup>.

Dick Glasson's investment was made from gold won at Edie Creek, in the Morobe district. ...in 1922 "Shark-eye Park" ...found gold at the junction of Koranga Creek and the Bulolo River... by the end of 1925 three miners struck gold on Edie Creek and three other miners who quickly joined them became known as the Big Six, of whom Glasson was one. 5

**Karawop Plantation** was owned and operated by Mr and Mrs Cobb. When Mr Cobb died, Mrs Cobb stayed on. District Officer Townsend was concerned about her welfare and called in at Karawop whenever he was in the area. He and others became concerned when a recruiter named Corrigan began to spend time at Karawop, but Mrs Cobb reassured him that all was well and that she depended upon Corrigan.<sup>6</sup> Six weeks later Corrigan announced to Mr. Townsend, his intention of marrying Mrs Cobb.<sup>7</sup>

**Writer's note:** When I passed through Karawop in the late 1970s while driving between Aitape and Wewak, I saw that the palms were becoming obscured by decades of casuarina growth.

## Wewak Town Map 19408.





The establishment of Wewak patrol post 1919. Lorna Fleetwood surmised that Jim Appleby who was stationed at Wewak, early in its history, may have opened the post<sup>9</sup>. Descendants of an ex-AN&MEF soldier turned Patrol Officer, Sam Freeman state Sam claimed that he opened Wewak.<sup>1</sup>

Sam Freeman appears to have been present in the Sepik through until 1930. He worked for the Ormildah Oil Development Company at Marienberg in the mid to late 1920s and he led the first Akmana gold prospecting expedition up the Yuat river, and tributaries into the highlands in 1929.

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Oil Search Limited capacity for quality mapping. While still based at Aitape, District Officer Townsend negotiated with Oil Search to conduct a joint patrol to explore and map the Sepik Plains in early 1934. That two-month expedition is described in the previous chapter.

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The hanging executions at Jama, Kuvinmas and Ambunti. These executions which were conducted on 21<sup>st</sup> May 1934 at Jama, [seven convicted head-hunters hanged] and New Year's Day 1935 at Kuvinmas [five convicted head hunters hanged]. Both executions, plus a third at Ambunti in 1930 in which 10 convicted head hunters were hanged, presumably by District Officer "Sepik Robbie" - E.D.Robinson.

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Two important, and far reaching developments occurred more or less simultaneously:

- 1. The move of the district headquarters to Wewak, and,
- 2. The discovery of gold, which is discussed in more detail in the next chapter

#1 The move of the District Headquarters from Aitape to Wewak. Mr. Townsend lobbied to move the headquarters from Aitape to Wewak where there was a better harbour,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Writer's personal communication with Sam Freeman's descendants.

which provided good shelter in both the North-West monsoon and the South-East season. Wewak was more central to the whole of the District. Once the Administrator gave permission for the move Mr. Townsend did not wait for funding approvals. He loaded his family onto the *Thetis* and moved immediately. Trader Ning Hee<sup>10</sup> decided to open a store in Wewak and travelled on the same voyage of the *Thetis* with the Townsend family. Mr. Townsend's diaries make no mention of a specific date on which this move took pace, but it seems to have been during the mid to latter part of 1934.

The often rough and ready men who passed through Wewak en-route to the gold fields needed a place to stay. So, it was that the "Blood House" on Boram plantation came into being. This was a long house built of bush materials, always filled with lines of bed sails and mosquito nets with an attached kitchen where meals could be cooked. "Most men stayed there at some stage of their lives in the District, and when it was mentioned, always said off-handedly, 'Oh, yes, the blood house – ha-ha! The Blood House was where men were men; and no women by request," If, as in the case of the Tudors, a miner came with his wife, another bush house was put at their disposal.

A.J.Marshall spent a year on the north coast of New Guinea and he spent a week at the Blood House waiting for a late boat "You are always likely to meet some men around Boram at Steamer time. Nonchalant recruiters, with their black resigned cargo, prospectors walking in with their pickle bottles and jam-tins full of shotty gold; a few traders sailing across by schooner from outlying islands or plantations along the coast...These men are not interested in dress shirts or surrealism: they are pioneers, the men who made countries, the drifters...on the trail of the big "find"...a few succeed, but most go on until a spear or blackwater [fever]claims them or they become the queer old men, unmistakeably stamped "Prospector" which you meet in men's countries all over the world. 12

The Blood House remained the main accommodation venue until Bob Parer built a very rustic sort of hotel at Wewak<sup>13</sup>. Deduction suggests that this must have been the "Blue Rat", which was located roughly where the post war Burns Philp Store was built. Sepik 3 mentions Clerk Lenny Odgers, and others, drinking at the "Blue Rat" in early 1942. The Blue Rat is marked on the 1940 Wewak town map as Williamson's Hotel.

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### A Brief history of the Chinese in the Sepik.

**Writer's note:** I am greatly indebted to Dr. Adam Liu for most of the information in this section. Adam, a grandson of Simon Chen Song Chow – a pre-war trader in Wewak – conducted detailed research into the Chinese families in the Sepik and was kind enough to share his knowledge with me.

Chinese were active in the Aitape/Sepik coast and inland areas during and after German times, recruiting labour and hunting birds of paradise. Little is known of them, as they tended to leave neither reports on what they did, nor maps of where they did it. These were, however, two unavoidable exceptions: when they ran afoul of the law, and when Chinese births and deaths were entered into official records - some examples;

- July 1912 Three Chinese and 10 New Guinean assistants employed by the Hansa Bay<sup>2</sup> planter Gramms were killed by Kagam tribes inland from Hansa Bay. A punitive expedition was made.<sup>14</sup>
- An unnamed Chinese managed Maindron plantation at Sissano in 1921-22 while serving a prison sentence the rape of a native women, with whom he was living. She had already given birth to one of his children and was heavily pregnant with a second<sup>15</sup>. Was he CHEONG see below?
- The Aseng/Asing, a mixed-race family. Father unknown. Daughter Una was born in Aitape around 1923. She married recruiter Wally Hook apparently in 1932 [which suggests that either

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Hansa Bay is in the Madang District just east of the mouths of the Ramu and Sepik Rivers.

birth or marriage dates are incorrect].<sup>17</sup> In late1942 Hook declined to be evacuated as Una was heavy with child and could not undertake the strenuous trek. Una and two of her four children survived the war, while her husband did not.

O A letter from Captain J.S.Milligan to Northern Section ANGAU, Lae, dated 28<sup>th</sup> January 1945 provides the following information: *About 1932 Mr Mantle, then DO Aitape was supposed to have celebrated the marriage between W.J.Hook and Una Ah Sing. Also present at the time were Ning Hee and Ah Sing. I am very doubtful whether Mr. Mantle did celebrate the ceremony, as I have a faint recollection of Hook telling me that his marriage to Una Ah Sing was never celebrated and that the gathering at Ning Hee's was a social gathering.* 

Unfortunately Una Ah Sing is uneducated and at the time was too young to understand the actual happenings. She herself, says the marriage transaction took place in Ning Hee's store in the presence of the DO. She then went to live with Hook as his wife. 18

- Mary Magdelene Kim Hong Cheong was born of a native mother in Aitape on 25/8/1925. The father's full name is not known except for the surname CHEONG.<sup>19</sup>
- Seeto Yen died 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1932 in Aitape.<sup>20</sup>
- Yip Chow drowned off Aitape 8<sup>th</sup> April 1933.<sup>21</sup>
- In 1943 Ah Gait, an Indonesian Chinese and part time employee of Wally Hook survived the war. But Tang Yuen Hing<sup>3</sup>, brother in law of Ning Hee, was murdered in 1942 by Yakamul and Lemieng natives.<sup>22</sup>
- In the early 1930s Chu Leong, a trader at Marienberg, shifted his trading operations to Angoram when the Administration moved from Marienberg to Angoram. Before and after the war he built, and traded from his ship the *Winon*. As he lost two fingers while building the *Winon*, the Sepik people knew him as Tripinga [Three fingers]. Shortly before World War 2 he married Elekama of Kiwim village, Keram River and they had a large family.
- The arrival from Rabaul of 5 Chinese of the Bay Loo Co in May 1934 Building contractors who worked on Government building programs at Wewak from 1934 to 1937, but also at Angoram and Aitape.<sup>23</sup>
- In early 1942. Two Chinese were mining with Garamambu miners when renegade police from Angoram attacked the party at Sigabika on the Salumei River [Sepik 3 Chapter 15] Ah Fang was killer and Raphael Chow Chen On escaped. Raphael was recorded in World War 2 documentation as "Gabriel" Chow Chen On. There was a Gabriel Chow Ying, a well-known Chinese in Rabaul who was unrelated to Raphael. Raphael was the brother of Wewak trader Simon Asong.<sup>24</sup>

Bay Loo Co and Tang Mow? Lorna Fleetwood noted that much of the construction was achieved with the assistance of the late Mr. Tang Mow<sup>4</sup>. He had originally migrated to Rabaul in 1911... Tang Mow served his apprenticeship with a building firm in Rabaul and later joined the Government Department of Public Works as a carpenter... Kassa Townsend... relied on him heavily for the building of the new station ... during the years 1934-1937.

Mr. Townsend's personal diaries do not mention Tang Mow in this context, but mentioned Bay Loo Co.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Tang Yuen Hing was born in Madang in 1917. He was the brother of Tang Shan Kew who married Ning Hee Their father was Tang Sam who appears in the list below.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Tang Mow 1960 Ltd was the leading trader in Wewak's China Town when the writer was posted to the Sepik in 1964. It is located perhaps 150 yards down the same side of the street from where the Blue Rat had been.]

8<sup>th</sup> May 1934 "Drina" in [to Aitape] from Wewak with bungalow and stores from Rabaul. Five Kongs [Chinese] and 10 Boys – Bay Loo and Co [Builders].

Bay Loo was a Rabaul consortium of several Chinese builders and a European partner called Clarke. They contracted carpenters and workmen from China.<sup>25</sup>

The Chinese in Wewak before the Japanese occupation came independently to set up businesses. On the eve of the Japanese occupation the Wewak Chinese belonged to nine families<sup>26</sup>:

- #1 Chow family, consisting of Chow Chee Toi [informant Adam Liu's great grandfather] Simon Chen Song Chow<sup>5</sup>, [Adam's grandfather] who divided his time between his Madang and Wewak interests, Simon's brother and two sisters. There was another brother Raphael Chen On Chow who was a gold miner. He is listed in Sepik 3<sup>27</sup> as "Gabriel<sup>6</sup> Chow Chen On", which is how he was apparently known on the goldfields. Raphael was also known as Ray Chow Chen On, "Ray" being short for Raphael.
- #2 Ning Family. Ning Hee, his wife and four children. Ning Hee's wife was a daughter of Tang Sam
- #3 Seeto Ping Shee Family. Seeto Ping Shee, his wife and two sons
- #4 Seehoo Nan family. Seehoo Nan, his wife and two children
- #5 Tang Sam family. Tang Sam, his wife, his eldest son and wife and their daughter, a younger son and wife and two children, four younger Tang brothers.
- #6 Tang Mow family. Tang Mow, his wife and three sons. During the writer's time in the Sepik. I dealt a lot with another son Michael Tang.
- #7 Mok Ching family. Mok Ching, his wife and son.
- #8 Ng family. Ng Yee, his wife and son
- #9 Leong Kok. It is not known if he had a family

These families would have made up the bulk of the Chinese people who were evacuated by Charles Bates and party into the highlands to be flown out from Benabena. After the war only three of these families returned to resume their businesses in Wewak. They were Tang Mow, Ning Hee and Seeto Ping Shee. Other Chinese came to Wewak after the war from Rabaul to start businesses. Chu Leong returned to resume his business, based at Angoram.

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### Two Tragic happenings in 1935

#1 The Murder of ADO Colin McDonald at Ambunti. ADO McDonald was shot in his bed at Ambunti in February 1935 by Constable Sepei. It so happened that in February the first three pedal radio sets to be sent to the district and it was decided to install the first one at Ambunti...six days later I had word that the ADO had been killed.<sup>30</sup> Mr. Townsend's personal diary best records how his investigation unfolded.

**2<sup>nd</sup> March 1935.** Thetis in at 6pm with report from Hepburn [a CPO, stationed at Ambunti] that McDonald was shot in the head about 5.30 am on 28<sup>th</sup> February 1935 at Ambunti and died about half an hour later. Sepei – ex constable finalised on 19<sup>th</sup> February 1935, discovered at the foot

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Simon Ah Song's full name was Simon Chen Song Chow, better known as Simon Ah Song Chow – often shortened to Simon Ah Song. Simon also dealt with the miners during the Sepik gold rush as described in the next chapter.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> The name "Gabriel" may have been applied to Raphael as there was a well known "Gabriel" in Rabaul at that time – Gabriel Chow Ying. An unrelated person.

of tree above house, having jumped down [writing unclear, but apparently meaning, in an attempt to commit suicide.]

3<sup>rd</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> March 1935. The *Thetis* collected PO Bill Bloxham at Marienberg, delivered stores at Angoram, then proceeded upstream stopping over night at Kambrindo [5<sup>th</sup> March], Angriman [6<sup>th</sup> March], Yentchanmangua [7<sup>th</sup> March] arriving Ambunti [8<sup>th</sup> March] at 1.30 pm. Mr. Townsend interviewed witnesses CPO Hepburn, EMA Richard Squires, N.E. Weldon, Navigator and Wireless operator of the ill-fated *Hermes*<sup>7</sup>, Schwartz<sup>8</sup> and PO Miller. Radio Operator *Weldon has been talking to Rabaul since* 28<sup>th</sup>.

9<sup>th</sup> March 1935. Inquest. 11<sup>th</sup> March. Sipei committed for trial: Witnesses: Hepburn, Bai, Baugi, Rohru. Korma for defence.

12<sup>th</sup> March 1935. Settling office affairs. Some vouchers to be made out and receipts to be reconciled with tax collection.

Why ex-Constable Sepei murder ADO McDonald. [informant ex Constable Nonguru] Sepei was angry about his dog. A Yambon [man] threw the dog into the Sepik and it came ashore at Ambunti. Sepei took it and looked after it. The Yambon man came and claimed the dog and the ADO gave it to him. Sepei felt that he had not been given a proper hearing and in the night, he prepared his rifle...I heard the shot but did not take much notice, but later we heard the kiap was dead.<sup>31</sup> G.W.L.Townsend takes up the story:

...when I reached Ambunti I found that police constable Sepei was under guard at the hospital. He had shot McDonald while the latter was in bed; he then tried to commit suicide by stabbing himself with a knife, then jumping from a tree. He failed in both attempts and eventually stood trial. He tried to plead "guilty" but the court would not accept the plea. Freddy Mantle appeared for him, pleading provocation, and several police witnesses were called on his behalf. He was, however, found guilty. From that day until he was hanged he never spoke another word.<sup>32</sup>

**#2 The Earthquake:** Shortly after 11 am on September 20<sup>th</sup> 1935 the whole of the Aitape District was shaken by an earthquake accompanied by low rumblings.

Inland from Aitape, the devastation was severe. S.W.Carey, a member of the Oil Search Ltd survey team was working in the Lumi area at the time of the earthquake. My terrified natives were thrown to the ground and picked themselves up, only to be thrown again...As far as the unfortunate natives are concerned, on a conservative estimate, at least 60% of the village house+6s have collapsed. A large number of natives were killed, some be snapping timber, but the majority through burial beneath landslides... "Devil Scarers" have been erected along the tracks and at the entrances to villages. I saw the natives of Talbipi village stringing up corpses of two unfortunates who had been buried by a landslide. They were hung from the top of a tall coconut palm and left there to decompose, so that the putrid fluid dripping from the bodies would fall on the ground and frighten away the devils who had caused the earth quake.<sup>33</sup>

Yambres, Paramount Chief of the Urat county, was clear in his mind as to the cause of the earthquake. "it's the white men looking for gold on the Damat. They have made the spirits angry and they shake the earth." He told J.K. McCarthy as he pointed unhappily to the ruins of a large haus tambaran. The next day a police runner from Aitape found McCarthy and told him of the death of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> The *Hermes* had been on an artefact collecting expedition [Sepik 4 Chapter 34] with JK McCarthy and Administrator McNicoll, and was lost with all hands en route back to Rabaul. Happily, McNicoll and McCarthy were not on board.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> I have been unable to identify who Mr. Schwartz was, but presume he was a labour recruiter, as he unsuccessfully sought an uncontrolled areas permit [Townsend's diary entry]

King George V of England. Yambers immediately absolved the prospectors from all further blame. "The great King dies" he said "the earth trembles." 34

The Parer family, and gold as catalysts that developed aviation in the Sepik<sup>35</sup>. It was the Parer family who spearheaded aviation in this area. Ray Parer was known as "Battling Parer". Of all the pioneer air pilots of New Guinea, Ray Parer was the only one who stayed from the very beginning, through years of peace and war, until age drove him out of flying. He first came to New Guinea in 1928. It was he who thought up the route from Port Moresby to Lae, which became the accepted one. "Morlae Airways" came into existence in late 1928, serving the route between Moresby and the Morobe gold field. Parer was the chief pilot as well as part owner and he flew the first airmail on that route on 16h April 1929. Other members of the Parer family joined him, including Bob in 1929. Bob was an engineer who serviced the aircraft.

Ray Parer had a tremendous reputation as a pilot, which was just as well as the early flights were pioneer flights in every sense of the word. There were no navigation aids, no radio communications, no emergency landing grounds, no meteorological service to assist and comfort and his passengers as they braved the massive cloud build ups, the bitter winds and black rain squalls of the route... Morlae Airways was replaced by Pacific Aerial Transport P.A.T.<sup>36</sup> [in about 1931/2]

Gradually Ray Parer did less and less flying as his interest in his mining lease on the Upper Watut grew. By 1934 h had almost ceased flying for P.A.T. and Bob Parer also gave up engineering to go mining on the Black Cat<sup>9</sup>. Kevin Parer remained to do most of the flying. It was about this time that Ray Parer flew to the Sepik in an old D.H.9, with Dick Glasson. They decided upon a site for an aerodrome at Angoram. Around this time, airstrips were developed at But and Maprik [to service the Yamil gold field], Wewak, Wom, Aitape, Burui, Maimai, Green River and Telefomin.

After World-War 2, two key inter-related issues determined the sites selected for new patrol posts: [1] an airstrip site as close as possible [2] to the centre of the indigenous population.

The Administration at Wewak in the late 1930s until the outbreak of war was served by a regular air service linking the government stations at Wewak, Maprik, Angoram and Aitape. There were also regular flights to the "outside world" at Salamaua.

Air services other than P.A.T, that periodically visited the Sepik airstrips were Stephen's Air service and Guinea Airways. P.A.T and Carpenters Airways merged on 30<sup>th</sup> September 1936 to become Mandated Airlines Limited. [MAL] In the Sepik the resident airline retained the acronym PAT – Parer Air Transport.<sup>37</sup>

**P.S.** In early 1942, Kevin Parer had landed at Salamaua on a regular trip from Wewak when three zeros attacked, killing him and destroying his Fox Moth aircraft on the ground.

## Other Parer family members and activities.

- 1. Cyril Parer and wife Marie came to the gold field via Maprik in 1937.
- 2. Bob Parer, mentioned above, also established a freezer works in Wewak, which, with the introduced air service between the coast and Yamil gold field, delivered frozen food to the miners.

**P.S.** Although the Parer freezer did not survive World War 2, such "freezer' services were still an essential service for Sepik outstations post war. When the writer was posted to the Sepik outstation Green River in 1964, an essential part of my introduction to the Sepik was for a staff member from

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> The track from Salamaua to Wau

District Office to take me to Wewak's banks and Trading institutions to introduce me as a reputable administration employee who would need to open accounts for weekly delivery of freezer goods.

From memory, I opened accounts with Steamships Trading Co, Burns Philp, and Tang Mow. Of necessity all transactions were done on a credit basis because outstation people very seldom came to Wewak.

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In 1936 Bishop Loerks informed DO Townsend that he planned to move the SVD headquarters from Tumleo Island off Aitape to Kairiru Island off Wewak. 38 Also in 1936 Aitape trader, prospector and recruiter Charlie Gough was murdered while illegally recruiting in the uncontrolled area west of Maprik.

#### 000000000

**Preparation for War.** By the middle of 1941 the Administration in Rabaul was very concerned about possible Japanese advances into the New Guinea. The advice given to all expatriates was to travel south to Australia and it was DO Jones, Townsend's successor, after the latter had been transferred to Salamaua, who organised this in the Sepik.<sup>39</sup>. Mr Townsend continues:

The Territory Superintendent of Police, John Walstab had drawn up a "Blue Book" master plan to come into operation if and when war was declared; and this, that is to say, my copy, had been duly delivered by hand of the Master of the Bulolo in great secrecy. It dealt with reporting of sightings of ships and action to be taken for the safety of the European population in case of attack. Invasion was not envisioned but there was always the danger of German raiders; and two did later enter Territorial waters. There were plans for the utilisation of the members of the Police Force, European and native; but, to anticipation again, these came to nothing when the invasion took place....

John Walstab was now a Major in one of the many military offices which had sprung up along St. Kilda Road in Melbourne; and was preparing to go overseas... I asked him who, if anyone, was going to oversee the plans laid out in his "blue book" for New Guinea defence; but he had no more responsibility in that direction. <sup>40</sup>

Writer's note: In September 1940 Kassa Townsend was posted again as DO Salamaua. His experiences with the Blue Book, there equated with that of DO Jones back in the Sepik; he was left to his own devices as described in Sepik 3. *The Sepik at War*.

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### 3. An overview of the pacification of the Sepik.

In 1906 District Officer Rodatz was faced with an aggressive indigenous population, which he pacified by the selective use of punitive expeditions [Chapter 11] The unskilled and indiscriminate use of punitive expeditions, during the AN&MEF occupation, particularly by District Officer J.H. Oilfent in 1919, appeared to worsen rather than improve law and order on the Sepik River. [Chapter 21]. The Japandai massacre of 1923, the exploration of the Sepik Plains and the campaign to stop headhunting on the Sepik River and its tributaries [Chapters 25.27, 34 and 40] saw the known areas of the Aitape/Sepik Districts classified as "under control" by the outbreak of World War 2.

Exploration of the Sepik was recommenced after the war. The area at that time which was either "unexplored of uncontrolled" commenced at Yessan village, upstream of Ambunti thence due north to the crest of the Torricelli Mountains, thence west along the crest of the range to the Dutch New Guinea border, thence south along that border [141°East line of Longitude] to its junction with

the 5° South line of Latitude, thence east south east along the Papuan Border, encompassing the Sepik and much of the Strickland headwaters, to an indeterminant point in the unexplored Highlands and then, back north to Yessan.

As will be discovered in Sepik 4 *Coming to grips with the future*, the exploration and pacification of this area involved considerable loss of life, headhunting and a lot of cannibalism.

# **End Notes Chapter 41**

- <sup>1</sup> G.W.L.Townsend District officer Pacific Publications 1968 Page 194
- <sup>2</sup> G.W.L.Townsend District officer Pacific Publications 1968 Page 195
- <sup>3</sup> A.J.Marshall Men and Birds of Paradise William Heinemann Ltd London/Toronto 1938 P 233
- <sup>4</sup> Fleetwood, L. 1985 Page 19
- <sup>5</sup> Fleetwood. L. 1985 Page 19
- <sup>6</sup> G.W.L.Townsend personal diary entry 10th March 1936
- <sup>7</sup> G.W.L.Townsend personal diary entry 6<sup>th</sup> April 1936
- <sup>8</sup> Fleetwood. L. 1985 Page 20
- <sup>9</sup> Fleetwood. L. 1985 Page 14
- <sup>10</sup> Ning Hee's store in Wewak is shown on the town map as Ning Hoe's store
- 11 .Judy Tudor "Introduction to the Jungle". Quoted in "Where the Trade Winds are". Stories and sketches collected by R.W.Robson and Judy Tudor P 40 [As quoted by Lorna Fleetwood 1985 Page 25
- 12 A.J.Marshall 1938 Page 94
- <sup>13</sup> G.W.L.Townsend District officer Pacific Publications 1968 Page 229
- <sup>14</sup> Bragge L.W. Sepik 2 Chapter 7 unpublished.
- <sup>15</sup> Bragge L.W. Sepik 2 Chapter 24 unpublished.
- <sup>16</sup> Personal communication with Adam Liu, grandson of Pre-WW2 Wewak trader Simon Chen Song Chow
- <sup>17</sup> Bragge L.W. Sepik 3 The Sepik at War [unpublished] Chapter 23
- <sup>18</sup> Document provided by Adam Liu See Reference Vol 26
- <sup>19</sup> Personal communication with Adam Liu.
- <sup>20</sup> Personal communication with Adam Liu.
- <sup>21</sup> Personal communication with Adam Liu.
- <sup>22</sup> Bragge L.W. Sepik 3 The Sepik at War [unpublished] Chapter 45
- <sup>23</sup> G.W.L.Townsend personal diary entries.
- <sup>24</sup> Personal communication with Adam Liu v
- <sup>25</sup> Personal communication with Adam Liu
- <sup>26</sup> Each member of each family is named in item 856 Reference Volume No 26, but for the purposes of this chapter the names are not necessary.
- <sup>27</sup> Sepik 3 Chapter 23 and 31
- <sup>28</sup> Bragge L.W. Sepik 3 The Sepik at War [unpublished] Chapter 23
- <sup>29</sup> Personal communication with Adam Liu
- <sup>30</sup> G.W.L.Townsend District officer Pacific Publications 1968 Page 223
- 31 Bragge L.W. Sepik Resource Notes Vol 18 page 83.
- 32 G.W.L.Townsend. 1968 pages 223
- <sup>33</sup> S.W.Carey "The Aitape Earthquake" Quoted in the Australian Geographer as quoted by Lorna Fleetwood 1985 P31
- 34 J.K.McCarthy Patrol Into Yesterday 1963 Page 158
- 35 This fascinating topic is covered PNG wide by Jim Sinclair's Wings of Gold
- 36 Fleetwood. L. 1985 Page 25
- <sup>37</sup> Bragge L.W. Sepik 3 The Sepik at War [unpublished] Chapter 6
- 38 G.W.L.Townsend. 1968 pages 224
- 39 Fleetwood L. 1985 Page 32
- <sup>40</sup> G.W.L Townsend's unpublished manuscript pages430-433

### Sepik 2 Chapter 42 The Sepik Gold rushes.

The idea that New Guinea was a land of gold originated with an imaginative account of the region by the Spaniard Antonia Pigafetta, in 1525. More than three centuries later, in 1852 a scientific basis for this belief was provided by John MacGillivray, naturalist with Captain Owen Stanley's cartographical expedition in *HMS Rattlesnake*, who found traces off gold in native pottery at Redscar Bay. He predicted that a rich lode would be found in the mountains of the interior.<sup>1</sup>

Redscar Bay is north west of Port Moresby between Lealea and Hisiu villages.

The discovery of Gold only initiates a "gold rush", when it is found in sufficient quantities that make it "payable" or economical to mine or otherwise produce. The story of gold in the Sepik needs therefore to be divided into two parts:

- 1. Unsuccessful quests for gold before and after the first "rush."
- 2. The First and Second "rushes"

## Unsuccessful quests for gold before and after the first "rush."

German New Guinea policy on mineral resources. In contrast to the steady German investment in the plantations, little interest was taken in the discovery or development of mineral resources. At first the German New Guinea Company [NGC] dominance on the mainland discouraged prospecting. Reluctant to admit private prospectors from British New Guinea in the days of its chartered rule, it attempted to maintain its monopolistic position after 1899 by obtaining the sole right to search for precious metals on the Upper Ramu when the charter was surrendered. This was reinforced by a further concession to von Hansemann in 1901 which gave exclusive rights to the Huon Gulf. Expeditions to both areas failed to locate more than unpromising traces of gold.

Although the major gold deposits were not discovered in German times, there was a marked change in the attitude of officials and settlers towards mineral development just before German Rule ended, and a growing conviction that the colony would flourish when the suspected mineral riches were discovered.<sup>2</sup>

**PS** In the mid-1930s Hitler's unsuccessful quest for the return of former German colonies<sup>3</sup> was no doubt driven in part by the wealth generated by the Morobe gold fields. By the mid-1980s the Morobe field had produced 3,500,000 ounces of alluvial gold and 500,000 ounces of hard rock gold.<sup>4</sup>

1910 & 1912-13 Herr Stolle, a mining engineer, accompanied the 1910 German/Dutch Border expedition and lead the 1912/13 Kaiserin-Augusta-Fluss- Expedition [Chapter 15]. Although Herr Stolle presumably prospected for gold throughout his two expeditions, there is no record of him finding any.

With the benefit of the 1912-13 expedition map, and hindsight the expedition's visit to Zuckerhut mountain [Mt Garamambu] in February/March 1912 placed them at the site of Beckett's gold discovery of 1941; the second "rush" mentioned below.

Dr. Thurnwald's 1913/4 lone exploration north from Marui, through the Abelam area to the north coast would have passed over the gold bearing Screw River country while passing just west of the centre of the "first rush" at and around Yamil.

The 1912/13 "Behrmann expectation also came close to the massive low-grade copper and gold deposit in the Frieda River headwaters while exploring both the May and Frieda Rivers. As we shall see in Sepik 4, although the Frieda prospect was identified in the 1960s, half a century later, it remains to be developed, primarily because of the massive investment required to make it payable.

1927. Following and during the Morobe gold rush, several miners from there came to prospect in the Sepik. These included Dick Glasson, one of the "Big Six" miners of Edie Creek fame. Mr. Glasson's gold wealth allowed him to purchase three plantations in the Wewak area; Boram, Moem and Brandi. A.J.Marshall met and described one of the more colourful of these ex-Morobe miners, who he met at Boram.

Old Alf Belfield...one of the old Papuan hands, seventy-two years old and still a crack shot with either rifle or revolver. Born in Canada and molded in Australia. Alf had knocked about the WA gold fields then crossed Torres Strait into Papua and in later years drifted over to the territory for the Morobe rush – "just to see what it was all about." He is perfectly certain there never was a good Administration official; and the very first day I met him he took me aside and promised to show me every way of beating the Government known to science. Alf's chief joy in life was beating the Government.<sup>5</sup>

The declaration of the Yuat River Gold field George Eichorn, his son Fred, and Willie Williamson had settled at Korogopa in the Keram River system in 1927... From there they prospected the Sepik and in 1930 discovered gold at the junction of the Yuat and Maramuni rivers. Or did they actually discover gold? As discussed earlier, Alf Belfield was also present when District Officer Sepik Robbie after testing, declared the gold field. But J.K. McCarthy pointed out that following the declaration, to the present day no mining took place there.

The declaration of the Yuat River gold field is even more suspect given the failure of the two expeditions conducted in the same area by the Akmana Gold Prospecting Company in 1929/30.

**The 1929-30 Akmana Gold Prospecting Expeditions.** A brief account of the Akmana Gold Prospecting Company's expeditions as told by a party member, reads as follows with corrections to the spelling of river names:

The Akmana Gold Prospecting Company's Field Party carried out two expeditions from September to December 1929 and from mid-February to the end of June 1930. They journeyed on the *Banyandah*, a cruiser of 38 feet from Madang to the mouth of the Sepik River, then up-river to Marienberg and Moim, then along the Karosameri River to the Karawari River and on to the Arafundi River to Lake Yimas, after which it was necessary to transport their stores and equipment by pinnace, canoe and ultimately on foot to their mountain base on the upper Arafundi River.

During their first expedition the Akmana Field Party prospected the tributaries of the Arfundi and then trekked across a spur of the central Mountain Range to sample the Upper Karawari River. Retracing their steps to the Arafundi they then headed out across another spur of the central Mountain Range to the junction of the Yuat River with the Jimi and Baiyer Rivers, again without finding gold in sufficient quantity. Returning to Madang at the end of December 1929, several of the party went back to Sydney to obtain instructions from the Akmana Gold Prospecting Company.

In mid-February 1930 the second expedition quickly returned to their mountain base and on across the mountains to the junction of the Yuat with the Baiyer and Jimi Rivers. They prospected south along the Baiyer River to its junction with the Maramuni and Tarua Rivers, where they established a palisaded forward camp naming the place 'Akmana Junction.' "The Akmana Junction base camp on the Maramuni river is presumably what ANGAU parties during the War referred to as "Macgregor's camp 10" The Akmana report continues.

From this base they prospected along the Maramuni River and its tributaries, again without success. Finally, they prospected the Tarua River south past the tributary which flows to Waipai, again without success and on the advice of mining engineer Seale, decided there

was nothing to justify further exploration. The party returned to Madang, sailing for Sydney on 3 July 1930.

After leading the first expedition, Sam Freeman did not return and Reg. Beazley became party leader of the second expedition, with Pontey Seale mining engineer, Bill Macgregor and Beazley prospectors and recruiters, and Ernie Shepherd in charge of transport and supplies, prospecting when opportunity arose. They had all served overseas during World War I with the AIF on the western front, in Egypt and the Levant and had previously been to New Guinea. In 1926 Freeman was near Marienberg with Ormildah drilling for oil; Shepherd was with Dr. Wade and R.J. Winters on their geological survey of an oil lease of 10,000 square miles (26,000 km2) in the *Bogia* and *Nubio* to the Ramu region and up the Sepik River to Kubkain 60 miles (97 km) above Ambunti. Beazley was drilling test sites for oil in the lower Sepik and he and McGregor recruited labour on the Sepik and explored grass country to Wewak. Beazley also prospected the Arafundi for gold and on his promising report to Freeman, Akmana Gold Prospecting Coy was floated in 1928.

Before setting off on the return journey from the highlands the party made first contact with the wigmen. Beazley had gone ahead of the main party and found himself the centre of interest for about 150 Highlands warriors with bows and arrows.

Apparently, they had been watching the movements of the party for some days and now chose to make themselves visible. The warriors were curious and friendly, but Beazley retraced his steps to his previous night's camp. There he was met by another 200 warriors, and since the first group had followed him downstream he found himself the centre of interest of 400 odd Highlanders who had never before seen a white man.

The Akmana Party made contact with many peoples they called: grass country people, head hunters, pygmies, wig-men, kanakas, poomani. These contacts were often with the help of Drybow/Dribu, a local leader and spokesman of the wig-men, a most intelligent man of goodwill, with a quiet authority that brought forth friendly cooperation. 'We made a peaceful entry into this new country, establishing a reputation for fair trade and decent behaviour ... but gold was our interest and we had traced the rivers and tributaries as far as practicable where conditions and results justified the effort and found nothing worthwhile. In the many years since, there have been quite a few reports of prospecting parties in the area. But nothing of note has been reported: So, we did not leave much behind, it seems.'<sup>7</sup>

### Pacific Islands Monthly articles concerning the on-going quest for gold in PNG

19/10/1932 Page 14 NG Goldfield's September report, & In quest of Sepik Gold Belfield and Winters looking in the Yuat River.

16/3/1934 Page 9 Clashes with natives – North-West of Morobe Gold fields – 19 killed

20/4/1934 Page 11 Planters go Gold seeking – Pennefather<sup>1</sup> in Aitape and Sepik hinterland.

22/6/1934 Page 21-23 Gold search in NW New Guinea – Aitape area and Yuat.

22/8/1935 Page 25 Sepik River Gold - Ray Parer's expedition - 12 months expected

24/8/1935 Page 80 Charged with Murder – Ludwig Schmidt<sup>2</sup>, Schultz and King [many articles]

20/12/1935 Page ? Prospects of New Guinea Goldfields Ltd – steady return from golden ridges and Alluvial.

20/12/1935 Page 9 Goldfields strike settled – Golden Ridges near Wau 21/2/1936 Page 53 Mr. Eric Feldt appointed warden of gold fields.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Victor Bolton Pennefather had been an AN&MEF Lieutenant at Aitape during the military occupation. In 1927 he acquired Tokua plantation in New Britain and in 1934 returned to the Sepik to look for gold.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ludwig Schmidt and his exploits are the subject of the next Chapter

23/4/1936 Page 11 Ship J. Conrad lands miners at Samarai.

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**Townsend's diary 16<sup>th</sup> June 1934** Gough lodged notification of payable gold on Wini [Townsend spelt it Weni] creek – West Wapi near Tofungu village. This report was investigated by Sepik Robbie.

- 1934 Wini Creek [Yellow Headwaters] south of Aitape. Sepik Robbie wrote a report dated 12<sup>th</sup> August 1934 as part of his Aitape Patrol Report No 1/1934-35. It contained two gold related reports.
  - 1. Reported Gold find Wini Creek C. Gough...at daylight on the 13<sup>th</sup> July a box was put in and worked throughout the day. Bottom was not found until 3.30 pm. At 4.45 pm the box was taken out and cleaned. This yielded about one pennyweight [1/20 of a Troy ounce or 1.55517384 grams] of good looking coarse gold. This has been forwarded by the District Officer to the Warden at Wau.

I consider that this is not a payable proposition and the area was not declared a gold field. Mr. Gough decided to carry on with his prospecting activities in other parts of the creek.

- 2. Dredging claims pegged by Mr. Gallet. Some distance down the [Wini] creek, Mr. Gallet has pegged ten dredging claims. These were also inspected, and to the best of my ability were also tested. As far as I can judge, these are not an alluvial proposition, but should be a good dredging proposition...Mr. Gallet estimates this should go about two shillings per yard... [There has been no recorded dredging done in the area in the years since.]
- **1936-37. The Ward Hunt expedition** spent months prospecting in the Telefomin area without finding payable gold. See Chapter 44.

### The first and second "rushes."

The first "rush" centred about 8 miles east of Maprik and involved streams flowing from the Prince Alexander Mountains both north to the sea – the Siling and other rivers, and south to the Sepik, the Ulahau and other rivers. The first records of it appear in Mr. Townsend's personal diaries.

25<sup>th</sup> April 1934 To Wumoibum and the Siling River – sent word to Roberts [a prospector?]

27th April 1934 With Roberts to claims.

28th April 1934 Testing

29th April 1934 Testing – agreed not payable.

Despite the lack of a declaration of a gold field, there was clearly enough gold in the gravels to attract some prospectors as reflected in the 1934 and 1935 Pacific Islands Monthly articles. But as a note from Bill MacGregor on the Siling River to Len Tudor stated in part, the pickings were lean:

Things are pretty quiet here, very little gold—just about a living if I keep very busy. Hope you are doing well. I hear you got some out of the Kobliwop. Yours Bill MacGregor 11/11/1938

Mr. Townsend summed up the situation thus:

A small gold rush was then in progress out around the Siling and Nagum Rivers that rose in the Prince Alexander Ranges behind, and a dozen men were prospecting in the district behind Wewak. At this time too, I began to have inquiries from miners in Morobe; but, although nothing would have pleased me more that to see an increase in the number of prospectors, nothing in the

information I could get led me to believe that there was extensive gold-bearing deposits in the Sepik District.<sup>8</sup>

**Townsend's diary - 18<sup>th</sup> March 1936** Thurston applied for dredging claims for Tudor and himself. This seemed to provide a turn around. The Pacific Islands Monthly's continued coverage of the PNG Gold situation was as follows:

22/1/1937 Page 72 New Goldfield in NG – since 1934 6,000 ounces from Wewak gold field. 26/5/1937 Page 62 Wewak field – 200 miners make a living – Ray Parer averaging 14 oz per week. 22/10/1937 Page 78 four articles below:

- 1. Sandy Creek Good Sluicing New Britain production figures.
- 2. Cuthbert's Misima Gold Mine Ltd Production figures
- 3. NG Gold production [Morobe field] figures up 359,650 oz Financial year.
- 4. Wewak gold field Warden's first report.

22/6/1938 Page 5 New goldfields in New Guinea – Mick Leahy – Mt Hagen. 15/7/1939 Page 4 Over £2,000,000<sup>3</sup> NG Gold production 1938-9

Clearly the Morobe gold field continued to be several orders of magnitude more productive than that of the Sepik. Mt. Townsend's assessment too, remained conservative:

From this time until the outbreak of world war 2 prospectors combed west, north and south of these original finds, but our goldfield was never very rich. One partnership [Thurston and Tudor and their lease "No 1 Gold"] did very well, indeed; several miners did well; but the majority made little more than a living and some not even that.

Highlands explorer and prospector Danny Leahy came to the Sepik to try his luck in the Amagu "Screw" River area. His description of that experience reflects realities of gold mining when things are not going well.

...I worked there for months, and there wasn't anything. And, you know, the horrible part was, people used to rush around and say "Yes Mr. Leahy, No, Mr. Leahy when we were in the news during those big trips, [exploration of the highlands] and it was the same when I got to Wewak.

But after I had been there nearly a year my finance was gone and I was down to credit...The horrible truth hit me...I got a letter one day from Burns Philp. And on the Screw River there was not much you could buy from the local — Not like the highlands where you could buy all the food you wanted. You had to bring in the rice and the tinned meat, carry them in from Wewak, which was about a ten-day round trip. Anyway, I had sent in an order for some more goods; and I never lived it up, or ordered grog or anything like that; right on bedrock, I was. The boys came back from Wewak empty-handed, just with the letter from Burns Philp.

The letter said "Dear Mr. Leahy, your account appears to be overdue and we are not willing to continue to supply you." Well that was it. My heart fell through my boots. I had no money to pay them. No money at all.

Anyway, I had been dealing with a Chinaman in Wewak, too, he had a store there — Simon Ah Song — so I sat down and wrote to Simon and told him what my position was, told him I was broke and could not pay until the gold came good. And Simon, he was a good little bloke, he said "Don't worry, just send in your order." So, every month I'd send the boys off with an order, and back it'd come. I never ordered anything extra — just the rice and meat and kerosene and sugar and tea — no luxuries. But every month there would be a bottle of whisky in the order. He really looked after me

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> £2,000,000 worth of gold when gold was £4 per ounce

Simon did. And, boy, I really learned a lesson at Wewak. That was good experience. I finished up there eventually. I paid all my bills, but I still owed the bank...<sup>9</sup>

Given Mr. Leahy's excellent description of the sense of helplessness that can develop when gold eludes discovery, it is understandable that suicide may provide the only way out for some men. Mr. Townsend described two such suicides from the Sepik gold fields:

I heard that one of two European prospecting partners had committed suicide ... and that the survivor was too sick to write a letter... I did not arrive until six days after it had happened. The two men occupied the same hut, using canvas stretchers placed about six feet apart. I went in to find the body of one man in one stretcher and the other occupied by the second man who was fast asleep. The stench was indescribable.

I managed to get the live partner out of bed, and got the dead partner buried... I completed the Coroner's Inquest next day, on the spot, getting little sense out of the survivor but some lurid details from the labourers. The death had happened about a week after they began a drinking spree and it was obvious that the dead man had had little idea of what he was doing.

I had the camp struck and the sick man carried to the beach. He was shipped out on the next boat to Australia where he was met and cared for by relatives.

There was one other suicide that year - a lone prospector who hanged himself in the doorway of his store hut. A week elapsed between the suicide and the arrival of the Coroner, with the body still hanging. Keeping to a routine laid down by the prospector when still alive, the boss-boy entered the store each day to get the daily ration of rice for the labourers, pushing the body aside to enable him to get into the store<sup>10</sup>.

At the outbreak of war, the then District Officer, Jones, was left with a District without rations, when the MacDhui was ordered back to Moresby from Wewak before it could unload the 6 months of Sepik rations on board. Jones was aware that Jack Thurston had a large stock of rations at his Yamil base east or Maprik, and negotiated with Thurston for the administration to take possession thereof.

Whereas the Sepik gold fields were never very rich, they resulted in the Sepik changing from a primarily maritime district, to one being serviced by aircraft, with airstrips being constructed in many strategic places, including Maprik and Yamil and the development of a road from Marui on the Sepik River north to Yamil via Bainyik. Maprik itself was established in 1937 as an administration post to support the nearby gold rush.

Other well known identities who tried their luck on Yamil gold field apart from Vic Penefather and Danny Leahy, already mentioned, were Jerry Keogh – Assistant District Officer, Ambunti and Tom Ellis, Medical Assistant at Maprik. Mr. Ellis would be better known in later years as the Director of the Department of District Services and Native Affairs.

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### The second rush warranted only two Pacific Islands Monthly entries:

**Sept 1941 Page 7** Another New Guinea Gold Find- Beckett and Eichorn found it west of the Chambri Lakes.

The writer took out a Miner's Right and spent two weeks on leave there in 1972 mining in the Kugundeli creek after Mining Warden Ludi Schmidt [Junior] mentioned to me that gold from that creek was rough and angular indicating is had not travelled far from the source. I won two ounces of

gold and a quantity of heavy black pebbles which turned out to be rutile. My mining experience confirmed the general consensus that the Garamambu gold field was far from a rich one.

June 1943 Page 28 New Guinea police run amok – inquest R.Beckett.

As a sad conclusion to this chapter, as described in Sepik 3 *The Sepik at War* - renegade police from Angoram raped, murdered and pillaged the Chambri lakes region, killing miners, Reg. Beckett, George Eichorn, Ah Fang and Jack Mitchell.<sup>11</sup>

# **End Notes Chapter 42**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Papua New Guinea Encyclopedia 1972 Vol 2 Pages 499

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Papua New Guinea Encyclopedia 1972 Vol 2 Pages 497-498

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Pacific Island's Monthly 21/5/1935 Page 3. Germany and New Guinea – plea for return of former colony.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Abstract – Dr. Greg Corbett's. The history of mining from *The Geology and Mineral potential of PNG* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Marshall A.J. Men and Birds of Paradise - William Heineman Ltd London 1938 Page 94-95

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> R.May in S Latukefu ed: 1989 P126.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Wikipedia/History of Papua New Guinea/6.1Akmana Expedition 1929/30

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> G.W.L.Townsend District Officer Pacific Publications 1968 Page 220

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> John Fowke – Kundi Dan – University of Queensland Press 1995 Page 164

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> G.W.L. Townsend District Officer Pacific Publications 1968 Page 231

<sup>11</sup> L.W.Bragge Sepik 3 The Sepik at War [unpublished] Chapter 17

### Chapter 43. Gold, early Highlands history and the case of Ludwig Schmidt.

Until the early 1930s the interior of New Guinea was considered to be a jumbled mass of unpopulated, timber covered mountain ranges<sup>1</sup>. At this time the New Guinea Coastal Districts of Morobe, Madang and Sepik each backed onto the unexplored mountain ranges and the Papuan border to their south.

The quest for gold, stimulated by the Edie Creek rush of January 1926 in the Morobe District saw prospectors venture into the unexplored Highlands. By 1928 Ned Rowlands was the first prospector to enter the Kainantu area and made the first gold discovery in the Barola Creek near Mt. Munifinka<sup>2</sup>. Among the many miners who followed Rowlands into the area were: Ted Ubanks, Jim Delaney, Ted Foad, Lex Peadon, Lance Peadon, Jack Lorenz, George Chester, Reg Dawes, Robbie Robertson, Jack Dodd, Latham Hamilton, Scotty Southerland, Bill Durcher, Bob Sturkey, Lea and Sid Aston, Frank McKee, Ben McGrath, Bob Duggan, Schmidt father and son, Helmuth Schultze, Joshua King, Groos and others. Harold Woodman, ADO Madang visited the area to examine and register the gold field.<sup>3</sup>

In September 1932, due to reports of attacks upon, and thefts from miners in the Upper Ramu River area, ADO J.L.Taylor and PO Charles Bates established a base camp on the banks of the Ramu River immediately below the site of the present Kainantu station. During 1932 PO J.K.McCarthy spent a short time establishing an airstrip. A second camp and aerodrome was established over the central divide at this time in the headwaters of the Purari at BenaBena.<sup>4</sup>

Ian Mack took over as officer in charge at Kainantu in late 1932. He was killed by natives while trying to make arrests at Aiamontina in 1933. Bill Kyle took over as OIC in mid-1933. In July 1933 Thomas Aitchison arrived as a Cadet Patrol Officer. [T.Aitchison, M.Leahy, propsector L.Aston, M.Leahy, J.K.McCarthy, J.L.Taylor and C.D.Bates were all important characters associated with the Sepik during the war years 1941-45 – see Sepik 3 *The Sepik at War*] In late 1933 A.Nurton was ADO at "Ramu Post". This, the first Government station in the Highlands, was at that time known by three separate and interchangeable names- Kainantu, Ramu Post and Upper Ramu. In March 1933 two plane flights confirmed populous valleys west of Kainantu, and Taylor joined forces with prospector Michael Leahy to explore them:

In three weeks they walked west through a wonderland of dense populations, manicured gardens, and beautiful scenery, to Kelua near Mt Hagen, which Taylor named. They explored in every direction until August when Taylor was ordered back to Kainantu. No explorers had so pleasant a walk and found so much new to Europeans in so short a time.<sup>7</sup>

Writer's note: The expedition by Taylor and the Leahy brothers are commonly credited with "discovering" the Highlands. But GWL Townsend points out that prospector Bill Macgregor, explored deep into what became the Western Highlands in 1929/30.8 Macgregor's expedition is written up separately as the as Akmana expedition.9

But it seems the vast populations of the Highlands may have been discovered by Europeans even earlier – By Dr. Schlechter during his gutta-percha expedition in 1902.

While in the Bismarck Mountains, he and his party had seen people there in numbers larger than anywhere else in New Guinea. He walked through extraordinarily large gardens which were so long that it took two hours to pass through them, and there were such gardens everywhere roundabout. <sup>10</sup>

End writers note

On a date unknown, a prospector called Ludwig Schmidt arrived in Madang. Schmidt, a 45-year-old Austrian, came to the Territory of New Guinea after spending five years in the USA and five years in Australia<sup>11</sup>. In order to assist Schmidt, ADO Harold Woodman of Madang went to Bilbil village to recruit labour to go to the Bulolo Gold Fields with Schmidt.<sup>12</sup> Among the recruits was a man called Maia was with Schmidt's mining venture from 1931 - 1934<sup>13</sup>. At this time Schmidt was living with his wife and son "Wiggy" [Ludwig junior] in Madang's Chinatown. Mary Mennis' *Potted history of Madang 2005* describes Schmidt's activities as told to her by Maia:

Together with a large group of Madang labourers, Schmidt's party walked to Bogati, where they turned inland to Unapinka near Kainantu and from there to Tairoro [Tairora?] where they looked for gold without much success. From there they went to the BenaBena area and set up a big camp...Overall they spent a year in the BenaBena area and there were many fights with local people...when hostile people bared their way, instead of trying to make contact with them, Schmidt shot some of them. This was a very bad example to set for the labour line because they began to accept it as the standard and later they did the same thing.

[But] Schmidt's approach worked. The local people brought food and pigs down to him to show their submission and he would give them tomahawks, knives and mirrors in exchange <sup>14</sup>

Not surprisingly Schmidt's behaviour came to the attention of the Administration at Kainantu and in late 1933 Patrol Officer Charles Bates went to Investigate. His report, addressed to ADO Nurton, Upper Ramu, District of Morobe, reads as follows<sup>15</sup>:

Dunantina River.<sup>1</sup>
Purari.
22<sup>nd</sup> November 1933

Attack on natives of Keyufa village, Kafe tribe, Purari area, by Ludwig Schmidt senior, and two indentured labourers of the said Ludwig Schmidt, Papaik and Maia, also the Gafitula natives enemies of the Keyufa, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1933.

Ref: attached statements of Ludwig Schmidt senior and the natives Papaik, Maia, Sui, Kabak and Wasa.

I beg to report that on the 19<sup>th</sup> instant I arrived at the camp of Ludwig Schmidt senior and saw Ludwig Schmidt and the above mentioned natives, indentured labourers of Ludwig Schmidt. I told Ludwig Schmidt that I had come to obtain some information relative to the above mentioned attack. Ludwig Schmidt made a statement to me. He was cautioned prior to making the statement. The above mentioned natives made statements to me in the presence and hearing of the said Ludwig Schmidt. These statements are attached.

Although I told Ludwig Schmidt to refrain from speaking about the matter until I was ready to take the statement from him concerning the attack, he would speak about the matter and made one or two remarks which I recorded in my notebook immediately afterwards. These remarks are not given in his statement proper to me and I think are of importance. He said "Two of my boys Papaik and Meksawa were attacked on 21st of October by the natives of Keyufa, and the reason I went to Keyufa on the 22nd was to investigate this attack". In his

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In the present day Henganofi patrol post area near Bena Bena.

statement proper he states that he went to Keyufa to meet the four natives, Kabak, Sui, Wara and Kaut who had gone to the Bena-Bena 'drome unaccompanied by a European and that he feared for their safety on their return. I said to him "You should not have sent the two natives Papaik Mekasawa to Schultze camp unaccompanied by a European." For a few minutes he said nothing, and then he spoke again. "Why I sent them alone was because I was sick and wanted some Aspirin Tablets from Schultze, I gave the two natives Papaik and Mekasawa a letter from myself to Schultze for the Aspirin. This is denied by Papaik...

From the information received from the Mission helpers of Labana and Rev.Bergman of the Lutheran Mission it appears that Schmidt killed two natives of Keyufa and seriously wounded three others, two of which are likely to die. From a distance I have seen Keyufa village which is now only a few black ashes of the village since Schmidt instructed his labourers Papaik and Maia to burn the village. The natives Papaik and Maia state that Schmidt told them to burn the village. Schmidt denied this later when I was taking the statements from Papaik and Maia. It will be noticed that Schmidt soon forgot the reason why he went to Keyufa that is the reason he gives in his statement proper, that he went to protect his labourers who were expected back from Bena-Bena 'drome that day. It would seem that shooting at these natives as he admits it would be vital for him if he had any regard for the safety of his servants at all that by some manner he would have conveyed to these servants the danger that would naturally surround them when they came within the vicinity of Keyufa. I am sure from the manner in which Schmidt gave his statement to me and what he said and how he acted, that he is lying. That his servants whom I interrogated were told by Schmidt what to say, or that they were trying to hide facts, of the attack in order to shield Schmidt.

The following I think is the true story of the attack upon the Keyufa natives and the burning of the village of Keyufa by Schmidt.

Papaik and Mekasawa were sent on the 20th October to Schmidt's [Schultze?] camp at Serupu to try the river there for gold. They were instructed by Schmidt to return the next day and report to him. That these natives did, and slept at the camp of Schultze, which is opposite the present day camp of Schmidt. That on the 21st of October Papaik and Mekasawa returned via Keyufa trying a small stream near Keyufa for gold. That whilst trying this stream, they had near them some Gafitula natives fully armed and that opposite the Gafitula natives were the Keyufa natives fully armed because the Gafitula were their hereditary enemies. That the Gafitula natives told these two natives of Schmidt to go back to their master with some arrows that they gave them and to tell master Schmidt that these arrows had been fired at them by the Keyufa natives so that in the hope that Schmidt would come and fight the Keyufa natives with his rifles. That this was done and that Schmidt actually came next day with the intention of fighting these natives of Keyufa. That not only did he come with two natives accompanying him armed, that is Papaik and Maia, but he came with a contingent of Gafitula natives, who are, incidentally, great friends for Schmidt's. [They supply him with native foods.] That he opened fire upon these natives killing two and seriously wounding three others and that he instructed his servants to burn the village of Keyufa and that the Gafitula natives helped in the general destruction of this village, and thus putting to rout the native men, women and children of Keyufa.

The above may be termed a "Preconceived Theory" of the attack but I feel sure from the statements and information received that it is a fairly correct account of the fight.

- a. Schmidt was contravening the Uncontrolled Areas Regulations when he allowed two natives Papaik and Mekasawa to be alone at such a distance from his supervision.
- b. He again contravened these regulations when he allowed four natives to proceed to Bena-Bena 'drome unaccompanied by Europeans.
- c. If Papaik and Mekasawa are to be believed that they were attacked by the Keyufa he was wrong in going to the village of Keyufa. (See provisions of Uncontrolled Areas Regs.)
- d. By allowing the natives Papaik and Maia to carry rifles without having general arms Permits for these natives he was again committing an offence.
- e. By firing upon these natives he was again committing an offence for it could not be said to have fired in Self Defence for he stated to me he went to investigate and there was no need to investigate and if his servants were attacked he went there from a native point of view in a hostile manner...

### C.D.Bates Patrol Officer.

Due to shortage of food, Bates patrol of November 1933 was unable to remain in the area to contact the Keyufa survivors. He rectified that with a follow up patrol that left Bena-Bena aerodrome on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December and proceeded to Fofoni village, a short distance east of Bena-Bena. Keyufa people had taken refuge there and Bates was able to interview them through Labana [Lutheran] mission interpreters Agaia and Sogoma. Laga-use of Keyufa made the following statement through the interpreters.

I lived in the village of Keyufa before it was burned. Some time ago a European whom I would recognize again came to my village. With him was another European... I had not seen before. With these Europeans were many natives of Gafitula village who are enemies of us. These natives were armed with bows and arrows. The Europeans and two labourers who were with them were armed with rifles. They approached our village from the east and as they got closer they opened fire on us with their rifles. They came nearer, the Europeans still shooting at us with their rifles. We, the natives of Keyufa were angry and all of us began to fire arrows at the Europeans and the natives accompanying them. We saw that one of us wounded the European we knew. I think we wounded him in the hand...Very shortly after this two natives of Keyufa named MEKINO and WOKEFA were killed by bullets from the rifles. All of us ran away. As we were running away we saw the labourers of the Europeans and all the Gafitula natives burning our village. When...all the houses were burning we saw the Europeans leave with their labourers. We did not return to our village then as the Gafitula natives...remained near our village. These natives of Gafitula killed nearly all of our pigs and destroyed some of our gardens. The two Europeans did not steal any of our pigs or food from our gardens. I do not know why the Europeans attacked us. We had not done them any harm.

Laga-use described the wounds of those killed as:

MEKINO bullet entered the breast – killed outright.

WOKEFA bullet through the eye and back – killed outright.

OFUYA bullet pierced the eye and one in the hip, died a few days later.

Bates also examined two other wounded natives:

ROPINA flesh wound to the right arm.

NE-HE-YA-RO flesh wound to the middle of the back.

Bates also interviewed Misimato, Terigifi, Rubisinefi and Li-Yo- Gafi of Keyufa. His report continues:

I mentioned to these natives that two labourers they knew had been near their village on the day previously. They all said they had seen two natives near their village on the day before the fight occurred. I asked them if they had attacked these labourers and they said they had not. They all said that when they saw these two natives near their village they also saw some natives of Gafitula village near the labourers and that they appeared to be accompanying them...

I endeavoured to get these ex Keyufa natives...to show me the graves of the natives who had been killed by Schmidt but the interpreters told me they did not want to and I did not press them. These natives were very nervous and it was only through the aid of the interpreters that I was able to make them stay near my camp whilst I obtained the above mentioned information.

Before Leaving Fofoni...I told them that now the Europeans who had attacked them had left them, they must not attack any other Europeans who may come near them. This was explained fully by the interpreters and they all said and promised not to attack any other Europeans...Sometime later I arrived at the Keyufa village. A few native women were taking native foods from their gardens, but who, on our approach, fled. They later came back and stood near our party...All that remained of this village were a few ashes where the houses and the stockades surrounding the village had been...This was all that remained of the village of Keyufa that had, when I visited it May, June and July last, thirty well built houses. I inspected their gardens...and saw the considerable amount of damage the Gafitula natives had done to them and the fences that had surrounded these gardens. The native women...had commenced to make new garden fences.

The documentation of the investigation Charles Bates had conducted found its way to ADO Nurton at Upper Ramu/Kainantu and on to the Morobe District Officer at Salamaua, who wrote:

District of Morobe Headquarters, SALAMAUA 18<sup>th</sup> December 1933.

The Director of District Services and Native Affairs.
RABAUL

## Alleged unlawful killing and arson – Ludwig Schmidt. 16

I attach hereto reports by P/O Bates and statements by various natives, which implicate Ludwig Schmidt, and probably Helmuth Schultze, in various charges – unlawful killing and arson, also various breaches of the Uncontrolled Areas Ordinance.

Both, together with all their labourers, (about forty) have since decamped from the Purari area, where they were engaged in mining, and as far as can be now ascertained, are making for Madang, and under the circumstances then existing, it was useless following them, but the District Officer, Madang, has been advised of the position and warrants have been taken out for the arrest of both when located.

The difficulties of interpretation and of securing witnesses from areas not under control may possibly mitigate against successful prosecution if the more serious charges are preferred against the two Europeans, but every effort will be made to overcome these and while it may be possible to get sufficient evidence from labourers who were with Schmidt and Schultze.

Fortunately the incidents have not disturbed the area or affected the position of other Europeans in the area, and it is fully expected that the timidity of the natives concerned will be gradually overcome.

E.Taylor
District Officer

After decamping from the Purari headwaters, these miners did not make for Madang as Taylor anticipated, but proceeded westward into the Central Highlands. Mary Mennis' interview with Maia of Bilbil continues the story:

...they went to the Hagen area at a time before the Government station, companies or missions had been established there...they found quite a lot of gold there. They stayed about a year in the Hagen area and went to many places where white men had not been before... Maia tells one story which shows Schmidt's attitude to the local people. One of the local chiefs asked Schmidt to help them fight their enemies and Schmidt seemed to regard this as great sport:

We went with our rifles, Schmidt went, the bossboi went and I went to help these people. It was not rain, it was spears<sup>2</sup> that came down on us when we approached the enemy. The chief said 'You are strong. You must shoot them'. We had three rifles and two pigeon guns. The leader of the enemy jumped up and Schmidt shot him dead Bang! The next one stood up and he also was shot. That ended the fight.

The enemy brought three pigs down and they shook hands with Mr. Schmidt and said 'You are our friends now'...From Hagen Schmidt's party pushed on towards the Sepik.

[One] night there was an attack on the camp and Maia was wounded in the shoulder. The invaders surrounded the tents and began to throw spears through the openings...The shooting this time was in self defence and Schmidt and the *bossboi* soon had the attackers scattered.

Like many other prospectors, Schmidt left no record of his route...but this much is known; accompanied by his son Ludwig [Jr] and Helmuth Schultze, they followed the route taken by Leahy brotyher and Taylor to Mt Hagen and then preceded towards the Sepik. The Schmidts parted company with Schultze near the Jimi River and walked to the Maramuni, a headwater of the Yuat [the route pioneered by Bill Macgregor<sup>3</sup> in 1929], before returning to the Jimi, where they had seen promising [gold] colour. Ludwig Schmidt Junior was wounded by natives while building a bridge across the Jimi. He and his father then followed the Yuat down to the junction with the Maramuni where they met another prospecting party. Ludwig junior left his father and continued downstream to seek medical assistance in Madang<sup>17</sup>.

Mary Mennis continues: When the contracts of his labour line ran out Schmidt had no intention of seeing his workers safely to the coast. Twenty of them were left in the lurch in the swamps of the Sepik River. It was only when Maia and the others asked Schmidt "what are we going to buy food with?" that he gave them tomahawks and knives. After meeting Sepik people who helped them, the labourers made rafts and went to Marienberg. The Patrol Officer there questioned them about Schmidt and asked if they had finished their time. He felt sorry for them and gave them bags of rice, meat and a case of tobacco. Chu Leong agreed to take them to Madang. 18

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The Pidgin word for arrow is Supia. It is presumed arrows rather than spears rained down on them.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See Chapter 37 The tracking down of W.A. [Bill] Macgregor

J.K.McCarthy in his "Patrol Into Yesterday" mentions that two other prospectors were with the Schmidt and Schultze. They were Joshua King and Groos; the latter was not taken into custody and escaped to Germany. Schultze and King knew that Schmidt's trail of blood must soon come to an end. They deserted Schmidt and made their way to Angoram and gave themselves up<sup>19</sup>.

While Schultze may have eventually surrendered at Angoram, there was an intervening episode in his story as told by Pacific Islands Monthly.<sup>20</sup> Under the heading **Mr. Schultz's "Find"** 

Firstly we had the find, reported to be four ounces a day "somewhere" in the headwaters of the Yuat River which drains into the Sepik. In April [1934] Schultz, who had left the Purari area some nine months before with Messrs. Schmidt (father and son) found his way down the Yuat river and eventually reported himself at the Government Station at Angoram, on the Lower Sepik.

Here Mr. Schultz found the indefatigable Alf. Belfield and "Dick" Glasson, who were then refitting [for a prospecting trip] to proceed to the upper reaches of the Sepik towards the Dutch border... After a consultation they decided to postpone that trip and accompany Mr. Schultz to where he stated his find to be.

Mr. Schultz, himself came on to Madang for other stores and equipment. Later he returned and joined the other two, after which, in a small launch, with canoes and carriers they set off on what they stated to be a three weeks' trek before reaching their objective.

It is not known exactly when in the sequence of events that Schultze and King were arrested. As for Schmidt, he did not plan to surrender. He planned to steal a boat on the Sepik and make his way to Dutch New Guinea...At his camp on the bank of the lower Yuat River Schmidt explained to his armed labourers that if a District Officer came, he, Schmidt would pretend to surrender and then they, the labourers, were to shoot the Officer from ambush.

ADO Colin McDonald duly arrived at the miner's camp and found Schmidt waiting for him. As McDonald stepped ashore to make the arrest Schmidt started to wave his arms. The hidden natives ran out from their hiding places, but instead of shooting McDonald, they pointed their rifles at Schmidt and told McDonald that Schmidt was a very bad man and to be careful of him. Schmidt was arrested and taken to Angoram and then on to Wewak.<sup>21</sup>

In Wewak, as the investigation continued and the case against the prospectors was prepared. Schmidt acquired a piece of metal tubing from a child's pram and using that as the barrel fashioned an imitation of an automatic pistol and made his escape. Two patrols were dispatched to intercept him. J.K.McCarthy, ADO Aitape went overland from Aitape to Timbunke on the Sepik in case Schmidt tried to escape upstream, while P.O. Bill Kyle moved west along the coast towards Dutch New Guinea and overtook Schmidt, who had been obtaining food at the point of his dummy pistol.<sup>22</sup>

Mary Mennis continues her story in relation to investigation or committal hearings that were held in Salamaua:

In 1935 Maia and others were contacted and taken to give evidence in the court against Schmidt. Bulus who was Schmidt's *bossboi*, was also called up to go to the court at Salamaua. Bulus had a similar story to Maia. It must have been a traumatic time for Bulus because when I interviewed him forty years later in 1974, about this occasion, he was very nervous he could be in court again...Bulus and Maia could have easily been found guilty

along with Schmidt and been hanged as well. However Maia's cunning way of instructing his friends to give the same evidence and not say anything else swayed the court.<sup>23</sup>

Evidence brought forward by the Crown against Schmidt in every case was given by labourers indentured to the accused and showed that the prisoner maintained an iron rule over his servants, who were afraid of him and carried out his instructions with trepidation.<sup>24</sup>

Mary Mennis continues: Schmidt pleaded not guilty due to insanity. He stated he went mad after he saw his son, Wiggy speared while crossing the Jimi River... Wiggy tried for years to clear his father's name, saying that prejudice against a German settler was one of the aspects of the trial. Sometime after Wiggy was speared, Schmidt was joined up with Schultze, Groos and King and the four men indulged in a "nightmare of shooting and rape." [Townsend. 1968: 223]. Groos returned to Germany before charges could be brought.<sup>25</sup>

In October 1935 Messrs. Schmidt, Schultze and King arrived in Rabaul from Wewak having been committed to stand trial in the Supreme Court. Some forty native witnesses were brought to Rabaul for the case.

As a sign of the political and social views of the times - no less than 80 pages of the Hansard of the Commonwealth parliament are occupied by the reports of the debates which took place on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> 1936, as a result of an attempt by the Labour Party to set aside the sentence of death imposed on Ludwig Schmidt for a series of murders of natives. Although it was carried on all night and part of two days, the debate brought out nothing new...Speakers...condemned the judicial system of New Guinea (which does not permit the use of juries) and sought to show it would damage white prestige in New Guinea if a white man were hung, but the Government stuck firmly to the recommendation of the Administrator and would not interfere with the sentence that had been passed. As a balancing argument concerning the hanging of one white man it was pointed out that between 1925 and 1936 a total of 57 New Guineans had been hanged in the Mandated territory.<sup>26</sup>

Schmidt was found guilty of killing four Mt Hagen men. He was sentenced to death and hanged in Rabaul on March 25<sup>th</sup> 1936<sup>27</sup>. Helmuth Schultze was sentenced to seven years for having abducted a native woman, while Joshua King was sentenced to ten years for having attempted to do grievous bodily harm.

Meanwhile [European] public opinion in the Sepik in April 1936 noted that:

At the moment, everyone was furiously indignant about the very recent hanging of Schmidt, the first European to be hanged in the country.<sup>28</sup>

Ludwig Schmidt Jr. was taken into custody as an enemy alien at the outbreak of the second World War, but was released after fourteen months of internment in Australia, and allowed to join the AIF<sup>29</sup> After the war and into the 1970s he served as a Mining Warden in the Sepik – the writer met him at Nuku in 1976. In 1963 when J.K.McCarthy's *Patrol into Yesterday* was released Ludwig Jr contacted MacCarthy and told him abusively that his coverage of his father's exploits was inaccurate as it left out one important character. This was mentioned in a discussion between Mr. MacCarthy and the writer at Mr. McCarthy's Mt Eliza home in Melbourne, in the 1970s. He asked if I knew who the "important character" was. I said it must have been Ludwig Junior himself, who had been evacuated with arrow wounds.

#### **End Notes Chapter 43**

- <sup>1</sup> Leahy M. Exploration into Highland New Guinea 1930-1935 Crawford House Press Bathurst. 1994. P 6.
- <sup>2</sup> Atichison T. Early History of Kainantu. Item 421 Bragge Reference Vol 13.
- <sup>3</sup> Atichison T. Item 421 Bragge Ref. Vol 13
- <sup>4</sup> The Chinnery papers from a handwritten list. See item 423 Bragge Reference Vol 13
- <sup>5</sup> The Chinnery papers from a handwritten list. See item 423 Bragge Reference Vol 13
- <sup>6</sup> Personal communication from Pat Johnson, daughter of Charles Bates.
- <sup>7</sup> Gammage W Taylor, James Lindsay (1901 1987) Australian Dictionary of Bibliography, Vol 18 (MUP), 2012. Item 420 Bragge Reference Vol 13
- <sup>8</sup> G.W.L.Towmsend District Officer 1968 page 232
- <sup>9</sup> Wikipedia.
- <sup>10</sup> R.M.Wiltgen Catholic Mission plantations in Mainland New Guinea their origin and purpose. -Second Waigani Seminar. Page 25
- <sup>11</sup> Souter. G The last unknown. Angus & Robertson 1963 P 186
- <sup>12</sup> Mennis M. A Potted History of Madang (2005) P 144
- 13 Mennis M 2005 P 148
- 14 Mennis M 2005 P 149
- <sup>15</sup> Bates C.D. reports held by his daughter Pat. Johnson. See Bragge Ref Vol 12 item 405
- <sup>16</sup> Bragge reference Vol 12 with item 405
- <sup>17</sup> Souter. G 1963 P 186/7
- 18 Mennis M 2005 P149
- <sup>19</sup> McCarthy J.K. Patrol Into Yesterday F.W.Cheshire Publishing Pty Ltd 1963 P135
- <sup>20</sup> Pacific Islands Monthly June 22 1934 p 21.
- <sup>21</sup> McCarthy J.K. 1963 P134/5
- <sup>22</sup> McCarthy J.K. 1963 P179
- <sup>23</sup> Mennis M 2005 P152
- <sup>24</sup> Pacific Islands Monthly April 23rd 1936 P 60
- <sup>25</sup> Pacific Islands Monthly March 19th 1936 P 34
- <sup>26</sup> Pacific Islands Monthly April 23rd 1936 P 60
- <sup>27</sup> Pacific Islands Monthly March 19th 1936 P 9
- <sup>28</sup> Marshall A.J. The men and birds of paradise. W.Heinemann Ltd. London 1938 P 98
- <sup>29</sup> Fleetwood L. A short history of Wewak Wirui Press Wewak 1984 P 32

# Sepik 2 Chapter 44 Oroville [Ward Williams] Gold prospecting Expeditions in the "Min" World 1935 – 1937

To the writer's knowledge there are three primary sources of information on the Oroville prospecting expeditions to the Upper Fly and Upper Sepik Rivers. These are, in date order:

- 1. Stuart Campbell's diaries 1935-37 which are lodged in the Mitchell Library Sydney.
- 2. James Sinclair's Wings of Gold Robert Brown & Associates 1978 Chapter 34 Ward Williams.
- 3. Norman Haynes' The Fly River Flights Gloucester Town Hall Printing Unit 1986

Additionally, Stuart Campbell and Wallace Kienzle's *Natives of the Fly and Sepik Headwaters*—Oceania Vol VIII No 4 of June 1938 provides good information on the Min people as they existed in 1936-7 and importantly on relations between the "Min" and the expedition.

#### 000000000

These expeditions were organized on behalf of an American and British mining syndicate and was led by Mr. John Ward Williams, a highly regarded American mining engineer. He had experience in many remote parts of the world and for the previous seven years had concentrated on the development of gold resources in Papua, particularly Papua's Yodda gold field. The exploration company involved in the Fly/Sepik expeditions was the Oroville Gold Dredging Company. <sup>1</sup>

A special feature of Mr. Ward Williams expedition planning involved the use of an aircraft which could land on both water and land. Aircraft, combined with the use of radio, would revolutionise exploratory field work by providing ground resupplies, subject to weather, where and when required. This would replace the previous time-consuming re-supply practice of "staging" as undertaken by the Karius and Champion expeditions of 1926/7 and 1927/8.

The plane used for Ward Williams's 1935 expedition was a Short Scion, which was a twin float plane rather than an amphibian. To land on land it was necessary to bring the aircraft ashore and replace the floats with wheels. This requirement and Ward Williams' interest in exploring the Upper Sepik meant that an airstrip site was required adjacent to the water as far towards the Fly River headwaters as possible. The survey work was to be conducted throughout the whole of the Western Division. Ward Williams' intention of a foray into the upper Sepik was illegal <sup>2</sup> as it entailed entering both the mandated territory to which his permits did not apply, and an uncontrolled area into which he had no permit to enter.

The airstrip site eventually chosen was some thirty miles upstream of D'Albertis junction and was known as Kiunga bend. The airstrip site and original camp site were constructed just upstream of the bend on the left bank of the Fly River – directly opposite the present-day Kiunga township. The camp was called Oroville. Due to flooding the camp was soon moved to higher ground on the right bank opposite the airstrip.

Ward Williams recruited former World War 1 soldiers and later Edie Creek miners and bushmen Bill Korn and Joe Bourke who between them had a quarter of a century of New Guinea bush experience on plantations and gold mines. Also in the team were George Anderson and Jack Gwilt. They employed 100 local Awin natives and cut an aerodrome 50 yards wide and 500 yards long from the virgin forest; an exercise that took three months. <sup>3</sup>

It was recognized that the expedition camp required security. Acting Assistant Resident Magistrate Cecil Cowley and ten armed members of the Papuan Constabulary were allocated to the Oroville camp, which ceased being a Base Camp to be called "Oroville Police Camp". Cowley had been employed by Anglo-Iranian Oil Ltd in 1927 before joining the Papuan Administration as a Patrol Officer.

The Short Scion with pilot Stuart Campbell and mechanic J.Hellon on board left Sydney on 11<sup>th</sup> June 1935. After many short hops up the Australian coast they arrived in Daru on 25<sup>th</sup> July. Campbell's regarded the expedition ahead as probably one of the toughest he had tackled, not the least because the Short Scion was underpowered for the task. <sup>4</sup>

Flight Lieutenant Stuart Campbell had enlisted in the RAAF as a cadet on 26<sup>th</sup> April 1926. He accompanied Sir Douglas Mawson as senior pilot on the first of two Antarctic expeditions 1929-31. He then worked for and was a partner with Major Hemming's company in London and flew a Dragon doing survey work in Western Australia for Western Mining and a survey of the Bulolo gold fields. He returned to Sydney on 18<sup>th</sup> May 1935 to help prepare the Short Scion for the Oroville Gold Dredging Company expedition.<sup>5</sup>

On 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1935 Campbell was in Kerema, having flown there in search of the Oroville chartered supply ship the *Gwen*, which was reported missing. From there he flew back to Daru, refueled and took off for Oroville. The Short Scion went missing that day; Campbell had time to radio Thursday Island "landing near Sturt Island with dud engine". The plane landed safely and was adrift for four days on the Fly River before being found by the Government ship *Vailala* and towed back to Daru. Campbell remained in Daru while the plane was repaired and finally departed in the Short Scion for Oroville on 31<sup>st</sup> August 1935.<sup>6</sup>

Soon after landing at Oroville, Campbell noted the return of the *Gwen* from downstream with Ward Williams, Bill Korn, Joe Bourke, and Jack Gwilt on board. In camp were George Anderson, Tom Parke and Cecil Cowley. After meeting everyone Campbell noted in his diary:

Had a long yarn with Williams this evening and it appears this job is going to be for worse than I anticipated. I have to carry men and cargo to make dumps of petrol, food and camping equipment over a range of mountains 12,000 feet high and land on unknown grassy valleys, reputed to be ideal to make aerodromes. This aircraft is totally unsuited to this type of work and moreover [I] have no confidence in these engines.<sup>7</sup>

In the first days of September 1935 Oroville Police camp security became a concern. Some axes had gone missing and Cecil Cowley and his police were obliged to raid local villages to expedite their return. This offended the local people and it was feared that the camp might be attacked. Two prisoners were taken and handcuffed together, but managed to escape. The Awin people on the north [right] bank of the Fly River were to remain difficult neighbours throughout both the 1935 and 1936-7 expeditions.

On 6<sup>th</sup> September 1935 the *Gwen* took Bill Korn, Joe Bourke and Cecil Cowley around to Observatory bend on the Strickland River to conduct further prospecting. On 28<sup>th</sup> September Campbell lunched with Korn at Observatory bend and learned that nothing had been found and that eliminated the Papuan territory. The only remaining hope was in the mountains in the Upper Sepik. This was what the party had anticipated.<sup>8</sup>

On 21<sup>st</sup> September, 12<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of October 1935 Campbell flew Ward Williams over the valley of the Upper Sepik. On Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September Campbell's diary noted:

The Scion was coaxed to 8,800 feet and we passed over with less than 300 feet to spare "Immediately the ground started to fall away and within three miles I burst into the sunshine of a wideopen valley, the headwaters of the Sepik; our goal at last. There below us lay grassy slopes and in all directions could be seen the clusters of brown thatched huts of native villages." This was the first ever sighting of the Telefomin valley from the air.

But concerning the risks involved in flying an unsuitable plane in a difficult flying environment Campbell noted:

He was rapidly coming to accept flying conditions which, just a few days previously would have appalled him<sup>9</sup>

The aircraft was still a float plane so without a suitable area of water, any attempt to land was out of the question. When they turned back the way they had come, the pass was blocked...at 8,800 feet Campbell sneaked over the divide between low-hanging clouds and set a course for home. ..

For the 12<sup>th</sup> October flight, the floats were removed and replaced by wheels. Upon testing, Campbell concluded that the Short Scion was a much better aeroplane without floats. That day, with Ward Williams and Joe Bourke on board the Short Scion climbed to 10,000 feet and crossed the Hindenburg Range. They sought to land on the grass ridges, but the only two areas that looked remotely suitable had surface water on them and had every appearance of being upland bogs. They turned for home, and while the clouds had rolled in they crossed the range at 11,000 feet. Nothing had been seen to resemble the "miles and miles of perfectly level grassy plains" reported by Karius and Champion.

Ward Williams still wanted to attempt a landing on the grassy slopes, perhaps with Guinea Airways aeroplane standing by. But Guinea Airways wanted no part of the scheme. Campbell understood that the Sepik was an uncontrolled area and as such was closed to outsiders...a comparatively small concern for Williams, who might get in unobserved, but Guinea Airways would have the spotlight on it and could not afford such an involvement.<sup>11</sup>

Campbell flew Ward Williams to Port Moresby at the end of October 1935. On 13<sup>th</sup> November, he received a message from Williams to go to the Strickland camp and instruct everyone to return to Oroville base. At the Strickland camp at that time were Bill Korn, Jack Gwilt, Joe Bourke and George Anderson. Soon after, orders were received to abandon Oroville and proceed to Daru. By November 26<sup>th</sup> four laden double canoes were ready for towing by the ships *Gwen* and *Papcon*; they arrived in Daru on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December 1935.<sup>12</sup>

## Matters of Chronology - Oroville and Archbald expeditions.

- The 1st Oroville Expedition to the Upper Fly and Upper Sepik ended and departed Oroville in late November and arrived in Daru on 8<sup>th</sup> December 1935.
- The Archbald expedition to the Upper Fly and the fringes of the "Min" world commenced reconnaissance flights on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1936. See chapter 45.
- The ship *Ronald S* arrived in Oroville on 10<sup>th</sup> August 1936 to take the Archbald party out and bring in the advance party of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Oroville expedition.

# As one expedition started another ended - a story of three expeditions to the "Min" World.

**Expedition 1** As indicted above the 1935 Ward Williams expedition prospected the Papuan side of the Limestone barrier failed to locate payable gold. Additionally, it was discovered that its aircraft, the Short Scion, was not suitable for the expedition's planned regular flights across the high altitude limestone barrier, to service the needs of a planned base in the Telefomin valley. Expedition 1 left the field, arriving in Daru on 8<sup>th</sup> December 1935.

**Expedition 2** As described in the next Chapter, Richard Archbald was an American zoologist and independently wealthy philanthropist. After an expedition to Papua in 1933, he returned in 1936 to explore the Upper Fly and the Fly Sepik Divide. Like the Ward Williams expedition, he relied upon a plane which would land upon water or land; a Fairchild amphibian. The expedition's forward base was established on Mt Blutcher, when the Fairchild was sunk in a storm in Port Moresby, causing the abandonment of their expedition.

**Expedition 3** In October 1936, the Ward Williams and party were back in Oroville preparing for their 1936/7 crossing of the limestone barrier into New Guinea's Telefomin valley, when the Archbald party, having abandoned their expedition, also arrived in Oroville, en route to Daru.



Reunion at Oroville. Seated: Kingsley, Brown, Healy, Archbold, Korn, Burke. Standing: Willis, Julstedt, Rand, Brass.

Presumably Kingsley was from the crew of the ship Ronald S

Writer's Note: Given that Hide's recent request to cross the border from Papua into New Guinea to continue prospecting the Strickland River had been declined, apparently Ward Hunt decided not to trouble the bureaucracy with either a similar request, or an application for entry into an uncontrolled area. Presumably if he discovered payable gold he would have taken the steps necessary to allow him to register a claim and benefit from the discovery.

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On 10<sup>th</sup> August 1936, the *Ronald S* brought the Oroville advance party back to Oroville. A new member of the party was Wallace Kienzle, a 22-year-old with experience as an overseer of native labour and mining experience from the Yodda gold field. Another new member was Bill Brown from the Marconi School of Wireless, Sydney<sup>13</sup>.

The immediate plan was that Ward Williams, and presumably Stuart Campbell would wait in Sydney for the arrival of the aeroplane by ship while the advance party would clean up Oroville camp and prepare a forward base as close as possible to the limestone barrier<sup>14</sup>. The fact that the Oroville advance party and Archbald party had some days together while the *Ronald S* unloaded Oroville stores and equipment allowed exchanges of information concerning landing sites on the Palmer River, the very recent track clearing, camp site preparation and descriptions of the people met along the route the Oroville would follow.

In order to establish No 1 camp Korn and Bourke had gone by canoe up the Fly River to the Palmer River, then up the Palmer to its junction with the Tully. From there they proceeded ten miles up the Tully and then walked westward for seven hours to the Fly River where they made camp about five miles upstream of Flint Island. They had the advantage of having a copy of Ivan Champion's map of the 1927-8 North West patrol route. 15

The awaited aeroplane was a secondhand Sikorski amphibian Model 39, registration No NC54V. With 300 horse power, it would provide more than 50% more power than the Short Scion. It arrived in Sydney on August 11<sup>th</sup>. Another new member of the expedition was recruited; he was Roy Savage who would maintain the plane's engine. The Sikorski departed Sydney on 26<sup>th</sup> August 1936 and arrived in Daru on 1<sup>st</sup> September. After some delay with customs clearance in Port Moresby, the Sikorski arrived at Oroville in the 1<sup>st</sup> week of September. During mid-September, the Sikorski conducted a week of shuttles to the No 1 camp below the Fly gorge carrying supplies and native carriers.

Having landed on the Fly River at No 1 Camp, anchoring was impossible because of the current, so Campbell had to turn the aircraft upstream and hold the position with the engine while unloading in mid channel into canoes. A round trip including unloading took a little over an hour. It was over 80 miles from Oroville to No 1 camp. Then on the 18<sup>th</sup> September a final resupply left Bill Korn, Wallace Kienzle and Joe Bourke with a month's rations and 32 carriers. Their immediate task was to get over the first limestone barrier<sup>16</sup>. [I.e. the Fly River Gorge.]

Nine days before attempting to take his party through or around the Fly Gorge, Bill Korn and nine carriers set out to try and find the best route. At one stage they were confronted by angry warriors with arrows fitted to their bow strings, dancing and gesticulating defiantly some 200 feet away on the other side of a deep gorge<sup>17</sup>.

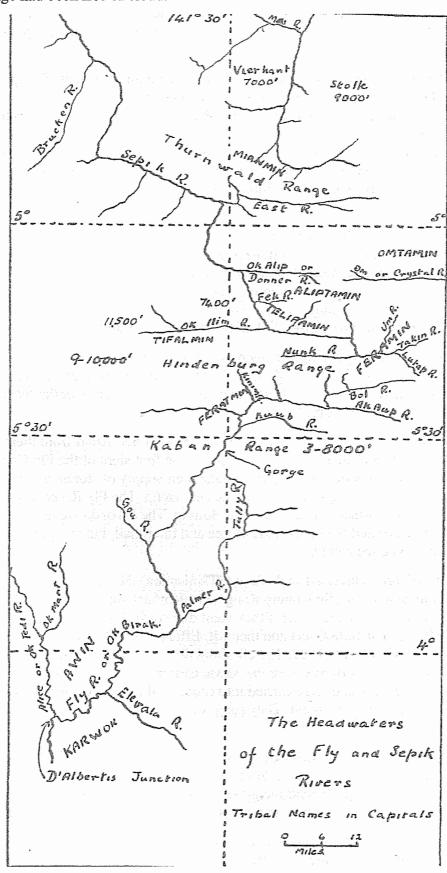
The whole party set out from No 1 camp on 26<sup>th</sup> September. Apart from their permanent carrier line, 16 Awin carriers had also been recruited. At the first sight of the Fly Gorge the Awin men abandoned the party, making it necessary to stage their supply of stores, by sending carriers back to the previous camp to bring everything to the next camp. The Fly River Gorge took four days to traverse. It took them a further ten days to reach Bolivip. The Sikorski sighted them there and dropped them one hundred and twenty pounds of rice and their mail, but three of the five bags of rice dropped were unable to be recovered.

At Bolivip the party conversed with Tamal (Tamismara) the headman of Bolivip through sign language about a way across the Hindenburg Range. He demonstrated by climbing a vertical tent pole, the conditions they would encounter if they went due north. The Bolivip guides then led them further east over Mt. Faim at 10,000 feet and then Mt. Effel at 11,000 feet. This had been the route Karius and Champion had taken in 1927. The climbing was exhausting and every party member suffered; not least among the sufferers were the Kiwai carriers, who were not mountain men. They lay exhausted beside the track and were carried into camp by the Bolivips, who, being mountain men, could not understand their problem. They suggested that as they were going to die anyway that they be allowed to kill and eat them. <sup>18</sup>

After days of extreme cold and damp, yet with no surface water available with which to cook their now moldy rice, they at last started to descend. Two hours into the descend they caught sight of the great open valley of the Upper Sepik; the grassy terraces where they planned to make an airstrip; two further days of walking brought them to a point overlooking the Telefomin plateau.

The party was all but out of rations and not having seen the Sikorski for many days, they were concerned it might have crashed. The decision was taken to send one party back to Kiunga with their remaining rations to seek help. Wallace Kienzle was about to depart with Tamal and the Bolivip

guides when the Sikorski appeared overhead and dropped rice, a loaf of bread and trade goods<sup>19</sup>. According to Campbell's diary the 14<sup>th</sup> of October was the first time in weeks that the top of the Hindenburg range had been free of cloud.



Stuart Campbell and Wallace Kienzle's 1938 Oceania article<sup>20</sup> provided the map [previous page] and description of the land route expedition had followed:

From the Palmer Junction the country begins to rise in a series of small ridges, running approximately east west, each higher than the last, until finally the crest of the Kaban Range<sup>21</sup> is reached at an altitude of about 4,000 feet. On the northern side this range drops away in a sheer cliff of thinly covered white limestone, probably about 1500 feet high, and it is this cliff which marks the southern boundary of what will subsequently be called the Mountain Area.

Northwards from the Kaban Range and running roughly parallel with it about eight miles away,<sup>22</sup> [was] the real backbone of the country – the massive Hindenburg Range, an impressive wall of rock nowhere less than 9,000 feet, and in places exceeding 11,000 feet ASL. It is the valley between these two great ranges that the numerous streams that go to make up the headwaters of the Fly River converge...

Crossing the narrow ridge of the Hindenburg, we descend sharply in one steep slope to the floor of the upper Sepik valley, a huge grassy basin surrounded with mountains 8,000 to 12,000 feet high, and dotted with numerous villages and native gardens.<sup>23</sup>

The ground party set up the camp which would be the expedition headquarters for the next five months. A five-rail-post-and-rail fence was constructed around the camp as the nearest village was just a mile away and many other villages in close proximity.

The ground party was met by Femsep and his people and they assisted with the work on the airstrip and camp. The minimal preparation of the airstrip apart from burning grass was indicated by the fact that less than a fortnight after the arrival of the ground party the Sikorski made its first landing in Telefomin on 26<sup>th</sup> October 1936. The airstrip and the landing were described as:

Viewed from the air the first impression was very favourable; rather less so as the approach was made. There was an uphill slope of maybe 1 in 20 over some 400 yards. At the top was a large sign STOP and at the downhill end a still larger sign MUD. Loose stones had been gathered clear of the strip into one huge pile. After one frightening first attempt to land the Sikorski made a very successful landing...

The natives had never seen an aeroplane before. They held their ground as the Sikorski landed, but, as it taxied towards the ground party, and incidentally towards themselves they gave a howl and scattered in all directions...they soon got over their fear and learned that the things they coveted – knives axes and salt were delivered by the aeroplane<sup>24</sup>

Security seemed not to be a problem; excellent relations were quickly established:

From dawn to sunset the camp was surrounded by hundreds of laughing, jabbering warriors, whose insatiable curiosity knew no bounds. Shaving, to them was a most interesting operation; having a bath in a bucket of hot water sent them into shrieks of delight, and even the most intimate details of our toilet were perforce carried out in the open and surrounded by an amazed and interested audience of men women and children. An abundance of taro, sweet potato, bananas and sugar cane was exchanged for salt.<sup>25</sup>

In terms of mining it became obvious that the geology of the immediate Telefomin area primarily consisted of limestone, which was not a source rock for gold. The sedimentary beds of the Telefomin plateau were tested without finding gold. Ground parties set out to prospect further afield and in order to support them, the Sikorski flew in a large supply of rations, stores and petrol. With the air support available for resupply drops, the ground parties travelled far and wide. But this also

involved risk; what would happen if the Sikorski became unavailable for whatever reason. Ward Williams addressed this risk factor by bringing in a second aircraft; a Wako T 10, which was a land plane, not an amphibian. As it only had a range of 400 miles, it was brought into Telefomin via Madang, with a diversion into Wewak.

Korn, Bourke and Williams prospected the headwaters of the Elip River and while they found gold colours, they were not in workable quantities for commercial exploitation. They also prospected the Sepik without success. Meanwhile Campbell flew Ward Williams on reconnaissance of the whole area including the Om and the Sepik Strickland divide area. On a flight close to the border with Dutch New Guinea, Campbell discovered a previously unknown river, which, as it was discovered in January he named it the January River<sup>26</sup>. Landing there would give the prospectors access to the Hoffnungs River area. James Sinclair takes up the description:

On 13<sup>th</sup> January [1937] he took off from Telefomin with Bill Korn, one carrier some food and camping equipment...Both Campbell and Korn knew the perils of attempting a landing on an unmapped stream; the brown waters...could be masking rocky outcrops that could rip the bottom out of the amphibian...The river was only 100 feet wide, with trees overhanging both sides, and the wing of the Sikorski spanning 52 feet...He touched down smoothly and taxied up to a small island, which became known as Wednesday Island...In short order Campbell returned with Bourke, another carrier and more supplies...Both men [Korn and Bourke] waited for the Sikorski to return with more men and supplies.

Over Telefomin Campbell discovered that a strong cross-wind was blowing across the aerodrome and he landed with drift on, bumping heavily on one wheel and breaking one of the hollow duralium undercarriage struts...

Campbell's first concern was to advise Korn and Bourke of the mishap and Ken Garden flew to the January River and dropped supplies to them, with a note that Wallace Kienzle was preparing to leave on foot to join them. But on landing at Telefomin, the same cross-wind...caught the Wako "for one terrible moment it stood poised on tail skid and wingtip...finally falling back onto its wheels again with a damaged rear spar and aileron...<sup>27</sup>

Kienzle led ration laden carriers on a forced twelve-day march to the stranded party. These incidents demonstrated just how risk-prone the Oroville prospecting venture really was. It was made even more so as the expedition's radio was located at Kiunga; apart from its aircraft [now unavailable] the Telefomin based party was out of touch with the outside world. The Wako's wooden frame was repaired on site, while make shift repairs to the Sikorski allowed further resupplies to the prospectors and the return of Kienzle to Telefomin before it was flown to Lae for repair.<sup>28</sup>

The prospecting of the Brucken and Hoffnungs Rivers now proceeded, but failed to find any gold. On 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1937 Ward Williams, Korn, Bourke and 14 carriers departed from Wednesday Island and prospected their way to the head of the January River. Again the results were negative. They crossed into the headwaters of the May River. Because of the rugged nature of the forested terrain Campbell found it very difficult to locate the ground party to drop supplies...By 10<sup>th</sup> March they had progressed down the May to a point where it widened out from a mountain torrent to a swift flowing river. They rafted downstream and by the 17<sup>th</sup> March they reached a broad calm section of the river and were able to signal Campbell to land the Sikorski, and by the 20<sup>th</sup> he had flown in sufficient supplies and equipment for prospecting to begin.<sup>29</sup>

Mert Brightwell's Ambunti patrol No 2/1954-55, as mentioned the Ward Williams Expedition wrongly named the August River of which they saw only the middle and upper reaches, as the January River.

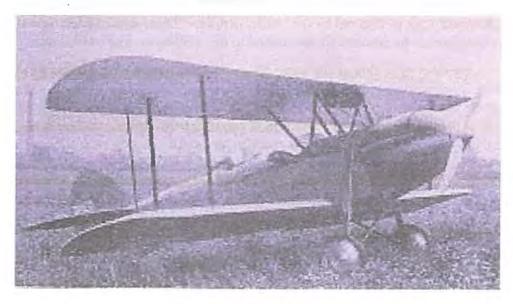
# **Short Scion**



Sikorski amphibian Model 39



Wako T 10



The upper August is where the August River flows slightly north of west towards the mountain gate. On some maps it is called the January River. By following the "January" River to its headwaters and crossing the divide into the headwaters of the May River indicates that of the two rivers which form the Upper August; the Tabu and the Aki, it seems they prospected up the Aki River. [Sepik 4 chapter 38 discusses Telefomin Patrol No 3/1966-67 which describes this same route as far east as Mowaimin in the May headwaters].

#### 00000000

Richard Thurnwald's visit of 1914 and that of Karius and Champion in 1926 [as far as Bolivip] and 1927-8 were each, of necessity hurried due to fears of running out of food. By contrast the Ward Williams expedition in the "Min" world lasted from October 1936 until February 1937. This allowed a more leisurely interaction with the "Min" peoples. Stuart Campbell and Wallace Kienzle, while not anthropologists, reported on the different groups of people they met and their relationships with each other. They wrote of the "Min" people:

...[of] their disposition we can only say that it has never been our fortune to meet a more friendly, cheerful, happy and unsophisticated community of natives.

They lead an idyllic life style in the healthy, bracing mountain climate, with little work to do and lots of time to do it. When this becomes tiresome there is always the diversion of a trading visit to one of other of the friendly neighbouring tribes, entailing perhaps a two day walk over a 10,000 feet limestone range...

Disease...appears to be almost unknown among adults...Throughout our whole period in this district we saw no evidence of the unsightly skin diseases so prevalent elsewhere in New Guinea.

All the Mountain people are cannibals and make no secret of the fact that the flesh of enemies slain in battle is eaten...<sup>30</sup>

These sentiments were also reflected in a telegram that Wallace Kienzle sent to his family announcing his imminent return home at the end of the 1937 expedition:

He jokingly wrote words to the effect that he liked the people so much he thought he might bring home a Telefomin bride...<sup>31</sup>

These friendly relations between the Oroville Expedition and the Telefomin and related peoples were built largely through mutually beneficial trade. The expedition needed a regular supply of food and salt was always in demand by the "Min" people.<sup>32</sup> There was one incident which appears to have had a consequence far into the future related to the Telefomin fear of firearms.

...the story goes that at one stage when supplies were running low a group of natives raided the store while he [Wallace Kienzle] was absent from camp...Wallace returned in time to see them disappearing into the distance, by now about one kilometre away. He was so incensed at their thievery that he took aim at one of the offenders – and hit him. The thieves dropped the axes and knives they were carrying and high-tailed back to their village. Wallace followed them there, where he found the culprit was a fellow called Arfiengim. He was not badly hurt, with only a flesh wound in the back of his shoulder. He literally did not know what had hit him. Even though they had observed Wallace shooting game, they had no idea the damage a bullet could do to a human, especially from so far away. Wallace applied first aid and the native soon recovered, and they never again had trouble with these villagers stealing camp supplies.<sup>33</sup>

Campbell and Kienzle's Oceania article reported on staple diets of taro and some sweet potato, mortuary practices, male and female dress, artifacts, and housing including men's houses. They described what could only be the inside of the Telefolip haus tambaran in which they saw at least 4,000 pig jaws. They noted the presence of stone adzes, but did not see any stone axes. They noted that counting was done using the right hand as a pointer and starting with the fingers on the left hand they work their way up the left arm pointing at salient points – wrist, forearm, elbow, bicep, shoulder, neck, ear, eye, bridge of the nose. The same procedure is then continued in the reverse order<sup>34</sup>.

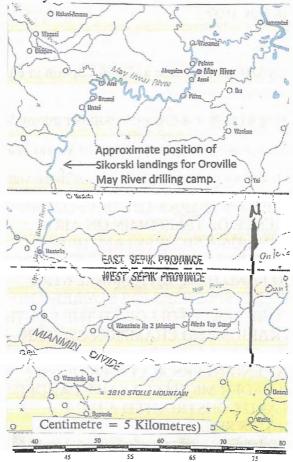
Writer's note: As indicated elsewhere the "Min" count in sequences of 13. The Duna use the same system to count in sequences of 14 as the Huli, in sequences of 15.

#### 000000000

With the prospecting focus now on the May River, the Telefomin base was closed. A huge drill was delivered in sections to the May River site by the Sikorski and three months of prospecting and drilling continued. They found gold colours, but it was located only in the alluvial material close to the surface; an apparent recent deposit. By the end of June it was concluded that there was no El Dorado in the mountain area and that the expedition should pull out.<sup>35</sup>

From the previous three months the May River camp had been in the Mianmin tribal area. Campbell & Kienzle noted of the Mianmin:

These people, of whom the Telifomin [Telefomin] group appears to stand greatly in awe, have never [before] been encountered and whilst their habitat is not known exactly, it is probable that they are the people living north of the Thurnwald Range at the headwaters of the south branch of the May River.<sup>36</sup>



Norman Haynes – *The Fly River Flights* continues: Of the Mianmin nothing had yet been seen. Often the prospectors saw footprints in the mud and branches freshly broken... and once when Korn was taking samples to the river from the drill that was set up nearby, he found his well beaten track closed by a significant barricade of small branches. He pushed these aside and went on with his job, but felt not very comfortable as he bent over the river with dish in hand... That day the Mianmin broke their silence and began shouting defiant calls from the bush, but they still remained invisible.

The final evacuation was one of the most trying periods of the whole nine months operation. Once it began it had to be carried out quickly because each flight left fewer and fewer men and supplies among the natives with whom we had utterly failed to establish any friendly relations.

Our fears that the Mianmin had for months been waiting for the opportunity to attack our camp were confirmed when, half an hour after I had taken Korn away, leaving only Kienzle and two boys in camp, one hundred of the Mianmin warriors who had been invisible throughout the whole period of our stay at the Mai [May] River suddenly appeared from the bush and crowded into the camp. We were leaving behind many supplies in order to lighten the loads and the camp was rich in trade goods. This was Kienzle's salvation. He gave away beads, knives, axes, salt, with regal generosity and this bewildered the hostile invaders who hung around the camp all day, but at nightfall disappeared again into the bush. Next day Kienzle was picked up and the Sikorski rose from the May River for the last time.<sup>37</sup>

#### Some post script comments:

Following the second Oroville expedition which came to an end in July 1937 the Sikorski had been sold and shipped to America. No information on its subsequent career.

The Short Scion was overhauled in Oct 1936 at Mascot in Sydney by De Havilland Aircraft Pty Ltd – floats removed and the plane was converted to a land plane and stored until it was sold to Mr. S.D.Marshall of Sydney in Nov 1937.

Ward Williams returned to USA.

Stuart Campbell re-joined the RAAF and became a Group Captain in charge of Catalina Wing flying mine laying missions during World War 2.

Ken Garden was killed following a crash in a Liberator bomber during World War 2.

Bill Korn died while a prisoner of war of the Japanese during World War 2.

A plaque at Telefomin which is carved on a panel from one of those wartime gliders it reads'

"THIS CG-4A GLIDER MARKS THE DEVELOPMENT AND DEPENDENCE OF TELEFOMIN ON AIR TRANSPORT. IN 1936 A SIKORSKI AMPHIBIAN PILOTED BY STUART CAMPBELL WAS THE FIRST AIRCRAFT TO LAND HERE ON A SMALL STRIP PREPARED BY PROSPECTORS JOE BOURKE AND BILL KORN. THIS PARTY FOLLOWED THE ROUTE OF THE 1926 KARIUS AND CHAMPION GOVERNMENT PATROL OVERLAND FROM THE FLY RIVER. IN 1944 USAAF ENGINEERS ACCOMPANIED BY SQUADRON LEADER MICHAEL LEAHY LANDED BY GLIDERS AND CONSTRUCTED A D.C.3 AIRSTRIP ON THIS SITE."

Telefomin Local Government Council

Cecil Francis Cowley was District Commissioner at Higaturu and was killed in the Mt Lamington eruption of 21<sup>st</sup> January 1951.

#### 000000000

#### Comments on the Kienzle & Campbell map.

The Fak River, also known as the Clear River is here marked as the East River.

The Om also carries the alternate name "Crystal" River.

The Fly River above D'Albertis Junction also carrier the alternate name Ok Birak.

Map/Text Spelling	Current Spelling	Map/Text Spellin	g	Current Spelling
Telifamin	Telefomin	Alip River		Elip River
Aliptamin	Eliptamin	Ilim River		Ilam River
Fekelmin	Fegolmin	Omtamin	Unspec	ified people of upper Om River
Suarmin	Suamin	Feratmin		Faormin? [Thurston spelling]
Kiarikmin	Kialikmin	Atem Kiak		Atemkiakmin
Koblenmin	Koberenmin	Ulapmin		Urapmin
Niamin [from text]	Mianmin	Bolowip		Bolivip
Unkiakmin	Ankiakmin	Setamin		Seltamanmin

## End Notes - Chapter 44

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Haynes N. The Fly River Flights. Shire Hall Gloucester 1986 Page 18

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Haynes N 1986 Page 18

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Haynes N 1986 Page 20

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Haynes N 1986 Page 41

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Haynes N 1986 Page 24

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Haynes N 1986 Page 48-69

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Haynes N 1986 Page 75

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Haynes N 1986 Page 86-7

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Haynes N 1986 Page Page 88 – quoting from Stuart Campbell's diary

<sup>10</sup> Haynes N 1986 Page 89

<sup>11</sup> Haynes N 1986 Page 90

<sup>12</sup> Haynes N 1986 Pages 138-141

<sup>13</sup> Haynes N 1986 Page 156

<sup>14</sup> Haynes N 1986 Page 156

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Sinclair J. Wings of gold – Robert Brown and Assoc. Bathurst 1978 p 243.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Haynes N 1986 Page 159

<sup>17</sup> Haynes N 1986 Page 167

<sup>18</sup> Haynes N 1986 Page 169

<sup>19</sup> Sinclair J 1978 P 247

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Campbell S and Kienzle W. Natives of the Fly Sepik Headwaters. Oceania Vol VIII No 4 June 1938 Topography description pages 463-4. Map on page 468.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> The Kaban Range is adjacent to and immediately west of the Blutcher Range.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> The formil Blutcher Range map shows this distance as closer to sixteen miles.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Keinzle W and Campbell S. Natives of the Fly and Sepik headwaters – Oceania Volume V111 No 4 June 1938. Pages 463-4

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Haynes N 1986 Page 171

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Haynes N 1986 Page 170

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Sinclair J 1978 P 249

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Sinclair J 1978 P 249/250

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Haynes N 1986 Page 173

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Sinclair J 1978 P 250-251

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Campbell S & Kienzle W. 1938 P 470

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Kienzle R The Architect of Kokoda – Hachette Australia Pty Ltd, 2011 P 101

Campbell S & Kienzle W. 1938 P 472
 Kienzle R. 2011 Page 95-6
 Campbell S & Kienzle W. 1938 P 466-481
 Haynes N 1986 Page 173
 Campbell S & Kienzle W. 1938 P 467
 Haynes N 1986 Page 175.

Sepik 2 Chapter 45 Archbald expedition to the fringes of the "Min" world 1936.

The members of the Archbald/Rand New Guinea Expedition [facts drawn from text].

Richard Archbald	Expedition leader, zoologist and Pilot		
Dr. A.L.Rand	Ornithologist		
G.H.H.Tate	Mammalogist		
Russell Rogers	Pilot		
Ewing Julstedt	Radio Operator		
L.J.Brass	Botanist and Chief photographer		
L.A.Willis	Transport Officer		
M.J.Healy	Papuan Government Police Officer		

Richard Archbold [1907-1976] was an American zoologist and philanthropist. He was independently wealthy, being the grandson of the capitalist John Dustin Archbald. He was involved in expeditions to Madagascar 1928-31 and New Guinea [Papua], 1933/34, and 1936-7 and Dutch New Guinea 1938-39. In late 1939 he conducted a pioneer flight across the Indian Ocean on his way back to New York.<sup>1</sup>

#### 00000000

Naturalists such as A.R. Wallace and Luigi Maria D'Albertis were attracted to New Guinea particularly by the birds of paradise. There were many other interesting natural history discoveries yet to be made in the Island. The attention of Mr. Richard Archbald, Research Associate of the Museum of Natural History in New York, was first directed to the possibilities of New Guinea in this respect during 1932, and in January 1933 the Archbald New Guinea expedition left New York and reached Port Moresby in February 1933. The party reached the top of Mt Albert Edward [Central District] and spent some time collecting there, but they found the inland journey extremely slow and hazardous. Rand and Archbald continue their story:

When the 1933 New Guinea expedition returned to New York in May 1934, we had learned from first-hand experience what it means to transport a large party into the interior of that unhospitable island.

On our next trip we hoped to explore the mountainous area around the headwaters of the Fly River...It would be utterly impossible to spend the time we hoped to spend in collecting the birds, animals and plants of the mountain regions unless new methods of transport and supply were to be developed.

Accordingly, as soon as we returned to the United States in 1934 Archbald looked about for a suitable airplane for the next New Guinea trip. He chose a Fairchild Amphibian with a single Wright Cyclone engine, a wingspread of sixty-seven feet, a pay load of 4,000 pounds, and a fuel capacity for 1,300 miles. It had a speed of one hundred and forty miles per hour. The advantage...it could land on the sea, the rivers and the lakes as well as the few airstrips on the island...

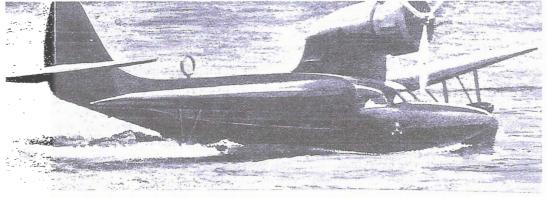
By March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1936 [having arrived back in Papua] we were ready to start our reconnaissance flights... We made five flights in all, covering most of the western division of Papua. Although we failed to find a better route into the mountains than that used by the 1927 patrol [Karius & Champion], we learned a great deal about the country in which we planned to collect. Mr. Woodward<sup>1</sup>, the Government Resident Magistrate in Daru, who accompanied

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> We meet Resident Magistrate previously, when he was one of two Papuan officers on loan to the Trust Territory of New Guineas and was stationed at Ambunti in 1924-5

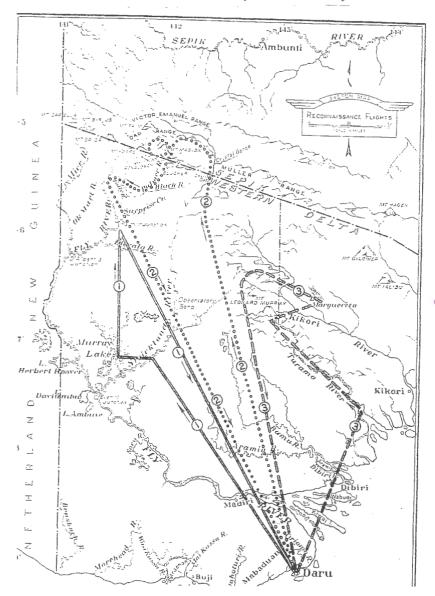
us on one of our flights, said that he saw more of the district under his control in the five hours of flying than he had seen in the last ten years of his administration...

Mr. Ivan Champion of the 1927-29<sup>3</sup> Northwest patrol fame went with us on the first of these flights. His knowledge of the country was of great assistance to us and he pointed out

landmarks that later became familiar to us, too.



Our Fairchild amphibian "Kono" was equally at home on the far reaches of the Fly and on civilized airports.



During the flights we picked out inland depots where the collectors would camp and where supplies would be delivered by plane. We chose one near Palmer Junction; another at the 610 mile mark on the Palmer River<sup>4</sup> near where MacGregor had been turned back by the limestone barrier in 1890; another still; further inland in an abandoned native garden at the end of Mt Blutcher;...and a fourth in the mountains where it was planned to build up an emergency store, east of Mt Mabion and near the slopes of the Dap Range<sup>5</sup>.

Archbald and Rand continue their story:

There, [the Dap Range, is 12.6 miles south of Telefomin and 14.9 miles east of Olsobip<sup>6</sup>] we hoped to collect at 2,000 feet intervals from 3,000 feet to 10,000 feet...

From the Palmer River, we flew over to visit the Ok Mart River, a tributary of the Alice. Mr. Champion was interested to see this region in an attempt to judge the density of its population, always a question of prime importance to government officers. Several years prior to 1936 the government had patrolled the area on foot and had estimated the population at approximately 2,000...The population is certainly more than 2,000 and may even approach...10,000<sup>7</sup>

The expedition's next objective was to establish its Palmer River base. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1936, party members Tate and Brass with 55 carriers and six police departed from Daru on the *Mairi*...The river party stopped at the prospecting camp of Oroville, which is nearly 500 miles up the Fly, and about thirty miles above D'Albertis Junction. The camp is on a low hill on the west bank overlooking the river. An Airstrip had been built on the lower bank of the river [on the opposite river bank].

[Governor Sir William] MacGregor, in 1890, had reported finding fine colours of gold near here, and although the present gold seeking company evidently had not found important deposits here in 1935, they still must have faith that the mother lode will be found in the vicinity, for when we came down the Fly a few months later some of the same men had returned to continue the search...

When we saw Oroville it had been abandoned for about a year. Shrubs had begun to spring up in the gardens. The buildings however were still in good condition...<sup>8</sup>

We took the *Mairi* to the Junction of the Palmer, the highest point on the Fly River that had been reached by a boat of this size. We then returned about four miles down the river, landed, and chose a camp site on the top of a small knoll one hundred feet above the water and one hundred yards inland...On one tree was hewn a scar representing a Sergeant's stripes. The Northwest Patrol had obviously passed this way...very close to where they made the first land camp on their second patrol. Before we had been at the Palmer Junction many hours a canoe appeared along the far bank. These people proved to be friendly... <sup>10</sup>

Willis and Healy sent a detachment of carriers and police out to cut a trail northwards towards the mountains while we made camp...It took us two days to get all of our supplies, and the building of our store was well along by then. As we planned to leave a month's stores here when we went inland to work in the mountains, and since this was the base to which Willis would bring the dropped parachutes and the specimens to deliver them to the plane, it was necessary to build a substantial store...The *Mairi* set off downstream at a good rate with the five-knot current to help her...

Willis and Healy...were to cut a track northwards to the 610 mile mark on the Fly River...at the end of two weeks the plane was to fly in and drop food to the track cutting

party for the next stage of their journey across the limestone to Mt Blutcher. [On 19<sup>th</sup> May] Willis and Healy disappeared into the forest to the north...With the departure of the advance party we set to work [collecting]...with fifty or so natives hunting for me.<sup>11</sup>

The airplane party visited us at Palmer Junction camp on June 1<sup>st</sup>...They had flown over the 610-mile mark with supplies for Willis and Healy...and finally found them two miles below the junction of the Black and Palmer Rivers<sup>2</sup>...Archbald and Rogers landed the plane with their supplies and the next day Willis and Healy moved on...across the Black River, then along the Palmer... towards Mt Blutcher...the next delivery by parachute was planned for two weeks hence.

The discovery of the new landing place for the plane at Black River, twenty five miles further up river offered the scientific staff an opportunity to collect in a slightly different area...The plane returned to Daru to take on extra fuel.

On 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> June the staff and equipment was transferred to the Black River camp... [On the Palmer River] two miles below the junction with the Black River.

On June 18<sup>th</sup> the plane flew in to deliver supplies to the advance party at Mt Blutcher. Two parachute loads of equipment and 17 bags rice were safely landed. The inland party was now only a short distance across the Palmer River from the proposed base at Mt. Mabion.<sup>12</sup>

Then disaster struck. In mid-July a radio message told how the plane had been sunk by a storm in Port Moresby harbour. Archbald and Rand continue:

A blow to our plans...here was the end to our mountain work...without the plane we could go no further inland...The immediate problem confronting us was a safe and speedy retreat to a place on the river where we could receive supplies by boat. Here again the radio proved its usefulness. The advance party had heard of the loss of the plane almost as soon as it happened...Tate, Willis and Healy had only sufficient food to last them for a hurried trip out to the Black River camp. If they were to bring out all their equipment, necessitating one relay, they would require additional stores...

Rogers flew to Lae, the centre of the airplane service in New Guinea, chartered a plane and as co-pilot with one of the Guinea Airways men, flew across the central range of New Guinea to Mt Mabion. They found the western side of the mountain completely covered in cloud but were able to drop the supplies on the old delivery field on the eastern side of Mt Mabion...the party learned of it in a surprising way. One of the little Unkia<sup>3</sup> [Ankeiakmin?] natives suddenly appeared in camp with a bag of rice he had found on the other side of Mt. Mabion. They realized at once Rogers must have delivered the food to the old field and soon recovered their much-needed supplies.

From Healy we learned...how the Setamin [Seltamanmin], the people of the upper Strickland, were at war with the Unkia people and were encroaching on their territory and how the Unkia tried to enlist the aid of our party to drive out or annihilate the Setamin...

So far the retreat had been achieved without the necessity of abandoning anything...In the meantime the Black River party had been building rafts for the trip down river between

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Clearly Willis and Healy had diverted from the original plan of travelling overland to the 610 mile mark on the Fly River, and had continued up the Palmer River. The second Oroville expedition did cross to the Fly River and established their No 1 camp there. The Sikorski aircraft had been able to land there.

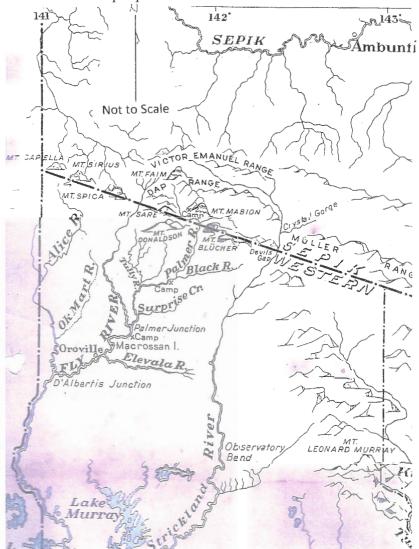
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Photos of "Unkia" men and women on pages 94 and 95 of *New Guinea Expedition* – Published 1940 reveal the Unkia to look exactly like Oksapmin people with men wearing long curly phallocrypts, cane girdles and women wearing full grass skirts.

our present camp and the Palmer Junction and beyond...twenty rafts were completed by August 3<sup>rd</sup>... Each one was equipped with ...fireplace, firewood, tent, cooking gear and food for three weeks.

How quiet and peaceful it was drifting down the still reach below camp...I felt no sense of motion at all and the banks seemed to be drifting past...About noon [on August 8<sup>th</sup>] we arrived at Oroville...We set up the radio and contacted Archbald on board the relief ship *Ronald S...*Two days later, August 10<sup>th</sup>, as we were sitting down to supper we saw the lights of the *Ronald S...*and shortly afterwards she was riding at anchor below the bank...

We would have to wait here at Oroville a few days until the gold mining concern unloaded their stores, then we would go back downstream...At Oroville the gold mining company was represented by four men. Two of them, Bill Korn and Joe Burke, had been on Edie Creek. Two years ago they had used Oroville as a base for prospecting. Now they planned to work into the headwaters of the Fly, travelling by canoe as far as possible, then on foot. Mr. Ward Williams, head of the organization, was bringing an airplane with which to supply the advance party from Oroville. <sup>13</sup>

From Oroville, the *Ronald S* took the Archbald and Rand party to Lake Daviumbu near Everill Junction, south of Lake Murray – an area which has nothing to do with the Sepik or Sepik related people and so is not taken further here.



#### Comments on the Archbald & Rand Map.

Mount Leonard Murray is now known as Mt. Bosavi and Lake Margurita, as Lake Kutubu. 14

The mapped area of the expeditions operations is on average about 22 miles too far north, based upon the relative map locations of Mt. Mabion on the Royal Australian Survey Corps 1966 Blutcher Range formil map. This is supported by the mapped location of the Dap Range, which is located 12.6 miles south of Telefomin and 14.9 miles east of Olsobip<sup>xv</sup> rather that some miles north of the New Guinea border as shown on the Archbald Rand map. Finally, their map shows the Victor Emanuel Range where the central divide is actually located, rather than south of the Om River.

#### **End Notes Chapter 45**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Wikipedia note

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> R.Archbald and A.L.Rand – New Guinea Expedition 1936-7 – Robert M McBride & Company New York 1940 Page 3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> This should read 1927-28

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> MacGregor was turned back on the Fly River not the Palmer. G.Souter *The last unknown* 1963 P 58.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> R.Archbald and A.L.Rand 1940 – photos on pages 18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Wikipedia – Dap Range.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> R.Archbald and A.L.Rand 1940 – page 27

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> R.Archbald and A.L.Rand 1940 – page 34

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> R.Archbald and A.L.Rand 1940 – page 37

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Based upon the geographic location, these would have been Awin people.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> R.Archbald and A.L.Rand 1940 – page 49

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> R.Archbald and A.L.Rand 1940 - page 87

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> R.Archbald and A.L.Rand 1940 – page 115

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> R.Archbald and A.L.Rand 1940 – photos on pages 28 qnd 29

xv Wikipedia – Dap Range + New Guinea

#### SEPIK 2 Chapter 46 The Taylor and Black Hagen-Sepik Patrol 1938-9

In an interesting commentary on the advancement in patrol techniques, Ivan Champion, [whose North West Patrol across Papua and New Guinea in the late 1920s], wrote the following about the Taylor and Black patrol of 1938-39:

[Following the Ward Williams' Oroville expedition of 1936-7] 'Only a year went by and the Kelefomin had their next visitors. This was the New Guinea Administration patrol led by J.L. Taylor and assisted by John Black. It was more an expedition than a patrol. [It was] equipped with radio communication, supplied with food dropped from aero planes, numbering some twenty police and over two hundred carriers. 1'

This patrol did usher in the modern style of patrolling techniques which were further developed during World War 2 with the servicing of ANGAU parties behind the Japanese lines. The Hagen-Sepik patrol was the longest in Papua New Guinea history, being in the field for 15 months from March 1938 to June 1939. It explored the New Guinea Highlands westward from Mt. Hagen to the Dutch New Guinea border. The best account of this patrol is found in Bill Gammage's *The Sky Travellers*, [The Meigunyah Press, University of Melbourne Press 1998], upon which this chapter is heavily based.

The Hagen-Sepik patrol explorations within the current Western and Southern Highlands Provinces and the Enga Province are not relevant to the present chapter. Rather our attention will focus on the patrol's activities in the area of the Sepik River and its tributaries and also in the Lower Lagaip River area which is inhabited by the Hewa people of the Sepik Hill language family.

The patrol was led by ADO James L.Taylor and accompanied by P.O. John R. Black. It was also accompanied by Medical Assistant Callaghan Baird Walsh, better known as Pat. Other Patrol Officers who accompanied the patrol from time to time were Ian Fairley Graham Downes, Murray Stanley Edwards and Lloyd Pursehouse and up to 38 members of the Territory of New Guinea Police.<sup>2</sup>

On the 10<sup>th</sup> May 1938 at Hoiyevia, near present day Tari, Taylor decided to split the patrol. Black and a party of 70 men would go north-west to Telefomin, where they would establish a base camp, repair the Ward Williams airstrip, explore west to the Dutch border and wait for Taylor and party to arrive. They planned that on the 14<sup>th</sup> October 1938 a plane would fly over Telefomin and see if Black's party was there. The Taylor party planned to follow the Sepik divide westward looking for river access into the highlands.

The patrol policy of peaceful penetration of new areas did not sit well with Black who believed in "forceful but just native administration". Of peaceful penetration policy he said:-

"We bring these people under control by conquest...Geneva methods...lead...to the primitive native misinterpreting kindness as weakness...to repeated acts of hostility... and great loss of life...two of three men shot on the first sign of hostility...may save twenty lives or more in the long run ..."

Ivan Champion would have been horrified...<sup>3</sup> Black's attitude set the standards and precedents which his police followed and at times exceeded, resulting over the coming months in a large death toll. Black's police detachment included two well experienced men, Serak and Habana

and younger men Kobubu, Kenai, Wosasa, Tembi, Orengia and Kwangu; the last two being from the Sepik District. In addition Black had Porti and Siouvute sworn in as special constables; a total of ten armed constables.<sup>4</sup>

Although this was a Territory of New Guinea Patrol which was supposed to remain north of the Papuan border, at Hoiyevia they were already well inside Papua and when Black left Hoiyevia on 13<sup>th</sup> June 1938 his patrol initially headed west - the Tari and Koroba areas. The patrol followed the Tumbudu River valley from its headwaters, in Duna tribal country, in a west-north-westerly direction to where the Tumbudu flows into the Strickland River. On the 6<sup>th</sup> July 1938 the patrol reached the Strickland River which they saw as :-

'A terrifying sluice seventy yards wide smashed angrily over half hidden rocks, its whirlpools spinning tree trunks like sticks, drowning talk and splashing spray at the watchers on the bank. On the far side a rock wall rose sheer for two thousand feet... conceding no hint of a track.<sup>5</sup>

Attempts to find or build a bridge up and down stream of their location failed. Finally, the patrol was able to build a bridge and cross the Strickland on the 13<sup>th</sup> July. Meanwhile gold panning produced fine gold colours in every pan, suggesting that there was a major deposit somewhere upstream. They continued prospecting while Constables Serak and Tembi explored the way ahead. A thousand feet above the bridge site they found evidence that people had watched the bridge building. From that point there was a track to the top of the gorge but they doubted that carriers could climb it. On the 16<sup>th</sup> July 1938 the patrol commenced climbing out of the Strickland gorge. Black noted it was the worst climb he had ever attempted:-

'It chilled me to the marrow to take my eyes off the grass and rocks in front of me and steal a glance at the muddy ribbon of the river in the chasm below.<sup>6</sup>'

They reached the top safely and made camp in an old garden, while enjoying the cool breezes that came with their gained altitude. The 17<sup>th</sup> was a rest day while police went ahead searching for people. Black warned his patrol members to respect local property or to suffer the consequences – caning was threatened.

From the Gorge the patrol moved in a northerly direction and as the mist cleared that morning the patrol members saw at close range and on higher ground a semi-circle of armed warriors. Constable Serak walked forward offering cowrie shells and calling reassuringly. Serak reached the line, shook hands and distributed the cowries and the warriors relaxed and led the way to the houses and gardens at Kunanap. As this was happening more warriors came up until about 150 of them were facing the patrol.

The situation suddenly deteriorated and again Serak tried to settle things down by offering a large cowrie shell to a warrior who spat on it. The apparent leader of the warriors, standing about fifty yards from Black, fitted an arrow to his bow string and drew it back. Black shot him dead. The police then opened fire killing at least two others and causing the assembled warriors to flee. By firing before an arrow had been fired, Black placed Serak's life in danger as the latter was mixing with the warriors still trying to make friends when the shot rang out. The man Black shot was Hanpahari/Kinpo.

The interactions between Black's patrol and the local people of the Bimin-Kuskusmin, Bak and Tekin valley areas in July and August 1938 were a strong test of Black's theory that *two of three men shot on the first sign of hostility...may save twenty lives or more in the long run*. The killing done by the patrol showed no sign that lives would be saved as a result in the future. An alternate outcome appeared more likely, i.e. that the patrol earned a reputation for aggression and as a result the local people prepared to defend themselves, creating a downward spiral of negative reinforcement in local relations.

On the other hand, the establishing a peaceful and friendly reputation might expect to create an upward spiral of positive reinforcement in which there was no bloodshed; an example of which was Ivan Champion's relations with the Unkiamin of Bolivip and the other peoples of the Fly headwaters. This was even more likely the case, given that the local people involved had heard of the visits to Telefomin by strangers such as these<sup>7</sup> [Thurnwald, Karius and Champion and the Oroville expedition] and each of those visits had been peaceful.

The patrol moved on, still going north, when on the 19<sup>th</sup> in the Bak valley another man was shot dead as he made a lone charge at the patrol firing arrows as he came. The patrol made camp, and in response to further hostility four pigs were shot, thus engendering additional negative reinforcement. On 20<sup>th</sup> July 1938 the patrol crossed a dividing range and entered the Tekin valley, near the site of the present day Baptist Mission station at Tekin. The Tekin valley was seen to run east west – in the direction of Telefomin ( the headwaters of the Sepik River at Telefomin is known locally as the Tekin ).

A sentry was seen on a hill 100 yards away and called to by the patrol. The response was hoots and owl cries that filled the valley as bowmen hurried to crowd the top of the hill. The waving of branches and signs of peace made by the patrol brought jeers and the angry waving of bows. Black instructed Kwangu to make camp while he, Serak, Porti and Kanai tried to make friendly contact. As Serak and Porti met with an old man who put his bow down, many other warriors were circling behind Black and Kanai. It was Kanai who called the warning that the warriors were about to attack. Black explained what happened next:-

'I fired in the clump of pitpit. I remember the yellow glint of sun on the shower of arrows fired at Kanai and I which providentially caught in a gust of wind and plummeted into the grass on our left. Kanai and I kept on firing. The ambushers broke and ran and we lifted out aim onto the massed archers on the hill top. They too broke and ran...We chased the crowd then through the pitpit and off the hill...8'

<u>Writer's Note:</u> At Oksapmin in April 1966 I spoke with an old man called Kuning. He explained that when Black led his patrol across the Strickland Gorge in 1938, he was among a throng of hundreds of Oksapmin warriors:-

'The people in the Tekin valley gathered at Sembati, where the Tekin Mission station is now...The plan was to attack and kill these spirits who carried no weapons — not one bow, arrow, club or spear could be seen among them...As they were unarmed the attack was to be at close quarters. We saw [Black] pick some green leaves and wave them over his head. Some took this as a sign of peace - others did not. When the patrol was within range of our arrows some warriors started firing.'



1938 Oksapmin warrior Kuning, with a Senior Constable of the 1966 Oksapmin police detachment.

The patrol was ready. One man was shot dead and [Kuning] was shot in the knee. He crawled into the bush and made a nest similar to that of a wild pig and he stayed there for days, and at night a wild pig came and slept on one side while Kuning slept on the other.<sup>9</sup>

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> July the patrol set up camp on the site where the patrol had been attacked at Sembati. Fever struck several of the patrol members at this time, presumably malaria from their time in the Strickland gorge. On the 24<sup>th</sup> Serak took gifts of shells and hung them in a tree. Soon contact was made. On 1<sup>st</sup> August carriers commenced planting gardens in case the patrol returned this way.

Meanwhile attempts were being made to find a track to Telefomin. On the 5<sup>th</sup> August, Black and a small party moved up the Tekin valley, where they met friendly people who introduced some Feramin visitors. Black recalled that Feramin was a tribal name on Karius' map but this did not result in a track or guides being identified to take the patrol to Telefomin. Also on the 5<sup>th</sup> at Divanap they discovered an overgrown European camp site, with steel axe cuts and a neat square clearing. Black had no idea who might have made it.

On 15<sup>th</sup> August two men were met, one was carrying a steel axe. They knew the word "sol" for salt and mimicked planes landing. They were Feramin men – friends of the Tekin people, but

enemies of the Telefomin. They agreed to lead the patrol over the Victor Emanuel range and from high in the moss forest Black glimpsed the Telefomin valley ahead. They set out from the Tekin valley on the 16<sup>th,</sup> and arrived in Feramin territory on 20<sup>th</sup> August 1938. Two days later, the patrol observed two watch towers where young Feramin men stood guard, watching towards Telefomin for any sign of approaching enemy warriors. The next day as the patrol continued on they met Telefomin warriors who were friendly and relaxed. They led the patrol across the Telefomin plateau.

The response of the Telefomin people to the arrival of Black's patrol was to call "Seno! Seno!"...smiling girls ringed the line making unmistakable offers of copulation, and friendly men led the way to Oroville's camp. The patrol made camp on the Oroville campsite overlooking the airstrip. Interestingly, Bill Gammage established in 1988 that the Telefomin people do not know the meaning of "Seno". We noted that Champion quickly established that "Seno" was replaced with the word "Avino" in Telefomin. Apparently the Oroville men had not read Champion's book and persisted with "Seno".

Large quantities of taro were offered in trade. On the 24<sup>th</sup> August, Black was invited to the Telefolip haus tambaran, the source of "Min" traditional belief and power. Whatever the Telefomin motive was for doing this, it was a clear sign of respect and yet another apparent indirect reflection of the positive relationship that developed a year earlier between the Telefomin people and the Oroville party members.

The next day Black shifted his camp to a better site called Tametigin from where he met with local people, learned local words, had patrol members built storehouses and extended the airstrip. He met with Constable Serak and discussed the need to maintain discipline is this sexually free environment, and in this discussion, was shocked to learn of instances of rape and unlawful shootings by some of the patrol police.<sup>11</sup>

<u>Writer's note:</u> In terms of standard patrol management as it existed in the 1960s, several shortcomings appear to be evident in Mr. Black's management of his patrol. These include:-

- 1. Regular spot checks and strict accounting for ammunition issued to police.
- 2. While the senior NCO was a critically important link in the command structure, the Patrol Officer, being a commissioned officer was in overall command and ultimately responsible. To this end it was incumbent upon him to maintain close control over his patrol police and other patrol members by
  - a. Leading by example. The example that was set by both Karius and Champion during the North- West patrol was an ideal to which to aspire.
  - b. To take disciplinary action and criminal charges if a criminal offence was committed. Such charges would be deferred for hearing after the patrol, but knowledge of what was to come would maintain discipline in the interim.

It was noted that soon after, a woman complained that a patrol member had promised her an axe for sex but had not been paid. She identified the offender, but despite hours of interrogation he did not confess. Femsep told Black that the same thing had happened several times before. Black paid the woman an axe and warned the patrol that anyone caught offending would go to gaol or be flogged.

Femsep, Daringarl and Nifinim of Karikmin, local men who had befriended the Ward Williams party, became Black's friends and companions and accompanied him where ever he want. They went with him to Eliptamin where there was an incident of an axe being stolen. Black's response was to shoot five pigs, for which he indicated he would pay if the stolen axe was returned. The axe was returned and payment was made for the pigs.

While in Eliptamin, either on this visit or while passing through the area during the visit to Nenatuman, Black became aware of an orphan called Sune who would play an important part in wartime and post-World War II history. Sune's circumstances were documented by ADO F. Jones in 1955:-

'Sune is a Fogilmin native [of the Upper Fly River]...after his father was killed in a tribal fight, a Telefomin native brought him to Terapdavip in the Eliptamin valley where he was found by the Black-Taylor patrol of 1938-39. He was taken by this party to Madang and later Rabaul, and later brought back to Bogia by Mr. Black.<sup>12</sup>'

On 17<sup>th</sup> October 1938 a Ford Trimotor aircraft circled the Telefomin airstrip and landed. Three Europeans alighted; the Sepik District Officer George Townsend, Police Warrant Officer Ted Allen and Pilot Tommy O'Dae. In what appeared to be typical of D.O. GWL Townsend, he complained that he had no official notice of the patrol working in his district, but in the same breath said that [Administrator] McNichol had told him to give it any help which it may need<sup>13</sup>. The visitors brought mail, bread, beer, stores, magazines and books and above all else the chance to speak English with other Europeans. Surprisingly this was not Townsend's first flight into Telefomin. In 1937 he had been flown in by the Oroville expedition's Stuart Campbell in the Sikorski amphibian.<sup>14</sup>

This was the first of several landings that brought in distinguished visitors. Soon after Kevin Parer's DH Dragon brought Dr. Schroeder, the Sepik District Medical Officer on a flight from Green River. Dr. Schroeder also brought beer, bread, fruit and medicines. Then on 21<sup>st</sup> October the Ford Trimotor returned and airdropped rice, biscuits, trade shell, ammunition and bolts of loin cloth. With its load thus lightened it landed. Mrs. Lynette Townsend, the wife of the District Officer alighted. Black described this scene:-

'The carriers rigged a sedan chair and carried her to the camp. Delighted people flocked in...women crowded around Mrs. Townsend, chatting about clothes and bilums as if she understood. Men came and said Seno! That night they danced in her honour and on 23<sup>rd</sup> October carried her back to the plane. 15,

The flight that took Mrs. Townsend back to Wewak evacuated Constable Habana who was suffering from an infected leg. The plane also took artifacts for Administrator McNichol. These included Feramin war shields and human teeth necklaces. Black also sent an official report and a letter to his parents. At this time there was what might be considered an unusual reflection of Black himself. He had been offered a couple of days break on the coast but he refused. He thought the offer indicated his visitors considered that the loneliness of the long patrol was affecting him and he needed a break. Under the circumstances most officers would have jumped at such an opportunity, except perhaps if they really did need the break but did not realise it.

Writer's Note: After the 1966 ten-week Strickland/Sepik patrol, I spent a week in Telefomin with ADC John and Pat Wearne. After a couple of days, I was surprised when John said "You are OK now, but you were not when you arrived – you were talking very loudly." I recalled late in the patrol I

really enjoyed a half hour radio conversation with him in English. By that time, I am sure I was even thinking in Pidgin!

On 19<sup>th</sup> October, in Black's absence a youth was caught after stealing an axe. He was tied to a post near Black's tent to await Black's return and a decision on punishment. Local men assembled, bringing their bows and arrows with them. When Black returned the weapons were taken from the men. The boy was caned and released and the community was warned that any further theft would result in more severe punishment. Increased tension was evident for several days following this incident. On 30<sup>th</sup> after burying some stores and leaving others in Daringarl's care, Black led his patrol towards the Dutch New Guinea border. At Urapmin, he noted that the people gathered arms in the hope that they might combine with the strength of the patrol to fight their enemies the Tifalmin. Black sent them back.

Upon entering the Tifalmin valley the patrol surprised some women who ran away screaming and Tifalmin warriors assembled on the other side of the Ilam River. Black approached waving in a friendly manner and holding out an offering of cowrie shells. A Tifalmin man, later identified as Tokaneng, took the offering and shook Black's hand. The patrol moved on and made camp when an ambush was suspected ahead. A pig was shot to demonstrate firepower. The patrol guard was doubled that night.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> November the patrol members worked at making friends, but not only did the Tifalmin bring no food to trade, they kept looking up the track, causing Black to believe an ambush had been set there. He ordered his patrol to grab fifteen Tifalmin men, which they did with difficulty. Some were struck with rifle butts in order to subdue them. The Tifalmin believed their men had been killed, but now the captives were ordered to call for food and the people rushed to collect it and bring it in. Black talked with the captives until late afternoon and then released them. On the track, as he suspected, Black found where an ambush had been set. Then on the 6<sup>th</sup> a scouting line was sent out under the leadership of Constable Kwangu.

This scouting party came back but without Kwangu and two others, and the sound of shots had been heard. Kanai reported that they had been surrounded by warriors but they had been scared off. The three missing men returned to camp. In 1988 it was learned that Kopokemyap and Wenkutien had seen the police party and ran. The police responded by firing at then, with one bullet grazing Kopokemyap's leg. The Tifalmin traded nervously, but in their nervousness, they killed and ate most of their pigs for fear that if they did not, the patrol would. The Urapmin welcomed the patrol action at Tifalmin with a feast and Serak found ten or eleven girls in the carriers' huts and sent them away. The patrol returned to Telefomin on 15<sup>th</sup> November 1938. The objective of reaching the Dutch border was not achieved.

On 15<sup>th</sup> November, relatives of two Karikmin girls brought them to the patrol as wives for Constables Kobubu and Orengia. Black warned the constables in question against this, stating that soon the patrol would depart. Black was aware that the police in question had been making overtures to these girls since the day they had arrived. Reluctantly Black allowed the girls to stay. This meant that the rules had changed; a new precedent was set and girls streamed into the patrol camp.

On 18<sup>th</sup> November Black lead a patrol northwards, to reach Nenatuman on the 21st. He was seeking a man described in Eliptamin as *a loin cloth* man, an outsider who was said to be living at Nenatuman. The man's name turned out to be Aboya and he had lived at Nenatuman for about 25

years. He and four others had come with a patrol, but had deserted. They had been stealing from Nenatuman gardens when discovered and shot with arrows. Of the five, Aboya had survived his wounds and was adopted by the Nenatuman people. Black concluded Aboya was a native of Madang and had deserted from the 1912 German Sepik expedition probably while the expedition was in the April River area. Aboya had no wish to leave Nenatuman. Black gave him an axe and other gifts. Aboya reciprocated by giving the patrol two pigs. He thanked Black for coming so far to help him.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> December Jim Taylor led his section of the patrol into Telefomin . The two officers compared notes for some days. The forward plan involved a deadline of 20<sup>th</sup> January when Taylor was due to meet a boat on the Sepik. The most obvious route to the Sepik River appeared to be to the north via the May River. They left in that direction on the 9<sup>th</sup> of December 1938 with Femsep, Daringarl and other Telefol people leading them.

On 15<sup>th</sup> December two Mianmin hunters of the Usali group with eyes to the south seeking signs of Telefol raiders saw smoke from patrol camp No 213 near the Fak River; the boundary between Telefomin and Mianmin. They concluded the smoke indicated the approach of a Telefol raiding party. One hunter went to warn Usali and Boblik to the west while the other went to Temse and Kome to the north. Warriors from these communities answered the call and moved through the night towards the enemy. The Telefol guides expected that the patrol's approach would be noted and bring a Mianmin reaction, but of this they mentioned nothing to Taylor, Black or the patrol police. Instead they had their hair cut so they might not be recognized.

On 16<sup>th</sup> December as the patrol forded the Fak River two shots rang out. Kamuna and Ubom who had been scouting ahead reported they had been threatened. An arrow with a knife blade point had been fired and missed. In return the scouts claim that they fired over the head of the attacker. They emphasized that the arrow had been fired first, fearing Taylor's punishment. Taylor now changed his plan of following a creek to the north in favour of finding a camp site that could be easily defended. The site selected was above a taro garden. Taylor fired two flares to impress the Mianmin and posted guards.

Early next morning warriors from Temse and Kome found the camp first - twenty shield bearers, each with a bow man behind them crept through the taro garden. Meanwhile Usali warriors following the patrol's tracks were further behind. The two guards Banonau and Narafui were at the police fire. The Mianmin crept to the nearest hut and blocked the door with a shield. They aimed their arrows between the palm log that formed the walls and fired at the sleeping men inside. Narafui saw them, ran for his shotgun calling "Get up get up". In the attacked hut an arrow punctured Kobubu's lung. He pulled the arrow out, but the head detached and remained in him and he collapsed. Arrows hit Porti in the hip, Obu in the arm and Kunjil in the thigh. Kunjil charged the blocked door, bursting it open, only to be met by a Mianmin warrior who stabbed him with a bamboo bladed arrow which went deep through his side and pierced his heart.

The patrol police opened fire and the Mianmin ignored the noise until they saw their men fall. Then after dragging their wounded clear, the Mianmin fled. Taylor ordered the firing to cease. Kunjil was dead. Taylor anticipated the raiders would return, so he ordered the clearing of scrub and the building of palisades as they attended to their wounded.

About an hour later the Usali warriors arrived. From the camp a sound was heard from the forest and taken at first to be a cassowary, but when it was identified as a man, Banonau opened fire

and others soon did the same. Arrows flew into the camp area and a Purari carrier was wounded in the leg. Three Usali warriors had been killed; they were Witenep, Watidap and Fagenap. With the attackers gone, Black declared that the raid had been a great blow to everyone's pride. The Telefol guides sat quietly, awed, but delighted.<sup>17</sup>

When Black passed back through this camp site eleven days after the attack, the stench of rotting flesh led him to two Mianmin bodies not previously seen. On the morning after the raid, Kunjil was buried and his grave disguised so that the Mianmin might not find it to excavate the body and eat it. On the 18<sup>th</sup> the patrol departed and after walking for three hours made camp again at a Mianmin settlement the Telefol knew as Aikamunavip. The Hagen men in the patrol team wanted to payback the death of Kunjil. Taylor sent Ubom off to scout ahead. The patrol heard shots and upon Ubom's return he reported that he had shot a wild pig and fired at a Mianmin sentry. Ubom and others were sent out to fetch the pig and to Taylor's disgust it proved to be a village pig. Ubom had led a party of raiders down to the village of Dugumabip and a total of seven men were shot dead others including women and children were also shot. Ubom claimed his party had ran into a fight. <sup>18</sup>

Upon noting the delighted faces of the Telefol, Taylor told Black that he would now be the king of the Telefomin plateau. Taylor's patrol report stated that one Mianmin had been wounded in the attack on the patrol camp. It did not mention the Hagen pay back raid on the Mianmin. The truth however was that never before had the Mianmin suffered such a great defeat. The patrol moved on. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of December they camped at the site of the Oroville drilling exercise of 1937. Christmas 1938 was celebrated there and two days later, Black and his party turned back for Telefomin while Taylor and his party continued down the May River to the Sepik.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> of January Taylor purchased eight canoes which they tied together as rafts. A party of spear bearing Iwam warriors appeared and seemed to be ready to attack. They were disarmed, and a firepower demonstration was given. The Iwam were given back their spears and sent on their way. The patrol set off with stores and swimmers travelling on the canoe rafts, and non-swimmers walking along the river bank. More canoes were purchased and more rafts were made as the riverbank was now swampy and the non-swimmers were forced to board the water craft. As the floating party neared the May's junction with the Sepik, angry warriors launched their canoes and seemed intent on attacking the party. Taylor ordered the firing of two volleys over their heads and the would-be attackers fled.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> January they reached the Sepik and on the 17<sup>th</sup> they reached the village of Yessan. The next day the party met the *MV Sirius* which had come upstream looking for them. After loading the men and gear, they travelled downstream to Marui, Angoram, Marienberg and reached Kopar at the mouth of the Sepik on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January. There the patrol refitted. The *Sirius* commenced its journey back upstream five days later, and entered the Karawari River on the 1<sup>st</sup> February. The *Sirius* could go no further than Ambrumei, a name on the map of the Karawari River above the Korsameri junction, but below the Arafundi River junction with the Karawari. They staged stores forward then transported them by canoe. Their aim was to follow the Arafundi River upstream and cross the Arafundi/Maramuni divide then to follow the Maramuni River upstream along the route that Bill Macgregor pioneered with Reg Beazley, Pontey Seale and Ernie Shepherd in 1930. Macgregor sent a copy of that map to Taylor at Kopar. On 1<sup>st</sup> April 1939 Taylor's party arrived in Wabag back in the Highlands.

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Meanwhile Black's patrol returning from Mianmin reached Telefomin on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1939, where Black allowed Femsep to describe to the Telefol what had happened in Mianmin. People crowded into the camp and girls wanted to sleep with patrol members. Black's diary noted that on 2<sup>nd</sup> January he had his first experience of native women, with a girl called Bubarbonip. He then entered a more enduring relationship with a girl called Babinip of Karikmin who was a relative of Daringarl. As the relationship became public Black recorded these thoughts:-

'Crowds of Karikmin came to my house, laughed and joked and talked. Because I have become so demoralized as to take a native woman, I find they now have much greater confidence in me and that my importance as an individual has increased enormously... Women, sex and our absurd ideals do more to alienate native races than we credit...<sup>19</sup>'

The whole issue of inter-racial sexual relations in PNG was brought to a head in 1951 by a complaint made by the then Australian Minister for External Affairs Mr. Percy Spender. The result was the passing of the Native Women's Protection Ordinance 1951. Barely a decade later in 1962 this ordinance was repealed along with other discriminatory legislation. The Legislative Council debate on the repeal of this ordinance makes fascinating reading as the various interest groups press their cases for repeal or for retention of the law. See Sepik 5.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1939 Black announced that the patrol would leave in three days' time. This news devastated the Telefol. Young women were fearful. The Ancestress Afek's law forbad women washing lest the taro fail and people starve. However, the patrol line demanded they wash before sex. A few refused wealth and temptation - the rest made no casual sacrifice. A reckoning was at hand. Black recorded - 'Diwien and her sister... [want to] come with me... They say that as they both washed their bodies... they will probably be killed by their angry tribesmen when we leave. <sup>20</sup>'

On the 25<sup>th</sup> January the patrol departed and to Black's surprise they found that the Om valley was very sparsely populated. They met no people until the 2<sup>nd</sup> February... by the 10<sup>th</sup> the patrol had only four days food left and Black became concerned - his police could easily desert to the earthly paradise at Telefomin...and await searching aircraft.<sup>21</sup>

By the 12<sup>th</sup> February the patrol was desperately short of food and a party searched ahead without success for gardens along the middle reaches of the Om River. Porti reported that he had located three sago palms. Subsequently three days sago production produced enough sago flour for each to carry a fifty pound pack of it. On the 16<sup>th</sup> the patrol continued on, a day later it reached the Om/Lagaip River junction and continued upstream along the right or north bank of the Lagaip River. Through all of this, Kobubu the policeman suffered from the pain of the arrow wound he received in the lung during the Mianmin attack two months previously.

The patrol's entry onto Hewa tribal lands was not welcomed by the Hewa people as Bill Gammage's *The Sky Travellers* recorded:-

'...anxiety grew when the Hewa finally signaled their presence on 20<sup>th</sup> February [1939] by putting warnings on the track, wild taro, stones, leaves. John Black advanced warily. He needed peace, trade and food but posted guards at night camps... A war of nerves began. On 21<sup>st</sup> February [Constable] Kwangu reported that two women gave him food for cowries, but ran off when the line arrived. Next day [Constable] Orengia reported wounding

a man who attacked him. They followed blood drops to an empty house, its pandanus floor washed in blood...

On 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1939...Serak, Kenai and Wosasa entered a garden and were attacked...Men and women with bows taunted them, slapping their bare buttocks and gesturing insultingly. Kenai fired a shot over a woman aiming an arrow at him, and the people ran... On 24<sup>th</sup>... near the Pori River junction with the Lagaip, red ochred warriors in bright feathered capes waited in ambush. "Frightened them off by firing two salvos over their heads after an unsuccessful attempt to get in touch with them" Black wrote. In the midmorning the Hewa attacked towards the rear of the patrol and Wosasa shot a man at close range. He fell into the river and disappeared.

On 25<sup>th</sup> February...Kenai and Tembi had seen two Hewa creeping down the slope, and Kenai shot one. On 26<sup>th</sup> February Porti found gold on a Lagaip beach and intensified prospecting efforts found gold dust on nearly every Lagaip beach they tested.

Hewa attacks continued and the patrol continued to defend itself killing one man and wounding another on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1939. On the 4<sup>th</sup> the patrol stumbled onto a house. A man inside shouted and men burst through the bush, firing arrows and Kobubu shot one at close range. A man from the house was disarmed and two women with babies were detained. They brought in food to trade. The man who Kobubu shot was brought to the house dying. His young wife expected Black to cure him and was distraught when he could not.<sup>22</sup>

On the 12<sup>th</sup> March, Black's patrol found Taylor's camp no 170 and realized they were closer to Wabag than he had thought. As previously noted, Taylor's patrol arrived in Wabag on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 1939. On 14<sup>th</sup> April as Black's patrol approached Wabag, he lined up his police and told them that Government business was private. They were not to talk about gold, women or fighting. They were not to boast.<sup>23</sup> Black's patrol arrived at Wabag on the 16<sup>th</sup> April.

#### Postscript to the Sepik aspects of the Hagen-Sepik Patrol of 1938-39:-

The time following the departure of the Hagen-Sepik patrol did not treat the Telefol people well:

- During 1941 there was a highlands-wide drought which brought famine and starvation.
- In May-August 1942 the Thurston expedition passed through the "Min" area demanding and enforcing the delivery of food from the people who themselves were going through a hungry period. Len Odgers, an expedition member noted "These people have no reason to love us".
- From September 1944 to February 1945, Squadron Leader Leahy and the Glider men were in Telefomin to extend the Telefomin airstrip as an emergency landing field. Local leaders Femsep, and Nefinim were reportedly treated as lackeys.<sup>24</sup>
- In three years in the early-mid 1940s influenza, a disease brought in by outsiders, killed 248 Telefol, one sixth of the population. Of these, 40 Karikmin people died.<sup>25</sup>
- In 1948 Telefomin patrol post was opened.
- 1953 saw the Telefomin uprising.

Pre-war and during the wartime the Yuat and Maramuni Rivers route to the highlands via Wabag was of critical importance for access to the Sepik and egress from it.

- 1930 Bill Macgregor pioneered the route.
- 1933-35 Ludwig Schmidt prospected and shot his way through the Highlands, was arrested on the Yuat/Maramuni track to the Sepik, and eventually hanged for his crimes.
- November 1942 Wabag patrol post was opened
- April 1943 => The epic evacuation of missionaries overland from the Sepik to the Highlands [see Sepik 3]
- June October 1943 The Fryer and Dutch parties of Coastwatchers enter the Sepik via the Maramuni [see Sepik 3]
- August/September 1943 Evacuations of Captain Blood's party from Lake Kuvanmas and Macgregor's party from Lake Yimas.
- January/February 1944 Lieutenant Boisen's party egress from the Sepik via Wabag.

# **End Notes Chapter 46**

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<sup>1</sup> Champion I.F. 1966 Page 213
<sup>2</sup> Gammage W. 1998 Pages 2
<sup>3</sup> Gammage W. 1998 Pages 8
<sup>4</sup> Gammage W. 1998 Pages 89
<sup>5</sup> Gammage W. 1998 Pages 95
<sup>6</sup> Gammage W. 1998 Pages 97
<sup>7</sup> Gammage W. 1998 Pages 101
<sup>8</sup> Gammage W. 1998 Pages 102
<sup>9</sup> Bragge Sepik Research notes Vol 15 letter dated 9/5/19 66
<sup>10</sup> Gammage W. 1998 Pages 111
<sup>11</sup> Gammage W. 1998 Pages 113
<sup>12</sup> Confidential memo of 2/5/1955 from ADO Telefomin to DC Wewak – in Bragge reference volume No 8 – item 265.
<sup>13</sup> Gammage W. 1998 Pages 119
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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> G.W.L.Townsend – District Officer Pacific Publications Sydney 1968 page 238

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Gammage W. 1998 Pages 118-119

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Gammage W. 1998 Pages 119-120

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Gammage W. 1998 Pages 144-145

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Gammage W. 1998 Pages 147

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Gammage W. 1998 Pages 176

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Gammage W. 1998 Pages 175

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Gammage W. 1998 Pages 180

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Gammage W. 1998 Pages 182-185.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Gammage W. 1998 Pages 193.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Gammage W. 1998 Pages 131

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Gammage W. 1998 Pages 230-231

## Sepik 2 Chapter 47 The Murders of Patrol Officer Neil Campbell Elliott and Constable Aipaum at Wanali village, Aitape Sub District on 1st July 1939.

On the evening of 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1939 Constable Sau of Yapunda Police Post arrived in Aitape and handed a letter from Patrol Officer Warner Shand to ADO Horrie Niall. The letter explained that Elliott's cook and another native had reported to Shand's patrol at Nuku Singri<sup>1</sup> at 7.30pm on 1<sup>st</sup> July with news that Neil Elliott and constable Aipaum had been murdered at Wanali and that Corporal Yugot was at Yilawombil, badly wounded.

On the off chance that Elliott might be still alive, Shand departed immediately on foot for Yilawombil and upon arriving, had treated Corporal Yugot, who had been wounded in three places. Shand then continued on to Wanali, where he found Elliott's body on the rest house veranda. The body was pin cushioned with spears and arrows and the left jaw had been cleft open apparently with an axe.

Constable Aipaum had been sent by Elliott to Mai village that day and had arrived back in Wanali at about 9 pm. He was shot in the back with many arrows, which killed him as he approached the rest house. His body was not found until next morning, after Shand had spent the night on watch.

Shand reported that soon after he reached Wanali at about 11.30 pm he heard several shots. Elliott's killers had taken weapons and were still nearby, presenting a threat to Shand.

Alt Island

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Chimppis C

O Reari

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O Reari

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The site of the future Nuku Patrol Post.

Next morning Shand buried Elliott and Aipaum and retreated to Yilawombil. He sent his message to ADO Aitape, stating that he would wait at Yilawombil for the ADO to arrive. He stated that he did not intend to take action against the offenders until the ADO arrived. He reported that he had about 8 or 9 police and suggested that they needed about another 30 to handle the situation.

ADO Niall instructed Patrol Officer Roy Mader to proceed over land from Aitape to assist Warner Shand. Niall proceeded to Tadji airfield from where he was flown by the Australian Petroleum Co [APC] Fokker to Wewak where he reported to District Officer Townsend, with whom he discussed his plans to investigate the matter. Townsend's letter <sup>1</sup> to the Director of District Services and Native Affairs recommended that Niall with Patrol Officers Warner Shand and Mader conduct the investigation:

Townsend's letter listed many patrol visits to Wanali since 1928 when ADO Sansom first visited the village. ADO Niall had been there twice in the previous two years and had been well received. The Tultul had even built a government rest house for visiting patrols. Warner Shand and Elliott had been working in the area for months and no one had any reason to expect antagonism. Wanali was in "an almost completely controlled area".

On 4<sup>th</sup> July Niall, his patrol police and rations were flown into the recently constructed Maimai air field. Townsend had arranged that he would rendezvous with Niall, Warner Shand, and Mader a few days later at Wanali.<sup>2</sup>

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As happens in such investigations the full facts of the matter tend to emerge slowly with the full story building up over time; that was what happened in this case.

Upon arrival at Maimai, Niall sent back to Townsend additional information: Elliott and Warner-Shand were conducting separate patrols in the same general area. On 28 June Elliott had come south from his patrol location and met with Warner-Shand at Singri Nuku, with the intention of both going together to the Klaflei area. On the morning of 1<sup>st</sup> July Elliott left Singri Nuku, intending to return north to Yapunda Police Post. Elliott would have reached Wanali village at about midday and was killed about 3 or 4 pm that afternoon – the 1<sup>st</sup> July.

When Elliott arrived at Wanali, he was angry with the Tultul about the dirty condition of the village and ordered that it be cleaned up. He threatened to gaol people if the clean-up was not done.

In the afternoon, he sent Corporal Yugot down to the village to see if the natives were cleaning it. Yugot was about 75 yards away from the Rest House when the natives attacked Elliott and he, simultaneously. Elliott was just inside the door of the rest house and the Tultul first grabbed him and held him after cutting his arm with a knife, then another native stabbed him in the stomach with a spear. Elliott fell to the floor after struggling with the Tultul who tried to cut his throat with the knife.

Elliott's servant then rushed up and grabbed the Tultul and pulled him off. The other servant then knocked the Tultul down with a rifle butt and Elliott shot the Tultul dead with his revolver.

Yugot rushed back to the rest house and helped Elliott up and Elliott pulled the spearhead out of Yugot's shoulder with his teeth and Yugot stayed with him until he died. The spear wound to Elliott's stomach and the cut on his arm were the only wounds he had when he died.

Yugot and the two servants and one carrier then put Elliott on his bed and set out for Shand who they reached at 7 pm...All the arrows and were put into Elliott's body and his throat was cut after he was dead. Niall continued:

The whole affair is a mystery to me and I can see no reason for it. The two boys here say the only reason they know is that Elliott crossed them for the dirty state of their village and threatened to calaboose them if he came again and it was not clean. All the surrounding villages had nothing to do with it.3

### The "mystery" clarified itself progressively

In a telegram to the Minister on 18 July it was reported that although the offenders had not yet been arrested, that Wanali people not involved had returned to the village and returned the rifle that was stolen during the attack.<sup>4</sup>

Administrator McNicoll's report to Secretary Prime Minister's Department on 22 July ...It is with regret that I advise that the information gathered so far indicates that the attack on the patrol officer and native constable was personal, more or less, because of their activities in the area. This is borne out by the fact that a native police corporal and the native WAIROW, although wounded, were permitted to escape and several other natives including Mr. Elliott's cook boy, were not molested at all.

There is evidence that Patrol Officer Elliott and/or Constable Aipaum, on occasions had assaulted village officials and natives for neglecting to carry out instructions and that pigs and dogs had been destroyed as a punishment if the native had failed to line for census and so on.

On the day of the murders – 1 July 1939 – it is alleged that Patrol Officer Elliott was heard to instruct the Luluai of Wanali that the village must be cleaned within three days or all pigs and dogs would be shot. Apparently this official, who is reported as a Tultul in my radiogram No 124 of 4 July, resented the ultimatum and attacked and killed Elliott.

The foregoing is reported for your confidential information as it explains to some degree the incident happening in a village which was regarded as being under control...<sup>5</sup>

Radiogram received from Deputy Administrator Page ... Niall reports that all natives

wanted in connection of murders Elliott and constable Aipaum have been arrested and that remainder of Wanali natives again settled in village...<sup>6</sup>

#### **ADO Niall's report dated 22 July.** The natives responsible for this trouble are:

WEINGUM	of W	/anali	Dead	) Responsible for the death of Patrol Officer Elliott.
YAU-ITO	46	66	in custody	) Responsible for the death of Patrol Officer Elliott
YAVI	"	46	in custody	) Responsible for the death of Patrol Officer Elliott
PAS	"	"	in custody	) Responsible for the murder of Constable Aipaum
OLKOPOI	"	"	in custody	) Responsible for the murder of Constable Aipaum
YAU-ITO	66	"	in custody	) Responsible for the murder of Constable Aipaum
YAU-ITO	46	"	in custody	) Speared Cpl Yugot
MISANDIUI	· "	44	In custody	) Cut Cpl Yugot with a knife
SO-O	"	• •	Dead	) Cut native WAIRON on head with a knife.

ADO Niall mentioned in his report that after leaving Warner-Shand. Elliott walked north with only two police, Constable Aipaum and Corporal Yugot. He had sent Aipaum on to Mai to collect stores from a supply dump there. About 3pm Yugot attempted to hurry the natives up at their work. He ordered the female KANDUR to pick up some human faeces with her hands, and when she

refused he beat her with a cane. He also slightly ill-treated another girl who refused to work. Both these females were relatives of the Luluai...It is thought that the Luluai went to the rest house to complain about the treatment of his daughter KANDUR.

Then without warning the native SO-O hit WAIRON, who had been assisting Yugot, on the head with a knife and the Luluai's two brothers YAU-ITO and YAVI immediately seized spears and attempted to kill Yugot, with whom they were angry over the assault of their female relatives. Yugot want to get his rifle, but fell. YAU-ITO speared him in the shoulder and the bamboo spear blade broke off. Wairon reached the police barracks first and took the rifle to the Rest Haus where he heard Elliott calling out. He ran up into the Rest Haus where he saw Elliott struggling with the Luluai. Elliott's servant Wali grappled with the Luluai and Wairon stunned him with the rifle butt.

Elliott struggled to his feet, seized his revolver from his bed and fired two shots at the Luluai who struggled out the door and collapsed onto the ground near where his brother YAU-ITO was standing with two spears. The other brother YAVI was standing nearby also with a spear. Elliott apparently did not see these men and was looking towards the village from which a lot of shouting could be heard. YAU-ITO threw a spear which hit Elliott in his left side and went right through his stomach knocking him off balance. YAVI then threw his spear which struck Elliott in the chest. The brothers would then have killed Elliott, except for Wali who took a shot gun and fired a shot, two pellets from which hit YAVI in the back. The brothers then ran off.

Elliott then called the party together in front of the rest house and while they were there the native SO-O came running towards them waving a big knife. Either Yugot or Elliott fired two shots<sup>2</sup> and SO-O fell down dead. The natives then congregated in a threatening manner down at the village and Elliott fired shots towards them, one of which hit a man called ALI who died some days later in the bush. The remaining natives then ran away.

Elliott then detailed a native to report to Warner Smith at Singri village. He had barely done so when he complained of pain and collapsed on the ground in front of the rest house with blood and froth flowed from his mouth. Yugot then took command and instructed the natives to carry Elliott up onto the rest house and put him on his bed...Elliott died within a few minutes. They gathered some of Elliott's belongings and set off to find Warner-Shand, which they did about 7 pm at Singri.

At about 5 pm, the Wanali male natives congregated in the lower part of the village and after discussion they visited the rest house. The bodies of two natives who had been shot were carried into the rest house and laid on the floor. Elliott's body was taken from his bed and out on the floor and many natives fired arrows and stuck spears into his body. They also hacked at his head with axes and almost severed the head from his body and rifled most of his belongings.

After dark, they again congregated in the lower part of the village. At about 9 pm Constable Aipaum returned from Mai with two natives from that village carrying Elliott's stores. A native PAS followed Aipaum at a distance of about 50 yards and then speared him from behind, from a distance of a few feet. The two Mai carriers threw away their loads and fled. Although the spear had gone right through Aipaum, he pulled it from his body and fired two shots, neither of which hit anyone.

Aipaum ran towards the rest house and a young man OLKOPI fired an arrow from close range that went through his stomach. Still Aipaum staggered on until YAU-ITO came up behind him and delivered the final spear wound...

ADO's report concluded:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> This was later corrected by Townsend – it was Yugot who shot him – reference NNA bar code 108394 page 33 of 120

I feel quite certain that the attack was not pre-meditated, and it all arose in the heat of the moment. The natives objected at being made to work, and the ill-treatment of two of their young women by Corporal Yugot was the prime motive that started the fight. Nobody saw the Luluai go from near his house where he was working to the rest house and what happened between he and Mr. Elliott that caused him to attack Mr. Elliott will never be known as there were not any eye witnesses and the Luluai is also dead. YAVI and YAU-ITO both apparently lost control of themselves when they saw their brother, the Luluai shot dead in front of them and that was the main reason they speared Mr. Elliott...<sup>7</sup>

## District Officer Townsend's Confidential letter to the Director Department of District Services and Native Affairs dated 20 July 1939...

The following information has been obtained from Lance Corporal Yugot, the NCO who was with Elliott at the time.

YUGOT commenced by reminding me that I had promised him a relief shortly. I remember doing so. Yugot then said that he had been afraid of "trouble" such as had occurred, but hoped to be relieved before it came.

Yugot joined Elliott about three months ago. Soon after he had reported [for duty], they and five constables went on patrol and came to Yaurumbo village. The village natives were put to work cleaning up and two women wore blouses which Elliott ordered taken off. Yugot went to take one off when her husband – who could speak [Pidgin] – said in a threatening manner "Maski Yu" [Forget it you] Yugot then said "All right, all right, go easy" Elliott heard this and punched the husband several times. After work, the husband was tied with cane and put with the police.

Next morning the people did not assemble quickly to carry the patrol and Elliott shot two dogs in punishment.

The wife was made to carry cargo that day and on the track Yugot heard a woman calling out. He later asked Aipaum [deceased] what the trouble was and Aipaum said Elliott had beaten the wife with a cane and Aipaum had told him to stop as the No 1 kiap would make a court if he heard of it.

The patrol went to Singri where all the carriers were sent back except the husband and wife who ran away next day.

The patrol went to Siri Morta and most of the natives were away... Elliott shot two pigs in punishment.

Two weeks later the patrol went to Monadin and Womerau. Constables Sau and Aipaum were sent to a hamlet and told to collect natives and told that if the natives ran away, pigs were to be shot. Yugot remaining with Elliott saw three shot pigs brought back. One was given to the Luluai of Womerau and one to another native. The third the patrol took...

The Sangi road was dirty so the Tultul was ordered to bring three pigs. He brought four, which were not paid for and two were eaten and two sent back to the pig pen at Yapunda base camp.

Later they went to Mai and Yugot was sent to Yambil and told to shoot pigs if the natives ran away. He did not shoot. Yugot returned to Mai and there saw the Tultul of Monadin, whose face was very bruised and swollen. Aipaum told him that Elliott had punched him because he for spending too much time carving garamuts. The garamuts were destroyed by fire by Constable Sau under Elliott's orders.

Constable So-on [Sepik] was sent for the Tultul of Mimbio [Mimbiok?] he village book was broken and the Tultul punished by Elliott. Aipaum and Yugot were told to hit him, which they did. Later it was discovered that the Tultul was not to blame and the Tultul was given a large knife to "Make the talk die" ...

It is the opinion of these natives that the Wanali people, the few concerned, only wanted the deaths of Elliott and Aipaum. They could easily have killed Yugot, the servant and other natives if they wished.

Yugot told me that he had not mentioned any of the shootings of dogs and pigs to Mr. Niall at the inquest [Yugot told me at Maimai]

Upon arrival at Maimai I asked Mr. Niall if he[Yugot] had discussed the reason for the murders and he said he had not. I told him what I had been told and he expressed his disagreement.

Some hours later Mr. Niall came to my tent and informed me that various constables had confirmed substantially what I had told him. He also said that one constable who was with Elliott at Singri Mota said that the Luluai there had threatened Elliott with a spear when he had shot the pigs, but Elliott fired a shot over his head and the Luluai had run away. 8

Mr. Niall had not previously heard of any of Elliott's actions in this regard.

Mr. Shand had also not heard of Elliott's harshness, but said that once, at Maimai he had stopped Elliott from punching a native who Elliott said would not answer him...It more than ever appears that the murders were the result of harsh treatment.

The value that natives place on their animals is too well known to stress. Mr Niall told me that pigs in this area are fairly scarce and very dear to buy.

Mr Niall has been instructed to make payment for all dogs and pigs destroyed without cause in this area...

The Daily News Sydney 29/9/1939 Rabaul Tuesday – Sentences of death was passed today on two natives convicted of having murdered Patrol Officer Elliott last month.

Presumably, as either a sign of respect from a world war 1 veteran for a prominent World War 1 General, [Neil Elliott was the son of Brigadier-General "Pompey" Elliott] or lack of knowledge as to what would one day be available to researchers in the Australian National Archives. Kassa Townsend's 1968 book *District Officer* wrote this incident up as follows:

...The murders at Wanali stemmed from the actions of one policeman and several carriers who during the patrol had interfered with a native woman and shot a pig. It happened that this particular pig could not be compensated for as the patrol officer had tried to do when he heard that the pig had been shot. It was part of a bride price that must contain this pig and no other. Interference with the woman, or even rape, as it possibly was — was regarded by the people merely as a case of "use of private property without permission" ... The pig was serious business. As revenge for it the villagers surrounded the Patrol Officer and the constable in a house and speared them to death.

The killers were eventually brought to trial but the Judge regarded the circumstances as extenuating and they got terms of imprisonment<sup>9</sup>

This, or course, was what should have happened.

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Writer's note: These murders took place in the Palei tribal area, which was then administered from the police posts at Maimai and Yapunda – Aitape sub district. Even in the post war years, as described in Sepik 4, the area continued to be prone to tribal warfare and aggression towards patrols.

During the writers posting to Nuku in 1976, sadly, I was unaware of these murders. Had I known, I would have visited and maintained the graves and interviewed the Wanali elders to record their recollections of events

### **End Notes Chapter 47**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ref SD 49E – 6 to Director District Services and Native Affairs 6<sup>th</sup> July 1939 NAA Bar code 108394 pages 53-56 of 120

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> G.W.L. Townsend 1968 Page 242.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ref SD 49E page 56 of 120

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Ref SD 49E page 49 of 120

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ref SD 49E page 44 of 120

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Ref SD 49E page 42 of 120

 $<sup>^{7}</sup>$  Ref SD 49E pages 34-38 of 120

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Ref SD 49E pages 34-38 of 120

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> G.W.L.Townsend 1968 pages 242 and 243

#### Sepik 2 Chapter 48 Assessment of the Australian Administration to 1941

Looking back through the 1914-1941 years of Australia's involvement in the former German New Guinea colony, the writer's first impression was that this was a period of Australian history in which Australians would find little to be proud. A more considered view was to see Australia's performance against the realities of the day. Just 13 years prior to the outbreak of World War 1, Australia had itself been an assembly of six colonies of the then, greatest empire on earth. Not surprisingly, the emerging nation was not then viewed by world powers more than some remote former British colonies with a population of just 4 million people. But following world war 1 Prime Minister Lyons, claimed Australia's place in world affairs when he said he represented more than four million; he represented 60,000 war dead.

Never-the-less World War 1, even in the Pacific region, was more about Britain and the British Empire than it was about Australia. It was Britain who invited Australia and New Zealand<sup>5</sup>, on Britain's behalf, to seize the German colonies in the Pacific. This invitation came with the proviso that You however realise that any territory now occupied must be at the disposal of the Imperial Government for purposes of an ultimate settlement at conclusion of the War.<sup>1</sup>

It was also Britain who changed Australia's orders concerning German colonies in the North Pacific, allowing Japan to win the League of Nations mandate over former German colonies as far south as the equator – bordering upon what would become Papua New Guinea; a decision with consequences for World War 2.

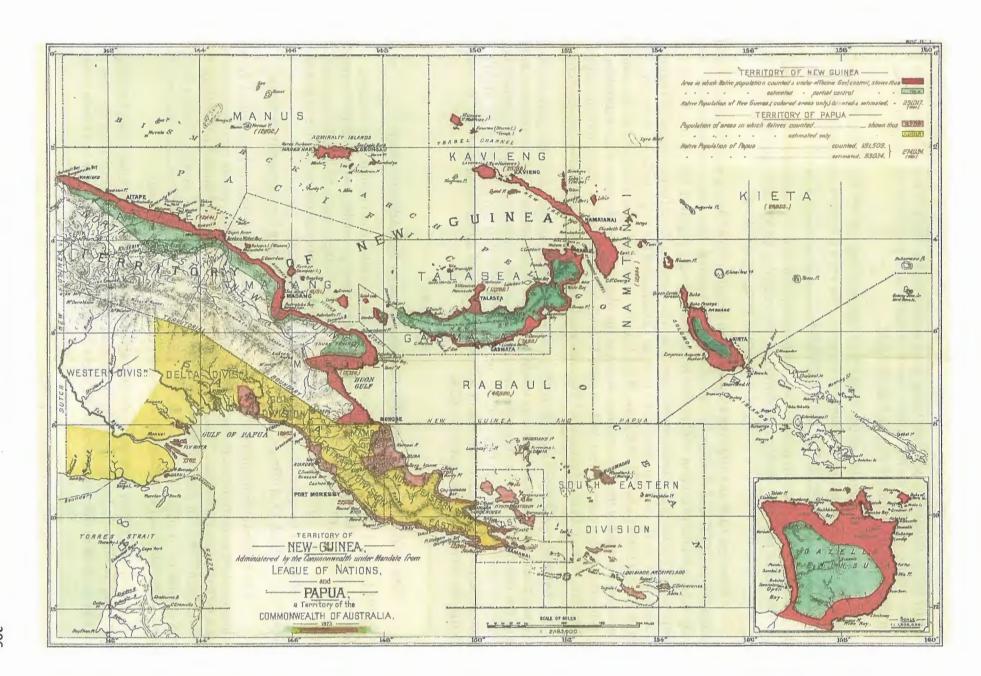
Finally, Great Britain, on behalf of Australia assumed the mandate from the League of Nations on 17<sup>th</sup> December 1920; but the mandate documents did not reach Australia until April 1921.

The mandate over former German New Guinea was a "C" class mandate ...inhabited by people not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world, [so] there should be applied the principle that the well-being and development of such people form a sacred trust of civilisation and that securities for the performance of this trust should be embodied in this Covenant. Key wording in the Mandate included:

- The Mandate shall promote to the utmost the material and moral well-being and social progress of the inhabitants of the territory
- ...that the slave trade is prohibited and that no forced labour is permitted except for essential public works and services...
- ...that traffic in arms and ammunition is controlled...
- The supply of intoxicating spirits and beverages to natives shall be prohibited.
- Military training of natives, other than for the purpose of internal police shall be prohibited.
- No military or naval bases shall be established or fortifications erected in the territory
- Mandatory shall ensure in the territory freedom of conscience and the free exercise of all forms of worship, and shall allow all missionaries, nationals of any State member of the League of Nations, to enter into, travel and reside in the Territory for the purpose of prosecuting their calling...<sup>2</sup>

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Australia viewed former German New Guinea as "the prize" and "our new possession". Indeed, despite its beginnings as an economic disaster, the colony had become an economic success due primarily to the dedicated governorship of Dr. Albert Hahl. The inevitable comparisons with Australia's adjacent colony of Papua, former British New Guinea, were heavily in the German colony's favour.



It is essential at this point to take into account Dr. Hahl's 1914 plans for the exploration and development of the German colony; what might have been. He planned to explore the interior of the colony by coordinated expeditions using water access via the Sepik, Ramu, Markham and Waria rivers. Among other things this would almost certainly have resulted in the early discovery of the Morobe good fields around Wau and Bulolo gold.

Following the signing of the World War 1 peace treaty on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918, the victorious nations looked to the future. In Australia, the 1919 a Royal Commission on former German New Guinea was convened to considered:

- 1. The nature and extent of privately owned property in former German New Guinea, and,
- 2. The action necessary for the transferring to, and retaining under, British ownership of such property in the event of a policy of resumption being agreed upon.

Between 1920 and 1927 the Expropriation Board in New Guinea was accurately labelled by author Peter Cahill as *A Prodigy of Wastefulness, Corruption, Ignorance and Indolence*<sup>3</sup>. German nationals [with the exception of Christian Missionaries] were expelled, their properties seized and disposed of primarily to Australian Service men who were involved in the seizure of German New Guinea. Former Royal Commissioner Lucas, as Chairman of the Expropriation Board say Burns Philp become known as "The Octopus of the Pacific" – replacing German firms as the controller of the copra and related trading ventures. Sadly, at the plantation level, most of the Australian servicemen who acquired them, had no more knowledge about how to successfully manage a copra plantation, than to build a battleship.<sup>4</sup> This was not helped by the decline in the price of copra.

Interim conclusion: Had Dr. Hahl's 1914 exploration and development plans for New Guinea been implemented, the colony would have built exponentially upon its successes as they stood at that time. As it was, Australian troops with no New Guinea administrative experience were required administer German law until the outcome of World War 1 was decided; Dr. Hahl's forward momentum was replaced by stagnation during the AN&MEF administration to 1921 as well as during the civil administration until 1928.

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#### The AN&MEF administration was conducted by five Administrators

Aug 1914 – Jan 1915: Colonel W. Holmes. – the military take over German New Guinea.
 Jan 1915 – Jan 1918: Secretary for Defence S.A. Petherbridge established AN&MEF<sup>1</sup> administration 21<sup>st</sup> Oct 1917 – April 1918 – during Petherbridge' illness Judge SS MacKenzie took charge.
 April 1918 – May 1920 – Brigadier General G.J. Johnson institutes many punitive expeditions, which did far more harm than good and brought reprisals.
 May 1920 – March 1921- Brigadier General Griffith – preparing for expropriation duties

The handover from military to civil rule on 9<sup>th</sup> May 1921, effectively continued the military administration as recruitment to the Territory of New Guinea [TNG] public service consisted only of men with military experience. This changed in 1925 with the first recruitment of civilians. Throughout TNG, but particularly in the Aitape District, illicit bird of paradise hunting and trading was conducted by officers of the AN&MEF and Expropriation board. This was made possible as there were still an active in market demand for plumes in nearby Hollandia.

[Captain] Oliver Thompson, the first civilian District Officer at Aitape, was investigated in 1925 and found to be deeply involved in the trade. His dismissal in disgrace from the New Guinea service resulted in the secondment of Resident Magistrates [equivalent rank to District Officers]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force

Woodward and Bastard to the Sepik from Papua. Reg Woodward was posted to Ambunti in the newly created Sepik District for a year and E.M. Bastard to Aitape District for three years.

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The Rule of Law 1921-1923. The Queensland Criminal Code was adopted into TNG on 9<sup>th</sup> May 1921, but this covered only indictable offences, TNG had no equivalent of Papua's Native Regulation Ordinance [NRO] for the hearing of summary offences. Patrol Officer Townsend's 1921 diary describes, the use of precedent from Aitape's Court Register as the means of navigating around this problem, which existed until 1924 when the TNG Native Administration Regulations [NARs] came into effect.

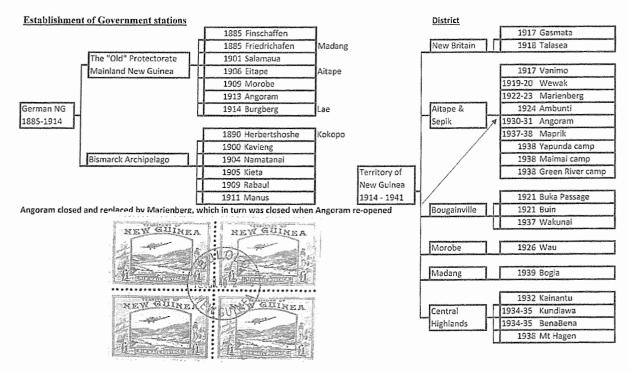
The Trust Territory of New Guinea administration was to be financially self-sufficient. In the early 1920s this was taken to ridiculous extremes [at Aitape and elsewhere] with patrols collecting head tax from the local natives in order to pay the tax collecting officer's and public servant's salaries in cash. The potential for corruption was gigantic.

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**Population 1921** Territory of New Guinea – counted and estimated 251,017 Papua – Counted 181,509 Estimated 93,034.<sup>5</sup>

**Population 1942<sup>2</sup>** Territory of New Guinea – counted and estimated 816,500 Papua – counted and estimated 338,000<sup>6</sup>

Noticeably the whole of the centre of the map [previous pages] is without detail – The Highlands plus most of the Sepik and Western Districts remained unexplored. Also notable is the importance placed upon harbors and anchorages – German New Guinea in the time before air travel was a maritime colony.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> These figures assumed a total population for the Central Highland of 240,000, a grossly underestimated figure

<u>Catalysts for Change 1</u> – Gold and Aviation. Prospector Shark Eye Park [1871-1925] is credited with discovering the Morobe gold fields, which became world news with the gold rush of 1926. The giant gold dredges required to fully exploit the field had to be broken down into pieces small and light enough to be flown from Salamaua to Bulolo by the aircraft of the day. The gold that was won required high value postage stamps in order that it could be flown to Australia.

Sepik Gold and Aviation. Jack Thurston discovered gold in Ulahau creek in 1936/37 about eight miles east of where Maprik would be established a year or so later. Thurston worked closely with Kevin Parer of Parer Air Transport. Airstrips were established at But on the coast and Yamil so supplies could be flown in. The Yamil field was also responsible to airstrips being constructed at Burui, and Maprik. Oil exploration in the Sepik were also responsible for building of airstrips at Maimai, and Green River, while the quest for gold saw the Ward Williams expedition build an airstrip at Telefomin. The administration took advantage of the presence of aircraft availability in the Sepik and build landing fields at Wewak, Angoram and Aitape. In addition, there were some private airstrips constructed throughout the Sepik District

<u>Catalysts for Change 2</u> – Cultural Interference by Catholic Mission. In order to establish Christianity as the religion of the Sepik people, the only pre-world World War 2 mission in the Sepik; the SVD Catholic Mission, while doing much good in the medical field, actively sought to destroy the traditional religion of the people by destroying haus tambarans and sacred objects.

Cultural Interference by the Administration. The Administration was arguably less intrusive in matters of custom than the Mission; custom was regarded as PNG Common Law. Customs that were repugnant to statute law, resulted in arrests and hearings in the courts. Such a Sepik custom was headhunting. Head-hunters were identified, arrested, tried, convicted and publicly hanged on the site where they committed the original offence. Lengths of hanging ropes were placed in each haus tambaran as warnings against similar future occurrances.

There were two Sepik responses to the hanging of head hunters;

- 1. Headhunting ceased abruptly, as if a tap had been turned off.
- 2. The killing continued covertly through the use of sorcery. The people demanded that sorcerers also be hanged just as the head hunters were; it their view killing was killing. Unfortunately, the NARs allowed only sentences of 6 months for sorcery, besides which, the level proof to establish a conviction for sorcery before the courts was and still is very difficult to acquire.

Cultural Interference – An outcome in need of more research. A visit to the Sepik by Administrator McNicoll in 1940 was noted in the Parembei village book. The Haus Tambaran had been converted into a church. The Administrator ordered that a separate church be built and the haus tambaran be returned to its original purpose. Both the cessation of headhunting and Christian opposition to traditional religious practices may have been contributing factors. Specifically, what motivated the Parembei people's actions is not known, and was not revealed in my interviews with Sepik Elders.

#### 000000000

Policy Changes – Indigenous Administration. The AN&MEF administration was required to administer German law in New Guinea until the outcome of World War 1 was determined. This involved group punishment through the use of punitive expeditions. This policy carried over into the civil administration at least until 1924, when the investigation of the Japandai massacre was committed. The administration intention was that punitive measures would be applied. But this did not happen.

By 1928 punitive expeditions were no longer a policy of the Australian civil administration as was shown in the investigation and consequences of the murders of two police at Waskuk. What happened was that Ambunti police conducted punitive reprisals, which, when discovered led to the transfer of the officer in charge from Ambunti. While no record has been found as to why and when this policy changed, the writer attributes the change to the 'sacred trust' of the League of Nations mandate.

There were considerable differences of opinion among administration officers about this change in policy, with many, including Patrol Officer John Black and Medical Assistant Stan Christian being of the opinion that the old policy was better because, then, at least the people knew where they stood.

#### 000000000

The Great Exploratory Expeditions. Both the German administration and the Australian TNG administration conducted very important exploratory expeditions in the Sepik. The main difference was that the German expeditions were conducted by scientists, whereas the Australian expeditions were conducted by Patrol Officer. The expeditions of note were:

- 1. 1884/5 Otto Finsch in the *Samoa* explored the New Guinea north coast from East Cape in Papua to Dutch New Guinea and entered the Sepik River.
- 2. 1886 Governor von Schleinitz explored as far as Yambon [about 250 miles from the river mouth]
- 3. 1886 Dr Von Schrader proceeded 380 miles upstream
- 4. 1910 The German/Dutch border expedition
- 5. 1912/13 The "Department of Colonial Affairs expedition' better known as the Behrmann expedition mapped the Sepik and some tributaries to the Dutch border.
- 6. 1914 Dr. Thurnwald's "Dash to the source of the Sepik". The discovery of Telefomin
- 7. 1927/28 Karius and Champion expedition from the Fly to the Sepik
- 8. 1938-39 Hagen-Sepik patrol Taylor and Black

**Labour recruitment.** The Behrmann expedition 1912-13 reported upon the Sepik's huge potential as labour source for the colony's plantations. Not only was there a large population, but it was easily accessible by shipping on the Sepik River. The Sepik did not become TNG's labour pool until the Australian administration.

Labour recruiters in general developed a bad name for themselves, but there were exceptions such as Wally Hook, while Charlie Gough lost his life while recruiting at Lehinga in uncontrolled country where he had been warned not to go.

With the outbreak of war with Germany in 1939, many Australians working in New Guinea enlisted and went to fight in Europe. Japan's 1931 invasion and on-going occupation of Manchuria raised concerns about a future conflict in the Pacific and following the Japanese raid on Pearl Harbour in December 1941, Australian troops were returned from the European theatre of war to defend Australia – primarily by fighting in New Guinea, as described in Sepik 3.

**Concluding Comments.** The League of Nations Mandate over the Trust Territory of New Guinea placed obligations of Australia; obligations, which in 1942 no one considered would be an issue for generations to come. It is probable that very little thought was given to these conditions until some of them became issues World War 2 – EG. Prohibition on the use of TNG Police in military roles.

Had the inhabitants of the former German colony been in a position to judge Australia's performance against the mandate's conditions, which of course they were not, I believe they would have looked with incredulity at words such as *The Mandatory shall promote to the utmost the* 

material and moral well-being and social progress of the inhabitants of the territory. There was extremely little evidence of this in TNG prior to World War 2.

Australia's apparent aims in New Guinea during this period appeared to be an extension of colonialism, through the exploitation of land, labour and capital. At no cost to the Commonwealth, the aim appeared to be to extract maximum wealth from the colony – through production from expropriated plantations lands through the use of cheap New Guinean labour and gold from the mines with active exploration in the hope of discovering commercial quantities of oil.

Australia's dealings with the indigenous population seemed focussed upon correction of the perceived erroneous ways of New Guinean tribal cultures such as head hunting, and inter-tribal warfare, while it can be argued that before development can be commenced it is necessary to establish a firm law and order foundation, the stamping out of traditional religion to clear the way for the establishment of Christianity was to produce cultural problems far into New Guinea's future.

While there was some progress made in the application of modern medicines, indigenous education, if it was addressed at all, was left to the German missionaries. On balance, by 1942 New Guineans had little for which to thank the Australian presence in their land.

#### **End Notes Chapter 48**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> SS MacKenzie 1939 page 6

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ed. B.Jinks, P.Biskup, H.Nelson – Readings in New Guinea History – Angus and Robertson 1973 pages 228-9

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> P.Cahill. The Journal of Pacific History Vol 32 [June 1997. Page 3 - 28

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> A.J.Marshall. 1938 P 233

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Map from the annual report to the League of Nations 1921-22

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> L.R.Healey - ANGAU 1942-1845 - UPNG 1976 page 10

## Sepik 4 Chapter 49 Boats of the Sepik and New Guinea coastal region – a Maritime History

Few visitors to the Sepik in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century come by ship, so it would be easy to lose sight of the fact that through its early history the Sepik was a maritime district. Shipping continues to be incredibly important on the Sepik River itself and its major tributaries. The present attachment, of necessity is a work in progress.

Sepik 1 – from the beginning of time to 1885.

Date	Navigator & S Name	hip	Notes	Reference	
1522	Victoria		Magellan's only ship to survive the	* *	
1545	Retez – No ship name found		circumnavigation of the world  Yñigo Ortiz de Retez (fl. 1545) was a Century Spanish maritime explorer of who navigated the northern coastline and is credited with bestowing the isla ("Nueva Guinea").	f <u>Basque</u> origin, of <u>New Guinea,</u>	Wikipedia
1616	Willem Schouter Jocob Le Marie Ships: Eenddrac Hoorn.		Sailed from Holland, around Cape I named after his recently lost ship Holland along the north coast of New Guines Schouten Islands are named for him debris and dirty water from Sepik R	oorn. Sailed a – The Sepik's . Observed	Wikipedia & Chapter 3
1700	William Dampie Ship: Roebuck	r:	English navigator - commissioned to east coast of Australia. Also, sailed of New Guinea and named New Bri circumnavigated the world three tim	the north coast tain &	Wikipedia
1768	Louis Antoine de Bougainville. Sh Boudeuse and Ét	ips:	In quest of the great south land turned Australia. Was attacked in New Irela proceeded to Batavia via the NG nor	and and	Wikipedia
1827	Jules Sébastien César Dumont d'Urville. Ship: Astrolabe		French explorer. During a circumnar globe mapped parts of the New Guin	•	Wikipedia
1835/6	H.M.S Sulphur	Surv	ey ship under Captain Edward Belche	er	Wikipedia
1838+/-	US Brig: Margaret Oakley. Captain: Benjamin Morrell	voya 1834 with mour [sma upstr peop	stream and returned without seeing Colour Scan New Delhi ople		
1889	India	Marc	uise de Rays expedition to New Irela	and Sepik 2 C	Chapter 4

Sepik 2 - 1884 to 1941

Date	Navigator & Name	-	Notes		Reference
May/June	Ottilie	11ft dra	ft. Reached Malu 230 miles from	Dr	C.Kaufmann Bragge
1886		Rv Mou	th. Wrecked 1891-2	ref	notes Vol 21 P151

Unknown	Sumatra	Shipped Sepik labour to Wuvulu	See	Sepik 2 Chapter 3
1891	Norma	German Hulk – sunk goods uninsured	Sepik 2 Chapter 2	
Oct 1901	Herzogin Elizabeth	Ramu expedition steamer wrecked on Ramu River	Sepik 2 Chapter 2	
1886	Samoa	Schrader and Hunstein to Chenapian	Sepik 2 Chapter 2	
1905	Seerstern			ik 2 Chapter 2
1907	Murina	Murina belonging to recruiter Rudolf Wahlen was briefly commandeered by D.O. Rodatz to investigate murders	recruiter Sepik 2 Chap oriefly	
1913	Komet	Built in Bremen to replace old Seerstern – patrol boat	Sep	ik 2 Chapter 2
1912	Condor	Met Behrmann party at Ambunti	Sep	ik 2 Chapter 2
1908	Lanceoog	10'7" draft Reached Avatip area		Kaufmann P 151
	Sandakan	Steamer		Sepik 2 Chapter 2
1908	Siar	600 tons Reached Pagwi 210 miles	up	Kaufmann P 151 Kaufmann P 151
Nov. 1909	SMS Cormoran	scuttled in 1914 at Palau	Caminimbit 176 miles from river south. Cormoran's stripped hull was "6	
1914	Cormoran 2 – not relevant to Sepik	Captured Russian steamer Rjasan fitted with Cormoran equipment as auxiliary cruiser and re- named Cormoran		ShipStamps.co.uk "Cormoran"
1941	Kormoran not relevant to Sepik	Sunk with HMAS Sydney off Western Australia		Wikipedia
May/June 1909	Peiho	Ship used by the Hamburg Sudsee expedition of 1909 Draft 10 ft		Kaufmann P 151
1909 1942-5	Gabriel "	Built in Hong Kong for Sepik SVD Mission ship did not survive the WW2. Details of loss not known		Sepik 2 & 3
No date	Ourour	15' 820 tons Marienberg		Kaufmann P 151
1912/13	Kolonialgesellschaft	Supplying Behrmann expedition		Sepik2 Chapter 3
1912/13	Condor	Supplying Behrmann expedition		
No date	Duranbah	12'6" draft 274 tons reached Angoram		Kaufmann P 151
1914	HMAS Sydney	Australian Fleet going to German N.G. later sunk by Ebden at Cocas Island		Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	HMS Hampshire	Action in Caroline Islands		Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	Scharnhorst	German Pacific Squadron		Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	Gneisanau	battle of Falklands Islands		Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	Ebden	German Pacific Squadron		Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	Leipzig	German Pacific Squadron later sunk in battle of Falklands Islands		Sepik 2 Cpt.20

1914	Nurnberg	German Pacific Squadron	Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	Geier	German Pacific Squadron	Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	HMAS Berrima	Australian Fleet going to German N.G.	Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	HMAS Knowna	Australian Fleet going to German N.G.	Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	HMAS Melbourne	Australian Fleet going to German N.G.	Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	HMAS Aorangi	Australian Fleet going to German N.G.	Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	HMAS Upolu	Australian Fleet going to German N.G.	Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	HMAS Australia	Australian Fleet going to German N.G.	Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	HMAS Protector	Australian Fleet going to German N.G.	Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	Submarine AE1	Lost off Rabaul – re-discovered 2017	Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	Submarine AE2	Australian Fleet going to German N.G.	Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	Star of England	Australian Fleet going to German N.G.	Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	Grantala	Australian hospital ship	Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	Montcalm	French ship with Fleet to German N.G.	Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	Lili	German vessel commandeered Madang	Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	[renamed] Rheno	German vessel commandeered Madang	Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	Davapia	German vessel commandeered Madang	Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	Witu	German vessel commandeered Madang	Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	Gabriel	German vessel commandeered Madang	Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1914	T.S.S. Navau	Repatriated troops to Sydney	Sepik 2 Cpt.20
1915	Eastern	Repatriated troops to Sydney	Sepik 2 Cpt.21
Dec 1914	HMAS Warrego Parramatta and Yarra	10'6" 500 tons anchored at Japandai. Seeking armed Merchantman reported	Kaufmann P 151 & Sepik 2 Cpt 20
		hiding in the Sepik River	
Dec 1914	Komet, renamed HMAS Nusa	To Dr. Thurnwald's Yellow River camp Thurnward absent later surrendered	Kaufmann P 151 Sepik 2 Cpt 21
1914-15	Siar	German ship captured by AN&MEF	Sepik 2 Cpt 21
1914-15	Lorengau	German shipping captured by AN&MEF	Sepik 2 Cpt 21
1914-15	Carola	German shipping captured by AN&MEF	Sepik 2 Cpt 21
1914-15	Meklong	German shipping captured by AN&MEF	Sepik 2 Cpt 21
1914-15	Sumatra	German shipping captured by AN&MEF	Sepik 2 Cpt 21
1914-15	Madang	German shipping captured by AN&MEF	Sepik 2 Cpt 21
1914-15	Matunga	Australian ship captured by Wolf	Sepik 2 Cpt 21
1914-15	Wolf	German vessel	Sepik 2 Cpt 21
1915 ?	Genoa	Brought DO Ogilvy - Madang to Sepik Rv.	Sepik 2 Cpt 21

1920s	Aloha	Aitape District vessel accompanied Japandai massacre investigation party 1924	Sepik 2 Cpt 26
1924/5	Arawa	Travelled Madang to Sepik with Townsend	Sepik 2 Cpt 28
Aug '27	Franklin	13'2" draft At Ambunti & Avatip	Kaufmann P 151
1929	46	Mouth of Leonard Schultze River	
1930	44	Korogo	
Dec '26 &	Elevala	Dec 1926 delivered Karius and	Across NG by
Jan'28		Champion expedition to the Elevala	I.F.Champion
4		Fly Junction. & to Mouth of October	_
		River – collected Karius & Champion	
		after Fly/Sepik crossing	
1926	Minnetonka	Shallow draft vessel used to position	Across NG by
		Karius & Champion upstream of	I.F.Champion
		Elevala Jn	
1928	Illyria	Crane Pacific Expedition	Sepik 2 Chapter 33
		1928-29 visited Marienberg The	
		brigantine yacht <i>Illyria</i> was built at	
		the Lussinpiccolo shipyards in Italy	
		from where it sailed for New York in	
		September 1928. The <i>Illyria</i> was	
		147'6" long. The height of the	
		foremast was 116' and the mainmast	
		128'. She was of 356 gross tonnage	
		and she carried 10,000 square feet of	
		sail. She also had an auxiliary diesel engine of 300 horse power.	
		engine of 300 horse power.	
1928?	Vanapa	Supply ship for US disease-resistant	Nat Geo Sept 1929
		Sugar cane expedition to Sepik	P 253-332
1927?	Thetis 1	50 ft ketch. The Sepik District's Govt	District Officer P
1942	44	ship	195
Dec'42		Thurston Exp. to Burumai upper May	Sepik 3 Chapter 24
Doot Was	Thetia 2	Rv Symbolic Madana by Cant Bland as	
Post War	Thetis 2	Sunk in Madang by Capt Blood so Japs could not have her.	
		Post War Government Trawler.	
1927?	Osprey	The Sepik River 40 ft work boat	McCarthy
16/10/35	o opioj	On Sepik Rv.10 Miles inside Dutch	1.100mmiy
Aug '43		NG. on 16/10/1935	
		Captured by Japanese at Begapuke.	
		Did not survive Japanese occupation	
Aug'43	Pat	The small boat belonging to George	Sepik 3 -
		Eichorn – captured when renegade	LWBragge
		police killed Geo and others on	
		Salumei Rv 1942, Crew stole it back –	
		eventually brought Macgregor to meet	
		Taylor party 1943. Captured by	
		Japanese with Osprey.	

replace the Gabriel, which remained in service  23 tons 7'6" draft reached mouth of Dio [Faringi] River 16.10.35 collecting art. Lost with all hands en route Rabaul.  1910 Pionier Serviced 1910 Dutch/German Border expedition  1921 Melusia Vessel which brought Wisdom, Lucas and G.W.L. Townsend Melbourne to Rabaul  1928-30 Nuloa Burns Philp ship of 190 tons brought MacGregor's horses to Marienberg  1911-1955 Montoro Coastal Vessel of 4.088 tons – in service 1911-1955  1930s MacDhui Burns Philp Coastal Vessel of 4,480 tons launched 23/12/1930 – sunk in Port Moresby harbour by Japanese air craft 16/2/1942  1934 Drina Brought Bay Loo Co builders to the Sepik from Rabaul  1930s Boina Support vessel for labour recruiting Sepik 2 Cpt 42  1935 Gwen Support vessel Ward Williams expedition Fly & Strickland Rivers  1935 Ronald S Support vessel Ward Williams expedition Fly & Strickland Rivers  1935 Ronald S Support vessel Ward Williams and Archbald expeditions Fly River  1935 Vailala Papuan Government vessel - Ward Williams expedition Strickland Rivers  1935 Papcon Support vessel Ward Williams and Archbald expeditions Fly River  1935 Vailala Papuan Government vessel - Ward Williams expedition Strickland Rivers  1935 Papcon Support vessel Ward Williams and Archbald expeditions Strickland and Fly Rivers  1935 Papcon Support vessel Ward Williams and Archbald expeditions Fly River  1935 Vailala Papuan Government vessel - Ward Williams expedition Strickland and Fly Rivers  1936 Dr Wade and R.J.Winters geological survey of Ramu and Sepik Rivers – as far as Kubkain  1920s/1930s Dr Wade and R.J.Winters geological survey of Ramu and Sepik Rivers – as far as Kubkain  1920s/1930s Bulolo Burns Philp ship 6,267 tons built 1938 and scrapped 1968  1929-30 Banyandah 38 ft work boat imported from Sydney in support of the Almana Gold Prospecting expeditions  1936 Mairi Daru to Oroville – Archbald expeditin. Sepik 2 Cpt 45				
Dec 1941   Numau Ablatak – I wet season   Ambunti		Blue Beard	Prospector Alf Belfield's launch	- 1
1934   Stella Maris   Delivered from Europe to Madang to replace the Gabriel, which remained in service   1935   Hermes   23 tons 7'6" draft reached mouth of Dio [Faringi] River 16.10.35 collecting art. Lost with all hands en route Rabaul.   1910   Pionier   Serviced 1910 Dutch/German Border expedition   Vessel which brought Wisdom, Lucas and G.W.L. Townsend Melbourne to Rabaul   1928-30   Nuloa   Burns Philp ship of 190 tons brought MacGregor's horses to Marienberg   Sepik 2 Cpt 27   MacGregor's horses to Marienberg   Sepik 2 Cpt 27   MacGregor's horses to Marienberg   Wikipedia   Service 1911-1955   Montoro   Coastal Vessel of 4.088 tons – in service 1911-1955   Burns Philp Coastal Vessel of 4.480   Wikipedia   Sepik 2 Cpt 27   MacGregor's horses to Marienberg   Wikipedia   Sepik 2 Cpt 27   MacGregor's horses to Marienberg   Wikipedia   Sepik 2 Cpt 27   MacGregor's horses to Marienberg   Wikipedia   Sepik 2 Cpt 27   MacGregor's horses to Marienberg   Wikipedia   Sepik 2 Cpt 27   MacGregor's horses to Marienberg   Wikipedia   Sepik 2 Cpt 27   MacGregor's horses to Marienberg   Wikipedia   Sepik 2 Cpt 27   MacGregor's horses to Marienberg   Wikipedia   Sepik 2 Cpt 27   MacGregor's horses to Marienberg   Wikipedia   Sepik 2 Cpt 42   MacGregor's horses to Marienberg   Sepik 2 Cpt 42   MacGregor's horses to Marienberg   Sepik 2 Cpt 44   MacGregor's horses to MacGregor's horses to MacGregor's horses t		Balangot	<b>!</b>	1 +
Dio [Faringi] River 16.10.35   collecting art. Lost with all hands en route Rabaul.		Stella Maris	Delivered from Europe to Madang to replace the Gabriel, which remained in	Sepik 2 Chapter 10
expedition   vessel which brought Wisdom, Lucas and G.W.L.Townsend Melbourne to Rabaul	1935	Hermes	Dio [Faringi] River 16.10.35 collecting art. Lost with all hands en	McCarthy and Map notes at Ambunti
1921   Melusia   Vessel which brought Wisdom, Lucas and G.W.L.Townsend Melbourne to Rabaul	1910	Pionier	i	Sepik 2 Chapter 12
MacGregor's horses to Marienberg   1911-1955   Montoro   Coastal Vessel of 4.088 tons – in service 1911-1955   Wikipedia   Service 1911-1955   Wikipedia   Support Description   Port Moresby harbour by Japanese air craft 16/2/1942   Brought Bay Loo Co builders to the Sepik from Rabaul   Support vessel for labour recruiting   Sepik 2 Cpt 42   1935   Gwen   Support vessel Ward Williams expedition Fly & Strickland Rivers   Sepik 2 Cpt 44   Expedition Fly & Strickland Rivers   Sepik 2 Cpt 44   Expedition Fly & Strickland Rivers   Sepik 2 Cpt 44   Expedition Fly & Strickland Rivers   Sepik 2 Cpt 44   Expedition Fly & Strickland Rivers   Sepik 2 Cpt 44   Expedition Fly & Strickland Rivers   Sepik 2 Cpt 44   Expedition Fly River   Sepik 2 Cpt 45   Expedition Fly River   Expe	1921	Melusia	Vessel which brought Wisdom, Lucas and G.W.L.Townsend Melbourne to	Sepik 2 Cpt 24
Service 1911-1955   Burns Philp Coastal Vessel of 4,480 tons launched 23/12/1930 - sunk in Port Moresby harbour by Japanese air craft 16/2/1942	1928-30	Nuloa		Sepik 2 Cpt 27
tons launched 23/12/1930 – sunk in Port Moresby harbour by Japanese air craft 16/2/1942  1934 Drina Brought Bay Loo Co builders to the Sepik from Rabaul  1930s Boina Support vessel for labour recruiting Sepik 2 Cpt 42  1935 Gwen Support vessel Ward Williams expedition Fly & Strickland Rivers  1935 Papcon Support vessel Ward Williams expedition Fly & Strickland Rivers  1935 Ronald S Support vessel Ward Williams Sepik 2 Cpt 44  2 Sepik 2 Cpt 44  3 Sepik 2 Cpt 44  3 Sepik 2 Cpt 44  3 Sepik 2 Cpt 44  4 Williams expeditions Fly River  1935 Vailala Papuan Government vessel - Ward Williams expedition Strickland and Fly Rivers  1920s/1930s Bogia Dr Wade and R.J.Winters geological survey of Ramu and Sepik Rivers – as far as Kubkain  1920s/1930s Nubio Dr Wade and R.J.Winters geological survey of Ramu and Sepik Rivers – as far as Kubkain  1938=> Bulolo Burns Philp ship 6,267 tons built 1938 and scrapped 1968  3 8 ft work boat imported from Sydney in support of the Almana Gold Prospecting expeditions  1936 Mairi Daru to Oroville – Archbald expeditn. Sepik 2 Cpt 45	1911-1955	Montoro	Coastal Vessel of 4.088 tons – in	Wikipedia
Sepik from Rabaul	1930s	MacDhui	tons launched 23/12/1930 – sunk in Port Moresby harbour by Japanese air	Wikipedia
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		•	38 ft work boat imported from Sydney in support of the Almana Gold Prospecting expeditions	
				Sepik 2 Cpt 45
1938 Sirius Met Taylor ex Hagen Sepik patrol at Yessan	1938	Sirius	Met Taylor ex Hagen Sepik patrol at Yessan	

## Characters, Spirits and Gods in order of appearance.

Writers note: Some names appear in multiple chapters. Names are listed only once, except where needed in the context of the chapter in question.

#### Chapter 1 Colonial Influences.

Edward Belcher of H.M.S.Sulphur.

Johann Cesar Godeffroy and Son - German Traders based in Apia, Samoa.

King Leopold II of Belgium.

Marquise de Rays of France.

Peter Enahoro - scholar and author of Nigeria

Sir Thomas Mc Ilwraith – Premier of Queensland 1883

Henry M Chester - Police Magistrate Thursday Island.

Nicholas Mikloucho Maclay - Russian scientist

Lord Derby – British Colonial Secretary

Hugh Hastings Romilly – Commissioner for the Western Pacific

Commander Erskine - Royal Navy

General Paul von Lettow Vorbeck of Tanganyika

Colonel John Walstab

Gough Whitlam - Prime Minister of Australia.

#### Chapter 2 Servicing Samoa's needs - The establishment of German New Guinea.

Eduard Hersheim – German trader and planter.

George Brown – Methodist Missionary in Duke of York Islands

Adolph von Hansemann – Berlin Banker.

Otto von Bismarck - German Chancellor.

Friedrich Herman Otto Finsch – Ornithologist, Ethnographer, Explorer

Gustav von Oertzen - Commissioner of New Guinea 1885

Eduard Dallmann - Captain of the Samoa

Georg Freiherr von Schleinitz - First Administrator of German New Guinea

Reinhold Kraetke - Second Administrator

Fritz Rose – Third Administrator.

Acheidt - Missionary murdered in New Britain in 1891

Bosch - Missionary murdered in New Britain in 1891

Georg Schmiele – Fourth Administrator

Hugo Rudger – Fifth Administrator.

Curt von Hagen – Sixth Administrator

Dr. Albert Hahl – Judge and Seventh Administrator [acting] – later Governor

Hugo Skopnik - Eighth Administrator.

"Queen" Emma Forsyth - Planter

Phoebe Coe – Emma Forsyth's sister and wife of Richard Parkinson

Herr Tappenbeck – leader of the 1899 Ramu Expedition.

Hans Rodatz – Member of 1899 Ramu Expedition – He established Eitape in 1906

Hans Klink - Member of 1899 Ramu Expedition - He established Morobe station.

Dr. Lauterback – took over s leader of Ramu Expedition 4/10/1899

Rudolph Bennigsen - First Governor of German New Guinea

Franz Bulaminski – District Officer of Kavieng

Boether - German Imperial Judge.

#### Chapter 3. Discovery and early exploration of the Sepik River

William Schouten – Dutch Navigator

Benjamin Morrell – Captain of the Brig Margaret Oakley

Thomas Jefferson Jacobs – crew member Margaret Oakley and author

U.M.von Hollrung – scientist

Dr. C.Schrader - scientist

Dr. C.Hunstein - scientist

F. Grabowski – scientist

Ngianbwel – Kubkain ancestor met von Schleinitz expedition 1886

Bigsibo – Kubkain ancestor met von Schleinitz expedition 1886

Felix von Lushon 1897 labour recruiter

Dr. Otto Schlagenhaufen – Swiss Anthropologist

Georg Thelinius - Sudsee Expedition leader 1908, Museum curator

George A Dorsey - Curator of anthropology - Chicago Field Museum of Natural History

Albert Burell Lewis - assistant Curator - Chicago Field Museum of Natural History

Leonard Schultze of Jena University – 1910 German leader Dutch/German Border expedition.

Dr. Walter Behrmann – Geographer 1912/13 Sepik mapping expedition.

Dr. Richard Thurnwald - Anthropoligist and Sepik explorer

## Chapter 4 Land acquisition in German New Guinea.

Rapardy – Representative of the Marquise de Ray

T.Kleinschmidt – German planter murdered on Utuan Isl Bismarck Archipelago

Thomas Farrell – Queen Emma's partner

Johann Kubary – land grabber – Madang District

Geisler of the New Guinea Company

Leucker of the New Guinea Company

William Morris [Billy] Hughes – Prime Minister of Australia

Walter Lucas of Burns Philp, the 1919 Royal Commission and the Expropriation Board.

#### Chapter 5 German Labour recruitment.

Ernst Berghausen – District Officer Madang and recruiter on the Sepik River

Freitdche – Labour recruiter attacked at Avatip in AN&MEF period

Gugundimi – one of the first Sengo village men recruited – later served as Tultul

Masuugundimi – one of the first Sengo men recruited.

Mogomeli – one of the first Sengo men recruited, but escaped.

Tubigumban – first Luluai of Sengo, appointed by the Germans

Jimarawan of Sengo shot by native recruiters

Colonel Samuel.A.Petherbridge -Administrator of TNG

W.A. "Bill" McGregor - labour recruiter, soldier, miner, explorer

Raphael Chow Chen On, recruiter, miner, soldier with Fryer party

G.W.L."Kassa" Townsend District Officer.

Stan Christian - Bounty descendant and Medical Assistant

Bill Stower -Recruiter

Johnny Young – Recruiter and trader at Angoram

Shanghai Brown – Recruiter and trader at Angoram

J.K.McCarthy - Patrol Officer and ADO

Jock B. MacKay – former PO who hated recruiters and recruiting

A.J."Jock" Marshall - Zoologist and adventurer

Wally Hook – former AN&MEF soldier, former Patrol Officer, recruiter and trader at Aitape.

Charlie Gough - Trader, Miner, Recruiter - murdered at Lihinga while recruiting

Lanuwan – Lihinga youth over the recruitment of who Gough was murdered

M.B.Arthur – Medical Assistant at Aitape

Ning Hee – Chinese Trader at Aitape and later at Wewak

Hui Hing – Chinese at Aitape 1936

Jack Thurston - Gold miner at Yamil, expedition leader

Kyngdon - Cadet Patrol Officer

Chief Justice Wanliss – Rabaul

J.M. Wood – Drimboi Plantation owner at Yakamul and recruiter

Ted Fulton – miner and recruiter and soldier

Len Tudor - miner

Francis Herbert Moy – recruited as a Cadet Patrol Officer 22/5/1935

Jack Brannagan - Recruiter

Harold Woodman -ADO Ambunti - later ADO Madang

Lenny Odgers District Office Clerk

Horry Niall – ADO Aitape, later DO Sepik, later 1st Speaker of PNG House of Assembly 1964

#### Chapter 6 Labour recruitment with a difference.

James Lyng – AIF Captain and Historian

Lajos Biro - Hungarian Naturalist and ethnographer married to several Madang women

Mr. Richter - New Guinea Co representative

Herr Fabricius – New Guinea Co representative

Fritz Schulz – Owner of Maindron plantation Sissano. Domestic relations with Sissano women

William Churchill - Anthropologist

Professor Craig Volker - studied Creole German Unserdeutsch

Reg. Beckett – Ambunti clerk/storeman – Garamambu miner murdered 1943

Weinak - Bill McGregor's woman.

### Chapter 7 The Bird of Paradise Trade.

Sultan of Tidore – held suzerainty over New Guinea for the Dutch

Chinese traders from Tanate and Tidore traded for bird of paradise plumes

Geissler Brothers 1892 Bird of Paradise hunters and traders.

Richard Parkinson - met Bird of Paradise plume traders from Hollandia in Sepik 1900.

Umlauft and assistant had arrows fired at them behind Magang while hunting birds 1907/8

Alfred Mivulicz killed in Ramu River bank while hunting birds

Several cases of Chinese, Indonesian and locals killed while hunting

Peterson killed behind Madang while hunting birds June 1912

Ivan Champion reported bird of paradise traders on Fly River

Drechsler – Papuan resident murdered Fly River while hunting bird of paradise

Bell – Papuan resident murdered Fly River while hunting bird of paradise

ADO Aitape – Ward Oakley reported bird of paradise traders west of Lumi 1932

ADO E.D.Robinson met Malay speakers in Yellow River area. 1934

PO J.D.Martin met Malay speakers in Dreikikir area 1951

1924 Oliver John Thompson DO Aitape convicted of illicit trafficking in Bird of Paradise plumage

ADO Bill Brown conducted exploratory patrol along Dutch Border 1956

PO Barry Ryan accompanied Brown's patrol

# Chapter 8 Differing impacts of contact with the outside world on the on the Chambri Lakes Stone Adze Blades and Aibom pottery industries.

Yebieli of Parembei murdered and beheaded by Chambri caused Chambri exile to hinterland Wabi Menuabai of Arinjone – informant.

-Kanaui

Webei - ancestors of Nyaurengai who brought Chambri out of exile

Wolisambang - ancestor of Nyaurengai who brought Chambri out of exile

## Chapter 9 The arrival of the Chinese and introducing Chu Leong.

Ah Tam – Entrepreneur supreme – land, ship building and maintenance, prostitution, opium etc.

Johnson Administrator

Chu Sai Leong - Chu Leong's recorded full name

Ah Chok - Chu Leong's first employer in TNG

Alois Kawan - of Marap, Mission man and informant

"Masts Bobby" Bob Overall - Marienberg and Angoram trader and recruiter

Wamo of Angasi, Keram River – Chu Leong's brother in law.

Anna Chu - one of Chu Leong's daughters - friend and author

## Chapter 10 Establishment of the Catholic Mission in the Sepik.

Father Arnold Janssen – Founder of the Society of the Divine Word [SVD], Steyl, Netherlands Father Eberhard Limbrock – Founder of the SVD Catholic church in TNG on Tumleo Isl Aitape

Ludwig Kaernbeck - Planter on Seleo Island Aitape

Dr. Karl Herzog – Catholic member on the New Guinea Co Board Administrator

Canon Hespers - Priest attached to the Cologne Cathedral

Joseph Loeg – acting German NG Administrator following the murder of Curt von Hagen

Prinz von Arenberg – Member of the Reischtag.

Herr Oskar Stuebel – Director of Colonial Dept in the Foreign Office.

Herr Bergmann of the Rhemish Lutheran Mission

Herr Hoffman - Bergmann's successor.

Brother Eduard Irlenbusch – established St Anna plantation

Brother Ferdinand Neinhaus took over St Anna plantation when Brother Eduard died.

Dr. R. Schlechter – conducted the Gutta-Percha native rubber survey

Father Loerks – Captain of Gabriel, became Bishop and executed at Sea by Japanese.

Father Andrias Puff – Succeeded Father Limbrock in 1924 until Bishop Wolf arrived in 1923

G.J.H.Barret OIC native and Asiatic prisons Rabaul 1922

Brigadier General E.A. Wisdom – Administrator

Father Franz Kirschbaum – established Marienberg 1913, friend and adviser to Townsend and others Dr. R.W. Wiltgen – Historian.

### Chapter 11 Berlinhafen, and Eitape [Aitape]

Diack former assistant trader to Kaernbeck on Seleo Isl.

Father van den Hemel – Priest and surveyor of the Sepik coast

Rudolf Wahlen - Planter and recruiter

Carl Georg Eduard Friederici – Linguist

Professor Richard Gustav Neuhauss - Physician, Anthropologist and Photographer

M.Pember of Aitape established and owned Brandi, Moem and Boram plantations.

Mr. Boiker – managed Brandi, Moem and Boram plantations

Sir Pita Simogun – Police Sergeant, war hero and politician

Mr. Schrober – took over from Rodatz as District Officer Aitape in 1911

#### Chapter 12 Administration of German New Guinea under Dr. Albert Hahl to 1914.

Sir William McGregor- Lieut. Governor of British New Guinea.

Georg Christian Thilenius - Curator of Hamburg Muesum & leader of 1908-10 Sudsee Expedition

Friedrich Fulleborn – Sudsee Expedition member

Augustine Kramer – Sudsee Expedition member

Paul Hambruch - Sudsee Expedition member

Otto Reche – Sudsee Expedition member

Ernst Sarfert - Sudsee Expedition member

William Muller Wismat – Sudsee Expedition member

Captain J.Luymes - Dutch leader of the Dutch/German 1910 border expedition

Mrs Lulu Miller – granddaughter of Queen Emma

Dr. Philofer – Lutheran missionary

Dr. Johann Karl Emil Eduard Haber -took over as Governor from Dr Hahl mid-April 1914 and signed surrender

## Chapter 13 Destruction of Traditional Religion and Culture in the Bien River Area

URIJA - An Aion water spirit

ORIAREM - An Aion water spirit

BEBE- Flying fox totem

UKEMBA - Ancestral canoe made by Opain

OMPAIN - An Aion cultural hero

ONEJO - Totemic representation of all things female

OKUR - Cultural hero and maker of war shields

YOTA – A spirit woman of the water

PAUJUAI - Cultural hero of the flying fox clan

ANOKRA - Ancestor from the Jimi clan

WAKIR – A snake spirit that could fly

GAKIR - Frog totem

AIRAMEI – Ancestor of the Saun clan

BAKI – Female mothering/parenting spirit

ORMAP – Pig spirit – the originator of all pigs

ANDONE - Sacred spirit [Tambaran] of the Urumbang haus tambaran

AMBAKRAP – Female mother ancestor killed by Atjam

DENGARA - Brother of Imburup in the two-brother myth

IMBURUP - Brother of Dengara in the two-brother myth

KUMANIA - Wife of Dengara

GRIMANGEI – Evil female earth spirit. [is she akin to Iatmul's Niamei, but evil?]

Gop/Erempa - old woman in 1991, who as a girl was ordered by priest to burn a haus tambaran

Bell - Mission worker who assisted priest in destroying Aion cultural buildings and objects

Sowop – Mission worker who assisted priest in destroying Aion cultural buildings and objects

Richard Aldridge - Art collector

#### Chapter 14 Changes in Sepik spirituality.

Mr. Stuben - Police Master

Dr. Donald Laycock - Linguist.

Ralph Ormsby – ADO Angoram.

Father Hansen – Priest in charge of Marui mission station – he did not survive Japanese capture.

Father Cruysberg - Priest at Marui who survived by avoiding capture

Captain Joe Searson of ANGAU

Sgt Danny Leahy of ANGAU

Professor Sachiko Hatanaka – Anthropologist

MAI'IMP - Sawos cultural hero

Ninga of Bien – cargo cult leader – pivotal to events in Chapter 13.

Brother James - Captain of the Stella Maris

Lutsner – presumably a priest responsible for the Aitape coast communities in 1934

George Ellis - ADO Angoram

T.W.Howlett - Patrol Officer

James Hodgekiss - ADO Ambunti

Frank Clune – Author

### Chapter 15 The "Behrmann" expedition 1912-1913

Mr. Stollé – Mining Engineer, Expedition leader

Dr. Christian Kaufmann – Swiss anthropologist and confident at Ambunti 1970s

Dr. Roesicke – Ethnographer.

Dr. Thurnwald – Ethnographer

Dr. Buergers – medical doctor

Dr. Behrmann – Geographer – the only member to publish, so it was called "Behrmann expedition."

Mr. Lederman – Botonist.

Mr. Tafel – in charge of police.

Mr. Schatteburg – Boat's engineer. Died and buried Frieda River area

John Black - Patrol Officer

Abova – 1912-13 labourer – deserted with others – lone survivor Nenatamun arrows, 1938 resident.

Mr.Fiebig – Boat engineer replaced Schatteburg.

Lieut. Joseph Barracluff – of ANGAU – killed by Japanese at Begapuke, April River 1943

## Chapter 16 Dr. Richard Thurnwald's Discoveries in the Upper Sepik

Barry Craig - Expert on "Min" culture and history.

Luigi Maria D'Albertis – Italian naturalist and explorer.

## Chapter 17 Dr. Richard Thurnwald in Telefomin and the Yellow River incident 1914/15 No new names.

## Chapter 18 Dr. Richard Thurnwald's exploration of the Sand and North Rivers and final surrender.

Major Martin – AN&MEF District Officer Madang

Commander Claude Cumberledge.

Captain Ogilvy – District Officer Madang – took over from Major Martin

Winston Churchill - British Colonial Secretary

#### Chapter 19 Surveying Kaiser Wilhelsland's land boundaries and introducing Captain Detzner.

Captain Hermann Detzner

Gavin Souter – author of The Last unknown 1963

Sgt Konrad - Police

Rainer Maria Rilke -Poet

George Chisolm – Patrol Officer – British New Guinea.

Chief of police Banik at Morobe

Dr. Christian Keysser – Neuendettelsau missionary

Rev. F.O. Theile Lutheran Missionary

Captain M.J.Dillany - District Officer Finschhafen

Major-General M.J.Johnson TNG Administrator.

#### Part 2 Turmoil - Transition from German to Australian New Guinea and from War to Peace.

# Chapter 20 World War 1 and the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force [AN&MEF] Colonel Holmes administration 1914-1915

Colonel William Holmes – AN&MEF Administraator.

Brigadier General T. Griffith

Arch Duke Ferdinand of Austria

Captain Wuchert - in charge of Bitapaka radio station defence

Lieut. Meyer – in charge of Herbertshohe [Kokopo] defence.

Rear Admiral George Patey - Australian Navy

Sub Lieut. Meyer of AN&MEF

Lieut. Bowen of AN&MEF

Able Seaman Williams – shot dead -1st Australian casualty of World War 1?

Rev. William Henry Cox.

Rear Admiral von Spee of the German Pacific Squadron

Lieut. Clarence Hansby Read of AN&MEF

Mr. Hoppman - Madang district planter

Father Ricken - German Priest - took Church service for AN&MEF Catholics

Rev Bluimin – Lutheran missionary Kranket Isl.

Private Harold Leslie Bragg of AN&MEF Madang – later POW in Germany – writers relative

Herr Schmidt – Planter wounded in indigenous attack

Captain Morrison – AN&MEF – in charge at Aitape

Lieut. Chambers – AN&MEF – in charge at Angoram.

Mr. Kempten – 1914 Boram Plantation owner

Senator Pearce

#### Chapter 21 The AN&MEF administration of former German New Guinea - 1915-1921

Captain G.O.Manning – AN&MEF officer in charge Native Affairs

Norman Lindsay - cartoonist

Dr. Campbell Brown – sent to Germen NG to assess assets.

James Burns of Burns Philp

Lieut. Charles Woodhall Brearley - District Officer Aitape in 1915

S.S.McKenzie - AN&MEF Judge and author

Captain James Harry Smith Olifent – DO Aitape 1919-1920

Lieut. Victor Bolton Pennefather.

Walter Balfour Ogilvy – District Officer Madang

George Butterworth Jackson - Wireless operator - undercover agent check on Bird of Paradise trade

H.J.Hiery - Author

Charles Rowley – Author

Captain Hunter – District Officer Aitape 1918

Captain Kenny – District Officer Aitape 1921

Stan Christian - European Medical Assistant

Parnek - elder of Aitape - informant

Kemerabi of Japandai

Ruman - Avatip leader 1919+/-

Kiginjimp – Avatip warrior credited with spearing a European recruiter

Kaigunmeri – Lisindu said Kaigunmeri not Kiginjimp speared the recruiter

Lisindu of Malu – informant

Yowanmeri of Avatip – credited with spearing a European recruiter

Kalimbank – was shot from Fritsche's ship at Avatip.

Nylak - was shot

Yuarimi – was shot

Yuwanbiar - Dived, lifted the anchor and set Fritsche's ship adrift away from Avatip

Marawul – at elder of Fritsche's time.

-Magasaubi

Numbunmi Among the Avatip people in hiding after the punitive expedition[s]

Gulman Among the Avatip people in hiding after the punitive expedition[s]

Yagi of Yerikai - informant

Yimbunduma

Taun Among 5 men and five women shot at Korogo by a "German" punitive

Woboigu expedition, more likely by AN&MEF.

Inugmeri

#### Chapter 22 The Korogo expulsion from mother village Nyaurengai

Woboi

Kanaumeri Korogo warriors who protected the Korogo against Nyaurengai, while living

Yaglimbanga in Nyaurengai. They suggested Korogo people leave.

Lantimi Meribondi

Usenogwai - Korogo elder who took Korogo into exile in between Japandai and Yambunumbu.

Poshi [m]

Tambamowi [m]

Nananggauwi [m] Korogo individuals killed in fighting with Nyaurengai and daughter villages

Andjibuliawi [f]

Boswei

Bensemboliawi

Mangganawi of Korogo taken to Parembei by Beiambandiwanda and Taramanggur.

Beiambaandiwanda - Parembei warrior and peace negotiator

Taramanggur. - Parembei warrior and peace negotiator.

Douglas Newton – scholar and author + curator of New York Museum of Primitive Art.

Wunjingowi – Korogo leader

Maigindimi

Walmeri

Tumuginmeri

Wabi Korogo warriors who provided rear-guard action at old Korogo opposite

Ivungameri Yentchanmangua as Korogos migrated into enemy Parembei territory

Manki

Munjingowi Patogwi

Mungano

Patgowi

Suat Korogo warriors summoned by name by the Parembei warriors at Kubulagwi

Wunjingowi

Kasimeri

Mungunu

Tangambinogwi – Teenage Korogo girl given as peace offering to Parembei village

Wungoinbu - Teenage Korogo girl given as peace offering to Parembei village

Konbinbinogwi - Teenage Korogo girl given as peace offering to Parembei village

Yarimaimange – Teenage Korogo girl given as peace offering to Malingai village

Nambaiyamange – Teenage Korogo girl given as peace offering to Malingai village

Ambinyamange – Teenage Korogo girl given as peace offering to Yentchan village.

Kabandam [Also known as Koma] – son of Ambinyamange became a hospital orderly

#### Chapter 23 The 1919 Royal Commission on former German New Guinea

Woodrow Wilson - President of the USA

David Lloyd George – Prime Minister. Prime Minister of the United Kingdom

Billy Hughes – Australian Prime Minister

William Massey - New Zealand Prime Minister

Judge Hubert Murray - Lieut. Governor of Papua. Chairman 1919 Royal Commission.

Atlee Arthur Hunt - Secretary Dept. Home & Territories. Member 1919 Royal Commission

Walter Lucas – Burns Philp Islands manager and Member 1919 Royal Commission.

Alexander Poynton – Minister for Home and Territories

CQC Marr - Minister for Home and Territories 1927.

Sir Thomas Henley – Politician and author

## Part 3 The Australian Civil Administration of TNG 1922-1941

### Chapter 24 Expropriation of German properties.

Frederick Reidy Jolley – Planter, former British Consul, member, then Chairman of Expropriation board after Walter Lucas. Jolley was dismissed for questionable conduct.

Mabel von Frege Weltzian - wife of Frederick Jolley

Lieut. Colonel J.H.Peck – Chairman of Expro. Board after Jolley – also dismissed.

A.J.Egan – Custodian responsible to Administrator after Board closed on 11/11/1927

Ah Chee - Rabaul hotelier

Edmund Barton – Australia's first Prime Minister.

C.I.H.Campbell - Commonwealth Bank Manager - Member of Expropriation Board.

C.J.W.Gillan - treasurer elect of TNG. Member of Expropriation Board

P.Deane - Custodian of expropriated properties.

J.R.Collins – replaced P.Deane as Custodian.

E.Hoff - German Settler

Brigadier General A.E.Wisdom – first civil Administrator of TNG

#### Chapter 25 An inauspicious start to Australia's civil administration of T.N.G.

Captain Morrison - District Officer Aitape 1914

Captain Brearley – District Officer Aitape 1915

Captain James Harry Smith Olifent - District Officer Aitape 1919

Captain Hunter - District Officer Aitape 1921

G.W.L.Townsend – War veteran – joined as a Patrol Officer 1921

Dowd - Recruiter murdered and buried in Madang

Captain Oliver John Thompson – first civil administration District Officer Aitape

Pole - disgraced Police Master Vanimo.

Walter John Hook - AN&MEF Patrol Officer Vanimo

Mr. C.Luhofs – Governor of Dutch New Guinea 1921/22

Jim Appleby – Deputy District Officer Wewak.

Noel Tracy - Chief Clerk Aitape 1921/22

Brendon Bradley - European Medical Assistant Aitape

Wilkins – Patrol Officer Marienberg at time of change over to civil administration

"Shark-eye George" AN&MEF Patrol officer Wewak

Sam Freeman - AN&MEF Patrol officer Wewak – later with Oil exploration Marienberg and leader of Akmana gold expedition.

Father Schafer of Yakamul [was he the Father Schafer at Timbunke in 1942?]

Bill Townsend

Ning Hee – Trader at Aitape

J.K.McCarthy – Patrol Officer, later ADO, later Director of Dept District Services & Native Affairs Wilder Nelligan – DO Talasea – corrupt, suicided, buried Talasea.

Mrs. O'Brien - wife of Madang Planter - broke story of the Japandai Massacre in Australian Press.

Senator G.F.Pearce – Minister for Home and Territories.

E.M.Bastard. Papuan Resident Magistrate seconded to Aitape as District Officer R.A. Woodward Papuan Resident Magistrate seconded to Ambunti as District Officer. Judge I.Wanliss – member of board of inquiry into District Officer Thompson activities J.H.Hunt. – member of board of inquiry into District Officer Thompson activities J.F.Cashman – member of board of inquiry into District Officer Thompson activities.

## Chapter 26 The Japandai migrations and massacre <1923

Sangai of Yambon – informant

Kagaramar – Sangai's ancestor

Nauwi Sauinambi of Bangwis - informant

Gaui of Sengo – informant

Damdagwa – Sengo woman left by mistake at Yambon.

Mabisaunogwi - Sengo woman left by mistake at Yambon

Kwatauwi of Avatip – informant

Yabsit - Avatip ancestor who established Avatip village

Karandaman of Malu – informant

Kugiaweni – ancestor of Yambon among many killed by Malu

Sugurandaman – Malu ancestor – cursed the Malu raiding party against Garamambu.

Benjindum of Malu – bitter in defeat by Garamambu migrated upstream.

Yakabus Kami of Maiwi - informant.

Malingot/Ongwinjambi of Brugnowi - informant

Gumbeli of Maiwi killed a man for adultery and fled to Japandai

Paligumban of Japandai with Gumbeli moved up river seeking new land

Avagien of Japandai with Gumbeli moved up river seeking new land

Winjamba of Malu disputed the Japandai presence in a sago/pig dispute

Mangandawa – woman given by Gumbeli to Yambon to make friends.

Tugwanmangiwanda - woman given by Gumbeli to Yambon to make friends.

Yaunimber - wife Jaimbendu of Yambon, and mistress [?] of Yeramai of Japandai

Wagi/Banduwan – informant in old undated file at Ambunti

Mariandei Kaneiman - informant in old undated file at Ambunti

Mangoimeri of Japandai – negotiated for a second migration to Yambon

Kwanggambi of Yambon agreed to accept a second migration from Japandai

Sugundambri of Nyaurengai/Kandingei participated in the Japandai massacre

Yabisaun of Nyaurengai/Kandingei later of Japanaut - participated in the Japandai massacre.

Parakau of Avatip was a friend of Yabisaun which resulted in Avatip participation

Dumisen – captured Japandai 9 year-old child killed by Yabisaun's child Sugurap

Jumibangwa - Japandai 9 year-old child killed by Yabisaun's child Sugurap.

Both child bodies put in post holes of Jriabei haus Tambaran at Bumbienda.

Gwolai of Tegoi – informant.

Bonguwan – an ancestor killed by Korogo and buried at Kaminimbit

Malinjoa – A Yentchanmangua girl given to Kaminimbit to pay for Bonguwan's grave site

Mainbwan – Ancestor migrating from Yentchanmangua to establish at Kaminimbit.

Malinginjin – Kanganaman leader

Weindumbanga of Lukluk Island, grandson of Yabisaun – informant.

Maganjui of Nyaurengai – informant

Yabik – of Japanaut with Yabisaun in Japandai massacre – migrated to Lukluk as a result Wabiengaui of Japanaut with Yabisaun in Japandai massacre – migrated to Lukluk as a result Gumbiangan of Japanaut with Yabisaun in Japandai massacre – migrated to Lukluk as a result

Ambaimeri of Nyaurengai – participated in Japandai massacre.

Kamburu of Nyaurengai – participated in Japandai massacre.

Kubeliwan of Nyaurengai – participated in Japandai massacre.

Mondindimba of Nyaurengai – participated in Japandai massacre.

Ambundimi of Nyaurengai – participated in Japandai massacre.

Kanbimeri of Nyaurengai – participated in Japandai massacre.

## Chapter 27 The 1924 Investigation of Japandai Massacre and 1920s patrol tactics.

Senator Grant.

Colonel John Walstab – Investigation leader

G.W.L. Townsend - Patrol Officer - investigation member

Eric Feldt - Patrol Officer - investigation member

Stan Christian – European Medical Assistant – investigation member.

Father Andrias Puff

Father Loerks - Captain of the Gabriel and future Bishop

Vaginap – Luluai of Avatip

Garu Jam of Yambon – informant

Ganbank of Yambon – taken to Ambunti for familiarisation

Yebindu of Yambon

Marikwat of Yambon

Kimbeinmange – A woman killed by Yessan to make Brugnowi village strong

Yambunwun - A woman killed by Yessan to make Brugnowi village strong

Ambai - A woman killed by Yessan to make Brugnowi village strong

Wanio - A woman killed by Yessan to make Brugnowi village strong

Yingir of Yambon - informant

Rudi Treutlein - Patrol Officer

John Corrigan - Assistant District Officer at Ambunti

Frank den Ousten – Cadet Patrol Officer

Nunguru of Japandai – son of Luluai Kemerabi

Captain R.R.Cole ANGAU ADO later District Commissioner Wewak

Bruce Robertson Patrol Officer

Geoff Swainson Patrol Officer

Lands Litles Commissioner Page.

## Chapter 28 Kemerabi – Townsend's ambassador to the Sepik Plains tribes and Kwonji his interpreter.

Kemerabi of Japandai – Headhunter, turned ambassador for the uncontrolled Sepik Plains for Townsend.

Kwonji of Burui, the only person Townsend found who was bi-lingual in Iatmul & Sawos languages.

Nonguru – Kemerabi's son – he was "Kane" to Kwonji's "Abel"

Alaminja of Nyaurengai

Abwandambwi - Kemerabi's grandfather of Chambri married in Nyaurengai

Wisambwi - Abwandambwi's son and Kemerabi's father - killed with his mother by Burui men

Sabiogwar of Burui sought peace with Kemerabi

Burinja – Sabiogwar's daughter ceremonially given to Kemerabi as a peace offering

Gauimeri of Burui

Yambeli - Guimeri's daughter captured by Japanaut warriors.

Kwongamgauwi of Japanut and his brother captured Yambeli to be sacrificed

Sameibanga of Japanut and his brother captured Yambeli to be sacrificed.

Yambeli was not sacrificed but raised and married Mopai at Japanaut – Kwonji was her son

Mopai of Japanaut - Yambeli's husband

Sagat – Kwonji's brother

Malaningi of Saula village helped Kemerabi with Plains pacification

## Chapter 29 The work of New Guinea's European Medical Assistants [EMAs].

Stan Christian – former EMA – informant.

Mayo Brothers – with US forces in PNG during World War 2

Major Hardy US Medic

General Blamey

Peter Rooke EMA – later Dr Rooke.

#### Chapter 30 The Karius and Champion Fly to the Sepik expedition first attempt 1926/27

William MacGregor - Lieut. Governor of British New Guinea.

Ivan Champion - Patrol Officer, explorer

James Sinclair - Patrol Officer, historian

Charles H. Karius – Assistant Resident Magistrate, explorer

Clem Rich - Plantation owner, former Patrol Officer

Mac Rich – Clem's brother - Patrol Officer, later acting a/Director District Services & Native Affairs

Lambden – Assistant Resident Magistrate – Daru

Gegera - Sergeant Royal Papuan Constabulary.

Iari – Corporal Royal Papuan Constabulary

Aruru – Armed Constable Royal Papuan Constabulary

Iawogo – Armed Constable Royal Papuan Constabulary

Dogio – Armed Constable Royal Papuan Constabulary

Kiopi – Armed Constable Royal Papuan Constabulary

Pakai – Armed Constable Royal Papuan Constabulary

Paru – Armed Constable Royal Papuan Constabulary

Bwanaki - Armed Constable Royal Papuan Constabulary

Bego – Armed Constable Royal Papuan Constabulary

Lagi – Armed Constable Royal Papuan Constabulary

Barry Craig – Expert on the "Min" people and their history

#### Chapter 31 The Karius and Champion Fly to the Sepik expedition second attempt 1927/8

 $J.E. Brien-Customs\ Officer,\ Daru-accompanied\ patrol\ on\ the\ {\it Elevala}\ leg\ of\ the\ patrol$ 

Tamsimara – Chief of Bolivip village.

Dr. Thurnwald.

Jigori - Corporal Royal Papuan Constabulary

Dr. Leonard Schultze

Jim Ritchie - Engineer of the Elevala

## Chapter 32 The impact of hanging executions on Sepik headhunting

Owun – Korogo head-hunter hanged at Ambunti in 1930.

Yuinumba – Owun's son for whom Owun captured the victim for his son to kill

Kwonji – Townsend's Middle Sepik Interpreter – who favoured hanging head hunters

Sambumbeli – Jama fight leader hanged at Jama May 1934

Yageleli of Sengo hanged at Jama May 1934

Ambeli of Sengo hanged at Jama May 1934

Tomeli of Sengo hanged at Jama May 1934

Tultul Gungundimi of Sengo hanged at Jama May 1934

Name forgotten of Sengo hanged at Jama May 1934

Eric Douglas Robinson, District Officer Sepik stationed at Ambunti

Constable Bauge

Jerry Keogh - Patrol Officer

Ludwig Schmidt – prospector, murderer the only European hanged in TNG

Colin MacDonald - ADO Ambunti murdered late February 1935

Constable Sipei - murdered MacDonald for which he hanged

Kawiambu – wife of Special Constable Baras – married in church

Constable Belova – murdered at Waskuk

Constable Luwitis - murdered a Waskuk

Neil Campbell Elliott – Patrol Officer murdered at Wanali 1939

Constable Aipaum – murdered at Wanali 1939

#### Chapter 33 Two American expeditions to New Guinea and Papua 1928/29.

Dr. E.W.Brandis – Pathologist and author National Geographic article "Into Primitive Papua by Seaplane. – seeking disease resistant sugar cane"

Dr. Jacob Jeswiet – Dutch sugar expert

Mr. C.F. Pemberton - "seasoned explorer"

Mr. Richard C.Peck - sea plane pilot.

Harold Woodward - District Officer

Jack Read - Patrol Officer

Richard Squires - Medical Assistant

Cornelius Crane

Richard Teller Crane Junior - Cornelius' father

Karl Patterson Schmidt - herpetologist & expedition member

Dr. Albert W.Herre -Ichthyologist & expedition member

Walt Alois Webber – artist & expedition member

William Lorenzo Moss – Medical doctor & expedition member

Charles R Peavy – Crane personal friend

Sydney N Shurcliff – Friend and Photographer

Murray Fairbank – Friend and Mechanical Engineer

Captain Sheldon Boutilier and ship crew of eighteen

Virginia Lee Webb

Charles Darwin

Alfred Russell Wallace

George Dorsey of the field Museum

Albert Beurell Lewis

Father Girards

Father Kirschbaum

#### Chapter 34 The murder of Constables Belova and Luwitis at Waskuk in 1928

H.Page – Government Secretary in Rabaul.

J.C.McLaren – Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department.

J.K.McCarthy - Patrol Officer

Allan H Ross – Patrol Officer

J.I.Merrylees - Assistant District Officer relieved Woodman as acting District Officer on 8/3/29

Harold Woodman – Assistant District Officer, had been acting District Officer of the Sepik District.

Reg Beckett - Warrant Officer, Gaoler and Storeman at Ambunti

Marik Kalapaj of Waskuk

Nambalum – Waskuk woman delivering a gift of sago to visiting police, was grabbed and raped

Faifu – Nambalum's husband and others killed the two police.

Karandaman of Malu was accompanying the police and escaped

Wironimba – a Yambon woman killed years before by Waskuk.

Kabongaui

Kwasump four Waskuks killed by Yambons and Malu warriors

Agawen

Kubalump

Simeiwur

Fitaga four Waskuks killed by Avatips

Kaumbos [F]

One infant

Ulagawen

Kamando

Kamando

Kanda'ap [F]

Ambau [M/child]

Umgweinuk [F/child]

Waliamber [F/child]

Limbus [F]

Misigo

Wiagindu

Sangiamba [M/child] twenty-one killed by Urumbanj, Saseriman and Police

Kwangi

Jonimber [F]

Yandum

Ungusikebeger [F/child]

Nouraka [F]

Gau'ariimbwia [F]

Yatos [M/child]

Nambangai [F/child]

Huikulum

Wogwiyena [M/child]

Waiwos [F/Child]

Luluai Abingamba

Tultul Latai Denied being Waskuks – Broke away and formed Bangwis

Sauinambi

Labakauwi

Kalapaj [also known as Fugolumkkalapaj

Marikwulumbank

Serangwamba

Alui'iuasa'i

Weifukyumbungu

Nauramankamandu Began payback killings in reprisal for their dead by first attacking Urumbanj

Soramangwoi

Yagoman

Warameisa

Yapmungwai

Labakaui of Bangwis

Sauinambi of Bangwis

Ambangagilambei of Bangwis

Hongwinapi – an Urumbanj girl killed with her mother and sister [names not known]

Juium of Saseriman killed in reprisal by Waskuk warriors

Kukwal [F] of Saseriman killed in reprisal by Waskuk warriors

Wurumbi [m/child] of Saseriman killed in reprisal by Waskuk warriors

Manjerigsias – Male Yena mask

Manjeriga – Male Yena mask

Alalyer – Female Yena mask

Saseriman peace offering, the equivalent of handing

over heads

Logusuwar – Famale Yena mask

Nilingai of Bangwis killed a Waskuk child by sorcery. He in turn was killed

# Chapter 35 Case study – The Birth of a Religious Movement: A Comparison of Melanesian Cargo Cults and Early Christianity.

Father Theo Aerts

Kilibob of the Madang two brother myth

Manup of the Madang two brother myth – supposed reincarnation of Satan

Brother Bartholomew

Father Dingels

Teni of Tauwete [Lumi area]

Lieut. Fryer – ANGAU behind Japanese lines escaped capture by Teni cult to be handed to Japanese.

King David

Prophet Nathan

Prophet Isaiah

Ahaz – the fainthearted king of the House of David

Immanuel

Jesephus – biblical historian

Judas of Galilee

Menachem- Judean rebel

Simon bar Giora – Judean rebel

Mikloukho-MasKay - Russian Scientist on Rai coast 1871 =>

Noah's son Ham - his descendants sent to New Guinea without "cargo"

Yali – war hero and cult leader

Antiochus Epiphanes [175-163 BC] – false messiah - came to Jerusalem and stripped the temple.

Herod – King of Juda

John the Baptist

Evara [1920] – involved with Mekeo cargo cult [Papua]

Filo [1942] – involved with Mekeo cargo cult [Papua]

Anhanitha – in the Koreri movement [1938] – Dutch New Guinea.

Tokeriu – Milne Bay prophet [1893]

Paliau – movement in Manus [1946]

F.E. Williams – Government Anthropologist [Papua]

#### Chapter 36 Oil exploration in the Sepik

Evan Richard Stanley - Government Geologist - Papua

Captain Macintosh of AN&MEF reported on Matapau seep

a/Captain Charles Woodhall Brearley – District Officer Aitape set up Colonial Exploration and Development Co[CE&DC] – with Matapau in mind.

Lieut James Gilles Syme Stewart - CE&DC share-holder

Private Malcolm Stewart - CE&DC share-holder

Duncan Syme Stewart – driver – CE&DC share-holder

William Knox D'Arcy - oil success in Persia

Colonel Munroe of Ormildah Oil & Development Co

Dr. H.I.Jensen - Geologist of Ormildah Oil & Development Co

Dr.Schlenzig - German colonial Mining Warden in Rabaul

Dr. George Arthur Vickers Stanley – Geologist Harry Eve – Oil Search Limited surveyor

## Chapter 37 Tracking down W.A. [Bill] Macgregor 1928 =>

William A [Bill] MacGregor - recruiter, miner, explorer, soldier, horseman

Roy MacGregor – Bill's brother – Planter.

Peter England - Trader and friend of Bill MacGregor's

Reg Beasley – Light horse man, and Bill MacGregor's recruiting and exploration partner

Errol Flynn - Patrol Officer, movie actor

Mrs Lynette Townsend [Kassa's widow]

Margaret [Peggy] Matches – author and victim of Bill MacGregor's charm

## Chapter 38 The Kamasiut of the Hunstein Mountains attack McCarthy's patrol 1930

J.K.McCarthy - Patrol Officer.

Sergeant Major Maru – New Guinea police

Constable Wana

Constable Moi

Constable Jeremei

### Chapter 39 Sepik Robbie – Eric Douglas Robinson

Eric Douglas Robinson [Sepik Wobbie] – AN&MEF medical assistant, later District Officer. Also ANGAU captain promoted to Major 2/12/1945.

Colonel Holman AN&MEF, recruited him.

Colin Simpson – author

Willie Williamson - prospector

George Eichorn – prospector

Freddie Eichorn – prospector – George's son

Alf Belfield – prospector

Jim McGuigan - European Medical Assistant

I.D.Lyon – Cadet Patrol Officer.

G.M. Keogh - Patrol Officer

W.J.[Jack] Read - Patrol Officer

A.J.Sansom - Patrol Officer

Margaret Mead - Anthropologist

Gregory Bateson - Anthropologist

Dr. Felix Speiser

Ward Oakley – a/District Officer Aitape 1932

Constable Wari

Woodville – Aitape District Clerk

Miss Nell Patterson – married E.D.Robinson 21/11/1933

Hepburn – Cadet Patrol Officer

E.Gallet - prospector

Constable Wankra - Malay speaker

Bill Kyle a/ADO Aitape to be relieved by McCarthy 22/3/1935

Lieut Ken W.T.Bridge ANGAU Bougainville and PO at Maprik late 1930s.

Marjorie Westmoreland – E.D.Robinson's second wife – later divorced

 $J.W. Mac Gregor-Patrol\ Officer-son\ of\ Bill\ Macgregor$ 

H.R.Niall - Post War District Officer - Wewak.

#### **Chapter 40 Sepik Plains exploration**

Mr. Montgomery Oil Search Ltd

G.A.V.Stanley - Oil Search Ltd Geologist

Harry Eve - Oil Search Ltd Surveyor

Mango - Mr. Townsend's horse

Chestnut – Mr. Eve's horse

Sergeant Baugi – New Guinea Police

Sergeant Maru – New Guinea Police

Webieli – Tultul of Parembei

Ambatungwi – Tultul of Kausimbi

Jack Reed - Patrol Officer

Constable Avingameri – New Guinea Police

Brother Joachim of Marui mission station

Jerry Keogh – ADO Ambunti

Robert Overall – Marienberg and Angoram trader and recruiter

Tom Yoemans – prospecting for Bulolo Gold Dredging Co.

A.A. [Bill] Bloxham Patrol Officer

E. Ward Oakley ADO Aitape

Father de Bruyn – accompanied the patrol to Maprik

Mr. Cobb of Karawop Plantation

Mr. Corrigan recruiter.

Sepik Robbie – E.D.Robinson

Constable Mouse

Constable Yuaka – fired at a threatening warrior and missed.

Constable Suprimeri – killed an attacking warrior

Constable Pasengon - killed an attacking warrior

Constable Tolamai - killed an attacking warrior

Constable Rohru

Samako/Farumu of Masalaga – 1970s informant

Pisia of Kubriwat

#### Chapter 41 The Sepik between World Wars 1 & 2.

A.A.[Bill] Bloxham – Patrol Officer involved in transferring Govt station Marienberg to Angoram.

Kenneth Hewwitson Thomas – stationed at Wewak patrol post 1933

Jack Woodville - Aitape District Clerk

W.O.Allen – In charge of police and gaols

A.J.[Jock] Marshall writer and naturalist—managed Tepier plantation for a short time

Mr. Boiker – German manager at Boram, Moem and Brandi plantations until Expro. Board took over

E.S.Eisfold – Expro. Board manager of Boram, Moem and Brandi plantations.

Dick Glasson - Miner and new Owner of Boram, Moem and Brandi plantations

Shark-Eye Park – credited with discovering the Morobe gold fields

Mr & Mrs Cobb – owners of Karawop plantation

Mr. Corrigan – Recruiter, married Mrs Cobb when Mr Cobb died.

Lorna Fleetwood – wrote *A short history of Wewak* 

Jim Appleby – Deputy District Officer Wewak 1921

Sam Freeman – AN&MEF and later Patrol Officer

Ning Hee – Chinese Trader at Aitape and Wewak

Bob Parer – Prospector and business man

Lenny Odgers -1941 District Clerk Wewak

Una Aseng wife of Wally Hook – born Aitape around 1923

Mary Magdelene Kim Hong Chinese born of native mother at Aitape 25/8/1925

Seeto Yen died Aitape 3/12/1932

Yip Chow – drowned Aitape 8/4/1933

Ah Gait – part-time employee of Wally Hook

Yuh Hing – Brother in law of Ning Hee murdered during World War 2 by Yakamul/Lemieng natives

Chu Leong - trader at Marienberg and Angoram

Ah Fang – miner murdered at Sigabika with Reg Becket and others

Raphael Chow Chen On – miner and attached to the Fryer coast watching party

Simon Asong – Raphael Chow Chen On's elder brother, a Wewak store owner

Chow Chee Toi – Simon and Raphael's father

Seeto Ping Shee - trader Wewak

Seehoo Nan - trader Wewak

Tang Sam - trader Wewak

Tang Mow - carpenter and trader Wewak

Mok Ching - trader Wewak

Ng Yee - trader Wewak

Leong Kok – little known of him

Freddy Mantle DO Aitape 1933

Colin MacDonald – Murdered at Ambunti February 1935

Constable Sepei – MacDonald's killer

N.E. Weldon - Navigator and wireless operator of the Hermes

Mr. Schartz – witness

Miller - Patrol Officer

Police witnesses - Bai, Baugi, Rohru and Korma

Ex Constable Nonguru – informant

Freddy Mantle – defence counsel for Sepei

S.W.Carey of Oil Search – witness to the 1935 earthquake

Yambres - Paramount Chief of the Urat country

Ray Parer - pilot and miner.

Kevin Parer - Pilot

Cyril Parer - Miner at Yamil field

Bishop Loerks

Charlie Gough – Miner, trader, recruiter murdered at Lihinga near Maprik.

#### Chapter 42 Sepik Gold Rushes.

Antonio Pigafetta - Travelled with Magellan

John MacGillivray – found good traces in Papuan pottery Redscar Bay

Von Hansellmann – German Banker

Mr. Stolle - Mining Engineer

Dr. Thurnwald – Anthropologist & explorer

Dick Glasson – miner and plantation owner

Alf Belfield – prospector

Fred Eichorn - prospector

Willie Williamson - reported discoverer of Yuat Rv Gold field

Sam Freeman – led the first Akmana expedition 1929

Reg Beazley – led the second Akmana expedition 1930

WA Bill MacGregor – Akmana prospector & partner of Reg Beazley

Ponty Seal – Akmana mining engineer

Ernie Shepherd – Akmana – transport and supply

Dr. Wade – early geological survey – oil lease

R.J.Winter – early geological survey – oil lease

Drybow/Bribu – Wigman leader who helped Akmana expedition

Eric Feldt – Mining Warden – Morobe field

Charlie Gough - prospector

Mr. Gallett – prospector

Mr. Roberts - prospector Siling River

Len Tudor - Miner

Jack Thurston - Miner

Ray Parer – Pilot and Miner

Cyril Parer – Miner

Kevin Parer - Pilot

Mick Leahy – miner and explorer

Danny Leahy – miner and explorer

Simon Ah Song – Wewak trader

Vic Pennefather - soldier, plantation owner and miner

Tom Ellis – medical assistant, miner and later Director of DDS&NA

Reg. Beckett - miner killed by renegade police at Sigabika 1942

George Eichorn – miner killed by renegade police at Sigabika 1942

Ah Fang – miner killed by renegade police at Sigabika 1942

Jack Mitchell – miner killed by renegade police at Sigabika 1942

## Chapter 43 Gold, Early Highlands History and the case of Ludwig Schmidt.

Ned Rowlands - found the Upper Ramu - Kainantu gold field

Ted Ubanks – Upper Ramu miner

Jim Delaney - Upper Ramu miner

Ted Foad – Upper Ramu miner

Lex Peardon - Upper Ramu miner

Lance Peardon – Upper Ramu miner

Jack Lorenz – Upper Ramu miner

George Chester – Upper Ramu miner

Reg. Dawes – Upper Ramu miner

Robbie Robertson – Upper Ramu miner

Jack Dodd - Upper Ramu miner

Latham Hamilton – Upper Ramu miner

Scotty Sutherland – Upper Ramu miner

Bill Durcher – Upper Ramu miner

Bob Sturkey – Upper Ramu miner

Les Aston – Upper Ramu miner

Sid Aston – Upper Ramu miner

Frank McKee – Upper Ramu miner

Ben McGrath - Upper Ramu miner

Bob Duggan – Upper Ramu miner

Ludwig Schmidt snr. – Upper Ramu miner

Ludwig Schmidt jr. – Upper Ramu miner

Helmuth Schultze – Upper Ramu miner

Joshua King – Upper Ramu miner

Groos – Upper Ramu miner

Harold Woodman - ADO Madang

J.L. Taylor ADO Upper Ramu [Kainantu]

Charles Bates – PO Upper Ramu [Kainantu]

J.K.McCarthy - PO Upper Ramu [Kainantu]

Ian Jack – OIC Upper Ramu – killed by natives 1933

Thomas Aitchison – Cadet Patrol Officer Upper Ramu

A.Nurton – ADO Upper Ramu Post

Dr. Schlecter – 1902 Gutta Percha expedition

Maia – Madang labourer/servant employed by Ludwig Schmidt

Papaik - Madang labourer/servant employed by Ludwig Schmidt

Sui – Witness who made statements against Schmidt 22/10/1933

Kabak – Witness who made statements against Schmidt 22/10/1933

Wasa – Witness who made statements against Schmidt 22/10/1933

Mary Mennis - Writer/historian

Meksawa

Kaut

Rev. Bergman – Lutheran missionary

Agaia – Kainantu language interpreter - at Lutheran Mission

Sogoma – Kainantu language interpreter - at Lutheran Mission

Mekino of Keyufa village shot dead by Schmidt et al

Wokefa of Keyufa village shot dead by Schmidt et al

Ofuya of Keyufa village shot dead by Schmidt et al

Ropina of Keyufa village shot and wounded by Schmidt et al

Ne-he-ya-ro of Keyufa village shot and wounded by Schmidt et al

Misimato – witness to events at Keyufa village

Terigifi – witness to events at Keyufa village

Rubisinefi – witness to events at Keyufa village

Li-yo-Gafi – witness to events at Keyufa village

E.Taylor – District Officer Morobe

ADO Colin MacDonald – arrested Ludwig Schmidt and soon after was murdered by Constable Sepei at Ambunti in an unrelated incident.

Bill Kyle – P.O. Aitape recaptured Schmidt after his escape.

J.K.McCarthy – ADO Aitape

#### Chapter 44 Oroville [Ward] expedition in the "Min" world 1935-1937

Stewart Campbell – Pilot

James Sinclair – author of Wings of Gold.

Norman Hayes – author of the Fly River Flights

Walter Keinzel - Labour and camp manager

John Ward Williams - Mining Engineer

John Korn – Miner from Morobe field

Joe Bourke - Miner from Morobe field

George Anderson – team member

Jack Gwilt – team member

Cecil Cowley acting Assistant Reserve Magistrate [Papuan service]

J.Hellon – aircraft mechanic

Sir Douglas Mawson of Antarctica fame

Bill Brown – second Oroville expedition

Roy Savage - aircraft mechanic

Ken Garden - Pilot

Tamisamara – Bolivip village leader

Femsep – Telefol leader

Mert Brightwell – ADO Ambunti 1950s

#### Chapter 45 The Archibald expedition to the fringes of the "Min" world 1936-7

Richard Archbald - Expedition leader, zoologist, Pilot

Dr. A.L.Rand - Ornithologist

G.H.H.Tate – Mammalogist

Russell Rodgers - Pilot

Ewing Julsstedt - Radio Operator

L.J.Brass - Botanist and chief photographer

L.A. Willis – Transport Officer

M.J.Healy - Papuan Government Police Officer

John Dustin Archbald – Richard's grandfather, philanthropist

A.R. Wallace - Naturalist

Luigi Maria D'Albertis - Naturalist

R. Woodward - Resident Magistrate

Ivan Champion – Patrol Officer

Sir William MacGregor - Lieut. Governor of British New Guinea

#### Chapter 46 The Taylor & Black Hagen Sepik Patrol 1938-39

James L. Taylor – Assistant District Officer

John R.Black - Patrol Officer

Bill Gammage - Historian

Callaghan Baird [Pat] Welsh - Medical Assistant

Ian Fairley Graham Downes - Patrol Officer

Murray Stanley Edwards - Patrol Officer

Lloyd Pursehouse - Patrol Officer

Serak – experienced native policeman of Black's party

Habana – experienced native policeman of Black's party

Kobubu – younger native police of Black's party

Kenai – younger native police of Black's party

Wosasa – younger native police of Black's party

Orengia – younger native police of Black's party

Kwangu – younger native police of Black's party

Hanpahari/Kinpo – of Kunanap region – Oksapmin area shot dead by Black

Kuning – old man in 1966 showed a bullet wound in his knee

Femsep of Telefol language group - Karikmin

Daringarl of Telefol language group - Karikmin

Nifinim of Telefol language group - Karikmin

Sune – an orphan child at Eliptamin – later Government interpreter

Frank Jones – ADO Telefomin 1955.

G.W.L.Townsend - Visitor to Telefomin 1938

Ted Allen - Police - Visitor to Telefomin 1938

Tommy O'Dae - Pilot

Kevin Parer – pilot of DH Dragon

Dr. Schroeder – Sepik District Medical Officer – Visitor to Telefomin 1938

Mrs. Lynette Townsend - Visitor to Telefomin 1938

Administrator McNichol

John Wearne - ADO Telefomin 1966

Tokaneng of Tifalmin contacted by Black

Aboya – a Madang native and apparent deserter from the Behrmann's expedition was happily residing at Nenatuman – Frieda Rv headwaters.

Constables Kamuna and Ubom – patrol forward scouts fired at a Mianmin warrior threatening them.

Constables Narafui and Banonau did night guard duty at the camp in Mianmin territory

Constable Kobubu was hit with an arrow – lung punctured

Constable Porti was hit in the hip with an arrow

Obu was hit in the arm by an arrow

Kunjil was hit in the thigh by an arrow, then stabbed with an arrow in his heart

Witenep – an Usali warrior shot dead.

Watidap – an Usali warrior shot dead.

Fagenap - an Usali warrior shot dead.

Bubarbonip - Telefomin girl brief relationship with Black

Bibinip, a Karikmin girl had a longer relationship with Black

Minister for External Affairs Sir Percy Spender caused Native Women's Protection Ordinance to be introduced in 1951 – [aimed at making sex relations with PNG females illegal for expatriates] Constable Orengia – reported wounding a man who attacked him

# Chapter 47 The Murders of Patrol Officer Neil Campbell Elliott and Constable Aipaum at Wanali village Aitape Sub District on 1st July 1939

Neil Campbell Elliott - Patrol Officer.

Warner Shand - Patrol Officer

Horrie Niall -Assistant District Officer Aitape

Corporal Yugot – wounded in the Wanali attack

Constable Aipaum

Roy Mader – Patrol Officer

G.W.L.Townsend - District Officer Wewak

Sansom – ADO Aitape 1928

Wairow – Native of Elliott's party, although wounded was allowed to escape

Weingum of Wanali – responsible for the death of Elliott – shot dead by Elliott

Yau-ito – responsible for the death of Elliott - in custody

Yavi – responsible for the death of Elliott – in custody

Pas - responsible for the murder of Constable Aipaum- in custody

Olkopoi - responsible for the murder of Constable Aipaum- in custody

Yau-ito - responsible for the murder of Constable Aipaum- in custody

Yau-ito – speared Corporal Yugot - in custody

Misandiup – cut Corporal Yugot with a knife – in custody

So-o – cut Wairon with a knife – shot dead by Elliott

Kandur - Wanali female ordered to pick up faeces with her hands. Beaaten when refused

Ali – wounded by Elliott in the affray – died in the bush days later

Constable Sau

Constable So-on

Brigadier "Pompey" Elliott – Patrol Officer Elliott's father

### Chapter 48 Assessment of Australian Admin to 1941.

Lyons – Australian Prime Minister

Dr. Albert Hahl – Governor of German New Guinea.

Peter Cahill – historian and author.

Walter Lucas – Chairman of the Expropriation Board

Captain Oliver Thompson – Australian civilian District Officer at Aitape

Reg Woodward – seconded Resident Magistrate from Papua

E.M.Bastard – seconded Resident Magistrate from Papua

Shark Eye Park – credited with discovering the Morobe gold field.

Jack Thurston – credited with discovering the Yamil gold field in the Sepik

Kevin Parer - pilot

John Ward Williams – mining engineer
Otto Finsch -explorer
Von Schleinitz – Governor and explorer.
Dr. von Schrader – explorer.
Dr. Thurnwald – explorer
Karius & Champion – explorers
Taylor and Black – explorers
Wally Hook – recruiter
Charlie Gough – recruiter murdered at Lihinga [near Maprik]

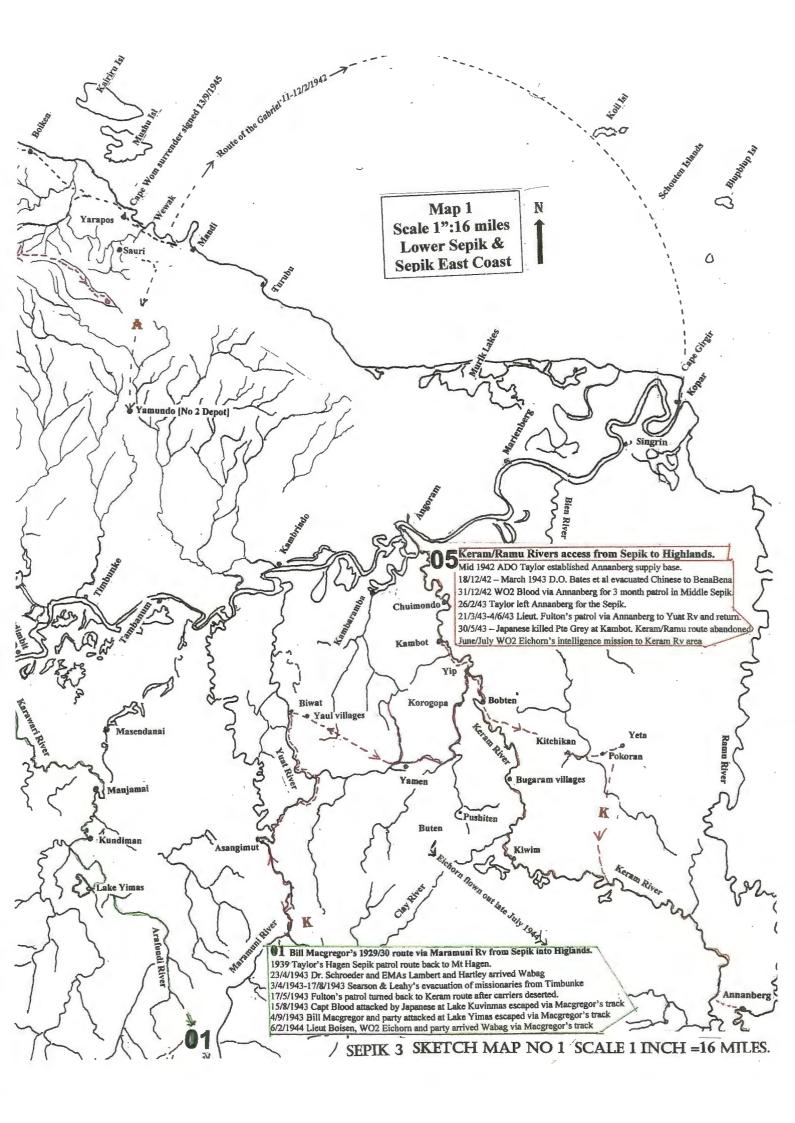
Sepik 2 German place names.

Kaiserine Augusta Fluss	Sepik River	
April Fluss	Niksek River	
August Fluss, Bergfluss	Yapseie River	
Leonard Schultze Fluss	Walio River	
Kaiser Wilhelmsland	North-East New Guinea mainland	
Bismarck archipelago	New Guinea Islands	
Dallmannhafen	Wewak	
Berlinhafen	Aitape roads – anchorage between mainland and Tumleo, Ali,	
	Seleo and Angel Islands	
Alexishafen	Alexishafen	
Ragetta Island	Kranket Island	
Friedrich Wilhelmshafen	Madang	
Simpsonhafen	Rabaul	
New Pommern	New Britain	
Neu Mecklenburg	New Ireland	
Frieda Fluss	Frieda River	
Angriffshafen	Vanimo	
Finschhafen	Finschhafen	
Prinz Albrechthafen	Bogia	
Stephansort	Bogadjim	
Potsdamhafen	Monumbo	
Neu Lauenburg	Duke of York Islands	
Neu Hannover	New Hanover or Lavongai	
Herbertshoe	Kokopo	
Kawieng	Kavieng	
Walman coast	East of Aitape - Chinapelli, Lemieng Vokau Pro	
Eitape	Aitape	
Ottilie Fluss	Ramu River	
Samoahafen	Salamaua	
Lehm Fluss	Clay River	
Toepfer Fluss [Potter river]	Keram River	
Nord Fluss	North River	
Burgberg	Lae	
Hansemann Coast	West from the mouth of the Sepik to Cape Terebu	
Finsch Coast	West from Cape Terebu to Dutch New Guinea	
Cape Pomone	Cape Terebu	
Zukerhut	Garamambu	
Sued Fluss	Black River	
Suedwest Fluss	Hunstein River	

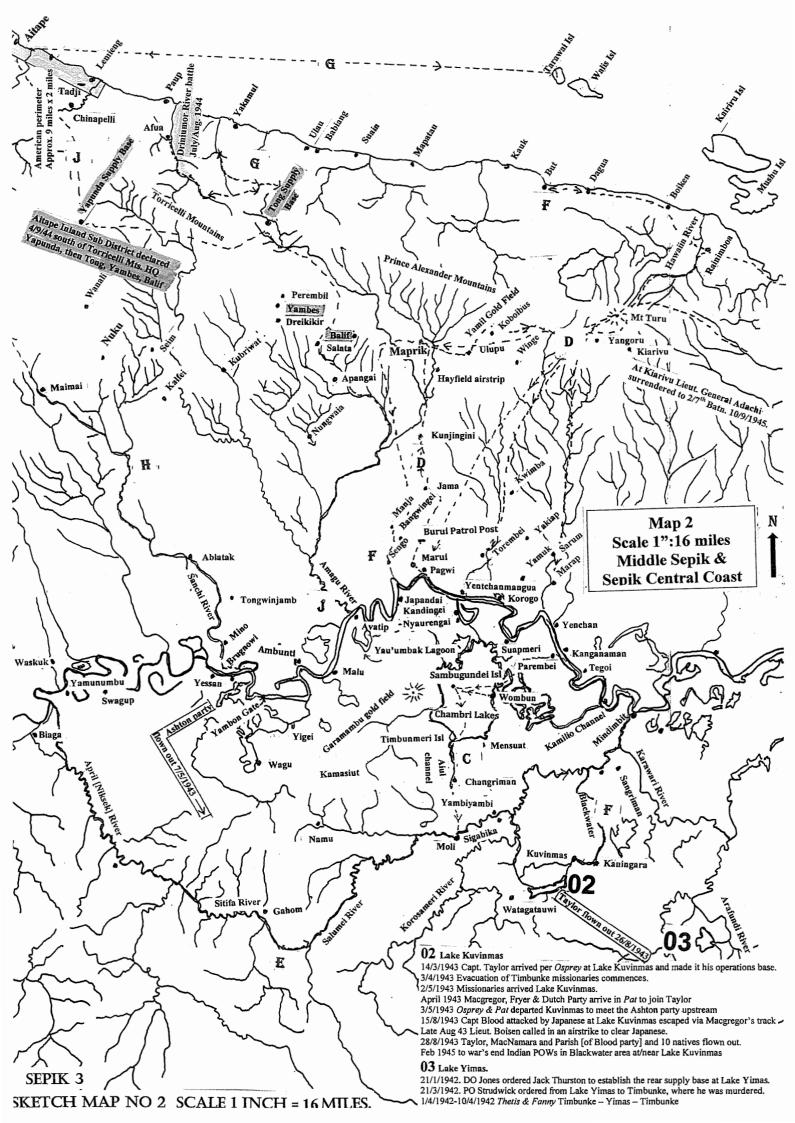
Sepik 2 ACRONYMS USED

AD Anno Domini [In the	ADC Assistant District	ADO Assistant District
year of the Lord]	Commissioner	Officer
AIF Australian Imperial	ANGAU Australia New	ANH Australian New
Force	Guinea Administrative Unit	Hebridies Company
ANMEF Australian Navel &	APC Australian Petroleum	ARM Assistant Resident
		i
Military Expeditionary Force  APC Australian Petroleum	Company ARM Assistant Resident	Magistrate [Papua]  ASL Above Sea Level
		ASL Above Sea Level
Company	Magistrate [Papua]	TP2 NG114 1 1C41
AWA Amalgamated	AWM Australian War	B2 – Military classification
Wireless Australasia	Memorial	"Medically fit for sedentary
PGP C Cl : 1	DDD C D	duty only
BC Before Christ	BP Before Present	BP Burns Philp [Trading Co]
Capt. Captain	CPL Corporal	CPO Cadet Patrol Officer
Coy Company	DDS&NA Department of	<b>DHPG</b> Deutsche Handles –
	District Services and Native	und Plantagen-Gesellschaft
	Affairs	
DO – District Officer	DR. Doctor	EMA European Medical
		Assistant
HLS Highland Labour	HMAS His Majesty's	HMS His Majesty's Ship
Scheme	Australian Ship	
HSAG Hamburg South Sea	Lieut. Lieutenant	LTC Lands Titles
Company		Commission
MAF Mission Aviation	MAL Mandated Airlines	MHR Member of the House
Fellowship		of Representatives [Aust]
MO Medical Officer	MP Member of Parliament	Mt Mount
MV Motor Vessel	NARs Native Administration	NCO Non-Commissioner
	Regulations 1924 [New	Officer
	Guinea]	
NG New Guinea	NGC –Neu Guinea	<b>OP</b> Observation Post
	Kompangnie	
OIC Officer in charge	PAT Pacific Aerial Transport	PCB Production Cpntrol
	1	Board
PNG Papua New Guinea	PO Patrol Officer	Rev Reverend
RM Resident Magistrate	SVD Society of the Divine	TNG [Mandated] Territory of
[Papua]	Word	New Guinea
WRC W.R.Carpenter	WW1 World War 1	
[trading company]	-	
1,		

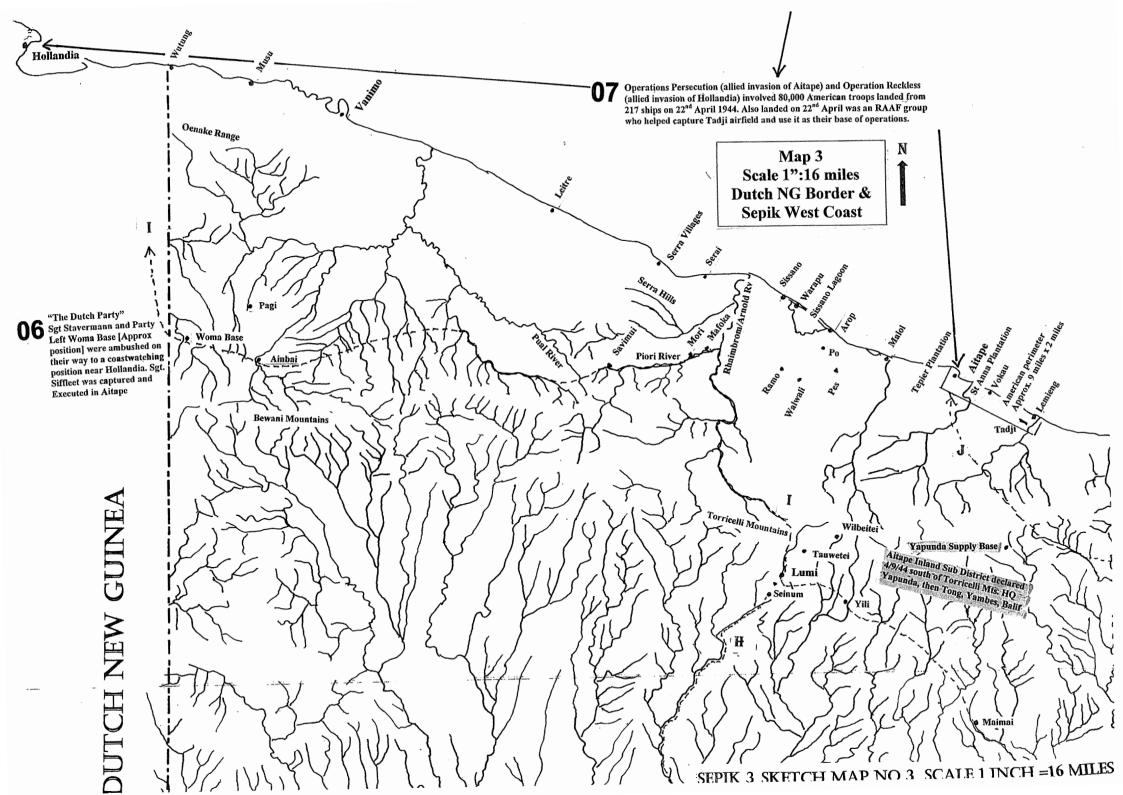




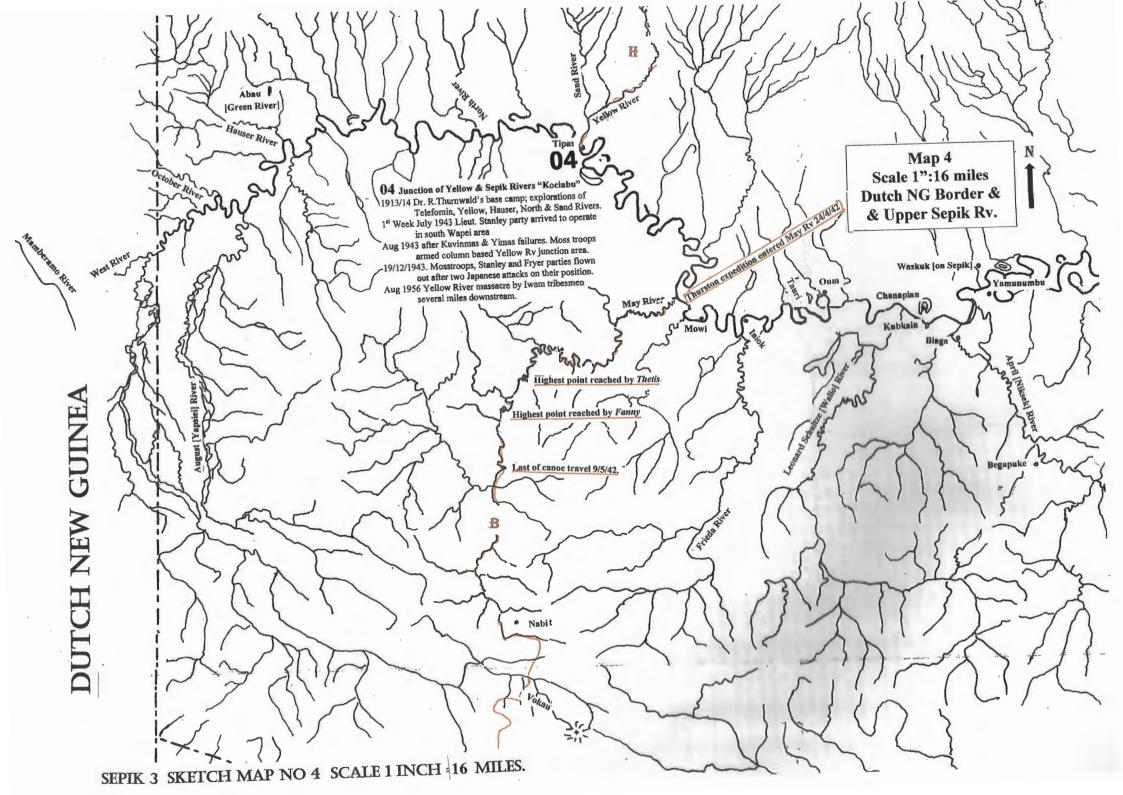


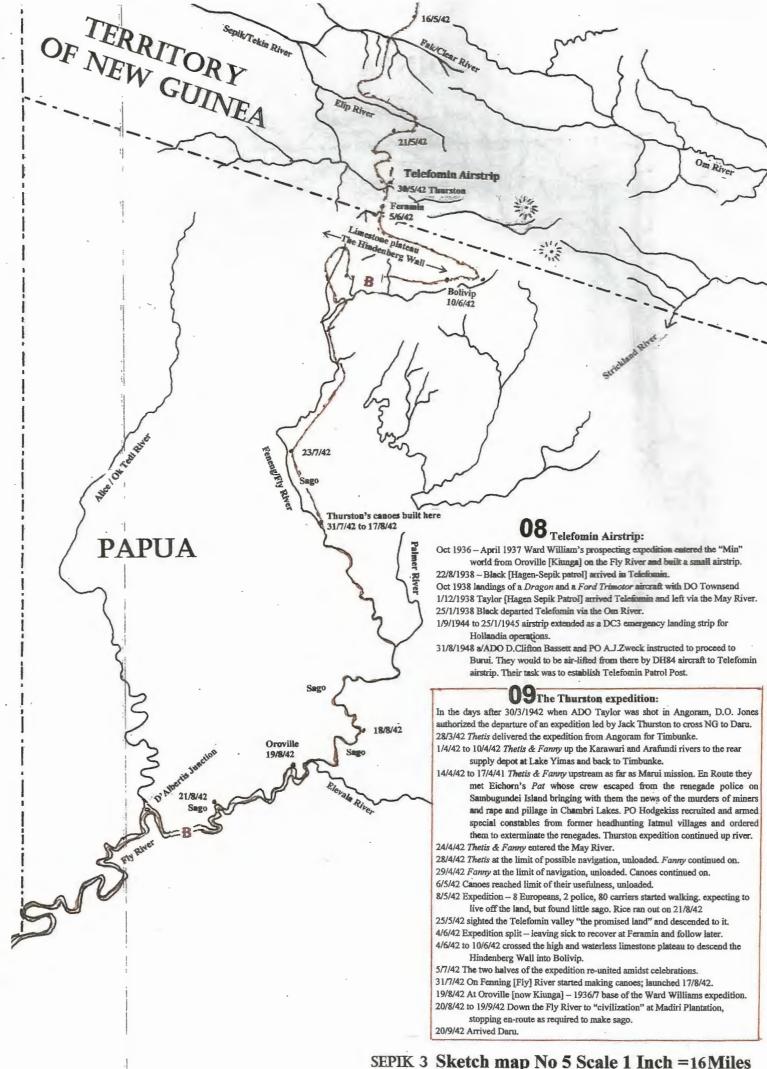


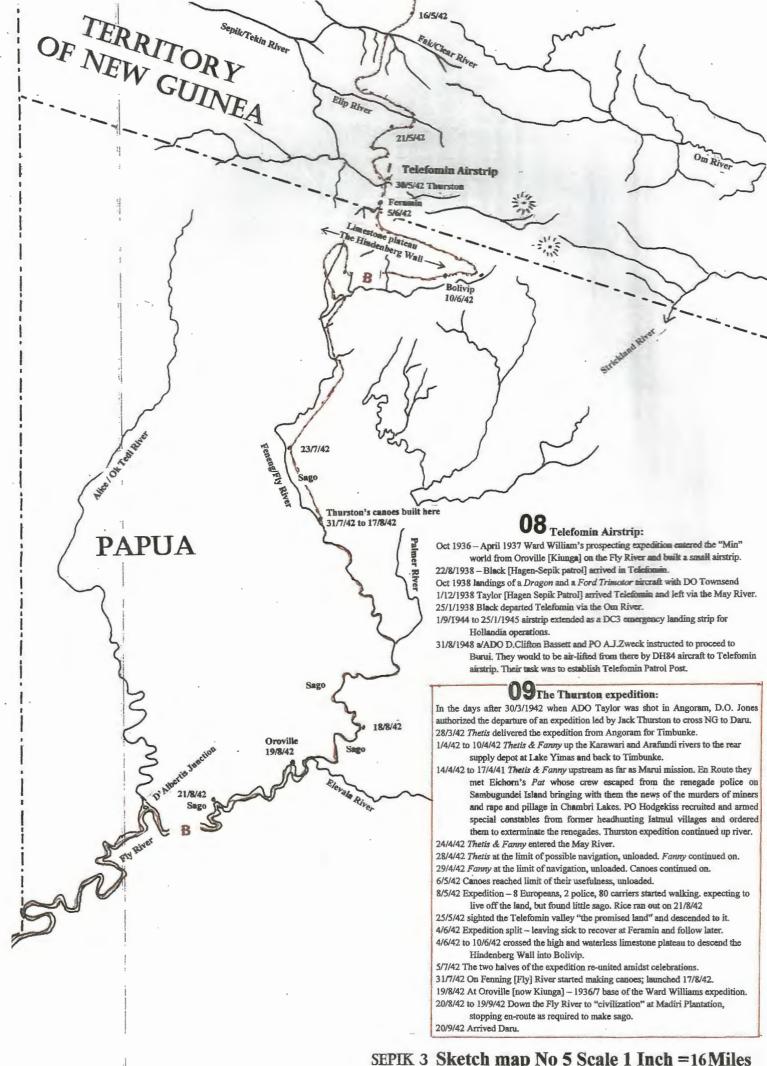




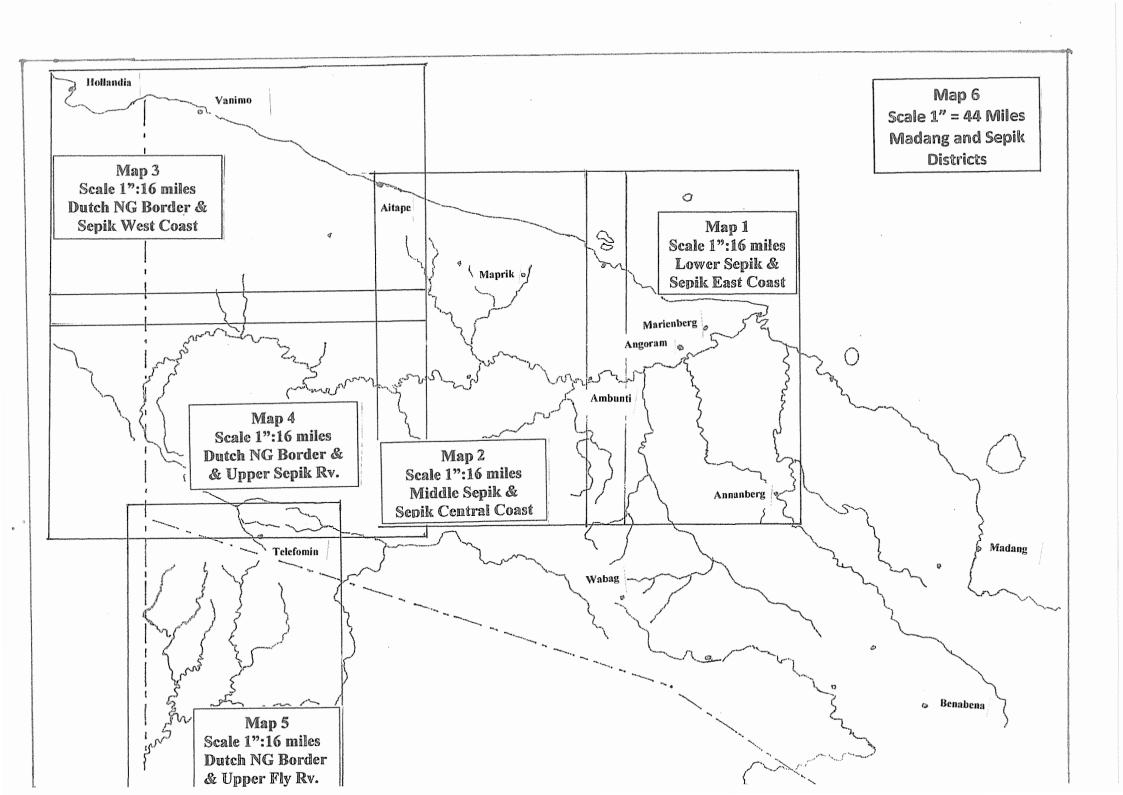












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