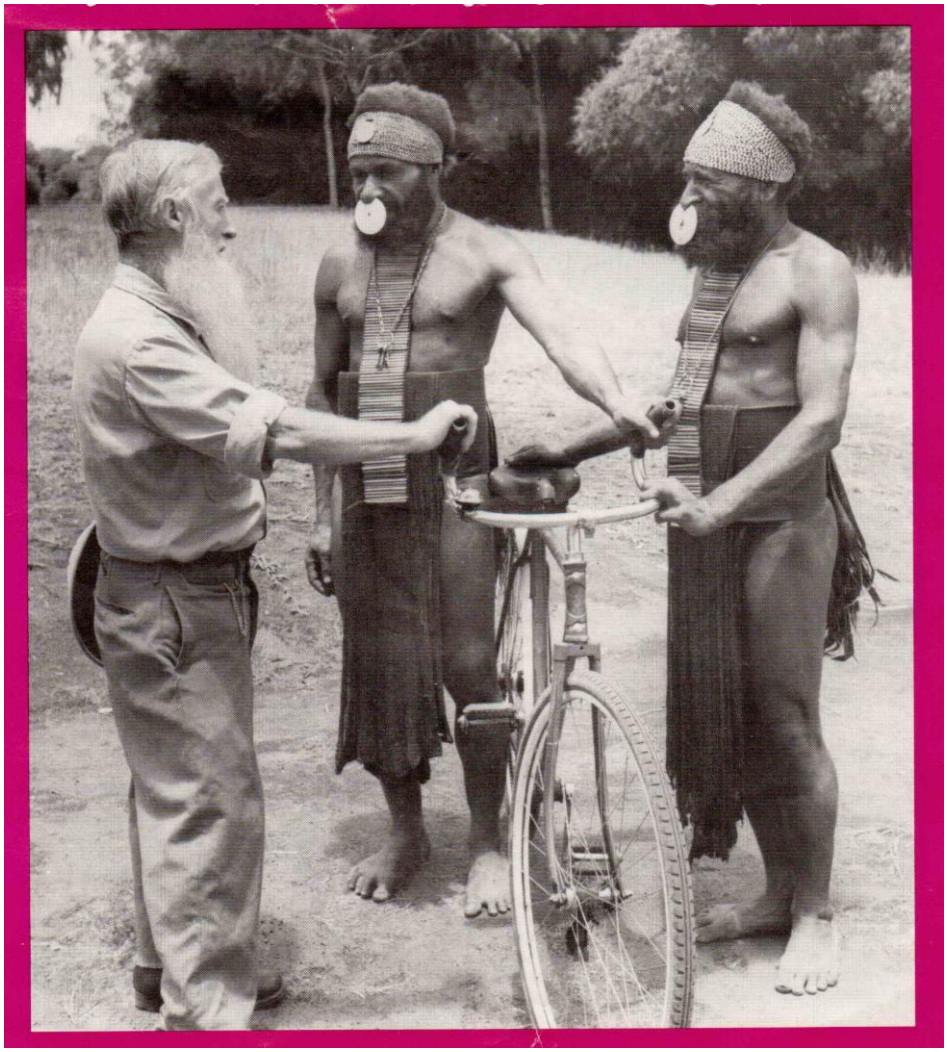


My Hagen People
By
Fr William Ross SVD

Seen here with chiefs Wamp Wan and Ninji Kama in the 1930s

compiled in 2018 by Mary Mennis MBE

Introduction.

Fr William Ross was born on 25 September 1895 at Whiteport, near Kingston 100 kilometers north of New York, U.S.A. He was the sixth of ten children and was very attached his mother who sadly died when he was only seven years old. He and his brothers were sent to an orphanage run by the Franciscan Sisters. One year, the Sisters introduced the boys to Fr Conrardy who worked with the lepers at Fr Damien's colony in Hawaii. From then on young William's ambition was to be a missionary. He attended College at St Laurent's in Canada and then the Society of the Divine Word Seminary in Techny Illinois where he was ordained. He achieved his ambition of becoming a missionary when he was sent to New Guinea in 1926 to help Bishop Wolf. He wrote many articles about his time in New Guinea and these first hand accounts give vivid picture of what it was like in those early days of missionary work.

The articles he wrote can be found in *The Catholic freeman's Journal* as well as *The Christian Family* which is held in the SVD archives in Techny in the U.S.

In putting this work together I have been helped and encouraged by many people whom I wish to thank. This list includes David Lloyd, Director of libraries of DWU in Madang, Archbishop Douglas Young, SVD of Mt Hagen, Fr Garry Roche SVD, Fr Jerry Theis of Techny and the Techny archivist, Mr Andrew Rea. The director of Anthropos gave permission to re-publish Fr Ross's article in Anthropos, which he wrote in the 1930s. Thanks also to Sister Jeanette Matela of Mt Hagen and the Hagen people themselves for their on-going interest. Joe Palimi, Dr John Evans and Chief John Kasaipwalova, of UPNG Press helped with my previous books. Also thanks to Michael Leahy for his permission long ago to use his photographs in books about Fr Ross. Also thanks for my grandson, Sean Mennis for help with the formatting and PDF, and thanks to John O'Brian for transporting my manuscripts to Mt Hagen.

I first met Fr Ross in 1971 and began to tape his life story then and wrote: *Hagen Saga* and much later *Rempi to Rebiamul*. However, I feel that some people might be interested to view Fr Ross's articles in *toto*. The photographs within the articles add to the atmosphere. While the text is sometimes difficult to decipher, I have typed it up to make it readily accessible for the reader.

Fr Ross lived long enough to celebrate his Golden Jubilee in 1972 in Rebiamul, Mt Hagen. At that time, Fr John John Musinky, SVD, Superior General wrote to him with his congratulations:

> We join you in thanking God for his Graces and for the gift of your vocation; we thank Him too for leaving you with us so long: a living link with Techny's past and with a glorious chapter of our history. May He keep you with the Society for many more years and then reward you, as a good and faithful servant with eternal life.

Local chief, Sir Wamp Wan, remembered Fr Ross as the father of his Hagen people since his arrival in 1934;

> Fr Ross taught our children to read and write. He always went out in any weather to reach the sick. If it was raining or if the rivers were flooded, he would go out and wade through them even in the dark.

Fr Ross was a warrior missionary bringing thousands of people to the Church between 1934 and 1973, only leaving his people for holidays in the U.S and when he was evacuated while the war raged in the Pacific. Although only five feet two inches tall he made up for this lack of height with his stamina and determination to do God's Will.

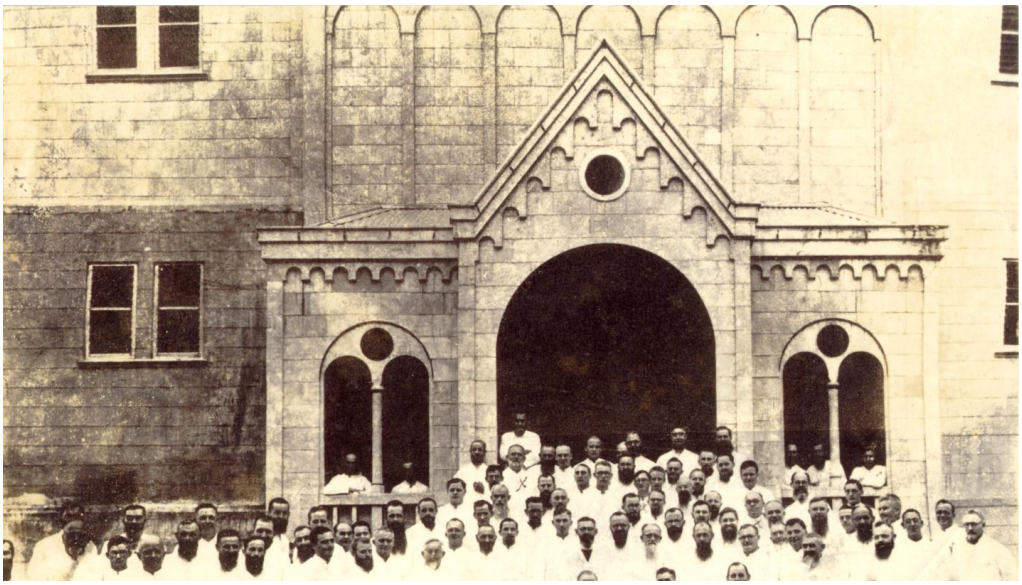
With this in mind I present *My Hagen People* by Father William Ross SVD.

Mary R. Mennis MBE April 2018.

Articles by Fr William Ross SVD of Mt Hagen

In 1914, at the start of the First World War, the German rule in New Guinea came to an end and the country became a protectorate of Australia. The German missionaries at Alexishafen were seen as enemy aliens by the new Australian Administration and they needed someone to communicate with the Australian officials.

In 1922, Bishop Wolf SVD, became the new leader at Alexishafen, and he wrote to the seminary in Techny, Illinois requesting that an English speaking missionary come to help him. Enter Fr William Ross from America in 1926. At first he acted as the bishop's secretary and got on well with the Australians in Madang. However, his lack of German proved to be a hindrance and he settled in nearby Rempi Village as the Parish Priest. He was an adventurous young man eager to explore the nearby mountains behind Alexishafen and made short treks to the mission stations of Halopa and Sigu. Then he ventured further in 1927 with Jock McKay to the mountains at Saruga, where they were attacked. These treks gave Fr Ross a thirst for exploring far into the mountains to find distant tribes.



Photograph: Missionaries at Alexishafen New Guinea

Catholic Freeman's Journal. 19 January 1928.

*Rev. Father Ross was editor of, '*The Little Missionary*' a monthly periodical published by the Society of the Divine Word, Techny, U.S.A., before volunteering for the New Guinea Mission. Apart from two or three American nuns, Servants of the Holy Ghost, all the missionaries in Eastern New Guinea are Europeans. Fifteen months ago (1926) Rev. Father W. Ross, S.V.D., left Sydney for New Guinea, the first American priest to join the Divine Word Fathers' Mission in New Guinea. That Father Ross is now fully participating in missionary work, the following will show, when it is remembered that all is done in the native language or Pidgin English.*

Fr Ross said:
To hear 120 confessions, it takes something like six hours as we consider the confessional our real workshop, and we give earnest and long exhortations and useful instructions, all bearing around one thought, because that's all they can grasp. The same idea is repeated in various ways. To give an example: Two weeks ago my sermon was on confession, emphasizing the importance of contrition. I told the natives always to make an act of contrition when they came to the priest. In putting it into the native language I must have [made a mistake] and said: "always make your act of contrition before you talk to

the priest," because many of them, instead of starting out with the usual formula of 'First Commandment,' etc., started in with a good act of contrition.

In 1931, Fr Ross sent a letter home describing a celebration at Badimhok Village in the mountains behind Alexishafen. In this letter his joy in being a missionary is very apparent and his sense of humour is noticeable;

Dear Friend,
Here I am away up in the mountains ten hours in from the coast, surrounded by laughing noisy natives in high spirits as they prepare to celebrate with a big feast, "*Kaikai*" and *singsing*, the happy event of their baptism. The house stands on the brow of a hill eighteen hundred feet high, commanding a superb view of the sea, which seems to be almost at our feet. Far to the south, down the coral coast, is Alexishafen, New Guinea, its corrugated iron roofs glistening in the dazzling sunlight, the home of some eighteen sisters, sixteen brothers and four priests with the boys' boarding school, girls' technical school, plantation, copra factory with Brother Eugene in charge and the workshops. From here I can signal to my confreres at night with a flashlight. It brings us nearer to one another. This station was opened in 1927, and the people picked out the site for the church and the house. After four years of climbing up and down these impossible tracks, I had the great happiness of baptizing eighty-one at this station on Whit Sunday. Today's celebration is in honour of this event.

Pigs are squealing everywhere. Taro, yams, bananas, pumpkins, coconuts and tobacco are piled high in all the villages, and sometime this afternoon my Rempi boys who came up with me on Tuesday night will open the festivities with their war paint, feathers and dancing. From leather lungs they keep yelling in a high voice, dancing to imitate the bird of paradise in his wooing. Between times food will be distributed, the place is full of visitors from several neighbouring stations, who have come in to make merry with their friends. This morning there were 115 at the communion rail, a happy event and one that gives great consolation to the missionary. Five years ago they had feasts, too, but the *piece de resistance* was a fight airing old grudges, insults to enemies and a lot of hullabaloo about what great fellows they were. Today, how things have changed.

We open the day with Holy Mass. We open the feast with a prayer. The dance and singsing is always in the second place. Then some former fighter will rise and instead of hurling abuse at all their enemies and boasting of how they will roast them for dinner, he will exhort the people to forget the past, and think now of Catholic practices. If I am present, he will probably point at me. (They all do this when they are good at it) and say 'There stands our missionary. A new era is here'.

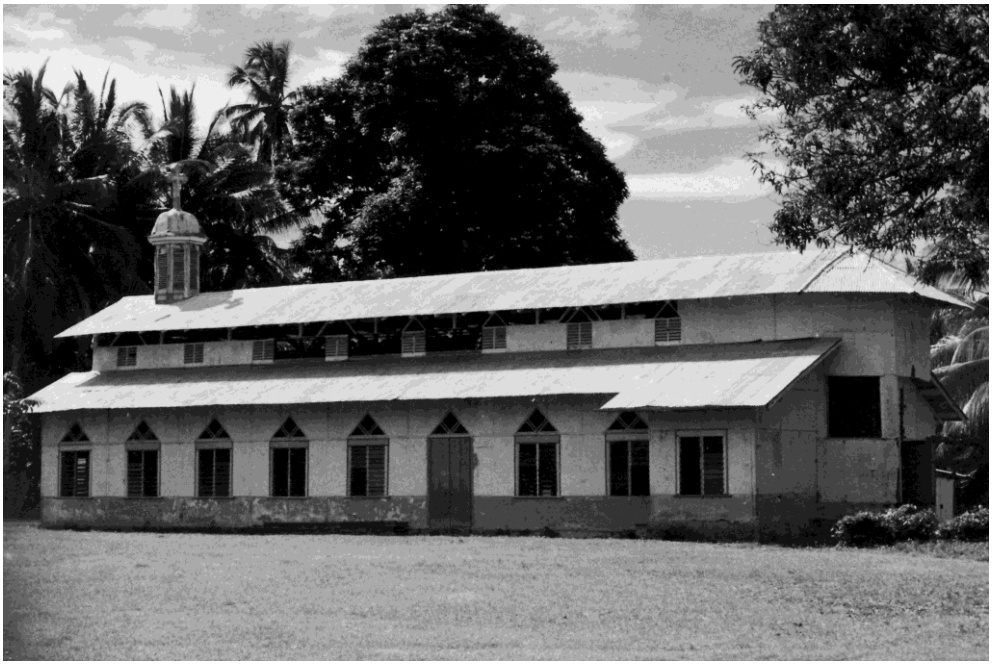
From here, God willing, I go to the next station of Sigu, tomorrow morning where practically the same program will be followed out. Sigu is not as large as Badimok, but owing to its central location between the two flanking stations receives more visitors, and this Sunday I hope to see some two hundred natives at the altar rail. From Sigu we move on to Balbe deep in the mountains. Here there are some eighty Catholics waiting for confession.

All were baptised yesterday in the big ceremony: eighty-one in Badimok, seventy-nine in Balbe and sixty in Sigu, two hundred and twenty in all, the fruits of four years of hard toil in these awful mountains. God has abundantly blessed the work. The people, too, are willing. Their zeal is remarkable, in spite of rain and storm they wend their way over the mountains to the tiny churches, though unclothed as they are. The rain is bitter cold and the wind pierces to the bone. The natives are all naturally afraid of rain so we have to praise these people on rainy days when the church is crowded. In fact, even in Alexishafen, how often it happens that on rainy Sundays the missionary must say Mass to an empty church

.

Photograph Fr Ross and the Rempi People

The Rempi people, thank God, are the best on the coast and in the mountains, as everyone says, due to no special zeal of mine, but to their own good will and co-operation to the grace of God when I came, there are no nine hundred and seventy and by Christmas I hope to have well over one thousand. The difficulty here in convert-making is not the hard hearts of the people. It is simply a lack of catechists and missionaries. The multiplicity of languages, the hardships of travel, the sparsity of population, the climate in general, all contribute to make up 'difficulties.' But one chief drawback accounting for our apparently slow progress is lack of missionary workers. Signed Father Will**.**



Photograph: Rempi Church, (M. Mennis).

The following article was written in 1930 and describes a large *tsunami* which took place on the Madang Coast in 1930. The mission at Alexishafen was not affected in fact it was while they were having their Christmas lunch that the news of the tsunami and its destruction reached them and they at once went to the aid of the mission at Sapara

Mourning on a Desolate Coast

By W. A. ROSS, S.V.D.
Alexishafen, New Guinea

A SMALL tidal wave, winged with death and destruction, broke over the sandy beach at Sapara, New Guinea, on Christmas Eve, razed the mission station, which had been four years in building, played around the ruined homes of a thousand natives, and in a moment raced back to its own restless element as if fearful of the power it had unloosed so suddenly.

In the Sapara mission station tonight, there is mourning on a desolate coast. The tears of Bethlehem have been shed. The stars peep down upon a wilderness which but a few days previously had been a scene of happy activity, where the mission cross glittered in the white sunlight, the voices of children resounded in prayer and song, while happy, carefree natives strolled up and down the sandy strand, listening to the murmur of the restless sea. Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean! Seek other victims of thy wrath. Sapara is no more. Man here marked the earth. But thou didst fear his might .... and now thy vengeance is complete!

Sapara lies forty-five miles northwest of Alexishafen. It was one of our most promising stations; 140 school children made life on the beach merry; back in the hills, and strung out along the coast, are eight other stations, and the young Dutch missionary, Father Engel Van Baar, had set his heart on winning some 2000 souls in the coming years. For the past four years, he had been planning, and building step by step, slowly but with an eye to detail, solidly with the future in view. He tells us the story of how his four years' work was brought to ruin in a moment, by the strange power of that restless sea that had lulled him to sleep at night, and greeted him on waking each morning. God's ways are not our ways. In His divine providence He has seen fit to destroy Sapara. Father Van Baar, sitting amid the ruin and desolation, can only thank God for the cross, and pray continually, "God's holy will be done. His name be praised for ever." On the evening of December 28th, we received the following letter. I give it here in all its simple, moving sadness.

Sapara, Dec. 26, 1930.

Reverend and dear Confreres:

Our dear Lord has just sent us a heavy trial, an unspeakably heavy trial.

Everyone was in the best Christmas spirit. For a whole week all had been busy making the station and the church as attractive as possible. The whole sanctuary was a beautiful starry heaven. Garlands and festoons hung in every available space. The Crib was more beautiful than ever. All for the Infant Saviour .... all to bring home to the natives who had come in from the far hills the real meaning and happiness of Christmas, so that moved by grace, their hearts would open to the call of the missionary and schools might be opened among them. The children of Moira and Asumbin were preparing for first Holy Communion. The people living near the station had been to confession on the 23rd, and on Christmas Eve all had received Holy Communion. The altar had been given the last finishing touches. The church lay ready to celebrate the Saviour's birth.

I had just finished breakfast, and was about to go over to the church to hear confessions, when a cry resounded over the station: "Look out, the sea, the sea! Run! Run!" Immediately following this cry, I heard my house cracking, saw the church rocking, and I had only time to flee toward Merriam, joining the horde of frightened natives running from all directions. The tidal wave had come so suddenly that most of the natives had barely time to escape. Michael, one of my catechists, had been in the store when the wave broke, and he had been badly cut and bruised. Cyril, too, with him at the time, had been badly cut. I found Michael had collapsed, and Cyril limping painfully, so I helped both to reach a dry place and safety. Then the natives carried in Regina, wife of the catechist Werner, and she was so far gone that I had barely time to prepare her for death. In a moment she passed away. Wives of other catechists were running wildly around crying for their children. We returned to bring them to safety. Other natives came carrying a bamboo cot. On this lay Beatrice, the wife of the Korak teacher. She was in a very bad condition. I did what I could for her, and went to see who else might be missing. I had to wade through water up to my knees along the entire return trip. At the station the water had receded, but what a sight! Not a single house left; everything scattered and strewn about in the garden far to the rear. Nothing had been spared. All my belongings lost, nothing to be seen. The beautiful church entirely gone!

But my chief concern now was, have all the natives on the station gotten safely away? No, some were still missing, among them, some people from Asumbin and Philomena, the wife of the teacher Alois. Then we worked away among the debris, seeking for the lost. Soon we found the dead body of a woman identified as one of the Asumbin catechumens. Night had fallen, and it was too dark to search further. The people, in terror, had all fled to their gardens. Thither we repaired, lest we have to flee again in the night. We could not sleep a wink that night. Beatrice, in terrible pain, called for me again and again. Rain was threatening, so we built a shelter for the dying woman. Fortunately, the rain held off. Under the open sky, shivering and praying, we spent a wretched night.

Christmas Day: Oh, what a Christmas for us! After a short morning prayer, we set at once to work. Holy Mass was out of the question. The sacred vessels had been recovered the day before, but the sea had soaked everything. Mass vestments and linens were all wet and filthy. All the hosts were wet.

(*Continued on page* 155)

RECORD OF A SAPARA FAMILY OF FIVE GENERATIONS GREAT-GREAT-GRANDMOTHER IN FOREGROUND; MOTHER AND BABY. FATHER OF BABY IS IN BACKGROUND. BEHIND THE MOTHER ARE THE GREAT-GRANDMOTHER AND THE GREAT-GRANDFATHER. TO THE LEFT IS THE GRANDFATHER AND BEHIND HIM THE GRANDMOTHER.

Mourning on a Desolate Coast. By Fr William Ross SVD

Sapara 26 December, 1930. [Text of the above article]

A small tidal wave, (tsunami) winged with death and destruction broke over the sandy beach at Sapara, New Guinea, on Christmas Eve razed the mission station which had been four years in building, played around the ruined homes of a thousand natives and in a moment raced back to its own restless element as if fearful of the power it had unloosed so suddenly.

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Sapara December 26 1930
Reverend and dear Confreres
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Christmas Day: Oh what a Christmas for us! After a short morning prayer we set to work. The sacred vessels had been recovered the day before, but the sea had soaked everything. Mass vestments and linens were all wet and filthy. All the hosts were wet (continued on page 155) --- and there was not a thing in good condition. Our first task was to find the missing Philomena We found her dead body beneath the debris. Oh what grief now, and that on Christmas Day. There were three dead and I feared Beatrice would soon depart this life.

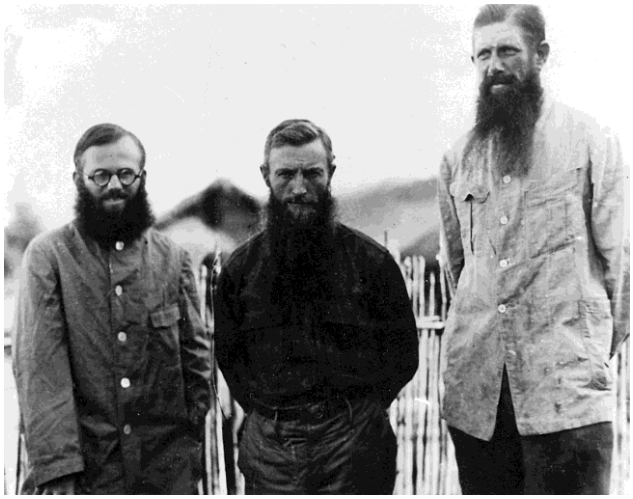
What sorrow for us all! Here I am sitting weeping among the ruins. I can see nothing, not the least thing in good condition. Altar, tables, closets, houses, clothing, books, all gone or destroyed. O dear confreres, pray for this stricken mission; pray for the people that through this calamity they might be brought nearer to God. Please pray for me too, as I sit here, my tears falling on the paper as I write. I hope that Sapara alone has been visited and that the other stations have been spared. The villages facing southeast have all been stricken. In Simbine, there isn't a house left; only the station remains. In Laden and Angoa most of the houses have been carried away. In the Sapara village not a house has been spared. In Medebur many houses have gone. Ulingan and Sikor are deep in water, and not a house is standing. Korak village has disappeared entirely, only the station is to he seen. In Babir and Tawulte there is not a house to be seen.

Thus has the sea in five minutes completely destroyed what had been built up with four years of hard toil. The fine garden, in which I had placed so much hope, is entirely destroyed - house, and clothing, and books, are all gone. I am sitting here in a native village, trying to bring order out of chaos and trust in God to look out further for us. May God's Holy will be done always. May His name be praised always. May His holy name be praised forever! Greetings to all the confreres!
Yours, E. Van Baar

Further Note: The Government in Madang, hearing of the disaster, took steps at once. Large supplies of food and medicine were shipped aboard the *Stella*, and carrying the doctor and the assistant district officer, together with Brothers Beda and Hyginus, the *Stella* silently left Alexishafen on her errand of mercy in the dawn of December 30th. The investigation by the district officer and doctor revealed eight deaths, and many wounded natives, some of whom were carried to the Madang hospital for treatment.

Brother Hyginus set to work at once to put up a temporary shelter for the homeless missionary, and Brother Beda stayed the week helping the natives rebuild. It will be long, however, before. Sapara is rebuilt. O readers of the Christian Family, if you have read thus far, please send up to heaven a silent prayer for this stricken mission and the poor missionary. Think of him sitting amid the ruins of his station, hearing continually the murmur of the sea that overthrew his work.

Let God's work go on. We ask you to help us. God will bless you for your gifts. Through your aid, a new church can be built, where the new Christians chastened by the visit of God, will pray more fervently, for you and yours, and where a humble missionary, drawn nearer to God's design through sacrifice, will remember you at the altar, as he daily offers to God the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. If you have anything to give, even the smallest gift, please send it to: Rev. Mission Treasurer.



From left. Frs Cornelius van Baar, William Ross and Br Anton Baas.

A FLOURISHING MISSION. [1933. Before Fr Ross went to Mt Hagen]. Catholic Freeman's Journal.

The annual statistics of the Vicariate of Eastern New Guinea have just been published for the twelve months ending June 1932 in the official organ of the Society of the Divine Word. 'Steyler Missionsbote.' The figures are supplied by the Vicar Apostolic, his Lordship Bishop Wade, S.V.D. Central Stations 9, Out Stations 67.

Estimated population - 150,000. Catholics (natives) - 13,25S, Catholics -(European)102, Catechumens - 4039, Protestants (Societies adherents) - 35,000.

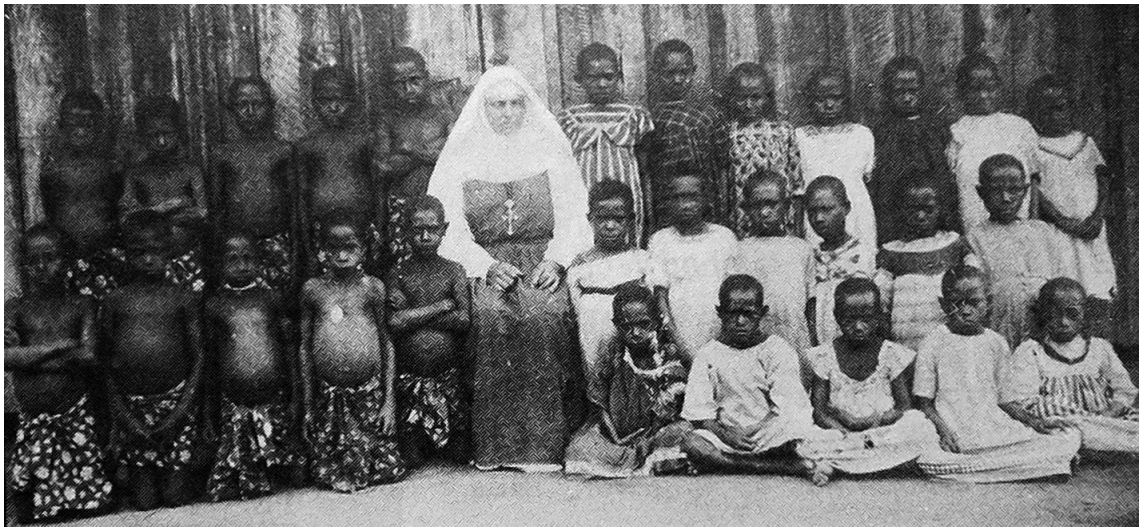
Personnel: Priests - 17, Brothers - 27, Sisters - 34, Catechists (native teachers) - 115.

Schools: Prayer Schools - 74 with pupils (boys) 1635, (girls) 1218.
Primary schools - 35 with boys 974 and girls 770, Catechist schools 5 - students 146,
Technical School students - 66, Domestic School students -109.

Sacraments: Baptised 1740, children 874, at hour of death 159,
Confessions 105,615, Devotional Communions 192,167,
Easter Communions 6,665, Mission Staff Communions 18,976.

The Apostolic Vicariate of Eastern New Guinea, so named in 1922, is part of the original mission district known then as the Apostolic Prefecture of Kaiser-Wilhelm-Land, founded by Rev. Father Limbrock, S.V.D., in 1896. From the small seed planted by this apostle has grown the two vicariates of Eastern and Central New Guinea, the latter being erected as a prefecture in 1913 and extended in area since, in 1927 and 1931; in the latter year it became a Vicariate, with Monsignor Loerks, S.V.D., as Bishop-elect, with headquarters at Tumleo, near Aitape, where Father Limbrock established his first mission.

The headquarters of Eastern New Guinea is located at Alexishafen, near Madang. The figures given above comprise those of civil districts of Madang and Morobe, which includes the newly-discovered goldfields area. These are visited regularly by an American Divine Word Missionary, Rev. Father William Ross, S.V.D., from Alexishafen.



Photograph: One of the Sisters and her class at Alexishafen.

New Guinea

IT MAY interest our readers to know a little more of Madang, New Guinea, where Fr. Ross and other Sisters are busily engaged in mission work. Only recently the Father had the great happiness of administering the last Sacraments to an old native.

Madang

The harbor of Madang is a picturesque waterway, surrounded by high land, and dotted with wooded islands. Under German administration this town, then known as Friedrich-Wilhelmshafen, was the capital of German New Guinea, and a good class of residence built for their officials is still in existence.

The climate of Madang is very close and moist, the annual average humidity being 80 per cent. Formerly it was a hotbed of fever, but the work done during the military administration converted it into a comparatively healthy settlement. Some months ago Madang experienced one of the most severe earthquakes in the memory of the oldest inhabitants. The supporting piles of some houses were broken, the wharf damaged, and large cracks appeared in the hills on the coast some distance away. After a day's experience of a real tropical downpour we saw the harbor next day in all its glory under a blaze of sunshine; the harbor an immense turquoise, studded with islands of emeralds as far as the eye could reach. This has some time been called the Venice of the South Seas, which may convey a slight idea of its beauty when seen at its best.

Writes Fr. Ross: "Last Saturday I went on my first missionary journey with Fr. Meyer. We left Alexis at 8 o'clock Friday morning and reached Rempi, the outstation, at 10 a.m., a two-hour run on the motorboat. We had to anchor well off shore as a heavy surf made landing dangerous. About fifteen little urchins carried our baggage along the road which winds through the woods and up to the Rectory, perched on a hill about 75 feet high. My first view of the church made me look again. A plain little native building, with a grass roof, and seating about 150 people, floor of mud, sanctuary floor of red brick. A native couple were married at the Mass. During

the Mass the people "tried to sing." I have never heard anything just like this singing. No sense of pitch or rhythm, and to make things worse, the catechist was yelling his head off to keep the people going.

Shortly after the motorboat arrived to take us back to Alexishafen.

The Philippines

Father Lyons at last found his pen. The life appeals to him, but he sees the need of more English-speaking missionaries. Here are his words: "Now that English is so important, the presence of native Americans is necessary, in order to compete with the public schools, who always have some such on their staff."

Languages

"There are three languages in daily use here, as in most towns of the Islands. The older people mostly know Spanish, the younger, if they have gone to school, English, while all know Ilocano. The public schools do not teach Spanish even in the high schools. We teach Spanish in all the high-school grades and in some of the grammar-school grades."

Climate

"As for climate, I find it very agreeable. Of course, from October to February is the nicest season: cool even during the day. The only thing that may be unpleasant, sometimes, is the dust stirred up by strong winds that blow here and there. After such a wind one must spend a half-hour or more dusting books and belongings. They say it is going to get hot in May; and after that the rain."

The Little Sunda Islands

Fr. Stenzel, accidentally of course, got his hand in the way of a rolling stone which severely crushed one of his fingers.

THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY and OUR MISSIONS 1932 155

Jottings from Father Ross, S.V.D.

Father Ross left Techny for New Guinea in the year 1926. He has the distinction of being the first American priest of our Society in that distant mission land.

The following lines are taken from a letter to our Very Rev. Provincial, Bruno Hagspiel, S.V.D.

IN November, in company with Father Schebesta, Brothers Symphorian and Bernardine, I made a trip up the Ramu river, which is rather unknown territory, seldom visited. It was the first trip for the mission in this section in six years. At the mouth of the river, owing to a breakdown of the motorboat, we were forced to camp in a swamp for a whole week, and there I caught a bad case of dysentery, being helpless for the entire week. Finally the motorboat was repaired and we steamed up the stream. It took us eight days to make 150 miles. We wished to reach Atemble, 163 miles up, for we had nine finish-time boys with us, whom we were taking home. Just after passing the 150-mile point, the river rushes through a narrow gorge, lined on both sides with rocks. We had in the course of the eight days many mishaps, with sandbanks, sunken trees and snags. But here was the worst danger yet. While attempting to avoid a whirlpool in the gorge, we struck a hidden tree, broke the steering gear, and were heading full speed for the rocks and eternity, perhaps, when a cross current caught our boat and threw us back to safety when we were within a few feet of the rocky ledge. We decided then to return to the 150-mile camp, and go overland. It took us eight hours to reach Atemble. Here we spent some four days scouting the country, and sounding the primitive people as to the possibility of opening up stations here. We bought small pieces of land in four places, and we hope they will be used as centers for mission work as soon as we have a few missionaries to send to the Ramu. The return trip was without mishap, as all we had to do was to stay in the middle of the current and let the swift stream carry us along. What had taken us eight days to cover was now completed in two days, and we reached Bogia Sunday night, December 6, at 6.30 p. m. There are not so many natives on the Ramu banks, perhaps 2000, and they are nomadic, moving with their gardens. Inland are many more natives, and everywhere we found them shy and harmless. We were on the trip from November 11th to December 8th, when we returned to Alexishafen. I took sick with typhoid and malaria in Atemble, and had a miserable downstream trip, and back home. I was laid up in bed till Christmas Eve, when I could say Mass for the first time in weeks.

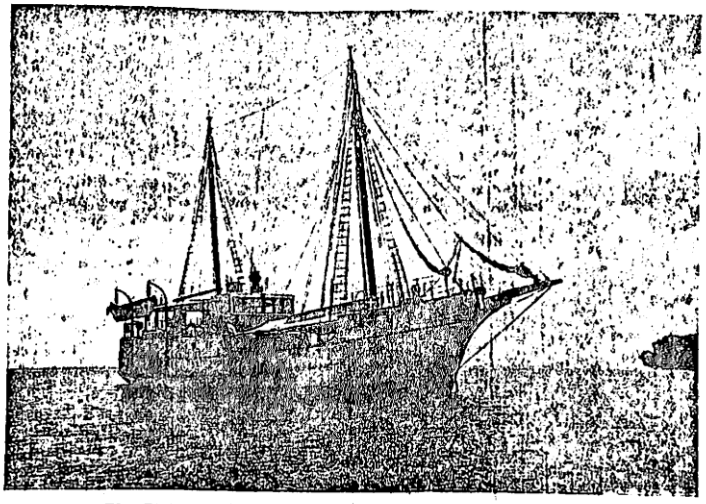
At Alexishafen I had plenty of companions in misery. Six of the Sisters and five Brothers were all laid up at the same time. Sister Ottonia was delirious part of the time. Sister Matritia had also a bad case. But thank God all are recovering and are almost well. Sister Ottonia is slow in gaining her old strength. In the mountains of Saruga one of the new arrivals, Father Felzmann, was also laid up and spent his Christmas in bed with chills and fever. He is now recovering. About a month ago we lost Father Lipperts of Ulau, scarcely a year out here and only newly ordained. Also Brother Wolfrid in But, only 26 years of age. Both died from blackwater fever. A half-caste girl, aged 23, and her brother of 19 also died recently. Thus it looks like a bad season for New Guinea. No one is sure what the epidemic is. It looks like malaria, yet acts like typhoid, and seems to have a bit of the flu thrown in. Three days ago a new Brother had to go to bed. He is still there. Evidently the sickness is contagious, but what it is the Madang doctor does not care to say. One of the things that make life in the tropics so uncertain.

The bishop is expected back in March. He must be getting ready now to leave Europe. Father Horsch may come with him, but we are not certain of this.

At Christmas the schoolboys put on a play in four scenes, "The Story of Bethlehem" in pidgin English and did remarkably well. There were only natives in the cast, no half-caste children. The first scene opened up with Joseph and Mary seeking shelter in Bethlehem. Pathetic and yet so comical as delivered by these black urchins... Then came the shepherds watching at night... this was also so realistically native that we enjoyed it greatly. There followed the appearance of the angels and their singing... then the final scene laid in the manger with the entire cast... the shepherds bring their gifts... one a lamb, one a dog, one a bottle of scented water, and one a rope of bananas. The angels singing "Holy Night" ... Joseph and Mary at prayer and the Child Jesus in the Crib. It was the first time we attempted anything like this in pidgin English, and the success of the entertainment and the pleasure it gave all who attended lead us to believe that with pidgin English we can unify the entire language group and simplify missionary work.

Brother Eugene is quite well, and is doing good work managing the dessicated copra factory, which is our sole means of

(*Continued on p.* 159)



The Stella Maris, the S.V.D. Boat, at Anchor before Tumleo

Jottings from Father Ross SVD 1932 - 1933. (Text of his article).

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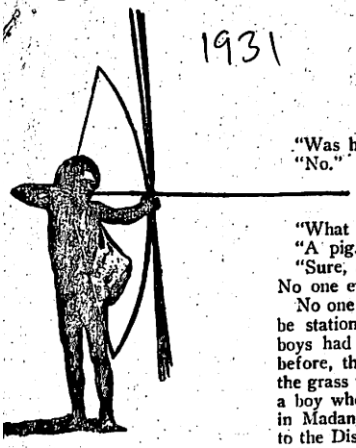
Brother Eugene is quite well, and is doing good work managing the dessicated copra factory which is our sole means of [page 159] support since the breakdown; of the copra market. We produce about 25 tons a month and this is sold in the Australian market to the biscuit men and confectioners and grocers. Brother

Eugene has to look after more than100 boys in the factory a big job for anyone. I had hopes of baptizing 100 at New Year, but, owing to my long absence from the mountains and the sickness, plans have gone to grief. However, I hope that by Easter all will be ready. Some 25 of the contract boys on the plantation here in Alexishafen, were baptized on Sunday, January 3, by Father Hesse, assisted by Father Kirschbaum, who is to sail for Europe in a week or two with the Bremerhaven, via Hong Kong. Kindest regards to all confreres. Fraternally yours, W. A. Ross, S.V.D.

1931

Sanguma

By Father William Ross, S.V.D.



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"Was he seen?"
"No."
"Was he heard?"
"Yes."
"What did he sound like?"
"A pig."
"Sure, and a divil of a pig he is."
No one even smiled.

No one slept that night. At the Balbe station, I learned that one of the boys had shot a village pig the night before, thinking the noise he heard in the grass was a Sanguma. And he was a boy who had worked for three years in Madang and had been personal boy to the District Officer.

Now what do the natives think of a Sanguma? Lord knows. He may be any kind of a ghost. But the form usually associated with native superstition is the disembodied spirit of a man. The Sanguma is an evil spirit, or a spirit bent on harm. Some men have the power of changing themselves into pigs or cassowaries, and they are called "Sanguma." One native showed me a bush with broad, well-veined leaves, the flowers tiny yellow clusters of beauty. This bush, he said, was used by the Sanguma people. They take a leaf, slap their legs with it, and when they walk abroad you no longer see a man but a cassowary. No one ever saw a man who has this power, but they know it exists. No one ever actually saw a Sanguma, but they know he comes. No one ever felt physically the effects of a Sanguma. but he has killed their friends and relatives. A man with this power renders himself invisible. Suppose he is an enemy? He waits along the road. You do not see him, when suddenly he grabs you, bites you, sucks your blood, tells you that in three weeks you shall die, and you go home, and in three weeks you die! It is all very real to these natives.

A classic example of what effect this belief has on mission work was related to me by Father John Dingels of Wiwiak, one hundred and eighty miles up the coast from Alexishafen. Two rogues of heathens from Madang appeared one day in the Wiwiak district. They came with a message. They were ambassadors of a black king. "Oh, yeah?" "NO, true too much." A Sanguma had appeared out of a hole in the rock, commissioned them to go and bring this message to all the natives. A black king is soon to appear. He will banish all white men. You shall have their possessions. This king is rich and powerful. He will take over all the big steamers. The ships will carry you tons of cargo, fish tins galore, rice in plenty, and every good thing you dream of. You must hear his message. Be quiet. No uprising. No fighting. Just await him. Believe he will come. We are his ambassadors.

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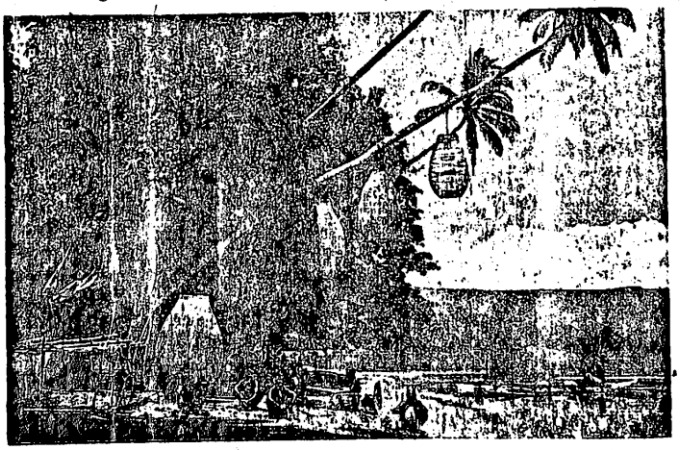

How the Natives make Fishing-baskets

Sanguma Text.

The tip of an arrow protruded beyond the tree. It was a big tree and did not grow arrows. My carriers had gone ahead. Stepping gingerly off the log, I peered round the trunk. Two brown, glistening forms, muscles taut, stood at attention.

“Well, well, Luke and Paul! What's the big idea?" I asked. They were friends of mine.
'Oh, nothing," they replied, which is New Guinea form of speech for everything.
When a native comes to my house. I ask him, "What’s up?” He replies "Oh, nothing.”
Or, "What are you are doing?" "Oh. Nothing"
“What are those fellows talking over?” “Oh, Nothing.”

So I rejoined, "You are watching for someone or something." Finally they related that the heavy sentry stuff was the "Sanguma.".
“Who saw the Sanguma?”.
“Two village women."
"When?"
“This morning.”
"Where?"
“At the spring?”
“How?"
“They were about to fill up their coconut shells with water, and fill the bamboo pipes when they spied him. They ran screaming back to the village.”

“Ah Ha. You fellows had a party last night uh?” But the irony passed unnoticed.
At the Sigu station I met groups of natives conversing in low tones. What’s the idea? You are talking with the Sanguma, man huh?”
“Yes”
”Was he seen?” “No.”
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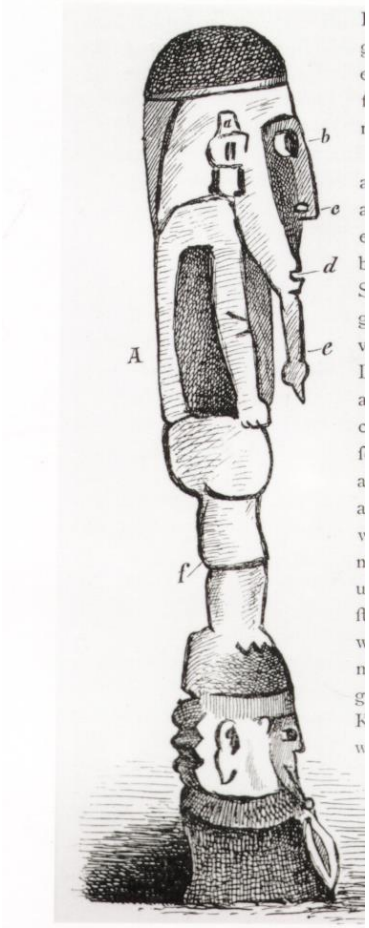
The people will receive us as becomes ambassadors. With this speech the rogues won a royal welcome. The catechist of Passam, an intelligent Catholic, attempted to dissuade his people from hearing this nonsense. At once the people rose up, drove out the catechist, and refused to attend the mission school. Elsewhere much harm was also done. Father Dingels got word of the trouble, had the rogues banished and fined, but the report died hard. A Sanguma had spoken; it was enough for three months. One village on the coast kept a light burning at night, in order that the cargo ship of the black king might not pass them by. It looks as though Old Nick, desperate, is trying hard through this superstitious belief in the Sanguma to cripple our work. Pray, won't you.



Statue of a mythical man in Madang

The following article was headed **Strange Rumours**

By Rev. W. A. Ross, S.V.D.

A ROLLING stone gathers no moss, but it may gather a lot of mud. The more it rolls through the mud, the dirtier it becomes. Rumors here in New Guinea have a habit of growing, too, as they are spread, and the uglier they usually grow, like war propaganda.

On my first visit to the inland village of Kimbes, some natives, who had been too frightened to accompany me, passed the word on to Alexishafen that I had been captured by cannibals. The boys of Alexishafen, who were miles and miles away from the scene of our peaceful invasion, promptly interpreted this, "The Rempi missionary has been speared, his legs broken, and he is now at death's door." When I appeared in Alexishafen a week later, curious glances greeted me. "Do I look queer?" I asked. Then one Brother almost embraced me: "Gott sei Dank, you are here. We heard you were murdered." In the village of Matukar, sixteen miles away from Alexishafen, I was helping out a month later, when one of the village braves accosted me: "We heard you were shot by the cannibals, but I could not believe it (oh, no!), because you are a man no-good (i.e., a fighter). Everyone here believed the report, but not I." Lord knows how far the rumor had gone in the meantime.

Later on, Father Novak started for Kimbes over the Saruga trail. The mountaineers, not knowing who he was, spied his party a long way off, set up a shouting and brandishing of spears, whereupon all the carriers fled. The missionary, calmly munching a sandwich a mile to the rear of the carriers, met his frightened boys and asked: "What's up?"

"We must flee," they cried. "The Kimbes people don't want us and are preparing an attack."

So the tired missionary, who had been five hard hours on the road that morning, gathered up his knapsack and walking-stick and returned peacefully to his station at Saruga. Away up in the hills, miles from the coast, more miles from Father Novak's lonely station, the Sigu natives greeted me. This was weeks later, long after Father Novak had written me all about his experience. "Did you hear the terrible news?" they asked.

"What news?"

"About Father Novak."

"No," I truthfully replied, for such news as I had was not at all terrible.

"The Kimbes natives, whom we visited last year, attacked Father Novak's party, beat him, even took away his shirt and trousers, and he barely escaped alive to Saruga." I had to laugh outright. The picture of Father Novak, 200 pounds strong, every inch an old campaigner, now minus his muddy boots, sans shirt and trousers, fleeing in undignified haste to Saruga over the terrible trail, was a rare scene indeed. We both laughed over this rumor later, and no one enjoyed the joke more than Father Novak. So it goes here in New Guinea. The natives cannot read. There is no telephone, yet reports do go abroad, and the farther away, the uglier or more comical they grow.

****

None of our mission natives has ever been to the village of Yaven, a mountain stronghold far inland from Sarang. Father William Van Baar and I hope to get there this year. The Yaven are known as a bad crowd. Though none of my mountain tribesmen have been there, yet they know the road is impossible, the Yaven are savages and cannibals of the worst type, and resent any outside intrusion. If we two shorties can negotiate the trip, what a juicy pie of rumors for the entire coast, from Alexishafen to Rempi and Mugil, linking the inland stations with the famous grapevine telegraph. But I do hope when all is said and done that they leave us our trousers.

Text of the above article.

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The drums had their way of sending messages were often very useful to the missionaries as is shown in the following article:

Native - Telephones.

Long before Philip Reis invented the telephone in 1861, the natives had their own wireless, which has often been of great service to the missionaries. Their system is confined to the big drum. The testing and tuning of a new drum means little sleep, for the missionary within miles, for all night until, perfected, its low, weird notes penetrate the darkness. Then friends from villages miles around visit the builders and criticize their instrument. Then it is taken from the place in the bush where it was built to the village, and an eight day's carnival commences. As soon as strangers are sighted the drums signal. "A white man is coming" and so villages are deserted until they depart. Not so the missionary who is known to the native.

During the Spanish influenza epidemic the mission boat *'St. Gabriel'* was at Alexishafen and all communication with the interior was forbidden by the government. The missionaries 100 to 250 miles west of the station had no idea of the cause of the delay: week after week passed and rations became scarcer. After eight weary weeks a messenger appeared from Wewak and said that the steamer had landed four missionaries at the mouth of the Sepik River, seventy miles distant. The drum had sent the news. The missionaries arrived eight days later, utterly exhausted after their long tramp over mountains and through valleys. Some of the missions now have a drum in lieu of a bell to call the natives to their prayers, and in times of peril to serve as a telephone. (Catholic Freeman's journal **January 1934**).

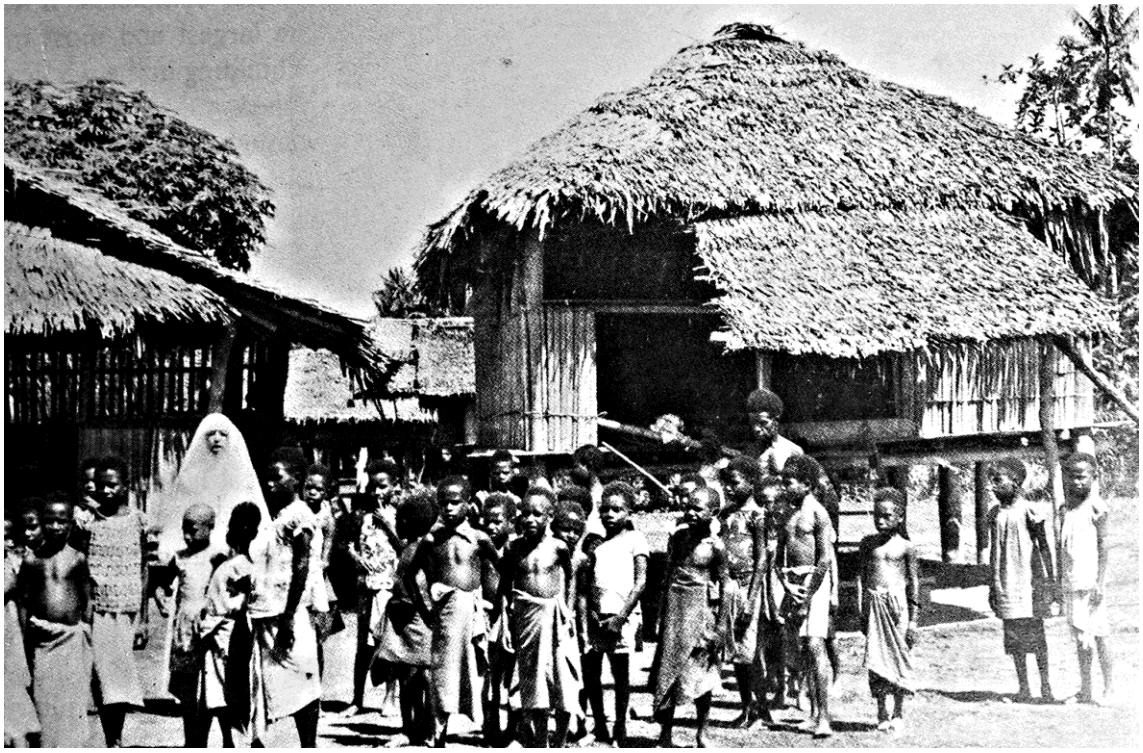
Mittelneuguinea, Südsee: P. Kirschbaum (Mitte) mit P. Nowak (vornan) und P. Roß am Sepik

Photograph: Fr Ross on the left, Fr Kirchbaum, and Fr Novak on board the Joseph on the Sepik.

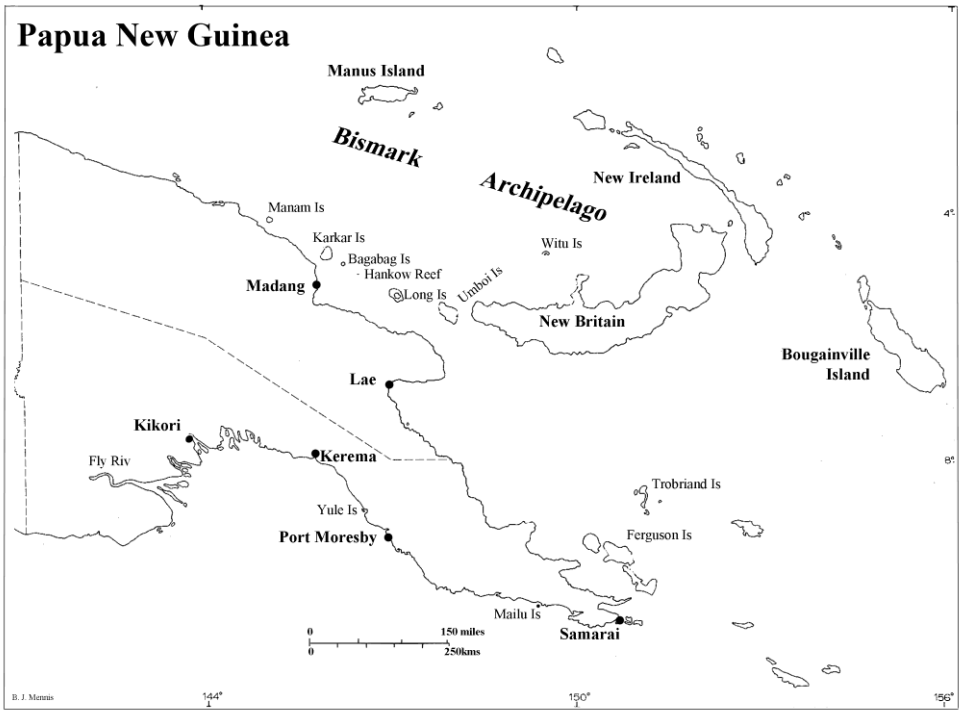
Glimpses of a Remarkable Journey to the Ramu River - article.

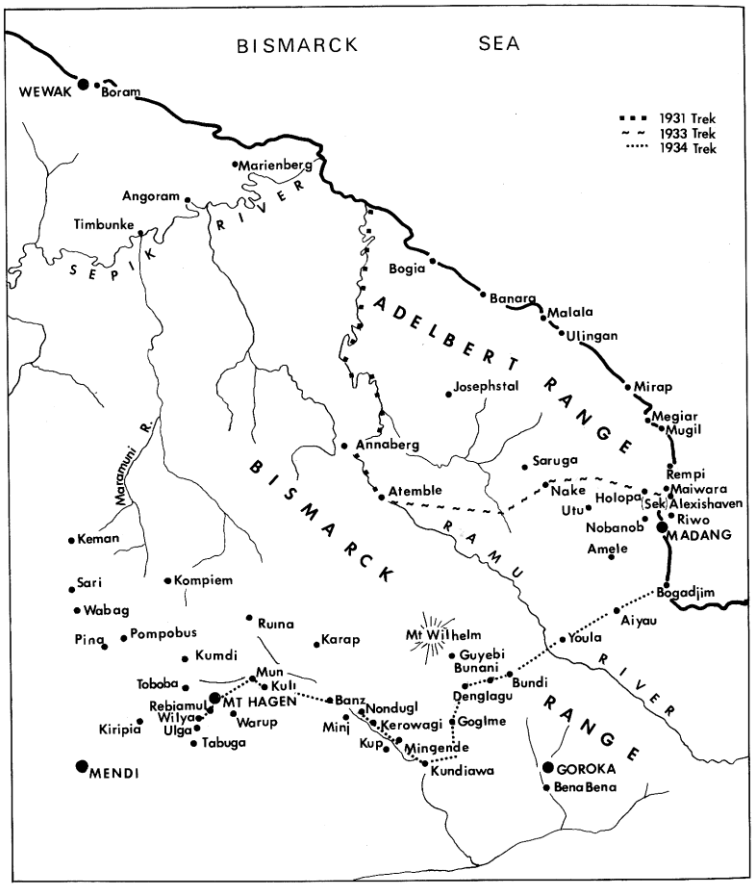
Father W. A. Ross, S.V.D., an American priest in the mission of New Guinea, has made a remarkable journey across a little known region, of this the largest Island in the world. Accompanied by Brother Lucidius and 23 carriers, Father Ross covered 250 miles in 88 days. His journey began at Alexishafen and terminated in the station of Atemble, on the Ramu River. He celebrated the Feast of the Assumption on August 15 at Saruga, a lonely station in the mountains, where Mass was said in a little tumbled-down school house, with rats and snakes creeping through the grass roof. While holding a catechism class a few days later, an old man rushed breathlessly into the assembly to announce that the young hunters had shot a wild pig which, however, escaped wounded. Out dashed the wild mountaineers to join in the hunt, seizing bows and arrows on the way. The pig got away, but the class was finished.. At another time, his guides lost the trail and Father Ross, with compass in hand, had to strike out a new trail. (**Catholic Freeman's Journal. 18 January 1934).**

Photograph: Brother Lucidius and Brother Gerhoch on the track



Photograph: SSpS Sister on patrol in a coastal village.





MADANG and HIGHLAND AREAS
PAPUA NEW GUINEA

This map shows the routes of the missionary treks, including the journey to Mt Hagen in 1934.

First Mission Expedition to Mt Hagen 1934

Rev. Fathers W. Ross S.V.D., and Tropper, S.V.D., and Brother Eugene, S.V.D., [Divine Word Missionaries] have left Alexishafen, the headquarters of the Vicariate of Eastern NewGuinea to open a mission station in the interior of New Guinea, near Mount Hagen. It is estimated that the journey will take from twenty to thirty days over native mountain trails, travelling on foot. It has been discovered, that the population is very dense in the heart of New Guinea. Who will adopt these lonely missionaries and send them papers regularly? **Catholic Freeman's journal 15 March 1934.**

Fr Ross said:

The last few hours before we reached the Ramu River we were travelling over a corduroy road. The banks of the river apparently had flooded and this road had been just like a swamp. Whoever had used it had put down trees from time to time and we were hopping from one log to the next for a couple of hours, until we reached the river. There were a few natives on the other side and they came over. We negotiated with them to carry us across in two dug-outs. We had seventy carriers plus cargo and it took the whole day to get across (Interview, Mennis, 2016: 44).

They made camp there on the banks of the Ramu at Yolapa where they were plagued with mosquitoes. Next day they walked as far as the Tauya River. It was river country and they did not meet any people. As the line of carriers stretched a long way back one of the missionaries led the way and the other two brought up the rear in case of attack. They next came to a small place called Wau where a storm was brewing and they just managed to get camp set up before the deluge came down.

Photograph: Bundi people (M. Mennis).

Next day after a stiff climb they reached the Bundi mission which was an established mission centre with a church and mission house. The mission boys hurried down the track to meet them and carried them up the hill which was tortuous on their sun-burnt legs. Fr Schaefer had waited for the party to arrive but had given up and gone on a tour of the out-stations. As soon as they heard Father Ross and the others had arrived, they hot-footed it back to Bundi.

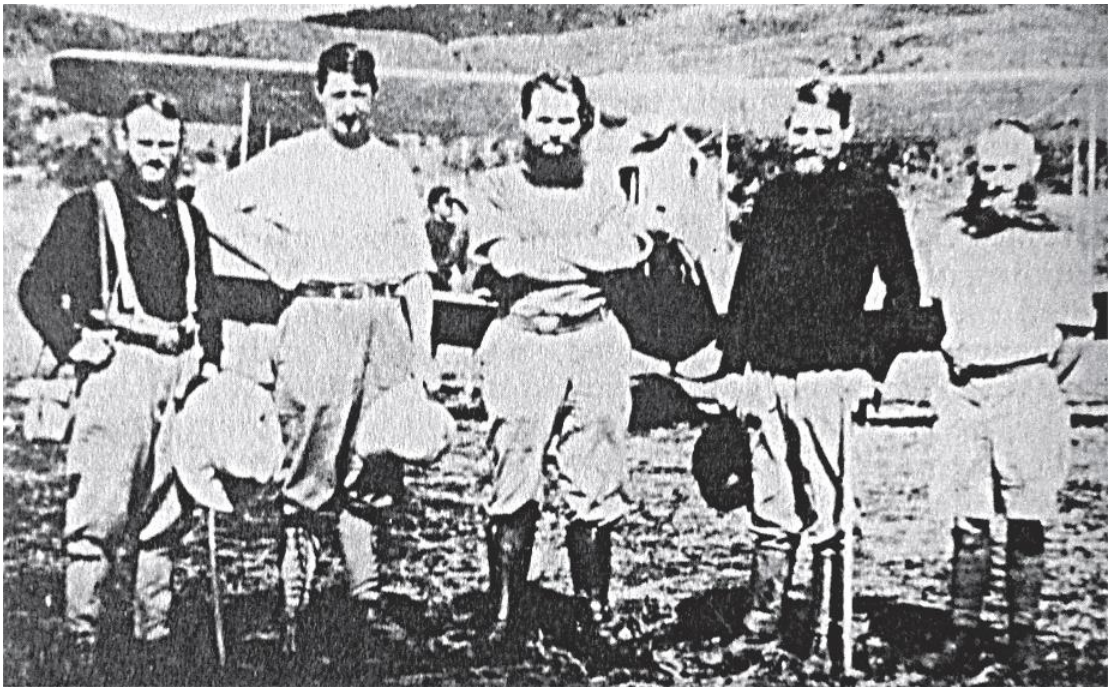
Bishop Wolf had nominated Father Ross as the leader but the forceful Fr Schaefer took the lead as he had already traversed part of the course and was a friend of the headman, Kavagl who was gong to take them to the Chimbu valley. After a few days rest, Father Ross and his party were ready to go.

There were then five missionaries in the journey: Fr Ross, Fr Schaefer, Fr Tropper, Fr Aufenanger and Brother Eugene Frank. They crossed the Bismarck Ranges and took the route Fr Schaefer had used to Chimbu. On the first day after Bundi the track went up and down gorges and sometimes up steep cliffs or down slippery descents with Kavagl and his people leading the way. Their first stopping place was at Nambugi where it was cold and the coastal carriers shivered as they were unaccustomed to the cold. The following night at Bunoni was even colder at two thousand feet six hundred metres above sea level. Next morning, they were treated to beautiful views in all directions. Behind them the many ridges fingered down to the mist-covered Ramu Valley and beyond were the Finisterre Ranges and in the distance was the ocean. They were on a spur of the Bismarck Range. Towering above them was Mt Wilhelm and ahead was the Chimbu Valley where tumbling rivers cut a deep swathe through deep gorges.

Photograph: Merane Mission, Chimbu. Leahy collection.

That day they descended to Denglagu, the source of the Chimbu River which they crossed over on two large logs and then climbed 500 metres to Inau where they camped. That night some Chimbu warriors appeared in the dark and the security men scared them off without waking the missionaries. They were probably after the many shells which were being carried as trade items. Next they camped at Goglme and the carriers were warned to be careful as it was unfamiliar territory. This did not stop them gate-crashing a local courtship ceremony. Next morning some of the villagers complained and Fr Schaefer dealt with the offenders in front of the villagers to their satisfaction.

Next stop was Kamanigl where a big singsing was being held. The people were all colourfully dressed in feathers and headbands made of the green scarab beetles. The drumming and dancing continued all night. Some of the people were frightened by the appearance of white men but others had seen Fr Schaefer and his party the previous year. They thought they were spirits of the dead until they saw them eating.



The first missionaries into Mt Hagen, March 1934. From left: Fr Tropper, Br Eugene Frank, Fr Alphonse Schaefer, Fr Aufenanger and Fr William Ross SVD.

The last camping ground on the Chimbu River was at Merane near present day Kundiawa, being the most southerly part of the trek. From here they turned west for the final 100 kilometres to Mt Hagen. Next place was Koruguru area where Kavagl was the headman. He offered them a site at Dimbe for a mission but they preferred a site at nearby Mingende which was still in his area. The people of Koruguru were so welcoming that both Father Ross and Father Schaefer decided the area would make a suitable headquarters for the whole Western Highlands. They continued on to Kerowagi, Nonugl, Banz, Kilua and then Wilya where the Leahy brothers were busy mining for gold. They reached Mt Hagen on 28 March 1934. Mick Leahy had built a small airstrip at a place called Mogei.

Mick Leahy wrote:

Wednesday 28 March 1934: Big excitement amongst the natives and a crowd of them on a ridge on the road along from Kaduwere. --- through the glasses we could make out a couple of white men and a long line of carriers. Went along the road to meet them having a pretty fair idea that it was the missionaries from Sek which it turned out to be - five of them altogether including Frs Ross, Schaefer, Aufenanger, Tropper, and Brother Eugene. They had had a good trip and brought back Rebier the little *monki* whom we took out with us last year and loaned to Father Ross to learn the language. He looks well and has grown 50% since I last saw him. All the white men of the party look well and are enthusiastic about the country (Diary).

Mick mentioned that Father Schaefer would return to his station on the Bismarcks, while Fathers Ross and Tropper and Brother Eugene were going to make a station at a place called Koruguru, near Mingende and gradually work inland up the valley for some years to come. Mick thought this would be "an effective barrier to any other mission as they would be in the pick position for aerodromes etc which will be about the only means of working in this valley for some years to come". They were expecting a small plane to arrive but there was no sign of it all day. Father Ross counted the approximate number of people waiting near the airstrip and got up to 1480. They went home very disappointed that the *balus* never showed up and I suppose thinking we tricked them".

Mick Leahy:

Saturday 31 March: A beautiful clear morning. [Mount] Hagen being clear almost the whole day, but no sign of the plane. I rigged the tent on the drome and Fr Ross celebrated Holy Mass in it using our table as an altar. There were about 40 boys, the priests, brother, Dan and I. We went to confession and communion. Father Schaefer sang the Mass with the boys in Pidgin English and the whole service was a good effort for Mount Hagen (Diary).

This was the first ever Mass in Mt Hagen.

About 10.30 the Fox Moth was sighted and they got the smoke signals going. He flew right over Giluwe, circled the drome then made a very good landing. Their brother Jim Leahy was on board having a free ride with Bob Gurney. They were full of southern news and were amazed to see five Europeans besides Mick and Danny Leahy at the airstrip. The Leahy brothers were getting ready to set off across the country fossicking for gold from camp 19 to camp 40 and then back to the Base Camp.

Monday, 2 April 1934: Bob and Jim got away as soon as it cleared up --- The missionary party got away about two hours later. They are taking the track on this side of the Wahgi which will not be so boggy and swampy and will probably be hung up for a day or two crossing the river lower down. The vine bridges being very insecure and require a whole lot of reinforcing before a long line of boys and cargo can be got over. Fr Ross was often asked what the reaction of the people was to the first plane when it came into land:

At first they considered the plane which came roaring out of the sky as a ghost. They viewed it as a terrible spirit come to destroy them. Some people lay face down on the ground and did not look up for an hour. Others who were more adventurous rushed to their houses and killed the first pig they could lay their hands on as a sacrifice to this awful monster. Today these same people roar with laughter when they describe how many pigs they gave to this metal ghost (Ross, 1956).

The day the plane left was Easter Monday 2 April 1934 and the missionaries returned to Mingende, where they intended to open the first mission station. Bishop Wolf had continually emphasised the importance of no big gaps between stations. From there, when they were established, they could go further west towards Mt Hagen. So they set about establishing a mission at Mingende. Fr Schaefer returned to Denglagu.

In the Jungle of New Guinea. 1934 by Fr William Ross.

Many of our readers will remember Brother Eugene, who was assigned to the New Guinea mission in 1929. He is a native of Mt Carmel Illinois and entered St Mary's Mission House in August 1921, made his first profession in Techny in 1924 and his final profession in New Guinea in 1930. Before gong to New Guinea he spent several years at the Sacred heart Mission House, Girard, Pa. where he was the baker for the community. In 1933 he was sent to the interior of New Guinea as a companion for Fr Ross, a native of New Jersey. It is Fr Ross who sends us this splendid report on Brother Eugene's excellent work in the jungle of the world's second largest Island.

The tallest man in the Mt Hagen area of New Guinea is six feet of bone and muscle, his once fair skin tanned now to the colour of the natives, stands hands on hips surveying the noisy crowd of natives with their bark hats, rope belts with stone axes hung on their side and green leaves in the back, their food piles neatly arranged row on row for market day.

Photograph: Br Eugene and friends at Alexishafen

Brother Eugene, for it is he we picture here, has the happiness and the single honour of being the first New Guinea Brother of the SVD to start work beyond the once end-of-the-world line of the distant Bismarck Mountains. No government posts to make life safer; no white neighbours upon whom to call in an emergency; alone he lives among these Stone-Age people earning their respect and affection. "Papa" they call him. And as a lone sentinel of the missionary occupation he is guarding the Mt Hagen station well and keeping down the dangers.

In the Jungle of New Guinea

"There's no Bakery in Mt. Hagen." "But Brother Eugene is at home there."

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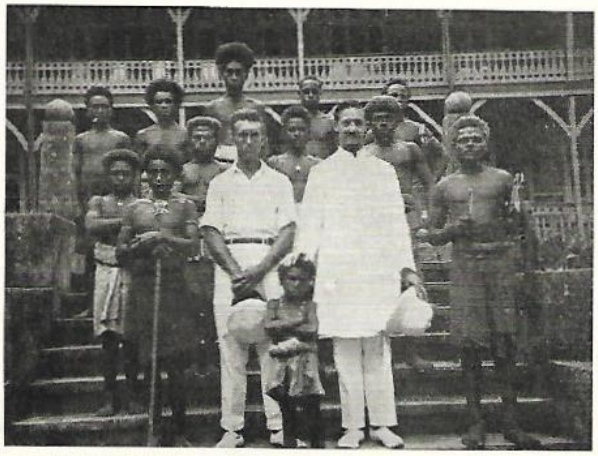
toward the rising sun ther four days' march ther Alfons Schae- station at Bundi on lopes of the high rck range. The Mt. n station stands at nd of the Wahgi which lies like a ng beauty between gged Bismarcks on the north and the equally rugged Border Range that separates New Guinea from Papua on the south. Bismarck peaks 14,000 feet high send their cold winds across the valley, and the 14,000-feet-high cones of the Border Range give them back just as good as they send. The Wahgi Valley has been but recently discovered and explored. It is about 80 miles long and 30 miles wide, the general height being about 5,000 feet above sea-level. On the east it forms beyond the Chimbu River, our road in from the Bismarcks, and Mt. Hagen 12,500 feet high rises like a giant at the western end to close the rolling downs. Here at an altitude of about 6,000 feet above sea-level, Brother Eugene has built a mission house, cookhouse, boy dormitory, bathhouse, toilet and potato-house. In pigin English we turn these names round, calling the buildings house-mission, house-cook, house-boy, house-wash-wash, house-back-back, and house-potato.

It is a long jump even for a long man, this inland station sixteen days from the coast and the factory at Alexishafen where for five years Brother Eugene worked faithfully to produce one of the best brands of dessicated coconut now on the market. During the hardest times, this factory alone seemed able to tide us over financial ruin. The dessicated coconut work where copra is dried in ovens differed not so much from Brother Eugene's work in the bakeries of Girard and Techny. But here in Mt. Hagen are no bakeries; the zealous Brother lives among Stone-Age savages far from all centers of shipping and transport; his home a grass hut; his car two long legs; his assistant contract-labor boys from the coastal stations and all this without any previous experience. Brother Eugene is happier here than he was in America, and would not readily change places with the dough-makers back home. A little "camp oven," an iron pot twelve inches in diameter and six inches deep, bakes an excellent loaf of bread. And when flour runs short, there is a Guinea Airways plane from Lae to replenish supplies. Of native foods there is an abundance; the supply of sweet potatoes, corn, sugar cane, beans, maize, and bananas being apparently unlimited.

Brother Eugene has a most interesting time buying food from these natives. Market day at the station sees a line of natives wending their way over the rolling downs through the cane grass early in the dewy morning. Stragglers keep coming in till about ten o'clock when some 600 natives are on the scene. The tallest man these natives have seen steps outside the bamboo fence, and with the aid of two stalwart station boys arranges the natives in orderly rows. Each Stone-Age native makes a small pile of each food article he has for sale — 10 potatoes, 6 or 7 pieces of sugar cane, a bundle of greens, a bunch of bananas. For each pile he receives a small, shiny cowry shell. These shells are so highly prized that some natives would go to any extreme of inconvenience or pain to procure a few. And what a noisy crowd during the buying! If one receives a particularly good shell, he lets out a yell of joy, and holding it aloft shouts: "See what the good papa gave *me!*"

(*Cont. on page 32*)



Captain W. A. Robinson, of New York, and Bro. Eugene, S.V. D., of Mt. Carmel, Ill., with Natives, at Alexishafen, New Guinea

Here in Mt Hagen, the Catholic Mission of Eastern New Guinea began breaking ground on May 29, 1934. The nearest post is sixty miles away down the beautiful Wahgi Valley. On towards the rising sun is another four days' march to Father Alfons Schaefer's station at Bundi on the slopes of the high Bismarck Range.

The Mt Hagen station stands at the end of the Wahgi Valley which lies like a sleeping beauty between the rugged Bismarcks on the north and the equally rugged Border Range that separates New Guinea from Papua on the south. The Bismarck peaks, 14,000 feet high, send their cold winds across the valley and the

14,000 feet high cones of the border range give them back just as good as they send. The Wahgi Valley has been but recently discovered and explored [by Europeans]. It is about 80 miles long and 30 miles wide, the general height being about 5,000 feet above sea-level. On the east it forms beyond the Chimbu River, our road in from the Bismarcks and Mt Hagen 12,500 feet high rises like giant at the western end to close the rolling downs. Here at an altitude of 6,000 feet above sea-level, Brother Eugene has built a mission house, cook house, boy dormitory, bathhouse, toilet, and potato house. In Pidgin English we turn these names around calling the buildings a house-mission, house-cook, house-boy, house wash-wash, house pekpek and house potato,

It is a long jump even for a long man, this island station sixteen days from the coast and the factory at Alexishafen where for five years Brother Eugene worked faithfully to produce one of the best brands of dessicated coconut. During the hardest times, this factory alone seemed able to tide us over financial ruin. The dessicated coconut work is where copra is dried in ovens similar to those in the bakeries of Girard and Techny. But here in Mt Hagen there are no bakeries; the zealous Brother lives among stone-age people far from the centres of shipping and transport; his home a grass hut; his car is his two long legs; his assistant contract-labour boys are from the coastal stations and all this without any previous experience. Brother Eugene is happier here than he was in America, and would not readily change places with the dough-makers back home. A little "camp oven," an iron pot 12 inches in diameter and six inches deep, bakes an excellent loaf of bread. And when flour runs short, there is a Guinea airways plane from Lae to replenish supplies. Of native foods there is an abundance; the supply of sweet potatoes, corn, sugar cane, beans, maize and bananas being apparently unlimited.

Photograph: Brother Eugene buying material for the mission houses. Michael Leahy

Brother Eugene has a most interesting time buying food for these natives. Market day at the station sees a line of natives wending their way over the rolling downs through the cane early in the dewy morning. Stragglers keep coming in till about ten o'clock when some 600 natives are on the scene. The tallest man, these natives have seen, steps outside the bamboo fence and with the aid of two stalwart station boys arranges the natives in orderly rows. Each native makes a small pile of each food article he has for sale – 10 potatoes, 6 or 7 pieces of sugar cane, a bundle of greens, and a bunch of bananas. For each pile he receives a small shiny cowry shell.

These shells are so highly prized that some natives would go to any extreme of inconvenience or pain to procure a few.. And what a noisy crowd doing the buying! If one receives a particularly good shell, he lets

out a yell of joy, and holding it aloft shouts: “See what the good Papa gave me!” Sometimes the din is so great that one cannot hear oneself speak.

Photograph: Wilya Mission 1930s. Leahy Collection.

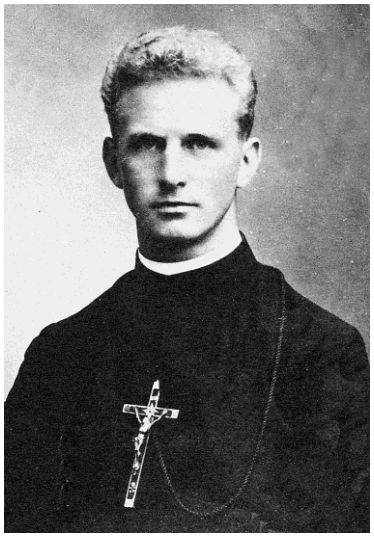
Brother Eugene’s work in New Guinea, both on the coast and here in Hagen is a living refutation of the oft-heard statement that Americans cannot make good missionaries. He has enjoyed excellent health since he shook the dust of the Girard bakery off his apron, and donned the long white cassock of the New Guinea missionary. He has had no malaria; a sound sleeper with good appetite; cheerful and ready for any hardship; punctual and faithful at work, he makes an excellent helper to the lone American priest who lives with him. Some day the Wahgi Valley with its thousands of stone-age people will be the real centre of our missionary work in New Guinea. Now the pioneering days are here, and just as Brother Eugene is doing yeoman work in these rough log-cabin days, so too we may look for him in the thick of the fight when the battle with Satan is on in earnest, and sheep are being gathered into the one, true fold. It takes no great stretch of the imagination to conjure up a picture of the future of Mt Hagen.

Photograph: Cricket match, 1934.Fr Ross, Fox twin, Br Eugene, Dan Leahy, Fox twin. In front is a group of Rempi men who worked for Fr Ross.

Brother Eugene dreams of stations everywhere, churches that send out their message of hope and peace, schools noisy with the voices of little piccaninnies Your good prayers will help this lone American brother in far-off New Guinea to make his dream come true. **(Article written by Fr Ross for the Catholic Freeman’s Journal published March 1935).**

Meantime, Brother Eugene felt that he needed a rest, physically and spiritually. He would go to Bundi and spend a few weeks there with Father Henry Aufenanger and make his retreat. He decided to leave on the second of January 1935. The site for the boarding school and boys' quarters had been cleared and a quantity of native building material brought in. Brother Eugene's last words to me as he left with ten coastal boys were: "Father, please do not build that school till I get back. I really want to have that privilege the first Catholic School in the Western Highlands". He did not come back and I never saw him again.

It took Brother Eugene and carriers six days to reach Mingende and it was here that they learned that Father Morschheuser had been killed and that Father Schaefer was on his way to Alexishafen to report to Bishop Wolf on the tragedy. Friendly natives warned the Brother not to go through the Chimbu River area, as the clans were at war. It would be dangerous entering any area where war was raging but the Brother thought he might get through safely to Bundi.

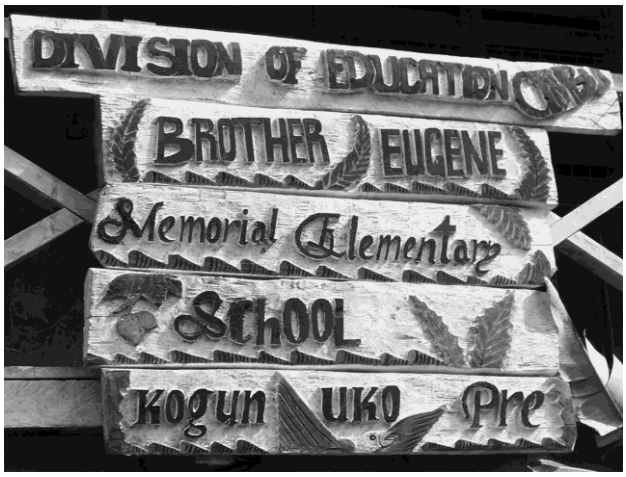


Photograph of Fr Karl Morschheuser

Father Carl Morschheuser SVD, a young man of 31, only three years a priest, was killed on December 16, 1934 early in the morning, after he and Father Cornelius van Baar had broken camp on the Chimbu River. Arrows shot from an ambush pierced the young missionary and he died soon afterwards.

After hearing of the death of Fr Morschheuser, Brother Eugene started up the Chimbu Gorge; at Goglme, the warring natives armed on the heights overlooking the Chimbu River, swarmed down on the party, surrounded them and began pulling the rucksacks and packs from the carriers; the boys all fled in panic. Brother Eugene was struck eight times with bone-tipped arrows, some of them puncturing his lungs. Weak and exhausted he was helped by a friendly group of natives [the Barengigl people] who carried him up the mountainside to a small hut, 8,000 feet above sea level. Inside a fire was burning. Two faithful native boys stayed with the Brother and helped him all they could. His only food was green bananas. His wounds were treated with traditional medicine. On the morning of January 15 1935 yodelling was heard. "Yalomba,Yalomba" "a white man was coming". Pati, the cook, who had remained with Brother Eugene, told him a party of police led by a European officer was walking along the trail.

"Fire in the air with the shot gun to attract their attention," Brother Eugene told the boy. As soon as the officer heard the shot, he sent a police constable up to investigate. Pati told him about the Brother lying in the hut. Soon the entire police party was near the hut. The officer was Robert Melrose, D.O from Salamaua. He had his cook make some hot coffee, built a stretcher and within an hour they were at the Kundiawa airstrip where a single-engine Junker was parked. This plane had brought the D. O.'s party to Kundiawa to investigate the murder of Father Karl Morschheuser who had died on December 16 1934 after being shot through the mouth with an arrow. The Junker plane brought Brother Eugene to Salamaua hospital, he lived a week while his lungs slowly and literally rotted away. Only a man of his magnificent physique and strength could have survived so long. He died on January 23 1935 and was buried in the Salamaua cemetery; his body was later exhumed and brought to the mission cemetery at Alexishafen. These are the first missionaries killed in forty years of work on New Guinea's mainland.



School dedicated to Brother Eugene.

Fr Ross wrote an article "THE PRICE" about Brother Eugene. (Text as follows)

Brother Eugene Frank S.V.D. of Mt Carmel Illinois died of septic pneumonia on 23 January 1935 in the little white-walled European hospital in Salamaua, the port of New Guinea gold-field. A government patrol going up river found the dying missionary on 15 January and rushed him to Salamaua by plane, where he died 8 days later. No priest to attend him; no religious to console him; only a kindly doctor and a sympathetic Catholic nurse saw him breathe his last breathe and make the supreme sacrifice for the far-flung mission in the Wahgi mission.

He was buried by a layman, the kindly District Officer of Salamaua, reading the burial service. Only a few white men followed the narrow footpath to the hill, in the tropical evening calm that fell like a benediction on the little cemetery that extends to the bluff which forms Salamaua's southern headland. The murmur of the surf below was the only music at the funeral. In an unblessed grave he rests, happy to have died like his Divine Master to win souls for heaven. Brother Eugene's death is no doubt part of, THE PRICE, demanded by God for future missionary success beyond the high range of the Bismarcks.

The country beyond the Bismarcks Mountains, along the Chimbu River, up the Wahgi valley to Mt Hagen, is an immense field for missionary labour. Into this field came Brother Eugene and two priestly companions in March 1934. A station, at 6,100 feet above sea level was opened at Koruguru along the Wahgi River, and the natives took kindly to the ways of Brother Eugene and his companions.

By May, the mission station was firmly established. Its location was ideal. It commanded a superb view of the Wahgi Valley which lies like a sleeping beauty between the high Bismarck range with peaks towering to 14,000 feet and the equally rugged Border range to the south. Far to the west with its 12,500 feet top like a table for giants, and we caste many a longing glance toward the old giant as our next field of labour.

In June we completed the Mogei station, near Mt Hagen with airstrip, kitchen, mission house and bathhouse. Brother Eugene could not rest. His heart was in the work, and by Christmas we had ten stations in the area among some 16,000 people

ut, the party fi-
ally entered it and
ound the object of
eir search. Nat-
rally Brother Eu-
ene was in a con-
ition of extreme
eakness, nearing
eath. He was im-
ediately brought
the plane and
rried to the hos-
tal in Salamaua.
hat was the day
which we re-
ived the telegram
at Brother Eu-
ne was not dead,
had been report-
l, but seriously
ounded. A few
ys later, however, another telegram
nveyed the news of his actual death.
e had received all possible care and at-
ntion, a nurse being with him day and
ght. But the eleven days in that lonely
t were too much even for his robust
nstitution. During these awful days he
obably suffered his purgatory. The
fferings he endured these days, and
addition the deprivation of priestly
sistance, must have been a great sac-
ice. It is even very doubtful whether
had a priest before his death, at the
spital in Salamaua. Thus came to an
rupt end the missionary career of our
ave Brother Eugene. We all miss
n; and our sole consolation is the
ought that we have in him an inter-
r in heaven for the Mission's future
ogress, for which he had consecrated
s young life. — R. i. p.

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The Price

y Rev. William A. Ross, S.V.D.
Missionary in New Guinea

Brother Eugene Frank, S.V.D., of
t. Carmel, Illinois, died of septic
eumonia on January 23 in the little
ite-walled European hospital at Sal-
aua, the port of New Guinea's gold
ld. Tragedy has marked Salamaua's
story. Government patrol officers,
ners, and police boys, attacked by na-
es, have been brought in to recover
to die. Brother Eugene, attacked on
Chimbu River on January 7, re-
ved eight arrow wounds. One arrow
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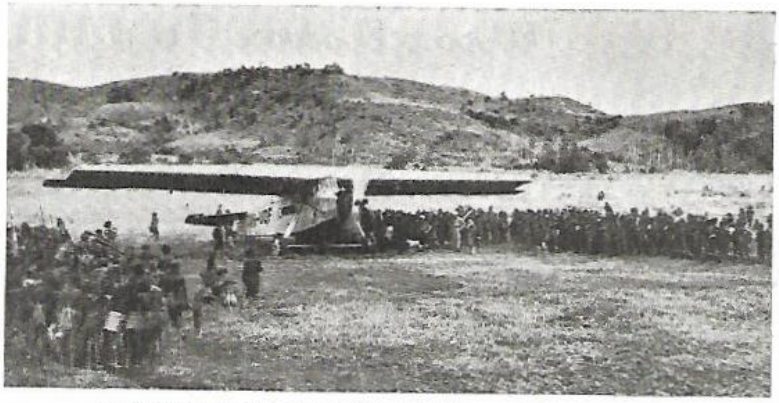

A Fokker airplane from the Pacific Aerial Transport Co., New Guinea, calls at the Mogei drome, in the Mt. Hagen section

only a kindly doctor and a sympathetic Catholic nurse saw him breathe his last, and make the supreme sacrifice of his life for the far-flung mission in the Wahgi Valley.

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A native boy from the Bismarck district in New Guinea

Brother Eugene's death is, no doubt, part of THE PRICE demanded by God for future missionary success beyond the high range of the Bismarcks.

Father Carl Morschheuser, S.V.D., a young man of 31, only three years a priest, was killed on December 16, early in the morning, after he and Father Cornelius Van Baar had broken camp on the Chimbu River. Arrows shot from an ambush pierced the young missionary, and he died soon afterwards. These two deaths represent the first price asked by our Saviour to win thousands of stone-age natives to His kingdom. These are the first missionaries killed in forty years of work on New Guinea's mainland.

The country beyond the Bismarck Mountains, along the Chimbu River, up the Wahgi Valley to Mt. Hagen, is an immense field for missionary labor. Into this field came Brother Eugene and two priestly companions in March, 1934. A station, 6,100 feet above sea level, was opened at Koruguru, along the Wahgi river, and the natives took kindly to the ways of Brother Eugene and his companions. By May, the mission station was firmly established. Its location was ideal. It commanded a superb view of the Wahgi Valley, which lies like a sleeping beauty between the high Bismarck range with peaks towering to 14,000 feet, and the equally rugged Border range to the south. Far to the west lay Mt. Hagen closing the valley with its 12,500-feet top like a table for giants, and we cast many a longing gaze toward the old giant as our next field of labor. Father William Tropper would stay on at Koruguru while Brother Eugene and I opened the Mt. Hagen area.

In June, we completed the Mogei station, near Mt. Hagen, with airdrome, mission house, workingboys' house, kitchen, and bathhouse. *Brother Eugene could not rest. His heart was in the work, and by Christmas we had ten stations in the area among some 16,000 people.*

Shortly after Christmas, one evening Brother Eugene came to me and talked

(Continued on page 275)

Shortly after Christmas 1935, Brother Eugene came to me and talked about making his annual retreat at Bundi. It was while he was on his way there that he was murdered by warring tribes. (The Christian Family)

Photograph: Mt Hagen tribesmen.

Following the murders of Father Carl and Brother Eugene, the Administration was under fire from southern papers. The question was pointedly put: "why does the Administration in New Guinea permit missionaries to go into uncontrolled areas where their lives are in danger and where there is no government protection?"

As a result the Administration in Rabaul set up strict restrictions: 1. No new missionaries would be given permits to enter the Highlands. 2. Missionaries already in residence would not be permitted to leave their main stations. This restriction applied to all Europeans and remained in force until January 1936 when some modifications were made.

1. No new missionaries would be given permits to the highlands before four years of experience on the coast.

2. No missionary would be given a permit to enter an uncontrolled area unless his party had 4 rifles and members of the party were familiar with the rifles.

3. Restricted station residence was modified to extend to a radius of 5 miles and the native clans that could be visited were marked on the permit of each missionary.

This limited travel permit remained in force right up to 1947. The station restrictions were a help to the Catholic Mission as full-time could be given to learning the native language, and a prayer book and hymnal and a bible history were composed and introduced into the boarding school. Ninji Kama, the local chief, selected village boys as applicants for Fr Ross's first school. They were screened and the first classes opened in March 1935. The boys were taught reading and writing, Pidgin English and English and arithmetic. We had 50 boys in two classes. The training of these boys continued through 1937 and 1938. On Christmas Day 1938, 28 boys were baptised. This was the first group in the Western Highlands to become members of the Catholic mission. The group had been preparing from March 1935 to 25th December 1938.

Ordinary Month … Extraordinary mission [July and August 1936] by Father William Ross .
Published Christian Family, March 1937.

By way of explanation! Several friends in America have asked me for some details of life in the interior of New Guinea. I think the best explanation can be expressed in the words ' different'. Extracts from my diary for a single month furnish the best material. There is no attempt made to utilize interesting events of other months. I have taken the running accounts exactly as they came.

***Saturday,* July 18, 1936: 8 p.m.**
Scene. Large school boys' house. Tilley lamp at one end. Myself squatted on earthen floor. Around the cooked pig, laid out on a banana leaf, sat forty-six boys. Ual cut the pork, Kunjip dealt it out. To cut a pig's lungs, intestines and one leg equally into forty-six portions is an art. Yet these boys have seen pigs cut up so often at home that they are experts. The fire sticks flaring up now and then revealed the tense looks of the smaller urchins. Each one got practically an equal portion. This scene is enacted each Saturday night, for on each Saturday we kill a large pig and divide it among the station boys.

18 July 8.30 p.m. about a dozen boys accompanied me back to the mission house, and then went up the hill to Kobe to take part in the *kanana* "singsing". This is a sort of love-making carried out at night, boy and girl rubbing the noses and foreheads together to the chanting of the onlookers. Twice they lock, then draw away. Some girls develop sores on the forehead from too vigorous rubbing. The men usually have their noses painted, and after this singsing the paint is all rubbed off, and one can tell who has been at the *kanana* singsing and who has not.

***Sunday,* July 19**. Paia said he came home from the Kobe *kanana* at 3 a.m. At half past six I noticed three or four boys coming back to the station. These night singsings are carried out in the Bismarcks, Wahgi and Mt Hagen areas. They have a tremendous appeal. Only unmarried girls may take part, though married men are allowed to take the lead always. Men are about the same the world over with the double standard hard to break down.

***July* 20.** Old chief Weingu came and announced the loss of one of our little pigs he was looking after. He had his chest all smeared with thick mud as a sign of mourning. I suspect he ate the pig himself. Later on old Nui came covered with ashes and wailing as he carried a very sick granddaughter aged about six months. The little one appeared to be dying. I baptized her "Maria" and told Nui she would go to heaven. I had no earthly medicine for a child so far gone. Several women brought in babies with *kaskas* and sores. One tot had been badly burned in the fire. Two old women asked me for something for a toothache. There are rumors of a tribal fight between Jika and Mogei. Ual says Jika challenged Mogei and the latter defied them to begin. Nothing is definitely decided yet. I have been correcting the translation of our Pidgin English Bible "Liklik Catholic Baibel" in the Mogei language .

66 THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY

Ordinary Month . . . Extraordinary Mission

By William A. Ross, S.V.D., Mogei, New Guinea

Mogei Mission Station in Grass Country, 6,000 feet above sea level

BY WAY of explanation! Several friends of mine in America have asked me for some details of life in the interior of New Guinea. I think the best explanation can be expressed in the words "something different." Extracts from my diary for a single month furnish the best material. There is no attempt made to utilize interesting events of other months. I have taken the running accounts exactly as they come.

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Mission Plane "St. Paul" at Mogei

Jika headman

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Correcting the translation of our pidgin English "Liklik Katholik Baibel" in the Mogei language.

July 21. Little Maria died at 3 p.m. and will be buried tomorrow.

July 23. About 9.30 p.m. a scream went up from a woman in Kai-pugari

July 21. Little Maria died at 3 pm and will be buried tomorrow.

July 23. About 9.30 p.m. a scream went up from a woman in Kaipugari across the drome. Shouts echoed all over Mogei. We thought someone had been killed, but learned that Wundaki and his gang from Nampaga had come, forcibly held Konch who was watching in the house, and made off with a very big pig.

The woman's screams were ear-piercing in the silent night. Lights flared up over Kobe hills. Shouts and answering shouts made a weird confusion. Early this morning a delegation called on me to help them avenge the wrong. They wanted a couple of boys, guns and dogs. I chastised

them for not telling me last night what it was all about, when we could have caught the thieves red-handed and recovered the pig. Revenge was none of my business. They departed wiser.

From all roads natives armed with sticks filed toward Nampaga to crack a few heads. Instead, one of the thieves cracked the head of the pig's owner, Mek, and also smashed his hand. Angry speeches and threats were the order till late afternoon. The invaders captured a pig from Nampaga.

The schoolboys cannot rest when these tribal quarrels are on, so I let them go over to have a look at the parleying mobs. Ual, Paia and Berum came home at 5 p.m. and vividly described the day's doings. The bleeding Mek; Runga threatened with death and wetting himself all over; Wamp's scorn for the thieves; trying to sift the case to show that both Konch and Runga had invited Wundaki's gang to take the pig at night; the destruction of Wamp's house when the sticks began to fly; and so on.

July 24. Mek came in to have his wounds dressed. His head is cut and the fingers and wrist of his right hand are badly swollen. He said he did not get a pig in return for his stolen one, but the thieves promised to make good. Right now they had no pigs to give, and Mek's was long eaten up. Some natives from Komach brought a red-striped tree bear on a pole. When the schoolboys at recess saw the little fellow they begged me to buy it. I paid a big price, a gold lip shell, but I could not resist the plea of the boys and their shouts of joy and triumph could be heard a mile away as they carried the animal on a pole to their house. Old chief Kudi came in and asked me on the quiet if I had some "poison" to kill one of his enemies. And I thought he was ripe for instruction!

July 25. Three of our boys went to bring in Koruba who is said to have stolen one of our pigs. We had a sow farmed out to Kanabi and in rapid succession three piglets of the litter were stolen. Koruba denied the theft. Women screamed and there was a big commotion before we had order, and made it clear to Koruba that he would have to make good the theft, and the sooner the better. Koben asked me for the loan of a spear as the Jika tribe is holding a big *Kur* singsing in honour of the spirits.

July 26. Wamp and his gang gave Imbil, Kobe's chief, a lot of gold lip shells, in a ceremony lasting till late afternoon. There were about twenty orators and all wanted to have a word about the affair. I understood that Wamp's tribe was paying off an old debt to the Kobe tribe.

July 28. Mick Leahy's boys heard a plane early this morning, but our natives down here say it was the wind. A long line of Kobe men, women and children some decorated, some not, passed the house on the way over to Maip's garden where a working bee was to be held. They must have enjoyed the day for at 4.30 p.m. the crowd returned, laughing and jostling one another in high spirits. De came in to report that the sow he was caring for had two young ones. I sent Koh over to have a look. The sow was in the bush, but Koli heard two little boys that the sow had five young ones.

July 29. Kala, chief of Agiliga, down the drome, came in and asked me to send two boys to bring the Mogei Kilteba tribe over to Agiliga, as the Kominiga were making repeated raids on them. Told him to come back Saturday. Koben, chief of Komach, asked me to lend him the dogs and a boy or two to help capture his pig which had gone bush. 1 told him to ask Mick Leahy as the bull dog "Snowy" needed exercise and just loved hunting pigs.

July 30. Rebia, with Snowy and Bluey, passed here early to help Koben. They captured the pig at noon, Snowy holding fast to its ear. Threatened De with dire penalties, and he admitted the litter consisted of five.

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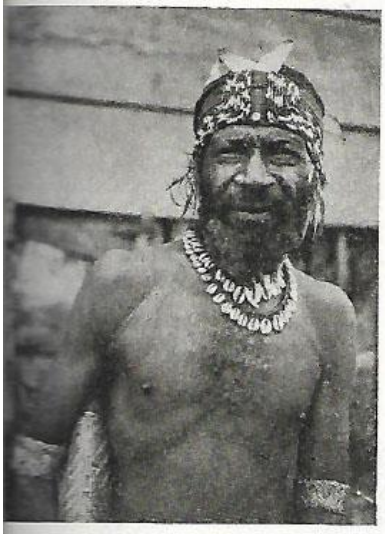

Headman from along the Nabilyels river

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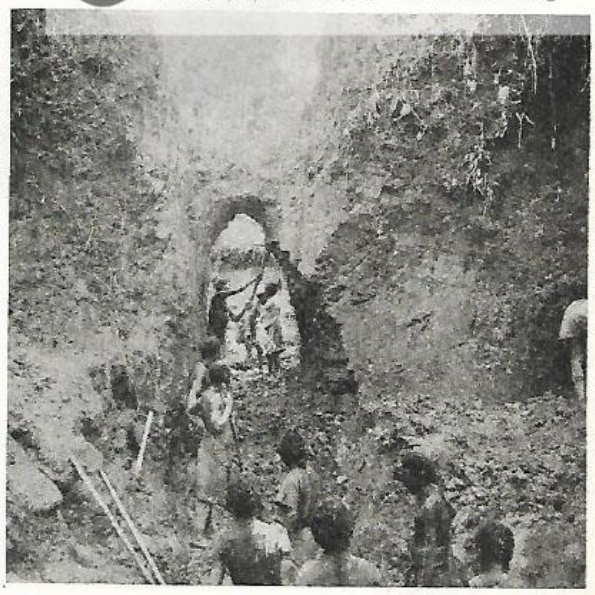

Mick Leahey's boys gold mining at Mt. Hagen

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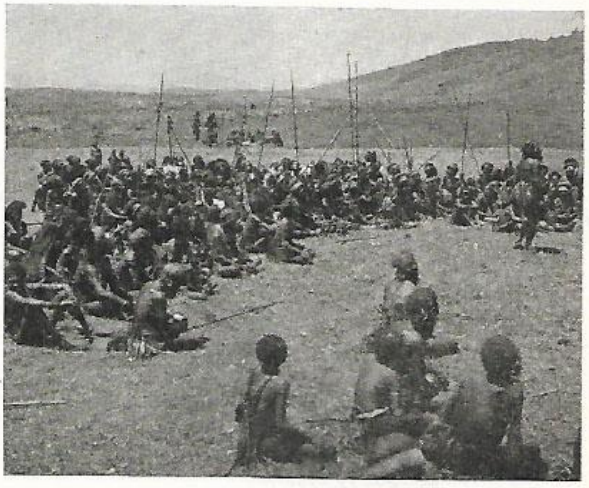

Rescue of the Kilteba . . . orator holding forth on the Mogei Drome

De came in to report that the sow he was caring for had two young ones. I said, "You're lying, a big sow has always more than two." "Oh, there were three," he replied. I sent Koli over to have a look. The sow was in the bush, but Koli heard from two little boys that the sow had five young ones.

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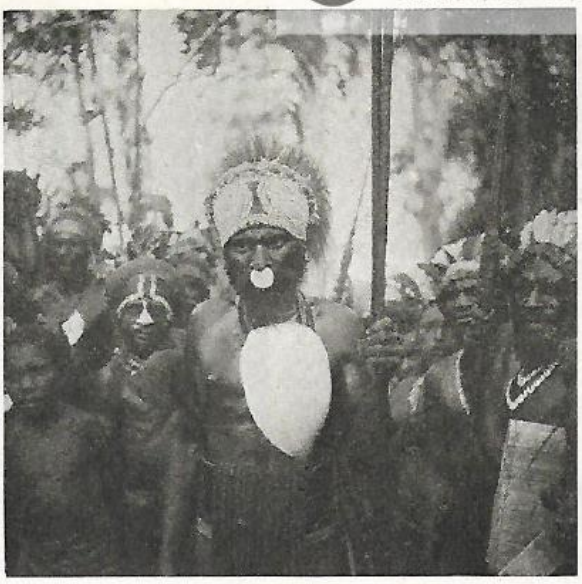

Kala of Agiliga

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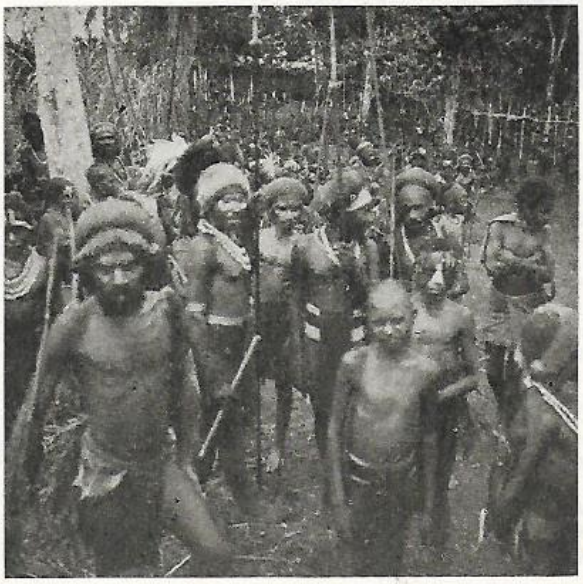
July 31. Guinea Airways' No. 3 Junkers arrived at 11.30 a.m. with Les Ross, pilot and Tom Aitchison of Ramu government post as passenger. The latter told us all about progress on the Ramu station, the peace among the former fighting tribes and their acceptance of the white man. "Boloney," said Mick and I.

Pilot Ross reported that the American Archbold Expedition's seaplane was ruined at Port Moresby when the wind got under its tail and it sank in the harbor. Refloated, but no good. The plane that Mick's boys heard on Tuesday was the Guinea Airways' Stinson. Ross said he tried for half an hour to land, but the fog wouldn't lift, and as petrol was getting scarce he decided to return to Lae.

August 1. Rumors that a small Nenga tribe attacked Jika. No details.

Aug. 2. Savu, Magok and Weirau, who had gone yesterday with Kala to rescue the Kiltebas, returned this afternoon. They reported how Mak and the big chiefs of Kominiga had cowed Kala, Wamp and the whole gang from near here. The Kiltebas cooked about 50 pigs as a peace-offering to the Kominigas, but the latter said it was not near enough to wipe out old scores. They wanted live pigs, too. The squabbling continued till Savu, our boss boy, said he was fed up with the quarrel and they should quit. He would now escort the Kiltebas to Agiliga and woe betide any Kominiga who started trouble.

August 4. Our little plane, St. Paulus, arrived at 10 a.m. Brought a fine red rooster and two cats, also a lot of badly needed shells.



Group of Mogei at a festival

August 6. Called to see Doa's mother. She had 103° fever and a pulse of 60, a bad combination. Severe abdominal pains. Gave her some castor oil and left some aspirin with her husband. The latter had thought she was dead in the night and promptly hacked off the first joint of the middle finger of his left hand. It was a mess as I saw it. They gave me a small cooked pig as thanks for my help. About thirty natives were in or near the house.

Two youths of Mogei stole Kobe Minjil's bananas, and when he raised an alarm they cut him badly across the arm with a stone hatchet. The Kobes rallied for revenge and passed me on the road at 5 p.m. as I was returning from Doa's house.

August 7. Yesterday's fight was called off at the last moment. Instead, a delegation was sent to demand restitution of a pig, rather a clever bit of diplomacy that called for some cool head.

A very foggy morning, no one dreaming of a plane, but at 8.30 a.m. there was the Paulus on the drome without any one having seen him land. He brought a good cargo of shells. Ual and Paia and Mel returned from a trip to Rempi, telling of how the pig we had left behind on our visit had been eaten up by the natives. I could have it any time I went over.

August 8. Dressed Minjil's wound, a nasty gash on the upper arm about three inches long and an inch wide, right to the bone. I did not think a hasty blow from a stone axe would go so deep.

August 9. . . . Lowest temperature of the year, 41° Fahrenheit. Felt frosty at dawn, and this is New Guinea! Of course, Mogei is 6,000 feet above sea level.

Minjiger and Jika tribes were attacked by a small tribe on the Nabilyer and a lot of big men wiped out.

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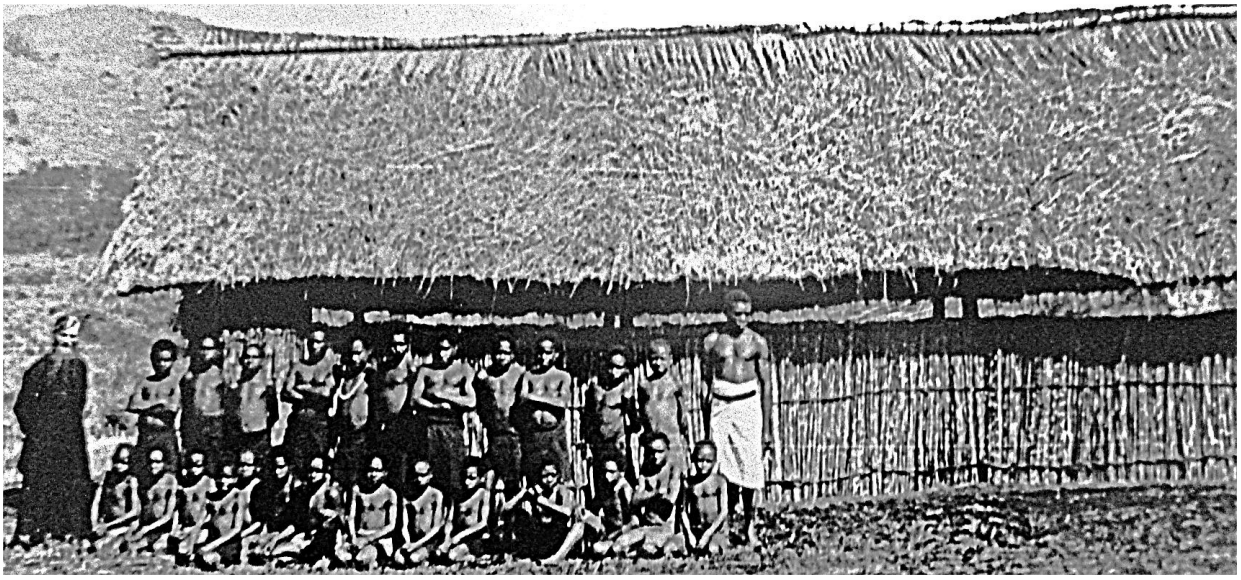
August 13. At 1.30 p.m. fire broke out in the smaller schoolboys' house, and before it was over both schoolhouses and living-quarters were a mass of charred wood and burnt grass. The heat was terrific as the flames mounted fifty feet in the air. The schoolboys lost all their treasures, such as knives, spoons, bowls, blankets, trousers, shirt etc. Only the larger boys were able to save their goods. Several Kobe men and women seeing the smoke and flames dashed down to help us. They carried water in bamboo pipes to put out the embers.



Photograph: First school at Wilya. Michael Leahy

As the first house went up in flames, the schoolboys who were at work rushed down the hillside and up the slope to the school plateau. Howling and screaming, rolling on the ground, they carried on something awful as the poor lads realized that all their precious possessions were gone. It was so pitiful as to be laughable. I found it hard to keep a straight face. A house we can build in one day at a cost of about $2.50. The articles lost were all valuable, but we can also replace them. When the fire died down I had all the workers on the station shovelling around over the flames, and we soon had a mound of fresh, cold earth which buried every vestige of the fire. In the evening the little fellows began digging for their lost treasures. One found the frame of his small mirror, another the burned iron of his knife and so on. It was really funny and the youngsters enjoyed the digging immensely.

August 14. Completed one new house, 30 feet long and 15 feet wide. Only the sleeping bunks and fireplace to be made. Women helped all day bringing in bundles of *kunai grass* for the roof.

August 16. Station deserted except for a few schoolboys. After Mass, all the boys and most of the workers went over to Jika to see the feast held for those who had been slain in the Nebilyer fight. About thirty pigs were killed. Contrary to their hopes, our boys received very little of the meat distributed among the invited guests. Our boys represented Mogei, and Jika is jealous of Mogei. Hence the cool reception.

N.B. Many events of the month are omitted. Space will not permit the description of several interesting happenings. But in the main, this account represents the average ordinary month in Mogei. Of course, we do not have fires every month. Apart from this, all the other events are duplicated monthly. After reading this account, I feel sure you will agree with the title that this is an extraordinary mission."

Waiting for the sing-sing to begin

Ordinary Month... Extraordinary Mission

(Continued from page 68)

August 10. Ual just told me of a horrible case that occurred in Noguba, his old home, about a week ago. A woman was accused of infidelity. The husband fastened the door of the hut, sharpened his stone axe in front of the woman, then in a calm, cool way hacked off her feet, then her hands, and as she was writhing in pain, he called in his friends to show them. Then he bashed in the poor victim's head. Ual says this brute is savage, as he killed Ual's father and mother in a night attack some years ago. His village is only five hours from here. The latent savagery of this tribe was stirred up by the frightful scene in the hut and two other men announced they had prepared a similar fate for their wives.

August 13. At 1.30 p.m. fire broke out in the smaller schoolboys' house, and before it was over both schoolhouses and living-quarters were a mass of charred wood and burnt grass. The heat was terrific as the flames mounted fifty feet in the air. The schoolboys lost all their treasures, such as knives, spoons, bowls, blankets, trousers, shirts, etc. Only the larger boys were able to save their goods. Several Kobe men and women seeing the smoke and flames dashed down to help us. They carried water in bamboo pipes to put out the embers. As the first house went up in flames, the schoolboys who were at work rushed down the hillside and up the slope to the school plateau. Howling and screaming, rolling on the ground, they carried on something awful as the poor lads realized that all their precious possessions were gone. It was so pitiful as to be laughable. I found it hard to keep a straight face. A house we can build in one day at a cost of about $2.50. The articles lost were all valuable, but we can also replace them. When the fire died down, I had all the workers on station shoveling ground over the flames, and we soon had a mound of fresh, cold earth which buried every vestige of the fire. In the evening the little fellows began digging for their lost treasures. One found the frame of his small mirror, another the burned iron of his knife and so on. It was really funny, and the youngsters enjoyed the digging immensely.

August 14. Completed one new house, 30 feet long and 15 feet wide. Only the sleeping bunks and fireplaces to be made. Women helped all day bringing in bundles of *kunai* grass for the roof.

August 16. Station deserted except for a few schoolboys. After Mass, all the boys and most of the workers went over to Jika to see the feast held for those who had been slain in the Nabilyer fight. About thirty pigs were killed. Contrary to their hopes, our boys received very little of the meat distributed among the invited guests. Our boys represented Mogei, and Jika is jealous of Mogei. Hence the cool reception.

* * *

N. B. Many events of the month are omitted. Space will not permit the description of several interesting happenings. But in the main, this account represents the average ordinary month in Mogei. Of course, we do not have fires every month. Apart from this, all the other events are duplicated monthly. After reading this account, I feel sure you will agree with the title . . . this is an extraordinary mission.

Pictures of this article are reproduced with the kind permission of Mr. M. J. Leahy.

Dan Leahy showing freezer fish to Mogei. Wamp, young headman of Nampaga in center

Nazareth Bells

(Continued from page 69)

ary fourteenth — send Him your message of fidelity and love, and then back it up all during Lent with actions befitting the season, remembering every day that, though you are fasting and almsgiving, you must do as He says and, "anoint thy head and wash thy face that thou appear not to men to fast, but to thy Father who seeth in secret will repay thee."

I love valentines, and I mean to send some. You love them and will send them, too. Then we shall get down to earth and make our words ring true, so that we may not be as "sounding brass and tinkling cymbals."

NOTE, In 1971, Gabriel one of the schoolboys remembered the fire. Gabriel Goiba, had happy memories of their first long-house divided into sleeping area and living area with six fire pits to keep them warm at night. On the day of the fire some of the boys had left kaukau cooking unattended and the house was soon ablaze. Gabriel lost his blanket, the tin he used to cook the kaukau in, his spoon and plate, a comb, mirror and shirts which Father Ross had given him and each of the other boys. He cried bitterly at the time, but felt better when he recovered his tins, plate and spoon. Gabriel enjoyed school and remembers the little books in the Melpa language and Pidgin. The Society of the Divine Word had the foresight to print books in Pidgin as well as the local language. They were the forerunners in the use of Pidgin English because they could see its advantages as a means of communication for people from different areas.

In October 1936 Father Ross described the progress he had made.

> Our little mission station at Mogei, not so little in numbers (for we have a hundred mouths to feed daily), has had a rather remarkable influence on the Mogei tribesmen from the start. We have been able slowly to work up a sort of social pressure against violence and injustice. Time and again leaders like Ninji, Wamp, Kudi, Tetsip, Koben and Wundaki have come in asking our permission to "bump off" some enemy. Naturally we strongly persuaded them to the contrary.

Photograph: Fr Ross with Wamp Wan and Ninji Kama and williwil.

Unga Gets his share - Fr Ross. Article for Christian Family (Text).

If old Unga had not been there, I would not have known how big this picnic really was. At Unga's age one doesn't go in for sports. He had hobbled along a rough trail, hundreds of bumps the mile, and for hours defied old man rheumatism to put him down for the count. So I reflected this affair must be the goods. And so it was.

The picnic park was long and narrow, with a bamboo stockade at one end. Behind this stockade, the dancers were being decorated for the grand entrance. Small urchins, peeping through tiny holes in the fence were whacked over the behind by grown-ups. Women were shooed away, from the barrier, for this was a men's affair, from soup to cigars, and women simply didn't count today except as local colour. Spying on the preparations was taboo, hence the vigilant elders had a busy time. Wamp Wan, young headman of the Mogei Nampagas was there with Tetsip, Ninji, Wundakai.

Unga stood at the entrance to the grove and welcomed me with an "*Al, Kundi*" (Hello Redskin); all white skins are called *kundi* here. "Well, Unga, old Boy, how are you? How's the rheumatism? Why only just the other day you were barely able to hobble to the Mogei station to get some mentholated salve for your creaking bones. Now you come away over here, how come?"

"Ah *Kundi*," Unga replied, "This is a real big singsing. There will be over 200 dancers. You'll see more gold lip and bailer shells, more red bird-of-paradise plumes, than you ever saw before in your life. You couldn't keep me away! Besides, there's a feed of pig at the end, and I have many friends in this place."

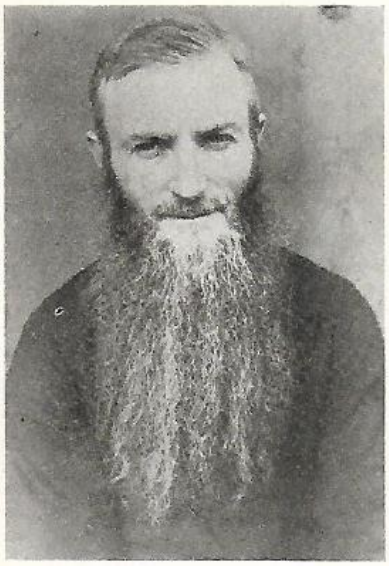
The picnic park was long and narrow, with a bamboo stockade at one end. Behind this stockade the dancers were being decorated for the grand entrance. Wamp acted as my escort. We passed down the long line bordered on both sides with shrubs and flowers while in the centre large *Casuarina* trees were growing out of mounds six feet high. The lawn was dotted flowers and small flowering shrubs, a restful sight for the eyes after hours of walking through high grassland to get there. These parks are peculiar to the Mt Hagen area. They are unusually well kept. The grass is cut short, new flowers continually planted and this park becomes the centre for all outdoor functions.

The roads leading to the park were swarming with brightly coloured natives, some wearing ropes of cowry shells, others wearing the large bailer shells, while nearly all the big men had a cassowary-plume headdress surmounted by one or two flaming red bird-of-paradise plumes or the more familiar yellow variety. A few blue bird-of-paradise plumes, smaller and more finely veined than the common variety, were also in evidence.

One or two of the old men in the grounds were smoking short bamboo pipes with a wad of tobacco in one end. The natives here are non-smokers, and these old lads were exceptions to the rule. The women and girls smeared with lard, glistened in the sun. Children wearing the fur of the tree-bear, as a headband were especially attractive. The din increased as each new band of arrivals entered the dancing park. A half-hour after my first glimpse of the scene it was impossible to move about comfortably. There were about 3,000 natives packed into this grove, milling around looking for their friends and relatives. There was a series of dances with people shouting and milling around and looking for friends and relatives and acquaintances. The crowd had the restless air of the surging sea.

Unga Gets His Share*

By William A. Ross, S.V.D., Alexishafen, New Guinea



Father Ross, missionary among the Mogei in New Guinea

IF OLD Unga had not been there, I would not have known how big this picnic really was. At Unga's age one doesn't go in for sports. He had hobbled along a rough trail, hundreds of bumps to the mile, and for hours defied old man rheumatism to put him down for the count. So, I reflected, this affair must be the goods. And it was.

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Unga stood at the entrance to the grove and welcomed me with an *"AI, Kundi"* ("Hello, Redskin"; all white men are called kundi here).

"Well, Unga old Boy, how are you? How's the rheumatism? Why, only just the other day you were barely able to hobble to the Mogei station to get some mentholated salve for your creaking bones. Now you come away over here, how come?"

"Ah, Kundi," Unga replied, "this is a real big *singsing*. There will be over 200 dancing. You'll see more gold lip and bailer shells, more red bird-of-paradise plumes, than you ever saw before in your life. You couldn't keep me away! Besides, there's a feed of pig at the end, and I have many friends in this place."

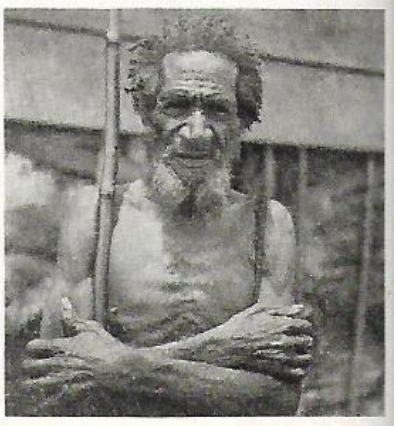
Wamp, young headman of Mogei Nampaga, with Tetsip and Minjil, Wundaki and Korubu, were all there, decorated in their best grease and feathers and shells. Wamp acted as my escort. We passed down the long lane, bordered on both sides with shrubs and flowers, while in the center large casuarina trees were growing out of mounds six feet high. The lawn was dotted with flowers and small flowering shrubs, a restful sight for the eyes after hours of walking through high grassland. These parks are peculiar to the Mt. Hagen area. They are unusually well kept. The grass is cut short, new flowers continually planted, and the park becomes the center for all outdoor social functions.

The roads leading to the park were swarming with brightly decorated natives, some wearing ropes of cowry shells, some displaying gold lip shells, others wearing the large bailer shell, while nearly all the big men had a cassowary-plume headdress surmounted by one or two flaming red bird-of-paradise plumes or the more familiar yellow variety. A few blue bird-of-paradise plumes, smaller and more finely veined than the common variety, were also in evidence. One or two of the old men in the grounds were smoking short bamboo pipes with a wad of tobacco in one end. The natives here are non-smokers, and these old lads were exceptions to the rule. The women and girls smeared with lard, glistened in the sun. Children wearing the fur of the tree-bear as a headband were especially attractive.

The din increased as each new band of arrivals entered the dancing park. A half-hour after my first glimpse of the scene it was impossible to move about comfortably. There were about 3000 natives packed into the tiny grove, and milling around looking for friends and acquaintances the crowd had the restless air of the surging sea.

Suddenly a shout went up. Two tall, brawny braves, brandishing stone axes, rushed out of the tiny gate in the stockade, made mimic gestures of slashing and hacking, and shouting at the top of their leathery lungs, soon cleared a lane among the densely packed spectators. They ran up and down this lane three or four times, then disappeared within the stockade. A long-drawn-out cry sounded from within, and about 50 natives in pairs dashed out of the gate and shuffled their way down the lane with both hands holding gold lip shells or bailer shells before their faces. They came to an abrupt halt. The entrance was not unlike an old-time "Charlie Chaplin" slide. A second group now dashed down the lane. They halted. A third and then a fourth and now the lane was crowded to congestion. The leading group moved on its way with a rapid, shuffling gait, followed by the other groups singing, shuffling and weaving along. And soon the whole line was in rapid motion, and as abruptly halted. This went on for half an hour. The sound of the shuffling feet and the cries created a peculiarly tense atmosphere among the onlookers, for this was a religious dance held to honor the spirits. A line of about twenty men and boys, as black as coal from head to foot, smeared with a kind of charcoal, and grimacing horribly, drew up the rear line of dancers. These were the "imps," set to guard the shells from being stolen. The imps were all armed with bows and arrows, spears and battleaxes. The tiny fellows were a scream. They could not take their policeman-duty seriously, and as the dancing lines halted abruptly, those behind were forced to check their speed as best they could and as a result many bumps were received. The little imps used these occasions to poke those in front of them to their hearts' content. Now the line of dancers moved back into the stockade.

"What now?" I thought. If Unga were near he would tell me for he must have taken part in many of these dances in his younger days. As I wondered Minjil, Mogei's Secretary of War, suddenly leaped to a platform running the length of the park, and shoved and slashed and howled and threatened until the platforms were cleared. There was one accident. The men in the crowd below had long human-bone-tipped lances, and as Minjil dashed along shoving right and left one youth fell off the platform and received a nasty gash in the thigh as he struck one of the upturned spears. He had to be carried home. We could not do anything for him, as no first-aid material was at hand. The platforms were now cleared, and the dancers filed out of a higher door in the stockade opening directly on the platforms, and marched solemnly along the platforms, each man holding a portion of cooked pig to be distributed among his friends below. Now I understood why the men under the platforms all had long lances, and why old Unga was miles away from me but very close to the lads who held the cooked pig. Now began the distribution. The soul of these pigs had long been offered to the spirits, now the men of Mogei would do justice to the flesh. Without any fuss a lance was thrust up to the man on the platform. A piece of pork was placed on the tip of the lance, the lance disappeared



Old man Unga

*Illustrations by courtesy of Mr. D. Leahy.

like magic, the pork was removed and placed in the net-basket carried for just such an occasion. From all parts of the platforms, similar scenes were being enacted. The pieces of pork were seldom more than a few inches square. Some men got lean meat, most got dripping fat. One had to be a personage, or a pal of one of the men on the platform, to get even a tiny piece of pork. Women were forbidden to eat this pork. One chief, seeing me away off at the edge of the milling crowd, beckoned and by signs indicated a huge piece of pork he had for me. I pantomimed being sick and told him to keep it for himself. He laughed as though it were a huge joke since no native ever refuses pork.

The pig finally distributed, the spectators from far away began slowly to leave the park in small groups. Now the speechmaking began. One orator after another arose and brandishing his stone axe addressed the crowd below: "Let all Mogei unite in one grand effort to show its wealth and power. The feast today was to invoke the help of the spirits. The rest was up to the men of Mogei." This was the gist of the speeches. I might add here that evidently these natural orators got their message home, for when some months later Mogei did hold its tribal feast, some 700 pigs were roasting on the coals and the name and fame of the tribe had gone unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

On the way home from the picnic park, I spied old Unga hobbling along. I overtook him and asked: "Say, Unga, how much pork did you get?" He smiled his crooked and triumphant smile, looked around to see if there were any unfriendly spectators near. Apparently satisfied, he opened his net basket and allowed me to peek in. The bag was full of various sized pieces of pork, about a dozen pieces in all. When I was lucky to have been offered a single piece, and I the KUNDI, I wondered just how Unga had managed it. But he evidently did not hobble two hours from home for nothing, and the old rascal kept his secret.

Children wearing the fur of the tree-bear as a headband were especially attractive

Knights Riding Forth

to warfare centuries ago, first were armed by special squires who made sure every part of the harness and equipment was in place. . . .

In France there is today a Society that performs similar excellent service for every outgoing missionary: they fit him out with a complete priestly kit, supply his most essential wants, and pay his way to the mission field.

We have seven missionaries, at least, sallying forth to strange lands this year, and each of them needs $300 for equipment, and $300 for the trip. These amounts will just cover the most important expenses. How helpful it would be to see your contribution come in, marked, "For the departing missionaries."!

If you prefer to send something personal, forward

Books — such as any priest would appreciate; or ask us for suggestions.

Vestments and Altar Linens.

Devotional Articles — rosaries, prayerbooks, holy pictures.

Medical Kit for First Aid. — This costs about $30.

Mass Kit—$150 defrays this most necessary expense.

Won't you send something towards this equipment fund? Your present won't be forgotten like ordinary feastday or birthday gifts: it will go on earning daily mementos for you all year round.

Address your contributions to Father Bruno, Mission Procure, Techny, Ill.

Half an hour after my first glimpse of the scene

From a Hospital Chaplain's Diary

He Had Been a Catholic

A very old man, his face yellow with jaundice, was brought in by his son. The chart said he was a Lutheran. Every day I passed the two-bed ward where the man lay dying, went in occasionally to look at him but never spoke to him because he never responded to anything. He was kept alive by a liquid diet. Anybody could see he was sinking, but somehow he would not die. He lingered on for a week without any great change for the worse. His married son and daughter sat at his bedside nearly all day waiting for his demise, and by and by it was mentioned all over the house that on the first floor we had a man who could not die. At last the daughter came to me and said: "Father, could you not try to do something for my father? You see he cannot live and he cannot die, it seems; would you not go in and say some prayers?" I inquired whether their father was a Catholic and she said no, they were all Lutherans. I consented, and while going down to the room suddenly the thought came to me: "This is strange, is it not possible that this man may have been a Catholic and is waiting for a priest." I went in, tried to speak to the dying man, but without getting a response. I recited some prayers over him, whispered into his ear the petition, "My Jesus, have mercy on me," recited the Act of Contrition very slowly and then gave him conditional absolution. Before I went out I seemed to notice a change in his appearance, the nose becoming more pointed and similar indications of impending death, and before I had been back in my room ten minutes, the daughter came in to thank me, because the father had at last died. Again I asked whether the man was a Catholic, again she said no, but when I asked whether he ever had been, she said, "Yes, when he was a boy, but he had lived as a Lutheran ever since he married mother." I told her what I had done, and both she and her brother seemed impressed. He was buried in the old family lot.

CHRISTIANITY AND LIFE

(Continued from page 131)

ligious conscience and consciousness, that hope for the great beyond and earthly duty are one.

We Christians know that our earthly life is only a transition, but we also believe in the gospel of the talents, which makes it a religious duty to "work" with them. For us this life and the future life are one entity. To us the earth is God's world and all genuine earthly activity service of God. Earthly life remains for us a transition to the great beyond, but we know that to reach the goal successfully means fidelity to the duties earthly life imposes. F. L.

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A second group now dashed down the lane. They halted. A third and then a fourth group appeared and now the lane was crowded to congestion. The leading group, moved on its way with a rapid shuffling gait, followed by the other groups singing, shuffling and weaving along. And soon the whole line was in rapid motion and as abruptly halted. This went on for an hour. The sound of the shuffling feet and the cries created a peculiarly tense atmosphere among the onlookers, for this was a religious dance held to honour the spirits.

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Now began the distribution. The soul of these pigs had long been offered to the spirits now the men of Mogei would do justice to the flesh. Without any fuss a lance was thrust up to the men on the platform. A piece of pork was placed on the tip of the lance and the lance disappeared like magic, the pork was removed and placed in the net-basket carried for just such an occasion. From all parts of the platform, similar scenes were being enacted. The pieces of pork were seldom more than an inch square.

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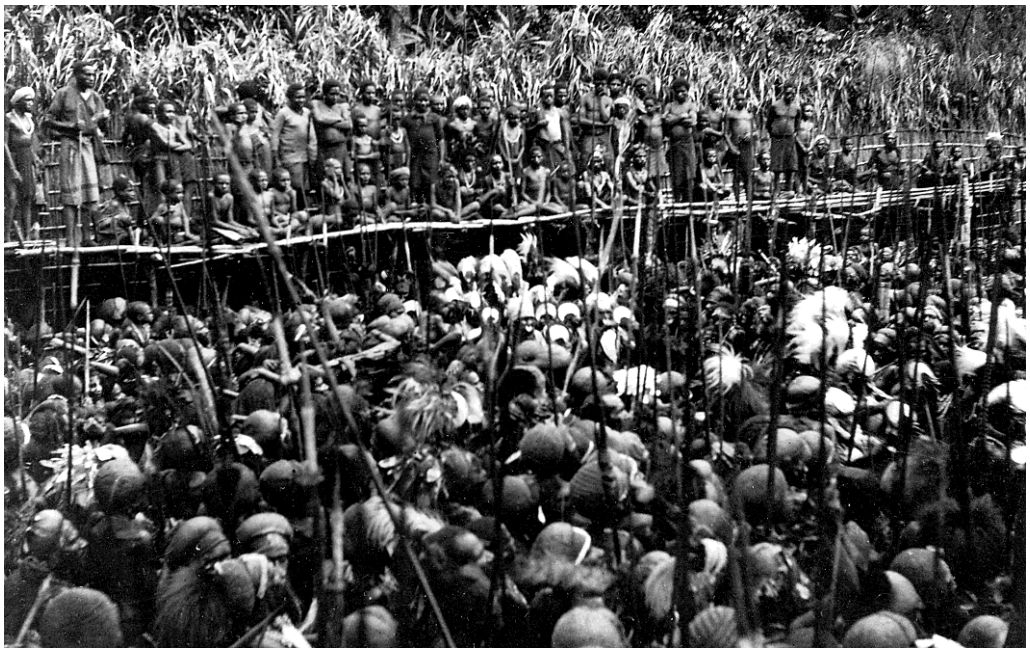

Photograph: Distributing the pork at a feast. Leahy Collection.

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Speech addressed the crowd.

“Let all Mogei tribesmen unite in one great effort to show its wealth and power. The feast was to invoke the help of the spirits. The rest is up to you men of Mogei.”

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Mogei's Big Barbecue by William Ross S.V.D Alexishafen New Guinea. Text of the article.

Far off to the north over the rolling grassland of Mogei a faint curl of smoke rose upward in the cool still air. Suddenly a swarm of schoolboys was around me. As when the horses are running, the cry, "They're off !" gets into one's blood and spells unusual excitement so does that first trace of smoke.

'Look Pater," they cried, dancing up and down. 'There's the first fire! Can we go?" Hardly waiting for permission, they dashed off, for today was Mogei's biggest day in years.

The first ray of dawn found Hagen, the mountain, without a cloud. The old giant with his rusty head 12,000 feet above the sea was soon beautifully lit up by the morning sun. The ice-topped crags thirty miles away were silent. Everything presaged a fine day, Father Meiser, after an early Mass and a hasty breakfast, had rushed off to Agiliga hoping to see the first line of pigs to be slaughtered at Yala's park. But early as he was, they beat him to it. He arrived to find the pigs laid out cold, ready for the fire-pits. He returned about 8am, after making a visit to three small parks in the Gugumomo area. He had counted eighty-eight pigs in these three parks.

When Dan Leahy and his boys came down from the camp on Kobe heights above the drome, I told Dan we'd seen a sight. Eighty-eight pigs in three small parks and there were twenty-three of these parks sharing in today's big feast!

De, the scraggy-bearded headman of Keminga, greeted us at the first singsing park, pride showing in his expansive grin. "I've killed five pigs, and this little section has killed another twenty." Twenty-five pigs for Mogei's smallest park! Dan and I agreed we were in for a big day. The fires smoking pig, decorated children, laughing elders, made a scene in which all cartes were forgotten, like a big picnic back home.

Koben was handing out bits of pork when we arrived at his big park in Komach. He must have had a pig in the pit at dawn. This park represented a veritable helluva scene. Smoke so thick our eyes smarted painfully, while a handkerchief was a necessity and blowing our noses a constant care. There were twenty-four platforms about three feet square raised a foot from the ground. A roaring fire on the platform was used in heating a dense mass of stones which popped in the heat with a rifle-like report. There were as many fire-pits as platforms. These pits were three feet deep and a foot and a half wide, and as we passed down the narrow park we had to rub our eyes free from smoke to avoid falling into one of the pits. The hiss of burning embers, the popping stones, the noise and the din, were too much for us. We sought relief in the cool of the big trees outside the dancing ground after counting sixty-eight pigs either roasted or ready to be roasted. Koben alone had killed nineteen.

The road to the park led down an incline over a small creek. Here women and girls were busy cleaning the intestines of sixty-eight pigs. These portions would be cooked later on in special pits, with quantities of ferns and edible greens. We hurried on to Wamp's park at Rebiamul, and here the scene defied description. It seemed that the Kuli, Ulga, Jika and Yamkar were over for the day. Thousands of strange natives coming to see what Mogei really could do by way of a feast. Men, women and children were sitting close together in the thick smoke. Mangy dogs ran in and out of the crowd watching for stray bit of pork. But the not so nimble could not possibly find a road through the crowd. The smoke rolled in like clouds over us; the heat was terrific. We could scarcely breathe. Even had we found a path, our eyes were too sore to follow it. Finally

Wamp, the young headman from Rebiamul, came to meet us. I asked him how many pigs his gang had bowled over. By careful thinking he accounted for seventy four. As we had had enough of the smoking fires, popping stones, gaping pits, grease-smeared natives, mangy dogs, we called it a day. There were ten other parks in this section. Wamp Wan knew exactly how many pigs each headman had killed and could accurately guess the number for the smaller fry. After considerable checking up, Dan and I tallied four hundred.

To rest out smarting eyes and get some fresh air, we made a long detour through the grassland, and called on Kala at his park near the east of the drome. Here the worst was over. There was no smoke. The roasted pigs were in the earthen ovens, cold long since. Twenty-four uncooked legs were lined up as offering for the Jika relatives and friends of the headman of this place. Dan and I counted sixty-five pigs in this park, the two headmen having killed twenty-two between them.

Kala with an eye to business asked if we would accept some of the pigs. We told him we came only as interested spectators. 'But that won't work," he said "The fact of your coming to our feast as our *Kundis* (masters) is a sign that you approve and will share some of the pigs."

"So what?" asked Dan.

Kala replied, "You're going to be offered a lot of cooked pig, and we expect you to give us presents of goldlip and bailer shells in return." "Thanks for the tip Kala, we'll be seeing you."

On the way home we checked our figures, and accounted for some hundred and ten pigs. There may have been many more. That evening there were about twenty headmen lined up before the house. Each carried a leg or a whole back. The next morning the smaller fry came and before I realized it we had forty-one legs and eighteen backs, I had to refuse more though they kept coming along all day. Even though we have ninety natives on our station six pounds of pork apiece was more than enough.

Dan and I estimated that Mogei had cut up over 40,000 pounds of pork. Jiga had some time before boasted of its five hundred pigs at the big feast, but Mogei today had broken that record and their pride knew no bounds."

After the big triumph, Mogei tribesmen were strutting about the area, decorated in all their finery. No work was done. They were living on their glory. We could scarcely get food for the station. I asked one young chief how long this humbug was going to last. He replied that it would be about a month before the people felt normal again. Meantime they made a nuisance of themselves around the station, hampering our work, carrying on horseplay and singsing through the night. Old man, Kundi came in one day and offered me some good advice.

"Kumdi" he said "You better move away. We have no more pigs. And you cannot run your station without pigs."

Old Kumdi was pretty nearly right. The shortage of pork is still felt. There will hardly be such a feast again for the next five or six years.

Mogei's Big Barbecue

By William Ross, S.V.D.
Alexishafen, New Guinea

FAR OFF to the north over the rolling grassland of Mogei a faint curl of smoke rose upward in the cool, still air. Suddenly a swarm of schoolboys was around me. As when the horses are running, the cry "They're off!" gets into one's blood and spells unusual excitement, so that first trace of smoke. "Look, Pater," they cried, dancing up and down. "There's the first fire! Can we go?" Hardly waiting for permission they dashed off, for today was Mogei's biggest day in years.

The first ray of dawn found *Hagen* without a cloud. The old giant with his rusty head 12,600 feet above the sea was soon beautifully lit up by the morning sun. The ice-topped *Crags* thirty miles away were silent. Everything presaged a fine day, Father Meiser, after an early Mass and a hasty breakfast, had rushed off to Agiliga hoping to see the first line of pigs to be slaughtered at Yala's park. But early as he was, they beat him to it. He arrived to find the pigs laid out cold, ready for the firepits. He returned about 8 a.m. after making a visit to three small parks in the Gugumomo area. He had counted eighty-eight pigs in these three parks.

When Dan Leahy and his boys came down from the camp on Kobe heights above the drome, I told Dan we'd see a sight. Eighty-eight pigs in three small parks, and there were twenty-three of these parks sharing in today's big feast!

De, the scraggy-bearded headman of Keminga, greeted us at the first singsing park, pride showing in his expansive grin. "I've killed five pigs, and this little section has killed another twenty." Twenty-five pigs for Mogei's smallest park! Dan and I agreed we were in for a big day. The fires, smoking pig, decorated children, laughing elders, made a scene in which all cares were forgotten, like a big picnic back home.

Bringing home the bacon

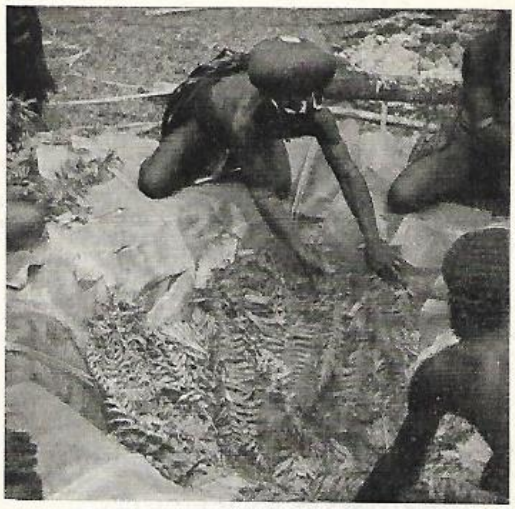
Koben was handling out bits of pork when we arrived at his big park in Komach. He must have had a pig in the pit at dawn. This park represented a veritable helluva scene. Smoke, so thick our eyes smarted painfully, while a handkerchief was a necessity and blowing our noses a constant care. There were twenty-four platforms about three feet square raised a foot from the ground. A roaring fire on the platform was used in heating a dense mass of stones which popped in the heat with a rifle-like report. There were as many firepits as platforms. These pits were three feet deep and a foot and a half wide. and as we passed down the narrow park we had to rub our eyes free from smoke to avoid falling into one of the pits. The hiss of burning embers, the popping stones, the noise and the din were too much for us. We sought relief in the cool of the big trees outside the dancing ground after counting sixty-eight pigs either roasted or ready to be roasted. Koben alone had killed nineteen.

The road to the next park led down an incline over a small creek. Here women and girls were busy cleaning the intestines of the sixty-eight pigs. These portions would be cooked later on in special pits, with quantities of ferns and edible greens. We hurried over to Wamp's park at Rebiamul, and here the scene defied description. It seemed that all Kuli, Uga, Jika and Yamkar were over for the day, thousands of strange natives invited in to see what Mogei really could do in the line of a feast. Men, women and children were sitting close together in the thick smoke. Mangy dogs ran in and out of the crowd watching for a stray bit of pork. But we, not so nimble, could impossibly find a path through the crowd. The smoke rolled in thick clouds over us; the heat was terrific. One could scarcely breathe. Even had we found a path, our eyes were too sore to follow it. Finally Wamp, the young headman of Rebiamul, came to meet us. I asked him how

Heating the cooking stones

Lining the hole with banana leaves

Putting in the hot stones



Seasoning the stew

many pigs his gang had bowled over. By careful thinking he accounted seventy-four. As we had had enough of the smoking fires, popping stones, gaping pits, grease-smeared natives, mangy dogs, we would call it a day. There were ten other parks in this section. Wamp knew exactly how many pigs each headman had killed, and could accurately guess the number for the smaller fry. After considerable checking up, Dan and I tallied four hundred.

To rest our smarting eyes and get some fresh air, we made a long detour through the grassland, and called on Yala at his park near the east end of the drome. Here the worst was over. There was no smoke. The roasted pigs were in the earthen ovens, cold long since. Twenty-four uncooked legs were lined up as offerings to the Jika relatives and friends of the headmen of this place. Dan and I counted sixty-five pigs in this park, the two headmen having killed twenty-two between them.

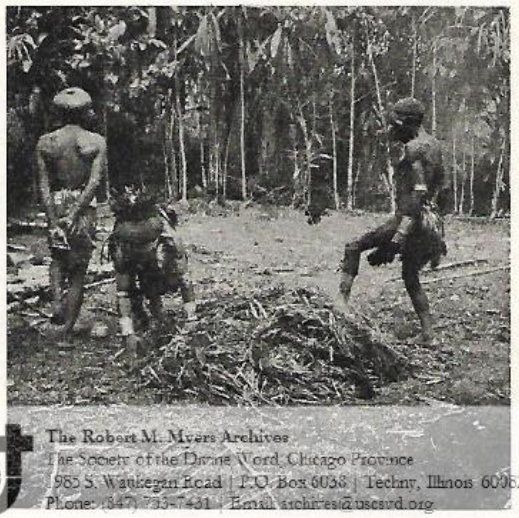
Kala, with an eye to business, asked us if we would accept some of the pigs. We told him we came only as interested spectators. "But that won't work," he said. "The fact of your coming to our feast as our Kundis (masters) is a sign that you approve and will share with us." "So what?" asked Dan. Kala replied: "You're going to be offered a lot of cooked pig, and we expect you to give us presents of gold lip and bailer shells in return." "Thanks for the tip, Kala, we'll be seeing you." On the way home we checked our figures, and accounted for seven hundred and ten pigs. There may have been many more.

That evening, there were about twenty headmen lined up before the house. Each carried a leg or a whole back. The next morning the smaller fry came, and before I realized it, we had forty-one legs of pig and eighteen backs. I had to refuse more though it kept coming along all day. Even though we have ninety natives on our station, six pounds of fresh pork apiece was more than enough. Dan and I estimated that Mogei had cut up over 40,000 pounds of pork. Jiga had some time before boasted of its five hundred pigs at the big feast, but Mogei today had broken that record, and their pride knew no bounds.

After the big triumph, Mogei tribesmen went strutting about the area, decorated in all their finery. No work was done. They were living on their glory. We could scarcely get food for the station. I asked one young chief how long all this humbug was going to last.

(Continued on page 98)

Last layer of stones and hot stones



Closing the hole with banana leaves

Covering the pot. The food is left an hour in the pit

MOGEI'S BIG BARBECUE
(Cont. from page 85)
He replied that it would be about a month before the people felt normal again. Meantime they made a nuisance of themselves around the station, hampering our work, carrying on horseplay, singing through the night.

Old man Kundi came in one day and offered me some good advice. "Kundi," he said, "you better move away. We have no more pigs. And you cannot run your station without pigs." Old Kundi was pretty nearly right. The shortage of pork is still felt. There will hardly be such a feast again for the next five or six years.

The headmen get their share

Chinese Food and Its Preparation

(Continued from page 89)

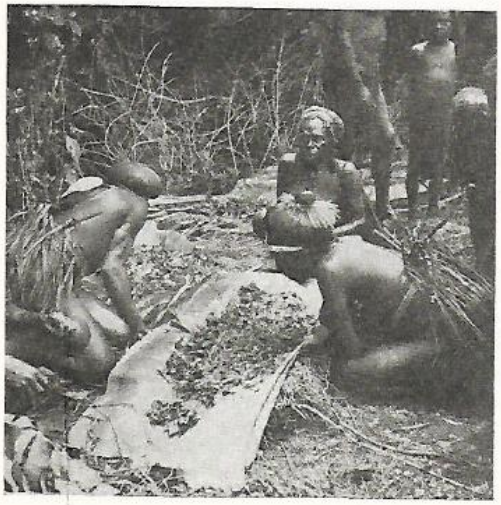
crushed with the peelings on and a little oil poured over them. It is common to go on the street in summer and see a small child walking along with a large green cucumber in its hand and munching away on it gleefully. Sea cucumbers, which are found in the ocean and are prickly and slippery, sell for three dollars a pound and are considered fine food. Pumpkin seeds and watermelon seeds, which are previously soaked in salt water and are dried on the streets in the sun, are served at all big dinners. Sunflower seeds are also eaten by rich and poor alike.

The Chinese do not eat much fruit. It is not because they do not like it, but it is too expensive for most of them. Figs are very common and grow almost everywhere. The Chinese call figs "Wu Hua Kuo" which means, "fruit without a blossom." Apricots, apples, grapes, peaches, pears, and strawberries are most of the fruits grown in Shantung Province, as the Shantung Province is the fruit growing province of the country. Much fruit is imported from the Philippine Islands, such as mangoes, pineapples, and bananas. Tangerines are very cheap all winter long. These come from Formosa and Korea.

The lotus flower, or sacred lily, as the Chinese call it, is a very useful as well as a beautiful plant. The lotus grow in large beds of water or small lakes and blossom during July and August. There are pink and white flowers, and they certainly are beautiful. They much resemble our water lilies, only they are much larger and have very long stems. First the Chinese enjoy the flower, and after it has blossomed and seeds have formed in the pods, the whole plant, roots and all, is taken out of the pond. The seeds are used for soups and candy. The immense leaves are used for wrapping packages. In Peiping, all the groceries and meats purchased during the summer come to your home wrapped in lotus leaves. The stems are dried and used for making fences while the roots are sold at all Chinese stores and are used as vegetables. Lotus-seed soup and fried lotus roots are truly good, and almost every foreigner relishes them. In Tsingtao our groceries and meats come to our kitchen wrapped in old U. S. A. newspapers which are about two years old. At first it used to disgust me, but a person must adopt the customs of the country and say, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do." It is very common to see women on the street with a piece of meat which they have just purchased tied to a string, without a paper around it, and are carrying it home for dinner. Fish are also carried home the same way from the market.

The vegetables in China are different than those in the States, however, we can purchase foreign vegetables. The main vegetable used in the north is Shantung cabbage, or Chinese cabbage. It does not resemble our cabbage very much and has a rather sweet taste. Spinach is very common and very cheap. Chinese do not eat raw vegetables as we do, excepting cucumbers. They even boil their radishes. The favorite vegetable in all China is "Sien Tsai," or salted vegetable. In the fall of the year large turnips or other vegetables are peeled and put into immense tubs of salt brine. Here the vegetables lie for two years until

(Continued on page 114)



Pork is seasoned by spitting salt over finely minced pieces

Crowd at the big barbecue

The mission Dogs of Mt Hagen by J. D'A

Catholic Freeman's journal 2 April 1936.

The mission on the top of Mount Hagen, New Guinea, now has an airplane service to the seacoast. The plane is a small Klemm, with a broad wing span and a fat round front; in the air it looks for all the world like a plump man doing a swan dive; it was supplied by the German mission-air society called the MIVA.

The new plane is doing a weekly service to Mount Hagen from Alexishafen, when the weather is not too bad. And to give you some idea of the improvement in communications, we shall give you the mail schedule of a Christmas box that was forwarded to Father William A. Ross, S.V.D., the Mount Hagen missionary, from his home base at Techny, Illinois, before the air service was opened. The box was shipped from Techny in October, arrived at Alexishafen in February, and reached Mount Hagen in July.

This upland region on the Island of New Guinea is one of the remaining centres of primitive people in a supposedly civilized world. It was here that a former Crusader, Brother Eugene. Frank, S.V.D., was murdered in January of last year. The present custodian of the Mount Hagen mission is Father Ross. As a student at St. Mary Mission House, Techny, he once served on the editorial staff of 'The Shield,' editing what was called the Prayer Forum now covered by the Prayer Calendar in 'The Shield 'and 'The Crusade Programmer.'

Father Ross has been in New Guinea for almost 10 years. He admits that after all this time, he is beginning to feel the effects of continued isolation. 'When I was new in the mission,' he says, 'I loved to be out alone in the bush. So do all new men, as a rule. But, as the years go on, this spirit of youth departs, too, and you find yourself with a growing yearning for companionship. It has taken almost 10 years to get me, but I admit now there's no fun in sitting down all by yourself to a meal three times every day and, after supper, sitting all alone with not even a dog to talk to, because a dog brings too many fleas into a bush house.

It was seven months since Brother Frank's death, when Father Ross wrote, that he was expecting that Brother Anton would come to relieve him long enough for the making of a retreat. Then a second priest was expected to come back with Father Ross and to share the work on Mount Hagen with him. We said before that Father Ross is the custodian of Mount Hagen. That is true as far as this missionary's interests are concerned.

For the protection of the property he has other helpers. These are dogs. Breeding of dogs has become a necessary avocation for the Mount Hagen missionary. There were five, not counting the three pups that were born to Montoro during the week when Father Ross last letter was written.

The pride of the lot was a big white fellow named Nero, described by Father Ross as weighing as much as himself, and as being probably the handsomest and the gamest dog in New Guinea. He used to be something of a mollycoddle, while living down on the coast, but after 17 months of rough bush life, he turned out to be able to hold his own against anything that walks on four legs and wags a tail.

Then there is Wahgi, a pure-blooded cattle-dog a savage little fellow. Then there is the old black Chow, called Buka, — a sedate old gentleman, very cunning, who keeps friendly with Nero by remaining at a distance from that blustering warrior. Next is Montoro, a little black half-breed, part Irish terrier and part cattle-dog.

One of her pups is Wilya, who is practicing for the career of policeman. Father Ross raised Wahgi and Wilya in Mount Hagen. When they were very little, he fed them raw meat twice a day; hence their savagery. If Wahgi is loose no-one dares come near the mission fence, he is loose from six in the evening until seven in the morning. Wahgi's reputation for biting is an effective guard against intruders. By this time it must be evident that Father Ross has some unfriendly neighbors.

Photograph: Fr Ross and his smaller dogs.

Sometimes groups of Mogei men sit around the mission fence, just watching and speculating. Their speculating concerns the possibility of getting the guns and shells that the missionary keeps for additional security. Father Ross overheard a conversation one day in which the murder of Brother Frank and a German missionary priest was the main topic. One of the men said:

> ‘If this one (meaning Father Ross) hadn't got his dogs, we could get into his house and clean up all the shells he's got!'

'We need prayer badly,' he says, 'and without God's constant grace we'll get nowhere.'

But you will read Father Ross's letters in vain if you are trying to find any evidence of fear merely for his own safety. His one concern is to keep the mission going and himself in a fit state of soul to preach the doctrine of Christ. Though, in his letter, he gives a pleased commentary on the contents of the Christmas box from Techny (nuts, candles, pickles, popcorn, peanut butter, grape marmalade, honey, flashlight batteries and magazines), his letter voices only one wish, — that Brother Anton would get to Mount Hagen soon, so that he might go for his retreat. He says “Lord knows how I need a retreat!”

Who's Who on Mt Hagen by Father William Ross.
The Christian Family. (Text of the article which follows).

Here are a few thumbnail character sketches of some of my natives in this mountain area of backwoods, New Guinea. They rate a place in any missionary's Who's Who".

YIMPA. If ever you meet a dark-skinned, tough, scrawny old man with legs about 3 ins in diameter, you'll know his name is Yimpi. Tirelessly he scampers about in pursuit of three things: free pork, free trade and freak deals. Wherever there is a feast, there you will find Yimpi. Whenever a new pearl shell is offered for sale Yimpi will be on the spot. Whenever there are innocents aboard, unskilled in the art of native trading, there Yimpi is making a deal. I have often spoken to the old man about heaven and eternal values, but Yimpi always assures me he is too busy and must first, "make a pile".

Only when his shells have reached sufficient number to show his rank as chief and when his pig pens are bulging with life, and when his daughters have been married off to prosperous natives will he deign to listen to my preaching. Right now he can't lose the chance of bartering with the servicemen from America and other lands. Any old hat, flute, bamboo pipe, spear or stone axe is precious so long as he can pawn it off as a bargain to the souvenir hunters from beyond the seas. Carefully tucking his prized possessions under his arm, he skips lightly over the hills and trails on his skinny legs and barters like a Shylock to wangle the best possible prize for his goods. Some day Yimpi will be ready to listen to the missionary. But not now; bushiness is booming.

MUNDAY. He holds a record that no-one dares to challenge. He can devour more sweet potatoes than any other native in Mount Hagen. Munday is never blue but always fat, lazy and in trouble. He thought his worries would be solved when he took to himself a bride. But Munday proved unlucky in love. Never was blushing bride so shocked as when Munday's wife saw him at table for the first time after marriage. His amazing consumption of food was far and away above normal if not superhuman.

The poor young bride was so totally dumbfounded and flabbergasted that she summarily disappeared. Munday rushed anxiously to the missionary appealing for help. He wanted his bride to come home again. He could not understand why she ran away. He had not hurt or molested her. With some effort we located the grieved wife. Hesitantly she revealed that she could never be happy with Munday. His appetite was so terrific that she would be spending the rest of her days over the cooking stove. Only on one condition would she return to blue Munday; he would have to get himself a second wife to attend to the kitchen work.

MOOG was one of the smartest little girls in the mission and knew the catechism by heart. Then suddenly, Moog grew up overnight so it seemed. The greedy parents wasted no time in selling off Moog in marriage to some distant chief far from mission influence. But the young inexperienced Moog could not stand the ways of the pagan chief, quietly she packed up and fled. The deserted headman deeply humiliated, demanded from the parents the refund of the girl's purchase price, the lordly sum of seven pigs and ten pearl shells. Naturally her parents felt grieved and embittered over this great loss of wealth. They could never forgive her and let her feel the sting of revenge.

Poor Moog's life became so unbearable she ran away once more and took up life in a government camp. Before long sad and lonesome Moog looked for companionship and forgetting her mission training, she began to live with a police boy as his wife. After several months he was transferred to a station on the coast, leaving Moog behind to take care of the home. Moog's path of degradation inclined steeply. Before long she became involved with

another police-boy at the camp. Moog was then left alone, a lonely cast-off. She returned meekly to her parents once more, her
young life soured and ruined. There are those who call the wilds of New Guinea a Stone age Paradise. Stone-age yes. Paradise? Not as long as immorality prevails.

ANDAH. Boasts just one solitary tooth in his head, but he possesses a precious pearl of faith. His wistful wrinkled old face is sunken and his dim eyes point to his great age.

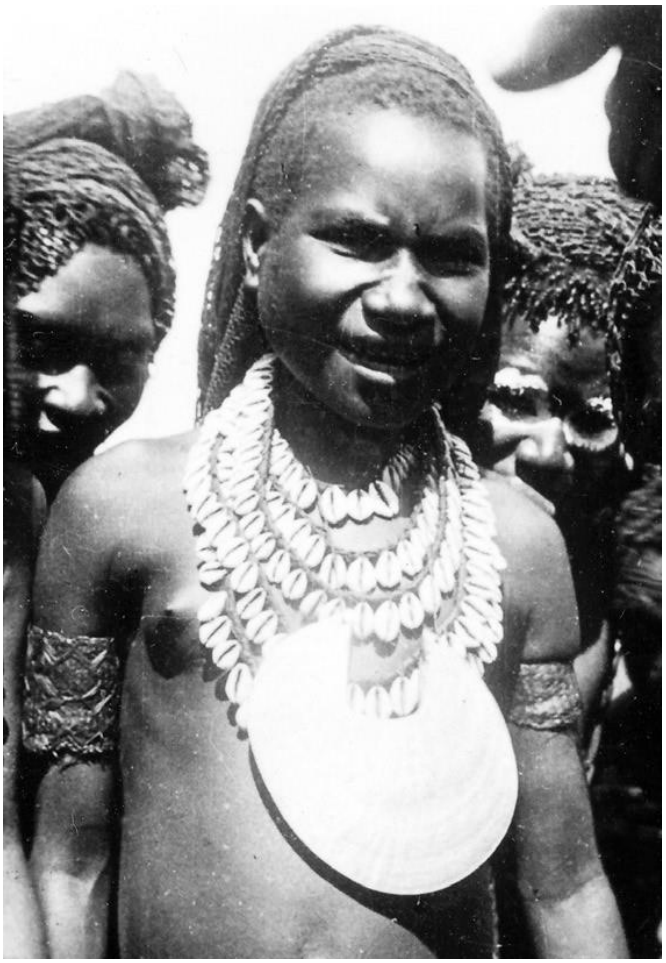
Old Andah is failing.
"Andah" I ask him, "When you die where will you go?"

"To heaven, of course," he replies.

"But you do not know a single prayer and you learned very little of the catechism!" I remark.

"That does not matter, Fadder. You have baptised me. The good Lord knows 1 am too old to learn. I am nearly deaf and blind. I try to harm no-one."

Andah is right. Despite age and infirmity, he never fails to attend Sunday Mass. After the Holy Sacrifice, he will sit for hours on our front lawn with far-away look in his eyes. Perhaps he is dreaming of a far-distant home. Andah is one of the flock the missionary need not worry about. He is ready for Heaven.



KAIYA. Kaiya is a Catholic married to a boy from the coast**.** When Kaiya had her first baby the pagan women tried to poke fun at her. 'You have been married only a year and you have a baby already." According to pagan customs in these parts of New Guinea, three or four years of wedded life should elapse before the first child is born.

Kaiya, however never minded the criticism of her neighbours. Now after several years of married life, Kaiya has four children: John a beautiful boy of six; Paula, little lady of three and the seven month old twins Paul and Joseph, Kaiya is a real apostle, Her good repute has grown with the passing of the years. All the pagan women learned to love and respect her. As a good Catholic mother, her influence dominates not only her own family circle but far and wide across the mission.

Photograph: Mt Hagen girl, Mick Leahy's collection

Hope of New Guinea missions are the children trained in mission schools. — Here is Father Ross with two of his star pupils

Who's Who on MOUNT HAGEN

By Father William Ross, S.V.D.
New Guinea

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MUNDAY rates high in Mt. Hagen's "400," but not with his wife, who left him because he ate too much

An exception in Mt. Hagen's gentlemen group is ANDAH, whose faith and piety impresses all

YIMPI never misses a chance to trade off a flute or bamboo pipe for a few shells. American service men proved to be good customers

★

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These Mount Hagen types demonstrate, even if feebly, that materialism is rife, that the good old people long for the heavenly home, that the pagan way of life can be counteracted by Catholic practices, and finally, that Sisters are needed, especially for the good training of the girls.

The so-called Stone Age Paradise of New Guinea is full of snakes. Among these "primitives," there is no real happiness. Only God and our holy faith can bring these natives whatever there is of real peace and paradise on earth.

★

Saturday afternoon: Father Ross and the parishioners clean up the church yard

Disarmament in Stone-age New Guinea. Fr William Ross S.V.D. Mogei, New Guinea. 1938. Catholic Freeman's Journal April 1938.

Heads of the League of Nations and members of the Society for the Protection of Aboriginals would have been pleased to have seen our demonstration. Ninji, Mogei's Minister. of War, did not say that exactly, for he has never heard of the two organisations; but his limited world was called upon to witness the fact that Mogei meant peace once for all. We veterans of life and work among New Guinea natives had no illusions about the sincerity of the move, though our tongues are in our cheeks when asked, 'Will it last?' What has ever lasted in New Guinea without a struggle, constant and continuous? And these Stone Age warriors of Mt. Hagen were discovered but yesterday.

Our little Mission Station at Mogei, not so little in numbers (for we have a hundred mouths to feed daily), has had a rather remarkable influence on the Mogei tribesmen from the start. True, others were before us. At least one expedition put the fear of the rifle into the fighters lined up against a peaceful penetration of the area. But apart from this, we have been able slowly to work up a sort of social pressure against violence and injustice. Time and again, leaders like Ninji, Wamp, Kudi, Tetsip, Koben and Wundaki have come in, asking our permission to 'bump off' some enemy. Naturally, we strongly persuaded them to the contrary. Our station is well armed. We are considered 'strong' among the natives. At first they wondered why we did not go out and take what we wanted by force. Instead of patiently haggling over the price of food or pigs, why not club the keen trader and take his wares? That would have been native 'fairness,' because might makes right. But when, in spite of our team of vicious dogs and our dozen guns, we lived peacefully and friendly, even adopting a fatherly attitude, among these natives who understood only the law of strength, their not-so-dumb minds began to grasp the fact that there was another law, far higher, perhaps, than their own.

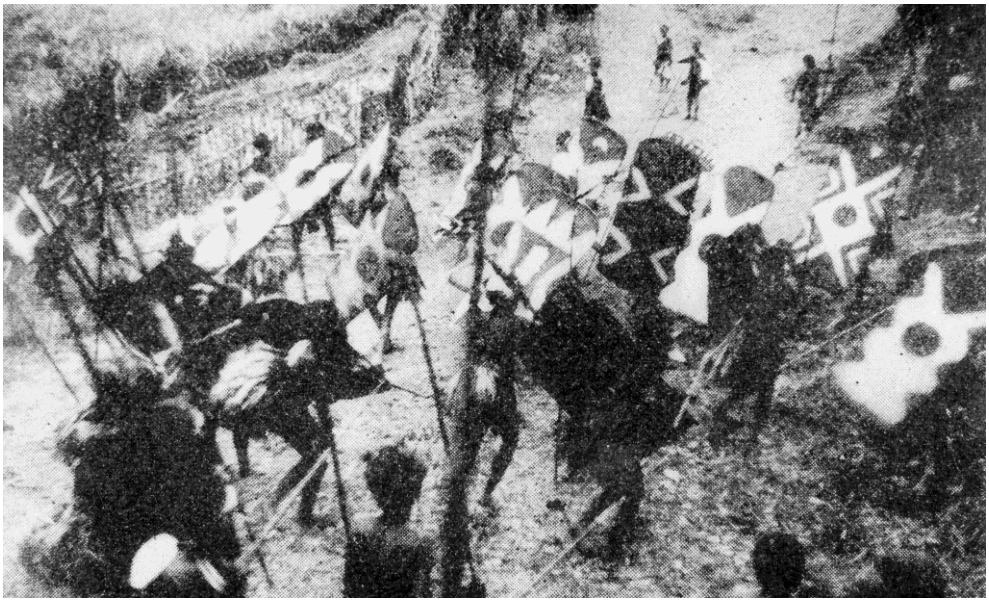
After two years the lesson went home. When the government did start a bit of 'cleaning up' among the locals, the ground was already well prepared. A few murderers were arrested. Three were sent out of the area by 'plane, and as the machine disappeared into the unknown, the relatives and friends of the prisoners were prostrated with grief and fear. 'Will they ever come back?' they asked again and again. I could only console them by saying, 'If you keep away from fighting and murder, the government will send them back.'

A government patrol of two officers from the Chimbu station sixty miles down the valley had made its second visit it here in a year, and we reported some of these recent murder cases. There was also considerable tribal fighting over toward Kelue to the north. The leader of the patrol decided to spend some weeks here to see if he could partly settle the disturbances. After the arrest of six locals, five Jikas, four Nengas, and a few Uga tribesmen, the patrol left the area taking the prisoners along. The natives everywhere were stupefied. I explained carefully to them that all old fights, all old murders would be forgotten. It was only what would take place from now on that would be reported and acted upon. That was consoling, for then natives had been at sea as to how far back old murders would be punished. Nearly all the arrested murderers had killed their wives. 'But wives will now get out of hand,' objected the locals. I explained that the government would deal also with lazy or bad wives. That satisfied them. A special meeting took place on the airdrome, and we called the attention of all the women to the importance of obeying their husbands.

These women who had been killed were mostly bad wives whom the government would have punished had not the men taken the law into their own hands. That was that. The government patrol left the area on October 26. Next day the locals staged their demonstration.

First, Ninji's party all decorated with grease and feathers and shells came running into the station in single file, shields and spears carried in war formation, while the battle cries resounded from strong, leathery lungs. They wheeled and drew up in front of our house. Gilanch's small band followed. Then the big men of Komininga and Agiliga made an impressive entrance. There were now about fifty shields in line.

Then the leaders had their way. They stated, as all natives do, that they had always been for peace. All the fighting, stealing, murders and other ugly acts had been committed by other tribes. The Mogeis were all good men. So they had decided to listen to us and to the government and give up fighting. The shields would be burned; the spears broken; bows and arrows reserved only for hunting.



Photograph: Mt Hagen warriors. Fr Ross

After four or five such speeches Ninji sprang to his feet. He made an impressive figure in his war-paint and feathers.

“What are we waiting for?” he cried. “There's our friend and protector. While he is looking on, let's show him this is not mere talk.”

Wham! Out came his hatchet, and he slashed into the first strong shield, the signal for the destruction to begin. “Up and at ‘em”, was the cry on all sides. Shouting and dancing, the warriors had destroyed the best shields before I could get a word in to explain that I would buy some shields as souvenirs of this event. I finally saved twelve good shields. A blazing fire had been made in a specially prepared pit, and into this pit the broken shields were thrown to burn merrily. Then began the real speech making, and I had to forgo lunch so as not to spoil the show.

“We have always listened to you,” he said. “We are at one with you.” [igi tenta, igi tenta], all repeated, “one talk, one talk. Your word is ours now. We will give up war and pay attention to our gardens and our homes and families. See, here are the symbols, here are the food emblems of this pact. This stalk of sugarcane, this wild maize, this banana stalk we shall plant them near the drome for all to see. See, here is the sign of peace, these crotons from my place, and those from the others, We shall plant them near the station, and every man will know by these tokens that Mogei has disarmed and is for peace.”

Then the planting took place. Following Ninji, some twenty leaders had their say, and I was so tired as the afternoon wore on that I felt like shouting, 'Boloney,' but so stirred up and so in earnest were the warriors that such an anti-climax would have been fatal.

At the conclusion of the speech making, I assured the Mogei tribesmen that I would protect them from any foreign invasion, so would 'Master' Mick Leahy, our neighbour. The other tribe hearing of Mogei's action would probably follow their good example. The picture of the future of peace was attractive. How they could walk over the whole area without fear of enemies; marry and intermarry with distant tribes of

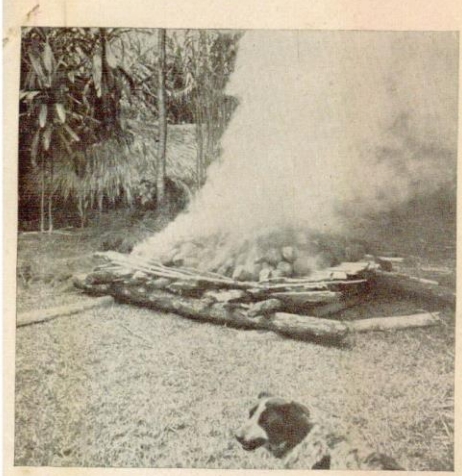
whom now they knew only the names; security for their women and children; no more night-watching; no war-torn areas to be rebuilt; no hunger, for in peace they would prosper and grow.

These natives are intelligent and they grasped the idea. When they finally departed, after presents had been made to the leaders, the shouts could be heard for miles through the tall cane grass country about Mt. Hagen. Mogei's disarmament if its pledges are kept, may go down in history as the first move of the Mt. Hagen Stone Age warriors of New Guinea toward a peaceful and happier life.

It was while Fr Fuchs was with Fr Ross that the Hagen mission was shifted from Wilya to Rebiamul. Brother Bonaventure, a builder arrived to take over the project. Fr Fuchs took over the pit-saw with a tem of 24 boys working 6 pit-saws, while Brother Bonaventure had 24 planing boys planing edging, and tongue and grooving the planks.

> We paid the owners of the land, [at Rebiamul]. By their standard of values they were very well paid in axes, spades, knives, cloth and shells so that to this day there have never been any complaints or repercussions. The transfer from Wilya to Rebiamul was carried out in slow stages throughout the year 1938. At Rebiamul, two timber residences were completed, a kitchen and a dining room, three timber school houses and finally towards the end of the year the large timber church. This church was still standing in 1966 when, with much hard labour, it was torn down and the timber used to build three small outstation churches. After thirty years it was as solid as the day the church was built (Ross, 1971: 326).

Photograph: Two new buildings of the Rebiamul mission in 1942. Photograph by Taffy Jones.



1. Roaring fires belch smoke and heat great piles of cooking stones that pop and backfire in the flames

2. Roasting pits are dug all over the place and lined with banana leaves which serve as insulation

Barbecue a la Kanaka

By Father William Ross, S.V. D.
Mt. Hagen, New Guinea

◆

THIS WAS THE BIGGEST EVENT IN YEARS. Not since 1937 had New Guinea's Kanakas seen anything approaching the giant-barbecue recently staged on Mount Hagen's lofty vales.

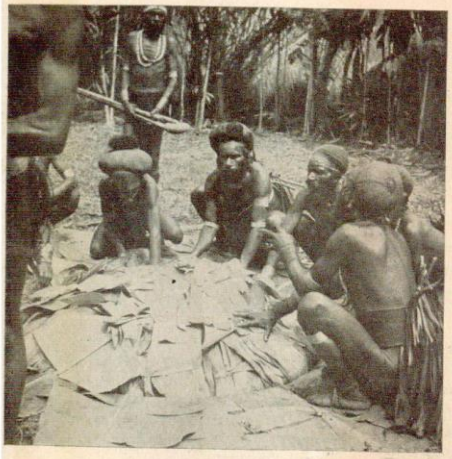
Before daybreak the natives popped out of their bunks with restless expectation. For months they had been looking forward to this great pork feast. The excitement took so much hold of them that for a long time they neglected work. The gardens suffered miserably.

Dawn's early light had just begun to bathe Mount Hagen's rusty, 13,000 foot head. From all sides and from miles around thousands of Kanakas flowed onto the fields in a constantly growing stream of chocolate-skinned humanity. The slaughtering and roasting of 1000 pigs was a "must" item on every one's calendar of the day — from babes to graybeards. There might never be another like it again for years, if ever.

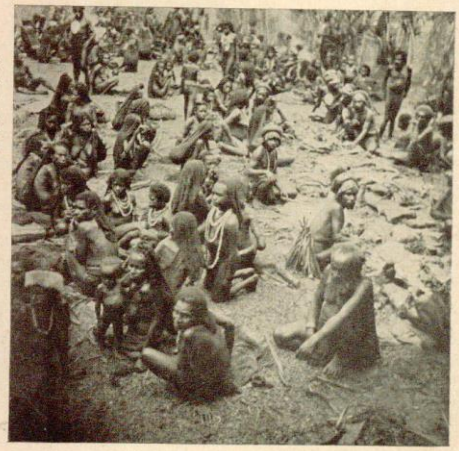
Prouder than any teen-ager regaled in her first evening dress, the decorated natives sparkled in glory. All done up with their best grease and large bailer shells, betopped with gorgeous feathers rivalled the riotous colors of the tropics' feathered clan.

Some displayed gold-lip shells or ropes of glittering cowry shells. Girls and women, smeared with lard, glistened in the sun. Nearly all the big men sported their cassowary plume headdress, surmounted with red or yellow bird-of-paradise plumes. Only a few could boast of the less common, finer veined blue plumes.

Peculiar to the Mount Hagen area are the well-kept public parks. The natives generally keep the grass clipped and the flower-beds planted in readiness for outdoor social functions as native dances and barbecues. The green lawns, colorful flowers and small flowering shrubs are a restful sight for



5. Palms, earth and banana leaves close the pits excluding the air. An hour later the steaming pigs are unearthed



6. The place teems with life. Children and their elders enjoy the huge barbecue as the greatest event in years

Note in those day Kanaka was an accepted term by everyone. Even though it is rarely used these days. The same with the term native. Text.

This was the BIGGEST EVENT IN YEARS. Not since 1937 had New Guineas people seen anything approaching the giant-barbecue recently staged on Mt Hagen's lofty vales. Before daybreak the natives popped out of their bunks with restless expectations. For months they had been looking forward to this great big pork feast. The excitement took as much hold of them that for a long time they neglected work. The gardens suffered miserably. Dawn early light had just begun to bathe Mt Hagen's rusty 13,000 foot head. From all sides and from miles around thousands of kanakas flowed into the fields in a constantly growing stream of chocolate skinned humanity. The slaughtering and roasting of 1000 pigs was a "must"

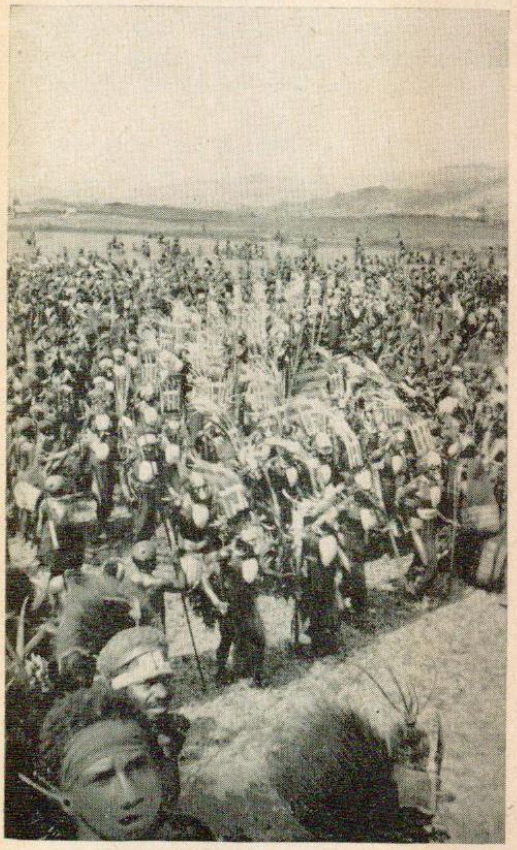
item in every one's calendar of the day – babes to greybeards. There might never be another like it again for years. If ever. Ponder than any teenager regaled in her first evening dress, the decorated natives sparkled in glory. All down up with their best grease and large bailer shells, betopped with gorgeous feathers rivaled the riotous colors of the tropics feathered clan. Some displayed gold-lip shells or ropes of glittering cowry shells. Girls and women smeared with lard, glistened in the sun. Nearly all the big men sported their cassowary plume head dresses, surmounted with red or yellow bird-of-paradise plumes. Peculiar to the Mount Hagen area are the well-kept pubic parks. The natives generally keep the grass clipped and the flower-beds planted in readiness for outdoor functions a native dances and barbecues. The green lawns, colourful flowers and small flowering shrubs are a restful sight for

the eyes after hours of walking through the high grasslands and jungle.

By eight a.m. the parks — not only one but a score of them — were teeming with human life. No carnival crowd could be gayer or livelier. Even at that early hour the porkers were already laid out cold, ready for the roasting-pits. Roaring fires were started all over the place to heat the piles of cooking stones that popped in the flames with rifle-like reports. The heat was terrific. One could hardly breathe.

A pilot flying overhead might have thought he was passing the "valley of a thousand smokes." Heavy clouds of smoke filled the air till the eyes smarted painfully. The hiss of burning embers, the crackle of superheated stones, the din of children out for fun, the laughter of elders keyed to the highest pitch of hilarity, the kaleidoscopic color changes of the gaily costumed mass in constant flux presented a new impression of Dante's "Inferno" — an inferno where jubilation reigned.

7. No Easter Parade on Fifth Avenue could rival for colorful display the Kanaka turnout on barbecue day. Even the men sport their gayest finery and fancy cassowary feather headdress surmounted with bird-of-paradise plumes of red, yellow and blue



The red-hot stones were pitched into deep-dug, leaf-lined holes then covered with coconut leaves to prevent contact with the pig-carcasses. Green palm branches and earth closed the pits and excluded the air. One hour later the steaming pigs were unearthed and carried to platforms for some remarkable demonstrations of carving. The soul of these pigs had long been offered to the spirits, now the flesh would be offered to the masses.

Bedlam was let loose when the hungering Kanakas milled around for their share. Some got lean meat but most received pieces with dripping fat. Men, women and children sat close together, rubbing smoke-filled eyes, enjoying the feast. Mangy dogs ran in and out of the crowd ready to snatch a stray bit of pork. Something like 100,000 pounds of meat disappeared that day.

It would take the natives days and weeks to get over the excitement of the great barbecue and feel like normal again. Meanwhile a sort of famine has set in. Not only is all the meat gone but the vegetable supply is running low since the gardens were neglected so long.

The natives are getting busy again, putting in the new gardens, but weeks will pass before the produce will reach

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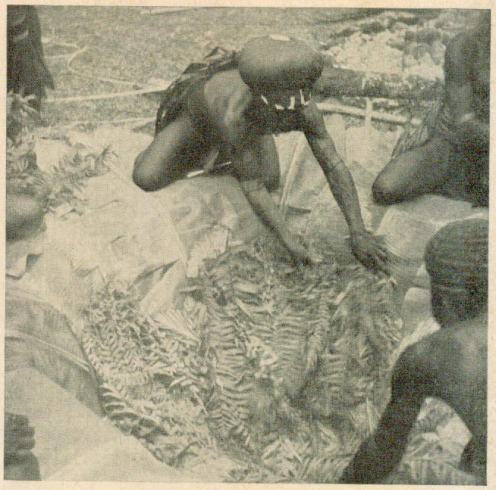
3. The crackling superheated stones are pitched into the leaf-lined holes in order to barbecue the pork



4. Coconut and fern leaves are placed as padding atop the red-hot stones to prevent scorching the meat

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The natives are getting busy again, putting in the new gardens, but weeks will pass before the produce will reach the table. Meanwhile the Kanakas are content to live on one small meal a day. They are satisfied to wait.

After all they have had the greatest barbecue ever heard of in New Guinea and surely in all the world. There can hardly be another feast like it for the next five or six years at least. They have lived like gods for a day. That is enough.

What price glory?

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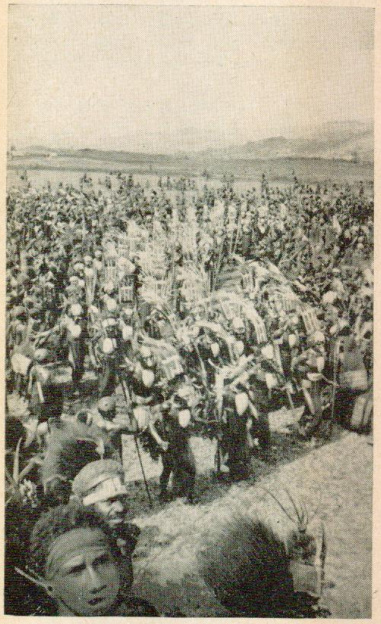


8. Girls and women, smeared with lard glisten in the sun. The gold-lip shells, large bailer shells and ropes of glittering cowry shells, the chocolate skins adorned with paints and pigments, the gorgeous feathers and plumes, all create a riot of color

What price glory!!

In the Name of the King in 1938. Alexishafen by Fr William Ross

Lord Gowrie, Governor General of Australia received a warm welcome at the Catholic Mission at Alexishafen on Sunday **August 8th 1938**. He was accompanied by the Administrator of the Territory of New Guinea in the destroyer "Swan" of the Australian Navy. [HMAS Swan U74]. Brother Symphorian gave the royal salute of twenty- one cannons, dynamite plugs upon a heavy steel plate as base, the echoes resounding over the harbour as each point of land caught the blast in succession. At the wharf the Sisters, Servants of the Holy Ghost, had prepared a beautiful arch of welcome, surmounted by two large Australian flags.

Photograph: Bishop Wolf SVD.

As the Governor General approached the arch, after being welcomed ashore by Bishop Wolf and the missionaries of the central station, the Brothers and natives the Mission boasts the only brass band in the New Guinea) struck up "God Save the King." A group of ten little four-year-olds sang a song of welcome in Pidgin English asking God to bless "the big fellow man belong King." Then each little brown cherub presented Lady Gowrie with a bouquet. Who can resist a chubby brown piccaninny when they smile?

The party passed through a long double line of schoolboys as well as working boys and village natives in town for the Sunday. The line extended a hundred yards from the wharf to the cathedral. The party was impressed with the cathedral especially when it was pointed out that the spacious structure was the entire work of the Brothers with no outside help. Two brother masons, three Brother carpenters, three Brother sawyers, a Brother tinsmith, a Brother electrician, a Brother painter, two Brother plantation managers – all helped in the great work. What could the mission do without the Brothers?

*Photograph: The New Cathedral at Alexishafen***.**

From the upper veranda of the mission House, the visitors had a fine view of the harbour, one of the best in New Guinea Far out in the bay the 'Swan" lay at anchor, a thing of beauty in her trim lines, so that Captain Darling could not resist taking a photograph of his ship.

A tour of the Mission station and plantation had been planned but intermittent showers spoiled the programme. However the visitors were able to see the workshops where native boys are trained in sawing timber, welding, mechanica work, carpenter work, building and other trades in using boat making tailoring, shoe making and saddlery. His Excellency, the Governor General, admired the Sisters' new convent the desiccated coconut plant and the general layout of the station.

His Excellency Lord Gowrie, the Governor General. of Australia, visited Alexishafen in 1938.

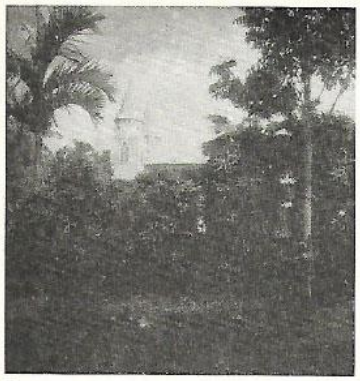
At noon luncheon was served at the Mission House on the spacious verandah overlooking the harbour. The band furnished music during the repast. At the conclusion of the luncheon Bishop Wolf rose and thanked the Governor General for his kind visit to the mission. He pointed out that to the visitors how the work of the mission has grown in the forty years of its existence and how God had blessed the work with 50,000 converts and another 40,000 prospective converts. This numerical growth had coincided with an actual growth in the population on the part of the natives a happy improvement made possible by the co-operation of the Administrator with the Mission, a union of effort most important for the future.

The Governor General responded that he was deeply impressed with everything he had seen at Alexishafen and grateful for the warm welcome given him IN THE NAME OF THE KING whom he represented in that part of the world. He thanked the mission for what it had done for the natives in the Territory; he felt sure our Administrator must be grateful for the good work of the missionaries. A work carried out at a cost of immense personal sacrifices. We were happy to hear this praise from the government at a time when other governments were murdering and butchering those who carry out God's work. If the British Government continues its policy of cooperation with a support of the mission work it cannot fail to secure God's blessing upon the Empire.

Jubilee celebrations for Bishop Wolf in front of the new cathedral, 1939.

In the Name of the King

By William A. Ross, S.V.D.
Catholic Mission,
Mogei, New Guinea



Cross versus the Stone Age. Alexishafen Cathedral raises its twin spires above the jungle of New Guinea

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Brother Symphorian gave the royal salute of twenty-one cannons, dynamite plugs upon a heavy steel plate as base, the echoes resounding over the harbor as each point of land caught the blast in succession. At the wharf the Sisters, Servants of the Holy Ghost, had prepared a beautiful arch of welcome, surmounted by two large Australian flags. As the Governor General approached the arch, after being welcomed ashore by Bishop Wolf and the missionaries of the central station, the Brothers and natives (the Mission boasts the only brass band in New Guinea) struck up "God Save the King." A group of ten little four-year-old pickaninnies sang a song of welcome in pidgin English, asking God to bless "the big fellow man belong King." Then each little brown cherub presented Lady Gowrie with a bouquet. Who can resist a chubby brown pickaninny when he smiles?

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The dinner in honor of the Governor General of Australia. (Foreground, left to right): Capt. Darling, R.A.N.; Sr. Matilda, S.Sp.S.; Lady Gowrie; Rev. William Ross, S.V.D.; Lord Daniel. (Background, left to right): Rev. J. Weyer, S.V.D.; Lord Gowrie; His Excellency, the Most Rev. Bishop F. Wolf, S.V.D.; General McNicoll and son.

A tour of the Mission Station and plantations had been planned, but intermittent showers spoiled the program. However, the visitors were able to see the workshops where native boys are trained in sawing timber, welding, mechanical work, carpenter work, building and other trades, including boatmaking,

The twentieth century visits primitive man. The Swan, carrying the Governor General of Australia, at anchor in Alexishafen harbor

Formality at the fringe of the New Guinea jungle. The Governor General of Australia is welcomed to New Guinea by Bishop F. Wolf, S.V.D.

tailoring, shoemaking, and saddlery. His Excellency, the Governor General, admired the Sisters' new convent, the dessicated coconut plant, and the general layout of the station.

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Caption under the photograph. The dinner in honour of the Governor General of Australia. Foreground. Left to right: Captain Darling, R.A.N.; Sr Matildas, S. Sp.S; Lady Gowrie; Rev William Ross, SVD; Lord Daniel. Background Rev J.Weyer, SVD; Lord Gowrie; his Excellency, the most Rev Bishop Wolf SVD and General McNicoll and son.

Christmas 1938.

Christmas Eve dawned clear and bright. The sun seemed to be at his best, though we had not had a fine day previously during the whole week. At two o'clock in the afternoon, the decoration of the station was completed with shrubs, palms, ferns, flowers and small banners lining walls and roads, posts and doors. Flags and small banners swung gaily in the breeze and the station took on an air of festivity.

The line of catechumens, twenty-six school boys in white, formed at the schoolhouse, marched to the chapel at 3 pm, made the acts of faith, hope and charity and contrition then formed outside in the clear mountain air for the baptismal ceremonies while a thousand natives looked on in silence and awe.

On Christmas morning at the eight o'clock Mass these first fruits of mission work in Mogei received the Christ Child into their white souls for the first time. The chapel was crowded to the doors, some 600 natives squeezing in, while a thousand remained outside till all was over. For the first time in five years of bush work, we had a Christmas crib. After Mass line after line of natives pressed toward the little straw hut to gaze in awe at the figures, wondering whether they were really alive. Not a native had seen a statue before in his life. Throughout the happy day, group after group of stone-age peoplr entered the chapel drawn by tales of the famous crib. Before the day was over an estimated 4,000 had been into the church.

These tender plants of new Christians must be carefully nurtured and guarded. Each evening we assemble in the church for devotions to the Christ Child and prayers and hymns ring out over the hills in the night air. At night prayers, we have the children pray for all our friends and families for the prayers of these new Catholics must be precious to Our Lord as all first fruits are. We hope to offer Him a second group of children on the feast of the visitation, then a third group by Easter. We need prayer more than anything else to win the hearts of the pagans to God. These inland-stone-age people are materialistic to the core. For the dancing carnival they come by their thousands from miles away.

Recently the government officer staged a three-day feast for the native groups. On the first day 5000 came on the second 8,000 and on the third when 120 pigs were roasted and divided among the chiefs, almost 18,000 gaily decorated natives danced on the landing field of the airport.

From left: Mrs Chalmers, Mr Dal Chalmers, Fr Ross, Dan Leahy, unknown, unknown, George Greathead (D. Leahy).

If we could get only 5,000 praying souls to storm heaven for us, this cause would won "in a jiffy". Easily! Each saintly soul would win four converts 4 x 5000 means the entire Mt Hagen group. Without prayer we might just as well close up, for it is useless and presumptuous to depend on natural ability in missionary work. Grace through prayer alone can win, and that's where you and I must get busy Won't you?

It was a Circus in Mt Hagen by Fr William Ross.
Catholic Freeman's Journal. 9 March 1939.

The author of this article, was the first native born American priest to be sent to the S.V.D. Mission in New Guinea. He is well known in mission circles in Sydney. Here he speaks of horses and cattle coming into the Highlands.

The largest animals the natives had seen prior to our coming were pigs and dogs. Horses and cows were things undreamed of, so 'the circus came to town.' Natives here are not afraid to express their feelings. They shriek with laughter, howl with glee, bellow with rage. But neither Father Frank nor I was prepared for the uproar caused by the arrival of 'pig-horse' and 'pig-bulla-ma-cow' in Mogei. For it was a steady yelling, yodeling, and screaming from morning till night. No sooner was one party satisfied than another, newly arrived, started in.

For two weeks all roads led to the Mogei air drome and mission station —roads black with natives, reminding me or two lines of ants, one line coming to the prize, the other carrying off the spoils. The native comers all eager to see the wonderful animals that belonged to ghost-men, the goers all eager to get home and tell those who had not seen the show. Horses and cows were things undreamed of, so 'the circus came to town. One old woman seemed to- have developed perpetual motion. Like the old Ephesians who for the space of about two hours cried out 'Great is the Diana of the Ephesians,' this old crone struck one palm against the other in a characteristic New Guinea gesture and kept repeating 'warag, warag, warag' (two men), steadily for half an hour. She was near me and was properly wound up. Then a cow mooed, and falling over one another the crowd scattered in all directions. The two mares, excited by the din and moving crowds, started to gallop and kick up their heels and chased everyone from the drome.

Falling head over heels in the tall grass the mob lay panting, laughing and frightened along the length of the half-mile drome. To keep up the interest, I decided to ride the smaller mare. I could hardly hold her. When in the saddle I barely touched the reins and away she flew like the wind down the drome. Her father was a race horse in Sydney, and she had the earmarks of the racer. The natives would close their eyes as the horse drew near, only opening them when we were far off.

I was told by the schoolboys that a lot of accidents happened in the crowd from fear of the 'swift pig-horse.' The other mare was named the 'big pig-horse.' I was no sooner back at the house, prepared to dismount, when the cows noticed a woman in the crowd carrying bundles of juicy bamboo shoots. They immediately took a decided interest in those shoots and went for the woman. The crowd bolted, yelling and screaming. So it went on all day, every day for two weeks — laughter, shouts, fleeing, yelling, for all the world like a thousand small boys let loose on a big flat plain.

Father Frank and I estimated there were ten thousand in to see the fun during the fourteen days. The story behind the coming of the horses and cattle so far inland New Guinea is soon told. Two Brother Farmers whom we called Marco and Polo drove the animals from Alexishafen, over the dangerous Ramu River, right up into the Bismarck range, where at 4,000 feet, the Bundi mission station offered them rest for a week, then on over the range at 10,000 feet.

While crossing the divide, the cold from Mt.William's snow-covered peak, 4000 feet higher than the pass, paralyzed the animals and the last of the little bugs and ticks from the coast fell off, so that the cattle actually arrived tick-free in the Waghi valley, after a triumphant march down the Chimbu River, where Father Morschheuser met his death and Brother Eugene was mortally wounded. A week at Father Schaefer's station, Koruguru, put the animals in good condition, but we had to wait almost a year before the road up the valley to Mogei was completed. Father Schaefer brought the animals along the last stretch of the long route. Actual marching time was 26 days out of Alexishafen. So, now we have four cows, a bull, and two horses. Fresh milk is a treat. Mogei is slowly evolving into one of the less tough corners of the mission field, and 'pig-horse' and 'pig-bulla-ma-cow' have much to do with that evolution. (The Little Missionary).

Glimpses Of Catholic Mission Life 20 April 1939. —

BY REV. W. ROSS, S.V.D., MT. HAGEN, NEW GUINEA.

Mt. Hagen these days is seething with excitement. One pot boils over while another is coming to the boil. It is only a week since we were concerned over the fate of the Hagen-Sepik patrol's base camp, 65 miles west of here along the Qai River. The camp is equipped with radio. A frantic message got through that the camp was partially destroyed, and that the natives were up in arms, one police boy had been killed, some carriers wounded, and one police boy was reported with a slim chance of recovery after an arrow had bored its way through the back, puncturing the lung.

This is the same type of wound that killed Brother Eugene. When the message arrived here, our patrol officer had already left for the base camp, not knowing the critical state of affairs. He had gone to bring in a large number of carriers that the expedition had used but could no longer feed, in four days he reached the camp, on the very day when thousands of natives were prepared to attack. His arrival with twelve police boys saved the camp and probably saved also the life of the lone white officer there. Later two plane-loads of officers and police got through to the camp, peace was made and the excitement gradually died down. This pot boiled over.

A second came to the boil as we heard of the murder of missionaries inland from Bogia, happily a false rumor. The Lutheran missionary party going inland to investigate a new station we had opened was set upon by hostile natives, one missionary received a spear wound, and some boys were wounded, but all escaped safely to the coast. Big excitement. Now the big excitement is the Christmas singing. How a tiny idea can gather momentum, once it is started among a population of thousands! From all sides these days natives are coming in, asking us when is Christmas. Their friends here have told tall tales of what a great celebration we are going to have: a hundred roasted pigs, a week's dance, and presents for all. At least 10,000 people are interested in the affair. Our locals now have other reasons to run everywhere for decorations for the big dance.

Their bluff has been called! Natives often prepare a year ahead for big occasions, and this three-month's preparation is rather short notice, hence the excitement. What started the rumor is the forging ahead of our new station — house after house going up, and still the sawing in the woods goes on feverishly. Seventeen houses are standing. The arrival of Brother Bonaventure from the coast to do the final building has given the work a new impetus. He is a skilled carpenter and builder.

With three white men on the station it looks as though Mogei is picking up, and the Mogei tribes men are not slow to make use of this as a proof of what is going to happen at Christmas. Then again, our station boys from the coast are married to local girls, with relatives and friends innumerable, so the talk goes on and on. The dedication of the new station has been set officially for Christmas, and we do hope to make a fine present to the Christ Child by getting Him the homage of thousands of stone-age people at least for His birthday. All who come to the station must pronounce the formula: 'To honor Christ, Lord of heaven and earth, our Brother come to earth this day to save us."

Other Attractions. Other attractions at our station at present are the two horses, the five cows, two calves and thirty-six pigs. The calves are dashing madly up and down the drome as I write. One mare just started a gallop, and a roar went up. I stepped outside thinking it might be the plane coming, but it was only Fanny racing around to her heart's content to the delighted shouts of the children. The thirty pigs on the station are a great attraction. These little fellows are Tamworths, like their sire, red as no natives ever is. Our pigs grow in one year as large as native pigs in four years, and natives come from miles around to see them.

How prosaic to say, "We have horses and cows and red pigs," but just picture stone-age people who have never seen either horse or cow, and certainly no red pig. The excitement stirred up by the arrival of these animals would be incredible to outsiders. Talk of a circus, this was more than a circus — fright, joy, consternation, admiration, wonder the 25,000 people who were attracted to our mission station by the

story of the pigs with long hair on their necks, other pigs with horns — you'd have to see it to believe it. Believe it or not, 'pig horse' and pig bullamacow' are known now over the whole of the Mt. Hagen area. It is useless to argue, 'that's not a pig, it's just a 'horse' or just 'cow' ' — the natives will persist in calling the animals 'Kung Horse' and 'Kung Bullamacow '('kung' meaning pig).

Food Problem.
For many months the food problem was acute, as it simply would not rain. Inches of dust covered the trails; even walking through grasslands would stir up dust — we were chewing dust, spitting dust, digging it out of our ears. Much sickness resulted. From Easter on to the present, we have hardly had a good shower, but now the backbone of the drought is broken. This month of the angels has brought in a lot of gentle rains and a few good floods, and the natives have food again. They did not dare dig up their gardens during the long drought, taking out of the ground only what was needed for the day's supply. Now happily we have to dig into our bags of cowry shell, and it is looking like old times. The Lord is helping us as ever.

Photograph: Mt Hagen couple 1971 (M. Mennis).

The spiritual side of the mission is slowly improving, and new life has been given the work with the arrival of the Brother builder. Many chiefs have promised to come for instruction when we move over to the new station. The school is progressing, and the boys are eager to be baptised. One little fellow in all seriousness said to me: 'Pater, you baptize me and then put a bullet through my head so I can go directly to heaven. 'That lad knows his catechism, but he doesn't mind putting me on the spot.

-—From 'The Christian Family.'

1940. More Glimpses of Catholic Mission Life An Arrow Pierced His Throat --

-- NEW GUINEA MARTYRS Catholic Freeman's journal 7 December 1940. By William Ross, S.V.D., Alexishafen P.O., MADANG, NEW GUINEA.

[The writer, Fr Ross, an American missionary, sailed from Sydney for New Guinea a few weeks ago, after enjoying a few months' leave following ten years on the mission. He is anxious to receive copies of the 'Freeman's Journal' to distribute to his confreres.]

Far across the Pacific lies that land of mystery, New Guinea. Shaped like a horizontal turtle, its neck stretches to the equator; its tail almost touches Australia. For six months in the year tropical rains pour down. Gold and copra are its chief exports. Here for forty years, missionaries of the Divine Word have faced heat and fever; storms and floods, perils on land and sea.

Today 44,000 Catholics boast; *'Me belong mission; me belong Pope; me Catholic true*!' Along 600 miles of coast, missionaries roll in canoes, dories and motor boats in quest of souls. A watery grave has been the fate of several Priests, Brothers and Sisters, as tropical storms arise without, warning. Inland horseback over the mountains and across rivers; on foot through jungles and swamps; in hollowed-out logs on rivers and creeks, the hunters of God push on. Each little station has its '*matmat*,' the cemetery where the plain wooden cross marks the last resting-place of the workers of Christ thousands of miles from their native

land. Ages? Some not thirty; many under forty, victims in God's will of malaria, typhoid fever, Japanese river fever, dysentery and pneumonia. Undaunted the 148 Divine Word priests and Brothers, the hundred Techny Sisters, carry on.

Over the Rainbow, onward goes the march.

Early in 1934, crossing mountains, 10,000 feet high at the pass, we, American missionaries, led an expedition into the newly discovered Wahgi Valley where New Guinea's largest tribes live. Here lies the future of New Guinea missionary work, teeming with thousands of natives, 50,000 speaking a single language. The most beautiful valley in the South Seas, it has been called. The Wahgi River flowing lazily through the centre of the great inland plateau that lies like a sleeping beauty, 5000 feet above the level between high mountain ranges that tower to 15,000 feet. 500,000 native live in this rich fertile valley, a land that time forgot, stone age people untouched by the outside world. Into this valley went our missionaries. Three outposts were opened while arrows and spears had to be dodged.

Blood Flows.

Father Carl Morschheuser was the first martyr to duty, an arrow piercing his throat, and sending his brave soul to God. A month later, at the dawn of the New Year, Brother Eugene of Mt. Carmel, Illinois, U.S.A., lay dying alone in a cold native hut, 8000 feet above the sea, his lungs and back punctured by eight human-bone-tipped arrows. He was our second martyr. More than once we barely escaped spears hurled at us. Day and night the survivors of our pioneer band had to keep watch and guard the outposts.

We learned the native language, dressed wounds and sores by the thousands, saved the lives of sick children, pulled spear-tips and broken arrows from the bodies of wounded tribesmen won the confidence and friendship of the chiefs, started schools, and to-day after six years of one of the most interesting bits of mission history, the inland valley of New Guinea has hundreds of Catholics. Native boys, trained under our daily care for five years, are out teaching their own people; churches are crowded; and while we face great dangers still and obstacles that are mighty, we see hope for a rapid harvest of thousands of souls when we are gaining faithful converts.

'We Stay! '

Father Carl's death was a sensation; the death of Brother Eugene stirred the whole Colony. The Australian Government decided that the missionaries, foolhardy in facing dangers, would have to leave the area. We begged, protested and pointed out our progress. We were permitted to remain on condition that we stay close to our main station, and not roam around the area. That meant isolation. We had three posts; two priests were at Denglagu, 8,400 feet above sea level beyond the Bismarck Range on the Chimbu River; two priests and a Brother were at Korugu, 50 miles down the river and up the valley; I was alone at Mogei, six days' march west of Korugu, at the extreme end of the Wahgi Valley. A European mission society sent us a small airplane which brought in supplies from the coast and kept us in touch with the Central Station at Alexishafen.

Big Bird Opens His Belly.

As the first plane roared through the air, natives dashed for shelter. 'What ghost can this be? He comes from the sky to kill us. Sacrifice! Sacrifice!' were the cries that resounded throughout the valley. Pigs were slaughtered and blood flowed as an offering to this strange god. While terror held men, women and children stay indoors, only the bravest warriors ventured forth to look at this ghost of the sky. The men who witnessed the first landing at Mogei gave a classical description of what they saw.

> The big bird flew in with out-stretched wings. It sang through its nose as though angry. When it dropped to the ground, it ran for a while on little black feet, then stopped at the house of the missionary. It opened its belly. Out of its belly came three white men. They pulled something out of the belly, like food that the bird could not digest. The missionary took this stuff to the house.

> The men shook one another's hands; then one ran to the nose of the bird: he pulled its nose back and forth; the bird screamed with anger, and the white men jumped back into the belly of the big bird ; away the bird ran, then flew into the air and out of sight. The big bird is surely a devil controlled by white men.

But the big bird had many a broken wing and fall, and left us stranded without food and supplies for months at a time.

Photograph: The Paulus with missionaries and the pilot, Willy Schaffhausen.

See You in Two Weeks.

"See you in two weeks!" shouted our mission pilot as the little plane took off for the coast, at the end of October 1935, that two weeks lengthened into two months, still no plane. Day after day I would scan the horizon, feeling akin to Robinson Crusoe on his lonely isle. Six months went by; Mass supplies failed; hardest trial now, alone among a dangerous people without the consolation of the Blessed Sacrament.

No other white man near. At the end of eleven months, one bright morning a shout went up: 'Big bird he come,' and there like a silver speck above the distant mountain came the plane, bringing food, supplies, letters. Mass wine and the first priest I had seen in a year.

"That was a long two weeks," I said to the pilot. The following year another accident to the plane left me alone for nine months. Next to the absence of the Blessed Sacrament and Mass, the hardest trial is not loneliness itself. It is the eternal uncertainty, waiting and hoping, wondering and imagining till one almost loses one's mind. Luckily there was plenty to do: work on the strange new language; translating a catechism, prayer book, hymn book, bible history; printing a hundred copies of these books on a worn-out mimeograph; teaching the 120 school boys; buying food for the station with shell money; dressing wounds; keeping guard over the station; planting potatoes and vegetables; raising pigs and chickens, and building new houses.

Today, with Catholic life established on three outposts, with eight missionaries in the valley, with the schools turning out native boys as teachers of their people our first great barrier has been hurdled. The transport of needed supplies remains alone the greatest problem.

'Goodbye, Bishop!'

On 6 August 1939, Bishop Francis Wolf of our New Guinea mission raised his hands in blessing over three kneeling missionaries. The pilot (Willy Schaffhausen) was tuning up the plane. Slowly the three arose, said goodbye to the Bishop, entered the plane which roared away down the drome. A few seconds, later it rose in the air, then suddenly swerved to the left, dived and with a terrific thud buried its nose in the earth, while the Bishop looked on paralysed with horror. The first missionaries to reach the scene of

the accident were met by an unforgettable sight as pilot and three priests and a native teacher lay battered and crushed to death. Both wings of the plane had been torn off and the engine buried ten feet in the earth. Cause of the accident? We shall never know.

The plane had been bought in Adelaide for £1800. It was old when we bought it. It had been doing good work flying over the mountains, but on this fatal flight it failed to carry the load and like a wounded bird crashed to the ground. The new graves in the cemetery have moved our ageing Bishop to appeal to good people to help us maintain our flying service.

'Is It Worth It?' Do you really need a plane?" I have been asked.

Our answer: "If we do not need the plane we can give up that inland valley and leave it forever, but there are a half million souls waiting for the Faith."

The first Catholics have been won. Catholic missionaries never turn back. Motor transport is impossible; there are no roads, mountain passes rise to 10,000 feet; dangerous and swift low-banked rivers have to be crossed. Horse or mule? Again roads are missing. We could build them, but it would take many, many years. Native carriers? The march to Mogei under the best conditions takes 24 days. To get a hundred pounds of flour to Mogei, I would have to employ 20 men for 24 days. The airplane brings me the flour in one hour and a half for £5. We have studied this problem carefully, and we find that under present conditions only an airplane can save the inland country.

Photograph: Mick Leahy collection. Mick Leahy on the left.

Photograph: Congregation in the Rebiamul Church, Mt Hagen 1971. (M. Mennis).

MOUNTAIN ECHO HELPS New Guinea Bush Telegraph
Courier Mail. March 1943. The war comes to Mt Hagen.

Bush telegraph is not so much of a mystery, according to the Rev. Father William Ross, S.V.D., United States missionary, who spent 17 years at the Roman Catholic Mission station at Mount Hagen, New Guinea.

Because of the peculiar formation of the mountains surrounding Mount Hagan, echoes could be heard for hundreds of miles, he said yesterday. Echoes of natives calling from the mountain tops carried for astonishingly long distances. During the bombing: of Lae, the dull echo of the explosions could be heard at the mission station, which was 300 land miles from the scene of action. Father Ross and another missionary, the Rev. Father G. Bernarding, arrived in Brisbane recently after having been given four hours' notice to evacuate their station.

They tramped for six days and nights after having been told to leave. They hastily gathered a few belonging, bedding, and sufficient food to see them through the trek to Port Moresby. Only one Japanese reconnaissance plane had been seen over Mount Hagen during the first months of enemy occupation, according to Father Ross. He considered that the mission staff would have been safe if it had remained there.

Preparations had been made to retire into the hills, but the mission's isolated situation ' would have daunted any land attackers. The site of the mission had been opened up originally by Queenslanders — two brothers, Mick and Daniel Leahy, who had gone there gold prospecting. Mick Leahy was now looking for Japs in an R.A.A.F. bomber. Father Ross wants to return to his mission; to his 16 schools and two big churches, and to his faithful natives. Two head boys have been left to care for the .mission, its cattle, horses, poultry, and vegetable patches.

Hierarchy of Papua New Guinea Meet at Wewak.

Melbourne Age. September 1952

A few flying hours distant from Melbourne is the mission field of Papua and New Guinea—five Vicariates and two Prefectures-Apostolic—and adjacent are the missions in the Solomon Islands. Two hundred and sixty priests, of the Marist, Divine Word, Sacred Heart and Franciscan Orders, and of the diocesan clergy, and more than 200 Sisters, Marist, Christian and De La Salle Brothers, and laymen work in this territory. Recently the Vicars Apostolic and Prefects-Apostolic met in Wewak for a conference. The Vicariate of Wewak, Central New Guinea, where the Hierarchy of Papua and New Guinea recently met in conference, will be remembered by many Australians as the scene of many patrol clashes with the Japanese, and as the place where the final surrender of the Japanese took place. Rusting landing barges on the beaches, abandoned Japanese tanks in the bush, gaping bomb craters on every side and gashes on dying trees made by machine gunning are daily reminders pf the recent war.

There are other reminders. The Wewak Mission, together with those of Madang and Rabaul and the Solomon Islands lost in priests, sisters and brothers, either killed or died as a direct result of imprisonment of a total of 175 missionaries. Included in this number were two bishops. All the material assets of these missions, all churches, schools, houses, furnishings, machinery, everything built up by skilled Brothers and the sacrifices of the native people and their missionaries over a "period of sixty years, were wholly destroyed during the Japanese occupation or in the recapture of the country. Missionaries who returned after the war had one great consolation as they beheld their homes made desolate, and that was, the welcome of their 140,000 loyal Catholic people. The same loyalty was an inspiration to the young missionaries who have come to take the place of the martyrs.

TRIBUTE TO AUSTRALIA

Today the missions of Papua and New Guinea pay tribute to the people and the Government of Australia for their generosity and assistance in the reconstruction of the Territory through the disbursement of War Damage Compensation, and the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme, as applied to many thousands of the native youth of the country. Attending the meeting were his Lordship Bishop T. Wade, S.M., Vicar-Apostolic of the Northern Solomons; his Lordship Bishop L. Scharmach, M.S.C., Vicar-Apostolic of Rabaul; his Lordship Bishop A. Sorin, M.S.C., Vicar-Apostolic of Port Moresby; his Lordship Bishop L. Arkfeld, S.V.D., Vicar-Apostolic of Wewak; Rt. Rev. Mgr. J. Doyle, M.S.C., Prefect-Apostolic of Samarai; Rt. Rev. Mgr. I. Doggett, O.F.M., Prefect-Apostolic of Aitape; Very Rev. Father W. Ross, S.V.D., Pro-Vicar-Apostolic of Madang. (Catholic people will remember that his Lordship Bishop Applehans, S.V.D., the Vicar of Madang, was killed in an aircraft accident in July, 1951.) Also attending were Very Rev. Mgr. E. Clarizio, from the Apostolic Delegation of Australasia, Rev. J. Dwyer, M.S.C., a member of the Legislative Council of Papua and New Guinea. His Lordship Bishop M. Aubin, S.M., Vicar-Apostolic of the South Solomons, was to have attended but ill-health prevented him travelling to Wewak.

WAR DEAD HONOURED

At the close of the Bishops' meeting Senior Bishop T. Wade,S.M., sang the Pontifical High Mass in thanksgiving to God for those early martyrs of the New Guinea Church." In speaking the assembled bishops, priests, brothers, sisters and the faithful,

Bishop Wade said:

> The meeting of the Catholic Hierarchy of Papua New Guinea closed yesterday. Before we leave for our respective missionary fields, we wish to honour those who laid down their lives for their sheep in the recent war. I have the happiness to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in their honour. The honoured today number one hundred and seventy-five, including bishops, priests, sisters and. brothers. And it is fitting that his honour is being paid at Wewak because here and at Madang the greatest sacrifices were made, including both Bishops killed, and over a hundred of the missionaries of those two vicariates. The sad circumstances in which Bishop Wolf and his

valiant missionaries died is known, but the exact time and manner of the death of Bishop Loerks and those with him, we wi11 know only in Heaven. Now we see again what has been so often proven true in the Church's long history that 'the blood of martyrs is the seed of Christianity.

MISSIONS AND THE FUTURE

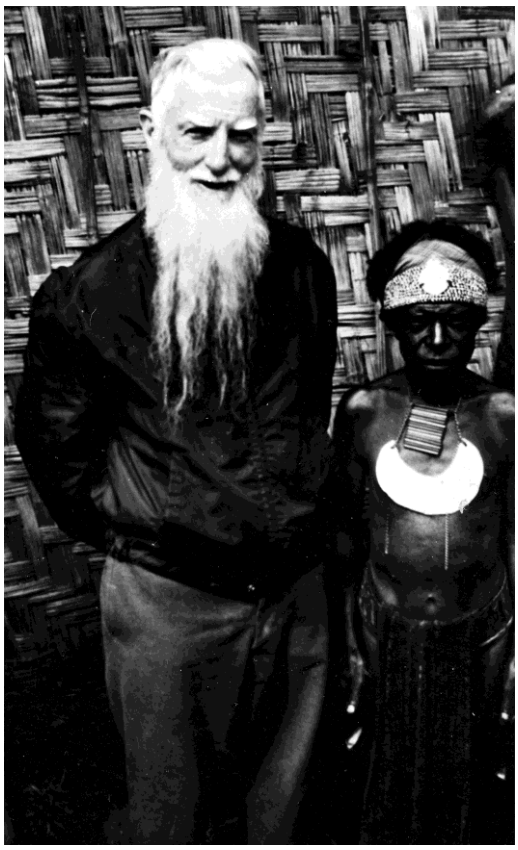
The present strength of the Church in Papua New Guinea is a living tribute to the wisdom and zeal of the early missionaries. There are in the Territory five Vicariates and two Prefectures-Apostolic. Rabaul, Port Moresby and Samarai districts are in the care of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart; the New Guinea mainland missions are staffed by members of the Society of the Divine Word; the Franciscan Fathers have their mission also on the mainland of New Guinea; in the North and South Solomons the Church is entrusted to the Marist Congregation. Five Bishops and two Prefects-Apostolic have the responsibility of these vast areas. There is at present a total of two hundred and sixty priests of the Marist, Divine Word, Sacred Heart and Franciscan Orders, and several diocesan priests working in the combined territories of Papua and New Guinea.

One of the New Guinea heroes of the war, killed last year in an air crash, was Rev. Father J. Glover, from the diocese of Wagga Wagga, N.S.W. Working also in the Vicariates and Prefectures are more than two hundred Sisters of various Congregations; Marist, Christian and De La Salle Brothers; lay brothers of the various Congregations; members of native Sisterhoods and Brotherhoods; more than twenty laymen who have given their services to the missions, gratis, for periods varying from two to ten years.

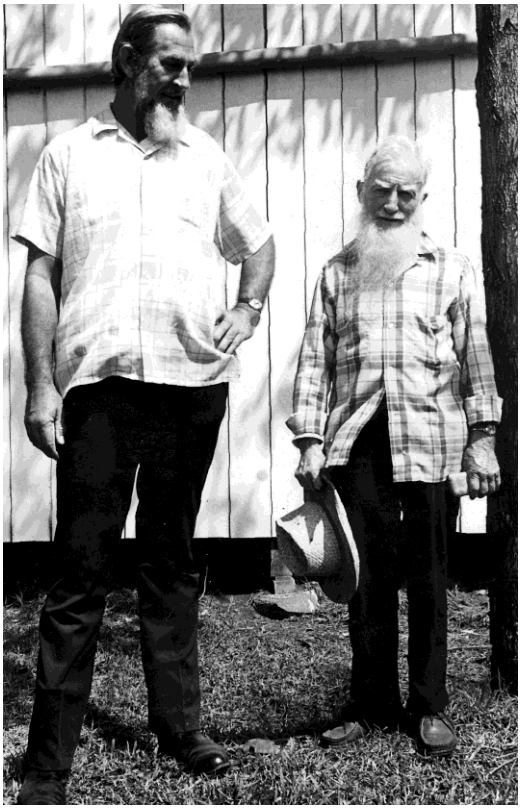
The total of these missionaries is more than six hundred and fifty, and they minister to the spiritual, educational and medical needs of two hundred and twelve thousand Catholics. This figure does not include the thousands of catechumens, tzhose in preparation for baptism, and those who have been to date only contacted by the missionaries. As every Catholic must know, the work of the missionary is not only the baptism of the .pagan and the infidel, but the establishment of the Church in the fullness of her glory amongst people who have known neither God nor the Redemption wrought by His Son.

The foundation of a native diocesan clergy is an absolute prerequisite for this establishment of the Church in its splendid, visible entirety, with flourishing institutions, seminaries, Congregations of Religious for men and women, educational facilities even to university standard, Catholic Action in all its diverse forms, and the full participation of the faithful in the life of the Church Militant. To date there is one native priest in the Territory, Rev. Father Louis Vangeke, of the Port Moresby Vicariate. Father Vangeke completed his theological studies in Madagascar and was ordained there in 1935, returning to his native Papua the same year. He is at present working in one of the mountain districts of the Yule Island mission, some sixty miles from Port Moresby. Five more native students from Papua-New Guinea will complete their studies and be called to the priesthood in 1953. These seminarians from Papua, New Guinea and the Solomon Islands have received their theological training in the Vicariate of Bishop Wade, and were taught for some years by Monsignor J. Hannan and Rev. Father McGuire, both of the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

Photograph: Fr Ross and parishioners after the war.



Photograph: Father Ross with a small friend in Mt Hagen.



Photograph: Fr Ross and Fr Krimm 1972 (M. Mennis)

The Hagen People by Fr William Ross SVD. Ethnological Notes on Mt. Hagen Tribes (Mandated Territory of New Guinea). With special reference to the tribe called Mogei. 1936.

[This article on the Mogei people is re-published here with permission from Anthropos. It shows the people as he saw them in 1935].

1.Settlements. 2.Dress and Ornaments. 3.Hairdressing. 4.Weapons and Implements.5.Economics. 6. Stimulants. 7.Trade and Money. 8. Intertribal Relations. 9. Tribal Organisation. 10. Family. 11. Sex Life. 12. Birth and Children. 13. Education. 14. Death and Burial Customs. 15. Religion.

1. Settlements.

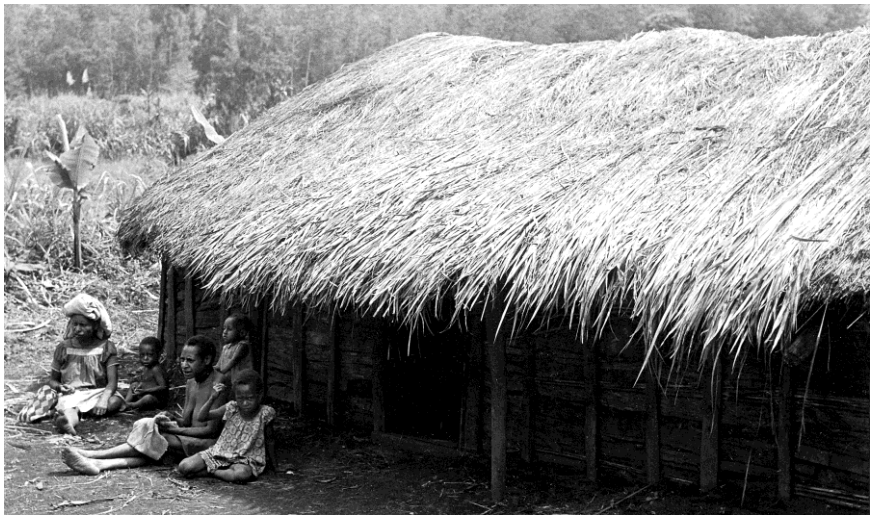
The Mt. Hagen natives live in single houses, near individual gardens. Villages in the strict sense do not exist. The houses in a certain area form a *kona* or place. Each place is distinct from every other. Each has its headman. The houses are built anywhere in the place area, a new house being built about every three years, often where a new area is being planted. Sickness, death, war and superstition are reasons for moving away from an area. Around the area of Mt. Hagen are the following tribes: Mogei, Jika, Kenjiger, Yamkar, Menembe, Nenga, Munjiger, Kumdi, Kimmi, Uga, Runga, Kuga, Kauger, Kulyi, Rogaka, and Kobe, comprising a total of about 18,000 natives divided among 500 or 600 "places".

The places comprise from 5 to 40 houses. Individuals from 30 to 200; families from 6 to 50: The places have no special formation; one finds 2 or 3 houses and a large garden; a single house and garden several houses with small individual banana and sugar cane gardens, and a large common sweet potato garden. The houses are built almost anywhere, on *kunai* flats, on hills, in swampy areas, along rivers.

In fact, the large population makes it imperative for the people to use all the land for cultivation, and leaves them no choice for good building sites. Regardless of location, good garden ground is their living ground. There are no stockades, fortifications or defences of any kind. All houses are open and easy of access. The houses are nearly always rectangular; occasionally one finds a small round house.

The houses (Plate I, figure 1) are built in rectangular form. First the ground is cleared, and then wooden stakes of equal length with sharpened points are driven into the ground about a foot or more. These stakes of Casuarina wood form the walls. The free spaces between the stakes are now lined with Casuarina bark and the whole closed in. The top of the ring of stakes is joined with poles of bamboo; all strongly tied. Then two center poles are joined by the ridge pole to form the roof. Laths from the ridge pole about a foot apart run down over the top wall of the stakes, and upon these the *kunai* (high grass) is laid as roofing material. The door is a tiny opening in the front wall. It is closed with pieces of wood, and can be closed from inside or outside.

Women's houses (in Mogei) have two doors. In the centre of the back wall, two of the stakes are planted more loosely than the rest, and instead of being tightly joined with bark are covered with leaves. This is the rear escape door in case of an attack while one is in one's house. In a second, the leaves are pushed aside, the loose stakes bent over and a hole appears large enough for a man or woman to escape through. The roof has no gables. The ridge pole is straight. *Kunai* grass is the only roofing material used. There are no houses built on piles. Tree houses are built only for hunting birds. They are mere flimsy shelters and are not used for sleeping.



Photograph: Women's house in Mt Hagen (M.Mennis)

The number of families or individuals sleeping in one house varies considerably. An enquiry into the natives using five houses elicited the following information:

House No I - Place called Rogia of the Kobe tribe: in this house live six men and two old women The father is Waiya aged 45, Son is Minjil aged 25, adopted sons are: Koben 25; Rebia 16; Ual 12; Kunjip 13. The two women Koip and Buka aged about 40 are wives of Waiya. His wife Koip is Minjil's mother; Buka has 2 female children married elsewhere.

House No 2 - Place called Kumbaba of the Kobe tribe: Yagega 45 is the father, sons are Rumag 16, Paia 14, and Biam 10; Korubu 2 is an adopted son; Yaga 40 is wife of Yagega. Total in this house 5 men and 1 woman.

House No 3 - Place called Gugumamp of the Kobe tribe: Aiberi 45 is father; mother is Ren 38, child is boy Roika 7; Kenga 30 and Ningaipa l0 are adopted sons, Piltil 35 is Aiberi's sister. Total 4 men and 2 women

House No 4 - Place called Marere of the Mogei tribe: Mik 40, his son Gomp 12, his brothers Raguba 38 and Waimp 35; Mik's adopted sons Nema and Koi 9; Waimp's son Mak 15; Raguba's sons Drobat 18, and Tetsip 15; and Waimp's adopted son Kobile 18 [Total 10 men]. (N B in Mogei women have separate houses and do not sleep with the men).

House No 5— Place called Marere of the Mogei tribe: Ruimp 32, wife of Mik (above); her daughter Kwoipa 2; Pera 12 is daughter of Waimp whose wife is dead. Total 3 women. In this house there are three pigs [343] (NB In Mogei the pigs are sheltered in the women's house during the night).

There are no special houses for boys and unmarried girls. There are no spirit houses for worship. When a man dies, he is buried, and afterwards the head is exhumed and a special small house is built, where an offering of pig is made. These little houses are built for the departed spirits of both men and women. They are also kept in repair and rebuilt when rotten. When a prayer or offering is made by the family to ensure good hunting or good success in some important venture, a pig is carried to one of these houses and there cooked, and eaten. There is no general tribal spirit house; no official house for worship. Each family maintains its own spirit houses for the departed members of the family. For their monthly periods, women resort to a small house built especially for this purpose.

The houses of headmen are the same as others. They may be larger at times. In each area are specially kept groves (Plate V, Fig. 9 and 10), cleared spaces like parks where the singsings or feasts are held. These parks have perfect lawns and are usually kept in fine condition. The borders are

lined with flowering shrubs of all colors. The center is often decorated with flowers. Mounds are spaced through the center and from these mounds of earth rise *casuarina* trees, shrubs or flowers. The whole is a beautiful sight. At the upper end of the singsing ground is a house called *rogumanga* (Plate V, Fig. 9, in the background). This is to house the treasures of gold lip shells, shell decorations, bailer shells, etc. It is essentially a men's house when new, but after it has been used once, women may enter, but not sleep in it. It is built like any other men's house, but usually has a small dark compartment at the rear where the shells are hidden away at night and when not in use during the singsing. Often around these houses one finds a big closely woven stockade behind which the dancers can decorate themselves. They file out of the barrier for the grand entrance.

In the men's houses one finds only weapons, the hearth, a few sleeping mats, wooden pillows, water bottles of bamboo, and a bit of firewood. The owners of the house usually litter the ground with spittings of sugar cane pulp, and on this soft but unsanitary carpet they sleep. The houses are frightfully full of fleas and vermin. In the houses of the women the decorations are kept. Also garden implements, food supply for the day, sleeping mats, *bilums*, (netbags) water gourds, ropes of various kinds for working men's hats, &c. are kept here. In all the houses is usually one hearth which is a round hole in the ground about $^{1}/2$ meter deep and $^{1}/2$ meter in diameter, lined with a wall of stones. Some are larger. Sometimes in women's houses there may be more than one hearth. As women and men sleep together in one house in Kobe, the women usually have walled-off compartments. In the Mogei men's houses there are no compartments, a piece of wood marks a dividing line on the floor. Each man knows his own part of the floor, and keeps to it. [344].

2 Dress and Ornaments

Grown up natives are never naked. Boys usually run around naked till the age of 7, though they may be dressed earlier, depending on the whim of the father. Girls usually are not naked after the age of three. But they may be clothed from birth. Usually when very young, both boys and girls are clothed one day, naked the next.

The usual clothing of men consists of a belt through which is drawn in a double fold a net protection in front, and a bunch of croton like leaves behind. These leaves are put into the belt, sterns upward. The belt is tight and hence the leaves are held firmly in place. The leafy back covering called *kaia* is usually changed every two days. Belts are of bark, cord or fibre and offer a wide variety of "styles".

The bark belts, called *kag* are made from the tree of the same name. They are from six to eight inches in width. When smeared with lard they take on a fine red stain. The ropes holding this bark belt in place are of bamboo, three turns on top and four below. This rope is called *kan kelua*. Another kind of belt is made of the ordinary *bilum* rope woven into thick strands Many sets are as wide as 2 inches. There is also much in use a woven bamboo belt 4 or 5 inches wide. Through the belt the *mal* is drawn in front in 2 folds. The *mal* is about 8 inches wide and 24 inches long and is made of the ordinary *bilum* rope. The croton like shrub, the leaves of which form the buttocks covering, is planted everywhere, so that there is no shortage.

On the occasion of singsings a bush palm like grass called *boganang* is placed over the ordinary *kaia*, making the thickness of the back covering about a foot, giving a cassowary like side-back effect. The natives say this extra covering is only for protection from the cold ground, though its resemblance to a cassowary's plumes may have some connection with a singsing in which they strut and stamp very much like a cassowary. Hawk feathers (*dap*) are usually worn only by big men. Also the small red bird of paradise called *barka*. The men all wear hats but not the women. The plumes of the Duke of Saxony bird are worn only by men on festival singsings. At singsings only, are women allowed to wear the big black plumes of the paradise bird called *rumba*, and also feathers of the hawk.

The men are protected only by the *bilum* coveting called *bal*. The penis is not specially covered beyond the folds of the *bal*. Women wear a belt called *kan rengi* five or six strands are woven into one rope about an inch thick. Attached to this belt, not simply drawn through it but really sewed on as one piece is the front covering called *gil*. This is made of the rope called *kan kral* 4 or 5 single strands to a rope, and 10

ropes to the whole *gil* making it about 3½ inches wide and 21 inches long, is the usual form. In back is attached a similar rope but this is only one inch wide and 24 inches long. The plant called *kim gung* gives the blue colouring for the *gil* ropes.

Some young women wear a *kan kral* flattened fibre on both sides of the ordinary *gil* making it some 5 or 6 inches wide. All in all women's dress in the Mt Hagen area is rather scanty. Young girls and married women wear the same clothing. There is no difference for age and rank either in the men's or the women's garb. Children and grown ups dress alike, due regard being made to size [345]. There is no special dress for mourning. In sorrow, mud is smeared over the chest, face and body, depending on the nearness of the person or cause of the sorrow. Sometimes only the face is smeared with the clay, sometimes only the chest, sometimes the entire body.

The decoration most prized by women is the gold lip shell. Men prefer the bailer shell called *tam* or *ram*. This is the shell used by the Lake Murray natives in Papua as a pubic covering. Almost anything new, brightly coloured or attractive will serve as a decoration. Parts of china dishes, tin lids, paper of all sorts, mirrors, cartridge shells, any bit of metal, all are prized. There are no tortoise shell decorations found here. Cowry shells are in great demand and these form the ordinary currency for trade and barter. They are strung on ropes vertically. The length of the rope determines its value, not the number of individual shells. Usually ropes of cowries are formed symmetrically, the largest cowries in the center of the chest and gradually getting smaller till the back of the neck is reached.

In Mt Hagen the natives do not paint the body. As already mentioned only in mourning are ashes or mud smeared over the face, chest or whole body. At singsings or on ceremonial occasions women often wear a ring of clay around the eyes resembling very much a pair of eyeglasses. Often lime is used to paint the nose or cheeks at feasts. Tattooing is unknown.

Teeth are not deformed or removed. Only old women with a toothache will have a tooth removed. Ear lobes are pierced and often nuts, beads, or shells are used as earrings. The earlobe is not stretched or deformed in any way. The nose is usually pierced in the central wall and bamboo or bone pushed through. Seldom are the sides of the nose pierced, though old men wear *tambu* shells in holes in the side of the nose. This is the exception rather than the rule. The tip of the nose is not bored. Skull deforming is unknown. Circumcision is not practiced at all.

3 Hairdressing

One feature of the Mt Hagen area natives distinguishing them from the rest of the Wahgi valley is the wearing of head coverings by the men (Plates II, III, Fig 6, IV, Fig 8) The young man wears his "hat" as soon as a beard appears on the chin. This head covering is worn by all grown men. Here and there one finds an old man who prefers to leave his hat aside. Sometimes when travelling, young men will also leave their hats at home. The usual hat called *woinia* is made from the rope called *kan ku*. It is planted in the gardens. When a stalk is large enough, the women gather it, skin it and put the bark in the sun to dry for an hour or two. Then it is placed in the house near the fireplace and smoked for a day. Then it is scraped, cleaned and beaten with a stick till it is flat and about eight inches wide. When finished it is cut to fit the head and smeared with lard thoroughly. Meantime the hair has been raised by running a small bamboo pin through it and working it into tiny plaits which are smeared with lard.

Over the raised coiffure the hat is placed and tied down at the sides with a small rope. A hole has been cut in the top of the hat into which may be stuck feather decorations. Often the hat becomes a travelling bag [346] housing shells, trinkets, pins and needles of bamboo or bone. Married and un-married men wear the same headdress. Often old men prefer a small, light *bilum* cover instead of the elaborate headdress. Once the hat is in place, it is seldom if ever removed. Men do not cut their hair; only women and children get haircuts. This is the only feature of women's hair arrangement; it is usually cut and trimmed short.

Women and girls have the same hair arrangement. They all wear, *bilums* fit on the top of the head, these fall behind like a veil and make the women very attractive from behind. No woman ever goes abroad

without one or several *bilums*. They consider themselves undressed without the *bilum* on the head, and even show signs of embarrassment when a *bilum* falls or is pulled from the head. Hair is never bleached or coloured. All the men wear beards which they never cut. The longer the beard the more pride to the possessor. Ordinarily men and women wear no decorations in the hair, but at times of visiting or at feasts all kinds of feathers are worn. Cockatoo crests, birds of paradise plumes, cassowary plumes, small birds' feathers, hawk feathers and wings, Duke of Saxony plumes are worn on ceremonial occasions. Real combs are unknown, only simple bamboo pins being used.

4 Weapons and Implements

The principal fighting weapons are the spear (*chimbun*), lance (*kolub gigeri*) and the bow and arrow (*el*). For hunting, the bow and arrow is used almost exclusively. Bows are made of the *limbum* (palm wood) called *de kia*. The bowstring called *kan kumanch* is of bamboo. Bows are about five feet long and an inch wide, the outside being concave in form and the inner surface flat. They taper at both ends to a sharp "finger" over which the bowstring is fitted. Either end is detachable. The bow is oval in shape. Arrows are of bamboo and are never feathered. The points are simply sharpened, or notched on one or both sides. Sometimes they are bone-tipped, bones of the forearm of men and women being used. Fish and bird arrows are three-pronged. There is no wrist protection. Harpoon arrows are not used.

Spears are used in fighting and carried on ceremonial occasions. There are five kinds of spears in use:

1) Plain *limbum* long pointed sharp spear about 3 metres long, undecorated,

2) the 'cupola" spear of *buk* wood, called the *chimbun*, about three metres long; about five feet from the bottom three needle sharp projections are found about nine inches long. Below this is a *kapul* (possum) skin around the shaft. The rest of the shaft up to a foot from the point is notched on both sides. The point is about a foot long and needle sharp (Plate II). This is a spear distinctive of the Wahgi valley and Mt Hagen. It is both a fighting and ceremonial spear. The whole spear including the sharp projections is cut from one piece of wood. There are no joinings.

3) A shorter variety about eight feet long, with thicker, duller projections is also found. *Kapul* skin decorates this same as the above. It is also similarly notched.

4) The bone tipped spear or lance about [347] 3 ½ metres long, called *kubandr onk*, usually smeared at the end with lime. Shin bones of men and women are used in this spear or lance.

5) The cassowary claw-tipped lance about 3 ½ metres long. All of these spears except the plain limbum are also used on ceremonial occasions. Spear throwers are not used. Daggers are not used. The boomerang is unknown. Clubs like canoe paddles of wood only are used. There are two kinds of wood used for these, *ketan* and *enigump*.

In defensive weapons the large shield holds first rank. This is made of a wood called *rebia*, the leaves not unlike those of a tamarisk. The large shield is 4 ½ feet high, 25 inches wide and about ¾ of an inch thick. The top is bordered with plaited cane. The wood is scraped, put over the fire, flattened out by pressing it on the ground on hands and knees, decorated with various designs, and rope grips fastened to inner side at top and center. One grip is for the shoulder and one for the hand. The rope when gripped is horizontal with the ground.

Wamp Wan and his shield 1971. (M.Mennis).

A smaller *rebia* wood shield called *rumag* is used to protect the side or is held before the face in a fight at close range. They are about half as large as the big *rebia*. Protective armour is not used. Usually the spearmen only carry the big shields; occasionally one finds bowmen using them too. Often in a fight one shield is used to protect several men, one behind the other. The shields in attack are the vanguard of the army, and hand to hand fighting, charge and retreat, back and forth, almost comical to an observer, is the rule. In a fight the thud of the arrows being stopped by these shields has a distinctive, resounding "plunk". In a retreat, shields form the protecting rear guard. Bowmen fight from a distance, whereas spearmen and shields get close up to one another.

The broad bark belt, six or eight inches wide is also a protection in a fight. The raised headdress, with a heavy bunch of cassowary plumes crowning the whole is a good protection from the blow of a stone hatchet.

Three kinds of axes are used in Mt Hagen

I. The rough working axe, light, small and crude for cutting firewood, sugar cane and doing chores.

2. The heavier work axe with longer and thicker flint, heavier handle, used for cutting trees and generally as a fighting weapon at close quarters.

3. The ceremonial axe or battle axe, is a beautifully shaped and sharpened flint, the shaft is decorated with fur, beads and chain of small nuts; this type of axe is most sought after; the flint called *rui* is about five inches wide at its sharpened edge, tapering to 2 ½ inches at the shaft, and being about 10 inches long.

Flints are sharpened to fit the shaft and tightened into positions in the hole by a "wedge" called *kabaga* which projects about an inch under the fastened stone. The shaft to the crosspiece is about 19 inches long. The crosspiece to the flint is about 18 inches wide. It tapers from 3 inches at the center joint to 1½ inches, then widens to a curved back 5 ½ inches across. The crosspiece, shaft and flint are bound with ropes of various kinds in a figure of 8 pattern (Plate III, Fig 5 and 6; see also P1. II).

The Mogei work axes come from Kuli, 8 hours down the valley to the east; ceremonial axes come from Jimmi River valley a day northeast of Rogaka. The flints are found in the Pim River at Kuli and the Jimmi River tributaries beyond Rogaka. They are an important article of trade. Knives are of bone, boar tusks or chiefly bamboo. No real stone knives [348] are used, though loose flints are sometimes used for cutting shells and other things. The natives make fire by drawing the bowstring or similar rope back and forth swiftly over tinder. Bores are not used. Some shells are cut by stone, but nearly all small shells are rubbed over a white stone called *rui nanga*, or axe-sharpener. It is the equivalent of the native's grindstone. Water is used in the process.

No wooden dishes are used or plates or, saucepans or any kind of pots. All cooking is done in a hole in the ground using heated stones (Plate IV, Fig 7 and 8) and the food is served on leaves. There are two kinds of bamboo baskets, cut from a single bamboo, one woven loosely; the *ming chipa* and one finely the *ming mangal*. Men only make baskets. Women only make *bilums* called *ual*. No woodcarving is practiced. Pillows of wood (*peng kilanda*) are simple pieces of wood upon two raised rests.

Mats are woven extensively. Almost every individual has a mat, some having several at a time. These mats are made of the *pandanus* like palm called *am*. The leaves are cut, dried in the fire, laid one overlapping the other and sewn up with *bilum* rope with a needle of bamboo or pigs' ribs. These mats are for sleeping. They serve also as umbrellas in the rain and a covering for corpses. Mats are 1½ meters long and one meter wide 30 to 36 of the *am* leaves make one mat. There are three seams, two along the outer edges and one in the center. No woman ever goes abroad without carrying her mat in a *bilum* hanging from the top of the head. Men do not carry mats about, as a rule

5 Economics

Agriculture is the chief source of the food supply, hunting being more of a sport than a real means of living. Rats, *kapuls*, snakes, wallabies, birds and fish are sought. Rats and birds are often hunted in groups through the *kunai*. Shouting and beating the grass with branches of trees and sticks, the natives scare up small birds and hurl sticks at them. Quail and smaller birds are often caught in this way. Rats are dug out of their nests in the grass or woodpile, and thus caught and eaten. Arrows and sticks are the chief hunting weapons.

Traps for rats consist of a bent twig and a vine noose. The bait is placed within the hidden noose and the "sprung" twig anchored. The rats nibble at the food, release the twig which springs back upright promptly hanging the animals in the noose. *Kapuls* are caught up in the trees. Using a rope noose for both feet, the native climbs until within shooting range of the animal. As it falls to the ground there is usually a dog waiting to pounce on it and hold it. Some *kapuls* living in holes in sides of a hill are caught in traps also. A bent stick called *miel* is used in place of the light twig used for rats. The noose, anchor and laying of bait are the same as for rats. The *kapul* pulls on the bait and swings up hung. Rats are often smoked out of the grass and pounced on, as they flee.

Each hunter owns and eats whatever he catches. There are no restrictions even for the women. Dogs are used in hunting rats, *kapuls* and wallabies. [349] All hunting areas are open range. Anything wild like *kapuls*, cassowary, rat, snakes and birds is the property of him who catches it no matter where he is hunting. There are no boundary lines for hunting. Everyone can hunt everywhere.

When group hunting is to be carried out, usually a small pig is killed, cooked in the small spirit house and eaten as an offering to the spirits for good luck. Group hunting on a large scale often consists in firing a big stretch of tall *kunai* and watching along the borders. Fishing is not the great sport it is on the coast. The few small streams here harbour principally eels and catfish. Men and women fish, both alone and in groups. A favourite time is by moonlight. On dark nights the natives sometimes fish with rushes for lighting the water. *Bilum* nets are used in mud dikes and fish are caught in this way. Eels are caught in basket traps, very crude compared to those used elsewhere. Hooks are not used. Arrows are used to shoot fish at night, but there is not much success, it is more of a sport than a business.

Big men know of a vine which when pulverized yields a juice which paralyses the fish. It is used only in still water As soon as fish are caught they are eaten, never preserved by smoking. A small fish line along which is tied lumps of bait is used in small streams for tiny fish. This is the sport the boys like best.

Agriculture is the essential industry of the entire Wahgi valley. Natives, in Mt. Hagen, Chimbu area and Purari are considered excellent gardeners. New gardens (Plate I, Fig. 2) are planted in new areas twice, sometimes three times, a year. The grass is torn out by the roots, let lie fallow, and then when thoroughly dry it is burned off, the ashes acting as manure. Men and women share this work equally. The same field is not used again for 4 or 5 years. The ground is tilled with sticks shaped like a canoe paddle. These sticks are of limbum or *Casuarina*. The men dig the ground; the women harrow the clumps of earth. Men build the fences. No gardens are used continuously in the same place. Women weed the gardens regularly. The staple crop everywhere is sweet potatoes. Taros and yams offer a slim variety to the potato diet. Breadfruit, sago, cocoanut and betel nut are unknown. Sugar cane, *pitpit*, vegetable greens of five or six varieties, corn, beans, bananas, and small bunches of a parsnip-like plant are extensively planted.

Men plant and own the sugar cane, *pitpit*, bananas, vegetable green called *weka*, taro, yam, and pandanus. Women plant and own sweet potatoes, beans, greens called *mui* and *kim*, cucumbers, while corn and manioc are planted by both men and women. Women also plant the parsnip like vegetable, called in Pidgin English *as bilong bin*, in Mogei *patch* and *puntch*. Two kinds of beans are found, string and dwarf. Sweet potatoes are planted with the vines at anytime of the year, often three gardens being planted in a year. The potatoes seem to be ready for harvesting in six to seven months. Beans, bananas, and sugar cane are planted once a year when a certain small blackbird called *gilgil golgol* comes out of the west, about August.

No ceremonies are connected with planting, though the women are said to pray silently, "by thinking of their departed spirits". Men are said to pray to the spirits by thought when planting yams and taros. The latter foods are only "side lines" and do not grow well in this area. Plants [350] are never watered even in drought and dunging the ground is unknown. Ashes from the burned grass or wood is the only manure known. The harvest is gathered without ceremonies. Often, however, when a good crop is evident, the headmen will kill a pig and hold a feast as a thank offering to the spirits. The men gather what they have planted, the women likewise what they have sown. Only so much food is gathered as is needful for the day.

Gardens are individual or common. When a whole "place" work a common garden, each family knows its own section. The checker-board beds and trenches show the divisions each has planted. Bamboo stalks are planted when the ground is being worked. When the beds are turned over ready for planting, these sticks are taken out, and the holes represent the divisions of the beds. Each family owns its own land.

There are no fowls in the Mt. Hagen area though in Koruguru there are many. Small dingo-like dogs are numerous here. Nearly every man has his own pigs. Pigs' ears and tails are cut. Each man knows his own pigs, gives them individual names. The pigs roam free by day, but in the evening they are called, fed and tied in the houses for the night. Each pig has a separate "sty" indoors. They do not make a mess except water. They are trained to this when small. The food of the pigs is a small bamboo sprout called *kung gumbul*, a green stalk vegetable called *mui*, vines of sweet potato plants, and the principal food being sweet potatoes.

Small pigs are often given the breast by women, carried in *bilums* like babies and carefully reared. Besides living in the houses at night, there are also certain districts where the pigs of a "place" are brought and watched. In these areas there are no gardens. This results in a great deal of time saving as in the place-gardens, fences need not be built. It sometimes happens that a man does not tie up his pigs at night. Often they get loose and roam into a garden and a great cry is set up by the owners when the damage is discovered. Fights result. Only recently, on May 25, 1935, a Mogei native of Agiliga called Temba killed another native with a club because this native's pig had rooted up his garden.

There are no wild pigs in Mogei. West of Hagen they are said to abound. Pork is eaten very often, for every imaginable ceremonial affair, but though the natives here get twice as much meat as those on the coast, they are really vegetarians eating sweet potatoes daily as their main food.

Pigs are killed:

1. when a man or woman dies; if it is a headmen, a big feast is held at which as many as 30 pigs are killed;
2. at the big annual singsings, when large numbers are killed (Plate V, Fig,. 10 shows the stakes to which the pigs are tied at these big feasts);
3. at espousals and marriage feasts;
4. before a big hunting to ask aid of spirits;
5. as a thank offering to spirits after a good harvest.
6. for naming a newborn child;
7. when building a. new house;
8. as payment for a wrong, rape, theft, etc.

No special ceremonies are used in killing the pigs. They are always killed by hitting them across the forehead above the eyes with a stout club. Pigs only are used as offerings to the spirits. Boars are scarce and boar tusks are valueless. They are not used as decorations but are filed and used as cutting instruments for sharpening arrows and spears. Nearly all the boars are castrated, but no special ceremonies are carried out in the process. To [351] obtain the services of a boar for the sow in rut, the native pays the owner of the boar a string of cowry shells and promises him one of the litter later on. Dogs are raised and are quite numerous, all being small and of the dingo type. The natives are astonished at the size of the white man's dogs. Dogs are also eaten, but this has not the significance of pig eating. Dogs are sometimes killed at big feasts, also when a man dies, but this remains always a "secondary" affair.

6. Stimulants.

Betel nut is not planted or used by the natives of the Mt. Hagen area. A wild variety grows called *rubemong*, also a wild pepper called *kugil*, but both are unsatisfactory to coastal boys used to the planted variety. Tobacco is planted, but not extensively. It is of good quality. A few old men smoke, also occasionally an old woman, but the native as a class can be called non-smokers. For smoking a small bamboo pipe is used called *rok ming*, *rok* being the word for tobacco, very much like the German *rauchien*. The tobacco is rolled into a small ball, stuffed into the end of the bamboo which is about six inches long, and a few puffs make the smoke. The use of tobacco seems to be an old custom, though the old men profess ignorance as to its origin.

Kava and palm wine are unknown. The only quasi-narcotics or stimulants used are ginger called *kobena* and a kind of wild mushroom called *nonda*. Ginger is used extensively and is considered a medicine in sickness. It is also supposed to be the native's poison for charming others and causing their deaths. In Pidgin English it is called *kauawar*. The wild mushroom called *nonda* makes the user temporarily insane. He flies into a fit of frenzy. Death is even known to have resulted from its use. It is used before going out to kill another native, or in times of great excitement, anger or sorrow.

Two kinds of salt are in use, both imported from the west, a region known as Enga. The ashes variety called *aip* is not as satisfying as the mineral sort called *kuota*. Ashes from a fire are often licked in lieu of salt. The great variety of green vegetables raised by the natives makes the absence of salt less felt, though the natives do prefer to have salt always on hand. It forms with stone axe heads the biggest article of trade in the area.

7. Trade and Money.

The giving of presents by individuals involves no ceremonies. Present giving is considered a good custom, but it is never one-sided, the recipient being in public opinion bound to return a present to the giver. He is not forced to, but he loses in public esteem if he fails to return in kind. When presents are made by a whole place, there is something ceremonial about it. The visitors arrive more or less well decorated; they are received by their friends likewise decorated. A pig is killed and a feast held. Later on the recipients will return the compliment. The chief presents are decorations of birds' feathers, birds of paradise plumes, cassowary plumes and hawk feathers; shells are also given as presents; axes also. [352]

The coming of Europeans to this area has not materially affected native customs of trade, except to increase tremendously the wealth of natives close to European camps (1935). The following are still articles of trade: stones for axes; cowries; gold lip shell; bailer shells; salt; pig grease; spears; decorations of all kinds; round shell decorations for the nose, and for the forehead.

Within the tribe trade takes place from place to place; there is also intertribal trading. Articles from the Papuan coast found their way in, eventually to Mogei, including the gold lip and bailer shells. *Tambu* shell is supposed to have come up the Yuat valley. West of Hagen, one finds natives with steel axes worn so thin as to suggest the passage of years for the article from the coast in transit. Direct trade with the coast is unheard of. It is usually the next tribe that is the source for all coastal articles. There are no market places or market days. The principal articles of trade are salt and stone axes, both carried on by the men. Men

also trade decorations such as the red bird of Paradise, cassowary feathers, hawk and cockatoo plumes. Women trade *bilums*, *kapul* skins, red ochre and ropes of various kinds. No special traders exist, all within the tribe trading generally. Trading is both by payment of shells and by exchange of articles.

The cowry shell (*gogomong* or *rang-el*) is the common currency. The shells are used either loose, in the hand, or sewn tightly vertically on ropes. Loose, the shells are counted in paying for an article; sewn on ropes the shells are not counted, the value depending on the length of the rope. Ropes are in a variety of sizes from 2 feet up to 9 feet. The largest ropes buy pigs or gold lip shells and are used in payment for a bride. Shells are used all over the Wahgi valley, also west of Hagen, and in the Papuan country along the Border Range.

Women often use bilums as their chief article of exchange. For a *bilum* they can buy a *purpur*(*gil*), skirt, red paint (*oi kela*) *kapul* fur (*kui kang*), ropes for working *purpurs* and other articles. Gold lip shells buy pigs and pay for a bride. Bailer shells likewise. These are the highest articles in value. The bailer at present has supplanted the gold lip in value. This is because the bailer was very scarce in Mogei whereas gold lips were plentiful, and the coming of the white man has given Mogei hundreds of bailers. In buying pigs, at Mogei they ask for a goldlip shell for a small pig; a bailer buys a big one; but customs in buying run on a fluctuating market.

The government patrol on the Chimbu put the goldlip on the market, and did away with the green snail's value, this in a period of only one month. Duke of Saxony bird plumes are usually not traded, but kept for ceremonial singsings and loaned. Shells are also loaned but without "interest". Work tools and household articles are usually not loaned or sold. For the cowry, the buying unit is a rope about two feet long. Very large, ropes, up to 9 feet in length, take on the value of a gold lip. The gold lip shells are judged both by size and perfect finish. Sea borer holes detract from the value of a good shell: the bigger the gold lip, the more valuable.

Bailer shells are all valued by size. The bigger the shell, the more it is worth. Pigs, either large or small, are bought according to the size of the bailer or gold [P 353] lip. The *tambu* shell unit is a small string that passes over the nose and falls about two and a half inches on each side of the nose, making it about seven inches long. This size of *tambu* buys a work axe stone.

Contracts are unknown. Land is not bought or sold. Trading may be carried on direct from producer to consumer, or through intermediaries: an example of the latter is the trade in stone axes. Axe stones are all of volcanic origin, the material of the stone being chert. Mogei has none of this. The working axe chert comes from the head of the Pim River near Kuli about 8 hours march east of Mogei. The finely polished ceremonial stone comes from beyond the Jimmi River Falls near the back country of Rogaka.

The general practice for stone axe trading is this: The Kuli people, men, women and children come in large numbers to Mogei bringing their stone axes. Mogei is supposed to bring them on to Munjiger. Munjiger deliver them to Enga. The Enga people bring salt to Munjiger in payment. Munjiger brings the salt to Mogei, and the Mogei people return Kuli's visit bringing the salt in final payment. Naturally each "agent" takes a cut out of the trade, both in axes and in salt, I dare say, Mogei gets the best cut as they have first pick of the stone axes and last cut of the salt. Food is not bought or sold among natives. Natives who are related to other tribes by marriage often undertake the trading with these tribes. For this service they are paid in shells. Within the tribe, the headmen try to monopolize the trade, getting better prices than would an ordinary individual. This is mostly the case when natives trade with Europeans. Trading seems to be really a "haphazard" affair. Salt comes over from Enga regularly, and
stone axes come in irregularly.

8. Intertribal Relations

The Mt Hagen natives are not great travellers in the sense that they go long distances for trade, like the Bismarck people, some of whom have been all the way into Papua. For Mogei, the limits of travel seem to be Kuli to the east, Rogaka to the northeast, Kumdi to the north, Munjiger to the northwest, the Nebilyer

River to west and south. But connecting these boundaries further are roads that go on and on down the valley toward the lower Wahgi the roads are clearly defined from tribe to tribe. In the Nebilyer valley running behind the Border Range, is a big, broad trade route, probably the main Papuan coastal trading route inland, the route along which gold lips and bailer shells have come inland.

That this is certainly the bailer shell route was proved by M. J. Leahy and J. L Taylor, in August 1934 when they followed the Nebilyer route and crossed the Border Range at 10.000 feet, at the head of the Minj River which joins the Wahgi near Jimbunar. Along the whole of the Nebilyer the bailer is well known. Also all along the Minj, but in the rest of the Wahgi Valley bailers are unknown until one comes near Mt Hagen. Wherever there are trade or visiting routes, the rivers are bridged by *kunda* or thorn vine. Suspension bridges are the rule. A high "anchor" plat-form is erected on both sides of the river high up the banks to escape floods.

From the "towers" of this platform, the thick outer ropes are stretched, the center ropes are then laid, and the supporting vine ropes tied under the center ropes to the outer side ropes. These bridges do not last long, but must be repaired about every three months. They are often carried away by floods. There are no boats, canoes or rafts used in the Mt Hagen area.

9. Tribal Organisation.

The Mt Hagen tribes have their own land boundaries, which are defined and well known, and disputes over land are said not to occur. Each tribe is distinguished from the others more by origin than by different customs and habits. As to the language distinctions, Mogei and Kobe have the same language, 3000 people in all, Jika and Yamcar have one language; Kenjiger, Kugiliger and Kimmi have one language; Nenga and Munjiger have one language; Remdi and Kumdi have one language; Menembe and Rogaka have one language; Kulyi and Yemi (a tribe almost extinct) have one language; Runga and Kuga have one language; Kauger, Roni and the present Benambe (driven out of present Mogei land) have the same language.

Each tribe has many places or "quasi villages", Mogei alone comprising about 100. Each place name is prefixed by the tribal name thus, Mogei Agiliga, Mogei Wilya, Kobe Rogia. Often village places in the same tribe are hostile to other tribal places. Recently Mogei Agiliga and Mogei Kominiga attacked Mogei Uldru and Mogei Komach. The tribes have no outstanding chiefs, but each place has its own headman or headmen. The headman is usually the richest and most powerful person in the "place". His power and influence descend to his son when he dies. His word is law in his place, but has no meaning elsewhere.

When I asked a young man of Mogei Wilya what he would say if commanded to do a certain thing by the headman of Mogei Kuye (an old powerful chieftain). He replied "I'd tell him he was boss in Kuye, but had nothing to say over us of Wilya". The headman wields his influence through the family. He usually owns about ten wives, has many children, and in the place his relatives are the most numerous. Hence he has a big family following. He acquires his title by descent, the original head of the family having won it by power and riches.

Men are known not so much by their tribe as by their place. Thus Kuye Kudi is the headman of *Kuye*. He is not called Mogei Kudi except perhaps by outsiders. Each place or quasi-village is a unit, and has its own land boundaries, its own streams and woods. There is no apparent feeling of general brotherhood within the tribe. There are no separate classes within the tribe. The distinction between youths, grown men, old men and headmen is well defined. Marriage takes place by taking women either, from another place within the tribe or from another tribe.

The story of Mogei's origin is as follows: At a place to the north lived two men. The place was Maip. One man was called Maip Mo and the other Debi-Kuibi. The two men planted a garden. One day they spied a big tree called *korup*. Majp Mo said to Debi-Kuibi, "go and get some firewood from [Page 355] that tree". Debi-Kuibi climbed the tree and broke off every one of the branches. When Maip Mo saw

this, he was angry and said: "Why did you break off all the branches?" So they quarrelled and separated, Maip Mo going south and founding the tribe of Mogei.

Kobe is supposed to have originated thus: At a place called Kundra- Monga two women lived. One day they went out to look for some ropes. They spied a *kapul* called *kui maya* which had only one eye. The women caught it, killed it and ate it. Their bellies swelled up and they bore children. These spread and founded Kimka, Rogaka and Kobe.

The story of the origin of fire may be inserted here. One day a man went hunting with his dog. The dog ran back and forth over some bamboos. Smoke came out of the bamboos. The man, curious, ran and got some dried grass, placed it over the smoke and so discovered fire. There seems to be no totemism in Mt. Hagen.

10. Family.

Men usually marry about the age of 20, and girls are taken at various ages, some before but most just after the age of puberty. A special relative as a bride for the boy seems not to be a custom. The forbidden degrees of marriage run the length of nearly all blood relations, even third and fourth cousins being *tabu.* Adoption is the same as natural relationship. The adopted son and daughter have all the *tabus* of natural children. Sexual relationships between blood relatives who are not allowed to marry is supposed to be as bad as incest.

Practically all marriages are made outside family relationships. Affinity offers no impediments. Sponsalia proceed as follows: The father of the boy goes seeking a bride for his son. He talks it over with a man from some other village or tribe who has a marriageable daughter, making a present of pig or shell even at the first discussion. When the girl is agreeable, the boy's father comes and reports to his son that he has found him a bride. The girl's father now goes to see the boy, and ascertain if he is a good type, while the boy's mother goes to visit the girl to see if she is a good match for her son.

When both parties are satisfied, the price is discussed. Prices differ considerably, depending on the status of the bride, her charm and character and standing in the tribe, and the man's standing. Headmen and their sons have to pay more than others for a bride. Some girls will bring a price of 10 pigs and four or five bailer shells; others will be given away for 5 pigs and five gold lips. There is no set price. The boy and girl seem to be free once the proposition is put up to them. The boy and girl make no move themselves, the parents arranging everything. The espoused now enter upon a definite relationship.

The sponsalia last until the dowries are ready. During espousals the girl is carefully watched and protected from others. Should another man rape the bride he would have to pay heavily, making a double payment to the father of the bride and to the prospective bridegroom. Should the girl be guilty, the offending man goes free, but the girl receives a good scolding or even a thrashing, and sometimes the sponsalia are broken off by the boy's father. All payments made have to be returned.[356]

Before marriage the bridegroom does not go to help his father-in-law. He keeps strictly to his own house. Only after marriage does he go to the house of the father-in-law and help him. If it should happen, without the knowledge of the parents, that the espoused carry on sexual relations and pregnancy occurs, the parties are scolded, and the marriage is hurried on, but there are no penalties. Otherwise all penalties for breaking the marriage laws and customs are payment of pigs or shells. It may happen that the bridegroom's father cannot pay the full price demanded for the girl. In that case, some arrangement can be made whereby the boy agrees later on to come to his bride's place and work for the parents, the understanding being that he will eventually pay when he is in a position to do so.

Photograph: Bride price in Mt Hagen, the parents receiving the bride price are seated behind. Photograph Fr Joe Jurczyga SVD.

Marriages make take place at any time; there is no waiting for ceremonial occasions or singsings. As soon as the parents and children are agreed, the girl's father sends word to the boy's father and the first exchange of presents or payments are made. It is not necessary to pay the full price all at once. When the father of the girl is assured of full payment, he makes ready the girl's dowry and on a certain day he kills a pig. The girl is smeared with pig grease, and decorated in all her finery, including many ropes of cowries, some gold lips and perhaps a bailer. These become the property of her future husband. The father's party now escort the girl to the place of the bridegroom.

The cooked pig is given to the boy's father and dealt around. This feast solemnizes the marriage. The boy's father has paid fully or in part the price say of 10 pigs and 4 bailers. The girl's father now pays the boy 3 or 4 pigs. The girl is now subject to her husband. He is the head of the house not she. The girl usually comes to live with the man at his place, not vice versa, though there are also exceptions to this rule. Should a couple elope; the father of the girl would go out looking for his daughter and try to bring her, back. Failing this, he might decide to put up with it, but pressure would be brought to bear on the boy in many ways, and in time his family would usually pay the full price. Elopement with entire escape of payment is unknown. In fact elopement is almost unknown. If the girl is taken out of another tribe, she now becomes part of her husband's tribe. Often the young couple do not at first build a special house of their own, the boy continuing to live with his father. But eventually they will have their own home.

Men and women eat together, and in Kobe sleep in the same house. In Mogei, however, men and women always sleep in separate houses. Usually the first wife is the "boss". The youngest wife is taken by the man to sleep in his house, if he is a headman. No other men may do this. The number of wives a man has depends on his wealth. Wives are expensive to buy; hence most young men must be contented with one. But as soon as opportunity arises, each man will try to get a second wife, then a third and so on. Some men in Mogei have ten wives. Women prefer to sleep in the same house as a protection, against spirits. They can be raped by bad spirits, even become pregnant. In this case usually the child and the woman die. At nightfall, they dread to be abroad, fearing the spirits. Some women claim to have been invited by a spirit hand to go into the *kunai* and sleep with the spirit. Hence, when many women sleep in one house they feel safer. [357]

In quarrels the women look to their relatives for help. The father usually never loses interest in his married daughter but follows her affairs closely. If the couple should quarrel, and if the girl's father attempts to stop the quarrel and is attacked by the husband, the latter is supposed to have committed a great crime, and is responsible in public opinion to make due reparation. This may consist in a family feast.

Infidelity is said to be common. If a man has several wives, he cannot follow their daily comings and goings closely, and the extra liberty enjoyed by these wives leads to licence. On the part of the woman infidelity is not common where the husband has but one wife. For the man, it may be just the opposite. If a married woman is raped, the offender must pay a pig or shells. If he pays, the damage is rectified. If he refuses to pay, the husband usually takes the law into his own hands and goes out and shoots a pig of the offender, or a general place quarrel may take place. It is not the rule that the offending man is killed, but it sometimes happens that an angry husband will kill him. When the wife is guilty, the man goes free, but the wife receives a beating from her husband. It may happen sometimes that he murders her in anger. Should a woman run away from her husband's place, the husband will go out to bring her back. If he cannot get her to come back, he is likely to kill her, as in the event of her running away her family does not reimburse the husband for what he has paid for the wile.

Grounds for separation on the part of both husband and wife are laziness, infidelity, continual quarrels and cruelty. In the case of separation, the small children go with the mother; the grown children are kept by the father. After 1eaving her husband, the woman would return to her own family. Both parties usually remarry. For the woman a price must again be paid but it is not as high as at the first marriage. This may be only one or two pigs. The father or brother of the woman must be paid. Young widows are always taken again in marriage. Usually the brother of the deceased husband claims the widows. It is considered tribal law that a young widow must remarry. A widow does not return to her own family, but remains in the place of her deceased husband. Old widows do not re-marry. If they had have grown children these take care of them; if there are no children then the old widow will live with one of her relatives or friends.

A widower usually seeks another wife. Even old men look for younger help-mates. Unmarried grown ups carry some stigma of shame; as a man does not marry because he is too poor, or is deformed, or has a bad name. A woman will not be taken in marriage if she is deformed, lazy or known to be of loose morals. No healthy decent girl ever remains single, and neither does any man who can get married refrain form doing so.

11. Sex Life

Boys are said to begin sexual relations with the opposite sex at about 15 or 16 years of age, girls are usually seduced earlier, some as young as ten years of age. Sexual relations between unmarried persons are allowed when the consent is mutual. Premarital relations are not punished when both parties are free and consent is mutual. At times of big feasts and singsings, young girls are often attracted by the gaily decorated young men, and take them by the arm, walking and dancing along with them as a sign of favour. This leads to sexual relations if the opportunity offers.

Generally young men do not go visiting young women of other places, except at night when the singsing *kanana* is held. This takes place in the women's house. The mother of the girls builds a big fire in the fireplace and by the light of this the couples sit on the floor facing one another, noses touching and heads weaving back and forth in imitation, apparently, of wooing birds. Should the fire die down, opportunity is taken by the couples to touch one another.

But should the older women catch them, they are chased out of the house with a stick. Much depends on the attachment of the couples to each other as to the amount of freedom taken at these

affairs, but the general rule is that it is a rather looked-forward to chance for lovers to carry on almost as though they were married. Sometimes such couples may eventually marry, but the arrangements must be made by the parents.

Coitus takes place outdoors, in *kunai* fields, along the roads, or anywhere where there is sufficient privacy It is considered a shame to be seen in the act. The relation between the sexual act and pregnancy is known. Contrary to the usual belief of natives elsewhere, the natives here are positive in their claim that a single act of coitus is sufficient to induce pregnancy. Women chew the berry, of the *kuong* tree to induce pregnancy. This tree resembles a peach tree. Preventatives are not used according to reliable information. Abortion is practiced by pressing around the womb with crooked thumbs This is said to be the only method employed. The sterile period in women is not known.

Menstruation is considered unclean. The women in their periods sleep in a small outhouse called *pena manga*. They may work by day in the gardens, but are not supposed to travel abroad. All children know about women menstruating. This comes from the fact that the women cook the food for men and boys. When they are in their periods, they tell the men to get someone else to cook for them. The regularity of menstruation is also known even to the boys. Should a man eat food cooked by a menstruating woman, he would become sick. The duration of pregnancy is not known, and it is believed the process can be hurried on by chewing the *kuong* berry and by asking the help of departed spirits.

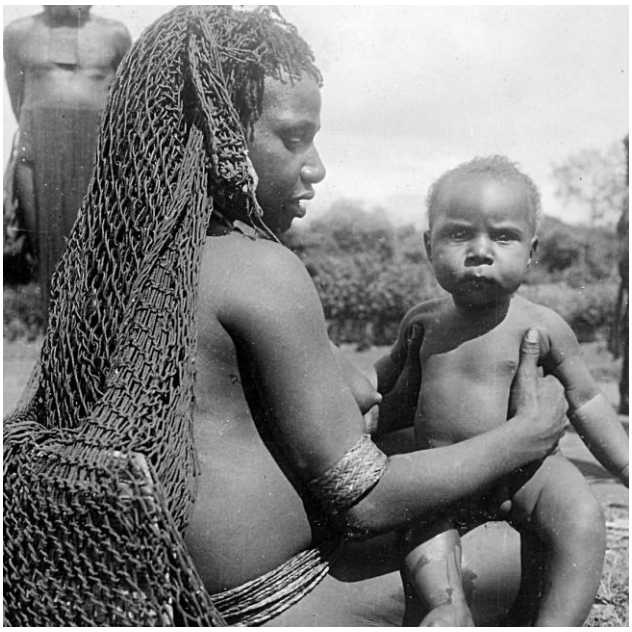
Pregnancy is accepted as a simple, natural fact. A short time before her time arrives, the woman is told to take it easy, doing no hard work, only taking the food out of the garden as needed. It is also universally known, even to boys, that pregnant women do not menstruate. There are no *tabus* [taboos] at this time.

Sexual relations are not carried out in time of war, sorrow, death, sickness, but effective *tabus* seem not to exist. This may be due to the fact that while sexual acts are carried out only as opportunity offers, so likewise *tabus* do not carry weight. Prostitution and homosexuality are unknown. Sterility is no ground for divorce. The man is said to be sorry for a sterile wife and consoles her by saying, "never mind we shall get a child by another wife".

12 Birth and Child

The only preparations made by the father in anticipation of the birth of the child is to see that there is a pig ready for the feast held at the naming of the children and that the invitations are sent out to relatives of the wife. When the woman realises that her time is approaching, she repairs to the *kunai* where a small rough shelter is built. Here birth takes place. Usually two or three women such as the woman’s mother, her married sister, and her aunt or close friends accompany the woman to care for her during childbirth. The man is not allowed to visit his wife until the child is born, but there are no taboos he must observe. He can work and go about as usual. In childbirth the pains are described as the effect of the child’s body hurting the mother. There is nothing said about the spirits hurting her. In fact the whole affair is taken as quite a natural thing.

There are no special midwives; nearly all women who have had children are capable of assisting. The afterbirth is buried in the ground in fear lest be carelessly left aside and pigs should eat it the children would die. The navel cord is cut with a sharp bamboo knife. If miscarriage takes place, the foetus is buried without more ado. If the child is born dead, it is buried without ceremony near the *kunai* shelter. If a woman dies in childbirth, the same ceremonies are held as for one who dies a natural death. The mother has no ceremonies to carry out. She is simply rubbed clean. If the child is sound, the helpers send word to the husband. He arrives near the *kunai* shelter and pauses outside. The child is now shown to him. He praises the wife and says what a fine child it is and the promptly departs.



Woman and child by Taffy Jones.

Twins (*kangamjoga pagilim*) are looked upon with disfavour but nothing is done about it. There are in Mogei two grown up sets of twins, one of two men and one of a man and a woman. But multiple births are rare. The natives expressed incredulity when I told them that one white woman had four and recently one mother had five children all living. Infanticide is not practiced. As one woman expressed it, "If a woman does not want a child, she tries to get another woman to procure an abortion for her. But once the full term pregnancy had gone on to childbirth, the child is born and raised." The mother looks after the infant entirely. She may be helped by another nursing woman in case she is sick or had little milk. Nursing takes place for about two years or until the child is strong enough to walk about with the mother. Often one sees children who must be over four years suckling the mother's breasts, but the real, daily nursing is over long before this age.

After the birth of the child, when she is strong enough, the woman leaves the *kunai* shelter which is destroyed and she now returns to her home. Sometime later a feast is held. The father sends word for the mother's brother to come. He is called the *pami*. He should come to name the child is the way the invitation reads: *pami omba m'bi tenum (pami*-he will come – name – he puts). Names are called after people who have attracted the fancy of the *pami*. If about the time the child is born, the Pami is struck by the appearance or power of some man; he will make a note of the name and call the boy this name. Also if he should see a fine type of woman at this time, he may call the girl [360] after the name of this woman.

Names of visitors who make a good impression are likely to be noted for future use. There are some babies here now called *kiap* following the visit of the government patrol last year. When the child is to be named, the close relatives of the mother are called, a feast is held, and the *pami* announces the name of the child. Fathers do not lose their own name in the identity of the child. They are called both their old name and also "father of so and so", but the latter term is used only after the child has grown and obtained a definite place in the village life. No one would ever call a man the father of the name of an infant.

There are no taboos placed on the father after the birth of the child. He can come and go as before. The relationship of father and infant depends on the man. If he is attached to the child, he will often carry it, hold it, and soothe its crying. In this case he is said to be a good father. But he can also deliberately choose to ignore it, and leave it always in the mother's hands. In this case he is said to be a poor father, and often domestic quarrels arise out of this carelessness of the father. Women, too, complain of it when the father is utterly indifferent to the child. A large family is desired. Sons are preferred to daughters throughout the tribe.

13. Education.

The training of the child is more by his own observation than by any direct parental teaching. At an early age the boy accompanies his father to work, goes along hunting with him, often is in the father's charge on trading hunting trading trips. He learns to use the bow and arrow, play the flute, build fences, and build houses, as well as sing and dance, in company with other youths more often than under the tutelage of his father.

The girls learn from their mothers how to work *bilums*, plant vegetables, cook food and so on. About the age of eight or nine children begin to directly assist their parents at work. The parents at this time begin to exercise a strong hand over their children. Should the child disobey, it is punished sometimes physically, sometimes morally. In the latter case, the punishment consists often in the parents' ignoring the presence of the children, leaving them abruptly to show displeasure. The disobedient child is not deprived of any possession, or made to go hungry.

In their games children sometimes show the work of grown-ups. Boys play at planting, fishing, shooting birds, fighting. In fact, one of the boys' sham battle games takes on the real seriousness of a fight between grown-up warriors, and will last the whole day, the boys using bamboo shoots for spears and attacking and retreating like big men. Ghost games, where one boy decorates himself to represent a ghost, are also common. Girls have no doll games, and none of their games seem to indicate the doings of grown-up women.

About the age of nine, the sexes are separated in the sleeping houses in Mogei, and in separate compartments in the Kobe houses. Boys prefer now to play with other boys, walk abroad with other boys, hunt and fish with other boys. Girls now accompany the mother always. There is a moral training given the children in the sense that they are rebuked for certain acts, told that they'll be punished by the headmen. Fear, more than any love for right, is thus [361] the outstanding motive for the child's and later the man's good conduct. One's good name comes later to be valued, and as elsewhere the Mt. Hagen natives all desire the esteem of the community. Virtues most praised are courage, strength of personality, fighting ability, ability to acquire and hold wealth. Mere goodness is more often than not considered weakness. Might is right, and the ability to maintain or exercise might makes the tribal leaders. Through might theft, rape, murder and intrigue are all justified. It is only the weak who are punished or who suffer the effects of evil actions. Revenge is a paramount motive of conduct. All of this the children learn from hearing the parents discuss cases, or from observing examples in the community life around them.

Next to parents, the uncles and aunts of the children have the most say over the children; help them as much as they can, assist the parents in finding the dowry or purchase price at the time of marriage. However, they are said to have no special duties in the upbringing of the children, this being a matter for the parents alone. There are no initiation ceremonies for either sex. The boy grows into manhood and the girl attains puberty without any fuss or public feast. There are no secret societies in the Mt. Hagen tribes.

14. Death and Burial Customs.

Death that occurs after a short illness is nearly always ascribed to an evil charm worked through the native ginger called *kobena:* usually deaths of young people also. But where a death can be easily explained, the accusation of evil charming is not made. As an example of this latter are: murder, death in battle, mother in childbirth, real old people's deaths, accidents as falls, cuts, etc. Any death the cause of which is not obvious is always ascribed to some one's giving the deceased *kobena.*

When a person is sick, one of the medicine men comes and putting the leaf called *kengen anung* in the fire, he takes it and rubs it back and forth across the sick person, mumbling the while. When one is dying, his friends hold the abdomen, and pretend to be trying to keep him from passing out. The dying man is left in his own house. While holding the stomach, if no movement can be any longer detected, the person is considered dead and the death wail is set up. All present, cry together in a kind of wail, not a chant.

The corpse is prepared for burial by the person's relatives or friends. The body is rubbed with pig grease, covered with leaves and placed on a platform till time for burial. Usually a day intervenes between death and burial. The time of burial depends on the arrival of relatives or friends. When it is considered that all who can come have arrived, the procession begins to the burial ground. There are community burial grounds, two large ones existing in Mogei.

It is usual to bury the corpse in the morning, as late afternoon burials are avoided from fear. It has happened often that when delay has caused the late arrival of close friends and relatives, the march has been begun in the afternoon, and the corpse left in the *kunai* near the grave till next morning. Using sticks, the same as for gardening work, the friends of the deceased [362] dig a hole three feet deep or more, and covering the corpse with leaves called *pogata* the body is placed in the grave, and covered with earth.

About two months later the body is exhumed and all the bones gathered and placed in the spirit house prepared for them. The handling of the skull is the same as the other bones, it having no special significance. No part of the corpse is eaten, the natives claiming to be horrified at the thought. After the burial the signs of mourning are carried till the exhuming of the body. These mourning ceremonies consist in daily wailing, going covered with mud or clay and remaining more or less at home. The *kanana* singsings of the young people are discontinued. After the bones are exhumed, a feast is held. In the case of a headman, it is done on a large scale, as many as fifty pigs being killed. Friends of the place are all invited, and the cooked pigs are shared with them: the more visitors, the greater honour to the dead. I have been told they never begrudge the giving of pigs' meat to strangers at these feasts.

An important man died some time ago near our station. On the day of the feast, I could not attend, but sent some of the station boys. The village people resented my absence, and I had to apologize to them and explain the circumstances. Each of the station boys at the feast received a leg of pig, and was told that had I been there personally, I would have been given an entire pig. After this feast is over, the mourning ceremonies cease. The mud is rubbed off, and village life becomes active again.

Burial ceremonies for headmen differ slightly from those for ordinary members of the tribe. The body of the deceased headman is wrapped in mats, and better prepared for burial. Only a small hole is dug in the ground. The body is buried, but the head is left exposed for a day, while the people of the place watch. Next day the head is also covered. The leaving exposed the head of the chief is to give more time to visiting friends to attend the burial and see the last of the corpse before it is completely buried. Women are buried deep in the earth, and are said to be buried "no good". A heavy stone is let fall on the chest, a *bilum* is torn and the eyes covered with this, then earth is thrown over the body. Men killed in battle and women who die in childbirth are buried the same as anyone else. There are no special ceremonies for them.

15. Religion.

The religious beliefs of the Mt. Hagen natives are rather vague. Nearly all the spirits they know had a human origin and are departed ghosts. These ghosts, if of the local tribe, remain in the vicinity of the burial grounds. Strange ghosts move about. Spirits take on a rank depending on their earthly existence as men. If the departed was a headman, his ghost will be a leader in the other sphere. If the departed was of no account here, his spirit will likewise be of no account. There are some spirits which were not men, being perhaps ghosts of nature or animals. Natives are very vague about this, saying they don't know these ghosts, though they know their names.

There are good and bad spirits. Bad spirits cause death, sickness, accidents, bad crops, etc. Good spirits aid in harvest, fishing, hunting, fighting, [363]. About the spirit world the information is very vague. The spirits perhaps eat the fruit of trees. How they pass the time is not known. One or two have distinctive means of showing their presence; thus *kur wag* sings; a departed spirit of the tribe makes a squeaking noise like a rat; *kur niningil* dwells in a stone and holds conversation with men, he being perhaps "an echo".

The spirits of the departed are supposed to fight against the real ghosts, not of men, that they meet in the spirit world. Spirits who were enemies of one another in this life are supposed to remain enemies and fight one another in the spirit world. Spirits can be influenced by men offering a feast of pig. These feasts take

place before a hunt or before the harvest, as the spirits can help men find *kapuls* and rats, and help bring in a good harvest. There are no rituals for spirit worship and no places reserved for their cult beyond the spirit houses where the bones of the departed are housed. The only offering made to spirits is a pig. The spirit is said to eat the "soul" of the pig while the men eat the flesh. Against bad spirits, protection is secured by offering a pig. This is usually done only by the headmen. The only natural phenomena with which spirits are connected are earthquakes and typhoons. With the sun, moon, water, ordinary winds, and animals they have no relation. There are no stories of any certainty regarding the origin of spirits.

The following spirits are known by name: *kur ent*, a good spirit residing in the woods, was never a man; kur ragera a bad spirit of the bush, never a man causes death; *kur nangaipa*, a good bush spirit, never a man; *kur waup*, a good spirit, is female; *kur wag*, the water ghost, a bad spirit of a former man; *kur chepok*, a bad man-spirit; *kur konagamp*, bush spirit of a man; *kur* nengfior, female spirit; *kur nengap*, a female spirit; *kur penamba*, a good female spirit; *kur niningil*, the stone-echo ghost; *kur prumbil*, a female spirit; kur rump, a female spirit; *kur kubaga*, male spirit from Enga; *Kur Maip*, the spirit of the founder of Mogei tribe.

Some Remarks by Father Garry Roche SVD on the above article.

Fr. Ross arrived in Mt. Hagen around Easter 1934. These notes would have been written after about two years or less in the area. Naturally the culture has changed in the past eighty years. The notes are still very informative. The following could be kept in mind.

- When Fr. Ross compiled these notes he was still living at Wilya. This is reflected in the locations of most of the houses described in the article. Fr. Ross moved to Rebiamul in 1938.

- Fr. Ross was using real names, eg., when listing the occupants of houses under house no. 3 he lists “Aiberi” and “Ren” as parents. He then lists “Roika” as a son. This man Roika was still alive in 2016. One of his sons is Hugo Kop, currently Chair of Governing Council of Holy Trinity Teachers College. (Concerning tribal affiliation, Roika is actually affiliated with Mokei Nampakae and not Kobe.)

- Likewise in House no 3. Nema is among those still alive. The place name “Marere” is not used much nowadays but it was in fact the area between Rebiamul and Kingalrui, (Holy Trinity Teachers College.)

- Orthography: Fr. Ross often used “ch” where now we would use “t” e.g. the word spear is translated “chimbun” whereas the more general spelling in Melpa would be “tembun”. (See under “Weapons and Implements”. Likewise the name “Kudi” is probably more accurately pronounced “Kuri”.

- Tribal Organization and Language. In section 9 on Tribal Organization, Fr. Ross lists about 20 tribes. His description could give the impression that there were several different languages. In actual fact practically all these tribes would speak Melpa or Tempagag. The Hageners themselves simply call their own language “mbo-ik”. The Nebyler dialect is often called “Tempagag.”

The following illustrations go with the article in Anthropos and are referenced in the text. *The ethnological Notes on Mt. Hagen Tribes, with special reference to the tribe called Mogei. 1936.*

W. Ross: Ethnographical Notes on Mt. Hagen Tribes.

Plate I

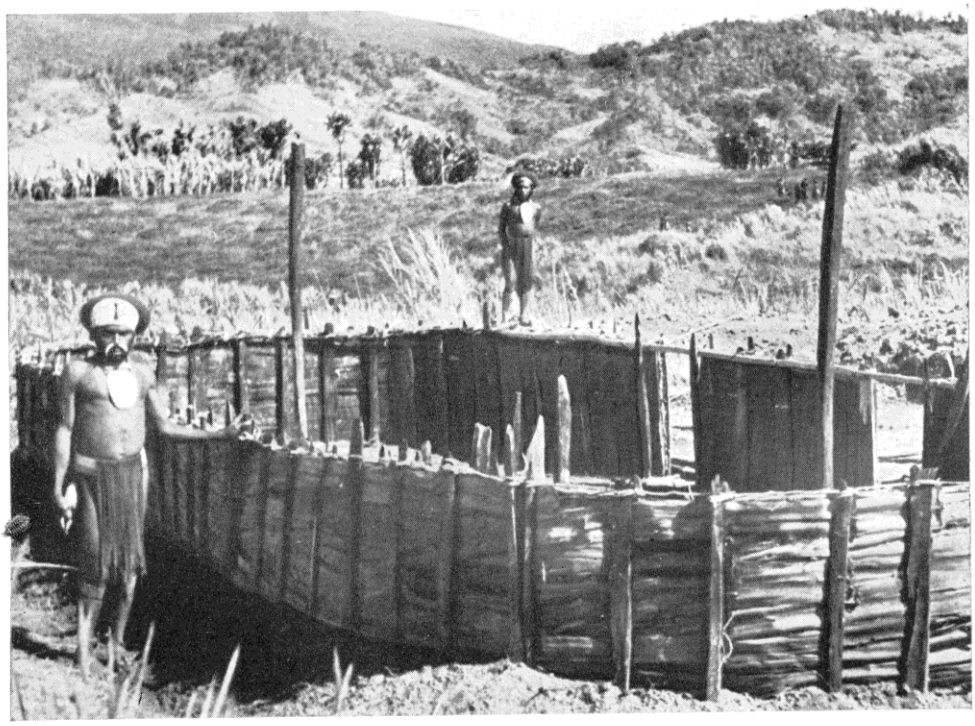


Fig. 1. House building in Mt. Hagen: Women's house with two doors.

Fig. 2. Gardens of middle Wahgi. Aerial view.

Anthropos XXXI.

St.Gabriel-Mödling/Wien, Abt. Buchdruck

Plate II

Anthropos XXVI.

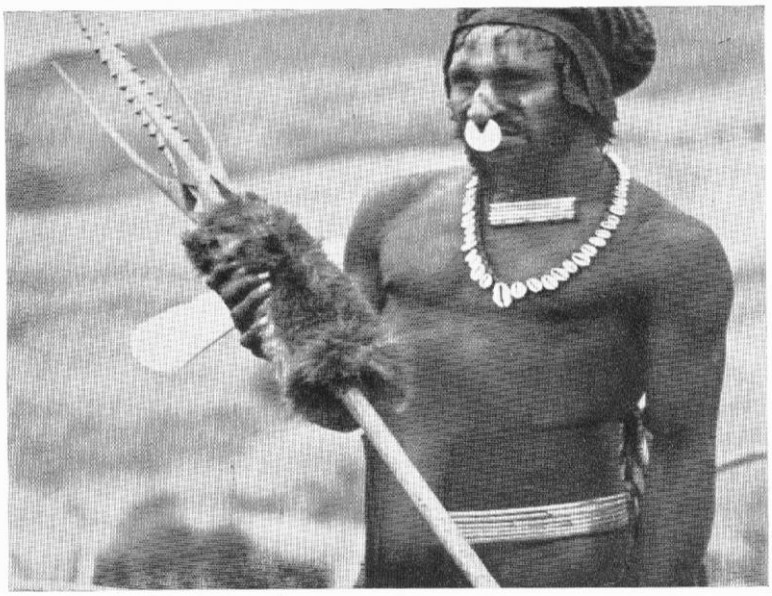


Fig. 3 and 4. Wahgi valley spears; one piece of work. Needle-like projections from the shaft. Decorated with *kapul* skin.

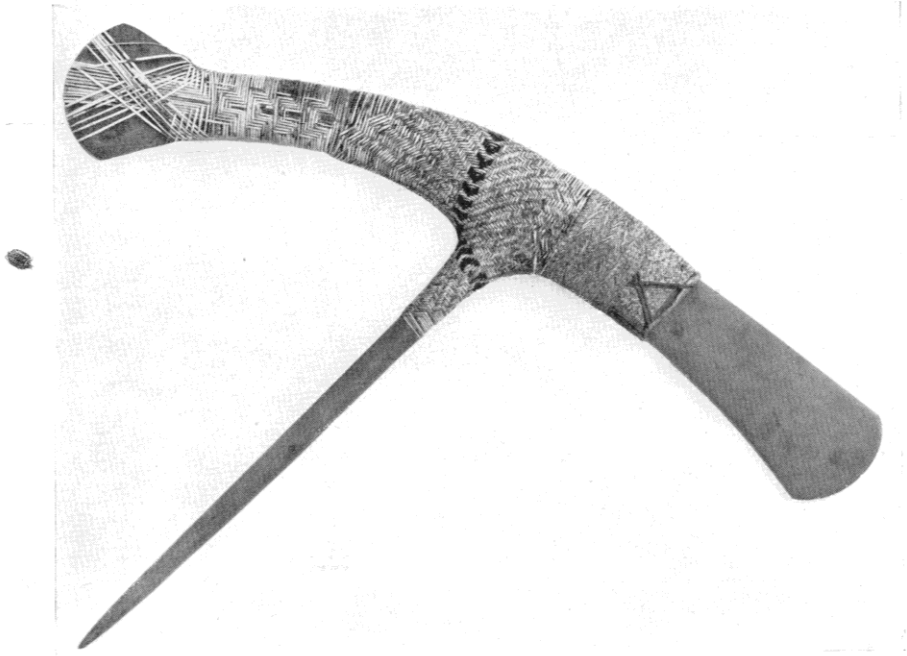


Fig. 5. Stone axe. With permission of Mr. SCHAFFHAUSEN, M. Gladbach (Germany).

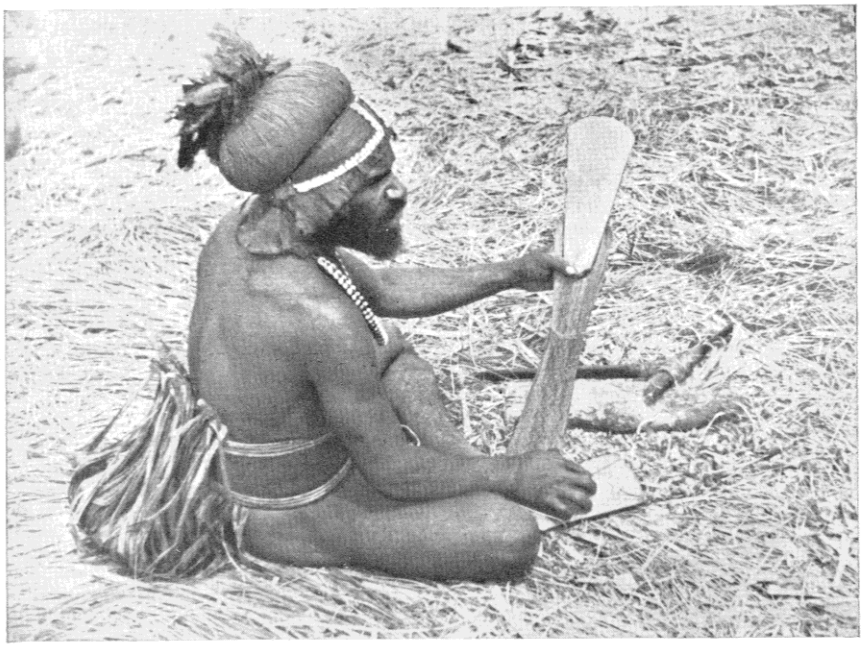


Fig. 6. Stone axe manufacture: Measuring shaft for flint holder.
Copyright by Mr. M. J. LEAHY.

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Plate IV

Fig. 7. Cooking at Mogei: The first row of potatoes and greens ready to be covered with a row of heated stones.

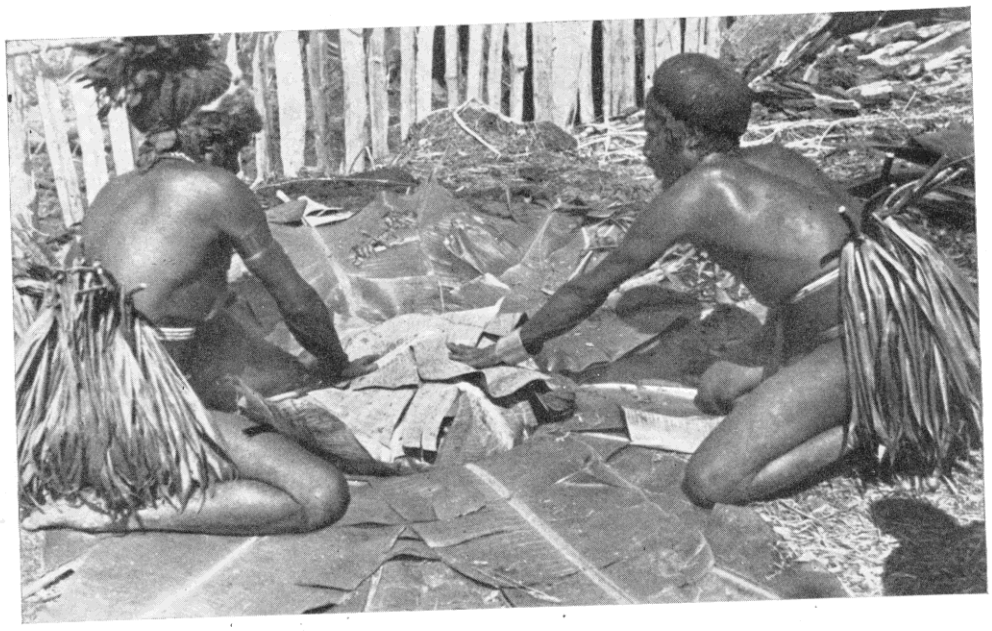


Fig. 8. Cooking at Mogei: The whole being closed with banana leaves.

Plate V

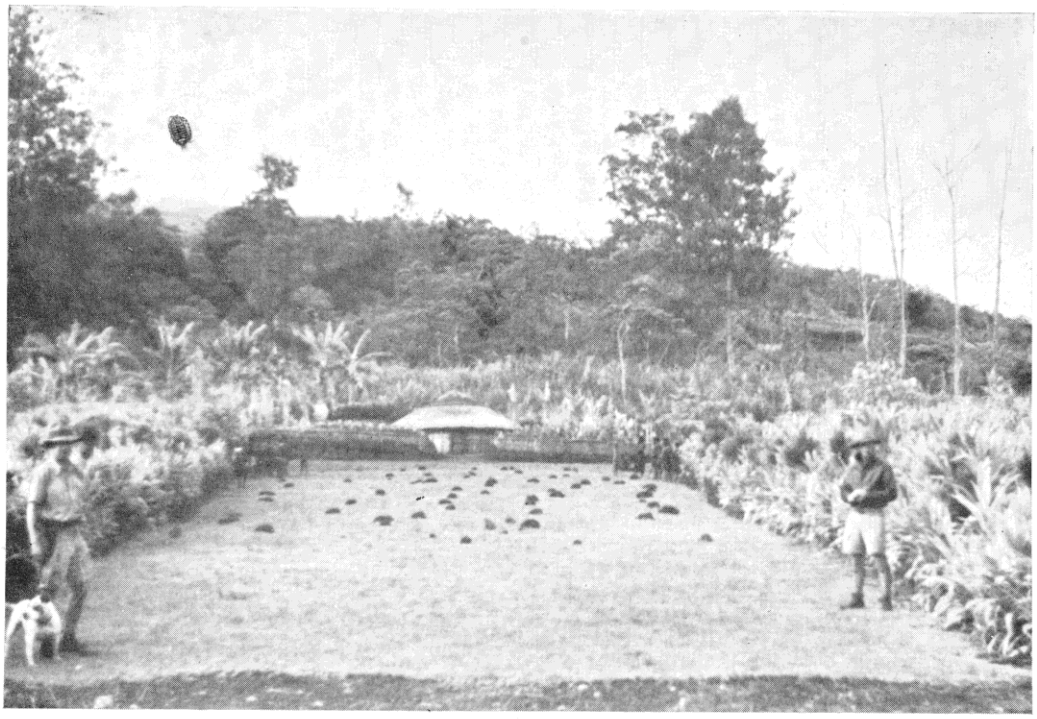


Fig. 9. Mt. Hagen singsing ground; borders decorated with shrubs (In the foreground the Leahy brothers).

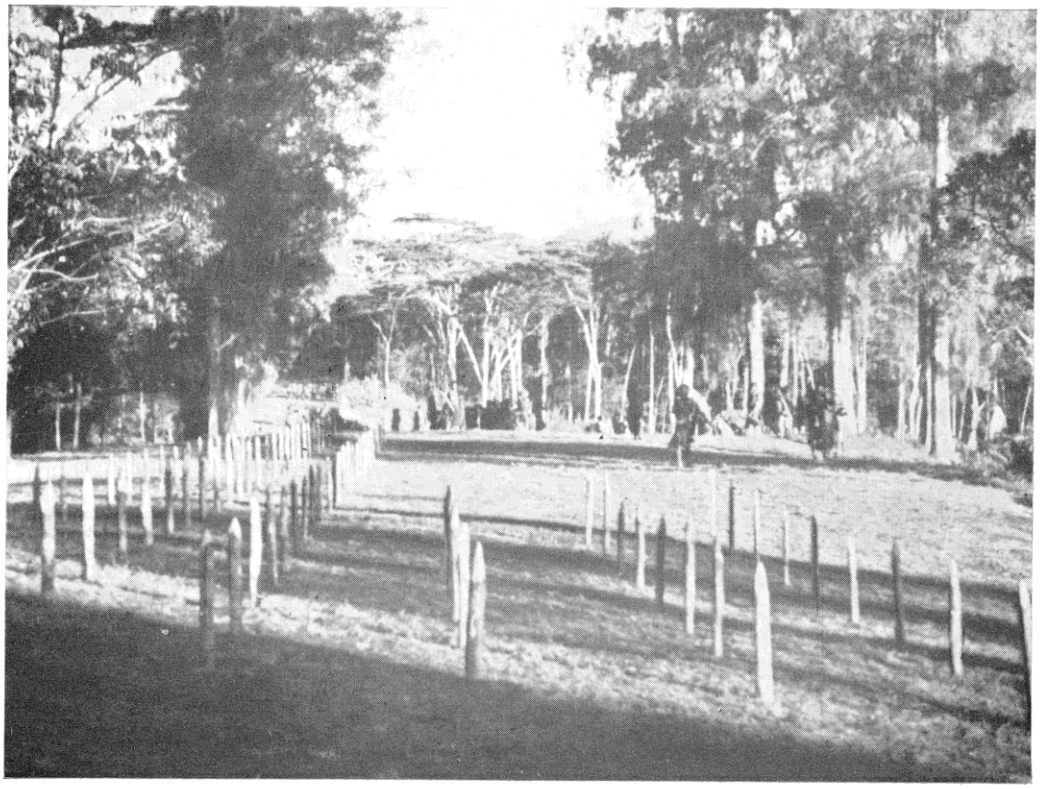


Fig. 10. Mt. Hagen singsing ground; stakes to which pigs are tied at the big feasts.

The Thirty Year man.

Val Bettin interviewed Fr William Ross, in the U.S. in 1956 22 years after the Hagen Mission was begun.

Val Bettin introduced him saying: "with me is Fr William Ross of New Guinea. He is the oldest American missionary in that country."

Q. Father tell me something of your life there in New Guinea?
There was plenty of mud along the coast and malaria as well in the tropical climate. I was eight years there. Then there was the romance of the Highlands where I have spent 22 years at 6,000 feet above sea-level. In a country only discovered in 1933.

Q Were you the first missionary in this area?
Yes, I led an expedition over the Bismarck's into the Waghi Valley. No white man had ever been on that route before.

Q. Did you find the locals friendly?
They were not very friendly at first. They were suspicious of us and they had a war-like disposition. On 23 January 1935 they killed one of my companions, Brother Eugene he was from Illinois. Tribal fighting was once the sport of the locals armed with bows and arrows. (Movie of armed warriors is shown on the screen). In this picture those arrows are tipped with human bones. Brother Eugene was killed with eight of these arrows.

Months earlier Fr Morschheuser was also killed further down the valley. The men in this picture are wearing gaudy headdresses of bird of Saxony plumes as they stamp around the sing-sing ground. The Bailer shells they are wearing are very valuable. There are some young boys following the men learning how to be warriors as well. Now there is peace in the Highlands but even today, if you see your enemies marching like this you'd better stay at home.

Q. How did you manage to win over their goodwill?
After the murder of our two missionaries the government issued an order. No white resident could leave their house. We were confined to our own homes and this was enforced for several months. This gave me the opportunity to learn the Mogei language. There were about 45,000 speakers of this language. No one knew anything about it and nothing was written in it of course.

So I started from scratch and learnt the language and made a lexicon of it. I worked tirelessly on this and then translated hymns, bible stories and the catechism into their language. In 1938, I mimeographed 500 sheets and handed them out.

Then there was the medical work we did. A woman might come in selling us sweet potatoes but she would be carrying a sick baby. If we tried to approach the baby she would rush away.

We were seen as sorcerers. After a while they let us bandage their sores and they realised we were there to look after them and for their good. So instead of throwing spears at us they ground them down and threw them away and now we have peace.

Q. Did they have any religion of their own?

Yes they did. It is called animism. They took the worship of these spirits very seriously. These ghosts were supposed to have taken up residence in *Kur* stones near the river and the power of the ghosts resides in them. These spirits could be of their dead ancestors or just spirits.

The ghosts are thought to have put a stone near the river bank and the power of these ghosts resides in these stones. Each morning the men go down to the riverbank looking for these stones they collect them and bring them back to their hamlets. When enough stones have been gathered there is a great celebration. The chiefs direct the spectacle (Fr Ross shows the film of the parade of girls dressed up).

Sacred *Kur* stones being cared for. Leahy collection

The spectacle begins with the wives and daughters of the men walking slowly between two rows of spectators. They are wearing pearl shells belonging to their husbands or fathers to show how wealthy they are. In the dance that follows only men can take part and it is held behind a stockade. Their shuffling feet are supposed to imitate the invisible ghosts. The men worship the spirits in this dance and are rewarded. It is called the great Kur dance which is held every five years.

Thousands of visitors come to see it. The men stay in long communal houses and say solemn prayers to the ghosts, and many pigs are offered to the spirits.

Cooked pork is carried to rickety platforms and divided up for people standing underneath the platform. The ghosts are satisfied with the souls of the pigs and the people can eat the sacrificial pork happily. Now we are blessed and we shall have many children, our pigs will grow and the ghosts will be happy.

Q. I suppose they have other dances?
Yes, they are known as dancing people. You can go through this area and find a dance going on somewhere. The dances are done to show the prosperity of the people or after a good harvest. It is the happy, joyful spirit of the tribe. One of these dances is the Mur dance and it has nothing to do with religion. It is performed by men and women together. Young girls link arms with the men.

This dance reminds one of a kind of bird as they go up and down on their feet bending their knees. There is also a long whistle piped in time to the dancing. Thousands of people crowd around to get a better view. Not even I could pep them up to a greater effort.

Q. I suppose they soon went home to sleep?
No, not at all they kept going for hours.

Q. Were there any other events apart from dances?
The Moka is the biggest social event. This consists of present giving. Let's say the chief wants to make a treaty of peace with another tribe. They pass over pearl shells trying to make friends. The shells are laid along the ground in rows and counted and checked. Each shell is worth five dollars. They must be returned in value and accepted as a debt. Up to twelve hundred shells could change hands in a day.

Q. Were here any other gifts given away?
Then there is the exchange of pigs. The chief who receives the pigs counts them out. They are like a credit in a cheque book. Each eight pigs or shells exchanged are marked by bamboo disc which must be reimbursed in the future.

Photograph: Mt Hagen tribesmen in their finery. Photograph by Brian Mennis

Q. The missions depend on the aircraft to bring in supples what was the reaction of the locals to the first aircraft that came?
At first they considered the plane which came roaring out of the sky as a ghost. They viewed it as a terrible spirit come to destroy them. Some people lay face down on the ground and did not look up for an hour. Others who were more adventurous rushed to their houses and killed the first pig they could lay their hands on as a sacrifice to this awful monster.

Today these same people roar with laughter when they describe how many pigs they gave to this metal ghost.

Q. What are some of the marriage customs of the Mogei?
The people live in a man's world. They see us westerners as very foolish why should the women be allowed to make a choice in whom they can marry? The girl has nothing to do with it. All negotiations are made by the clan. Often the couple have not seen each other before the marriage ceremony. After the bride price has been paid which maybe twenty pigs, the girl is brought to the man's house smeared with lard. The man might run away too scared to meet her.

Maybe a week later the girl cooks a meal in public where everyone can see. She offers him food and if he accepts the food then he accepts the girl in front of everyone. In offering the food the girl is agreeing to be his wife. This is the wedding custom of the Mogei in Mt Hagen.

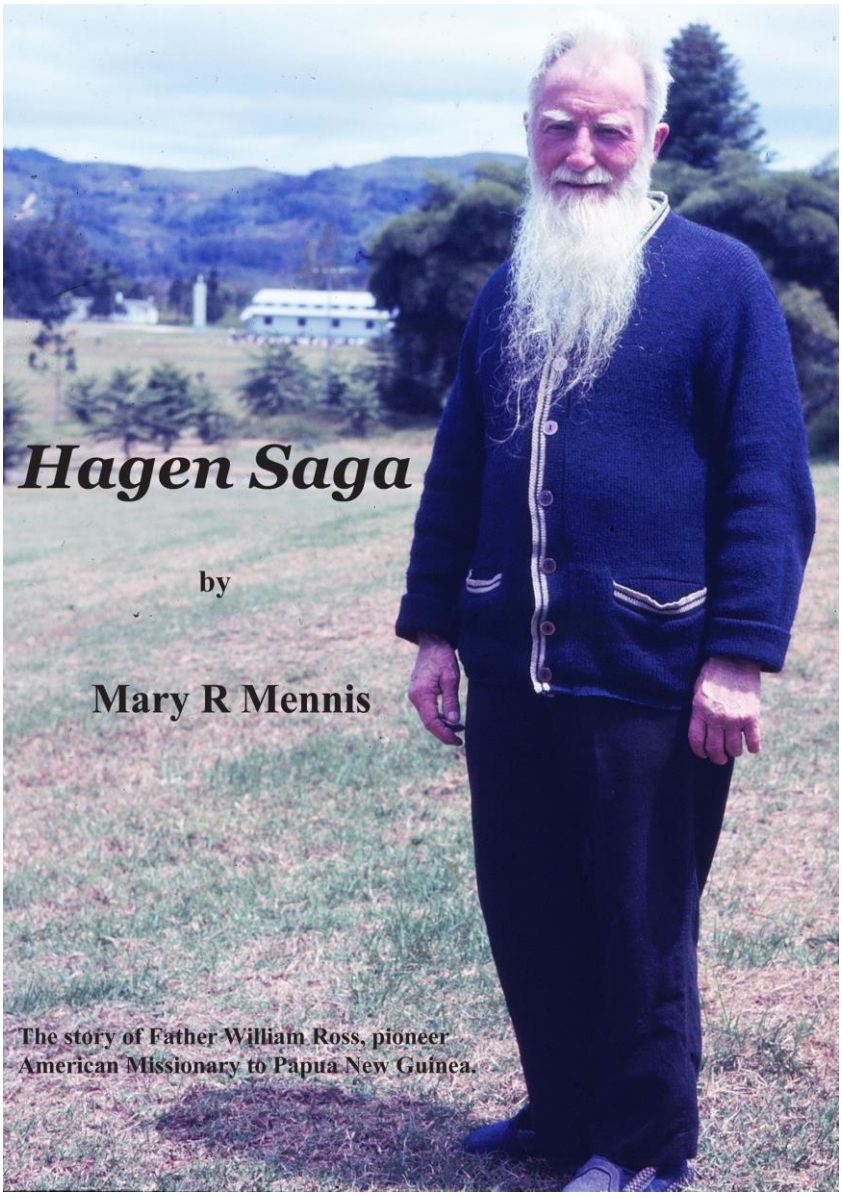
Q. Do you try to change any of their customs?
We don't interfere with their customs unless they are detrimental to the people. Most of their customs are OK. But if a man gets sick they will want to find who killed him. (He shows footage of this). They hold a trial, a real trial to find the culprit. At first they try to cure the man.

They hold a ceremony called Pulling sugar. They say "let's try to suck out the poison from that man". They cut bamboo pieces and sharpen them. They place these on the body of the man and suck out the poison and then spit it into a tin on a fire which sizzles from that. No man gets sick unless someone has poisoned him.

But now they say they have a real spirit man in the village. The catechist comes into the scene and tips over the medicine man's bowl. The missionary has been called and gives the dying man the last rites. The missionary is received well even by pagans who are willing to be baptised before death. [Fr Bernarding is seen wearing a white cassock while he administers to a sick person]. The sick man is carried back to this house and the pieces of sugar cane are placed on a platform for all to see. If the man dies than they must find out who was the guilty one.

Q. Have you seen many changes since you arrived?
When we came into this area we found people who were living in an age of 20 thousand years ago. They knew nothing of steel, materials, paper or thread. The trend now is for the people to have a better life. The prime movers in this direction are the missionaries. There are now 36,000 baptised Catholics in 16 parishes. I am happy with the progress we have made in the last 22 years.

Tell me Father what is your greatest wish?
My greatest wish for the future is that this work will continue. That boys and girls would follow in our footsteps. If I knew that we would have priests, brothers and sisters and lay people to go to the foreign missions so our work could continue then my dearest wish would be fulfilled.



Photograph: Fr Ross in front of the Rebiamul church, 1971

Second Waigani Seminar, 1968. The History of Melanesia.

Article by Fr Ross: The Catholic Mission in the Western Highlands. pps 319 - 327

This paper will present the historical development of the Catholic Mission in the Western Highlands.

Father Franz Kirschbaum who came to New Guinea in 1908 was a pioneer missionary on the Sepik River and travelled extensively up and down the great waterway, and along the side streams, he sighted what appeared to be a vast inland plain stretching far to the southeast. He wrote to Bishop Francis Wolf, the first bishop of the Divine Word Mission who had come to New Guinea in 1923, suggesting that an expedition be formed to investigate the inland country. Father Richard Nowak and Father William Ross would accompany Father Kirschbaum.

Bishop Wolf applied for a permit from the government office at Rabaul, and promised to turn over to the office, maps and data. The reply from Rabaul was that such an expedition was inadvisable at this stage.

In 1932, Bishop Wolf appointed Father Alfons Schaeffer and Brother Anton Bass to open a mission at Guyebi and Bundi in the Bismarck Mountains. They were the first Catholic missionaries to cross the Ramu River and build permanent stations in the Bismarcks. The Wahgi Valley was well known to the Bundi people. They called it Arava. They informed Father Schaefer that Arava women were married into Bundi and Bundi women went to Arava.

They said, “Come on over with us and see the big valley”. But the two missionaries had their hands full building up Bundi and had to decline the invitation. “We can go over later”.

Early in February, 1933, Michael J. Leahy sighted the Wahgi valley, arranged an expedition through the N.G.G. Ltd for whom he was working at the time; Daniel Leahy accompanied his brother, along with Ken Spinks, a surveyor and Jim Taylor, a government patrol officer. The members of this historic expedition remained in Mount Hagen till September 1933, when they returned to the coast and went south for a well-earned holiday. Mick Leahy and I had known each other for several years. From Mt. Hagen in July 1933 Mick wrote to me at Alexishafen. “This is a fabulous country, a vast population, a beautiful climate; in fact this is the real New Guinea. Come in here by all means.”

[p320] I showed this letter to Bishop Wolf who told me, “Go to Salamaua, arrange a flight to Mt Hagen and spend some time up there arranging for a future mission.”

I took ship to Salamaua, reported to the district Officer, E.J.Taylor who informed me that he had received word from Mick and Dan that they were closing their camp at Mt. Hagen and were walking back to Wau. Mr Taylor suggested to me that it would not be feasible to go Mt Hagen at this time, since I had no carriers, supplies or arms so I waited at Wau for Mick and Dan to come in.

We spent a couple of weeks together, waiting for the boat going south, [to take us] by way of Madang and Alexishafen and Rabaul. At Alexishafen Mick, Dan and Jim Taylor had a happy visit with Bishop Wolf, who was most enthusiastic about an expedition to start early in the New Year 1934. He had already appointed Father William Tropper and Brother Eugene Frank to accompany me on the expedition.

In November 1933, Father Schaefer, Father Cranssen and Brother Anton were ready to cross the Bismarcks and visit the Arava people. The headman of the Korugu area, a powerful chief named Kauwagl, came to Bundi with his Bundi wife and a large number of Chimbu related to the Bundis [through marriage]. They escorted the three missionaries on the first expedition to the Wahgi Valley from the north: Mick Leahy’s expedition came into the valley from the east. Father Schaefer and party in easy stages reached Kerowagi. Through the influence of Kauwagl and other natives, the party met a friendly reception everywhere. They returned and reported their experience to Bishop Wolf.

Father Tropper, Brother Eugene and Father Ross were preparing to leave Alexishafen in early January, 1934. However, supplies that had been ordered failed to turn up on time. It was not until February 15 1934 that we boarded the launch the "Michael" with 70 carriers and supplies to last for six months, besides essential building materials, nails, locks, hinges, bolts, household supplies and church goods. There was no airstrip either in Madang or Alexishafen at this time. Certain supplies we had to bring in overland by carriers but rice, coffee, salt, tea and sugar could come in by plane from Lae.

The "Michael" took us to Bogadjim about 18 miles down the coast from Madang. There was a road to the Ramu River from this port. On February 17 1934, we started the long trek. It would take us 38 days to reach Mt Hagen. Crossing the Ramu Rover in two dugouts, one passenger at a time and a limited amount of cargo took up an entire day, but we made it without mishap.

From the bank of the Ramu, the road followed a dried river-bed; there was hardly any shade and the heat was like a drawn sword; we were all badly sunburned especially on the legs after wearing shorts. When we reached Bundi, the natives gave us a warm welcome, but as they carried us in triumph, the sunburnt legs became a real torture. Fathers Aufenanger and Schaefer were away on a bush trip. There was no-one at home at Bundi except a few native labourers. Bishop Wolf wished Father Schaefer and Father Aufenanger to accompany us as far as Mt Hagen, as Father Schaefer knew the roads and had many contacts, at least in the Chimbu area.

I had a native Mount Hagen boy of 18 years of age; he had come with Mick and Dan Leahy to Alexishafen and remained there while the Leahys and Jim Taylor continued on to Sydney. From the Mt Hagen boy I learned many words in the native language and wrote a vocabulary which would be valuable after we left the Chimbu area.

At various hamlets along the route, we made inquiries as to who might be interested in having us work in their areas. One volunteer would be appointed as our future representative. We would return and talk with him again. Likely sites for mission stations were marked on our rough map. Along the route we marked sites and wrote the names of native friends at Denglagu, head of the Chimbu Gorge, at middle Chimbu, at Merane near the present Kundiawa, at Mingende which would be our centre; at Kerowagi, Nondugl, Banz, Kelua, and Wilya.

We arrived at Wilya, Mount Hagen on March 28 1934 and met Mick and Dan Leahy, who had completed a small airstrip and were expecting the first plane to land at the Mogei airstrip on Easter Sunday 1st April 1934. Mick asked our party to begin our work at Wilya, and look after the airstrip, as his mining camp was 1100 feet higher up the mountain and two miles distant. But we had orders from Bishop Wolf to start the work of the Catholic mission at Mingende, as the gap between Bundi, the last resident Catholic mission station and Mount Hagen was too great. A land-contract and link-up must be maintained, for any effective mission work.

The first plane on the Mogei airstrip touched down about 9.am on Easter Sunday. Bob Gurney, the pilot of Guinea airways was amazed to have seven Europeans greet him. The plane brought food, supplies and mail for Mick and Dan. Early Monday morning, Bob took off and shortly afterwards we were heading back to Mingende.

Father Schaefer and Father Aufenanger continued on to Bundi. Brother Eugene started the building of the Mingende Station. Rapidly the buildings took shape; living house, kitchen, laundry, workers' quarters, tool shed and a small church. Literally thousands of natives helped with the work. For payment they asked for a few cowry shells a day. We could buy a pig for a bush-knife [322]or a small axe. They were still using stone. Other articles for trade included *tambu* shells, beads, and powder-paint. For a green snail shell a large pig could be bought.

By the end of May, the station buildings at Mingende were completed and we had the confidence of the natives. Many of the headmen wished to go with us to Mt Hagen to buy new wives, so we arranged for

another visit. Mick Leahy again asked us to take over Wilya. Father Tropper agreed to return to Mingende and live and open the first Catholic Mission station in the present Western Highlands.

The official approval for the first foundation of the Catholic Mission in the Western Highlands was embodied in a letter from Bishop Wolf dated 15 June 1934, authorizing Brother Eugene and Father Ross to reside at Mount Hagen, and be responsible for the establishment and development of the Catholic Mission in the Mount Hagen area.

Brother Eugene with 15 coastal boys and hundreds of local volunteers quickly built the main station at Wilya, where Mick and Dan Leahy had built their Mogei airstrip. House, church, kitchen workers' quarters, fowl housie, piggery, were completed, built of native materials-bamboo walls and kunai-grass roofs. Brother Eugene was a tireless worker. From June till September, 1934, besides the main station nine out-stations were built: to the west, 12 miles; south 15 miles; east 24 miles and north 29 miles. It would seem almost unbelievable but one out-station at Anggil in the Ulga valley was completed in one day of 13 working hours; some 200 natives, men women and children, like an ant-colony, kept busy bringing in kunai-grass, ropes from the bark of trees, wild sugar-cane for walls and saplings. For each bundle brought in, a few small cowry shells were considered adequate payment for the Ulga natives. From 6 am till 7 pm residence and kitchen, house for the workers and workers' kitchen and a number of latrines; in this one day eleven houses were completed and ready for use.

At Wilya we planted gardens. The soil was poor, light and volcanic and was crying for fertilizer. But the staple crop, sweet potatoes flourished. The Mount Hagen natives had a higher set of values that the Chimbu. We bought pigs for the mother-of-pearl shells and for bailer shells. A large bailer shell costing in those days about 25 cents would buy a 200 lb Pig. Meantime we were busy dressing wounds, cuts and sores and giving aspirin for fever. We visited the hamlet areas to get acquainted with the natives and estimate the population. Daily we paid for the food brought in by the natives and everyone had more than enough for [323] his own use.

We had a working team of twenty Mount Hagen men besides the 15 coastal workers and while they needed a lot of food, food was cheap. A ton of sweet potato cost no more in cowry and *tambu* shells than about 25 cents. We had a small church at Wilya where every Sunday Mass was celebrated, but very few of the local natives attended services, not knowing what it was all about. Finally the turning point came.

Photograph: Fr Ross with the people having a singsing on the airstrip.

In December, 1934, Ninji, the local paramount chief of the Mogei Nampoga Clan, came and asked me: "What do you want from us; when is the pay-off? You have looked after our sick, attended to our sores, wounds and bruises, now we want to know when you are going to give us the bill, for in our way of life, nothing is given for nothing, and we presume you are the same."

I replied to Ninji, "That is the question I have been waiting for and here is my answer. We do not want your land, your women or your pigs. We wish to open a boarding school where your boys from the ages of 10 to 16 will be taught to read and write. You have seen us looking at books and writing on paper. This art we shall teach your boys; they will live at our mission stations and go to school each day."

Ninji then asked, "Will we have to find food for the boys?"

I told him "we would take care of the food. We can take care of 50 boys".

Ninji said. "I can find you 100 boys if you want them."

"No," I said, "For the beginning 50 is the limit. We shall open the school right after the New Year."

Meantime, Brother Eugene left to go on retreat. It took him and carriers six days to reach Mingende and it was here that they learned that Father Morschheuser had been killed and that Father Schaefer was on his way to Alexishafen to report to Bishop Wolf on the tragedy. Brother Eugene thought he might get through to Bundi even though tribal war was progressing. He started up the Chimbu Gorge; at Goglme, the warring natives armed on the heights overlooking the Chimbu River, swarmed down on the party, surrounded them and began pulling the rucksacks and packs from the carriers; the boys all fled in panic. Brother Eugene was struck eight times with bone-tipped arrows, some of them puncturing his lungs. On the morning of January 15 1935 yodelling was heard. "Yalomba,Yalomba" "a white man was coming". Pati, the cook, who had remained with Brother Eugene, told him a party of police led by a European officer was walking along the trail.

"Fire in the air with the shot gun to attract their attention," Brother Eugene told the boy. As soon as the officer heard the shot, he sent a police constable up to investigate. Pati told him about the Brother lying in the hut. Soon the entire police party was in the hut. The officer was Robert Melrose, D.O from Salamaua. He had his cook make some hot coffee, built a stretcher and within an hour they were at the Kundiawa airstrip. There a single-engine Junker was parked. This plane had brought the D. O.'s party to Kundiawa to investigate the murder of Father Karl Morschheuser who had died on December 16 1934 after being shot through the mouth with an arrow.

The Junker plane brought Brother Eugene to Salamaua hospital, he lived a week while his lungs slowly and literally rotted away. Only a man of his magnificent physique and strength could have survived so long. He died on January 23 1935 and was buried in the Salamaua cemetery; his body was later exhumed and brought to the mission cemetery at Alexishafen.

At Wilya we had been living in a house built of native materials. All the station buildings were of kunai or pit-pit. In 1935 we started pit-sawing and in a year there was a sizeable stack of pit-sawn timber. About a mile north of Wilya we discovered a level stretch of land, comprising more than two hundred acres with very few natives occupying the land. We approached the headmen and told them our plans for the future; a real central station with a large timber church to hold 1000 natives, several timber schools buildings, a clinic, missionaries' residence, native workers' quarters, and catechists house. Father Franz Fuchs and Brother Bernarding had come in from the coast to help at our station, and we assured the natives we were now in a position to carry out a building program of the 200 acre plot. About 100 acres were an old battleground, and no one dared to live on this no-man's land as it was a dividing line between the Mogei-Kominga clan and the Mogei-Nampaga Clan, eternal enemies. In time of war they fought their battles on this ground.

Father Fuchs took over the pit-saw work and had a team of 24 boys working 6 pit saws. Brother Bonaventure had 24 planing boys, planing, edging, and tongue and grooving the planks. We paid the owners of the land, and by their standards of values they were very well paid in axes, spades, knives, cloth and shells so that to this day there have never been any complaints or repercussions and the Catholic Missionaries have peacefully occupied the central station for the last 30 years.

The transfer from Wilya to Rebiamul was carried out in slow stages throughout the year 1938. At Rebiamul, two timber residences were completed, a kitchen and a dining room, three timber school houses, and finally towards the end of the year the large timber church was built. This church was still standing in 1966, when with much hard labour it was torn down and the timber used to build three small outstation churches. After thirty years it was as solid as the day the church was built. After the baptism of the first group of 28, the Catholic Mission in the western Highlands set up its headquarters at Rebiamul, and Wilya returned to the former native owners of the land.

When the first government official was appointed for Mount Hagen in 1938, the Catholic Missionaries cooperated with him in every way. The present site of the administration was shown to Murray Edwards and the airstrip site which the Catholic Mission had picked out for itself was turned over to him. Brother Bonaventure helped to build the first government residences.

[On the route in from Alexishafen the highest pass was 9,000 feet. The Paulus could go up to 16,000 feet so we had no difficulty over the passes." Of course Mt Wilhelm was 15,000 feet but the pilot would skirt around the mountains and fly up the valleys and over the passes. Unfortunately unpredictable weather conditions made flying in New Guinea extremely hazardous. If cloud came down it could reduce visibility to nil].

In 1939 there were 66 baptised Catholics in the Western highlands. That year Father Ross went on leave to America after spending 13 years in New Guinea. He returned in September 1940 bringing with him two young American priests, Father George Bernarding and Father Joseph Kotrba. Two years later sadly Father Kotrba was beheaded by the Japanese as an American spy.

On his return to New Guinea, Father Ross was asked by Bishop Wolf to take over the rectorship of Alexishafen. The Mount Hagen mission had been closed. The two German missionaries there had run foul of the curfew regulations and were sent back to Alexishafen. From time to time Fr Ross could visit Mount Hagen, finally Bishop Wolf agreed to release him from the rectorship of Alexishafen to reside full time in Rebiamul. In December 1941, Father Bernarding came for a Christmas visit to Mt Hagen. He remained in Rebiamul all of 1942 and the work of the Catholic Mission went ahead. There were 470 baptized Catholics at the beginning of 1943 when under military orders the two Catholic missionaries had to leave for Australia. There were no Catholic missionaries in the Western Highlands until September 8 1944, when the two priests returned to Mt Hagen.

Since Father Bernarding and Father Ross were the only missionaries in the Western Highlands, Angau officials requested us not to take advantage of our position by setting up new stations where other missionary organisations had previously operated: a request we scrupulously fulfilled. In June of 1946, there were 1,136 baptized Catholics in the Western Highlands. Twenty-two American priests came to \New Guinea between 1945 and 1946. Five of these priests are still in the Western Highlands.

The year 1947 was an eventful year. All former restrictions on uncontrolled area movements were lifted and the entire Western Highlands was thrown open to missionary activity. The Catholic Mission opened new residential stations at Minj, Banz, Nondugl, Ulga, and Pompobus in the Wabag area. Til 1959, the present Western Highlands diocese belonged to Madang. Then Mount Hagen became a separate Vicariate and Bishop George Bernarding was named the first Vicar-Apostolic. He was consecrated in Pittsburgh on 21.4.1960 and installed in Mt Hagen 8.9.1960.

With a residential bishop in Mt Hagen, the work of the Catholic Mission has made continual progress. On June 10 1961, the number of Catholics was 24,069. There are now over 70,000 and the Catholic Mission

of Mount Hagen in the Western Highlands is the third largest Catholic mission in Oceania. There are 34 residential mission stations and 550 out-stations. In the field of education the Catholic mission in the Western Highlands is making good progress, but details are outside the scope of this paper.

We are often asked how you explain the rapid growth of the Catholic Church in the Western Highlands. My answer is:

First we paid a high price. Brother Eugene was only 35 years old when he was killed.

Secondly we advanced slowly, giving the people a long and thorough preparation for baptism so that they knew exactly what they were accepting.

Thirdly every missionary is a dedicated person and the natives have come to realise this. So the increase of baptized Catholics from 28 in 1938 to over 70,000 in 1968 need not be classed as 'miraculous'.

Photograph: Children at the Rebiamul School in 1971. (M. Mennis)

Marriage: Christian Leadership Through Family Life
Father William Ross.

1. **What makes a country strong?** If the question were asked, "What is it that makes a country strong so that it will not disintegrate?" there might be a variety of answers given.
Some might say, "A country is strong when it has a powerful army, a balanced budget, a sold economy, a powerful navy."
Others might say "A country is strong with a large population, with a good standard of living with everyone working for a good wage." Again you might hear the answer that "a good school system with everyone literate is the sign of a strong country." All of these answers would be true to a certain extent, but there is something else that we must not overlook.
2. A house is no stronger than its foundations, the roof is no stronger that its supports. If the foundation gives way, if the supports totter, then the house will fall.
I remember once spending a weird night at an outstation overlooking the Baiyer River. The grass-thatched church and the bush house I lived in were perched on a mountain spur, where winds whistled through the rafters and cold night mists made one wish for a warm fire which just was not there. On this particular night there was a cold rain and a heavy wind on the brow of the mountain. The bush church had been leaning to one side for a long time and I feared that this night would see the *coupe de grace*. The weird sounds, made by the howling wind, and the heavy rain gave me the shivers.
The cook came to me and said, "Father, don't sleep in the bush-house. It is not safe in a night like this." I had carefully examined the base of the posts which were fairly solid: the walls of the house seemed firmly knit; the roof might loose some *kunai* during the night, but I did not think it would blow away and swaying in the wind was natural, so I slept there.
In the middle of the night there was a large crash. I hurriedly picked up the flashlight and went outside to have a look. A big Casuarina tree had crashed to the ground. I flashed the torch on the church and saw that it had a greater list than earlier in the evening. I feared it would be down before morning, as collapse was written all over it. Next morning, during my meditation after a sleepless night, I thought of the fallen tree and the ready-to-fall church.

3. C**ivilisations collapse, when the foundations are rotten**. The old Roman Empire was the strongest in the world, but when families became corrupted the mighty empire fell.

4. **The home and family are the foundations of society.** If the home and families of a country are rooted in the laws of God; if society is based on the laws of God then that country will be strong and will endure. We speak here of the ordinary courses of history. Catastrophes, formerly called 'Acts of God', wars, famine, pestilence, earthquakes, floods, may ruin a country, but there is no question of these things in this paper I am writing now.

5. **Marriage is based on the laws of God**, This paper deals with marriage based on the laws of God in general and in particular with marriage which you, future leaders of Papua New Guinea, should consider.

6. **Marriage was instituted by God himself**. The very first book of the Bible, the second chapter of Genesis, tells the story.
I quote

> And now from the clay of the ground, the Lord God formed man, breathed into his nostrils, the breath of life and made a living soul. But the Lord God said, "It is not well that man should be without companionship; I will give him a mate of his own kind." So the Lord God made Adam fall into a deep sleep and while he slept He took away one of his ribs and filled its place with flesh. From this rib which he had taken out of Adam, the Lord God formed a woman. When he brought her to Adam, Adam said, "Here at last is bone that comes from mine, flesh that comes from mine: it shall be called woman, this thing taken out of a man". v 24.

> That is why a man is destined to leave father and mother and cling to his wife instead, so the two become one flesh.

Thus we see that marriage is not a human institution, but comes directly from God. The Son of God, when he became man and taught on this earth of ours, upheld the laws established by His Heavenly Father.
In Mt 5: 32, Christ stated:

> But I tell you solemnly that the man who puts away his wife (setting aside the manner of unfaithfulness) makes an adulteress of her, and whoever marries her after she had been put away commits adultery.

In Chapter 19 of Matthew, Jesus answers the Pharisees, who questioned Him about divorce. "Have you never read, how He created them, male and female; and how He said:

> A man therefore, will leave his father and mother and will cling to his wife, and the two will become one flesh? And so they are no longer two, they are one flesh; what God then has joined, let no man put asunder."

Our Lord instituted marriages as a sacrament, and marriage now comes under the jurisdiction of the Church which He founded.

7. **Marriage is a contract:** a lawful contract between man and woman for the generation and education of offspring and mutual love and fidelity. By nature and by divine precept, the man is the head of the family and the wife is subject to the authority of the husband. Pope Pius XI explains this in his great encyclical, '*Casti Cunnubi'*. This subjection, he says, of the wife to her husband, does not deny or take away the liberty which fully belongs to the woman both in view of her dignity as a human person, and in view of her most noble office as wife and mother and companion; nor does it bid her obey her husband's every request, if not in harmony with right reason or with the dignity due to wife. It forbids that in this body, which is the family, the heart be separated from the head. For if the man is the head, the woman is the heart; and as he occupies the chief place in ruling, so she may and ought to claim for herself the chief place in love." The essence of the marriage contract is the mutual consent of the parties to live together, a life in common as husband and wife, under the matrimonial bond which persists until death.

8. For a happy marriage, husband and wife must base their lives on the spirit of self-sacrifice. There is a beautiful exhortation in the small English ritual read by the priest just before the ceremony when two Catholics were married.

> **My dear friends, you are about to enter into a union which is most sacred and most serious. It is most sacred because it is established by God himself; most serious because it will bind you together for life in a relationship so close and so intimate, that it will profoundly influence your whole future. That future with its hopes and disappointments, its joys and its sorrows, is hidden from your eyes. And so, not knowing what is before you, you take each other for better or worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health until death.**
>
> **It is a beautiful tribute to your faith in each other, that you are ready to pronounce these words. It is most fitting that you rest the security of your wedded life upon the great principle of self-sacrifice. You will belong entirely to each other; you will be one in mind, one in heart, one in love. Sacrifices will have to be made, but love can make them easy. No greater blessing can come to your married life than pure conjugal love, loyal and true to the end. And God will not fail you, but will give you the life-long support of His grace in the Holy Sacrament which you are now going to receive."**

9. **Marriage and Family Life.** In the second part of this paper, let us consider Marriage and Family Life in the light of your hopes and ours that you will become the future leaders of this country. First of all, there are certain tribal customs prevalent here in Papua New Guinea, which not only do not make for a stable marriage or a happy family life, but which positively work against such stability and happiness. While customs differ considerably in different parts of their country relative to the making of marriage, I would say that the fundamental rights of the partners to a marriage are ignored in most areas. By fundamental rights of the partners, I stress their freedom of choice.

In many cases, neither partner can exercise the right of choice. In many case, neither partner is consulted; in many cases the partners do not know each other intimately; and it sometimes happens that one of the partners never saw the other, before the first negotiation were being made by parents or clan leaders.

10. **Educated Papua New Guineans should insist on their dignity as human persons** and be free to exercise their right, a God-given right, to choose a suitable partner in the life-long contract of marriage. The first step in choosing a partner for a marriage should certainly not be made by the parents or the clan leaders. The man who wishes to marry should have the first right in choosing his wife. He will naturally look for a wife, not simply for her physical charms, but for her character and qualities of mind and heart. If the wife has a similar education and tastes that are similar, the marriage could be happy one. The woman should be free to choose her husband. She too, will look for a man of good character, with a similar education and tastes similar to her own. When both are really in love, when each appreciates the good qualities of the other; when their ages are similar; when each feels fairly certain that they can live happily together; then and then only, I would say, that you young men and women approach parents and clan leaders to start negotiations according to your local native customs.

11. **At what age should young people marry?** I would think a young man should not marry before he is 21 years of age and the girl not before the age of 18. The Marriage Ordinance of Papua New Guinea sets the minimum age as 18 for men and 16 for a woman. But educated young men and women will realize that when entering upon a life-long union, they are no longer children, but must stand upon their feet as mature people. A man must be proud of his wife, not ashamed of her; and the wife must be proud of her husband. Too great a disparity in ages might prove a drawback in the marriage; in the case where a husband is ever so much older than his wife, or where the woman is much older than the young man, difficulties may arise that work against a happy family life.

12. What about local customs which up to now have had to be followed? As long as a young man can choose his own bride and the bride her own husband, it will be wise to follow the old customs. The custom of the Bride Price, if rightly understood, can be called a good custom. No man buys his bride. There is an exchange of presents which cements the relationship of the two respective clans. Where pigs are exchanged, new blood-stock is made available to other parties. Then too, it is quite natural that the parents of the woman, who have raised her and brought her to the marriageable age when she can be helpful to the man, would expect some payment in return. But young men about to be married, and girls on the threshold of marriage must bear in mind that the parents can in no way control, interfere with or claim authority over the marriage once they have been united in the sacred bonds of matrimony. Too many marriages break up because of parental inference.
Once they are married, the husband and wife owe no obedience to their parents. They continue to love their parents, prudently follow their advice, and help them when they can, but they no longer come under the parental authority. When you young men and women wish to get married, build a home and start a family, make sure that all good local customs have been met, otherwise there may be strife and misery, and bickering that may cause the engagement to be broken off.

13. **You must realise that there are many implications when a marriage takes place.** Two clans are united in new relationships. The husband has all his wife's relatives to consider and the wife likewise must take into account her husband's relatives. If the husband and wife come from entirely different areas: one from the mountain area and one from the coast; one from the coast and one from a distant bush area; and where customs of the husband's people differ greatly from the customs of the wife's people, there could be a danger to the marriage.

For Papua New Guinea, I can speak from experience. In the old days no Wewak man or one from the Sepik could get the approval of his people to marry a Madang woman. The woman was simply not accepted, and after the marriage she was socially ostracised. One Rempi woman committed suicide after two years of this kind of humiliation from the relatives of her Wewak husband.
Coastal people may find it hard to settle down for life in the Highlands and likewise Highland people may find it difficult to live on the coast. These differences which may well affect the happiness of family life should be taken into consideration before you young men and women settle down in marriage.

14. **Husband and wife must live together guided by the principles of self-sacrifice.** There are many dangers which cause the family life to be unhappy: jealousy on the part of either partner; quarrels that are hard to make up; false suspicion which gnaws at the roots of mutual love and trust. One of the partners may expect too much from the other. The husband may expect his wife to be a veritable slave in the home, whereas they are both equal in human dignity. A wife may be too demanding of her husband, asking him to buy things he cannot afford or she may waste money on things she does not need. You can think of many other situations which have their impact on family life. Both partners must make every effort to give and take, to recognise the good qualities of each other, and not to see defects and short-comings only.

15. **Children are the joy of marriage.** They are a gift of God to the married couple. The care and education of the children are the parents' great duty. Both must co-operate in the training of their children. The character formation of the child starts in the home, not in the school. Children learn best in the home and the parents must always be on their guard to show good example to their children, correct their faults, and train them in a truly Christian home life. We are all children of a fallen nature, and too often the old human nature shows itself in a child very early. The child wants their own way; does not want to share things; shows stubbornness; is prone to outbursts of crying when they don't get what they want. Parents must always be patient and kind with their little children. Correction is always necessary. The child must be gently scolded when it has done something bad. but parents must be very careful in using physical punishment, not acting on the spur of the moment when the child gets on your nerves.

16. **Home-life is a full-time job.** Both parents must co-operate fully in making the home happy, and filled with happy and well-trained children. Later, when your children go to school, show an interest in all they learn at school. Help them in their home-work.
I remember the delight of my mother when at the age of six, I came home from my little country school and blurted out
"Mummy I learned to write a big word on the blackboard today and I can spell it too."
"Which word, Willy?" she asked.
"Chicken" I proudly replied. That evening she told my father and he remarked
"Willy will be a wizard one day".
I did not know what a wizard was, but I was happy. The point I am trying to bring out is that you should show an interest in your children's schooling and help them in every way.

17. **It is from happy homes and happy families that we can expect the leaders of the future.** The experience of the Courts tells us that nearly all cases of juvenile delinquency can be traced back to broken homes, a bad upbringing and the failure of parents to train their children in virtue.

In Conclusion, I would exhort you to bring religion into your homes. For a happy home and a happy family life we need the help of God, through His grace coming to us in the Sacraments, in Holy Mass, and through prayer. If we keep God in our home, God will keep us. Put your home under the protection of the Blessed Mother Mary. If every home in Papua New Guinea were modelled on Nazareth, this country would be a spiritual power-house.
We want you boys and girls to be the leaders in a country that is strong. And this country will be strong when homes have God's laws for their foundation, and receive God's blessing on happy families. It is up to each and every one of you to work together for this ideal.

[End of Articles by Fr Ross]

Wamp Wan had many stories to tell about the early days in 1971:

When white men first came here we thought they were *tambarans* and ran away to the bush. We did not stay near our houses but ran away, leaving our pigs behind. We sang out to our pigs from the bush so they would not be frightened. These new white men, the Leahy brothers, held their bellies to show us they needed food. They could only talk with their hands. They held up wood to show they needed some wood to cook the food with. They pointed to pigs to show they needed them to eat. They made a sign to show that they wanted to make a house. They showed with their hands that they needed *kunai* cut for the houses and when all these materials were gathered the people helped them build their houses. The Leahy brothers brought out *kina* shells, tomahawks, bush knives, and showed us that they would pay for our work with all these things. Later, when Fr Ross came, we did not know what he came for. Only later he told us about the mission. When he came, he said to the people, "Me, Fr Ross." We looked at him and saw his long *maus gras* (beard) and we said to each other, "He is like you and me" After five months Fr Ross began a school at Wilya at the *ples balus* (airstrip) and he picked boys for the school. They learnt to speak T*ok Pisin*. When we saw the first plane come at Wilya at the *ples balus* we were very frightened. We wouldn't look closely at it, but ran to the bush. We thought it would eat us.

Brother Eugene came to build the church and the houses while Fr Ross organised the school. Karagu, Magok and Manui all came with Fr Ross. They cut the planks with their hands and carried the planks on their shoulders. They didn't have cars or trucks to carry things.

When the war came, Fr Ross called us together and said, "In the morning, I will say Mass and after that I have to leave." He did not want to go. After Fr Ross had gone, the *kiap* was still here and many American soldiers stayed at the Lutheran station at Ogelbeng. They built a big fence there and stayed inside it.

When Sister Vinciana and the other Sisters were escaping from the Sepik, we sent some of our men down there with Danny Leahy. They came back via Maramui with him. These Missionaries stayed at Mt Hagen but Fr Ross had already left. Plenty of Europeans came to Mt Hagen from Madang, and Manus Island and they stayed in Mt Hagen. During the war, Hagen was bombed by the Japanese. We cut posts and planted them across the airstrip so the Japanese could not land. Some of the men covered the roofs of the mission houses with branches and leaves so the Japanese would not see the shiny roofs and they were not bombed.

When Wamp Wan and his tribesmen saw Fr Ross again after the war, they said, "He must have cut off his beard." Wamp remembered Fr Ross as the father of his Hagen people since he arrived. "He taught our children to read and write. Fr Ross always went out in any weather to reach the sick. If it was raining or if the rivers were flooded, he would go out and wade through them even in the dark."

Photograph: Sir Wamp Wan in 1971. (M. Mennis).

In the archives at Mt Hagen, there is a letter from Rome addressed to Fr Ross from Fr John Musinsky SVD the Superior General of the SVD Order at that time. It was a great honour for Fr Ross to receive this letter and he was clearly touched by it at the time.

Roma-Ostiense 29 May 1972.

Jubilee Greetings,

My dear Fr Ross:

It has come to my attention in various ways that you will be celebrating the Golden Jubilee of your priestly ordination on 10 June. I would like to congratulate you, both personally and on behalf of the Society, on this grand occasion. Celebrating is not exactly the right word, since I understand that you are still hospitalized with a broken hip. The Regional's February - April newsletter was optimistic about your being around again in the time for your jubilee, but Bishop Cohill (who is here) said he did not think you would be.

It would be very good if the Bishop was wrong in this case, and the Region was right! Whichever way it goes, I am sure that you will take this in your stride, as you have taken so many other hardships since going to New Guinea. What a lot of changes you must have witnessed in nearly half a century as a missionary in one of our toughest missions! And what a lot you have accomplished for the local church there, bringing God's Love and his salvation to so many people who, but for you might never have known Him at all.

You have labored long and hard in the Lord's vineyard, from the early days until now and you have earned a rest. It may be that God had immobilized you for this very reason: to give you time to sit down and to look back leisurely on these fifty years as His servant. We will join you in thanking God for his Graces and for the gift of your vocation; we thank Him too for leaving you with us so long: a living link with Techny's past and with a glorious chapter of our history. May He keep you with the Society for many more years and then reward you, as a good and faithful servant with eternal life.

Fraternally in the Divine Word,

John Musinky, SVD,
Superior General.

The letter was very special as Fr John Musinsky was the Superior General of the whole SVD Order throughout the world. It was said that Fr John presided over the Society during one of the most difficult times immediately after Vatican II.

Photograph: Mt Hagen market (M.Mennis)

Fr Ross's Golden Jubilee, 8 September 1972

Fr Ross's Jubilee celebration was postponed until September 1972 because of his broken hip. I flew up from Madang for the occasion. Here are my memories of the event:

> There was great excitement in the villages around the township of Mt Hagen. The men, their skins glistening with pig grease, strung new *tanget* leaves through their belts, donned their finest golden bird of paradise feathers and gathered their drums, for this was a day of celebration. It was a beautiful day with the mists rising from the green valleys and clearing above the blue-green splendour of the mountains. The mission with its setting amongst the pine trees and clumps of bamboo was a fitting place for the festivities.
>
> Around an outside altar decked with golden sunflowers and lilies, twenty priests gathered to concelebrate Mass, dressed in golden vestments. The small bearded figure of Fr Ross was flanked by an archbishop and two bishops as he bent his snow-white heard over the altar to intone the words at the beginning of Mass. In his address, Bishop Bernarding paid tribute to Fr Ross's pioneering work. He recalled his tireless spirit and strong physique which had enabled him to tramp great distances over rough terrain to lay the foundations of the Hagen mission which was now the third largest in Oceania consisting of 24 parishes in the Hagen and Wabag areas (Mennis, 2015: 9).

Wamp Wan and his Mogei people gave Fr Ross some money for his Golden Jubilee. They did not count how much it was but many people gave two dollars each so it would add up. They said to Fr Ross: "You are old now and we are giving you this money to buy some coffee and food. Now you can stay at home and drink and enjoy this food. When you die we will bury you in the cemetery at Rebiamul."

Death of Fr Ross

Fr Ross died on 20 May 1973, lying peacefully on his bed holding his rosary beads. Word spread and the people, faces smeared with red mud, came flocking to the space outside his room and sat under the *Casuarina* trees mourning him with great sobbing. On the day of the funeral on 24 May, Many thousands gathered at the open-air funeral Mass and followed his coffin on its way to his last resting place.

Obituary of Rev. William Ross from the SVD files, 1973.

In 1972, just a month before the death of Father Ross, the paramount chief Wamp Wan of the Mogei Tribe was received in private audience by Pope Paul VI at the Vatican. Chief Wamp Wan was on his way home from London, where he saw his life story televised in colour on the British Broadcasting television networks.

When Father Ross arrived at Mogei in the New Guinea highlands, on 27 March 1934, just 11 months after the tribe was discovered by the Leahy brothers of Australia, he met Chief Wamp Wan and his tribesmen. Negotiations followed with the chief in the purchase of land for the present church and Episcopal headquarters for the Catholic Diocese of Mt Hagen. Nearly all the tribal members are now Catholics; however Chief Wamp Wan has not become a Catholic. Well-known for his deep faith in God, Wamp follows the teachings of Christianity, attends Sunday Mass and lives a prayerful life. He accredits the Christian message received from Father Ross and fellow missionaries in discounting age-old primitive practises.

Father Ross, the white bearded missionary was one of the most dedicated and most courageous men to set foot in New Guinea to work among the people. Back in 1926 when first assigned to the land that time forgot, Father Ross was instrumental in leading the way to the central highlands of Mt Hagen where people lived in the Stone Age. He spread the gospel with compassion along with medical and economic assistance and soon became recognised as a friend and spiritual guide for all. By the end of his career his congregation totalled more than a quarter of a million people.

For pastime and amusement in that distant land, he kept close contact with all major baseball leagues by means of the short wave radio set tuned to American broadcasts as the events occurred. In his jungle atmosphere amid stone-age people, he could quote team standings, batting averages and pitching records. Father Ross became a legend among the natives of the Highlands of New Guinea. His long flowing white beard resembling that of Santa Claus enhanced his prestige and helped him command the respect of the people.

Born in 1895 at Rosendale, New York, William Ross attended St Joseph's Grammar School in Peekskill and St Laurent High School in Montreal, Canada. He began his studies for the priesthood at the age of 21 at the Divine Word Seminary in Techny in 1916, was professed in 1917 and completed his theological studies there.

His ordination to the Holy Priesthood occurred at Holy Name Cathedral in Chicago on 10 June 1922. The next day, Trinity Sunday, Holy Orders was conferred by Archbishop George Mundelein on Father William Ross and Father Rupert Weindl. Father Ross was one of three priests who began work at St Francis Xavier Mission House when it opened in 1922. After successfully working in the new job, he was appointed to the New Guinea missions in 1926.

Departure ceremonies for Father Ross and three Sisters, Servants of the Holy Spirit were held on Sunday 12 September 1926. Rev. Peter Heier and Rev Thomas Megan also received their mission crosses from Father Provincial Adolph Burgmer at the same ceremony and departed for Honan, China. They boarded ships on the west coast for their ocean trip across the Pacific Ocean. The three Holy Spirit Sisters accompanied Father Ross to the New Guinea missions.

The first Divine word missionaries landed in New Guinea in 1896 and settled on the coastal regions founding many missions and stations, thus converting many Papuans to the catholic faith. Missioned to New Guinea in 1926, Father Ross was the first American priest of the society to go to New Guinea. He spent the first seven years instructing and baptising the villagers along the coastal areas. He began his

mission outpost at Rempi in 1927 and won many converts to the faith. His labours were blessed with God's graces for the many souls coming into the church and receiving the sacraments.

In 1931, he prepared 81 New Guinea natives for baptism which he administered at his mission station in the mountains beyond Alexishafen, the central station of the Vicariate. In November 1931 he made a trip upstream on the Ramu River which was an unexplored region in those days. The 150 mile trip took Father Ross and his aides eight days. After many hardships the group arrived at Bogia where they found many village people. In 1931, epidemics of malaria and Blackwater fever took the lives of several Priests, Brothers, and Sister Servants of the Holy Spirit who worked in the New Guinea mission. He himself was laid low with the fever for several weeks. Father Ross made his first visit to the inland village of Kumbes in the early part of 1933. He trudged the lengthy route on foot from the coastal regions to start a new mission station. Later in the year he helped found a mission at Saruga.

Trek to the Highlands.
Rumours were prevalent of thousands of people living in the Highland areas of the inland mountains as reported by gold prospectors that journeyed into nearby mountains. In 1933 Father Ross received permission from Bishop Wolf to preach the gospel in the mountainous highlands of central New Guinea. Much time was spent in preparation for the first inland trek. Although foodstuffs were provided by villagers in inland areas, he had to take extra clothing, mosquito nets, tools, Mass supplies of altar wine and vestments, medicine and his rifle for protection and hunting game for food. The trip of Fr Ross and four other missionaries as well as carriers and workers took 40 days of following tracks, working their way up mountains and sliding down the opposite sides. Wading knee deep in mud and swamps and crossing mountain streams was their daily occurrence.

They crossed mountains with an elevation of 10,000 feet and descended to the Wahgi Valley where Father Ross founded a mission among the largest tribes of inland New Guinea. There was half a million natives living in a Stone Age era in primitive conditions. He learned the native language and dispensed works of mercy to natives seeking comforts from their ills. He saved the lives of the sick by dressing their wounds and giving medicine to relieve their discomforts. This all helped to win their confidence and friendship after which many took interest in the missionaries and sought their advice in many matters of importance both temporal and spiritual. Primitive conditions prevailed. Villagers used weapons of wood and stone, because steel was unknown to them. They didn't know how to boil water nor the purpose of doing so.
Insurmountable difficulties of suspicion and distrust faced the missionary in his dealing with his people. Soon Father Ross mastered the native language and was able to converse with the people. Later he wrote dictionaries and grammars of their language. Even though the progress of conversion was slow, converts were received into the church through the many acts of kindness and helpfulness that were needed to break down the suspicion and win their confidence. Traditionally, strangers outside their tribe were looked upon with a great deal of suspicion. Father's gentle smile and persevering efforts won many souls for the church. Another obstacle facing the priest was the pagan precincts and polygamy which had to be dealt with tactfully.

The first class in religion was formed in Mt Hagen in January 1935 by Father Ross with the help of Peter Karagu a catechist and teacher from the Sepik who accompanied Father Ross in 1934 and lived in Mt Hagen the rest of his life. In January 1939 class of 28 young men and boys were baptised by Father Ross and made their first Holy Communion following their lengthy catechumenate of four years. Conversion rose yearly.

The aftermath of World War II days was very difficult because of the heavy loss of the mission staff. Many mission stations were bombed, some totally ruined and others were badly in need of repair. Nippon soldiers captured many missionaries, persecuted them and martyred many of them. Of those who lost their lives of the Divine Word Mission, were two Bishops, 103 Priests, and 63 Sisters on the casualty list. Many died from friendly fire while on the Dorish Maru, a Japanese ship.

After American forces liberated the South Sea Island, Father Ross was able to return to his mission assignment. By the 1960's there were 100,000 practising Catholics in the New Guinea mission, and much

credit for this fine evangelisation work was attributed to the efforts of Father Ross during his many years in the missions.

Fr Ross returned to Techny U.S.A. on 15 August 1939 for a visit and rest from his hard labours in New Guinea where he had spent 13 years working. On his return, to Mt Hagen, Father Ross worked with Brother Bonaventure Marcinek to build a new mission station at Rebiamul to serve the Mogei tribesmen. He dedicated the new chapel and mission station at Christmas time 1939. He baptised hundreds of pagans and babies in the Mogei mission each year during the 1930s.

Father Ross began work among the Stone Age native of New Guinea four years before the Australian government appointed officers for the maintenance of peace. Tribal warfare was prominent in the early days of mission lore. On the playing fields of Mt Hagen, law and order was restored through Father Ross as arbitrator. Rivalry in soccer games in the modern sports activities replaced the old age warfare of bygone years. Among the highlights in the Mt Hagen diocese is the native dance ceremony staged annually upon the successful harvest. [The Mount Hagen Show].

Father Ross introduced the Christmas crib to his New Guinea people at the mission station in Rebiamul in Mt Hagen. The local people enjoyed their artistic Christmas crib and walked long distances to attend the crib devotions led by their missionary priest. Their prayers and singing added to the zest and joy of the Christmas season.

Only 5ft 1 inch tall, his expeditions opened the highlands areas to future explorations and settlement. In recognition of all his work and the many services which he rendered to the people and the country of New Guinea, Queen Elizabeth made Father Ross an Honorary Officer of the British Empire in 1971. Still erect in his old age, active and vigorous with a white beard which would put Santa Claus to shame, Father Ross continued his work as pastor of Rebiamul Parish at Mt Hagen, the first Catholic Mission which was located in the Wahgi Valley, until it grew into the third largest diocese in the South Seas. Most Rev George Bernarding SVD, a native of Pittsburgh, Pa, heads the diocese and followed Father Ross into the mission field.

On 10 June 1972, Fr Ross, the famed missionary explorer of Papua New Guinea's Highlands celebrated his 50th anniversary as a priest with a broken hip - an injury sustained in a serious fall. This postponed formal observation of the Golden Jubilee until he was well enough to concelebrate his own anniversary Mass in an outdoor setting.

At this time he wrote:

> These 50 years as a priest, and particularly those years since 1926 which I have spent in New Guinea have been a great joy. I consider myself as particularly honoured for being permitted to work in what amounted to be a new world. Helping to build a community among such diverse peoples has been a challenge, and at times it seemed like the impossible dream. But gradually people who speak hundreds of different languages are uniting into a nation so that Papua New Guinea can enter into trade and economic parity with other parts of the world. Some day the people of Papua New Guinea will be their own governors and all of us who are products of a western culture will have completed our work.

Under the Australian government, which administers the eastern half of Papua New Guinea, the country has moved towards self-rule. The mission work has thrived through the missionaries and their work among the people. Divine Word missionaries and staff four mission territories and serve 225,000 Catholics. They are assisted by 100 local nuns and brothers and some local priests. Local seminarians will provide the area with the future priests needed in the mission work. Every Sunday, the central mission station in Mt Hagen of which Father Ross had charge, 1,200 people attended. When the local chief, Ninji Kama became a Catholic on his deathbed in 1964, his profession of faith was a stimulus to the conversion of his followers.

In the mission area Father Ross catered for 400 lepers. Oftentimes the humble missionary took to the trail at 4 am to bring the sacraments to the sick in distant settlements. The little wiry priest considered the four-hour hike before Mass as good for his constitution. The local population rapidly advanced to a better life. An almost unbelievable fact, but all due respect is paid to Father Ross for his part in the being the leading factor in parting the curtain of the Stone Age existence of the three decade period from when he made his discovery.

Fr Ross's Death

After a busy day at work, Father Ross retired at his normal routine time of 10.30 pm on 19 May 1973. He had been ill with an influenza type of sickness, but paid little notice to it. On Sunday mornings, he usually had the 10.30 Parish Mass at Rebiamul; however on this day he failed to rise for the Mass. Not being alarmed another priest substituted in his place. At 4 pm brother Paul Broekman noticed that Father Ross had not risen. Upon investigation, the priests found that he had died in his sleep with his rosary in his hands. His death was registered as being on 20 May 1973. Brother Rudolph Becker prepared a cement vault for the internment of the deceased missionary.

The funeral service for Father Ross was held on Wednesday morning 23 May at 11 am. The concelebrated Mass was offered by Bishop John Cohill, the main celebrant, assisted by 40 priests participating in the liturgy. [Bishop Bernarding was in the U.S at this time]. Thousands of natives attended the solemn services with dignity and emotion paying tribute to the great missionary, to whom they owed their faith in Christ. He had served the Lord well in his 47 years of pioneer work in the New Guinea Highlands. When he died this pioneer missionary left his work to the succeeding generations of missionaries.

Among his survivors were his sister, Mrs Fred Weber, 31 Mason Street, Menlo Perk terrace, Metuchen, New Jersey; and his sister-in-law Mrs Anna Ross, 47 Matthew's Drive, Hamilton Square New Jersey.

The Postal Administration of Papua New Guinea issued a commemorative seven toea stamp on October 28, 1976, designed by Richard Bates, honouring Father Ross for the forty years of ministry to the people of the Highlands. The stamp depicts the 78 year old white-bearded priest with a typical highland scene with an inscription reading: Father Ross – pioneer missionary, 1896 – 1973.