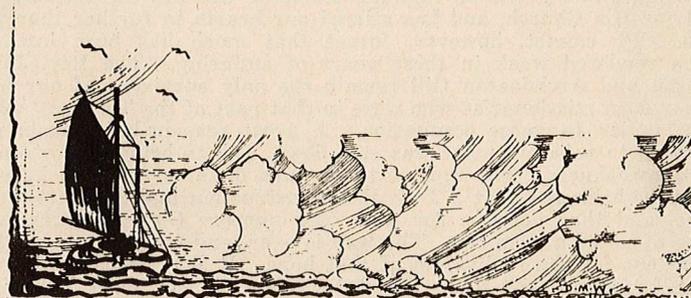


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Adventuring For Christ IN THE PACIFIC



The New Guinea Mission

The Bishop's Annual Diocesan Report

JUNE 1st, 1945, to MAY 31st, 1946.

AN A.B.M. PUBLICATION.

THE WAR—AND AFTER

During the war the main task of the Mission was to hold the fort wherever it could be held. It was difficult enough to do even this. Many a time it seemed that all might be lost. Often it was a very thin line that kept the life of the Church together. Yet in no district did the work ever wholly cease. For this we can render heartfelt thanks to God Who maintained and guarded His Church through those difficult years, and prevented its light from being extinguished. The restoration to us last September of the Rev. James Benson, and his remarkable preservation in the midst of so many trials and sufferings, has given us another token of the providential care of God for His Church, and has stirred our hearts to further thankfulness. We cannot, however, forget that much has been lost and much rendered weak in these years of suffering. The Rev. James Benson and Archdeacon Gill remain the only survivors of our band of northern missionaries who were in that part of the Territory which came under Japanese occupation. A great responsibility rests now upon all to raise up what was cast down, and to bring new strength out of weakness. Throughout those dark days we tried to hope on in faith, believing that a Day of Reconstruction and Advance would come, and that perhaps for that very purpose God was preserving some of us as a remnant. The war is over, and perhaps we are now impatient for the realisation of that hope. It still seems a long way from fulfilment. At times the obstacles in its path seem forbidding, and plans for it are conditioned by so many "ifs" that the form it will ultimately take remains hidden in a maze of uncertainties and difficulties.

CHANGES AND CHALLENGES.

The end of war has naturally brought a great change in the general complexion of a country which was a war zone. The past year has seen the release of Papua from military control, the return of civil administration, the advent of Colonel J. K. Murray as Provisional Administrator, a man whom we believe to be an understanding friend of missions, the return to their homes of vast numbers of Papuan men from war services, as well as the return of many European residents. The change from war to peace, the rapid departure of thousands of service men and the stripping of transformed jungle areas of their war apparatus, has come almost as suddenly as the change in the opposite direction came in 1942. Such momentous changes in a short time could hardly have been expected to take place without much confusion and the creating of new difficulties. Some of these are gradually being resolved, and strenuous and not unsuccessful efforts are being made to bring order out of chaos. There remains, however, much that is disturbing in the life of the people and of the country, and amongst those who care most for the true development of the character of the Papuans the future seems fraught with misgivings and anxieties.

FORWARD STEPS.

Though the materials for our own reconstruction efforts are not yet available, there have been some forward steps in recent months which we hope will prove a foundation for our future efforts.

There has been the arrival of the new Mission Launch *St. George*, the gift of the Women's Auxiliary of Western Australia and of other friends, dedicated in Sydney in October, safely dropped in New Guinea waters in December, and in constant use in the service of the Church and Mission ever since. There has been the purchase of a trawler at Lae, which we hope may prove a suitable replacement for the time being of our lost Mission Schooner *Maclaren King*, the purchase and conversion of three smaller launches for mission stations, and of other army equipment. In all these things of vital necessity to our work we are deeply indebted to the Secretary of the Board of Missions, the Rev. M. A. Warren, for his ceaseless labours and journeys on our behalf.

Mr. Warren has made four journeys to New Guinea in the last six months. After working tirelessly for many months in Sydney on the fitting and adapting of the *St. George*, he personally superintended its conveyance to New Guinea, and took charge of it on its first journey up the North East coast from Samarai to Lae, visiting all our stations en route, and rendering many helpful services to our missionaries and to the mission generally. After his return to Australia he made two other visits direct to Lae in connection with the purchase of the trawler and other equipment, and on a fourth visit worked for some weeks in Lae on the trawler, and has brought it down the coast on its own power to Samarai to hand it over to the Mission.

BASE HEADQUARTERS.

Samarai has been re-established as the Base Headquarters of the Mission, and our Diocesan Office has been set up there once again after four years at Dogura. Though conditions of living and working are far from normal, a return to a more ordered management and administration of the Diocese is now possible. St. Paul's Church has been re-opened for worship. It was the only one of our Mission buildings and the only building on the foreshore of the island to escape destruction in 1942, and it has remained standing since in its impressive loneliness as a silent witness to the things which are eternal. Archdeacon and Mrs. Thompson established themselves in temporary quarters when they returned in January from a much-needed and long overdue furlough, much of which was spent in official diocesan and mission business in Australia. The Archdeacon had not been away from the diocese for six years, and during the whole of the war he carried on his work as Secretary of the Mission at Dogura. Last July he and other members of our staff were involved in a serious motor lorry accident at Dogura which might well have proved fatal.

LOSSES, REPLACEMENTS AND NEEDS.

The Diocese is passing through a very critical time owing to shortage of staff, which is hindering at a vital period in its history its true work of winning souls for Christ and the building up of His Church in Papua.

Since the beginning of 1941 we have lost 33 missionaries, eleven of them by death, including the eight who suffered martyrdom in 1942, and most of the others through ill-health. These losses include nine priests, ten teachers, and nine nurses. Up to the beginning of 1945 there had been only four replacements. Six recruits have recently arrived, so that the number now is ten.

In the middle of last year we welcomed Mr. Eric Wood who, after being for a time at Dogura and Sangara, is now at Taupota.

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The early months of this year brought us the following reinforcements:—Sister Marie Rawlins, now working at Dogura, Sister Jean Henderson at Eroro, and Miss Dorothea Stephens, B.Sc., at Boianai. More recent arrivals have been the Rev. John Andersen, Th.L., the Rev. Sydney Smith, and Mr. Horace Klower, B.A., Th.L., Dip.Ed. The first two are undergoing a course of language study and specialised training in missionary work at Taupota, under the Rev. A. P. Jennings, whilst Mr. Klower is assisting the Rev. O. J. Brady at St. Aidan's College.

We still need seven priests, eight teachers, and seven nurses apart from other general workers to bring us up to our 1941 level, and even that was smaller than the needs of maintenance and advance require. There are at present no "spares" for furlough gaps, and this may delay some much-needed furloughs for hard pressed and tired workers.

Six stations remain without white priests, and four without any white missionaries at all. Gona, Isivita and Naniu have been without white missionaries for four years, and Sefoa for three. Boianai, which has a larger number of out-stations than any other district, has been without a white priest for over five years. Evangelistic work in the Deneva mountain area of that district, so promising in 1940, has had to be abandoned, and the people have fallen back to heathenism. Gona awaits now the return of its beloved Father Benson as soon as he can be relieved at Port Moresby, where he has been called upon to fill an unexpected and urgent gap. Isivita cries out for someone to carry on the work of its martyred priest, Henry Holland. Naniu has suffered much, and it will take many years to retrieve the ground lost there.

That Sefoa, the newest district in the Mission, should have been left so long is a tragedy. The native staff there have been very faithful, but Christians young in the faith, living in the midst of heathenism, and surrounded during the war by new and strong temptations, have lacked the pastoral care which a priest could have given them, and they have been able to receive the Sacraments but seldom. It is an even greater tragedy that in big districts like Boianai and Menapi there were no white priests to give the large number of men and boys returning from army labour camps the leadership for which they were ripe. They will be the fathers and leaders of the future in their villages. They came back full of new ideas, some of them eager and co-operative, and others strange, disconcerting and critical, and they found their Church without a leader. There were many signs that they would have followed true leadership at that time, and the voices of the keen and loyal Christians among them would have prevailed in the villages over those who had been influenced during the war by unbelieving Europeans, and who counselled a return to old ways and even the following of European vices. Such a failure on the part of the Home Church calls for a more than usually deep outpouring of penitence, and for earnest and sustained intercession not only that the need may be met in the near future, but that the harm done may be overcome.

European missionaries have been at work at eleven stations during the year.

Taupota and the whole diocese suffered an irreparable loss through the passing in December of Miss Florence Nita Inman. Her heart had been wholly given to her work for God in Papua for many years. The Guild of St. Mary, which seeks to inspire in the hearts of Papuan women the ideals set forth by the Mothers' Union, will

remain as a permanent mark of her influence, for she was its foundress, and she remained until the day of her death its first secretary.

War reactions have been seen at Taupota at their worst, and are causing us much anxiety at present. The close proximity to Milne Bay, and the constant calling in at the villages of small boats during the war, has had a bad influence, and there has been a lowering of the moral standards, a return in some cases to heathen practices, and a general apathy and sometimes even an antagonism. Unfortunately the Rev. A. P. Jennings has been much hampered in counteracting it by his very indifferent health, and Sister Mary Mills is contemplating leaving us shortly. The Rev. Clement Wadidika, Papuan priest, is stationed at one of the out-stations, Awa'lama, and during the war he made periodic journeys over the mountain range to minister at the labour camps. The Bishop visited Keia, another of the out-stations, recently, to dedicate a new Church, which had the rather unusual feature for a native built Church of a porch.

The Bishop recently made a visitation of the Hioge District, which is under the Rev. Peter Rautamara, the first and oldest of our Papuan priests, and Churches were dedicated at out-stations. The visitation revealed the high quality of the pastoral work of this faithful priest, who is a true shepherd amongst his flock.

DOGURA.

Dogura district has also suffered somewhat from war reactions, but the wave there has been more fluctuating. The work of the head station has gone on steadily during the year under the Rev. John Bodger, who also acted as Commissary in the absence of both the Bishop and the Archdeacon of Samarai at General Synod. Sister Bromhall was in charge of the hospital until January, when she moved to Mukawa. Miss Somerville is superintending the school work. Some of the art and composition work of St. Paul's scholars was on exhibition in Tasmania, and was much admired. The house-keeping has fallen on Miss Devitt. It is too much for her, and we need someone who can accept the work as a special vocation. Shortage of staff has prevented the mountain and other out-stations being visited regularly during the year, and the teachers have had to carry on on their own.

The Cathedral now has flags presented by the U.S. Army, the R.A.A.F., and the R.A.N., in gratitude for the services rendered during the war by the Mission and by Papuan Christians. The presentation of these Standards by high ranking officers specially appointed for the purpose by their high command, and the dedication and placing of them in the Cathedral on three separate occasions, were noteworthy events of the year. The first was combined with an official visit of Major-General Morris, then G.O.C. of A.N.G.A.U., who brought with him the Band of the Royal Papuan Constabulary.

St. Agnes' Home has now almost as many half-caste children as before the war. Miss Kekwick's management of the Home single handed, and the happy tone among her family, is one of the bright spots of the present, but she badly needs a fellow-worker.

Miss Caswell was at Wamira until recently, when it was necessary for her to leave for Australia to undergo an operation.

ST. AIDAN'S COLLEGE.

St. Aidan's College is fuller than it has ever been. Seven students went out in January to begin their work as teachers. The earnestness of these men was most outstanding. Nineteen new stud-

ents joined the College in March, and there is already a waiting list for next year. Most of the students are from the northern area of the diocese, which suffered so much during the war. No one who visits the College can fail to be impressed by the serious purpose of these men, their sense of vocation, and the high standard of devotion and loyalty which exists in the College. We cannot feel too thankful to God that the health of the Principal, the Rev. O. J. Brady, has been maintained under the strain of carrying on until recently single-handed.

ONWARD MARCH

Boianai Station has been under Miss Downing and Mrs. Lane. Miss Downing has now left us on account of home ties after many valuable years of educational and missionary work in the Diocese. Mrs. Lane has also resigned, and will be leaving us shortly.

Menapi has been reopened as a white missionary station, with Sister Kent in charge. She is assisted by three half-caste girls. The station carried on for over a year with its native staff only, after the death of the Rev. F. H. T. Lane. Amos Paisawa, the Papuan priest, visits the out-stations.

The work in the Mukawa and Wanigela district has been well maintained; at Mukawa under the Rev. and Mrs. Raymond Nicholls, and at Wanigela under the Rev. Hugh Andrew, with Sister Dorothea Tomkins and Miss Mavis Eather. Mr. Nicholls and Mr. Andrew are planning an extension of evangelistic work in the mountains behind their districts, and Mr. Nicholls has made some preliminary journeys already. Regular visits have been made in both these districts to the out-stations, and for the most part the response and the level of the work at these have been encouraging. Mr. Nicholls has also visited Menapi occasionally, and Mr. Andrew, Sefoa, whilst these stations have been without white priests. The Bishop was present at the St. James' Festival at Mukawa, and the opportunity was taken of welcoming back those who had been away on war service. A large gathering at Wanigela was also addressed by the Bishop in January. Unfortunately the life there had been beclouded by a particularly sad fall of a native teacher.

Erero, occupied for three years by the U.S. Army, came back to the Mission at the end of last year. The Rev. R. L. Newman had been using one of his out-stations, Emo, as his headquarters. He is now back at Erero with his wife and child. Allan, his head teacher, who went out from St. Aidan's College two or three years ago, is a very faithful man. The Erero people suffered as much as any during the war. Though a coastal people, used to fishing and like occupations, they were transplanted inland, where they remained for three years. Back now on the beach, they are living in old army huts till they can build again villages after their own hearts. In March Sister Henderson joined the Rev. and Mrs. R. L. Newman. Her advent was greeted with great enthusiasm by the Ererans, who had never before had a nurse at their station. The medical post she has established there has been widely used, and may well eventually be the foundation of a new mission hospital to replace the one at Gona.

The Rev. Dennis Taylor has been exercising an oversight of the Gona, Ambasi and Isivita districts besides his own at Sangara. The school at Sangara, under Mrs. Taylor, is the largest in the Mission. There is still a great eagerness for the Mission among these northern people, who were enveloped by the Japanese in 1942, and whose missionaries were martyred. A chain of new out-stations under native teachers has been opened by Mr. Taylor, and he reports a

total of two thousand children on his school rolls. He has been greatly assisted by his Papuan Deacon, John Rautamara, who has shown outstanding devotion and ability. It was a testimony to the influence of the Mission at Sangara that on VJ Day all the personnel of the Government Station at Higaturu, then under A.N.G.A.U., came down to the Mission for the Thanksgiving Service, instead of asking Mr. Taylor to conduct a special one for them on their own station as on VE Day. Various denominations were represented.

Archdeacon Gill's temporary war-time head station at Iaudari, some forty miles up the Mamba River, was found to be too inaccessible when army means of transport ceased. He has now moved down to Dewade, one of his coastal out-stations, and is busy converting it into a head station until such time as Douvira can be restored or some other suitable place selected. His native assistant priest, the Rev. John Livingstone Yariri, is stationed on the Gira River, and is responsible for most of the itineration in the district.

There has been no increase in the native ministry during the year, but we are expecting to have three new deacons shortly. We shall then have ten Papuan priests and seven deacons. Only eight priests have been available for active work during the year.

Our educational work continues, but has been much handicapped by lack of European teachers and school material. The Educational policy of the Civil Administration has not yet been declared, but it seems certain that it will have a place in it for our work.

Our Medical work has increased during the year, and it seems likely that it will have an important place in the future in the life of the country. Here again we are much handicapped by lack of equipment and drugs.

We are having grave anxiety on the score of finance and supplies. Prices for all goods as well as for travel and other necessities, continue to be exorbitantly high, and income will only go about half as far as it did before the war. There is no guarantee of a regular supply of the essential commodities needed for feeding our native dependants, and substitutes for these are usually almost prohibitive in cost. We must trust our greatly needed increase of both European and Papuan staff will not be in the end short circuited because of lack of finance and supplies.

THE CALL TO ADVANCE.

The withdrawal of the military and of all service chaplains leaves the Diocese now with the task of finding priests to minister at European centres and of financing them. Two great needs of the moment are priests for Port Moresby and for the Lae areas. St. Augustine's, Wau, from which the Rev. Vernon Sherwin formerly worked the latter area, was totally destroyed. Mr. Sherwin, after a long term of devoted service as a chaplain, is in need of a period out of the tropics, and has been granted long leave of absence.

The Determination before General Synod extending the bounds of the Diocese to include the mainland portion of the Mandated Territory, passed without opposition. It now awaits the approval of the Diocesan Synods. The doubling of the size of the Diocese places upon the Church new responsibilities for the future. "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few. Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest."

✠PHILIP, NEW GUINEA.

Samarai, Papua.
20/6/46.