

**Journey
Into
Yesterday**

**By
Ruth B. Coles**

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Dedication

To my late husband Reg,
whose faith and dedication made it all possible.

Acknowledgments

To the Christians in the Waria Valley for the privilege of being able to live and work with them in sharing the Good News of Jesus.

To Pleasant Valley Church of Christ for supporting my late husband and myself financially for the 13 1/2 years we spent in Papua New Guinea.

To City Beach Church of Christ for their support in sending medical supplies each month and later sending regular support to our working fund.

To the many congregations and individuals in Great Britain and Australia who contributed periodically to our working fund so that we were able to do the work of the Lord in that remote area of Papua New Guinea. I thank you.

To our co-workers, Jim and Bessie McGeachy, with whom we enjoyed a harmonious relationship for 6 years. They gave themselves wholly to the work of the Lord in the Waria Valley.

To Dana Marlin of Little Rock Arkansas for her offer to check my book for grammatical errors, etc. She was so encouraging and helped me a lot.

To my nephews, Ian and Dan McKenzie, for their encouragement and enthusiasm.

Last but not least, to my daughter, Catherine, for pushing me to finish the book and the many hours she spend reading and correcting the manuscript.

Publisher's Statement

A few years ago I visited the brethren in Port Moresby, Lae, Mt. Hagen and other cities in Papua New Guinea. I was very impressed with the country and what had been done there up to that time. That work continues to grow.

Joe Cannon and family arrived in Lae in 1971. Any number of other American and Canadian missionaries followed. The Tom Bunts of Australia worked there, and in more recent years have been taking our magazine, **The Voice of Truth International**, into Papua New Guinea. Reg and Ruth Coles lived and worked in the Waria Valley for more than one dozen years.

After brother Coles' death, sister Coles contacted me from her home in Scotland about printing the story of the work she and her husband had done in Papua New Guinea. Of course I was delighted to do this.

I would encourage you to read this book and get acquainted with the Coles and their efforts to take the gospel to Papua New Guinea. Look at the pictures and see the country as they saw it and meet the people that they knew. What a great work to be involved in!

Maybe this book will create in you the desire to do more for the Lord here at home and to help other brethren in their efforts to evangelize the world. Better than that, it might even create in you the desire to go as they went. In that case, this book will be worth more than you could ever have imagined. There is a great need for more families to move to mission fields and do as the Coles did. We continue to pray that God will send forth more laborers into His vineyard.

J. C. Choate
Winona, MS
Dec. 20, 2001

Introduction

Brethren, in the spirit of Philippians 4:8, (to think on things that are lovely and of good report) it is my privilege and honor to introduce a very lovely lady in the Lord, sister Ruth Coles, and the stories of faith that she reports in the following pages. I know you will applaud the triumph of Christ in the lives of people newly touched by the gospel. Perhaps you will also be encouraged to emulate Reg and Ruth Coles, who show us what extraordinary things God can do with any of us who are willing to sacrifice their lives to His will.

On behalf of all who have had some association with this work, and especially for those at the Pleasant Valley congregation of the Lord in Little Rock, Arkansas, I thank God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, for the privilege.

Robert C. Walls
Elder

Table of Contents

| | |
|------------|-----|
| Chapter 1 | 1 |
| Chapter 2 | 12 |
| Chapter 3 | 20 |
| Chapter 4 | 29 |
| Chapter 5 | 43 |
| Chapter 6 | 58 |
| Chapter 7 | 72 |
| Chapter 8 | 83 |
| Chapter 9 | 97 |
| Chapter 10 | 108 |
| Chapter 11 | 123 |
| Chapter 12 | 139 |
| Chapter 13 | 151 |
| Chapter 14 | 163 |
| Chapter 15 | 177 |
| Chapter 16 | 192 |
| Chapter 17 | 206 |

Chapter 1

Journeys into the “bush” or safaris, as they are called in Africa, are called “patrols” in Papua New Guinea. This probably arises from the frequent government administration patrols of remote areas by kiaps (Australian patrol officers) and native policemen. Reg and I were very excited to be going on our very first patrol to the Papuan Waria (so called because it is that part of the Waria Valley which is located just across the border of New Guinea and into Papua). Joe Cannon, veteran missionary from Japan, was leading our patrol. He and his wife RosaBelle had moved to Lae, in Papua New Guinea in 1971 and Joe had already made two patrols to the Waria Valley. My husband Reg came to Lae in December 1972 to work as a missionary with the Cannons. I joined the team in January 1973. We were to fly from Lae to Garaina and from there begin our two and one-half days walk through the bush.

It was necessary to leave early in the morning, as Garaina is surrounded by high mountains which are often obscured by clouds by mid-afternoon. It would also help us to walk the first four hours of our journey before darkness at six-thirty in the evening. We left in high spirits with what seemed to be a massive amount of luggage, kitbags with clothing, sleeping bags, pillows, towels, food, medicines and various other essential items. The patrol would take nine days and we had to feed ourselves and our carriers on the trek through the bush.

One quickly learns that there is a difference between actual time and what is known as New Guinea time. It simply means that time is flexible in New Guinea. The small plane which we had chartered for the flight to Garaina was supposed to leave at nine o'clock in the morning. It eventually left Lae at noon. We were to learn later that this was a common occurrence. The flight lasted forty-five minutes and was very beautiful. We flew across the Huon Gulf and into the mountains to find range upon range of high mountains covered with virgin forest. If we had to make an emergency landing it would have to be on top of a mountain and they all looked too jagged for that. The plane was buffeted by strong currents of air flowing between the mountains and sometimes felt like a bouncing rubber ball.

Eventually, Garaina airstrip came into view looking very beautiful in the valley between the mountains. We could see the tea plantation on the left hand side and a corrugated iron building at the end of the airstrip. Beyond was the small village of Garaina with several good looking houses with well kept gardens. The airstrip was much longer than we expected, and we later learned that a DC-7 could land there. Pedora, a Waria man who had been in Lae for some years and was a Christian, was with us. He could see a few people from his village waiting to welcome us. We learned that most of the carriers were waiting at our first stopping place. As it was getting late in the day and we had a four hour walk ahead of us and not enough carriers, we hired a tractor and driver and loaded up the cargo. We sat on top of the cargo and off we went. The roads in Garaina are dirt roads and reasonably smooth but once we had crossed the river on the only bridge (which was continually being washed away) the track became anything but smooth and we bumped along lurching from side to side, and sometimes going so slow it would have been better to get down and walk. Eventually, after three hours of this we arrived at the river which separated us from our destination. This was as far as the tractor could go. The road which we had just traveled was there because translators for the Summer Institute of Linguistics were working on the language of the Waria tribe, Guhu Samane, and were writing the New Testament in that language. They lived on this road at Kipu, a village which we had passed on the road. We would visit them on our return journey. There was a rickety bamboo bridge supported by "faith", which we crossed with care, as there were great gaps in the middle. The waiting carriers had heard the noise we were making and all came running to carry the cargo across. We were greeted by "Dzoobe! Dzoobe Mina!" while each one shook hands with us. Dzoobe has two meanings, hullo and thank you. Dzoobe Mina! means a big hullo or a big thank you. We were to hear and make this cheerful greeting continually in the days which lay ahead.

We walked a short way on a narrow track to a clearing where two bush houses stood. The first house belonged to the Australian Patrol Officer. He used it when visiting that particular area to check on the welfare of the people, settle disputes, and check that the tracks between villages were kept clear. Every village was responsible for cutting the grass

at the edges of the track for a certain length through the bush. The patrol officer had a house built for his use in different areas of the Waria Valley. The other house was for his policeman and carriers. It was a beautiful place with several coconut palm trees planted in the clearing. On the left hand side there was a mountain range with some mountains as high as 6000 feet. We could see in the distance a waterfall tumbling down the face of a mountain in a long stream of water. Just behind the houses we could hear the rumble of the river as it rushed over boulders on its journey to the sea many miles away.

It was getting late and we had to cook food for everyone before it got dark. While the people got the fires going we got our sleeping quarters ready. When we sorted out our kit bags we found that a plastic bottle of cooking oil had leaked and all our food containers were covered in oil. Someone had sat on it on our journey in the tractor, and we were glad that it was the only casualty. After we had all eaten rice and tinned mackerel and drunk loads of tea, we sat around the fire to get acquainted. We learned how much the Waria people liked to sing, and so we sat around the fire in the moonlight and had a short devotional meeting before going to bed. It was a beautiful night with a star studded sky. The only sounds were the croaking of numerous frogs and the welcome sound of the rushing river. Reg and I did not know then that we would be in this same place many times in the future, doing the same things as we were doing that night.

Next day we were all up at dawn and ready for the day's march at seven o'clock. The carriers were chattering and laughing amongst themselves, especially the women, who wanted to carry more cargo than we had given them. By nine o'clock the sun was really hot, we crossed rivers 16 times on this journey, mostly it was the same river twisting and turning on its course towards the sea. It is a lovely clean river flowing very fast over boulders with a sandy bottom. In places where there was not a bridge we had to struggle across and our boots and slacks were wet up to our knees. Two women always helped me safely across and we marveled at the strength and patience of the women. In addition to their cargo, which was carried in string bags called bilums, many had a baby or small toddler also in string bags on their backs. These bags were woven from

the beaten bark of a certain tree, and each family had their own design in bright colours produced from the dye of berries and leaves. We walked through wide kunai grass plains where the grass was so sharp that if you simply brushed against it, you would be scratched or cut. This was also where it was hottest. However, we got some relief from time to time when we walked through forests. I was really disturbed when we met a family with small children who on seeing me screamed in terror. I learned that this was because I had white hair which the people associate with "Maseli" or spirits (ghosts). I was to find this happened every time I went to a new village until the children got to know me, so I often kept my bush hat on. Many of the people had never seen a white woman before, so it was small wonder that everywhere I went people touched my face and especially my head of white hair.

Half way along the valley we came upon a primary school in the middle of nowhere. Children from throughout the valley came as boarders to this school. It was a well run denominational school with buildings mostly constructed with bush materials. Each week the children walked to school on Sunday morning and returned to their villages on Saturday morning. The parents had to send food from their gardens with their children: Sweet potato, taro, pumpkin, greens, sugar cane and bananas. The children also helped to care for the gardens at the school. It is a good system.

We eventually arrived at the village of Aroba where we would spend our second night on the road. This village was set in a hollow in the mountains with 15 houses scattered throughout the area. A small church building stood off to the side. It was very clean, but unusual, since there wasn't any grass. We discovered that Pedora had many relatives in this village and we were made very welcome. Many of our carriers decided to carry on across Mt. Ubari to their families in the villages on the other side. The family we were staying with, Maniki and his wife, Qasira, had prepared lots of different vegetables and fruits for us. Here I tasted pitpit for the first time. It is cooked over the fire and when the leaves are peeled off it leaves a long firm centre which, to me, tasted like asparagus. It was delicious. Both Maniki and Qasira had attended high school in Lae and both spoke English but often lapsed into Melanesian Pidgin. I should



Village of Aroba. Our second day on the road.

mention here that Melanesian Pidgin is the lingua franca of Papua New Guinea. It was a language born of necessity because there are over 800 hundred different tribal languages in Papua New Guinea. We sat around the fire and talked until late, mostly about the church and the gospel. The house was full of people all eager to hear what was said. Maniki translated everything into Guhu Samane the language of the people, for the benefit of the older folks. When we said in Pidgin, “mipela ammamas tru long kam long hia na lukim yupela ol manmeri na pikinini i stap long Obasupu, insait long Papuan Waria,” we were saying that we were happy to be visiting with all the men, women and children who lived in the group of villages known as Obasupu. These villages are situated in an area on the border of New Guinea and Papua, and some are actually in Papua, hence the name Papuan Waria.

Next morning we were up at the crack of dawn to wash in the cold waters of the stream. Although it is hot during the day, it can get very cold at night and early morning in the mountains. We had a short worship service in the small dilapidated church building before we left to

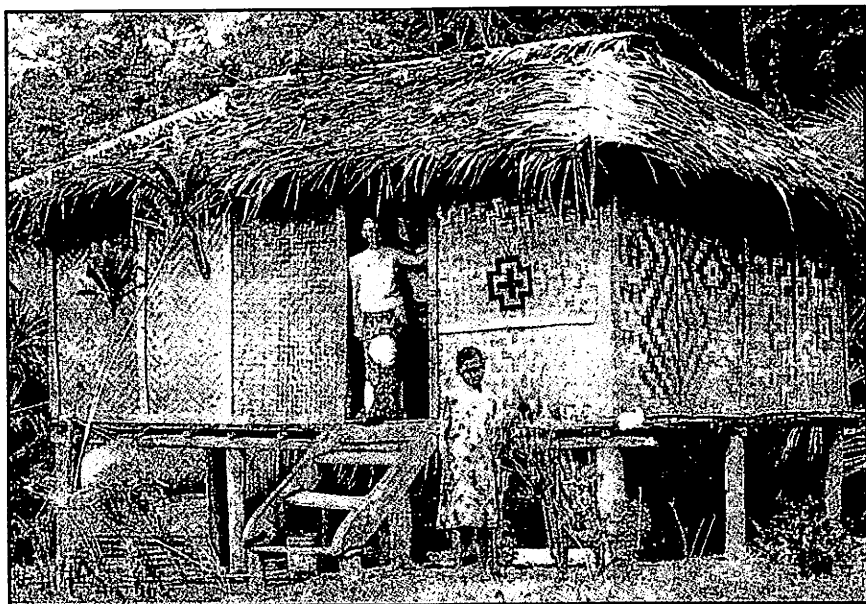


Pigs mean wealth. Village of Orouba.

walk across Mt. Ubari to Orouba. It was a beautiful walk up the mountain track where on both sides the Aroba people had planted new gardens. When we reached the top we were able to see for miles down the valley where we had walked the previous day. It was truly a beautiful sight with the mountains on either side, the sparkling rivers, woods and kunai plains. We walked across the ridge of the mountain to the other side and here we saw another kind of view. Below us we could see some villages a fair way apart, nestling at the bottom of another range of mountains, which are the foothills of the great Owen Stanley Range which runs down the centre of Papua New Guinea. In the distance to the left were more mountains whose peaks were still covered in the morning mist. Looking down at the villages which looked so tiny, it never crossed the minds of Reg and me that we would be returning there in one years time to stay for 11 years with the people of the Waria Valley. Going down the other side of the mountain was much steeper and rockier than the Aroba side. We eventually reached the River Koripo, a beautiful fast-flowing river with no bridge, so again we got feet and legs wet. It is not easy to walk across a

river in bush boots with pebbles and rocks continually moving beneath one's feet. Thankfully, our boots were canvas and the water drained out. As we made our way to Orouba, the people came running to greet us and to shake our hands. Some of the older people patted our chests in greeting.

Orouba was a small pretty village with ten houses, four on one side and five on the other, and at the far end, a house shaped like Noah's ark. All of the houses were built of bush materials and stood on stilts. The walls and floors were of bamboo and the roof of palm thatch. The houses had a design woven into one wall, almost like a family crest. The village had a fairly wide oblong stretch of grass running from the top to the bottom of the village and all of the houses had poinsettia, bougainvillea or hibiscus growing in front of their houses. We had been allocated the boy's house, a long house with just one room. The custom in all of Papua New Guinea is that when boys reach puberty, they leave the family home to live together in a house for young men until they marry and build a family house of their own.



The Boy House, where we stayed.

As we sat on the steps of the boy's house removing our wet boots and socks we were surrounded by a crowd of adults and children. There was a gasp from the women as they saw our very white, wrinkled feet. There was a great deal of chatter in Guhu Samane and then laughter as one by one they came and felt our cold feet. We explained that as soon as our feet were dry and warm that they would quickly return to normal. This was to be the first of many such incidents when the people were confronted with something new and strange to their culture.

I was surprised to find that the people in this area did not have any medical help, as we had seen a clinic in Garaina and a small aid post near the school. However, we learned that their medical orderly or "dokta boi" had left under a cloud two years before and had never been replaced. We had brought some medical supplies with us, so very soon I had a long queue of adults and children with colds, malaria, and some very bad tropical ulcers. I had trained as a Registered Nurse in Glasgow and as a Midwife in Aberdeen, and had been a district nurse and labour ward sister in England. In Australia I had worked in an orthopaedic clinic in Canberra, and as a Midwifery tutor in Sydney. We were running clinics in squatter areas in Lae so I was already used to the kind of medical problems we would meet here in the bush.

We met Pedora's father and mother, Sumugau and Tuhara. Sumugau was the headman of the village. They both had a very regal bearing. We found the people happy, very friendly and with very good manners. The people of Orouba brought us lots of vegetables and fruit and we in turn gave them rice, tinned meat and fish. The people of the Waria Valley are all subsistence farmers and at this time, seldom saw anything out of a tin.

The following day, Joe, Reg and Pedora walked five miles to check on a mountain plateau which they had been told was suitable for constructing an airstrip. While they were gone I held another clinic treating many adults and children from the surrounding villages. After I finished, the children were eager to show me around. We went to the beautiful river Ai where I was able to bathe and wash our dirty clothes. I then had to prepare our evening meal with pots slung on bush ropes from the rafters over the fire. It was "cooking with tears" (smoke). After we had eaten, many people came to sit around our fire and to "story" about their

past and their hopes for the future. They wanted a missionary to come and live with them to teach them the gospel and to help in their development.

The following day we had to leave them, as we had promised to spend the next night in the village of Aroba on the other side of Mt. Ubari. It was sad to say farewell after so short an acquaintance, but we had another two and one-half days walk through the bush back to Garaina and our work in Lae. In Aroba we heard the same cry for a missionary to come and live amongst them to teach them. During our three day stay we had visited eight of the fourteen villages in the Papuan Waria, handing out Pidgin New Testaments to those who could read and telling them about the New Testament church. In Pidgin Matthew 4:18-20, reads like this: "Jisas wokabout arere long raunwara Galili, na em i lukim tupela brata, Saimon, ol i kolim Pita, na brata bilong en Andru. Tupela i wok long tro-moi umben long raunwara. Tupela i wok bisnis long kisim pis. Orait Jisas i tokim tupela olsem, 'Yutupela kam bihainim mi, na bai mi lainim yutupela long pasin bilong kisim ol manmeri.' Na kwiktaim tupela i lusim umben na i go bihainim em."

On the journey from Aroba to Watabung (waters meet) Joe had been saying how blessed we had been to have good weather throughout the trip. Later that day we were caught in heavy rain before we reached the confluence of the two rivers and waded across the swift flow of water tumbling through big boulders to the other side. When we reached the ford we found the volume of water so much that we were forced to go downstream through the bush and cross the river on what once had been a bridge but now consisted of a few flimsy bamboo poles. This was no easy task for the carriers and we had some anxious moments. A slip into the wild cataract below would have been very serious because of so many upstanding boulders and the steep gradient below that point. Need I say that we were apprehensive about our safety too. One by one we inched our way across the slippery bamboo poles with only one other broken down pole as a handrail at waist height. This was too loose to be helpful and holding it was more psychological than practical. When safely across, the kiaps bush house looked like a first class hotel. We were all soaked to the skin and we quickly lit fires and emptied our packs to find



The rickety bridge we had to cross on the way back to Garaina.

every item of dry clothing we could find for ourselves and our carriers. It was good to sit by the fire and drink hot tea.

Next day as we walked to Garaina we stopped and visited with the S.I.L. translator, Ernie Ritcherd, and his family in the village of Kipu. This family had lived in the valley for 17 years with spells every two months at the Summer Institute of Linguistics headquarters in Ukarumpa in the Eastern Highlands. They had their own small airstrip where the S.I.L. plane or helicopter could land with their supplies. There are over 800 tribal languages in Papua New Guinea and none in written form. S.I.L. has many translators throughout the country but only a few tribes have the New Testament in their language. Ernie Ritcherd was working to produce the New Testament (Poro Tongo Usaqe) in Guhu Samane, the language of the Waria people. His work and friendship were to be greatly beneficial to us in the years which lay ahead. After having coffee and cake baked by Mrs. Ritcherd, we continued on the last leg of our journey to Garaina airstrip to meet our plane. It had been a most rewarding experience in every way and we would look forward to returning one day.

When Reg and I returned to Lae, we could not get the Papuan Waria people out of our minds. We reasoned that Reg, being an engineer, could construct an airstrip on that mountain plateau which he had seen, as well as teach the Good News of Jesus Christ. I could attend to all their medical needs as I was a qualified nurse and midwife. We felt all fired up to go right away, but we knew in our hearts that we could not do that. Joe and RosaBelle were due to go on leave in October of that year and would not return till July 1974, eight months later. Reg and I were to be responsible for the work in Lae during that time. We decided that we needed to make it a matter of prayer and if the Lord wanted us to go to the Waria Valley, He would open the door.

Chapter 2

The very name Papua New Guinea, conjures up in the mind a picture of head hunters and cannibals. This is an exciting and challenging country for the missionary and the last in the world to be explored by Europeans. As recently as the 1980's a hitherto unknown tribe was discovered in the Western Highlands who had never seen a white man and were ignorant of anything outside of their own territory. Even today it is not known if there are others who are still oblivious to any civilisation other than their own. Certainly, there are many places in Papua New Guinea which are very remote and have little contact with the outside world.

Many people are unsure about the exact location of Papua New Guinea. This is not surprising since it has only made an impact on the media in recent years. "PNG", as it is affectionately known to most expatriates who reside there, lies in the South Pacific Ocean. It occupies the eastern part of the world's second largest island previously known as New Guinea. Its neighbours are Indonesia (whose territory includes the western half of the island which is known as Irian Jaya) and Australia (whose most northerly point is barely 100 miles from southern Papua)

The island of New Guinea was first sighted by the Portuguese in 1511 but has only had continuous European contact for a little over a century. During the late nineteenth century, the island was divided into Dutch, German and British New Guinea. In 1920 the League of Nations gave Australia a mandate to govern the eastern part of the island now known as Papua New Guinea. In addition there are several smaller islands around the main island of New Guinea. To the north, Manus, New Ireland and New Britain are all part of Papua New Guinea, while the North Solomons group of islands in Milne Bay also belong to PNG.

In Papua New Guinea there is such a diversity of colour, features and language amongst the indigenous people that one wonders how this could be in a population of just over four million. Many of the people living in the south coast of Papua are light skinned, while on the island of Buka in the Solomons group, the people have the blackest skins you will find any-

where in the world. In the Highlands of New Guinea you will find that many people have red skins, and elsewhere, various shades of brown. One thing is common to all, however, they are the friendliest and most cheerful people you will find anywhere.

The official language of the country is English and this is now being taught in all the primary schools. However, the great majority of people do not speak English and so use Melanesian Pidgin which is the common language. Even some of the elected members to the House of Assembly, which is equivalent to the House of Commons, give their speeches in Pidgin.

About 90 percent of the population live in the rural areas, some of which remain very remote from life as experienced in the towns. Most of the people are subsistence farmers except for those living near towns or the Highlands highway where they can grow enough vegetables, fruit or coffee to sell. Some enterprising individuals have secured loans from the Government to start a cattle project.

Papua New Guinea is very mountainous, with the Owen Stanley range dividing the country in half. These mountains have peaks of over 10,000 feet. The highest mountain in Papua New Guinea is Mt. Wilhelm in the Eastern highlands, which rises to 15,000 feet. Because of the mountainous terrain it has been difficult to construct roads. The only road of any length in the country is the Highlands Highway which runs from the coastal town of Lae in Morobe Province to Laigam in the Enga Province, a distance of 600 miles. We traveled on it when it was still a dirt road. Papua New Guinea is considered to be a pioneer of modern civil aviation because the country has been so dependent on flying for its progress. There are small airstrips dotted around the country, some in the most inaccessible places. It is quite an adventure to fly into one of these remote airstrips, which are usually located amidst breath-taking scenery.

Papua New Guinea is situated on the volcanic belt known as the Ring of Fire. Earth tremors are common in some parts of the country and sometimes felt in Lae. Mount Lamington which erupts about every 80 years is in the Oro Province. It erupted in 1937 killing many people in the area of Popondetta. There are several active cones in the northern

islands. Rabaul is built at the base of a group of active cones at the north tip of New Britain, and was virtually destroyed in 1937 and again in 1994.

The country has a very high annual rainfall with an average of 75 inches in New Guinea, and often as much as 300 inches. The driest areas are around Port Moresby and the lowlands of east Papua where the rainfall averages 40 inches, it varies from year to year. There is always a danger of drought. The temperature near the coast remains fairly constant throughout the year reaching the high eighties. Night time temperatures are cooler. In the highlands the temperatures are much cooler around 55-65 degrees F. The hottest months in Papua New Guinea are January and February and for much of the country they are also the wettest.

There are many beautiful birds in Papua New Guinea. The most notable is the Bird of Paradise whose feathers are used for the beautiful head dresses worn by the men of various tribes for their traditional dances. Compared with the birds, animal life is sparse. There are many reptiles, ranging from small lizards to huge salt water crocodiles and a great variety of snakes.

Visiting some of the rural areas of Papua New Guinea is like "Walking into Yesterday". One can visit people living in their villages in much the same way as their forefathers did thousands of years ago. They still plant their large vegetable gardens by slashing, burning and planting in the same way as their ancestors. The gardens are often planted on mountain slopes where they are exposed to the very hot sun, and at times are swept away by heavy tropical rains. Commercial agriculture is based mainly on rubber, cocoa, coffee and copra.

It was to this beautiful country that Reg and I felt that the Lord was leading us towards the close of 1972.

I need to backtrack a little here to explain what brought us to Papua New Guinea in the first place. Reg was born in Twickenham, Middlesex, and his family were Anglicans. For many years he was not happy with the teachings of the Church of England and was searching for the Truth. In the course of his work in a research laboratory in Middlesex he met a young man, Eric McDonald, who was a member of the Church of Christ. It was through Eric that Reg was taught the way of salvation. I was born

in the little fishing village of Portknockie on the Moray Firth coast in the Northeast of Scotland. My parents and maternal grandparents were members of the Church of Christ. I followed in their footsteps and was baptized into Christ in the year 1941. In 1948 I moved to the Greater London area to take up a position as a labour ward sister of a large maternity unit in a general hospital. I was invited by a Christian couple, Jim and Nan Black, to attend a Bible study in their home on a Saturday evening. The very first time I went there I met Reg and we were married two years later.

Reg was a lecturer at Kingston College of Technology (which is now a University). One day he announced that he had seen a job advertised in British Guiana (now Guyana) for a vice-principal of a trade school with the Demerara Bauxite Company which was operated by Alcan of Canada. We lived in that beautiful country for two years. We then went to Canada for one year and returned to England. Our daughter Catherine was then six years old. In 1964 we again had itchy feet and went to Liberia in West Africa with Lamco, a consortium of companies mining iron ore. Reg was employed as a Technical Training Officer, a job which he enjoyed, as it was challenging. During our stay in both Guiana and Liberia we felt restricted in reaching the native population with the gospel. We vowed that one day we would go as missionaries to a third world country. After three years in Liberia, we returned to England where Reg was employed as an Education Officer for Buckinghamshire. Two years later we were off again, this time to Australia, where Reg was employed as a Patent Examiner with the Australian Government.

Australia is a beautiful country and we were located in Canberra in the Australian Capital Territory. We spent some of our time visiting the Kosciusko National Park and the Tidbinbilla Park in the Brindabella mountains where there is an abundance of kangaroos, koala bears, wild pigs, wombats, emus and a great variety of brightly coloured parrots and parakeets. The sunsets in Canberra are spectacular.

During this time Reg started thinking of the vow we had made some years before to take the gospel to a third world country. Reg was now fifty years old and I was 18 months younger, and as he rightly pointed out, if we did not go soon we probably never would. We started investigating

different places. Reg had an interest in India as his father had served there for several years in the British Cavalry. We contacted several missionaries who had either been there or who were presently there. The greatest difficulty was that we could only get a visa for three months and would have to keep renewing it. There was always the nagging doubt that having started a work there one could be refused a visa at any time. We decided that this option was out. We then turned our attention to the Aborigines of Northern Australia but we could not find an open door. However, in the meantime Reg decided to give up his position with the Patent Office and move to Sydney where he would attend the Macquarrie School of Preaching for a time. We did this, and while Reg studied part time I worked as a midwifery tutor in a hospital in North Sydney. We thought that our plans had been scuppered when I was admitted to the intensive care unit of the hospital with severe chest pains. I was found to have a blood clot in one of my lungs. However, I was quickly put on a heparin drip and this gradually dispersed it during my two weeks hospital stay. During this time Joe Cannon visited Sydney and spoke to the students at Macquarrie and also showed slides of New Guinea. Reg was really interested in what he saw and heard. When Joe returned to Papua New Guinea Reg wrote to him and asked if he could come and visit the work in Lae. Joe was delighted as they really needed more workers there. Reg spent five weeks seeing the work being done in Lae on the coast and the work being done by Duane Morgan in Goroka in the Eastern highlands. He returned to Sydney convinced that the Lord could use us in Papua New Guinea. Reg suggested that we start preparing right away to go to New Guinea. I was not so sure and wanted to know who would support us to go to the mission field. Reg replied "If the Lord wants us there, He will support us."

Our daughter, Catherine, was due to leave school in December of that year and had already applied to the Royal Adelaide Hospital in South Australia to start her training as a nurse in January 1973. Her school friend, Margaret, had returned to Adelaide with her parents and was to commence a teacher training course also in January.

The Lord really takes care of things and works things out for us when we trust Him. We had friends living in Christies Beach, Adelaide, who

had worshiped with the same congregation as we had in Kentish Town, London. They had emigrated to Australia with their family 15 years previously and we had kept in contact. When we decided to go to Papua New Guinea and leave our 17-year old daughter in Adelaide, our friends Albert and Olive Matthews offered to be “Mum and Dad” to Catherine in our absence. This was a great relief to us as I was not happy about leaving Catherine, even though she was mature for her age and had given her life to the Lord at the tender age of 12 years. It was decided that Reg should go ahead on 18 December 1972, and I would follow three months later when Catherine was settled in at the hospital. In the meantime I took a job at a small acute hospital on the east side of Adelaide. During this time the Matthews let me stay with them. In the middle of January I received a call for “help” from Papua New Guinea. Reg was finding it very hard coping on his own as he had rented a house in China town and was not used to housekeeping. I was torn between the two, but Catherine decided for me, saying “Dad needs you more than I do, so you must go.” The matron of the hospital reluctantly released me on short notice and I arrived in Papua New Guinea on 31 January 1973.

I was a bit apprehensive as I arrived at the then small airport building in Port Moresby, for it was absolutely seething with people. Many were sitting on the floor with their personal belongings in huge string bags, cardboard boxes, live chickens in plastic shopping bags with their heads sticking out, puppies and children crying for attention. The buzz of noise was deafening. As I picked my way between the people and the cargo to the exit, I saw someone waving to me, and to my relief recognised the face of Major Roylance of the Australian Army. Reg had called him and asked if he would meet me. We had met Major Roylance in Canberra where he and his family worshipped with the same congregation as we did. They were now stationed in Port Moresby. I was pleasantly surprised on the drive to his home to see modern houses and beautiful gardens. His wife had prepared a lovely lunch and we were able to visit until my plane left in the late afternoon. I arrived in Lae and was met by Reg, Joe, RosaBelle and what appeared to be the whole of the Boundary Road congregation. It was really exciting to meet all of my Papua New Guinea brothers and sisters and to be reunited with my happy husband.

After greeting everyone, we drove from the airport to the church property followed by a loaded bus and truck. I was surprised to see the very nice looking properties on either side of the Markham Road and the road itself lined by beautiful trees. The church property on Boundary Road is located on one-quarter of an acre of land which is broken up by a meandering stream flowing through the middle. It had at that time two houses on the property, one of which was the Cannon's residence and the other was being used for the meeting of the church. Several internal walls had been removed to make a fair-sized hall. The first thing which caught my eye as I entered the gate of the property was Joe and RosaBelle's menagerie, consisting of several cages of tree kangaroos in various shades of white and brown, two beautiful yellow crested parrots, two brightly coloured parakeets, one of which was called Turu who spoke very clearly, calling the name of their dog "Honeygirl". It was not uncommon in the Cannon household to have parakeets perched on the curtain rails, for RosaBelle loved these brightly coloured birds. The Cannons had their two youngest sons living with them in Lae. Gregory and Robin both attended the International High School, but Gregory was due to leave that year to attend Harding University in America. Their four older children were already in the USA. Joe and RosaBelle had served as missionaries for the Church of Christ in Japan and Okinawa for 25 years and decided to come to Papua New Guinea to start a new work in Lae in 1971. This was a totally different culture from the Japanese way of life. When I met Joe and RosaBelle the first thing which impressed me was their total dedication to teach the Gospel to the people of Papua New Guinea. Joe is a cheerful, outgoing, generous personality and the people responded to him. He made friends all over Papua New Guinea in the 13 years he spent in that country. RosaBelle is of a much quieter disposition but she too endeared herself to the people by her loving caring attitude. They made a great team and did an excellent work of caring for the whole man in Papua New Guinea.

Joe and Jean Sims were also working in Lae when we arrived. They had two small children and were planning to join the team in Goroka in the Eastern Highlands in April of that year.

When I saw our house in Chinatown I was delighted. It was a two

bedroom house built on stilts with space for parking a car underneath the house. What delighted me most was the garden. From the back of the house the garden stretched in a beautiful lawn to a stream flowing along the back of all the houses on the street. The garden was full of trees and shrubs, including banana and guava trees. Needless to say, the fruit trees were a constant attraction for small boys during the season of fruit. The houses in Lae did not have a postal delivery service. We were required to purchase a post office box at the Lae Post Office, which gave a very good and efficient service. Our road had the attractive name of Bowerbird Road. We discovered that all the streets in Chinatown were named after New Guinea or Australian birds.

Papua New Guinea is situated in an earthquake area and we had frequent earth tremors. Sometimes these were strong enough to make our house sway on its posts and things tumbled off the shelves. It was a little frightening at first, but we soon got used to it.

Chapter 3

When Reg and I decided to go to Papua New Guinea we did not have any financial support and intended to try to get part time work to support ourselves. However, this was not to be, for we learned very quickly there was just too much to be done on the missionary side of things. We had travelled at our own expense and shipped our household goods from Sydney. I had sold our car in Adelaide before leaving so we had that money, plus what was left of our savings, to see us through the next three months. We just had to rely on the Lord to show what He wanted us to do. Two months passed, then out of the blue came a letter from the elders of Pleasant Valley Church of Christ in Little Rock, Arkansas, informing Joe that they were looking for a man to support in Southeast Asia. They had sent similar letters to other missionaries in that area. Joe gave the letter to Reg and he replied the same day. It was so unusual for a congregation to be seeking a man as usually it was the other way round. After exchanging several letters the elders of the congregation in Little Rock decided in faith to support an unknown 51 year old Englishman, in Papua New Guinea. We were by this time getting low on cash and decided to borrow on our life insurance policies, to buy some form of transport.

Joe Sims had previously bought a Mini-Moke, the cheapest car on the market, and was paying it by monthly instalments. He had recently been sent the funds to buy a Land-Rover and was willing to sell the Mini-Moke to us if we would give him so much in cash and take over the monthly payments. This we were glad to do and so became the proud owners of a Mini-Moke. It looked like a small Jeep with open sides and was dark orange. Joe Cannon had graciously lent us his Mini-Moke frequently, at some inconvenience to himself, so we were glad to relieve him of that burden.

We received our first cheque at the beginning of April 1973. The Pleasant Valley congregation was to support us for the next 14 years in Papua New Guinea. Reg was right, the Lord did supply all of our needs, and we had reason to be thankful and to praise His name many times in the years ahead. Faith is the victory.



Joe and RosaBelle Cannon.

The work of the church in Lae was aimed at both coastal and Highlands people. There was a squatter settlement on a small hill at the back of the church property composed of mostly Highlanders. These were the people who demanded most of our attention. They were mostly men who had come to Lae from their Highland villages in Chimbu, Wabag, and Mt. Hagen to find work. Unfortunately, very few had any kind of skills and so they were without money. Some were fortunate that they had “wantoks” (people of the same language group) who helped them with food. There were other squatter camps on the outskirts of Lae and two of those we visited on a regular basis. Because of the lack of money and the sight of so much food, clothing, and other goods in the stores, some of the people turned to stealing and other crimes.

RosaBelle had started a clinic on the property to help the squatters with their many minor medical problems. Many suffered from bad colds and malaria since coming to the hot coastal climate from the much cooler Highlands. Some of the long-term residents had brought their families and many of the children were infected with scabies and head lice. It was

not uncommon to see women and children at the clinic looking for lice in each others heads while waiting for their turn to be seen. The clinics had grown tremendously with many children coming from a nearby primary school. Many of the adults, but especially the children, had large tropical ulcers full of pus on their legs or feet. Since our clinic was not recognised by the government, we had to buy all of our supplies. When a patient required a penicillin injection, it was necessary to go to Angau hospital. One of our missionaries with an eye for a bargain came in one day with 1,000 Band-Aids which he had bought at a good price. No wonder they were cheap — not one of them would stick to the skin.

We were treating from 1,500 to 2,000 people a month and we decided to try again to get some Government supplies. Thankfully, the Medical Officer of Health agreed to give us the basic requirements for our clinic. This was a great relief. I also contacted several congregations in Australia who sent us bandages and used clothing and sheets. A medical representative, in the City Beach congregation in Perth, W.A supplied us with products such as ear and eye drops and antibiotic creams. Also, in



Tree Kangaroos in Joe and RosaBelle's Menagerie.



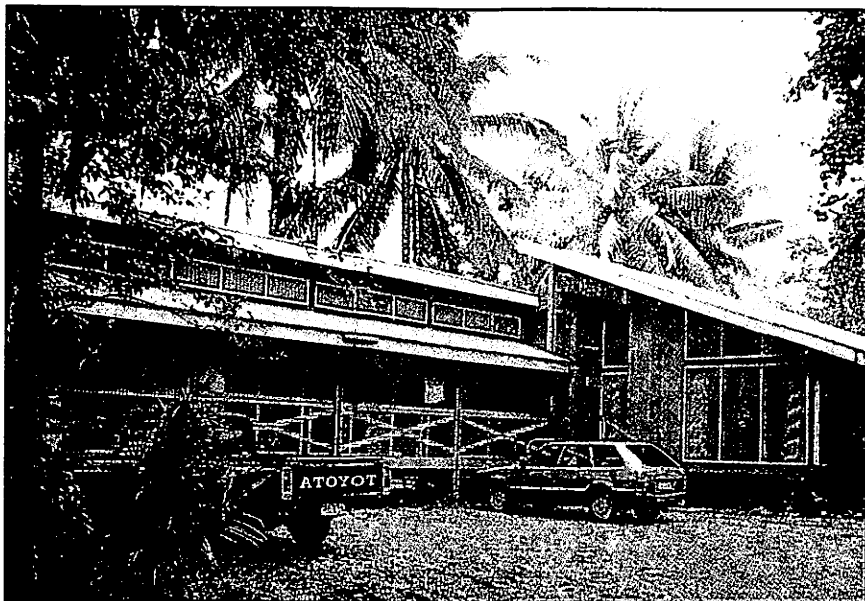
Lae City. The Church Bus.

the same congregation were several nurses who obtained permission from the hospital administration to send to us sterilised dressings and laundered crepe bandages. The cost was borne by the City Beach congregation who continued this service for the next 13 years. This proved to be a tremendous boost to our medical work since Reg and I did not have a work fund.

In addition to holding a clinic at Boundary Road three days each week, we also held a clinic at the squatter area behind the church property every Sunday afternoon, and each Tuesday evening two teams went to two squatter areas, Papuan Transport Compound and the Waria Compound, on the outskirts of Lae. These places had been vacated by Transport companies some years previously and the buildings which had been left had been taken over by squatters. In Papuan Transport the people were all from the Highlands region. In the Waria Compound they were either from the Waria Valley or from the coastal regions of Morobe and Oro districts. The Waria Compound people had built bush houses and planted coconut palms, making the area a more pleasant place to live.

When we went to these squatter areas we were always made very welcome and were greeted by hordes of children who wanted our attention. Like children everywhere, they were happy, friendly and carefree. We operated the clinic in the daylight hours from 5 p.m. until 6:30 p.m. We then rigged up a small generator and strung lights from the trees and started our gospel service. The children all stayed, as they loved to sing the choruses, but sadly many of our adult patients melted into the shadows. Some did listen to The Word in hiding. They were afraid to be seen openly at our meetings in case of reprisals from their denominational leaders in the Morobe Province, who were dominant and very militant. We were able to reach people with the gospel of Christ. Some in these areas did respond and remain faithful to this day.

There were many funny incidents in our day to day work. One of these was when Reg decided to make a baptistery in the River Buai which ran through the property. A big husky Highlander offered to help. Reg, who had worked out a plan for the baptistery, explained to him what needed to be done. First of all, he had to go with the church truck and its driv-



The Missionary Centre, Lae.

er and another man to get some large rocks from the outskirts of Lae. This was done. But unknown to Reg, who was busy elsewhere, he had taken it upon himself to go ahead and build a dyke across the river. Joe happened to see what had happened as his beautiful carp were gasping for breath in shallow water down stream. Joe called Reg from where he was building a new classroom in the church building and said "Come and see what your man has done, I don't think that it is what you wanted." Reg was amazed when he saw the number of huge boulders strewn across the river, putting it down to the fact that neither his nor his helper's grasp of the Pidgin language was very good, as well as to his helper's enthusiasm, which I must say was somewhat dampened by having to remove his dyke.

Tomas, who took his name from his birthplace in the Highlands of New Guinea, was a very happy and cheerful young man. One day he was helping RosaBelle's houseboy, Teo, feed the animals. RosaBelle gave Tomas some scraps of bread and meat for the pig, which was being fattened for a mumu. To RosaBelle's surprise Tomas made a big fat sandwich for the pig, causing much laughter and teasing of Tomas. Another



Three Highlander members of the church.

day Tomas was helping in our house, and found some duplicating carbons in my wastepaper basket. Picking them up he liked the colour of the blue stain on his hands. I was really surprised to come home and find Tomas with his hair dyed blue, singing at the top of his voice.

One day while working at the Boundary Road clinic, someone found one of our members, a man from Chimbu called Mana, under a hedge in front of Joe's house. He seemed to be very ill, so I decided to get him into our Mini-Moke and take him to the hospital. Another man, whom I had never seen before, jumped in beside Mana. I asked one of the bystanders who this man was and learned that he was a sorcerer. Apparently, the night before when Mana was not feeling well he had asked his relatives to get the sorcerer. He came, and after reciting some mumbo jumbo over him he had "miraculously" removed a stone from Mana's knee. I did not want the man to come with me to the hospital but he would not leave my car. When we arrived at the hospital I told the male clerk in the outpatient department about the sorcerer, asking if he could keep him outside and away from Mana. The doctor who saw Mana



Our Mini Moke.

decided to admit him for investigation. I asked if he could keep the sorcerer from visiting him. He said that he would try. But that it was not easy because they could not tell who was a sorcerer. Sorcerers dressed normally but had power over the people because of their fear of magic and spirits. When we lived in Africa we found that healthy people died because they believed so strongly that this would happen if they saw the "little men of the mountains". Their fear was so great that it played tricks on their imagination.

During the first few months Reg and I were trying hard to perfect our Melanesian Pidgin which we mainly learned "on the job". Of course we made mistakes and some of them embarrassing. One day I was teaching a ladies' class and we were given a new classroom with a cement floor. As the women sit on the floor, Joe had provided us with a thick grass mat to cover the floor. As I opened the door I called "yupela meri plis kam na sindaun long matmat" the chatter suddenly stopped and all of them held back. I quickly realised that I had made a big mistake! The word "matmat" is a genuine Pidgin word but it means "the grave" or "burial" ground. I explained my error and we all laughed. I was glad that the people had a great deal of patience with us as we learned Pidgin, for it was a second language for them also. It is not a hard language to master and in a few months we were quite fluent.

Teaching children is always a joy as they are so eager to hear the Bible stories and colour the pictures. I had one little boy in my class who had recently arrived from Chimbu to stay with an uncle in Lae. He was about nine years old and very smart. He said that he had been in school in Chimbu but had no papers to prove this and the Chimbu Education Authority seemed unable to trace his records. However, after many visits to the Education Department in Lae, I managed to get him a place in a local school. We rigged him out in a new shirt and shorts and off he went. Unfortunately, he only stayed three days and ran away. Two years later he was to enroll in a literacy programme which was run by Nancy Merrit, a single missionary from Canada. Today, Yusi Miopa, who was that little boy, has been an evangelist for the Pidgin speaking congregation in Lae for many years and has brought many people to Christ both in Lae and in the Chimbu province. Teaching children is so important, as has been proven so many times, for they are the future church.

It wasn't all plain sailing in Lae and we had many heartaches. One big problem was the introduction of beer to Papua New Guinea. Unlike other tribal people, the tribes in Papua New Guinea, as far as we know, had never made an intoxicating drink. When they drank beer they became very drunk. The highlanders are very volatile and when drunk they are ready to fight. There is a saying in New Guinea that "men argue over women, fight each other over pigs and kill each other over land." Joe and RosaBelle who lived on the church property and near to the squatter settlement were disturbed frequently by people running to Joe to come "antap" to break up a fight. The other problem was gambling. Gambling with playing cards is an offence in Papua New Guinea. The police were always on the lookout for gamblers, who were locked up in jail and then fined. Needless to say, this happened often to our new Christians in the early days.

Chapter 4

Another major problem in Papua New Guinea is the system of "Payback". This system has been in operation between the tribes for centuries, but in the latter part of this century it has reached new heights. For example, if a man is driving a vehicle which is involved in an accident where someone is seriously injured or killed, the men from the victim's tribe will attack the driver of the vehicle and kill him, even if he was not to blame. It doesn't matter whether the driver is black or white, he or she does not stand a chance. So, in Papua New Guinea if one is involved in an accident the advice is "do not stop, but drive to the nearest police station and report it." In the Highlands angry tribesmen have been known to attack the village of the driver with spears, bows and arrows. The villagers have fled into the bush and returned to find all of their houses burned to the ground. They have also been known to try and get the driver out of police custody where he has been kept for his own safety. This is still happening today.

Reg and I had our first taste of "holding the fort" when Joe and family went to Sydney, Australia, for two weeks. Joe was teaching in Macquarie Preaching School and holding a series of Gospel meetings in the evenings. Reg was often up at the squatter settlement until the early hours of the morning or removing drunks from the church building. It was a very busy time but an introduction to what life would be like when Joe, RosaBelle and family would leave for eight months in America in November 1973.

In September of 1973 we were to make our first patrol to the Papuan Waria, which you have read about in Chapter One. In November of that year we received a visit from Goebel Music, the pulpit minister for the Pleasant Valley Church of Christ in Little Rock, Arkansas. He had been attending the Annual Asian Missionary Workshop in the Philippines. Since Goebel was so far south, the elders of Pleasant Valley decided it would be a good time for him to make our acquaintance and then report to the congregation. Goebel was able to see the different aspects of the work both good and bad in his four day visit. He preached on Wednesday

evening to a crowd of about 150 people. Over 100 people had been baptized at that time, losing some and gaining some. The squatters were always on the move coming and going between Lae and the Highlands. Goebel liked what he saw and could see the potential for building a strong church in Lae. He was amused at our Mini-Moke since he was a tall man and had difficulty getting his long legs into such a small vehicle. At least it was airy and we did manage to take him part of the way up the Markham Valley.

Two weeks after Joe left, some brethren came to see Reg to ask him if they could borrow Joe's land cruiser. They wanted to tow an old truck which they had pulled out of the bush at the back of the property where it had been dumped. Reg questioned them about what they intended to do with the truck. They said that Joe had given them the truck and they wanted to take it to the garage to have it repaired. Reg told them the truck was useless and that was why it had been dumped, that it would require a new engine, and asked who was going to pay for it. Reg knew that they were testing him and if he gave in to them we would be landed with a massive repair bill. So he said "Sorry, Joe did not tell me anything about it and you must wait until he gets back and check it out with him." They were not pleased and talked amongst themselves. The situation was pretty tense. However, Reg pointed out that the truck was in the way where it was and had to be pushed back into the bush. Some left angry but others complied with Reg's wishes and pushed it some way back.

Other things happened where Reg had to really stand his ground, but later I believe the men respected him all the more. A few men had collected crates of beer bottles and they wanted to borrow the church bus, and its driver Pedora, to take them to the depot to exchange them for money. Reg refused, explaining why he would not allow the church bus to be used in this way. These men thought that all waitskins (white people) had plenty of money and so they could not understand why Reg would not give them what they wanted.

Another incident which happened and was to be a turning point in Reg's relationship with the men, concerned the church bus. Pedora was the driver and he had gone out to pick up people on the outskirts of Lae. He was returning with a full load when Sekora, a Highlands man, hailed

him. Pedora did not stop because the previous week he had been stopped by the police and warned that he would lose his licence if the bus was overloaded. We were in the middle of our Sunday evening service when Sekora burst in and went straight up to Pedora, who was leading the singing, and punched him in the face. Pandemonium broke out and men started taking off their shirts, ready to fight. Reg shouted at the top of his voice for the men to put their shirts on and sit down. I think everyone was so surprised to hear Reg shouting with such a commanding voice that they all obeyed. Then



Pedora and Garape who came with us to the Waria Valley with their children, Roina and Rosa.

he quietly reminded them that they were there to worship God and that he would settle the matter when the meeting was over. This he did, and counselled individual men, bringing the matter to a peaceful conclusion. I must admit that during the episode I was shaking with fear, thinking that nobody had told me that missionary work could be like this.

It was wonderful in later years to see some of those men settle down and becoming a real asset to the church in Lae, bringing others to a knowledge of Christ. From the work which started in 1971 in the squatter settlement behind the church property, there are now two congrega-

tions meeting in a well constructed church building on the property. One is Pidgin and one is English with many well educated men capable of leading the church in every aspect of its work. There is also a congregation in Taraka on the outskirts of Lae. There are now (1995) approximately 500 Christians meeting in Lae. Many people have moved back to their own towns and villages and are involved with the work of the church there.

In January 1974 our daughter, Catherine, arrived in Papua New Guinea for her annual leave. We had left a schoolgirl to start her training as a nurse one year before, and here was a confident young lady stepping from the plane. We were overjoyed to see her and shed a few tears. So much had happened in all of our lives and we had so much to talk about.

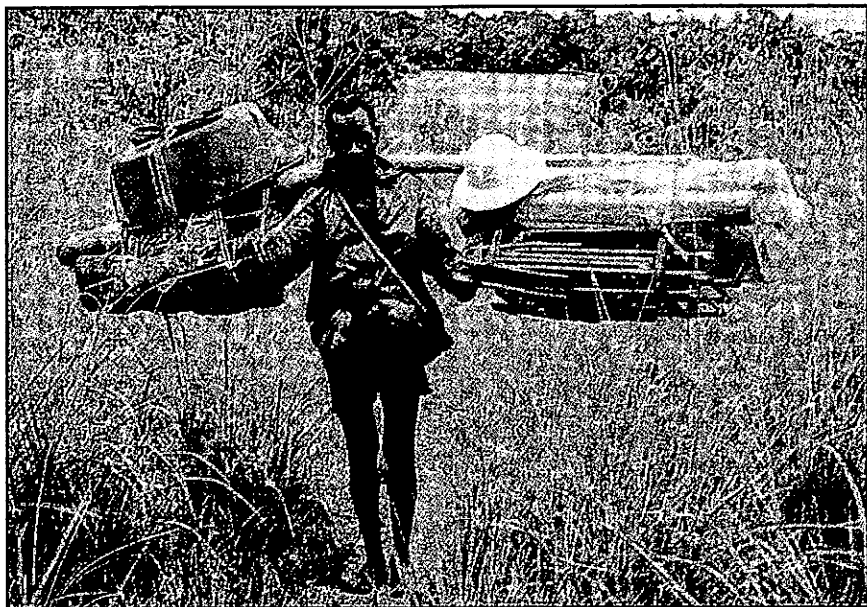
Catherine loved our Mini-Moke and drove it all around our garden, dodging our palm trees. We took her into the bush and let her drive it on a dirt road. The highlight of the visit for her was when we went to Goroka for three days. We took Garape, her two children, and two Highland men



Deberi on the left and Thomas on the right carry a heavy load.
This is when we moved to the Waria Valley.

who hitched a ride with us. There were four missionary families in Goroka and one single man. Reg and I stayed with the Duane Morgans who had started the work in Goroka in 1971 and Catherine stayed with the Curtis Harrisons and their three daughters. We had already met both the Harrisons and Wallaces who had arrived in December 1972. We had not as yet met the recent arrivals to Papua New Guinea, the Joe Reynolds family and Andy Scott a single missionary. All of the Goroka team came from America. Andy and Catherine were attracted to each other and spent a lot of time talking together. When we left they had promised to correspond with each other, which they did.

The Gympie Church in Queensland sent us several boxes of clothing which were very much appreciated by the brethren and others attending the clinics. Amongst the clothing were some brightly coloured neckties which the men loved. They had never worn a necktie before and this became a symbol of status. Even though it was too hot to wear a necktie and some even wore them with tee shirts, all were worn on Sunday to the morning worship service. The women really appreciated the nice skirts,



Nokokuna, who earned the name "Helicopter", with his load.

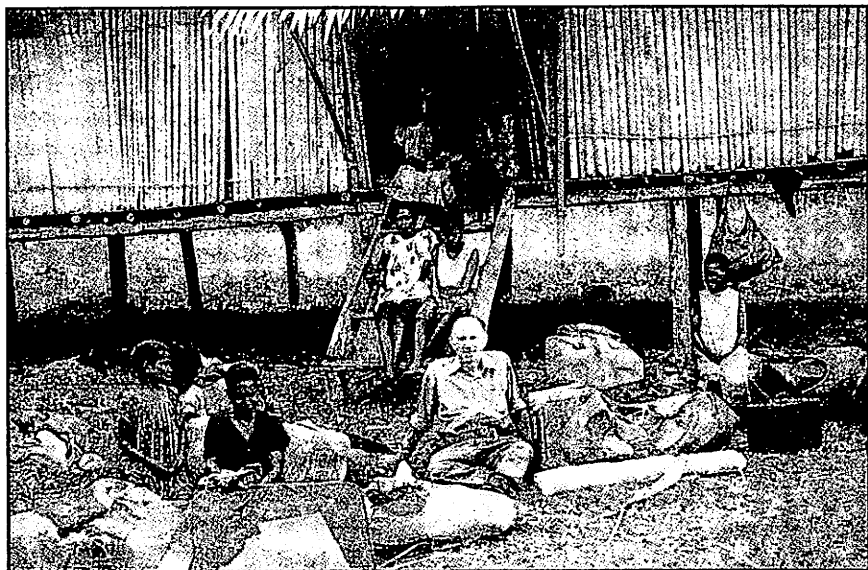
dresses, children's clothes, and babies nappies.

The City Beach congregation in Perth continued to send us medical supplies and, for me, that was the highlight of each month. The first time I received crepe bandages there was a sudden spate of men with sore knee joints. I quickly realised that these bandages were greatly prized. I found out some weeks later why, when I saw them used as leg ribbons for the annual tribal "singsings" competition in Lae.

The church in Lae was continuing to grow numerically and spiritually. Several university students who had been attending Reg's English Bible classes, had been baptized and they were bringing others to hear the gospel. Reg had also started a work with students at the Lae Technical School and this was also bearing fruit. Reg had been studying with Simon Gerel a man from the Chimbu Province, and eventually in February 1974 Simon was baptized into Christ. This proved to be a turning point in the troubles in the Christian settlement at Wanmail. Simon was a well built stocky man in his thirties, and he agreed to join forces with Reg to maintain order in the squatter settlement where he also lived. Although there was still some fighting and disturbances, things gradually improved with Simon's help. Wanmail was the name of the squatter settlement at the back of the Church property and was so named because it was one mile from the town centre.

The medical clinics were getting bigger all the time, with mothers bringing their babies and other children to see us. Some of the mothers were learning from our talks on hygiene. When we saw a nice clean baby we would hold it up for the others to see as an example of how they should care for their infants. The mother of the clean baby would glow with pride. At that time we usually had 100-150 people attending each clinic. The Papua New Guinea people are the best patients I have ever had to deal with. They never complain when treated, even when they had large tropical ulcers which were very painful. Even the children seemed to have a high pain threshold and accepted everything we did with such trust.

Teo, one of our night watchmen, was admitted to the hospital with pneumonia. Three days later he ran away when he was being wheeled on



We spent the first night on the road in this house.
The carriers are ready to leave.

a trolley to the X-ray department. He thought that he was going to the theatre to “be cut.” He was still quite ill and no amount of persuasion would make him go back. I took him to the hospital daily for penicillin injections. At that time the Health Department would not issue penicillin to us.

Rubee, the 13-year-old daughter of one of our members, got involved in a fight with an older woman and defended herself with a small knife. The police were called and Rubee was taken into custody to appear in court the next day. Reg and I went to the magistrate and told him that she was just 13 years and that she should appear in a children’s court. He agreed and arranged for her to be seen in the children’s court. I had told Rubee to be sure to bathe and to wear a clean laplap (a piece of cloth wrapped around to make a skirt). When I arrived to pick her up she was wearing a clean laplap, but she had just washed it and it was dripping water. I had to rush around and find her another laplap. When Rubee, her father, and I arrived at the Court House we found that the temporary Australian magistrate did not understand Pidgin, and that the New Guinea

magistrate did not speak English. The usual magistrate was on leave so after some delay, I was asked to speak on Rubee's behalf, with the result that the case against her was dropped.

The Government had passed a motion to provide donkeys and buffaloes for rural areas to help minimise the country's dependence on fuel and to assist small businesses to develop. This was headline news in the local newspaper. Reg suggested that when we go to the Waria Valley that perhaps we could trade in our Mini-Moke for so many donkeys, and he added wittily, "It would be difficult though, since our Moke is rated in horse power."

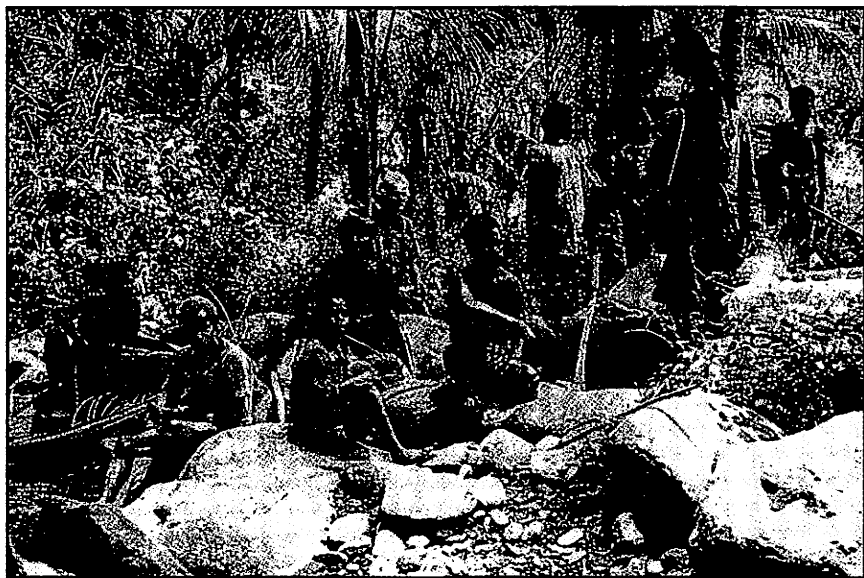
The Cannons returned in July and we were more than happy to see them. Soon after, Lorna Fairly arrived from Sydney, Australia, to help Joe with his secretarial work. Lorna was to prove to be a great blessing to the work in more ways than one. Her father was a Scot, and an evangelist with the Holland Park Church of Christ in Brisbane, and her mother was Irish. With that combination, Lorna was blessed with a good sense of humour.

Reg and I had thought much about going to the Waria valley to work and when we heard that Ray and Elizabeth Lock, their teenage son Mike, and daughter Lois, and two younger daughters were coming to join the work in Lae, we decided that the way was open for us to leave Lae and go to the Waria. Our elders at Pleasant Valley approved of our move and Joe gave us his blessing. Pedora, Garape, his wife and their two little girls Roina and Rosa would go with us for six months. Both were from the Waria tribe and they would be able to open doors for us and act as interpreters. We were to leave on October 2, 1974. Some people thought that we were too old to go to a bush work, but we were to prove them wrong.

The Lock family would use our house in China town and our Mini-Moke until they could find a house and transport of their own. Things were working out and we believed that the Lord's hand was in all of these new developments.

Reg and I decided that we needed a break after all the stress of the past 20 months. We decided to go to the S.I.L. Guest House in Ukarumpa

in the Eastern Highlands. The Summer Institute of Linguistics is the American part of the Wycliffe Bible Society, which sends translators all over the world to translate the Scriptures into the language of the people. As there are so many tribal languages in Papua New Guinea, they will be there for many years to come. Ukarumpa is their headquarters in Papua New Guinea, and we hoped to combine our time there between relaxing and searching for useful information to help us in our future work. We spent a lot of time in their extensive library and found that when we managed to get a radio transceiver we could have it adjusted to the S.I.L. frequency, and be able to contact a doctor in an emergency. We also found that we could charter one of their planes or helicopters if required. This was good news for we found later that their rates were much lower than the commercial airlines. The S.I.L. Guest House was a busy place and we met some interesting people. While we were there we had a call from the elders of Pleasant Valley Church of Christ informing us that they had sent funds to cover our removal costs to the Waria Valley. Thank you Lord! You did supply all of our needs.



Resting in the shade.

While we were there we heard about a Highlands Chief who had deposited \$200 in the bank in Goroka. Some weeks later he arrived at the bank and asked the bank teller for his money. The teller started to count it out in notes, but the chief stopped him and said that he had deposited coins and that he wanted it back in coins. The teller complied with his wishes. He went outside and sat on the pavement with his family and counted his money. Satisfied, he took it back in to the surprised teller and deposited it again. He just wanted to make sure it was still there. At this time Papua New Guinea was using Australian currency.

This story highlighted two problems in Papua New Guinea at that time. First, the tribal people did not understand banks or trust them. Second, they preferred coins to notes because they did not rot when they buried them. In the early 70's there was a severe shortage of coins and the mint in Canberra, Australia, was having difficulty keeping up with the demand. The Government appealed to the people over the radio and in the press to stop burying their money and to put it in the banks. Because Papua New Guinea coffee was in great demand, more people in the highlands grew it. With the construction of the Highlands Highway, they were able to sell it on the roadside and so had more money than ever before.

It was with some excitement and some trepidation that we bid farewell to the brethren in Lae, and boarded the chartered plane which was to take us and our 1,500 pounds of cargo to Garaina, in the Waria Valley. We had foam mattresses, mosquito nets, two lightweight garden chairs, several paraffin lamps, clothing and enough food supplies (we hoped) for three months. We planned to return to Lae, 100 miles away, every three or four months to replenish our supplies. Again, it was to be a matter of faith that God would supply our needs. We had a working fund of only \$25.00 (Australian) per month from the Embelton Church of Christ, and \$50.00 dollars worth of medical supplies, plus freight costs, from the City Beach Church of Christ, both in Perth, Western Australia. We had never been to Perth and had not met either congregation. Embelton was to stay with us until 1977. The City Beach congregation was to continue to support our work for the thirteen and one-half years we were in Papua New Guinea. Their financial support increased year by year and today they continue to send some support to the work in the

Waria Valley. They also support Garoa, an evangelist from Orouba, who is now working with the Church in Popondetta on the coast. They are truly a dedicated group of Christians led by a fine eldership, who give liberally of their means, so that the gospel can be preached to the lost in other countries.

We were met in Garaina by Pedora and Garape who had flown out the previous week, and several carriers both men and women. Some of the women had babies in bilums (string bags) on their backs. I always marvelled at the loads these women could carry with apparent ease walking gracefully along the uneven tracks. I always felt rather clumsy beside them in my bush boots. We renewed acquaintances we had made the year before and were led out of the airstrip by a cheerful crowd of people. The council representative in Garaina was cool in his reception when he heard that we had come to stay. Some denominations had tried to get into the valley without success, and the denomination which controlled the whole of the Waria Valley were quick to start threatening us. However, our situation was different and more secure than those who had tried before. First of all, we had been invited by the headman (Pedora's father) to come to Orouba village to teach them about the New Testament church. Second, Reg had met the District Commissioner, who was an Australian, in Lae and had informed him of what we intended to do. His reaction was that he would ask the Patrol Officer in the Garaina District to give us every assistance. The Patrol officer was reluctant to become involved with us in any way because of any problems which might arise because of our presence in the Waria Valley. We could see his dilemma and accepted this.

However, we were able to hire the council tractor and driver who would take us the first leg of our journey to Watabung. As before, it was a slow process and some of our carriers went on ahead to tell the others waiting there that we had arrived and were on our way to Watabung. In some ways sitting on top of piles of stores in a trailer which is lurching from side to side in the hot sun is worse than walking. We were glad when we reached Watabung before dark. There is a very short twilight in Papua New Guinea. Darkness comes very quickly after sunset, and I missed the long twilight we experienced in Britain. It is very difficult if

one is caught between villages without a light when darkness descends. Fortunately, this did not happen to us very often and we usually had a Waria man or woman with us on such occasions when it did happen.

When we arrived in Watabung, the carriers had already started the cooking fires and had water boiling for cooking rice and the welcome cup of tea. After we had eaten, we all sat around the fires in the moonlight singing hymns and choruses and then we had a short devotional. At this time, the people were rather shy of us and especially the women. However, when they saw our willingness to tell them about ourselves and our interest in all of them, we talked until it was time to sleep. It gets cold in the Waria Valley at night because of the surrounding mountains. As many people as possible squeezed into the two small bush houses and the rest slept outside. During the night we were wakened by smoke filtering through the floor. Some women had moved under our house and had lit a fire to keep warm. When the men heard us coughing and spluttering they raged at the poor woman who had lit the fire. However, we all had a good laugh about it in the morning.

As we set off in the cool of the early morning we were in high spirits. It is a beautiful valley with mountains on either side. In one place we saw the beautiful waterfall which we had seen on our first visit, tumbling hundreds of feet down the mountain face. There is so much change of scenery, so many beautiful rivers to cross, with the clear water rushing pell-mell over boulders on its journey to the sea. Sometimes we would wade across with the water over our knees and at other times we would cross bridges made of bamboo and bush rope which would sway precariously as we crossed one by one. We crossed kunai grass plains where the sun was so hot and there was little or no shade. The kunai grass was so sharp that you could get scratched just by brushing against it. Then we would follow the well worn track into shady forests where we would rest awhile. In the late afternoon we crossed the wide Supuruba River and climbed the hill to the village of Aroba where we would spend the night before crossing Mount Ubari to Orouba.

The people of Aroba gave us a great welcome and brought us many vegetables and fruits. We in turn gave them rice and tinned mackerel. We stayed in the home of Maniki and Qasera as we had done the previ-

ous year. Their house was full of people wanting to just sit and listen to what we had to say. Reg suggested that if the people would like to meet after we had all eaten that he would explain why we had come to this part of the Waria Valley, and would try to answer their questions. We did this and everyone seemed satisfied with Reg's explanations.

I treated local people with malaria and headaches and promised to hold a small clinic in the morning to treat ulcers and sores. Next morning we were all up at dawn and after eating, I held a clinic while Reg talked with the men. Then we packed up and prepared to leave, promising to visit them again as soon as we were settled. Some of the men and children came with us and our carriers half way up the mountain. We were feeling refreshed after our night's sleep and made good time to the mountain top. As we walked along the ridge I was excited to reach the other side so that I could look down on my future home. We reached a place where we could look down and see the seven villages spread out in what looked like a large hollow covered with trees and bushes. It looked a long way down and so isolated. Some of the men lit a fire and started yelling at the top of their voices. Then they let the fire smoke so the people would see it and know that we were on our way. The people have marvellous eyesight and can see great distances. They assured us that they could see people waving in the nearest village. It was hard going down Mt. Ubari. The track was non-existent in parts, and we found ourselves scrambling over rocks, while the raging river below got bigger and bigger. Eventually we were there, standing by the River Koripo which was in flood, and no bridge. It is not easy to cross a river when the rocks are constantly moving under your feet. However, with a strong woman on either side of me and soaked to the skin, we reached the other side. We walked past the villages of Repanaga and Onodora with our boots squelching and our clothes dripping. We were hot after crossing the mountain so this unexpected dip had cooled us down. Children ran down from the villages to watch us go past, staring at us with fearful brown eyes. I think that I would have been afraid myself if I had seen myself in a mirror at that moment.

We had a great welcome from the people in Orouba with much handshaking and Dzoobe's (Hullo) and were led to our house which was the

first in the village. It looked nice with its new walls and roof until we reached the front of it - there was no wall and here we would be like a couple of goldfish in a bowl. However, we were assured that we would have a wall in a few days. At least our bedroom was enclosed so that was something to be thankful for. While we were changing into dry clothes the people brought us some cooked hot kaukau (sweet potato) which tasted really good. One of the women, Gorapa got our fire going and quickly rigged up a pot of water hanging on bush rope from the rafters. I made tea and quickly there were lots of people drinking tea. If this happened every day I wondered if our supplies would last. (We did go through tons of tea and coffee in our years there.) The people had no way of buying tea or coffee as the only store was in Garaina. If we ran out of any of our supplies we would just have to wait until we returned to Lae.

As we went to bed that night we thanked God for bringing us to this beautiful place safely. We had a lot to learn about living in a bush situation but with God's help and the help of these generous caring people, we knew that we could do it. We were looking forward to the future.

Chapter 5

The meetings in our house and the showing of Jule Miller film strips were well attended. Reg taught in Pidgin and this was translated into Guhu Samane, the language of the Waria people. The older people were not familiar with the Pidgin language, so we had everything we said translated into the tribal language. This was beneficial for everyone present since we all understand things better in our mother tongue. The people's understanding of the teachings of the Bible was very poor. The men asked a lot of questions which Reg was more than happy to answer. Our Bible classes often took the form of a history, geography and Scripture class combined. We had brought with us a world globe which proved to be a major attraction to the people. We found that the Waria people were very intelligent and grasped information very quickly. Their minds had not been cluttered with the Western media and so they were thirsty for learning. They already believed in God, and that Jesus His Son was cru-

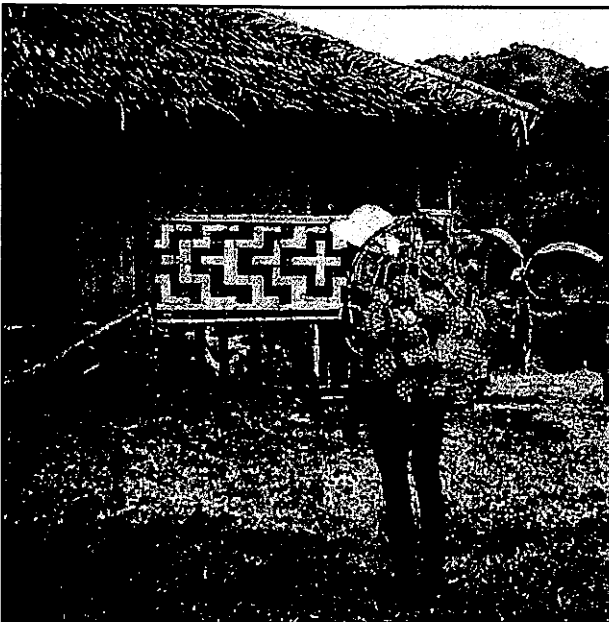


Our house in Orouba Village.

cified for the sins of all men. It was up to us to build on that foundation.

Reg had many talks with Pedora's father, Sumugau, and his mother, Tuhara, with Pedora translating. A few months after our arrival Sumugau and Tuhara were baptized into Christ. In our previous experience in Lae and in the Highlands it was the young people who responded to the gospel first, and the older people who were very wary. In the following year it was to be the older people who responded to the gospel and the younger people who were wary. We were glad that the people considered carefully what we taught and studied the scriptures before committing themselves to Christ.

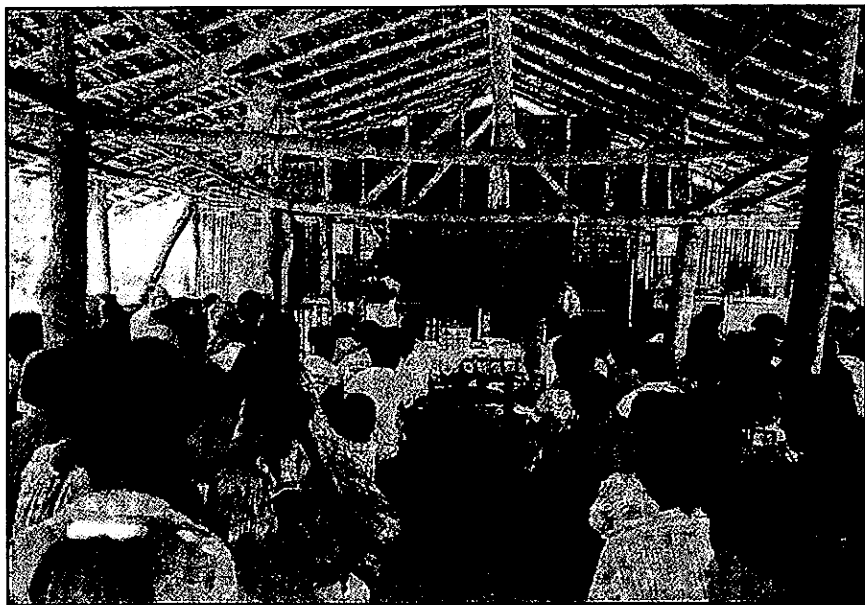
The medical work was going well. I used a structure with a cement floor and a corrugated iron roof but no walls in the village of Repanaga for my clinics. This suited me well, apart from the fact that I had to carry all of my equipment to and from Orouba. However, I had a willing band of workers in the children. Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday my army of little volunteers, all carrying something, wended their way single



A welcome gift of pineapples from Nokokuna.

file through the bush with me in the lead. The structure I was using was being built as a Medical Aid post three years before. The medical orderly who had been sent there displeased the people by his immoral behaviour and they sent him away. He was never replaced and the structure was never finished. The nearest Aid post was a one day walk through the bush towards Garaina, so very few people ever went there. The result was that when I arrived I found many adults and children suffering from large tropical ulcers on their legs. Malaria was rife and the infant mortality rate was very high. I trained Garape, Pedora's wife, to help me to dress minor sores, etc. She loved the work and did very well until she had to give it up when she had her third child.

Our daughter Catherine had arrived back in Papua New Guinea at the end of November and Joe Cannon was escorting her out to visit with us. When they arrived there were nine people, including Andy Scott, who was anxious to see Catherine again. The visitors all left after a few days and Catherine remained with us. Unfortunately, while Catherine and I were bathing in the river I slipped off a flat rock and fell into the river



One of the early church buildings with dirt floor.

onto some rocks, fracturing three ribs. I was really winded but felt mad at myself for allowing such a thing to happen so soon after arriving in Orouba. That evening a young woman was brought to me with a gash on her knee. I tried to suture the cut but could not bend, so I had to call on Catherine to do her first suturing job. I had local anaesthetic which made the job much easier for her and the patient, and with my instructions she did a good job. Garape, Pedora's wife, had been helping me in the clinics so I instructed her on how to remove the sutures after seven days.

I thought that I had better go into Lae and have my chest x-rayed. We decided that we would all go and Reg and I would return in two weeks. I walked the first day and one half, but the men decided to make a stretcher and carry me so that I could catch the S.I.L. plane which was due in Garaina the following day. They made a really good stretcher of bamboo poles and we put our sleeping bags on it with a sheet to protect me from the hot sun. There were six carriers, two men carrying and the others changing places often. With that arrangement we made very good time. I am very slim so it was not too hard for the men to carry me. I must say that they were excellent stretcher bearers who took every precaution to make me comfortable. When we arrived in Garaina the weather was starting to deteriorate and I thought the plane would not come in. However, it duly arrived around four o'clock in the afternoon. Shortly after take off it started to rain heavily and the mountains were disappearing behind banks of cloud. It was a single engine, four seater plane, piloted by S.I.L.'s chief pilot. Even he was concerned about the weather. We all prayed, because either direction was bad. Suddenly, a window opened in the clouds and the pilot guided his plane right through it to brilliant sunshine on the other side. We all heaved a sigh of relief. It had been a tense ten minutes or so and we thanked God for His care. When I arrived in Lae it was confirmed that I had fractured three ribs. The doctor told me that the walking had kept my lungs clear. It was just a matter of time until the ribs healed. It was most painful to lie down or sit up from lying down. Catherine went to Goroka to visit Andy and we did some necessary shopping before returning to Orouba. We knew what things were essential for us to buy and we needed good lights. We bought two good pressure lamps with mantles which gave us excellent light and which we could use both for the house and our evening meetings. We looked at



Ladies class in Orouba early days.

some wood-burning stoves and decided on our next trip we would try and get one of these. Cooking over a wood fire was not easy for me. I wanted to make bread but had not found a successful way of making it on the open fire, so I made scones and pancakes instead.

While we were in Lae we met Kobubu and his wife, Pomue, who had been visiting their daughter, Pusu, and son-in-law, Bonihe, who were already Christians. While they were there they had studied with Joe Cannon and had decided to surrender their lives to Christ. Their home was in the middle Waria near the villages of Qaro-Motete. We passed their village each time we walked through the Waria Valley. Kobubu was the first man to have a small herd of cows in the Waria Valley. On our return, we timed our journey so that we could meet with them on Sunday morning. We stayed in the Kiap's house close to the village all day Saturday and thought of Paul who waited a whole week in order to break bread with the Christians at Troas on the first day of the week. Reg preached and all of our carriers attended the meeting.

When we arrived at Orouba, hot, dusty and tired we found a group of men waiting to evict us from the area. This group of pastors, teachers and counsellors, all nationals, wanted to condemn us publicly for our activities. Sumugau and the other men of the village told us to go and wash and change and when Reg was ready then he could come and answer their charges. It was their custom to give a traveller time to rest so that he would be in a fit state to answer any questions. When Reg and Pedora sat down and faced their accusers, the group were afraid to accuse them harshly because they could see that the people wanted us there. Reg explained why we had come and explained to them the Scriptures concerning Christ's church, Peter's sermon on Pentecost and the instruction of Christ in Matthew 28:18-20. They did not have Bibles with them and did not want Reg to use his. They failed in their objective and left dissatisfied. This kind of "court" was to be repeated again and again over the next five years.

About a week later a very great wind, like the gales we have in Scotland, came sweeping through the valley. Trees were blown down and in its wake many roofs blown off. People put their fires out and left their houses. When it had passed we found part of our roof blown off and everything inside covered with a thick layer of fine dust. Beetles had been at work in our bamboo walls and the wind had blown all the dust out. It is said that "it is an ill wind that doesn't blow some good for someone." It did for us, for we were never bothered by the dust again, the bamboo hardened and the beetles left us. Apparently, this wind blew every two years or so and sometimes lasted two or three days. We would experience it again. Unfortunately, our roof leaked after that and we were continually finding new holes where the rain dripped through.

My first ladies' class was attended by 14 women. Reg had fixed a blackboard in the small church building. While I was writing on the board I turned to talk to the women and there was a shout "Snake." All the women ran out and when I turned to look there was the snake crawling over the top of the board. Needless to say, I left in a hurry too. Some boys came in and killed it. I estimated it to be about five feet long. It was a little time before the chattering stopped and we were able to resume the class. The women were amused when I wrote a list of their names and added Mama Snake to the list.

The children's classes on Wednesday evening and Sunday morning were very popular with more children coming all of the time. There were probably 40 children attending on Wednesday. The single men had given me the use of their house consisting of one very large room, which was ideal at this stage. We had a fire in the middle of the room and a kerosene lamp hanging from the ceiling. I bought some corn for popping when I was in Lae and was interested to see their reaction to this. After class one evening I hung a large pot over the fire. The children watched intently as I put the oil in the pan, then I showed them the dried corn kernels. I put it in the pot and told them to sit very quietly and listen. They heard the corn popping and looked at each other, but when they saw the lid starting to rise they all shouted and all the parents came running. When they saw the fluffy white corn they were all amazed and everyone wanted to have some. Needless to say, the adults loved it as much as the children. I was to make popcorn often in the future for the men's classes which were held in our house, and for the children. It was exciting to see the reaction of the people to new things which we take so much for granted.



Garoa, a fine preacher, with his wife, Zaruho, and family.

The medical work was growing. As people in distant villages heard about our work more people would bring their sick people on stretchers to see me at any hour of the day. I was therefore pleased to hear that an enrolled assistant nurse wanted to come and work with us. Pat Stidworthy arrived in March and proved to be a great help to the work in Orouba. She was a big hit with the children because she had brought her accordion with her. Pat was with us for just over a year. She suffered a back injury when she slipped on the track near our house which had been dug up by pigs. She continued her work in Lae until she returned to Perth, Western Australia. She enjoyed her year in the bush for there she learned to suture wounds and give penicillin injections. Medical emergencies were mostly cuts from bush knives or axes, which I usually sutured on the verandah of our house in the daytime and inside our house at night. I had a canvas army-type bed which I used for patients. There were many other times when I was called out to a village to see someone who was very ill, or a woman in labour who was having problems. The most common problem was a retained placenta, which I was able to cope with. Only twice was it necessary to call in a plane to take the woman to the hospital for a manual removal of the placenta under anaesthetic, and it was the same woman on both occasions. I did have the occasion to send another woman to the hospital with a postpartum haemorrhage. The use of penicillin injections for tropical ulcers and serious cuts to the legs, etc., had a dramatic effect, as the people were not used to it. The ulcers healed in two to three weeks and the wounds healed beautifully. This also had its problems. People started asking me for an injection; even after I had explained that it was not necessary in their case. They did not believe me, and thought that I had favourites that I gave injections to. Gradually in time they came to understand my actions and to trust my judgment.

Head lice was a problem in some families and scabies to a lesser extent, but with giving lectures on hygiene to the women we were able to greatly diminish this problem. The Waria people are clean people. Their houses and surrounding areas are swept every morning and they wash their clothes and bathe in the beautiful river Ai which is about 100 feet below the village of Orouba.

Being a registered general nurse and midwife, I was very interested

to see how the woman prepared for labour and gave birth. Several weeks before the baby is due to arrive the husband of the expectant mother builds a small house next to the family house. It is built sturdily of bamboo walls and palm thatch roof, but unlike the family house, it has a dirt floor. Inside the house a small platform is built with a small fireplace in the middle, with just enough room for the woman to lie down. When her labour pains start she goes into the little house and a bed of leaves is prepared on the dirt floor. Usually her mother and mother-in-law are in attendance, staying with her all of the time. She squats on the bed of leaves and when the baby is born it is covered with a cloth of some kind, but not until the placenta is delivered will the cord be cut. The women would tie the cord with a thin piece of clean twine. I found that sometimes the baby got quite cold in these circumstances. When I was called, the baby had usually been born an hour or two, so I quickly cut the cord and wrapped the baby in a warm towel and gave it to grandma to keep warm. I never interfered with their way of doing things unless there was a good medical reason for doing so. After the placenta is delivered the mother is washed and placed on the platform near the fireplace. The placenta is then buried in the floor of the house so that the dogs can't get at it. The mother will sit and warm her hand on the fire and hold the baby's cord and in this way the cord will dry and fall off in a few days. The woman will remain for a week or two in the little house while she recuperates after the birth of her baby. Her husband will go hunting to find some meat for her to make her strong. She will not be permitted to touch or cook her family's food for one month following the birth of her baby, as she is considered unclean. I was surprised to find this Old Testament law in force in the Waria Valley. Apparently it is common to other tribes in Papua New Guinea, and has been present in their culture for hundreds of years. The same law applies to women who are menstruating. We Westerners need to respect their culture and not try to change it. I never saw a baby with an infected cord or a woman with puerperal sepsis in the eleven and half years we lived with the Waria tribe.

The babies are breast fed on demand for the next 12 months or more. It is not unusual to see a child of two or three years run to his mothers breast for comfort when he is hurt or upset.

There are lots of taboos in the Papua New Guinea culture and each tribe has its own. In the Waria Valley the houses are well built above the ground on stilts. Some are quite big with three or four rooms in the house. The head of the house has his own room for sleeping, boys also have a room of their own, mothers and daughters usually sleep in the living room. There is no furniture of any kind but there may be the occasional sleeping mat or suitcase if some of their relatives have managed to get work in the town. Relatives are obligated to help the family back in the villages with clothing, cooking utensils, enamel cups, plates, etc. They all eat and sleep on the floor. If a woman steps over a man's plate of food the man will not eat it, as it is then regarded as unclean and will be thrown out. If a woman offers food or water to a man when her husband is not at home this is regarded as enticing the man. When I learned of this taboo I had already, unknowingly, enticed lots of men by giving cups of tea, coffee and biscuits to our workers. However, because of my white hair my errors were graciously overlooked. I made a point of learning all there was to know about taboos after that. Another important one



Lady being baptized by Deberi.

was, if you combed your hair and some came out on the comb, you must bury it because if someone found it they could use it to work magic and make you sick or even die. Such was the suspicion and fear entrenched in most of the people of witch craft and evil spirits.

When boys reach puberty they move out of the family home into a "men's house" with other young single men. They will remain there until they marry and build a family house of their own. In the meantime, they help with all the communal chores, hunt together and are free to visit other villages. When they seriously think about marriage the culture does not allow them to be with the girl of their choice alone. He can visit her in her parent's home and make his intentions known. When they decide to marry, the father and mother of the girl bring her to the man's village and their friends and relatives give gifts. They are now married. In later years some Christian couples asked to be married in the haus lotu (church building). In the Highlands of Papua New Guinea the man must pay the girl's father a bride price and this price is increasing all of the time. When we arrived in Papua New Guinea the bride price was a number of pigs and perhaps vegetables and some money accompanied by a large wedding feast. Today if the girl has been educated to high school or university standard the bride price increases dramatically to a hundred pigs and sometimes thousands of Kina. Some young men spend years paying off the bride price. In Papua New Guinea, in years gone by, the parents of a boy would choose at an early age the girl he would marry and this was agreed between the parents. Some parents in the Waria Valley adhere to this tradition even today, but they are in the minority.

Many of the children in our area did not attend school. The nearest school was one days walk away and the children who did attend, often did not start school until they were nine years of age. There were very few high school places in Lae, so few ever got the chance of going there. Reg felt that we needed to do something about this, but we did not have the resources or manpower to do it. Every time we went to Lae we headed for the Education Department for Morobe District and begged for a school. Reg filled numerous forms and did a head count of all the children in the Papuan Waria. Eventually, in February 1976 the first two teachers arrived without notice. Reg organised the people to build hous-



Lady being baptized by Garoa.

es for them and got the first classrooms built. With all of the eight villages involved, the bush buildings were quickly erected. The present school is now located on the airstrip which is five miles from Orouba on top of a mountain. Many children have gone to high school in Lae and Popondetta from this school. Some are working in the towns and others chose to return home to their villages. They are an asset to the community wherever they are. When the school started we were amused at the way they chose the youngest ones. They had to be able to touch their left ear with their right hand going over their head. The Waria children are slim and small for their age so they were probably seven years at least before they started school. They enrolled a lot of the older children. Most of the girls worked hard but several boys dropped out. They were too used to roaming the bush at leisure. However, I started a literacy class for them every morning and this proved to be a worthwhile project, for some of those boys are now Christians and taking an active part in the work of the church.

Reg decided to try to get an airstrip constructed on Abero, a moun-



Story Time. Ruth with children at Orouba.

tain plateau five miles from our house. It had been cleared some years previously but had never come to anything. He sent a notice to all of the villages asking for volunteers and about 30 men came to help him. They cut down all the small trees, bushes, cleared out the roots, and cut a strip through the kunai grass the length and width of the proposed airstrip. Reg took measurements of the entire area, and then contacted the Civil Aviation authorities to ask their advise on working the airstrip. They sent two men out by helicopter to survey and measure it. When Reg showed them his calculations they were really surprised, for they were the same as they had made with their sophisticated equipment. They asked him what he had used. He showed them his camera tripod, spirit level, and water levels using a hose pipe and clear plastic tubing. I believe that we survived so many years in the bush because Reg was able to do so many practical jobs to make life easier.

Many people turned up at the airstrip to see a helicopter for the first time. It was interesting to see how the old men reacted. They wandered around it looking at everything, and walked underneath to touch and talk

amongst themselves with wonder that such a thing could actually fly in the sky. Reg was given the go ahead to construct the airstrip which was greeted with applause by all of those present.

The work started with great enthusiasm the following week with a good number of people from all of the villages giving a hand to pull up the strong kunai grass and clear the remaining small bushes from the area. As the weeks progressed more and more people stopped coming to the airstrip until one day there were only six of us and two of those were old men. Reg asked for an explanation of this as we walked home through the villages. The people talked amongst themselves in Guhu Samane but avoided looking at Reg. When we returned to Orouba we heard that the pastors had commanded the people to stop helping Reg because he was building the airstrip for the Church of Christ and no-one else would be allowed to use it. Reg had already made it clear to everyone that this was a community airstrip and had nothing to do with the church. However, they were persuaded not to believe him and for the next six months we would have to work with a limited number of men and women in preparing the strip. Thankfully, however, some began to believe in us and to see that we were willing to help anyone, especially when I was called out to a distant village in the middle of the night and was willing to walk several miles to see the patient. The Orouba men were very protective of me on these occasions. Usually two men would escort me wherever I went during the hours of darkness. In the daytime the women would go with me. Eventually, the people drifted back to help on the airstrip and the work progressed.

We had received enough money to purchase a Codan radio transceiver which was to make a difference to our lives and the lives of the Papuan Waria people. Many men from different villages had combined forces and climbed the mountains to find and fell an ironwood tree for our radio mast. They came back dragging it through the bush and singing just as the Africans do when they are working in unison. We had not heard this before in New Guinea and it sounded really nice. They erected the radio mast with great efficiency. We heard later that this was a skill used in erecting the "haus tamberaun" which their fathers had used to build the very high front of their spirit houses. They attached the aerial to a high

tree about 100 yards away. Every morning at our scheduled time many people would gather to hear the conversation. We would ask if there were any calls for us. We were able to link into the telephone system in Lae and, when necessary, order groceries or medical supplies from the stores. Also, Joe would keep us informed on what was happening in the outside world. The radio transceiver was to prove to be a boon to us and to the Papuan Waria people, for it brought them out of their isolation.

Our mail was delivered to the Post Office in Garaina and given to anyone visiting there from our area. Sometimes it was passed from hand to hand and village to village before it reached us. It says something for the integrity of the people that in the two years we had mail delivered in this way it was never tampered with, and as far as we know, we never lost any. We, in turn, sent a man each week with our mail. We received cheques this way and sent cheques to pay for our bills. It was a slow process but it worked.

Pat had settled well into the life of the village, and was kept busy. She was a great help to me in the medical work, teaching the children and in the cooking of meals. One day a boy brought an opossum to the clinic, it was quite tame and Pat was enchanted with it, so she bought it. It was an attractive little creature which ran up and down Pat's arms. She made a little bed for it on the verandah and tied it up there like a little dog at night. She named it Zombie, for when she first met the Waria people and they greeted her with "Dzoobe" she replied with "Zombie" thinking that this was what they had said. Everyone laughed and teased her, which she took very well. Hence the name Zombie seemed fitting. Pat had arranged with Sehequ, who lived in Orouba, to build a small cage for Zombie. Unfortunately, during the night Zombie fell through a gap in the floor and the village dogs received an unexpected meal. Next morning Pat was devastated, as she had loved the little animal. Reg promised, in a rash moment, to get her a kitten when we next went to Lae and this helped to console her.

Chapter 6

That same evening as we were all preparing to retire we heard a lot of commotion outside. Reg went to investigate. A man had walked over the mountain from Aroba carrying his young daughter in the torrential rain. She had gashed her leg with a bush knife. Reg got the generator going and I sutured the leg with Pat's help. We got a good fire going and as the father and daughter dried off with towels we found some clothes for them to wear. They went next door to Sumugau and Tuhara where they stayed for several days.

The mother of the child arrived next morning with a load of food from her garden for Sumugau and Tuhara, and the family stayed in Orouba until the child's sutures were removed. Thankfully, most of our suturing jobs were done during the hours of daylight.

Our house was very small, with a living room, one small bedroom and an even smaller store room which Pat was using as her bedroom. We had a small kitchen added on, but we were planning to build a bigger house in the coming year. Every house was infested with cockroaches, mice and ants and our house was no exception. Everything had to be kept in sealed containers. When the roaches couldn't find food, they attacked our papers and books. We sprayed our books but with little effect. The houses in the village were very close together and could be very noisy at times. There was really very little privacy. The pigs, which had been rummaging in the bush all day, returned to the village at night and slept underneath the houses. More often than not, we had a couple of fat pigs underneath our house who snorted and snored throughout the night. I am a very light sleeper and I did not appreciate being kept awake by pigs. I tried to discourage them by pouring water on top of them through the spaces in the floor. Sometimes it worked but sometimes it didn't, and they just moved a little way. Eventually, I had to accept it and try to ignore the pigs. Also we had a rooster who took a fancy to our house, and perched underneath the house with the pigs. At 5:30 a.m. he would rouse the whole village with his enthusiastic morning reveille, but when it was right underneath our bed, it was deafening. Sometimes, I must admit, I wished that he could find his way to the cooking pot.

Our day started at 6 a.m. It was usually cold first thing in the morning, so the first chore was to get the fire going to get the water hot. It was really nice to look out in the early morning and to see the smoke from the fires filtering through the roofs of the houses. Even though we did not have a chimney, the roof was very high and the smoke usually went straight up through the thatch. As I looked towards the airstrip and the mountains in the distance I often thought that this is what the earth must have looked like at the beginning of time. The mountains were covered in white clouds with a peak here and there showing through the clouds. It was very beautiful.

Some time previously Reg had the men build a shower room on to the house. It was at the side of the kitchen. It was a simple affair with an army canvas shower bucket hanging from the ceiling, a plastic base and three shower curtains. The water was heated over the fire in a large pot hanging from the rafters by a couple of dog leads. Reg had rigged up a large plastic funnel with a length of hosepipe running through the wall of the kitchen into the wall of the shower room and into the shower bucket



The airstrip in operation.

which had a large hose. If someone forgot to turn off the hose, the next person lost all the water before they reached the shower room. On the whole it worked very well and was a great asset, and saving us the journey to the river every day to bathe. The water from the shower just ran down a ravine at the back of the house. I noticed that our banana trees in that area really flourished and brought forth good fruit, so maybe they liked the soapy water.

We were very excited when we heard that the iron wood stove, which we had ordered in Lae, had arrived in Garaina. Several men set off from Orouba to carry it. We knew that it would not be an easy task to carry such a heavy item through the bush. We advised the men to remove every movable part to make it easier to carry and promised to pay them extra for the inconvenience caused by the heavy weight. I must say that the people were always very cheerful and willing to do anything to help us. They knew that it was not easy for me to cook over an open fire, and they looked forward to seeing the stove in operation. The two girls who carried our water had chopped a pile of wood in preparation for the arrival of the stove. When it arrived three days later with a length of pipe for the chimney, the men were given a great welcome for the people had never seen anything like it. Pat and I had to be patient while Reg and Gobeda fixed a metal plate on our roof and a hood on the chimney, as we could not risk the chance of the palm thatch catching fire. I thanked God for His providential care, for the most sophisticated electric stove in all the world could not have looked better to me than the black iron stove which now had pride of place in my kitchen. With the wood crackling in the firebox and several pots of water heating on the top, Pat and I prepared to bake our first loaves of bread.

A long line of people waited to view our new stove. As word spread, more and more people arrived to walk into our kitchen and cluck their tongues over this amazing thing which would cook the white skins food. Everyone was so happy for us. Whenever Pat or I had a baking session a group of children would gather under the house, waiting for a taste of the goodies.

We had to buy our food in bulk when we went to Lae every three or four months. This was expensive because of having to freight it by air.

One month when we were really low on funds and concerned about how we were going to pay our bills, a cheque arrived out of the blue from a man in Australia. He was an Englishman who had emigrated to Australia years before and had heard about Reg and me from his sister. He sent us \$1000 Australian dollars (this was the currency of Papua New Guinea at that time) with a little scrap of paper saying "use this as you see fit." Our benefactor wished to remain anonymous. God had supplied our needs again and was to continue doing so from the most unexpected sources.

Reg made a patrol to Aroba village one Saturday morning and planned to stay until Sunday afternoon to teach the people and preach on Sunday at their request. Reg always taught every time we went to Lae, when we stayed in Aroba on our return journey through the valley. The people wanted to hear more about the teachings of Jesus and His church, and Reg tried to go there as often as his work in Orouba would permit. On this occasion, Pedora, Garape, Sehequ and Ai went with Reg. After the sermon on Sunday morning ten people came forward repenting of their sins and asking to be baptized into Christ (Acts 2:38). They went



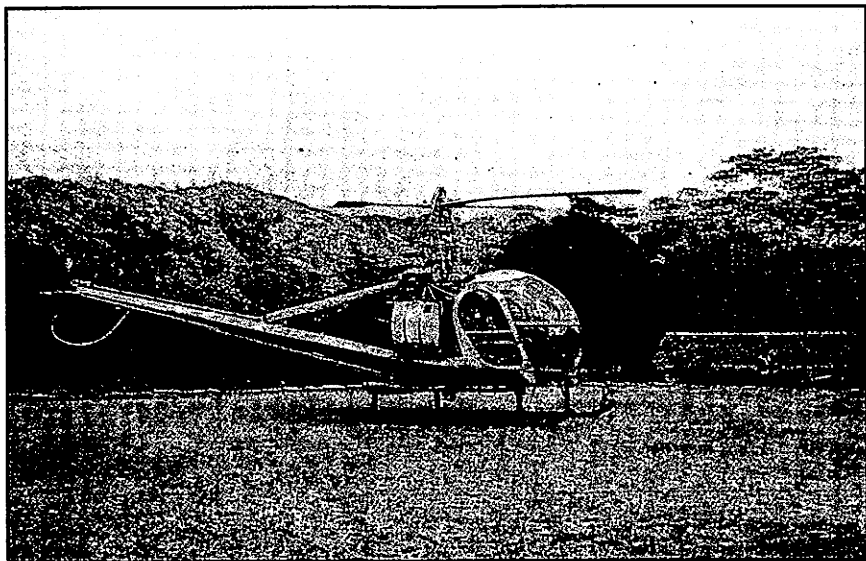
Highway No 1. Road from the airstrip.

down to the River Topome, where Reg took their individual confessions of faith and Pedora baptised them by immersion in the river. There were five men, Jarope, Ono, Quma, Hopaia Dumare, and four women, Korizobe, Sina, Sagirepa and Pidari. Six were young adults and four elderly people. We were glad that the people studied the Bible carefully before committing themselves to Christ. Some people attended classes for two years or more before making a decision. This way they usually remained faithful. We were thankful for this small harvest in Aroba at this time, for it encouraged other people to consider their relationship with God.

We had a letter from our daughter, Catherine, telling us that Andy Scott had spent three weeks in Adelaide, during which time he had asked her to marry him. She accepted and they agreed to be married in Lae on 24th January 1976 when she completed her final nursing examinations. This was great news. We could look forward to having our daughter once again living in the same country as us. We were reminded again that if we trust God, He always works things out.

It was now September 1975, which was going to be a significant year in the history of Papua New Guinea. It had been a territory of Australia since 1920 and on September 16th it was to gain its independence from Australia. The Australian Government had done an excellent job of preparing the people for independence. However, many people in the Highlands, especially, did not want independence and wanted Australia to remain in control.

All the towns and cities were celebrating in a big way and the remote areas were given some funds that they too could celebrate. The show which the people of Obasupu (the area of villages where we were working) prepared, was really excellent and better than any of the national "singsings" which we had seen in Lae. The men and women prepared beautiful head dresses with bird feathers, many from the bird of paradise. The men wore a covering of beaten bark which was decorated with their own particular design and the women wore grass skirts. Both wore woven armbands and belts. These they decorated with leaves which indicated peace. All of them wore necklaces of pig tusks, dog teeth, cowrie shells or other beautifully carved shells. Some wore kina shells which



The Helicopter pad just above our house. We only had to use it once.
It was very expensive.

were shaped like a half moon and cream in colour, and were the most important shells used for bartering before the use of money. The men beat their kundu drums and chanted as they danced in some kind of formation. Usually the dances imitated animals or birds or some other aspect of their tribal life. It was very colourful and interesting to us.

They then put on a play of the first coming of a white man, an Australian patrol officer in the late 1930's. They had the khaki shorts, shirts, knee hose, shoes, patrol box and folding chair of the patrol officer. They had borrowed some things from us but we had no idea what was going on. They had the original type of police uniform, a navy jersey with a badge and a peaked cap. They had carved a rifle from wood and had a relative send a firecracker from Lae which sounded like rifle fire when lit. The story was that when the patrol officer, his policeman and his carriers arrived, some of the carriers had taken two of the village women into the bush. The men of the village were enraged and started firing arrows at the group. The policeman fired his rifle and killed three men. The woman and children were hiding in the forest and the men also retreated from this

deadly weapon. The policeman then encouraged them to come back by holding up a bowl of salt, which one by one the men crept forward and tasted with wonder. Then he showed them a mirror and they were really afraid of their own reflection. In the end they appointed one man as a policeman and another as a councillor to hear disputes. They were given gifts and the patrol officer's party left. It was all done exceptionally well. They must have practiced for hours as the acting was terrific, and no one had breathed a word about it. How I wished that we had a movie camera at that moment. They also did another with eight men, their skins covered in a white chalky substance from head to toe, which made them look really eerie. They approached the village from the bush walking bent over, at a slow pace, beating their drums in a slow rhythm. They were spirits coming to claim the spirit of a boy, supposedly dead, lying on the grass with his grandfather bending over him waving a branch of leaves to keep off the hordes of flies (numerous very small boys) which were buzzing around the body. This, too, was acted out with real professionalism. I realised more than ever why toddlers were scared at the sight of my white skin and very white hair.



Reg with Puoba (a former policeman) and Sumugan
at the cleaning of the land for our house.

It had been raining heavily in the night, as it did on most nights. As Pat made her way to the small house in the early hours of the morning, she slipped and fell heavily on the slippery path. Not only was the path slippery, but the pigs had dug it up looking for a special nut which they love to eat. Reg called them miniature bulldozers. That was a good description, because they just tore up the ground in their frantic search for their favourite food. Poor Pat was bruised and sore for days and her back ached. We tried to persuade her to go to Lae to have an X-ray, but she stubbornly refused. We had some deep heat ointment which helped but did not cure it.

Our small house was built in the same way as the native toilets. It was built of bush materials and had a deep pit covered with tree trunks, which in turn were covered over and cemented together with earth and gravel. The normal method is to cut a diamond shaped hole in the trunks and cover this with a piece of wood with a long handle attached. We were very surprised to find that we had a "throne" on top of ours, which had been carefully trimmed with an adze. We were told that Garoa, who had



Taro Festival in Repenaga (Root Vegetable). The taro is heaped inside a wooden structure and then distributed to the people who gave the taro sticks for planting.

visited the tea plantation manager's house in Garaina, had seen a flush toilet there and it had a seat with a cover. He wanted us to have the best that he could offer, so he took the trouble to construct a box on top of the hole with a carefully trimmed seat. We found that the people were concerned for our welfare and wanted to help us in any way they could. We, in turn, wanted to live as closely to their way of life as we could without jeopardizing our health. The "throne" had its drawbacks, for we had many spiders, small scorpions and other insects which could hide under that seat, so we kept it well sprayed with insecticide. It was not uncommon to go to the small house at night with a flashlight and see a snake in the rafters. I am not very brave where snakes are concerned, but when I could identify the non-poisonous from the poisonous I felt less apprehensive. However, I must add that it is surprising how one can adjust to living in these conditions and be perfectly happy.

We all started work at 8 a.m. Reg was really busy, preaching and teaching the Word, having studies with groups in Orouba and across the mountain in Aroba. He was also working hard with a small group of men to con-



Pigs are also slaughtered and given as payment at this festival.

struct the airstrip. Although the work was going well, it was very slow. The lack of proper tools to do the job was a great hindrance. He also had to walk the five miles up the mountain and back which took up valuable time. As I mentioned before, time in Papua New Guinea did not have the same meaning as it does to us Westerners. In this remote area of the Waria Valley the people were really not very concerned about time. If things didn't get done today, there was always tomorrow. Procrastination was a way of life. To Reg, who had been used to timetables in teaching and to Pat and me, used to the many time schedules of busy hospital life, it could be very frustrating at first. However, we learned to blend in with the people and they with us, and eventually we had a really good working relationship. I think that part of the reason for our success in living in the bush was Reg's attitude to the people and their skills. When we first went there the men told Reg that the white man had so much knowledge and they had so little. He told them that this was not true. He told them that the knowledge he had he was willing to share with them, but they had a lot of knowledge that he did not have. He told them that they had skills building bush houses, surviving in the bush, knowing what was edible and what was not, that he did not have. They understood the habits of the wildlife and which snakes and insects were poisonous. They knew when rain was coming long before it appeared, and most important for us, which water was good to drink. He told the men "We must share our knowledge and that way Ruth and I can learn your language and how to live here in the bush." The men were very happy with that and Reg made a practice of discussing everything with the men before doing it. We found that the people were very quick to learn new skills and they were always willing to try.

The Bishop of the religious group who were opposing us in the Waria Valley, was angry when he heard that many people had been baptized into Christ. He decided to send a colleague and a member of Parliament who at that time was working in his office, to come to the Waria Valley to persuade us to leave.

They had sent word ahead that they were coming and asked for all the people of the Papuan Waria to assemble at the village of Sekare. We also received a message that we were also to attend this meeting. Hundreds

of people gathered to hear and to see what would happen. They were told many things about us which were not true. Reg was then given an opportunity to defend himself and his actions. He used the Pidgin Bible and an interpreter to speak in Guhu Samane. He explained that Christ had built only one church (Matthew 16:18) and that we were following the teachings of that church given in the Acts of the Apostles. Peter preached in Acts chapter two how one could become a member of that church which was the body of Christ. He also said that he was following the Great Commission which was given by Christ himself in Matthew (28:18-20). The pastors were shouting at Reg to put his Bible away and not to use it. He told them that it was because he was teaching its truth that he was on trial before them. They stopped him and took a vote from the people on whether they wanted us to leave or stay. Someone asked if we could stay if I just did medical work and Reg constructed the airstrip but we did not teach or preach. Reg got up again and said "No I cannot do that. I came first to preach the gospel and that is what I will do, the other things are secondary." They voted overwhelmingly that we should leave the Waria Valley. Reg stood up again and told the people that he had been invited to Orouba, and he was living on tribal ground and that we had no intention of leaving. With that the meeting broke up.

Later that evening we had a message to say that the two visiting dignitaries would see us alone the following morning in our home in Orouba. They would not allow any of their pastors to come and we were not to have any of our church members present. We heard that they had said they would remove us.

When they arrived Reg welcomed them warmly and I served them coffee and cake. They talked with us for three hours. Reg told them the history of the church. They were both highly educated men and as we conversed in English we found for the first time that the animosity had gone. When Reg went into his small office to get a map, and I went to the kitchen to make some coffee, I heard the Member of Parliament say to his colleague, "This man is sincere. I cannot give an adverse report on him." I was standing in my little kitchen with the tears flowing down my cheeks. Reg was conversing with the men once again, and I quickly composed myself and carried in the coffee. When they left they shook

our hands in a spirit of friendliness. I think that they were both very brave and honourable men considering the opposition stacked against us. After they left to walk back to Garaina and on to Lae, the people were watching and waiting to see us leave and were quite surprised that we carried on our normal routine of work.

It would have been naive of us to think that this would be the end of the matter. We had several small courts with local pastors in the months ahead. Then one day out of the blue, we heard from Joe Cannon in Lae that the Waria council had met and passed a resolution that we had to leave the Waria Valley. It was announced on Morobe Radio and in the Morobe Newspaper in Lae. About two weeks later we had an official letter from the Chairman of the Waria Council telling us of the motion which had been passed 17 to 1 against us. Reg immediately wrote a reply telling the Chairman as kindly as possible, that the best thing he could do was to rescind the motion as it was not constitutional, reminding him that people had freedom of religion, freedom of speech, and freedom of movement in Papua New Guinea. He said that they had not invited him to the meeting to defend himself, and that we had no intention of leaving the Waria Valley at that time. Well, his letter threw everyone into a state of dismay. They did not know how to handle this unexpected response. They decided to contact the District Commissioner and he flew to Garaina to meet with the Council. We did not know about this until later. The District Commissioner told them that Reg was right and that they should leave him alone to get on with his work. There was peace for a time but when a new pastor came on the scene, he would try to evict us where others had failed. Eventually, after some years the persecution stopped. The local people who were members of this denomination were really shamed by what was happening and supported us and helped us in many ways. They carried cargo for us and even helped us with building work. We were glad when it was over because it was very stressful. The wonderful thing about it was that every time we were persecuted the church grew, just as it had in New Testament times.

Reg had a call from the hospital in November to tell him that an appointment had been made for him to see a visiting ear, nose and throat surgeon the following week. Reg had been having trouble with his throat,

so was glad to have the chance to have it checked out. He would be gone several days, as it took two and half days to walk to Garaina to get the plane. The men asked if I could continue to study with them while Reg was gone. At this time none of the younger men were Christians so Reg and I thought this would be good. During the third week of November we were surprised by the arrival of the first New Testaments printed in Guhu Samane. They cost one dollar each, and of course everyone wanted one. The people held a little ceremony to celebrate the arrival of this important book. An old man, Ai, who was a member of the church took off and decorated his body with the trappings of his ancestors, mainly leaves, charcoal and chalk. Then Garoa who could read and speak some English read to the assembled crowd and especially Ai, a portion of the New Testament in English. Ai shook his head vigorously. Another man then read the same portion from the Pidgin New Testament with the same result. Then Sehequ read from the Poro Tonga Usaqe, the New Testament in Guhu Samane, the Waria tribal language. Ai's face was wreathed in smiles as he nodded his head enthusiastically. This is something which he could understand and everyone else too. All the people clapped and thanked the pastor who had brought the books from Ernie Richert the translator. It was to prove to be the most momentous day of our whole time there. I was so very sorry that Reg was in Lae. However, two days later on Friday evening ten people came to see me, they had been studying the scriptures in their own language. The spokesman, Sehequ, said, "We have been reading it for ourselves in our own tongue, and we now know that everything which Reg has told us is true. When Reg comes back tomorrow we all want to be baptized into Christ." Can you imagine the emotion which that statement produced in all of us? Reg was due back in the village the next day, so I did not sleep very much that night. These were the men who had helped Reg by translating everything he said in the Bible studies and in preaching. They had been studying the Scriptures with Reg for over a year.

The City Beach congregation in Perth Western Australia, along with several individuals in Australia and Britain, made donations towards the purchase of five hundred New Testaments in the Guhu Samane language. This was to prove to be a breakthrough in the teaching of the gospel in the Waria Valley.

When Reg was in Lae he decided to ask for an appointment with the Bishop who seemed so determined to get us out of the Waria valley. He was given an appointment and was able to have a lengthy discussion with the Bishop. Reg was able to show him that we were teaching only what was written in the Scriptures, and was pleased that the Bishop gave him the opportunity to do that. Later Joe Cannon was able to arrange another meeting with the Bishop in Joe's house, where he and Reg discussed the question of baptism by immersion with the opposing group. It was a friendly meeting and did much to stem the continuous persecution which the church in the Waria and in other areas had been enduring.

Chapter 7

The following morning I left with two young women, Bawagi and Bihabe, to meet Reg on the trail. Ray and Elizabeth Lock, along with their 20 year old daughter, Lois, were coming on their first visit to the Waria Valley. Also with the visiting party was Rick Niland, who before becoming a missionary, was a Patrol Officer with the Australian Government in Papua New Guinea. The Waria Valley was well known to him, and he knew all of the village headmen and councillors. When we met I was anxious to tell Reg all that had happened in his absence. He and the rest of the party were delighted to hear of the arrival of the New Testament in the language of the people and the response of some of the people. *"The Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two edged sword"* (Hebrews 4:12). It is so important for people to be able to read the scriptures in their own language. The Wycliffe Bible translators are doing a magnificent work worldwide.

Reg and our visitors were warmly welcomed by the people in the village of Orouba, and especially by those waiting to be baptized. It was a happy group of people who made three trips to the River Ai that afternoon to witness the baptisms into Christ of Garoa, his wife, Dzaruho, Sehequ, his wife, Baseba, Gobeda from Orouba, Gibe, his wife, Paiama, an elderly lady, Tarabodi, from Repanaga, Ruma from Onodoro, and Pai from Pikié.

The following morning, which was Sunday, the brethren from Aroba came across Mt. Ubari to worship with us and our visitors in Orouba. It gave us all a good opportunity to visit together. This would happen many times in the years ahead.

Our visitors took part in all of our work activities while they were with us, as well as visiting all of the surrounding villages. Elizabeth and Lois helped with the medical work while Ray and Rick helped Reg on the airstrip. Sadly, their five days with us was soon over and they had to return to their work in Lae.

The work on the airstrip was well on the way to completion. It was time to think about getting cone markers for the airstrip. We did not have

the finances to buy them, so we managed to get a pattern for making them using strips of bamboo. This proved to be a slow process. However, one day we had a radio call from the tea plantation manager in Garaina telling us that Garaina airstrip had been upgraded and that he had been allocated new cones for the complete airstrip. He asked if we would like their old ones and, if so, would we send people to pick them up. We were absolutely delighted. Thank you, Lord! The carriers left next day, pleased to have a trip to Garaina where there were a few stores. When they returned some days later, they were all carrying the cones on their heads and looked like a line of coolies coming up the trail. We quickly got to work scrubbing and painting the cones ready for use on our strip.

Around this time we decided to clear the bush for our new house on a narrow ridge, just outside Orouba, near a good water supply. The land was allocated by the people in the village for the use of the Church of Christ. It was a large strip of land which had some coffee gardens on it. The people wanted a permanent church building erected there in the future. It was interesting to see how the bush was cleared. When the trees had been felled and the thick undergrowth cleared, there was a thick carpet of matted roots, moss and tough grass all interwoven to form a thick covering. With their sharp bush knives the men cut the roots that were holding it in place, and then rolled it like a carpet to the edge of the cliff where it tumbled down toward the river below. They disturbed a number of snakes in the process and some of those were the very poisonous white small-eyed snake. I was very glad indeed that during our years living in the bush I never had to treat anyone for snake bite. I treated many centipede bites which caused intense pain over a twelve hour period. Although a centipede bite was not dangerous to adults, it could kill a young baby. There were several types of centipedes and all of them ugly. I was wakened one night with something crawling on my forehead. I brushed it off but was instantly alert, it was a centipede. I woke Reg and we hunted for it in the bed with the aid of flashlights. When we found it, Reg killed it. It had got through our mosquito net by a small tear made by our dog, Tama, when he was chasing a mouse a couple of nights previously. You can be sure that I mended that net next morning.

When the area was cleared for our house we also cleared another area

for a helicopter pad just above it. This was for medical emergencies, especially as the men had now started using a chain saw for cutting trees.

Pat was still having problems with backache which made it difficult for her to bend to treat patients. She decided that following the wedding of Andy and Catherine in January she would return to Perth, Western Australia. When she told the people of her decision they decided to put on a "singsing" in her honour. On the last week of December the people from several villages held a traditional singsing in honour of Pat. The women presented her with several "bilums" which they had made, and some of the men gave her shells. The children would be sorry to see her go with her music box (accordian).

Reg and I heard from the elders of Pleasant Valley Church of Christ that they were planning to have all of their missionaries with them for a "Homecoming celebration" the following June. It would be a welcome break for us, since we would have been in Papua New Guinea for three and half years by that time. Many people may think that living in a remote jungle area of Papua New Guinea would be very relaxed and easy. This is not so, for there are many stresses involved in living and working in a primitive culture. We were also very busy with our individual work. In fact, we had marked Saturday as our day off each week and we imagined being able to read, go bush walking, or go for a swim in the river. But it seldom worked out like that. People from distant villages would arrive on our doorstep asking for medicines for sick relatives or just to visit. If we stepped out of the door with our bush boots on and our walking sticks, immediately we had escorts. This is because the people wanted to protect us from any harm.

Reg, Pat and I left Orouba the first week of January in order to have two weeks before the wedding. Reg and I had many things to arrange. According to the British culture, we, as parents of the bride, made all the arrangements for the wedding feast. Pat wanted time to arrange for her flight to Perth, Western Australia. We were at that time sharing a house with Lois and Lorna rented from Ray Lock. We only used it when we came to Lae, so they had it to themselves most of the time.

Catherine, had already arrived from Australia. Andy had brought his

parents down from Goroka, where they had arrived two weeks previously. Andy's parents, Paul and Peggie, stayed with us and we had a wonderful time of fellowship together. Andy's father was preaching for the Church of Christ in South Carolina, U.S.A. The wedding was conducted by Joe Reynolds, who was a student with Andy at Sunset School of Preaching. The national brethren had decorated the church building with flowers and palms and we had been able to borrow some big potted flowering shrubs from the botanical gardens. It was a lovely wedding and all of our missionaries in Papua New Guinea were there. The Melanesian hotel served a beautifully prepared meal which we all enjoyed before sending the happy couple off on their honeymoon to Wewak, in the East Sepik province.

The missionary men decided that since we were all in Lae together we would hold a mini workshop for one day before returning to our different areas of work. This was beneficial to all of us, as we were able to discuss various problems and how to tackle them as well as sharing helpful ideas for improving our work. We returned to the Waria Valley with the usual amount of cargo plus many items requested by the village people: Bush knives, grass knives, axes and various cooking utensils. I was always happy to shop for the people because the items they bought improved their way of life. I mostly shopped at the wholesale stores and usually managed to get an extra discount when I bought 10 or 20 axes, etc. All the store keepers got to know me and were very helpful. I think that my white hair was a great asset on my shopping sprees. While I was shopping Reg would be at home working on accounts, lessons, or designing our new bush house or church building. It was the only chance he had to attend to paper work.

Garape and Pedora had a new baby boy Dzohane (John). It was at this time that we learned another custom of the people. Pedora went out to the forest in search of some food to strengthen his wife. He climbed a high tree where a certain species of large ant (or termite) builds its nest. He chewed some ginger sticks and blew into the nest. Apparently this stupefied the ants and Pedora was able to steal their eggs which he brought back to Garape.

The highlight of that month was the official opening of Kira Airstrip.

We decided to name it Kira Airstrip, as the nearest village to it is Kira and it was short and easy to pronounce in pilot communications. We now had an official licence for light aircraft on a restricted basis. The strip was examined by a Baptist friend of Andy Scott's, who piloted a single engine plane. We had three young men staying with us during that week, Dave and Michael Lock and Tom Moore. They took the opportunity of flying out to Lae from Kira in the small plane. Dave was not looking forward to the two day trek through the bush to Garaina, so he was especially glad to be able to fly from Kira.

One of the customs of the people was to help each other build houses and especially to thatch roofs. The family of the house being thatched was then obligated to help the men or women helping them when the need arose. It was a good system and worked well. The same system applied to gardens and we were to witness what we called "festivals." For example, if people from one village gave taro sticks or sugar cane shoots to another village, when the crop was harvested the following year the receivers were obligated to give some of the harvest to the villagers who gave them the sticks for planting. This was quite an elaborate ceremony where both sets of villagers would dress up in their finery and perform dances. There would be huge mounds of Taro (large tubar) and in the case of sugar cane, bundles of cane. Speeches would be made and then the names of the head of each family line would be called out and the taro distributed. Some live pigs would also be given to certain headmen. Following this, on some occasions, and I was never quite clear about this, money trees would be presented to the givers of the taro. This was two, five or ten kina bills attached to a small branch of a tree and presented to the headman of the village distributing the taro or other crop. It was very interesting to us to witness these ceremonies, and we were always included on the receiving end. We were glad that the Waria people kept their culture alive and passed on those good practices to their children.

The time was passing quickly, and there was so much to do before we would go on leave. Andy and Catherine would be staying in Orouba for a month while we were gone. During this time Andy had promised to supervise work on the airstrip and to continue on the foundations on our new house. Catherine would take care of the medical work and both

would teach Bible classes. They were followed by Ray and Elizabeth Lock for one month and Rick and Ruth Niland for one month. Michael Lock and Tom Moore would follow the Nilands, and all of the teams would work to build up the young congregations in the Waria Valley.

During the time that Rick and Ruth were in Orouba, the work on the airstrip was completed, and brought up to the necessary standard to receive a commercial license. It seemed fitting that Rick should be the one to apply for the commercial license because, as a Government patrol Officer, it was he who had instigated the clearing of the site on which the airstrip now stood, several years before Reg and I came to Orouba. Unfortunately, nothing more had been done at that time and it had become very overgrown again.

It was really good to spend just two hours walking to the airstrip to get the plane to Lae, instead of walking two and a half hot days walking through the bush to Garaina. This airstrip was to prove to be a great blessing to the people and to us. The strip is on a beautiful location on a mountain plateau, surrounded by higher peaks. All of the frustration and hard work had been worth it.

We were to fly from Port Moresby to Sydney, where we hoped to spend a few days visiting friends. When we arrived in Sydney a shock awaited us. We had lived in Australia for two and half years prior to going to Papua New Guinea, which was at that time an Australian Territory. We had a resident visa and stood in the residents line. When we reached the desk we were whisked away into a small office. Naturally we were really concerned and had no idea what we had done wrong. We were told that as Australian residents we should have returned to Australia within three years to have our passports stamped. We pointed out that we had been in an Australian territory until September 1975 when Papua New Guinea had gained her independence, and at no time had we been told of this law. However, all of this fell on deaf ears, and we were told that we had lost our residents status. We were told that we had to leave the country in three days, as we did not have a visa.

We flew to Hawaii where each passenger was presented with a beautiful lei. We had left Port Moresby on Monday evening and here we were

arriving in Honolulu on Monday morning. It was the first time we had experienced going back in time. The Pearl Harbour Church of Christ had given us the use of their preacher's house as he was on leave in the U.S.A. We appreciated having this time to relax before going on to the States. I had three male cousins who had emigrated to Hawaii in the 1930's, and I was able to contact the eldest, George Mair. We spent a great day with George and his wife in their home at Shark Bay, talking mostly about people and events in Portknockie in the North East of Scotland. We met with the congregation in Pearl Harbour who made us very welcome and I thank them for their hospitality to us at that time.

From Hawaii we flew to Los Angeles and soon got lost in the airport. While we were waiting for our plane we decided to have a cup of tea. When we asked the girl at the snack bar for hot tea we realised that she was a little flustered. However, she solved the problem by heating iced tea in the microwave oven in paper cups. It was the worst cup of tea I have ever tasted. We learned from that experience. We were informed that our plane was delayed, as it had been reported that a bomb had been placed in the plane. We were delayed three hours and it was found to be a hoax. We were concerned for Andy's uncle and aunt, Bill and Charlsie Teague, who were meeting us at Midland Odessa and we had no way of contacting them.

We spent a week in Pecos, Texas, with Bill and Charlsie who made us very welcome. As this was our first visit to America they were anxious to introduce us to the American culture. Pecos is a small town and we were intrigued by the number of oil pumps operating in several fields around the area. Apparently this area is rich in oil, and many people have made their fortunes by finding oil on their land. Bill and Charlsie were gracious hosts and we enjoyed our short stay with them.

When the plane arrived in Little Rock we were met by several elders of the Pleasant Valley congregation, their wives and some other people. It was good to recognise one known face in the crowd; we were glad that Goebel Music was there as he had visited us in Lae in 1973.

We stayed with Goebel and his wife June, and their four children for three weeks. This lovely family made us feel very welcome in their home

and we were able to relax. June kindly took me shopping to buy some clothing and see the huge supermarkets with their large variety of goods. It was a bit overwhelming after shopping in the small stores in Papua New Guinea.

Every day we were invited out for lunch with one family and for dinner in the evening with another. Many of the members of the church wanted to spend some time with us. All of the meals were absolutely beautiful, and after living on mainly vegetables and fruit, with some tinned meats and fish, for the past three and half years, Reg and I found it difficult to adjust to the abundance of food. However, our time spent with each of those families (too many to name) was greatly encouraging to us, and we had a rich time of fellowship with each family. Some members of the congregation would have liked us to come for breakfast too, but we were used to eating a light breakfast, so had to graciously decline the kind invitation.

The highlight of our visit was the "Missionary Homecoming Day" when we met brother and sister Charles Davis, who were missionaries in the Philippines, and brother and sister S.F. Timmerman, who were missionaries with the French speaking population in Montreal, Canada. All three men preached on that day and gave some insight into the work which each family was involved. It was a very interesting and inspiring time for all of us. We had a beautiful fellowship lunch prepared by the women of the church and a great time meeting people.

On Wednesday evening Reg showed slides of our life and work in the Waria Valley of Papua New Guinea, which were greatly appreciated by everyone. Looking at the slides made me homesick for Orouba Village. I think that it was only then that I realized how much I loved and appreciated those lovely people of the Waria tribe.

The time in Little Rock passed all too quickly, and we were on our way to spend one week with Andy's parents in Anderson, South Carolina. It had been just over six months previously since we had met Paul and Peggie at the wedding of Andy and Catherine. We were surprised to see Peggie on crutches, but had to laugh when Paul told us that she had hurt both of her knees when she had gone roller skating with the youth group.

We had a really pleasant time in Anderson. Paul and Peggie took us out to see the beautiful countryside. One day we visited an Indian reservation which both Reg and I found very interesting, but also very sad. They were showing visitors the skills they used in hunting, fishing, and making pots and garments before they lost their land.

One thing which interested me very much was the banner which was displayed above the exit of the church building where Paul preached. It said quite simply "You are now entering your mission field." I thought to myself "how true that is," and to be reminded of it every time one left the church building was really very inspiring.

We left South Carolina and flew to Toronto, Canada, where we had spent one year in the early 1960's. John and Margaret Cargin, members of the Strathmore Boulevard Church where we had worshiped during our time in Toronto, had invited us to stay with them for a few days. We had a pleasant time of fellowship with them and Reg showed slides of our work to three different congregations.

Reg and I then flew to Britain where we stayed with Fred and Dorothy Proud in London for a few days before traveling to Corby to stay with my sister, Isobel and her husband, Frank Worgan. We made news in the local newspaper in Corby. We had hired a car in London, as we had planned to drive to Buckie on the Moray Firth, in the north east of Scotland to visit my brother, Alex, and his wife Margaret. It was a beautiful drive and we visited relatives on the way.

I was looking forward to meeting the brethren in Buckie, as my parents had met with that congregation for many years. Also, they had sent money several times to help our work, which was greatly appreciated by Reg and me. It was nice for me to be back home. Unfortunately, the first Sunday we were in Buckie, while returning from the morning church service, we were involved in a car accident. The car was badly damaged and I had my right clavicle fractured. I was admitted to the lovely small hospital in Elgin where I spent two days while being thoroughly checked out. The brethren at Buckie were very concerned for us, as were the brethren in Peterhead where we were scheduled to show slides that evening. However, everything went well from there on and we drove to

Glasgow with my sister, Catherine, and her husband John. We then left by train for London. My brother, Bill, who had been a captain in the merchant service, was at that time the harbour master in Rothesay which was down the River Clyde from Glasgow. I had talked to him on the telephone the previous evening, and he had decided to rush up to Glasgow the following day to see Reg and me at the station before we left for London. It had been at least ten years since we had seen each other and he was very upset to see me looking pale and with my arm in a sling. I was so glad that we had met, because he died of cancer in the lungs a few years later while I was in New Guinea.

While we were in London we visited Australia House to check with the immigration authorities about getting our resident's visa reinstated. However, they could not help us but gave us a visa for one month to visit Australia.

We had planned to visit the City Beach and Embleton congregations in Perth, Western Australia, as both congregations had been involved in contributing to our working fund, both in Lae and the Waria Valley. The City Beach congregation was especially involved with my medical work and had sent to me four cartons of supplies every month by air freight. I was really dependent on these supplies, as I was receiving just the bare necessities from the government stores at that time. I must say this, that the government was doing a tremendous job of airfreighting medical supplies to small Aid Posts in remote areas. One item which I was always thankful for was a sufficient supply of penicillin for injection. An anonymous donor in New South Wales sent several boxes of disposable syringes and needles, for which I gave thanks to God. The nurses at Angau hospital were still boiling syringes to sterilize them as I also had to do since going to the Waria Valley. This gift was a great blessing and from that time someone always supplied me with disposable syringes.

We flew from London direct to Perth. It was a long flight with a fueling stop in Bombay. We had never been to Perth and were pleased to be met by Harry and Gwenda Blackmore of the City Beach congregation. Harry was the chief consultant psychiatrist for Perth City and beyond. He and Gwenda gave us a warm welcome and drove us to the home of sister Mavis Whittaker and her daughter, Wyn, where we were to stay. It was

a friendly relaxed atmosphere and we enjoyed our week with them. Harry was very interested in our work in Papua New Guinea and throughout our years there he kept in constant touch with us and was always seeking ways to provide what we needed. Harry and Gwenda are two dedicated people who did much to make life easier for us in the Waria Valley. We greatly appreciated them both.

While we were in Perth Reg preached and showed slides to both City Beach and Embelton congregations. After the meeting at Embelton a Dutch couple, Tom and Rens Bunt, invited us to their home. They were very interested in what Reg had said about the Lord's work in Papua New Guinea and said that they would like to come and work with us in the Waria Valley. They were retired and while Tom seemed to be very fit, Rens had been troubled in the past with rheumatoid arthritis, and at one time was forced to use a wheel chair. We were concerned that Rens might not be able to cope with the great amount of walking which had to be done in the course of our work. However she was a lady of indomitable character and once she had decided what she wanted to do, she did it. Rens was also a registered nurse and Tom at that time was an elder in the Embelton congregation. They decided to think seriously about the matter and to let us know their decision when we returned to Papua New Guinea.

Perth is a beautiful city, and some of the brethren showed us the sights. Reg had meetings with the men of the City Beach Church about the work in Papua New Guinea, and how they could best help us. Many people invited us to their homes to have lunch or dinner and we had a very good time of fellowship. We were able to have a quick visit to my nephew, David, and his family who lived on the outskirts of Perth. They had emigrated to Perth some years previously. David was working as a Welfare Officer with young boys and teenagers, mainly in finding them good foster homes and taking an interest in each one. It was obvious that David loved the work. Later his wife, Hilary, was to work in a similar role with boys in a Borstal home (detention centre).

Chapter 8

From Perth we flew to Adelaide where we spent a few days with our friends Albert and Olive Matthews who lived in Christies Beach. They met with the small congregation at Noarlunga. Reg preached and showed slides of Papua New Guinea to the brethren there. He was also invited to show slides to two other congregations in the city.

Adelaide is also a lovely city and our friends, the Matthews, had emigrated there from England in the 1950's. It was good to see them again and to thank them personally for taking care of our daughter, Catherine, during her three years of nurse training. They were very kind to her and her friends and she loved them both.

From Adelaide we flew to Canberra to check with the immigration authorities regarding our lost residents visa. The officer whom we saw was very kind, but as we could not tell him when we would be returning to Australia he suggested that we contact his office when we were ready to take up residence in Australia again. It was nice to see Canberra again as we had lived there for 18 months. I had worked as a nursing sister in the Hospital on the side of Lake Burley Griffen. Reg had worked in the Australian Patent Office. Canberra was in the Australian Capital Territory and all of the Government Offices were there including the House of Assembly. I enjoyed seeing all of the beautiful parrots and parakeets flying around people's gardens. We worshipped with the Canberra church and Reg showed slides of our work in Papua New Guinea.

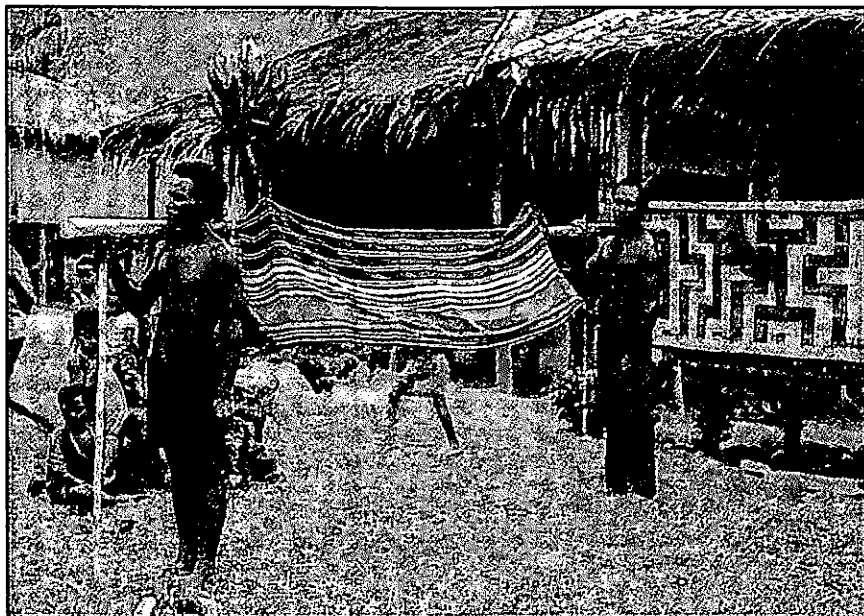
We flew to Brisbane from Canberra where we boarded our connecting flight back to Port Moresby and home. It had been a good trip and was much cheaper buying "Around the World" tickets. One can go anywhere as long as you go forward all of the time. If one chooses to go to another place or country not on the route, then one must pay the whole fare for that diversion. We chose not to make any.

We arrived back in Lae, Papua New Guinea in October. Our fellow missionaries and brethren from the Lae church met us. We were surprised to meet some brethren from the Waria Valley. Gibe and his wife, Paiama,

with their new baby son, and Ari and his wife, Sopara, from Aroba were all staying with Ari's daughter, Nebobo, and her husband Tuhe and their young family. Tuhe was a foreman carpenter working for the government. Both came from Aroba in the Waria valley. While Gibe and Ari were with them they spent time teaching the gospel to the young couple, resulting in their baptism into Christ.

Our first week in Lae was spent in buying stores to take back with us to the Waria Valley. We also went to Watabung near Goroka to spend a few days with Andy and Catherine in their bush house near the Highlands highway which was just a dirt road. Although the house was screened from the road by trees and coffee bushes, they were troubled by dust thrown up by passing trucks. Unfortunately, I had no sooner arrived than I fell sick with dengue fever which is carried by mosquitoes and can make one feel very weak. We returned to Lae after four days. I felt really ill for a further week.

The worst result of this sickness was that it delayed our departure to



A patient arrives by stretcher, made by the men and used only once.

Orouba. Eventually the great day arrived and we were scheduled to leave Lae at nine o'clock in the morning. Clouds were obscuring the mountains in the Waria valley and we did not leave until two o'clock in the afternoon. We felt sorry for the carriers who would be waiting for us to arrive and wondered if they would give up and go home. We need not have worried for as we circled the airstrip we could see a crowd of people waiting. When we landed there were about 200 people waiting to greet us. It was good to be home. The track down the mountain was in a bad state and we were slithering and sliding all over the place trying to get a foothold. We talked non-stop for the next two hours as we walked along the narrow tracks with the cheerful happy people.

Try to imagine arriving in a village to a small bush house and it is quickly getting dark. We needed to get the lamps lit, pay the carriers and somehow get all the cargo inside the house. Fortunately, we had plenty of willing hands and we soon had a fire going in the stove to heat the water for a shower and the ever welcome cup of tea. Reg and I always numbered all of our packages and listed the contents so that we could find



This young woman had cut her leg with a machette.

things quickly on arrival. It was quite late before everyone left and we were able to have something to eat and get to bed.

We were up at six the following morning and by seven-thirty quite a number of people had gathered outside our house. The men wanted to talk about various problems which had cropped up in our absence, and I think that Reg talked non-stop for the first four days. People were waiting to see if I would be holding a clinic that day, how could I refuse? I told them that over the weekend I would just treat emergencies but on Monday our normal schedule of clinics would start again. I was kept busy treating various ailments for two hours or so and then I had to get our boxes unpacked and stowed away.

We found that all of our pressure lamps were out of use, our generator badly needed maintenance and the radio battery was flat. I felt so sorry for Reg as the airstrip required attention and the grass needed cutting. At this time it was still being cut by hand, and for that we needed volunteers. Andy had started the work on our new house and some men



Medical clinic in Aroba, 2 hours over the mountain from where we live.

were waiting to carry on with this work. The earth floor in our toilet needed emergency shoring up to avoid the floor caving in, which would not be very nice for the unfortunate one using it at that time. We have heard of it happening and we did not relish the thought. The toilet served us well until we moved house. There was just so much to do all at once. Reg wanted to get his teaching programme back on course and he was expected to be involved in preaching for the two congregations. I often thanked God that I had married an engineer, for it seemed that Reg was able to cope with any emergency and was able to even make spare parts to keep things going until he could order the part required. He often assisted me with serious medical emergencies and kept the patient calm while I got my instruments sterilised and my table set up on the verandah.

In the first week back I had two medical emergencies, a small boy had cut his head with a bush knife and a man had cut his leg with a very sharp adze. It always surprised me that more children were not cut with bush knives and axes, for they used them from a very early age. On the following week I was called to a sick woman in the village of Aroba. I



Medical clinic in Orouba.

decided that while there I might as well hold a full medical clinic. I sent a women on ahead to tell the people of my plans and to tell them to gather so that I could start as soon as I had seen the sick woman. I had two women with me carrying my supplies as we set off on our two hour walk across Mt. Ubari. Just beyond the village of Repanaga is the river Koripo, a fast flowing river without a bridge, where the water sometimes reached my knees. For the greatest part of the journey I was squelching along in wet bush boots, wet socks and the bottoms of my slacks soaked. When we arrived in Aroba I found that the sick woman was suffering from hepatitis. After treating her and leaving her the necessary medication, I explained to the relatives what they must do to stop this disease spreading. I found the Waria people were very good at following my instructions. Fortunately it was to be an isolated case at that time, but I did find other isolated cases during my years in the Waria Valley.

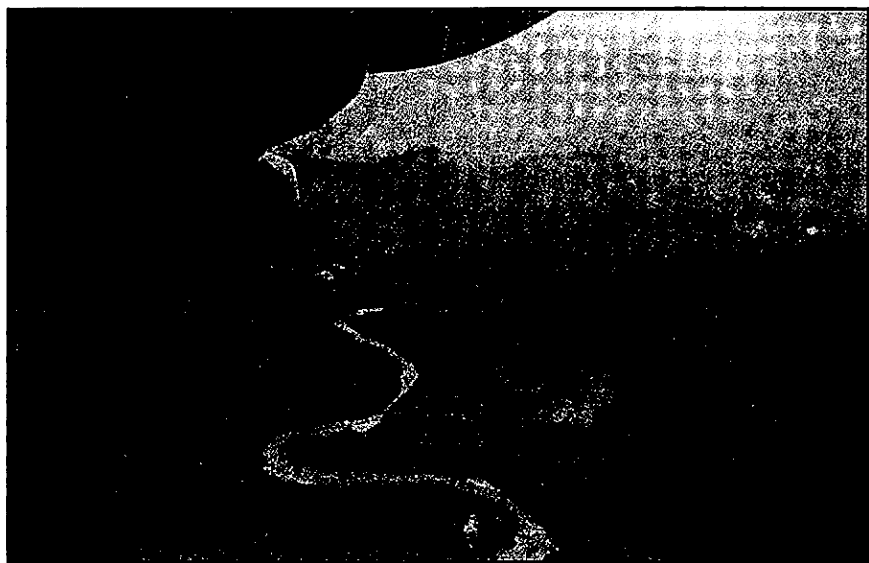
My helpers and I treated many patients from nearby villages during a three hour clinic. The people gave us lots of fresh fruit and vegetables to take home with us. We had just reached the top of the mountain when we were met by two



My medical clinic in Orouba.

boys with a note from Reg saying that a man, Moinaqa, had been attacked by a bull while cutting timber in the bush. Reg had seen him and diagnosed a fractured clavicle and possible fractured ribs. He had made him comfortable in our house until I arrived. I agreed with Reg's diagnosis and treated his cuts and bruises. He was suffering from shock but was fortunate that it had not been worse. The owner of the bull was from the village of Sakare, and Councillor Noriba ordered him to keep the bull in a fenced area. He probably also gave some compensation in kind to Moinaqa. I was always amazed at how quickly the people recovered from their injuries.

Although the villages of Kira and Giminie would not invite Reg to teach or preach the gospel there, they were friendly towards us. We often stopped in Kira on our way home from the airstrip to buy coconuts to drink. A man or boy would climb the tree and throw the coconuts down. Everyone had to stand well clear as they are very heavy and can kill a man if he is struck on the head. The men are very skillful at removing the outer husk of coconut fibre, which is very thick, and cutting the top off



The Waria River which Ruma and I had to cross on the longest bamboo and wood bridge I have ever seen. Needless to say it swayed dangerously as we crossed to the village of Upupuro.

the nut so that one can drink the delicious milk. In a fresh coconut the nut is full of milk with just a thin layer of soft meat which is good to eat. We were very pleased when a man from Kira offered to give us a piece of land on the airstrip to build a shed to house our new mower. The money to purchase the grass cutting machine had been sent to us from the church in Corby, England. This was a great asset in keeping the grass cut on the airstrip. We paid a man to do this work. God provided all of our needs.

The work of the church was growing and we now had three congregations, Orouba where we lived, Aroba just two hours across Mt. Ubari and Qaro-Motete a days walk away on the road to Garaina. We really needed help as Reg was overloaded and we were praying about that.

People who are working in the towns or who are in the police or armed services try to return to their villages around Christmas time to spend a little time with their wantoks (which literally means one language), but most often “wantok” means relative. They save money



Village Graveyard.

throughout the year and are expected to give gifts to their family line, including uncles, aunts and their family. Sometimes they bring food and clothing, sometimes they hand out small amounts of money to various people. When they leave they have only the clothes they are wearing and must start the process all over again. These people have a really hard time. They do not have vegetable gardens like the village people and the cost of living in the towns is high. Very often a couple living in a town will take in relatives' children so that they can attend school in the town. Risi and his wife from Onodoro, had four children of their own and four children from the Waria Valley who were attending school in Lae. With food, clothing and school fees, this couple did not have any chance of raising their own standard of living, yet they willingly sacrificed to help others. All of the tribes in Papua New Guinea have these close family bonds.

One custom which interested me very much was that when a young married woman found that she was unable to conceive, a relative would give her the youngest of her family, usually a toddler, to bring up as her own. Usually they would be living in the same village where the natural mother would have a lot of contact with the child. The Papua New Guinea people love children and take a great interest in each others children. Naturally, they also care for the elderly, who are never left to fend for themselves. I was very impressed by this caring attitude.

When people return to the villages from the town for a holiday around Christmas time, the villages in one area get together and put on a special singing in their honour. Usually pigs are killed, and occasionally a cow, and are mumued (Food is cooked with hot rocks in a hole in the ground. The food is covered with leaves and sealed to trap the steam inside. Water is poured into the food through a piece of bamboo. When the water hits the hot rocks steam is created.) with various kinds of vegetables. The people then sing and dance til the early hours of the morning. As far as we know, there never has been an intoxicating native drink made in Papua New Guinea. People did not know of such a thing until beer was brought into the country in the middle of this century. It was sold in the towns, but thankfully it was not brought to the remote villages. This was one stipulation that Reg made when he constructed the airstrip:

future owners of small stores would promise not to bring intoxicating drinks into our area. To this day that promise has held.

In the Highlands of Papua New Guinea, some tribes are still trying to settle their disputes by fighting each other with spears, bows and arrows. By comparison, the Waria Valley is a very peaceful place. The people can get into very heated arguments but do not usually revert to violence. In the years we were there, I know of only one instance of two men fighting with weapons. They used very long, fairly thick sticks, which were used by their ancestors. They were fighting over the ownership of a piece of land. One man received a nasty head wound and the other had a gash on his face and bruising of his head. Their relatives brought them to our house in the evening and both were lying on the floor. I sutured the wounds and gave them some pain killers, and they left for home. Councillor Noriva told them the following day that they would have to walk to Garaina next day and report the fight to the policeman stationed there. We were surprised that they did this and both were jailed in Lae for two months. Some time after that they both became Christians. As I mentioned before land is a priority to the Papua New Guineans, pigs and then women.

It was necessary for me to spend three weeks in the village by myself on one occasion when Reg was away. I could not have been better cared for if I had been with my own family. They are my family in Christ. Prior to our coming to Orouba the only white person to visit this area was the Australian Patrol Officer, who would visit once or twice each year. During the war with the Japanese the American and Australian soldiers were given a lot of help from the people of Papua New Guinea, which earned them the nickname of "Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels." As far as I am concerned they are a beautiful and happy people. While Reg was away I thought it would be nice if we could improve the track up to the airstrip. It was in a very bad condition. I called some of the men together and asked them if we could get a group of men and women together to work on the track for a few days. To my surprise they showed real enthusiasm about my plan. I agreed to provide the food and cold drinks and we all set off with all the tools we could lay our hands on, especially picks and shovels. I went as often as I could to lend a hand, but had to hurry back

every day at 4:30 p.m. when Reg had arranged to call on the radio. The people did a really good job on the track. It was much wider and most of the obstacles had been moved out of the way. It was really worth all the work to see the surprise and delight on Reg's face as he started down the mountain from the airstrip. Following our effort, an enterprising man from Kira village had cut some steps in a particularly steep part of the track leading to the airstrip. The people were willing to work, they just had to be shown the need.

The annual Papua New Guinea Missionary Workshop was held at a Lutheran Boarding School in Wau during the school holidays. Wau is about 40 miles by air from Kira, which is noted for its gold mining and timber industries. Wau is situated in a very pretty mountainous area. There are several small stores and it is linked to Lae by road and air. All of the missionaries appreciated the good facilities, the food, discussions, and times of fellowship we had together. We all returned to our different areas renewed and strengthened. Andy and Catherine had brought us a puppy to take back with us to Orouba. We called him Tama, which in Guhu Samane means "big star or planet." He was the star of the village and he knew it. I feared for him as he barked at the heels of enormous pigs. He never outgrew his dislike for pigs. When he was older he chased and bit Council Noriva's small pig. I had to suture the wound, give the pig a shot of penicillin and pay three kina in compensation. Everyone, including me, found the whole incident very funny, but I made sure that it did not happen again. Fortunately, the little pig recovered from its ordeal.

We had suffered several deaths amongst the elderly since our arrival in the Waria Valley three years previously. The people hold a wake for the deceased on the night on which he or she dies. During this time they sing hymns, pray, and then several people will tell stories about the deceased one's life. This goes on throughout the night and the burial takes place next day. The men chop down a tree and make planks with an adze to make a coffin. (Since the arrival of Reg's chain saw and Alaskan mill, they have planks to hand, making it easier.) They have the funeral service at the home of the deceased and bury the remains before the day gets too hot.

Each village has its own burial ground just outside the village. In years gone by, their ancestors put the body on a platform in a tree and just left it there. Sumugau was able to show us bones of the last person who was cannibalised still in the branches of a tree near a track which we used often. Sumugau and some of the other older people remembered this practice during their lifetime. It was part of their way of life and they did not realise then how wrong this was. It was only when the Australian patrol officers came with armed police to make contact with the people that this practice ceased. Some of the older men and women remembered when their own parents were cannibals and could tell us gruesome and sometimes funny stories of those far off days. One of those stories was about an enemy who was captured and he was wearing sandals. Nobody had ever seen this before and thought the sandals were part of the body of the man. When they cooked the body, the sandals were too tough to eat so they tried boiling them, but still couldn't eat them, so they had to give up.

It is not surprising that in a situation like ours the people from far and wide come to us for help. One morning just after six a pastor from the other religious group came to ask Reg for some nails to make a coffin for an elderly lady who had died in the village of Kira. Then Zaruho arrived to say that she could not do the laundry that day because a group of people had arrived from Wau the previous day and she had to feed them. These people were from the Goilala tribe across the mountains to the north of us. They were a short stocky people who had a reputation for fighting. They had been to Wau which is the closest town to Goilala. Some of their men had gotten drunk and killed two men of another tribe. The police in Wau jailed the young men and shipped the rest of the group to Kira airstrip. Garapa came shortly after Zaruho. She was unable to help in the medical clinic that day because she was on the list of carriers to carry cargo for a new store which was starting up in another village. The next caller was a girl with lemons wanting to exchange them for chewing gum. All of these callers and we hadn't even had breakfast.

One morning a man called at the house just as dawn was breaking. He told me that some men had carried a woman from a distant village to his village of Upopuru, a two and a half hour walk away from Orouba.

She had delivered a baby but the placenta was retained, and please could I come as they were afraid that she would die. I sent for Ruma, a young women who often walked with me to medical emergencies. I had never been to this village, but Reg had and was able to tell me something about it. We first traveled the familiar track through the villages of Gimine and Kira. Then we branched off across the river Ai and followed a winding track, sometimes close to the river and sometimes high above it. My heart was in my mouth on several occasions when the track went close to the edge of a sheer drop. We came to one place where we had to walk over three very long tree trunks spanning a gorge where the water was rushing down to the river below. I was scared and I would have never crossed it on my own, but Ruma went before me and held my hand and guided me across. My legs were like jelly. This was one situation where I wished that I had bare feet like Ruma, not hindered by bush boots. Ruma was a very cheerful companion and, like all the women of her tribe, had very strong arms. We eventually came in sight of the village of Upopuru, but it was on the other side of a wide river. This was the Waria River and it was spanned by the longest bamboo bridge which I had seen. My troubles were not over. When I put my booted feet on the bridge it swayed precariously from side to side and was broken in several places. A woman on the other side shouted something to Ruma, but she did not tell me what the woman had said until my feet were on the ground. The woman had said "Tell the missus to be careful, the bridge is rotten."

The village was full of people, as many of the woman's relatives had come with her. Groups of men were standing talking and women were running to and fro. Hordes of children just stood staring at me, some scared of my white face and white hair. We found the woman in a makeshift shelter under a house. She was a pretty young woman, lying on a bed of banana leaves. I was sorry to see that the baby was dead, and had obviously died in the uterus some days before. This would account for her long and difficult labour. The stench was awful. I quickly cut the cord and gave the baby to the woman's relatives for burial. The placenta was still attached to the uterine wall and the best thing for the patient was to get her to hospital in Lae. A plane was due in that day. How I wished at that moment that our "Walkie-Talkie" radios which we had ordered had arrived, for this was just the kind of situation where I could

have called Reg. I hurriedly wrote him a note asking him to contact Talair and to tell them that we had a patient who needed to be lifted out to the hospital. A man ran to Orouba with my note.

Upopuru is on the other side of the mountain on which the airstrip was constructed. Had I known then what a formidable task it would be to climb to the airstrip, I would never have attempted it. The men quickly constructed a rough stretcher to carry the patient. There was no track and we went straight up the face of the mountain in what seemed to be a water course as the stones and boulders were wet and slippery. I was afraid that the plane would be there before we reached the top. It was really hard going. I was pushed and pulled by the women up the face of the mountain. When I reached the top I was exhausted and I lay on top of bags of coffee to rest. The young woman was fine. I had given her an injection of penicillin and some tablets to relieve her pain. I checked on her constantly and, just as the wheels of the plane touched down, she delivered the placenta. I still wanted her to go to the hospital in case of infection, but she refused and all her relatives were adamant that she would not go. The men were really mad at her and were ranting at her because of all the hard work of carrying her up the mountain. It was as if they thought that the poor woman had timed it deliberately. I had to explain to the bewildered pilot what all the fuss was about. I was just thankful that it was the usual Thursday plane and not a chartered medical emergency plane. I managed to explain to the men that nature must take its course in this kind of situation, and sometimes it is dangerous to interfere. They said that they understood and agreed to help the woman back to the village. I suspect that they did not carry her all of the way back, but that she had to walk. Fortunately, the Waria women are strong and healthy and she came to no harm. As soon as I got home, I sent her a course of oral antibiotics with strict instructions on how to take the capsules. She recovered well and returned to her own village.

Chapter 9

Some men arrived from Qaro-Motete one day to tell us that a young man was dying in that village. The story was that two weeks previously a sharp piece of bamboo had penetrated the top of his right foot. His family believed that someone had worked "posin" (sorcery) on him. When this happens the victim believes that he will die and he usually does. The men told me that his foot and leg were very badly swollen. I told them that they must return and carry the young man to Orouba where I could treat him and send him to hospital. They said it was no good doing that because he was going to die. I was adamant that they should bring him. After talking to the men of Orouba they agreed to go and help carry Bobo. They arrived with Bobo the following day. I was appalled at the state of his foot. The side and top of his foot was one huge ulcer filled with pus and dead flesh and the smell was awful. Apparently, when the "dokta boi" (medical orderly) heard that he was being brought to Orouba, he gave him his first injection of penicillin. It was twice the normal dose so I did not give him any more that day. I cleaned out the wound and cut away the dead flesh, applied saline dressings, and made Bobo comfortable. Reg and I had then the task of persuading Bobo to take some food and to try to assure him that he was not going to die. I contacted a doctor by radio at the Angau Hospital in Lae, explaining the situation to him. He advised me to carry on with the saline dressings and the six hourly penicillin injections, and send him out on the next plane. Because of the weather, it was five days before a plane came in and by that time his wound was looking nice and clean and Bobo was feeling much better. I could breathe a sigh of relief that he had not died, because the power of the mind is tremendous and we had to pull him back from his negative thinking. However, when the time came for Bobo to be carried to the plane his relatives objected and said that he could not go. They were convinced that he would die in hospital. There was much weeping and wailing. However, with the help of the Orouba men we were able to persuade them and sent his wife and mother with him. We explained that he would need to have a skin graft and that he would be gone for several weeks. Fortunately, Bobo had a married sister living in Lae and this helped the

situation. The outcome of this event was that Bobo returned with his foot beautifully healed, and his relatives had bought him new clothes. Shortly after they returned from Lae he and his wife moved from Qaro-Motete to Orouba. This incident helped the people to realise that the power of God and prayer was greater than the power of sorcery. It also increased their faith in the hospital, for this I was thankful.

Lorna Fairley a single missionary from Lae came to visit us in Orouba. She was shortly going back to Australia on leave. She taught children's classes and taught them new songs. They loved her. She helped me in the medical clinics and learned to make bread. We had to make all of our bread and I was very thankful for my very efficient black iron stove, which cooked the bread to perfection. The only problem was that the bread never lasted very long.

Our new house on the outskirts of the village was nearing completion. It was near a spring which produced very good water and which we would fence off to keep the pigs out. It was a year ago that the founda-



Our new house near a natural spring. My husband, Reg, at the gate. Harry Fitzgerald behind visiting from Pleasant Valley.

tions of the house had been laid by our son-in-law, Andy Scott. It is never easy in a primitive culture to plan ahead. Local conditions, attitude to work and the availability of money make precise planning very difficult. However, things do get done eventually and we were looking forward to having more space. Several missionary men were due to come to Orouba in a few weeks time for a men's retreat, so we wanted the house to be ready for them. Also we heard that Tom and Rens Bunt would be joining the work in the Waria Valley in the near future.

The Church was growing and we now had 135 Christians in the Waria Valley. Many of these people had to face opposition, as well as a background of traditional superstition, fear and ignorance. We found that the people were very intelligent and were able to grasp the truths of the Bible very well. The men also learned new skills in building and mechanics, as well as the use of sophisticated electric driven tools. Several of the men were showing leadership qualities and some women were becoming very good Bible class teachers. Reg held Bible classes on Tuesday and Thursday evenings for the men as well as a Sunday and Wednesday night



House and out buildings.

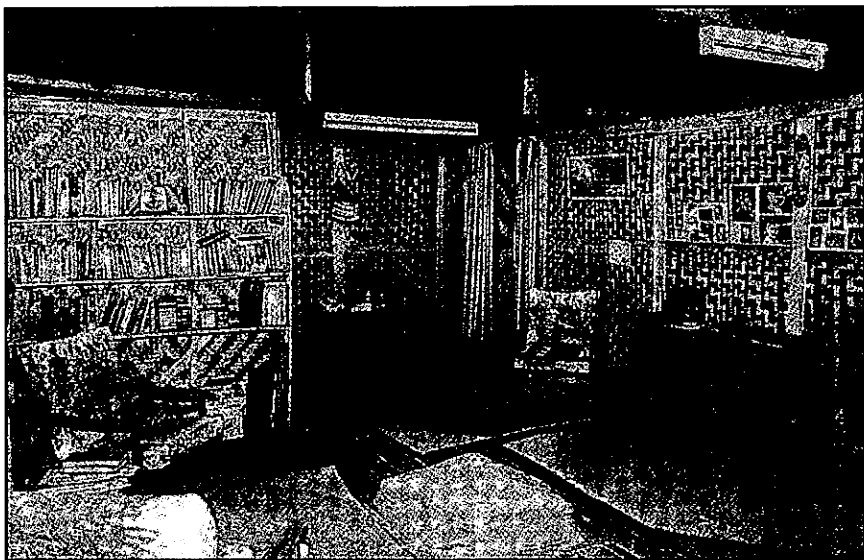
mixed class. I had a class every Thursday morning for the women, with an average of 60 women in attendance. I also gave lessons on hygiene and sewing to the women, which they all enjoyed. The women of our supporting congregation in America sent me a parcel of lengths of material for the women to sew. Some were bright colours and some not so bright. I thought to myself, if I hand these out to the women they will think that the ones who get the bright colours are my favourites, for all of the women love bright colours. I decided to roll each length in a sheet of newspaper, hiding the colour, then I let each woman take a roll and everyone was happy.

It was always a happy event when someone came confessing their belief in Jesus Christ as the son of God, repenting of their sins, and being baptised into Christ for the remission of their sins. We always had a special little service for each one before going down the two hundred feet to the River Ai. It got dark each evening around six-thirty. Sometimes a man or woman would be baptised in the evening in the light of the moon and stars and the help of a kerosine lamp. The only sound was the rushing of the river as it tumbled over boulders on its way to the sea. We had a natural baptistry, a big water hole with a sandy bottom and clear water with a small waterfall tumbling into it. It was also used as a swimming pool by the local children and sometimes by Reg and me.

Reg and I could see the need for us to spend more time with the congregation in Aroba. The people agreed to build us a house in Aroba so that we could stay for a few days at a time, instead of the odd days here and there. When we had a lot of rain, the slippery track over Mt. Ubari could become quite treacherous. It was easier for the people in their bare feet to keep their footing than for us in our bush boots. With three different family lines living in Aroba, it was not surprising that they had differences of opinion from time to time. Sometimes those differences became quite heated. Occasionally Reg had to go to Aroba and sort out their differences. One day while in Aroba there was heavy torrential rain and the track was really washed away. Reg had great difficulty making it back down the mountain. Fortunately, he had a couple of strong men to help him. He had our new walkie talkie with him, so he was able to call me. I sent a man with a pressure lamp as it was getting dark.

Catherine was expecting her first baby in a weeks time. I had decided I would go to Goroka to be with her for the first week at least after the baby's birth. She was booked into the Goroka Hospital to have her baby. I was very concerned because the baby was presenting breech. I was even more concerned when I heard that the Australian lady doctor who had been caring for her during her pregnancy had left the country. Happily for Catherine, another lady doctor came in her place. Sara Ruth Scott was born 20 July, 1977. This was our first grandchild. She was a beautiful baby. I couldn't wait to tell her grandpa. Andy and Catherine were able to stay in a missionary house on the Church of Christ compound for a further two weeks before returning to their bush house in Watabung. I would have liked to stay with them longer but I had to return to my work in the Waria Valley.

Tom and Rens Bunt arrived in Orouba from Australia to work with us in the Waria Valley. Although we had moved into our house there was still much to be done. Their first job was to learn to speak Melanesian Pidgin so they could communicate with the people. Reg and I spent as



Inside our living room. Note the fireplace in the middle of the room.
Smoke went straight up through the high roof of palm thatch.
It was very cold at night.

much time as our duties would allow in helping them to learn this language. We had learned "on the job" and knew this was a good way to learn the language. They in turn helped with the medical work and jobs around the house. Tom participated in the classes and worship services as soon as he felt able to do so. Reg and I took them to all the villages and introduced them to the people. We also climbed Mt. Ubari to Aroba. The house that was being built for us was well on its way to completion. When Tom and Rens saw the house they decided that perhaps they should seriously consider working with the Aroba congregation. They stayed with us for six weeks and decided to go to Aroba. We were a little concerned for Rens as she was considerably older than me. We need not have worried, she managed really well. One advantage for me having Rens in Aroba was that she was also a registered nurse, and could see to the medical needs of the people in the villages in that area. They stayed in Aroba for two years, then moved to Wau where they took over a work which had already begun there. It was nice for us to have their company in the Valley for that time. We were sorry to see them go. Tom and Rens are dedicated to the Lord's work and did a great job in strengthening the Aroba congregation.

Several men were able to preach and two who were proving to be outstanding at that time were Garoa in Orouba, and Deberi in Aroba. Garoa had been a school teacher and could speak English, Pidgin and three tribal languages, which was very useful. On Sunday evening the men of Orouba went out preaching in pairs to five different local villages. This saved the people from walking long distances in the dark to attend the evening meeting in Orouba. This worked very well and was a good training ground for young preachers. Because it frequently rained at night, we kept a stack of umbrellas and several spare kerosine lamps to supply the men for their travel. Later, when the men went on patrol for several days to different villages, we lent them haversacks, raincoats and a medical kit. These were always returned.

Much of my time was taken up with medical work. There were always babies due in the 100 square mile area where our work was concentrated. Although most of the Waria women coped very well in labour, there were always a few who ran into trouble. Sehequ's wife, Baseba,

was one of these. She was in her mid-thirties and was expecting her seventh child. The day before she went into labour I could not hear the foetal heart. I did not tell her because she had felt the baby move that day. However, during the early hours of the following morning, she delivered a stillborn baby boy. The placenta was expelled some time later and she had a postpartum haemorrhage. Sehequ arrived at the house at 6 a.m. with the news. I quickly dressed and ran to the village and gave her ergometrine to control the bleeding and penicillin in case of infection. I was really upset that the family had not called me earlier. I learned that Baseba had also suffered an ante-partum haemorrhage two days earlier but did not tell me because she was afraid I would send her to hospital. This resulted in her having a stillborn baby. Now they had delayed again for the same reason. I managed to control the bleeding but it was obvious that Baseba had lost a lot of blood and needed to get into hospital quickly. I managed to contact the radio operator in Lae who put me through to the hospital. The superintendent quickly arranged for an emergency flight to come to Kira to pick up Baseba and Sehequ.



Our water supply. Fresh spring water.

There is a widely held belief in Papua New Guinea that if you have an accident or you become ill, it is either that you have committed some really bad sin or someone has worked sorcery on you. So began an argument as to which was the cause of Baseba's present condition. I told them there was not time to discuss this matter, that the plane was on its way and the men had to carry her as quickly as possible to the airstrip. I told them that if Baseba had committed some sin she could confess it on the airstrip. Reg had already run to Repanaga to get Councillor Noriva to command the men to carry her at once to the airstrip. I was praying all of the time that the men would just take up the stretcher and go. Eventually they went. I had already sent a message to the pilot to wait for the patient if the plane arrived first, which I am thankful to say he did. It was to be a long time before the people could rid their minds of the beliefs of their ancestors and erroneous present day teaching.

Baseba was given blood transfusions on arrival at the hospital, and was discharged home two weeks later. However, all was not well with her. She complained of continuous abdominal pain. Since I had not seen the placenta, I wondered if perhaps part of it had been retained. I could not allow this situation to go on, so I sent her back to the hospital on a normal passenger flight. The doctor found that she had advanced cancer of the cervix. This was a great blow to us. For the next year Baseba went back to Lae frequently for treatment. Unfortunately, the day came when there was nothing more to be done and Baseba was sent home to die. When I heard the news from the doctor in Lae I went to see Sehequ who was working with Reg at the time. It was really hard for me to tell him the bad news. I had grown to love this family and I broke down and wept. Sehequ put his arm round my shoulders and said "Ruth don't cry, Baseba's home is not here, it is in heaven." What a great faith. We were to learn much from this courageous family in the following six months. Baseba and I could talk freely about death and one day she told me that before she became a Christian that she was afraid of dying. She said "I thought that when I died they would put me in a deep hole and I would be in darkness all alone. Now I know that it will be just my body in the hole, and my spirit will go to be with Jesus." Sehequ and Baseba's faith helped so many people. I was able to get morphine from the hospital to administer to Baseba in the last months of her pain. This formed a bond

between us. Reg and I were with Sehequ and his family when Baseba died.

In the early hours one morning I was awakened by the loud barking of our dog Tama. I could see a light on the track to our house. I quickly dressed and Reg lit the lamps. Two men from Aroba had arrived to tell us that Morobena, a member of the church there, had delivered a baby three hours previously, but the placenta had not been expelled. She was not bleeding, but had said goodbye to all of her relatives because she thought she was going to die. I quickly got my emergency case which and set off with the men. As always, two men joined us in Orouba. I had taken a pressure lamp with me as it gave good light. When we reached the River Koripo the water was very high. I usually walk through the water with help, but two men made a chair with their hands and carried me. They said that they did not want me walking in wet clothes in the cold night air. I was glad of their help and we crossed much quicker. I never felt afraid walking through the bush with Waria men in the middle of the night. They took the greatest care of me and I could not have done the medical work without them. Even when I had to stay in a village for several hours, the Orouba men always stayed with me and took me home again.

When we arrived in Aroba, I was most concerned for the baby girl. The Waria women never cut the cord until the placenta is delivered. I found the baby on the floor covered by a piece of cloth, but cold. I quickly cut and tied the cord and wrapped the baby in a blanket I had brought and gave her to Morobena to feed. The sucking baby helps to contract the uterus and expel the placenta. The placenta was separated and I quickly expelled it, much to the relief of all the women present. I always prayed for God's help in dealing with medical emergencies and I must give Him the glory for the things I was able to accomplish in the Waria. The experience I gained in the early years in the Waria Valley were very valuable to me.

Everybody was very happy with the outcome of my visit and I was invited to breakfast with the headman Ari and his wife, Sopara. We had boiled sweet potatoes and hot black tea. It was very good. It was Sunday morning and their Bible classes would be starting at 8:30 and their wor-



The Ladies' sewing class, Orouba.

ship service at 10. I decided to stay and worship with them. I contacted Reg on the walkie talkie to tell him all was well and I would be home in the afternoon. My clothes were mud spattered. One of the women lent me a laplap, a brightly coloured piece of cloth wrapped around the waist to make a long skirt. It was hilarious to me to see my dirty bush boots peeping out from beneath the skirt, but no one else even noticed. After the meetings I dressed a few sores and gave out aspirin for headaches and chloroquine for malaria. My two companions and I left the village with two young women laden with gifts of fruit and vegetables.

Early one morning a man came to say that a young girl from Pikie had quarreled with her family and had tried to commit suicide. She had mixed and drank a potion from a poisonous vine. This mixture is what the men used to kill fish in the river. I told the man to go quickly to Pikie and get the men to carry the girl to me. It would take too long for me to go to her. While I waited I had read up what to do, as I had never dealt with a case like this before. I decided to give her the most common antidote for poisons, a mixture of charcoal, milk of magnesia and strong tea.

While Reg grated the charcoal from the sticks of yesterday's fire, I brewed the tea and mixed the milk of magnesia. The men carried her the short cut to the house, down steep banks to the river. One of them had the bright idea of pushing mud into the girl's mouth with water from the river. This made her vomit which helped the situation. I then administered my brew. Between all of us we managed to stop any dire consequences which may have happened with the poison. I kept her in our house giving her frequent drinks of milk made from dried milk. When she was well enough to leave she went to relatives in Orouba and stayed for a couple of days. I was only to see this happen once more in my time in the Waria. By that time I had managed to get a jar of the antidote from the hospital in Lae. The people do have stresses in a primitive culture, usually caused by their beliefs and fears in spirits living in trees, rocks, and water, and their constant fear of sorcery.

Some of the people experienced opposition when they became Christians. One of these was a woman named Burisi. She lived in the village of Onodoro and started attending our Bible classes in the early days of the church. No one objected to this until she decided to become a Christian and was baptised into Christ. Her family was furious and some of her relatives cut her house walls and took her to a public court. Reg went to the court to support her. They could not reverse her decision so her family tried hard to make life difficult for her. She had given birth to twin girls, which she carried faithfully in string bags to all of our meetings. She had four older children who attended Sunday school. People could hear her singing as she worked or praying and telling Bible stories to her children. Although some of her relatives never became Christians, Burisi won them over to her way of thinking by her good behaviour. In later years one of her brothers and one of her sisters became Christians. More recently, some of her older children have become Christians. Burisi is a good Bible class teacher and organizer, a faithful member of the church.

Chapter 10

We had well over 100 children attending Bible classes in four different locations. It was now becoming obvious that there was a need for a new classroom for young teenage boys. Reg decided to build this classroom near our house. This building would also have an office for Garoa who had taken on the role of a full time evangelist. It would also serve as a place for me to see patients arriving from distant villages in the afternoon of any day, with only medical emergencies treated on the verandah of our house, cutting down the traffic through our house.

Reg decided at the same time to draw up plans for a guest house for visiting missionaries and overseas visitors, which were increasing in number. Both of these buildings would be built entirely of bush materials, the same as our own house. The biggest problem with bush buildings, however, is that as soon as they are built they are attacked by insects. Termites attack the main supports of the house, carpenter bees



Combined men's Bible class for preachers from three congregations.

attack the roof supports, and a small moth begins to eat the palm thatch while laying a number of eggs. Eventually, the roof starts to leak and needs continual patching. Within 12 to 18 months we had to replace large sections of the palm thatch.

The carpenter bees never ceased to amaze me. They chose the soft wood which supported the thatch, boring a perfect circular hole with what appeared to be a small drill on the end of their noses. They would then lay an egg in the hole and seal it. Later a wasp would remove the seal from the hole and lay her egg on top of the bee's egg. The larva of the wasp would then feed on the larva of the bee. Many must have escaped this horrible death, because we had lots of carpenter bees busy drilling holes in all of our buildings. We sprayed our house every three months to keep insects at bay, especially the big cockroaches, with minimal effect.

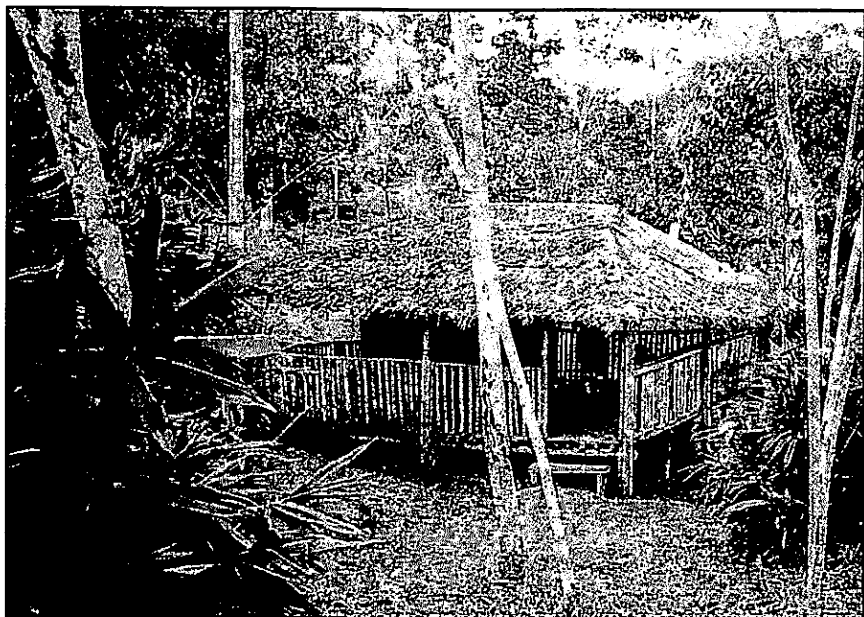
Since we had disturbed many occupants of the bush in building our house, it was not surprising that some would find their way into our house. It was not unusual to wake up in the morning and find that a snake had shed its skin in the rafters above our mosquito net. One curled up on the shelf behind the wood stove in the kitchen, a sight which jolted me awake as I stretched out my hand to get the matches off the shelf to light the stove. I even had one fall off the porch roof onto my head, which scared me out of my wits. At first we killed every snake which we found in the house. As we learned which were poisonous and which were not we ended up shooting them out of the house.

The things which I disliked most were centipedes and scorpions. Fortunately, we saw very few scorpions. For that I was thankful. The roaches were an absolute nuisance. We had to keep everything, especially food, in sealed containers. Unfortunately, they and the big lizards could be very messy. We tolerated the lizards because they ate the roaches. We were continually using bug spray and often lit bug bombs early Sunday morning when the house would be empty for several hours. We were not greatly troubled by spiders in the house, although we did have some pretty black and gold ones which we left alone. At the bottom of our garden was a huge spider web stretching several feet in an open space from one tree to another. This acted as a net for all kinds of insects and

small birds. There seemed to be hundreds of spiders working on it continually. Thankfully, they were content to stay in the bush.

We always checked our clothes and shoes for unwelcome insects before dressing. Sometimes if I was in a hurry, I would find a large brown insect similar to a locust inside my blouse. It had long scratchy legs. I hated them! I usually made matters worse in my frenzy to remove my blouse. It was an ugly insect but quite harmless. They flew through the gaps between the roof and the walls in the evening, attracted by the light. Tama, our dog, was an expert at catching them. Sometimes, our house would be in an uproar when we had missionaries visiting from Lae. These insects would fly in, sometimes in quite a large number, flying very fast and always seeming to fly straight at people. Such was life living at the edge of the jungle. We had to learn to get used to the unwelcome guests.

Garoa had proved to be a great asset to Reg in the work of teaching and preaching in Orouba and other villages. He was well known for his



The Boys' Bible class house.

skill as a peacemaker, and was liked by most people. Reg decided that it was time that Garoa had a holiday. He sent him and his wife, Zaruho, to Lae for two weeks. Garoa preached for the Church in Lae and everyone was surprised at his knowledge of the scriptures. Joe Cannon took Garoa on a patrol to Goroka and Chimbu in the Eastern Highlands, where Garoa preached in several places and was well received. Later Gobeda, Sehequ, and Deberi along with other younger men who were receiving "on the job training" would preach in other places.

I was invited to teach a religious instruction class at our local primary school in Bakadu one afternoon each week. I love teaching children and enjoyed doing this, even though it meant a three mile walk both ways. One of the younger women always accompanied me. Later, two of the women were able to take this class which was so important to our work.

The guest house was nearing completion. Reg decided to use it one day each week to conduct Bible classes for the men from the Aroba, Qaro-Motete and Orouba congregations. The class was for men who were interested in deeper Bible study. It proved to be very successful. I typed all of Reg's notes and copied them on our old spirit duplicator. The notes were in Melanesian Pidgin, as few could read English at that time. Ruma and Gohe, the young women working in our house, prepared food for the students. Tom, Garoa and Reg taught classes, as well as visiting missionaries who would teach a specific subject. The one-day school was very popular, and the men benefitted greatly from it.

The number of Church of Christ missionaries in Papua New Guinea had increased greatly. Quite a number of young single men and women missionaries came for two years mostly locating in Lae, Goroka and Mt. Hagen. They liked going on patrol to different places and some of them visited us from time to time. It is always sad when a missionary has to leave the field for reasons of ill health. We were extremely sorry when Curtis Harrison had to leave Goroka for that reason. Curtis was experiencing numbness in his arms and kept dropping his books. He was advised to return to America, where he was diagnosed as having a tumour growing around his spinal cord at the base of his skull. He had surgery to remove the tumour but was left paralysed from the waist down. However, Curtis is not a man to give in easily. He wanted with all of his

heart to return to Papua New Guinea. For several years he worked hard at getting back the use of his legs. Although he never accomplished this fully, he could walk some with the use of two walking sticks. Curtis did return to Papua New Guinea. He located in Port Moresby as the weather suited him better than in Goroka. Although he arrived in a wheel chair, he later drove an adapted car. His faithful wife and co-worker, LaMoine, was ever by his side attending to his needs. They were able to remain in Port Moresby for two years or more, until ill health once again forced Curtis to return to America. There are many faithful Christians in Papua New Guinea today because of the work and dedication of Curtis and LaMoine Harrison.

Reg and Garoa worked together to translate Bible tracts into Guhu Samane, the language of the Waria people. Andy, our son-in-law, had already translated into Melanesian Pidgin the five books from the Patriarchal to Christian age accompanying the Jule Miller film strips. Garoa was already working on those. Reg and I had translated some other short tracts into Pidgin for Garoa to translate into Guhu Samane. This was time consuming work but worth the effort.

Mel Bowman, a graduate in architecture and building from the A&M University in Texas, joined the missionary team in Lae. His purpose for coming to Papua New Guinea was to help missionaries with their building programmes in the towns and cities. He built the classrooms and accommodation blocks for the Bible School in Lae. Later he built the church buildings in Mt. Hagen, Wau and Port Moresby and helped renovate the Goroka church property.

Mel came to the Waria Valley for two days to assess our needs in Orouba and returned later for two weeks. He helped Reg erect a much needed tool store and workshop at the back of our house. All of Reg's tools and building materials were stored in Reg's office in the house (which also served as a spare bedroom for visitors). Mel also built a structure to carry the circular saw so that Reg and the men could trim the timber in readiness for our new church building. Unfortunately, Mel was not able to help us with our church building. We were thankful for the help which he was able to give us at that time. The Lord continually provided help as needed.

Manike Darei, the young man we had sent for training as a medical orderly, returned to Repanaga to work. He spent one year of study in Mt. Hagen and two years in training at the Health Centre in Garaina, where he worked under a medical supervisor. He was then posted to Repanaga where he would be paid by the Government. Ruma and I worked hard to get the clinic building ready for his arrival. We had a store cupboard, which was kept locked, containing a good supply of everything required to start his work. Manike and I agreed this would now be his domain, but if he had difficulties or needed my assistance, I would be happy to help in any way that I could.

I continued with my antenatal and baby clinics and was unavoidably involved in other ways too. I still treated medical emergencies when Manike was not available. He had to help his wife cultivate their new garden and build a house for his family. Also, he did not work weekends and his duties did not permit him to travel to other villages to visit the sick. The relatives had to carry the sick to the clinic. The people were used to me visiting the very ill patients in their villages and I continued



Jim and Bessie McGeachy with their children, Fiona and Kenneth.

to do this. When I saw a patient in these circumstances, I always made a report to Manike, as he was the official medical representative of the Government.

The visitors to the Waria Valley were always captivated by the beautiful scenery, for the area was surrounded by high mountains and virgin jungle. One could see beautiful birds and sometimes even catch a glimpse of the elusive birds of paradise. These birds were hunted all over Papua New Guinea for their beautiful feathers. The feathers are used by the people, especially the men, to make elaborate head dresses for their local and national singsings. There are many butterflies in brilliant colours, some of which, along with the birds of paradise are protected species. There are ground orchids which are quite common and various colours of lovely orchids growing on the trunks of trees in the high forest. There is also a variety of creepers which entwine themselves in the branches of trees. Some have vivid red flowers, others have pink, blue, purple or white flowers. *“Even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.”* The animal population is sparse in the Waria Valley, probably hunted out of existence. The main ones hunted today are opossums and wild pigs.

Joe and RosaBelle Cannon often brought visitors to the Waria Valley, since apart from Andy and Catherine in Watabung, ours was the only other bush work with missionaries in residence where people had to walk everywhere. One day they arrived with a party of eight people from Lae, Larry Mckenzie from Memphis, Tennessee, Jim McGeachy from Perth, Australia, Pat Stidworthy who worked with us in the Waria for a year, Hydeki Ataka and Kyoko Pukada from Japan, working as assistant missionaries in Lae, and Dino Kamakutni from the Chimbu Province, a student at the Lae Bible School. Dino planned to spend one month with the small congregation at Qaro-Motete.

Joe had chartered a small plane to bring the party to Kira. It was to return the following day to pick them up. There was very little time for them to visit the villages. We arranged a meeting in the evening where they could meet some of the brethren. They left our house at 8 a.m. the following morning to walk the five miles to Kira airstrip. They waited all day for the plane to come in but it failed to arrive. It was unfortunate that



The new guest house. Later it became the home of Jim and Bessie McGeachy.

our radio, our only form of communication with the outside world, was in the C.R.M.F. workshop in Mt. Hagen being repaired, so we could not call Lae.

When it became obvious that they would have to spend the night on the airstrip, I sent mattresses, blankets and food to see them through until the plane arrived the following day. They had our little two room house to sleep in with cooking facilities and everything they would need. Larry called our little house "The Waria Hilton." We had often waited the whole day for a plane which did not arrive. Before we had the little house built we had to walk back down the mountain, five miles back home, and make the return journey the next day. A few very frustrating times we had to return home two days running. The most common cause for the delayed plane was bad weather, either in Lae or in the mountains. After crossing the Huon Gulf on its journey to Kira, the plane must fly over or through range upon range of high mountains with no landing area until it reaches Garaina in the Waria Valley. It is little wonder then that when these mountains were obscured by clouds the pilots were reluctant to risk their lives and planes.

Jim McGeachy, with the party from Lae, came from Australia to visit Tom and Rens Bunt, who were at that time working in Aroba. They had all worshiped with the Embleton congregation in Perth, Western Australia, before Tom and Rens came to Papua New Guinea. We told Jim that he was welcome to stay with us on his return journey. Jim enjoyed his stay with the Bunts in Aroba and decided to spend four days with us in Orouba to see something of our work and meet the people. Reg told Jim about our future plans and hopes for the work. Before leaving Jim asked Reg if he could come and work with us in Orouba. Reg assured Jim that we would love to have him and would look forward to his return.

A lot of culture stress is “pig stress.” Pigs are very important to the Papua New Guinea culture for they signify wealth. The more pigs a man owns the more important he becomes. He is regarded as “a big man.” In the Waria Valley the pigs are not penned but have to go out and fend for themselves. Although, having said that, the people often feed them with sweet potato when they return from the forest after dark.

We had been working hard to keep the area surrounding the outside of our house and the helicopter pad clear of fast encroaching kunai grass and weeds. It was looking really nice until several pigs started arriving every day. Our dog Tama, who disliked pigs, would alert us to their presence by his furious barking, and whoever was in the house at that time, would chase them away. One boar with big tusks was not easily scared and often stood his ground. We were afraid to let Tama loose and the old boar seemed to know this. We wouldn't have minded the pigs so much, but it was the damage they did to the ground and our ditches. They ripped up everything in their paths, like so many miniature bulldozers. One day they appeared with a sow with several piglets in tow. The place was starting to look like a bomb site. Reg decided to find the owners and have a meeting to discuss the situation. The result was that they built two strong stiles across the track above the helipad and below the guest house. We had fenced off the water supply previously and extended the fence to link up with the stiles, cutting off the area from the pigs. The other side was a steep cliff down to the River Ai, but we built a strong stile at the top of the track leading to the river. There was a small stream nearby where they could drink water when necessary. Peace at last.



Teachers' Workshop.

There were quite a number of Waria people employed in the town of Popondetta in the Oro Province on the coast. Among these were several members of the Church of Christ from both the Waria Valley and the Highlands. Reg decided to go there with Gobeda and contact these people. Popondetta is a fairly large spread-out town with mainly dirt roads. Because of the mountain ranges there is no road between Popondetta and Lae or Port Moresby. Popondetta does have a good seaport and all their supplies are delivered by ship. They also have good passenger ship service between Popondetta, Lae and Port Moresby. Talair had at that time started a weekly service between Popondetta and Kira airstrip. Reg and Gobeda were able to fly direct to Popondetta, a 30 minute flight.

Reg and Gobeda visited some Waria people living at Kokoda and they were made very welcome. Some of the older men recalled the wartime struggles on the now famous "Kokoda Trail." The trail is in the Owen Stanley mountain range where Papua New Guinea, Australian and American soldiers fought to halt the advance of the Japanese troops. Many suffered from disease and severe hardship on both sides. Hundreds of men died in the jungle-covered mountains.

At the same time Reg was planing his visit to Popondetta, Andy, our son-in-law, planned a patrol to a remote area in the Chimbu mountains. Catherine decided that it would be a good time to visit the Waria Valley and Grandma. I was delighted to have Catherine and little Sara with me for two weeks. Although we lived in the same country we were fortunate if we saw each other twice in the same year. Such was the distance and nature of our work. All of the village children were intrigued by the blonde haired toddler and would come play with her every day. Some little ones were a little scared at first and would just stand and stare. Sara was used to this, as there were no other white children where she lived in Watabung with her parents. Sara probably spoke Pidgin before she could speak English (and perhaps Siane too, the language of the people where Andy and Catherine worked).

A young man, Dale Templeton, from Texas came to work as an assistant missionary in Papua New Guinea for two years. He spent some time in Lae but decided he would like to have experience in a bush work, so he came to us for three months. He stayed in our guest house but ate meals with us. The young people liked him. He spent his time mainly working with young people and learning to speak Pidgin. When he returned to Lae he often drove the church bus to pick up people on the outskirts of Lae. One day when he was driving a full bus load towards the University, he saw a car coming towards him at high speed on the wrong side of the road. Dale quickly pulled off as far as he could to the side of the road and stopped the bus. However, the car which was being driven by a drunk driver, ploughed into the bus at high speed. Dale received multiple fractures to one leg and arm plus other injuries. A women had a fractured arm and there were some other minor injuries. Reg and I were in Lae when the accident happened. I was in Joe Cannon's house when news of the accident was phoned in. I went to the casualty department of the hospital where I found Dale in a bad way on a trolley. I learned that the driver of the car had been killed and his badly injured passenger was lying next to Dale. I consoled Dale while I removed broken glass from his hair. It was pandemonium, with staff running everywhere and no-one attending to Dale or the other badly injured man. A member of the Church came in and I left him with Dale. I called our doctor and told her what had happened and asked her if she could

please come quickly. She responded immediately and arrived at the hospital in about five minutes. I was so relieved, as I was really worried about Dale's condition. In a brief time she arranged for Dale to be transferred to the operating theatre, and for someone to attend the other very badly injured man in the room with Dale. It was a traumatic time for Joe and RosaBelle, dealing with the bus passengers and seeing that those who needed treatment were taken to the hospital.

Dale returned to Texas. His badly injured leg was shorter than the other and his orthopaedic surgeon shortened his good leg to match. Dale was very tall. When he returned to Papua New Guinea at a later date we did not notice any real difference in his height. We all thanked God that things worked out so well for Dale.

Reg was suffering from recurrent earache. While we were in Lae he decided to visit our doctor. She diagnosed a fungal infection. At the same time she checked his blood pressure and told him his blood pressure was very high and he could not return to the bush. Reg told her he was



Children's class, Wednesday evening.

returning to the bush in two days time. She was angry with him and gave him tablets to reduce his blood pressure. When we returned to Orouba I decided to monitor Reg's blood pressure daily for a time. At no time did I find his blood pressure very high. The tablets were making him feel ill, he had headaches, nausea and lacked energy. He was not able to work and kept lying down. I made the decision to monitor his blood pressure and start reducing the tablets over several days until he was completely off of them. We did this and, thankfully, Reg gradually returned to normal.

After this episode we decided to make a short visit to Australia in about three months time where Reg could have a thorough medical check up. I needed to see an ear, nose and throat specialist as I was becoming even more deaf. I started going deaf in one ear in my early thirties and had been diagnosed as having otosclerosis, which I inherited from my father. This was corrected by surgery, but now over 25 years later, both ears were affected. During the next three months we made all the necessary arrangements.

The church was continuing to grow in spite of continued opposition. Several of the men were teaching and preaching and some of the women were teaching children and women's classes. It was Reg's overall plan that we should both work ourselves out of a job, allowing the local brethren to eventually take over the work from us. However, we were prepared to stay in the Waria for as many years as we were needed, and if it was God's will for us.

Jim McGeachy had arrived back in Lae much sooner than we had anticipated. We told him of our plans and suggested that he remain in Lae and learn the Pidgin language. Bessie Phipers and Nancy Merrit were both single missionaries working in Lae. Both were good teachers so we suggested to Jim that he should ask for their help in learning the language. Reg also suggested that as Mel Bowman was involved with building work at the Bible school, Jim could work with him and gain useful experience before coming to the Waria Valley to work. Jim agreed to do this, which proved to be an excellent idea.

Reg and I promised to spend a few days over Christmas with our fam-

ily in Watabung in the Eastern Highlands. This would be our first Christmas with our first grandchild, Sara. We flew to Lae and spent one night there. The following day Ray and Elizabeth Lock and their two daughters, Rebecca and Bethany, picked Jim McGeachy, Reg and I up in their land cruiser. We traveled the five hour journey on the Highlands Highway, which now had a good road surface, to Watabung. Ray and Elizabeth visited their eldest daughter, Lois, and her husband, Larry, who were working with the church in Mount Hagen.

We drove up the hot Highlands Highway which links the Highlands and the coast, up the 100 mile length of the vast Markham Valley. The treeless mountains on the right looked as if they were made of paper mache. We passed many villages dosing in the shade of their tall coconut palms and children playing in the muddy rivers. Where the Markham Valley merges with the great Ramu Valley and the Ramu sugar plantations we turned and climbed the zig-zag road of the Kassam pass to a height of 5,000 feet and the beginning of the Highlands. The view from the top was panoramic and the air cool, fresh and invigorating after the heat of Lae.

We passed numerous small villages with the small round mud huts clustered together and the bands of laughing children shouting a greeting. We saw heavily bearded men and young women dressed only in beaded aprons adorned with shells and feathers. We were welcomed to the small town of Kainantu with a sign which proclaimed "Gateway to the Highlands." About 90 minutes later we were in the town of Goroka. We made a short stop in Goroka to visit the John Wallace and Curtis Harrison families working there. An hour later, after crossing the 8,143 feet high Daulo pass, we were in Watabung. Ray, Elizabeth and their daughters still had a two hour journey ahead of them to reach Mount Hagen. They would pick us up again on their way back.

We spent a happy few days with our family and Jim. We especially enjoyed Sara who was a happy adventuresome little girl who was climbing everywhere. This worried me a little, as there was a fast flowing river rushing along very close to their small garden. Andy had built a fence which would offer some protection for Sara. Their house was also built near the Highlands Highway near a bend, where large trucks sped by

daily. However, the villagers in Watabung loved Sara and there was always someone keeping a watchful eye on the little blonde toddler, along with Catherine.

When we first met the people of Watabung we were very embarrassed by their customary greeting. Some of the older women ran their hands over our bodies. It was such a different approach than that of the reserved Waria tribe. However, we accepted that this was the custom of the Siane people who were just as generous and hospitable as those in the Waria Valley.

Denise and Dottie were two single women who worked together as translators for the Summer Institute of Linguistics. Denise was British and Dottie was American. They had been working together for several years translating the New Testament into the Siane language. They lived in a bush house in the village of Nolambarlo not far from the Scott's bush house. Catherine invited them to spend Christmas day with us. I was really glad that Catherine and Andy had the friendship of these two lovely ladies.

Watabung is over 5,000 feet above sea level, so it was very cool in the evenings, sometimes cold. Andy had built a fireplace with a chimney going through the kunai thatch, so we were able to enjoy a cheery log fire. One blessing of the cool climate was that there were no snakes, no mosquitoes or other bugs which plagued our lives in the Waria Valley. It was good to dress in the morning without first checking clothes and shoes for bugs.

The time passed quickly and all too soon we were on our way back to Lae. Our flight back to Kira was one of the worst we had experienced. The plane was buffeted by very strong gusting winds, and at times we were bounced too-and-fro like a big rubber ball. The worst time was when we got caught in a stream of air rushing out from between two ridges. We were glad when the plane eventually landed at Kira airstrip.

Chapter 11

The following day the people prepared a “singsing” in our honour and sent word to us when they were ready to begin. Reg went on ahead of me to the village and I followed a little later. On the track I met some men carrying a stretcher with a ten year old girl who looked pale and frightened. She had been swinging from a bush rope and had fallen on to a jagged tree stump. The people in the village had seen the stretcher bearers and knew that I would be held up. Reg also came back to the house to help me. I was glad because he was excellent in emergencies.

I was not prepared for the size or depth of the wound and was appalled when I saw it. The back of the little girl’s thigh had been sliced open from one side to the other, exposing the bone. Fortunately, it was a clean cut. It was too late in the day for a plane to land at Kira and I just prayed, as I usually did on these occasions, for God’s guidance. I flushed the wound thoroughly with an antiseptic solution and closed the wound with deep tension sutures. The little girl was extremely brave as I explained to her what I had to do. She sucked happily on a lollipop while I put in the local anaesthetic and sutured the wound. I told the parents I would call the hospital in the morning to arrange for a plane to pick the daughter and mother up. The men would carry her up to the Airstrip on the stretcher. I started the patient on a course of penicillin injections and gave the mother tablets to give for pain when the anaesthetic wore off. The courage of the children never ceased to amaze me. Their infinite trust in me made me feel very humble. This little girl was very fortunate to return from hospital with the wound nicely healed. I thanked God for His providential care.

Although we were planning to go to Australia we did not have the funds to cover the cost of our fares. I wrote to my sister Isobel about our plans and reason for going to Australia. She immediately contacted other members of our family and also the congregation in Buckie and Peterhead in the northeast of Scotland. Frank also spoke to the congregation in Corby where he was the evangelist at that time. Of course we did not know this and had planned to charge our fares to our account with the air-

lines. However, before we left we had the money for our fares. We had medical insurance which would cover most of our expenses. We even had enough money sent to us to cover the balance. Thank you Lord for the love of our family in the flesh and our family in the Lord.

When I had my hearing tested I was advised against surgery to correct my deafness because of the risk of my balance being affected. I was advised to have two hearing aids which would cost 750 Australian dollars. Unfortunately, our medical insurance did not cover these. We decided to postpone getting these until sometime in the future. We were staying with our friends, Albert and Olive Matthews, in Adelaide. When we returned from the doctor's clinic, they wanted to know the outcome. When we told them, they went into action and we were informed that the Noarlunga congregation wanted to pay for my hearing aids. We felt truly blessed.

Reg was thoroughly examined by medical specialists. His heart, lungs and blood pressure were checked while he walked quickly on a moving belt. He had blood tests and chest X-rays. We were pleased to



Children running races at annual picnic.

learn his heart and blood pressure were satisfactory. He had a barium x-ray which showed he had a hiatus hernia. We suspected this and Reg was careful with his diet. When he saw the E.N.T. specialist he confirmed that Reg had a fungal infection of his ear which was very persistent. This was treated, but Reg was warned that the infection would probably recur as it was very difficult to eradicate. We knew this by experience but had hoped that a permanent cure could be found. It was not to be. Reg had to suffer this very painful ear infection on and off the whole time we were in Papua New Guinea.

Just before we left to return to Papua New Guinea, we had a telephone call from Jim McGeachy. To our surprise he told us that he was getting married. We had only been away three weeks and found it hard to believe. Bessie Phypers had been helping to teach Jim the Pidgin language since his arrival in Papua New Guinea and they both felt that the Lord had brought them together. They planned to marry on the 24th March and go to Orouba with us. We were absolutely delighted. We had known Bessie for two years. She was an excellent teacher. Bessie was from British Columbia and Jim was a Scot, like me. We would now have two missionaries joining our team instead of one. The great thing was that we had a house all ready for them. They were both mature people and Bessie had visited Orouba on at least two occasions. We felt confident that they would adjust to living in the beautiful isolated region of the Waria Valley.

We were glad to be back home in Papua New Guinea. We had suffered culture stress in Australia with the huge volume of traffic in the city and everyone rushing everywhere. We realised how much we had adapted to the native way of life.

Rex Morgan a missionary in Port Moresby met us at the airport. We stayed two nights with Rex and his family. We also made the acquaintance of the Jim Kennedy family.

When we returned to Lae we were met by the happy faces of Jim and Bessie and to share in the joy of their forthcoming marriage. Unfortunately, I was not able to attend their beautiful wedding in the botanical gardens, conducted by Joe Cannon. They even had a Scottish

piper in attendance. Catherine was expecting her second baby, which was due any day. All the missionaries from Goroka were arriving in Lae for the wedding. I was uneasy and decided to fly to Goroka to be with Andy, Catherine and Sara. The day of the wedding Rachel Elizabeth Scott was born. I was so happy I had given way to my hunch. I was able to take care of Sara while Catherine was in hospital. Andy was now the proud father of two little girls and was "walking tall."

Jim and Bessie chose to spend their one week honeymoon in the Waria Valley. They returned to Lae to purchase items needed to live in a bush environment. We had given them the keys of both houses, as ours had all the supplies they would need, and they could chose to stay in either bush house.

When we returned to Orouba we found that the brethren had sincerely tried to keep the whole programme running in our absence. They had done very well.

The most significant surprise we had on our return was to find that the church members had been enthusiastically digging to prepare the site for the new church building. It had proved too much for them and work had stopped until Reg returned. They had moved from the agreed site to another of their independent choice because a man had planted some palm trees on the original site. Their new site was where three paths converged close to a burial ground and a cliff. They were digging into rising ground instead of across it and were having to remove increasing depths of soil, giving up when the depth exceeded their height. Reg gently rejected the new site and said they could build a much needed classroom there. They agreed to return to the site first chosen. The owner of the palm trees was quite happy to move them, so all was well.

Garoa, Deberi and Gobeda went on a one month missionary patrol to the town of Popondetta. They found the response to their preaching was very good and the people asked them to stay an extra week. They were preaching and teaching mainly to people employed in the rubber or palm oil plantations. Families in the Waria Valley are very close, and do not like to be separated for too long. They planned to return to Popondetta again in the near future.

The small plane was circling to land. Although it was a sound which we heard often, this was a special plane and a special day. The plane was bringing Jim and Bessie to work with us in Orouba. The carriers had all gone to the airstrip to welcome them and carry their cargo. Their house was ready and we were looking forward to their company. The people would certainly let them know they were very welcome to live in their midst. The Waria people are so genuine in their welcome and their desire to help in every way. Nothing is too much trouble for them and Reg and I both loved them. Bessie was fluent in Pidgin and was at home with the Papua New Guinea culture. She was a tremendous help and encouragement to Jim during the first few months. He made great progress with the language and settled in very well to the work.

I had been planning for some time to hold a teacher's workshop for women interested in teaching children's classes. Twenty-eight women from both the Aroba and Orouba congregations expressed interest. We had asked Nansi Merrit, a single missionary with the Lae congregation, to help Bessie and I with the programme. We had to bear in mind that the women would need time during the week to go to their vegetable gardens for food. After Jim and Bessie were settled we decided to go ahead and have the workshop.

Nansi arrived from Lae and we planned the workshop of lessons and practical work. We were to start the following Monday at eight o'clock in the morning and were going to hold the classes on the big verandah of our house.

Imagine our surprise when all the women were waiting outside our house at seven Monday morning, and they were to arrive early every morning of the course. They were so eager to learn it was a real pleasure to teach. Some of the women were already teaching. When we challenged them to use things from their own culture to teach the Bible stories to the children, we were inundated with good ideas. They divided into groups one day and acted out some well known Bible stories with great enthusiasm. A lady in the States had made beautiful brown skinned boy and girl puppets, in addition to several animal puppets I had purchased in Australia. Reg made a puppet stand for me fitted with curtains. Nansi, Bessie and I acted out a little puppet show for the ladies. It was a

simple Bible oriented story and the women loved it. They could see how the children would respond to the puppets. Some were eager to try using them. The women voted the week a great success. We had found many hidden talents which were very encouraging to us.

The people were very amused when I arrived at the church building carrying a bilum (string bag) on my head, native style, with the puppets peeping out. I asked the children to name the puppets. They had great fun choosing appropriate names for each one. The elderly people were also very intrigued with the puppets but had difficulty believing that I was making them work with my hand. The tiny tots believed that the puppets were alive and shyly shook hands with them. Working with the children and puppets was really interesting and I enjoyed it very much.

We decided to have an annual special sports day and picnic for our Bible class children from the Aroba and Orouba congregations, usually over more than 150 children attended. The village of Onodoro was the chosen site since they had the longest stretch of grass. The first day we



Preparing the ground for the new church building.

had so much fun introducing the children to the three legged race, lemon on spoon race, sack race, pass the parcel and pin the tail on the pig. The teenagers drew pictures of the pigs and made the tails. We pinned these onto plywood boards and four men held the boards so that the game would not take too long. It was really hilarious for the children.

I had found small stuffed toys for the little ones and quite a variety of interesting things for the older ones in the wholesale stores in Lae. They really enjoyed pass the parcel. I had managed to get a couple of plastic snakes for the older ones parcels. It took bundles of newspapers to wrap them but it was worth it. We made loads of cookies and popcorn and buckets of tang made from an orange flavoured powder. Lollipops and chewing gum completed the menu. The children really love it. We gave the mothers and fathers a chance to race too for a packet of tea or razor blades. It was a really good time of fellowship. It became much easier to organise in future years with Jim and Bessie's help.

Puoba was an elderly man who worked as a policeman in 1942 during the war with the Japanese. He was a charming old gentleman with very good manners, and a very hard worker. Puoba and his son Gibe had constructed a new bush church building on the site of the old one in the village of Onodoro. We held a short worship meeting followed by a fellowship meal to celebrate its opening. We used this building for children's Sunday School and for evening services every Sunday. Robert Menga, a national evangelist with the Church in Lae, came to visit us in the Waria Valley. A 75 year old lady, Florence Gelley, came with him. Florence is a Canadian and was helping the missionaries in Lae. She spent much of her time repairing the clothes of the students at the Melanesian Bible College in Lae. We were doubtful that she would be able to cope with the walking. Knowing how independent Florence was, I asked two young women to take care of her, especially on the track down the mountain from the airstrip. I also went along to meet the visitors. Florence was very hot walking down the mountain. When we arrived in the village of Kira, where we usually rest, I suggested that she have a good rest. No wonder she was hot, she was wearing stockings. When she decided to remove them several small children in the hut with us gasped in horror. They thought she was shedding her skin like a snake.

It was very funny, and needless to say, the story spread like wildfire, much embellished in the telling. Next day we suggested to Florence that she should rest. She was eager to be busy, so we gave her a bolt of material and she happily cut out various garments for the ladies sewing class. Robert was made very welcome and preached in several locations and visited many of the homes in different villages. They really enjoyed their stay and were sorry to leave us.

We had an unexpected visitor from Tube (pronounced Too-bay), a village between the Waria Valley and the coast. His name was Kuworo. He was fluent in both Pidgin and Motu, as he had worked in both Lae and Port Moresby. He was a carpenter and wanted to know if Reg would hire him. Reg employed him as a carpenter in the house to build shelves, etc., and later to help in the construction of the new church building. Kuworo proved to be a tremendous help and a good carpenter.

Motu was a tribal language of Papua, but was used by all the tribes in much the same way in Papua, as Pidgin was in New Guinea. It was com-



A large tree being cut into timber of various size and width.

pulsory for all the policemen to learn Motu in the early days, so some of our older men, like Puoba could speak Motu and not Pidgin. This was understandable because the group of villages where we were working were actually on the Papuan side of the border.

The foundations for the new building were started. It had taken time and energy to clear the bush and level the ground. Many men and women had come to help us level the ground and pound it with lengths of tree trunks to make it firm. Few people own a spade or hammer. All the tools had to be supplied by us and it was necessary to improvise quite a lot. However, Reg was a Chartered Engineer and I knew from experience that any job he undertook to do was done well. This was the biggest undertaking yet. He designed the building and built it without skilled labour except for only a semi-skilled carpenter helping him. The people of the Waria tribe were very quick to learn new skills and we were very proud of their accomplishments in erecting the church building. Jim was a great asset to constructing the building and, like Reg, he was very particular that every job which he undertook was well done.



Timber cut in the bush, dipped and stored.

Reg decided to give the foundations time to settle and harden. Meanwhile, the men started felling trees, preparing the timber and stockpiling it ready for use. Every tree in the forest belongs to someone, even the trees in the virgin forest high in the mountains. All the land is tribal land and each family line has a share of the land which has been handed down from father to son over centuries. The members of the church in Orouba, which now numbered over 100, volunteered to give some trees to build the church building. These were duly marked so the men would not fell the wrong tree. Reg had visited the forestry commission to get advice on which trees to use for building. He also bought books which contained pictures of the trees and a very good description of the leaves and fruit. Before felling any tree the men first brought back a sample of leaves, flowers or berries so that he could identify the trees which he needed. Some of the trees were huge beautiful hardwoods. Reg bought a chain saw with an Alaskan mill attachment. He went into the forest to train a team of men in its use. This was a very exciting time for the men. Reg was very safety conscious. He required the men to wear hard hats,



The tank where the timber was dipped.

goggles, ear muffs and steel tipped boots which he supplied. He sent Sehequ, Gobeda and Hihila, the most able men, on a course to the Timber Trades College in Lae to learn the use of the chain saw and mill. They each received a certificate at the end of the short course. One of the lecturers at the College, Risi Rereva, was from the village of Onodoro. He and his family worshiped with the Church of Christ in Lae, so he helped our three men during their time there. When the building was nearing completion, Risi made a pair of beautiful doors for the main entrance.

The men from the Aroba congregation on the other side of Mount Ubari wanted to be involved in the building programme. This would also help them to earn some pay. With Reg's help they built a wire enclosed bush building for the chemical dip tank. The tank itself was eighteen feet long made of eight semicircular corrugated iron sheets riveted together. It was strongly supported by thick sawn timbers from our own mill. The men from Aroba also prepared an area for "curing" the dipped timber under plastic. Three to six weeks was needed for each batch of timber. A second open sided bush shelter was built for drying and storing the treated timber. As a safety precaution the dip tank shed was kept padlocked when not in use. Reg was very safety conscious and the accident rate was minimal. I always checked the men for cuts or sores before they started dipping the timber. If any were present they were not permitted to do the dipping. We provided our workers with soap so they could wash in the river after work.

Reg trained a team of four in the dipping process. They wore rubber boots, long rubber gloves, goggles, masks and hats. Bessie and I made thick plastic aprons for them. We also provided extra shirts and trousers, as their clothes sometimes got splashed with the chemical. The team worked conscientiously and were proud of their job. When they were not doing the dipping they were employed on the site. Often the timber had to be washed before it was dipped because the saw team would often slide the timber down the mountain to save the effort of carrying it down steep slopes. The timber got very muddy but was easily washed by the women. Bessie and I often took part in this kind of work.

Living in the bush one could not plan to build something and go ahead and work on it until it was finished. The men had to help their

wives in the gardens from time to time, especially in the making of a new garden. Bush had to be cleared, trees felled and the ground cleared. A new garden was made every year by every family and it was a big job. The women went to their gardens every day to weed, dig and get food for their families.

Every year there was a time when several families would go to Goliata. This was a three or four day walk to the Goliata's remote mountain homes to the north. These people are strong and warlike. They sold the Waria people young pigs and tobacco leaves. Sometimes their hosts would not let them leave for three or four weeks. The Goliata people would then pay a visit to Orouba and other villages near to us to buy coconuts, sugar cane, vegetables, fruit and string bags, which the Waria women made very well.

Every year the people would also set aside a time for fishing. In the fast-flowing rivers the only fish that lived there were small sucker fish. One time each year eel swam up the rivers from the coast to spawn. The people would build a dyke up river and down river and catch anything in the water between. Even if their catch was very poor it was a time of fun and laughter for everyone.

The Oro Provincial Government agreed to buy a motor mower for cutting grass on the airstrip. Our original pedestrian mower had served well for four years, but was continually requiring attention. We were very happy to get the new mower. Reg instructed Onipa, the airstrip maintenance man, in the use of the mower. This was a very exciting development for the local people and several men wanted to have a go at driving it. Reg had to be very strict and say that no one was allowed to drive it except Onipa. However, as the months went by the pressure on Onipa to let others drive the mower became great. Unknown to us he had given in. The result was that the mower was put out of action by the damage done to a vital part of the machine. Reg had to walk five miles to the airstrip to check the machine for the damage. He ordered spare parts by radio, but had to wait several days for their arrival. Reg made another trek to the airstrip with a couple of men and a load of tools to repair the damage. It took much longer than expected. Late afternoon a couple of women and I went to prepare food for the men and we all stayed the night on the

airstrip. Fortunately, we had a small two room house built there previously with the necessary things required stored in a 44 gallon drum.

The women and I returned the following morning as I had medical work to do. The men completed the job and returned in the afternoon. Reg had to make new rules about the use of the mower. Otherwise, the people would be back to cutting 2000 feet of grass strip by hand. No one welcomed that.

The time went so fast and I seemed to accomplish so little. I tried to get one morning in the office each week to pay bills and get essential letters typed. I often found myself working late at night when I was less likely to be disturbed. Such was the life of a missionary. One had to be a "jack of all trades," especially the male missionary. I sometimes marveled at the things Reg was able to do. He even made spare parts for machines in an emergency. It gave me confidence living in a remote area and I thanked God often for my husband.

When Papua New Guinea was a territory of Australia, the Australian Government had a policy that as tribes were contacted in new areas by the Australian Patrol Officers, they would choose two men respected in that tribe for their wisdom. One would be appointed as a councillor and one as a policeman. These two would work together to keep peace. In the Waria Valley there were 18 councillors spread over the whole of the Waria Valley and only one policeman in Garaina. There was also an Australian patrol officer located in Garaina. He was replaced by a Papua New Guinea Officer after Independence in 1975. Councillor Noriba, who was responsible for our area, had been in office for 15 years. He was getting on in years and decided to retire. An election was held and Gibe, one of our Christian men, was elected. We were pleased about this, as we thought that Gibe would do a good job. He was the nephew of Noriba and would be able to get sound advice from his uncle if needed.

Gibe was a man in his late forties. He was having trouble with his eyes and needed spectacles. At that time we did not have an optician in Lae, but one Chinese Store kept a big supply of spectacles. I decided the next time I went to Lae I would talk to the proprietor to see if he would permit me to take a variety of different strength spectacles to the Waria.

News of my intentions became known. Several men and women came to say that their sight was failing and they would like spectacles. I compared the spectacles with my own prescription glasses and thought that they were very good. The result was that I had to have an eye clinic where people came and tried on the different spectacles and chose what suited them best. They were well made with metal frames and looked nice. They were not expensive (about ten Australian dollars). The men especially were delighted as the spectacles helped them with their reading and writing. It was rather funny at first seeing the men wearing spectacles and the women laughed and made fun of them.

Our famous Scottish poet, Robert Burns, said in one of his poems "The best laid plans o' mice and men gang aft agley" (go oft astray). How true that is. I planned to take some time and work in the office on this particular day. There were bills to pay, letters to write and a dozen other things waiting to be typed.

Saoba arrived to carry our mailbag to the airstrip and to collect the one coming in on the plane. Five minutes later I was called to Orouba to see a sick woman. While there I checked on a man whose leg I had sutured the previous afternoon. I went back to get breakfast ready at seven thirty. I then contacted Talair in Lae by radio to tell them to pick up a patient at Kira for Angau Hospital in Lae. The patient was a young woman from a distant village whom I had seen the previous day. She had lost the use of both her arms and legs. I was unable to locate the cause.

I started work on rosters for volunteer workers on the church building so that the work would go smoothly. Gibe, our newly elected councillor, arrived asking for my help with bookkeeping. He had started a small store but had no idea how to go about it. I spent time explaining income and output and that for a time any money which he made on the sale of goods would have to be ploughed back into his small business. Since the opening of the airstrip many men have tried and failed at running a small trade store. The main reason is that they eat their stock themselves or give credit to relatives. When they come to replace the stock they cannot understand why they don't have money to pay for it. It is very difficult. Later a man came to ask for some medical supplies as a group was going across the mountains to Goliata. It was then my radio

skedule time so I called Wau and ordered a 44 gallon drum of kerosine. Several more people arrived for medical treatment. Garoa then needed my help with translating.

At 12:30 p.m. I still had not gone back to work in my office. I decided to get lunch ready. A women arrived from the airstrip with the groceries I had ordered. She told me a woman I had sent to the hospital in Lae two weeks earlier had arrived back on the plane. I had suspected she was carrying twins and one was presenting breech. I was really pleased that she had come home with twins, a boy and girl. This kind of news made all the hard work worth while.

I was having repeated sharp pains in my left ear so I decided to start myself on a course of antibiotics.

Saoba arrived with the mailbag. I was always eager to open the mail bag. I sorted out the letters for the people but as sometimes happens, there was just bills, books and bulletins for us. I really needed to write more letters, but when?

A woman worried that her baby was overdue came to see me. I examined her and reassured her that she probably had two or three more weeks to go. It was now 2:30 p.m. Where does the time go? I decided to prepare the material for my children's class that evening. In between times, I prepared dinner and filled the oil lamps. I also set some traps as I had seen a small rat in the house the previous evening. I baited it with a piece of uncooked sweet potato.

At 6 p.m. Reg went to his Bible class in Orouba and I went to Onodoro. I often felt like the pied piper as I led a long line of children through the bush on the narrow track between Orouba and Onodoro. I led the way with a pressure lamp. We would sing all the way. About 50 children attended the class. The children of more distant villages only came to the Sunday school class.

I got home before Reg and found a fat rat in one of the traps. This one had obviously made a few trips to our store room and found something there to eat. I went to check on the store room and almost stepped on a large centipede. I was really afraid of centipedes and it got away before I had time to kill it. We have found that if one steps on a centipede

it folds up and sometimes manages to crawl up one's leg. It was now 8:30 p.m. but the day was not finished and anything could happen between now and bedtime. Our days were very full but with Jim and Bessie's help, things were much easier.

Chapter 12

Reg and I decided to take Jim and Bessie on their first patrol in the Waria Valley. We flew from Kira to Garaina to give Jim and Bessie a chance to see the tea plantation at ground level and the small settlement at Garaina. There was a Post Office and two small stores which sold the bare necessities (soap, soap powder, matches, razor blades, tea, sugar, hard biscuits, tinned mackerel, rice and kerosine and occasionally a knife, axe or tee shirt).

A patrol officer at the airstrip when we landed kindly offered to give us a lift. He drove us to an empty house, previously occupied by a Bible translator, and told us we were welcome to stay there. We were just commenting on our good fortune when a man arrived and told us that we would have to pay to stay there for one night. We thanked him but had to decline. Since we planned to pay our carriers in advance so that they could buy things in the stores, we did not have enough cash. Some women had walked to Garaina the previous day to help us carry our bags back through the valley. They heard where we were and came to find us. They made arrangements for us to stay with one of their relatives in a bush house on the outskirts of Garaina. The owner was an agricultural officer, or diddy man as he was known to the local people. He taught people how to care for their cattle and coffee gardens. The Government had introduced a small flock of sheep from New Zealand on a trial basis. This was a great attraction to the local people who had never seen sheep. He also had goats, which seem to be adaptable anywhere in the world.

We spent a happy evening in a very crowded room just talking. Some pastors arrived wanting to know what our intentions were in coming to Garaina. Reg explained why we had come and that we would be leaving in the morning to walk through the valley. He gave them some Bible tracts in Pidgin and they left satisfied. The women prepared the meal of fish, rice, vegetables, tea and biscuits. Our hosts provided the vegetables and we enjoyed a nice dinner together. We had brought our sleeping bags, so as visitors left very late and our hosts and their children prepared for bed, we found a space with our carriers and curled up for the night.

This was a good start for Jim and Bessie because it showed them how we had slept during our journeys through the Waria Valley during the first two years of our work.

Next day we were up at sunrise with the rest of the household preparing for our four hour walk to Watabung. We did not hurry because Reg was having problems with his right hip. He had fallen down the side of a mountain, while out in the forest cutting timber with the saw team. He had been X-rayed in Lae the last time we were there and learned there was osteoarthritis present in his hip.

When we arrived in Watabung I marvelled again at the beauty of this place where two rivers converged. We had to get busy and organise our sleeping arrangements. Four extra people and a baby had joined our party, making 13 adults and a baby to feed. Fortunately, we had taken a good supply of food since we planned to visit the small congregation in Qaro-Motete, in the middle of the valley, and Aroba on the Gariana side of Mt. Ubari. We always gave food to our hosts when we stayed in a village.



A house being roofed with palm thatch. The leaves are boned then folded over a stick and stitched on. It is amazingly rain-proof.

The following day we walked to Qaro-Motete. Jim and Bessie were surprised at the changing countryside and the number of times we had to cross rivers. We would be walking for an hour or so across kunai grass plains and then plunge into cool forests where we would stop and rest awhile. At one point Reg disappeared into the forest. When he appeared he was carrying a bunch of wild flowers. He knelt before me, then I remembered, it was our wedding anniversary. The carriers were all laughing and wondered what Reg was doing. Amidst the laughter we had to explain what a wedding anniversary was. They do not bother about such things and this was just another crazy idea of the white skins. They had become used to many of our strange ways, but this was something new. You can be sure that this incident was told and retold in the days ahead. The husbands and wives never showed their feelings for each other in public. We tried to be the same, but this was something special and I was delighted that Reg had remembered our anniversary at such a time. I was glad Jim caught the incident on camera.

We passed the primary school, not far from Qaro-Motete, and all the children were in the playground. They called and waved so we stopped and talked with them. There were a number of children well known to us from our group of villages in Obasupu. They were happy to see us. Not far from the school we stopped to admire a small herd of cows in a fenced pasture. These belonged to Kobubu, the man we would stay with in Qaro. He had been a policeman and was now retired. He had managed to get a loan from the Government and built himself a successful business with the cows and had a small store. He was a well built man and spoke very rapidly, but with authority. When he talked people listened. In the late 1940's when the Australian Patrol officers were making their first contact with unknown tribes in the Central Highlands they recruited Waria men for their police force because of their reliability. Kobubu was one of those.

We talked well into the night about the problems the small congregation was experiencing there. The Cargo Cult had arrived in the middle Waria. It had been brought in by people belonging to that area. This cult is widespread throughout Papua New Guinea and other countries in south east Asia. It is based on the belief that relatives of the people who have

passed on to the other world are sending all kinds of material things to their living relatives by ship and by plane. They believe that others are meeting these ships and planes and stealing the goods which should be rightfully theirs. They mainly accuse white people of doing this and that is why the whites have so much and they have so little. They go to the tops of the mountains and pray for these things to come and sometimes neglecting their food crops to do so. Several members of this small congregation had already joined this group in the belief that one day wealth would come their way.

The following day was Sunday and Kobubu asked Reg to preach for the congregation that morning. All of our carriers attended and there were local visitors as well. After the meeting we had tea and biscuits with Kobubu and his family and left for Aroba.

It was not the best time of day for walking. The sun was high in the sky, but we were anxious to reach Aroba in time for their evening meeting. We arrived there in torrential rain just as they were commencing their evening worship. The men asked Reg to preach. Afterwards we had a good time of fellowship with people from three surrounding villages. We and the carriers stayed in the house previously occupied by Tom and Rens Bunt. As was the usual practice, when Reg and I stayed overnight in a village many people came to talk. The house was overflowing. The women made a huge pan of tea, while Jim, Bessie, Reg and I escaped to the bedrooms to change into dry clothing. I was feeling very cold and was thankful for the scalding black tea.

Next morning while Reg had a business meeting with the men, Bessie taught a Bible class for the children and I taught the women's class. Following this we held a medical clinic treating mainly minor sores, colds and malaria. After a quick lunch we left to climb over Mt. Ubari and home.

As we came up the track to Orouba we saw a group of small boys decorated with feathers and leaves, singing and dancing on the track. They loved to copy their fathers. As we approached a bend in the track they all stopped and just stood there. We stopped to talk with them. Directly behind us we heard the low beating of a drum, and out of a per-

fectly concealed hiding place a small boy jumped out at us. It was so perfectly timed and arranged that the boys got the reaction which they wanted. I thought that the carriers would never stop laughing. They really enjoyed the joke played on us. Children are the same everywhere, full of life and fun, always finding something new to amuse themselves.

We were surprised to find the number of things which the older boys made for the younger ones. They had a tree which had a small round fruit like little wheels. They were not edible, but the little boys used them to join together with small twigs and make little cars. Some relatives from the town had brought toy cars and bicycles to the village and the enterprising boys had copied them. One boy carved beautiful aeroplanes from balsa wood, complete with propellor and pilot and cargo doors which opened. I bought one or two of those, but they have disappeared during our several moves since leaving the Waria Valley.

Tobey Huff, one of the missionaries working in Goroka, operated a printing press doing a great job of producing various teaching materials for the work around PNG. Elizabeth and Lois Lock were in the forefront in producing material in Pidgin for children's Bible classes. The church in Goroka produced a small magazine called "Nupela Laip" which means New Life. The new magazine encouraged the nationals from all the congregations in Papua New Guinea to submit material. Several of our men and women wrote articles from time to time. It was exciting for them to see their article and name in print.

The Annual Papua New Guinea Lectureship was held in Lae. Since Jim had not attended one of these he and Bessie went with some of the brethren from the Waria Valley. It was a good opportunity to meet people from different tribes from all over Papua New Guinea. The Waria people enjoyed meeting people from other tribes and made many friends in this way. We knew Andy and Catherine and our two little granddaughters would be there. We looked forward to firsthand news of them from Jim and Bessie.

When our travellers returned from Lae we learned they had experienced a very rough flight to Lae due to bad weather. The women were especially frightened. Jim and Bessie were able to reassure them. During the Lectureship Ono and Gobeda taught classes to young men on "How

to Prepare to Preach.” Sogoma gave a report on the Waria work and Qasira and Zaruho, the wife of Garoa, taught ladies classes. Gobeda also preached for the assembled crowd Sunday morning. We were proud of their participation in such an important event. The Waria people continue today to play a part in lectureships and workshops.

One Sunday morning Reg exhorted the Orouba congregation to increase their individual offerings, giving a lengthy dissertation on the whole matter. During the collection of the contribution a brother would usually lead a hymn or chorus. On this particular day one man who had nothing to give started the chorus “Silva na gol mi nogat” (“Silver and gold have I none, but what I have I give to you”) based on Acts 3. It made us smile. Another thing which was quite common in the Waria and other congregations in Papua New Guinea was for a person without the correct amount which they intended to give, to put in a one kina coin and take the change from the plate.

Reg and I were now in our sixth year in the Waria Valley, our eighth in Papua New Guinea. Looking back we wondered where the time had gone. There was always so much to do and no time to think about time. We never knew when it was a national holiday and were often quite surprised if on a Monday morning we were unable to raise the radio operator in Lae. We had no newspapers and listened to the news broadcasts on the radio when we had time. Sometimes we were unaware of important world happenings for weeks or even months after the event.

The foundations of the church building were ready. We could not afford to freight much cement out to the Waria. The cost would rise from six Kina for one bag in Lae, to 32 kina (\$ 40 U.S. or £18.61) in Orouba. Reg decided to economise by sinking metal supports in cement, to which each of the main supports would bolted. This caused extra work but proved to be an excellent idea. The men then had to erect scaffolding using strong wood from the forest. The men of the Orouba church had undertaken all of the felling, sawing and carrying of timber from the local forests. Truly a heavy labour. They had cut 12, 6 x 6 inch hardwood columns to give the main support to the roof. These columns required eight men just to lift one of them. They then slid them down the mountain with guiding ropes. It took 12 to 16 men to carry them through the

bush. This type of hardwood sinks in water. The columns were certainly a challenge to the wood eating insects, but they were dipped in the tank like the other timbers.

The women also did their share of the work, carrying smaller diameter timbers from the forests and stones and sand from the river for the cement. Bessie and I cooked for all of them.

In the Waria Valley we had rain throughout the year. It usually rained at night and during the day it was fine and sunny with temperatures in the 80's. However, in June, July and August we had our rainy season. We could have torrential rain at anytime of the day. Also during this time our days were much cooler and our nights cold. Many people, especially the small children, suffered from colds and coughs.

Our supporting congregation in the U.S.A. decided it was time we had a break. It had been four years since our last furlough and we were in need of a rest. The elders invited us to a Homecoming for all of their missionaries. We had much to do before leaving Papua New Guinea in September.

The preaching and teaching of our brethren was bearing fruit. People



This is Sumagau making the roofing for a house with palm leaves. It was Sumagau who invited Reg and I to come to his village of Orouba to teach the scriptures.

were overcoming their fears and being immersed into Christ. The church was growing both spiritually and numerically.

We had a full programme of teaching and preaching going. Jim was helping the men with singing and some were starting to sing in harmony. Bessie was helping the teachers of children's classes with the preparation of visual aids. Several men from Aroba and Orouba studied with Reg in a special class for preachers and teachers every Friday evening. The Aroba men stayed the night in Orouba and Repanaga villages. Once each month the ladies class from Aroba would come to the ladies class in Orouba on Thursday morning, staying for lunch. The following month the Orouba ladies would cross the mountain to Aroba. It helped to cement relationships.

On one such occasion, when the Orouba women went to Aroba, the ladies of Aroba had prepared an excellent meal of all kinds of fruit and vegetables. In addition, they had the little sucker fish found in the local rivers, speared on bamboo and cooked over a fire. What surprised me was that they also had fat grubs which looked like caterpillars cooked in the same way. They urged me to try the fat grubs, which they claimed were very juicy and sweet. However, although I ate the little bitter fish I could not bring myself to eat the grubs. Perhaps if I ever get lost in the jungle and am hungry enough I may be glad to eat such things as barbecued fat grubs.

I had brought a lot of medical supplies with me. After we had eaten I held a clinic that was well attended. I worked non-stop for two and a half hours with the help of Sapore and Ruma. We treated ulcers on legs, children with infected eyes and ears, bad colds, malaria, etc. I gave several penicillin injections and asked several people to attend the clinic in Repanaga. The children enjoyed the P.K. chewing gum which they received as a reward for being good.

When we were ready to leave the people gave us gifts of vegetables and fruit. I was very tired before I reached the mountain top on the return journey. I felt as if I had rocks tied to my feet. However, after a short rest and a long drink of coconut milk, I felt refreshed and ready to make the descent on the other side. It had rained heavily the previous night and the

track was much worse going down. My knees ached and I was glad to reach the bottom of the mountain. I was looking forward to getting home to a hot shower. It had been a good day and I was greatly encouraged by the spiritual growth of some of the women.

Jim and Bessie were expecting an addition to their family, but Bessie was not feeling well. They decided to go to Lae for Bessie to be seen by a doctor. Bessie was advised to remain in Lae for some weeks. We missed them but wanted the best for Bessie.

We were saddened by the death of our elderly brother Sumugau. He died peacefully in his sleep after a short illness. Sumugau was the headman of Orouba village. It was he who invited Reg and I to come and live with the people in Orouba. He gave us land and supervised the building of a house for us in his village. He defended us against opposition and was our first convert. He was a great example to so many people. He never missed a meeting of the church. He and Tuhara had five sons, all became members of the church. Three of those sons were able preachers when Sumugau died. Sumugau knew that he was dying and spoke to his sons about their spiritual welfare and future responsibilities. Gobeda said "Papa you can't go yet, you must wait and see the new Church building." Sumugau said, "I cut the first post and that is enough for me." Sumugau was a well known man in the Waria Valley and beyond and many people attended his funeral.

Reg and I missed Sumugau very much. He had been a good friend to us and had great wisdom. We would miss him sitting by our fire telling stories of a bygone era. He never spoke or understood Pidgin but was very eloquent in his own tribal language of Guhu Samane. We felt sorry for Tuhara who had been Sumugau's constant companion and friend. We never ceased to wonder at the easy acceptance of death amongst the people of the Waria tribe. There was not the usual weeping and wailing which you see in most third world countries, but a calm serene acceptance of the will of Ohonga Mai (God Papa). It was wonderful to witness this, even though we as Christians realise that death is not the end for those who have given their lives to Christ, but a new beginning.

We had a visit from a politician from the Oro Province. Mr. Bonga,

the Transport Minister, talked to the people about ways in which the Government would be able to help them. One suggestion which Reg was happy about was that they planned to supply funds to maintain the airstrip. This would remove that "headache" from him. The other was a proposed road to Garaina. This would not help the people very much since there was not a road going from Garaina out of the Valley. The people would still be locked in. Reg suggested a road to Morobe on the coast. Since Morobe is in the Morobe Province, the Oro Provincial Government would not become involved in that. However, that is still the best option for the Waria people. Everywhere is so mountainous that building roads is far too expensive to be considered.

Garoa, our evangelist, was invited to preach a series of gospel meetings for the congregation in Goroka. He was pleased to have this opportunity, for he felt that "A prophet is without honour in his own tribe." A few days before Garoa left Orouba, an unexpected parcel of clothing arrived from Australia. In it was everything which Garoa needed, trousers, shirts, underwear, socks and even a warm pullover for the cold nights of Goroka. This was further evidence to us, and Garoa, of God's providential care. The parcel was from the church at City Beach, Perth, who not only sent medical supplies every month, but also supported our working fund monthly. The ladies class also sent clothing from time to time. This parcel could not have arrived at a better time.

I had been very busy with medical work at this time due to a type of influenza virus which especially affected the older people. It meant a lot of walking for me to different villages to visit the sick and minister to their needs. Most elderly people in the Waria Valley are very thin and look as if they need some additional protein to their diet. I have always been surprised at their resilience to recover from respiratory infections. Some reach a ripe old age. It is very difficult to guess their ages and few have any idea of the year they were born. We worked out approximate ages by asking people if they were children, youths, or married men when the Japanese invaded Papua New Guinea in 1942. The parents nowadays take a note of their children's birth dates. Until there is a legal system of recorded births, deaths and marriages, people will continue to guess their ages. Of course, in the towns and cities throughout Papua New Guinea

there are many educated people from different tribes who record these things as they are important to them too.

Reg was delighted to have a promise of some financial help from our supporting congregation for the building. Also about this time, we received a substantial cheque from the City Beach Church of Christ in Perth, West Australia for our church building. This meant that Reg could go ahead and buy some very necessary supplies to enable real progress.

We had a visit from two Canadian young men, Michael Lock and Andy Fleming. Both were studying at Abilene Christian University in Texas. They had attempted to walk from Wau to Garaina over a route only used by men bringing cattle into the Waria Valley from Wau. The Orouba men told us that this was a very hard walk even for them. They would not use that route unless they were forced to. When they arrived at our house they were both exhausted. Michael's knees were really hurting and I was concerned for him. They told us that in this remote mountainous region they had not seen man or animal for several days after leaving Wau. They had no idea of how far they were from Garaina. Michael was having increasing pain in his knees and was beginning to think that he could not go on, when they saw a man coming from his garden. They called out to him. He was able to tell them they were quite near to a new isolated airstrip called Sim. They waited there and eventually were able to get a plane to Garaina. Sim airstrip is built on a small rocky ridge in the middle of nowhere, but it serves a group of scattered villages in that area. Reg and I had landed there on two occasions. It was a scary landing and take off.

Andy and Michael decided to walk up the Waria Valley to Qaro-Motete, where they would spend the night with Kubobo's family. From there they walked to Aroba and on to Orouba. Michael stayed for one week. Most of the time he was forced to rest because of the state of his knees. I was able to apply an anti-inflammatory gel and crepe bandages to his knees, giving some relief. He walked to Kira with the aid of a walking stick and flew to Lae. Andy worked on the church building with the men and also overhauled a small petrol generator. He stayed for four weeks. The people loved him. Characteristically, he decided to walk to Kuworo's village on the way to the coast. The people there built him a

raft and he rafted down the Waria river to Morobe on the coast. From there he traveled on a coastal steamer to Lae. We appreciated his adventurous spirit and hoped that he would return to Papua New Guinea one day as a missionary.

Chapter 13

It seemed that at a time when we were making real headway, and our brethren were growing spiritually, Satan would show us the power which he can exert over the minds of men and women. It was not our intention to Westernise the people of the Waria tribe. They had many good customs which we in the Western culture would do well to copy. But they were governed by a fear of the unknown. They believe that there are spirits in the trees, rocks, rivers and mountains. We have been told stories which were passed down from their ancestors, resembling stories we read as children, based on Greek mythology. Our purpose was to teach them the gospel of Christ, and to help them to trust Him and to place their lives in His hands. Many had done this, but we knew that it would take time for them to shed their long-held beliefs in spirits and the power of sorcery.

Just as we have clashes in personalities in our own culture, the same thing happens in other cultures, Papua New Guinea is no different. It was more difficult for Reg to settle disputes between men in the congregations in Aroba and Qaro-Motete, as we were not with them all of the time as we were in Orouba. However, he did his best by walking to these villages and spending the night. He always used an interpreter to translate from Guhu Samane, the tribal language of the Waria people to Melanesian Pidgin. This way he could be sure of understanding the whole problem. As is usual in our own culture, many of the things which divided people were not of major importance. When the matter was discussed in a calm atmosphere, Reg and the men were usually able to resolve it.

One morning very early, a young woman was brought to me on a stretcher. The men had left her with her mother under a clump of bamboo just above our house. I hurried out to see what the problem was. She had delivered premature twins right there under the bamboo. Both babies were alive at birth but died immediately afterwards. They were both tiny and looked as if they were at least three months premature. I had to attend to the mother quickly as she was haemorrhaging. I managed to expel the placenta and control the bleeding and had the men carry her into our house. I felt sorry for the young couple as this was her first pregnancy. While I attended to the young mother, Reg and Garoa made a small cof-

fin for the babies. I always kept a supply of sheets for such occasions. The babies were buried in the graveyard outside their own village of Sarasara in the afternoon.

Some men arrived from the airstrip with the roofing iron for the church building. As they released the folded sheets from their bonds one sheet sprang open and the sharp corner caught Saoba on his thigh, making a deep cut. It was fortunate that it happened outside the house, as he was bleeding profusely. I got him inside and cleaned the wound thoroughly while waiting for my instruments to sterilize. It was a clean cut and I soon had it sutured. It healed well in a week and I was able to remove the sutures.

Bessie was doing well and her baby was due in three weeks. I kept urging her to go to Lae where she was booked into the hospital. She and Jim decided to wait four days and leave on Tuesday. On Saturday they had a "cookout" with the youth group and both were very busy. On Sunday, about 3 a.m. I was wakened by Jim calling through our bedroom window (wire net) that Bessie's labour pains had started. It was raining hard, and I prayed for it to stop so that we could get a plane in from Lae when it was light. However, although we had a plane standing by in Lae all day, the rain continued relentlessly. The mountains were engulfed in clouds and there was no way a plane could land in such bad weather. By afternoon a crowd had gathered outside of Jim and Bessie's house waiting for news. At about 3:30 p.m. Fiona Ruth was born. Jim was relieved and so was I that everything had gone so well. Bessie was an excellent patient. The people outside clapped and cheered. It was like a royal birth. This was a very special baby and she was given the tribal name of Tuhara by the people. This was also an honour for Tuhara, who was a very special lady. The people had never heard of a white woman giving birth to a baby in a bush house. This elevated Bessie in their eyes. Next day Jim and Bessie left for Lae so that she could have the best post-natal care.

In the early hours of Monday morning I was called out to a woman in the village of Gimine. She had delivered a baby but the placenta was retained. I sent her into hospital on the same plane. Also I had examined a woman two days previously and had found that her baby was presenting breech. As this woman's baby was due soon, I sent her into Lae too.

It was a “Maternity plane” which left the airstrip that Monday morning. I felt sorry for the pilot. I went to the airstrip with them all in case I was needed, but they arrived in Lae without mishap.

Heavy frequent rain had disrupted air services to Kira airstrip. The weather conditions over the past two months has also caused a temporary food shortage. The taro crop was late and there was a shortage of sweet potato. When this happens the people resort to their traditional substitute, sago. The people go into the bush and cut down sago palms. Many hours of hard work are required to extract the sago, which has to be washed thoroughly. They do this with the ingenious method of halving bamboo stems and erecting them on a series of Y shaped branches stuck in the ground. They then make a series of channels to wash the sago. It is then boiled and eaten. It is very filling but has little flavour.

This situation arose most years we were there, either due to torrential rain or very hot sun affecting the food gardens. We always tried to help by ordering bags of rice from Lae, but it was like a drop in the bucket.

It was time for Reg and me to leave the Waria Valley to go to Lae where we would begin our journey to America. We were both very tired and ready for our second furlough in eight years. This time we would be gone only three months, planning to return to Papua New Guinea in mid-December. We had completed all the arrangements for the overall work while we were gone. This would be left in the capable hands of Jim and Bessie.

We spent a few days in Hawaii en route to Little Rock. We stayed in the Pagoda Hotel on a self catering basis, which was very nice. When we did eat in the hotel dining room, it was quite an experience. They had channels of water full of beautiful large tropical fish and plants running through the floor.

Before going to Little Rock we stopped off in Abilene, Texas, where we attended our first Papua New Guinea Missionary Forum, hosted by the Stamford Church of Christ. This annual forum is held in different locations in the States to inform churches about the mission field in Papua New Guinea, to bring past and present missionaries together and to encourage new recruits. We stayed in the home of a cotton farmer, his



Distribution of the New Testament and Psalms in Guhu Samane,
the language of the Waria Tribe.

wife and three little boys. It rained very hard one night and the following morning there was a large pool of water in the yard. I made paper boats and had fun sailing these on the new pond with the three boys.

We arrived in Little Rock to experience once again the wonderful hospitality of the brethren of Pleasant Valley Church of Christ. We met several other missionaries who were also supported by this mission-minded congregation. We spent one month in Little Rock and several weeks in different locations throughout the States. We spent one week in Miami with Rex and Brenda Morgan and their family who were also home on furlough from Papua New Guinea. We spent one day on two small boats in the everglades viewing the wild life there, including the many alligators lying on the banks. Reg was in the first boat with Rex. I followed with Charlie St. John, the preacher from the congregation where Rex and Brenda were worshipping. Fortunately for me, Reg was able to knock off the many big spiders from the overhanging bushes before I passed under them. Even though we lived in the bush where spiders were common, I still didn't fancy one of these Miami spiders falling down my neck. In spite of this, it was an interesting visit.

We spent one week with our son-in-law's Uncle Bill and Aunt Charlcie in Pecos, Texas. During that time Charlcie made me a lovely suit, blouse and cape. I was delighted, but concerned that Charlcie was getting up very early every morning to sew. She was a wonderful lady.

Arriving back in Papua New Guinea, we spent a few days with Andy and Catherine in the Highlands. It was nice to see our two little granddaughters, Sara and Rachel again. We spent a happy few days with our family. The elders of Pleasant Valley decided that we needed a car to use in Lae instead of always having to borrow a vehicle when we came in from the bush to buy stores. We were delighted about this and bought a four-wheel drive air-conditioned Subaru when we returned. It was the first time to make the journey to Goroka and the Highlands in our own car, an air-conditioned one at that!

Jim and Bessie did not have a car either, so they were able to share ours. The car helped them to get around more easily with baby Fiona when they went to Lae. We seldom went out of the Waria Valley at the same time, so this worked well.

Gobeda's wife had been ill off and on for some months. Reg and I decided to bring them both to Lae while we were there. This way I could go with Gorapa to the hospital and find out what her problem was. She was found to have a very enlarged spleen, even for PNG where enlarged spleens are common due to malaria. She was also very anaemic and the doctor decided to keep her for two weeks. Gorapa was amazed at everything she saw for she had never been outside the Waria Valley before. Gobeda told us that she was terrified in the plane and held on to him. She was afraid of the traffic and the crowds of people. She was really surprised to see the variety of goods in the shops in Lae. Gorapa tasted ice cream and couldn't understand what it was. There are hundreds of people in the Waria Valley like her, unsettled when they are confronted with the affluence of the towns. They become like a people torn between two worlds.

We left Gobeda and Gorapa in Lae and returned to the Waria Valley. We were met at Kira airstrip by a large crowd of people, some to carry our cargo and some to welcome us home. As we came up the track

towards our house we heard Tama barking a welcome, and saw Jim, Bessie and Fiona waiting outside the gate. It was nice to be home. As we hugged Jim and Bessie, Tama was going frantic, running round in circles, trying to attract our attention. He surely was glad to see us home.

We were sorry to hear that there had been some trouble in our area. Two policeman had come from Garaina to take 13 young men into custody. A young married woman from Onodoro had left her young husband in Sarasara and returned home. She had been trying to entice a young man who was interested in one of our house girls. The two family lines were at loggerheads, and four of our Christian young men went to the aid of the young husband. There had been a fight. All of the young men who were involved were to be jailed for a month. Nobody was hurt, but it was to teach them a lesson.

In spite of all of the problems, the church continued to grow numerically and spiritually. We continually thanked God for His mercy and grace.

We realised that Garoa had carried a heavy load in our absence and Reg suggested that he and his wife, Zaruho, should get away from Orouba for a rest. Garoa decided to go to Popondetta. We had five contacts from the World Bible School in that area and Garoa wanted to try and contact them. There were several Christians from other districts in Popondetta, but as yet they were not meeting together. Garoa had plans to get them together and was delighted to have the chance to return to Popondetta for a month.

A large part of our roof was leaking and needed to be replaced, our wood stove needed an overhaul and some new parts made. The grass cutter had to be repaired and our diesel generator overhauled. The posts holding our washing lines were being eaten by termites and had to be replaced. It was a good thing that we were not away too often, as jobs multiplied in our absence. The roof suffered because of not having our central fire on the floor of the living room lit while we were away. The insects had an easy time eating the thatch without having the problem of smoke. The stove was getting old and had started to rust while not in use.

One day a little boy was brought to me having severed half of his

right thumb with a sharp knife. He had been cutting the top of a coconut. His older sister had tied a piece of bush rope around his thumb to try and stop the bleeding. I cleaned up the wound but was alarmed at the splintered bone. I padded and bound up the wound and kept him for a while to check on bleeding. I then went to see the boy's parents and arranged for him to go to the hospital in Lae the following day. There was never a dull moment in our work in the Waria Valley, but we both enjoyed the challenge. I always prayed for God's help in my medical work, for there were many times I was confronted with injuries which normally would be dealt with in a casualty department of a hospital. My equipment was basic and I only used local anaesthetic.

There were several teenagers who had returned from high schools in the towns where they had been unable to find work. All of them spoke English, as did some of our primary school children. Reg, Jim, Bessie and I had a coordination meeting once each week to discuss the work. At one of these meetings we decided to have a service in English on the second Sunday evening of every month on a trial basis, to encourage the young people. The Pleasant Valley congre-



Saoba and Inuma on their wedding day. Saoba had become a very talented preacher.

gation in Little Rock sent us English hymn books. These were to prove very popular with many people. Jim was an excellent song leader and proved to be a very good music teacher. The people love to sing and the young people were soon singing lots of new songs with gusto.

I taught a young teenage boys class on Sunday morning. All our classes were at 8:30 a.m. and our worship service was at 10:00 a.m. A large empty oxygen cylinder hanging from a wooden support was used as a bell. It was very efficient and, when struck with a metal rod, could be heard for miles around. I encouraged the boys to take part in reading from the Pidgin New Testament. I was surprised to find that some of the more intelligent boys could not read. They were ashamed of this. They had dropped out of school but were willing to learn. I brought this up at one of our coordination meetings. It was decided that we would start a literacy class for any boy who wanted to learn to read and write. Bessie volunteered to do this class as she had previous experience in teaching literacy in Lae. The boys came every morning from 8:00 to 9:00. Ten boys attended the class. They were so keen that they were at our house every morning at 7:30. Others wanted to come so Qasira, the wife of our health worker, volunteered to help. She graduated from high school in Lae and is very intelligent. This good work bore fruits in the years ahead as some of these boys became workers in the church.

Our radio transmitter had been giving us trouble and Reg was unable to locate the cause. One of the men announced that the trouble was caused by a man from a village some distance from Orouba, who at that time was dying in hospital. He said "you wait and see, when he is dead and his body is brought back here and buried, the radio will work again." Strangely enough, I spent a lot of time trying to contact the hospital on behalf of relatives about this man. He died, and I spent considerable time arranging for his body to be brought back to Kira. Eventually all the arrangements were completed and the body was brought back and buried in his village. The man who claimed this man was responsible for messing up our radio waited anxiously for the results. The radio continued to give trouble. Eventually Reg solved the problem by resoldering some of the wires.

We attended the annual Missionary Workshop in Mount Hagen in the

Western Highlands. The theme was "The Spiritual Life of the Missionary." There were 36 missionary men and women with 29 children in attendance. The workshops were always well organised and it was good to have the chance to exchange information. During the workshop the vital need for believing prayer was emphasized. We all benefited from the lessons and the discussion groups which followed. We returned to our different areas of work encouraged by being together for the four-day workshop.

Jim and Bessie McGeachy were going on leave with their bush-born baby. Fiona was a beautiful child, both happy and healthy. They were going to visit Jim's mother in Perth, Western Australia and on to British Columbia, Canada, where Bessie's family lived. We would miss them but they needed to go on furlough.

Qasira and Ruma taught the literacy class which was proving to be a great success. The boys benefitted from the individual attention they were receiving.

Andy and Catherine with their two small daughters had also gone on leave for six months to America. When they returned home they brought us our third granddaughter, Celina, who was born in Texas. They were all lovely, happy and healthy children and we thanked God for them.

The rain did not deter the women from going to their gardens or the men to work felling trees. When Reg and I were last in Lae I found a factory where plastic sheeting was made and sold to construction companies in large rolls. I talked to the manager and explained that I did not want to buy a large roll, but enough to cut up for the people to cover their heads and shoulders when they returned from their gardens in heavy rain. The manager was very understanding and sold me the end of a roll, very cheaply. It was far more than I had expected. I was delighted. I very often received help of this kind from different managers of stores. I put it down to my white hair. Reg used to say that I "had a face that would get a scone at any door." I truly believe that it was the Lord's intervention.

During wet weather, when the saw team returned, tired and wet, they would come into our house and sit around a blazing fire and drink hot tea.

On wet days I would fill the oven with sweet potato. They would sit and enjoy these straight from the oven. During these times they would relate the day's happenings to Reg.

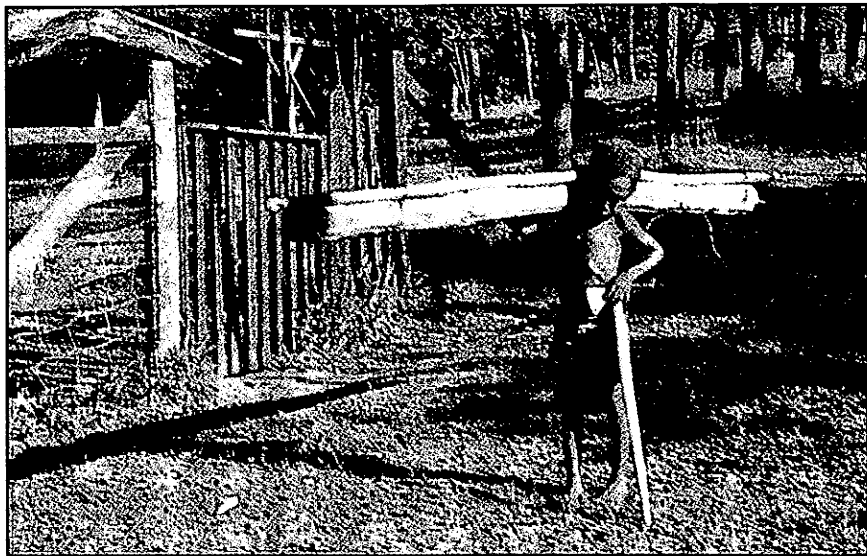
One day when they returned they told us that they had cut down a different species of tree. Reg examined the foliage and believed that it was one of the eucalyptus varieties, which would produce a lot of good lumber. The men had cut six 13 foot long logs from it. The largest had a circumference of 44 inches. While felling the tree, a part of the core fell out which was found to have the marks of an ancient stone axe clearly imprinted on it. The men said their ancestors must have started to cut the tree when it was ten inches in diameter, but for some reason decided to leave it. They were quite excited about the find. I wonder how often men from the stone age and men from the 20th century have cut the same tree. The men cut some very large trees. When they had skinned the logs, they slid them down the mountain to where they would be cut into the required widths of timber, often getting 60 pieces of lumber from one log. One length of green timber of 4 x 2 inches weighed about 50 pounds. The timber had to be carried long distances back to the storing shed. This was mainly done by the women.

With the carpentry and building work going well, the men were often held up waiting for timber. It was a slow process waiting for the timber to be dipped and dried and made ready for use. Also, sometimes the chain saws needed spare parts from Lae. It was just as well that the work on the building had to stop sometimes, giving the men time to help their wives in the gardens or repair their own houses. It also allowed Reg to do other necessary church work, and helped us accumulate funds to pay our workers. We never did have enough funds to cover all the needs. I suppose this is a common complaint of all missionaries.

We had a wedding, where Saoba and Inuma were married in the church building. Inuma was one of my house girls and Saoba was one of our promising young preachers. It is the custom when a girl marries for her to leave her home village and go to live in the village of her husband. After Saoba and Inuma were married her parents would not let her go to her husband's village. However, when her younger sister married a man closer to home, they relented and let Inuma go with Saoba.

Woody Square and Judy Brown, students from Harding University in Arkansas, spent one week with us in Orouba. The people were really excited about Woody because he was black. It was the first time that they had seen a black man from another country. Woody and Judy enjoyed their visit amongst the Waria people and promised to return one day in the future. Which they did later as missionaries in Lae.

A second copy of Poro Tonga Usaqa ma Samaho (The New Testament in Guhu Samane with Psalms) had been published. We had been obliged to commit ourselves to buying five hundred copies of the New Testament with Psalms, in order to ensure that the second edition would be printed. The first copy was produced for two kina and we hoped that these would not prove to be any more expensive. Again the City Beach Church of Christ in Perth, Western Australia, sent \$1,000 (783.60 kina) to purchase them. This dedicated congregation had strongly supported us from the beginning of our work. We thanked God often for their generosity. We were delighted to receive \$1000 U.S. from brother and sister L.T. Moss of Pleasant Valley Church of Christ in Little Rock.



Jacob bringing home the firewood.

I need to tell you a little about Tee and Betty Moss. Tee was an elder at Pleasant Valley. When we were last on furlough they told us they were going on holiday for two weeks and asked if we would like to stay in their house while they were gone. We had been staying with the preacher, Nick Hamilton, his wife, Kathy, and their small daughter, Rachel. They told us to go ahead, as it would help Tee and Betty to have someone stay in their home. I was not prepared for the beautiful home perched on a hill with lovely white columns on the front porch. I said to Betty, "From a bush house to a mansion. I don't know if I can cope." They both made Reg and me feel so welcome. They were very humble people, using their means to further the gospel in other countries. It was very nice staying in their home. Every day different members of the church would come and pick us up for lunch and in the evening for dinner. I only had to prepare breakfast and felt thoroughly spoiled. Betty is now a widow and lives in a smaller, but lovely house, where I stayed with her for a week in 1995.

I had to teach the boy's literacy class for a short spell. One morning as I went to ring the bell, I slipped on the wet bridge spanning one of our ditches, which carried the water which dripped off the roof in heavy rain. I fell into the ditch fracturing my left wrist. I went into the house feeling very sorry for myself, supporting my wrist with my right hand. Reg took one look at me and sat me down. Reg was always very cool headed in emergencies. He put my arm in a sling while he made a couple of splints and padded them with cotton wool. He then applied a crepe bandage and put the sling back on, made a cup of tea and gave me some pain killers. By this time the boys and some of the men had arrived. It was strange for them to see me as the patient and Reg the nurse. Reg contacted the airlines to see if a plane would be in the area that day. There was none so he arranged for me to be picked up at Kira the following morning. I went into Lae and had my wrist X-rayed and put in plaster. I returned to Kira two days later.

Chapter 14

When I returned six weeks later to have my plaster removed, Reg went with me. He was so glad he did, for a few days later I was very ill with amoebic dysentery. I was in bed for eight days and was very weak. At one point I had the strangest sensation of being in a very big whirlpool, gradually being sucked into it, while resisting with all my strength. Fortunately, we were living in a missionary motel and had been given a cottage in the garden so that we had complete privacy. Reg did a good job of caring for me.

Shortly after we returned to Orouba, I was called to the village of Repenaga to a young woman in labour with her first baby. The baby boy had been born when I arrived, but the young woman was very frightened. I have explained in an earlier chapter the arrangements the Waria people make for a woman before she goes into labour. The baby was lying with his mother on a bed of leaves on the earth floor. He was very pale and cold. I cut and tied the cord and wrapped him in a warm blanket, hastening to assure the mother. As I proceeded to clear the baby's mouth and throat of mucus, an old lady was trying very hard to spoon water into his mouth. I asked her to stop. I carried on attending to the baby until I had him crying lustily. Another younger woman was busy expressing milk from her breasts. As soon as the baby cried she started spooning the milk into the baby's mouth. I gave her the baby while I attended to the mother. What more could I say, it is their custom. A short time later the baby was immersed in cool water.

The first time I saw these things happening I cried out in protest and quickly organised a class to teach the women hygiene and how to use plastic and old sheets on top of the leaves. I kept a stock in hand for them to use. I also impressed upon them that a small newborn baby loses heat very quickly and the need to cover the baby as soon as it is born. However, though all agreed with me, it was very hard to change the ways of the older women and they were in charge at the birth of a baby. Usually this was the mother and grandmother of the girl in labour. I was always so glad that we lost very few babies. The mortality rate for babies

was high when I first went to the Waria Valley, and to a lesser degree for the mothers. If the mother had a postpartum haemorrhage usually both died. I suspect this was due to ignorance in trying to expel the placenta before it had separated from the uterine wall. Fortunately the younger women started to listen to my teaching on this subject. At first members of the church would send for me if they or their families experienced problems during child birth. When news spread that I was willing to go to any village to any woman who was in trouble at any time, people from distant villages would send for me. Needless to say, this usually happened at night or the early hours of the morning.

I appreciate very much that I have been permitted to go into so many homes to attend to the people. They have so little of the things we in the west take for granted and yet they are happy. Our aim was not to change the customs of the people but to teach them the love of God through His Son Jesus Christ, and to try to help to raise their standard of living.

There were now several Christian men and women living in Abero where the Kira airstrip was located. To save the five mile walk to Orouba every Sunday, they decided to start meeting at Abero. Some of the Orouba men agreed to help them by working a roster where they would take it in turn to preach there. We now had Christians meeting in six different locations, Orouba, Aroba, Qaro-Motete, Girie, Oipo and Abero. Oipo was a long way off and the men went on patrol there from time to time. The church planned to send a man and wife team to stay there for a longer period. The men would never go anywhere to preach unless they were invited. This was good and worked very well throughout the years.

We were sorry to hear of the death of Millie Herndon in the U.S.A. Bob and Millie had worked with the missionary team in Lae and Port Moresby. They spent an enjoyable week with us in the Waria Valley and had visited several villages. The people were saddened to hear of Millie's passing. They had returned to America because of Bob's increasing health problems.

After receiving this bad news we were shocked to learn from Joe Cannon on our radio transceiver that Rex and Brenda's six month old daughter had died suddenly from gastroenteritis. They decided to return

to America with their other three children. They were a hard working couple who would be missed by the Lae missionary team. They are now working with the Spanish speaking people in Miami.

We were able to purchase 100 copies of the "Simple New Testament" for the use of our English speaking teenagers and people like Garoa who had a fair knowledge of English. These proved to be very popular and encouraged the teenagers to attend classes. Those who were able started learning their memory verses in English. The others continued to use Melanesian Pidgin.

Garoa went several Saturday evenings to Abero to show the Jule Miller film strips. These are very colourful and in a place like the Waria Valley, showing pictures on a screen at that time, was a real novelty. Onipa, the man responsible for cutting the grass on Kira Airstrip, was very interested in what he saw and heard. Later he requested to hear more and was eventually baptised into Christ. This was an encouragement for the small group meeting at Abero.

We were happy to welcome back Jim and Bessie McGeachy with Fiona, now twenty months old, and her new brother, Kenneth, who was four months old. The people were really pleased to see the family again, with Fiona being the star attraction with her beautiful blue eyes, blonde hair and winning ways.

I was very busy with the medical work as the medical orderly was away for three weeks. Since he did not work at weekends, I was often busy. I had more emergencies than usual with some bad lacerations and two fractures. This along with the extra clinics which I had started for antenatal patients and babies, kept me on the hop.

Eight men went from the Orouba congregation on a three day patrol to Oipo and Sedema in the Kenoma district. The men were quite capable of organising these patrols. By this time the men who had shown leadership qualities had already taken over the running of the work of the church. Reg still did a lot of teaching, but he took his turn in preaching with the rest of the men. Several men were proving to be very good preachers and teachers. I encouraged the women to support their husbands in their work. Some went on patrol with their husbands and taught

women's and children's classes.

When they returned from their patrol two weeks later, we heard that five women and one man in Oipo, and two women in Girie had obeyed the Gospel. Garoa and Moidare stayed to teach and strengthen the brethren in Oipo. They would visit Girie on the return journey. Garoa referred to Moidare as "his Timothy" as he was helping him to grow in the Lord. Another two men from Orouba were in Oipo at this time. One was visiting a sick relative and another was making a new garden for a man who was blind from cataracts. This involved clearing the bush and burning it (slash & burn) then planting the new vegetable crop.

At this time we were experimenting with the range of our hand held radio transceivers (walkie talkies). Sogoma, who was the church secretary and a very reliable man, went up to Kira airstrip at an arranged time and called Garoa in Oipo. Garoa also had to climb a hill in Oipo to be able to make contact with Sogoma. We discovered one day that Garoa had been crossing a wide river which was in flood, when a boulder was



Men go out to preach to Oipo Sedema and Kenoma District, which is three days walk from Orouba.

lifted by the current and crashed into his right leg making a deep gash. He asked that we send some medical supplies. I sent him some antiseptic solution to clean the wound and butterfly adhesive dressings to close it. I also sent dressings, crepe bandages, and an oral antibiotic for him to take for ten days. Fortunately his leg healed well and he was able to return in two weeks. He still continued to preach and teach as people gathered in the house where he was staying.

The men of Aroba were working in the other direction and making one-day patrols to Sarage and the Biawaria, teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ and getting results.

It was important to us that the church would continue to survive in the Waria Valley after we left. For this reason, Reg encouraged the men to use their talents in whatever area of work which they were most interested and able to do. I encouraged the women in the same way. There was no shortage of talents and there was not the reticence which we often find in the Western culture. The majority of men were vocal and would not hesitate to pray or to talk freely about the gospel. They often visited the sick and prayed for them. The women, too, would pray in a most natural way. Some women became very good teachers of classes for women and children.

When the men went to preach in six different locations on Sunday evenings they went in pairs, an older experienced man with a younger man. On Sunday evening they always preached in their own language of Guhu Samane. Of course it was easier for the young men to start preaching in their mother tongue. However, on Sunday morning Reg encouraged the men to preach in Melanesian Pidgin with an interpreter translating the message to Guhu Samane, the tribal language. Reg did this to familiarise the men in preaching in Pidgin. When they went to towns or to another tribe they would have to preach in Pidgin to be understood. One or two eventually preached in English as well. Just beyond the bounds of the Waria Valley there were other tribal languages and the men eventually went to those tribes. Also, with the introduction of the Papua New Guinea Annual Lectureship (or Kibung as it was called), many tribes were represented and all the teaching was done in Pidgin.

The volume of work was so great at this time that Reg and I had remained in the "bush" for five months. Our supplies were running low and we were feeling in need of a break. Reg was scheduled to speak at the National Preacher's Workshop in Lae. Then we would both attend the Annual Missionary Workshop which was to be held in the Sports Training Institute in Goroka the following week.

Garoa and Deberi traveled with us to Lae to attend the Preacher's Workshop. It was always an encouraging time for the men to attend these workshops since they were so isolated from most of the other congregations. It gave them the opportunity to meet preachers from other tribes and language groups and to discuss together common goals, failures, successes and common problem areas. The whole workshop was based on the letter of Paul to Titus.

While Reg was attending the workshop, I was busy buying supplies, plus the many shopping requests from the people living in the villages around us. I was always happy to do this for the people as most of the



Gemu washing our clothes in the River Ai.

things which they bought improved their standard of living. Such things as cooking pots, cutlery, enamel utensils, blankets, pillows, sleeping mats and clothing. I kept a good supply of washing soap and razor blades on hand at all times. The men working on the chain saw and other building work saved some of their pay each week. I was the "paymaster" so I started a banking system for the people to buy goods from Lae. The women who carried the cargo from the airstrip and the girls who worked in our house washing clothes and carrying water, etc., all used our bank. Of course there were no charges and no interest, but it worked very well. It surprised the people how their money mounted up over a period of three months or more. I loved doing this and really enjoyed buying for the people. One lady gave me forty kina, (now equivalent to 40 U.S. dollars or 20 pounds Sterling) and asked me to buy whatever I thought she needed. I talked with her and told her what was available in the stores and together we made a list.

Our journey to Goroka was uneventful, except for unexpectedly running into dense cloud while traveling over the Kassam pass from the Markham valley into the Eastern Highlands. This road climbs for 5,000 feet, with hairpin bends all the way, and a strong chance that one will meet a big truck coming down the hill on the wrong side of the road. Needless to say, we honked the horn at every bend, and arrived in one piece at Goroka. Jim, Bessie and their children arrived later with some of the Lae team.

This was our ninth Missionary Workshop. Each missionary team took a turn in organising this annual event. Our guest speaker was Larry McKenzie from Memphis, Tennessee. Larry did a fine job teaching and encouraging all of us in the need for believing in the power of prayer in our work and personal lives. Larry especially emphasised Matthew 9:37-38 and Mark 11:23-24. Reg spoke on "growing successful rural congregations" while other men spoke on other aspects of missionary work. The ladies also had their own special sessions in the afternoons.

When we returned to the Waria we were sorry to hear from Sam Kirkpatrick in Lae that David Lock and his family had returned to Canada. David had not been well for some weeks and the doctors in Lae had been unable to find the cause. David's doctor in Canada referred him

to a hospital for tests. It was found that he was bleeding from his bowel, caused by a parasitic infection. He was advised not to return to Papua New Guinea. Another casualty was Tom Bunt, missionary in Wau, who was diagnosed as having suffered a mild stroke. Tom and Rens decided to return to Australia where he could have a full medical check up.

We had a visit from a black American, Willie Franklin. The people were captivated by him. Willie was an American football star, broad built, very tall and always smiling. He stayed with us for one week and visited all the local villages. He loved the Waria Valley and promised to return and work with us the following year. He did return to Papua New Guinea the following year with his wife and located in Lae. Willie had recently married Pam and felt that it would be too much of a culture shock to take her into a bush situation. This, of course, was true and they did a good work in the city of Lae with the English speaking population.

Tuhe Kassau, a Waria man employed as a foreman carpenter in Lae, came home on leave. As promised, he worked on the church building



Young women returning from their gardens with vegetables.

with Reg and Jim. It was so nice for Reg to have an experienced carpenter for three weeks. The work on the building was pushed ahead.

Manike, the medical orderly, had gone to Lae with a patient and I did not expect a speedy return. He had to wait for the authorities to pay for his return fare. I was kept very busy while he was gone.

One evening I was called to see a woman in the village of Gimine. She had delivered a baby boy some hours previously but the placenta was retained. This was the same woman who I had sent to the hospital in Lae two years previously with the same problem. She had to have a manual removal of the placenta under a general anesthetic. As usual, the baby was still attached to the cord but he had been covered. I cut and tied the cord and gave him to his mother to suckle, hoping this would stimulate the uterus to expel the placenta, but without effect. I could see this was going to be a long night. The woman was not in the usual small house built for this occasion but was lying in the main room of the family house. The roof was very low and there were several old women sitting around



Young women carrying water for drinking in a bamboo pipe.

the fire. Two Orouba men came with me. They were quite happy sitting around a fire with the Gimine men drinking strong black tea. I brought a lamp and my Guhu Samane New Testament with me. The women were quite surprised to hear me reading the Scriptures in their own language. I didn't always pronounce words correctly, but the Orouba women always encouraged me to read in Guhu Samane.

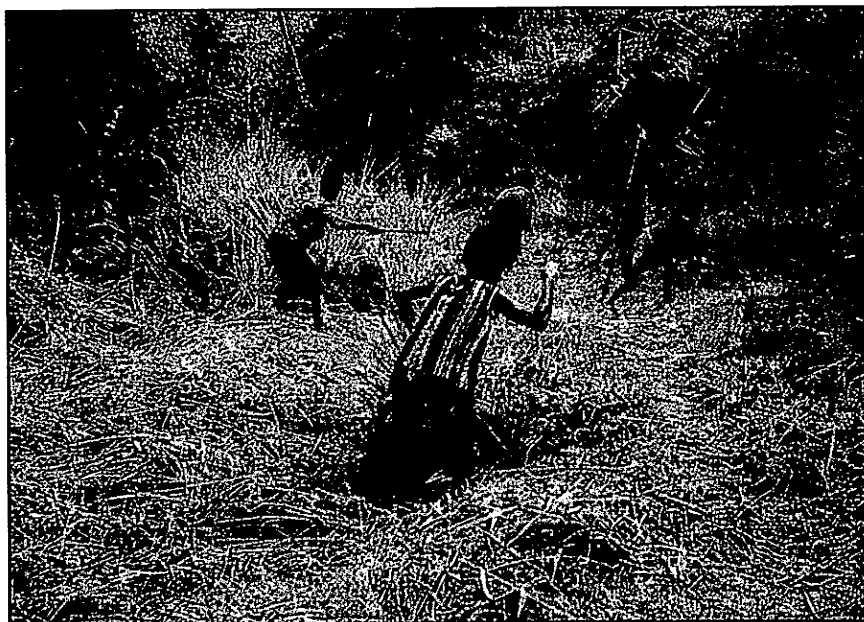
During the night the patient kept up an incessant wailing. I assured her from time to time that everything was fine. It fell on deaf ears. She probably knew, as I did, that she would end up in hospital as before. Any interference from me would only cause haemorrhaging. About 4 a.m. the door burst open and a wild looking man burst into the room. He made straight for the patient, and before I could stop him he was sucking at her abdomen. He then stood up and threw something at my feet. The patient had quieted. There were gasps of awe from the old women as one of them picked up the object and untangled it. It was a nut wrapped in bush twine, covered with betel nut juice which is red like blood. The women believed that he had sucked this object from the women's abdomen and now she would be all right. I realised that this was a sorcerer trying to prove his powers. I explained to the women that this was a trick but they did not believe me. At first light I went outside and talked to the men. I looked straight at the sorcerer and told the men that I was going to call Lae for a plane to take the patient to hospital. I told them that no one was to go near the patient except her husband, and if anyone touched her and she started to bleed she would die, and that they would have to bear the responsibility. The men assured me that they would not let anyone touch the woman. I left with Gobeda. I could hardly straighten my back and I ached. The plane arrived and took the lady to hospital and she had the placenta removed under anaesthetic. She was advised not to have any more children. While the people continue to believe that certain men in the tribe have power to make people well or to make them die, they are playing into the hands of these unscrupulous people.

We were delighted to hear that the Scott family was coming from their work in the Eastern Highlands to visit us for two weeks. Unfortunately, in the first few days every one of the girls had chicken pox. I had never seen chicken pox in the Waria Valley and I had visions

of an epidemic. The Orouba children had been playing with Sara, Rachel and Celina since their arrival and no matter how hard we tried to keep them separate it just didn't work. They did not feel ill, so were out playing in the garden. Rachel called them "chicken pops" so that was the name everyone adopted. Strangely enough, I never had one native child with "chicken pops" for which I was more than thankful.

While our family was with us our water supply dried up completely. We had to employ more girls to carry our water from the Orouba source, which was hard work and took a lot of time. It made us realise how we took for granted the beautiful spring water near our house. There was a severe drought which affected the people's gardens and they had to go into the forest and cut down sago palm trees for food.

Andy helped Reg with the building work and did a lot of preaching and teaching during the two weeks that they were with us. Catherine cooked lots of goodies and enjoyed using my black iron wood stove. They enjoyed their stay and we loved having them. Just to round off their



Keeping the track clear for walking.

stay their plane failed to arrive on the day of departure and they had to spend the night in our little transit house on the airstrip.

Shortly after our family left we were glad to see the storm clouds gathering and the heavy rain that followed. All the village children ran out to play and laugh with upturned faces to the torrential rain. It was good to see our spring in action again. The people are so dependent on the sun and rain for their gardens, yet too much or too little of either can be devastating.

The men's business meetings concerning the affairs of the church were usually held on a Saturday and were a whole day affair. This was because the men followed the same procedure as their fathers had done in their tribal meetings. They did not give up until they had a consensus of opinion with everyone satisfied with the outcome. It meant that I had to provide them with morning coffee, light lunch and afternoon tea. They met in the classroom built near the top of the cliff just outside the boundary of our fence, so they had complete privacy.



Baby's sleeping bag.

One day we experienced a very strong earth tremor which shook our bush house. This made us aware that our house was not very safe. Reg checked underneath and found that several posts needed replacing. He got four men onto that right away before we had another tremor. We couldn't help but think about Mt. Lamington which is just about 50 miles away on the coast near Popondetta. We would certainly feel the effects in Orouba if it erupted again. Our house was on much shorter posts than the average Waria house because we did not keep pigs.

One day the saw team returned in the early afternoon because the saw had stopped working and they could not restart it. Some of the men were adamant that a man who had died recently was responsible. They claimed that he had put his hand on it and stopped it working. The ancestors of the Waria people strongly believed that the spirits of people who had died roamed around until they found a permanent resting place and they could influence the lives of the living for good or ill. Many of our brethren claimed that they no longer believed such things, but there were those who believed that this was still possible. Reg was able to locate the problem with the saw and he sent an order for a new part by radio to Lae.

We had heard many of the strange things which had happened in years gone by handed down by father to son. I always meant to take a note of these stories but somehow I never had time. I know that anthropologists would be interested in these tribal tales. Perhaps one day I may even get the opportunity to write these down. One story involved a hill at the back of our house. We were told that there used to be three hills there, the big one which still stands and two smaller hills, one on either side of the big hill. It was the responsibility of the two smaller hills to see that there were plenty of trees, flowers, birds and small animals on the big hill, but sadly they neglected their work. One night when all the people were asleep the big hill had the two small hills moved right out of the area. Today you can see one of these hills in Garaina at the end of the valley, and the other one near Morobe on the coast. I believe that every culture has its stories of long ago, so the Waria tribe are no different. Many of their stories relate to people being changed into animals or birds.

Reg and I could never complain of being bored. The peaks and troughs of our experiences often alternated with such startling rapidity

that we felt our poor brains were having to race just to keep up with the most urgent of our responsibilities.

We heard from Sam Kirkpatrick that someone had broken into our car in Lae and stolen all of our tools. This was becoming a common problem in Lae as more and more people flocked to the towns in search of work.

One night I woke up shivering with a high temperature, severe headache and vomiting. I had suffered attacks of malaria before but this was to be the worst I had ever experienced. I started myself on a course of Quinine Bisulphate because I knew from past experience that this was the only cure for me. However, I felt really ill all of the next day and my energy was absolutely depleted. Reg got really worried and decided to charter a plane from Lae to get me out. The men quickly made a stretcher and carried me to the airstrip. Everyone was so worried. When we arrived in Lae we were met by a very worried and flushed Catherine. She had flown down from Goroka as soon as one of the missionaries phoned her with the news. I felt more concerned for her than I did for myself for she looked so anxious. I was taken straight to the surgery of an Australian doctor. I knew this doctor well as I often called her if I needed help with a diagnosis. She took a blood test which was checked straight away in the laboratory next door. Reg and I were aghast when we heard the doctor talking on the phone about me. She was saying "this woman has this new strain of malaria and she is the third one I have seen. The first died and the second one we shipped to Australia." I thought, "What hopes for me", but the Lord wasn't finished with me yet. I received the appropriate medication and gradually started to get better. I believe that my having started my own cure straight away in the Waria Valley had prevented a more serious outcome. I was to suffer malaria attacks three times after returning to England, but with the help of the Tropical Diseases Hospital in London the malaria was finally eradicated from my system.

Chapter 15

Trouble had been brewing for some time about which province should govern the Papuan Waria. All of the years we had been living there the Papuan Waria had been governed by the Morobe Provincial Government and most people wished it to remain that way. The area called the Papuan Waria was a triangular piece of land protruding across the border into Papua. This area contained all of the villages in Obasupu and Avihesa where most of our members lived, and the villages of Pore all the way to Kira Airstrip on Abero. This was why it was called the Papuan Waria. From Aroba on the other side of the mountain range, including Mt. Ubari, was on the New Guinea side.

Because our area was on the Papuan side of the border, the politicians of the Oro Provincial Government were disputing with the Morobe Provincial Government that our area rightly belonged to Oro. This was a political exercise to win votes for certain people. If the Oro Government won the argument it meant that the Waria tribe would be split into two different areas and most people did not want that. However, the wrangling went on until one day the Government ministers in Lae got really angry and sent in two planes to lift out all of their school teachers, the medical orderly and supplies. We were devastated. After all of our work it seemed that we were back to square one. The people were very angry indeed with the supporters of Morobe threatening the supporters of Oro who lived mostly in the villages of the Pore District. It also meant that I was back in full swing again with the medical work in the whole area. I had never really become uninvolved, that would have been impossible, but Manike, the medical orderly had been taking the daily clinics.

Reg and I could not become involved with politics, but we allowed the people the use of our radio transmitter to make calls of protest to the different political parties. Some weeks later, after visits from politicians, we had the school teachers and medical orderly replaced by the Oro Government. The medical orderly chose to work near the airstrip. The school, which had been near the village of Kira was later relocated near the airstrip. In the weeks which followed the people of the Papuan Waria

were involved in many discussions about their future. The Papuan Waria was later officially designated to be part of the Oro Province in Papua.

During this time a delegation from the Goliala people arrived from their distant mountain villages. They had come to invite the people of the Obasupu district to attend a big feast and "singsing" which was to be held in their villages in June. When Reg heard that all of our key workers both in the church and in the building work were involved in a meeting in Orouba to fix the date for this big event, he was really concerned about the outcome. He decided to do something which he had never done before to intervene in their arrangements with the Goliala people. He strode down to the village and asked to speak to some of the leaders of the church. He pointed out to them that they must consider their responsibilities to the church and the work on the building. Before leaving them he suggested they tell the Golialas that they could not attend the feast until near the end of the year. Some hours later Garoa came and informed Reg that they had reached an agreement. The feast would be held in November instead of June. We thanked the Lord for answering our



Bob Walls and Harry Fitzgerald from Pleasant Valley church of Christ arrive in Orouba for a visit. My husband, Reg, is in the middle.

prayers. The mere thought of six to eight weeks lost work when things were going so well was just too hard to contemplate. However, everyone was happy about the decision and we could go ahead and make plans.

Amidst all of the troubles there were happy times too. One of these was when we were invited to attend a sugar cane festival. The people of Obasupu (our group of villages) had invited the people of Pore district (the group of villages near the airstrip). Three generations ago these people had been enemies. The men had told us that near Kira there was a spring which yielded what they described as "salty water." The Obasupu people craved this water. At night the men armed with bows, arrows and spears would creep through the jungle with women carrying earthen pots to steal the water from the spring. If they were seen, a fight between the people would follow with some people being killed. Many times they were successful and carried the water home. However, this festival (the only word we could think of to describe it) was when the Obasupu people presented the Pore people with bundles of sugar cane. The people of Obasupu had gone to a lot of trouble to erect a large bush shelter near some of the gardens of the people from Repanaga village. They had cleared a large area of the bush and left large and small trees for shade. People from both areas were dressed in their finery. The men were wearing loincloths, their bodies painted and leaves hanging from their waists. They wore beautiful feather headdresses. The women wore their grass skirts and had the upper part of their bodies covered in leaves and flowers. They also wore headdresses of feathers, but less elaborate than the men. Several men made speeches relating the history of the sugar cane and who had contributed the shoots for this present crop. Then Gibe, one of our men, called the name of each family head and they went forward to receive their sugar cane. We were quite touched when Reg's and Jim's names were called and they went forward to receive their sugar cane. Some live pigs also changed hands and after more speeches, everyone left to walk home to their villages. It was a very good system for keeping the people united.

Art and Ruby Ford, missionaries in Lae, came with their three boys to visit the Waria. They stayed with Jim and Bessie, intending to stay three weeks. However, on their arrival it was quickly apparent that nei-



Traditional “singsing” in honour of the guests. The headdresses are made with bird feathers and local plants etc.

ther Art nor Ruby were well. Both had been sick the previous week with diarrhoea and vomiting but had felt well enough to make the flight to Kira. The two hour walk from the airstrip was the last straw and had just taken all of their reserve energy. In the days ahead Ruby recovered and felt fine, but Art was not well. We felt very worried about him and persuaded him it would be wise to return to Lae where he could be treated by a doctor. They had been with us for only five days. We were so sorry that Art had been too ill to enjoy the beautiful scenery and the fellowship of our brethren. The three boys were full of energy. I took them to several villages. It was a great experience for them to live in the bush for those few days and to have so much freedom after living in town. They were really sorry to leave.

Silas Kazo came from the church in Goroka to stay with us for several weeks. Silas was a good teacher and preacher as well as a very good carpenter. We welcomed him with open arms. He gave a tremendous boost to the building work. Silas visited the villages and studied the Bible with several people. The people really appreciated his interest in them.

The people had asked us to invite someone from our sponsoring congregation to attend the opening of our church building. The building was not completely finished but the roof was on and we had made well over a 100 pews. We were given two very colourful bilums to send to the Pleasant Valley Church to give to whoever would be coming to represent them. The visitors would be required to carry the bilums on their shoulders when they entered the village of Orouba.

Everyone was very excited when they heard that Bob Walls, one of the elders, and Harry Fitzgerald, one of the preachers, would be coming to Papua New Guinea in September. There were many secret preparations going on behind the scenes. We knew that the brethren were preparing a singsing in their honour but were really surprised at the beautiful programme which they prepared.

Reg went into Lae to meet our guests. On the day of their arrival I went with a few men and women to Kira airstrip to meet them. Everyone in the villages around could see the planes arriving and taking off from Kira airstrip. However, I confirmed on the walkie talkie that they had arrived safely. I decided to go ahead with the women back to the village so that our visitors could walk at a leisurely pace down the mountain and up to the village. Everyone seemed to be hiding in the bush when I got back to the village. They had erected a woven bamboo fence with a gate across the entrance to the village. I was impressed by that because I had never seen one like it before. It must have been made some days before in readiness for the occasion. Reg, Bob and Harry were deeply moved by their welcome to Orouba. First they were escorted through the gate where prayers of thanksgiving for our visitors safe arrival were made. Then a group of women all dressed in traditional native dress sang a song of welcome in the tribal language. It was very moving indeed. I was so sorry that we did not have a movie or video camera to film that welcome and the wonderful days which followed. The women then placed garlands of flowers on the necks of Bob, Harry and Reg. They were escorted to the top of the village where chairs had been placed for them to sit down. Then they were greeted with the most beautiful singsing we had seen in Papua New Guinea. All of the headdresses were beautifully made and the painted designs on their bodies and faces were some that we had

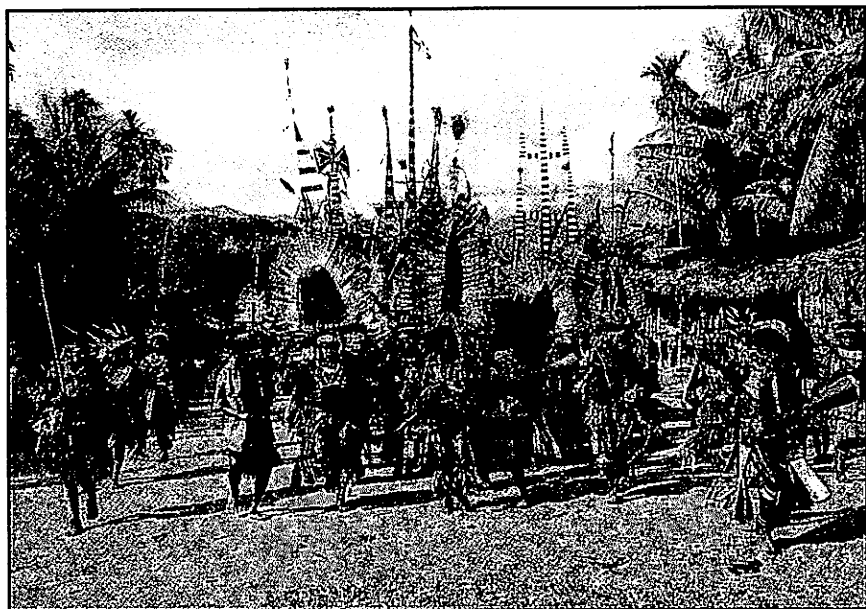
not seen before. The people must have been working on these things for a long time.

After the programme for that day was finished we dispersed to our houses to eat our evening meal. Later in the evening our house was full to overflowing with men coming to talk with Bob and Harry. When I served coffee to the men I could see some of them smiling as I handed Harry his mug. The men recognised it as the one with the ceramic frog on the bottom. They were all watching Harry, waiting for his reaction. He did not disappoint them. He said, "There is a baby frog in my coffee and he is waving his legs at me." Of course when this was translated to the men they roared with laughter. We often used this mug on various unsuspecting visitors with varied results. Some jumped up, spilling their coffee. Others pushed it to one side in disgust without comment. It was very funny, because living in a bush house where we were plagued with insects of all sizes, it would seem that it would not be unusual for something to drop from the roof into one's coffee. In fact, this seldom happened.

The following day we took Bob and Harry on a tour of the villages of Avihesa which included Sarasara, Pikie and Eroma. In the afternoon we visited some of the villages in Obasupu, Orouba, Onodoro and Repanaga. Everywhere they went they were made very welcome and they commented on the neatness and cleanliness of all the villages. Sarasara is fairly high up and one can see a long way off from a small hill near the entrance of the village. Every village has its own graveyard on the outskirts of the village. Most of their gardens are a long way from their villages. Their crops are usually cultivated on the sides of the mountains where the soil is most fertile.

The next day was Saturday. This was to be a very big day with many different singsings, singing and dancing in traditional dress to the beat of the kundu drum. These drums were hollowed out from a certain tree trunk and decorated with carvings and paints made from wild berries. The drum mouth was covered with either lizard or snake skin stretched very tightly over the wood. They made a very good sound.

The people from different villages had combined their talents to pres-



Dancing and beating of drums as they go the length of the village.

ent a very good programme for Bob and Harry and to celebrate the opening of the church building the following day. They had a story about pigs living in the forest with a lot of small boys acting the part of small pigs. It was done very well. Another three boys were a crocodile. The men had made a really good image of a crocodile using black plastic and white paint. The men and women did dances imitating dragon flies and a dog chasing an opossum. They had comic stories too: a husband and wife went to the forest to find honey. The wife was chased by the husband and had her grass skirt chopped with his bush knife because she had dropped some of the honey.

Some people from the Pore district also came and put on some of their traditional singsings. Even though they were not members of the Church of Christ they wanted to celebrate with us because we had a new church building. All the people of the Pore area were friendly towards Reg and me and had helped us on many occasions. I had treated many of them and their children medically and had often walked to their villages to visit their sick.

The people prepared a feast in honour of our guests. They killed a cow and five pigs. They had some trouble with the cow who almost escaped into the forest. The women prepared mountains of vegetables to be mumed with the meat. Big fires are lit and large stones are placed on the fire to heat, then deep pits are dug lined with banana leaves and alternate layers of hot stones. Meat and vegetables are placed in the pit. It is all covered over with earth and steamed for four hours or more. Sometimes a bamboo pipe is inserted into the pit and a small quantity of water is poured in to keep the food moist. This is a mumu. It looks pretty unappetising when it comes out of the pit, but in fact it is delicious and none of the goodness is lost from the meat and vegetables. The people have meat so seldom that they really enjoy the chance to have a special mumu. We also had lots of rice, tinned mackerel, which the people love, cold drinks, tea and coffee. Altogether it was truly a sumptuous feast. When Bob, Harry, Jim, Bessie and their children, Reg and I walked back to the house we all agreed that it had been a wonderful day for all of us.

Sunday was the highlight of Bob's and Harry's visit, the official



Women in their colourful head gear.

opening of the church building (even though it was not quite finished). Bob presented the church with a wooden plaque from the Pleasant Valley Church of Christ in Little Rock, which had been carved by one of their members. On it was written the Apostle Paul's words from Romans 16:16, "All the churches of Christ greet you." It pleased our brethren that the verse was in Melanesian Pidgin. There were 306 people in attendance to hear Bob and Harry preach from God's Word and bring greetings from the churches in America. It was a very memorable day for all of us.

Bob and Harry were able to see the church at work during the following week. They were impressed by the teaching and preaching abilities of some of our brethren. They were amused when they visited the midweek children's class where over a 100 children were gathered. The children asked if they could give them a Bible quiz from Genesis to the book of Acts.

One day I walked with Bob and Harry over Mt. Ubari to visit the congregation in Aroba. The people knew we were coming and had prepared a feast for us. I saw some sick people and tended to some cuts and sores while Bob and Harry talked with the men. The women sang a beautiful song of farewell to us as we left the village. It is not an easy walk to Aroba, especially if one is not used to walking, but it is always harder on the return journey down the mountain. One of the men informed us that he knew of a better route which was a short cut. Alarm bells should have started ringing in my head at that statement, but they didn't. Every time anyone suggested a short cut in the past, it was a disaster, with us having to overcome greater obstacles and the journey much worse. This proved to be no different. We found ourselves slithering and sliding down a very muddy hill. It was torture and I felt very sorry indeed for Bob and Harry. I decided that it was better for them to take it easy and I went on ahead with one of the women. I had dinner to prepare. I arrived home very tired but after a hot shower I revived and prepared our dinner. Bob and Harry arrived some time later utterly exhausted. They too felt better after a hot shower and dinner. Harry said, "We could have gone home and boasted about this if a 60 year old woman had not beaten us down the mountain." I told them that I had also found it very hard, but had been walking the trails for nine years and was accustomed to the conditions.

The only thing which marred the visit of Bob and Harry was on their return flight to Lae. The weather was very poor with high banks of clouds, which is not very pleasant when one is flying through the mountains in a small plane. But this was nothing compared to what would happen the following Saturday when we flew from Goroka to Lae. We had taken Bob and Harry to Goroka so they could see something of the Highlands of New Guinea and visit some of the congregations there. We stayed with Andy, Catherine and the girls. Andy took Bob and Harry to some of the remote congregations where he worked. They were truly amazed at the condition of some of the "roads" where Andy went with his land cruiser.

Bob and Harry left some of their luggage in Lae. It was their intention to spend the weekend there and preach for the church on Sunday. The weather was not good when we left Goroka, but we expected it to clear as we got nearer to Lae. However, it got worse. We were flying through thick clouds above Lae and could not land. The previous night it had rained so hard that part of the city was flooded, bridges and houses had been washed away and the airport was flooded. The pilot was advised to land somewhere else. We flew 160 miles to Popondetta to refuel. We learned two hours later that we would not be able to land in Lae that day. The pilot decided to take all the passengers to Port Moresby. We were able to spend the night with John and Cornelia Murphree and Tom and Kathy Moore, missionaries working in Port Moresby. Bob and Harry decided to stay in Port Moresby as they were due to leave on Tuesday. Early on Sunday morning Reg and I returned to Lae, a city devastated by floods and many homeless people. They had experienced 30 inches of rain on Saturday and were to experience a further 20 inches on Sunday and 10 inches on Monday. We were glad that Bob and Harry made the right decision to stay in Port Moresby since ours was the only flight into Lae that day.

We were able to get Bob's and Harry's luggage on the first available Talair flight out of Lae on Monday morning.

The church in Lae went into action to help the flood victims. They had 200 people staying in the school buildings and were organising food for hundreds more. The Government of Australia was quick to respond

to the disaster and sent plane loads of tents, equipment and food for the homeless. Churches around the world sent funds to buy food and clothing. We were thankful for the good response to the plea for help.

After Bob and Harry left, Reg and I remained in Lae for a few days to do some necessary shopping. We also visited the dentist who had been absent for one year. We both had two fillings and were shocked at the increase in price since our last visit.

The Oro Provincial Government had sent a Government officer to open a Government Station on Kira Airstrip. This was good news as he would take care of the airstrip and mower as well as settling disputes between the people. Twelve members of the National Government and the Oro Province were present. They arrived at 9:30 a.m. and were greeted by singsings from different villages. Jim, Bessie and I attended the ceremony. Reg was finding it hard to walk long distances and was not too steady on his feet at times.

We did not realise then that Reg had a tumour in his pituitary gland. The tumour was pressing on his optic nerve causing tunnel vision. It was also causing him to be unsteady on his feet. Two years later when we moved to Goroka a visiting Neurologist diagnosed his trouble. Looking back, I can only marvel at his tenacity to finish the church building and keep on preaching and teaching. I also wonder why our doctor in Lae and doctors in Australia failed to pick it up earlier. However, that is another story.

We were saddened to learn of the passing of Clarice Sutton, a good friend in Australia who had sent us many encouraging letters and contributions to our work. In spite of her advancing years she was always cheerful and had a deep concern for the lost.

The church was continuing to grow numerically and spiritually. One clan leader who had resisted the gospel for eight years finally gave his life to the Lord. Muda, who had eventually been taught by Garoa, was to prove to have quite an influence for good in the years ahead. Mostly people attended our Sunday services or Bible classes for months and sometimes years before they committed themselves to Christ, but when they did they usually remained faithful. We were glad that people studied the

Scriptures first and understood what they were doing before they were baptised into Christ. Reg was very keen to teach the men as much of the Scriptures as he was able before being forced to leave because of ill health. The men then could go out confidently and teach others. Garoa was proving to be an excellent preacher and teacher as well as a tremendous help and encouragement to Reg. Many other younger men were proving that they also had the ability to preach and teach. One of those who stood out above the others was Saoba. He had a very good grasp of the Scriptures and was able to get his message across in a very clear manner.

We went to visit a couple in Onodoro. The husband was very angry with his wife for becoming a Christian saying she should have waited until he was ready to become a Christian. This was causing friction between them. Unfortunately, when we arrived at the house the man sat with his back to us the whole time and never spoke a word to us. We were disappointed and confused by his attitude as it was so unlike the usual behaviour of the Waria people. However, we did not criticise him and always greeted him if



Muda from the village of Sarasara.

we met him in the village or on the track. One night Gau brought him to see us. Gau told us that he had been very ashamed of turning his back on us in his own house. When we continued to greet him cheerfully every time we met him it made him feel worse. He had asked Gau to go with him to our house so that he could apologise to us for his behaviour. We assured him that he need not worry, that we understood how he felt. He was so relieved and he told us that he felt as if a load had been taken off his back. However, he never really forgave his wife and never became a Christian.

Reg was concerned about his inability to climb the mountains and was beginning to feel that he would have to leave the Waria Valley. I had come to the same conclusion and felt concern for Reg. He decided that perhaps if we could move to Garaina where it was flat we would still be in the Waria Valley and have direct contact with our brethren in the Papuan Waria. The Summer Institute of Linguistics helicopter was coming to Garaina and would be in the area for a day. Reg arranged for the pilot to pick him up from our helipad and take him to Garaina where he had arranged to meet the District Officer. However, the helicopter arrived a day late and when Reg reached Garaina the District Officer had left for Lae. Reg looked around and found two good houses which had been empty for three years. The helicopter pilot brought him back again and told him that our helipad was one of the best he had landed on. This was good news because Reg had worked hard to keep it in good condition. Reg tried to follow up on the Garaina project and enquired about renting one of the houses. He never did get an answer. We heard later that the Government was considering getting the tea plantation operational again and if this happened there would be no chance of us getting a house there. The Lord had other plans for us.

The second edition of the New Testament with Psalms had arrived on the airstrip. We had five crates with 72 copies of Poro Tongo Usaqa Samuho Ttari in each crate. It had been nine years since we had received the first edition and it was now out of print. We were pleased to see the arrival of the second edition. We had a special meeting to give all of the Christians in the Waria Valley their own copy of the New Testament. Garoa had worked hard with some helpers to put the names of each one,

along with a Bible text, in their individual copy of the New Testament. We also gave a copy to all the teenagers who were attending Bible classes. It was a very special day for everyone and we hoped that we would all be able to say with the Psalmist "*Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path*" (Psalm 119:105).

As you have observed, medical work played a large part in my life in the Waria Valley. One Saturday night I was called out to Sagirepa for one of our Christian women. She had given birth to a baby boy but the placenta was retained. I was with her the whole night with no signs of the placenta separating. Sagirepa fainted three times during the night and I feared for her life. At seven o'clock Sunday morning I got through on the radio to the Christian Radio Missionary Fellowship in Mt. Hagen, and arranged through them for a plane to come from Popondetta to lift Sagirepa out to hospital. Several of the men carried Sagirepa to the airstrip. The plane had already arrived and Sagirepa was whisked off to hospital. She had the placenta removed under anaesthetic but lost a lot of blood in the process and had to be given a transfusion of several pints of blood. I was very thankful to see her return with her little son and both well about a month later. We were very thankful for the services of C.R.M.F. and M.A.F. (Missionary Aviation Fellowship) for both of these organisations are doing a great work in Papua New Guinea in serving the needs of people in remote areas. Both S.I.L. and C.R.M.F. (Christian Radio Missionary Fellowship) have a doctor on call at all times who can give medical advice.

We were trying to get as much done as possible before going on leave to Australia. It had been four years since our last leave and we were feeling ready for it. Reg wanted to get as far ahead as possible with the completion of the building but we were short of funds. The reason was that the people were short of food due to a severe drought. Other parts of the country had also been affected. We appealed to the Government for help. While waiting for action from them we used the money ear marked for the building to buy 700 kgs. of rice and boxes of tinned fish. We had to charter a twin engine plane to transport this from Lae. This was like a drop in the ocean but it did help some villages until the supplies arrived from the Government.

Thankfully, the Pleasant Valley congregation sent us \$2,000 to finish our building work and \$600 to buy more food. Thank you Lord!

A young congregation in Indagen in the Huon Gulf area north of Lae asked Garoa to come and preach a series of gospel meetings for them. Garoa was fluent in the language of that people, Kotte, and was more than happy to go. The Popondetta church had asked for Deberi to go and help them for a few weeks. We were eager for our men to gain experience outside of their own territory, but their airfares, which are very expensive in Papua New Guinea, blew a hole in our working fund. Jim and Bessie were contributing generously to the whole work of the church and we were thankful for their dedication to the progress of the work in the Waria. Garoa experienced a lot of persecution from a religious group in Indagen for his preaching. Being a gentle peaceful man, he was able to overcome it.

Chapter 16

A month or so after the drought we had very heavy torrential rain for several nights. Gobeda was delighted when he discovered a huge hardwood tree (the Papua New Guinea name was taun tree) from high up in the mountains, which had been washed down by the river and delivered to Onodoro village. Gobeda claimed ownership of the tree which had been stripped of its branches by the boulders in the river. It was a beautiful tree which yielded four fat logs for the saw team to deal with. The timber was used for the flooring in the classrooms and evangelists office in the church building.

Before leaving for Australia, Reg and I attended the Annual Missionary Workshop in Goroka. The theme was "The Christian Race" Reg's subject was one which was close to his heart, "Training National Church leaders." The time spent with other missionaries, listening to lectures and discussions was, as usual, very uplifting and encouraging. Jim and Bessie returned to Orouba with their children after the Workshop. It was nice for us to go on leave knowing that Jim and Bessie would be there to cope with any emergency. We would miss Fiona and Kenneth, as they visited us every day and called us Grandpa and Grandma. It would prove to be a little confusing later on when the children discovered that they had three grannies. However, at that time we were happy to be the centre of their attention.

Our elders in Pleasant Valley decided that as Bob and Harry had visited the work in Papua New Guinea the previous year, it would not be necessary for us to visit the United States on our next furlough. We decided we would go to Perth, Western Australia and spend some time with the brethren in that City. Our biggest problem was to find somewhere to stay, as it would be very expensive staying in hotels for four months. However, we are told in Philippians 4:6 "*Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*" Reg and I did this frequently and we were continually having our faith strengthened by answered prayers.

One evening Reg and I were invited to dinner in the home of Bruce and Leslie Downing, missionaries in Lae. While there, Bruce's parents called him from Perth. Bruce's father was headmaster of a school in Perth and his mother was a librarian. Both had been given long service leave and were planning to go to Europe for six months. They were considering letting their house while they were gone, but had doubts about getting anyone in the short time available. Bruce told them about us and our plans to go to Perth for just over four months. We offered to rent their house during that time. They were absolutely delighted, but informed us that we could have it free of charge plus the use of their two cars, as long as we kept their garden in order. An answer to prayer? Yes! Thank you again Lord. We actually left their house just a few days before they returned and they told us that their garden had never looked so good. It was a lovely house in City Beach, not far from the congregation who supported our work and near to the beach and a lovely park.

After leaving Port Moresby we flew to Brisbane and spent a few days with friends there. We then traveled on to Adelaide to visit Albert and Olive Matthews for one week before flying to Perth. We were met in Perth by several members of the City Beach congregation who escorted us to our "holiday home." Reg and I were really thankful for this lovely home which had been made available to us. While we were there lots of people invited us for meals and took us for drives to beauty spots. We visited my nephew, David, and his family in their home on Gooseberry Hill on the outskirts of Perth. Their garden was the natural Australian bush with all the lovely native flowers, trees and shrubs. We borrowed two bicycles and rode around the huge park not far from our house. I was also able to borrow a typewriter from brother Harry Blackmore. Harry was the chief consultant psychiatrist in Perth and was also very active in teaching and preaching in the City Beach congregation. Within the congregation they had a large group of deaf Christians and Harry also was very active with them. He had learned the sign language at an early age and was able to communicate easily with members of that group. The City Beach congregation had supported our work in Papua New Guinea from the early days in Lae and it was to Harry that we made our requests known. Harry and his wife, Gwenda, were amongst our most loyal supporters.

While we were in Perth we visited three other congregations where Reg preached, or talked about the work in Papua New Guinea. I taught some ladies' classes. We had a really restful time and enjoyed our stay in that beautiful city. Having the use of Mr. Downing's car made it so much easier for us to get around. We were really thankful to Mr. and Mrs. Downing for their generosity to us.

When we left Perth we flew via Alice Springs to Cairns. We managed to get a glimpse of Ayers Rock from the plane. In Cairns we were met by former missionaries to Lae, Sam and Margaret Kirkpatrick. Sam had been our contact in Lae for some years, and we used to call Sam on our outstation radio when we needed spare parts for any of our equipment. They had returned to Australia about two years previously. It was good to sit down and talk and to inform them of all the latest happenings in Papua New Guinea. We would have liked to have visited the Great Barrier Reef but unfortunately, we just did not have time.

It was good to return to the hustle and bustle of Papua New Guinea.



The completed church building.
The sign says "Church of the New Testament" in Guhu Samawe.

It was nice to go away for a break, but each time we went overseas we were always happy to return, especially to Orouba. However, we had several problems in our house. The cockroach population had increased dramatically and this was evident throughout the house. The mice too had been having a ball. We found they had chewed holes in several of the cartons of books which I had packed. It rained heavily our first night back and the roof leaked in every room. The large sheet of plastic which was fixed on the rafters above our mosquito net was sagging with water. The stove in the kitchen had rusted badly. When I lit it smoke belched from several seams. Imagine having to deal with a rusty smokey stove after using a microwave oven. That is "culture shock."

Jim and Bessie had found it necessary to spend more time in Lae than they had wished. Jim's mother had arrived from Scotland and refused to go out to the Waria Valley. Bessie was expecting their third child and had experienced some problems, which made it necessary for her to remain in Lae until baby Sarah was born. Things had not worked out as we had all planned, but that is often the way in life. We were just happy that everything had gone well for Bessie and baby Sarah.

The next day my house girls and I thoroughly cleaned the house, spraying every nook and cranny inside and underneath the house. Reg organised some men and women to make new thatch for our roof and later we filled the cracks in our stove with fire clay. In a few days we had everything back to normal.

A month after our return one of our mail bags went missing en route to Lae. This was the first time that this had happened. It was quite serious because I had sent several cheques to pay bills and a number of letters. We believe that it had been stolen. I always kept a record of all the mail sent out, so I was able to contact the Australian and New Zealand bank in Lae to cancel the cheques. It meant having to rewrite letters and cheques. I often did this on Monday evening, working until the early hours to get things ready for the mail bag which went out every Tuesday. I did try each week to get items for the mail ready in advance, but there were so many other demands on my time.

The church building was nearing completion at last. Reg and some

of the men were working on a “parquet” floor, Papua New Guinea style. They were using 4-inch thick round slabs, sliced from a log using a chain-saw. They were then skinned and shaped to fit with axes before laying them on plastic sheeting to keep them dry and free from centipedes. When it was finished the floor looked really good. Jim had built a platform with the help of some men. It had been varnished and looked really nice. Kuworo had made a really good communion table, a lectern and a beautiful blackboard and easel.

Reg and I planned to leave the Waria Valley in July, having spent 11 years in this remote area. Reg had been diagnosed as having osteoarthritis in his right hip. He was finding it increasingly difficult to walk the trails. We talked this over with Andy and Catherine and we decided to join them in the work in Goroka.

Jim and Bessie and their three children had also decided to leave the Waria work. They were due to go on furlough soon. They decided they would extend their stay to two years so that Jim could take a course on Biblical Studies in a college in Canada. When they returned they planned to locate in Port Moresby, where Fiona would attend school.

The people organised a “singsing” and mumu for Jim and Bessie and the children. They were presented with many gifts. They had been with us for six years and were much loved by us and the people. We had worked really well as a team and were also good friends. We would miss them.

One morning Manike, the Aid Post Orderly (dokta boi), came to see me. He told me that he was being transferred and he did not know when he would be replaced. When he left I was shocked to find very few supplies in the Aid Post and had to send an order post haste to Lae for over 100 kina worth of supplies. It was this kind of emergency which threw our finances into chaos.

In April Reg and I went to Lae to buy necessary supplies. This would be our last visit to Lae before leaving the Waria Valley. A few days after we left trouble arose between the villages of Aroba and Qasama, the two villages on the other side of Mt. Ubari. The dispute was over land rights. The boundaries of land are not at all clear and people frequently have

minor disputes over who owns what. Deberi, an evangelist in Orouba who originally came from Aroba, went over to help to settle the trouble. Money was exchanged, pigs were killed and eaten, and the opposing parties shook hands. However, one old man who was not happy about the outcome, sent word to all the headmen of the villages in Obasupu that he wanted them to help him to reclaim his land. Apparently they had a meeting, but instead of resolving the matter according to the laws of the country, they reverted back to the old ways of their ancestors. They sent a bunch of tanget leaves to the Qasama people, which was a declaration of war. The old men told the young men to get their bows, arrows and spears and they climbed the mountain to Qasama.

Most of the men from several villages were involved, 70 in all, 27 were members of the church and 43 from other religious groups. The evangelists, Deberi and Garoa, pleaded with them not to go. They were all fired up and would not listen. To make matters worse, some of the group were just teenagers, some still in school. The old men watched while the young men cut down banana trees and coffee bushes. One pig and one dog were killed. Fortunately, all the people of Qasama had left the village. A man had run to Garaina and informed the policeman there. He in turn notified the Government officer at Kira. They were all arrested.

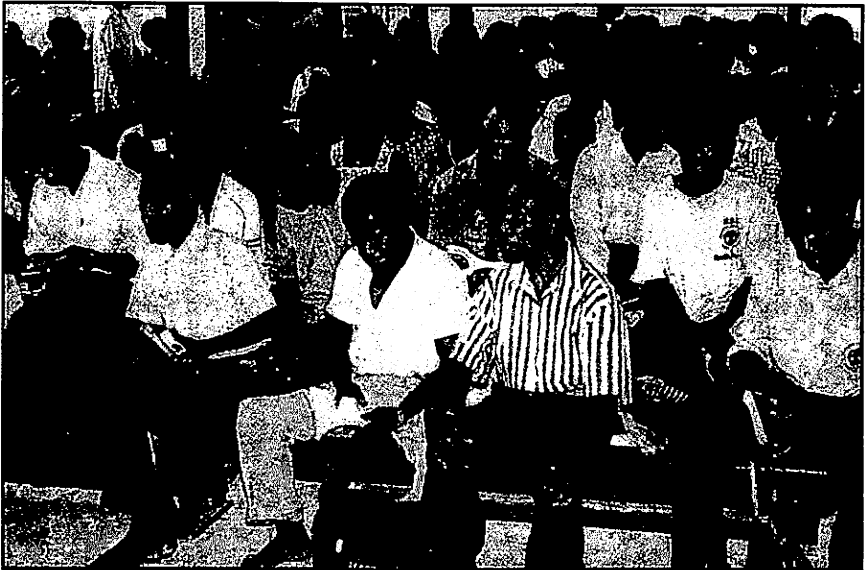
There had been a breakdown of law and order throughout Papua New Guinea, resulting in more robberies with violence, murders and rape. In the Highlands especially, tribes were always fighting each other with people getting killed and villages burned to the ground. The Government had brought in much harsher laws with harsher penalties. Unfortunately, our area was among the first to receive these harsh penalties, even though this was probably the first time that anything like this had happened in the Waria Valley for 30 years or more.

When we returned and heard what had happened our hearts were heavy. We knew that these men had acted foolishly, but we also had grown to love and respect them. They were normally peaceful people who had been pulled into this situation by the headmen. They were all sentenced to one year in prison in Popondetta. It was so sad for this to happen just two months before we were due to leave the Waria Valley.

There was not a proper court hearing. Some older men who had gone along to prevent trouble, but could not keep up with the young men, were also jailed even though they had not done anything wrong.

Reg wrote letters to lawyers and other influential people to try to get a proper hearing for the men, but without results. They were to be an example to others in the country who decided to take the law into their own hands. We felt sorry for the women who were left to carry the burden of tending the vegetable gardens and doing the work which their husbands normally did. However, they accepted the situation cheerfully, and the boys and girls worked harder after school.

We wrote regularly to the men in prison and encouraged their wives to do the same. Sehequ, one of the men in prison, wrote and told us that the Prison Governor allowed them to have a short devotional every morning and services on Sunday. We worked out a roster and sent a man to stay in Popondetta for a few weeks at a time so the men could have visitors and help with the Sunday service. There were a number of people



Sunday morning worship in the new building. Segehu is in the front with the striped shirt. He was leader of the saw team.

from the Waria Valley living in Popondetta and this helped the situation.

Reg contracted a severe fungal infection in his right ear. It was very painful, and although I gave him a course of antibiotics and contacted the doctor in Lae to send out some special ear drops, it failed to clear up. I wanted him to go to Lae but he felt that he could not leave the work at that time. It was six weeks before it eventually cleared up and I really felt for Reg during that time. He had so many things to organise before leaving the work. He just kept going and being thoughtful and caring of everyone else's needs.

We heard from Pat Thew, a member of the City Beach congregation in Perth, Western Australia, that she planned to visit the Waria Valley in June with her two adult sons, Jonathan and Adam. This was good news. We were glad that they would be present for the celebrations planned for the completion of the church building (at last). Pat was a very good friend and she had a great interest in the work being done in the Waria Valley. She sent parcels of clothing from time to time which were greatly appreciated by the people.

We had also asked Ken Page, missionary in Lae, who was the only one at that time who owned a video camera, to come to the Waria Valley and record the events on video. He agreed, and arrived one day ahead of the Thew family. We were having unusual weather for that time of year, with heavy rain during the day and night. We were concerned that Pat and her family might not be able to land at Kira. The day was very cloudy and cool as I walked to the airstrip with several carriers to meet them. The tracks were all very wet and muddy and made walking more difficult. I was really pleased to see the sun struggling to come out from behind the clouds as we reached the airstrip. About an hour later the Talair plane landed. We were very fortunate that the airstrip had a natural slope, and the water was able to drain off the mountain ridge. It never once got waterlogged and, for this reason, the pilots liked landing and taking off from Kira.

A number of young men came along to meet the plane since they were anxious to meet Jonathan and Adam. The Waria people loved having visitors and gave the Thew family an enthusiastic welcome. As we

wound our way down the mountain we met Ken Page with his video camera. He was able to take pictures of us all walking along the tracks. The cloudy day was a blessing after all for it made it much easier walking the five miles to our house.

Unfortunately, during the next two weeks we were to experience the worst weather we had experienced since coming to the Waria 11 years ago. It rained every day at some time and was very cool. It was the only time that we all wore sweaters and had a fire going the whole day in the main room of the house. In spite of this we were able to get out and visit all the villages. Pat taught the ladies' class, with me "tanim tok" into Pidgin and Burisi translating into Guhu Samane for the older women. It took quite a time but nobody was in a hurry to go anywhere. Some ladies had come from Qaro and Aroba to hear Pat speak. We had over 80 women in attendance. They sang some hymns in Guhu Samane for Pat, which she enjoyed.

On Sunday we had a special service for the completion of the church building. The brethren came from Qaro-Motete and Aroba. The building was full. It rained very heavily first thing in the morning. Although we were scheduled to start at 8:30 a.m., we had to wait until the rain stopped to allow people to walk the fairly long distances from their villages. Our service eventually commenced at 11:30 a.m. After the preaching of The Word, four young women came forward stating their belief in Christ and asking for baptism. Several people accompanied them to the river where Deberi baptised them in the swollen river. We then returned to join the rest of the congregation in the building.

A few days later, the people had prepared a special programme of singsings and a mumu to celebrate the completion of the building and to say farewell to Reg and me. They presented a very good programme as well as re-enacting the first visit of a white man to their territory. The most unexpected item on the programme was one presented by the Headmaster, teachers and pupils of the primary school. Some of the teachers came from outlying islands and they had taught their traditional Singsings to their pupils, which were quite different from the Waria Singsing. It was very interesting indeed, but the one that brought tears to many eyes was a song written in honour of Reg and me thanking us for

what we had done in the Waria Valley and wishing us goodbye. It was in Pidgin to the tune of Vera Lynne's wartime song, "Now Is the Hour When We must Say Goodbye." At the end of each verse they sang "Aipo Dzoobe" which means "Goodbye and Thank you." At the end of the last verse the children left in twos singing "Aipo Dzoobe" until the last two had dispersed. It was very moving. I stood there with the tears streaming down my cheeks.

After the mumu (feast) there were many speeches made. One man read the first letter that Reg had written to Sumugau, the headman of Orouba, early in 1974, telling that Reg and I had accepted his invitation to come and teach them the Good News of Jesus Christ. We were presented with many gifts of bilums, some containing small gifts of money. We were given beautiful kina shells and other shells which had been handed down from father to son, strings of cowrie shells, dog teeth, boar tusks and bows and arrows. It was a very solemn time.

Our guests departed for Lae. The Thew family would travel to



Gobeda presiding at the Lord's Table.

Goroka to spend a few days with Andy and Catherine before returning to Australia.

We were scheduled to leave Orouba in one week's time and were busy packing up our belongings. We were leaving the house furnished and equipped with everything a family would need if missionaries wished to visit the Waria Valley. Three days before we left many people came and sat around the outside of the house for hours, weeping or talking in low tones. We felt so sorry to be leaving them, but we knew that because of Reg's health we had to go. I gave away all of the spare water bottles, cups, buckets, blankets, etc., mostly to the elderly.

On the day we left to go to the airstrip, crowds of people came with us to spend the night on the airstrip. First we went to the haus lotu (church building) where we had a short devotional and sang some songs together. The older people who were unable to walk to the airstrip came to shake our hands and hug us. They all wept, which made me weep too. The young women who were expecting babies were really worried about me leaving in case they encountered problems. I felt as if I was abandoning my children and my heart was heavy. We had left the radio outstation in the house. Gobeda was an expert in its use. He knew how to keep the batteries charged and contact Lae in an emergency. We had been preparing the people for this day for a long time and were confident they would carry on the work.

As we walked through the villages of Pore on our way to the airstrip, people came out of their houses to shake our hands and to wish us well. The school children left their classrooms to again say "goodbye" and to wave to us until we were out of sight. It was getting late in the afternoon and I had to get our little house ready before darkness descended on us. The rains had gone. I don't think I have ever seen the sky so beautiful as it was that night. As the sun sank over the horizon it changed from pink to red and then to indigo blue. Standing on the airstrip surrounded by mountain peaks was a most beautiful sight. Darkness comes quickly in the tropics. In no time at all we were under a canopy of stars and Usu Dzadza (God's light, the moon). It was a perfect night and I did not want to leave.

More people arrived on the airstrip in the evening, lighting several fires at the side of the strip and cooking the food which they had brought with them. People living near the airstrip brought pots of food and gave to our people from Obasupu. After we had eaten, we sat around the fires and sang songs until quite late. Reg and I were both emotionally drained and were glad to lie down on our mattresses.

Next morning everyone was up at dawn. We could hear the chatter of the women as they prepared food or sent the children to fetch water. We washed and dressed quickly because we knew that people would start to come and see us in the early morning. There seemed so many questions still to answer and last minute arrangements still to be made. After we had eaten Reg went to talk with the men while I packed up our goods and made arrangements with the women about who was to get the sheets, blankets pillows, mattresses, etc., from our little house. I tried to be very fair about this, giving most things to the elderly men and women of the church so that they would have some comfort in their latter days or years. The women approved of this and helped to arrange it.

The final parting from the people was very hard for both them and us. Our lives had become so entwined during these past 11 years. We were their Mai (father) and Pai (mother) and they loved us as much as we loved them. Many people had walked from villages far and near to shake our hands and wish us well. There must have been well over 300 people there to see us off. We were all shedding tears and my eyes were puffed up. I believe that it was the saddest day in our lives. As we boarded the small plane which was to take us to Lae, the pilot understood and sympathised with us. We had flown with him on many occasions. The pilot then did a beautiful thing. He circled low over all of the villages where we had worked and we could see the people and small children waving, then he circled the airstrip again before heading for Lae. We really appreciated that last gesture to these beautiful people.

After spending a few days in Lae, we heard that the court had decided to review the case of the Waria men who were in prison in Popondetta. We had already decided that we would visit the Waria men in prison in Popondetta. When we heard about the court hearing we decided to make our visit coincide with that hearing. We flew to Popondetta and booked

in at the one and only hotel, which was very expensive. Popondetta is a spread out town. There was little public transport and no taxis. Reg and I decided to hire a car to visit the prison. This too, proved to be extremely expensive. We only wanted the car to drive to the prison, which was a long way out of town. We asked if we could hire it for the afternoon. The lady in charge of the car hiring said she had a reason for driving that way herself and that she would take us there. If we had difficulty getting back then we could call her. Thank you Lord!

The prison Governor was a very understanding man. He told us that he had never before had a group of prisoners who were so polite and willing to work. He said that they were a good influence on others. However, he gave us the bad news that the court appeal had been postponed. He had no knowledge if or when it would be held. The Governor had released six Waria people, two old men and four school boys. He took us to visit our people who were all gathered together in what I believe was the dining area. It was the first time that we had seen Waria men weep. Reg and I were quite overcome. I had to grit my teeth to keep from breaking down



My family in 1984 in Goroka PNG.

there in front of them. They told us that they were so ashamed of what they had done. One man turned his face to the wall and wept, he could not look at us. Reg put his arm around him and comforted him. We then sat and talked with them and encouraged them. Reg had asked permission from the Governor to have a devotional meeting with the men. His lesson was one of looking forward and encouraging the men in every way that he could. They told us how much it had meant to them that we had come to visit them in prison. Reg told them how pleased all the Christians were in the Waria Valley that they were reading the Scriptures daily and praying to the Father. We urged them to write to their families often. We had brought the necessary items to enable them to do that. Reg told them what our plans were and how that we would keep in touch with them. We promised to visit the Waria Valley again when they were released. Reg assured them that we would do all we could to get a reduction in their sentence.

Chapter 17

When our visiting time with the men was over, the Governor invited Reg and me to his house to have a cup of tea. We spent some time with the Governor and his wife discussing what had occurred in the Waria Valley leading to the men's imprisonment. He could tell by the attitudes of the men that they were not violent men, but the very opposite. However, Reg told him that we had worked with these men for 11 years found them to be happy, honest people who were always willing to help in any way. Many of them were Christians who took an active part in the work of the Church. In a moment of weakness they had made the wrong decision to fight with weapons for the rights of an old man.

The Governor asked his driver to take us back to our hotel. Reg and I were very thankful to the Governor for his kindness to us and his understanding of the Waria men's plight. It had been a very emotional time for all of us. We were so glad that we had made the decision to visit the prison in Popondetta. We left for Lae the following day. We thanked God for His providential care.

Andy, Catherine and our three granddaughters came to Lae in their Toyota truck to carry our cargo to Goroka. We had stored several 44 gallon drums of unnecessary household goods, i.e., food mixer, toaster etc. when we had moved to the Waria, which we did not need in the bush.

Reg and I travelled in our own car with Catherine and Celina. Sara and Rachel travelled with Andy in the truck. We had a good journey to Goroka. It was hard to believe that we had left the Waria Valley for good.

We stayed with Andy and Catherine in Goroka for two weeks before moving into a two bedroom house on the compound of the International Primary School. There were four houses in a terrace, usually occupied by teachers. However, many teachers preferred to have their own accommodation away from the school. There was a high security fence around the property, a security guard on duty during the night, and four young rottweiler dogs belonging to two teachers on the property. The thing which we found hardest to cope with was the constant noise of traffic. The property was situated at the junction of two busy roads where heavy

trucks rumbled up and down throughout the day. On top of this the airport runway was just a short distance away and we could hear the Air Nugini jets revving up their engines for take off. It was all so alien to Reg and me to be living behind a seven foot fence in such a noisy, dusty environment. We missed living in Orouba, surrounded by mountains and trees, leaving our doors open, knowing no one would steal our possessions.

Reg and I soon became absorbed in the work of the church. Andy was involved with about 40 small congregations scattered throughout the mountains of the Eastern Highlands and the Chimbu Province. It was very difficult for Andy to train leaders in all of these village areas. He with the other missionaries in Goroka decided to start a Bible school. At first they had a rural location 3 miles out of Goroka. Bush material buildings were erected and people had gardens and could help support themselves. The students were in school for 20 weeks a year in 5 blocks of study for one month each. The school was then moved into Goroka with the purchase of a building with several dormitories and cooking facilities to house the students. The men returned to their villages to teach the people what they had learned. It was a good system and worked very well. Reg was able to help with the teaching of the students in the Bible school. I taught classes for women and teenage girls.

Shortly after we arrived, Jab Mesa and his wife, Rebecca, who had been a tremendous help to the church in Goroka, left to attend a Bible college in New Zealand. We missed Jab's good work and cheerful personality. Tobey and Kathy Huff, former missionaries in Goroka, had arranged for Jab and Becky's support while they lived and studied overseas. Tobey had a printing business in Tauranga, New Zealand, and was able to provide Bible material to many congregations of the church in the South Pacific.

Goroka has pleasant weather, with warm days and cool nights. This is because it is over 5,000 feet above sea level. The people look very different from the Waria people. They are mostly short and stocky with features more like the Africans, but with a reddish brown skin colouring. They are a friendly, smiling people but with volatile tempers.

One morning a crowd of about 200 men jogged past our house. They were painted with red mud, holding spears aloft in their hands and chanting a dirge while they ran. One police car was leading them and another was at the rear. We heard that a man from their tribe had been killed during the night, his throat was cut and a truck had run over him. Apparently he had been found by a truck driver employed by the Waterworks Department. It was not known if he had accidentally run over him, but now the crowd was after his blood. The police were helpless to stop them. In some cases a crowd like this would pull a man out of the police cells and kill him. We thought of our poor Waria men in prison for something which, compared with this, was minor. We were to witness this kind of thing several times in the few months we were in Goroka.

In September I travelled with Andy, Catherine, my three granddaughters and 40 Christians to Lae to attend the annual Papua New Guinea Lectureship. The programme had been arranged by Garoa Sumugau, one of the evangelists from Orouba. I felt really proud of him as he did a very good job.

Four days later Andy and Catherine returned to Goroka and I went to the Waria Valley with Sally Shaw. Sally was in Papua New Guinea with the Peace Corps, working with the Wau Ecological Institute. Sally was an artist and had offered to paint signs for the Orouba Church building. She made two signs, one in Pidgin which read "Sios bilong Kraiss" which means "Church of Christ." The other in Guhu Samane read "Poru Tongo Usaqe Guhu" which means the "Church of the New Testament." The church members were very pleased with Sally's work. I was happy to see all of the people, teach the ladies' class and encourage the women but we could only stay for a few days. It was a very emotional time again when we left, especially as I was taking Tama, our dog with us. They cried for Tama too. I had reason to wish in the weeks ahead that I had left our dog with the Waria people.

In October Reg had written to the Public Solicitor's office in Port Moresby regarding the imprisoned Waria men. It may have borne fruit, for we heard that the majority of the men would be released in January and the ringleaders two months later. We were really glad about that. They would have served nearly nine months in jail. We just prayed that

it would teach them all that they must never again take the law into their own hands.

We received a letter from a young Christian, Sabiqa Name. He had gone with his younger sister to Popondetta, where she was admitted to hospital suffering from septicaemia, due to a large tropical ulcer on her left leg. Sabiqa is a very shy man, but while he was in Popondetta he went to the prison and asked if he could preach to the men on Sunday mornings. The Governor of the prison asked if he had a card or letter stating that he was a preacher for the Church of Christ. Sabiqa said "No, I have only my Bible." The Governor let him in. Sabiqa said that he had prayed a lot about his visit and he felt sure that God would open the door for him. He visited the prison many times during the several weeks he was in Popondetta and was able to encourage the men.

Reg had a blackout while having a shower one Sunday morning. He lost his memory, did not know who he was or where he was and spoke only in Pidgin. I quickly got in contact with a national doctor who diagnosed Reg as having cerebral malaria. He gave Reg a large dose of chloriquine by injection. I was sure that his diagnosis was wrong, as Reg did not have the symptoms of cerebral malaria. Reg was confused the whole of that day. Unfortunately, Andy, Catherine and the girls were in Mt. Hagen for the weekend where Andy was preaching for the church there. They were to return that evening. I was so anxious to see them. However, after a good nights sleep, Reg woke up absolutely normal and could only remember blacking out. I knew then that it had not been cerebral malaria, but something perhaps more serious. We had decided some time previously to return to England around May 1986. This latest development made this much more definite. We decided to start packing our books and personal belongings. One of the members of the church, Kiombe, was a carpenter. He agreed to make three crates for us so we could pack and sort things in easy stages.

Some weeks later while we were packing, Reg felt faint and lost his memory again. We were all very worried, but as before, he was back to normal next morning.

A few days later we heard that there was an English Neurologist in

the area. He had come to Papua New Guinea to carry out some research. We were able to contact him through Catherine's Lutheran missionary friend who worked in Goroka Hospital. When he saw Reg and discussed his symptoms he told Reg that he possibly had a tumour in the area of the brain. This was confirmed by X-rays. He advised us to return to England as soon as possible. He gave Reg steroids which helped to reduce the pressure and made it easier for him to travel.

We received wonderful help from Qantas staff and British Airways on our long journey to London and on to Birmingham, where we were met by my brother-in-law, Frank Worgan. Frank had been in contact with a local doctor who visited Reg the following day and referred him to the Radcliffe Infirmary in Oxford. At the Radcliffe the neurologist arranged for Reg to have a brain scan which revealed a fairly large benign tumour in his pituitary gland. It was decided at that time not to remove the tumour but to treat it with drugs to reduce its size and to prevent its growth. The pituitary gland is a very important gland in the body. When anything goes wrong it can have serious effects on other glands in the body. The tumour was pressing on the optic nerve, resulting in tunnel vision. This accounted for Reg banging his head frequently during the construction of the church building. Fortunately, he had wisely worn a hard hat most of the time. Strangely, the medication which he was given had some good side effects, one was a marked improvement in the osteoarthritis in his hip. Reg suffered three mild strokes in the following two years, but none left any permanent damage. We decided to move to Scotland, the country of my birth, where we spent six happy years.

In 1991 Reg had a real yearning to return to Papua New Guinea to visit the people we had both grown to love. He discussed this with his consultant at the Western Hospital in Edinburgh. The consultant told him of the risks, but added "If you really feel that you want to go, go ahead. It is the quality of life which counts." So in December, 1991, we returned to Papua New Guinea. Our family had moved from Goroka to Lae, where Andy was the principal of the Bible College. We lived in a two bedroom house just a few yards from our family in the church property. I was able to return to the Waria Valley and revisit all of the villages where we had worked. Reg was unable to go, as he could not do the walking which was

involved. However, many people travelled to Lae to visit us during the months we were there. In September we chartered a plane and brought 18 people in for the lectureship. Many more walked to the coast and came by ship. Reg was able to meet with many men from the three congregations to discuss the future work of the church. We were also able to arrange a feast in their honour while so many were present in Lae at that time. It was a very happy and rewarding time and we were both glad that we had returned to Papua New Guinea.

Reg was beginning to feel unwell. He was finding the hot weather in Lae was sapping his strength, so we decided to return home. We had been in Papua New Guinea for 11 months.

We had sold our house to enable us to return to Papua New Guinea. While house hunting in Scotland we stayed with Christian friends, Ian and Sheila Moyes in Kirkcaldy. We found a cottage to rent on a sheep farm on the outskirts of Glenrothes. This was to prove to be a very good move. It was beautiful countryside and we had rabbits and pheasants running through our garden. We were able to take many lovely walks together. Eight months after our return home Reg suffered a severe heart attack one Sunday morning. He had another on arrival in the hospital and was in a critical condition. I called Andy and Catherine who were already packed to return to America to put their teenage girls in school. They had planned to spend one month in Australia before leaving. When they received my call they came straight away to Scotland. The first week Reg was very ill and confused. The second week he rallied and was more like his normal self. We visited him everyday and sometimes Catherine and I stayed at the hospital overnight, as I had been doing before they came. Reg joked with his granddaughters. We had a really happy week together. Reg passed from this life on the Sunday evening, two weeks after he had suffered the heart attacks. We were so thankful to the Lord for giving us that last week together as a family.

The church in the Waria Valley continues to grow spiritually and numerically because of the faith of a man who was willing to go to Papua New Guinea without support, who gave himself completely to the work in the Waria Valley because he believed that a missionary must minister to the "whole man." It was because of Reg's unshakeable faith that I was

persuaded to go with him to Papua New Guinea.

In 1995 I returned alone to Papua New Guinea for two months. I had raised the money for my fare, medical supplies, used clothing and other necessary items to take to my brethren in the Waria Valley. Most of the money came from the British brethren, but the brethren in Pleasant Valley, Little Rock, U.S.A. gave generous donation towards my expenses.

I had been in contact with Velma Forman, a Canadian from British Columbia. Velma was a Registered Nurse with a special interest in Paediatrics. She was working with the missionary team in Lae and agreed to accompany me to the Waria Valley.

It was a very emotional time for me as people wept for Reg and for me being alone. However, Velma and I were able to hold many medical clinics, teach classes, visit all of the villages in Obasupu and spent many hours talking with people. The church building was repainted by

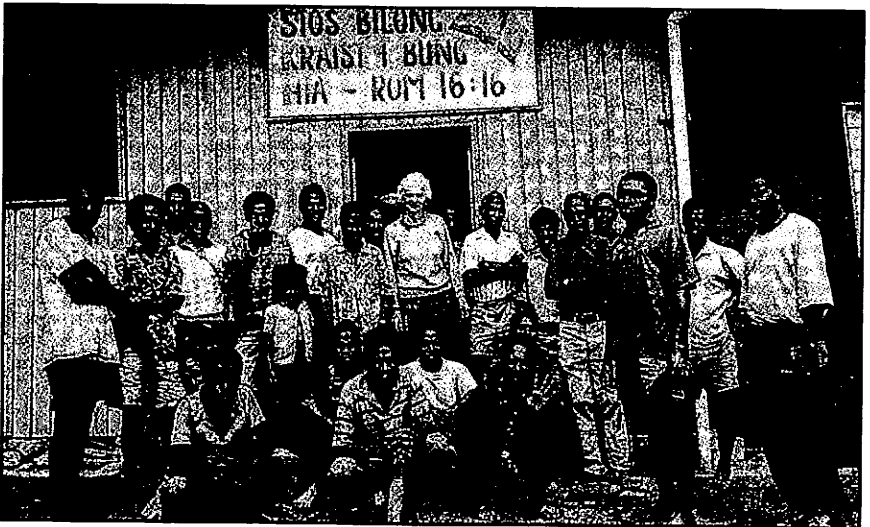


Velma Forman and I leaving Orouba. We had held classes every day with Velma doing a wonderful work there. We also did a lot of teaching.

the men and a feast held in honour of my late husband, Reg.

Sumugau, the eldest son of our late brother Gobeda, had given Velma and me the use of his new bush house during our stay. It was a well built house with three rooms and a verandah. With the help of Aleks Emoro, an electrician who had returned to the area from Bougainville, the men managed to get the old generator working. They rigged up a light inside and one outside the house. This rekindled a desire to have light in the church building. However, this is not practical because of the cost of freighting fuel into Kira airstrip from Lae or Wau.

When I talked with Aleks later, I quickly realised that solar power was the answer to our problem. Aleks assured me that if I could raise the money that he would install it. The Solar Power was installed in April 1996 in time for the Annual Women's Workshop in Orouba that month. It was the first time that this event had been held in a bush situation so all the ladies were surprised to see a good church building with electric light. The Lord has promised to supply all of our needs and He never fails to do so.



When I returned, the men asked me to meet with them to discuss several things. This is outside the church building sign, "Church of Christ meets here."

I would like to thank all the Christians in Great Britain, U.S.A. and Australia for supporting us to do the work of the Lord in Papua New Guinea. Without your help we could not have done this work. Many times we quoted the verse from Phillipians 4:13, "*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*" We could not have done this work alone. Reg and I knew that people were praying for us continually.

We could not have done this work without our Papua New Guinean brethren. We often marvelled at their patience with us when we stumbled over their language and made mistakes in their culture. They were so hospitable, loving and gracious to us and encouraged us immensely during our years with them. They are continuing to faithfully serve God in the Waria Valley.