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PATROL REPORTS

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STATION: WEWAK

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Papua New Guinea Patrol Reports

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TERRITORY OF PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA

PATROL REPORT

3-19/50

District of Sepik Report No. Wewak 15-49/50

Patrol Conducted by P. E. Zienberg P.O.

Area Patrolled West wafi

Patrol Accompanied by Europeans -

Natives 5

Duration—From 29/5/1950 to 5/6/1950

Number of Days 8

Did Medical Assistant Accompany?

Last Patrol to Area by—District Services...../...../19.....

Medical /...../19.....

Map Reference.....

Objects of Patrol.....

DIRECTOR OF DISTRICT SERVICES
AND NATIVE AFFAIRS,
PORT MOLESBY.

Forwarded, please.

/ /19

.....
District Commissioner

Amount Paid for War Damage Compensation £.....

Amount Paid from D.N.E. Trust Fund £.....

Amount Paid from P.E.D.P. Trust Fund £.....

.....

.....

.....

opula

(COPY)

TERRITORY OF PAPUA-NEW GUINEA.

DS.30-11-116.

DEPARTMENT OF DISTRICT SERVICES AND
NATIVE AFFAIRS,
PORT MORESBY.

MEMORANDUM FOR --

2nd August, 1950.

District Officer at Wewak,
District Sepik.

WEWAK PATROL REPORT NO.15 - 49/50.

Receipt is acknowledged of your WK.P/R. 15 of 4th July 1950, together with the above, which has been read with interest.

It is pleasing to see that the officer is taking steps to guard against over-recruitment, that War Damage Claims have been finalized for the area in question, and that it is to receive regular patrolling in future.

Roads and Bridges. I agree with the remarks made under this heading; if stocks will allow, picks and shovels should be loaned to these people for road work, where and when necessary.

Councils. No attempt should be made to initiate these in the area, at this stage.

The concluding remarks, under the heading "General" are of interest and are being circulated by memorandum for the information of all field officers, as there are no doubt many who will be interested.

(I.F. CHAMPION)
ACTING DIRECTOR.

MINUTE TO : Officer-in-Charge,
LUMI.

For your information,

P.R.15.
15th August, 1950.


(J.R. RIGBY)
Acting District Officer,
Sepik District.

File

TERRITORY OF PAPUA & NEW GUINEA

File No. 30

Lumi Patrol Post.
Aitape Subdistrict.
19.6.50

District Officer,
WEWAK

PATROL REPORT - WEST WAPI AREA

Forwarded herewith are four (4) copies of the a/m
Report for distribution, please.

A copy has been forwarded to A. D. C. Aitape for
information.

..... P. O.
Officer-in-Charge.

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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE & AIR FORCE

PATROL REPORT No. 15/49-50

SUBJECT OF PATROL: West End Area of Aitape Sub-District.
OFFICER CONDUCTING PATROL: Mr R. A. Fienberg, Patrol Officer.

AREA CONTROLLED: That area WEST of LINE Patrol Post and known as the WEST WAPI, Aitape Sub-District.

OBJECTS OF PATROL: (1) Revision of Census.
(2) Investigation of additional car Damage claims.
(3) General Administration.

DURATION OF PATROL: From 29 May 50 To 5 June 50 (incl)

PERSONNEL ACCOMPANYING: 4 Members R.A.A.F.
1 R.M.C.

MAP REFERENCE: Aitape Sheet 2078 - 4 miles = 1 inch. Strat Series. M. E. L. Grid.
(No copy District Map available)

INTRODUCTION:

Apart from the objects enumerated above (which would apply to other sections of the Wapi) my reasons for choosing this area for my first patrol since taking over the Wapi Patrol Post were that exactly twelve months had past since the last census patrol; I had reason to believe the area to be somewhat over-recruited and the people not over-keen on taking advantage of the medical services available at Wapi. The passage of one year between census checks thus makes the figures compiled valuable for statistical purposes, while further recruiting can now be successfully controlled and an accurate assessment of medical requirements made. The western portion of the Wapi has been the least patrolled in past years, and I intend visiting it again and spending more time there than other sections have been patrolled and I have familiarised myself with all the country controlled from this Post. Most villages are small and the area is only sparsely populated in comparison with other portions of equal size, while the inhabitants are the least sophisticated, with the possible exception of those living in the vicinity of the Sepik and Yellow rivers.

DAILY DIARY:

- Monday 29th May:** WAPI to MIMTINI - Village inspected and census revised. To WOHITINI and SUGOITINI villages. Inspected and census checked. R.A.A. investigated.
- Tuesday 30th May:** SUGOITINI to WIMATI No. 1, to MIMTINI No. 1, to WIMATI. Inspections and census checks. To WOHITINI and WOHITINI. WOHITINI checked en route. Reported an excellent village.
- Wednesday 31st May:** To WAPI. Village in process of being rebuilt on new ground. Inspected site of proposed Medical Aid Post. To WOHITINI. Census revised. To WOHITINI. Heavy rain.

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PATROL DIARY - Konta.

Thursday 1st June : WONNI inspected and census checked. To YWAITHI, To YEBIL. Villages in state of collapse. People set to work under supervision. To URIVAI - inspection and census. Back to Yebil. Census revised and village again inspected.

Friday 2nd June : To TINNI. Patrol stores left here and patrol continued on to KANAI and KHANTIN. No Villages being built. Sick to hospital. Census revised. Returned to TINNI. KWATUM census checked. Sing-sing at night. Distributed trade gifts.

Saturday 3rd June : To KALINGUM. Inspection and census revision. Sick to hospital. To MILKILI - village in poor condition and tasks set. Census revised.

Sunday 4th June : To YAWITHI, LAH-ON and MURU-UM villages. Inspected and census revised. Sick to hospital. Rested in afternoon.

Monday 5th June : To OPHEAI - inspected and checked census. To LUMI, census revised. Returned to Station.

1. OPHEAI a. The Census

New type village books were issued to all villages in this area in June 1949, it being only necessary to revise the list of names on this occasion. Some difficulty was experienced in arranging the people in to family groups, village officials for the most part being of little assistance. However a perusal of the census figures obtained will show that 45 "New Names" were recorded, that is of people who had not previously presented themselves for inclusion in past census lists. This, out of a total recorded population of less than 2500 is pleasing, and shows that the people are losing their fear of patrols and are now more prepared to establish contact. These New Names are shown as "Inward Migrations" there being no column set aside for recording them separately, and their total is derived (apart from physical count) by subtracting the "Outward" from the "Inward" migrations, there being no migrations to villages outside those under review.

It is considered that the census of the area is now at least 90% accurate, it seeming likely, by a study of the figures, that a few females in the 10-18 age group are not being produced. This is only to be expected until such time as we have gained the complete confidence of the natives and the reasons behind the census checks at least partly appreciated.

A somewhat unusual, and pleasing fact which may be seen by a comparison of births and deaths since 1949 is that out of 26 villages, 20 show a natural increase, 3 remain static while only one village shows a natural decrease and that of one only. The number of pregnancies has dropped sharply over the 12 months while the fewest deaths have occurred in the 5-8 and 9-13 age groups and the most in the 0-1 month. Five women are reported to have died in childbirth.

(b) Labour - Recruiting etc.

I consider several West Nari villages to be over-recruited and am submitting to the HQ a list which I consider should be closed forthwith to further recruiting until the end of 1950. It is estimated that by that time a number of men will have been repatriated. However the labour situation in the area will come under review at the end of December, and if I am then not satisfied with the position further recommendations for extending the time of closure will be made. There seems to be a wide-spread belief that the Nari area can supply an inexhaustible supply of labour, but even allowing that the West Nari with its population of 680 males in the 16-45 age group is not a fair argument, nothing could be farther from the truth.

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2. (b) Contd.

It may be noted that villages such as KANDI are not actually over-recruited now, but certainly will be if any more men become indentured. Such villages are recommended for closure, it being obviously absurd to wait until the horses have gone before shutting the gate. In this particular village 30 "adult" males remain, but of these 9 are aged and incapable of heavy labour and another has lost a limb. To attempt to judge the situation therefore by the number of male adults left in the village in relation to the number of females is dangerously inaccurate. It gives no true picture of remaining village labour resources whatsoever.

2. WAR DAMAGE COMPENSATION :

The previous patrol had carried out investigation and recording of W.D.C. claims, so that only a very small number of additional claims were tendered. These were lodged by persons absent under indenture at the time of the last patrol or unable, for some legitimate reason, to then submit their claim.

There should be no further claims from this area.

3. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

(a) Native Affairs.

If the lack of complaints is any indication then the West Wapi is a law-abiding and peaceful area. Not one complaint was brought forward during the patrol and there was no indication of inter-village friction. These people are particularly unsophisticated. They seldom leave their own immediate area and with the exception of labourers returning and departing they have little contact with the outside world, i.e. outside their own linguistic group.

The area was first patrolled (according to available records) in 1931 and there were subsequent patrols in 1940, 1945, 1946 and 1949, so that, obviously, little has been attempted in the way of advancement. This is scarcely surprising when it is remembered that geographically and economically the West Wapi is as far from large business or administrative centre as international boundaries and labour requirements will allow, and this, coupled with his complete lack of interest, has not allowed the native to become involved in any of the schemes which from time to time provided for his cousin on the coast. In fact, one can scarcely avoid coming to the conclusion that if any one area in the country has been exploited for the sake of the prosperity of others then that area is surely the Aitape hinterland. For many years the Wapi has provided a steady flow of labour for distant centres of commerce. The drain on the manpower of the villages has been constant, and one would find it difficult to observe anything given in return apart from odd, and often useless, articles of trade, and an entirely superfluous knowledge of how to cut and bag coconuts. The returning wanderer does not even bring monetary wealth to his village. He invariably arrives home "broke", and had I not been told this by the men themselves, I could gain the knowledge by a simple deduction: There are some 10 grove stores at Aitape and more at Wapak for a small resident native population, but only one in the Wapi, and that does practically no business.

Whether the native resents the outside world's attitude towards him is difficult to ascertain. He is not a particularly communicative person, and I suspect, suffers somewhat from an inferiority complex. This is manifest in a "couldn't care less" attitude, a surprising show of self-confidence and a disregard for advice and assistance. He expresses no desire for the establishment of schools, patronages, but shows little enthusiasm for the medical services provided and makes no effort to increase the numbers of his livestock or his village wealth by trading with the coastal areas. He seems to show, indeed, a faint contempt for everybody and everything. On the face of it, he can scarcely be blamed.

From a brief wartime observation and an equally brief survey now, I consider the Wapi area and the Wapi people have great possibilities. If we can avoid the mistakes made in other areas and if we can consider the Wapi as being something other than merely an inexhaustible supply of contract labour, then we are at least

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3. (a) - Contd.

heading in the right direction. The length of the road is a secondary consideration. It can always be reached by progress, no matter how slow, but never by remaining static.

The patrol was well received in all villages. There were no outstanding incidents and no show of hostility.

(b) AGRICULTURE & LIVESTOCK :

There is no shortage of basic foodstuffs. Taro and sago are the main items of diet with the addition of sweet potato and fruits. Agricultural methods are, of course, very primitive, and a great deal of village land and labour is wasted in consequence. Only the latter is in short supply, as yet. The soil is not particularly good being for the most part of a heavy composition, often clay, but there are patches of sandy loam which produce good crops. The climate is ideal for the cultivation of European vegetables, and one or two villages are showing interest in the production of cabbages, tomatoes etc. A small quantity of a good variety of rice has been received and this is being distributed for planting. Inaug has been restricted to villages in close proximity to the Patrol Post until the results have been noted and more seed obtained. At the present time there is insufficient rain and consequently I have delayed planting until the end of the dry period.

Livestock is in very short supply throughout the area. Pigs are few and of a particularly inferior type, while fowls are a rarity. There is less livestock in the Wapi area than in any other in which I have patrolled, and I have not yet seen one well-bred fowl or pig. The climate I consider to be eminently suited to the breeding of most livestock, especially pigs, fowls and goats and the establishment of a small stock farm would be a tremendous asset.

(c) MEDICAL - HEALTH & HYGIENE :

No Medical Assistant accompanied the patrol, therefore a separate medical report appears as an Appendix ('A') to this report.

(d) EDUCATION :

There are no Government schools established in the area patrolled, and Mission influence in this direction has not been felt to any extent. In the absence of any knowledge of the plans of the Education Dept, I refrained from making mention of the matter, lest I raise false hopes. Throughout the West Wapi there is not one student absent attending a Government school and only seven (7) at Mission establishments.

(e) ROADS & BRIDGES :

The rugged nature of the country and the length of time which has elapsed between patrols, coupled with the general shortage of manpower and tools and the distance between larger villages, all combine to make the area one in which walking conditions are poor. I do not consider it practicable to expect all roads to be cut and maintained in good order throughout the year when the average number of able-bodied males in villages is 86. In fact many of the tracks could not be put in good order by any means short of mechanical equipment. As long as the approaches to the villages are cleared and the road throughout checked for slides, breakaways and other dangerous points and bridges installed where necessary, nothing further could be insisted upon without imposing hardship. Officials were reminded of their obligations under the Ordinance, and work was ordered to be done where needed and where it could be carried out without undue effort. None of the roads is suitable for vehicular traffic and very few would allow the passage of a horse. All villages are in need of picks, shovels and saw iron.

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5. (d) VILLAGE OFFICIALS

Few officials have any knowledge of their duties and they do not appear to be held in very high regard by the villagers. This is, no doubt, more the fault of visiting officers than anything else. A native can scarcely be expected to become acquainted with Administration policy or domestic with a hat being placed upon his head, nor can the village people be expected to practice obedience to one appointed to a position completely foreign to their ideas of village administration. I intend bringing village officials in to Lami in groups for a short course on their function, powers and responsibilities, and this may improve their efficiency and standing. However I do not expect any really satisfactory results. While a village official remains an unpaid civil servant and the whipping boy of visiting officials and village natives alike one cannot expect to have the natural leaders come forward to accept an unenviable position, or, for that matter, even the intelligent.

(e) VILLAGE COUNCILS :

There are no Councils as yet established in the area patrolled and I consider that there is little likelihood of their being any practical use for many years to come. Of the many things required in the Tani, the least important at this period are village councils.

(f) MISSIONS :

There are no Mission stations established in the area and little, if any, mission influence is so far felt. There are one or two mission-trained teachers in the area but they have neither the facilities nor the training to undertake the immense task of educating a totally ignorant people, and cannot be censured if there is no visible evidence of their having accomplished anything. They are, at least, making an attempt.

(g) GENERAL :

I record the following as a matter of interest for other officers engaged in field work, on the assumption that the majority, like myself, are interested in making the work of foot travel less arduous and who are conservative in the style of footwear they affect. Until this patrol I had never worn any footwear other than the regulation Army-type boot, and being physically slight, have often bemoaned their weight and tendency to attract large quantities of mud, sticks and leaves. After the first day's walk on this patrol, as an experiment, I changed to a pair of rubber-soled, canvas-topped boots, known, I believe, as "Gym boots"; as light and as comfortable as sandshoes but of much stronger construction and providing adequate protection for the feet. The area patrolled is mountainous, the roads particularly rough and the greater part consisting of that slippery stone-like clay known generally as "scap stone". I found that the "gym boots" were ideal for all types of country encountered. Despite wet tracks and many difficult and even dangerous climbs, they provide adequate purchase and are so light that even if one does slip one is much more capable of retaining balance. Worn with leggings of American Army type cutters they afford ample protection to the feet, ankles and legs and I found no soreness at the end of the day's walk. They are particularly suited to walking in river beds, both over rocks and on sand, and as mud, grass etc. do not adhere to them, do not become heavier as one proceeds. (After the first day I weighed my Army-type boots. They weighed over 1½ lbs each including the mud adhering to them.) After more than a week walking I could see no appreciable deterioration in their condition, another distinct advantage over leather footwear, and one which should appeal to economy-minded patrol officers. As these boots may be purchased for less than a pound it seems that one may find the boot allowance adequate after all.

For Census figures see Census Register of

John Henry P. O.

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PATROL REPORT No.

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APPENDIX 'A'

MEDICAL REPORT - KESI KAPI - AITANE SUBDISTRICT

Apart from a large number of cases of tropical ulcers, little sickness was encountered in the villages visited. As there were no absentees from the census check all people were seen and more than 50 persons who had not previously appeared were sighted. Evidently, therefore, there was no-one so sick as to be unable to make line. As each family group was checked off the census roll the natives comprising it were passed on to the E.M.O. who examined each person with some care. In this way over 50 people were found to be in need of hospital treatment for ulcers and a much smaller number for other complaints. These were despatched to hospital immediately in the charge of the village medical staff.

Practically all villages have M.V.E.'s, but they are, without exception, sadly lacking in any form of training. Steps are being taken by the E.M.A. i/c Lumi hospital to rectify this, but I am impressed on officials that in the meantime it would be their responsibility to ensure that those needing medical care were sent to hospital. These people are still very primitive and it will be some little time yet before they will come to accept medical treatment with confidence. At KAKOI village (one of the most primitive) the people were found to be in a sorry way, many ulcers having reached an advanced state, the child of the M.V.E. being one of the worst. These people at first refused to go to hospital and considerable persuasion was needed before they agreed, albeit reluctantly, to go. The M.V.E. was particularly unhappy, and declared solemnly that if anyone died at the hospital his own life would surely be forfeit. The people from this area also expressed a fear of travelling to Lumi, although the distance may be covered in two days and the pass through no "foreign" area. I did not accept this as being a serious or legitimate excuse, but assured them of the Government's protection at all times and promised to deal very severely with anyone subjecting them to ill-treatment or intimidation or molesting them in any way, either while journeying to and from hospital or while undergoing treatment there.

Mr Healey, the M.M., Lumi is establishing several Aid Posts within the sub-district, and this will eliminate the necessity for anyone to travel more than a day's walk for treatment. The site for one of these posts, between KAKAIKI and PAI villages was inspected by me and found to be very suitable. Work is at present in progress on erecting wards and other buildings. The site is on high ground with an adequate water supply in close proximity and the Post will serve a number of nearby villages.

I do not consider there is any immediate necessity for a medical patrol to the area, but Mr Healey has been informed of conditions there and will no doubt visit it in due course.

The patrol was accompanied by WEL 17 E.M.O. NIYONI. I cannot speak too highly of his enthusiasm or of the thoroughness of his work, and his skill appeared better than average. He is to be commended on the manner in which he carried out his duties.

W. Healey
Patrol Officer.

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PATROL REPORT No.

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APPENDIX "B"

REPORT ON N. G. R. F. PERSONNEL ACCOMPANYING PATROL :

The following members of the N. G. R. F. accompanied the patrol :

- | | | |
|---------------|---------------|---|
| Reg. No. 4181 | Cpl BINGKING | - An efficient and hard-working NCO. Has had considerable experience in the handling of partially controlled natives. |
| Reg. No. 6668 | Const BEN-HOT | - Young and enthusiastic. Should become a valuable member as he gains more experience. |
| Reg. No. 6474 | Const SEKO | - A cheerful and efficient Const. Does not lack initiative, is quick witted and an asset to any patrol. |
| Reg. No. 6519 | Const KOLOU | - A Marus native. Young and keen and of more than average intelligence. |

All the abovesamed members carried out their duties in an efficient manner, and their bearing and discipline was good at all times.

P. J. Keenan
.....
Patrol Officer.
Asst. Sub-Inspector.

For Census figures see Census Register

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