

THE OPEN DOOR

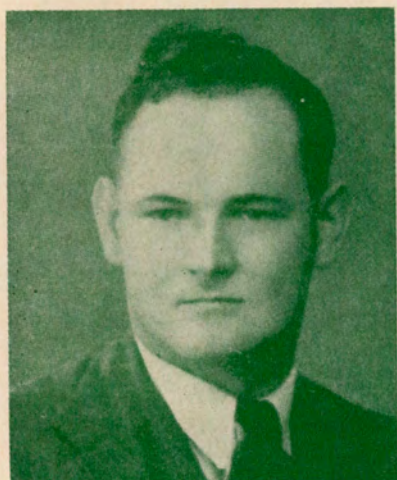


The Rev. Gordon H. Young
Highlands Pioneer

TWENTY YEARS IN THE HIGHLANDS

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Rev. R. L. Barnes



Rev. C. J. Keightley

Pioneer Leaders



Mrs. Dey, our guest editor
teaches a literacy class.

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love and of a sound mind. (2 Tim. 1:7).

Twenty Years Of Witness In The Papua New Guinea Highlands 1950-1970

The first twenty years of Methodist Mission endeavour in the Southern Highlands District of the Territory of Papua and New Guinea surely gives us proof of the power of love overcoming the spirit of fear. Man lives under the spirit of fear whether he belongs to a primitive stone age culture in beautiful Highlands valleys, keeping himself alive with subsistence farming, or to the cream of society in a technologically advanced country with all its material benefits. Without God's gift of the Holy Spirit in his heart, man's life is one of fear.

There are always those who say "Why not leave these people alone?". In many ways the people of the New Guinea Highlands live in ideal conditions. A healthy climate with plenty of both sunshine and rain, and an agricultural system which suits them. No one need go hungry, or cold, or unclothed if he is willing to work. If he is unable because of youth or age, his family cares for him.

But ask anyone of the Christian folk if there is any difference now and almost always the answer will be — "We are not afraid any more." Thousands of people went in daily fear of their neighbours, of sudden warfare, of sickness, of death, and were terrified of the evil spirits which they believed caused much of their troubles; afraid of sorcery and magic, unseen and insidious.

The old evils are not removed. Unfortunately new ones come within the fast changing life in a "developing" country and clash of alien cultures. But the Gospel of Jesus Christ brings a way of inward peace, a strong love which overcomes fear, and in the darkness a light which can never be extinguished.

In the following pages we have tried to give you a glimpse of that light shining through many witnesses. Of those whose names may not even be mentioned, we beg forgiveness, but it is impossible in such a short space to write of everyone. Those of us who have been part of the beginning praise God for that wonderful experience, and pray God for you who will be the witness of the future.

JOYCE K. DEY

Hamilton, New Zealand.

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

- 1875 The Methodist Church of Australia began mission work in the Duke of York Islands, near Rabaul, with the arrival of Rev. George Brown and his Fijian helpers.
- 1891 Rev. W. E. Bromilow began work in the Papuan Islands.
- 1902 The New Zealand Church joined in work in the Solomon Islands; Revs. J. F. Goldie, George Brown, and S. R. Rooney being the pioneer men.
- 1945 After World War II the Australian Administration began to move into the hitherto unexplored Highlands and the Methodists of Australia and New Zealand felt a responsibility to take the Gospel to some of the newly contacted Highlands people.
- 1950 Early in the year a survey party consisting of Rev. E. Clarke (S.A.) of Papuan Islands District and Rev. G. H. Young (S.A.) of New Guinea Islands District with three indigenous workers from each area went to Mount Hagen to investigate suitable areas where no other Missions were working. After much discussion and some patrols they felt that the Mendi area was the right place, although at that time it was not at all opened up.
- In September 1950 a Government Patrol walked through the Mendi area from Lake Kutubu and selected a site for a station and possible airstrip. In October Rev. Gordon Young was invited to accompany the first patrol to Mendi from Mount Hagen skirting to the north of Mount Giluwe (13,660ft). Through some if this area there were no tracks and they had to cut their way, sometimes climbing to 10,000 feet above sea level. The journey took seven days, but was reduced to five days on the return trip. The following month Gordon Young with Tomas To Mar and Kaminiel Ladi (both from New Ireland) returned with another patrol, this time to settle.
- 1951 As more staff arrived from other Districts and Australia, education, medical and agricultural work was begun, but in all fields the progress was very disappointing; the language barrier was frustrating; the Mendi people were only interested in the missionaries as a possible source of material wealth; expatriate missionaries were restricted by law from moving freely except within a few miles of the Patrol Post.
- 1953 A second Mission Station was set up at Hoiebia, Tari, fifty odd air miles west of Mendi, by Rev. Roland Barnes (Q) and educational and medical work commenced. The area was heavily populated and the Huli people more co-operative than the Mendi, but the same slow progress and frustrations were suffered.
- 1955 A separate Leprosy Hospital was commenced in Tari by Sister Elizabeth Kessler (Germany).
- 1956 Work was extended to the Lai Valley west of Mendi, but separated from it by a high mountain range, and Rev. David Mone (Tonga) was appointed to supervise it.
- 1959 Rev. C. J. Keightley (N.Z.) walked through the Lai Valley further west to Nipa and established another station in an unexplored area.

- 1960 The first enquirers came forward at Tari and Mendi and pre-baptismal instruction classes commenced. Some literacy classes in the Huli language for adults were held at Tari.
- 1961 Synod recorded:—
- | | | |
|-------|--------------------|-----------|
| | Baptised Believers | Enquirers |
| Mendi | 5 | 45 |
| Tari | 33 | 165 |
- 1962 Rev. C. J. Hutton (Vic) who had been a school teacher in Tari and was then on ministerial probation flew into Magarima (north of Nipa and east of Tari), to commence work there, and explored the area further north where later stations were established.
- 1963 Bible Schools for illiterate men were commenced.
A District Pastor Training College for literate Pastors was begun under the leadership of Rev. Graham Smith (S.A.)
- 1964 Moves were made towards a Melanesian Conference of the Methodist Districts, or alternatively a wider union of these Districts with the Papua Ekalesia (originally London Missionary Society), United Church Port Moresby and Kwato Mission at Samarai.
- 1968 In January the United Church was formally inaugurated, the Highlands District becoming the Highlands Region of the United Church in Papua, New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.
- 1969 The town work of Mount Hagen, some 75 miles by road from Mendi was included in the Highlands Region.
- 1970 Circuits and Superintendent Ministers are as follows:—
- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Bishop | Rev. A. G. Smith (S.A.) |
| North Mendi | Rev. Tomas To Mar (N.G.) |
| South Mendi | Rev. F. J. K. Baker (N.Z.) |
| Lai | Rev. Tava Tupou (Tonga) |
| Nipa | Rev. R. Reeson (N.S.W.) |
| Magarima | Rev. Aminiasi Qalo (Fiji) |
| Tari | |
| Huli | Rev. Matthew Beaso (Sol. Is.) |
| Mount Hagen | Rev. Sione Kami (Tonga) |
| St. Paul's College | Rev. D. Kitchingman (N.Z.) |

Church Growth Statistics

Year	Overseas Staff	Coastal Staff	Baptised Highlands Members
1959	12	27	—
1960	13	18	—
1961	12	29	38
1962	13	30	287
1963	13	28	1,063
1964	14	29	1,779
1965	18	22	3,927
1966	18	21	7,221
1967	20	28	9,917
1968	26	30	11,277
1969	25	31	12,112

In 1969 there were 27 Highlands Pastors, and 167 local Evangelists.

The First Witness - Opening New Stations - 1950 to 1970 -

MENDI: Mrs. GRACE YOUNG, wife of Rev. Gordon Young, writes of the very early days. Her experiences were similar to those of many of the wives who accompanied their husbands into new areas, except that each time it has become easier with more airstrips, loads, and supplies.

Oh! It is hard to say "Goodbye", but this we had to do in July, 1950 to our friends and the little home we loved at Namatanai, New Ireland. It was even harder for our companions, Kaminiel Ladi, his wife Miriam and their two children; another catechist Tomas To Mar and a young helper, David Bulu. It was a wonder all the tears that fell did not wash us down the hill in a flood. A truck took us to Ulapatur on the West Coast to meet a Trawler for Rabaul.

The Trawler had engine trouble so we could not sail that day, and slept the night at a Chinese owned plantation. In the middle of the night Ladi came to Gordon and said that Miriam had run away. They found her on the road to Namatanai. Miriam was overcome by fear and homesickness because of all the stories they had been told by their relatives, of how the early Fijian Missionaries were killed by their ancestors. Their friends had begged them not to go, as the same thing would happen to them and they would never see home again. By morning Miriam had peace of mind and we set sail on the Trawler not knowing what the future held in store for us all, but sure that God had called us and we were on our way in answer to that Call.

The men went on to Mount Hagen and we women waited in Rabaul until in September I received a letter from Gordon asking me to join him at Ogelbeng, the Lutheran Mission Station, near Mount Hagen. I sailed on the Malaita for Madang, and on October 30th 1950, a Madang Air Lines "Dragon" flew me to Ogelbeng. The Lutheran Missionaries from Germany made we most welcome in their home. Nobody seemed to know when the Patrol was due back as they had been expected before then, but we had just finished our evening meal and were sitting talking when the boys called out "They are coming". Although the Patrol was late arriving in Mount Hagen, Gordon decided the extra four miles to Ogelbeng was something nothing after walking for seven days to Mendi, and five back again. Oh! With what joy I ran to meet him and the others. There wasn't much sleep that night, we had so much to say.

Within two weeks Gordon and the three Coastal men left for Mendi to choose a Mission site and remain there. So the Methodist Mission work began in November 1950 at Unja, Mendi, with the erection of two pup tents for Ladi, Tomas and David, and strips of unbleached calico slung over poles to form a tent fly with bush partly filling the ends, for Gordon and all their supplies.

At Ogelbeng I kept house for the young American Medical Missionary, and helped with the hospital work which I found most rewarding. When the Mendi airstrip was in use my task was to sort out a Dragon load of cargo into small Auster loads ready to be flown in. Pineapple tops were saved and

put away ready for Mendi; our friends gave us fresh plants as well, different varieties of banana palms, seed potatoes and anything else they thought would be useful. Bread, cake, biscuits and even a cat found a place on the plane. A Policeman lifted the lid of the cat's box at the Mendi airstrip, away ran puss, so we had to find another to take her place. Unfortunately for pussy the Mendi people discovered that this strange new animal was good to eat, and had to be reminded often that these were household pets.

Early in 1951 two more Pastors came with their wives, and Miriam with her two children. The men flew on, but the wives and children stayed with me, because Mendi was still a restricted area for women. Our time of waiting drew us very close together. The Lutheran Mission Staff were wonderful to all our Staff who came under their care, and we cannot give them adequate thanks or enough high praise. They treated us like their own, they shared our joys, gave us courage and assisted in every possible way to get those in authority to agree to us women joining our husbands.

Poor Ladi had to be flown back to Ogelbeng once. We did not recognise him, he was so swollen all over. However the Doctor discovered that he was allergic to the pandanus nuts which the Mendis had kindly given him to eat. Gordon too came back once, and I remember how tired and thin he looked with dark red circles under his eyes. A pioneering situation is not an easy one, especially when he had to stop the Mendis fighting every day. They would come to the Mission Station each morning to work on clearing the site; once handed a spade to work with it did not take them long to learn that a spade was almost as good a weapon as a bow and arrows.

Finally the "Red Tape" for the Pacific Islands wives was cut. Miriam, Doris, Dulcie and their families left for Mendi a week prior to my departure. I was the first white woman to live in Mendi; theirs was the honour of being the first Missionary Wives to live there.

It was the morning of July 24th, 1951, when the Lutheran Mission Auster landed at Ogelbeng en route for that pilot's first flight to Mendi, and he told me that providing the weather was good and the flight satisfactory he would return for me. Yes! Permission had been granted at last, because they finally had a teleradio at the Mendi Patrol Station. (Incidentally this had been burnt the night before and was out of action!) It is hard to find words as to my feelings that day, after twelve months of waiting to join Gordon in this venture of service for the extension of the Kingdom of God. There was the great excitement of being reunited with my husband, but no fear of the unknown; this thought of going to Mendi was part of my life; a feeling of joy and anticipation. When the plane landed it was hard to open the door for the people crowding round to catch a glimpse of this most peculiar creature, a white woman.

* * *

Rev. Gordon Young continued as leader of the Highlands work until early 1960. His was the very difficult task of vigorous and courageous leadership in those early days; disarming his "workmen" as they came on to the Mission each day; building weather-proof buildings suitable for the "cold wet tropics" from local materials; walking for hours over rough tracks in all weathers; welding his raw team of Coastal men, not used to the exuberant

Highlanders, into strong leaders; and working for ten years without seeing any evidence of the Gospel having reached the hearts of the people. That harvest was reaped by those who came after, yet each and every one played his part and continues to do so. "To God be the glory, great things He hath done."

TARI: Here is an account of the beginning of the work at Tari, as seen by one of the Huli people. DABUMA is now about thirty years old, married to Waiwali, with four children, and is one of the Highlands men at present studying at Rarongo Theological College. He remembers the arrival of the early Administration Patrols in 1951, and has some unhappy memories of many of his people being put in gaol, mainly for fighting with each other. He was born quite close to Hoiebia, the site chosen for the Methodist Mission at Tari.

In 1953 the hard work on the airstrip was nearly finished and the planes started to land. At that time the Missionaries flew from Mendi to Tari. They were Rev. G. Young from South Australia, Tomas To Mar from New Ireland and Inosi Kwabiaoni from the Papuan Islands. They spent a few nights at the Government Station and then came over to Hoiebia, about two miles. On their arrival we were a bit frightened to go near to them because we thought they were the same as the Government. The thing that was different was that these men had no guns. At that time I was about twelve, so I was there too. These Missionaries were kind to us and tried to make friends with us. When we saw this we started to come to them and they began to learn a few words of our language. A man called Elaya, who had been to Mount Hagen with the first white visitors, became their interpreter. We started to help them to build their houses, and after the houses were finished they looked for some boys to work in their kitchens, so they found me and two others. The other two worked in Rev. Young's house and I became a cook boy for the two Coastal men.

In those days Tomas and Inosi used to give me fish and meat from the tins, but I never took it because it did not taste nice to me. Also the smell of soap was very horrible to me at that time so I never used it. It took me some months before I began to eat the meat and fish, and use the soap.

On Sundays they preached the Gospel to us; usually about thirty people coming. When the Missionaries prayed to God we covered our faces with our hands and kept watching them.

After a few weeks Rev. R. Barnes came from Mendi and Mr. Young went back. Mr. Barnes and his two men continued their work in preaching the Gospel and building the houses for those who came later to do the work of God there. These men tried their best to be one with the people there. When the people saw this they were very happy to join them and do the work that needed to be done. Every afternoon they learned some of the Huli language and taught us about the Lord Jesus.

Some time later Mrs Barnes and her two boys arrived. Many of us were surprised to see the first white woman. Then Sister Walker arrived to begin the health work and the people were very happy to come to the hospital and put medicine on their sores. Later two Missionaries came from the Solomon Islands — Alpheus Alekera and John Pirah. We were afraid to talk with them because of the colour of their black skins, but Alekera started the school and

I attended with some others. More Missionaries came and more of our people listened to God's word.

I was with the Mission quite a long time but I didn't have any idea about Christianity. I only tried to do good works to please the Missionaries, and I tried to get good things from them such as axes, knives and singing paint. I went to school with the other boys and girls but the school was meaningless to me, so often I asked my teacher to let me go home. I went and joined my people to fight with other groups. Sometimes I went and learned some of our culture from our leaders and I had to conduct spirit worship. Most of my time I was busy studying these things. Some times I didn't come to school for two weeks. When I came to school again my teachers used to ask me, "Where have you been, my boy?" I usually told them that I got very big sick when I got home. Other times I told them my parents stopped me from coming back quickly. My teachers knew what I had been doing but they never sent me out from school. From this I thought I wanted to learn the things for them, but now I can see my idea was wrong. We had this wrong thought; every month we went to ask our Minister to give us pay for the things which we learned from him in school. Every time we went to him he gave us only one answer. He said, "The things we teach you in school are yours. You are not doing our work." He was right but we did not understand the meaning of school, so many of the boys left and went back to the village, only a few of us continued. That doesn't mean we knew the meaning of it either, but we wanted to stay with the Mission because it was better than living in the village. Only four of us reached Grade 6 in 1960 but still we didn't know why we did this and what we would do when we finished school.

When I look back, I can see what God has done for me even though I didn't understand. From this I believe that there is God's plan for me in the future. I can trust in His will and do what he has given me to do in this world. The man who has many pigs always works hard to find food for his pigs so none of them will be hungry and go to other gardens to seek for food. I have the same idea about God's people. God has chosen me to feed His people with the Good News of Jesus Christ. Here in Rarongo College I am finding the Spiritual food for the people of God.

MAGARIMA: In 1962 JOHN HUTTON went into Magarima, roughly half way between Mendi and Tari. The people had built an airstrip, almost unaided in the hope of encouraging Mission and Administration personnel to come into their area, and had been asking for some time for our help. Here are some extracts from John's diary.

27/3/62: Arrived Magarima airstrip per BVJ (M.A.F. Cessna aircraft) 8.30 a.m., and installed our things in the Administration Rest House. First impressions; large proportion of pitpit (wild cane grass) to people; gardens mostly in river valleys; not many trees; interested to see when people came that they had definite Tari associations (language etc.) but had some Nipa or Mendi influence (e.g. shell ornaments); quite a few were able to speak both languages. About 150 people gathered in the late afternoon. They talked about their desire to have Missionaries come — how they have had this desire for a long time. They listened intently to recorded Huli chants and Bible stories.

28/3/62: People gathered again in the morning, this time about 230 increasing to 300, they listened to Bible stories and talked for two hours. They affirmed their desire for a "Teacher" (of God's Word) to be appointed immediately. I made a general survey S. and S.W. of the airstrip.

In January 1963 the Hutton family were able to move into Magarima.

BARBARA HUTTON gives us a few of her impressions:

The people were very keen to hear the word of God, and came every afternoon for a meeting. As they said, "We are years behind the people of Tari, and so have a lot to catch up." They would often ask us to repeat a message two or three times, so that they could remember it. People didn't come with their problems, arguments and complaints like the Hulis did. They said that if they had a quarrel between a husband and wife, they were too ashamed to tell us about it. The biggest problem to me at Magarima was the sick people landing on the doorstep when I had neither the knowledge nor medicines to help. There was supposed to be a "Doctor Boy" at the Government Aid Post a few miles away but he was often absent (attending to his pigs somewhere) for days and sometimes weeks on end. I did what I could. When very ill people came I would speak on the teleradio to Sister Helen Young at Nipa for advice, and ask for any medicines she could spare. Sometimes we had women with babies ill with pneumonia sleeping in our kitchen so I could give them their medicines during the night, but even then many died.

MOUNT HAGEN 1970. The Bishop says:—We never took any interest in Mount Hagen — after all the Lutheran, Anglican and Baptist Missions all work there. But as the number of United Church folk gradually increased they started their own services. This newly formed work has now been made a Circuit of the Highlands Region. Rev. Sione Kami (Tonga) has been stationed there, and there is every indication that under his dynamic ministry, a vigorous young church is growing.

SIONE KAMI says:—None of the Mount Hagen native people come to our Church as they are looked after by the other Churches and Missions who were here before. The people of the United Church are mostly Coastal people — Papuans and New Guineans who are working here for the Administration or for private firms; we have some European members and some Chinese; I think about 200 come. We have our service at 10.15 every Sunday morning. Most of our services are conducted in English, not very much Pidgin or Motu, as all of our congregation understand some English. It is sometimes hard working among a mixed congregation like this. I usually visit three schools every week, and spend a lot of time visiting the United Church people. The more I go to see them, the more come to Church; the less I go to visit them the less people come to Church on Sundays. At present we have no Church building so we use a school room at the Primary School, and are now raising money to build our Church. It is hard work but we are happy to do it.

SOUTH MENDI: In 1970 Rev. FRED BAKER (N.Z.) and his family moved to Yaken, seven miles south of Mendi township. His is a new Station in an "old" area. He writes:—

Yaken already has a history as a Church going back to 1956. Since then Pastors from New Britain, the Solomon Islands, Papuan Islands and more recently Mendi itself have worked here. One of the first Baptismal Services in Mendi was held at Yaken in July, 1961, when one man, Ndus, was baptised. Today there are about 700 Church Members in this part of the valley.

We have been impressed by the faith of these people. Naturally it is a simple faith, because these are simple unsophisticated people. One of their first reactions when a person gets sick is to call the Evangelist or Pastor to pray for them. Often when a person is being taken to hospital they will have a prayer before they leave home. This is not done for show but arises naturally from their faith. When speaking to anyone about the old times and the new life of a Christian you can see their eyes light up and a quiet smile come on their face.

THE WITNESS OF HEALING — FIRST AID AND INFANT AND MATERNAL WELFARE

From the time of arrival of any Missionary in an area medical first aid was given to those who came in need. As soon as practicable, trained Nurses came, set up their aid posts under extremely primitive conditions and worked marvels of healing with a mixture of modern medicines, common sense and prayer. Often people came unwillingly, and were healed in spite of themselves and their faith in evil spirits. The Administration provides a great deal of help by the provision of drugs and some equipment. Where Government Aid Posts are established the Mission Nurses concentrate on Maternal and Infant Welfare, but where no other medical service is available they offer help for every ailment from broken heads to sick pigs, giving of themselves unstintingly.

Sister Joyce Walker (Q) began the medical work at Mendi in 1951, and was followed by Sisters Beth Priest (N.S.W.) and Lydia Mohring (Germany). Sister Walker also pioneered the Hospital at Tari; followed by Sister Edith James (N.Z.) It is impossible to mention each one separately. As a tribute to them all and a typical history of medical work in the Highlands we bring you this account from Mrs. Margaret Reeson at Nipa.

"Which is it? A baby or a murder?"

Sister Helen Young asked this question when her last Sunday evening Fellowship in Nipa was interrupted by a medical emergency.

HELEN YOUNG came to the Highlands from South Australia in October, 1957, and went to Tari where she was in charge of the Leprosy Centre. In 1960 she transferred to Mendi to work in the Mission Hospital, which was later closed owing to its proximity to the large Public Health Department Hospital. Early in 1961 Helen joined the Nipa staff. The First Aid Post was a rough building 10' x 15' where outpatients were treated. The people quickly responded to general aidpost help but it was some years before many would stay in hospital for extended treatment.

The maternity work started under unpromising circumstances. Two Coastal Pastors' wives were expecting babies in 1961 and there was nowhere suitable for them to go for confinement. Helen noticed that one of the Pastors was building a new 10' x 10' fowl house and persuaded him to line it and put in a window, so that she could use it as a Maternity Hospital! Later there was a room in the outpatients' building, but Helen still had to combat

continual dust filtering through the ceiling, rats and other pests. Few women came in for normal delivery, but they brought in the difficult cases — the result of this being that a Government Census of 1956-57 recorded no deaths of women of child-bearing age for that period. Then the Methodist women of New Zealand made their special project for one year a new Maternity Hospital for Nipa. It was built from pitted timber by Mr. G. T. Dey (N.Z.) and local helpers, and in 1968 the beautiful, shining new permanent building was opened. Since then the number of women coming to have their babies with the Sisters' help has more than trebled. They speak with awe of the incredible cleanliness and comfort of the hospital in contrast to the tiny, low, windowless, filthy "maternity houses" in the bush, with the terrible alone-ness of childbirth where no one may touch the mother to help her. They even enjoy the bucket showers!

In 1962 Helen began a series of Infant Welfare Clinics around the valley. At first response was slow, and sometimes she would walk the six miles out through the bush to Enjua and home through the rain, to have found only a handful of women at the clinic. But gradually numbers increased and mothers became more faithful in attendance. In 1965 a gift from New Zealand brought a Honda motor cycle, which has saved miles of walking. At present there are eleven clinics over a wide area, with hundreds of women and children attending. The clinics bear little resemblance to those in Australia or New Zealand — the babies are weighed on a spring scale hanging from a rafter; little ones are laid in a sling, and the bigger children grab the cloth, pick up their feet and swing! But the same advice and supervision is given as well as all the courses of injections needed by young children as a protective measure.

Now after twelve years Sister Young was returning to South Australia and the people wanted to show their love and gratitude for all that she had done for them. They decided among themselves that they would take up a collection for her on the basis of 10 cents for each child who had been cared for. One morning they gathered to say thank you and bring their gifts. It was not only mothers and babies who wanted to give. As the coins cascaded out on to the garment spread on the ground it was clear that the money represented many memories, many occasions when her help had been given.

There were women who had come to the maternity hospital to have their babies, and young children who had received infant welfare care. There were men and women who had been given treatment in all kinds of illnesses. There were the Mission Staff, brown and white, who had all gone to Sister with their aches and pains, their babies and their worries, and received expert treatment. There were the Administration Officers, who counted Helen the next best thing to a Doctor — she had been asked to patch up many attempted murder cases, and even in the early days been sent out into the bush with an armed guard to attend to an injured Patrol Officer.

Among those who gave were some whose stories are representative of many.

ARMAN has a beautiful plump and precious baby daughter. She is one of the three wives of a leading Christian layman. For over six years she had been married and while she cuddled the babies of her co-wives she longed for a child of her own. At last she became pregnant and joyfully began to attend the ante-natal clinic. In due time she came to the new Maternity Hospital for

confinement. Labour was slow and delivery very difficult, but when Arman finally held her beloved child safely in her arms she realized that if it had not been for Sister Helen her longed-for child may have died at birth. If she had remained at home to face the birth quite alone in the primitive hut, she might still have been childless, and even lost her own life.

TIYAO sees the Maternity Hospital with mixed feelings. Her first babe died at birth there. She recalls how Sister Helen had joined her in her tears for the little one and though she could not understand quite what had happened, she said to her sisters afterward "If I had been alone in the bush, I would have died with my baby. But Sister helped me." Tiyao is expecting another baby now. Rather than feeling anger at the hospital staff she is coming faithfully to ante-natal clinics knowing that here she will find love and help.

KELENJ keeps a watchful eye on her lively, healthy youngster as he plays. She remembers the weeks she spent in hospital with him when he was fifteen months old. She had taken him to one of the regular Infant Welfare Clinics and Sister had noticed his advanced state of malnutrition. Kelenj was persuaded to bring the child to hospital and daily the Sisters struggled to get him to eat. For five weeks they fought and finally she took him home, not much heavier but now able and willing to accept food. She persevered with feeding and now her child is completely normal and healthy.

And so they brought their gifts to add to the pile. It mounted and mounted until over \$62.00 had been given. Counted in 10 cent pieces that is a lot of love

THE WITNESS OF HEALING — LEPROSY

The incidence of leprosy in the New Guinea Highlands is fairly high per total population and quite early after the establishment of the work at Tari, it was decided to set up a separate hospital to help these people. A German Methodist Deaconess came to do this and Sister EDITH JAMES (N.Z.) who later took over the work writes:—

Sister ELISABETH KESSLER had a long wait to set up the first Leprosarium as the land negotiations dragged on. For those able to walk to the Mission Hospital, aidpost treatment was commenced, and a small hut built for Arobe nearby, for he could walk nowhere.

By 1956 a ward of six beds and the administration block of bush materials with a clay floor were ready, and the Centre soon grew to house seventy-two men and twelve women. That bush block was to weather many storms before it was replaced in 1963 by a fine building in permanent materials as a gift of the Leprosy Mission. The real progress was made with the setting up of the surgical unit in 1966 and the whole work including an effective control programme became the responsibility of the Leprosy Mission. The new techniques of medical care and surgery led to an effective outpatients programme and residential wards as such could be closed.

Sister Kessler with her training in the skills of leprosy care laid a good foundation for treatment. Sister Helen Young saw a remarkably rapid acceptance of our care — patients often arriving from great distances, often to disappear equally as unexpectedly when results were not immediate! For a semi-nomadic people long term treatment posed a cultural problem, for how could they maintain garden rights if they made no appearance on the land, or were not present to accept their tribal responsibilities?

I shall always remember the first Baptism Service held at the Centre, when we knelt at the communion rail, a mixture of damaged limbs but mended hearts. Many men and women passed through the healing of the small Leprosy Centre to serve the Church. Wagai was among those first baptised, later to become a most effective Pastor of the Leprosarium; Kebaya is training as a Medical Orderly, and many many more are witnessing to the power of the Christian Gospel. The story of Aolso will have to suffice as an example.

AOLSO was born at Ekanda in Nipa about twenty-five years ago. As a boy he contracted leprosy and his people worked sacrifices to the spirits to try and cure him. It was to no avail and Aolso lived his young life in fear of death.

In 1960, when the white people had been in Nipa only six months, a Patrol Officer sent Aolso to see Sister Helen Young who confirmed the diagnosis of leprosy and saw his ulcerated feet. Perhaps he could be sent to Tari for treatment. Young Aolso was terrified at the thought of leaving home but the Minister, Rev. Cliff Keightley finally persuaded him to go. The journey by M.A.F. Plane, and the adjustment to hospital life in a strange place with a different language was very difficult. Yet over the three years he was there not only were his ulcers healed and the disease arrested, but he also had opportunity to attend literacy classes (in a foreign language) and talk with Missionaries and Huli Christians. While in hospital he became a Christian and when he returned to Nipa three years later, was the first Nipa person who was able to read and write and also to be baptised. He was influenced by the parable of the ten lepers — only one returned to give thanks. He himself is most appreciative of the medical care given him by the Mission.

Aolso became an Evangelist to his own people and in 1967-68 he attended St. Paul's College in Mendi for Pastor Training. He is now at Mereb, in the Nipa Valley where, with his wife Sob and their two-year-old son, he ministers to the people around him. He preaches; visits; conduct training classes for Sunday School teachers, enquirers and literacy groups. He shows initiative and effort in the planning of his work and his people love him.

THE MINISTRY OF TEACHING

As each Mission Station was established small schools were opened under Coastal men who had had some training in their own areas. In Mendi a small Sunday School was commenced in August 1951 with children of the Coastal Pastors and any Mendi children who could be persuaded to join. From these children a primary school was opened at the beginning of September, with SETEPANO NABWAKULIA (Papua) as the teacher of eleven children. In October, Miss Elsie Wilson, Sister Joyce Walker, and Rev. Roland and Miriam Barnes with their infant son arrived. A white baby!! The Mendi folk were staggered. Naturally they also thought Roland was a man after their own hearts with three wives!! They could not understand why the other two white women did not have husbands.

ELSIE WILSON (S.A.) had been used to teaching elementary classes in a New Guinea language and found it very difficult to know where to begin. Not only were all the Coastal children from different language areas, the Mendi language was at that time unwritten and largely unknown by the Staff.

Instruction had to be in English; she tried to use pictures, line drawings, photographs, anything as teaching aids, but many of the pictures held no associations for the Mendi people. Anyone and everyone walking along the path went in to look at them; at the slates and books, at the pupils sitting on the floor; continually interrupting teacher and pupils. The school increased in number but not in quality. At the end of 1952 there were 200 children on the roll with a daily average attendance of about 20.

ALPHEUS ALEKERA (Sol. Is.) and NATHAN SIPISONG (Bougainville) began schools in a similar way in Tari (1953) and Nipa (1961). Australian and New Zealand teachers followed but inadequate numbers and short term staff, poor regular attendance of children and continually rising standards required by the Territory Administration caused many problems and frustrations. Some small outstation schools were started and later closed, disappointing both people and staff. The school at Mendi after many ups and downs was finally closed when several Administration Schools were opened in the valley. The school at Hoiebia, Tari, began solidly and continued to flourish under Mr. C. J. Hutton and Mr. G. C. Buckle. The Nipa school was also able to continue and grow, and these two are at last on a firm footing.

There are now six schools, 19 teachers and 600 pupils of the Highlands Region. From July 1970 a unified Territory teaching service came into effect. Previously the Government paid a "Grant-in-aid" for mission teachers, much below the salaries of Government teachers. Now mission teachers may join a new Territory teaching service and receive equal pay. In return the Churches will hand over much of the control of schools and staff to Education Boards, on which they will share representation with the Education Department and community interests. There are still many problems to be ironed out and some people to convince that it is a sharing of control rather than a take-over by the Administration. But it means a more economical use of the limited resources of both Missions and Government and a healthy trend away from the atomization of the present pattern. Some of the distinctiveness of Church education will diminish, but it can do so only with corresponding value for education throughout the Territory.

Although numerically our results from early educational efforts were very poor some pupils did manage to go on to further studies, some are now at Theological College, some trained Pastors, youth workers, Medical Assistants, Nurses, some in the Police Force, drivers, storemen, and so on.

TRANSLATION AND LITERACY WORK

The children are being taught in English and in time will be able to understand much in that language, but it is imperative that all people hear the Gospel in their own tongue. There are 700 different languages in New Guinea, not counting dialects. The United Church Highlands Region covers two language groups, Mendi with its many dialects, and Huli the language of the people at Tari with very little dialect differences. Over the past twenty years much time and work has gone into the building up of an orthography, a grammar, and translation of parts of the Bible, stories, texts, hymns and indigenous chants in both languages. Much of this has been done with the co-operation of other Missions in the same language areas. These languages are "verb dominated". That is, the action is the most important part of the language and the translation of the abstract concepts of the Christian faith

into a form acceptable and understandable by the people takes many hours of work by translator and his informants.

One also learns a lot about the culture. For instance the Nipa people do not say "as numberless as the sands of the sea" but "as many as the hairs on a dog." The story of the Good Shepherd is just as effective if it is a precious pig which is lost, and the Prodigal Son can waste just as much of his money and life out on the "Coast" learning to gamble at cards and drink himself silly. It makes much more impact than being "riotous in a far country."

"What are these mysterious marks you are making? Do they really say that to us?" And so classes to teach the local people in their own language grow, with simple primers prepared and printed so that those first literate ones can, with almost no equipment, go out and teach others to read. Now the time has come when many a local Evangelist is able to read a Bible passage in his own language and teach the lesson from it.

BIBLE SCHOOLS: As the work grew and sometimes the staff shrank it became necessary to consider the training of others to help. Bible Schools for local men were commenced at both Mendi and Tari at about the same time and have continued on in various forms of regular training of local helpers in all Circuits.

Rev. JOHN REES (S.A.) tells of the beginnings at Mendi.

It all began soon after I came to Mendi in late 1960 and had to settle to the serious task of deciding how a dozen Missionaries could possibly proclaim the Gospel to some 30,000 people in the Mendi and Lai valleys. As the months went by it became clearer that the method of Jesus must also be ours; to concentrate on a few and go deep, rather than spread wide and thinly. At the beginning of 1962 the time seemed ripe to make a start. Five out-stations were invited to send two men each and every Christian was asked to help in the erection of buildings in which the men could sleep, eat and study. They came in for a week of concentrated study and then returned to their families to attend to their home affairs for the second week, and so on for some months. All the men were illiterate, so a series of lessons with only stick figure illustrations — rather like a simple comic strip — was prepared.

With the first group of trainees the major problem was to get them to understand what was happening. There was a great deal of enthusiasm, but some of the men found the going very hard, and progress was slow. However, once a few of the brighter ones, such as Sond, cottoned on to the lessons and stories, and became experienced at reading the stick figure pictures, they would spend a lot of time going over and over the things with the others, squatted in a circle during breaks. One of the slowest was old grandfather Ndus, from Yaken. I despaired of his ever learning anything, and at the end of the course, he was still not very sure about even the Bible stories, but his faith was so clear and so strong that he was accepted by Quarterly Meeting as an Evangelist.

Then the amazing thing happened. Joseph Tirlua, the Pastor at Yaken went on furlough. We had no replacement, so Njus was told to hold the

fort. He did this to such good effect that he prepared a group of people there for baptism, opened three new preaching places, and at one of the latter, Meki, prepared 100 converts (largely influenced by his and one or two others' witness) for baptism. Under his guidance the people learned Bible stories, Christian chants and the Creed. I found that I had to tell Ndus a story only once and he remembered it. Responsibility brought out the talents that before had remained hidden.

One of the grandest, saintliest men in that first school was Tundupi, also a grandfather, and like Ndus, previously a spirit leader of his people. He was, despite his age, one of the most alert men in the group, learnt quickly, and was a father to all of us, as he was to the people of his Church.

Later courses were composed of more and more people who had had less previous contact with the Church. For these there was often agonising tension between the new faith and the old spirit practices, and many of them understandably tried to hang on to both at once. In these cases it was usually their fellow trainees who disciplined them, and finally demanded their removal from the school. Others again came for what they could get out of it in the way of food, blankets, tools etc., but again, these soon weeded themselves out. The amazing thing was that so many of them, including men who had only heard the Gospel first a matter of a few months before attending the school, stuck to it, and developed into strong spiritually literate Christian leaders.

THEOLOGICAL STUDENTS

Four Highlands men are studying to become ordained Ministers at the United Church Theological College at Rarongo, near Rabaul. Each one can tell of a life of fear in the "old" days and of the power of the Holy Spirit in his heart today.

They are Aya Dabuma, Wasun Hoka, Paul Gomengi and Kaiapa Tebela. We hope to tell something of their story in our next issue.



Men of Tari and their Teacher.

PASTOR TRAINING — ST. PAUL'S COLLEGE, MENDI

In the early years of the Highlands work a great company of men and women from the older Mission Districts of New Guinea, Papua, and Solomon Islands came to help. Some had been trained as teachers for lower grades in primary schools, some were Catechists and Pastors, and others laymen who had some special practical gift to offer. All came as God-called Missionaries from their own Churches, in many cases supported in full by their people at home. They had to make as many if not more cultural adjustments than had the Europeans. Climate, food, houses, surroundings and people, all foreign. The gratitude of many Highlanders for the work and witness of these men and their families is very deep.

Following on their example and the need for more advanced training of leaders than that available in the Bible Schools, a District Pastor Training College, later called St. Paul's College was commenced at Mendi in 1963, with the Rev. GRAHAM SMITH (S.A.) as Principal. The first four students were men from Tari, Gomengi (now at Theological College) Dabagua, Yagari and Bogaya all still working as Pastors in various parts of the Region. The course was in English and was planned to take two years. By 1966 the nature of the course was changed. Young men of intelligence who were literate but unable to take a course of study in English were brought into the College to take a two-year course in Pidgin English. These courses have continued, most of the men going back to their own or other areas to supervise groups of preaching places, run Bible Schools for local evangelists, and be true Pastors to their small flocks.

Rev. DAVID KITCHINGMAN (N.Z.) present Principal gives us these thumb sketches of his students.

- A **The Senior Student.** Almost the perfect gentleman. Christian by nature and persuasion.
- B **The only one with any primary education.** Moody but means well. Ponderous until he begins to preach in his own language.
- C **The "academic underachiever".** Compensates by excelling as a naturalist, and by dabbling in wood-carving.
- D **The conscientious one.** Complains about too few exams. Spent some years prior to College ministering in another language group.
- E **The College Clown.** Took off his own line's nasal singing by interrupting; "Hey you fellows, blow your noses first." An all-rounder in sports and studies.
- F **The Slogger.** Unfortunately slogged another student's wife one day. A part-time cassowary trader.
- G **The Dux.** Brainy, bright and charming. The instant volunteer. Capable of anything if he had not been denied an early education. His father had six wives, and was an enemy of the father of another Student.
- H **The Pig Man** according to the name which his father gave him in jest against his mother. Certainly the College scapegoat, but not without courage and conviction.
- I **The Old Man** as he is termed by the rest of the Students. May be thirty-five years of age, married with five children. Spent ten years in pre-college pastoral work.

All in all a fairly typical chronical of theological students. Great variety; great potential.

The Witness Of The "Working" Ones

AGRICULTURE: The Highlands people are dependent on their gardens for sustenance and very early it was seen that some practical help in improving their agricultural methods could be very valuable. The first Lay-missionary to the Highlands was Mr. DAVID JOHNSTON, an agriculturalist from New South Wales. He worked hard on an unpromising area of land at Mendi and established coffee, pineapples, vegetables, fish ponds, and some cattle, but neither he nor Frank Coleman (Q) who followed him, were able to carry out their extension plans to any great degree, owing mainly to the lack of the large amount of capital needed to develop this sort of project. The Mission withdrew from its main Agricultural programme in 1966 when Frank Coleman transferred to Administration Agriculture. Small individual projects are carried on by Missionaries in local areas — some coffee and cattle in Tari, school gardening and poultry projects in Nipa, and encouragement of the local people to grow new vegetables for consumption and sale.

BUILDING: Mr. GORDON T. DEY (N.Z.) arrived in Mendi in November 1954 to begin the permanent building programme for expatriate staff housing and continued as a Lay-missionary until 1969, building houses and hospitals in four Circuits. All timber was pitsawn from local trees, the quality of which was largely unknown and unpredictable. Supplies of builders' hardware were flown into remote airstrips in Cessnas and carried to the Stations on the heads or shoulders of the local people. Plans and specifications had to be prepared to incorporate sizes of plywood, corrugated iron, tanks and waterpipe which could be fitted into small aircraft.

Other Australian and New Zealand carpenters came, for varying lengths of time, together with laymen from Coastal Regions. We can mention only two. TIMOTI NEWAI a pitsawyer, whose father was a wild Papuan, had a strong sense of call to give of his talents to the people of the Highlands. He worked in Mendi, Tari and Nipa training his pitsaw teams in a mixture of languages — he never managed to learn any except his own — and preaching sermons on his one theme. "I am only an old "off-cut" but God can use any one, even me, to show His way to others." With his gracious wife Diane, Timoti will long be remembered. TIMOTHY TAMASAN is from Buka, and under Peter Rodway and Gordon Dey has become a very skilled and valuable carpenter. His example to the Highlanders as a Christian is a shining light on his dark face.

OFFICE WORK AND SUPPLY LINES: In May 1959 Miss JOYCE K. ROSSER (N.Z.) was appointed as Secretary to the then Chairman, Rev. G. H. Young. She took over the general office work, book-keeping and much of the ordering of supplies. As the number of stations grew the lines of supply became overloaded and office work increased far beyond the scope of one Secretary and the Chairman. Teleradios were set up at each main station to enable staff members to have regular daily contact with each other and the Bishop and as a speedy communication for help in medical or other emergencies. In 1967 a Bulk Store was established in Mendi and developed into a profitable venture by Mr. RON PRESCOTT (S.A.) over the three years of his service. Each Circuit has its local Trade Store to retail goods in its area. The Region now has an Accountant, a Store Manager and several office workers to keep the wheels rolling.

The word "wheels" reminds us of drivers, mechanics, hydro-electricity and electricians which are all part of the modern mission set-up. We cannot hope to name every short term and voluntary worker, nor the army of skilled consultants who have given time, money and efforts to help with recent technical projects. Tradesmen are also helping the Highlands Region financially in that their skills can be hired out to Local Government Councils and the Administration for work such as vehicle repairs, transport of "back loads" of cargo and work on electrical installations.

In the first fifteen years the Mission was very dependent on the Lutheran Mission Supply House in Madang, and the Missionary Aviation Fellowship aircraft for every item of imported goods — from flour and meat to nails and roofing iron. No words of gratitude can express our appreciation of their help in so many ways. Without that help our outreach to the Highlands would have been well nigh impossible. Now with improved road transport, much of the heavy supplies are trucked in from Lae, through Mount Hagen to Mendi and distributed by road and air from there. This year of 1970 has seen something only dreamt about in the early years; the establishment of an M.A.F. base in Mendi and a resident pilot there to serve the Missions of the Southern Highlands District.

WIVES: They come in all colours and ages; they support their men in every way, physically and spiritually; they sew, mend, and "make-do"; they tend their gardens, light the lamps, carry the water, and do their housework often under primitive conditions; they bear, rear and educate their children; they teach, advise, cajole and pastor to their household help and anyone else on the doorstep; they learn and teach new languages; they preach; they help in medical work; they keep boarders; they welcome visitors at all hours of the day or night, whether on foot covered in mud, or straight from a cloudy sky in a helicopter; they write letters and articles — in everything they do they try to show their share of the Love of God to all around them.

So whether you are an Agriculturalist like David Johnston with a talent for language and preaching; a builder like Gordon Dey sent to run a Circuit for nearly a year; a typist who teaches Sunday School; a volunteer worker who plays the guitar; a wife who listens; or any other helper you are part of the "great cloud of witnesses."

THE WITNESS OF THE ORDAINED MINISTER

Over the first twenty years, twenty-two ordained Ministers have served. From Australia, nine; New Zealand, three; Fiji, one; Tonga four; T.P.N.G.

five. Some have been mentioned as pioneers in various places, but we cannot hope to tell of each one and his troubles and triumphs. TOMAS TO MAR came with Gordon Young and Ladi to Mendi in 1951 and served long and lonely years as a Pastor. He returned to his home in New Ireland; studied, married and has now come back (1970) as a respected senior Minister to Kambarep in North Mendi. DAVID MONE (1956-60) and SIONE FIUSATI (1964-68) came from Tonga and both served in the Lai Valley, gaining the love and respect of their congregations. Both went home and subsequently became ill and died. Some Missionary families lost children who died in the Highlands, and some members of other families have died since returning home but we can gladly say that no adult life was lost on the field during these first twenty years. Rev. AMINIASI QALO and his wife Vasiti live in cool cloudy Magarima, a far cry from the warmth of Fiji, but their hearts are warm for their flock.

We must leave it to REV. C. J. KEIGHTLEY who was in the Highlands Region from 1955 to 1967 to tell us of the Ministers' witness.

A pioneer minister in the Highlands learns to be a man of many parts. He will become involved in building, organising of work lines for many projects, agriculture, and many other tasks; but along with these he will maintain his normal ministerial functions. Always he will seek to give these their proper place, for they are his primary responsibility and reason for engaging in missionary work.

One of the tools essential to his work, as it is for all his fellow missionaries, is mastery of his people's language. This does not come easily for the majority of outsiders. It may take years of effort and study before adequate facility in its use is acquired, but without it little effective missionary work can be achieved.

The preparation of material both for his own use and for the use of his team of helpers, which includes the local pastors, is one of his essential tasks and responsibilities. Carefully worked out themes and notes for preaching; courses for class meetings and Sunday schools as they come into being, are required. While the Highlands people are still largely illiterate a careful and limited selection of biblical and other material for this purpose is necessary and important. For example, we found it useless trying to preach week after week on themes chosen at random. The working out of courses and lessons covering the essential aspects of Christian living was, by experience, found to be necessary. At Nipa we worked out twenty-six studies which were used over and over again for several years. These courses, along with a catechism, the answers to which were set to local chant tunes, and the biblical stories that were illustrated with stick figure pictures for use by illiterate pastors and leaders, contributed greatly to the breakthroughs that finally came, and gathered pace. For the membership classes separate courses were also prepared, which again were largely the work and responsibility of the Ministers.

Talking to people about the Christian life, preaching to them and counselling them, both on the main station and while out on patrol to the hamlets is all part of a Minister's work in the Highlands. While he finds it very demanding because of the strangeness of the language and the problem of its being unwritten, he also finds it very rewarding, when after years of toil he sees the flowering of his efforts and those of his fellow missionaries who have worked along side him as a team.

Here are a few examples from Tari of the sort of counselling which is required by the missionary.

Tuesday: Ame and her husband came to see me. Ame as a baptised Christian felt she should not associate with her husband as he is not baptised — that his "badness" might contaminate her. Her husband has only recently come to Tari, but has already said that he wants to become a Christian. Ame's husband had a problem also. Ame's first husband had died. Some of the Christians had told him that in the next life her first husband and he would have a big fight. "Is this true?" he wanted to know.

Saturday: Bai Haera came to see what we thought about whether or not he should give back the pigs for his sister who hanged herself. He says that as the woman was pregnant he does not have to; others say that as there are no children born, Haera should keep one mother pig and return the rest of the bride price.

Monday: Undiabu came to seek advice as to whether he should do magic to make the bone of his son's spine knit. According to him the child is dying from a broken spine as a result of the time when the child's mother was accidentally knocked over by a lad on a bicycle. However, Sister Joy later informed me that the child is very ill with pneumonia — nothing wrong with his spine!

THE WITNESS OF THE PEOPLE

TEKIN of Mendi, was a young widow in her twenties when the Mission first came to Mendi, thinking that her first husband had died as the result of sorcery. She lived at Tend, in the centre of the valley where the present Head Station now stands, and her father fought with the neighbouring clan of Tendelem. The women and children would run and hide in the bush while fighting was in progress, often going into "foreign" territory across the river at Poramanda to escape the arrows. When her people saw the first European arrivals, and the airstrip receiving the first aircraft, they were filled with suspicion and fear, thinking these strangers were maybe a new kingdom of the deceased spirits. Gradually the influence of the first Missionaries broke down some of the barriers of reserve, and Tekin began to listen to their message. She married again, but stayed near enough to continue with attendance at Services until she was baptised and attended one of the early Bible School courses.

She has had no formal education, but since her baptism has been a Christian leader among the illiterate women. Her fears are laid aside, women's feelings are taken into consideration much more because of the influence of the Gospel and she has learnt the way of Jesus to love and care for other people. She has been able to hear the scriptures in her own language and is now attending literacy classes, thrilled to be able to read even a little. Her witness is the day to day one of helping to build up the other Christian women by her example in attending classes and prayer.

GILIBA of Tari is a young man, the son of Hedabe who lived close to the Station at Hoiebia. When asked who helped him to learn about God his answer was, "Jesus, because he worked in my father's heart, so Hedabe sent me to the Mission to learn about God's Way." He attended school at Tari

and Nipa up to Standard 6 and was then sent to the United Church Hospital at Kapuna for a three year course of training as a Medical Orderly. He has been appointed to the Mission Aid Post at Kip in the Lai Valley where by his work he frees the Australian Sister, Frances Williams, for more Infant and Maternal Welfare. His witness is telling the good news of Jesus; teaching the ways of health; treating the sick ones with medicine; and by his words and actions helping his own and other people to find the way of Life.

SAOMB and SAOLIN are a husband and wife who witness together. Saomb was a boy of ten living in the Lai Valley when the Missionaries first came to Mendi. He lived in his family hamlet, worked in the garden, cut the firewood and looked after the heavy work for his elder sister, their parents having died some years previously. He heard of these new arrivals in Mendi, and when Tomas To Mar and Rev. David Mone came to live near his home he went down with the other boys to see what it was all about. The Missionaries taught him to read a little and both told him of the good news of God's Way. No; long after his baptism he attended Bible School in Mendi. As a trained Evangelist he went with an older man, Lowa, to Nipa as the first Mendi missionaries to a "foreign" people. It was there that he met and married Saolin who was one of his congregation. She had lived the life of a Nipa girl, caring for gardens and pigs, attending ceremonies with her friends, until her life came under the influence of other Christians and she was baptised not long before her marriage. After five years in Nipa, Saomb was transferred back to his home valley of the Lai.

The two together as Evangelist and wife are giving wonderful witness among their own people. They worked at first about three hours' walk north of the main station, setting up a new house and garden among people who had very little idea of the Gospel. Later Saomb asked to be nearer to his own family and they were transferred to Sekip Te. The people there were weak in their Christian allegiance, some of their leaders being very strong in the old spirit worship. They had built a spirit house a stone's throw away from the Evangelist's home and were very annoyed because Saomb and other Christians visited it, and each time they had to kill pigs to appease the spirits for these intrusions. Several times his life was threatened but he persevered in faith and prayer even though on occasions somewhat afraid. The people have now calmed down and are watching and listening to Saomb and Saolin. They have two small daughters and at the beginning of 1970 another was born, only to die of pneumonia. Let SAOLIN speak for them all.

Our baby had a "big sick" and Sister gave her lots of medicine, but she still died. Our Minister Tava Tupou came and we had a Service and put her in the ground. Tava was very good and prayed with us and made us feel strong and that God was near us when we were sad. Since my baby died I have gone and prayed with other women whose babies were sick, to help them. I still look after the gardens, but I don't fight any more. I am happy and sing happy songs. I like to go to Church to hear the Word of God. I like to go and talk to the other women about God, so that they can know the same happiness I have. I can read so I take my book and read the Bible stories to the other women. Now I am a Christian I am always happy and I am not afraid to die, as I know God is looking after me in all I do.

“The Witness About Jesus Christ”

(I John: 5,6-12 T.E.V.)

Jesus Christ is the one who came; he came with the water of his baptism and the blood of his death. He came not only with the water, but with both the water and the blood. And the Spirit himself proves that this is true; for the Spirit is truth. There are three witnesses, the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and all three agree. We believe the witness that men give; the witness that God gives is much stronger, and this is the witness that God has given about his Son. So whoever believes in the Son of God has this witness in his heart; but whoever does not believe God, has made a liar out of him, for he has not believed what God has said as a witness about his Son. **THIS THEN IS THE WITNESS: GOD HAS GIVEN US ETERNAL LIFE, AND THIS LIFE IS OURS IN HIS SON.** Whoever has the Son has this life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

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