

Chapter 18

Lives Told: Australians in Papua and New Guinea

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The home computer, Microsoft Word, more sophisticated programs known to younger generations, and the flourishing of family history—the practical means and the incentive—have resulted in the recent publishing of many autobiographies and biographies. That so many of the lives recorded include years spent in Papua and New Guinea reflects the fact that Australians have seen Papua New Guinea as a frontier of adventure, the beginning of the exotic and where Australians have peculiar responsibilities. Australians wanting to go ‘overseas’, searching for something more exciting than work in an insurance office or the daily milking of the cows and with an often unexpressed hope that they might make a name in national, church or commercial history, could get their fares to, and a job in, Papua New Guinea. It is also where Australians fought the battles of World War II closest to Australia, the theatre where most Australians went to war, and where over 8,000 Australians are named on the headstones and panels at the British Commonwealth war cemeteries at Rabaul, Lae and Port Moresby. The number of books about Australians in Papua New Guinea is also a result of the increasing enthusiasm of Australians since the late 1970s to recall and define themselves by their experiences in war.¹ While many of the books are privately published, nearly all have an ISBN number: they are produced with a consciousness that they will find readers beyond the family. The production and editorial standards of some of the privately published books—such as Betty Scarlett’s *Oscar X-Ray Calling* and Paul and Eleanor Knie’s *The Life Story of Ida Voss*—are as high as those of many commercial publishers.

An increase in the number of lives told is obviously an advantage to historians. On a few topics there are now several books. The growing importance of Kokoda in Australia, accelerated by the visits of Prime Minister Paul Keating when he kissed the ground in 1992, and John Howard and Sir Michael Somare in 2002 when they opened the Isurava monument, has been demonstrated in the three detailed popular histories by Peter Brune, Peter Fitzsimons and Paul Ham.² The autobiographies and biographies now cover most of the key players: David Horner on Vasey, Blamey and Shedden; David Day on Curtin; Gallaway on Blamey and MacArthur, Edgar on Potts; Braga on Allen; Ken Eather on his

distant relative, Major General Ken Eather; and Brune on Honner. Taken with the earlier books on and by Sydney Rowell and the Americans Douglas MacArthur, Robert Eichelberger and George Kenney, and Steven Bullard's introduction to, and extension of, Japanese sources, there are few topics in Pacific history better covered than Kokoda 1942.³ Neil McDonald's thoughtful biography of Damien Parer, the cinematographer, adds much to our understanding of how the Kokoda campaign was reported in print as well as on the screen. We now have access to much history and the making of history. And much has been written on another war photographer, Frank Hurley, who was in Papua between the wars.

The personal reminiscences tend to add detail and confirm established perceptions. Hamlyn-Harris, who first wrote his account while in hospital in 1943, described his first encounter with the Australian wounded near Myola and it 'moved [him] to the depths':

Picking their way very carefully with expressions of solemn responsibility, came native carriers with the badly wounded. Some of these forms under their coverings were horribly mutilated and might not survive long ... The natives moved softly and silently, handling the stretchers with a surprising deftness in rough places in order to save their human burden from the slightest jolt. Their homely faces were soft with pity and concern. They would carry these poor wounded along such a route as I have described, through mud and slush and morass, along the razor backs ...⁴

The images and the vocabulary are familiar, and while some soldiers may have drawn on Bert Beros's popular poem, 'The Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels', others who wrote before it was published obviously did not.⁵ Then and now, the carriers had the admiration of the diggers.

A few books add to published material on Kokoda. The unpretentious family history of the Hogan brothers gives a picture of the men in the prewar and follows them through their training, first impressions of Port Moresby (a 'dilapidated looking place'), combat and the postwar.⁶ Two of the Hogan brothers, Tom and Nace, fought in the 3rd Battalion, a militia unit raised on the Southern Highlands of New South Wales—from Crookwell to Cooma. The militia battalions, especially those raised in country areas, were made up of men, many of whom knew one another in the prewar and who then trained together at local drill halls and at various camps. With the two Hogan boys in the 3rd Battalion were four others from Grabben Gullen who were all farewelled together. Of the six, two were killed, two wounded and the other two suffered severe illness. The worst battle for the 3rd Battalion was at Templeton's Crossing, and so within a few days in October 1942 much bad news went back to Grabben Gullen and

nearby Crookwell; and it went to telephonists and ministers of religion who knew the men and their families. By providing the perspective of Bill Hogan, who stayed home, the Hogans show the interaction between home and battlefield in ways missed in much military history, and in a militia battalion that interaction was concentrated in particular communities.

Alan Hooper gives a different and more intimate account of the home and battle front through the use of the letters that passed between him and his fiancée, later wife. But Hooper also provides a detailed account of what was happening to Papua New Guineans involved in war. Having arrived in Port Moresby in a Queensland militia battalion, the 49th, before the Japanese invaded, he volunteered for service in the newly formed Papuan Infantry Battalion. In the late stages of the Kokoda and Buna-Gona battles he was on the Opi and Kumusi Rivers engaged in a complex guerrilla war. Japanese attempting to escape from battle or new troops trying to re-enforce those already there were passing through the area; survivors of crashed aircraft were struggling to make their way to safety; Papuans who had been away as indentured labourers were coming home; New Guineans who had been conscripted by the Japanese were escaping into the area; and the local Orokaiva and Binandere were disturbed by the withdrawal of much of the old system of government and mission authority, the signs of battle at sea and overhead, the armed and unarmed foreigners amongst them and the many unsettling rumours. In one incident twelve returning labourers were killed and some of Hooper's troops used their rifles to take revenge.⁷ Hooper was often the only Australian with his Papuan troops, and he had had to learn Police Motu to communicate with them and the villagers. Hooper writes with the same close observation and knowledge as some of the prewar government field officers who transferred to the army, but Hooper was young and had none of the prejudices that the older officers carried with them.

The publication of John Jackson's diary and letters tells us much about the man after whom Port Moresby's airport is named, and it includes a full account of his escape after being shot down off Lae in April 1942.⁸ Near Busama, he found some people 'bluffed by the Japs' and reluctant to help, other local men leading the pursuing Japanese, and two Tolai, stranded in the area, who risked everything to lead him through the Japanese to the nearest Australians. They were, Jackson wrote to his wife, 'two wonderful boys'.⁹ He was flown out of Wau but killed in combat four days later.

Ken Thorpe, who served with an Independent Company (later commandos) alongside the coastwatchers on Bougainville, was another soldier dependent on Papua New Guineans. He reports using women carriers, including one who carried the heavy battery for the telradio with her infant perched on top of the terminals. The almost casual violence of the war is apparent in his account of the Papua New Guinea police who seized two Bougainvillean 'boys', and,

convinced they had been working for the Japanese, forced them to walk in front of the patrol. When the two young men made a dash for freedom, the police opened fire, killing one, but the other may have escaped into dense bush.¹⁰ Thorpe also notes an incidental hazard of jungle fighting. Short of oil to protect his sub-machine gun, he cleaned it with pig grease, but when he fired it a stream of cockroaches and a cloud of smoke came out with the first bullet.¹¹ Later in the war when Thorpe was training with the 1st New Guinea Infantry Battalion, he disciplined a soldier and was later attacked by about five New Guinea soldiers when he went for a shower.¹² As on other occasions, the men in the Pacific Islands Regiment demonstrated that they had limits to the extent to which they could be pushed around. Walpole, 2/3rd Independent Company, was in the Wau-Salamau area, but most of his book is concerned with the later campaign on Borneo. Mick Dennis, another commando, provides a report on the fighting around Wau and the 1945 Muschu Island raid, but has few reflections on the peoples and places of battle.

By contrast with those who fought in or alongside Papua New Guinean units, most of the Australians who went to Papua New Guinea during the war had brief contact with Papua New Guineans. On the Kiriwina air base Norman Medew says that children were nearly always the interpreters. A man, rarely a woman, wanting to trade might arrive with a large bunch of bananas, and it would be a young boy who would ask, 'You got bullamacow?'¹³ And a swap of tinned meat for fresh bananas would be organised. Bill Marks in his uninhibited way says that he was with a group of men recently back from the Middle East. Travelling on an open truck from the Port Moresby wharf towards Rouna, they passed a group of bare-breasted women and the sudden rush to one side nearly tipped the truck over.¹⁴ The photographs that appear in the books—particularly of those who were on the Trobriands—are evidence of the young men's at least initial interest in the grass-skirted women.¹⁵ The more restrained John Kingsmill says they rarely saw any Papuan or New Guinean women:

Never alone, always with her husband, the 'Mary' would be sighted, as a curiosity worth noting, walking along the side of the road as our trucks roared past, flinging up clouds of dust (or mud in the Wet). The man went several paces ahead, carrying his spear and perhaps a small child, or with the child running at his heels with the family dog. The woman walked behind her man, small and meek and heavy-laden. She looked more like his child than his wife. Suspended from a strap across her forehead was a large woven bag which she balanced on her shoulders.

I never got close enough to do more than wave and they would invariably wave back and smile huge betel-nut-red smiles at us, though they probably had only the vaguest idea of what we were all doing there ... I never once saw an unfriendly face amongst them, rather it was a matter

of childlike friendliness or giggling shyness or a long frowning stare of incomprehension.¹⁶

Kingsmill's comments were, like most of the casual references to Papua New Guineans, well-intentioned, but indicate a superficial understanding and more than a hint of condescension.

Many of the reminiscences retain much of the language of the time, 'boong' often being used. Tom Hogan says simply says that the New Guineans were 'referred to as "Boongs"'.¹⁷ With 'boong' are the compound terms 'boong basher' for an Angau officer and 'boong train' for a line of carriers. Lloyd Collins explained the distinction between 'coon' which he said meant a black American and 'boong' which was a Papua New Guinean. Both terms, he said, 'came to be used with much respect and endearment and were not interpreted as derogatory'.¹⁸ Later, in the fighting out from Wau, Collins was with a group who had to carry supplies forward and they were proud to be called the 'white boongs'. It was a term of praise, Collins says, because 'every soldier in New Guinea knew [that] the word "boong" stood for service, loyalty, sacrifice and discipline'.¹⁹ The diggers had certainly changed the old terms, for in the prewar the word 'boong' was almost unknown, and coon was commonly used for the local people in New Guinea, even appearing in the *Rabaul Times*. One of the first of the Australian troops posted to Rabaul, Jack Stebbings of the 2/22nd Battalion, wrote in a matter-of-fact way to a mate: 'the natives here are known as "Coons"', but it was not a term used in Papua.²⁰

The ex-servicemen make frank comments on the Japanese. As John Holmes said, they respected the bravery of the Japanese but 'never ceased to loathe them'.²¹ Several comment on the general attitude to the taking of prisoners, even if they did not record it with the brutal directness of Frank Perversi, 'We don't take fucking Jap prisoners'. Perversi says that while he heard this often, he was nearby on just the one occasion when some Australians killed a prisoner.²² At Milne Bay the young militia soldier, James Henderson, said that after the men had seen evidence of torture of their own battalion dead, they understood that they had been ordered to take no prisoners and 'felt that what they had seen demanded it. The fury they felt would burn for decades among survivors'.²³ Near Mubo in the Morobe District, Collins recorded a digger saying 'We thought our job was to kill the bastards, not capture them'.²⁴ Stanton went from curiosity about prisoners, to a determination to shoot them, to sympathy for the surrendered Japanese at the end of the war. The men who had fought in the Mediterranean looked back with a 'hint of nostalgia' to campaigns that 'had a sweep and scope possible only in the open north African desert'. In New Guinea, Peter Jones said, the 'claustrophobic jungle imposed a stealth and furtiveness' and the men did not think of the Japanese as an 'honourable enemy'. The jungle war, he wrote, 'lacked mutual respect'.²⁵ John Bellair, who had fought in Greece

and Crete, said that after 40 years 'It had not been easy to write of my brief experience in New Guinea. I thought that time had healed my memories, but I found that it was not quite so'.²⁶

Perhaps the greatest value of the recent war reminiscences is the variety. Many have been written by men who were in non-combat units. Michael Pate was in a concert party and Keith Smith, radio man and comedy script writer in the postwar, was with the 15th Field Ambulance during it. Among the airmen who have recorded their experiences, Norman Medew and Arthur Gately were armourers on fighters, John Carroll and Rus Center were wireless operators and navigators on Beaufighters, Geldard was a wireless operator with 4 Army Cooperation Squadron, Derrick Rees and Laurie Edmonds were aircraft fitters, John Kingsmill and Jack Woodward were radio ground staff, John Balfe was flying transports, and William Deane-Butcher was the doctor with 75 Squadron. As a 28-year-old doctor from Sydney, Deane-Butcher went north in April 1942 equipped with a 'weighty text book about tropical medicine' and a Royal Air Force handbook which included such useful information as 'survival in the Arctic, speaking Arabic and international flags'.²⁷ Deane-Butcher was with 75 Squadron through the grim days from March 1942 when the 75 Squadron Kittyhawks supplied Port Moresby's main air defence against the dominant Japanese and in August 1942 the squadron operated from Gurney airstrip in the battle of Milne Bay. On his first day at the Seven Mile strip in Port Moresby, Deane-Butcher woke to terrifying din: a cook was belting a sheet of galvanised iron slung from a tree and shouting, 'Come and get it, bugger yers'.²⁸ With his care for the morale and physical condition of the men, Deane-Butcher's work is to be placed alongside that better known memoir of H.D. (Blue) Steward, *Recollections of a Regimental Medical Officer*. Weate's biography of the pilot Bill Newton is one of only three of at least nine Australians who won the Victoria Cross in Papua or New Guinea. Wayne Rothgeb's *New Guinea Skies* is included in the bibliography as an example of one of the memoirs of the American college boys who flew in New Guinea; but few of these are likely to surpass the earlier Edwards Park's *Nanette*. Rothgeb flew Lightnings (P-38s) and Park Airacobras (P-39s) out of various New Guinea strips.

The army reminiscences include those of Bill Marks, who was a corporal cook and then in a laundry unit and of Roy Sibson, an army craftsman with skills handy when making souvenirs to sell to Americans. Jim Rudge arrived in Port Moresby in 1943, served in Angau as a Medical Assistant, and returned briefly to Australia before going back to Papua New Guinea to work in the Department of Public Health. Rudge is the only wartime medical assistant to have published an extensive account of his work. Deploying much detail, Rudge sketches people of all races, gives much ethnographic information and provides insight into the life of a medical assistant. He held posts in Kikori, Popondetta, Daru, Rigo,

Kairuku, Abau, and Bougainville. It has to be conceded that the section under the heading 'Social Life at Kikori' is short. Tarlington is one of the few who have written about the long-term impact of six years of war on the rest of his life. Polly Underwood, Australian Army Nursing Service, arrived in Port Moresby in January 1942 wearing her 'outdoor winter uniform consisting of pure wool, fully lined winter costume, jacket worn over a long-sleeve white cotton shirt with brown woollen tie, cotton stockings, brown lace-up shoes with our grey felt hats pulled well down over our eyes and our brown kid gloves clutching our neat, very small, zippered purses'.²⁹

Having reached Port Moresby before the impact of battle, she saw something of the prewar Territory. On a visit to Koitaki plantation at Sogeri the nurses had their 'clothes laid out, baths drawn and ... beds made' and at meals they were attended by immaculately turned-out servants. When Moresby appeared to be under threat of invasion, the nurses were evacuated. Later in the war when Underwood was stationed at Finschhafen, the nurses were enclosed in barbed wire, guarded and not allowed out alone. The threat was said to be black Americans—and that says something about perceptions of race and gender in wartime New Guinea.³⁰

Alice Bowman, another New Guinea nurse to have written an autobiography, went to New Guinea in 1939 to work in the European hospital. Choosing to stay in Rabaul after the Japanese southward assault, she was captured and interned in Japan. Her work is an account of captivity and can be placed alongside Margaret Clarence's short book on her mother, Kathleen Bignold, another civilian woman captured in Rabaul and forced to endure captivity in Japan. Peter Fenton's biography of the lively Olive Weston includes only a brief mention of her time in New Guinea.

Although we now have Alan Powell's careful unit history of Angau, the eight reminiscences of the Angau officers (Geoff Blaskett, John Cooke, Ted Fulton, Kingsley Jackson, Clarrie James, Jim Ross, Jim Rudge and Eddie Stanton) extend knowledge of the military administration of New Guinea.³¹ Jackson, James, Rudge, and Stanton bring the perspective of the outsiders, the Angau officers without experience in the prewar territories. James served in a number of centres from the Highlands to Misima—including being present at the hanging of eight Islanders at Bwagaioia. James handed over Goilala station in 1946 and took up a position in Canberra that had nothing to do with Papua and New Guinea. His experience was exclusively that of the wartime *kiap*. Stanton spent most of his war in the Milne Bay Islands and in his detailed diary he displayed the racial prejudices of his time and he was equally frank about his fellow officers. By contrast Fulton first went to New Guinea in 1930, returned to run a plantation in the postwar and continued to visit Papua New Guinea after Independence. In Angau, Fulton walked the Bulldog track to Wau and just kept on going

through to Bena Bena. In his revealing comments on the police, he shows an understanding of the complexities of loyalty; and his relationships with Father Schwab and other priests raise different questions about race, culture and loyalty. Both James and Rudge note that the police were carrying and demonstrating sub-machine guns on patrols among Papua New Guineans.³² Brian McFarlane was called up to do his national service in the 1950s and stayed in the army. His is one of the few reminiscences of serving in the postwar Pacific Islands Regiment. McFarlane joined the 'black hand gang' in 1963, and was posted to Vanimo, Port Moresby and Wewak before leaving in 1965 and going on to Vietnam.

Of the four accounts of the escape from the disaster of Rabaul in 1942, Gordon Abel gives an unpretentious and moving account of the gradual reduction of his group to just two. One man, he said, committed suicide when he realised he could no longer keep up; and Abel admits the guilt of survivors who struggled on, unable to bury their dead or even record where they had died.³³ The most important, because of the key role that he played, is by Frank Holland, a timber worker, who crossed New Britain to carry news of one escaping group to the other. Included in the bibliography are books by Americans who survived as prisoners of war in Rabaul: Kepchia, McMurria and Nason were three of six American survivors from a group of 83 Allied prisoners. The only other survivor was the Australian *kiap* and coastwatcher, John Murphy. Fred Hargesheimer, another American and extraordinary survivor, is also included because he returned to New Guinea and repaid the villagers who saved his life after he crash-landed on New Britain in 1943.

Margaret Reeson in her study of those who waited and grieved during the war has shown how the thirst for knowledge among close relatives is intense and sustained.³⁴ And clearly the desire to know has driven the research for some sons and daughters of those caught in extraordinary circumstances and especially of those who did not survive and have no known grave. Anne McCosker has written well, not just of her mother and father and their lives on New Guinea island plantations, but of that generation and the way of life that was overwhelmed by three years of war. Margaret Henderson and Gillian Nikakis have written moving accounts of fathers they did not know and who disappeared as prisoners of the Japanese: the reader shares their obligation to chase rumours and fragments of information to understand the reaction of their mothers and to create a father with greater substance than the one existing in family lore.

Where in the past much biographical writing of peace-time Papua and New Guinea has been dominated by missionaries, government field officers and travel and adventure writers (such as James Chalmers, C.A.W. Monckton and Ion Idriess) in recent writings, apart from Kingsley Jackson, the *kiaps* and adventurers have largely abandoned publishing.³⁵ But there has been little change in the production rate of the male mission memoir and the book tribute

to the distinguished missionary. Henry Kendall wrote his own unpretentious record of his time at the Anglican mission in Popondetta, Samarai and Dogura. Milton McFarlane was a state school teacher in Queensland who from 1961 committed himself to 17 years' teaching for the Seventh Day Adventist mission on Mussau, Bougainville and in the British Solomons. Lynette Oates has written of David Lithgow who went to the Milne Bay islands in 1964 and through the next three decades did much bible translation work. Glen O'Brien wrote a biography of Kingsley Ridgway; and Ridgway's own memories of leading the Methodist mission in the Southern Highlands in the 1960s is included within the one volume. Ian Frazer's biography of Ed Tscharke (soldier in the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles, medical assistant in Angau and Lutheran medical missionary on Karkar for nearly 40 years) is different in that Frazer is not a Lutheran and he writes with an easy journalist's style. Diane Langmore and David Wetherell provide the only outsider and scholarly studies of missionaries.

Like the war reminiscences, much of the recent writing by civilian men has broadened the range. The title of John Cooke's autobiography *Working in Papua New Guinea 1931-46* indicates what is to come—a frank narrative of someone who was, among other things, a barman, timber cutter, schooner operator, recruiter and cargo handler for Guinea Airways. Arthur John worked on the Bulolo goldfields—with a digression for sexual adventure in Japan in 1933. John says that the round trip to the near north via the China ports, Japan and the Philippines was common among the goldfields workers who had two months' leave after two years' service. Keith Buxton was a postwar medical assistant and then tour operator; Tom Cole was a crocodile shooter and coffee planter with an interest in a saw mill and a hotel; Bobby Gibbes, DSO, DFC and Bar, fought his war elsewhere, but in the postwar he operated an airline in New Guinea and owned a plantation and hotels; and Les Bell ran the Kavieng engineering works ('We repair everything from sewing machines to aeroplanes') and a plantation before serving in a radar unit in World War II. Born in England, Dennis Puffett served in the war in Europe, came to Australia and worked in the Northern Territory before being superintendent of wildlife management in Port Moresby from 1971 to 1973. Geoff Litchfield gained his initial flying experience in the services, but he was a 'fly boy' in the postwar navy and came to Papua New Guinea in 1966 as a pilot for civilian airlines. His last stint was with Air Niugini in the 1980s.

Bruce Neale gives a cheerful impression of life in bachelor quarters in early postwar Port Moresby and of later surveying roads and hydro-electricity stations for public works. Jim Allen, geologist, and Max Reynolds, vulcanologist, have written short memoirs of their work, Allen with private companies and Reynolds with the government. Phil Thomson, actor and dramatist, has provided an impressionistic account of theatrical ventures and leading a theatre company and cultural centre in Madang.

Bob Connolly's *Making 'Black Harvest'* is obviously essential reading for understanding his and Robin Anderson's prize-winning film trilogy (*First Contact*, *Joe Leahy's Neighbours* and *Black Harvest*) but it is more than that. Anderson kept a diary, both wrote letters written from the field. Tim Bowden taped six hours of interview with them, they took notes while filming and they had kept the film and recorded dialogue not used in the edited films. This material gives a density of evidence about what many commentators called a tragedy. As a result, Connolly has written one of the most revealing accounts of the turbulent Highlanders taking their warfare into the world of cash cropping.

One of the few of the recent books that continues an older tradition of frontier patrolling is Jim Sinclair's sympathetic and well researched life of Ivan Champion which concentrates on his exploratory patrols. Margaret Abbotts' biography of her father, Stanniforth Smith, is a family history and while it gives family context it is brief on critical incidents in Papua such as the expedition up the Kikori in 1910. The work and beliefs of Raphael Cilento, director of public health in Mandated New Guinea, has been re-assessed, but more because of his place in the history of racial attitudes and medicine in Australia, rather than for what he did in New Guinea.³⁶

Before 1975, most scholars who recorded their time in Papua New Guinea wrote more in the tradition of the travel and adventure writers. Evelyn Cheesman (who was in Papua 1933-4) and Jock Marshall (New Guinea 1936) both conform to that pattern.³⁷ Hortense Powdermaker (New Ireland 1929-30) with her shrewd comments on the black and white societies and her discipline was an exception.³⁸ Of the recent books, Tim Flannery's *Throwim Way Leg* looks back—as its sub-title, *An Adventure*, makes clear—to the old tradition, but many of the others break completely with any chasing of the first, wildest and most remote.³⁹ Spate and Fisk write about Papua New Guinea while considering tough questions about economic development in the third world. Spate, after his second visit in 1952, decided that

the way forward would not be by plantations, and dreams of small-scale white settlement were just that, fancy dreams. They failed to account for just about everything: the high costs of initial clearing, the almost complete lack of transport (except by air) and other infrastructure, the distance from markets.⁴⁰

This is a long way from the last 'unknown', lost 'paradise', stone-age warriors and first contact. The intellectual problems are important, conclusions drawn from research in the rest of the third world are presented, while the exotic locations and the physical adventure have almost disappeared. In the collection edited by Brij Lal in honour of Bob Kiste, several contributors provide revealing accounts of their background and their engagement with Papua New Guinea, and while the country they encounter is different from that pictured by

Monckton or Hides, it is still exotic.⁴¹ Ulli Beier's memoir is urban and the culture that he is concerned with is that of the Papuan New Guineans who work within the literary and visual arts appreciated in Sydney, Berlin and London. He brings comparisons with other colonies to Australians and to Papua New Guineans.

The writings of and about anthropologists have done most to expand and change scholarly biographies of foreigners in Papua New Guinea. In *Return to the High Valley*, Kenneth Read added to the base of fine writing and revelation about himself, his discipline and the people of the Asaro that he began in *The High Valley* published in 1966.⁴² The extent to which he found that the Asaro had changed and the corrections that he needed to make to his original findings on basic issues such as land ownership and the hierarchies of families, enforces the need for long-term studies. The American, Michael French Smith, has written a personal account of his visits to Kragur on Kairiru Island in the East Sepik Province, the first and longest beginning in November 1975, and the later and briefer visits in 1981, 1995 and 1998. Significantly, all of Smith's visits have been to a post-independence Kragur. On his last visit he noticed that people were referring to the 'chief', both the term and position were new: in the past he had known several village bigmen who, while not equal, none was the recognised village leader. He listed other changes:

While a mainstay of village life, Catholicism still managed to stir things up. Charismatic worship in particular gave women, the young, and the mildly rebellious opportunities to carve out new zones of freedom from established authority and hierarchy. School learning was becoming significantly more common, and its tensions with older forms of knowledge and power were becoming more pronounced. Assertive women were scandalising conservative men; youths filled with spirits of various kinds butted heads with elders; the educated young were annoying almost everyone, including each other; traditional leaders were struggling to define and assert their authority; and the gap between villagers and urban Kragurs was more apparent than ever. Some villagers found themselves divided by support of rival parliamentary candidates. The possibility of mining put an edge on concerns about land rights ...⁴³

The villages remain dynamic, changing substantially within a generation, and those changes have nothing to do with Australian government—or any governments'—officers demanding or guiding change.

Margaret Mead generates comment (for example, Howard and McDowell) but no one has attempted a sustained re-evaluation of her New Guinea monographs as Derek Freeman did of *Coming of Age in Samoa*.⁴⁴ Wetherell and Carr-Gregg have written a sympathetic study of Camilla Wedgwood, and while she is an interesting character and did fieldwork on Manam Island in 1933 and

engaged in important debates on education during and immediately after World War II, she was not at the forefront of a discipline or a driver of government policy. With Michael Young's work on F.E. Williams and his essays and first volume on Malinowski, scholarly biography has made a significant advance. His *Malinowski: odyssey of an anthropologist* contributes to the general history of Papua, as well as giving insights into one of the most important and complex minds to engage with the Pacific and influence the formative years of a discipline. We are indebted to the breadth of Young's research, the structure that allows easy shifts between narrative and analysis, and the lucid prose.

Since Paul Hasluck's *A Time for Building* was published in 1976, there has been no comparable exposition and defence of Australian administration; but then no other Australian minister of any department has been as willing to do the research or as able to write about policy and its implementation as Hasluck.⁴⁵ It is appropriate that Hasluck has stimulated two volumes reappraising his work (Porter and Stannage). Both Les Johnson and Rachel Cleland have given their different perceptions from government house, Port Moresby; Nott has written a biography of Charles Barnes; Peter Fox's memoir of accounting in Port Moresby and Goroka includes broader economic and political issues; Tom Leahy has recalled his time in politics before 1972; Downs has dealt briefly with his early years in the House of Assembly; Ray Whitrod has given a chapter to his time as Commissioner of Police 1969-70; but in the 30 years since independence, few of the other Australians who were actors and observers of the critical years of transition—say from 1968 to 1978—have written of their experiences in Canberra, Port Moresby or a district. If Rowley Richards aged 88 can publish his memoirs of being a prisoner of war of the Japanese, and at 89 speak eloquently about writing and memory, then there is still plenty of time.⁴⁶

Papua and New Guinea have raised questions of definition of 'Australia' and 'Australian' for the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. An eminent Australian citizen who worked in the Mandated Territory of New Guinea qualifies for an entry because he or she was an Australian, but German, New Zealand or American missionaries qualify only if they were thought to have worked within 'Australia' or had an impact on Australian policies. The indigenous people of the Mandated Territory and subsequently the United Nations Trust Territory were Australian protected persons, but not citizens of Australia. British New Guinea was a British possession, and the Australian colonies contributed to its revenue, but it was not Australian. Although from 1906 Papua was an Australian Territory, its indigenous inhabitants were less than citizens of Australia: they could not live on the Australian mainland, and did not qualify for Australian welfare payments. In practice, the *Dictionary* has included some foreign and indigenous inhabitants of Papua and New Guinea, but the criteria for inclusion may have been higher than for those who spent all their lives clearly within Australia. First published

in 1966, the 16th volume of the *Dictionary* was published in 2002, completing the four volumes of those who died in the years 1940-1980. Those significant in Papua and New Guinea (other than those who were there because of war) in Volume 16 include: Joan Refshaug (medical practitioner and administrator), Alfred Robinson (government officer, soldier and planter), Matthias Toliman (school teacher and politician), Peter To Rot (Catholic catechist and martyr), Camilla Wedgwood (anthropologist and educationist), Eric Wright (medical practitioner), Leigh Vial (coastwatcher and patrol officer), and Yali (political and religious leader). There is also an entry on Peter Santo (indentured labourer of Espiritu Santo). The *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, a basic tool of historians of Australia, is often neglected by historians of the Pacific Islands.

When Chilla Bulbeck, Jan Roberts and Stephanie Lloyd and others put together their reminiscences of Australian women and children in Papua New Guinea, they could reasonably claim that the histories then published were histories of events in which men dominated—often apparently events in which only men were involved. Bulbeck went on to say that ‘women’s stories are contained in a handful of white women’s memoirs and the ephemera of mission booklets’.⁴⁷ That seemed reasonable at the time; but women have been quick to exploit the ease of home publishing and recently more have had their experiences published commercially. Women live longer and as widows they may have the chance and feel an obligation to record their husbands’, as well as their own, lives. Several, including Beavis, Boys, Cleland, Deasey, Kidu, Hollinshed, Maclean, Rule, Rybarz, Scarlett and Sherwood, wrote or were recorded as widows or as wives who did not share their husbands’ Papua New Guinea experience.⁴⁸ Although nearly all write generously of their husbands, their accounts benefit from the absence of any personal or official constraints that the husbands might have imposed. Winsome and Ormond Speck solve the problem of wife and husband perspectives by each writing sections on their times in the eastern highlands and among the Kukukuku.

The short mission memoirs continue: Beavis, Biggs, Edwards, Freund, Gray, Scarlett, and White. They may now be more common, but the Sunday School prize market has almost disappeared and so have the old home mission societies that needed comforting reports from the field to encourage them to keep contributing funds to convert, heal and clothe the pagans. The changing audience and attitudes means fewer claims to piety, dedication and frontier adventure by the missionaries and fewer references to savages emerging from the darkness of brutality, superstition and ignorance. Betty Scarlett was the wife of a New Zealand Presbyterian minister who worked for the old London Missionary Society on the Papuan coast. The Mission had already changed its name to Papua Ekalesia and was on its way to becoming part of a Papua New Guinea United Church.

Her memoir is almost secular: she is a wife and mother in a foreign country, and the many tasks that fall to her as a minister's wife are practical.

The brief lives are more than anodyne reports: all are valuable to historians. Blanche Biggs was a doctor and coordinator of the medical services of the Anglican Mission. Her book, a collection of letters to her friends, includes reports of patrols and her work in the aftermath of the eruption of Mt Lamington in 1951. Maureen Carlon has written well of being a teacher with the Catholic mission at Kiripia in the Kaugel Valley from 1969 to 1980. (She realised she had enrolled one boy underage when a mother arrived flapping her breast to indicate it was time he was fed.) Sister Catherine O'Sullivan writes of the internment of the Rabaul Sacred Heart nurses during World War II, Dorothea Freund has an account of the evacuation of women and children in December 1942.

In many of the brief memoirs there are often points of particular interest. For example, Nancy White, a teacher with the Anglican mission from 1948 to 1967, said that at a mission conference in 1950 at Dogura the bishop announced there would be an increase in pay for white staff from 50 to 64 pounds a year. It was, she claims, the first increase the mission had ever given, and the rate of pay applied to all staff irrespective of their qualifications or position.⁴⁹ That decision said much about the poverty of the Anglican mission and the demands that it made on its staff. In October 1958, the first students from White's school at Manau at the mouth of the Mambare River sat for the examination to enter a secondary school, the Martyrs Memorial School. After the examination she sealed their papers in an envelope and two boys set out to carry it to the Martyrs School. It was three days tough walking, but, she thought, it would be good for the boys who would see their first cars and trucks, even their first road. John Waiko and his brother Bob were two of the first boys to go from Manau to the Martyrs School. John was later a professor of history at the University of Papua New Guinea and Minister for Education and Bob Dademo was a senior officer in the Papua New Guinea Defence Force.⁵⁰

Secular women have taken up the short memoir. Anna Phillips is an able writer and has shrewd comments on memory as well as demonstrating an ability to rework them. Phillips is a daughter of Frank Tuza, a doctor who went from Hungary in the turmoil of the postwar and the Russian occupation to Australia, and after a brief course at the Australian School of Pacific Administration in 1950, to Buin in south Bougainville. By alternating her accounts with her father's, Phillips provides a rare forum for one of the refugee doctors who supplied much of the expertise in the Public Health department, and she is able to comment on the family's different memories. Phillips makes subtle comments on the position of New Guinean servants in the 1950s: 'a strange colonial amalgamation of affection, interdependence and paternalism attended by innuendo of racial superiority'. Pat Boys and Edna Maclean writing of the 1930s describe a society

with clear distinctions. When she was working in Rabaul, Maclean would spend weekends at Ranau:

There were dozens of little native girls everywhere. They pulled the punkahs in the dining room and while we were having dinner, there would be one underneath the table. We would get a smack on the leg if ever a mosquito or whatever happened to land ... On the tennis courts they would be running around getting the balls for us and throwing them back.⁵¹

After Margaret Wood's sister, Carol Coleman, arrived in Rabaul in the mid-1930s she worked for an accountant. He found a 'boi' for Carol, and told Carol that 'under no circumstances' was she to carry anything, not even a packet of cigarettes—that was the job of the servant who would walk a few paces behind her.⁵² For many of the Australians then in Rabaul the aim was to keep the distinction between the races sharp rather than subtle.

Many of the short memoirs deserve to be more than ephemera, but more significant have been longer studies by Baranay, Deasey, Downing, Green, Golski, Kidu, Harkness, Hollinshed, Lewis, Rule, Rybarz, Sherwood and Voss. They have few male equivalents. Ida Voss, Marjorie Deasey, Doris Downing, Bessie Lewis and Joan Rule gave most of their working lives to missions. Ida Voss was born in Iowa into a family of Lutheran missionaries and travelled with her sister, Lulu, to New Guinea in 1921. A trained nurse, Ida married fellow missionary Victor Koschade in 1924. The Koschades left New Guinea in 1936, and lived in South Australia until they went north to spend five years in central Australian missions. She died in 1972.⁵³ Her story has been put together by her grandson, Paul Knie, and his wife Eleanor, mainly from Ida's unpublished autobiography and letters. Marjorie and Dudley Deasey went to Balimo to work among the Gogodala for the Unevangelised Fields Mission. They left in 1942, returned to Papua in 1944, retired from Balimo in 1974 and spent another ten years working for the mission—then the Evangelical Church of Papua—in Hohola. (Keith Briggs' memoir covers the extension of the Gogodala mission into Mount Bosavi. The Briggs family left in 1990.) Both Deasey and Voss reveal the church and social contexts that directed them to Papua and New Guinea, and neither the Australian Baptist nor the American Lutheran background is readily available to most historians of Papua New Guinea.

Both books have much interesting detail. Marjorie Deasey almost provides a history of the Gogodala. On her arrival, they were a people lightly touched by the outside world, still living in longhouses and nobody baptised. When she left 35 years later the Gogodala were within months of being citizens in an independent nation. Her perspective as a woman is evident in the broad issues and the trivial. (A man might not note when the Gogodala women first began clothing their babies in nappies—it was 1953-1954.)⁵⁴ In writing of her sister,

Doris Downing, Joyce is able to fill in the background that gave rise to the dedicated teacher, but unfortunately many of her letters from 1929-1941 written while at the Anglican station of Boianai have been lost. There is much more detail on her earlier life in the Carpentaria mission and on her return to Papua from 1944 to 1946.

Joan Rule, who spent 40 years in the Southern Highlands, is strongest on the problems of learning a language and producing written material in the new language. She and her husband did not leave Kutubu and Mendi until 1991, but she has only brief comments on the impact of gas and oil production. In her reminiscence of nursing at Anguganak in the West Sepik from 1965 to 1981, Bessie Lewis gives a thoughtful account of the medical work of the Christian Missions in Many Lands. Judith Green's *These were my children* recalls the four years that she and Barney Green spent at Bundi in the early 1960s. That was the year that August Kituai started Standard 1 as a nine-year old boarder under the care of 'Masta and Misis Green'. They did, he said, 'wonderful work'.⁵⁵

Carol Kidu's book is a frank account of a romance; her marriage in 1969 to the Papuan lawyer and later judge, Buri Kidu; married life in Papua New Guinea from 1969; and, after Buri's death in 1994, her election to parliament in 1997.⁵⁶ She allows the reader a level of intimacy that brings understanding to race relations, cross-cultural marriage and politics. None of the Australian men who have married Papua New Guinean women have written a book of their experiences; and Tom Leahy is one of the few to have given an account of contesting elections and life in the House of Assembly, but his experience was before independence and only a handful of copies of his book were printed.⁵⁷

In her 10 years in Papua New Guinea from 1951, Beverley Rybarz had a rollicking, emotional time. Having arrived in Lae as the bride of a pilot, she soon separated, and in 1957 married Stanislaw Rybarz. Rybarz was contracting for major road and bridge projects—such as the Kumusi Bridge—and Beverley was sometimes with him and sometimes working elsewhere. She admits to being caught with a bare bum more often than anyone in other confessional memoirs. Her life is in sharp contrast to that of the moral rectitude maintained by most of her mission sisters. Barbara Sherwood arrived in Manus in 1946 when it was still strewn with the debris of war, and American troops were still present. A lecturer in biology at the University of New England before her marriage to Bill, a doctor and linguist, she was also a talented artist. Her memories of Manus, Samarai, Mapamoiwa, Rabaul and Port Moresby are gentle, perceptive and illustrated with her own line drawings and wash paintings.

The books by Harkness, Hollinshed, Carlon, Golski and Baranay make a Highlands sequence. Chris Harkness was in Mount Hagen working for the administration from 1965 to 1968 and her book is a detailed evocation of the lives of the expatriates at the height of their influence and when Tom Ellis, as

District Commissioner, was 'the greatest of men'.⁵⁸ This would be a better book at half the length, but it must be conceded that some of its value lies in its detail. Hollinshed arrived in the Western Highlands nearly a decade earlier in 1956 and she records the struggle to establish the coffee plantations, the flourishing of the plantations, and the deterioration resulting from crime and resurgent tribal fighting. She suffered personal assault and as a reporter for the *Post-Courier* wrote of the warfare through the Nebilyer Valley in the 1970s: thousands of coffee trees and many houses were destroyed, at least 15 people killed and some 'of the injured died, others were too afraid to go to hospital and some lived maimed for the rest of their lives'.⁵⁹

Judith Hollinshed and her husband left Papua New Guinea at the end of the 1980s and she returned to bury his ashes at Verona plantation in 2000 to see 'bleak evidence of lawlessness'.⁶⁰ Maureen Carlon arrived at Kiripia mission station in 1969 and taught there until 1980. With Mount Giluwe in the distance, Carlon was living in an area more isolated from the obvious changes and violence; and she has chosen to say little of any disturbing reverberations that came into the valley. Inez Baranay and Kathy Golski were in the Highlands well after independence, Golski at Rulna out of Mount Hagen in 1981 and Baranay at Wabag in 1992. Neither had a position of authority over Papua New Guineans—and did not expect one. In fact, one of Baranay's problems was the assertiveness of her Papuan New Guinean boss. Both women have a sense of being guests in another country, and of having to tolerate inconvenience and negotiate for much that they would have liked to have taken for granted. Both are articulate, have absorbed much about gender, colonialism and third world aid, and both accept that no culture has a monopoly on virtue or evil. In memories and judgments they are further from the women of the Territory than the passing of 20 or 30 years would suggest. The changing perceptions of place and roles are apparent, but less extreme, in the deft impressions recorded by Jean Bourke and others in *Our Time But Not Our Place*.

Before 1975, the government field officers, the mission patriarchs and the independent adventurers were writing their books within a context of easily measured progress. For the government officers there were increasing numbers of peoples being contacted and brought under control. New sub-districts and patrol posts were being opened, peace imposed, and obviously repugnant practices such as cannibalism, payback killings and infanticide suppressed. With a few injections and a wider range of foods the people were healthier. People were concentrated into better built and cleaner villages, and tracks between villages were cut and maintained. The police, village officials and *dokta bois*—under the direction of government officers who eliminated the few backsliders—were efficient and loyal. The planters cleared the jungle, tended the orderly tree crops and provided the revenue that paid for government. Their

labourers returned home taller, stronger, knowing the ways of the cash economy and equipped with a *lingua franca*.

The missionaries saw themselves coming among peoples living in fear, ignorance and dirt. They gave them literacy in their own languages, freed them from superstition and malign sorcery, provided them with modern health services, and brought them the intellectual, spiritual and institutional benefits of a world religion and a promise of a life beyond death. All had ready self-images and metaphors: they were explorers, pioneers on an untamed frontier, manning outposts of empire, civilisers, and peace-makers. They replaced stone with steel; they were the bringers of light into the earth's last dark corners; and in the end they were the makers of a democratic and Christian nation. Even if the biographers avoided triumphalism, and conceded that they went to the Territory to do good for themselves, they had still worked within a greater scheme of progress. They had, as it was sometimes said, 'done good while doing well'.

Those who have written reminiscences since 1980, and certainly since 1990, have written either as builders of institutions that have failed, decayed or been replaced, or they have gone to a foreign country with obligations to abide by local laws and customs and work within institutions where power is held by Papua New Guineans. Missionaries, particularly those from the old missions—the Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican, Methodist, and London Missionary Society—must now face the facts that they might suffer assault; and that, in areas where they were once dominant and in the towns, charismatic movements have captured the enthusiasm, and collection money, of many Papua New Guineans. But the institutional strength of the Catholic, Lutheran and Seventh Day Adventist churches has remained important, and where the state has not been able to meet the needs of its citizens, the missions may have increased in importance. The crowds greeting visiting hot-gospellers, the numbers of people claiming to be 'born-again', and the assertions of their faith by leaders indicate that Papua New Guinea's belief systems have been strongly influenced by over 130 years of missionary endeavour.

The government officers who brought peace now read of resurgent tribal fighting, a 10-year low-level war on Bougainville and that razor wire is standard on houses in the towns. Those who took 'government' to villages know that now no government services reach many of those villages. *Kiap* government was for many an interlude, not a transformation. The miners have seen the destruction of one of the world's great mines on Bougainville, the transfer of ownership of Ok Tedi, the ravaging of the alluvial field at Mount Kare and the fluctuations on the oil and gas fields between riches and corruption and violence. Elizabeth Thurston, the daughter of a planter and later the wife and partner of a planter, wrote of their unlocked plantation house in the 1960s: 'None of us could have believed that in the next decade or so this presumption of innocence and

enduring stability would be replaced by fear, uncertainty, a sense of anarchy and a groundswell of political pressure and change'.⁶¹

That shift in the context in which biographies have been written in the last twenty or so years could be expected to change them—in tone, in reflection on what might have been done better, and in assessing the legacy. In practice, the impact has varied. The government field officers have largely stopped writing. Perhaps they are inhibited because those ready images of the outpost of empire, the boys' own adventure on the frontier and bringing the benefits of civilization to ignorant tribesmen have so passed from fashion their resurrection seems impossible. Perhaps, too, some are conscious that Bill Gammage in his writing on Jim Taylor and John Black and the Hagen-Sepik patrol has introduced a level of frankness and complexity that they could not, and may not want to, reach.⁶² But it may also be because they would have to write defensively—to explain why their peace was for many an interruption, not a legacy. The silence of the field officers is unfortunate: we need to know more about what they were doing when they were not on patrol. We need to hear their own tough self-evaluation of trying to set up local government councils, conduct national elections, introduce the first Papua New Guinean patrol officers and specialists into their districts, and maintain peace when their authority was shifting to others. The continuing reluctance of most of the bureaucrats in Canberra and Port Moresby to write memoirs means that social scientists and historians have no equivalent to Paul Hasluck's *Time for Building* to help them interpret government files.

Resources for administrative and political histories may be thin, but the possibilities of other sorts of histories have increased. Now there are the memoirs of film-makers, dramatists, literature and art teachers, geologists, self-taught mechanical engineers, mine workers, recruiters, accountants, school teachers, anthropologists, wildlife managers, hydro-electricity plant planners, Pacific Islands Regiment officers, planters and civilian pilots.

The missionaries have continued to write, and the range of writers has widened to include the lay workers and subordinates who will not have mission colleges and scholarships named after them. In their lives there is an emphasis on achievement, and it is undoubtedly justified. For little material reward and often putting up with physical hardship, they taught, healed and gave people the first printed texts in their own languages. A few still have the piety, fervour and faith of the prewar mission books: these are lives fulfilling a greater design. But in many in the last few pages there is now a brief summary of crime and corruption and competing beliefs. Seven years after leaving Papua New Guinea in 1971, Betty Scarlett and her daughters returned to the house in Port Moresby used by transiting missionaries. She said, 'Our welcome in this wholly expatriate establishment was cool. They seemed to have interest only in *Faith Missions*, not those like our United Church ...'⁶³

Many mission biographies also now include a defence against charges of suppressing benign and creative elements in local cultures. The excesses, they claim, were often carried out by converts, not by overseas missionaries. Marjorie Deasey comes closest to admitting to a 'life of failure' after more than 30 years among the Gogodala. Having faced accusations about destroying Gogodala culture and being caught up in local politics, Marjorie and Dudley Deasey flew out of Balimo with no farewell. They recovered in Port Moresby where their house was a second home to the Gogodala, and after Dudley died Marjorie was feted on her return to Balimo. Marjorie Deasey's self-assessment of the dedicated missionary allows glimpses of opposing arguments, the possibility of failure and the personal anguish that would follow. In the end, the Deaseys could claim success, but it is not triumphant.

What is common to the great diversity of lives now recorded is that by going to Papua New Guinea they claim to have had their lives enriched. Even those who were in Papua New Guinea for just two or three years, regard Papua New Guinea as having been important in who they became and what they remember. Seen in this way, the biographers are not claiming to have done good, but almost incidentally to have had good done to them.

The most obvious change that has taken place has been the increase in the number of women writers. Whether church or secular, or from pre- or post-independence Papua New Guinea, in the last 25 years women have been more ready to record their lives. They have had less immediate responsibility for policies, and less responsibility for their implementation, so they have been free of the restraints that may have inhibited some men. Also, women who have been aware of the feminist movement and have changed their roles or aspirations in the workforce and in their relationships with men may be more ready to adapt to the changes that came with the transition from 'territory' to 'colony' to foreign country. Whatever the reason, many women have been ready to accept the present and concentrate on the immediate task—whether that was running a health clinic in the West Sepik, opening a school in the Highlands, or trying to introduce a literacy program for womens' groups. Often the most engaging and revealing moments are not incidents of great drama—they are the memories of nights spent on pitching small boats, clinging to small children, chucking up over the side, and accepting the impossibility of using the only toilet, a bucket; or noticing that the school children had placed the long buds of the red flowers of the tulip tree on their desks—they contained water and were used to clean their slates; or trying to explain to a 16-year-old son why he could not ride a motor bike exuberantly in front of a group of Highlanders who once would have been entertained but were now enraged because this was an arrogant display of what they did not have and could not do in their own country.

The men obviously vary widely from the fundamentalist missionaries to the knockabout labourers, but the women reveal a wider range of attitudes. No man writes with Kidu's commitment to a Papua New Guinean community, or with Baranay's distance and criticism of contemporary Highlands. The diversity of the women is most obvious in their vocabularies. While some women can write of having to 'slosh along in pig shit', ask 'What the fuck do I want?', or recall having a 'hot fanny', for other women such terms—and implicit values—are as alien as an iceberg in Moresby Harbour.

The servicemen and women who were 'in the islands' during World War II have had much encouragement to write. The increasing crowds at Anzac Day ceremonies, the repeated public appearances of prime ministers at battle sites and war graves, the affirmation of the values of a nation displayed and reaffirmed in war, and the many celebrations of the 50th and the 60th anniversaries have increased consciousness of war service. The emphasis has been on particular battles, theatres and experiences: the prisoners of war of the Japanese and the battles in Papua New Guinea, particularly Kokoda. This has been consistent with the desire to bring the symbols of nationhood closer to home, to diminish distant and empire service, and to make central the battles in immediate defence of Australia and without moral ambiguity. The soldiers did not aim to convert, rule or make money out of Papua New Guineans. Their memories are set against the 'special relationship', their dependence on the carriers and the carriers' generous response. The servicemen and women therefore can exempt themselves from any of the sins of commission and omission of colonial masters and nation builders, and they write to record experiences seen as critical in the making of their own nation. And it is not only men who were in battle who write, but many of the support troops.

Social scientists now, and historians now and in the future, have a mass of memoirs to exploit. Where the archival records of governments, missions and companies are largely written by men, the memoirs are being taken over by women. The division between male political and economic history and female social history seems to be widening. In this two-stream world of enquiry, the value of those few who bridge the streams—such as Carol Kidu who is as revealing on politics as she is on social history—are all the more important.⁶⁴

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Hank Nelson (December 2005)

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ENDNOTES

¹ With one or two exceptions, all books listed have been published since 1980.

² Peter Brune, *A Bastard of a Place: the Australians in Papua* (Sydney 2003); Peter Fitzsimons, *Kokoda* (Sydney 2004); and Paul Ham, *Kokoda* (Sydney 2004).

³ Sydney Rowell, *Full Circle* (Melbourne 1974); Lieutenant General Robert Eichelberger, *Jungle Road to Tokyo* (London 1951); George Kenny, *General Kenny Reports: a personal history of the Pacific War* (New York 1949); Clayton James, *The Years of MacArthur: 1941-1945*, vol. 2, (Boston 1975) remains one of the best on MacArthur in the Pacific; Steven Bullard, "'The Great enemy of humanity': malaria and the Japanese medical corps in Papua, 1942-43", *Journal of Pacific History*, 39:2 (2004), 203-20.

⁴ Geoffrey Hamlyn-Harris, *Through Mud and Blood to Victory* (Sydney 1993), 50-1.

⁵ Beros says it was written on 14 October 1942, *The Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels and Other Verses* (Sydney n. d.). The poem was in the *Courier Mail* and the *Women's Weekly* before it appeared in the book. It was certainly published in Australia before the end of 1942.

⁶ Tom Hogan, Nace and Bill, *From Grabben Gullen to Kokoda*, privately published (1992), 106.

⁷ Alan Hooper, *Love War & Letters PNG 1940-45: an autobiography 1940-1945* (Coorparoo 1994), 142.

⁸ Also quoted in David Wilson, *The Decisive Factor: 75 & 76 Squadrons—Port Moresby and Milne Bay 1942* (Melbourne 1991), 46-50.

⁹ Patricia and Arthur Jackson (eds), *'A Lot to Fight For': the war diaries and letters of S/Ldr J.F. Jackson, DFC*, privately published (1996), 230.

¹⁰ Ken Thorpe, *My Wartime Story* (Gundaroo 1996), 37.

- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, 33.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, 64.
- ¹³ Norman Medew, *Up North in Fortythree: the story of a spitfire squadron in the Island War*, privately published (1989), 31. Carroll also comments on the peoples of Goodenough and Kiriwina.
- ¹⁴ Bill Marks, *The Fall of the Dice* (Fremantle 1991), 113.
- ¹⁵ John Carroll, *Good Fortune Flew with Me: memoirs of John W. Carroll's tours of operational duty during World War II*, privately published (2002), has several good photographs—of more than Papuan women.
- ¹⁶ John Kingsmill, *No Hero: memoirs of a raw recruit in World War II* (Sydney 1994), 160.
- ¹⁷ Hogan, *From Grabben Gullen to Kokoda*, 121.
- ¹⁸ Lloyd Collins, *New Guinea Narrative 1942-1943: incorporating the wartime diary of a cipher operator*, privately published (2001), 6.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 102.
- ²⁰ Jack Stebbings to Bert Collinson (n.d.), letter collection in Salvation Army Heritage Centre, Bourke St, Melbourne.
- ²¹ John Holmes, *Smiles of Fortune: a memoir of the war against Japan 1943-45* (Sydney 2001), 81.
- ²² Frank Perversi, *From Tobruk to Borneo: memoirs of an Italian-Aussie volunteer* (Sydney 2002), 131.
- ²³ James Henderson, *Onward Boy Soldiers: the battle for Milne Bay* (Perth 1992), 161.
- ²⁴ Collins, *New Guinea Narrative*, 112 and 95.
- ²⁵ Peter Jones, *The Reluctant Volunteer in Service with the Ninth Division 1940-1945* (Loftus 1997), 161.
- ²⁶ John Bellair, *Amateur Soldier: an Australian machine gunner's memories of World War II* (Melbourne 1984), viii.
- ²⁷ William Deane-Butcher, *Fighter Squadron Doctor: 75 Squadron Royal Australian Air Force New Guinea 1942*, privately published (1990), 18.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, 27.
- ²⁹ Polly Underwood, *The Reflections of an Old Grey Mare: a salute to those who served*, privately published (n. d.), 14.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, 42.
- ³¹ Alan Powell, *The Third Force: ANGAU's New Guinea War* (Melbourne 2003). Also, Frazer has written of Ed Tscharke, a medical assistant in Angau.
- ³² Clarrie James, *ANGAU: one man law* (Loftus 1999), 81; G.A. Rudge, *A Medast's Way, Part 1: 1943-46*, privately published (1987), 37.
- ³³ Gordon Abel, *To War and Back: a young soldier's journey through the terrors and boredoms of World War Two*, privately published (1999), 29.
- ³⁴ Margaret Reeson, *A Very Long War: the families who waited* (Melbourne 2000). See also Carolyn Newman (ed.), *Legacies of our Father: World War II prisoners of the Japanese—their sons and daughters tell their stories* (Melbourne 2005).
- ³⁵ Philip Fitzpatrick, *Bamahuta: leaving Papua* (Canberra 2005), has been omitted because a 'number of characters are fictitious and one or two things didn't quite happen in the way I've described' (preface). Similarly I have left out E.I. Symons, *Beyond the Reef*, privately published (1985), who has written a novel, but the section on the war in New Guinea is he says, the story of his own platoon and 'as true as my memory will allow', 173.
- ³⁶ See, e.g., Warwick Anderson, *The Cultivation of Whiteness: science, health and racial destiny in Australia* (Melbourne 2002).
- ³⁷ Evelyn Cheesman, *Things Worth While* (London 1958), brings together her travels. A.J. Marshall, *The Men and Birds of Paradise: journeys through equatorial New Guinea* (London 1938).
- ³⁸ Hortense Powdermaker, *Stranger and Friend: the way of an anthropologist* (London 1967).
- ³⁹ *The Age*, 22 March 1998, headed its review 'Boy's own story'—and Flannery writes sharp clear narrative.
- ⁴⁰ Oskar Spate, *On the Margins of History: from the Punjab to Fiji* (Canberra 1991), 91.
- ⁴¹ Brij V. Lal (ed.), *Pacific Places, Pacific Histories* (Honolulu 2004).
- ⁴² Kenneth Read, *The High Valley* (London 1966).
- ⁴³ Michael French Smith, *Village on the Edge: changing times in Papua New Guinea* (Honolulu 2002), 168.

- ⁴⁴ Derek Freeman, *Margaret Mead and Samoa: the making and unmaking of an anthropological myth* (Canberra 1983).
- ⁴⁵ Paul Hasluck, *A Time for Building: Australian administration in Papua and New Guinea 1951-1963* (Melbourne 1976).
- ⁴⁶ Rowley Richards, *A Doctor's War* (Sydney 2005).
- ⁴⁷ Chilla Bulbeck, *Australian women in Papua New Guinea: colonial passages 1920-1960* (Melbourne : 1992), 2.
- ⁴⁸ I have used 'Boys' but she is the daughter of Margaret Woods, and it is Woods who lived in New Guinea. Several of the other women noted earlier also wrote as widows, e.g. Bowman, Epstein, and Green.
- ⁴⁹ Nancy White, *Sharing the Climb* (Melbourne 1991), 34.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 81.
- ⁵¹ Edna Maclean, *My Loves and Hates*, privately published (1990), 30.
- ⁵² Pat Boys, *Coconuts and Tearooms*, privately published (1993), 107.
- ⁵³ Contrary to most of the women noted here, Ida Voss was outlived by her husband by some nine years.
- ⁵⁴ Marjorie Deasey, *Never Say I Can't*, privately published (2004), 188.
- ⁵⁵ August Kituai in a letter to Hank Nelson, 1 December 2005. It is interesting that the primary teachers of the two historians, John Waiko and August Kituai, have both written reminiscences.
- ⁵⁶ Carol Kidu, *A Remarkable Journey* (South Melbourne 2002).
- ⁵⁷ There is no copy in the National Library of Australia. As noted earlier, Ian Downs has a little of his own involvement in politics.
- ⁵⁸ Chris Harkness, *New Guinea: the Wahgi impact* (Cooparoo 1994), 274. A biography of Ellis is included in an appendix.
- ⁵⁹ Judith Hollinshed, *Innocence to Independence: life in the Papua New Guinea Highlands 1956-1980* (Canberra 2004), 204.
- ⁶⁰ Hollinshed, *Innocence to Independence*, 3.
- ⁶¹ E.T.W. Fulton, *No Turning Back: a memoir* (Canberra 2005), 284.
- ⁶² Bill Gammage, *The Sky Travellers: journeys in New Guinea 1938-1939* (Melbourne 1998).
- ⁶³ Betty Scarlett, *Oscar X-Ray Calling: the story of the Scarlett family in Papua New Guinea 1962-1971*, privately published (2005), 170.
- ⁶⁴ Kidu, *A Remarkable Journey*.