
Woodlark

a people free to walk about

Woodlark Island, over 40 miles in length and greater in area than Sudest, is lower and swampier than the other big islands of south-eastern Papua. Thick rain forest flourishes wherever the soil and drainage are adequate. The raised coral, mangroves, forest and small areas of garden lands of the west are divided from the east by the hills near Kulumadau in central Woodlark and the low Okiduse Range which rises at Mount Kabat in the north and culminates in a spear point of peninsula dominated by Suloga Peak. Inland from the mid-north coast and Guasopa Bay are extensive gardening lands.

In 1895 the beach opposite Mapas Island was covered in stone chips, a clearing about a mile inland was strewn with more fragments, and beyond that near an old village site on the flank of Suloga Peak were acres of chips. For many generations men had mined on Woodlark, taking stone from rock faces exposed in a gully on Suloga and working it until it became a tool, wealth and art. The hard volcanic rock was flaked by striking it with another stone, ground in sand and water, and then polished in water and the powder coming away from the stone itself. At the old village site on Suloga and at other places on Woodlark were large slabs of rock each with a circular depression made by men grinding and polishing. In the most valuable blades the polishing highlighted a network of lighter bands, the result of the irregular laying down of the original volcanic ash.

Suloga was the main source of stone blades for all the south-eastern islands. Blades were also traded to people on the mainland, going as far north as Collingwood Bay, and in the south they were picked up by Mailu Islanders and passed along the coast in a series of exchanges until they reached the Papuan Gulf 500 miles from the Suloga quarry. Different sized blades suited various tasks: felling trees and clearing scrub for gardens, adzing dug-outs, shaping the outside of logs for hulls, and cutting grooves and chipping holes to attach outriggers. Sometimes flaked blades were exported and polished by peoples on other islands. Even where polished blades were being used, as at the

canoe-building sites on Panaeate, men were constantly grinding new cutting edges and re-binding loose blades to handles.

Finely banded stones, larger and thinner than any working blades, were objects of beauty and tokens of wealth. Men sought to acquire them in the competitive and ceremonial trading exchanges which linked the islands and the mainland. Men paid their debts in Suloga stone. Displayed before visitors from distant villages, they were tangible signs of the wealth and power of Trobriand chiefs. The islander who carried a finely ground axe hooked across his shoulder to a feast or a meeting with trading partners was displaying a valuable object; he was probably prepared neither for work nor war.

When iron was replacing stone as a cutting tool in the 1870s the inhabitants of the two villages who worked and distributed the blades suffered a 'big sickness'. The survivors abandoned their homes and their skills to settle in a small hamlet on Suloga beach. Without a knowledge of the techniques or magic which allowed other men to sail and plant with confidence, the Suloga were still a depressed community twenty years later when white miners came to Woodlark for another mineral of value, beauty and utility.

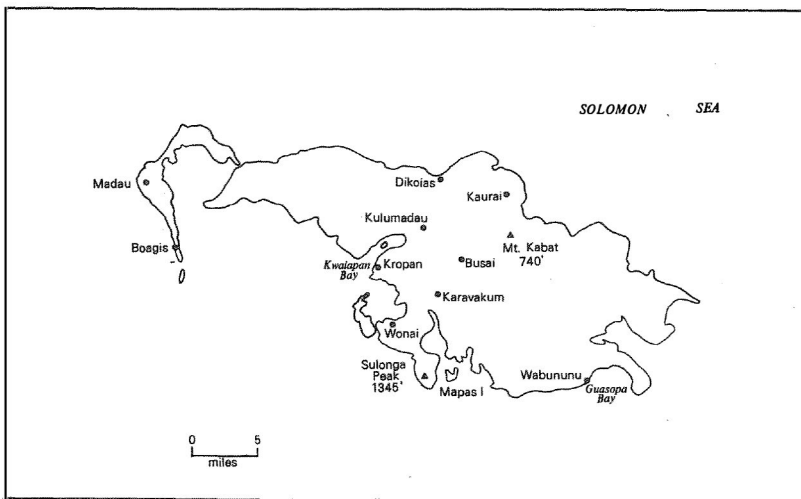
The Suloga blades, which had been selected and ground with the greatest care, retained their value. On Panaeate men who worked with iron tools, still loosely bound to wooden handles, accepted thirty or more stone blades for building a *waga*; after 1900 European traders paid from £5 to £10 for Suloga axes in one area to exchange them for shell and copra in another. The trader also benefited from the prestige which passed to the owner of a fine blade.

By 1850 Woodlark Islanders had traded, worked, fought and entered into religious dispute with Europeans to a degree unknown to other Papua New Guineans. In the 1830s they traded with whaling boats which came in search of food and water, and in 1840 some Europeans began calling the islanders' homeland after the whaler *Woodlark* which had anchored there in about 1832. In ignorance of the recommendation published in the *Nautical Magazine and Naval Chronicle* other foreigners and islanders continued to call it Murua.

On the advice of the captain of a whaler, Monseigneur Jean Collomb led a party of French missionaries of the Society of Mary to Woodlark in 1847 to begin the work of converting the people of New Guinea to Christianity. Aware that the islanders had killed all except one of the survivors from the wreck of the *Mary*, the missionaries held some Muruans hostage on the mission boat to secure the safety of those who went ashore. But the Muruans, anxious to trade for iron, competed to be hosts to the foreigners. The Marists chose to establish their mission on Guasopa Bay, a broad stretch of protected water backed by a gentle curve of sandy beach and flat forested land in

south-eastern Woodlark; they called the 'beau et excellent' harbour, 'Nativité'. With the assistance of Pako, a Muruan who had been to Sydney and spoke some English, they purchased land and began to build. Collomb set himself the task of learning six new words of the Muruan language each day and he instructed his missionaries to patrol all parts of the island so that no infant need die without benefit of baptism. Three months after the missionaries arrived a baptised child died and Collomb forgot his fever to shed tears of joy for having been able to open heaven to another soul. But the Muruans were unmoved by the missionaries' assault on their beliefs. They would not accept that suffering and death had come to Woodlark because Adam had eaten of the forbidden fruit; and if the Marist God was so powerful then let him come down among them bringing his iron and displaying his axes. The Marists, who were often sick and unable to provide food for themselves, had no obviously superior material or spiritual power, while the Muruans could feel that in performing their rituals while gardening, trading and fishing they continually confirmed their relationship with the forces controlling the world. Having come into economic and ideological competition with the Marists, the Muruans were determined to cling to their own ways in spite of drought and disease. By 1849 the Marists had ceased active mission work to serve God by following a strict monastic life. The only convert was made by the Muruans: Brother Optat chose immediate pleasure on Woodlark rather than wait for eternal reward. He escaped the mission to meet Muruan women and commit 'improper familiarities ... in the sight of all'. His brothers in the church shipped him to Sydney in 1850.

Map 5 Murua Goldfield, Woodlark Island



To shake the pride of the Muruans and demonstrate the superior ways of Europeans, the Marists took five Muruans and three Laughlan Islanders to Sydney in 1851. On their return the travellers led a movement to make another Sydney on Murua, and the missionaries believed that soon they would see a general acceptance of Christianity. But the Italian missionaries of the *Missioni Estere di Milano* who replaced the Marists in 1852 reaped no harvest. Drought and disease again afflicted the Muruans, and fighting broke out between villages; once more the missionaries became isolated from the islanders. In 1855 the Italians abandoned Woodlark. One priest, Giovanni Mazzucconi, who had been in Sydney recovering from illness, sailed on the *Gazelle* to rejoin his colleagues not knowing that they had already left for Australia. When the *Gazelle* ran on a reef outside Guasopa eight canoe loads of islanders came alongside, and feigning friendship to get on deck, killed all on board and looted the ship. The Muruan who told the crew of the schooner *Favourite* the story of the attack had been to Sydney and he chose to go away again on the *Favourite*. Individual Muruans were prepared for adventure and economic revolution; their resistance to Christian missionaries was not part of the conservatism of a community opposed to all change. And some Muruans may have thought they had paid a terrible price for their resistance; there had been about 2200 people on the island when the missionaries arrived but many islanders had died of disease by the time they left. Forty years after the Marists departed MacGregor asked Makavasi of Guasopa if he remembered the language of the missionaries: 'he promptly replied "travaillez comme ca"' (work like this).

The Muruans continued intermittent trading and fighting with visiting ships, and for the latter they were shelled by a French warship. Their relations with the outside world changed in 1880 when Wilhelm Tetzlaff ('German Charlie'), an agent of Eduard Hemsheim of Matupit, New Britain, established a trading station in the Laughlan Islands. The Laughlan Islanders were part of the Muruan community. They visited Woodlark frequently, many leaving the Laughlans with the south-east trades in November and returning home with the north-west in December, their canoes loaded with yams and other garden foods. Men from Woodlark visited Tetzlaff's station and an island woman who had lived with Tetzlaff later married a Guasopa man. Foreigners thought that Tetzlaff had acquired a position of influence among the Laughlan Islanders. When the Queensland labour traders came to the Laughlans in 1883 William McMurdo, the government agent appointed to see fair play on the *Stanley*, concluded that Tetzlaff had advised the recruits to desert. He punished all involved by burning village houses and Tetzlaff's station and destroying canoes. The Muruans attempted to retaliate in 1885 by seizing

a boat from the *Victoria*, which was returning men from Queensland. A 'treacherous-looking lot' forced their way between the oars, grasped the gunwales and tried to drag the boat inshore, but the crew was able to take the boat clear without bloodshed; the two Muruans who had served a year with the Mourilyan Sugar Company waded ashore with their bundles. Few Muruans went to Queensland but many engaged in the copra, pearl and bêche-de-mer trades of south-eastern Papua.

Captain Bridge raised the Union Jack at Guasopa on 9 January 1885 before a gathering of 'the finest and most robust Papuans we had seen'. They were also hostile, indicating by mime that labour recruiters had tied men's hands behind their backs and taken them away. The Muruans, having been drawn towards the German commercial empire by Hertsheim, were now in the most north-western corner of British New Guinea.

Government officers had little reason to visit Woodlark until November 1889 when the traders Kickbush and Neilson were killed and their boat, the *Albatross*, was looted at Guasopa. According to evidence given at the trial of those accused of murdering the traders, Tetebra of Panemote Island, a crewman on the *Albatross*, had arranged the attack. Kwarma of Wakoia, who had been to Sydney, believed that his people living inland from Guasopa could attack the foreigners and be safe from any reprisal. Tetebra had then met the Wakoia and they had planned the raid. When news of the killings reached Samarai the Muruans were forced to take part in a sequence of events known to other people of British New Guinea. Assisted by Muruans who were hostile to the Wakoia, MacGregor led a small armed force inland. They quickly arrested most of those involved, but Mamadi, who was supposed to have taken a leading part, evaded capture. As a gesture of reconciliation Mamadi left a revolver and a Snider rifle with a 'bunch of sweet smelling herbs' tied to the trigger guard on a mat on the platform of his house. One of the captured men, Viviga of Wakoia, was found guilty of the murder of Albert Kickbush and sentenced to death. Against the advice of other members of the Legislative Council MacGregor directed that Viviga be hanged at Omdamuda, Guasopa Bay. MacGregor believed that plunder alone was the motive and although 'entertaining ... an extreme aversion to capital punishment' he decided that a public execution would be to the 'ultimate benefit of the natives'.

Having gone to Woodlark because of the killing of Kickbush and Neilson, government officers became involved in other events. They learnt that the Wakoia had attacked the villages close to Guasopa Bay killing thirteen people on one raid and surprising and killing fifteen women in their gardens on another. One group from Guasopa had

abandoned their homes and taken refuge among the more numerous Wamana people of the north coast. The Wamana, having had more frequent contact with foreigners, accepted the coming of the government without any display of opposition; but the Wakoia, less involved with the traders and fearful of retribution for their part in the attack on the *Albatross*, left their villages and carried their axes, ebony spears, and painted shields when they learnt that government parties were in the area. A clash was avoided when Viviga was arrested in 1891 but in 1892 MacGregor sent word to Boiomea, a Wakoia leader, that he had arrived 'to fight if they wished to have fighting, or to make peace with them all except the murderer Mamadi, if they wished to have peace ...'. Although suspicious that MacGregor wished to imprison him, Boiomea chose peace. Wamana, Wakoia and Guasopa met and MacGregor arranged for the Guasopa refugees to return to their own lands. MacGregor gave shirts and tobacco to the 'chiefs' hoping that in taking the 'clothes' a man also accepted an obligation to speak for the government. Six months later Bingham Hely reported that 'the natives everywhere came off to [the government boat] with the greatest confidence' and he believed that a 'lasting peace' had been established between the Wamana and the Wakoia.

Before the arrival of the miners the Muruans were caught in further strands of the loose government net by the appointment of a village constable at Guasopa, and the old people of the Laughlans in 1893 had 'burst into a wailing lament' as the first young man left to join the Armed Native Constabulary. His mother put a mat and two coconuts in the dinghy which took him to the *Merrie England*. The next year more young men joined the constabulary.

Apart from the occasional visit of a naval officer or a punitive explosive shell, the 'government' had followed the miners to Sudest, accompanied them to Misima, and preceded them to Woodlark.

Lime spatula, Woodlark Island, 1974



In 1895 the traders Richard Ede and Charlie Lobb, who had taken over Tetzlaff's trading station on the Laughlans, found gold on Woodlark. Lobb, a Cooktown miner, went to New Guinea in about 1890, and Ede kept him supplied on prospecting trips around the islands. Four months after making the strike, Ede and Lobb formally applied for a claim from which their labourers recovered 20 ounces of gold per week. Lobb drowned in 1897 when he was knocked overboard by the boom on his cutter; Ede remained on Woodlark

as a planter and trader until 1942 when he went to Australia shortly before he died. Another find was made by the Papuan collectors employed by the English naturalist A.S. Meek. He turned digger to work a claim and win £250 worth of gold in six months. When MacGregor arrived in November 1895 he found about a dozen men mining on a spur of Suloga Peak, another dozen working on a creek at the head of Suloga Harbour, and a few prospecting other areas. Hoping to discourage competitors, some diggers told MacGregor that 'the whole field was utterly worthless', but MacGregor decided that they had been 'doing fairly well, some of them very well'; and he proclaimed the Murua as British New Guinea's second goldfield. Hearing of more finds in the creeks of the wet forested country between the Okiduse Range and Kulumadau, men prospecting the mainland or turning over old ground in the Louisiades left to try the Murua. By the end of 1895 about fifty diggers were on the new field. The number of miners on Woodlark continued to grow, and then in February, March and April of 1897 there was a rush, with steamers arriving every fortnight from Queensland. Shipping agents in Sydney said that the demand for passages was as great as during the early days of Coolgardie. Australian interest in gold in New Guinea grew on rumours, scraps of contradictory news and occasional reports which sober men could believe. In March 1897 they learnt that the *Ivanhoe* had arrived in Cooktown from Woodlark with 800 ounces consigned to Burns Philp and 32 passengers who were prepared to declare that they had another 300 ounces. There was certainly gold on Woodlark. In fact during the first three years, at least 32,000 ounces went from Murua through Queensland ports; not much compared with the richest Australian fields but more than three times the amount taken from Sudest and Misima from 1888 to 1890. Early diggers at places they named Elliotts Creek, Mackenzies, Colemans, Reillys and Big Ben Creek, Yanks, Skippers, New Chum and Floggers Gully made tucker and some had a full 'shammy', a soft leather bag of gold. Most of the alluvial workings were near Busai, with smaller centres at Suloga, Wonai, Okiduse, Karavakum and Kulumadau.

One man who sank test holes in many gullies on Woodlark was C.A.W. Monckton. Whit Monckton, the son of a New Zealand doctor, was twenty-three. He had gone to New Guinea in 1895 for adventure and, armed with a letter of introduction from the Governor of New Zealand to Sir William MacGregor, had hoped to obtain a position in the government service. Sir William had no vacancies and Monckton went to Woodlark. After a brief stay on the island Monckton recruited two labourers in Samarai and returned to mine. Nearly twenty years later when he was farming in New Zealand he listed his prospecting equipment:

For food we depended on a small mat of rice of about fifty pounds weight carried by one boy, and as many sweet potatoes, yams or taro we could pick up from wandering natives. The other boy carried a pick and shovel, tin dish, crowbar, axe and knife, and three plain deal boards with a few nails, comprising our simple mining equipment, together with a sheet of calico, used as a 'fly' or tent, to keep the rain from us at night. My pack consisted of a spare shirt, trousers and boots, rifle, revolver, ammunition, two billy cans for making tea and boiling rice, compass and matches, and last but not least a small roll case of the excellent tabloid drugs of Messrs. Burroughs and Welcome.

On the rare occasions that panning revealed gold, they assembled the sluice box, set it with a fall of one inch in twelve, put stones or nailed vines across the bottom to trap the gold, and diverted creek water through it. Monckton found enough gold-bearing ground to shovel into the sluice box to pay his expenses; but many who came in the rush of 1897 did not.

In January MacGregor wrote to the Governor of Queensland asking him to correct the 'many sensational, probably misleading items of news' in the Australian press; but the number of diggers on Woodlark continued to increase until April when there were about 450 on the island. Alexander Campbell, attempting to administer the new field by making schooner trips north from his headquarters on Nivani, thought that Murua could support about 170 men. Many of the early diggers, coming from other parts of New Guinea, were accustomed to the climate and knew what stores, trade goods and equipment were needed to work an island field; but during 1897 the number of men on the island without money or stores or hope increased. The diggers and the constant rain turned Busai into a swamp of churned mud. The storekeepers found it almost impossible for their labourers or mules to carry goods from the anchorage in Suloga Harbour to Busai. A correspondent of the *Sydney Daily Telegraph* giving The Latest Information in March 1897 said: 'The sun burns down on the soaked ground, the rotting vegetation, the putrid beach, and the unwholesome mangrove swamp, and the air seems to be alive with fever bacilli.' He thought that alcohol had established its reputation as an enemy of fever, and with a bit of quinine the sick could pull through. Not all men, he conceded, had a constitution strong enough to survive the cure. At least fourteen miners died in March; one, Charles Rayman, with no money and his two mates dead from fever, put his gun in his mouth and blew his head off. Forty men left for Cooktown on the *Clara Ethel* in March: 'most ... crawled to the vessel stricken with fever and dysentery', two died before the ship cleared the harbour and five more were buried at sea. Campbell tried to auction the

possessions of those who died on Woodlark, but found little to sell: 'when a man dies on the field be his claim rich or poor, there is nothing in the camp a few minutes after death'. William Page and Patrick Finnigan, charged with stealing 11 ounces of gold, a revolver and a watch from James Henderson, said in their defence that they had thought Henderson was dead. They were celebrating their luck in a licensed store when Henderson walked in and accused them of theft. Still drunk when he faced Campbell, Finnigan suffered an additional penalty for contempt of court. MacGregor called the early arrivals 'industrious workmen of good character', but many of those arriving in 1897 were men without mining skills and Campbell reported that they included about 'a dozen very bad characters', some of whom had served long prison sentences in the Australian colonies.

Table 6
Murua Goldfield
production and population

<i>Year</i>	<i>White Miners (30 June)</i>	<i>Papuan Labourers (30 June)</i>	<i>Production (ounces)</i>
1895/96	190	760	12,000
1896/97	400	1600	20,000
1897/98	160	640	10,000
1898/99	62	248	5000
1899/1900	76	304	6000
1900/01	150	600	7500
1901/02	100	400	7000
1902/03	120	480	8500
1903/04	125	500	9000
1904/05	100	400	9689
1905/06	80	294	10,527
1906/07	69	227	5296
1907/08	69	227	5296
1908/09	70	252	6339
1909/10	48	252	9780
1910/11	89	343	8632
1911/12	89	403	9447
1912/13	93	420	12,147
1913/14	39	347	9182
1914/15	58	450	7170
1915/16	48	318	6790
1916/17	36	300	4527
1917/18	11	120	3052
1918/19	16	35	405
1919/20	3	30	400

Although many men left after April 1897 the Murua did not decline as rapidly as the Louisiade fields. At the end of June 250 miners

remained, 160 were still there in June 1898, 62 in 1899, 76 in June 1900 and 180 in November 1900. Men stayed because the alluvial field was richer, and others arrived because reefs had been found. Campbell granted the first reward claim for a reefing prospect at Colemans Creek near Busai in April 1897, but it was not until the testing of the Ivanhoe reefs at Kulumadau in 1899 that Australian capitalists were prepared to invest in the Woodlark mines.

Three companies were formed to exploit the Kulumadau reefs: the Woodlark Island Proprietary Goldmining Company of Sydney, the Woodlark Ivanhoe Goldmining Company Kulumadau of Adelaide, and the Kulumadau Woodlark Island Goldmining Company of Charters Towers. With the assistance of a surveyor, a court and assessors the companies bought out the claim holders and began recruiting men, importing machinery, developing plant sites and sinking shafts. The distance between the mines and a port was reduced to a mile and a half by a track cut from Kulumadau to Bonagai on Kwaiaapan Bay. When the Proprietary Company decided that too much of its capital was being taken by Australian labourers and reduced wages from £5 to £4 a week, the men stopped work. The company brought in more workers from Queensland and they joined the strikers. The mine manager appealed to Campbell for police to protect the company's property, but Campbell decided that the company's property was in no danger and to bring in the Armed Native Constabulary would 'have been the signal for an otherwise orderly and well conducted body of strikers to have become a disorderly mob, and possibly both police and mining property might have fared badly'. The company agreed to pay £5 and the ten stamp battery was ready for the official opening by the Lieutenant-Governor, George Le Hunte, in April 1901.

By the end of 1901 the three companies were working the Kulumadau lodes, and at Suloga another company had installed an engine and pump to sluice for gold. But the warden thought that the method of extraction used by the Suloga company was unimportant because, 'if the gold is not there it cannot be dug up'. The Suloga company, whose stocks had soared 'like a rocket', did not earn enough to pay for its lease. At Kulumadau the Proprietary Company had forty Papuans working on the tram line between the mines and the port, another sixty cutting timber for shafts, building and fuel, and the three companies employed sixty-five Europeans and 130 Papuans at the mines; but the crushing mills were often silent. There was gold at Kulumadau, but it would not support three companies using extravagant methods. The Ivanhoe abandoned its leases in 1903 and the Proprietary Company closed its mine in 1905; in the previous year it had paid a dividend of 3d. on each £1 share. The Kulumadau

Woodlark Island Goldmining Company took over the Proprietary Company's leases in 1907 and maintained production until 1918. In most years the Kulumadau produced gold worth between £10,000 and £20,000. In 1915 it employed 28 Europeans and 253 Papuans, and when it closed in May 1918 it had to dismiss 11 Europeans and 120 Papuans.

At other old alluvial centres hopeful leaseholders made many trial crushings and attempted to form companies. In 1905 Karavakum (or Bonivat) looked like the 'coming locality'. Test crushings from the Woodlark King lease having given high yields, the owners installed a mill, concentrator and cyaniding plant. Over the next ten years the Woodlark King produced over £50,000 of gold. Although it was one of the richest single leases on Murua, the Woodlark King did not tempt investors to support large-scale development. At the Little McKenzie, another Karavakum lease which was briefly 'one of the most promising properties on the island', the owner installed a battery from the old Ivanhoe mine and for a few years it again crushed stone for little return.

Where the alluvial miners took thousands of ounces of gold from the old silts and many creeks of the Busai area, the reefers found numerous leaders and deposits of 'good stone'. The first crusher to work at Busai on the Federation lease in 1906 was powered by a waterwheel, but it was soon replaced by Fred Weekly and partners' Murua United battery. Weekly crushed stone for leaseholders at £1 a ton for small lots, most of the stone being bagged and lumped to the mill on Papuan shoulders until tramways were built to the most important mines in about 1911. George Jones's Federation lease, the most productive at Busai, yielded over 1800 ounces before 1914.

The leaseholders were hampered by water and their inability to raise the capital to open new lodes and introduce more efficient methods of recovering gold. Kulumadau had an annual rainfall of over 160 inches but surface water disappeared quickly in the porous coral and limestone soils. The level in the companies' dams fell quickly during brief dry spells and the mills were forced to stop. At other times the underground miners spent more time bailing than digging. The Kulumadau shafts went below 500 feet but at Busai and Karavakum where the mining areas were lower and the leaseholders could not afford to install efficient pumps, deep mining was impossible and even shallow shafts were flooded.

After May 1918 there were frequent attempts to open old mines. Most gold was won in 1938 and 1939 by a company cyaniding the sands from the Woodlark King. The alluvial miners had never completely abandoned Murua. In 1901 when the first crushers began operating the alluvial miners recovered 7500 ounces, and in 1913

eighteen white miners and their 'teams' of labourers were washing gold on the island. They reported finding 695 ounces but the warden conceded that the alluvial miners were still as reticent as they had been to MacGregor in November 1895. In the 1920s and 1930s men kept returning to Woodlark, where they set gangs of Papuans to rework old ground while they prospected for reefs and poked around old shafts. By 1940 the miners had taken over 200,000 ounces from lode and alluvium. Until the revival of the Louisiades in the 1930s when the Umuna mine was paying a monthly dividend to its shareholders, Murua was Papua's richest goldfield.

Paddle handle, Massim, after Haddon 1894



In 1901 Kulumadau was a crude settlement of tents, huts of bush material and a few new buildings of sawn timber and galvanised iron. It was inhabited by white company miners and construction workers, independent reefers and alluvial miners, and gangs of Papuan labourers and villagers who had come to look, sell or work. Although the death rate was much lower than it had been in the early days of alluvial mining, Kulumadau was still considered 'naturally an unhealthy locality' where 'fever' was persistent and outbreaks of dysentery common. Three stores licensed to sell liquor and another, 5 miles away at Busai, served the 150 white residents on the island. The Reverend James Walsh of the Methodist mission complained of men, on the Sabbath, gambling with dice, playing billiards, drinking and singing obscene parodies on 'The Holy City', 'I will arise' etc. It was worse one Friday night when Gus Nelsson celebrated an expansion of his business by giving free drinks to all: 'Saturday the men drank harder. Sunday was worse. Yesterday was worse still, and rioting was strong. Today the language is worthy of a sewage farm, and still the drinking goes on.' Two years later the majority of members in the Commonwealth Parliament briefly agreed that they should transform the way of life of most white men in British New Guinea.

In August 1903 Samuel Mauger, a Melbourne hat manufacturer eager for governments to pass legislation to protect men from evil, moved that a section be added to the Papua Bill prohibiting the sale of alcoholic liquor to all residents except when authorised by a doctor. Ardent prohibitionists and those who believed that 'The taste for drink is an overpowering passion with the black' and likely to be the cause of their destruction combined to pass Mauger's amendment. The Acting Administrator, Christopher Robinson, wrote to inform the parliament

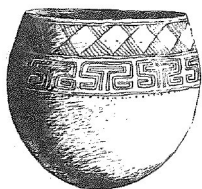
that the miners were 'accustomed to the use (and abuse also, for that matter) of alcoholic liquors' and he doubted the capacity of any government to change their ways. The miners who responded to Alfred Deakin's request for the views of every class told him that they would 'certainly not do without their grog'. W.E. Buchanan, who spoke as 'an old digger, with some 30 years' experience', seven of them spent prospecting and trading in New Guinea, said that the miners would 'certainly not for one moment brook any interference by the present native police; any such action would, without doubt, mean a very unhealthy experience for the native force'. And Buchanan 'with all courtesy' went on to tell the 'Federal politicians' to 'do something ... towards improving the disgraceful conditions of the unfortunate natives of your own land whom you have allowed to become utterly depraved by drink and opium'. In Western Australia and Queensland, said Buchanan, the laws against supplying liquor to Aborigines were a 'screaming farce, and the open and permitted degradation of the native women a crying shame'. Buchanan spoke from a position of some righteousness. Very few men had been charged with supplying Papua New Guineans with liquor, none with selling it to them, and convicted Europeans had been fined heavily. The Papua Act was passed without the prohibition clause: Deakin was able to satisfy Mauger and his supporters with provision for a poll giving the white residents the chance to reduce the number of licences to sell liquor. The white residents voted not to close any licensed store or hotel; and while some miners were prepared to give a medicinal nip to an exhausted labourer, they rarely allowed a Papuan to drain the bottle for pleasure, companionship or escape. The miners maintained their own reputation for hard drinking. In 1906 the three Royal Commissioners appointed by the Australian government to make recommendations about the future of Papua took evidence in Sheddon and Nelsson's Kulumadau store 'still redolent of fried tinned sausages'. The first comments addressed to the Commissioners were the incoherent ravings of a 'wildly drunken son of toil'. Some miners responded to the chairman's call for order and the drunk, the chairman noted, 'was dragged by his head into oblivion'.

Government officials, public spirited men and white women increased sobriety and civic order in Kulumadau. In 1901 one or two white women lived in the Kulumadau area, seven were on the island in 1905 and by 1912 the 'single ladies of Kulumadau' could conduct a 'ball' at Nelsson and Sheddon's store, with proceeds in aid of the Kulumadau General Hospital. A rival storekeeper (who had just arrived from the Lakekamu Goldfield where all women were scarce) reported that sixteen white women came to the ball and 'a lot more stayed away'. He accused all the white women of selfishness, but

circumstances may have warped his judgment. Angelina 'the town whore' who 'could take the *Kia-Ora* [a trading boat] or even a larger size' had venereal disease; at least the storekeeper said that several of her customers had copped a load. For those with other interests or prepared to postpone sensual pleasures, there were meetings of the Hospital Committee, the Progress Association and the Amalgamated Workers' Union. The Kropan villagers were paid to 'erect shelters and seats for the convenience of travellers' on the Bonagai-Kulumadau road. Convinced that there would be a large white population on the island in the near future, the government extended its services. Roads were improved, a school for more than twenty white children was opened in 1913 and a wireless transmitter able to contact Australia began operating in 1915. But the white population had reached a peak of 179 in 1913.

When war broke out in Europe white men showed great enthusiasm for the European Armed Constabulary, which served the Empire by mounting guards at 'Saltwater' and the wireless station. They were instructed not to resist an 'attack in force'. Confident that in Woodlark's thick bush a group of thirty armed whites and ten Papuans would be able to resist 'any ordinary landing party', they asked for more precise instructions. The Government Secretary told them that the shelling of the township could be considered an attack in force, and in that event they should cease defending the wireless station. A month after news of the war reached Woodlark strange lights were seen entering Kwaiapan Harbour and the alarm was raised; but the lights were only the burning torches used by a Muruan fisherman. The German raider, *Wolf*, sunk the Burns Philp boat, *Matunga*, off the Laughlans in 1917; but by that time the European Armed Constabulary had handed in their rifles. Some white men sailed from Woodlark saying they were 'leaving for the front', prices rose, ships called less frequently and the mines did not flourish. The closing of the Kulumadau mine in 1918 and the shifting of the government station to Misima in 1920 ended white small town life on Woodlark. 'Doctor' John Taaffe, who had cared for victims of accident and disease since his arrival on Woodlark in 1896, lived for another year to look after government business and be generous to all men.

Clay Pot, Panaeate, after Tindale and Bartlett 1937



In 1897 James Gallagher, a miner, returned to his camp and was unable to find a tent he had left to dry. He asked the labourers of another miner, Thomas Scott, what had happened to his 'calico' and one said that he thought that Pumpkin (or Nagevagum) of Suloga had taken it. Firing a shot from his Winchester on the track just outside the village Gallagher entered Suloga and asked for Pumpkin. Eventually he appeared, and told Gallagher that 'House belong you stop house belong Scott'. He then accompanied Gallagher back to Scott's camp, and produced the tent. After a brief argument Pumpkin said, 'Suppose you want to fight By Christ I fight plenty belong white man I no afraid belong him'. Gallagher gave Pumpkin a poke with his rifle and told him to shut up. The next day Pumpkin and his father, Lakapu, fought Gallagher at his claim, slashing him on the back and wrist with knives before Scott came to Gallagher's aid. In retaliation Gallagher's brother Mat and two other miners burnt Lakapu's house. At a preliminary hearing Lakapu and Pumpkin claimed that they had gone to sharpen their knives on Gallagher's grindstone but he had misinterpreted their actions and attacked them. Sentenced to imprisonment on Nivani, Lakapu advanced to the position of warder, but returned to the labour gang when it was discovered that he had been spending his nights with a woman on Panapompom and returning to Nivani early in the morning. Lakapu died at Nivani in 1900. His son, although a 'young ruffian' who 'had to be taught his position' and strapped for attempting 'to have connection' with another man's wife, survived his term under government supervision.

Considered too young when arrested to face a charge before the Central Court, Pumpkin had served his time as a mandated child under the control of the resident magistrate. He returned to Suloga having suffered less than many of those who had remained in the village. There had been some prostitution. In 1899 Campbell cautioned two men at Suloga: Robert Lewis, a miner, who slept with a girl under twelve in his bunk, and Parakota of Suloga who attempted to obtain a shilling by falsely promising to lend his wife to a miner. 'Some alleged white man' introduced venereal disease in 1898 and it spread rapidly. After 'much sickness and many deaths' caused by unrecorded diseases the people of Suloga abandoned their village in 1901 and camped on the beach. Campbell wrote in the Nivani station journal:

One thing appears to be pretty certain with regard to these people, and that is that the number of deaths during the past six years from diseases introduced by the whites, is very much larger than it could have been from all causes in the old savage days during a like period of time.

Eventually some people moved back and others left Suloga Peninsula to go north to Wasilasi and east to Unamatana. In 1915 Suloga was again abandoned and the village burnt after three people had died and others had suffered from dysentery.

Tudava, the first Suloga village constable, was recognised as a leader by his own people, and before his appointment in 1897 he had worked for the alluvial miners and learnt some English. Sometime after Tudava's death in 1915 Pumpkin took over the leadership of those people remaining in the Suloga area. He was most effective in directing their efforts to earn cash. By 1915 he had worked gold claims and his people had cleared 60 acres on Mapas Island for a copra plantation. When copra prices collapsed in the 1920s and 1930s the Suloga collected trochus shell and continued to work old alluvial areas. In 1941 they were still making sago to feed the men washing for gold, then almost the only product the islanders could sell. Pumpkin had died in about 1935. Some Muruans thought he had been poisoned, for he came from a community in which powerful and wealthy men were envied and in danger.

Lakapu and Pumpkin acted differently from all other Muruans. They were the only ones to attack and severely wound an early alluvial miner. Pumpkin showed greater determination than most Muruans to earn more cash than he needed to pay his £1 annual tax, buy tobacco and make infrequent purchases in the stores. But Pumpkin's attitudes and skills were not unusual. Frequently miners and government officials described the Muruans as independent, and sometimes they called them truculent and even 'overbearing'. Europeans in the 1920s, expecting to meet the simple savage, spoke disparagingly of Misima men who knew some English and 'seem[ed] very sophisticated, smoking Derby tobacco in clay pipes'. They were more disturbed by the Muruans' ability to select and reject from the new ways paraded before them. The Muruans faced numerous bearers of a culture who were confident, aggressive and given power by their technology, political organisation, and place in the economy, yet they were often able to choose the sort of relationship they wanted with the foreigners.

The Muruans knew some of the early miners, having met them as traders before 1895, and they were able to speak a little of their language. By the end of 1896 the people near Suloga Harbour were conducting a 'considerable industry' of their own and selling their gold in the calico and bush-built stores. The Muruans did not contest the right of foreigners to seize the richest patches, but some of the miners objected to their countrymen employing Papuans at 10s. a month to work ground outside their claims, and buying miners' rights for Papuans so that they could hold claims until their employers were ready to work them; and a few miners said Papuans ought not to work on any claims unless they received a 'due share of the results'.

If Muruans shared Campbell's distaste for the woman from a northern village who was 'prostituting herself all over the place', or for other women who formed casual relationships with Europeans, they did not allow it to influence their behaviour towards the diggers. They worked on the alluvial fields, carried for the storekeepers and replaced the miners' tents with the sago palm huts which the miners thought were healthier and more comfortable.

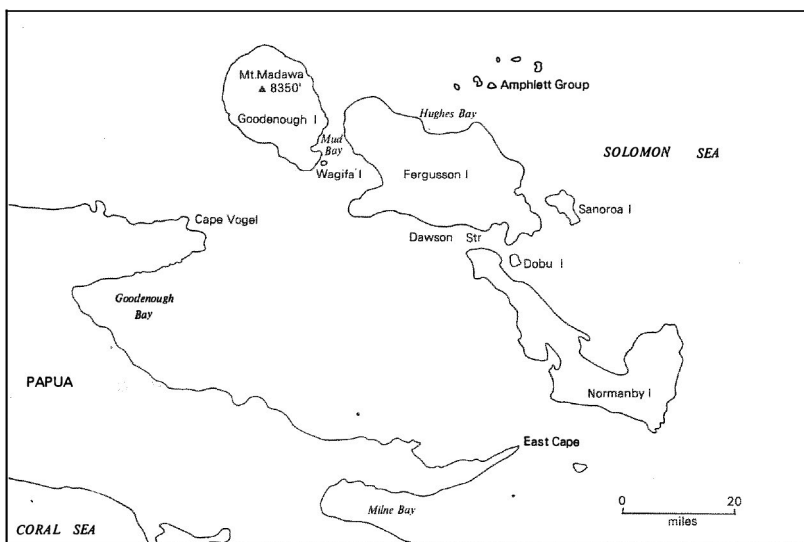
The Muruans were also prepared to work for the government, sometimes they came to the government station offering to work, but usually a government officer went to a village to recruit men for a particular task. Gangs of Muruans cut the tracks from 'Saltwater' to Kulumadau and on to Busai and Karavakum, bridging creeks, clearing timber, digging drains and carrying coral to surface tracks; they did constant work repairing sections washed away in heavy rains and cutting back long grass and undergrowth; they cleared the Nasai Point quarantine area; brought in bundles of sago leaf for thatching; they loaded and unloaded the punts which met the steamers in Kwaiajan Bay; worked on the construction of the wireless station; and when the timber for the Kulumadau school arrived they carried it from the landing and cut and transported timber for the stumps. At times the government employed up to eighty 'free' labourers. Most came from the northern villages of Dikoias and Kaurai, some from Guasopa, Wakoia and Kavatana in the east and Kropan in the south, and a few from Madau in the west. Normally they agreed to work for a short period for payment in tobacco. On 14 November 1911 fifty men from Kaurai, nearly all the able-bodied men from the village, came to Kulumadau and began cleaning up the cemetery; on 18 November they were paid 8 pounds of tobacco.

But some Muruans who worked for the government at Kulumadau were not free. Infrequently groups were gaoled for failing to carry out a government officer's instructions. In 1915 twenty-one Dikoias men were sentenced to four days' hard labour for failing to keep village tracks clear, and in 1917 thirty-three men from Kaurai were given fourteen days for not cleaning their village. Their experiences of prison work did not reduce their enthusiasm for 'free' labour. In March 1912 nineteen Kaurai men served seven days for refusing to carry for a government patrol and at the end of their sentence agreed to stay in Kulumadau to work on the road as paid labourers. And as free labourers they still ran the chance of being thrashed by road overseer Hamilton. To feed the prisoners and labourers maintained on the station, government officers bought food in the villages, supplementing the supply by taking frequent trips to draw on the yam gardens of the Trobriands.

Although some Suloga people worked as casual labourers for the reefers, Muruans would not sign-on as indentured labourers for the Kulumadau companies. In 1903-4, when the mines and stores employed 500 indentured men, only one Muruan signed-on; in the next year no Muruan signed a contract. Planters taking up leaseholds increased the demand for labour, but the Muruans still refused to sign-on. On Misima in the 1930s most indentured labourers came from outside the island, but there were always some local men prepared to accept the same conditions and they often left the north coast village of Bagalina to work at Umuna. On Woodlark when the Kulumadau companies' demand for labour was at its greatest Muruans from all villages, some of whom worked for the alluvial miners and the government, decided not to work as indentured labourers.

Nearly all the men who indicated to the government officer at Bonagai or Kulumadau that they understood the contract of service to work as a mining labourer on Woodlark came from the D'Entrecasteaux Islands. In December 1899 a hurricane swept through the archipelago, destroying tree crops and damaging gardens. It was followed by severe drought. Some Goodenough Island people, 'mere skeletons' desperately trying to keep alive, exchanged children who were then killed and eaten, or plundered gardens where a few root crops still survived. Many volunteered to follow earlier recruits to Woodlark where the companies were preparing for their first crushings; and government officers passed men who would normally have been rejected as unfit. The rains fell, the gardens recovered, but the rate of recruitment did not decline.

Map 6 D'Entrecasteaux Islands



Coming from a competitive and abstemious community where all men worked hard in their gardens and strong men demonstrated that they had slight appetite for food or sex, the Goodenough Islanders knew the virtues of hard work; more than other Papuans they were willing to do the monotonous labouring tasks which the foreigners wanted other men to do. Young men went away before marriage and came back with greater prestige and the wealth to seal a marriage contract, or they left when their wife was pregnant for the first time. Some signed-on several times, coming home for only two or three months between contracts to help make new gardens and meet other obligations. By 1940 all men in many villages had been away to work and no woman had been more than a few miles from her home. In the Trobriand Islands where the people made different judgments about human behaviour, some women were prepared to sail as companions to white recruiters or live in miners' camps, but the men generally refused to work on alluvial fields or down the shafts at Kulumadau and Umuna.

The ordinary labourer on Woodlark was paid 10s. a month, and a few with special skills or those who became 'boss-boys' could earn up to 30s. Sometimes the companies paid a £2 bonus to men completing a twelve-month contract. White recruiters in 1900 were paid £5 a head for men landed in Woodlark and 10s. to return the 'time-finished' labourers to their homes. The recruiter took his boat into an anchorage and his Papuan crewmen went ashore to persuade men to come away with them. Sometimes a returned labourer or a leading man in a coastal village acted as his agent. Many early recruits from inland Goodenough and Fergusson came from villages unknown to government officers where the people still engaged in warfare and cannibalism. Government officers taking the first patrols inland met men who had worked in many parts of the Territory and spoke a little English and Motu. William Bowden, investigating the killing of some Fergusson Islanders on Goodenough in 1910, was showered with stones and spears. He asked an interpreter to call out that he had come to talk and not to fight. He did not have to wait for a translation of the reply: 'You policemen, you Government, we fight you', and more stones came down. Government officers were surprised that they could not recognise returned labourers until they spoke; nothing in their appearance or manner distinguished them from those who had stayed at home.

When men from the interior passed through coastal villages to go away as labourers they changed relationships between inland and coastal peoples. Because of their location coastal people had been the first to meet Europeans, and some had been able to exploit their position, distributing goods obtained from the foreigners and claiming

power from the patronage of government officers, missionaries or traders. Labourers returning to inland villages in south-eastern Goodenough were likely to lose all or some of the contents of their boxes of trade; and some coastal peoples tried to preserve their position by preventing inland peoples making direct contact with foreigners. In 1903 Campbell called at Upaai on Hughes Bay, Fergusson Island. Men who had been friendly to him in the past and acted as guides when he had led a patrol which clashed with the inland Maiadoma now told him that the Maiadoma were talking loudly of destroying any government party that entered their territory. They had threatened to eat the police and use Campbell's 'skull to decorate the best house in their chief village'. The Upaai advised the government to 'kill em all'. Campbell agreed that if the Maiadoma had said such things they should be punished severely, but before he left the beach a leading man of Maiadoma came out to the government boat and, handing over a basket of yams for the 'master', accused the Upaai of causing all the trouble:

From days long gone by they and we were always enemies. The coast people and the hill people. We used to kill each other one tribe taking payment for every man killed by the other tribe. The government came and the coast people first knew it, and they now are always threatening us that they will bring the government to eat us up. It is true my men took their spears to you when you came here last, that was because the Upaai people said you were coming to kill us all.

You took two men away that time, the brother of one of those men is now standing there. We have come to say we do not want any more fighting, we have come to ask you that we the Maiadoma people may be protected from the threats of the Upaai people. Before you were led to our villages by them because we had killed a man belonging to their tribe, but we did this in payment for one of our men killed by them.

The Maiadoma also complained about Nicolas of Upaai, who had spent several years working for traders and now acted as an agent for recruiters. He threatened violence against the inland peoples and deceived his employers by keeping the tobacco which they had given him to pay intending recruits. Nicolas explained its loss by saying that hill people had stolen it from him. Campbell believed the Maiadoma: they told a plausible story and Campbell's old prejudices led him to favour the 'straightforward' inland men against Nicolas, 'one of the most objectionable of natives "the whiteman's nigger"'. Other officers followed Campbell's actions on his first patrol to Maiadoma: advised, guided and assisted by coastal people they punished unruly hill people.

Most D'Entrecasteaux Islanders tolerated the conditions on Woodlark, but some did not. By January 1897 the storekeepers were complaining about seventeen Dobu and Normanby carriers on the Busai track who stole a boat and deserted. Other islanders followed. After investigating a case in 1900 of thirteen Normanby men who stole a whaleboat, stocked it with tobacco and other goods, and sailed for home, Campbell decided that they 'have so frequently stolen boats, and escaped punishment, that they looked upon it as the right thing to do whenever they get tired of work, or become homesick'. A group of Dobuan labourers made sure they would not be pursued by stealing all rowlocks and oars, including those in the store. Sometimes deserters gave themselves up or government officers persuaded them to surrender by threatening to destroy a canoe unless they came forward; but until each man's name was entered in the village book, and there was a network of village constables through the islands, government officers found it difficult to capture deserters. Men facing a term in a prison gang and then returning to their old employer escaped by signing-on under another name and going to work in a different area.

Men accustomed to ocean voyaging who found little pleasure in mining or carrying may have taken any unguarded boat as an invitation to desert; others had specific grievances. Some Goodenough Islanders said that they had been mistreated by their overseer and had decided to take a boat when three labourers were killed by a fall of earth. And desertion was common in 1902–3 when thirty-seven indentured labourers died of beriberi, dysentery and German measles. The death rate reached its height in that year; over the next three years only eighteen labourers died out of a work force of over 400. In 1913–14 fifteen men died and four deserted from the 608 labourers on the island. The death rate was low compared with some mainland goldfields, but some white miners complained about the accident rate. Of the fifteen who died in 1913–14 six died as a result of injury, the highest in any one year. With many inexperienced men employed underground by struggling companies normally free of expert mining inspectors, a high accident rate was likely. The Kulumadau companies may have been lucky to avoid a major disaster.

Before the arrival of the miners the Laughlan Islanders told MacGregor that they did not want a mission teacher to live among them. MacGregor assumed that they had been influenced by the trader Tetzlaff; but in rejecting the missionaries the Muruans were confirming a decision of their fathers. They did not want the missionaries to return. In 1899 the Guasopa would not sell land to foreigners unless the buyers agreed not to let missionaries use it. A year later E.J. Glew of the Methodist Mission visited Woodlark with the hope of establishing a station there, but 'the natives [did] not seem to

view the matter with favour'. They explained their opposition to Campbell:

Those of the Dukoeasa [Dikoias], Kaurai, and Kropan villages called upon me and requested me to prevent the missionary settling at their respective villages. They stated that if he did establish a station in their villages that they would leave them and build new towns elsewhere. They appeared to have particularly strong views upon this subject. When asked for their reasons for objecting to have a missionary stationed amongst them they stated that now they were free so long as they did not commit any offence against the law, but once the missionary came they would no longer be able to 'walk about' i.e. be free.

At first the Methodists avoided Muruan hostility by offering guidance to the Europeans and indentured labourers in Kulumadau, but later they built a station at Guasopa. For over fifteen years European missionaries worked on Woodlark, but the Muruans chose not to believe them or the South Sea Island and Papuan teachers who came to Woodlark before 1940. No other small group of Papuans received so much attention from Christian missionaries and took so little notice of them.

The Misima had agreed to be hosts to mission teachers, who influenced a change in their beliefs and behaviour; the Sudest had shown no enthusiasm for the missionaries and the missionaries had spent little time there; the missionaries had worked hard on Woodlark but by 1940 their only consolation was that written by Xavier Montrouzier at Guasopa in 1851; they had suffered, sown in tears, and the islanders had resisted the grace of God.

The uniformity of the Muruan decision not to be Christians or indentured labourers was in contrast to the uneven impact of mining on the island. The Suloga, already suffering an economic revolution following the end of quarrying, lived on the beach where the diggers landed and on land where they mined and built their stores; those Muruans living in the main centres of population in the north and east were within a day's walk of the mining areas but distance gave them a buffer; in the extreme west the people of Boagis were little disturbed. Related by language to the Panaeate, they were seamen and traders, often 'sailing about' for two or three months of the year. They did not mine for themselves or work for foreign miners. In 1931 when they displayed their wealth to a visiting patrol officer it consisted of 270 necklaces and arm-shells soon to be taken to trading partners in other islands, the necklaces continuing their circle through the islands by going south and the arm-shells west. Forced to find cash to pay taxes, the Boagis looked to the beach or the sea; they worked shell or copra.



World War II touched Misima when production at Umuna was at its height; it broke across Woodlark when the white population had declined to six miners, three planters and traders, and one government officer. Two miners who were living with local women decided not to obey the general order to leave the area in January 1942. They were joined by Lieutenant P.J. Mollison, recently a patrol officer and now an officer in the Royal Australian Navy and a coastwatcher. Early on 23 June 1943 villagers told him that soldiers were landing on Guasopa beach. Hearing the troops speak English Mollison went forward and learnt that they were the advance party of Alamo Force, instructed to occupy Woodlark, code-named Leatherback. Within a few weeks nearly 8000 troops and 17,000 tons of equipment and stores had been landed at Guasopa. Most of the troops were from the United States 112th Cavalry Regiment, an artillery battalion and support units which had trained and assembled in Townsville. Lieutenant-General Walter Krueger, commander of the United States Sixth Army, recalled that a few men from the Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit had 'served as a cushion between troops and natives'. Twenty-four days after the arrival of the first troops the Guasopa airfield, built close to the site of the old Marist mission station, was ready for use; and a week later a fighter squadron began operating from Woodlark. The Japanese responded with two light bombing raids which did little damage.

Expected to be a major base for attacks on Japanese-held areas on Bougainville and New Britain, Woodlark was of little use to the Allied forces. The movement of men and equipment and the development work around Guasopa were later thought valuable only because they were practice for other, larger amphibious landings. War had come to the Muruans as suddenly as mining, but it had been on a massively larger scale, was less explicable in terms known to the Muruans and it was briefer. After the war the foreign population declined to about eight: men concerned with planting, saw-milling, trading and prospecting. And sometimes scholars, missionaries and government officers lived on Woodlark. The one obvious legacy of the war was the Guasopa airstrip.

In the post-war years the Muruans changed their way of life in one major respect: they listened to the teachers from the Methodist mission and many became members of the Methodist, later the United, Church. But in 1974 there was still a *waga* pulled up on Guasopa beach. Like others in the area it had been purchased by an exchange

of shells and other valuables from the canoe-makers on Gawa Island. The carved prow, the mat sail and the hand-spun rigging were similar to those shown in the earliest photographs taken on Woodlark Island. The houses in Wabununu village on the west side of the Bay are now rectangular boxes with thatched gable roofs; yet people and place seem to be lightly touched by the outside world. A man in Wabununu village still makes a name by acquiring arm-shells in competitive and ceremonial trading with other villages. The old men of Wabununu remember the miners as hard men who took much wealth and gave little. They built fences around their houses in Kulumadau. If you visited a miner's camp and you had fish to sell you were tolerated, but if you went to talk and eat with Papuan labourers you were shouted at and hunted away like a dog. In Muruan eyes the miners were men who did not understand that wealth was something which men could compete for, yet at the same time it could be shared and circulated.

The question for a historian to ask about Woodlark is not what changes the miners brought, but why they brought so few.

More than other Papuans on island goldfields the Muruans suffered a decline in population. In 1900 there were about 2500 Muruans; they had recovered from the effects of the periods of drought and disease in the 1850s. By 1920 there were only 800, and the population remained at about that level until 1940. There seems to have been no one epidemic but many: dysentery, venereal disease, influenza, whooping-cough and German measles. Before the village constable of Dikoias came to Campbell in 1901 to ask for help because many of his people were sick and some had died, he may have been forced to doubt the capacity of Muruans to sustain their own ways; but later he would learn that the Europeans could then do little to stop the dying. The declining population may have made it harder for the Muruans to maintain their independence; it was not sufficient to make them capitulate to foreign science or foreign explanations about the causes of suffering. In 1971 nearly 1200 Muruans lived on Woodlark.

The description of the Suloga quarry is taken from MacGregor to Governor of Queensland, 20 November 1893, and Seligman and Strong 1906. Seligman 1910 and Malinowski 1934 have additional information on the axe industry. Fred Damon showed me an old grindstone near Wabununu village in 1974.

Laracy 1969 and 1970 provides more detailed information about the early Catholic missionaries on Woodlark than is given here. The description of Guasopa Bay and the incident about the baptism of the child are from Verguet 1861. The looting of the Gazelle is from *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 June 1856.

Tetzlaff's association with the Marquis de Rays's expedition is mentioned in Biskup 1974. The burning of his station is referred to by Corris 1968, Morrell 1960, and Scarr 1967.

Of the 405 men returned to south-east New Guinea by the Victoria only two were from Woodlark; *Queensland Parliamentary Papers*, 1885, Vol. 2, p. 1072.

The sources referred to in earlier chapters were again used to provide information about early contact between foreigners and Muruans, and about the beginning of mining. Two valuable newspaper accounts on mining are *Cooktown Courier*, 22 October 1895 and *Brisbane Courier*, 5 March 1897. Ede's obituary is in *Pacific Islands Monthly*, May 1942. Meek 1913, pp. 73–4 and Monckton 1921, p. 22 give their experiences. The conditions on the goldfield in 1897 can be gauged from Campbell's reports in the Nivani Station Papers and in newspaper accounts; *Brisbane Courier*, 9 April 1897, *Sydney Mail*, 24 April 1897, *Mount Alexander Mail* (Castlemaine) 21 April 1897 and in Musgrave's collection of cuttings. Campbell wrote from Suloga Harbour: 'I have now before me several Northern Queensland papers, but in none of them can I find a word of warning in re the Woodlark Goldfield, although on the other hand there are plenty of, if not absolutely untrue, highly exaggerated, reports of the quantity of gold, the vessels, or miners, carry away with them from this island ...' He gave an example of a man who arrived in Cooktown and claimed to have 200 ounces; Campbell said he had less than 20. Nivani Station Papers, 20 March 1897.

The account of the strike by white workers is taken from the Nivani Station Papers. Campbell, Nivani Station Journal, comments for September 1900, wrote: 'The men contend, and with truth, that although the rate of wage was £5 they, what with sickness, wet weather, and other causes did not earn more than £3-12-0 per week. The company's pay sheets show an average of £3-13-0 per week per man. The storekeepers are paying £5 per week at present-time.' H.B. Higgins in the Harvester Judgement of 1907 thought 7s. a day was a minimum fair and reasonable wage. Before the Royal Commission of 1906 Fred Weekly said, 'No labouring man on this island gets less than £5 a week. The salary of the Magistrate and Warden hardly comes up to that'. In fact, Francis Gill, the Warden and Assistant Resident Magistrate, received £250 a year.

The statistics related to reef mining are recorded in *Annual Reports* and there are some quarterly returns from the companies in the Nivani Station Papers. Evan Stanley, 'Report on the Geology of Woodlark Island (Murua)', *Annual Report, 1911/12*, pp. 189–208, gives details about the location of leases as well as the nature of the country.

The diary of the Reverend James Walsh is quoted as Appendix D in D.A. Affleck, Murua or Woodlark Island: A study of European Contact to 1942, B.A. hons. thesis, A.N.U., 1971.

The discussion on prohibition is recorded in *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates* on the Papua Bill, and *Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers*, 'Papua (British New Guinea). Spirituous Liquors — Correspondence Respecting the Suggested Prohibition Against their Introduction, Manufacture and Sale', 1904, Vol. 2. The Chairman of the Royal Commission, Kenneth MacKay, wrote unofficially of his tour in *Across Papua ...*, London, 1909, pp. 65–6.

Events of importance to the European community were noted in the Kulumadau Station Journal and, infrequently, in the *Papuan Times*. Whittens' storekeeper wrote about Woodlark women to Frank Pryke, 23 September and 23 November 1912, Pryke Papers. South-Eastern Division, General Correspondence, C.A.O., C.R.S.G 180, item 15 has a little information on the school and item 55 is a file on the European Armed Constabulary.

There is a tribute to John Taaffe in the Kulumadau Station Journal for 4 June 1920.

Campbell, Nivani Station Papers, 30 December 1897, wrote a long report on the attack on Gallagher and enclosed statements by witnesses. D.H. Osborne has an account of the attack on Gallagher in *Pacific Islands Monthly*, September 1942.

While there are breaks in the government records about Woodlark after the transfer of the government headquarters to Bwagaioia in 1920, some of the reports of H.W. Rogerson, who was stationed at Kulumadau for much of the 1930s, have survived. The Bwagaioia papers include reports of patrols to Woodlark.

In 1905 I.J. Penny died while walking to Kulumadau and it was assumed that he had died of fever, but two years later it was discovered that he had been murdered by Muruans. This second death was ten years after the beginning of alluvial mining.

Dimidau, who established a copra plantation at Muniveo, was another leader who pressed his people into the cash economy.

'Muruaans were often able to choose the sort of relationship that they wanted ... ' I do not argue that they made the best choice; just that they chose.

There are two basic studies on the people of Goodenough Island: Young 1971, and Jenness and Ballantyne 1920.

The statement by the leading man of Maiadoma was taken down by Campbell, Samarai Station Journal, 23 August 1903.

The death rates are from *Annual Reports*. I was unable to find any figures for injuries not resulting in death.

Campbell wrote down the Muruan objection to the missionaries in the Nivani Station Journal, September 1900, comments at the end of the month. The Minutes and Journals of the Annual District Synods, held at Dobu, United Church Papers, Box 20, New Guinea Collection, University of Papua New Guinea, have references to Woodlark, 'one of the most trying and perplexing stations in the District'.

The account of the war and Woodlark is based upon Australian War Memorial, C.A.O., 609/7/9, 616/4/1-5, 616/10/1, 519/1/12 and 519/6/71; and ANGAU War Diary. A report by A. Timperley lists the foreign population on Woodlark on 1 January 1942, ANGAU 80/6/4. I am grateful to Jerry Leach who directed me to the records in the War Memorial. Additional information on the war from: *Allied Geographical Section, Southwest Pacific Area, Terrain Study No. 23, D'Entrecasteaux and Trobriand Islands*, October 1942; Dexter 1961; Krueger 1953; Miller 1959; and Morison 1950.

Fred and Nancy Damon, resident in Wabununu village in June 1974, hosted a meeting with the people of the village and translated their talk. I am indebted to them for much general information.

This text is taken from *Black, White and Gold: Goldmining in Papua New Guinea 1878–1930*, by Hank Nelson, published 2016 by ANU Press, The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.