

The Work Grows Among the Mountain People

At first the missionaries wanted to start a second Kate Station to the West of Sattelberg. (p. 129 GNM). Then they began to look at the mountain ridge to the north of Sattelberg where a good population lived, also many miles to the inland. Missionary Zwanzger began preparations in 1903. The first village visited was at war so the reception was bad. The visiting party noticed three huts built near-by high in a tree. However, a station site named Wareo was selected which was covered with bush. Keysser went along and helped for the first half year. A few months later peace was made at the new station between two warring tribes. Then the people sent seventy carriers, both men and women, to bring all of Zwanzger's supplies and belongings in one trip from the coast to the station. (p. 130 GNM). Only one axe and one knife were stolen in the process by a man named Sagi. When Sagi was later discovered the men of the area were very angry. This was a sign that Zwanzger had been accepted into clan membership.

The nearby influence of Sattelberg was felt early. The first class of school boys numbered 41. One year later there were 67 in school. Wareo also became a health station like Sattelberg so that in 1912 a guest house became necessary. This guest house was paid for by gifts from the Iowa Synod in the U.S.A.

Now came the decisive struggle at Sattelberg. The work in the coastal villages could be characterized as a mission approach to individuals. (p.131 GNM). Because of the heat and climate, the coastal people were also more phlegmatic. In Sattelberg, the coming of the Gospel cost a more stormy conflict but many years of preparation were necessary. In 1902 nineteen people were murdered in the area. In 1903 cannibalism was still practiced.

Finally, in 1904 the first two school boys who had been instructed by Keysser, were baptized by Flierl. Their names were Ajang and from Kupa village. One hundred guests were present for the occasion. (p. 132 GNM).

The baptism made no influence on the general mass of people. But a beginning was made. In November, 1903 Keysser together with Chief Zake invited many to a big dance-feast. No one was allowed to bring weapons to the station. The dance went on all night. Then came the feast. And following it Keysser addressed the two hundred who were assembled. He spoke of sorcery and the fear of sorcery as a poisonous boil of the body which must be cut open before healing could be expected. Zake also spoke and admitted to the murder of Mogas in 1902. Then Chief Sane made a great speech in defense of himself. He said he made no sorcery but in the end admitted that he had asked others to make it for him. He had rally intended to kill the neighboring chief Gambangge. Gambangge then admitted that he had planned to kill Sane by sorcery. A chief sorcerer, name Bal, first defended himself, then shut up. (p. 133 GNM)

By the end of 1904 ten people asked for baptismal instruction. Before their baptism on May 7, 1905 (p. 135 GNM) the ten were tested by a visit to the feared places of the spirits. Many who came to the baptism were deeply impressed. Thirty more asked for instruction. Seven to eight hundred were present at the baptism of the thirty. Than so many came that the missionary

couldn't handle the work alone. So pre-instruction for baptism was begun in the villages and was given by the baptized Christians. By 1907 two hundred of a population of two thousand were baptized. (p. 136 GNM).

On Simbang, Missionary Schnabel, who had worked on Sattelberg, baptized six young men on May 13, 1906 and another group of twenty-three on October 7, 1906. These were all Kates. Simbang was then closed and removed to Masan Mountain which had an elevation of 200 meters. In 1907, ninety one people came for instruction at Masan and in 1908, two hundred and fifty. The Christians helped with pre-instruction. A new church had already been built when the station was begun in 1906 with seating for four hundred. (p.137 GNM)

Meanwhile on Wareo, the first heathen from the Hinterland Mountains came for a visit in 1905. Wagner and Zwanzger worked together. Of the three hundred men, women and children who visited the Christmas service, sixty adults asked for instruction.

On June 28, 1906, the first class of six were baptized. A new church was built which could hold seven hundred if crowded. (p.138 GNM). At the baptism of 1910, the church could not hold the eight hundred guests who came. By 1915 half of the Wareo people were Christians. Five hundred had been baptized. One hundred and fifty were catechumens and one hundred and fifty were pre-catechumens.

The earth quake of September 15, 1906 at 2:00am, the worst in memory, caused much discussion among the people. Instead of fear of ancestors, there was now fear of God. (p. 139 GNM).

Sattelberg station was in fog for all except an average of 53 days per year. Thus the gardens suffered, also the cows. At that time the German government gave 500 hectares to the mission. This land had been intended for a plantation when originally purchased.

Thus, after the first baptism at Sattelberg, Flierl turned over the work to Keysser, and on the day after Epiphany, 1904, set out to establish Heldsbach, named in memory of missionary held. (p.142 GNM).

In one year there were eighty three young men on the station. Most went to school. The local people also gathered for church and instruction. On March 4, 1906 the first twelve were baptized by Flierl including chief Zake. By 1911 the congregation numbered 217. This small congregation established the first evangelist's or helper's station of the Kates one day's walk to the north along the coast.

Missionary Wacke, who had been at Simbang, was sent to help Flierl. The oldest son of Flierl, Wilhelm, also helped. A good bush house was built after the importance of Heldsbach was realized. In the beginning of 1907 Flierl moved his family down. For three years he had been separated from his family, visiting them every second week-end at Sattelberg. (p.143 GNM)