

The Spread of the Gospel in the Waria Valley

The whole area was occupied by non-Melanesians, and the government had already established a post there before missionaries came. A road was opened to the mid-Waria area. After coastal from the Malalo area found the language difficult, Kates sent eight workers from three different congregations. First two coastal stations were established. Then five days walked inland along the middle Waria, Kipu was started. The people there had asked for and prepared for evangelist of Hube, Mainao. (p.212.GNM) In 1922, the Kate's got help from five workers sent by the Zaka congregation. These five were sent by the congregation with many gifts including also 50 shillings each.

After a trip to the upper Waria, Mailaender reported that 25 villages on both sides of the river lived in peace. In 1921 two days' march up river from Kipu, the station Gerepo was established. In 1922 on August 16, Mailaender crossed the watershed of the Waria and came to the Biaru valley from which the waters flow into Papua. The evangelists had already been there twice. But when the party arrived, the people were busy with a large Balum festival and had invited many people from the Butu and Ono tributaries of the upper Waria who were still enemies of the Gospel. So the missionary and other workers received no food. (p.213.GNM)

At 5 p.m forty-two armed warriors surrounded the rest-houses where the mission party was relaxing. These warriors were encouraged by the other people to shoot. This situation went on for hours. But every time a warrior lifted a bow, he couldn't shoot. Remembering the Elisha story of 2 Kings 6:14-23, Mailaender prayed that God would give the warriors sleep. And behold, at 2.30am in the morning, the warriors went to sleep in the cold rain with bows and arrows in their hands. And so the company escaped.

Two years later in this village of Ilup on the Biaru, a great peace meal was offered to Mailaender and one year later an evangelist's station was established there. Via the station on the Biaru, a connection was made with the Malalo evangelists on the upper Pilolo.

And even more wonderful event happened to the evangelists at Gerepo shortly after their arrival there. The Nasangale, way up in the valley, swore the death of the evangelists. One night they surrounded the house. Suddenly they saw three beings in white going back and forth in front of the house. So the company of warriors fled in fear. (p.214.GNM)

On November 21, 1926 the first baptism was held in Kipu. Only one hundred guests came from the more distant villages. The chief failure was the lack of movement by the evangelists. There was a population of 12,000 in the valley. W. Flierl had been designated as the second missionary for the Waria, but he was interned during the war. (p.215.GNM).