

Pambu

The monthly newsletter of the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau,
Research School of Pacific Studies,
Australian National University, Canberra

No. 7

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February, 1969

A CAPUCHIN'S VIEW OF WARTIME MICRONESIA UNDER THE JAPANESE

A once-secret document, which contains an account of conditions in the Mariana and Caroline Islands after the Japanese occupied them in World War I, is among the latest unpublished material to be copied on microfilm by the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau.

The document, which is probably one of the few contemporary accounts extant of a little-known period of Micronesian history, is preserved in the archives of the Roman Catholic Mission at Yap in the Western Carolines. The P.M.B. has been able to obtain microfilm copies of it through the courtesy of Mr W.A. McGrath, an Australian, who is Director of Land Management in the United States Trust Territory Government at Saipan. Mr McGrath borrowed it from the Rev. Father John Condon, S.J., of Yap.

The Yap document, which is typewritten and in Spanish, is a somewhat mysterious one. As the first page and title page are missing, it is not known who the author of it was. However, internal evidence indicates that the author was either:

1. A Spanish Capuchin priest stationed at Guam, who had once spent "more than 10 uninterrupted years" in the Marianas and Carolines, and who was well-informed about events that occurred there during World War I, or
2. A German Capuchin priest, who wrote in Spanish or was translated into Spanish, and whose ten uninterrupted years in the Marianas and Carolines included the war years.

Another mysterious aspect of the document is that it was not originally written for the purpose for which it was finally used - and it is not now known what its original purpose was. However, in its final form, the document served as a guide to a new body of Catholic missionaries who went to Micronesia in the early 1920's, following the expulsion of German Capuchins from those islands in July, 1919.

The Pacific Manuscripts Bureau was established in 1968 as part of the Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, Canberra. Its purpose is to locate unpublished documents of value concerning the Pacific Islands and to obtain copies of them on microfilm for four world libraries specialising in Pacific research. The four libraries are the National Libraries of Australia and New Zealand; the Mitchell Library, Sydney; and the Library of the University of Hawaii, Honolulu.

After making some general observations on conditions in Micronesia in the first few pages, the author of the document said he did "not pretend to indicate to the directors of the new mission how they should work in this very difficult field." He then went on to say that "to orient the new missionaries to the general situation in the islands," he was attaching a long article, which had been written "for other purposes", but which would be useful and interesting to the new missionaries.

"The article is put at the free, private disposition of the missionaries, but it cannot be published - either in full or in part, either in the original or in translation - without my authorisation," the author of the document added.

The document was originally 125 pages long. It is divided into seven chapters: Natural Conditions in the Marianas and Carolines; Social Conditions of the Islanders; Stages of Life of the Islanders; Religion and Morality; the Situation of the Islanders with Respect to Christianity and the Roman Catholic Mission; and the Catholic Mission under Japanese Rule. The chapter on social conditions has been removed from the Yap typescript.

In the sixth chapter, the author states that whereas the people of the Marianas, known as Chamorros, had been familiar with Christianity for more than three centuries, those in the Carolines had only been instructed in "the true faith" in the last few decades and most were still pagans.

"The first missionaries," the document goes on, "were Spanish Jesuits, who were later replaced by Augustines of the same nationality. The Mariana Islanders long ago abandoned their pagan customs and practices, and are at present what can be called a Catholic people. The Catholic faith has penetrated profoundly into the soul of the present generation, and dominates all their thoughts, feelings and tastes. They are faithful to their religion and practice it passably, even if all of them are not yet mature enough to figure among the saints..."

The report explains that the Marianas had, for many years, been part of the diocese of Cebu in the Southern Philippines. But as a

result of the Spanish-American War, which ended in 1899 with the loss of Guam to the United States and the sale of the Carolines and other Marianas islands to Germany, the Marianas were then separated from Cebu and constituted as an apostolic prefecture. This was entrusted in 1904 to the German Capuchins of Rhine and Westphalia. In the following year, when Guam was made an apostolic vicariate under the control of the Spanish Capuchins, the Marianas and Carolines were united as an apostolic prefecture and the German Capuchins were placed in charge of the Carolines also.

Efforts had been made to christianise some islands in the Western Carolines at the end of the 17th and beginning of the 18th centuries. However, these had failed, partly because of contrary winds and dangerous storms, and partly because of the difficulty of communications and the isolation of the islands. Only since the late 1880's, when Pope Leo XVIII adjudicated in favour of Spain in a dispute with Germany over the islands' sovereignty, had Spanish Capuchins begun a real missionary effort. Meanwhile, American missionaries from Boston had already been working for several decades in the western islands of the group, fighting against the use of kava and tobacco by the islanders, against their dances and sport, and, above all, against their nakedness. The last-named battle assured the Americans of "a good market for the sale of calico and other cloths."

As in the Marianas, the foreign missionaries in the Carolines were replaced by Germans, at the request of the new administration, after Germany bought the islands from Spain. Besides the replacement of the Spanish Capuchins by Germans, Protestant missionaries from the Liebenzeller Mission in Germany began work at Truk and Ponape, while the Methodists "took refuge" on Kusaie.

"At the outbreak of the World War," the document continues, "the [Catholic] apostolic vicariate had 16 principal stations in these scattered islands...22 popular schools for the education of native youth, and four boarding schools for girls and boys. The personnel of the mission comprised: one bishop, 19 priests, and some 20 teaching brothers and 15 nuns. The priests and brothers were all Capuchins from the province of Rhine-Westphalia; the nuns belonged to the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Francis, whose mother-house is at Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In addition, the mission made use of numerous Islanders, some as catechists, some as assistant-teachers.

"In the last few years before the war, the situation of the mission was very satisfactory on all sides....It is true that there was still much to be done, since the work had hardly been begun and was not in full swing [in the Carolines] when the clouds of war gathered on the horizon."

Referring to the Japanese occupation of the Marianas and Carolines in October, 1914, the document says that the Japanese at first declared complete liberty of religion, and promised not to put

obstacles in the way of the missionaries so long as they submitted to the changed conditions, and abstained from political activity against Japan.

"As the missionaries, both then and now, did not regard themselves as representatives of any national interest, but only the Catholic faith, the change in government did not affect them much, so long as they were unimpeded in their apostolic work," the document says. "In the early days, nothing in particular happened; they submitted to the laws and regulations promulgated by the new rulers; and they continued working as before.

"But this tolerant situation did not last long. As the war went on, incidents occurred to obstruct the mission's work, and to make it impossible in more than one place. The last and gravest blow that the mission received came with the treaty of peace, with its clauses concerning the missions, and the interpretation and execution of them by the Japanese Government.

"Already, towards the end of 1915, all the mission schools in the islands had been suppressed, and in their place Japanese schools of a sort were established. In these, besides teaching the children the Japanese language, every kind of pagan ceremony and Japanese religious custom was taught. As attendance at school was made compulsory for all children, and as every kind of religious influence over young people was prohibited during school hours, the children were gradually separated from the missionaries, and only with the greatest difficulty could they be got together for religious instruction.

"In many cases, the Japanese teaching staff advised and encouraged the children to have nothing to do with the mission. In some island groups, the local authorities made great difficulties and insisted on the most ridiculous things with the object of ruining everything when the missionaries tried to get the children together either to teach them or to enable them to hear mass. In other island groups, the authorities were less troublesome, and put no obstacles in the way of the missionaries; but even there the missionaries were treated with distrust and were placed in a position of tutelage.

"As the military regime changed continually, the missionaries were at the mercy of the commandants of the various island groups. If the commandant was a reasonable, well-intentioned man, things went along well enough. But if he was a German-hater, or if, for some reason, the missionaries were an obstacle to him, then they had to be ready for anything.

"The islands that had the least good fortune in their Japanese commanders were the Palaus. Here the missionaries were maltreated, without any consideration whatever, from the beginning of the occupation; and the Japanese did not refrain even from striking some of the missionaries. The nuns were also repeatedly treated without consideration and decorum.

"At every turn, the Japanese found all kinds of pretexts to act against the missionaries; and to give things some semblance of right and justice, they organised a sort of judicial proceeding, the upshot of which was that all missionary personnel were expelled from the Palaus at the end of 1915...More or less at the same time, two missionaries were expelled from the island of Truk and two from the Marianas, without any reasons being given beyond the pretext of military exigencies.

"Several missionaries from the Liebenzeller Mission on Truk suffered the same fate at the same time; but as on Truk, as well as in the Marianas, some missionaries still remained, mission work was not completely paralysed...

"After these events, in late 1915 and early 1916, the situation remained unchanged for the remainder of the war. But as soon as the Paris peace treaty had been signed, which made Japan lord and master of the islands - and before this treaty had been ratified by any other country - Japan immediately took steps to rid the territory of every person likely to be troublesome to it in the new era that was about to begin.

"All missionaries from the Marianas, Carolines and Marshalls were conducted on board a Japanese ship and quickly shipped to Yokohama, from which port they were repatriated to their homelands. While this was being done with such haste and lack of consideration, the Japanese Government sent a representative to Rome to arrive at a friendly agreement - so the newspapers said - with the Holy See on the question of the missions. Basically, this proceeding was nothing but a stratagem to disguise the barefaced manner in which the missionaries had been expelled, and to enable the Japanese to appear before the world at the signing of the peace as a courteous and considerate people. In brief, the Japanese negotiations with the Holy See amounted to the fact that the Japanese representative declared that his government would not permit the German missionaries to return to the islands, but that they would have nothing against missionaries from Italy, Spain, France, Belgium or England going there."

The document goes on to lament that, for various reasons, it would not be easy to replace the expelled German priests, and that if it had really been necessary for the Japanese to get rid of them, the break could have been made less brusquely. The document continues:

"As the German missionaries did not harm Japanese interests during the war, one may suppose that they would not do much danger in a few months after the signing of peace. Thus they could have instructed their successors in certain ways and helped them to learn the language; and while the new missionaries were mainly preparing themselves for their new work, they [the Germans] could have attended to the religious needs of the natives..."

"The German missionaries have left the field of their labours with no feeling in their hearts but sorrow on seeing the highest interests of humanity fall before the littleness of politics..."

"They do not cease to pray that God will bless the field of labour that was entrusted to them, as well as their old and faithful parishioners and the new pastors who are to take over their flock..."

Although the document is, perhaps, most interesting and novel in its historical details, anthropologists could well find many points of value in its chapters on the life, religion and morality of the Micronesians.

LOGBOOK OF FAMOUS MISSIONARY VOYAGE TURNS UP IN ENGLAND

One of the best-known exploits in the history of European penetration in the South Pacific is the discovery of the island of Rarotonga in 1823 by the Rev. John Williams, of the London Missionary Society.

Williams was not, as he himself knew, the first European visitor to Rarotonga, for soon after his arrival there the Rarotongans told him about a large ship which had once visited them and which he had no doubt was the Bounty "after she had been taken by the mutineers."

Williams was not even Rarotonga's second known European visitor, nor the third, for his ship was preceded in 1813 by the Endeavour, of Sydney, and in 1814 by the Cumberland, of Sydney, which sought a cargo of sandalwood there.

However, Williams' "discovery" of Rarotonga was a discovery in the sense that he reached the island without the benefit of sailing directions from his European predecessors, nor a knowledge of its latitude or longitude.

Describing the discovery of the island in his book, A Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea, Williams said that on Raiatea, where he was first stationed in the Pacific, he frequently heard of Rarotonga, as that island figured largely in Raiatean legends. Later, in 1822, he heard more about it from a couple of Polynesian missionaries who landed on Aitutaki and found several islanders who had come from Rarotonga.

In talking about it to an old priest at Raiatea, Williams was told that Rarotonga had once been joined to Raiatea, but that the gods had carried it away, supposedly to the south. There had subsequently been voyages between the two islands, and Rarotonga was reputed to be "a large and beautiful island, with a population so great that it was divided into nine-and-twenty districts."

After Williams had discussed the matter with his missionary colleagues, Lancelot Threlkeld and Robert Bourne, it was decided that

he and Bourne should hire a vessel and go to Aitutaki with a number of native missionaries and then search for Rarotonga with the object of introducing Christianity there.

Four native missionaries from Raiatea and two from Tahaa were chosen to go on the voyage, and the Raiateans and Tahaans took such a lively interest in the undertaking that, "by their willing contributions" they completely equipped the missionaries for the voyage and for their new station without any expense to the London Missionary Society. The ship chartered for the voyage was the Endeavour (Captain John Dibbs), which, by a coincidence, was the same one that had been to Rarotonga previously.

Williams recorded that after a pleasant sail of five days, he and his party reached Aitutaki. There they picked up the Rarotongans living on the island, and, despite warnings from the Aitutakians that the people of Rarotonga were "a most ferocious people" and "horrid cannibals," they continued their voyage in search of that island. However, when after "six or eight days" Rarotonga failed to appear on the horizon, the Endeavour steered for Mangaia. From there, the missionaries went on to Atiu, Mitiaro and Mauke, the last of which had not previously been visited by Europeans.

To reach Mauke, Williams and Dibbs had the assistance of the chief of Atiu, Roma-tane, who was also chief of Mauke. This chief accompanied the missionaries on their voyage from Atiu to Mitiaro and Mauke, and it was he who also guided them to Rarotonga.

The point is not made completely clear in Missionary Enterprises, but it appears that Roma-tane was taken back to Atiu after the visits to Mitiaro and Mauke, and it was then that he told the missionaries how to get to Rarotonga.

"Finding Roma-tane exceedingly intelligent," Williams recorded, "we inquired of him if he had ever heard of Rarotonga. 'Oh, yes,' he replied; 'it is only a day and a night's sail from Atiu; we know the way there.' This information delighted us; but, when we inquired the position in which it lay, he at one time pointed in one direction, and at another in quite the opposite. But this was soon explained; for the natives, in making their voyages, do not leave from any part of an island, as we do, but, invariably, have what may be called starting-points. At these places they have certain landmarks, by which they steer, until the stars become visible; and they generally contrive to set sail so as to get sight of their heavenly guides by the time their landmarks disappear. Knowing this, we determined to adopt the native plan, and took our vessel to the 'starting point.' Having arrived there, the chief was desired to look to the land-marks, while the vessel was being turned gradually round, and when these ranged with each other he cried out, 'That's it! that's it!' I looked immediately at the compass, and found the course to be S.W. by W.; and it proved to be as correct as if he had been an accomplished navigator."

Williams recorded that after leaving Atiu, the Endeavour was baffled for several days by contrary winds. On the morning of the day that Rarotonga was discovered, when the ship's provisions were "nearly expended" and the missionaries' patience "all but exhausted," the captain came to Williams and said: "We must, sir, give up the search, or we shall all be starved." Williams replied that they would continue on the same course till eight o'clock, and if they did not find Rarotonga by then, they would return home.

"This was an hour of great anxiety," Williams said, "hope and fear alternately agitated my mind. I had sent a native to the top of the mast four times, and he was now ascending for the fifth; and when we were within half an hour of relinquishing the object of our search, the clouds which enveloped its towering heights having been chased away by the heat of the ascending sun, he relieved us from our anxiety by shouting, 'Teie teie, taua fenua, nei!' - 'Here, here is the land we have been seeking!'"

Rarotonga, from this time onwards, figured importantly in Williams' career, and Williams wrote extensively about it in his Missionary Enterprises. However, scholars have long known that Williams did not publish everything he had to say about the island.

Williams' biographer, the Rev. Ebenezer Prout, recorded in 1843 that in one of his sojourns at Rarotonga, Williams learned details of "a most disastrous" prior visit to that island by a European ship - undoubtedly the Cumberland in 1814 - during which the Rarotongans attacked the crew after having been "almost maddened" by the crew's "licentious and oppressive conduct." Meanwhile, those on board the European ship slipped the cable and stood out to sea, "leaving in their haste a piece of chain, which proved invaluable to Mr Williams in building the Messenger of Peace." Prout added that Williams prepared "a detailed account of this occurrence" for his Missionary Enterprises, but that this material, "with many other paragraphs," was omitted for want of space.

When the foregoing passages in Prout's biography were pointed out to the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau more than six months ago, the P.M.B. immediately began inquiries in England, Ireland, Canada and South Africa to see if it could track down the material that had been omitted from Williams' book, together with any other unpublished Williams documents. For a long time, the only document that these inquiries revealed was a letter written by Williams in Cape Town in 1828. However, in mid-February, the P.M.B. unexpectedly received a letter from a great-grandson of Williams in England, who said he had a number of documents of his famous ancestor which he would be glad to lend to the Bureau for copying. Among these was the logbook of Williams' voyage to Rarotonga in 1823.

Williams' great-grandson is Mr J.W.M. Williams, of Surrey, who said in his letter that the logbook was "a fairly lengthy work,

running to 21 double pages of closely written manuscript, some of it rather difficult to decipher." Mr Williams said he also had some letters of his great-grandfather. These were:

1. From the Rev. John Williams to A. Birnie, Esq., from Rarotonga dated February 27, 1830, thanking him for chain cable.
2. From Williams to his father and family, written at Raiatea on November 9, 1822.
3. A copy in English, in Williams' handwriting, of a letter from Tamatoa, king of Raiatea, to the President of the United States, dated September 10, 1829.
4. From Williams to his sister Mary Ann, written in England on July 28, 1834.
5. From Williams to his wife Mary, written in England in June, 1834, giving his itinerary for various visits.

Mr Williams added that among other relics of his great-grandfather in his possession were a round table, the leg of which was made from a piece of the mainmast of the Messenger of Peace, a microscope, a gold-mounted miniature, and a marine-type chest and wardrobe, both of which were thought to have been made from breadfruit tree wood.

NEW CALEDONIA'S OLDEST NEWSPAPER COPIED ON MICROFILM

The microfilm "library" of the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau now includes a complete file of New Caledonia's oldest newspaper, La Moniteur de la Nouvelle Calédonie, which ran from October, 1859, to June, 1886.

In its early years, only 200 copies of each issue of this newspaper were printed, and these are now so rare as to be virtually in the manuscript class.

The only complete file of the paper, as far as is known, is in the Ministère de la France Outre-Mer in Paris, whose authorities recently made it available for microfilming for the P.M.B.

The Moniteur, an official weekly publication, consisted for the first two years or so of two printed pages containing Government decrees and decisions, court judgements, statistics, news of official ceremonies, shipping movements and such like, and some general news.

From the beginning of 1862 the size of the paper was doubled, and was divided into official and non-official sections. The non-official section was opened to contributions from readers so long as they did not transgress the "limits of an official journal."

There was a further liberalisation of the paper's policy six months later when all kinds of articles on literary, scientific and economic subjects became acceptable so long as copies of them were first deposited with the Administration.

The Moniteur was superseded on June 23, 1886, by the Journal Officiel de la Nouvelle Calédonie et dépendances which is still being published. By that time, a number of privately-sponsored newspapers had come into being and the need for a government publication to print non-official news no longer existed.

It is worthy of note that the oldest of New Caledonia's present newspapers, La France Australe, began publication only three years after the Moniteur ceased.

The Moniteur, needless to say, contains a great deal of information on New Caledonian affairs that is not to be found elsewhere. The deposit of microfilm copies of its pages in the member libraries of the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau should open up new vistas to students of Pacific history.

HOW A CANNON SALUTE LED TO FIJI'S DEED OF CESSION

On July 4, 1849, John B. Williams, the United States consul in Fiji, invited a large number of Fijian guests to celebrate the 75th anniversary of American independence at his consulate on Nukulau Island near the mouth of the Rewa River.

The occasion was celebrated with equal doses of square-bottle gin, fireworks and cannon fire, and as occasionally happens on such occasions, the festivities got out of hand.

While some of Williams' men were firing a national salute, blazing wadding from the saluting cannon struck and set fire to a Fijian hut. Within minutes, the fire spread to Williams' own house, destroying his furniture, his consular records and some of the trade goods that he purveyed to the Fijians when he was not acting as consul. Other items in the trade store were grabbed by Williams' Fijian guests - mainly men from the island of Beqa - who promptly made off with them.

After Williams had vainly tried to have his goods returned to him, first by sending a messenger to Beqa, and then by writing a threatening letter to the island's chief, he sat down and informed the State Department of what had occurred. In his letter he calculated his losses at \$3,006.12 $\frac{1}{2}$ - the odd half-cent deriving from the fact that the fire had consumed, or the Fijians had stolen, eleven razors valued at 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents each.

The State Department took no particular notice of Williams' letter; but Williams never afterwards allowed it to forget his loss, nor did he ever cease trying to recoup it.

Less than 18 months after the fire, Williams, in a dispatch to the State Department, began blaming Cakobau, the chief of Bau, for the "spoliation and plunder," and from then until his death 10 years later he frequently importuned the State Department and visiting American naval captains to get Cakobau to pay up.

When Williams died on June 30, 1860, he reckoned that Cakobau owed him \$19,365.50 - the original \$3,006.12 $\frac{1}{2}$ having increased to that amount through the addition of a bizarre variety of compound interest.

Although a court subsequently found that there was "no possible way" of accounting for the "great and strange discrepancy" between Williams' original estimate of his losses and his final valuation, he had made so much fuss over them that the British, American and German Governments had become involved, and, in the end, as a result of a chain of derivative events, the Fijian chiefs finally ceded their country to Queen Victoria.

The story of this extraordinary episode of South Seas history was pieced together several years ago by Mr John C. Dorrance, now Second Secretary in the United States Embassy in Canberra, who wrote it up as a research paper during a period of study at the University of Hawaii.

Mr Dorrance, who first became interested in the Williams story during a term in Fiji as U.S. Consul himself, used a number of unpublished letters in the Peabody Museum in Salem, Massachusetts, as his source material. - among many other documents.

He recently lent the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau a copy of his paper so that it could be microfilmed for the Bureau's member libraries. The paper has never been published.

WRITINGS OF A NOTED MISSIONARY-ANTHROPOLOGIST

An old leather-bound "ledger," which was kept by the Rev. Lorimer Fison during his early years in Fiji a century ago, has recently been copied on microfilm as Pacific Manuscripts Bureau Mss. No. 26. The ledger is owned by Mr G. Gibson, of Blackburn, Victoria.

Its contents include copies of letters, notes on Fiji customs and personalities, sketches of life in Fiji, and an early draft of Fison's book Tales of Old Fiji.

Fison, a university-educated man, with a keen interest in anthropology, was born in Suffolk, England, in 1832. He migrated to Australia in 1856, joined the Methodist church, and went to Fiji as a missionary in 1864. He remained in Fiji until 1884, when he returned to Australia and became editor of the Spectator, a Melbourne church paper. He died in 1907, the same year in which his Tales of Old Fiji were published in London.

The earliest entry in Fison's ledger is a biographical sketch of a native minister, Tomasi Navunisinu, which is dated July 14, 1865. The letters, mainly to members of Fison's family, bear dates from 1866 to 1868.

The various tales which were eventually published in book form were also collected in the 1866-68 period, although not published until 40 years later. The wording of some of the tales as recorded in the ledger has been much worked over and occasionally differs in its final form from that in the published version. This, no doubt, could be a matter of some importance to students of Fiji's traditional history. Such students will also find that various annotations which Fison made to the stories in the ledger were not included in the published version.
