

RICHARD THURNWALD and THOMAS JAMES RODONI IN THE UPPER SEPIK REGION OF NEW GUINEA 1914¹

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The Kaiserin-Augusta-Fluss Expedition of 1912-13, financed primarily by the Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin, was scientific in its objectives, gathering data and specimens in the fields of geography, geology, botany, zoology and ethnography in the Sepik River basin (**Figure 1**). Richard Thurnwald, the ethnographer, joined the expedition rather late in January 1913 and assumed survey mode for the next two years, carrying out a most remarkable feat of exploration into previously unknown territory. He followed the course of the Sepik from its mouth to its source in the highlands of central New Guinea, including side trips up Sepik tributaries south and north, and two overland journeys from the Sepik to the north coast (**Figure 2, left**).² Most of this exploration was done between January 1913 and April 1914 after which he went to Sydney to re-provision. He was back in the Sepik by August and immediately set out to reach the headwaters of the Sepik, the Sand and the North rivers.

From his Upper Sepik base camp at Meander Mountain opposite the confluence of the Yellow and Sepik rivers, he worked his way up to the Sepik source basin by canoe, and then on foot, to reach present-day Telefomin on the 19 September 1914 (see map at www.uscngp.com/about/ and click on PLAY). He returned down the Sepik arriving back at his Meander Mountain base camp mid-October to hear rumours of a major European conflict; he decided to continue his exploration of northern tributaries of the upper Sepik (the Sand and North rivers) but when he returned to his base camp in early January 1915, he found it ‘utterly devastated’ and his boats were gone (Thurnwald 1916 – see listing at www.uscngp.com/papers/ for translation into English). Thurnwald’s camp had been raided by a detachment of the Australian Naval & Military Expeditionary Force (AN&MEF) led by Commander Claude Cumberland. One of the men with Cumberland was the keen photographer Thomas James Rodoni (**Figure 2, right**) who had enlisted with the AN&MEF on 15 August 1914.³

In February 2014, Bill Rodoni, Thomas’s son, donated his father’s photographs to the University of Newcastle’s Cultural Collections. Many of the negatives had suffered deterioration during the past century but as many as possible have been conserved and digitised by the University’s archivists. These images are now available for scrutiny at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/uon/sets/72157651638124931/>

Among these hundreds of photographs are a significant number that Thomas Rodoni took in northern New Guinea while he was with the AN&MEF, many of them of officers and men posted at Madang (**Fig. 3**) and others illustrate the journey up the Sepik River with Cumberland. These we have supplemented with images that came from Rodoni, or may have been taken by Rodoni, that are held by the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

However, photographs of subjects further upriver than Thurnwald’s base camp at Meander Mountain cannot have been taken by Rodoni; they must be Thurnwald’s. These are extraordinarily valuable as they constitute first-contact images of the peoples of central New Guinea and the upper Sepik. In the context

¹ Readers should go to **VIEW** and use the **ZOOM** option to inspect details of images and maps.

² Craig 1997:390 – [on-line at this site](#) - and Marion Melk-Koch 1989.

³ The Embarkation Roll misspells his surname as ‘Rodini’. Men were recruited to the AN&MEF to capture and administer the German colony of New Guinea after Britain declared war against Germany 4th August 1914.

of Rodoni's voyage up the Sepik with Cumberlege, and of Thurnwald's explorations of the upper Sepik, we will provide evidence for which images we believe are Rodoni's and which are Thurnwald's.

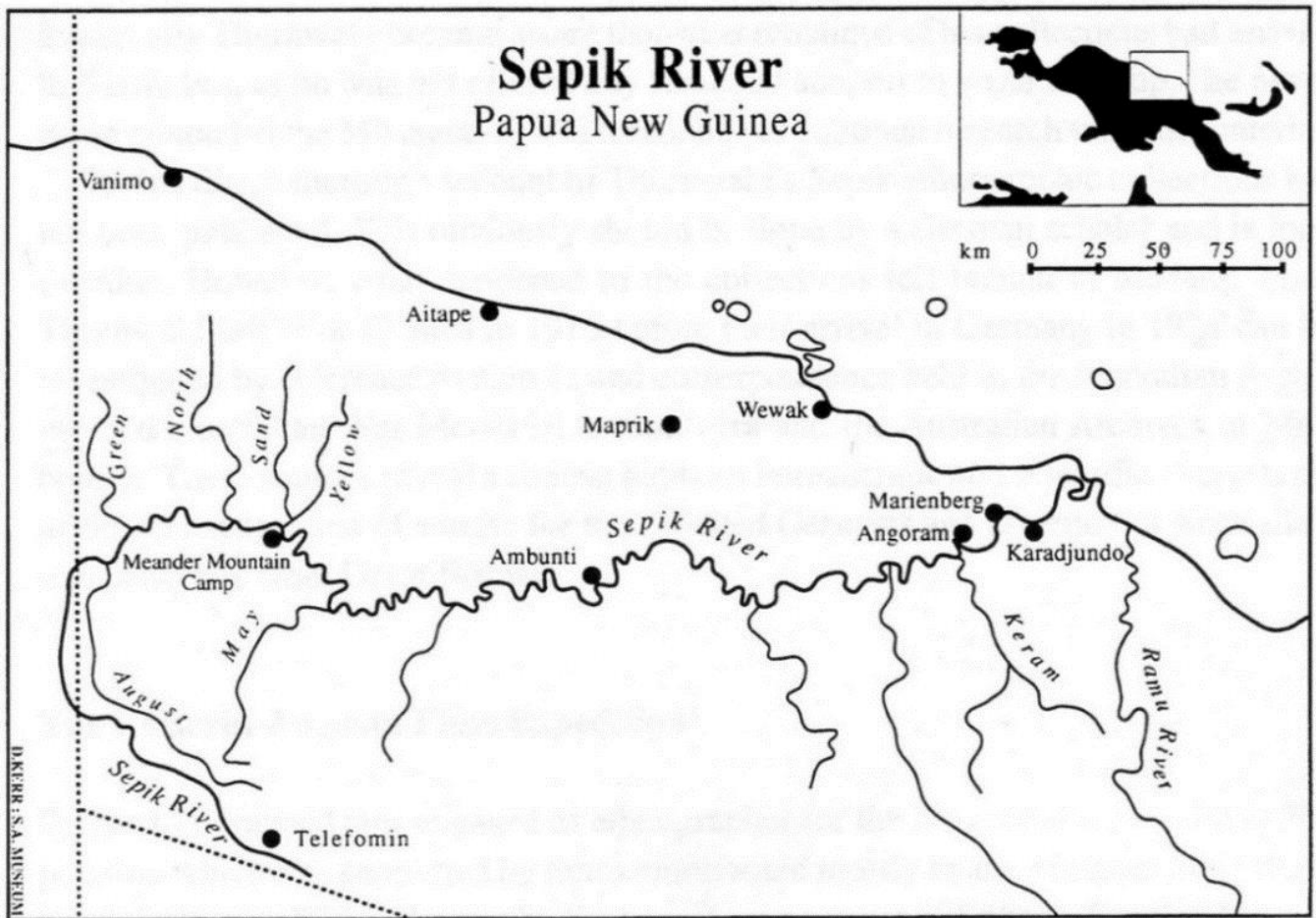


Figure 1. Map of Sepik River.

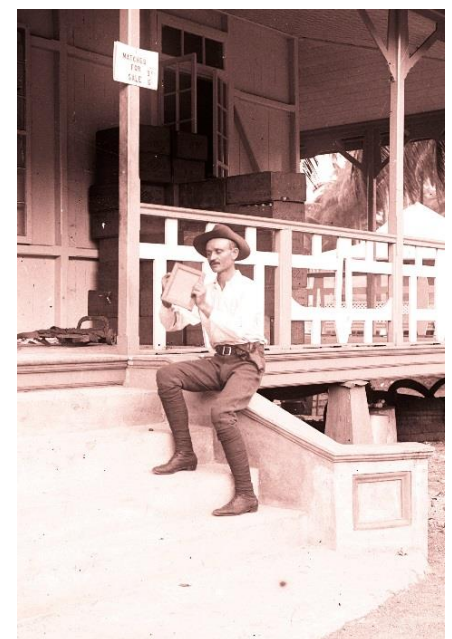


Figure 2. Left: Richard Thurnwald on the track to Aitape, November 1913 (Melk-Koch 1989:185, Abb.26). Right: Thomas James Rodoni at Madang, c. November 1914. Rodoni image ARODGN_0102.



Figure 3. Garrison Military Police? Madang, 1914. Rodoni image ARODGN_0285.

As a consequence of the declaration of war between Britain and Germany, on 6 August 1914, a telegram was sent by the British Secretary of State to the Governor-General of Australia requesting the capture of German wireless stations in the Pacific. An Australian naval force landed near Rabaul on 12 August and destroyed the German colony's telephone service. This invasion was carried out by the torpedo destroyers HMAS *Parramatta*, HMAS *Yarra*, HMAS *Warrego* and the submarine *AE-1*, covered by the light cruiser HMAS *Sydney*.

Colonel William Holmes arrived 11 September with the AN&MEF, took the wireless station at Bitapaka and secured the surrender of the German administration 17 September. This all happened quickly and relatively efficiently as the Australian government had been anticipating the declaration of hostilities.⁴

Holmes's next task was to replace German officials at the colony's several district administrative centres with Australian military officers, and come to grips with the task of maintaining 'a colonial asset in good working order, with an eye to international law'. A large number of men, from all walks of life, had signed up for service with the AN&MEF and several, who were given the rank of Captain, became District Officers located at Aitape, Madang, and Morobe on Kaiser-Wilhelmsland (the New Guinea mainland), Lorengau on Manus Island, Kavieng on New Ireland, Herbertshöhe (Kokopo) near Rabaul on New Britain, and Kieta on Bougainville. German New Guinea thereby came under Australian military administration until 1921 when it was taken over by Australian civil administration as a Trust Territory of the League of Nations.⁵

⁴ Newton 2014.

⁵ Rowley 1958.

In late 1914, a story emerged from a German prisoner-of-war held at Holdsworthy near Sydney that there was an armed German ‘merchant cruiser’ hiding up the Sepik River.⁶ Colonel Samuel Pethebridge, Commander Claude Cumberlege and members of the ‘Tropical Force’ proceeded to the Sepik River on board the three destroyers.⁷ *Yarra* and *Parramatta* were left at the mouth of the river to await the arrival of the little captured steamer *Nusa* (**Fig.4**); *Warrego* with Pethebridge and Cumberlege on board steamed 40 miles (65 km) up to the Catholic Mission station at Marienberg to interview the missionaries there about the supposed German ‘raider’ on the Sepik (**Figs 5-7**) .



Figure 4. *Nusa* at Rabaul; unknown photographer. AWM A03024.

⁶ Jose 1928/1943:137.

⁷ The following account draws on Jose 1928/1943 and Mackenzie 1938.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

A03026

Figure 5. 'HMAS *Nusa* being followed by HMAS *Parramatta* near the mouth of the Sepik River, during reconnaissance to Angorum, 9-10 December 1914.' Unknown photographer, maybe Rodoni. AWM A03026.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

A03025

Figure 6. 'HMAS *Warrego* on the Sepik River during the reconnaissance to Angorum 9-10 December 1914.' Unknown photographer; maybe Rodoni. AWM A03025.



Figure 7. ‘HMAS *Parramatta* or HMAS *Warrego* moored by the bank of the Sepik River.’ Probably at Marienberg, 9 December 1914. Unknown photographer, maybe Rodoni. AWM A03670.

The missionaries said there was no such enemy boat, only the German police officer Tafel and the medical officer Wolfrum at ‘Angorum’ (Angoram) with a detachment of native police, and Richard Thurnwald and his engineer Fiebig engaged on scientific and exploratory work for the Kaiser-Augusta-Fluss [Sepik] Expedition, hundreds of miles further up the river. Cumberland and Pethebridge transferred to *Nusa*, continued a further 20 miles (32 km) to Angoram 10 December (**Figs 8, 9**), and took Wolfrum into custody; but Tafel had fled into the bush.

They all returned to Madang and Pethebridge went on to Rabaul to report to Holmes. While at Madang, Pethebridge decided that Cumberland should take the three destroyers and *Nusa* back to the Sepik to capture Tafel, to establish an Australian military police post at Angoram, and to ensure there were no other German threats in the region. Cumberland left Madang 14 December; Rodoni was definitely on board for this voyage, if not that of the previous week, as several photographs taken during this second voyage (eg. **Figs 10, 11**) are attributed to him and there are no reasons to doubt his authorship. Tafel was tracked and captured, and the police post at Angoram taken over 16 December (**Fig. 11**).



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

A03028

Figure 8. 'Brigadier-General Sir Samuel Pethebridge and party at Angorum near the Sepik River'. 10 December 1914. Unknown photographer, maybe Rodoni. AWM A03028.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

A03027

Figure 9. 'The police station surrounded by shrubs at Angorum near the Sepik River'. 10 December 1914. Unknown photographer, maybe Rodoni. AWM A03027.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

H1 2589

Figure 10. 'Angorum, New Guinea, 1914. The King of local native tribes in the area on the deck of HMAS Warrego'. Rodoni image. AWM H12589.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

H1 2578

Figure 11. ‘Angorum, New Guinea, 16 December 1914. The Australian flag being raised with an official party standing by as the Proclamation advising the AN&MEF was taking control of the country from the German forces was being read.’ Rodoni image. AWM H12578. Deteriorated versions of this image are in the Rodoni archive in Newcastle.

Two images of villages in the vicinity of Angoram (Wolem and Magem – see map, **Figure 12**), one donated to the Australian War Memorial by Lt-Com. G.A. Hill of *Yarra* and the other donated by Colonel S.S. Mackenzie (**Figs 13, 14**) were probably taken by Rodoni at the time of the take-over of Angoram on 16 December. *Yarra* had remained at Marienberg so it is unlikely that **Figure 13** was taken by Hill, and Mackenzie was not present on this expedition so could not have taken **Figure 14**.

As the Catholic missionaries at Marienberg had expressed concern about Thurnwald’s welfare, Cumberlege decided to continue upriver. He reported that, from Angoram, he ‘sent on *Nusa* . . . to sound, & followed her in *Warrego* accompanied by *Parramatta*. I instructed *Yarra* to search the creeks and tributaries of the river from Angoram to the mouth . . . The noble river curved and flowed as wide & as deep as lower down; at dusk an anchorage in mid-stream was made, and from time to time communication and barter with natives was had recourse to’.⁸ Two of Rodoni’s images record these interactions (**Figs 15, 16**) and a third (**Fig. 17**), although donated by Lt-Comdr G.A. Hill of *Yarra*, must have been a Rodoni image as *Yarra* did not go that far upstream.

⁸ Cumberlege 1914:3.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

J03351

Figure 13. 'New Guinea c.1915. A native village opposite Angorum on the banks of the Sepik River.' Donor Lt-Com. G.A. Hill, RNR. Photo probably by Rodoni at Wolem. AWM J03351.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

H18981

Figure 14. 'A village on the Sepik River just above Angorum. The smoke comes from natives burning off parts of the jungle. This place is about 60 miles [nautical? = c.110 km] from the mouth of the river.' Donor Col. S.S. Mackenzie. Photo probably by Rodoni at Muangem (Magem, Pagem), 124 km from the river mouth. AWM H18981.



Figures 15, 16. Sepik men approaching to trade; note bunches of bananas in rear half of canoe in Figure 15. Rodoni images ARODGN_0408 and ARODGN_0417.

Inspection of the leading canoe in **Fig. 17** reveals two carved objects: the one to the left is clearly an orator's stool (cf. **Fig. 18**); the other appears to be a figure standing on a round base and also may be an orator's stool. So far as we are aware, this kind of carving is of the Iatmul people and not found downstream of the middle Sepik village of Tambanum. Further, two of the paddles held by the men have the concave outline at the distal end, characteristic of the Iatmul.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

J03348

Figure 17. 'New Guinea c. 1915. 'Natives in canoes at Karnbrim, Sepik River, wishing to barter'. Donated by Lt-Comdr GA Hill, RNR'. Probably a Rodoni image. AWM J03348.



Figure 18. Orator's stool, Kanganaman village, Iatmul people, middle Sepik. Photo: B. Craig Sepik 1981- M8:31

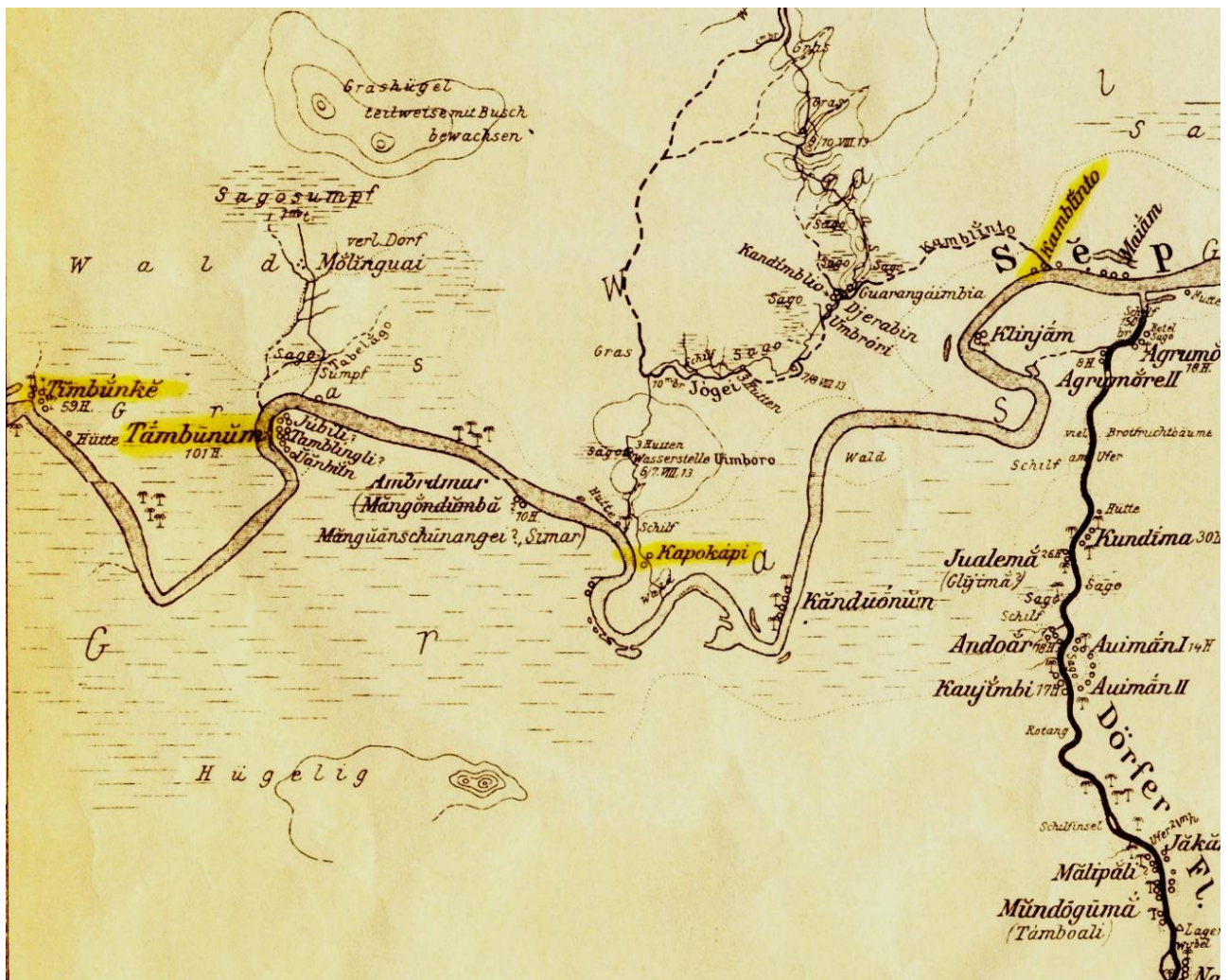


Figure 19. Locations of Timbunke, Tambunum, Kapokapi and Kamblinto (Kambrinum, ‘Karnbrim’?) and Yuat (Dörfer) River; detail from Behrmann 1924, Map 3.

The location ‘Karnbrim’ may refer to the village of Kambringi or Kambrinum on Schultze Jena’s map of the 1910 expedition (Kamblinto on Behrmann’s map, **Figure 19**; Kambrindo on today’s maps), located just upstream from the junction of the Sepik and Yuat Rivers, 64 km downstream from Tambanum, but given the likelihood that the artefacts in this photograph are of the middle Sepik, we doubt that ‘Karnbrim’ is the correct location where this photograph was taken.

One of Rodoni’s images held by the Australian War Memorial (**Figure 20**) shows Cumberlege and some crew members at ‘a covered kerosene storage at Kapa Kapi operated by German scientist Doctor Thurnwald’. The kerosene would have been fuel for Thurnwald’s lamps and little steam launch.

Although neither the official accounts nor Cumberlege mention Kapa Kapi, on the maps prepared for Leonhard Schultze Jena’s 1914 report of the German 1910 expedition up the Sepik⁹ and for Behrmann from observations by the 1912-13 Kaiserin-Augusta-Fluss Expedition and Thurnwald in 1914,¹⁰ there is a small settlement named Kapokapi on the left (north) bank of the Sepik about 15 km downstream from ‘Tambunum’ (see map, **Figure 19**). It was from here that Thurnwald walked north through the Sepik plains and over the coastal range to the coast just east of Wewak in August 1913.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

H12582

Figure 20 ‘Sepik River, New Guinea. December 1914. A covered kerosene storage at Kapa Kapi operated by German scientist Doctor Thurnwald, located by members of the Royal Australian Navy.’ Donor T.J. Rodoni. AWM H12582.

⁹ Schultze Jena 1914.

¹⁰ Behrmann 1924.

About 30 miles (48 km) downriver from ‘Maloo’ (Malu),¹¹ Cumberlege received a radio message warning not to risk his destroyers on the river. Cumberlege therefore transferred to *Nusa* – with Lieutenant Wilson to survey the river, Major Martin and ‘2 police boys’ – and continued upriver, sending the destroyers back to Angoram. Rodoni was probably already aboard *Nusa*.

They continued upriver: ‘At Maloo, the first considerable mountains began, and near here [about four km further upstream] we visited the laager established by Bergmann [sic] in the 1911 [sic] expedition’.¹² It is likely that it was on the hill above this camp, where Ambunti is now established, that Rodoni took a photograph looking east, downriver (**Figure 22**). This is a similar view to the one published by Behrmann (**Figure 23**); note the same distant conical mountain-top beyond where the river curves to the left. Here again the location is incorrectly named; ‘Timburke’ could be a misspelling of ‘Timbunke’ but there are no hills there (see map, **Fig. 19**).

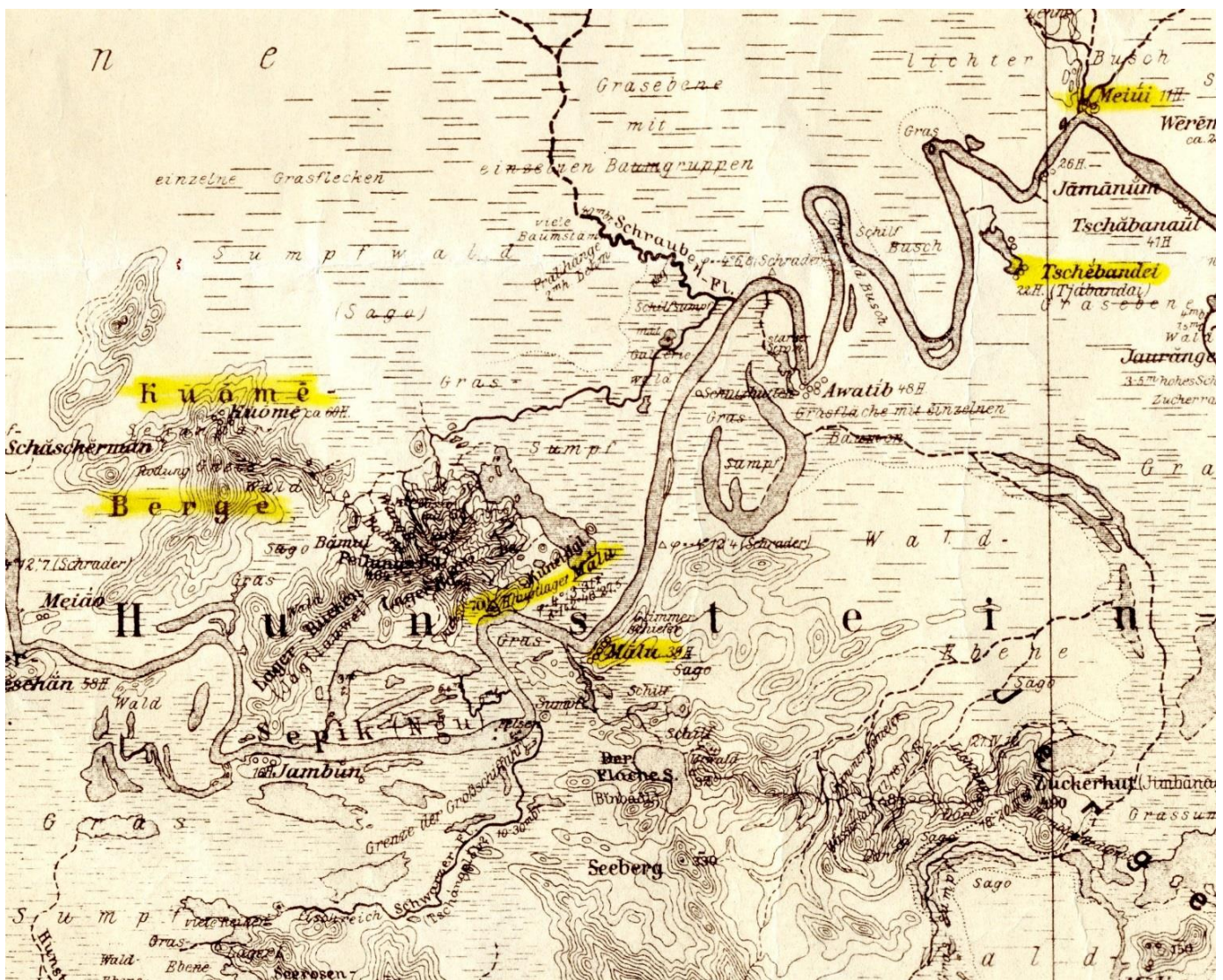


Figure 21. Location of ‘Hauptlager Malu’, Malu, ‘Tschesbandei’ (Tshebandei) and Meiui; detail of Behrmann 1924, Map 2.

¹¹ Cumberlege 1914, p.3. This would have been around about where Pagwi is situated today (Meiui on Behrmann’s map – **Fig. 21**), downstream from Ambunti and c.380 km from the mouth of the Sepik.

¹² Cumberlege got it wrong. This was the ‘Hauptlager Malu’ (see map, **Fig. 21**), the base camp established by Behrmann during the 1912-1913 Kaiserin-Augusta-Fluss [Sepik] Expedition, on the left (north) bank just upstream from Malu, exactly where Ambunti is now located. See Behrmann 1922:84-110 and end-map.

Cumberlege continues in his report (p.4):

Having searched the laager, we proceeded on our voyage once we took a backwater which was not surveyed by the Bergmann Expedition, and found a very primitive tribe, utterly naked, except in a few cases in which the J.T. [penis] was covered with a tube some 28 inches long and made of plaited grass, triced up with a sloping lift to a woven grass belt. . . . They were all well-armed with very long spears and bows and arrows; nevertheless we made friends and they soon laid by their weapons and conducted us to their village, which was extraordinarily dirty, the houses being cone-shaped, very high, the centre pole being a large tree with cross bars lashed on right to the top, evidently to take refuge if attacked.¹³



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

H1 2580

Figure 22. ‘Sepik River, New Guinea. December 1914. Commander C.L. Cumberlege, Royal Australian Navy, and two companions surveying the river from the 300 foot Timburke lookout. Donor T.J. Rodoni.’ AWM H12580. The same image is in the Rodoni archives - ARODGN_0226.

It is likely that in the first line of the quotation above, there should be a full stop after ‘voyage’ and ‘once’ should be the beginning of a new sentence. That makes it possible to interpret the diversion as having taken place some distance upriver from the Malu base camp. However, before determining where that may have been, there is another Rodoni image (**Fig. 24**) that appears to have been taken a little upstream from the Wogamusin village of Kubkain near the junction of the April and Sepik rivers.

¹³ More likely as a ladder to facilitate the thatching of the roof.



Figure 23. View of the Sepik east from above the 'Base camp Malu'. Behrmann 1922:88.

The most significant indication is the painted sago petiole panel¹⁴ in the canoe closest to the *Nusa*. The scrolls bordered by dentates is a common motif of the Wogamusin decorative style.¹⁵ The photograph Craig took at Kubkain in 1972 (**Fig. 25**) confirms that. The lifebuoy and window at the left of the Rodoni photograph indicates *Nusa* is heading upstream (**cf. Fig. 4**). This suggests that the men in the canoes have paddled up from Kubkain in pursuit of the *Nusa* to trade.

In 1972, Craig photographed the April Hills and Hunstein Mountains in the east from a position about a kilometre upstream from Kubkain (**Fig. 26**). The profile of the low range of hills (the April Hills) in the middle distance just visible above the riverbank forest to the left of the Kubkain settlement on its little hill matches the profile of the low range of hills in the middle distance to right of centre in the Rodoni photograph, with Pyramid beyond. The low hill to the far right of the Rodoni photograph is most likely the low hill immediately south of Kubkain (see map, **Fig. 27**).

¹⁴ It is a sago petiole (the flattened out base of the sago palm frond), as close inspection of the image shows that the panel does not have the rigid flat surface of a wooden board. Newton (1971:51) states that the 'porches of the [Wogamus] houses are said to have been ornamented with many bark paintings'.

¹⁵ See Kelm 1966, Plates 136-140, 157.



Figure 24. Sepik men in canoes, probably upstream from Kubkain (note painted 'bark' sheet or carved board in nearest canoe), trading with the crew of the *Nusa*. Hunstein Range in the distance. Rodoni image ARODGN_0419.



Figure 25. Carved and painted boards photographed at Kubkain in December 1972. B. Craig 1972-73, BM22:30.



Figure 26. View east-south-east towards the April Hills at left, Kubkain at left of centre, Pyramid in middle distance to the right and the Hunstein Range in the far distance obscured by cloud. B. Craig 1972-73, BM22:29.

From these assumptions, it is possible to plot a likely location from which Rodoni took his photograph: the northern edge of the bend in the Sepik, about four kilometres south-east of Tsenap (**Fig. 27**).

Supporting evidence that these are Wogumas men from Kubain are the body ornaments. The two closest men in Rodoni's photograph have nose and upper arm ornaments similar to those in Berhmann's photograph of a 'Wogumasch' man (**Figure 28, left**) although the headdress is a little different and we've been unable to find an image of a long shell chest ornament like the one worn by the closest man. However, that man appears to be wearing a short phallocrypt (penis cover) similar to a kind collected from Kubkain (**Figure 29, two at left**) and another man appears to be wearing another (long) kind, also used at Kubkain (**Figure 29, two at right**).

It must have been not far upriver from the location of this Rodoni photograph that Cumberlege took the diversion mentioned above and came upon the houses with cone-shaped roofs. Roesicke in 1913 photographed a house with a high pyramid-shaped roof at Tsenap and Bühler photographed two similar houses further upstream at the Iwam villages of Aum and Iniyok in 1959.¹⁶ The kind of phallocrypt described by Cumberlege – 'a tube some 28" long and made of plaited grass' – matches the woven phallocrypts of **Figure 29 right**.

¹⁶ Hauser-Schäublin 1989, Abb. 183, 185, 186.



Figure 27. Detail of Behrmann 1924, Map 2 showing likely location from which the Rodoni photograph (Figure 24) was taken.



Figure 28. Left: Man of ‘Wogumasch’; Behrmann 1922:97. Centre & right: details from Rodoni’s photograph (Figure 24).



Figure 29. Left: Two immature-coconut shell phallocrypts from Wogumas villages of Kubkain (Kelm 1968, Pl. 537) and Washkuk (Newton 1971, Fig.103). Right: Two long woven phallocrypts from ‘Wogumasch’ (Schultze Jena 1914, Tafel XLI, k) and Kubkain (drawing of *holsou* collected in 1972 by B. Craig, PNG National Museum 79.1.228).

Cumberlege carries on his account (1914:4):

Our voyage continued mile after mile through gorgeous forest and mountain scenery, until just before dusk one evening we descried a white boat some three miles ahead, secured to the bank. . . . We found here the Engineer of the Expedition and about 30 or 40 boys. A large village had been built, the forest cleared on the mountain side, and gardens planted. The professor, however, was further up the river in canoes, with the remainder of the police some 25 or 30 natives. This I considered to be the farthest possible limit for a ship of any size to get up. . . The ‘Nusa’ could have gone up about another 20 miles when it becomes too shallow for anything but canoes.

This was Thurnwald’s Meander Mountain base camp (map, **Figure 30**). Four images, undoubtedly Rodoni’s, were taken at this base camp: one from the riverbank shows *Nusa* moored at the camp (**Fig. 31**); two show the moored *Nusa* and Thurnwald’s launch, *Papua* (**Figs 32, 33**), and one shows the camp probably taken from *Nusa* departing downstream about 24 December (**Fig. 34**).¹⁷

Cumberlege reports his actions at the base camp:

We also found here 3 big motor launches and one small engine which was used on a dug out; this latter I requisitioned, it being the property of the Engineer; one of the launches was his own property, the other two were Government property or Government chartered. These were annexed, as also were the rifles, stores, ammunition, etc. Staying the night here, I filled up with firewood next day, and embarking the German commenced my return journey. Major Martin elected to remain behind with the police boys, so I gave him one able seaman. With him he will bring down the Professor and stores in the different motor boats, cargo barge, and canoes found there.

¹⁷ Cumberlege’s report does not give dates for his arrival and departure at Meander Mountain. Thurnwald dates the arrival at about 23 December in his letter dated 2 March 1915, Madang, to ‘His Excellency, the Administrator of New Guinea’ (Australian Archives, Series AWM 33, Item 12/3).



Figure 30. Location of Thurnwald's Meander Mountain base camp, and the North, Sand and Yellow rivers. Detail from Behrmann 1924, Map 1.



Figure 31. Nusa moored at Thurnwald's Meander Mountain base camp, c.23 December 1914. Rodoni image ARODGN_0411. AWM H12579 is the same image.



Figure 32. *Nusa* moored at Thurnwald's Meander Mountain base camp, c. 23 December 1914. Thurnwald's launch *Papua* in front and to the left. AWM H12583. Figure 33. Slightly different view: Rodoni image ARODGN_0420.¹⁸



Figure 34. Thurnwald's Meander Mountain base camp, probably taken from *Nusa* departing downstream. Rodoni image ARODGN_0409.

¹⁸ Figure 32 is in the Australian War Memorial archives as H12583. The caption reads 'The captured German yacht NUSA used by Royal Australian Navy Commander C.L. Cumberlege to reach German scientist Doctor R. Thurnwald's main station at Tschesbandei.' Tschesbandei (Tschebandei on Behrmann's map and Japandai on today's maps – see map Fig. 21) is incorrect. AWM H12579 (same image as Fig. 31) is also incorrectly captioned: 'Malu, New Guinea. December 1914. The former German Navy yacht *Nusa* being operated along the Sepik River by the Royal Australian Navy. It is seen here at a research station operated by German scientists Doctors W. Behrwaun [sic] and R. Thurnwald.' This is not the Malu base camp from which the photographs in Figs 22 and 23 were taken.

As it happened, Major Martin went up to the lower reaches of the North River and discovered Thurnwald's food depot but was unable to find Thurnwald who was much further up that river. The Major therefore took everything from the depot and returned to Meander Mountain where he loaded up everything of value and departed down to Angoram, leaving Thurnwald to fend for himself with virtually no spare equipment or provisions.¹⁹

The things removed from the Meander Mountain camp would have included all the photographs taken by Thurnwald between 27 July and 10 October 1914 during his second exploration up the Sepik as far as the headwaters at Telefomin, and up the Sand River 11 to 26 November. He would have left the photographs of those two journeys at Meander Mountain while he explored the North River. Therefore any images in the Rodoni archive that appear to have been taken upstream from Meander Mountain to Telefomin and along the Sand River must be Thurnwald's. They would not have included images of his first exploration of the Sepik from 7 December 1913 till his return to Sydney in April 1914 to rest and re-provision as he would not have left them in the tropical conditions of his Meander Mountain base camp. Those images are most likely to be found in German archives.

How the photographs that Thurnwald took during his journey to the source of the Sepik and up the Sand River came into Rodoni's possession, and why they were kept by Rodoni on his return to Australia a few months later, is a matter for conjecture. It is possible that Rodoni was asked by Cumberlege to look at the images to ascertain whether any of them might be of military interest.

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The next section of this paper will attempt to identify Thurnwald images and where they were taken, in the context of Thurnwald's account of his two journeys in the upper Sepik. Some of these images are in the Rodoni archives at the University of Newcastle, New South Wales, and some are in archives in Berlin; copies in German archives used here were generously provided by Marion Melk-Koch but there are undoubtedly other images somewhere. From Thurnwald's diary account it is clear that he took many photographs during his first exploration of the Sepik but although they were probably sent on to Germany, relatively few have been found. Some were published by Marion Melk-Koch in her 1989 book on Thurnwald and some are unpublished.

It is not clear how many of Thurnwald's photographs were retained by Rodoni. There is one Thurnwald photograph attributed to Rodoni in the photographic archives of the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, a significant number have been rescued from among the images in the Rodoni archive (University of Newcastle, NSW), and others may be among the images irreparably damaged during the hundred years they languished in poor storage conditions in Australia.

Craig is familiar with a significant portion of the territory Thurnwald traversed and can refer to a translation in English of the published accounts of the two journeys (1914 and 1916 – see www.uscngp.com/papers/) and to the maps showing Thurnwald's explorations (Behrman 1924). Winter has provided translations of sections of a copy of Thurnwald's handwritten diary which provides more detail than is given in his published accounts. So far as we are aware, a complete translation into English of the handwritten diary has not been done.

¹⁹ There are several accounts implying that Thurnwald was 'brought back' downriver by Major Martin, based on Pethebridge stating in his 1914 Report that Major Martin 'will bring down the Professor and stores...'. That was the intention but not what happened. Even the official histories got it wrong (Mackenzie 1938:173 and Jose 1928:144) so it is not surprising that subsequent writers perpetuated the error. It is not clear how the official histories got it wrong when there was ample correspondence to indicate otherwise (see Craig 1997:391-2).

Thurnwald arrived in the Sepik in January 1913. A summary of his itinerary for January 1913 to January 1915 has been published (Craig 1997:390) but the first page of his handwritten diary commences 7 December 1913 when he recounts his departure from his lower Sepik camp at Karadjundo on the Keram River²⁰ ‘with a long, heavily-laden train of canoes tied together and pulled by two boats and the pinnace . . . the whole looked like a floating gypsy camp’ (1914:338). Melk-Koch has published three photographs of the flotilla, one in the lower half of the Sepik (1989:197, Abb.32), another near Wogumasch 13 December 1913 (1989:192, Abb.28), and a third at an unknown location that same month (1989:195, Abb.30).

Contrary to Craig’s (incorrect) statement (1997:390) that Thurnwald established a base camp at Meander Mountain for his first explorations, before continuing upstream beyond the Yellow River confluence, he did not stop there. Near the mouth of the North River, where the village of Beimap is located on the 1974 1:100,000 map, he photographed men with bows and arrows (**Figure 35**), some wearing palm-nut phallocrypts (**Figure 36**) and two of them smoking tobacco using a two-part bamboo apparatus (**Figure 37**).



Figure 35. Oberer Sepik, Nordfluss, Leute vom Hügeldorf. Illustrated as Abb. 29 in Melk-Koch 1989:193 and captioned ‘Bewaffnete vom Hügeldorf, Nordflussmündung 19.12.13’ (Armed [men] of the hill village [near] the mouth of the North River). The men second from left and second from right are using the tobacco-smoking apparatus. The man at left and the two at right are wearing palm nut phallocrypts as illustrated by Schultze Jena (1910, Tafel XLI, e & g), from ‘Dorfes 30’ on the Sepik (Wagu on modern maps, between the Yellow and North rivers). Image courtesy Marion Melk-Koch.

²⁰ The published account (Thurnwald 1914) gives 5th December as the commencement date.



Figure 36. Palm nut phallocrypt (with snake/lizard skin?) as worn by some of the men in Figure 35, Bapi, Yellow River, Namie speakers. Leiden 4477-471.



Figure 37. Two-part bamboo smoking tubes, Edawok (Edawaki), Yellow River, Namie speakers. Australian Museum E44611-1, -2. Cf. similar apparatus from Dorfe 30 (Wagu), Abau speakers, in Schultze Jena 1914, Tafel XLII, i.

He continued on until 25 December, arriving at a small hill on the west bank of the Sepik about halfway between where the Hauser and October rivers join the Sepik. He named this the 'Weihnachtslager' (Christmas Camp) and established it as his base camp for further explorations in the region (see Melk-Koch 1989:196, Abb.31).

A few days later he carried on upstream, followed the October River for two days, continued upstream on the Sepik for another day, explored a short distance up two branches of the West River, and was back at his Christmas Camp 4 January 1914. **Figure 38** is a view to the south-west with Hufi village on the west bank of the Sepik and the Star Mountains of West Papua in the distance; Hufi is located a few kilometres downstream from the West River junction.

It is likely he took the photograph of four fully-bearded men (**Figure 39**) at a community house near the October River. Melk-Koch published a Thurnwald photograph of a large community house near the October River junction (1989:199, Abb. 33) which is the same house illustrated by Schultze Jena (1914, Taf. XVI and XXIX).



Figure 38. View south-west towards the Star Mountains in West Papua c.60 kilometres away, with Hufi village on the Sepik River in the foreground. Photo: B. Craig USEE 1968-C7:27.



Figure 39. ‘Männer vom oberen Mittellauf des Augusta-Flusses’. These men are most likely from a settlement near the confluence of the Sepik and October Rivers; support poles of a community house are in the background. Cf. Schultze Jena 1914, Tafel XXIX – note the hair style and extent of facial hair. Image courtesy Marion Melk-Koch.

During the January 1914 journey, he came across several community houses on the banks of the Sepik.

The houses – often 20 to 25 metres long and 10 to 15 metres wide – are most imposing from a distance because they are often 10 to 15 metres high and look like town houses; however, they aren't at all. One is soon surprised how poorly they are built (1914: 340).

Two Thurnwald photographs from the Berlin archives (**Figures 40, 41**) illustrate this observation and his subsequent lengthy description (pp.7-9 of translation of Thurnwald 1914 at www.uscngp.com/papers/).



Figure 40 (Left): 'Haus am Hauptstrom 30.12 [1913]' probably near the Sepik-October River junction.

Figure 41 (Right): 'Haus oberhalb der ersten Stromschnelle' (house above the first rapids) on the Sepik, probably between the October and West river tributaries. Published in Melk-Koch 1989:209, Abb. 37. Images courtesy Marion Melk-Koch.

Thurnwald reprovisioned and set out again up the Sepik in the pinasse, arriving at his Papua-lager 11 January, a little upstream on the Sepik from the West River junction.²¹ He described the panoramic view from a 120 metre-high hill behind this camp (see pp.5, 6 of translation of Thurnwald 1914 at www.uscngp.com/papers/).

He pushed on up the Sepik arriving at his Pinasse-lager on the 13th. Here he recorded the Abau vernacular term for sago (*nau*). He made attempts to proceed further upstream but trouble with the motorboats and flotsam on the river prevented this, so this was as far up the Sepik that Thurnwald ventured during this first series of explorations.

He turned back and arrived at his Christmas Camp on the 19th. He planned his next excursion up the 'Berg' (August) River, which took place between 24 January and 18 February. It is difficult to identify the location of his camps along this river and there appears to be some confusion over his use of the terms 'Bergpforte', 'Bergpfortenlager' and 'Bergtorlager'. Schultze Jena located the 'Bergpforte' on what he thought was the Sepik but was on what is now named the Schultze Anabranche of the Sepik; Thurnwald uses these terms for a location on the 'Berg' (August) River that is probably where the 1912-13 expedition reached its highest point on 18 August 1913. The 1924 Behrmann map indicates this location but does not show how far Thurnwald reached, though it was obviously much further upstream at a location named Kegelberg ('Conical hill'), probably just beyond the village of Bibiyun as marked on the 1974 1:100,000 map.

Thurnwald returned to his Christmas Camp 18 February and prepared for an exploration of the Hauser and Green rivers. On the 21st he took a photograph of a boy and two men at the camp (**Figure 42**).

²¹ A view of Thurnwald and his men at his Papua-Lager, just upstream from the West River, taken in January 1914, is reproduced by Melk-Koch (1989:203, Abb.35).



Figure 42. 'Eingeborene vom Weihnachtslager 21.2.[1914]' Two men and a boy at the Christmas camp, on the Sepik between the Hauser and October rivers, just downstream from present-day Kobararu. Image courtesy Marion Melk-Koch.

He left for the Hauser River on 24 February and at the end of February reached a location on Green River where Kambriap is marked on the 1974 1:100,000 map. Returning to his Christmas Camp, he packed up and travelled back down the Sepik to a location on a lagoon near Meander Mountain where he left most of his gear. During the second week of March he explored the Yellow River north to about where Maurom is marked on the 1974 1:100,000 map. He records that at one of the villages encountered on the return down the Yellow River, they were brought smoking tubes and penis gourds as well as sago to exchange for glass rings (**Figure 43**).²² We do not know whether these artefacts have survived in a museum collection somewhere.

On 15 March they commenced the journey back down the Sepik and Thurnwald wound up the first stage of his explorations in the upper Sepik to go to Sydney for rest and reprovisioning.

²² These were most likely the shell replicas produced by A. Sachse & Co. (Wronska-Friend 2015).



Figure 43. 'Oberer Sepik 1913, 1914'. This may be somewhere on the Yellow River in March 1914. Note the lumps of sago held by three of the men, the smoking tube being demonstrated by the man second from right, and the white shell rings held by the two boys. Image courtesy Marion Melk-Koch.



Figure 44. Split pig tusk chest ornament like that worn by one of the men in Figure 43; ornament (Leiden 4477-420) collected in 1969 at Bapi, Yellow River, Namie speakers.

Thurnwald returned from Sydney at the end of July 1914 with two years of supplies and the ambition to reach the source of the Sepik. He set out upriver, established a base camp at Meander Mountain opposite the mouth of the Yellow River, then continued on upstream past his previous base camp at Christmas Hill, but had to give up the use of his motor boats several days earlier than he had during his exploration up the Sepik in January 1914.

The canoes we brought with us were now put to use between the mouths of the October and West Rivers. . . . The journey progressed easily enough by paddling or punting [past the Papua-Lager] as far as the Pinasse-Lager, which I had been able to reach in the pinnace during the high waters of January [1914]. From here on the difficulties began. Whilst the river had so far been flowing in a single stream hemmed in by forested banks, it now became wild and disrupted. The water split out into an enormous number of channels – here dividing, there flowing together. In among them, giant islands of boulders and sand were deposited, upon which pit-pit [*Saccharum* species] spread and young forests sprang up. . . . In the maze of channels it was often difficult to maintain one's sense of direction and often one or another of the canoes would get lost. So we pressed on, day after day . . . There were no native settlements anywhere in the vicinity (pp.2-4 of translation of Thurnwald 1916 at www.uscngp.com/papers/).

Excitement was occasioned by an encounter with a crocodile which they managed to kill and add to their menu, along with hunted game such as pigeons, cassowaries, wallabies and wild pigs.

The mountains, often shrouded in mist till late afternoon, seemed to get further and further away . . . Finally we lost all sense of the distance we had covered and began to doubt our estimations. Imagine my delight, therefore, when I came unexpectedly on the so-called Mountain Gate [Bergpforte] one midday. Two low hills from ten to thirty metres high, guarded the entrance to the sanctuary of the mountains. The river flowed out through a gorge no wider than twenty metres, into a world where it immediately spread itself pretentiously over the inextricable maze of channels that I hoped now lay behind us. It formed a great whirlpool at the foot of the hills as though considering its next step into the wide plain. . . Behind this outer Mountain Gate, the hills stood back and we arrived in a basin about ten kilometres wide and thirty-five kilometres long, covered with channels, gravel banks and pit pit. . . A long narrow gorge, the Inner Mountain Gateway [the Zweifel Gorge], led into the heart of the range. (p.5 of translation of Thurnwald 1916 at www.uscngp.com/papers/).

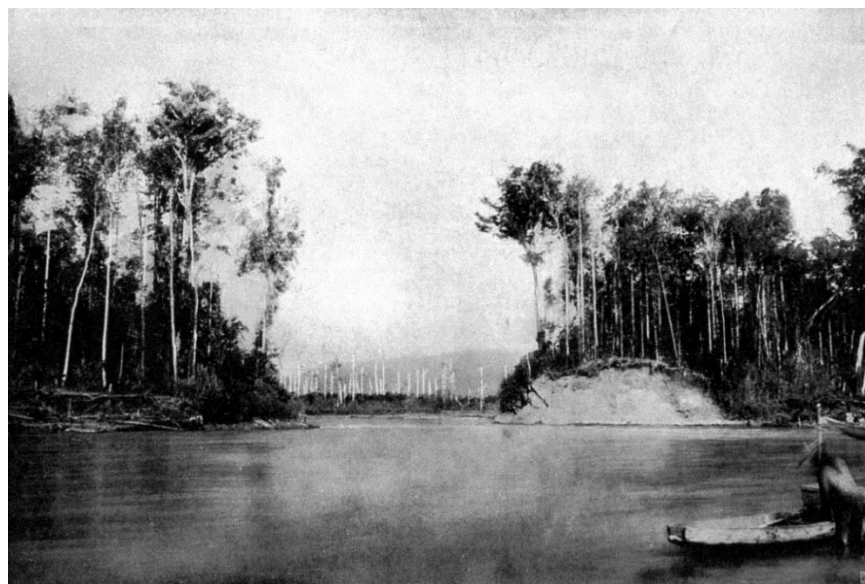


Figure 45. View south through the Bergpforte (outer Mountain Gate) on the Schultze Anabranh. Schultze Jena 1914, Tafel LVII.

Here we need to pause in the narrative and examine what Thurnwald has been reporting. From the Pinasse-Lager upstream, the Sepik is braided and interspersed with sand and gravel banks. Thurnwald describes his struggle through this river-scape which strongly suggests that he is on the Sepik. However, his reference to the (outer) Mountain Gate (the ‘Bergpforte’ – **Figure 45**) suggests that he is on the Schultze Anabranh which runs parallel and to the east of the Sepik River (compare the Schultze Jena/Behrmann map with a 1963 map, **Figure 46**).²³ The 1963 map and Google Earth imagery suggests that the Anabranh is a relatively narrow, unbraided stream for most of its length, which doesn’t match Thurnwald’s description of ‘the maze of channels’ above. This remains a puzzle.

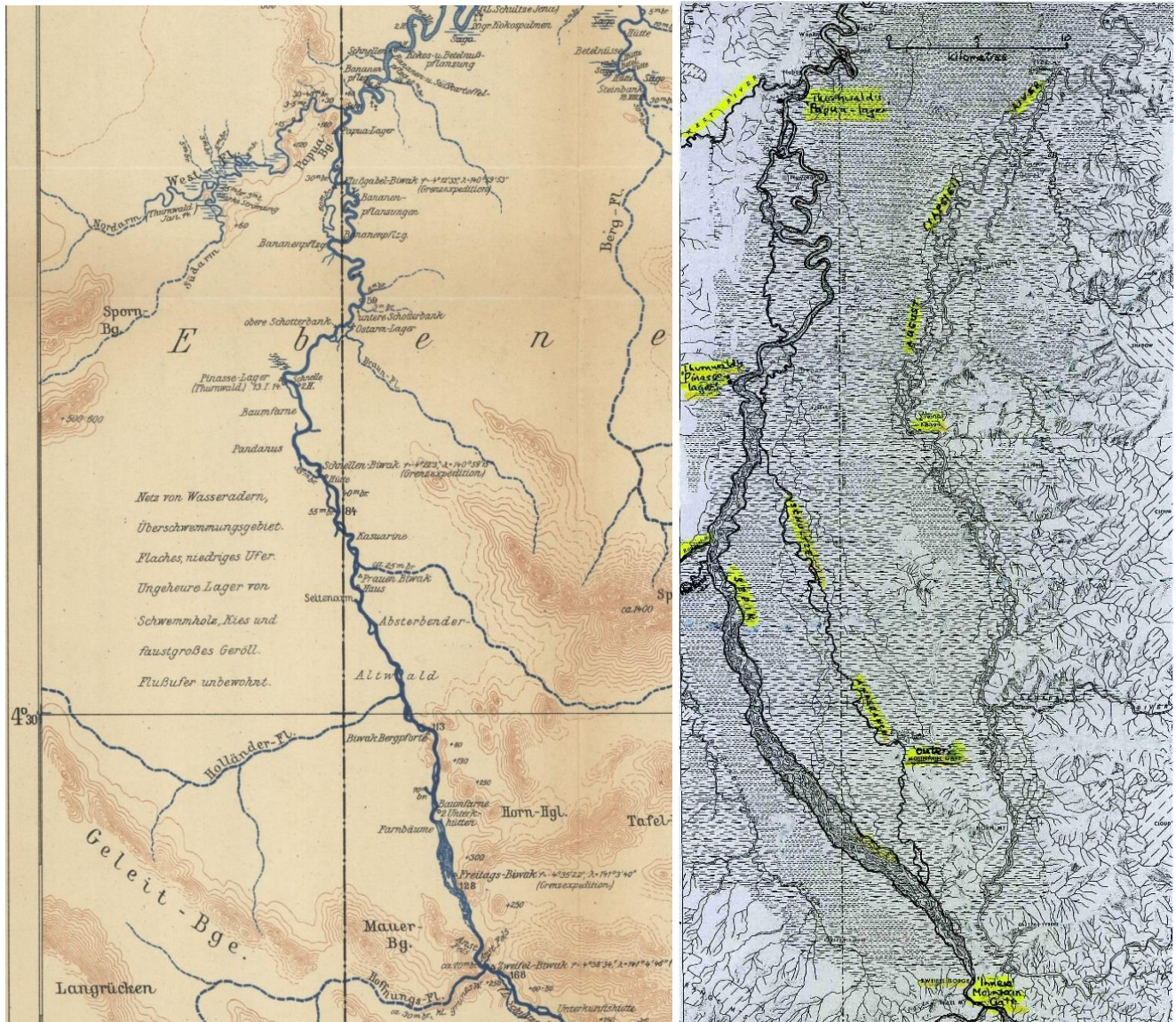


Figure 46. Left: Detail of Behrmann’s 1924 Map 1, based on Schultze Jena’s 1914 map, which shows the north-flowing Schultze Anabranh as if it were the Sepik River. Right: Map showing the intricately braided Sepik to the west of the Schultze Anabranh (Border Special, Sheet 3, 1:100,000, 1963).

It is possible that a photograph looking upstream on a relatively narrow watercourse with pebble strand (**Figure 47**) was taken on the Anabranh about 4 August 1914. This is similar to a photograph Craig took on the Bowye Anabranh of the August River (**Figure 48**) east of the Sepik at about 4° 17’ S.²⁴

²³ It wasn’t until the Australian Division of National Mapping produced the Border Special series in 1963 based on aerial photography that the course of the Sepik and of its Anabranh were accurately identified.

²⁴ Thurnwald’s Papua-Lager on the Sepik is about 4° 12’ S and his Pinasse-Lager at 4° 20’ S. The August River is a smaller stream than the Sepik.

Thurnwald refers to ‘two low hills from ten to thirty metres high’ at the outer Mountain Gate; the Anabranh river level at that point is about 150 metres ASL and the hills either side of the ‘Gate’ are 200 metres ASL, so he was about right. The hills either side of the Zweifel Gorge (the inner Mountain Gate) rise from the river level at 200 metres ASL to 441 and 584 metres ASL so there could be no confusion between the two ‘Gates’. A photograph taken by Thurnwald (**Figure 49**) appears to have been from a hill immediately east of the Anabranh near the ‘Bergpforte’ (Outer Mountain Gate) or perhaps further south from the hill east of Schultze Jena’s ‘Freitags-Biwak’. The view is to the south-west, possibly the ‘Mauer-Berg’ at the left and the ‘Langrücken’ right of centre. The Schultze Anabranh is in the foreground below and the Sepik plain in the middle distance. A comparable photograph taken from an aeroplane by Craig in 1968 (**Figure 50**) looks south-west from a location above Schultze Jena’s ‘Freitags-Biwak’.



Figure 47. View upstream, possibly on the Schultze Anabranh of the Sepik River, August 1914, alternatively, on the Berg (August) River, February 1914. Thurnwald photograph in Rodoni archives, ARODGN_0133.



Figure 48. View downstream on Bowye Anabranh of August River. B. Craig 1968, M8:27.



Figure 49. View south-west probably from a hill overlooking the Schultze Anabranche with the Sepik plain in the middle distance, about 6 August 1914. Note the stump of a tree in the bottom left corner that has been cut with a steel axe to clear the view. What appears to be a vertical measuring rod is in the foreground left of centre. Image courtesy Marion Melk-Koch.



Figure 50. View south-west towards the West Papuan Star Mountains, over the braided course of the Sepik River north (downstream) of the Zweifel Gorge. The Sepik here is flowing left to right. B. Craig 1968 M21:30.

Thurnwald estimated that the basin between the outer and inner Mountain Gates to be about ten kilometres wide and thirty-five kilometres long ‘covered with channels, gravel banks and pit pit’. Although the width at ten kilometres is about right, the straight line distance between the outer and inner Mountain Gates is about fourteen kilometres, and only about five kilometres is occupied by the braided course of the Sepik (map, **Figure 51**).

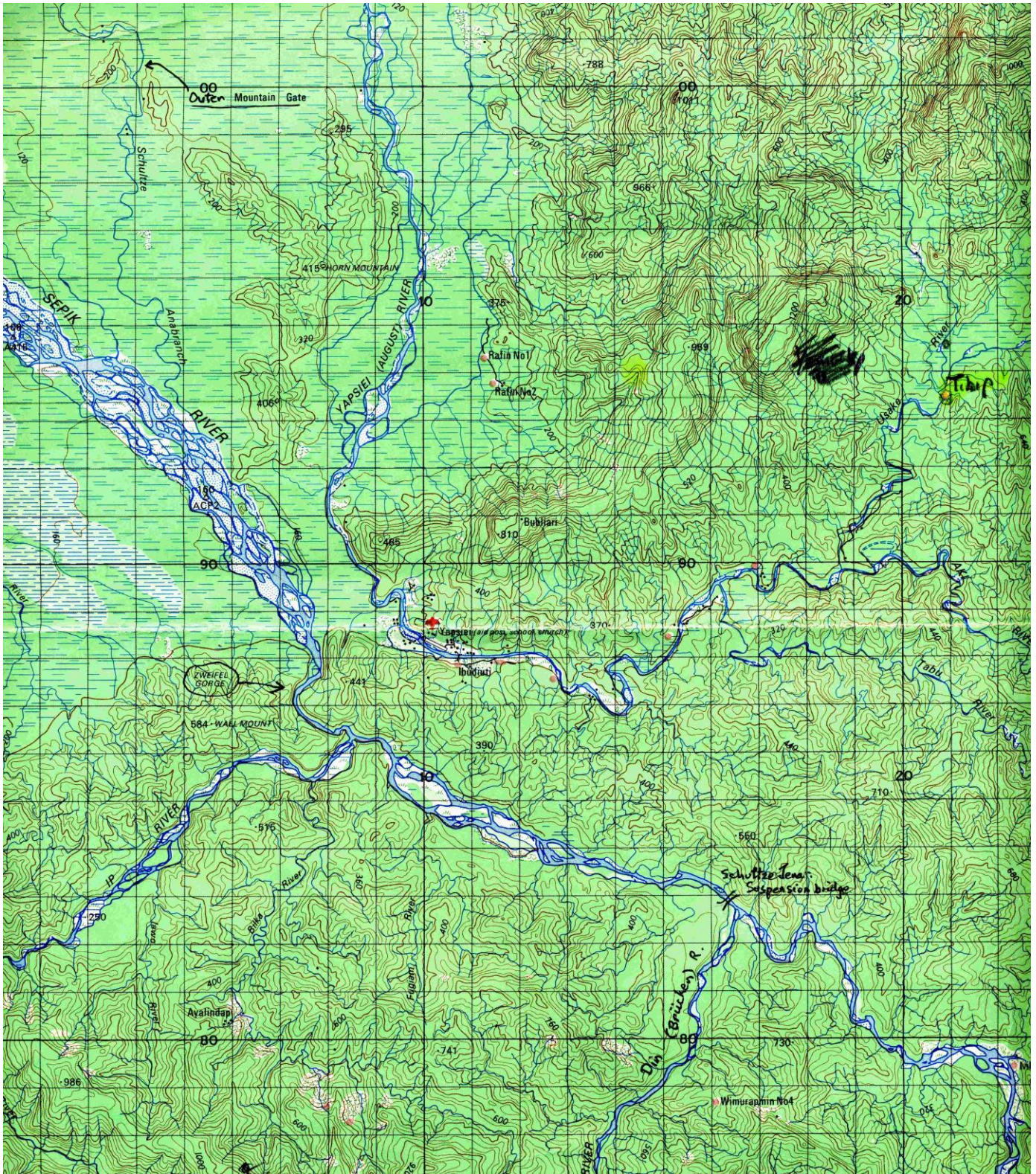


Figure 51. Map showing location of the Zweifel Gorge ('Inner' Mountain Gate) and of the suspension bridge near Brücken confluence. Detail from 1:100,000 map, YAPSI EI Sheet 7188 (Edition 1) Series T601

‘A long narrow gorge, the inner Mountain Gateway, led into the heart of the range . . . the next line of hills being no more than 150 to 200 metres high . . . Every day the valley was wider until it was soon several hundred metres broad. This basin was similar to that between the inner and outer mountain gates but on a smaller scale. Here and there, different sized tributaries flowed in . . .’ (pp.5, 6 of translation of Thurnwald 1916 at www.uscngp.com/papers/). This description matches the course of the Sepik between the Zweifel Gorge and upstream to a southern tributary, the Brücken (Din) River (map, **Figure 51**).

Another photograph by Thurnwald (**Figure 52**) appears to be looking upstream along the Sepik from the south-east end of the Zweifel Gorge. **Figure 53** was taken from an aeroplane during an airdrop of supplies to a government patrol in 1963 somewhere in the ‘inner basin’ south-east of the Zweifel Gorge.



Figure 52. View upstream, probably at the south-east end of the Zweifel Gorge. Thurnwald photograph courtesy Marion Melk-Koch.



Figure 53. View downstream (northwards) along the smaller scale basin that Thurnwald traversed upriver from (south of) the inner Mountain Gate (the Zweifel Gorge). B. Craig 1963 C17:18.

Just downstream from the Brücken (Din) confluence, a suspension bridge is marked on Behrmann's map and there is one photographed by Thurnwald (**Figure 54**). This is almost certainly the suspension bridge published by Schultze Jena (**Figure 55**) and most likely the same one in the Thurnwald photograph published by Melk-Koch (**Figure 56**).

The river in the Thurnwald photograph appears to be in flood whereas in the Schultze Jena photograph, it is at a low level. Schultze Jena was at this location during the fourth week of October 1910; Thurnwald was there in the third week of August. At Telefomin, near the source of the Sepik River, August seems to be the month of maximum rainfall with December the lowest; however, rivers can rise and fall dramatically on a daily basis.²⁵

²⁵ Although rainfall is variable on a daily basis, for an indication of the yearly pattern, see the table of monthly rainfall, Telefomin 1963, in Morren 1975/1986:65.



Figure 54. Oberer Sepik Thurnwald 1913, 1914. Southern end of suspension bridge near Brücken-Sepik confluence looking upstream, about 12 August 1914. Thurnwald photograph courtesy Marion Melk-Koch.



Figure 55. Suspension bridge over the Sepik downstream from the Brücken confluence, October 1910. Schultze Jena 1914, Tafel XXX.



Figure 56. 'Hängebrücke im Gebirge, Oberer Sepik', about 12 August 1914 – View downstream of suspension bridge over the Sepik, August 1914. Thurnwald photograph courtesy Marion Melk-Koch (see also Melk-Koch 1989, Abb. 38). Note the similar shape of the supporting branch at the left end of the suspension bridge in both photographs and tree on ridgeline.

Another of the Thurnwald photographs in the Rodoni archives (**Figure 57**) could have been taken at the western end of the smaller basin looking downstream towards the Zweifel Gorge but the braided section of the Sepik at the lower right corner of the map in **Figure 51** may be more likely.

A photograph in the Australian War Memorial archives donated by Rodoni bears the caption 'Sepik River, New Guinea, December 1914. Police boys and natives with their canoes at Knome Bge' (**Figure 58**). There is no 'Knome Bge' on any maps or in the gazetteers. If the caption was provided by Rodoni, he may have misread or mis-transcribed 'Kuome Berge',²⁶ north-west of Ambunti. However, the terrain in this image does not match that area and shows a European wearing a hat and men with caps characteristic of the German native police. The canoes and punting poles are like those in the Thurnwald photograph published by Melk-Koch showing men hauling a canoe through rapids (**Figure 59**). The terrain in that image is typical of the Sepik upstream from the location in **Figure 58**; the rocks on the near bank in **Figure 59** appear to be water-worn limestone.

²⁶ So named by members of the 1912-13 Kaiserin-Augusta-Fluss expedition and marked on Berhmann's 1924 map. These hills are now named the Washkuk Hills and are inhabited by the Kwoma (see map, **Figure 21**).



Figure 57. View downstream (note the pile-up of debris right of centre), either on the Sepik River looking north-west towards the Zweifel Gorge or upstream from the Brücken confluence. Thurnwald photograph in Rodoni archives, ARODGN_0346.



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Figure 58. 'Sepik River, New Guinea, December 1914. Police boys and natives with their canoes at Knome Bge. Donor T.J. Rodoni.' Most likely a Thurnwald photo on the Sepik about where Schultze Jena's 'End-Biwak' was located. AWM H12584.



Figure 59. Hauling a canoe through rapids, probably a few kilometres upstream from Schultze Jena's 'End-Biwak', about 20 August 1914. Note water-worn limestone rocks in foreground. Melk-Koch 1989 Abb. 36.

Thurnwald reports:

The valley narrowed into a gorge, the slopes became steep and sharp . . . only by all manner of mountaineering skills did we succeed in pulling the canoes forward along the walls if there was no handy sandbank in the middle of the river. The rapids became regular waterfalls and the stones monstrous rocks . . . rapids followed rapids so that it became more and more difficult to pull the canoes through the raging foam.

We passed the point which Professor Schultze reached in 1910 [the 'End-Biwak']. . . but I was able to continue my canoe journey only for another one and a half days.

There is another Thurnwald photograph, looking upstream (**Figure 60**) possibly taken soon after the walking began from his 'Kanu-lager' (see map, **Figure 62**). One of the Thurnwald images in the Rodoni archive also may show that section of the river at low-water (**Figure 61**).



Figure 60. Oberer Sepik - view upstream on the upper Sepik, c. 3-5 September 1914. Thurnwald photograph courtesy Marion Melk-Koch (see also Melk-Koch 1989, Abb. 39).



Figure 61. The Sepik at low water, probably upstream from Thurnwald's 'Kanu-lager', c. 3-5 September 1914. Thurnwald photograph in Rodoni archives, ARODGN_0228.

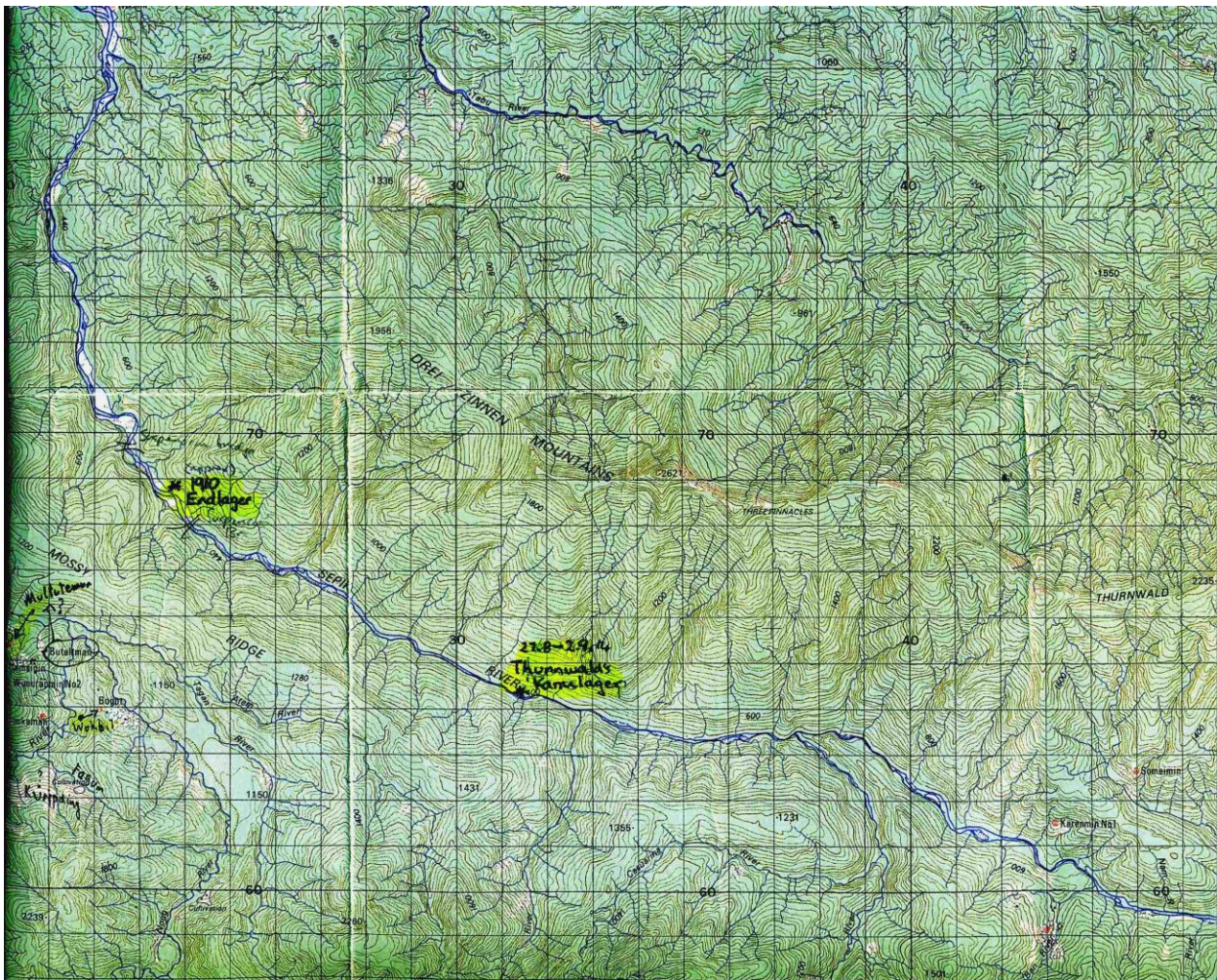


Figure 62. Map showing location of Schultze Jena's 'End-lager' and Thurnwald's "Kanu-lager'. Detail from 1:100,000 map, YAPSIEI Sheet 7188 (Edition 1) Series T601.

So far, since he left his Meander Mountain base camp, it appears that no local inhabitants came close enough to Thurnwald for him to photograph them. He did see some people in this mountainous section of the Sepik but they kept their distance. It wasn't until he entered the western end of the valley called 'Ifitaman' by the Telefolmin that he encountered a small village and its inhabitants.²⁷

As the path emerged from the bamboo thicket, we found ourselves unexpectedly in front of a village of five houses. A little boy with a big stomach and a lot of dirt on him eagerly chased after a butterfly. I stood there and waited a long time before he noticed me. He caught sight of me, stared for a minute, then ran away with a cry of horror. A man, just coming out of a house, fled into the forest howling with fear. The doorways of occupied houses were hastily barred.²⁸ Behind the village, another man came out of the forest with bow and arrows, stared for a while and rushed back downhill. Deep silence reigned in the circle of village houses. I went up, knocked at the doorways and spoke, putting knives, glass beads and rings – the usual presents – in front of the houses in which I suspected there were people. But in vain; nothing stirred.

Meanwhile, I examined the houses. They were cubical buildings, the walls being three or four metres long and erected on 250 mm to 500 mm high posts. The walls were fabricated from poles

²⁷ Apparently at 'Somáp' which probably was an Atemkiakmin parish settlement of the Telefolmin, near present-day Emolavip. This encounter occurred 16 September 1914 (Thurnwald's Diary, p.182).

²⁸ Horizontal slabs of wood were used to block the small doorways of the houses.

lined up next to each other or from halved saplings.²⁹ In the front or along the sides there was a narrow verandah for stacking firewood, taro shoots or banana suckers, and the bamboo water containers. One gained entry to the smoke-blackened huts through a narrow opening hardly a square metre in area.³⁰ In the houses occupied by people, the entrance was closed up by a door of planks. . . The largest structure of them all³¹ was somewhat apart from the others. A hedge of red and yellow-leaved ornamental plants had been grown in front of this . . .

The people were all very small but, despite their shyness, seemed intelligent. They wore rattan loops [*oltil*] wound several times around their hips and the usual [gourd] penis-sheaths [*kamen*]. Their hair was bound at the back into two long plaits. Many woolly tufts of hair are first bound with small strips of rattan; these are bound into two large plaits with broader rattan strips and then smeared with red clay.³²

Then I stood alone in the village again waiting for the remaining youths to approach, took photographs and left, as I saw that all my efforts to entice the people back were in vain. I made camp for the night further down along a creek.³³

The *mafum* hair appendage and the form of the houses as described above can be compared to **Figures 63** and **64**. Two of the photographs in the Rodoni archives (**Figures 65, 66**) may have been taken by Thurnwald in the small village he describes above and marked Somáp on his map.



Left: Figure 63. Telefolmin *mafum* initiand at Telefolip, Ifitaman. This youth is wearing plaited, rather than rattan, loops around his waist and a short gourd phallocrypt in the style of the Mianmin to the north of the Telefolmin. B. Craig 1962 C9:18.
Right: Figure 64. Ulapmin *mafum* initiand at Denbel. B. Craig 1972 BK1:16.

²⁹ Vertical poles are a feature of the walls of men's houses (*tinum-am*) whereas vertical split timber walls are a feature of women's houses (*unang-am*).

³⁰ The openings are around a half metre wide by a metre high.

³¹ This was the men's cult house, called *yolam*.

³² This type of head dress is called *mafum* and is a marker of the fourth stage of Telefol male initiation (see **Figs 63, 64**).

³³ The evening of 16 September 1914, on the south bank of the Ok Fek (Ofek on 1:100,000 map).

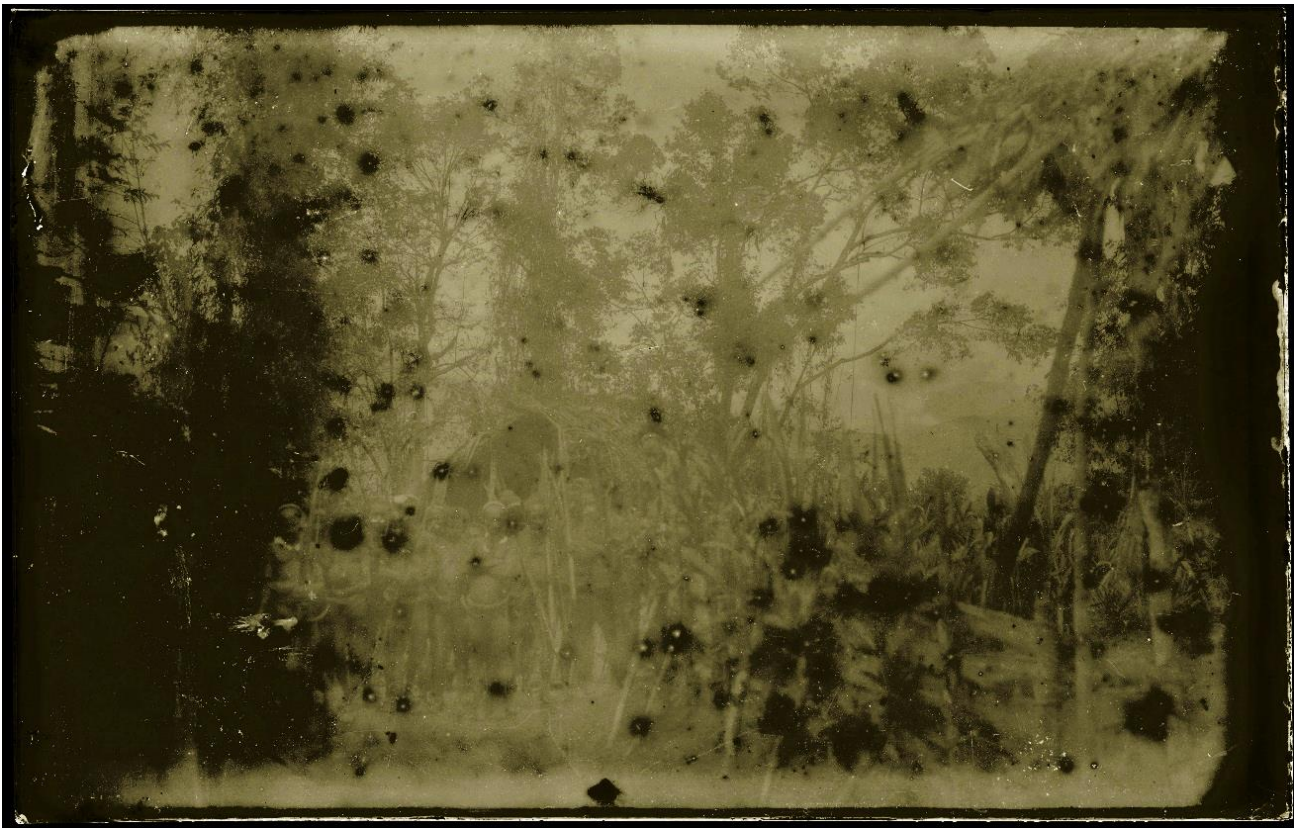


Figure 65. Men gathered in a small village of the Telefolmin, possibly ‘Somáp’ on Thurnwald’s map and near present-day Emolavip at the western end of Ifitaman. Thurnwald photograph in the Rodoni archives, ARODGN_0229.



Figure 66. The same group of men as in Figure 50 but turned away from the camera, apparently to show the *mafum* ritual hair appendage. The plants to the right of the men look like the cordyline plants described by Thurnwald as ‘a hedge of red and yellow-leaved ornamental plants’ that are grown inside the fence in front of the men’s cult house. This suggests that the roof eaves visible at top right are of that cult house. Thurnwald photograph in the Rodoni archives ARODGN_0345.

The image in **Figure 65** is considerably damaged but can be related to the image in **Figure 66** by careful comparison of the trees in the background and of the house left of centre in **Figure 65** and right of centre in **Figure 66**. The shape of the trunk and branches of the tree behind and to the left of the house in **Figure 65** matches that of the tree directly behind the house in **Figure 66** (given slightly different positions of the camera), and planks of the fence at the bottom right corner in both images are identical. It is likely that Thurnwald photographed the men facing towards him then asked them to turn around so he could photograph their *mafum* ritual hair appendages.

Thurnwald continues his account:

After we broke camp next morning [17 September] we soon noticed that many people followed us. We passed extensive gardens. As we approached these, the people yelled at us in a great fright. When we climbed a hill, the crowd accompanying us in the distance climbed a neighbouring bare hill. There appeared to be 40 to 50 men armed with bows and arrows, their heads decorated with feathers and cuscus fur. They remained at a distance of several hundred metres. I didn't let myself be disturbed and kept on photographing and examining the landscape. When we continued on, they followed.

After some stopping and calling out, they approached so close that I felt I could risk another attempt at offering presents. Finally, I succeeded in persuading one of them to accept a few rings; then a second and a third man. Now that one or other of them stood there with a white glass ring or with glass beads on his chest, without feeling bewitched, suddenly everyone wanted to have something, and more and more people turned up until I was surrounded by 80 to 100 people. With my fifteen carriers, tired out from the long, exhausting trek, I was in a situation which called for caution. However, I wanted to make use of the opportunity to replenish the scanty rations of my team. By appropriate signs I got the people to bring taro and yams, which they did willingly; they added cane sugar and tobacco as well.



Figure 67. Three senior men, most likely at the location of the bridge between Ifitaman and Ulapmin/Tifalmin. Two of these men (especially the man with the shell nose- and forehead- ornaments) can be identified near the centre of Figure 66. Thurnwald photograph in the Rodoni archives, ARODGN_0198.

Then several old headmen came hesitantly up to me [the men in **Figure 67?**]. One of these took the lead and brought us to another village. From there we climbed down along a mountain stream to where the Sepik River frothed between cliffs and boulders, its waters only 5 to 10 metres wide there. There we made camp in the presence of our guides [see **Figures 68, 69**].



Figure 68. Telefolmin men and boys most likely on the north bank of the Sepik River near the bridge between Ifitaman and the Ulapmin and Tifalmin villages to the west. Thurnwald photograph in the Rodoni archives, ARODGN_0197.



Figure 69. Bridge across the Sepik on the track between Ifitaman and Ulapmin/Tifalmin.³⁴ Note boulders at left and compare to boulders at left behind the men and boys in Figure 68. Thurnwald notes the gap as 5-10 metres. B. Craig 1981 MtnOk C7:4.

³⁴ Craig has revised his opinion of the location of the bridge across this narrow section of the Sepik. In his annotation to the translation of Thurnwald's 1916 report, he believed it was near the junction of the Ilam River with the Sepik but a more detailed examination of the report, the handwritten Diary and the map favours the location identified here.

A view west along the Sepik (**Figure 70**) indicates the terrain Thurnwald traversed during his walk (right to left) from ‘Somáp’ to the north bank of the Sepik where he camped on the evening of 17 September, and then back uphill the next day to turn east, and to the right of the point from where this photograph was taken, to the main Telefolmin villages.



Figure 70. View westwards downriver along the Sepik. The narrow bridge crossing is in the gorge at the left behind the casuarina tree. Thurnwald’s route from ‘Somáp’ would have been down a ridge from the right to the river then back up again to the ancestral trail from the river past the point from which this photograph was taken. B. Craig 1962 C11:5.

The next day (18 September), Thurnwald

moved on, from district to district, from village to village in close succession [see map, **Figure 71**]. We had left behind the river and its wooden bridge across a narrow spot barely 5 metres across, where the river forces its way between two cliffs. The inhabitants of a district only ever followed us up to their border; on the other side their neighbours stood ready to receive me and thus I was handed on from one district to another. We crossed ridges covered with well-cultivated gardens and over wide grassy areas with small clumps of trees. Constantly, new groups of people turned up from various directions and greeted me with handshakes and the assurance of friendship.

Thurnwald took several photographs of groups of men that day (**Figures 72 to 74**). The details of the vegetation behind the men and on the ground suggests these photographs were taken at the same spot; a couple of the men seem to be in more than one of the images.

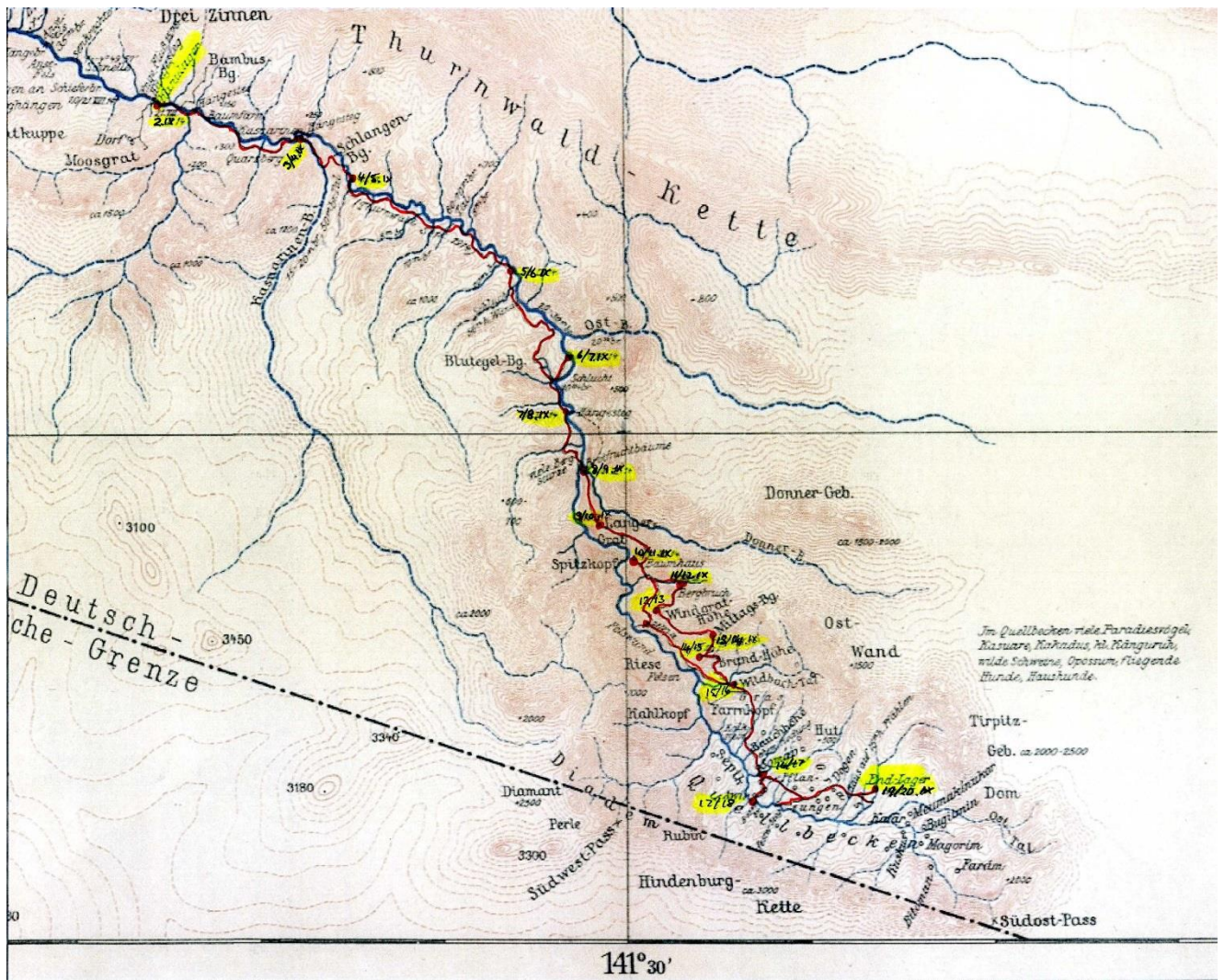


Figure 71. Thurnwald's route from his 'Kanulager' (2.IX.14) to Telefomin (19/20.IX.14). Detail from Behrmann's 1924 Map 1.



Figure 72. 'Quellbecken des Augustaflusses'. Thurnwald photograph courtesy Marion Melk-Koch.



Figure 73. '1914 Telefomin'. Thurnwald photograph courtesy Marion Melk-Koch



Figure 74. 'Zentralgebirge Quellgebiet'. Thurnwald photograph courtesy Marion Melk-Koch.

Another photo (**Figure 75**), probably taken that day, shows a crowd of men and youths apparently observing Thurnwald's approach. **Figure 76** shows two houses in one of the villages he passed by.

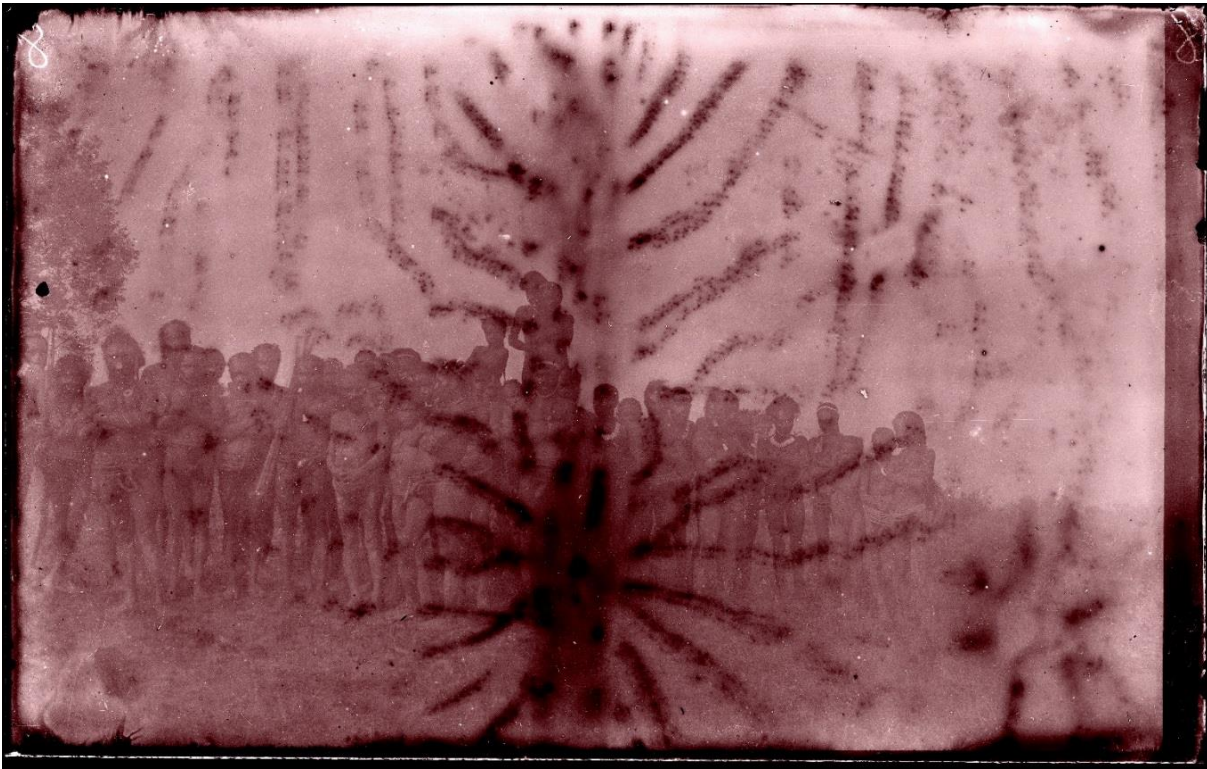


Figure 75. A crowd of men and youths apparently watching Thurnwald's approach towards the main villages of Ifitaman on 18 September 1914. Thurnwald photograph in the Rodoni archives, ARODGN_0344.



Figure 76. 'Häuser am Quellbecken Augusta-Fluss'. Telefolmin houses, view south, the Behrmann Range in the background at right. Note that there are no carved and painted house boards at the entrance to these houses. Thurnwald photograph courtesy Marion Melk-Koch.

A short distance before his final ‘End-Lager’ of 19/20 September (which was, according to some informants in 1962, just east of the present location of the Sub-district office of Telefomin), a ‘Haus auf 15^m h. Pfählen’ is marked on the Behrmann’s 1924 map (**Figure 77**). Thurnwald photographed eight men below a house high up on poles (**Figure 78**); this may be the house referred to on the map which appears to be on a creek (called the Afaam) between the present-day Telefomin airstrip and the Sol River.³⁵ The reason for the elevated house may have been defensive, as a watch-tower, as the boundary with the enemy Falamin (Feramin) was only a few kilometres further to the east. Thurnwald recorded ‘Farám’ as a location further east at the headwaters of the Sepik.

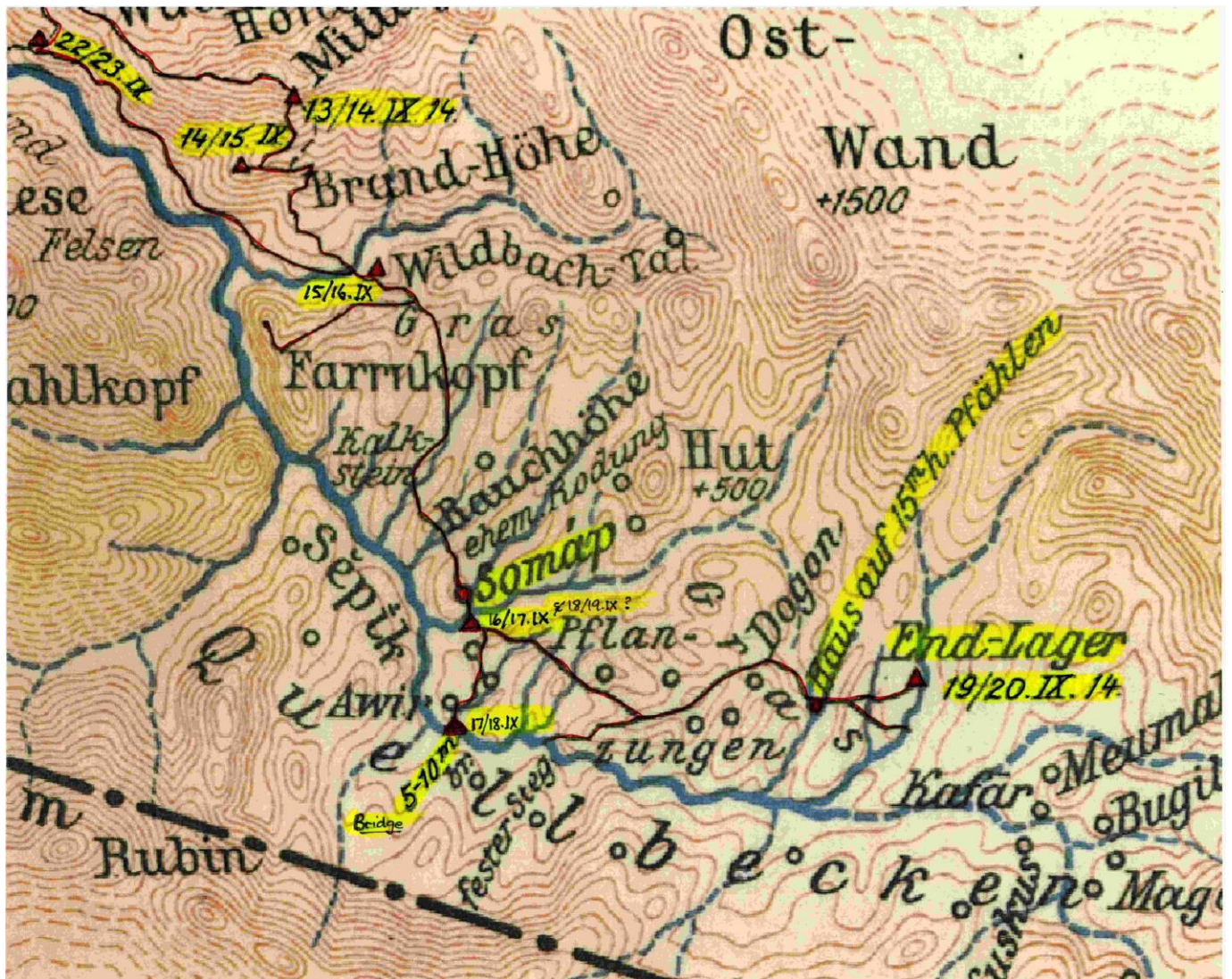


Figure 77. Thurnwald’s route from his camp of 13/14.IX.14 to his ‘End-Lager’ (Telefomin) of 19/20.IX.14. Detail from Behrmann’s 1924 map. The bridge across the Sepik in Figure 67 is where Thurnwald camped 17/18 September.

In **Figure 78**, the surrounding vegetation seems to have been cut back for gardening and/or defensive purposes. Four of the men are armed with bow and arrows and two of them appear to have a (stone-bladed) adze hooked over the left shoulder.

³⁵ Dan Jorgensen suggested the Afaam as the likely location, affirmed by comparison of Thurnwald’s map with recent hi-res Google Earth images of the locality.

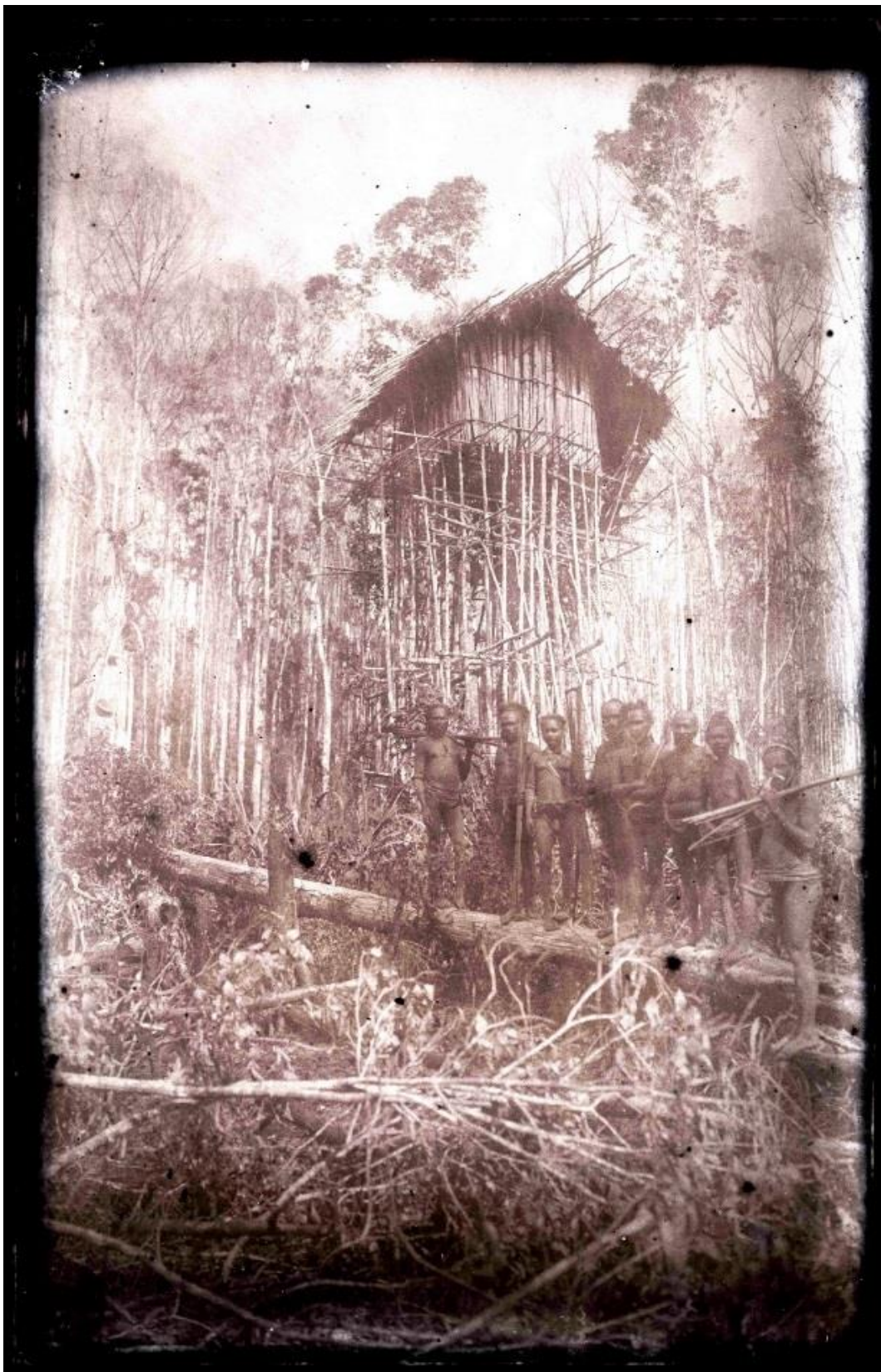


Figure 78. House high up on poles, probably on the Afaam Creek, a little east of the present-day airstrip and administration centre of Telefomin. Thurnwald photograph in the Rodoni archives, ARODGN_0200.

Figure 79 is a photograph looking east into Falamin territory, probably from the western side of the Sol River valley or perhaps even from the house up on poles shown in **Figure 76**. The profile of the distant ranges compares to the landscape in **Figure 80**, which is a photograph taken from a vantage point a kilometre or two south of that for **Figure 79**.

Thurnwald camped at Telefomin 19-20 September but as his supplies were running low, he reluctantly gave up the possibility of further exploration and turned back. 'The decision to return was heard by my fifteen faithful men with more jubilation than it was made by me'.



Figure 79. Landscape east of the Sol River valley, towards Falamin (Feramin) territory. Thurnwald photograph in the Rodoni archives, ARODGN_0347.



Figure 80. Landscape east towards Falamin (Feramin) territory. B. Craig 1967-M17:3, 4.

On the way back westwards, people became agitated, apparently fearing Thurnwald would take food from their gardens. However, he offered payment for taro and sugarcane; 'From then on our path through the area was smooth and friendly'. In the evenings the people visited the camps and traded. 'They offered my carriers arrows and decorative objects whilst the carriers made them happy by giving them strips of red calico or glass beads.'

They arrived back at the 'Kanulager' on the 26 September but supplies meant to have been delivered from the 'Papua-lager' had not turned up, so they had to continue downstream living off sago they processed themselves and the occasional pig, cassowary or bird.

They emerged from the mountains but although Thurnwald reports that he left both the 'inner' and 'outer' mountain gates behind, he must have travelled down the braided course of the Sepik, not down the Schultze Anabanch on which the 'outer mountain gate' is located because he reports that on the 4 October he did a brief survey of the 'Holländer', a tributary of the Sepik from the west that cannot be accessed from the Schultze Anabanch. He seemed to be unaware that the Raadsel (Rätsel, meaning 'mystery'), another tributary from the west, entered the Sepik only a kilometre north of the Holländer.³⁶

Thurnwald arrived at the 'Papua-lager' near the confluence of the West and Sepik rivers 6 October to find the rest of his men barricaded inside a camp on a hill to protect themselves from attacks by the local people, hence the non-arrival of supplies to the Kanulager. Fiebig had passed on the news, along with the mail from Marienberg, that the 'English' had detained German shipping in the colony. This set Thurnwald speculating what possibly could have happened to provoke such action.

They broke camp and Thurnwald burnt down the community dwelling of his men's attackers after looting the place of ethnological items, shooting a pig, and taking sago and crocodile eggs. This would have been near the present-day settlement of Hufi on the PNG-West Papua border.

Thurnwald expressed his feeling of alienation from what seemed to be happening in the colony and overseas. 'It is a feeling as if one were in another world, to think that out there eventually everything will go topsy-turvy and that one sits here, or travels, as if that outside world does not exist' (*Diary* p.212).

He continued downstream to the Meander Mountain base camp, arriving there 9 October. Nowhere since leaving Telefomin does he report coming face-to-face with any local people. Fiebig was waiting at the camp and passed on the news from Marienberg that Germany was at war with England. Thurnwald thought this was a huge error of judgement on Germany's part. He assumed Australia would send ships and troops to take over all the centres in the colony, including Angoram.

He reviewed his supplies and decided to send Fiebig back down the Sepik with many of his men, pay them off, and get more news of events in Europe. He then set about writing a report of his 'dash to the source of the Sepik' (published 1916) while awaiting Fiebig's return.

Fiebig got back 8 November and confirmed the news of the conflict in Europe but Thurnwald decided to continue his explorations along the Sand River, a tributary of the Yellow River, and along the North River, as far as the coastal range (see map, **Figure 81**).

His exploration of the Sand River began on 11 November. He confesses that he is getting tired of the hardships of exploration and wants to go home. On 13 November he traded for food from people who came from a cluster of villages that coincides with the present-day Namie (Lujere) settlements of Gwidami, Mukudami and Aiendami. They were unarmed and seemed to know about him; he assumed people of the Yellow River that he had met in May 1914 had told them of him.

³⁶ It isn't clear who named these two tributaries although the Rätsel is conjectured on Schultze Jena's map.

He carried on upstream, seeing no more people, hauling the canoes over sand- and gravel-banks, then wading up the river to reach the hills 19 November. He stayed a couple of days then turned back downstream where he was met at the place where he had left his canoes (at his camp of 18/19 November) by about 20 men with bows, arrows and short spears. The nearest present-day settlements are Pelama on the river about three kilometres north of this camp, and Yakoma five kilometres to the north-east. These people speak Seta, one of the Torricelli Phylum languages that straddle the Torricelli Mountains almost to the north coast.

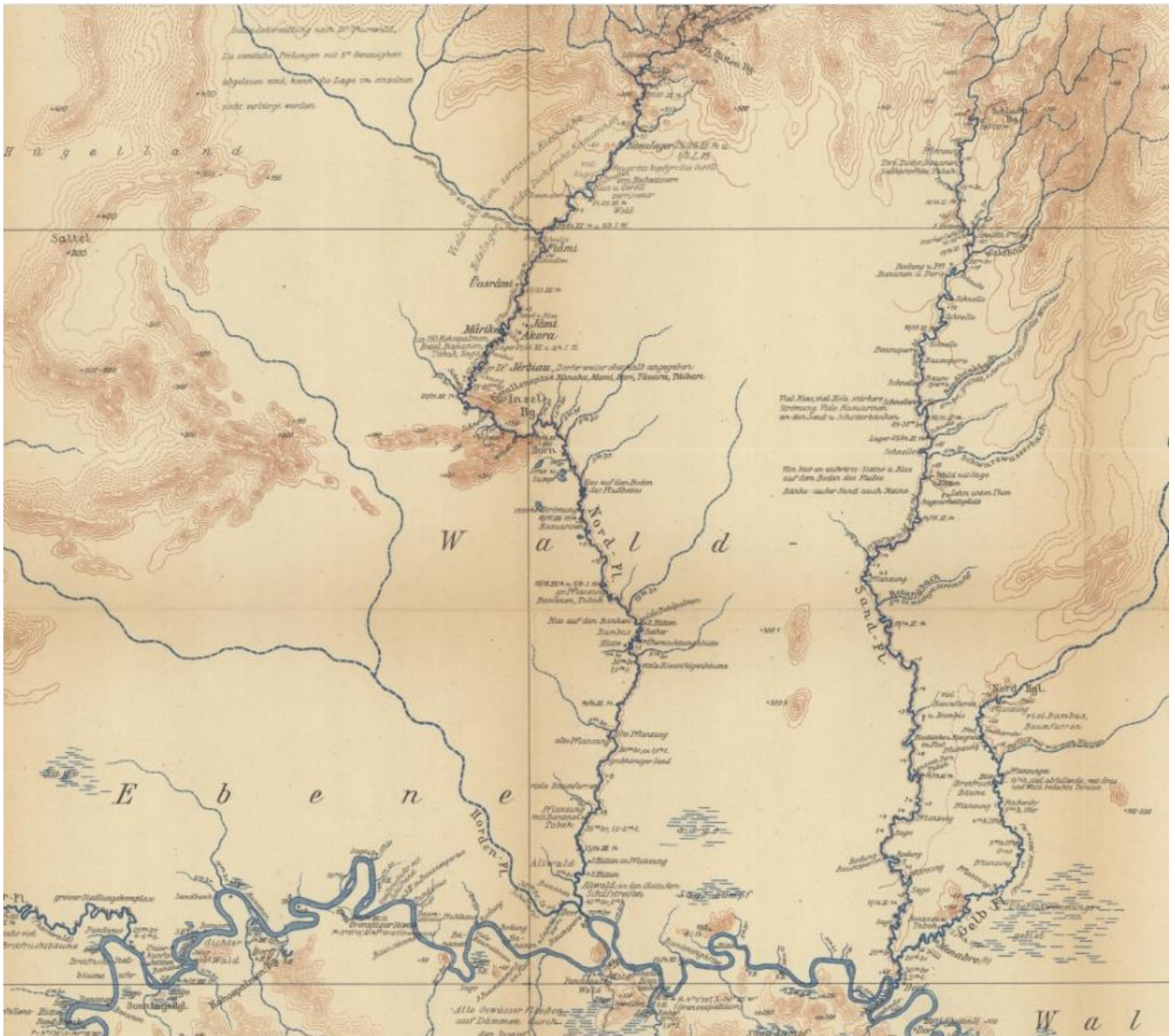


Figure 81. The Yellow, Sand and North rivers (right to left). Detail of Behrmann's 1924 map.

Among these men was one wearing a rattan cuirass and others, fight ornaments, 'including cassowary feathers, as if they were mammoth tusks, turned upwards in the nostrils'. Other ornaments were forehead bands of *Coix lacryma* (Job's tears) seeds as well as a bandolier-like chest ornament of *Coix* seeds and belts of seeds and bones around their hips. These details seems to correspond to the ornaments worn by the men in **Figure 82**. Thurnwald made offers for string net bags, a cuirass and bows and arrows, in

exchange for glass beads and rings. He set up his camera but it isn't entirely clear that he was able to take photographs before they hurried away; **Figure 82** suggests he did.³⁷



Figure 82. '1913, 1914 oberer Sepik'. Man at centre wearing a rattan cuirass; men at left and right wearing rattan upper arm bands and 'bandolier' chest straps; the man at left has upward-turned nose ornament and the man on the right wears a bone-and-seed belt; two of them wear *Coix* seed or nassa shell forehead bands. It is difficult to discern the kind of phallocrypt worn by the men but in the similar photograph published by Melk Koch (see footnote 37), they are of the egg-shaped kind found from the Abau of the upper Sepik northwards as far as the north coast. Note that the background suggests a rocky foothills location. Thurnwald photograph courtesy Marion Melk-Koch.

³⁷ Another photograph that features the same elderly man wearing the same cuirass has been published by Melk-Koch (1989, Abb. 34) captioned 'Leute vom Oktoberfluss'. This caption must be incorrect as there is no evidence that Abau speakers (of October River or anywhere else) made or used rattan cuirasses and the description in Thurnwald's Diary, plus the mention of cuirasses in his published Report (1916:91), suggests these photographs were taken on the upper Sand River. Although in that Report Thurnwald records the wearing of rattan cuirasses by the men of the Yagroner Hills of the middle North River (1916:92), he did not mention that in his Diary. The kind of cuirass in Figure 80 is the same as those from Vanimo, Wutong and Doponendi illustrated by Tiesler (1984, Abb. 2, 3, 14) and possibly Sissano (Abb. 4). Sissano is NNE over the Torricelli Mountains from the source of the Sand River and Vanimo is NW over the Bewani Mountains.

A number of artefacts of the Ak and Namie (Lujere) speakers south of the Seta speakers (**Figure 83 a-c**) are consistent with the body ornaments of the men in **Figure 82**.



Figure 83a. Rattan upper arm bands, Berlin VI 50738 a, b. Kwieftim, Ak speakers (north of the Namie).

Figure 83b. Forehead band with nassa shells (rather than *Coix* seeds). Berlin VI 50675. Kwieftim, Ak speakers.



Figure 83c. Bone and seed belts (top one with blue trade beads). Top: Berlin VI 50655, Yegarapi, Namie (Lujere) speakers. Bottom: Berlin VI 50656, Kwieftim, Ak speakers.

There is an image in the Rodoni archives that we believe is Thurnwald's, showing six men and two boys standing on a pebble strand with a river behind (**Figure 84**). The landscape is consistent with the upper reaches of the Sepik River which is braided with pebble flood banks for some forty kilometres downstream from (north of) the Zweifel Gorge, most of it in then Dutch New Guinea. The men are wearing relatively straight gourd phallocrypts, their bows and arrows are quite long and the man third from the left is holding a gourd lime container, all attributes of the material culture of the upper reaches of the Sepik River. They are not Mountain Ok men who usually wear multiple loops of rattan around their waists and who do not have gourd lime containers.

However, as noted above, nowhere since leaving Telefomin did Thurnwald come face-to-face with any local people. On his journey up the Sand River in November, he reports that at the stage where his canoes kept running aground on sandbanks, 'we met only a few natives along the banks' but on the way back downstream, '[a]long the middle reaches of the river, large numbers of natives appeared. . . There seemed to be extensive settlement here' (Thurnwald 1916:91 – translation).

Confirmation that this photograph was most likely taken on 25 November on the middle Sand River is found in his Diary (p.239) where he remarks: 'After I had managed, before we departed the camp, to bring some natives in front of my lens, we went off in our canoes'. He would have left it and any other photos he had taken on the Sand River at his Meander Mountain base camp when he left for his North River explorations, which would explain how it could have come into Rodoni's possession.



Figure 84. Six men and two boys standing on a pebble strand, probably on the middle reaches of the Sand River about where Thurnwald's camp of 24/25 November 1914 was located. Note gourd lime container held by fourth person from left. Thurnwald photograph in the Rodoni archives, ARODGN_0337.

Examples of Namie objects held/worn by the men in **Figure 84** are presented in **Figure 85a-g**.



Figure 85a. Gourd lime container, Basel Vb15192, Tipas, Namie speakers.



Figure 85b. Gourd phallocrypt, Basel Vb 26349, Bapi, Namie speakers.

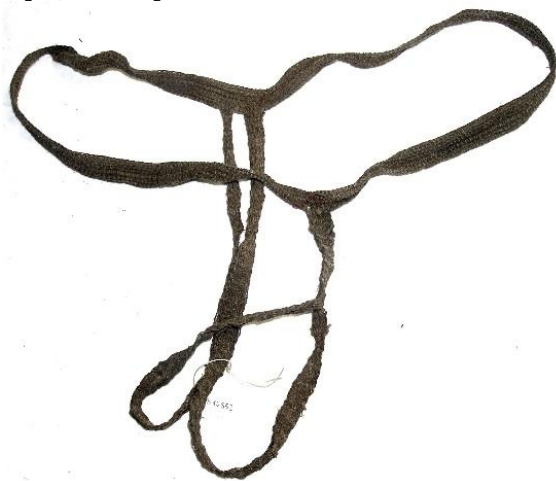


Figure 85c. Chest band, Basel Vb15852, Sibat (Tipas), Namie speakers.



Figure 85d. Dogs' teeth necklace, Basel Vb26464, Yiwani, Namie speakers.

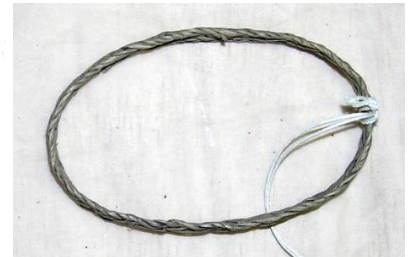


Figure 85e. Two amulet bags, Basel Vb15843, Vb15850, Sibat (Tipas), Namie speakers

Figure 85f. Two upper arm bands, Berlin VI 50722, Kwieftim, Ak speakers & VI 50795, Yegarapi, Namie speakers.



Figure 85g. Waist band/belt, with three rows of nassa shells. PNG National Museum E7467, Walakori, Namie speakers.

Thurnwald got back to Meander Mountain on 26 November. Fiebig had not returned from his trip down to Marienberg so Thurnwald decided to wait before going off to the North River to complete his explorations, as he wanted to hear the news about the War. He had the top of Meander Mountain cleared for the view over the plains to the north and prepared equipment and canoes for the North River excursion. Fiebig turned up 9 December; he had been delayed by the pinnace's engine needing repairs. He brought news of early German advances and victories in Europe.

The North River flows south from the coastal mountains, cuts eastwards through the middle of the Yagroner Hills, then turns south again to join the Sepik (**Figure 86**). Thurnwald left 13 December with six canoes and 29 men, assisted to the North River by the pinnace and motor boat. Fiebig took the pinnace and motor boat back to Meander Mountain and Thurnwald established a depot for emergency supplies a short distance up the North River. He would have left any photographs he had taken on the Sand River at

his Meander Mountain base camp, along with the photographs from his journey to the source of the Sepik.



Figure 86. The Yagroner Hills left of centre, c. 25 km east from near Amanab in the Border Mountains. The North River flows from left to right through the Yagroner Hills. B. Craig 1969-C8:18.

For the first few days they endured heavy rain, and trees and logs swept along in the flooded river. On the 17th he reached an outcropping of hills named ‘Insel Bg’³⁸ on the 1924 Behrmann map, at the middle reaches of the North River (map, **Figure 87**), but because of the strength of the river in flood, had to wait till the 19th to move on. Meanwhile Thurnwald visited a nearby village and traded white rings, tobacco and red paint for coconuts and betel nut. He notes the people were shy of the camera so he could not take photographs.

On the 19th he marked a settlement which corresponds to Wagroni on the 1974 map. He reports that ‘the natives here wear basketry cuirasses covering their hips, chest and back’ (p.28 of the translation of Thurnwald 1916 at www.uscngp.com/papers/) but does not mention this in his Diary. On the 20th he made camp at the western edge of the Hills and climbed the highest peak. The next day he followed the river northwards and passed through an area he described as ‘densely populated’. He recorded the names of several settlements, not named on today’s maps; the people would have been Kwomtari speakers.³⁹

His reception in these villages was generally favourable with brisk trading. On the 22nd at Uasrami, the most desired trade from Thurnwald were the white rings, red paint but especially red cloth which they cut into long strips to wear on their arms and chest. He remarked on a form of ‘farewell’: scratching under the chin of the one being farwelled (Diary, p.262).

³⁸ Yagroner Hills on the 1974 1:100,000 map. Thurnwald would have named this outcrop of hills ‘Insel Bg’ as it was like an archipelago of islands in a sea of swampy forest.

³⁹ About where Thurnwald marked Jerbiau, Baiberi is marked on the 1974 1:100,000 map.

On the 25th he made camp at his Kanulager, continuing along the river thereafter on foot, reaching a settlement named Musa on the southern fall of the Bewanis, 29 December (map, **Figure 88**). The next day he had a hilltop cleared for the view. He felt tired of the constant wetness, biting insects and ragged clothes and boots. He abandoned the idea of climbing to the coastal watershed and returned to the Kanulager 1 January 1915. The men shot a pig and he celebrated the New Year with oysters from Sydney fried in butter with sauerkraut.

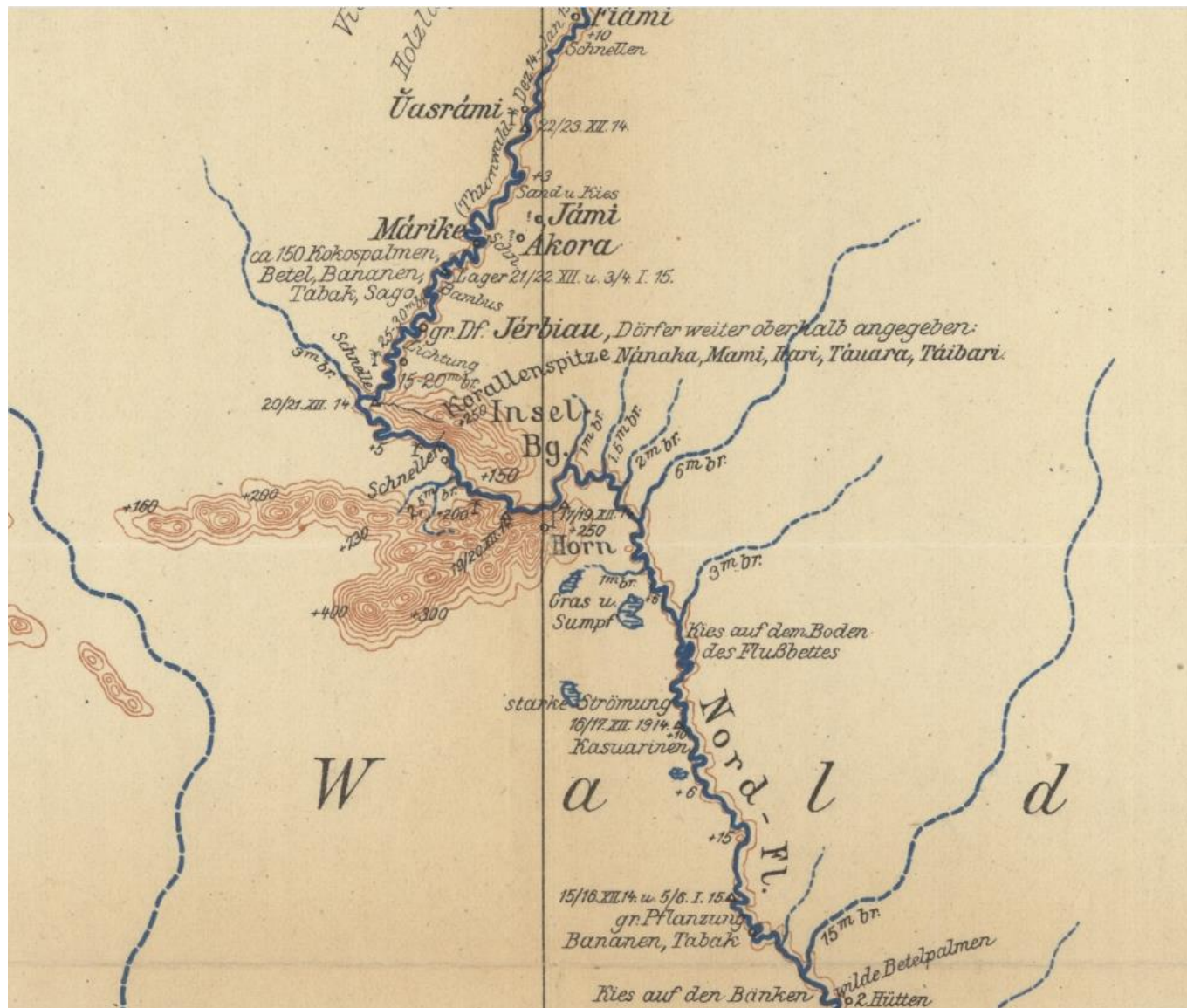


Figure 87. The ‘Insel Berg’ (Yagroni Hills) in the middle North River. Detail from Behrmann’s 1924 map.

On the 3rd, near Márike, they had an accident in the obstructed river and canoes capsized, precipitating men and boxes of supplies into the river. They lost trade goods, a camera stand, lamp, paddles and some personal belongings. The local people assisted with retrieving things and everything was set out on the river bank to dry. ‘In the meantime, the natives bring coconuts, sago, bananas and tobacco, allowing me to photograph and question them’ (Diary, p.272 and **Figure 89**).

He continued downriver arriving at his depot near the mouth of the North River on 6 January but his supplies had gone and there was no sign of Fiebig. He was much puzzled by this and carried on down the Sepik to the Meander Mountain base camp, arriving 7 January. There he discovered everyone and everything was gone – boats, supplies, equipment, photographs and collections. Boxes were broken open, packaging strewn about, bottles broken, papers scattered. ‘Of the photographic collection I see as a

remnant only single labels and empty boxes' (Diary p.274). Cumberlege and Martin had come and taken everything away just a week or so before.

The Commander later denied vandalising Thurnwald's camp, claiming that it was done by Thurnwald's own men, which was contrary to what Fiebig told Thurnwald when they met again at Marienberg (Craig 1997:390-393).

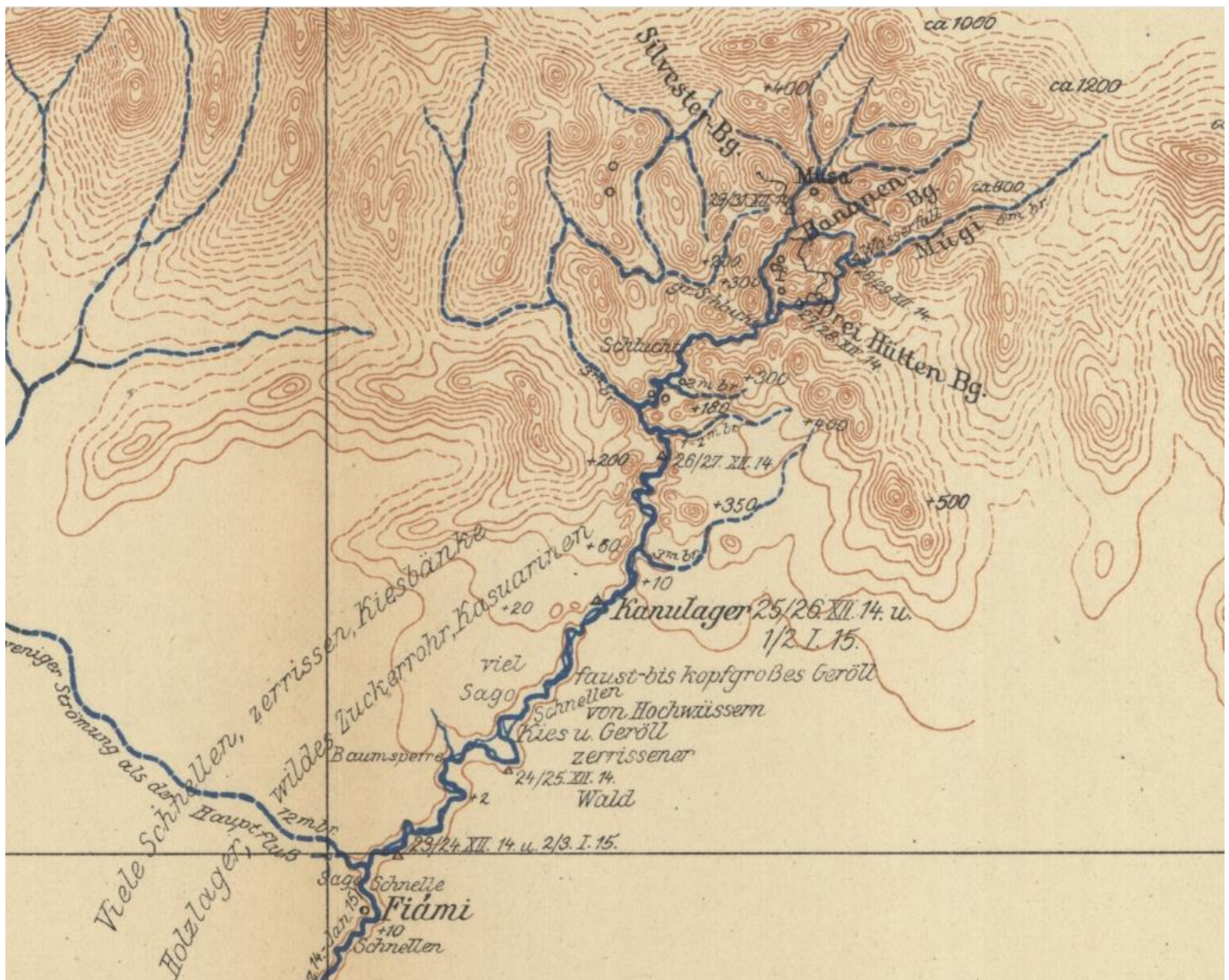


Figure 88. Upper North River. Detail from Behrmann's 1924 map.

With a few canoes left at Marienberg and the ones he had used on the North River, he had twelve canoes, and himself and 29 men, so he had two lots of six canoes tied together and they set off adrift down the River on 8 January with beans and rice enough for 76 days. He arrived at Angoram on the 17th and at Marienberg the next day.

In his published report (p.30 of the translation of Thurnwald 1916 at www.uscngp.com/papers/), Thurnwald allowed himself some exaggeration of his admittedly vexatious situation:

Here [at the Meander Mountain base camp] another surprise was in store for me, for meanwhile war against my expedition had been undertaken with five ships and 500 men who had succeeded in storming my camp; everything not considered worthwhile removing was chopped into small pieces. Thus I found myself robbed of my pinnace and boats and deprived of gifts of barter and

provisions. I had no choice now but to set out on my return journey down the Sepik by canoe. By mid-January 1915, I arrived at the mission at Marienberg and learned there that my base camp at Karadjundo had suffered the same fate as my camp at Meander Mountain, that it had been plundered and robbed by the Anglo-Australian troops.



Figure 89. 'Leute vom Nordfluss'. Men of the North River, most likely on the gravel banks just downstream from Uasrami (Yenabi on the 1974 1:100,000 map) on 3 January after an accident in the canoes. Note the three men at the left wearing laplaps (waist cloths), no doubt from Thurnwald's contingent. The youth to the right is wearing a European hat and a laplap; he would be most likely the youth towards the end of the line in Figure 2. This scene suggests an amicable gathering as described by Thurnwald. Thurnwald photograph courtesy Marion Melk-Koch.

Over the next few weeks, Thurnwald commenced negotiations for the return of collections, provisions and equipment (Craig 1997) but his photographs in the Rodoni archive and possibly a shield and a hand drum from the upper Sepik now in the Melbourne Museum (Craig, Vanderwal & Winter 2015:135-139), indicate that he was not entirely successful.

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