The Missionary Family at Kwato

Top Row: Dr. Vaughan, Frank Briggs, Ida Briggs, Cecil Abel, Phyllis Abel, Mary Abel, Doris Purcell, John Smeeton and Jony, Russell Abel.

Middle Row: Raymond Whale, Margot Knight, Miss Parkin, Bess Swinfield and Margaret, Mildred Bath, Marjorie Abel Smeeton.

Bottom Row: Arthur Beavis, Robin Knight and Oliver, Nevil Young, Arthur Swinfield, Geoffrey Baskett.
New Guinea Evangelization Society, Inc.
Cooperating with
The Kwato Mission of Papua,
Founded in 1898 by Rev. Charles W. Abel
American Board of Directors:

Delavan L. Pierson, President
J. Ard Haughwout, Vice-president
Miss J. H. Righter, Secretary
Walter McDougall, Treasurer
Miss Grace P. Curtis, Promotion Secretary
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British Society — The Incorporated Kwato Extension Association.
Mission Field — Eastern Papua, Australasia.
Head Station — Kwato, Samarai (via Sydney, New South Wales.)
The American Society receives and forwards funds contributed for the support of the Mission.

American office, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York City.
Address of the Treasurer and Promotion Secretary, Upper Montclair, N. J.

Notes and News

Our hearts go out to our fellow Christians at Kwato and our prayers go to God for them in these difficult days. Samarai, the Papuan government port — about twenty minutes by launch from Kwato — has twice been bombed; women and children have been evacuated and schools have been moved to Milne Bay.

We have been endeavoring to keep in touch with the missionaries on the field and have radioed them asking as to their welfare. A radio message was received in reply on February 28. It reads (as interpreted) “All missionaries evacuated to Australia, except Cecil Abel and Geoffrey Baskett, Doris Purcell is returning to America.” To supply needed funds on February 13th the American Directors sent, through the Sydney bank by radio, a remittance of $1,300. No doubt this has been of very great help. Pray for our fellow workers and for the Papuan Christians in this time of special need. Their faith and ours is in God, whose we are and whom we serve — by life or by death.

The New Guinea Evangelization Society was organized under the stimulus of the Rev. Charles W. Abel and was incorporated in America in June, 1923. Three of the ten original incorporators are still members of the Board of Directors. The purpose of the society is to vouch for the work, to help make known in America what God is doing in Papua and to receive and forward funds to the field. For a time, after Mr. Abel’s death in 1930, we accepted the main responsibility as the Governing Committee of the Kwato Extension Association. Later this responsibility was committed to the British friends, while American friends remain as prayer-partners and supporters.

Since the American Society was organized over eighteen years ago, we have received and forwarded to the field about $140,000, including money for the Memorial House of Prayer, and for the hospital, for the purchase of plantations, for miscellaneous buildings and for equipment, printing the Scriptures, and for support of the work. The number of missionaries from England, America and Australia has increased from five to twenty-one and the Papuan Christians from less than one thousand to an estimated ten thousand. New fields have also been evangelized in Buhutu Valley and the Amau District. Many Papuans have been trained as Evangelists, teachers and industrial Christian leaders. The work still goes on with spiritual power and fruitfulness.

During the past years some warm friends and supporters of Kwato have been called to their Eternal Home. These include Mrs. Arthur Wells, Mrs. Omar Decker, Miss Harriet Huntley and Miss Laura W. Pierson. They are greatly missed here, but their prayers and their gifts are a memorial before God.

The financial support for the Kwato work has diminished in England and America on account of the war and for other causes. The total American gifts last year were $4,159. This compares favorably with $3,946 received in 1940, but is nearly $1,000 less than was given in 1939 and $2,000 less than in 1938. The 115 gifts last year came from ninety people — sixteen more than in 1939. Pray that God may move the hearts of His people to support His work in proportion to the needs as He sees them.
War Comes to Kwato

A Recent Letter from Phyllis Abel

WHAT we dreaded and hoped and prayed would never come is now upon us. A warning has just gone and the whole island took cover until we could be certain the planes flying by were not enemy planes. It seems so incongruous in this quiet peaceful part of the world to be hiding from the terror of war.

Yesterday a notice was issued from the war office saying that all women and children were to be evacuated, except missionaries and nurses. We were glad of that last phrase. At least we can stand by a bit longer. I think the main danger will be a shortage of food so that all those who are not absolutely essential to the welfare of the country are left out of it.

It has been a great shock and we are realizing how much we depended on the ordinary necessities of everyday life — kerosene, fresh foods, lighting and so forth. It is likely that we shall not be able to get these as we may be cut off from any communication with the outer world for months at a time. We have felt very clearly that we should carry on with the programme God has given us and which the country needs more than ever.

Our key note for Christians is "Peace and Good Will" — qualities that every person can spread if they are at peace in their own hearts with God, and in their relationships with each other. There is all this chaos in the world today because there is chaos in the hearts of men; that is where they need the redeeming Christ. "He shall save His people from their sins." There is no other answer for the world. We know that He redeems the individual, but we believe that He can redeem the nations too, through redeemed individuals. This thought has come with such great conviction lately with the thought of our tremendous responsibility and opportunity as the ones who are to give the world this message.

I have been realizing that it matters a great deal these days how I live; that everything I am and do is of essential worth to God, and to my country.

This crisis has been used to rouse many who were just easy-going Christians, satisfied to have the comforts of a faith in Christ for themselves but doing very little to set for the world, the pace for a new way of living. One of the boys, the Captain of the Kwato boat, said in church on Sunday that selfishness had made him blind to the needs of others and of his country. He had loved his home, his own comfortable way of living.

Financially things have been very tight. Because of the long spell of dry weather we had a very lean season of coconuts. The drought also affected all our gardens and the last two months we have lived beyond our income. This has been another factor in drawing us nearer to the Lord. We set ourselves to find out where we were failing to follow God's guidance and we have proved again and again that when we are financially short, the fault is with us and not with God. When He guides, He provides.

Where is all this going to end? We all need the "peace which passes all understanding" to garrison our hearts."

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It is truly remarkable the way people are still giving in spite of the war and other things to distract their minds. We are deeply grateful for the loyalty and love behind all these gifts and we want to share something of the fruits of it all so that the partners in America who help by giving, may rejoice with us here.
Children’s Gifts

At a recent social evening, Cecil Abel told how the children at Amau, on hearing of the appeal for the Bombed Areas Relief Fund, decided to give all the money they had worked so hard to collect to build their school. It came to £7 ($30). Alice wrote down their own words as they told about it. One child said:

"Formerly we lived in our old villages. Then God led us down to Amau, where we started school and learned about Him. For this our great gratitude. So we send our gifts to help our Empire. I am AUREKALA."

The gifts for relief amounted to £105. This means real sacrifices in sixpences and shillings.

We have had a great day today—Sunday. A long team meeting was held this morning and this afternoon we broke up into units to study the verses on a fighter's spiritual equipment (Ephesians 6). We are to fight grumbling, gossip, and criticism this week. This evening we had the Lord's Supper, which was a fitting close to the day.

P. D. A.

The Fete at Kwato
(For the benefit of the bombed people in England.)

It is all over. We had a great day in every way. It rained the day before, which was a great blessing as we were entirely without water. Can you imagine a fete without water for washing up. The "Osiri" came in during the night, bringing crowds of people from Milne Bay with food—fowls, a couple of pigs, watercress and fruit.

We had stalls in the big hall. A fancy stall, baskets, curios, and sweets, cakes and jams. Outside we had a produce stall where we sold vegetables of all sorts—yams, taros, corn, pumpkins, fruit etc. Around the poinciana tree there were small tables and a tea garden.

In the side-shows, which Nevil Young ran very well, there was a stuffed sack with a pig drawn on it. One could throw so many spears for 5 shillings and the person with the highest score won the pig. This was very popular. I think the two pigs brought in £8. There were other similar competitions. Not far from the church was a Papuan stall and cafeteria, where cooked food and pork were sold by the plateful. This too was very popular for the dimdims (whites) as well as Papuans!

Nearly the whole of Samarai came over. Everyone was very jolly and entered into things with zest. People enjoyed their tea out in the garden for it was a lovely cool fine afternoon and the rain kept off until all the outdoor activities were over for the day. About 60 people stayed for the evening when we had what we call a "Community Concert." There were songs in which all joined in, and solos. The children sang "The Friendly Dark" and did it beautifully on a darkened stage. They sat and lay around a lantern and as they sang the last verse one child turned out the light. The children had a real spiritual experience over this. At the rehearsal they had not sung it well. The little boys did nothing but play and the little girls were sullen. After it was over I had a little talk with them. They prayed about it and decided to show a new spirit at the concert. And they did. Everyone remarked on their singing, and especially that of the boys.

At the end of the day we had a buffet supper, and folks all went home early, having had a very good time. We raised, up to date, a little over £94 ($300).

P. D. A.

Microscopes at Kwato

Dr. Berkley Vaughan writes: "One day, in a fit of enthusiasm, I thought out a demonstration for our school teachers on the subject of germs. They had always been politely interested but not very concerned; if germs were so small that they couldn't be seen, how did I know that there were such things, was their unspoken attitude. This time I determined I would make it plain so I kept a piece of meat until it really got "high." When I brought it into the classroom it caused considerable stir, in more senses than one. I explained that bad milk, bad meat, and other rotten things owed their trouble to these elusive germs and that I was now going to let them see the offenders. I put some of the juice from the meat under the high-power lens of the microscope and, of course, it was seen to be a shimmering mass. Two or three of the more sophisticated girls had a look and expressed due respect. Then came a girl who had spent most of her time in outside village schools. She took one good look and the next instant, with a whoop like a Red Indian, she was out of the room and down the road as fast as she could go.
Past and Future

A LETTER FROM CECIL ABEL

YOU will by now have heard of the good news of the birth of Christopher Charles Abel, (the son of Russell and Sheila.) We were all very thrilled to feel that there is an Abel to carry on the good name for future generations and to carry on the work here when our turn comes to hand over. He should be finishing his course at Cambridge when I am 60! — Just about time to be putting the next generation through their paces! It is very inspiring to think that God has started this work to go on through the years that lie ahead and that in His mind there is just as clear a plan for the work that the children will do as that which He gives to us. When young Charles is handing over to his sons or nephews at the age of 50 they will be celebrating their centenary!

So, during these Jubilee days, it has been a great impetus to our faith and vision to feel that we must set the pace, not only for a decade but for the next fifty years. We must lay as solid a foundation for them to build on as Father laid for us . . .

You will be wondering also how this war is affecting us financially. Copra has been unsaleable for six months although it is just coming in again now at a very low figure. Our desiccated coconut market has kept open but people are buying fewer sweets now I suppose so that the factory has to reduce what they can take from us. This has reduced our income considerably and in a department that could ill afford the drop. You recall that the plantations were, supporting all the local educational work. Had it not been for the constant income from America during these hard months I don’t know how we would have survived. But while coconuts went down we have seen
another of our industries come right forward to the place it once held in the Kwato industrial work. That is our mill work. The demand for timber of all kinds has been very great and we have been going all out to take advantage of this demand and supply all we possibly could. Since we began shipping timber to Port Moresby late last year we have sold nearly 100,000 super feet of timber from our mill. Part of the returns from this had to go for better equipment and more power but all this is paid for now and we are just beginning to reap the benefit from this part of our work. I feel sure this will go a long way towards offsetting the drop on the coconut side. We have the advantage of being able to ship our timber in our own boats as soon as it is ready. This is why we were able to secure the contract. This brings us into contact with people in the capital which is a big advantage from all points. Through this we have been able to get closer to the heads of our Government departments as well as to other missionaries.

The work around Milne Bay and in the Kunika district goes ahead. On September 25th., Father's birthday, we had a big conference at Bisimaka down in the Bay. Leaders from all parts were there, as well as representatives from the Government and local plantation men. Bisimaka is the oldest station in our district. Long before Father came here the pioneer, MacFarlane, landed there and established a South Sea teacher. This man was later killed and eaten but not before he had given them the Gospel. So the local Wagawaga people are calling the conference and acting as hosts. It is going to be a great time.

My little family are all well, Elspeth and David and Arthur. — but my larger family, 65 of them, are oozing measles just now (October 1941). I think about 40 are still spotty! However, fortunately it is the very light kind — German measles we call them here. We try to make life interesting for them with picture books and extra oranges and by reading stories; they seem to be quite enjoying their quarantine. They are a lovely crowd of kiddies, and many really know the Lord Jesus and have let Him come into their hearts and lives.

Memorial House of Prayer

The workers at Kwato were hoping to have Christmas services in the Abel Memorial House of Prayer. The building is finished and is very lovely. All are thrilled with it, but the fittings and windows have still to be completed. When the interior scaffolding is taken down they plan to take some pictures to send to America.

Last week the church fund was down to seven shillings. John Smeeton (the architect), said that he did not want to stop work on it, so all prayed about it. On Saturday one of the Papuan school teachers from Sariba Island came over and brought a cash box containing £5.11.0 — just what was needed to carry on for a month. Later a cloth bag with over £7 was brought from Buhutu.

Once a month on Sunday evening news is given to the Papuans of what God is doing in various parts of the world, including Papua. The meeting closes with prayer and praise. Phyllis Abel writes that the story of the gifts for the church thrilled everyone.

Halliday Beavis

Two Pagan Papuans
We have just returned from Dobu, where we attended the Methodist Mission Jubilee. We left Kwato at 4 A. M. on Wednesday anticipating a rough trip, but we arrived at Eastcape at about eight on a lovely morning, with just enough breeze to fill the sails of the Osiri. We dropped anchor, had breakfast and the boys had a swim. Our party consisted of my brother, Cecil, Geoff Baskett, Tom Paramore, Elsie Campbell, myself and Osineru, Lily, Tuata, Daido, Mahuru, Mose and Rastus. We sailed for Dobu at 9:30 and had a perfect trip, arriving in the Dobu passage about 2:30 P. M. We found a sandy beach where we anchored, had tea and cleaned up before proceeding to Dobu. There we arrived in the middle of a big meeting, which they term “calling the roll.” People from all the districts stood up in turn and sang a hymn; one of their number, usually the teacher, said a few words. When our turn came we sang Keriso e amaitoi, and Mahuru spoke. He told how glad we were to celebrate with them. He looked back over 50 years of light in Papua and spoke of the chaos and darkness in the world today, showing that we had no security except God. He looked forward to the next 50 years. “Suppose that all the white missionaries had to leave our shores, would the Papuan Christians be able to carry on?”

The two days were packed with meetings and sermons. They certainly could sermonize! There was a service each morning at 6:30 A. M. at which there were four sermons — long hours of sermons. In the evening there was a Missionaries’ Social, where messages of congratulation were read from Australia and other parts of the Pacific. Then I was asked to talk about my experiences in England and U. S. A. After that there was a discussion.

Sheila and Russell Abel with Christopher Charles

On the second day there was an entertainment, given by the various station schools — a display of club swinging and flag waving, songs, etc. The small lads from the Anglican Mission sang a number of songs, we sang, “Kapore egu eanua” and our famous quartette, “Smilin’ Through” (our own topical words). In the afternoon there was a public sale, and in the evening we had movies — my brother’s coronation film. The engine petered out in the middle, but the people had never seen moving pictures before and the exclamations rose to yells! We went on board at 11 P. M. that night and sailed at 11:30 into a choppy head sea. We reached Eastcape in time for breakfast the following morning. Being Saturday there was no hurry to get home, so we anchored off a lovely sandy beach at a little island, donned our togs and had a most gorgeous swim. It was a lovely ending to a very happy trip.

We learned some great lessons from our trip to Dobu, Chief of which was a deep sense of responsibility to God and to Papua for all the advantages we have at Kwato. Some of our Papuan team saw, as never before, the reason for some of the things that Father and Mother had striven for; things like our laws at Kwato, and their insistence on English-speaking. How wise they were.
Food Crops

At Amau we have a big scheme for agriculture and hope eventually to be independent of outside imports. We expect a bumper rice harvest this year. We have grown corn on a large scale and have experimented in various forms of corn foods and corn meal, in case we cannot get wheat. Amau is a perfect spot. It is in a wide plain at the foot of a mountain over 6000 feet high; a deep river runs through the wide acres of rice, corn, sweet potatoes and peanuts. Tomatoes, cabbages and other "dimdim" (foreign) vegetables grow beautifully there. A large area of the village land is under cultivation and is bearing abundantly, but as it all has to be carried to the coast — eight miles — it is difficult to find a market for it. The Christians prayed about this and one man — one of the chiefs — came to breakfast one morning while we were there and told us that the Holy Spirit had led him to plant an area on the coast with sweet potatoes and the proceeds of which were to go towards a motor lorry! He set off directly after breakfast to carry out his plans; others caught the inspiration from him and now they have the money for their lorry.

We were very struck by the deep spirituality of the people there. In the late afternoon the whole village turned out to play football; then as the sun went down, the whole village was wrapped in quiet and you could see little groups at prayer. There would be a family, or a group of children, having prayer all their own, or a group of young men out under the trees, or on the banks of the river. Everywhere you would see these little groups, and we believe this is the secret of their powerful witness and the quality of their lives.

It is such a joy, in the midst of all the chaos, to be able to point out to our people that, while the kingdoms of earth are once more tottering to ruin, yet the Kingdom begun by the God-Man, on a little green hill in Palestine, in grief and agony, is the Kingdom which, like the grain of mustard seed, is quietly, steadfastly growing, "Till the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord" at His return. In the little village of Koeabule the people are learning to "Trust and Obey" so that, when He comes, they may be ready for Him.

Mary Abel

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"What the future will be no one knows. We can only see one step at a time. I am convinced that we should get our work in such shape that I can hand over at short notice. Beyond that nothing is clear. We are called to live by faith and not by sight, and as we rely on God He will give us clear orders when the time comes.

Berkley Vaughan