C.R.S. G91 ITEM 154C

1910-11
Annual Report
Cape Nelson

Resident Magistrate's Office
Cape Nelson, North Eastern Division.
July 13th. 1911.

Sir

I have the honour to forward, for the information of His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, the Annual Report on the affairs of the North-Eastern Division for the year ended the 30th. June 1911.

General Affairs of the Division.

The main part of the work of the the division is the dealing with native matters. The European population of consists of a varying number of missionaries, usually four or five, stationed at Mukawa and Wanigela, the manager of the Hombiri Rubber Plantations Ltd. in Collingwood Bay, and two government officers. Mr. R.A. Vivian has also recently opened a store at Kwavivas, near the Cape Nelson government station and is proposing to take up land for the cultivation of limes.

There has been little change in the general condition of the Division or in the work done by the officers stationed in it. The S.S. Mindoro now calls regularly once a month and thus keeps open more regular communication with the outside world than formerly.

The area kept under effective control has somewhat increased. The Kosirava, Middle and Upper Musa Districts, and the Lower Barigi Districts have all been now brought under what may be regarded as complete control. Government influence and authority has also increased on the Upper Moni River.

C.R.S. G91 ITEM 154C

Armed Constabulary.

The strength of the Armed Constabulary in the Division has been maintained at twenty men, including three non-commissioned officers. The men are mostly recruited from the North-Eastern Division and on the whole have behaved very well. For outstation work of all kinds the local natives are more useful as police. They have the advantage of knowing the country and of being able to speak some of the local dialects. leave out

Besides accompanying the officers of the Division on patrol, the police are kept busily engaged in taking messages, summoning and arresting natives, and in helping with the general station work.

Gaol.

For the greater part of the year, the gaol has been in the immediate charge of a prisoner warder. His conduct has been so uniformly good that he was pardoned towards the end of the year. I am however hoping to get him back as a free warder.

The old gaol building has been given up and the prisoners have been accomodated in two new buildings, one of which is not yet quite complete. During the year it was decided that the new gaol should have an iron roof and this has delayed matters somewhat. A stockade has been built around the gaol compound and will assist in maintaining due discipline among the prisoners. For the most part the prisoners are drawn from the parts of the Division under full control and there is little or no fear of their ever trying to escape. There have also been a few prisoners arrested in the still unsettled Hydrographer Range and there have been a few instances of these escaping; but in each case the escapees have been recaptured within a few days.

During the year two hundred and seventy five prisoners were admitted into the gaol. The average number of prisoners

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C.R.S. G91 ITEM 154C

in gaol during the year was twenty three. On one occasion the number reached one hundred and twenty three.

In addition to the prisoners proper, eighteen females and twenty one males have been confined for treatment under the Special Contagious Disease Regulation and these have , on the average, been under treatment for forty eight days each.

Native Affairs.

There are now forty five village constables actually doing duty in the Division, besides two whose appointment has been sanctioned and three others who have been recommended. They do a very useful work in keeping the magistrate in touch with native affairs at a very small cost. They are , for the most part, paid at the rate of ten shillings a year; but are in addition paid at current rates for any actual work they may be called upon to do outside of superintending the maintenance of village houses in good repair, the maintenance of roads, and the keeping of the village site clean. A village constable has been appointed on the Domara River, a tributary of the Musa, a little beyond any other village constable, and another one has been appointed on the Moni River, also a little beyond any former village constable; but the area controlled by the village police has not altered greatly during the year.

A large district, with however only a very scattered population, lying between the Upper Barigi and Upper Moni rivers shows signs of settling down in a very peaceful manner. The comparatively densely populated southern slopes of the Hydrographer Range show little sign of coming under control. These natives persistently avoided having anything to do with two patrol parties during the year and on one occasion conducted a raid right down to the coast. Since then several of them have been arrested and dealt with judicially.

C.R.S. G91 ITEM 154C

The Upper and Middle Musa districts and also the Kosirava and Lower Barigi districts have all been very peaceful and orderly during the year and can be regarded now as under complete control.

Native Census and Labour Supply.

During the visits of the Assistant Resident Magistrate to the coastal villages in the rainy season a census of the villages was made. In all three thousand nine hundred and twenty two males were counted and three thousand and sixty three females. This gives a total of six thousand nine hundred and eighty five natives in these villages. A few villages which may reasonably be considered coastal villages were not included so that it will not be far wrong to say that there are ten thousand natives or a little less from which recruiters can reasonably expect to get native labour.

It will be noticed that there is an excess of eight hundred and fifty nine males or a proportion of nearly four males to three females. It is from this excess of males that the recruiter can most hopefully look for recruits. There is little to induce the older and married natives to sign on for work. A native living in his native village can by a reasonable amount of work ensure a dry house and a reasonable amount of food for himself and his family. It is hardly true however that he can do this unless he does do a fair amount of work for himself. Statements are at times made that natives exist in comparative luxury in their own villages without doing any work. But this can hardly be true generally. The native must eat and he can only get food from his garden if he has cleared the ground, and kept wild pigs away by a fence or by garding the garden. If he has tobacco either he or his fellow villagers must have worked for it. If he wants meat he must hunt for it. If he wants a house he must build it and native houses require continual repairs if they are to be kept dry and in reasonable repair, or reasonable

COMMONWEALTH ARCHIVES
C.R.S. G91 ITEM 154C

or reasonably comfortable even from the natives' point of view. As in every other place there will always be a certain proportion of the population idle at any one moment; and if Europeans visit at all infrequented villages the entire village not unusually stays at home to see them and of course the visitor finds them all "doing nothing". If however a native "goes to work" he is more certain of regular food and perhaps of better quarters. On the other hand he is entering on the unknown and may find himself at the mercy of an unsympathetic "boss", whom he can neither understand nor who can understand him. In any case there is the loss of the sense of freedom which a village native must feel. The dysentery epidemics have also carried off some hundreds of natives and this cannot but discourage the others from going to work. Another aspect of the question is perhaps sometimes lost sight of. The recognised cost of feeding and clothing a native amounts to about seven pounds a year. This includes only actual food consumed, one pound only of meat per week, one blanket and four cubits: it does not allow for the cost of a house or of any luxuries beyond a stick of tobacco a week. The cost, to a native of keeping a wife can hardly be less than this; but his wages, as a rule, only amount to six pounds a year. In other words it is very difficult to see how a native can in Papua support a wife and family on his ordinary wage. It may well be that his wife can <u>at times</u> earn something for herself and it may be that <u>at places</u> she can buy native food cheaply; but I believe the general experience is that in the end it is cheaper and more economical to buy rice rather than plant native food.

The decisive factor in inducing a native to leave his home the first time for work is I believe a desire to see more of the world with at times the hope of earning sufficient wealth to buy a wife. These factors act with less

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C.R.S. G91 ITEM 154C

effect a second time a native is asked to go to work.

It is certainly a great inducement to a native to go to work if he knows definitely where he is going to work, if he knows from direct information given him by his own relatives and friends that it is a comfortable place, if he knows that he will always have someone of his own friends whom he can look to as his leader and who is capable of stating his case to his employer if he should have any grievances, and if his ~~employer~~ immediate employer will listen to and deal sympathetically with any grievances which may arise. If these conditions are met I see no reason why some five or six hundred natives should not be supplied continuously for work on the plantations in the near future. I can see little likelihood of more than this unless indeed there should be some quite unforeseen change in present conditions.

Accepting then that the coastal parts of the Division ~~has~~ have a population of ten thousand and can at most ~~supply~~ keep up a continuous supply of six hundred natives continuously at work on the plantations, the next question which will arise is the number which the still more or less unsettled parts of the Division can supply. A short time ago I estimated the total population of the Division at thirty thousand; but I am inclined now to think that this was somewhat too high. It may perhaps be as low as twenty thousand. It is in my opinion a very liberal estimate indeed if we assume that those parts can within any reasonable time supply more than another five or six hundred natives continuously at work. It must not be forgotten that many of these natives are likely to be just as much affected by malaria as are Europeans if brought down to the coast.

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C.R.S. G91 ITEM 154C

appreciably increased unless married natives are habitually go to work. If they do other difficulties arise. The employer must keep the wife and family or pay enough for the husband to and a little over unless the government is going to engage in some expensive scheme of relief for in a few years for natives who are too old to effectively work. The presence of wives on the plantations may lead to certain abuses. If the wife is left alone in the village while the husband goes to work on a plantation, there are other evils which are likely to arise in the case of most Papuan women. If the husband has his wife in the village and works on a plantation he is hardly likely to spend more than say about half his time at actual work; and it is to be remembered that any common and prolonged separation of husband and wife cannot but diminish the population available as labourers in the more distant future.

During the present year just under three hundred natives have signed on for work and this is an increase of about fifty on the year before.

C.R.S. G91 ITEM 154C

Patrols.

At the end of August the Resident Magistrate left in the "Merrie England" to deal with certain land matters there. After visiting the village of Moitu he came along the coast in a whaleboat and went inland from Collingwood Bay. The villages at the headwaters of the Musa river were visited and from there the range was crossed into the Keveri valley. The party came into contact with a party under the Hon. W.Whitten who had come in from the south coast and were looking for native labour. A return was then made to the head-waters of the Musa and the main branch of this river, the Moni river, was followed up for a time and then a route was followed across the hills to the Lower Barigi and to Pongani at the head of Dyke Acland Bay. After a few days at Pongani a patrol was made to the Hydrographer Range and many of the villages on the southern slopes of the range visited. The return journey to Cape Nelson was made by whaleboat.

Leave no space

During the wetter part of the year the coastal districts both north and south were patrolled by the Assistant Resident Magistrate as far as the boundaries of the division. The main object of the patrol was to make a census of these villages and to enforce the regulation with regard to the keeping of the village houses in good repair and a cleared space around the villages.

On the first of May the Resident Magistrate left for an extended patrol of the northern parts of the division. He first went inland near the mouth of the Musa river and visited the Kosirava and Lower Barigi districts. The Kosireva natives for the first time came freely and interviewed the party. One of the Agaiambo swamp villages was also visited. Much difficulty was experienced in getting to the village. An attempt to reach one village failed and the other village was only

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C.R.S. G91 ITEM 154C

reached after three hours journey in a small canoe without outrigger. This canoe was alternately paddled across patches of open water and dragged through masses of water weeds until the village built on piles was reached. The village consists of only nine houses erected just where the Legara river is opening out into the swamp. The people differ but little, and speak practically the same language, as surrounding natives; but they are remarkable in that they are flat footed. This can only be attributed to their never having walked about on hard ground and so never so the muscles which support the arch of the foot have never been exercised. Like other Papuans they keep pigs but are forced to keep them in stys built on piles. The pigs are said to be put in the sty when quite young and never to leave it except for an occasional bath. After leaving the Agaiambo swamp some of the lower Barigi villages were visited and the whaleboat met at Pongani.

From Pongani a trip along the coast to the end of the Division and to the government station at Buna Bay, Kumusi Division, was made. Buna Bay is quite close to the boundary.

On returning to Pongani the Resident Magistrate went inland with the intention of making arrests at two of the Hydrographer villages. The people had raided certain other natives killed two women, wounded a man, and had raided the Pongani gardens close to the coast. The village mostly concerned in the matter, Avaru, was surprised and five natives arrested. An attempt to surprise another village failed owing to two of the Avaru natives shouting a warning to these people just before the village was reached. A return was then made to Pongani.

From Pongani the Resident Magistrate again went to the Lower Barigi district and from there over the range to the upper Moni river. This river was reached somewhat higher up than it had been visited previously. The district was found sparsely populated. For the most part these natives seem to live in small groups of houses and to trust to concealment for safety. They all appeared to be on friendly

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C.R.S. G91 ITEM 154C

terms with natives who are already acquainted with the government and, for the most part, quite pleased to be visited. The party came down the Moni river and visited some of the villages at the headwaters of the Musa river. The Resident Magistrate has originally intended coming down the Musa but on learning that the Musa natives had deserted the direct route to Collingwood Bay from fear of the Yabura people in the Keveri Valley a change of plans was made and the direct route followed to Collingwood Bay.

C.R.S. G91 ITEM 154C

Judicial cont.8.

The number of socery cases will at once attract attention as remarkable. It does not however indicate any widespread growth of socery or even any unusual energy on the part of the village police or the magistrate to to root out this offence. The largest tribe in the division, the Maisin people, were perturbed at the number of deaths in their villages and came to the conclusion that the deaths must be due to the socery experts among their friends the Kubiri people. They decided that this could not be allowed to go on without making the Kubiri people pay for it. So the Maisin natives to the number of seventy, one went to the Kubiri villages and said "you must pay for these people you have killed" - fortunately the Papuan will usually accept a pig as compensation for any relative, especially if the government is near - "or else our sorcers will make pouri-pouri and take payment by making all sorts of disasters happen to your tribe". The Kubiri people promptly handed over the required pigs and other articles more apparently from fear of pouri-pouri than from fear of any actual violence. News was shortly brought to the government station and a summons sent to the Maisin people to come in. This they did to the number of sixty five and the six stragglers arrived during the next few days and explained that they were away from the village when the summons came. They all candidly admitted the facts. The leaders were sent to gaol for three months and the others for one month. The incident would be of comparatively little importance were it not for the underlying fact that the offence was nothing more than a symptom of the number of deaths which have occurred in the settled parts of the Division during the last few years. These deaths are all put down to socery and payment sought in the usual way. It may be that the friends of the deceased make pouri-pouri to kill the supposed murderer: it may be that they demand pigs: it may be that they attempt to square matters by killing the supposed socerer or a relative: or it may be that they come to the magistrate and want to lay a complaint for

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C.R.S. G91 ITEM 154C

murder. In one instance I treated a complaint as one of aggravated assault although I suspect that murder was really contemplated with motives of revenge. In another case a woman was murdered without there being any trace of the culprit. From surrounding circumstances I suspect this murder had a similar motive i.e. the murderers considered that they were only doing their duty in avenging the death of a relative.

Sorcery is probably widespread in the Division but the fear of sorcery without due cause probably does far more harm than the sorcerers do either directly or indirectly by causing fear. In common with pretty well all races in a low degree of culture the Papuan is surrounded by natural processes he does not understand but which he vainly, although quite honestly, believes he can control - at least if a more expert sorcerer does not thwart him. He sees a friend die, it may be of pneumonia; but the fact is proof positive to him that someone has murdered him by magical means. If he wants rain to come he has only to apply to the nearest rain maker, who puts the appropriate articles in a stream of water and perhaps recites the appropriate spells and in this wet part of the Territory rain is pretty sure to come before very long. If a plentiful supply of garden produce is required there is probably someone who knows the right article to bury in the garden etc. A short time ago two police were sent in a canoe along the coast. They came back after some slight delay very indignant with one another. One complained that he had arrested and handcuffed a native and that the other one had promptly released him. It appears that they were delayed at Pongani by rough weather so the more courageous of the two decided to arrest the local storm maker and did so. The other policeman when asked to explain why he had ventured to release a man under arrest explained - not that he had grown out of such beliefs - but that he only released the storm maker because he was afraid that if the storm maker was kept under arrest he would naturally keep the sea rough and perhaps

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C.R.S. G91 ITEM 154C

prevent them from getting back altogether. Such beliefs really do little harm as a rule and are, I think, best ignored unless they are wilfully and deliberately used as a means of extorting presents or causing fear: and if too much notice is taken of such matters the native becomes all the more convinced, if such is possible, that the sorcerers have very real power since action by the government is liable to be regarded as an admission that the sorcerers are really guilty of causing the deaths or other misfortunes which the natives put down to them. The best way of dealing with such superstitions appears to be to ignore them until they are used for a purpose evil in itself. And it is well to remember that superstitions of all kinds still linger, even if they do not flourish, in pretty well all countries. The native is naturally very reticent about all sorcery matters, as a rule, both with government officers as well as with missionaries.

C.R.S. G91 ITEM 154C

The Mission.

The Anglican Mission has continued its useful work in the Division although the Wanigela station has had to be left for a part of the year without a European in charge. It is a very real loss to the Mission and to the natives of the district that Mr. and Mrs. Money of Wanigela have had to leave Wanigela owing to Mrs. Money not being able to stand the very trying climate of Collingwood Bay. They had both been some years in the Territory and could speak several of the native dialects. And the longer anyone stays in the country the more he realises that the great difficulty, above all others, in dealing with natives is the difficulty of making them understand the exact meaning of what is said to them and in understanding the exact meaning of what is said by them.

Mr and Mrs. Tomlinson, with the help of Miss Oliver, have continued their work at Mukawa and have with the help of other European members of the Mission superintended the work of the South Sea Island teachers in the Wanigela district as well as in the Mukawa district.

The Mission is in charge of eleven mandated children who are well looked after by the members of the Mission at Mukawa. In addition to these the mandates of two children expired during the year.

C.R.S. G91 ITEM 154C

Trade and Revenue.

The Mombiri Rubber Plantations Ltd. have continued to work their plantation in Collingwood Bay and have a European in charge of it.

A native store, built of iron, has been erected near the government station at Cape Nelson by Mr. H.A.Vivian and he has applied for a small area of land with a view to planting limes and manioc. Mr. Vivian is also recruiting Native Labour and towards the end of the year was very successful in recruiting a large number of natives for agricultural labour in Milne Bay, E.D.

The Revenue for the year has been £28-5s-0d. and is accounted for as under.

	£ s. d.
Native Labour Fees.	22-19-0
Arms Permits	2-15-0
Trading Stations	2-0-0
Judicial Fines & Fees.	8-6
Sundry	3-6.
	38-5-0

It is a slight decrease on last year but this is more than accounted for by a decrease on account of Judicial fines and fees. Native Labour fees show an increase of £4-6s-0d.