

*A.M.D.G.*

# St. STANISLAUS MAGAZINE

## ASSOCIATION SECTION

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# ST. STANISLAUS COLLEGE ASSOCIATION



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## EDITORIAL

The Association continues to grow, its activities widen in scope and the pessimists have had to defer the fulfillment of their gloomy prophecies for another year at least. All this is heartening, but it is certainly not sufficient reason to sit back with a look of smug 'satisfaction on our faces and our thumbs in our waistcoats.

As strength is attained it carries greater possibilities for good or otherwise. The responsibility which that strength imposes should be borne by each and every one of us. Our debate on the education problem was noticed: it was regarded as important enough to warrant reference in the press. The nature of the opinion expressed by those on the other side of an imaginary fence matters little; the fact that the opinion of this Association has received recognition matters a great deal.

Our transformation from infancy to manhood in one short year has not been unattended by the penalties of rapid growth, but if the inevitable differences of opinion are resolved by the method of open discussion hitherto practiced they can only add virility to the administration of our affairs. The Association has the betterment of the College as its main task. Work for or against either is necessarily work for or against both; we make no apology in commending that thought to those who would think otherwise.

Much has been achieved in the past twelve months, but there is still much to be done. The time should come when this Association, by its very strength, will ensure that the College is adequately equipped to meet a growing need. Whether that goal is ever reached depends not on certain individuals, not on committees, not on what happens ten years from today, but on every member now.

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## MONTHLY PROGRAMMES

The monthly programme organised by the Activities Sub-committee continue to attract good audiences. In April the Hon. Vincent Roth gave a talk on "Old Georgetown". There are few men better fitted to discourse on this subject, and Mr. Roth gave an interesting and fascinating account of the growth of this city of ours.

In May the Literary and Debating Group came into the picture with a full-dress debate on the dual control of education. Sound ground work and the obvious improvement attained only by practice were evident in the style and fluency of the speakers. The invidious task of preparing the opposition's case was undertaken by Cecil de Caires and Andrew Morrison, with Dr. de Caires lending background support. They had to contend with Fr. Fenn and Jorge Jardim, both members of the United Christian Front Committee. Members had a chance of hearing the arguments against the dual control system put up in an orderly and careful manner. They also heard how these arguments can, and should, be met.

In June Fr. Parkinson presented an amusing and highly entertaining lantern-demonstration on "Drawing". We are indeed grateful to Fr. Parkinson for undertaking this job in spite of heavy calls on his time at Main Street. Our hard-working Vice-President, Mr. C. P. de Freitas prepared the slides for the programme, and a splendid job he made of them too.

July was one of our highlights. The United States Consulate, through the personal co-operation of Mr. Robert Bates, Vice-Consul, gave us a magnificent "talkie" show. Films depicting the processing of bauxite from its crude state to the deadly bombers and fighters, the beauty and culture of South America and the wonders of the salmon in Alaska, were presented. A record attendance of 102 members was striking evidence of the appreciation of the Association.

In August Mr. C. P. de Freitas let us see an interesting and beautiful collection of slides showing some of the experiences of the International Boundary Commission. He told some droll stories which had his audience in a happy mood.

These programmes serve a dual purpose. They provide entertainment for members and make it possible for them to meet informally at least once a month. After the show it is gratifying to see the audience break up into groups and discuss a variety of subjects ranging from the War to some proud papa's latest addition to the family. As long as these "get together" command interest the Association will live and grow from strength to strength.

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## THE LITERARY AND DEBATING GROUP

The primary object of this group is to provide opportunity for any interested members of the Association to gain experience in debate and public speaking.

For the record let it be written that the group was formed on the 17th March, 1943, and that eleven members were present at the preliminary meeting. The membership now stands at 42 so that there has been quite a satisfactory advance, but we have room, for more members.

Regular meetings of the group are fixed for 8:30 p.m. on the first Monday in each month and are held at the College. Invitations are not necessary but notices showing the subject for debate are sent to all those members who wish to receive them. These notices serve also as reminders and, in addition, if for any reason it should become necessary to alter the date of the regular meeting, the notice will avoid inconvenience to members. All those interested are urged to register their names and addresses with the Honorary Secretary of the Group, Mr. H. W. de Freitas, 26 Brickdam, Georgetown 11, so that notices may be sent to them.

The results of the debates held so far are as follows:-

26 <sup>th</sup> March	"That street lighting should be restored in Georgetown."	Motion carried: 15 votes to 14.
5 <sup>th</sup> April	"That bachelors should be taxed."	Motion defeated: 26 votes to 3.
3 <sup>rd</sup> May	"That the cinema exercises a harmful influence on the rising generation."	Motion carried: 16 votes to 5
10 <sup>th</sup> May	"That wireless is a greater boon to mankind than aviation."	Motion carried: 12 votes to 9.
21 <sup>st</sup> May	A debate before the whole Association on the question of the dual control of education was held with the object of bringing before the members the arguments for and against such control. The opposition made the most of their case, and the Chairman congratulated them on the fire and deceptive sincerity with which they had argued a cause in which they did not believe. Members should now be familiar with the arguments to be met, and how to meet them.	
5 <sup>th</sup> July	"That intensive bombing alone could bring the war to an end."	Motion defeated: 19 votes to 5.
13 <sup>th</sup> September	"That a public school-examination certificate is not a sufficient index of ability for employment."	Motion carried by 9 votes to 4

The group varied its activities in June and August and instead of a debate held a Musical Evening on the 7th June at the ZFY Studio. Dr. de Caires demonstrated how melodies taken from classical works were used for dance numbers and pointed out the contrast between the ordinary statement of the "tune" in a jazz number with the

development of a "theme" in a symphony or concerto. As a finale the Piano Concerto in A Minor by Grieg was played in full. We are grateful to Mr. Gerard de Freitas for his help and advice. On the 9th August there was a discussion on the uses and abuses of propaganda led by the Rev. Fr. S. Boase, S.J.

If we accept the eagerness of members to speak as an indication of the progress so far achieved it can certainly be said that such progress has been considerable. In the beginning men had to be coaxed and cajoled into agreeing to join in the debate and even after they had got on their feet they had to have support from the furniture to keep them there. It now seems likely that the time will come when it may be necessary to enlist the services of a chucker-out of massive proportions to maintain order. However, that day is far off still and although we have not yet produced any ideas of world-shaking dimensions our progress lies in the increase of confidence and in clearer thinking.

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## **COMMITTEE NEWS**

There have been a few changes on the Committee during the year. Some time ago our Hony. Treasurer, Mr. Jorge Jardim, had to resign through ill health. Mr. Walter Rodrigues filled the breach and we wish to thank him for taking the care of our finances into his capable hands so willingly.

The Hony. Secretary has resigned prior to going on holiday to Barbados. He has handed over to Mr. C. C. de Freitas, the Asst. Secretary. Mr. Jorge Jardim has filled the vacancy and it is a pleasure to welcome him back on the Committee.

Dr. de Caires has resigned owing to absence on duty and his place has been taken by Mr. H. W. de Freitas who has been doing good work as Secretary of the Debating Group. We are sure that the Committee will benefit by his keen interest and - outstanding ability. Mr. de Freitas has been appointed Hony, Asst. Secretary.

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## “ROLL OF HONOUR”

### OLD BOYS SERVING WITH THE FORCES

R.G. Amory	R.A.F.	F. P. Gonsalves (Sq/L)	R.A.F.
D. Birtles	Tanks	L. B. Grace	R.A.F.
F. Brazao	R.A.F.	A. Grant	R.A.F.
P. Camacho	R.A.F.	R. Gonsalves (P/O)	R.A.F.
Al. Cunningham	R.A.F.	R. Gomes	R.A.F.
D. Cunningham	RA.M.C.	<b>A. P. HEALD-R.I.P.</b>	R.A.F.
An. Cunningham	R.A.F.	(Killed by Accident)	
I. Cunningham	R.A.F.	L. Hart	U.S. Army
F. D'Agrella	R.A.F.	H. Hart	U.S. Army
J. H. Davies	M.N.	A. S. H. July	Q.R. Regiment
D. J. de Caires	R.A.F.	D. R July	Tanks
<b>C. De CHALUS-R.I.P.</b>	R.A.M.C.	(Prisoner of War)	
(Died on Service)		J. F. July	Tanks
A. V. de Freitas	R.A.F.	(Prisoner of War)	
C. L. de Freitas	R.A.F.	B. C. Jardine	R.A.F.
(Prisoner of War)		A. Jones	Tanks
M. de Freitas	T.R.N.V.R	C.P King	R.A.F., D.F.M.
S. da Silva	R.N.V.R	J. Lopes (Lt.-Col.)	R.A.M.C., India
F. da Silva	Tanks	O. Marks	R.A.F.
V. da Silva	Tanks	H. N. Nascimento	R.C.A.
A. de Freitas (Major)	R.A.M.C.	P. Nobrega	R.A.F.
L. A. de Freitas	R.A.F.	(Prisoner of War)	
R. A. de Freitas	R.A.F.	B. O'Dowd	R.A.F.
P. M. de Freitas	R.A.O.C.	<b>D. S. PSAILA-R.I.P.</b>	R.C.A.F.
H. E. de Freitas	R.A.S.C.	(Died on Service)	
J. P. de Freitas	R.C.A.F.	N. Rego	R.A.F.
P. J. Dodds	R.A.F.	W. Roth	R.A.F.
J. Evelyn	R.N.V.R	F.D. Slater	1st Bat. Loy. Regt.
H. Fernandes	R.N.V.R	C. I. Schultz	R.C.A.
P. Fernandes	R.A.F.	C. Serrao	Tanks
T. Fitzgerald	R.A.F.	J. Smith	R.A.F.
C. Foster	R.C.A.	K. Smith	T.R.N.V.R
G. French	R.A.F.	G. Tranquada	R.A.F.
C. Gomes	Tanks	I. Vieira	R.A.F.
E. Gomes	R.C.A.F.	S. Wallbridge	Tanks
F. I. Gonsalves	Tanks	L. Willems	R.A.F.

*This list has been compiled from various sources and is in accordance with the latest information available. We are aware that there may be omissions and inaccuracies and we appeal to everyone to enable us to keep the list accurate and up to date. We hope to have more information before the next issue of this magazine is published.*

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## NOTES AND PHOTOGRAPHS OF OLD BOYS WITH THE FORCES

### Pilot Officer Cecil Percy King

News has been received in the Colony that Pilot Officer Cecil Percy King (22), only son of Mr. P.W. King - (Crown Solicitor ) and Mrs, King of 259, Middle Street, has been listed missing.

He won the D.F.M. as a Flight Sgt. in the Royal Air Force. Soon after, he attained the rank of Pilot Officer.



**Cecil Percy King**



**Claude Serrao**

### Trooper Claude Serrao

The many friends of Trooper Claude Serrao will be glad to hear that he is still "at the front" and doing well with the Second Royal Tank Regiment in the Persian and Iraq Force.

Claude Serrao is the eldest son of Mrs. Julia Serrao who is now resident in the United States, and the late C. R Serrao who was wharfinger at Bookers Cooperage.

Claude is in his 28th year and went to England in 1936 when he enlisted with the Royal Tank Regiment. He was with General Wavell in India and Burma.

His mother, two brothers, and two sisters took up residence in New York in 1939 after the death of his father. Since the U.S.A. entered the war his two kid brothers, Eddie and Ensleigh enlisted for active service with the American Army.

In a letter he asks to be remembered to all his friends back home and expresses the wish that they write him occasionally telling him all the goings on in B.G. His address is: "Trooper C. Serrao, 788165, "C" Squadron 2nd R.T.R., Persian and Iraq Force, Iraq."

## P.F.C.'s HARRY & LAWRENCE HART



P.F.C.'s Harry and Lawrence Hart are two young American citizens who are serving in Uncle Sam's Army at Atkinson Field, but they have never seen the Statue of Liberty, nor set foot on U.S. territory.

The boys are the elder sons of Mr. Basil ("Ben") Hart, a native of Wisconsin, and Mrs. Hart of Pirara ranch in the Rupununi District on the Brazilian frontier.

The two lads were born on their dad's cattle ranch on the Ireng river which forms part of the boundary between British Guiana and Brazil. The ranch is believed to be on the very spot – Pirara - which is famous in legendary history as the scene of the salt water lake where Sir Walter Raleigh was told by Carib Indians that there was a City of Gold - El Dorado - where the chieftain. "El Hombre Dorado" lived in a Castle of Gold.

The boys got their elementary education under the Jesuit Missionaries who work along the Aboriginal Indians in the hinterland. Later they were sent to Georgetown for further studies at the College here. On leaving College they returned to Pirara.

When work started in British Guiana for the construction of the U.S. Air Base at Hyde Park, Ben Hart came to the City and took a job with the Elmhurst Company. He was for some time at Seba Quarry blasting rocks to help build Atkinson field, and then he was stationed at Hyde Park.

When the Japs made their attack on Pearl Harbour Ben's two eldest sons got their dad's "Okay" and reported to the O.C. at Hyde Park.

### The CUNNINGHAMS

Mr. William Cunningham, late of the B.G. Boundary Commission, is now a Home Guard in Britain. So is one of his sons, Eric, who also holds a "key" position as draughtsman in "Cables and Standard". Three other sons: Allan, Ian and Anthony, are in the Royal Air Force; another, David, is in the Royal Army Medical Corps in Africa,

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## DEMOCRACY

Democracy, says the dictionary, is a form of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people.. Few of us will accept that as a full definition. The freedom of Magna Carta has grown through the centuries until we have the declaration which has been called the Atlantic Charter. Yet who will make bold to say that this will be the ultimate concept of human freedom; who will be prepared to say that that same Charter will not be outmoded a hundred years from now?

Ideas change through the years and unless they maintain their power of growth and development they must stagnate and die. But change must not mean capricious variation. Mere change without conservation, says Whitehead, is a passage from nothing to nothing.

Democracy has been termed a perpetually evolving adjustment between freedom and justice. The world must solve that problem of adjustment time and time again. When this war is over we hope to see Lincoln's 'new birth of freedom.' Hitler's new order and young nationhood cannot compare with democracy, which by its very nature is always new, always young.

We must, in the words of Jean Juarez, 'take from the altar of the past the fire, not the ashes.'

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## SOCIAL AND PERSONAL

We congratulate IVAN SEELIG on his recent appointment as Private Secretary to His Excellency the Governor. Ivan entered the Civil Service in 1928 and has served as Secretary on several committees and the Franchise Commission.

The legal profession carries many a name from the roll of St. Stanislaus. PERCY W. KING first acted as Official Receiver, Public Trustee and Crown Solicitor in 1920. He was appointed to that post in 1923 and although, as a Commissioner of Income Tax, his name appears on an irksome confidential document, that name has become a synonym for 'public trust.' CARLOS GOMES somehow manages to find the time to support the Association and is one of our life members. STANLEY GOMES, Assistant Attorney-General, FRED HRAZAO, Crown Counsel, and the late G. J. De FREITAS, K.C., all come to mind.

BERTIE GRACE, 1936 Guiana Scholar, obtained his B.Sc. Engineering, and has just returned to the Colony to take up the post of Assistant District Engineer in the Public Works Department. MERVYN BELGRAVE, the 1941 Guiana Scholar, has arrived in England to pursue his studies. CARL Da SILVA, runner-up for the 1942 Scholarship Award, has been passed for the R.A.F., but it is not yet known when he will be leaving the Colony. Examination results are awaited to see whether WALTER HARRISON will follow CLEMENT YHAP'S example and earn the right to put B.A. after his name.

Dr. HEUNG HO, Ear, Nose and Throat Officer attached to the Public Hospital; entered the Medical Service in 1927. We are glad to welcome him as a member of the Association.

Last year's Parker Cup Final almost reached the status of an Intercolonial Cricket Tournament. PETER BAYLEY, LENNIE THOMAS, ROBERT and JOHNNY CHRISTIANI all distinguished themselves. WILLIE MATHIAS continues to hold the Tennis Championship, but his presence on the football field is sorely missed. His brother- LOUIS is seen in town occasionally, when they renew their rivalry on the tennis courts, . Dr. CHARLES ROZA, one-time lay master at the College, is still seen occasionally between the sticks for the West Demerarians. \_He won his blue and a big reputation as a goal-keeper at Edinburgh University.

RUPERT CRAIG, District Engineer on the East Coast, was a contemporary at school of our President, JOHN FERNANDES, and C. P. De FREITAS, who nearly lost his life on the International Boundary Commission to delineate the boundaries between Brazil, Venezuela and British Guiana.

We congratulate the Hon. Capt. C. 'PAT' FERREIRA on his election to the Legislative Council. He has recently been appointed a member of the Transport and Harbours Board.

Most of us remember FRANK (BILL) HUMPHREY, one time Inter-colonial and G.F.C. left-back. He is Auditor for the Singer Sewing Machine Company and is at present on a visit to the Colony, accompanied by his charming wife.

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## NEWSLETTER FROM TRINIDAD

**IVAN THOMAS**<sup>1</sup> has accepted the post of Secretary-Treasurer to the Trinidad Branch of the Association. In a letter to the Editor he gives the following news:

**BASIL ABRAHAM'S** wife was very ill recently; she is much better now and is at present in Barbados. Basil has been transferred from San Fernando to Port-of-Spain. He works with Alston & Co., Ltd.

**BOBBY BOON** is now back in Port-of-Spain as a Cashier at Barclays bank, after having spent some years in Grenada. He is still very much single.

**ALEX GONSALVES** has just returned from what he describes as a blank fine holiday in Barbados. Alex is quite a lad with the ladies.

**JOHN MENDONCA** managed to get over to B.G. for a short holiday. He is fast becoming a mogul in San Fernando and the Singer Sewing Machine Company's Office there is one of the nicest fitted.

**CLAUDE SANTOS** announced his engagement to Miss Joan Lewis some time ago. They plan to get married in October.

**BERNIE THOMAS** made quite a name for himself in football circles and had been playing in goal for the Casuals'. He recently played for North against the South, in the island's biggest match of the year. His side won. He has gone to Canada to join the R.C.A.F.

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<sup>1</sup> Since this was received the writer has arrived on a visit to his parents, accompanied by his wife.

## WONDERLAND

As everyone already knows Wonderland was a great success. The net proceeds were in excess of the six thousand dollar mark, and the profits from the two dances brought the year's total to over seven thousand dollars. This is really an astonishing achievement and even the most sanguine prophet has had his ideas made to appear like the wanderings of a pessimist.

The President wishes to thank each and everyone of the great band or helpers who made this miracle possible; he does this in the name of the Association and the College. We take this opportunity, also on behalf of the College and Association, of thanking him for carrying the lion's share of the burden. We have tried to compile a comprehensive list of "Wonderland Helpers" but soon discovered that such a list would probably require a special issue of the magazine. We hope that all those who so willingly put their shoulders to the wheel will accept this as a sincere vote of thanks. We know that they worked with no thought of personal glory but we can assure them that their work has been greatly appreciated.

We venture that the following lines will be remembered for many a year to come, as a memory of a job well done:-

WONDERLAND 1943  
Nett Proceeds:- \$6,378.45.



*Give me the high imaginings of youth  
Grasping at ideals; and give me a heart  
So kindled with a purpose to impart  
Activity Then let me see the truth  
Of a more sober age, and so increase  
In wisdom; be articulate and send  
Others impelled towards the selfsame end. That so  
'with joint endeavour we may cease  
To build up in the clouds. Then shall we see Those  
palaces, now only in the mind, High-turretted,  
immense and well ~designed, Take solid shape. For  
our reality  
Is bid a dream. of yesterday; a light  
That grew from far off glimmerings at night.*

-A. M.

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## LOOKING BACK



The Old Grammar School



Cast of "Vice Versa"  
As played by St. Stanislaus College, 1934



C. D'Ornellas winning the 440 yds. from  
Yhap and Player by 5 yds.  
(St. Stanislaus College Sports, 1934)

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# **ON THE FRONTIER OF BRITISH GUIANA AND BRAZIL**

By C. P. DE FREITAS

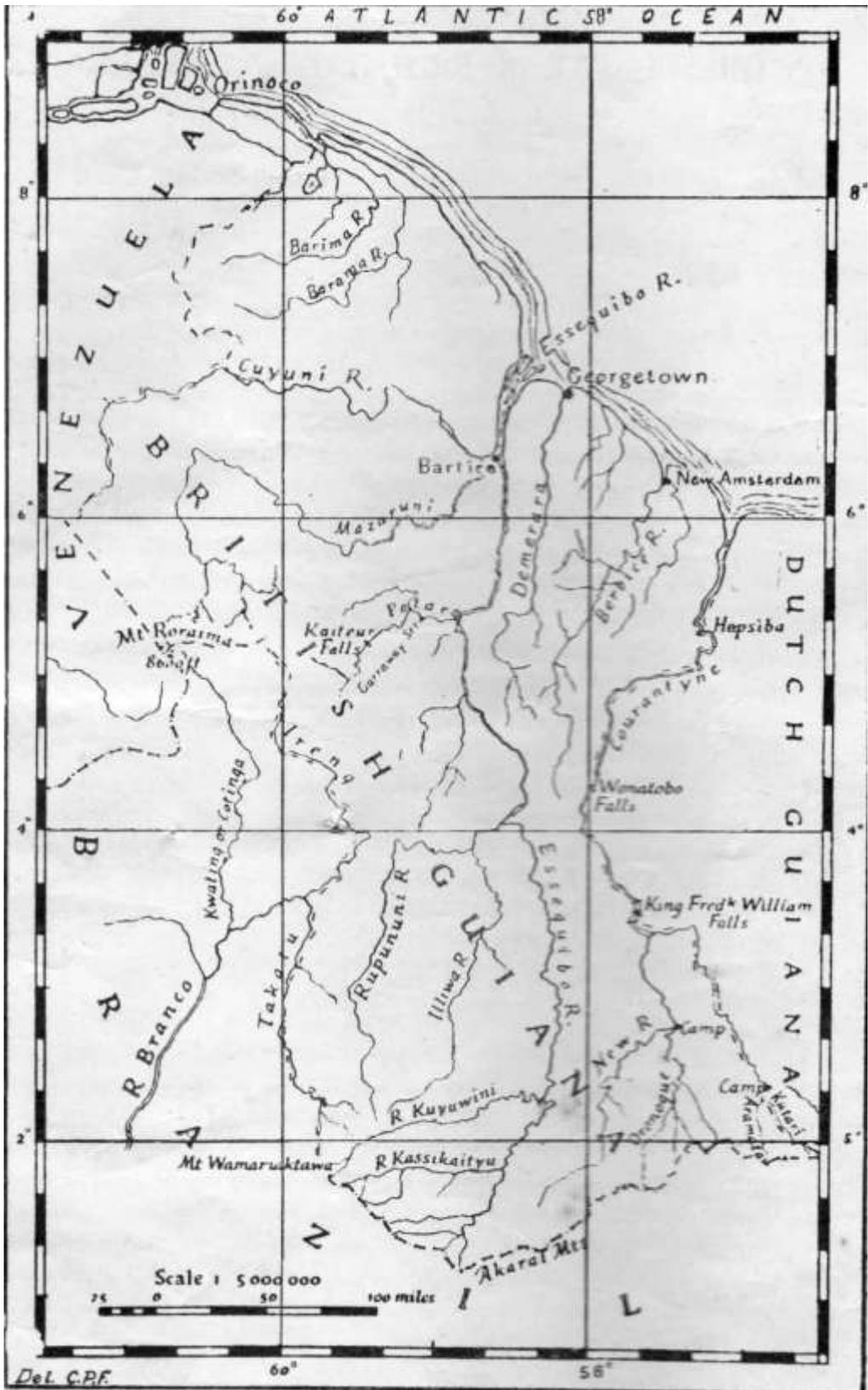
The country around the frontier of British Guiana and Brazil is, for the most part, unknown and populated by only a few Indian tribes; owing to the difficulties of transport, travellers in that vicinity are very rare. As much as most men I am attracted by the mystery of the unknown, by the "bright eyes of danger," so it was. with great pleasure that I received my appointment as a member of the British Commission who, together with a Brazilian Commission, were empowered to survey and demarcate this boundary.

It was decided that the British Commission would meet the Brazilian Commission and a Venezuelan Commission in the Savannahs at the base of Mount Roraima on the summit of which the boundaries of the three countries meet. The headquarters of the British Commission was in Georgetown, the capital of British Guiana, and the route we proposed to take from this city was via the Kaieteur Fall, across the frontier into Brazil, and through that country and Venezuela to Arabopo, an Indian village about ten miles from Roraima.

Our original agreement with the Brazilians and Venezuelans was that we should all meet at the village of San Paolo on the Kukuenaam River. After discussion, we came to the conclusion that Arabopo would be a more suitable site on which to establish the field headquarters of the three commissions. We decided we would get there first and, if our conclusions proved correct, would send out runners to meet the other two commissions, who, we understood, would be travelling together, to inform them of this and request them to agree to our proposal.

## **WE START ON OUR JOURNEY**

The mining town of Bartica lies one day's journey by river steamer from Georgetown and is situated at the confluence of two big rivers, Essequibo and Mazaruni, and about four miles below the mouth of the Cuyuni another big river flowing into the Mazaruni. Most of the activities in gold and diamond mining take place up these three big rivers and their tributaries; hence Bartica has become the Jumping-off ground for expeditions going up any of these rivers, Owing to the rise in the price of gold and the consequent large-scale development of these areas, roads are being built to the several mining districts, but at the time our expedition passed through Bartica the location of these roads had only then been started. We, therefore, had to proceed up the Essequibo River in large motor boats specially built and adapted for use in the falls encountered there.



Sketch-map of British Guiana to illustrate the work of the British Guiana and Brazil Boundary Commission

## **AN AMERICAN VISITOR DOESN'T LIKE, THE FALLS.**

After loading these boats' our party said "goodbye to the amenities of civilization and started the journey up the Essequibo River. On the first day's run several of the worst falls were encountered. Most of our party had already travelled over falls and rapids in several rivers of the Colony so were quite used to it. We were, however, fortunate enough to be of assistance to Dr. and Mrs. Mann of the Washington Zoo by giving them a passage in our boats to the Potaro, where they proposed hunting for snakes, etc., and the thrill they got from this their first experience was passed on to us. The doctor's assistant, Frank Low, was very frank when he said "I have got to go through, but I certainly don't like it."

At the end of the second day's journey from Bartica, we turned into the Potaro River, a large tributary of the Essequibo and arrived at the foot of a large fall called Tumatumari. The size of this fall and of several others further up made it impracticable to take the large motor boats farther up.

As part of our organization, a relay of smaller boats, above and below the several falls, and portages cut around them, had been provided in anticipation of our arrival here. This served not only for our initial trip but formed a line of communication with headquarters. Our cargo had therefore to be transported by the portage and reloaded into the smaller boats above. This occupied a few days, during which time we took the opportunity of setting up the portable wireless set for a test under field conditions. Dr. Mann decided to stay here and do his collecting in the forests around Tumatumari but he did not have to go far for his first catch. Early one morning one of the men reported that a large labarria (a venomous snake of medium size) had established itself in the roof of the shed we were using as a temporary storehouse. In a few minutes he had the snake coaxed on to a stick and a little later into a bag, thus giving us a lesson in snake catching in return for the lesson we had given him in taking a boat over the falls. Communication having been satisfactorily established with Georgetown, we re-packed the set, bade good-bye to the Manns and continued our journey up the Potaro River.

## **A TOUCAN TRADES IN DIAMONDS.**

On the afternoon of the second day we arrived at the last outpost of civilization, the house of McTurk, a prospector and diamond buyer. We were surprised that he did not come out at the noise of our arrival but we discovered the reason when we climbed the long flight of stairs to his house, necessarily high owing to sudden rises in the river submerging the island on which it is built. We found him sitting at a table intently watching a tame toucan in a cage. He told us that the toucan which had been allowed to roam loose around the house had swallowed a good many diamonds from a parcel he had just bought. He had given it a dose of castor oil, had imprisoned it, and was now awaiting results. As we stayed here the night we were able to congratulate him on the recovery of all the stones before we turned in to sleep.

The country through which the Potaro flows is extremely picturesque especially that through which our next day's journey took us. This is the gorge of the Kaieteur Fall and the mountains coming down almost to the water's edge change their shape with every turn of the river. Here like an old mediaeval castle, there cathedral-like with towering spires and, in another place, a huge battleship with razor-edged prow.

### **THE HIGHEST WATERFALL IN THE WORLD.**

Towards afternoon we camped at a point about three miles down river from the bottom of the Kaieteur Fall, as it is from this point that the ascent to the top of the plateau and of the fall is commenced. The first mile of this is over gently rising ground and the next three-quarters of a mile a climb with a grade of one in three. This was particularly arduous to me for I was in charge of the two chronometers and as they could not be trusted to the labourers I had to carry them up the mountains myself. This left only one hand free and my concentration had to be divided between the climb and care not to bump these, instruments against the outcropping rocks.

The remaining one and a half miles was fairly good going and brought us to the top and within view of this wonder fall. Its magnificence has to be seen to be appreciated and neither my pen nor a photograph could adequately do justice to it. Imagine a river some four hundred feet wide with an average depth of nearly twenty feet, emptying itself over the face of a precipice about nine hundred feet in height into a great basin below, in one clear white mass, and you can form some idea of the grandeur and magnitude of Kaieteur Fall. The dark green foliage of the forest, on the banks of the river- and clinging to the bluffs of the valley's side, the pink and gray of the sandstone rocks on -the right of the Fall's lip and the clear brown of the water as it turns the edge, suddenly changing dead white, all with a distant background of purplish blue mountains, are contrasts of colour which give extraordinary beauty to the scene.

Behind the falling water there is an enormous cave, in and out of which through mist and spray large black swallows dart and circle. Late in the afternoon these swallows came in from all points of the compass in large flights and gathering into two or three immense flocks kept whirling above us, closely packed together, at a height of about a hundred yards. Every now and then as the flocks passed above the fall, hundreds would swoop down almost perpendicularly, with extraordinary velocity, and, passing close over the edge, drop until opposite the great cave, then suddenly change their direction and shoot through the mist on either side into their roosting places.

### **INDIAN WOMEN CONVERT THE CHEMIST INTO A DRESSMAKER.**

Two flat-bottomed punts which we had brought in' sections from Georgetown were now assembled, and leaving some men to continue the transportation of stores from the bottom to the top of the plateau, we continued our journey up the Potaro River for a further thirty miles to the mouth of the Chenapow River, a small tributary. This place was the farthest inland which was economically possible to reach by water, and

we sent the punts back for further supplies, the relays of boats further down the river being continuously engaged in bringing these up from Georgetown.

Two months before we left Georgetown a party under the direction of a foreman who had lived for years among the Indians had been sent on to engage Indians, open up trails and establish field depots on the route to Roraima. The mouth of the Chenapow River where we disembarked from the punts was the first depot established and we were met here by about a hundred Indians all willing to work as carriers on the land journey. Money has no value in these parts and barter goods had to be brought up for paying these people. These goods were now opened up in the depot for inspection by them and some issued as an encouragement and an earnest of our good faith. The men's clothing consisted of a red loin cloth and the women's of a bead apron. When shown singlets the men each wanted one and considered themselves well dressed when wearing nothing else. The women also wanted clothes and so dress lengths of cotton print were issued to each of them. The doctor's assistant and chemist who fancied himself a bit of a tailor made a dress for one of these women and had his hands full for the next three days. He was glad to find that a sewing machine formed part of our stores. Rations had now to be issued to all these people and an account kept of those who had received goods and rations. As it was impossible to keep a check on their names, several bearing identical ones, each man was given a number which was stamped on a brass tag and handed to him. This pleased them as much as the clothes did, and was promptly hung around the neck; they quickly learnt the rule, "no brass tag, no rations".

## **TRAIL LEADS THROUGH HEAVY FORESTED COUNTRY.**

There were seven of us officers in the commission and as this would mean too cumbersome a party to travel together on the land journey, it was decided that two of us should go ahead with a party of labourers and Indians to our next field depot. This section of the journey was a four days' walk through (heavily wooded country; the trees being for the most part over 100 feet high, forming a canopy which blocked out all sunlight. The third day was the most arduous as on that day we crossed the divide between the Potaro and Ireng Rivers. It was a succession of hills one after another and at no time were we walking on the level for longer than five minutes. About the middle of the fourth day's journey the trail left the forest and we came into open savannah country. We were very glad of this as the forest has a depressing effect on one, and it was a relief to get away from the gloomy dampness into warm sunshine and to be able to see further than fifty yards ahead. After walking about an hour on this plateau we came to the edge of it and could see in the distance below the forest fringed Ireng River with our No. 2 field depot in the savannah close by. This looked, at the most, half an hour's walk away, but it took us two hours' good going, down hill most of the way, before we reached the place. We met some more Indians here among them being an old "Schoolmaster", chief of the San Paolo Indian village. He remembered the Tate expedition to Roraima quite well and after discussing with him the conditions around there at the present time I was still more convinced that Arabopo would be a more suitable site for our field headquarters. These Indians were previously engaged by our

foreman as carriers between this point and Roraima. They had refused to work in the section we had just passed through because they believed that the Indians working there, who were of a different tribe, would harm them should they trespass into their territory. Meeting however together in this place which they probably considered neutral territory they were on the friendliest of terms.



*Women formed a large portion of our labour. They make excellent carriers, accustomed as they are to do all the household moving, while their men only carry their guns. Here they are seen wearing the dresses made for them by the Doctor's chemist.*

### **FREIGHT: ONE DOLLAR A POUND.**

A few days were spent in receiving stores from the Potaro section and despatching them to the Roraima area. The greatest difficulty of the expedition was the organization of the transport of stores. Besides food supplies and our instruments and equipment we had to take barter goods. We could not postpone payment to the Indians to the end of the field season which would extend from twelve to fourteen months; neither were the Indians willing to work continuously through this long period; and one batch would have to be paid off and another batch engaged after- every three or, four months; This meant that a stock of barter goods had to be kept at all our field depots so that stores for the expedition's own consumption formed only a small part of a bearer's

load, the greater part being goods for his own payment and his rations. As a man's load averaged eighty pounds; including his hammock and personal effects, it can be seen that very little of the necessary stores of the expedition formed part of this load. The mathematical calculation of the cost of carrying these stores to Roraima took one around a vicious circle; but it was eventually estimated to be somewhere in the vicinity of one dollar a pound.

### **ACROSS THE HIGH TABLE LAND SAVANNAHS RORAIMA IS FIRST SEEN.**

It was now decided that another officer and I should proceed to our third field depot at Arabopo, near Roraima, and await the Brazilians and Venezuelans, and induce them to establish their headquarters there.

After crossing the Ireng River into Brazilian territory there is a steep climb of 1,500 feet through the forest fringing that river to open savannah land above. We were walking on a plateau, about 2,000 feet high, where there was always a cool breeze blowing, for the most part gently rolling country cut up with rivers both large and small. These had to be forded across small rapids and falls, which were the shallowest parts; and, incidentally, the prettiest. At about mid-day on the third day after leaving the Ireng, we noticed we were climbing, but so gentle a slope that we did not realise how high- we were going until we came to an abrupt stop at the edge of the mountain and saw the country below. We had now reached a height of 3,920 feet and from here we had our first sight of Mount Roraima in the distance, its top covered in cloud, with Mount Weitipu nearer to us. The climb down was very tiring as this had to be done in a series of drops over twenty-one nearly vertical ledges. 'On the next day, journeying through country just as picturesque, we camped on the bank of Kwating River near a very pretty series of falls called the Orinduik. This name is derived from the two Indian words 'Orin and Duik. 'Orin is the name of a thick moss that grows on the rocks in the falls. This moss is collected by the Indians and dried slowly by being hung over their fireplace until it turns into a black pulpy mass, and is then used by them as a kind of chewing tobacco. 'Oddly enough when dried it has a distinctly salty flavour, though the water in which it grows is quite fresh. 'On several of the rivers visited later I found falls with the same name given to them by the Indians, as they all had this particular moss growing on the rocks.

### **A THUNDERSTORM FLOODS THE CAMP.**

There was a hut on the bank of this river in which we found an Indian, who gave his name as Johnson, with his family and various relatives. He claimed to be a doctor; but judging from the appearance of his people, sanitation and cleanliness did not form part of his training. This family was an exception; in all my travels in the colony both before this and after, I never came across any other Indians either in themselves or in their villages approaching one-tenth the low condition of this household.

During the night a heavy rain and thunder storm came on and the water, on its way from the surrounding hills to the river, took a course through our tents. Half the night was spent perched on my cot sharing it with bags and instruments, which had to

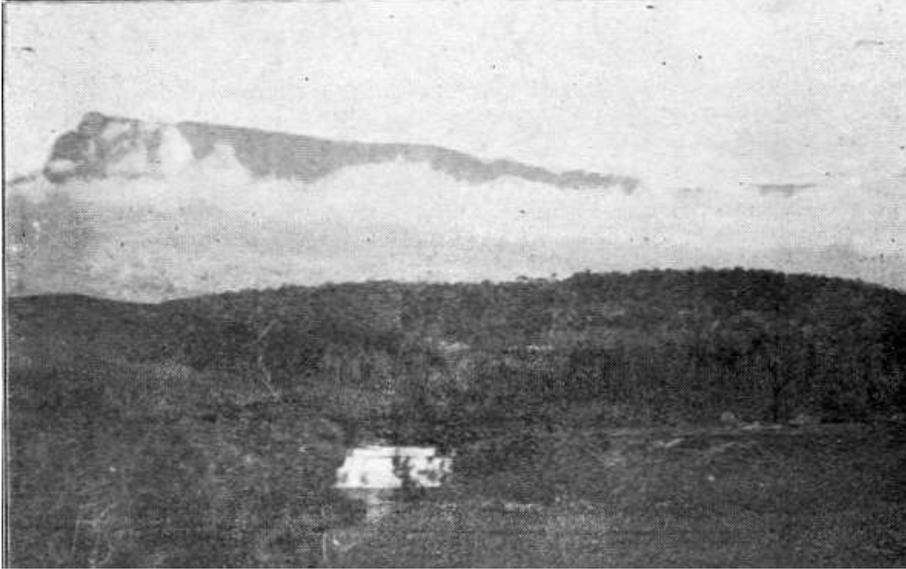
be lifted off the ground where the water ran about two inches deep. On the next day we entered Venezuela when we crossed the watershed of the Kwating River over Mount Weitipu. The word Wei, in Arecuna, means either the sun or a gourd; I think that in this instance it is meant to be a gourd, as one aspect of the mountain shows what looks like a huge gourd perched on the top.

We had reached a good height without appreciably noticing it; for, after circling the peaks of Weitipu on the next day we had to make a fairly steep descent to a river below. Just as I had reached this the rain came down in torrents and kept on for about two hours. There was nowhere to shelter so we continued our journey and arrived shortly after at Arabopo drenched to the skin.

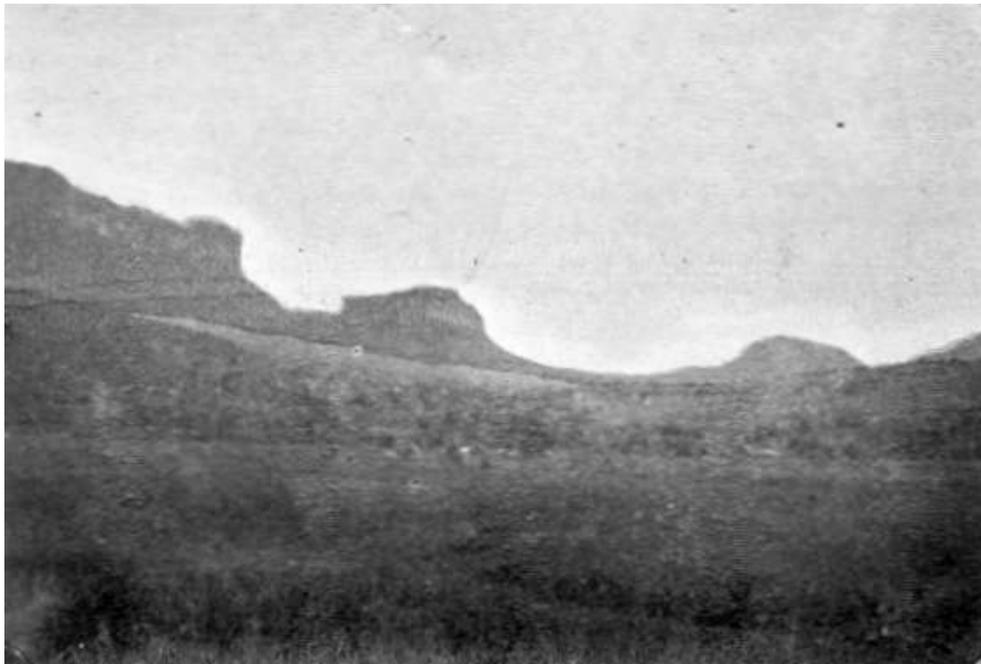
### **WE MEET ISAAC, THE AREKUNA CHIEF.**

Just before reaching Arabopo I noticed two men approaching us. One appeared to be a nude Indian, but the other was a fully dressed man; and I wondered whether the Brazilians or Venezuelans had already arrived. As they came nearer, however, I recognized the dressed, one as Isaac the Chief of the Arekuna Village. He wore the very clothes in which he had been pictured in the National Geographic Magazine, complete with socks and sock suspenders pulled over his trousers. Though there was nobody ahead of me, news had somehow got in to him that we were arriving, and he had come out with his secretary, as I afterwards called this man who accompanied him wherever he went, to do the honours. He turned back and escorted me to his village; insisting, on the way, in helping me over rocky streams and difficult places; this, as a matter of policy, I allowed him to do. We were glad to get in to our depot to shelter and put on dry clothes. After we had changed, I was introduced to all the villagers by their chief.

When the rain cleared we could see Roraima, though quite shrouded in cloud ; and it was three days before we were able to see its cliff faces properly. Our conclusions that Arabopo would be a suitable place in which to establish our field headquarters now proved correct. It was large enough for all three commissions to establish their camps, and was served by a sufficient supply of fresh water. As it faced that side of Roraima on which lay the source of the Kwating River, where the trinational mark would have to be put down, its position was ideal for laying down a base line for triangulating to this point.



*Mount Roraima peeps above the clouds. In the foreground is the Arabopo River and Fall with the Indian Village to the right.*



#### THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN BRITISH GUIANA AND BRAZIL.

*This range was part of the watershed between Mt. Roraima and the source of the Ireng River on which the boundary was demarcated. On Mt. Roralma, on the left, can be seen a small white streak. This is the Kwating River at the source of which, on Roraima's summit, a huge concrete pyramid marks the meeting place of the boundaries of British Guiana. Brazil and Venezuela.*

## **FIELD HEADQUARTERS ARE ESTABLISHED.**

So, as we were practically certain that the Brazilians and Venezuelans would agree to staying here, we started laying out sites for the erection of the tents and building sheds for the storage of our goods. Isaac and his Indians were always with us and were quite interested in all that we did. I showed him his picture in the National Geographical Magazine, and he was pleasantly surprised to see that we knew all about him before seeing him. Astonished ejaculations were heard on all sides as the Indians recognised the several individuals pictured in the magazine. They also recognised members of the National's party, and decided that we must be mutual acquaintances. - These people worked very well for us during the nine months we spent among them and showed genuine sorrow at our departure.

I found the climate of Arabopo very pleasant. At no time was it very hot or very cold, the average mean temperature being around sixty degrees in the day and fifty at night. From this place I paid a flying visit to the summit of Roraima and spent three days exploring part of the top. Two members of the British Commission were detailed afterwards to make a complete topographical survey of the whole plateau on top, and this entailed a period of two-months continuous residence on the summit. This was the longest time that anyone ever lived on the summit of Roraima, and thus constituted a record for the British Commission. The Brazilians and Venezuelans arrived after this survey was nearly completed and accepted our work, and so were not up there as long.

When the Brazilian and Venezuelan Commissions arrived they agreed to establish the field headquarters at Arabopo, and this little village became a small town for the time being. For some unknown reason, during the whole time we were in that district we were unable to get fresh fish or game; so we were glad when the Brazilians arrived driving a herd of cattle from the lower savannahs with them. Isaac and other Indians owned a few head of tame cattle which were grazing in the lands a distance from the village; these followed the wild cattle driven in by the Brazilians, but were not corralled with them. These cattle soon developed a taste for the towels and linen lying out to dry outside our tents and eventually we had to build a stout post fence around the camp to keep them out,

## **FIRST RADIO STATION ON THE SUMMIT OF RORAIMA.**

The trinational mark on the top of Roraima had to be built at the source of the Kwating River; for this it was necessary to trace the river from below to the point where it fell off the cliff face of Roraima and then trace it to its real source on the plateau. Two parties had to work simultaneously, one on the top and one below; and a great deal of triangulation had to be done. The time taken to do this would have been a great deal longer had it not been for the help of radio. A portable station was set up on the top of Roraima and sent out its first radio in a message to the Governor in Georgetown; which was the first official telegram to have been marked by the Post Office as originating from

Roraima, The triangulation signals on Roraima and on the base below were large pyramidal structures covered with white and red cotton; on one occasion while taking a round of angles from my station below, the mark on Roraima appeared on the second round to be smaller than it did on the first round. I thought that owing to its great wind resistance it had been blown down; but on calling up the station on the summit I found out in a few moments that the party there had moved it to set up his theodolite. Matters were adjusted in a short time and so saved an error creeping in with the consequent worry later on of finding where it had occurred. This really should never have happened, but we were waiting for days for the clouds to roll away from the top of Roraima, and as this particular morning, when it cleared, happened to be Christmas morning, we each of us thought that we would steal a march on the other, forgetting that if it was clear enough to see from above it was also clear enough to see from below.

As the boundary now ran it meant that the only known ascent to the top of Roraima was through Venezuelan territory; so I left Arabopo to try to find if it were possible to get to the top through British territory; but this was also done by the party on the summit who reported that they had gone right round the edge of the cliff and could find no way down. Since the boundary would also go over the summit of Mount Weiasipu, (on the right of Roraima looking from Arabopo) I went on there to see if there was a way up to the top of that mountain. I found it, however, to be inaccessible and also discovered that the watershed, on which the boundary would be demarcated, running between these mountain masses, though only a gradual rise from the plains around Arabopo, descended suddenly on the British side, and no way down could be found except the known pass some fifteen miles beyond.

### **THE MAZARUNI RIVER BASIN A HUGE CRATER.**

From my position on this watershed I was able to look down on the huge forest of the Mazaruni valley two thousand feet below, and extending for miles. I could see what appeared to be a continuous mountain range encircling the valley. It afterwards proved that the source of the Mazaruni with those of all its tributaries are completely enclosed by a mountainous ridge except in the one place where the river had broken through the high cliff walls. This would lead one to the theory that at one time there was a huge lake here, the water of which, eventually breaking through a weak spot, was drained away and this large depression was left. This theory would account for the huge growth of forest trees there as well as for the fact that the savannah comes to an end at the edge of this ridge; for just as today the rivers in the savannah have forest-clad banks so would this large lake in the earliest days have bred a forest around its edge.

The boundary ran on this watershed from Roraima to the source of the Ireng River and was fairly easy to determine owing to its well marked ridge, It was therefore decided that the Commission should divide into two parties, Brazil and British Guiana being represented in each party; one party to continue on this watershed and the other to travel back to the Ireng and survey and demarcate it. I was attached to this latter party and so left Arabopo for our field depot No.2 on the Ireng, taking the same route back as I had come, with the exception of a slight deviation to the upper reaches of the Kwating River.

### **THE IRENG RIVER: A RIVER OF FALLS AND BLOOD SUCKING FLIES.**

The boundary of the western portion of British Guiana is marked by the Ireng River from its source to where it joins the Takutu River, and thence up the Takutu River to its source. Both of these rivers had to be surveyed and concrete marks put down along the banks every twenty-five miles or so. A line through heavy forest had to be cut along the banks following every bend of the river for the first thirty miles from its source, but below this it was possible to use small dug out canoes, locally called corials. The next fifteen miles was still through forest but after- that the river flowed through open savannah country with high, hills, and in some places large mountains, reaching down almost to the water's edge. This made the journey by river very hazardous as there were innumerable falls and rapids to be negotiated and the greater part of the river had never been explored before.

According to the map on which the river had, it seemed, only been sketched in, there was a trail leading across country, inland from the river, cutting out a large bend and joining the river again at a point about thirty miles below. As I had only two small canoes to take myself and four men with equipment and instruments, I could not take more than two weeks rations. I, therefore, gave- instructions that a party guided by an Indian should leave in a week's time and take a further supply of rations overland to this point, the mouth of a fairly large tributary called the Puwa. They were to hang out a flag there so that I, travelling on the river, would not miss it. I estimated that by cutting down the daily ration, what we had would last for three weeks which should be ample time for doing the journey and surveying the river; I could then replenish my rations and proceed further down stream.

Numberless falls and cataracts were met with on the way down river and we were continually unloading the canoes, portaging them and the cargoes, and loading up again. On several occasions the boats were swamped and our stuff got wet. A great nuisance was the swarm of Kabowra flies we met. These are small blood-sucking flies that attack one in hundreds, leaving small black spots under the skin where they have sucked. They came out ,with the sun in the morning, were with us the whole day and went in again with the sun at night. Not having a proboscis, they cannot bite through any

finely woven cloth, so we obtained a little comfort by wearing gloves and a veil, cut away in front for the mouth and eyes.

### **THE RIVER THAT DISAPPEARED**

On the thirteenth day down I had finished about forty-two miles of survey and had not yet come across the large tributary where I expected to find the supply of rations awaiting me. I was getting very anxious for, though we had cut down on the rations, the continual swamping of the canoes and wetting of our food had somewhat diminished the quantity.

I had thought that by now the worst parts of the river had been passed, but on the afternoon of this day we arrived at a place which fairly took my breath away. After breaking up in rapids the whole river disappears underground beneath huge boulders and can be heard rumbling below at a depth of about thirty feet. About a quarter of a mile further down it again gushes forth about a hundred feet below the level of these boulders and drops another thirty or forty feet into a boiling cataract. Hills come down steeply on both banks of the river and the whole place is a jagged mass of high boulders and deep chasms. We decided to camp among the boulders while considering how we should get through.

Exploring the river, I came across a trail on the Brazilian side leading inland, so I decided to follow it for some distance to see where it led and if it were possible to get any further information. I also required some food as the men and myself were almost completely out of rations; my meals consisted of four soda biscuits in the morning and four in the afternoon with a cup of sugarless and milkless tea. About three miles along this trail I came to an Indian village. From the people living there I was able to obtain a small amount of farine (cassava flour) and a chicken (they were themselves short of food) and the information that the name of the place was Mataruka, They also told me that Puwa River was a further ten miles down river and that this stretch of river was bad for about two miles. Beyond that it was unbroken water but it was impossible to get the canoes to this calm water.



" THE PASSAGE OF DEATH."

*Where the author's boat was wrecked and the crew narrowly escaped with their lives.  
The water at the side of the hill is forced out under great pressure after travelling underground  
for a great distance*

As the survey had to be of the river itself and owing to the hills stretching up and away from the banks, from the tops of which the contour of the river could not be accurately surveyed, I decided that I would have to try and get the canoes through. After much argument two of these Indians agreed to help me do this. It took us three days to haul the canoes over the rocks and up the hillside to the top of a small hill which was at the bottom of a larger one. We were able on the next two days to take the smaller

canoe up this hill and down to the water's edge a total distance of about two miles. With the means at our disposal this however could not be done with the larger canoe. I, therefore, decided to slide it down this hillside to the water below, where there was a small calm patch, and run the cataracts below that. Apparently, however, it was raining very heavily at the source of the river for on the next morning I found that it had risen about twenty feet and that instead of going down under the boulders mentioned before it ran over them in a tumbling mass and fell about one hundred and fifty feet into the gorge below and, due no doubt to internal pressure, was also shooting out of fissures and cracks all along the hill side. The calm patch had now gone and I decided therefore to wait a day before launching the canoe into this seething mass of water.

### **THE PASSAGE OF DEATH. MEN SENT TO SAVE OUR BODIES FROM VULTURES, SUPPLY US WITH MUCH NEEDED FOOD.**

Next morning the water appeared to be getting higher instead of abating so I decided that I would launch the canoe. The two Indians I had engaged from Mataruka had, after hearing my plans three days before, left me saying that the place I was proposing to go through with the boat was the "Passage of Death" and that I, would be dead in a short time. Their desertion though it made me angry at the time, eventually proved a good thing as will be seen later.

Out of my crew of five who all volunteered to take the boat through I chose three and kept the other two to accompany me on the survey of the river going from boulder to boulder. The canoe took the water well and entered the passage but as it took the drop where the river narrowed down between two rocks, instead of shooting clear over it buried its nose and went down vertically, the drop being too steep. It then floated up and shot over the other fall breaking itself in two on the rocks below. Luckily the three men, instead of being pulled over the other fall as the canoe was, were caught in the back water and were able to swim to me. It was a wet and despondent party who went in to camp that afternoon .. We were left with one small canoe, one pound of farine and a few biscuits for six men, and yet another half mile of cataracts to pass through. This despondency, however, soon broke as around six o'clock we heard shouts and on looking up we saw the faces of two men peering over the top of the hills at us. We directed them how to get down to us and found, on their arrival, that they, were two of the permanent hands belonging to the British Commission. The two Indians who had left me had travelled overland to our depot to cash in the pay orders I had given them and had there met Cheong the Deputy Head of the Commission, who, hearing that they had come from the Ireng, had enquired about me. They told him that I and all my crew, having gone through the "Passage of Death", had all been killed and that by now the crows were picking our bones clean. He had, therefore, sent two of his men to search

for our bodies and give them a decent burial as well as to salvage any records of my expedition. Luckily -they had brought some rations with them and this was soon divided among us all. From them I understood that there was a trail near us which in half a day would allow us to reach the dump of rations at Puwa River, and that they had seen a small canoe near that river which it might be possible to commandeer. On the next day I sent out my five men together with these two with instructions that the five were to return to me with rations and the two would take the canoe and come up river to meet me at the foot of the last cataract.

When my five men returned they were so pleased at having been "rescued" that taking my canoe over the last stretch of falls was child's play to what we had done before. There we met the other two men with the commandeered canoe. This was so small, however, that only three men and myself could use the two canoes. We used them for survey purposes only and, the other four men carried the camp equipment and rations overland to the site of the next night's camp. On the third day after leaving these cataracts we arrived at the mouth of the Puwa River and the men were given a two days' rest, which they thoroughly deserved" and I engaged some Indians from a nearby village to assist me in transport further down river. One of these was sent out with a gun to try to get some fresh meat. He brought in a deer that evening and it was all eaten by next morning. From this point onward' s the banks of the river were comparatively flat, except where two mountain ranges formed, a steep gorge through which it would not be worthwhile to take the canoes, so I decided that I would continue to survey along the river bank and transport my rations and equipment overland.

### **A STOIC INDIAN BOY.**

On the next day, therefore, I continued the journey in this manner and camped at the Indian Village of Chiung where I had recruited the extra men. Two more days' work took me to a larger village at Karabaru, The rain came down in torrents that night and continued well into the next day; so instead of going out that day I spent my time in dressing my men's cuts and bruises caused by their working among the rocks and boulders in the river. Seeing this, some of the Indians of the village also came for treatment and in the late afternoon a boy was brought to me with the barb of an arrow stuck in the top of his arm. Another boy had shot him while they were playing together Luckily the arrow was not a poisoned one. Its head had gone through his flesh, but not out at the other side and the barb in it prevented it from being pulled out the way it had gone in. The boys in their anxiety to get it out themselves had tugged at it and broken the haft near to the flesh. The only thing I could do was to sterilize a razor blade and make an incision through the flesh and so lift the arrow head out. This cut was quite two and a half inches long and was done without an anaesthetic, yet the boy never once

cried out, but bore it without flinching. I have never come across anyone who can bear pain without showing it, as these Indians can. I told the boy's parents that he would have to accompany me on the next day to have his wound dressed and so that I could see that it was not becoming septic. The next day, however, he did not turn up and I have not seen him since. I expect he got well, though, as the Indians have their own remedies for cuts and wounds, which remedies, appearing to us far from being aseptic, still seem to do their work.

Next day I closed the survey work on two astronomically fixed marks at Echilebar. The boundary continues along the Ireng River to its junction with the Takutu River and then up that river to its source. Both these rivers lie in the open plains known as the Rupununi Savannahs, taking their name from the Rupununi River which is the means of access to these lands from the coast. The worst part of the Ireng was now past as these savannahs are comparatively flat, and we had little difficulty in travelling over the remaining portion of the river frontier.

### **RE-EQUIPMENT OF EXPEDITION BECOMES NECESSARY.**

We had now completed over fourteen months' continuous service in the field and it had become necessary to re-equip and refit the expedition so it was decided to return to Georgetown for a month. This return to the amenities of civilization was very welcome to the officers and men.

As will be seen from the map on page 22, the Essequibo River runs down the middle of the colony of British Guiana, forming as it were its backbone with its most southern point the source of the river. The watershed lying between the basin of this river and the basin of the Amazon River, from the source of the Takutu River to the source of the Courantyne River, forms the southern frontier between British Guiana and Brazil. In order to locate this watershed it was necessary to explore the headwaters of the Essequibo River and its tributaries. This we now set out from Georgetown to do.

The first part of the journey was the same as that taken on the last field season, via the mining town of Bartica, but instead of turning in the Potaro River we went farther up the Essequibo. The doctor and the secretary of the Commission had been replaced by two men who had just come out to the Colony and to whom this country and its method of bush travel was novel. Having heard that British Guiana was a country rich in gold' and diamonds, they believed that these were lying loose just waiting to be picked up. Whenever we stopped at any of the falls to unload and carry the boat over, they could be seen scraping in the gravel and in the holes in the rocks looking for specimens. At the end of every day the secretary emptied his pocket of quite a number of small

quartz pebbles which he stored in his cannister. He was collecting these, sure that on expert examination some of them would turn out to be diamonds.

### **THE EVIL RIVER SPIRIT OF INDIAN LEGEND.**

After a week's travelling we arrived at Kurupukari, the headquarters of the District Commissioner. We spent the day here in order to give the men a much' needed rest after their heavy work in the falls. The District Commissioner is a great talker, as are most men who live in these isolated parts, and he kept us all amused with yarns of his experiences in different parts of the colony. Among other things he told us that the "Masakuraman", the Indian water demon, was not a myth after all. "I have seen him" he said, "right here in the river." According to him it was a huge hairy beast and he had seen it swimming slowly, in the river quite near to his boat landing. A policeman without his consent had taken a shot at it with his rifle and it had given a few convulsive rolls, sunk and had been seen no more. The District Commissioner was now certain that there must have been many previous appearances of the beast at this place and that therefore, the name of the place, Kurupukari, was only an abbreviation for Masakurapukari, which translated means "Waterman foot very good." He was also convinced that it was half man, half beast. It is more likely to have been a giant sloth, as these creatures have faces which at times appear very human.

### **THE RUPUNUNI RIVER AND SAVANNAH.**

A journey of two more days took us to the mouth of the Rupununi River, a large tributary of the Essequibo River. Though our objective was the source of the Essequibo River, our route had to lie along the Rupununi River and the savannahs, owing to a large fall higher up the Essequibo, the negotiating of which was practically impossible. This fall stumped Schomburgh in his early explorations and has caused the failure of several large companies working balata around that district. Our journey up the Rupununi was uneventful as there were no more falls to be passed but progress was slow owing to the innumerable sandbanks in the bed of the river. On the second day up we came to the first bit of open savannah which was particularly exhilarating, after being hemmed in by high walls of forest, on both sides.

### **A FIRE EATING CROCODILE.**

We went ashore at this place to cook the midday meal and while doing so noticed a large crocodile swimming about in the river. This district is the only one in the colony where these large reptiles are found and they seem to come over the swamped savannahs during the rainy season from the" Amazon river basin. They are never found

lower down owing no doubt to the barrier to their progress caused by the falls and the forests.

The men with us, mostly experienced bushmen, told us that these crocodiles eat fire. We laughed at them and they offered to prove it to us. They took an empty salmon can and poured in about four ounces of gasoline; they floated the tin on the stream and put a match to it. The crocodile immediately streaked after the blaze and as he got alongside opened his huge jaws and swallowed the whole thing, can and all. This I was able to see quite well, as at the time it was opposite to me and the can with fire was between the crocodile and myself. Had he only swamped it the gasoline would have floated and continued burning, but the whole thing disappeared at the snapping of his jaws.

Two more days' slow travelling took us to Yupukari, an Indian mission station, From this point upwards the course of the Rupununi River lies in a gorge through the Kanaku Mountains, a large mountain mass situated in the centre of the Rupununi savannahs. Our base camp and present objective was in the savannahs near the head of the Rupununi River, but owing to the very dry state of this river, further progress by water was impracticable. We therefore disembarked at Yupukari and sent the boats back to Bartica for further supplies.

### **HORSEBACK TRAVELLING A WELCOME CHANGE.**

Our means of transport now was by horseback, the heavy supplies and equipment being carried by bullock carts. Each cart is drawn by a team of six to eight bullocks and two carts were sufficient to take all our load. It was necessary to go right across the savannah to the Takutu River on the border and then back again to the Rupununi River, thus encircling the Kanaku Mountains. The journey to the base camp occupied seven days in all and was exceedingly pleasant after being cooped up in a boat for about two weeks. The exhilaration of riding over these savannahs and breathing the pure dry air is beyond description. The, stages on the journey were comparatively short as the bullock carts had to travel very slowly, and could only do so in the early mornings and late afternoon, the heat in the middle of the day being too much for the animals. Luckily we had no rain and the nights were pleasantly cool after the intense heat of the day. . Several small creeks had to be forded, and these with their rocky beds, palm-fringed banks and nearby grass covered hills were very picturesque.

Whenever we could we were glad to break our journey and stop the night at one of the houses of the ranchers as it was much more comfortable than camping in the open savannah. Their hospitality was so great however that it somewhat embarrassed us. Being such a great distance away from the city and transport facilities to the district being very scarce, these people were often short in their supplies and one never knew

whether it was not their last pound of sugar that was being served up at table. Fresh beef though, was very plentiful, as that only meant rounding up a steer and butchering it.

Our base camp situate near the source of the Rupununi River in a small savannah called Isherton was the farthest point up to which the bullock carts could be used for transport. The first two days' journey, part through savannah- and part through forest, brings one to the Kuyuwini River about 180 miles below its source; and a further two days' walk to the Kassikaityu River. This latter journey is through a trail in heavy forest which took two weeks to open up sufficiently wide and clean for the pack bullocks; and fields had to be cut in the forest where elephant grass had been planted to provide fodder for the animals. With the exception of the first of the four days' journey when the Rupununi-Essequibo divide is crossed the country passed through is flat and monotonous.

In the dry season all one's drinking water has to be obtained from holes dug in the ground; and, as often as not, this is polluted with droppings from animals and with dead toads. In the rainy season it is just the reverse and nearly the whole journey has to be done through water knee deep, and in places waist and even neck deep.

### **THE RIVER OF DEATH**

A large clearing was made at the Kassikaityu end of the trail and a field depot established to serve the parties exploring the upper reaches of the Kuyuwini and Kassikaityu , Rivers. These two rivers are large tributaries of the Essequibo and their sources lie on the watershed forming the boundary. Their courses lie entirely in forest, the Kuyuwini running through very fiat, country, but the Kassikaityu has its source in a mountain range three to four thousand feet above sea level.

The translation: of the Indian word Kassikaityu means the river of death, and the reason for that name I could not understand at first, as the river is full of good fish and the forest around abounds in game; but taking into account the fact that from the time the Commission started work and residence in this district, there was continuous illnesses among both the officers and the men, culminating in the end with most of us contracting beri-beri, of which several died before we could be evacuated, I have come to the conclusion that this is a very apt name.



*The rugged beauty of the Ireng River. On the right is Brazil and the left British Guiana. This river forms the boundary between these two countries.*



*Members of the Wai-Wai Indian tribe of the Upper Essequibo River. The tribe is fast dying out, only a mere handful being left out of the hundred seen by Schomburgh*

## THE WAI-WAI INDIANS FAST DYING OUT.

After these two rivers and their tributaries were explored and surveyed to their sources and the watershed between them and the Amazon basin defined and demarcated it became necessary to explore the Essequibo itself and its smaller tributaries. I therefore went down the Kassikaityu River to its mouth a distance of sixty miles, in a dug out canoe with an outboard engine attached. The Kassikaityu being a fairly large stream with no obstruction to navigation but one small rapid, the journey was done in two days. I turned into the Essequibo River and proceeded up it for about thirty miles, then stopped at the abandoned site of the old Tarurna Indian village. A large clearing was made here and several months were spent in building sheds to establish the new camp which was to serve as a base for operations in the Essequibo and Courantyne River basins. From several of the large trees cut down, dug out canoes were made .

Both Barrington Brown, Discoverer of Kaieteur Falls, and, Schomburgh, Author of "Travels in British Guiana" had reported that there were several villages in the upper Essequibo with three or four hundred Taruma and Wai Wai Indians; hut about eight miles above our base camp is Mowika Village where We now found the last remnants of these Indians in the Colony. There were sixteen all told, including men, women and children. Three Taruma men had married into the Wai Wai tribe and a few of the children were the offspring of these unions. There are more men than women and consequently, whereas in other Indian communities in the Colony the men have sometimes more than one wife, here the women have more than one husband. There is apparently no ill feeling however and they live very friendly together ruled by a chief who is a fine upstanding figure with a perpetual smile on his face. From what I could gather there is a great deal of inbreeding, owing to the smallness of the community and its isolation from other tribes, and the results are apparent in a few individuals. I should have very grave doubts 'as to the future existence of the tribe but for the fact that a male Wapisiana who came across from the Rupununi some years before has settled among them and that now that the commission has opened lines of communication others may do so and so preserve the community, though not keeping the pure strain of the Wai Wai intact.

One peculiarity of these Indians that I had not previously met with in other Indians in the Colony is that the men keep their hair long. The Chief of the tribe has his strung through a hollow cane, ornamented with feathers and hanging down his back. He also has the usual shell ornaments in his ears and they all have necklaces of seeds, teeth, etc. strung around them. They wear the usual body covering, that is a red loin cloth of their own weaving on the men and a bead apron on the women.

Their houses are in the form of lean to sheds, having a three-sided roof reaching from the 'top to the ground on the windward side but entirely open to the leeward side.' Built, inside, around the walls are platforms raised, about three feet above the ground, on which their dogs are tied. Of these there are some very good specimens and each man owns six or eight. As a matter of fact ,they look after their dogs better' than they do themselves or their children. The dogs are used in packs for hunting, the Wai Wais still using bows and arrows and being a bit timid where guns are concerned.

One of the chief items of barter previously with us had been guns of the muzzle loading type, a man often working for a month to get one; now they are all dead stock. The manner these people adopt for procuring food is interesting as well as unusual. A hide is built on a platform in the tree tops and two or three Indians will spend a couple of days and nights there waiting for a large Powis or Marudi, large forest birds, to alight nearby, when they will then pick it off with an arrow. This the Wai Wais consider satisfactory hunting,

The staple food and drink is, as with other Indians, Cassava (Manioc) grated and made into cakes, and casiri, a powerful fomented drink. The cassava graters are made by them from slabs of wood covered with a resinous gum into which are stuck small pieces of flint. A decorative pattern is put on with a red dye which is also used for painting the skins of themselves and their dogs. Combs are made from hard palm thorns stuck into pieces of hard wood. In common with some other tribes they wear elaborate head-dresses and body ornaments made of feathers of gay colours. Though I handled these ornaments I was not fortunate enough to see them in use, as they are only worn to, a dance or festivity and nothing of this sort occurred during my stay among the Wai Wais.

### **"WHITE INDIANS" A MYTH.**

I had read an article in which the late Dr. Walter Roth, a noted authority on the Indians of British Guiana, was quoted to have remarked on the fair complexion and great beauty of these Indians., Most likely the Doctor had been misquoted or was being sarcastic. Their colour is not any fairer than that of any other Indian in the colony and their women are very plain to say the least of it; they do not compare at all favourably with the Patamonas,or Ataros.

My reading of this article, however, gave rise to an unwitting hoax being perpetrated on the American, public. I had occasion to send out instructions to one of the ranchers in the Rupununi who was acting as our transport officer and as he was a

good friend of mine I wrote and invited him to come in and see us, adding as an incentive that we had discovered a tribe of Indians here with white skins and golden hair who had never seen any civilized people before. At this time there was an American journalist travelling through a portion of the Colony and who was then in the Rupununi staying at a ranch house. To him my friend showed the letter, not thinking for one-minute he would take it seriously. What was my amazement some months later on my return to, Georgetown to see blazoned forth in some American papers an account written by this journalist of his travels in British Guiana, in which he stated that he had travelled in the headwaters of the Essequibo and had discovered there a tribe of beautiful and blonde Indians. He even described their village' and his, adventures among them. If his "White Indians" were not coloured, his imagination was-very highly!

### **ILLNESS AND DEATH CAUSE CESSATION OF WORK.**

All this time while the basin of the Essequibo River was being explored and the boundary demarcated, a new line of communication was being established from the Coast up the Courantyne and New Rivers and across country from the New River to the Essequibo River. The work had just been completed and the camps evacuated when an attack of beri-beri broke out among us. Several of the officers and men contracted this disease, including myself and Cheong the Deputy Head, to whose party I was attached and whose death in the bush was a great loss to us all I being younger than he was. Was just able to get across to the New River where I was taken charge of by the Medical Officer and brought down river to a hospital in the city, the journey down taking in all about one month.

As we had now been engaged on this work for four years and also, owing to the illness contracted, it had become necessary that the officers should all take vacation leave outside of the colony; the work was therefore temporarily suspended. It has since been completed by a party of Royal Engineers.

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## IF YE BREAK FAITH

*Take up the quarrel with the foe;  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch, be yours to lift it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.*

JOHN McRAE, Lt.-Col., C.E.F.

The future of education in the Colony has stirred the hitherto stagnant pool of public opinion to its depths. Perhaps the most obvious result has been the quantity of mud that has emerged to cloud the issue. The attitude of this Association has been clearly set out by competent writers and speakers and that view is shared by the Christian bodies. But it is a tragic fact that few people realise the vital importance of the wider problems of education in time of war.

Raymond B. Fosdick, President of the Rockefeller Foundation, has declared that the "necessities of military mobilisation has decimated faculties and student bodies alike, Cultural values upon which civilization is based have been thrown to the winds as the intellectual blackout spread across half the world." Since the dark days of 1940 the shadows of war have been cast upon every part of the world. We cannot place those cultural values in a vault, to be dusted and brought out again when this conflict is over. History shows that there can be a victory of arms with the loss of the civilization and the problem has to be solved of how to win the war and at the same time" preserve those intellectual ideals and standards, those great things of the human spirit without which a military victory would in the end be nothing but ashes." President Fosdick goes on: "in time of war the advance of knowledge for the sake of knowledge is a luxury which a nation fighting for its life apparently cannot afford."

Such is the wider problem. Heavy responsibility has to be borne by all educational institutions. If they cannot carry it no one else will, for no one else can. The treasures of the spirit are held in trust from the past for the future; there must be no flaw in the title deeds.

In 1881 the College of William and Mary, in Virginia, ruined by the civil war and financial catastrophe, closed its doors for nearly seven years. But every morning during those seven barren years the president rang the chapel bell. There were no students, no teachers, in the desolate buildings with rain seeping through the leaky roofs. But President Ewell still rang the bell. We can all learn something from that act of defiance and faith.

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# ST. STANISLAUS COLLEGE ASSOCIATION

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(Hon. Secty.)



Jorge Jardim



Fr. F.J.  
Smith S.J.



Standing

J. R. Tranquada, A. A. Abraham, J. B. Gonsalves, F. I. de Caires,  
C. C. de Freitas (Hony. Asst. Secty.) P. F. de Caires .

Sitting

Rev. Fr. A. Gill, S.J., C. N. Delph (Vice-President), John Fernandes  
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Absent

R. J. Fitt

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# BIRD-NESTING IN B.G.

By AN OLD BOY.

In contributing this article to the College Magazine I hope to stimulate interest among today's students in a hobby that is both fascinating and instructive, and one that offers unlimited scope for the development of a keen sense of observation. Bird-nesting should be treated as a study, and careful notes made of the type and composition of nests, situation, number of eggs laid, colour and markings, variations, and so forth. To do this will often entail several visits to the same nest, but it is the only way to collect reliable data. A simple fact which requires only a line or two to record may: take hours of patience and watching to establish, and at times, under conditions of real discomfort. Such information however, if compiled and illustrated with colour-photographs, would be a great help to future generations, and with this end in view the College might perhaps be willing to encourage the boys to start a Collection of Eggs and to tabulate their observations.

My own notes, made over 30 years ago, still give me pleasure to read, as they recall many interesting trips and experiences; but before describing some of the Nests and Eggs of our commoner birds, I should like to say a few words on the difficulties and risks that may be encountered.

Many birds build their nests in close proximity to Marabuntas, and there is little doubt that this is one of their methods of protection. It requires a good deal of cautious courage to reach such nests, and not infrequently, the risk of attack is too great. Then there is the danger of snakes and alligators when traversing swamps, trenches, and undergrowth, not to speak of mosquitoes and other insect pests ..

A pleasant or unpleasant surprise may come from the strange variety of new tenants ready to occupy used or abandoned nests. On occasions I have found a small green snake about a foot in length coiled up on a former bird's nest built in low bushes. Spiders also, frequently take possession, especially of the deep or enclosed types of nest, while the open kind are used by rats and field mice to eat and sleep on. For their young these latter build their own nests of dry willows or other soft material which may easily be mistaken for a bird's. Perhaps the commonest occupant are stinging ants which have often given me 'un mauvais quart d'heure'. There are many varieties to be encountered, but the largest and most dangerous - the big black ant about one inch in length known as the 'Manari'- I have only met with on the ground among the fallen leaves. Their sting produces high fever, and it is said that several bites at one time can have fatal results.

For these reasons it is wise never to put your fingers into a nest that you cannot see into. Even if you are not bitten or stung, you may be badly frightened, and should you be high up at the time you may endanger your position.

There are also several kinds of ants that inhabit the trees, living under the bark, in crevices, or in decayed portions of the tree. Some are just irritating to the climber, but others are sufficiently painful in their attentions to make it necessary to give up the attempt. Lastly, there are the difficulties of "Pimpler Bush", and thorny trees such as the "Sandbox", "Oronoque", "Silk Cotton", and "Bread and Cheese:" For the average birdnester the latter must be classed as unclimbable and passed by.

It will be found that there is quite a variation in size, colour and markings of eggs in some species," and care should be taken not to confuse these variations with the eggs of "Cuckoos" or "Lazy Birds" deposited in the nests of Wrens, Finches, Mocking Birds, and possibly others.

To assist identification I have asked Mr. Peberdy to supply the scientific names according to the latest classification (Hellmayr) now in use at the Museum, and I am "also publishing a print of some of the eggs described, taken from a natural-colour photograph. It is unfortunate that it cannot be reproduced in colour, but I have arranged for a limited number of prints to be hand-tinted so that those who are sufficiently interested can obtain a copy from the Editor.

Owing to the limited number of Birds described in this article it has not been possible to follow any special order or sequence, but it is to be hoped that others will build on this information so that a useful publication may eventually be brought out to serve as a guide and reference to enthusiastic bird lovers.

## **PITANGUS SULPHURATUS SULPHURATUS.**

### **1. Kiskadee - Large**

This tyrant and bully of the feathered world is equally aggressive towards, man if he ventures near his nest, and his swooping attacks are always accompanied by noisy and violent abuse. Perhaps it is on account of this brave and fearless nature that the Kiskadee selects such conspicuous places to build his large, clumsy, enclosed nest. It is always an untidy composition, consisting of various grasses with the addition of cotton wool, cloth, tape, twine, or any other handy oddments he can find to use. The site is usually an outer branch on the leeward side of a tall tree with the entrance facing south-west. The eggs, which generally number 3, are of a creamy white spotted with brown and grey at the large end.

## **PITANGUS LICTOR LICTOR.**

### **2. Kiskadee - Small**

The lesser Kiskadee, or slender-billed tyrant bird, is by no means as bold or turbulent as his bigger relative, and often utters a plaintive plea when his nest is in danger. He builds a smaller and somewhat tidier nest, though the shape and composition are just the same. It may be found on the lower branches of trees, and its full complement is 3 eggs, which are of a milky white spotted or speckled light brown and grey.

## **FLUVICOLA PICA PICA.**

### **3. Cotton Bird**

This pretty little bird although not often seen. about town, except on the outskirts, is quite common in the country along the trenches or wherever there is water. It builds a cosy little enclosed nest of cotton-wool and grass, or feathers and grass-stuffs, usually lined with feathers. While not difficult of discovery, the nest is often situated in such a unique site as to escape the attention of the casual observer-a low branch over-hanging the water, at the foot of a small bush on the bank, or even in a little shrub growing in the water and projecting only 10 or 12 inches above the surface. It lays 3 pretty milk-white eggs sparingly spotted with red-brown. On one occasion I found a nest that was lined with a strip of nicely marked snake's skin, which it was of interest to note was carefully laid with the rough side downwards so that the eggs rested on the smooth surface.

## **TODIROSTRUM CINEREUM CINEREUM.**

### **4. Pirppitoorie or Pigmy Tyrant Bird**

This tiny restless creature seldom sits still and may be seen hopping incessantly among the branches of the lower trees and bushes in search of insects. His nest is peculiar and interesting. It hangs from the end of a slender branch on a low tree or tall bush, and in appearance resembles a Frenchman's beard that needs trimming. The entrance is in the side and is protected by a slight hood. It is made of soft grasses lined with fibres, and the outside is roughly ornamented with spiders webs, flower stamens, and lichens. It lays 2 eggs of transparent white with a few yellowish-brown spots faintly visible.

## **ARUNDINICOLA LEUCOCEPHALA.**

### **5. Parson Bird or White-headed Manikin**

Though it inhabits the same haunts and builds a similar nest in size and shape to the Cotton Bird's, it lacks the latter's spriteliness of movement and may easily be spotted on this account. The nest, which is substantially constructed, is made of soft fine grasses, well lined with feathers, and may be found in low branches or very small trees in the vicinity of a pond or trench. It lays 3 eggs of a delicate transparent white, that like the Cotton Bird's, turn to pure milk-white when blown. This bird I notice is not so often seen these days, though it never was as common as the black and white Cotton Bird.

## **THRYOTHORUS CORAYA RIDGWAYI.**

### **6. Wren or "God-bird"**

Everyone is familiar with this happy and cheerful warbler who quaintly hops in and out of the house collecting spiders and other insects. He will build his nest of sticks lined with fibres and feathers in almost any hole or enclosed space that presents itself, and often chooses rather odd sites. I once found a nest in the pigeon-hole of a writing desk that was in constant use, and I know of another built in an old skull that was hanging on a gallery wall, Out of doors the Wren usually selects a hole in a tree, provided the entrance is very small, but should he- use, for example, the cone-shaped twist of a Tar Palm leaf, he builds up a barricade of sticks in the front, leaving only just enough space at the top to pass in and out to the nest behind. This precaution to ensure the smallest possible entrance is well founded, as the Wren is frequently the victim of the Lazy Bird who, if she can get in, desposits her egg in the Wren's nest and leaves him to rear the greedy youngster. The latter is twice the size of the young Wrens and soon pushes them out of the nest to get all the food himself. The usual number of eggs, laid is 2, but I have found as many as 4 and even 5 in one nest. They are of a delicate flesh colour prettily speckled all over with pinkish brown and blended at the round end with grey. The Lazy Bird's egg is easily distinguished by its larger size and different marking-a large edition of the common Grassbird's egg.

## **TURDUS ALBICOLLIS PHAEOPYGUS.**

### **7. Common Thrush**

As well known as the Wren, but not as friendly, the Common. Thrush is always welcome for his sweet and melodious song in the early morning and late evening. The Thrush will always be, found where there is a garden or cultivation in town they

build on the sills of high houses or under the eaves, and in the country on the branches of low trees or the forks of taller ones. Their deep nest of dry grasses, roots, leaves, fibres, and such like, is strongly held together with mud, but cannot be compared with the neatly plastered nest of the English Song Thrush. Strangely enough the eggs, which number 3 as a rule, are almost identical in appearance with the English Blackbird's, varying in colour from a greenish blue splashed with two or three shades of brown, to a light green completely smeared over at the large end and shading off towards the, point into faint spots.

### **FORMICARIUS COLMA COLMA.**

#### **8. Black-breasted Ant Thrush**

The peculiar and rather plaintive notes of this bird in the nesting season are bound to attract attention. It may be heard quite a distance away, and by standing still and repeating the notes alternately with the bird I have often brought him to within a few yards of me.

It feeds among the lower trees and bushes and suspends its frail open nest of fine grass and fibres from the forked branch of a bamboo, courida, croton or other low plant, very often only 4 or 5 feet from the ground. The 2 eggs it lays are comparatively large, and are white spotted all over with brown tinged with purple and bearing streaky marks of a lighter shade. The male is black and white barred, with black crest and throat, and should not be confused with the Common Check Bird.

### **HOLOQUISCALUS LUGUBRIS LUGUBRIS.**

#### **9. Blackbird**

Also known as the Cornbird, it was once a very popular cage-bird among boys. Usually several of them build in close proximity, though isolated nests are not uncommon. The nest is bulky and consists of grass and grass-stuffs. It may be found in low trees and bushes, or in the "busi-busi" growing at the edge of trenches. The full complement of eggs is 4, the colour being a pale greenish blue blotched and streaked with black and brown, and having fainter marks of purple.

### **BUTORIDES STRIATA.**

#### **10. Chough**

The Chough is such a common bird about our trenches, ponds, swamps, and rivers, that I believe few observers can say that they have not seen its nest and eggs. In the long grass growing in the water, on the branch of an overhanging 'tree, among the

couridas that fringe the sea coast and rivers, in the mangroves that creep into the creeks and trenches-in all such places the flat loose structure of sticks or twigs, with its 2 or 3 pretty light green eggs is a fairly common sight. Sometimes the eggs are soiled with mud from the breast and feet of this wader-fisherman.

### **ICTERUS NIGROGULARIS NIGROGUARIS.**

#### **11. Yellow Plantain Bird or Yellow Oriole**

Although this bird does not build in colonies, frequent instances will be found of three, four, or more nests all suspended from the same tree. The nest, which is about 10 or 12 inches in length, is made of strong fibres securely matted and interwoven, with the entrance at the top. It hangs from the extremities of the branches of Cabbage Palms, Coconut Trees, Bamboos, and other tall trees usually of a thorny nature. The eggs number three, and are a bluish white streaked with black and grey mostly at the round end. The young birds while still in the nest are often attacked from without by the hawk, which I have seen clinging to the nest and trying to tear an entrance with his beak.

### **CAGICUS CELA CELA.**

#### **12. Black & Yellow Mocking, Bird or Cacique**

The long hanging nest of the Mocking Bird is about double the size of the Yellow Plantain's and, differs from it in the slight projection of the entrance at the top. The tough fibres used in its construction are stripped from the leaves of the Etae Palm which abounds in the forests. They are so strongly woven together that it requires considerable force to enlarge the hole sufficiently to admit one's hand. They always build in colonies, and as many as 50 or more nests, new and old, may be seen hanging from a single tree. Some of them in one colony I visited were obviously of very recent construction as the birds had interwoven a quantity of green strips among the dry ones, which added greatly to the striking, effect of the sight. In some colonies the nests hang so low that they may easily be examined from the ground, and it is interesting to note how in the country they often choose trees quite close to human dwellings. Their power of imitation is astounding and can be both amusing and entertaining. The Mocking Bird lays but 2 eggs which are of a white ground-colour spotted with, dark red-brown over profuse purplish under stains.

## **PSOMOCOLAX ORYZIVORA ORYZIVORA.**

### **13. Great Ricebird**

Unfortunately the Mocking Bird becomes at times the prey of the Great Ricebird which invades its colony and uses its nest. The Great Ricebird lays a large pale blue egg spotted with black and brown and bearing fainter spots of purple. Besides being twice the size' of the Mocking Bird's, it has a strong thick shell, and easily crushes the thin delicate egg of the latter. This bird also lays many more eggs, and is in itself a very clumsy bird, all of which add to the breakage and destruction of the smaller eggs. I was very interested in one particular colony of B. & Y. Mocking Bird which between June of one year, at which time it was free from any sign of the Ricebird's interference, and March of the following year, had become invaded and was threatened with extermination unless they removed to a new and safer site. I examined at least 30 nests. In each case there were one or two white eggs and 3 or 4 of the larger blue ones, but many had been deserted by the birds, as the glutinous contents of the broken eggs had cemented them all to the bottom of the nest. I found only one whole white egg and that had evidently only just been laid. Several nests contained young Ricebirds. The number of eggs laid varied. In one nest I found as many as six Ricebird's eggs and two Mocking Bird's: in another eight Ricebird' sand two. Mocking Bird's: and in a third .ten Ricebird's and one Mocking Bird's: the latter always broken.

## **CERTHIAXIS CINNAMONEA CINNAMONEA**

### **14. Routee, or "Rootie" as it is sometimes spelled**

is a small brown spine-tail that builds a very unusual nest having a long curved passageway terminating in a dome-shaped bowl, rather after the style of a smoker's pipe. It is built of small twigs and sticks, often thorny, very strongly put together and sticking out in every direction. The nest in the bowl is lined with a few leaves or some soft grass. It is a difficult nest to get access to, and can hardly be examined without breaking an opening into the dome. It contains three eggs of greenish white colour, and is usually found in palm clumps, low bushes and thickets. Many times one finds two nests, one on top of the other, but as I have never come across any instance where both were in use it may be assumed that the lower one was from a previous hatching. There is reason to believe that the Routee is sometimes a victim of one of the "Lazy Birds", as I have found on rare occasions a light blue egg in the nest that was double the size of the others.

## **CROTOPHAGA ANI ANI.**

### **15. Old Witch or Jumbi Bird**

This weird creature, so awkward and ill-balanced, is peculiar also in other respects. It lays an egg that is coated all over in a chalky white substance which if rubbed or scratched reveals a bright green shell underneath. It would be difficult to say how many eggs one pair Jays as they have the habit of sharing the same nest with several others. For this reason there may be six, eight, ten, or more eggs in one nest, and to cover these for hatching requires several hens. This raises many larger domestic issues which cannot be pursued here. It may be noted however that they invariably travel about in groups, and seldom in single pairs. They nest in low bushes, thickets, and over-grown clumps, the nest being a rough structure of sticks with a few leaves in the centre. The Old: Witch is often to be seen among grazing cattle jumping at the flies and other insects which bother them.

## **SALT ATOR MAGNUS.**

### **16. Tompitcher**

This is one of the Onomatopoeic birds, that is, birds whose names are derived from the sound they make. There are others, such as "Wife Sick", "Who You", "Bell Bird", etc. The nest of the Tompitcher may be classed among the rarer finds of a birdnester, as they are scarce. It is a small open structure of leaves and bents in a bamboo clump or low bush about eight feet from the ground. The, eggs, which number two, are a medium blue finely spotted and streaked with black. The shell is thin and requires careful handling.

## **IONORNIS MARTINICA.**

### **17. Blue Hen or Coot**

This very beautiful wader graces our lakes, swamps, and canals, and makes its nest among the aquatic plants, water-lilies, rice and wild grasses that grow in such places-usually a foot or more above water level. The nest, which is composed of the rushes, leaves, and other plant material near to hand, is shaded and concealed by the overhead growth which the birds bend down to form protective cover. The number of eggs ranges from three to six and they closely resemble the English Moorhen's, being a dirty brown tinged with pink, and spotted with reddish brown and grey.

## **JACANA SPINOSA.**

### **18. Spurwing**

Another of our charming aquatic birds to be found wherever there is water. It is very shy and issues its cry of alarm on the slightest approach. It builds its nest of sticks and leaves among the water lilies or grass just above the water, and the eggs, usually four, are very dark, being a yellow-brown ground colour with heavy streaks of black all over, particularly at the large end.

## **NYCTICORAX NAEVIUS.**

### **19. Quaak**

A member of the Heron family, it builds a nest of sticks and twigs similar to the Chough's, only coarser and larger. The eggs, which are also of the same shade of light green, number 2 as a rule. It nests on the low overhanging branches of the Mangrove, bamboo, or other tree growing on the water's edge.

## **CORAGYPS FOETENS**

### **20. Carrion Crow**

This common black vulture so often seen about town goes far aback of the Sugar Estates and to the coastal pastures to build its crude nest of sticks in the hollow stump of an old tree or a convenient fork in the branches, where it deposits its 2 eggs of dirty. white spotted and blotched with dark brown.

## **THRAUPIS PALMARUM MELANOPTERA**

### **21. Cocoanut or Palm Sacki**

This lively singer is very common in Cocoanut and other Palms, among the branches of which, close to the trunk, it builds its simple nest of fibres. It lays 2 eggs of grey-white spotted black.

## **THRAUPIS EPISCOPUS EPISCOPUS**

### **22. Blue Sacki**

One of the prettiest and best known of the Tanagers and a very popular cage-bird. The nest consists largely of cotton wool held together with grass or seed-pods and lined with fibre. The site is usually a branch that is neither high or low. Although I have found 3 eggs in a nest, 2 is the usual number. The colour is white with a tinge of green or grey profusely spotted all over with dark brown.

## **RAMPHOCOELUS CARBO CARBO**

### **23. Cashew Sacki**

The forked branch of any low tree or bush in the garden, such as hibiscus, croton, ixora, rose-bush, may be chosen by the Cashew Sacki for his nesting site so long as it is within easy range of fruit trees, wild berries, and insects. The material used is grass, roots, leaves, with a lining of fibre, fine grass, or hair. It lays 2 eggs which are blue tidily spotted with black, with the addition sometimes of grey and brown.

## **MICROPHILA MINUTA.**

### **24. Common Grass Bird**

There are several different Finches .in the Colony, but the nest of the familiar brown-breasted Finch may be found everywhere in town and country . Any small plant, bush, fern, or hedge, 3 to 4 feet in height serves to conceal his neat nest of fine grass, fibre, and wool, with its two round eggs of greyish white thickly spotted with chocolate brown and black. There is often quite a variation in both size and shape of these eggs, but the extra large egg sometimes found in the nest seems to' indicate that the Grass Bird is one of the victims of the Lazy Bird.

## **AGELAIUS ICTEROCEPHALUS ICTEROCEPHALUS.**

### **25. Yellow-Headed Reed Bird**

This striking bird is conspicuous among the reeds or "busi-busi" in our trenches, and in the rice fields along the coast. They usually are seen in flocks, and the bright yellow head and hood of the male stands in strong contrast to the dull faded colour of the female. It nests among the reeds and long grasses and uses them for building material. The egg is a pretty shade of blue-green with black spots and faint purplish marks.

## **LEISTES MILITARIS MILITARIS.**

### **26. Robin or Red-breasted March-bird**

The simple nest of fibre or fine grass built on the ground or only slightly raised from it; is by no means always easy to find. It lays two to three eggs of greenish white sometimes thickly spotted with brown and grey, sometimes only faintly mottled at the large end.

## **THAMNOPHILUS DOLIATUS DOLIATUS.**

### **27. The Check Bird or Chequered Ant Thrush**

is a black and white check all over, and care must be taken to distinguish him from the Black-breasted Ant Thrush, It is a somewhat smaller bird than the Black-breasted, and utters a cry not unlike his, except that whereas the latter ends on a rapidly descending scale, the Check Bird finishes on ascendant notes. The female is a light brown colour, and this helps identification. The nest, which is frail, is suspended, hammock-like, from the fork of a low branch 5 or 6 feet above ground and is composed of fibres. The colour and markings of the eggs. are, I believe, similar to the Black-breasted Ant Thrush's, but I lack sufficient confirmation on this point to be definite.

## **TACHYPHONUS RUFUS.**

### **28. Black Tanager**

This bird builds an open nest of dry palm and other leaves and stems, lined with fibres, hair, or soft fine grass, in low palm clusters and shrubs. It lays two eggs which are cloudy white faintly touched and streaked with grey, and bearing a few heavy blotches of dark brown, The shell is strong.

## **CALOSPIZA CAYANA CAYANA.**

### **29. Bucktown Sacki**

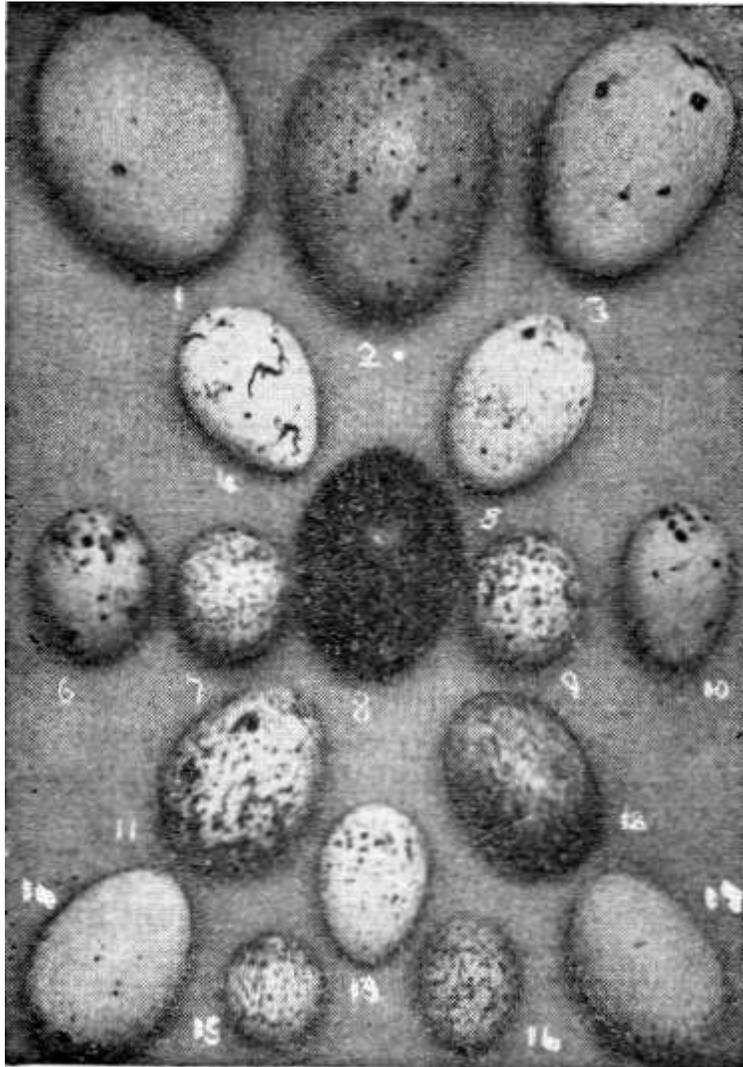
A pretty vari-coloured Tanager that is very popular as a cage-bird among the Indians or 'Bucks' as we call them. Its nest of cottonwool, grass, and fibre is usually found in low trees, and contains two eggs of greenish white ground, heavily splashed, particularly at the large end, with chocolate-brown and grey.

## **TYRANNUS MELANCHOLICUS DESPOTES.**

### **30. Grey-headed Tyrant Bird**

A fairly low .branch is the usual site for the flat nest of roots, sticks, vines, and fibre built by the Grey-headed Tyrant Bird. It lays two to three eggs of a pinkish white spotted brown and grey mostly round its widest girth.

**SOME OF THE EGGS DESCRIBED IN THE ARTICLE ON BIRD-NESTING IN B.G.**



1. Chongh; 2. Blue Hen; 3. Great Ricebird; 4. Yellow Plantain; 5. Black and Yellow Mocking. Bird; 6. Yellow-headed Reed Bird; 7 & 8. Grass Bird; 8. (centre) Spurwing : 10. Cashew Sacki : 11 & 12. Common Thrush; 13. Cotton Bird; 14. Kiskadee; 15 & 16. Wren; 17. Tompitcher.

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## **St. STANISLAUS COLLEGE ASSOCIATION ENROLMENT FORM**

### **WHY?**

ST. STANISLAUS COLLEGE receives no financial assistance from Government. If the College is to exist, help is needed. The Association offers an opportunity to give this help and obtain benefit in so doing.

### **HOW?**

The Association will organise Fairs, Dances, etc., to raise funds to meet the College's annual deficit. Money obtained from subscriptions will be used solely for the Association itself.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

All past students of St. Stanislaus College, fathers and (male) guardians of present or past students and all lay masters of St. Stanislaus College – past and present – shall be eligible for Ordinary Membership. For the purpose of these rules, a guardian shall be taken to include any person who has paid, or undertakes to pay, at least one year's tuition fees for a boy at St. Stanislaus College.

Associate Members shall be those past students of St. Stanislaus College who have left the College for a period not exceeding three years and desire membership at a reduced subscription. Provided, however, that no person shall remain an Associate Member for a longer period than such three years after leaving College.

The annual subscription for Ordinary Members shall be five dollars payable half-yearly in advance, and for Associate Members one dollar payable in half-yearly advance. Any Ordinary Member whose usual place of residence is out of the Colony shall not be called upon to pay more than two dollars per annum. Life membership – fifty dollars.

**PLEASE FILL IN THE ATTACHED FORM AND SEND IT IN AT ONCE.**

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(CUT HERE)

The Hony. Secretary,

ST. STANISLAUS COLLEGE ASSOCIATION,  
7, High Street, Georgetown 9.

I desire to become a member of the above Association.

I enclose herewith ..... dollars and ..... cents,

being one  
half year's subscription as an Ordinary  
Associate Member.  
Overseas

NAME (BLOCK LETTERS): .....

ADDRESS .....

..... DATE .....

.....  
*Signature*

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**COLLEGE SECTION**