

Name:	Gerald Iwuga
Date of interview:	Saturday, 24 May 2014
Location of interview:	Beama village, Oro Bay Rural LLG, Northern Province
Chief interviewer:	Didymus Gerald
Time interview concluded:	2:12 PM
Duration of interview:	13:49:10
Main language of interview:	English (some Notu)
Image:	

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW

Time	Transcript
00:00	<p>[INTERVIEWER]:</p> <p>This is interview number 6, the gentleman who will be interviewed is Gerald Iwuga from Embugu village in Oro Bay. He will be talking about his dad's experience there during the war, his dad's name is Eric Iwuga. He was a carrier initially and then moved on to be a member of the Papuan Infantry Battalion. This interview will be in the language.</p> <p>Gerald, [in Notu].</p>
00:44	<p>My father was born in 1919, and 1943 he joined the carriers. First he joined the carriers and then later he become a PIB. He died in 1956. And I was born on 30 August 1951. So my father didn't tell me any good stories about how he went, but usually told his wife, my mother, so my mother usually told what her husband told, the stories about the war, during World War Two.</p>
01:40	<p>So when Japanese came to Buna, Pacific Island army, they fought against the Japanese. During this time, Major Tom Grahamslaw, recruiting carriers and soldiers. My father was one of them who were recruited carrier not PIB at the first.</p>
02:32	<p>Then when the Japanese came to Gona and Buna and they advanced to Awara, Isurava and Olvi, Kumusi River, Kokoda, Australian try to come and stop them from going up but Australian were late and Japanese already advance, so Japanese arrived at Kokoda and they came to Kumusi river and they found Japanese at Kumusi River so they had to fight each other. But Japanese were very strong so they force Australians back to Kokoda, Isurava and went back to Ioribaiwa, Japanese were at Ioribaiwa and Australians were at Imita ridge and were then exchanging fires.</p>
03:37	<p>After that Australian force Japanese back to Kokoda, came to Oivi, Kumusi River, they came into Popondetta and moving down to ... All this time my father was there with those Australian carriers. One of them with their other members but when my father was carrying ammunition and medical supplies, all this, they used to see the Japanese shooting the Australians, killing Australians, his heart was broke, and he wants to become a soldier and come against them.</p>
04:25	<p>He wants to become a soldier and come up against them, that's why when the ANGAU officers send him back to do the same job at Ariko and Siremi, Buna, Duropa, he approach. He was doing the same job and he noticed that American cadets were wounded and killed, some of them were killed, his heart was broke, so he approach ANGAU officers to become a soldier. So they recruit him as a soldier, with a regiment number 3762, 3762. They fought, and as with his number 7362 as a Bren gunner, as a Bren gunner, and his assistant is Jari Tongamo.</p>
05:49	<p>His son is standing there, Tongamo, and he became a Bren gunner, because he's a tough man, he's a very hero, that's why he become a Bren gunner. So he fight against the Japanese and helps Australian and Americans and fought against the Japanese, from Duropa, Buna and Gona, and gradually they move to Salamaua, Lae, and Wau, Wau, Bulolo, these areas. After this, why because he wants to become a soldier, because you see, he used to crawl in the wild, crawl on the ground, and pick up those cadets who are wounded and some who are killed,</p>
06:48	<p>that's why he wants to become a soldier and he wants to fight against the Japanese, against the Japanese. So he joined the PIB, I mean Papuan Infantry Battalion. And when he was at Lae, Salamaua and Bulolo, ANGAU authorities made a decision for B</p>

	company to have a rest so they sent them to Port Moresby for three months' rest. So while they were three months at Moresby, after three months they sent them to Buka. With his assistant, assistant Jari, so they went to across to Buka,
07:42	the Japanese had no foods to eat, they lost their foods here, they got no way to get food, so in Buka they used to tie up Buka women with the ropes, with the tree, and they used to cut their meats and they used to fry them and eat. So when these two brothers, these two brothers, Mr Iwuga and his assistant, they used to go and see them and they want the food so they used to give them water, they used to give them food. They told them to, told my father to untie the ropes. When he untied their ropes, they used to fall down and die, these Buka women, because the Japanese cut their meats, because in that place, no food, the Japanese had no food, that's why.
08:47	After that they came home. So I will not give you details because I won't give dates or anything, because if my father was alive he'd give you details, but he died in 1956, that's why, what he told my mother I'm telling you.
09:15	[INTERVIEWER]:  Gerald thank you for the story. You talk about your father being a carrier. From the account of your story, was your father, obviously your father was motivated when he saw the killing actually taking place. Do you think he was angry before he joined the army?
	Yes. Because he saw with his eyes, that American cadets and Australian cadets, some of them were killed, some of them wounded, and he used to carry them and his heart was broke, he used to get angry, that's why he want to fight against Japanese, that's why he didn't get rifle, he got Bren gun. When the riflemen used to fire, they give up, but my father got his Bren gun, he kill all the Japanese.
10:22	[INTERVIEWER]:  Was your father married before the war?
	No.
10:30	[INTERVIEWER]:  When your father witnessed this incident at Bougainville like you said, cannibalism, by the Japanese, against our local people, was he touched, did he feel sorry?
	Yeah. He used to see that type of life, he was not happy. And he wants to help those people. But some of them are OK, but some of them the Japanese used to cut their meats and they ate them, and that's why they used to fall down and die.

11:15	[INTERVIEWER]: What did the army do about it, or the ANGAU officials do about this situation at that time?
	Well, in their camp is OK but in the Japanese area they can't help.
	[INTERVIEWER]: After the war, what did your father actually do? Did he come back to the village and settle down as a villager?
	Yeah, he came home and he became a village policeman, or what do you call it, village constable.
11:50	[INTERVIEWER]: Did your father receive any medals for his effort in the war?
	Yes, he ... the war medals, two stars and one medal, but my small brother took it to Madang and I was struggling to ring him, and ring him, to get those things, but...
12:12	[INTERVIEWER]: Your father was a carrier, and then later he went on to be a member of the Pacific Islands Battalion. During this period, I understand they signed some form of contracts. After the war, did your father receive any form of payment?
	No.
	[INTERVIEWER]: Do you have any further comments you'd like to make?
	Yeah, I understand that my father was one of the heroes, but his name was hidden.
12:55	So now you're happy that this project is on?
	Yes.

13:00	[INTERVIEWER - JW]:  I have a question. Your story relates to cannibalism. Killing and eating one another. What did the Japanese do to the bones of our people who they had put in the frying pan or who they had cooked, can you be able to say something of the bones of our people who they killed and cooked and ate.
13:36	[INTERVIEWER]:  Thank you Gerald for talking to us it has been a pleasure.