

<b>Name:</b>	Baroni Douglas
<b>Date of interview:</b>	12 April 2017
<b>Location of interview:</b>	Bou, Milne Bay Province
<b>Interviewer/s:</b>	Anne Dickson Waiko, Elizabeth Taulehebo and Keimelo Gima
<b>Duration of interview:</b>	07:54 & 24:01
<b>Main language of interview:</b>	Tawala
<b>Image:</b>	

### TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW

Time	Transcript
00:00	[Interviewer]  This is an interview at Bou village with Baroni Douglas taped on the 12 April 2017. When the war came she was about 18 years so she would be about 92 years old. And the interview is being conducted by Dickson-Waiko, Taulehebo and Gima.
	I was living with my parents at the beachside when the war came. We cooked our food and sat down to eat when we saw Australians patrolling up to East Cape. We were scared when we saw them. We carried clay pots of food and ran away up this way into the bushes. We were hiding in the bushes and on their way back from East Cape, they went straight to Kaloi. I ran away with my mother, father, siblings and other relatives, also with my brothers. All of us ran away and went into the bushes. They returned to Kaloi and we came out from our hiding places down to our houses at the beach.
02:20	When they landed, they came up towards Ahioma and Nigila and they asked us to sew sago leaves thatched for roofing and they brought dinghy and loaded them for their houses, the Australians. The Australians asked us to sew sago thatched roofings for them. They loaded everything and took them down to

	<p>build their houses. After that, they asked us to go to Lelegwagwa. There were numerous of them who came and filled this place, everywhere. So we all had to move to Lelegwagwa.</p>
03:08	<p>There were so many soldiers and I was really scared. That's why we moved to Lelegwagwa and had to live there for some time. We had to be strong even though we were scared of the soldiers. However they were not shooting at us or angry at us. They did not chase us also. But they built some houses here as well and lived. They lived at Bou, Divinai and Bubuleta, and some came towards Lelegwagwa side. We were not safe around here so they advised us to go to Guga. Therefore, we had to go to Guga. The government, councillor instructed us to go and stay at Guga. The councillor for the community and representative of the government asked us to leave this place because the war was coming. There were a lot of Australian soldiers. My family and I went to Guga. Some of the people went to Hiliwau too. The people here moved and settled at Guga, Wagohuhu, Huhuna and Porotona. Other people from Bubuleta, Watunou, Divinai and Bou moved and settled at Hiliwau and Wagohuhu also.</p>
04:37	<p>My family lived at Hiliwau for a while and later we moved down to Guga where some of our relatives were living. We were living there while the war was going on here with the Australians. After the war, we returned to our villages. When we came, we had to live in the mountains for some time before moving down to our villages. While we were living in the mountains, the men came down to village and built our houses again. There were a lot of iron roofing left after the war. Also other war remains so our men used them to build our houses again at the beach and we settled there.</p>
05:50	<p>No, I don't remember them, taking people here to help in their work. They did the work themselves. They also carried their own stuffs, like packs and army things when patrolling up this way. A lot of the soldiers I saw were very young man.</p>
06:06	<p>There was a laundry place for the soldiers at Hanabala and my brother Kubuna was working as a laundry man there. My uncle Isako was working there also. They used to wash the soldiers' clothes. Hanabala is where the Digicel tower has been put up today. My brother was one of the laundry man Bulegei's uncle, his name is Tomemesi. He volunteered to help in the laundry work. He wanted to wash army clothes so they got him. He was also a young man so he voluntarily joined. The Australians were stationed there.</p>
07:11	<p>Before the war, we attended schooling at Divinai. One day at school, we were told that there will be no more school and we were to remain at home because a war was coming and the Australians were arriving. The councillor informed us. Some people from Watunou, Bubuleta and Divinai moved to Logeia, while some of us remain in our homes for a while.</p>
PART 2	<p>I had no idea why there was a war and it was fought on our land. I only know that they landed at Kaloi (Wahuhuba) but their reasons for coming here, I do not know and also my elders did not attempt to explain the reasons of the war to me</p>

	and they passed away. I was one of the eye witnesses the war when I was a young girl but I didn't know why there was a war.
01:02	I remember seeing some American soldiers. The councillor is already dead but he was the one who informed us to leave this place and go to much safer places. We were asked to leave this place during the day. We carried our things and walked to our temporary homes and lived there. But we used to return here to look for food in our gardens. Our gardens are up on the mountains so we used to follow the bush tracks and come to the gardens, harvest our vegetables and return to our settled home.
02:13	My mother remained there while my father, elder sister Sinedalu and I used to come to the garden and harvest our vegetables. Sometimes we would pick ripe pappaws to trade with the Australian soldiers at Hanabala. Both unripe and ripe pappaws were taken to trade with the soldiers. They used to give us food in exchange such as biscuits, flour. The foods given to us are similar to the ones we buy at Alotau. The army was not supplying us with any rations, none that I can recall. We were trading instead in exchange for each other's food. From Guga, we used to walk all the way here to look for food and trade for the army's food and return home. There were several other people apart from my father, sister and me.
03:40	A good number of us coming to trade for food with the soldiers were young girls. The soldiers used to tease us, the young girls. One of the white man soldiers really liked me and he used to tease me a lot. He cried for me when I refused him. Don't think that I am making a joke. He was an Australian man. He wanted to marry me but I was really scared of him. My village councillor warned me and told me hide away. He said run away from this Australian man. I refused to make friends with the white man. You know I was scared of him because he was a soldier. They looked frightening to us with their guns and packs slung over their shoulders. The soldiers were too much of teasing so I ran away and when I returned to Hiliwau, we had to move down to Guga. The Australian man never confronted my parents to express his feelings for me, he only asked for me but I was too scared so I had to run away. My parents didn't like him too.
06:03	I don't remember how long or how many years we lived at Hiliwau then at Guga. I think five or six years we lived there and returned here.
06:40	When we returned, our properties were destroyed, trees, coconut tree chopped down, animals like pigs and chicken were killed while we were a way.
06:58	We lived at our same residential area when we returned after the war. However, we were first living in the bush for some time before we moved down. There were many people living with us in that area, it's just up there where the councillor is living there, the place called Kibowabowa and later we moved down to the beach side.
07:54	I heard of the Japanese but I didn't see any of them. I was also scared of them. The Japanese came and returned when the war was over. But I heard of two Americans who were flying their plane and it was shot and it crashed at Dituna,

	<p>in the sea. They swam up to the shore at Gehigehi where there was a Mess house and they hid inside. They were taken down to Ahioma however, and were killed. No, it supposed to be two Japanese who were shot by the Americans and their plane crashed at Dituna, it's a reef. Or no, it was the Australians who shot the Japanese plane and it crashed into the sea with those two men. I think they were taken and shot maybe at Ahioma.</p>
10:23	<p>We were living on the other side and no soldiers came there, whether the Americans, Australians or the Japanese. They were only here, from Ahioma up to East Cape. They had bases and they lived in those areas but they left when the war was over.</p>
11:08	<p>The Australian soldiers were good to us but we were scared of them so we left this place as soon as we can when we were asked to. We heard that the Americans and the Japanese were fighting so we had to leave.</p>
11:55	<p>When the war ended, the Australian army returned home after fighting here. Some of the men recruited to help in the war were Willie and Abe, they were recruited by the Army.</p>
12:33	<p>I went to school at Divinai. I was still in school when the war came. They told us to return to our homes and our teacher went to Logeia, his name was Manaima Frank. So all the students stopped going to school and we stayed in our homes. Manaima is from Bou and he did not remain with his people instead he ran away to his wife's village at Logeia. He ran away before the war came here. I was doing my Grade six when the war came, and I was already a young girl. I was told that I will continue school at Koiabule (KB), with other girls from Watunou and Bubuleta. From Koiabule, we were to be sent to Kwato but due to the war so we didn't go. The war affected my education which I never completed after the war because I was already a young girl, more matured by then.</p>
14:39	<p>Like I said, we had to run away because of the war. But I like the war here because I did not see the soldiers firing their guns anyhow and shooting at people. I saw them carrying their guns and big packs over their shoulders and walked up to East Cape. The soldiers were like showing off at us and teasing us, the young girls and we used to run away and hide in the bushes. We saw the white men, the soldiers were young men. They were nice looking and handsome men. And in today's times, we should marry them. The soldiers were really young and they used to carry their packs and guns and often patrol up to East Cape and back to Kalo (Wahuhuba). We had to run away from our homes and hide whenever we see the soldiers coming.</p>
16:50	<p>Our community councillor was informed to let us know that we were to desert our homes and leave for safer places; away from where the war was fought. So the councillor chose that we all move to Guga and live with relatives there. We had to leave this place because the armies were setting up base camps and moving in to live in our villages.</p>
17:11	<p>After the war ended and when we returned home, all our things were gone. Plants were destroyed and animals were killed. Trees and coconuts were cut</p>

	down. All our things were damaged. Our pigs and chicken were slaughtered and eaten by the soldiers.
17:47	I was already married war when the war ended. I got married to a man from Guga during the war when we were living there. I was mature enough and at a marriageable age so I got married.
18:48	When the soldiers came here, they did not fight or shoot anyhow at the people. In Bou area, only Doilegu was recruited to help to fight in the war. At Divinai, there were three Enoka, Abe and Willie. During their patrol times, they don't shoot or throw bombs, they used to march up only to East Cape and march back.
20:08	We were living at Hiliwau and my mother bore Saileni and Gwen. And Neshura was born at Lelegwagwa. She was born when the war came so my mother loaded her in the basket and my father carried her and we ran away. There were several other mothers who bore children during the war while we were living at Hiliwau. A good number of children were born during the war period. When we were moved to the other side, Hiliwau and Guga, we had to live with our wantoks (relatives) in their homes.
22:00	We were at Hiliwau living with Palesi's husband Komokomo and the family. And later on moved to Guga.
22:26	I don't remember any stories about my people using custom or magic during the war or any other stories from other people.
23:28	My other relatives who helped in the war did not tell me much about the war or their experiences about the war. I am telling you my stories of the war and what I witnessed during the war. I remember us running away. And too I was a young girl at that time.
23:55	[Interviewer] Okay, thank you.