

# The Pangsha Letters

An Expedition  
to Rescue Slaves  
in the  
Naga Hills

J. P. Mills

With an introduction by his daughter  
Geraldine Hobson

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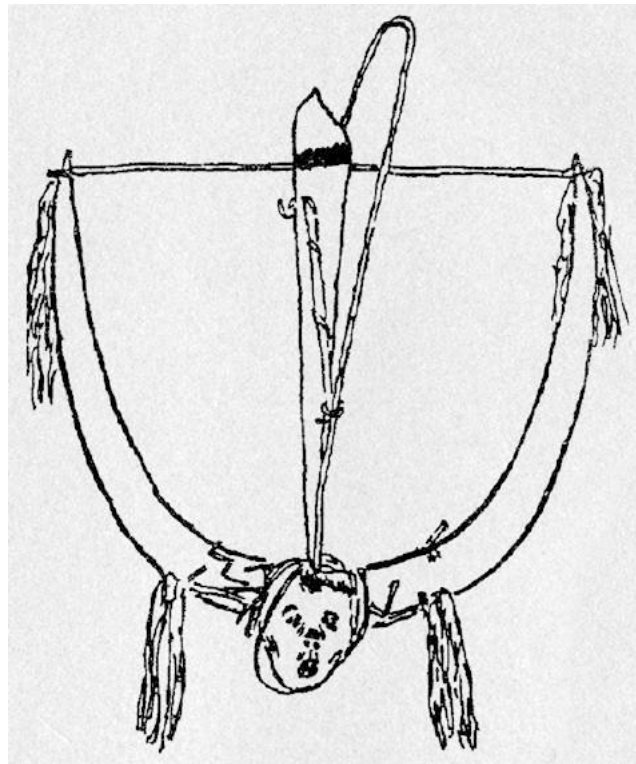
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Headhunter's Trophy  
Human skull still with some skin, hair and teeth attached, mounted  
with wooden horns and hornbill feather, with bark tassels  
Collected at Pangsha by J.P. Mills



Chingmak, Chief of Chingmei

## INTRODUCTION

Philip Mills was born in 1890, educated at Winchester College and Oxford University and joined the Indian Civil Service in 1913. He was posted to the Naga Hills in 1916, as Sub-Divisional Officer (S.D.O.) at Mokokchung, while his colleague J.H. Hutton was Deputy Commissioner (D.C.) in charge of the whole area, based at Kohima. Between them over the years they collected around 4000 objects for the Pitt Rivers Museum at Oxford, whose Curator was Henry Balfour.

At the time of the Pangsha expedition, in 1936, my father had become D.C. at Kohima. As Deputy Commissioner he represented the Governor of Assam, who was the Agent of the Viceroy, because all tribal areas came within central Government jurisdiction, not that of the State. The Naga Hills were inside the "inner line", and special permits, issued by the D.C., were required in order to enter them. The tribal inhabitants could of course move freely in and out, and many Nagas worked in the tea gardens of Assam.

Only part of the Naga Hills was directly administered, due mainly to the lack of communications. The only access was on foot and the country was extremely precipitous. Much remained unexplored, and this expedition ventured far into unmapped territory where the villagers had never seen a white man and the location of Pangsha was not exactly known. My father, however, had many friends among the Nagas, and his reputation for fairness and friendship extended well beyond the boundary of administered territory. For instance Chingmak, chief of Chingmei in the unadministered area, had once walked many days to Mokokchung to meet my father, and been received with great honour. They had been good friends ever since. Both Chingmak and his son bore the ornaments and tattoos of headhunters. My father's official Tour Diary says:

"There is a fair collection of heads in Chingmei, the most famous being that of a Panso man who is said to have taken fifty himself. One of Chingmak's sons, aged about 25, has contributed eight to the collection." Chingmak's loyalty was to be of crucial importance during the expedition.

Headhunting was officially banned in the administered area, but certainly continued in the territories beyond, playing a central part in the culture of the Nagas who practised it. Captured heads conferred great status on the warriors, entitling them to wear special cloths, ornaments and tattoos. The head was received in the village with ceremony, feasting and dancing. The "soul-force" contained within it would bring prosperity and fertility to the inhabitants, their crops and cattle. Normally only one or two heads would be captured in a raid. Pangsha, however, had gone in for the wholesale destruction of villages, killing most of the inhabitants and carrying off into slavery those who survived. It had established such a reign of terror that my father felt he had to bring it to heel. In fact Pangsha was responsible for the last recorded Naga

headhunting raid, in 1954, when fifty-seven heads were taken from Yimpang.

It appears that human sacrifice, using slaves who had been bought specifically for that purpose, was only ever practised by a small number of Nagas, known as the Rampang group, who purchased their victims from the tribes further south. A far higher price was charged for a slave who was to be sacrificed than one to be kept as a servant.

The following extracts are from a report dated 1922-23 by Lt. Colonel E.T. Rich, of the Survey of India: "When once a diviner has found that a human sacrifice is required either to help the crops or to cure sickness, etc., the householder sets about procuring a slave for the purpose. No human being of either sex or race, whether Naga, Kachin, Chinese or Indian comes amiss as a victim, the only conditions are that the slave must actually be purchased with a view to being sacrificed ... and if a child must not be less than about four and a half feet high, which would be equivalent to ten or eleven years old.

The slaves, as a rule, seem to be bought from Naga tribes living many marches to the south who have captured them in raids...They are not told they are to be eventually sacrificed so, as a rule, do not try to escape. If they do they are confined with wooden stocks round their feet, rendering escape impossible.

Ten days before the day, the victim is made to eat separately, which would certainly give him a suspicion of his ultimate fate, but he is kept thenceforward in a more or less dazed condition by being given quantities of charu (rice beer) to drink and if this doesn't have enough effect, a brew is given him to make him lose his senses, consisting of the shavings of the bone of the top of a dried human skull, which all my Naga informants agreed to be most potent...

At early dawn, the victim is led out to the front of the house platform, from which the ladder, leading down to the porch, has been removed. He is then made to stand on the edge of the platform, and his head is cut off from behind, so that it falls, with the body, down into the porch and the blood flows over the spot where the ladder usually stands, thus making a barrier over which no bad spirit can enter the house. Instead of killing the victim on the house platform in this way, some tribes kill him on the ground in the porch by beheading, whilst a few spear the victim first and then cut off his head... The guests ... are all assembled in front of the house, and as soon as they see the victim killed, they all commence to dance and enjoy themselves."

The account continues by describing in detail how the head and body of the victim were divided up and given to various participants. Part of the skull was hung up in the porch to prevent bad spirits entering. Pieces were given to near relatives, or sold for large sums to guests to be used for the same purpose. This recouped much of the cost of the sacrifice. The recipients of these relics held similar festivals on return to their homes. Other parts of the body were placed at entrances to the village and in the jungle as a warning to evil spirits to keep away. Any parts of the victim not

distributed were thrown away in the jungle. (It should be emphasised that Nagas never practised cannibalism).

My father in his Tour Diary writes, however, that "there are only hearsay reports of the use made of slaves when they are sold to villages further to the East. Some are certainly adopted. It is equally certain that human sacrifice of the Rampang type is unknown in the area to which these slaves go. Rumour has it that one is sometimes used as a foundation sacrifice for a morung and buried alive under the main post. Or a rich man may buy a slave and let his son take his head and thereby win his headtaker's ornaments without risk. Another rumour (heard of other tribes and never confirmed) is that a slave is tied up in jungle felled for jhuming and burnt alive."

My father, as senior political officer, was in overall charge of the expedition, but worked closely with Major Williams, who commanded the military arm. This consisted of 150 men of the Assam Rifles, a paramilitary force. They, like the Nagas, were hillmen, mostly Gurkhas. Smith, the Sub-divisional officer, was in charge of the 360 coolies, who were eager volunteers, armed with their shields and spears and hoping to acquire the status of headhunters by joining the expedition. All the loads were borne in conical carrying baskets, and as each coolie had to bring along enough food to last himself several weeks, a large number of coolies was required to transport the expedition's tents, bedding, food and personal baggage.

"The Baron" was Baron Christoph von Furer-Haimendorf, an Austrian anthropologist who had recently arrived in Assam. My father had given him permission to work in the British administered part of the Naga Hills, and they had become firm friends. When my father invited Haimendorf along on the Pangsha expedition he was overjoyed, and Haimendorf's book 'The Naked Nagas', which contains a vivid account of the trip and some excellent photographs, is dedicated to him.

My father died in 1960. More than twenty years later my mother came across these letters and decided to have them typed for private circulation, after editing out the parts of a personal nature. My task, since her death, has been to check them against the Tour Diary, mainly for spellings of place names, and to place them in context by adding an introduction. Where I thought the account needed clarifying, I have occasionally inserted short extracts from the Tour Diary, or deleted passages to avoid repetition. The photographs are all by Professor von Furer-Haimendorf. The line drawings, reproduced from the record cards or the Accessions Book, are of objects collected in the area by father and Hutton for the Pitt Rivers Museum.



J. P. Mills with rescued slave child



## THE LETTERS

November 13th, 1936

Here we are one day's march out from Mokokchung, and all more or less safe and sound. One coolie who has dysentery will have to go back, and two have had bad arms and fever owing to vaccination. There was not the least need to vaccinate anyone, but Vieyra, the sub-assistant surgeon, insisted. His sole object in life is to cover himself always and avoid responsibility. So those poor devils of coolies were vaccinated just before they started.

I stopped it as soon as I got to Mokokchung. Vierya is one mass of oiliness when he talks to me, but I am told he loathes me. The day started none too well and very early. About 4 a.m. a damned pony got into the compound and started stamping round the bungalow. You know how every stamp sounds there, as if the ground were hollow. So I went out and chased it, whereupon it fell down the steps of the bungalow and woke Williams up! However, we were off by 8 to the tick and went down to the Dikhu river. The road on to Mokokchung is bad, and that on the other side worse. Yet Lambert<sup>1</sup> called it a bridle path and wants Government to take it over and maintain it. I shall turn that proposal down with a bang. No wonder our poor pony Blackie got out of condition if he was taken up and down it. The bridge across the river is the most Heath Robinson thing you ever saw in your life. The coolies had to wade across; only about two could have been on the bridge at the same time, and we should still be there waiting for them all to get over. The village elders of Chare met us in force, with a lot of fish.

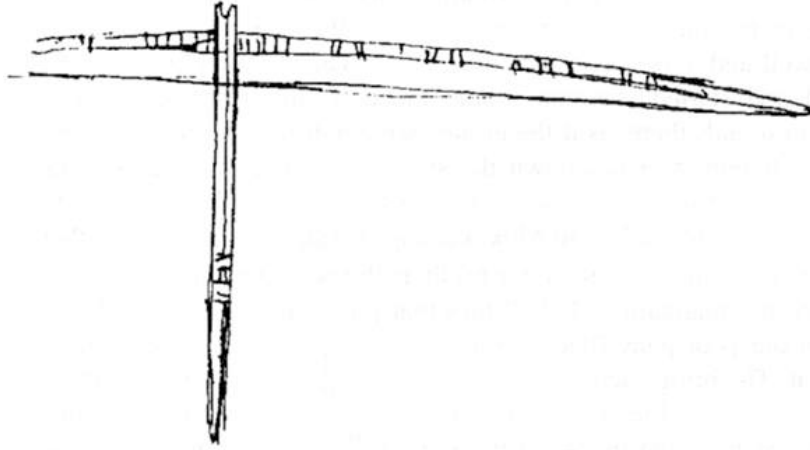
Smith is as bad on hills as ever. It certainly was very hot and I was fairly cooked on the climb myself. Practice will put him into training. We had two or three halts, and at one I was much amused by a Lhota coolie stuffing rice into his mouth and eating enormous red chillies exactly as if they were sticks of chocolate! I know everyone round here, and there were plenty of smiles to meet us. Our camp is a poor one, very cramped and uneven, but it will do for one night. No one is likely to stay awake long, we've got a worse march tomorrow, I fancy. Smith works very hard, too hard. He won't let his subordinates run their shows, but he'll soon learn. He ran about and looked after things when we got to camp, while we other three sat peacefully and had our sandwiches. But the poor boy did hog it before tea: I thought we should never wake him up again – and that in the most awful babel of hundreds of voices you ever heard.

The Baron and I went into the village and had a look round. Not very interesting, they told me that Pawsey<sup>2</sup> made them burn all their old heads taken when head hunting, when they were taken into the administered area. I wouldn't have believed him guilty of such an act of vandalism.

Everyone has full bellies tonight. We've been given three cows, five enormous pigs, four goats, 30 lbs. odd of fish, and chickens without number. Of course we shan't do

as well as that everywhere.

1. *Police Officer*
2. *Charles Pawsey I.C.S*



Crossbow

Phire-ahire  
November 14th, 1936

We had our bellyful of hills today, not a hundred yards level in 10 miles. First we dropped 2,000 ft. to a stream and climbed 1,500 ft. to Thurigare, then down another 1,500 ft. to the Chimei River which forms the frontier of administered territory, and up about 3,000 ft. to our camp, a fine spacious one. We were all pretty cooked. A change into a dry shirt, a rest, and some sandwiches, and the Baron and I went to look at the village.

Everyone is so friendly that we did not take an escort into the village, where the gaonbura cheered us by giving us an exhibition with a crossbow, the popular weapon in this part of the world. The poisoned arrows are of the type Pangsha say they will use against us. A wild boar he had recently shot had only gone 20 yards after being hit. Then I came back, found my tent up, took off my boots and slept like the dead till tea. I think tea is the best meal of the day on these shows, and there is no doubt it does cheer one up.

It was more than cloudy at times. We had heavy rain for our slide down the first mile, and the coolies must have had hell with their heavy loads. But they have worked splendidly, and have kept well closed up, an important thing when a column can string out to nearly two miles. More presents of food, three enormous pigs, a cow, three goats, ten chickens, some excellent fish – the kind you and I ate at Zekwera.

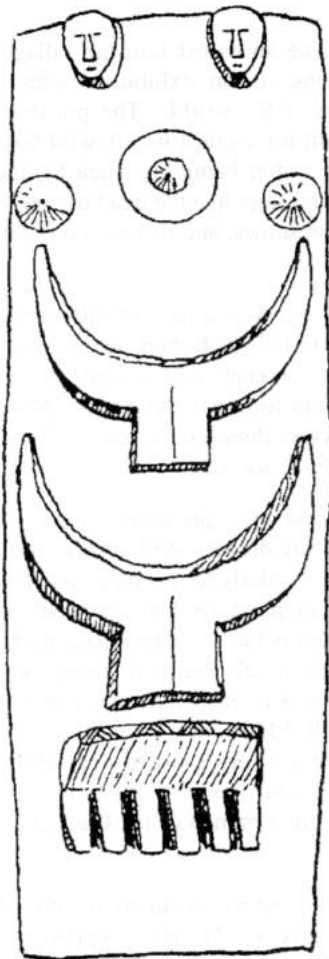
I must go across now and join our little mess for a pre-dinner drink, all 'shop' banned. We gather every evening before dinner. Williams is pretty tired, I fancy. I heard him call for the hospital orderly to massage him. The Baron lay down and went to sleep

the moment he had finished his sandwiches, just where he was sitting! Smith is fairly cooked, too, but he bustles round far more than he need. Your tough Philip is going very strong, thank you, though at 46 I am a good deal older than any one else in the whole outfit. We sat over drinks till 9.15, a very cheerful party-soup, fish, barking deer and dried fruit. We are very short of vegetables, Smith having arrived in Mokokchung too recently to have any ready yet. So we had a tin of Baked Beans! We have got a branch of the Canteen in camp, and draw things as we need them.

The Baron is always full of stories. He told us he wears Austrian national costume whenever he goes into the country in Austria. Apparently everyone does; a few women have their costumes in silk and bright colours. The men wear leather shorts which must *never* be cleaned, and are only really smart when fifteen years of wear have put a bit of colour into them!

We've got a short march tomorrow. The Column [*the military escort*] goes down a valley and up the other side. The Baron and I are going round through some villages, a little longer but less steep.

Chongtore  
November 15th, 1936



House carving, Sema

It has been a pleasant morning, and most of the afternoon spent sleeping, reading or writing. The Sangtams don't live in large villages but in small khels strung out along the ranges, so that one hardly knows where one village ends and the other begins. I let the Column go straight to camp today. By 'straight' meaning they plunged down into the inevitable valley and climbed 2,500 ft. the other side. Meanwhile I took the Baron round the semicircle of hills which the Column had cut across. We had to climb up about 6,500 ft., but it was pleasantly cool and we saw villages no white man has ever been in before. Their names cannot mean anything to you, but were Holongba, Sangsomo and Anangba, each one consisting of several small khels. There are plenty of people I know round here including one Chirongchi, a superb-looking specimen who went to France in World War I and came back safe and sound, with a rifle and 90 rounds of ammunition, which I made him give up. I simply couldn't let him go round slugging his enemies with it; he has a good few. I noticed that the exposed side of his house is built with boards so that the casual spear can't go through.

We took a photograph of Chirongchi standing by the skull of Pukovi, a notorious Sema rogue that he killed. They hang the heads that they take near the big village log-drums in these parts. Everyone was most hospitable and so many people

asked us into their houses that we only just got back in time for lunch, though we started at 7.30 and only did about seven miles. You can imagine how thrilled the Baron was at achieving the anthropologist's ideal, and visiting villages no white man had been to before. Of course most of the men had seen me or some other European at Mokokchung, but the women and children never had, yet they showed no excitement, and didn't even stare rudely. But probably the children will have lots to say later – people of an entirely strange colour wearing entirely strange clothes, must be too much to take in all at once.

We stay here tomorrow to give the men and coolies a rest. I hope to visit this village and another smaller village called Liresu. It will be my last chance of moving about freely: in the Yimsungr and Chang country I shall have to have an escort all the time, as they are not as reliable as the Sangtams. Here we don't even put our camp into a state of defence. Later on we shall have to have two camps joined together. There are too many coolies to come in with us, so they will be on one side, with a picket to look after them, and we shall be in the other with a perimeter and troops all round us.

Every evening I have to receive the presents brought in and distribute the meat. This evening we had one cow, five pigs, four goats and a mass of chickens and eggs. Then the neighbouring chiefs who had come in had to be given drinks – a pretty hard bitten lot.

Smith is going to be far from ideal at Mokokchung. He simply won't demean himself to be friendly with these people. I don't think he knows how to unbend. He is always criticising everyone. He told the Baron he couldn't see the good of paying friendly visits to the transfrontier villages; the proper thing was to burn them!

The effect of heights (about 8,000 ft.) and steep hills on the Baron is to give him a furious appetite. He eats everything he can see and seriously depletes our stores! He says, "I want meat, meat, meat!" He is looking better already; Atebrin which cured his malaria had turned him bright yellow! But that is wearing off now.

Chongtore  
November 16th, 1936

Dreadful weather, which is all wrong for November, rain and drizzle all day, but we managed to visit the two villages I had planned to, both rather dull Williams and Smith came with us. Williams said, "One can't imagine these people wanting to kill one another, look at that dear old man there!" So I asked the dear old man, with a smile like a benevolent Rector, and he said he had killed and taken the heads of three people in his youth!

This afternoon the Baron showed us his Konyak photographs. I suffered one of the few fits of jealousy I have ever had. He is just starting his anthropology, but has the most marvellous equipment, that was not invented when I was doing the same sort of work. The results are so good that I feel I never want to take a photograph again!

Helipong  
November 17th, 1936

It was really rather a blessing the letters were got off yesterday. I have had far less time today. We all had rather a disturbed night. The wind blew half a gale and the tents rocked and flapped, the roofs were blown off the poor coolies' lines and the rain came in on them. However, we were away at 7.30, all cheerful and with no-one sick. We went up and down shoulders and crossed about four streams. The bridges in these parts are single logs, which I hate to cross, and the water ice-cold snow water. We then started the main climb about 3,500 ft., most of it as steep as it is possible for a path to be. We got right up into evergreen forest at over 7,000 ft., and then the mist came down and the rain with it. It was a gloomy bit of marching.



Wooden tally  
of heads

Then the sun came through and we emerged in the open here. This is a little Chang outpost, right up against the Yimsungr. There was a village here which was wiped out by Yimsungr some years ago, and this is a refoundation by their permission. It is the highest village there is, only 20 houses and very poor. They have no rice at all, only millet and Job's tears, and even they don't always ripen, rather like oats in Scotland. But the view is beyond description. You can see from the Burma boundary to the Plains. They have just been sending a Heliograph message through to Kohima via Mokokchung to say we are all well though rather chilly. I loved every minute of the view, for I saw for the first time villages I had heard of for years. I could see from the Konyak country I visited in the north, to the Sangtams I have been to in the south.

But it *is* cold. At the moment I am in a very snug tent, all glowing from a very hot bath.

When we arrived I got a dry shirt and vest as soon as possible, but of course one's socks are soaked with sweat and one's feet freeze. Sandwiches were no good to get the blood going through our veins, so we had bully beef and baked beans, very good indeed. I slept a little in the afternoon and then I went and saw the chiefs who had come in. One Cheshorr chief, with superb broadmindedness, had had the back of his Government red cloth embroidered with the figure of a man in cowries to denote his prowess as a headhunter!

Smith rather annoyed me by retiring to bed instead of meeting the chiefs as he should have done. He hardly ever goes into the villages and seems to have no great interest in anything. He was very bad with the coolies today, I thought, cursing and damning the headmen in charge of each section of coolies and saying they were hopeless. Really they are first class, but he will not learn that the fewer orders one gives the better. People are far better left to get on with their own job, so I took a hand this evening.

We had our first practice at Alarm Stations. I had only to explain once about lining

the perimeter and standing-to, and then we made them do it, and Williams and I went round. It was *first-class*. There was too much noise in one place, and the men were not properly spaced out in another, that was all. Then we had the usual stand-to for a 'Retreat' and it was perfect.<sup>1</sup> No noise and everyone in position. Smith was not allowed to have anything to do with this, but he took the hint and has just been to my tent to tell me on his own that he does not intend to give the coolies such detailed orders in future.

The practice was because we go more carefully tomorrow, with a strong advance guard, and pickets when we get into camp. I don't think there is the slightest danger of trouble, but the people here are wild and woolly, and one doesn't want to take any risks at all.

1. *Standing-to for a Retreat: practising the drill for a fighting withdrawal.*

Kuthurr

November 18th, 1936



Model of Chang Warrior  
holding head

The poor Baron is in bed. He looked very green at breakfast. His trouble is a chill on the stomach. It was frightfully cold at Helipong and he is terribly careless about putting on a coat when he is hot. When he is tired he just 'flops' and doesn't worry about anything.

Smith also complains of feeling unwell. He was not well enough to do any work when we got into camp, but quite fit enough to eat a large helping of tinned salmon. He then retired to bed, but I made him get up to see the gaonburas and accept their presents.

It has been a pretty hard day. After a fine night it poured with rain while we were breaking camp – a miserable thing at the best of times. To add to our delay Smith was late for breakfast (to Williams's annoyance), so that the servants were late washing up and packing. However, we just got away on time and dropped 3,500 ft. to a stream, where we had our first rest. The drop from 7,000 to 3,500 ft. was too much for Smith's nose which bled furiously!

Then we started up our 2,500 ft. climb. On the way we went through Chingmirem, a Chang village where we were royally entertained, as it is Naku's ancestral home. His grandfather founded it. We got in about half-past two and had our lunch towards three-tinned salmon as aforesaid: Williams doesn't like a sandwich lunch. That over, I went straight into Kuthurr with an escort and paid visits. Smith retired to bed to sleep! I've never missed a chance of visiting a village in my life, and what use Smith thinks he is doing to be as S.D.O. Mokokchung I can't imagine. It is very much part of his

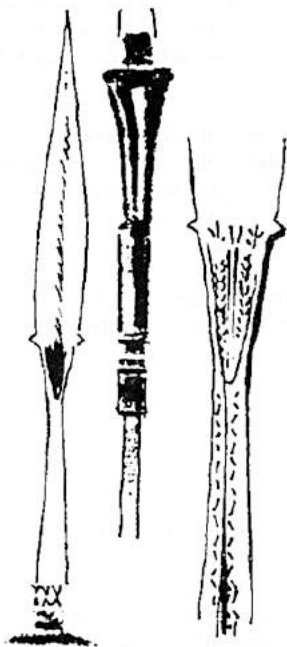
job to get to know the transfrontier people with whom he will have to deal. It's hard work at the end of a long day, I know, and I was pretty weary when I got back for a bath and cup of tea about five. Then I had to meet people and receive the presents, a mithan, two pigs, a goat and eight chickens. Then I watched the coolies doing alarm practice and finally I felt my physical activities for the day were over, and settled down to plans and political discussions. No wonder I slept well that night!

Kuthurr were quite friendly, but a little nervous. All women except the gaonburas' wives had either bolted or shut themselves in their houses. I got a very nice hat made of the skin of the scaly ant-eater for the Pitt Rivers Museum.

Chentang  
November 19th, 1936

I forgot to tell you of the most amusing thing that happened yesterday. The Baronial bowels were being troublesome and he had to go aside into the jungle while the Column went slowly past (it's not far short of a mile long). The Sepoys a little way behind heard rustlings and grunts and groans in the jungle, and thinking it was some beast of prey began to throw stones: whereupon the Baron swore back at them in English broken by emotion! I would have given anything to see it. Williams and I laughed till we cried when he told us. The Baron is quite weak today but as careless as ever. Again I found him cooling himself off with only a shirt on.

Smith seems all right too. He admits that he suffers from a more or less chronic liver in the mornings. He is so absurdly critical of the very slight and very human faults of the coolies.



Chang Spear

We had a pleasantly easy march of about five miles today, and on the way passed the place where a Chentang man was recently ambushed and speared. We were given a vivid description of how he ran down the path with a spear in him and were shown exactly where he was eventually caught and his head removed. Chentang is a small Chang village and only holds its own by stoutness of heart.

There is a huge Yimsungr village called Sangpurr on the heights above them who never give them any peace. Most of the Chentang people are living in miserable huts for Sangpurr got in and burnt them not long ago. One of the Sangpurr men was caught and lost his head, however, and the trophy was hanging up when I went into the village.

It has been a day of politics. Pangsha sent me a final message to say they would not give up their slaves, that we were probably all women, and that the sooner we came to attack them the better they would be pleased.

Panso, however, a big and truculent village on our flank, came and were given rum and red cloths. They have never attempted to make friends before, and they were rather an anxiety. Sangpurr also came in and were likewise clothed and repasted. They too are a troublesome crowd. I would like to visit them, but we shan't have time, I'm afraid.

We can't make any detailed plans till we get to Chingmei, our advance base, tomorrow. I could not help admiring the pluck of the Sangpurr and Panso headmen. There they were, in our camp, disarmed and surrounded by Sepoys, yet they showed no emotion. I told Panso I would visit their village and that if they did us no harm we would do them none.

It was a short march, and the Baron and I went and had a look at the village while camp was being made. I loathe the making of camp. I get hungry and cold and irritable, and people worry me about countless things. In the afternoon I got an hour off and slept for half of it. Last night was rather a poor one – I was probably over-tired. Today has been an easier day.

I've got to turn out for a practice alarm in a few minutes.

Chingmei  
November 20th, 1936

I took over the running of the Coolies today, more or less, as far as camp work is concerned, and among 360 men there are many fools, as you can imagine. The first trouble was building the perimeter, which was badly done at first. The coolies really did not understand, it is so long since we had a show of this kind. We shall be in this camp for a long time and must make a particularly good one. Then a lot of men were cutting up meat when Retreat was sounded and the gate closed. They were late cutting up the meat because they were kept working late, and they were kept working late because they were slow and didn't understand these jobs. Finally, to put the lid on things, a sentry (as raw as the coolies) opened a gate again and men trooped out to get water in the dark, *strictly* against orders.

Smith added to the tale of petty annoyances by being asleep at the very time when he knew people would have to be interviewed. However, on the whole the day has been a great success.

We had an easy march. First we went up to a saddle at about 7,000 ft. and there an armed escort from Chingmei met us, as it is a notoriously bad place for ambushes. A finer set of men I never hope to see. Then we went gently down to the village and were met by Chingmak, the chief, on the way, a great personal friend of mine. We had a wonderful reception and everything in the world was done for us. We have a most magnificent camp



Hat from Chingmei  
came decorated with  
goatshair



site and eleven enormous houses built for us. These were lavishly decorated with carvings of hornbills and the male emblem accurately executed in wood; this was intended as a compliment, and Chingmei may be said to have conferred the order of manhood on us.



Male figure

The most important thing is that Pangsha have surrendered three of the four slaves they took. The fourth is a small girl who has been sold three days' journey away in Burma and all I can do is to tell the Burma Government. Altogether we have five surrendered slaves now with us. A girl about 17 or 18, a boy about 12, two little boys and a little girl. All except one little boy are in a pretty bad way, and seem stupid with all they have been through. A very pathetic sight. I am having them fed on the best in the land and they are being treated with every kindness. Language is a real difficulty, as four of them are from up north and can't understand more than a word or two of Chang.

The 'slave girl' is not at all of the Arabian Nights kind. She is ugly, caked with dirt and has a goitre, but one can't take risks, so she is being chaperoned by Mrs. Chingmak. We went into Chingmei village for a little this morning on our way to this little camp a mile beyond – Chingmak's little daughter aged 3 or 4 came straight to me and sat on my knee all the time I was in his house.

Though we are up at 6,000 ft. I feel fairly warm tonight. How I slept last night! – I never stirred till my early tea came at 5.30 a.m. Smith is more quiescent. He suddenly apologised at breakfast this morning for his bad temper hitherto, and we all looked embarrassed as people do when someone makes a public apology.

Chingmei  
November 21st, 1936

We are *very* unlucky with the weather for this time of year. I had intended to go into the village and take photographs this morning, but there was hardly any sun, and now it is raining. A drizzle has at this moment turned into a downpour and my tent is miles from the mess house in this spacious camp. The slaves seem to be settling down and already look happier.

There is a good show of heads in the village. The great prize is one from Panso, that of a man who is said to have taken 50 himself and eventually met the fate he deserved. They are hung up in the big drum houses which are generally extensively carved and decorated. Chingmak's little daughter has asked to come with her father to see my tent. She really is a sweet little thing.

I got very little rest this afternoon, though I have a many official letters to write. A dobashi brought a lot of gaonburas in for drinks and plumped them down just behind my tent, making work impossible. People want me every few minutes to see people or

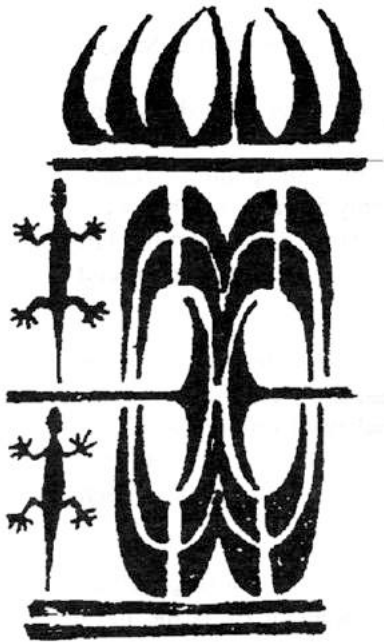
give orders.

We go to Yimpang tomorrow, there and back in the day. They will be perfectly friendly, I fancy, but we are taking 50 riflemen in case.

Chingmei  
November 22nd, 1936

Twelve to fourteen miles up and down these hills is not conducive to good letter writing. We went to Yimpang, one of the slave-raiding villages, with fifty riflemen. To say we got a hearty welcome would be an exaggeration. The people were pretty frightened for no white man has ever been there before. It is over 7,000 ft. up, and the first thing we did was to look at the view. It was rather thrilling, looking down on to unsurveyed country, and we were busy for some time taking bearings and putting on the map villages which were mere names before. The range which marks the boundary with Burma was quite close and I was told a column of 50 horses, i.e. mules, visited Himbu, a village just the other side of it, last year.

The sight of Sepoys with rifles and fixed bayonets must have been rather shaking to Yimpang's nerves, but we had a piper with us and after one of your Scottish airs the people began to look more cheerful.

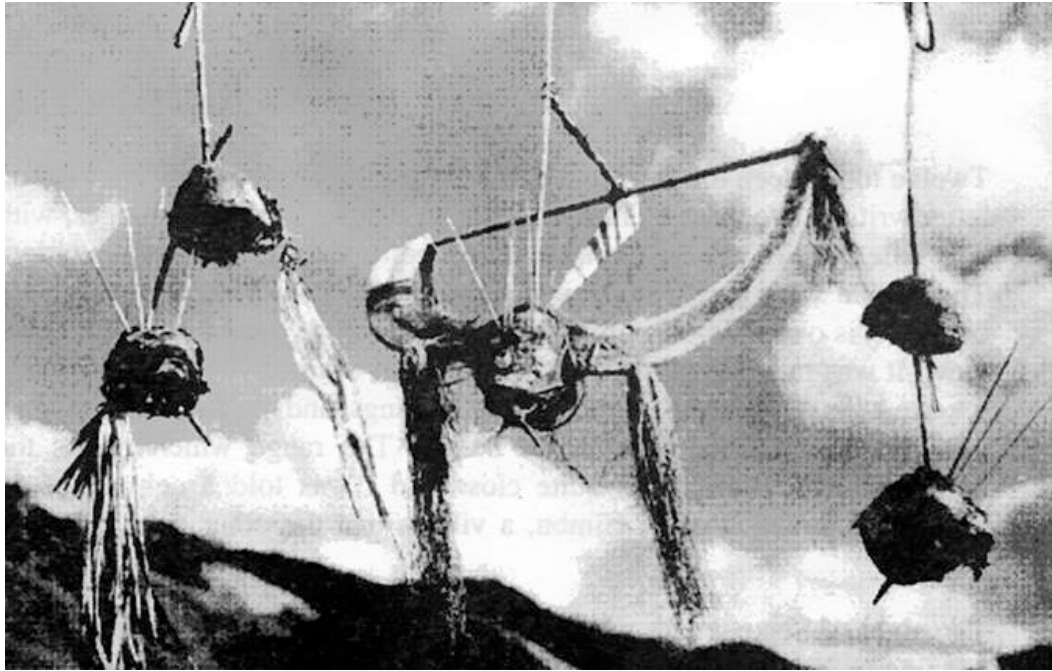


Bamboo drinking vessel

Hanging from the Head Tree were five heads of the wretched Saochu people they killed in the spring. As the raid was for slaves and was a gross act of treachery I was determined to confiscate them, but I bided my time till we were safely outside the very strong fortifications. A double fence with a ditch in the middle was simply bristling with panjis. Then I demanded those heads, and waited outside with my 50 rifles till they were produced. We got them and the Yimpang Head Tree is bare: and the Pitt Rivers Museum will get some fine specimens if I can ever manage to send them.

We had gone straight up a valley to Yimpang, with a steep climb at the end. We were going north with ranges on the east and west. For our return journey we turned down the western range and went through a village called Waoshu. The views were beyond description. I could see right into administered territory and even a bit of low cloud which must have been the Plains.

Waoshu is small, and in an immensely strong position on a ridge which dropped sheer on both sides. The entrance we went in by is the most strongly fortified I have ever seen. I think Hutton went through the village 13 years ago, and everyone was most friendly. The rather breathless piper played another tune. Then we went along the ridge and down to a well-earned tea.



Head tree, Yimpang

What a nuisance, it has been fine all day and now it has begun to rain. My poor 'heads' will get wet, but it won't be the first storm they have ever known. They are hanging just outside my tent. I hope they won't send ghosts to give me dreams.

Tomorrow I don't mean to budge from camp as I have a lot of writing to do. The day after we go to Noklak – I aim to make peace with them but can't get in touch. We heard when we got back today that a party of them had been moving along the range parallel to us on the east end, and three men walked into Yimpang as we walked out, just to see what information they could pick up.

Chingmei  
November 23rd, 1936

Pangsha have challenged us to go and see them and I must do so. If I let them think we are afraid they will raid again and capture more wretched little children. We start at 6.30 tomorrow and camp for the night at Noklak.

Whether Noklak will fight or not we don't know. Pangsha will certainly do so, I am afraid. Their weapon is cross bows with a range of 200 to 250 yards, and poisoned arrows. There's no doubt of the risk. It is about the nastiest job I have ever had to tackle. If you hear nothing before you get this letter you will know I am all right, for I shall be in friendly territory long before you get it. The effect of the local poison is pleasingly instantaneous.

The mail has just been brought in [*by runner*]. We have only just heard these

incredible rumours about the King [Edward VIII] and that Mrs. Simpson is being divorced – is this because of the King? There is a rumour he wants to marry her at once; the nation would never put up with that. She simply couldn't be crowned Queen of England.

For some weeks I have had a feeling I should not come back from this show, but now that has suddenly completely worn off.

It is freezing cold here in camp tonight.

Noklak  
24th November, 1936

All safe so far. The immediate tragedy is that they have left the bitters for our gin behind. I was called at 4 a.m., then breakfast, and we were off before 6 a.m. and dropped down a very steep hill to a stream.

Noklak has sent in word that they would not clear the path for us or prepare a camp site, as they did not want to offend Pangsha. Chingmei and Noklak being at war, the path between the two villages is entirely overgrown with jungle, with panjis for the feet of the unwary stuck in the ground. Men from Chingmei had cleared most of the path yesterday, but the last two hours were terrible going. You could hardly see where to put your feet and there was a sheer precipice on our right most of the way.

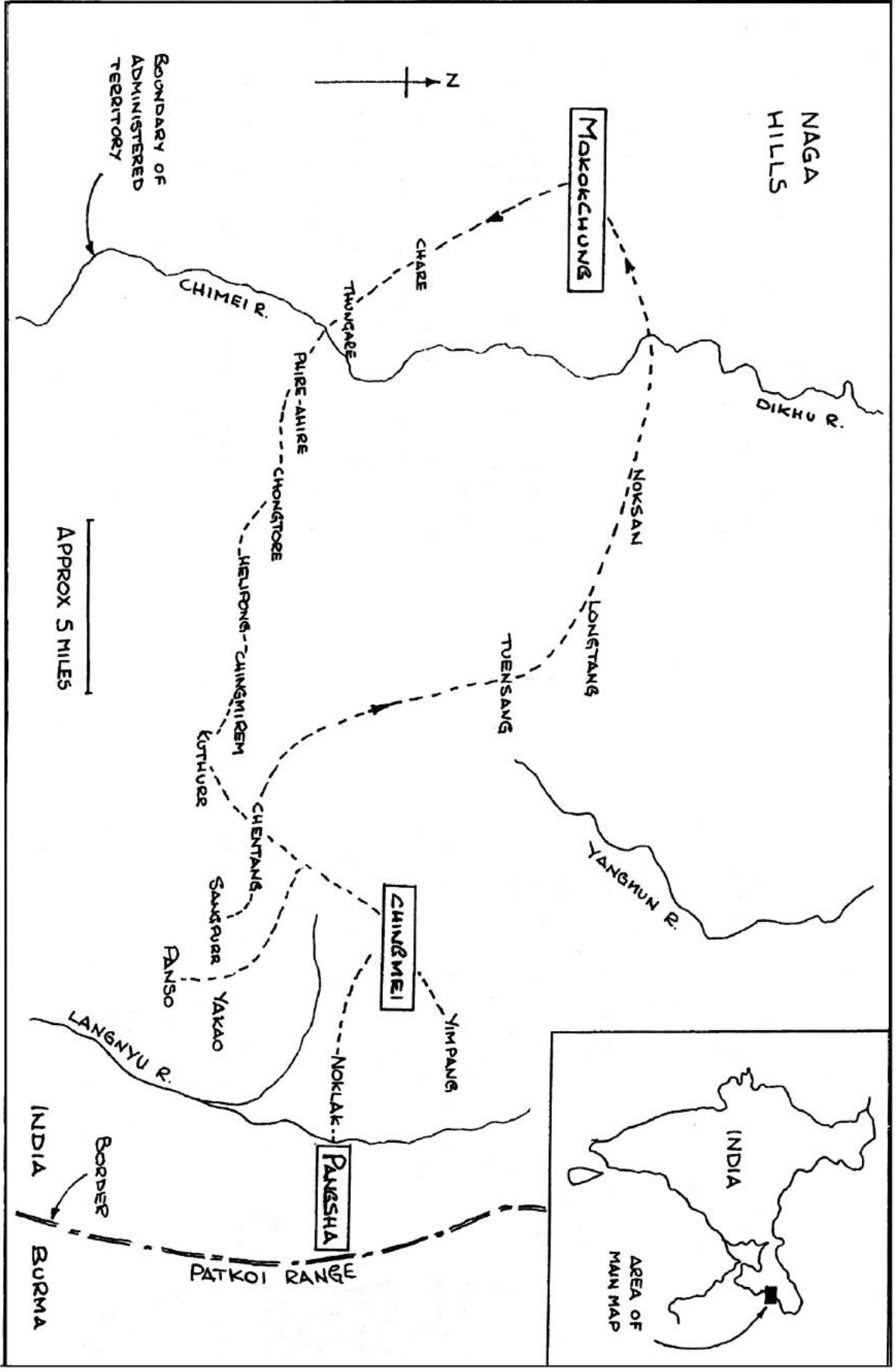


Cane leggings

We had six Chingmei scouts going ahead looking out for poisoned arrow traps and panjis, but they could not see them all. One Chingmei man got a panji clean through his foot, and another was badly cut by a panji on the shin, and one Sepoy was badly cut in the calf. Also one Sepoy was terribly stung in a mysterious way and had enormous swellings on his throat, arms and thighs. Chingmei man who got the panji clean through his foot had it bound up by the sub-Assistant Surgeon with us, and merely said, 'How silly of me to tread on it!', and insisted on re-joining the head of the column again. A fine hardy lot, the Changs.

For a long time after Noklak came in sight there was not a sign of life. Then suddenly a large body of armed men appeared on a path below us. The troops were splendid, they realised that if men advanced conspicuously like that, there was a chance of parley, and held their fire. We shouted and they shouted, and eventually we got two men to come up to us, and they greeted Chingmak like an old friend, though the two villages are at war!

SKETCH MAP SHOWING ROUTE OF EXPEDITION



We then got the Noklak men to lead us and soon found an excellent camp site in a grove of trees and bamboos, with a lovely stream of water just outside our perimeter! Then at last I was able to settle down to sandwiches, having had nothing since about 5.30 a.m. As Noklak had done nothing to help us I did not spare their bamboos. By far the most dangerous hour of the day was when coolies were felling them in all directions, and we kept looking up to see if one was going to fall on our heads! Everyone was cheerful and glorying in destruction, except, needless to say, Upanso. He, with a face like a wet day, announced he had fever and a bad ankle. A little later on I noticed him laughing and keeping an eye on the distribution of pork!

Winged words from me have reduced Noklak to such a state of politeness that they have produced no less than 10 pigs, 10 fowls and an enormous he-goat which stinks to high heaven! The only trouble is that our camp is far too small and crowded, Williams having miscalculated the size of the perimeter. However, we have all squeezed in somehow. We have only got 120 of our 360 coolies.

The Baron has enjoyed his day. While we were getting into camp, a very long process, he sat talking to dobashis and taking notes. He is disgusted at the idea that the Hapsburgs might get back on to the Austrian throne. He says Otto knows nothing of the world and is entirely run by his mother who is a foul woman. She used to have awful scenes with her husband in public! Austria crawls with archdukes, all of whom are utterly degenerate and most have married much beneath them.

They are calling me to step across to the mess, to drink gin without bitters! I am going to burn Pangsha tomorrow. We shall probably have a battle, and we are all feeling in good fettle for it.

Langnyu River, below Pangsha  
November 25th, 1936



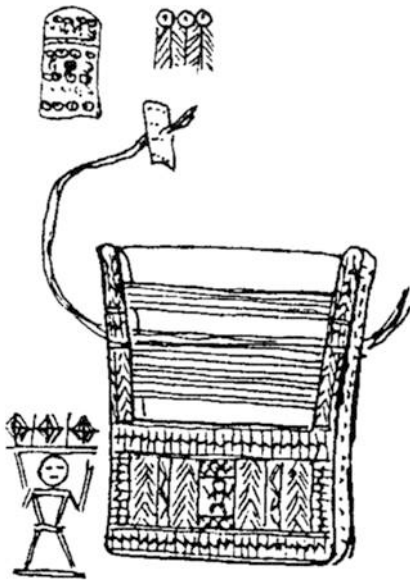
Axe headed dao  
Kalyo-Kengyu

People stirring in our tiny camp woke me at three this morning. I was called at ten-past four, and we began moving off at half-past six. We were on the move with no halt of longer than ten minutes till half-past two. So you can imagine I am pretty tired. We went along hour after hour expecting an ambush at any minute. Once we heard a Pangsha scout call back to say we were coming – so just to show we were coming, I had a whole hillside of Pangsha land set on fire as we passed and so made useless for jhuming for years.

About midday we got in touch with a party of Pangsha men and after much shouting persuaded four of them to wait for us. They had a goat and a chicken and made a fulsome speech. I kept them as hostages till we were through a particularly bad bit of jungle. Then I told them I had come to punish their village and show them that we were more powerful than they. I then sent them safely away. We had been going along the slopes of the west side of the Langnyu Valley, and very soon saw strong armed parties coming across the river with the evident

intention of coming up on our side and blocking the path they expected us to take. So we cut our way straight down to the river and spoilt their nice little plan. The river valley is broad and covered with short grass, and we got our first bit of easy marching of the day. We had meant to go up and deal with Pangsha, which is on the east bank, but it was too late, and we were all too done. So we made camp on a lovely level island. The Baron described the grass as being 'like an English lawn', and I replied that it might be like a Viennese lawn, but not an English one.

We sent 30 coolies, with a guard of Sepoys, to cut some bamboo for our camp. We soon saw an armed party assemble on a spur above them. So Williams had the Lewis gun trained on the path down. Very soon three men came down flourishing spears and obviously intending to get a coolie's head (probably they could not see the guard of Sepoys or did not understand who the funny little men in khaki were). The Lewis gun opened fire and knocked over two out of three. Both of them picked themselves up and crawled or walked away, but it was good shooting at long range.



Dao Carrier

I don't know whether Pangsha will fight tomorrow, I rather doubt it. Nor do I know whether they will attack the camp tonight. We are within bow shot of the jungle slopes. We can't help that. My tent has its back to the perimeter and an arrow would have to go through both the bathroom and the inner flap, not to mention the piles of blankets under which I propose to sleep.

We have a very hard day in front of us tomorrow. Our idea is to leave the loads here under a guard, and go up to the main village with the main body and the armed coolies. Having burnt that, and done all the damage we can, we come back here, pick up the baggage and march for three hours down the valley. There we dump the baggage again, climb an enormous hill, and deal with a colony of Pangsha, come down the valley again, and pretend to make camp. At moonrise we slip away to Noklak to comparative safety – so you see, I might not manage a letter to you tomorrow.

Langnyu River  
November 26th, 1936

Here we are, all safe and sound, and Pangsha the invincible is a heap of ashes. We left the loads in camp with a guard and moved out at half-past six, and very cold it was in the valley.

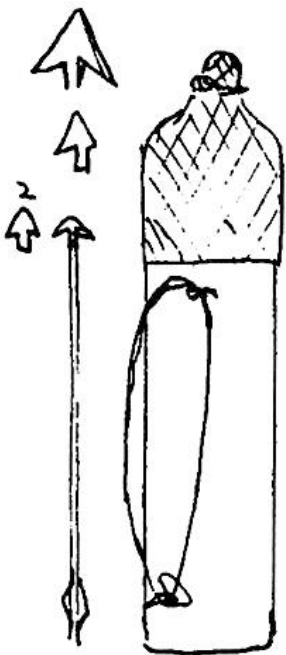
Pangsha men were shouting down at us, 'Come along, come along', and up we went very carefully indeed. Williams was in his element with the advance guard taking up positions in front of us, and flanks out and all the rest of it. Pangsha people appeared from time to time and short bursts of fire kept them at a respectable distance.

It was all at very long range except once when Subadar Balbahardur got into some men at about 300 yards and bowled over six. They all got away, however. These modern bullets go right through without doing much harm.

They are meant to be humane and to wound a man without killing him.

The coolies' feelings can be imagined at seeing no one killed. I am very sorry too; Pangsha will be able to boast that they lost no lives. Nor did we destroy as much property as I should have liked. Homes can always be rebuilt, and the few cattle and pigs we got are nothing. The village is huge and very difficult to deal with. There is a small khel at the bottom, and two very big khels at the top on different spurs and with a deep ravine between them. We are on one spur and had to send a party round to burn the other. It would have taken all day to move the whole force. Then

when the flanking party had lighted their khel they couldn't hear the bugle calls, and we took ages to get in touch with them and withdraw them. All the property that mattered had been taken out of the village and hidden near it. We could hardly touch it for we did not dare scatter our force.



Arrows and quiver

We were back in our camp in the valley by a quarter to twelve and then the really anxious moment of the day began. Nlamo, who is now foully untidy and the Baron's factotum, and three other Lhotas had not come back with the coolies. To make things worse we could hear Pangsha men shouting, 'Cut them off, cut them off!' They had been sent to collect some special stuff for the Baron, and had evidently mistaken the orders about rejoining the last coolies as they returned behind them. We thought they were certainly dead and a party was just going out as a forlorn hope when they appeared, breathless and sweating. The idiots had gone the wrong way and met Pangsha men at short range. I can't imagine which side was most surprised. Nlamo peppered a man with buckshot and they got away. It was a near squeak.

We had a short meal and marched again at 12.30. At first the path down the river was good and then a series of gorges began.

We went on and on, no one knowing the way, and tried to find the path back up to Noklak. At last we had to camp, far too late to attempt to go up to the little colony of Pangsha this evening.

We shall have to deal with it tomorrow, and I am spared a night march, which I should have hated after such a long day.

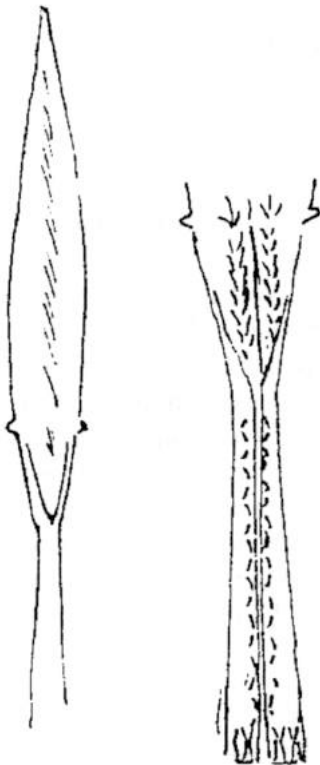
The men and coolies are tired out too, and the latter want to settle down to mountains of meat they have carried away. Chongsema himself shot 13 cows. I am glad no one had a poisoned arrow into him. We found two among the stuff left behind; dreadful things, with huge iron barbs.



Noklak  
November 27th, 1936

Here we are, safely back in our old camp at Noklak in a lovely grove with a stream of perfect water a few yards from the perimeter. But we had our battle all right, by far the most serious there has been in these trans-border shows here. We sent the coolies and one platoon straight back from our river camp to here, and the Baron, Smith and I went up with Williams and a platoon of 50 men to Wenshoyi, a khel of Pangsha about three miles from the main village. They had built a stone barricade loopholed for arrows but did not hold it. In the middle of the wall was a fence of banana stems, for it is a very old Naga belief that bullets passing between banana stems are "cooled" and rendered harmless. We proceeded to loot and burn the village.

Then we withdrew. We had to go about 3,000 ft. down a long spur. Very soon down on our right we saw about 500 men from the main village streaming along a path to cut us off. We knew the supreme moment had come, and that Pangsha were going to try and overwhelm us and annihilate us by sheer weight of numbers. They disappeared into dead ground, and then came at us over a ridge with a roar. It was an experience I shall never forget. The charge was between 10 ft. high stalks of giant millet, easy to run through but hard to see through. Our advance guard, having gained a bit of high ground, fired over our heads and stopped the charge. I should think the nearest man rolled over like a rabbit with a bullet in the chest not more than 50 ft. away. They were just drawing back their arms for a shower of spears. Of course they



Spear  
Kalyo-Kengyu

outnumbered us by ten to one. We beat them off. The men were splendid, firing calmly and carefully. At one point, Williams, two yards from me, snatched a rifle from a Sepoy's hand and fired himself. Then began a long retire march<sup>1</sup> down a slope, with Williams handling his men *superbly*. Rifles were cracking all the time as we held them off the rear, and we were going at the double in case they cut us off at the river. We got down and across all right without a single casualty, though we killed a number of the enemy, including two ringleaders. We had to keep them off, we couldn't afford to have even a few wounded. In civilized warfare you can leave wounded knowing they will be looked after, but in Naga warfare every man has to be brought along, even in a retreat, and that hangs up things frightfully.

Once across the river we could take things easy with friendly Noklak above us. It was a terribly hard climb and two Sepoys could hardly struggle along. Poor Smith has gone to bed dead to the world.

One's feelings in a fight of this kind, with your life or theirs at stake, are hard to define – I was completely absorbed in

what was going on, and in listening to and obeying all orders instantly. There was no time for anything else; things were happening too quickly. The worst part was a frightful thirst; we were running hard in boiling sun, and my running days are really over.

I had always been told that Pangsha, who do not know what fear is, would make a real effort to wipe us out, which would have been a very bad image for the Raj. We are due back in comfortable Chingmei tomorrow.

We may not have to go to Nokhu and if we do they won't be such a tough proposition as Pangsha. What the exact Pangsha losses were we shall probably never know, but I doubt if any other village will want a dose of rifle fire after today!

1. *Withdrawal in contact with the enemy.*

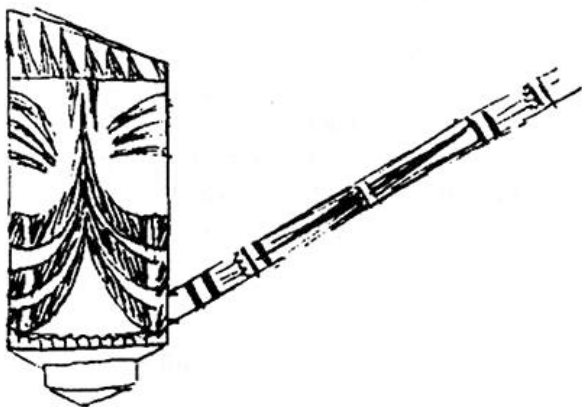
Chingmei  
November 28th and 29th, 1936

Today we are resting ourselves and coolies and Sepoys. Smith is a useless fellow, does nothing but sleep and eat and avoid work whenever he can! Williams and I are thoroughly fed up with him.

It was a long and rather beastly march to get here, the path like the side of a house. But we were very tired after five days of ceaseless hard work. I feel so nice and civilised now after a warm bath, and a lunch fit for a python!

We stay here tomorrow, as I have a lot of official writing to do. Then we go on to Panso (friendly), and, if necessary, to Nokhu (hostile). I am making every effort to get the slaves out of Nokhu without a visit. We are all sick of climbing up and down hills.

Chingmei  
November 30th, 1936



Bamboo pipe  
Chang

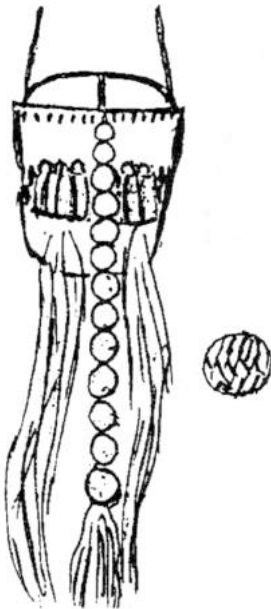
The Chang slave was a youth, as fat as butter. He has married a Ponyo wife, wears Ponyo dress and tattoos, and shows *no* desire to return to his relations, not a word of whose language he can understand. I shall let him stay.

We've had a deputation from Pangsha and their friends. One of them, Mongsen, had a dreadfully burnt foot which I got the Doctor to bandage. He had trodden on some hot ruins in his village. That he had hobbled in so many miles because I had asked them to come is a tribute to his

pluck and good faith. They frankly said they wanted peace and friendship and as a sign thereof accepted drinks from us. Changs and their neighbours know how to make war without malice, and our visitors were soon discussing the incidents of the battle with the utmost cheerfulness, finishing up with an oath of peace.

The Patkoi looks quite an ordinary range from here, but it's extraordinary what a boundary it is. People living just the other side, a day's easy march from my villages, often wear turbans and Burmese cloths and adopt Burmese customs.

Chentang  
1st December, 1936



Chingmei dance "tail"  
the cane balls  
represent heads

We are re-rationing and the noise is deafening.

We must have had one of the most exciting battles there has ever been in the Naga hills. I knew Pangsha would give us trouble, but I did not want to worry you by telling you. Send up a little prayer of thanks that all went so well. We shall have no more trouble with Pangsha: in fact I hope we shall have no more anywhere this trip. I have to try to get some slaves out of one more village, Nokhu, but I want to do it by diplomacy rather than fighting.

A mail is in this evening and the congestion in my cramped little tent surpasses anything you can imagine. Even my bed is piled with papers. Williams hears that the City is simply buzzing with these awful rumours about the King. Lloyd's Insurance against the Coronation not coming off went up to 25% and they refused to do any more business. The American papers are full of flaring headlines about the divorce. 'King's Cutie kicks husband out', and so on. Williams and I are miserable about it all.

Afternoon of December 1st. We collected five more of the slaves from Chingmei. 'Girly' is a young widow. Her mother was killed when she was captured and her father died a few days ago. She wants to stay on at Chingmei with Mrs. Chingmak. Really, she is hardly fit to be moved, as her mind is still dulled with shock and fear. 'Bert' is the youth. He has some relations left so I am taking him back to them. One of the children has a grandfather in Chingmei, so will stay with him: another deaf and dumb poor little rabbit is going back to his father, the last has no one left in the world, all killed in the raid, so he is being adopted by a dobashi and his wife, a nice childless couple who live in Mokokchung.

Diplomacy is completely jammed at the moment. In the area through which I want to get messages, no one dare visit anyone else's village. We plunge into it tomorrow, and then things will be easier. It's going to be one of our worst marches. We go down into a valley, over a hellish range on the other side and down into another valley. I want to

make the next day's march short so as to leave plenty of time for talking. Nokhu is the place out of which we are trying to extract slaves, and the last thing anyone wants to do is to go there.

Williams has a streaming cold and we are all sick of hills and battles and rather short rations.

Yakao  
December 2nd, 1936

We are all rather tired and uncomfortable. We did too long a march and we have a frightfully cramped camp site in the jungle. The food we sent for from a nearby village has only half come. Smith is bone idle and disliked by everyone, and grumbles the whole time.

We had a thousand-foot drop to a stream and then climbed up and up to the top of an 8,000 ft. range. Luckily our climb was in shade. There is a village, Sangpurr, at the top, and we heard that our embassy from Nokhu was at Panso, our objective for tomorrow. Seeing is believing, so I have sent for them to come to our camp tomorrow.



Hat of cane with  
chin-strap of tiger claws  
Kalyo-Kengyu

The Nokhu men turned up actually while I was writing to you. They have never seen white men before, but no muscles of their faces moved. The Oriental is a past master at concealing his feelings. It turns out they are only from a small khel of the village, but that is better than nothing. I sent word by them that people from the main village must meet me at Panso the day after tomorrow. They can't get there before.

To reinforce my message I sent them scraps of *The Statesman*, one for each morung. They will never have seen paper before and will believe that the people who came in today really saw us!

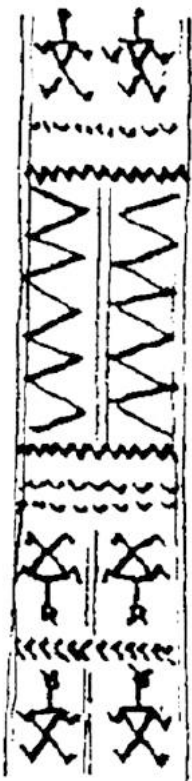
They said they had returned all their slaves on hearing that we were making a fuss about slavery. This may or may not be true; it remains to be seen.

Panso  
December 3rd, 1936

We had a most gentlemanly march of about five miles, ending up in a camp of vice-regal dimensions all ready for us. We began with a climb of almost an hour, with one *very* narrow log bridge in the path. As it was sloping up I managed it all right, but how I shall ever return over it on the downward slope I can't imagine. These damned log bridges are the bane of my life. Everyone seems good at them but me. I hate

going over a single log, roughly level on the top and no hand rail! At the top of our climb was Yakao village, a place of about 50 houses in which no white face has ever been seen before. They were a little sore at having lost a head by treachery a few days ago, but were *most* friendly to us.

I collected one or two things I wanted, including a real 'crash helmet', a huge thing of cane with rope coiled round it, and padded inside with a filthy rag! They use them in village fights when it is 'genna' (against their own tribal laws) to use steel, but you may hit the other fellow on the head with a club, as hard as you like! Also a very fine drum of the curious type one gets round here. I also collected a set of ladies' combs. One for the scalp has fine teeth, and the other one has a long handle and blunt bamboo teeth. This is used for twisting the back hair when it is being done in the morning.



Breast ornament  
Panso

Then we came down a long spur here to this huge powerful village, never before visited. I haven't actually seen it yet, as it is further down the slope over a bump and out of sight. They are all *very* pleased with us for burning Pangsha. This year Pangsha visited them and returned home with twelve Panso heads. But they are not prepared to go *too* far. They don't want us near the village, so we have made our camp well up on the spur where water is a great difficulty. They have brought us pigs and chickens, but their baskets of rice had a thin layer of rice on the top and Job's tears underneath – this is a very inferior sort of grain. All our efforts to get big bamboos for carrying water have been in vain. They just sit about, and I don't want a quarrel.

Tomorrow I am going into the village (with a strong escort). I have always wanted to see it and I hope to get some things for the Pitt Rivers Museum.

Here the views are magnificent. The ridge down which Pangsha attacked us is plainly visible down and across the valley. One can even see the piece of jungle behind which the Pangsha people massed. What is more important at the moment, we can see what the hell of a long way Nokhu is from here. We could never get there in the day. But I hope we don't have to go. Panso confirm that all the slaves were returned when the news came that we had really started, that is to say, all slaves but one, who has been sold in Burma. It will be for the Burmese people to send her back if they

can. I do wish they would look after their people, their D.C.s sit down on the Chindwin surrounded by Courts and know absolutely nothing about their Hill Tribes. Lambert talked to one and was amazed at his ignorance. I'm inclined to believe Panso about the slaves. They long for us to go and burn the powerful Nokhu and would be ready to rake up anything against them that they could.

I've never seen such a village as this for ceremonial slowness. An *enormous* procession of men has just brought firewood and water-bamboos. Most people carried nothing, and no one more than one stick of firewood or one bamboo! It took an

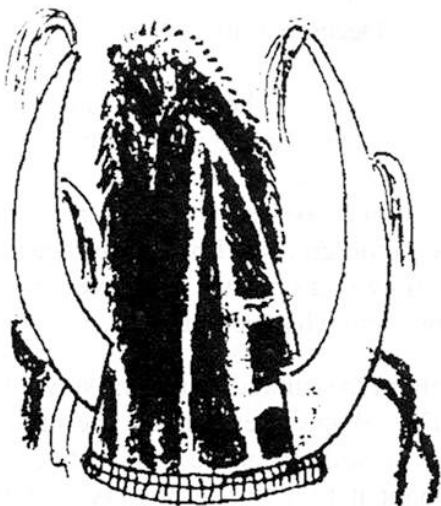
immense time to get this very small result, for the procession had to move slowly and chant all the time!

Smith is having a better day! I really think 5 miles is about as much as he can do without getting tired and cross. Anyhow, having a dog I refuse to bark myself! And he has really done quite a lot of work. I gave him direct orders not to go to bed in the afternoon as he loves to do, and told him he might be wanted at any time.

Panso  
December 4th, 1936

I had hoped to leave here tomorrow, but we shall be held up for another day. It takes such ages to get messages anywhere. People who went off at dawn yesterday won't be back till tonight, and I doubt very much if they went at dawn. No one in this place does much before 10, they are like Angamis in that. One slave ought to be in tonight, one I had never heard of till I got here. The further we go the more odd ones we find. We must stop somewhere so I mean to go back from here whatever happens.

This morning the Baron, Smith and I spent in the village, Williams staying in camp to bake his cold in the sun. The village is enormous, the most awful rabbit warren you ever saw. There is hardly room to walk between the houses. How anyone would ever count it to assess it for taxation I don't know, and if they did they wouldn't see any taxes, for money is unknown. What few small things I bought, I bought with red wool. Japanese wool I can spare, but Japanese is half the price of German, and German has driven English out of the market years ago. So with a choice of Japanese and German, I thought I might as well take the cheaper.



Cane hat decorated with  
mithan horns

Everyone was very friendly, but I should not have cared to go in without an escort. There would not be the slightest chance for you if they wanted to do you in. The gaonburas' wives were in their houses but I did not see any other women. Ngabu tells me that the maidens of Panso are unrivalled for their beauty, and that no marriage prices are paid. Boys are well brought up here. Dotted about the village are imitation Head Trees, where boys practice hanging gourds with the proper ornaments so that they won't make a mistake in ceremonial when their day comes.

This second a man has told me that Nokhu have come in, but whether all the men I want are here or not I don't know. One advantage with the definitely nervous Panso is the cost of food to the village, from a visit by a Column. It will probably cause Nokhu to see the light!

Panso  
December 5th, 1936

Nokhu came in all right last night; men from all the morungs to whom I had sent scraps of *The Statesman*. I interviewed them by lantern light. All went well. I told them they had captured 10 slaves of whom one had died, but they say this was an exaggeration and I see no reason to disbelieve them. They say they only had four of whom one is dead and one sold in Burma, and two returned.

I had a long talk with Williams last night, whom I have got to know well on this trip. With my entire concurrence he is recommending two Indian Officers for the King's Police Medal for Gallantry for their conduct in the action against Pangsha.

In the afternoon Panso put on a dance for us. I have seen too many Naga dances to be very interested. The Baron however loved every moment of it, and rushed about like a press photographer. He wants spectacular pictures which he can sell.

What I am really waiting for is an embassy from a place called Saochu, a village we had never heard of till we got here. They say they have a slave which they wish to return. The dance was really not a bad one, and some of the ornaments were very fine, though I wish the rims of white enamelled plates were not fancied as neckwear! Probably they fetch a good price here.

Nokhu having come to terms, we have been able to shorten our tour a little. We shall all be glad to turn our noses towards home.

Sangpurr  
6th December, 1936

It is icy in this camp at 7,600 ft., but directly we get into the sun it will be too hot. We are getting rather short of rations as Smith is so greedy, he eats and drinks about twice as much as anyone else.

I felt the march today for some reason or another; it may be the height. First we went up a long, long slope to Yakao and then down to a muddle of streams and shoulders one after the other, and then a long climb up here. I had lunch as soon as I could get it and went off with the Baron to the village, a long straggly place, the end of which it takes an hour to reach. It meant I was on my feet from 7 a.m. till 4.30 except for lunch.

Hutton got a very bad reception here 13 years ago, the only time the village had ever been visited before, and I had to see if local manners had improved. I don't think they have, much; every house was shut except those of the four people who entertained us, and I don't suppose I saw twenty people in the whole place. I fancy all property that mattered had been removed, in case we looted it.

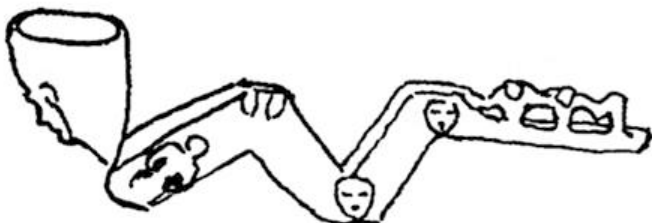
Chentang  
December 7th, 1936

There has been a lot of happiness in our camp today. The Pipers are giving us an extra tune. It began when we got here. We came easily down the long slope from Sangpurr we had climbed so wearily a few days before, then across a stream and up a short if very steep climb to this camp. We were all together once more now. The coolies we did not take to Panso and their guard were waiting for us and the signalling post (heliograph) was withdrawn today. Then there was 'Girly' and Bert and one of the children and what was *far* more important, their relations. The child was the son of a man called Pangting who was here simply beaming. The child is dumb, but an absolute little lamb. The poor hangdog little wretch had become a laughing baby. He came and sat with me and played. 'Girly's' parents were supposed to be dead and weren't, they were here as large as life. Even the unutterable 'Girly' herself looked quite attractive with happiness. Her mother was almost speechless. We mustn't forget 'Bert'. It appears that that incredibly ugly youth has a wife whom he thought had been killed in the raid, but now she is alive and well, even he smiled. Just before the little party set off ahead of us to their home, 'Girly's' mother told me that the slave we have been trying to get back from Burma was also her daughter, and begged me to get her back. I could only say I would do my best.

Two hours later a real life drama happened. The poor little slave girl from Burma was brought in. *How* glad her mother would have been! But they will meet in a few days. I do feel rather proud of getting her back from miles inside Burma, without any reference to the Burma Court. It was all done by judging Naga character and guessing that Pangsha, and Ponyo in Burma, would keep their word. The only slave left that I know of is the one Saochu have got. We had never even heard of the village before, and had no rations left to get there.

After this show I feel I have not lived in vain. I have actually found and got into our own hands five children and two adults and have caused two more children to be returned to their parents. All have been saved from a life of drudgery and disgrace, and very likely from human sacrifice. I forgot to tell you that the Baron got four heads for museums during the battle of Pangsha and carried the basket himself all through the battle!

Panjis are a great nuisance with Sangpurr and Chentang at war. The place is full of them, and several coolies have been injured and will have to be carried in litters.



Carved pipe, Tuensang

Tuensang  
December 8th, 1936

The panjis are a damned nuisance. We have not been in camp long, and already a



wretched coolie has been carried in with his leg cut to ribbons. The doctor got a tourniquet on at once or he would have died of loss of blood. He is in a pretty bad way now. It has been a long day and the last thing I want is an extra pack of trouble. We had breakfast at 6 a.m. and lunch at 2.30, a long time to march on an empty stomach.

Smith blotted his copybook badly. He told me several times we had 'plenty of coolies', taking into account the casualties and the people to carry them. So we stood about in icy wind while local men were recruited (they were of course paid by the Government), otherwise it would have meant sixteen loads being left behind. Then it was discovered that the local men had had no breakfast, and there was more delay while they had some.

At last we got off and crawled up 2,000 ft. to the top of a 7,000 ft. range. From the top the path ran along a knife edge in heavy jungle and we went on trying to find somewhere to halt in the sun. Then we went down a long, long spur, up through this enormous village, and a little way down the other side, to find a camp cleared for us and eleven fine houses built for us. I am afraid the trouble is going to be a shortage of water.

When we arrived the dak [*the mail*] was waiting for us, and I sat on a bundle of firewood and read some of it while lunch was got ready. A huge repast of tinned salmon, bully beef, cold chicken, potatoes, baked beans and cheese. 'A decent lunch for a change!' was Smith's gracious comment!



Mithan drinking horn

Kauffmann continues to be most unpopular in Kohima.<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Williams wrote to her husband, 'When one meets the Baron one wonders why we went to war with Germany and Austria: Kauffmann supplies the answer'. Rather neat, I think.

I see in the paper there has been fighting on the North West Frontier, with a fairly big casualty list. I do hope you didn't get a turn from some such evening poster as 'British Officers killed by Tribesmen'!

A good deal of the evening has been taken up with reports of fines of mithan sent in by various villages guilty of contumacy. Pangsha have paid four. They still admit 5 dead and no wounded, which can't be true, for we saw men topple over and get up again. They say their cows are finished. One dobashi admits shooting 13 himself, and there was more beef going than anyone could carry away. They have also sent in 6 eggs. They had them ready for us before we were there, so you can imagine the state they are in now! Ponyo, a village in Burma, has also paid up 4 mithan. How horribly against all the rules of red tape! I ought to have corresponded with the Burma Government 'through the proper channels'. If I had there would have been no mithan.

I've seen the last deputation and received the last presents. The Pipers played their goodnight tune, the sun is down, and the gates of the perimeter are closed. I therefore hope work is over.

I forgot to tell you the little girl from Burma was restored to her parents today, and I saw them all together. Another absolutely miraculously transformed child, a little smiling imp. Pangting's little boy was too busy stuffing food into his mouth to play, but he gave me a beaming smile. 'Girly' and the little one are the oldest and youngest of four sisters, the two middle ones lost their heads in the raid.

I've been to see the injured coolie: he is suffering from shock and loss of blood, but he'll pull through all right. No main artery is cut and the bleeding has been checked. They are very tough! Tomorrow we stay here. The men have clothes to wash and there is bread to be baked, and I have got to visit this village. We are at about 4,000 ft. here, a very grateful change in height and temperature. In no other camp have I been able to sit comfortably after dark with the flap of my tent open.

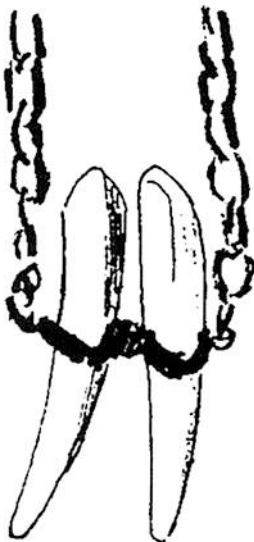
How difficult is the English language! The Baron suddenly announced at breakfast, 'I do not smell so much today', meaning that his nose was not stuffed up with a cold! He also always describes his gold watch as his 'golden watch'.

#### 1. *An anthropologist*

Tuensang  
December 9th, 1936

Early this morning I was dragged off to say farewell to the slaves who went off in great form.

After breakfast I have to pay calls in this huge village, which will take a long time. What a day! Paying calls as fast as I could took me the whole morning. It must be two miles from end to end, and the houses built close together. Full of interest, and I got a lot of stuff for Balfour. I know exactly what he wants, just simple things that cost nothing but which fit into series.



Necklet, Chingmei

I don't think I spent more than one rupee's worth of red wool – the best kind of coinage here. We were rather late for lunch, and then I had to do files all the afternoon.

In spite of this hard trip I am not looking forward to work in Kohima again.

Longtang  
December 10th, 1936

Why go to Covent Garden to hear singing? At the end of the camp is Ngabu in a bamboo palace, and round a fire outside,

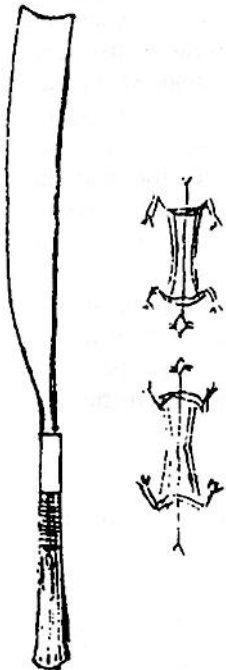
Changs are walking in procession and chanting. Down below the camp Lhotas are singing their own songs. Everyone has a full belly, for pigs have poured in. The Sepoys instead of pigs got the most venerable he-goats you ever saw! We do very nicely on chickens, mithans' tongues and a little goats' milk for breakfast.

I had to say goodbye to my old friend Chingmak, Chief of Chingmei, today. I am afraid we shall never meet again in this world. He is a very fine type of man, and without him we should never have got our slaves back. He nearly broke down when the moment came, and I hated it too. He is a Naga of the finest type and on this expedition has been literally indispensable. His village is on the edge of the slave raiding area and he used all his great influence to help us. Without his aid we could not possibly have got the slaves back. I intend to ask that his conduct be recognised.

The 4,000 ft. climb up was not nearly as bad as we had expected, but Williams rightly described the path down the spur as 'blood-stained'. We went in and out round shoulders till we thought we should never get here. Then, of course, it takes some time to get things out for lunch even after the loads are in and the various areas in the camp assigned to various lots of people. What has really made me frightfully late this evening is that this is a village of craftsmen, and no collector can resist seeing things made. Then detailed notes had to be written up and the Baron came in for information. We are keeping an anthropological diary which we hope to publish. He sits up half the night writing and he has practically all the necessary photographs. It saves me a lot of trouble, as my camera is now old and uncertain to say the least of it.

I shan't have much time for writing tomorrow as we have a pretty bad climb by the look of it. We are within sight of British Territory now, and tomorrow we get to the Dikhu, the boundary river.

Noksan  
December 11th, 1936



Dao

Such a gorgeous sunset tonight. We looked at it right down the Dikhu valley, with Lungkam outlined against the red sky, and Wokha Hill away back to the left. We began our day with a very steep descent to a stream, then over a ridge and down to another broader valley where we halted the column and all the coolies splashed about and were happy. They hadn't had a chance to wash for days. It was also preparation for a very steep climb indeed of 2,500 ft.

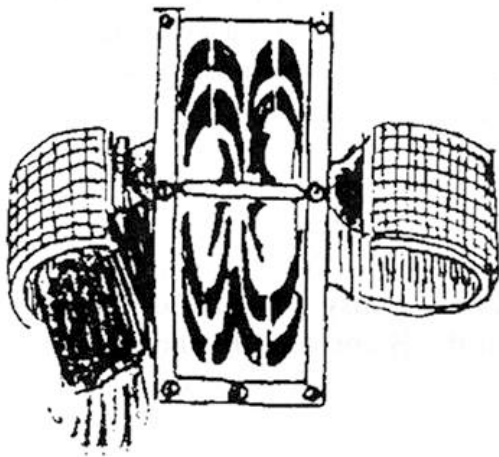
I didn't mind it myself, but I wasn't altogether happy about Williams. He wasn't too fit last night, and he was below par at breakfast, and the cold he has had for days seemed to be turning into 'flu. He was in poor form by the time we got to the stream, and I thought he would never manage the climb. I kept close behind him to watch, and I noticed the Medical Officer in front casting a frequent eye over his shoulder. As a matter of fact, a heavy sweat, a rest and a drink

worked a miracle, and he was most perky at lunch. More aspirin and a good night will probably do the trick.

We have only to get down to the Dikhu river tomorrow, nothing as a march. Williams is going to fish, but I shall be too busy. I have to divide all sorts of trophies with the Baron and do endless jobs. We get to Mokokchung the day after tomorrow.

Put on their mettle by the din last night, the Sepoys have begun a concert. I haven't the heart to get them stopped, but the din is driving me nearly silly. Discordant raucous Hindu songs are bad enough but the tom-tom is the crowning evil. They have a huge fire burning and there is a fellow dancing in front of it. I have just had to get up and see another village which has come in. Daos are the traditional presents here. I have collected about 50 on this trip. Tomorrow they will have to be distributed.

Dikhu River  
December 12th, 1936



Dao Carrier

The last time I went down to this fishing camp I heard of King George V's death. Today came the papers with the news of the constitutional crisis over Mrs. Simpson. We are all utterly miserable. We've no news yet of what finally happened; whether the King abdicated, or whether he gave the woman up. It is not easy to gauge public feeling properly from the many extracts in *The Statesman*, but here I think we would prefer him to abdicate: his reputation will be so terribly damaged in any case. Curiously enough, I feel this more than I did King George's death in some ways.

I stayed behind with the Baron to call on Thakan, Chief of Litim, a very old friend. He seemed in the prime of life when I was very young and S.D.O. Mokokchung. Now he is shrivelled and almost blind. He just sits in front of my tent and watches me. He says that to see me is like seeing one who comes back from the dead, and that he will never see me again.

This is only a fishing camp for Williams. He got 7 or 8 and we are on a very pleasant fish diet. Smith is very annoyed that no one has given him any presents! All my things are going to the museum I collect for, and the Baron's presumably to Vienna. Such a lovely camp down here. It is such a pity the news has cast a gloom over us all. It's an old haunt of mine, with a fine orange tree bearing the most delicious oranges, from the pip of an orange eaten by me years ago.

Nakhu came along to the mess shed after Retreat and we had a long talk. The show has gone off very well, and though we took no heads, it will count as a headhunting raid for all the Nagas who came on the expedition, and everyone will get their ornaments. I like to think that when I die there will be Nagas wearing ornaments I

have helped them to win. Even the Christians I have with me are going to put them on – after all they are no more heathen than medals gained in war! Best of all, I've kept my record of not losing a coolie.

Tomorrow we cross into British Territory and climb the long hill to Mokokchung, passing the welcoming villages on the way.

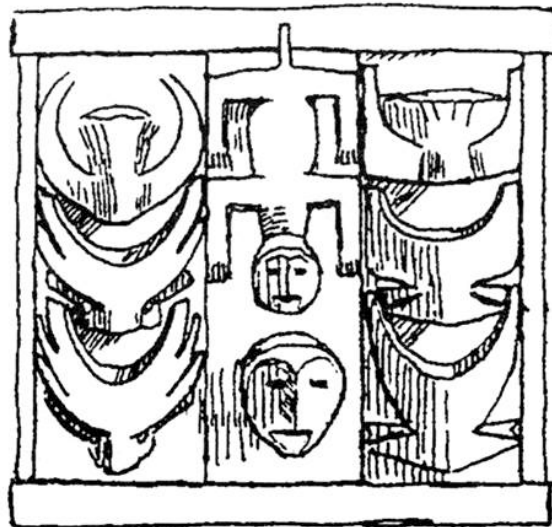
Mokokchung  
December 13th, 1936

A wire from Government was waiting for me here to say the King had abdicated, and the Duke of York had been proclaimed George VI. I am sure it was the best way out of it all. King Edward's reputation could never have stood the blow. England likes a Queen too, and the Princesses are immensely popular. One never hears much of the Duke of York. How bad is his stammer now?

We had a stiff climb on a half-made bridle path, really worse than a Naga path, for it went up and down needlessly and suddenly, and we had a four-hour climb before we got to the top. You can imagine the crowds which met us. Nagas from miles away came to meet their friends among the coolies, not one camp without a drink. I've had to pass three villages and each one had vats of rice beer all ready. The coolies were not unrepasted by the time they got here.

I had such a nice note from Mrs. Williams. Immediately after the Pangsha show I wrote and told her how splendidly her Bill had got us out of it all. How completely calm he had kept himself and all of us. She wrote and said it was just the sort of gracious thing I would do – which is a compliment I appreciate.

Today is a day of goodbyes, and not a moment's peace do I get! Next march – back to Kohima!



Carved house planks  
Eastern Angami

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## GLOSSARY

**Dao** – all purpose chopper or axe

**Dobashi** – interpreter

**Gaonbura** – headman

**Jhuming** – slash and burn cultivation

**Khel** – residence quarter of a village

**Mithan** – semi-domesticated Indian bison (*Bos frontalis*)

**Morung** – young men's dormitory building

**Panji** – sharpened bamboo spike

## TRIBAL NAMES

Angami, Chang, Cheshorr, Kalyo-Kengyu, Konyak, Lhota,

Sangtam, Sema, Yimsungurr.