



# Smithsonian

*National Museum of Natural History*

*Guide to Sugar Plant Hunting by  
Airplane in New Guinea, 1929*

Human Studies Film Archives  
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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Human Studies Film Archives
<b>Title:</b>	<i>Sugar Plant Hunting by Airplane in New Guinea</i>
<b>Date:</b>	1929
<b>Identifier:</b>	HSFA.1982.07
<b>Creator:</b>	United States. Department of Agriculture Brandes, E. W. (Elmer Walker)), b. 1891 Peck, Richard K.
<b>Extent:</b>	Film reels (black-and-white silent; 35mm) 116 Photographs (Lantern slides)
<b>Language:</b>	No linguistic content; Not applicable .

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Received from United States Department of Agriculture in 1982.

### Related Materials

Photographs from the expedition are at the National Anthropological Archives, Photo lot 91-8, United States Department of Agriculture photographs relating to sugar expedition to Papua New Guinea.

### Preferred Citation

*Sugar Plant Hunting by Airplane in New Guinea*, Human Studies Film Archives, Smithsonian Institution

### Restrictions

The collection is open for research. Please contact the archives for information on availability of access copies of audiovisual recordings. Original audiovisual material in the Human Studies Film Archives may not be played.

### Conditions Governing Use

Contact the repository for terms of use.

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## Scope and Contents

Edited film made by the United States Department of Agriculture during an expedition to locate disease resistant varieties of sugar cane in the Territory of Papua and Mandated Territory of New Guinea. Footage was shot during 57 flights in what was ostensibly the first European exploration of sites in the interior. Locations and documentation include: aerial shots of coastal villages between Samarai Island (southeast of Milne Bay) and Port Moresby; villages along the Lower Fly and Strickland rivers, Lake Murray, and areas of the Upper Fly; a *dubu* (communal men's house) in a village on Lake Murray; Negritos on the Upper Fly and a Pygmy "tree house" village at the confluence of the Ok-Tedi and Fly rivers; sites on the Kikori and

the Sepik rivers between Lae and Ambunti which includes shots of an Ambunti *haus tambaran* (ceremonial house) and Sepik Papuans making *sac-sac* from the sago palm; and scenes in the coastal village at Hula (near Port Moresby) which show stilt houses, outriggers, and missionized natives being put through military drill. Shots from the embarkation phase of the expedition include scenes in New York City and the Panama Canal and aerial shots over Mount Hood, Oregon, on return to Washington D.C. Film has intertitles.

Supplementary materials: 57 glass lantern slides from the Papua New Guinea expedition and 59 glass lantern slides from, we believe, Cuba that are associated with this expedition.

Legacy Keywords: Aircraft monoplane ; Canoes dugouts outriggers as transportation ; Agriculture agricultural crops gardens ; Barter ; Adornment shells feathers boar tusks ; Houses tree houses ; Cannibalism skull ; Weapons bows spears ; Cookery ; Settlement patterns ; Missionaries ; Crops agriculture ; Art men's houses ; Clothing acculturation ; Tools ; Language and culture ; Papua New Guinea ; Samari ; Point Hood ; Port Moresby ; Fairfax Harbor ; Lae (New Guinea) ; Kikori River (Papua, New Guinea) ; Fly River (Papua New Guinea) ; Sepik River (Papua, New Guinea) ; Juarangei ; Hula (New Guinea) ; Australia ; Queensland ; Panama Canal (Panama) ; Lake Murry (Papua, New Guinea) ; Oceania ; Strickland River, New Guinea ; Ok-Tedi River, New Guinea

Please note that the contents of the collection and the language and terminology used reflect the context and culture of the time of its creation. As an historical document, its contents may be at odds with contemporary views and terminology and considered offensive today. The information within this collection does not reflect the views of the Smithsonian Institution or Anthropology Archives, but is available in its original form to facilitate research.

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

### Subjects:

- Scientific expeditions
- Sugarcane

### Types of Materials:

- silent films

### Places:

- New Guinea
- Oceania

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## Container Listing

Sugar Plant Hunting by Airplane in New Guinea, reel 1, 1929

1 Film reel (black-and-white silent; 35mm)

Notes: Edited film reel (reel one) includes shots of monoplane being loaded on ship, passage through the Panama Canal; aerial shots of coastal villages between Samarai and Fairfax Harbor along the New Guinea coast; shots of native outrigger canoes; shots of members of the expedition. Film has intertitles.

Legacy Keywords: Aircraft Fairchild monoplane ; Aircraft loading of maintenance of ; Ships ; Canoes outriggers ; Language and culture

HSFA 1982.7.1-1

Sugar Plant Hunting by Airplane in New Guinea, reel 2, 1929

1 Film reel (black-and-white silent; 35mm)

Notes: Edited film reel (reel two) includes shots along the New Guinea coast between Samarai and Port Moresby which include aerial shots of native villages and gardens, unloading of ship provisions and loading a the smaller supply craft used to set up base camp; shots of natives drilling in military formation under the direction of colonial officer; aerial shots of native outriggers along the coast; shots of interior villages from the air; natives surrounding the monoplane at water's edge. Film has intertitles.

Legacy Keywords: Settlement patterns villages ; Agricultural crops gardens ; Colonial administration government officers ; Canoes outriggers ; Military accouterment dress natives ; Millenarian movements cargo cults symbolism of marching ; Language and culture

HSFA 1982.7.1-2

Sugar Plant Hunting by Airplane in New Guinea, reel 3, 1929

1 Film reel (black-and-white silent; 35mm)

Notes: Edited film reel (reel 3) includes aerial and ground shots of Lake Murry and areas of the Upper Fly River; native villages with tree houses; shots of aircraft landing on the lake and hundreds of natives gathering about the plane; bartering between natives and members of the expedition; close up shots of natives in their canoes with bows and spears, males adorned with shells, feathers, boar tusks; shot of a native with a human skull; sugar cane specimens. Film has intertitles.

Legacy Keywords: Settlement patterns villages ; Agricultural crops gardens ; Cannibalism skull ; Canoes outriggers ; Barter Europeans natives ; Houses tree houses ; Warfare fortifications tree houses ; Weapons spears bows ; Adornment feathers shells ; Hair styles braids ; Airplanes for exploration Papua New Guinea ; Language and culture

HSFA 1982.7.1-3

Sugar Plant Hunting by Airplane in New Guinea, reel 4, 1929

1 Film reel (black-and-white silent; 35mm)

Notes: Edited film reel (reel 4) includes aerial and ground shots of the Sepik River between Lae and Ambunti, a native police camp; Shots include: aerial views of a coconut plantation; Father Kirschbaum (a missionary) boarding the plane for flight upriver; scenes in a native village including shots of a "House Tambaran" (large ornate men's house), statuary art associated with the tambaran, male natives wearing penis sheaths, and dugout canoes. Film has intertitles.

Local Keywords: Settlement patterns villages ; Agricultural crops gardens ; Labor natives ; Canoes dugouts ; Missionaries Father Kirschbaum ; Houses men's house tambaran ; Carving art men's house ; Art statuary ; Adornment hairstyles shells ; Dress penis sheaths ; Penis sheaths ; Airplanes for exploration Papua New Guinea ; Language and culture

HSFA 1982.7.1-4

Sugar Plant Hunting by Airplane in New Guinea, reel 5, 1929

1 Film reel (black-and-white silent; 35mm)

Notes: Edited film reel (reel 5) includes shots of a native village which includes women with woven mat headcovers, interior shots of a men's house showing sleeping quarters, ritual and domestic paraphernalia; scenes of men smoking tobacco and details footage documenting the stages and sexual division of labor involved in making native tapioca known as "sac-sac". This includes shots of males felling and de-barking a sago palm, pulverizing its pith with special mallets, women carrying the pounded sago to a strainer/washing trough, decanting the sago starch, and cooking the mixture to proper consistency. Film has intertitles.

Legacy Keywords: Settlement patterns villages ; Agricultural crops gardens ; Division of labor by sex preparing tapioca ; Houses men's house tambaran ; Hearths men's house ; Smoking tobacco ; Tools stone axes mallets ; Food preparation division of labor by sex ; Dress adornment ; Basketry palm spathes ; Cooking sago palm ; Eating "sac-sac" ; Language and culture

HSFA 1982.7.1- 5

Sugar Plant Hunting by Airplane in New Guinea, reel 6, 1929

1 Film reel (black-and-white silent; 35mm)

Notes: Edited film reel (reel 6) includes shots of coastal village at Hula. Scenes include rows of raised house built near water, children and adults in dugout outrigger canoes, large seagoing canoes on the beach, natives dressed in European-style clothing (indicating missionary influence), shot of an albino child, and a widow and two male kinsmen dressed in traditional mourning attire. Also shots of expedition member with specimens of sugar cane; return on ship to Queensland; various shipboard scenes. Film has intertitles.

Legacy Keywords: Acculturation clothing ; Canoes outriggers ; Canoes seasoing canoes ; Mourning practices associated with dress ; Agricultural crops sugar cane ; Albinism human ; Houses stilts ; Sugarcane ; Dress adornment ; Language and culture  
HSFA 1982.7.1-6

Sugar Plant Hunting by Airplane in New Guinea (outtakes), 1929  
1 Film reel (black-and-white silent; 35mm)

Notes: Outtake film footage which includes shots of native women straining sago, natives drilling with rifles, aerial shots over the Smithsonian, Washington D.C., various shipboard scenes, and natives in European dress.

Legacy Keywords: Cookery ; Colonial administration military drilling ; Acculturation clothing ; Ships nautical rigging ; Sugarcane ; Dress adornment ; Aerial views ; Language and culture

HSFA 1982.7.1-7

Sugar Plant Hunting by Airplane in New Guinea (outtakes), 1929  
1 Film reel (black-and-white silent; 35mm)

Notes: Outtake film footage includes various river scenes, shots of monoplane on river, aerial shots, plane being loaded onto ship, plane in flight from the ground, natives in European dress, native villages, bartering with natives, dolphins swimming across bow of ship.

Legacy Keywords: Barter ; Aircraft monoplane ; Acculturation clothing ; Ships nautical rigging ; Village ; Dress adornment ; Airplanes for exploration Papua New Guinea ; Language and culture

HSFA 1982.7.1-8

Sugar Plant Hunting by Airplane in New Guinea (outtakes), 1929  
1 Film reel (black-and-white silent; 438 feet; 35mm)

Notes: Outtakes of an edited film of a Department of Agriculture project to locate disease resistant varieties of sugar cane in New Guinea using an airplane fitted with pontoons.

Legacy Keywords: Aircraft monoplane ; Canoes dugouts outriggers as transportation ; Agriculture agricultural crops gardens ; Barter ; Adornment shells feathers boar tusks ; Houses tree houses ; Cannibalism skull ; Weapons bows spears ; Cookery ; Settlement patterns ; Missionaries ; Crops agriculture ; Art men's houses ; Clothing acculturation ; Tools

HSFA 1982.7.2