



1. DISCOVERY!

Through white clouds and above a foaming river the airplane coasted, over the high mountains, tall as the Rockies. But these mountains weren't rocky. They were covered with forests and jungles, streams flowing down, raging rivers rushing around and through. It was Dutch New Guinea.

"What in the world" The explorer, Richard Archbold, held the binoculars to his eyes. "I can't believe it. Russ, do you see what I see?"

The pilot squinted out the window and nodded. Below them, in the huge valley along the river, lay small tan circles that could be nothing except grass-roofed huts. "I see them," he said. "It's not your imagination. Those are houses, all right."

Richard let out a long, slow whistle. "They'll never believe this back in New York. They will never believe it. Who would've ever thought there was a valley this huge in the middle of all these mountains? That there are *people* living here?"





WITNESS MEN



“How many do you think?” Russ asked. “Looks like hundreds of them.”

“Thousands, I’d say,” came the reply. “And if there’s a family in every one, then maybe fifty, sixty thousand people.”

All the other dozens of men in the exploring party also strained their eyes out the windows of the airplane. “Look, can you see the stone walls?” one of them asked.

“I can see the outlines of all the gardens. Looks like New England farmlands!”





“This was supposed to be an *uninhabited* territory,” Richard muttered.

While the explorers marveled, down below the tribal people were reacting too. They stared up at the giant silver bird in the sky, crying out with fear or awe, cowering or wondering or threatening. Some of them had heard that such wonders existed, but almost none of them had ever seen one.

It was 1938.

These were the Dani people, only one group of what turned out to be hundreds of thousands of tribal people



WITNESS MEN

in Dutch New Guinea, discovered by the outside world for the first time.

And neither the Danis nor any of the other tribes had ever, through all the centuries of their existence, ever dreamed that any outside world even existed. Through all their generations they had thought they were the only people. The only people in the world.

Their world was about to undergo a gigantic change.

See Thinking Further for Chapter 1 on page 139.