



Revd Ottho Heldring in Zetten (Hemmen). There he also met his future co-worker Johann Gottlob Geissler. Geissler was born on 18 February 1830 in Langen-Reichenbach, near Torgau (in Saxony, Germany). His father was a tailor and an active Lutheran. Geissler became an apprentice cabinetmaker, and he too trained with Gossner and was sent out by him.<sup>1</sup>

Gossner and Heldring (the latter called the “godfather” of the New Guinea mission) had agreed to send Ottow and Geissler to Dutch New Guinea with financial assistance of Dutch Christians, *inter alia* to cover their travel, outfit and housing expenses, but on the understanding that otherwise they had to support themselves as much as possible through a trade. Together with other mission candidates they left the Netherlands in June 1852 and arrived in Batavia (today Jakarta) in October. They went to work on a nearby mission estate, Kampong Makassar, continued learning Dutch and took up the study of Malay while awaiting government permission to travel to the outlying areas. This came through early in 1854 and in May they left for Ternate, where they stayed with the Revd J.E. Höveker. There they also met with traders plying the coasts of New Guinea. One of them, Captain G.J. Fabritius, had lived with his family and thirteen sailors without any problems on Roon (Rohn, Run, Rhun) Island in the Geelvink Bay for fifteen months<sup>2</sup> in the early 1850s, and he provided them with

<sup>1</sup> For most of the above, see J.C.G. and H. Ottow, *Im Namen Gottes betreten wir dieses Land: Die ersten Missionare Carl Wilhelm Ottow und seine Frau Auguste unter den Kannibalen auf Neu Guinea (1855-1862)*, Münster, 2004, chs. [2-3], and for Geissler, p. 134.

<sup>2</sup> So Fabritius to Goudswaard; cf. A. Goudswaard, *De Papoewa's van de Geelvinksbaai: Hoofdzakelijk naar mondelinge mededeelingen van ooggetuigen*, Schiedam, 1863, p. 5. Other time frames mentioned in the literature are: a year and a half (J. Pijnappel in “Eenige bijzonderheden betreffende de Papoea's van de Geelvinksbaai van Nieuw-Guinea,” *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 2 (1854): 371; Ottow and Geissler in a letter to E.W. King, 1 Sept. 1854, referred to in a letter by King, 6 Nov. 1854, *De Vereeniging: Christelijke Stemmen* 9 (1855): 583, similarly A. Wichmann in *Entdeckungsgeschichte von Neu-Guinea (1828-1885)*, *Nova Guinea*, Leiden, 1910, vol. 2, pt. 1, p. 83); and three years (J.E. Höveker in a letter to King, 4 Dec. 1854, *De Vereeniging: Christelijke Stemmen* 9 (1855): 718; F.C. Kamma in “Dit Wonderlijke Werk.” *Het probleem van de communicatie tussen oost en west gebaseerd op de ervaringen in het zendingswerk op Nieuw-Guinea (Irian Jaya) 1855-1972: Een socio-missiologicalische benadering*, Oegstgeest, 1977, vol. 1, p. 49; J. and H. Ottow in op. cit., p. 43, referring to the letter from Höveker).





















































































































