Those who travel in Southern Surinam may meet different Bush-Negro and Indian tribes. From the 17th century onwards many negro slaves escaped from the plantations in the coastal area of Surinam. Along the rivers in the interior they founded villages that are still existing today. The Aukaners or Djukas and the Bonnis or Aloekoes living along the Maroni River and its tributaries are descendants of those slaves. During their advance to the South the Bush-Negroes drove the original Indians further into the interior. Their cultures being fairly different the Wayana and Trio Indians and the Bush-Negroes mixed hardly at all.

The Wayanas and the Trios live in Southern Surinam and in Brazil. They have been in contact with civilisation for a long time. The cultures of these Indian tribes are quite similar, but their languages differ, although they are grammatically related. (4)

In literature as well as in popular language there is a legendary name: Wajari Koele. The Wajari Koeles are described as uncivilised Indians, living between the Oelemari river and the Litani river. (1)

According to AHLBRINCK (1) the last member of this tribe, a woman named MALAWNI, died in Cottica on the Lawa river in 1938. MALAWNI escaped after one of the numerous fights between the French goldraiders and the Wajari Koeles, and was abducted by the Bonnis when found along the Maroni Creek.

The Wajari Koeles are not the same people as the Wamas, who are described by AHLBRINCK. The Wamas are probably identical to the stone age Akurio Indians contacted by the author of this report.*

* The author is making a pedological-geological study of the river valleys in Eastern Surinam and adjoining French Guyana. This study is being carried out under the supervision of dr. P. BURINGH, professor of
Another uncivilised Indian tribe are the Malayaimas. The author met one Malayaima Indian, who lived with a group of Akurios. As far as the author knows groups of Malayaimas have never been met by outsiders.

FORMER CONTACTS WITH NOMADIC INDIANS IN SURINAM

In 1937 Admiral C. C. Käyser met some nomadic Indians on the headwaters of the Oelemari river. Van Lynden published a short report of this contact in his paper: 'In search of the Southern border'. (3)

In 1938 Father Ahlbrinck met some similar Indians too, also at the upper Oelemari. The priest described his experiences in a detailed report entitled: 'In search of the Indians'. (1) The Indians encountered by Admiral Käyser and by Father Ahlbrinck belong to the same group. They were said to be Wamas. The priest also looked for Wajari Koele Indians, but he didn't find them.

Thirty years later, in June 1968, a new contact with nomadic Indians was reported. Successively some Wayana Indians, a Frenchman - called André Cognat and the missionaries Schoen, Yohnner and Ford met some unknown Indians near the Waramapan creek, an affluent of the Litani river. They called themselves Akurios. The Surinam papers of that time mentioned these contacts in bold type.

IN SEARCH OF THE AKURIO INDIANS

In September 1968 the author did pedological fieldwork on the headwaters of the Litani river. Seven Djukas and a Wayana Indian also formed part of the group. The following is taken from a diary made at that time.

We had just established our base camp on the bank of the Litani river, when we met Mr. Schoen and Mr. Leavitt, both American missionaries of the Surinam Interior Fellowship. It was rather surprising to meet people in such an inhospitable and isolated region. The missionaries were very pleased that they were able to borrow some gasoline.

tropical soil science at the Agricultural University in Wageningen, The Netherlands. The investigations are subsidized by the Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research (WOTRO). — Ahlbrinck's experiences resemble those of the author very closely. Diagrams of the Wama handcraft are identical to the articles the author brought back from his contact.