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*History*  
**A Genealogical ~~Study~~ of Cape  
Coast Stool Families**

PhD Thesis

9

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **A GENEALOGICAL STUDY OF CAPE COAST STOOL FAMILIES**

Cape Coast was one of the most politically and socially significant towns in West Africa. Between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, it was one of the main trading emporia on the West African coast. By the early twentieth century Cape Coast had developed into the centre of the West African proto-nationalist movement. Long-standing trading, familial and social connections with Europe, had created a social infrastructure that nurtured political activity.

Throughout the period of establishment of permanent European settlements, there was increasing indigenous conflict between the Fante, (an immigrant group who favoured systems of matrilineal inheritance) and the native Efutu, who maintained patrilineal systems of lineage. By the eighteenth century, the mercantile success of the Fante gave their families and institutions a disproportionate amount of power within Cape Coast.

As Cape Coast grew in size and influence, the two systems of lineage created independent and competing histories which legitimised their respective claims to jurisdiction of the town. Over generations the histories supported by the two lineages diverged to a point where they could no longer be reconciled. The political differences of the two lineages served to reinforce the opposition they held in their histories, which in turn fuelled their vehement support for their separate customs and institutions.

Toward the end of nineteenth century, as the church's influence grew and British law became increasingly accepted, the stool ceased to be the sole source of indigenous reaction to colonial and Asante encroachments. The stool's relative loss of power to the British had been exacerbated by an extended interregnum at the end of the nineteenth century and the continuance of lineage disputes between the stool families. From within the Fante section of the stool family, several individuals stepped forward to voice the opinions of the town. Although such men could justify their roles through their genealogical links to the stool, they chose not to. In the first two decades of the twentieth century the political agenda of certain local politicians broadened beyond the bounds of Cape Coast, and then beyond the bounds of the colony. The weakness of the Cape Coast stool and a catastrophic downturn in trade pushed the town into recession. Cape Coast never recovered. A major stool dispute enquiry in 1916, underlined how obscure and contradictory the stool history had become. It was only at that point that people realised that the demise of the stool history ran parallel to the decay of the extended stool family. The stool families' cohesion was inextricably linked to the general acceptance of specific homogenising genealogical accounts of stool history. As the history became obscured by time, so the stool family went into decline.

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## GLOSSARY

To the best of my ability I have tried to offer orthographic alternatives to words that have well-used multiple spellings. The glossary is not exhaustive, it offers *short explanations of some* of the well used terms and names.

Please note in relation to names, when an individual uses their first name as a Christian name, then their surname is listed first, otherwise names are listed as they are said.

**Abba Anseykooma** AKA, or also spelt as, Abba Anseikoa, the female head of one section of the Ahenfie and Dawson Hill.

**Abanyingua** are hereditary titles created by the Oman and bestowed because of great deeds.

**Abba Kaybah** she married Richard Brew's son Harry.

**Abogyagua**, blood stools.

**Aborigines Rights Protection Society** (the ARPS) a society set up to promote and effect unity of purpose and of action among all Aborigines of the Gold Coast.

**Abradze**, Abriadzie, Aburadzie, Abradse, the family name of the main section of the stool family of Cape Coast.

**Abrafo** The plural of Brafo, Executioner.

**Aburadzi-fu**, Ofurna-fu, Egyirina-fu, Dabo, a species of black antelope or bush goat, that gives its name to a clan.

**Abusua**, matrilineal inheritance system.

**Abusum Edusono eson**, seventy seven Gods or spirits in Cape Coast.

**Acquah**, J.M. a member of the Winnebah royal family.

**Acquay**, R. B or R.B. Acquah Government Registrar and Supi of the No.3 Company.

**Addabin** Grandmother of Kojo Mbra I.

**Adjua Esson** the wife of Samuel Collins Brew (snr.).

**Adjuah Atta** head of the Amoah family.

**Adjuah Pow**, head of the domestic servants of the Amoah family.

**Adontin**, traditionally the main body of a military manoeuvre.

**Adwin-fu**, meaning 'thinking people', a name given to a clan.

**Adwinadzi-fu**, a cluster of Odwon trees, adwin, (silurus, river fish), that give their name to a clan.

**Adwinnadzie**, a clan name.

**Adzewafudampanim** or Azzuwanfodapnim the sacred spot in the town where all Omanhin are sworn.

**Afful**, K. a Captain of the No.4 Company.

**African Methodist Zion Church**, one of the earliest indigenous Cape Coast Churches.

**Aggrey** or Egyr Bead, a valuable bead that was introduced in the sixteenth century by Europeans. The beads were probably buried with the wearer at death. It was traditional at that period to bury people under the floor-boards of their homes. In the nineteenth century the beads were dug up in the area around Cape Coast.

**Aggrey**, Joe, Burupu, an Omanhin of Cape Coast.

**Aggrey**, John A.K.A. Essien an Omanhin of Cape Coast.

**Aggrey**, Thomas No.3 Company, principal Captain.

**Agnona**, the parrot clan.

**Agry**, Joagré, Aggry, orthographic alternatives to Aggrey.

**Aguanna**, one of the clans.

**Egyr Ansa**, Egyr Ansa or Egyir Ansa an Omanhin of Cape Coast.

**Ahenfie**, Ahinfié, the traditional home of the Omanhin and Royal family.

**Ahimfu** or Mpakanmfu, the hereditary Ahin of Cape Coast.

**Ahoba ni**, 'objects left on the shelf', children or other human securities, whose services were pledged in debt.

**Aikosua Mary**, the head of Effikessim.

**Akaa war**, in 1848, fought by Cape Coast against Kweku Akka (or Atta) Omanhin of Apollonia.

**Akan**, the ethnic group that includes the Fante and the Asante.

**Akoto**, an appellation by which the Cape Coast people are collectively known.

**Akrampa**, the No.6 Company.

**Akumfuna**, state sword.

**Akunkuran**, white ringed crow, one of the clan names.

**Akwaaba Abba**, a member of the Cape Coast royal family.

**Akyiami**, Spokesmen.

**Amama**, a Cape Coast village, see Amanma.

**Amanfu**, Amanfur, Asafu No.7, Amanfur, or sometimes new town, the people of the No.7 Company.

**Amanhin**, plural of Omanhin.

**Amanku**, civil fights, or riots between two or more Asafu in the same town or state.

**Amanma** or Annana the name of a Cape Coast village that means children of the fig tree.

**Amanson**, seven states.

**Amba Mpokuwa**, a member of the Cape Coast royal family.

**Amisah**, G. a member of the Cape Coast royal family and an executive of the Fante Confederacy.

**Ammuah** or Amoah, head of No.1 Company and a senior Ohin.

**Amrah Coffi**, Berempong Kojo's brother.

**Ando**, an Efutu Omanhin.

**Ankobia**, see Wirempe.

**Ansah** a mythical hunter.

**Ansah**, William, a Fante trader.

**Asafo** or Asafu, the military companies within Cape Coast. The Asafo are broken up into divisions or Atsikuw both of which terms have been translated into English as 'companies'.

**Asafohin** a senior member of an Asafo company.

**Asafopenyin** senior members of the Asafo companies.

**Asafu-Mpanyin** representative heads of companies.

**Asafuhinfu**, members of the Asafo companies.

**Asante**, Ashantis, Asanti, people from the Asante area.

**Asantehene**, head of the Asante people.

**Assumdwi Frankaa**, peace flags.

**Assumdwi Nsa**, peace drinks.

**Asua wirempi**, Akwa Odudu, also Aban Esia one names of the clans.

**Asuafu**, Nsuafu, Nsonafu, Osu, fox, alternative names for one of the clans.

**Atsi-Koo**, a section of Cape Coast, represented by the Mpakanmufu Chiefs.

**Atta Kofi**, an Efutu Omanhin.

**Atwaa-fu**, Abadzi-fu, Bodom, dog Aban esia alternative names for one of the clans.

**Azzuwanfodapnim**, the sacred spot in the town where all Omanhin are sworn.

**Bannerman**, C.J, a member of the National Congress of British West Africa.

**Barter**, Edward or Ned an indigenous trader, who had had mythical success.

**Basonfu**, the seven principal advisers of the state.

**Benkum**, left wing of a military manoeuvre.

**Bentsir**, one of the Asafo companies.

**Berempong Cudjoe**, Berempong Kojo, Birempon Cudjo, the progenitor the Cape



Coast stool family.

**Berempong**, big man/rich man.

**Bilson, F.S.** worked, with a big mining company as an assistant surveyor and professional mining prospector in the Birim district before becoming Omanhin of Cape Coast. He was later destooled, but he never accepted his destoolment.

**Blankson Wood, George** was a 'mulatto' Clerk to Charles Finlayson a European advocate.

**Boatsi**, an Efutu Omanhin.

**Bogyadom**, the blood relatives of the Oman.

**Bond of 1844**, The Bond became the primary basis for British jurisdiction over the people of the Gold Coast for many decades after it's signing.

**Boy**, a mildly derogatory term that became accepted through usage, that meant a male slave or pawn.

**Braffo**, an executioner, and the name of an Efutu senior.

**Brafonkwa**, one of the Asafo Companies, see Brofoomua.

**Brew**, James Hutton, a lawyer, an executive of the Fante Confederacy and a descendant of Berempong Kojo and Richard Brew.

**Brew**, James, see James Hutton Brew.

**Brew**, Richard, the progenitor of the Gold Coast Brew family.

**Brew**, Sam Kanto a 'powerful mulatto slave trader'.

**Brew**, the family name of one of most influential families in Cape Coast.

**Brew**, William Ward, a lawyer and a member of the National Congress of British West Africa.

**Brofoomua**, AKA, Brofumba or Brofunkwa Asafu, originally 'white men's children or servants', that became No.5 Company.

**Brown**, E. J. P. Lawyer and member of Legisla-

tive Council.

**Brown**, J. P. the powerful Asafohin and newspaper owner.

**Brown**, Peter a Goldsmith from Accra the Captain of the Wirempis.

**Buckle**, V. J., a lawyer.

**Bucknor**, A. J. E., a lawyer.

**Burupu**, A.K.A Joe Aggrey, a Cape Coast Omanhin.

**Caboceiro**, Caboceroes, Capasheers, translates loosely as Captain, or minor chief.

**Cape Coast Literary and Social Club**, one of the earliest social clubs on the coast.

**Captain**, usually a translation of Supi of Safohin.

**Casely-Hayford**, a Fante lawyer and J.H. Brew's nephew A.K.A. Safohin Ahinnana Agiyman of the No.3 company.

**Chief Capasheers**, military chiefs or Supis.

**Chief**, a vague term used to refer to positions such as Ohin, Supi, Asafohin or Omanhin.

**Coker**, W.Z. Tufuhin, a Freemason, a respected member of the local Temperance Movement, and a veteran of the East Africa campaign.

**Commeh**, founder of the Komenda stool.

**Company Post**, a sacred spot for an Asafo member, see essuro.

**Cromwell**, J.B. Oliver, captain of the No. 3 company.

**Cudjo Cabocheer**, Cudjoe Caboceer, see Berempong Kojo.

**Cudjo, William**, a relation of Philip Quaake.

**Cudjoe Mbra**, see Kojo Mbra.

**Dadzee**, a member of Ntoto who was forced to sue the Omanhin for money that had been long owed to him.

**Dawson's Hill**, one of the Cape Coast stool houses, and the name given to an area of the town.

- Dawson**, Catherine AKA Efua Ketsi, the holder of the Anona Stool and the daughter of Joseph Dawson.
- Dawson**, Joseph a European trader.
- De Graft Johnson**, J. C. a Fante civil servant.
- De Graft Johnson**, J. W. a Fante expert on indigenous culture.
- De Graft**, Joe or De Graaf, the Royal Africa Company Linguist and Okyiamé.
- Dehyina**, one of the local clans.
- Dey** of Efutu, King of Efutu.
- Dey**, an Efutu title similar to that of Omanhin.
- Drybald Taylor**, Joseph a Minister of the African Methodist Zion Church.
- Du Bois**, one of the early American writers and activists on Black issues.
- Dumna**, one of the clans.
- Easmon**, Dr J. F. one of the first African doctors on the West coast of Africa.
- Ebiradsi-fu Ku**, (Bush Cow) or Dihyina-fu. a clan.
- Ebiradzi**, see Abradze.
- Ebusua**, see Abusua, also used as Ebusua kuweson, seven matrilineal clans.
- Effikessim**, one of the Cape Coast houses.
- Efutu**, Afutu, Fetu or Etsifu, the area under whose jurisdiction Cape Coast originally fell. It's capital was Fetu.
- Eguana-fu**, Eko, (parrot) Anona-fu, Sansa (hawk) Anona Oksubureentsir. Amuana-fu, alternative names for the parrot clan.
- Egyir Penin**, was probably the first Efutu Omanhin to reside in Cape Coast.
- Egyr Ansa**, was probably the father of Burupu
- Egyr Enu**, an Efutu Omanhin.
- Ejo**, An elderly caretaker of the Cape Coast stool.
- Ekar** a round pad of dry leaves placed on the head for carrying loads
- Ekueson**, seven Asafu.
- Enhunyame**, not seeing God.
- Esirifi**, may or may not have been a paramount Omanhin, but was undoubtedly an important Ohin of Oguaa.
- Essien**, AKA John Aggrey, a Cape Coast Omanhin.
- Essiman**, Berempong Kojo's Sister.
- Essuro** is the rallying point of the Company.
- Ethiopianism**, a philosophy that linked the disparate black communities of the world into one struggle.
- Ewusi**, Tom, see Barter, Tom.
- Fandi**, an edible piece of vegetation.
- Fantes**, Fantis, incorrect collective terms for the people from the Fante area.
- Faux Tandoh**, a member of the Amoah family.
- Ferguson**, George Ekem, a Fante civil servant.
- Fetish Nana-Tabir**, a fetish carried out on the Cape Coast Castle rock.
- Fetish tree**, a sacred tree that is said to have metaphysical power.
- Fetish**, Festissos, fetich, Fetisso, the intangible metaphysical activity and beliefs of the indigenous population.
- Fetu**, Feutu, Foetu see Efutu, also used as the Capital of Efutu.
- Fynn**, Rev. Wesleyan Minister and Brother of Joe Aggrey.
- Ga Manche**, the head of the Ga people.
- Garvey**, M. one of the earliest black activists.
- Geraffo**, a senior position within the Efutu stool.
- Ghartey**, King or Omanhin of Winnebah.
- Gold Coast Leader**, a Cape Coast based newspaper edited at one time by JE Casely-Hayford and J. P. Brown.
- Gyase**, Giase, Gyasi, Jyase household guard of the Omanhin.

**Gyasehene**, Gyasihene, the head of the Gyase.

**Gyemi** 'save me', a form of fetush.

**Hagan, J.S.** Supi of No 5 Company.

**Harding**, Rosetta, Efua Harding, a senior member of the Abradse family.

**Hayford**, E.J, The eldest brother of J.E. Casely-Hayford.

**Hayford**, Rev. Mark Christian set up the first indigenous Baptist Church he was a brother of J.E. Casely-Hayford and son of Joseph de Graft Hayford.

**Hayford**, Rosa the wife of Mark Christian Hayford.

**Hooper**, J. D. a potential candidate for Omanhin, when during the Mbra dynasty.

**House**, (italics) a faction of a lineage.

**House**, (underlined) a place of habitation.

**House**, A house within the context of Cape Coast could mean one of the five major houses or areas of the town from where most of the population could trace it's ancestry. The other local meaning of house is the family or a faction of the lineage from one of each one of these houses. When the word 'house' is neither underlined or italicised it is meant in both the above senses.

**Hutchison**, the British Resident in Kumase.

**Hutton Mills**, Thomas, the President of the National Congress of British West Africa.

**Inkabor**, a custom of charging companies to pass onto another companies' land.

**Inkooms**, or Nkum, Nkotum eku mi, you cannot kill me, the name of the No 4 Asafo Company.

**Intoto**, see Ntoto.

**Joe Aggrey**, a Cape Coast Omanhin.

**Josiah**, A. B. Supi of the No 3 company.

**Jyase**, See Gyase.

**Kanquies**, a staple form of food

**King**, an unspecific term that could mean, Omanhin Ohin or even Supi.

**Kitson Mills**, a member of the Ga and Cape Coast stools.

**Kobbina Doku**, an Efutu Omanhin.

**Kobina Foa**, was the Kyeretafo for Kojo Mbra.

**Kodfoku**, indigenous term for yellow fever.

**Kofi Abu**, head of the Gyase, in the Edwardian period.

**Kofi Amissah**, a Cape Coast Omanhin.

**Kofi Amoa**, a Supi of No. 1 Company.

**Kofi Ando**, an Efutu Omanhin.

**Kofi Badu**, was the Supi of Anafu.

**Kofi Karikari**, the Asantehene during the 1873-74 war.

**Kofi Kuma**, one of the Mpakanmfu.

**Kofi Nyami**, Supi of No 5 Company.

**Kofi Sackey**, Chief Regent during the late 19th century interregnum.

**Kojo Mbra I**, Cudjoe Imbrah, or Cudjo an Omanhin of Cape Coast.

**Kroo-scavengers**, cheap imported male labour.

**Kuofi**, J.J. Omankyame in 1917.

**Kurentsil**, a potential candidate for Omanhin during the Mbra dynasty.

**Kurentsiwa**, a female member of Effikessim.

**Kwaku Atta**, see Kweku Atta.

**Kwaku Enu**, alias John Crentsil, a Cape Coast Omanhin.

**Kwamankra**, the main protagonist of J E. Casely-Hayford's Ethiopia Unbound.

**Kwamin Tawia**, a potential candidate for Omanhin at the time when Kojo Mbra was made Omanhin. It is interesting that 'Tawia' is a name used to denote the child after twins.

**Kwamina Afua**, (A.K.A James Hayford) - the Okyame. One of the early converts to Christianity, was appointed by Maclean as British resident at Kumase.

**Kwashie Anfam**, head of the Cape Coast Mpeninfu.

**Kweku Akka**, (or Atta) Omanhin of Apollonia.

**Kweku Arhin**, the Akomfudzihene a member of the Mpakamfu.

**Kweku Atta**, a Cape Coast Omanhin.

**Kweku Kai**, Jao A.K.A J. L. Aggrey a senior member of Ntoto I.

**Kwesi Atta**, a Cape Coast Omanhin.

**Kwonna** , or Kwonna-fu, Odumna-fu, a clan.

**Kwow Akon**, Supi of the No 1 Company.

**Kyeretafo**, to stand behind, to support, seen sometimes as an heir apparent, it translates literally as 'the man who cuts the sheep' in sacrifice after the enstoolment.

**Kylame**, see Okyiame.

**Kyirema**, the drummer.

**Lands Bill**, a bill that proposed the idea of vesting Queen Victoria with all unoccupied lands on the coast.

**Low Town**, or No.2 Company, see Anafu.

**Madam Aba Ayebi-Awhe**, a senior member of Effikessim and later Queen mother.

**Madam Abba Aikosua**, a member of the Ahenfie.

**Madam Aboache**, a member of Ntoto.

**Madam Adjuah Pow**, a senior member of the Amoah stool.

**Madam Aikosua Egyrba**, (A.K.A Mary Mills and School Mammie), head of the Abradse family.

**Madam Aikosua Mary**, the head of Effikessim.

**Madam Araba Yanyiwah**, the head of Effikessim.

**Madam Efua Harding**, a member of the Abradse family.

**Madam Sophia Christian**, (A.K.A Owura Sophia), the head of Ntoto II.

**Madam Wireduo**, the head of Effikessim.

**Manceroes**, young men of the town.

**Martin, Joseph**, John Aggrey's Chief Magistrate.

**Mayah, Chief** held one of the hereditary stools within Cape Coast.

**Mbra Enu**, an Omanhin of Cape Coast.

**Mbra III**, G.A. Mends, Kofi Afari a Cape Coast Omanhin.

**Mbra**, a dynasty of Cape Coast Amanhin.

**Mbrome**, an Omanhin or Ohin of Cape Coast or Efutu.

**Mends**, G.A. alias Kofi Afari, Omanhin Mbra III.

**Mensah Sarbah**, John a Cape Coast lawyer.

**Mensah**, J.P. the Omankyiame.

**Merifa**, Captain of No.2 Company.

**Mpata** compensation.

**Mulatto**, derogatory term that became acceptable through usage, meaning the progeny of an African and an European.

**Musa**, Chief led the Kotokraba Muslims at the turn of the nineteenth century.

**Nana Andoh**, Last recognised Omanhin of Efutu.

**Nana Boatsi**, a patrilineal Omanhin of Cape Coast.

**Nana Egyir Ansa**, eldest son of Omanhene Kojo Mbra.

**Nana Ofori Atta**, the Okyenhene of the Akim area.

**Nkum**, Nkoom, Nkotum eku mi, you cannot kill me , No. 4 Asafo Company.

**NKyidom**, rear guard,.

**No. 1 Company**, Bentsir.

**No. 2 Company**, Anafu

**No. 3 Company**, Ntsin.

**No. 4 Company**, Nkum.

**No. 5 Company**, Brofumba.

**No. 6 Company**, Akrampa.

**No. 7 Company**, Amanfur.

**No. s 1 and 6** were also known as the Twafu,.

**No. s 2, 3, and 4** were also known as

Adontsin;.

**Non-European**, a term used by some writers to describe a person with some African blood.

**Nsimankan**, one of the earliest Cape Coast battles.

**Nsonna**, the name of one of clans.

**Nton eson**, there are seven nton or ntoro divisions. **Ntoro** are the positions and institutions that have become synonymous with patrilineal inheritance.

**Ntoto No. 1**, the senior section of Ntoto.

**Ntoto No. 2**, the junior section of Ntoto.

**Ntoto**, one of the major house of Cape Coast.

**Ntsinfu**, see No. 3 Ntsin or Ntin.

**Ntua**, ammunition-belt.

**Nunoo**, a generation of brothers who were senior members of the Cape Coast stool family.

**Nyankuma Kitsibua**, a species of scorpion, used as a name for a company.

**Nyimfa**, right wing of a military manoeuvre.

**Obaatan**, mother.

**Odefu**, benefactor.

**Odumankuma Bombofu**, the mythical ancient hunter.

**Odumankuma Kyirema**, the mythical ancient drummer or musician.

**Odumankuma Tunmfu**, the mythical everlasting artificer in metals.

**Odzikrofu**, or Odzikoro, a person who owns a village.

**Oegwa**, see Oguaa.

**Ofu**, a species of monkey, used as the name of a clan

**Oguaa Wukuda**, the paramount oath.

**Oguaa**, Ooegwa, Ogua, Iguei, indigenous and original name for Cape Coast.

**Ogwa Besonfu**, Cape Coast town council.

**Ohin**, a minor Chief.

**Okumfo**, the indigenous holy men.

**Okyiame**, A linguist, diplomat and advocate.

**Oman Clique**, a term given to the Oman that was contemporary to Bilson.

**Oman**, the institution that runs the administration for the stool.

**Omanfu**, Stool Councillors.

**Omanhin**, Omanhene, a major Chief who rules over other Chiefs.

**Otutunafo**, household slaves.

**Otwiafu**, a local clan.

**Pakamfu**, the most highly regarded hereditary Oman stool.

**Palanquin**, a special mode of transport restricted to certain Chiefs.

**Palaver**, palavara an arranged discussion, debate or dispute.

**Paramount Chief**, see Omanhin.

**Penins**, Pinins, Penyin, elders, household heads

**Pietersen**, W. C. the President of the Aborigines Rights Protection Society.

**Quaque, Phillip**, first Fante Vicar and a member of the Cape Coast royal family.

**Quartey-Papafio**, Dr B. W. a Ga member of the National Congress of British West Africa.

**Quartey-Papafio**, Hugh a Ga member of National Congress of British West Africa.

**Quashie Amphon**, head of the Mpeninfu.

**Quesi Quansa**, a Captain of the No.2 Company.

**Renner**, P. A, the head of the Cape Coast volunteers.

**S.P.G.**, Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

**Sackey**, a generation of brothers who were from one of senior families within the Cape Coast stool.

**Safohin**, the head of an Asafo company.

**Sagoe**, Supi of the No.3 Company.

**Sai Yootoo Quamina**, the Asantehene

**Sarbah**, J. M. a lawyer and member of the Cape Coast royal family.

- Sawyerr**, Akilagpa a member of the National Congress of British West Africa.
- Sekye**, J. E. Aggrey was a prominent candidate for both Omanhin and Kyeretafo.
- Sekyi**, W. E. G. a lawyer and member of the Cape Coast royal family.
- Shandi**, a form of edible vegetation.
- Sister Anseikoa**, a senior member of the Abradze family.
- Stool**, the name for the forum of government and the seat upon which its leader sits.
- Supi**, the head of an Asafo Company.
- Tabora**, a form or 'fetish'.
- Teki Ankan**, the brother of Omanhin of Aguafo.
- Teki**, Omanhin of 'Aguafo'.
- Tekyina**, one of the local clans.
- Thompson**, J. R., an interregnum Omanhin, A.K.A Tufuhin James Robert Thompson, A.K.A Kum.
- Thompson**, Kojo a political activist in the 1920's and 30's.
- Thompson**, Rev. Thomas a minister of the S.P.G, see SPG.
- Thompson**, Willie a member of Ntoto II.
- Tsinkuran**, Chief, a hereditary Ohin of Cape Coast.
- Tufuhin**, Tufohen, head of the Asafo Companies, a Master of Arms.
- Twɪ**, the language of the Akan peoples.
- Twidan**, Twidan-fu (Itwi, Leopard, and Opete, Turkey-Buzzard) Eburotuw, (Corn stalk) Eburetu Abohen.
- Ugwa**, see Oguaa.
- Van Hein**, Henry a member of the Cape Coast royal family and an senior member of the National Congress of British West Africa.
- Wharton**, Charles a member of the Amoah family.
- Wirempe**, Werempe, Werempedom, were known as the 'Ankobia or Kojo Nkum' (Kojo's slaves). They represented the stool council of the matrilineal stool and after the reign of Kweku Atta the Gyase were culled from their ranks.
- Wirempihene** head of the Wirempe.
- Woodes**, one of the senior families of Effikessim.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **I. AIMS OF THIS PROJECT**

In the past, Fante history had practical applications within local society. History tied individuals to their families, to land, to stool positions and legitimised constitutions. The essence of indigenous Fante history was genealogy. Because of the importance of history in Fante society, the control and dissemination of historical data, was always a central part of advocacy, diplomacy and political activity. People used history to establish their legitimacy and maintain their status. History constructed to fulfil such overtly political functions, is revealing both as an artefact for historical analysis and as a source. This is a genealogical study of Cape Coast stool families, which looks at how power was transferred through genealogy. It examines how once factions of the stool family gained legitimacy, history was controlled and manipulated. This work will also examine how as British jurisdiction began to tighten around the Cape Coast stool, so part of the stool's power began to dissipate among the families which surrounded it. Although socio-political control continued to reside within the extended stool family after colonisation, sections of the stool family began to fulfil their political ambitions through direct involvement in European law and the church.

By adopting genealogy as both the subject of study and as a historical device for linking historical incidents, it is possible to critically examine the genealogical continuum that links early Cape Coast dignitaries with Fante figures at the centre of coastal politics in the early twentieth century. The genealogical continuum not only reveals the growth and demise of the extended family system, it also gives an insight into how Cape Coast history is dominated by a single family and how factions of that family fought to control the history itself. This study does not include an analysis of the financial histories of the figures involved, as studies of Fante mercantile communities and economic histories of the southern Gold Coast have been undertaken previously by other scholars.<sup>1</sup>

### **II. SOME OF THE PROBLEMS OF WRITING FANTE HISTORY**

Fante oral tradition reveals how the most fundamental organs of government were dominated by charismatic individuals. The power of the individual gave rise to a paramount stool with rules and history that were in continual flux. Because of the instability of this political system, the potential for the individual to effect the community was immense, and the greater the effect the individual had on the community, the longer their eulogy.<sup>2</sup> This created a system in which precedent and rules were disregarded by consecutive leaders and radical policy was consistently

implemented by their followers. Fante leaders commanded enough power to overtly reconstruct stool history and ignore precedent.<sup>3</sup> Each leader rose and fell with an entourage of sycophants and officials, chosen from the large extended stool family. The main function of this organisation was to enhance and reinforce the image of the stool with the *Chief* at its centre.

The Cape Coast stool was at different times ascended through either patrilineal or matrilineal lines, and many of the satellite institutions were run with equal inconsistency. Within the Cape Coast municipality, there were several stools, or equivalent institutions, that were all connected under the Paramount stool, but that were riven with opposing and contradictory affiliations. Each institution was constantly competing with others, and many faced on-going instability within their own ranks. Charismatic, clever and well-connected individuals, could rise quickly through the indigenous echelons to positions of great influence.

The constant process of the ascendance and fall of individuals from positions of power, fostered conditions in which it was advantageous for them to be affiliated to diverse and sometimes incompatible institutions. Social pressures<sup>4</sup> and physical hardship, fractured the 'extended family' into small groups of introspective citizens, whilst the political agenda always placed the individual back within the context of the stool family. The people who emerged from this process, seem to have shared nothing that defined them as a single social entity. The only thing that such people had in common was genealogy.

A major part of the historiography of the Gold Coast developed from a tradition of colonial anthropology.<sup>5</sup> These studies were written to solve or resolve the resonating inconsistencies in traditional institutions. Many of the successive works tried to define, sort and order the incoherence of the local history and customs, into a smooth continuum.<sup>6</sup> Scholars have tried to simplify the complexities by dividing the community into categories which mirror those found in Western societies. However, there are few formal structures in Fante society that one can identify as being similar to those used in traditional Western social theory. Commitments to the extended family make it difficult to sub-divide Fante communities by socio-economic criteria.

This study has tried to embrace the inconsistencies as part of the history. The subsequent tentativeness of some of my conclusions, is not a measure of my indecision, but of the condition of extant indigenous history. The pace of the work is indicative of the temporal bias created by the surviving sources. The complexity of the indigenous institutions, is purposely left unsimplified. This is to illustrate as accurately as possible, the confusion that may have surrounded these institutions. Within this context, such complexities and inconsistencies have not been viewed as problems, but as pointers and clues into the internal machinations of indigenous history.



### **III. THE HISTORIOGRAPHY.**

The historiography of the Fante is laden with collective terms. Collective labels have been used by historians to identify general reactions to socio-economic trends. Past literature seems to distinguish three socio-economic groups: the main body of people, (or *the proletariat*, *the uneducated masses*<sup>7</sup> or sometimes *the African*); the elite, (who have also been called *the educated elite*<sup>8</sup>, *the intelligentsia*<sup>9</sup>, *the petit-bourgeoisie*,<sup>10</sup> *the aspirant bourgeoisie*,<sup>11</sup> *the African middle Class*,<sup>12</sup> *the educated African elite*,<sup>13</sup> *the westernised social elite*<sup>14</sup> *the colonial elite or the sub-elite*,<sup>15</sup> *the Creole*,<sup>16</sup> *the Westernised African*<sup>17</sup> and *the educated African*<sup>18</sup>); and the *Chiefs* (who were also called the *traditional elite*,<sup>19</sup> *the traditional rulers*,<sup>20</sup> *the tribal leaders*,<sup>21</sup> *the natural rulers*,<sup>22</sup> and *the natural leaders*<sup>23</sup>).

If read in isolation, written sources seem to corroborate the identification of these three groups. The most apparent are the literate Fante, (very often professionals or merchants), who left a lot of source material and so have been the subjects of the larger part of Fante histories. The traditional leadership and the anonymous majority are less well represented. Because the material is so abundant for one group and so lacking for the other two, historians (by writing histories based primarily on written material), have over-emphasised the differences between the groups, and in some cases historians have set up false oppositions.

The historiography dates the origins of this sociological opposition to the 1860's. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the divisions between the families who favoured matrilineal and patrilineal inheritance, began to manifest themselves in many different ways. Perhaps the most profound manifestation of the division, emerged from the patrilineal Aggrey *Amanbin's* support and promotion of education and Christianity. The Western education of many of the progeny of the Aggrey families, created a cultural division in the town that was to reinforce the differences between the lineages. The socio-political divide between the lineages, has consequently been perceived in the historiography as the beginning of a division between literate classes or elites, and an illiterate non-elite.

In his thesis on Cape Coast, Roger Gocking does not identify the separate lineages and their socio-political differences. Gocking identifies the growth of education as evidence of divisions between the elite and the *Oman*.<sup>24</sup> He suggests that Aggrey surrounded himself with educated men, and consequently ignored the traditional advisers.<sup>25</sup> Aggrey's advisers were graduates of the Cape Coast school, which had been set up at the request of the stool in the late eighteenth century. Their education had been enabled by the Cape Coast royal family, and did not exclude them from being stool officials. The traditional *Chiefs* that Gocking refers to, were the opposing matrilineal stool officials led by Kwesi Atta. Gocking posits that the 'educated elite' sought to wrestle power from the traditional hierarchy, and he

identifies the *African Times* as a forum for the elite's ideas. His grounds for this assertion are that the educated community were the newspaper's only subscribers and contributors.<sup>26</sup> Obviously, the great majority of people, who were illiterate, were not in a position to contribute or subscribe to local newspapers. Education alone, however, cannot be used as a defining criterion of a homogenised elite. The context for his assertions reveals more anomalies within Gocking's work. Gocking claims that by the middle of the eighteenth century, "Cape Coast had become a mixture of European and African customs."<sup>27</sup> Accepting this premise, it would not seem strange to find an educated stool official by the middle of the nineteenth century. It is also difficult to identify who the 'traditional chiefs' were, within what Gocking defines as a 'creolised' society.

Debrunner and Kimble suggest that this sort of analysis is a development of the contemporary colonial administration's conclusions. Debrunner suggests that, "the stereo-typed opinion on the mission-educated Africans became that they were 'discontented and unprincipled natives, principally mulattos and semi-educated blacks (who appear to be an evil inseparable from all Negro communities)."<sup>28</sup> Kimble observed that "there was a definite 'Colonial office attitude' towards educated Africans, which ill became a government whose declared object was to bring education to Africa."<sup>29</sup> The negative conclusions of colonial administrators, were incorporated into the sociological models of those scholars who sought to make parallels between the rise of bourgeoisie in Western Europe, and the rise of an educated elite on the Gold Coast.

These alien social structures are grafted onto the data to offer some clarity to the internal divisions within Fante society. But as Kimble suggests, "Even today, when the process of social differentiation has been carried to considerable lengths, the network of kinship ties, involving obligations towards members of the extended family at all social levels, prevents the formation of rigid class barriers."<sup>30</sup> Kimble identifies several works that used social classifications and dealt with these problems by defining the specific characteristics that are particular to West Africa. Kimble explains that, Kilson "distinguishes a middle class somewhere in between the lower class of peasants and wage-earning labourers, and the European 'upper class' of officials and entrepreneurs."<sup>31</sup> Kimble argues that "it seems unsatisfactory to lump together in theory all Africans engaged, at what ever level, in commerce, teaching, and the civil service, as well as members of the professions."<sup>32</sup> Perhaps a preferable utilisation of this theory, is conducted by Hodgkin. He was "careful not to include the infinitesimally small group of lawyers, doctors, property owners, and senior civil servants, and defines the middle class as consisting of relatively small-scale entrepreneurs, traders and less exalted ranks of the educated salariat."<sup>33</sup> Kimble concludes that it is nevertheless, "clear that the concept of class structure is not particularly helpful in analysing the shifting patterns of African society."<sup>34</sup>

Of the historians who have focused on the Fante, Mary McCarthy is the most uncompromising advocate of the structuralist approach to Fante history. Like Gocking, McCarthy suggests that the aforementioned social divisions, came to the fore with the Aggrey *Amanhin*. She argues that during the early nineteenth century, the middle-class emerged facilitated by the opportunities in business and the accessibility of European education.<sup>35</sup> McCarthy argues that by the 1860s, the Fante bourgeoisie, which had previously shown an affiliation to the British, “began to work in tandem with the *chiefs* to achieve their goals”<sup>36</sup> and “were not ‘resisting’ British rule so much as simply disassociating themselves from the efforts of the British administration.”<sup>37</sup> The actual homogeneity of this ‘bourgeoisie’ is open to question. The idea that they co-operated for mutual gain is perhaps unlikely because it would have undermined their mercantile competitiveness and their family links with the rest of the community.

It is difficult to find a precise definition that can truly encapsulate this group, as Kimble contends, “changes in African society that have preceded or accompanied the development of nationalism are as clear in outline as they are imprecise and unprovable in detail.”<sup>38</sup> Kaplow, who looked at some of the complex detail to which Kimble refers, suggests in her thesis that, “Important differences in wealth, education and degree of westernization prevailed among the African merchants.”<sup>39</sup> Gocking similarly states that it is difficult to define this group as being “authentically” anything.<sup>40</sup> To combat the inherent problems of applying a Marxist classification to the data, Kimble, Gocking, Edsman and Kaplow, have tried to apply the seemingly more appropriate Weberian elite theory.

Kimble supports S.F. Nadel's definition of 'elite' as “a stratum of the population which, for whatever reason, can claim a position of superiority and hence a corresponding measure of influence over the fate of the community.... an *elite* must have some degree of corporateness and exclusiveness, forming a more or less self-conscious unit within society.”<sup>41</sup> Gocking identifies an ‘educated’ or ‘creolised’ elite and suggests that they, “displayed many of the same characteristics as that of their counterparts in Senegal and Sierra Leone... These populations were readily distinguished from indigenous African people around them, not only by their economic activities, but also by their western education and acceptance of Christianity. They were acutely aware of these distinctions and tended to identify closely with European countries and their values.”<sup>42</sup>

Gocking, like Edsman, identifies a clear divide between the elite and non-elite.<sup>43</sup> Gocking is even able to identify the few exceptions that make the rule. He describes J.P. Brown as ‘a marginal member’ of the educated elite.<sup>44</sup> Gocking also argues, that “neither opposition nor collaboration adequately describe the actions”<sup>45</sup> of the ‘elite’. He, however, then continues to make conclusions based on collective activity. Both Gocking and Edsman utilise some level of elite theory in their work,

whilst simultaneously suggesting that those they define as part of the 'elite', actually have very little in common. For Edsman, this is a by-product of his work's focus on a single profession.

In *Lawyers in Gold Coast Politics*, Edsman's project is confined to analysing social change through tracing the development of the legal profession. He presumes that a history of advocates, offers a clear and full picture of the causally complex events in the Gold Coast in the early twentieth century. Edsman, however, fails to place the battles that were fought in the courts, and the personalities who fought them, into a wider context. The conclusion that these diverse individuals were linked because of their self-alienation from traditional society and their ambiguous but uncritical relationship with the colonial power, is unconvincing. Edsman persuasively suggests, that these men sustained their living, by taking advantage of their places on the cusp of the African and European communities. But Edsman pushes this line of argument to a less convincing conclusion when he asserts, "it was not easy for the educated elite to find a position within the traditional system which was suitable for an adviser on modernization. If an educated African was elected chief, for instance, he was hampered by numerous customs and practices which might limit his role as a modernizer, and he became responsible to and had to rely on groups following traditional norms and values."<sup>46</sup> Edsman suggests that only occasionally were there, "educated chiefs and linguists, but usually the elite tended to work their advice as confidential agents, state councillors or, in the case of lawyers, as the chiefs' solicitors."<sup>47</sup> Edsman is clearly mistaken. Not only were many lawyers (such as James Hutton Brew, Sarbah and Casely-Hayford) who were *Chiefs* and *Asafo Captains*, but they also grew up in the households of some of the great educated Fante linguists.

Kaplow's view of the elite is similar to Edsman's. She suggests that the elite, "formed a small, insular community on the coast. Largely cut off from outside influences by the geographical situation, their lives had the flavor of provincialism and their amusements resembled those of contemporary, small-town Britain."<sup>48</sup> Kaplow characterises the nineteenth century as a period that saw the rise of a united group of Africans and 'mulattos', who acted as intermediaries in the period of transition to legitimate trade. Kaplow argues that by the end of the nineteenth century, merchant descendants attained recognition and, "were no longer content to act as advisers to the chiefs... They saw it as their mission to replace the chiefs as the political leaders of the Gold Coast and much of twentieth century Ghanaian history is about their efforts to accomplish this."<sup>49</sup> Kaplow contends that this was a by-product of the larger process of Europeanisation which, "struck ever deeper roots in the indigenous community. This process was aided and accelerated by the marked tendency of the African merchants to frequent and marry each other."<sup>50</sup> Kaplow concludes that this process was consolidated by education, "-the mere fact that they could read, write, and speak English - set them apart from the rest of indigenous society and drew them closer to the European residents."<sup>51</sup>

Kimble, on the other hand, suggests that education did not necessarily set these men apart from their communities or push them closer to the Europeans. Kimble argues, "There was a steadily increasing minority of Africans who had profited from the best opportunities that were offered locally, together with a few who had managed to secure higher qualifications overseas. Such men naturally tended to assume a position of leadership, especially in Cape Coast and Accra; there were always one or two scoundrels ready to impose upon the gullible, but more often than not the educated leaders identified themselves closely with the interests of their own people."<sup>52</sup> Kimble contests that this process was reinforced by the changing economic situation, "as money incomes increased, wealth tended to accumulate in the hands of the younger men, who were more adaptable and more susceptible to outside influences; the introduction of Western education threw emphasis even upon the children."<sup>53</sup>

Roger Gocking suggests that the social structures he identifies were consciously contrived by the contemporary elite. He claims that "The educated elite divided their society between the 'better classes' and the 'poorer classes', or as a reflection of the social importance of education, the 'educated' as opposed to 'the illiterate classes'."<sup>54</sup> Gocking sees this control of the social processes of Cape Coast, intensifying through the nineteenth century, stating that, "by the eighties the educated elite developed a much more conceptual distinction between the categories into which the colonial society could be divided."<sup>55</sup>

Outward manifestations of Europeanisation, such as dress, have formed the justification for defining an elite. Kaplow suggests that the homes of the elite were "European in style and furnished with imported materials insofar as the owner's means permitted."<sup>56</sup> This seems to imply that the more wealthy the African, the more Europeanised they were in their style, or that there was a shared aspiration of Africans, to be as Europeanised as possible. Kimble adopts a similar line of argument saying, that, "European styles of dress were an important as an outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual superiority."<sup>57</sup> Kimble also describes how "Towards the end of the century we find Hodgson writing approvingly that King Mate Kole had discarded native dress, 'by reason of his education and therefore more enlightened ideas', and supporting his application to wear a special uniform on occasions of state."<sup>58</sup>

There is evidence of a clear reaction to these outward manifestations of Europeanisation, from the very section of the indigenous population who have been defined as the elite in the literature.<sup>59</sup> Archie Casely-Hayford observed of his father, who was born at the end of the Aggrey dynasty, "it is an undisputed fact, that he wore his own native costume and invariably did so of a Sunday evening, when he attended the Wesleyan Church at Sekondi or elsewhere where he found himself, and he had an equally good wardrobe of native costumes as he had of English clothes. He was however, in so far as they appertained to men's native costume, for adapting them

to suit modern conditions.”<sup>60</sup> Later in the nineteenth century, it was voices from within the ‘elite’ which called for a return to African dress, nomenclature and the promotion of Africanised education.<sup>61</sup>

The problem in defining an elite in this context, is that people with multiple commitments and affiliations to both Europe and Africa, can only tenuously be grouped together. To partially overcome this problem, Gocking, like Kimble, introduces a social classification system into elite theory. Gocking claims his theoretical position is defined by paradigms placed on the community by itself. As previously discussed, Gocking, suggests that the elite would have perceived ‘poorer’ and ‘better’ classes within the community. Kimble sees these structures as objective tools of analysis.<sup>62</sup> He argues that there were classes within the elite, among them, the educated and traditional elites.<sup>63</sup> Gocking and Kimble both attempt to avoid the pitfalls of Marxist classification by introducing elite theory. Ironically, the limitations in the scope for successfully applying elite theory to the complex coastal communities, made it necessary for Gocking and Kimble to reconstruct a system of economic classification, to clarify the terms ‘elite’ and ‘non-elite’. Although Gocking and Kimble offer the most successful solutions to the problems of defining the dynamic sociological strains that co-existed during this period, the solutions are only partial ones. Their re-classifications of ‘elite’, re-introduce many of the problems they sought to evade by avoiding a Marxist system of classification. As Kimble argues, it is “clear that the concept of class structure is not particularly helpful in analysing the shifting patterns of African society.”<sup>64</sup> This, however, is also true when class is placed in the framework of elite theory.

The question of who legitimately represented the community, the *Chiefs*, the ‘elite’ or both, has been a major theme in modern Fante historiography. One aspect of this study, will be to examine whether these are, in fact, inappropriate questions to ask of a group that cannot be convincingly divided. This study of Cape Coast will attempt to chart the evolution of advocacy and diplomacy from its traditional position as a fundamental part of stool functions, to a point when it was operating as an independent entity. Advocacy developed through periods of constitutional change, wars and natural disasters. The changes in the status of the stool and the citizen, manifested themselves through complex social trends and developments throughout the period. The role of newspapers, education, local societies, the Church and changing attitudes to inheritance and marriage, have been understated in the historiography. This study will illustrate how these individual social phenomena became constituents in the process of change, but did not affect the basic affiliation of the Fante to the stool.

#### **IV. THE TREATMENT OF LEGITIMACY AND PROTEST IN THE HISTORIOGRAPHY**

Because of the historiographical tradition of dividing Fante society into elite and non-elite, there is a subsequent division in the conclusions made about local protest and reaction. Protest that involved Christian-educated Fante, has been treated as a different form of self-assertion than non-Christian protest within the historiography. Scholars have categorised the 'elite' protest as part of the rise of a hegemonic challenge to the traditional order which has led to a debate over the motives and legitimacy of 'elite' reaction to colonial encroachments.

One reason for the debate over the legitimacy of the 'nationalist' movement, is linked to the uncertainty of when nationalism became a recognisable phenomenon in coastal politics. The origin of 'nationalism' or 'proto-nationalism' on the Gold Coast, has been dated at different decades by different scholars. What is defined as 'self-assertion' by some scholars, is described as 'nationalism' by others. Many of those who see 'nationalism' as a mid-nineteenth century development, identify it as having its causal origins in the Aggrey *Oman* or the Mankessim Council, both of which were run by *Amanbin*. Scholars who identify 'nationalism' as having its birth in the 1920s, conceive of it as being part of a literate elite reaction.

Debrunner and Bartels, who both worked on the rise of Christianity through the nineteenth century, identify 'nationalism' as a by-product of the education gained in Methodist schools. Because the main Methodist school in Cape Coast had been supported by one side of the stool, they identify 'nationalism' as having emerged from within the *Oman*. Bartels identifies the assertive regimes of the Aggrey *Amanbin* as the beginning of 'nationalism', and suggests that nationalism in the Gold Coast reached its second phase in the Fante Confederacy.<sup>65</sup> Bartels describes this 'nationalism' not as a causal result of colonialism, but as a result of Christianity.<sup>66</sup> Bartels saw Christianity as the only constant factor in the lives of the indigenous activists, and so he defined 'nationalism' as growing from a local commitment to Methodism. Bartels describes how the formation of the anti-Land Bill movement was enabled by Methodism. He explains, "a group of three Methodists... met in the house of 'Father' Brown to organize the movement against the Bill..... After a few meetings their number grew, and they formed the Gold Coast Aborigines Rights Protection Society."<sup>67</sup>

Debrunner has a slightly different perspective on this issue. Although he states that "Methodist laymen played a large part" in the Fante Confederacy,<sup>68</sup> he sees Methodism as complimenting early 'nationalism' rather than enabling it. Debrunner argues that there was a general change in the complexion of the community during the last two decades of the nineteenth century.<sup>69</sup> Debrunner suggests that Methodism was the primary part of a whole spectrum of new commitments that many of the politically active men in Cape Coast were taking on. Debrunner suggests that by the

time of the anti-Land Bill movement in the 1890's, Methodism had grown to be central to the lives of many of the politically active men in Cape Coast. He argues that the Methodists, "were all more or less politically active,"<sup>70</sup> which was the reason for "Cape Coast Methodism becoming the seed-bed of modern Ghanaian nationalism in the 1890's, culminating in the foundation of the Gold Coast Aborigines Rights Protection Society, a nationalist political party."<sup>71</sup> Debrunner's argument that Methodism was a complimentary constituent in the growth of nationalism, is more persuasive than Bartels' view. Bartels and many other scholars, seems to overlook the fact that the Methodists offered one of the only avenues to European education. The anti-Lands Bill movement required European-educated men among its leaders and so it would seem quite natural that its leaders were Methodist-educated.

Mary McCarthy is sceptical of the approach which identifies these early developments as 'nationalism'. She suggests that to define nineteenth century acts of self-assertion primarily as protest, could be a mistake. She argues that what has been interpreted as nationalism and protest, was actually a narrow group of people protecting their own political and economic interests.<sup>72</sup> Gocking uses 'nationalism' as the main theme of his thesis, and like McCarthy he suggests that it is a mistake to identify these early incidents of self-assertion as protest or nationalism. Gocking identifies what he sees as a complex causation which precipitated Gold Coast nationalism, and suggests it is a mistake to adopt the simple causation that colonialism begat nationalism.<sup>73</sup>

The development of Gold Coast 'nationalism' or 'proto-nationalism' from its debatable roots in the nineteenth century Cape Coast stool, to its place in twentieth century Pan-Africanism, cannot be adequately analysed unless one looks closely at the motives of the major protagonists. The Africans themselves presented their cause as part of their political heritage. To slice across this continuum and describe what precedes it as 'self-assertion' and what follows it as 'nationalism', may be a methodological mistake. It seems that there was a continual process that had its roots in the period prior to the *Aggrey Oman*, which generated a communal awareness that developed over time into a consciousness of what was eventually called 'nationhood'. The process developed at different speeds within different sections of the community. It is clear that the sense of community was fostered by literacy, and so nationalism began among the educated. The process seems to have culminated in the 1920s, with the establishment of the National Congress of British West Africa.

It was at this stage, that Casely-Hayford the congress' leader, (who was a direct descendant of *Omanbin* Aggrey), made an emotive appeal to the people of West Africa in general.<sup>74</sup> By making his appeal to British West Africa, Casely-Hayford defined his political forum as being bounded by colonialism and not the family. Although he justified his position by his genealogical connections to the Cape Coast stool, he foresaw a political agenda which was not necessarily based on the family.



There is a clear divide between Casely-Hayford's aspirations and the protests of the Aggrey dynasty, but they come from the same root. Both Aggrey and Casely-Hayford tried to foster self-reliance among the Fante in an endeavour to counter the consolidation of colonialism.

It could be argued that by the 1920s, the literary revolution of the previous three decades offered a rather 'high-brow' 'nationalism' to a limited few. At grass roots level, the effect of written intellectual polemics, may have been minimal. Critics of the National Congress of British West Africa, complained that though this "self-appointed congregation of educated African gentlemen"<sup>75</sup>... belong to the stools, the fact remains that in this country there are such things as *Chiefs* elected by the people, and it is not ... a fair thing for the people of the stools to be approached by a political party on any big public question in any other way than through the *Chief* and his *Councillors*.<sup>76</sup>

Although there was a clear ideological continuum from the nineteenth century protests of the Cape Coast stool, to the growth of the National Congress of British West Africa, by 1920, it was no longer clear whether the congress had any formal right to claim it was representative. Because the delegates of the congress had almost full control over the press, pamphlets and societies, the contemporary Fante written sources largely verify their mandate. Sadly, most oral testimony has been affected in some way by written history, and so a reconstitution of a stool perspective of these events is perhaps impossible. The debate has continued in the historiography, where the congress delegates, (and those who were said to share their interests), have been clearly identified, labelled and juxtaposed against the other apparent groups.

As discussed in detail above, the division between elite and non-elite that has been identified in the historiography, does not give an accurate reflection of contemporary society. The conclusion that the National Congress of British West Africa was the culmination of the 'elite's' attempt to gain power, does not place this movement into its full social and temporal context. There is a clear continuity of protest against external encroachments that is evident from the late eighteenth century onwards. If one denies that pre-twentieth century indigenous reaction was protest, then one is forced to conclude that the first coastal protest developed with the professionalisation of the law. This misconception denies the historical antecedents of the NCBWA.

The complicated social structures which co-existed within Fante communities from the eighteenth century onwards, have been simplified within the historiography. Historians have reduced Fante society into inappropriate European categories. Although Fante society was profoundly affected by European institutions, it nevertheless maintained Akan systems and customs. Despite this, the historiography has suppressed the Akan constituents that existed in Fante communities. The most fundamental preserve of Akan culture, was the importance of family. The pervasive-

ness of the family system, makes it a natural structure through which to chart history. Because genealogy was used as the basis of legitimacy and ownership, the structure of family can lead the historian into the legal and political framework that dominated Fante society, as the basis of legitimacy, genealogy and the extended family system were essential to the strength of the stool. Within the Cape Coast area, 'family' or 'extended family' was perceived as a unit that contained people (related by blood or not) who claimed a genealogical or familial attachment to a single household. This could include domestics and their off-spring.

The breakdown of the system of genealogy in the 1920s, coincided with a major economic and political decline of the Cape Coast stool. The political horizons of many within the local community began to broaden beyond Cape Coast thus adding to the town's misfortunes. These factors combined to marginalise the influence and power of the Cape Coast stool. Cape Coast never really recovered from these events. The 1920s, therefore, are a suitable point for conclusion.

## **V. METHODOLOGY**

The first generation of Gold Coast historians created a historical methodology that was a direct development of the traditional oral history.<sup>77</sup> They identified the constituent that is common in all Fante history - the charismatic individual - within his/her genealogical context. By treating the history as a 'group biography' or a 'prosopographical study', they showed that it is possible to trace patterns or reactions to social or economic events that would be invisible from within traditional Western analytical constructs.

Although prosopographical methodology does not always manifest itself in finished history, the importance of family and genealogy in West Africa has meant that many scholars have employed a prosopographical approach at some level of their research. The indigenous Fante historical method, could be viewed as a form of oral prosopography. Collective biography and genealogy are the essence of the greater part of Akan indigenous history. This has been tapped and used in many written histories. This is most apparent in the eulogic pocket biographies that were collected by Ephson,<sup>78</sup> Hutchison<sup>79</sup> and Sampson.<sup>80</sup> Though they are based partly on written records, they are the products of the indigenous tradition, especially in as far as they comply with the old Fante proverb, 'There are no bad Chiefs, only bad messengers'.

Although not instantly obvious, a similar methodology was employed in Reindorf<sup>81</sup>, Priestley<sup>82</sup> and Ward.<sup>83</sup> These scholars place biographical and genealogical data into a chronological and critical framework. Priestley's genealogical study, *West African Trade and Coast Society*, which looks at the mercantile Fante, demonstrates the complexity of individuals such as John Currantee (AKA Eno Baisie Kuentasi who was variously described in British records as *Obene, Principal Caboceer*

and *Captain of Anomabu*<sup>84</sup>). Priestley places individual Fante into a detailed genealogical and prosopographical social framework, which explains their actions and status as though they were subjects of biographies. The advantage of this methodology is that it explains Fante political activity as created by individuals, rather than analysing groups as though they were created by economic or political conditions.

More recently, James Sanders has employed a similar methodology in, *The Political Development of the Fante in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: A Study of West African Merchant Society*, where he takes a microscopic look at the political processes through the serial biography of figures like John Currantee, who he uses as examples of the Fante transition into European style government.<sup>85</sup> This work goes only part of the way to fulfilling the potential of the prosopographical methodology. If the stages of data collection are crafted carefully enough, the collated data can become a new source in itself. The new body of data can provide a source of statistical information and general quantifiable facts whereby prosopography goes beyond data accumulation.<sup>86</sup>

However, collective biography has been seen to have problems. Prosopography has been used in a pseudo-scientific way. Biographical data has been treated as if it were purely quantitative. Biographical information, especially when obtained from oral testimonies, is highly subjective and cannot be used as the basis of quantitative analysis. There is also a problem in analysing groups such as elites within a prosopographical project. Because the term 'elite' is so ambiguous, quantitative conclusions drawn about the 'elite', become tainted by the lack of clarity in the original term. These problems may be inherent in quantitative prosopography that deals with sociological terms. Awareness of the problems of the application of elite theory to this form of prosopography, has been presented as a partial solution in contemporary work. Kristin Mann's introduction to *Marrying Well*, reveals this awareness of the problems.

Mann clearly points out in her introduction that elite theory, "implies a common set of values, accepted by all.....Yet in Lagos no single standard existed,"<sup>87</sup> and so the application of elite theory for Lagos would seem to be inappropriate. On the basis of this argument, Mann successfully deconstructs elite theory. But then later in her introduction, she reconstitutes and utilises a system that has all of the same theoretical constructs and problems. This is done by applying a form of elite theory that is constructed around a *common set of values*, (i.e. she excludes certain groups from her project because, they did not "share the elite's values..."<sup>88</sup>). Mann is also forced to exclude "successful educated traders and high-ranking clerks in mercantile firms because of the impossibility of identifying them."<sup>89</sup> These are the sort of practical constraints that manifest themselves in any project. However, Mann's definition of 'elite' is partly dictated by practical considerations and partly by theoretical. It could

be argued that this approach is a good practical solution to a difficult theoretical problem.

Elite groups are, by definition, exclusive, and elite theory demands that the distinctions between the *elite* and *non-elite* be set out clearly. The problem arises of how one justifies drawing a line at any given point, in light of the theoretical questions that Mann raises above. Within a small prosopographical project such as Mann's, the quantitative results<sup>90</sup> could be significantly changed if a slightly different definition of elite was used for the project. Because the subject, (the *elite*), are never clearly defined, it becomes difficult to draw quantitative conclusions from data based on subjective definitions of what and who the *elite* were. The problem may arise because Mann attempts to define the boundaries of the prosopographical project from the onset, rather than allowing the data to lead to conclusions of where the parameters of an elite group might be. Perhaps by writing a locational and professional prosopography, that did not allude to elite theory at all, the project may have overcome these theoretical problems. This was the methodology employed by Wilks and McCaskie in the Asante collective biography project.

The Asante collective biography project, started in 1972 by Ivor Wilks and Tom McCaskie, is perhaps the most innovative and ambitious prosopographical project started on West Africa. The project had three distinct but interrelated aims, namely,

- 1/ The systematic carding of data on the careers of individual Asante citizens.
- 2/ The compilation of biographical profiles of selected individuals.
- 3/ The preparation of data for analysis.

The Asantesem data-base,<sup>91</sup> is a data-base of biographical records. Although it was subsequently used in a positivistic manner, the data is not optimised for that sort of analysis. Apart from the genealogical and professional information, most of the fields<sup>92</sup> are designed to be filled by general biographical information that could not be accessed by a computer that uses structured query language<sup>93</sup>. The data-base is very successful as collective biography. But in terms of fulfilling the third Asantesem criteria of being designed for data analysis, it is less successful. Many of the fields, (like Career period I- VI), contain information that could potentially comply with the logical protocol set up by structured query language, and so allow that data to be sorted and analysed by a computer. But the particular form of the Asantesem fields, allows for general biographical data to be input which cannot be sorted according to any single criteria. In one of the earliest biographical profiles produced by the project, detailed information on the life of Opoko Frefre is presented.<sup>94</sup> It contains information of how he rose from being a servant to training in the treasury. If this information was in a form that could be consistently compared to other equivalent individuals, then through computer analysis, macro conclusions could be drawn on social mobility in Asante.

Prosopography is an immensely profitable methodology, but as I have mentioned it has inherent problems. Though I have outlined some of the problems of prosopography, I would not suggest that this project has overcome them all. What I have tried to create, is a project in which the methodology is very apparent so that if any future researcher wishes to expand or utilise any of this work, they can be completely aware of the project's limitations.

As part of a genealogical history of Cape Coast, the contemporary newspapers have been one of my major sources. I have collected hundreds of obituaries, births, marriages and pocket biographies from the local press. Much of the research time has been spent trying to collect as much relevant biographical information from the Gold Coast press as possible. Birth and death records and oral testimonies were used to corroborate and substantiate the information gained from the press. Although a lot of the information was unimpressive in isolation, in the context of other equivalent information, it has begun to piece into a genealogy of the Fante stool families. The finished collection of data, collated by computer, has given the project a rigid and precise genealogical structure, onto which a social history of Cape Coast has been placed. A prosopographical approach has given some coherence to the complex systems that existed in this tumultuous period in Cape Coast history. It allows for separate themes and histories to be delineated and analysed within the context of the families which created them, and to chart the growth of phenomena such as Christianity and European education over generations and through specific families.

I would like to thank my supervisor Richard Rathbone for his patient guidance and Sara Corrigall for her ceaseless encouragement. I will always be grateful for their support. I hope this work will be of some use.

Notes: Introduction.

<sup>1</sup> See, Daaku, K. *Trade and Politics on the Gold Coast 1640-1720*. Unpublished PhD. dissertation London Univ. July 1964. Kaplow, S. *African Merchants of the Nineteenth Century Gold Coast*. Unpublished PhD dissertation, Michigan. 1971. McCarthy, M. *Social Change and Growth of British Power in the Gold Coast*. University Press of America. Lanham. 1983. Sanders, J.R. *The Political Development of the Fante in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: A Study of West African Merchant Society*. Unpublished PhD. thesis. Northwestern. 1980. Reynolds, E. *Trade and Economic Change on the Gold Coast 1807-74*. London, 1974.

<sup>2</sup> Many of the collections of eulogies seem to ignore any moral stand and simply write about those Cape Coast Fante who had an effect on the town's history.

<sup>3</sup> A good example is the present *Omanbin* of Cape Coast Nana Mbra IV, who now completely dismisses the authenticity of any of his predecessors who were enstooled patrilineally. See for a discussion of the manipulation of stool histories see, Henige, D. "Akan Stool Succession", *Journal of African History*, 16, 1975, PP.285-301.

<sup>4</sup> Such as the Church or Temperance Movement.

<sup>5</sup> Examples include: Boyle, J. *A Practical Medico-Historical Account of The Western Coast of Africa*. London. 1831. Forbes, J. Graham "Native Methods of Treatment in West Africa" *Journal of the African Society* Vol. III 1903-4. Harper, C.H. "Notes of Totemism of the Gold Coast." *Journal of the Anthropological Institute* XXXVI 1906. Ffoulkes, Arthur "The Fanti Family System." *Journal of the African Society* Vol. I VII No.28 July 1908 PP. 349-409. Rattray, R. *Ashanti Law and Constitution*. Oxford. 1929. Field, M.J. *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People*. Oxford. 1937. Meyerowitz, Eva *Akan Traditions of Origins*. London. 1952.

<sup>6</sup> These include: Lloyd, P. *The New Elites of Tropical Africa*. London. 1966 Wilks, I. "Aspects of Bureaucratisation in Ashanti in the Nineteenth Century." *Journal of African History* Vol. 7. No. 2. 1966. Wilks, I. *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*. London. 1975. Kea, R. *Settlement Politics and Trade in the Seventeenth Century Gold Coast*. John Hopkins University Press. Baltimore and London. 1982.

<sup>7</sup> *The Gold Coast Leader*.

<sup>8</sup> Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P.187, Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*. Oxford 1963. 135-140 Kimble's sympathetic ideas on the educated elite are a sophisticated reworking of the view that the 'educated elite' was simply a colonially trained group of Africans. This is developed by Langley into a far more complex and critical look at the tensions and oppositions. *Pan-Africanism and Nationalism in West Africa 1900-45. A study in Ideology and Social Classes*. Oxford. 1973.

<sup>9</sup> Asante, S. *Pan-African Protest: West Africa and Italo-Ethiopian Crisis*. London, 1977, P.20.

<sup>10</sup> Boahen, A. Adu "Politics and Nationalism in West Africa 1919-35" *General History of Africa*. VII, *Africa Under Colonial Domination 1880-1935*. Ed. A. Adu Boahen. California. Unesco. 1985. P.634 There are some differences in the way that they use these terms. In J. A. Langley's socio-political work, the 'Elite' are defined as a group of Europeanised professionals who used the people as 'cannon fodder' in a process that they hoped would result in their political dominance and social exclusivity. Langley argued that the 'educational and legal reforms they demanded, as well as their criticism of the monopolies and combines, were directly connected with their own class interests'. Langley A. *Pan-Africanism and Nationalism in West Africa 1900-45. A study in Ideology and Social Classes*. Oxford. 1973.

A. Adu Boahen sees them as a group of entrepreneurs who used the political arena to fight battles that would secure their economic positions he argues that, 'Although they claimed to speak in the name of the 'people', the interests of the nationalist petit-bourgeoisie were not identical with the people; in fact, it was the contradictions within the colonial system they sought to harmonise in order to protect their own interests without upsetting the system.' Boahen, A. Adu "Politics and Nationalism in West Africa 1919-35" *General History of Africa*. VII, *Africa Under Colonial Domination 1880-1935*. Ed. A. Adu Boahen California. Unesco. 1985 P.634.

<sup>11</sup> Cited in McCarthy, M. *Social Change and Growth of British Power in the Gold Coast*, P.125.

<sup>12</sup> Hodgkin, T "The African Middle Class", *Corona* London 1956 P.86-87.

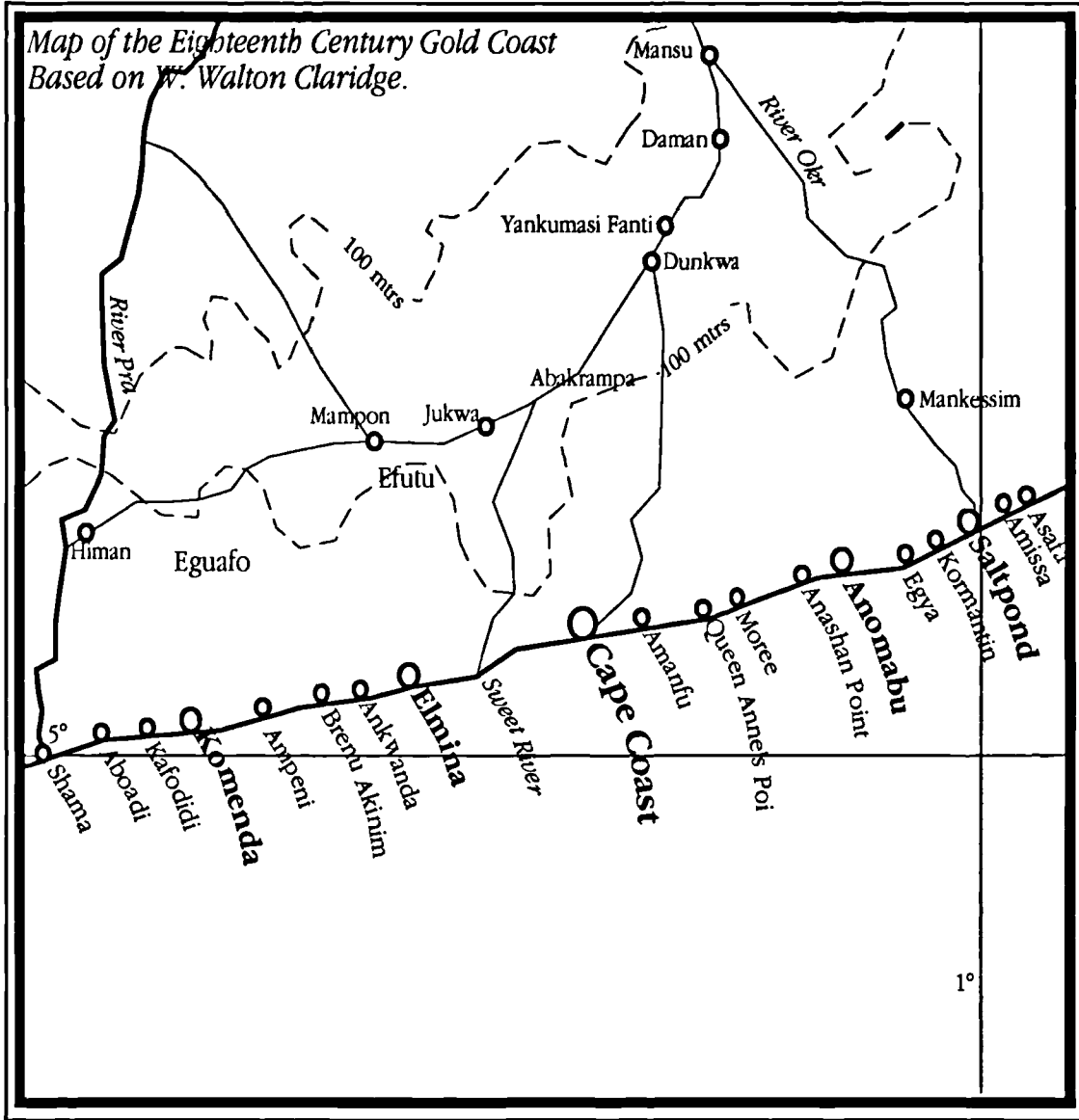
<sup>13</sup> Busia, K "The Present Situation and Aspirations of Elites in the Gold Coast", *International Social Science Bulletin*, Vol VIII No.3.

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- 74 Casely-Hayford, J.E. *United West Africa*, London, 1919. P. 14.
- 75 Cited in Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*. Oxford 1963. P. 391.
- 76 CO 98/35. Minutes of the Legislative Council, 1920-21.
- 77 The *Okyame's* style of history was essentially serial biography. The individual was usually the subject of such histories rather than the events which they lived through. This perspective was perfect for accommodating the charismatic individuals who seem to defy categorisation. Amongst the writers who grew out of this stool tradition were John Mensah Sarbah, See, Sarbah, John Mensah. *Fanti Customary Laws*. London, 1897, and Sarbah, John Mensah. *Fanti National Constitution*. London, 1968 (who grew up in the household of the *Omankyame*, Kodwo Kwegyir), J.E.Casely-Hayford (who was the grandson of Reverend James Hayford, AKA Kwamina Afua the 'well-known' Fante *Okyame*, See, Casely-Hayford, J.E. *Ethiopia Unbound; Studies in Race Emancipation*. London, 1969. First published London, 1911. P. 71 ) and Joseph de Graft Johnson (who was the grandson of the linguist, Joseph de Graft. See, De Graft Johnson, Joseph *Toward Nationhood in West Africa*, London, 1928. See introduction. See also *Royal Gold Coast Gazette* ,18 March 1823. P 1). The earliest books came directly from the households of the *Okyame* with the tradition of telling old stories and retracing genealogy for juridical and political reasons, but primarily for pleasure. Ray Jenkins' thesis discusses the use and manipulation of history. See, Jenkins, R. *Gold Coast Historians and Their Pursuit of the Gold Coast Pasts, 1882-1917*. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Birmingham, 1985.
- 78 Ephson, I. *Gold Coast Celebrities* Accra 1969. Please note: references to Ephson are listed under the subjects' names because of the confusion of pagination within the volume.
- 79 Hutchison, CF *Pen Pictures of Modern West Africans* , London, 1930.



- 80 Sampson, M.J *Gold Coast Men of Affairs*. London, 1937.
- 81 Reindorf, Carl Christian. *The History of the Gold Coast and Asante*. Accra, 1951.
- 82 Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969.
- 83 Ward, W.E.F. *A History of Ghana*. London. 1958.
- 84 Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P.13.
- 85 Sanders uses as an example, John Currantee who became ruler not because he was from any of the two or three local ruling families but because he was a wealthy man capable of supporting local wars. Sanders, J.R. Sanders, J.R. *The Political Development of the Fante in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: A Study of West African Merchant Society*. Unpublished PhD. thesis. Northwestern. 1980. Reynolds, E. *Trade and Economic Change on the Gold Coast 1807-74*. London, 1974. P.5.
- 86 The prosopographer is usually attracted to a group or family because of a unique and sometimes ethereal quality that is possessed by it. At first that quality seems to distinguish the group clearly from the groups that surround it. Wittgenstein called that ethereal quality 'family resemblance'. *In a family there need be nothing common to all the members, nor need any member be taken as a paradigm, but the members form 'a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing' like the fibres that make up a thread. But what becomes apparent to the prosopographer who analyses a group closely, is how groups dissolve into other groups and then dissolve further into equally complex individuals, as families merge into other families. At this point the ethereal fibres of 'family resemblance' cease to be strong enough to sustain the groups definition. Groups that at first seemed to have an independent reality fade to the point where only location, era and the historians terms seem to hold the group together.*
- 87 Mann, Kristin *Marrying Well*, Cambridge. 1985. P.5.
- 88 Ibid., P.6.
- 89 Ibid.
- 90 Many of which are presented in percentage form.
- 91 A card Index system held on a Computer, it can be sorted by criteria that are set up by the user.
- 92 A Field is the term given to one the subsections of the database, that could be, name or date.
- 93 The standard method of sorting and finding information in a data-base.
- 94 See Asante Seminar '75 No.1 March 1975. *Proceedings Of Meetings Held At North Western University 1974-1975*. P.7 & 8.



**CHAPTER I**  
**ABORIGINALS, IMMIGRANTS AND PROGENITORS,**  
**EDWARD BARTER TO REV. PHILIP QUAQUE,**  
**TO 1800**



*This Picture shows the market of Cabo Corso, just over a mile to the east of the Castle de Mina. It is a good trading-place, having the finest Market of all the Towns, which is why I have chosen it. **A** is the house or residence of the Captain of this place. **B** is the Hut or Barn in which the Captain stores his Millie. **C** is the Market for Bananas and fruits, as well as the place where they sell meat. **D** is the Lodge where Peasants come and sit in the Market with their pots of Palm wine. **E** is the Chicken Market. **F** is the Fish Market. **G** is the wood Market. **H** is the Rice Market, where Millie is also sold. **I** is the place where fresh water is for sale. **K** is the early Market, where they sell Sugar-cane. **L**: here Holland Linen, which the Peasants have brought ashore from the Ships lying opposite their quarter, is measured out in fathoms and remeasured. **M** is the place where women from the Castle de Mina come and sit in the market with their Kanquies. **N** is the sacrificial table of Fetisso, their God. **O** are the Dutchmen who come to the Market to buy something. **P** is the Captain's guardsmen, walking with their weapons. **Q** is the road to the sea-shore. **R** is the road to the Castle de Mina. **S** is the road to Foetu (Fetu) and other Inland Towns.<sup>1</sup>*

## **I. THE FANTE MIGRATION TO EFUTU AND THE INTERRELATIONSHIP OF CLAN SYSTEMS.**

Perhaps the origins of *Oguaa*<sup>2</sup> have now been lost.<sup>3</sup> What remains are the complex origins of diverse groups of people who have lived in the area that is now called Cape Coast. *Oguaa* was originally a small village that was under the paramourcy of the *Omanbir*<sup>4</sup> of Efutu.<sup>5</sup> As Cape Coast, it became the last stop for the people of the interior as they migrated south and the first stop for the Europeans as they sought what was hidden beyond the hills that surround it. With each new wave of migrating Fante<sup>6</sup> and each new influx of Europeans, Cape Coast acquired new customs and each added its own account of the town's origins.

The Efutu migrated south some generations before the first Europeans arrived on the coast, and they had found a healthy trade in fishing and mining iron and perhaps gold,<sup>7</sup> in the hills that surround what is today Cape Coast. The Fante had followed the Efutu and began to establish their own mining communities. An excavation of a 'pre-European' Fante iron smelting site began in November 1964.<sup>8</sup> The excavation revealed the intricate smelting system which gave evidence of smelting skills that had developed over generations by the Efutu. "A complete absence of European articles"<sup>9</sup> seems to date the site somewhere between the mid-fifteenth and mid-seventeenth centuries.<sup>10</sup>

Close to the excavated hill top settlements was an old Fante village, Amanma (that means 'children of the fig tree').<sup>11</sup> The inhabitants of the village have claimed that "they were of the Anoma clan"<sup>12</sup> and that their ancestors had originally migrated from Yabiew. They claim to have been led southwards by an *Obin* called Nana Bankuma, and to have founded their village "seven years before Cape Coast."<sup>13</sup> If one can trust the traditional chronology which suggests that Amanma was founded seven years before the founding of Cape Coast castle, and Yabiew ten years before the arrival of the Dutch, this may help us in approximately dating the Fante migration at some point in the mid-fifteenth century. The archaeologist D.A. Penfold suggests, "It would appear then that before the arrival of Europeans on the coast, the hills around Cape Coast were populated by Fantes smelting iron, and making pottery. Presumably, with the building of the castle at Elmina and then the castle at Cape Coast, these people began to drift into the towns, leaving their settlements."<sup>14</sup>

Although it is impossible to date when the migration began, the level of development revealed by the excavated Fante mines implies that the migration had been taking place for some decades before the arrival of the first Europeans, and it continued for some time after their arrival. This seems to indicate that the influx of the Fante into the coastal sea ports, as witnessed by the first Europeans, may have been the tail end of the migratory movement that began with the original Fante split from the demographic core of the parent language group, the *Akan*.

The *Akan* still clearly exhibit a high degree of cultural homogeneity.<sup>15</sup> The *Akan* share a variety of common traditions, such as similar notions of clan. Such common traditions date back to the period when all of the variegated polities that make up the *Akan* were a single entity. A.B. Ellis, one of the earliest collectors of 'pre-migration' oral traditions, suggests that the origin of the names Asante and Fante, date back to this period. He states that, "when the *Fantis* and *Ashantis* formed one nation, they were, whilst engaged in war with some inland power, reduced to the verge of starvation by the destruction of their provision grounds. In this extremity they saved themselves, some by eating of a plant named *shan*, and others of a plant named *fan*; and the two words, together with the verb *di*, 'to eat,' made the names *shan-di* and *fan-di*, which in course of time became *Ashanti* and *Fanti*."<sup>16</sup> Although the accuracy of this conjecture is debatable, it may well have been war or perhaps lack of food that drove the *Fante* southward towards what was traditionally *Efutu* land.

The *Efutu* did offer some resistance to the encroaching *Fante*, and the hardship of the beleaguered *Fante* forces is said to have led to the discovery of palm wine. A.B. Ellis relates the local tradition that, "When the *Fantis* were marching from the interior to the sea-coast, the people already living in the forest tried to stop them, and the *Fantes* had to fight their way through. The scouts who headed the march were led by a celebrated hunter, named *Ansah*. This man had with him a dog, which always accompanied him; and one day, when out scouting, it led him to a palm-tree, which had been thrown down by an elephant that had bored a hole in it with its tusk, in order to drink the sap. *Ansah* observed the sap still flowing from the hole, and fearing to taste it himself, lest it might be poisonous, gave some to his dog. Next day, finding that the dog had suffered no ill effects, he drank some of it."<sup>17</sup> This and many other similar accounts are common to all the *Fante* and although their content may not be completely accurate, they operate as clear indications of common origins.

As the *Fante* moved south, families and groups settled along the way, founding villages which maintained strong relationships with the *Fante* who continued on to the coast. Even today, the oral tradition emphasizes that the *Abin* of "Abura, *Abiadzi* and *Kwaman* .... are all brothers and not under each other.. if the three chiefs meet together they all call each other brother."<sup>18</sup> These *Abin* all give the same account of how, "we migrated from somewhere, but when we came, ... we fought with the original settlers and drove them."<sup>19</sup> The fraternal links created through the hardships and wars of the migration have never been relinquished. The *Chief* of *Dominase* said "... We all came from *Teckiman*. On account of this, if the *Omanhene* of *Abrakrampah* dies, a notification is sent to me and I go to perform the Funeral custom."<sup>20</sup> These relationships between the different *Fante* towns have been maintained, whereas, *Crowther* argued that "the original relationship between the *Akan* and the *Efutu* peoples is too remote in point of time as to evade enquiry, but, though there is a distinction of language and of constitutional type, they share a common system of

tribes or clans.”<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, the tradition of the everlasting artificer of metals, (who is said to have created man and given rise to the clan system), is common to both the *Akan* and the *Efutu*. As E.J.P. Brown described,

*Odumankuma Tunmfu (the everlasting artificer in metals) created Odumankuma Bombofu (the ancient hunter) and gave him a gun to hunt with in the field. He also gave him a leaf to rub in both hands and to squeeze the juice on the first animal he would find on his way, when it would be transformed into a handsome maiden.*

*He accordingly set out on his mission and the first animal to cross his way was Nyankuma Kitsibua (a species of scorpion); he dropped the juice of the leaf on it and it instantly assumed the shape of an Ofu (a species of monkey). Ofu told Odumankuma Bombofu that it was not the right beast to be transformed into a human being but the fox, the most wily of the beasts of the field. If, therefore, he would restore it to its former shape it would point out the fox to him. Odumankuma Bombofu reversed the process of transformation and Nyankuma Kitsibua resumed its original shape. Nyankuma Kitsibua led him to the hole of the fox and fetched it out Odumankuma Bombofu squeezed the juice of the leaf on the fox and transformed it into a beautiful maiden. He took her in marriage, naming her Odumankuma Kyirema (the ancient drummer or musician.)*

*Odumankuma Bombofu and Odumankuma Kyirema lived together and begat many children. Odumankuma Tunmfu gave directions to their male children also to transform animals of their own choice by the same transformation process employed by Odumankuma Bombofu into women and marry them. The transformed beasts thus became the totems of the various tribes or clans by which they are denominated.<sup>22</sup>*

There are various versions of the clans' origins. Each clan includes the tradition of the everlasting artificer of metals in their own particular account of origination. The *Annona*, or parrot clan tell a story of, an ancestor who was “a woman who went to some far distant country... and on the way home she met a murderer, who was about to assault her, but following native fashion, he first asked her with whom she was walking; she boldly replied, her people were coming behind. He asked who they were, and how many; she shouted, and a parrot that was approaching answered, ‘Ohoo!’ The man, thinking somebody was coming, of a truth, ran away, leaving the woman to continue on her road. After some time she returned and brought back her children from the far country, and this family originated the *Agona* tribe, which ... spread all over Assin, Ashanti, Fanti, and other countries; and all *Agonas* are consequently descended from that woman, and all *Agonas* revere the parrot whose ancestor saved their ancestor from disgrace and even death.”<sup>23</sup> Though each version of origination is substantially different, the clan's nomenclature and the clan's role rarely differed.<sup>24</sup>

## **II. THE ADVENT OF COASTAL TRADE.**

The large town of Efutu, where the paramount stool of the Efutu people was lodged, would have attracted many of the migrating Fante. Through the clan system, the migrating Fante families could have settled and become assimilated into Efutu equivalents of their own clan groups and those who founded new towns, would have fallen under the paramountcy of the Efutu *Omanhin*. It is clear, therefore, that prior to the arrival of the Europeans, the Fante and other settlers in the region, were the subjects of the Efutu. Thus, it has been concluded that during the mid-to-late-fifteenth century, the inhabitants of *Oguaa* were an amalgam of different groups - including the Abra, but that the area was probably dominated by the "so-called aboriginal Afutu (Fetu or Etsifu) and Asebu (Saboe) people."<sup>25</sup>

The arrival of the Europeans in *Oguaa* and Elmina at the end of the fifteenth century was perhaps one of most important climacterics in the history of these coastal towns as they were introduced to European culture. The introduction of European trade realigned the relative importance of the coastal towns for the Efutu people. The traditional indigenous trade between Efutu and the interior became increasingly supplanted by the new coastal trade in which individual Efutu and Fante assumed the role of middlemen in the new trade between the Europeans and the Asante. The first Europeans traded from their ships and only occasionally went ashore, and so were at the mercy of the coastal traders. This limited view of the coast led early Europeans to assume that, "The *Blacks* of the gold coast are for the most part very rich, through the great trade they drive with Europeans, both aboard the ships and ashore, bartering their gold, for ... *European* commodities, of which they make a vast profit up the inland.[sic]"<sup>26</sup>

For *Oguaa* the initial build up of this trade was gradual. By 1556, Cape Coast "consisted of only some twenty houses, which were enclosed by a rush fence about 5ft high."<sup>27</sup> Mueller, a contemporary Danish chaplain, described the Efutu capital of Fetu which "lay some twelve miles inland from Cape Coast. It had a large and busy market-place which was also used for singing and dancing. The town itself consisted of a maze of narrow, deep and often muddy alleyways. It was about three times the size of the village of Ugwa which surrounded Cape Coast Castle. The houses of Cape Coast, however, were often better than those of Fetu City because many Accani traders<sup>28</sup> lived there."<sup>29</sup> Traders such as the Accani began to invest in permanent residences in Cape Coast, using the town's location to enable them to trade as middlemen between the Europeans and the Efutu and Asante.

The Europeans quickly became aware that further inland there were "even bigger Towns with larger populations than those on the coast."<sup>30</sup> The potential for trading relatively inexpensive utilitarian goods in return for expensive metals was almost unlimited. However, the scale of profit was substantially depleted for the Europeans by dealing through the coastal traders. The Europeans were middlemen

themselves, selling the gold and occasional ivory cargoes on to merchants in Europe. The European traders sought to maximize their profits and some endeavoured to probe into the interior, and a few entrepreneurs began projects that cut out the African middlemen all together. The Europeans' lack of experience perhaps meant that many of these early projects were no more than experiments. A non-contemporary oral account suggests that in one of the earliest projects, during "the last half of the 15th century, Fernando Gomez opened a mine at Approbi on the Prah side of Commenda, and as tradition says that in the year 1662 the mine collapsed."<sup>31</sup> Most of the Europeans were more cautious and began by building trade upon relationships with the coastal peoples.

The Europeans were able to attract the Fante and Efutu traders to Cape Coast because they were bringing in new goods in large quantities. In the early seventeenth century, Pieter de Marees wrote, "we bring them (the Blacks) large amounts of Silesian Linen, which sells there in great quantities, because they clothe themselves with it and it is the most popular cloth which they use to wear. In the second place, all sorts of basins are brought there, such as small and large Neptunes, Barbers' Basins, cooking Basins, *fater*-Basins, chased basins, big Scottish Pans, not less than 2 fathoms in circumference, and small rimless Cups."<sup>32</sup>

The early Europeans also introduced what was to become a local institution - the *Aggrey* or *Egyr* bead. Some of the coastal traders began to specialise in the purchase and sale "of Venetian Beads of all sorts of colours".<sup>33</sup> De Marees described how the local people preferred "one colour to another. They break them into four or five little pieces, polish them on a stone in the way children polish cherry-stones, string them on Tree-bark in bunches of ten, and trade extensively in this commodity. These polished Beads they wear around their necks, hands and ankles. They also use round Paternoster-beads, especially big, round *Contoirteekens* which they hang and plait in their hair, letting them thus dangle along their ears."<sup>34</sup> The beautiful abstract designs that were created by polishing small pieces of Venetian beads were mistaken by the Victorian traveller A.B. Ellis as being the same as beads that had "been found in ancient tombs in North Africa, in others in Thebes, and in parts of India."<sup>35</sup> Ellis suggested that it was "not unreasonable to ascribe a Phoenician origin to them."<sup>36</sup> This fuelled the false speculation that the Phoenicians had direct trading links with the *Akan*.

Until 1620, Elmina had developed at a faster rate than Cape Coast with the encouragement of consecutive European factors. But during the 1620s disease and inter-state wars took Elmina into a decline. Bosman wrote of Elmina in 1629, "about 15 or sixteen Years past it was very Populous, and eight times as strong as at present, the Inhabitants being then very Terrible to all the Negroes on the Coast, and such as could under a good General succeed in great Undertakings; but about 15 Years past the Small-Pox swept away so many, and since by the *Commanian* Wars, together



with the Tyrannical Government of some of their Generals, they have been so miserably Depopulated and Impoverished, that 'tis hardly to be believed how weak it is at present."<sup>37</sup> The way was thus left open for Cape Coast to become the foremost trading town on this part of the coast.

The continual movement of people into and within the coastal region, and the power struggles which ensued, created a backdrop of unrest and uncertainty. The Europeans were quick to point out that the coastal people, "...easily find a reason to make war on one another. But the wars do not last long; they are started with great speed and also quickly ended. They very easily make war on one another, for the Kings are so embittered and angry with one another and are so haughty that one will not tolerate the other; and consequently they immediately challenge one another to take the field and wage a battle."<sup>38</sup>

The Europeans were soon drawn into the inter-state wars. De Marees' vivid account of the situation describes how, "In the year 1570 when Don Sebastian was King of Portugal and ruled over the Castle of Mina, and the Portuguese were waging war on the people of Comando and Foetu, they came with a great number of Soldiers and drove away the Inhabitants and burnt their Towns, namely Comando and Foetu. The Negroes gathered in the Forest, watched the Portuguese returning to their Castle and murdered and killed over three hundred of them, whose heads I have seen having counted up to fifty of them, lying buried above the ground."<sup>39</sup> If it had not been for the use of traditional weapons, the fatality rate in these disputes may have been higher. As the Europeans began to introduce guns and muskets onto the coast, the battles entailed new logistical considerations with the wars becoming longer and the fatalities larger.<sup>40</sup>

At the turn of the seventeenth century, De Marees described how the use of European weaponry by the indigenous population was in its infancy. He described how, "Although they are greatly afraid of the shooting of big Guns or Muskets, nevertheless they enjoy hearing gunfire; for, when ships come to anchor or sail away, they come out of their Huts and run towards the beach in order to hear the salutes of the Ships. .... They also buy many Firelocks and are beginning to learn to handle them very well. They have understood that a long Gun carries further than a short one, as the Portuguese, and we too, sufficiently teach them."<sup>41</sup> Two decades later Bosman wrote that the residents were very skilful with fire-arms especially, "Musquets or Carabins in the management of which they are wonderful dextrous. 'Tis not unpleasant to see them exercise their Army; they handle their Arms so cleverly, discharging them several ways, one sitting, the second creeping, or lying etc. that 'tis really to be admired they never hurt one another. Perhaps you wonder how the *Negroes* come to be furnished with Fire-Arms, but you will have no Reason when you know we sell them incredible quantities, thereby obliging them with a Knife to our own Throats."<sup>42</sup>

The Europeans sought to create strong and permanent bases from which they could trade and attempt to consolidate their precarious position on the coast. They thus began to build lodges and forts along the coast. Sharp reconstructed some of the early history of the fortifications along the coast and described how, “the Portuguese put up a lodge on the seashore beside the village of *Oegwa* in 1610. This lodge was later abandoned and occupied by the Swedes about 1652. The Swedes were dispossessed in 1658 by the Danish Company under Carlof, who thereupon strengthened his position by building a fort on the hill at Amanful over looking the Cape Coast lodge.”<sup>43</sup> The English were next to invest in a long term lease at Cape Coast.

The Dutch had maintained a precarious control of Elminan trade for some decades. In the mid-seventeenth century the Dutch sought to gain control of Cape Coast and Komenda, posing a serious challenge to English interests on the coast. In 1662, the English began a campaign against Dutch interference in their trade at Komenda. In the following year, however, the English were successful in establishing a permanent post at Komenda, and ten years later built a Fort. In 1668, the Guaffos<sup>44</sup> turned against the Dutch, plundering their factory and murdering their servants. As a punishment for this assault, “the Dutch endeavoured to maintain a blockade of the native states of Guaffo and Fetu.”<sup>45</sup> This action underlined a developing pattern of strengthening European bonds in the coastal towns, and the increasing power they were able to wield from the shore.

With the establishment of permanent European trading bases on the coast, coastal towns were drawn into becoming allies of individual European factors. The coastal strip thus comprised small villages that serviced the towns, whose survival and prosperity was intrinsically linked to fortified buildings with European flags flying from their battlements. The shift of the migratory pattern towards the coastal towns away from the Efutu capital, gave the Europeans increasing influence and power over the coastal peoples. Very quickly Europeans began to use this influence to manipulate the precarious relationships between their trading partners, and trading competitors.

In the mid-seventeenth century, anxious about the growing influence of the Portuguese on the coast, “the Dutch entered into friendly relations with the Guaffos and incited them against the Portuguese.”<sup>46</sup> The people of Efutu later formed an allegiance with the Guaffos and the Dutch, and though the Guaffos were subsequently subjugated by the Efutu, they “made good their deliverance from Portuguese control.”<sup>47</sup> According to nineteenth century Komenda stool tradition, at about the time of the on-going civil war, ‘Commehe’, the traditional founder of the present stool family in Komenda, made his way to the area today named after him. This land was offered to him at a yearly stipend. It was later transferred as compensation for assisting Taki Ankan in the defeat of Abu Taki<sup>48</sup> with whom he had been at war.<sup>49</sup>

According to the stool histories of the stools of Abra, this civil war began in 1688

in the state of Aguafo.<sup>50</sup> A dispute had arisen between Abu Taki, *Omanbin* of 'Aguafo', and his brother, Taki Ankan. Taki Ankan had formed an alliance with the Dutch and the 'Adoms' and, therefore, had a ready supply of men and weapons. Some years later the *Omanbin* Abu Taki was murdered by the English, newly installed at Cape Coast. Taki Ankan was also implicated in the murder and so for protection he took refuge at Cape Coast, where he became an ally of the English. Later supported by the 'Saoboos'<sup>51</sup> and the residents of Cape Coast, he attacked the 'Guaffos'. Under *Tufubin* Amu Taki, the 'Guaffos' at first repelled Taki Ankan, but in a second attack he inflicted a decisive defeat on Amu Taki's forces and Taki Ankan installed himself as *Omanbin* of 'Aguafo'.<sup>52</sup>

The continual surge of self-destructive military campaigns served to weaken the position of the indigenous people, whilst strengthening the hold of Europeans. Bosman stated that the coastal people were complicit in this process because they "themselves... plaid an opportunity into our hands by their intestine divisions."<sup>53</sup> The resulting political weakness of the major inland southern stools, and the economic strength of the coastal towns, served to destabilize the indigenous political systems, as once populous and prosperous inland paramount seats, became vulnerable and depopulated.<sup>54</sup> Many of the coastal towns began to diminish into markets that operated purely as satellites to European bases. The seventeenth century traveller Barbot was intrigued by the way in which the markets along the coast had mostly developed around fortified European buildings, especially in the state of Efutu, "This little kingdom has several villages on the sea-coast, the chiefest whereof is *Ooegwa*, at cape Corso, which juts out into the sea in 4. deg. 49 min of north latitude."<sup>55</sup> He remarked how Cape Coast had become "famous for its beautiful castle the *English* have built there, and for the plentiful market held every day."<sup>56</sup> Both institutions were part of the growth of European influence on the coast and both served to undermine the central control of the inland paramount stool at Efutu. The market re-sited the trading centre, while the importation of weapons and heavy artillery to the castle was a constant threat to the supposed dominance of the Efutu stool.

As European weaponry became incorporated into coastal life, the shift in power became commensurate with access to guns and gun-powder. This inevitably created a position of dominance for coastal towns in both trade and war. The Europeans also began to feel the backlash of introducing such weapons to the coast as elucidated in Bosman's account referred to earlier, when their growing influence on the coast was potentially jeopardised by the weaponry they had introduced.

According to Barbot, by the mid-seventeenth century, the town of *Oguaa* contained more than "500 houses, divided by narrow crooked lanes, along the descent of the hills. appearing like an amphitheatre from the coast."<sup>57</sup> Barbot mistakenly suggested that it was governed by a Braffo (which is usually translated

as executioner<sup>58</sup>) and “one *Griffin*, a *Caboceiro*, and it lies all of it under the command of the castle-guns.”<sup>59</sup> The town had established a thriving market with its own local institutions and customs. De Marees describes that, “In their Market-place they have a square stand, about 4 foot square, with four Pillars rising 2 Cubits above the ground; it has a flat top made of reeds. All around it they hang straw wisps or *Fetissos*. They put *Millie* with palm oil or water on it and give this to their God as food and drink, to sustain him lest he die of hunger or thirst.”<sup>60</sup> Yet despite the evident strength of independent local customs, the town was increasingly dominated by the castle. Barbot relates how, “on the battlements are ten guns and twenty-five on the flankers from a minion to nine pounders; and on a rock call'd *Tabora*, twenty paces from the castle, are four, or six twelve pounders, in a round tower, garrison'd by about as many men; which serves to keep the *Blacks* in the town the better in awe, as well as to defend them from all other *Blacks* their enemies, that come from the inland country.”<sup>61</sup>

The most apparent ‘enemies from the inland country’ were the Efutu, within whose paramountcy *Oguaa* was sited. The land on which Cape Coast was developing was subject to rents that were collected by the Efutu *Omanbin* on a yearly basis. The Royal African Company was at this stage the employer of the factor who ran Cape Coast Castle. In K.G. Davies’s account of the Royal Africa Company he explains how the rents system operated, “In 1696 the rent paid was nine marks of gold (or £288, valuing the gold at £4 an ounce), and the same king received a further six ounces for the company’s factory at Anashan.”<sup>62</sup> At this point the Efutu paramount stool was not prepared to forego its jurisdiction over Cape Coast, as was demonstrated by the events of September 1688. The *Omanbin*, “marched on Cape Coast with 4,000 men, laid siege to it, and demanded a ransom of 120 bendas of gold.”<sup>63</sup> This attack was orchestrated by the *Omanbin* in alliance with the Dutch at Elmina. One of its main objectives was the seizure of Fort Royal, the former Danish settlement, overlooking the castle. Many travellers had previously remarked how vulnerable the castle would have been if the fort were to fall into enemy hands. From the fort it was possible for an enemy force to mount an assault on the castle. The Efutu-Dutch attack failed, and relations between the English and the Efutu were volatile for some years afterwards.<sup>64</sup> The volatility of Anglo-Efutu relations was compounded by knowledge that the Efutu had been consciously creating a barrier to direct inland trade. The English had become aware of the Efutu control of the gold mines which were “not far from the beach,” near the paramount stool.<sup>65</sup> This added to the English realisation that the power of the *Omanbin* was the only thing blocking what Bosman called, ‘our greedy course of plunder’.<sup>66</sup>

Although there was a temptation for the Europeans to attempt to undermine their landlords, the Royal African Company found that the *Omanbin* of Efutu could be as effective an ally as he was an enemy. This was shown when the *Omanbin* came to the rescue of the Royal African Company when the Castle was besieged in 1681.

A riot broke out after eighteen slaves escaped from the castle and disappeared into the town. The denizens of *Oguaa* refused to hand them back, as N.A Dyce describes in his summary, "Neither threats nor persuasions would induce the townsfolk to hand over the Castle chattels, and at last the Castle guns were trained on the town."<sup>67</sup> Seven hundred Cape Coasters then turned out and besieged the Castle as Dyce continues, "The casualties were fairly heavy on both sides and the fight was only stopped by an unknown King of Fetu, who hurried to Cape Coast with just twelve attendants, to secure the safety of the English Agent, Mr Greenhill."<sup>68</sup> The *Omanbin* sat beneath a *fetish* tree which stood near the Castle (that can be seen in the illustration on the opening page of this chapter) and negotiated for eight days until an effective settlement was agreed.<sup>69</sup>

These displays of the power of the Efutu *Oman*, forced the co-operation of the English at Cape Coast, and for most of the seventeenth century, as an act of diplomacy, the Royal African Society sent representatives to the Efutu *Omanbins'* court at their own expense. Barbot describes how the principal court was "compos'd of the king of *Fetu*, his *Dey*, or prime minster, the *Geroffo*, and the *Braffo*, with two English factors of cape Corso Castle."<sup>70</sup> Although the visits were not obligatory, they were made as an act of appeasement and done at great expense. Each of the factors had "to have as many suits of clothes as he stays there days, to appear every day in a different suit, which puts the company to three hundred pounds charges yearly."<sup>71</sup>

### **III. EDWARD BARTER AND THE ORIGINS OF THE ASAFO COMPANIES.**

In 1685, the directors of the Royal African Company decided to make a concerted effort to buy up the few remaining leases held by the Danes in a bid to consolidate their holdings in Cape Coast. Early that year, the Danish fort was purchased by the English and formally handed over.<sup>72</sup> This gave the English increasing control of the European Cape Coast trade. For the first time they were able to attempt to drive down prices. Previously, competition from other Europeans had meant that English prices were often undercut. An inventory taken at Cape Coast in 1684 revealed goods that had lain in store for seven years.<sup>73</sup> In 1687, two years after the Royal African Company purchased the fort, increasing English confidence led to an attempt to depress the Castle staff wages by valuing gold at £4 an ounce.<sup>74</sup> The Company had, however, badly overestimated the power of its position within the town. The soldiers at Cape Coast mutinied, and a compromise settlement of £3 16s an ounce was finally reached.<sup>75</sup>

There was only one *non-European* member of the Royal African Company at that time who "was a mulatto named Edward Barter."<sup>76</sup> Edward Barter was to become a very important figure in Fante history. According to Bosman he "occupied a small fort under the English Castle with a flag on it and some cannon."<sup>77</sup> Moreover, Bosman

asserts that in 1700, “Barter hath greater power on the Coast than all the three English Agents together, in whom the chief command of the Coast is vested jointly.”<sup>78</sup> Barter was able to combine his skill as a businessman with his special knowledge of local institutions. He was the first in a long line of skilled Fante diplomats who created an ambience of Fante/English co-operation, whilst never allowing their Europeanised image to compromise their Fante affiliations.

Bosman was surprised that the English agents could allow a ‘non-European’, to have such a profound control over their lives. Bosman suggested that it was a mistake, “to be guided by Barter in all matters and he knows how to take advantage of them. Moreover, owing to the fact that he can raise a large number of armed men, some his own slaves and the rest free men who adhere to him, he is much respected and honoured. He pretends to be a Christian, and by his knowledge of that religion which he acquired through being able to read or write, he might very well pass for one.”<sup>79</sup> Even with the guidance of Barter, the Royal African Company continued to face considerable competition from its European rivals. In 1702, the company attempted to introduce a policy to secure control of the entire Cape Coast market, by ordering that;

*the natives, traders and inhabiting in our negro town under our protection and cheif [sic] castle should signe a palavara or obligation not to dispose of any gold but for goods out of our store, provided we have the goods they want ... wee order that you encourage such Capasbeers or chieftraders as will begin and promote this design, and to make the most considerable of them cheif [sic] Capasbeers of the negro town under our castle.*<sup>80</sup>

The policy was, however, never implemented. Allegedly, at this time “all power was in the hands of” Ned (Edward) Barter.<sup>81</sup> Barter perhaps realising the impossibility of implementing this policy, began to develop his own projects, some of which obviously created direct competition for the Royal African Company. Thus, in July 1702, the company wrote to London: “We find you are sensible how much wee [sic] have suffered in our trade by Ned Barter’s promoting his own private interest before our common good, his dealing with and giving to other traders.”<sup>82</sup>

The company’s change in attitude towards Barter forced him to move eventually to Elmina, where he died a year later.<sup>83</sup> Barter was the personification of the new Fante - his versatility and diplomatic skills had given him the edge over his European and Efutu competitors. During the seventeenth century, the Europeans ceased to be exclusively interested in trade and military control of the local population, and began to attempt to create constructive and organised projects in co-operation with them. This had allowed Barter and many merchants like him, to utilize their knowledge of the local situation and their experience of dealings with the Europeans, and develop their seeming inferiority into an advantage. This returned the focus of power within

Cape Coast back to the town and away from the castle. Barter as a cultural, racial and commercial middleman, was the perfect interface between the two worlds.

During this period, Cape Coast was highly malleable in the skilled hands of men like Barter. During his life he wielded great power in Cape Coast, amassed great wealth and built up a large entourage. Thus, he probably left a large inheritance and perhaps a stool. De Marees had observed that, "If a man is a Trader or a person of some fortune, he will have a Boy or Slave walking behind him and carrying his Stool or seat; and whenever he stops to chat or talk, his seat is put down for him to sit on."<sup>84</sup> These stools were not just for physical comfort, they were indicative of the owner's formal or purported nobility. Even if Barter did not have a stool, his small fort with its cannon and the people who he had gathered to man it, were to become part of a military support for a growing indigenous and independent Cape Coast government, namely the *Akrampa Asafo*.

Such local institutions and stools may have begun to make the paramount stool of Efutu seem somewhat superfluous to the smooth and strong growth of Cape Coast. During this period, the positive contribution of traders such as Barter, made it possible for the town's relatively new *Oman* to institute the "ancestral paramount oath '*Oguaaa Wukudda*'. This bound the newly instituted Cape Coast *Omanbin*, and his *Oman* to follow the basic rules of the new stool, which were based on ancient Efutu institutions.<sup>85</sup> Exactly when this constitutional development occurred is not known. The establishment of the Cape Coast stool, probably enhanced the power of the local linguist or *Okyiame*.<sup>86</sup> The *Okyiame* acted as the mediator in the interaction between the new stool and the Europeans, and the new stool and adjacent stools on the coast. Linguists were thus in a position to increasingly influence events. The town was also to offer unprecedented power to the *Asafo* (or young men of the town) and gave a voice and new freedoms to the anonymous majority.

Early twentieth century accounts suggest that, "the *Oman* of Cape Coast is traditionally composed of the *Omanbene* (Paramount Chief), *Abimfu* or *Mpakanmfu* (Chiefs of various grades<sup>87</sup>), *Tufubin* (Master of Arms), *Omamfu* (Councillors), *Asafu-Mpanyin* (Representative Heads of Companies), *Akyiami* (Spokesmen)."<sup>88</sup> Apart from the *Mpakanmfu* or *Abiramponfu*, "Councillors of the *Omanbin*,"<sup>89</sup> there was also the *Asafo*. According to De Graft Johnson, the *Asafu* is said to connote the "third estate" or common people.<sup>90</sup>

Edward Barter was a *Supi*, the head and organiser of an *Asafu* company. The *Supi*, as the *Twi* implies, "is like the big water-pot, who, figuratively speaking, acts as reservoir for all the waters of the *Asafu*. He must be a wise and deep-thinking person having the ability to settle all *Asafu* disputes: patient, bold, and able to weigh carefully before-hand the results of every step taken. He is the custodian of the *Asafu* ammunition and money. He is their *Obaatan*, mother."<sup>91</sup> of his company. The office traditionally descends from father to son, "but as the position is a responsible one,

a nephew may be selected if he succeeds to his uncle's property."<sup>92</sup> Oral testimony from the mid-twentieth century, suggests that Thomas Edward Barter was the organiser or *Supi* of the *Akrampa* (No.6) Company and was known locally by his part Fante name, Tom Ewusi. The best informed of the old Fante families still remember him as "Tom Ewusi a okori Aburokyir ba kye nwiwa', *Tom Ewusi who on return from Europe gave presents of brass basins.*"<sup>93</sup>

Thomas Barter's mother was a native of Anomabu and his father a European trader. Fante tradition says that he was a Governor or Director-General of the Royal African Company. Although he controlled the flow of the Royal African Company business, he was never formally 'Governor' of the Royal African Company. De Graft Johnson wrote that, "in those days, apart from a few white soldiers, only *mulattos* were employed as soldiers in the garrisoning of the Castle and other English forts in the Gold Coast. A large surplus of *mulattos* remained in Cape Coast who could not be absorbed. In 1665 Tom Ewusi organised all the *mulattos* he could gather from the *Nkum* and *Bentsir* quarters.... into an *Asafu* and named it *Akrampa*. The word is said be a corruption from Portuguese and means 'peace-makers in a town'. Their motto is; 'Defence not Defiance'."<sup>94</sup> According to investigations made by Arthur Ffoulkes in 1907, the *Nkum* and *Bentsir*,<sup>95</sup> from whom Barter recruited his men, were the oldest *Asafo* companies in Cape Coast. It is still believed by many oral sources that the original founders of the town were the "*Bentils* and the *Inkooms* from Sekyere north-east of Kumase, who settled on Efutu land, and absorbed the Efutus,"<sup>96</sup> but this is one of many accounts of the origin of *Oguaa*.<sup>97</sup>

The *Akrampa* were not a purely indigenous institution and as a result, the company differed from the others in that the customary colours and motifs that they chose were the Union Jack and a flag inscribed with their motto 'Defence not Defiance'. It was concluded in a 1924 colonial report, that because the company was formed by a '*mulatto* administering the Government', all of their equipment and institutions had naturally developed as pastiches and bastardisations of European motifs.<sup>98</sup> This is not strictly true; they shared with all the companies certain *sui generis* Fante symbols and rituals. They had a strong adherence to local 'fetish'. Even in the early twentieth century, it was said that, when the *Akrampa* company made any '*fetich*' custom. It was taken very seriously, blood had to be spilt; this was on certain extreme occasions human blood.<sup>99</sup> By the time that Ffoulkes' detailed work was done in 1907, human blood had been replaced by the blood of sheep or goats.<sup>100</sup> Although the *Akrampa*'s origins were partially linked to the European influx into Cape Coast, their assimilation into Fante military life was complete. As a result, no one has ever questioned their loyalty or resolve, as reflected in Ffoulkes' report, "in all the ancient wars this Company showed great fortitude, activity and bravery. They were so tenacious in battle that out of the 800 strong that took to the field at *Nsimankan*<sup>101</sup>, refusing to accept a defeat, not 500 returned after defeat."<sup>102</sup>



Barter, the company's founder, was the personification of the newly developing compromise between indigenous and European culture. In spite of his Europeanised image, and although he had a European father, Barter as the *Supi* probably had an important function in the indigenous political system.<sup>103</sup> He had certain responsibilities which bound him closely to indigenous customs and institutions. Barter was a *Supi*, and as Arthur Ffoulkes in his 1907 report on *Asafo* traditions suggested, the *Supi* was to some extent responsible for the administration of local law.<sup>104</sup> The administration of the law would have probably meant Barter's inclusion in traditional punishment and ritual. Such rituals<sup>105</sup> were performed at some point by every Cape Coast *Asafo* company. These traditions tied men like Barter inextricably to their *Akan* origins. Although the question of to what extent these institutions were actually Fante is probably now an unfruitful line of enquiry, it is both interesting and productive to look at how early the worlds of the Europeans and the aborigines combined to create something manifestly new. Because the formation of the seven *Asafo* companies occurred during the period in which the Europeans arrived on the coast, the history of their origins and early development represent some of the earliest formal collaborations between Europeans and Fante.

Although it seems clear that the *Bentil* and *Nkum Asafo* companies arrived in Cape Coast with the first group of migrating Fante, and the *Akrampa*, the *Brafonkwa* and the *Amanfu Asafo* were seventeenth-century developments, there has nevertheless developed an extensive debate within the historiography surrounding the origin of the company system. Datta and Porter suggest that, "There seem to be two schools of thought seeking to explain the origin of the *asafo*: J.S. Wartemberg<sup>106</sup> and Kwame Arhin<sup>107</sup> consider that it was in some way connected with European presence on the Gold Coast, but there are those who suggest an entirely indigenous development."<sup>108</sup> Wartemberg and Arhin support their stance by analysing the composition of the *Asafo* companies which grew up in the towns along the migration route from the interior. They then compared them with *Asafo* companies which grew up on the coast. Their work has shown how "In traditional states away from the coast, where European influence has been felt less strongly, the companies are fewer in number, have fewer offices, are less elaborate in their paraphernalia, and are generally of more limited significance, especially in the political field."<sup>109</sup> But there is a sense in which both groups could be correct, because the founding of the *Asafo* companies cuts across the period in which the Europeans first arrived on the coast. The conclusions of Datta and Porter seemed to reflect this when they argued that, "the *Asafo* is indigenous to various *Akan* peoples. It is clear, however, that the character and development of the system, particularly on the coast and especially in Fanteland, have been much influenced by the situations created through contact with Europeans."<sup>110</sup>

Like the *Akrampa*, the No. 5 (*Brofumba* or *Brafunkwa*<sup>111</sup>) and No. 7 (*Amanfu*<sup>112</sup>) *Asafo* companies had similarly mixed origins, which owe as much to European coastal movements as indigenous tradition. In the 1930s, when the *Asafo*



were having a political renaissance, J.C. De Graft Johnson constructed a history of the Cape Coast *Asafo*. De Graft Johnson wrote that, “The Swedes who built the Castle brought with them from the coast a large number of servants, men and women, and bought others locally. The men they trained as masons, carpenters, bricklayers to assist in the building.”<sup>113</sup> In order to be near the building they were constructing they were given the land adjacent to the castle which had previously been occupied by the *Ntsinifu* (today the No.3 company). De Graft Johnson continued, “These workmen and servants were subsequently formed into the *Brofumba* or *Brofunkwa Asafu*, white men’s children or servants, and became No.5 Company.”<sup>114</sup> They also assimilated the ‘*fetich Nana-Tabir*’, which was the most important ‘*fetich*’ of *Oguaa*; this was apparently “a big hole, full of snakes and sea-weeds, in the rock on which the castle was built, and the hole was filled in about 1874.”<sup>115</sup> The *Brofumba* subsequently enjoyed a special relationship with the castle owners. This is still the only company that is allowed to fire its guns in the castle. This privilege was gained because they alone were involved in the Swedish contribution to the construction of the castle.<sup>116</sup>

The No.7 *Asafo* Company was started by the African settlers who accompanied the original Danish influx into Cape Coast. The Danes had established forts and lodges in many of the towns east of Christiansborg. In 1658, the Danes brought several families of artisans and masons from their eastern settlements to assist in the building of Fort Freidricksborg on the protuberance just to the east of Cape Coast Castle. This fort was purchased by the British in 1685 and named Fort Royal. De Graft Johnson explains that, “For those artisans and their families a new town was built in the hollow ground quite close to the site of the Fort and named *Amanfur*, new town. In course of time they were formed into *Amanfur Asafu* No.7.”<sup>117</sup>

The No.5 Company the *Brofumba*, “(white men’s children), or *Brofoo-Nkua* (white men’s slaves)... were given quarters near the castle”, and they built their own *Essuro* so establishing their place as an *Asafo*.<sup>118</sup> Ffoulkes explains the significance of the *Essuro*, “The Company Post or “*Essuro*” is the rallying point of the Company, and each Company has its own post. These are found on that part of the land or town on which the Company has settled, and which it looks upon as peculiarly its own. The Company Post consists generally of a circular brick or swish (earth) tower, with one entrance. In this are kept all the paraphernalia of the Company.”<sup>119</sup> The immigrants that made up Nos. 5, 6, and 7, companies, although of ‘foreign’ extraction, quickly assimilated the Fante language and customs whereas, it seems that some of the later immigrants, such as the Muslims, were able to maintain their clearly separate identity and traditions.<sup>120</sup> This may have been because the founding of the last three companies was contemporary to the tail end of the Fante migration from the interior, whilst the Muslims arrived after the establishment of the paramount Stool.

#### **IV. THE ROLE OF THE ASAFU COMPANIES.**

The earliest travellers' accounts tell of how the coastal towns were run by governments consisting of two parts, "the first whereof is the Body of *Caboceroes*, or chief Men; the other the *Manceroes* or young Men."<sup>121</sup> This undoubtedly refers to the socio-political division between the *Oman* and the young men who made up the *Asafo* companies. The origins of these earlier *Asafo* companies is now unclear. There are several accounts of their origins, but most early twentieth century accounts say that, "only one body was formed at first, but this gradually grew and expanded until the number reached as many as seven *Atsikuw*."<sup>122</sup>

The *Asafo* and its divisions *Atsikuw* (both of which terms have been translated into English as 'companies') formed the basis of the larger politico-military divisions into which each *Akan* Fante State is theoretically divided, namely: "*Adontin* main body; *Nyimfa*, right wing; *Benkum*, left wing; *Gyasi*, household guard; and in certain instances sometimes *NKyidom*, rear guard, as well."<sup>123</sup> Each division was traditionally under the command of a *Wing Chief*, but in actuality, there were a range of small localised deviations from this rule. The Cape Coast company system is somewhat different than those in other Fante towns, in that when it took to the battlefield, it actually had no *Wing Chiefs*.<sup>124</sup> At what stage the Cape Coast company system developed its particular idiosyncrasies, such as the practice of not having *Wing Chiefs*, is now impossible to date, but in comparatively recent years, the Cape Coast companies have taken on these titles which have formalised this deviation:<sup>125</sup>

Bentil-Tuafo (Advance Guard)  
 Anafo-Akomfodse (No Villages)  
 Nin-Dontsin (The Centre)  
 Nkum-Nydom (The Rear Guard)  
 Brafonkwa-Enimafa (The Right Wing)  
 Akrampa-Akrampa (No Villages)  
 Amamfu-Benkum (The Left Wing)      126

Many such formalisations were made during the early twentieth century, as the histories of the eighteenth and nineteenth century battles began to be written down. During that period J. De Graft Johnson reconstructed a history of the *Asafo*. Johnson suggested that, during a war, before the *Asafo* moves out, "it is usual to offer a sacrifice of a sheep or goat to the *Asafo Abusum*. These are believed to be spirits of ancestral heroes and are specially invoked to protect the *Asafo* during the impending campaign."<sup>127</sup> In Cape Coast, the *Asafo* move out to war,

*in the following order: Nos. 1 and 6 as Twafu, vanguard; Nos. 2, 3, and 4 as Adontsin; with No.5 and 7 as Nkyidom, rearguard. Detachments from Nos. 3 and 4 formed the Omanbin's bodyguard..... But in actual battle array, when Oguua takes the field with other Fanti troops against a common enemy, the Atsikuw Eson spread themselves along the whole of their battle front- Nos. 1 to 7. In this order Akoto (by which shortened appellative Cape Coast people are collectively known) give battle officered by their respective Asafubinfu and Abinfu and commanded by their Tufubin or Okuradom (supervisor of troops) who keeps in touch with his own Omanbin.<sup>128</sup>*

The whole procession pulled out to the sound of the *Kyirema*, the drummer. De Graft Johnson describes how, "His equipment is two small drumming sticks and the *Asafu* drum which is made of a hollowed *odum* or *kyindur* piece of wood over which is stretched the skin of a *dabo*, black antelope"<sup>129</sup> The drum was used as a means of communication over long distances and during the fury of battle. The whole spirit of the *Asafu* was seen as being embodied in the drum and how it was played.<sup>130</sup>

According to De Graft Johnson, when the Fante *Asafo* marched onto a battlefield, the individual who commanded was "an officer called *Tufubin*, chief of the gunners, whose position is both military and political. In Cape Coast and Anumabu the officer is to-day said to be hereditary through the female, that is to say, the holder succeeded either his elder uterine brother or mother's brother, but this does not appear always to have been the case."<sup>131</sup> Succession to office in the *Asafu* was once patrilineal, (that is, in 'the male line', not in 'the female line' as is the case with *Abusua*<sup>132</sup>), which was usually limited in Cape Coast for important positions within the *Oman*. The *Asafobin*, the immediate subordinate of the *Tufubin*, was also a patrilineally inherited position. The *Asafobin* was, the senior officer in charge of a section of the *Asafo* and De Graft Johnson relates how, "He must be a bold and fearless man, slow to anger, circumspect, able to take in at once the disposition of the enemy as well as of his own men; must be able to handle a gun. If elected when a child he is taught to fire a gun as soon as possible. He carries a whip and a gun and ammunition-belt (*ntua*), and sword (*akumfuna*) which indicates his rank. He consults the *Supi* and gives orders to the other officers."<sup>133</sup>

Each Company had its own number which indicated its position in the field of battle, "1 *Bentsir*, 2 *Anafu*, 3 *Ntsin*, 4 *Nkum*, 5 *Brofumba*, 6 *Akrampa*, 7 *Amanfur*."<sup>134</sup> The number seven is said to have had a very special significance - it is said to be "a complete and perfect number according to Fanti traditions as preserved in the well known saying *Eson n'ekir nnyi ba*."<sup>135</sup> Cape Coast not only has seven *Atsikuw* companies,<sup>136</sup> but it is also said that there is 'no child after the seventh child'. De Graft Johnson, who was fascinated by this, explained that not only was there '*Amanson*', seven states,<sup>137</sup> but the list of Fante institutions that were divided by seven continued with '*Ekueson*', seven *Asafu*;<sup>138</sup> '*Ebusua kuw eson*', seven matrilineal clans; '*Nton eson*,' seven *nton* or *ntoro* divisions; '*Basonfu*' seven principal advisers of the state;

'*Abusum Edusono eson*', seventy seven Gods<sup>139,140</sup> The system of numbering the companies was borrowed from the system that traditionally divided households and families into hierarchies. Traditionally the household of the eldest heir would become No.1 and the second heir No.2 etc..<sup>141</sup>

## **V. THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF THE ASAFO COMPANIES.**

According to a traditional account, which has not been contradicted by the written sources, the first *Oguaa Asafu* were *Nkum*(No.4) and *Bentsir*(No.1). It is now impossible to ascertain with any certainty what the etymological history of *Nkum* is, but it seems to be an abbreviation of the saying *Nkotum eku mi*, *you cannot kill me*, which through constant usage eventually became shortened to *Nkum*. *Bentsir* is said to come from *Itsir*, meaning *head*. *Anafu* means the *lower part* of anything, a name gained because the group developed from an appendage of the *Bentsir*. In the same way *Ntsin* (from *tsin* to stretch) developed out of the *Nkum*.<sup>142</sup>

The evidence suggests that the origin of the nomenclature of the original companies has a similar history. *Bentil* or *Bentsir* and *Nkum* are from *Twi*, whereas, *Akrampa* is said to be a corruption of a Portuguese word that has become *Twi*. Reindorf, in his *History of the Gold Coast*, mis-attributes their names as originating during the early Asante confederacy. So far as one can judge, there is no connection between the establishment of the different companies of the Fante states. This is borne out by the fact that there are different numbers of companies in Elmina and Anomabu from the number at Cape Coast, which would seem to suggest independent development of company systems in each of the towns. But the development of the company system in each town followed a pattern that has made it possible for a stranger to "associate himself with the Company which corresponds either numerically or nominally with the one of which in his own town he was a member."<sup>143</sup>

Kwame Arhin argues that the *Asafo* companies on the coast may have had their origins in the armed retainers who "gathered around certain merchants for protection and security in the uncertain periods of the slave trade, and that the captains of such companies might have had their roots in the centuries of economic relations with the European traders, and the local merchants who had been able to acquire wealth and built up independent 'centres of power'".<sup>144</sup> Barter's involvement in the establishment of the *Akrampa* would seem to be a good example of Arhin's thesis, but it is less convincing when confronted with the knowledge that the *Nkum* and the *Bentil* pre-date the arrival of the Europeans.

Datta and Porter suggest that Ellis,<sup>145</sup> Brown,<sup>146</sup> Christensen,<sup>147</sup> and the co-authors Annobil and Ekuban,<sup>148</sup> can be differentiated from the aforementioned *Asafo* historiography because they would claim the *Asafo* were a purely indigenous

institution.<sup>149</sup> This is a categorical position that is not completely accurate. It must also be accepted that, “European influence has also resulted in the adoption of certain practices and the use of certain articles and symbols by *asafo* companies. The firing of muskets during the funeral procession and burial of a deceased member was probably copied from the European practice of extending military honours to dead soldiers.”<sup>150</sup> What refutes the ‘indigenous origin’ argument, above all, is the seventeenth-century European introduction of groups into Cape Coast who were to form the *Brofumba*, (*white men’s children or servants*) the *Akrampa* and the *Amanfur* (*new town*). Datta and Porter argued that the European influences on the companies can be seen by looking at the “emblems used by Cape Coast companies on flags” which they assert speak for themselves;<sup>151</sup>

Bentsir: a grapnel, lighthouse, a mirror, a Bible.

Anafo: a pistol, a picture of Queen Victoria, a representation of David and Goliath.

Nisin: a man-of-war with an anchor, pack of playing cards, a notebook and a pencil, a cock on a compass, a train, a motor car, an aeroplane, a caterpillar machine.

Nkum: a bugle, a telescope, a small hand clock.

Brofumba: some builders tools, an axe and a spade, some cannons

Akrampa: a Union Jack, a side drum.

Amanfor: some sandpaper and a pot of polish, a keg of gunpowder on top of a flagstaff, a file.

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The conclusion that Datta and Porter hope the reader will make, is that these obviously European motifs are somehow an indication of the Europeanisation of the companies. But such contemporary symbols do not denote anything about the origins of *Asafo*. They merely show how profoundly the *Asafo* changed over the generations since their origination. It is likely that the European presence on the coast, by contributing to the weakening of the traditional stools in the interior, indirectly brought the coastal *Asafo* to greater prominence.<sup>153</sup>

It seems clear, that the original *Asafo*, perhaps in a distinctly different form, were the *Nkum* and the *Bentil*. The *Nkum* and *Bentil* were probably part of the original migration of Fante which arrived at the Efutu village of *Oguaa* in the mid-fifteenth century.<sup>154</sup> Although the other companies arrived during the early years of the European arrival on the coast, they were able to form a unit of seven companies which constituted a successful military machine. The formation of a militarily independent and complete *Asafo* system, was an important step towards the establishment of Cape Coast as an independent stool.

Because so much of the *Asafo* history was created during the twentieth century, it is difficult to speak with any degree of certainty about the epistemological basis of

the historiography. By the twentieth century, early stool histories had become corrupted by time and conscious manipulation. Historians who did not take this fully into account, incorporated questionable sources uncritically into the historiography. The accounts of the origins of the *Asafo* companies are so couched in European terminology, that the terms themselves may marginalise the indigenous contribution to the origins of the *Asafo*. It is, therefore, difficult to look through the veil of historiography created in the twentieth century, to gather a clear picture of the origin and nature of such indigenous institutions. It is not only difficult to make categorical assumptions about the fragmented data that makes up the history, but the terms and concepts that we use to construct that history are also problematic. McCaskie's work on the problems of epistemological commensurability in the European study of the Asante, offers some interesting insights into the translation of even simple concepts and terms. McCaskie suggests that attempts to find epistemological common ground between the *Akan* and the European cultures, was a by-product of a historically constrained episode in European thought.<sup>155</sup> Although this is undoubtedly an astute observation, it perhaps does not go far enough in emphasizing the complexities that the cross-cultural researcher faces.

The early Cape Coast Fante fell into an unconscious state of cultural compromise; a process that built links across the cultural chasm by finding approximate terminological equivalents to the basic titles of indigenous institutions so that, *Supi* became *Captain*, *Atsikuw* became *Companies* and *Oguaa* became Cape Coast (a nautical description, explicitly suggesting that one's approach to the town would be from the sea, as a foreigner). Such titles were manifestations of a town forging lasting associations with its trading partners by homogenising terms of reference. But this was also part of a process that was obscuring the epistemological basis of indigenous institutions for future generations of historians. By the turn of the twentieth century, when much of the Fante history was first written, this process had been under-way for at least two hundred years. A study of the early local press seems to show that by the late nineteenth century, certain *twi* terms had become interchangeable with their accepted English equivalent; the term '*Supi*' had become consistently substitutable with '*Captain*'. Thus, by this stage in Cape Coast, a '*Supi*' was probably accepted as a '*Captain*' and vice versa. The problem is not simply one of whether the English terms are epistemologically commensurate with their accepted Akan equivalents, but of whether they can now be clearly separated. This seems to reveal that not only is there a temporal barrier for the historian, there is also a barrier of language. Both serve to obscure our perspective on the origins of the *Asafo*.

## **VI. CAPE COAST - AN INDEPENDENT STOOL.**

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the infrastructure of Efutu had begun to disintegrate. Its continual wars with the Guaffo (Guaffoe means 'behind the mines'<sup>156</sup>), had left it under Guaffo control.<sup>157</sup> This situation had developed during the 'Commanian wars' when Efutu was geographically split, part of the region allied with the 'Commanians' and part with the English. Both sides suffered heavy losses which resulted in a massive depletion in the Efutu population.<sup>158</sup> As Bosman recounted, the "Country was formerly so powerful and Populous that it struck Terror into all its Neighbour-Nations... But 'tis at present so drained by continual Wars, that it is entirely Ruin'd ... The King of *Fetu* nor his Nobles not daring to stir without the permission of the King of *Commany*."<sup>159</sup> Bosman remarked how, when walking through Efutu before the last war, he had "seen it abound with fine well-built and populous Towns so agreeably enrich'd with vast quantities of Corn and Cattle, Palm-Wine and Oyl, that it was not a little pleasant to observe; but what was most Charming was that it was so covered with smooth streight Paths."<sup>160</sup> The severity of the wars was partly due to the introduction of advanced weaponry which had enabled small factions of well-armed Fante to overcome unprotected towns. The centralised Efutu *Oman* defended its satellite communities by continual offensive military action, at great cost to their human and economic resources.

The introduction of the gun did not just re-define the rules of warfare, it also meant that a small group or even an individual could threaten an *Oman*. As a result the Efutu *Omanhin* attempted to create a climate of absolute fear, to ensure a completely non-belligerent community. De Marees observed that the *Amanhin* of such towns had, "some Men who are their Soldiers and Slaves (and are therefore much like soldiers) and watch the Kings' Court every day; they form, so to speak, his Guard or bodyguards. These men are very haughty and proud of their office, going through the Streets with a great show, conscious of their appearance, always smiting (striking) their Weapons above their heads and continuously jumping up and down and around, looking very terrifying."<sup>161</sup> To show that such displays were not merely symbolic, the *Omanhin* demonstrated as often as possible that these exhibitions could and would be turned into incisive and ruthless action.

Before the advent of the new weaponry and the instability it caused Efutu, the region had been the most powerful and highly populated area on the coast. It had developed systems over generations that made it attractive to the migrating Fante. De Marees had been surprised by its caring attitude towards the sick and weak, "people who are blind or have some physical defect, such as being Crippled or Lame, and who, because of their infirmity cannot earn their living, are appointed by the King to work the Bellows for Blacksmiths. Others are sent to help people to press (extract) Palm Oil, or grind Paint, which such deformed people are able to do, or to perform such trades as they can manage in order to earn a living. Thus no poor people (I mean



people who beg for their bread) are found here.”<sup>162</sup> In the subsequent period of instability, such practices could obviously no longer be supported.

The gradual demise of Efutu’s power through continual military campaigns, allowed a rising Cape Coast to challenge the old capital’s paramountcy. David Henige suggested that this process began as early as the seventeenth century. But the actual paramountcy “of Oguaa (Cape Coast) seems, like that of Anamabu, to have been an eighteenth-century creation.”<sup>163</sup> The site of Cape Coast was already heavily settled by the middle of the sixteenth century, but at this stage the town was part of the inland state of Fetu. Although Efutu was an extensive region prior to the arrival of the Portuguese in 1482, its decline mirrored the exponential growth of Cape Coast.<sup>164</sup>

For some decades the Royal African Company had been increasingly frustrated that the people of Efutu were so easily able to control trade coming from the north, and redirect it either to Cape Coast or Elmina. In 1706, Sir Dalby Thomas wrote that with 150 decent soldiers at Cape Coast he could destroy Fetu and “foarse an inland trade.”<sup>165</sup> The sad state of contemporary Efutu meant that Thomas’s military boasts may have had logistical validity. The Elminan Fante, who had previously been allies of the Dutch, were eventually to inadvertently carry out the wishes of the Royal African Company. In January 1711, encouraged by the Dutch, the Elminan Fante invaded Efutu, partly in order to capture slaves and partly because the Efutu were seen as allies of the English at Cape Coast Castle. Most of the Efutu women and children were killed or captured, but many of the men escaped to Cape Coast.<sup>166</sup> This was an important victory for Cape Coast in its struggle to throw off the paramountcy of Efutu. Migration had left the Fante communities dispersed and subservient to Efutu or the Europeans. The victory cemented closer relations between the neighbouring Fante states. As Priestley concludes, “In time, Cape Coast was ruled by its own dynasty, independent of Efutu, and became an integral part of Fanti and ultimately its effective capital.”<sup>167</sup>

As Cape Coast grew, fostered by the trade with the Europeans and the steady influx of Fante from the north, the local leadership began to establish a tradition that denied the paramountcy of the beleaguered Efutu *Omanbin*. Cape Coast developed traditions that were an unstable mix of the old Efutu, Fante and European customs. When incompatibilities and complexities within the developing hierarchy began to emerge, economic or physical strength usually prevailed. Wealthy migrants could buy hereditary positions and the protection of a town’s young men. Even the position of *Omanbin* could sometimes be bought for a price. The *King* of Saboe, who was originally from ‘*Infantin*’<sup>168</sup> was made ‘*King*’ in this way.<sup>169</sup> Many of the European commentators were amazed by this, and De Marees was drawn to remark, “these Kingdoms are not a heritage or fief and are not even inherited by friends (relatives) or children, but by a stranger.”<sup>170</sup> Those who bought a position of nobility took advantage of this enhanced status by granting audiences with new Europeans

seeking to trade in Cape Coast. Pieter de Marees commented that, "They are very proud of becoming a Nobleman, and the first thing they will tell strangers is that they are Noble and have a lot of Slaves, considering themselves big Men and Masters."<sup>171</sup> But there were pressures on such men to give gifts to their peers and to indulge the *Omanbin* and his *Oman*.

Sometimes the initial price of gaining nobility was enough to ruin a prospective 'nobleman' in itself. De Marees remarked how it seemed strange to him that so many 'noblemen' were not actually rich; "for once they have bought their Nobility, they are poorer and shabbier than they ever were before in their lifetime. But as they think that they have become great Masters (men of great distinction) once they have been made Noblemen (although they thereby derive little advantage), they long for it very much, and right from their childhood they begin to make savings in order to spend them on their Ennoblement."<sup>172</sup>

## **VII. BEREMPONG KOJO**

The most notable of such eighteenth century Fante businessmen was undoubtedly *Berempong*<sup>173</sup> Kojo<sup>174</sup>, who was "The progenitor of all the later *amanbin* of Oguaa, though apparently never *Omanben* himself."<sup>175</sup> David Henige in his work on Fante Chronology wrote that, "Cudjoe *Caboceer* is the most important figure in Oguaa traditional history."<sup>176</sup> Henige also said that in 1729 a certain 'Cudjoe' was listed on the Company's payroll as 'Linguister and Messenger Extraordinary.'<sup>177</sup> In 1742 this individual, now known as Cudjoe *Caboceer*, became the Company's Head Linguister and retained his post until his death thirty years later. According to tradition, *Berempong* Kojo was a native of Adanse in Akumfi, and, therefore, was probably a pure Fante. He was also a wealthy slave dealer.<sup>178</sup> At that time Cape Coast was establishing itself as a major trading centre. An eighteenth century missionary said that compared to other Fante coastal towns, Cape Coast contained "a great number of inhabitants. The houses were built of mortar, and the most of them two stories high, but do not stand in much regularity of order."<sup>179</sup>

*Berempong* Kojo's family were part of the southern migration of the Fante. The people of Komenda suggest that 'Commeh' (the founder of their town) was *Berempong* Kojo's younger brother. Both brothers were born and bred in Techiman - the traditional home of the Fante. The Komenda tradition suggests that 'Commeh', "grew up to be rich and warlike, while his elder brother was neither".<sup>180</sup> Their volatile relationship forced Kojo to leave his family in Techiman and settle in Cape Coast. The Asante, who were themselves expanding south, began to make sporadic attacks on the Fante left at Techiman. Stool tradition says that "Commeh, with a large train of warlike men at his command, often took active part against those invasions and inflicted severe losses on the enemy. By his gallantry and heroic deeds, the Ashantis

were incensed against him. Finding he could not remain alone in Techiman after his brother had departed, Commeh withdrew his forces from the conflicts with the Ashantis and joined his brother at Cape Coast.”<sup>181</sup> The two brothers lived peacefully for some time until their old differences began to revive; at this point ‘Comme’ left Cape Coast and founded what is today Komenda. The accuracy of this account is open to question. But the basic theme of Kojo being a part of the initial Fante migration, and his close relationship with the contemporary ‘*Omanbin*’, is highly plausible. However, the suggestion that *Berempung* Kojo was the ‘founder’ of Cape Coast is one of the many misleading and ambiguous titles that is given to Kojo within the mythology.

### **VIII. BEREMPONG KOJO AND THE WIREMPE LEGACY**

As Henige implies in his work on the Fante stools, the conflicting and unclear oral tradition and written sources have created some debate over Kojo’s position in Cape Coast history. Thompson, a contemporary missionary, suggested that although *Berempung* Kojo was effectively the “*Chief* man of that place, this is only as to his wealth and influence; for a younger brother of his Amrah Coffi, is the *King*, whom he recommended to the election of the people, he himself declining it.”<sup>182</sup> By the 1750s, when Reverend Thompson wrote those words, Kojo had years of experience of successful trading as a middleman in the European-African trade. He had accrued great wealth, hence his title ‘*Berempung*’, and great political power. Kojo’s personal body-guard, ‘the *Werempe*’ were the custodians of his immensely powerful stool. They were recruited from Kojo’s households and the most effective of the *Asafo*.<sup>183</sup> *Wirempe* is said to be derived from a Portuguese term, which has been translated as *the pennant on the top of the flag*, but the word has now been fully integrated into the Twi language, and means something like, ‘strong minders’.<sup>184</sup> The *Wirempe* were known at that time as the ‘*Ankobid*’ or ‘*Kojo Nkum*’ (Kojo’s slaves). *Kojo’s slaves* or household, have become perhaps the single most influential group in Cape Coast history.

*Berempung* Kojo did not have legitimate or recognized blood progeny. His sister Essiman had no children, as W.Z. Coker testified, “all his successors were his slaves and descendants of his slaves.”<sup>185</sup> Ephson suggested that Kojo formed the *Wirempe* by buying slaves from the interior with European factors’ money; he apparently then housed the slaves in villages on the outskirts of Cape Coast and reported them as dead. It is said that in this way he formed the villages of Kakumdu, Mpeasem and Siwdu, which afterwards became known as ‘Parson’s Croom’. The inhabitants of these three villages were known as the *Werempedom*, or later the rural section of the *Ntin* (or No.3) company.<sup>186</sup> This is supported by a contemporary document which suggests that, “in former times it was the custom for *Chiefs* or *Caboceers* to establish rural settlements of their own from which to draw fighting men

from among their retainers of such when necessary. The settlements formed by *Berempon* Kojo were Siwudu, Abura, Kakumdu and Mpeasem which are known today as the Wirompe Villages of the Oguaa (Cape Coast) state.<sup>187</sup> These villages later combined to form the *Ntin Asafo* company. Kwesi Johnson suggests that “hitherto the town of Cape Coast proper was divided into the wards only Nkum and Bentsir. Owing to the increase in population and the extension of the town the Intin ward was formed from the north-eastern portion of Nkum just as the Anarfu quarter was carved out of Bentsir.”<sup>188</sup>

In some Akan polities there is a clear difference between the *Wirempe* and the *Gyase*, while in others their duties have become intertwined. In the normative Fante state, the *Gyase* were the personal bodyguard of an *Omanbin* who would accompany and protect the *Omanbin* in battle, carrying his stool when applicable. In peace time, part of their duty was to look after parts of the *Omanbin*'s regalia.<sup>189</sup> The main function of the *Wirempe* was only of limited importance to the everyday running of the stool. Usually they were seen foremost as the section of an *Omanbin*'s bodyguard, responsible for guarding the regalia of office.<sup>190</sup> The *Wirempe* came into their own at the time of an *Omanbin*'s death, when they theoretically had the power to veto any candidate who was put forward as a successor to the late *Omanbin*.<sup>191</sup> In reality, their power to veto a candidate was no more than symbolic. Within Cape Coast, as in some other Akan polities, there was a tradition of appointing a *Kyeretafo* (an heir apparent).<sup>192</sup> The existence of a *Kyeretafo* made certain of the customary duties of the *Wirempe* a formality, as the new *Omanbin* would have been selected at the time of his predecessor's enstoolment.<sup>193</sup> The custom of appointing an heir apparent continued until 1884, when the position of *Kyeretafo* was abolished in some Akan towns.<sup>194</sup> This followed the reign of the Asantehene, Kwaku Dua, who narrowly survived a murder attempt by his over-eager *Kyeretafo*.<sup>195</sup>

Perhaps after this constitutional development, the *Wirempe*'s role in local politics changed to accommodate the new conditions. In theory the abolition of the *Kyeretafo* would have given the *Wirempe* the full powers to veto an *Omanbin*. Whether an *Omanbin* had died or not, the *Wirempe* could use their potential power of veto to bargain for what they wanted with the *Oman*.

There is an obvious overlap in the duties of *Wirempe* and the *Gyase*, both institutions were responsible for sections of the royal regalia. Rattray found a town in Asante where the *Wirempe* and the *Gyase* were intimately linked. Rattray described Nsoko where the *Wirempefu* were directly under the *Gyasebene*.<sup>196</sup> Within Cape Coast, there was a similar scenario, in which the *Wirempe* were “under the *Jyase*.”<sup>197</sup> The facts that surround the merging of the two institutions are of importance in understanding the particular development of the Cape Coast *Wirempe*.

For the first half of the nineteenth century there were two stools in Cape Coast; one patrilineal and the other matrilineal. The patrilineal stool, with its alliance to old *Efutu*, had its own *Gyasefo* who were selected from the *Nkum Asafo* company. The matrilineal stool had its *Wirempe* who had always been selected from *Effikessim* and the *Ntin Asafo* company. *Effikessim* was one of the largest houses of *Berempɔng Kojo*, controlling several farms and villages on the out-skirts of Cape Coast. Over generations, the title '*Wirempe*' lost some of its significance as an office. The title had become almost synonymous with the families within *Effikessim*. It may have partly been this alternative significance of the title '*Wirempe*', that made the *Wirempe* so renowned in Cape Coast in particular. According to Rattray, in some Akan polities it was forbidden to even mention the word '*Wirempe*' except after the death of an important person.<sup>198</sup> Even if this was not generally the case, there is a noticeable omission of the activity of the *Wirempe* in most sources. Perhaps because the word had a dual significance in Cape Coast, it was used on an everyday basis, unlike in many Fante towns, where the *Wirempe* seem to play a less significant role.

When Kweku Atta became *Omanbin* in 1856, he united the two Cape Coast stools; the patrilineal stool of Egyr Ansa and the matrilineal stool of *Berempɔng Kojo* became one.<sup>199</sup> As part of the radical changes Kweku Atta chose a new *Gyase* for the new stool, from his own family at *Effikessim*. This led to the merging of the new *Gyase* with the *Wirempe*. Because the old *Gyase* never fully accepted this development, (they never relinquished physical control of the patrilineal stool), the new *Gyase* kept their name '*Wirempe*' to differentiate themselves from the old *Gyase*.<sup>200</sup> This event undoubtedly gave the *Wirempe* an unprecedented amount of power and clearly divided the town between the matrilineally and patrilineally affiliated stools and institutions.

It is my guess that by the early twentieth century, when much of the existing Cape Coast history was constructed, *Effikessim's* account of stool history had been indelibly ingrained into most of the surviving oral accounts. As a result it is impossible to write a history of Cape Coast and not give what seems to be a comparatively exaggerated weight to the *Wirempe's* role. This in turn may over-emphasize the contribution of *Berempɔng Kojo* in the history of Cape Coast.

## **IX. THE FAMILY OF BEREMPONG KOJO.**

*Berempɔng Kojo* was the progenitor of the Abradze family, and his domestics and subsequently the Fante *Oman* of Cape Coast, were his Abradze progeny. The five households that spawned the subsequent *Amanbin* of Cape Coast, emerged from the offspring of *Berempɔng Kojo's* five relationships. Apart from the relationship with his wife, Akwaaba Abba, he had four other relationships with domestic servants. There are consequently five divisions of his family, which are known by the names of their houses, as follows:

Abenfie

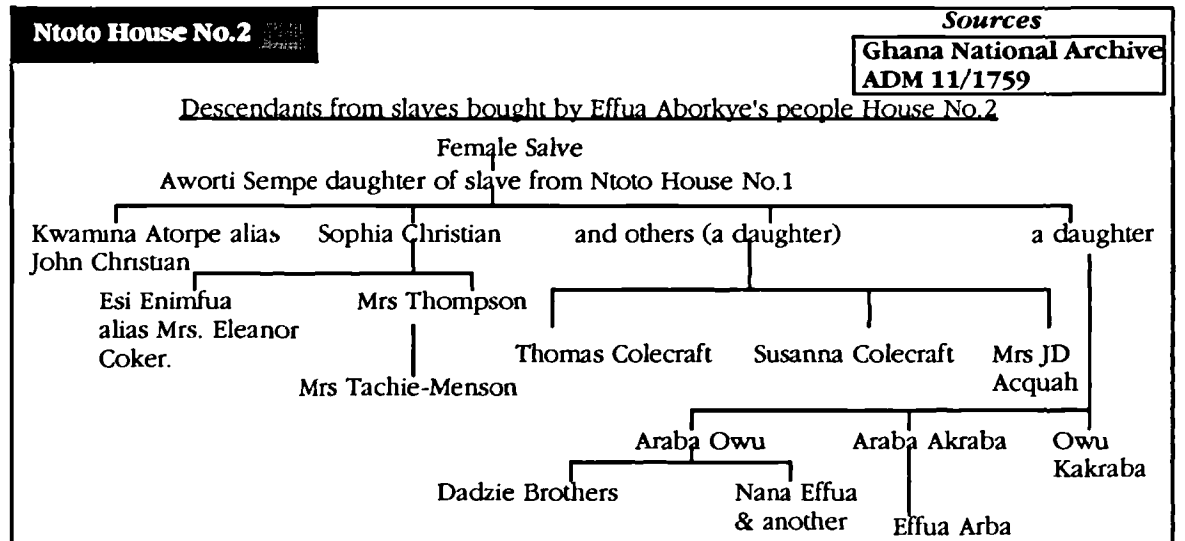
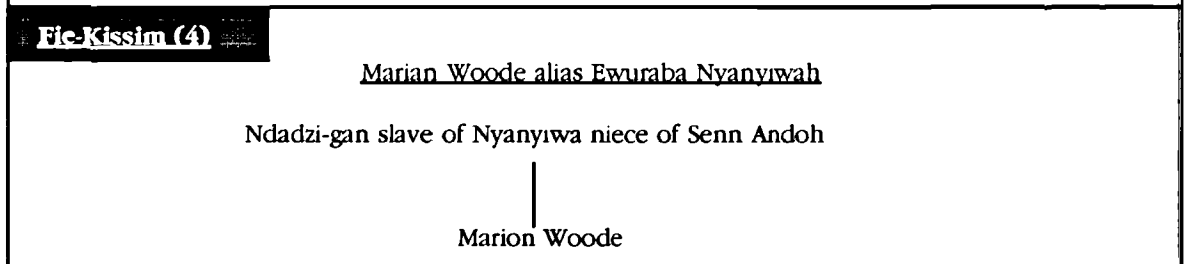
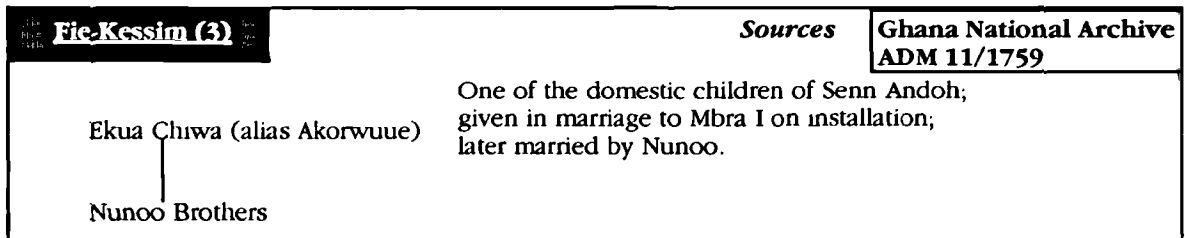
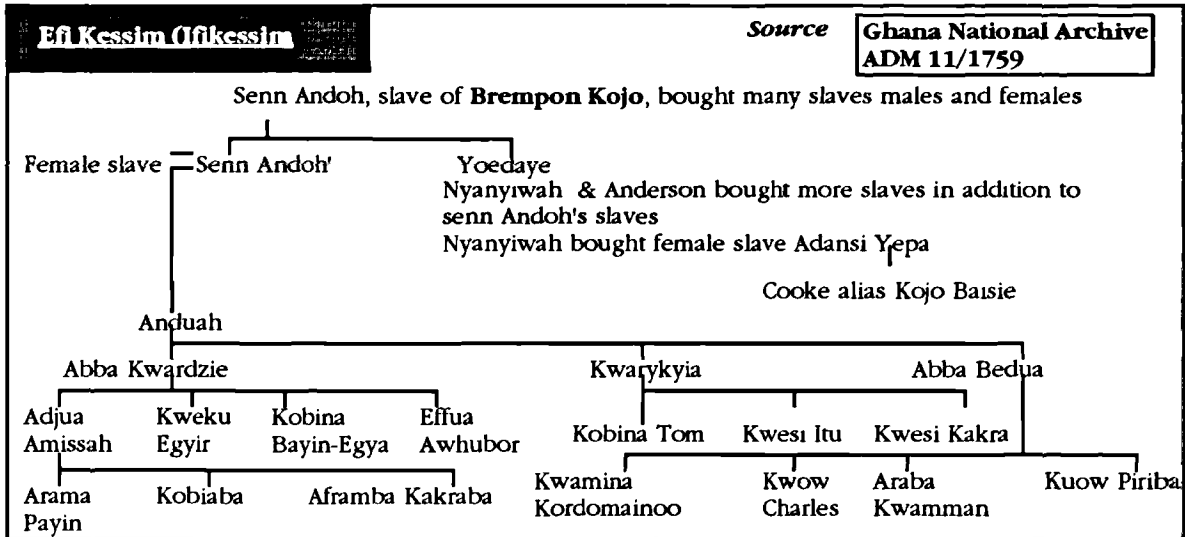
Effikessim

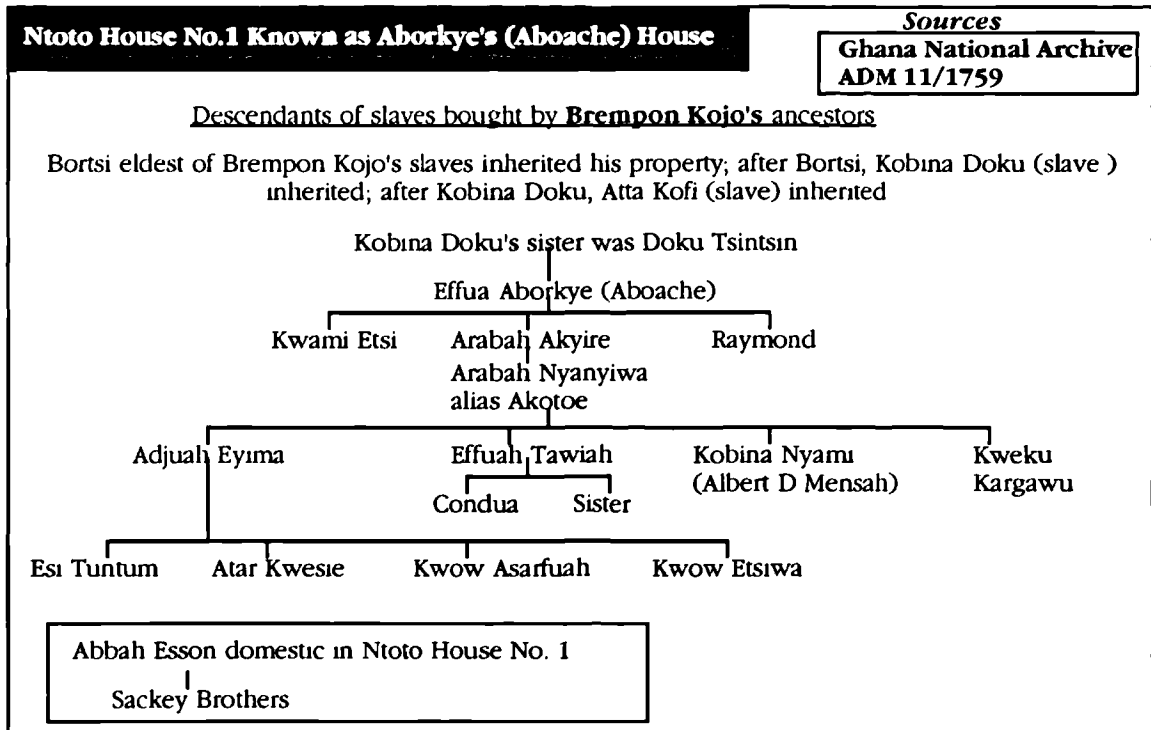
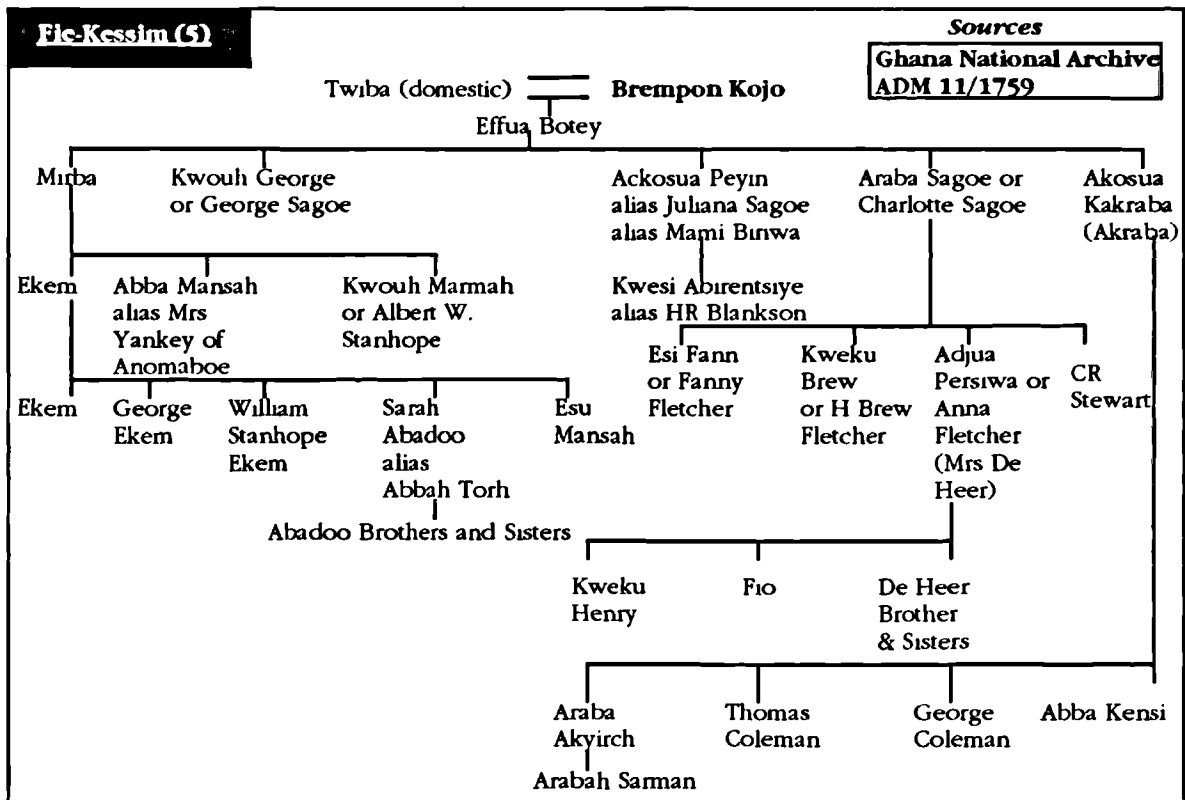
Ntoto No. 1

Ntoto No. 2

Dawson' s Hill

The Family embraces a number of persons who are blood relations and others who are not.<sup>201</sup>





Although it is now generally accepted within the historiography that Kojo was not in fact *Omanbin*, there is some evidence that seems to suggest that he may have been. Even up until the 1950s, there were members of the Abradze<sup>202</sup> family who still maintained that Kojo had been *Omanbin*,<sup>203</sup> and today on the wall of the old *Abenfie* in Cape Coast, it is still written, *Nana Berempong Cudjoe Ebiradzi Fi Kessim Cape Coast, Ghana. Stool Family.*

The *Oman* of Cape Coast are Efutus not Fantes.<sup>204</sup> This means that during the eighteenth century, the *Oman* followed the Efutu stool tradition of inheriting property and position through the patrilineal line. Those who maintain that Kojo was *Omanbin*, suggest that he was crowned in the presence of Governor Tymewell and officials in the city of Efutu in 1754,<sup>205</sup> or 1757.<sup>206</sup> Cape Coast, as has been shown, was traditionally under the paramountcy of the Efutu, and even though Kojo was a Fante,<sup>207</sup> it is plausible that he would have been crowned in the old capital. According to E.J.P Brown, Kojo was the step-son of the then King of Efutu through his mother's remarriage. This would have meant that as a Fante on an Efutu stool, Kojo would have inherited patrilineally but on his death, his position and property were open to be fought over by both his matrilineal and patrilineal heirs.

According to Crowther's 1916 report, (which has today become the reference text of preference for the Cape Coast stool), *Berempong* Kojo married Akwaaba<sup>208</sup> Abba, the wife of a former ruler of *Oguaa*. Akwaaba Abba had produced two children, Egyr Ansa and Amba Mpokuwa, by her first marriage and bore *Berempong* Kojo a daughter Ekuwa Adabin.<sup>209</sup> It is clear from Reverend Thompson's contemporary accounts, (Thompson is said to have been the first English missionary in West Africa<sup>210</sup>), that Kojo's brother was *Omanbin* during the 1750s.<sup>211</sup> If Kojo was in fact the former ruler's brother - as Thompson suggests - he would have as the Efutu patrilineal custom dictates, taken his brother's wife upon his death. If his brother had no sons,<sup>212</sup> Kojo also stood to inherit his brother's possessions and perhaps even his position too. *Berempong* Kojo left no legitimate descendants in the female line as his sister, Essianoh, had no children. So his matrilineal successors were, according to Fante custom, his domestics.<sup>213</sup>

Although Kojo only left domestic slaves and their progeny, it seems that the ambiguities between Efutu and Fante, gave them what they saw as *legitimate* claims on Kojo's property and titles. Traditionally, household slaves (*otutunafo*) were "those who were unable to repay some great service rendered to themselves or to their families, and who gave themselves up to, or were seized by, their benefactor (*odefu*)".<sup>214</sup> They were forced to serve in their benefactor's retinue, and sometimes as a personal bodyguard. These individuals were not usually transferable, as Ffoulkes explains, "being free-born, and fellow-countrymen. Their relations were personal, and continued as long as the obligation lasted. If it had not ceased at the owner's death, the heir inherited them with the property. They could not be given away or sold."<sup>215</sup> But occasionally, when the slaves outlived their owner, they or their progeny could claim the owner's property, assuming the role of the late owner's family. As Casely-Hayford's perhaps romanticized view suggested, "Gold Coast slavery was neither the slavery of ancient Rome, nor that of Afro-American history. The Gold Coast master was always humane and considerate. He actually went so far as to consider the slave a member of his family, and to adopt him as such. When his line



of descent failed he promptly named the slave his heir.”<sup>216</sup> This tradition was said to have been most prevalent among the Fante and the Efutu, although it has been argued that, “it is open to question whether this implies a joint ancestry since the principal of adoption into the tribe of slaves and domestics is a very plainly established institution,” among all the *Akan*.<sup>217</sup> This tradition enabled the servants of *Berempong* Kojo to inherit his stool. These families maintained for generations that the stool was the paramount stool of Cape Coast and thus kept alive the claim that Kojo had been the *Omanbin*.

It was obvious to Reverend Thompson, that even during the life of *Berempong* Kojo’s brother, Amrah Coffi, Kojo was the effective ‘*Chief man*’ of Cape Coast. On Thompson’s first night in Cape Coast he wrote that, “I preached in the Chapel of the Castle, before the Governor and Officers. There was also present the chief Man of Cape Coast town, *Cudjo Cabosbeer*.”<sup>218</sup> And when Thompson “preached to the Blacks for the first time, at *Cudjo’s House*”,<sup>219</sup> he wrote that, “he had been appointed to be there in the Morning,” but when he arrived he was disappointed that there was no audience. He recounted, “The matter was this, there had been a *Pallaver* (as they call it) that is, a Cause tried there; and the *Pinins*, or old Men who are the Judges of the Town, had according to custom, drank freely of strong liquors; that when the Business was over, *Cudjo* sent them Home to sleep it off, and told them they might come in the Afternoon, and he would speak to me to meet them. I had then a large Audience, who behaved very orderly.”<sup>220</sup> This seems to suggest that *Berempong* Kojo controlled the Royal tribunal and the *Pinins*<sup>221</sup> who sat on it. The debate about Kojo’s position will inevitably be left open, but his influence on, and contribution to Cape Coast from 1750 until his death thirty years later, is unrivalled by any other official of the *Oman*.

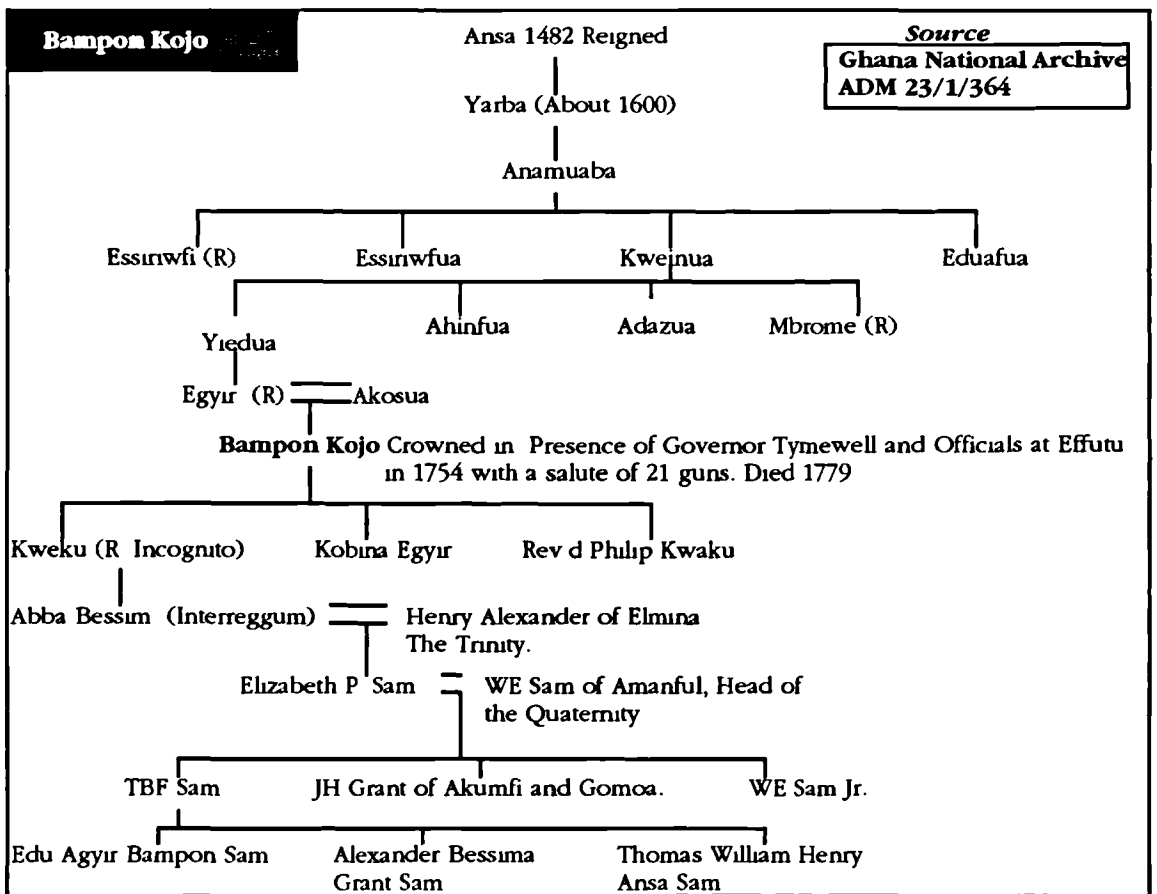
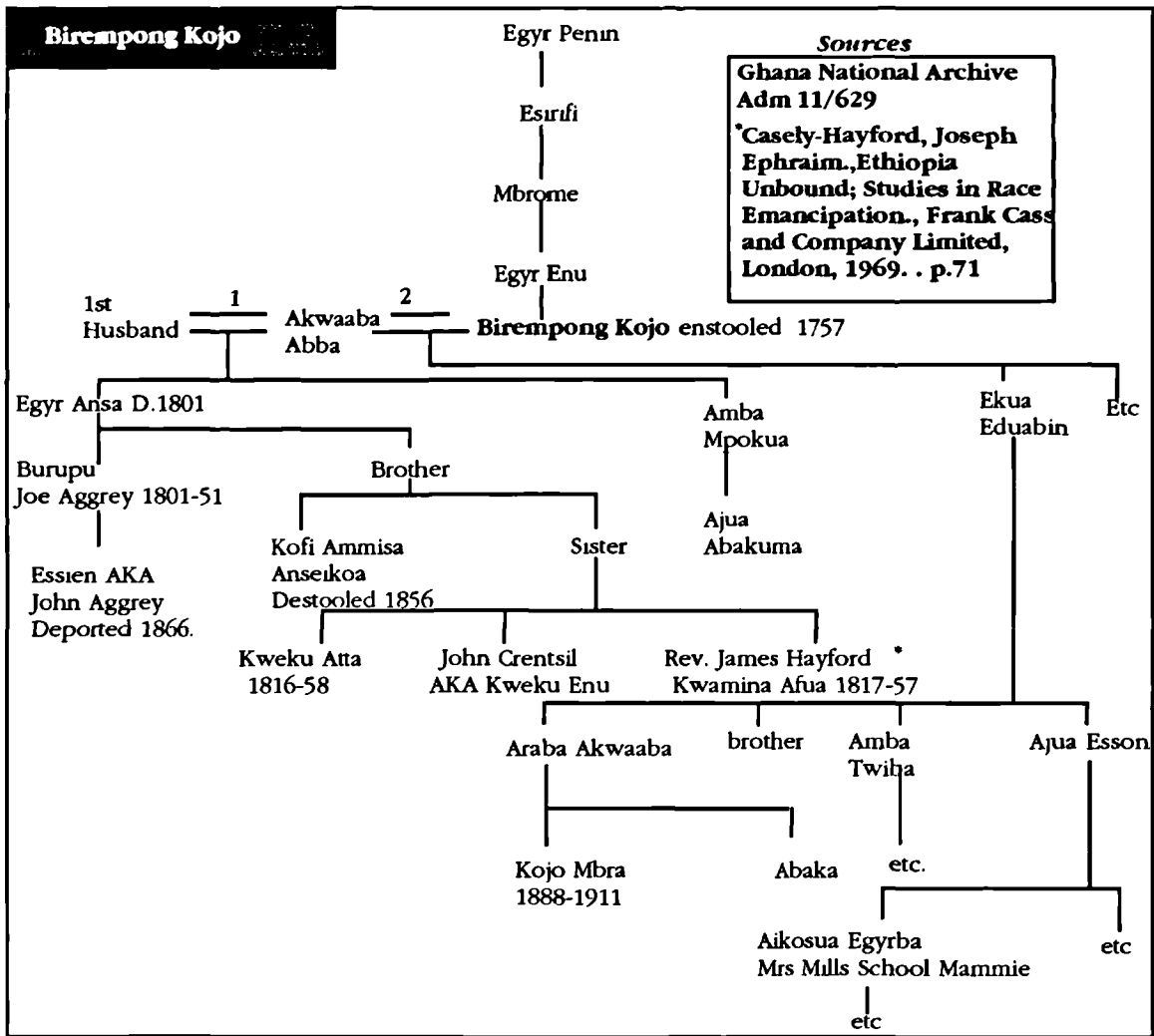
Kojo was at his most impressive as a diplomat, especially during times of political unease. During the Seven Years war, when European relations on the coast were tenuous, Bartels describes how, “the long continuance of the war prevented the usual supplies from reaching the coast; and the Castle would have been reduced to great straits for provisions had *Birempon* Cudjo not supplied it with food.”<sup>222</sup> Priestley adds that, “he was also indispensable, in the Anglo-Fanti discussions held at Cape Coast Castle during 1752 about excluding the French from settlement on the coast.”<sup>223</sup> In the 1760s he was “prominent in conferences in Efutu on the subject of Ashanti-Fanti hostility”.<sup>224</sup> The hostilities built up in 1765, after an Asante army pursuing the Akim and the Wassaw, entered Fante territory. They encamped close to the coast at Abura. Initially, the Asante had been allied to the Fante in this action, but disagreements developed, culminating in a brief outbreak of hostilities. This was the first Asante-Fante war. Although the Asante withdrew, rumours abounded that this was a taste of things to come. Kojo’s contribution was later rewarded by the Royal African Company who presented him with two silver goblets that were inscribed,

*A Present from the Committee of the Company of Merchants trading to Africa, to Cudjoe Caboceer, for his faithful service and adherence to the subject of his Most Sacred Majesty King George III Anno Domini 1774.*<sup>225</sup>

At the age of 64, Kojo was at his political peak.<sup>226</sup> During his lifetime he had risen, like Barter, from a position on the staff of the Castle, to become one of the most powerful men on the coast. Kojo had personally witnessed the ascendance of the Fante from its position of comparative subjugation by the Asante, the Aguaffo and the Efutu, to a point at which the Cape Coast stool became a politically independent and autonomous institution. A contemporary document, suggests that during the period in which Kojo was, “at the head of this town ... he had such great power over the people in it and those of adjacent countries, that he engaged them to do almost what he liked which added great weight to the...”<sup>227</sup> stool's authority in the different regions along the coast. This created a new set of dynamics, of new allies and enemies and, according to Priestley, “under these pressures, the Fanti states began to develop a greater degree of cohesion and consultation among themselves.”<sup>228</sup> Under Kojo's influence and control, they were able to hold frequent conferences in the 1760s, to discuss the terms of a peace settlement with Asante, and to determine lines of policy on questions of vital concern to all the maritime region. Although the conferences took place at Mankessim, Abura, and Efutu, with Kojo at the helm, the Cape Coast *Oman* was at the the centre of coastal political machinations.<sup>229</sup>

As an ex-linguist, Kojo could speak English very well and he had “a good Knowledge of many Things relating to the Government and other Affairs of *England*.”<sup>230</sup> This interest in Europe and particularly in European education, led Kojo to send his son Frederick<sup>231</sup> to be educated in London, under a ‘Rev. Territ of the Temple’. Frederick was accompanied by another boy of similar age who was the son of John Courantee, a somewhat similar figure to Kojo from Anomabu.<sup>232</sup> Kojo was keen to promote western religion and education. Before Thompson left Cape Coast, he wrote that Kojo had expressed a desire for a “School, and saying that the People would be glad to have their Children educated in some kind of Learning; I told him I would mention it, when I wrote to the Society.”<sup>233</sup>

When Kojo died in 1779 at 78,<sup>234</sup> he left five households of domestic slaves<sup>235</sup> and a step son, each with a rightful claim on his position and property.



The two sides of Kojo's family, his Fante domestic servants, and the Efutu *Oman*, both placed *Berempong* Kojo into their own genealogical context. The Fante descendants of Kojo continued their practice of matrilineal succession and the *Oman* continued the practice of patrilineal inheritance (as illustrated in fig. *Birempong* Kojo). Because his Fante family believed *Berempong* Kojo had been an *Omanbin*, they offered their own candidates up after the death of every subsequent *Omanbin*. The birth of a system of parallel-lineage has created problems at the enstoolment of many subsequent *Amanbin* (as illustrated in fig. *Bampong* Kojo). The question of whether *Berempong* Kojo was *Omanbin* and who were the legitimate heirs of the stool of Efutu/Cape Coast, has created consistent controversy. There is no historical data that can irrefutably destroy either argument, but the manipulation of the existing information has created a controversy. The discussion that follows about the complex lineages, attempts to establish as fully as possible how the two lineages explained their legitimacy. Their lack of clarity prohibits any conclusive analysis.

After *Berempong* Kojo's death, the emergence of the 'parallel-lineages' created a duplicate *Omanbin*. This division continued for a century and was only resolved with the enstoolment of Kweku Atta in 1856.

#### Efutu Male Descent

Egyr Ansa-Berempong Kojo's step  
 Burupu  
 Kofi Amissa  
 Change to Female Descent  
 Kweku Atta  
 Kweku Enu  
 Essien  
 Kwesi Atta  
 Kojo Mbra

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#### Fante Female Descent

Berempong Kojo  
 Boatsi  
 Kobbina Doku  
 Atta Kofi  
 Kweku Atta  
 Kweku Enu  
 Kwesi Atta  
 Kojo Mbra

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The Fante descendants of *Berempong* Kojo regarded Boatsi as the rightful successor to the position of *Omanbin*. Whereas, the Efutu descendants saw Egyr Ansa as the natural successor to the first husband of *Berempong* Kojo's wife, Akwaaba Abba.<sup>238</sup> The descendants of Kojo's original bodyguard have never accepted the Efutu lineage, and when, in 1916, Kofi Abu, a '*farmer and a chief*', was asked to list the first *Omanbin*, he listed them by beginning with *Berempong* Kojo, followed by; "Nana Andoh. after Nana Boatsi, after Boatsi Kobbina Doku, after Kobbina Doku Atta Kofi, after Atta Kofi Kweku Atta". Kofi Abu was part of the *Wirempe* family who had

merged with the *Gyase* in the 1850s and was, therefore, unwavering in his belief that, “*Berempong* was an *Omanbene*.” He asserted that he had, “never heard of Egyr Ansa being placed on the stool of Cape Coast.”<sup>239</sup> He argued that, the names he had listed, “were all members of one family not sons - that is in the female line.”<sup>240</sup> He further testified, “I have heard of Amissa he was an *Omanbene*, I have heard of Essien: he asked to become an *Omanbene* but never became one. The people I have named sat on the stool of *Berempong* Kojo.”<sup>241</sup> When questioned on the omission of Egyr Ansa, he reasserted that, the *Gyase* did “not know Egyr Ansa. Our master was *Berempong* Kojo.”<sup>242</sup>

Many sceptics of the *Gyase*'s view<sup>243</sup> of Kojo's lineage, have suggested that there were in fact two separate stools. One was the authentic Efutu stool of the Cape Coast *Amanbin*, and the other a subordinate and separate stool of *Berempong* Kojo. Such sceptics argue that, “*Berempong* Kojo's immediate successors were correctly asserted as ‘Kofi Ando, Boatsi, Kobbina Doku, Atta Kofi,’ but “that they sat on *Berempong* Kojo's family stool which was not the stool of the *Amanbin* of *Oguaa*.”<sup>244</sup> The *Gyasefo* have rebuffed this argument by insisting that the authentic *Omanbin*'s stool was, “*Berempong* Kojo's stool.”<sup>245</sup>

During Crowther's enquiry into the Cape Coast stool history, Aikosua Mary, a senior member of the *Gyase*, testified. When she was asked by one of the heads of the Efutu descendants, ‘Is it true that *Berempong* Kojo was *Omanbene* of Cape Coast?’, Aikosua Mary answered ‘yes’.<sup>246</sup> It would, however, seem strange that a man with a title of *Berempong*, which translates from Twi as ‘rich-man’, was in fact *Omanbin*. When *Tufubin* Coker, the head of the Efutu descendants, put to Aikosua Mary, ‘Do you know what is meant by the term *Berempong*?’ Aikosua Mary answered, “Chief Coker (you) would better answer that question than I”.<sup>247</sup>

Later in the same interview, *Tufubin* Coker suggested that there were two stools.<sup>248</sup> This does seem plausible; there were a few *Gyasefo* who acknowledged two stools, but maintained that Kojo's was the senior stool of the pair. <sup>249</sup> Some *Gyase* even include notable *Amanbin* from the Efutu lineage in their own matrilineage and claim, for instance, that, “Burupu was on *Berempong* Kojo's stool.”<sup>250</sup> Contemporary witnesses seem to support the view that there were two stools and that the Efutu represented the authentic *Oman*. One witness actually said, “I remember Burupu - he died when he was about nine years of age. I remember Atta Kofi. Atta Kofi was sitting on *Berempong* Kojo's stool and Burupu was *Omanbene*. In those days the *Wirempe* were not the *Jyase* of Cape Coast. The Nkum Company were the *Jyase*.<sup>251</sup> Burupu had his own village Burupu-Ekroful towards Asebu. I remember the *Akka War* in Appollonia. Burupu was *Omanbene*.”<sup>252</sup> The Efutu side of the stool have always supported this point of view and argued that, “*Berempong* Kojo was never *Omanbene* his real name was Kojo Mensa. Fortune descended on him, and he got the name *Berempong* a rich man.”<sup>253</sup>

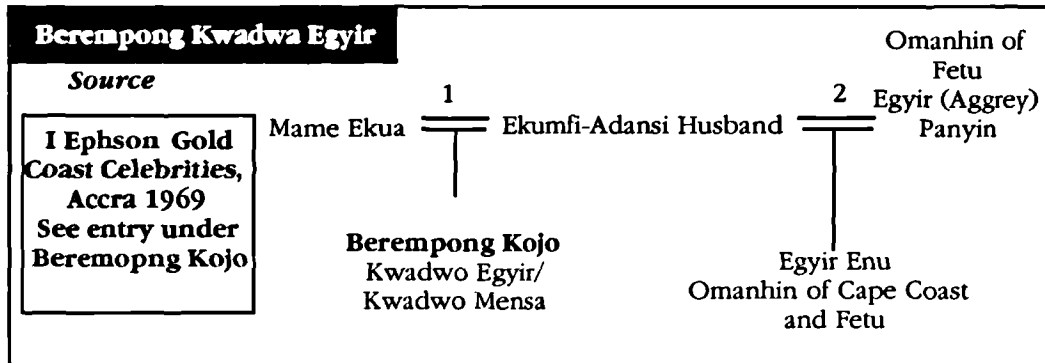
There is an overt historiographical impasse here, as to whether *Berempong* Kojo was the *Omanbin* or not. This impasse cannot be legitimately resolved without more historical data. Without this data, we are forced to make considered speculations on the basis of what is known, which is often ambiguous and sometimes contradictory. This places the historian in the position of a juror who must resist the temptation of becoming a judge.

Crowther points out the importance of the fact that, *Berempong* Kojo's stool was matrilineal, whilst the Efutu and early Cape Coast stool operated through what Henige called the, "ordinary system of male descent."<sup>254</sup> Bosman's early seventeenth century observations of this area, reaffirmed that, "the Dignity of King or Captain in most of these Countries descends Hereditarily from Father to Son."<sup>255</sup> Perhaps then, Crowther's assertion that, "prior to 1856, the succession to the stool of Cape Coast was in the male line i.e. From father to son of the previous ruler,"<sup>256</sup> is correct. From this, Crowther goes on to surmise, "it may be presumed that up to this date a line of *Amanbin* following the Efutu practice of descent in the male line of Efutu Blood had succeeded one another whether in Efutu or *Oguaaa* as rulers of the town and its villages. The only evidence to rebut this assumption, is that *Berempong* Kojo was an *Omanbene*,"<sup>257</sup> which would have meant that the Cape Coast stool was matrilineal, which it clearly was not.

There is a previously unmooted theory that could resolve some of the confusion. It is possible that there were three stools. It is clear beyond doubt that the original stool of Efutu and the stool of *Oguaaa* were patrilineal. Crowther has shown that, the successor's to *Berempong* Kojo's stool - Kojo Ando, Boatsi, Kobbina Doku, and Atta Kofi - "never claimed to be *Amanbin* of *Oguaaa*,"<sup>258</sup> which he substantiates by the fact that they all ascended their stool through the matrilineal line. The matrilineal stool of Kojo must have been created during the *Berempong*'s lifetime when both the stool of Cape Coast and the stool of Efutu were still competing for paramountcy. This may be an indication that the Fante family of Kojo grew to dominate the Efutu stool after Kojo's death, and instituted a matrilineal system of inheritance. Perhaps over generations, as the power of the Efutu declined, the history of its stool became retroactively reconstructed with the replacement of the Efutu *Amanbin* with Kojo's descendants. This would explain the diversity of accounts that relate *Berempong* Kojo to the Efutu *Oman* - some as a son of the *Omanbin*, some as a brother, others by marriage etc. All other contemporary relationships were clearly defined as matrilineal or patrilineal, whereas, Kojo's relationship to the Efutu stool is very ambiguous. This ambiguity may have been the result of his family trying to consciously but inconsistently construct a genealogy of the Efutu royal family which included Kojo.

Thompson suggests that Kojo was the brother of *Omanbin* Amrah Kofi.<sup>259</sup> Ephson constructed a genealogy from unknown sources, in which Kojo is purported

to be the elder brother of the *Omanhin* of Efutu, Egyr Enu (who features in fig. *Birempong* Kojo), whilst Crowther suggests that Kojo's relationship with the *Omanhin* was as an in-law. These discrepancies may have developed because Egyr Enu was an older (hence Egyr) figure in *Berempong* Kojo's family. Egyr Enu was evidently an Efutu *Omanhin*. *Berempong* Kojo although perhaps related, was probably never *Omanhin*.



It would seem that part of the confusion regarding Kojo's status has been caused by some degree of conflation of the stool history of Efutu, which became dominated by Kojo's descendants, and the stool history of Cape Coast. It has consequently become difficult to tell which *Omanhin* sat on which stool and when the Cape Coast stool gained the paramountcy of the area. Perhaps *Berempong* Kojo's undisputed nobility, was due to his connection by marriage to the Efutu stool. Those who have claimed he was *Omanhin*, have suggested that he was enstooled in Efutu.<sup>260</sup> His marriage into the Efutu royal family is supported by Crowther's work, which names his wife as Akwaaba Abba.<sup>261</sup> Ephson's claim that *Berempong* Kojo was the brother of the King of Efutu, is probably a misinterpretation of the relationship of brother-in-law, which would corroborate Crowther.

The conflation of the two stool histories may have arisen because it was unclear for some generations where paramountcy lay - with the Efutu or the Cape Coast *Oman*. When *Berempong* Kojo's Fante descendants gained control of the Efutu stool, they changed the pattern of inheritance to the matrilineal line. Ironically, this led to a situation in which the Efutu stool (traditionally patrilineal) became dominated by the Fante matrilineal descendants of Kojo, whereas, the Cape Coast stool, maintained a patrilineal line of succession, despite the fact that its *Oman* was dominated by Fante.

## X. MODES AND IMPLICATIONS OF LINEAGE

I would speculate that the matrilineal and patrilineal lineages are descent patterns from different ages of migration. The matrilineal pattern, is part of the early exogamous system of the *Akan*. E.J.P. Brown suggested, "Man was at first, as Darwin supposed, a jealous brute who expelled his sons from the neighbourhood of his women; he in this way secured the internal peace of his fire circle; there were no

domestic love-feuds. The sons therefore of necessity married outside their group and were exogamous. As man became more human, a son was permitted to abide among his kin, but he had to capture a mate from another herd (exogamy).”<sup>262</sup> The expulsion of sons from the clan for competitive reasons, became less and less relevant as time went by, but the system of matrilineage continued and is still said to exist in the ‘clan’ system. The residue of the early Akan clans or families are still in existence. Perhaps the patrilineal system developed some time later, as technological developments and improved environments, allowed the luxury of sons remaining in the fold. Eva Meyerowitz suggests that the patrilineal clans were derived from the system adopted in Guan around 1000 AD.<sup>263</sup>

Today the majority of the major *Akan* stools are matrilineal and they are of two distinct types which De Graft Johnson describes as *Abogyagua* and *Abanyingua*;

*but it should be borne in mind that all stools are first and last Abogyagua (blood stools). In this respect the suffix "bogya" (or "mmogya") appears to have three distinct meanings: 1/ blood-because blood, animal or other, forms an essential part during the consecration of a stool (egua) and at the annual or other periodical ceremonies connected with stools; 2/ relationship: because the stool is the visible sign of relationship, by blood, lineal or collateral or by purchase or adoption, existing amongst the several members claiming descent from the common ancestor who found the stool or ancestress who founded the family. (Akan stools usually have male names, and sometimes "strong names" besides, but relationship thereto is generally through the female-mother or sister of the original founder... 3/Daring. because during actual hostilities or immediately after a fierce engagement with the enemy the blood of a bold enemy of rank, who had been captured at some risk by members or people of the stool, was shed over such stool [sic] (hence it is the emblem of authority or power - Tum or Tumi - over one's enemies and subordinates or dependents). It may be added in parenthesis that the blood of a criminal was never shed over the Abanyingua- the more innocent and bolder the victim the better.*<sup>264</sup>

The *Abanyingua* are created by the *Oman* and bestowed in acknowledgement of great deeds, although, “all stoolholders are expected to be bold men, as cowardice is an insuperable disqualification, but the occupant of the *Abanyingua* is the man par excellence of the *Oman*.”<sup>265</sup> It is possible that *Berempong* Kojo’s unrivalled contribution to eighteenth-century Cape Coast life, had warranted the award of an *Abanyingua* stool.

The Cape Coast *Oman* had the power to bestow both *Abogyagua* and *Abanyingua* stools, some of which were inherited through matrilineal and others through patrilineal lines. The two forms of lineage have a different significance. The positions and institutions that have become synonymous with patrilineal inheritance, are almost all defined as *Ntoro*,<sup>266</sup> whereas, those associated with matrilineal



inheritance are known almost entirely as *Abusua*.<sup>267</sup> C.H. Harper wrote, “the *Ntoro* and *Abusua* exist side by side, the former being, I was informed, connected with *fetish*. The custom is that you take your father’s fetish and your mother’s family.”<sup>268</sup>

The systems for inheriting land and position in Cape Coast, have developed over centuries of gradual migration, and are subsequently riven with complexities and ambiguities. The two systems of *Ntoro* and *Abusua* have run side by side for at least 500 years,<sup>269</sup> and over time matrilineal institutions have come to dominate in Cape Coast. In each sub-group of the *Akan*, the complementary and sometimes rivalling modes of lineage have found their own balance, but there is no area that is exclusively patrilineal or matrilineal in its modes of inheritance.<sup>270</sup>

There is clearly no single rule or principle that governs the systems of lineage and inheritance in Cape Coast. However, as I have attempted to show, by chronologising the origins of the stools and the evolution of their systems of inheritance, it becomes possible to understand them more fully. The history of the *Oman* of Cape Coast, can be simplified by extracting figures like *Berempong* Kojo and analysing what they contributed to the stool, and what existed prior to their contribution. Without for instance seeing Kojo’s matrilineal stool as a sub-stool, of the Cape Coast patrilineal stool, one may perceive inherent lineage contradictions.

## **XI. PROGENY OF THE HOUSEHOLDS OF KOJO.**

The dissolution of *Berempong* Kojo’s stool in the nineteenth century did not alter his most important contribution to Cape Coast history. Edward Barter set the stage upon which *Berempong* Kojo’s diplomatic and business skills enabled him to manoeuvre the Fante out of a position of subjugation to the Efutu, and to a lesser extent the Europeans. Kojo’s wealth gave the Cape Coast stool stability at a time when the surrounding older stools began to lose the battle against the profound changes in trading relations and military logistics. The exponential growth of Cape Coast’s political influence in the eighteenth century, can only be compared to Accra’s in the twentieth century. *Berempong* Kojo was central to this growth. One of the most profound areas of Kojo’s influence was in education.

Philip Quaake was born in 1741. According to Fante tradition, “He was the son of Cudjo, the enlightened Cabosheer of Cape Coast known to the African people as Birempon Cudjo.”<sup>271</sup> In 1754, when still a young boy, he was sent to England “with two other African youths, Thomas Caboro and William Cudjo, on the recommendation of Rev. Thomas Thompson to be maintained and educated at the expense of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.”<sup>272</sup> *Berempong* Kojo had made a point of asking Thompson for his support in the education of some of his children.<sup>273</sup> Although Quaake was the only child to survive the English winters, his dynamic educational development, seemed to offer some compensation, and the success of Thompson’s scheme was never questioned. When Quaake returned to Cape Coast,

ordained, and highly articulate, he saw his immediate priorities as instituting a place of regular Christian worship and the establishment of a school.

Both European religion and education had previously had intermittent histories on the Gold Coast. Bartels describes how, “there had been a school in the castle as far back as the 1690’s,”<sup>274</sup> and from 1720, when James Phips of the Royal African Company was appointed “as Captain-General and Chief Merchant of Cape Coast” he began to “ensure that morning and evening prayers were regularly read by a minister of the Church of England or by ‘some person fitly qualified to perform the same’.”<sup>275</sup> Although Cape Coast already had educational and religious institutions, Quaake’s proposed formal introduction of both a Church and a school met with initial problems.

The instability of the Gold Coast in the 1750s combined with widespread disease, had devastating effects on the European community who lived and worked in the castle. Thompson, who had instigated Quaake’s education, left the Gold Coast in 1756. In the same year President Melvil died, and with him nearly all the officers and the garrison of Cape Coast. It was so bad that according to Dr Lind,<sup>276</sup> “the living were scarce sufficient to remove and bury the dead.”<sup>277</sup> Evidently, the Europeans were not immediately in a position to consider Quaake’s requests for assistance.

Although financial and personal support was not at first forthcoming, Bartels explains that, “Soon after his arrival, however, repeated requests were made to him for a school to be opened. These requests, he said in a letter to the Society, stirred up in him greater hope in his countrymen than he had imagined... he opened a school in his room in the Castle for mulatto boys and girls only, though it was his intention to take ‘some of the rougher kind’ later.”<sup>278</sup> Quaake needed a larger space for his sermons, and he eventually began to preach to a mixed congregation from *Berempong* Kojo’s (his father) house.<sup>279</sup> At that time, Kojo’s brother, Amrah Coffi, was *Omanhin*,<sup>280</sup> and he took offence to the services being held in his younger brother’s house and not in the *Abenfie*.<sup>281</sup> (It is said that this offence was left unsettled for generations and in the reign of Kofi Amissa (Circa 1850<sup>282</sup>) it was settled by denying the patrilineal side of the stool further rights to the position of *Omanhin*.<sup>283</sup>) As a result, Quaake later re-sited his sermons in the *Abenfie*,<sup>284</sup> and so Christianity was inadvertently given the mandate of the stool, and became a permanent fixture of Cape Coast life.

The establishment of the school was more problematic. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, (which had originally sponsored Rev. Quaake), appeared to have had sole responsibility for providing textbooks. There is no evidence that either the Committee of the Company of Merchants or the Committee of the S.P.G. shouldered its share of the responsibility for maintaining the school with any conspicuous zeal of deep conviction.<sup>285</sup> As a result Quaake’s school was very short of basic materials and the funds with which to acquire them. Quaake was probably

aware that the failure of the school, his first project, may have been the end of his chances of raising interest in future projects.

Quaque had just returned from London, where various philanthropic and social societies were emerging, based in coffee houses; some had formed into an organisation called the Freemasons. Freemasonry in its present form, (English or Scottish Constitution), was established in 1725. From that date onward, it was administered centrally from the Grand Lodge in London.

Freemasonry reached West Africa in 1735, when Richard Hull was appointed *Provincial Grand Master* for the "Gambay."<sup>286</sup> In 1736, David Creighton M.D. was made *Grand Master* of the Cape Coast Lodge. Cape Coast was the centre of British administrative and trading activity on the Gold Coast at this time. Because such Lodges were usually run from trading stations, their survival depended upon the volume of business and upon the physical survival of their members. Information was dispersed from the Grand Lodge to the colonies through business periodicals. Indigenous West Africans took advantage of the masonic and business networks by seeking publicity for their businesses and education for their sons in the popular gentlemen's magazines<sup>287</sup>.

Quaque developed a society that could fund his school based on similar principles,

*It was with great joy therefore that Quaque hailed a new Local Education Authority under the name of the Torridzonian Society. The Society consisted of the President, his Council, and the other gentlemen of the establishment. It was founded on the 28th July 1787, with William Fielde. President of the Council, as its President, Robert Stanton as Vice-President, and George Torraine as Treasurer and Secretary. There were twenty-three other members including Quaque himself. Members were distinguished by a gold medal. On one side of the medal was a sun in full splendour encircled with the motto, Friendship ardent as the Clime. Needless to say this was a high standard to set for human friendship.<sup>288</sup>*

It is probable that the society's name was derived from a term used by the earliest travellers, 'the Torrid Zone.' Barbot on reaching West Africa for the first time wrote, "As it lies in the Torrid Zone, the heat is excessive."<sup>289</sup> When the Torridzonian society was eventually consecrated as a bona fide Freemasonry Lodge in April 1810, it retained its name<sup>290</sup> as the Torrisinian<sup>291</sup> or Torridzonian<sup>292</sup> Lodge No. 621. Quaque's society, "decided that 'on a certain day of every week the members should pass away a few hours in an evening in mutual harmony and social conviviality'; the cost was to be met from monthly subscriptions. Membership soon increased so did funds."<sup>293</sup> European factors and Fante merchants like Quaque's contemporary William Ansah,<sup>294</sup> were among the first members. At first, the society operated as an educational authority. The success of the club and extra funds, gave Quaque the

impetus “to employ the fund for the purpose of founding a school for the education of twelve mulatto children.”<sup>295</sup> Quaque was assisted at the school by his son, Samuel, who had recently returned from England after receiving an education.<sup>296</sup> Margaret Priestley tells how,

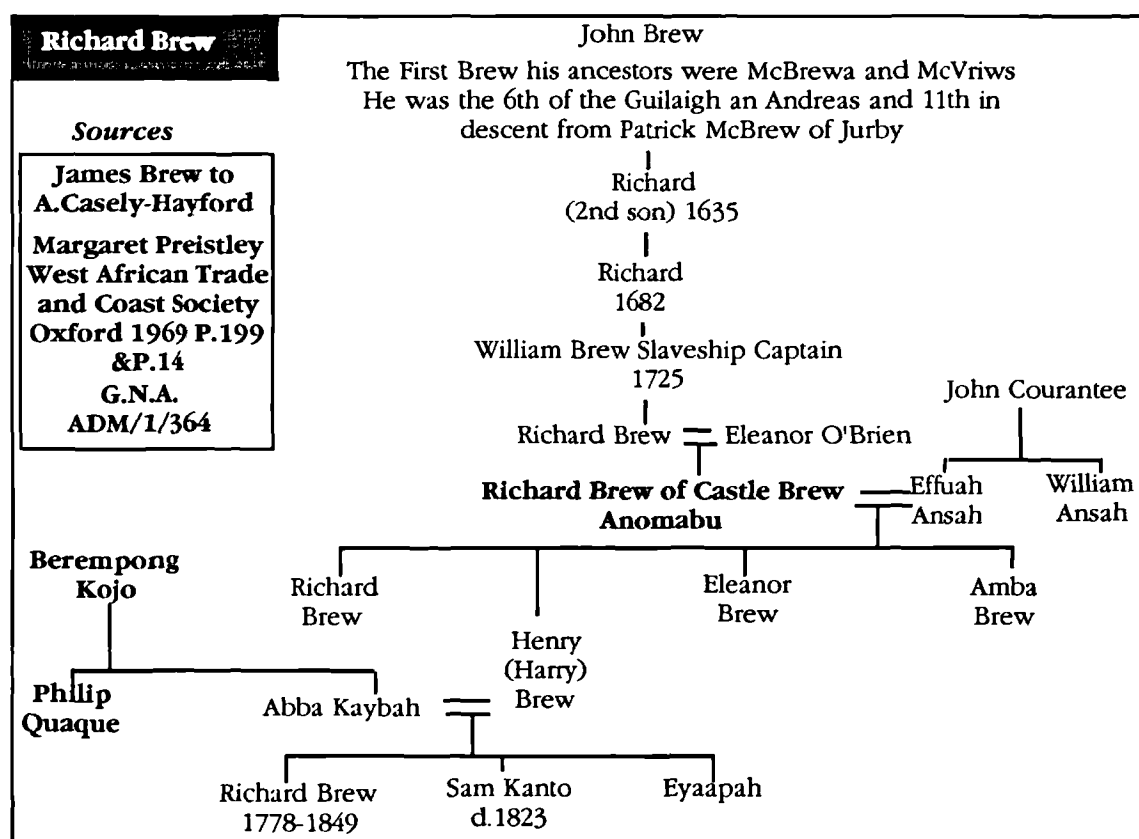
*Unfortunately, this philanthropic venture was short-lived, and within a few years of its foundation the Charity School ran into difficulties, in part financial. Yet the struggling educational plant, however feeble, never died completely. From the ranks of Quaque's school came teachers to carry on his work during the first decades of the nineteenth century, and the arrival of the Methodist Missionary Society on the coast in 1835 owed much to the tradition of Bible study he had instilled in his pupils.<sup>297</sup>*

Quaque's attempts to 'spread the word' took him along the coast, baptising and converting amenable Fante. In 1767, he visited Anomabu for the first time where, “he stayed for one week in Castle Brew on the 'kind Recommendation' of Samuel Smith whom he must have met in London through the Africa Committee.”<sup>298</sup> Richard Brew, who owned the castle, became one of Quaque's long-term acquaintances, and through the marriage of Brew's son, Quaque and Brew were later to become in-laws. Richard Brew was unlike most of the Europeans who had resided on the Gold Coast up until that point. Priestley describes how, “from June 1751 until his death at Anomabu on 5 August 1776, the Gold Coast was his home and the centre of his activities, first in the service of the Company of Merchants at various British forts and then as a private trader at Anomabu.” During Brew's twenty-five years on the Gold Coast, there was only one occasion when he was definitely known to have been away. His almost “continuous presence on the coast for a quarter of a century not only marks him out as an exceptionally hardy individual; it also means that his life impinged on a number of important events of both West African and European significance.”<sup>299</sup>

Brew was the first European to become closely involved in indigenous coastal life to which he devoted most of his mature years. His early time on the coast was spent in “the service of the Company of Merchants trading to Africa as a factor at the main British fort, Cape Coast Castle.”<sup>300</sup> During this period he may well have got to know Quaque's father, *Berempong* Kojo, who was the most significant Fante trader of the period and a frequent visitor to the castle. Therefore, Brew was probably aware of the young Quaque and probably heard of his return as the first ordained Fante. And so Quaque, the well-renowned Fante priest, was welcomed warmly on his first visit to Brew's castle. On Sunday, he held a service to a good audience, both white and black, and afterwards baptised Brew's daughters.<sup>301</sup> The two men represented a new coastal phenomenon - Brew was a European who had made a profound familial and economic commitment to the Gold Coast and Quaque was a Fante, who had been profoundly influenced by European culture and education. The positive

and negative aspects of the inextricable intermingling of the two cultures was to become characteristic of many of the progeny of *Berempong Kojo*.

Some years later, Quaquer's 'sister' Abba Kaybah married Richard Brew's son Harry.<sup>302</sup> Although the relationship 'sister' is not confirmed, it is certain that, "Harry's wife Abba Kaybah, the mother of his children, belonged to the same family, along the female line of descent, as did the Reverend Philip Quaquer."<sup>303</sup> What is significant about this marriage, is that Quaquer was directly related to the Fante matrilineal side of the Cape Coast *Oman*, and Harry Brew's children as the maternal nieces and nephews of Quaquer, were also direct descendants of the Fante *Oman*. Harry Brew's children were the first known people of partial European descent to be heirs to a Fante stool. I have discussed what they inherited from Quaquer, but what they inherited from the Brew family was equally rich.



Margaret Priestley ambiguously wrote of the origins of Brew, that, "the name 'Brew' or 'Broe' has different origins and a long history behind it. It is an anglicized version of the Gaelic 'O' Brugh', it appears at the end of the twelfth century in the Norman form of 'de Berewa' and 'de Bruth', and it is also a Manx surname."<sup>304</sup> James Brew, the Manx genealogist, argues that the Manx side of the family was the original Brew family seat. James Brew was able to construct this genealogy, which identifies Richard's grandfather William as a slave ship captain.<sup>305</sup> This may have given Richard a precedent for his work on the west coast of Africa.

Quaque was one of the first Fantes to embrace British culture as fully as he could. Without doing any more than being a successful preacher, he was to provoke extreme reactions in some of the most liberal and mild Europeans. The question of what positions and professions were appropriate for blacks on the eighteenth-century Gold Coast was a contentious one.

Richard Brew was described by Quaque as having, 'the most polite manner imaginable'.<sup>306</sup> But his manners must have got the better of him when he told the Governor of Anomabu that he would not go to Cape Coast, "to be Subservient to and sit under the Nose of a Black Boy to Hear him pointing or laying out faults their before them."<sup>307</sup> Priestley recounts that "there was also an example of a Mr Cohouac who refused to obey the Governor's summons to be present at divine service at half past eleven, stating that he did not choose 'to attend to hear a blackman whatever.'" For Brew this is an extremely uncharacteristic outburst. He was one of the few Europeans who had married an African, and had chosen to educate his children and even sought to provide for them after his death.<sup>308</sup> What may have really provoked such reactions, was the thought of God using an African as a vehicle for his message. This attitude continued to pervade certain denominations of the Church on the coast into the nineteenth century, and was one of the factors that gave the Fante the impetus to found their own 'low' churches.

Harry Brew (as Richard's son and Quaque's maternal nephew), was the heir to both ancient *Oguaaa* and eighteenth-century Cape Coast. He followed in the footsteps of his father and at a similar age, became a member of the Cape Coast Castle staff. In 1792, he was appointed linguist at Cape Coast Castle, a post once held by his maternal grandfather *Berempong* Kojo.<sup>309</sup> The name Brew was immortalised among the Fante, as subsequent generations took up Harry's example and married into the upper echelon's of the local stool families, educated their families in a European style, and maintained successful professional lives. As individuals who genealogically as well as psychologically crossed the ethnic divide between the European traders and the major Fante *Aman*, they were over time able to use their intimate knowledge of both ethnic groups to the advantage of the Fante at Cape Coast.

In the period between *Berempong* Kojo's death in 1779,<sup>310</sup> and the end of the century, the *Wirempe* and the domestic servants who were the heirs to his five houses became the most powerful single group in the town. Through successful trade, fortuitous marriages and personal investment in education, the progeny of the five houses of Kojo were to become the centre of intellectual activity during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

From the *Abenfie* came, W.E. Sam, (the first Fante geologist), Rev. Quaque, the Grants and the Hayfords, - from the 'Family Assembly Hall at *Effikessim*,<sup>311</sup> the Nunoo Brothers, the Woodes, John Mensah Sarbah, the Stanhopes, the Abadoos, George Ekem Ferguson and the Colemans, - from the *Ntoto No. 1*, the Sackey/Sekyi brothers

and *Ntoto No. 2* produced the Dadzie brothers and through marriage the Tachie Mensons. Although no data is available on Dawson's Hill, it may well have been the case that similar figures were born into the household during the nineteenth century.<sup>312</sup>

## **XII. CONCLUSION**

To separate the history of Kojo's progeny from the history of Cape Coast is impossible. The one theme and the single progenitory figure who individually reflects changes in the *Abusua* and *Ntoro*; the matrilineal and patrilineal; the *Oman* and *Asafo*; the slaves and the noblemen, is *Berempong* Kojo. As the single figure to whom most of the major Cape Coast families can be traced, he must be the only figure that can be reasonably called Cape Coast's progenitor. Kojo's legitimate or non-legitimate family is the single consistent element of the Cape Coast *Oman* from its birth as an independent stool at the beginning of the eighteenth century, to its demise at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Each genealogical tree of a major Cape Coast family is essentially an appendage of the *Ankobia* - the five houses of Kojo. Undoubtedly if Kojo had chosen Elmina as a place to settle, there would have been a similar *Berempong* to step forward and play his progenitory role in the developing Cape Coast. (Indeed it is still said, " *Birempong* Kodwo N'anyim akam no nyimpa bo-e.' (The tribal incision on *Birempong* Kodwo's face was made by a man),"<sup>313</sup> which is intended to suggest how even Kojo operated within the guide-lines and limitations of the indigenous institutions). But Kojo was uniquely far-sighted in his promotion of education. Because of Kojo's personal encouragement, a school was established at Cape Coast during his lifetime. The tradition of educating the progeny of the *Oman*, was to give Cape Coast an edge over other coastal towns, as military insurgency against the Europeans, ceased to be a viable option in the early nineteenth century.

Notes: Chapter 1. Aborigines, Immigrants and Progenitors.

<sup>1</sup> De Marees, Pieter Translated by Albert Van Dantzig and Adam Jones, *Description and Historical Account of the Gold Kingdom of Guinea 1602*, Oxford, 1987. P.62. Kanquies may be kenkey.

<sup>2</sup> The Indigenous name for the area which is now called Cape Coast also spelt Igwa, Iguei, Oegwa, Agwa and Ogua.

<sup>3</sup> Although Eva Meyerowitz dates the founding of Oguaa at 1380, I would question it's accuracy. See Meyerowitz, E. *Akan Traditions of Origins*, London, 1952. P. 131.

<sup>4</sup> Traditional leader who had other sub-chiefs under them, also spelt , Omanhene, and Omanhen.

<sup>5</sup> Also spelt Fetu, Effuttu, Etsifu, and even Foetu.

<sup>6</sup> Also spelt Fanti, Fantee and Fantyn.

<sup>7</sup> There are traditional accounts of alluvial gold being extracted from the hills around Cape Coast, but because iron and gold are rarely found in the same geological formation these stories may have been inaccurate.

<sup>8</sup> Penfold, D.A. "Excavation of an Iron Smelting Site at Cape Coast." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, 1213, 1971/72, Vol. 12 . P.7.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., P.11.

<sup>10</sup> This seems to be supported by the work of Eva Meyerowitz, See *Akan Traditions of Origin*, London, 1952.

<sup>11</sup> Penfold, D.A. "Excavation of an Iron Smelting Site at Cape Coast." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, 1213 1971/72, Vol. 12. P.11.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., P.13.

<sup>15</sup> Christensen, James Boyd "The Role of Proverbs in Fante Culture." *Africa*, Vol. 28. 1958.

<sup>16</sup> Ellis A. *The Tshi-Speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast of West Africa*, London, 1887. P. 334.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., P. 337.

<sup>18</sup> *A Report of a Commission of Enquiry Under the Commissions of Enquiry Ordinance, 1893, Into the Relationship Between the Stools of Abra, of Dominase and of Kwaman*. London 1918. P.28.

<sup>19</sup> *Omanbene of Abra, A Report of a Commission of Enquiry Under the Commissions of Enquiry Ordinance, 1893, Into the Relationship Between the Stools of Abra, of Dominase and of Kwaman*. London 1918. P.36.

<sup>20</sup> *Report of a Commission of Enquiry, under the Commissions of Enquiry Ordinance, 1893, into the Relationship between the stools of Abra, of Dominase and of Kwaman*. London 1918. P.27.

<sup>21</sup> GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs - ADM. 11/629 & 1759 *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry*.

<sup>22</sup> The reference to the gun seems to give some temporal context which may date the tradition to not earlier than the sixteenth century. Brown, E.J.P. "Mfantasi Akan Totems", *Gold Coast Review*, Vol. II, No. 2, June 1926. P.181.

<sup>23</sup> Arthur Ffoulkes wrote "The Omanhin of Denkera, Nkwanta Bissa, who lives in the Cape Coast District, at Jukwa," told me this story "The Fanti Family System", *Journal of the African Society*, Vol. I VII No. 28, July 1908, P. 397.

<sup>24</sup> Nsona was a fox, an emblem of shrewdness. Anona was a parrot, an emblem of patience or forbearance. Twidan, was a leopard, an emblem of violence. Kwonna was a buffalo, supposed to have a passion to seen what is in water and on land, an emblem of inquisitiveness or thoroughness. Adwin was a sheat-fish of the deep fresh waters, an emblem of thoughtfulness. Intwaa was a dog, an emblem of agility or promptness. Aburadzi was a plantain tree, supplying the staple food, an emblem of excellence or ambition.

<sup>25</sup> GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. /1/1473 *Ffoulkes's Report on the Asafo*.

<sup>26</sup> [sic]. Barbot. J. *A Description of the Coasts of North and South Guinea*. London, 1732. P.147.

<sup>27</sup> Claridge , W. Walton. *A History of the Gold Coast and Ashanti*, Vol. I London. 1964. P. 65.

<sup>28</sup> The Accani were apparently different from the Akan, although their name may have been derived from them being Akan. The Accani according to Birmingham were from Accania, a



place that I have been unable to site. Birmingham, David "A Note on the Kingdom of Fetu (translations from Wilhelm Johan Mueller chaplain of the Danish Garrison 1661)." *Ghana Notes and Queries*. 1965-6. Vol. 9. PP. 30-33. According to Sanders the Accani are from the area which is today identified as Asen. See, Sanders, J.R. *The Political Development of the Fante in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: A Study of West African Merchant Society*. Unpublished PhD thesis, Northwestern, 1980.P.84. See also, Kea, R. *Settlements, Politics and Trade in the Seventeenth Century Gold Coast*, Baltimore and London, 1982. P.248, who identifies Accania as Assin.

<sup>29</sup> Birmingham, David "A Note on the Kingdom of Fetu (translations from Wilhelm Johan Mueller chaplain of the Danish Garrison 1661)." *Ghana Notes and Queries*. 1965-6. Vol. 9. P. 30.

<sup>30</sup> De Marees, Pieter Translated by Albert Van Dantzig and Adam Jones, *Description and Historical Account of the Gold Kingdom of Guinea 1602*, Oxford, 1987. P.77.

<sup>31</sup> Gomez was a Portuguese entrepreneur. See, *Report of a Commission of Enquiry, under the Commissions of Enquiry Ordinance, 1893, into the Relationship between the stools of Abra, of Dominase and of Kwaman*. Part II London 1918. P.21 This is recorded as part of local tradition.

<sup>32</sup> De Marees, Pieter Translated by Albert Van Dantzig and Adam Jones. *Description and Historical Account of the Gold Kingdom of Guinea 1602*, Oxford, 1987. P.51-2.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., P.53.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>35</sup> Ellis, A. B. *A History of the Gold Coast of West Africa*, London, 1971. P.10.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>37</sup> Bosman, W.A. *A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea*, London, 1967. P.43.

<sup>38</sup> De Marees, Pieter Translated by Albert Van Dantzig and Adam Jones, *Description and Historical Account of the Gold Kingdom of Guinea 1602*, Oxford, 1987. P.88-89.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., P.91.

<sup>40</sup> See, work by J.E. Inikori and R.A. Kea, 'The Import of Firearms into West Africa 1750-1807', *Journal of African History*, XVIII, 2, (1977), seems to corroborate de Marees' observations, that guns made a significant impact. Ray Kea also deals with this point in Kea, R. *Settlement Politics and Trade in the Seventeenth Century Gold Coast*. John Hopkins University Press. Baltimore and London. 1982. P. 158-160.

<sup>41</sup> De Marees, Pieter Translated by Albert Van Dantzig and Adam Jones, *Description and Historical Account of the Gold Kingdom of Guinea 1602*, Oxford, 1987. P.92.

<sup>42</sup> Bosman, W.A. *A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea*, London, 1967. P.184.

<sup>43</sup> Dyce, Dr. N.A. Sharp "Cape Coast An Historical Sketch, from 1610 to 1725." *Transactions of the Cape Coast Historical Society*, No. 1 Vol. 1. Cape Coast. 1936.

<sup>44</sup> Guaffo also spelt Egaufu was the area to the south west of Efutu and to the north of Elmina.

<sup>45</sup> *Report of a Commission of Enquiry, under the Commissions of Enquiry Ordinance, 1893, into the Relationship between the stools of Abra, of Dominase and of Kwaman*. Part II London 1918. P.21.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> He is also known as Amu Taki, because there is very limited information on him it is now impossible to say which is correct, Abu would seem Islamic and Amu Akan. The spelling of Taki varies from source to source, it can be spelt Teki.

<sup>49</sup> *Report of a Commission of Enquiry, under the Commissions of Enquiry Ordinance, 1893, into the Relationship between the stools of Abra, of Dominase and of Kwaman*. Part II London 1918. P.21.

<sup>50</sup> The area where the Guaffo were from.

<sup>51</sup> The people from Asebu.

<sup>52</sup> *Report of a Commission of Enquiry, under the Commissions of Enquiry Ordinance, 1893, into the Relationship between the stools of Abra, of Dominase and of Kwaman*. Part II London 1918. P.21.

- <sup>53</sup> Bosman, W.A. *A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea*, London, 1967. P.32.
- <sup>54</sup> This is supported by Henige's work, which dates the creation of the paramount stools on the coast to this period, which was the positive outcome of the failure of the internal stools.
- <sup>55</sup> Barbot. J. *A Description of the Coasts of North and South Guinea*. London, 1732. P.168.
- <sup>56</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>57</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>58</sup> It must be acknowledged that this may have also been a reference to a 'High Priest Braffo,' who 'was the sovereign ruler of the Fanti' (see Sarbah, John Mensah *Fanti National Constitution*. London, 1906 P.52) or to the honorific title of Bafuor.
- <sup>59</sup> Barbot. J. *A Description of the Coasts of North and South Guinea*. London, 1732. P.168.
- <sup>60</sup> De Marees, Pieter Translated by Albert Van Dantzig and Adam Jones, *Description and Historical Account of the Gold Kingdom of Guinea 1602*, Oxford, 1987. P.67.
- <sup>61</sup> Barbot. J. *A Description of the Coasts of North and South Guinea*. London, 1732. P.169.
- <sup>62</sup> Davies, K.G. *The Royal African Company*. London 1957. P.282.
- <sup>63</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>64</sup> Ibid., P.283.
- <sup>65</sup> De Marees, Pieter Translated by Albert Van Dantzig and Adam Jones, *Description and Historical Account of the Gold Kingdom of Guinea 1602*, Oxford, 1987. P.188-9.
- <sup>66</sup> Bosman, W.A. *A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea*, London. 1967. P.33.
- <sup>67</sup> Dyce, N.A. Sharp "Cape Coast An Historical Sketch, from 1610 to 1725." *Transactions of the Cape Coast Historical Society* No. 1 Vol. 1. Cape Coast. 1936. P.11.
- <sup>68</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>69</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>70</sup> Barbot. J. *A Description of the Coasts of North and South Guinea*. London, 1732. P.172.
- <sup>71</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>72</sup> Dyce, N.A. Sharp "Cape Coast An Historical Sketch, from 1610 to 1725." *Transactions of the Cape Coast Historical Society* No. 1 Vol. 1. Cape Coast. 1936. P.10.
- <sup>73</sup> Davies, K.G. *The Royal African Company*. London, 1957. P.261.
- <sup>74</sup> By over-valuing gold the company could underpay their staff by paying them same weight. Davies, K.G. *The Royal African Company*. London, 1957. P.253.
- <sup>75</sup> Davies, K.G. *The Royal African Company*. London, 1957. P.253.
- <sup>76</sup> Dyce, Dr. N.A. Sharp "Cape Coast An Historical Sketch, from 1610 to 1725." *Transactions of the Cape Coast Historical Society* No. 1 Vol. 1. Cape Coast. 1936 P.8.
- <sup>77</sup> Cited in Dyce, N.A. Sharp "Cape Coast An Historical Sketch, from 1610 to 1725." *Transactions of the Cape Coast Historical Society* No. 1 Vol. 1. Cape Coast. 1936. P.8.
- <sup>78</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>79</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>80</sup> [sic]. Cited in, Davies, K.G. *The Royal African Company*. London 1957. P.280.
- <sup>81</sup> Ibid
- <sup>82</sup> [sic] Cited in, Davies, K.G. *The Royal African Company*. London 1957. PP.280-1.
- <sup>83</sup> Davies, K.G. *The Royal African Company*. London, 1957. P.281
- <sup>84</sup> De Marees, Pieter Translated by Albert Van Dantzig and Adam Jones, *Description and Historical Account of the Gold Kingdom of Guinea 1602*, Oxford, 1987. P.34.
- <sup>85</sup> GNA ADM. 11/1109 *Deposition of the Cape Coast Omanbin 1929*.
- <sup>86</sup> Also spelt Kyiami, who is a spokesman or advocate.  
Oman Kyiami - State Kyiami.  
Asafu Kyiami - Company Spokesman.  
Ebusua Kyiami - Family Spokesman. See, GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/1759 *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's installation, and the Constitution and Customs of Cape Coast*.
- <sup>87</sup> "The Council, Beguafo, comprises certain hereditary chiefs supported by persons who may be selected for their ments. The local name for these stooled or hereditary chiefs is Mpakanmufo a name derived from the two-man palanquin (Apakan) which they are entitled to use." See, GNA ADM. 11/1109 *Deposition of the Cape Coast Omanbin 1929*.
- <sup>88</sup> GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM.11/1759 *Crowther s Recommendations for*

*Bilson's installation, and the Constitution and Customs of Cape Coast.* ".in every Fanti town or village there were communities consisting of householders, a number of whom formed each of the several wards into which each town village or town was divided; that whilst each householder was ruled by the by the head of the family each war was under control of the several heads of families under a president called a "Penin" or Elder. The Penins or Elders of the wards were subordinate to the chiefs the most influential whom was the Headman or Cabboceer; the Elders, the Chiefs and the Headman together constituted a Council of Elders which directed and controlled each town or village, settling all matters of dispute and regulating all the internal organisation of the Community." See, Pachai, B. "An Outline of the History of Municipal Government at Cape Coast " *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vol. VIII, 1963.

<sup>89</sup> GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/1759 *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's installation, and the Constitution and Customs of Cape Coast.*

<sup>90</sup> De Graft Johnson , J.C. "The Fanti Asafu." *Africa*. Vol. 5. 1932. P.308.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, P.312.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> The date of Barter's trip to Europe is unknown, De Graft Johnson , J.C. "The Fanti Asafu." *Africa*. Vol. 5. 1932. P.309.

<sup>94</sup> De Graft Johnson , J.C. "The Fanti Asafu." *Africa*. Vol. 5. 1932. P.310.

<sup>95</sup> The Nkum and Bentsir were the oldest Asafo companies in Cape Coast.

<sup>96</sup> GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/1473 Arthur Ffoulkes.

<sup>97</sup> There is a tradition that Kojo Akwa who was allegedly the founder of the Cape Coast visited Don Juan Carlos. King of Portugal, and was ship-wrecked on his return. See, GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/629 & 1759 *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry.*

<sup>98</sup> GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/1759 *The Constitution and Customs of Cape Coast.*

<sup>99</sup> Oral testimony of the *Supi* of Akrampa says that in 1873 five Asantes were decapitated by the Akrampa for gun running. For the Brofunkwa version see P.174 of this thesis.

<sup>100</sup> GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/1473 *The Work of Arthur Ffoulkes.*

<sup>101</sup> Asante/Fante war of 1824.

<sup>102</sup> GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/1759 *The Constitution and Customs of Cape Coast* Entry on the Akrampa. Their valour in this battle was said to have earned them exemption from the Royal oath.

<sup>103</sup> This can be presumed if early twentieth century descriptions of Barter's Akrampa Asafo in any way reflect the Asafo of this period.

<sup>104</sup> Ffoulkes suggested, "The Supi and the Asafopenyin decide who are executed, the Supi then gives the Abrafo the order, and these proceed, in cold blood to carry out the order. The procedure is to catch the victim unaware, either by lying in ambush, or by approaching him in his sleep, and to run the knife through both cheeks, to prevent him from being able to speak; for if he can now only mutter the a chief's oath, the Abrafo must release him, or he is treated as a murderer.- A chiefs oath is a challenge to appear, with the swearer before the chief whose oath is sworn. for explanations, and once sworn, neither party may prevent the other from appearing- The Abrafo having thus silenced his man, proceeds to stun him, and severs the head from the body, by hacking at the nape of the neck. When severed, the head is placed on the Company-post of the executing Abrafo, and after decomposition sets in, he removes it to his house, scrapes the skull with his knife, and stores the cleaned trophy inside the Company-post, placing the lower jaw-bone on the Company drums and horns." GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM 11/1473 *The work of Arthur Ffoulkes.*

<sup>105</sup> Many of these rituals which were retroactively declared *indigenous* in certain historical and anthropological studies of the early twentieth century. GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/1473 See *the work of Arthur Ffoulkes on the Asafo Companies. 1907.*

<sup>106</sup> Wartenburg, J.S. *Sao Jorge d'EL Mina, Premier West African Settlement.* Ifracombe. 1950.

<sup>107</sup> Arhin, K. "Diffuse Authority among the Coastal Fanti." *Ghana Notes and Queries.* No. 9. Nov. 66. PP. 66-85.

<sup>108</sup> Datta, A.K. and Porter, R. "The Asafo System in Historical Perspective." *Journal of African History.* Vol. 12. 1971. P.282. Ellis, Brown, Christensen, and the co-authors Annobil and

- Ekuban, See, Ellis A. *The Tshi-Speaking of the Gold Coast of West Africa*, London 1887 P.29,  
Brown, E.J.P. *Gold Coast and Asianti Reader* London, 1929 Bk. 1, Christensen, J B *Double  
Descent Among the Fanti*. New Haven 1954. P.118 & Annobil, J.A. and Ekuban, J.E. *Mfantse  
Amambu Mu Bi* Cape Coast 1944 1952 .
- 109 Datta, A.K. and Porter, R. "The Asafo System in Historical Perspective." *Journal of African  
History*. Vol. 12. 1971. P.295.
- 110 Ibid., P. 297.
- 111 Also spelt Brafonkwa and Brafoomua.
- 112 Also spelt Amanfur.
- 113 De Graft Johnson , J.C. "The Fanti Asafu." *Africa*. Vol. 5. 1932. P. 309.
- 114 Ibid.
- 115 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/1473 This 'fetish' was according to  
Thompson, "a rock behind the Castle, which juts into the sea in the angle of the cape, from  
which the place takes its name. This rock they call Taberah, a name made infamous of old  
by the impiety of the Jews.....every Sunday they make an offering to taberah of cankee,  
which is their bread, mixing it with palm oil.....they have a legend, that once in ancient  
time a fisherman as he was exercised in his calling, was swallowed up by the sea; and after  
forty days, being cast up again, he came on shore with his message from god, that the  
people were commanded to make Taberah the solemn Place of his worship from that time  
forward. .... Here it is easy to know that this prophets name was Jonah." See Thompson, Rev.  
T. *An Account of Missionary Voyages*. London, 1758. P.38-40.
- The Abusua have an equivalent spot, "Adzewopodanpenim that is Westminster Abbey  
- that is the sacred spot in Bentil street behind Ch. Coker's house unless an Omanhene is  
taken to that spot he would not be recognised as an Omanhene. At this spot the necessary  
rites were performed, this consisting in daubing the forehead in mud. He was confined in a  
room for eight days on the eighth day he was taken to Papretem." See, GNA Cape Coast  
Native Affairs ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry. Evidence of  
W.Z Coker*.
- 116 The Swedes repaid the Brofumba loyalty by offering those who worked on the castle  
what were considered good conditions for the seventeenth century Gold Coast. Pregnant  
women who helped in the castles construction were allowed double pay for the work they  
did. See, GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/1473 *Ffoulkes' study of the system of  
Asafo companies*.
- 117 De Graft Johnson , J.C. "The Fanti Asafu." *Africa*. Vol. 5. 1932. P.311.
- 118 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/1473 *Ffoulkes' Study of the System of  
Asafo Companies. Cape Coast Company Flags and Violence, History and Photographs 1909*.
- 119 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/1473 *Ffoulkes' Study of the System of  
Asafo Companies. Cape Coast Company Flags and Violence, History and Photographs 1909*.
- 120 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/1473 *Ffoulkes' Study of the System of  
Asafo Companies. Cape Coast Company Flags and Violence, History and Photographs 1909*.
- 121 Bosman, W.A. *A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea* London 1967  
P.164.
- 122 De Graft Johnson , J.C. "The Fanti Asafu." *Africa*. Vol. 5. 1932. P.308
- 123 Ibid.
- 124 It is concluded that, "They cannot in any way be said to have the status of a Wing or  
Divisional Chief of an Akan state who will frequently have 30 or 40 villages under him."  
GNA ADM. 11/1109 *Deposition of the Cape Coast Omanbin 1929*.
- 125 GNA ADM. 11 1109 *Deposition of the Cape Coast Omanbin 1929*.
- 126 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs - 11/1473 *Ffoulkes' Ffoulkes' Study of the System of  
Asafo Companies. Cape Coast Company Flags and Violence, History and Photographs 1909. &  
GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11 629 & 1759*.
- 127 De Graft Johnson , J.C. "The Fanti Asafu." *Africa*. Vol. 5. 1932. P.320
- 128 Ibid., P.315.
- 129 Ibid., P 313
- 130 Ibid.
- 131 Ibid., P.312
- 132 The matrilineal line of inheritance that dominates the majority of Akan institutions. De

- Graft Johnson , J.C. "The Fanti Asafu." *Africa*. Vol. 5. 1932. P 312
- 133 De Graft Johnson , J.C. "The Fanti Asafu." *Africa*. Vol. 5. 1932. P.313
- 134 Ibid. P.309.
- 135 Which means, seven is a perfect and complete number. De Graft Johnson , J.C. "The Fanti Asafu." *Africa*. Vol. 5. 1932. PP. 307-308.
- 136 1 Bentsir, 2 Anafu, 3 Ntsin, 4 Nkum, 5 Brofumba, 6 Akrampa, 7 Amanfur.
- 137 Nsona, Anona, Twidan, Kwonna, Adwin, and Aburadzi.
- 138 See above footnote.
- 139 "1. ABAKA—Beulah Lane area including part of Jukwa Road, Siwudu, Aboom, Kotokuraba and part of Dawson Hill.
2. ABU FIJFUW—Reef towards Ekwan (Queen Anne's Point)
3. ABU KAWKAW—Fort Victoria Site
4. ABU KESIDU—Customs Beach
5. ABU KUR (or ABURUKUR)—Customs Beach
6. ABU KWESI—(1) Nkum(2) Roman Catholic Cemetery
7. ABU POW—Kotokuraba Market
8. ABU SANTSIIN—Reef running from Nkum Beach
9. ABUSUM FUFUR—Nkum (Victoria Park)
10. AADUA—Behind Methodist Domiabra Cemetery
11. AAKOABIREM—Behind Fosu Lagoon (Bakatsir)
12. ADADENTEM—Siwudu (Municipal School Site)
- 13 AKODAA EKU—Bentsir
- 14 AKROMA KOJO—Customs Beach
15. AKYIRE—Bentsir (Aba Konfu's House)
- 16 AKOTSIABA—Nkum (Kakanadzi Nana Adjua Ata's House)
17. AKYIM KWEKU—Nkum (Victoria Park)
18. AKYISA—Nkum (Akyinba)
19. AMISA—Amisa Kyir (King Aggrey Street)
- 20 AMRA KOFUA—Brofuyedru Reef
- 21 ANTAR KWESI—Siwudu (C.O.S. Park)
22. ANTU NTEFI—Nkum Females' Beach
23. BENDZI—Near Fosu Lagoon
24. BUBA YSINTSINDU—Customs Beach
25. BUBRAKU—Customs Beach
26. BREDUA—Ituray (Eturyie)
27. BRENU—Ituray (Eturyie) Water Pool
28. BU AMRADU (BURA AMEIDU)—Amanfur Point
29. BUKYIA MENSAH—Near Reef facing Nkum Beach 30. BURANTA—Abakam (Elmina Road)
31. BUZENYA—Bentsir (near Bentema's House)
32. BUSUMEFI—(1)Fortgate Hollse site (2) Between Methodist and Roman Catholic Cemeteries.
33. DUMANTA—Bentsir (Fynn's House Site)
34. EBUAKU—Ntsim (Upper-north Paprata)
35. EBUFI—Nkum (Kweku-eyim near Konfu Mensah's House)
36. EBUI—Idan ("Signaller")
37. EDUMASI—Cape Coast Hospital Site
38. EKATA EFUNANU—Municipal Tipping Depot Area
39. EKUMAFUR—Idan Bcach
40. EKUANU—Asikam (near Customs Beach)
41. ESIKAKYIR—Amisakyir (Before Ebui)
42. ESUMBA—Bentsir (Aba Konfu's House)
43. ETSIRIFI—Customs Beach (near Big Town Drain)
44. EYIKU—Bentsir (Kwansima's House)
- 45 EYITSIW—Idan Tsr
46. FOSU—Lagoon, Elmina Road
47. GYANBIBA—Ntsir

48. GYANKORBIR—Fort Victoria—Elmina Road Cemetery
49. GYE-GYE (or DWI-DWI)—Ntsin-Connor's Hill
50. GUAFU DENDE—Emisakyir
51. ITUEY-Old Market—Central Police Barracks Site.
52. KANTEMWOM—Amanfur (Latrine Site)
53. KAWUTSIR HWE—Across Fosu Lagoon
54. KWANKYI-NA-NUMA—Fosu Lagoon
55. KOPI DUN—Nkum (Konfu Mensah's House)
56. KOJO BIRIM—Kotokuraba—Aboom Area
57. KOTOKURABA—Kotokuraba
58. KWESI EHUN—Bentsir
59. KWESI EKYINABA—Bentsir (Gyakyi-Attabra Mensah's House)
60. KWESI ITWI (OMANWURA)—Nkum (Kakandzi Nana Adjua Ata's House)
61. KWESI PINI—Nkum (Kakandzi Nana Adjua Ata s House)
62. MUNTURNANUM—Asopuru (Behind Fosu Lagoon)
63. NA ENYI—Bentsir
64. NKYINKYINDU—Siwudu
65. PAPRATA—Ntsin
66. SAPREKU—Back of Wesley Chapel
67. SAFU—Eduanu (Aquarium)
68. SANKREDU—Siwudu Area
69. SANSANMEI—Kotokuraba—Aboom
70. SIKAFU KWEKU—Nkum
71. TAABIRI-Castle Rock
72. TANSEI BIBADU-Customs Beach
73. TUTUBU BUBIM—Bentsir (Gyakyi-Attabra Mensah's House)
74. WIADUKU—Asikam
75. WIANUME—Nkum (Kakauadzi House Site)
76. WURAKOBIREM—Aboom Road Junction (near Children's Hospital)
77. YEEDZIWA—Nkum (Victoria Park)

In each case it is not the natural physical object itself that is venerated as a "god", but rather the spirit believed to be inhabiting that object as an agency for the dispositions of the Great Spirit. Nyamkupon, the Supreme God of Earth and Sea and Sky. Each god, either singly or in association with one another, has but a limited zone of influence." WS Kwesi Johnston A list of Seventy-Seven Tutelary Gods of Cape Coast *Ghana Notes and Queries* 10-12 1968-72.

140 De Graft Johnson , J.C. "The Fanti Asafu." *Africa*. Vol. 5. 1932. P.308.

141 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/1759 *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's installation, and the Constitution and Customs of Cape Coast*.

142 De Graft Johnson , J.C. "The Fanti Asafu." *Africa*. Vol. 5. 1932. P.309.

143 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/1473 *Ffoulkes' study of the system of Asafo companies* See also Reindorf, C. *History of the Gold Coast*, Accra, 1951 P.110-120.

144 Arhin, K. "Diffuse Authority Among the Coastal Fanti." *Ghana Notes and Queries*. No. 9. Nov. 1966. PP. 66-85.

145 Ellis A. *The Tshi-Speaking of the Gold Coast of West Africa*, London 1887 P.29.

146 Brown, E.J P. *Gold Coast and Asianti Reader*, London, 1929 Bk. 1.

147 Christensen, J B *Double Descent Among the Fanti*. New Haven, 1954. P.118.

148 Annobil, J.A. and Ekuban, J.E. *Mfantse Amambu Mu Bi*, Cape Coast, 1944 1952 .

149 Datta, A K and Porter, R. "The Asafo System in Historical Perspective." *Journal of African History*. Vol. 12. 1971. P 282.

150 Ibid., P.296.

151 Ibid.

152 Ibid.

153 Ibid.

154 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11 1473 *Ffoulkes' study of the system of Asafo companies*

155 McCaskie, T.C. "The Historiography of Asante" *African History Seminar* SOAS November 1 1989.

- 156 *Report of a Commission of Enquiry, under the Commissions of Enquiry Ordinance, 1893, into the Relationship between the stools of Abra, of Dominase and of Kwaman.* Part II London 1918. P.22 The Guaffoe came from the area to the north of Cape Coast and to the east of Efutu.
- 157 *Report of a Commission of Enquiry, under the Commissions of Enquiry Ordinance, 1893, into the Relationship between the stools of Abra, of Dominase and of Kwaman.* Part II London 1918. P.23.
- 158 Bosman, W.A. *A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea*, London. 1967 P.47-8.
- 159 Ibid., P.47.
- 160 Ibid., P.48.
- 161 De Marees, Pieter Translated by Albert Van Dantzig and Adam Jones, *Description and Historical Account of the Gold Kingdom of Guinea 1602*, Oxford, 1987. P.89.
- 162 Ibid., P.177.
- 163 Henige David *The Chronology of Oral Tradition* Oxford 1974. P.152.
- 164 Ibid.
- 165 Davies, K.G. *The Royal African Company.* London 1957. P.283.
- 166 Ibid.
- 167 Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study.* London, 1969. P. 15.
- 168 Van Dantzig and Jones suggest that Infantin was what is now Biriwa.
- 169 De Marees, Pieter Translated by Albert Van Dantzig and Adam Jones, *Description and Historical Account of the Gold Kingdom of Guinea 1602*, Oxford. 1987. P.94.
- 170 Ibid., P.97.
- 171 Ibid., P.170.
- 172 Ibid., P.168.
- 173 Also spelt, Birempong, Berempon, or Bampon The word is sometimes translated as 'big man' and at other times as 'rich man'. The original meaning may have been 'big man' but the term may have become synonymous with wealth over time. See, Kea R. *Settlement Politics and Trade in the Seventeenth Century Gold Coast.* John Hopkins University Press. Baltimore and London. 1982. P. 56.
- 174 There are orthographical differences it is also found as, Cudjo, Cudjoe, or Kodjo.
- 175 Henige David *The Chronology of Oral Tradition* Oxford 1974. P.153.
- 176 Ibid. P.154.
- 177 Ibid.
- 178 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/629 & 1759 *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry.*
- 179 Thompson, Rev. T. *An Account of Missionary Voyages.* London, 1758. P.34-5.
- 180 *Report of a Commission of Enquiry, under the Commissions of Enquiry Ordinance, 1893, into the Relationship between the stools of Abra, of Dominase and of Kwaman.* Part II London 1918. P.86.
- 181 *Report of a Commission of Enquiry, under the Commissions of Enquiry Ordinance, 1893, into the Relationship between the stools of Abra, of Dominase and of Kwaman.* Part II London 1918. P.86.
- 182 Thompson, Rev. T. *An Account of Missionary Voyages.* London, 1758. P.34-5.
- 183 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/1759 *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's installation, and the Constitution and Customs of Cape Coast.*
- 184 GNA Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry.* Evidence of JP Brown. Prior to the enstoolment of Kweku Atta, the Gyase were made up of the patrilineal inherited Nkum. After the enstoolment of Kweku Atta, in the mid nineteenth century he selected a new Gyase from his own family villages of Kakumdu, Sudu, Abra and Mpeasam and they became called the matrilineal *Wirempa*. See, GNA ADM. 11 629 & 1759.
- 185 GNA Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry.* Evidence of W.Z Coker.
- 186 Ephson I, *Gold Coast Celebrities* Accra 1969 Vol. I. See entry under Berempong Kojo.
- 187 T.70 1528, letter of Nassau Senior Cape Coast Castle 7th December 1757,P.188 Quoted in, W.S. Kwesi Johnson, "*Berempong Kojo, 1719-1779, A Great Son of Fantiland.*" NAG, Cape

- Coast, ACC No. 82/1965.
- 188 Ibid.
- 189 Rattray R.S. *Religion and Art in Ashanti*, Oxford, 1927. P. 116-7.
- 190 Gocking, R. *The Historic Akoto: A Social History of Cape Coast Ghana 1843-1948*. Stanford, 1981. Glossary.
- 191 Casely-Hayford J.E. *Gold Coast Native Institutions*. London .1970. Originally London, 1903. P.40.
- 192 GNA ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry* Coker's evidence. see also Casely-Hayford J.E. *Gold Coast Native Institutions*. London .1970. Originally London, 1903.P.41, Wilks describes how Kwaku Dua introduced the custom of a second heir apparent to 'stand behind' his first heir apparent. Wilks, I *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*, London, 1975. P. 367 and Ramseyer and Kuehne, *Four Years in Ashantee*, London. 1875. P. 367
- 193 Casely-Hayford J.E. *Gold Coast Native Institutions*. London .1970. Originally London, 1903.P.41.
- 194 GNA ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry* Coker's evidence.
- 195 See,GNA ADM 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry* Coker's evidence. See background in Wilks, I *Asante in the Nineteenth Century* London 1975 P. 367-9.
- 196 Rattray R.S. *Religion and Art in Ashanti*, Oxford, 1927. P.178-9.
- 197 Tufuhin Coker GNA ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- 198 Rattray R.S. *Religion and Art in Ashanti*, Oxford, 1927. P.179.
- 199 GNA ADM. 11/629 & 1759 *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry*.
- 200 GNA ADM. 11/629 & 1759 *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry*.
- 201 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/1752 *Evidence taken at the 1941 Stool Dispute*.
- 202 A Fanti legend ascribes the discovery of fire to the Aburadzi (Abradze, Abradze, Abiradsi) tribe as being the first to bring it down from heaven. See, Brown, E.J.P. "Mfantasi Akan Totems" *Gold Coast Review*, Vol. II No. 2 June. 1926. Which may be attributable to this family or the Totemic clan of the same name.
- 203 It is plausible that there are still members of the family who still maintain that Kojo was Omanhin.
- 204 GNA Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM. 11/1/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*. The Evidence of J.P. Brown.
- 205 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/1/364.
- 206 Ibid.
- 207 Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P.15.
- 208 This may have been a nick-name, as it is similar to the Twi word for welcome.
- 209 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/629 & 1759 *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry*.
- 210 Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P. 21.
- 211 Thompson, Rev. T. *An Account of Missionary Voyages*. London, 1758 P.34-5
- 212 Which one has to acknowledge as unlikely.
- 213 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/629 & 1759 *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry*.
- 214 Ffoulkes, Arthur "The Fanti Family System" *Journal of the African Society*, Vol. VII. No. 28 July 1908 P.402.
- 215 Ibid.
- 216 Casely-Hayford J.E. *Gold Coast Native Institutions*. London .1970. Originally London, 1903. P.82 See also Sarbah, John Mensah. *Fanti Customary Laws*. London, 1897. P.108.
- 217 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/629 & 1759 *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry*.
- 218 Thompson, Rev. T *An Account of Missionary Voyages*. London, 1758 P.33.
- 219 Ibid. P 35.
- 220 Ibid.
- 221 Household head usually wise and venerable men, also spelt Penyin, Panyin. Pennin.
- 222 Bartels, F. "Philip Quaake 1741-1816." *Transactions of the Gold Coast and Togoland*



- Historical Society*. Vol. 1 Part. 5, 1955. P.157.
- 223 Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P. 16.
- 224 Ibid.
- 225 Ephson, I, *Gold Coast Celebrities* Accra 1969 Vol. I. See entry under Berempong Kojo.
- 226 This age is extrapolated from his age at death, see, Ephson I *Gold Coast Celebrities*, Accra 1969 Pt 2 P.16.
- 227 T.70/1528, letter of Nassau Senior Cape Coast Castle 7th December 1757.
- 228 Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P. 12.
- 229 Ibid. P. 12.
- 230 Thompson, Rev. T. *An Account of Missionary Voyages*. London, 1758. P.34-5.
- 231 Each of the genealogies on these pages represents a specific historical perspective on the stool history. Frederick does not appear on these genealogies because it is difficult to place him any of these genealogies without having information on his mother. But it may be the case that Frederick appears but under his Fante name.
- 232 Thompson, Rev. T. *An Account of Missionary Voyages*. London, 1758. P.34-5.
- 233 Ibid. P.41.
- 234 Ephson I *Gold Coast Celebrities*, Accra 1969 Pt 2 P.16.
- 235 See Figs. Efikessim (Ifikessim), Fie-Kessim(3), Fie-Kessim (4), Fie-Kessim(5), Ntoto House No.1 Known as Aborkye's (Aboache House) and Ntoto House No.2.
- 236 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/629 & 1759.
- 237 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/1759
- 238 See *Birempong Kojo*.
- 239 GNA Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry. Evidence of Kobi Abu*.
- 240 Ibid.
- 241 Ibid.
- 242 Ibid.
- 243 Gyase, Gyasi, Jyase or Giasethese are the Body-Guard of the Ruler. The No. 4 Company once performed this office, but post-1850 the Wirempetu (a section of the No. 3 Company) took their place. See, GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/1759 *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's installation, and the Constitution and Customs of Cape Coast*.
- 244 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM.11/629 & 1759.
- 245 GNA Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry. Evidence of Aikosua Mary*.
- 246 Ibid.
- 247 Ibid.
- 248 GNA Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry. Evidence of W.Z Coker*.
- 249 John Peter Mensa a store keeper at Cape Coast for the African Association Said, "There were two stools that were united with one Berempong Kojo and Egyr Ansa I cannot say if Berempong Kojo was our Omanhene. I have heard that the Jyase were servants of Berempong Kojo." GNA Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- 250 GNA Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry. Evidence of Aikosua Mary*.
- 251 Prior to the enstoolment of Kweku Atta, the Gyase were made up of the patrilineal inherited Nkum. After the enstoolment of Kweku Atta, in the mid nineteenth century he selected a new Gyase from his own family villages of Kakumdu, Sudu, Abra and Mpeasam and they became called the matrilineal *Wirempetu*. See, GNA ADM. 11/629 & 1759.
- 252 GNA Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry Evidence of J P. Brown*.
- 253 GNA Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry. Evidence of W Z. Coker*.
- 254 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM. 11 1759 *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's installation, and the Constitution and Customs of Cape Coast*.
- 255 Bosman, W A. *A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea*, London, 1967. P.133.

256 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM. 11/629 & 1759 *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry*.

257 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM.11/1759 *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's installation, and the Constitution and Customs of Cape Coast*.

258 Ibid.

259 Thompson, Rev. T. *An Account of Missionary Voyages*. London, 1758. P.34

260 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM. 11/364

261 This may have been a nick-name, as it is similar to the Twi word for welcome.

262 Brown, E.J.P. "Mfantasi Akan Totems" *Gold Coast Review* Vol. II No. 2 June 1926. P.183.

263 Meyerowitz, Eva *Akan Traditions of Origins*, London, 1952. P. 124-5.

264 [sic] De Graft Johnson, J.C. "The Significance of Some Akan Titles." *Gold Coast Review*. Vol. II. No. 2 June 1926. P.215.

265 Ibid., P.216.

266 The correct *Ntoro* clans are a complex combination of names, and animals that have been adopted over time.

"The following are the seven principal clans with their denominative totems and appellatives. The words in italics are the tribal appellatives.

1/*Asuafu*, Nsuafu, Nsonafu, Osu, (fox); akunkuran, (white ringed crow) *Asua wirempi Akwa Odudu*, also Aban Esia.

2/*Eguana-fu*, Eko, (parrot) Anona-fu, Sansa (hawk) *Anona Oksubureentsir*. Amuana-fu.

3/*Twidan-fu* (Itwi, Leopard; and *Opete*, Turkey-Buzzard) Eburutu, (Corn stalk) *Eburetu Abohen*.

4/ *Aburadzi-fu*, Ofurna-fu, Egyirina-fu, (*Dabo*, a species of black antelope or bush goat) *Eduena Aburadzi* Tekyina-fu. *Dabo*, same as Aburadzi *Abodsin abo krun*.

5/*Atwaa-fu*, *Abadzi-fu*, (Bodom, dog) *Aban esia*

6/*Kwonna-fu*, Odumna-fu, Ebiradsi-fu *Ku*, (Bush Cow) *Dihyina-fu*.

7/*Adwinadzi-fu*, a cluster of Odwon trees, *adwin*, (silurus, river fish) *Adwin-fu*, i.e., wowo adwin meaning thinking people.", See, Brown, E.J.P. "Mfantasi Akan Totems" *Gold Coast Review* Vol. II No. 2 June 1926. PP.184-185.

Eva Meyerowitz suggests that these clans have their origins in the earliest vestiges of migration oral tradition. She suggests that the original clans or families who held these names, were derived from Gwan, Gbon, and Guan, See, Meyerowitz, Eva *Akan Traditions of Origins* London 1952. P. 125.

267 The *Abusua*, are what encompass the matrilineal systems, "Bosman wrote, "the Right of Inheritance is very oddly adjusted; as far as I could observe, the Brothers and Sisters Children are the right and lawful Heirs." See, Bosman, W.A. *A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea* London 1967 P.203 The system is designed partly to force exogamy, as "each family includes members on the mother's side only; thus the mother, and all her children, male and female, belong to her family; so do her mother and maternal uncles and aunts", See, Ffoulkes, Arthur "The Fanti Family System" *Journal of the African Society* Vol. I VII No. 28 July 1908 P. 399. Where as one's father and his relatives give only *Ntoro* the spiritual inheritance of the ancient clans and the *Asafo* company. A woman would inherit her father's clan and *Asafo* company but could not pass on those spiritual institutions to her child, "her daughters' children, male and female, are members of her family, but her son's children are not, as they belong to the family of the son's wife." Ibid.,P.399. Because the father only gives his children their spiritual inheritance, "the father has only a life-interest in them; he pays for their keep, feeds, and educates them; he sets them up at the outset of their career with money or other means of obtaining a living, and until they start life for themselves he is entitled to whatever profits they make; he also pays any fines that may be inflicted on them by the chief, and "satisfies" individuals who make a claim against any of them; he may also chastise them, but he may not sell or pawn his *own* children. Unless a man fulfils these conditions, his *own* children can refuse to provide his coffin and burial cloths at his death; and this is considered the height of disgrace." Ibid. P.400.

Although this system is matrilineal it is based upon there being a strong *paterfamilias* figure at the head of each family, "there is an old Fante proverb that sums this up neatly, "it is a house where there is no male that the female speaks," See, Christensen, James Boyd "The Role of Proverbs in Fante Culture." *Africa*. Vol. 28. 1958. P.235. This system has tended

- to push women into the role of being means to power rather than powerful entities in themselves. Women have, however, been known to occupy the stool as reigning chiefs " Ffoulkes, Arthur "The Fanti Family System" *Journal of the African Society* Vol. I VII No. 28 July 1908 pp 349-409.
- 268 C.H. Harper Notes of Totemism of the Gold Coast *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, XXXVI. 1906.
- 269 See, Meyerowitz, Eva *Akan Traditions of Origins*, London, 1952.
- 270 GNA Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM. 11/1/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*. Evidence of Egyr Ansa, "succession generally follows the common rule but in some places it is the son who succeeds not the mother or nephew. The town's people can then decide to pass on the person nominated by the family and elect some other suitable person instead."
- 271 Bartels, F. "Philip Quaake 1741-1816." *Transactions of the Gold Coast and Togoland Historical Society*. Vol. 1 Part. 5, 1955. P.153.
- 272 Ibid.
- 273 Thompson, Rev. T. *An Account of Missionary Voyages*. London, 1758. P.34-5.
- 274 F.L. Bartels *The Roots of Ghana Methodism Cambridge*, 1965. P.3.
- 275 Ibid.
- 276 Bartels, F. "Philip Quaake 1741-1816." *Transactions of the Gold Coast and Togoland Historical Society*. Vol. 1 Part. 5, 1955. P.157.
- 277 Misquoted by Bartels, (P.157) as, "the living were so scarce sufficient to remove and Society had bury the dead" Claridge, W. Walton. *A History of the Gold Coast and Ashanti*, Vol. I. London, 1964. P. 234.
- 278 Bartels, F. "Philip Quaake 1741-1816." *Transactions of the Gold Coast and Togoland Historical Society*. Vol. 1. Part. 5, 1955. P.158.
- 279 GNA Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*. Questions of W.Z Coker & Evidence of J.P. Brown. This occurred, according to one source, the year before *Berempong Kojo's* enstoolment. See, GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM. 11/629 & 1759.
- 280 Thompson, Rev. T. *An Account of Missionary Voyages*. London, 1758. P.34.
- 281 GNA Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*. Evidence of JP Brown.
- 282 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/629 & 1759.
- 283 GNA Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*. Evidence of W.Z Coker.
- 284 Ibid.
- 285 Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P. 22-3.
- 286 Tachie Menson, A.B. *The History of Freemasonry in the Gold Coast*. P.1.
- 287 The illustration on this page is from the 'Gentleman's Magazine' . The 'Gentleman's magazine' was used to disperse trade and society news. William Ansah was a merchant from Anomabu, who was related to Richard Brew, he was educated in Europe in 1750 with the backing of the Royal African Company, under personal charge of Lord Halifax, a Commissioner of Trade and Plantations. If Ansah was a Bona Fide Freemason he was one of the first ever black Freemason's (traditionally Prince Hall who was initiated in America more than twenty years later is thought to be the first black Freemason). When Ansah returned he was able to find a place as an intermediary between the British and the French whilst passing information about both to his Father. See Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P.20-21
- 288 Bartels, F. "Philip Quaake 1741-1816." *Transactions of the Gold Coast and Togoland Historical Society*. Vol. 1 Part 5, 1955 P 161.
- 289 Barbot. J. *A Description of the Coasts of North and South Guinea*. London 1732. P.1.
- 290 Bartels, F. "Philip Quaake 1741-1816." *Transactions of the Gold Coast and Togoland Historical Society*. Vol. 1 Part. 5, 1955. P.164.
- 291 Tachie Menson, A.B. *The History of Freemasonry in the Gold Coast*. P.1
- 292 Lane, John *Masonic Records 1717-1894* , 1895. P.34 P. 242.
- 293 Bartels, F. "Philip Quaake 1741-1816." *Transactions of the Gold Coast and Togoland Historical Society*. Vol. 1 Part. 5, 1955. P.162.

- 294 He was distantly related to Quaque, see Brew's genealogy (fig. Richard Brew).
- 295 Bartels, F. "Philip Quaque 1741-1816." *Transactions of the Gold Coast and Togoland Historical Society*. Vol. 1 Part. 5, 1955. P.162.
- 296 Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P. 22-3.
- 297 Ibid., P. 23
- 298 Ibid., P. 109.
- 299 Priestley, M.A. Richard Brew; "An Eighteenth Century Trader at Anomabu", *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vol. IV Prt 1, 1959. P.30.
- 300 Ibid., P.29.
- 301 Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P. 109.
- 302 Ibid., P. 199 This genealogy verifies Abba as Harry Brew's wife, P. 126 verifies Quaque as Harry Brew's son's maternal Uncle which would have made Quaque and Abba brother and sister.
- 303 Ibid., P. 121.
- 304 Ibid., P. 29.
- 305 James Brew to Augustus Casely-Hayford. Undated.
- 306 Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P. 109.
- 307 Cited in, Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P. 109.
- 308 See Brew's will Chancery Lane, Public Record's Office London.
- 309 Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P. 121.
- 310 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM. 11/364.
- 311 GNA ADM. 1/1109 *Deposition of the Cape Coast Omanbin 1929*.
- 312 GNA Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*. Many of the witnesses mention Dawson Hill in this context.
- 313 Ephson, I, *Gold Coast Celebrities Accra 1969* Vol. I. See entry under Philip Quarque.

**CHAPTER II**  
**LAW AND JURISDICTION**  
**THE AGGREY DYNASTY: BURUPU TO ESSIEN**  
**1800-1870**

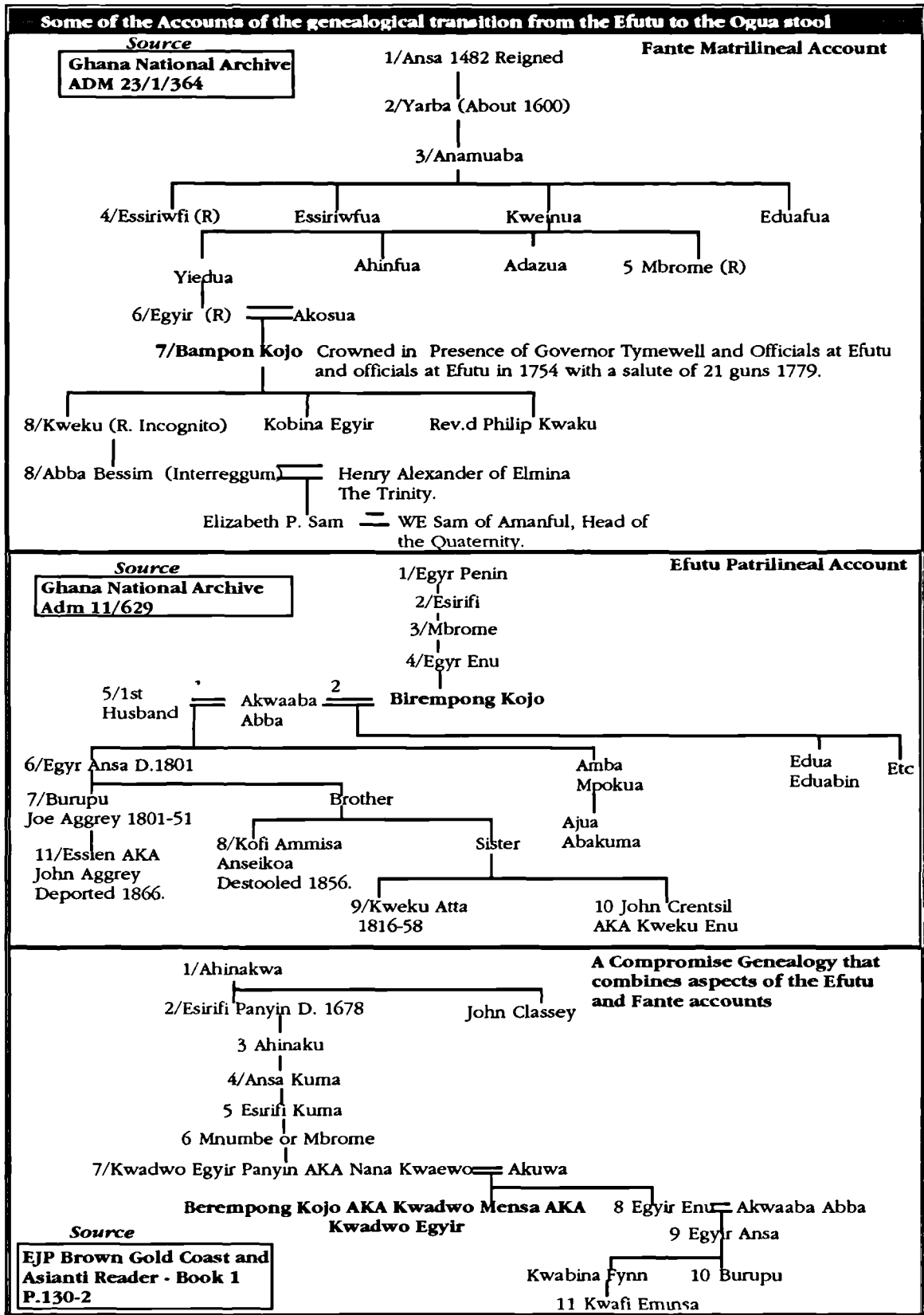
*The stream crosses the path,  
The path crosses the stream;  
Which of them is the elder?  
Did we not cut a path to go and meet this stream?  
The stream had its origin long long ago.  
The stream had its origin in the Creator  
He created things,  
Pure pure Tano.  
(Asante drum poetry) <sup>1</sup>*

## **I. STOOLS AND LINEAGE**

The parallel narratives that make up Cape Coast's stool history, begin to converge and correlate in the periods immediately before and after 1800. At any single point during the first decade of the nineteenth century, it is difficult to confidently identify the person who sat on what had become the Paramount stool. The problem is not the lack of sources, but the profusion of incompatible accounts. The different factions of the Cape Coast stool family have developed differing accounts of their history, which over generations became a way of defining the reasons for the factions.

As the influence of the Cape Coast stool began to expand inland, the outlying villages began to be physically and politically encompassed by the town. The villages that had once been subordinate to Efutu began to realign and re-negotiate their allegiances with the coastal Fante. Because the loss of Efutu's power to Cape Coast's paramount stool had been gradual, there was no generally recognised point at which the *Amanbin* of Efutu were superseded by the *Amanbin* of Cape Coast. The *Wirempe*, (who were made up of: the personal body guard, the residual family and descendants of the servants of *Berempong* Kojo) maintained their independence from the recognised *Oguaa* stool, and continued to elect their own *Amanbin* throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. As Fantes, the family of *Berempong* Kojo maintained their tradition of enstooling *Amanbin* through the matrilineal line, while the urban families in Cape Coast continued the Efutu tradition of old *Oguaa*, of appointing *Amanbin* through the patrilineal line. This left a period that is awash with various accounts of successive *Amanbin*.

For the first twenty years of the nineteenth century, the merchants of the Royal Africa Company at Cape Coast simultaneously acknowledged three and sometimes four indigenous heads of the Cape Coast area; the Efutu *Dey*, the Efutu *Omanbin* who was named Ando,<sup>2</sup> the *Oguaa Omanbin* called Aggrey<sup>3</sup> and the head of the Cape Coast *Peninfu*, Kwashie Anfam.<sup>4</sup> The question of which of these noblemen deserves to be remembered posthumously as *Omanbin* of Cape Coast, is a contentious one. As late as 1814, Europeans noted that "Cape Coast is in the kingdom of Fetue. The Dey had always received ground rent for the castle. It is from Fetue, and the neighbouring villages' that the natives and garrison are chiefly supplied with corn and other provisions. In case of a disturbance with either Town or Castle, these people can prevent supplies from being brought down."<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, in 1803, it was observed in Cape Coast that, "Over the town as a whole was the King (*ohene*) who, in 1803, was one of the Aggrey family which had long been prominent in the area. But the Ohene's position was somewhat anomalous, for there was another individual, one Andoh, called principal Caboceer by the British, who took precedence over him."<sup>6</sup>



The British paid ground rent to both Ando and the *Dey* of Efutu for use of the castle until at least 1820,<sup>7</sup> but they acknowledged that the people of Cape Coast had little respect for either of the Efutu leaders. In 1816, an official report from the castle suggested that at that time Ando had, “very limited power or influence over the natives near the fort; he could probably raise 3000 men if determined to make war

on an European settlement, or to support it against other enemies, European or African.” The writer went on to say that, “at present the Fantees are the only natives from whom assistance could be procured, the aid of 8000 men could probably be obtained.”<sup>8</sup> This is in contrast with Meredith, who four years earlier had written of the *Dey* that, “the family, or descendants of his race are still considered with respect.” but, “in general the people are obliged to submit to the Fantee laws regulations and customs.”<sup>9</sup> The fact that Meredith found it necessary to use the word ‘still’ in reference to the Efutu state, seems to imply that their grasp on local political control was weakening. The process of transition from Efutu paramountcy to the paramountcy of Cape Coast evidently occurred gradually over the first few decades of the century. Perhaps during the 1820s, the Efutu stool began to disintegrate as its people moved toward the coast.

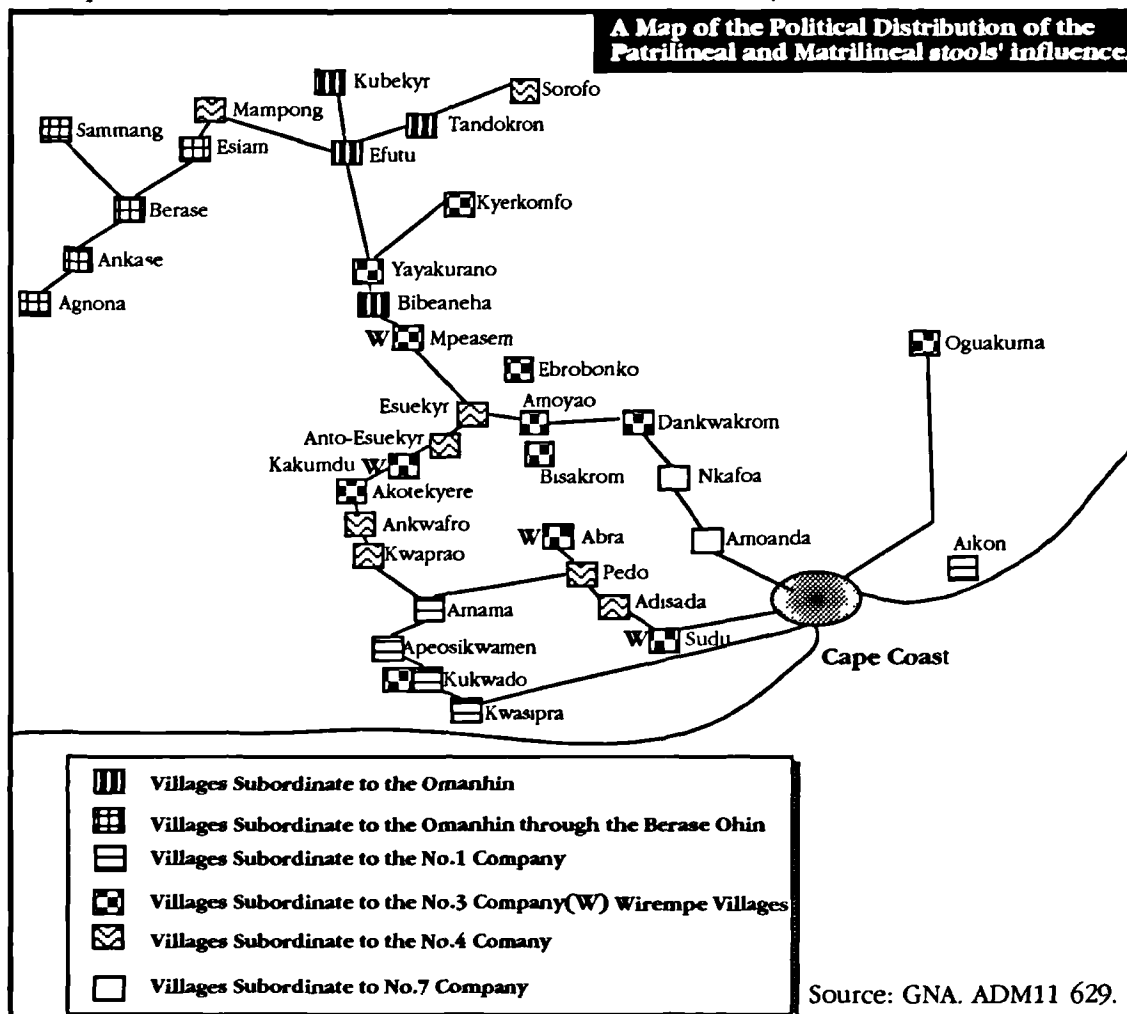
In his thesis,<sup>10</sup> Sanders speculates a very different causation. Sanders suggests that Astley’s late seventeenth-century observations of the coast, offered some clue as to when the Efutu *Amanhin* moved permanently into Cape Coast. In 1693, Astley wrote, “While they (Capt. Philips’s ship) lay here (Cape Coast), the King of Sabo, and *Nimfa*, the General of the *Arkanis*, with about twenty thousand Blacks, in their Return from the wars against the King of Futtu, (whom they had routed out of this Country, and forced to seek protection at Mina Castle) made his brother King, who soon followed them to Cape Coast Castle, where he took the Fatish [sic] to be at constant Enmity with his Brother, to be ever true to the English Interest, and not to molest the *Arkanis* in their Trade, which was the Occasion of the War with his Brother.”<sup>11</sup> Sanders suggests that the King of Efutu resided in Cape Coast from that time onward. If one accepts this assertion, it would also follow that the King of Efutu was living in Cape Coast under the protection of the British during a subsequent period when Efutu/British relations were volatile. In 1706, Sir Dalby Thomas was moved to write, that if he had 150 well chosen soldiers at Cape Coast, he could and would destroy Fetu and force an inland trade.<sup>12</sup> If the King of Efutu was living within Cape Coast, it is doubtful whether he would have needed to ‘force an inland trade’. Sanders’ speculation is probably incorrect as many of the early-nineteenth-century writers also state that the King of Efutu resided within the town of Fetu, throughout the town’s decline during the nineteenth century.

Despite the town’s misfortune, the Efutu continued to appoint *Amanhin* for the first few decades of the nineteenth century. The old Efutu stool had been patrilineal, but the growing residual family of *Berempong* Kojo, (who were Fante and therefore, matrilineal), were gradually taking over the villages that surrounded old Efutu. At some point during this period the stool of Efutu and the stool of *Berempong* Kojo became unified. *Berempong* Kojo was said by some to have sat on the stool of Efutu; if this was so then Ando must have been, according to this account, one of his successors.<sup>13</sup> Subsequently, every Efutu *Omanhin* after Ando, sat on the Efutu stool



and the matrilineal stool of Kojo, and all were considered by the *Wirempe*<sup>14</sup> to be the legitimate heirs to the Cape Coast stool which fell within the Efutu paramountcy. Following this, after Kofi Ando, the *Wirempe* were said to have elected Boatsi, Kobina Doku, and Atta Kofi.<sup>15</sup> Within the heart of metropolitan Cape Coast, the patrilineal Efutu stool family continued to maintain its influence.

Joe Aggrey is somewhat of a mythical figure. He created the stability during his reign of fifty years which established the conditions from which the patrilineal Cape Coast stool could grow in influence. His adoption, or at least acceptance of Christianity, may have made him more acceptable as a representative for indigenous feeling, to the Europeans. Although he was said to have been part of the patrilineal dynasty, there is some speculation that he was in fact a true Fante and, therefore, perhaps sat on the stool of *Berempong* Kojo.<sup>16</sup> When Aggrey was interviewed by a British soldier, J.E. Alexander, in 1835, he said that, "he had six wives, who produced him a child, 'now and then;' his age was about sixty-five; and he had succeeded to the caboceership through his mother, as is usual here."<sup>17</sup> Alexander evidently found the system of matrilineal inheritance remarkable and worthy of comment. It is, therefore, unlikely that he misremembered; the only indigenous alternative (patrilineal) would have been what he was accustomed to and not worthy of comment. If, indeed, Aggrey was part of the matrilineal section of the Cape Coast stool, then there has at some point been conscious reconstruction of the history.



There are other anomalies; it is today generally acknowledged that Joe Aggrey reigned from 1801-1851,<sup>18</sup> but in March 1814, a factor at the castle wrote, "Aggrey, King of the town, died 21st January, he had been long afflicted with a very painful disease."<sup>19</sup> It was thought by many that he was murdered by a political rival, the head of the *Mpenifu*, Quashie Amphon. Amphon was given refuge in the fort and free transport to Sierra Leone to save him from certain death at the hands of the people of *Oguaa*.<sup>20</sup> The confusion over the dates of Joe Aggrey's rule is further exacerbated by his son, Essien, who testified that his father ruled from 1814 to 1851<sup>21</sup> and succeeded through the matrilineal line. If this is true, then the matrilineal Fante must have had control over the Cape Coast stool by 1814. This may indicate that Aggrey senior sat on *Berempong* Kojo's stool, (which was the only matrilineal stool in the area), as some of the *Wirempe* have since maintained.

The *Wirempe* have consistently argued that, "When *Berempong* Kojo died he was succeeded by Ando, Ando was succeeded by Kobina. K. Doku was succeeded by Boatsi; before Boatsi died he appointed his son Burupu (Joe Aggrey) as his successor."<sup>22</sup> In the past, this account of events has been dismissed, because there is documentary evidence that shows Ando and Aggrey were contemporary *Amanhin*, and so could not have sat on the same stool.<sup>23</sup>

<b>A Table of the Amanhin of Cape Coast and Oguaa</b>			
<b>Berempong Kojo's &amp; Effutu Stool</b>	<b>Amanhin who sat on both stools</b>	<b>Oguaa Stool</b>	<b>Installation and death dates</b>
Berempong Kojo Boatsi Ando Kobbina Doku Atta Kofi	Burupu (Joe Aggrey)	Egyir Penin (Aggrey I)	Unknown
		Esirifi	
		Mbrome	
		Egyr Enu (Aggrey II)	
		Egyr Ansa (Aggrey III)	D,1801
		<i>Aggrey Speculative Amanhin</i>	1801-1814
			1801-1851
		Kofi Amissah	1851-1856
		Kweku Atta	1856-1858
		Kweku Enu (John Crentsil)	1858-1863
Kwesi Atta		Essien (John Aggrey)	1865-1866
			1865-1866

It seems possible from the confusion of death dates, that the figure Aggrey was a conflation of two separate figures from the historiography. Some of the anomalies revealed in the different accounts, could be resolved if the figure called "Aggrey" was, in fact, two separate *Amanhin*. The only irregularity with this theory, is that, Joe Aggrey inherited the stool through his father. But if Burupu (Joe Aggrey) sat on *Berempong* Kojo's stool, then it would have been more likely that he inherited matrilineally, as he stated when interviewed by J.E. Alexander in 1835. The death of the earlier *Omanhin* Aggrey in 1814, may have marked a point at which the Cape Coast stool became matrilineal and perhaps the stool family transferred its allegiance temporarily to the increasingly powerful stool of *Berempong* Kojo. This is supported by an article in the *Royal Gold Coast Gazette*, in 1823, which reported stool succession generally being in the female line.<sup>24</sup> This is simply a hypothesis; it may be that there is not enough data to explain the irregularities, but from the two accounts there is enough to develop a schematic chronological tabulation of the *Amanhin*.

The conflation of the two Aggreys may have been caused by the profound changes in the stool during the later reign of Burupu, 1814-1851. This period perhaps overshadowed the earlier regime to a point where it was gradually forgotten. His son suggested that Joe Aggrey was born about 1760, and was enstooled in 1814,<sup>25</sup> which shows that Burupu was over fifty when he came power and so he may well have had significant influence over the town prior to his installation.<sup>26</sup>

It may also be possible that some of those individuals described as *Chiefs* and *Headmen* by the Europeans, were actually *Supi*. At the turn of the nineteenth century, the *Asafo* companies were at their political zenith, and the *Supis* had great influence over the sections of the town in which their companies were based. This led to a mistaken presumption by many travellers, that there were several near equivalent, "*Chiefs* or *Caboceers*, of whom King Agry" was the most influential.<sup>27</sup> By 1835, Joe Aggrey (Burupu) had become the uncontested *Omanhin* of Cape Coast, and owned one of the few two storey private houses in the town. J.E. Alexander visited him in 1835 and wrote:

*the residence of the Caboceer was on an eminence open to the sea; and consisted of two stories with protecting wings and a gallery in front: behind was a court and a stair; and in the lower buildings in the rear, were crowds of women and children. Joagré received us at his door, and shook hands with us. He spoke English well his height is about five feet nine inches; his head was entirely shaved, and nothing on it; and he had a small nose and thin lips, with a short white beard, like a goats, on his chin. He wore a fetiche in a gold case round his neck, gold and aggrey bracelets, and an ample cloth of crimson held loosely round his lower man: a pair of neat sandals were on his feet. The caboceer conducted us to an upper room, in which were only a few chairs; but he said that he was putting his house in order, which had been burnt by the Ashantees.* <sup>28</sup>

Later in the interview, J.E. Alexander convinced Joagr  (Joe Aggrey) to dress up in his state robes. After waiting some time, Alexander described how, he “then came in, wearing a blue and green balloon- shaped cap, ample robe of red silk with sleeves, and a brass-mounted sword, the gift of Charles Macarthey. He had on also a shirt, with ruffles at the wrists. We all followed him into an inner apartment, where he seated himself on a large crimson and gilt armed chair, on the back of which were the arms of the old African Company. The crest was an elephant and castle, and two armed negroes supporting a shield, on which a ship was emblazoned.”<sup>29</sup>

The interview gives an insight into the profound changes that Aggrey had lived through. The sword that was a gift from Macarthy, the chair from the Royal African Company and the lack of chairs due to the upheavals of Asante invasion, were all residual artefacts of an active political life. 'Joagr ' then showed Alexander, “the broad-swords used in late wars, resembling large bill-hooks, with open work on the blades like fish knives. Some of these weapons had two blades springing from a single gilt hilt; and all were encrusted with human blood. Among the articles in the room were, also, a clock, strings of beads hanging up, old bugles, and powder-horns; and a cupboard, on the top of which stood a dozen little figures of Toby Philpot!”<sup>30</sup> As Alexander left he noted that, “One thing particularly surprised me at Joagr 's residence; of the six English residents who accompanied our party not one had ever been in the chief's house before; though all of them had resided several years in the colony.”<sup>31</sup>

After the era of *Berempong* Kojo, Aggrey's relative isolation from the Europeans on the coast, may account for why less is now known about him than *Berempong* Kojo, who lived considerably earlier. The account of his life that subsequently became accepted, may well have been constructed in the 1850s. This may be corroborated by the incidents that took place prior to the selection of Kojo Mbra as *Omanbin* in 1888. During the enstoolment, a book of stool genealogies was borrowed from Kofi Amissah, a member of the *Nkum*.<sup>32</sup> The book's owner or keeper, Kofi Amissah, if not a relation of his namesake *Omanbin*, may well have been named after him. If the genealogies in this book were constructed in the reign of Kofi Amissah or later by his family or supporters, it may well explain the bias of the subsequent history.

After Kofi Amissah's administration, the history of the stool becomes standardised around two conflicting accounts: an account from the perspective of the *Oguaa* Abradze family, and an account from the perspective of *Berempong* Kojo's *Wirempe*. In 1916, a century after Burupu's enstoolment, the *Oman* of Cape Coast was called to give the official account of the stool history as part of a stool dispute. The two accounts of the stool history were for the first time acknowledged to be irreconcilable.

The *Wirempe* maintained that, “Burupu was on *Berempong* Kojo’s stool.”<sup>33</sup> The Abradze family dismissed this, arguing that at the time of the Akaa war, in 1848, Atta Kofi<sup>34</sup> was on the stool of *Berempong* Kojo and Burupu was then *Omanbin* of Cape Coast.<sup>35</sup> There is supporting documentary evidence that Burupu was *Omanbin* at the time of the Akaa war, but this does not in itself resolve the anomaly because the *Wirempe*’s chronology of *Amanbin* is significantly different from the Abradze’s version. The *Wirempe* suggest that, “that Atta Kofi was before Burupu, and both sat on the stool of *Berempong* Kojo.”<sup>36</sup>

Each significant event has a parallel causality in the two versions of the history; the Abradze family have argued of the significance that the destoolment of Atta Kofi was carried out by the *Wirempe*, who were part of *Berempong* Kojo’s stool.<sup>37</sup> Almost predictably, the *Wirempe*’s account contradicts this directly, stating that Atta Kofi was destooled by both the *Wirempe* and the *Oguaa Oman*.<sup>38</sup> The Abradze family have suggested that the whole *Wirempe* lineage was groundless, arguing that, “Egyr *Penin* was the first *Omanbene* to reside in Cape Coast” and that “he was followed by Egyr Enu and then Egyr Ansa who was the father of Burupu.”<sup>39</sup> If this account is accurate, it would suggest that *Oguaa* gained its paramountcy while Efutu was still at its zenith in the early eighteenth century. This seems to be highly unlikely, because as late as 1812, Meredith states that the family, or descendants of the Efutu *Oman* were “still considered with respect.”<sup>40</sup> There are also suggestions that, Egyr Ansa was a son of *Berempong* Kojo which would also refute this.<sup>41</sup> But in the Abradze family’s support, Meredith, as I have already mentioned, also observed that, “in general the people are obliged to submit to the Fantee laws regulations and customs.”<sup>42</sup> The *Wirempe* have made equally contentious claims, such as denying the existence of Egyr *Penin* and Esirifi, who may not have been paramount *Amanbin*, but were important *Abin* of *Oguaa*.<sup>43</sup>

Although the two incomplete accounts are difficult or impossible to reconcile today, there is a coherent history in which all of these figures play a part. The events in which they were protagonists can be given a chronology, and through such events one can begin to piece together a near continuum that leaps from documented event to event. But unlike *Berempong* Kojo, it is difficult to place them in the context that may have given them significance as *Amanbin* rather than as figures in conflict with external powers for Cape Coast’s jurisdiction .

## **II. THE RIOT OF 1803**

At the turn of the nineteenth century, life in both town and castle revolved around trade, which, at this time, was mainly in slaves.<sup>44</sup> The socio-cultural differences between the two worlds of Africa and Europe, were overcome by their unified aspiration to optimise their trading relationship. The indigenous leadership was prepared to go to enormous lengths to maintain the smooth flow of slaves from the interior to the coast. In January 1802, the *Peninfu* agreed to guarantee the safety of their white partners in trade by consenting to pay forty ounces of gold if any threatening act was perpetrated against a white man.<sup>45</sup> The treaty was to certify "that the caboceers, penins and other principal people of Cape Coast town met .... in the public hall to renew their allegiance to the Company, and bury all quarrels in oblivion; at the same time passing a law that whoever henceforth should be found to break the peace shall be subject to the penalty of forty ounces of trade goods (£80 sterling) to the African Company." It was signed by four men: Andoh, Aggrey, Rev. Quaake and Joe de Graft, (the Company Linguist), each of whom had become a mouthpiece for a small section of the town.<sup>46</sup>

The treaty itself marked an important change in the relationship between the castle and the town. For the first time, the indigenous population formally acknowledged the importance of the Company to the town, in a treaty that tacitly implied their economic dependence on the African Company. Although the Company was still liable to pay ground rent to their indigenous landlords, the treaty gave them a new confidence. This perhaps is why the Company allowed their rent payments to slip, and by 1805, it owed £192 to the *Dey* of Efutu and smaller amounts to Aggrey, Andoh and Anashan.<sup>47</sup>

The sentiment and agreements of the treaty were short-lived. A year after the agreement was signed, a riot broke out in Cape Coast, fuelled by the disparity between what the Royal African Company saw as its rights and what the indigenous people felt was warranted to any individual living under the jurisdiction of a Fante *Omanbin*. The incident had begun when, Kofi Badu, the *Supi* of Anafu, tried to buy a length of cloth from John Swanzy.<sup>48</sup> Kofi Badu, paid Tavia, Swanzy's gold-taker, £2 worth of gold for the cloth.<sup>49</sup> When the gold was examined by another gold-taker, it was discovered to have been heavily adulterated. About two-thirds of it was found to be base metal.<sup>50</sup> Swanzy was so enraged that he struck his gold-taker, Tavia, who fled from the house,<sup>51</sup> and went into hiding.<sup>52</sup> On hearing this, *Supi* Kofi Badu offered to take the gold back, if it was proved impure.<sup>53</sup> But Swanzy had decided that Kofi Badu was guilty of fraud.<sup>54</sup> Governor Mould, who is described by Porter as 'weak and indolent', gave Swanzy permission to take Badu into captivity if he could not find Tavia.<sup>55</sup> Badu was later captured and locked in the castle, with the sanction of the Governor, as a security for the return of the gold-taker.<sup>56</sup> Badu was a powerful man;

as *Supi* of the ascendant Anafu Company, he controlled one quarter of the old town.<sup>57</sup> Badu's incarceration resulted in a group of the outraged Anafu Company invading Swanzy's house, "armed with Musquets, knives, etc , at the same time throwing stones into the Castle, offering great insult and threatening to seize Mr Swanzy by force and carry him into the interior Country."<sup>58</sup>

Realising the gravity of the situation, the Governor sent repeated messages to the *Caboceers* and *Peninfu*, asking them to join him in a meeting to resolve the situation, "which they peremptorily refused to comply with, and treated the Messengers with contempt."<sup>59</sup> Meanwhile, Swanzy decided to stay to defend his house which contained a lot of valuables. Porter suggests that the Governor had expected, "the town rulers to come hurrying to the castle when summoned, while the townsmen were insisting on their own dignity and authority."<sup>60</sup> Eventually, "Andoh, the Chief Caboceer, and King Aggrey did ..... go to Swanzy's house to try to end the trouble; but that was a case of exercising their own authority and was not a submission to the authority of another."<sup>61</sup>

After considerable thought, the Governor released Kofi Badu. The Governor's action was seen as an acknowledgement that the Europeans accepted part of the blame in the escalation of events. However, at a second meeting of the town's rulers, Mould asked them to deposit forty ounces of trade goods in the castle as payment for the town's violation of the earlier treaty.<sup>62</sup> Kwashie Anfam was supposed to have been bold enough to say that the British had broken the law by allowing Swanzy to imprison Badu originally.<sup>63</sup> Claridge argued that Swanzy had acted in the only way possible, as "it would clearly have been useless to take this case before the Chief's court, for it involved the question of cheating the white man, and African and European alike had been accustomed to regard the cheating of each other as their rightful prerogative."<sup>64</sup> Perhaps perceiving Anfam's words to have been indicative of a deeper sentiment, the outraged Governor turned the castle guns on the town.

The Europeans in *Oguaa* fled into the Castle and the old and infirm of Cape Coast were sent out to the village farms. The British warned that the first shot was to be fired at the *Caboceer's* house.<sup>65</sup> The first shots were fired through Andoh's house, killing two of his sons. The town was then set on fire and in three hours, "the whole town presented a scene of devastation."<sup>66</sup> Much of the town was soon ablaze, but some of the houses that overlooked the castle were made of clay and these would not burn, and cannon shot either passed through the walls or sunk into the clay. From these houses the people of Cape Coast launched a retaliatory attack, firing into the castle and out at canoes trying to relay supplies to the isolated castle. It was said that the *Asafo* companies returned the European's fire, killing Sergeant Basson and wounding several others. The shot that killed Basson may have been aimed at John Swanzy, who was standing by Basson at the moment of the sergeant's death.<sup>67</sup> The townspeople sustained losses of between 80 and 100 people.<sup>68</sup> After a month long

siege,<sup>69</sup> during which trade was brought to a standstill,<sup>70</sup> the Europeans were relieved by HMS Romney.<sup>71</sup>

Although there was no decisive victor in the incident itself, the town was destroyed whilst the castle was basically left intact. This gave the Company the opportunity to force a treaty that gave the right to punish, even more harshly, those who reneged on the earlier agreement. It was agreed from December 1803 onward, that, “no gentleman shall be insulted or molested by the said townspeople – anyone or more so offending are to be delivered up to the Governor and, if not redeemed immediately by their families, to be sold off the coast. Done at Cape Coast, 20th December 1803, and a gun fired in token of the same. [Signed by Andoh (Caboccer), Aggrey (King), Kwashie Anfam (Penin) Kwamina Adu (Captain of Bentsil), Andoh (Penin), Kofi (Captain of Lower Town), Anoma (Captain of Intsin), Kwamina Wiredu (Captain of Nkum), John Christian (Mulatto volunteer) and the Caboccer of Accra.]”<sup>72</sup>

### **III. 1807 THE BEGINNING OF THE END OF THE SLAVE TRADE**

Systems of pawns and slaves are indigenous to West Africa, but by the turn of the nineteenth century, the scale and profit of the slave trade had turned an indigenous institution, based on punishment and liability, into a vast industry in human subjugation and misery. Meredith vividly described how, at the height of the slave trade, towns

*“from Cape Coast to Accra inclusive, formed the grand emporium of that traffic on the Gold-coast; ships resorted hither with confidence of disposing of their cargoes; and a quick circulation of money existed throughout the country. The inhabitants of every town and village along the coast were a sort of brokers; – persons employed as trade-boys, by the residents and captains of vessels, and fishermen: few indeed attended to the labours of the field. The town of Cape Coast was composed of three different classes, who acquired wealth with such celerity and ease, that one half of them were men of independence!”<sup>73</sup>*

Among the indigenous community, those generally referred to as ‘slaves’ or ‘domestic slaves’ by Europeans, were actually several groups characterised by vastly differing sets of rights and privileges. According to Mary McCarthy, “The principal stratifying variable among slaves was origin, with the foreign-born having the lowest status, and progressive improvement occurring in succeeding generations until the distinction of slave eventually disappeared altogether.”<sup>74</sup> The different gradations of the unfree allowed for some to be gradually integrated back into a ‘normal’ family life. McCarthy also says, “In between the categories of the free and unfree stood individuals, called ‘pawns’ by the Europeans, whose services and persons had been pledged as security for the repayment of a debt.”<sup>75</sup> Pawns could obtain freedom either by being integrated into the ‘owner ‘s’ family, or by repaying the original debt.



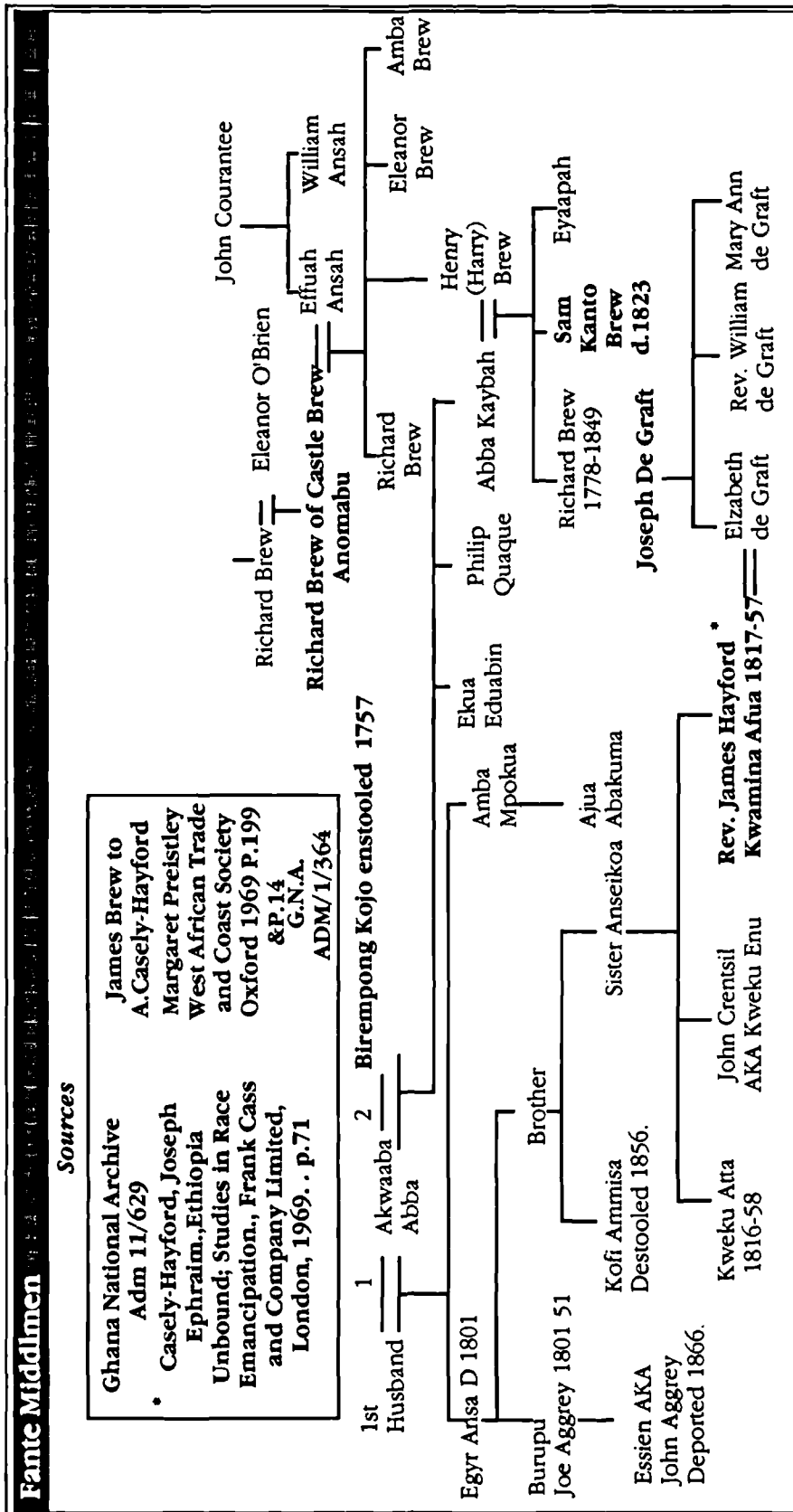
Within the local context, slavery operated as method of social control and as a means of addressing the problems of liability in a society in which most individuals owned very little except their innate freedom. In March 1807, after many years of campaigning by philanthropic groups, the British Government decided that it was time to act against the buying and selling of human beings. The government produced a declaration that read the, "Purchase, Sale, Barter, or Transfer of Slaves, or of Persons intended to be sold, transferred, used or dealt with as Slaves...shall be, and the same is hereby utterly abolished, prohibited, and declared to be unlawful."<sup>76</sup>

Claridge suggests that, "The coast people, especially the more influential natives, were bitterly opposed to it; for it deprived them of an easy means of becoming rich, and it doubtless led to a considerable increase in the number of human sacrifices; for the numerous prisoners that were taken in the wars who would otherwise have been sold to the slave dealers, now became a drag on the market and were readily spared to swell the number of victims at any great custom."<sup>77</sup> But in reality, the abolition of the slave trade, "did not mean an immediate end to the overseas slave trade, and the Fante would probably have been able to continue trading at close to their current rate had it not been for the fact that they lost their 'middleman' position in the trade with the interior by that time."<sup>78</sup>

Perhaps the most significant immediate effect of abolition, was on the officers of the Royal African Company, who felt "another inconvenience besides their pecuniary loss. They had no power to put criminals to the death, and were now deprived of the very effective means of transportation of which they had hitherto availed themselves."<sup>79</sup> Swanzy emphasizes that, "domestic slavery continued in the settlements, with the castle slaves still regarding themselves as superior to unskilled free men, and many others still in ownership – the creole Lieutenant-Governor at Accra, is said to have had 300."<sup>80</sup> And as late as 1841, the Fante wife of James Swanzy, Elizabeth, signed a petition supporting the continuation of domestic slavery, with other prominent women such as, Fanny Smith, Mary Jackson, Mary Hutton, Sarah Cross, Catherine Bannerman and Helen Colliver.<sup>81</sup>

In the same year that the British abolished the slave trade, the Gold Coast was thrust into chaos by the first Asante invasion of Fante territory. A contemporary account describes how, "Two Chiefs of the Assins, whom Sai Tootoo Quamina the Ashantee King defeated in battle, sought refuge among the Fantees. On the refusal of the Fantees to deliver up the fugitives, the Ashantee army moved down to the coast whither the Assin Chiefs had fled. At length a division of the army took possession of the Dutch Fort at Cormantine ... on June 15 the Ashantees advanced to Annamaboe and attacked the town and fort."<sup>82</sup> The invasion marked a change in Asante policy, as described by Margaret Priestley, "Over the next decade, further invasions altered the political scene in the maritime area and brought the Fanti states under Ashanti control, presenting the British with the problem of new relationships at a time of economic revolution on the coast."<sup>83</sup>

The simultaneous break-down in Fante - Asante relations, and the abolition of the slave trade, brought into question what role Cape Coast could play in an era of legitimate trade. From the war-torn, post-abolition coast, emerged several progeny of *Berempong* Kojo who continued the tradition of being middlemen, but were primarily motivated by financial reward rather than political aspiration. Perhaps the most successful of these were, Sam Kanto Brew - the slave trader, Joseph de Graft - the *Omankyiame* and Kwamina Afua (AKA James Hayford) - the *Okyiame*.



**IV. SAM KANTO BREW - A SLAVE TRADER IN AN ERA OF LEGITIMATE TRADE.**

Sam Kanto Brew did not use the advantages of his mixed upbringing to become, (like his great grandfather *Berempong Kojo*, and his father Harry<sup>84</sup>), the Castle *linguist*. Sam Brew instead utilised his knowledge of the land and its languages to

ply his trade independently. He sought alliances where they were to his commercial advantage and felt no sustained loyalty to the British or the Fante. Priestley quotes Governor Hope Smith who described Brew as a "turbulent and refractory character, defying all authority, and living in open violation of the laws," and she says that such "opinions expressed about him and the impact he made on affairs, both call to mind his Irish predecessor. Literate, and by virtue of his origins well placed for commercial opportunity, he belonged to the old established world of Fanti middlemen whose livelihood was undermined by the parliamentary legislation of 1807."<sup>85</sup>

Although there is no known date for his birth, he was probably born in the last decade of the eighteenth century at Cape Coast, where his family lived. From there, "he traded in slaves along the coast as far east as the Accra region, and inland with the Fanti state of Abura, an important link in the chain of communication that led to Ashanti."<sup>86</sup> Contrary to British policy, Brew encouraged the *Asantehene's* efforts to continue the slave trade. A contemporary witness described how, "Specimens of guns, powder etc were sent up by Brew to the king as a present, and to induce him to send down slaves for sale."<sup>87</sup> By 1817, "Sam Kanto's business had reached proportions that caused the British to refer to him as a 'powerful *mulatto* slave trader' and a 'great slave merchant'. In scale of undertaking he was perhaps the greatest, and certainly the most prominent of a group of mulattos so engaged at Cape Coast."<sup>88</sup>

Sam Kanto Brew's great wealth, must have made him a conspicuous individual in a Cape Coast, which had been politically and economically isolated for some years. In 1817, Bowdich's mission opened up direct contact between Cape Coast Castle and Asante. After several years of war, an Englishman, Hutchison, was stationed in Kumase as the British representative. Unlike his great grandfather - *Berempong* Kojo, Sam Brew had no political influence over Cape Coast and so he could not control the resentment that was building toward him from both the Europeans and the Fante. In 1817, when his trading empire was at its peak, the people of Cape Coast turned against him. The new Governor, Hope Smith, felt that it was time that a check was made on Brew's flagrant slaving from a British port. A warrant was issued for Brew's arrest. Brew in his, by now, infamous style, attempted to get away. The townspeople were alerted and he was lucky to escape with his life.<sup>89</sup> As Brew took refuge in Winnebah, he sent out his two *Okyiame*, one to Kumase, and one to Cape Coast, to protest at his treatment.

In October 1817, *Asantehene* Osei Bonsu, asked to see Hutchison, the British Resident in Kumase, about the Brew incident. The *Asantehene* argued that the case should be tried in Cape Coast and whoever was shown to be wrong, the people of Cape Coast, or Sam Kanto Brew, would be required to pay a fine in gold to the *Asantehene*. The *Asantehene* also made it clear that he regarded the Fante as his slaves or subjects.<sup>90</sup> Hutchison was outraged that an individual, motivated by greed, could have put in jeopardy the diplomatic efforts that had only just re-opened the

trade routes. Hutchison wrote, “this insolent mulatto man, by presents to the King and his principal men, and being the chief support for the slave trade between this nation and the coast, has made the King interest himself in his favour in an improper degree.”<sup>91</sup> Hutchison was told by the Governor to assure the *Asantehene* that Brew’s differences were with the Governor and not with the people of Cape Coast.<sup>92</sup>

The Brew incident had brought to a head the issue of jurisdiction; the *Asantehene* had referred to the Fante as his slaves or subjects, which had not only shocked the people of Cape Coast, but had also implied a marginalised role for the British on the coast. Consequently, Cape Coast began a policy of deliberate belligerence. Cape Coast refused to pay the Asante *apeato* (war tax) and systematically harassed Asante visitors to Cape Coast. This led the *Asantehene* to establish a land blockade of Cape Coast in early 1821.<sup>93</sup> At first, Cape Coast was completely isolated in its opposition to Asante, but as the effects of abolition and increasing Asante domination were felt all along the coast, Cape Coast’s belligerence became supported by other towns, and disaffection spread to other Fante areas.<sup>94</sup> This was coupled with the arrival of Governor Charles MacCarthy, who was prepared to give vigorous British support to the rise in anti-Asante feeling.

Charles MacCarthy sought to gain control of the coast through political and juridical negotiations. MacCarthy’s inexperience gave him the naive confidence to put his ideas into action. He demonstrated a complete ignorance of indigenous political machinations and disrespect for the enemy. Mary McCarthy suggests that by March 1823, Charles MacCarthy, “felt it was time to test the enemy, and using the trial and execution of an Anomabo man by a court at Dunkwa as an excuse, he ordered Chisholm to proceed there and capture the two or three hundred Asante who had convened there for the trial.”<sup>95</sup> There were very few men familiar with the terrain, who were fluent enough in English, and knew the Asante well enough to brief Chisholm adequately. Unfortunately for them, the British chose as their guide Sam Brew, “and he not only led them in the wrong direction but also sent a message to ‘a Fante Chief, then in alliance with the Ashantees to apprise him of the march of the troops,’ and the British-led force was ambushed.”<sup>96</sup> Margaret Priestley suggests that Brew’s support of “the Ashanti against Cape Coast Castle is not surprising, in view of his old link with Abura Dunkwa in the slave-trading network.”<sup>97</sup> But I think in the context of his biography, Brew may well have been motivated by revenge and greed. The British were only just managing to maintain their position on the coast, and any significant loss could have dealt a death blow to their aims of expansion. British - Asante aspirations overlapped, and Brew must have realised that the British had more to lose from a long-drawn-out battle over jurisdiction of the Cape Coast Fante. Priestley later acknowledges that this extended period of friction, “had its basic cause in the recurrent problem of responsibility for the Fanti in the vicinity of the British settlement.”<sup>98</sup>

Brew's infamy had made him known along the length of the coast. On St Patrick's day 1823, a song was sung entitled, 'the Gold Coast Volunteers', in which one verse went, "*Let's drive from this country, the trait'rous Brew, And down with the power of O' Sarii Tootoo.*"<sup>99</sup> It is also interesting to note that the Gold Coast Volunteers, after whom the song was named, were made up of members of all the *Asafo* companies who had some European blood, many of whom, like J.D. de Graft, were related to Brew! On 24th May 1823, Brew was deported. On the first night of the voyage to Sierra Leone, he was found with his throat cut; it was concluded to be suicide. Before he killed himself, Brew had been found "groping about the cabin...whispering that someone wanted to kill him."<sup>100</sup> As when Brew had fled Cape Coast in 1817, claiming people were attempting to kill him, he was assured that this was not so.<sup>101</sup> In both incidents, it was Brew's word against others. What is clear is that he had made enough enemies to be murdered. His last act - to lead the British into an ambush and to expect to come out ahead - was an act of a desperate, perhaps deluded man.

Brew's disturbed and violent life, paralleled the coastal disruptions that characterised Cape Coast's awkward shift from the slave trade to legitimate commerce. His tragic end seemed to follow naturally from the tragic time in which he had lived. The chaos he had helped to propagate, continued as a posthumous tribute to his spiteful, but nevertheless impressive tenacity. As a direct result of Brew's intervention into British plans, food shortages rapidly increased in Cape Coast, when a large Asante division occupied the Fante countryside north of the town in 1823 and 1824. In June 1823, the Asante had systematically "destroyed crops and villages in the vicinity of Cape Coast, adding the threat of famine to a population already struck with an epidemic of smallpox."<sup>102</sup>

By May 1824, the Asante were in Efutu, and the *Asantebene* warned that, he was determined to throw every stone of the castle into the sea. By June, the Asante were on the hills around Cape Coast. Although Cape Coast expected inevitable defeat, "all the able-bodied male inhabitants were at once ordered out to repel the expected attack, while the women and children, many of who were refugees who had been driven in from the outlying villages, crowded round the Castle gate clamouring for admission."<sup>103</sup> The houses that were in close proximity to the Castle which had been a source of inconvenience for the British during the riots of 1803, were still standing. Fearing impending invasion, instructions were given by the British for their immediate demolition. Four of the houses were set alight; fanned by the high wind the flames spread from house to house. The Asante army seeing the town in flames, were perhaps confused and temporarily withdrew. But a month later, they returned to the hills on the edge of Cape Coast. Surprisingly, as the inevitable skirmishes began, the Fante began to force the Asante back. Claridge recounted how, "During this retreat a brother of the Fanti King, Aduku, who was taken prisoner by the Ashantis in 1807 and had since been employed as an umbrella bearer to the King, made his

escape and reached Cape Coast.”<sup>104</sup> What was left of Cape Coast, had hardly been worth fighting for. The people of Cape Coast had fought and won a victory to save something far more abstract than their houses; they had fought for their town’s independence. As late as 1825, an anonymous British merchant wrote, “The appearance of Cape Coast is worse than the worst account we had received of it. In the old town there are only four black houses that have roofs to them so that nearly five thousand people are destitute of shelter.”<sup>105</sup> But the unsettled period of transition to legitimate trade was over. As Cape Coast rebuilt itself over the next few decades, it was as a town in an intimate alliance with the British, in which Sam Brew would not have been comfortable.

## **V. REV. JAMES HAYFORD AND JOSEPH DE GRAFT.**

Bowdich’s 1817 opening of direct contact between Cape Coast and Asante, heralded a new era that was defined by the emergence of a different type of middleman. The multi-lingual Fante *Okyiame* had been central figures in political developments of the Cape Coast stool since the time of Edward Barter. Kwamina Afua, (AKA Rev. James Hayford), and Joseph de Graft, (de Graft was Hayford’s father-in-law), were among the first generation of Christian Fante who had been educated at the school founded by their ancestor Philip Quaake.<sup>106</sup>

After Quaake’s death in 1816, de Graft, who had been the Africa Company’s *linguist* since 1803, ran the school.<sup>107</sup> The school had expanded under his guidance, perhaps due to the domination of the classes by de Graft’s many children. The gifted Elisabeth, Mary Ann, John and William de Graft were consistent recipients of school prizes.<sup>108</sup> In adult life John, (as John Coleman de Graft) and William (as Rev. William de Graft) were to make their own profound contributions to life on the coast. As a Christian, Joseph de Graft was active in encouraging the spread of the religion and as a Lieutenant in the Volunteer Company,<sup>109</sup> he was active in helping to put down Chiefs involved in what the British saw as acts of barbarity.

The Volunteer Company was made up of members of the *Asafo* with some European ancestry.<sup>110</sup> De Graft was consistently described as a ‘*mulatto*’, but where his European connection lay, is not known. The name de Graft suggests his father or grandfather was of Dutch origin, but this cannot be proved.<sup>111</sup>

Since the turn of the century, and following their victory over the Asante, the Fante became increasingly confident. As Dupuis pointed out, the southern provinces were no longer overawed by the presence of the *Asantebene*. As the Cape Coast Fante wrestled power from the Efutu, so their confidence continued to grow. The *Asantebene* argued that it was only Cape Coast that refused to acknowledge his authority, whilst, “the other towns of Fantee do what is right.”<sup>112</sup> The *Asantebene* described cases of his messengers being beaten and robbed while passing through Cape Coast and of the Governor refusing to hear their complaints.<sup>113</sup>

The *Asantebene* grew increasingly irritated by this policy of belligerence, and he identified two individuals as being central to the policy, Joe Aggrey (AKA Burupu) and his *Omankyiame* Joe de Graft. The *Asantebene* felt that Aggrey and de Graft were cheating his *Akyeame* and telling the Governor lies. The *Asantebene* sent an *Okyeame* who warned the Governor that, “they had better look to it, and take care what they do, for he is not a king to play the fool with.”<sup>114</sup> Ironically, it was de Graft, who as the castle *Linguist*, was responsible for translating this message to the Governor. At one point during the translation, the *Asantebene’s* “*ambassador* paused or was interrupted by Aggrey, De Graaf and others”, perhaps as he said something that they felt was not politically pertinent for the Governor’s ears.<sup>115</sup> Dupuis had “reason to doubt the veracity of the linguist’s interpretation” and so he secreted a linguist of his own in the room who assured him, “that the Kings speech did not exactly tally with what he had just heard from the public interpreter.”<sup>116</sup>

The *Asantebene’s* vehement dislike of de Graft, served to illustrate the power of the *Okyiame*. Earlier, when Dupuis had arrived in Kumase with Abroah, his own personal *Okyiame*, his mission was almost jeopardised because the *Asantebene* “obtained information ....that Abroah was a relation of De Graaf, ..... whom he was pleased to consider his political and personal enemy. This circumstance also weighed heavily on Abroah’s reputation at court, and indeed operated to the disadvantage of the mission.”<sup>117</sup> Dupuis described how the *Asantebene*, exclaimed, “with much bitterness of expression, against De Graaf (the mulatto linguist at Cape Coast) upon whom he lavished every abusive epithet.”<sup>118</sup> He is the man, said the *Asantebene*, “who encourages the people to rebel; and his intrigues in the castle made the white men enemies to their best friend. His heart is bad, and he suggests falsehoods to the governor.”<sup>119</sup> The *Asantebene* evidently saw de Graft as the architect of the policy of belligerence towards Asante from Cape Coast.

De Graft, as a Christian, had undoubtedly influenced official stool policy regarding traditional Fante customs considered un-Christian. In Aggrey, de Graft found a sympathetic monarch. Burupu permitted the establishment of a Wesleyan mission run by his son Essien, Joseph de Graft and John Sam and he endorsed their Bible reading evenings. This outraged the *Akumfo* (the indigenous priests or holy-men), and the Christians had to fight to continue their mission. On one occasion, Essien, de Graft and John Sam, were flogged at the castle gate by the *Akumfo*, and then imprisoned. Essien did receive support, however, from a sailor called Potter, who began fund-raising on his return to London to assist the mission.<sup>120</sup> It is difficult to gauge the response among the local people, to Aggrey’s active support of Christianity. As a result, it is now difficult to say if Essien’s treatment was an indication of how little the *Akumfo* respected *Omanbin* Aggrey, or of how little respect Aggrey had shown a formidable *Okumfu*, in allowing his son to set up a Christian organisation.



Where it was possible, the English used the Volunteer Company to implement their military aims. The arrival of George Maclean on the coast added British support to the Cape Coast Oman's previously isolated position of belligerence toward Asante. Maclean also endorsed Aggrey's deep-rooted criticism of the many 'un-Christian' indigenous practices. In 1823, Aggrey and de Graft joined the volunteers marching to bring Moree's *Chief* back to Cape Coast to answer accusations that he had been involved in human sacrifice.<sup>121</sup> A decade later, the Volunteer Company took to the field for the same fundamental cause.

Kweku Akka (or Atta) *Omanbin* of Apollonia, had been enstooled around 1831. Within a few months of his enstoolment, it was reported that 30,000 people were living under the terror of his rule between Esiama and Assini. Frank Swanzy said, "I... have seen the people there wearing nothing but the common grass cloth, for fear of the king, lest they should be supposed to possess money or property... I have seen people minus their ears, noses or lips for the most paltry offences."<sup>122</sup> It was said that, "Apart from 30 human sacrifices at the funeral custom of Akka's mother, the particular atrocity that engaged the attention of Maclean was the execution of traders from Wassaw, who were loosely under British protection. They had been tied to stakes on the beach and left to die of exposure. In 1835, Maclean crossed the Ancobra with one hundred and eighty men, accompanied by Frank Swanzy, who rallied the Fantis in the main encounter."<sup>123</sup> The Fante contingent was made up of the Volunteer Company. After a short campaign, Akka was brought to justice by the company of Cape Coast, and fined the considerable sum of £550 oz. of Gold Dust.<sup>124</sup>

Co-operation between the *Oman* and the Castle existed only as far as their interests coincided. There were no political compromises from either side. The British still sought to officially define their jurisdiction over the town, and the *Oman* sought to resist it. De Graft and Aggrey had consistently made it clear that they would not acknowledge the jurisdiction of either the British or the Asante. In 1829, Aggrey was temporarily denied the rent that had always been paid to his family by the British for the use of the castle, and was forced to pay 5 oz of gold for "his past misconduct". The British felt that Aggrey and de Graft had placed British negotiations with the Asante in jeopardy by hoisting a flag which depicted the *Asantehene* kneeling before the Cape Coast *Omanbin*. Aggrey had then called a large and raucous palaver to exhibit his new emblem.<sup>125</sup>

In 1836, Aggrey sent a petition to the House of Commons expressing gratitude for the abolition of slavery within British possessions, and asking members of the House to take measures to ensure free trade between the people on the coast and the coastal vessels. The petition "further said the people of Cape Coast enjoyed no advantages under the British Fort; that they were in a wretched condition, groaning under the lash, oppressed with chains, and liable to unlawful imprisonment at the hands of the local government, from all which miseries they prayed to be saved."<sup>126</sup>

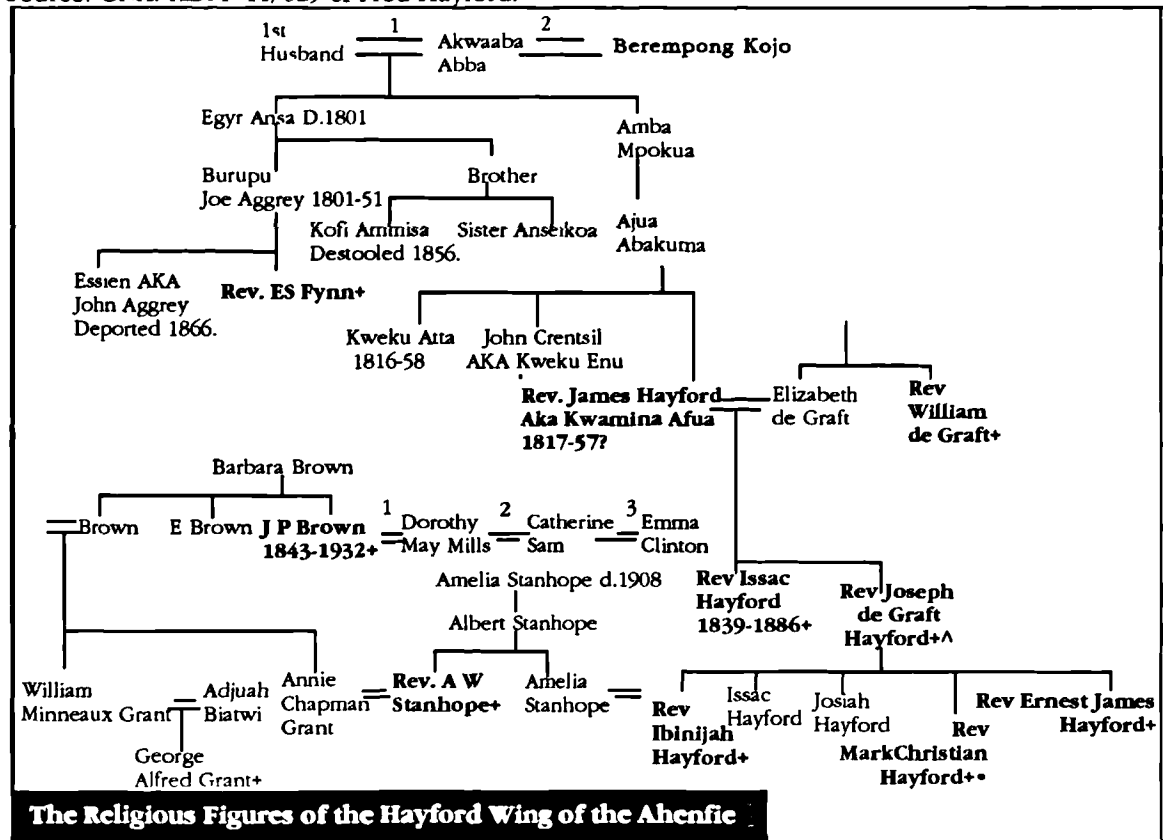
From that point onward, though an acknowledged ally of Britain, Aggrey was denied his usual rent for the castle.<sup>127</sup>

It is not known when Joseph de Graft died, but by the mid-1830s, his influence had begun to wane, replaced by that of his son-in-law James Hayford. The pupils of de Graft's school, went on to become a profound legacy to his skill as a teacher, and his vision of a Christian Cape Coast. In one of its eulogies, the *Gold Coast Echo* remarked, "among the early Fantee converts to Christianity, who had been so educated, and who had received their earliest religious impressions in that school, was a person named James Hayford, who, in 1836, had become a member of the Wesleyan Society recently established at Cape Coast."<sup>128</sup>

In 1831, after two decades of disruption, as an act of appeasement the *Asantehene* deposited six hundred ounces of gold at Cape Coast Castle. The *Asantehene* also gave up two of his sons (Owusu Ansa and Owusu Nkwantabisa) as security that Asante would keep the peace.<sup>129</sup> As the Fante *Chiefs* gathered at the castle to ratify the terms of the new treaty, a riot erupted, between the followers of some Wassaw *Chiefs*. John Mensah Sarbah recounts, "Maclean immediately suppressed the disturbance, 'and ordered that a hundred lashes should be given to each of the chiefs who had allowed their people to fight.' Boampong, one of the chiefs who suffered this indignity, committed suicide that same day."<sup>130</sup> The degrading corporal punishment of an indigenous monarch, demonstrated Maclean's lack of respect for the local hierarchy and the confidence that the British had gained from the peace treaty established on their terms.

One of the terms for peace was, "that the British authorities should have a representative resident or consular agent at Kumasi. For this purpose Maclean selected .... an intelligent Fantiman, trained at the Government school at Cape Coast Castle."<sup>131</sup> In, or about 1836, James Hayford, one of the early converts to Christianity, was appointed by Maclean as British resident at Kumase. John Mensah Sarbah remarked that "So much influence did this early Resident acquire over the Asanti monarch, that he had permission to hold Divine services within the precincts of the residence of the king, who, with his attendants, occasionally joined him in worship."<sup>132</sup> It was said that this consisted "of singing psalms and hymns, and prayer, and reading the holy scriptures."<sup>133</sup> Rev. Hayford continued his pioneering religious work up until his death, while remaining Aggrey's *Omankyiame*.<sup>134</sup> Hayford's death, like Brew's, seemed to be a reflection of the way that he led his life. At the time of the Fante invasion of the Dutch coast in the late 1860's, Rev. James Hayford had gone as a peace-maker to separate the combatants "In the struggle he was brutally, though perhaps, unintentionally, struck down."<sup>135</sup> Hayford's progeny like those of Joseph de Graft were of fundamental importance as activists in the growth of Christianity in Cape Coast.

Source: GNA. ADM 11/629 & Fred Hayford.



## VI. RELIGION

It is something of a miracle that there was a continuum of Christianity on the coast from its inception with Rev. Thompson in the middle of the eighteenth century, up until Hayford's personal mission in about 1836. There were times when it seemed to have been snuffed out, only for it to be rekindled elsewhere in an equally precarious form. Towards the end of Quaquer's life, his faith had begun to wane and Cruickshank suggests that his career had been somewhat of a failure, "no result followed his labours. It is even said that, at the approach of death, he had recourse to fetish practices."<sup>136</sup> At the time of Quaquer's death, the British presence on the coast was at its most insecure. During this period a certain amount of decadence and depression had set in amongst the castle staff.

These feelings had been reinforced by the general debilitation of the Europeans on the coast. J. Boyle's medical account of the Cape Coast states that in, "1819 there were eight new comers from England, all of whom were seized with fever, and three died: and out of forty, the total strength of Europeans in the service of the late company, five died. In the year 1820, there were four new comers all of whom were seized, and two died; and out of the total number, 39, four died. In 1821 there were seven new comers, all of whom were seized, and two died; and out of the total number in service, 41, six died; thus making an average of one out of every two" being effected by some form of debilitating illness.<sup>137</sup>

The atmosphere was such that one European remarked, "I have witnessed instances of persons who fell victims to the disease in question from disappointment in their expectations."<sup>138</sup> Fever was treated through the weakening process of bleeding the patient. Even those who were sent to offer spiritual guidance were not immune from the pervasiveness of the depressing atmosphere. Boyle described one clergyman who "indulged *too* freely in the enjoyments (if enjoyments they can be called) of the bottle" and died in 1819 only six months after his arrival.<sup>139</sup>

For treatment, Europeans soon became disillusioned with their own doctors' ability to treat tropical diseases, and soon turned to the indigenous 'fetish' treatments. One old indigenous medical practitioner became well known among the Europeans as Dr Saguah. The traveller J. Holman wrote of Saguah, "He was originally a slave to the African Company at Cape Coast, and having been accidentally placed in the house of the medical establishment, he learned to compound medicines." Mixing indigenous treatments with what he had learned from the Europeans, "he rendered himself very useful, and continued at the pestle and mortar until Charles Macarthy's arrival, when the African Company was dissolved, all their slaves liberated, and the new charter proclaimed, (for Sierra Leone and Cape Coast)" in March, 1822.<sup>140</sup> Holman said that after having received his freedom, Saguah "assumed a position of some importance, and was retained on the medical establishment as dispenser, with a small salary. His excellent conduct and judgement in the discharge of his new office procured him the general respect and confidence of Europeans, and his reputation, when I was at Cape Coast, stood so high that he was frequently consulted on diseases of the climate in preference to the medical gentlemen from Europe."<sup>141</sup>

Many European merchants who had arrived in search of a fortune felt cheated. W. Allen, on an official expedition of the coast, reported that many Europeans, "looked in vain to realise any to the descriptions given by Barbot of the physical characters" of the people.<sup>142</sup> Throughout this period Quaque was described as a single 'native preacher' who had 'a small congregation'. The Governor read prayers in his service every Sunday and in the week days Quaque taught up to one hundred and thirty-six boys on the Lancastrian plan<sup>143</sup> at his school. What was formerly a school for *mulatto* girls, had turned into little more than a brothel for the Europeans.<sup>144</sup> It is perhaps somewhat forgivable, that in his final moments, Quaque had resorted to what the Europeans around him had resorted to themselves. Though his labours had not shown much fruit, Rev. Quaque had "continued in the mission until his death in 1816 at the age of 75. As a mark of their approbation of his long and faithful services, the "African Company erected a memorial to him at Cape Coast Castle, testifying that he was employed there 'upwards of 50 years' as missionary from the society and chaplain to the factory."<sup>145</sup>

Quaque was succeeded by successive European replacements, none of whom stood the conditions very long; Rev. J. Collins (1818-1819) and R. Harold (1823-1824), lasted less than a year each. Harold received a grant to build the first church in Cape

Coast outside the castle. The church was built “for the use of the natives, of whom it was said, by their attendance at funerals, manifested a disposition to conform to the usages of the church”.<sup>146</sup>

Between 1824 and the arrival of Rev. T.B. Freeman in 1838, there was little or no contact with a trained or ordained Christian minister. Christianity survived through this period by the Christian teachings of Joseph de Graft, who had taken over the school from Quaque. There was consistent opposition to Christianity from the *Akumfo*, and increasingly from Muslims who had become increasingly influential in Kumase, and had begun to sweep southward.

For the first two decades of the nineteenth century, Muslims made significant contributions to the government in Kumase. Over time, Muslim religious traditions became intertwined with indigenous social activity. However, the rise of the Islam in Kumase was followed by an equally swift decline around the 1830s.<sup>147</sup> It would seem that the Muslim faith was assimilated only as a cultural appendage of the traditional Akan religious practices. Perhaps Quaque’s pre-death recourse to indigenous religious practice, was a measure of how Christianity, (like Islam), had failed to profoundly penetrate the Akan psyche by the 1820’s. Placed into this context, James Hayford’s part-religious mission to Kumase in 1836, may well have been absorbed into the existing Asante society in a similar way to Islam - simply as a satellite of the existing belief system. The development that was to change the practice of assimilating and customising alien religion, was the arrival on the coast of the charismatic, Thomas Birch Freeman in 1838.

## **VII. THOMAS BIRCH FREEMAN**

The Basel Mission had experienced major problems during its establishment in the eastern section of the Gold Coast. On the other hand, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (WMS), which started its operations in 1835, had a smoother introduction. Their first base at Cape Coast, continued the work of Joseph de Graft. Clarke suggests, “The ‘government’ school at Cape Coast trained a number of students in reading, writing, and Bible knowledge, and it was one of the school’s former students, William de Graft, who played an important part in arranging for the WMS to establish itself at Cape Coast.”<sup>148</sup>

There were a few inevitable initial difficulties. Freeman described a situation in which he gave several *Akyiame*, what he saw as “all necessary information” for their conversion to Christianity, but found great difficulty in making them understand him. Freeman concluded, “for how can those who are buried in superstition, form just any idea of the motives which stimulate the Christian Mission to visit them?”<sup>149</sup> Freeman’s luck quickly changed, he wrote in his diary how,

*When I arrived at the next village, as I was sitting under a tree, I overheard one of my basket men telling a group of natives, in the Fantee language, that I was*

*a Fetishman. While they were looking earnestly at me, I embraced the opportunity of talking to them in the same manner as I did those in the other village. At first they told me they liked their Fetish better than they did my God. I told them that their Fetish was of no value to them, and informed them of the power and goodness of God, at which they were truly astonished and said they would pray to Him if they knew how. I endeavoured to show them how to pray, and they promised to do so, expressing a wish that the great God should be worshipped in their croom and their children taught to read the great Book of which I told them.*<sup>150</sup>

It would seem, in the context of the decline of Muslim influence in Kumase, that such conversions, if accurately described, were only superficial. It is doubtful that anyone would have relinquished a lifetime of religious belief after speaking to a complete stranger for a few moments. But Freeman, unlike his predecessors, developed his initial contacts with consistent visits and encouragement and eventually a network of churches mushroomed along the coast. The building of places of worship, once again, brought to the surface tensions between the *Akumfo*, (priests), and the Christians.

On several occasions Freeman had to travel along the coast consoling his congregations who had become targets for the *Abin* and the *Akumfo*. In one case, in 1840, Freeman travelled to Komenda to tell Christians who were being persecuted by their Chief to 'stand fast'. Later in the same year, to show his commitment to the community, he helped to build a church at Komenda. That same year, Freeman started a Methodist Society at Saltpond.<sup>151</sup> During the building of the church at Saltpond, an *Okumfo* put a 'fetish' on the foundation site; the next morning the work on the church could not continue because no one in Saltpond would touch it. This was an illustration of the ambivalence of the Christians' faith; many were still restricted by traditional taboos. The impasse was broken when Freeman himself agreed to negotiate with the *Akumfo*.<sup>152</sup>

Freeman's work had been made somewhat easier by the earlier work of the government school which had propagated Christianity throughout the 1820s. Freeman selected one of its old boys, William de Graft (a son of Joseph de Graft the *Omankyiame* and schoolteacher) and took him to England in 1840. While in England, Freeman and de Graft went on tour to all the bases of the WMS, who were their sponsors. De Graft was a tremendous advertisement for Freeman's proposed work; it was said that the "great audiences which came to hear them recognised in De Graft a man who was their moral and intellectual equal."<sup>153</sup> On their return to Cape Coast there was a 'tremendous welcome' as "A vast procession came to the Mission House with presents and an official address of welcome".<sup>154</sup>

Freeman had demonstrated his commitment to the coast, and in the coming months his reputation quickly spread. At two services held on one day, Freeman

baptised nearly three hundred members. In Asaafa, a suburban coastal village near Cape Coast, he baptised over two hundred and fifty people in one day.<sup>155</sup> As interest in Christianity developed, so the *Akumfo's* active resistance grew more evident.

The problem of what missionaries saw as the indigenous resistance to Christianity, was not a spent force. As Christianity began to spread inland, the tensions between the Christians and the *Akumfo* became more acute. In 1849, Christianity reached Asaafa, and began to spread toward the villages that surrounded "the sacred hollow in the forest in which the God was believed to dwell."<sup>156</sup> The *Akumfo* were naturally angered by this; and a meeting was arranged under the control of *Omanbin* Adu of Mankessim, which sought to organise the *Chiefs* to defend indigenous institutions. Soon after this agreement had been made, one of the fetish priests, joined the Christians. He, with two accomplices, entered the sacred grove and cut down several poles which they planned to use for building purposes. When *Omanbin* Adu heard of this, he went to the Christian village and set fire to it, taking ten Christians as prisoners.<sup>157</sup>

Adu was later fined £56 by the Judicial Assessor at Anomabu for burning the village and the Christians were fined £20 for the violation of the sacred spot. When the other *Chiefs* who had been at the Mankessim meeting heard of this, they were outraged at the inequity of the decision. The Judicial Assessor argued that the decision was based on the principle of Christianity being of greater merit than *Fetishism*. Claridge described, "While these events had been happening, a *fetish* man named Kofi Kuma, who had quarrelled with another priest about a woman, privately disclosed the whole fraudulent business of the priests to the Judicial Assessor and furnished him with the proofs of a plot against several of the leading converts to Christianity, namely George Blankson of Anomabo; Hayfron, the fort interpreter; and William Parker and Stanhope"<sup>158</sup>, who were officials of the Wesleyan Church. A clandestine meeting had been held at Anomabu at which it was planned to kill these men by hiring a fetish man, "to poison them and thus remove the chief danger threatening their religion and means of livelihood." The nineteen *Akumfo* found guilty of conspiracy to poison were publicly flogged at Cape Coast and imprisoned for five years.<sup>159</sup>

The leading converts in Cape Coast were part of an increasingly powerful section of the coastal community who favoured Christianity and European education. They were mostly progeny of *Berempong* Kojo, who had some genealogical connection(s) with Europe. Their legitimate claims to hold indigenous power, made them crucial middlemen in trade and politics. Their independent money enabled them to reach the forefront of Fante politics in the tradition of Edward Barter.





## **VIII. TRADITIONS OF THE AKUMFO**

The traditions that the *Akumfo* were attempting to protect, were based on a powerful mixture of communication with the dead and simple respect for those of great age and wisdom - alive or dead. Fisk has argued, that the practice of ancestor veneration, "is the logical extension of the reverence paid to everyone who reaches old age."<sup>160</sup> She explained that, "Ancestors reside both in the world of the living and in the realm of the dead. Therefore, they have greater knowledge than the living. Moreover they are closer to God than human beings."<sup>161</sup> Sarpong adds, that the ancestors operate as custodians of laws and guardians of their living relations.<sup>162</sup>

Casely-Hayford suggested that the Fante, "profoundly believes in the world of spirits. He believes that the spirit in a man never dies. So vivid is his faith that he holds open and direct communion with his dead friends, not through a medium, but, as it were, face to face."<sup>163</sup> Through the pouring of libations, individuals are able to show respect and communicate with deceased friends and relations. Dead friends entered a plain in which they could see the world and the systems of causality with absolute clarity.

The Fante created a divide between corporeal life and the enlightened state that one passes into after death. Our natural unaided view of the world, was seen as a limited and inferior perspective of a complex universe that was dominated by metaphysical phenomena. This was said to have led to an inevitable subordination of the material world in favour of a spiritual world to which only a few had limited access.<sup>164</sup> Casely-Hayford argued that to the Fante, "It matters not what happens today since tomorrow may find him in the grave and at rest with his forefathers."<sup>165</sup> The medium through which ordinary mortals could access this world, was through the skills of an *Okumfo* or the wisdom of an elder.<sup>166</sup>

The Christian account of Jesus Christ being crucified and then rising from the dead to predict the second coming, struck a chord with many Fante who were told the story by missionaries. In one case, a woman claimed to be Jesus Christ 'come again in the flesh.' Several of Freeman's newly formed Saltpond society, went to Mankessim on a pilgrimage to visit the woman. It was said that although she was entirely illiterate, she could read the Bible and she had the power to forgive sins. Strange vapours were seen in the local chapel and the local agent had strange dreams. One of Freeman's followers returned to Saltpond claiming to have been made a preacher who "could command the motions of the sun in the heavens."<sup>167</sup> It was only later, under duress, that the woman repented and acknowledged her mistake.<sup>168</sup> The woman, like many others, might have seen Christianity as a means to the sort of charismatic power that was traditionally reserved for the *Okumfo*.

Freeman's work consolidated the work of the earlier missionaries, such as Rev. James Hayford. Freeman later suggested, perhaps mistakenly,<sup>169</sup> that even Muslims

in Cape Coast fell inadvertently under his influence, as they began to use the ceremonial law of Moses as a basis for polygamy, which of course involved using the James I Old Testament. Some Muslims allegedly went further and began to use Freeman's Old Testament hymns that had been translated into Fante. Freeman took the opportunity to attempt to convert them into Christians.<sup>170</sup>

### **IX. THE BOND OF 1844**

Cape Coast quickly became the centre of Wesleyan Christianity, and gradually Methodism spread to the tributary villages and farms that surrounded it. For at least one hundred years, there had been some form of Christian institution in Cape Coast. Freeman's work slotted into that historical tradition and his work was also complementary to European trade. The Europeans found it easier to expand their trading links into areas which had accepted or tolerated Christianity. Similarly, Christianity was able to make inroads into areas where there had already been extensive European trading contact.

The terms that were demanded by the Europeans for continued trade had been essentially Christian tenets. In the 1823 campaign to Moree,<sup>171</sup> and the 1832 Akka war, human sacrifice had been cited as being incompatible with European-indigenous trading relations. The Cape Coast *Oman* and the Volunteer Company had participated in both wars. Their involvement had stemmed from their equal commitment to the adherence of Christian principles as a necessary condition for continued trade.

To a certain extent, Cape Coast had been forced into a close but unequal partnership with the British, because it had been isolated with the British in its opposition to Asante. This had resulted in a loss of trading and military independence to the British rather than the Asante. But Cape Coast had not only lost its trading and military autonomy; the early years of Maclean's administration had emphasised how the people of Cape Coast were gradually losing their jurisdiction in the town to either the Asante or the British. The Asante continued to claim Cape Coast as their own, whilst the British used their military alliance with the people of Cape Coast to emphasise the vulnerability of the town if it were isolated. This period was thus immensely important for Cape Coast and it is instructive to look at conclusions drawn about it in Fante historiography. There are those who have seen the Bond of 1844 as a turning point in Anglo-Fante relations, because it gave the British new jurisdiction. Others have seen the Bond as an ambiguous and unimportant document which came to be exploited by the British.

The British saw the potential for developing a legally binding relationship with Cape Coast from the early nineteenth century, "In 1820, His Majesty's Government decided to introduce a Bill into Parliament for divesting the Company of Merchants of the management of the Forts and Settlements on the Gold Coast in furtherance of a plan for placing these Forts under the management of the immediate Officers of

the Crown.”<sup>172</sup> Sarbah explained that by 1828, the London committee had only just begun appointing “the local officials, namely, a governor, his secretary, a surgeon, an officer of a guard of one hundred men, and a commandant for” the Fort at Accra. Sarbah continued, “Assisted by a council of local merchants, over whose deliberations he presided, the Governor acted also as treasurer, warehouse-keeper, and commander of the troops.”<sup>173</sup>

Since 1820, “On the 24th day of June each year the British resident merchants at Cape Coast Castle and Accra, who had each completed a year’s residence on the coast, met and elected five of their number to be the council for the following year.”<sup>174</sup> Kimble suggests that the first decade of crown control was made difficult by declining trade which almost resulted in a British withdrawal in 1828.<sup>175</sup> Despite the initial difficulties, the British maintained their commitment to the coast.

John Mensah Sarbah explained that the early British officials were not supposed to benefit as individuals, “The general principle of this merchant government being voluntary service, the rules made it plain that the members of the council and other British residents were to act without pecuniary reward in their offices, for the defence of the forts and preservation of that order and good government on which depended their own safety and commercial prosperity.”<sup>176</sup> The ambiguities that surrounded that ‘order and good government’, allowed consecutive Governors enough freedom to impose their own personal visions of order and good government on the coast.

Maclean’s impetuosity and genuine wish to do the very best for the crown, had made him a dramatically stronger governor than those who preceded him. He maintained unrestricted trade between the coast and Kumase, and his successes against the Asante gained him many Fante allies.

Danquah suggests that Maclean, “must have known of the Dutch Bund or Contract of Government between the Government of the Netherlands Settlement on the Coast of Guinea and the Native Government of Elmina, drawn up as far back as 1642.”<sup>177</sup> Perhaps using the Dutch ‘Bund’ as a precedent, Maclean drafted his own Bond<sup>178</sup> The British saw it as giving them legal jurisdiction over the area around the castle, binding the people of Cape Coast to acknowledge, “the prohibition of human sacrifices, and other barbarous customs, such as kidnapping.”<sup>179</sup>

The Bond was signed by most of the Fante *chiefs* and it became the basis for British jurisdiction over the people of the Gold Coast for many decades to come. From its inception, it was unclear whether the Fante *Chiefs* were granting the British the right to remain on the coast on their terms, or whether the Fante were being forced, through weakness, into acknowledging British jurisdiction. Claridge argued it was, “a very necessary step; for as time went on, it became more and more necessary to have documentary evidence of every agreement or arrangement made with the Chiefs and people, many of whom, in the coast towns especially, were now being educated and could no longer be regarded and treated as simple savages.”<sup>180</sup>

The British saw themselves at this stage in a paternal role. The recommendations of the report which was to become the basis of the Bond, suggested, that the Fante, "relation to the English Crown should be, not the allegiance of subjects, to which we have no right to pretend, and which it would entail an inconvenient responsibility to possess, but the deference of weaker powers to a stronger and more enlightened neighbour, whose protection and counsel they seek, and to whom they are bound by certain definite obligations."<sup>181</sup> Ambiguity developed because by signing the Bond, the *Chiefs* acknowledged, the "power and jurisdiction" of the European forts and settlements and agreed that, "murders, robberies, and other crimes and offences, will be tried and inquired of before the Queen's judicial officers and the chiefs of the district, moulding the customs of the country to the general principles of British Law."<sup>182</sup> But where the jurisdiction of the European Forts and settlements began and ended was not ever made clear.

Claridge suggests that, "no innovations were introduced by this treaty; it conferred no territorial rights; but it legalized and defined that jurisdiction in purely criminal matters,"<sup>183</sup> became the responsibility of British courts. For some time, Maclean had, "sought to maintain peace and order among the *chiefs* of the southern states, to stop human sacrifice, panyarring, attacks or raids on peaceful traders, and slave trading. He did this mainly by peaceful means, though he did not hesitate to use force when necessary."<sup>184</sup> This long-term policy had become the basis of the Bond. A. Adu Boahen argues that the Bond was not actually "as important as has been supposed. First, it merely recognised Maclean's former administration of justice, and did not create it. Secondly, the new jurisdiction that it granted to the British was limited only to criminal cases, and even this limited power was to be exercised in co-operation with the chiefs themselves. In other words, the sovereignty of the signatory *chiefs* was fully recognised."<sup>185</sup>

Both Danquah and Ward were keen to emphasise the Bond's insignificance for different reasons.<sup>186</sup> They both sought to show that it was incorrect for the Bond to have been interpreted as the basis for British jurisdiction over Cape Coast. Ward argued that, "there is no intention to grant to the Crown any territorial sovereignty or suzerainty, nor is there granted any authority beyond that of enforcing compliance with the orders of the court."<sup>187</sup> Danquah went further and suggested, that, "under the bond of 1844 no special rights or liberties were granted by the British sovereign to the 'Fantee *Chiefs*', If anything, it could be said that it was rather the 'Fantee Chiefs' who granted the rights and liberties to the British sovereign."<sup>188</sup> Ward saw it as a declaration that established the terms for a relationship between individuals, and went as far as calling the bond a *Magna Carta*.<sup>189</sup> Danquah suggested that this was misleading and argued that the Bond, was "a *Magna Carta* in as far as it purports to give the British something they never possessed before in law: the grant to them of the right to try cases not otherwise in law within British jurisdiction."<sup>190</sup>

Another lawyer, Casely-Hayford, also argued that the Bond had been given too great a historical status. He felt that its original purpose had been to control acts of barbarity. He suggested that, "a careful reading of this Bond makes it clearly evident that its main object was to enable Her Majesty to exercise jurisdiction in suppressing heinous offences committed within districts adjacent to the forts. In the exercise of such jurisdiction, the Queen's judicial officers were to act conjointly with the *Chiefs* of the districts."<sup>191</sup> Casely-Hayford argued that, "the Bond had no reference to territorial acquisition; it did not extend the Queen's possessions beyond their former limits. In brief, such jurisdiction as it conferred was restricted to criminal matters."<sup>192</sup> The words of the bond itself may have actually been of little contemporary significance, but they subsequently became the basis for the recognition of "two systems of courts in the Gold Coast. The Queens courts and the courts of the *Chiefs*."<sup>193</sup>

J.M. Sarbah suggested that as a result of the Bond, "the aboriginal rulers did not give exclusive jurisdiction to the British in judicial matters, for trials were to take place before the queen's officers and the *chiefs* of the district; nor did these *chiefs* divest themselves of their judicial rights in civil or *all* criminal matters."<sup>194</sup> Although trials were, as Sarbah points out, to be held in both the Queen's court and the *Chiefs'* courts, there was a continual drain on the coffers of the indigenous courts as cases drifted away to the Queen's court. The Queen's court seemed to offer consistency and comparative fairness for the weak and the strong. The parallel sets of courts, with their own methods and objectives, allowed people to choose what they saw as their kind of justice. The acknowledgement of the Queen's court's rulings, implied that the *Amanhin's* court's decisions were open to question. This led to people using the varied indigenous courts to their advantage. Because it was possible for two independent courts to have jurisdiction to try the same case,<sup>195</sup> it was said that if a Fante was "dissatisfied with the decision of a sub-chief" he could take "out a fresh summons and start the case de novo in the *Headchief's* Court."<sup>196</sup> Through this confusion, the court at Anomabu became known as "a court of popular resort for people coming from as far as the Sekum River."<sup>197</sup>

This brought the courts' methods into focus. It was said that in Aburi, to find a murderer, a bowl was circulated around the townspeople that contained hot shea butter and a silver ring. Everyone had to take the ring out of the bowl. "When four or five men of a family had swollen hands, they were considered guilty."<sup>198</sup> In other areas, the defendants were sometimes tortured until they admitted their guilt.<sup>199</sup> Some cases were appealed several times until a powerful plaintiff or defendant got the result that they desired. In one case, Yaw *Penin*, the nephew of the *Omanhin* of Anomabu, took a case to his uncle's court, where he was awarded four shillings which the plaintiff refused to pay. Yaw *Penin* then had the case appealed in the Queen's court where he received damages, but he was still not satisfied and appealed again to the

indigenous court where he was awarded 7 dollars.<sup>200</sup> In another instance, a powerful *Penin*, Etoarful, won a case in which it was judged that the defendant had no right to lash out at him with a stick, even if it was in self defence.<sup>201</sup>

Europeans also used the indigenous court system when it was to their advantage. Because guilt was often ascertained partially through a 'fetish', wealthy Europeans could sometimes rely on their influence to gain them a favourable result.<sup>202</sup> Years after the abolition of slavery in England, merchants on the coast legally maintained their slaves, and those who gave their slaves freedom, sought compensation from the slave for their release. In one such case, in 1853, a European merchant named Smith, took his slave Quacoo to Aggrey's court to get the nine shillings that Smith felt he was worth for his freedom. Aggrey offered to pay Smith the amount and then keep Quacoo as his own slave. Quacoo, on hearing this, said that he would rather cut his own throat than be thrust back into the situation from which he was fighting to escape. Because suicide was illegal, Aggrey was able to imprison Quacoo and force him back into slavery.<sup>203</sup>

The most notorious case of misuse of the system created such a stir, that the injustice it sanctioned was later brought to the attention of the courts in England by the Aborigines Society. In the early part of 1847, Capt. Augustus William Murray was robbed of "certain gold ornaments, of native manufacture." Murray had in his service a man called Robert Erskine. Erskine was accused of the crime and was tortured until he confessed.<sup>204</sup> After Erskine had confessed he was taken to Joe Aggrey 'to give him fetish' which meant he would be subjected to painful ordeals, which Murray was aware the indigenous courts employed in such cases.<sup>205</sup> Captain Murray had asked Aggrey to try Erskine, "country fashion", to see if he had stolen his property,<sup>206</sup> knowing this would mean the continued torture of Erskine, followed by his conviction. Whereas, if Erskine had been tried in the Queen's court, there would not have been the evidence to convict him. As expected, Erskine was found guilty after he failed the 'fetish test', and the torturing thus continued.<sup>207</sup> Erskine was put 'in log' for five days.<sup>208</sup> Later Erskine was found to have been innocent. There was outrage in the town. At one point, incensed by the manifest atrocities perpetrated on the innocent Erskine, 300 people stood outside the castle and began to pelt the soldiers with stones.<sup>209</sup> Crippled by the torture, Erskine became a drunk and a beggar. His father, a militia man in the castle, lost his job as a direct result of the incident, and his brother who lived in Anomabu was also punished for Erskine's alleged crime. Aided by Frank Swanzy, the Erskine incident gained publicity.<sup>210</sup> A year later, the Aborigines Society took up the case, and it was taken to court in England three years later, where it was successfully prosecuted by the Society.<sup>211</sup>

Although there were certain officials who believed that the indigenous courts of conciliation or arbitration should always have the right of appeal to the English

court,<sup>212</sup> there was no statute that formalised this, and so the system of parallel courts continued. There were also popular unofficial courts that operated between the English and indigenous courts. One was run by Captain Hutchison who was a volunteer in the Gold Coast reserves, a local merchant and the man who was to consolidate the influence of freemasonry on the Gold Coast. Hutchison was constantly visited by Fante who wanted “him to settle some disputes among their people.”<sup>213</sup> It was said that, “he had so much the confidence of the natives, that both their great men and the common people, preferred referring to him to settle their quarrels than to their own authorities.”<sup>214</sup>

The British consistently attempted to gain a mandate for the right of appeal to their courts. Throughout the 1850s and into the 1860s, consecutive governors sought to widen their jurisdiction within Cape Coast. Although there were regular internal struggles within the *Oman*, they maintained the policy of not allowing the English to amend the conditions of the 1844 Bond. On May 10th 1865, the interregnum *Omanbin*, J.R. Thompson, and his *Asafo captains*, Issac Roberston, Kwamina Mayan, Kwamina Acquah and Kweku Gapee, turned down the request from the administration that they should cede, “a portion of the town of Cape Coast to the Government.”<sup>215</sup> Thompson wrote in opposition to an earlier Government despatch, “I am unable to approve the step which you have taken in declaring the territory within five miles of eight separate British forts to be British territory, and I have to instruct you to recall the notices in which this is done. Whatever influence you may be able to exert in discouraging or repressing barbarous customs leading to loss of life will be very proper, and I shall be happy to approve your exercise of it, but the extension of British territory is a different matter, and cannot receive my sanction.”<sup>216</sup>

There was a certain amount of indigenous resistance to the British courts which was not based on the issue of jurisdiction; it was based on the problem of the British courts being as prone to abuse of their mandate and power as the indigenous courts. According to Governor Pine, there was a recurrent difficulty in filling the senior civil service posts, “in the several districts of the Protectorate by reason of the scarcity of officers available and their inexperience and consequent (as a general rule) inaptitude for the duties.”<sup>217</sup> Many of those who were appointed had scant understanding of the law and often showed the indigenous *Abin* and *Amanbin* little respect. Within a period of a few months, the Cape Coast court fined the *Chief* of Komenda 19 oz of Gold; the *King* and *Chief* of Appollonia 80oz of gold; the *King* of Anomabu 50l sterling; and the *Chief* of Accunawassie 32oz of Gold.<sup>218</sup>

However, the people who administered the law, were sometimes as unscrupulous as those they punished. Martin Doorly, for instance, was dismissed for various atrocities as prison governor in the 1860s, and yet was later appointed as Justice of the Peace!<sup>219</sup> In another case, Justice James Bannerman was given twelve months hard labour in a chain gang, for embezzlement and extortion whilst operating in his

capacity as Justice of the Peace. It was said that Bannerman apparently kidnapped a man and his wife and sold them for one hundred dollars.<sup>220</sup> In yet another case, an inspector of Cape Coast prison was dismissed for cruelty. Many prisoners had been kept in irons and starved before trial.<sup>221</sup> Some prisoners had been upwards of a year waiting to be tried. *The African Times* wrote, "is it not a rascally shame in a country ruled by three lawyers" (the Governor, the Chief Justice and the Acting Colonial Secretary).<sup>222</sup> It went on to argue, "it is nothing for a gentleman to give his prostitute a large shoe trunk full of valuable medicines out of the military chest, and then sit the same day as magistrate and sentence a poor black man to six months, with hard labour, for stealing a fowl worth one shilling; at the same time condemning the poor fellows thieving propensities, in strong pathetic language. How can Africans advance in civilisation if her sons have examples like these before their eyes?"<sup>223</sup>

One *Obin* argued that the Governor "came here with a mask on, to bamboozle and gull the much despised savages of Cape Coast, whose fingers, to use his language, "are so swollen, that they cannot write a document worthy of his notice."<sup>224</sup> Whilst "another of these gents here expressed his opinion that we ought not be educated, because, I suppose, it would take us out of our place in nature."<sup>225</sup> By the 1860s, the *Abin* of Elmina were driven to write to the Dutch government "urging that, they wished to be ruled 'by men who respect the laws, not trample them under foot.'"<sup>226</sup> Resentment towards English law was not limited to the *Abin* and *Amanbin*, whose courts were in direct competition with the English courts. The individuals who had come to know the reputations of the English courts, were also resentful of the English administration. One of the most disliked administrations was that of Governor Conran. It was said that when Conran left Cape Coast by boat in 1867, he was 'cursed' by some five thousand local people.<sup>227</sup>

Although the ambivalence of the Bond caused such negative repercussions, there was complete agreement between the English administration and the Cape Coast *Oman* on policy towards administrations that condoned acts of 'barbarity'. In 1848, four years after the signing of the Bond, the people of Cape Coast, "as the allies of the British Government, sent a combined expedition against the notorious King Kweku Akai to punish him for his fiendish atrocities and studied defiance to British authority."<sup>228</sup> Kweku Akaa (or Akai or Atta) was the *Omanbin* of the Appollonians. He had ruled the Appollonians under a regime of fear for some decades. Frank Swanzy led 120 West Indian soldiers and 4500 Fante against Akaa. Prior to the outbreak of hostilities, at least 400 Apollonians allied with the invaders and guided Swanzy's men to *Omanbin* Akaa's hiding place in the swamps, where, after a small fracas, they saved 120 prospective victims from the log.<sup>229</sup> *Omanbin* Akaa "was captured, tried, found guilty, and sentenced to death..but his sentence was commuted to that of penal servitude for life; he died in 1852."<sup>230</sup>



## X. KOFI AMISSA

When the Akaa war broke out, Burupu (Joe Aggrey), was almost ninety and too old to lead the *Asafo* companies. So Kum,<sup>231</sup> led the Cape Coast people into battle at Appollonia. While Burupu was on the stool of Cape Coast, Atta Kofi was on the stool of *Berempong* Kojo.<sup>232</sup> Atta Kofi, therefore, led the *Wirempe* into battle.<sup>233</sup> On their victorious return, Akaa's stool was placed in Kum's house as a trophy, and it was subsequently passed from *Tufubin* to *Tufubin*. Kum and Atta Kofi's joint victory, elevated the *Wirempe* into the ascendancy, and although Burupu was not yet dead, the matrilineal family had become powerful enough to begin to dictate policy. As a younger man, Burupu had been acknowledged as the undisputed *Omanbin* for an extended part of his reign. He is one of the few *Amanbin* who is acknowledged by all the Cape Coast houses to have been "*Omanbene* of *Oguaa* (Cape Coast)."<sup>234</sup>

It is generally accepted that Aggrey, "succeeded in the male line, a circumstance not disputed, and his father is said to have been Egyr Ansa which translated means Egyr the third"<sup>235</sup> This account gained credibility, partly because, Burupu's other name, Joe Aggrey, was an anglicised corruption of the Fante name Egyr.<sup>236</sup> But as I point out in the opening pages of this chapter, Aggrey's inheritance through his father is open to dispute. Aggrey was hostile to British encroachments on his power right up until his death in 1851.<sup>237</sup> Then over ninety, he refused to supply bricklayers to the castle after his posters demanding the end of domestic slavery by "educated persons", were torn down under the authorisation of the governor.<sup>238</sup> Aggrey was succeeded by "Kofi Amissa, who in the ordinary system of male descent would be the son or grandson of a former *Omanbene*."<sup>239</sup> But whether he did inherit patrilineally, is open to dispute. Some of the *Wirempe* later claimed Kofi Amissa was part of their matrilineal family.

Aikosua Mary, who later became head of *Effikessim*, (the major matrilineal house which contained the *Wirempe*), was a young girl at the time of Kofi Amissa's enstoolment. She suggested that Kofi Amissa ascended the matrilineal stool of *Berempong* Kojo, and he, "was very fond of women and did not govern the country properly".<sup>240</sup> There is reason to believe that Aikosua Mary was mistaken in her belief that Kofi Amissa was on the matrilineal stool. Though later destooled, Kofi Amissa was always able to claim the support of the No.4 Company, the Nkum - who were traditionally the bodyguard of the patrilineal stool. Perhaps because the *Wirempe* had been acquiring power and influence over the town since the Akaa war, Kofi Amissa as a patrilineal heir, found it more and more difficult to maintain the respect of the *Asafo* companies and the *Oman*.

After being on the stool for only five years, Kofi Amissa was destooled for what seems to have been a trivial matter, which suggests that his administration had been generally unpopular for some time. In 1856, an important government official, (perhaps the Governor himself,<sup>241</sup>), arrived in Cape Coast. As it was customary for

the *Oman* to fire the 'feu-de-joie', the *Asafo* companies prepared their guns. But Kofi Amissa refused to allow them to fire the volley of honour. The *Oman* went ahead and vetoed the *Omanbin's* decision and ordered the companies to fire their guns, as was traditional. Kofi Amissa intent that it should be his bodyguard, if any, to fire the volley, gathered the *Nkum* and the inhabitants of their villages to perform the ceremony. But at noon,<sup>242</sup> the *Nkum* were stopped by the *Oman* who refused to allow them to pass. Some of the *Supi* endeavoured to separate the two sides that were squaring up to fight, and managed to send word to the Governor in the Castle. Major Bird was despatched from the castle with a detachment of soldiers. Major Bird and his soldiers succeeded in temporarily dispersing the people, but on his return to the Castle, at about five o'clock,<sup>243</sup> the first shot was fired.<sup>244</sup> Crowther suggested, "It seems likely that this was only the circumstance which gave the opening for a revolution against an unpopular or unsuitable ruler."<sup>245</sup> The reasons for Amissa's unpopularity were not just that he was a bad leader, he had also dragged the stool into debt.

Since the suicide of *Obin* Boampong, (after Maclean had publicly punished him) it had become policy that the indigenous leaders should be treated with respect in such situations, to preserve their dignity. However, in 1853, Judicial Assessor Fitzpatrick saw fit to lock up *Omanbin* Kofi Amissa for non-payment of a debt.<sup>246</sup> Fitzpatrick's decision was later defended by Mayne, the Captain of the Gold Coast Corps, who argued, "The most that could be said about Mr Fitzpatrick was, that ... perhaps he had some ungraciousness of manner, but these were trifles indeed when compared with his high principles and upright justice."<sup>247</sup> It may have been after his incarceration, that Kofi Amissa's alleged attempt to blow himself up in his house with gunpowder, occurred.<sup>248</sup> After the destoolment "of Kofi Amissa the *Oman* of Cape Coast decided that they would no longer allow the descent in the male line. The *Oman* consulted and applied to Kofi Kuma" to be the new *Omanbin*.<sup>249</sup> Kofi Kuma refused to accept the title, but put forward his sister's son, Kweku Atta, in his place. The *Oman* accepted Kweku Atta.<sup>250</sup>

## **XI. KWEKU ATTA**

During the brief interregnum, James Thompson, (AKA Kum), was acknowledged as the head man in Cape Coast. Thompson's courts became acknowledged as the most senior courts in the town. Though politically moribund, Kofi Amissa refused to accept Thompson's authority, and took out a summons in the British court against him. Thompson was asked to account for the money he had received by way of fines in his court. As a result of the court action, the British administration withheld their assent to Thompson's self-appointment as temporary head man, while simultaneously distancing themselves from Kofi Amissa. The British stated that an *Omanbin* could not be removed without the consent of the Governor. Despite this acknowl-

edgement, the British refused to accept Amissa as *Omanbin*. Ephson remarked, “Kofi Amissah was left in an anomalous position with neither power, authority nor wealth. Kofi Amissah grew less and less popular. In practice, however, the main authority in Cape Coast was exercised by Thompson, who claimed that his office (as the leading *councillor*) traditionally ranked second to the *King*, and that he was in effect ‘*Mayor of the Town*’.”<sup>251</sup> Later Thompson was able to consolidate his position when he was made *Tufubin* after the death of his uncle, Kobina Kum.

In March 1856, after the necessary preparations, Kweku Atta was enstooled as *Omanbin* of Cape Coast. *Effikessim* and the *Wirempe* had not only won the total acceptance of a matrilineal candidate, but they also secured the acceptance of matrilineal lineage. Crowther relates how, “Up to this date a line of *Amanbin* following the Efutu practice of descent in the male line of Efutu blood had succeeded one another whether in Efutu or *Oguaa* as rulers of the town and its villages.”<sup>252</sup> Although it was the destoolment that provoked “the occasion of a change in the line and the adoption of the principal of descent in the female or family line. It is significant that the change was made, at least partially in the closely related Efutu state of Winneba during the same decade.”<sup>253</sup> The change in lineage had other repercussions. After the destoolment, it was decided that “*Kojo Berempong*’s stool should be merged in the stool of Cape Coast and that this brought about the *Wirempe* being under the *Jyase* of Cape Coast.”<sup>254</sup>

Prior to the enstoolment of Kweku Atta, the *Gyase* were made up of the Nkum *Asafo* Company, who adhered to the Efutu patrilineal inheritance system. After the enstoolment of Kweku Atta, he selected a new *Gyase* from his own family villages of Kakumdu, Sudu, Abra and Mpeasam. Because the old *Gyase* never fully accepted this development, (they never relinquished physical control of the patrilineal stool), the new *Gyase* were known as the matrilineal *Wirempe*.<sup>255</sup> The *Wirempe* also indirectly controlled Berase, which had its own *Obin* who was in control of Ankwase, Esiam, Agnona and Sarman. The Berase *Obin* had no autonomous title, or military position.<sup>256</sup>

Kofi Kuma, the head of the patrilineal *Oman*, had skilfully ruled in a brief interregnum, during which he had shown sympathy to *Effikessim* and had given support to the *Wirempe*. Kofi Kuma sought to institutionalise the change to the matrilineal system. J.P. Brown testified that, “Kuma and the elders took an oath with the *Oman* that the succession should remain in the family,”<sup>257</sup> by becoming matrilineal forever. Because Kuma had gained complete support of the matrilineal family, he was able during his brief period as *Omanbin*, to unite the two stools. Some saw this as an act of skilful diplomacy on Kuma’s part,<sup>258</sup> others as an act that demonstrated the political ascendance of *Effikessim*.<sup>259</sup>

Kuma handed on the reins of government to his nephew, Kweku Atta, who quickly established himself as undisputed *Omanbin*,<sup>260</sup> with a new stool under the

guardianship of the *Wirempe* at Kakumdu.<sup>261</sup> Kweku Atta was diplomatic enough to leave the old stool of Cape Coast with the Nkum, and like his predecessors Burupu and Kofi Amissa, “Kwaku Atta went to Nkum to offer the usual libations to it.”<sup>262</sup> The enstoolment of Kweku Atta in March 1856,<sup>263</sup> led to the acceptance of a new version of Cape Coast’s stool history which gave an official mandate to the matrilineal account of Cape Coast stool succession. Kweku Atta could be traced through the female line to *Berempong* Kojo:

*Berempong* Kojo

Kojo Ando

Boatsi

Kobbina Doku

Atta Kofi

Kweku Atta

Kweku Enu

Kwesi Atta.<sup>264</sup>

It was argued by the *Wirempe* that there was no patrilineal connection between Kweku Atta and the previous *Amanhin*, except that of ‘tribe’. It was suggested that Kweku Atta gained his eligibility, as “the nephew of Kofi Kuma one of the *Mpakanmfu* or *Chiefs*.”<sup>265</sup> But Kuma was related to both the patrilineal and matrilineal side of the stool family, and so, Kuma’s heir, Atta, became accepted by the patrilineal and the matrilineal side of the family.

Kweku Atta was to live up to the task that Kofi Kuma had set for him. He was not just a good *Omanhin*, he may well have been the greatest administrator ever to sit on the stool of Cape Coast. He was said to have been “a born *linguist*, though illiterate, he spoke English, Dutch, Portuguese, also Ingrusi, Marawa, Ga and Nsimaa. He mastered the Akan dialects so well, he could not be detected from an Asanti, an Akyim or Denkyira born. He had the courage of his convictions and thoroughly knew and to the fullest extent guarded his rights. Yet he well knew how far to go and never committed himself. He kept his chiefs and people and the Government Officials also in their right places. He had quite a free hand and the Government never had occasion to interfere with the people.”<sup>266</sup>

A measure of Kweku Atta’s success came late in his short reign when, Benjamin Pine, Governor and Commander in Chief of the Gold Coast, “was so impressed with his unusual intelligence and tact in administration, that he offered to give him and a few attendants a free passage to England in one of Her Majesty’s ships: but although the King himself was willing to go, the Chiefs and people strenuously opposed the step suspecting that it was a trap on the part of the British government to get rid of the man whose presence was a complete check to them, and the project was abandoned”<sup>267</sup> Kweku Atta died only two years after being enstooled, but his brief reign was to become a legendary example of the potential for Cape Coast’s stability

and unity. The *Gold Coast Aborigine* remembered many decades later how, “His Highness Quacoe Attah *King* of Cape Coast, the most civilised and intelligent native prince on the Gold Coast, died on Saturday the 20th of February 1858.”<sup>268</sup> It was said that “Cape Coast never suffered a heavier loss than in the death of its *King* Kweku Atta.”<sup>269</sup>

After Kweku Atta’s death, the two sides of the Cape Coast stool returned to their historically opposing stances. The Nkum, the No.4 company, and traditional bodyguard of the patrilineal stool, sought Kweku Enu as the successor to Kweku Atta.<sup>270</sup> Kwaku Enu, (alias John Crentsil), was Western educated<sup>271</sup> and, in compliance with the patrilineal tradition, the Nkum argued that he was the younger brother of the previous *Omanbin*.<sup>272</sup> Fortunately for Kweku Enu, the *Wirempe* interpreted the relationship between Kweku Enu and Kweku Atta as that of cousins which made Kweku Enu eligible as a matrilineal candidate as well. Which account was accurate is now unclear.<sup>273</sup> There is, however, a chance that both accounts could have been true, because it was traditional for a man to take his widowed brother’s wife as his own. If their father’s were brothers and followed this practice, it is possible that Kweku Enu and Kweku Atta were brothers and matrilineally related cousins, simultaneously.<sup>274</sup>

Kweku Atta, who died in 1858, ruled only two years, and his successor, Kweku Enu (John Crentsil), died in 1863, only five years later. Some attributed the brevity of these reigns to divine wrath at the change in lineage.<sup>275</sup> As a result, “after Kwaku Enu’s death a dispute arose. The people thought that because the old line of succession had been changed, people were dying so rapidly they would go back to the old state of things.”<sup>276</sup> *Effikessim* fought the *Oman*’s decision to re-establish the patrilineal system of lineage in vain. While the dispute continued, *Effikessim* appointed Ejo as caretaker of the matrilineal family stool. <sup>277</sup> J.R. Thompson, the *Tufubin* and ‘*Mayor*’ of the town, stepped forward to administer the patrilineal side of the Cape Coast stool, and once again became the most powerful man in the town.

Thompson and Ejo ruled for only two years, and then two rural claimants stepped forward as heirs to the matrilineal and patrilineal stools. John Aggrey made a claim to the patrilineal stool and Kwesi Atta to the matrilineal stool. *Tufubin* Coker later recounted that, “After the death of Kwaku Eno the country was split into two sections and one section went back to the male line of succession and elected Essien (John Aggrey) the other section went for Kwesi Atta of the family.”<sup>278</sup> Cobbah Biney of Ntun, a member of the matrilineal family, argued that there had rarely been patrilineal succession. What had been perceived as patrilineal, was in fact matrilineal, “after the destoolment of Kofi Amissah (Prince as *Omanbin*), the sword was offered to the late *Chief* Kofi Kuma (*Chief* Sackey’s Uncle) who in turn presented it to Kweku Atta, his nephew, who also was succeeded by his cousin Kweku Enu (Crentsil). Essien alias John Aggrey, a son of *Omanbin* Brupu, was the first to succeed after the restoration of the line of Princes.”<sup>279</sup>

## **XII. JOHN AGGREY (AKA ESSIEN) AND THE CHANGE IN SOCIAL RELATIONS**

John Aggrey was a protégé of the Wesleyan Mission. He promoted himself as the first “Christian *King* of Cape Coast; but he was quite illiterate and could only speak a few words of English.”<sup>280</sup> Many people in the town felt that the matrilineal *Amanbin* had been cursed with short reigns because of their lineage. Crowther suggests that, “Feeling was strong enough, to give one Essien or John Aggrey, a son of Burupu or Joe Aggrey, a sufficient following to obtain recognition as *Omanbene*.”<sup>281</sup> Meanwhile, “the opposing party supported Kwesi Atta of the Abradze family.”<sup>282</sup> The *Oman* were against Aggrey’s candidacy, but Aggrey had the support of “a large majority of the general inhabitants of Cape Coast and more especially from the companies or clubs which constitute the native defence of the district.”<sup>283</sup> The disunity between the *Oman* and the “general body of inhabitants especially as to the selection of a *King* .... resulted almost entirely in the extinction of the former as a body.”<sup>284</sup>

As Governor Pine explained, resistance to Aggrey came from only two of the *Oman*’s members. As late as 1867, the *Oman* had not regained its position. The *African Times* went as far as to say the *Oman* “*Chiefs* so called, at Cape Coast are under the *King*. They have not the least power over the people of Cape Coast: they are persons, properly speaking, such as patriachs of old to their own families; some of them are inheritors of their deceased uncles’ houses and other properties; if they possess any power at all, they have it only over their houses, but not politically.”<sup>285</sup> Presumably, there was also some opposition from *Effikessim* and the family of Kwesi Atta who sought their own separate representation.<sup>286</sup>

It was acknowledged later that the *Wirempe* had never recognised Aggrey (AKA Essien).<sup>287</sup> Before Aggrey’s enstoolment, the two *Oman Chiefs* withdrew their objections,<sup>288</sup> but later, at the enstoolment ceremony, the two *Chiefs* were conspicuous by their absence, which was purportedly due to illness.<sup>289</sup> Governor Pine described how during the ceremony, he left “more hastily perhaps than courteous hospitality would dictate, fearing that the motley crowd, by which he was followed, might in their joy mar the propriety of the proceedings.”<sup>290</sup> The *African Times*, like Pine hoped that Aggrey’s enstoolment would be the beginning of a period of cooperation between the British and the stool. The newspaper optimistically reported that, “the new king is friendly and speaks English and wishes to be on good terms with traders.”<sup>291</sup> But the newspaper remarked with some surprise, that although he promoted himself as a Christian King with education, he was surrounded by, “canoe men, carpenters and Fetish men as councillors they have advised him to institute courts and appoint native magistrates.”<sup>292</sup>

The matrilineal family also saw scope for problems at Aggrey’s enstoolment. They felt that Governor Pine’s support was an indication that Aggrey was a

government puppet. The patrilineal family, however, argued that the insinuation that Aggrey was appointed because of Pine's support was wrong. They retorted, "Aggrey was appointed by the local people and then Pine acknowledged him, by a salute of seven guns from the castle and a guard of honour composed of Her Majesty's 4th West India Regiment, who presented arms to him, a formality which had been observed from time immemorial." After this the Governor General of West Africa, Major Blackall, made a speech congratulating the new *Omanhin*.<sup>293</sup>

At an evening meeting of the Wesleyan Annual District Synod, which was held on the same day as the enstoolment, Aggrey addressed the gathering in Fante although Pine was in the Chair. Aggrey spoke of how he had been rejected as a ruler for twenty years because of his Christianity and was considered by many to be an enemy of the country. He described how he had set up the indigenous Wesleyan Mission with Joseph de Graft and John Sam in 1832. He had been good friends of these two and they had attended Bible-reading evenings together.<sup>294</sup> After years of being relegated to the periphery of local politics, Aggrey relished his new-found power.

Very quickly after his enstoolment, Aggrey's predisposition towards European culture began to manifest itself in his policy. He ordered, that gong gong be beaten, (a local proclamation), to announce that the market and shops would close on Sunday as a mark of his Christianity.<sup>295</sup> Aggrey also ordered new wall-paper for the palaver hall, which was said to have a national pattern on it accompanied by pictures of Queen Victoria, the Prince and the Princess of Wales.<sup>296</sup>

Aggrey's honeymoon period was brief. One month after his enstoolment, he sent a letter to Governor Pine outlining his proposed agenda,

*As a Christian, I have already beset myself to reform to some extent the common law of the country, but the laws and customs of the country cannot all be at once displaced and replaced without the effusion of blood ... Maclean, the Governor in a very peculiar imperceptible and unheard of manner wrestled from the hands of our King, Chiefs and head men their power to govern their own subjects .... A blow was thus firmly slowly and persistently struck and the supreme authority power and even influence of the Kings chiefs and headmen gave way to the powerful Governor Maclean ... I descended from the House of Kings and the founder of this town now known under the name of Cape Coast. ... Cape Coast in the eyes of the law is not British Territory.<sup>297</sup>*

Aggrey was suggesting that although Cape Coast had become increasingly Europeanised, it had never lost its jurisdiction in the eyes of stool law.<sup>298</sup> The question of whether the British wrestled power from the stool or whether it was conferred by the Fante, was contested. Some thirty years later, a Secretary for Native Affairs argued that, "Aggrey was wrong. President Maclean did not wrest the power from the native

chiefs. The natives, dissatisfied with their Chiefs' Courts, of their own accord transferred their judicial allegiance to the British Courts, with the result that the majority of native Courts fell into practical disuse except in respect of matters of too little importance to be dealt with in the British Courts."<sup>299</sup>

It is clear that the gradual demise in popularity of the indigenous-run courts was a single manifestation of a general change in social relations in many of the Fante towns. Within Cape Coast in particular, there was a continuation in the growth of European institutions such as the Church. This was not necessarily a measure of how the Europeans 'wrested' power from the local hierarchy, it was perhaps a reflection of the general popularity of what the new societies offered.

Although Aggrey sought to protect his stool from the encroachments of Europeanisation, his Christianity represented a form of compromise to European culture that has led many scholars to see his administration as the point at which Cape Coast became a tool of an educated, Europeanised elite. Aggrey's enstoolment has become seen as a socio-political watershed within the historiography. In his thesis on Cape Coast, Roger Gocking does not identify the separate lineages and their socio-political differences. Gocking perceives Aggrey's support of education, as an early manifestation of ongoing divisions between the *Omanbin*'s educated elite and the *Oman*.<sup>300</sup> Gocking suggests that "Aggrey surrounded himself with educated natives, and there was no place for the traditional chiefs."<sup>301</sup> This would seem to be in direct conflict with contemporary reports that described how, Aggrey, was surrounded by, "canoe men, carpenters and Fetish men."<sup>302</sup> Both accounts are partially accurate. The men that Gocking defines as 'educated' were also part of the indigenous hierarchy. Aggrey's *Okyiame* or advocate, Martin, was a graduate of the Cape Coast school and was also a *Supi*. There were probably several men who surrounded Aggrey who were 'educated', but could still be described as, 'canoe men, carpenters and Fetish men'. The idea that it was impossible to maintain intimate links with local politics and also be educated, is central to Gocking's thesis. This sets up a false opposition within Gocking's work between the 'educated' and the non-'educated'.

This premise led Gocking to suggest that the 'educated' elite sought to wrest power from the traditional hierarchy. Gocking identified the *African Times* as a forum for the elite's ideas.<sup>303</sup> Because Gocking places the aspirations of the elite and the traditional hierarchy in opposition, it is difficult to make sense of the *African Times*' acute scepticism toward Aggrey's followers. If there was an ideological opposition, and Aggrey had surrounded himself with 'educated men', as Gocking suggests, it would have made sense for the *African Times* to support that. Whereas the *Times* condemns the lack of sophistication of Aggrey's followers. Education is not an absolute, nor does it have to operate to the exclusion of other social commitments. Aggrey as a semi-educated, Christian *Omanbin*, was living proof of this.



Education is the factor that many scholars have cited as the major characteristic that distinguished the elite from the non-elite. The first generation of graduates of the Cape Coast school have, therefore, been perceived to be the first clearly defined elite group. These men began to come to the forefront of local politics in the 1850s. Perhaps this is why H. Merivale commented, that it was only from the 1850s onwards, that there had been a growing, "intermediate class - half caste and half civilised - men with a certain amount of English knowledge and ideas derived from the missionaries or elsewhere."<sup>304</sup> It was suggested that they seemed, "to exert an influence among these Africans by insisting on their anomalous state of dependence."<sup>305</sup>

Kimble argues that, "From this time onwards there was a definite 'Colonial Office attitude' towards educated Africans, which ill became a government whose declared object was to bring education to Africa."<sup>306</sup> What Kimble referred to was the British administration's deeply held scepticism towards Africans with European education. Such men were often seen as opportunists attempting to create a divide between the people and the British administration, and then using that division to their political and economic advantage.

The Colonial Office attitude to educated Africans carries over into the historiography. This has tended to simplify the complex relationships that educated people had with the coast. Kaplow, suggests that, "their education - the mere fact that could read, write, and speak English - set them apart from the rest of indigenous society and drew them closer to the European residents."<sup>307</sup> Kaplow continues, they "formed a small, insular community on the coast. Largely cut off from outside influences by the geographical situation, their lives had the flavour of provincialism and their amusements resembled those of contemporary, small-town Britain."<sup>308</sup> Debrunner regarded this sort of viewpoint as developing from "the stereo-typed opinion on the mission-educated Africans,"<sup>309</sup> which he characterised as a false view "that they were discontented and unprincipled natives, principally mulattoes and semi-educated blacks."<sup>310</sup>

Debrunner's characterisation of the stereotypical educated Fante is a conscious over-simplification. Although Kaplow's work suggests that it is possible to clearly delineate between the elite and the non-elite, it is far more complex to make such clear distinctions than it is often presented in the historiography. Even a superficial look at the roles of individuals can reveal this. Edward Barter, the seventeenth-century merchant, established an *Asafo* company and was an educated Christian. From the seventeenth century onwards, Christianity and European education played a part in indigenous life. To draw a line half way across the nineteenth century and argue from that time onward an educated elite developed, would, therefore, simplify a complex situation.

The incorporation of European education and religion in Cape Coast had been operating at many levels for many decades. The line between those who could be

called Europeanised and those who adhered to 'traditional' practices, had ceased to be clear a long time before Essien's reign. Some contemporary European observers, argued that the interweaving of cultural and sociological constituents from Europe and Africa was a phenomenon that had been gaining momentum since the Europeans first arrived on the coast. Europeans felt that this was most apparent in the number of progeny from inter-racial relationships. One European went as far as to remark that, "Cape Coast town has always been under the influence of half-caste traders."<sup>311</sup> A.B. Ellis speculated that he doubted, "if many Fantees could be found in Cape Coast who have not English blood in their veins to some degree."<sup>312</sup>

The gradual acceptance of certain European institutions and customs was most manifest in the social activities of the people of Cape Coast. The late 1850s and early 1860s saw the introduction of a variety of social clubs and friendly societies. There had not been an example of this sort of society since the introduction of the early lodges such as the Torridzonian Lodge or society started by Philip Quaake. Despite the attractions of the earlier societies, the fraternities either broke with the Grand Lodge or foundered. When the Grand Lodge records were reappraised in 1862, most of the early Lodges set up in colonies were struck off. Many of them had not made the obligatory cash return to the Grand Lodge, and some had rarely met. Among those struck off in 1862 were, the Torrisionian<sup>313</sup> or Torridzonian<sup>314</sup> Lodge No. 621, which had been set up at Cape Coast Castle in 1810; the Cape Coast Lodge<sup>315</sup> No.599, which had been established in 1833<sup>316</sup>, but made no returns<sup>317</sup>; the Freetown Lodge of Good Intent No. 721, founded in 1820; and the Gambia Lodge 867 which was *Consecrated* in 1851.<sup>318</sup>

The first Lodge to be set up by indigenous *Craftsmen*, was the Gold Coast Lodge No.773, founded in Cape Coast on 24th November 1858 and *Consecrated* the following April.<sup>319</sup> The early members came from both African and European communities, and it was the first mixed race Lodge on the Gold Coast.<sup>320</sup> Because only Masons can found other Lodges, the Gold Coast Lodge No 773 was the parent Lodge of all the other Lodges in British West Africa. It must be presumed that its founders were initiated in England. They included two 'mulatto' brothers R. Hutchison and T. Hutchison, and a handful of merchants and civil servants, A.B. McIntyre, C. Edwardes, C. Bartels and R. Clark.<sup>321</sup>

The first *Brethren* to be initiated, were mainly civil servants; Sam Bannerman, H. Ussher ( a future Governor) , Sam Rowe, (the Colonial Surgeon and another future Governor). There was also a selection of some of the most wealthy merchants in Cape Coast at the time, including; J.E. Sampson, and T.F.E. Jones.<sup>322</sup> In the first ten years after the *Consecration* of the Gold Coast Lodge, freemasonry spread very slowly among the indigenous community. The English Templars<sup>323</sup>, The American Templars<sup>324</sup>, The Christian Guilds, The Knights of Marshall<sup>325</sup>, The Oddfellows<sup>326</sup>, The Temperance Movement and a variety of clubs and societies, had less rigorous entry

requirements and were thus able to recruit members at a faster rate. The Freemasons maintained that, “the persons admitted to the lodge must be good and true men, free-born, no bastard, no bondsman, no woman, no immoral or scandalous men; but men of good report.”<sup>327</sup> If these stipulations did not exclude an individual it may have excluded their friends or family, or simply have offended their sensibilities.

The public image of Freemasonry on the Gold Coast is rarely written about by non-masons. When Freemasonry was written about in the West African press, the articles usually praised its history and the unrivalled loyalty that it inspired. Masons had a very high public profile in Cape Coast; they marched in the Empire Day parade; Freemasons' Hall was known to everyone in the town and Masons participated in social events and funerals. The membership of the Gold Coast Lodge No. 773, included some of the most well-known figures of the town who ran some of its most important institutions. The Gold Coast Lodge members also lived up to the altruistic maxims of freemasonry. It was through Lodge contributions that Christ Church was built in the centre of Cape Coast.<sup>328</sup> During the Asante invasion of 1863, R. Hutchison, (the Lodge's founding member), led his own self-financed force of Masons, against the Asante. He contracted malaria and died in the field.<sup>329</sup>

The feuding *Asafo*<sup>330</sup> had been losing members since the 1840s. The press implied that the hermetic society could become the *Asafo*'s respectable replacement. *The Three Wise Men Society* was one of a few hybrid societies, mid-way between a European-style hermetic society and an *Asafo* company.<sup>331</sup> *The Three Wise Men Society* began as a ‘rowdy dowdy’<sup>332</sup> society run by young men<sup>333</sup>. Under the influence of E.J. Jones, the society adopted hermetic and pseudo-religious symbols, and became the *Star of Peace Society*. They wore black as sinners, red for the blood of the lamb and white for the purity gained under guidance. At its peak, the society boasted 197 members.<sup>334</sup> The religious content of its meetings grew until it became a religious temperance society.

The Gold Coast Temperance Movement was partly started by *King Gharthey* of Winneba as a reaction to the drinking clubs that were very popular at the time. Fresh water was often in short supply during the early 1860s and was sometimes sold in the markets for more than gin or rum.<sup>335</sup> The Tiger Society was made up of young men who sought to take advantage of the relatively low price of alcohol, by consuming as much as possible. After only a few meetings, it was disbanded when two of its members (in a state of extreme intoxication) died, one by drowning and one from a fall.<sup>336</sup>

The Temperance movement was run by a family. Gharthey was the brother-in-law of Rev. Parker, one of the most influential members of the Temperance movement. Rev. Parker's half-brother, J.D. Ekem, was the Secretary of the society. Ekem had six daughters who had all married into prestigious families in Anomabu, Cape Coast and Winneba (the Brews, the Abadoo's, the Fergusons, the Insaidoos, the

Ammissahs and the Fynns).<sup>337</sup> These wealthy and influential people formed the backbone of the movement and their communities in the 1860s. The society established a hotel in Anomabu and it erected the first lamp posts on the Gold Coast.<sup>338</sup>

The Temperance movement was more tolerant and open than the comparatively aloof and insular Freemasons. Emotional accounts of the 'respectable members' fights against the 'accursed drink' were published in the West African press.<sup>339</sup> The Temperance movement also differed from the Masons in its acceptance of women members. Elizabeth Gharthey, the eldest of Gharthey's ten children, was one of its most prominent members.<sup>340</sup> King Gharthey and his daughter Elizabeth were both keen harmonium players. Their harmonium was carried to meetings on poles attached to their portable pulpit, they then took turns in playing and preaching.<sup>341</sup> After Gharthey's death in 1897, Elizabeth Gharthey was called to the Temperance Council.<sup>342</sup>

Four years prior to Gharthey's death, he had strangely joined the 'rival' Ancient Order of Foresters, *court* number 7423.<sup>343</sup> This had led to an unusual scene at Gharthey's funeral. The funeral procession included both the Temperance Movement and the Foresters, as well as his subordinate *Chiefs* and nobility in state dress. Each group represented a different facet of the Gharthey's life. Before Gharthey was laid to rest, the procession stopped in front of the Union Jack in the centre of Winneba, and a volley was fired as a sign of Gharthey's loyalty to the British. The complexity of Gharthey's affiliations shows how difficult a formal class analysis of individual Brethren can be. Gharthey was by profession a merchant<sup>344</sup> and a midwife (or healer)<sup>345</sup>; he supported some of the local political bodies with stool money; he led the temperance movement and he was a novice in the Foresters. Gharthey was, by birth an aristocrat, by profession middle class, and in terms of his political influence he was unrivalled. But because of Gharthey's lowly position in the Foresters, he may well have paid deference to many of his subjects who were more senior *brethren*.

Gharthey's affiliations to the worlds of politics and midwifery whilst simultaneously being a Chief and a *brother*, make a formal typology problematic.<sup>346</sup> Gharthey's ability to cross the cultural borders of Europe and Africa without feeling compromised, was a reflection of the ambient conditions on the coast at that time. After a century of access to European education, law and religion within Cape Coast, and an even longer history of inter-marriage between the two communities, many people along the coast had diverse cultural affiliations.<sup>347</sup>

### **XIII. THE ADMINISTRATION OF ESSIEN**

Aggrey, as an old boy of the Wesleyan mission, was one of the men the above accounts referred to. He sought, as did many of his contemporary *Amanbin*, (despite what the *African Times* reported<sup>348</sup>), to recruit his administrators from this group. In one of the earliest meetings of the Anomabu Temperance Society, 'Chief' Solomon had similarly argued "trade is wanted, our children must learn other trades, and when they become men they can be able to find their living, as education without trade or any kind of work will not do; so the work, the work, the work is wanted for our children."<sup>349</sup>

The merits of a Protestant work ethic were contrasted weekly in the press with the alleged indolence and debauchery of non-Christians. When 'King Quao Dade' of Akwapim died after twenty-five years on the throne, the *African Times* reported, "had he not been very often under the influence of liquor and of bad advisers, he would have been a good ruler." And they continued, "of course women and children were killed when the *King* was buried in his plantation village."<sup>350</sup> Aggrey, as a Christian with some European education, represented the complete antithesis of the Quao Dade approach. Aggrey and his peers pursued the promotion of education and sought to extinguish the practices of slavery and human sacrifice.

Following Aggrey's enstoolment, he openly refused to acknowledge the judicial basis for the British courts on the strength of the ambiguous terms of the Bond. Aggrey sought to establish a fully fledged and autonomous indigenous army for the security of the state.<sup>351</sup> This meant that from day one, Aggrey's administration was on a collision course with Governor Pine, who as a trained lawyer sought to gain political advantage through the courts. At first, Pine attempted to overlook their differences and agree to concentrate on what policies they shared as Christians. Pine wrote, "I welcomed to Government House the new King of Cape Coast. On that occasion we congratulated ourselves with having met with a Christian King and faithful ally; but only a few days had passed, when he showed symptoms of disaffection."<sup>352</sup>

These symptoms of disaffection began to manifest themselves as soon as Aggrey's 'native court' with its 'native magistrates' began to reside. Pine argued that the people did "not get justice in the native courts; he who pays the judge the most is sure to win the case."<sup>353</sup> Pine gave as an example, the *Omanbin* of Anomabu's court, which had closed after two months because of what he saw as blatant corruption.<sup>354</sup> The matrilineal *Omanbin*, Kwesi Atta, supported by the *Wirempe* and several disaffected *Ahin*, also convened his own courts, which Pine closed and then released all of the prisoners. Pine had taken advantage of this incident to publicly voice his objection to the indigenous court system, and to point out that he did not acknowledge Kwesi Atta as *Omanbin*.<sup>355</sup> But Aggrey went ahead and convened his own courts and appointed as his *Chief Magistrate* Joseph Martin, Captain of the No.7 *Asafo* company.<sup>356</sup> One of the first cases tried in Aggrey's court under Martin in early 1865, was to prove a test to the resolve of Aggrey and Pine.

George Blankson Wood was a 'mulatto' clerk employed by Charles Finlayson, a European advocate and attorney. At Aggrey's court he was "found guilty of the most aggravated and unprecedented contempt of court that it fell to the lot of the sitting magistrate (Joseph Martin) to order George Blankson Wood be committed for the offence."<sup>357</sup> George Blankson Wood, however, "proved himself to be so daring as to resist and withstand the constables in the execution of their duty."<sup>358</sup> Blankson Wood was charged with fetish practices,<sup>359</sup> but perhaps because of his knowledge as a clerk of a European attorney, he had refused to respect the authority of the court. Wood had refused to wait his turn and said, "before I wait I better be imprisoned."<sup>360</sup>

Pine was shocked when he heard about the case and wrote to Aggrey, "I never have and never will, while I have the honour to hold my position here acknowledge a court constituted as you describe or recognise its proceedings, or that of any other which is irresponsible and not amenable to appeal to the British Judicial Authorities....I hold George Blankson Wood to be a British subject"<sup>361</sup> Pine, as a trained lawyer, was also annoyed that the untrained Martin, "who arrogates himself the position of magistrate of this town,"<sup>362</sup> could imprison individuals without allowing them an appeal to his own court. Aggrey, somewhat stunned by Pine's reaction retorted, "Mr Joseph Martin Wood .... may be ignorant and lawless as far as the laws of England are concerned, but I am satisfied that he is not without a knowledge of the common law of the country which has given him birth, and that he is not inexperienced or unable to determine according to the dictates of equity and reason. Nay, he has knowledge of the laws, customs and rights of the people in this country necessary for the administration of justice." <sup>363</sup>

Pine cancelled and annulled the trial, "and called for a re-examination and re-establishment of Aggrey's court on a basis as the Governor would determine."<sup>364</sup> Pine ordered Colonel Conran, the head of the Cape Coast garrison, to have a hundred men prepared in case Aggrey resisted the order. Conran replied to this letter, I "have to express my gratification that your tone and style towards *King Aggrey* happily confirmed the position I myself had taken towards him." Conran added, "I do not consider the King to be a bad man, but think he is very badly advised by a set of part educated councillors, who resemble Chartists more than anything else."<sup>365</sup> Conran from his subsequent career appears to have been somewhat of a bully,<sup>366</sup> and perhaps because Governor Pine did not want to be associated with his bullying tactics, he withdrew the contents of his first letter, arguing that, "the letter in question though signed by me, was written and presented to me for signature without my perusal, on account of extreme illness."<sup>367</sup>

Aggrey's initial response to these incursions on his power, was equally uncompromising. Aggrey tried unsuccessfully to raise support from the interior.<sup>368</sup> John Coleman De Graft, a cousin of the *Omanhin*, informed Pine that Aggrey was trying to gather support from other Fante towns.<sup>369</sup> On hearing this, Conran wrote,

"I will not only have 100 men in readiness to turn out in an hour but will have the entire force under arms including guns and gunners in twenty minutes from this."<sup>370</sup> Aggrey immediately sent a dispatch to Conran, that said we wish "to express our astonishment and sorrow at what happened quite unawares that the soldiers turned out with arms and canons loaded against us."<sup>371</sup> Aggrey realised that he had no real choice but to fully co-operate with the British. Within a few weeks, "the King of Winneba and over a hundred other inhabitants of Cape Coast and others of Fanteland presented a petition to the Governor expressing their solidarity for the British Government."<sup>372</sup>

In perhaps the most inspired piece of lateral thinking made by a nineteenth century Cape Coast *Omanbin*, Aggrey set a precedent by sending a deputation of his supporters to England to petition his point. He thus began a political tradition of sending deputations to England to petition the British government directly; this form of protest was to continue as the most formidable means of spearheading dissent until Independence. Pine had decided to limit the power of Aggrey's court by claiming the sole right to give lawyers licences. This meant that Aggrey had to employ qualified lawyers to prosecute at his own court. Aggrey "sent Martin to England to represent the hardship his people had to bear in having to employ lawyers."<sup>373</sup>

In September 1865, *Chief* Joseph Martin, appeared before a special committee of the House of Commons and argued that the action of the government in issuing licences to only trained attorneys, caused disaffection among the *Chiefs*, who felt it would lead to a decline in the number of cases being tried at their courts.<sup>374</sup> Martin also pointed out to the West Africa Committee, that in his view, the people of Cape Coast would soon be able to govern themselves according to Fante law.<sup>375</sup> Martin struck a chord with the West Africa Committee, who earlier in 1865 had recommended the training of the indigenous population for government.<sup>376</sup> But the Gold Coast administration, argued that Aggrey had, "the mad desire to govern, not only Cape Coast itself but the whole Gold Coast,"<sup>377</sup> and that it would be unwise to even consider ever relinquishing "the government of this coast into such incapable and dangerous hands."<sup>378</sup>

Aggrey went as far as to claim, "jurisdiction upon ground actually within a few yards of the forts,"<sup>379</sup> arguing that Britain had not acquired the land of Cape Coast and thus could not exercise any jurisdiction over it.<sup>380</sup> During Conran's peace negotiations with the Asante, Aggrey asked to be consulted at every stage, to which Conran responded, "give Aggrey my compliments and tell him to mind his own business and not to interfere with mine."<sup>381</sup> Conran made every effort to snub Aggrey's authority. After the death of *Omanbin* Kofi Affey of Anomabu, Conran suggested administering an oath of allegiance with the new *King*, an honour which had never been extended to Aggrey. At the death of Kofi Affey, Conran made sure that the Anomabu castle guns were fired seven times as a mark of honour. This was

doubly insulting to Aggrey, because he had been refused the support of the Anomabu people in his attempts to make a representation against Pine's administration a few months earlier.<sup>382</sup>

Early in 1866, almost a year after the original incident, Aggrey had still not paid back the fine levied against him after the case of Wood vs. Martin.<sup>383</sup> Perhaps in an endeavour to calm the increasingly tense situation, Governor Pine allegedly paid the fine levied against Aggrey from the government coffers.<sup>384</sup> In contrast to Pine's appeasing attitude, Conran had consistently acted against Aggrey who he regarded as a catalyst for indigenous belligerence. Conran continued to demonstrate his disdain of Aggrey by acknowledging Kwesi Atta, (the matrilineal *Omanbin*), as the bona fide *King* of Cape Coast.<sup>385</sup>

Aggrey retaliated against Conran in the only way he could. There had been an agreement ratified by the British and Cape Coast Fante that no negotiations should be initiated with the Asante by either Aggrey or the British administration. Aggrey would not have found out that Conran had clandestinely broken this agreement, if Conran had been discreet in his negotiations. Conran arrested Kweku Gaynin, an Asante refugee who had lived in Cape Coast since 1863.<sup>386</sup> It was only after this event, that Aggrey discovered that the *Asantehene* had asked for Gaynin as a stipulation for peace.<sup>387</sup> Aggrey despatched one of his envoys, Joseph Martin, to question the Governor on the matter. The Governor retorted "does *King* Aggrey say I am under him, who is he?"<sup>388</sup> Pine had plainly broken the basic terms of the agreement, yet felt no obligation to even explain himself. Pine's reaction revealed the inequity of the relationship between the Fante and the British. The military strength available to Conran at a moments notice, was ultimately the dictating factor in the newly developing relationship.

Kimble suggests that the events that were to bring the general ill-feeling to a head followed the yam festival of 1866. Tension between Aggrey and the British administration waned temporarily, but in September, during the annual yam festival,<sup>389</sup> trouble flared again. At most yam festivals, a large amount of alcohol was consumed by the young men, and so there were inevitable outbreaks of violence. On this particular occasion, the annual yam custom began peacefully, but as the ceremony came to a close, it developed into a riot.<sup>390</sup> Conran was said to have then led his armed soldiers into the town.<sup>391</sup> The next morning, it was found that two people had been killed, sixty wounded and the town had been ransacked and looted.<sup>392</sup> Several of the West India Regiment were also hurt.<sup>393</sup> It was suggested by some in the town, that Conran had been present when a young man named Saniez had been murdered.<sup>394</sup>

The *African Times* reported the riot as having started after an argument between two soldiers of the 4th West India Regiment and some of the local people; one soldier was severely beaten, other soldiers heard of this and a scuffle broke out.



Under the command of Major Ivey, the soldiers ran amok in the streets of Cape Coast killing, beating and stealing. John Saniez was allegedly stabbed in his bed, dragged through the window along the ground for thirty yards, and was then killed with the blows of rifle butts and stabs of bayonets. The other death occurred when, Kwamina Crentsill, a gold-taker working under H. Barnes, (a local merchant) was returning home at about 7p.m. He was attacked and badly beaten by a small group of troops led by Governor Conran, who allegedly instructed that he should be tied with his own undercloth and dragged to prison. Crentsill later died from his wounds.<sup>395</sup>

Conran, testified under oath that he had spent most of the evening with the Acting Governor Doorly, and he rebuked Aggrey for complaining about the riot.<sup>396</sup> Later, Headley, the soldier who was charged with the murder of Saniez, had his sentence commuted from execution to life imprisonment.<sup>397</sup> Conran argued that, "It is very difficult to manage soldiers excited while residing in town amongst the inhabitants."<sup>398</sup> Later that month, Saniez's body was paraded through Cape Coast in compliance with local law but to the annoyance of Conran.<sup>399</sup>

In October 1865, after his attempts to rally forces from the interior, Aggrey was officially warned against the use of force anywhere on the coast. Kimble describes how, "only a year later, he took troops to Anomabu and handcuffed three Chiefs, to ensure payment of a fine by their King."<sup>400</sup> Conran reacted by releasing several of Aggrey's prisoners before he returned to Cape Coast. Aggrey was then informed that his court would be tolerated by the British provided it dealt only with land disputes, petty debts and minor offences. Aggrey's determination was not in the least bit tempered. Towards the end of the year, he threatened the Governor with similar scenes of rebellion as had been recently experienced in Jamaica.<sup>401</sup> A crowd of around 2500 of the townspeople, met at the *Ahenfie* to offer support.<sup>402</sup> Aggrey challenged Conran,

*I presume your object is .... to incite me and my people to enact more of those fearful things that took place in Jamaica that I have heard of .... however much you may wish to have me and my people under martial law, you may never have that pleasure...if some tangible satisfaction is not accorded to me and those whose interest I am bound to protect, it will be time enough for me to adopt those measures which will ensure to me and my people something unlike the slavery you are now endeavouring to place us in.*<sup>403</sup>

After this second petition, Conran summoned Aggrey to the castle, but Aggrey refused to go stating that he was the *King*, and chose not to recognise Conran.<sup>404</sup> Conran then sent a despatch that read, "Be it therefore known and proclaimed that the said John Aggrey is forever deprived of his stool and dignity, and that the office and title of King of Cape Coast no longer exists, and is abolished from this day forth' (the 21st March 1867)."<sup>405</sup> Casely-Hayford later suggested that there were precedents

for the destoolment of an indigenous ruler by the British. He suggested that by the 1860s, "the practice of refusing to recognise native Kings as Kings by an authority practically deriving its existence from such Kings" was "nothing new."<sup>406</sup> Nevertheless, the patrilineal families of Cape Coast were extremely shocked.

Although the *African Times* implied that Aggrey was deserted by his friends,<sup>407</sup> there was widespread outrage at the political implications of Conran's actions. Many of the educated and senior townspeople gathered together and appointed Mr Bannerman and Thomas Hughes as Aggrey's attorneys<sup>408</sup> Bannerman had been a personal enemy of Conran since Bannerman's testimony against him in the Saniez case. Conran disliked most indigenous lawyers, who he saw as being confidence-tricksters, because even in the lean years of the 1860s, according to Conran, lawyers were still earning up to £1200 per annum on the coast.<sup>409</sup> Conran, however, reserved the title of 'the most dangerous attorney of all' for Bannerman.<sup>410</sup> Even with Bannerman and Hughes by his side, Aggrey was tried and committed on several charges of cruelty.<sup>411</sup> The people then organised a petition that was signed by many of the senior family members.<sup>412</sup> The petition stated that "175 cases of importance were settled in his court without a single appeal to the English courts." It complained of what the people perceived as the rising tide of injustice, especially in the Saniez case.<sup>413</sup>

After coming to terms with the situation, Aggrey accepted a pension of 100 shillings a year for life, for his co-operation and silence.<sup>414</sup> Thus, on December 8th 1867, at 11 am, Aggrey was deported to Sierra Leone.<sup>415</sup> The matrilineal families saw this as a victory for Kwesi Atta, and subsequently suggested that Aggrey was never recognised as *Omanbin*; it was his attempt to be falsely recognised as *Omanbin* that had led to his exile.<sup>416</sup> But the editor of the *African Times* suggested that, "the removal of Aggrey from his stool was none other than the opportunity so much needed for raising Cape Coast to the position of a colony."<sup>417</sup> The British saw the deportation as the result of Aggrey, "falling into the hands of unwise Councillors, who if guided by patriotic intentions were certainly incapable of clothing them in diplomatic language."<sup>418</sup> Aggrey himself later came to believe that this was the case, and when two years later he petitioned for his return, the Governor wrote, "Aggrey himself now sees that he was the dupe and tool of some semi-civilised *mulatto* adventurers who for their own ends encouraged and made use of him to oppose the Government - these men are now thoroughly discredited and no longer capable of doing any mischief."<sup>419</sup> The Governor went further, "...as a subsidised chief or head man, he would be a material aid to the local government in dealing with the natives."<sup>420</sup> When Aggrey returned from Sierra Leone he was met by 1500 *Asafu*, and carried through the town on a palanquin.<sup>421</sup>

After sixty-five years, the Aggrey dynasty was effectively finished as the hub of Cape Coast stool power. Although it is unclear whether there were two or three

patrilineal *Amanhin* of the Aggrey dynasty, a consistent political approach ran throughout their reigns. The years of Aggrey rule had consolidated Cape Coast as the epicentre of Fante political feeling and the capital of mercantile brokerage. The growth of the church and other social institutions had given Cape Coast a 'sophisticated' ambience that produced a generation that were hungry for European education and self-determination. The children of Aggrey's educated *Oman* were to consolidate the Aggrey legacy by pushing the Gold Coast into the forefront of West African politics.

Notes: Chapter II. Law and Jurisdiction: The Aggrey Dynasty.

- <sup>1</sup> Birtwhistle, A. *Thomas Birch Freeman* London 1950 P.20.
- <sup>2</sup> *House of Commons Papers and Accounts Report From the Committee on African Forts 1816*, P.100.
- <sup>3</sup> *House of Commons Papers and Accounts Report From the Committee on African Forts*. Appendix March 10 1814. P.45.
- <sup>4</sup> Porter, R. "The Cape Coast Conflict of 1803: A Crisis in Relations Between the African and European Communities." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana* Vol. XI 1970. P.56.
- <sup>5</sup> Metcalfe G.E. *Great Britain and Ghana, Documents of Ghana History 1807-1957, Ghana* 1964., P.30.
- <sup>6</sup> Porter, R. "The Cape Coast Conflict of 1803: A Crisis in Relations Between the African and European Communities." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana* Vol. XI 1970. PP.30-31. For more information on this period see, E.C. Martin, *The British West Africa Settlements, 1750-1821*. London, 1927.
- <sup>7</sup> *House of Commons Papers and Accounts Report From the Committee on African Forts 1816* P.100.
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, P.165.
- <sup>9</sup> Meredith, H. *An Account of the Gold Coast of Africa*, London. 1812. P.96.
- <sup>10</sup> Sanders, J.R. *The Political Development of the Fante in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: A Study of West African Merchant Society*. Unpublished PhD. thesis. Northwestern. 1980.
- <sup>11</sup> Astley, T, *A New General Collection of Voyages and Travels*, London, 1968, Vol. II P.401.
- <sup>12</sup> Davies, K.G. *The Royal African Company*. London, 1957. P.283.
- <sup>13</sup> GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/364 or Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P.16
- <sup>14</sup> Wirempe are the Ankobia or Kojo Nkum or Kojo's slaves which became part of Ntin No. 3. See, J.P. Brown, GNA ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- <sup>15</sup> GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM. 11/629 & 1759. *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry*
- <sup>16</sup> GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -Kofi Abu of the Giase ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- <sup>17</sup> Alexander J.E. *Narrative of a Voyage of Observation Among the Colonies of Western Africa*, London, 1837. P. 168.
- <sup>18</sup> GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs -ADM. 11/629 & 1759. *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry* This is Crowther's report which has become the basis for most chronologies of Cape Coast Amanhin such as Henige's work *The Chronology of Oral Tradition*, Oxford. 1974.
- <sup>19</sup> *House of Commons Papers and Accounts Report From the Committee on African Forts* Appendix March 10 1814. P.45
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>21</sup> *African Times*, April 24 1865. P.123.
- <sup>22</sup> GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs Kofi Abu of the Giase ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- <sup>23</sup> Unless of course they were brothers, which they were not.
- <sup>24</sup> *Royal Gold Coast Gazette*, February 18 1823.
- <sup>25</sup> Essien added that he had as, "a youth, in days now long gone by, witnessed and assisted at human sacrifices. "African Times April 24 1865 P.123.
- <sup>26</sup> *African Times*, April 24 1865. P.123 & Alexander J.E. *Narrative of a Voyage of Observation Among the Colonies of Western Africa*, London. 1837. P. 168.
- <sup>27</sup> Allen, W *Narrative of The Expedition Sent by Her majesties Government to the River Niger in 1814*, 2 Vols. 1848. London. P.155.
- <sup>28</sup> Alexander J.E. *Narrative of a Voyage of Observation Among the Colonies of Western Africa*, London, 1837. PP. 167-8.
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, PP. 168-9.
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, P. 169.
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, PP.169-170.

- 32 J.P. Brown GNA ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry.*
- 33 Kofi Abu of the Gyase GNA ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry.*
- 34 Atta Kofi was of the same family as Aboatchi (Ntoto). See, J.P. Brown GNA ADM 11/1765. *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry.*
- 35 Tufuhin Coker GNA ADM. 11/1765. *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry.*
- 36 Kofi Abu of the Gyase GNA ADM. 11/1765. *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry.*
- 37 Tufuhin Coker GNA ADM. 11/1765. *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry.*
- 38 Kofi Abu of the Gyase GNA ADM. 11/1765. *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry.*
- 39 J.P. Brown GNA ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry.*
- 40 Meredith, H. *An Account of the Gold Coast of Africa, London, 1812.* P.96.
- 41 Crooks, J.J. *Records Relating to Gold Coast Settlements. Dublin, 1923.* P.42.
- 42 Meredith, H. *An Account of the Gold Coast of Africa, London, 1812.* P.96.
- 43 GNA ADM. 11/1765. *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry.*
- 44 Porter, R. "The Cape Coast Conflict of 1803: A Crisis in Relations Between the African and European Communities." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana, Vol. XI. 1970.* P.27.
- 45 Meredith, H. *An Account of the Gold Coast of Africa, London, 1812* P.98.
- 46 Porter, R. "The Cape Coast Conflict of 1803: A Crisis in Relations Between the African and European Communities." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana Vol. XI 1970.* P.47.
- 47 Ibid., P.44.
- 48 John Swanzy was the brother of James the famous merchant. Swanzy, H. "A Trading Family in the Nineteenth Century Gold Coast". *Transactions of the Gold Coast and Togoland Historical Society, Vol. 2 Pt. 2. 1956.* P.92.
- 49 Porter, R. "The Cape Coast Conflict of 1803: A Crisis in Relations Between the African and European Communities." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana, Vol. XI. 1970.* P.50.
- 50 Meredith, H. *An Account of the Gold Coast of Africa, London, 1812.* P. 99-103.
- 51 Porter, R. "The Cape Coast Conflict of 1803: A Crisis in Relations Between the African and European Communities." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana, Vol. XI. 1970.* P.51.
- 52 Meredith, H. *An Account of the Gold Coast of Africa, London, 1812.* P.99-103.
- 53 Porter, R. "The Cape Coast Conflict of 1803: A Crisis in Relations Between the African and European Communities." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana, Vol. XI. 1970.* P.51.
- 54 Meredith, H. *An Account of the Gold Coast of Africa, London, 1812.* PP.99-103.
- 55 Porter, R. "The Cape Coast Conflict of 1803: A Crisis in Relations Between the African and European Communities." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana, Vol. XI. 1970.* P.51.
- 56 Meredith, H. *An Account of the Gold Coast of Africa, London, 1812.* PP.99-103.
- 57 Porter, R. "The Cape Coast Conflict of 1803: A Crisis in Relations Between the African and European Communities." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana, Vol. XI. 1970.* P.52.
- 58 Crooks, J.J. *Records Relating to Gold Coast Settlements. Dublin, 1923.* P.99.
- 59 Ibid., P.100
- 60 Porter, R. "The Cape Coast Conflict of 1803: A Crisis in Relations Between the African and European Communities." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana, Vol. XI. 1970.* P.53.
- 61 Ibid.
- 62 Ibid., P.56
- 63 Ibid.
- 64 Claridge, W. *A History of The Gold Coast and Ashanti, Vol. I. London, 1915.* P.231.
- 65 Porter, R. "The Cape Coast Conflict of 1803: A Crisis in Relations Between the African and European Communities." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana, Vol. XI 1970.* P. 56.
- 66 Ibid., P.58.
- 67 Ibid.
- 68 Ibid., P.60.
- 69 Meredith, H. *An Account of the Gold Coast of Africa, London, 1812.* PP.99-103.
- 70 Porter, R. "The Cape Coast Conflict of 1803: A Crisis in Relations Between the African and European Communities." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana. Vol. XI. 1970.* P.27.
- 71 Swanzy, H. "A Trading Family in the Nineteenth Century Gold Coast". *Transactions of the Gold Coast and Togoland Historical Society Vol. 2 Pt. 2 1956.* P.92.

- 72 Porter, R. "The Cape Coast Conflict of 1803: A Crisis in Relations Between the African and European Communities." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vol. XI. 1970. P.66. It was to become almost a pattern, that when the town fell into ruin, there was some civil unrest which worked to the advantage of the British. One evening in 1805, Governor Torrane described how the long term enemies, the Benti and the Nkum, "again renewed their old quarrel. The disturbance became violent...I did however separate them, till morning when they went to the beach to fight and, notwithstanding every effort I made, I could not separate them. I fired one or two shots over them; I next fired so near as to splash them with the water but nothing short of firing at them could have dispersed them. It was therefore constrained to let them follow their inclinations. During this period their bullets flew in great abundance about the castle...Night put an end to their fight with the loss of a few men on each side. Ibid., P.31.
- 73 Meredith, H. *An Account of the Gold Coast of Africa*, London, 1812. P.96.
- 74 McCarthy, M. *Social Change and Growth of British Power in the Gold Coast*. University Press of America, Lanham, 1983. P.15.
- 75 Ibid.
- 76 Crooks, J.J. *Records Relating to Gold Coast Settlements*. Dublin, 1923. P.104
- 77 Claridge, W. *A History of The Gold Coast and Ashanti*, Vol. I. London, 1915. P.255.
- 78 McCarthy, M. *Social Change and Growth of British Power in the Gold Coast*. University Press of America, Lanham, 1983. P.72.
- 79 Claridge, W. *A History of The Gold Coast and Ashanti*, Vol. I London 1915. P.255.
- 80 Swanzy H. "A Trading Family in the Nineteenth Century Gold Coast", *Transactions of the Gold Coast and Togoland Historical Society*, Vol. 2. Pt. 2 .1956. PP.94-95.
- 81 See 1842 Report and Appendix in CO96/9 Evidence of R.R. Madden (9023) 7/9/1846.
- 82 Crooks, J.J. *Records Relating to Gold Coast Settlements*. Dublin, 1923. P.106
- 83 Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P.130.
- 84 Ibid., P. 121.
- 85 Cited in Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P.132.
- 86 Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P.132.
- 87 Metcalfe G.E. *Great Britain and Ghana, Documents of Ghana History 1807-1957*. Ghana, 1964. P.47.
- 88 Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P.133
- 89 Treasury 70/1606/2.
- 90 Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P.137.
- 91 Treasury 70/1606/2.
- 92 Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P.137.
- 93 McCarthy, M. *Social Change and Growth of British Power in the Gold Coast*. University Press of America, Lanham, 1983. P.86
- 94 Ibid., P.89
- 95 Ibid., P.90
- 96 Ibid.
- 97 Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P.139
- 98 Ibid., P.138.
- 99 Cited in Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P.140, from the *Royal Gold Coast Gazette and Sierra Leone Advertiser*. 12 July 1823.
- 100 Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London, 1969. P.141.
- 101 Ibid., P.137.
- 102 McCarthy, M. *Social Change and Growth of British Power in the Gold Coast*. University Press of America, Lanham, 1983 P 86.
- 103 Claridge, W. *A History of The Gold Coast and Ashanti*, Vol. I London 1915. PP.373-4.
- 104 Claridge, W. *A History of The Gold Coast and Ashanti*, Vol. I London 1915. P.379.
- 105 McCarthy, M. *Social Change and Growth of British Power in the Gold Coast*. University Press of America, Lanham, 1983. P.87
- 106 See Map above.
- 107 Porter, R. *The Cape Coast Conflict of 1803: A Crisis in Relations Between the African and European Communities*. Trans. P.27.

- 108 *Royal Gold Coast Gazette* November 29 1823.
- 109 *Royal Gold Coast Gazette* March 25 1823.
- 110 *The Gold Coast Chronicle* September 1895 P.2.
- 111 This is a personal assertion that may be disproved.
- 112 Dupuis J. *Journal Of A Residence In Ashantee*. London 1824 P.XXX.
- 113 *Ibid.*, P.XXXI.
- 114 *Ibid.*
- 115 *Ibid.*
- 116 *Ibid.*, P.XXXIII.
- 117 *Ibid.*, P.114.
- 118 *Ibid.*, P.118.
- 119 *Ibid.*
- 120 *African Times*, April 24 1865. P.123.
- 121 *Royal Gold Coast Gazette* March 18 1823
- 122 Cited in Swanzy H. "A Trading Family in the Nineteenth Century Gold Coast", *Transactions of the Gold Coast and Togoland Historical Society*, Vol. 2, Pt. 2, 1956. P.101.
- 123 This spelling of Fante as Fanti is Swanzy's. See: Swanzy H. "A Trading Family in the Nineteenth Century Gold Coast", *Transactions of the Gold Coast and Togoland Historical Society*, Vol. 2, Pt. 2, 1956. P.101.
- 124 Swanzy H. "A Trading Family in the Nineteenth Century Gold Coast", *Transactions of the Gold Coast and Togoland Historical Society* Vol. 2 Pt. 2 1956 P.102.
- 125 CO 98/1A.
- 126 Sarbah, John Mensah. *Fanti National Constitution*. London, 1968. P.220
- 127 *Ibid.*, P.221.
- 128 *Gold Coast Echo* 24 April 1886.
- 129 Sarbah, John Mensah. *Fanti National Constitution*. London, 1968. P.80
- 130 *Ibid.*, P.82
- 131 *Ibid.*
- 132 *Ibid.*,
- 133 *Gold Coast Echo*, 24 April 1886.
- 134 *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers Concerning the Gold Coast and Surrounding Districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971 P.145.
- 135 Casely-Hayford, Joseph Ephraim. *Ethiopia Unbound; Studies in Race Emancipation*. London, 1969. First published London, 1911. P.71.
- 136 Cruickshank, B. *Eighteen Years on The Gold Coast of Africa*, 2 Vols. London 1853. Vol. 1 P.183 Ref. to Quaake to Rev. T. Thompson.
- 137 Boyle, J. A. *Practical Medico-historical Account of The Western Coast of Africa*, London, 1831. PP.152-3.
- 138 *Ibid.*, P.153
- 139 *Ibid.*, PP.156-157
- 140 Holman, J. *A Voyage Around the World Vol. Travels in Madeira*. London, 1840. P.205.
- 141 *Ibid.*
- 142 Allen, W. *Narrative of The Expedition Sent by Her Majesties Government to the River Niger in 1814*, 2 Vols. 1848, London. P.155.
- 143 The Lancastrian plan was a popular monitoring system that had been invented by Joseph Lancaster some years earlier.
- 144 Alexander, J.E. *Narrative of a Voyage of Observation Among the Colonies of Western Africa*, London, 1837. P. 152.
- 145 Pascoe, C.F. *Two-Hundred Years of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel*, London, 1901. P.258.
- 146 *Ibid.*
- 147 Bowdich observed some Muslims who had "been a long time in Ashantee pour forth a little of anything before drinking. It may be remarked, that all the worshippers of the fetish do this and also set apart some of their victuals before they eat." See, Bowdich, T.E. *Mission from Cape Coast to Ashante*, London, 1819. P.414. In some respects, the Muslims had made religious compromises. Dupuis remarked of a certain group, "Although Moslems, many of these people, in common with the heathen Africans, were addicted to the of spirituous

liquors." See, Dupuis, J. *Journal Of A Residence In Ashantee*. London, 1824. P.94-9. Fynn argues that, "The usefulness of the Moslems, however, was not confined to matters of prayer. The Asante believed that the Islamic religion was a kind of magic which could help them in their wars. Thus Osei Bonsu was said to have "never engaged in any warlike enterprise without their society" See, Fynn, J.K. *Asante and its Neighbours 1700-1807*, Evanston, 1971. P.139. But their contribution went even beyond that, as Dupuis observed, they "enjoyed rank at court, or were invested with administrative powers, entitling them even to a voice in the senate." See, Dupuis, J. *Journal Of A Residence In Ashantee*. London, 1824 P.95. Bowdich commented during his visit on the "the moorish chiefs and dignitaries" by whom the Asantehene was surrounded. Their influence was "powerful and not only from their rank but their repute." See, Bowdich, T.E. *Mission from Cape Coast to Ashante*, London, 1819. P.53. The Muslims operated one of several metaphysical bodyguards to the Asantehene, and constantly tested visitors' motives. Bowdich described how his party was, "conducted some way without the town to an assembly of the Moorish caboceers and dignitaries, who exert every device against us. A chapter was read from the Koran, and we were ordered to swear by that book that we had no rogue's palaver, and that we had no poison in the King's liquor." See, Bowdich, T.E. *Mission from Cape Coast to Ashante*. London, 1819, P.56. When Bowdich refused, "The King's linguist mediated, and asked us if we would only strike that book (Koran) three times, and then declare as much, because the Moors said, that book would kill" them if they lied. Bowdich, T.E. *Mission from Cape Coast to Ashante*, London, 1819. P.56. They also dispensed a metaphysical insurance by writing charms to do things, such as, prevent fires, which they sold at what was reputed to "an enormous price (a little piece of paper about four inches square with a sentence of the Koran written on it, sometimes selling for £3 or £4)." See, Methodist Missionary Society Papers, Box 1842-3, File 18842/11, February. 14th 1842. Letter from R. Brooking in Kumase. Brooking remarked, "The Ashantis had shrewdness enough to observe that they pretended to sell charms to protect the property of others but could not protect themselves." See, Methodist Missionary Society, Papers Box 1842-3, File 18842/11, February. 14th 1842. Letter from R. Brooking in Kumase. By the late 1830s, the ephemeracy of the Asante flirtation with Islam had begun to become apparent. The discovery of a Muslim *Chief's* involvement in a conspiracy, had precipitated a marked change in their general fortune. See, Methodist Missionary Society Papers, Box 1842-3, File 18842/11., February 14th 1842. Letter from R. Brooking in Kumase. During an 1842 visit to Kumase, Rev. Brooking speculated that, "by the blessing of God, we may anticipate a rich harvest. The signs of the times are certainly favourable. The Mahomedans have lost their influence with the people." See, Methodist Missionary Society Papers, Box 1842-3, File 18842/11., February. 14th 1842. Letter from R. Brooking in Kumase.

148 Clarke, P. *West Africa and Christianity*, London 1986 P.42.

149 Methodist Missionary Society Papers Box Freeman P.51.

150 Birtwhistle, A. *Thomas Birch Freeman* London 1950 P.14.

151 Ibid., P.47.

152 Ibid., P.48.

153 Ibid., P.51.

154 Ibid., P.54.

155 Ibid., P.102.

156 Claridge, W *A History of The Gold Coast and Ashanti*, Vol.I, London, 1915. P.467.

157 Ibid., P.468.

158 Ibid., P.473.

159 Ibid., PP 466-473

160 Fisk, H. *Religion, Disease and Healing in Ghana*, Munich, 1989. P.144.

161 Ibid., PP 144-145

162 Sarpong, P. *Ghana in Retrospect*. Accra, 1974. P.41

163 Casely-Hayford, J.E. *Gold Coast Native Institutions*, London,1970. Originally London, 1903. PP.101-2.

164 Casely-Hayford uses the word '*fetish*' as many have, to describe a psychological state, i.e.; the trance induced in '*Suman aba nu du*'; (See, earlier, J.E. Casely-Hayford, *Gold Coast Native Institutions* P 107) but its greater usage is reference to objects of religious significance. The word has wide and vague parameters, Dupuis suggests that the word is "a corrupt relic



of the Portuguese, introduced to the country, probably, by the original explorers of the nation.... The religious laws of particular sects or casts, (for they are probably as various in Africa as elsewhere) are described to Europeans, at the present day, under the denomination Fetiche. The talismanic charms and sentences from the Koran, worn about the body, have the same appellation in common." See, Dupuis, J. *Journal Of A Residence In Ashantee*. London, 1824. P.107. Dupuis then went further to suggest that "generally whatever is held as sacred, including trees, stones, rivers or houses, whether ancient or of recent dedication to any invisible spirit or matter, are comprehended within that signification." See, Dupuis, J. *Journal Of A Residence In Ashantee*. London, 1824. P.107. Its practices, though difficult to encapsulate in any description, *fetish* are generally qualities, states and objects that are designed to engender fear, awe and respect.

One of the satellite phenomena of what came to be known as 'fetish', i.e. sacrifice, was as a means of social control. Public executions and sacrifices could engender fear and respect and at the same time eliminate those who were seen as being undesirable in society. Freeman described how on entering Kumase, "I saw what was calculated to harrow up the strongest and most painful feelings,- the royal executioners, bearing the blood stained stools on which hundreds and perhaps thousands, of human victims have been sacrificed by human decapitation, and also the large death-drum, which is beaten at the moment when the fatal knife severs the head from the body." See, Methodist Missionary Society Papers, Box Freeman, P. 47. 1840-44. Bowdich's arrival in Kumase was greeted in a similar fashion; he described how, on arriving at Kumase he was made to pass "under a fetish, or sacrifice of a dead sheep, wrapped up in red silk, and suspended between two lofty poles." See, Bowdich, T.E. *Mission from Cape Coast to Ashante*, London, 1819. P.31. Bowdich was also made aware of the utility of what at first seemed purely barbaric. He explained how during the annual yam festival, "about a hundred persons, mostly culprits .... are generally sacrificed, in different quarters of the town." See, Bowdich, T.E. *Mission from Cape Coast to Ashante*, London, 1819. P.279. Dupuis described something similar, "My entry into Coomassy they affirmed, (the Muslims) was signaled by the sacrifice of a number of human victims; slaves and malefactors, who had been reserved by the king and his chiefs for many days previous." See, Dupuis, J. *Journal Of A Residence In Ashantee*. London, 1824. P.100. Dupuis was almost immediately aware that the Asantehene was attempting to leave him in a state of awe, through fear. He also realised that the killings were not politically pointless. He described how the "victims for the altars" were not indiscriminately chosen; they were called delinquents, having been found guilty of speaking disrespectfully of the king and his government, harbouring seditious plots, violating the civil laws or "witchcraft or sorcery". See, Dupuis J. *Journal Of A Residence In Ashantee*. London, 1824, P.240. On another occasion Dupuis observed how, victims had comprised Gaman prisoners of war or else were criminals or disobedient slaves. See, Dupuis, J. *Journal Of A Residence In Ashantee*. London 1824. P241. <sup>165</sup> Casely-Hayford J.E. *Gold Coast Native Institutions*. London .1970. Originally London, 1903. P.103.

<sup>166</sup> The *Akumfo* generally invested his practice with a certain amount of secrecy. It was said, that, the *Akumfo*, "pretends to hold communion, not in a spiritual sense, but in a matter-of-fact way, with the spirits of the dead, and he will often bring you back a message from a dead friend, if desired. When a priest is called in from a distance to attend a case, he will generally tell the friends of the patient much about the family history, and indicate that a deceased relative is troubling the patient for some act of disobedience. The deceased relative must accordingly be propitiated. How does he come to know the history of the family to which he is a stranger?" See, Casely-Hayford, J.E. *Gold Coast Native Institutions* London,1970. Originally London, 1903. P 106 Casely-Hayford suggests that it was a universally acknowledged scam, "There is a Guild of Priests in the country to which all Priests belong, whose members are absolutely faithful to one another. Upon the arrival of the Priest in the town where his attendance is required, he immediately goes to meet his brother Priest, or some student of the Priest, if he is out of town, who gives him all the information he requires, and which he subsequently puts to such effective use. The people understand the deception, but never expose it; for the Priest's office is a sacred one, and they philosophically look to the spiritual side of things and not to the letter." See, Casely-Hayford, J.E. *Gold Coast Native Institutions*. London,1970. Originally London, 1903 P 106-7. Surprisingly

Sarpong does not acknowledge or perceive this 'scam'. See, Sarpong, P. *Ghana in Retrospect*. Accra, 1974. The *Guild of Priests* was a powerful though insular and arcane organisation. "A Priest's training begins early in his life. He is generally sent away to another district to a seminary, where he serves out his apprenticeship, which may cover a period of three years. During that time he learns the use of herbs and their application to the cure of diseases, at which he becomes very proficient in the course of after practice." In a society dominated by metaphysical explanations to physical phenomena, there are no purely physiological diseases, and so the treatment of illness is inextricably linked with religious faith. When the *Okumfo* "returns from his apprenticeship to his own town, he generally gives a show, which takes place when his 'company' folk hold a 'company' dance. He, on this occasion, performs various feats in clever dancing to the beating of his favourite airs on the *tom tom*, and he generally succeeds in working himself into a frenzy of excitement, when the 'fetish' is said to have come upon him - 'Suman aba nu du.'" See, Casely-Hayford, J.E. *Gold Coast Native Institutions*. London, 1970. Originally London, 1903. P.107. This example of 'fetish' is a state in which the unconscious takes over from the conscious, opening up a door into the mystical world of omens and predictions that are communicated from the metaphysical plane.

The only other way to gain full access to the spirits is through death itself. The moment of death is the ultimate moment when one passes through doorway to the other sphere, and so an important set of customs have to be adhered to before and after the moment of death to show adequate respect. "When a person is about to draw his last breath water is given him to drink, 'signifying either that he feels thirsty and wants to slake it, or that he is about to take a long journey and needs water if he is to succeed.' After this the corpse is covered in a kente cloth. The body is then smeared with lime 'to render it soft and tender in order to facilitate the positioning during the laying in state and the encasement.' Rum sometimes mixed with lime or cement, is poured down its throat to act as a preservative. Notification of the death is sent to near-by relatives and the chief of the town, and the corpses is washed after it has been shaven and the finger-nails clipped." See, Nimako, S *The Christian and Funerals*, Cape Coast, 1954. PP. 65-66.

Although there is great respect for the dead relation, there is also great fear of ghosts, and so the closest relations are usually isolated until the moment of burial. "The widow or widower sits at the feet of the dead spouse until burial. He must not handle money, must speak to no one, and must not answer back when spoken to, till the day of the final libation ceremony. Men remain in this state widowhood till the libation, but women continue up to twelve weeks. In this state they are considered unclean and full of ill-luck and are badly and mercilessly treated. They sleep by the bed on which the deceased spouse was laid in state. They wear leaves of a sharp smelling plant called 'eme' on their body. It is believed that ghosts hate the scent of this plant and may not come where it is." See, Nimako, S *The Christian and Funerals*, Cape Coast, 1954 PP.69-70. There was also merciless treatment of women if they were married to a member of an *Asafo* company. After the funeral had begun, the company members "seize hold of the widow, tie a rope round her wrist and drag her to the company post. Here she is mocked scolded and buffeted. She is asked to confess any infidelity on her part or swear by fetish that she has always been faithful to her husband. Empty tins and filthy rags may be hung about her body." See, Nimako, S *The Christian and Funerals*, Cape Coast, 1954 P. 70. Perhaps the most dramatic and dangerous section of the funeral occurs at its climax "At midnight on the day preceding the Libation day the widow or widower has to 'carry fire'. A big fire is prepared and lit in a broken pot and put on his or her head. He or she must carry this fire into the sea or nearest river followed by two widows or widowers who shout, 'No one must meet this!' after him or her" to ward off ghosts. See, Nimako, S *The Christian and Funerals*, Cape Coast, 1954. P.70. These customs are performed primarily to reduce the chance of bad luck or ghosts seeping back from the other sphere, during the process of a dead relation passing on from this sphere to the next. The *Okumfo* is, therefore, a formidable figure because he can open the doorway into the other sphere at will, and then act as a medium and a control for the power and information passed on by the deceased.

<sup>167</sup> Birtwhistle, A. *Thomas Birch Freeman* London 1950 P.106.

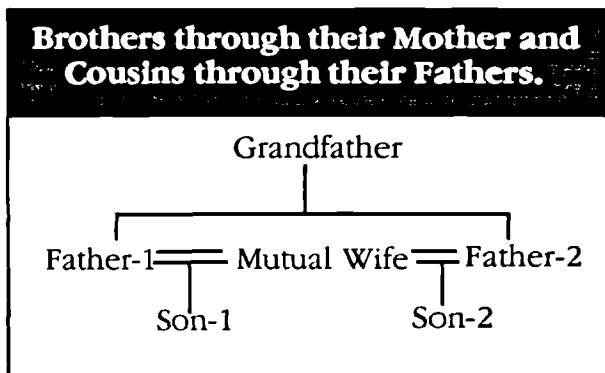
<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, P.107.

<sup>169</sup> Muslims had always based their polygamy on Koran texts anyway.

- 170 Birtwhistle, A. *Thomas Birch Freeman* London 1950 P.104.
- 171 About two miles east of Cape Coast. Also spelt Mori.
- 172 Crooks, J.J. Records *Relating to Gold Coast Settlements. Dublin* 1923. P.122.
- 173 Sarbah, John Mensah. *Fanti National Constitution*. London, 1968. P.78.
- 174 Ibid.
- 175 Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*. Oxford. 1963. P.193.
- 176 Sarbah, John Mensah. *Fanti National Constitution*. London, 1968 PP.78-9.
- 177 Danquah, J.B. "Historical Significance of the Bond of 1844." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*. Vol. III Pt. 1 1957. P.8.
- 178 Ibid., P.5.
- 179 Crooks, J.J. Records *Relating to Gold Coast Settlements. Dublin* 1923. P.280.
- 180 Claridge, W. *A History of The Gold Coast and Ashanti*, Vol. I, London, 1915. P.453.
- 181 Crooks, J.J. Records *Relating to Gold Coast Settlements. Dublin* 1923. P.280.
- 182 Ibid., P.296.
- 183 Claridge, W *A History of The Gold Coast and Ashanti*, Vol. I, London, 1915. P.453.
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- 197 Ibid.
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- 203 *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.145.
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- 207 Ibid., P.164.
- 208 Allegedly a slow punishment which could cripple the victim. *British Parliamentary papers, West Africa General*, 1812-74, Shannon/Ireland, 1971. P.264.
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- 232 Tufuhin Coker GNA ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
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- 236 Ibid.
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- 240 The words of Aikosua Mary of Effikessim, GNA, ADM.11/1765.
- 241 GNA ADM 11/629 & 1759 *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry*.
- 242 J.P. Brown, GNA, ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- 243 Ibid.
- 244 Godfrey Egbert Hooper Captain of No. 6 Company, GNA ADM. 11/1/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- 245 GNA, ADM. 11/629 & 1759, *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry*.
- 246 *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.147.
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- 248 Ephson, I. *Gold Coast Celebrities*, Accra, 1969. Vol. I, see entry, Chief James Robert Thompson.
- 249 Who was an uncle of *Obin* Sackey who was later to be an interregnum *Omanbin*. See, *Tufubin* Coker, GNA, ADM. 11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- 250 Tufuhin Coker, GNA, ADM 11 1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- 251 Ephson, I *Gold Coast Celebrities*, Accra, 1969, Vol. I., see entry, Chief James Robert Thompson
- 252 GNA, ADM 11 629 & 1759, *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry*.
- 253 Ibid.
- 254 Tufuhin Coker, GNA, ADM. 11 1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.

- 255 GNA, ADM. 11/629 & 1759, *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry*.  
 256 J.P. Brown, GNA, ADM. 11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.  
 257 Ibid.  
 258 Tufuhin Coker, GNA, ADM. 11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.  
 259 Ibid.  
 260 J.P. Brown, GNA, ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.  
 261 Kofi Abu of the Gyase, GNA, ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.  
 262 J.P. Brown, GNA, ADM. 11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.  
 263 GNA ADM. 11/629 & 1759 *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry*  
 264 Ibid.  
 265 Ibid.  
 266 *Gold Coast Echo*, 24 April 1886.  
 267 *Gold Coast Echo*, 24 April 1886.  
 268 *Gold Coast Aborigines*, 18 March 1899.  
 269 *Gold Coast Echo*, 24 April 1886.  
 270 Kofi Sackey, GNA, ADM. 11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.  
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 272 Tufuhin Coker, GNA, ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.  
 and J.P. Brown GNA, ADM.11/1/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.  
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- 275 GNA, ADM. 11/629 & 1759, *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry*.  
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 277 The words of Aikosua Mary of Effikessim, GNA, ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.  
 278 Tufuhin Coker, GNA, ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.  
 279 The use of 'Prince as Omanhin' is meant to denote patrilineage. *The Eastern Star and Akuapem Chronicle*, 4-11, October 1919. P.4.  
 280 Claridge, W. *A History of The Gold Coast and Ashanti*, Vol.I, London, 1915. P.539.  
 281 GNA, ADM.11/629 & 1759, *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry*.  
 282 Ibid.  
 283 CO96 67.  
 284 CO96/67 176. 9 February 1865. Pine to Cardwell.  
 285 *African Times*, June 22 1867, P.139.  
 286 Which I shall deal with in the next chapter.  
 287 Tufuhin Coker GNA, ADM.11 1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.  
 288 CO96 67, 10 February 1865. Pine to Cardwell.  
 289 CO96 67, March 8th 1865, 228 Pine to Cardwell.  
 290 CO96 67, March 8th 1865, 231-2 Pine to Cardwell.  
 291 *African Times*, June 23 1864. P 153  
 292 *African Times*, April 24 1865. P 122  
 293 *African Times*, May 23 1867. P.126.  
 294 *African Times*, April 24 1865. P.123.

- 295 CO 96/68. 12 September 1865. Conran to Cardwell,
- 296 CO 96/68. 1865.
- 297 CO96/67, 16th March 1865. Aggrey to Governor.
- 298 When *Omanbin* Nana Mbra III and his contemporary *Oman* sat down to write a constitution for Cape Coast in 1924, they referred Aggrey's letter. The constitution subsequently reads, "from the signing of the Bond of 1844 to the Accession of Aggrey V in 1865, the people kept gradually imbibing English manners and customs, and resorted more to the British Courts of Justice than their own Native Tribunals. Even when *Omanbene* Aggrey V was being installed he was clothed in a Robe, was sworn on the Bible, drawn in a carriage in the procession round the Town, and Offices were created bearing English names such as those of Judge, Treasurer, Secretary, Sheriff etc." Constitution of Cape Coast, written for *Omanbin* Mbra III and his contemporary Chiefs, GNA, ADM.11/1759.
- 299 *A Report of a Commission of Enquiry Under the Commissions of Enquiry Ordinance 1893, Into the Relationship Between the Stools of Abra, of Domtnase and of Kwaman, Part 1*, P.11.
- 300 Gocking, R. *The Historic Akoto: A Social History of Cape Coast Ghana 1843-1948*. Stanford, 1981. PP.82-86.
- 301 *Ibid.*, P.114.
- 302 *African Times*, April 24 1865. P.122.
- 303 Gocking's grounds for this assertion are that the, "educated natives were almost the paper's sole subscribers and contributors". See, Gocking, R. *The Historic Akoto: A Social History of Cape Coast Ghana 1843-1948*. Stanford, 1981. P.96. Whereas, it may simply have been that contributors required some education before they could consider writing a newspaper article.
- 304 CO 96/31, Minute of H. Merivale, February 1855.
- 305 *Ibid.*
- 306 Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*. Oxford, 1963. P.90.
- 307 Kaplow, S. *African Merchants of the Nineteenth Century Gold Coast*. Michigan, 1971. P.153.
- 308 *Ibid.*, P.158.
- 309 Debrunner, H. *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, Accra, 1967. P.121.
- 310 Cited in Debrunner, H. *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, Accra, 1967. P.121.
- 311 CO 96/31, Minute of H. Merivale, February 1855.
- 312 Ellis, A. *A History of the Gold Coast of West Africa*. London 1893 P.12.
- 313 Tachie Menson, A.B. *The History of Freemasonry in the Gold Coast*, P.1. Some of the work in the next few pages is further developed in "Politics, Families and Freemasonry in the Colonial Gold Coast" Casely-Hayford, A. L. and Rathbone, R. Ed., Peel, J. *Peoples and Empires in Africa*, London, 1992.
- 314 Lane, John *Masonic Records 1717-1894*. London, 1895. P.242.
- 315 Lane, John *Masonic Records 1717-1894*. London, 1895. P.268. Calls this the Lodge of St John.
- 316 Tachie Menson, A.B. *The History of Freemasonry in the Gold Coast*. P.1.
- 317 Lane, John *Masonic Records 1717-1894*. 1895, P 268.
- 318 *Golden Jubilee District Grand Lodge of Nigeria. Rt. Hon Earl of Scarborough. A Souvenir Booklet to Commemorate the Golden Jubilee of District Grand Lodge of Nigeria. 1913-1963*. P.14.
- 319 Tachie Menson, A.B. *The History of Freemasonry in the Gold Coast*. P.2.
- 320 See, *Golden Jubilee District Grand Lodge of Nigeria. Rt. Hon Earl of Scarborough. A Souvenir Booklet to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of District Grand Lodge of Nigeria. 1913-1963* P 15, where the fact that the Lodge is mixed is noted as being exceptional in the context of a general West African history of Freemasonry. Although Freemasonry claims not to discriminate on the basis of religion or race, 'mixed' Lodges are, even today, the exception rather than the rule. In the USA, with its tens of thousands of Lodges, there is only one racially integrated Lodge. See, Martin Short, *Inside The Brotherhood*, London, 1989, P.352.
- 321 Tachie Menson, A B. *The History of Freemasonry in the Gold Coast*. P.2. The breakdown of this group into European and African was done using Colonial Office Lists and Hutchison's *Pen Pictures of Modern West Africans*, (which is the only history that contains specific information about masons and their families, as it was written by a prominent Free-

mason) Because the idea of what an African or European is, is fluid, I cannot be certain that the whole list is accurate.

322 Tachie Menson, A.B. *The History of Freemasonry in the Gold Coast*. P.2.

323 A society that affiliated itself to the Church of England.

324 An originally American society that affiliated itself to the Church.

325 A society that affiliated itself to the Catholic Church.

326 Two secret societies, firstly, the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows, and secondly, the United Order of Oddfellows. See, Anon. *Independent Order of Oddfellows a History*, 1879.

327 *The Freemason*, 12 June 1869.

328 C.F. Hutchison, *Pen Pictures of Modern Africans*, London, 1930. P.110.

329 Ibid.

330 The indigenous military companies.

331 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 18 August 1899.

332 I think 'rowdy dowdy' means drinking and gambling in the style made famous by the Tiger society (see next paragraph).

333 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 18 August 1899.

334 Ibid.

335 *African Times*, 23 November 1863.

336 *African Times*, 23 December 1862.

337 *Gold Coast Leader*, 1 August 1903.

338 *African Times*, 23 March 1863.

339 *African Times*, 23 December 1862.

340 *Gold Coast Leader*, 5 September 1903.

341 *Gold Coast Leader*, 5 September 1903. The employment of women orators had its precedent in the *Asafo* movement where there was a history of strong Fante military women.

342 *Gold Coast Leader*, 12 September 1903.

343 *Gold Coast Methodist Times*, 31 August, 1897.

344 Ray Dummett, "African Merchants of the Gold Coast, 1860-1905. Dynamics of Indigenous Entrepreneurship." in *Corporate Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 25, No. 4, October 1983.

345 *Gold Coast Methodist Times*, 31 August 1897. His influenza cure was also famous.

346 Gharthey also crossed the boundary of Cohen's Weberian categories of 'Modern' and 'Primitive' See Cohen, A. *Two-Dimensional Man*, London, 1974. P.1. This problematic shows one of the strengths of Gramsci's work on hegemony. Gramsci argues that a class maintains its dominance not simply through the organisation of force, but because it is able to go beyond its narrow, business interests, exert a moral and intellectual leadership, and make compromises with a variety of social allies. The variety of social allegiances dynamic for West Africans at this period are best accommodated by Gramsci's definition of hegemonic control. Gramsci places the *civil society* as a central influence on events and this is an essential element to the success of his model. See, Bocoock, Robert. *Hegemony*, London, 1986.

347 There was an inevitable defensive reaction from some of the European community on the coast who wanted to quell any attempt by the indigenous population to dominate the few purely European institutions that existed. The *African Times* expressed disappointment that the proposed Philanthropic Society of Cape Coast, had met with opposition from 'white men generally.' of whom they accused of thinking, that "many of the members composing the society in question are but half educated and semi-civilised." See, *African Times*, 23 January 1865. P.85. Some of the Europeans reacted, by trying several times to start an 'Anti-Nigger Club' in Accra, which was to be set up to foster European sport such as cricket, quoits and billiards to the exclusion of the indigenous population. See, *African Times* 23 January 1866 P.72 Aggrey's approach to government brought this debate out into the open.

348 See above in the account of Aggrey's enstoolment

349 *African Times*, 23 March 1863. P.100

350 *African Times* 23 January 1867. P.81.

351 Agbodeka, F. "The Fanti Confederacy." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Africa*. Vol. 7. 1965. P.86.

352 *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.357.

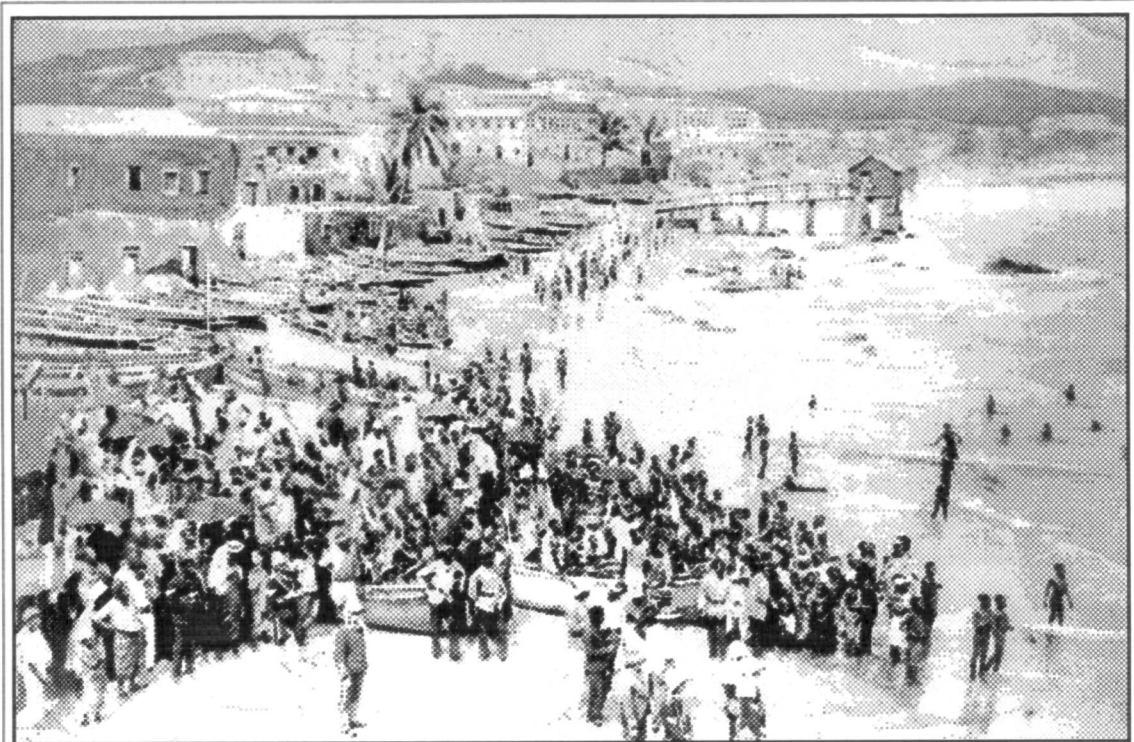
353 *African Times*, 23 April 1866 P.107.

- 354 Ibid.
- 355 Ibid., P.108,
- 356 *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.630
- 357 CO96/67 Aggrey to Pine. March 1865. 332-4.
- 358 Ibid.
- 359 *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971., P.357.
- 360 CO96/67, 8 March 1865, Joseph Fynn to Pine.
- 361 CO96/67, 14 March 1865, Pine to Aggrey.
- 362 *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.358.
- 363 CO96/67, March 1865, 332-4. Aggrey to Pine.
- 364 Ephson. I, *Gold Coast Celebrities*, Accra, 1969, Vol. I. Aggrey (Essien).
- 365 *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P. 375. Conran to Cardwell, 23 October 1865.
- 366 The contemporary press reported the event as if there had been some long-term problem, but what exactly that was, is unknown.
- 367 *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P. 367.
- 368 Ibid., PP.370-1.
- 369 CO 96/67. 29th April 1865.
- 370 CO 96/68. April 1865.
- 371 CO 96/68. April 1865.
- 372 Ephson. I, *Gold Coast Celebrities*, Accra, 1969, Vol. I. Aggrey (Essien).
- 373 *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971 P. 375. Conran to Cardwell, 23 October.
- 374 Constitution of Cape Coast, written for Omanhin Mbra III and his contemporary Chiefs. GNA, ADM.11/1759.
- 375 CO 96/68. Conran to Cardwell, 24 November 1865.
- 376 Resolutions of the Select Committee, 26 June 1865. Cited in Metcalfe *Great Britain and Ghana, Documents of Ghana History, 1807-1957*, Ghana,1964. PP.311-312. For further information, see Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*, Oxford,1963. PP.209-212.
- 377 CO96/74. Conran to Blackall, 31 December 1866.
- 378 Ibid.
- 379 Casely-Hayford, J.E. *Gold Coast Native Institutions*. London,1970. Originally London, 1903. P.162.
- 380 Agbodeka. F. "The Fanti Confederacy." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Africa*. Vol. 7. 1965. PP.86-87.
- 381 CO 96/68. Conran to Cardwell, 24 November 1865.
- 382 CO 96/68. Conran to Cardwell, 6 November 1865.
- 383 CO 96/68. Conran to Cardwell, 11 December 1865.
- 384 *African Times*, 23 February 1866. P.83.
- 385 *African Times*, 23 March 1866. P.96.
- 386 *African Times*, 23 August 1866. P.16.
- 387 Ibid., P.19.
- 388 *African Times*, 23 June 1866, P.130.
- 389 A ceremony when all the companies met under their own flags and enjoyed festivities.
- 390 *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.372.
- 391 CO 96/68. Conran to Cardwell, 25 October 1865.
- 392 *African Times*, 23 October 1866, P. 40.
- 393 *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.377.
- 394 *African Times*, 23 February 1867.
- 395 *African Times*, 23 December 1867, P.67. This is related by Charles Bannerman who was head of the jury in the Saniez case injuries.



- 396 *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.387.
- 397 Ibid.
- 398 CO 96/68. Conran to Cardwell, 11 September.
- 399 Ibid.
- 400 Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*, Oxford, 1963. PP.216 -217.
- 401 The collapse of the Jamaican plantation system. together with other factors including: unemployment, heavy taxation, and droughts, produced a crisis in 1865.
- 402 CO96/74
- 403 Cited in Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*, Oxford, 1963. P.217. Also see, Agbodeka F. "The Fanti Confederacy." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Africa*. Vol. 7. 1965. P.88.
- 404 Agbodeka F. "The Fanti Confederacy." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Africa*. Vol. 7. 1965. P.88. Also see, Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*, Oxford, 1963. P.218.
- 405 Wilson, Horton. *Origins of West African Nationalism*, London. P.179.
- 406 Casely-Hayford J.E. *Gold Coast Native Institutions*. London .1970. Originally London, 1903. P.162.
- 407 *African Times*, 23 May 1866 P.121.
- 408 *African Times*, 23 November 1866, P. 51.
- 409 CO96/68. Conran, October 1865.
- 410 CO96/68. Conran to Cardwell, 23 October 1865.
- 411 *African Times*, 23 May 1866. P.121.
- 412 *African Times*, 23 October 1866. P.39.
- 413 *African Times*, 23 February 1867. P.91.
- 414 *African Times*, 23 April 1867. P.117.
- 415 *African Times*, 23 January 1867. P.81.
- 416 The words of Aikosua Mary of Effikessim, GNA, ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*. Aikosua Mary, who was alive at the time, argued that, "Essien tried to make himself Omanhene and that was exiled for this."
- 417 *African Times*, 22 June 1867, P.145.
- 418 GNA, ADM.11/629 & 1759, *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry*.
- 419 CO 96/79, 25 January 1869.
- 420 CO 96/79, 25 January 1869.
- 421 Agbodeka F. "The Fanti Confederacy." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Africa*. Vol. 7. 1965. P.107.

**CHAPTER III**  
**FROM PROTECTORATE TO COLONY**  
**KWESI ATTA TO KOJO MBRA**  
**1865-1900**



Cape Coast Landing Beach. December 1873  
(Source: Casely-Hayford Archive).

## **I. KWESI ATTA**

During the last three decades of the nineteenth century, Cape Coast rose to its political and economic peak. For three decades, the families of the Cape Coast *Oman* dominated coastal politics, education and religion. The Aggrey dynasty was dead, but it had provided the conditions that enabled the families of the Cape Coast *Oman*, to assume a position of political brokerage between the British and other coastal communities. The Europeanisation of education, politics and the law during the years of the Aggrey *Amanbin*, had given certain families in Cape Coast the necessary skills to operate as emissaries for the Europeans while securing the terms and administration of the newly developing political agenda for themselves.

Over the three or four generations after *Berempong* Kojo's death, the houses that had constituted his family, became generally recognised as separate institutions, each of which came to control smaller houses themselves. Though most of the families that controlled Cape Coast were in some way descended from *Berempong* Kojo, successive stool disputes had left them divided and isolated. As a result, many of the political and economic advances made over the period, were dissipated among the smaller families rather than being centralised in a united stool.

The traditional position of *Okyiame* became less important, as families began to train their own lawyers, who were increasingly perceived as autonomous professionals and not as appendages to a stool. After Aggrey's exile, the stool was left divided, as were the Fante. The confused and troubled relationship between the Fante and Asante continued. All of this was set against the backdrop of a juridical tangle that was a by-product of British and Dutch ambitions on the coast.<sup>1</sup> Those who could move comfortably between the divided groups, were able to dominate the means and contents of interaction. As a result, this became the era of the middleman, or as s/he has been increasingly called, the broker.<sup>2</sup>

The patrilineal family of the Aggrey *Amanbin* and the *Nkum*, maintained that Aggrey was still *Omanbin* even in exile. It became increasingly accepted, however that Kwesi Atta, who *Effikessim* had recognised as *Omanbin* for at least three years, was effectively filling the constitutional space that had previously been filled by John Aggrey (Essien). By the spring of 1867, Kwesi Atta had gained a large enough following, to secure the mandate of the Governor. The Governor expressed his disappointment that Aggrey persisted in his opposition to the point where his deportation became necessary. But after a year of uncertainty, it was time to accept a new *Omanbin*.

The *African Times* reported that as the Chief Magistrate began the ceremony of swearing in the new *Omanbin*, "all of the respectable part of the audience left."<sup>3</sup> The *Times* lamented that the 'decent' people of Cape Coast were left without a leader, "we are now left as orphan children."<sup>4</sup> The Christians and Aggrey supporters drew up a petition that complained at the "unfortunate consummation in the nomination of a staunch *fetish* idolater to be the headman or representative of the native inhabitants of Cape Coast."<sup>5</sup>

Although there were continual requests for a Christian *Omanbin*, Governor Ussher recognised that the town was split irrevocably and that a Christian *Omanbin* would only antagonise the non-Christian families. The split inevitably led to differing interpretations of events that surrounded the enstoolment of Kwesi Atta. *Tufubin* Coker recounted some years later that, “after the deportation of Essien the two stools were united into one” and Kwesi Atta sat on both. Coker suggested that the majority had ‘always’ recognised him.<sup>6</sup> But this account is weakened by Coker’s later admission that the government had refused to acknowledge Kwesi Atta.<sup>7</sup> Others contended that when “Essien (John Aggrey) was sent to Sierra Leone no one was placed on the stool of Egyr Ansa ..... the Government recognised Kwesi Atta.”<sup>8</sup> Despite this debate within the oral history, there is documentary evidence that Kwesi Atta was acknowledged by the British administration.

Within months of Atta being recognised as *Omanbin*, he began to do things which caused the Governor to question his suitability. In September of 1867, he robbed four local traders from Denkyera. Kwesi Atta was taken to court and ordered to pay eighteen days expenses to the four men.<sup>9</sup>

The month before Kwesi Atta was recognised as *Omanbin*, in early 1867, the British and Dutch signed a historic agreement that was to come into force in January 1868.<sup>10</sup> The British assumed jurisdiction over the formerly Dutch territory east of the Sweet river, while the Dutch were to control the formerly British territories to the west. The news of this agreement infuriated the Fante, who had not been consulted at any stage.<sup>11</sup> It also alarmed the rulers of the western districts because they knew the Dutch were the traditional allies of the Asante, and they expected their states would soon be overrun.<sup>12</sup> The recognition of Kwesi Atta as *Omanbin* by the British shortly after the signing of this agreement, seems to suggest that they saw him as a likely ally. Agbodeka went as far as to suggest that they saw his “duties were to be confined to passing on information from the Colonial Government to the people.”<sup>13</sup> Kwesi Atta had a different idea of his status. As Adu Boahen comments, “It seems clear that the southern states were not prepared to see their newly won independence from Asante being encroached upon by any other power, African or European.”<sup>14</sup>

Essien had tried throughout his reign to unite the Fante against the British. Ironically, it was the British and Dutch agreement to an interchange of jurisdiction, which was to achieve what Essien never could. The growing unity and confidence among the Fante, became a considerable concern to the government. The British administration had foreseen a very different outcome to the interchange of forts. Conran had argued for some time, that not only would interchange make the administration of the coast more efficient, it would also get rid of some of the increasingly ‘refractory’ towns, such as Appollonia.<sup>15</sup> This was a mistake; although the policy was designed to be divisive, it only served to create greater unity among the Fante. During negotiations between the British and the Dutch, the coastal area

became increasingly hostile towards the British. The government not only ignored these developments, it saw the unpopular policy of interchange as the answer to the growing belligerence, hence Agbodeka's analysis that if, "the interchange was first mooted in 1865 as a financial arrangement, it was finally adopted in 1868 largely as a means of abating the effects of the African protest movement."<sup>16</sup>

In January 1868, as the terms of the agreement became law, the Fante were forced to unite to resist the imposition of a territorial treaty in which they had no say. The Fante decided to confederate independently of the British against the Asante. They met at Mankessim where they formed a council, (the Mankessim Council), which was later to develop into the Fante Confederation.<sup>17</sup> Sarbah identified their main ambition as promoting "friendly intercourse between all the kings and chiefs of Fanti, and to unite them for offensive and defensive purposes against their common enemy."<sup>18</sup>

The Fante had lost confidence in the ability of the British to resist the Asante, and in the effectiveness of Aggrey's belligerence, they had seen the possibility of administering their own country. The momentum of anti-colonial activity had been maintained by the more vocal sections of the local community, who had complained frequently about maladministration.<sup>19</sup> As Kimble discusses in detail, the 1865 Select Committee had concluded that expansion of territory or assumption of government by the British in this area, were inexpedient, and a complete withdrawal was considered.<sup>20</sup> Governor Ussher observed in 1868 that, "A small class of discontented and unprincipled natives, principally mulattos and semi-educated blacks (who appear to be an evil inseparable from all negro communities), is active in its endeavours to persuade the ignorant, impressionable and childlike Fantees, that the time has come to govern themselves and to throw off our rule, retaining us here as advisers only. They cunningly and wilfully [mis]represent the Parliamentary Resolutions of 1865."<sup>21</sup>

Those Ussher described as, 'unprincipled natives' were the hardened campaigners from Aggrey's *Oman*, who had been educated as children by Rev. Philip Quaque and Joseph de Graft. Ussher exclaimed that they were, "bold enough to reject and deny our right of interference in peace and war, in other words, they throw off our allegiance!"<sup>22</sup> Over several months, Ussher fought a war of words against what he called, 'self-interested mulattos'. Agbodeka concluded that, the "real reason for discrediting the elite of the coast was that the coast officials, probably under merchant influence, were anxious to convince a reluctant British public and an over-cautious colonial office not to return the Gold Coast to self-government."<sup>23</sup>

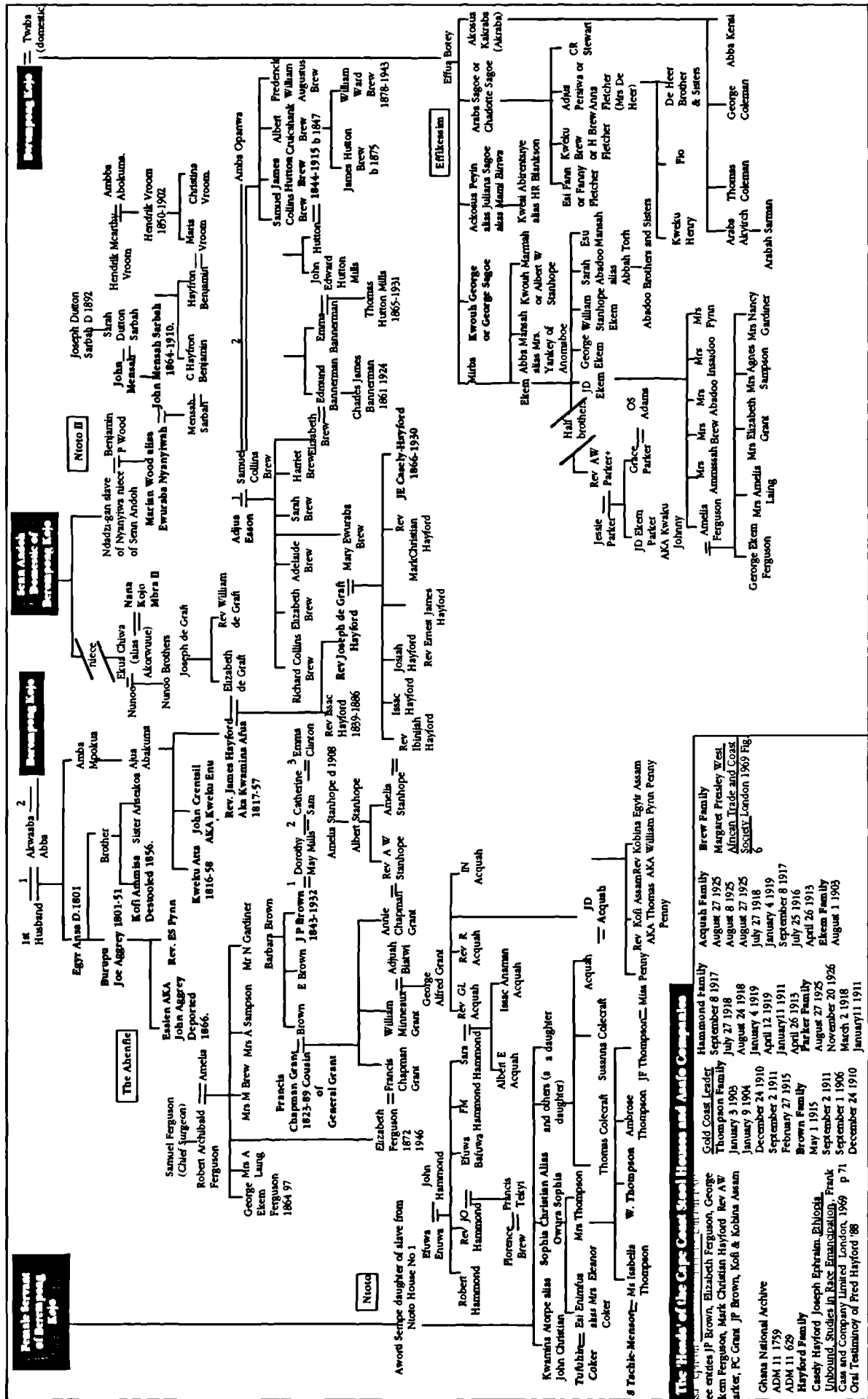
The Dutch, (with the co-operation of their Elminan allies) had bombarded Komenda. As J.H. Brew wrote the Komenda were, "the natural allies" of the Fante,<sup>24</sup> so, despite British warnings not to get involved, a Fante force marched against the main Dutch port at Elmina.<sup>25</sup> In early 1868, the Eliminans advanced on, and set fire to Amama, a Cape Coast village. *Tufubin* Coker testified that, "Cape Coast rose to this

affront and went to war."<sup>26</sup> Kwesi Atta set out with his *Asafo* companies led by Kofi Amoah, *Supi* of No. 1 Company.<sup>27</sup> Kofi Amoah, as *Supi* of No.1 Company, was responsible for the Amama farmers and their families because Amama was a traditional farming satellite of the Bentsil Company.<sup>28</sup> With complete disregard for British warnings, most of the male population joined Kwesi Atta at the front, among them, Rev. James Hayford, who was killed on the battlefield while trying to separate the warring factions.<sup>29</sup>

The *African Times* reported how, "the now Dutch town of Elmina had attacked the once British but now Dutch neighbouring towns, and the Fantee's had gone to fight with their brethren against the Elminans, this action had been expressly forbidden but was ignored."<sup>30</sup> Ussher was not prepared to let this action go unpunished; while the town stood empty of young men he burned down the houses of Kwesi Atta and Kofi Amoah and confiscated all of their property.<sup>31</sup> Among the personal possessions lost in the fire, was the coffin of Kwesi Atta's aunt. Governor Ussher had advised Kwesi Atta not to go to war and was outraged that he had been so flagrantly ignored. On Kwesi Atta and Kofi Amoah's return, they were outlawed.<sup>32</sup> Although the two men were subsequently not recognised by the British, they did not leave the town and were not imprisoned. In December 1869, their sentences were commuted but their goods and chattels were never returned.<sup>33</sup>

Kwesi Atta maintained his position as head of the *Oman* until his death in 1887. According to Governor Ussher, *Omanbin* Amonoo of Anomabu, and Kwesi Atta, were said to have made an 'extraordinary income' by selling captured Elminans.<sup>34</sup> Tufuhin Coker later suggested that after Kwesi Atta was outlawed, "the stool of the *Omanbene* was then different: the stool itself was at Nkum."<sup>35</sup> This probably means that the *Nkum*, who were the traditional bodyguard of the patrilineal stool, re-emerged as the ascendant family.

The *Asantebene*, shocked by the Fante assault on his occasional allies at Elmina, sent a messenger, Akyampon Yaw, and an entourage, to negotiate settlements with the Denkyeras and Fante and bring enemies of Asante to trial.<sup>36</sup> The *Asantebene* complained about the general disrespect of the coastal people towards his authority. He rejected Fante claims of victimisation, saying that, indeed, *he* was a victim of *their* wickedness; he described how on two occasions he had, "sent his traders to Mr Blankson of Anomaboe, to purchase some silks and other goods. The Assins wantonly seized the whole gold and detained the men."<sup>37</sup> The Fante were unconcerned by what probably seemed like lame threats against their unified strength. In July 1868, the Elminans struck a peace deal with the Fante.<sup>38</sup> Towards the end of the year, the *Omanbin* of Elmina was deposed by his own people, who sought closer ties with the Fante.<sup>39</sup>



## **II. JAMES HUTTON BREW AND THE FANTE CONFEDERACY**

The British administration was able to emasculate Kwesi Atta by refusing to recognise him. In his place, however, arose educated individuals who were the heads of families and *Asafo* companies, who were able to articulate Fante grievances without exerting physical force. Many of these young men, such as James Hutton Brew, came from the fringes of power within the major Cape Coast houses; only a few, such as J.A. Horton, were not progeny of *Berempong* Kojo.

James Africanus Horton was a Sierra Leonean who had been stationed in the Gold Coast as the Staff Assistant Surgeon to the army. Horton published *West African Countries and Peoples*, in 1868, which, amongst other things, gave a context to the general growth in anti-British sentiment. Horton outlined the logistical and constitutional stages that were required to give the Gold Coast self-government. He also drew up a plan for the establishment of a government which could reconcile the historical ethnic differences that had divided the Gold Coast for centuries.

James Hutton Brew saw the potential to actualise the theories of Horton. Brew had been educated from the age of eight in England, and had worked as a lawyer since his return.<sup>40</sup> Prestley suggests that at this stage, the profession of attorney required no professional qualifications, but Brew did demonstrate knowledge of British law.<sup>41</sup> Whilst still in his twenties, Brew made a major contribution to the Fante attempt to gain self-government. As a descendant of *Berempong* Kojo and Richard Brew, he was fully aware of the internal workings of local government, while being completely at ease with the British.

Governor Simpson, began a campaign of conciliation and mooted the possibility of recognition for the Mankessim Council. Simpson realised that the Mankessim Council took on a different mantle in peace time; it represented a permanent council that would operate as a centre of administration.<sup>42</sup> The Mankessim Council was able to consolidate its influence, as the Asante continued to make minor offensive probes toward the coast over the next two years.

In 1871, in the second stage of the British consolidation of their power on the coast, they took control of the remaining Dutch possessions. The Dutch settlements comprised the forts at Appam, Axim, Butri, Dixcove, Dutch Accra, Dutch Komenda, Elmina, Kormantine, Moree, Sekondi and Shama.<sup>43</sup> Although certain local civil servants saw a long-term strategy of colonisation developing,<sup>44</sup> the official line of the government as expressed in Resolution No.3 of the 1865 Select Committee report, represented a far more tentative picture of British commitment to the coast.<sup>45</sup>

The Mankessim Council, encouraged by positive signals from the British government, continued to grow in confidence. By 1871, in its new dynamic manifestation as the Fante Confederation, the Mankessim Council was able to meet and outline its constitution. James Hutton Brew drafted the remarkably far-sighted



Constitution. James Hutton Brew saw the main task of the members as, “to direct the labours of the Confederation towards the improvement of the country at large ... To make good and substantial roads throughout all the interior districts included in the Confederation....To erect school-houses and establish schools for the education of all children within the Confederation, and to obtain the service of efficient schoolmasters.....To promote agricultural and industrial pursuits, and to endeavour to introduce such new plants as may hereafter become sources of profitable commerce to the country.”<sup>46</sup>

Casely-Hayford, a lawyer also, (and Brew’s younger cousin<sup>47</sup>), said of the constitution in 1903, “fancy the Aborigines of the Gold Coast, thirty-two years ago, thinking of the necessity of good roads, fifteen feet wide, connecting the principal producing districts with the sea coast!”<sup>48</sup> When he wrote of his surprise, Casely-Hayford was aware that over the interconnecting period, none of these constitutional aims had been met. He lamented, at the “waste, absolute waste, of a golden opportunity.”<sup>49</sup>

Gocking suggests that, “The council of kings and chiefs had come together rather spontaneously to organize resistance to the Dutch and their local allies. Under pressure from the educated natives, this gathering began to consider a larger political role, as a confederation of Fanti states.”<sup>50</sup> Gocking speculates that the Confederation was a medium through which the ‘educated elite’ sought control. He states that, “The initiators of this organization were educated natives, from Cape Coast, and also from other important coastal settlements such as Anomabu and Winneba.”<sup>51</sup> From this premise, Gocking surmises that, “The constitution, which the assembly finally drew up in 1871, reflected the increased importance that educated natives were to have in the Confederation ..... Apart from reflecting the educated elite’s desire to more effectively control the operation of the Confederation, this dominance on their part can also be seen as an expression of the criticism of the previous administration.”<sup>52</sup> The man who drafted the constitution, J.H. Brew, may be seen as an archetypal member of the ‘educated elite’. Brew was partly of European ancestry and was also a trained lawyer, yet he also demonstrated, (like many of his peers) a cast iron connection to the local hierarchy, which made him as legitimate a voice as any *Chief*. Brew was, an *Odzikro* of Abura Dunkwa and was closely tied to the Cape Coast stool.<sup>53</sup> The divide between those who were *Chiefs*, and those who represented them, was evidently far less clear-cut than Gocking describes.

In April 1872, Pope Hennessy, the Administrator-in-Chief, wrote favourably of the new Confederation<sup>54</sup> in a despatch, “I have listened with much interest to the clear and able statement of Mr. Brew and the other gentlemen who did me the honour of coming to Elmina to explain their views about the Fantee Confederation. I should be very sorry to discourage any legitimate efforts of the Fantees, or other protected tribes, to establish for themselves an improved form of government; on the contrary, I should

be glad to foster all efforts of the kind.”<sup>55</sup> Pope Hennessy grounded his support in the fact that, “every educated native at Cape Coast sympathised with the Confederation.”<sup>56</sup> He observed that one of his personal acquaintances, F.C. Grant, a Fante, who was “certainly not the inferior of any European on the Gold Coast in character, ability or mercantile position, is a strong supporter of the confederation.”<sup>57</sup>

Brew was aware from the outset, that the future success of the Confederation would rely partly on government recognition. He realised that, “for the Fanti Confederation to be of real practical use in the amelioration, development and civilisation of the country, it must have the recognition, countenance, and support, and hearty co-operation of Her Majesty’s government, and its friendly aid and advice.”<sup>58</sup> Brew’s main ambition was to persuade the government to allow the vice president and four other members of the Confederation to be elected to the Legislative Council.<sup>59</sup> This was not a groundless claim, as it was increasingly acknowledged that since the formation of the Confederation, the Fante people had combined under one government, whose status, although ill-defined, carried great weight and influence amongst the people of the interior. One civil servant wrote of the Confederation, “it forms a representative body, to whom the various tribes who are anxious to become allies of the Fantee race have been able to communicate their wishes. It is the pivot of national unity, headed by intelligent men, to whom a great deal of the powers of the kings and chiefs are delegated, and whose advice would have considerable weight and power.”<sup>60</sup>

Some of the local civil servants were more sceptical than Pope Hennessy. In December 1871, C.S. Salmon argued that “the majority of the names appended to the constitution have been put down without the knowledge or consent of the parties themselves.” Salmon concluded that the, “dangerous conspiracy must be destroyed for good, or the country will become altogether unmanageable.”<sup>61</sup>

Late in 1871, when news of the constitution of the Fante Confederation had spread along the coast, a government despatch was circulated to senior civil servants that said, “spare no endeavours to arrest, and commit to prison, or send up for trial, as the case may warrant, all and any persons of any rank or position whatsoever, who may be found committing any overt acts on behalf of the so called confederation, absolutely as if such acts were committed by the particular individual or individuals concerned, against the peace of Her Majesty.”<sup>62</sup>

On 10 December 1871, “all the parties who held office under the banner of the Confederacy, were arrested except Ghartey.”<sup>63</sup> It was later alleged that “four of the parties stated in their examination, that they had never seen the constitution, and were not aware of its object; they were only told it was for the good of the country.”<sup>64</sup> Among those arrested were, Ferguson, Insaidoo, Hayford, and Abadoo. All four were released on bail four days later.<sup>65</sup> J.A. Fynn was suspected of being the author of the anonymous but scathing attacks on the government in the *African Times*.<sup>66</sup> The

*African Times* had run a series of pieces in which the captive men were identified as 'real African martyrs' and the government was vilified.<sup>67</sup> On December 30, a few weeks after the original arrests, Fynn's house was searched, and all his papers were removed.<sup>68</sup>

Perhaps on the strength of information given to him in these early arrests, Salmon was able to build a case against his real targets. In January 1872, Salmon imprisoned, "three persons of education and influence there, viz., Mr W.E. Davidson, Mr J.H. Brew, Mr J.F. Amissah, on a charge of high treason."<sup>69</sup> They were arrested at 10.30 pm, and locked in the Gothic House cells.<sup>70</sup> The three prisoners were treated well and given an allowance of one dollar a day. All except Brew and Davidson were later released on bail. Although they were never officially charged, pressure was brought on them to relinquish their posts in the Confederation; when they all refused, their allowance was stopped.<sup>71</sup> Ussher later acknowledged that, "The course adopted in issuing the search warrants, and especially in repeating the search was imprudent, and had a tendency to irritate the person subjected to their action."<sup>72</sup>

The Fante Confederation was seen by some contemporary figures as an early nationalist movement.<sup>73</sup> It was undoubtedly an attempt to gain a united form of self-government which may have constituted nationalism. Agbodeka suggests that central to the Confederation's aims, was to resist attempted domination by all external powers.<sup>74</sup> Scholars such as Bartels, have placed the confederation in a continuum of rising nationalism that began with the protests of Aggrey's *Oman*.<sup>75</sup> Wilks describes the leaders of the Fante Confederation as "the leaders of Fante nationalism."<sup>76</sup>

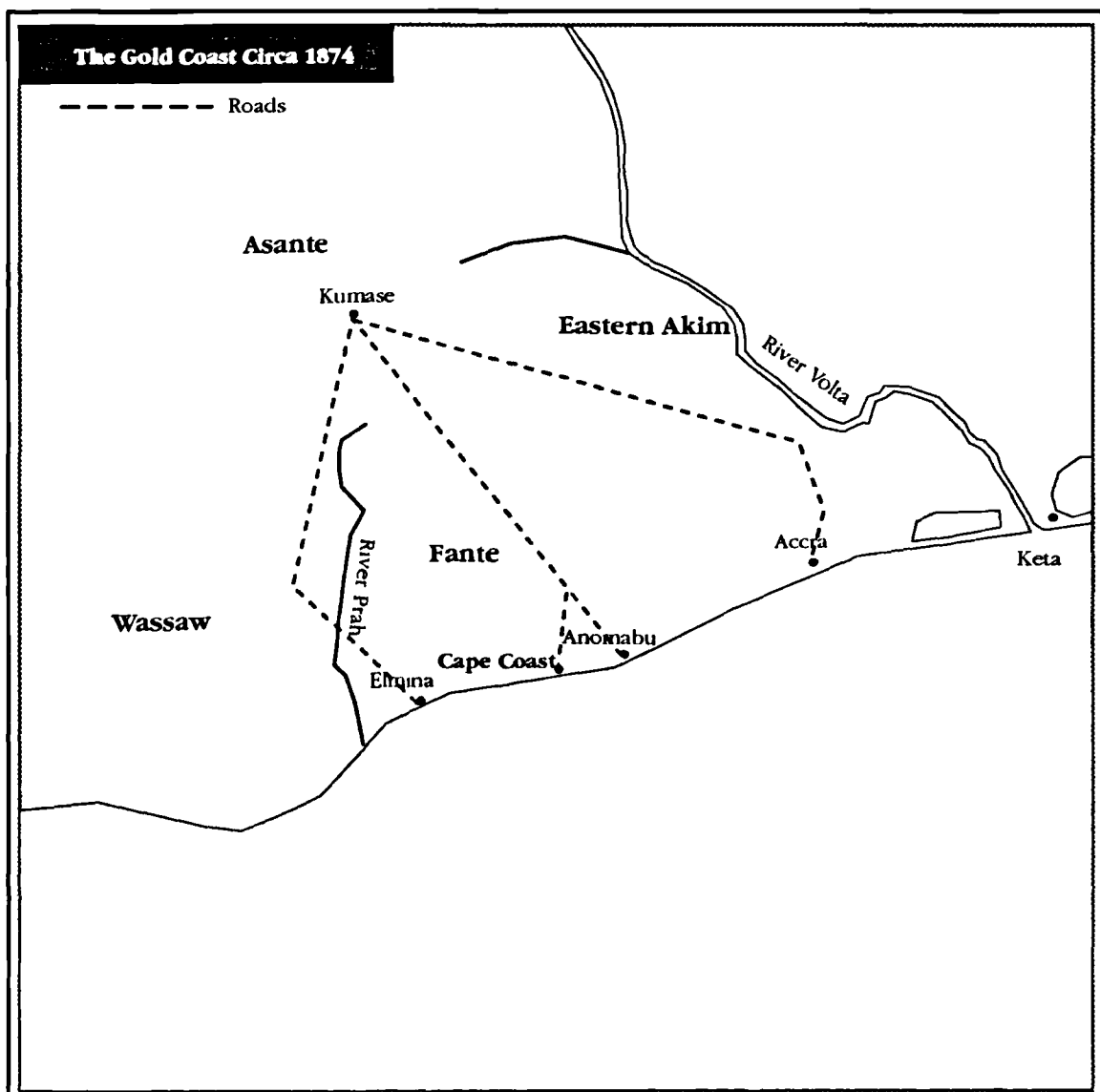
McCarthy suggests that scholars should exercise extreme caution before they define indigenous reaction as either protest or nationalism. She argues that, when looking at the Fante Confederation, "it should be clearly distinguished that the elements of protest were only incidental and not a primary motivation for the movement."<sup>77</sup> McCarthy suggests that there is "a danger of seeing every incident of conflict between Europeans and Africans as a form of protest. This tendency is a reaction on the part of historians to the decades of colonialist interpretation of events in Africa which commonly saw Africans as docile and helpless in the face of superior European intelligence and tactics." McCarthy continues, "the newer perspective sometimes improperly places the African people in the position of reacting to European actions when in fact their motives are related to causes quite apart from European policies. The Fante Confederation was clearly not a case of simple reaction. The Fante had certain compelling reasons for unity. It was, rather, the Fante action to which the British were forced to react."<sup>78</sup>

McCarthy's apprehension about the dangers of misinterpreting indigenous actions as reactions is partially valid. However, the unity that developed, did appear to foster greater political self-awareness. Contemporary accounts seem to reveal that both the British and the Fante were fully aware of the ambitions of the Confederation

to secure self-government. Both Salmon and Ussher repeatedly expressed their concerns at the ambitions of the Fante to rule themselves in official correspondence, and were harsh in their condemnation of the Confederation, culminating in the eventual arrest of its leaders.<sup>79</sup> The constitution was a clear account of how the Fante intended to do exactly that. Brew did not shirk from any opportunity to place his aspirations in national terms.

### **III. THE SWANZY FAMILY AND THE 1874 ASANTE WAR**

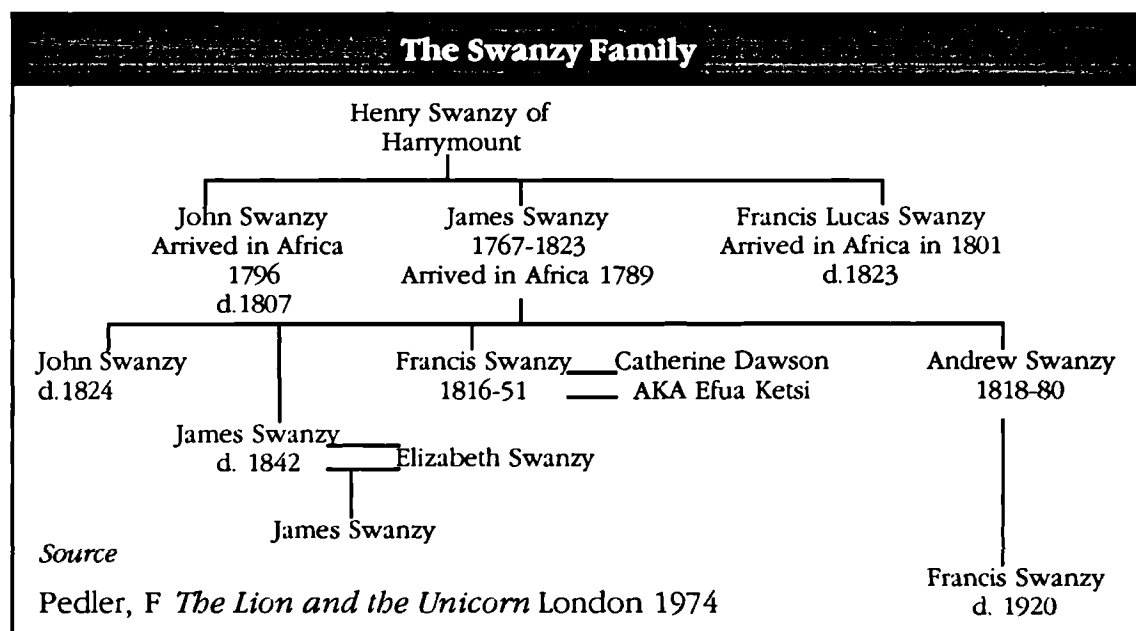
In 1863, while the Asante occupied the northern section of the British protectorate, Kweku Gaynin (or Gjanin), escaped from Kumase and took refuge in Cape Coast. Gaynin gained the faith of the townspeople and lived essentially as one of them. During the ensuing negotiations for peace, the *Asantehene* ordered his deportation as a stipulation for peace.<sup>80</sup> Governor Conran, realising that Gaynin was a potentially valuable man, had taken him prisoner.<sup>81</sup> Since 1863, the Fante had further enraged the *Asantehene* by seeking complete independence.<sup>82</sup> Wilks suggests that the assumption of British authority over Elmina and other formerly Dutch spheres



Source: Based on Leigh Maxwell *The Ashanti Ring*, London, 1985. P.7.

of influence, threatened Asante strategic interests and was a central factor in precipitating the eventual conflict. In late 1872, the Asante began planning a final offensive onslaught on their coastal enemies. Ramseyer and Kuehne, who were part of a group of German missionaries who had been held in Kumase in the years preceding the 1873-4 war, later wrote from their privileged position that, "The real reason of the war was that the British had refused for ten years to give up the chief Gjanin, who had escaped to the coast; this had likewise been the cause of the fruitless expedition of 63-64."<sup>83</sup>

Among the many people who suffered from the breakdown in Asante/Fante relations, were the many merchants who operated as middlemen between the interior and the coast. One of the most prominent trading companies was F. and A. Swanzy, a family firm which had been operating on the coast for some decades. Francis Swanzy, the firm's founder died on the coast in 1851<sup>84</sup> and his brother, Andrew, took over. Andrew employed William Cleaver, an influential European, as his principle factor.<sup>85</sup> Aided by his sister in-law, Kate Dawson, (AKA Efua Ketsi, the holder of the Anona Stool), Swanzy established close links with Asante and eventually got on good terms with the *Asantehene*.<sup>86</sup> Swanzy supplied the *Asantehene* with muskets and gunpowder.



In early 1873, the Asante's army invaded the protectorate with 40,000 men.<sup>87</sup> The British mobilised 200 Fantes volunteers and 200 armed Hausa police. A government official remarked that the "so called Fantee army from the first moment of hostilities has had no confidence either in themselves or their leaders."<sup>88</sup> In March 1873, from his obvious position of strength, the *Asantehene* sent an envoy to Cape Coast to negotiate the release of the German missionaries. All three members of the embassy lodged at the Asante Prince Ansa's house.<sup>89</sup> Although Ansa had lived for

many years in Cape Coast, as the negotiations proceeded, he revealed his ultimate loyalty was to the Asante.<sup>90</sup>

When a rumour broke that the Asante emissaries were running guns to the front, a mob led by some of the executive of the Fante Confederation, (including Brew, Amissah and Davidson)<sup>91</sup> descended on Ansa's house demanding justice. Five Asantes were removed from the house and taken to the beach where they were decapitated. The police had only just arrived in time to save Ansa, his wife and son from meeting with the same end. The mob justified their actions by arguing that the delegation had planned to leave with ammunition for the enemy during the night.<sup>92</sup> Their heads were never found by government agents.<sup>93</sup> Subsequently only one body could be identified, by a mark in the corpse's groin that George Blankson had noticed when the victim had been alive.<sup>94</sup>

It is probable that most of the town knew where the heads were. The mob were mostly members of the No.5 company, the "*Brofumba* or *Brofunkwa* Asafu, *white men's children or servants*."<sup>95</sup> The No.5 company had maintained one of the last sacrificial *fetishes* in Cape Coast. The '*fetish Nana-Tabir*', which was the most important '*fetish*' of *Oguaa*; this was "a big hole, full of snakes and sea-weeds, in the rock on which the castle was built, and the hole was filled in about 1874."<sup>96</sup> The '*fetish*' was first identified by a European a century earlier, when he described, a rock behind the Castle, that jutted out into the sea at the angle of the cape. He wrote,

*this rock they call Taberah, a name made infamous of old by the impiety of the Jews .... every Sunday they make an offering to Taberah of cankee, which is their bread, mixing it with palm oil ..... they have a legend, that once in ancient time a fisherman as he was exercised in his calling, was swallowed up by the sea; and after forty days, being cast up again, he came on shore with his message from God, that the people were commanded to make Taberah the solemn place of his worship from that time forward. Here it is easy to know that this prophets name was Jonah.*<sup>97</sup>

The obvious influence of the Old Testament and the fact that the *fetish* was practised on Sundays, is a clear illustration of the mixed origins of the No.5 Company. The murder of the Asantes on the beach, was equally linked to the No.5 Company's dual heritage. The *white men's children*, as the No.5 were known locally, were at the forefront of the Fante Confederation. They had among their members, some of the wealthiest and most highly educated men on the coast. Such men had a lot to lose if the Asante were to invade the coast; some of them were in lucrative positions as brokers between the British and local population.

The hole in which the *fetish* was practised was probably filled in because the murder of the five Asantes was the last such execution that could be sanctioned by the *Brofumba*, whose members included many Christians and who made up the greater part of the executive of the Fante Confederation.<sup>98</sup> Such public figures may have felt they could not be associated with such acts of ritual violence.

No one came forward to identify the murderers.<sup>99</sup> George Kuntu Blankson, who was able to identify one of the headless bodies, had established a long trading relationship with the Asante, and so knew many of the Asante envoys well. Blankson's identification of the dead man fuelled speculation that he was the trader who had supplied the envoys with guns and gunpowder. When he arrived to answer charges at the *Omanbin's* Council at Anomabu, George Blankson was mobbed and nearly stoned to death. Although Blankson was later acquitted of all charges, the tension was so high that he was placed in the castle for the duration of the war for his own safety.<sup>100</sup> A member of Swanzy's staff described with some trepidation the tension that had been building around the town for some months.<sup>101</sup> In one case, a cousin of James Hutton Brew (an executive of the Fante Confederation) H. Brew, who was a retail storekeeper, shot a Hausa soldier who ran away with his domestic servant. H. Brew was released on bail of £200.<sup>102</sup>

There had been rumours of an imminent Asante invasion for some months.<sup>103</sup> The Hausa troops who were stationed at Anomabu were consistently on alert.<sup>104</sup> A government official speculated that the Asante advance across the Prah would be in September, as soon as their harvest was gathered and the rains had ended.<sup>105</sup> The Fante reconstituted their traditional alliance with the British.

In August 1873, news reached Cape Coast that the Asante had crossed the Prah on their way south. A huge battalion of their army was camped on Sopome, an island in the middle of the river.<sup>106</sup> By September, 20,000 refugees settled in Cape Coast bringing with them, 'every imaginable disease'. G.T.H Lyall, a member of Swanzy's staff described how,

*The rains set in about this time with great severity and of course many of these poor wretches were homeless and exposed to the weather and being sick also they died in great numbers. The smallpox which had already got a foothold in the town, now assumed gigantic proportions and the hospital for that disease was full to suffocation yet every day fresh applicants came and not having a chance of admittance they fell back on the streets and died and also communicated the disease to all around. Many died after some days of starvation the little money they brought in was soon expended as provisions increased in price.*<sup>107</sup>

Lyall further described how, "every night there was a constant howling from the falling in of houses upon the poor wretches who were too ill to move away and who got buried in the ruins; a more frightful picture can hardly be drawn than the state of this town at that time."<sup>108</sup> Partially protected from the disease in the castle, "the Europeans at first held up well against the sickly state of the atmosphere but gradually it worked its poisonous way in the system and everyone in the place succumbed one after another, several died especially the Government people, others were invalided at home, and a few were fortunate to reach there alive while many died on the way."<sup>109</sup>

In an endeavour to make something of these degenerating conditions, the Swanzys continued their trade with the Asante.<sup>110</sup> The Swanzys' insight into the politics of the Gold Coast, may have enabled them to capitalise on the war scenario. The Swanzy family had a unique influence on Gold Coast military activity. Frank Swanzy had married Catherine Dawson, (AKA Efua Ketsi, the holder of the Anona Stool) the daughter of Joseph Dawson. She was reputedly the richest woman on the coast and was said to have paid danegeld to the Asante by balancing gold dust against a cannon-ball to end the 1863 war.<sup>111</sup> During the altercation which had caused the earlier war, *Asantebene* Kofi Kakari's uncle's body had been taken with the army to battle so that the late *Asantebene* could be buried as a warrior. It was lost in action at Elmina.<sup>112</sup> The body was later allegedly given to Kate Dawson as a present.<sup>113</sup>

The Swanzys were aware that they were not alone in keeping up trade with their potential enemies. Andrew Swanzy later explained that the French were gun-running to the Asante through the ports of Assini and Grand Bassam.<sup>114</sup> He argued that outside the immediate influence of the protectorate, the Akyems had also maintained a healthy trade with Asante. As the weather improved for a few weeks in August, it became possible to exchange signals with Elmina, which had been impossible for at least four months.<sup>115</sup> For the first time, the government could send a mission to the east to try to slow the trade between the Akyem and the Asante.

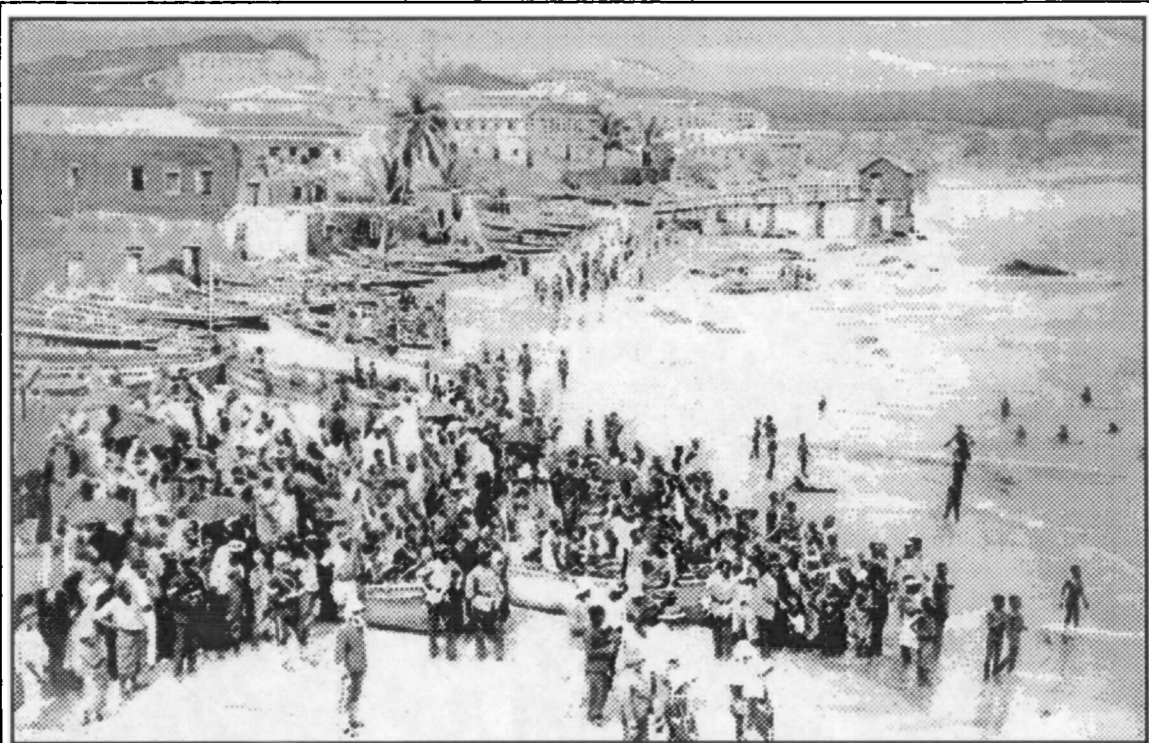
There were initial difficulties in procuring the necessary surf boats for the mission.<sup>116</sup> Perhaps realising it was possible to kill two birds with one stone, the government had four tugs full of Swanzy's gunpowder seized.<sup>117</sup> The boats were not subsequently used in the mission and Swanzy complained about the government's seizure of his property. In October, Swanzy wrote to the Lords Commissioner of the Admiralty, accusing the Governor of acting under "motives other than those of duty in detaining our vessels, for days together without any reasonable cause."<sup>118</sup>

By the time that Swanzy had made his complaint, the mission to the east had already left. The mission itself had begun with severe logistical problems. Not only was there a lack of boats, but there was also a lack of men to fill them. Because of the yam custom, there was difficulty in raising more than a handful of local people. Captain Glover was selected to lead the campaign east, to try to stop the Akyem trade in powder from what they thought was the river Quittah (which was probably the Volta, which enters the sea at Keta), with only a small team of men and against rains of a "violent character."<sup>119</sup>

Towards the end of the year, Sir Garnet Wolseley, one of the most influential British officers of the latter part of the Victorian era, was dispatched from England to deal 'strongly but fairly' with the Asante. Wolseley arrived in Cape Coast with a small retinue and the authority to have the Royal Welch Fusiliers and the 2nd Battalion of the Rifle Brigade, ready and despatched from England as soon as he gave the word.<sup>120</sup> Wolseley was a hardened war hero, of many successful campaigns.



Wherever he went, there followed a large contingent of the British press. The campaign had created a stir in Britain, and the name Kofi Kakari became as well known in current affairs as any contemporary politician. *The Illustrated London News* and the *Daily News* took the story to heart, and sent journalists to cover the campaign. The journalists arrived in Cape Coast, bringing with them all the prejudices that kept their popular newspapers popular. The Cape Coast that had been negotiating for self-government, was suddenly turned into the military epicentre, with the castle as the focus of activity.<sup>121</sup>



Cape Coast Landing Beach December 1873 (One of the oldest photographs of Cape Coast)  
(Source: Casely-Hayford Archive)

A few days after his arrival, Wolseley organised a 'grand palaver' to which he invited all of the allied *Amanbin*, including, the *Amanbin* of Anomabu, Denkyera and Assin. Wolseley demanded their loyal assistance but later commented, that he could not "fail to observe an air of despondency which does not seem promising." By that point anyway, suffering from low morale<sup>122</sup> and weakened by disease and hunger after months in the field, the Asante were massing their armies for retreat.<sup>123</sup> By the end of 1873, the war had become a huge public relations exercise, with the British press baying for blood.<sup>124</sup> The British decided to continue, regardless of the state of their enemy, if not to win a well-earned victory, then to teach their foe a public and painful lesson. Within a few weeks, a battalion of the Royal Welch Fusiliers (23rd Regiment of Foot), the 42nd Royal Highland (The Black Watch) Regiment and the 2nd battalion of the Rifle Brigade had arrived in Cape Coast, with the very latest in military technology.<sup>125</sup> Perhaps realising that hostilities were imminent, Swanzy again tried to land munitions in the Cape Coast area without success.<sup>126</sup>

As the British soldiers arrived at Cape Coast, the weather began to improve,<sup>127</sup> but the provisions made for them were woefully inadequate and within days, one hundred marines were incapacitated by sickness.<sup>128</sup> A letter was immediately sent to the Admiralty acknowledging that disease was a greater problem than the enemy. It was also logistically “impossible in many cases to relieve the sick lists of the squadron by sending home invalids” because of the lack of boats.<sup>129</sup> To make matters worse, food was not reaching the coast; five tons of meat extract was ordered for Cape Coast from Peak Freans, but only one ton actually got to the coast.<sup>130</sup>

To a large extent, what lay ahead was a logistical nightmare. The Europeans who had been recruited to go east in the Akyem expedition were in a “debilitated condition”, many of them were not “efficient for military duty.”<sup>131</sup> Before the expedition had left, sixty-three percent of the marines were ineffective through sickness.<sup>132</sup> Although the expedition had partly been intended to investigate the possibility of attacking Kumase from the east, logistical problems made that impossible. The newly developed machine guns were difficult to carry in the heavy terrain, and the plan of attacking Kumase from Akyem had to be abandoned.<sup>133</sup>

Wolseley attempted to rally the indigenous troops by giving all the auxiliaries “a guarantee that a fair share of any treasure taken in Kumase should be allotted to each *chief* and his people co-operating and engaged.”<sup>134</sup> Wolseley also had seven hundred Enfield rifles dispatched from England for the indigenous allied combatants.<sup>135</sup> Many of the Fante troops were farmers and so a rifle was an invaluable tool for hunting and livestock protection. Many of the farmers were still using Portuguese muskets. With the lure of new guns, Wolseley was able to recruit soldiers from Cape Coast and carriers from the villages on route to Kumase, such as Abura, Abiadzi and Kwaman. Most of families who lived in the Fante villages were inter-related and so as soon as Wolseley secured the services of one village, others followed.<sup>136</sup>

As the troops moved out to the front, Kwesi Atta “was chosen by the family to carry the stool together with his men to the front.”<sup>137</sup> The intelligence unit that Wolseley had set up concluded, that once the Fante had been conscripted, ‘there would be no danger of any deserting.’ Their limited studies into Fante anthropology told them that, during a war “the towns and villages are given up to the women and children, no one but the decrepit and aged men are allowed to remain, the women after the force has left the town strip themselves of all their clothing and any man entering the town would then be stoned to death.”<sup>138</sup>

The Swanzy family foresaw realised the defeat of Asante was inevitable, and before the campaign began, they offered their complete support to the British. Andrew Swanzy became the main source of information for the War Office, and he did all he could to help the military expedition.<sup>139</sup> The re-alignment of the Swanzy family loyalty was a measure of the inevitability of British victory. The Swanzy family, like the Blanksons, were operating as middlemen in particularly harsh trading

conditions. To prosper in this environment, the Swanzys had to adopt the trading tactics of the Fante; the Swanzy's sought alliances with the powerful when they could secure them and based business on courting the ascendant powers and operating as brokers.

The British victory came much faster than even the press had imagined. Within three months of Wolseley's arrival on the Gold Coast, the Asante were routed and Kumase was burned to the ground.<sup>140</sup> The results of the destruction of Kumase were manifold, but the most profound from the perspective of Cape Coast, was a change in the previously conciliatory stance of the British administration towards the Fante.

Although Gocking<sup>141</sup> and McCarthy<sup>142</sup> suggest that the Fante Confederation had failed before the war, it seems that the Fante still harboured hopes of self-government. Wilks concludes that the British effectively destroyed Asante political influence on the southern provinces permanently.<sup>143</sup> The defeat of Asante and complete removal of the political challenge of Asante in the south, may have contributed to a new found British confidence. Indeed, on 6 August 1874, the British Order in Council constituted the Gold Coast colony, empowering Queen Victoria to "hold, exercise and enjoy any power or jurisdiction...in the same and as ample a manner as if Her Majesty had acquired such power or jurisdiction by the cessation or conquest of territory."<sup>144</sup> Such formal extensions of power showed a change in the earlier British stance towards the region and revealed that the British now saw their role as one of coloniser rather than collaborator. This may have been the real factor that was to destroy the Fante Confederation.

#### **IV. THE REPERCUSSIONS OF THE WAR OF 1874**

The Earl of Carnarvon, who looked at possible changes in the relationship between the British and the Fante, concluded that at the time of the Bond,

*in 1844 the method of proceeding by negotiation was recommended by obvious considerations of prudence. But in the thirty years which have since elapsed the power and resources of the British Government have been gradually increasing, until, by the recent victories of the British forces, they have been so strengthened and consolidated as to render an act of sovereign power, such as a proclamation of the Queen, the only appropriate mode of proceeding for the attainment of the desired object.<sup>145</sup>*

One government official later looked back with admiration at the profound "influence exercised by Maclean with a miserable pittance of between £3500 and £4000 a year."<sup>146</sup> The new policy outlined by the Earl of Carnarvon, may have been an attempt to recreate something like that control. J.B. Danquah later lamented at how, "as soon as the British felt strong enough to give full expression to their imperial power over the Gold Coast, the Secretary of State, the Earl of Carnarvon... decided to impose upon the Gold Coast a unilateral declaration which was described by him

as 'a Proclamation emanating from the sole authority of the Queen.'<sup>147</sup> Some people felt the British had reneged on their promise, to convene discussions with the Fante Confederation after the 1873-4 war, regarding the permanent structure of the Fante government.<sup>148</sup> Danquah suggested that, "Quite surprisingly, and in complete disregard of that promise, the Gold Coast was joined to Lagos and erected into the status of a 'Colony'."<sup>149</sup>

There was one positive constitutional development, "in 1874 a constituted Legislative Council came into being with the 'Official Majority' system"<sup>150</sup> and the principle of government nominating a handful of Africans onto the Council.<sup>151</sup> The constitutional and political changes that followed the war marked a new era in Gold Coast politics. The introduction of a Legislative Council created a new and recognised channel for indigenous views and reaction. The Legislative Council, being independent of the stool, offered the chance for an individual to represent the African community, and yet not necessarily be a *Chief*. A new set of social dynamics were also created, by giving politics independent of the stool a recognised forum. Qualifications for membership of the Legislative Council were defined according to European criteria. In the early years of selecting members for the Legislative Council, those Africans with some European education, or knowledge of the political systems in Europe, were probably at an advantage over the rest of the community. Some of the men who had been seen as the emissaries of the Mankessim Council, such J.H. Brew, began to realise that there was a place for them as fully-fledged politicians.

## **V. SOCIAL CHANGE IN COLONIAL CAPE COAST**

For some years after the war, one of the proud boasts of the local Freemasons, was that Wolseley had attended meetings at the Gold Coast Lodge No.773, during his stay on the coast.<sup>152</sup> This became a significant period in Gold Coast Masonic history, because the post-war era was a time of growth in the popularity of the existing fraternities and saw the proliferation of new societies.

The West India Regiment had a very central role in the 1873-74 War. They spent the longest periods at the front, and as a result they sustained the heaviest losses. After the hostilities, a few of the West India Regiment settled on the Gold Coast. One soldier of the West India Regiment, Edward Stewart, stayed on the coast and became a minister. The Rev. E. Stewart, worked for fifty years until his death in 1924, promoting the American Templars. Rev. Stewart was a member of the Belgravian Lodge and he opened seven others.<sup>153</sup> The American Templars originated in New York in 1851, as one of the first movements to break the discrimination between black and white men. As a result of its liberal attitudes, it attracted many blacks and grew at a phenomenal rate.<sup>154</sup> The English Templars began in Birmingham in 1870.<sup>155</sup> The Templars, like the Rechabites, took on all the tenets of the Temperance movement,<sup>156</sup> but they shared some of the secrecy and the regalia of the Freemasons. The significance and

adornment of their regalia was very specific. Compared to Americans, the English Templars wore relatively elaborate regalia, and attacked the Americans on one occasion for their 'puritanical' attitudes.<sup>157</sup> The tiny but important distinctions between the groups of Templars, led each group to stamp its specific identity firmly on the West African *Brethren*. On Temperance Sunday, the groups would hold separate services in the same church.<sup>158</sup> The English Templars made public defences of their regalia, which were called excessive by the Americans. But the two organisations were fundamentally the same.

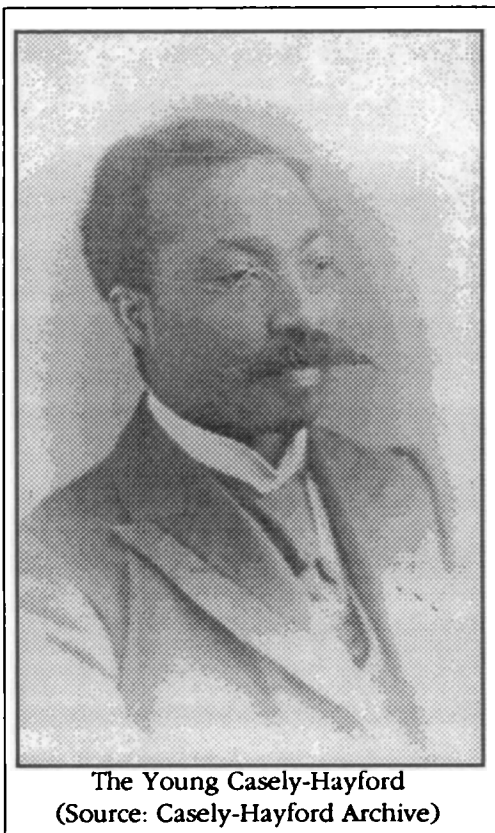
So far as Freemasonry was concerned, the patronage of so many wealthy and influential Cape Coasters, made the Gold Coast Lodge the Premier Lodge<sup>159</sup> of West Africa by the 1880s. The Lodge was promoted by the interest shown by the old stool families such as the Planges, the Amissahs and the Hayfords, who were beginning to join.<sup>160</sup> As the Lodge grew, it moved to a larger Temple. In 1878, it moved from Dawson Hill, to Fort Gate House, Castle Street. Within a year, funds were raised to build a dedicated Temple. This building was rapidly outgrown, and in 1892, moved to Saltpond where it continued to expand.<sup>161</sup>

The introduction of the Boys Brigade movement to the Gold Coast in the 1890s, as well as the Cub Scouts, the Red Cross<sup>162</sup> and St Johns ambulance brigade<sup>163</sup> in the early twentieth century, contributed to general changes in the style of education, entertainment and health care. The general economic growth within the colony in the early 1900s, changed the character of many of the towns on the coast. The changing conditions in this period were ripe for Freemasonry to develop into one of the fundamental social and political forces in West Africa.<sup>164</sup>

Another area in which there was a profound change in the post-war period was local communication. The Fante Confederation demonstrated the potential for organised local politics. African representation on the Legislative Council, created a new political forum through which to channel ideas. All that was lacking, was the means of communication to distribute information throughout the colony.

## **VI. JAMES HUTTON BREW AND THE RISE OF THE INDIGENOUS PRESS**

Shortly after the war, James Hutton Brew, who had drafted the constitution for the Fante Confederation, began one of the earliest Gold Coast colony newspapers. Brew, like many of the pioneers of Gold Coast literature, was a trained lawyer who had realised that the media, like the law, was a means to political power.<sup>165</sup> Casely-Hayford recounted that, "One of the first newspapers to attract attention was the *West African Herald*, which was edited by the gifted and lamented Charles Bannerman, of Accra, lawyer, wit, and publicist. It appears this remarkable man had no press, and he took the extraordinary pains of first composing his articles, and then making out several copies of a given issue in his own handwriting."<sup>166</sup> Bannerman went to these lengths, because he foresaw that the control of the means of communication, would become as important as what was communicated.



The Young Casely-Hayford  
(Source: Casely-Hayford Archive)

James Hutton Brew's younger cousin, Casely-Hayford, described how, "young Brew's political ardour was not quenched by the hard knocks he had received in connection with the Confederation movement. Receiving a liberal education in early youth, and associating afterwards with such brilliant men as George Blankson of Anamaboe, (by far the cleverest man of his day from all accounts), Charles Bannerman, Edmund Bannerman, and others, not to speak of a successful career at the Gold Coast Bar, he developed, in the eighties of the last century, into the most brilliant journalist the Gold Coast has ever known. The columns of the *Western Echo*, which he edited, were for a number of years a source of inspiration to the rising youth of the country in matters relating to political

enfranchisement of the fatherland."<sup>167</sup>

When Casely Hayford left school in the 1880s, Brew gave him his first job as the assistant editor on the *Western Echo* under T. Laing.<sup>168</sup> The personal relationship of matrilineal cousins, did not compromise their working relationship. Casely-Hayford wrote of Brew, "I never knew a humbler man than Prince Brew. Never did he pass an article to the head printer without first reading it aloud to us, and inviting our free criticism."<sup>169</sup> The birth of the Gold Coast press was also the birth of a forum for debate and criticism of government. The fact that the families who had been at the forefront of local dissent were synonymous with the families who ran the early newspapers was not a coincidence.

The *Western Echo* was to become the guiding voice in the building of 'nationalism'. Though its audience was limited, news could be disseminated and local history recorded far more efficiently than had ever been previously possible. The process of writing down Cape Coast's history, was to set in stone certain accounts of the oral history. The families that had contributed to the political discussions at the time of the formation of the Fante Confederation,<sup>170</sup> were from a diversity of local backgrounds, whilst the literary movement was dominated by one section of the *Abenfie*. This was to bias the subsequent study of Fante history toward the perspective of those families, almost eradicating *Effikessim's* account of Cape Coast stool history from the written versions.



Ray Jenkins, in his work on brokerage, asked why this generation of Cape Coast writers produced so much history, as compared with their Ga counterparts.<sup>171</sup> The men who wrote the earliest Cape Coast histories, came from the same families that had produced the *Oman's Akyiame* over the years. They continued their family traditions of political brokerage, of specialisation in historical and juridical consultation and of practising their general skills of linguistic and oral communication. The race to gain general acceptance of their families' accounts of the stool history, was also their means to political dominance. The history also defined the rights to land, customary practices and the constitution. The immutability of the written text made it the perfect medium for such men to stamp their authority on the town with an unprecedented permanence.

For at least the first decade of their existence, the topics that the early Gold Coast newspapers reported on were mostly reactions to constitutional developments. In 1876, 1878 and 1883, successive Native Jurisdiction Ordinances were introduced, which worked to regulate the juridical powers of the *Amanbin*. In 1924 a new constitution of Cape Coast welcomed a temporary respite in the Cape Coast stool's decline, as most cases were designated by British law as "triable in the first instance in the Native Tribunal, subject to Appeal to the British Court of Justice." Some argued that this arrested, "the decay of the peoples knowledge of their Customs" because, "it encouraged the exercise by the native *Kings* and *Chiefs* of their Powers and Jurisdiction according to Native laws and Customs so long as these were not repugnant to Natural Justice and good conscience."<sup>172</sup> In Cape Coast the semi-recognised *Omanbin*, Kwesi Atta, had no acknowledged Native Tribunal and so could not take advantage of these developments. Thus, his constitutional role as *Omanbin* was gradually eroded. Mbra III later described these particular constitutional developments, as a 'dead letter' for Cape Coast.<sup>173</sup>

## **VII. KOJO MBRA: THE FIRST OF THE MBRA DYNASTY**

When Kwesi Atta died unnoticed in January 1887,<sup>174</sup> he took with him a period of political uncertainty. Since the British had ceased to recognise him almost twenty years earlier, the nominal role of the *Omanbin* had been continually eroded by the contrasting growing effectiveness of bodies like the Fante Confederation and individuals like James Hutton Brew. The loss of a recognised voice in the community was coupled with the growing dominance of British law. The *Oman* had lost more power to the British in twenty-five years than it had in the previous one hundred. This had been demonstrated most starkly in the title of "crown colony" replacing that of protectorate in 1874.

Kofi Sackey, Anko Kwamina and Hagan were the only surviving senior members of the last recognised *Oman* of the 1860s. Since the outlawing of the last *Omanbin*, they had lost some of their power to the educated community. Ironically,



it was calls from the newly empowered educated members of the community, that were to eventually bring back recognition to the stool, as a part of a scheme to, “improve the affairs of Cape Coast.”<sup>175</sup> During what had effectively been an interregnum, there was according to *Omanbin* Mbra III, “no State Tribunal, the subordinate Chiefs of Cape Coast, such as Amoa, Menya, Gyepi, Kwesi Ata, Sekyi (Sackey), James Thompson, etc. heard and decided cases in their own private houses; still the majority of cases of dispute, whether petty or serious, happening in the Town, were taken to the British Courts of Justice. It was at this time that the advice ‘*Fa Ko Abanm*’, meaning, ‘take it to the Castle’ (the Court being originally held in the Castle) came into being.”<sup>176</sup>

Various colonial administrators argued that the government courts had proven as preferable alternatives to the indigenous courts. *Omanbin* Mbra III later described (albeit somewhat obscurely) how the government had tried to attract indigenous cases and educated Fante had taken advantage of the opportunity, “to represent litigants in the Courts; with the result that in the course of time, and until the year 1887 when the late Honourable John Mensah Sarbah, CMG, MLC, the first native Barrister of the Gold Coast, returned from England whither he had been for the Legal profession, a number of pettifoggers, among whom were, however, a few of high literary attainments such as Charles Bartels, George Blankson, James Hutton Brew, James Bannerman, Edmund Bannerman, and the celebrated Charles Bannerman, sprang up.”<sup>177</sup>

Some later *Amanbin* have suggested that this was the stage when Cape Coast, without an acknowledged *Omanbin* and Native Tribunal, cut ties with the old order, and the traditional systems of administering law, and that this explained, “the gradual fading away of the knowledge of the people of Cape Coast of their laws, manners and customs.”<sup>178</sup>

In 1884 *Tufubin* Thompson, who had acted as a part-time interregnum *Omanbin* for the patrilineal families, died. For three years there was instability, as the aged Kwesi Atta, recognised by only half the town, fought to control the *Asafo* companies. During the last three years of his life, there was continual friction between the Cape Coast Companies.<sup>179</sup> The death of Kwesi Atta in 1887, gave the community a chance to begin afresh by appointing a new *Omanbin* who could unite the disparate families.

The educated sections of the community had no official mandate and so without a traditional mouthpiece they were effectively only individual citizens acting against the Government. The first appointment was of a new *Tufubin*, W.Z. Coker, who had married into the family of the previous *Tufubin*, Thompson. Coker was the first to acknowledge that it was not *Asafo* support that had selected him as the right candidate, as was traditional; the “settlement was effected in 1888 by the educated members of the community.”<sup>180</sup>

Coker described how at the time there was a threatened disturbance between Bentin (the No.1 or Tũafo-*advance guard*) and the rest of the Companies. Coker testified that, "Then the leading members of the literate community among whom were Mr. Brown, T.F.E Jones, Mr Brew, Mr Grant and others consulted together and invited all the companies to a meeting at Papratem. The dispute was settled, after this the people applied to the companies to elect their own *Omanbene* and obey him. Then Kwaku the head of the Tũafo (No.1 Coy)" was<sup>181</sup> "charged to find out who was to be *Tufubin* and Akundo the man of the *Nkums* was charged to find the *Omanbene*. After the enquiry Kojo Mbra"<sup>182</sup> was nominated as *Omanbin* and in spite of some opposition, Coker was chosen as *Tufubin*.<sup>183</sup> Although Kojo Mbra's nomination came from the *Nkum*, the traditional bodyguard of the patrilineal stool, there were other patrilineal claims from Kwamin Tawia and Aggrey Fynn, which were rejected.<sup>184</sup>

The matrilineal family have a different version of the story. They suggest that they chose Kojo Mbra from the traditionally matrilineal household of *Effikessim*. *Effikessim* was also the house of the *Wirempe*, who had replaced the *Nkum* as the stool bodyguard, (the *Gyase*), during the reign of Kweku Atta. The matrilineal family suggested that, since the death of Kwesi Atta, the stool had been in the possession of a woman who had risen to head *Effikessim*, Madam Efua Wireduo. *Effikessim* described how "annually the *Jyase* and the family performed the annual ceremonies with regard to the stool, washing it and so forth with rum and blood: and all the time were looking for a person who could well administer the country."<sup>185</sup>

Aikosua Mary described how a year after Kwesi Atta's death, the *Oman*, "came to the family and asked for a person to be elected to the place of Kwesi Atta: a meeting took place at '*Fikasim*' the house of my aunt Wiredoa. There were many children in our house at the time but Kojo Mbra seemed to be the wisest and so he was elected and given to the *Oman* he was given to the *Jyase* first and the *Jyase* gave him to the *Oman*."<sup>186</sup> This account may be more accurate, because not only does it comply with the tradition of the *Wirempe* being King-makers, but it also corroborates the idea that the Fante, in theory, maintained a system of exogamous marriage. Such marriages were not always the norm by this stage, but usually applied to the *Omanbin*. It is generally accepted that Aikosua Mary was given as the wife to Kojo Mbra.<sup>187</sup> Aikosua Mary was a member of the *Abenfie*, which may have meant the Kojo Mbra was from *Effikessim*.

It is said that eventually there was agreement and, the "whole family" gave approval to Kojo Mbra I as *Omanbin*. In October 1888,<sup>188</sup> Kojo Mbra was allegedly taken to *Azzuwanfodapnim* (the sacred spot in the town where all *Amanbin* are sworn), where "he was followed by the whole family."<sup>189</sup> This was said to include, a "deputation of the representatives of the Companies and community generally, including the educated people."<sup>190</sup> After the ceremony Kojo was supposed to have said, in traditional Akan style, "I am not anxious to be your King. I am satisfied with

my present position of a gold taker. Leave me alone in peace." But the Deputation insisted upon his accepting the office, arguing, "we must have a *King*, and you being the rightful heir, you cannot well refuse.' They pressed him and gave him no rest until he consented to be King."<sup>191</sup> Kojo Mbra was then installed as *Omanbin* of Cape Coast.<sup>192</sup>

Although Kojo Mbra had allegedly been enstooled by unanimous consent, "Sir Brandford Griffith (acting on the advice of Sir Frederick Hodgson, the Colonial Secretary), refused to recognise him," but did not at first make his reasons clear.<sup>193</sup> Very soon after the government had revealed its stance, the local press hit back, and in a leader, "***The Gold Coast Echo*** .... espoused the right of the community of Cape Coast to elect and enstool Cudjo Imbrah as their King, with or without official recognition, and to advocate a scheme of municipal government for Cape Coast on native lines."<sup>194</sup> The people of Cape Coast also produced a petition, which outlined the noble pedigree of Nana Mbra I. The petition began, "we submit that Cudjoe-Mbrah is in every way fit and proper person for the post. In the list of Kings will be found one Agyr Ansa otherwise known as King Aggrey. This Agyr Ansa was the second real King of Cape Coast having succeeded Amradu Kofi the first *King*. Agyr Ansa had a sister named Addabin. Addabin also had a daughter named Akwaaba who was the mother of Cudjo Mbrah."<sup>195</sup>

The petition suggested that Kojo Mbra was the legitimate heir, and that the government should recognise him as such. In 1916, Francis Crowther, Secretary for Native Affairs, and one of the few contemporary Europeans to study Fante institutions in depth, suggested that the government was misguided in its decision. He argued that, "A few hours enquiry and a little sympathetic hearing of the question would have revealed that for the first time in thirty years the settlement of a much vexed question was in sight."<sup>196</sup> Crowther suggested that the *Oman* had chosen the right candidate because it was, "clear from the enclosures to the petition sent to the Secretary of State in 1890, that his relationship to Egyr Ansa, coupled with his right to the occupancy of the stool of Berempong Kojo, that is to say the line selected at the revolution of 1856, that enabled the Oman of Cape Coast to adjust to the difficulties of thirty years."<sup>197</sup> Casely-Hayford concluded emotively, "the people yearned for a King as an orphan child yearns for a lost parent."<sup>198</sup> There were those, such as Casely-Hayford, who saw the latent belligerence in the indigenous response, as demonstrating that, "it was the sentiment of nationality which prevailed"<sup>199</sup> But Kojo Mbra was not to be recognised by the government until 1910, a year before his death.<sup>200</sup>

Shortly after Kojo Mbra's enstoolment, the government set a pattern for their relationship that was to carry through to his death. The government had recently introduced the Labour Ordinance. The new ordinance ruled that a certain amount of stool labour had to be provided to serve municipal needs. Casely-Hayford asked, "But what had Cudjoe Imbrah to do with the 'Compulsory Labour Ordinance'?"

Nothing at all, if you please. The Government having objected to his enstoolment, and having done all they could to place obstacles in the way, and to weaken his influence, suddenly woke up to the fact after his enstoolment, that there was a King of Cape Coast, who could find labour for the Government, while the Government could not find labour for themselves.”<sup>201</sup>

Kojo Mbra replied to the British administration, “By your own act, I have not that control over my people now that my ancestors had; give me time, and I will try and find you the labourers that you want.”<sup>202</sup> The government gave a deadline by which it should receive the labour it requested, which Kojo Mbra found impossible to meet. Later the government served the *Omanbin* with a writ: he was then tried, convicted and imprisoned. Casely-Hayford (who was to successfully quash the *Omanbin*'s conviction on appeal)<sup>203</sup> complained, “he suffers ignominy unparalleled in the history of the country.”<sup>204</sup> Fortunately, he was “saved from a heavy pecuniary loss by technical points raised by his counsel.”<sup>205</sup> Not only was the incident damaging to Kojo Mbra, but it also came as an insult to the sections of the community that had supported his enstoolment. Many were shocked as the “self-same Cudjoe Imbrah, over whose enstoolment sensible men had shown such enthusiasm and such national spirit... they coolly clap him in gaol. Nay, worse, the King is treated as a common felon!”<sup>206</sup>

Although Kojo Mbra seemingly had the full support of the local community, he was comparatively less powerful and less respected than the *Amanbin* of the Aggrey dynasty, who had reigned over a divided Cape Coast. Not only was Mbra not acknowledged by the government, his tribunal had also lost its status after years of disuse. Perhaps more subtle was the *Omanbin*'s comparative loss of power to the European-educated members of the local community. Kojo Mbra was completely illiterate and unlike his four or five predecessors, he showed no interest in education or Christianity. His attitude to education and his receding constitutional role, relegated his views and policies to parochial issues. Issues that concerned the colony as a whole were increasingly being placed in the hands of those whose major qualification was their education and not their position in the local hierarchy.

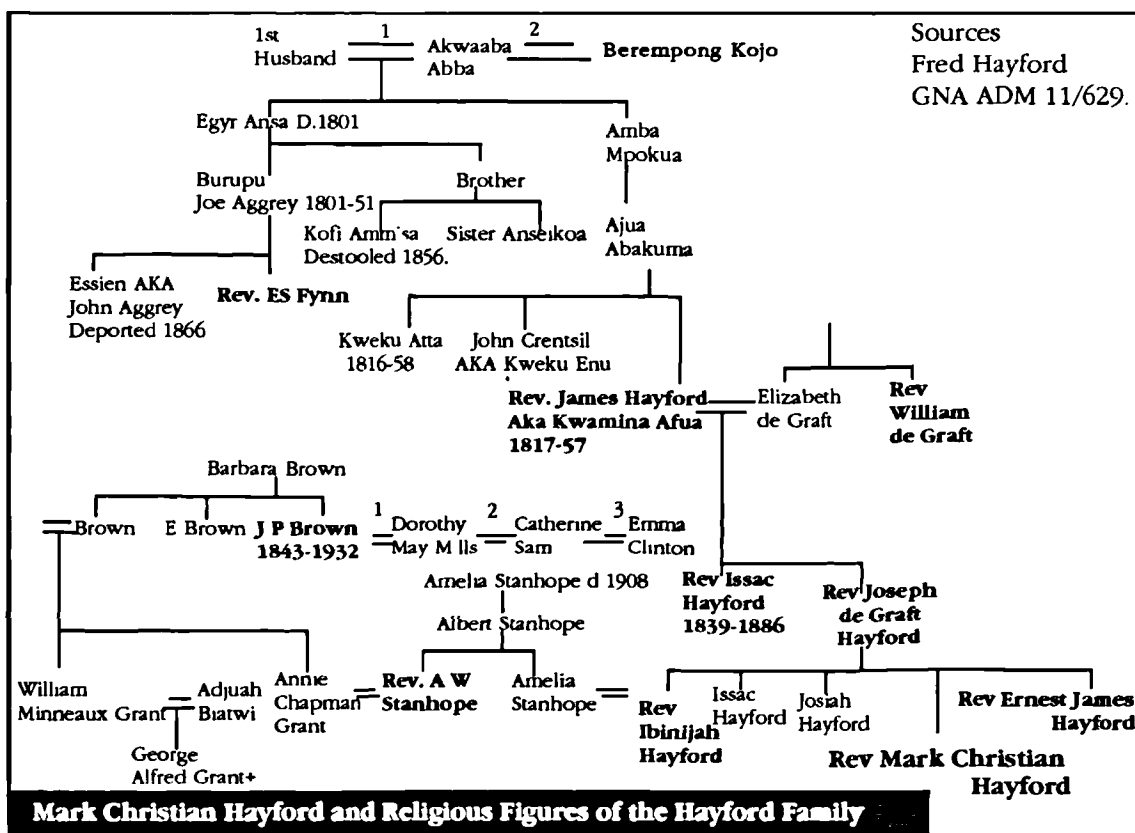
Although the optimism of the 1870s for self-government had not been fully justified, the Legislative Council and the Wesleyan Synod had offered forums through which the indigenous people could voice their opinions. These European-style institutions helped to reveal the usefulness of European education among the indigenous community. Most of the local schools were attached to local Churches which were usually controlled by Europeans. Certain members of the Cape Coast community, sought to wrestle the control of the Churches and their schools away from the Europeans.

## VIII. REV. MARK CHRISTIAN HAYFORD AND CHANGES IN THE PRACTICE OF CHRISTIANITY

In 1893, the Wesleyan Synod prohibited Wesleyans from marrying according to indigenous custom. This and other actions undertaken by the Church synod, alienated large numbers of Wesleyan church-goers over the next few decades. *The Gold Coast Aborigine* protested that marriage in Europe, varied between each country, "according to manners and customs of that nation,"<sup>207</sup> and did not see why this should not apply in their own situation.

Although the Wesleyan Church was about to go into decline, the Church was generally growing in Cape Coast. Freeman wrote enthusiastically about how 'far and near' it was spreading, saying, "Whilst writing this a sister returning from Dominase where she had been on a visit to good brother and father Rev. Mr Fynn, informs me that the Church that side is being similarly visited by the gracious spirit."<sup>208</sup> By 1857, however, T.B. Freeman had resigned because of his refusal to keep within the financial limits of what the committee fixed in London. Many of the earliest ministers also began to drift away.

By the 1860s, there had been a Christian contingent in the stool family for a century. There is a direct genealogical path from Rev. Philip Quaque, through, Joseph de Graft to Rev. James Hayford. However, Hayford's children and grandchildren, were the first of many families of ministers to leave the Wesleyans en masse. Rev. Issac Hayford, Rev. Josiah Hayford and Rev. Jos de Graft Hayford had all left the Wesleyan Church by 1870.<sup>209</sup> Jos de Graft Hayford almost returned to the Wesleyan Church in the 1870s, when he was a candidate for the ministry. His examination before the





synod was postponed when he was called to the front against the Asante. Later he was put in jail when the Mankessim constitution was received by the governor,<sup>210</sup> never to be a formal Wesleyan minister again. The last member of the Hayford family to enter the church was the aptly named, Mark Christian Hayford, in 1892. Like his father and uncles, his commitment to the Wesleyans was to be short-lived, though he was to remain one of the most committed and influential Cape Coast Christians to the end of his life.

Mark Christian Hayford was a junior civil servant. He had entered the service of the government in 1888, and risen to the position of clerk of the Supreme Court of the territories, which gave him a yearly income

of £250, subject to increase of £30 a year.<sup>211</sup> After four years in what must have been one of the most prestigious jobs on the coast, M.C. Hayford gave it all up for the Church. For at least a year before Hayford officially approached the church, he had been a 'local preacher' at Araba,<sup>212</sup> where he had used his influence "to protect some of the converts from the unjust and rough treatment at the hands of their neighbours."<sup>213</sup> M.C. Hayford was, in addition to his preaching, involved in the Cape Coast Temperance movement. He was also active in areas further afield. The head of the MMS said, "the adjacent towns have been visited by him, and have heard the glorious gospel from his lips."<sup>214</sup> He had worked with the slaves of the Royal Niger Company and it was said that he had given them words of peace and consolation.<sup>215</sup>

The Temperance movement had created a new set of moral objectives for the Gold Coast, which were completely supported by the press. *The Gold Coast Aborigine* preached, "do not take God's name in vain, do not fight, quarrel or brawl, do not buy or sell or drink spirituous liquors, do all the good you can to your neighbour. follow strictly the golden rule, by doing unto others, as would they should do unto you."<sup>216</sup> But while demanding self-improvement, the press suggested that, "to change men permanently to make them members of such societies true to themselves, and to the principles of their organisation there needs an alteration within them as without. No legislation can make them unselfish or true or upright."<sup>217</sup> *The Aborigine* announced that "those who belong to friendly societies are helping towards this good in as far as they enter into the spirit and meaning."<sup>218</sup>

M.C. Hayford was an example of someone who lived by these tenets. In August 1892, he wrote to the synod, "I have for some time past had a desire to enter into the

Christian ministry, and to consecrate my life and work to God ... those of an earlier day - earlier generation - who occupy the field are, one by one, passing to their rest-with their places unfilled.”<sup>219</sup> After the luxury of £250 per year as a civil servant, Hayford thought that on entering the ministry he should accept a cut in income. Hayford asked for £96 per annum as his minimum wage. He was offered £75.<sup>220</sup> He argued as politely as possible, that Rev Parker, Rev. Hayfron and Rev. Hayford had all recently left the church, but whilst in the ministry, Parker had earned £100 per annum as his previous position had been taken into consideration.<sup>221</sup> The synod would not compromise.

Five years later, M.C. Hayford travelled to England to have all his teeth extracted.<sup>222</sup> While in England he discovered the Baptist Church and was attracted by its egalitarian policies. Upon his return to the Gold Coast, he began plans to change denomination. Hayford explained to the Synod that, “having received a call from another Church,” which he was pleased to accept,- “seeing in it the directing hand of God,” he had decided to give the Wesleyan Church notice of his severance from that day.<sup>223</sup> Unlike his predecessors, Hayford did not leave the Wesleyan Church to take up another profession or because he had lost his faith. Hayford left because he felt that another Church could offer him a preferential framework through which to express his faith. Judging from the hostility of their reaction, the Wesleyan Synod were insulted by Hayford’s resignation. After heavy criticism, Hayford complained of “defamation or attempted defamation of character” by the Wesleyan Church.<sup>224</sup> Rev. Ellis, his direct superior, had allegedly accused Hayford of making “deliberately false statements” in front of the synod.<sup>225</sup> Despite the Synod’s resentment, M.C. Hayford was ordained in Lagos, and became the sole minister of the Baptist Church of the Gold Coast.<sup>226</sup>

For some time, the Wesleyan Church had been criticised in the indigenous press for being staid and conservative. Its resistance to full acceptance of Africans as ministers on equal terms with Europeans, had made it increasingly alienating and irrelevant to the indigenous population. In the mid-1860s, Rev. Mckenzie, a black West Indian, left his job as acting colonial and garrison chaplain. Mckenzie argued that he was being racially discriminated against with the establishment of a rival service for ‘Her Majesties forces’ at the Wesleyan Church, under Rev. West, a European vicar. Conran, the Governor, argued that people preferred the Wesleyan service because Mckenzie’s voice was not strong enough.<sup>227</sup>

Another later incident involved,

*the Gold Coast Methodist Times, which was organised, edited and managed by that able young man the Rev Attob Abuma, then in the active ministry of the Wesleyan body of the Gold Coast The paper was the property of that body, and Attob Abuma was but their servant But the intrepid editor did not think it right to confine the columns of the paper*

*to church news and religious controversy. He saw no reason why the grievances of the people should not be ventilated, and their temporal amelioration enhanced in as far as it lay within the power of that spiritual organ.*<sup>228</sup>

Towards the end of the century, the *Gold Coast Methodist Times* supported indigenous protests against the Lands Bill, and the Synod decided to close the paper. Attoh Ahuma “gave up the editorship, and the paper died from sheer inanition.”<sup>229</sup> These, and many other comparable incidents, served to make the Wesleyan Church less and less popular. Kwamankra, the main protagonist of Casely-Hayford’s semi-autobiographical *Ethiopia Unbound*, summed it up in his reaction to a church service, “The preacher was a white man, preaching to a black congregation; and outside on the front wall of the holy edifice was to be seen a notice which informed all whom it might concern that there would be a service *for* Europeans in the Club House at the station at a certain hour that day. Kwamankra turned away in disgust.”<sup>230</sup>

Casely-Hayford’s brother, Mark Christian Hayford, also, “believed in a church led by Africans and independent in its administration from institutions in Europe all America.”<sup>231</sup> Mark Hayford argued, “the whites with whom the blacks were associated in Christian work would, as a general rule, not allow them their due rights and privileges, not for any reason of want of intrinsic merit in them - but because they were black.”<sup>232</sup> Many concluded that there would “never be anything like genuine Christianity on the Gold Coast and in the hinterland till the missionaries have begun from the beginning to build up a national Church on scientific lines – a Church wherein the Spirit of Christ will be all in all, and the letter a dead thing.”<sup>233</sup> Casely-Hayford reflected that it seemed inconsistent that the indigenous convert could not, “sing his own native songs, and play his native airs in church...why should not the native be invited to church by the call of the big drum, as he is generally called to any public meeting in the country?”<sup>234</sup>

The Church could not ignore these new demands for change. From within the indigenous population, several figures emerged to fulfil the demand for a relevant form of Christianity. Amongst these, were the Prophet William Wade Harris, John Swatson and Sampson Oppong.<sup>235</sup> While these charismatic figures swathed the coast with their message, Mark Christian Hayford began work to facilitate the momentous change in the Church as it became independent. Mark Christian Hayford was not as popular as the charismatic religious men. Haliburton in his article, “*M.C. Hayford a non success story*”, compares Hayford unfavourably to other contemporary religious figures and suggests, “Mark either held the wrong cards, or he was in the wrong game, or he played very badly.”<sup>236</sup> The comparison of Hayford with these other religious figures is perhaps inappropriate. Hayford was taking on the mantle of his forefathers, and sought to create a bridge in a continuum that could be traced back to Joseph de Graft, Philip Quaake and *Berempong* Kojo. M.C. Hayford created the first independent church on the Gold Coast that operated internationally, and that



was his achievement. The Church itself, also as a permanent structure, offered a different form of religious commitment to travelling evangelists, who mostly made temporary conversions.

Mark Christian Hayford held his earliest services as a Baptist evangelist in the Ebenezer Hotel in Cape Coast. His services were sometimes disturbed by “rude persons who threw sand and stones and other missiles at us through the windows.”<sup>237</sup> Gradually, his congregation grew to a point where he had to move to the larger Good Templar’s Hall.<sup>238</sup> By 1906, the construction of his own church was complete. Through his years of determined struggle, he had earned the nickname of ‘Osofo moko’ - Rev. Pepper, because of his fiery temper.<sup>239</sup>

Later in the same year that Hayford established the Baptist church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church on the Gold Coast was also inaugurated. It was founded with a similar resolution as Rev. Hayford’s Baptist church. Its founders were Rev. F. Egyir Assam (Rev. Assam, like many others, was an ex-Wesleyan minister.<sup>240</sup>) with T.B. Freeman Kofi Assam Bl and de Graft Johnson: they announced proudly that it was a church “governed entirely by coloured men.” *The Aborigine* reported, “It is indeed, an entirely Negro Church; organised by Negroes for Negroes, manned, governed, controlled and supported by Negro energy, intellect, liberality and contributions. In fact, it is the sentiment of the church, that however great may be the friendship, intellect or interest of any white man, in well-being, Christianisation and enlightenment of the Negro race be he European, American or Asiatic, he cannot successfully reach the emotional feelings of the masses of our people.”<sup>241</sup>

After only a few months, indigenous Baptist schools had opened at Cape Coast, Elmina, Saltpond and Anaman. Some 200 people had joined the church.<sup>242</sup> Although this was not a phenomenal start, it must be compared to the huge organisation of the Wesleyans, who had been on the coast for more the one hundred years, and had not converted large numbers of indigenous people. Clarke estimates that by 1885 there were, “5,300 active members and 77 schools with 2356 students.”<sup>243</sup> The Wesleyans had consolidated the growth of Christianity by making it a permanent feature of Gold Coast life. But the Wesleyans had become remote from the community and less relevant than the new independent churches. As a result, during a period in which it should have been growing exponentially, interest began to wane.

## **IX. JAMES HUTTON BREW AND THE ANTI-LANDS BILL DEPUTATION**

The Crowns Lands Bill was first mooted in 1894, when the government discussed the idea of vesting the Queen with all unoccupied lands on the coast.<sup>244</sup> A deputation of educated Fante and Ga, complained convincingly to the then Governor Brandford Griffith, and the Crown Lands Bill scheme fell through. In 1897, Governor Maxwell made a trip between Accra and Axim, and was impressed at the potential for what he saw as wasteland. Maxwell made moves to re-introduce the ordinance, in an endeavour to exploit the seemingly disused land. "This bill professed to protect the lands of the natives against undue advantage taken of them by foreigners in buying concessions of them."<sup>245</sup>

At first the Bill was welcomed by the indigenous community, but attitudes changed as people realised it was to be a more sweeping ordinance than Griffiths' original bill. Maxwell appended to Griffiths' basic idea, a concession court, with powers to grant land certificates. The court was above the supreme court and was meant to supersede it. The land certificates could render null and void all previous claims.<sup>246</sup> The Lands Bill of 1897, "aroused the energy of the Kings, Chiefs, Councillors, Rulers and inhabitants of this country, who solemnly protested against the Government proposal."<sup>247</sup>

The Bill itself, suggested that it was only concerned with unowned or waste land. 'Waste land' was defined as land "of which for a period of thirty years next before the commencement of this ordinance no beneficial use has been made for cultivation or habitation."<sup>248</sup> The Government argued that it was fair that, rather than see the land go uncultivated, that all 'waste land' and forest land in the colony should be vested in "the Queen for the use of the Government of the colony... all minerals within and under all land in the colony save as hereinafter expected are hereby vested in the Queen for use of the Government of the Colony."<sup>249</sup>

Even a District Commissioner, W.H. Adams, saw the anomalies in the Government's line of argument, writing in 1897 that "every acre of land on the Gold Coast has an owner. There is no unoccupied land. Though no boundaries may be visible to the European, they are perfectly clear to the eyes of the owners. It would seem as if in the remote past the whole land has been vested in various King's, each Stool, with its boundaries, forming a commonwealth."<sup>250</sup>

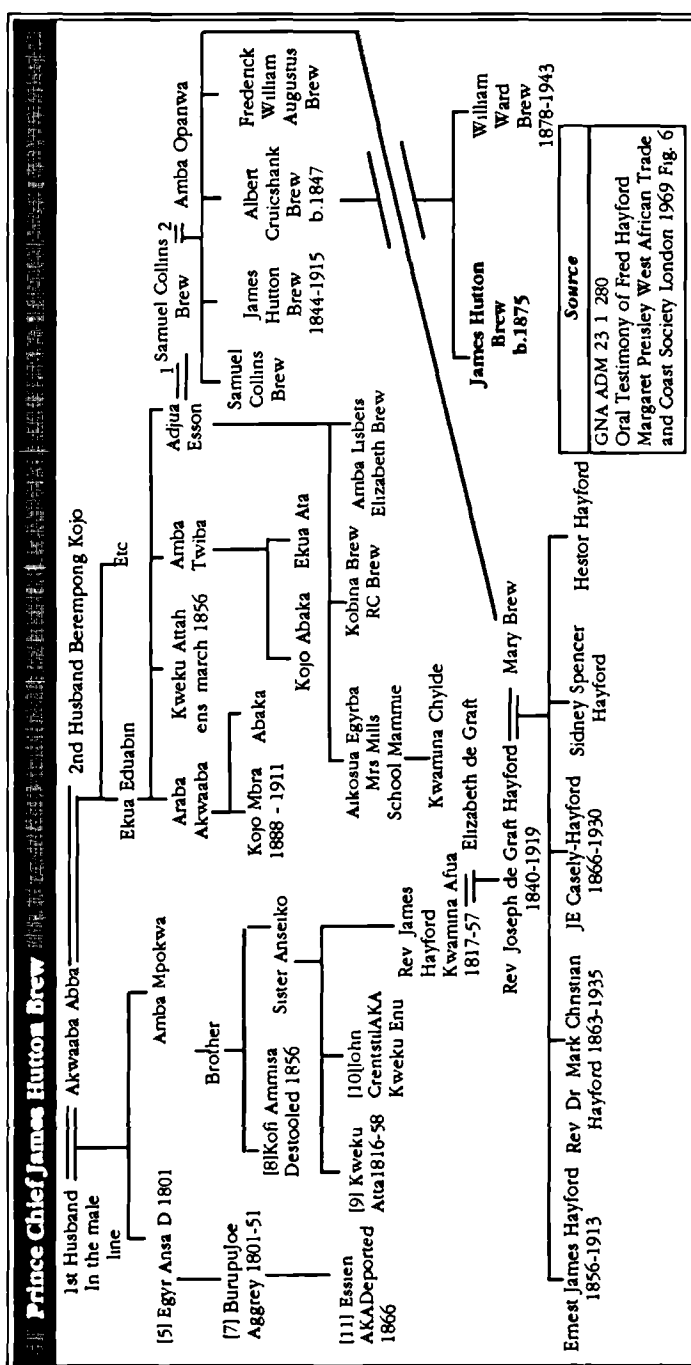
Predictably, James Hutton Brew spearheaded the indigenous reaction to the Bill. Brew wrote in the *Gold Coast Leader*, "we are thrown back upon the only recourse left to us to send to England a deputation without further ado or further delay and this is what we urge upon the public as our only means of escape from continued oppression and misrepresentation."<sup>251</sup> He claimed that, "it is quite evident, that we are at this time passing through one of the most critical times in our political existence, and none of us can shut his eyes to the fact".<sup>252</sup> Brew concluded that, "never has the

necessity of sending a deputation to England to state our grievances to the good people there, made itself so palpably felt as now.”<sup>253</sup>

Brew's second attempt to organise a delegation to England in five years, brought the weight of the government down on him.<sup>254</sup> District Commissioner, Henry Vroom, began an investigation into the legitimacy of Brew's titles of *Prince* and *Chief*.<sup>255</sup> Brew was undaunted and in the *Gold Coast Express* he wrote, “Long ere the white man appeared on the Gold Coast there were kings and chiefs, and persons in authority; so elected, created, and recognised by their people...The powers and authority they exercise and enjoy, they were in possession of before any Government assumed a protectorate over them.”<sup>256</sup>

At an unprecedented meeting, organised by the government, chaired by Vroom, and attended by *Omanhin* Otu IV, *Obin* Amba Bedua, *Obin* Kra Kwasi,

*Omankyiami* Kuaw Ayin, *Kyiami* of Dunkwa Eduabin and J.E. Biney (for the *Omanhin* of Cape Coast), James Hutton Brew was made to defend his title.<sup>257</sup> In Brew's defence, the *Omanhin* of Abura Dunkwa explained that the present stoolholders's uncle, Tawia, was the father of Brew's mother Amba Opanwa. This was the justification for Brew's title of 'Prince'. Brew's title of 'Chief' was obtained not long after the 1874 war, when Brew was enstooled as a *Chief*. He allegedly paid £2.8.6 for the privilege.<sup>258</sup> The women of the Abakrampa area had daubed themselves with pipe clay and danced on the occasion of his enstoolment.<sup>259</sup>



The *Gold Coast Aborigine* was outraged, “why so much ado, we ask about Prince Brew? Why cannot he be let alone? Must he be hunted down as a patriot he resents any attempt of the government on the rights and liberties of his people and ably and unanswerably defends them? .... Whatever Brew's faults<sup>260</sup> he is in reality Prince-Chief of Abakrampa and Dunkwa and neither the Gold Coast Government, nor the Secretary of State directing it can unmake him so.”<sup>261</sup>

The government's treatment of the Brew issue, the recent failure to implement a proposed poll tax,<sup>262</sup> and the impending failure of a house tax, only served to heighten peoples' resistance to the Lands Bill. The *Gold Coast Aborigine*, declared, “Governor Hodgson may force his house tax on us; the Land Bill may be passed, with all the dignity and worth of Great Britain: we insignificant as we may be, may seek our rights and defend them, and perhaps defend them to the very last.”<sup>263</sup>

The first wave of resistance arose in a flood of petitions. There was an Axim petition against the Lands Bill that included among its signatures the two most senior local men, *Obin Kweku Atta* and *Obin Kodwo Abroko*.<sup>264</sup> There was also a petition from the ‘*King and Chiefs of the Protectorate*’ against the bill, which the petitioners saw as a piece of legislation designed to regulate the administration of public lands which they argued could not be proved to be public property, “but are in absolute possession of Kings, Chiefs, towns, villages, communities, families, companies tribes or private individuals of this country.”<sup>265</sup> There was a petition from Anomabu which was organised by *Omanbin Amonoo IV*, AKA Richard Acquah Harrison,<sup>266</sup> which argued that as “landowners of stool property or of ancestral property acquired by purchase or other lawful means .... have not the slightest doubt but that their properties as well as their rights will be seriously affected by the proposed land ordinance.”<sup>267</sup> It seemed that all over the Gold Coast, there was ‘anxiety’ about the Lands Bill.<sup>268</sup>

The residue of the Mankessim Council organised “a grand congregation of the Kings, Chiefs etc. .... together with the Captains, Head men and other influential members of Cape Coast community. “<sup>269</sup> A platform was erected in front of Frank Hayfron's store, on which stood a group of men who were selected to form the basis of a well-qualified forum, specifically to complain about the Bill.<sup>270</sup> The forum agreed to call itself the Aborigines Rights Protection Society (the A.R.P.S.).<sup>271</sup>

Kimble suggests that this “was perhaps the first organised protest on anything approaching a national scale in the Gold Coast.”<sup>272</sup> One of the *Chiefs* present stood and said, “This formation of the Aborigines Society amongst us, is very opportune. May the spirit of unity that has brooded over us to bring us together thus continue to lead us! Here the young and old, the educated and illiterate meet together for the common good of the land.”<sup>273</sup> The educated sections of the community felt that the society, “should see, that our Kings and *Chiefs* do have intelligent people to act as

their clerks, for it is unquestionably true, that some at least of our troubles arise from the fact that these fifth rate “scholars” do not translate Government communications to them properly, nor can the authorities understand their “high English” and the result very often is grave and serious misunderstandings on both sides.”<sup>274</sup>

Many scholars have concluded, that the A.R.P.S. was really a forum through which the ‘educated elite’ could extend their power and influence. Gocking suggests that the establishment of the A.R.P.S. was the culmination of the long process of ‘creolisation’. Gocking argues that by the 1890s, there was a clear divide between the ‘educated classes’ and the ‘traditional order’. Within this context, Gocking perceives the A.R.P.S. as the ‘educated elite’, ‘making an alliance with the native order’ for their own advantage.<sup>275</sup> This sort of historiography has represented this group as an insular and homogenous ‘elite’ whose prime motivation was to secure political and economic power.

Kaplow suggests that this group was self-conscious about their status, and demonstrated this by the adoption of contrived and conspicuous symbols reflecting European culture and style. She posits that their homes were, “European in style and furnished with imported materials insofar as the owner’s means permitted.”<sup>276</sup> Kaplow argues that the process of Europeanisation was creating a hegemony, with those at the forefront of the process enjoying the advantages of power and wealth. Kaplow asserts that, “Over time the process of Europeanization struck ever deeper roots in the indigenous community. This process was aided and accelerated by the marked tendency of the African merchants to frequent and marry each other; nearly all the important families were related to each other through multiple connections.”<sup>277</sup> Scholars who hold this view, have also suggested that outward manifestations of this hegemony, were consciously represented in European clothes and accessories. Kimble remarks that, “European styles of dress were important as an outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual superiority.”<sup>278</sup>

This analysis of the process of Europeanisation, not only seems to identify formal differences between the ‘elite’ and the non-‘elite’, it goes further and implies that the ‘elite’ sought to propagate those differences. Kaplow goes as far as to suggest that the hegemony did not only operate in socio-political spheres, it also penetrated marital systems. It seems clear from the detailed genealogical work done for this study of Cape Coast, that illiterate figures, especially women, made major contributions to local politics throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth.<sup>279</sup> Illiteracy also figured in many of the families of the ‘elite’. It only becomes possible to identify complete nuclear families of literate individuals from the 1920s onward. Many of the figures who are identified as belonging to the ‘elite’, married illiterate women and had certain children who they chose not to educate. What have been seen as outward manifestations of the homogeneity of the ‘elite’, are an equally tenuous means for defining members of this group. In 1899, the *Gold Coast Express*, ran an article on the fashion among Kroo-men of wearing heavy frock coats and beavers and

collars.<sup>280</sup> The fashion for European clothing, evidently effected every economic echelon of local society. Fashion seems to have been of superficial significance in the nineteenth century. Many lawyers relaxed in Kente.<sup>281</sup>

What refutes the application of elite theory in this context beyond all doubt, is the way in which the 'traditional order' rallied to the defence of James Hutton Brew's credentials. Brew, as the architect of the anti-Lands Bill organisation, is probably the most likely recipient of the tag of 'educated elite'. Yet *Amanbin* of Abura Dunkwa, Anomabu and Cape Coast, were prepared to testify to the authenticity of Brew's right to speak on their behalf. These testimonies represent one of the few direct reactions of the indigenous hierarchy to 'educated elite' control. It seems clear, that the attending *Amanbin* did not perceive the difference between Brew's credentials and their own. It seems that the formal label of 'elite', if appropriate, was not recognised by the contemporary community.

The historiography has identified education and Christianity as being complementary characteristics that were shared by the 'elite'. This view may have developed because most European education was connected in some way to the Church. Some scholars see a tradition of nationalism and passive protest having its roots in the growth of education. Bartels identifies the aggression of the Aggrey *Oman*, as marking the beginning of nationalism and suggests that, "nationalism in Ghana reached its second phase in the Fante Confederation."<sup>282</sup> Bartels justifies this assertion, by linking passive protest to the growth in power of the mission educated. Bartels suggests that, "Having been ushered into the freedom of the Gospel, and taught to understand it, these leaders brought a genuine discontent into their discussion of the affairs of State and took back into the ... Church traces of the peoples' aspirations. There was a kind of cross-fertilization with these leaders as the agents."<sup>283</sup> Bartels thus perceives generations of Christians, leading Cape Coast's protest movement, beginning with Aggrey through to the formation of the Aborigines Rights Protection Society.<sup>284</sup>

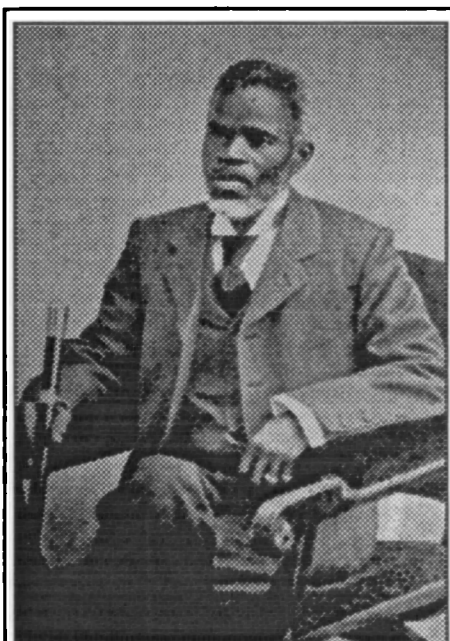
There is an important question to be asked as to whether Christianity enabled nationalism or whether it was simply part of the social paraphernalia of a powerful section of the Cape Coast community. Debrunner seems to suggest, that although "Methodist laymen played a large part" in organisations such as the Fante Confederation,<sup>285</sup> their Christianity only contributed to the growth of the movement, and did not enable it. Debrunner acknowledged that along with Christianity, many people involved in the Fante Confederation were also connected to, "literary, intellectual and social clubs, societies and Masonic lodges"<sup>286</sup> Christianity was a single constituent in a complex set of social commitments. It seems that within this context, these people should not be defined or grouped by their education or religion. The A.R.P.S. attempted to look beyond such limited commitments, by defining the society's objective as to "promote and effect unity of purpose and of action among all Aborigines of the Gold Coast."<sup>287</sup>

The promotion of this unity was to be done by protecting the people, “in the free enjoyment of their ancestral lands and ancient institutions and other rights at all times by constitutional means and methods,”<sup>288</sup> and by inculcating in “the members the importance of the continued loyalty to the British crown.”<sup>289</sup> This was to be done primarily to foster, “in the rising generation a knowledge of their historical past, and to encourage the study of laws, customs and institutions of their country.”<sup>290</sup> The actual constitution of the A.R.P.S., was a direct development of the constitution written by James Hutton Brew some decades earlier, which must be seen as an indication of Brew’s foresight, and on-going influence.

Each *Chief* donated £50 to send a counsel to the Legislative Council. Governor Maxwell was unsympathetic and retorted, “you can inform your clients that I do not mean to take their lands from them.” But to the dismay of the new group, a second reading of the bill went ahead. By the time of the third reading, the ambiguities had been ironed out of the bill, and the A.R.P.S. became aware that the Asante area was included in its scope.

In response to the situation, the local community planned to raise the £4-5000 necessary to send a deputation to England. £400 was raised from the Cape Coast *Asafo* companies alone, and many individuals donated £5-10, which allowed a solicitor to be immediately employed in London. The deputation made immediate plans to leave. The deputation was made up of George Hughes, T.F.E Jones and J.W. Sey, all of whom were prominent Cape Coast men. Following in the footsteps of his elder cousin, James Hutton Brew, J.E. Casely-Hayford, became involved as the local co-ordinator of the news of the London delegation’s actions.<sup>291</sup>

By coincidence, Maxwell travelled to England on the same boat at the deputation. Illness broke out during the voyage, and Maxwell died en route. One of the deputation, Sey, was taken ill, but was fortunate enough to recover. The deputation stayed four days in Liverpool and then travelled to London by train.<sup>292</sup> They were successful in their aims and returned triumphant. Casely-Hayford commented that, “a more splendid victory in the annals of Gold Coast Constitutional History could not have been scored than that which marked the labours of the Gold Coast Aborigines’ Rights Protection Society in the fall of 1898.”<sup>293</sup>



J. Sey  
(Source Casely-Hayford Archive.)

Upon their return, it had become indisputable that Cape Coast was, “the leading town of the Gold Coast.”<sup>294</sup> J.E. Casely-Hayford argued that it contained “within its walls the best intelli-

gence of the country.”<sup>295</sup> For the closing years of the nineteenth century, Cape Coast was the centre of the indigenous church, the most potent indigenous press, the indigenous protest movement and the most famed social scene. The A.R.P.S became the hub of this dynamic epicentre. Casely-Hayford suggested, that the *Amanbin* and *Abin* were “wont to send their big Linguists on important occasions to consult with their intelligent ‘sons’ and chosen representatives, to wit, the members of the Gold Coast Aborigines Rights Protection Society.”<sup>296</sup>

The embarrassing issue of the Lands Bill had put government officials on the defensive. Perhaps as a result, the government planned to change the face of indigenous leadership, by appointing what they saw as a like-minded man as *Omanbin*. In April 1898, a rumour went around the town that the government was attempting to install the *Tufubin*, W.Z. Coker as the *Omanbin*, in place of Kojo Mbra.<sup>297</sup> In a letter said to be from the Acting Colonial Secretary, C. Rigby Williams, it stated that, Coker’s “position of *Chief* of Cape Coast will henceforth be recognised. *Chief* Coker may be informed.”<sup>298</sup> An anonymous letter in the *Gold Coast Aborigine* asked “who made him *chief*; *chief* of what?”<sup>299</sup> The letter went on to tell how Coker had worked for the colonial service and had lost his job, and of how the *Tufubin* had been sent to prison for some sort of corruption.<sup>300</sup>

Coker was incensed by the allegations against him and made his position even less tenable by going out with a loaded revolver with the intention of shooting the author of the inflammatory letter, a man named Quacoo. Although the original letter had been anonymous, the author’s name had been mistakenly disclosed by the newspaper in the following issue.<sup>301</sup> The government were not deterred by events, and Kojo Mbra was summoned before Deputy Governor Cummings, and told that if Coker was not recognised as a *Chief*, Mbra’s “deportation would be followed by the other chiefs.”<sup>302</sup> Kojo Mbra stood his ground, and with the support of much of the town, Coker was never made *Omanbin*.

The turn of the century saw Cape Coast at its most impressive. Although the traditional hub of political activity, the *Oman* and the *Omanbin* had been partially displaced and independent members of the stool family had stepped forward to more than fill the gap. Many of the ancestors of these men, had traditionally been mediators between the *Oman* and the government, so with the demise of the *Oman*, they were the natural heirs to that political role. James Hutton Brew was one of the most successful of these figures. He took a central role in the Fante Confederation, the anti-Lands Bill deputation and the A.R.P.S.. The continuity between these events, was partially moulded by Brew’s contribution. Like *Berempong* Kojo, Brew, stood on the periphery of local politics, from where he could safely affect its causality, whilst consecutive *Amanbin* suffered from the encroachments of colonialism. Brew’s relationship with the *Oman*, has been perceived within much of the historiography as part of the manipulation of the traditional order by the elite. But the support he gained from the *Amanbin* and *Abin*, seems to suggest that this view was not shared



by those he represented, and Brew's positions of *Prince* and *Chief*, seem to show that this view was not accurate. Brew's passive and constructive alternatives to Aggrey's belligerent petitioning, were to become precedents that would be used again and again in the political development of the Gold Coast.

Notes: Chapter III From Protectorate to Colony.

- <sup>1</sup> At this point Fante territory extended from the Sweet river, west of Cape Coast, across to the river Sekkom West of Accra. The Amanhin of Cape Coast were Essien (John Aggrey) and Kwesi Atta. The Omanhin of Anomabu was Amoonoo Ansah or Quow Samman. At Abrah ruled Anfoo Otoo at Inkkoosookoom Esee Andorh, at Ayan Acquano, At Afooah Mooquah, at Ekkoonfie Ackinee, at Gomooah, Ortabill, At Argoonah had Yow Doodoo for its Omanhin, but was by rights of war, annexed to the Goomooah district. The paramount Omanhin was Eddo, whose stool was in Mankessim, the traditional capital town of Fante. See, *African Times*, 23 July, 1868, P.8
- <sup>2</sup> See, Moraes Farias, P.F. and Barber, Karin *Self Assertion and Brokerage*. Birmingham. 1990.
- <sup>3</sup> *African Times* 23 May 1867 P.126.
- <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, P.127
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, P.128
- <sup>6</sup> Tufuhin Coker GNA, ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>8</sup> Kofi Sackey GNA ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- <sup>9</sup> *African Times* 23 December 1867. P.69.
- <sup>10</sup> Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*. Oxford. 1963. P.223
- <sup>11</sup> Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*. Oxford. 1963. P.222. Wilks emphasises that the Anglo-Dutch treaty alienated the Fante and eroded their traditional loyalty to the British administration. See Wilks, I. *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*. London. 1975 P.227.
- <sup>12</sup> Wilks, I. *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*. London. 1975 P.227. See also, Yarak, L.W. *Asante and the Dutch 1744-1873*. Oxford, 1990. P.280.
- <sup>13</sup> Agbodeka F. "The Fanti Confederacy." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Africa*. Vol. 7. 1965. P.100.
- <sup>14</sup> Webster, J.B., Boahen, A.A. with Tidy, M. *The revolutionary years West Africa since 1800*. Burnt Hill 1984. PP.158-159.
- <sup>15</sup> Agbodeka F. "The Fanti Confederacy." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*. Vol. 7. 1965. P.98.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>17</sup> Limberg, L "The Economy of the Fante Confederacy." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana, Vol XI*. 1970. P.83.
- <sup>18</sup> Sarbah, J. *Fanti National Constitution*, London. 1906. P.201
- <sup>19</sup> Limberg, L "The Economy of the Fante Confederacy." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana, Vol XI*. 1970. P.83.
- <sup>20</sup> Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*. Oxford. 1963. PP.205-9
- <sup>21</sup> Dispatch from Ussher to Kennedy, CO96/79, 6 April 1868, cited in Metcalfe G.E. *Great Britain and Ghana, Documents of Ghana History 1807-1957*. Ghana 1964, p.323.
- <sup>22</sup> Cited in Agbodeka F. "The Fanti Confederacy." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*. Vol. 7. 1965. P.107.
- <sup>23</sup> Agbodeka F. "The Fanti Confederacy." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*. Vol. 7. 1965. P.96. Also see report of address by Conran to local merchants cited in Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*. Oxford. 1963. P.218. which seems to support Agbodeka's analysis.
- <sup>24</sup> Cited in Sarbah, John Mensah *Fanti National Constitution*. London, 1906. J.H. Brew, Fante Confederation P.190
- <sup>25</sup> Agbodeka F. "The Fanti Confederacy." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*. Vol. 7. 1965. P.104.
- <sup>26</sup> Tufuhin Coker, GNA, ADM. 11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- <sup>27</sup> GNA, ADM. 11/629 & 1759.
- <sup>28</sup> Tufuhin Coker, GNA, ADM. 11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- <sup>29</sup> Casely-Hayford, Joseph Ephraim. *Ethiopia Unbound; Studies in Race Emancipation*. London, 1969. First published London, 1911 P.71
- <sup>30</sup> *African Times*, 23 May 1868. P.127.
- <sup>31</sup> Tufuhin Coker, GNA, ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>33</sup> CO 96 79.A Proclamation by T. Jones, Acting Colonial Secretary

- 34 I have not been able to find out to whom they were sold, Limberg, L "The Economy of the Fante Confederacy." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vol XI. 1970. P. 95.
- 35 Tufuhin Coker GNA ADM. 11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- 36 Wilks, I. *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*. London. 1975 PP.227-228.
- 37 *African Times*, 23 November 1868.
- 38 *African Times* 23 July 1868, P.5.
- 39 CO 96/95. 42. 6th April 1872. Governor. Pine to Lord Cardwell January 1865.
- 40 Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study* London. 1969. P 161.
- 41 *Ibid.*, P.162.
- 42 Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*, Oxford. 1963. PP. 232-5.
- 43 *A Report of a Commission of Enquiry Under the Commissions of Enquiry Ordinance 1893, Into the Relationship Between the Stools of Abra, of Domtnase and of Kwaman, Prt 1. P.7.*
- 44 Such as Governor Ussher.
- 45 Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*. Oxford. 1963. P.208.
- 46 Sarbah, John Mensah, *Fanti National Constitution*. London, 1968. J.H. Brew, Fante Confederation P.201.
- 47 Casely-Hayford was a generation younger than Brew and so called him uncle, but was his cousin.
- 48 Casely-Hayford J.E. *Gold Coast Native Institutions*. London .1970. Originally London, 1903 P.186.
- 49 *Ibid.*
- 50 Gocking, R. *The Historic Akoto: A Social History of Cape Coast Ghana 1843-1948*. Stanford, 1981. P.125.
- 51 *Ibid.*
- 52 *Ibid.*, P.130.
- 53 Investigations were done on his credentials to satisfy civil servants at the highest level and they concluded that "Mr. Brew is chief of a small town called Dunquah which is under the King of Abura. He was at one time a solicitor, but was suspended from practice by one of the judges of the Supreme Court in 1882 or 1883. He is the son of the late Samuel Collins Brew, who was a trader at Anomabu, and at one time District Commissioner of Saltpond. I need not point out that his position as headman of a village does not warrant any assumption of rank." *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1890-6*, Shannon/Ireland. P.587. Despite this, the local press later proved the Brew was a legitimate *Chief*.
- 54 J. Pope Hennessy appears to have been willing to look at the position of Confederation afresh, despite Ussher's earlier severe criticisms. See Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*, Oxford 1963. PP.258-259.
- 55 Danquah, J.B. "Historical Significance of the Bond of 1844." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*. Vol III, Prt 1, 1957. P.26.
- 56 *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.567
- 57 *Ibid.*
- 58 J.H. Brew to J. Pope Hennessy, 16 April 1872. See *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.573
- 59 J.H. Brew to J. Pope Hennessy, 16 April 1872. See, *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.574
- 60 Letter from Horton to Earl Granville, Secretary of State for the Colonies as cited in Wilson, H *Origins of West African Nationalism*, London. 1969. P.204.
- 61 Despatch from C.S. Salmon to A.E. Kennedy, 4 December 1871. See, *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.522.
- 62 Extract Pope Hennessy to Earl of Kimberley (Secretary of State), 29 October 1872. See, *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.566.
- 63 Despatch C.S. Salmon to A E. Kennedy, 10 December 1871. See. *British Parliamentary*

*Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.523.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> James Amissah etc. to Pope Hennessy, 18 April 1872. See, *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.586.

<sup>66</sup> D.P. Chalmers to Pope Hennessy, 20 April 1872. See, *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.596.

<sup>67</sup> A letter to the Editor of the *African Times*, 1 December 1871. See, *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.536.

<sup>68</sup> Petition of J.A. Fynn to Pope Hennessy, 19 April 1872. See, *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.588.

<sup>69</sup> F. Fitzgerald to Earl of Kimberley, 2 January 1872. See, *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.534.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> C.S. Salmon to Pope Hennessy, 16 February 1872. See, *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.554.

<sup>72</sup> H.T. Ussher to Pope Hennessy, 13 May 1872. See, *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1850-1873*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.593.

<sup>73</sup> Brew wrote a constitution for Fante self-government, that aimed to create a Fante National Assembly and Casely-Hayford suggested that the constitution represented the beginnings of a nation, see, Casely-Hayford, J.E. *Gold Coast Native Institutions*. London. 1970. Originally London. 1903. P.182 & P.327-340. Also see Horton's letter to Granville May 1870, cited in Agbodeka, F. "The Fanti Confederacy." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vol 7, 1965. PP.122-123.

<sup>74</sup> Agbodeka, F. "The Fanti Confederacy." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*. Vol. 7, 1965. P.105.

<sup>75</sup> Bartels, F.L. *The Roots of Ghana Methodism*, Cambridge, 1965. P.144.

<sup>76</sup> Wilks, I. *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*. London. 1975. P.230.

<sup>77</sup> McCarthy, M. *Social Change and Growth of British Power in the Gold Coast*. University Press of America, Lanham, 1983. P.169

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Examples of the concern of Ussher and Salmon about the Fante Confederation appear in despatches, Ussher to Kennedy, 6 April 1868, CO96/76 see, Metcalfe G.E. *Great Britain and Ghana, Documents of Ghana History 1807-1957*. Ghana 1964 P.323. and C.S. Salmon to Sir A.E. Kennedy, 4 December 1871. see, Metcalfe G.E. *Great Britain and Ghana, Documents of Ghana History 1807-1957*. Ghana 1964. P.338.

<sup>80</sup> *African Times*, 23 August 1866, P.19.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., P.16.

<sup>82</sup> For a brief period it did, however, look as though the Asante would consider recognising the Fante Confederation as the legitimate administration for the Gold Coast. According to Wilks, these plans were scuppered by the arrest of the Confederation leaders by the British in December 1871. See, Wilks, I. *Asante in the Nineteenth Century* London 1975. P.231.

<sup>83</sup> Ramseyer, F and Kuehne, J *Four Years in Ashantee*. London 1875. P.201

<sup>84</sup> Pedler, F. *The Lion and the Unicorn*, London, 1974, P.42.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., PP.43-44.

<sup>87</sup> Official reports estimated the Asante army at 40,000 men whilst Wilks speculates it may have comprised as many as 80,000 men, Wilks, I. *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*. London. 1975, P.236., and Kimble quotes a contemporary estimate of 20,000 Asante facing Wolseley on his arrival in October Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana* Oxford. 1963. P.271.

- 88 CO96/107. 19 April 73. report of the Ashantee invasion.
- 89 *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1873-4*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.366
- 90 Ansa had lived in Cape Coast since he was a boy, and had been converted to Christianity, had attended the Government school, had been ordained as a minister and was on a crown pension of 100 shillings per annum. *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1873-4*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.367.
- 91 *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1873-4*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971. P.369.
- 92 Ibid., P.367.
- 93 Ibid., P.368.
- 94 Ibid., P.369.
- 95 De Graft Johnson , J.C. "The Fanti Asafu." *Africa*. Vol. 5. 1932
- 96 GNA, Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs, ADM. 11/1473. *Cape Coast Company Flags and Violence, history and photographs 1909*.
- 97 See Thompson, T. *An Account of two Missionary Voyages*. Facsimile reprint. London, 1937 PP.38-40.
- 98 GNA Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs ADM. 11 1473. *Cape Coast Company Flags and Violence, history and photographs 1909*
- 99 *British Parliamentary Papers, Papers concerning the Gold Coast and surrounding districts 1873-4*, Shannon/Ireland. 1971 P.370.
- 100 Ephson, I. *Gold Coast Celebrities*, Accra, 1969, Vol. II. HR Blankson entry.
- 101 G.T.H. Lyall to Cleaver, 19 September 1873, UAC Archive.
- 102 Ibid.
- 103 CO96/107. 4 March 1873.
- 104 CO96/105. 4 August 1873. Captain. W.H. Blake. to Commodore J.E. Commerel Subsequently Peak Freans said they could supply up to 1000 lbs per week; the offer was turned down. CO96/105. Herbert to the Admiralty 5 September.
- 105 CO96/107. 19 April 1873. Report of the Ashantee invasion.
- 106 CO96/105. Freemantle to Secretary of the Admiralty.
- 107 G.T.H. Lyall to Cleaver 19 September 1873. UAC Archive.
- 108 Ibid.
- 109 Ibid.
- 110 CO96/105. Freemantle to Secretary of the Admiralty, 9 October 1873.
- 111 Swanzy, H. "A Trading Family in the Nineteenth Century Gold Coast", *Transactions of the Gold Coast and Togoland Historical Society*, Vol. 2, Pt. 2, 1956. P.103.
- 112 CO96/105. Freemantle to Admiralty. 9 October 1873.
- 113 The Daily News Special Correspondent, *The Asantee War*, London 1874, P.58-59. According to this source she was the King of Denkyera's daughter, she was infact his granddaughter.
- 114 Pedler, F. *The Lion and the Unicorn*, London, 1974. P.45.
- 115 CO96/105. Freemantle to Admiralty. 9 October 1873.
- 116 CO96/105. 26 August 1873. Freemantle to the Secretary of the Admiralty.
- 117 CO96/105. 16 September 1873. Freemantle to the Secretary of the Admiralty.
- 118 CO96 105. 14 November 1873.
- 119 CO96/105. 22 September 1873. Freemantle to Secretary of State.
- 120 Maxwell, L *The Ashanti Ring* , Bury St Edmunds, 1985 P. 17
- 121 Brett described the town; "close to the castle exists a large town, with mercantile firms, missionary establishments, schools, chapels, government house and buildings, hospitals civil and military, European inhabitants and Fantee people, who have mingled their blood with the European and naturally claim our protection. All these people it would be impossible in the event of an invasion to receive inside the castle and our forts. The town moreover, is situated so close to the castle and is so intricate in its construction that it would be impossible to defend the castle without destroying the town." CO96 107. 21 April 1873. Captain. Brett to Secretary of State for War.
- 122 Wilks, I *Asante in the Nineteenth Century* London. 1975. P 237
- 123 CO96 105 5 October 1873 Freemantle to Secretary of the Admiralty

- 124 See *Illustrated London News*, December 1873/ January 1874. and Daily News Special Correspondent. *The Asantee War*. London, 1875. See also Wilks, I. *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*. London. 1975 PP 236-238.
- 125 Maxwell, L *The Ashanti Ring* , Bury St Edmunds, 1985 P.46
- 126 Before this was detected, Swanzy had already apparently landed some of the powder further down the coast at Grand Bassam. CO96/105. 5 October 1873. Freemantle to Secretary of the Admiralty.
- 127 CO96/105. 5 October 1873. Freemantle to Secretary of the Admiralty.
- 128 CO96/105. 27 December 1873.
- 129 Ibid.
- 130 CO96/105. 5 September 1873. W. Rowsell to W. Herbert.
- 131 CO96 105. 5 August 1873. J.E. Commerell to the Secretary of the Admiralty.
- 132 CO96/105. 30 July 1873. Col. Harley.
- 133 CO96/107. 19 April 1873. Report of the Ashantee invasion. Memoir on movements against Coomassie in Asanti West Africa.
- 134 Ibid.
- 135 CO96/107. 17 March 1873. Mr Hemming to Lord Kimberley.
- 136 *A Report of a Commission of Enquiry Under the Commissions of Enquiry Ordinance 1893, Into the Relationship Between the Stools of Abra, of Dominase and of Kwaman, Prt 1*. P.28. The words of Kwesi Abuwa, Adontihene of Abiadzi.
- 137 The words of Aikosua Mary of Effikessim. GNA, ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- 138 CO96/107. 19 April 1873. Report of the Ashantee invasion. Memoir on movements against Coomassie in Asanti West Africa.
- 139 Pedler, F. *The Lion and the Unicorn*, London, 1974. P. 44.
- 140 Maxwell, L *The Ashanti Ring* , Bury St Edmunds, 1985. P.87.
- 141 Gocking, R. *The Historic Akoto: A Social History of Cape Coast Ghana 1843-1948*. Stanford. 1981. See, Chapter 4.3.
- 142 McCarthy, M. *Social Change and Growth of British Power in the Gold Coast*. University Press of America. Lanham. 1983. PP.170-1.
- 143 Wilks, I. *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*. London. 1975. P.242.
- 144 Cited in Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*. Oxford. 1963 PP.273-274.
- 145 Cited in Casely-Hayford J.E. *Gold Coast Native Institutions*. London, 1970. Originally London, 1903. P.357.
- 146 *A Report of a Commission of Enquiry Under the Commissions of Enquiry Ordinance 1893, Into the Relationship Between the Stools of Abra, of Dominase and of Kwaman, Prt 1*, P.7.
- 147 Danquah, J.B. "Historical Significance of the Bond of 1844 " *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*. Vol III, Prt 1, 1957. P 23-4
- 148 Danquah suggests that Pope Hennessy made a promise that talks would take place after the war. Danquah, J.B. "Historical Significance of the Bond of 1844." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*. Vol III, Prt 1, 1957, P.26. See also Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*. Oxford. 1963. P.258-261 for full discussion of Pope Hennessy's recommendations to the Colonial Office before the outbreak of hostilities in 1873.
- 149 Danquah, J.B. "Historical Significance of the Bond of 1844." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*. Vol III, Prt 1, 1957. P.26.
- 150 GNA, *A Starting Point for Gold Coast Native Institutions*, J.E. Casely-Hayford.
- 151 GNA, *A Starting Point for Gold Coast Native Institutions*, J.E. Casely-Hayford. For additional information, see also Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*. Oxford, 1963. P.409.
- 152 See, Anon. *Golden Jubilee District Grand Lodge of Nigeria Rt Hon Earl of Scarborough. A Souvenir Booklet to Commemorate the Golden Jubilee of District Grand Lodge of Nigeria. 1913-1963*. P.15. Wolseley was the perfect advertisement for Freemasonry, representing one dimension of a more aggressive era of Freemasonry. The military campaigns that were fought all over Africa during the next fifteen years may have given the Masonic organisation a strong injection of new recruits. Between 1860 and 1890 over 1500 Lodges were consecrated world-wide, as compared with 700 in the previous 120 years.
- 153 *Gold Coast Leader*, 4 October 1924.
- 154 *The Freemason*. 2 December 1871

- 155 *The Freemason*. 2 December 1871, The Templars should not be confused with the Knights Templars.
- 156 *The Freemason*. 2 December 1871.
- 157 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 17 September 1898.
- 158 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 3 December 1898.
- 159 A Masonic title meaning the regional centre for Freemasonry
- 160 Tachie Menson, A.B. *The History of Freemasonry in the Gold Coast* P.3.
- 161 Ibid.
- 162 The Red Cross had been set up by Jean Henri Dunant a Freemason.
- 163 The Knights of St John were affiliated to the Freemasons, see *Gould's History of Freemasonry*, London, 1884.
- 164 I think it is interesting to note that, Willoughby Osborne, Smyly, and Rowe, all Governors or very senior Colonial servants at the turn of the century, had in common with the major West African politicians their brotherhood.
- 165 The history of the press is covered in some detail in Jenkins, R. *Gold Coast Historians in Pursuit of the Gold Coast Past, 1882-1917*. unpublished PhD thesis, Birmingham, 1985. Gocking also gives the press attention in Chapter VII of Gocking, R. *The Historic Akoto: A Social History of Cape Coast Ghana 1843-1948*. Stanford. 1981. Kimble uses the press as a consistent theme in, Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*. Oxford. 1963.
- 166 Casely-Hayford, J.E. *Gold Coast Native Institutions*. London. 1970. Originally London, 1903. P.175.
- 167 Ibid., PP.175-176.
- 168 Ibid., P.176
- 169 Ibid.
- 170 see the earlier table.
- 171 Jenkins R, Intellectuals, Publication Outlets and 'Past-Relationship'. Some Observations on the Emergence of Early Gold Coast - Ghanaian Historiography in Cape Coast, Accra and Akropong 'triangle': c.1880-1917" ed. P.F. Moraes Farias and Karin Barber, *Self Assertion and Brokerage*, Birmingham, 1990. P.71.
- 172 *Constitution of Cape Coast, written for Omanhin Mbra III and his contemporary Chiefs*. GNA, ADM.11/1759.
- 173 Ibid.
- 174 Kofi Sackey, GNA, ADM.11/1765. *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- 175 The words of Aikosua Mary of Effikessim, GNA, ADM.11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- 176 *Constitution of Cape Coast, written for Omanhin Mbra III and his contemporary Chiefs*. GNA, ADM.11/1759.
- 177 Ibid.
- 178 Ibid.
- 179 Tufuhin Coker. GNA, ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- 180 Ibid.
- 181 I think the word 'was' is mistakenly omitted.
- 182 Tufuhin Coker. GNA, ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- 183 Ibid.
- 184 Ibid.
- 185 The words of Aikosua Mary of Effikessim. GNA, ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- 186 Ibid.
- 187 Ibid.
- 188 Ibid.
- 189 Ibid.
- 190 Casely-Hayford, J.E. *Gold Coast Native Institutions*. London. 1970. Originally London, 1903. P.261.
- 191 Ibid.
- 192 The words of Aikosua Mary of Effikessim. GNA, ADM 11 1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- 193 GNA, ADM 11 1759, *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry*.

- 194 Casely-Hayford, J.E. *Gold Coast Native Institutions*. London. 1970. Originally London, 1903. P.177.
- 195 GNA, ADM.11/1759, *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry*.
- 196 Ibid.
- 197 Ibid.
- 198 Casely-Hayford, J.E. *Gold Coast Native Institutions*. London .1970. Originally London, 1903. P.262.
- 199 Ibid.
- 200 GNA, ADM.11/629 & 1759, *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry*.
- 201 Casely-Hayford, J.E. *Gold Coast Native Institutions*. London. 1970. Originally London, 1903. P.263.
- 202 Ibid.
- 203 Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*. Oxford. 1963. P 466.
- 204 Casely-Hayford, J.E. *Gold Coast Native Institutions*. London. 1970. Originally London, 1903. P.263.
- 205 Ibid.
- 206 Ibid., P.262.
- 207 *Gold Coast Aborigine* 12 February 1898 P.2.
- 208 Methodist Missionary Society Papers, Joseph de Graft, 29 September 1875, item 35. WMS Archives, SOAS.
- 209 Alphabetical Arrangement of Wesleyan Methodist Ministers, Methodist Missionary Society Papers. WMS Archives, SOAS.
- 210 Haliburton, G.M. "M.C. Hayford a Non Success Story" *Journal of Religion in Africa*, XII, P21.
- 211 Methodist Missionary Society Papers, Item 18, 14 March 1894, M.C. Hayford - General Committee. WMS Archives, SOAS.
- 212 Methodist Missionary Society Papers, 8 August 1892, his testimonial. WMS Archives, SOAS.
- 213 Methodist Missionary Society Papers, 20 June 1893, Secretary of the Niger Mission. WMS Archives, SOAS.
- 214 Ibid.
- 215 Ibid.
- 216 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 12 February 1898. P.2.
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- 234 *Ibid.*, P.105
- 235 Haliburton, G.M. "M.C. Hayford a Non Success Story" *Journal of Religion in Africa*, XII. P 22.
- 236 Haliburton, G.M. "M.C. Hayford a Non Success Story" *Journal of Religion in Africa*, XII, P 23. There are several inaccuracies in this article, the most profound of which states that Joseph de Graft Hayford had maintained a fishing boat on the Pra river where he had seen out his days; his death certificate in St Catherine's House London, shows that he died in London where he had been in residence for some time.
- 237 Haliburton, G.M. "M.C. Hayford a Non Success Story" *Journal of Religion in Africa*, XII. P 24.
- 238 *Ibid.*
- 239 *Ibid.*, P 28.
- 240 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 19 November 1898. PP.2-3.
- 241 *Gold Coast Aborigines*, 26 November 1898.
- 242 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, October 1898. P.4.
- 243 Clarke, P. *West Africa and Christianity*, London, 1986. P.58.
- 244 For a further examination of the background, ramifications of and responses to the Lands Bill, see Chapter IX of Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*. Oxford. 1963. PP.330-357.
- 245 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 10 December 1898. P.2.
- 246 *Ibid.*
- 247 GNA, *Founding Constitution of the ARPS*.
- 248 *The Gold Coast Chronicle*, 11 January 1895. P.2.
- 249 *Ibid.*
- 250 Casely-Hayford, Joseph Ephraim. *The Truth about the West African Land Question*. London, 1971. First published London, 1913. P.27.
- 251 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 14 May 1898. PP.2-3.
- 252 *Ibid.*
- 253 *Ibid.*
- 254 To demonstrate their autonomy, the Asante established an Asante embassy at Freemason's Hall in Cape Coast. This inevitably created a certain amount of concern for the government. In February 1895, James Hutton Brew, who was related to the *Asantehene*, became his official diplomat. He began arguing the case for a newly-established embassy and explained that it had been set up to co-ordinate an attempt to organise a delegation to England to complain about the constitutional encroachments of the government. Though the delegation was to founder through a lack of funds and recognition, Brew had come to realise that Gold Coast politicians were vulnerable to the power of policy-makers in London who could veto or create policy for the Gold Coast without local consultation.
- 255 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 26 February 1898.
- 256 *Gold Coast Express*, 8 July 1897.
- 257 *Gold Coast Aborigines*, 26 February 1898.
- 258 This was not unusual. Most of the stools on the coast, had been created in this way during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. See De Marees, P. *Description and Historical Account of the Gold Kingdom of Guinea, 1602*. Oxford, 1987, P 94.
- 259 *Gold Coast Aborigines*, 26 February 1898.
- 260 Not only had he been disbarred, in 1883 Brew had been accused of mistreating of a young boy who had gambling debts by the *Chief* of Grand Bassam See, GNA, *Extortion of James Brew of Cape Coast*.
- 261 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 26 February 1898. P.2.
- 262 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 17 December 1898. P.3.
- 263 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 14 May 1898. P 2-3.
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- 266 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 12 February 1898. P.4.
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- 268 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 15 January 1898. P.3.
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- 279 See the final chapter.
- 280 *Gold Coast Express*, 7 September 1899.
- 281 Casely-Hayford, Archie. Unpublished Manuscript: *Casely-Hayford The Man and His Work*, Accra and at sea Off Port Bouel, 1935.
- 282 Bartels, F.L. *The Roots of Ghana Methodism*, Cambridge, 1965. PP.87-88.
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- 284 Ibid., P. 144.
- 285 Debrunner, H. *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, Accra, 1967. P.121.
- 286 Ibid., P.229.
- 287 GNA, *Amended Bye-Laws, Rules and Regulations of the Gold Coast Aborigines Rights Protection Society*.
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- 290 Ibid.
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- 292 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 10 December 1898. P.2.
- 293 Casely-Hayford, J.E. *Gold Coast Native Institutions*. London. 1970. Originally London, 1903. P.171.
- 294 Ibid., P.260
- 295 Ibid.
- 296 Ibid., PP.260-261.
- 297 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 2 April 1898.
- 298 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 9 April 1898.
- 299 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 16 April 1898. P.3.
- 300 Ibid.
- 301 Ibid.
- 302 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 11 June 1898. P.2.

**CHAPTER IV**  
**THE DECLINE OF CAPE COAST**  
**AND DECAY OF THE STOOL**  
**KOJO MBRA**  
**1900-1911**

Hymn 986  
 In Time of Pestilence

*In Grief and Fear, to thee, O Lord,  
 We now for succour fly,  
 Thine awful judgements are abroad,  
 O shield us, lest we die.*

*The fell disease on every side  
 Walks forth with tainted breath;  
 And pestilence, with rapid stride,  
 Bestreus the land with death.*

*O look with pity on the scene  
 Of sadness and of dread,  
 And let thine angel stand between  
 The living and the dead.*

*With contrite hearts to thee, our King,  
 We turn, who oft have strayed;  
 Accept the sacrifice we bring,  
 And let the plague be stayed.<sup>1</sup>*



1907 photograph of No.5 Company Officers in front of their Company Post. In the front row, the two Company *Brafo* impersonate 'sepo' victims by holding their knives in their mouths and below them lie the bunches of palm nut kernels used in the preparation of a new Company *Captain*.  
 (Source: GNA ADM/1473.)

Throughout the nineteenth century, Cape Coast was gripped in cycles of endemic crisis. Drought, disease, and civil disruption, seemed to be intrinsic parts of the Cape Coast dynamic. In the early years of the twentieth century, the shadows of disease, drought and *Asafo* riots again descended on the town. This period marked the fall from grace of Cape Coast, and the demise of the stool, amidst problems which it had shirked throughout the nineteenth century. The historical cycles of the town, at first disguised this fatal period as a precedented periodic down-turn. It was only a decade after the process of ultimate decline had begun, that its significance was fully recognised by the people of Cape Coast. The leadership of Kojo Mbra, had been shown to be completely ineffective in the town's battle against recession, civil disruptions and disease. In March 1909, in front of most of the town, the Commissioner of the Central Province said that it must be acknowledged, that, "Cape Coast is not unfortunately, the flourishing city it once was; it has lost the large up-country trade which it used to live on, and you are realising that the time has come when you have to look to your own exertions to keep your heads above water.....we are seeing our worst days now."<sup>3</sup> What many had suspected for some time, had become indubitable with the publication of the population census, which reflected a new migration pattern away from Cape Coast to Accra.

In 1901, Cape Coast's population had been 28,948, but by 1911 the figure had plunged to 11,269.<sup>4</sup> The Medical Officer whose department compiled the figures, concluded that, "Cape Coast was in its zenith towards the close of the nineteenth century, and there is no doubt that the population has much diminished. The number of ruins in the town alone bears this out. One meets with a great many cases where members of families have left Cape Coast to earn their livelihood. Merchants complain of a loss of trade."<sup>5</sup> Disease and extreme weather, (both drought and heavy rains), plagued the town for a decade, and by 1910, it was in an "impoverished condition."<sup>6</sup>

The failure of the stool to react to decline of the town, and the consequent loss of the stool's status, was partly due to the weakness of Kojo Mbra as an *Omanhin*. Unlike his predecessors, Kojo Mbra's position was increasingly marginalised by forces from within the indigenous community<sup>7</sup> and simultaneously by the colonial government. Unlike the Aggrey *Amanhin*, Mbra did not have the necessary political skills to spearhead opposition to colonial encroachments. The inadequacy of the *Omanhin* was made even more apparent because he was surrounded by many highly competent politicians, some of whom may have felt that they could do a better job. Mbra's *Tufubin*, Coker had made an attempt to usurp him in 1898,<sup>8</sup> and *Obin* Sackey had proven himself more than able to do the job of *Omanhin* during the previous extended interregnum. The growth and success of the ARPS had also marginalised the role of the illiterate *Omanhin* in areas such as legislature and constitution. The limitations of Kojo Mbra and the diminution of the stool's status during the 1890s,

meant the stool was unable to adapt to the changes in the town's fortunes during the early twentieth century. The developments that contributed to Cape Coast's demise are important not only because they give a clear picture of the town's decline, but because they also show how Cape Coast's new institutions were gradually challenging and replacing the stool's position as the focus of local power and politics. The demise of stool power reflected the disintegration of the stool family.

## **I. CHANGES IN PERCEPTIONS**

From the turn of the twentieth century, the Gold Coast was blessed with a consecutive line of liberal Governors. However, during the first decade of the century, the 'gentlemanly' coastal community, started to become aware that racial attitudes were hardening in Europe, and that the social halcyon days of mixed race clubs and societies were drawing to a close.

Institutionalised racial discrimination became evident in medicine at an early stage in the Gold Coast. K. Patterson describes how Africans had been employed in the colonial medical service in the nineteenth century and between 1892 to 1897, the department was headed by the Sierra Leonean, Dr J. F. Easmon. Patterson goes on to say that, "by the end of the century rising racism and a desire by Europeans to monopolize higher posts in the empire blocked the careers of educated Africans in all branches of the colonial service. An earlier, albeit sometimes grudging, willingness to appoint qualified Africans to important positions in West Africa gave way to an increasingly rigid color bar."<sup>9</sup>

In 1912, the *Gold Coast Leader* argued that, "when native doctors like Horton, Davies and Easmon were in the public service in West Africa more was done in the matter of scientific investigation of diseases and in the contribution of observations of local West African conditions to European publications than is being done at present when white men have seized for their own exclusive use all public medical appointments and public appliances for medical research and the reason for this is not too far to seek."<sup>10</sup> The newspaper was implying that the lucrative fees commanded by doctors were being reserved for whites.

Throughout the decade, *The Gold Coast Leader* gave detailed coverage to the Medical Department's racism. It publicised each entrenchment of attitude by the Administration. When 'young' Dr Easmon was denied a job in the government Medical Service in 1912, *the Leader* suggested it was due to racism. The paper looked back nostalgically on the halcyon days, when Easmon's father had been one of the great doctors on the Coast,<sup>11</sup> heading the colony's medical department from 1892 to 1897. Despite an African having headed the department for five years, the numbers of Africans within the service did not grow. Although there are no figures for the nineteenth century, the contemporary press suggested that there was a reduction in the numbers of African medical officials during the first decade of the twentieth century.

By 1912, in the whole of British West Africa there were 150 medical men, of whom only seven were African. *The Leader* again argued that, "Public medical work in West Africa has degenerated and is degenerating in the hands of white doctors into a contrivance for mere money-making"<sup>12</sup> In 1909, the government argued that they did not believe "...West African doctors are on a par, except in very rare instances, with European doctors, or that they possess the confidence of European patients on the coast."<sup>13</sup>

This discriminatory policy affected Cape Coast most directly in the change of its Medical Health Officer, in 1911. Until 1911, the Medical Health Officer had been appointed by the President of the Town Council. The Town Council was made up of elected African representatives, and their appointee had for some years been Dr R.A. Savage. Savage was a respected Edinburgh-trained Nigerian physician, who was prominent in local affairs, and was one of the first members of the mixed Cape Coast Masonic Lodge. From 1911, the Governor assumed responsibility from the Town Council, for appointing Cape Coast's Medical Officer. This began a situation where unfamiliar appointees were brought in from the metropole, starting with the temporary appointment of Dr F. J. A. Beringer. Beringer's arrival from England was followed later the same year with the appointment of the first European Sanitary Inspector, Mr Hutton.<sup>14</sup> This policy must, to some extent, have forced Cape Coast professionals to question their worth. The view that African professionals with identical training to their European counterparts did not possess the confidence of the Europeans, seemed to suggest that there was some subtle element in Africans that disqualified them from complete respectability.

Thus, Cape Coast's Churches and the Temperance Movement, who had for some years advocated a change in cultural perspective, began to find the weight of government and newspaper opinion firmly behind them. The ethos of 'cleanliness being next to godliness' and of 'civilisation being half-way to heaven'<sup>15</sup>, was central to this. The Friendly Societies were promoted within the newspaper columns, and the young were encouraged to join such societies, as a means to God, social responsibility, abstention from alcohol and control of the libido.

In the nineteenth century, hermetic societies such as the Freemasons, had been the exclusive preserve of the European officials, the Cape Coast professionals and the literate (many of whom were *Abins*, *Tufubins*, *Asafobins* and members of the ARPS). The only Masonic lodge was the Gold Coast Lodge, No. 773 at Cape Coast. The introduction and popularisation of the friendly societies, allowed many access into the hermetic hegemony that stretched world-wide, and promised 'enlightenment' for the average man. It placed the individual on the bottom rung of a ladder, that ultimately ascended into heaven.

Some of those who were denied access to these societies, adopted subtle adaptations in their cultural practices. The Kroo men, for example, who were employed to collect the refuse and clean public latrines, took to parading through the town on special occasions, dressed in heavy frock coats, beavers and collars, even in the height of the summer.<sup>16</sup> For those allowed into the 'friendly societies', there was quite a choice. The societies included the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows, the Foresters,<sup>17</sup> Heart of Oaks, the Loyal Order of Ancient Shepherds, the Grand United Order of Oddfellows,<sup>18</sup> the Rechabites<sup>19</sup> and the National United Order of Free Gardeners etc. These were secret and social societies, that practised some of the rituals of the Freemasons, but had more popular appeal.<sup>20</sup>

The *Gold Coast Aborigine* suggested that by the beginning of the century, 'nearly every young person' on the Gold Coast (provided they were male), was a member of a 'friendly society'.<sup>21</sup> Although this may have been an exaggeration, in the major towns such as Cape Coast it was probably two-thirds accurate.<sup>22</sup> Many people complained that the societies existed, "more for the display of regalias, and processions than anything else....for you usually find a brother working against a brother, to the very losing of his daily bread."<sup>23</sup> This may have been a valid criticism. Funerals<sup>24</sup>, jubilee celebrations<sup>25</sup> and other formal occasions, saw the Cape Coast 'friendly societies' put on their regalia and march through their towns, marking out boundaries and showing off their finery to the women and rival societies. It was also argued by the Christian press,<sup>26</sup> that the 'friendly societies' were a 'healthy' successor to the *Asafo* companies. The friendly societies' support of Christianity was argued to be a positive and uniting force.

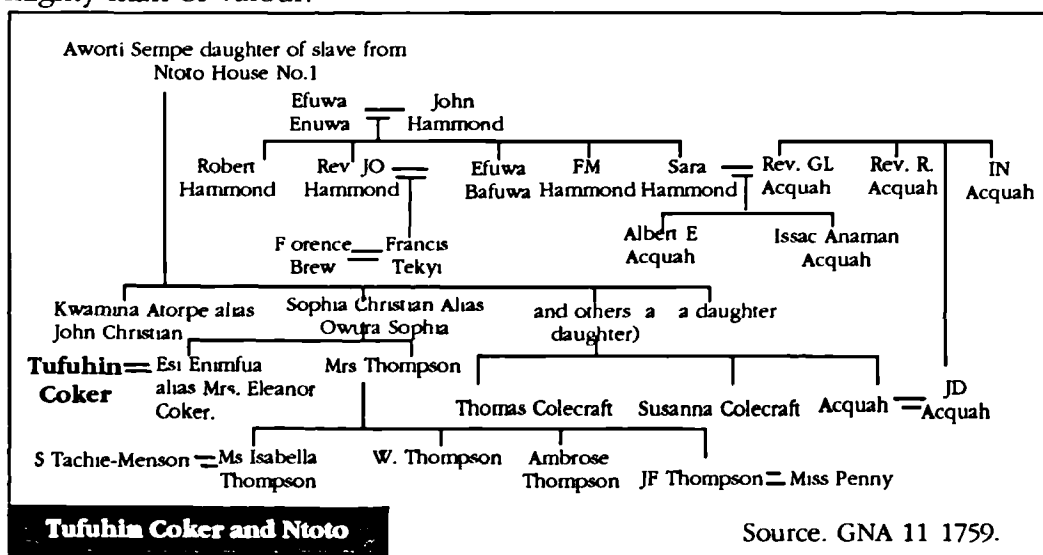
*the societies are for strengthening of the bond of brotherhood, for fostering of that benevolence which in our hearts is an answering glow from the great heart of God our father; and they are wholly mistaken who join these societies for sinister motives. The great law and doctrine of the order of Oddfellows, for instance, embodied in the familiar sacred motto, friendship, love, truth are more than just figures of speech.*<sup>27</sup>

Among the indigenous community, the hermetic and temperance societies brought with their introduction, the sanction of a *superior* attitude among the Christian community and the formally educated. The 'enlightened' and 'empowered,' were able to point the finger at the 'uneducated heathen,' and identify them as the 'problem,' while often the 'problem,' was not identifiable with a specific social group. As Cape Coast fell into difficulties, its indigenous super-structure headed by an *Omanbin* who was an 'uneducated' non-Christian, was almost powerless to inspire the aspirant, Christian and educated people into action.

Unlike the lineage divisions that had existed for some generations, the developing split between the *Omanbin* and the 'educated' community was based primarily on ideology rather than on conflicting interpretations of family history. As

certain people changed their attitude to the *Omanhin*, so notions of family began to change also. Previously family, lineage and household had been the main politically homogenising factors. However superficial its impact, the Temperance brotherhood demonstrated that other cohesive systems could operate alongside the family. Senior members of the stool family who wished to expand their political influence began to join and dominate the social and Temperance societies.

*Tufubin* Coker had the foresight to enter the Temperance movement at the time of its introduction onto the coast, in the late 1870s.<sup>28</sup> Coker grew with the organisation, and used his charisma and influence to mould it into an institution which extended his political influence. Coker was apparently a Hausa soldier, who had revealed himself as a highly-skilled transport officer in the 1890s. He had successfully engineered the transport in two major Asante expeditions.<sup>29</sup> Coker married into the *Ntoto* family, and then used his military experience to become the Cape Coast *Tufubin*.<sup>30</sup> *Tufubin* Coker, perhaps realising the potential power of these institutions, got dispensation to consecrate a new Temperance Lodge at Rolla's Hall in 1899.<sup>31</sup> As described in the previous chapter, he then unsuccessfully attempted to become 'Omanhin' in the late 1890s. In 1902, *Tufubin* W.Z. Coker went to Britain to visit the Grand Lodges of the Channel Islands and Scotland. Whilst in Birmingham he became somewhat of a celebrity, cutting a dash in his blue Norfolk suit and a broad rimmed clerical hat. He was invited to attend the Birmingham Lord Mayor's reception. To the delight of the people of Cape Coast, his visit was covered by the *Birmingham Evening Despatch*, in which he was quoted as saying proudly of Cape Coast that, "Out of 25,000 population we have in the Good Templars alone between 2000 and 3000 adult members and very many juveniles. I have myself been a Good Templar for twenty-three years and am the Special Deputy Grand Chief Templar of the Advance Guard Lodge at Cape Coast Castle. Beside the Temperance influence the sanitary condition of the colony is also being greatly improved and this is making the place more healthy."<sup>32</sup> The *Despatch* wrote of their distinguished guest, "when Mr William Zacheaus Coker is at home at Cape Coast Castle he is a great chief and a mighty man of valour."





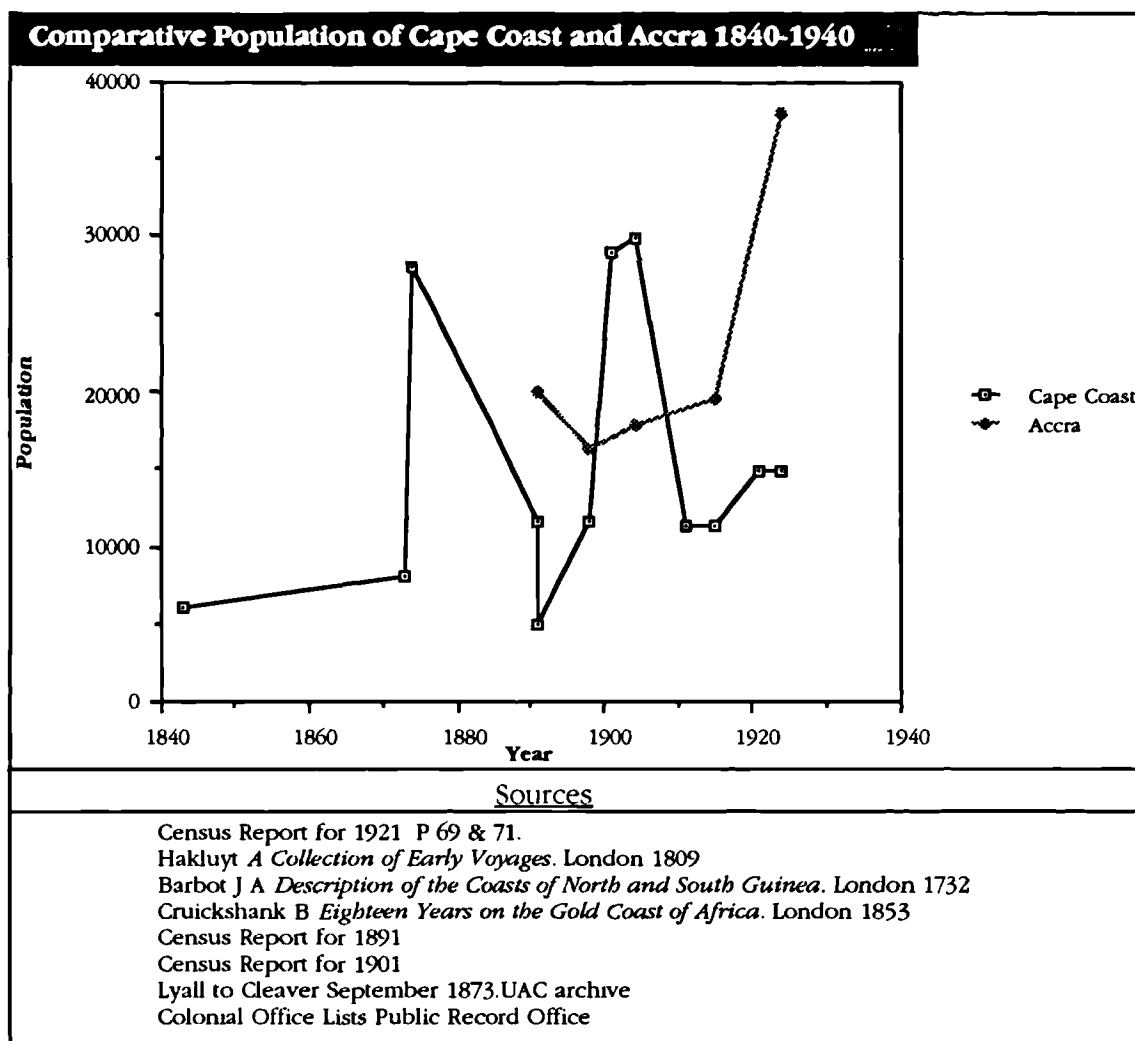
Coker returned to Cape Coast as a hero, but a hero of English Temperance, and not a heroic *Tufubin*.<sup>33</sup> The attractive features of the Temperance movement, made it far more popular than the Freemasonry, and Coker sought to utilise this.<sup>34</sup> When Coker went on tour, the Juvenile Free Gardeners hosted a tea party for him, and both the English and American Templars welcomed him at Saltpond. New Lodges were consecrated, and the *Omanbin* of Cape Coast joined one of them. This encouraged many of the *Oguaa* Royal family to join.<sup>35</sup>

The power structures which existed within these new societies, prompted a re-consideration of indigenous attitudes towards local leadership. Traditional leaders could be seen in a new context where, for instance, the illiterate Cape Coast *Omanbin*, Nana Kojo Mbra, was a junior member of a Temperance organisation, whilst his *Tufubin* W.Z. Coker was a senior member, and *Asafo* Captain, J.P. Brown, was at its head.<sup>36</sup> The junior position of the Cape Coast *Omanbin*, was both an illustration and a cause of the general weakness of the stool. Many hoped that the changes these societies inspired would 'improve' Cape Coast. However, the process of change was weakening the influence of the stool, to a point where it could not effectively assert itself against the natural and civil disruptions that were about to destabilise the town.

## **II. THE FIRST MANIFESTATIONS OF DECLINE**

K. Patterson pointed out that, "Infectious diseases have accompanied human movement throughout history. Explorers, merchants, soldiers, pilgrims, refugees, and migrants carried plague, measles, smallpox, typhus, tuberculosis, syphilis, malaria, yellow fever, cholera, and a host of other deadly afflictions around the world."<sup>37</sup> At the turn of the century, Cape Coast was in the grip of this phenomenon. There had been an unprecedented influx of what the *Gold Coast Leader* described as, "all sorts of people...who knocking about the country to their hearts' content" found a resting place on the coast, "bringing with them every possible disease to which human flesh is susceptible."<sup>38</sup> As the impoverished and diseased arrived in Cape Coast, so the well-qualified and healthy left for the growing and relatively prosperous, Accra.

*TheGold Coast Leader* suggested, "the churches will do well to start the litany at once, the only resource available for deliverance from a repetition of 1900's disastrous work."<sup>39</sup> In an endeavour to limit the spread of disease, Hausa troops were employed to kill diseased animals in the market place, and Kroo-scorpioners' were paid to chase down stray animals.<sup>40</sup> This was accompanied by what the press described as, "the needless and heartless pulling down of new and decent buildings, .... the unnecessary preventing of new buildings with frivolous objections, .... the principle thoroughfares unpaved or well kept and dustbins strewn over them,"<sup>41</sup> and "the depriving of the people their water because of the mosquito..."<sup>42</sup>



In 1899, as the link between the mosquito and malarial fever was finally proved, so the disease was for the first time convincingly connected with puddles of stagnant water.<sup>43</sup> Cape Coast had been consistently in the grip of malarial fever, and so a study of the water supply was immediately commissioned. The report of the newly established Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine on the town's water supply was ominous. The report stated that the market well was only fit for washing purposes and of the two wells in Intin Street, one was used as a refuse pit, and the other was only fit for washing, partly because it had a dustbin beside it. Of the wells at Kotokraba, one was dry and was used as a refuse pit, and the other contained water that was not just filthy, but had many culex larvae floating on the surface; whilst the well at Aboom only had a small amount of dirty water at the bottom.<sup>44</sup> As the situation grew worse, *The Gold Coast Leader* poured scorn on the situation,

*Tweedledum Tweedledee let me sing for a while,  
 and I am sure you will deem it a boon,  
 For my verse like bad weather will give you bile  
 When I sing of Cape Coast Lagoon!*

*Tweedledum Tweedledee! for the stench is sublime,  
augmented by raining of June,  
and fever is bred all this troublesome time,  
By the pestilent Cape Coast Lagoon.<sup>45</sup>*

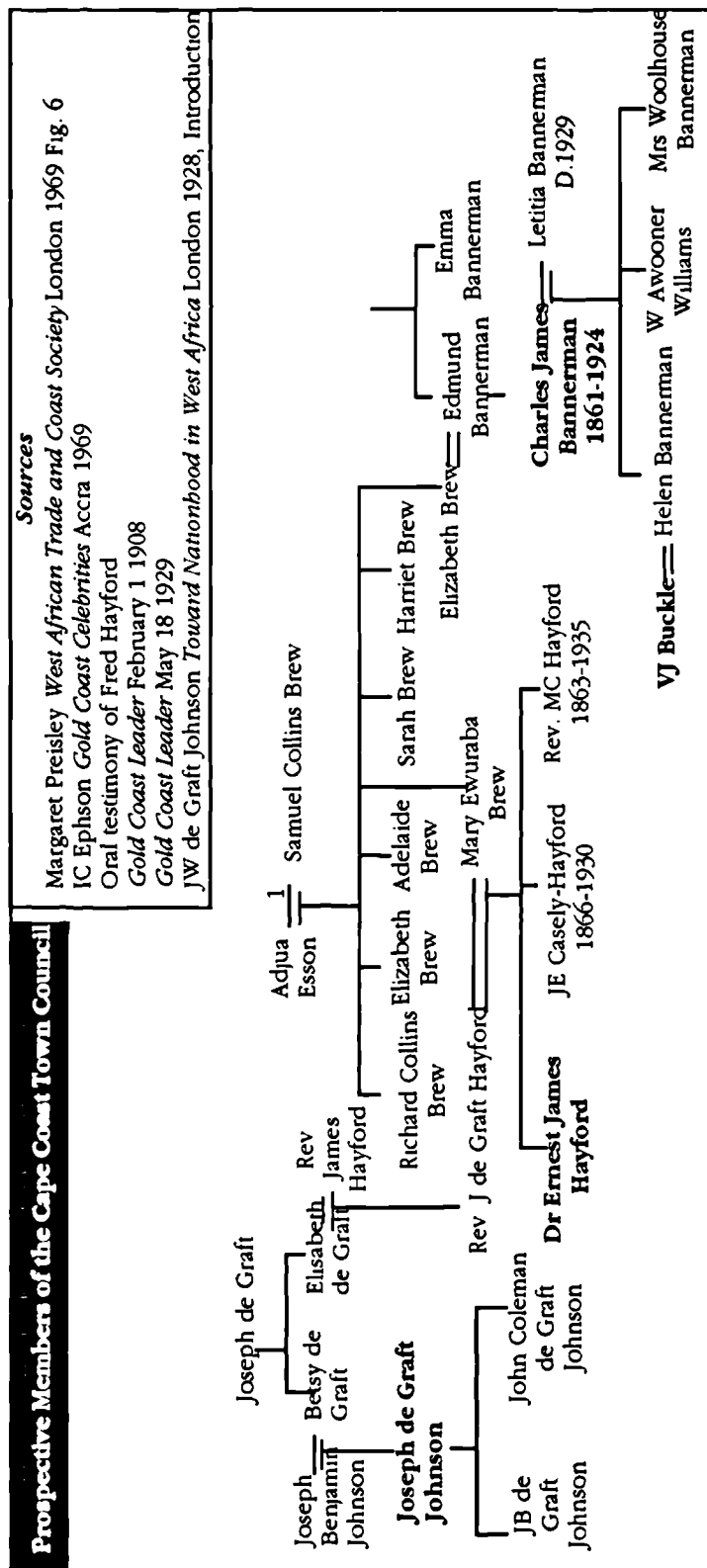
Although Cape Coast's problems were obvious, and their immediate solutions straightforward, the community was divided over who should be held accountable. ***The Gold Coast Aborigines***, argued that the Health Officer and the Inspector of Nuisance, were directly to blame for the sanitation of the town, and that they should have taken their responsibilities more seriously.<sup>46</sup> ***The Gold Coast Leader***, felt that fault was actually with the Aborigines Rights Protection Society, who had acted 'lethargically' toward a memorandum on health.<sup>47</sup> The fact that the *Omanbin* was omitted from any blame, was not a measure of the stool's innocence but more an indication of its weakness.

Although the ARPS was the most prominent channel for indigenous reaction, it was stifled by the Cape Coast stool. Although the *Omanbin* controlled the means to change, he did not have the necessary political skills to manage the administration through this difficult period. The two indigenous institutions were politically hamstrung by their failure to work together. The severity of the ambient crisis, was leading to an inevitable clash between the *Oman* and the ARPS over political jurisdiction.

### **III. LOCAL GOVERNMENT: THE ARPS CHALLENGE**

Since the colonial administration had relocated in Accra it had become traditional for the governor to visit Cape Coast, and to spend time listening to the grievances of the resident population. The governor's time in Cape Coast was divided up equally between the Stool and the Chamber of Commerce. Since their success against the Lands Bill, the ARPS had been keen to make their public quizzing of the governor as rigorous as possible. To show the unity of the local government, the ARPS voiced its opinions through the *Omanbin's* questions. In March 1903, the governor's speech was awaited with great anticipation. The physical state of Cape Coast and the proposed hut tax, were among many controversial topics that the ARPS were keen to see discussed. The governor met the 'Chiefs' led by the *Omanbin* Kojo Mbra. The *Omanbin* was completely unprepared, and came close to embarrassing himself. Each of Mbra's questions was dealt a decisive and dismissive blow. ***The Leader***, as the unofficial mouthpiece of the ARPS, launched a scathing attack on the *Omanbin's* lack of political skill, and emphasised his limited education. ***The Leader*** was almost equally condemning of the other indigenous leaders, concluding, "His Excellency must have felt that his time was wasted and the people felt bored. No doubt there was much in what they said but one cannot help feeling disappointed."<sup>48</sup>

Coker, who was both a member of the ARPS and the *Oman*, joined in the criticism, and began to distance himself from the Cape Coast *Omanbin*. The ARPS argued that the country depended on the rulers keeping abreast of developments in colonial policy, "And in doing so we have relied upon the few educated ones among our reigning potentates, naturally looking to them to take the lead." It was contended that, unlike Richard Acquah, (the educated *Omanbin* of Winneba), the uneducated *Omanbin* of Cape Coast, was not up to the job.<sup>49</sup>



Kimble describes how the 1894 Towns Council Ordinance was applied to various towns on the coast with limited success.<sup>50</sup> In July 1904, sections of the ARPS received unofficial government backing to establish a town council that would officially centralise Cape Coast's municipal decision-making away from the *Oman*.<sup>51</sup> Within a month, the ARPS had been given official government sanction to proceed. The society held a meeting at Chapel Square, to discuss the feasibility of the project with the whole town.<sup>52</sup> Very quickly, the constitution of the council was drawn up, and it was agreed that the councillors would be voted into office. Each household would have a vote, and every tenant who paid more than £24 in rent per annum, would also be eligible for a separate vote.<sup>53</sup>

Opposition to the council arose from the *Omanbin*, who saw it as marginalising the traditional power of the stool, by assuming duties like taxation and collection.<sup>54</sup>

To appease the *Omanbin*, a meeting was held to which he was invited along with, *Tufubin* Coker, (a member of important *Mpakanmfu* section of the *Oman*). The ARPS members who attended included, *Chief* Sackey, *Chief* (Amoah) Johnson, E.J. Hayford, R.B. Acquah, J.W.D. Johnson, C.J. Bannerman, G.H. Savage and V.J. Buckle.<sup>55</sup> Although the ARPS and the *Oman* represented two sets of social opinions, and separate perspectives on Cape Coast political machinations, they all shared a legitimacy conferred by kinship, and the same or similar rights to speak on behalf of the community. Coker was the only outsider, but his marriage into the *Ntoto* House had linked him, like *Chief* Amoah, R.B. Acquah and *Chief* Sackey, into Madam Aboache's section of the stool family.<sup>56</sup> The other members of the ARPS were *bodyadom*, (all sons of the stool), who had been advocates for their families. As well as E.J. Hayford, R.B. Acquah, J.W.D. Johnson, C.J. Bannerman, G.H. Savage and V.J. Buckle belonging to the ARPS they also shared membership of the same social clubs. V.J. Buckle and C.J. Bannerman, were both for instance, members of the same Harmonic Lodge.<sup>57</sup> Coker, as a member of both the *Oman* and of the ARPS, was the only individual who stood to gain, whatever the outcome.

The *Omanbin* was not satisfied with the outcome of the meeting, and some weeks later he began legal action against the unconstitutional usurping of his power by the ARPS. When his intentions became known, sections of the ARPS attempted to taint Mbira's image, by suggesting that the *Omanbin* was motivated by the wish to have direct control over the implementation of the proposed hut tax. When the matter went to court in England, the *Omanbin* gained the support of a variety of British MPs. Led by Keir Hardie, they protested on his behalf that, the government of Cape Coast should be left to the, "natural chiefs and rulers," and they should have the right to directly tax their people.<sup>58</sup>

Late in 1905, the ARPS and the *Omanbin* were brought to arbitration by the Axim branch of the ARPS. It was agreed that the Cape Coast ARPS should pay the *Omanbin* £9-17-0 satisfaction, if the *Omanbin* would drop the case and make public all his communications with his solicitors. The matter did not close there. In November 1905, the *Omanbin* asked for *gong gong* to be beaten and announced that the Town Council Ordinance had been repealed. This was simultaneously reported by the sympathetic paper, the *Gold Coast Aborigines*, but was found later to have been untrue.<sup>59</sup> The continued public bickering between the executive of the ARPS and the *Omanbin*, only served to further damage the image of the town. In one of its editorials, *The Leader* remarked, "the extent to which capital is being driven out of Cape Coast may not be known, but those who watch events, and take heed of cause and effect are now uneasy and view the future with grave apprehension."<sup>60</sup> Ironically, because of the animosity between the *Omanbin* and the ARPS, no African stood for election to the Town Council for some years. Hence, as Gocking points out, "For the first two years of its existence the council was indeed little more than a government

department. It consisted of the district commissioner, its president, the European engineer in charge of public works, an other European official, and an African who was a junior officer in the customs department.”<sup>61</sup>

The discord between the *Omanbin* and the ARPS, together with the shifting population and the general degeneration of the disease-stricken town, combined to disastrous effect. Cape Coast had a history of riots and civil disruption. The sad state of the town generated conditions ripe for such internal friction.

#### **IV. ASAFO CONFLICT AND CIVIL DISORDER - THE FURTHER EROSION OF OMANHIN POWER, 1904 - 1907**

In the late 1860s, there had been a serious *Asafo* riot between the *Bentin* (No.1) and *Ntin* (No.3) in which No.3 buried one of the members of No.1 who were killed, in Intin Street.”<sup>62</sup> A small earth and straw mound was erected to mark the spot, and into this mound No.3 erected an “emblematic iron pin about a foot long, threaded with bamboo fibre, and covered by a tortoise shell.”<sup>63</sup> The pin was representative of the company’s victory and became very precious to the No.3 Company.<sup>64</sup>

In mid-1904, the senior drummer of the *Anafu* (No.2), performed what were regarded as several provocative and hostile acts against No.3 company, and became a ‘marked man’.<sup>65</sup> The acts, although not condoned by *Anafu*, served to make the drummer a celebrity. In December 1905, the drummer died, and being an *Asafo* senior, No.2 company attempted to organise a company funeral. The funeral procession was planned to pass through Intin Street onto No.3 company land. It was also planned to incorporate the recently imported custom of, “one man dancing like a circus rider on the coffin of the deceased throughout the funeral.”<sup>66</sup> Traditionally, if a Cape Coast company passed over the land of another company, it was customary for the hosts to be notified, and offered some form of refreshment, as an acknowledgement of the favour.<sup>67</sup>

In a meeting held in November 1905, Mbra I decided that this tradition should cease, and that individuals could pass freely over each others land.<sup>68</sup> At the same meeting, the *Ntin* (No.3) company also suggested that the “foreign custom” recently imported, of dancing on the coffin should be stopped, because, “it was a custom degrading to such a highly advanced race as the Fantee.”<sup>69</sup> Above and beyond the practice being bad for the image of the Fante, it had always provoked problems because, “it gave the Company practising it the chance, by native gestures which are well understood, of insulting persons on the road without using terms of abuse.”<sup>70</sup>

When the drummer died, only a month after the *Omanbin*’s ruling, the No.2 company asked for an exception to be made, to allow a dancer to stand on the drummer’s coffin. They argued that because the drummer had been such an old and well-respected company member, he deserved every possible posthumous honour.

The *Omanbin* weakly consented.<sup>71</sup> The *Omanbin's* decision was doubly wounding for the No.3 company, because they had originally suggested banning the practise, and it was they that were about to be insulted by the *Anafu's* dancer. No.3 company asked for the ruling on 'tribute' to be revoked also, so they could at least salvage some compensation.

The Central Province at that time, was administered by a liberal District Administrator who was an amateur anthropologist. District Commissioner A. Ffoulkes, had become an expert on Fante customs, after years working in the Central Province. He was, therefore, more empathetic than other contemporary officials might have been. But on hearing of the *Omanbin's* reversal of his original decisions, he decided it might be prudent to try to stop the coffin dancing, and he instructed the police to prevent it.<sup>72</sup> Ffoulkes also asked Superintendent Webb, (the senior Cape Coast police officer), to instruct *Tufubin* Coker to ensure that the dancing on the coffin did not go ahead.<sup>73</sup>

Prior to the funeral, *Ntin* (No.3) company prohibited No.2 company from passing along Intin Street, without paying the usual tribute, and also limited the number of *Anafu* that could enter the procession.<sup>74</sup> No.3 company were only prepared to permit the family of the deceased to bury the drummer. The funeral was quietly performed on Tuesday 5th December and the family returned home.<sup>75</sup> Later that evening, in an unsanctioned bid for revenge, Kweku Brissi, a junior member of No.2 company, advanced up Intin Street, trespassing on *Ntin* land. He proceeded to break the needle that adorned the swish mound above the burial site of the victim of the 1860s riot, and retired with the iron emblem and bamboo fibre to *Anafu* land.<sup>76</sup> As soon as No.3 company heard of this assault on their sacred property, they gathered every man available and went along Intin Street to attack the *Anafu*.<sup>77</sup>

*Tufubin* Coker was alerted of developments, and before *Ntin* could reach *Anafu* land, he had placed O. Cromwell, a respected *Captain* of the No.3 Company, and Thomas Aggrey, their principal *Captain*, across Intin Street, armed with whips. The street was narrow and so the two men, cracking their whips at the angry *Ntin*, could more or less stand their ground. Meanwhile, Hon J.P. Brown, was doing his very best to keep the company from breaking past their captains.<sup>78</sup> At the other end of Intin Street, No. 2 company were being whipped back in the same way by *Tufubin* Coker himself. He was aided by Kwesi Quansa, (a *Captain* of the No.2 Company) and K. Afful (a *Captain* of No.4).<sup>79</sup> The Public Works Department had left large heaps of broken stone stacked in Intin Street for repairs to the main drain. These had been removed by the women and had been piled into heaps at each end of Intin Street, to clear the ground for battle.<sup>80</sup>

By the time Ffoulkes arrived on the scene, the two companies were within eighty yards of each other. The police, backed up by volunteers headed by P.A. Renner, arrived moments later and cordoned off the street. After some discussion,

Ffoulkes personally went to the No.2 Company to see if he could retrieve the stolen iron.<sup>81</sup> Ffoulkes was unable to recover the needle, but he was able to witness the effectiveness of the whipping back of the companies, as No. 2 began to withdraw down Intin Street.<sup>82</sup> No.3 company held their position beside their 'desecrated fetish'.<sup>83</sup> Some two and half hours after the fracas had begun, the *Anafu* were forced back to their company posts, and eventually persuaded their 'mammies' that continuing the disruption was pointless and they dispersed.<sup>84</sup> The enraged *Ntin* refused to move and they named, Kweku Brissi, as the man who had been seen pulling up the iron.<sup>85</sup> The Captain of No.2 Company, Merifa, produced Brissi, who denied all knowledge of the theft.<sup>86</sup> Ffoulkes promised No.3 Company satisfaction.<sup>87</sup>

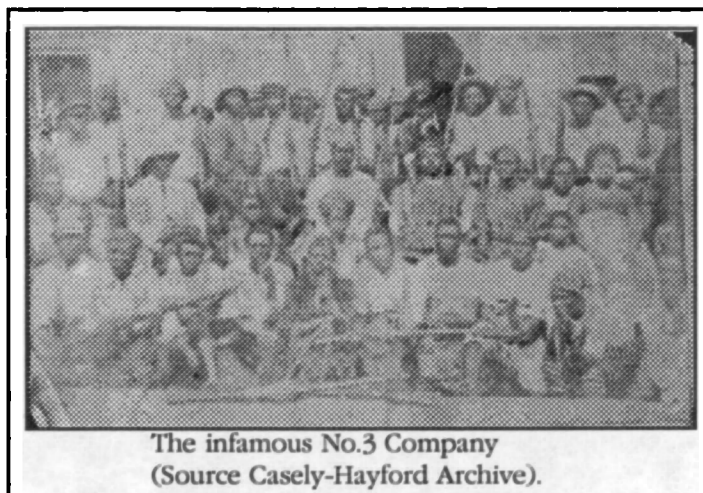
Ffoulkes realised the gravity of the situation and the potential for the current disruption to develop into a conflict in which all the companies would become involved.<sup>88</sup> He decided to act swiftly and to try the accused Brissi immediately. In an endeavour to guarantee indigenous co-operation, Ffoulkes asked the *Omanbin*, J.P. Brown, Coker, P.A. Renner, (who had turned out the volunteers<sup>89</sup> to support the police), to sit with him that afternoon, while he heard the case.<sup>90</sup> The *Omanbin* was sick and could not attend, but *Chief* Sackey was able to come in his place.<sup>91</sup> Brissi was found guilty and four *Captains* of No.2 Company were bound over to appear in court at 7pm, and bring the missing iron with them.<sup>92</sup> Ffoulkes gave them some lee-way, and waited another two hours. At 9pm, the bamboo fibre was returned, but not the iron.<sup>93</sup>

Each of the companies maintained farms on the outskirts of Cape Coast, which were sometimes maintained by hundreds of people.<sup>94</sup> During that evening a runner must have been sent to the No.3 company farms to gather support. Mr Berbasko, a senior civil servant who lived at Aboom Wells, tried to inform his colleagues in central Cape Coast that several hundred men had passed his house that evening, on their way into town.<sup>95</sup> The men had passed into Cape Coast unnoticed by Ffoulkes or his police force. The next morning, Ffoulkes waited in court with the few *Captains* of each side who had been bound over, again in the hope that the iron rod would be returned.<sup>96</sup> Once more Ffoulkes was made to wait, and at 11am when his patience had run out, a warrant was issued for the apprehension of all the *Captains* of No 2 company who had not assisted in separating the companies.<sup>97</sup> Ten minutes later, Cromwell and Aggrey of No.3 company, rushed into Ffoulkes' office and informed him that the men of No.3 company had not waited for their *Captains*' return, and had gone out to fight.<sup>98</sup>

Ffoulkes went to Intin Street with all the police he could muster. He drew a cordon across the two ends of the street, with four men placed on the junction of Kotokraba, to stop the rural members of No.3 company entering.<sup>99</sup> Intin Street was quiet when Ffoulkes arrived. R.B. Acquay, (Government Registrar and *Supi* of the No.3 company), demonstrated how although European-educated, and a direct subordinate of Ffoulkes, his loyalty was to his *Asafo* company. R.B. Acquay lied and



said that the armed men who had come in overnight, had been satisfied with Ffoulkes' promise to get No.3 company compensated. and had returned to the bush.<sup>100</sup> A few moments later an escort police bugler told Ffoulkes that this was not true, and that four hundred men had just passed by Kotokraba on their way to the lagoon.<sup>101</sup>



The infamous No.3 Company  
(Source Casely-Hayford Archive).

How exactly 'several hundred' men had slipped into Cape Coast, and then four hundred men, in broad daylight, travelled through the main thoroughfares to get to the lagoon unnoticed by the police, is unclear. But when Ffoulkes arrived at the lagoon, he saw, "in the distance what must have been nearly the whole of No.3 company stretched across the whole breadth of the lagoon, numbering over five hundred men, with more than two hundred guns, and their white bedaubed fetish women to the fore."<sup>102</sup>

The previous night, A.B. Josiah and Captain Sagoe of No.3 company had clandestinely told the village members of their company to pass into Cape Coast over the hills, instead of returning home.<sup>103</sup> A.B. Josiah and Sagoe were arrested and disarmed running along Aboom road to warn the *Captains*<sup>104</sup> of Ffoulkes' arrival. In the distance, the No.3 company drums had begun to beat the challenge that had been beaten the day before in Intin Street.<sup>105</sup> When Ffoulkes realised that the fight had been secretly pre-arranged, he wrote a note to the officer in command of the Cape Coast detachment of Hausas, to turn out his men and stop No.2 company from approaching the lagoon.<sup>106</sup> No.2 company had sent a runner to Moree for assistance - which was promised - although the people of Moree were traditionally part of *Bentil* (No.1). If the help had arrived in time, this would have brought No.1 company into the disturbance; if No.1 company had become involved that may have also involved companies with whom No.1 company had old grudges.<sup>107</sup> *Tufubin* Coker, perhaps the only person with the power to stop the altercation, was unable to help, because he had publicly sided with No.2 company after the initial riot.

Ffoulkes went to the lagoon where he met with J.B. Oliver Cromwell, the senior captain of No.3 company. Ffoulkes, however, was not allowed to speak to the company because the *Ntin* feared he would order their disarmament.<sup>108</sup> The District Commissioner did manage to communicate that if they did not disperse in an hour, he would not only confiscate their guns and destroy them, but he would also destroy their company drums.<sup>109</sup> Most of No.3 company who had come in from the outlying villages, were hunters and farmers whose guns were fundamental tools in maintain-

ing their livelihoods. They had, however, travelled a long way for the fight, and were slow to disperse. Ffoulkes' interest in the Fante and his genuine feeling for the people, stopped him from dealing with farmers swiftly. He was aware how valuable the farmers' guns were to them, and was slow to confiscate them when the rural *Asafo* members did not disperse as quickly as hoped. But the crowd gradually dwindled, and Ffoulkes was able to leave the scene in the mid-afternoon.<sup>110</sup>

Ffoulkes, running low on ideas and patience, re-convened the court at 4.p.m, and issued an ultimatum to No.2 company, that if the iron was not produced by the next day at noon, he would have prisoners raze their company post to the ground.<sup>111</sup> The company post was a small brick wall near the fish market near Low Town where the illustrious members of Low Town or No.2 company had been buried, and the elders performed 'fetish rites'.<sup>112</sup>

When the iron was not produced, preparations were made to dismantle the post and the fish market was cleared, to keep No.3 company from trespassing. But at the last moment, Old *Captain Merifa* and other seniors of No.2 company, met and begged for an extension until 10am the next day. The following morning, the company post was pulled down and the bricks removed to the Castle.<sup>113</sup> The District Commissioner said that the bricks would not be returned, until the iron of No.2 company had been returned, and that even then the correct building permit would have to be applied for after at least three months due consideration.<sup>114</sup> *Captain Merifa* and *Captain Oliver Cromwell* were then made to shake hands.<sup>115</sup>

When Governor John Rodger received Ffoulkes' report on the riots, he suggested destroying all the company posts to eliminate the potential for such riots ever occurring in the future.<sup>116</sup> Ffoulkes argued that this would not be a good idea without some urgent provocation because there was, "a great deal of sentiment attached to them." He suggested that it would be better to issue an ultimatum through the *Omanbin* that if there was another riot, all the posts would destroyed.

Ffoulkes also proposed the suppression of '*Inkabor*'<sup>117</sup>, the custom of charging a company to travel through another company's land on official occasions.<sup>118</sup> This usually involved a bottle of rum being sent to the host company and, "If this rum is accepted, the passing company may vent their feelings in words song, or action, to their hearts content, in praise, or in reproach to the company who accepted the rum."<sup>119</sup> The *Omanbin* had attempted to impose fines on companies that offered or accepted such 'dashes',<sup>120</sup> but on the first occasion for the enforcement of this new rule, the *Omanbin* had allowed No.2 company to escape the restrictions.<sup>121</sup> Ffoulkes decided that the *Omanbin*'s ruling should be adopted and enforced as part of colonial policy. He recommended that from then on, a government pass would be required to pass through another company's territory.<sup>122</sup>

The government's adoption of a policy to regulate '*Inkabor*' was not a measure of the government's faith in the *Omanbin* who had instigated the policy. Issues

pertaining to *Asafo* custom were among the few areas in which the *Omanbin* still had normative power. However, the recent events had shown that his authority was limited. The centralised regulation of '*Inkabor*' was therefore a measure of how little faith the colonial administration had in the Cape Coast *Oman*'s ability to administer itself. This served to bring to a head the inadequacies of the *Omanbin* and the need for a Town Council.

## V. THE TOWN COUNCIL VS THE OMANHIN

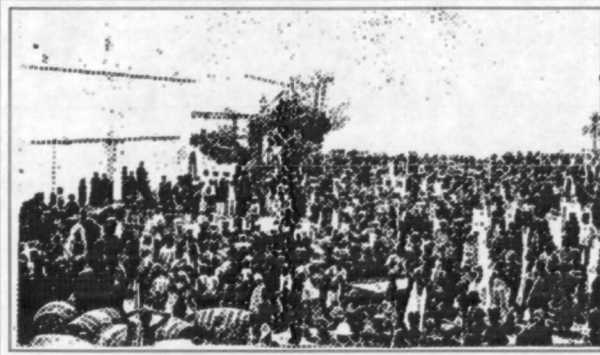
In early 1907, three years after the Town Council issue had first arisen, the case of *Omanbin* Mbra I vs the ARPS went to hearing in Cape Coast. The ARPS invited Amoonoo V from Anomabu as their guest at the trial without the customary permission of the *Omanbin*. The ARPS's case was successful, and the Cape Coast Town Council was formed. *The Leader* concluded that "the rottenness of the position taken by the Cape Coast's rulers' advisers was exposed." The Judge had made it clear that he felt the Aborigines Society represented rulers of 'larger districts and greater importance',<sup>123</sup> than simply Cape Coast. The *Omanbin*'s impotence at time of the death of the *Asafo* drummer, the ensuing *Asafo* company conflicts, and his defeat in the ARPS court case, were set-backs from which he never fully recovered.

There had been frequent disputes and bloodshed between the *Asafo* over the previous fifty years.<sup>124</sup> The intervention of former governors had not eliminated the belligerence that was part of being an *Asafo*. In the years following these incidents, there was a period of peace. Traditionally, one of the most volatile occasions was the installation of a new *captain*, when a lot of rum was traditionally consumed. During the ceremony, "the *Supi* or next senior captain, cuts off the top of the swish mound or 'essu,'<sup>125</sup> renews the fibre on the 'dadicol',<sup>126</sup> mixes rum with the swish that is cut off, and anoints the foreheads and shoulders of each of the new Captains with a mixture of rum and earth."<sup>127</sup> After this, much rum was drunk, and fights sometimes broke out. When *captains* of the No.5 company were installed in 1907, "all the principal members of the company were made to sign a bond in £500 that no disturbance would take place."<sup>128</sup>

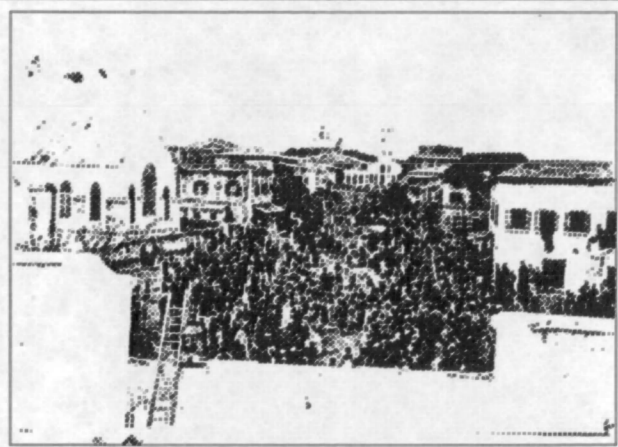
Following the government regulation of certain *Asafo* practices, a tem-



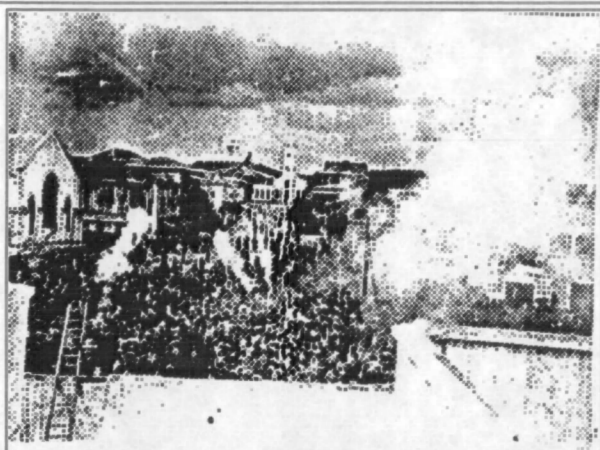
(Photographic Source: GNA ADM/1473.)



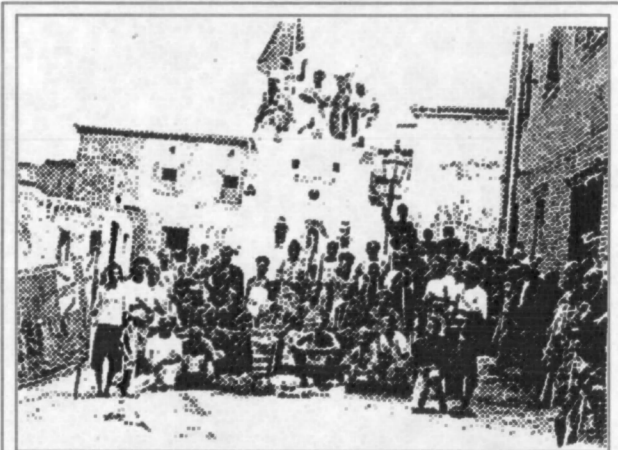
No.5 Company Parading outside the Castle.  
1907



The Company guns are prepared



The Company guns go off



No.5 in front of their Company Post.



The No.5 Flag-bearers just before the volley was fired.

porary optimism was apparent in the press. Many people hoped that the town had achieved a new balance; the demise and loss of respectability of much of the traditional order, was countered by the complimentary rise in popularity of the new societies and the ARPS. Although the local press were against the complete emasculation of the *Omanhin* and *Asafo* companies, there was a noticeable move away from open support for the traditional order for its own sake. The founding of the Cape Coast Town Council, created a new forum for political debate, in which lineage was not a primary legitimating factor. This period had seen many changes in social and cultural relations, which had changed the face of local politics. The Town Council was a product of these changes, and the men who were voted onto the council had to be aware of the new socio-cultural agenda which was partly developing in the new clubs and societies.

## VI. NEW SOCIETIES & CLUBS - CHALLENGES TO TRADITIONAL SOCIETIES AND HIERARCHIES

The antagonism between the *Asafo* companies could not contain itself indefinitely. In October 1907, another riot almost occurred, again between No.2 company and No.3 company, while they were doing the annual road cleaning.<sup>129</sup> The social respectability of the *Asafo* companies had been declining for some years, but the near repetition of the 1905 incident was somewhat of an embarrassment for the *Tufubin* and the *Oman*, and many sought to distance themselves from the companies. Efforts were again made to encourage the young men of the town to join the Church-run clubs and societies, and several new societies were proposed. W.H. Wharton, the Commissioner of the Central Province wrote to Sir Alfred Jones, the Chairman of Elder Dempster and Company - the steamship owners and insurance brokers, in the hope of getting the company to sponsor a club in Cape Coast.<sup>130</sup> But by the time Elder Dempster had replied from Liverpool, some two months later, Wharton had been replaced by an Acting Commissioner H. C. W. Grimshaw and the club was not pursued any further.<sup>131</sup>

In July 1907, E.J.P Brown proposed the establishment of a reading club in Cape Coast, similar to the club built by the government in Accra. Here it was hoped that, "the intelligent and more respectable of our young men may have the opportunity of associating themselves with the elders and respectable and intelligent members of the community for mutual improvement generally and also to foster healthy recreation and amusement."<sup>132</sup> The District Commissioner, W.C.F. Robertson, agreed to meet and discuss the proposed club.<sup>133</sup> The club's early members included J.M. Sarbah, G. Amissah, E.J.P. Brown, C.E. Bannerman, and many other eminent men of the town.<sup>134</sup> W.Z. Coker, the *Tufubin*, realised that the 'influential' sections of Cape Coast society were somewhat disillusioned with the *Asafo* companies, and so, in 1902, he rekindled his enthusiasm for the Temperance movement and went on tour.

The tour took Coker as far as Akyem, where he enrolled several members, and consecrated two new Temperance Lodges - one at Kyebi and another at Nsawam. The new Lodges were under the subordinate Lodge at Winneba, which was in turn under the District Lodge at Cape Coast.<sup>135</sup> *Tufubin* Coker, as a senior Lodge member,<sup>136</sup> encouraged members to join the new Lodges, and enticed new members, with what appears to have been inaccurate information about their status.<sup>137</sup> Perhaps in his haste to widen his political influence, (against the backdrop of the declining *Asafo* companies), *Chief*Coker also sanctioned other irregularities. Coker allowed the enrolment of several members who, although they were said to be working within the jurisdiction of the Winneba Lodge, were not shown in the returns periodically sent to the district Lodge. They were, therefore, not constitutionally recognised as Lodge members.<sup>138</sup>

The new members of the Lodges believed that their membership gave them authority to defy the indigenous hierarchy. At first, the government did not realise the lodges were having this effect. The District Commissioner of Central Province argued that so far as he was aware, "the work done by these Lodges in the Coast Towns has had a beneficial effect; they have exercised a healthy check on the consumption of drink, and have been the cause of no marked digression from Native Custom to the detriment of the allegiance of the subjects to the Chiefs."<sup>139</sup> In the rural areas, this was not strictly true. Both the Kyebi and Nsawam branch Lodges of the Star of Hope Winnebah Lodge, had used the Lodge as a platform for an attempted destoolment of a legitimately enstooled *Chief*.<sup>140</sup> Initially, it was accepted by the administration that, "a check to the oppression of the up-country *Chiefs*" was always, 'useful'.<sup>141</sup> But by 1908, it became clear that "the disregard for native customs" had reached proportions which were 'clearly undesirable',<sup>142</sup> when "every sub-chief or subject who is discontented with the ruling of the Omanhene, is invited to join the bush Lodge, being informed on payment of 2/6 he can come under the protection of the Lodge, and practically defy the power of the chief."<sup>143</sup>

The government began to realise that Coker's misinformation had left what the District Commissioner called, "these ignorant bush natives" with the perception that the power of the Lodge was, "greater than that of Government and that the Government is powerless to interfere with them"<sup>144</sup> The Winnebah Lodge, under whose jurisdiction the Kyebi Lodge lay, did not attempt to correct the misconceived view of their status and authority.<sup>145</sup> The Lodge members refused to pay their share of the legal expenses of the Stool, to take part in the cleaning of the roads or to attend the *Chiefs'* court and acknowledge his oath.<sup>146</sup>

In 1908, *Obene* Wanki, who was the *Chief* under whose jurisdiction the rebel Lodges lay, burst into one of its meetings and confiscated all the Lodge furniture. The Lodge consulted A.J.E. Bucknor, a lawyer, who immediately brought a case for damages against the *Obene* for at first £50, and then £250.<sup>147</sup> After intervention by the District Commissioner, Lodge members agreed to accept their responsibilities to the stool, but argued, that "they could not obtain justice in the *Omanbene's* court for the reason that their order was so distasteful to Attah Fuah (The *Omanbin*) that any case in which a member of their lodge appeared on one side was prejudged, and that the hearing of the case was a farce."<sup>148</sup> The administration concluded that the head of the District Lodge (English) at Cape Coast, J.P. Brown, should be commissioned to enquire and report upon the actions of *Tufubin* Coker of Cape Coast and the branch Lodge at Winnebah, in enrolling members in the vicinity of Nsawam and Kyebi, who were not constitutionally recognised.<sup>149</sup>

It is interesting that Coker, the *Tufubin* of Cape Coast, was able to cast such an influence over people as far afield as Akyem. Not only did Coker manage to recruit new members into the Temperance movement, he managed to inspire such

commitment that the people were prepared to defy the power of their *Chief*. This was probably partly due to dissatisfaction in the local hierarchy and the persuasive nature of the *Tufubin*. Within Cape Coast there had not been such overt conflict between the stool and the Temperance movement. This may have been because the line between those who were members of the stool family and those who were part of the Church and Temperance movement was less clear-cut. Throughout the late nineteenth century, Temperance had been favoured by members of the stool families of Cape Coast, Anomabu and Winneba.<sup>150</sup> Coker, for instance, was a *Tufubin*, a member of the *Oman* Council as well as being an official in the Temperance movement. The enstoolment of the non-Christian Kojo Mbra was the first time in decades that Cape Coast was led by someone who did not support Christian values or Temperance. From this point onward there was an undercurrent of resentment from the Christian and the Temperance sympathisers. Although the resentment to Kojo Mbra did not manifest itself in overt acts of defiance, as in Akyem, it became apparent that subtle ideological divisions were developing.

Within Cape Coast, feelings of scepticism over the integrity of the indigenous law and administration, were beginning to become apparent in different groups. The Muslims within Cape Coast, like the Lodge members in Akyem, had created an inward-looking religious hierarchy, that was alien to what surrounded them. The 'Mahommedens' were a growing and influential section in Cape Coast politics. In the Kotokraba area, they may have been in the majority in 1905 as they are today.<sup>151</sup> *Chief* Musa, who led the Kotokraba Muslims, was at the centre of a network of Muslims that made up powerful minorities in many of the coastal towns.<sup>152</sup> In 1908, *Chief* Musa wrote of his concern at the treatment of Muslims in Anomabu, who whenever involved in a court case, were required to swear the *Omanhin's 'fetish oath'*, which was against their religious beliefs, and regarded as blasphemous.<sup>153</sup> *Chief* Musa suggested that they be allowed to take their cases to the Muslim court at Kotokraba.<sup>154</sup>

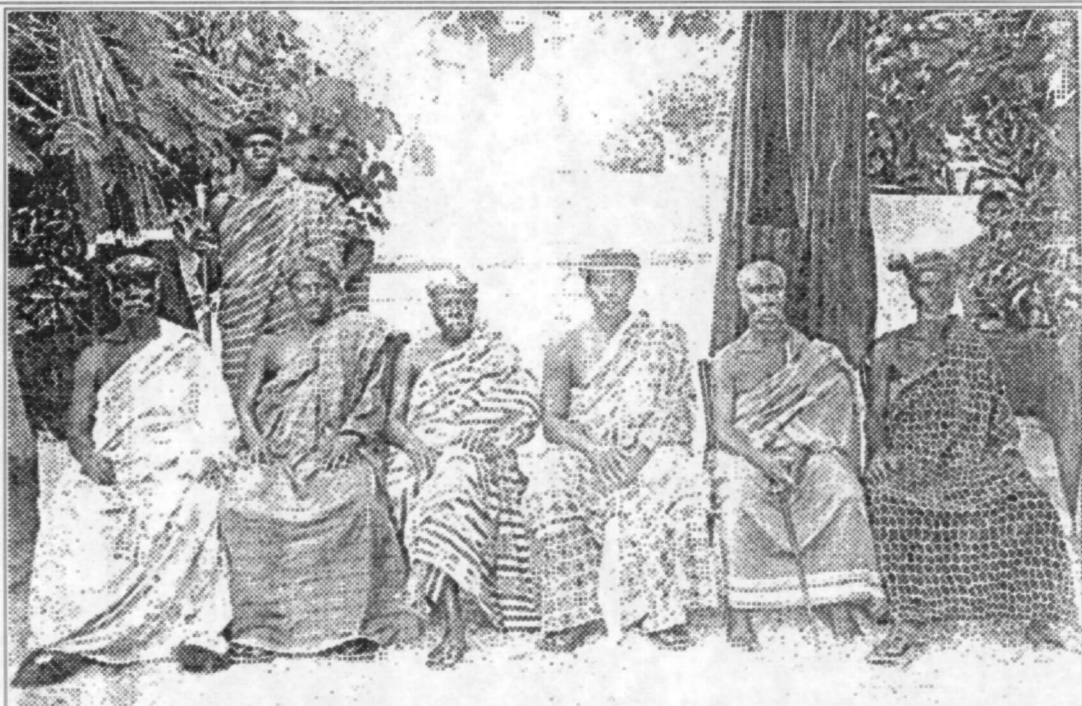
The Commissioner of the Central Province, E.C. Eliot, saw this as an attempt to break away from allegiance to the 'natural *Chiefs*' and discouraged it.<sup>155</sup> The District Commissioner argued, "these so-called Mohammedans would be only too glad of an opportunity to defy the native custom whereby they are bound to appear before their *Omanhene* should his oath be sworn against them. The adoption of Christianity does not, I believe, exempt a subject from appearing before a native Court and taking oaths in a similar manner."<sup>156</sup> The Muslim community in Cape Coast did mix the tenets of Islam with indigenous customs for their own advantage,<sup>157</sup> as did the Christians, but whether this was an attempt to use their religion to escape the law, is unclear.

Not only was there growing scepticism of Kojo Mbra's administration from the indigenous population, the government began to demonstrate increasing doubts

about the *Omanbin's* ability to preside over internal disputes, particularly relating to the *Asafo*. Hence, in October 1908, the District Commissioner began negotiations with the "Chiefs, Captains, and other representatives of the seven Cape Coast Companies." He hoped to persuade the Companies to, "voluntarily surrender all the objectionable flags and emblems," which, for so many years had served to provoke disruptions in the community.<sup>158</sup> On 23rd of January 1909, representatives of the *Omanbin*, *Tufubin* Coker, and *Supis* and *Captains* of each company, signed a declaration saying that they would agree to the replacement of the 'objectionable flags and emblems'.<sup>159</sup> New flags were designed and made up by Mrs Eliot, (the District Commissioner's wife), and other women in the Central Province.<sup>160</sup>

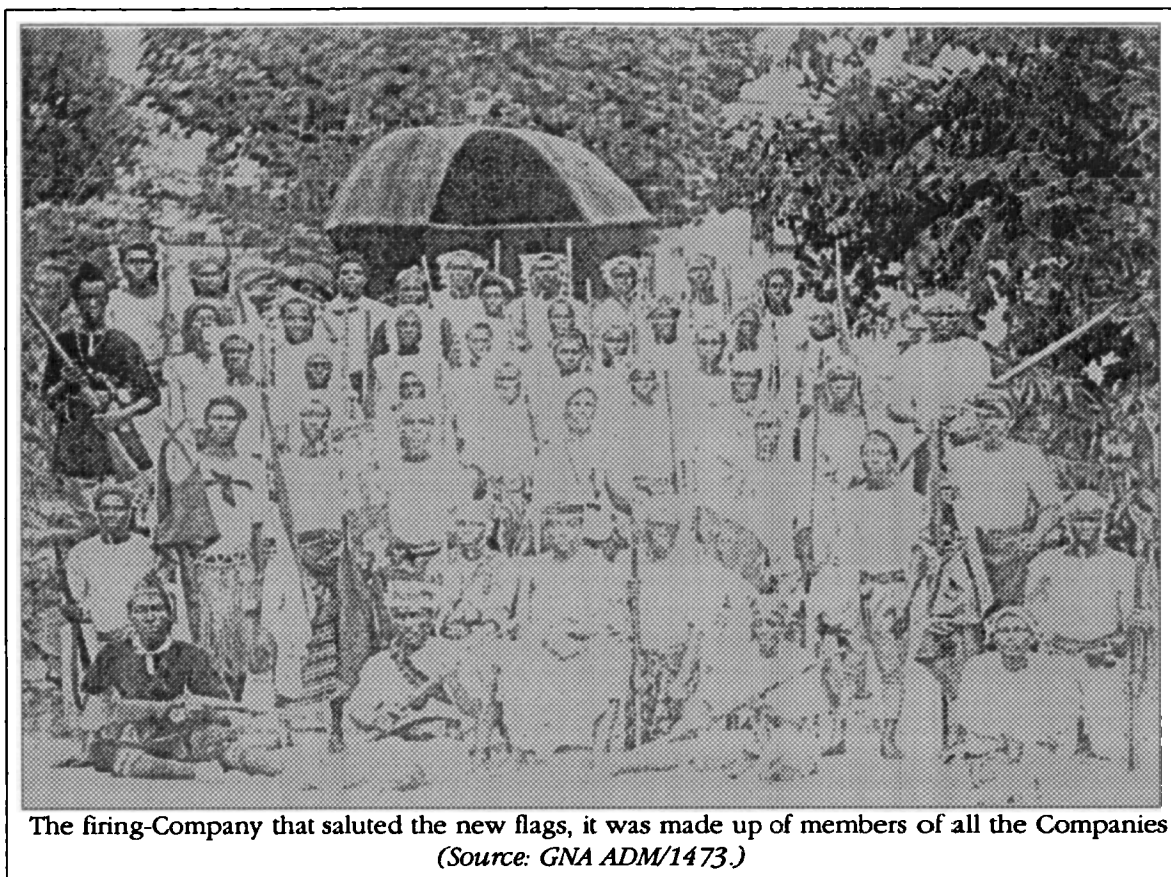
On the 6th March 1909, a meeting was held in Victoria Park to discuss the voluntary surrender of the 'objectionable flags and emblems' by the *Asafo* Companies.<sup>161</sup> The flags and emblems were to be replaced with new company 'peace flags', '*Assumdwɔ Frankaa*', and to be accompanied by drinking of '*Assumdwɔ Nsɔ*' (peace drinks). At 4pm 'practically the whole population of Cape Coast were collected on the Victoria Park.'<sup>162</sup> £100 had been spent on presents to pacify the *Asafo* Companies. A present was given to each company and each *Chief* involved in the arbitration. A small expenditure was made on liquor for the '*Assumdwɔ Nsɔ*'.<sup>163</sup> A pamphlet was handed around with a list of the 'offensive emblems', and a list of the newly proposed emblems.<sup>164</sup>

There was an opening address by Commissioner Eliot, who announced that, when the new emblems were chosen, they should be added to the list provided, and then passed by the Commissioner and all the other companies. He then warned that anyone who subsequently broke these rules, would be punished.<sup>165</sup> Eliot went on



The Chiefs who negotiated the new flags. Coker sits third from the right.  
(Source: GNA ADM/1473.)





The firing-Company that saluted the new flags, it was made up of members of all the Companies  
(Source: GNA ADM/1473.)

to say something that everyone in the town already knew, but had not previously acknowledged, "Cape Coast is not unfortunately, the flourishing city it once was"<sup>166</sup> as the town had lost the substantial northern trade which it had largely depended on. Eliot suggested that Cape Coast's survival was the major immediate issue facing the town, and lamented, "we are seeing our worst days now."<sup>167</sup>

J.M. Sarbah, who had been a key figure in the negotiations, continued in a similar vein in his address, but he felt able to direct the finger of blame. He argued that to a large extent, all plans that had been attempted in previous years were, "neutralised by our disunion and indifference."<sup>168</sup> This argument was echoed by, W.C. Pietersen, the President of the Aborigines Rights Protection Society, who argued that change was up to the people themselves, as they could all clearly see, "the threatening clouds."<sup>169</sup> W.Z. Coker thanked the Commissioner on behalf of the *Asafo* Companies, and then began the drinking of the *Assumdwii Nsa*, the peace drink.<sup>170</sup>

This issue had placed *Tufubin* Coker at the centre of negotiations and political machinations at a convenient moment - coinciding with the decline of his Temperance activities. For all the *Assumdwii Nsa*, the peace, was inevitably temporary. The peace lasted until the end of 1914, when No.1 company and No.2 company began fighting with stones in the Low Town area.<sup>171</sup> The confrontation had resulted following a funeral custom that No.1 company performed in No.2 company quarters. A drummer from No.1 company, insulted or cursed No.2 company with his drum. An altercation then took place which culminated in a full and open fight. More than forty *Asafo* members were arrested, eight of whom were suffering from stone and cutlass

wounds. Forty *Asafo* members were convicted, 38 were fined £3, one was fined £5, and one was flogged. All the fines were paid.<sup>172</sup> The harsh punishments were very much in line with what the press called 'public opinion', that had been distancing itself from the old agenda that appeared to them so closely associated with 'violence' and 'illiteracy'.

The 'impoverished condition of the town'<sup>173</sup> was beginning to concern everybody. The *Gold Coast Leader* remarked how the town's degeneration was becoming more and more apparent, "the Wesleyan Guild, a flourishing institution sometime ago, is very poorly attended now. The attendance even of the spiritual heads is spasmodic. The Sunday School is going to rack and ruin,....and in the Church itself there is a strong feeling of dissatisfaction."<sup>174</sup>

The depressing effects of cyclical endemic illnesses, civil disruption and the ambient economic crises, were beginning to sap the community's morale. As conditions became more difficult towards the end of the decade, and survival became the main issue, sections of the community began to allow their subscriptions to clubs and societies to lapse.<sup>175</sup> It also became apparent, that in the areas of medical treatment and burial, the majority of the population had maintained their loyalty to indigenous practices. A survey of burial practices, gives a clear insight into this. The 'heathen' graveyard was the most popular place of burial - it was also the largest and fullest, occupying 13,300 square feet.<sup>176</sup> There were two smaller Wesleyan cemeteries, one undenominational Christian, two government-run public cemeteries, an *Amanfu* 'heathen' cemetery and an *Amanfu* Christian cemetery,<sup>177</sup> a 'heathen', a Mahomedan, a private, and a Sudu Village cemetery. But what was clear was at the ultimate moment of reckoning, the majority of the people of Cape Coast maintained their commitment to what they *really* knew. This was partially demonstrated during the yellow fever outbreak of 1910.

## **VII. DR. ERNEST JAMES HAYFORD AND THE INDIGENOUS RESPONSE TO YELLOW FEVER OUTBREAK**

Scott suggests that a fierce outbreak of bilious remittent fever in 1901, was in fact known to have been yellow fever. He argued that the Medical Officer, "was advised that it would never do to allow it to be known that yellow fever was occurring." Many years later, a doctor disclosed that there had been several unrecorded cases in 1901.<sup>178</sup> In 1910, there was another serious outbreak of yellow fever on the coast. The disease quickly ripped through Cape Coast, especially affecting those in the European community. Rev. A.T.R. Bartrop, (Chairman and General Superintendent of the Wesleyan Church), and his colleague, the Rev. J.H. Bridge, both died within weeks.<sup>179</sup> Because the 1901 outbreak had been kept secret, most of the community was thrown into panic, "by the announcement by the government Medical Officers that yellow fever, hitherto supposed to be unknown in West Africa, had broken out on the Gold Coast."<sup>180</sup>

*The African Times and Orient Review* reported, "The terror was increased by the severe quarantine and other regulations, which it was considered necessary to enforce, dislocating both the commercial and social life of the colony."<sup>181</sup> Dr Ernest James Hayford, a member of the Cape Coast *Abenfie*,<sup>182</sup> had set up medical practices at Cape Coast, Elmina, Shama, Sekondi and Axim. He was known for his successful applications of indigenous drugs, where there was no European equivalent.<sup>183</sup> Dr Hayford believed that the name, 'yellow fever', was a misnomer, and that the disease was really a severe form of bilious remittent fever. *The African Times and Orient Review* emphasised that, "The distinction was important, as, in Dr Hayford's opinion, the wrong designation arose from a mistaken diagnosis, which led to a wrong treatment of the disease, resulting fatally in almost every case treated as yellow fever."<sup>184</sup>

Dr Hayford's recommended treatment of "yellow fever", was based on indigenous medicine. The European Medical Officer was surprised as the indigenous population began to reject the European treatment, in favour of indigenous medical practitioners, who they believed could cure "yellow fever (*Kodfoku*) by native medicine." This view was held by "the most enlightened men."<sup>185</sup> The proof of the effectiveness of the indigenous diagnosis and practice, became apparent as every case of the disease treated by Dr Hayford, recovered.<sup>186</sup> Some years later, 'it was rumoured' that the French were working on a serum or vaccine, "taken from the human blood and mixed with native medicines"<sup>187</sup>

However, amongst the European community, yellow fever continued unabated. So serious was the state of affairs, that the Colonial Office sent Sir Rupert Boyce, (who was considered the best living authority on yellow fever), to the Gold Coast to investigate. *The African Times and Orient Review* described how, "With this eminent scientist, Dr Hayford maintained a lively controversy in support of his own view, and, in the general opinion, fully held his ground against the 'highest authority'." The controversy was never resolved and ended when Sir Rupert Boyce died, soon after his return to England.<sup>188</sup> Later that year, Hayford left the medical profession and went to England to train at the Bar.<sup>189</sup>

The popularity of indigenous medicine, even amongst those who had been European-educated, was indicative of how European culture and technology could interlink with indigenous traditions. It seems that people adopted European practices in as far as they worked successfully in any given situation. There were probably very few people who accepted European culture wholesale. Where European knowledge offered solutions, people were prepared to utilise it. Sacrifices made to acquire European knowledge and skills, did not reflect a commitment to Europe. E.J. Hayford's late change of career, was probably indicative of this use of European knowledge. In the 1880s, when the Wesleyan Church was at its height, Hayford had been a Methodist minister; in the 1890s, he trained to become a doctor; and in the final decade of his life, he trained to be a lawyer. Hayford was concerned with

effecting his immediate conditions, and as conditions changed, he was prepared to throw off his previous occupation, and re-train.

### **VIII. RESPONSES TO THE DECAY**

Because of the dispute between the *Omanbin* and the ARPS, government officials had come to dominate the Town Council. By 1910, after almost a decade of decline, the council began to implement radical policies to arrest Cape Coast's rapid demise. Although neither the ARPS nor the *Omanbin* had been able to suggest positive policies to evade the crisis, both institutions sought to block the Town Council's plans. For the first time in many years, the ARPS, the *Omanbin* and the local press were united. Ironically, the town's unity was inspired by government policy which seems to have been in the town's best interests.

In August 1910, as the yellow fever began to abate, *Tufubin* Coker, supported by the *Omanbin*, the *Supis*, the ARPS and the senior people of the town, signed a petition against the new sanitary by-laws passed by the Cape Coast Town Council.<sup>190</sup> Although the by-laws had not received the official endorsement of the Governor, they caused outrage in Cape Coast. If enacted, the laws would increase the powers of Medical Inspectors to prosecute those found guilty of breaking the sanitation laws. In the past, Sanitary Officers had been instructed to patrol Cape Coast, looking for open pots and barrels that contained stagnant water. When such containers were found, they were authorised to pour kerosene oil into them to kill mosquito larvae. The inspectors had taken to simply breaking such pots, and then levying heavy fines of 40 shillings on the guilty households.<sup>191</sup> On occasion, they had been said to, "enter premises and bedrooms to ransack clothings and other paraphernalia, cooking pots and other utensils for the purpose of destroying them".<sup>192</sup>

The new by-law would have made it illegal for the five wells in the town to have their water drawn by a bucket, as pumps were safer and more sanitary. Because the people of Cape Coast could not meet the cost of the installation of such pumps, in order to comply with the by-law, the five wells in the Cape Coast would have to be closed altogether.<sup>193</sup> The petition suggested that, "the people should be gradually taught hygiene and sanitation, so as to get them to take a lively interest in such matters which we have no doubt whatever in stating they are prepared to do instead of passing drastic measures and imposing severe fines on them."<sup>194</sup>

The petition was ignored, and the Sanitary Inspectors began a rigorous campaign of searches and fines. One of the first victims, was J.P.H. Brown, the proprietor of the *Gold Coast Leader*. The *Leader* reported that the inspectors 'invaded' his premises and the water was tested against his protests. In the same week, thirty or more people were fined for having mosquito larvae found on their premises. At the well-respected Madam Mansah's house, a Sanitary Inspector forced entrance, and found two pots; neither pot had larvae, but during the search, one pot was broken

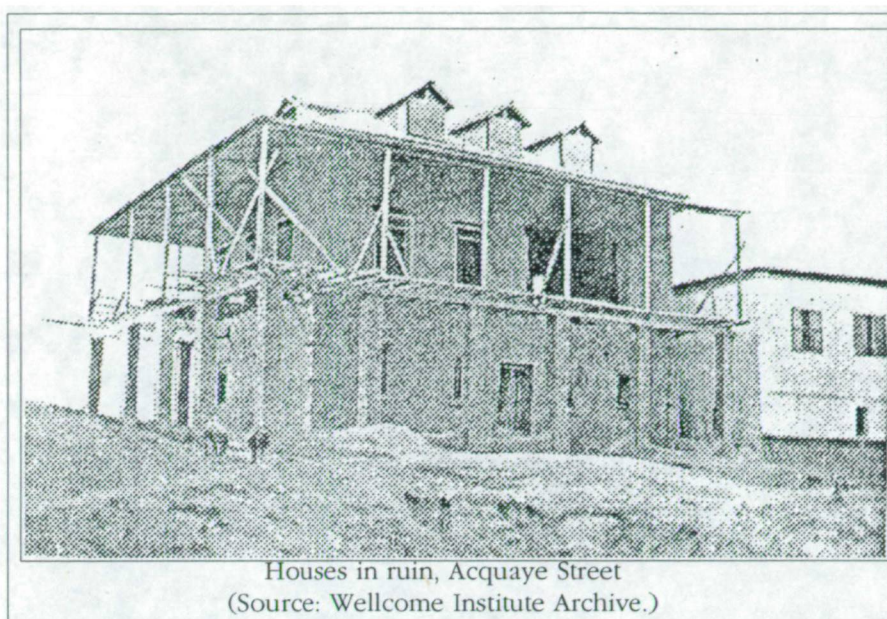
and then left outside by the inspectors. The pot then became 'infected by larvae',<sup>195</sup> for which Madam Mansah was later fined 10s.<sup>196</sup>

With the arrival from England of Dr Beringer, the "sanitary prosecutions slackened a bit and the molestation of people by sanitary inspectors abated a bit"<sup>197</sup> But the general uncompromising prosecutions continued. Dr Rice, Senior Sanitary Officer in a neighbouring colony, advised that the most effective way to maintain sanitary conditions was to, "inspire the fear of hell into the breasts of natives."<sup>198</sup> This statement was doubly painful, because the British government in West Africa, had excluded qualified 'native' medical practitioners from appointment to the Sanitary Department of the colony. Thus, there was no opportunity for an experienced indigenous advocate to offer a more considerate view.

The *Gold Coast Leader* concluded that, "sanitation is nothing but a device of the white man to find jobs for himself, to humbug the natives and by sanitary prosecutions and fines, to levy irregular taxes on the people for the maintenance and up-keep of the sanitary show"<sup>199</sup> The *Gold Coast Leader* sought to publicise each prosecution. One of the most controversial of the time, was the case of George Amissah, a respected Cape Coast businessman and a member of the *Abenfie*. Amissah was in his shop, opposite his house, when the Health Officer asked if he could inspect his house for water-filled receptacles. Amissah said, 'yes, but wait my Aunt is in the back yard bathing'. Dr le Fanu, the inspector, refused to wait. Amissah ordered the bolt to be drawn across the inside of his house, and refused to allow the inspector to enter. The next day, Mr Carter, the European Sanitary Inspector, began an investigation of conduct. Carter concluded that Mr Amissah was not being unreasonable in the circumstances, and that perhaps Dr le Fanu, who had only been on the coast 3-4 weeks, had over-reacted.<sup>200</sup> After Dr le Fanu's persistent demands, George Amissah was charged with obstructing a medical officer in his duty.<sup>201</sup>

To the disgust of the editor of the *Gold Coast Leader*, the case was not dismissed in court on its merits, but on a technical error. *The Leader* argued that it was, "persecution to have poor people, who possess practically nothing and often times experience difficulties in providing themselves with daily food",<sup>202</sup> to be inundated by, "fines of 10/- or 12/- a week for doing what the public authorities themselves have failed to do, viz., keep places under their own control free from mosquito larvae. People have to store water in small receptacles there is no other system of keeping water."<sup>203</sup>

The severity of the inspections and fines, were often not sanctioned by government policy. It was openly acknowledged that, "the quality of the inspectors left much to be desired,.... ignorance was frequently alleged as an excuse when certain acts had been omitted or wrongly committed."<sup>204</sup> The Senior Town Sanitary Inspector, received £95 per annum and a bicycle allowance, while his four juniors received £40 plus a uniform, but very little training. In 1911, the two Inspectors who



were of the least use, were dispensed with. The Senior Inspector's job was upgraded and each officer was provided with a book of rules.<sup>205</sup> This was supplemented by more than 1500 hours

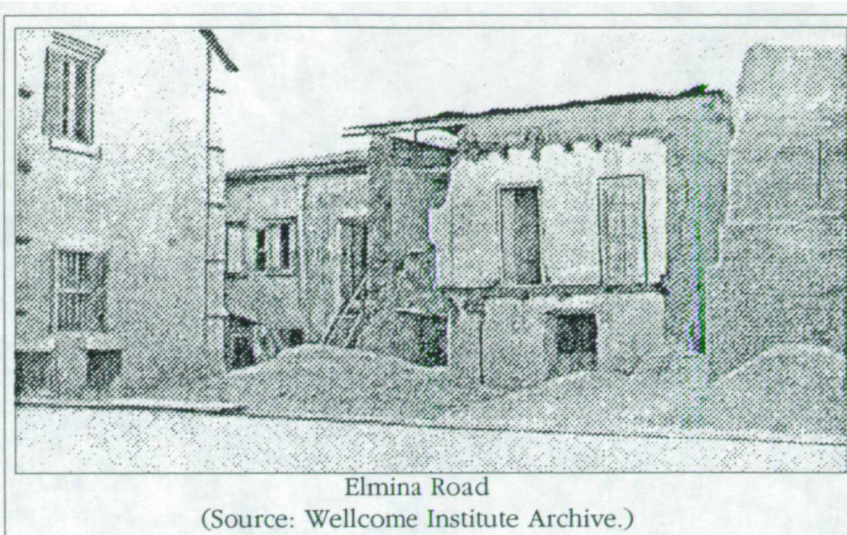
of Kroo labour a month, which was consistently used to keep Cape Coast as tidy and clean as was possible.<sup>206</sup>

By 1911, Cape Coast was in a very dishevelled condition. The government used the Spirit License Ordinance as a pretext to inspect every property. Each house was checked for evidence of liquor production. The Medical Officers' subsequent conclusions, were condemning. Although the criticism was tinged with European prejudices, it does give an insight into the atmosphere of the town. The results of the survey suggested that at least four-fifths of the population of Cape Coast slept in rooms 'unfit' for human habitation. This was said not just to be the 'poorer classes' problem - even some of the 'better off' section of the community had portions of their properties, especially on the ground floors, which were 'uninhabitable'.<sup>207</sup>

The 'vast majority' of Cape Coast houses were badly planned, damp, dark and ill-ventilated. Usually the ground floor was built below ground level. The Medical Inspector said that, "some of the underground rooms in which human beings live are unfit for the meanest domestic animal". The underground rooms were below 'lean-to houses and sheds', "further taking away light and air." Most of the houses were said to be asymmetrical; shapes that were simply optimised to cover every available piece of ground.<sup>208</sup> Within many of these houses, there was often no source of light or ventilation, and goats and sheep were allowed to roam freely. On the floors lay, "accumulations of decomposing rubbish - chiefly rags and old clothing."<sup>209</sup> The internal conditions of the houses were compounded by the external congestion.

In the more densely congested areas, the houses were placed 'without any relation whatever to one another,' so that, "where there was room a house was built. It might touch a neighbouring house or it might not; it might block up a passage; it might intrude upon the yard of a neighbour; it might stop the ventilation of the neighbouring houses or prevent the entrance of light; it might do anything. Only one question appeared to matter: was there space for a room or two of any sort?"<sup>210</sup> The

main reason for this congestion was that certain families, *Asafo* companies, and religious groups, had lived in given areas of the town for many years. The traditional sites of the communal home had not changed, but the size of the groups had



Elmina Road

(Source: Wellcome Institute Archive.)

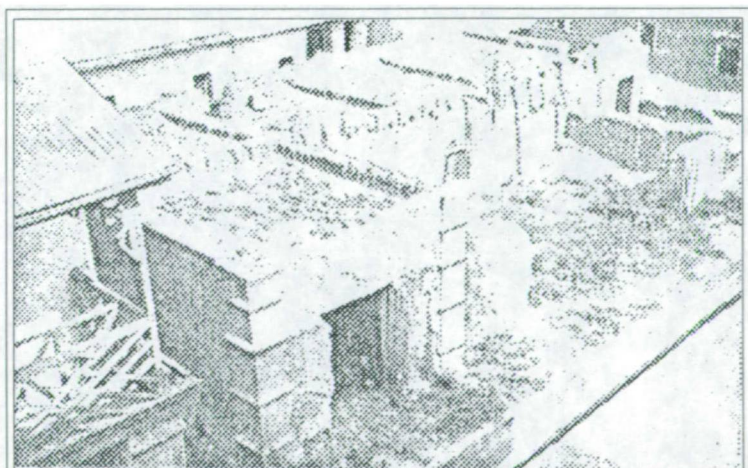
grown substantially over generations. Communities could not expand as other communities surrounded them, and they would not integrate. The few who could afford to travel, were obliged on their return to re-establish themselves within the vicinity of their family home.<sup>211</sup> When asked by the Provincial Commissioner and the Medical Officer if they would move to less congested areas of the town, only ten minutes walk away, with generous compensation, there was a unanimous 'no'.<sup>212</sup>

The administration found it strange that a person from Cape Coast would "rather live in one of the already over-crowded hovels with his own people."<sup>213</sup> Many families had lived in areas of Cape Coast since the days when it was customary to bury the family dead under the floorboards, and so for them the site of the house was more than just a piece of real estate. Many of the dead were buried with Aggrey beads and gold trinkets. People asked rhetorically whether the government realised what the land meant to them; "for a few paltry pounds which is all the Government is prepared to give us, we shall willingly give up this treasure - to say nothing of the ashes of our dead ones?"<sup>214</sup>

The density of the population within many of the small communities and large families, may have helped to foster the spread of diseases which could at times

decimate whole families.

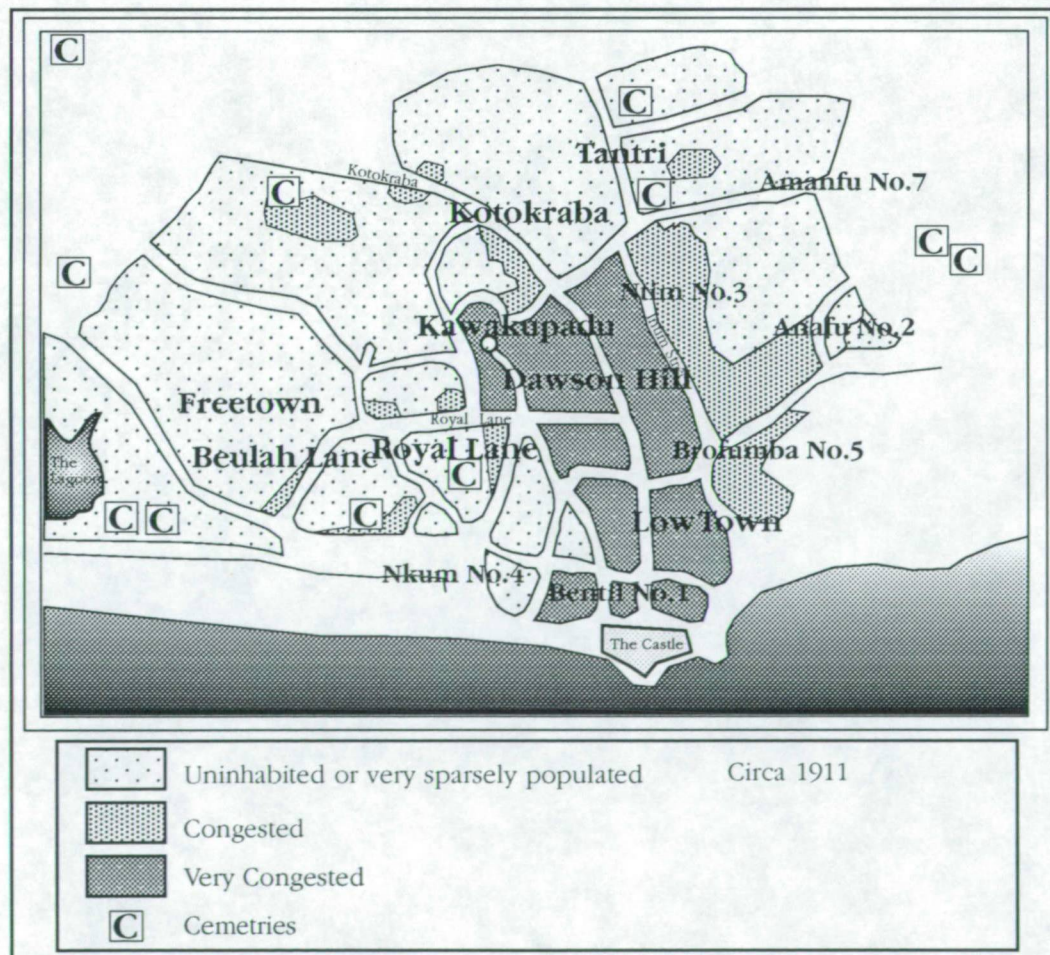
A breakdown of the fatalities from the most common illnesses, seems to show how particular illnesses were concentrated in certain areas and among certain *Asafo* companies.



Houses Disintegrate in Coronation St.

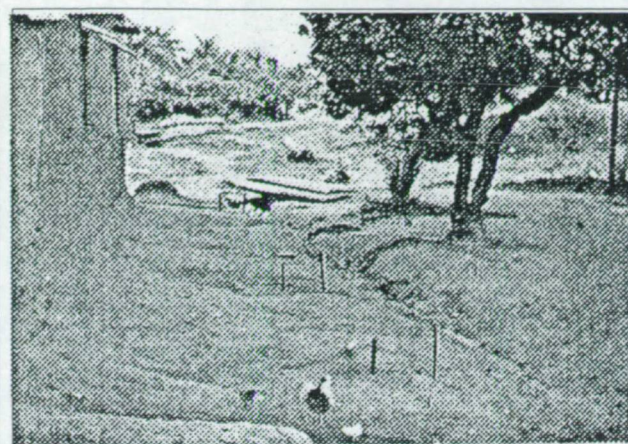
(Source: Wellcome Institute Archive.)

	Diarrhoea Dysentery	Consumption	Total Deaths Per District
Tantri	6	4	18
Kotokraba	12	13	41
Freetown	0	1	7
Beulah	-	-	-
Lane	1	2	17
Bentil	-	-	-
& Nkum	3	5	16
Royal Lane	6	1	30
Dawson Hill	1	-	9
Low Town	1	4	18
Kawakupadu	1	3	10
Ntim	3	2	16
Brofumba	1	2	13
Anafu	1	0	12
Amanfu	3	5	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>220</b>





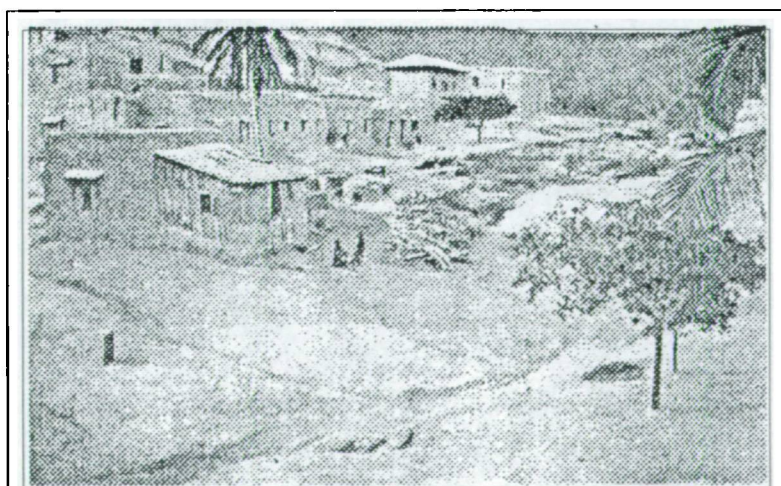
These figures must be seen in the context that one-fifth of the deaths registered above, occurred in two dry months following a long period of torrential rainfall.<sup>216</sup> During this period, the water had begun to stagnate after washing down from the higher ground. This would probably account for the high number of deaths in the low-lying areas such as Kotokraba (where the *Abenfie* was sited), which lies below several hills that



Water Worn Kawanpadu Street. Note the planks over the natural drain in the middle of the road.  
(Source: Wellcome Institute Archive.)

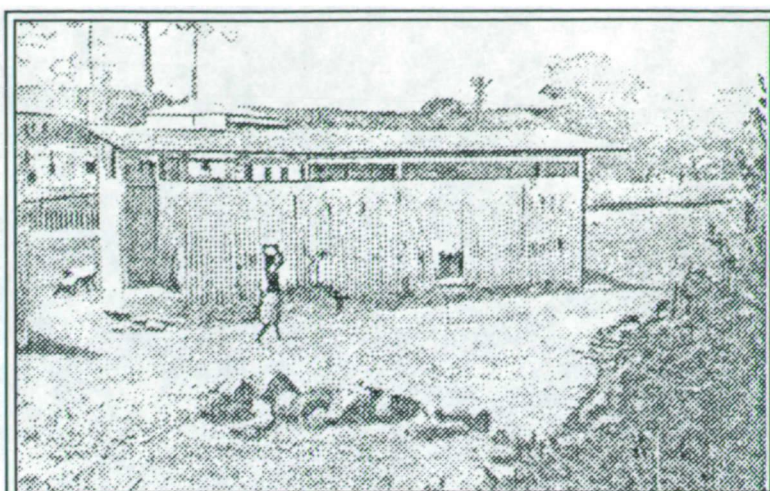
served as indigenous burial sites, or Christian cemeteries.<sup>217</sup> It was argued that some of the cemeteries were, “menaces to health” having “dwellings and wells near them.” It was suggested that the closing of all the existing cemeteries was probably advisable.<sup>218</sup> The surface of the high ground from Kawanupadu was worn and eroded by the water flow that followed the topology down through Coronation Street into Kotokraba.

In 1911, the houses at the bottom of Coronation Street were removed to make the thoroughfare clearer and more manageable.<sup>219</sup> The flow of water and sewage within the town washed the effluence down from the high areas into the low-lying areas, such as Kotokraba, through the centre of the town and into the sea - and sometimes back onto the beaches. This often left the beach in a foul condition. The process was compounded because people used the beach itself for their daily ablutions, and the prisoners and Kroo ‘boys’ who were employed to empty the public latrines, often emptied them directly onto the beach. When the latrines were emptied in the sea, strong currents often washed the sewage back onto the beach.<sup>220</sup>

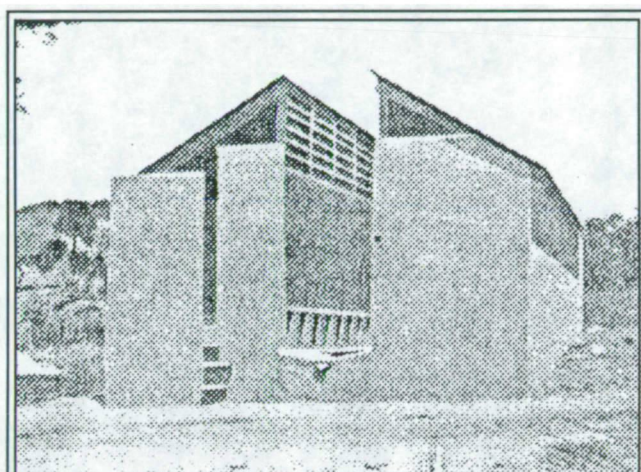


Water Worn Buckman Street.  
(Source: Wellcome Institute Archive.)

In addition to fouling the beach, there was a certain amount of fouling of the “narrower lanes, passages between houses, bush and even of the widest streets.”<sup>221</sup> To redefine the flow of water and to curb the spread of disease, a campaign was launched to demolish uninhabited or



Pre-1911 undrained latrine  
(Source: Wellcome Institute)



Post-1911 concrete squatting pan latrine  
(Source: Wellcome Institute Archive.)

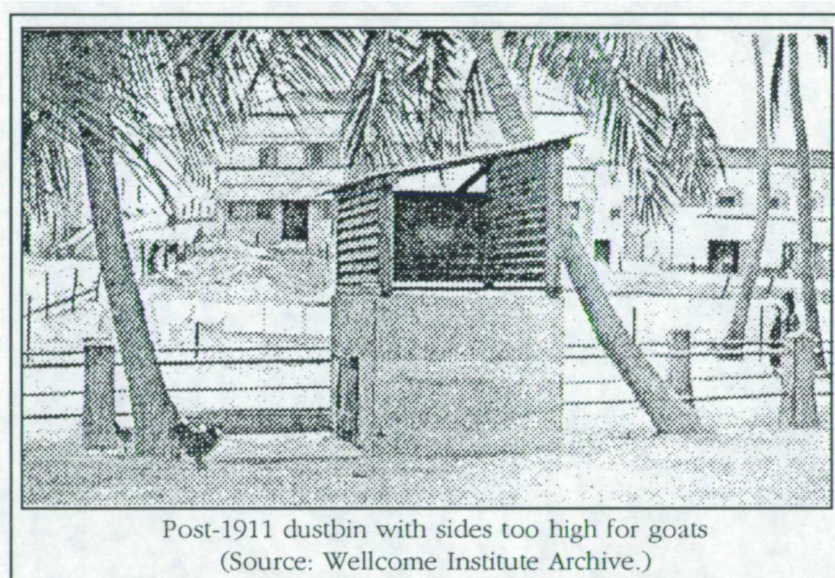
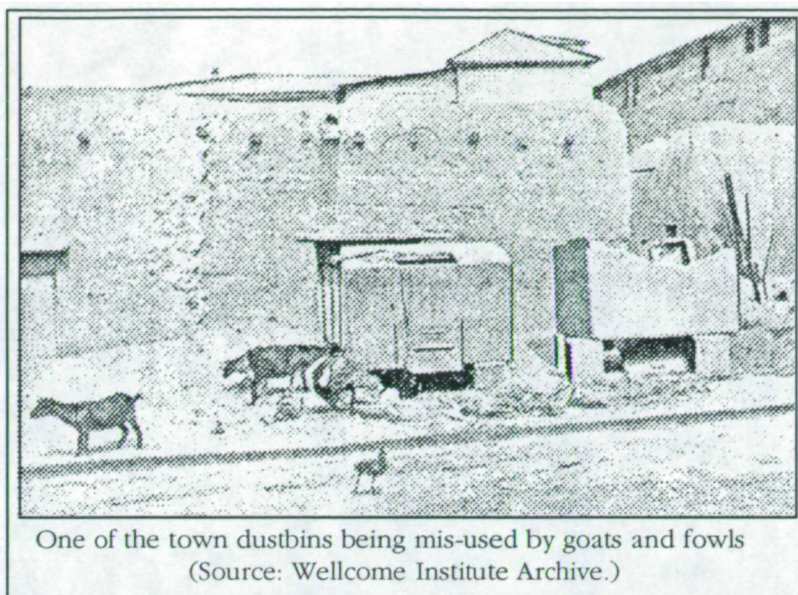
dilapidated buildings, and to enforce the law against insanitary practises. Inspectors, Sub-Inspectors and Learners, took it in turns to patrol daily with, 'Plain Clothes Constables', making arrests.<sup>222</sup> In 1911, there were 695 prosecutions for insanitary practises which were punished with over £180 worth of fines and

two imprisonments.<sup>223</sup>

There had been an on-going project to improve the environment of Cape Coast. During 1911, 128 dangerous buildings were demolished by the Town Council, 175 buildings were in danger of collapse and 110 had been partially demolished.<sup>224</sup> These were mostly old houses, that had fallen into ruin due to neglect. The ceilings of some houses had fallen in, whilst others were only

represented by one or two walls. Some such houses were inhabited and a few had been started, but had never been completed.<sup>225</sup>

The empty and decaying buildings were depositories for rubbish; leaking ceilings turned rooms into large stagnant pools where mosquito larvae could breed unheeded. The Medical Inspector argued that, "every house, every room, every wall pulled down allows more fresh air and light to penetrate neighbouring rooms and houses; every demolition means less damp, fewer pathogenic organisms, less vermin, fewer flies, better health."<sup>226</sup> Mr Hutton, the European Sanitary Inspector, began a parallel scheme to name and define the beginning and end of each street, as many of the streets had previously been without a clear name. Different streets had been known by the same name, some streets had been known by more than one name, other streets had no names or did not have definite boundaries.<sup>227</sup> Hutton also attempted to number every house, or in highly congested areas, every group of houses.<sup>228</sup>



Although the motives of the government's sanitary inspectors were good, the scheme met with continual opposition. The scheme showed how powerless the stool had become to manage even the most fundamental municipal duties. The imposition of government-defined standards on the town served to create even greater resentment. Despite opposition, the government continued to implement rigorous sanitary policy through the Town Council.

In 1911, attempts were made to begin epidemiological monitoring in Cape Coast. The first figures were collected and analysed in late 1911, when for Cape Coast it was already too late.<sup>229</sup> Migration patterns had been set as the working population moved away from the town to find work. The town's infrastructure was crumbling, due to neglect and a lack of investment, and the physical conditions of those who remained, was poor. What had become a swift but fatal blow for the town, had only been resisted at the point of post mortem. The 1911 health figures were a clear map of a decade of decay and degeneration, but the trend had been set, and was by that point, difficult or impossible to resist.

These events left Cape Coast a significantly different place in 1911, than it had been when at its peak, only slightly more than a decade earlier. The incipient process of marginalisation of the stool's power, became realised in the Town Council Ordinance. When Nana Kojo Mbra died in December 1911,<sup>230</sup> he seemed to take with him the resistance to the changing agenda. Although the enthusiasm for European social institutions, such as, the Temperance movement, was beginning to wane by the end of the decade, wherever they had been introduced, they had created alter-agendas that served to place the indigenous hierarchy into what seemed a larger and less favourable perspective. For the first time, potent forces from within the indigenous community had (perhaps inadvertently) worked to marginalise the power of the *Omanbin* and the stool. The decline of the stool's power within the town, combined with the relative decline of the town itself and left the stool in an uncertain position as the colony entered a period of change.

Notes: Chapter IV. The Decline of Cape Coast.

<sup>1</sup> Wellcome Institute. Appendix D *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1913* P.15 By 'a native'.

<sup>2</sup> Ffoulkes suggests that tradition of holding knives in the mouths of Brafo to impersonate 'sepo' victims was customary when the companies were posing. GNA, Accra. Cape Coast Native Affairs, ADM.11/1473, See the work of Arthur *Ffoulkes on the Asafo Companies. 1907.*

<sup>3</sup> GNA, Accra. Cape Coast Native Affairs, ADM.11/1473, *Ffoulkes on the Asafo Companies. 1907.*

<sup>4</sup> Wellcome Institute, *Government of the Gold Coast Extracts from the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health Cape Coast. 1911*, P.185.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> GNA, Accra. Cape Coast Native Affairs, ADM.11/1473, *Ffoulkes' study of the system of Asafo companies, 1907.*

<sup>7</sup> Such as the Aborigines Rights Protection Society.

<sup>8</sup> *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 9 April 1898.

<sup>9</sup> Patterson, K. *Health in Colonial Ghana: Disease Medicine and Socio-Economic Change, 1900-1955.* 1981. P.13. See also Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana.* Oxford. 1963. P.97.

<sup>10</sup> *Gold Coast Leader*, 7 December 1912.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Command Bill Cd 4720, July 1909.

<sup>14</sup> Wellcome Institute, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1913* included in a volume, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1908.* P.189.

<sup>15</sup> This was originally from George Meredith's *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel.* London, 1859.

<sup>16</sup> *Gold Coast Express*, 7 September 1899.

<sup>17</sup> At the turn of the century the Ancient Order of Forester's Friendly Society, Gold Coast. The Court Enterprising Sons, No 6,997, Cape Coast, was officiated by:

Chief Ranger J.E. Hayford

Sub-Chief Ranger G.K. Blankson

Secretary D.M. Abadoo

Sub-Secretary Isaac Roberts

Treasurer C.F. Turkson

Senior Woodward S.P. Longdon

Junior Woodward J.E. Sago

Senior Beadle J.T.N. Yankah

Junior Beadle R.T.F. Jackson

and it boasted Five Courts, including the above,

The Court of the rising sun, No. 7,423, Winneba

The Court Spring of Love, No.7 688, Accra

Juvenile Branch

The Court Hope of the Future, Cape Coast.

The Officers were changed annually. See, Anaman Rev, J B. *The Gold Coast Guide For the Year 1895-6.* London, 1894. P.103.

<sup>18</sup> At the turn of the century the Grand United Order of Oddfellows' Friendly Society, Gold Coast, District A, was officiated by:

District Master W T. Duncan

Deputy District Master FM Hammond

District Secretary Richard Graves

District Treasurer E.R Stewart

and boasted of seven Lodges,

Sub Lodges

Belgravian Lodge, No. 1,977, Cape Coast

Dawning Sun Lodge No 2,552, Elmina (Not working)

Star of the East Lodge, No. 2,553, Accra

Land of the Living Lodge, No 3,324, Salt Pond

Dispensation of Winneba, No. 3,1015

Juvenile Branch

Pride of Cape Coast Lodge

The officers were changed annually. See, Anaman Rev, J B *The Gold Coast Guide For the Year 1895-6. London, 1894.* P.102-3.

<sup>19</sup> At the turn of the century the Independent Order of Rechabites Temperance Friendly Society, Gold Coast boasted four Tents.

The Refuge Tent, No.- Elmina (not working)

The Lifeboat Tent, No. 1,841 Cape Coast

Juvenile Branch

The Pilgrims' Juvenile Tent, No. 607, Cape Coast. See, Anaman Rev. J. B. *The Gold Coast Guide For the Year 1895-6. London, 1894.* P.104.

<sup>20</sup> From the addresses of the English bases of these societies (in *The Register of Friendly Societies*) they seemed to be most popular in lower middle-class areas, whereas Freemasonry appealed to the middle and upper middle classes and the aristocracy.

<sup>21</sup> *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 3 March 1900.

<sup>22</sup> This assumption is based on looking at the numbers of friendly societies in towns where the population was known.

<sup>23</sup> *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 3 March 1900.

<sup>24</sup> See as examples, *Gold Coast Methodist Times*, 31 August. 1897-Ghartey's funeral, *Gold Coast Express* December 28 1899 J.S. Hagan's funeral.

<sup>25</sup> *Gold Coast Echo*, 15 June 1887.

<sup>26</sup> By Christian press I mean the newspapers like the *Methodist Times* that had an obvious religious bias.

<sup>27</sup> *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 23 July 1898.

<sup>28</sup> *Gold Coast Leader*, 12 July 1902.

<sup>29</sup> When he became known as the "finest transport officer since Moses". Although the *Gold Coast Leader* suggests this, the name William Zacheus Coker is an unlikely one for a Hausa soldier. The Cokers are a well-known Sierra Leonean family, *Gold Coast Leader*, 12 July 1902.

<sup>30</sup> GNA, ADM.11/1759, *Constitution of Cape Coast, written for Omanbin Mbra III and his contemporary Chiefs*. The evidence of W.Z. Coker.

<sup>31</sup> *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 15 July 1899.

<sup>32</sup> *Gold Coast Leader*, 12 July 1902.

<sup>33</sup> *Gold Coast Leader*, 4 October 1902.

<sup>34</sup> At the turn of the century, the Independent Order of Good Templars Gold Coast English Lodges were represented by several Lodges:

The Advanced Guard Lodge No.1 Cape Coast

The Star of Elmina Lodge No.2 Elmina

The Shield of Hope Lodge No.3 Accra

The Rescue Lodge No.5 Anomabu

The Tower Refuge Lodge No.6 SaltPond

Juvenile Temples

The Ark of Safety Temple No.1 Cape Coast

The Home of Conquerors Temple No-

The Freedom Temple No.3 Anomabu

The Hope of the Future Temple No 4 SaltPond

Mr J.P. Brown D.D. G.C.T. had the oversight of all of the above Lodges and Temples. See, Anaman Rev. J. B. *The Gold Coast Guide For the Year 1895-6. London, 1894.* P.104.

<sup>35</sup> *Gold Coast Leader*, 1 November 1902.

<sup>36</sup> Anaman Rev, J. B. *The Gold Coast Guide For the Year 1895-6. London, 1894.* P.104.

<sup>37</sup> Patterson, K *Health in Colonial Ghana: Disease Medicine and Socio-Economic Change, 1900-1955.* 1981 P 1

<sup>38</sup> *Gold Coast Leader*, 2 August 1902

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> *Gold Coast Leader*, 11 July 1903.

<sup>42</sup> *Gold Coast Leader*, 11 July 1903. The press was not completely innocent of behaving irresponsibly during this period, as advertisements for miracle cures, such as Dr De Roos' "world famed guttae vitae life drops" began to creep onto their front covers. Medicine's that claimed to 'the cure all known ills' or to be "the great European remedy for

- spermatorrhoeae, debility, epilepsy and those diseases for which mercury, sarsaparilla etc. are too often employed by English physicians to the ultimate ruin of the sufferers health." Every packet boasted 'the British Government stamp.' *Gold Coast Express*, 1 July 1897.
- 43 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 11 November 1899.
- 44 *Gold Coast Leader*, 25 October 1902
- 45 *Gold Coast Leader*, 13 September 1902.
- 46 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 31 January 1900.
- 47 *Gold Coast Leader*, 29 November 1903.
- 48 *Gold Coast leader*, 28 March 1903.
- 49 *Gold Coast Leader*, 26 September 1903.
- 50 Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*. Oxford. 1963. P.360.
- 51 *Gold Coast Leader*, 1 July 1904.
- 52 *Gold Coast Leader*, 20 August 1904.
- 53 *Gold Coast Leader*, 3 September 1904.
- 54 Later, the whole ARPS came to agree with the Omanhin's stance. See, Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*. Oxford. 1963. PP.360-1.
- 55 *Gold Coast Leader*, 17 September 1904.
- 56 GNA, ADM. 11/1759, *Constitution of Cape Coast, written for Omanbin Mbra III and his contemporary Chiefs*.
- 57 Hutchison, C.F. *Pen Pictures of Modern West Africans*, London, 1930. P.63. Tachie Menson, A.B. *The History of Freemasonry in the Gold Coast*. P.12.
- 58 *Gold Coast Leader*, 23 June 1906
- 59 *Gold Coast Leader*, 24 February 1906.
- 60 *Gold Coast Leader*, 7 April 1906
- 61 Gocking, R. *The Historic Akoto: A Social History of Cape Coast Ghana 1843-1948*. Stanford. 1981. P.202.
- 62 GNA, Accra. Cape Coast Native Affairs, ADM.11/1473, *Ffoulkes' investigation into the 1907 Asafo riots. & Ffoulkes' work on the Asafo company system*.
- 63 Ibid.
- 64 Ibid.
- 65 Ibid.
- 66 This was ruled at a general meeting called by the *Omanbin* only a short time before. It had been proposed by the No.3 Company. GNA, Accra. Cape Coast Native Affairs, ADM.11/1473, *Ffoulkes' investigation into the 1907 Asafo riots. & Ffoulkes' work on the Asafo company system*.
- 67 GNA, Accra. Cape Coast Native Affairs, ADM.11/1473, *Ffoulkes' investigation into the 1907 Asafo riots. & Ffoulkes' work on the Asafo company system*.
- 68 Ibid.
- 69 Ibid.
- 70 Ibid.
- 71 Ibid.
- 72 Ibid.
- 73 Ibid.
- 74 Ibid.
- 75 Ibid.
- 76 Ibid.
- 77 Ibid.
- 78 Ibid.
- 79 Ibid.
- 80 Ibid.
- 81 Ibid.
- 82 Ibid.
- 83 Ibid.
- 84 Ibid.
- 85 Ibid.
- 86 Ibid.
- 87 Ibid.
- 88 Ibid.

89 No.6 Company and the other Asafo members who had some European blood.

90 GNA, Accra. Cape Coast Native Affairs, ADM.11/1473, *Ffoulkes' investigation into the 1907 Asafo riots. & Ffoulkes' work on the Asafo company system.*

91 Ibid

92 Ibid.

93 Ibid.

94 See GNA, Accra. Cape Coast Native Affairs, ADM.11/629.

95 GNA, Accra. Cape Coast Native Affairs, ADM.11/1473, *Ffoulkes' investigation into the 1907 Asafo riots. & Ffoulkes' work on the Asafo company system.*

96 Ibid.

97 Ibid.

98 Ibid.

99 Ibid.

100 Ibid.

101 Ibid.

102 Ibid.

103 Ibid.

104 Ibid.

105 Ibid.

106 Ibid.

107 Ibid.

108 Ibid.

109 Ibid.

110 Ibid.

111 Ibid.

112 "The Company post consists generally of a circular birch or swish (earth ) tower, with one entrance, in this are kept all the paraphernalia of the Company, viz. the drums, flags, horns, caps emblems, fetishes, and trophies, and the Supi keeps the Key. An essential part of this tower is a flag-pole, on ceremonial and other occasions, the Company flag is exhibited from this post, and it is the Companies first care to guard it's flag from capture or insult.

The site of the tower is very often a vault, in which the principle men of the company have been interred since the origin of the 'post', sometimes it is a spot where some former hero of the Company has died and been buried; or again it may be the ancestral tomb of the Company's principal man before the 'post' was erected to mark the spot. In some instances the Company Post is merely a small mound which marks the spot where the Company has buried a notable enemy slain in battle. In all cases the site of the post, and the post itself, are sacred.

Connected with the post, it the 'dadicoe' which is a piece of iron wrapped round with a bunch of pineapple fibre. This stuck into a small mound of earth or 'Essu', which forms the coronation stool, so to speak, of the captains of the Company, as it is at this mound that the captains of the company are installed." See, GNA, Accra. Cape Coast Native Affairs, ADM.11/1473 *Ffoulkes' investigation into the 1907 Asafo riots. & Ffoulkes' work on the Asafo company system.*

113 GNA, Accra. Cape Coast Native Affairs, ADM.11/1473, *Ffoulkes' investigation into the 1907 Asafo riots. & Ffoulkes' work on the Asafo company system.*

114 Ibid.

115 Ibid.

116 Ibid.

117 means to notify or Ka nsa to notice rum.

118 GNA, Accra. Cape Coast Native Affairs, ADM.11/1473, *Ffoulkes' investigation into the 1907 Asafo riots. & Ffoulkes work on the Asafo company system.*

119 Ibid.

120 Ibid

121 Ibid.

122 Ibid.

123 *Gold Coast Leader*, 16 March 1907

124 GNA, Accra Cape Coast Native Affairs, ADM 11 1473, *Ffoulkes' investigation into the 1907 Asafo riots & Ffoulkes work on the Asafo company system.*



- 125 The Swish Mound at the foot of the company post.
- 126 A piece of pineapple fibre wrapped around a metal stake that is placed in the ground around the company post.
- 127 GNA, Accra. Cape Coast Native Affairs, ADM.11/1473, *Ffoulkes' investigation into the 1907 Asafo riots. & Ffoulkes' work on the Asafo company system.*
- 128 Ibid.
- 129 Ffoulkes had been moved to Tarkwa, but his fascination with the Fante continued, and he published an important paper in the *Journal of the African Society* which was used in the investigation of the disruption. See, GNA, Accra, Cape Coast Native Affairs, ADM.11/1473, *Ffoulkes' investigation into the 1907 Asafo riots. & Ffoulkes' work on the Asafo company system.*
- 130 GNA. ADM. 23/1/105, *Clubs and Societies.*
- 131 Ibid.
- 132 Ibid.
- 133 Ibid.
- 134 Ibid.
- 135 Ibid.
- 136 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 15 July 1899.
- 137 GNA. ADM. 23/1/105, *Clubs and Societies.*
- 138 Ibid.
- 139 Ibid.
- 140 Ibid.
- 141 Ibid.
- 142 Ibid.
- 143 Ibid.
- 144 Ibid.
- 145 Ibid.
- 146 Ibid.
- 147 GNA. ADM.11/1388, *Lodges 1909.*
- 148 GNA. ADM. 23/1/105, *Clubs and Societies.*
- 149 Ibid.
- 150 See previous chapter.
- 151 GNA. ADM. 23/1/148, *Jurisdiction of the Omanbin over the Mohamedens.*
- 152 Ibid.
- 153 Ibid.
- 154 Ibid.
- 155 Ibid.
- 156 Ibid.
- 157 Ibid.
- 158 GNA. ADM.11/1473, *Company Violence: an investigation into the 1907 Asafo Riot.*
- 159 Ibid.
- 160 Ibid.
- 161 Ibid.
- 162 Ibid.
- 163 Ibid.
- 164 Ibid.
- 165 Ibid.
- 166 Ibid.
- 167 Ibid.
- 168 Ibid.
- 169 Ibid.
- 170 Ibid.
- 171 GNA. ADM.11/594, *Cape Coast Riot 1914*
- 172 GNA. ADM.23/1 105, *Clubs and Societies.*
- 173 GNA. ADM 23 1 441, *Clubs & Medicines and Poisons*
- 174 *Gold Coast Leader*, 6 January 1906
- 175 By 1910 Temperance news faded dramatically from the press.
- 176 Wellcome Institute, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The*

Year 1908. P.208.

177 Named after, and predominately used by the Amanfu *Asafo* company

178 Scott, D. *Epidemic Disease in Ghana*. London, 1965. P.42.

179 Ephson, I. *Gold Coast Celebrities*, Accra, 1969, Vol. II. Entry under Ernest James Hayford.

180 *The African Times and Orient Review*, September 1913.

181 Ibid.

182 See his partial genealogy earlier in this chapter and also in the next chapter as the brother of J.E. Casely-Hayford.

183 Ephson, I. *Gold Coast Celebrities*, Accra, 1969, Vol. II. Entry under Ernest James Hayford.

184 *The African Times and Orient Review*, September 1913

185 GNA. ADM.23/1/441, *Clubs & Medicines and Poisons*.

186 *The African Times and Orient Review*, September 1913.

187 GNA. ADM 23/1/441, *Clubs & Medicines and Poisons*

188 *The African Times and Orient Review*, September 1913.

189 Ibid.

190 GNA. ADM.23/1/181, *1910 Protest by Ratepayers*.

191 Ibid.

192 GNA. ADM.23/1/441, *Medicines and Poisons*.

193 GNA. ADM.23/1/181, *1910 Protest by Ratepayers*.

194 GNA. ADM.23/1/441, *Medicines and Poisons*.

195 *Gold Coast Leader*, 12-26 August 1911.

196 Ibid.

197 *Gold Coast Leader*, 20 July 1912.

198 Ibid.

199 Ibid.

200 *Gold Coast Leader*, 31 August 1912.

201 *Gold Coast Leader*, 24 August 1912.

202 *Gold Coast Leader*, 31 August 1912.

203 Ibid.

204 Wellcome Institute, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1913* included in a volume, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1908*. P.190.

205 Ibid.

206 Ibid.

207 Ibid., P.194

208 Ibid.

209 Ibid.

210 Ibid., P.193.

211 Ibid.

212 Ibid.

213 Ibid.

214 *Gold Coast Leader*, 31 October 1903.

215 Appendix E Wellcome Institute, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1913*.

216 (The contemporary reports suggest that the boundaries were not arbitrary but were suggested by some physical feature (attitude, valley, natural drainage etc.) or by density of population, or there may be some natural congregation of people through similarity of race or occupation.) 30 out of 230 deaths in July and December 1912 when the rainfall had dropped from 2.85 - .20 inches in December and 2.70 - .50 inches in January. P. 186 and Appendix D Wellcome Institute, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1913*

217 Wellcome Institute, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1913*.

218 Wellcome Institute, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1913* included in a volume, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1908* P 201

219 Ibid., P.199

220 Ibid., P.197

221 Ibid., P.198

222 Ibid.

223 Ibid., P.201

224 Ibid., P.195

225 Ibid

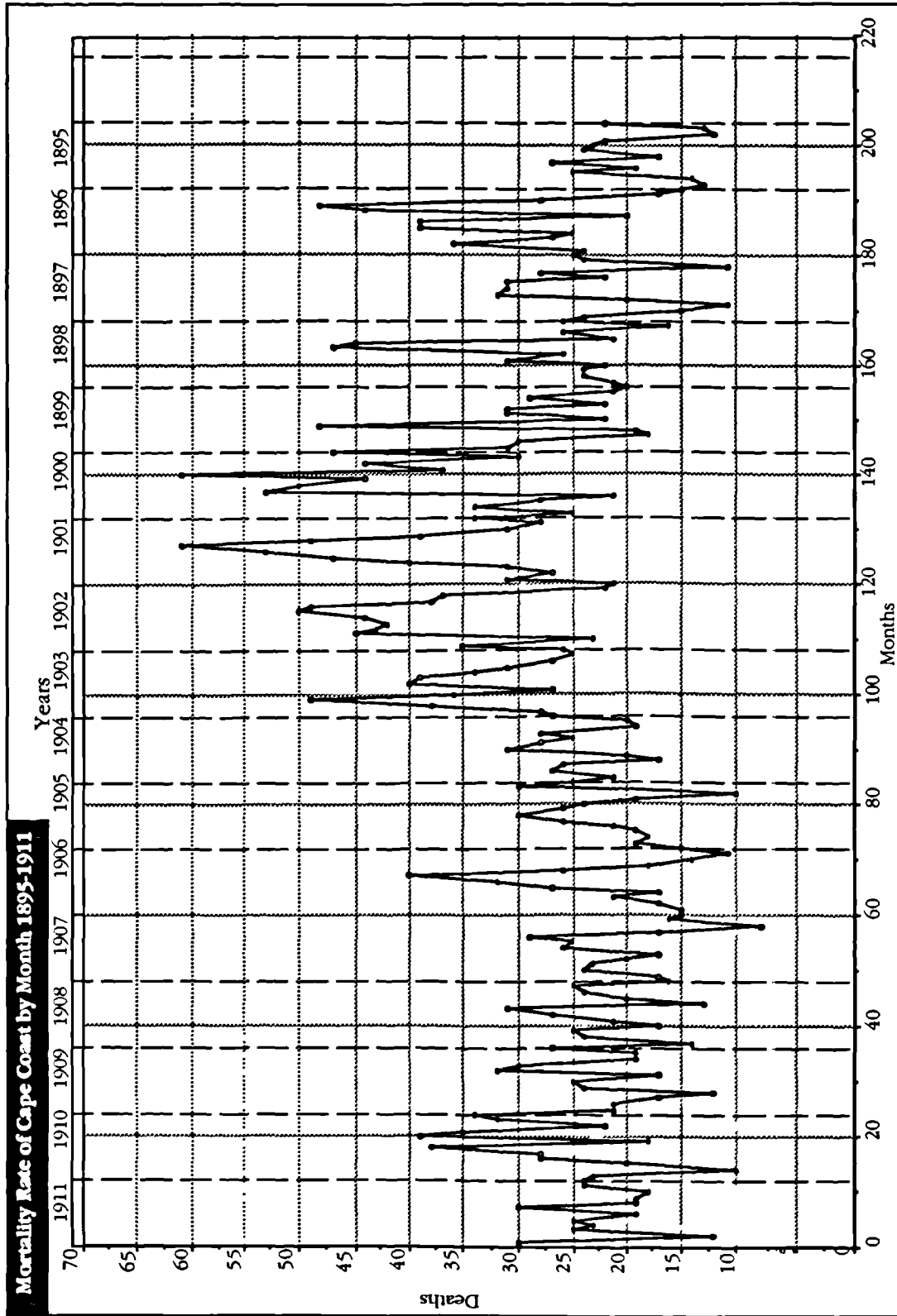
226 Ibid., P.196

227 This would also have been beneficial as people began to send letters. Wellcome Institute, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1913* included in a volume, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1908*. P 196.

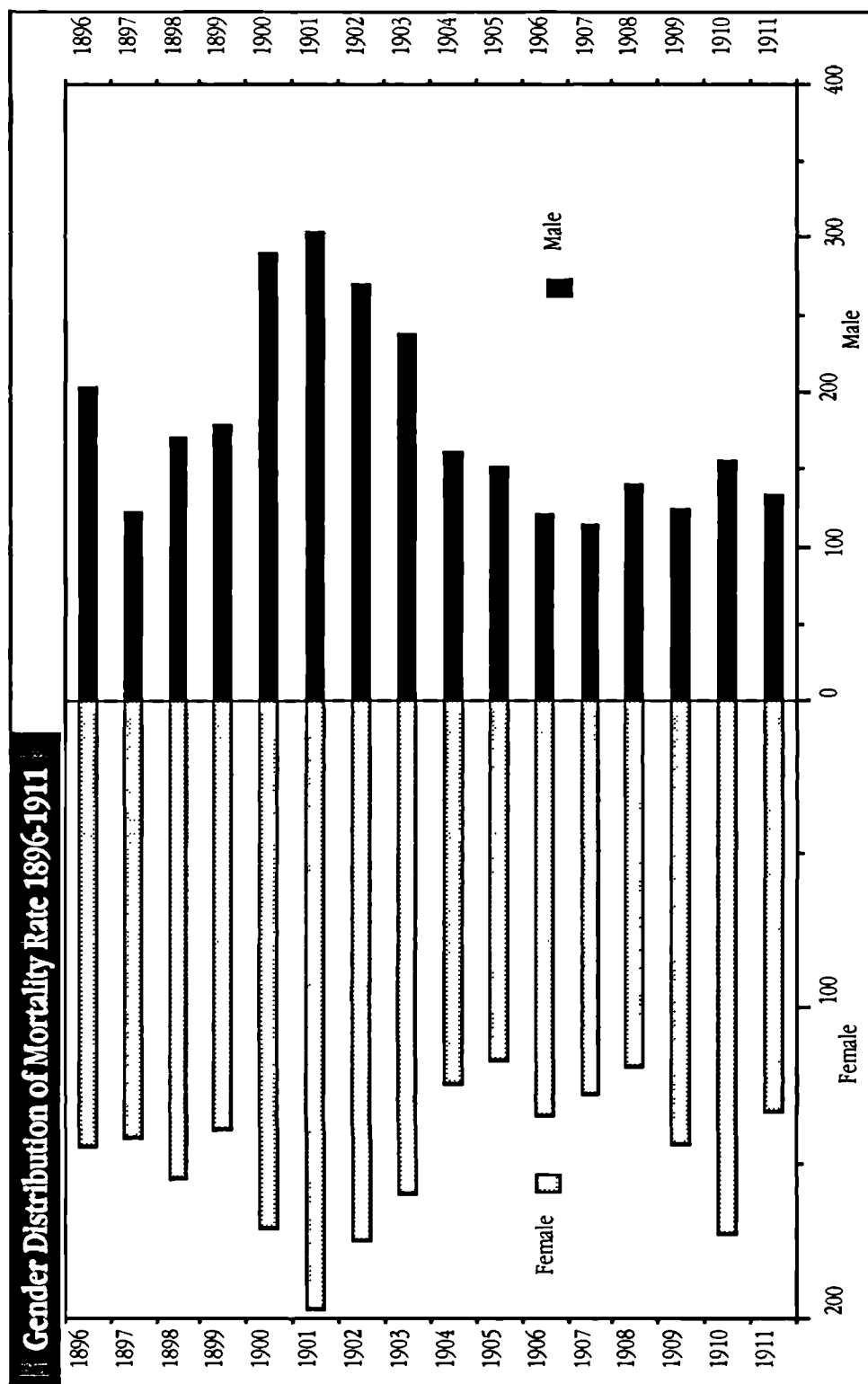
228 Wellcome Institute, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1913* included in a volume, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1908*. P.196

229 Previous attempts to conduct epidemiological monitoring, were hindered by a lack of accurate and consistent scientific data. There was, for instance, no compulsory death notification, although in every case of burial in a cemetery, government authority had to be obtained. See, Wellcome Institute, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1913* included in a volume, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1908*. P.186. In an endeavour to monitor epidemics and fatal infectious diseases, it was recommended that from 1911 onward, death registration should fall into the jurisdiction of the Medical Health Officer. Prior to that time the Assistant Registrar of Deaths sent a daily report of registered deaths to the Medical Officer, giving symptoms and duration of illness. If the report seemed suspicious or in any way indicated a dangerous infectious disease, further inquiries were made by the Medical Officer. This system left "much to be desired", the government suggested, "as a scientific record of causes of deaths it is useless". The system had been optimised to protect the public by monitoring outbreaks of disease within areas of the town, but not to collect and collate scientific data. The system ensured that it was improbable that "a fatal epidemic could progress in Cape Coast beyond a few deaths without being recognised by the Sanitary Authority." However, the information could not be utilised to predict potential outbreaks of disease. See, Wellcome Institute, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1913* included in a volume, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1908*. P.187.

The figures of the monthly mortality curve for the 17 years, 1895-1911, show, "very clearly the rise in mortality during the middle months of the year, with marked remissions during the late and early months." The months from May to August were the most fatal and October to April the least, while September is intermediate. See, Wellcome Institute, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1913* included in a volume, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1908*. P.187.

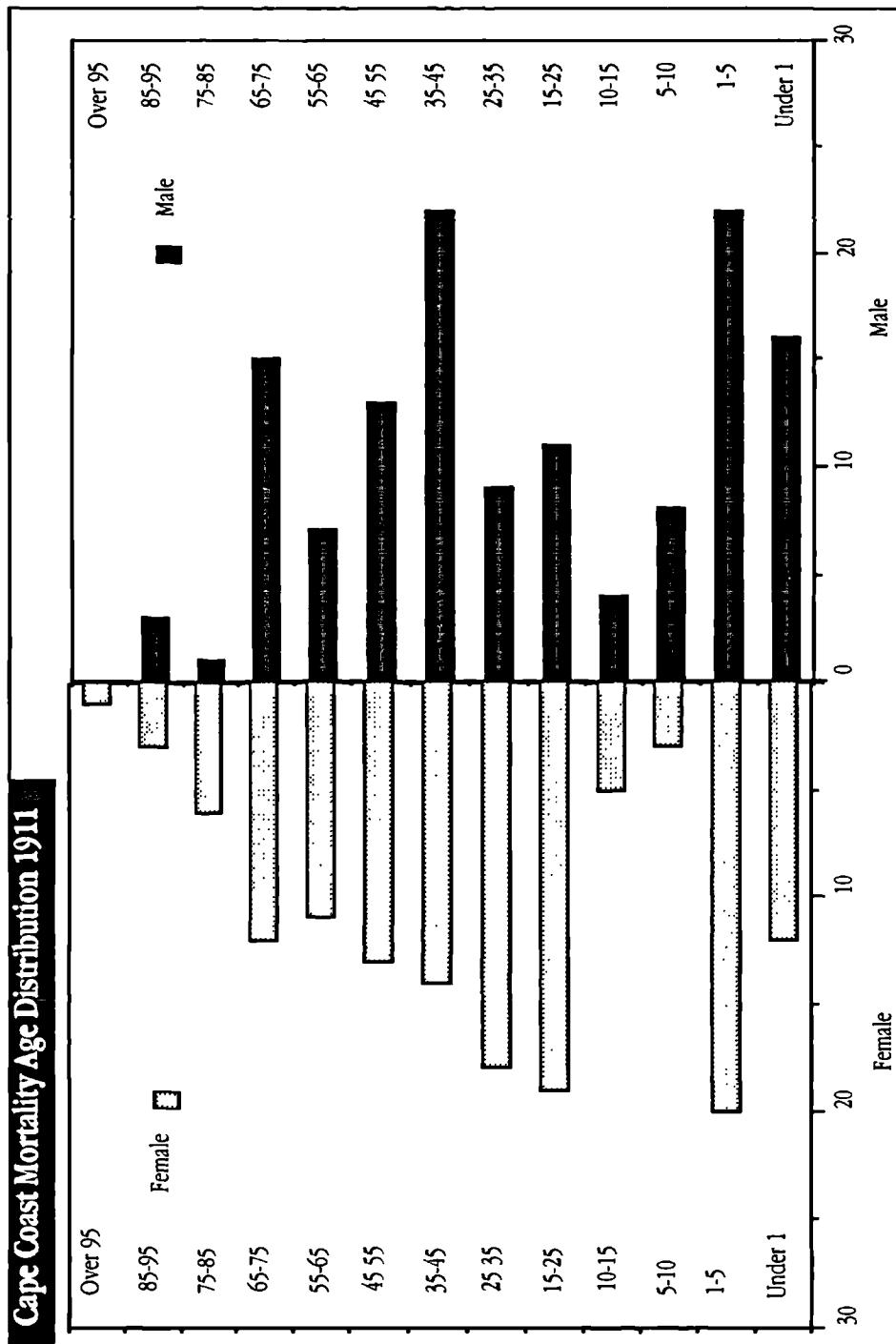


When these figures are re-examined with the age and sex of the dead taken into consideration, an analysis of how specific groups were affected by disease can be made. The small number of recorded deaths of infants, probably resulted from there not being any compulsory birth registration See, Wellcome Institute, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1913* included in a volume, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1908*. P.188.



(The majority of Fante in the Edwardian period did not know their exact ages, but in a town such as Cape Coast the Medical Inspectors suggested that, it was possible to arrive at a fairly correct solution, in most cases from historical associations, by comparison with the known age of some relative or otherwise. Of 268 deaths recorded in 1911, the recorded age distribution was as per the graph )

Although there is a low number of infant deaths, the Medical Officer did observe that many women in the town were pregnant. This probably meant that the number of registered infant deaths was not a genuine reflection of the real picture. The reason for the curiously



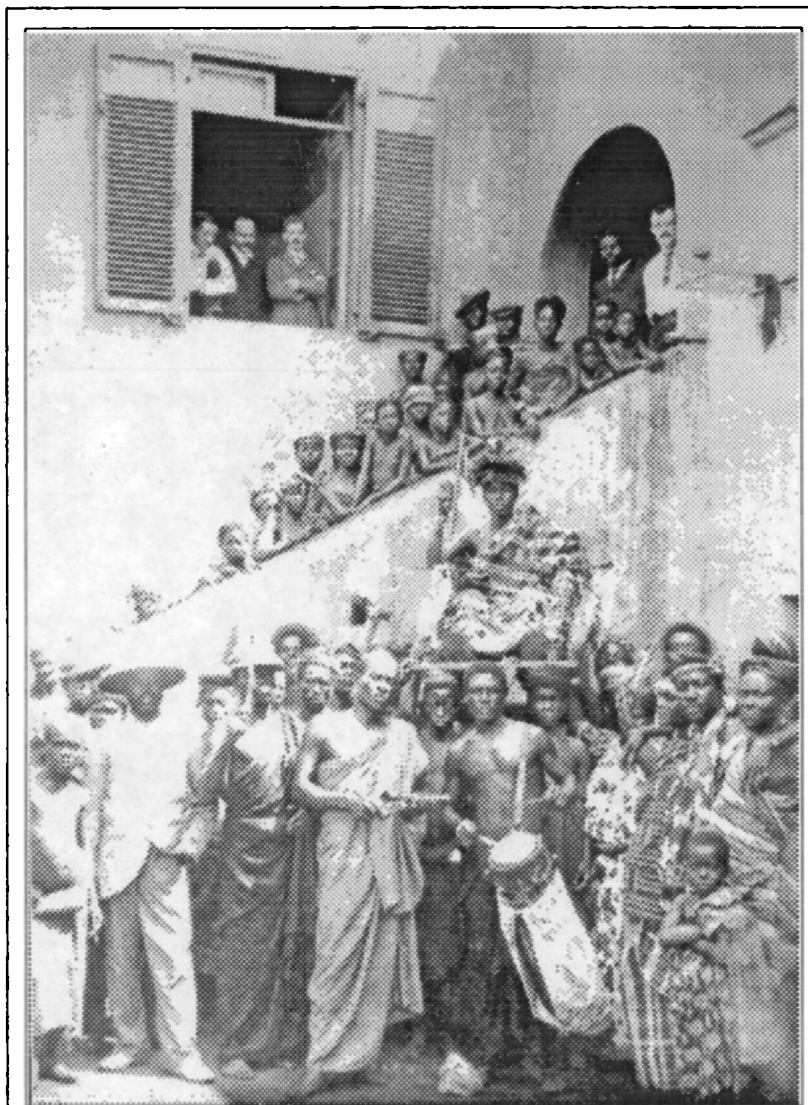
low infant mortality figure, was evidently not a low birth rate. The Medical Officer suggested that the only remaining explanation was that deaths of infants were not being registered because not only was registration not compulsory, it was also acceptable to bury a body in the bush, provided the place was not 'in any town or adjacent to it'. The loss of an infant was also regarded by some as a reproach, and a quiet burial would give the minimum publicity to the death and remove "the necessity for funeral customs - always an expense." See, Wellcome Institute, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1913* included in a volume, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1908* P 188 Fisk's work seems to corroborate this idea. See, Fisk, H *Religion, Disease and Healing in Ghana*, Munich 1989. P 126.

It had been customary to bury family members below the floorboards of the house. This had been made a statutory offence Although it was unlikely that this continued as a practice among adults, it is conceivable that adults were continuing the practice with their infants. Although low, the recorded infant mortality rate is more or less evenly divided

between males and females, which seems to demonstrate that there was not a conscious policy of discriminating against female infants as there is in some cultures. The gender-specific mortality begins in the women of child-bearing age, and the men of 35 and over. The reasons for the high mortality rate of child-bearing aged women is fairly obvious. However, the question of why there are consistently a disproportionate number of male deaths - as compared to women - in the over-35s, is more puzzling. See, Wellcome Institute, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1913* included in a volume, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1908*. P.188. When compared to the age distribution per 1000 deaths for the same period, apart from the obvious difference in the average longevity of the sexes, there are an inexplicable number of male deaths consistently throughout the 1890s and into the 1910s - and as the total deaths grow - so the male deaths grow disproportionately. Perhaps this was simply because there were more men in the town than women. Hausa troops, Kroo labour, and migrant workers, were all predominantly male. The Kroo men and the male prisoners worked in foul conditions, and the Hausa troops had been victims of limited outbreaks of diseases, such as leprosy. (Although not fatal leprosy was a measure of how these small male communities suffered limited diseases ) See, *Gold Coast Express* September 17 1897, and Wellcome Institute, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1913* included in a volume, *Government of the Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Report For The Year 1908*. P.204. The low quality of life of these three predominantly male groups, may have been the reason for the consistent and significantly higher numbers of male deaths.

<sup>230</sup> GNA. ADM.11/629. *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry*.

**CHAPTER V**  
**NATIONALISM AND THE CULMINATION OF LOCAL CRISES**  
**MBRA I TO MBRA III**  
**1911-1922**



F. S. Bilson  
(Source: Casely-Hayford Archive)



The development in the scale and significance of Gold Coast politics, in the first two decades of the twentieth century, meant that the best and brightest members of the stool families were no longer content to regard their political universe as bounded by the relative parochialism of Cape Coast. The traditional political boundary of the extended family or stool, was breached, and many of the ambitious young people, began to look beyond, at issues of anti-colonialism, Pan-Africanism and internationalism. Provincial towns that had relied on the historical commitment of key families, began to lose their younger generations and thus the structure of local institutions were weakened.

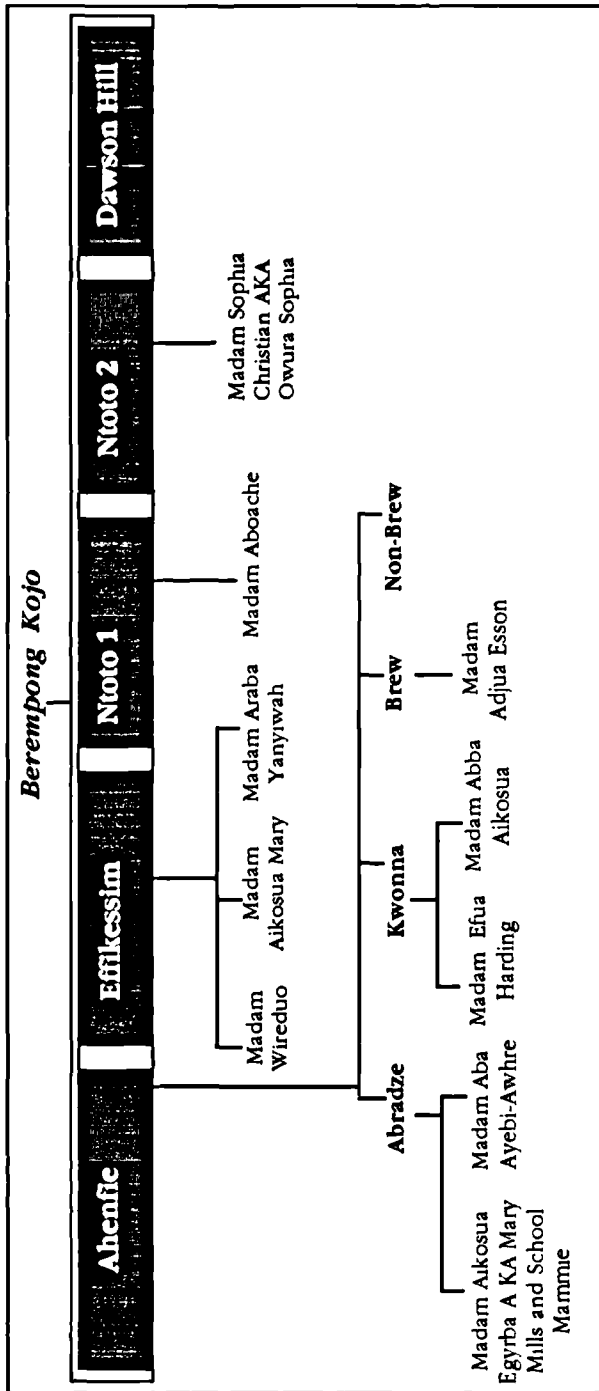
The physical, demographic and political decline of Cape Coast since the turn of the century, had left the town in a depressed state. By 1915, the delicate political balance had become increasingly unstable. A significant part of the male working population migrated to Accra. Additionally, war and work-related diseases exacerbated the problem of a declining male population.<sup>1</sup> Thus, many of the local stool positions were undermined by constant dispute, or were held by people 'in absentia'. By 1916, the stool of Head *Chief* Amoah of *Nkum*, had been vacant for about 8 years; the stool of *Chief* Tsinkuran had been vacant for 20 years, and also vacant were the stools of *Chief* Mayah, the stool of J.S. Hagan of No.5 Company, the stool of Kofi Nyami of No 5 Company, and the stool of Kwow Akon of No.1 Company.<sup>2</sup> Several elderly women emerged from the political instability, to operate as the *materfamilias* for the major households.<sup>3</sup>

## **I. DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE FIVE HOUSES OF KOJO**

In the two hundred years since *Berempong* Kojo's death, the five *houses* he left, had established themselves as separate institutions with separate customs and loyalties. Where these divisions did not delineate familial boundaries firmly enough, families took their patrilineal clan name or geographical location, as a means of more specific identification.

The *houses* were both places of habitation, and factions within the greater-stool lineage.<sup>4</sup> Over generations, the original *houses* of *Berempong* Kojo, had become independent *houses* with their own farms, land, history and genealogies. Because of the size of the *Abenfie* and *Effikessim*, those *houses* were sub-divided by categories, such as clan or sub-family. Each division of the stool family, maintained its separate account of Cape Coast stool history. As a *house* came into political ascendancy, so would their version of the stool history, and their candidates for stool positions. The deaths of significant figures within a household, could undermine the *house* or divide it between contenders. From this divisive process emerged several matriarchal figures who were able to unite and bring stability to the large *houses*. As women, they did not hold official positions and so were not considered a threat by the politically ambitious. However, they commanded authority from their families as the senior members of the household. This status, although unofficial, was legitimised through their genealogy.

Source: GNA ADM 11/1759



Each woman operated as a mother, as an administrator and as a mouth-piece for their household, while running successful businesses or schools in their professional lives. Marriages had created a complex tangle of genealogical inter-connections between the *houses*, that reminded every family member of their interdependence. However, the fundamental differences in their rivalling accounts of stool history, fostered a climate of mutual distrust.

When a candidate was chosen for a significant position in the stool hierarchy, the other *houses* would take up their customary stance of opposition. Usually their opposition was based on no more than habit or pride. During this process they used what political machinery they could control to undermine the *house* in power. Because the united opposition seemed to be stronger than any single *house* in power, political instability undermined both the minor and major Cape Coast stools. The major churches, the colonial courts and administration served as arbitrators when disputes between the *houses* became irreconcilable. 'Neutral' arbitrators, however, could only

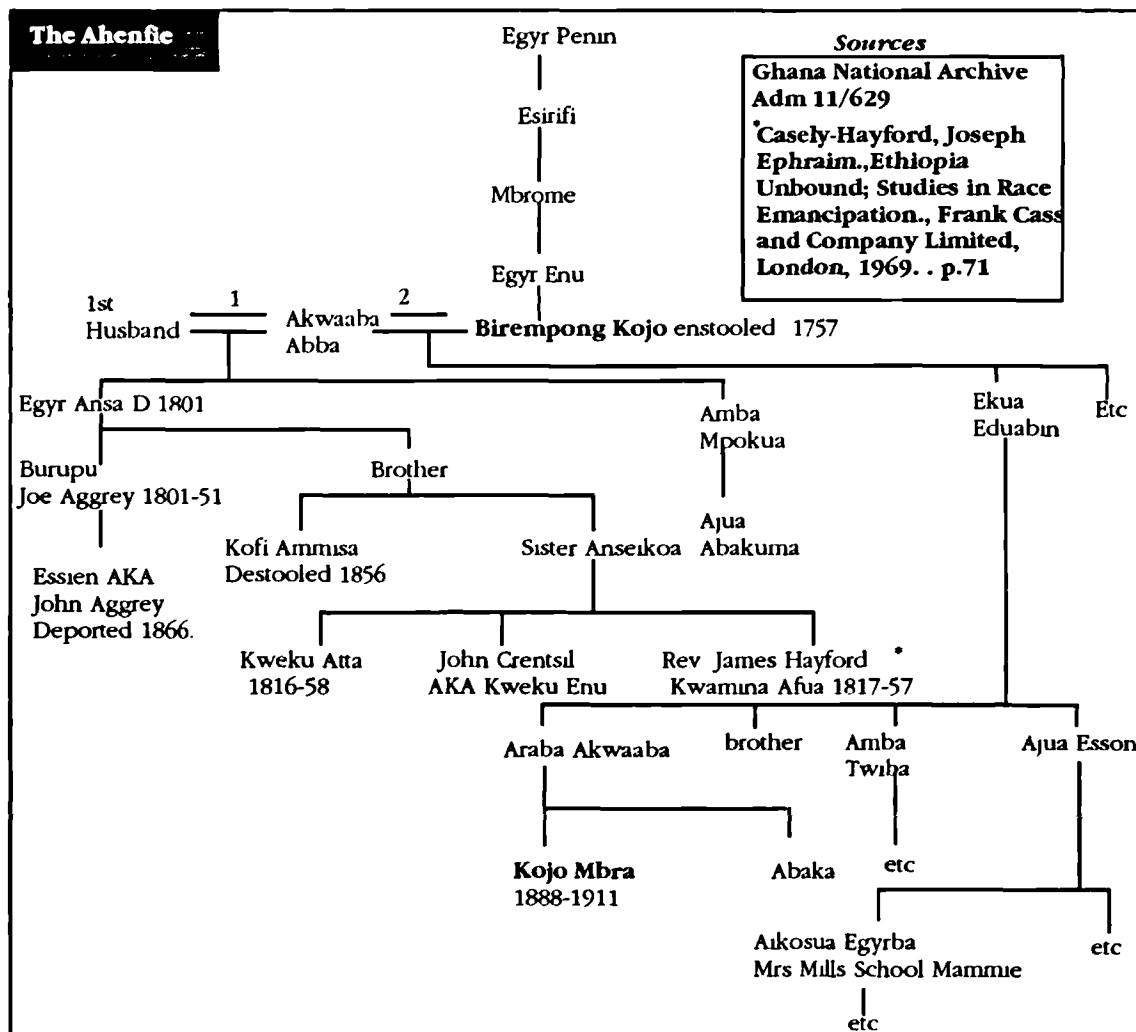
deliberate upon the information given to them and because the history of the stool had become eroded and fragmented, witnesses from different *houses* rarely gave consistent accounts of their histories. Attempts by external arbitrators to be scientific often served only to give official sanction to the most powerful section of a household.<sup>5</sup> Usually such sanctions did not serve as significant improvements on the traditional methods of electing a potential candidate to a position.

The rise to power of the young intellectuals and the elderly women of Cape Coast was a by-product of the instability of the Cape Coast stool. The traditional overlapping interests of Cape Coast's five *houses*, seven *Asafo* companies and its *Oman*, had only rarely offered the people of Cape Coast extended periods of stability

and peace. The gradual entrenchment of differences between these factions meant that the limited channels for communication that existed were of crucial importance. The stool advocates of this period were usually elderly women or young scholars. As the instability of the stool became more and more profound, communication between the *houses* became increasingly difficult. Thus began a period in which the skills of advocacy and diplomacy were fundamental factors in the everyday operation of the stool. Between 1915 and 1922, as Cape Coast continued to decline, the individuals who had previously been seen as advocates and mouthpieces, were projected into positions of eminence and leadership. After the death of Kojo Mbra in 1911, the processes that had fostered this phenomenon became even more significant.

## II. KOJO MBRA

Despite several sources including, Crowther,<sup>6</sup> Aikosua Mary<sup>7</sup> and Casely-Hayford<sup>8</sup> arguing that Kojo Mbra was the uncontested choice as *Omanhin* of the town, there had been some objections to his enstoolment. When he was nominated by Adjua Esson, his aunt and the head of the stool family, he was handed over to the *Wirempibene* to be presented to the *Oman* council. At that time a female member



of the *Effikessim* called Kurentsiwa, made a statement to this effect; “this stool you are going to sit on is mine and I have given it to you therefore let me share your food.” It was later said by his son that Kojo Mbra understood this to mean that Kurentsiwa had a better claim to the stool than he had. Mbra, therefore, refused to accept the stool. Thereupon, the senior members of the Royal family met, and rejected Kurentsiwa’s claim, and ordered her to pacify Kojo Mbra by slaughtering a sheep.<sup>9</sup>

Kurentsiwa represented an undercurrent of anti-Mbra feeling that existed in one section of *Effikessim*. The *Oman* had originally asked *Effikessim* to nominate the replacement of Kwesi Atta. A meeting took place at *Effikessim* and Madam Wireduo, as the head of the family, was asked to nominate a candidate. Madam Wireduo’s niece later said that, “There were many children in our house at the time but Kojo Mbra seemed the wisest and so he was elected and given to the *Oman*.”<sup>10</sup>

It was generally accepted that, “Kojo Mbra was elected by the people in preference to the Princes Kwamin Tawia and Kurentsil”.<sup>11</sup> Kwamin Tawia and Kurentsil were said to have led lives that were ‘derogatory’ to their prospective position, while “Mbra’s amiable disposition won him the peoples’ affection; but for this he would have been rejected on account of his remote relationship with the stool.”<sup>12</sup> Those who tried to legitimise Mbra’s claim argued that, “Cudjoe Mbra is in every way a fit and proper person for the post.”<sup>13</sup> They suggested that he was the maternal great nephew of Egyr Ansa. Others suggested that, “Egyr Ansa gave one of his blood relatives as a messenger to *Berempong* Kojo ... the issue of the messenger was a woman who had their children and Kojo Mbra was the son of one of these female children.”<sup>14</sup>

Kojo Mbra claimed the stool through his connection to Egyr Ansa and Akwaaba Abba, yet he was a member of what was traditionally the opposing family - that of the domestic servants of *Berempong* Kojo at *Effikessim*. Mbra’s clever presentation of his genealogical credentials gave him the sanction of the *Abenfie* and *Effikessim*. This gave Kojo Mbra the support of both the Efutu patrilineal stool and *Berempong* Kojo’s matrilineal stool. Kweku Atta, who had been the *Omanbin* in the 1850s, had also sat on both stools. But whether Mbra’s election was legitimised by this precedent for the union of the two stools is unclear.<sup>15</sup>

Kweku Atta had cemented his position by burning the ancient stool of *Berempong* Kojo, and using the ashes to paint the stool of Egyr Ansa, his legitimate forebear.<sup>16</sup> Kojo Mbra’s first act was an equally controversial one; he burned the old stool of Egyr Ansa. Crowther describes how Mbra was punished for the action, “and compelled to pay satisfaction for removing this particular stool from *Nkoom* and for consecrating a new one with the remains of the ancient stool.”<sup>17</sup> This serious act was punished merely by a fine of 25 shillings.<sup>18</sup> Mbra was partly excused for his actions because he acknowledged he had been wrong to move the stool from its traditional spot. He explained that, “the room in which it was, was leaking and that consequently

the stool was getting mouldy and rotten.”<sup>19</sup> Mbra described how his aunt’s mother, ‘*the School Mammie*’, had attempted to clean the stool in its fragile condition and it had crumbled in her hands. He bought a new stool and had besmeared it with a mixture of goats blood and the particles of the old stool: so the new stool had then been substituted for the old one.<sup>20</sup>

Kojo Mbra may have seen this as an opportunity to destroy the old lineages that had created so much political instability in the past. However, his actions only served to bring the divisions between the lineages into starker contrast. The stool he had destroyed was a sacred one, called *Enbunyame* (not seeing God). It was Egyr Ansa’s old patrilineal stool,<sup>21</sup> that had been passed down from Egyir Penin and the old Efutu Kings. The *Nkum*, who had been the traditional patrilineal stool body-guard, (or *Gyase*), consequently refused to support him. From that time on Mbra was identified as being manipulated by the matrilineal *Effikessim*. This was further justified by incidents which had taken place at Kojo Mbra’s enstoolment. Kojo Mbra had been placed in the ‘room of *Berempong Kojo*’ prior to his installation.<sup>22</sup> Every *Effikessim Omanbin* was placed in ‘the room of *Berempong Kojo*’ and after their installation their stools were left in the room and, “sacrificed to annually.”<sup>23</sup> Thus, rather than uniting the opposing lineages Mbra’s enstoolment and subsequent actions had confirmed where his allegiances really lay. Because of the ambiguities surrounding his genealogy, once questions had been raised about Mbra’s legitimacy, scepticism continued to grow.

Kojo Mbra was not a great *Omanbin*. He accrued several debts that later became an embarrassment, and at one point one of his creditors, Dadzee from *Ntoto*, was forced to sue the *Omanbin* for money that had been long owed to him.<sup>24</sup> Kojo Mbra’s debts were consistently paid by Madam Wireduo, of *Effikessim*.<sup>25</sup> While Kojo Mbra was alive he maintained the effective unity of the *houses* but beneath the surface the atmosphere of mistrust remained.

When Kojo Mbra died in 1911, the controlled resentment exploded. The *Effikessim* seized part of the *Omanbin*’s paraphernalia that was necessary for his burial;<sup>26</sup> this included the stool and the sword of state.<sup>27</sup> The *Abenfie* held other vital funeral paraphernalia, and as each side refused to compromise, Kojo Mbra could not be buried.<sup>28</sup> The *Abenfie* argued that as the legitimate family, they should have the right to bury their relation: they suggested that “Mbra I (Kojo Mbra) .... recognised only the members of the *Abenfie* house as his blood relatives”<sup>29</sup> and they, therefore, had the sanction of their blood. This argument was supported by the fact that Ekua Twiba, a member of *Effikessim*, and Essie Kakraba a member of *Dawson Hill*, were married to Mbra.<sup>30</sup> The *Abenfie* household felt that this was evidence that “the members of *Effikessim* and *Dawson’s Hill house* were not blood relatives of Mbra I as the *Omanbene* could not marry one of his own blood.”<sup>31</sup> This argument was inconclusive, because the laws governing exogamy had rarely been practised since

Cape Coast had gained its independence from Efutu. The continual repayment of Kojo Mbra's debts by *Effikessim* would also seem to suggest that *Effikessim* were regarded as the close family of the late *Omanbin*. The argument was not resolved by the families for sixteen years, and not until February 1927 were the funeral rites of Kojo Mbra completed.<sup>32</sup>

### **III. A SUCCESSOR TO KOJO MBRA**

The incidents which surrounded the death of Kojo Mbra meant that the possibility of electing another candidate to unite the two stools was lost. The issue of the funeral rites only further entrenched the historical differences between the two major *houses*. The *Nkum*, in their traditional allegiance to the *Abenfie*, felt even more adamant that the successor to Kojo Mbra should come from their family. The *Nkum* argued that the new *Omanbin* should sit on the old burned patrilineal stool of Egyr Ansa in its new manifestation as the matrilineal stool of Mbra.<sup>33</sup> *Effikessim*, on the other hand, had put forward Kojo Mbra's nomination, and given personal and financial support to the *Omanbin* for his entire administration. Predictably, they felt *Effikessim* should nominate and elect the future *Omanbin* as an heir to the destroyed stool of *Berempong* Kojo.<sup>34</sup>

In theory, the family put forward potential candidates who were the closest and most suitable descendants of a previous *Omanbin*. In reserve the family nominated a *Kyeretafo*,<sup>35</sup> (an heir apparent). The family then put the candidate into the care of the *Gyase*, who in turn offered the nominee up to the *Oman*.<sup>36</sup> The *Oman*, as a 'neutral and incorruptible' force, was then supposed to discuss the prospective candidate's suitability and, if he was found acceptable, he was then prepared for enstoolment.

These rules were open to interpretation, and over the years they had become used only as guidelines. The position of *Kyeretafo*, though traditional to the Cape Coast area, had become almost disused.<sup>37</sup> According to *Tufubin* Coker, the *Kyeretafo* of *Asantebene* Kwaku Dua, had attempted to poison the *Asantebene*, fearing that he might die before he succeeded to the stool. Thus, the position of *Kyeretafo*, was seen as posing too much of a potential threat to the stability of the stool.<sup>38</sup> The tradition of *Kyeretafo* had been adapted in Cape Coast. The *Oman* accepted a senior figure to cut a sheep's throat, as was traditional, but to operate only as a nominal *Kyeretafo*. The title did not give the holder the instant right to be 'heir apparent'.<sup>39</sup>

Kobina Foa had been the *Kyeretafo* for Kojo Mbra, and his descendant Sekye (AKA J.E. Aggrey), was a prominent candidate for both *Omanbin* and *Kyeretafo*.<sup>40</sup> The *Oman* was not the 'impartial' institution that it should have been. It was led by the formidable *Tufubin*, W.Z. Coker,<sup>41</sup> and *Chief* Kofi Sackey, (who had been Regent during the interregnum). The *Oman* had steadily grown in stature and had shown itself to be partisan over the previous years. The *Oman* had enjoyed the use of the

stool and tribunal funds during the interregnum and, according to an unsympathetic source, they built up debts of £700 for which the incoming *Omanbin* was liable.<sup>42</sup> Their uncompromising snobbery had earned them the name of '*the Oman Clique*' in the town.

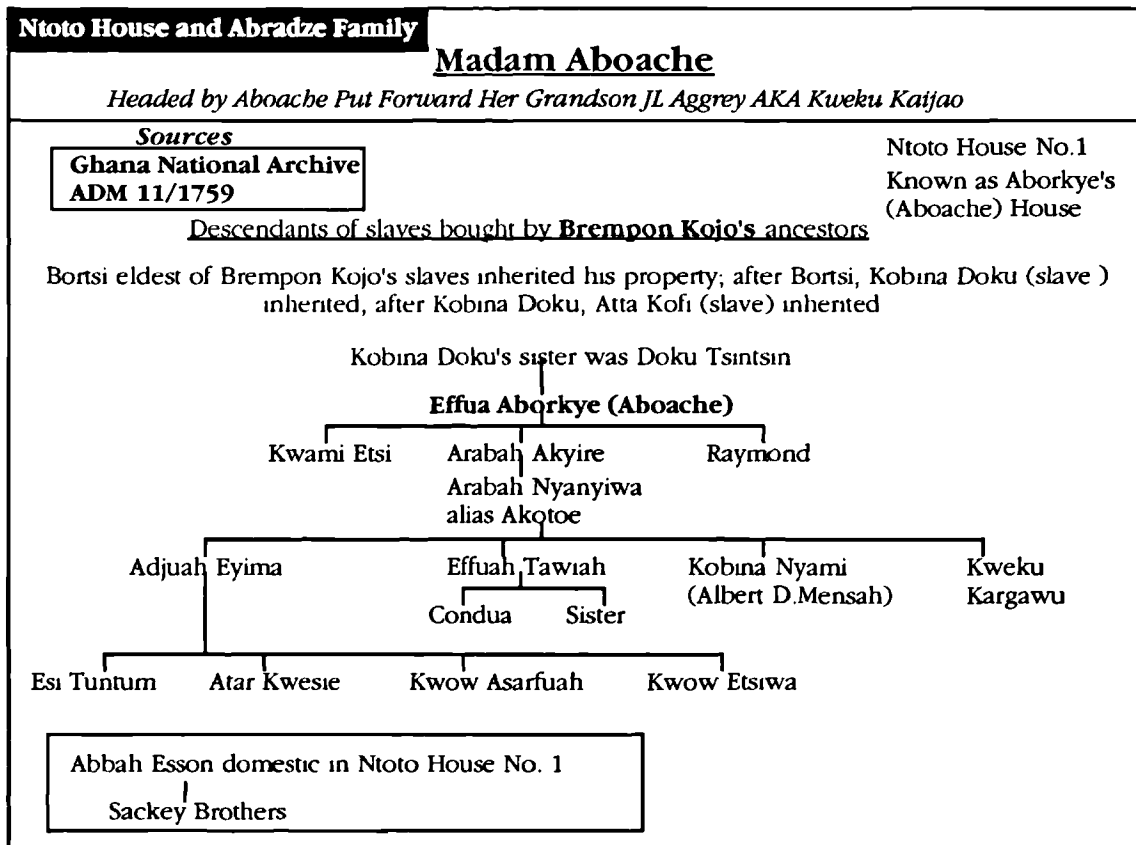
Because the stool was split, with its separate enstoolment methods and traditions, the nomination and installation process could not operate smoothly. The *Oman* attempted to negotiate its way around the problems, by sending one of its senior members, the Hon. J.P. Brown to *Effikessim*, inviting Madam Wireduo and the other senior members to a meeting at the *Oman*. The *Oman* explained to Madam Wireduo, "that they wanted a man to be placed in the room of Egyr Ansa not *Berempon* Kojo."<sup>43</sup> The *Oman* argued that this would "avoid all disputes."<sup>44</sup> *Effikessim*, however, disagreed with the *Oman* and continued with its traditional process of selecting potential candidates to the stool of *Berempong* Kojo.

The minor *houses* of *Ntoto*, also demanded the right to nominate the potential *Omanbin*. Because no two *houses* shared the same criteria for selecting the *Omanbin*, it was impossible to come to anything other than a practical but unpopular decision. In complex stool disputes it seems that character was given preference over genealogy. Nana Egyir Ansa, the eldest son of Mbra I, suggested that, "in none of our native institutions is there any succession which is automatic; the rightful person to succeed must be appointed by controllers or elders of that institution."<sup>45</sup> One must, therefore, conclude that political acumen and temperamental suitability for the position of *Omanbin* were far more important qualities in the list of criteria for selection, than simple genealogy.

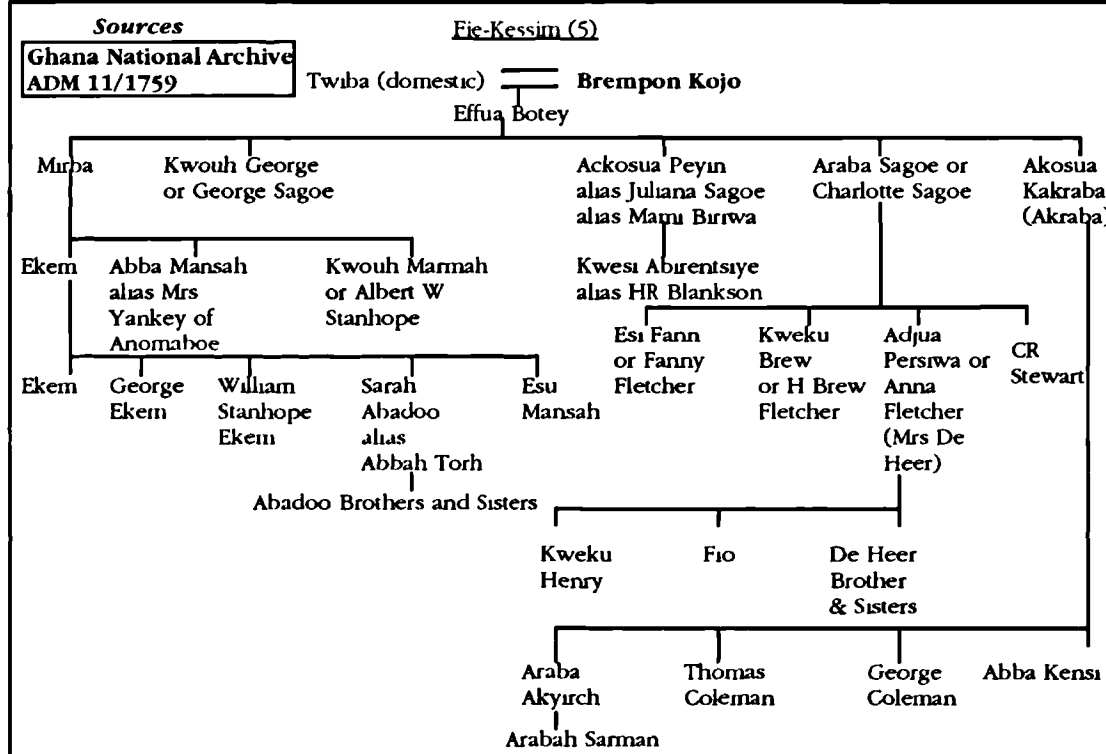
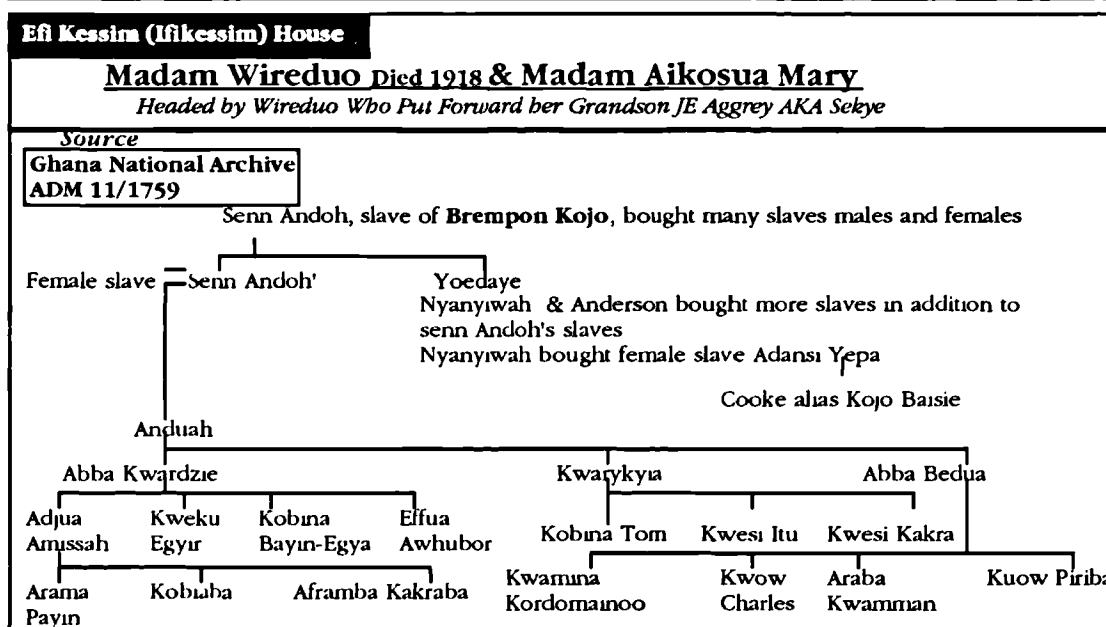
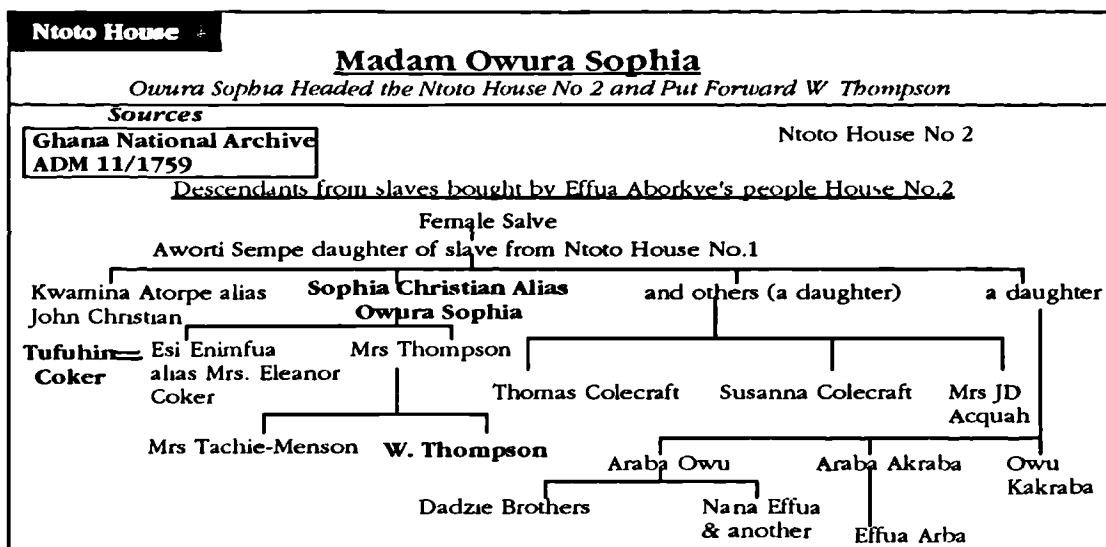
*Effikessim*, where many of the young prospective *Amanbin* had grown up, became the site for several meetings to which all the *houses* were invited. Present at the meetings were: J.P. Mensah the *Omankyiame*, H.R. Blankson, Owura Sophia, a representative of Madam Aboatchi and *School Mammie*, Mrs Mills. *Effikessim* also invited Peter Brown, a goldsmith from Accra, the Captain of the *Wirempe*, (the *Berempong* Kojo stool custodians).<sup>46</sup> After the meetings, at which several potential candidates were mooted, each of the *houses* put forward their nominations. Each candidate was proposed and supported by one of the eminent elderly women who had risen to head the major households.

**IV. EARLY NOMINATIONS**

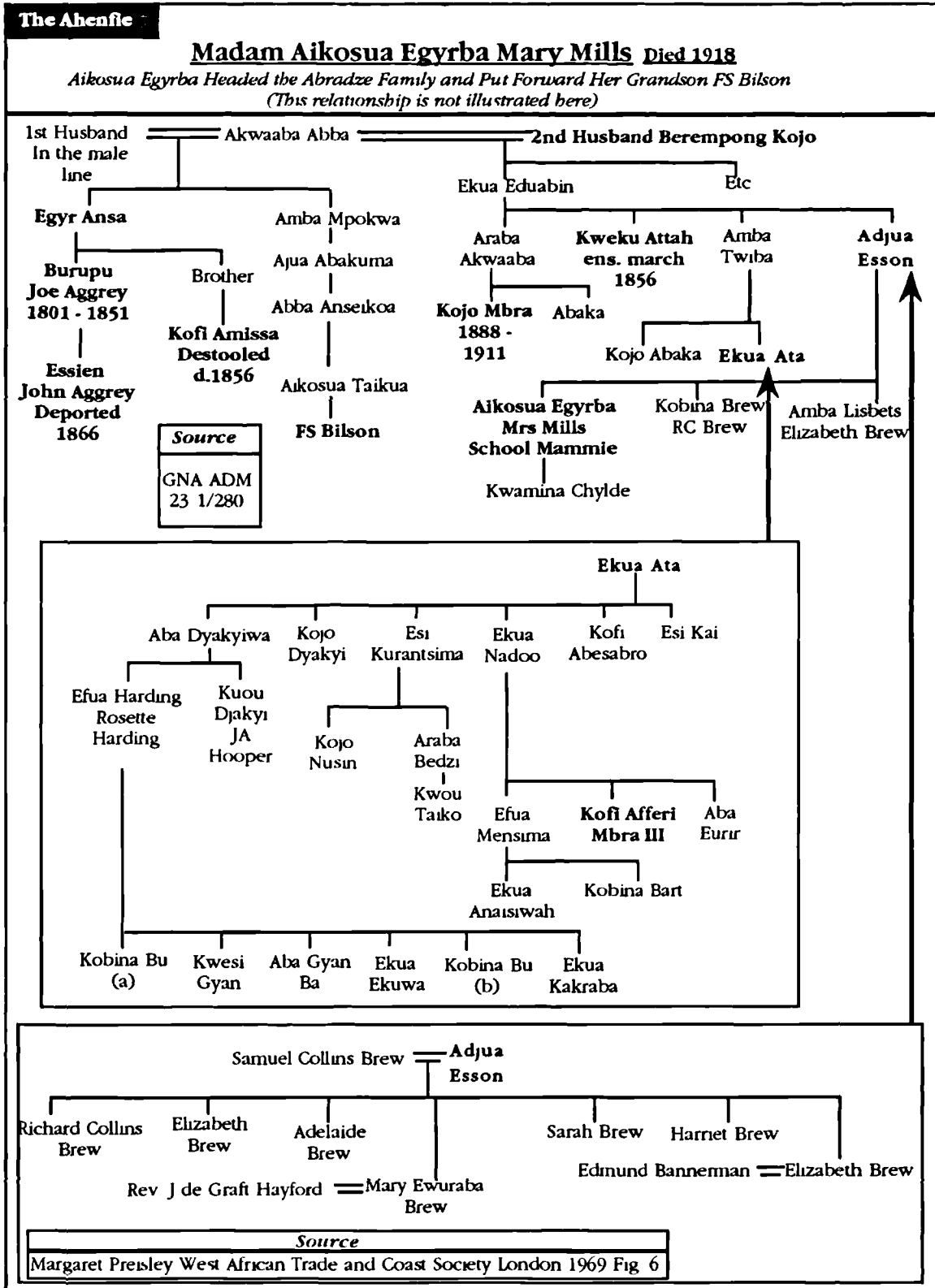
The first nomination was from *Effikessim*.<sup>47</sup> Sekye (AKA J.E. Aggrey), was offered with Willie Thompson of *Ntoto II* 'to sit behind' as his *Kyeretafo*.<sup>48</sup> The *Oman* rejected the nomination of Sekye, because he could not be shown to be a descendant of Kojo Mbra.<sup>49</sup> *Effikessim* argued that the *Oman's* job was to elect the nominated person, not to deliberate over their credentials. They also pointed out that Sekye was the successor of Kobina Foa, the previous *Kyeretafo*, but the *Oman* were not sympathetic. Further deliberation produced the compromise coupling of Kweku Kai Jao (AKA J.L. Aggrey) of *Ntoto I*, with Willie Thompson as his *Kyeretafo*. This was also rejected by the *Oman*. Why they were rejected is unknown. They were all from the *Abradze* family and came from the different *houses*. Sekye, was from Madam Wirodua's *house*, (*Effikessim*), Kweku Kai Jao, was from Madam Aboache's *house*, (*Ntoto*), and Thompson, was from Owura Sophia's *house*.<sup>50</sup> Both *Effikessim* and *Ntoto* would have been satisfied by a combination of any of these candidates. However, because none of the candidates were from the *Abenfie*, they were rejected and the *Oman* argued their families were "unable to trace their relationship with Kojo Mbra."<sup>51</sup>











Bilson had been promoted as a potential candidate by his grandmother, Abba Anseikoa, who was the head of one section of the *Ahenfie* and Dawson Hill. Also supporting Bilson were, "The *Tufubene*, the *Chiefs (Mpakamfu)* and all the companies with the exception of one captain of the No. 3 company (J.B. Oliver Cromwell)."<sup>58</sup>

J.W. De Graft Johnson, was appointed the head of the committee that looked into Bilson's character and past conduct.<sup>59</sup> F.S. Bilson, had worked with a 'big mining company as an assistant surveyor' and 'professional native mining prospector and

Chief Clerk' in the Birim district since 1909.<sup>60</sup> The *Oman* detected a small debt of £60 to something called the African Association of Cape Coast, which they agreed to pay before his installation to avoid any scandal. But De Graft Johnson's investigations failed to reveal another personal debt of £42 to a creditor named Otoo, who was later to get a warrant for the *Omanbin's* arrest to the embarrassment of the *Oman*.<sup>61</sup>

## **V. THE ALIENATION OF EFFIKESSIM AND NTOTO**

The opposing *houses* had refused to participate since Mary Mills had been selected by the *Oman* as the head of the family. Crowther describes how, despite this, Bilson, was eventually taken from Effikessim by the official *Abradze* family *Akyiame*, J.P. Mensah and Kojo Nyen. Bilson was presented to the *Oman* who accepted him.<sup>62</sup> The *Oman* then arranged for Bilson to be carried through the central streets of Cape Coast on a palanquin as the acknowledged future *Omanbin*.<sup>63</sup>

This decision shocked *Effikessim* who immediately "sent Thompson who had already been rejected with the proposal that he should be appointed as" *Kyeretafo*.<sup>64</sup> After some successful negotiating by the *Okyiame* of the *Abradze* family, many in *Effikessim* began to accept that Bilson with Thompson as his *Kyeretafo* was an acceptable combination. In early 1914, in accordance with tradition, Bilson was taken to Effikessim by Joseph Drybald Taylor, a Minister of the African Methodist Zion Church. Taylor acted as Bilson's father, and presented him to Madam Wireduo and the family as the future *Omanbin*.<sup>65</sup> Madam Wireduo was still not happy with Bilson, and as he was led towards her she kept her eyes fixed on the floor. As Bilson drew near to her, he was heard by some present to say, "Nana I am your grandson look at me."<sup>66</sup>

From Effikessim, Bilson and his retinue went to the *Oman* to begin the process



F. S. Bilson on a Palanquin  
(Source: Casely-Hayford Archive)

of installation but the *Oman* had decided to reject Thompson.<sup>67</sup> *Tufubini* Coker, the most senior voice in the *Oman* at the time, suggested later that it was the rejection of Thompson that had 'annoyed' *Effikessim* and precipitated a total breakdown in communication between the *houses*.<sup>68</sup> *Effikessim* demanded that if Thompson could not 'sit behind' Bilson, then they would not accept Bilson as *Omanbin*, and they began a campaign of non-participation.

*Effikessim* sought arbitrators to at least slow the enstoolment of F.S. Bilson in the hope of holding an enquiry in the long-term. They

argued that the *Oman*, who were theoretically neutral, had sought to take advantage of the fact that *Effikessim* was controlled and administered completely by women.<sup>69</sup> The women of *Effikessim* complained to the Commissioner of the Central Province who monitored the developments closely and called meetings of the families. Each time the families met before the Commissioner of the Central Province the "*School Mame* was found to be in the wrong."<sup>70</sup> The Wesleyan clergy, seeing that the situation was getting steadily more serious, began their own investigation. They found the *Oman* to be complicit in the misguided dealings of Mrs Mills, (*School Mammie*).<sup>71</sup>

*School Mammie* had selected Bilson without consulting the other *houses* which had further alienated *Effikessim*. The Gold Coast Aborigines Rights Protection Society and the Wesleyan clergy attempted to pacify the *Effikessim* by asking Mrs Mills to pay compensation to the offended *houses* and the *Wirempe*.<sup>72</sup>

In spite of objections, the process of Bilson's installation continued. The *Oman* offered *Mpata* (compensation) of £21.12/<sup>73</sup> but the *Effikessim* refused to accept it.<sup>74</sup> They argued that because the *Oman*, "insisted on the successor of Egyr Ansa, we could not accept money and barter away our inherent rights."<sup>75</sup> *Effikessim* had maintained for some time that if Bilson was to be placed on Kojo Mbra's stool, "the whole matter was settled."<sup>76</sup> At a meeting of the Wesleyan clergy to which *Effikessim* were invited, a judgement was given in their favour.<sup>77</sup> The *Oman* tried to suggest that the disagreement between *Effikessim* and the *Abradze* was no more than a matter of presentation. Crowther describes how the situation was partially resolved when Mr Kofi, the *Oman's Okyiame*, explained at a meeting of the Native Tribunal "that the stools of Egyr Ansa and *Berempong* Kojo had been united into one and on that stool it was desired to place Bilson."<sup>78</sup> Kofi's persuasive words, together with an *Mpata*, temporarily appeased the *Effikessim*.<sup>79</sup>

By February 1916, Bilson had gone through the pre-enstoolment rituals; he had been taken to *Adzewafudampanim*,<sup>80</sup> anointed with clay, confined to the room of Egyr Ansa, presented at Papratem and the oaths of allegiance had been taken by all the companies.<sup>81</sup> Supporters of the *Oman's* clumsy attempts to control the situation argued "that the offended house of the *Abradze* family and the *Werempe* by refusing to attend meeting and by general in-action adopted a policy of passive resistance which compelled the *Oman* to employ measures of an abnormal character."<sup>82</sup> A final meeting of the clergy on 1st December 1915, revealed the *Oman's* implicit acknowledgement that the events leading up to Bilson's enstoolment had cut corners and broken fundamental rules. This pushed the Secretary for Native Affairs to hold an eleventh hour enquiry.<sup>83</sup>

## **VI. CROWTHER'S ENQUIRY**

The enquiry was chaired by Francis Crowther, the Secretary for Native Affairs. His notes, interviews and conclusions, represent one of the few comprehensive insights into the complex workings and history of the stool.<sup>84</sup> There were three major issues that were under examination: first, to find out if Mrs Mills' family were the correct contingent of the stool to nominate the prospective *Omanbin*; second, to see on which stool that *Omanbin* should sit and third, to see if Bilson was the correct candidate.

Transitions from *Omanbin* to *Omanbin*, had historically resulted consistently in disputes. Many people had begun to accept that no *Omanbin* could be smoothly or unanimously installed. Kojo Mbra's eldest son argued that "The destoolments of *Omanbin* Kofi Amissah was strenuously opposed by No.4 (*Inkoom*) company who were his body guard. The No.2 (*Anafu*) company showed their opposition to Kojo Mbra by disallowing his parading through their quarters. The *Werempi* and *Abiradsi* family opposed the election of Bilson as *Omanbin* Mbra II. The rule of majority was applied in each instance, and the peoples right prevailed in spite of all opposition."<sup>85</sup>

In each case the family or families forced into opposition, made strenuous moves to destabilise the elected *Omanbin*, which only served to undermine the position of the town as whole. As its first objective, Crowther's enquiry attempted to establish which of the *houses* was entitled to nominate the prospective *Omanbin*. Mary Mills, the nominator of F.S. Bilson, was from the *Abenfie*. However, Bilson's predecessor, Kojo Mbra, had been nominated by Madam Aboache of *Ntoto*, and both *Amanbin* had been brought up in the *house* of Madam Wireduo of *Effikessim*.

Crowther quickly identified that both the *Wirempe*, (the custodians of *Berempong* Kojo's stool), and the *Nkum*, (the custodians of Egyr Ansa's stool), "oppose the election of Bilson and ranked with them are certain houses or families within the *Abradze* tribe."<sup>86</sup> He continued, "The *Werempefu* refused to participate in the nomination and the offended houses still stand aloof."<sup>87</sup> The *houses* that opposed Bilson were those that had been excluded from his nomination, *Effikessim* and *Ntoto*. The *Oman* had attempted to argue that the *Abenfie*, as the legitimate family of the *Omanbin*, had the sole right to participate in this custom.

Many people such as J. Mensah Cooke, (a senior member of *Effikessim*), argued that, "all the houses have a voice in the matter."<sup>88</sup> This seems convincing, because *Ntoto* had nominated the previous *Omanbin*, and the *Effikessim* "were the only people who supported K. Mbra"<sup>89</sup> through his period of embarrassing debt. *Effikessim* argued "we shared all his troubles with him, there were no other people besides us."<sup>90</sup> *Effikessim* also argued that Mary Mills had not only ignored the other *houses* but had also not consulted the relevant members of her own *house*. *Effikessim* stated that, "no one person can elect an *Omanbene* the whole family must do it."<sup>91</sup> Crowther concluded that many of *Effikessim* did not actually oppose Bilson: much

of "The difficulty was in the manner in which he was nominated and the irregularities which took place."<sup>92</sup>

One of the apparent irregularities arose out of the question of which stool Bilson should sit on, the ancient patrilineal stool of Egyr Ansa, the matrilineal stool of *Berempong* Kojo or the new stool of Kojo Mbra. This raised the issue of which inheritance system was the authentic one and whether the *Oman* of Cape Coast was originally from old Efutu. So long as the *Omanbin* was chosen in the Efutu male line, the matrilineal family and their domestics and slaves remained only a peripheral part of the extended family. However, when the stool changed to a matrilineal system both the matrilineal descendants of *Berempong* Kojo and the matrilineal descendants of Egyr Ansa became part of the immediate Royal family<sup>93</sup> and thus claimed the right to nominate *Amanbin*.

Although Crowther was to conclude that Egyr Ansa's stool was the true stool of the *Omanbin* of Cape Coast, his enquiry revealed basic flaws in the accepted stool history.<sup>94</sup> In spite of the fact that the *Abenfie* side of the stool dominates today, it is not clear that it always did, nor that its version of the stool history is any more valid than the opposing ones. The party supporting Bilson's election asserted that, "*Berempong* Kojo left no descendants in the female line, his sister Essinoah having no issue and that his successors were therefore as is custom, his domestics."<sup>95</sup> However, as Crowther acknowledges, "It may be difficult to prove this one way or another now, but this point is not one of very material importance for descent in the recognised household in the absence of blood descendants in the female line, is a well-established practice."<sup>96</sup>

Although Crowther was to come down on the side of the Egyr Ansa family he was forced to acknowledge the fundamental problems in achieving a scientific answer when both sides of the family believed so emphatically in such overtly contradictory accounts of their history. Crowther attempted to establish how Bilson was or was not related to Kojo Mbra, who had been for a time accepted as the undisputed *Omanbin*. Crowther saw this as preferable to establishing Bilson's relationships to *Berempong* Kojo and Egyr Ansa which could have only been seen as more divisive. With this in mind, Crowther concluded after an examination of Bilson that he was "of heritable blood of Kojo Mbra whose occupancy merged the stools of *Berempong* Kojo and Egyr Ansa..." which would be, "the only reliable standard by which the line of future rulers of Cape Coast can be traced."<sup>97</sup>

The results of Crowther's investigation were probably made more palatable because Crowther had held an open trial in which all factions of the stool family were able to publicly cross-examine one another. Despite this, there may have been dissatisfaction that at the end of the day, a European had made a decision of the most fundamental importance to the indigenous community. There is little or no record of local reactions - other than relief - that the issue which had divided the stool for more than a century, was resolved.

## VII. BILSON IS ENSTOOLED AS MBRA ENU

The interregnum was over. Kofi Sackey stepped down as Regent on 23rd November 1915.<sup>98</sup> On 27th March 1916, Bilson was confirmed as *Omanbin* Mbra Enu by Governor Clifford.<sup>99</sup> The *Oman* had held meetings of the Native Tribunal without an *Omanbin* for four years, and had developed a style that had earned them the name of 'the clique'. The interregnum *Oman* shared the money accrued in fines from the tribunal and built up debts which were the responsibility of the incoming *Omanbin*. The accounts of the tribunal had been carefully audited by George Jeffery, of Cape Coast, in 1914, when "all these squanderings or wastes of the stool funds .....were discovered."<sup>100</sup> But the *Oman* had chosen to keep this information hidden from the incoming *Omanbin*. After Mbra Enu's enstoolment, he was found to be responsible for the £700 debt. This created instant animosity between Bilson and the *Oman*.

At that time a two-storey Cape Coast townhouse, could be purchased for approximately £60, and so a debt of £700 condemned Mbra Enu to some years of debt repayment. Mbra felt the money had been deliberately and deviously "wasted by the acting *Tufubin* of Cape Coast and other accomplices."<sup>101</sup> Mbra Enu also faced the debt built up from the customary ceremonies that were involved in his own installation.<sup>102</sup> This amounted to an additional £500.<sup>103</sup> Mbra Enu claimed his only means of raising money to pay his stool debts, and the clandestine debts he had accrued as a private citizen, was through fines imposed on the guilty in the Tribunal Court. After several months as *Omanbin*, Mbra Enu complained that of the money collected monthly from the Tribunal, the most he had been given was £10.<sup>104</sup>

A few days after Mbra Enu received his confirmation from Governor Clifford, the Governor made a controversial speech on the future of the ARPS, (Aborigines Rights Protection Society), and its relationship with the government and the Chiefs.<sup>105</sup> He argued that "'The Gold Coast Aborigines Society', should cease to be the mouthpiece of the paramount head chiefs"<sup>106</sup> The ARPS had attempted to democratise the system of selection of members onto the Legislative Council. The ARPS proposed that the *Asafo* members should be allowed to elect candidates onto the Native Tribunal who would in turn be able to vote in members to the Legislative Council.

Clifford argued that it would be fairer to appoint an *Omanbin* from each province of the colony to the Legislative Council.<sup>107</sup> The well known past indiscretions of the Cape Coast *Amanbin* and a recent law suit taken out against Mbra Enu by Otoo, (one of his debtors) seemed to suggest that the credentials of the stoolholders did not necessarily equip them for public representation. The ARPS sought to emphasise this point. Mbra Enu, on the other hand, argued that, on the contrary, the ARPS were attempting to deny Clifford his chance to give support to the indigenous system. Clifford's plan would place the *Amanbin* back in the centre of local politics as a legislator and traditional leader. The barrister E.J.P. Brown, one of



the active members of the *Oman*, and legal adviser to the Gold Coast Aborigines Society, recommended that, “a protest should be made against Clifford’s announcement which, would be in the form of resolution, passed and signed by all and every *Omanhene*.”<sup>108</sup>

J P. Brown, the powerful *Asafobin* and newspaper owner, (not to be confused with E.J.P. Brown BL), voiced his disappointment at the fact that Mbra Enu had publicly said things in support of the Governor’s opinion, which only served to demonstrate the divisions between the Cape Coast political institutions. Mbra Enu’s support for the Governor isolated him even more from the *Oman*, the ARPS and those who supported them. The *Omanhin* responded by unsuccessfully attempting to abolish the *Oguaa Besonfu*, (the Town Council), and appointing his own people to their positions.<sup>109</sup> Perhaps realising his enemies were the most powerful men in the town and that the seeds of conspiracy had been sown, Mbra began a campaign of uncompromising attacks. Mbra Enu had the opposing section of the family arrested on an unsubstantiated charge; he tried to force *Chief Sackey* to retire from the *Oman*, and he began a campaign to stop the *Asafo* having the right to elect councillors to the Native Tribunal.<sup>110</sup>

During this period the problem of the stool debt began to get out of control. Otoo obtained a writ for Mbra Enu’s arrest. This may have been the major factor that led Mbra to make his most serious mistake. In one of the last meetings of the tribunal, Mbra lost his temper with the Councillors, and said that he would dismiss them and select Councillors of his own choice. The *Oman* later suggested that this was done to effect a re-hearing of the case *Turkson Vs. Eduaku and Heywood*, “as he showed a desire to favour one of the parties.”<sup>111</sup>

As an act of manipulative appeasement Mbra invited the Councillors to his house and tried to change their minds over the decision in the *Turkson* case; when they refused, he lost his temper again and they left in disgust.<sup>112</sup> Later Mbra Enu asked for the Civil Record Book to be sent to his house, where he adjusted the notes in the *Turkson* case. Mbra Enu later tried to defend himself by saying that the Tribunal was his ‘absolute property’ and he, therefore, had the right to use it and its records as he wished.<sup>113</sup> At about this time Mbra Enu was confined to his home because the Otoo debt case had developed to the point where his arrest was imminent.<sup>114</sup>

E.J.P. Brown, had prepared a petition to the Governor in an attempt to make him change his mind on the issue of allowing an *Omanhin* from each province to sit on the Legislative Council. Mbra Enu refused to sign the petition so uniting the *Oman*, the ARPS and the other *houses* against him. This resulted in a bid to depose him. In October 1916 he was sent a letter from the *Oman* that included a declaration that he was to sign or consider himself destooled. The declaration was to be a guarantee of his good behaviour and to vouch that he would “henceforth act only by advice, consent and approval of the said *Oman* of Cape Coast in all matters relating

to the stool of Cape Coast which I presently occupy.”<sup>115</sup> In return Mbra Enu would escape prosecution in the Otoo case and have the debt partly repaid by the *Oman*. The declaration was effectively an amendment to the constitutional rights of an *Omanhin*. The position of *Omanhin* was traditionally Paramount, and forcing Mbra Enu to act only on the advice of his *Oman*, was unprecedented. Mbra Enu refused to sign the document and derided it as the ‘Clique’s Magna Carta.’<sup>116</sup>

### **VIII. THE DESTOOLMENT OF MBRA ENU**

On Wednesday 1st November 1916, only eight months after the confirmation of Mbra Enu's installation, “a message was sent to Mrs Mills the head of his family to the effect that he was no longer *Omanbene* of Cape Coast and desired her to nominate a suitable person to be elected to the stool.”<sup>117</sup> Mbra Enu was officially destooled on the 12th February 1917.<sup>118</sup> Bilson was immediately ejected from the Ahenfie, and carpenters “boarded up the windows and doors of the apartments.”<sup>119</sup> Bilson's family later described how, “The crowd swore the ancestral paramount oath, *Oguaa Wukuda* and ordered Bilson to leave within five minutes of their swearing the oath.”<sup>120</sup> They continued, “The Clique's leader Mr Coker then signalled by saying that the *Omanhin* Bilson is ‘destooled’, as he will not sign the declaration.”<sup>121</sup>

Mbra Enu was ejected at such speed that he was unable to collect what he argued were his personal belongings but which subsequently became stool property.<sup>122</sup> The houses were immediately put up for sale at £63 by the *Oman*, to pay off some of the immense stool debt which was in excess of £1400.

<b>First floor Apartments of the Abeufle Circa 1915, See GNA ADM 23/1/280</b>	
<b>State Bedroom</b>	
<p>State Bedhead, with mattress and Covering Linguist Sticks Native Made Fly Whisks Umbrella (Khaki Colour European Made Ebony Walking Stick Ceremonial Stool of White Wood and Silver Ceremonial Stool of Ebony and Brass Breech Loading Enfield Rifle Damaged Old Type Krag-Jorgenson Carbine Small Stool with Emblem of a Heart Mahogany Chest of Drawers Mahogany Chamber Cupboard Canvas and Cloth Hammock Locally made Umbrella of Coloured Cloth</p>	<p>Q.V Ashanti Ceremonial Medal on a heavy Silver Chain In a Case. Silver Key Ring and Keys Gilt Skull Cap With Emblem 3 Assorted Tin Trunks 4 Northern Territory Made Blankets Large Wooden Trank with Key 2 Old and Rusted Gong Gongs 5 Various Emblems for the tops of State Umbrellas Brass Pot for Tallow 1 Small Mahogany Medicine Chest 1 Chamber Pot 9 Various State Swords</p>
<b>Small Room First Floor</b>	<b>Big Room on First Floor</b>
<p>Standing Clock (Wooden Case) Small locally Made Washstand locally made "drinking box for native custom" Narrow Mahogany Sideboard Bamboo Walking Stick with China head Hausa Dagger</p>	<p>Mahogany Sideboard Native Stools Wall Clock Human Skull Cut Glass Decanters Couches (locally Made) Bentwood Armchair (Old &amp; Repaired) Rocking Chair Circular, Occasional-Table Small Mahogany Dining Table Old Cane Bottom Chairs Large Framed Photograph Water Colour of King Prempeh in Procession</p>
<b>Sudy On First Floor</b>	
<p>Velvet and Walnut Rocking Chair Bentwood and Cane Arm Chair 4 Large State Umbrellas Hanging Lamps of Ruby Glass 2 Mosbie Axes Old Table Old Indian Feather-Brush Indian Fan</p>	
<b>Bedroom</b>	
<p>Locally Made Bed and Mattress Old Natu e Made, Wash Stand</p>	
	<b>Landing</b>
	<p>Wicker and Canvas Locally made Hammock</p>

If what Bilson left behind was personal property, it was a measure of the degree of luxury he had enjoyed, on what he argued was at the most £10 a month, from the Tribunal funds.<sup>123</sup>

The day after his destoolment, Bilson wrote to the Governor and appealed for an "urgent earnest enquiry."<sup>124</sup> He asked that it might be presided over by other *Amanhin* who would probably have more empathy for his plight than most eminent

people of Cape Coast. Bilson recommended, Amonoo V of Anomabu, Essandoh III of Nkusukum and Otu Ababio II of Abura.<sup>125</sup> Bilson argued that his destoolment was unconstitutional, because it was illegal to swear an oath against any blood Royal of a stool.<sup>126</sup> The *Ex-Omanhin* also contrived to make it as difficult as possible for his enemies to consolidate their position by requesting that the Native Tribunal be closed.<sup>127</sup> None of these requests were granted, and to add insult to injury, there was a reception in Cape Coast on the 15th February 1917 for the Acting Governor from which Bilson was barred.<sup>128</sup>

In May 1917, Mary Mills and Madam Abba Anseikoa began a campaign to pressure for Bilson's re-ensoolment. They prepared a long sycophantic letter to the Governor (who they described as representing "the British Empire, renowned, and always prevailing for the rights, justice, fair play, liberty and freedom of her subjects, poor and oppressed."<sup>129</sup>), that condemned the injustices perpetrated against the "poor boy Bilson."<sup>130</sup> The letter complained of Bilson having "all sorts of unjustified treatments from the hands of the Native Tribunal, the very self same faction who caused the alleged destoolment,"<sup>131</sup> and of them "passing themselves as the *Oman* of Cape Coast especially on purpose for a chance of bringing out a destoolment campaign."<sup>132</sup> The letter explained how "in truth they are not the Oman of Cape Coast, but the '*Atsi-Koo* section of the town," (the section of the town represented by the *Mpakamfu Chiefs*, who were the most powerful *Chiefs*, but were not necessarily synonymous with the *Oman*). The letter argued that the 'clique's' political pretensions were not based on any role founded in the 'stool constitution'.<sup>133</sup>

Bilson claimed that the 'clique' had used the British legal machinery to undermine and destool him which was in direct conflict with 'stool law'. What exactly Bilson meant by 'stool law' and 'constitution' is unclear. The most significant thing that Crowther's work demonstrates are the ambiguities inherent within indigenous tradition. Because of Bilson's corruption in the eyes of British law, the *Oman* had been able to confiscate the Native Tribunal's revenue and funds.<sup>134</sup> The barrister, E.J.P. Brown, was instrumental in assisting the *Oman* in placing Bilson's crimes within a purely British legal framework, so limiting the traditional power of the *Omanhin*.<sup>135</sup> The legal advice taken to destool Bilson cost £50 which ironically came from stool funds. Bilson's supporters argued that the *Oman's* 'misuse' of stool funds gave legal force,

*to their unconstitutional destoolment irrespective of all the bad treatments, disgrace, deprivations, insults, disrespectfulness, accusational false charges, misrepresentation matters, threats with contempts, insubordinations, conspiracy unjustified impositions of pacifications, in money on trifle cases, undue advantage of oppression, slander, inquisitiveness and all the wicked acts unworthy to be given to any ordinary person* <sup>136</sup>

The supporters of Bilson argued that if indeed Bilson was guilty of corruption, then Tufuhin Coker, the head of the *Oman*, had also received Tribunal funds and

private bribes, in his capacity as judge.<sup>137</sup> Bilson's family contended that in violating the oath of "*Oguaa Wukuda*", by confiscating the Native Tribunal's funds, and by giving the *Omanbin* an ultimatum, the *Oman* had shown the ambiguous ground that lay between British law and 'stool law'. They argued that this had allowed E.J.P. Brown to run roughshod over long-held indigenous traditions. It is impossible to ascertain whether the ambiguities were, in fact, a result of their being no specific 'stool law', or whether the lack of clarity was due to British law running alongside a confusing indigenous system. In spite of this, Bilson undertook to "pay any amount of pacification fee" that was imposed upon him for a settlement.<sup>138</sup>

On 13th July 1915, *Regent* Sackey, with the *Asafo* companies' representatives, had given Bilson an advance prior to his installation. When the loan was not repaid, the *Ahenfie* was put up for auction.<sup>139</sup> There were no immediate buyers and the building stood unoccupied with the personal effects of the Ex-*Omanbin* within. On 31st July 1917, Bilson wrote to Kofi Sackey complaining about the condition of the *Ahenfie*,<sup>140</sup> and the effect that this had on his, "aged Grand Aunt Mary Mills and his cousin Abba Ayebiahwe who were without a residence because of the boarding of the house."<sup>141</sup> When the September rains came Bilson complained that his *house* was in danger of "being tumbled to the ground."<sup>142</sup> In early October 1916, Bilson broke into the *Ahenfie* and retrieved what he argued were his personal "belongings, and not the property of the town companies or town of Cape Coast."<sup>143</sup>

On the 6th October 1917, *Omankyiami* J.J. Kuofi, "representing the companies, councillors or *Omanfu* of Cape Coast Native Tribunal," served a writ claiming damages against Bilson and his family for trespassing.<sup>144</sup> Although the case was later "struck out" when Kuofi did not turn up to the court,<sup>145</sup> Bilson had been financially ruined and his reputation destroyed. The reasons for Bilson's destoolment had been circulated as part of a report that was sent to the Governor. It had become common knowledge that, amongst other things, he had deceived and cheated over the Turkson case; that he had arrested the opposing section of the stool family; that he had tried to abolish the *Oguaa Besonfu*, (the Town Council). There was now an imminent warrant for his arrest.<sup>146</sup> The District Commissioner concluded that, the alleged charges against the *Omanbin*, if well-founded, appeared to be grave.<sup>147</sup>

The division of the town into two camps went deeper than there simply being opposition to Mbra Enu. The divisions were indicative of how the people of the town saw their history and their future. For *Effikessim* and *Ntoto*, it was a reply to the *Ahenfie's* account of Cape Coast history, which had come to dominate during recent years. Although *Berempong* Kojo had not been generally recognised as an *Omanbin* of Cape Coast, Crowther's investigation had shown that there was enough evidence to cast doubt on the unquestionable legitimacy of Egyr Ansa's stool also. Crowther raised questions of how it was that the Paramount stool of Egyr Ansa had been left to decay in a room that leaked and eventually collapsed. The inherent contradictions in the competing accounts of the stool history, revealed how the indigenous law and

constitution that had been written about with positivistic vigour by men like Sarbah and Casely-Hayford, only reflected a selective view of local history. For the first time, it was publicly acknowledged, that the Cape Coast stool history was immensely complex, perhaps so complex that it could not always be relied on as an answer to questions of legitimacy. Perhaps the fallibility of local history also demonstrated the fallibility of genealogy, which served to weaken the credibility of the extended stool family. This not only changed the way that some people related to their past, it also may have changed the way that some people saw their future. The ARPS, and the literate sections of the community, seemed to face little opposition as they stepped forward to fill the small political role that had been left by the out-going *Omanhin*. Cape Coast had lost its position as the central focus of indigenous Gold Coast political activity, and many sons of Cape Coast began to look to issues beyond the boundaries of the town and the colony.

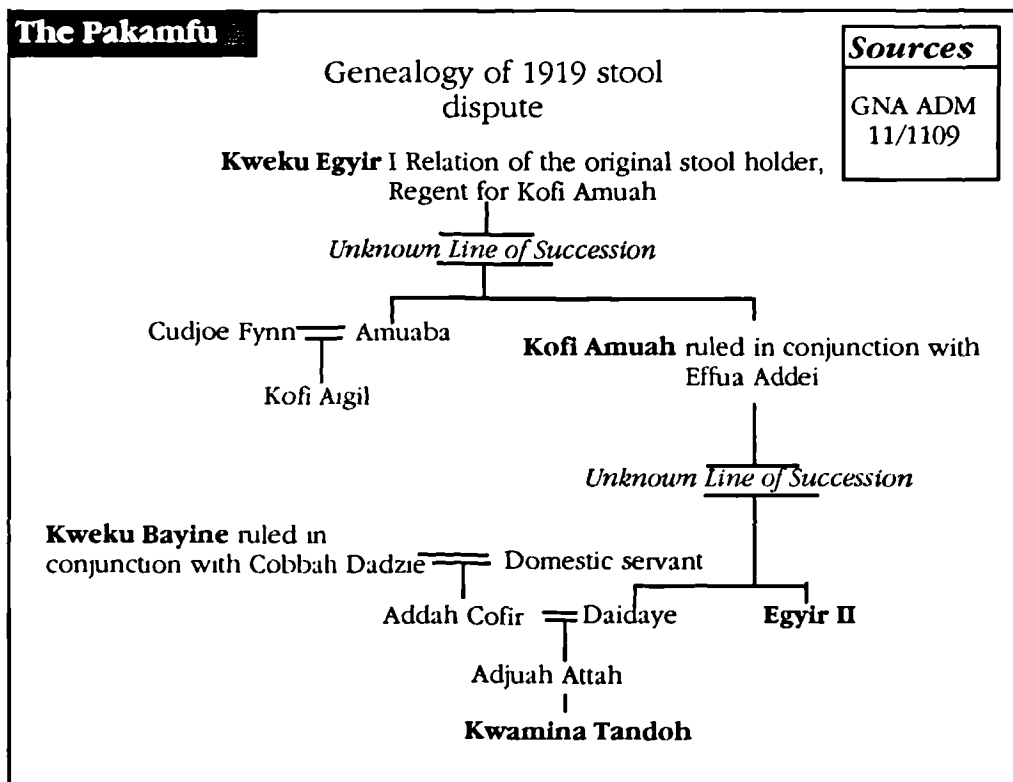
### **IX. THE LOCAL REPERCUSSIONS OF BILSON'S DESTOOLMENT.**

The second extended interregnum within five years inflicted a painful blow to an already ailing stool, at a time when the more flexible organisations in the town were developing into national institutions. The versatile women who headed the major households, were the most significant figures from the old order. By 1918, many of them had been making contributions to Cape Coast political life for 65 years. Mary Mills had been a major figure in the Abradze family during Kweku Atta's reign, (1816-58), as had Madam Aboache for *Ntoto* and Madam Wireduo for *Effikessim*. Each had offered financial support to the stool and had operated as a voice for the fractured extended stool family during successive disputes. Ambah Wireduo died in early 1918, and Mrs Mary Mills (*School Mammie*) died two weeks later.<sup>148</sup> *School Mammie's* death was followed by that of Aikosua Maria, Ambah Wireduo's successor, two months later.<sup>149</sup>

The loss of these three important figures during a period of instability, added to the weakness of the stool. The major *houses* split further into smaller *houses* with less power. The funeral custom of Mary Mills could not be held before that of Kojo Mbra and the late *Omanhin's* funeral could not be held until the *Abenfie* and *Effikessim*, (who each held items necessary for the custom), became reconciled.<sup>150</sup> During the seven years since Kojo Mbra's death, the issues that had created the original rift between the stool families had been exacerbated by the enstoolment and destoolment of Bilson. The Secretary of Native Affairs wrote that, "the fact of this funeral custom not having been held is an open sore, and in order to heal it, it must first be ascertained which is the correct party to perform it. The history of this Stool is an unusual one, but I am not at present prepared to believe that the funeral of the deceased *Omanbene* can properly be held without the presence of his successor."<sup>151</sup>

*Effikessim* decided that they would bury Madam Wireduo and use the stool and the sword of State of Kojo Mbra as part of the custom.<sup>152</sup> After publicly announcing the funeral for 4.p.m, it actually began at 7am. To the mortification of Bilson and his followers, the emblems were exhibited but because of the wrongly advertised time, there was no disturbance.<sup>153</sup> The public humiliation of Bilson’s section of the stool family by the *Oman*, the ARPS and now *Effikessim*, combined with the death of *School Mammie*, served to undermine it as the senior household.

With no *Omanbin*, with several of the major stools vacant, and after the death of three of the household heads, many people in Cape Coast looked to other institutions for a lead. Traditionally the *Mpakamfu* had been the second most powerful Cape Coast stool, but the stool had been vacant since the death of *Chief Amoah II* in 1910.<sup>154</sup> Faux Tandoh and Charles Wharton were the leaders of opposing sides of the Amoah family who had been in dispute since Amoah II’s death.<sup>155</sup> By 1919, the need to resolve the dispute became crucial and Mr Trotter, the District Commissioner, decided that an enquiry should be held. Trotter realised that, “the stool is primarily a family one but it owes importance particularly to the fact that it carries the office *Mpakamfu* or enstooled hereditary Chiefs who make up the begwafu of the Oman.”<sup>156</sup>



The relationship between the two sides of the Amoah family was exactly parallel to that of *Abenfie* and *Effikessim*. The descendants of the domestic servants of the founder of the stool had made consistent claims to the *Mpakamfu*. As with the

*Omanbin's* stool it was the 'domestics' who had shown constant loyalty to the stoolholder. Adjuah Pow, the head of the 'domestics', argued that she should nominate the *Chief*. She argued that the other side of the family, headed by Adjuah Atta, could not demonstrate their relationship with the late *Chief* Amoah except through the nebulous suggestion that they were of the same 'tribe'.<sup>157</sup>

Adjuah Pow suggested that her son, Charles Wharton, though of illegitimate descent, was the only viable nominee. She argued that Adjuah Atta's nomination of her son, Faux Tandoh, should be ignored.<sup>158</sup> Adjuah Pow claimed "the First occupant of the stool was related to one Egyir who acted as Regent during the time that Amuah (Amoah) was a minor. Adjuah Atta the claimant as the mother of Tandoh traces her descent from this man Kweku Egyir"<sup>159</sup>, not from an actual holder off the *Mpakamfu* stool. Adjuah Pow argued that the 'legitimate' family had died out, leaving only the ancestors of the domestics "namely herself and her nominee and brother Kow Duku."<sup>160</sup>

The loyalty of the 'domestics' had been demonstrated just prior to Amoah's death in 1910. The stool had been in severe debt and was considering selling stool property to pay off creditors. Adjuah Pow intervened and paid Mr Kendall to whom the debt was outstanding.<sup>161</sup> The enquiry showed how the 'domestic servants' had paid for the funerals and the debts of the *Mpakamfu* stool for at least a generation and felt that they had 'bought' a 'legitimate' stake in the stool. However, the enquiry was to take the 'legitimate' family's side because of their tenuous but legitimate blood rights to the stool.<sup>162</sup>

The findings of the enquiry did not instantly solve the problems. Faux Tandoh, who was enstooled as *Chief* Amoah III, was domiciled in England. In 1923 he was forced to appoint Wharton to represent him on the *Oman* Council. He evidently did this with a view to pacifying the members of his family who were opposed to his succession. But in spite of this the dispute continued. The section of the family which supported *Chief* Amoah III, approached the *Oman* Council and unsuccessfully requested them not to allow Wharton to represent the family on the Council. On *Chief* Amoah's return, in 1926, it must have come to light that not only did he wish to return to England but that he was suffering from a mental illness. After a family meeting, it was decided to allow Wharton to continue his representation.<sup>163</sup> Tandoh returned to England where his illness worsened and where he later died in an asylum hospital.<sup>164</sup>



Faate Boundary Disputes Pending November 1921	
GNA ADM 23/1/411	
Division	Dispute
Anomaboe	Dispute with Asebu Possibly also with Abra in the North and East. There is one detached village south Denkyira another between Dominase and Mankessim
Abasa	Koom Vs Brainoo one appeal from Enyanmen a case affecting Divisional land
Enyanmen	Boundary with Denkyira dispute also some palavers about small villages. Also whether Sunkwa was under Enyanmen was a matter on which rulings have differed
Denkyira	The boundary with Enyanmen is disputed by many miles Badum and Essiam land is probably of definite limits but the question of allegiance is disputed.
Ejumaku	A recent case involving Odoben and Nkum was decided by Ajumaku and the linguist of Agnona against Nkum
Essikuma-Breman	Dispute pending in Courts affecting the village of Baku and Assen-Mansu
Kwaman	Disputes with Abra over Kwadja Sekyure and Katekyiase.
Mankessim	Aidoo of Mankessim has a case with the Odikuro of Mprenkyi
Abeasi/Dominasi	Kwaman claimed to own half of Kyekyewire village

The degeneration of the paramount stool of Cape Coast and the ancillary institutions which supported it, evidently added to the instability of the minor stools. By 1921 there had been on-going disputes along almost every town boundary that fell within, or fringed, the greater Cape Coast area. The particularly unstable nature of local politics was not only due to the Bilson destoolment, the economic crises that had effected Cape Coast in the previous two decades also had severe repercussions on the town's surrounding and dependent on Cape Coast.

The crises that had plagued Cape Coast for at least two decades were self-fuelling. The failure of indigenous politics, was in part due to the ambient economic crisis as trade was re-routed to Accra. The loss of trade and population created a weakness in the local economies and stools, which in turn created further insecurity. This was a growing problem, but it was made much worse because the respected members of the Cape Coast stool family, who could have conceivably changed the towns fortunes, were looking away from parochial Cape Coast issues, to issues that affected the colony as a whole.

## X. CHANGES IN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LOCAL INSTITUTIONS

Bilson's major mistake, had been to underestimate three powerful forces in the Cape Coast area: the Church, the ARPS and the various clubs and societies. Many within the *Oman* had previously attempted to increase their social and political influence by becoming dominant in the hermetic and social organisations on the coast. W.Z. Coker, *Tufubin* and head of the *Oman*, had been responsible for calling

the Temperance Lodge at Rolla's Hall to order since the 1890s.<sup>165</sup> He had also joined the Freemasons, was a patron of Cape Coast Literary and Social Club<sup>166</sup> and was prominent in Wesleyan Church affairs. Other patrons of the Cape Coast Literary and Social Club, who were also Church-goers, and were or were to become Freemasons, included most of the senior members of the ARPS, Henry Van Hein,<sup>167</sup> William Ward Brew,<sup>168</sup> J.E. Casely-Hayford<sup>169</sup> and E.J.P. Brown. Although the significance of the Temperance movement had begun to decline, the remaining complex network of secular, hermetic and Christian fraternities gave men like Coker access to a clandestine and privileged sphere of Cape Coast society. The societies and churches were the only spheres in which government officials, the ARPS, the *Oman* and their wives could mingle as a group in recreation. Beyond the church and the hermetic societies, the social clubs offered the perfect arena for people to be 'seen in' by their peers.

The Ladies Club was established in 1905 and had thirty-two members, three of whom were wives of government officials; the Sporting Club, which started in 1910, had twenty members, three of whom were government officials; the Cape Coast Literary and Social Club was set up in 1914, and boasted thirty-one members, twelve of whom were government officials; the Redamus Club, had been started in 1912 and had 18 members, nine of whom were government officials and the Eureka, established in 1916, had thirty-one members, twelve of whom were government officials.<sup>170</sup>

Eminent Cape Coasters who wished to enhance their political image, may have felt that by raising their social profile they could broaden their public appeal. It may have, therefore, seemed advantageous to be involved in some of the social clubs in the town. The *Oman*, with W.Z. Coker at its helm, E.J.P. Brown as its lawyer, and Kofi Sackey as one of its most senior members, could boast control, membership or influence, of most of the significant clubs or societies. This influence was enhanced by the fact that they were all senior members of the stool family, and that W.Z. Coker was the head of the seven *Asafo* companies, the biggest body of young men in the town.<sup>171</sup>

From the onset of World War I, as popular local opinion came increasingly into conflict with the colonial administration, the local societies and clubs took on a new significance. The complexion of the clubs and societies changed very rapidly, and the organisations that people patronised became seen as a reflection of a political view-point and social standing. Nana Ofori Atta, the *Okyenhene*, became a patron of the Cape Coast Literary and Social Club, although it would have been impractical for him to attend its meetings, because he was resident in the Eastern Province and Accra.<sup>172</sup> Perhaps because societies were used as a means of broadening their members' public appeal, they began to do public charitable work.

Many of the societies began to establish rival funds for war victims, which publicly reflected the wealth and success of the societies and their members. Casely-Hayford and Savage independently began the 'Sekondi Gold Coast Imperial War Fund', that raised £3700 of which £100 was donated to the South African War Relief Fund.<sup>173</sup> This led to a split in the executive of the ARPS. To outdo the unauthorised collection of £3700 by Casely-Hayford and Savage, the ARPS initiated its own 'aboriginal' appeal that raised £1500.<sup>174</sup> The distinctive funds were a symptom of the struggle for dominance within the ARPS that had emerged as the stool degenerated and the political potential of the Aborigines society became apparent.

The ARPS was originally a satellite of the Cape Coast stool. It was established partly by the extended Cape Coast stool family in an attempt to protect local land rights from colonial encroachments. The demise of local politics and the extended family system, transformed the ARPS from being an ally of the stool to being a rival. A network of institutions and newspapers started to interlink the issues concerning the colonies of British West Africa. Within this changing context, many people saw the ARPS as a reluctant successor to the *Oman*,<sup>175</sup> while others including Casely-Hayford, felt that by linking local issues with international issues, they could broaden the society's agenda and become more effective. Leaders such as Nana Ofori Atta, made consistent efforts to break through the ethnic isolation and introspection, by joining Cape Coast societies. However, he argued that what was really needed was a movement to voice the grievances of West Africa as a whole. To this end, Ofori Atta suggested "that conferences should be held at the various regional centres."<sup>176</sup>

## **XI. THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF BRITISH WEST AFRICA**

In 1919 Casely-Hayford wrote, "Are there men on whom we can rely in the work of national and racial emancipation? If not, where can we find them, where can we rear them? If.....you cannot prepare yourselves in that element of self-reliance, then our future is dark. We should like to feel that one tocsin call can arouse West Africa into national consciousness."<sup>177</sup> It was against the background of the stool's decay, that this rallying cry rang out. The new organisation saw its major aims as, "Firstly, to effect a Union between the four colonies. Secondly to stimulate public interest in matters affecting public welfare. Thirdly to give greater weight to West African opinion."<sup>178</sup>

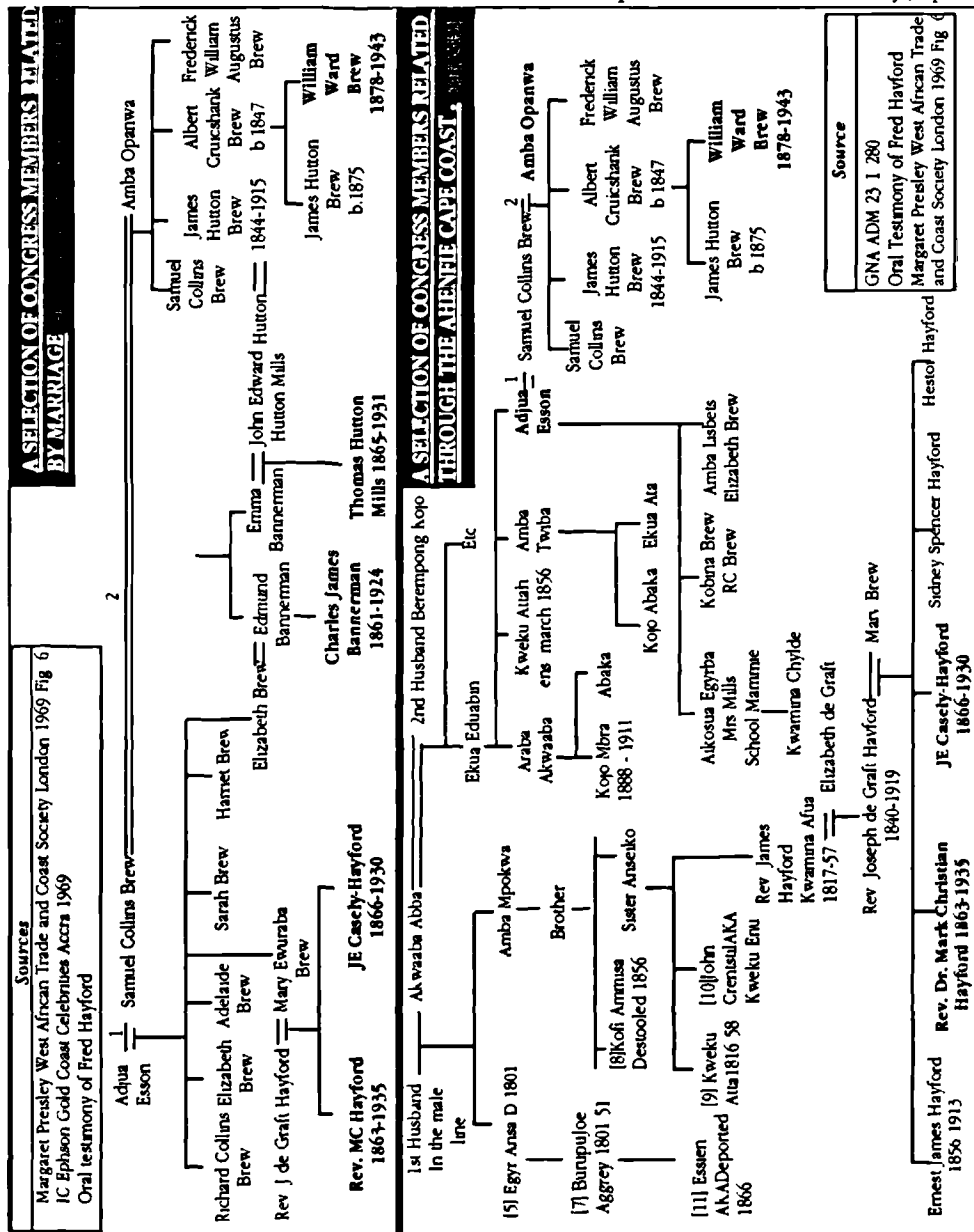
The period from 1910 to 1920, saw major developments in the Gold Coast economy. The First World War had created a variety of demands for resources and manpower that were more than met by each of the colonies of West Africa. Positive 'national' characteristics were posited and honed by the press, and the abstract ideas of 'patriot', and 'nation' became part of both colonial and indigenous rhetoric. New international ideologies began to influence coastal politics.<sup>179</sup> In an attempt to place local concerns into this larger context, members of the Cape Coast stool family joined

with other coastal intellectuals to establish the National Congress of British West Africa.<sup>180</sup>

1920 seemed to represent an important climacteric in colonial policy; India had just been given a new constitution, Egypt was also about to receive a constitution, Malta had already been accorded partial self-government and the World War I peace settlement had contained a historic sovereignty of nations clause. Was it too “much to ask and to expect that British West Africa should also receive due consideration?”<sup>181</sup>

## XII. CASELY-HAYFORD; IMAGE AND LEGITIMACY

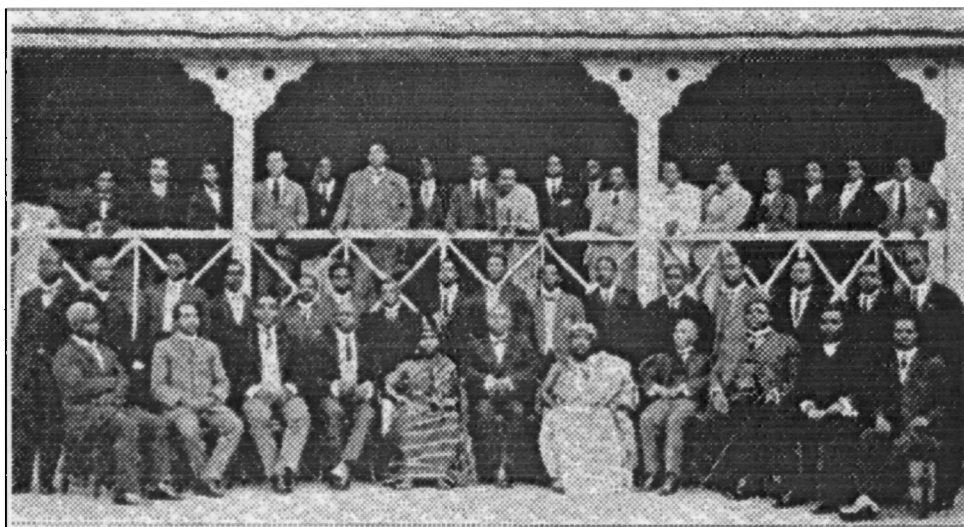
The executive of the ARPS became increasingly distressed at the lack of consultation between Casely-Hayford (who led the Congress) and themselves. At a meeting in August 1919, a *Chief* questioned Casely-Hayford directly, “you must know you are not the King of the Gold Coast, and even if you were, you would have your big men to consult first.”<sup>182</sup> Questions about the legitimacy of the Congress and the lack of communication between the leadership and the community, spawned an idea



that the Congress's members were consciously attempting to usurp the traditional order and replace it with an *elite* or *intelligentsia*.

Kimble described the membership of the NCBWA as comprising "seventeen lawyers, in addition to a sprinkling of Chiefs, clergy, journalists, doctors, merchants, and 'independent gentleman' -all from the Colony"<sup>183</sup>. They presented themselves as a sophisticated and single-minded group. They shared, political aspirations, professional histories and in many cases the *craft* of Freemasonry. The Rodger Club was the perfect place to hold the inaugural meeting of the Congress. Many of the club's past, and future Chairmen, were at the conference, all of whom were Masons (including E.C. Quist of Accra Lodge No. 3065<sup>184</sup>, H. Ribeiro of St Georges and Secondee Lodge No. 3851<sup>185</sup>, Akilagpa Sawyerr of the Lodge St Andrew No. 1299 Scottish Constitution<sup>186</sup> and Hugh Quarthey Papafio.<sup>187</sup>) Their image belied the fact that one could rephrase Kimble's description as, two *Amanbin*,<sup>188</sup> one *Kyiame*,<sup>189</sup> three *Penins*,<sup>190</sup> three *Tufubins*,<sup>191</sup> two *safohins*,<sup>192</sup> and a sprinkling of *Bogyadom*<sup>193</sup> and 'independent gentleman,' all from the Colony.<sup>194</sup>

The organisers of the NCBWA, J.E. Casely-Hayford, and Thomas Hutton Mills, were eminent gentlemen with well-respected genealogical and professional credentials. Many of the central figures of the coastal membership were related by marriage, or through the Cape Coast *Abenfie*. Other Fante members such as Henry Van Hein and W.E.G. Sekyi, were senior members of *Effikessim*, and were, therefore, also



From left to right, seated; AB Quarthey-Papafio, H Van Hein, Dr HC Bankole-Bright, FW Dove, Ga Manche, T Hutton Mills, Manche Kojo Ababio, JE Casely-Hayford, Prince Bassey, Duke Ephraim, Patriarch JG Campbell  
 Standing:EE Offiong, Rev MC Hayford, A Newton, E Ofori, SR Wood, WG Essien, CJ Bannerman, SA Quagraine, Adeniji Olugbile, Adeoye Deniga, SD Bervell, JB Nelson, W Ward Brew, Akilagpa Sawyerr, JE Emingsang, F Arkhurst.  
 Balcony; J Kitson Mills, LEV McCarthy, JH Coussey, JM de Santana, CA Barnes, Dr FV Nanka Bruce, JT Addy, CJ Reindorf, WEG Sekyi, H, Quarthey-Papafio, A Vanderpuye, Dr CE Reindorf, Prince K Atta Amoonu, K Quarthey-Papafio, HR Ribeiro, J Glover Addo, JM Opong, RS Sackey.

(Source: Casely-Hayford Archive)



The Members take their seats  
(Source: Casely-Hayford Archive)

related (though somewhat distantly) to the *Abenfie*. The lowest common social denominator for the Fante, was the family, and familial networks were probably fundamental in the planning of the Congress. Where the familial connections did not exist, professional, hermetic or fraternal ones may have replaced them.

The Congress was the largest gathering of European-trained West African professionals of its time, and it seems that many of its members were Freemasons. Freemasonry had been growing in popularity for some decades before the Congress. Perhaps the gathering of so many prominent masons, gave Freemasonry a further boost in popularity. There was certainly a move by many of the non-masons of the NCBWA to become Freemasons in the months following the meeting. William Ward Brew and Henry Van Hein began planning the *consecration* of the first Scottish Lodge on the Gold Coast. On the 5th May 1921, the Lodge Progressive No.1261, under the Scottish Constitution, was *consecrated* at Cape Coast. The *Consecrating Officer* was *Worshipful Brother* J. Berkeley Macauley, a Sierra Leonean Krio. Ward Brew was able to rise quickly through the Masonic ranks to the position of *Royal Arch*,<sup>195</sup> to become, at that time, the highest ranking Mason, 'African' or 'European', on the Gold Coast.

Casely-Hayford joined the English Freemasons. Whilst in London some years earlier, Casely-Hayford had become interested in theosophy and attended the lectures of Annie Besant and Madame Blavatsky. He became a believer in reincarnation and read theosophical works on Co-Masonry.<sup>196</sup> Perhaps it was his background interest in Co-Masonry, and his experiences with other Masons at the Congress, which encouraged him to join the Freemasons, with his son Archie, only



Casely-Hayford gives the opening speech  
(Source: Casely-Hayford Archive)



The Press take notes  
(Source: Casely-Hayford Archive)

months after the close of the inaugural conference.<sup>197</sup> Casely-Hayford became a member of St George's (Secondee) Lodge No. 3851 English Constitution. Like Ward Brew, he rose to the position of a *Royal Arch* Mason of the Victoria Chapter Accra. He was also later elevated to the Eighteenth Degree at Lagos which he especially visited for that purpose.<sup>198</sup>

The general popularity of Freemasonry among the members of the NCBWA, and the reaction of the non-Masons after the inaugural conference may be a sign that Masonic or social networks were used in the conference's organisation. It could be reasonably speculated that Masonic signs and words were included in their speeches and conversations. If indeed this sort of conscious propagation of a hegemony took place, it could be seen as a reflection of the profound differences in the outlook of the Congress, and the community that they sought to represent. If one accepts Gramsci's view that a class maintains its dominance not simply through the organisation of force but because it is able to go beyond its narrow, business interests and to exert a moral and intellectual leadership and make compromises with a variety of social allies, one could conclude that the use of Freemasonry, in this context, was indicative of the development of a separate social class.

The suggestion that many of the men involved in the NCBWA were part of developing separate class (which has been posited by J.A. Langley<sup>199</sup>) ignores some of the particular conditions which surrounded the Fante members of the Congress. For the Fante the phenomenon of family and stool allegiance, was constantly in conflict with formal notions of class. The development of such a class was continually challenged by the traditional family structure. The issue of family allegiance was central to the political formulations of the group's leaders. They realised that their genealogies gave them their legitimacy and not their social status.

Langley, however, argues that the educational and legal reforms demanded by the NCBWA, as well as their criticism of the monopolies and combines, were directly



The meeting in progress  
(Source: Casely-Hayford Archive)



connected with their own class interests.<sup>200</sup> Adu Boahen supports this view suggesting that they were “co-operationists with exceedingly limited political objectives, a sub-elite whose interests generally coincided with, and were in fact protected by, the foreign rulers they were agitating against.”<sup>201</sup> These works have argued that the members of the Congress presented themselves in a manner that was contrived, to suggest the division between the Congress members and those of the rest of the community.

Langley and Boahen’s views could be borne out by the example of the Hon. Thomas Hutton Mills Bl. He promoted himself as a family man (a nuclear family man). The marriages and deaths of his children were all announced in the fashionable press. *His image and life-style were the perfect advertisement for a successful barrister.* Profiles always presented him as the head of a family that comprised a doting wife and adoring and intelligent children.<sup>202</sup> Casely-Hayford also promoted himself in a similar manner. He was always linked to his equally successful brothers and father as if to promote the insularity of nuclear family. These were professional ploys, adopted to impress clients, and create images that harked back to a British upper-middle class.

An interesting incident occurred some months after the NCBWA’s inaugural conference which would seem to further illustrate Langley and Boahen’s point. Whilst in London, Casely-Hayford, his son Archie, and Hutton Mills, were leaving one of the Inns of Court dressed in their wigs and gowns, when the annual procession of the Lord Chief Justice passed them. Archie Casely-Hayford wrote some years later, “fully robed, we decided as colonial barristers, to join the procession with the Chancellor, the Lord Chief Justice and all the Noble Law Lords and other bench Judges in England as also the various practising barristers then in London and other legal dignitaries. We marched in the streets from the law courts in the Strand in the procession to the Abbey.”<sup>203</sup> This incident was recorded by a black American journalist who was coincidentally passing. The journalist photographed the scene and wrote, “the honourable Hugh Millston and the honourable Casely-Hayford Judges and Counsel in procession to Westminster Abbey, London. The two prominently shown above are from the Gold Coast. Honourable Casely-Hayford is a member of the British Exchequer. These Judges preside at the most celebrated cases in the Empire.”<sup>204</sup> Placed within the context of the conclusions of Langley and Boahen, one might presume that this was a measure of how much these men sought to be seen as part of the European establishment.

These conclusions, however, ignore the place that many of the Congress members held within local stools. It was through the stools that many of these men claimed a mandate. Hutton Mills was a *Tufuhin* of the Jamestown stool and he had close genealogical links to the Asante stool. Thomas Hutton Mills’ father, John, was a relative of the eminent Nii Attoh, an official of the Jamestown stool<sup>205</sup>. In 1913, this pedigree led to Hutton Mills being presented to W.E. Gladstone. He was introduced

as a close relation of the *Asantebene*.<sup>206</sup> Hutton Mills' pedigree was similar to many of the Ga members of the Congress, such as C.J. Bannerman and Kitson Mills. Kitson Mills, was the son of a Jamestown stool councillor<sup>207</sup>, and C.J. Bannerman shared Hutton Mill's prestigious and close links to the Asante stool.<sup>208</sup>

Casely-Hayford, a Fante, was *Safobin Abinnana Agiyman* of the No.3 Company, in Cape Coast.<sup>209</sup> Casely Hayford was also a patrilineal heir to the position of *Okyiame* of the Cape Coast stool. Fellow members of the Congress, William Ward Brew, and Mark Christian Hayford shared Casely-Hayford's hereditary responsibility. Casely-Hayford's son later wrote, "As a lover of our ancient institutions Casely-Hayford always believed in the reverence of our national rules and customs. He believed in proving that it is not true that there is a gap between the educated African and his less fortunate illiterate brother."<sup>210</sup> It also seems that Casely-Hayford participated in many of the more popular social clubs. His son wrote that, "he was a good dancer and particularly fond of our own African dance known as 'High Life' in which he would often be seen dancing sole in the centre of a great concourse of people, handkerchief in hand in accordance with the African way of dancing, finding a suitable partner to summon to the centre and cover the embarrassment of dancing alone, encircled by the other dancers formed in a mighty ring around, holding hands."<sup>211</sup>

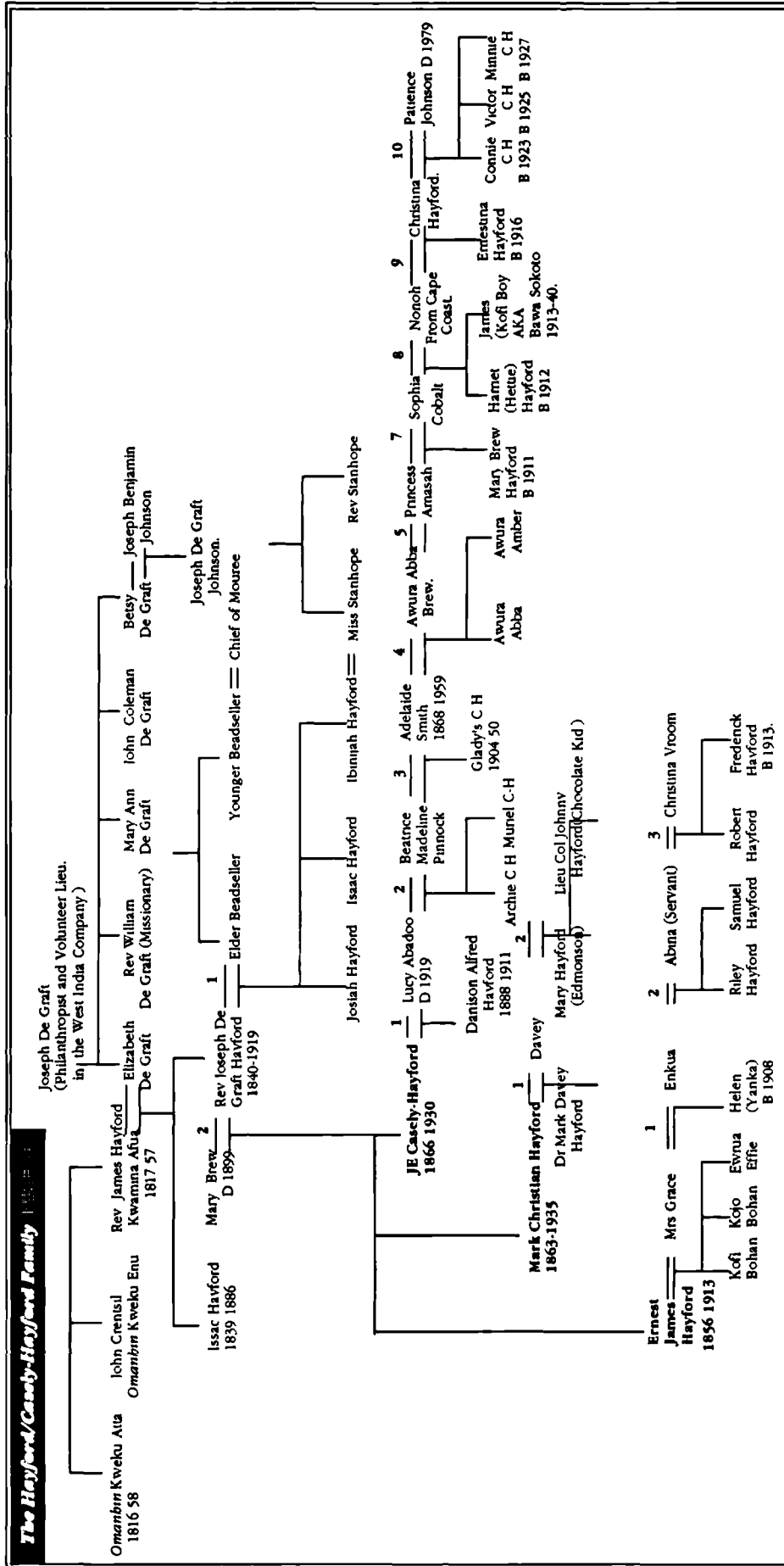
Although Casely-Hayford may have been a 'lover of ancient institutions', his generation had witnessed a gradual decay of the extended Cape Coast family system. The 'families' and stools from which the Congress derived its legitimacy, were fractured and confused. The prevailing nuclearisation of Cape Coast families left many of the large *houses* split and nearly powerless. Casely-Hayford had not been above succumbing to the tide of change. Casely-Hayford's father had died alone in a London infirmary in 1919 after a fall in his single room apartment in a Seventh Day Adventist hostel.<sup>212</sup> This sad and lonely demise of one of the fathers of the Fante



Safobin Ahinnana Agiyman  
(Source: Casely-Hayford Archive)

Confederation, was a measure of the degeneration of the safety net that had been represented by the extended family. This was not an isolated case. Some years earlier, in 1913, James Hutton Brew, Casely-Hayford's elder matrilineal cousin and another veteran of the Fante Confederation, had died alone in Dulwich in South London.<sup>213</sup> Brew, as his matrilineal guardian, had given Casely-Hayford his first introduction into journalism and Joseph de Graft Hayford, as his father, had been inspirational in his early development. It would have been traditional for these ageing and wise men

to be pulled into the bosom of the local political system. Yet in old age, they were pushed to the system's periphery.



Source: Fred Hayford

Casely-Hayford demonstrated what he felt were his familial obligations in his 1913 will (there were allegedly others). The will created a clear division between his inherited family wealth and the wealth he had personally accumulated. He also made a distinction between his matrilineal and patrilineal responsibilities. Casely-Hayford firstly divided his legitimate and illegitimate family by an appellation. The will asked that all the progeny of his second son Archie “begotten under the customary law of the Gold Coast or by the laws of England ..... shall bear the name ‘Casely’ immediately before the surname ‘Hayford’.”<sup>214</sup> This was done to clearly mark out the children that he produced from relationships with domestic servants and casual relationships from the progeny of his marriages by indigenous or European custom. Casely-Hayford then asked that most of his personal wealth be distributed between the progeny of the two Christian marriages that he had by 1913, (he allegedly had others subsequently), and that his family wealth be redistributed among his extended family of nieces and nephews.

Casely-Hayford created a clear divide between his immediate family and his extended family, and in so doing revealed his perception of his different obligations and responsibilities to both groups. It is obviously wrong to extrapolate from this that other equivalent men held the same beliefs. It is, however, reasonable to suggest that other contemporary figures were placing their obligations in equally complex frameworks. The complexities of his obligations, were also illustrated in Casely-Hayford’s relationship to Mbra III. Their relationship was obviously very close at the time of the *Omanbin*’s installation. Casely-Hayford was given the honour of being invited to the *Omanbin*’s enstoolment ceremony as ‘a senior member of his family’. However, in the late 1920s, as the editor of *Gold Coast Leader*, Casely-Hayford wrote a sharp and timely critique of Mbra III’s administration for which he was threatened with legal action. Yet within months his then wife (nee Patience Johnson) gave birth to his last son, Victor, who Casely-Hayford gave the Fante name *Nanambra* in honour of Mbra III. It seems again clear that Casely-Hayford placed a divide between what he saw as two different worlds; his professional obligations and his personal loyalties.

This phenomenon of at least two forms of obligation combining to make a single and undefined outlook, was at its most conspicuous when Casely-Hayford died in 1930. There were two death notices distributed, one of which accompanied a photograph of Casely-Hayford the lawyer, in stiff wing-collar and dark frock coat, and another was attached to a photograph of Casely-Hayford as *Asafobin*, of the No 3 Company, in full and appropriate kente cloth. The order of Casely-Hayford’s funeral cortege was worked out by his life long friend, Kitson Mills. Kitson Mills ordered the procession thus: 1. officiating Minister and choir; 2. Freemasons; 3. the cortege and State Emblem Bearers; 4. members of the family; 5. members of the Legislative Council; 6. members of the Bar Association; 7. members of the National Congress of

British West Africa; 8 the male section of the community; 9. the female section of the community; 10. schools of Accra and Christiansborg; 11. representative of Manchemi; 12. Asafobii (the different companies).<sup>215</sup> The list can clearly be read in two different ways. It is traditional in a Fante ceremony to have the most important guest last, whilst the European tradition would place the most important guest closest to the coffin. Kitson Mills seems to have used this cultural ambiguity to compliment everyone involved. Casely-Hayford died as he lived, balancing his social obligations to the complex communities.

This ambiguity was part and parcel of coastal life. Most of Casely-Hayford's generation were thrust into the confusion of a period of irresistible change. This was partly linked to a growing European influence with the advent of rapidly improving communications and technological innovations. Although this phenomenon was most obvious among the literate community, it seems that the success of movements such as temperance indicated how widespread compromises to European culture were. The adoption of certain European cultural traditions was going on at every level of the community. But compromises were not absolute. It seems that most people remained deeply involved in the indigenous institutions. Langley and Boahen seem to suggest that the Congress sought to harmonise the contradictions between the colonial system and local systems for their own benefit.<sup>216</sup>

Despite the loss of power of the stool and the extended family, the NCBWA still sought to claim its mandate from these traditional channels. Though much diminished, the indigenous political network that already existed was based around the extended family, and the Congress sought to maintain and exploit that network. The hermetic societies could therefore have only a limited influence on the social structure of the 'elite' in the community. The forum for indigenous political discussion was probably still linked closely to stools and stool families. It was perhaps with this in mind that, Thomas Hutton Mills pointed out, "it is important to note that each one of these Delegates is an AFRICAN, belonging to a DISTINCTIVE AFRICAN FAMILY and thereby commanding the right of property and other interests either in his own right or in the right of the family to which he belongs. It follows from this, that apart from the fact of the Delegates being natural leaders of the people of their several communities they have in themselves the natural right to appeal to His Majesty's Government for such constitutional reforms as in their judgement are necessary."<sup>217</sup>

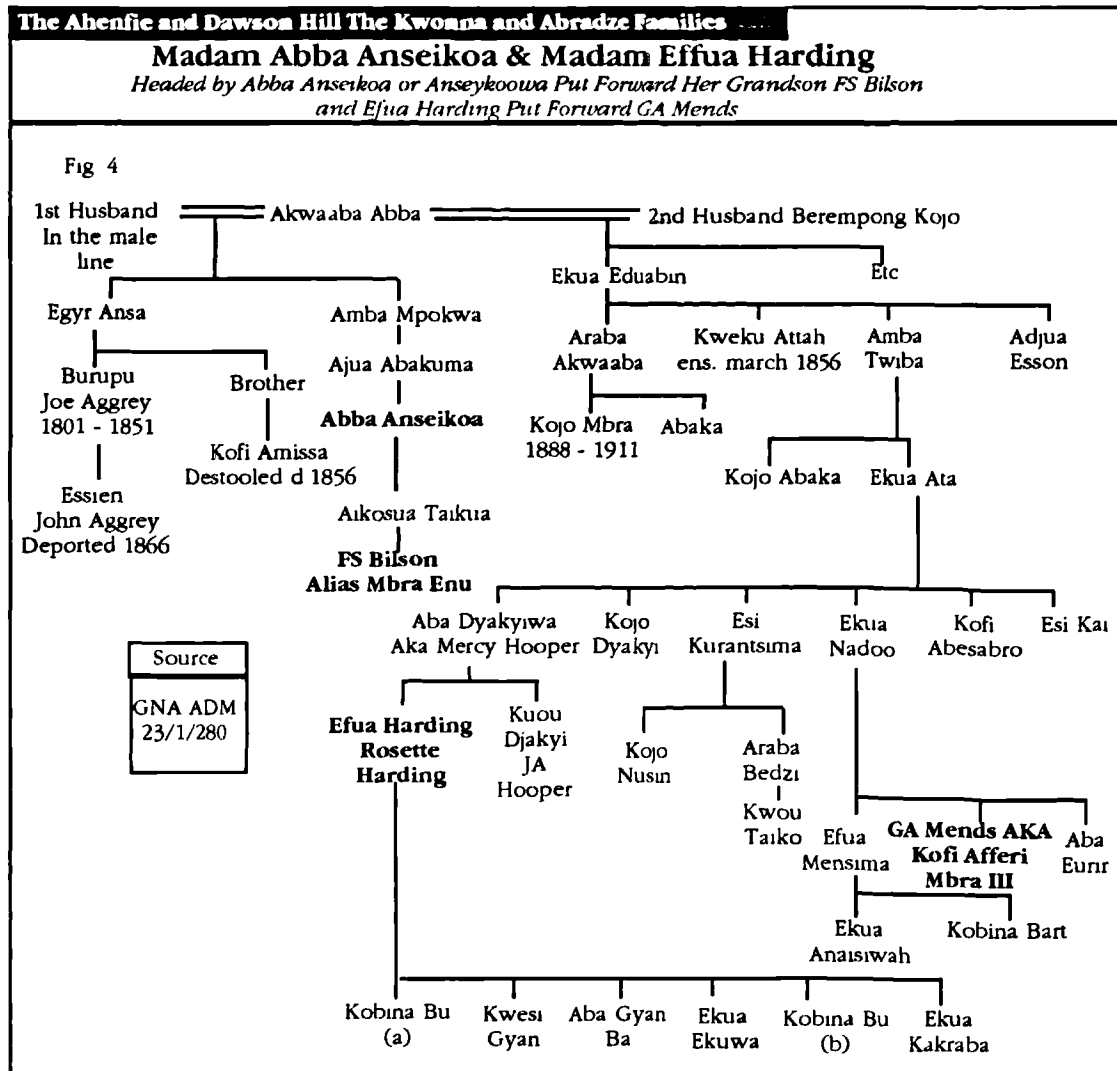
The Congress committed itself to stopping the European nations from "exchanging or partitioning countries between them without reference to, or regard for, the wishes of the people."<sup>218</sup> They argued that this form of policy was, "tanta mount to slavery."<sup>219</sup> The Gold Coast members of the National Congress of British West Africa proposed, in compliance with traditional law, that the new constitution should recommend that, "The first electoral group shall be the heads of families in a village town,"<sup>220</sup> that each constituency be "divided into sub-divisions and each sub-division

comprise villages under *odzikrofu* and *Abinfu*, and towns under *Abinfu* and *Amanbinfu*." Each such village or town should consist of "families under family heads."<sup>221</sup> This was argued to be essential to the development of "the interests common to the inhabitants of the British West African Dependencies, interests not merely material but intellectual and spiritual."<sup>222</sup>

The inaugural meeting of the Congress, was heralded as a great success. As the press reported it, the Congress had defined new and common goals for the colonies of British West Africa, and had placed the family at the centre of its political formulations. After two decades of negative news, the people and press of Cape Coast welcomed the positivity that the Congress generated. Much of the positive press coverage was in the newspapers owned by Congress members. Ironically, the place given to the Congress in the subsequent written history, was not, for the most part, developed on the eulogical coverage of the contemporary local press.

Although the relative importance of Cape Coast was fading, the Congress had shown the influence of specific members of the Cape Coast stool family on the politics of West Africa. The Congress had attempted to reassert the importance of the family to the peoples of West Africa. This was just the inspiration that the people of Cape Coast needed, as the town faced another uncertain period in the absence of heads of many of the major stools and families.

### XIII. REPERCUSSIONS OF THE CONGRESS IN CAPE COAST



After the deaths of Mary Mills, Madam Wireduo and Aikosua Maria, Araba Yanyiwah had become the head of *Effikessim* and Aba Ayebi-awhe and Aba Anseykooma the heads of the *Abenfie*. Between January and February 1920, the *Oman* approached the *Abenfie* to nominate a new *Omanbin*.<sup>223</sup> After extended deliberation, Aba Anseykooma (AKA or also spelt as, Abba Anseikoa), suggested the re-ensoolment of Bilson, pointing out that because the charges against him had never been established, he was still *Omanbin*.<sup>224</sup> Araba Yanyiwah of *Effikessim*, at first came forward in support of a new candidate, Kakraba. However, she then re-considered and agreed with Aba Ayebi-Awhe to support the re-installation of Bilson.<sup>225</sup> For the first time, the major *houses* agreed on the nominee but predictably the *Oman* were not keen to re-elect the man they had helped to destool. The *Oman* began clandestine negotiations with a junior member of the *Abradze* family, Miss Rosetta Harding (alias Efua Harding). She was not generally considered to be a mouthpiece for the *Abenfie*, and at only 30 years of age Harding was obviously subordinate to the aged Aba Anseykooma.<sup>226</sup>

Efua Harding was secretly invited from Saltpond to attend a meeting with the *Oman*. She was secretly chauffeured from Saltpond to Cape Coast by Mr. Johnson, in a hired car. Aba Anseykooma later suggested that this was done to, “gain consent to the “Election” of the boy G.A. Mends.”<sup>227</sup> Aba Anseykooma was furious when she ‘heard casually’ that Efua Harding had “secretly given the boy up to the *Oman* without first even seeing .... her grand-mother or aunt.”<sup>228</sup> Aba Anseykooma explained that Efua Harding was her great niece and George Adolphus Mends, (alias Kofi Afari), was her great nephew.<sup>229</sup> She argued that Mends, who was about to be enstooled by the *Oman*, was of the same lineage as Bilson and of the same *Kwonna* family.<sup>230</sup> Mends was, therefore, no more or less eligible on genealogical grounds than Bilson.

Efua Harding later consulted both the *Abenfie* and *Effikessim*, and Mends was only accepted when the full consent of Bilson’s family had been secured.<sup>231</sup> Later, Mends was offered as *Omanbin* elect.<sup>232</sup> However, certain members of the *Abenfie* were not wholly convinced of the arguments against Bilson. On the 29th June 1920, as the *Oman* began the installation process of Kofi Afari, (alias G.A. Mends), Aba Anseykooma raised the issue again by arguing that until the charges had been proven against Bilson, he was the “best and most politically beneficial choice for the next *Omanbin*.”<sup>233</sup> In early August 1920, despite opposition, Mends was enstooled as Mbra III.

The success of the inaugural meeting of the Congress, had rekindled Cape Coast’s pride. Members of the Cape Coast stool family had created a platform on the international stage that well reflected the traditions of education and resistance, that had been part of the Cape Coast stool since the days of *Berempong* Kojo. The new *Omanbin* was the first to formally acknowledge the contribution that the Congress members had made to the town. *The Gold Coast Leader* described the morning after his installation, “at about 7.30am the *Omanbin* received the Hon. Casely-Hayford MBE a blood relative of the ‘stool’ of Cape Coast who had been especially invited down from Sekondi, and other prominent members of the family and distinguished guests.”<sup>234</sup>



This was a symbolic reunion of the two previously antagonistic elements of the Cape Coast stool. After two decades of division, it was a temporary reconciliation of the political activists who had worked through the ARPS and the NCBWA and the stool. Although, in the months following the enstoolment of Mbra III, the old problems of the Cape Coast stool were to re-emerge and the Congress was to face criticism from Nana Ofori Atta, this moment represented the good-will and faith between the two institutions, and was an acknowledgement that at the end of the day, they were a family. *The Gold Coast*



**Leader** reported that, "After the usual greetings, The Hon. Casely-Hayford tendered customary presents to the *Omanbin*, which were graciously received. Then came the presents to the *Oman* per *Tufubin* Coker; to the *Gyasidom* per *Chief* Ebu; to the Assukofu per Pobee; to the state carriers; and to the princes and princesses of the family, which were all well received and for which thanks were returned in state."<sup>235</sup>

A procession then left the *Ahenfie* and paraded through the town in reverse seniority; "1/ *Tufubin* Coker and suite 2/ The Dontsihin, *Chief* Essia and suite 3/ the state paraphernalia including the silver goblets and vessels presented to *Berempong* Kojo by King George IV of England under the supervision of Mr A.W. Appia. 4/ the male members of the family in gorgeous attire under Messrs Sibon Arthur, E.J. Bart-Plange Jr., and Arhin. 5/ *Chief* Ebu and elders with the sacred stool and 36 rifles. 6/ the Hon. Casely-Hayford, Messrs Essaw, J.D. Hooper, W. Lovelace Johnson, J.M. Acquah and George Quansah. 7/ the *Omanbin* Mbra III in state palanquin."<sup>236</sup> **The Gold Coast Leader** later reported that, "the new *Omanbin* is of a quiet and dignified demeanour and has already made a good impression ..... We look forward to the loyal support of all responsible persons, so that at last, the hatchet of the old disputes being completely buried, Cape Coast may rightly and effectively take her place once more in the affairs of the country."<sup>237</sup>

It had become almost traditional that some resilient section of the Cape Coast stool family would object to a newly enstooled *Omanbin*. There were still Bilson supporters in the town. The smaller *houses*, supported again by the *Gyasibene* and this time the *Nkum* (No. 4 company), opposed his nomination, refused to recognise his election and did not take part in his installation. A later colonial report explained that, "Their opposition to Mbra III continued after his recognition by the government and in order to arrive at a peaceful settlement Mr Atterbury, then Acting Commissioner of the Central Province, held a short meeting on the 25th November 1920 where the opposing members of the stool family and the *Gyasibene* were ostensibly reconciled."<sup>238</sup>

Since the turn of the century, Cape Coast had been in a continual economic decline that had been compounded by Mbra II's confused period of leadership. The *Oman*, the *Omanbin* and the ARPS, had been moving apart throughout the period, and the enstoolment of the Mbra II, had brought the *Oman's* expectations into direct conflict with the aspirations of F.S. Bilson. Cape Coast's only continuity during the first two decades of the twentieth century, had been the women who headed the major households. These women had consistently tried to remind their householders that the institution of the family was all-important.

The near simultaneous success of the National Congress of British West Africa and the enstoolment of Mbra III gave Cape Coast perhaps its first excuse for optimism in twenty years. The *Omanbin's* attempts to applaud the actions of the Congress by inviting Casely-Hayford back into the fold was a central part of this. The post-1900

*Amanhin* had been forced onto the defensive by the *Oman*, the government and the natural disasters that had plagued the town. The paternal action of Nana Mbra III to Casely-Hayford, seemed to sanction the Congress and regained respect for the stool. This was done by explicitly recognising that the single thing that held the stool together, that gave the stool relevance and that gave the Congress the right to represent the people of Cape Coast, was the 'family' and its unity.

Notes. Chapter V. Nationalism and the Culmination of National Crises.

<sup>1</sup> See previous chapter.

<sup>2</sup> GNA. ADM.11 1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*

<sup>3</sup> Household does not refer to single abode, it refers to a group of closely related people who lived or were born within the close vicinity of the original house.

<sup>4</sup> To differentiate a house of habitation from a *house* that is a faction of a lineage, *a lineage* will be in *italics* and an abode will be underlined.

<sup>5</sup> Two good examples are the 1919 Pakamfu and the 1916 Bilson disputes, both of which will be examined in detail later.

<sup>6</sup> GNA. ADM 11/1759 *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's Installation* 1916

<sup>7</sup> The words of Aikosua Mary of Effikessim GNA. ADM.11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.

<sup>8</sup> Casely-Hayford, J.E. *Gold Coast Native Institutions*. London. 1970. Originally London, 1903. P.261.

<sup>9</sup> GNA. ADM.11/1752, *Enquiry into the Dispute Over the Election of a Successor to the Paramount Stool of Oguuaa; Report and Findings* 1941 Ansa. P.158.

<sup>10</sup> GNA. ADM.11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry* Evidence of Aikosua Mary.

<sup>11</sup> *The Eastern Star and Akwaptin Chronicle* 4-11 October 1919.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> GNA. ADM.11/1759, *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's Installation* 1916 The Ahenfie family.

<sup>14</sup> GNA. ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry* The Effikessim family.

<sup>15</sup> GNA. ADM.11/1759, *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's Installation* 1916.

<sup>16</sup> Oral testimony of the Omanhin of Cape Coast. 1990.

<sup>17</sup> GNA. ADM.11/1759, *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's Installation* 1916.

<sup>18</sup> GNA. ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry* J.P. Brown of the Oman.

<sup>19</sup> GNA. ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*. The Ahenfie's evidence.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> GNA. ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*. The Gyase's evidence.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> GNA. ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*. Effikessim's evidence.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> GNA. ADM.23/1/280, *Genealogy of Bilson; Inventory of Ahenfie; Bilson's property, 1917*. Ahenfie family evidence.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> GNA. ADM 11 1752, *Enquiry into the Dispute Over the Election of a Successor to the Paramount Stool of Oguuaa, Report and Findings* 1941 Ahenfie family evidence Egyr Ansa Jnr.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> *Gold Coast Leader*, 26 February 1927

<sup>33</sup> GNA. ADM 11 1759, *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's Installation* 1916

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> (*to stand behind, to support*), seen sometimes as an heir apparent, it translates literally as 'the man who cuts the sheep' in sacrifice after the enstoolment.). GNA. ADM.11 1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry* Coker's evidence.

<sup>36</sup> GNA. ADM 11 1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry* Coker's evidence.

<sup>37</sup> GNA. ADM 11 1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry* Coker's evidence. This is interesting because as the position becomes disused in Cape Coast it becomes fashionable in areas such as Akyem

- 38 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry* Coker's evidence.
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 Coker was also a Freemason, (see, *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 15 July 1899) a respected member of the local Temperance Movement, and hardened a soldier of the East Africa campaign, who had pretensions to be *Omanbin* some fifteen years earlier, see, GNA. ADM.1/1109, *Deposition of the Cape Coast Omanbin 1929*. See, Chapter IV.
- 42 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*. Evidence of the Ahenfie.
- 43 GNA. ADM.11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- 44 Ibid.
- 45 GNA. ADM.11/1752, *Enquiry into the Dispute Over the Election of a Successor to the Paramount Stool of Oguuaa; Report and Findings 1941*.
- 46 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*. Evidence of Effikessim.
- 47 GNA. ADM.11/1759, *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's Installation 1916*. Evidence of Effikessim.
- 48 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*. Evidence of W.Z Coker.
- 49 Ibid.
- 50 GNA. ADM.11/1759, *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's Installation 1916*.
- 51 GNA. ADM.11/1759, *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's Installation 1916*. Evidence of Effikessim.
- 52 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- 53 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry* Her own evidence.
- 54 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*. Evidence of Effikessim.
- 55 GNA. ADM.11/1759, *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's Installation 1916*.
- 56 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*. Evidence of W.Z Coker.
- 57 GNA. ADM.11/1759, *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's Installation 1916*, Evidence of W.Z Coker.
- 58 GNA. ADM.11/1759 *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's Installation 1916*.
- 59 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry* His own evidence.
- 60 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *Petition from Bilson's family to Governor 8 May 1917*.
- 61 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *List of Charges Preferred Against the Omanbene Mbra II which led to his Destoolment*.
- 62 GNA. ADM.11/1759, *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's Installation 1916*.
- 63 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*. Evidence of Oman.
- 64 GNA. ADM.11/1759, *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's Installation 1916*.
- 65 GNA. ADM.11 1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*. Evidence of Joseph Drybald Taylor.
- 66 Ibid
- 67 Ibid.
- 68 GNA. ADM.11 1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*, Evidence of W.Z Coker
- 69 GNA. ADM.11 1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*, Evidence of Effikessim.
- 70 Ibid
- 71 Ibid.
- 72 GNA. ADM.11 1759, *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's Installation*. Evidence of Effikessim 1916.
- 73 GNA. ADM.11 1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*, Evidence of Effikessim.

- 74 Ibid.
- 75 Ibid.
- 76 Ibid
- 77 Ibid
- 78 GNA ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther s 1916 Enquiry*
- 79 Ibid.
- 80 The sacred spot where all *Amanbin* were taken before enstoolment.
- 81 GNA ADM.11/629, *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry*.
- 82 GNA. ADM.11/1759, *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's Installation* 1916, Evidence of the Oman.
- 83 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*, Evidence of the Oman.
- 84 Crowther's work has, therefore, been one of the main sources of this thesis. This chapter derived most of its data from Crowther's investigations.
- 85 *The Eastern Star and Akwapim Chronicle*, 4-11 October 1919.
- 86 GNA. ADM.11/1759, *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's Installatton*, 1916, Evidence of J.P. Brown. Prior to the enstoolment of Kweku Atta, the *Gyase* were made up of the patrilineal *Nkum*. After the enstoolment of Kweku Atta in the mid-nineteenth century, he selected a new *Gyase* from his own family villages of Kakumdu, Sudu, Abra and Mpeasam, and they became called the matrilineal *Wirempe*. The old stool traditions of Egyr Ansa continued to be maintained and the patrilineal *Gyase* (who were made up of the *Nkum*) continued to see themselves as the true *Gyase*. See, GNA ADM.11/629.
- 87 GNA. ADM.11/1759, *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's Installation* 1916.
- 88 GNA. ADM.11/1752, *Enquiry into the Dispute Over the Election of a Successor to the Paramount Stool of Oguaa; Report and Findings* 1941. Evidence of J. Mensah Cooke.
- 89 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*. Evidence of Effikessim.
- 90 Ibid.
- 91 Ibid.
- 92 GNA. ADM.11/1759, *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's Installation*, 1916.
- 93 Ibid.
- 94 One simple but effective question was asked by W.Z. Coker, "If Egyr was Omanhene of Cape Coast how should his stool get rotten?" GNA. ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- 95 GNA. ADM.11/1759, *Crowther's Recommendations for Bilson's Installation* 1916.
- 96 Ibid.
- 97 Ibid.
- 98 GNA. ADM.11 1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry*.
- 99 Ibid.
- 100 GNA. ADM.11 1765, *Petition from Bilson to Governor, 8 May 1917*.
- 101 Ibid.
- 102 Ibid.
- 103 Ibid.
- 104 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *Petition from Bilson's family to Governor, 8 May 1917*.
- 105 GNA. ADM 11 1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crouther s 1916 Enquiry* Subsidiary documents.
- 106 Ibid
- 107 Gocking, R. *The Historic Akoto: A Social History of Cape Coast Ghana 1843-1948*. Stanford, 1981. P 282
- 108 GNA. ADM.11 1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crouther s 1916 Enquiry*. Subsidiary documents
- 109 GNA. ADM.11 1765 *List of Offences Committed by Omanhene II Since his Enstoolment*. Subsidiary documents.
- 110 Ibid.
- 111 GNA. ADM.11/1765 *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther s 1916 Enquiry* Subsidiary documents
- 112 GNA. ADM.11 1765, *List of Charges Preferred Against the Omanhene Mbra II which led to*

*his Destoolment.*

113 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *List of Charges Preferred Against the Omanhene Mbra II which led to his Destoolment.* & GNA ADM.11/1765, *List of Offences Committed by Omanhene II Since his Enstoolment.* Subsidiary documents.

114 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *The Notes and Evidence of Crowther's 1916 Enquiry.* Subsidiary documents.

115 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *Declaration.*

116 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *Declaration.* & GNA. ADM 11/1765, *Petition from Bilson to Governor, 8 May 1917.*

117 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *List of Charges Preferred Against the Omanhene Mbra II which led to his Destoolment.*

118 GNA. ADM.11/1109, *Deposition of the Cape Coast Omanbin 1929.* Evidence of Bilson's Family.

119 Ibid.

120 Ibid.

121 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *Petition from Bilson to Governor, 8 May 1917.*

122 Ibid.

123 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *Petition from Bilson's family to Governor, 8 May 1917.*

124 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *Petition from Bilson to Governor, 8 May 1917.*

125 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *Omanbin to Provincial Commissioner, November 1916.*

126 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *Petition from Bilson's family to Governor, 8 May 1917.*

127 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *Omanbin to Provincial Commissioner, November 1916.*

128 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *Petition from Bilson's family to Governor 8 May 1917.*

129 GNA. ADM.11/1109, *Deposition of the Cape Coast Omanbin, 1929.*

130 GNA. ADM.11/1765, *Petition from Bilson's family to Governor, 8 May 1917.*

131 Ibid.

132 Ibid.

133 Ibid.

134 Ibid.

135 Ibid.

136 Ibid.

137 Ibid.

138 Ibid.

139 Ibid.

140 GNA. ADM.11/1109, *Deposition of the Cape Coast Omanbin 1929.* Evidence of Bilson.

141 Ibid.

142 Ibid.

143 Ibid.

144 GNA. ADM.11/1109, *Deposition of the Cape Coast Omanbin 1929.*

145 Ibid.

146 GNA. ADM.11 1765 *List of Offences Committed by Omanhene II Since his Enstoolment.*

147 GNA. ADM 11/1109 *Deposition of the Cape Coast Omanbin 1929.* District Commissioner.

148 GNA ADM.23 1 280, *Genealogy of Bilson; Inventory of Ahenfie; Bilson's property, 1917.*

Ahenfie family evidence

149 Ibid.

150 Ibid.

151 Ibid

152 Ibid.

153 Ibid.

154 GNA. ADM.11 1752, *Enquiry into the Dispute Over the Election of a Successor to the Paramount Stool of Oguaa; Report and Findings 1941.* Evidence of W C. Ackon.

155 Ibid.

156 GNA. ADM 11 1109, *Deposition of the Cape Coast Omanbin 1929, Kwamina Tandob Dispute.*

157 Ibid.

158 GNA. ADM.11 1109, *Deposition of the Cape Coast Omanbin 1929, Kwamina Tandob Dispute,* Evidence of Adjuah Pow.

- 159 Ibid
- 160 GNA. ADM 11/1109, *Deposition of the Cape Coast Omanbin 1929, Kwamina Tandoh Dispute*.
- 161 GNA. ADM.11/1109, *Deposition of the Cape Coast Omanbin 1929, Kwamina Tandoh Dispute*, Evidence of Adjuah Attah.
- 162 GNA. ADM.11/1109, *Deposition of the Cape Coast Omanbin 1929, Kwamina Tandoh Dispute*.
- 163 GNA. ADM.11/1752, *Enquiry into the Dispute Over the Election of a Successor to the Paramount Stool of Oguaa; Report and Findings 1941*, Evidence of W.C. Ackon.
- 164 Ibid.
- 165 *Gold Coast Aborigine*, 15 July 1899.
- 166 GNA. ADM.23/1/298, *Cape Coast Literary and Social Club: notices and tickets, 1916*. & Hutchison, C.F. *Pen Pictures of Modern West Africans*, London, 1930.
- 167 Ibid.
- 168 Ibid.
- 169 Ibid.
- 170 GNA. ADM.23/1/441, *Clubs*, 1917.
- 171 It is interesting to note that, although Bilson had been *Omanbin*, he had only gained that position through the support of the *Oman* and one section of his family. This support was short-lived. Bilson as head of the Abradze section of the *Abenfie* (although he was Kwonna) was not a convincing challenge to the powerful combination of the *Oman* and the ARPS. GNA. ADM.11/1109, *Deposition of the Cape Coast Omanbin 1929*. Evidence of Aba Anseykooma.
- 172 GNA. ADM.23/1/298, *Cape Coast Literary and Social Club: notices and tickets, 1916*. Archie Casely-Hayford suggests that the monthly journey from Cape Coast to Accra, led to the premature death of his father. See, Casely-Hayford, Archie Unpublished Manuscript *Casely-Hayford The Man and His Work*, Accra and at sea Off Port Bouel, 1935.
- 173 Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*, Oxford, 1963. P.376. In this context Nana Ofori Atta, very publicly donated £2000 to the Prince of Wales Fund and bought an aeroplane, named 'Akim Abuakwa' which entered the battlefield. Ephson, I. *Gold Coast Celebrities*, Accra 1969, Vol. I., P.116.
- 174 Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*, Oxford, 1963. P.376.
- 175 This had begun when the ARPS had attempted to institute and run a local Town Council in an attempt to take on some of the responsibilities of Kojo Mbra. See previous chapter.
- 176 Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*, Oxford, 1963 P377.
- 177 Casely-Hayford, J.E. *United West Africa*, London, 1919, P. 14.
- 178 GNA. ADM.5/4/19, *Files Relating to the National Congress of British West Africa*.
- 179 Garveyism began to influence coastal politics. There is a community of West Africans now living in Los Angeles who were attracted to America in the 1920s because of Garveyism, Prince Modupe Paris interview, May 1989. Since 1913, Du Bois's work also influenced politics on the coast. West Africans had attended Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Pan-African Congress, and when Du Bois convened his first Pan African Congress in 1919, there were delegates from Nigeria and Sierra Leone See Asante, S. K. B. *Pan African Protest: West Africa and Italo-Ethiopian Crisis*. London, 1977., P.19.
- 180 There was some opposition to the Congress. E.J.P. Brown derided the Congress as "Casely-Hayford's mouthpiece." See Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*, Oxford, 1963. P378.
- 181 GNA. ADM 5 4 19, *Files Relating to the National Congress of British West Africa*. The recent successes of Kojo Thompson's Jurisdiction Bill Opposition Committee, seemed also to herald the beginnings of a change, and gave the National Congress of British West Africa a firm precedent for success.
- 182 *Gold Coast Nation*, 16 August 1919.
- 183 Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana*, Oxford, 1963. P.381.
- 184 *West Africa*, 7 September 1935, P.1032 & Tachie Menson, A.B. *The History of Freemasonry in the Gold Coast*, P.20
- 185 *West Africa*, 7 September 1935, P.1032 & Tachie Menson, A.B. *The History of Freemasonry in the Gold Coast*, P.10.

- 186 *West Africa*, 7 September 1935, P 1032 & Tachie Menson, A B. *The History of Freemasonry in the Gold Coast*, P.26.
- 187 *West Africa*, 7 September 1935, P 1032.
- 188 Kings.
- 189 Stool Spokesman and historian
- 190 Matrilineal or patrilineal lineage heads.
- 191 Military head, Statesman and Administrator.
- 192 General of Army.
- 193 'Blood descendant of a King.
- 194 See Appendix II for details of who had which Akan title.
- 195 Hutchison, C.F. *Pen Pictures of Modern West Africans*, London, 1930. P.54.
- 196 Casely-Hayford, Archie. Unpublished Manuscript *Casely-Hayford The Man and His Work*, Accra and at sea Off Port Bouel, 1935, P.3., of Manuscript. In 1902, the Lodge of Human Duty was consecrated in central London. It became the first Co-Masonic Lodge Co-Masons follow the teachings of Annie Beasant and have strong links with the Liberal Catholic Church, while being loyal to the maxims of Freemasonry.
- 197 Casely-Hayford, Archie. Unpublished Manuscript *Casely-Hayford The Man and His Work*, Accra and at sea Off Port Bouel, 1935, P.3., of Manuscript
- 198 *Ibid.*, P.45.
- 199 Langley, A. *Pan-Africanism and Nationalism in West Africa 1900-45. A Study in Ideology and Social Classes*. Oxford Clarendon Press. 1973. PP.107-112.
- 200 Langley, A. *Pan-Africanism and Nationalism in West Africa 1900-45. A Study in Ideology and Social Classes*. Oxford. Clarendon Press. 1973. P.221.
- 201 Boahen, A. Adu. "Politics and Nationalism in West Africa 1919-35" *General History of Africa. VII. Africa Under Colonial Domination 1880-1935*. Ed. A. Adu Boahen. California. UNESCO. 1985. P.634.
- 202 Collingridge, A. *The Red Book of West Africa: Historical and Descriptive, Commercial and Industrial Facts, Figures and Resources*. London. 1920, P 224.
- 203 Casely-Hayford, Archie. Unpublished Manuscript *Casely-Hayford The Man and His Work*, Accra and at sea Off Port Bouel, 1935, P.54., of Manuscript.
- 204 *The Chicago Defender*, 18 December 1920.
- 205 Ephson, I. *Gold Coast Celebrities*, Vol I, Accra, 1969, P.86.
- 206 Collingridge, A. *The Red Book of West Africa: Historical and Descriptive, Commercial and Industrial Facts, Figures and Resources*. London. 1920, P. 224.
- 207 Hutchison, C.F. *Pen Pictures of Modern West Africans*, London, 1930.
- 208 See Genealogy of NCBWA members.
- 209 *Gold Coast Leader*, 21 May 1927.
- 210 Casely-Hayford, Archie. Unpublished Manuscript *Casely-Hayford The Man and His Work*, Accra and at sea Off Port Bouel, 1935
- 211 *Ibid.*, P.52.
- 212 Joseph de Graft Hayford's death certificate
- 213 James Hutton Brew's death certificate.
- 214 J.E. Casely-Hayford's will, Casely-Hayford Family Papers, Accra. Casely-Hayford's will demonstrates a remarkable similarity to the will of the eighteenth-century Irish merchant, Richard Brew. Brew married into the Cape Coast stool and judging from his will, he had a deep regard for his Fante wife. The will demonstrates the same tendency to limit the access of the extended family of his spouse
- 215 Casely-Hayford, Archie. unpublished manuscript *Casely-Hayford The Man and His Work*, Accra and at sea Off Port Bouel, 1935, P.63., of Manuscript
- 216 Boahen suggests that, "Although they claimed to speak in the name of the 'people', the interests of the nationalist petit-bourgeoisie were not identical with those of the people, in fact, it was the contradictions within the colonial system itself that they sought to harmonize in order to protect and expand their own interests without upsetting the system; hence their constitutionalism and their recognition of the benefits of British colonial rule." Boahen, A Adu. "Politics and Nationalism in West Africa 1919-35" *General History of Africa. VII. Africa Under Colonial Domination 1880-1935* Ed. A. Adu Boahen. California. Unesco. 1985. P.634.
- 217 GNA. ADM 5 4 19, *Files Relating to the National Congress of British West Africa*



- 218 Ibid.
- 219 Ibid.
- 220 Ibid.
- 221 Ibid.
- 222 Ibid.
- 223 GNA. ADM.23/1/280, *Genealogy of Bilson; Inventory of Ahenfie; Bilson's property, 1917.*  
Ahenfie family evidence.
- 224 GNA. ADM.23/1/280, *Genealogy of Bilson; Inventory of Ahenfie, Bilson s property, 1917.*  
Evidence of Aba Anseykooma.
- 225 GNA. ADM.11/1752, *Enquiry into the Dispute Over the Election of a Successor to the  
Paramount Stool of Oguaa; Report and Findings 1941.* Evidence of A. Yanyiwah.
- 226 Aba Anseykooma claimed to be the first cousin of Kojo Mbra I and the Grandmother of  
Mbra Enu (alias Bilson). See, GNA. ADM.23/1/280, *Genealogy of Bilson; Inventory of Ahenfie;  
Bilson's property, 1917.* Evidence of Aba Anseykooma.
- 227 GNA. ADM.23/1/ 280, *Genealogy of Bilson; Inventory of Ahenfie; Bilson's property, 1917.*  
Ahenfie family evidence.
- 228 GNA. ADM.23 1/280, *Genealogy of Bilson; Inventory of Ahenfie; Bilson's property, 1917.*  
Evidence of Aba Anseykooma
- 229 Ibid.
- 230 Ibid.
- 231 GNA. ADM.11 1109, *Deposition of the Cape Coast Omanbin, 1929.*
- 232 GNA. ADM.23 1/280, *Genealogy of Bilson; Inventory of Ahenfie; Bilson s property, 1917.*  
Evidence of Efua Harding.
- 233 GNA. ADM.23 1/280, *Bilson's Genealogy and Supporting Documentation.* Put forward by  
his family Evidence of Aba Anseykooma.
- 234 *Gold Coast Leader*, 20 August 1921.
- 235 Ibid.
- 236 Ibid.
- 237 Ibid.
- 238 GNA. ADM.11/1752, *Enquiry into the Dispute Over the Election of a Successor to the  
Paramount Stool of Oguaa; Report and Findings 1941.*

## CONCLUSION

*The great man of the age is the one who can put into words the will of his age, tell his age what it will be, and accomplish it. What he does is the heart and essence of his age; he actualises his age.*<sup>1</sup>

F. Hegel

This work has attempted to reconstruct the body of Cape Coast history around the skeleton of genealogy. Unlike the work of David Henige<sup>2</sup>, this thesis has attempted to place stool history into the context of the socio-political developments which surrounded it. In contrast to the work of Margaret Priestley<sup>3</sup>, this study has placed the stool at the centre of its focus. By looking closely at the changing relationship between genealogy and political power, this work has charted the development of law, advocacy and legitimacy. Because the indigenous Akan historical methodology is intrinsically linked to genealogy, a study of Cape Coast genealogies encompasses the history of the *histories* of the town. The plethora of diverse accounts of early Efutu and Cape Coast (*Oguaa*), make an analysis of the perspective of these *histories* as useful in a historical study as the facts that they impart. Consequently, the rise and fall of Cape Coast incorporates the demise of the *history* of the extended stool families of *Oguaa* and Efutu - the towns that Cape Coast came to replace politically. Within this framework, there are interesting conclusions to be drawn about the developments within local historiography and law, the changing status of indigenous advocates and the changes in the lives of families and stools that the history describes.

Some of the adaptations in the history were closely connected to fundamental changes in the importance of family. Many of these adaptations became apparent, when the previously unchallenged status of family and stool loyalties, began to have to compete with larger, more nationally-oriented affiliations in the late nineteenth century. As the phenomenon of a national identity began to develop, so the extended families and the stools that they supported began to fade from the direct focus of a growing group of independently powerful and ambitious men. In the midst of this social instability, the histories of the families were changing in form and relevance.

The myriad of rival nineteenth century stool genealogies, reveal that Fante historiographical debates were loaded with political and social tensions. As *houses* and families rose into positions of influence, the evidence suggests that their concomitant family histories came to dominate. The writing down of these histories was to break the momentum of the natural rise and fall of rivalling family histories. The transcription of Gold Coast oral histories, resulted in the work of the early indigenous literate historians gaining a near unquestioned status, and forming the foundation for future history. It is not a coincidence that the first generation of Fante

historians within the written tradition, are among the most eulogised men in Gold Coast history. Their work not only legitimised their own genealogical lines, it was also an advertisement for their political potency. Before they were described in written form, there was no single accepted set of Gold Coast or Fante 'native institutions'.

The conditions for the gradual convergence of the countervailing histories were undoubtedly established within the area of law. As British law became established, liability to punishment before the law increasingly became determined by established precedents, and not by the fiat or discretionary legal powers of *Amanbin*. As even disputes between stool officials and individual citizens became subject to the jurisdiction of British law, the rights of the individual became profoundly enhanced. The prevailing concepts of theoretical equality before the law, and the independence of the legal system worked to undermine the hierarchy that underpinned the status of the *Amanbin*.<sup>4</sup>

The earliest indigenous lawyers attempted to clarify the ambiguities which had emerged while indigenous and British law attempted to co-exist. In attempting to clarify the grey area which existed between stool law and British law, many of the early lawyers wrote histories of the local stools as if the history was clear and unchallenged. Many of these early histories gained immediate respect, and they came to be used by both the colonial authorities and the stools. These early indigenous written histories and constitutions reflected the prevailing history of the day, after a century of stool instability and constitutional change. Throughout the preceding era, there was a continual drive by different factions within Cape Coast to gain recognition of their rivalling histories and constitutions. Much of the written history of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to some extent inherited the inconsistencies and incompatibilities of the oral accounts, from the preceding period.

Many of the men who were pushed into the forefront of indigenous politics at the turn of the twentieth century were historians or newspaper proprietors. These men controlled the tools of myth-making and were mythologised because of that control. Where once the stool histories had served to enhance the position of the *Omanbin*, by the turn of the twentieth century, historians were able to use their work as a means of enhancing their own reputations. The extended interregnums of the nineteenth century, had given the *Oman* and the families that supported it, the skills to run the stool effectively with or without an *Omanbin*. The subsequent *Amanbin* were essentially tools of the new political system that was developing. Bilson (Mbra II) had attempted to resist these developments to his peril.

The *Amanbin* of the Aggrey dynasty had been the funnel through which the *Oman* and its support system had channelled its energies. The interregnums that followed the Aggrey dynasty, had shown that the *Omanbin* was not an essential component for the smooth running of the stool and demonstrated that stability did

not need to be linked to a single authoritative figure. The dissipation of power throughout the *Oman* and the extended family, altered the infrastructure of the *Oman*. This gave rise to powerful members of the *Oman* like W.Z. Coker and Sackey, who dominated stool politics for forty years.

The Aggrey dynasty had not only maintained the *Omanbin* as the focus of the stool, but had also made the *Omanbin* the focus of dissent. Those on the stool's periphery were buffered from the British, Asante and local reaction to that dissent. The figures on the periphery of the stool, consequently survived successive *Amanbin*, and became more established facets of the stool than any individual *Omanbin*. From positions on the edge of the *Oman*, individuals were able to consistently influence stool policy.

The years of Aggrey's (Essien) rule established Cape Coast as the Fante centre of anti-British protest, and the capital of mercantile brokerage. The growth of the Church and secular institutions in Cape Coast helped to create the conditions that produced a generation that were hungry for European education and self-determination. Unlike many of the *Chiefs* that they supported, this generation were able to skilfully articulate Fante grievances. After Aggrey's deportation, the momentum of protest was maintained by sections of the European educated community in the growing indigenous press.<sup>5</sup> The first stages of this process began with the birth of the Fante Confederation, which sought the right for the Fante to rule themselves. The Fante had gradually lost confidence in the ability of the British to resist the Asante, and inspired by the example of Aggrey's protests, they saw an opportunity to administer their own country. Over the following decades, the residue of Aggrey's educated *Oman* and their progeny, were to consolidate the Aggrey legacy by pushing the Gold Coast into the forefront of West African politics.

By 1900, alternative social and political institutions were established through which personal ambition could be channelled without being limited by obligations to the extended family. To what extent such institutions were inadvertently used for this purpose, can never be fully known, but they rose to prominence in Cape Coast during the period in which the town had conspicuously begun to move toward its demise. This may have been an indication of how some of these organisations were being used as financial and social supplements for the failing extended family.

A contributory factor in Cape Coast's on-going stool crises, was the internal conflict that existed between the major houses. This conflict was further complicated by there being two systems of lineage. As Cape Coast grew in size and influence, the two systems of lineage created independent and competing histories, which legitimised their respective claims to jurisdiction over the town. Over generations, the histories supported by the two lineages, diverged to a point where they could no longer be reconciled. The political differences of the two lineages, served to reinforce the opposition they held in their histories, which in turn fuelled their vehement support for their separate customs and institutions

For the first half of the nineteenth century, there were two stools in Cape Coast, one patrilineal and the other matrilineal. There is little more that can be categorically concluded from the surviving contradictory data. It seems that in the middle or late part of the nineteenth century, sections of the history were reconstructed. With the residual history, it is difficult to even reconstruct a chronology of the early nineteenth century *Amanhin*, or to say through which lineage they inherited their stools. Based on the testimonies of representatives of the five houses, it is possible to hypothesise the order in which the *Amanhin* ascended the stools.

<b>A Table of the Amanhin of Cape Coast and Oguaa</b>			
<b>Berempong Kojo's &amp; Effutu Stool</b>	<b>Amanhin who sat on both stools</b>	<b>Oguaa Stool</b>	<b>Installation and death dates</b>
Berempong Kojo Boatsi Ando Kobbina Doku Atta Kofi	Burupu (Joe Aggrey)	Egyir Penin (Aggrey I)	Unknown
		Esirifi	
		Mbrome	
		Egyr Enu (Aggrey II)	
		Egyr Ansa (Aggrey III)	D,1801
		Kofi Amissah	1801-1851
		Kweku Atta	1851-1856
		Kweku Enu (John Crentsil)	1856-1858
			1858-1863
			1865-1866
	Essien (John Aggrey)	1865-1866	
	Kwesi Atta	1865-1866	
	Kojo Mbra I	1888-1911	
	Mbra II	1916-1917	
	Mbra III	1920-	

Although the introduction of the Mbra dynasty in the 1880s was seen by many within the stool family as overcoming some of the inherent lineage problems, the conflict remained bubbling below the surface. Despite the fact that the traditional supporters of the patrilineal stool had accepted the matrilineal system of inheritance, they had not relinquished their claim to place a separate *Amanhin* on their own stool. This internal back-biting eventually led to a near complete breakdown in processes of 'traditional' enstoolment and government. These divisions in the early twentieth

century stool, harked back to the fundamental issue - was *Berempong Kojo Omanhin* of Cape Coast? Although Crowther concluded that he was not,<sup>6</sup> there are remaining reasons and ambiguities,<sup>7</sup> which seem to point to the contrary. The question may have to remain unanswered.

What is clear is that *Berempong Kojo* had been more powerful than the stool he had served. His immense wealth and his encouragement of education, gave his progeny the opportunity to make a profound effect on the developing town. The subsequent stability that the Aggrey dynasty brought to the town gave the progeny of *Berempong Kojo* the chance to consolidate the advantages he had given them. As a result, Cape Coast was thrust forward through the nineteenth century by the actions of ambitious individuals, most of them progeny of the *Berempong*. Most of these individuals; Harry Brew, Sam Kanto Brew, Joseph de Graft, James Hayford and James Hutton Brew, to name a few, operated as brokers. Their genealogies gave them a foothold in both the European and the African communities and they sought to take advantage of that. The growth of Cape Coast was to their personal advantage as well as being advantageous to the stool. These men accrued substantial personal wealth and were continually influential in stool policy. Their actions, perhaps unintentionally, contributed to the improvement of the ambient condition of the town, and assisted the political and financial ascendance of the stool and the extended families that supported it.

The ideological continuity that is evident from *Berempong Kojo* to the Fante Confederation, is indicative of more than political cohesion. There are also clear lineage ties linking some of the brokers of the nineteenth century, (Harry Brew, Sam Kanto Brew, Joseph de Graft, James Hayford and James Hutton Brew), with Richard Brew and *Berempong Kojo* at the end of the eighteenth century, and Casely-Hayford and many other active political lawyers at the end of the nineteenth. Each of these men were involved in defining or redefining the laws and constitution of Cape Coast.

Gradually through the nineteenth century, an imbalance invisibly developed between what the individual demanded of the stool, and what the stool demanded of its citizens. As people began to see personal and political independence as more attractive than the benefits of the extended family, the indigenous *Oguaa* courts and *Oguaa* customs started to fall into decline. This process can be measured by the fact that in many areas in which individuals began to adopt practices independently of the stool, the old stool institutions which offered official equivalents suffered; independent written histories began to supplement and then replace oral stool history, and the *Okyiame's* role as an advocate became marginalised by the professional European-trained lawyers.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the sheer size of the old Cape Coast families and houses made the political structure they supported inefficient. The decline and

failure of genealogy as a criteria for legitimisation and the apparatus for holding the extended family together, was one of the most conspicuous signs of the decay of the extended family. In this context, the nuclearisation of families seems to have been irresistible. The process of families becoming nuclearised, added to the erosion of the extended family. The old political processes had become increasingly inefficient, not because of any particular individual's actions, but because of the disintegration of the extended family.

As Cape Coast fell into decline, individuals and small families were able to adapt quickly and transfer their traditional skills into those areas which operated more successfully within the rapidly changing coast. Their success added to the redundancy of the extended family. Because most of the growing group of early-twentieth-century merchants and professionals had made their wealth as individuals, they were probably reluctant to share either their profits or their skills with an unlimited extended family, except in return for political power. The liquidity of the wealth and skills of many of these individuals and their families, gave them a new found mobility, which they used to their advantage increasingly as Cape Coast went into decline. This galvanised the process of family nuclearisation. Within Cape Coast, this was reflected in the gradual abandonment of many of the large family houses, which had always been the base of the powerful extended families.

The demise of the Cape Coast family marked the beginning of the end for the town. Ironically, Cape Coast had been a victim of its own success. The cultural ambiguities which had been inherent in the town's development, had created an unstable environment in which certain individuals prospered. At first, the success of these individuals combined and created a successful town. When the Gold Coast was made a colony and Accra was chosen as the centre of government, these men saw a larger stage on which they could utilise their skills. This led to a rapid divestment of money and interest in Cape Coast. As people became more mobile the nuclearisation of the family gradually prevailed. The demise of the Cape Coast stool family, was part of this process.

#### Notes: Conclusion

<sup>1</sup> Hegel F, *Philosophy of Right* Oxford 1967 P 295.

<sup>2</sup> See, Henige, David *The Chronology of Oral Tradition*. Oxford 1974. Chapter V. and "Akan Stool Succession" *Journal of African History*. 16. 1975. PP. 285-301.

<sup>3</sup> See, Priestley, M. *West African Trade and Coast Society A Family Study*. London. 1969

<sup>4</sup> These concepts must be contrasted to a legal system that gave voice to sayings such as, *a poor man can never win a court case*. See, Christensen, James Boyd "The Role of Proverbs in Fante Culture." *Africa*. Vol. 28 1958 P.232.

<sup>5</sup> Limberg, L. "The Economy of the Fante Confederacy." *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana, Vol XI. 1970. P.83.*

<sup>6</sup> GNA. ADM.11 629. *Crowther's Report of the 1916 Stool Dispute Enquiry*

<sup>7</sup> See Chapter I.

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