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Ghana Studies Council Newsletter

CHAIR'S REMARKS

By Roger Gocking, Mercy College

his year's newsletter is a double issue to make up for the Council's failure to produce a newsletter in 2004. The newsletter contains a directory of the membership and a list of their recent publications (I have excluded forthcoming publications). In the past these listings were among the most useful features of the GSC Newsletter. Currently there is a directory of members on the GSC's web site, but this dates to 2002 and obviously needs updating. I have made an effort to do this in the newsletter mostly by relying on the e-mail addresses that are in the GSC's mailing list rather than mailing out questionnaires as has been done in the past. However, I did mail out some questionnaires, and 68 people responded in one way or another. Those who are surprised to see that they are missing can assume that I got no information back form them. I hope that the listings in the next newsletter will be more complete. At the back of this newsletter there is a membership questionnaire. Please fill it out. Hopefully, the presence of this newsletter will be enough to stimulate responses from previous members, some of whom have changed addresses recently. I would prefer if the questionnaire information could be sent to me electronically as this makes it much easier to incorporate into the newsletter and the web site directory.

I am told by the GSC Journal's editors, Takyiwaa Manuh and Lynne Brydon that the next issue of *Ghana Studies* (no. 7) will be out in the fall of 2005. No.6 was a most impressive issue and no. 7 promises to be just as good. There has also been some confusion on the issue of subscriptions to the journal. North American members automatically get the journal as the cost is included in membership. This cannot be extended to those outside of the United States as banking anything but dollars would be extremely expensive. As a result non-US members have to deal directly with the University of Wisconsin, which publishes the journal. Instructions for doing so are on the GSC web site.

The GSC is sponsoring two panels at the Forty-eighth annual meeting of the African Studies Association in Washing-

ton D.C. 17-20 November 2005. The first panel is entitled "Human Capital Formation and Utilization in Ghana's Economic Development Process," and has been organized and will be chaired by George Kojo Arthur. The second is "Emerging Health Issues in Independent Ghana," which has been organized and will be chaired by Baffour Takyi. I thank them for their work in this regard. There was considerable interest in submitting panels for the two slots that the GSC is allotted on the program. There were a number of such offerings as the deadline approached, and coupled with the ASA's new online system, with its inevitable bugs, there was considerable confusion and some dissatisfaction with how the process worked. We will have to discuss this issue at the next meeting in Washington. In addition to the sponsored panels, there will also be other specifically Ghana-related panels and roundtables. David Groff has organized a roundtable on "Effective Study Abroad Programs in Ghana," and Paul Nugent has organized a panel on "What Ghanaians Mean When They Vote: National Campaigns, Local Dynamics and the 2004 Polls." All of these panels/roundtables should prove most interesting, and I urge the membership to attend. The annual meeting of the Ghana Studies Council will be held on Friday, November 18 during the ASA meeting between 7:45-9:15.

Special thanks also to Larry Yarak, who continues to be our webmaster and Jean Allman who is our treasurer. Anne Hugon of the Université Grenoble has generously agreed to take over from Paul Nugent as our European treasurer. I would also like to thank previous chairs Ray Kea and David Owusu-Ansah who along with Larry and Jean have acted as my "state councilors."

I must also extend my thanks to Virna Wong of Mercy College Publications for her work in formatting this newsletter, and also Barbara Koenig of the Civic and Cultural Studies Division of Mercy College for help in mailing the newsletter. Council members David Groff and Trevor Getz also played an invaluable role in proof reading the text and helping me correct the inevitable errors that creep into a publication of this nature.

WEST AFRICANS IN THE DUTCH COLONIAL ARMY

By Ineke van Kessel, African Studies Centre, Leiden, The Netherlands

folland's African Army is the English title of an exhibition on L the little-known history of the West Africans who served in the Dutch East Indies Army, and their Indo-African descendents. Recruitment took place in Elmina and Kumasi between 1831 and 1872, when the Dutch handed their Possessions on the Coast of Guinea to the British. Most of the 3,080 recruits were men from the area of present-day Ghana and Burkina Faso.

The modest-scale exhibition opened on 12 May in the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam, with an unexpected flurry of publicity in the Dutch media, including a substantial item in the evening TV news and stories in all major newspapers. On display are nineteenth-century paintings and lithographs of African soldiers in the East Indies, and a selection of photographs depicting Indo-African family life on Java. The paintings and lithographs are on loan from various Dutch museums, while the photographs come from private family collections and from the Indo-Afrikaans Kontakt, the organization of Indo-Africans living in the Netherlands. Also on display is an early twentieth century wayang golek, a figure in the Javanese puppet theatre, depicting an awesome African soldier in army uniform with sharp teeth.

The exhibition will be on display in the Tropenmuseum till 4 September, after which it will move to Museum Bronbeek, the colonial army museum in Arnhem. From early 2006, the exhibition will be shown in the Indisch Huis in The Hague. Texts are in Dutch (Dutch title is: Zwart in dienst van Oranje) and in English. The exhibition came about as a byproduct of my book on the Africans and Indo-Africans in the Dutch East Indies.1 In contacts and interviews with Indo-African descendents, an unexpectedly rich treasure of photographs was unearthed, some dating from the early twentieth century.



Left to right: Richard Hulskamp, Mary Land, Daan Cordus, Eef Cordus-Klink, Joyce Cordus and Grace Comijs on a visit to St. George d'Elmina, from where their forefathers began the long journey to Java. The Indo-African delegation travelled to Ghana in 2003 to take part in the opening ceremony of the Elmina-Java Museum, where the story of the African soldiers is on display.

From 1831, the Dutch used their tiny footholds on the Gold Coast to solve the manpower problem of the East Indies army, or KNIL (Koninklijk Nederlands Indisch Leger). African recruits were counted as part of the European contingent, and were entitled to European status in terms of army pay, uniforms (including shoes) and most other conditions of service. In spite of numerous infringements on the promise of equal treatment, the African soldiers were certainly better paid and better treated than native Indonesian soldiers. However, volunteers proved very scarce. Three ships, meant to transport an experimental "Negro company" of 150 men, sailed to Batavia with only 44 volunteers. Army reports on their performance in

campaigns in southern and western Sumatra were highly favorable.

In view of the longstanding cordial relations with Ashanti, the Dutch government subsequently decided to send an envoy to Kumasi. In 1837, a treaty was concluded between the Asantehene Kwaku Dua and General Jan Verveer, on behalf of the Dutch King Willem I. The Asantehene would deliver 1,000 men within a year, in exchange for 6,000 guns with powder. In addition, the Dutch obtained permission to open a recruitment bureau in Kumasi, which was staffed by a Eurafrican official from Elmina, Jacob Huydecooper. Initially, Verveer had hoped to recruit Ashanti men, reputed as a "warrior race." When this proved impossible, he settled for the slaves of

the Ashanti, "Donkos," who subsequently acquired the reputation of a "warrior race," even though their ethnic origins were very diverse. The Asantehene never met his obligations, sending only a trickle of recruits to Elmina. Huydecooper, however, managed to acquire considerable numbers of men from private Kumasi citizens. The recruits were given an advance on their army pay to purchase their liberty and were issued with an Act of Manumission and Emancipation. Meanwhile, recruitment also continued along the coast.

The operation ended in 1842, after a series of mutinies in the African companies on Java and Sumatra caused the army command to doubt the wisdom of the African recruitment scheme.

Recruitment was resumed in 1855: another 800 young African men made the voyage to Batavia before Elmina was handed to the British in 1872.

Recruitment in Africa can only be illustrated by archival documents, but the African experience in the East Indies has been amply portrayed and photographed. Paintings and drawings made in the nineteenth century focus on their military valor. Corporal Jan Kooi from Elmina, who earned a series of medals in the Aceh war (including the Militaire Willemsorde, the highest distinction in the Dutch army), had his portrait painted during his stay in the Netherlands on the voyage home to Elmina. Photographs of the first generation Africans are rare: Corporal J. de Leeuw is photographed with the Militaire Willemsorde, sergeant Piet Klink figures with his Javanese wife, while Jacobus Jol arranged a studio photograph with his Indo-African son and

, after

Joseph Nelk was the Indo-African son of African soldier Willem Nelk and his Javanese wife Sarina. Willem Nelk returned to Africa in 1881, but Joseph stayed behind to join the Dutch East Indies army at the age of 15. He served till 1910 and afterwards made a career in music. His grandchildren now live in the Netherlands and the USA.

daughter. Judging from the photographs of the second generation, quite a few Indo-Africans succeeded in joining the lower echelons of the colonial elite. Family pictures show smartly-dressed families in front of comfortable houses, or wedding pictures in style, with all the paraphernalia of a European wedding. Most telling are the *baboes* (house maids) and house boys in the background: in two generations, the African recruits had achieved a considerable rise in social status, from ex-slaves to European citizens in colonial society.

The third phase in the saga of the Black Dutchmen, or Belanda Hitam as the soldiers and their offspring were called in Java, is the journey to the Netherlands. An army career had become family tradition in many households, with the sons and grandsons of the African soldiers serving as professional soldiers in World War II against Japan, and subsequently in the Dutch war against Indonesian nationalists. Since most Indo-Africans identified strongly with their Dutch citizenship, after Indonesian independence, they opted to settle in the Nether-

lands. In this section of the exhibition, we see large passenger ships followed by the first snowball fights in the Dutch winter. The story ends with the rediscovery of Africa: dozens of Indo-Africans have by now made a roots trip to Ghana. Daan Cordus and Eef Cordus-Klink, for many decades the driving force behind Indo-African reunions, are photographed in the courtyard of St. George d'Elmina, together with Thad Ulzen, the greatgrandson of Corporal Manus Ulzen, who returned from Batavia to Elmina in 1836. When in 2000 the Ulzen family in Ghana first learned about this part of their family history, they decided to use the family plot in Elmina for a museum. The Elmina-Java Museum, situated along the main road from Cape Coast to Takoradi, opened in February 2003. Some of the displays now shown in Dutch museums will have the Elmina-Java Museum as their final destination.

¹ Ineke van Kessel, *Zwarte Hollanders: Afrikaanse Soldaten in Nederlands-Indie* (Amsterdam: KIT Publishers, 2005).

ENCOUNTERING GHANA FOR THE FIRST TIME

By David Groff and Michelle Newkirk, Linfield College, Oregon

n the past decade, Ghana has emerged as a magnet for American undergraduates seeking African educational experiences. According to the Institute of International Education, 805 American students studied in Ghana in 2002-2003, the most recent year for which data is available. This number represents 16.7% of all the American students studying on the continent that year and is greater than the total for any other Sub-Saharan African country except South Africa. Currently, more than thirty American colleges, universities, and educational consortia offer some kind of study abroad opportunities in Ghana. Clearly, visiting Ghana has become one of the primary ways for American students to gain an introduction to the continent.

In 2004 the authors of this article were members of a group of fifteen students and two faculty members that visited Ghana as part of Linfield College's January Term Off-Campus Study Program.² What follows are our observations and reflections on some of what we experienced during our month-long encounter with contemporary Ghana, an encounter at once exhilarating, bewildering, and unforgettable.

At Linfield the "Janterm" off-campus program provides students with an opportunity to participate in a variety of international and domestic travel experiences as an integral part of their undergraduate studies at the college. To encourage and facilitate widespread participation, the college pays the airfare for students for their first Janterm off-campus course. Admission to the courses is competitive requiring students to submit an essay explaining their interest and to undergo an extensive interview process. When the Ghana course was first advertised in the spring of 2003 interest ran high and forty applicants vied for the fifteen available spots.

The course, "The Emergence of Modern Ghana," provided an overview of Ghanaian history with an emphasis on the processes by which the peoples of Ghana became incorporated into the modern world system. It began with extensive classroom preparation before departure and involved lectures, discussions and written assignments while in country. But clearly the primary attraction of the course lay in the opportunity for direct "experiential learning" during twenty-six days spent traveling around the country visiting sites of historical, cultural, healthcare, and environmental interest and interacting with Ghanaians from a many different backgrounds.

Not surprisingly the experiences that had the most dramatic and powerful effects on the students occurred during our visits to Elmina and Cape Coast Castles. We had prepared for our visit by studying the history of the Atlantic Slave Trade prior to our departure from Oregon. We had looked at the organizational modalities of the trade and reviewed arguments about the economic, social, and political impact of the trade on what is now Ghana. We had also grappled with the moral issues surrounding the trade and touched on some of the recent controversies surrounding the touristic represen-

tation of the trade at the sites we would be visiting.

Nevertheless despite all our efforts nothing could fully prepare the students for the actual reality of being in the castles and experiencing the oppressively fetid air of the dungeons. Encouraged by the dramatic narratives of our Ghanaian guides, all of us fell under the spell cast by these imposing old structures where unspeakable horrors had routinely been carried out for long stretches of time. Overcome by the emotional intensity of the occasion, some of the students broke down in tears.

The emotional impact of the visit to the castles coupled with wide-ranging post-visit discussions informed by the historical literature on slavery and the slave trade resulted in significant insights for the students. Most notably students came to recognize both the human realities and moral complexity of the relationships involved in the trade and the significance of the trade's role in weaving together the modern world system. After visiting the castles, it became impossible for the students, all of whom were Euro-Americans, to avoid confronting the legacy of slavery and the bonds it created between America and Africa.

Another emotionally compelling feature of our experience in Ghana came as a result of our encounter with Ghanaian religiosity. Anyone who has visited the country can attest to the ubiquity of religious expression in its diverse forms: innumerable Christian sects, various Islamic communities, and indigenous African practices. For the students in our group, religion became perhaps the salient feature of contemporary Ghanaian culture. Our students found it remarkable that so many Ghanaians' everyday speech is peppered with references to God, Jesus or Mohammed. It made an impression when people responded to the students' conventional greeting of "how are you" with "By God's grace, I am fine." The prominence of shops, especially in the southern regions, featuring such pious names as "King Jesus Shoe Repair," "The Blood of Jesus Saves Chop Bar," and "Glory to God Rasta Hairdo" was equally impressive.

Formal expressions of faith were also quite striking for the students. During our month in country, we attended services at two Ghanaian churches: Wesley Methodist Cathedral in Cape Coast and Calvary Presbyterian Church in Abiriw in the Eastern Region. While both of these churches are theologically and organizationally linked to rather staid American "mainline" Protestant denominations, the services we attended manifested an exuberant sensibility rarely exhibited in Methodist or Presbyterian churches in the U.S. Both services went on for more than two hours and involved much drumming, dancing and singing. Particularly striking was the practice of "dancing the offering." Instead of quietly passing the collection plate, members of the congregation rose and made their way down the nave to the alter to deposit their gifts, moving rhythmically to the beat of a rousing praise

chorus performed by a singer, an electric guitarist and a drummer.

Coming from America where, notwithstanding wide-spread religiosity, public expressions of faith tend to be restrained and circumspect, the students found Ghanaian religious enthusiasm both fascinating and challenging. In class discussion, some of the more secular students in our group expressed discomfort and uncertainty about how to respond to overtly religious comments and questions from Ghanaians interested in eliciting the nature of their religious commitments. But it wasn't only the secularists who were disoriented by the pervasiveness of religion in Ghanaian society. The religious students, too, were utterly amazed and somewhat bewildered by it.



Linfield Students at the Kumasi Childrens' Home

Despite the passage of time, the somber historical reflections induced by our visits to the slave castles and the cultural ruminations stimulated by Ghanaian religious expression remain vivid in our minds. But what stands out most in our minds, as we think back on our experience, is the memory of the personal warmth and hospitality most Ghanaians showed our group. Everywhere we went on the great loop of our itinerary from Accra to Cape Coast to Kumasi, Larabanga, Molé, Tamale, Abiriw and back to Accra, we were received with friendliness and cordiality.

The warmth was genuine notwithstanding a certain tacit mutual recognition of the vast gulf of wealth and power separating American visitors like us from our Ghanaian hosts. As the readers of this newsletter know only too well, Ghana has endured an economic and political roller coaster ride since independence in 1957. After the nadir reached in the early 1980s and the rigors of the structural adjustment that followed, there has been a certain upturn with the resumption of modest economic growth and the establishment of constitutional democratic government. The atmosphere in the

country, as we experienced it, seemed positive and energetic despite the manifold challenges.

Ghanaians we got to know seemed proud of what has been accomplished but apprehensive about the serious problems facing the country. Many were understandably interested in persuading visitors like us to engage with their country on more than an intellectual and touristic basis. We were frequently asked in both subtle and not-so-subtle ways to provide financial and other forms of assistance. Such overtures coupled with the obviousness of some of the needs in the country inspired some of our students to return to the U.S. determined to make a tangible gift in gratitude for the experience they had had. Their chosen project was to help fund an improved facility for the primary school attended by

the children of our group's guide in Kokomlemle, a suburb of Accra. Once back in Oregon the students raised more than \$8,000 from individual contributions. Soon "Linfield School" will open in Kokomlemle.

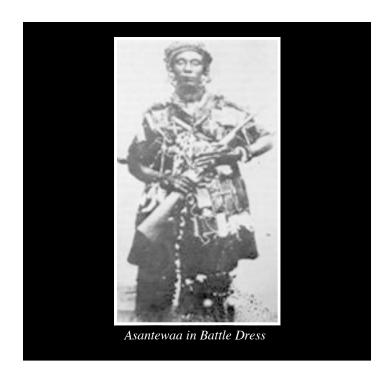
Travel study courses like the one in which we participated in January 2004 weave together academics and tourism with a goal of providing students with a deeper, more complex understanding of the contemporary world. Our experience has left our students with an abiding sense of connection with Ghana and by extension with Africa. Spending time in Ghana enables students to develop an understanding that there is more to Africa than the warfare, poverty, corruption and disease conveyed by the nightly news.

David Groff is Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at Linfield College Portland Campus. He holds a doctorate in African history and has led two travel courses to Ghana. Michelle Newkirk was one of the student participants in the 2004 travel course to Ghana. She graduated from Linfield College in May 2005 with a bachelor's degree in Health Sciences. She plans to attend Medical School.

At the African Studies Association Annual Meetings in Washington DC November 17-20, David Groff will team with David Owusu-Ansah from James Madison University and Bruce Haight from Western Michigan University to lead a round table discussion of study abroad programs in Ghana

¹ Bradley Rink, Institute of international Educaton, personal e-mail communication with the authors, June 14, 2005.

² Linfield College is an gerneral baccalaureate college with campuses in McMinnville and Portland and Adult Degree Program centers in eight cities in Oregon. The total headcount enrollment in the spring of 2005 was 2424.



YAA ASANTEWAA GOES TO CHATHAM HOUSE, LONDON

he London premiere of the international TV documen tary, *Yaa Asantewaa*, *Heroism of an African Queen* took place at Chatham House, in London on January 26, 2005. The showing was hosted by the Royal Institute of International Affairs (RIIA) and the Royal African Society. The 75 minutes internationally acclaimed documentary was written and produced by the Ghanaian author and diplomat, Mr. Ivor Agyeman-Duah. The documentary was produced three years ago, and it first premiered under the sponsorship of the Public Affairs Department of the United States Embassy in Accra. The present version is a DVD and VHS production by Global Media Alliance (GMA) of South Africa.

The documentary treats what historians have described as the Yaa Asantewaa War of 1900, named after the Asante Queen Mother who exhorted her people to resist the British conquest of the Asante Kingdom. Yaa Asantewaa's subsequent betrayal, arrest and exile is one of the most famous stories from this period, and she is often compared to Joan of Arc. In 1999, listeners of BBC Africa service nominated her as one of the greatest Africans of the last century, and readers of NewAfrican magazine voted her as number six on the list of 100 greatest Africans of all times. Along with the Asantehene Nana Prempeh I and his family, she was exiled to Cape Coast, then to Freetown, Sierra Leone, and finally to the "Prison Without Bars," the Seychelles Islands, in the Indian Ocean.

The documentary also includes great footage from the

Seychelles where Mr.Agyeman-Duah interviewed descendants of King Prempeh and that country's Foreign Minister as well as Asantehene Otumfuo Osei Tutu II (the present Asantehene), Ghana's foremost historian, Prof. Adu Boahen, and the Catholic Metropolitan Archbishop of Kumasi, Peter Akwasi Sarpong, a leading anthropologist.

Only part two of the three-part series was shown: Yaa Asantewaa: The Men Died on the Battlefield, but this was enough to spark "endless debate" on cultural heritage and leadership. The audience highly commended the documentary, but also situated Yaa Asantewaa's heroism and her building of an unknown modern feminist agenda in the contemporary African situation. Whether the question was from a Ugandan, a Sierra Leonean or British-Carribbean, it was post-colonial leadership and the foot-role of women in it that inevitably came up.

Ghana's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, H.E. Isaac Osei, who shared the question and answer session with Mr. Agyeman-Duah, suggested that if Yaa Asantewaa's exploits were important to the history of Asante, they were also a reminder of how important the role women play in the economic development of Ghana as producers of export commodities, and as agents of price determination in the domestic markets. No barriers, he explained, exist in Ghana for women with political skills and ambition to pursue them. He conceded that though a BBC reporter who covered the

December election in Ghana was not happy with the percentage of women involved and eventually elected, the Ambassador said, it was an improvement with women constituting 25 of the 230 members of Parliament..

A Caribbean woman challenged in a rhetorical joke that the best honor Ghana could give to Yaa Asantewaa's memory was for the Government to ratify the UN Convention on women, which so far has been signed by only five countries.

In his remarks, Mr. Ivor Agyeman-Duah said colonial rule and the extent of its damage to Africa's capacity for development is an ongoing debate, but it was important that British institutions like Chatham House and Africans gather to discuss the past as part of the present. He expressed the hope that the past would be critical in policy formulation of the present by the policy-community operating from outside the continent. In addition, he felt that the story's biggest effect was not its adoption by some universities in America for African studies programs or by the Panafest Foundation, but the planned exchange of visits by the Asantehene to the Seychelles and some of Prempeh I's descendants in the Seychelles to Kumasi.

Mr. Alex Vines, the head of the RIIA and a Research Fellow at Oxford, said that "Yaa Asantewaa is an iconic figure much discussed in gender development and cultural studies and is one of the distinguished Africans in history." He also felt that the film was important as it helped us get the "details right" about a war that "is known outside Ghana as the war of the Golden Stool and the Queen of Ejisu was the principal inspiration."

The business director of GMA, Mr. Akwasi Agyeman, intimated that in April, the Asantehene Otumfuo Osei Tutu II and some state dignitaries will have a private viewing at the Manhyia Palace Gardens in Kumasi. The GMA, he said, "intends to help in popularizing an important African story and also helping with cultural preservation and development."

Supporting the Institute in this event were the GMA, whose Co-Founder Edward Boateng, is also advisor to the CNN International, and he indicated that he intends to enter the documentary in international competition. Also, James Currey Publishers recently published an edited volume of Prempeh's letters from the exile period. This work is edited by Emmanuel Akyeampong, Adu Boahen, Nancy Lawler, Tom McCaskie and Ivor Wilks.

Adapted from ghanaweb.com and GLOBAL MEDIA ALLI-ANCE

AWARD FOR KUFOUR BIOGRAPHY



Ivor Agyeman-Duah

Ghanaian diplomat, Ivor Agyeman-Duah, received the President's Distinguished Leadership and Scholarship Award from the Association of Third World Studies (ATWS) for his biography of Ghana's present president, John A. Kufuor. *Between Faith and History: A Biography of J. A. Kufuor*, chronicles the ups and downs of "an Akan youth of Ghana who exchanged his right of succession to the Apagya Stool to become his country's democratic president." The award was presented at the Association's 2004 annual meeting held in Macon, Georgia. The out-going President of ATWS, Prof. A.B. Assensoh, Director of Graduate Studies at Indiana University, explaining the significance of the award said, it is "to honor individuals and causes that, in [the Association's] opinion, have played useful roles in Third World events. Listening to readers, who have read and highly commended [this book], they see [it] as a serious contribution to scholarship on The Third World, not a mere political tool."

Also receiving the same award was Toyin Falola for his autobiography, *A Mouth Sweeter Than Salt*, a retrospective account of family tales and society's beliefs, history and mythology as they evolved in the childhood and teenage eyes of the author as he grew up among his Yoruba people in south-western Nigeria.

ATWS is the largest professional organization of its kind in the world, with global membership and chapters in South Asia and Africa. Members include academics, practitioners in the area of Third World development, government agencies and diplomats who reside in over 20 countries around the globe.

JOHN D. FAGE (1921–2002)

By Roland Oliver (From the *Independent*, 20 August 2002)

OHN D. FAGE, well-known as a historian of Africa, and especially of West Africa, was a man for all seasons, with qualities of intellect, ambition and sound judgment which could have brought him success in almost any profession.

The son of Arthur Fage, a distinguished physicist and Fellow of the Royal Society, John Donnelly Fage was educated at Tonbridge School and Magdalene College, Cambridge, where his undergraduate studies were interrupted by three years of service in the RAF during the Second World War. His flying training took him to Canada and Southern Rhodesia, and his subsequent active service was in Catalina flying boats engaged in long-distance reconnaissance flights searching for Japanese submarines all over the Indian Ocean from Madagascar round to Ceylon, the Andamans and Burma.

As with so many of his generation, these kinds of experiences turned Fage's mind toward a career lived at least partly away from Britain. When he returned to Cambridge in 1945, it was to complete a BA in History with first class honors and then to research for a doctorate in the field of imperial history, submitting a thesis on the constitutional history of Southern Rhodesia leading up to the grant of self-government in 1923 to a tiny minority of white settlers, published in 1949 as *The Achievement of Self-Government in Southern Rhodesia*, 1898-1923.

When it came to earning a living as a university teacher, however, chance led Fage to focus on a very different part of Africa. In 1949 he married Jean Banister, and needed a larger income than that provided by the Bye-Fellowship to which Magdelene had elected him. He therefore applied for and was appointed to a lectureship in history at the recently founded University College of the Gold Coast.

There, on a spectacular hillside site

near Accra, a barely credible attempt was being made to plant an offshoot of Oxbridge, complete with gowns and high table dinners and halls of residence designed in quadrangles. It was even said that David Balme, the founding principal, once circulated a note to the staff complaining that he had looked out of his window at 1 A.M. and had seen only one light still burning, showing that the candle was not being burnt at both ends in the approved Cambridge fashion.

Nevertheless, in this hothouse atmosphere, the Fages and their young family flourished. Starting with one senior, but part-time, colleague, the History Department grew year by year to a strength of six, sufficient to teach honors as well as general degrees, and Fage himself rose rapidly through the ranks to become professor in 1955 and deputy principal in 1957.

Long before this, however, Fage had come to realize that the kind of history needed by students in an African country already destined for early political independence would be something quite different from the British imperial history in which he and most of his colleagues had been trained. Any satisfactory concept of African history would have to reach back into the precolonial past and also to cover the whole continent, including those parts of it which were emerging almost simultaneously from French, Belgian, Portuguese and Italian colonial rule. For this ideal to be realized there would need to be an African historical literature fit for university students to study. And this was something that would require nothing less than the active support of the historical community worldwide.

For his own part, Fage devoted his research time to *An Introduction to the History of West Africa* published by the Cambridge University Press in 1955, which was to sell 300,000 copies. For the rest, much flowed from the close working relationship which he and I

developed after 1951, when an enterprising publisher suggested that we might co-author a two-volume work on the history of the whole continent. Although we each had our own projects on the stocks, his on West Africa and mine on East Africa, the idea appealed to us and we spent two weeks discussing it at my home in Buckinghamshire. We agreed that the book must remain for the present a gleam in the eye, but that I should arrange a summer conference at SOAS (the School of Oriental and African Studies at London University) for teachers of history in all the African universities and for others in neighboring disciplines willing to help us to define the boundaries of the subject.

The first Conference in African History and Archaeology took place in 1953 and was repeated on a larger scale in 1957 and 1961. These conferences attracted public attention and brought us much valuable support. Next, in 1957, we planned and launched the Journal of African History, which began publication in 1960 and which we edited through its first 12 years. By 1961 we felt confident enough to undertake the Short History of Africa published by Penguin Books in 1962, which in successive revised editions sold more than 400,000 copies and was translated into some 12 other languages. Finally, there came the marathon task of the Cambridge History of Africa in eight volumes, planned in 1966 and completed under our joint General Editorship between 1975 and 1986.

The Fages had by this time long returned to England, where John in 1959 joined the History department at SOAS. In 1963 he moved to Birmingham University as Professor of African History and Director of the newly founded Centre of West African Studies. There, he built up a distinguished interdisciplinary staff, largely recruited from the former expatriate teachers of what were by this time the independent universities of Nigeria and Ghana. These

were seasoned scholars, whose presence attracted many gifted research students from Europe, Africa and America.

The Centre, along with others of its kind, suffered gravely from the cuts in government funding in the later 1970s, and especially from the imposition in the early 1980s of full-cost fees for foreign students, who from then on went increasingly to the United States. The inevitable result for the Centre was that its members had to devote themselves more and more to undergraduate teaching. Fage himself became increasingly involved during these years in the central administration of the university, serving as Dean of Arts, and then as Deputy Vice-Chancellor. This he found to be grueling and unsatisfying work, and when the opportunity was offered to take somewhat early retirement in 1984, he grasped it.

Soon afterwards he and Jean moved to what had been their holiday home in mid-Wales, where they enjoyed 15 years of what he described as "rural contentment" before he suffered the stroke which led to the long illness from which he died. An eagerly awaited autobiogra-



The new home of the Institute of African Studies at Legon

phy, *To Africa and Back*, was published by the Centre of West African Studies only a few weeks before his death.

John Donnelly Fage, historian: born Teddington, Middlesex 3 June 1921; Bye-Fellow, Magdalene College, Cambridge 1947-49; Lecturer and Senior Lecturer, University College of the Gold Coast 1949-55, Professor of History 1955-59, Deputy Principal 1957-59; Lecturer in African History, SOAS, London University 1959-63; Professor of African History, Birmingham University 1963-84 (Emeritus), Director, Centre of West African Studies 1963-82, Deputy Dean, Faculty of Arts 1973-75, Dean 1975-78, Pro-Vice-Chancellor 1979-84, Vice-Principal 1981-84; married 1949 Jean Banister (one son, one daughter); died Machynlleth, Powys 6 August 2002.

SHORTER NOTICES

◆ Tamale Institute of Cross-Cultural Studies (TICCS) as an integral part of its 20th Anniversary Celebrations (December 2003), TICCS launched two new MA programs: the MA in Cross-Cultural Ministry (in affiliation with the Akrofi-Christaller Memorial Centre in Akropong-Akuapem), and the MA in Cross-Cultural Development (in affiliation with the University for Development Studies, Tamale).

Unfortunately, TICCS has had difficulty attracting students for the MA in Cross-Cultural Ministry. Frustratingly, the institution has three unused scholarships. Instead, the Akrofi Christaller Memorial Centre has agreed to offer this degree this year. They are fully recognized by the National Accreditation Board of Ghana (NAB).

The MA in Cross-Cultural Development is unfortunately on hold. The NAB gave permission for the program, but did not give the go-ahead for the University for Development Studies in Tamale to be the program's mentor and the actual degree-granting institution. The University of Ghana at Legon agreed to fill this role but requested a fee of \$50,000. Currently the program needs a sponsoring university.

The cost for each 18-month program is \$16,000. This includes everything but airfare.

◆ Aluka Presentation at GSC Annual Meeting: The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in conjunction with Ithaka, a not-for-profit organization, is building a database for the world-wide education community. The visual materials will be supplemented with important scholarly and historical material. The database is intended for an undergraduate and young graduate student audience. It will provide African institutions with much needed access to important historical materials that are scattered and dispersed.

One aspect of this project is the African Cultural Heritage Sites and Landscapes collection. A number of sites have been chosen for creating high-resolution images for the database. Among them are two Asante temples near Kumasi and selected features of Elmina Castle.

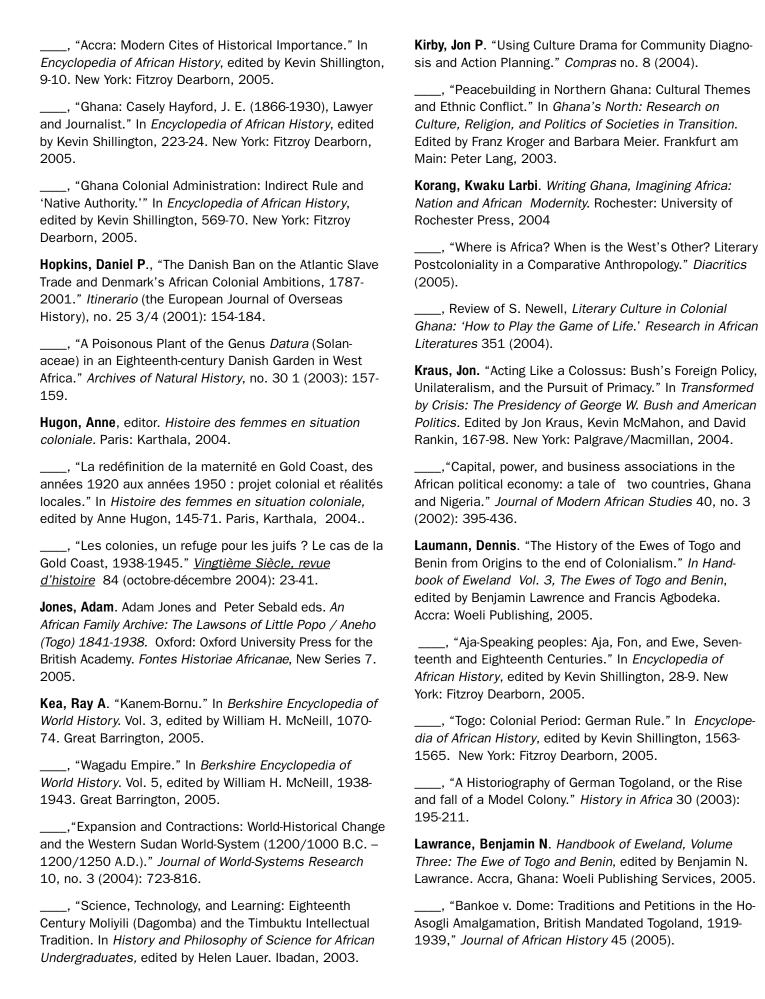
Mr Rahim Rajan, who is responsible for this aspect of the project, will give a short presentation at the GSC annual meeting.

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