

Basel Mission Archives

"Mader's Quarter Report"

Title: "Mader's Quarter Report"

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Description: (a) his account of the war-scare adds nothing to what has already been said, except that Akwapim made its war-customs, and asked the British government for weapons, powder and lead. Mader points out that it was all a rumour- and compares it with a scare that the French were about to invade which swept Schwabia in March 1848. b) He also offers an account of the history of Akwapim, which he comments is a war-history like that of the Swiss - a people searching for freedom (though on a smaller scale). He says it is translated 'from the mouths of the people', and the text of the history is indeed in quotation marks. Previously the Akwanu people lived between Nyanawase in the Accra area to Kekwaprangase (or Tekwaprangase, the initial consonant is not clear) (now) an Akim village near the Akwapim farms. Their king was called Ansaraku. His subjects had become so many that he could not call them together by messenger, as the custom is, but would let off a cannon to call them together, (Mader comments that he does not know if this is true, but it is not at all unlikely that the Portuguese or the Dutch would give such an important Chief a cannon to mark some treaty which had been concluded). The Akwapims were among Ansaraku's subjects. They were treated no different from wild animals, however, as for example if a father gave his son a gun and sent him into the bush to hunt, if he found an Akwapim he would shout 'Are you a man or an animal?' If the Akwapim did not answer on the spot, the Akwamu would shoot him without a second thought. The Akwapims put up with this sort of thing for a long time, but in the end they sent an ambassador to the king of Akim to tell him that because they had no chief the Akwamu were treating them like wild animals and that if he would send them a hard-neckled leader, who would drive away the Akwamu, they would serve the King of Akim. At this the King of Akim's brother swore the war-oath to the King and prepared to attack the Akwamu. The King chose warriors, armed them, and put them under the orders of his brother: and they set out. The leader instructed the Akim and Akwapim warriors to remain in two groups, the Akwapim marching toward the enemy first, while he stayed with his people in the rear. When the Akwamu heard that the Akwapims were coming to attack them, they said scornfully 'The Dokunno are freely giving themselves to the dogs - let us catch them like little chickens'. When soon after they heard the beat of drums, several scouts were sent out. They did not see the Akims, however. They were able to shoot most of them, and the few survivors fled back and said 'Red people are coming, what shall we do?' The Akims are called the red people because they are not so black as the other negro tribes. At this the Akwamus gathered their people and divided them into one force to fight the Akwapims, and one force to fight the Akims, but they were heavily defeated, and those of them that survived fled to the Volta, crossed it, and settled on the other bank. Then the Akwapims invited the King of Akim's brother to be

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their king: as the proverb has it, 'If you have no master, anyone at all can sell you'. He in turn sent to the king of Akim and asked his instructions. He replied 'I know that the Akwapim are no nation because they have no king, so if you wish it, stay there are rule over them'. When the brother fetched his mother and family from Akim, and settled them thee in what is now the Akropong king's village of Amamprobi, an hour from here, later they wanted to be on the hills, and so they built Akropong, and we live here still. It is usually the case for the Akims and the Asantes to be enemies - they were constantly at war. In the same way the Akwapims and the Accras clashed. They killed each other without mercy, no Accra man dared to be found on the Akwapim hills, and if they wanted to work on farms near the hills, they were either chased away, or made captive, or killed. The produce of such farms in fact belonged to the Akwapims. This caused the Accras to send embassies to the Asantehene to ask him to intervene on their behalf against the Akwapims. The Asante army drove the Akims and Akwapims out of their towns into the Fante country. Following this, the Akwapims had to promise to serve the Asantehene, sending yearly a tribute: 2 large pewter plates, 100 baskets of salt, 300 men (probably for sacrifice), gold to the value of 660 Thalers. This went on until the Europeans began to wage war against the Asantes and drove theml out of our land. Had this not happened we would be now slaves of the Asantehene but now we own our own heads, eat our own bread and live in our own land.

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