

# Basel Mission Archives

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"Müller's Report on a Journey in the Inland Twi Areas"

**Title:** "Müller's Report on a Journey in the Inland Twi Areas"

**Ref. number:** D-01.35.I..3

**Date:** Proper date: 11.04.1882

**Description:** Reporting a tour of Akim, Asante-Akim, and Kwahu. There are five Juaben villages in the stretch Koforidua-Kukurantumi. There are 28 inhabited places in Kwahu - 8 of them are among the largest towns on the Gold Coast. Kwahu burial customs (he mentions the casting of pottery out of the villages) he treats as being new to him. In the forest between Kwahu and Asante Akim he met a few hunters and people carrying loads of gum resin. In Asante Akim he calculates 5000 inhabitants, 10 villages, but the people have only been there for 8 years and are not really settled. They are a busy people - the villages empty in the daytime. Politically insecure, however - he reports the wish to be linked to Akim Kotoku. Obogu is independent of both Asante Akim and Asante, has linked itself to Kotoku, 800-1000 inhabitants. From Obogu en route for Akim they pass two farming camps Komesu and Praso, both only inhabited from time to time. 6 hours south of them is Afosu (a Kotoku village) and 7/8 hours south again Asuom. Very bad paths. Their experience preaching on this tour was that everywhere the gospel is received as a good and kindly word. Only three times were they refused help over sleeping - once in a very poor encampment in Akim, once in Fade, and once en route of Asante Akim. In the Juaben villages people are willing but passive spectators. In the gold-mining villages (Osine named) the response is less marked. Akim women are treated much more like slaves than Akwapim women, and therefore come less to street preaching than Akwapim women. The fetish priest of Nkwatia can turn himself into a spirit and play like an ape in the trees, and comes into the villages at night armed, everyone flees into their houses. In Abetifi there were 40 people at morning service. Since there is a shortage of catechists, the Abetifi request for a catechist has been turned down. Of the 12 boys from the Abetifi boarding school at his examination all, especially the gifted ones, have done extremely well. 4 of the oldest Müller describes as 18-20 years old. They wanted to leave school, 'being tired', but their people expect them to become teachers, and after conversation they were re-heartened. In Pepease their preaching took place on the day of him a fetish custom, when there was no response to a request for silence for the preaching, Ramseyer went into the fetish priest's house, and immediately all was silent. They preached on the cross, and eternal death. In a similar situation at Sakaraka (except that the custom was to do with obsequies) they do not seem to have made any request for silence - the custom just stopped and people gathered round. Kwahu chief's houses are grander than those in Akim, and it is usual to see the war drums adorned with skulls. In Asante Akim they had few listeners. When he tried to interview the old chief about the question of a teacher they found he had died, and his successor was not so enthusiastic - he was mostly concerned to assert the need for some-one in Bompata rather than Adomfe. Müller reckons they are disappointed in the political results following their connection with the Basel

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Mission - and Müller told him that catechists were not supposed to waste their time settling papavars. In Obogu there was a much friendlier welcome on the part of men women and slaves. This town has cleared the way to the Pra. Obogu he describes as having 800-1000 inhabitants. West Akim, which he defines as being between the Pra and Atiwa-Pameng mountains, and inhabited by the Kotokus along the Pra and Abuakwas along the Berem contains 65 settlements, 40 of them very small, and the rest of average 500-600 inhabitants. Alongside from farming their main occupations are trade, catching fish, and hunting. Though the coast is only 4-5 days away they do not seem to have taken up palm-farming. The Asiamang people live on trade and hunting - their town is isolated in the middle of the forest. He travelled back to Aburi via Asiamang and Nsakyé, going along the 'usual merchants' road to Accra for 8.9 hours, then along hunters' paths for 5-6 hours to the Densu and the village of Nsamam. From Nsamam Nsakyé is reached in 6 hours, and Aburi in a further 3 hours. Asuom - the problem in-this town is that c 1879/1880 Buck found people milling to become Christians since then Ramseyer and Mohr have found none. Müller found none also. He has the view in fact that the local people have decided against the acceptance of Christianity - his host gave him to understand this, and the street-preaching congregation gave a hostile reception to his question when anyone wanted to become-a Christian. There is apparently a pond in the vicinity, whose fish are worshipped by the town. They did not want strife in the town from having the population divided though he admitted the younger people wanted to become Christians. Although catechumen had been reported in Otumi he could find none. (From Otumi to Kade they passed through Nkwatanang and Sabi). Kade repeated the theme the people were hostile to the extent of not wanting to sleep or feed the mission party, though earlier reports had spoken of a large welcome. In Adanggoro they were welcomed. Via Akwatia they came to Osanase where the relatives of an earlier middle school pupils welcomed them, and in the evening the whole village gathered for preaching. There is in fact a teacher's house and school house already built here and they have been asking for a teacher (Müller remarks that they mean they want a catechist) for a long time; the ex-pupil's (new merchant in Akuse) relatives have taken the lead in this. The town is not in a good position for a teacher, however; its neighbour-town is Asaman, but that is 5-6 hard hours away. There are 600-800 inhabitants. Though a catechist would do better in Osenase than Asiamang where there is absolutely nothing for him to do. None of the 5 Christians of Asiamang were in the town when Müller passed through. Müller advises that West Akim should be settled by a Deacon or two when it is riper for harvest.

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