

# Basel Mission Archives

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"Müller to Basel"

**Title:** "Müller to Basel"

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**Date:** Proper date: 18.09.1889

**Description:** Report on a journey to Nkonya. En route preaching in the Boso area - a rare case of opposition in that when they went to preach in To there were few people there, and these people mocked them, so they had to leave. The Abo was swollen and they heard (in Kpalime) that their usual route was impassable, and there were no boats available for carrying them on the Volta. They therefore had to travel via Tsate and Dudome, and even at the latter place Müller was carried by a man who almost had to drop him when the water was up to his armpits. No doors or windows in houses in the Sohae area - and the livestock sleep in the houses with the owners. In Sirigbe the people asked for a teacher. Müller pointed out the teacher in a village not 1 ½ hours away, but he said, they would have to give up worshipping fetishes and using if they were to become Christian. An elder said they did not worship fetishes but God. Müller said that if they were told untruths then they could never start a mission in the village. A young man stood up and said what the elder had said was not true. Müller reckoned this statement cost him something -and they discovered that one day 8 of the young men had gone to a teacher visiting the village with the intention of becoming Christians - this was the only one left who held to this intention. Müller advised him to give up the service of fetishes, pray to the living God, and visit the teacher in Vakpo. But he also remarks that unfortunately almost the whole conversation had to be carried on in Crepe. There is a long account of events in Vakpo: The teacher's wife was extremely dissatisfied with the pioneer life (housing etc.): that the chief was more eager for the teacher than his people (he had himself helped to build the house which the teacher was at present living in). There was also a local man who had been converted while a refugee in Krobo during the Asante war - name Christian Kwasi. Preaching in Vakpo Müller took the text 'if anyone honours me I' will honour him' and preached on the virtues of Solomon who assembled raw materials for the temple. Müller clearly feels that the key difference between the history of the church in Vakpo and Amfoi was the difference in character and initiative between the two catechists and their wives. He speaks of the two parts of Amfoi in which he preached in each once. In Okyerefo and Asafe the people understood very little Twi. En route between Amfoi and Okyerefo they met a party of 50-60 young men with several elders engaged on cleaning the path. In Kpando there was severe pressure for a teacher, though in reply to Müller's question who wanted to become a Christian there was no certain answer. Müller promised a teacher in the following July if a house was built for him, evidently believing that this was unlikely. He also said that the Bremen Mission was really the mission for the Ewe area. The villages on the stretch Kpando-Ntwumuru are listed here as Aloe, Aban, Afesi, Agbenohoe, Praprawasi. At Ntwumuru Hall's residence is on a small rise 5 minutes from the town, a small house, two huts by it, and a 40 foot

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square fence. The house (like that in Amfoi) is divided into three rooms, each with door and window. Hall is generally respected and regarded with affection. The king and a linguist during Müller's visit gave a son each to Hall for schooling which Müller hopes would open the way to other people who feared repercussions if they sent their children to school. But Müller says also that the children have tasks in relation to the busy farming - many yams are planted and especially the older ones have to look after the younger ones when the whole family goes out onto the farm to work. Müller remarks that there seems to be little peace between the King' of Nkonya and his subjects. Recently a fetish priest who advised the people to preserve unity was derided in the streets. 'Let us hope that God brings him (Hall) success in planting among the people another attitude and spirit and in bringing about peace'. Müller says he has never known a people so in the power of darkness - they are afraid 'but they do not know what they are afraid of'. This means that if you ask them a question you very rarely get a definite answer. Müller relays the material in Hall's Year's Report about the prohibitions put on him during the yam festival with the additional material that in Wurupong it was the fetish-priest's brother who told him the rules he must observe; he was also forbidden from ringing his bell and preaching in Tapa; in Ntwumuru however he was forbidden from ringing his bell but the king welcomed the idea of his preaching. In Nkonya Müller heard that many traders had gone to Oboaso to trade in rubber, and that at Adele, where the German Government has set up a station to bring the different people under its authority there was a resting place where many traders were. Müller met a young man in Nkonya who had been sent inland by the Mission Trading Company in Akuse, and tried to encourage him to act as a missionary on his travels. The young man does not seem to have been very zealous - he would have liked Müller to go with him and help in the purchase of food. He also claimed to have had no training in street preaching, but Müller advised him just to talk to people, and to read to them out of his New Testament - he had one with him. From Nkonya he made a visit into the Atauru-nom district by the Volta. They preached in 5 places. In one place an old chief said after their preaching that indeed they were sinners - but what could be done? In other villages they seem to have stressed principally the point that fetish priests were deceivers, and received answers which seem to have indicated that the people at least in part agreed. Returning they found the Abo again swollen. Müller reckons 8 people had been drowned in the course the last three months crossing it. However there was a bridge formed out of a fallen tree one hour from Vakpo.

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