

# Basel Mission Archives

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"Martin's Report for the Year 1897"

**Title:** "Martin's Report for the Year 1897"

**Ref. number:** D-01.67.VIII..212

**Date:** Proper date: 18.03.1898

**Description:** Lists the building operations on mission land, (other than members' houses) carried on the year: Anum - a second cistern, and a 30 lengthening of the chapel Toseng - a 2-room shingle roof teacher's house and a chapel Bose - a new storehouse Kpalime - the swish walls of a new teacher's house Botoku - a 2-room storehouse for the teacher, and an open hall (the elders gave the grass for this building) Bume - a storehouse (built with the help of Christians from Anfoe and the Bume Christians heathen relative) Ntwumuru - chapel enlarged by 50% Alavanyo - a teacher's house and a chapel Worawora - 30% renewal of the chapel Guamang - the teacher's house is completed and a new chapel begun. Jasikan - the walls of a new chapel. Borada - the walls of the catechist's house are ready and the timbers needed ready sawn. Together, he writes these show a readiness for community-work on the part of the Christians and the respect with which the Christian community is regarded by the heathen, because from their side too help has come over teachers' accomodation. It is felt to be an honour to have a teacher in one's town, or among one's townpeople. Tension between Christians and heathen has occurred only in Akwamu and Bume. Among the missionaries Pfisterer was sent with the instructions that he should travel in Buem looking for a suitable site for the founding of a European mission station (Lochmann, missionary in Akwamu, got married). Among the local agents Monitor Jonas Awuku 'fell' and was replaced by Monitor George Ofusu. Catechist Sam. Adow who had been working adequately in Anum had to be dismissed on account of it being discovered that he had been guilty of sexual misdemeanours during his middle school and seminar days. He was replaced by David Sam. Catechist Timoteo Osee was posted to Anum because of the extension of the school into the upper classes. Catechist Chr. Adu was posted to Bume on graduation from the Seminary, Benj. Afari, pupils teacher, was sent to Worawora to replace the dismissed monitor Dako Wilson. A pupil teacher abandoned his work in Ntwumuru (Sam. Ahuna) and had to be replaced by monitor Jerem. Saforo previously intended for Boso. Pfisterer had as his assistant Theophil Asare, re-taken into mission employment. Pupil teacher Charles Nyako was sent to Adele. Chr. Adu and Tim. Osee are from the Anum district - the first to be appointed agents from this district. They are both from Boso. In the bi-yearly courses for the further education of the catechists and teachers they were pleased at the curiosity shown in informal chats about such things as astronomy and electricity. The missionaries between them travelled for 378 days in the year and the catechists and teachers (with Pastor Hall) for at least 332 days - Martin stresses the overall need for more staff in a passage which purports to give a complete account of the villages between the Abe, Konsu, and Volta. In this he only lists 2 on the west bank - Nkami and Akramang. In a passage naming the senior lay Christians who assist him in his preaching in the mid-Volta district he writes

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that the Kpando presbyter George Amanee is a great help, inter al in translating into Ewe, and Martin takes him to Atawronu, Avhatei, Dseme, Nkami and Akramang. Other senior Christians used in this sort of way are Joseph Anku in the Bume villages, and Emmanu in the Alavanyo villages. Anum - a bad year with a reduction of 7 in the community and 22 people excluded. These included a teacher, a catechist and the Presbyter who was found to have a concubine in the town, and gave up wife and new swish-walled and shingled house to go and live with her. They also went through the list of community members looking at those who were rarely or never to be seen at services. The surviving Presbyter is Albert Oko. The old Presbyter was much respected for his wealth among Christians and heathen alike. Toseng - Martin is very impressed with the work of the teacher, and that of the Presbyter Mose Odankwa. The community increased by 29, including a fetish priest and family. Good relations with the missionaries - visiting them in Anum, and providing carriers for journeys frequently. Most of the young men can read, and the knowledge of the bible is impressive. Boso - he repeats earlier criticisms of the community, including the point that the spirit of family unity is weak, and that they are in far too easy communication with the heathen. (The latter being not characteristic of Toseng, where the heathen come onto the mission station if they want to see someone). There is a presbyter called Petro who does a good job. Kpalime - a community of elderly farmers who live together in peace and friendship. Tsatei - a stable situation in which Martin thinks the community is growing in understanding of their new religion. Martin writes about the fact that the Wesleyans have started work in Anum. This developed from their work in Peki - one or two excluded Christians - including ex-Presbyter Isaak Amamfo - from Anum and a man who as a catechumen, but whose baptism had been put off by the missionaries because he had taken part in a heathen festival, asked for a Methodist teacher, and got one. When they were visited by the Methodist minister from Kpong, Martin asked him a series of question to which he got no satisfactory answer: Whether they would like the Basel Mission to intervene in an area where the Wesleyans had been working for 30 years? Why they had not gone to Nkwakubeo or Dodi or Abamensam or Miawoani? Whether people who were troubled about the salvation of their soul, or wanted to become holy, had not, a church already in Anum - and whether there were not places for the children still in the Basel Mission school. Was it easier to go to heaven if you were a Methodist? Did he think the Basel Missionaries were teachers of mistaken doctrines? The Methodist minister apologised along the lines that the teacher had instructions not to accept anyone who had already been baptised into the Basel Mission Church without consulting them - at which Martin accused him simply of telling lies. Attached to the report is a statistical abstract of the building state of each community, in which it is stated that Bumi was founded in 1897. This is the year in which a teacher was first posted there.

**Subject:**

[Archives catalogue]: Guides / Finding aids: Archives: D - Ghana: D-01 - Incoming correspondence from Ghana up to the outbreak of the First World War: D-01.67 - Ghana 1897: D-01.67.VIII. - Anum

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