Between 1799 and 1806, a Society for the Education of Africans (London) maintained an academy near Clapham Common where the sons of prominent African political leaders, African and EurAfrican traders, and Nova Scotian settlers in or near the British settlement at the mouth of the Sierra Leone River were given training in 'industrial habits', language, reading and writing, and of course religion. This Society, composed of prominent Anglican clergy and laypersons who were also members of the Clapham Sect, the Eclectic Society, and the newly formed Church Missionary Society (CMS), many of whom were directors or subscribers to the Sierra Leone Company and all of whom championed the abolition of the slave trade, collected subscriptions to pay for the school's costs. More than 20 boys received an education at this school, and with it an introduction to a segment within British society that was influencing the direction of British life in a profound fashion. Most of the African boys converted to Christianity during their period of study, and some died while away from Africa. Nearly half returned to Sierra Leone, however, with some obtaining employment with the Sierra Leone Company (before 1808) or with the British colonial administration that assumed Royal control of the Sierra Leone settlement in 1808. Others returned to assume the vocations of their fathers and came to play important roles within indigenous societies and coastal commerce. The account of this African Academy, also called the Clapham Academy, and of its origins, objectives and difficulties, is important for a full understanding of circumstances that led to the planting of the first CMS missionaries in Sierra Leone and for that Society's selection of Susu as the language to be used in West Africa for spreading the Gospel. The academy was also an interesting experiment in education within Britain and one that served a special non-Caucasian population for a proscribed span of time during the period that immediately preceded the introduction of large-scale monitorial methods that became the vogue in the early nineteenth century.

The plan for the Clapham-based school for Africans had its origin, interestingly, in Edinburgh rather than in London/Clapham. The Reverend John Campbell, who was then serving as Secretary to the Edinburgh Missionary Society, reported in his semi-

1 The American Philosophical Society (1999) provided funding for research in Britain. I am indebted to Christopher Fyfe and Paul Edwards for reading a draft produced several decades ago, and Suzanne Schwarz and Victoria Coifman for helpful suggestions on later versions.

autobiography that, early in 1796, the 'thought occurred [to him]—"Might we not bring over Africa to England; educate her; when some through grace and gospel might be converted, and sent back to Africa,—if not any converted, yet they might help to spread civilization, so all would not be lost".3 This scheme, as Campbell described it, was the product of personal reflections on the lack of success by earlier missionaries sent to Sierra Leone, especially to those failures that related to the 'unhealthiness of the climate to European constitutions'.4 Such a project, he surmised, would "bring over twenty or thirty, or more, boys and girls from the coast of Guinea, through the influence of Governor [Zachary] Macaulay [of Sierra Leone]; educate them in Edinburgh [for five years], and send them back to their own country, to spread knowledge, especially Scripture knowledge".5 Campbell first circulated his plan to several of his closest friends in Edinburgh, among whom was the Countess of Leven who also was a good friend of Charles Grant, Chairman of the East India Company, the latter then visiting his own kin then living in Edinburgh. Grant met Campbell to discuss the scheme, added his own calculations concerning the costs necessary to implement and maintain such an ambitious project, and promised to consult with friends in the Clapham/London area who might be interested in lending their names to the project and perhaps their financial support.6

In the following months, Campbell wrote to several members of the 'Clapham circle' and received letters in reply from Grant, William Wilberforce and Henry Thornton, the latter then treasurer of the Sierra Leone Company. These letters indicated that his proposal was under serious consideration, but that the general consensus obtained in London urged that 'it would be advisable to defer entering upon the execution of any such scheme till peace [with France] was restored'.7 Grant's caution regarding timing, cost of implementation and high taxes during wartime was apparently sufficient to dissuade Campbell from pursuing his plan further, and the project was set aside while Campbell dealt with other matters in Edinburgh.8 For nearly a year and half, the plan lay dormant.

3 Philip, Life, Times, and Missionary Enterprises, 160–1; italics are used here as they appeared in the original. The chronology as illustrated in Philip's work is somewhat confusing, especially since it appears to come from an earlier unpublished autobiography written by Campbell. Philip uses quotations to signify those paragraphs that he took directly from Campbell. While the list of events appears to follow logically in sequence, the original correspondence provides somewhat different dates and perhaps a different ordering, suggesting that Campbell may have remembered events in the wrong order. This reconstruction is an attempt to reconcile Philip's account (Campbell's autobiography) and letters found in Duke University, Special Collections Department, William R. Perkins Library, Durham, North Carolina, USA, John Campbell (1766–1840) Papers (hereafter cited as Campbell Papers). For establishment of the Edinburgh Missionary Society in 1796, see G. Smith, Short History of Christian Missions (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1904), 174.

4 Philip, Life, Times, and Missionary Enterprises, 160. See also D.J. East, Western Africa: Its Condition, and Christianity the Means of its Recovery (London: Houlston & Stoneman, 1844), 277, for the effects of 'sickness and dissension'.

5 Philip, Life, Times, and Missionary Enterprises, 161. By his own account (ibid., 166–7), Campbell was already on speaking terms with Macaulay. In 1794, after the French had attacked and sacked Freetown, Macaulay had returned to report to the company managers, and during that visit, he travelled to Edinburgh where Macaulay's four sisters were living. Macaulay met Campbell during that visit, and he commissioned Campbell to assume some responsibility for his sisters' financial matters. Campbell noted in his autobiography that he served as bridegroom's man to three of Macaulay's four sisters.


7 Ibid., 161–3; Letter, Wilberforce to Campbell, 23 September 1796, Campbell Papers; Letter, Grant to Campbell, 1 May 1797, Campbell Papers.

8 Letter, Grant to Campbell, 1 May 1797, Campbell Papers. Haldane, Memoirs, 190. Philip, Life, Times, and Missionary Enterprises, 170–1, mentioned that Campbell also was Secretary of the Edinburgh Magdalen Society which was active in 'lessen[ing] the number of prostitutes' whom Campbell called 'pests of society'. 
In March 1798, however, the plan was given new life when Robert Haldane of Edinburgh learned of Campbell’s intentions and asked for details. Haldane was a well-known philanthropist and activist within Scottish religious circles, and was not without critics in London, where many considered him to be too tied to a Dutch-style Calvinism and to Republican and Jacobite influences then spreading across the English Channel from revolutionary France. Campbell calculated that transport, education and maintenance for

9 Hannah More, in *Considerations on Religion and Public Education* (Boston: Weld & Greenough, 1794), staunchly defended education for the masses, but not at a cost of diminishing faith, belief in God or adherence to a religion. In particular, she believed that the French Revolution was godless and clouded by notions of ‘reason’. For a more detailed view of More’s sentiments regarding the French Revolution, see H.C. Knight, *Hannah More; or, Life in Hall and Cottage* (New York: American Tract Society, 1862), 151–68. H. Silver, *English Education and the Radicals 1780–1830* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), 18, noted that: ‘Once the debates about the French Revolution had taken shape, however, the reaction saw the Sunday school movement as one of the English sources of subversion, given the spread of Methodist Sunday Schools in particular. The Bishop of Rochester, to take an extreme example, described them as “schools of Jacobinical rebellion and Jacobinical politics . . . schools of atheistism and disloyalty”’. 
30 children at Edinburgh would cost from six to seven thousand pounds. Haldane considered the plan and, after accepting it, suggested that Campbell write to Macaulay at the Sierra Leone settlement at Freetown and indicate that he 'had [secured] sufficient funds for supporting such an institution, and requesting him to collect 30 or 40 of the sons and daughters of the African chiefs over whom he had influence, and send them over to you'. Campbell subsequently sent a formal proposal to Macaulay, with one letter sent in care of the Sierra Leone Company in London and a second in care of the firm of Anderson & Anderson, Philpot Lane, London, which maintained a commercial entrepôt on Bance Island within the mouth of the Sierra Leone River.10

Campbell's proposition reached Macaulay late in May 1798, and the latter replied promptly and positively, but 'with certain modifications'.11 While this proposal was new and certainly intriguing to him, Macaulay was not without experience of assuming responsibility for the care and education of children sent to Freetown for education. Indeed, it had become a common practice for traders and local elites on this section of African coast to send sons abroad, either to prepare them to return and assume positions within their fathers’ professions or to obtain consequential ties that would translate locally into political and commercial advantages. Liverpool-based traders with important commercial interests at the Îles de Los and along the neighbouring coast from the mid-eighteenth century were known to have taken a considerable number of such sons and daughters to Liverpool where they were educated and from which they returned as advocates of British commerce and Liverpool affiliations.12 It was similarly common for indigenous rulers to send a son upcountry to be educated in influential Koranic schools located at Timbo and Labè, the latter important political and cultural centres within the Fula empire in Fuuta Jaloo.13 In effect, it was perhaps expected along this section of coast that any African or Euro-African trader of means or political leader of consequence would want to send a son or a daughter or both to Freetown, where a new political centre of influence was emerging at the close of the eighteenth century and which was then portraying itself as the upcoming centre of Atlantic commerce on this section of coast.


11 Knutsford, Life and Letters, 201. Knutsford's interpretation of this correspondence is probably incorrect, because it fails to correlate with versions found in either Philip, Life, Times, and Missionary Enterprises, or Haldane, Memoirs. This letter of 1 June 1798, Macaulay to Campbell, has not been located. In Thornton to Campbell, 28 September 1798, Campbell Papers, Thornton mentioned that Macaulay had received from Campbell 'a Commission for 30 African boys & 5 Afr. Girls'.

12 Letter from John Matthews, James Penny, and Robert Norris to John Tarleton, 16 April 1788, in Report of the Lords of the Committee of Council . . . relating to Trade and Foreign Plantations (1789), Privy Council, United Kingdom. In this letter of 1788, students listed included John and James Cleveland of Bananas Island; John Holeman of Bance Island, Forékariah, and Îles de Los; William and John Bottle of Bance Island and Rio Grande; James Payne of Îles de Los; Emanuel Gomez of Rio Pongo; Andrew White Conta of Bereira in Moria; Thomas Williams of Îles de Los; William Jelioram Fernandez of Bouramaya in Konkouré River. Those not mentioned here but known to have studied in Britain included David Lawrence of Rio Nunez and Rio Pongo; Fantimani of Canoe in Rio Pongo; Betsy Heard of Bereira in Moria; and Naimbanna, son of 'king of Sierra Leone'. For more on Bance Island, the Îles de Los, and Liverpool activities along this coast, see Hancock, Citizens of the World, Chapter 6; and B.L. Mouser, 'Îles de Los as Bulking Center in the Slave Trade, 1750–1800', Revue Française d'histoire d'outre-mer, 83/313 (Dec. 1996), 77–90. For the story of Henry Granville Naimbanna, see E.G. Ingham, Sierra Leone After a Hundred Years (London: S Orr & Co., 1894), 168–83. For requests from local indigenous rulers to send boys to Freetown for education, see 'Diary of Lieutenant Clarkson, R.N.', Sierra Leone Studies, old series (March 1927), p. 93.

Indeed, in 1798 nearly 50 such children were living in Freetown where they would receive training and where they were expected to create profitable commercial and political linkages.\textsuperscript{14}

Macaulay had more than a passing interest in contemporary educational practices in Britain and in the importance of schools for sons and daughters of African political and commercial leaders and for settlers at the Sierra Leone Company’s Freetown settlement. By 1799, a vast majority of settlers within Freetown had been brought there from Nova Scotia, and most had come with Baptist or Methodist connections. From the beginning of company involvement in Freetown, officials had encouraged missionary efforts, especially as they related to discouraging slave trading within indigenous populations and to improving skills among the settlers that would be useful to the settlement itself. The problem, for the company, however, lay with the fact that most missionaries or teachers came from Nonconformist sects, and the Sunday schools that they organized in Freetown tended to cultivate dissent and question company authority. Revolutionary republican ideas spreading from France and the Americas also found root within Freetown where many settlers believed themselves to be constrained by the Established Church of England and by a company administration that was not interested in encouraging change or equality. Macaulay clashed repeatedly with Nonconformist preachers and teachers, for those Sunday schools were simply propagating troublesome ideas from a company perspective. Several ministers/teachers were expelled from the settlement after being charged with sedition.\textsuperscript{15}

From Freetown, Macaulay had also maintained a lively correspondence with Hannah More at Cowslip Green and with Selina Mills who lived with the More sisters and assisted them in their schools. It is significant that Macaulay proposed marriage to Miss Mills in 1796, and they were married on his return to England in 1799.\textsuperscript{16} While copies of Macaulay’s letters to More have not been found, her letters to him suggest that he had written often about the Sunday-school system operating at Freetown. When in England in 1796, Macaulay visited Cowslip Green several times. Hannah More was perhaps the most prolific female writer of tracts regarding the improvement of the poor lower classes and of educational methods, but her writings also attracted numerous critics as well as supporters. The More sisters operated a boarding school for girls at Bristol and maintained a Sunday school at Cheddar for lower class girls. Her circle of supporters flocked to Cowslip Green and championed her ideas. Among

\textsuperscript{14} Knutsford, Life and Letters, 202; Letter, Macaulay to Campbell, 20 June 1798, Campbell Papers; [Venn], ‘ Providential Antecedents’, 805–6. Sierra Leone Company, Substance of the Report . . . of the Directors . . . 1798 (London: James Phillips, 1798), 51, noted that there were 300 children attending school in 1794, with ‘many [40] of them the sons of Chiefs’. See also Sierra Leone Company, An Account of the Colony of Sierra Leone, 1795 (London: James Phillips, 1795), 209–10, for an invitation extended to indigenous local political leaders to send sons to Freetown, which ‘has been uniformly received with expressions of satisfaction’. The author, ibid., 211, indicated that 20 ‘sons of Chiefs’ were in Freetown in 1794, with another 20 located on Balion Shore. C. Fyfe, A History of Sierra Leone (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), 69, noted that chiefs who sent children to attend school in Freetown were charged nothing for that education, and these children ‘were lodged in Macaulay’s house where he led them daily in family prayers and catechized them on Sundays’, in effect following closely the model used in Sunday schools prevalent in England.

\textsuperscript{15} The most complete discussion of Macaulay’s difficulties with missionaries/teachers and Nonconformist Sunday schools is found in S. Jakobsson, Am I Not a Man and a Brother? (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1972), 104–30.

these were the Reverend John Newton and numerous members of the Clapham sect, of which 'she became virtually a member herself'.¹⁷ Through these and other correspondences, and assuming that Macaulay read at least some of More’s writings, Macaulay was well aware of major trends regarding education for the lower classes that were prevailing within Britain for the time.¹⁸

Macaulay’s ‘modifications’ to Campbell’s proposal regarding the Africans then in his supervision at Freetown pertained to precise commissions that Campbell apparently had given. While the exact details of these specific requests are unclear since Campbell’s letter has not survived, the nature of Macaulay’s modifications is clear. In his letter of reply dated 20 June 1798, Macaulay suggested that prospective children would be selected directly from those who were already under his care in Freetown, who already had some knowledge of letters and who were in the below 13-year range. The number of boys (20) would outnumber girls in a significant way, however, for indigenous girls of that age would probably already have been married or promised to a spouse. Since Macaulay or other company agents had already fashioned agreements with fathers, he cautioned that it would be improper literally to surrender his assumed in loco parentis responsibility to Campbell, and consequently that he would expect to retain the children in Sierra Leone until he returned to England late in 1798 or in 1799. The Africans would be expected to remain in Britain for not less than ‘5 or 6 years’. Macaulay also recommended that one or two boys would be selected from among the Freetown-based Nova Scotian settlers. In reply to an apparent request that Macaulay include a Fula boy from the powerful Fula empire in Fuuta Jaloo that supplied many slaves reaching markets along this coast, Macaulay replied that he would try but could not promise to satisfy that request. Campbell apparently had also asked that the children be vaccinated against smallpox before they left Sierra Leone, but Macaulay advised that they be inoculated (not vaccinated) when they reached Britain and that they spend the necessary time in recovery at the Smallpox Hospital at St Pancras. This modification would mean, certainly, that the students could not be sent forthwith to Edinburgh on their arrival in Britain. In the meantime, Macaulay agreed to transmit the substance of his letter of reply to Henry Thornton and to discuss arrangements with local fathers for selection of candidates, transport and other issues relating to their residence in Britain. Subsequent events indicate that Macaulay believed that Thornton would finalize arrangements with Campbell before his arrival with the promised children.¹⁹

With Macaulay making preparations from Sierra Leone, Henry Thornton wrote two letters to Campbell in 1798 and one in 1799, and in these he repeatedly asked Campbell about the nature of funding by the ‘unnamed source’. In particular, Thornton was concerned that all parties ‘come without much delay to a clear & full understanding as to the means of defraying the very considerable expense which will attend the Education of so many persons in this dear Country’. Progressively Thornton demonstrated his anxiety that Campbell


¹⁸ Macaulay’s correspondences with Ms Mills during this period are amply described in Knutsford, Life and Letters.

¹⁹ Letter, Macaulay to Campbell, 20 June 1798, Campbell Papers. Campbell (letter of 6 October 1798, Campbell to Haldane, printed in Haldane, Memoirs, 207–8) reported the contents of this letter to Haldane and proposed in that letter that there might be a further provision that would allow for the addition of ‘ten or twelve following every year, to make a regular rotation and keep it up’. 
seemed intent on concealing the name of the benefactor (Haldane) and that no plans had been forthcoming from Scotland regarding the disposition of or care to be given the children once they arrived in Britain. Thornton noted that a former governor of Sierra Leone, William Dawes, had offered to provide the children with temporary housing near London, but Thornton also stated that no one in London should be made liable for their expenses while in London if a patron for their welfare already existed in Scotland. Indeed, news from London indicated that Governor Macaulay had already departed Sierra Leone for Britain with the Africans, and still those in London remained uncertain and increasingly uneasy about plans for the disposition of the children once they arrived.

In the midst of this confusion over the Africans’ eventual arrangement, Macaulay arrived at Portsmouth onboard the Ship *Mary* in mid-May 1799 with his cargo of 20 boys and four girls, and a housekeeper, Mary Perth, who had played a role in their care while at Freetown and who probably was expected to keep them supplied with familiar fare and support during their introduction to Britain. Macaulay immediately posted Campbell from Portsmouth and rushed overland to London to make arrangements for the placement of the children. With Macaulay installed at Battersea, the children were taken on their arrival to Thornton’s weekend retreat located on the edge of Clapham Common. Hannah More met the children there and tested their knowledge of religious ideas obtained already at Freetown. Learning on his arrival that smallpox was present in London, Macaulay arranged for the children’s immediate inoculations at St Pancras Smallpox Hospital and for their confinement there during their recuperation. Before they were taken to St Pancras, however, Campbell met them at Clapham, ‘all jet black, cheerful and happy’.

At this point in time, it is clear that Campbell had intended to return immediately to Edinburgh with the children, but Macaulay informed him that he had explained only inoculation to respective parents at Sierra Leone, and that it would be impossible for Campbell to remove the children as quickly as he had expected. Indeed, the longer that

20 Letters, Thornton to Campbell, 28 September 1798, 26 October 1798, 14 February 1799. In his autobiography, Campbell claimed to have ‘heard not a syllable of intelligence from Africa’ in the two years after his sending the letters of 30 March and 4 April 1798. Macaulay’s reply to Campbell, dated 20 June 1798, Campbell Papers, is in significant variance to this assertion. Smith, *Short History of Christian Missions*, 174–7, noted that Haldane had attempted to establish a mission to Benares, India, along narrow Calvinist lines, and that the East India Company (Charles Grant, Chairman) had charged that plan with promoting discord within India. In effect, Campbell may have presumed that any scheme supported by Haldane would be opposed by many members of important societies in the London/Clapham area.

21 Fyfe, *History*, 60, 101–2, identified Mary Perth as a Nova Scotian who had been a slave in Norfolk, Virginia, before crossing the British lines during the American rebellion. Arriving in Sierra Leone, Perth was one of the first women to operate a store within the settlement. Fyfe noted that she also ‘managed Macaulay’s household, [and] looked after the children sent to school in the Colony’. Campbell, in Philip, *Life, Times, and Missionary Enterprises*, 175–7, described her store as ‘an ordinary [eating-house], where the clerks and servants of the Company dined’. E.G. Wilson, *The Loyal Blacks* (New York: Putnam, 1976), 354–55, wrote that Perth kept a ‘boardinghouse, for company staff and took care of their laundry’. The Reverend Melchior Renner took meals at Perth’s ‘ordinary’ in 1805 (CMS number, CAI/E1/17, Renner to Pratt, Sierra Leone, 18 October 1805). I am indebted to Suzanne Schwarz, who is editing the journals/diaries of Zachary Macaulay for the period during which he was governor of Sierra Leone, for the reference to the *Mary* (Captain Estill) as the ship that carried Macaulay and the Africans, leaving Freetown on 4 April 1799 and arriving off the coast of Britain 48 days later. In Macaulay’s journal (4 April 1799), he mentioned only 25 children as sailing from Sierra Leone.

22 Much of this information was contained in letters from Macaulay to Selina Mills, 1 June 1799 and 5 June 1799, printed in Knutsford, *Life and Letters*, 220–3. The children were already in residence at St Pancras by 5 June 1799. See also Philip, *Life, Times, and Missionary Enterprises*, 167–8. The debate over inoculation which would require residence at St Pancras Smallpox Hospital and vaccination which was perhaps safer but unknown to Macaulay when he was in Sierra Leone is discussed fully in Haldane, *Memoirs*, 230–1. For Hannah More, see J. Telford, *A Sect that Moved the World* (London: Charles H. Kelly, 1907), 137.

Macaulay and Campbell conversed, the more concerned did Macaulay become about the fate of the children once they reached Edinburgh. Campbell’s explanation of subsequent events was curt: ‘Whilst the children were under inoculation the patrons could not agree about their education: wherefore a society was formed in London, which took them off my hands, and I returned to Edinburgh without them.’ Macaulay remembered it differently. In his reconstruction of events, Macaulay soon became aware of the Haldane connection and of Haldane’s ‘religious and political views’. Perhaps disingenuously Macaulay formally proposed that Haldane financially support a Clapham-based school for the children; to his friends, Macaulay envisioned a school that would be more attuned to currents of educational thought then circulating among the Evangelicals and one regulated by a London/Clapham-based committee, for he ‘was resolved that the young blacks should remain in safety from contamination with any heretical or socialist ideals’. To be sure, the last thing that Macaulay wanted was to place the children in a school that would teach them disrespect for company authority and foment more republican notions within the colony. Moreover, these were not simply working-class children. Several were the sons of chiefs and all would play important roles on their return to Africa. Understandably, Haldane promptly withdrew his offer of support and accomplished that with simple words: ‘We will not so mix the work. Either you or I shall have the whole charge.’

Once Haldane was no longer a participant in the project, Macaulay and his friends were faced with the dual obligations of securing patrons who would support the Africans financially and of determining the course of their activities while they remained in England. The Sierra Leone Company had already paid for their transport to Britain, and directors of that company would continue to support their maintenance, if perhaps only for the reason that the company had been largely responsible for their presence in London. For a time, Thornton, as secretary of the company, thought it possible to obtain a Parliamentary grant to support the school, a prospect that, had it occurred, certainly would have linked the school to imperial objectives, but that eventuality never materialized. The Reverend John Venn (Rector of Clapham) believed that the newly formed Church

24 Ibid., 172–3, 177. Philip commented (177) that ‘it would be easy to throw much light upon this painful issue of a favourite plan, by introducing here the letters of Mr. R. Haldane and Mr. Macaulay; but no good purpose could be answered by doing so, except to prove that Mr. Campbell’s patience was well tried, between the cool calculation of the governor [Macaulay] and the warm anticipations of the philanthropist [Haldane]; and this will be readily believed without proof’. Only one of the above mentioned letters has been located (see below).

25 In the Christian Observer, 1 January 1802, 53, the author described dissenters in Scotland as: ‘A new sect of Independents, to whom no proper name has been yet assigned, but who are generally known by the name of Haldanites and Circus people. A society, composed principally of persons of this description was formed four years ago, under the name of the Society for propagating the Gospel at home; which employs its funds in procuring men to itinerate both in Scotland and Ireland, and in educating young men for the office of itinerant preachers. There is in England a society somewhat similar to this, chiefly supported by the Independents and Calvinistic Methodists.’

26 Knutsford, Life and Letters, 224–5. Haldane, Memoirs, included a letter from Haldane to Campbell dated 18 June 1799, in which Haldane wrote: ‘I must say that this is a very extraordinary business. However, I am satisfied. The Lord seems to intend a different plan for the children. His will be done! I am sure my intentions were right in the business. . . . I distinctly meant, from the first, that I should have sole management, and in consequence pledged myself to the sole expense. . . . Mr. Thornton, Mr. Grant, and Mr. Hardcastle knew this, and there was time enough for Mr. Macaulay to have known it too, and I rather think he did know . . . and if he had entertained any suspicion, he should have stated his objections before he left Africa, and inquired more minutely into it’. Macaulay’s response (Knutsford, Life and Letters, 225) was similarly simple: ‘At last my children are rescued from the grasp of Mr. Haldane!’


Missionary Society (1799) might play a role in the education of these Africans, but petitions to that effect within the society were 'referred' several times and were never fully discussed by the society's directors or within its appropriate committees.  

By the time that the children had completed their confinement at St Pancras Hospital, arrangements for their housing had been made at Clapham, and a special subscription-financed society had been formed to oversee their education. This society was called the African Academy—Clapham. 

Society for the Education of Africans, and its directors included Henry Thornton, Charles Grant, William Wilberforce, George Wolff, Granville Sharp, Samuel Parker, the Reverend John Venn (Rector of Clapham) and Zachary Macaulay. Unfortunately no full listing of subscribers has survived for this school, but later interactions suggest that Hannah More, the Reverend John Newton, Lord Teignmouth and Thomas Babington were prominent among its supporters. The four girls were taken to Battersea Rise where a woman there agreed to educate them at her own expense. 


30 Sierra Leone Company, Substance of the Report . . . of the Sierra Leone Company . . . 1801 (London: W. Phillips, 1801), 22, 49–50, 52. This notice also indicated that 'Donations and Annual Subscriptions are received at the Sierra Leone [Company] Office, Birch Lane, Cornhill, and by Messrs. Down, Thornton, Freer and Crewe, Bankers, Bartholomew Lane, near the Bank, London'. See also Johnson, Story of a Mission, 23. Hole, Early History, 49, stated that the Africans were 'received into the patronage of the Sierra Leone Company' and that it was the company that promoted the subscription for their maintenance and was a guiding force in the origins of the Society for the Education of Africans. See also Knutsford, Life and Letters, 237.

31 For More, see Fox, 'Hannah More, Evangelical Educationist', 94; Hopkins, Hannah More and Her Circle, 146–59. Thomas Babington was married to Macaulay's sister, and Lord Teignmouth lived next to the school in Clapham.

32 [Venn], 'Providential Antecedents', 806. See also Sierra Leone Company, Substance of the Report . . . of the Sierra Leone Company . . . 1804 (London: W. Phillips, 1804), 35–6; Telford, Sect that Moved the World, 137–8. In CMS G/C1, minutes for 4 November 1799, Venn introduced a proposal to educate African children to become missionaries.

33 Hole, Early History, 49. Details of the education provided for the females unfortunately is missing in the record. The prevalent style of school available for girls was known as 'dame school', and these tended to be day schools where girls received training in household tasks such as spinning, darning, cooking, midwifery and child rearing. In the instance of the Africans, however, the females would have required residence, unlike those who attended traditional dame schools, Sunday schools, or charity schools. In particular, Hannah More, who may have exercised considerable influence in determining the type of education made available for the African boys, was dissatisfied with the minimalist approach of dame schools, and in her boarding school at Bristol had attempted to provide girls with a more advanced style. It was her belief (H. More, Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education [London: T. Cadell Jun. and W. Davies, 1799], 107) that 'the profession of ladies, to which the bent of their instruction should be turned, is that of daughters, wives, mothers, and mistresses of families. They should be therefore trained with a view to these several conditions, and be furnished with a stock of ideas, and principles, and qualifications, and habits, ready to be applied and appropriated, as occasion may demand, to each of these respective situations: for though the arts which merely embellish life must claim admiration; yet when a man of sense comes to marry, it is a companion whom he wants, and not an artist. It is not merely a creature who can paint, and play, and dress, and dance; it is a being who can comfort and counsel him; one who can reason, and reflect, and feel, and judge, and act, and discourse, and discriminate; one who can assist him in his affairs, lighten his cares, sooth his sorrows, purify his joys, strengthen his principles, and educate his children.' While it is unlikely that all such sentiments guided the girls' education at Battersea Rise, it is probable that sponsors hoped that these girls would return to Freetown as practising Christians, with trades that would serve the settlement, perhaps as persons who could operate dame schools for the growing number of Nova Scotian and Maroon settlers who made up the majority of the settlement's population. For more on dame schools, see L. Morrish, Education Since 1800 (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1976), 4–9; M. Baker, 'The Lady Hastings' Charity Schools: Accounting for eighteenth-century rural philanthropy', History of Education, 26(3) (1997), 255–65. For more on Hannah More, see Hopkins, Hannah More and Her Circle. Hopkins mentioned (172) that the More sisters maintained a short-lived Cheddar School of Industry after 1789, in which girls from lower classes were taught housekeeping skills for employment as domestics in the homes of well-to-do families.
Specifics of a particular educational method used at the African Academy, of its curricula or even a full listing of students who attended the school unfortunately have not survived in the record. The purpose and general scheme of their education, however, was clear. This was a school that had been formed, like the society that sponsored it, for the expressed purpose of educating Africans for a specific number of years, after which the society would cease to exist and the Africans would return to Africa and serve Sierra Leone Company and colonial interests, either within the Freetown settlement or through interactions with Africans outside it. Most prominent among company objectives was the abolition of slave trading on this coast, which it believed would open the interior to British commerce and lead to Africa's transformation. The school would be formed following the private-venture model and would be supported by a specially formed voluntary association through a 'joint-stock method of financing'.

By terming the school an academy, its sponsors probably envisioned the school as approximating private academies of the time. This academy, however, joined the advantages of courtly academies (for the children of rulers) with small private classical schools in which students were boarded in a 'paterfamilias' mode like those staffed by a vicar, and which were formed for an intention and ceased to exist when that purpose had been fulfilled. This smallness also had the advantage of approximating the 'home-tutor' concept followed by many within the upper class and allowed instruction to be shaped to individual needs or particular skills, especially when differentiating between sons of chiefs and those of settlers. Such a model also avoided the weaknesses of public grammar schools, which the Evangelicals believed to be characterized by poor supervision, wasted effort, unhealthy treatment of younger boys by older boys and corporal punishment.

The Africans were to be trained in 'industrial habits' useful within their own ranks and to be prepared to introduce 'the arts of [European] civilization into Africa'. Courses to be taught included printing, operation of a printing-press, carpentry, elements of mechanics, Christian teachings, reading, writing, arithmetic, history, geography and natural philosophy. Three students were to be 'put out to learn Boat-building'. One was given training in mensuration (the mechanics of measuring), and all at least ideally were to be prepared in trades useful to the Freetown settlement. In 1802, all were reported to speak and read English 'tolerably well'.

The children were permitted to speak their indigenous languages only amongst themselves, although on one occasion (October 1799, soon after their arrival) the Reverend John Newton visited the 'twenty African black-birds' whom he addressed in the Sherbro language and to which they answered properly in Sherbro.

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36 [Venn], 'Providential Antecedents', 806. Wilson, Loyal Blacks, 375, suggested that these students were brought 'to England to be trained for missionary work'.
37 [Venn], 'Providential Antecedents', 806; Public Record Office, War Office (WO) 1/352, 'Report from the Committee on the Petition of the Court of Directors of the Sierra Leone Company', printed 25 May 1802, 30; Hennell, John Venn, 241.
38 WO 1/352, 'Report from the Committee on the Petition of the Court of Directors of the Sierra Leone Company' (printed 25 May 1802), 30.
39 Hole, Early History, 49–50.
Identification of the Africans by name and circumstance is difficult because of the nature and silence of sources. No ship’s manifest has been found for the Mary for 1799, and no school records have been located. Macaulay’s journals and letters fail to include names, although a census taken in 1801 in Clapham indicates that Macaulay was operating a school and that 21 unnamed males then lived at his residence.\(^{40}\) Luckily, however, baptism and death records do exist for Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common, and provide a partial list of participants in the Clapham school:

1. Isaac Watt, ‘aged about 15 years, the son of African Heathen Parents, living in the Kingdom of Foy in Africa, and educated at the African Academy in this Parish’. Baptized 19 October 1801, No. 94.\(^{41}\)
4. William Banna, ‘aged 15, son of Naimbanna, the Deputy of Pirama, King of the Timmawny Country, Africa’. Baptized on 31 July 1802, No. 82.\(^{44}\)
5. Joseph Williams, ‘aged 15, from Wotkapong, a town in the Susoo Country. Son of KaFodee, a Chief in the Rokelle, Africa’. Baptized on 31 July 1802, No. 83.\(^{45}\)
6. Peter Smith, ‘aged 15, from the Bulom Shore, son of Pa Dick, and nephew of Pa Jack, Chief of Bulom Shore, who visited England in 1794’. Baptized on 31 July 1802, No. 84.\(^{46}\)
7. William Tamba, ‘aged 12, Son of Pa Tamba, a Trader from the Bulom Shore’. Baptized on 31 July 1802, No. 85.\(^{47}\)

\(^{40}\) London Metropolitan Library/Archive (hereafter cited as LML), Census Returns, Clapham Population Returns, Folio P95/TRI/73, p. 6.
\(^{41}\) LML, Clapham Register (CR), Burial & Baptisms, 1792–1803, Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common, Baptisms for 1801, No. 94.
\(^{42}\) LML, CR, Burials & Baptisms 1792–1803 (Folio P95/TRI/91/1), Burial for 1802, No. 56. Fyfe, History, 62, identified John Kizzell [Kizzell, Kezell] as a Sherbro who had been enslaved and carried to Charleston, Carolina, in his youth. By the mid-1790s, Kizzell had returned to the Sherbro where he engaged in trade. Wilson, Loyal Blacks, 576, identified Kizzell as one of the Nova Scotian boys who attended the African Academy. WO1/352, List of Nova Scotians [1802], listed John Kezell as having a son in England.
\(^{43}\) LML, CR, Burial & Baptisms, 1792–1803, Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common, Baptisms for 1802, No. 72; ibid., Burial for 1802, 15 July 1802, No. 67. See also LML, Folio P95/TRI/91/1, p.100, burial No. 66. This is probably the son of Fantinani mentioned by Zachary Macaulay, in Sierra Leone Company, Substance of the Report . . . of the Sierra Leone Company (London: James Phillips, 1798), 43.
\(^{44}\) LML, CR, Burial & Baptisms, 1792–1803, Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common, Baptisms for 1802, No. 82.
\(^{45}\) LML, CR, Burial & Baptisms, 1792–1803, Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common, Baptisms for 1802, No. 83. Wotkapong was the political and commercial centre of Sumbuya, an indigenous state ruled by non-Muslims but dominated by Islamized Susu. The Dumbuya family was a prominent Susu lineage in Sumbuya, and Daia Modu Dumbuya maintained a valuable and important commercial outpost on the edge of the Freetown settlement.
\(^{46}\) LML, CR, Burial & Baptisms, 1792–1803, Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common, Baptisms for 1802, No. 84.
\(^{47}\) LML, CR, Burial & Baptisms, 1792–1803, Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common, Baptisms for 1802, No. 85.
8. James Fantimanee, 'aged 10, son of Foree Carree Trader from the Bullom Shore, now Resident at Kakandee in the Susoo Country'. Baptized on 31 July 1802, No. 86. 48


10. Thomas Carr, 'an African Youth from the Bullom Shore'. Burial on 8 January 1804. 50

11. William Fantimanee, ‘son of Fantimanee a Chief of the Rio Pongas in the Susoo Country on the Coast of Africa’. Baptized by John Venn, 10 February 1805, No. 58. 'Aged 19 or 20'. 51

12. Lory [Sory], 'son of Duke Geloram [Fernandez] in the Rio Pongas in the Susoo Country on the Coast of Africa ... aged 12 or 13'. Baptized by John Venn, 3 May 1805, No. 59. 52

13. Stephen George [Caulker], 'son of Stephen Calker, Proprietor of the Plantains and other Islands near Sierra Leone ... aged 16 or 17'. Baptized by John Venn, 12 May 1805, No. 66. 53

14. John Calker [Caulker], 'son of the aforesaid Stephen Calker. Aged 10 or 12'. Baptized by John Venn, 12 May 1802, No. 67. 54

15. Yarrah, 'son of Naminamodoo a Chief in Port Logo in the Timmany Country. Aged about 17'. Baptized by John Venn, 12 May 1802, No. 68. 55

16. Samuel Peter, 'son of Tamro a Relation of Pa Jack (now King George Bann) of Yongroo on the Bullom Shore near Sierra Leone. Aged 17 or 18'. Baptized by John Venn, 12 May 1802, No. 69. 56

17. Caesar Russel, 'a son of Boora on the Bullom Shore near Sierra Leone. Aged 17 or 18'. Baptized by John Venn on 12 May 1805, No. 70. 57

48 LML, CR, Burial & Baptisms, 1792–1803, Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common, Baptisms for 1802, No. 86. Kacundy was the indigenous name for the upper Nunez River where important trading entrepôts linking interior commerce and Atlantic maritime trade were located. Kacunda/Kacundy was also the name of one of the largest towns located in the Nunez. For more on the Rio Nunez during this period, see B.L. Mouser (ed.), A Slaving Voyage to Africa and Jamaica: The Log of the Sandown, 1793–1794 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002).

49 LML, CR, Burial & Baptisms, 1792–1803, Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common, Baptisms for 1802, No. 130. Fyfe, History, 100, wrote that Wilson became apothecary at the settlement on his return.

50 LML, CR, Burial & Baptisms, 1804, Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common, Burials for 1804, 8 January, No. 2.

51 LML, CR, Burial & Baptisms, 1805, Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common, Baptisms for 1805, No. 58; Johnson, Story of a Mission, 23. Fantimani Sr had acted as Peter Greig’s host from 1797 to 1800.

52 LML, CR, Burial & Baptisms, 1805, Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common, Baptisms for 1805, No. 59. The identity of Duke Gelorum is uncertain, but this may have referred to Jellorum Fernandez who was the head of an important Luso-African lineage at Bouaramaya in the Konkoure River at approximately this time. For more on the Fernandez lineage, see B.L. Mouser (ed.), Journal of a Missionary Tour to the Labaya Country (Guinea/Conakry) in 1850, by John Ulrich Graf, University of Leipzig Papers on Africa, History and Culture Series, no. 1 1998, 7–11. It is likely that the person identified in baptism records as Lory was the same as the person named Sory, leader of the Fernandez lineage in 1850.

53 LML, CR, Burial & Baptisms, 1805, Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common, Baptisms for 1805, No. 66. Hennell, John Venn, 242, wrote that Zachary Macaulay, Henry Thornton, William Wilberforce, Charles Grant, Thomas Thomason, Admiral Gambier and Lord Muncaster attended these baptisms on 12 May 1805.

54 LML, CR, Burial & Baptisms, 1805, Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common, Baptisms for 1805, No. 67.

55 LML, CR, Burial & Baptisms, 1805, Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common, Baptisms for 1805, No. 68.

56 LML, CR, Burial & Baptisms, 1805, Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common, Baptisms for 1805, No. 69. Fyfe, History, 100, identified ‘King George Bann’ as King George of Kafu Bullon.

57 LML, CR, Burial & Baptisms, 1805, Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common, Baptisms for 1805, No. 70.
18. John Thorpe, ‘son of John Thorp, a Maroon originally from the Coast of Africa near the Gulph of Guinea, born in Jamaica. 15 years old’. Baptized by John Venn on 12 May 1805, No. 71.

19. Thomas Smith, ‘son of Andrew Smith, a Maroon, originally from the same part of Africa. Born in Jamaica. 15 years old’. Baptized by John Venn on 12 May 1802, No. 72.

20. James, ‘aged about 17, son of Bubucarree, near Rio Pongas in the Susoo country’. Age about 17 years. Baptized by John Venn on 12 May 1892, No. 73.

The only African female mentioned in the baptism record was Betsey Fowles, ‘an African. Aged 20 years from Bananas [Island] near Sierra Leone’, baptized on 13 July 1805 and buried on 18 July 1805. A second female was Elizabeth Gould who returned to Sierra Leone when Mary Perth sailed for Africa in December 1801, but Gould may have been Perth’s assistant or ‘domestic’. The Sierra Leone Company, in its 1802 Annual Report, claimed that all had been selected with the desire and consent of parents and that they were expected to remain in Britain for seven or eight years. The company, and certainly the subscribers to the society that supported the school, anticipated that they would return to play important roles within their own ethnic groups or within the company/settlement and that many would ‘succeed to Power, being Children of the Chiefs of the Country’.

While it is certain that the above list of names does not sufficiently inventory all students who attended the school, this listing does demonstrate that the sponsoring society had good reason to expect a significant benefit to flow from the school’s operation. That 18 of the known boys had been baptized must also have appeared hopeful for the belief by some that the school might also serve as a seminary to train catechists who would spread Christianity in Africa using indigenous languages. From the school’s beginning, the school was visited frequently by the Reverend Henry Brunton who had gone to Africa under the sponsorship of the Edinburgh Missionary Society in 1797, and who had spent nearly a year in the Rio Pongo where his landlord/patron/host was the father of William Fantimani, one of the students brought to Britain in 1799. While in the Pongo and later at Freetown, Brunton had been fascinated by the prospect of carrying out a systematic study of the Susu language, and he began to make a word-list and to construct a Susu grammar. Indeed, colonial officials frequently complained that Brunton, when he served as company

58 LML, CR, Burial & Baptisms, 1805, Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common, Baptisms for 1805, No. 71.
59 LML, CR, Burial & Baptisms, 1805, Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common, Baptisms for 1805, No. 72.
60 LML, CR, Burial & Baptisms, 1805, Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common, Baptisms for 1805, No. 73.
61 LML, CR, Burial & Baptisms, 1805, Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common, Baptisms for 1805, No. 96, and Burials for 1805, No. 57.
62 Wilson, Loyal Blacks, 356.
63 WO 1/352, ‘Report . . . 1802’, 31. In Hull University, Thomas P. Thompson Collection, DTH/1/2, Zachary Macaulay to Ludlam, 4 August 1806. Macaulay mentioned that four Maroon boys were then in London. These were John Thorpe, Thomas Smith, Gray and Murray; the latter two were not identified elsewhere. Fyle, History, 100, mentioned two other boys whose names were not found in baptism records; these were James Wise, a Nova Scotian, who became government printer; and David Edmonds Jr, who returned to Sierra Leone as a skilled boat-builder. Wilson, Loyal Blacks, 376, identified seven other African or Nova Scotian students: James Edmonds, William Pitcher, Scipio Lucas, Joshua Cuthbert, Nathaniel Snowball Jr, and sons of Abraham Hazeley and Sophia Small. Wilson (p. 374) noted that Abraham Hazeley had sent a daughter, Phillis, to England in 1794 with former governor Dawes and that she had received an education there. Phillis Hazeley later married the Reverend Gustavus Nylander, one of the earliest missionaries sent to Sierra Leone by the CMS.
chaplain between 1798 and 1800, seemed more interested in language study than in serving company and imperial interests or in educating children within the settlement. When he returned to Britain in 1800, he took with him a young boy from the Pongo area, Jellorum Harrison, who was either a brother or cousin to Lory/Sory listed above. In effect, the African Academy contained persons who were friendly to Brunton's language project, and for his purposes the school served as a laboratory for his language study. By 1802, Brunton had printed several tracts in parallel language format (facing pages in English and Susu).  

The zenith of Brunton’s publications, however, was his *A Grammar and Vocabulary of the Susoo Language* printed in 1802. In his introduction to that work, Brunton enthusiastically and repeatedly expressed his conviction that Susu was spoken over a vast region along the African coast and far into the interior, and that the Susu peoples should be a principal focus for missionary work on the continent. In that sense, he was instrumental in shaping the prevailing opinion—especially that held by Macaulay, directors within the Sierra Leone Company, and leadership within the Church Missionary Society—that knowledge and use of the Susu language would open Africa’s interior to Christianization, civilization and British commerce. This single focus and the avalanche of Brunton’s publications concerning the Susu people and their language effectively reinforced the CMS’s decision that had identified Sierra Leone and the Susu peoples as the centre of its immediate efforts on the coast. Rather than describe the African Academy as a school for children of rulers and settlers who would return to serve colonial objectives, Brunton preferred to see it as a school that was training catechists—for all practical purposes a seminary.  

The Reverends Peter Hartwig and Melchoir Renner, who would become the first CMS missionaries sent to Africa, often visited the African Academy while they were preparing for their mission assignment, and it was there that ‘these men acquired a fair knowledge of the Susu language’.


65 H. Brunton, *A Grammar and Vocabulary of the Susoo Language, to which are added, the names of some of the Susoo towns, near the banks of the Rio Pongas: a small catalogue of Arabic books, and a list of the names of some of the learned men of the Mandingo and Foulah countries, etc.* (Edinburgh: J. Ritchie, 1802). For Church Missionary Society enthusiasm for Brunton’s early writings and his focus on Susu, see CMS, G/C1, General Committee Minutes, 4 January 1802, 1 March 1802, 5 April 1802; and CMS, G/AC 3/1/84, Cardale to Steinkopf, 3 March 1801; Johnson, *Story of a Mission*, 127. In his *Fourth Catechism*, 25, Brunton argued that once the Susu language had been ‘reduced’ into written form, the Susu people would no longer send their children to be educated in Mandingo Country (Morta), nor would they need to import teachers from upcountry. Instead, Brunton fancifully suggested that Mandingos would send their children to Susu Country for an education. Whether this argument was considered by the CMS is uncertain. For a listing of Brunton’s publications and numbers of tracts printed by 1802, see the *Christian Observer*, August 1802, 537–8.

66 Johnson, *Story of a Mission*, 23. Grove, *Planting of Christianity*, Vol. 1, 215, noted that the CMS had asked Brunton to prepare ‘materials’ for a mission to the Rio Pongo. Macaulay and Thomas Ludlam, both of whom had served as governor of Sierra Leone, confirmed that books/tracts had been prepared in two languages and had been sent out to Sierra Leone by 1802. For the latter and Macaulay’s belief that Susu was the principal
For whatever reasons, the African Academy ended in 1806. Perhaps the sponsors believed that it had simply outlasted its usefulness, or perhaps plans and financial commitments were designed only for a seven-year duration. Or perhaps most of the children had become adults and were beyond school age; perhaps it was time for them to return to Sierra Leone. Another explanation, however, may relate to the winter of 1805–06 which may have been particular unhealthy, especially for Africans in London. By one account, only six students survived in mid-1806, and these were quickly dispatched to Sierra Leone. Unfortunately, no death records for Clapham Common have been located for 1806, and hence there is no adequate explanation for the high mortality that may have occurred in the winter of 1805–06. Henry Venn later claimed that the African Academy was 'given up ... partly in consequence of the intention of opening a Seminary in Sierra Leone', but no such seminary was developed immediately to replace that which had been 'given up' in Britain.

A seldom-mentioned benefit of the African Academy was the influence that it may have had on a generation of young males who would play important roles in British history. Certainly by 1806, the directors of the Society for the Education of Africans (London) had recognized the value of William Greave's school and of his educational methods, for they began to send their own children to his school, if only as 'day-boys' and in addition to traditional tutorial methods, even before the Africans returned to Sierra Leone. Charles John Shore, later Lord Teignmouth, recounted that when he entered Greave's school in January 1806, only six African boys remained. A group of the African students had gone back to Sierra Leone in November/December 1805. Shore was the only non-African attending the school until he was joined by William Wilberforce Jr, and the sons of Henry Thornton, James Stephen, Charles Grant 'and others'. Four of the African boys subsequently returned to Sierra Leone, but two remained at the school, with the Africans serving often as disciplinarians or monitors for the younger boys, a circumstance common to the Bell method that was becoming fashionable for the time. The youngest of the latter was Zachary Macaulay's son, Tom, later known as Thomas Babington Macaulay, the future prominent historian. Shore found it particularly amusing that William

language for commercial expansion, see WO 1/352, 'Report ... 1802', and CO2/1, Macaulay to Sullivan, 4 September 1802. For plans to place Hartwig and Renner in Clapham and near the African Academy, see CMS, G/AC, 3/1/118, Pratt to Jaenicke, 24 December 1802. The African Institution. Second Report ... African Institution (n.p., 1808), 24, emphasized that Susu was an important language for commercial penetration of the continent, claiming that Susu was understood by most Fula and Mandé nations. In CMS, CAI/El/1, Macaulay to Corresponding Committee, 10 June 1803, Macaulay wrote that the missionaries' studies were 'proceeding in this country under the care of Mr. Greaves at the African Academy'. For more on Hartwig and Renner, see B.L. Mouser, with N.F. Mouser, Case of the Reverend Peter Hartwig, Slave Trader or Misunderstood Idealist? Clash of Church Missionary Society/Imperial Objectives in Sierra Leone, 1804–1815 (Madison: University of Wisconsin African Studies Program, 2003); and B.L. Mouser, with N.F. Mouser, The Reverend Peter Hartwig, 1804–1815: A Sourcebook of Correspondence from the Church Missionary Society Archive (Madison: University of Wisconsin African Studies Program, 2003).

67 Hennell, John Venn, 242.
68 [Venn], ' Providential Antecedents', 807–9. Venn erroneously called the African Academy by the name 'African Seminary'. He did recognize that student mortality was an important reason for the school's closing. Unfortunately, the history of this school and the fate of its students continues to be clouded with misinformation and error. Only recently, J. Hanciles, Euthanasia of a Mission: African Church Autonomy in a Colonial Context (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002), wrote that the Clapham-based educational 'experiment lasted only five years and had a disappointing outcome: the children were capable students, and eighteen of the number were baptized in Clapham Church, but, unable to acclimatize, their health deteriorated and they died, one after the other, before the program finished'. A few years earlier, W.R. Shenk, Henry Venn— Missionary Statesman (New York: Orbis Books, 1983), had written: 'The experiment ended pathetically as the Africans, unable to adapt to the climate, died one by one.'
Wilberforce Jr was receiving ‘the lash’ from Africans at the very time that his father was rescuing ‘the negro from the similar usage of the white’.69

The final chapter in the African Academy’s existence was written more in Africa than in Britain. In early December 1805, the Reverend Peter Hartwig wrote that he had conversed with a group of the boys on their arrival at Freetown but he failed to mention them by name. Hartwig did note that those who had learned a trade while in Britain were welcomed back and that:

...those that had learned none, now body seemed to desire them back. They are at a loss what to do; & I fear very justly that they will be soon as they [sic] very African I saw enough in the Rio Pongas that were educated in England for 10.12.14 years, & were worse then pagans. What a desiriable [sic] thing it would have been if these boys all had learned a trade, as even the Colony is deserted of able mechanics.70

Of those whose names were mentioned in baptism records, only four continued to play prominent roles in or near Sierra Leone. These were William Fantimani, who became a firm advocate of schools in the Rio Pongo, and it was he who in January 1807 carried his father’s invitation to the missionaries at Freetown to establish a mission which would nearly a year later become the first CMS outpost on Africa’s west coast.71 John Macaulay Wilson became apothecary on his return, then House Surgeon of the Liberated African Hospital at Freetown, and finally ruler (George II) of the Kafu Bulom people when his


70 CMS, CA1/E1/116b, P. Hartwig’s Journal, Freetown, 25 November 1805 to 29 December 1805, entry dated 6 December 1805. In 1805/1806, J. Corry, Observations Upon the Windward Coast of Africa . . . 1805 and 1806 (1807/London: Frank Cass, 1968), 80–2, an apologist for the slave trade, condemned the Sierra Leone Company and the abolitionists for not establishing a ‘seminary’ in Africa that would focus on ‘the rudiments of letters, religion, and science, and the progressive operation of education adapted to the useful purpose of life’. Corry was particularly critical of the notion of taking Africans to Britain for education. Jakobsson, Am I Not a Man and a Brother?, 142–3, noted that the Church Missionary Society had accepted the idea of a seminary at early as 1809, but observed that Josiah Pratt preferred that it be located in the centre of former slave-trading country ‘as a means of repaying the debt that Britain owed to this continent on account of the greediness of the English’. The first such seminary would be established at Bounamoya in 1814 and be called the Gambier Mission.

71 CMS, CA1/E1/93, P. Hartwig to Pratt, 27 January 1807.
father died in 1826. John Thorpe, a Maroon from the settlement, served in a minor administrative position in the governorship of Thomas Perrott Thompson. Mangé Sory Fernandez became the head of his lineage at Bouramaya in the Dembia/Konkouré River and ruled with a stern hand into the 1850s. Those not included in baptism records but who returned to work within the settlement were James Wise who became government printer; James Edmonds who worked in the apothecary shop; Scipio Lucas and David Edmonds Jr, who were engaged in boat-building; Joshua Cuthbert who was assigned to the dispensary; and Nathaniel Snowball Jr, who served as master of the Ship Dawes which was used in the Freetown/Nunez trade.

The Reverend Leopold Butscher, writing in c. 1815, was more cynical about the effects of educating Africans in England, and considerably less objective than had been Hartwig, although his evaluation was given nearly a decade after the demise of the African Academy in 1806:

As a means of introducing, more effectually, the English language, together with the Christian religion, into this quarter of the world, the benevolent & humane friends of the poor African, so greatly debased from his natural simplicity by the slave trade, have thought it expedient to call some African Youths to England to be instructed, & afterwards sent back to impart their knowledge to their countrymen. As benevolent & well intended as such a plan may appear, experience has shown, that it has not altogether produced those beneficial effects that were expected. Some years ago, more than twelve youths, who had, agreeable to this plan, visited England for the purpose of receiving an education returned to Africa; but I am sorry to say, that with exception of two or three (who being still at Sierra Leone, & in some measure under the control of the Society have not yet been so much exposed to temptation) almost all the rest have turned out worse than they would probably have been, had they never quitted their own country.

Evaluated on whatever criteria, the African Academy had served a useful purpose. Twenty or more African boys and girls had received training in Britain and in a subscription-funded, residential and purpose-specific school near Clapham Common. The Church Missionary Society and evangelicals in Britain used the school as a language laboratory for development of religious tracts in Susu/English format designed specifically for the purpose of spreading Christianity on the African continent. While this laboratory perhaps did not produce the number of missionary catechists that some of the school’s patrons would have preferred, it did create conditions that perhaps suggested that a seminary might be established on the African continent, a seminary that would train Africans who would carry the Gospel into the continent in indigenous languages. It did not, however, lead immediately to such schools being established in Sierra Leone. This school also served as a practical experiment within the academy system then prevailing in Britain. By any measure, the African Academy was not a failure.

72 Fyfe, History, 100, 139, 162–3. Fyfe wrote that a David Edmonds Jr returned from Britain with skills in boat-making, that a James Wise worked as government printer and later publisher of the Sierra Leone Gazette, and that several others became clerks at the settlement. The names of Edmonds and Wise were not located in baptism records. Wilson, Loyal Blacks, 376, noted that a James Edmonds worked in the apothecary shop.
73 Hull University, Thomas Thompson Papers, DTH/1/48, Hartwig to Thompson, 20 February 1810.
74 Mouser, Journal of a Missionary Tour, 8–11.
75 Wilson, Loyal Blacks, 376.
76 B.L. Mouser (ed.), Account of the Mandingoes, Susus, & Other Nations, c. 1815, by the Reverend Leopold Butscher, University of Leipzig Papers on Africa, History and Culture Series no. 6 (2000), 23–4. Butscher continued his observations in like fashion, concluding with: ‘In my humble opinion it will be far better, to train up School masters in the country where they are born, & to send thither pious & able men for that purpose.’