Origins of Church Missionary Society Accommodation to Imperial Policy: The Sierra Leone Quagmire and the Closing of the Susu Mission, 1804-17

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Abstract
A series of events in 1807 changed the mission of the early Church Missionary Society in Sierra Leone from one that was designed initially and solely to spread the Christian message in the interior of West Africa to one that included service to the Colony of Sierra Leone. Before 1807, the Society had identified the Susu language as the appointed language to be used in its conversion effort, and it intended to establish an exclusively Susu Mission—in Susu Country and independent of government attachment—that would prepare a vanguard of African catechists and missionaries to carry that message in the Susu language. In 1807, however, the Society's London-based board and the missionaries then present at Sierra Leone made a strategic shift of emphasis to accept government protection and support in return for a bargain of government service, while at the same time continuing with earlier and independent goals of carrying the message of Christianity to native Africans. That choice prepared the Society and its missionaries within a decade to significantly increase the Society's role in Britain's attempt to bring civilization, commerce and Christianity to the continent, and to do it within the confines of imperial policy.

Keywords
missions, origin, slave trade, Church Missionary Society, Sierra Leone, Melvill Horne, empire, Lutheran, German

The accepted rationale for abandonment of the Susu Mission in the Rio Pongo in 1817 in favor of Freetown has generally converged on seven circumstances existing in 1816-17 when transfer of activities to Freetown occurred. These included perceptions that 1) the Pongo and neighboring areas among the Northern Rivers were particularly unfriendly to missionaries because Islam was expanding into these areas and because traders located there continued both to trade in slaves and to believe that missionaries reported their slave trading activities to authorities at Freetown; 2) recent setbacks (in the form of
frequent fires) had seriously damaged physical structures in the Pongo, and to rebuild them would represent a renewed commitment of resources and personnel; 3) the deaths of several missionaries in the rivers had given the region the reputation of being a 'white man's grave'; 4) Edward Bickersteth's 1816 visit to the region had effectively sealed the fate of the mission, once he was fully briefed on needs at Freetown; 6) Governor Charles MacCarthy's enthusiasm as an advocate for educational reform at Freetown and for rapid uplifting of settler and captive (Liberated African) populations led him to believe that parts of both tasks could be relegated to the Society; and 7) the perception that Freetown had become a dumping ground for captives from across the coast of West Africa. By nearly all accounts, the decision to abandon the Rio Pongo and to instead focus CMS attention on Freetown was both reasonable and amicable, reached by prudent and honorable men. Those reasons may have applied well to the 1816-17 period, but pressures from Freetown and its administrators to curtail, delay, restrict or outright halt missionary activities in Susu Country dated to at least two decades earlier and only a few years after the earliest settlers had arrived from England and Nova Scotia/Jamaica.

The intent of this paper is not to retrace the history of early settlement and settlers or the often bitter discord between settlers and those who administered them in the settlement's early years. Those tasks have already been performed admirably by Stephen Braidwood, Christopher Pyle, John Peterson, Cassandra Pybus, Simon Schama, Richard West, and Ellen G. Wilson. Nor is my purpose to trace the history of all missionary efforts within Sierra Leone. Instead, my purpose here is to address contradictions between the perceived spiritual and administrative needs of the colony by its officials—on the one hand, and the intuited objective of early missionaries (particularly those bound for the Rio Pongo)—on the other.

From the beginning of Sierra Leone Company's supervision of the settlement, officials had faced difficulties in obtaining and retaining capable chaplains for its own company personnel. The chaplain's responsibilities also included the task of tending to contentious settlers who had arrived from America with dissident religious ideas (nearly all were Baptists, Methodists or followers of the Countess of Huntingdon) and revolutionary politics, for Republican notions from across the Atlantic were joining Jacobin sentiments from France. Neither could be tolerated, and early company officials were quick to make that known. Zachary Macaulay, who arrived in Freetown as governor in 1793 at the age of 25, 'took seriously the admonition of the [company's] chairman, "that the point to be laboured is to make the colony a religious colony"'. In effect, the Company demanded and sought chaplains who would focus their attention upon the settlement and nowhere else, and who
would loyally serve the company's leadership and company policy. The chore of finding such a person was at times trying and often unsatisfying.

The first chaplains to arrive in 1792 were the Reverends Nathaniel Gilbert IV and Melvill Horne, cousins who were ordained in the Established Church, although both held Wesleyan leanings. Gilbert remained only four months. Horne arrived already an advocate of itinerant missions to native Africans, and he believed that he could combine duties as chaplain with missionary efforts outside the settlement. He soon chafed at restrictions placed on him by company officials who accused him of speaking too freely and too often with Africans visiting Freetown, and of lacking language skills sufficient for the task. He left Freetown after only fourteen months in 1793, returned to England in frustration and disappointment, and wrote extensively in the coming decades about his unsatisfying African experience and his conclusions regarding selection of missionaries and the ingredients necessary for a mission to have success. The Reverend James Langlands arrived in October 1794 on board the vessel Harpy, but Langlands survived at Freetown only a few months, dying of disease before the end of that year.

Certainly the most contentious of the colony's early chaplains—from a settler perspective—was the Reverend John Clarke, a Scottish Presbyterian who arrived with Zachary Macaulay on his return as governor in 1796. Clarke was sympathetic to Macaulay and Macaulay's distrust if not contempt for settlers. Clarke accused the settlers of intolerance and of disobedience to any law or authority—the latter justifying their noncompliance through a faith in divine grace (or Antinomianism). This positioned Clarke in opposition to John Garvin and Jacob Grigg, who had been sent out along with David Rodway as missionaries by the Baptist Missionary Society. Through much of 1796 Garvin and Grigg accused Clarke, and indirectly Macaulay, of plotting to force settlers to convert to Presbyterianism. Garvin was even reported to have written to Horne of his frustrations and convictions. Garvin was charged with incitement to riot (among other things), was found guilty, and was provided passage to America. Grigg sailed for Virginia soon thereafter. Clarke remained chaplain to the settlement until his death in December 1798.

In the meantime, James Watt, who was a Company official and manager of farms on Bullom Shore opposite Freetown, had traveled along trade paths into the interior and had composed an elaborate journal in which he reported that the Alimaami of Timbo, ruler of the Fula state in Fuuta Jaloo, had promised to welcome Christian missionaries and to provide them with land and position. That invitation was repeated liberally in British missionary publications as an unequivocal pledge to permit the spread of Christianity in the distant interior, with the consequence that an influx of missionaries bound for Fuuta...
Jaloo soon arrived at Freetown. One group of four families and two single ministers from Wesleyan Foreign Missions arrived with Macaulay in 1796, but they soon lost their enthusiasm and returned to England. Inspired by the promise of a Fula mission, the London Missionary Society and its Glasgow and Edinburgh sections sent out lay missionaries in 1796 and 1797. None of these Fula bound attempts succeeded in reaching their objective. Peter Greig, a gardener, and Henry Brunton, a divinity student from the Edinburgh branch and bound for the Fuuta were sent to the Rio Pongo where Macaulay believed it possible to establish a mission and where the Company maintained a trading outpost at Freeport that would provide them a degree of protection and guidance. At least for a brief time, and so long as the Company could supply support, Greig and Brunton operated a school in a nearby village belonging to a local headman named Fantimani. Brunton focused most of his efforts on generating a word list of Susu words and grammar, but his endeavors in the Pongo were curtailed by illness. He returned to Freetown, where he was co-opted to become chaplain after the death of John Clarke in 1798. Officials at Freetown claimed that Brunton neglected his duties as chaplain due to frequent illnesses and his continuing and intensive study of the Susu language, and Brunton returned to Britain in 1801 to convalesce.

By any measure, however, it was Brunton's subsequent accomplishments that most influenced the choice of a specific mission target for CMS missionary efforts from Sierra Leone. Brunton had returned to England with several Susu boys from the Rio Pongo region, one of whom was named JeliotUm Harrison, a member of an important trading family with marriage alliances among the Ormonds of the upper Rio Pongo, Fernandezes of the Dembia River area, and Gomezes of the lower Rio Pongo. Brunton used Harrison and others and their native knowledge of Susu to elaborate his already broad list of words and grammatical constructs, and to develop his certainty that Susu was spoken widely in the interior of West Africa, and should thus be the language used to convert Africans to Christianity. Brunton also visited the newly formed African academy near Clapham Common that was established in 1799 to educate twenty sons of chiefs and traders brought by Macaulay when he returned to England in 1799. Brunton's list and his notions were published widely. His conclusions that Susu would and should be the language of conversion, that students at the Clapham school would be a vanguard leading to an African renaissance, and that future missions in Africa should be Africa focused were widely studied and accepted in British circles. This was especially true among members of the Clapham Sect; among evangelicals who were then attempting to end the slave trade from Africa; and among founders of the Church Missionary Society. Even Zachary Macaulay, who had encouraged missionary
efforts outside of Freetown during and after his tenure as governor of Sierra Leone but who had also sought to contain missionary enthusiasm that he considered harmful to the settlement’s welfare, had recognized the Susu language as a crucial part of mission success by 1799. Most importantly, however, Macaulay believed that missionaries would need to acquire the ‘gift of tongues’, otherwise their efforts would be fruitless. Perhaps his negative experience with the families that accompanied him to Africa in 1796 dampened his fervor, knowing that missionaries could not be allowed to establish missions without a concurrent company and colonial commitment to rescue them if that should be required. Simply put, missionaries were not to venture too far from Freetown, and were not to be permitted to create more problems for the settlement than Freetown was willing and able to resolve.

Macaulay’s return to Britain in mid-1799 coincided with the beginnings of a missionary society affiliated with the Established Church and with a change of administration at Sierra Leone, both of which set the course of missionary ventures in West Africa for the next decade. That is not to say that Macaulay was the principal voice in that society’s formulation. As Walls and others have amply noted, the latter decades of the eighteenth century in Britain were filled with significant discussion and debate concerning the purpose of missions, and particularly the proper character and role of missionaries. Here is not the place to define those twists and turns of argument, but it suffices to point out that the founders of the Church Missionary Society (originally called the ‘Society for Missions in Africa and the East instituted by Members of the Established Church’) were familiar with the writings of Horne and others, and were aware of failures experienced by other societies. Horne had recommended sending missionaries in groups, having British societies as organizational sponsors and support bases, sending only unmarried persons into the field, avoiding linkages to governmental polities, and shunning relationships with commerce. Horne believed that ideally a society should avoid any formal connection with a particular religious denomination and suggested that an ecumenical mission should be designed to serve the ‘Church Universal’. The founders of the Society, on the other hand, came primarily from the Established Church and from members of the Eclectic Society and the Clapham Sect, and their objective was to bring an evangelical bent to the Church’s ministry. Arguments and disagreements were many. All, however, were intent on achieving ‘the conversion of the heathen everywhere to Christianity’.

The most prominent figure in the Society was the Reverend John Venn, rector of Clapham. This was an era of ‘providential theology’, with the theological debate centering on questions of whether Providence was to be defined as ‘divine intention’ or ‘progressive evolution’. The Reverend Thomas Scott,
for instance, advanced the notion of the 'patience of waiting' for right things to happen. Venn, secretary of the new Society, believed that one must follow providence rather than 'anticipate [it]', which 'inclined them [the Society] to follow in the wake of imperial expansion, rather than to strike out on their own', effectively assigning to Britain the role of 'agent of providence'. Yet Venn also accepted much of what Horne proposed—sending unmarried missionaries in groups, living in villages, studying languages, and avoiding entanglements in politics and commerce. To this mix was an additional ingredient—the 'company experience'. Several Sierra Leone Company directors were represented on the Society's board, as was Macaulay after he returned to London at the end of the century. Macaulay came with his own ideas and with the experience of having lived and governed in Sierra Leone. He knew the conditions that missionaries would face, and he was soon convinced that Susu was to be the language of conversion and that the Rio Pongo was to be the mission objective. Brunton's language studies and his publications convinced Macaulay. The only dissenting voice came from ex-governor William Dawes, who championed Wonkapong, capital of the Bullom/Susu state of Sumbuya, as the target of the Society's first missions. Macaulay's presence in London—along with several Susu boys from the Pongo then attending Clapham's African academy and Brunton's publications—were perhaps enough to incline the Society toward the Rio Pongo.

Macaulay likely gave voice to another ingredient necessary in this discussion. While all could agree that the purpose of missions should be the conversion of 'heathen', the question remained which should come first to Africa—Christianity, commerce, or civilization? How should one define civilization? Porter summarized the argument by stating that 'Britain's own capitalist culture and institutions provided the principal yardstick'. As an administrator at Freetown, Macaulay contended that civilization should come first and Christianity later. What was needed at Freetown was an orderly government ruling over orderly settlers. Macaulay had provided what he considered to be orderly government with the promise that firm discipline would bring an orderly population. This was essentially a chicken/egg argument—could Christianity survive without commerce, or could commerce survive without Christianity? That argument was never resolved.

But there was another component that was perhaps overlooked, at least in the beginning, by the Society and by Macaulay. When Macaulay returned to Britain in 1799, he left behind his protégé Thomas Ludlam to govern the settlement. Ludlam, who served as governor from 1799 to 1800, 1803 to 1805, and 1806 to 1808, was only 24 years old and has been described by Pybus as a mere 'boy', a 'stripling'. Ludlam's only experience in governance had been his single year of tutelage under Macaulay's mentoring. Joining Ludlam's small
circle of advisors were Alexander Smith and Richard Bright. By nearly any measure, Ludlam and those around him were not as enthusiastic about establishing and supporting missions as Macaulay had been. Almost immediately after Macaulay’s departure in 1799, Ludlam faced a crisis of sorts at Freetown that he had helped to create. Perhaps naively, Ludlam had relaxed Macaulay’s restrictions on settlers. Regardless of his motives, many settlers interpreted his attempts at conciliation as signs of weakness and demanded more concessions, eventually leading to a major emergency known as the Nova Scotian Rebellion of 1800-1801. During the rebellion Ludlam relinquished governance to William Dawes, who had served as governor before Macaulay, but Ludlam resumed the governorship in 1803 when Dawes returned to England for consultations. That rebellion, and the 1802 negotiations with leaders in Moriah/Sumbuya that followed, since a few leaders there had joined Nova Scotian rebels against the Company, left Ludlam with a toughness at a delicate time in missionary history.

When the Church Missionary Society initiated its plan to send missionaries to Susu Country, whether the Rio Fongo or Sumbuya, the colony had been without a chaplain for nearly four years, and it seemed impossible to persuade an Anglican clergyman to accept the post. Macaulay proposed that the Society’s first two missionaries, both Germans ordained as Lutherans, be sent to Freetown for up to a year for acclimatization and introduction to African customs and patterns. They were to live in a neighboring native town where residents spoke Susu and where they were to learn that language as well as Arabic. But Macaulay also wanted them to serve as chaplains and teachers during their temporary residence at Freetown. The Reverends Peter Hartwig and Melchoir Renner arrived at Freetown in April 1804 after a period of training in the London area in both English and Susu languages and religious doctrine. Once at Freetown, however, the governor provided them housing near the chapel rather than in a native town and thus reduced their ability to study African languages. Renner as mission superior accommodated quickly to his new but temporary role as chaplain, and he established a close working and civil arrangement with Ludlam and the settlement’s leadership. Hartwig, on the other hand, had married on the eve of his departure from England, and he and his wife Sarah lived a life largely apart from Renner and others. Sarah taught school while Hartwig increasingly focused on the Susu mission ahead—collecting and ordering material for the future assignment, connecting with Africans visiting the settlement and in neighboring villages, and studying the Susu and Arabic languages.

That single-minded focus, whether naively reached or deliberately provocative, produced a breach between Renner/Ludlam and Hartwig, with the consequence that boisterous arguments resulted, to the point that settlers clustered
outside Hartwig’s house to listen to their confrontations. Their disagreements lay mainly in the definition of Providence and in a lack of agreement regarding specific instructions given them by the Society. Renner believed in the idea of ‘patience in waiting’, while Hartwig ascribed to the position that one must seize an opportunity when it presents itself. They also disagreed on the instructions they had been given—were they to remain no longer than one year at Freetown (by 1807 they had been in Freetown for more than two years, and Renner had never ventured far beyond the settlement’s boundaries); were they to focus their efforts on the chaplaincy; or were they to prepare enthusiastically for a mission in Susu Country and serve the settlement’s needs in the meantime? Hartwig and Renner had differed with each other on points of doctrine while in Germany, so it was apparently nothing new for disagreements to continue at Freetown. 28

For Governor Ludlam, however, and for Macaulay and Venn in London, these disagreements among missionaries were embarrassing and troubling. In London Venn was shepherding a new society that had no experience to guide it, and its members were confused by what they read in letters from Africa. Ludlam saw the missionary problem in Freetown more as a question of disobedience or disregard for authority, and Macaulay in London consistently championed his protégé at Freetown. Ludlam had had his share of troublesome settlers, and he certainly did not relish the additional problem of shepherding irritable missionaries who would soon be leaving the settlement. Nor did he welcome the prospect of missionaries moving into areas of the coast where their presence might actually incite Africans against the settlement and its commerce. His experience after the Nova Scotian Rebellion and reports from Smith and Bright who had visited Susu Country in 1802 confirmed that Muslim leaders there would consider Christian missionaries to be natural religious enemies and would oppose any proselytizing within their territories. 29

Back in London there were those who wished that the missionaries would reconcile and that missions would move swiftly forward, but there also were those of ‘worldly policy’ as represented by Macaulay and Dawes who cautioned that missionaries could not ‘itinerate’, as Horne and others had proposed, without an accompanying and overwhelming colonial presence to sustain and protect them. 30 This simmering debate in London also included the sentiment that it had been a mistake to have the missionaries remain in Freetown for so long a period, since once in Freetown they seemingly became captives to the needs—the ‘trap’—of the settlement. Nearly all reports from Africa seemed to support Renner’s explanation for delay and to blame Hartwig for the continuing troubles there.

This debate became critical when three additional missionaries—Leopold Butscher, Gustavus Nylander, Johann Prasse, again all Germans and Luther-
ans—arrived in Sierra Leone in September 1806, this time with instructions from the Society to leave the settlement as soon as possible. Hartwig, who arrived back in Freetown after a period of residence in Mandingo Country interpreted their arrival, their willingness to listen to his complaints and their new mandate as vindication for his opinion that it was time to establish the mission and for missionaries to leave Freetown. For Ludlam, their arrival mainly meant that he now had five unhappy missionaries in his midst rather than just two. The Society’s new instructions to the missionaries also specified that they were to receive guidance from London rather than the settlement’s administration, effectively leaving Ludlam out of the administrative loop and without authority to supervise their activities upon the coast. Meanwhile, both Ludlam and Macaulay were convinced that missions would fail anywhere along the coast if slave trading continued, and both believed that it was better to postpone the establishment of missions until slave trading had been made illegal.

The new missionaries also faced a dilemma—who was to be believed about circumstances at Sierra Leone? Renner explained to them that he had remained compliant to Ludlam’s guidance because it was ‘not yet the time of converting the Susoos’. Hartwig bitterly complained that Ludlam/Renner had ridiculed and marginalized him, and that Renner had become too willing a pawn to settlement and Company needs. Whether a result of proximity or of prior disposition, the newcomers began to take sides in their dispute. Buescher accompanied Bright during his visit to Susu/Mandingo Country in 1806, and during that period he listened carefully and singly to arguments supporting the Company and Renner’s position. Ludlam also sent three missionaries, Renner, Buescher and Prasse, to Mandingo Country to remove them from Freetown and away from Hartwig, to give them experience in using the Susu language and to introduce them to African customs and climate. That visit placed Renner and Buescher together for several months, during which time Renner recruited Buescher to his cause. Ludlam also gave the missionaries unique instructions regarding their expected behavior while within Mandingo Country: they were not to mention the fact that they were missionaries, were not to itinerate, were not to proselytize, and were ordered to identify themselves only as teachers, but they could engage in small trade. Nylander, in contrast, remained in Freetown where he was elevated to the post of temporary chaplain, although he was scarcely fluent in spoken English. He wondered why that task was denied Hartwig, and he marveled that the Society had sent them to such a ‘terrible place’, stating that had he known beforehand he would never have come to Africa.

It was during this period of separation that Hartwig committed an error in judgment that brought with it an ultimatum and a dramatic change of course

for CMS missions. Only Hartwig and Nylander remained at Freetown in
January 1807 when William Fantimani, one of the Susu boys who had been a
student at Clapham’s African academy and who had returned to the Rio
Pongo, arrived in Freetown aboard his father’s vessel with instructions from
his father to ‘fetch’ the five missionaries and transport them to his town on the
Rio Pongo. For Hartwig this was an act of Providence designed to permit the
missionaries to leave Freetown completely, and the elder Fantimani’s invita­
tion could be neither misinterpreted nor denied. At once Hartwig applied for
permission to leave for the Pongo, but Ludlam—perhaps still smarting from
the new instructions carried by the missionaries—simply said that he had
neither the authority to permit him to go nor the power to hold him at Free­
town. Hartwig pondered this nonanswer for a few days, and finally decided
that it granted him license to leave by not denying him permission; he made
that decision only after the younger Fantimani had returned to the Pongo
empty-handed. Hartwig announced his goal to leave Freetown and packed his
luggage with the intention of sailing on the first available boat. Ludlam had
other thoughts: he ordered Hartwig’s luggage searched and any property
belonging to the Society removed. Understandably, Hartwig was furious. In a
rage, he left Freetown, likely believing that the remaining missionaries would
soon follow him and finally free the CMS of Company control. He sailed first
to Mandingo Country on 11 February, intending to continue to the Rio
Pongo and join Fantimani. Ludlam simply reported that Hartwig had aban­
doned Freetown and the Society’s service, and that he had sought the employ­
ment and protection of slave traders in the Northern Rivers. Hartwig was
gone from the settlement and outside Ludlam’s immediate domain, and
Nylander was in shock.

But having succeeded with respect to Hartwig, Ludlam pressed his advan­
tage. In letters written to the parent Society in February 1807 to justify his
action or inaction, Ludlam argued that the Society’s leadership had denied
him authority to supervise the missionaries on the coast; as a consequence he
and the local committee considered their role vis-à-vis the Society as termin­
ated, although he noted that persons at Freetown might still assist the mis­
ionaries but only as individuals. Before these letters arrived in London,
however, the parent Society’s general committee met on 21 April and resolved
six items: 1) that all missionaries would be of equal rank; 2) that Fantimani’s
town in the Rio Pongo was designated as the Society’s only mission site;
3) that Renner would remain in Freetown as chaplain; 4) that no correspond­
ence coming from missionaries would be censured or read by anyone at Free­
town; 5) that salaries would be paid directly by the Society and not through
the Company; and 6) that all stores were to be equally divided. A copy of these
resolutions, which effectively separated the Society’s efforts upon the coast from attachments to the colony, and a letter of strong reprimand to Renner regarding his mistreatment of Hartwig arrived in Freetown on 28 June, and Buccher informed Ludlam and Smith of their contents one day later. Ludlam was furious. From his perspective, the Society had formally removed the missionaries from any linkage to the Company and, perhaps most gallingly, the Society now felt able to dictate who would be chaplain at the settlement. Ludlam fully recognized that the Society had accepted Hartwig’s interpretation of circumstances upon the coast and not those of either Ludlam or Renner. Ludlam immediately informed the missionaries that the committee of laymen/advisors at Freetown that had been formed before the first missionaries arrived in 1804 no longer existed, and that as governor he would still provide the missionaries with financial assistance but only so long as ‘all remain together in the Colony’. Nylander, clearly the most temperate voice among the remaining missionaries, described this period as ‘a very remarkable crisis’. Elsewhere he used terms such as ‘alarmed’, ‘put in a most critical condition’, ‘left without any support whatever’, ‘great distress’, and ‘a melancholy Situation’. Between 28 June and 1 July, the four remaining missionaries met to find a resolution to their collective dilemma. In their jointly signed report to the Society dated 1 July and in letters written separately over the next few days, they found common ground. In that report they concluded that Hartwig had disobeyed Ludlam and had left Freetown without approval, that he had told the Society many lies and ‘falsehoods’, that he had never been a true Christian, that he had become a missionary only to escape conscription in Germany and that he had left Freetown with the intention of becoming a slave trader. This consensus—effectively a reevaluation—represented a significant reconstruction of memory. It also represented a major reversal at Freetown that needed close evaluation by the Society’s General Committee once their report of 1 July reached London in September.

At a 12 October meeting of the CMS General Committee, Alexander Macaulay, brother to Zachary and recently arrived from Freetown, described Renner as the injured and innocent party and Hartwig as the troublemaker. The committee accepted that argument and completely reversed course by reinstating Renner as mission superior, and by asking Ludlam’s committee to resume its role at Freetown as mentor to the missionaries. Henceforth, Ludlam’s committee would choose one of the missionaries to remain in Freetown as chaplain. Clearly the General Committee recognized that it could hardly provide timely guidance over such a long distance during a time of war and that, in any case, it would need someone at Freetown to provide protection
and service if its mission were to have success. Macaulay later admitted, 'I believe they [the General Committee] would now be glad if all these missionaries could be recalled.' Had the committee sustained its instructions to the missionaries dated April 1807, that effectively would have rejected the consensus reached by the latter at Freetown in June, and perhaps completely jeopardized whatever remained of the Society's objective in Susu Country. In effect, the Society found a compromising solution to a seemingly unsolvable problem. Until this date the Society had used the Company as a nearby conduit for payments and protection, and the Society had provided temporary service in the form of a chaplain and a teacher. But that arrangement had been only a temporary convenience, one that the Society rightly believed would end once a mission in Susu Country was established. The October resolution, however, formalized a continuing arrangement between the Society and in this case a company, but within an environment that was projected to change in 1808 to royal colony status. The Society would provide Freetown with a chaplain and would be reimbursed by the Company and later the colony for that service.

With Hartwig removed from Freetown, with a resolution of sorts between the Society and the officials at Freetown finally arranged, and with the certainty that the Company would relinquish authority over Sierra Leone to the government in 1808, it was time to give serious consideration to actually establishing the Susu Mission in the Rio Pongo. By happenstance, only six days after the 12 October 1807 meeting in London Butscher arrived at Fantimani's town in the upper Rio Pongo to survey the promised site and to formalize the beginnings of a mission settlement at Kacara/Canofee. What Butscher found instead were an impoverished Fantimani, small villages, and major disappointment. But while at Kacara a friendly American trader offered him the nearby property at Bassaya of a British trader who had recently died, and 'the deed of gift was signed' on 22 January 1808 for a property that contained at least five houses, a store, four houses for servants, and extensive gardens, all on the conditions that the missionaries establish a school, that the donor's children be permitted to attend it, and that instruction be given in English rather than Susu. If there was any problem with the Rio Pongo site it was the fundamental issue of slave trading, and whether recently passed laws in both the United States and Britain would halt the trade for its subjects or whether it would continue. Macaulay was convinced that missions could not succeed if slave trading persisted. Slaving commerce in the Rio Pongo had been robust during 1807 as frightened traders sold off their stocks of market-bound slaves, with some retiring from the trade altogether and others adopting a wait-and-see attitude for changes that might come after anti-slaving
legislation took effect in January 1808. Thus began the Susu Mission in the Rio Pongo, which lasted from 1808 to 1817.99

The Rio Pongo Mission, as it came to be called, eventually consisted of five stations—Kacara/Canofee, the original property belonging to Fantimani; Bassaya, described above; Gambier, at Bouramaya after 1811; Kaporo, on Sangara Peninsula; and on Crawfords Island in the Iles de Los group.46 Burscher, Rennner and Prasse were the first missionaries to go to the Pongo, with Nylander selected by Ludlam to remain in Freetown as chaplain. For a time Nylander proposed a mission among the Temne on Bullom Shore, but the parent Society advised against it, believing that the Society needed a consistent voice in the position of chaplain at Freetown to watch over its interests along the coast. Three new missionaries, Rev. and Mrs. Charles Wenzel and Rev. John Barnett, all Germans and Lutherans, reached the Pongo in 1809 and added to the staff and buildings at Bassaya and Kacara. Many of the children attending the schools boarded there; while most were sons and daughters of local traders and headmen, the number increasingly included Liberated Africans from Freetown, orphans, and redeemed slaves purchased through donations from British sponsors. At Bassaya and Kacara only English was used in the schools, a clear indication that local preference was for English and not Susu instruction, with the consequence that little work was accomplished in the study of Susu or the transcription of the Gospels into the Susu language. That alone was a major disappointment, and in 1811 Burscher proposed to rectify that fault by suggesting a new station at Bouramaya on the nearby Dembia River where he had been promised the use of property and protection from its principal headman, William Fernandez, again on the guarantee that his own children would be enrolled in the school. Burscher envisioned that mission, named Gambier after Lord Gambier,41 primarily as a school to train catechists in the Susu language and for its graduates to carry the Gospels into the African interior. Incoming new missionaries John Wilhelm and Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan Klein arrived late in 1811, with the latter assigned to Gambier mission to begin that process.

By 1812 there were nearly 120 children under the care of the various missions, but no instruction was yet being given in the Susu language, and not a single church had been built. By 1815 a total of sixteen persons had been sent out from London—missionaries, laymen and wives, and two Africans, Richard Wilkinson and Jellorum Harrison, who had studied scripture in England and who were related to many notable trading and regal families in the Rio Pongo and Dembia River. Of those sixteen, thirteen were Germans; seven of those died of tropical diseases.48 Both Sarah and Peter Hartwig (the latter having survived more than seven years of exile in Mandingo Country) returned to
the Society's service, with Peter demoted to the status of translator, but both died by the end of 1815.\textsuperscript{43} Truly, Sierra Leone and the Rio Pongo region had become a 'white man's grave'.

Two major problems confronted the missionaries in the Pongas Mission that made their progress and their relationship to influential traders and headmen increasingly difficult. One concerned the continuing slave trade. As noted earlier, Macaulay and Ludlam believed that missions could not succeed while slave trading flourished, and the Rio Pongo was one of the last areas along this section of coast where local geographical features helped to make that possible.\textsuperscript{44} For a time, Britain and America had adopted plans to stop the trade by seizing the vessels and captains violating laws that prohibited it. Resourceful captains soon found a way around those proscriptions by carrying flags and papers identifying themselves and their vessels as something other than British or American. Once it became evident to British officials that slave trading could continue under this device, officials adopted a new policy of punishing those British and American traders who resided within the rivers, arresting and trying a few to send the message that attempts to halt slave trading on the high seas had been joined by raids against trading posts and traders who continued to engage in that commerce. When Major Charles Maxwell became governor of Sierra Leone in 1811 (1811-1814) and initiated his program to stop slave trading within the rivers by launching raids against that commerce at its source, he found the missionaries to be willing allies in the rivers. The problem for the missionaries was the perception or, rather, the certainty that the missionaries were reporting to Freetown the names of slave trading vessels when they arrived in the rivers in search of cargoes and the names of Pongo-based traders and headmen who were still involved in that commerce.\textsuperscript{45}

Missionaries also wrote letters to the Society that described their trials and tribulations, as well as their meager mission successes. In its efforts to increase donations from contributors in Britain, the Society fittingly circulated parts of those letters, many containing comments regarding events and conditions in the rivers, but with names of traders and headmen judiciously extracted.\textsuperscript{46} Gradually, however, those publications reached the hands of the traders and African headmen whose misdeeds were being described in graphic detail. The relationship between the missionaries and many of those traders and headmen located around them turned hostile. Local children were removed from the schools, with the consequence that missionaries were increasingly left with a majority that consisted only of those redeemed from slavery, orphans, or imported from the Sierra Leone settlement where large numbers of slaves taken from captured slave ships were being unloaded. In effect, the Society's
mission to spread the Gospel to native peoples in Susu Country was contracting rather than expanding.

A second and no less critical problem involved the continuing lack of harmony among the missionaries themselves. Hartwig and Renner had written harsh (some might say terrifying) things about each other, and that circumstance continued with the new missionaries as well. Instead of a single mission station where all missionaries were given separate tasks, the Pongas Mission appears to have evolved on a far different model. While coordination existed, for all practical purposes, five separate missions were in play. Each missionary acted as superior in his own mission station, and each vied with the others for resources, choice of children, access to London and the Society and respect and influence. Unfortunately, most of those things were in short supply. While one might argue that the missionaries were at fault for this dilemma, one might equally contend that the Society was in the process of developing its own policies and that distance, time and distractions with missions established elsewhere left the missionaries in the Pongas without adequate guidance from the parent Society.

At the height of the struggle between Hartwig and Renner, Hartwig had written an appeal, pleading that the Society send someone to Freetown to survey conditions because he did not trust anyone around him to provide the Society with a truthful report. That circumstance increasingly repeated itself as the Pongas Mission continued, but this time it was Renner and Butscher who asked for an official visit from someone directly connected to the Society in London. After the arrival of missionaries Charles Wenzel and John Wilhelm in 1814, the missionaries bitterly criticized each other in letters, accusing others of excessive drinking, attempting to become superiors, pilfering or wasting resources, lying, not being good Christians, wasteful efforts and so forth. Several lay persons at Freetown who were listened to by members of the Society's General Committee in London, added to this turmoil by characterizing the mission effort in the Pongo as wasteful, useless, and unproductive among a people that even Venn described as unappreciative; their portrayals of the missionaries themselves were often equally harsh.

Whether in frustration and desperation or in an effort to return harmony to the mission and its personnel, Richard Bickersteth, who was then assistant-secretary to the Society, sailed for Sierra Leone in January 1816 and spent three months visiting outposts on the Rio Pongo and Dembia River, and Freetown in Sierra Leone. His task was simply stated: 'To inspect the Mission, and gather such information as should enable the Society to put their affairs on a better footing, and enlarge their efforts with fresh zeal'. He listened attentively to the missionaries and to Charles MacCarthy, who had become
governor of the Crown Colony of Sierra Leone in 1814. During that period when the Susu Mission had its beginning in the Rio Pongo region, the Society had incrementally increased its role in the Freetown settlement. Nyländer had remained in Freetown as chaplain from 1808 to 1811, and during that period governors had increased his tasks to include supervision of a newly devised educational plan brought to Freetown by the African Institution, a non-sectarian group chaired by Zachary Macaulay in London that had been formed to provide teachers and training in arts and manual trades in the colony. Nyländer accepted both tasks, and part of his salary was paid by the government, for in substance he had essentially become a part of the colonial administration. Under Governors Thompson, Columbine and Maxwell, his role in educating settlers increased steadily, largely in consequence of a significant influx of recaptured Africans released at Freetown from slave trading vessels brought there for adjudication.49

By the time of Bickersteth's 1816 arrival in Africa, the role given to the chaplain at Freetown had grown significantly, and Governor MacCarthy was interested in increasing it even more. From 1810 until c. 1812, several schools had been built at Freetown, and Nyländer was responsible for them all as agent of both the administration and of the African Institution in London, which provided teachers. When Nyländer went to Bullom Shore in 1812, Butscher became the settlement's chaplain, superintendent of government-sponsored schools that then held nearly 500 students and—as of November 1813—missionary to all Africans residing within Freetown. In November 1814, Governor Maxwell agreed to protect missionaries in the Rio Pongo, build a new church at Freetown, increase the salary for the chaplain and assign all Liberated Africans to the care of the CMS. By that date there were more than 10,000 Liberated Africans within the settlement, of which nearly 1,000 were then attending schools. In contrast, only 200 were enrolled in schools in the Rio Pongo. The plan specifically suggested that the best of these students in Freetown would be taught to become teachers, catechists and ministers, and that schools would also teach the use of native languages.50

Governor MacCarthy faced two choices when he became governor of the colony in 1814—continue his predecessor's policy of protecting missionaries in a region of the coast that was becoming increasingly offended by their presence, and perhaps anticipate that an end to the Napoleonic Era would bring a positive change of attitude in the Rio Pongo; or attempt to refocus the Society's efforts toward Freetown, where he needed assistance with growing numbers of Liberated Africans. Despite the momentary optimism among some that an end to the European war would bring closure to the slave trade, many believed that just the opposite might occur. MacCarthy requested that the
missionaries move to Freetown, where they could be protected and be of greater service. The home Society was friendly to this suggestion, but it also believed that its primary mission should first serve the Africans, that changes in slave trading might bring positive adjustments in the Pongo, and that it still might be possible to serve both objectives.

Undeterred, MacCarthy took this one step further early in 1815 by announcing that no new Liberated Africans would be taken from Freetown to the Pongo for schooling. MacCarthy explained to Bickersteth that the physical and commercial climates within the Pongo were not advantageous to continued missionary efforts there, that slave trading continued and was actually increasing, that educating Africans in the Pongo would mainly assist the slave traders and continue that commerce, and that restoring buildings that had been mysteriously destroyed would represent a useless commitment of resources in an area where Christianity had little chance of succeeding. At the same time, he argued that he could scarcely send children from Freetown to the Pongo where they might be recaptured and sold again into the slave trade. He thus suggested a move to Freetown where children who had become Christians would live in a Christian environment and could maintain their commitment to Christianity more easily than in the Pongo. Bickersteth returned to Britain a convert to MacCarthy's vision, but with the possible caveat that the Pongas Mission would continue, and that it might be necessary to significantly increase the Society's efforts there if success were to be expected. In effect, however, Bickersteth and the Society placed the fate of the mission in the hands of the missionaries; whether to maintain or abandon it was left to their discretion.

That choice was decided largely as a consequence of events in the Rio Pongo between December 1816 and March 1817. Renner had gone to Freetown, and while there had reported to Governor MacCarthy that a slaving vessel had entered the river and was collecting a cargo. Partly in response to that information, a British royal squadron vessel followed a suspected slaver into the Rio Pongo on 1 January, captured it at Lisso, which was located neat the Bassaya mission station, and ordered local headmen to surrender the vessel's crew and cargo within a month's time. The seizure of the slaver and the momentary retreat of the squadron vessel to the nearby coast to await compliance with its order set the stage for a major crisis for the missionaries. Headmen who directly profited from continued slave trading amassed warriors and weapons for the upcoming encounter with British forces, and, following protocols accepted in the river and as landlords to slave traders as well as the missionaries, they requested ammunition from the missionaries. Renner bluntly told his landlords that the missionaries would help them to fight against the Fula, who
were the river's overlords, but that they would not assist them against the Brit­
ish. By the time that the squadron vessel returned, the headmen refused to
hand over the slaver's crew and cargo, with the consequence that the British
shelled a number of local villages, killing several Fula who were then trading
in the region. Word of the battle near Lisso quickly spread into the interior,
and there was concern—especially from Renner—that the Fula might send
warriors to directly intervene against the British and that the missionaries
would suffer as a consequence. A war conference of nearly 3,000 Bagu and
Susu warriors and headmen hastily convened in the upper Pongo, with obvi­
ous results. The missionaries were blamed directly, and Renner particularly, for
the latest crisis, and whatever support for them that existed in the upper river
rapidly disappeared. Renner's life was threatened and the position of the
remaining missionaries became increasingly untenable. In midyear, Renner
and Wilhelm left for Freetown, where the missionaries contemplated the cir­
cumstances in the Rio Pongo. MacCarthy's advice to the Society was undis­
guised: 'Send us men of activity and zeal and if you cannot do so without
neglecting the Rio Pongas, pray withdraw your establishment until the slave
trade is excluded from thence'.

In the following months both Renner and Wilhelm returned temporarily to
the Pongo, perhaps to give it one last chance for success. In the meantime, the
Society's leadership in London had concluded that the Susu were reluctant to
accept the Christian message, that they had been unappreciative of the Socie­
ty's efforts from 1808 to 1817, and that MacCarthy's offer of protection and
service in Freetown was to be considered seriously, but left the final decision
to the missionaries. In August 1817 mysterious fires again destroyed mission
buildings. The decision to abandon the missions in the upper Pongo at Bas­
saya and Canofee was made in November, and the missionaries left the upper
river for Freetown. The Society's missions at Gambier likewise failed to pro­
duce students trained in native languages and lasted only until 1815. The
mission on the Iles de Los survived only for a year; again the victim to reckless
accusations of slave trading made by missionaries. The Kaporo mission
remained active for nearly another decade, perhaps suggesting that the Society
refused to completely abandon the notion of a Susu Mission until it became
clear that much of the Society's objectives could be obtained through close
cooperation with authorities connected with the colony.

Conclusion
Events, correspondence from missionaries and minutes from the Society's
leadership in London clearly indicate that the transition of the Society's objec­
tive in Africa from an exclusive focus on missions to Africans to one that included service to the government and administrators in Freetown was an incremental and unexpected one that began even before the Susu Mission in the Rio Pongo was implemented in 1808. The decision of the missionaries in 1807 to jettison Hartwig in favor of a collective consensus and a subsequent reversal by the Society's General Committee to formalize an ongoing arrangement with the Company/Colony dramatically changed the Society's course on the West African coast. Not only would the Society supply the colony with a chaplain and a superintendent for its schools, but its missionaries in the Pongo would assist British policy and provide officials at Freetown with information regarding events along the coast, including persistent slave trading. To be sure, the Society continued to pursue its earlier objective of educating Africans to become catechists and eventually missionaries, but within the Pongo context that objective was frustrated by continued slave trading and by circumstances within the river that made that mission unproductive. The choice made in 1816-1817 to accept a greater administrative role and missionary presence at Freetown led to abandonment of the Susu Mission, but not necessarily the cessation of the Society's commission to learn African languages and train Africans as a vanguard for conversion. In this instance, however, conversion was to follow the flag rather than to anticipate it, and to attain it within the context and protection of British imperial policy.

At another level, however, the Church Missionary Society was experimenting with objectives during its early years that emphasized repayment for wrongs brought to Africa as a consequence of slave trading. In that instance, imperial agendas were dismissed and minimized as parcels of worldly policy, and the Society sought to distance itself from the trap of settlements and colonial entanglements. Essentially, the Society focused its early activities within a separate Susu Mission, and it acquiesced to a role within Freetown only as an unintended consequence of circumstances then existing on Africa's Windward Coast. Continuing slave trading and the inopportune selection of contentious missionaries complicated the Society's efforts. Moreover, the presence of large and ever increasing numbers of Liberated Africans at Freetown after 1811 changed the dynamic of the Society's goals and the role that it was to play within British imperial policy. If the Society intentionally sought to maintain a distance from worldly policy at its inception in 1799, by 1817 that had changed to at least a participatory role, but one that would support an agenda that emphasized service to Africans—even if that assisted imperial policy at the same time.
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Notes


3. I am indebted to Andrew Porter, George Brooks, Victoria Bombs Cofman and Cassandra Pybus who read early drafts and provided valuable suggestions.


5. Horne (1815: ix) wrote that his colleague (unnamed) arrived in Sierra Leone after him, remained only four months, and left for service in the West Indies. For Gilbert, see Falconbridge 1967: 142-144. Falconbridge (1967: 170) dates Horne's arrival at Freetown after Gilbert's departure from Sierra Leone. In her journal entry from 15 January 1793, however, she mentions that Gilbert had again arrived at Freetown, this time in the company of Zachary Macaulay.

6. Fyfe 1962: 38, 51-52; Schwarz 2007: passim; Schwarz 2004: 6-7; Schwarz (ed.) 2002: xv-xiv; Orchard 1998: 144-146; Horne 1810; Smith 1971: 307-308. In Horne (1815: v-x) described his Sierra Leone experience, noting that his plan to establish a mission was 'unfounded and chimerical' and suggesting that missionaries needed to be sent only in groups. Horne particularly advised that missionaries be unmarried when they left England. Above all, he cautioned that missionaries could not live in Freetown but 'must, I confess, become inhabitants of the native villages'. During the period of the Province of Freedom, Peter Frazer, formerly a Presbyterian, acted as the first chaplain at Freetown. According to Porter (2004: 46) Frazer lasted only ten months and then returned to Britain.


8. Hochschild (2005: 232-255) described Macaulay as a 'priggish, somber young man', 'unpopular with the black settlers, ... opposed to self-government, quick to order corporal punishment, and fixated on blasphemy and sin', and 'humotless and unlikable'.


11. Fyfe 1962: 6; Religious Tract Society 1836: 64-65. According to Smith (1971: 310) the Plan specifically recommended that 'six Families [of laymen] will be a suitable number in the [defaced] for this Undertaking'. Indeed (1971: 311), Coke had intended to accompany this group to Timbo but for some reason did not follow through. In this instance, Macaulay suggested that these Methodists remain at Freetown for seasonings before entering the interior. En route to Sierra Leone, however, Macaulay noted significant dissent among them, and upon arriving at Freetown the wives refused to accept the reality that they would be required to perform physical labor. Macaulay concluded that they were ill fitted to venture to Timbo (1971: 311-4).


13. Fyfe 1963: 76; Walls 1996: 168; Religious Tract Society 1836: 65-73; Walker 1845: 170-173; Smith 1900: 122-136. For the course of the Company's commercial activities at Freeport and conditions in the Rio Pongo before 1798, see Mouser 1973: 45-64; Hair 1963: 6-7; Jakobsson 1972: 118. Walker (1845: 172) observed that before Greig's death he 'spoke Soooo like a native'.

14. For details of the Fernandez family at Bouremaya, see Mouser 1998: passim.

15. For Brunton, see Brunton 1802; Hair 1965: 38-53; Hair 1962: 45-47; Hair 1961: 683-684; Christian Observer August 1802: 537-538; Groves 1862: 213; Choules and Smith 1842: 213ff; Seddai 1874: 54-56. For the Clapham academy, see Mouser 2004: 87-103; Hair 1896: 48-50. Walker (1845: 181-183) claimed that the Society had first considered Freetown/Sierra Leone to be its mission target, and that Brunton's publications and enthusiasm were sufficient to change that objective to Susu Country. Walls (2002: 95) noted that '[t]he birth of the missionary movement in Britain coincided with the development of the public campaign against the Atlantic slave trade. Supporters of the one movement were usually supporters of the other; and the parliamentary leaders against the slave trade were evangelical humanitarians who were mostly enthusiastic supporters of missions. They were also practical politicians who combined their moral stance against slavery with economic arguments against slavery as an economic institution'. For a recent brief description of Clapham Common at the end of the eighteenth century and of the Clapham group, see Hochschild 2005: 250-255.


18. Several histories of the CMS and the Susu mission have been written by clergy, and many have been published by the CMS. The best regarded include Hole 1896; Walker 1845.


22. Jakobsson 1972: 122-123; CAIE 57, Hartwig to Pratt, 10 May 1806 (Mouser and Mouser, eds. 2003: 50) and CAIE 89, Ludiam to Pratt, 20 December 1806 (ibid.: 72).
23. Porter 2004: 92-98. See also Porter 1985: 597-621. Porter (1985: 597) cited Bishop Samuel Wilberforce as writing in 1860: 'In the first place, there is little hope of promoting commerce in Africa, unless Christianity is planted in it; and, in the next place, there is very little ground for hoping that Christianity will be able to make its proper way unless we can establish a lawful commerce in the country.'

24. Ajayi (2004?) addressed the issue of church/state and mission/empire with a particular focus on interactions between Church and state in eighteenth-century Britain. Citing Walls, Ajayi reviewed the perception that evangelicals had rallied against 'nominal Christianity' in favor of a more robust form and within a British context. In effect, the state was to be transformed, with people following afterward. In the instance of mission/empire, Ajayi suggested that many evangelicals viewed the state and empire as a gift of 'Providence' that should be exploited and nurtured. Ajayi cited the example of Henry Martyn, who went to India in 1806 and saw no contradiction in serving as both a church chaplain and missionary. Indeed, Ajayi noted that many evangelicals saw slavery and the slave trade as economic issues rather than religious or ethical ones, at the same time asserting that 'it was unquestioned that Freetown was a joint project of Mission and Empire... At the beginning of the 19th century, in spite of the legacy of the separation of Church and State, Evangelicals assumed “Christendom”, and were willing to cooperate loyally with the State'. Stanley (1990: 43, 70-74) emphasized the role of humanitarian objectives in molding CMS and state objectives surrounding the slave trade question. Stanley (1990: 71) also discussed a well-accepted evangelical notion of 'commerce as an instrument of God's providential rule of human affairs'.


26. Much of the following section on Hartwig, Renner and Ludlam is discussed and documented in greater detail in Mouser and Mouser 2003. A transcription of Hartwig's journals and letters is found in ibid., and in Mouser and Mouser, eds. (2003: passim). See also Stock 1899: 83-91; Walker 1845: 192-219; Johnson 1953: 22-25.

27. CAIEI, 116b, Hartwig journal, entries for 13 and 16 December 1805 (Mouser and Mouser 2003: 85); CAIEI, 30, Hartwig Journal, 17 February 1806 (Mouser and Mouser, eds. 2003: 33).

28. Note: similar arguments consumed those in the Society who were fascinated with theological debate.

29. For reports produced by Bright and Smith, see Mouser 1979.

30. Hull Library, T. P. Thompson Papers, DTH/1/2, Macaulay to Ludlam, 7 November 1807. For this period of deliberation within the Society's general committee, see Hole 1896: 128-130.


32. CAIEI, 92, Nylander to Pratt, 20 January 1807 (Mouser and Mouser, eds., 2003: 78-80).

33. Ibid.; Mouser and Mouser (2003: 41). No correspondence in the German language was located in the archive, although there were occasional mentions that letters in German had been translated. No notations on letters used in this research indicated that they had been originally written in German.

34. CAIEI, 93, Hartwig to Pratt, 27 January 1807, CAIEI, 94, Nylander to Pratt, 27 January 1807, and CAIEI, 95, Hartwig to Pratt, 29 January 1807 (Mouser and Mouser, eds., 2003: 80-82).
35. CAI/E1/109, Nylander to Pratt, 8 July 1807 (Mouser and Mouser, eds., 2003: 104-107). Hole (1896: 131) argued that the 21 April resolutions were 'inadvertently passed'—a 'mishap'—by the General Committee, with 'consequences they neither foresaw nor desired'.

36. CAI/E1/109, Nylander to Pratt, 8 July 1807 (Mouser and Mouser, eds., 2003: 104-107); CAI/E1/110, Nylander to Pratt, 10 July 1807 (Mouser and Mouser, eds., 2003: 107-108). It is uncertain whether these were Nylander's words. Missionaries were permitted to write letters in German, but none in German for this period were found in the CMS Archive.

37. CAI/E1, 119b, Quarterly letter, 1 July 1807 (Mouser and Mouser, eds., 2003: 103-104).

38. Hull University Library, J. P. Thompson papers, DHT1/2, Z. Macaulay to Ludlam, 7 November 1807. According to Hole (1896: 132) at the 12 October meeting in London Alexander Macaulay had praised Renner, but he also noted that 'all the rest [of the missionaries] were deficient in energy. not visiting the huts, not catechising the children or people, not learning the language'.

39. Hole 1896: 133. Hanciles (2002: 13) telescoped the mission history of this period from 1804 to 1817 into only two paragraphs, with several errors in fact and chronology. McMillin (2004: 106-110) noted that American slavers 'flocked to the coast of Africa' during 1807, with the effect that the coastal market was flooded with trade goods from America. Slaves were in high demand and in short supply relative to goods brought across the Atlantic. This was especially true for the Windward Coast, which was closest to American buyers and where smaller American vessels preferred to trade. Even so, McMillin (2004: 111) wrote that slave 'imports skyrocketed' in Charleston, South Carolina, in the final months of 1807.

40. Much of this section on developments within the Rio Pongo is taken from Hole (1896) whose version is drawn largely from minutes of the Society's General Committee in London, covers only the period to 1815, and provides only one lens for events transpiring in Africa. More detailed and interpretive descriptions are found in Stock 1899: 134-139; Jakobsson 1892: 142; Religious Tract Society 1836, 90-169; Walker 1845, 220-500; Choul, and Smirh 1842, 559-567.

41. Lord James Gambier was a distinguished member of Parliament and former admiral of the fleet who supported the efforts of the Church Missionary Society. He served as president of the Society from 1812 until 1833.

42. Stock 1899: 135; Barrow 1900, 17-18, 26-33.

43. For events leading up to the Hartwigs' deaths, see Mouser and Mouser 2003: 52-57.

44. For continued slave trading in the Pongo region into mid-century see Howard 2006: 23-49; Mouser 1971.

45. Thorpe 1815: 144-148. See also Pratt and Pratt 1849: 107-110.

46. The most important venue for publishing these letters was in the annual Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society.


48. Pratt and Pratt 1849: 120. For an interpretation of Bickersteth's visit, see Birks 1851: 274-306. Birks argued that while the Rio Pongo had been a promising mission objective in 1807-1808, conditions had changed sufficiently by 1816 to make the Freetown settlement a much more favorable setting for the Society's efforts and resources on the
coast. The objective of carrying the message to 'heathens' could be just as easily carried out in Freetown as in the Rio Pango.

49. Porter (2004: 66) concluded that a 'partnership' between the Society and the colony had emerged under Maxwell's and MacCarthy's governorships.

50. Jakobsson 1972: 57, 132, 176-182. Bledsoe (1992: 187) wrote that 'the two general aims of colonial authorities and missionaries—gentrification and conversion, respectively—were intertwined. Missionaries insisted that students embrace the lessons imparted in school as a sign of religious and cultural conversion. And government schools viewed Christianity as basic to a civilized society'. Bledsoe (1992: 188) argued that captive children, and there were many without parents at Freetown, represented both a significant problem for the colony and a unique opportunity for the Society by providing a 'tabula rasa state' upon which to build Christian values and create catechists and missionaries. Ajayi (2004) wrote that by 1814, the number of captives arriving at Freetown was increasing 'by about 3,000 annually'.

51. Jakobsson 1972: 155, 183-184. Hastings (1994: 186) put it more directly: 'MacCarthy was insistent that the CMS give up its pointless mission to the Susu and concentrate instead on civilizing and Christianizing the captives so as to turn Sierra Leone into an orderly Anglican society. The CMS sent out Edward Bickersteth in 1816 to inspect, and he agreed with MacCarthy. They (the CMS missionaries) would take over the management of the villages. In England at that time many a vicar was also a JP. MacCarthy's plan to unify religious and civil functions was not so extraordinary for the age'. Johnson (1953: 25-26) noted that of the 26 missionaries sent by 1816, sixteen had died.


53. Porter (2004: 67) claimed that MacCarthy's promise included 'religious influence, funds for a house and chapel in every [captive] village, clergy salaries, overall organization sufficient to embrace the growing numbers of Liberated Africans and a culturally coherent settlement resting on Christian education'. In Missionary Records (Religions Track Society 1836: 161) Bickersteth is quoted as having said: 'Our German brethren have laboured, their labours are our disgrace, their Christian courage and self-denial our reproach, and in an English colony, they cannot, from their almost necessary ignorance of our language and habits, be so acceptable as Englishmen'. Johnson (1953: 29) listed ten villages composed primarily of Liberated Africans as of 1817. Ajayi (2004) noted that '[m]any missionaries were anxious to go and do battle in Muslim states. But they also often looked over their shoulders to see where they could expect co-operation from traders and protection from state power'. Walls (2002: 96-97) described this dilemma, stating that once colonial rule was established the nature of the missionary task changed: 'The CMS give up its pointless mission to the Susu and concentrate instead on civilizing and Christianizing the captives so as to turn Sierra Leone into an orderly Anglican society. The CMS sent out Edward Bickersteth in 1816 to inspect, and he agreed with MacCarthy. They (the CMS missionaries) would take over the management of the villages. In England at that time many a vicar was also a JP. MacCarthy's plan to unify religious and civil functions was not so extraordinary for the age'. Johnson (1953: 25-26) noted that of the 26 missionaries sent by 1816, sixteen had died.

54. For this event see Mouser 2007: 23; Jakobsson 1972: 159-161.

55. Quoted in Jakobsson 1972: 162.

56. Brian Stanley, 'Patriotism or Nationalism? A Sermon Preached for the Church Mission Society... 14 April 2004', http://www.martynmission.cam.ac.uk/CRSpapers.htm, noted...
that the Society's 1816 resolution to abandon the Susu Mission 'was the most strategic deci­
sion the CMS has ever made'.

57. CAI/E5, 59, Kenneth Macaulay to Pratt, 21 December 1815 (Mouser and Mouser, eds., 2003: 146).

national stripes and national origins proselytized in British colonies, often working with the
full support and authorization of the colonial state, whether to ensure permission to oper­
ate or to secure fiscal subsidies. The state returned the favour by invoking missionary serv­
cices to colonized peoples as a justification for European imperial advance, design­
ing Christianity preeminent among the gifts bestowed upon the rest of the world by western
civilization.... However much missionaries may have intended to befriend the "native",
their presence contributed to the consolidation of European colonial hegemony'.
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