The path to the publication of our collaborative research concerning an aspect of earliest Church Missionary Society history has been an irregular, and often despairing, one. For a time it seemed unlikely that we would ever finish our research, and that was simply the research part of it. The prospect of collaboration by husband and wife, persons trained in disciplines—history and sociology—guided by approaches seemingly opposed to each other, was not a promising one from the start. Simply put, could we cooperate, work through the processes of writing, thinking, and rewriting/rethinking within a single household, and endure the stress associated with meeting demands placed upon us by a publisher and full-time jobs as instructors? Had we been aware that this project would last for nearly thirty years for Bruce and twenty for Nancy, and consume entirely too much of our lives, we are pretty certain—in retrospect—that we would never have embarked on it.

Bruce was the first to encounter the archive of the Church Missionary Society, during his dissertation research in London in 1966. At that time his principal objective was to scan records found in that archive for bits and pieces of data relating to political development and economic transformation of a part of coastal Guinea/Conakry from 1800 to 1850. That was a region where the Church Missionary Society had operated schools and mission stations between 1808 and 1816/17. Among the Society’s earliest missionaries sent to West Africa was one named Peter Hartwig—a person who, according to other missionaries and early historians, had deserted the sacred cause to become a slave trader, and yet had returned to the Society’s service at the eleventh hour, only to die in 1815 in a yellow fever epidemic then sweeping the African coast. Still, something seemed to be amiss in that narrative, for
correspondence found in the archive suggested that it was a very complex affair. It was apparent that a careful review of Hartwig's experiences would be a worthwhile research project, but for a later time.

Research travel to England in 1979 and 1981 and again in 1984 made it possible to revisit that archive, then located at the University of Birmingham. Bruce was still working on other projects, but the letters deserved a second and then a third look. Nancy accompanied him during the last two visits when it was possible for both of us to devote several weeks to reading letters and other documents. In the beginning, Nancy was merely a notetaker, providing a helpful hand to a spouse. We divided the letters for closer treatment and spent our evenings comparing impressions and notes. We had collaborated in a review of Strangers in African Societies edited by William A. Shack and Elliott P. Skinner (Berkeley, 1979), in which one of the strengths had been the fact that scholars from several disciplines had contributed articles using methods from distinctly varying disciplines. In that work Donald Levine had reviewed the literature on strangers and had developed a typology by cross-referencing various intentions of strangers' presence with hosts' responses. While Levine was mainly interested in types of groups (guest, sojourner, newcomer, intruder, inner enemy, marginal man), he noted that his typology could be equally applied to individuals. This was a typology, we thought, that might be applied to Hartwig, for he seemed to represent all "intentions" mentioned by Levine.

For a time, however, it seemed wiser to concentrate on data collection and leave the problem of establishing a common methodology and actual writing for another day. Over the next decade (1985-96), we only occasionally devoted time to, and reached some conclusions about, the Hartwig project. One of those was the decision to transcribe Hartwig's letters and journals because we needed a common base on which to attach a research method and because it became increasingly clear that many letters were emotion-filled and contained words with very specific meanings. Only when those words were actually on paper would we begin to see nuances and how writers used these words over time. Our scheme for transcription expanded significantly to include nearly all correspondence within the CA1/E1 series, and many pieces from CA1/E2-E4, as they related to Hartwig and his problems.

II

Initially, and perhaps naively, we considered the possibility of developing a single methodology and writing the contribution together. Leo Spitzer had successfully and impressively integrated different methods in his Lives in Between: Assimilation and Marginality in Austria,
Brazil, West Africa 1870-1945 (New York, 1989), and we thought it possible to do the same. We had cooperated in the review of Shack and Skinner, and that surely was sufficient evidence that we could collaborate in this project, was it not? Gradually, however, both of us came to identify problems that seemed insurmountable. Bruce was too schooled in narrative history to permit easily the intrusion of models into his interpretation, and he was uncomfortable in reaching conclusions that were not firmly grounded in documentary sources. Nancy was reluctant to engage in psychohistory, for which she was not trained, and to conclude with something that was neither good history nor good sociology. Nancy also would need to construct a process for dealing with letters that provided nearly the totality of sources for her interpretation. Neither of us was interested in integrating two disciplines to such an extent that both of us would have compromised ourselves or our fields and would have become embarrassed with our result. As a consequence, writing went slowly and frustratingly during this phase.

Only in the mid-1990s did it become obvious to us that it would be unlikely that we would ever be able to treat the data within a single analytical approach, for the reasons cited above and because our schedules simply refused to coordinate. Instead, we agreed that Bruce would review Hartwig's period from 1804 to 1815, using a distinctly historical methodology, while Nancy, using a more model-oriented sociological approach, would explore writings about "stranger," "alienation," and "marginal man," as well as other theories that might have application to Hartwig's actions before he left the Society's service in 1807. Happy as beavers in a stream, we embarked on our separate tasks.

Paul Hair of the University of Liverpool read an early draft of Bruce's writing, and eventually of both our contributions and encouraged our work, especially the possibility of providing interpretations from two disciplinary perspectives and the likelihood of including annotated transcriptions of many letters found in the Church Missionary Society's archive. One potential publisher, when we described our separate interpretive chapters and our long appendix of nearly 150,000 words, was enthusiastic to consider and probably publish our work, but only to a maximum of 75,000 words, which likely would have covered only the introduction and our two contributions—everything but the text itself. The monograph series at the Department of History, University of Liverpool, read, considered, and received readers' comments on our full manuscript, but their objection was that it appeared too much to resemble a long series of letters/reports/journals (available, by the way, in Birmingham, only a few miles from Liverpool) with two introductions, one of which was non-historical in nature. In error, we submitted our manuscript to the American
Philosophical Society, which had sponsored two research visits to the archive (1984/1999), for publication in its Transactions series, but they declined. We surmised that their objection lay with the bipolar interpretations and their reader’s suggestion, while enthusiastically recommending the manuscript's publication, that some changes be made.

Discouraged, but presented with detailed suggestions from APS’s reader, the authors considered what they had come to accept as impossible. Nancy was not willing to go through a major rewriting (this wasn’t even her minor field!), but Bruce wanted to give it still another effort. Many ideas from Nancy’s material had already made their way into Bruce’s contribution despite his earlier reservations, but more could be integrated and perhaps a section of Nancy’s work could be added to the manuscript’s conclusion. Over the next year Bruce rewrote the introduction and divided the body into five sections. Many of the APS reader’s suggestions led to substantive changes that served to strengthen the manuscript. Over his shoulder Nancy watched this process, participated in fine-tuning thoughts and language, and checked his accuracy, especially as it related to sociological thought.

III

After one more rejection, we submitted our manuscript to the University of Wisconsin, African Studies Program, for publication in its series of occasional papers.¹ The first volume, Case of the Reverend Peter Hartwig, Slave Trader or Misunderstood Idealist? Clash of Church Missionary Society/Imperial Objectives in Sierra Leone, 1804-1815, includes an introduction and four chapters that describe Hartwig’s experiences as a missionary attached to the Church Missionary Society at a crucial time during that Society’s existence. The Society had begun its venture in Africa with a singular objective of serving Africans and carrying the gospel to the continent. Only once on the coast did the Society find it necessary to accommodate to the requirements of Empire, for it would be the British government that would give them protection and assistance, without which it was unlikely that they could succeed. Central to the evolution of accommodation between missionary venture and imperial designs was the Reverend Hartwig whose experiences on the coast perhaps forced an agreement, of sorts, between Society and government.

For obvious reasons this also was a critical time for Hartwig. Identified by missionaries and historians as a failed missionary, Hartwig was identified as the cause of all the Society’s problems at

¹Both volumes now published.
Sierra Leone, as a person who had become a missionary only to escape conscription into the Prussian army, and as one who left the Society’s service with an obvious intention of becoming a slave trader. We found this interpretation to be misleading and in many respects unfounded. To be sure, Hartwig was not a model missionary, but he did not deserve the charge laid against him by his colleagues and by historians. Hartwig and his experience on the coast provide evidence for many notions associated with the concepts of “alienation” and “marginal man.” His actions were understandable, yet they led to disaster for Hartwig rather than to understanding or reconciliation. To this first volume is attached an appendix of four journals written by Hartwig, covering travels into and observations about Susu and Mandingo areas, where the Society intended to establish its first missions.

IV

The second volume, *The Reverend Peter Hartwig, 1804-1815: A Sourcebook of Correspondence from the Church Missionary Society Archive*, contains an introduction, followed by 121 annotated letters, reports, and journals written by or about Hartwig. This correspondence served as the base documentation for the first volume, and will doubtlessly serve as the foundation for many interpretations that will follow, for these letters are difficult to decipher in their original state, are filled with emotions and contradictions, and lend themselves to differing interpretations depending on the reader. We trust that publication of these letters will provide evidence of the importance of missionary records as a source in historical reconstruction and will encourage researchers to use the Church Missionary Society archive and its vast resources.²

²See Nancy Mouser, “Peter Hartwig: Sociological Perspectives: Marginality and Alienation,” herein following.