

# Ghana

## KWAME BOAKYE KWANIN

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Ghana, officially the Republic of Ghana, is a country in West Africa, bordered by the Gulf of Guinea, Cote D'Ivoire (Ivory Coast) to the west, Burkina Faso to the north, and Togo to the east. The origins of the Adventist presence in Ghana can be traced to literary evangelism back in the 1860s.

## Literature Evangelism and the Birth of the Adventist Church

The origin of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ghana was traced through literature ministry.<sup>1</sup> It was linked to the activities of a lady called Hannah More, who was a missionary serving for another denomination in West Africa but accepted Seventh-day Adventist doctrines while home in Massachusetts on furlough.<sup>2</sup> She returned to the west coast of Africa with her new belief and shared her faith through literature in many mission stations in West Africa. The practice of spreading Adventist beliefs and messages through the distribution of literature beyond America was particularly very much alive between 1863 and the turn of the century.<sup>3</sup>

There were no direct converts from the distribution of literature by Hannah More in 1863 along the west coast of Africa. But Owusu-Mensa strongly suggests that the lady's work must have penetrated some hearts in Ghana with the Adventist message in later years.<sup>4</sup> He supports his submission on the grounds that J. D. Hayford, who lived in Sekondi, a major port of call for ships visiting the coast of Ghana in the nineteenth century, was a pioneer Seventh-day Adventist believer in Ghana.<sup>5</sup> However, he admits that Hayford was not among the first group who were baptized by Dudley Upton Hale, an ordained Adventist minister of the gospel on March 27, 1897, probably at Cape Coast or Apam.<sup>6</sup> Hale landed in Ghana on Oct 3, 1895; but surprisingly J.D. Hayford was the first Adventist in Ghana to meet the new Seventh-day Adventist missionary from America, Dudley U. Hale, on



"Dolphijn's hand," a monument at the coast of Apam commemorating the origin of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ghana, c. 1888.

Photo courtesy of Kwame Boakye Kwanin.

September 29, 1895.<sup>7</sup> Quoting from the *Diary of Dudley U. Hale*, superintendent of the SDA Mission in West Africa from March 25, 1895, to May 15, 1897, Owusu-Mensa asserts that Hayford assisted him (Hale) in one of his religious services on board the ship at night.<sup>8</sup> Again Kofi adds that Hale on his preliminary visits along the coastal area of Ghana, scouting for a place for the headquarters, stopped over at J. D. Hayford's home at Shama for breakfast.<sup>9</sup>

Consequently, it was this same J. D. Hayford that Arthur G. Daniells, president of the General Conference, met in London in May 1902 and whom he described as a "brother brought up a Christian, and educated for gospel work."<sup>10</sup> Again it is revealed that J. D.'s brother, Dr. I. J. Hayford, gave Dudley U. Hale a hearty welcome when he (Hale) visited Axim, west of Sekondi. So, these Hayfords seem to have acquainted themselves with Adventism through literature ministry of some people like Hannah More, George Drew, and many others along the west coast of Africa. Also, they might have been converted into Adventism through this literature before the arrival of missionaries. No wonder Scott Moreau, Gary Corwin, and Gary McGee submit that "Wherever one goes in the world, God is already there. He is intimately interested in every person in the world right from the start. Because of this intense interest in every person, God is in the process of making Himself known long before missionaries arrive on the scene."<sup>11</sup>

In another development, Francis I. U. Dolphijn of Apam, who other scholars and observers refer to as one of the earliest indigenous Seventh-day Adventist converts in 1888 in Ghana, also received his conversion through literature.<sup>12</sup> According to a different tradition, William Kweku Atta Dawson, who was from Fetteh in the Gomoa district of Fanteland in Ghana, brought the Adventist message to Ghana in the nineteenth century. The Dawson Tradition says that Dawson was a merchant dealing in rubber along the coast of West Africa. In one of these trips, he visited America and might have come in contact with Adventism in the 1870s or 1880s and got baptized. He returned to Ghana and shared his new beliefs with people including his own friend Francis I. U. Dolphijn.<sup>13</sup> Dolphijn, being a Methodist, was a bit skeptical about the Sabbath truth. But after reading a lot of tracts about the Sabbath truth, he was convinced and became an Adventist in 1888. Dolphijn then linked with the General Conference and other organizations of the Adventist movement for more information and help.<sup>14</sup>

## Francis I. U. Dolphijn

Moreover, the Dawson tradition has it that Dolphijn became more active in Adventism than Dawson. He died early around 1910.<sup>15</sup> Consequently, the current Seventh-day Adventists across Ghana have the conviction and understanding and accept the year 1888 as the origin of the church in Ghana. Church building and a monument had been built at Apam, Ghana, in honor of Adventist roots there. These monuments along the coast of Apam in Ghana had been erected to authenticate Adventists' origin in the place. One hundred years' anniversary was celebrated massively in 1988 with the presence of Neal C. Wilson, former president of the General Conference, gracing the occasion; and, subsequently, the 125 years' anniversary was also celebrated in grand style in 2013.

All kinds of regalia were used to mark this eventful anniversary. By 1890 he had built a company of some fifteen SDA believers at Apam using the papers like the *Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald* and *Signs of the Times*.

Before the General Conference sent the missionaries to Ghana in late 1893, Dolphijn of Apam was the most outstanding leader of the Adventist faith in Ghana. Through the reading of copies of *Present Truth* distributed by the International Trust Society, he enhanced his knowledge and understanding of Adventism. Because of Dolphijn's commitment, Mrs. S. L. Strong, the General Corresponding Secretary of the International Tract and Missionary Society of the General Conference, spoke persuasively about the believers in Ghana during the 1891 session and the support they needed from America.<sup>16</sup> By 1891 33 believers had accepted to keep the Sabbath truth in Apam through efforts of Dolphijn.<sup>17</sup> There were challenges to the work on the west coast of Africa. Few among many challenges suggested by Gordon R. Doss<sup>18</sup> impeded the work in Africa, including the former Gold Coast where Dolphijn found himself are: (1) church members have a problem of spiritual lethargy and dual allegiance that diminishes their participation in evangelism, (2) conversion is often seen as a move toward upward mobility. New converts expect their material needs to be satisfied by the church. If not, they may drop out, (3) membership growth sometimes outpaces the construction of new church buildings, (4) Adventists in Africa have an inadequate strategy for addressing African traditional religions/cultural context even for people who are Christians, (5) social-cultural-religions analysis is usually not done beforehand as part of making an evangelist strategy for a particular place, and (6) spiritual counseling is not provided alongside evangelism.

Admittedly, the church in Africa has always been confronted with challenges, but the scope and intensity of its challenges now seem to be greater for Dolphijn: Saturday instead of Sunday, monogamous marriage instead of polygamous marriage, abstaining from drinking and some eating of meat. But, in spite of all these challenges, he worked hard to reach out to many people at Apam and its surrounding towns with the Adventist message. Again he wrote letters upon letters to the General Conference requesting more literature and missionaries. Finally the General Conference gave attention to the request of Dolphijn for the work in West Africa by sending Lawrence Chadwick in September 1892, and a budget of \$1,300 was allocated for the work in Africa.<sup>19</sup> A report sent to the General Conference about the work in the Gold Coast (Ghana) by Chadwick inspired Karl G. Rudolph and Edward Leroy Sanford to become full-time workers and missionaries in Ghana in 1893. Therefore, on February 22, 1894, Rudolph and Sanford arrived at Apam in Ghana.<sup>20</sup> Sanford, after working for some five months, went back to America because of malaria. For two years Rudolph did a remarkable work by making more contacts and expanding the mission. But he moved the mission station from Apam to Cape Coast on September 10, 1894.<sup>21</sup> Rudolph teamed up with Dolphijn and with some converts in Adventism made a great move to send the Adventist message to the hinterland, Ashanti, and beyond.

## The Work in Nzimaland

There was another batch of missionaries who were also sent to augment the work in Ghana in 1895 headed by Dudley Upton Hale. The rest were G. P. Riggs and Mr. and Mrs. George Thomas Kerr.<sup>22</sup> Hale and his team worked heavily in the far west of Cape Coast, Ahanta, and Nzimaland. Hale went back to America, which nearly slowed down activities of Adventism in 1897. But still the devoted Dolphijns and Hayfords worked feverishly to rekindle the flame of Adventism along the coast of Ghana. Hale returned with his family on March 3, 1903, and later James M. Hyatt and his wife followed. They did all in their capacity to grow the work in Ghana. This time they introduced the idea of education. However, in mid-1905 Hale and Hyatt decided to move the headquarters to Kikam in the Nzimaland.<sup>23</sup> The convert of Christian Abraham Ackah, who lived in Cape Coast but hailed from Kikam in the Nzimaland, brought the dream of education to fruition.<sup>24</sup> Ackah teamed up with Hale and Hyatt and worked tirelessly in the Nzimaland to win more people into Adventism. The Nzima's, being Akan, believe that Saturday is the "Day of the Lord Our God."<sup>25</sup> This inexplicably confirms that the knowledge and the understanding of God have representation within the roots of African culture.

So, the concept of Sabbath being Saturday was not unknown to the Nzimas. With the influx of many converts, the first school was started in September 1908 at Kikam. It is reported that as of October 27, 1908, the Kikam Seventh-day Adventist school had thirty-six members.<sup>26</sup> Many more schools were opened in the Nzimaland, which enabled Adventism to spread amazingly rapidly in that territory. Thankfully, on October 19, 1909, Kikam Seventh-day Adventist Church, with 34 members, became the first church to be organized in Ghana by D. C. Babcock. Kikam produced gallant workers like C. A. Ackah, J. K. Garbrah, Moses Andoh, Papa Amoo, Arthur Essien, Kofi Christian, apart from Dolphijns, Hayfords, and Dawsons.<sup>27</sup>

## The Work in Agona and Beyond

Many great attempts that had been made by the pioneer missionaries including native Ghanaians like Dolphijns and Hayfords to reach out to the Ashantis with the Adventist message in the early twentieth century proved unsuccessful. However, challenges faced by Adventism in Nzimaland forced the missionaries to scout for places in the interior, Ashanti region, and beyond. Firstly, around 1913 and 1914 Kikam Adventism experienced challenges because of the poor lifestyle of members. Secondly, bad teachings of the Harris Movement, led by Prophet William Wade Harris, had a negative influence on Adventism in Nzimaland.<sup>28</sup>

Consequently, William Lewis and his team had no choice and determined that they would have to infiltrate the interior part of Ghana with the Adventist message. But before their journey to the Ashanti region and beyond, he made an important search about the place from the colonial British governor by writing a letter on October 21, 1914.<sup>29</sup> Tradition has it that it was ascertained that the paramount chief of Agona Traditional Area, Nana Kwame Boakye was the only chief who supported the British governor during the Yaa Asantewaa War in 1900 and 1901. Nana Boakye's support for the Whites was of good intention. Tradition has it that he thought Nana Prempeh 1 had been exiled to Seychelles since January 1896 by these Whites. So, fighting the Whites in 1900

and 1901 might aggravate the problem, which would probably lead to the death of Nana Prempeh 1 by the Whites. Therefore, he supported the Whites in order to persuade them to bring back his king.<sup>30</sup>

Subsequently, the chief of Agona, Nana Kwame Boakye, who happened to be the grandfather of the writer, was recommended by the British governor to Lewis as one who would receive him (Lewis) heartily being a white man in the hinterland. So, Lewis and his team were advised to make contact with Nana Kwame Boakye first before any other chief in Ashanti because of his (Nana Boakye) positive inclination to the Whites. True to the recommendation on October 24, 1914, Nana Kwame Boakye warmly received Lewis and his team without hesitation.<sup>31</sup> Again, Nana Kwame Boakye discovered that his name “Kwame born of Akan, believed in the same God that Lewis and his team would want to bring into his territory.<sup>32</sup> Interestingly, he (Nana Kwame Boakye) had a tremendous palace, and he immediately assigned some rooms to Lewis and his team to begin their work straightaway. Paul Hiebert has remarked, “If we develop positive attitudes of appreciation and acceptance of the host people, we have laid the foundations for learning their culture and becoming one with them.”<sup>33</sup> Because, by custom and tradition Nana Boakye’s people knew the Supreme Being, the God of Saturday, Onyamee Kwaame Akans also knew that the Saturday Sabbath comes from the sinless world in which there was neither Jew nor Gentile.<sup>34</sup> Thus, they link Saturday to God directly; thus, they call God “*Otwieduapon Kwame*.”<sup>35</sup>

Again, Nana Kwame Boakye’s warm reception of Adventism in 1914 partly came from his indomitable desire for European education, which the church proposed.<sup>36</sup> Nana Boakye did all he could to make Lewis and his team feel at home in Agona. Before his death on April 10, 1915, he had sent his chief security advisor, Paul Ansa, to be a member of the Adventist church in order to feed him (Nana Boakye) with information.<sup>37</sup> Interestingly Paul Ansa became a changed person--no more drinking, no more idol worship, and no more unclean meat. Lewis Walton has said, “The only truly good news my gospel can offer to others is that I am not only forgiven, I am changed.”<sup>38</sup> From Agona the Adventist message spread like wildfire. Surrounding towns like Wiawmoase, Asamang, Ntonso, Afamanso, Akrofonso, Abipoa, Kofiase, Bedomase, Yonso, Odumasi, Mampong and many more had received the Adventist message between 1915 and 1919. Adventism also spread to mid-north of Ghana to Atebubu, Kwamedanso, Techiman, and Nkoranza areas. Agona then became “Jerusalem” for Adventism in the interior part of Ghana. In 1915 a vast parcel of land was bequeathed to the Adventist Church for the purposes of church buildings and schools. Observers have said that on this land was a tree called “*Onyina Brempong*”<sup>39</sup> where a great shrine of Agona was located.<sup>40</sup> Tradition has it that Nana Boakye established a deal with Lewis that if he was able to fell the tree, “*Onyina Brempong*,” that parcel of land would be given to him (Lewis) for free. Observers said that after intensive prayer by Lewis and his team for many days, the tree was felled. It was a mystery to the townfolk and drew many people into Adventism in the area. By the close of 1917, Lewis raised a beautiful church building in the very place where “*Onyina Brempong*” had been for the worship of Saturday God.<sup>41</sup>

## Education as an Evangelistic Tool

Education is paramount for the development and progress of the Adventist Church. However, before 1915 there was no Adventist school in the interior part of Ghana. As the church took off in Agona in 1915, Lewis and his team incorporated informal education in the church's activities using the premises of Nana Kwame Boakyé's palace.<sup>42</sup> Many citizens of Agona were taught how to read and write using the Bible under the supervision of J. K. Garbrah and Kofi Christian. Between 1917 and 1919 with the foundation laid by Lewis, Thomas Baker put up a nice one-story building for school and made it a boarding school.<sup>43</sup>

Many students from Agona, Asamang, Ntonso, Kofiase, Wiawmoase, and many places in the country converged at Agona to have an Adventist education. The boarding school at Agona was significant for some reasons. Apart from academic exercises, the teachers prepared the students to use the Bible for missions and trained them to use the hand to support their livelihood. The middle school at Agona became also a training ground for the indigenous workers in Ghana.<sup>44</sup> In 1920 many students from Nzimaland had their training and joined the workforce.

Thankfully, J. K. Garbrah, who had supported the work in the coastal area and in the Ashanti region as teacher-pastor, was ordained into the gospel ministry in Sierra Leone on April 23, 1921.<sup>45</sup> Some of the students of the school at Agona who later supported the work were C. B. Mensah, J. K. Amoah, A. Agyei, A. K. Amofa, the Essiens, and many more. In the early years the school in Agona was headed by the missionaries: Lewis, the pioneer teacher, L. F. Langford, Fielding, Clifford, Munson, and others. But from 1947 onwards some indigenous persons who were trained in the school had the opportunity to head the school. Some teachers like R. K. Antwi, E. K. Agyeman, D. K. Aboasu, and C. K. Boateng headed their alma mater.<sup>46</sup>

## The Work in Kumasi

Agona and its surrounding towns had been impacted by the Adventist message between 1915 and the early part of 1921. And Agona became the headquarters of Adventism in these years in the Gold Coast. Owusu-Mensah quoting Clifford says that 1921 began with 97 baptized members and 364 Sabbath School members, but by the end of the year the statistics stood at 242 and 544 respectively.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, in 1923, L. F. Langford transferred the West African headquarters from Waterloo, Sierra Leone, to Agona, Gold Coast. However, Adventism was not known in the garden city, Kumasi—the seat of the Ashanti kingdom. So, on October 12, 1921, J. K. Garbrah, with new zeal after ordination, supported by Jesse Clifford and Thomas Baker, began the work in Kumasi. They moved the headquarters from Agona to Kumasi in 1924.<sup>48</sup> They did a great work in Kumasi. Garbrah being an educationist opened a school in Kumasi. With the commitment by laymen from Agona, Ntonso, Kofiase, Wiawmoase, the work also grew in Kumasi. Under the leadership of Langford, the West African field got the name West African Union Mission. Good work done in Kumasi by some workers like T. H. Fielding, A. K. Amofa, and J. K. Amoah in subsequent years expanded the work in Kumasi.

## The Work at Bekwai and Beyond

In 1927 J. J. Hyde moved the headquarters back to Agona. But the second missionary work of Jesse Clifford in Ghana in 1931 changed the entire mission system. Clifford discovered a new place where communication would be more feasible than Agona and Kumasi. He realized that Bekwai could be fitted for these communication opportunities.<sup>49</sup> Bekwai was closer to the Takoradi harbor, which had been opened in 1928. It was also along the railway line from Takoradi to Kumasi, and receiving things abroad would not be difficult. Thus, in 1932 Clifford moved the headquarters finally from Agona to Bekwai. Clifford, being a good evangelist, did all he could to expand the work in the Bekwai area. From 1932 to 1949 Clifford developed Adventism to the admiration of many people. His mentee was I. K. Ansong, who later became the principal of the training college at Agona in 1970-1975. Although Clifford was not very much into education as he was in evangelism, his leadership role in establishing the Seventh-day Adventist Training College in 1932 cannot be overemphasized. By 1939 the training college had been elevated to a full-fledged institution under the headship of Charles A. Barlett. Some pioneer students at Bekwai in 1939 were Andrews Agyei, B. Y. Berkoo, J. K. Boateng, Felix Donkor, S. K. Essel, and David Mensah.<sup>50</sup> The training school attracted many people all over the country and beyond to Bekwai. There was also a one-year gospel training program running in 1948 at Bekwai. So, seminary and teacher-training programs were simultaneously pursued at Bekwai. Many basic schools had been opened by Adventists in the Bekwai area. By the time Clifford was leaving Ghana in 1948, the Adventist membership stood at 4,681 while non-baptized membership was 1,267.<sup>51</sup> By the time they had made progress in education, many Ghanaians had gotten to know Adventists. Clifford headed the church in Ghana between 1932 to 1948, but he maintained Agona as a district temporarily headed by F. L. Stokes.

The work in the Koforidua area was also growing in 1931 due to the activities of a small membership in Osiem, being the cradle of Adventism in eastern Ghana. So, in 1935 or early 1936 Clifford transferred F. L. Stokes from Agona to Koforidua to begin a new mission station.<sup>52</sup> This transfer created some vacuum at Agona. This shortage of new leaders to grow Adventism impeded the growth of Adventism in Ghana. Always the missionaries would have to move from place to place within a short period. Hiebert asserts, "Missionaries argued that young churches should learn to support themselves, that continued reliance on outside support created a dependency that hindered their maturation and growth."<sup>53</sup> Stokes and his team were able to impact places like Osino, Kwawu, Nsawam, Akuapem, Akyem areas, Begoro, Asaman Tamfoe, Asokore, and even Accra with the Adventist message. The work in Koforidua and its environs grew. From Koforidua the Adventist message entered Accra.

## Jesse Gibson

In 1948 Jesse Gibson took over the leadership of the church from Clifford. Before Gibson's presidency, he had secured a parcel of land in Osu, Accra, between 1946 and 1947 through his good friend K. A. Gbedemah, a

politician and businessman who had also become an Adventist.<sup>54</sup> Today it is now headquarters of the Southern Ghana Union Conference. Again Gibson moves the Ghana headquarters from Bekwai to Kumasi in 1949 because of challenges missionaries and workers faced in traveling. Although Gibson spent three years in a leadership position in Ghana (1949–1951), his administrative skills and organizational abilities repositioned the work for effective supervision. He began the creation of districts making the areas easier to manage and for proper evaluation of work in Ghana. C. B. Mensah headed Agona Mission District, the Bekwai and Koforidua mission stations were administered by two foreigners; namely, H. J. Welch and D. J. Clarke, respectively, and J. K. Amoah was appointed to head Kete-Krachie Mission District.<sup>55</sup> Also, J. M. Arloo was made head of the Techiman Mission District and S. B. Essien, who formally began mission work in 1914, became the leader of the Winneba Mission District. Gibson and P. H. Stearman (secretary-treasurer) supervised the entire work in Ghana from Kumasi.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, Gibson secured a parcel of land at Kwadaso-Kumasi within his tenure.<sup>57</sup> The Adventist message had spread throughout Volta North in the early 1940s in towns like Bodada, Kagyakrom, Jiasekan, and other villages. From the northern Volta, Adventism spread to the northern regions in the 1950s under the gallant worker named E. B. Akyiano.<sup>58</sup> He headed the work in Tamale and worked among the Dagombas. Although Gibson gave a budget of \$1,000 to support the work in the north, yet the Adventist message had little influence in the north. Tamale was organized into a mission station in 1968.<sup>59</sup>

## The Indigenous Ghanaians' Leadership

Even as missionaries dominated the churches in the nineteenth century, important leaders emerged.<sup>60</sup> This was possible through the effective mentorship, training, and encouragement of the missionaries, and the work in Ghana got into the hands of the indigenous Ghanaians. In 1959 Charles Bennett Mensah, who was ordained in 1945, became the first president of the Ghana Mission of Seventh-day Adventists.<sup>61</sup> C. B. Mensah served the church from 1933 to the time of his election in 1959 as a president. President C. B. Mensah encouraged more laymen into evangelism. He strategically used camp meetings as big platforms for soul winning. C. B. Mensah's presidency initiated and promoted the opening of Asokore Teacher Training College and Agona Teacher Training College in 1962 and 1963 respectively.<sup>62</sup> These colleges became great pathways for Adventist missions. Many students who passed through were impacted positively by Adventist doctrines, and many more converted into the faith. Thankfully, these two colleges are in existence today serving remarkable mission purposes resulting in many baptisms every quarter. C. B. Mensah's administration brought many souls into Adventism: membership of 4,933 in 42 churches he inherited to 10,034 in 56 churches, the membership more than doubling.<sup>63</sup>

Also serving for six years as Ghana Mission president, C. B. Mensah was transferred to the Union in Accra and another capable leader, namely John Kenneth Amoah, became the president of Ghana Mission in 1965. Amoah worked very hard to prepare the Ghana Mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church into conference status. The field was financially strong, and membership grew greatly. In the 1968 Biennial Session at Wiawmoose under the leadership of J. K. Amoah the entire Ghana Mission demanded that the field be organized into a

conference.<sup>64</sup> That year, 1968, the mission reported membership of 11,217 in 61 organized churches. Duncan Eva, the Northern European Division president, who chaired the proceedings, took notice of their demand. Consequently, in the Eleventh Biennial Constituency Session on December 25, 1970, at the SDA Training College, Asokore-Koforidua, Ghana Mission was made a conference with J. K. Amoah as the president and P. R. Lindstrom as secretary-treasurer.<sup>65</sup> This conference status was historic and the first of its kind in the continent of Africa in 1970. Many people from Ghana Conference were sent to other fields in West Africa as missionaries in support of the Adventist work. With the training institutions like the Adventist Seminary of West Africa and the Adventist Missionary College that later became known as Babcock University and Valley View University respectively, many Ghanaian workers have been trained to serve many fields both at home and in the diaspora. In late 1974 32-year-old Matthew Ango Bediako took over from J. K. Amoah as president of the Ghana Conference SDA Church.<sup>66</sup> Bediako and his team worked tirelessly to expand evangelistic activities to all parts of Ghana. He conducted campaigns in Hoehoe, Accra, Kumasi, and many big towns to bring the Adventist Church into the limelight. It was also during his era that women's status was raised by establishing a Vocational Training Institution at Techiman for young ladies in 1974/1975.<sup>67</sup> Again, it was during his tenure that the Central Ghana Conference decided that South Ghana Mission be carved out with Andrews Narh Daitey as president and Accra as its headquarters in 1977.<sup>68</sup> Interestingly, under the leadership of Bediako the laymen were fully prepared to own the church. Laymen supported the growth of the church in all facets: finances and evangelism. Thankfully, during Bediako's administration, a seminary was established at Bekwai in 1979. It was this seminary, born in 1979, which has evolved and matured to today's Valley View University at Oyibi, Accra.<sup>69</sup> Under the leadership of Bediako many new church buildings were built to the glory of God. In 1980 M. A. Bediako was again elected as the president of the West Africa Union Mission headquartered in Accra. He finally moved to Accra in 1981. By this time, 1980, a new division had been created for the work in West and Central Africa and some islands in the Indian Ocean; namely, Africa-Indian Ocean Division, by the General Conference. Robert John Kloosterhuis became the president, Guy S. Valleray the secretary, and Jacob Jonas Nortey became the treasurer.<sup>70</sup> H. V. A. Kuma took over from Bediako in 1980 as the Central Ghana Conference president. But after receiving a call to join the Adventist Seminary of West Africa faculty in March 1984, he moved to Nigeria.<sup>71</sup> P. K. Asare became the next Central Ghana Conference president in 1984. When Bediako joined the General Conference as field secretary, Asare moved to the Union as president in 1985.

The departure of P. K. Asare to head West Africa Union Mission brought in W. G. Mensah as the president of the Central Ghana Conference in 1985. His concentration on health infrastructure was so noticeable. The Atibie Hospital being taken over by the government around 1973 during the time of J. K. Amoah discouraged Adventists not to accept any agency agreement to run health facilities. So, a new clinic that started at Asamang during Bediako's administration in 1977 became the Adventists bona fide property.<sup>72</sup> In spite of challenges, W. G. Mensah's administration did well to open more hospitals and clinics in towns and villages. Onwe, Kwadaso,

Amoanapraso, Wiawmoase, Kofikrom, Asawinso, Nnoboam, Kortwia, Dadieso, and Konkoma health centers were established between the period of 1985 and 1998.<sup>73</sup> It was during his tenure that Mid-West Ghana Mission with Sunyani as headquarters was carved out of the Central Ghana Conference in 1986. K.O. Amoyaw was made the president of the Mid-West Ghana Mission.<sup>74</sup> Again, in 1997, under his leadership Central Ghana Conference was organized into two—Central Ghana Conference with headquarters at Kwadaso-Kumasi with W. G. Mensah as president and South Central Ghana Conference with headquarters at Amakom-Kumasi with Israel Nana-Tuffour as president.<sup>75</sup>

## Conclusion

The Church in Ghana now is leading in evangelism, membership, workforce, and finance in the West-Central Africa Division. The church has grown in Ghana and is organized under two unions (Northern Ghana Union Mission and Southern Ghana Union Conference) with an estimated membership of nearly two-hundred fifty-seven thousand and 1,773 churches in 2018.<sup>76</sup> It has impacted many Ghanaian communities with the establishment of Adventist primary and secondary schools, humanitarian work of ADRA, Valley View University, health services and hospitals<sup>77</sup>, two colleges of education, and a Nursing/Midwifery Training. Ghanaian Adventist immigrants in Europe and America have established many Adventist worship centers in the diaspora practicing their Adventist faith in their native language and contributing to the Adventist Church growth abroad.

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## NOTES

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2. R. W. Schwarz, *Light Bearers to the Remnant: Denominational History Textbook for Seventh-day Adventist College Classes* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing, 1979), 148.
3. Owusu-Mensa, 11.
4. *Ibid.*, 10.
5. *Ibid.*, 11.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. Dudley U. Hale, "Diary of Dudley U. Hale: From March 25, 1895 to May 15, 1897" (Heritage Room, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI), 37; quoted in Kofi Owusu-Mensa, 11.
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11. A. Scott Moreau, Gary R. Corwin, and Gary B. McGee, *Introducing World Missions: A Biblical, Historical and Practical Survey* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2005), 28.
12. Owusu-Mensa, 13.
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*
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19. Owusu-Mensa, 27.
20. Ibid., 33.
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25. Sednak Kojo Duffu Asare Yankson, *Africa's Root in God: the Knowledge of the Creator Embedded in the Indigenous African Culture* (Hempstead, N.Y.: Sankofa Heritage Books, 2007), 118.
26. Kofi Owusu-Mensa, 101.
27. Ibid., 110-111.
28. Ibid., 131-132.
29. Ibid., 139-140.
30. Solomon Amoah, grandson of Paul Ansah (Nana Boakye's treasurer and chief security) of Yonkers, N.Y., interview by author, October 18, 2019, Yonkers, N.Y., notes, Nana Boakye and Yaa Asantewaa Wars 1900/1901.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
33. Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2006), 76.
34. Eriks Galenieks, "The Sabbath Commandment in Exodus 20:8-11," *Adventist Theological Society, Adventist University of Africa Chapter, The Sabbath and the Bible*, Vol. 1 (2017) : 29.
35. *Otwieduapon Kwame*, A name given to God of creation by the Akans in Ghana, and they also believe that Saturday is the day of God.

36. Kofi Owusu-Mensa, 143.
37. Solomon Amoah, interview by author, October 18, 2019, Yonkers N.Y., U.S.A.
38. Lewis R. Walton, *Morning's Trumpet* (Bakerfield, CA, 2001), 85.
39. *Onyina Brempong* was a big tree under which Nana Kwame Boakye kept his gods and was believed to possess divine power, making it difficult to be felled by human beings.
40. Solomon Amoah, interview by author.
41. Ibid.
42. Amofa Agyemang of Agona SDA Church and old teacher of SDA Middle School at Agona, interview by author, December 16, 2019, Agona-Ash, notes, one-hundred-year anniversary of Agona SDA school.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid.
45. Owusu-Mensa, 183.
46. Ibid., 193-195.
47. Ibid., 175.
48. Ibid., 183-190.
49. Ibid., 204.
50. Ibid., 218-219.
51. Ibid., 221.
52. Owusu-Mensa, 210.
53. Paul G. Hiebert, 194.
54. Owusu-Mensa, 235.
55. Ibid., 237.

56. Ibid.
57. Ibid., 236.
58. Ibid., 241.
59. Ibid.
60. Scott, Corwin and McGee, 139.
61. Ibid., 262.
62. Owusu-Mensa, 270.
63. Ibid., 280.
64. Ibid., 291.
65. Ibid., 296.
66. Ibid., 314.
67. M. A. Bediako, president of CGC from 1974 to 1979, interview by author, December 25, 2019, Kumasi, Bediako's leadership in CGC.
68. Ibid.
69. Kofi Owusu-Mensa, *Thirty Years of Valley View University 1979 to 2009, Valley View University Monograph Series*, volume 2 (Accra, Ghana: Advent Press, 2010), 5.
70. Owusu-Mensa, *Ghana Seventh-day Adventism*, 332.
71. Ibid., 333.
72. Ibid., 309.
73. W. G. Mensah, president of CGC from 1985 to 1997, interview by author, December 25, 2019, Kumasi, W. G. Mensah's leadership.
74. Owusu-Mensa, *Ghana Seventh-day Adventism*, 355.
75. W. G. Mensah, interview by author, December 25, 2019.

76. "Northern Ghana Union Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*, accessed January 10, 2020,

<https://www.adventistyearbook.org/entity?EntityID=52483&highlight=Ghana>; "Southern Ghana Union Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*, accessed January 10, 2020, <https://www.adventistyearbook.org/entity?EntityID=13528&highlight=Ghana>.

77. Anyinasaso Seventh-day Adventist Clinic, Kumasi; Akomaa Memorial Adventist Hospital, Bekwai, Ashanti; Apaah Seventh-day Adventist Clinic, Kumasi; Asamang Adventist Health Centre, Kumasi; Dominase Adventist Hospital, Bekwai, Ashanti; Konkoma Seventh-day Adventist Hospital, Kumasi; Kwadaso Seventh-day Adventist Hospital, Kwadaso, Kumasi; Nagel Memorial Adventist Hospital, Takoradi; Obuasi Seventh-day Adventist Hospital, Obuasi-Brahabebome; Seventh-day Adventist Hospital, Koforidua; Tamale Adventist Hospital, Tamale; Wiamoase Seventh-day Adventist Hospital, Wiamoase, Ashanti. For more information and the names of other clinics and hospitals, see

<https://www.adventistyearbook.org/search-results?term=ghana>.

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