

## THE GOLD COAST WATER RATE CONTROVERSY 1909 — 1938

By  
\*STANLEY SHALOFF

The waterworks Ordinance of 1934 together with the Criminal Code (Amendment) Ordinance commonly termed the Sedition Bill, both of which were enacted almost simultaneously, were jointly responsible for arousing the ire of the people of the Gold Coast Colony to such an extent that two costly protest delegations were sent to London that same year to seek, among other objectives, the nullification of those very unpopular measures. The controversy was by no means a new one, for from the time that the imposition of a charge upon persons availing themselves of pipe-borne water, supplied and paid for by the colonial administration out of the general rates, was first contemplated in 1909 until such an impost began to be collected in 1938, six governors and several colonial secretaries grappled with the emotional issue of whether or not it was proper to demand payment from a not-too-well-off population for the consumption of water. The residents of Accra, Cape Coast, and Sekondi, who would have been obliged to assume the financial burden for such a service, viewed it as an unfair exaction akin to the proposed income tax bill of 1931 which they had staved off and thus they likewise bitterly opposed its passage with practically the same degree of vociferousness but without nearly as much violence.

Perhaps the most confusing aspect of the entire dispute concerned the contradiction of opinions as to whether Governor Sir Hugh Clifford (1912-1919) had solemnly bound the colonial regime never to levy such a water rate in a speech which he made in October, 1913 shortly before the opening of the Accra waterworks. His successors were confronted with the problem of determining whether he had, indeed, made such a commitment and, if so, whether they were obliged, morally or otherwise, to respect it? What Clifford had actually said was this: "rates will be charged for water supplied to houses but not for water drawn from street fountains". Since the pipe-borne water supplied to houses was to be metered, there was no question about the owners' responsibility to pay. What was in doubt was the financial obligation of the masses of city dwellers who secured their water from outdoor stand-pipes. The Government's position was that it was unfair to burden ratepayers of the rest of the colony with the cost of the urban waterworks which were of no direct benefit to them.

>

---

\* Associate Professor of History, University of Wisconsin — Oshkosh.

Governor F. G. (later Sir Gordon) Guggisberg (1919–1927), one of the most popular of the Gold Coast administrators, almost compromised his high standing among the people by appointing a committee in September, 1922 to investigate the advisability of requiring the communities enjoying a pipe-borne water supply to pay a special rate. On the basis of the report tendered to him five months later Guggisberg forewarned the Ga Mantse, Tackie Yaobol (the principal chief of Accra), that it was likely that the property owners in the city would soon be called upon to pay a general water rate<sup>3</sup>. Although the Ga Mantse recognized that the Government had incurred some expense in constructing and maintaining the waterworks, he was not prepared to concede that there was any necessity for such a levy in addition to the house rates already in effect. He insisted that the townspeople had been promised immunity from such a charge for agreeing to abandon their former unhealthy sources of supply<sup>4</sup>.

As was to be expected, when the news got abroad the public protests became loud and insistent. But what was not predictable was Guggisberg's decision to withdraw the proposed measure following its first reading in the Legislative Council in July 1924. When ten years later General Creasy of the Gold Coast section of the Colonial Office and a future governor of the colony (1948–1949) sought the reason why the bill had been shelved, he was told by Sir John Maxwell, who had not only introduced the legislation but had as well chaired the committee which recommended it, that Guggisberg had decided to await the completion of the Cape Coast waterworks before proceeding. But as far as Creasy and Shenton Thomas, who served as the governor between 1932 and 1934, were concerned, the real explanation for Guggisberg's hesitation was his unwillingness to force the passage of the measure in the face of unanimous African sentiment against it, particularly since that opposition was grounded on a pledge which the people claimed to have received from his predecessor<sup>5</sup>.

The question had still not been resolved when near the end of 1927 Sir Alexander Ransford Slater succeeded Guggisberg as governor. In an earlier tour of duty as Colonial Secretary in the Gold Coast, Slater had been so unpopular with the African Civil Servants that they had petitioned the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Milner to recall him saying that they considered him to be a "Negrophobist" who dealt unfairly with matters vital to their interests<sup>6</sup>. Hugh Thomas, who served in the secretariat under Slater and whose brother, Sir Shenton, eventually replaced Slater as governor, was of much the same opinion. He described Slater (who served between 1927 and 1932) as perhaps the worst possible choice to follow the well-liked Guggisberg asserting that he had a cold eye, an unsympathetic demeanor, and very little use for people in general and the African in particular. As if to confirm that his fears had been justified, Thomas years later recalled how Slater, as governor, had refused on one occasion to shake the hand of a prosperous cocoa farmer who was presented to him. "Good God!", he had

commented, "I'll be expected to shake hands with my steward boy next!"<sup>7</sup> Even if we treat Thomas's judgements with some reserve, seeing that he "frankly disliked" Slater, the fact remains that the Governor was held in low esteem by those he ruled because of his policies, prejudices, and personality.

On behalf of the Ga State Council, Augustus William Kojo Thompson, who had briefly represented Accra in the Legislative Council and who would do so once again in the near future (much to the chagrin of the colonial authorities) presented a petition to Governor Slater on July 22, 1929 protesting against the planned imposition of a general water rate. Since the Government seemed unmoved by the plea,<sup>8</sup> the Gold Coast press commenced a bitter campaign in an effort to forestall the measure. The *Vox Populi* reminded the administration of the sacrifice the people had made in filling up their old wells and receptacles without any compensation.<sup>9</sup> "Taxation on water," it declared, "heaven's natural gift to poor people is unjust and we think that it is those that can afford other drinks than water who ought to pay duty on their drinks"<sup>10</sup>.

The *Gold Coast Spectator* echoed a similar plea in emphasizing that "the situation needs more cautious handling than the customary blustering policy of the Government in enforcing legislation in the teeth of powerful opposition." Moreover, it reminded the administration of the Aba Market Women's riots in Nigeria in 1929 and warned that the animus of the Gold Coast women had risen to such a point that a comparable outburst could not be ruled out of the question, if the Government persisted in pushing through a Waterworks Bill<sup>11</sup>. A few years later in February, 1934, when *The Times of West Africa* believed itself threatened by repressive controls, it reflected then that it was no coincidence that the water rate, which it claimed had been "Shelved in 1929 BECAUSE of Press Criticism," was about to be revived in conjunction with a Sedition Bill.<sup>12</sup>

Other factors, however, had influenced the Government's decision aside from the power of the press. The women of Accra had vividly demonstrated their hostility to the proposed water rate by stoning the Acting Ga Mantse and the James Town Mantse at a mass rally at Bukom Square in November, 1920 because they believed that the Mantsemei had been insufficiently militant in their opposition to the bill. Much the same kind of message was delivered just a few days later to the district commissioner at a meeting at Adjaben Lodge and although the brickbats in that confrontation were only verbal, nevertheless he was made to understand the great depth of popular feeling against the proposal. If the Government insisted upon attempting to balance the budget in a time of economic depression, then the solution, suggested the spokesman for African opinion at that meeting, was retrenchment and not additional levies<sup>13</sup>.

Whether the Ratepayers' Association or the Mambii Party could be relied upon to resist the bill more effectively ultimately became the subject of

political debate during the 1931 election contest between Frederick Victor Nanka-Bruce of the ratepayers and Kojo Thompson of the Mambili for the Accra seat in the Legislative Council. Although Nanka-Bruce was victorious, he was hurt then, and even more so four years later in his unsuccessful bid for re-election, by charges that in 1924 he had stated that: "when conditions are more favourable water rates could be introduced" and that "in principle", he agreed to "the introduction of a water rate" <sup>14</sup>.

Slater had indicated in an address to the Empire Parliamentary Association on May 15, 1930 that "the principle on which I personally proceed as Governor is that if there is absolutely unanimous opposition to any Government measure I withdraw it until I have had an opportunity for further consultation with the Secretary of State For the Colonies" <sup>15</sup>. This was not as reasonable a policy as it might appear, for he meant that all the African and European unofficials would have to be in agreement something which never happened.

Since only the Africans had raised their voices against the Waterworks Bill which he had authorized to be gazetted in June, 1930, Slater did not stray from his support of the measure. Six months later, however, he reluctantly determined that the economic crisis was too grave to push the bill through immediately. Thus he waited until June 9, of the following year before he despatched a confidential copy of a new draft ordinance, "to provide for and to regulate a supply of water to the public" to Lord Passfield at the Colonial Office for his opinion.

The Governor, in defence of his proposal, expressed the view that it was unlikely that Governor Clifford could have intended that a water rate never be imposed in Accra seeing that he had appointed a committee in January 1914, to draw up a waterworks ordinance and had been incontrovertibly recorded as having said that "A special as well as a general rate will have, of course, to be charged for private connections" <sup>16</sup>. Apparently the committee one of whose members was Thomas Hutton Mills, the nominated African member for Accra in the Legislative Council, issued a report in favour of a water rate in 1915, but by then, the Government had been diverted by a shift of priorities rising out of the First World War and as well by the need for municipal reorganisation. Since Slater was "very loathe to take any action which could be construed as belittling the sanctity of a Governor's promise to a primitive community even where the promise had been made without the authority of the Secretary of State," he left it up to Lord Passfield to determine whether Clifford had made a binding pledge of a free water supply <sup>17</sup>. If he were given his head, Slater contemplated imposing a five percent levy which according to his calculations would likely have returned only ninety per cent of the maintenance costs and none of the renewal charges.

Lord Passfield, the former Sidney Webb, concluded on August 26, 1931 that Governor Clifford had not permanently bound the colonial administration to any course of action. Indeed, he revealed that Clifford had "inadver-

tently" ignored Lord Crewe's approval of Governor Sir John Rodger's Despatch No. 543 of November 3, 1909 which had requested permission to introduce a general water rate for public stand-pipes<sup>18</sup>. In any case, since eighteen years had gone by since Clifford's statement and the economic circumstances had markedly changed, the Colonial Secretary considered Clifford's comments no longer pertinent. What was important, in his opinion, though it is easy to take exception to it, was his judgement that no other place in the world enjoyed such pure water while paying nothing for it. Furthermore, he thought it inequitable that the people outside of Accra and Sekondi should have to subsidize the waterworks of those communities<sup>19</sup>.

Having been thus encouraged, Slater, formally sought the endorsement of the Colonial Office for his water rate proposal. Approval was forthcoming on September 22, 1931 from J. H. Thomas, the new Secretary of State for the Colonies in the short-lived National Government of Ramsay MacDonald which remained in power from late August until November of that year<sup>20</sup>. But as the depression had not eased appreciably by then, Slater thought it unwise to force the issue. The problem was therefore inherited by Shenton Thomas who succeeded him in 1932.

Thomas, who ultimately came to be held in as low popular esteem as Slater, owed part of his ill-repute to his professed intention to secure the enactment of the waterworks legislation as soon as conditions would allow it. On one occasion, he likened Clifford's alleged promise to the people of Accra to a father's assurance of care to his children which was predicated upon their assumption of a similar responsibility upon maturity for his welfare in his old age. "If I have helped you to get teeth," Thomas said, in citing a Twi proverb, "you should help me when mine are going"<sup>21</sup>. His point was, of course, that the Government had spent £39,000 over the past eighteen years to supply free water but that in a depression it could no longer afford to assume the burden alone without the assistance of the urban ratepayers<sup>22</sup>. It was scarcely surprising that Thomas should have chosen to represent the administration as a father figure, but what was ironic and portentous was the toothless decrepitude of the paternal image he drew in contrast to the energy of the filial Gold Coast population.

In September 1933, Thomas asked Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister, who was then Secretary for the Colonies, to sanction the provisions of a Waterworks Bill he intended to introduce at the next session of the Legislative Council. Five months later he received authorization to proceed and the bill was ready for Council consideration by March 20. But by that time, however, there was great tension and bitterness in the colony and in the Council as well, for Thomas had decided to move the passage of Seditious Bill and it was known that he was desirous of restraining the press. Indeed, journalists such as: Nnamdi Azikiwe, Joseph Danquah, Bankole Awoonor Renner, I. T. A. Wallace-Johnson and R. B. Wuta-Ofei, all of whom Thomas would have dearly loved to have muzzled because of their "suspicious" foreign contacts and caustic criticisms,

mistook the Sedition Bill for a press control measure, the introduction of which was anticipated, but which ultimately was never formally submitted. Thus they were determined to capitalize upon the popular feeling against the water rate to win general support for their struggle to retain press freedom. With that objective in mind, the Press Association urged the men of the Colony not to "forget to tell the women that if the Press fail in their work, Water Rate will be imposed, and everyone suffer, whether she can afford or not" <sup>23</sup>.

Even Nanka-Bruce, who no one thought of as a radical, urged Thomas to delay the second reading of the Waterworks Bill for six months in consideration of the gravity of the depression and the moral weight of Clifford's words. He asserted that the people could not afford the ordinary house rates imposed by the Town Council let alone another levy. Moreover, he dismissed the notion that the farmers favoured such a proposal as one means of reducing the fiscal pressure upon themselves when what they really cared about, he alleged, was a better price for their cocoa <sup>24</sup>. His remarks were seconded by Nana Ayirebi III the paramount chief of Winneba, who claimed that it was only right that water provided to the urban centres should be funded by the Treasury, for the chiefs had long been accustomed to applying a part of their income to the construction of much-needed wells <sup>25</sup>.

K. A. Korsah, the member for Cape Coast, who eventually went on to become the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Ghana, was bitterly critical of what seemed to have been, in his opinion, the arbitrary termination of the Clifford commitment. Thus he denounced the proposed water rate as an "ill-conceived and ill-timed" tax of sorts which testified to the administration's "scant consideration for the sufferings of the people of this country" <sup>26</sup>. Similar words were spoken by Nana Ofori Atta, the paramount chief of Akim Abuakwa, who was perhaps the indigenous ruler most esteemed by the British because of his endorsement of their policy of indirect rule. His declaration that the Provincial Councils of Chiefs would be satisfied with nothing less than the permanent withdrawal of the measure, ended any hope the Government might have entertained that the rural authorities would back the bill. Ofori Atta rejected the idea that the colonial regime suddenly was motivated by a concern for the well-being of the farmers whose interests had been officially ignored so often in the past <sup>27</sup>.

In support of the pending legislation, a government spokesman insisted that it was neither a tax nor a revenue collection measure in that it merely obliged those who availed themselves of a particular amenity to assume a fair share of the expense of providing that service. As regards the matter of the sanctity of a governor's words, it was pointed out that Clifford had demonstrated through his subsequent actions that he definitely intended to introduce a general water rate in Accra and that he had not meant to imply a reversal of Governor Roger's previously announced policy <sup>28</sup>.

Such reasoning, however, did not impress the African members of the

Council. One of their number, George James Christian, a West Indian barrister who had taken Casely Hayford's place as the representative for Sekondi, retorted: "If you are going to squeeze us as you would to a sponge with water and take our life-blood, when we come yearning to you and you say you are not going to give any ear, then we have no alternative than to bow. But remember that it remains, and the day of reckoning will come" <sup>29</sup>. Even one of the European unofficials was moved to remark that with conditions as they were perhaps it was not most propitious time to seek the passage of the bill <sup>30</sup>.

Shenton Thomas concluded the debate by reminding "the recalcitrant members of the Council" that even Governor Guggisberg, whom they had much admired, had indicated in his last address to that body that as far as he was concerned, there was no evidence to the effect that the Government had ever pledged itself to abstain from imposing a general water rate. Ordinance 20, which was then before the chamber for consideration, called for a maximum levy of five per cent of the rateable value of property. What that denoted, the Governor emphasized, was that the masses would be under no obligation to pay anything at all. In an effort to make the measure even more palatable Thomas promised that it would not be implemented until the economic climate had improved. His arguments went for naught for the nine African representatives cast their votes collectively against the proposed legislation, which however was passed with official and unofficial European support <sup>31</sup>.

Although there was general African opposition to the Sedition and Waterworks Ordinances, there was a division of opinion as to what should be done to obtain their repeal. In essence, the heart of the problem was the unwillingness of the Aborigines' Rights Protection Society (A.R.P.S.), which was favoured by Kobina Sekyi, <sup>32</sup> and Wallace-Johnson, and other so-called "radicals," to join forces with the Legislative Council contingent of Korsah and Nanka-Bruce and the Provincial Council Chiefs of the ilk of Ofori Atta unless the Society's leadership was recognized and everyone agreed to proceed under its name and in pursuit of its goals. Since these conditions were unacceptable to anyone but the partisans of the A.R.P.S., an independent Gold Coast and Ashanti delegation was constituted in May, 1934, to convey the protests of the people directly to the British Government. Those entrusted with that responsibility included: Ofori Atta, his half brother, Joseph B. Danquah, Korsah, Nanka-Bruce, Akilagpa Sawyerr of the Accra Ratepayers, James Mercer, and in the interests of the Ashanti Kotoko Society, E. O. Asafu-Adjaye and I. K. Agyeman <sup>33</sup>.

Shortly after their arrival in London, the delegates submitted a petition seeking redress of all their grievances. Moreover, they warned that popular confidence in the word of British colonial officials was in danger of being undermined by the manner in which Clifford's "solemn promise" had been so cavalierly disregarded. Apparently they had forgotten that there had once been a time when even the African population had lost sight of Clifford's

assurances, for in 1921, the residents of Winneba had reluctantly agreed to pay a water rate when the Government threatened to suspend the construction of their waterworks until they did so. At the very least, the delegation pleaded for a delay in the implementation of the ordinance <sup>34</sup>.

Some of these points were reiterated by J. H. Stamp in the delegates' behalf when they were received by Cunliffe-Lister and his advisors including Shenton Thomas (then on official and unlamented leave), on July 24, 1934. His presentation did not appear to impress the Colonial Secretary who supported the Governor's observation that the true objects of the bill had been distorted as a result of a "deliberate campaign of perversion fostered by the local press" <sup>35</sup>. "To say that people who benefit by an exclusive service for a particular area should have the whole of the cost of that service carried by the general community of taxpayers," was not a policy with which Cunliffe-Lister cared to be identified <sup>36</sup>. Thus the British Government's official rejection of the petition was transmitted to the members of the delegation the following October not long after they had returned home. The Waterworks Ordinance was upheld though the Governor was granted discretionary powers as to when he might enforce it <sup>37</sup>.

For its part the A.R.P.S. was mainly concerned to regain the privileged status which it had formerly enjoyed as the intermediary between the administration and the chiefs prior to the initiation of indirect rule. In pursuit of that objective, George Edward Moore and Samuel Richard Wood arrived in London one month after their rivals. But while they may have persisted in their enterprise far longer than the Gold Coast and Ashanti delegation (until November, 1936) in the end, they too, were unable to secure a reversal of imperial policy. Indeed, it took several months and considerable pressure before they were even able to gain an unofficial hearing as they had been forewarned not to come <sup>38</sup>.

If the austere personalities of Slater and Thomas had, to some degree, aggravated existing tensions in the Gold Coast, then the same thing could not have been said about their successor, Arnold Hodson, who came to the colony from Sierra Leone in the autumn of 1934 proceeded by his reputation as the "Sunshine Governor." Ironically, although he ultimately called for even harsher restraints upon the press than had been advocated by Thomas and as well authorised sedition trials for Azikiwe and Wallace-Johnson, he had to be pressured into implementing the Waterworks Ordinance.

On May 27, 1936 Hodson advised the Colonial Office that as the economic situation had improved somewhat he was thinking about levying a water rate of two and one half per cent (instead of the maximum five percent) in Accra effective the beginning of the new year. However, he expressed some apprehension that such a step might enable the "notorious Wallace-Johnson" to cause difficulties <sup>39</sup>. Apparently, the Colonial Office was not overly distressed by that prospect, for Hodson was assured of its full support "even if drastic action has to be taken in the event of riots." What Whitehall was concerned



about was that the people should be given advanced warning of the action contemplated and that they should be left under no delusion as to the permanency of the lower rate<sup>40</sup>.

Hodson revealed his true feelings on the matter in a confidential letter to Sir Cecil Bottomley, the Principal Under Secretary of State for the Colonies in charge of West African Affairs, In June 22nd, 1936. He maintained that Clifford had, in fact promised the people of Accra that they would not have to pay anything for the use of the street founts in recognition of their co-operation in filling in their former sources of supply. For the Government to go back on Clifford's word, for the mere pittance involved, struck him as a breach of faith which could seriously jeopardize the better spirit which then prevailed. "My own view," he stated to J. H. Thomas, "has been, from the outset, that the inhabitants of Accra have real ground for their plea that Government is under obligation to them"<sup>42</sup>.

So that all the people of Accra might be served equally, Hodson requested that the rate be put off until 1938 by which time additional waterworks would have been completed. W. G. A. Ormsby-Gore, who had replaced J. H. Thomas as Colonial Secretary in May 1936, only very reluctantly approved the deferment of the impost. But particularly in the light of the much publicized official rejections of the protest petitions, he desired to make it perfectly clear to everyone that such postponement by no means meant that the government was even remotely entertaining the possibility of abandoning the rate. That would have involved, he concluded, the ignoring of many more precedents than the one which some persons alleged had already been disregarded. Besides, the consensus at the Colonial Office was that Hodson was merely courting personal popularity at Whitehall's expense<sup>43</sup>. In the end, the Governor bowed to the will of his superiors and announced in the Legislative Council in March 1937, that effective April 1, 1938, a water rate of two and half per cent would be collected in Accra, Cape Coast, Kumasi, and Sekondi from the owners of houses having a rateable value of at least £6 per annum<sup>44</sup>.

There was a number of reasons why this imposition proved to be such a contentious issue over so many years. First of all, it was viewed by a large number of persons not as a payment for a service, but rather as an indirect tax, and as the income tax riots had so vividly demonstrated, the prospect of such an exaction was enough to quicken the hostility of the urban masses. Tempers flared as well because there was some confusion as to whether the residents of Accra had been guaranteed that a general charge would not be levied upon them to cover the cost of the public stand-pipes. Although Hodson believed that Clifford had committed the colonial administration to such a course, the objective evidence would lead one to conclude that Clifford had only meant to exempt the poor from such a fee. Certainly, some of the friction resulted from the widely held misconception which the government was unable to dispell that all those who were dependent on the outdoor taps

would be obliged to pay something. Of course, it was hard for some people to accept the idea that there should be any charge at all for water. The Government did not help matters by finally choosing to enact such an ordinance in the depths of a harsh economic depression and, simultaneously, with other unpopular measures. And since, the Waterworks bill, the press tried to exploit their discontent to generate opposition as well to the sedition legislation. In that way, the water rate became much more significant than might otherwise have been the case. In part, its passage was responsible for strengthening popular support for the two protest delegations which travelled to Great Britain to seek a general reversal of colonial policy. And while it is true that the Waterworks Bill was not withdrawn in the end, as it had been many times in the past, its implementation was at least delayed until 1938.

What the popular struggle to scuttle the water rate clearly revealed, however, was the potential political strength of the masses when they were mobilized in opposition to an action which directly and adversely affected their best interests. The battle over, the income tax and the earlier campaign against the Lands Bill of 1897 had offered the same testimony although in those instances a greater measure of success was enjoyed. Thus it was becoming increasingly clear that even in those matters where the colonial authorities could make a good case for their actions they no longer could presume to do what they pleased without calculating the likely response of the people. Certainly the press was on the watch for any issue it could exploit to lambaste the administration. No doubt, the often bitterly divided coastal elite was selfishly motivated in championing popular causes, but it was good politics and good sense to confront the regime on the matter such as the water rate which exercised large numbers of strategically placed persons. In any event, not all of the voices raised on behalf of the masses were self-serving. Finally, while it is true that most of the poor persons could not as yet vote in the 1930s the day was fast approaching when their support would be vital in determining who would capture the political kingdom.

## Footnotes

1. There was general agreement as between the delegations on such matters as: the need for an elected, unofficial, propertied, African majority on the Legislative Council, equal unofficial, African representation on the Executive Council, greater equity for African civil servants as regards starting salaries, and the desirability of an objective inquiry into the nature of the relationship between Great Britain and the Gold Coast. There were as well numerous other concerns of lesser import. And it should be noted that the Aborigines' Rights Protection Society opposed the Native Administration Ordinance of 1927 which gave expression to the policy of indirect rule.
2. *Legislative Council Debates*, March 20, 1934, p. 75, as quoted by Attorney General J. C. Howard.
3. Memorandum prepared by Gerald H. Creasy, July 18, 1934, GO 96/714/21656/1934, Public Record Office, London. Hereinafter cited as P.R.O. Such notification was given in October, 1923.
4. A.D.C., Accra to the Secretary for Native Affairs, June 30, 1930, ADM 11/1048/2, Ghana National Archives, Accra. Hereinafter cited as G.N.A.
5. G. H. Creasy to E. J. Boyd, July 28, 1934, GO 96/714/21656/1934, P.R.O. Guggisberg as well supposedly had a difference of opinion on this matter with the Colonial Secretary of the colony, Sir James Maxwell. The Accra waterworks were completed in 1914 followed by Sekondi in 1917, Winneba in 1921, and the Cape Coast in 1928.
6. "Despatches relating to a petition from Native Officials in the Gold Coast Praying for the Recall of the Colonial Secretary," Petition of February 20, 1919, *Sessional Paper No. III of 1918-1919*, as cited in David Kimble, *A Political-History of Ghana, 1850-1928* (Oxford, 1963), p. 103.
7. Unpublished Memoirs of Hugh Thomas, MSS. Afr. S. 576, pp. 70-71, Rhodes House, Oxford University. The *Gold Coast Spectator* reported on November 29, 1930, that African officials had gone out on strike against Sir Thomas Sthenton Whitlegge Thomas when he had been governor of Sierra Leone.
8. G. C. Du Boulay for the Colonial Secretary to the acting Ga Mantse, Ayi Bonte, October 26, 1929, ADM 12/3/54, G.N.A. He reminded the petitioners of the "heavy" cost for "poor" water in the past and indicated that the residents of Winneba, Labadi, and Teshie paid for their water.
9. *Vox Populi*, November 29, 1930.

10. *Ibid.*, November 22, 1930.
11. *Gold Coast Spectator*, November 29, 1930.
12. *Times of West Africa*, February 17, 1934, as cited by Chiu Sheng-Pao in "The Gold Coast Delegation to Britain," (Taipei, 1970), p. 24.
13. *Gold Coast Independent*, November 22, 1930.
14. *Vox Populi*, August 29, 1931.
15. Sir Ransford Slater, "The Gold Coast: Some Facts and Figures," *Journal of the African Society*, XXIX (July, 1930), p. 345.
16. Slater to Lord Passfield, June 9, 1931, ADM 12/3/54, G.N.A. The Italics were Slater's.
17. *Ibid.* Hutton Mills later served as the president of the Gold Coast section of the National Congress of British West Africa in 1920.
18. Lord Passfield to Slater, confidential, August 26, 1931, ADM 12/1/77, G.N.A. Actually, the British Government was reconstituted on August 24, and J. H. Thomas replaced Passfield. Lord Crewe approved Rodger's petition in January, 1910.
19. *Legislative Council Debates*, March 1, 1932, pp. 84-85. Slater indicated the sentiments of Lord Passfield to the members. Slater expected £16,000 to £20,000 to be gained from the imposition of such a rate and thus he denounced the Accra press for demanding privileged treatment for the community. Moreover, the Governor promised to appoint a joint committee of officials and unofficials to determine the form and the amount of the charge and he indicated that he would put off the introduction of the measure for an unspecified time.
20. J. H. Thomas to the Governor of the Gold Coast, September 22, 1931, ADM 12/3/198, G.N.A. He also approved the introduction of the Income Tax Bill in response to Governor Slater's request of August 16, 1931.
21. An address of Shenton Thomas to the chiefs of Accra, January 24, 1933, as recorded in the *Gold Coast Spectator*, February 4, 1933.
22. Governor Thomas to the Ga State Council as recorded in the "Miscellaneous Confidential Papers of W. J. A. Jones," ADM 1688, p. 8. G.N.A.

23. *Vox Populi*, February 28, 1934 as cited by Chiu Sheng-Pao, *Ibid.*, p. 24.
24. Legislative Council Debates, March 21, 1934, pp. 78-83.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 86.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 95-96.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 98-99.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 103-105. These were the sentiments of the Colonial Secretary G.A.S. Northcote.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 108.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 109. Harris accepted the principle of the bill, but thought that the time was not opportune.
31. *Ibid.*, pp. 111-112. The ordinance was based on a Uganda statute.
32. Kobina Sekyi was a powerful figure in Cape Coast politics and a major cog in the Aborigine's Right Protection Society.
33. Sir Edward Ochir Asafu-Adjaye indicated in an interview on March 8, 1969, in Accra that the water rate was viewed as a central government import, a form of indirect tax. In retrospect, he thought that it should have remained a local affair which is just another indication that he and Agyeman were mainly concerned with matters of import to the Ashanti. Mercer was killed in an automobile accident shortly after his arrival in Great Britain.
34. "Gold Coast Papers Relating to the Petition of the Delegation From the Gold Coast and Ashanti," *Sessional Paper* No. XI of 1934, p. 11
35. Governor Thomas to Cunliffe-Lister, May 10, 1934, ADM 1/2/206, G.N.A.
36. Cunliffe-Lister to the Officer Administering the Government of the Gold Coast, August 10, 1934, confidential, encloses notes on the interview with the Gold Coast and Ashanti Delegation on July 24, 1934, as corrected by the participants, ADM 12/1/86, p. 4, G.N.A.

37. Acting Colonial Secretary G. C. Du Boulay to Nana Sir Ofori Atta, October 1, 1934, *Sessional Paper No. XI of 1934*, p. 79. The delegation had arrived home on September 12, 1934. Cunliffe-Lister meanwhile had informed Hodson of the response on September 7, 1934. Danquah remained in Great Britain and did not return to the Gold Coast with the others.
38. V. Lynch, Acting Commissioner of the Central Province to the President of A.R.P.S., July 4, 1934, A.R.P.S. Papers file 154, G.N.A., Cape Coast. He indicated the sentiments of Cunliffe-Lister. Wood, who was from Axim, was the senior secretary of the A.R.P.S. while Moore was the *Tufuhin* (commander) of the *asafo* companies of the Oguaa State (Cape Coast). Moore had already served some time in prison for allegedly provoking a riot.
39. Hodson to the Colonial Office, May 27, 1936, CO. 96/729/31206/5/1936, P.R.O.
40. H. F. Downie to Hodson, July 8, 1936, ADM 12/5/77, G.N.A.
41. Hodson to Bottomley, June 22, 1936, CO. 96/729/31206/5/1936, P.R.O.
42. Hodson to J. H. Thomas June 26, 1936, *ibid*.
43. Colonial Office Minute, June 26, 1936, *ibid*. It was believed that the establishment of sound and equitable principles of administration far outweighed the danger which could be posed by temporary local disturbances.
44. *Legislative Council Debates*, March 16, 1937, pp. 22-23.