

ARCHAEOLOGY

Report on the departmental work carried out while on
trek from 3rd August - 5th September 1965.

The site of Jakpasere is about one mile north-east of Grunshi Zongo which is three miles south of Salaga. Its importance in Gonja history lies in the fact that it is believed to have been Jakpas' 'Shea Butter Palace'. A plan of the site was made and photographs and sketches were taken of the remaining standing walls. It is hoped that in the near future a small trench will be dug across the site to test the stratification.

The Gonja Tower-house complex at Butie was mapped and contoured. This site lies on the Mangpa-Mpaha road and is one of numerous mound sites within the general area of the confluence of the White and Black Volta. The three major mounds were all over sixteen feet high and in close association with ponds, bilegas, and several adjoining smaller mounds. On the top of one of the larger mounds, exposed timber supports, and a collapsed, partially decomposed, mud-brick wall seem to indicate a relative recent abandonment of the site. Whether this late occupation took the form and function of earlier periods of occupation remains to be revealed by excavation.

The two ends of the base line were cemented in a place which will subsequently allow for further refinement in the map and a permanent control for latter excavation.

During the stay in Zongoiri, between the White and Red Volta, four Kusasi pots were purchased and are now in the ethnographical collection (of the Archaeology Department).

A quick survey of the walls at Nalerigu (four miles east of Gambaga) was taken as well as several photographs of the condition of the remaining standing walls.

Gwolu, in the Upper Region, was visited and a brief examination was made of both the inner and outer walls. Several photographs were taken which will be included in a brief report to the National Museum on the required preservation of these and the other mentioned walls of Northern Ghana.

A musical instrument "Cheng" (isale), which appears to be a type of reed harp was purchased and is now in the Department of Archaeology.

The rock-gong at Chiana, sixteen miles west of Navrongo, was visited, and subsequent inquiries produced some information concerning the existence of several caves which appear to be associated with other rock-gongs.

The walls at Ulu about twenty-three miles east of Lawra appear to be almost completely denuded but some information as to their nature was obtained from the elders.

The remains of pottery pavement on an old habitation site in the Chaa valley, Burufu, was examined and photographed.

The rock-gong and rock-slide Sankana, seven miles west of the Wa-Lawra road, was examined and photographed. Rock specimens were taken from the rock-gong and other associated rock types for petrological examination.

A sample of thickly scattered pottery was taken along the Chache-Ferry road which is the approach across the Black Volta to Bouna. This is now in the Department's collection.

A visit to the Tong Hills was made where the presence of pottery pavement was noted in several of the compounds at Tengzugu. A brief visit was made to the Tongo shrine in the accompaniment of the Tendana and elders of Tengzugu.

(Much of the above work was done in close collaboration with J. Goody and several short joint notes on some of this work will be out at a later date).

R.W. Mathewson

A NOTE ON PRESS-ARCHIVES RESEARCH AS
AN APPROACH TO WEST AFRICAN HISTORY

Many of those currently working in the fruitful field of West African history have for many years now been discovering a particularly rich mine of primary source material. It lies dispersed at various points in the archival world, in the form of collections of the old journals and newspapers produced in or dealing with the various ex-British colonies, as well as Liberia¹.

-
1. But not the French-language areas, to the same extent. See Pere J. de Benoist: "The position of the Press in French-speaking West Africa", in Report on The Press in West Africa, produced by the Committee on Inter-African Relations, and circulated by the Extra-Mural Department, University College, Ibadan, Nigeria, 1960.