

KING EYO HONEST VII - 1874-1892

EARLY YEARS

He was a young man at the time when the missionaries arrived in Calabar. It was the custom in those days for the chiefs to place their sons in the of ships' Captains so that they might be tutored in the English lang and in commercial techniques.

ANRM DUKE EPHRAN

In the introduction to the famous book, 'Efik Traders of Old Calabar' which is the diary of Antera Duke, Daryll Forde tells us that in their interaction with European supercargoes, Efiks soon appreciated the importance of acquiring a commercial language in which to carry out their transaction since the Europeans had neither the training nor interest to learn their language. This problem existed all along the coastal states in the Oil Rivers and in order to overcome it, there developed through their long association with English traders and seamen, a jargon which was mainly English in vocabulary but whose construction was modelled on the local language which in this case was Efik. The Europeans adopted it in their dealings with the people and it was in turn 'carried from place to place on the West Coast where it merged with other jargons similarly developed to become in the 18th Century, a fairly standardized pidgin English'.

The value of written records, especially of transactions, was also recognized by Efik traders and some of them were effectively instructed in writing by Englishmen from the ships. Forde tells us that several published narratives of the early 19th century refer to the keeping of accounts and journals by the leading Efik at this time. The diary of Antera Duke, written in the 18th century is a living testimony to the fact that Efiks kept written records long before the 19th century. It is also on record that the sons of some of the leading traders in the 18th century had visited England and schools had long before the arrival of Missionaries on the shores of Calabar, been established by Efiks in their towns 'for the purpose of instructing in this art, the youth belonging to families of consequence. As a matter of fact, one of such schools was, according to oral tradition, started by Henshaw Town in a disused Ekpe shed. The Ship Captains had helped to get teachers for them.

APPENDIX II

(Public Record Office (London) F 084/1508 - 12 July 1850)

Agreement made between David Hopkins, Esquire, Her Britannic Minesty's Consul, in the name of Her Majesty's Government and King Archibong III and his Chiefs in the presence of resident Missionaries Of Duke Town and Creek Town and the European Merchants and Traders whose names sre hereunto subscribed.

TWIN CHILDREN AND TWIN MOTHERS

ARTICLE- I

Whoever wilfully takes the life of a twin child or twin children shall be adjudged liable to the penalty of death. Anyone wilfully concealing any faet that may come to their knowledge of the murder of twins shall be considered accessory after the fact and shall be liable to such punishment as the Consul shall direct.

Twin Mothers in future shall have full liberty to visit the town and buy and sell in the markets, the same as any other woman of the town, and they shall not be molested in any way.

FRIENDSHIP WITH OBA OVONRAMWEN OF BENIN

Little known but albeit of great historical interest, is the fact that in the latter part of his life and until his death, Chief Esien Etim Offiong played host to the great exiled King of Benin, Oba Ovonramwen (or Overami as she was sometimes called). The Esien Etim family history has it that after the king had been exiled to Calabar, Chief Esien Etim Offiong specially appealed to the British government for permission to play host to him. Upon his request being granted, no doubt on the grounds of the implicit confidence the British had in him. the king lived in **Esien Town**, until his host died in 1911. While there he had married one of Esien Etim's daughters who was said to have born him, but had re-married and left Calabar with her child after his death. With the death of Chief Esien Etim Offiong, Oba Ovonramwen moved to Calabar town where he died in 1914.