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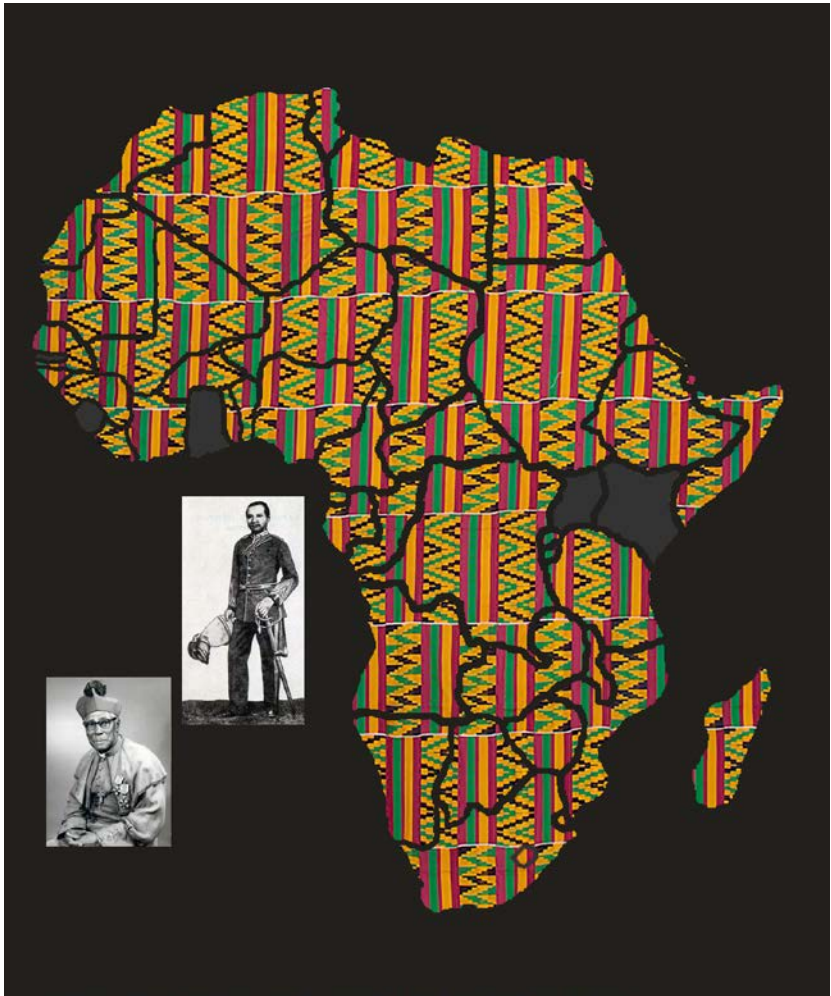
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Focus:

Horton, Nicol, Maxwell, Richards

(The Gambia)

Daniel Williams Alexander (East Africa)



A publication of the *Dictionary of African Christian Biography*

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The *Journal of African Christian Biography* was launched in 2016 to complement and make stories from the on-line *Dictionary of African Christian Biography* (www.DACB.org) more readily accessible and immediately useful in African congregations and classrooms.

Now published quarterly, with all issues available on line, the intent of the *JACB* is to promote the research, publication, and use of African Christian biography within Africa by serving as an academically credible but publicly accessible source of information on Christianity across the continent. Content will always include biographies already available in the database itself, but original contributions related to African Christian biography or to African church history are also welcome. While the policy of the *DACB* itself has been to restrict biographical content to subjects who are deceased, the *JACB* plans to include interviews with select living African church leaders and academics.

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Contents

“Creole Saga”: The Gambia’s Liberated African Community in the 19 th Century: The Stories of J. A. B. Horton, G. C. Nicol, J. R. Maxwell, and J. D. Richards	6
Horton, James Africanus B.	11
Nicol, George Croley.....	14
Maxwell, Joseph Renner	18
Richards, Joseph Davidson.....	23
The Contribution of Daniel William Alexander to the Birth and Growth of Eastern Orthodoxy in East Africa.....	29
Alexander, Daniel William (A)	35
Alexander, Daniel William (B)	37
Recent Print and Digital Resources Related to Christianity in Africa	38

Note: Photos on the cover are of James Africanus Horton and Archbishop Daniel William Alexander.

“Creole Saga”: The Gambia’s Liberated African Community in the 19th Century: The Stories of J. A. B. Horton, G. C. Nicol, J. R. Maxwell, and J. D. Richards

This issue of the *Journal of African Christian Biography* features the biographies of four important figures of the Gambia’s liberated African community: James Africanus B. Horton, George Croley Nicol, Joseph Renner Maxwell, and Joseph Davidson Richards. The featured biographies below are excerpted from Dr. Asi Florence Mahoney’s book entitled “*Creole Saga: The Gambia’s Liberated African Community of the Nineteenth Century* (2006, 2nd edition 2017). [1] Dr. Mahoney (née Peters) is one of the earliest Gambian researchers of repute on written 19th century Gambian history. She was born in Bathurst (Banjul), the Gambia, in 1936 of Sierra Leonean parents who were both descendants of liberated Africans. [2]

In his 1983 book entitled *West African Christianity: The Religious Impact*, Professor Lamin Sanneh showed that the liberated African community had four origins: the black poor, that is, former slaves who came from Great Britain; Nova Scotia settlers—former slaves who had fought with the British during the American war of independence; the Maroons, descendants of former slaves who had liberated themselves in Jamaica; and the Recaptives, former slaves who were liberated from slave ships and resettled in British territories in West Africa. [3] The last group constituted the majority group. By the 19th century, all four groups were present in West Africa, teaching, doing military service, working in government, professional services or business, and sharing the brunt of Christian evangelization throughout the region. As Mahoney states, “the liberated African was a phenomenon of the 19th century in West Africa.” [4]

With the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act of 1807 and the Treaty of Paris of 1814, the British authorities found it necessary to police the West Coast of Africa and to establish a stronger presence in the Gambia valley because it was one of the major centers of the slave trade. The goal was to intercept slavers on land, river, and sea in order to liberate their slaves and to rejuvenate legitimate trade in the area. In Sierra Leone, most of the Recaptives were settled within the twenty or more especially created villages in a thirty-kilometer radius of the city center. The agreement of April 23, 1816, between Brigadier General Charles MacCarthy, the governor general of British West Africa (represented by Captain Alexander Grant), and King Tomany Bojang of Kombo allowed St. Mary’s Island (Banjulo) to be leased. Within six months, the British built a garrison on this strategic island on the southern estuary of the River Gambia and founded a settlement of freed slaves.

In the Gambia valley, the liberated African community was geographically more dispersed than in Freetown. Resettlement in the Gambia took place within four nodes: at St. Mary's Island, from 1816 onwards; at MacCarthy Island, which is located 300 kilometers upstream, from 1823 onwards; at the Ceded Mile, which stretched approximately thirty kilometers along the northwestern estuarine riverbank, from 1826 onwards; and at Kombo St. Mary, the southwestern coastal mainland, from the 1830s onwards. These four centers of British protection and freedom on the River Gambia attracted groups of migrants that were multi-racial, multi-ethnic, and multi-religious.

The migrants belonged to five classes. First, the merchants and traders, who were predominantly Christians, were of British, French, African, and Portuguese origin.[5] These were international merchants who had been promised property and protection in the Gambia valley. They brought along their Señora wives and concubines, and mulatto children. Second, the builders, artisans, servants, and domestic slaves came from coastal states of Senegal and were predominantly ethnic Wolofs and Muslims.[6] Many had received manumission from the Wesleyan Methodist Church and played the role of translator-evangelists as well. Third, ex-servicemen were liberated African soldiers who had enlisted in either the Royal African Corps, or the 2nd or 4th West India Regiment.[7] After their service, they took up business activities like commercial shipping, trading, brick-making and farming. As voluntary security personnel, they were scattered throughout all four nodes of British protected territories. They were compensated with land and stipends. The fourth category of immigrants was the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and peasants. These were generally from the indigenous tribes of the Gambia Valley—the Mandinkas, Wollofs, Fulas, Jolas, Serahules, Serers, Manjagos, and Bambaras. The IDPs were refugees escaping civil-religious conflicts in the Gambia River valley and beyond, while many peasants came purely in search of work opportunities.[8] This class brought African Traditional Religions to British protected territories. The fifth category of immigrants were the liberated African Recaptives who have since been called the Krios, Creoles or Akus. Initially, they trickled into St. Mary's Island directly from Freetown. However, by 1826, their numbers had become significant and made up 5.3% of St. Mary's population. This upward trend peaked at 50.3% in 1838.[9]

At the height of their influx in 1840, a government commission of enquiry was established to evaluate the state of the Gambia's liberated African community. Mahoney reported that the head of the commission, Dr. Madden, painted a very grim picture of the situation. He reported that this community had created severe health, economic, and educational challenges for the

government. Many members of the liberated African community were in a poor state of health, several were hardened criminals from Freetown, and most were illiterate. To worsen their plight, many of their children were excluded from the only school in Bathurst. It is probable that Dr. Madden's report prompted the government, the church, and the establishment to review their attitudes towards the liberated African community.

About sixty years after Madden's report, the 1901 Census indicated that the Gambia's liberated African community had shrunk to just 25% of the population at St. Mary's Island and to 8% of the population of the three other settlements combined—at MacCarthy Island, the Ceded Mile, and British Kombo St. Mary.[10] The explanation for this drastic decrease might have been their vulnerability to sickness, civil war, and remigration. Despite the difficulties experienced by this community, Mahoney discovered that by the second part of the 19th century, there were noticeable signs of rejuvenation. She traced the growth of the community in her book.

The four subjects whose stories are presented below played key roles in shaping the history of the Gambia and of West Africa. Three of them were born and schooled in Freetown, Sierra Leone before finishing their education in Great Britain: Horton became a military commandant and medical doctor, Nicol, a minister, and Maxwell, a lawyer. Horton and Maxwell then saw brief service in the Gold Coast before being posted to the Gambia. Nicol returned to Freetown and served at Regent Parish where he was chosen to serve as chaplain to the troops in the Gambia. Of the four, only Richards was a native Gambian who was educated and served in the Gambia.

The outstanding contributions of these four individuals transformed business, politics, legislation, and diplomacy in the Gambia. Horton established a home defense unit, a municipality, and primary health care systems. Nicol developed education and mass communication. Maxwell drafted legislation protecting the rights of married women (1885) that anticipated the Republic of the Gambia's Women's Act – 2010 Clause 41: "A woman has the right to acquire her own property and to administer and manage it freely." [11] Richards advocated for the rights of local traders and businessmen.

These men were trail-blazers in the emerging West African settlements. Nevertheless, in her concluding appraisal of these and other liberated Africans, Mahoney highlighted a recurring phenomenon in the late nineteenth century that threatened to wipe out all memory of these subjects and their achievements from the historical record:

James Africanus Horton, J. D. Richards, George Croley Nicol, Joseph Renner Maxwell, and many others were symbols of liberated African achievement. At the very hour of success, however, the climate of white opinion began to change from benevolence to hostility, suspicion and ridicule. Even the church that had spearheaded liberated African emancipation, now declared openly that its senior posts were to be reserved for Europeans! Throughout West Africa of the late nineteenth century, this unfortunate attitude plagued the liberated African elite at the time of its greatest achievement, and forced its leaders to look to the future with foreboding. It was out of this desperate situation in all the colonies of British West Africa that the National Congress of British West Africa (NCBWA) was founded in 1920.[12] Liberated Africans had taken their destiny in their own hands. [13]

The 1880s and 1890s and the dawn of the twentieth century witnessed the systematic humiliation of these individuals and many others belonging to the liberated African community through frequent questionable and subjective decisions by the authorities. The government, the establishment, and the church, which, together, had once assisted and encouraged their predecessors now ridiculed their descendants and treated them with hostility and suspicion. This unfortunate trend continued well into the twentieth century.

Mahoney's book documents the important role the liberated African community played in the history of West Africa. She explains this in the thesis statement of her book:

The political freedom of West Africa, however, cannot be understood without the liberated African, whose ancestors had reached the shores of Freetown and Bathurst in the early nineteenth century, broken-down in health, and dejected in hope. They had readily responded to the friendship of missionaries from Europe and the West Indies, who had come to ameliorate their condition, and make reparations for the evils of the Atlantic Slave Trade. Liberated Africans thus became the interpreters of Western civilization, first to their own people located on the Coast, and then to the indigenous peoples of the hinterland. Christianity and Western education were the main features of the new culture adopted by this growing urban "elite" along the Coast...now call[ing] itself "Creole" (Krio) or "Aku." [14]

The stories of Horton, Nicol, Maxwell, and Richards point to acts of emancipation of the liberated African community. Members of the liberated

African community can still trace their blood connections in West Africa from the northern island of Saint Louis (Ndar) in Senegal to the southern city of Lobito in Angola; from the islands of the West Indies to Great Britain and North, Central, and South America.

I am a fourth generation descendant of the Gambia's liberated African community. Some believe that we were the sacrificial symbols of an African "Sacrament." We were forged out of diversity and human misery, and formed into God's delivered peoples. The Almighty and Invisible God of grace made the liberated African community a sign of His overwhelming power to save and to transform the defenseless of every race and gave them a place in His ongoing history of salvation within Africa and beyond.

Rev. Gabriel Leonard Allen

DACB Advisory Council Member and JACB Contributing Editor
December 2017, Banjul, the Gambia

Notes:

1. Their stories can be found in chapters four and five of Asi Florence Mahoney, *"Creole Saga": The Gambia's Liberated African Community in the Nineteenth Century* (Banjul: Baobab Printers, copyright 2006, 2017): Horton, p.136-140; Nicol, p.75-78; Maxwell, p. 78-85; Richards, p.61-70. For their complete biographies with footnotes and bibliographies, please consult the DACB website, at www.dacb.org.
2. Dr. Mahoney taught history at the Gambia High School (1966-1972) and little later at the Gambia College (1982-1985). In April 2016, she was invited to the Eburnjan Theatre of Banjul to deliver a special lecture on the 200th Anniversary of the Founding of Bathurst, now Banjul (1816-2016). Although formally retired from active service, Dr. Mahoney remains a devoted Anglican, ecumenist, and a life-long teacher and researcher.
3. Lamin Sanneh, *West African Christianity: The Religious Impact* (Orbis Books: Maryknoll, 1983), 56, 58, 71. 73.
4. Mahoney, 52.
5. Mahoney, 35-44.
6. Mahoney, 44-52.
7. Mahoney, 52-53.
8. Mahoney, 44.
9. Mahoney, Appendix VIII: "Census Returns of St. Mary's (1818-1901)," 201.

10. Mahoney, Appendix IX: "Census Returns for 1901," 203-205.
 11. Office of the Vice President & Ministry for Women Affairs, *The Republic of The Gambia Women Act 2010 – Clause 41* (Banjul: Graphic Designs Printing & Advertising, 2010), 10.
 12. J. Ayodele Langley, *Pan-Africanism and Nationalism in West Africa: 1900-1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 107-140.
 13. Mahoney, 159.
 14. Mahoney, 159.
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Horton, James Africanus B.

Born 1830s

Anglican Church

Sierra Leone, Gold Coast, the Gambia

Africanus B. Horton was a physician, an army officer and a writer. He attended the Church Missionary Society Grammar School and Fourah Bay College in Freetown before going to King's College, London, on a medical scholarship from the War Office in 1855. Having acquitted himself with distinction at King's College and later at Edinburgh University where he earned a doctorate in medicine, Horton joined the British Army Medical Services with the rank of staff assistant surgeon. He was to give twenty years of service to the army from which he later retired with the rank of lieutenant colonel.

His first post was at Anomabu near Cape Coast in 1860. By the mid-1860s, during the governorship of Colonel G. A. K. d'Arcy (1859-1866) and Admiral C. G. E. Patey (1866-1871) of the colony of the Gambia, he was serving in MacCarthy Island, which had a population of 1,100, of which 250 were liberated Africans. As the tropical climate of the Gambia had taken a toll on the lives of three European assistant surgeons, the governor decided to bring in "colored" assistant surgeons to fill the gap.

At this time, public opinion was concerned with the withdrawal from the island of the British troops of the 4th West India Regiment because Muslim reformists had launched a jihad on the River Gambia. It was in this complex political situation that Horton assumed office as provisional civil and military commander as well as medical officer of MacCarthy Island in June 1866.

An intellectual, but very much a man of action and a pragmatist, Horton took immediate measures to organize a militia that would provide some security for the community. Recognizing the commercial and strategic importance of the island and the interests of the mercantile community, he convened a meeting of merchants and traders the day after the departure of the troops. The result was the creation of a volunteer force led by special constables who received weapons and pay. Horton viewed the positive response of the Islanders, especially their acceptance of responsibility for their newly created volunteer force, as a manifestation of their spirit of mutual solidarity and ability to govern themselves.

Horton believed that this spirit of self-help among a small group of entrepreneurs on an abandoned British island signaled that they could achieve self-government within twenty years with a little additional training. The situation filled him with hope for the future of MacCarthy Island and indeed for West Africa. He drew on this experience to expand a pamphlet he had published a year before entitled the “Political Economy of British West Africa” in which he outlined a “ground-plan” for the future of political regimes in West Africa that included a list of requirements for colonies and settlements.

Within three years (1866-1869), Horton had produced a definitive work that not only further examined these requirements for self-government but categorically repudiated the idea that Africans were inferior beings. *West African Countries and Peoples: A Vindication of the African Race* is an important study for all those interested in the growth of self-government and Pan-Africanism in West Africa in the latter part of the 19th century. Horton’s understanding of Gambian affairs was remarkable for someone whose job required him to live on an island one hundred and seventy-six miles upriver. In the few years spent in the country, he had acquainted himself with its peoples and their problems to such an extent that *West African Countries and Peoples* provided valuable working solutions for the colonial office as well as for the governors-in-chief of West African settlements. Horton’s idealism was never divorced from political issues on the ground.

As a medical man, Horton was concerned with community health and what today is known as primary health care. For that reason, he drew the attention of the authorities to the importance of low-cost housing for the poorer inhabitants. He urged the authorities to build quality, inexpensive housing in Kombo and to mandate that all poor inhabitants follow the new standards in their future construction projects.

Horton saw no advantage in allowing Africans to enter the main stream of civilization at their own conservative pace. He believed that the government

had the duty to civilize the local people in the Mandingo towns in British Gambia. The government could not, in good conscience, allow people to continue to live in an unhealthy state of squalor. However quaint or picturesque they may have seemed, the traditional African huts in Baccow (Bakau) were poorly ventilated and cramped inside. This made them unacceptable because of the unhealthy living conditions.

Notwithstanding what might be regarded today as misguided enthusiasm for Western civilization, 19th century West African intellectuals maintained a clear vision of a viable West Africa capable of holding its own in the world. Indeed, many of their concrete proposals for development contributed to the progress of future generations in West Africa. For instance, Horton proposed a plan to form a municipal council in St. Mary's that he believed would greatly benefit the local population and the whole colony. He also strongly recommended the appointment of a mayor for Bathurst: the demand for a mayor was to become a recurrent cry of the liberated African community for another half century!

Many of his proposals, though realistic and enlightened, were not immediately realized. His vision for West Africa often disturbed the thinking of those who saw its inhabitants as inferior and incapable of any serious advancement. Regardless of the prejudices and theories of members of the Anthropological Society like Dr. Hunt and Captain Richard Burton, Horton continued to seek solutions to the needs of his people in the area of education for West African women, the establishment of standardized government schools, and a savings bank for the Gambian population.

Horton's concern for the diversification of the Gambian economy is still a concern of the Gambian government. Cotton is becoming a major industry in the economy today. A bridge has been erected over Oyster Creek. Arabic has been introduced into the school curriculum using Pakistani and Gambian teachers, rather than Senegalese teachers, as Horton proposed a century ago. Horton's pioneering book was an early example of modern political theory in Africa.

Asi Florence Mahoney

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Nicol, George Croley

Born: c. 1820s to 1830s

Anglican Church

Sierra Leone, Great Britain, the Gambia

In 1869, George Croley Nicol, formerly pastor of St. Charles Church, Regent, in Sierra Leone, was appointed to the vacant post of colonial chaplain of the Gambia. He had been educated in the Church Missionary Society Grammar School in Freetown before earning a scholarship for further studies at the C.M.S. College Islington, London. After further theological training, he was ordained by Bishop Jackson, in St. Paul's Cathedral, London on September 29, 1849.

From 1869 to 1887, Nicol labored to cultivate an informed public opinion in Bathurst. His first concern was, of course, the spiritual welfare of the colonial troops still stationed on St. Mary's Island. However, once the troops withdrew in 1870, he devoted his energies to building up the colonial school and to improving standards among school-leavers. The school came to be known as King's School or St. Mary's Anglican Elementary School. His experience in England had convinced him of the benefits of western education for the liberated African community of West Africa. For this reason, his ambition was to educate his own children abroad—both sons and daughters—salary permitting. Indeed his son, George Guernsey Nicol, became the first West African to graduate from Cambridge University, in 1879.

The cost eventually caused financial embarrassment to Nicol. The problem was brought to the attention of the bishop of Sierra Leone, the Right Rev. Graham Ingham. Ingham disregarded Nicol's commendable efforts as a father trying to give the best education to his children and he criticized him for his "vanity." To add insult to injury, Nicol's retirement from the colonial service was now confirmed. The bishop explained that it would be better to have

Europeans fill these posts in the future as long as Europeans were available. Furthermore, Ingham was convinced that the salary of an African colonial chaplain was “too large for an African.” Nicol pleaded, without success, for an extension of his services because he needed to cover the expenses of his large family, in particular the educational costs of his two youngest daughters in England.

This was how the first African colonial chaplain of the Gambia was retired because the public could not exert pressure on the establishment over appointments and retirements. Nicol’s colleague, Thomas Maxwell at Cape Coast, was also retired in 1887. These cases were only two of the many examples that marked a period during which the presence of educated West Africans only produced sarcasm or hostility from British colonial officials.

However, both Nicol and Maxwell had enjoyed a long period of distinction before the change in the attitudes of European philanthropists. Nicol, for example, had spent his best efforts promoting education. In the 1880s, he had widened his objectives, and devoted his energy to promoting a local newspaper, through which he hoped to reach the public. His goal was to encourage a love of reading in the community that would foster growth in the social, moral, and intellectual arena, and the development of a local identity.

These were the editor’s hopes expressed at the resumption of publication of the newspaper, the *Bathurst Observer*, owned by a group of liberated African entrepreneurs of Bathurst, and a West Indian barrister, Mr. Chase Walcott, who was manager. The printing press was situated at No. 9 Wellington Street, Bathurst.

For over five years the paper maintained a high standard of production, and provided a useful platform for the discussion of the major issues of the day, particularly those of a commercial and political nature. However, when Nicol retired to Freetown in 1887 and Chase Walcott died in London in 1888, the *Bathurst Observer* came upon difficult days, and soon went out of circulation. But, thanks to Nicol, the need for a local newspaper had been created and it was not long before another liberated African newspaper—*The Intelligencer*—was founded in the 1890s. This became a reputable paper and, like the *Bathurst Observer*, it circulated in West Africa and England.

Although Nicol experienced great difficulty establishing a colonial school, the institution that was largely his responsibility is today one of the important primary schools in the Gambia. It was his aim to expand the school into a government institution open to all religions and social classes. He had a vision for a government boarding school that would attract pupils from Gorée and the sons of chiefs from the River States, thus strengthening the ties between

indigenous states and the local government. He hoped that such an institution would not only teach academic subjects but also technical subjects like carpentry, masonry, and agriculture. These skills would contribute to the material welfare of the community.

Nicol was well ahead of the thinking on education in the Gambia at that time. Although he laid his proposals before the administrator, Captain Moloney, he got no response. It was only in the early twentieth century that Governor Denton encouraged the Riverain chiefs to accept sponsorship for their sons at St. Mary's School.

The colonial government, for its part, believed that it had already held out a generous hand to educationalists in the settlement because of the Education Act of 1882—"An Ordinance for the Promotion and Assistance of Education in the Settlement of The Gambia." The act provided government grants-in-aid to denominational schools in proportion to the examination results reported by the government inspector of schools. However, since the Anglican community lacked funds to employ competent teachers to meet these requirements, the effects of this act were so detrimental on St. Mary's School that it virtually closed down in 1883 and the pupils were distributed among some of the other schools. This serious situation caused great concern and sadness to the colonial chaplain. However, rather than accept defeat, Nicol himself turned schoolmaster. He opened a private school in his own home called "Regent House" in the hopes that things might take a better turn under a new administrator. Nicol's great hope was that his "Prep School for boys of respectable parents" might be the start of a grammar school in the future.

A few months later, the Holy Ghost Fathers of the Roman Catholic Mission were also encouraged to assist more effectively in the field of education. They opened a private school at the corner of Oxford Street and Pignard Street for girls and boys of either denomination. The advertisement that appeared in the *Bathurst Observer* was very attractive and Nicol used his privilege as editor to exhort parents to seize the opportunity to send their children to school. The Catholic Fathers had a staff of well-trained European teachers and offered free primary education to all. However, fees were charged for extra subjects like ancient or modern languages of Europe, natural philosophy, music, drawing, and embroidery.

If Nicol was deeply interested in formal education for young children, he was no less concerned about general education for young adults. Indeed, the young men of the Gambia and West Africa were always his most urgent concern, for he sincerely believed that the future depended upon them. Therefore he spared no effort in offering them education, even after they had left school, in the

hopes of cultivating an informed public opinion. He also established a reading room and a lending library to contribute further to the political and social progress of the community.

With little or no remuneration, Nicol persisted with a program of lectures on subjects that he hoped would enlighten the Bathurst community. Distinguished members of the community delivered lectures on topics like astronomy, agriculture, and sanitation at the barracks once a week. But whether it was due to the cost of admission or because the Gambian youth felt no need for further intellectual advancement, the attendance at these lectures was very disappointing. Nonetheless the significance of these lectures lay in Nicol's leadership and his vision for general education for the community because he believed that this was essential for progress. Nicol was certainly ahead of his time.

Asi Florence Mahoney

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Maxwell, Joseph Renner
1857 to 1901
Anglican Church
Sierra Leone, the Gambia

Joseph Renner Maxwell was the Queen's Advocate, the chief magistrate to the colony of the Gambia (1883-1897), and a member of the legislative and the executive councils of the Gambia colony.

In his private life, Maxwell was essentially a lonely man. He was born in 1857, the eldest son of the Reverend Thomas Maxwell. After secondary education at the Church Missionary Society Grammar School in Freetown, his father sent him to Merton College, Oxford, to read law in 1876. There he received second-class honors in jurisprudence in 1879 and passed the bar in 1880. Maxwell then returned to Cape Coast where his father was still colonial chaplain and set up a legal practice that soon flourished.

Maxwell was so successful in the Gold Coast that the governor, Captain Barrow, offered him the newly created post of Queen's Advocate in the Gambia colony. Although not a Gambian, Maxwell shared the aspirations of the liberated African community of West Africa and he considered it his duty to accept the position.

More than any of his contemporaries, Maxwell struggled to adjust to Gambian society in Bathurst. For the first time in the colony, a liberated African had penetrated the privileged circle of the white establishment. Maxwell was third from the top of the colonial administration hierarchy. He became head of the judiciary after his predecessor Francis Smith retired and was a member of both the legislative and executive councils. He lived in European quarters but only after he had communicated to the governor that he was the only head of department without quarters or a house allowance. In 1889, he received the highest honor when Governor Carter appointed him and Mr. H. H. Lee, head of the Treasury and Customs, to serve as his deputies during his absence upriver. Maxwell thus became the first and last black man to act as governor of the Gambia colony, albeit for a very brief period.

As he rose in the social and administrative ranks, Maxwell had to face opposition from those around him. In 1887, a dispatch from the secretary of state underlined that family connections rendered a candidate ineligible for the chief judicial and fiscal offices in the colony. As Maxwell's brother-in-law was one of the few barristers in the settlement, this was a matter of some concern. The implications of dishonesty naturally disturbed Maxwell who expressed his concern to Governor Samuel Rowe.

When the secretary of state decided to withdraw Maxwell from the Gambia service, Maxwell's close friend J. D. Richards decided to fight the decision with a petition. By August 1887, Richards had collected the signatures of jurors, mechanics, traders, clerks, and even market women who expressed their support for the newly appointed chief justice, their confidence in his integrity, and their satisfaction in his ability to represent the whole local community without showing favoritism. As a result, the secretary of state responded favorably to the pressure of public opinion. Even Governor Rowe gave the secretary a very positive review of Maxwell's diligence and cooperative spirit.

Unfortunately, success and status could not bring Maxwell happiness. Not only was he deprived of companionship at home—his English wife only visited the Gambia once for a few months—but he could not afford to make friends in a small community where he was chief magistrate. It seemed that he only had one close friend, J. D. Richards, who was much older than himself. In short, Maxwell held himself aloof from the liberated African community.

On the other hand, as a senior civil servant, his colleagues were expatriates from Britain. His attitude to them was one of restrained politeness, because he believed that they resented a black man in high office. Maxwell, however, did find one friend in the white community, Père Amman, one of the Roman Catholic Fathers.

At the age of forty, Maxwell was already a sick man. He retired from the service on grounds of ill health in November of 1897 and returned to England to join his wife. After three years of medical treatment in England, Maxwell was returning to West Africa when he died at sea on November 9, 1901. Thus passed away one of the greatest Africans the Gambia has ever known.

Maxwell's Legacy

What contribution did an exceptional liberated African official like Maxwell make to the colony? In his official capacity, he introduced lasting legislative reforms. He believed that one of the most revolutionary items of legislation he wrote was "The Married Women's Property Bill" of 1885 that gave Aku women traders a certain amount of independence and protection for their business property. Liberated African opinion, however, was divided on this issue. Those who objected believed that the law gave liberated African women too much economic independence and encouraged them to live apart from their husbands. However, Governor-in-Chief Sir Samuel Rowe was convinced by the representations made in support of Maxwell's bill and instructed the administrator, Captain Moloney, to allow the third reading and give his assent.

While Maxwell was in the Gambia, he put into writing his thinking on black identity in a piece entitled “The Negro Question” that he intended for publication. At the time, Edward Blyden was writing periodically for the *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, a newspaper that he had helped to found to serve the interests of African people. *The Sierra Leone Weekly News* prompted many liberated Africans in West Africa to make a reappraisal of themselves. Across the Atlantic too, Afro-Americans under the leadership of W. E. B. Dubois, Marcus Garvey, and others analyzed the problems of “the Negro” in the United States.

Maxwell’s “The Negro Question” has never been given serious consideration, probably because of the solution he proposed—a solution that black people regarded as disloyal and unpatriotic. The work, however, is of importance as a psychological study of the liberated African elite. It covers their hopes and fears, and discusses the problems of achievement. In the final analysis, their attainment of professional skills and the status of senior civil servants did not bring them fulfillment, but instead conflict and disillusionment. Maxwell did not share Blyden’s optimism in the future of “the Negro” of West Africa.

Maxwell’s study of “the Negro” led him to conclude that he was despised not because he had intellectual or moral deficiencies but because he was ugly. Maxwell knew Blyden’s views on “the Negro” who was conscious of the unattractiveness of his race: it was an example of the African inferiority complex that was a by-product of the Christian influence among them. Blyden explained that Christian missionaries imposed preconceived ideas on African converts and insisted that whites represented the Aryan race and culture.

Judged by the reality of experience, Blyden’s thesis was simplistic: in spite of superior qualifications, difficulties continued to beset the educated “Negro” because of his skin color. Maxwell experienced this when a local chief invited to an official meeting approached every white member of the council and paid them obeisance but ignored the acting clerk of council, Maxwell, the black chief magistrate.

The late nineteenth century witnessed the apogee of liberated African civilization but it was also a very trying period when Africans suffered all kinds of indignities from blacks and whites alike, because of skin color. Some of the most brilliant minds of this community saw no hope in the future for black people.

In this depressing atmosphere, Blyden’s optimism regarding the contributions that the black race could yet make to the world was a breath of fresh air. His lecture on “Race and Study” delivered on May 19, 1893 in Freetown was partly to refute Maxwell’s solution to “The Negro Question.” Maxwell believed that the solution was “Man-Culture” or “Afro-European miscegenation” that combined the attractiveness of Caucasians with the

shapeliness and strength of Africans. But for Blyden, such a proposition was as good as doing away with African racial identity and personality.

Maxwell made no apologies for the solution he proposed. He argued that since persons of mixed (notwithstanding illegitimate) birth were given precedence over pure “Negroes” born legitimately in West African society, then the problem was not a question of ability or achievement, but of skin color. Yet Maxwell did not respect the African who aped the European, nor did he have time for the educated African who forced himself on white society.

It was not a simplistic solution either, for Maxwell advocated inter-marriage only between educated blacks and educated whites whenever possible. Maxwell himself had married an English woman, Ada Maud Beale. He discouraged inter-marriage between blacks and the mulatto community of West Africa, because he did not believe it led to the improvement of mulattos. Nevertheless, he felt mulattos held the key to the solution of the “Negro problem.”

If, from our high-minded view of independent Africa under black governments, we are tempted to dismiss Maxwell’s preoccupation with the color of his skin and the texture of his hair as paranoid, it may be worth remembering that black America, in its struggle for recognition in the 1960s and 1970s, found it necessary to use the slogan “Black is Beautiful!” Critics may also accuse Maxwell of exaggeration, charging him of having miscalculated the dimensions of the racial problem, and of lacking in imagination and insight. Maxwell certainly never dreamed that within half a century the blacks of Africa would begin to control their destiny. Political independence has indeed happened.

Asi Florence Mahoney

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Richards, Joseph Davidson
1843 to 1917
Anglican Church
The Gambia

Joseph Davidson Richards, popularly known as “JD,” was an Aku entrepreneur of Bathurst. In January 1883, he was nominated to be the first African unofficial member of the Gambia legislative council.

Joseph Davidson Richards was born in Bathurst in 1843 of liberated African parents from Abeokuta in Yorubaland, Nigeria. His father was a tailor by trade, but his mother was a trader in cola nuts. Thanks to her success in this lucrative business, their family was able to purchase a large house from a merchant named Richard Lloyd.

Richards grew up in this house and attended the Wesleyan Primary Day School in Bathurst. When he was ready for secondary education, his autocratic mother refused to imitate other prosperous liberated African families. She would not allow her son to go to the Church Missionary Society Grammar School in Freetown, because she did not want him to be like the other young men in white-collar jobs in the Gambia civil service who were disliked for their arrogance. Therefore, he was trained in business under her watchful eye.

Soon Richards was ready to find a job in the groundnut trade. In the 1860s, William Goddard, agent for the firm of Forster and Smith, made him his trader at Banney in Jarra Kingdom, in present day Fulladu West District on the south bank of Central River Region. Richards’ next station was in Niumi, in the king of Barra’s domain. There he bought nuts during the 1870s and gained valuable experience that prepared him for the dangers of his future life as an entrepreneur. Richards became so successful by the 1880s that he dealt directly with manufacturers in Manchester who supplied him with printed cottons, cotton yarn, and hardware for the river trade. Not only did he own cutters for transporting groundnuts to Bathurst, he also employed his own liberated African and Wolof traders.

At this stage of his career, Richards stayed in touch with the activities in the Riverain States by maintaining contact with the rulers or with his own traders. Dealing with shrewd rulers over the alleged disregard of traditional law and custom made Richards very aware of the complexities of trade and politics in the Riverain States. His first-hand knowledge of the river, sound common sense, and business acumen put Richards in a position of leadership during the crises of a complex transfer of territory.

The colonial government often consulted Richards on local issues. His indomitable will, sense of purpose, eloquence, and advocacy in fluent English on behalf of the liberated African community made him an outstanding leader for the Bathurst Native Association (BNA). On a visit to the Gambia in 1882, Sir Arthur Havelock, the governor-in-chief of British West Africa, learned about the Bathurst Native Association and its demands for greater participation in the affairs of the settlement. Impressed by the leadership of the association, and convinced of the justification of its demands, Havelock wrote to the secretary of state. In his letter, he advocated for the necessity of having local representation for the small traders of the Gambia and Sierra Leone living in Bathurst on the legislative council. He put forward Richards' name.

Dr. Q. S. Gouldsbury, administrator of the Gambia colony (1877-1884), had recommended Richards to the governor-in-chief after informally surveying the liberated African community and discovering that Richards was highly regarded and trusted among the locals. Richards received his letter of appointment to the legislative council dated January 1, 1883 that tasked him with representing local interests.

Throughout his five years' membership on the legislative council, Richards never failed in his role as constructive critic of the colonial government. Indeed, he pursued this role so vigorously that successive administrators began to regard him as an embarrassment to the colonial government. Richards always voted in the best interests of his people on issues related to duty increases on rice or other goods, safety issues on the roads, increased foreign shipping traffic on the Gambia River that threatened the local shipbuilding industry, and colonial government expenditures, to name but a few. However, he also made it a point to work in collaboration with the other unofficial member of long-standing in the council, James Topp, a German merchant representing the commercial houses. In spite of their joint efforts on certain issues, the official majority often overruled them.

Inevitably, Richards and Topp ran into disagreements in the council because they represented opposing commercial houses and different interests. In 1888, the financial situation of the colony had declined and, as a result, Richards was appointed to sit on a three-member committee of the Legislative Council to draw up proposals for raising additional revenue.

The visit of Governor-in-Chief Sir Samuel Rowe was seen as an opportunity to revisit the question of protection for British traders in the troubled Riverain States. Traders were hoping for a punitive expedition against Fodey Kabba Dumbuya whose activities in the Jarra country had overthrown traditional authority without replacing it with a stable political system. Liberated African

merchants and traders had suffered great hardships on the river for many years. The constant raids of Kabba's warriors had forced the lucrative trade of the Jarra country and neighboring Kiang to change locations. Their vivid descriptions of his atrocities and of his slave-dealings reopened the discussion regarding a proposed British Protectorate on the river.

Other tensions on the river involved British commercial interests and extensive territory owned by a local chief, Musa Molloh. Richards advised subsidizing Musa Molloh by signing a commercial treaty with him that included some provision for the return of criminals and refugees to the chief. Musa Molloh accused the British of interfering with the laws and customs of his jurisdiction and he was angry that British traders gave refuge to his domestic slaves.

The British government was soon forced to take action against French encroachment on the north bank of the River Gambia. For a long time, it had pursued a policy of neutrality towards the jihadists, who were ravaging the Riverain States. However, the diplomatic situation created by French forces pursuing Said Mattee on the very banks of the River Gambia goaded the British government into action. On his visit to the colony in 1887, Governor-in-Chief Rowe surveyed public opinion on this issue and gave Richards' comments considerable weight. These consultations were the prelude to the signing of treaties of protection with Gambian chiefs. As a result, the British flag was raised in all wharf-towns in 1888. Though French encroachment precipitated the declaration of a British Protectorate in the Gambia, Richards and the Bathurst Native Association played important roles in its realization.

In 1886, another distinguished liberated African merchant named Samuel John Forster joined Richards on the legislative council. Forster's career in the council was a long and distinguished one. His temperament was probably better suited to the role of the unofficial member in a nineteenth century West African legislature than was Richards'. Too outspoken on controversial issues, often critical of official conduct, and perhaps lacking in deference to the official majority, Richards became a "marked man."

No sooner was G. T. Carter appointed administrator in 1888 than he set out to reconstitute the legislative council with a view to weeding out opposition and replacing all who hindered his administration. He really only had Richards in mind. His dispatch of September 1888 to the secretary of state highlighted the fact that there were too many "unofficial" representatives on the council. In six years their number had grown from one to four and in 1888 they even outnumbered the official representatives by one. This was an unsatisfactory state of affairs, which Carter intended to put right, once separation from Sierra Leone was complete.

Thus Richards' career as first African unofficial member of the Gambia legislative council came to an abrupt end. He never returned to the council though he was still regarded by his own people as the leader of the liberated African community. He was immediately replaced by William Goddard's mulatto son, Henry Charles Goddard, agent for the Bathurst Trading Company, who was not expected to provide much opposition to official members.

Richards no doubt continued to hold a prominent place in the liberated African community. In 1895, when Governor Llewelyn (1891-1900) issued a confidential circular to jurors, magistrates, and professional gentlemen in the colony inviting them to send in names of any three gentlemen they wanted nominated to the legislative council, Richards drew 49 votes and Mr. Forster only 34 votes. Notwithstanding this fact, Richards was still excluded from the council, and the appointments of Forster and Henry Goddard were renewed for another five years.

In 1900, H. M. B. Griffith, the acting governor, followed Llewelyn's initiative and consulted public opinion for a suitable representative of their interests on the council. In that year, 57 circulars were distributed in the colony, and 50 were returned with the following results for the three forerunners: Goddard, 42 votes; Richards, 33 votes; Forster 32 votes. Once again, Richards was immediately excluded for being a potential opposition leader on the council. Another reason for his disqualification, according to official explanation, was that Richards represented the Sierra Leone section of the liberated African community. Yet it was common knowledge that Richards was Gambian by birth, that he had never attended school in Freetown nor lived there for any length of time.

In February 1884, Richards was appointed justice of the peace and, in July of the same year, sanitary commissioner. When the commission was superseded by a board of health in March 1887, Richards naturally found a seat on the board as a representative of the Bathurst Native Association, which had hitherto submitted numerous petitions deploring the unsanitary state of Bathurst, especially during the rainy season. It was partly to meet their demands for a town council that Administrator J. S. Hay (1886) had appointed the leaders of the liberated African community to sit on the newly constituted Board of Health, under the chairmanship of the colonial surgeon. Richards saw the board as the beginning of a municipality that would one day elect members and command its own revenue. It was, therefore, a great disappointment to him when the board became defunct after its first few meetings due to uneven attendance and petty jealousies.

Therefore, when the new governor, Llewelyn, arrived in 1891, Richards presented a letter that urged him to put into effect the terms of the Public Health Act, with additional recommendations for improvement. Richards had already drawn Administrator Carter's (1886-1891) attention to the unsanitary condition of the town, and to the existence of the Public Health Act but Carter had ignored his letters.

The main cause of the failure of the first board was the lack of popular votes from the ratepayers in the colony. Of course, Llewelyn had followed closely the agitation for a municipality in the neighboring colony of Sierra Leone led by Samuel Lewis in the 1880s. Like Lewis, Richards saw the establishment of local self-government through a municipality as useful training for the citizens. The governor, however, did not think that the local population was sufficiently educated to organize their own representative government.

To the secretary of state, however, the Public Health Ordinance was a vital necessity. He was willing to encourage "the better class of inhabitants in Bathurst" to assist in preserving the health of the town. Therefore a new board was appointed in January 1892 that included a strong representation of the liberated African community: J. D. Richards, Edmund Thomas, T. W. Sawyerr, Jas. C. French, and Francis Goree Njie were all members. Their appointment, however was still by nomination by the governor and not by election. Yet, the municipality ordinance of Sierra Leone passed in February 1893 provided for twelve of the fifteen councilors to be elected, with the power to levy rates and provide enough revenue to meet expenditure.

The Bathurst Board of Health was empowered to advise the governor on the allocation of rates, market dues, and licenses of various kinds that were sources of revenue from the town, but beyond this, it could not go. In short, the board had no executive power. This limitation caused a great deal of frustration to prosperous merchants who were accustomed to handling large sums of money and to negotiating agreements with commercial houses abroad. Perhaps even more serious than this complaint of the absence of executive authority was the governor's apparent indifference to the recommendations of the board.

The basis of the conflict between governor and board was really financial. The governor held the purse strings and kept a watchful eye on expenditure. The board, on the other hand, complained of a meagre revenue, yet would not accept any proposal for the increase of rates from 3% to 5%. Thus the early attempts at creating a municipality in the colony of St. Mary's were unsuccessful. Neither the Sanitary Commission, nor the Board of Health provided the experience for its members that would have prepared the way for a

town council. Indeed, it was not until the twentieth century (1947) that such an institution was established in Bathurst.

Asi Florence Mahoney

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The Contribution of Daniel William Alexander to the Birth and Growth of Eastern Orthodoxy in East Africa

Eastern Christianity has existed in Africa since the first century. Many centuries later, the Orthodox Church was implanted in certain sub-Saharan African countries through the agency of Eastern Orthodox immigrants from Europe and Russia. East Africa owes its vibrant Orthodox Christianity to the early twentieth century Afro-American liberation movement led by Marcus Garvey. The leaders of the religious branch of the movement were Patriarch George Alexander McGuire and South African Archbishop (later Patriarch) Daniel William Alexander, both of the African Orthodox Church. These two men collaborated with two leading East Africans who became Greek Orthodox bishops in 1973: Ugandan Christophorous Spartas Sebbanja Mukasa of Nilopolis (1899-1982) and Kenyan George Arthur Gatungu Gathuna of Nitria (1905-1987). Along with Archimandrite Fr. Obadiah Kabanda Basajjakitalo (1896-1985) of Uganda, these men (who were priests at the time) joined the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa in 1942 with the help of Archimandrite Fr. Nicodemos Sarikas, a Greek priest from Asia Minor who was serving in Arusha, Tanzania at the time.

Eastern Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa

The earliest account of Eastern Christianity in Africa is the biblical story of the Ethiopian Eunuch who was baptized by Philip. Another instance is the formation and development of the ancient Alexandrian See of Saint Mark the Evangelist.¹ Between the first and fourth centuries, North African Christianity produced some of the greatest Christian scholars of all times.² However, there is no evidence that this revered North African Christianity ever traveled beyond Ethiopia into Sub-Saharan Africa for the first 1500 years of Christianity.³ In the early 1500s, Portuguese explorers were the first to bring the Western tradition of Roman Catholicism into Central Africa.⁴

¹ John Baur, *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa: An African Church History*, 2nd ed. (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2009), 1-39; John Mbiti, "The Future of Christianity in Africa (1970-2000)," *Communio Viatorum* 1:2 (1970), 19.

² John Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity and Christian Divisions: The Church AD 450-680* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1989), 272.

³ Baur, 20.

⁴ Baur, 40-98.

Eastern Orthodox Christianity came to Central and Southern Africa with immigrant merchants. The first was a Greek Cypriot named George Orfanides who arrived in Rhodesia (today Zimbabwe) in 1880, while others settled in Beira, Mozambique in 1890.⁵ However, historical evidence along the coast of East Africa in the 1700s describes clergymen similar to Eastern Orthodox priests who had probably come with Arabic traders from the Middle East, the birthplace of Eastern Christianity.⁶ The Orthodox Christian immigrants in Africa later invited priests from their countries to come and serve them. These priests mainly served the immigrant population and did not extend Orthodoxy to the locals. However, a few priests went out of their way to propagate the faith to the locals—at first only to Africans working for Orthodox immigrants or in the church compound and later to their families and friends.

Eastern Orthodoxy in Uganda

For many years, Reuben Sebbanja Ssedimba Mukasa Spartas and his fellow military comrade and brother in law Obadiah Kabanda Basajjakitalo had wanted to leave the Anglican Church in Uganda because of its discriminatory practices towards Africans. Spartas came across the *Negro World Journal* and wrote to the Afro-American Garvey Movement religious leader Patriarch McGuire in April 1925, telling him of their desire to learn and teach scripture in an African led church. However, Spartas only received a response in 1928 when McGuire connected him with the newly consecrated Archbishop Alexander of South Africa.⁷

Alexander arrived in Uganda in August 1931 to serve the Ugandan led church that already had 1,512 members.⁸ In March 1932, Alexander consecrated one sister/nun, one reader (Mr. Erisa Sebbowa), and three deacons (Daudi Jube, Yosia Mukasa and Simeon Pasha). He also ordained both Spartas and Obadiah

⁵ Archbishop Makarios Tillyrides, *Year Book and Review* (Nairobi: Orthodox Archbishopric of Nairobi, 2016), 47; John Cosmas Ngige, “Theological Training and Formation in the Eastern Orthodox Churches in Africa,” in Isabel Apawo Phiri and Dietrich Werner (eds.), *Handbook of Theological Education in Africa* (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2013), 292.

⁶ Beck Sanderson, *MidEast and Africa 1700-1950 of Civilization* (World Peace Communication, 2010); Robert Maxon, *East Africa: An Introductory History*, 3rd ed. (Morgantown, VA: West Virginia University Press, 2009).

⁷ F. B. Welbourn, *East African Rebels* (London: S.C.M. Press Ltd, 1961), 81.

⁸ Welbourn, 87.

to the priesthood on Pentecost Sunday of 1932 at the cathedral of Villa Jerusalem in Degeya.⁹ Archpriest Spartas was made vicar general of the Ugandan Diocese.

Eastern Orthodoxy in Kenya

The African Orthodox Church of Kenya (AOCK) was established in 1929 as a result of cultural clashes between local Africans and European missionaries. At the time, missionary teaching strictly rejected cultural practices such as polygamy, female genital mutilation (FGM), circumcision rituals and dances, consuming traditional brew or tobacco, levirate marriages, communicating with ancestral spirits, and bride price payment, among others.¹⁰ There were also political and educational struggles. Even though legislation had established norms for social life and minimum standards for the provision of housing, food, and medical services, Kenyans working for Europeans still received limited education, lower wages for more work, and no medical attention, all because they were considered less human.¹¹

These Africans decided to found a church that would combine both their African and their Christian ethos. Considering that missionaries were involved in education and that starting an African church meant seeking not only spiritual, but also mental, economic and political liberation, the Kenyans initiated movements that were politically and academically based. As a result, institutions emerged as part of this social liberation such as the Kikuyu Independent Schools Association (KISA) in Muranga and Nyeri areas, and the Kikuyu Karinga Education Associations (KKEA) in Kiambu and Nairobi areas.¹²

While these Kenyans had teachers for their schools, they lacked ordained clergy to perform liturgical services, such as baptism. Consequently, they started looking for a church that would educate and ordain them.¹³ They

⁹ Welbourn, 88.

¹⁰ Carl G. Rosberg Jr., and John Nottingham, *The Myth of "Mau Mau" Nationalism in Kenya* (New York and Cleveland, OH: Meridian Books, 1966): 105-135; F. K. Githieya, *The Freedom of the Spirit*, thesis (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1997.); Kamuyu-wa-Kang'ethe, "African Response to Christianity: A Case Study of the Agikuyu of Central Kenya," *Missiology: An International Review*, 16:1 (January 1988): 23-44; Welbourn, 135-136; Robert W. Strayer, *The Making of Mission Communities in East Africa: Anglicans and Africans in Colonial Kenya, 1875-1935* (London/ Nairobi: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, 1978), 77-87, 136-150.

¹¹ Robert L. Tignor, *Colonial Transformation of Kenya: The Kamba, Kikuyu and Maasai from 1900-1939* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 4-7.

¹² Welbourn, 83, 151-153.

¹³ Githieya, 95.

wrote to the Anglican bishop of Mombasa in July 1933 to request permission to send two young men to St. Paul's Divinity School (today St Paul's University) in Limuru, Central Kenya, for their theological training. They also asked for an African clergyman who would help them while these two were still in school.¹⁴ Although the English missionaries had originally agreed to help the independents, they later rejected their proposal in full.¹⁵

During this process, James Beuttah, an adherent of KISA who worked in Mombasa, met Archbishop Daniel William Alexander.¹⁶ Alexander was on his way back from Uganda where he had been teaching Ugandans and receiving them into the church. As Uganda was a landlocked country, his boat trip from South Africa brought him to Mombasa. From there he left for Uganda by train, and returned the same way. Beuttah explained the situation of the Kenyan independent church group and Alexander accepted to help find a solution. The Kenyans contacted him again in 1935 through the KISA chairman Johana Kuniya, and Alexander responded positively on May 8 and June 10, 1935. He explained the history and basic teachings of his church and proposed to come by September 1935.¹⁷

Alexander arrived in Gituamba of Muranga County in Central Kenya in 1935, and set up a seminary. He taught seven KISA men and one from KKEA, for eighteen months. As an outcome of this training, he ordained Fr. Arthur Gatungu Gathuna of Nairobi West (KKEA) and Fr. Philip Kiande of Nyeri as well as six archdeacons of KKEA.¹⁸ Alexander left Kenya on July 7, 1937, ten days after the ordinations.¹⁹

East Africans Join Greek Orthodoxy

One member of the Ugandan group, a Greek immigrant in Kampala named Mr. Vlachos, noticed that the practices of the Orthodox Church under Alexander

¹⁴ Rosberg and Nottingham, 127-129.

¹⁵ Strayer, 150-152.

¹⁶ Ciprian Burlacioiu, "Between the United States, South Africa, and East Africa (1921-1940)," *Journal of World Christianity* 6.1 (2016): 82-98; Richard Newman, "Archbishop Daniel William Alexander and the African Orthodox Church," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 16.4 (1983): 615-630; Theodore Natsoulas, "Patriarch McGuire and the Spread of the African Orthodox Church to Africa," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 12:2 (1981): 81-104; Warren C. Platt, "The African Orthodox Church: An Analysis of Its First Decade," *Church History* 58.4 (December 1989): 474-488.

¹⁷ Githieya, 97

¹⁸ Githieya, 98-99; Tillyrides, 49.

¹⁹ Rosberg and Nottingham, 130.

differed from those of traditional Eastern Orthodoxy.²⁰ In 1932, Vlachos introduced the Ugandans to Fr. Nicodemos Sarikas, a Greek priest from Asia Minor serving in Arusha, Tanzania. Sarikas introduced them and later the Kenyans to the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa and officially received them into the church in 1942. The link between Alexander and the East Africans thus ceased very early on but his influence made them a unique Eastern Orthodox Church to this very day.

Alexander's Contribution to his Church

Alexander's leadership set a precedent in the administration and management of an indigenous African church. He insisted on the need for apostolic succession, which was the reason why Africans initially accepted to be under the American based African Orthodox Church. To his students in Southern and Eastern Africa, he passed on the importance of this apostolic continuity. He was conscious of the need to keep in contact with the mother church and was faithful in communicating with the African Orthodox Church in the United States. He did not ordain any bishops without the Patriarch until he broke away from them. The same search for apostolic succession prompted him to contact the Greek Orthodox archbishop of Johannesburg and sub-Saharan Africa who was then Metropolitan Isidore (1934-1966) to request affiliation with the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa.

Although he did not have a high level of education, Alexander established seminaries in South Africa and later in East Africa to make theological education available for his clergy. He insisted on documenting all church and personal activity, including meetings, synods, and correspondence. He kept records of almost everything, even bank accounts, because he felt it was important for an indigenous church to be self-sustaining and to keep clear records. Alexander insisted on the involvement of women in church leadership, and thus made sure that all clergy wives were in charge of the women's Guild of Saint Monica.

Alexander communicated with many church leaders of his time as well as scholars of Christianity. This showed his ecumenical initiative and his openness to receiving others and to being received by them. His correspondence tells us that there was an African Orthodox Church in England sometime between 1928 and 1959.

²⁰ Welbourn, 89.

This issue of the *Journal of African Christian Biography* features two biographies of Archbishop Daniel William Alexander from the *Dictionary of African Christian Biography*.²¹ It is important to remember the legacy of important African pioneers like Alexander who brought Orthodoxy to East Africa as an African Instituted Church. Along with others, his boldness and his love for African leadership contributed to planting and nurturing the seed of Orthodoxy in Kenya. Today, the East African Orthodox Church continues to grow. In term of growth, East Africa is the leading Eastern Orthodox region under the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa, and has outlived many other churches. This church is unique compared with most Greek Orthodox Churches because it has preserved the church characteristics established by Alexander.

Very. Rev. Protopresbyter Fr. Evangelos Thiani

DACB Advisory Council Member and *JACB* Contributing Editor

December 2017, Nairobi, Kenya

²¹<https://dacb.org/stories/southafrica/alexander-daniel/> ;
<https://dacb.org/stories/southafrica/alexander-daniel2/>

Alexander, Daniel William (A)

1883-1970

African Orthodox Church

South Africa, Uganda, Kenya

Daniel William Alexander was born on December 23, 1883 in Port Elizabeth. There are conflicting reports about his birth parentage. Johnson (1992:78) says he was born on December 25 and that his mother was of Cuban and Javanese extraction, but in his application for a French passport he said his father was a French subject from Martinique and his mother was an African.

He was brought up as a Roman Catholic but later joined the Anglican Church. He was commandeered to serve as a cook in the Anglo-Boer War when he was living in Johannesburg and went to Natal. He was arrested as a British spy and imprisoned in Pretoria, then released when the British took the city. His first wife, Maria Horsley, died about this time (Johnson 1992:79). He met an Anglican priest, Father Godfrey, who asked him to help with a funeral, and he became an Anglican, and began to study for ordination (Johnson 1992:80). He was a catechist at St. Cuthbert's Anglican Church in Pretoria when he married his wife Elizabeth on August 29, 1902. He later joined Brander's Ethiopian Catholic Church in Zion, where he was a Provincial Canon, Director of the Rand, and Prebendary of St. Augustine's Pro-Cathedral (Kampenhansen 1976:578).

According to Johnson (1992:81), Alexander left Pretoria and the Anglican Church in 1914. In about 1920 he joined the African Church of J. Khanyane Napo, who had also been a member of the Ethiopian Catholic Church in Zion. He was stationed in Kimberley, and, tired of being summoned to Johannesburg for meetings about quarrels between the leaders, he left to form the African Orthodox Church in 1924. He sought to affiliate this entity with George McGuire's African Orthodox Church in the U.S.A. after reading a sermon by McGuire in *Negro World* of August 9, 1924 (Marks & Trapido 1987:221). He was consecrated a bishop by McGuire and others in America in 1927.

In about 1928, Reuben Spartas in Uganda made contact with Alexander. Alexander traveled to Uganda in October 1931 and, on Trinity Sunday 1932, he ordained Reuben Spartas and Obadiah Basajjikitale as priests (Welbourn 1961:81). When travelling back to South Africa, Alexander met a postal clerk, James Beuttah, in Mombasa. Beuttah suggested that he return to Kenya to visit the independent schools associations.

In May 1935 Alexander wrote to Archbishop Isidore of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Johannesburg, asking for letters of introduction to Fr.

Nikodemos Sarikas of Tanganyika and the Patriarch of Jerusalem (Githieya 1992:158). The archbishop replied, suggesting that he visit the Patriarch of Alexandria. Alexander arrived in Kenya on November 18, 1935, and founded a seminary with eight students at Gituamba. In June 1937 he ordained two of his students as priests and two as deacons and returned to South Africa (Githieya 1992:167-168).

The African Orthodox Church in South Africa received government recognition in 1941. In 1960, two bishops from the American branch of the AOC visited South Africa to consecrate two new bishops. Shortly after the consecration, they deposed Alexander and promulgated “emergency regulations” to govern the church. After that, mainly as a result of American interference, the AOC broke up into several factions, and Alexander changed the name of his branch to the African Independent Orthodox Church.

Stephen Hayes

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- Welbourn, F. B. 1961. *East African Rebels: A Study of Some Independent Churches*. London: SCM.

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Alexander, Daniel William (B)

1883-1900s

African Orthodox Church

South Africa, Uganda, Kenya

Daniel William Alexander was a native of South Africa, consecrated on September 11, 1927 to be archbishop and primate of the African Orthodox Church in South Africa. In 1929, he licensed Spartas as a lay-reader in Uganda. In 1931 he visited Uganda, where he spent ten months training ordinands. In 1935, he visited Kenya at the request of the Kikuyu Independent Schools Association (KISA) and ordained at least four priests. Of these, two formed the African Orthodox Church, while the rest remained faithful to KISA and formed the African Independent Pentecostal Church. These churches in Uganda and Kenya eventually transferred their allegiance to the Orthodox Patriarch of Alexandria.

Louise Pirouet

This biography, used by permission, was written by Louise Pirouet, as part of *A Dictionary of Christianity in Uganda* (Department of Religious Studies, Makerere University College, 1969), p. 10. Copies available at Africana Section, Makerere University Library (AF Q 276.761 MAK and AR/MAK/99/1); Bishop Tucker Library, Uganda Christian University and in the U.K. at the University of Birmingham; Crowther Centre Library, CMS Oxford and Louise Pirouet Papers, Cambridge Centre of African Studies.

Recent Print and Digital Resources Related to Christianity in Africa

Catron, John W. *Embracing Protestantism: Black Identities in the Atlantic World*. Florida: University Press of Florida, 2016. [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com/dp/9780813061634) ISBN-13: 978-0813061634

"In *Embracing Protestantism*, John Catron argues that people of African descent in America who adopted Protestant Christianity during the eighteenth century did not become African Americans but instead assumed more fluid Atlantic-African identities. America was then the land of slavery and white supremacy, where citizenship and economic mobility were off-limits to most people of color. In contrast, the Atlantic World offered access to the growing abolitionist movement in Europe.

Catron examines how the wider Atlantic World allowed membership in transatlantic evangelical churches that gave people of color unprecedented power in their local congregations and contact with black Christians in West and Central Africa. It also channeled inspiration from the large black churches then developing in the Caribbean and from black missionaries. Unlike deracinated creoles who attempted to merge with white culture, people of color who became Protestants were "Atlantic Africans," who used multiple religious traditions to restore cultural and ethnic connections. And this religious heterogeneity was a critically important way black Anglophone Christians resisted slavery." From [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com/dp/9780813061634)

Hughes, Arnold and David Perfect. *A Political History of the Gambia, 1816-1994* (Rochester Studies in African History and the Diaspora) [s.l.]: Boydell & Brewer; University of Rochester Press, 2008. [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com/dp/9781580461269) ISBN-10: 1580461263 / ISBN-13: 978-1580461269

"*A Political History of the Gambia: 1816-1994* is the first complete account of the political history of the former British West African dependency to be written. It makes use of much hitherto unconsulted or unavailable British and Gambian official and private documentary sources, as well as interviews with many Gambian politicians and former British colonial officials. The first part of the book charts the origins and characteristics of modern politics in colonial Bathurst (Banjul) and its expansion into the Gambian interior (Protectorate) in the two decades after World War II. By independence in 1965, older urban-based parties in the capital had been defeated by a new, rural-based political organization, the People's Progressive Party (PPP). The second part of the book analyzes the means by which the PPP, under President Sir

Dawda Jawara, succeeded in defeating both existing and new rival political parties and an attempted coup in 1981. The book closes with an explanation of the demise of the PPP at the hands of an army coup in 1994. The book not only establishes those distinctive aspects of Gambian political history, but also relates these to the wider regional and African context, during the colonial and independence periods." From: Amazon.com

Saine, Philip. *Challenges of Gambian churches during Yahya Jammeh's era*. [Gambia]: [publisher not identified], ©2017.

Book review: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201707140228.html>

Dissertations & Theses

Curley, Christine Elizabeth. *Anglican Stagnation and Growth in West Africa: The Case of St. Paul's Church, Fajara, the Gambia*. Wycliffe College and the University of Toronto, Master of Theology Publication:
<https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/handle/1807/32753>

Abstract: This paper investigates the history of the Anglican Church in the Gambia, and uses one church, St. Paul's, Fajara, as a case study to understand the growth of the Church in the country. This paper evaluates the Anglican leadership in the mid-twentieth century to understand why the growth in the Anglican Church has been so small. To understand the stagnant growth, this paper also explores the Islamic and British backgrounds in the country, as well as some of the evangelistic techniques used by the Anglicans, as well as critiquing leaders in the 1970s and 1980s at St. Paul's, Fajara.

Higgins, Thomas Winfield. *Prophet, Priest and King in Colonial Africa: Anglican and Colonial Political Responses to African Independent Churches in Nigeria and Kenya, 1918-1960*. University of Edinburgh, Doctoral Thesis. 2010. Publication: <http://hdl.handle.net/1842/5472>

Abstract: Many African Independent Churches emerged during the colonial era in central Kenya and western Nigeria. At times they were opposed by government officials and missionaries. Most scholars have limited the field of enquiry to the flash-points of this encounter, thereby emphasizing the relationship at its most severe. This study questions current assumptions about the encounter which have derived from these studies, arguing that both government and missionary officials in Kenya and Nigeria exhibited a broader

range of perspectives and responses to African Independent Churches. To characterize them as mainly hostile to African Independent Churches is inaccurate.

This study also explores the various encounters between African Independent Churches and African politicians, clergymen, and local citizens. While some scholars have discussed the positive role of Africans in encouraging the growth of independent Christianity, this study will discuss the history in greater depth and complexity. The investigation will show the importance of understanding the encounter on both a local and national level, and the relationships between the two. It is taken for granted that European officials had authority over African leaders, but in regard to this topic many Africans possessed a largely unrecognized ability to influence and shape European perceptions of new religious movements.

Finally, this thesis will discuss how African Independent Churches sometimes provoked negative responses from others through confrontational missionary methods, caustic rhetoric, intimidation and even violence. These three themes resurface throughout the history of the encounter and illustrate how current assumptions can be reinterpreted. This thesis suggests the necessity of expanding the primary scholarly focuses, as well as altering the language and basic assumptions of the previous histories of the encounter.

Kihali, Elekjah Andago. *Challenges facing the Orthodox Church movements in East Africa: a historical and canonical survey*. Holy Cross Orthodox School of Theology, Masters Thesis, 2002.

Publication for purchase: <http://www.tren.com/e-docs/search.cfm?p016-0027>

Abstract: This study is an effort that seeks to look into the origins and nature of problems in the history of the Orthodox Church in East Africa and in so doing stimulate some debate on the history and problems facing the Orthodox Church in East Africa today with an emphasis on Kenya. This study does not intend to provide a chronology of the history of the Orthodox Church in East Africa but rather to look into the genesis of its present and past historical canonical problems. It is the purpose of this thesis to lead us, the Orthodox of Africa, into dialogue with one another regarding the state of the situation in East Africa and with an emphasis on Kenya. This will lead us into self-understanding as well as the discovery of the motive behind our problems.

* * *



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