

PROBLEMS IN THE COMPILATION OF A CRITICAL GAZETTEER TO COLLECTING LOCALITIES IN GHANA

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Work was started on a botanical gazetteer for Ghana independently of Mr. HEPPEL's project for the whole of the area of the Flora of West Tropical Africa, second edition (F. W. T. A.). We have agreed that the Ghana gazetteer will be published as part of the more comprehensive work, but that it may include additional information.

The following material is included for each locality.

1. The standard name, which will in general be that used in the U. S. Gazetteer for Ghana (U. S. Board on Geographic names, 1967); where a different name is adopted the U. S. equivalent will also be given.
2. The orthographically correct name in cases where there is the possibility that this may eventually replace the presently used name.
3. Type of locality, using the U. S. abbreviations; for example PPL for populated place.
4. Names of one or more collectors.
5. Latitude and longitude.
6. Distance and direction from nearest of 33 towns marked on an accompanying map.

In addition all rejected place-names that appear in F. W. T. A. are given, together with the corresponding accepted name, but without latitude and longitude. The provisional totals of places and variants is given in Table 1.

The first important decision made was to limit the scope of the work to the names used in F. W. T. A. The main reason for this lies in the extensive duplication of names among Ghanaian villages; for example the Ghana Census of 1960 (GIL & DE GRAFT-JOHNSON 1961) cites 160 villages called Domeabra. Only one of these occurs in F. W. T. A., and the gazetteer refers only to this one. It would clearly be a difficult task to ascertain that collections had never been made at any of the other 159. It is a consequence of this limitation that the gazetteer cannot be used uncritically for the location of specimens that are not cited in F. W. T. A. The inclusion of names of collectors as in BAMPS (1968) reduces the element of doubt, however, and perusal

of specimens in the Ghana Herbarium suggests that the great majority of localities even for uncited specimens has in fact been included.

The general outline of Ghana, or the Gold Coast as it then was, took shape at the Berlin Conference of 1885. The boundaries were delimited up to 9° N by 1892, and around the whole perimeter of the country by 1898. The only major subsequent change has concerned the eastern boundary with Togo. After the first World War, half of the former German colony was administered under trusteeship as British Togoland, until in 1957 this territory became an integral part of independent Ghana (Fig. 1). Many specimens collected before 1957 are labelled "Togo", but their localities are now in Ghana. For example Amedzope is cited as "Togo" in volume 1 of F. W. T. A., but as Ghana in subsequent volumes; such places are indicated by the abbreviation "B. T." in the Gazetteer. All the specimens collected by ST. CLAIR-THOMPSON are from Ghana as are almost all of those collected by MORTON, and by ADAMS. Most of the early German collections were made in what is still Togo, although BAUMANN made some collections in Avatime, Ghana, and Krause went through Kete Krachi to Salaga and beyond (CORNEVIN 1959).

It is impossible to localise exactly some of the earliest collections. BRASS, who collected in 1780—81 at various places along the coast of Ghana from Dixcove in the west to the Accra Plains in the east, labelled all his specimens "Cape Coast". Although his Dixcove plants were lost when he was captured off Elmina by the Dutch, as vividly recounted in his letters preserved at Kew, it is almost certain that some of his specimens, for example *Annona glauca*, *Grewia villosa* and *Hibiscus micranthus*, must have originated from near Accra. ISERT and THONNING, the Danish botanists, made important collections between 1783 and 1802 mostly on the Accra Plains and the nearby Akwapim Hills in Ghana, but also from the coastal regions eastwards to Ouidah in Dahomey. Most of their specimens are labelled simply "Guinea" and cannot be precisely located. Some have more exact localities, and many of these are shown on Thonning's map which is reproduced in BRØNDSTED (1952). BURTON and CAMERON labelled their plants "Gold Coast", and all came from south-west Ghana between Axim and the goldfields at Tarkwa as can be seen from the map in their book (BURTON & CAMERON 1883).

CUMMINS accompanied the Ashanti expedition of 1895—6; the places at which he collected are particularly easy to trace as they all lie on the line of march from Cape Coast. "Dunquah" is not the well-known "Dunkwa" but rather Abura Dunkwa; "Mansu" is Asin Manso; "Sutah" is Nsuta on the Kumasi road and not the better-known town of the same name near Tarkwa. Akroful is a rather common name, meaning "new town"; CUMMINS collected from a town of this name near Cape Coast, not in Ashanti as suggested by IRVINE (1961). This Akroful was on the Kumasi road according to military maps of the time (ANON. 1906), and the species themselves are typical of dry forest near the coast.

Foresters such as H. N. THOMPSON, T. F. CHIPP and C. VIGNE were the

first men to collect extensively in the interior of Ghana. THOMPSON's collections were made in the course of a single tour, and many can be located from the map in his report (THOMPSON 1910). CHIPP's collections were much more numerous than THOMPSON's and there are no detailed maps of his itineraries. However, his check-lists (CHIPP 1913, 1914) are useful in localising collections to the province, his specimens are accurately dated and numbered in chronological sequence, and his use of names is reasonably consistent. Partial itineraries have been prepared and found useful in tracing obscure or ambiguous localities.

KITSON was the first director of the Gold Coast Geological Survey and he travelled, largely on foot and bicycle, over most of the country between 1913 and 1930 though his plant collections were made only in 1927—1928. His localities are often obscure, but he prepared a guide and map which are in the Kew map-room. His annual reports, especially KITSON (1928), are also very useful, and it has been found possible to pinpoint all his localities.

These early collectors often lacked adequate maps, and transliterated according to their own ideas of spelling the place-names given to them by guides and villagers. They also travelled slowly, and small places tended to assume great importance. The modern botanist dashes about in a land-rover, and his localities are easier to find because they are almost always near roads, and are marked on the map whence the name is usually derived.

Table 1 shows that for the 1062 Ghanaian places referred to in F. W. T. A. there are at least 670 incorrect names. Of these, some are mistakes in the transcription of labels, for example "Sibiri" which is a vernacular name for *Marantochloa leucantha*; Joacri which is the acronym W.A.C.R.I.; Kakumat R., Assuansi, for the Kakum R. at Asuantsi; Ateiso F. R. for Adeiso, E. R.; and Dormaa to Ahenkro for Dormaa-Ahenkro. Some variants result from far-reaching name changes. Dormaa-Ahenkro was until quite recently called "Pamu"; the new name emphasizes what was presumably in dispute, that it is the chief town of the Dormaa state. Nokeira is not in Ghana but in Sierra Leone; the mistake is the result of the juxtaposition in the Kew Herbarium of SMYTHE 242 from Nokeira, Sierra Leone, and CHIPP 242 from Tarkwa, Ghana, both specimens of *Omphalocarpum abia*. In F.W.T.A. *Steganotaenia araliacea* is said to be represented by VIGNE FH 1383 from Tiasi. In fact this specimen is probably part of a collection from Yendi to which has been attached a label for *Celtis "prantlii"* collected at Jiasi.

In Northern Ghana many of the towns have names ending in -gu or -ga. These names appear to date from a time previous to the arrival of the present inhabitants, and nowadays the suffix is often dropped in ordinary speech although its formal correctness is recognized. Hence "Saku" and "Sakogu", and "Navere" and "Navrongo" are alternatives.

The greater part of the synonymy arises however from variations in orthographic practice. The first place names appeared on maps before Ghanaian languages had been put into writing, and long before the adoption of a standard orthography. In CHIPP's day "Kumasi" (as used exclusively in

F.W.T.A.) was spelt "Coomassie"; according to modern practice it should be spelt "Kumase". Ghana has now adopted a policy of orthographic standardization of place names. This work is expressed in the Gazetteer for the 1960 population census (GIL & DE GRAFT-JOHNSON 1961). Local committees drew up lists of names in their immediate district and these were submitted to

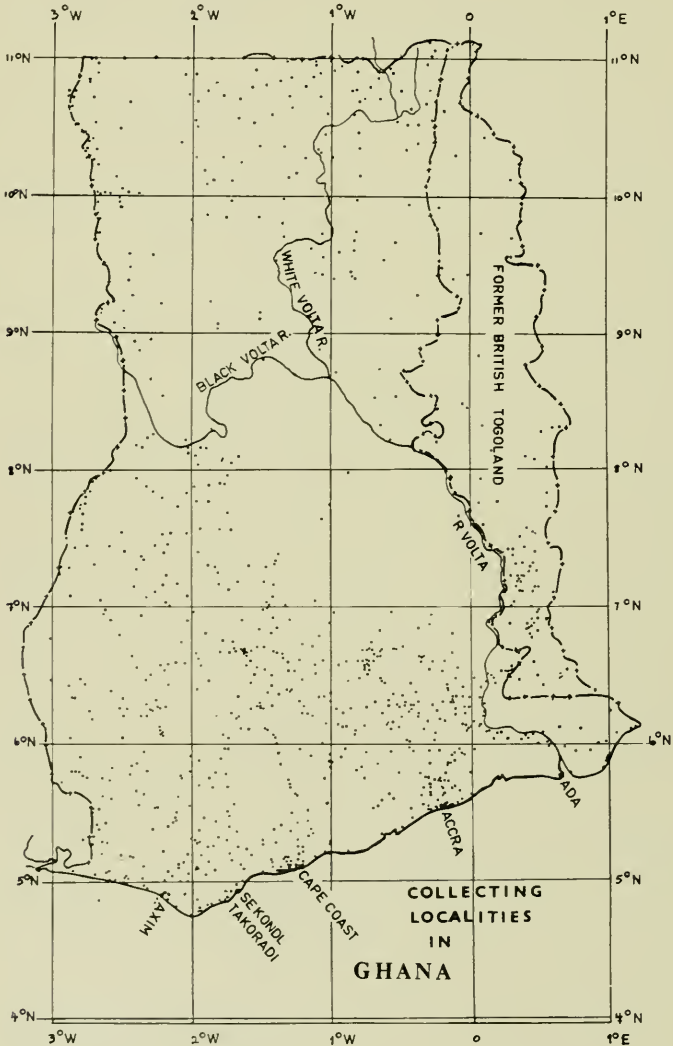


Fig. 1

the Bureau of Ghana Languages for checking. This gazetteer will be revised when the 1970 census is published. Unfortunately latitudes and longitudes are not given in these census gazetteers and the U. S. Gazetteer (1967) is undoubtedly much more useful to botanists though not all of its spellings are recognized as standard in Ghana.

The reasons for standardization are firstly to give similar spellings to similar sounds, and secondly to make meanings clearer. For example, "Domeabra" means "if you love me, come". If spelt "Domiabra", the "me" which means "me" becomes "mi" which means nothing. The suffix "-ase" means "under", as in "Odumase", under the "odum" tree; "-asi" is usually incorrect. Unnecessary duplication of letters is avoided, and "-assie" is even less correct. Problems arise where there is no letter in the Latin alphabet that exactly represents a particular sound. The letters "f" and "p" are equally close to the sound of the final consonant in "Amedzope", and the choice between this spelling and "Amedzofe" can only be made according to considerations of consistency.

The main checks on thorough-going standardization are practical ones; a sudden change from "Juaso" (incorrect) to "Dwaaso" (correct) will confuse map-readers, and may have legal implications. A further complication is that practice varies from language to language within Ghana. For example "Tsito" is correct for "Chito", whereas "Kyebi" is correct for "Chibbi".

Table 1 shows that despite all these difficulties it has been found possible to locate precisely the vast majority of places cited for Ghana in F.W.T.A. Their co-ordinates have been plotted on Fig. 1 and the resulting map gives a reasonable picture of the distribution of collecting effort in the country.

A botanical gazetteer is used by different people with differing requirements. The person working with specimens may want to locate the places on the labels. The name there may read "Coomassie" and he looks for this in the gazetteer. The person who is mapping distribution from F.W.T.A. will be satisfied by "Kumasi" as will be the botanist who is looking for plants on the spot using a modern map. Any mapper of distributions is content with latitude and longitude, but the local botanist may read the flora to get an idea of the sort of place where a particular species grows. If the name is unfamiliar, distance and direction from the nearest town gives the required information more directly than latitude and longitude and it is for this reason that these figures are given in the Ghana gazetteer.

I prefer to adopt a more flexible approach to names other than those of towns than is followed in the U. S. Gazetteer. Forest reserves vary tremendously in size, and this should be indicated as it affects the precision of localization. "Hills" may refer to a well-defined range, or just to hilly ground near a named town. In the first instance the co-ordinates of the highest point may be useful, but not in the second. "Ashanti" (correctly "Asante") is given co-ordinates to its mid-point in the U. S. Gazetteer. The term "Ashanti" is vague, as it is a large region and its borders have changed considerably through the years during which collections have been made. A

better solution to the problem of ill-defined tribal areas is an accompanying map. Small tribal areas can be adequately represented by co-ordinates and distances from a nearby town.

Table 1. Provisional analysis of Ghana localities cited in *Flora of West Tropical Africa* ed. 2

Correct names accurately located	
Type of locality	Total
Towns & villages	836
Rivers & streams	28
Hills & mountains	32
Forest reserves	75
Tribal areas	20
Other geographical features	71
Grand total	1062 (including 49 formerly in British Togoland)
Other names	
Variants and errors	670
Vernacular names of plants and habitats	2
Located only approximately	52
Not located at all	15

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Zoologisch-Botanische Datenbank/Zoological-Botanical Database

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