No. 9: Oxford University and an Adult Education Experiment in Ghana, 1947 - 1950.

KWA O. HAGAN
Oxford University and an Adult Education Experiment in Ghana
1947 - 1950

By

KWA O. HAGAN, B.Litt. (Oxon)
Senior Resident Tutor, I.A.E.

Published by The Institute, May 1974
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preface: I.A.E. Monographs</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part I: Historical Background</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; II: First Phase of Experiment</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; III: The Second Phase</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; IV: Outcome of Experiment</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; V: Official Reaction to One-Day Schools</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; VI: References</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preface

INSTITUTE OF ADULT EDUCATION MONOGRAPHS

This is one of a new series of Monographs launched by the Institute at the time of its 25th Anniversary celebrations - October-December 1973. The series is meant to circulate (among research students, university staffs, and other interested persons) a body of writing on various subjects which is always being put out by members of academic institutions like the IAE but seldom getting published for general circulation.

By the establishment of this series we hope we have embarked upon a corrective process, and that these monographs will serve the purpose of supplying a quantity of background material to many research subjects. They will not all, or always, be learned papers according to the strict academic definition of the term; they are not planned to be such, though some will in fact be learned and/or scholarly; many will be purely narrative or descriptive. Nor are they issued in strictly chronological order: No.1, for instance, carried the review history of the Institute, was written specifically for the celebrations but published after No.2, which was written in 1968.... The aim of the series is thus simply to release it as useful, helpful academic background material, for those who will find it so.

Titles in the series so far are the following:
"Twenty-Five Years of University-Based Adult Education in Ghana: A Review" (No.1) by K.A.B. Jones-Quartey; "Report on Dag Hammarskjold Seminar on the Use of Correspondence Instruction in Adult Education" (No.2) by E.A. Haizel, E.A. Mensah
and J. Opare-Abetia; "Exploring the Role of Literary Clubs and Youth Movements in Ghana Politics in the 1930s" (No. 3) by Kwa O. Hagan; "The Role of Local Government in Nation Building" (No. 4) by J.K. Ansere; "Awudome Rural Development Project - An Evaluation" (No. 5) by Jette Bukh (Miss); "The Economic Power of Co-Operatives in Developing Countries" (No. 6) by A.M. Kusi; "Mass Education and Community Development in Ghana - A Study in Retrospect, 1943-1968" (No. 7) by Kwa O. Hagan; "Joint Report on 1971 Third Conference of African Adult Education Association (AAEA) and First Africa Regional Meeting of International Congress of University Adult Education at University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania" (No. 8) by J. Opare-Abetia; "Oxford University and an Adult Education Experiment in Ghana, 1947-1950" (No. 9) by Kwa O. Hagan.

All the authors named above are members of staff at the Institute, and the first dozen or so of these booklets will all probably be written by such staff members, or by research personnel even if only temporarily attached to the Institute. But in time the series could well carry titles by outsiders, when and as suitable and opportune.

K.A.B. Jones-Quartey
DIRECTOR

December 1973
Legon
I. THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The origins of the Oxford experiment in university-type adult education in Ghana (and Nigeria) can be traced to the era of post-war educational and social reforms in Britain, out of which emerged the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts of the 1940s. Arising out of the Acts, the Asquith Commission was appointed in June 1943, "to consider the principles which should guide the promotion of higher education, learning and research and the development of universities in the colonies". In the same month and year, the Walter Elliott Commission was also appointed as a 'linked commission'. Its task was "to report on the organisation and facilities of existing centres of higher education in British West Africa, and make recommendations regarding future university development in that area".1

The Asquith and Elliott Reports on the one hand and the Colonial Office Report on Mass Education in African Society, on the other, were complementary in their approach to adult education. For while the latter stressed the need to help adult illiterates to acquire the skills of literacy and leadership towards social and economic progress, the Elliott Report in particular laid stress on the need to re-educate adults, through university extra-mural education, to be alive to their responsibilities as intelligent citizens and leaders in the community. The Asquith Report also stressed the importance of extra-mural work of a colonial university college in the following terms:

We have thought of the University so far as a centre of research and teaching of undergraduates.
We hope that it will also take a leading part in the
development of adult education in the region.... We should therefore urge that from the earliest stage in its evolution, the university colleges should maintain direct contacts with those members of the population whose studies must necessarily be restricted to the leisure left from their other work ... we consider, therefore, that in every colony served by a university, there should certainly be one centre for extra-mural studies, and that there should be similar centres wherever large urban or industrialised localities provide opportunity for part-time study.

On the development of higher education in West Africa, the Elliott Report contained a Minority Commission's recommendation to set up only one University College for the whole of West Africa, to be based at Ibadan, Nigeria, and that Achimota (which had then developed a strong post-secondary department) and Fourah Bay College, Sierra Leone, should be "relegated to the status of territorial colleges". In his Despatch No. 234 of 1 October, 1945, the Secretary of State for the Colonies expressed a preference for the Minority Commission's recommendation and such an expression produced a violent reaction in the Gold Coast. This was articulated in the press and in various memoranda to the Secretary of State by public bodies and organisations such as the Achimota Council, the Central Advisory Committee on Education, the Joint Provincial Council of Chiefs and the Gold Coast Youth Conference.³

As a result of such representations from the Gold Coast (and also from Sierra Leone) the Secretary of State expressed modification in his views. Consequently, in his Despatch No. 169 of 6 July 1946, he appreciated the feelings of people who wanted Achimota and Fourah Bay also developed as University Colleges without hindrance to the establishment of a West African University College.
This Despatch which was made public gave great relief in the Gold Coast, and led to a resolution moved by C.W. Tachie-Menson, Municipal Member for Sekondi-Takoradi, in the Legislative Council on 24 July as follows:

That this Council, having had before it the Secretary of State's Despatch No.169 on the Report of the Higher Education Commission, and having considered the invitation by the Secretary of State to the Governor to submit his views on the practical methods of implementing the Secretary of State's proposals, hereby respectfully request His Excellency the Governor to appoint a Representative Committee to advise him on this matter to the end that the views to be submitted by the Governor may reflect the clear and undoubted wishes of the people of the Gold Coast on a subject so deeply concerning the future of the country.

Accordingly, the Governor appointed a Committee, under the chairmanship of K.G. (later Sir Kenneth) Bradley, then the Acting Colonial Secretary of the Gold Coast, to make recommendations, in the light of the Despatch No.169, for the development of higher education in the Gold Coast.4

In its recommendations, the Bradley Committee "stressed the importance of integrating the work of the university with the life of the community", through a department of extra-mural studies. In its "rough outline of staff requirements" to start the University College of the Gold Coast in 1948-51, the Committee provided for a "Director of Extra-Mural Studies". The Committee further noted that "Oxford University Delegacy of Extra-Mural Studies has already offered to conduct experimental extra-mural classes in West Africa".5 The scene was thus set in the Gold Coast for an experiment in university adult education.
The decision taken by the Oxford Delegacy to experiment on extra-mural classes in West Africa was considerably influenced by the optimism of Col. George Wigg, M. P. (now Lord Wigg of the Borough of Dudley), who, after a visit to West Africa in connection with a survey of Army Education, reported unofficially in 1946 to the Oxford University Extension Lectures Committee (of which he was himself a co-opted member):

During my tour of Africa last year I think I saw most of the developments which resemble adult education as we know it in this country. In Kumasi, Gold Coast, the Labour Officer, Mr. Oswald Kitching, who possesses considerable knowledge of the W.E.A. both as a student and as a member of the Yorkshire North District, had gathered a group of ex-Achimota students and courses had been planned covering a period of a year. Attendance was on four nights a week, and at the end of the year, 48% of the students originally enrolled were still maintaining a regular attendance.... The experiences I record, added to general impressions gained there by countless talks with Africans and Europeans, convinced me that an enormous and vigorous field for work on extension courses lines is ready to be developed in larger centres of population in West Africa.... The prestige of an established and respected university as the sponsor of such a scheme is essential, and whilst the support of the Colonial Office and Government is important it must not be too obvious or heavy handed.... A conception of education which did not lead to a job, but to unpaid service to the community will be something very new on the coast, but some day it must be started if self-government is not to remain a meaningless slogan. I believe the time is ripe to experiment on the lines I suggest and I am convinced that such an experiment would be a success.
Col. Wigg also referred to a warrant officer of the Royal Army Medical Corps with considerable experience of British adult education who, in association with the British Council, had in 1944 organised adult education classes in Lagos, Nigeria, on elementary economics for some 100 students. Thus, Wigg's comment provided a means whereby the Oxford University Delegacy for Extra-Mural Studies was called upon to launch an experiment in West Africa. Whether it was at all certain to justify Col. Wigg's optimism depended largely on the attitude of men then at the Colonial Office, London and at Rewley House, Oxford.

In the Colonial Office were two education advisers who had long developed when in the Colonial Service a great deal of sympathy towards the aspirations of colonial peoples. These were Christopher Cox and W. E. F. Ward. Cox, a Fellow of New College, Oxford, had been Director of Education and Principal of Gordon Memorial College, Khartoum, Sudan, in 1937-39. Ward was from 1924 Master of Achimota College, and later Director of Education in Mauritius in 1940, and his intimate knowledge of West Africa became particularly helpful at every stage of the experiment. There was also Arthur Creech-Jones, as the Secretary of State since 1946, who gave the experiment every encouragement. Creech-Jones had himself served on the Elliott Commission on Higher Education in West Africa in 1944-45.

At Rewley House, the home of the Oxford Extra-Mural Studies Delegacy, Thomas L. Hodgkin, the Secretary, became very enthusiastic about the great adventure that Oxford was embarking upon and he was much encouraged by a group of dons at the University to try out the experiment. The Oxford dons were: The Very Rev. John Lowe, Dean of Christ Church, and Chairman of the University Extension Lectures Committee; Professor G. D. H. Cole, Lucy Sutherland of Lady Margaret Hall, Leonard Barnes of Barnet House
and A.D. Lindsay, the Master of Balliol, who showed especial interest in the experiment. Both Lindsay and Hodgkin had been known to be strong advocates of decolonisation.

Furthermore, Hodgkin must have become keenly interested in the proposal of his old friend and associate, Col. Wigg. The two men had in 1939 cooperated in developing Army education in North Staffordshire W.E.A. District, when Hodgkin was then the Oxford Delegacy tutor, and Wigg was the secretary of the W.E.A. District. Hodgkin and Wigg had also been associated with preliminary work in connection with the future University of Keele in North Staffordshire. 9 Hence, the close association between the two men must have deepened Hodgkin's interest in Wigg's report on West Africa.9

In particular, the Oxford experiment in Ghana appears to have been well timed. It was launched in the country at a time when the Burns Constitution of 1946 had failed to meet the aspirations of the people, politically, and there was developing a pressing demand, spear-headed by Dr. J.B. Danquah and others of the United Gold Coast Convention, for self-government, which resulted in the sudden outburst of rioting in February 1948. In essence, the Oxford experiment contributed towards the preparation of the people of Ghana for political and civic responsibilities, in order that the then prevailing clamour for self-government might not remain, as Col. Wigg had put it, "a meaningless slogan".

As a preliminary to the launching of the Oxford experiment, Thomas Hodgkin paid an exploratory visit to Nigeria and the Gold Coast in early 1947. In the Gold Coast, Hodgkin travelled from Accra to Cape Coast and on to Sekondi-Takoradi and Kumasi. He established
contacts and explained the Delegacy's proposals to a wide range of people, including civil servants, politicians and nationalists, educationalists at the secondary schools and colleges, trade unionists, and key officers of literary and social clubs and cultural organisations. Hodgkin found that a great many of the literary and social clubs were sponsoring their own programmes of occasional public lectures and debates, particularly at Accra, Cape Coast and Sekondi/Takoradi. It was indeed an interesting coincidence that the literary section of the Railway Club at Sekondi was then engaged on a series of weekly study and discussion of a textbook on the economic history of England.10

Hodgkin soon discovered that there was in the Gold Coast a ready response to his proposals. This was not accidental, for it was the outcome of cumulative interest in matters educational and cultural which had prevailed in this country for more than a century, as the result of the activities of the self-improvement societies and literary clubs. These organisations became understandably interested in Hodgkin's scheme of an organised pattern of university adult education to be sponsored from Oxford. It was mainly some of the officers of these clubs, particularly in Accra, Cape Coast, Sekondi/Takoradi, and Kumasi, that volunteered to form the ad hoc committees which took over the arrangements for launching the university extension course a few months later.

First Phase of the Oxford Experiment

As a result of the keenness shown in Hodgkin's visit by both the Colonial Secretariat in Accra and Achimota College, preliminary arrangements for launching the experiment were undertaken cooperatively by A.T. Kerr and Peter H. Canham of the Secretariat on the one hand, and Modjaben Dowuona of the post-secondary department,
Achimota College, on the other. It was thus possible after Hodgkin's visit for the Oxford Delegacy to send out J.A. McLean to the Gold Coast in April 1947 to commence experimental classes for a period of three months at Accra, Cape Coast, Sekondi and Kumasi.

McLean was a well-tried extra-mural studies tutor. He was also well informed about the political scene in West Africa, having in the early post-war years established contact with the West African Students Union (WASU) at a time that WASU was agitating for self-rule in British Africa. It was McLean who, after he had returned from his experimental lecture-courses, enabled Kwame Nkrumah in London to know about the political situation in the Gold Coast. Nkrumah has recorded in his Autobiography:

It so happened that Tony McLean, an Extra-Mural tutor of Oxford University, had recently returned to England after some months in the Gold Coast and it was through him that I found out the exact political situation obtaining in the Gold Coast. He knew several of the promoters of the UGCC personally and gave me his honest opinion of them. From what he told me I concluded that the sponsors of the movement were men whose political philosophy was contrary to the political aspirations of the people of the Gold Coast.¹¹

McLean, the 'Extra-Mural tutor', started a twelve-week lecture-course on 'Economic History and Problems' at the four centres, and the adult classes at these centres drew a big response. The course became popular with some of the students who were then studying by themselves privately through correspondence courses from Britain. Occupationally, the classes comprised mainly school-
teachers and clerks, some of whom had had secondary education. In Sekondi, the class had a core of very keen trade unionists, who, according to the tutor, contributed effectively to class discussions. The trade unionists had joined the class through the encouragement of the Labour Officer, the same Oswald Kitching who, as we have noted from Col. Wigg, had earlier organised an adult class at Kumasi. Kitching was then on transfer to the Western Region and he and his wife were both members of the class. Two other local personalities were members of McLean's extra-mural class at the Railway Club house. These were R.S. Blay, a prominent lawyer, and the Ghanaian Chief Mechanical Engineer of the Gold Coast Railway, G.B.K. de Graft-Johnson.

Local organisation of classes at the four centres was purely on a voluntary basis, and officers of local voluntary associations emerged as good class organisers, and so a real source of local initiative. At Accra, the class secretary was E.B. Odunton, the general secretary of the Gold Coast Teachers' Union; at Cape Coast, the secretary was Charles C. Quaye, a history master at Mfantsipim School and the chairman of the local branch of the Teachers' Union; at Sekondi, A.K. de Veer, the general secretary of the Gold Coast Railway Employees Union and secretary of the Sekondi Literary Circle, became the class secretary; and at Kumasi the secretary was William Boatin, who was then the secretary of both the Hodson Club and the Old Achimotan Association, as well as an officer of the local branch of the Teachers' Union.

Basic class membership was on the whole satisfactory; an average of some 125 adult students attended two/thirds of the twelve weekly meetings in all the four centres. The apparent success of the first phase of the Oxford experiment in the Gold Coast derived in part from the cultural isolation
of the adult students who, apart from the benefits they derived from membership of literary and social clubs, had no further openings for further education. This isolation became in itself the measure of opportunity which lay open to university adult education in the country during the forties.

Hence, in bringing to adult students in Ghana, to quote McLean, "the type of education so socially purposeful, so related to the problems of the day, so adult in character, and so democratic as the extra-mural study course," Oxford was in the forties indeed beginning to play a significant role in educational revolution in West Africa comparable to the role which the ancient university had played in the development of adult education in Britain during the second-half of the nineteenth century and thereafter. Adult Education had in Britain developed in response to the demand of the organised working-class. In Ghana, adult education, in the form of University Extra-Mural Studies, grew naturally from the educational and cultural organisations, and in response to the needs of an educated minority of clerks and school teachers who had become frustrated as a result of lack of opportunity for advancement, socially and economically.

In addition to his twelve-week lecture-course at the four centres, McLean also gave a number of single lectures on current affairs to sixth-formers and students of training colleges in Accra, Cape Coast and Kumasi, and another lecture on 'Industrialisation' to the trade unionists at Sekondi-Takoradi. In a radio talk which he gave to round off his experimental lecture tour in May 1947, McLean said inter alia: "...nor are we in any way afraid of the expression in our discussion of controversial or unpopular views...our aim is not indoctrination,
the imposing of the tutor's views on the students; our aim is free enquiry and honest investigation of evidence, a cooperative task to which both tutor and students contribute".13

McLean's experimental classes ended with a conference at Achimota College in August, 1947, at which he reported on his work to a representative group of students from the four centres as well as the officials of the Education Department, the British Council and the post-secondary department of Achimota College.

The conference, however, noted some shortcomings in the experiment, notably, the failure to attract more women to the classes: there were only fourteen women (mainly schoolteachers) out of a total enrolment of some 240 adult students at the four extra-mural classes. There was also the limited social composition of classes (made up predominantly of school teachers and clerks from the government offices and mercantile houses). It was considered desirable to have to avoid any idea of social or educational qualification of class membership at future Extra-Mural classes.

Plans were made for interim activities at the four centres through a programme of occasional single lectures and discussions, and Modjaben Dowuona of the post-secondary department of Achimota College agreed to act as 'unofficial director and adviser' on the activities of the centres.14 Besides Accra, Dowuona was able to pay special visits to the other centres at Cape Coast, Sekondi/Takoradi and Kumasi during the interim.

Thus ended the first phase of a great educational venture, the success of which was made practicable by a harmonious cooperation of several persons and bodies;
First the optimism of Col. George (now Lord) Wigg, as the originator of the scheme; then the onus taken on by the Oxford Delegacy, through its secretary, Thomas L. Hodgkin, in sponsoring the experimental course and seconding a tutor whose salary was paid by the Delegacy; the approval given by the Colonial Office, London, and the readiness of the Gold Coast Government to help by providing accommodation, transport and subsistence allowance for the Oxford Delegacy tutor; the British Council who willingly made available for use by the classes, books requested for the course, and Achimota College which provided headquarters for the Oxford Delegacy tutor, and the great help given from Achimota, especially from Modjaben Dowuona whose advice and general assistance during the whole period of the experiment were indeed invaluable.\(^\text{15}\)

The undoubted success of the first phase of the experiment, apart from the efforts of the cooperating persons and bodies, was also as much due to the ever-present desire of the young people of the Gold Coast for opportunities of self-improvement, educationally. Added to this was the easy and friendly attitude and keenness of J.A. McLean, the tutor. The Colonial Administration recorded the personal success of the tutor in the following terms:

"The success achieved is due largely to the manner in which Mr. McLean applied himself to his task, and His Excellency \[\text{the Governor of the Gold Coast}\] is most appreciative of the valuable work which he did during the brief time he spent in the country".

Furthermore, the Governor of the Gold Coast, following the successful and encouraging result of McLean's tour, expressed his pleasure to the Oxford Delegacy to continue its association with the Gold Coast, through the
extra-mural studies scheme.\(^\text{16}\)

**Second Phase of the Oxford Experiment**

In its original proposals, the Oxford Extra-Mural Studies Delegacy had also conceived a longer-term programme by which, if the first experiment proved reasonably successful, the appointment of at least two or three tutors would be considered for sustained work in the Gold Coast and Nigeria, and in order to assist in the building up of a vigorous adult education movement in West Africa over a period of two or three years. The Delegacy hoped to raise various questions in connection with the experiment, such as: who was to finance future extra-mural work in West Africa? What was to be the relation between the extra-mural courses initiated by the Oxford Delegacy and the development of a university college or colleges in West Africa? What should be the participation in the scheme of other British universities? What modifications, if any, of the form and subject-matter of the educational work should be attempted in relation to the needs, interests and background of the students? What should be the future lines of cooperation with voluntary and statutory bodies in the colonies concerned in regard to the organisation of demand for adult education?\(^\text{17}\)

With these questions to be resolved at some juncture of the experiment, the Delegacy in April 1948 sent from Oxford, J. A. McLean (who had successfully launched the experiment in the Gold Coast a year earlier) and Henry Collins to commence experimental classes in Nigeria. Collins, then recently appointed as a resident tutor in North Staffordshire, knew the Nigerian situation well, for he had spent a considerable time there during World War II as a member of the Army Education Corps.\(^\text{18}\)
In the Gold Coast, the success of the experimental course in 1947 by J.A. McLean prompted the Delegacy to persuade the Colonial Office to sustain a longer-term programme. As we have noted, the Gold Coast Government had given an assurance for continuation of work, and the Bradley Committee had stressed the importance of extra-mural studies as a component of the work of the University College of the Gold Coast.

Accordingly, the Delegacy in May 1948, sent David Kimble to the Gold Coast. Kimble, who was then a staff tutor for the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire District of the W.E.A., had joined the Oxford Delegacy from the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. He found himself, as he has put it, "pitchforked... into the midst of Gold Coast life and politics", for the sudden outburst of rioting in February-March preceded his arrival in the country. Before then, he had, under the guidance and encouragement of Thomas Hodgkin (himself a very keen analyst of the nationalist awakening in Africa), made as thorough a study as possible of contemporary events in West Africa. Kimble was able to make many friends among a wide cross-section of the Ghanaian community, and more so among the nationalists of the UGCC and later the CPP, to the extent that it was represented to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford that he was "too closely associated with the nationalist movement". His many travels up and down the country and his encounter with all manner of interesting people in public and private life in the country must have laid a solid foundation for the extensive research which he later undertook and has resulted in his capital work, A Political History of Ghana 1850-1928. (Oxford 1963).¹⁹
Within a year, J.A. McLean and Henry Collins in Nigeria and David Kimble in the Gold Coast had made a notable contribution to a study of contemporary problems in West Africa, through a series of articles which they contributed in West Africa and in Rewley House Papers, Oxford, in 1949.20

Kimble soon organised a sustained lecture-course of twenty-four weeks in the established centres at Acra, Cape Coast, Sekondi/Takoradi and Kumasi on the topic, 'Problems of Modern Government'. Thereafter, in consultation with these centres, he arranged a further programme of terminal lecture-courses which were given by part-time tutors. In Accra, Kenneth Baldwin, lecturer in Economics at the University College, gave eight lectures on 'An Introduction to Economics'. At Cape Coast, Charles Quaye, B.A., a Senior Master of Mfantsipim School, gave twelve lectures on 'Economics on Everyday Life'; and at Kumasi, M. Dei-Anang, B.A., then Education Officer, gave eight lectures on 'Trends in African History'. But Sekondi/Takoradi, on the other hand, managed with a programme of assorted lectures over a period of twelve weeks, during which Mrs. Ione Acquah, M. Sc., did four lectures on 'Local Aspects of Sociology' and J.W. Lawson, B.A., Assistant District Commissioner, gave two more on 'The Greek City State'. Other lectures followed: R.J. Wallace, B.A., Assistant District Commissioner, on 'The Manorial System'; W.W. Sawyer, lecturer in Mathematics at the University College of the Gold Coast, on 'Mathematics in Everyday Life'; H.J. Christian, a Sekondi lawyer, on 'Gold Coast Law and Practice', and J.G.T. Torto, B.Sc., a Posts and Telecommunications engineer, on 'Aspects of Municipal Engineering'.

After completing what amounted to the second course
of lectures in the Delegacy's programme at the four major centres, Kimble next turned his attention to other towns by running a terminal course of ten weekly lectures on the topic, 'Machinery of Government' at Ho, Koforidua, Swedru, Tarkwa and Tamale (which was able to cope with only six weekly lectures because of a late start of the course there). The Delegacy tutor's choice of subject was in accord with a request of the Achimota Conference which McLean convened after his experimental lecture-course. This conference had requested that the next extra-mural course to be undertaken by the Oxford Delegacy should be on politics.21

The choice of politics seemed an obvious one because the Oxford experiment was undertaken at a time when there was advocacy for decolonisation and a strong agita­tion for self-rule in the Gold Coast was then fast deve­loping. The experiment was therefore seen as a means of introducing the system of handling controversial issues of the times by using the extra-mural class as the democratic unit. But doubts were raised by expatriates of the Colonial Administration as to the wisdom of teaching controversial subjects, particularly politics, to a politically-minded educated minority. As in Britain in the early days of the tutorial classes, so in the Gold Coast, it was feared that extra-mural classes would be breeding ground for radical enthusiasm and turn out political agitators and political militants. This official reaction underlined the serious rift that then divided the Colonial Administration from educated African opinion.22

On the other hand, in certain nationalist circles in the Gold Coast the teaching of politics in extra-mural classes, sponsored from Britain as the metropolitan country, was considered as rather imperialistic in design. David Kimble's lecture-courses on the Machinery of
Government, following almost immediately after the February-March 1948 riots in the Gold Coast, was at first gravely open to suspicion. For there had grown up in the country an acute distrust of anything thought to be connected with the colonial government. People were therefore genuinely suspicious that the second phase of the extra-mural lecture scheme from Oxford was perhaps an elaborate manoeuvre by both the Colonial Office and the Gold Coast Government.23

In that situation, only personal confidence in the tutor could then provide hope of enabling people to realise the value of university extra-mural studies. Hence the Oxford extra-mural tutor had a really difficult role to play during the experimental period of the forties. He was indeed a sort of a 'living bridge' between Oxford and the public in West Africa. If he tried to avoid controversial issues, he failed both the ancient university and his new African audience. The tutor's role was to give his adult students, and indeed the whole community of the Gold Coast, academic guidance in assessing their needs at a crucial time of their country's transformation. The students, particularly those in the four major centres, soon discovered that classes were marked by academic freedom and uninhibited discussion, as had been the practice in Britain. As a result, a cordial relationship came to exist between the tutor and the adult students, who became freer and more articulate with their questioning on current political and economic issues. For the formation of the UGCC in 1947 as a nationalist movement, claiming to speak for the entire country and aspiring towards self-rule for the Gold Coast, had heightened interest in political discussion. In trade and commerce, economic grievances had been awakened by the creation of AWAM (Association of West African Merchants) comprising only members of
the European-owned firms in the country. The Association was looked upon by people of the Gold Coast with grave suspicion. It was charged with keeping up prices of imported commodities unnecessarily on the high side. On AWAM, the Watson Commission Report on the Disturbances in the Gold Coast in 1948 commented:

The charge was clear: it was being alleged that importers, particularly those associated with the hated organisation which flourished under the name of Association of West African Merchants (AWAM) were deliberately keeping up 'prices of essential commodities' to an outrageous extent... the suspicion not unnaturally grew up that, at all material times, there was some private arrangement between the powerful importers... and the Government.24

With such a background to questioning at the classes, the Oxford Delegacy extra-mural tutor seems to have shown an understanding of the students' frustrations and discontent. In doing so, the tutor gained the confidence and friendship of his adult students, just as the tutor in England had by his candour gained the confidence of the English working-class students in the early days of the W.E.A. before World War I.

Another factor of the second phase of the experiment was the prominence given to public lectures as a means of reaching out to a wider public other than the regular students in the lecture-courses. David Kimble was himself able to address a number of public meetings at established centres of extra-mural classes as well as at other places such as Keta and Kibi, on a wide range of topics, including 'Public Opinion and Modern Government', and 'Political Implications of Self-Government'. Large
audiences attended the public lectures. There was the example at Tarkwa, where some 400 people, including workers of the local gold mines, school teachers, railwaymen, clerks, shop assistants and senior executives of the commercial houses, turned up at the local Methodist School hall to listen to Kimble who spoke on 'The Idea of Adult Education'. Those present included J.V.L. Phillips, M.A. (Cantab.), then the Senior Labour Officer in charge of the district, as well as J.O.T. Agyeman, a manager of the United African Company. Mr. Phillips afterwards became one of the early part-time tutors of extra-mural courses. Some years later, Mr. Agyeman, as the Managing Director of the Ghana National Trading Corporation encouraged the promotion of adult education activity for the staff of the Corporation and such activity has continued to flourish among the Corporation's headquarters staff.

In the major centres of classes, prominent visitors to the Gold Coast at the time were invited to give lectures as part of the experimental programme. Thus Dr. A.E. Morgan, Educational Controller of the British Council, gave a lecture at Accra on 'Education and Democracy'; Professor L.C. Hill of Exeter University spoke at both Accra and Kumasi on 'The Future of Local Government in the Modern State', and Professor Liston Pope of Yale University addressed a meeting at Accra on 'Race Relations'. There were other local personalities who gave public lectures, such as Justice K.A. Korsah (later Sir Arku Korsah, Chief Justice of Ghana) who gave a public lecture at Kumasi on 'The Judicial System of the Gold Coast'.

There was yet another contributory factor to the outcome of the experiment as a whole. As has been noted, the educational system in the Gold Coast had
created a class of educated elite of clerks and school teachers who found themselves starved of intellectual and cultural facilities for self-improvement except the very limited opportunity that the literary and social clubs provided for them. There was, for instance, up to the 1940s, no library service in the Gold Coast. A small private lending library had, however, been established in Accra by the close of the 1930s, through the personal efforts of Dr. John Orfeur Aglionby, the third Anglican Bishop of Accra. The library was housed at the Bishop's house on the grounds of Holy Trinity Church on High Street, Accra. When the demand for books outgrew his own private lending library, Bishop Aglionby offered £1,000 to start a fund for a public lending library. In 1944 the British Council started operations in the Gold Coast and a year later established its own library with Miss Evelyn Evans as the librarian. The Council then formed a Library Advisory Committee which later became the Gold Coast Library Advisory Committee, and the Gold Coast Library Board was established in 1949 by the government. It was from the British Council's library that book boxes were sent to extra-mural centres in the country during the first and second phases of the Oxford experiment. Several of the books were specially sent out from Britain by the Council, primarily for the Oxford experiment. The supply of such books indeed constituted a staple for intellectual life at the extra-mural centres throughout the country.

It is worth noting at this juncture that, as a result of the library fund initiated by Bishop Aglionby, a library wing was added to the Town Hall in Accra - The King George V Memorial Hall - (later converted into Parliament House) and the Council's own library and Bishop Aglionby's lending library merged, under the auspices of the Gold Coast Library Board, into the first full scale Public Library in the Gold Coast, and Miss Evelyn Evans of the
British Council became the librarian.

The Oxford Delegacy, sponsoring adult education in the Gold Coast, had necessarily to shoulder the responsibility of establishing standards - of objectivity, of free discussion, of systematic study, and of reading and written work. The Delegacy tutor's technique was invariably this: a student might be corrected during discussion time on a point of fact, but the tutor ensured that the student's opinion was not contradicted. The student was usually asked how he arrived at his conclusion. Was it guess work on his part or a repetition of someone else's view, or was it an inference from the facts? If an inference from the facts, did the conclusion really follow from the facts? On the other hand, was it really one of a number of possibilities? And were the facts and arguments cited relevant to the conclusion?

By such mental drilling, and with great rapidity, the adult students in class caught the spirit in which extramural classes were conducted. The result was that discussion in class became animated, controversy was keen, and written work reached an appreciably high standard. In his first report after the first experimental lecture-course in 1947, J.A. McLean had commented:

The level of discussion, especially at Accra, was high, and it was not unusual to find the tutor still being bombarded with questions at the end of a two-hour session. Class members showed a marked ability to relate the issues treated to topical and contemporary problems, and proved themselves controversialists no less passionate than English students are.

The high standard of work reached by the end of the
second experimental lecture-courses was borne out by impressive statistical data which the Resident Tutor, David Kimble, provided in his report on Extra-Mural Classes in 1949.

**Outcome of the Oxford Delegacy Experiment**

The experiment in the Gold Coast was attended by another success of great significance. British experience had shown the value of an educational movement, such as the Workers Educational Association, controlled by its own students, and it was agreed from the outset that any organisation to emerge from the experiment must be controlled by the students themselves. In fact the Oxford University Extension Lectures Committee (OUELC), which gave the West African experiment its blessing, was definite about the need for a permanent organisation when it stated:

The development of Extension Course work in the immediate future in West Africa would thus prepare the ground for the extra-mural work of the proposed West African University College or Colleges.... This is all the more important since a vigorous adult education movement does not develop simply because facilities are made available. In fact the justification for the term 'movement' in this connection lies in the necessity for an active and educationally conscious student body capable of organising the demand for facilities. Part of the purpose of pioneer Extension Course work on the lines suggested would be to assist the development of such an organised demand.

In the Gold Coast, the second phase of the experiment
ended, as it had originally been proposed by the OUEL, in the formation of a countrywide adult student movement. This was brought about by a combination of local factors, geographical, social and organisational. The country, of an area of 92,000 square miles, had been fairly largely opened up, through Governor Guggisberg's Ten Year Development Plan, 1919-1928, by a system of good trunk roads and a transport system developed over the succeeding two decades, resulting in easy mobility. Socially and organisationally, voluntary associations had become accustomed to attending seasonal or annual conventions, especially during the Easter recess, as witnessed by the series of the Gold Coast Youth Conference which was attended by the literary and social clubs and other societies, from various areas of the country, during the 1930s and forties. People were therefore quite at home with such conventions or conferences with their committees of work. In consequence, members of the extension lecture-courses had no hesitation in responding to invitation to attend a conference such as J.A. McLean had succeeded in convening at Achimota in August 1947, after his experimental lecture-courses.

At the conclusion of his lecture-courses up and down the country, David Kimble also convened a conference of sixty representatives from ten extra-mural centres, to consider the next step in regard to a future programme of work. The conference was held in the Governor's spacious resthouse at the Botanical Gardens at Aburi. It was both a weekend study as well as a business conference. Lectures were given: 'The Idea of Adult Education' by David Kimble, and 'Adult Education and Democracy' by Dr. A.E. Morgan, Education Controller of the British Council and lately Vice-Chancellor of McGill University, Montreal, Canada. The Principal of the University College of the Gold Coast, David Balme,
DSO, DFC, spoke on what the newly established institution of higher learning hoped to achieve. Then Modjaben Dowuona, Academic Registrar of the University College (who had worked in various ways towards the success of the experiment), presided at a business meeting. This reviewed the work done at the extra-mural centres and considered future possibilities of adult education work in the country.

The outcome of the meeting was an ad hoc committee, drawn from the representatives, that sat very late into the Saturday night to examine a draft constitution, produced by David Kimble, for setting up an adult students movement, under the suggested name of 'Citizens Educational Association'. The committee was presided over by Gilly O. Jones-Quartey, a pharmacist and at that time the chairman of the Accra Extra-Mural Classes committee. He was a man who had unquestionably developed a profound interest in voluntary associations and was known then to be a member of not less than a dozen social and cultural associations in Accra. Under Gilly Jones-Quartey's chairmanship, the committee rejected the suggested name on grounds that the term 'Citizen' tended to exclude from membership those who were not citizens of the country. Next, the committee also rejected another suggestion to adopt the name, Workers' Educational Association, as in England. For those present were mostly school teachers and junior civil servants who had not developed any concept of a workers' movement or a working-class feeling of solidarity in the Gold Coast, such as existed among the working-class in England at the formation of the W.E.A. At the meeting, too, were a few politicians, farmers' leaders and leading journalists like M.K. Apaloo (later to be a prominent member of the Parliamentary
opposition), and Moses Danquah. These wanted to be classified in terms other than 'workers' or 'working-class'. In the end a compromise was struck. The new movement was to be named 'People's Educational Association' (P.E.A.). Even so, some members expressed anxiety, for they thought that the new organisation was likely to be identified in officialdom with 'People's Organisations' in the Socialist countries of Eastern Europe. Indeed, the name People's Educational Association must have had a familiar ring in the Socialist world, as, two years later, in 1951, the late Professor Ivan Potekin, member of the Supreme Soviet, and director of African Studies of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, Moscow, endeavoured to establish contact with the Secretariat of the P.E.A., long before his first visit to Africa in the late fifties.

However, the next day, Sunday, 24th February 1949, under the shade of a gigantic tree in the Botanical Gardens at Aburi, the Conference of representatives of the Oxford Delegacy extra-mural centres in the Gold Coast enthusiastically launched an adult education movement - the People's Educational Association (P.E.A.), and K.G. Konuah, founder and principal of the Accra Academy, was elected as the interim President.

In hailing the birth of the P.E.A., the Gold Coast Express declared:

This happy link-up of the Gold Coast with Oxford University in a permanent way - in the sense that wherever and whenever the P.E.A. is mentioned Oxford University will be remembered as its source - was brought about by the cooperation of the University itself, the Gold Coast Government, and the enthusiasm of our people, including the students.
It is worth noting, in contrast, that in Nigeria the result of the Oxford Delegacy's experiment as regards emergence of an adult education movement was less spectacular. At the conclusion of experimental courses by McLean and Collins in 1948, meetings of students were held at various extra-mural centres, and the ad hoc committees which had been set up during Thomas Hodgkin's visit in early 1947 were replaced by locally elected bodies at Lagos, Ibadan and other places. There later developed the Nigerian Extra-Mural Association, but this was not organised on regional or federal (national) basis, as the British W.E.A. or the P.E.A. of Ghana. Rather each local centre, as a unit, maintained direct contact with the Extra-Mural Studies Department of the University of Ibadan.34

In the Gold Coast, the Oxford Delegacy's interest in extra-mural activity continued after the experimental period, and even after the work had been handed over in 1949 to the newly established University College which had been opened a year earlier. David Kimble was seconded by the Oxford Delegacy to become the Director of the University College's Department of Extra-Mural Studies, which commenced formal work in October, 1949. Before then, Kimble had visited Sierra Leone early in the year and made proposals for extending the Oxford Delegacy's experiment from the Gold Coast to that country. The reaction of the Government of Sierra Leone was however unfavourable. It was not until 1951 that, as a result of the long-standing association between Fourah Bay College and Durham University, H.J. Boyden, (later Member of Parliament) as Durham's Director of Extra-Mural Studies visited Sierra Leone to advise on extra-mural work.
The Oxford Delegacy next proposed to the Colonial Office to carry out the Extension Courses experiment in East and Central Africa, particularly in Nyasaland (Malawi), Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Tanganyika (Tanzania). The proposal was, however, turned down for reasons that extra-mural classes of the kind tried out in the Gold Coast and Nigeria would have given rise to peculiar problems in East and Central Africa. Such a rejection by the Colonial Office might have been fundamental; for, as J. M. Lee has observed:

The activities of the Oxford Delegacy had left-wing political overtones which the Secretary of State and the Colonial Office officials did not like, and it was therefore not allowed to extend to East and Central Africa in 1949, when the application was made.

Arthur Creech-Jones, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, is known to have expressed "some scepticism" at a later stage about the experimental lecture-courses in West Africa, and thought that the work was more the kind of undertaking which the W.E.A. should handle than the University.

Official Reaction to One-Day Schools

The attitude of the Colonial Office had been influenced in all probability by reports from the Gold Coast Government on extra-mural activity, particularly in the form of One Day Schools. Several of these were held, under Kimble's guidance, by the extra-mural centres at Accra, Sekondi/Takoradi and Kumasi, during 1948-49. In a letter from Accra in September 1948 to Thomas Hodgkin at Rewley House, Oxford, Kimble commented: "It is common knowledge that confidential reports have been written.... These had gone from the regions to the Secretariat and the Colonial Office, London."
Such 'Schools' were held on a Saturday afternoon when at least two speakers spoke from different viewpoints on a topic of the moment. The 'Schools' provided an opportunity for public consideration of current controversial issues. This particular activity was viewed in government circles with grave misgiving. Europeans criticised these popular Saturday meetings basically on the grounds that certain matters were too dangerous to be handled safely in public. They expressed fears that public discussion of controversial issues at the crucial stage of political development in the Gold Coast might spark off further civil strife. This was the period preceding the C. P. P. declaration of 'Positive Action' programme in January 1950, which was aimed at attacking "the forces of imperialism in the country".38

It was also the time of the T.U.C. General Strike in the first week of the same month. The strike was in sympathy with the government meteorological workers who had stopped work at the beginning of December. In consequence, the Government had declared a state of emergency in the country, complete with a dusk to dawn curfew.39

An example of such weekend One-Day Schools was that organised by David Kimble at the Rodger Club, Accra, in September 1948, on the theme, 'The Press and Public Opinion'. The open-air One-Day School was attended by over 400 people, including some Europeans, mainly civil servants. The 'School' was addressed by three Africans and two Europeans. Under Kimble's chairmanship, K.A.B. Jones-Quartey, a well-known Ghanaian journalist with experience in West Africa, Britain and the United States (who was then back home on a visit), started off on the subject, 'Some Problems of the Press'. Next, Ako Adjei,
a lawyer, politician and managing editor and publisher of an Accra newspaper, the African National Times, spoke on 'An Editor Looks at the Press', while J.W. Tsiboe, proprietor and manager of the Kumasi-based Ashanti Pioneer, and president of the Gold Coast Press Association, discussed the subject, 'A Manager looks at the Press'. The two European participants were: Alec G. Dickson, Mass Education Officer and formerly Assistant Editor of the British newspaper, the Yorkshire Post and foreign correspondent of the Daily Telegraph, who spoke on 'Inter-Press Relationships' and Major A.J.V. Lillie-Costello, the government Public Relations Officer, who ended with 'The Press and Government'.

There was a rumbling sound about this particular 'School'. Its organisation led to a conflict between Major Lillie-Costello and David Kimble. The former alleged that the speeches made at the 'School' had been meant as an attempt to attack the Public Relations Department and so the Government had suffered "considerable illwill", and that the vexed question of race relations had thereby been brought to the fore. Kimble refuted the allegation and maintained that the speeches and general discussion that afternoon succeeded in creating a healthy impact on the public. This seems to have been reflected very stoutly in a leader in a nationalist newspaper which concluded:

The people of the Gold Coast do not talk of race. The unity of Mankind is the great social principle that we uphold and, on that basis, we deal with every human individual according to his merit and inner quality. Africans and Europeans, we can live together, in mutual fellowship and love. But Africans must govern themselves. That is quite fair enough'.
Other repercussions followed. Kwame Nkrumah later commented that when Major Lillie-Costello addressed the 'School' and said, "the Press in this country, as in any other country, can be a tremendous carrier of goodwill if it so wishes, or, it can just as easily follow a policy of racial division and all that policy entails", the government Public Relations Officer "was at pains to point out that the press had a very important part to play in the life of the country".  

A great deal of uneasiness was evidently created in official quarters through the series of One Day Schools, and even by the very personality of David Kimble, a dashing, six-foot Englishman in his late twenties, who went about habitually wearing a red tie. In January 1950, high official resentment to extra-mural activity was voiced by no less a person than the Governor, Sir Charles Noble Arden-Clarke. During the General Strike in the first week of that year, the Governor was heard to remark at Sekondi that one of the causes of unrest then prevailing in the country had been the effect of 'mental indigestion' from which the strikers were apparently suffering, as a result of the programme of extra-mural studies. The Governor afterwards was obliged to modify his remark when he later had an opportunity of observing at first-hand what a beneficent influence extra-mural work was then exerting in the country generally.
REFERENCES


2. Cmd 6647, pp.18-19, para.7.


4. The Committee comprised six Africans and six British expatriates. The African members were: Mr. Justice J.H. Coussey (Puisne Judge), Dr. I.B. Asafu-Adjaye (Member, Executive Council), Dr. F.V. Nanka-Bruce (Member, Legislative Council), Mr. C.W. Tachie-Menson (Member, Executive Council), Nana Tsibu Darku IX (Member, Executive Council) and Mr. Justice L.E.V. M'Carthy (Chairman, Achimota Council). The others were: Mr. T. Barton (Director of Education), Mr. D. Benzies (Principal of the Presbyterian Training College, Akropong-Akwapim), Mr. C.S. Deakin (Warden of the Post-Secondary Courses, Achimota), Mr. H.C. Neill (Acting Principal of Achimota College) and Mr. G.E. Sinclair (Senior Administrative Officer), now Sir George Sinclair, M.P., as the Secretary.

5. Bradley Report, para. 47.


7. T.L. Hodgkin had already developed a keen interest in colonial affairs during his days in the Palestine Administrative Service, 1933-36. He resigned for
political reasons, returned to England, and later as organising tutor conducted courses for the North Staffordshire W.E.A. District, 1939-45. He became Secretary of the Oxford Delegacy and Fellow of Balliol College, 1945-52. Hodgkin was a joint secretary of the (International) Commission which reported on the development and expansion of University Education in Ghana in 1960-61. An acknowledged Africanist, he became in 1962 the first Director of the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, and remained so until 1965.


9. Col. George Wigg was in pre-war days secretary of the North Staffordshire W.E.A. District, with close association with the Oxford Delegacy. During World War II, Wigg (as a former professional soldier) rejoined the Army and became Colonel in the Army Education Corps. Throughout his army service and later as Member of Parliament for Dudley, he remained a member of the Oxford University Extension Lectures Committee. Later in his political life he became Paymaster General, in October 1964, an office he relinquished in 1967 to become Chairman of the Horse-Race Betting Levy Board, and he is now Lord Wigg of the Borough of Dudley. - (Source: 'Some Wartime Development in Adult Education', Rewley House Papers, Oxford, Vol. II, No. IV, March 1941; also, The Times, London, 29 November 1967.)


15. Modjaben Dowuona, M.A. (Oxon.), became Registrar of the University College of Gold Coast and first Master of Commonwealth Hall, Legon, up to 1962 when he went to Nigeria as Registrar of Ahmadu Bello University, in Zaria. That University conferred on him an Honorary LL.D. After the coup d'etat of February, 1966 in Ghana, he returned home to become Commissioner of Education in the N.L.C. regime. Mr. Dowuona has since retired, after being Chairman of the National Council for Higher Education as well as the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, Ghana.


It was the Governor, Sir Gerald Creasy, who succeeded Sir Alan Burns in 1947. He was obliged to confess to the Legislative Council that he had been "overtaken by events", following the February-March 1948 disturbances in the Gold Coast. Creasy was succeeded by Sir Charles Noble Arden-Clarke in August, 1949.
17. OUELc, 'Proposals Regarding University Extension Courses in West Africa', Agendum 5, 9 March 1946, Rewley House, Oxford.


23. See Adult Education in the Gold Coast, p.3

25. Adult Education in the Gold Coast, p.20


27. See Ref.14 above.

28. See Ref.17 above.


33. Gold Coast Express, Accra, 28 February 1949.

34. See Henry Collins: 'Need for a Permanent Organization', West Africa, 26 February, 1949; also S. G. Raybould, Adult Education at a Tropical University, p.9.

35. Notes of a meeting between Christopher Cox and Thomas Hodgkin at the Colonial Office, London, 21 September 1949, on Kimble's report of his
visit to Sierra Leone; also on further proposals of extension work in other parts of Africa (Rewley House Records, Oxford).


37. See Ref. 35 above.


40. Adult Education in the Gold Coast, p.12.

41. Confidential letter, David Kimble to Acting Colonial Secretary, Accra, 19 September 1948 (Rewley House, Oxford).

42. The African National Times, Accra, 15 September, 1948.


44. Hagan, Ibid., p.219n.