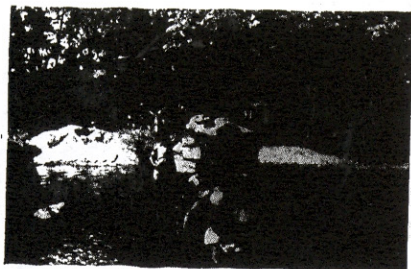


Through the Wurkum Country.

An account of a tour of investigation made in the country of the Wurkum people, Northern Provinces, Nigeria, by Rev. C. W. Guinter, with a view to the establishment of a Mission Station. These people have not hitherto been reached by missionary effort.



On the 4th of January we left Wukari by motor cycle by way of Donga and Suntai. After crossing the Suntai River we struck bad roads, and we got on very slowly, arriving at Jalingo on the 6th. After a pleasant interview and luncheon with the District Officer, Mr. Chapman, we proceeded to Kona, where we found Mr. and Mrs. Olsen very happy in the work. The following day being Sunday, it was my privilege to bring the morning message to above a hundred people who had gathered within the walls of the new school building. There were a goodly number of adults present. The more than sixty school children were there, fifteen or more of whom were girls. At this service Shumen, a son of the present chief, publicly confessed his faith in Christ, and expressed his desire to follow Him. The work here is very encouraging, and our friends could do well with a lady teacher to carry on the school work.

The following day we proceeded to Lau. We found our canoe with the loads had arrived. We at once arranged for carriers, and in the evening we crossed to the new village of Soba Lingu, where we spent the night. Early next morning we were under way, and by nine o'clock we had reached Karim, where the native district head lives. We were very kindly received, and our every need supplied. In the afternoon we had a fine interview with the district head, and we told him that the object of our visit was to find a site for a Mission

Station in the Wurkum country. He seemed pleased that these backward peoples were to have the Light. After his visit we had a little go at the language of the natives of this place. It is quite different from the other languages in this district. The natives are mostly pagans. The district head, some of his officials and the cattle Fulani, are Moslems.

The next day we proceeded to Bambur. This is a Wurkum town. Part of the people are still on the hill and part of them have come down and settled at its base, having their farms in the great plain sloping down towards the Benue River. This was the place suggested to us for a beginning of our work. We found the people very keen to have us come. They seem quite intelligent, and appear to be above the ordinary natives of the district. We spent two days here investigating the district, and looking for a suitable site for a station. The chief wanted to give us one just across the road from a large native house. We found a better one on the Kwonchi Road, about a half mile North-East of the chief's house. We took the measurements and put in the marker so that we could apply for this if we thought it the right place after seeing the rest of the country. Before I left the chief gave me one of his sons to enter school at Wukari in preparation for the work here.

On Friday morning we crossed the Bambur Hill into the plain to the West. We passed some farm villages and a large cattle camp on the way. After four hours' travel we came to a rocky plain rising abruptly from the valley. On the top of this is the town of Kirim. This is a widely scattered town with little groups of houses nestled in among the rocks. There is a market and a small settlement of Hausa traders. When we told them of our purpose they became very enthusiastic, and promised us help to begin work among them. Many of the men and youths

speaking Hausa. Their principal occupation is agriculture, their farms being scattered in the plain at the foot of the hills. The main road to Muri passes through the town.

Early the next morning we set off through undulating country towards the North. In three hours we were in Angule, the first Bachama town. This is located on a plateau, and widely scattered. After a rest we went down the pass into the valley. Here, nestled at the foot of quite high hills are more Bachama villages. They farm in the plain right up to the Bauchi Province.

Pushing on across this plain we reached the foot of the Gwona Hill. A stiff climb of less than a half hour found us in what remains of a once large Jukun settlement. There are now less than thirty compounds remaining. We spent the Sunday here, and had the privilege of speaking the living Message to a dying people.

On Monday we retraced our steps to the Bachama villages, and from there crossed the hills into a valley between the mountains. Here and there nestled up close to the hillside were the farm villages. Passing across this valley we climbed up on an undulating plateau dotted with small villages. At one of these, Pitike Walkali, we stopped for

the day. This is the former site of the large Bachama town. The people have scattered and settled nearer the good farm lands, only a few remain here. The natives are rather above the average in intelligence. As far as we can learn this language has no relation to the Bachama of Yola Province. Many

of them hear Wurkum, but most of the women and children speak only Bachama.

The next day the first part of our way was very rough. It was up and down hill, and over several rocky passes into a narrow valley leading down to Kwonchi, only about three miles from Bambar. In our journey we had nearly completed a circle. Only a few of the Kwonchi people have come down from the hills though most of them have their farms in the plain of the Benue River.

They have no large towns. Five hours trek over a low hill and along the foot of the hill brought us to Zo. Here is a little group of people of less than five hundred who have a language quite different from that of their neighbours. The people are a fine type physically. They have come down from the hills to the better land in the plain.

The day following we travelled along the road at the foot of the hills for four hours, and arrived at the last large



HILL PAGANS.

settlement in this part of the Province, Bambuka. These people are still perched up against the mountain side, and some are still on top. They have just promised the District Officer that they will come down to the plain. They are a good type physically. They enjoy a good fight, and show considerable strength of character.

After seeing the principal places in the district I have decided to ask for the site at Bambur. It is quite central. We can reach most of the people in a radius of twenty-five miles. The people are keen, and there is little Moslem influence. The density of the population is the greatest in this Province.

C. W. GUNTER.

★ ★ ★ ★

The Freed Slave Children's Christmas.

IN former years many friends have helped to provide articles for a Christmas Tree for the boys and girls at the Freed Slaves' Home at Wukari, in Nigeria. We are sure that the children will not be forgotten this year. The articles most appreciated are:—

Brightly Coloured Cotton Cloths, say a yard square. Lengths of Coloured Cotton Cloth, say 2½ yards by 27 to 30 inches. Brightly Coloured Woollen Caps.

Writing Tablets, Envelopes, Note Books, Pens and Pencils.

Scissors, Reels of Cotton, Safety

Pins, Thimbles, Small Looking Glasses, Strong Combs.

Strong Pocket Knives, Padlocks, Small Hinges, Trumpets, Mouth Organs, Toys, Plasticine, Tennis Balls, Wall Quoits and table games.

Boiled Sugar Sweets in tightly sealed bottles or tins.

Special subscriptions toward purchase of articles locally would also help; these should be sent to the Secretary, Sudan United Mission, Falcon Court, 32, Fleet Street, London, E.C. 4.

Parcels should be sent to F.S.H., c/o Mr. T. F. Mason, 10/12, Ivy Lane, Newgate Street, London, E.C. 4, not later, if possible, than 1st August.

S.U.M. Prayer Meetings.

Bangor, Co. Down.—Third Monday, at 8 p.m., in various houses. Notice can be received by applying to Mr. James Black, Haslemere, Bangor, Co. Down.

Belfast.—Third Thursday, at 3 p.m., in the Y.W.C.A., Donegall Square; Every Friday, at 8 p.m., in 6, Upper Charleville Street.

Birkenhead.—Last Tuesday, at 3 p.m., at house of Miss D. A. Cook, Minstead, Rosemount Road, Oxtou, Birkenhead.

Cambridge.—First Saturday, at 8 p.m., at Castle End Mission.

Carlisle.—Second Tuesday, at 8 p.m., in the Railway Mission.

Glasgow.—Third Tuesday, at 8 p.m., in Room D, Christian Institute, Bothwell Street.

Kilmarnock.—Last Friday, at 7-30 p.m., in Wards Place.

King's Lynn.—Every Tuesday evening, at house of Miss E. Holditch, Srettisham, King's Lynn.

Liscard.—Third Monday, at the Christian Endeavour Meeting, Christ Church, Martin's Lane, Liscard.

London.—Third Thursday, at 7 p.m., in Trinity Baptist Church, Crawford Place, Edgeware Road, W. 1; Last Tuesday, at 4-30 p.m., in the S.U.M. Office, Falcon Court, 32, Fleet Street, E.C. 4.

Moyallon.—First Friday, at Moyallon House.

Newmilns.—First Monday, at 8 p.m., in Herbron Hall, Greenside, Newmilns.

Swindon.—Last Thursday, at 7.30 p.m., in Temple Street Schoolroom.