Cameroon Mission History Materials in the North American Baptist Conference Heritage Center

Section A: Published Books, Unpublished Manuscripts, and Unpublished Translations

Many of these books were given to the NAB Heritage Center by former Cameroon missionaries. These are materials they read in preparation for Cameroon service or acquired while they were in Cameroon to learn more about their adopted country. Some were written by missionaries after their time in Cameroon, others by Cameroonians or others familiar with Cameroon or similar African countries. The annotations touch on how these materials were helpful to missionaries and some of the specific connections to North American Baptist Conference missionaries.

The order is alphabetical by last name of author (or editor if no author named, or publisher in neither given). Almost all materials are in English with a few in German, French, Pidgin English or Cameroon’s Douala.


Amin, Julius. 1992. The Peace Corps in Cameroon. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press. 240 pages. The early history of the Peace Corps in Cameroon by a Cameroonian who benefited from the program in the 1960s and later came to the USA to study. NAB Missionary Paul Gebauer and Cameroon Baptist Flavious Martin were teachers in the first training session in the USA for Americans going to Cameroon under the Peace Corps. Some taught in the NAB mission secondary schools.


Bederman, S.H. 1966. “Plantation Agriculture in Victoria Division, West Cameroon: An Historical Introduction”. (Reprint from Geography Journal. Nov. 1966). It was plantation workers from the grasslands that established the first Baptist churches in the grasslands after becoming Christians on the coast and returning to the grasslands.

Bender, C. J. 1921. Weltkrieg und die Christlichen Missionen in Kamerun, Der. Kassel: Drud und Verlag von J.G. Onken Nadhfolger, G.m.b.h. 217 pages. World War I in Cameroon as seen by a NAB missionary there during that time.


Bender, C. J. n.d. [1924]. Tales from the [Cameroon] Jungle. Girard, Kansas: Haldeman-Julius Company. 64 pages. This and the following 2 publications are small booklets that NAB Missionary Bender wrote while back in the USA in the early 1920s.


Bible Portions used in Cameroon.


Good News, St. John (As John been see’am). 1996. (Bible, St. John in West African Pidgin English). Omaha, Nebraska:
Bongmba, Elias Kifon. 2001. African Witchcraft and Otherness: A Philosophical and Theological Critique of Intersubjective Relations. Albany, NY: State Univ. of New York Press. 224 pages. Bongmba is a Baptist Cameroonian educated in Cameroon and the USA who then was Baptist pastor in Yaoundé, the capital city of Cameroon, and then returned to the USA to teach at Rice University in the Religion Department.


Buchet, Jean-Louis, et al, eds. 1988. Jeune Afrique economie: CAMEROUN 88. Paris: 640 pages. An English translation of the article (p. 382) about the Secretary of Agriculture, Dr. Solomon Nfor Gwei, has been inserted. Quote: “…Don’t be surprised to find a Bible on coffee table in the waiting room of the State Secretary for Agriculture.” Cameroonian Gwei attended Baptist schools and was pastor of a Baptist church before earning advanced degrees in Europe and the USA. He returned to Cameroon to participate in the building of that young nation where he was an active member of a Cameroon Baptist Convention church.


Cameroon Baptist Convention. 2009. “2008 Annual Board Reports”. 85 pages. By Felix Finba, Director of Evangelism and Missions; Tetevi Bodylawson, Education Secretary; and Pius Tih Muffih, Director of Health Services.


Crang, Kenneth. 1959. Sandals at the Mosque: Christian Presence Amid Islam. NY: Oxford Univ. Press. 160 pages. An introduction to Islam by one who “out of a lifetime’s travel and study in the Islamic world…seeks to show…the depths of Muslim religious thought and experience, and how in that setting to preach the Gospel…” Helpful in gaining perspective about Cameroon since almost 30% of the population is Muslim.


Dennis, Alain. 1984. Au-delà du regard: le Cameroun (French); Beyond sight: Cameroon (English). Excellent color photographs about Cameroon with both French and English captions.

Deitel, Anne. 1977. Cameroon Today. Paris: Editions j.a. 256 pages. Designed as an introduction to Cameroon for those who may want to travel as tourists to Cameroon with excellent color pictures and maps with information about interesting places to visit.


Epale, Simon J. 1990. In Their Master’s Vineyard: The Story of Religious Missions in Cameroon. Limbé: Non-Published Manuscript. Approx. 619 pages. 8½ x 11” double spaced. Probably the most comprehensive history of Christian missions in Cameroon written by a Cameroonian. Epale’s primary schooling was at the North American Baptist Soppo Mission Station in the early 1930s when NAB Missionary Carl Bender was the missionary in charge. Epale did further studies in Nigeria and England earning a doctorate at Oxford. He assisted North American Baptist missionaries in starting the Teacher Training College at Soppo in 1950. He died before the final editing was completed on this manuscript.

brought to Cameroon in church work and advances in education and medical work. The two paragraphs on the “Baptists” is weak.


Fanfon, Christopher. c. 2004. *Detestable Practices.* Bamenda, Cameroon: Self Published. 21 pages. The pastor of a Cameroon Baptist Convention church citing Scripture warns Christians not to be involved in such practices as sorcery (Acts 8:9-11), witchcraft (Ex. 22:18), mediums (Deut. 18:9-13), juju dancing (2 Cor. 6:14-18).


Farwell, Byron. 1986. *The Great War in Africa, 1914–1918.* New York: W.W. Norton, 382 pages. Chapters 2-4 (42 pages) are about World War I battles fought in Cameroon, some in the coastal area near the North American Baptist Sopho mission station. Farwell tells of a (non-Baptist) mission employee who was apprehended swimming toward an Allied war ship with sticks of dynamite. This may help to explain why the military ordered all missionaries (at that time all were connected to a German mission society) out of Cameroon. Missionaries from North American Baptist churches at that time served in Cameroon under the auspices of the Baptist Missionary Society of Germany so they were lumped together with the German missionaries and also deported to leave even though they were American citizens. However, NAB Missionaries Carl and Hedweg Bender refused to leave.


Frantz, Charles. 1979. “Fulbe Continuity and Change Under Five Flags Atop West Africa: Territoriality, Ethnicity, Stratification, and National Integration”. Buffalo, NY: State Univ. of NY. 45 pages. This and the following article are scholarly studies of Cameroonian sub-cultures among which NAB missionaries worked.


Gebauer, Paul. 1964. *Spider Divination in the Cameroons.* Milwaukee: Milwaukee Public Museum. 153 pages. Based on Missionary Gebauer’s MA thesis at Northwestern University in which he describes the divination practices of a people among whom he lived as “a particular attempt to ascertain, interpret and control the will of destiny (includes the will of the gods, ancestors, and of spirits) by means of a highly developed system of leaf-cards that are manipulated by a diviner with...a certain spider...”


Hailwood, John. 1991. “My Africa, 1949 - 1956”. Hythe, Kent, UK. 110 pages. A typeset manuscript by a British citizen employed by British Government in Cameroon who was a friend of the missionaries (mentions several), and supported the mission.


Hofmeister, Jacob. 1921. “Missionary Jacob Hofmeister: Experiences in Mission Service in Cameroons – Volume 1”. Translated by William Rentz. Edmonton: Privately published. 129 pages. These 3 volumes are the remembrances of German Missionary Jacob Hofmeister and his 1898-1914 times in Cameroon based mostly on his diaries. During those years he interfaced extensively with the North American Baptist missionaries. Hofmeister was the first long-term missionary to Cameroon from Germany succeeding North American Baptist Emil Suevern as Field Secretary.

Hofmeister, J[acob]. 1923. *Erlebniss im Missionsdienst in Kamerun – Zweiter Band.* Neuruppin, Germany:
Commissionsverlag. 288 pages. See Volume 1 of the English translations for notes.


Kayser, H. P. n.d.[2009]. Kamerun Missions. New Bern, North Carolina: Privately published. 64 pages. The 1910-1915 Cameroon mission experiences of Herman Kayser excerpted from his “Story of My Life” by his son A.P. Kayser, Sr. Also includes some of A.P.’s memories that his father told him about other experiences and photographs from Cameroon of that time.

Keller, Werner. 1969. History of the Presbyterian Church in West Cameroon, The. Victoria, Cameroon: Presbyterian Church in West Cameroon. 159 pages. NAB missionaries cooperated with the missionaries of the Basel Mission through the years at various levels as that Mission’s work became the Presbyterian Church in West Cameroon


Koenig, Kathy. 2005. People at the End of the Road, The: Notes on Esimbi Culture. n.p.: Privately published study Resource. 127 pages. An in-depth study of a people group that Baptists have been in contact for years but still is not reached in the sense of becoming a self-propagating Christian community.


Kwast, Lloyd E. 1971. Discipling of West Africa: A Study of Baptist Growth, The. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 205 pages. “The central purpose of this study has been to see how the Baptist church in West Cameroon has grown and to understand the factors in her historical development that have influenced growth.” p. 174.


Lang, George W. and Ben Lawrence, Compilers. n.d.[1960s]. “A Brief Baptist History For use in the Baptist Schools”. Cameroon: Cameroon Baptist Mission, Office of the Education Secretary. 73 pages. Prepared by NAB Missionaries Lang and Lawrence for the Cameroon Baptist primary schools grade VI (USA 8th grade equivalent) classes.


Lemke, Dieter, 2001. man no be God: Bushdoctor in Cameroon. San Jose, CA: Writers Club Press. 270 pages. NAB Missionary Doctor Lemke tells of his 1967-1980 years in Cameroon and later experiences of several short-term assignments when he started a program of education among students to help combat the spread of AIDS.


Lo, Jim, Grace Holland, Peter Selemani. 2001. Living for God: An Evangelical Programmed Text. Nairobi:


Mascher, Karl. n.d. [1909]. *Missions Album from Cameroon*. Kassel: disc. 279 pages. Translated from the German *Missionsalbum von Kamerun* by Myrtle Erts. Mascher, the Home Secretary of the Baptist Mission Society of Germany, toured Cameroon in 1908 and was responsible for over 170 b/w photos and other illustrations of the mission scene in the early 1900s Cameroon. The text shows an understanding of Cameroon and a world mission perspective.


Merfield, Fred G. 1956. *Gorillas Were My Neighbours*. London: Longmans, Green and Co. 249 pages. Professional hunter Merfield tells of his 1920-30s Cameroon adventures where he specialized in capturing or hunting giant gorillas for zoos and museums. Before WWI he worked on a German plantation in what later became the British Cameroons and was accepted by the chiefs to observe celebrations and customs seen by few outsiders.


Moss, C. R. n.d. [1962]. “MBEM: Six Months in the Cameroons or an Unspoiled Land”. n.p.: typed manuscript. 300 pages. 300 pages. The views of a Britisher sent to the British Cameroons in the early 1960s to prepare for the UN-sponsored plebiscite in which the vote would be to join with the former French Cameroons. Adapted for the American reader by George Dunger.

Ndichafah, Lucas T. 1961. “Baptist Adventures in the Cameroon”. Cameroon: Handwritten original. 156+ pages. Unpublished manuscript by a Baptist pastor who was 10 when the Gospel came to his Grassland village in Cameroon. Includes handwritten communications by the author to NAB Conference leaders regarding the manuscript.


Nfor, John N. 1994. “A Look at the Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC) and Developments”. Ndu, Cameroon: Manuscript. 155 pages. Nfor, long time leader of the CBC, served as CBC Exec. Secretary (1963-67), Principal of the forerunner of the Cameroon Baptist Theological Seminary (1974-85) and other positions. Not all pages available when copy was made in Cameroon.

Njeshu, E. N. 1946. “Life of an Ndu Man: A Short History of the Ndu or Wiya People” Kumba, Cameroon: Typescript. 17 pages. Njeshu, an elementary school teacher and village historian, wrote this “to provide teachers in the schools located in the Ndu and surrounding villages with ideas for the teaching of Local History and Geography”.


Pennsylvania Baptist State Convention. “Minutes…October 26, 1843”. Copies of select pages where Konrad Fleischmann’s early work with the Penn. State Convention are recorded: “…Missionaries commissioned by the Convention during the year…Konrad Fleischmann…” (p. 40). Fleischmann founded in 1843 the first church of what would become the North American Baptist Conference.


Reyher, Rebecca. 1952. *The Fon [traditional ruler] and His Hundred Wives.* Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co. 318 pages. A popular title by a serious journalist. The author was impressed by NAB Missionary Paul Gebauer: “He [Gebauer] talked well, intelligently, I [author] liked to listen to him. ‘African Baptists accept men and women as God has found them. We take in the husband with one wife or all the wives. We don’t make any laws for African Baptists. We are not out for numbers but quality. They will carry the mass along into a new age.’” (p. 47).

Ritzenthaler, Pat. 1966. *The Fon [traditional ruler] of Bafat.* London: Cassell & Company Ltd. 221 pages. Sociologist Ritzenthaler described the life of a ruler in a late 1950s Cameroon village. Included are 32 pages of excellent photos. The good work of Baptists and other missions are recognized. This is continued in *Cameroons Village* co-authored by Ritzenthaler and her husband.


Rudin, Harry R. 1938. *Germans in the Cameroons.* New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press. 456 pages. Based on Yale Professor of History Rudin’s earlier work in the archives of the German Govt. studying the years 1884-1914 when Germany ruled Cameroon. Records indicated the “first white missionary in Victoria” (now Limbé) came in 1891 sponsored by “a German branch of the American Baptist Mission”. This was August Steffens of the German Dept. of the Rochester (NY) Seminary.

Russell, Horace O. 2000. *Missionary Outreach of the West Indian Church: Jamaican Baptist Missions to West Africa in the Nineteenth Century.* New York: Peter Lang. 323 pages. Jamaican-born Seminary Professor Russell leaves no stone unturned in telling how the Jamaican Baptists (recent slaves) asked British Baptists for help in going to their homeland on the West Coast of Africa to help in mission work that eventually (1858) started today’s Down Beach Baptist Church in Limbé, Cameroon.

Saker, E[mily]. 1908, 2nd ed. 1929. *Alfred Saker of the Cameroons.* London: Carey Press. 224 pages. Alfred Saker (1814-1880) was the natural leader of the early British Baptist missionaries that established churches on Fernando Po Island and Cameroon. His 1844-1876 mission work included translation of the Bible into the Duala language. He established the city of Victoria (now Limbé) in 1858 with Jamaican settlers from Fernando Po when Spanish authorities no longer allowed Baptists churches there.

Sanneh, Lamin. 1983. *West African Christianity: The Religious Impact.* Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 286 pages. Sanneh, a West African by birth and early education, received his PhD at the Univ. of London and taught at several African universities before teaching posts at Harvard and Yale. His overview of early Christianity in West Africa is comprehensive but the chapter that includes Cameroon is somewhat sketchy except for the Basel Mission activities. Sanneh sees the purpose of the German Government authorizing the Baptists of Germany to sponsor North American Baptist August and Anna Steffens as missionaries to Cameroon in 1891 as a way to bring more German influence on the independent Native Baptist Churches.


Scheve, Edward, n.d. [1902]. *The Mission of the German Baptists in Cameroon.* Sioux Falls, SD: North Am. Baptist Conference Heritage Commission. 61 pages. Translated from the German by Myrtle Eris in 2004. Scheve, the chair of the Berlin Baptist Missionary Committee, became the director of the Baptist Missionary Society of Germany at its formation in 1898. This is the most complete history available about the 1891-1901 decade of mission work by North American Baptist missionaries in Cameroon.

Schilke, Richard (compiler and editor). 1964. “Missionary Handbook for the Missionaries of Cameroon Baptist Mission...North Am. Baptist General Missionary Society”. Forest Park, IL: Typescript. 48 pages. The Home Mission Secretary Schilke put together a handbook very useful for missionaries new to the Mission and Cameroon as well the veterans. Included are basic policies and some procedures with several documents such as the “By-Laws of Field Organization”.


Schneider, Gilbert. 1963. *First Steps in Wes-Kos.* Hartford, CT: Hartford Seminary Foundation. 81 pages. Following his graduate work, Missionary Schneider produced this “practical level of linguistics” introduction to Pidgin English. It was useful to missionaries and others, like USA Peace Corps persons, going to West Cameroon where Pidgin was spoken by 75% of the adults.


Schneider, Mildred M. 2000. *Mbingo: The Founding of Bamenda New Hope Settlement, 1952–1961.* Portland, OR: Privately published. 297 pages. The story of this leper camp and treatment center from excerpts of letters by NAB Missionary Nurse Mildred Schneider. Includes the time when on their way to Cameroon their infant daughter died on ship and was buried at sea.

Schwartz, Nancy Beth A. n.d. [c. 1970]. *Mambilla – Art and Material Culture*. Milwaukee: Milwaukee Public Museum. 49 pages. NAB missionaries have worked among the Mambilla people since the late 1930s. NAB Missionary Gilbert Schneider who with his wife Mildred was based at Warwar Mambilla 1947-1951 was a major contributor to this book.

Sieber, J. 1925. *Die Wute (The Vute)*. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer. 114 pages. Description of a Cameroon people-group with whom early NAB missionaries were in contact.


Victoria Centenary Committee. 1958. *Victoria, Southern Cameroons: 1858–1958*. Victoria, Southern Cameroons: Basel Mission Book Depot. 95 pages. A history written by several knowledgeable contributors for the Victoria Centenary (100 years after British Baptist missionary Alfred Saker founded the village) with the chapter on “The Missionary Impact” contributed by the 3 major missions of which the NAB Mission was one. NAB missionaries participated in the planning and production with NAB Missionary Norm Haupt playing the role of Saker in the arrival by small boat depicting that 1858 scene.

Vielhauer, Ba. c. 1932. “Mungaka Vocabulary”. Unpublished typed language study work sheets. Translated from the German by Miss M. Dieth. 59 pages. The actual worksheets (given to NAB Missionary Norm Haupt after translation from the German to English) of this Cameroonian tribal language translation project.

Von Berge, Herman et al. n.d. [1944]. *These Glorious Years: The Centenary History of German Baptists of North America, 1843-1943*. Cleveland: Roger Williams Press. 262 pages. A compilation by different authors of chapters dealing with various aspects for 100-years of NAB Conference history. Chapter 6 includes a summary of the Cameroon mission. There are 48 pages of a variety of photos covering the 100 years including several Cameroon missionaries.


Zimbelman, Ernie and Dorothy Wolitarsky Zimbelman. 2011. “My Story and Her Story”. Sioux Falls, SD: Privately printed. 146 pages. The Zimbelmans were NAB missionaries to Cameroon 1959-1968. He taught at two different colleges while she home-schooled the children and also covered several support roles including being the treasurer at one of the colleges. Their Cameroon years are in two sections of the book (pages 27-38 with many photos and 72-79).