Danish Plantations on the Gold Coast 1788–1850

By Henrik Jeppesen

It was the trade with gold and later on also with slaves that primarily interested the Danes on the Gold Coast back in the 16th, 17th, and 18th century. Trade with agricultural products were of no interest. Some supplies were taken in of course for the ships and the forts, and later, much of the provisions needed for the slave-ships during the Atlantic crossing were also bought locally, but it cannot have influenced agronomics much. Not until at the end of the 18th century the Danes and other Europeans began to take an interest in African crops and the cultivation of land. Things developed slowly, however, and a proper European colonization was never made. European-owned plantations were established in certain regions, whereas in others the African small-holders became suppliers of the increasingly demanded colonial produce. The extent of the Danish effort was modest, but its pioneer character entitles a certain attention. Many plantation projects were made in the course of time. Of the few actually carried out ruins can still be found in Ghana.

The plans of establishing plantations and colonies should be viewed in connection with the efforts towards the abolition of the slave-trade. The first attempt was made in 1788, the intention being to eliminate the slave-traffic by growing such products in West Africa as were produced in the West Indies by the imported slaves. Some more attempts were made a few years later, but with little success. The ordinance of the abolition was made in 1792, coming into force on the 1st of January 1803. With the approach of this date a new development started. To compensate for the financial loss caused by abolition, plantations were one of the possibilities,

and in the years around 1803 a number of plantations were established, some privately and some government-owned, but they were all destroyed by the Ashantis in 1811. New buildings were not erected until around 1830, but the activity decreased again, and at the sale of the forts in 1850 the plantations were played out. At this time, however, the trade in commodities produced by the local inhabitants was steadily increasing.

Attempts of cultivation before 1788

In the years prior to the debate on slave-traffic some projects were made with a view to establishing plantations, for instance in 1767 by Det Bargumske Handelskompagni (viz. Vore gamle Tropekolonier). Before these projects special crops had only been raised to a limited extent, for instance in connection with most forts some gardening was made for self-supporting in European vegetables. This was the case at Frederiksborg (founded 1660 and surrendered to the English 1689) near the present Cape Coast. The governor from 1789-92, Andreas Riegelsen Bjørn, gives an account, printed in Thaarups Archiv for Politik, Statistik og Husholdningsvidenskaber, Vol. III, 1798, that as commander of Fredensborg at Ningo he laid out a garden in 1779 "which supplied the head fort with European vegetables and garden fruits". Later on, as commander of Kongensteen he had also laid out a garden there "which after my transfer to the fort Prindsensteen became molested and desolate". At Ningo, about half a mile NE of the ruins of Fredensborg, two gateposts can still be seen in the bush, originating from the entrance to the garden. The number of Danish forts and trade lodges expanded considerably during the time of governor Jens Adolf Kjøge (1780-89), and he laid out a garden near Christiansborg in 1783.

Isert and the treaty with Krobo, Frederiksnopel

Paul Erdmann Isert, a doctor (born 1756 at Angemünde, Brandenburg) was the first to set up a plantation. He lived on the Gold Coast from 1783 to 1787. A number of his letters to the family was published under the title "Reise nach Guinea" in 1788 (Danish edition 1917). Isert returned to Denmark on board a slave-ship via the West Indies. During this voyage he was horrified to see the living conditions of the slaves and reached the conclusion that tropical products might as well be raised in Guinea as in the West Indies, whereby the misery of the slaves could be avoided. Count Ernst Schimmelmann was sympathetic to these thoughts and, supported

by the fund "Ad usus publicos", Isert returned to Guinea in 1788 in order to set up plantations. After a fruitless attempt near the town Malfi at the river Volta, Isert decided to establish his colony in the Akwapim mountains near the town Akropong. The place was named *Frederiksnopel*, and on the 21st of December 1788 the project was so far advanced that he could make a kind of opening ceremony. In a letter dated 16th January 1789 Isert describes his intention with the establishment (Thaarups Archiv). On the 21st of January he died.

Isert had made a treaty with the chief of Krobo, Attiambo, regarding purchase of land for the plantation. Fig. 2 shows the signatures of Attiambo and Isert on the treaty. The peculiar thing is, however, that Akropong does not belong to Krobo but to Akwapim, towards which district the treaty was also later claimed. Further, there seems to have been some misunderstandings as to the contents; according to the treaty Isert bought on behalf of the Danish King all the land in the Akwapim mountains not utilized by the Africans. However, these areas were actually under cultivation, but were bush in the African shifting cultivation system — a misunderstanding also made elsewhere in Africa. In addition, the rules said that land could not be owned by human beings, it belonged to the gods and could consequently not be sold. The inhabitants of the village had the right of use to the territory of the village, but aliens living in the village might share this right if they were accepted by the community. Customarily, certain gifts were to be given to the traditional sovereigns in return. Attiambo would gladly have Isert living with them, as they were well-acquainted from a campaign against the tribes near Keta (*Isert*). Further, he was interested in settlement of Danes, hoping to attract trade to the place and avoid the middlemen from the coastal tribes. He must have considered it a cession of the right of use to Isert and the payment as the traditional gift, whereas the Danes thought they bought the land. According to the treaty the Africans were entitled to cultivate the soil that the Danes did not utilize. Also this indicated that the misunderstanding mentioned might have occurred. On later occasions the Danes claimed the treaty towards this "changeable people" when purchasing plantation grounds, but did not fully succeed whereas they were always allowed to cultivate a certain plot of land against payment of a fee.

After Isert's death the plantation was continued but with little success. The intention had been to grow coffee and sugar (G. J. 256/1796) but no records hint of exports of products. For some years

the place was inhabited; the records show Grotian (G. J. 256/1796) and Gust (G. J. 174/1796). The reason was a wish to maintain the rights legally acquired — so it was assumed — by the treaty. In 1802 (G. J. 407/1802) Generaltoldkammeret (The Customs Department) agreed to recall the military staff. At that time there were "some houses and a small plot of land on which cotton is planted" (G. J. 179/1802).

In 1965 this place was found with the assistance of the paramount chief of Akropong, who was also acquainted with its history. Only a few heaps of stone could be seen, and it was impossible to get a general view of the extent of the former plants.

Other attempts to set up plantations

The most important reason for the failing success of Frederiksnopel was its inland position, which entailed serious transportation difficulties. This was acknowledged by commander Jens Nielsen Flindt, former assistant of Isert and in charge of Frederiksnopel after Isert's death. In 1792 Flindt was granted a sum from the fund "Ad usus publicos" for new plantations, and he started laying out *Frederikssted* near the town Dodowa (*Schimmelmann*). A sawmill, 3 dwelling-houses, a granary and a long and large building were erected. Various accounts are available, among others also letters from other Danes assisting in the project. These Danes complained of Flindt and pointed out that Flindt's reports did not correspond to the facts and that he exaggerated the obtainable results. This is interesting in connection with Flindt's later activity with plantations. The critical voices stressed that experiments would have been worth while before establishing plantations of such scale.

Flindt was recalled in 1795 — just before the plantation became profitable, he asserted. 4.730 cotton plants should have been planted. It is known that a modest export has taken place. On the 4th of May 1798 the Council reports the dispatch of a bale of cotton raised on the plantations of Frederikssted and Frederiksberg (G.J. 415/1798). This is, apart from dispatch of some samples, the first evidence of an export from the Danish plantations it has been possible to trace in the available sources. Frederikssted never became of importance, however; it fell into disrepair and was abandoned in 1802 (G. J. 1064/1808).

It has not yet been possible to find the place where ruins, if any, of the buildings might be seen. In a village near the assumed position of Frederikssted the inhabitants claimed to know the place, but

nobody would go into further details nor even tell whether anything at all could be found on the place to-day.

Isert tried to carry out his plans with subsidies from the Danish government and in co-operation with the Governor's Council in Guinea. About the same time Danes began to take interest in plantations at their own expense, f. inst. the merchants Niels Lather and Peder Meyer. In 1790, being commander of Kongensteen, Lather set up a plantation named *Jægerslyst* near the fort (*Schimmelmann*). Meyer established the plantation *Frydenlund* near the former lodge at Tubreku. The buildings were erected in "negro manner" (*Monrad*). These two plantations were already abandoned in 1793 (*Schimmelmann*). They received no support and the owners asserted that governor Bjørn frustrated their efforts. Meyer would not give up, however; about 1798 (G. J. 415/1798) he started a plantation N of Accra near the Akwapim mountains at the village Judufa (to-day: Oyamfa). Reports show that there were abt. 2.000 coffee bushes in 1803, a modest number which can hardly have occupied more than 0,5 hectare. (From G. J. 707/1826 it appears that 2.500 bushes occupy about 4.000 m^2).

Near the fort Prindsensteen at Keta attempts have been made of growing cotton abt. 1795 (G. J. 216/1796). One bale of cotton was sent from here in 1802 (G. J. 216/1802). Keta is situated on a sand-bar with bad soil for cultivation. *Monrad* reports that the plantation might have been situated on the remains of the previous African village. To-day modern dwelling-houses occupy the area.

Frederiksberg

In 1796 governor Wriesberg (governor 1795-1800 and 1802-1807) established a plantation, *Frederiksberg*, about 1.500 m N of Christiansborg on the Kuku-Hill (G. J. 298/1797). A six-room house was built "of which one for billiards". It was the intention to grow cotton, for which purpose 6 hectares were cleared (1500 x 400 feet). Coffee was tried too, and indigo was known to grow wild, i. e. it might be cultivated if knowledge could be obtained of the growing methods. This place was more profitable than those previously mentioned. The records mention export of a total of about 10 bales of cotton, the exact transportation of which can be traced from letters from custom authorities and from the brokers that sold the merchandise at the Stock Exchange. The prices obtained, however, are quite out of proportion to the sums invested in the plantations. The extent of the trade does not appear from the records, and the

greater part (presumably the best) was undertaken by the government officials privately; but the efforts cannot have been substantial. In 1800 (G. J. 37/1800) Frederiksberg is mentioned as a pleasant country seat. It lapsed into decay, but was restored in 1825 (G. J. 512/1825). *Wulff* reports that Frederiksberg was in ruins by 1836; but in 1848 the buildings were restored again (fig. 2) and simultaneously private houses were built nearby for the Danish officials of Christiansborg.

Besides cotton and coffee, cultivation of vegetables, lemons and tamarind trees was tried at Frederiksberg. The tamarind tree (Tamarindus Indica) was grown because of its edible pods and is especially interesting in connection with Danish plantations. In Ghana they call it Blofo yoyi tso, which means "white man's bean tree". It is found at all Danish plantations and can be used as an indicator for these. From an early drawing of Frederiksberg (*Isert's* letters p. 190) an avenue of tamarind trees can be seen from Christiansborg to the plantation; part of these trees still exists, as Salem Road in the quarter of Christiansborg(now: Osu, its old name) exactly follows the old road-line to the plantation and still has some of the old tamarind trees on both sides — part of the trees framing the avenue has gradually been replaced by Neem trees (Azadirachta Indica). At Osu, tamarind trees are seen at many places, whereby the old network of roads can be traced, f. inst. the remains of the avenue from Christiansborg leading to the English and Dutch forts towards W (cf. map behind). On the top of Kuku-Hill only some heaps of stone indicate the ruined walls of Frederiksberg.

Jens Nielsen Flindt and Ejebo

In 1798 (G. J. 370/1798) the previously mentioned Jens Nielsen Flindt tried to return to Guinea as commander of Kongensteen in order to set up plantations at the river Volta. He also applied for allowance to produce spirits. After various postponements he got the appointment and left for Kongensteen accompanied by his sister, who was to experiment with weaving of the expected production of cotton, and by a Hans Christoffersen who was to be in charge of the distillation of spirits from locally grown maize. This enterprise seems to have been profitable, and experiments were also made with distillation of palm wine. It is more difficult to estimate the results of the plantation, however. A great number of enthusiastic letters from Flindt is available — with applications for further support —

but it might be wise to take his reports with a certain amount of reservation.

Flindt founded the plantation *Ejebo* on the western sand-bar between the river Volta and the Atlantic. In 1800 he is reported to have planted 14.730 cotton bushes and laid out 3 fields of maize (G. J. 9/1800). In 1803 about 4 hectares should have been cleared and 3.000 coffee bushes set; maize was planted to yield shadow for the bushes. Flindt was not granted all the money applied for, especially due to Peter Thonning's estimate of the bad physical conditions for cultivation on the sandy and saline soil along the river Volta (G. J. 656/1804). In 1801 a bag of cotton was shipped and again in 1807 reports show a modest export, including salt and hides. Besides maize, coffee and cotton such products as yams, tobacco and sugar (G. J. 650/1804) were also grown. In 1811 the Ashantis demolished the plantation, and Flindt was taken to Kumasi as a prisoner. On his release he tried to resume work; an application for subsidy was answered in 1818 (G. J. 1662/1818) with the question when he would repay the loan from 1800.

Monrad describes how he came to Ejebo by an avenue from Kongensteen and found various houses of a good quality. In 1828 a captain named Lind (G. J. 141/1828) reported that nothing was left of the plantation. To-day, only a single tamarind tree indicates the place.

Increased interest in plantations around 1800, Thonning's travel

New ways had been tried during the decade prior to the abolition of the slave-trade on the 1st of January 1803 in order to justify financially the maintaining of establishments on the Gold Coast. The matter was not taken too seriously, however, which is illustrated by the fact that in 1803 (G. J. 503/1803) the Governor's Council solicits a further 10 years' postponement of the abolition with the purpose of establishing new plantations during this period. There is no doubt that the slave-trade was profitable to the government officials and that they accepted only very reluctantly the abolition, as it also appears from *Monrad's* report (Monrad was a clergyman in Guinea 1805-09). No special interest was taken in establishing plantations, a fact that deserves attention when judging the results, though it is true that the Danish government granted substantial loans.

In 1799 Generaltoldkammeret sent Peter Thonning, a studiosus chirurgiæ, to the Gold Coast to estimate the possibilities, especially with a view to the growing of dye-plants. He returned in 1803 with

a big collection, mainly of plants, and reports on the growing possibilities are still available. Unfortunately, Thonning's herbarium was burnt at the bombardment of Copenhagen in 1807. Some duplicates had been given away, however, and on these, as well as on some specimens collected by Isert and others, *F. C. Schumacher* based his: "Beskrivelse af guinesiske planter", published by Videnskabernes Selskab. The descriptions of plants are in Latin, whereas some of the information on their cultivation and use is in Danish. These notes were worked up by *P. Asherson* in a paper published in "Zeitschrift für Ethnologie: Botanisch-ethnographische Notizen aus Guinea". Botanisk Tidsskrift, vol. 57 and 58, has a complete list of the preserved collection which can be seen to-day in the Botanical Museum of Copenhagen (*Junghans*). Thonning also drew a map of "The Danish possessions in Guinea". The first issue is from 1802 (copy hereof in "Vore gamle Tropekolonier"). The original map has some corrections and supplements; on the copy it is not possible to distinguish between the original and the later inserted. Several revisions were made of this map, the last in 1847 (the 1845 edition is reproduced in Isert's letters and in Nørregaard).

Plantations at Akwapim till 1811

Thonning recommended plantations near Akwapim. At the coast it was dry "only during three months everything grows" (G. J. 37/1800), whereas inland the ground was better and precipitation more ample. As mentioned, it was in this region that Meyer set up his second plantation. In 1802 Christian Schiønning, the later governor (from 1807-12), founded the plantation *Bibiase* about 13 miles N of Christiansborg. To facilitate the transport a road was laid out from Kuku-Hill across Legon Hill (where the University of Ghana is situated to-day) to Bibiase in 1803. The road was very straight, and after Monrad's description tamarind trees were planted along the roadside on nearly half the stretch. Some of them still exist, for example a row of seven (fig. 4) on the south side of Legon Hill near the Great Hall of the University; just to the north there is another one, and at several other places tamarind trees can be found. The road was necessary for transports to and from the plantation, but it was emphasized too that it was of great advantage to the Africans.

The plan was to grow coffee at Bibiase, which was managed only a few years by Schiønning, however; Monrad writes that the planta-

tion is not kept up and that Meyer lives in the plantation house (about 1809). In 1820 Bibiase was bought by governor Steffens (G. J. 38/1821) and in 1826 governor Richilieu is the owner of the plantation (G. J. 807/1826), which is stated to have grown wild (G. J. 6/1827). Wulff reports on a visit in 1838; he stayed at "Den kongelige plantage" (The Royal Plantation), and during a walk "I saw two plantations, one named Pompo, the other Bibiase".

This description was used in 1965 to localize Bibiase. As we knew both "Den kongelige Plantage" and Pompo we tried to take the same walk. We found a tamarind tree and shortly after another one, and they marked the direction of the avenue to Bibiase. It was just to penetrate the bush at the foot of the Akwapim mountains and look at the foundation of the house. Fig. 5 shows a measuring of it. The house has been 42 x 24 feet and must have contained 5 rooms and a terrace. On the southside the foundation is 1½ feet above ground-level — cf. fig. 6.

In 1808 governor Christian Schiønning set up the plantation *Daccubie* in the Akwapim mountains (G. J. 1030/1808). This was the biggest establishment we found and the one which have had the greatest extent and the highest production. In 1809 there were 40.000 coffee bushes corresponding to an area of about 7 hectares (G. J. 1124/1809). Further, 100.000 coffee beans were laid in rows, and bananas and manioc were grown. In 1808 8.000 banana plants were planted. In 1810 Schiønning exported 10 tons of coffee from Daccubie, and in later reports he expected a harvest of 100 tons in 1811, but the plantation was demolished by the Ashantis in that year (G. J. 1342/1813).

The plantation building of Daccubie is the only ruin previously described (*Lawrence*). It was measured in 1956. To-day, there are remains of a building of 78 x 18 feet turning EW. The eastern part has still walls of a height showing that the building was two-storeyed. According to *Monrad* the roof was flat. In front of the house was a courtyard with surrounding walls. The place was named wrongly (Kpompo) by Lawrence. According to Monrad's description of Daccubie there is no doubt that the building mentioned is the remains of this plantation. Especially interesting is Monrad's report on a well. When we were guided to the ruin along the riverlet Daccubie we passed this well, and the Africans told that it is still the last place to dry up and that people from Abokobi 2 miles away come to take water there, when the area is drought-stricken.

Lawrence mentions this plantation as Kpompo, which has been

about 1 mile more southward, however, on the present position of the village Pompo. This was the place Wulff visited in 1836. To-day 22 of the tamarind trees of the avenue are left — 14 on the northside and 8 on the southside. The present footpath from Temang to Pompo goes by the avenue and leads to the plantation building *Pompo*. S of the eastern part of the avenue the foundation can be seen, the extent of which only an excavation can reveal. It has not been possible to find any information on this place apart from the remark made by Wulff. At which time it was established and by whom, nobody knows. The map on plate 1, drawn in 1837, does not include Daccubie; this hints at the possibility that it was already then in ruins and had been unused since 1811.

Reports exist on other plantations from the period 1790-1811, but nothing shows the exact position nor whether they have only been a plot of cultivated land with or without buildings. Meyer had a plantation on Legon Hill, probably only fields, however, (*Monrad*). It is also evident that the Danish merchants Truelsen and Jacobsen bought land at Accra near Akwapim and that Truelsen at any case started a plantation (G. J. 1208/1810). He also had a plantation on one of the islets in the river Volta; on the Danish maps it was named Truelsens Ø — to-day the local people call it Trusckewumu, which means "Truse on the sand". The presumed place of the plantation is now eroded away. Finally, an Afro-West Indian named Balck had plantations at different times; he came to Guinea shortly before 1800 and lived there until his death 40 years later. According to local statements he had a plantation near Abokobi. For rebuilding of his possessions Balck was supported by the Danish government after the ravage of the Ashantis, and he was apparently the only one who repaid the loans granted (G. J. 881/1834).

Most of the plantations were situated at the foot of the Akwapim mountains; mainly because of the amount of precipitation and (especially) the spread of it over the year. Erroneously, some have stated that the Danes had 11 plantations in the area (f. inst. *Adams*). This misstatement must be due to Thonning's map, reproduced in Isert's letters, which has a signature for "rosarplads"; rosar means to grow. However, this signature covers plantations as well as the farms of the Africans; other editions of the map have similar signatures also for areas where the Danes have never had plantations — this is especially evident from the 1847-edition. It is interesting to note the accordance between the placing of this signature and the present range of farming on the Accra Plains.

Precipitation and exuding ground water have created a belt of dense vegetation, about 1½ miles broad, and the villages lie in a line on the fringe of this belt.

Plans for utilizing the crops about 1820, Frederiksgave

The ravage of the Ashantis in 1811 decreased the interest for plantations remarkably, though a few tried again. Influenced by the English Sierra Leone Project, plans for colonizations were formed. Other thoughts were expressed, for example to send orphanage children to the Gold Coast and teach them to cultivate the soil, or to send prisoners. The last proposal was turned down, however, "as they are dangerous and might be founders of much evil" (G. J. 512/1825).

Governor Johan Christoffer Richilieu (governor 1824-25) who owned Bibiase, repaired the road to the plantations in 1825. Simultaneously, it was proposed to increase the production of maize. The flour might be sold as food for the slaves in the West Indies, which were in lack of areas for this crop. A mill was necessary, and one was built in Denmark and erected outside Christiansborg in 1826. The idea was that the maize should be bought from the Africans to make them interested in cash-cropping. Previous attempts had been made, for example with cotton, to stimulate the Africans' interest in monetarian economy. Samples of maize flour were sent from the West Indies, but it arrived tainted and was only fit for cattlefodder. The efforts were in vain, and some years later the mill was pulled down.

In connection with the mill project two Africans, Sebastian Joseph and Peter Accra, were educated as millers in Denmark (G. J. 873/1827). Further, it was proposed to send four Africans to the West Indies to train them as plantation managers. The mulatto school children were also set to cultivate the ground; the boys planted and the girls cleaned and spun (G. J. 622/1829); this, in order to "make this useful plant (cotton) more known".

At Prindsensteen governor Wriesberg tried to manufacture soap on basis of palm oil (G.J.191/1822). In 1828 captain Lind investigated along the river Volta on the possibilities of utilizing the different types of wood, but he discovered that the apparently rich vegetation along the river was only a gallery forest, which gave no base for forestry.

At the end of the 1820'es a recultivation of plantations in decay started; some government officials took such initiative on private

basis, for example scrivener M. Thonning and doctor Trentepohl. It was pointed out that the Akwapim mountains were healthier for the Europeans than the coastland, and it was planned to move the governor and his staff in the hope that private Danes would follow and cultivate land. In 1830 money was applied for to erect a big building as a convalescent home for Europeans (G. J. 662/1830). It was governor Hein (governor 1828-31) who took this initiative. He bought a plantation started by Lind, coffee was planted and the building work commenced. The necessary money was granted from Denmark, and in 1832 the building was ready. King Frederik VI gave his permission that the plantation was named *Frederiksgave* (Frederik's Gift). Sometimes it it also called "Den kongelige Plantage" (The Royal Plantation). Simultaneously, a new road was built, this time leading round Legon Hill, and some draught animals were procured from the Canary Islands to facilitate transport.

At that time most private plantations grew maize for the slaves, but at Frederiksgave it was the intention to grow coffee, sugarcanes, cotton, oranges, tobacco, indigo etc., but with coffee as primary production. Lind had already planted 2.000 bushes, which were reduced to one third the following year, however. Governor Mørck (governor 1834-39) reported very discouragingly (G. J. 314/1836) on the experiments at Frederiksgave. In 1833 the crop was 20 lbs., in 1834 60 lbs. and in 1836 4 lbs. of coffee. The main reason for the failure was lack of precipitation. The other crops were only planted in small quantities and nearly all plants had died. The experiments on wine, figs and various kinds of hemp also failed. It appears that irrigation had been applied, and that the results of forest clearing gave cause to worry, as it would partly cause erosion, partly deprive the plants of shadow and "of the fertilizing effect of the leaves with the consequence that the soil will be as poor as it is at the foot of the mountains". This observation reveals a certain knowledge of the problems involved in tropical agriculture; but the results did not match the insight. In 1838 and 1839 the annual, total crop of all plantations was only about 2.000 lbs. of coffee, and the following years seem to have been still worse.

In 1843 the prospects of the coffee crop are described as bright "the coffee trees can hardly bear the weight of the numerous fruits" (G. J. 270/1842), but the prices were low, the harvest costs too high, and the result became again a deficit. The plantation was kept in repair and was among the buildings sold to the British in 1850.

The ruins of Frederiksgave lie near the village Sesemi. The road

from Abokobi leads to them — the last stretch by the remnants of the old avenue. There are 10-15 trees left, but they are subdued by other vegetation and are not so impressing as at Pompo. The ruin lies remarkably untouched about 50 yards above the plain. The building was erected on a slope, and it was necessary to make a foundation rising about 10 feet above the ground-level along the front, fig. 8. Fig. 9 shows a plan of the house, which measures 48 x 27 feet. A double staircase leads to a terrace (A). Under the staircase is a small room (B). The terrace is surrounded by 5 rooms (C-G). Apparently, construction has taken place in several stages; the openings between C and D, and F and G have later been bricked up; the pillars in the walls of C and G are plastered against the extension. In D the walls are preserved up to ceiling height (about 10 feet); inside holes for the joists can be seen. No doubt, the building has been flat-roofed as was generally the case — a roof outlet on the northern side of D indicates this. The walls are made of rough-hewed stones laid in mortar. Externally, they have been plastered; as the plaster contains shells the sand must have been brought from the coast. The internal walls have been plastered too, and in D remains of the final layer of whitewash can still be seen. The roots of big trees keep together many of the walls (fig. 10); when they die the rest of the house will collapse. Behind the house is a passage, and the slope along it is supported by a wall of about 1½ feet. Next to the house is the foundation of a small building with one room, 7½ x 12 feet. Further down the slope is another foundation, 12 x 30 feet, of a four-roomed house. At the foot of the western staircase lies a path supported by a stone kerb; it continues as far as 50 yards from the staircase into the bush towards W.

Further upwards the hill behind Frederiksgave lies a big heap with many small, sharp stones, which have apparently been cut here for the building. No other stone houses are to be found in the vicinity.

People in the village Sesemi told us that at Osu a stone was kept with the year 1832 engraved. After much search and countless complications we succeeded in seeing this stone — there proved to be two. They were kept under an iron bed in a small wooden house belonging to one of the local chiefs. One of the stones had the initials of Frederik VI and the year 1832, the other had "Frederiksgave" engraved (fig. 12). They had been taken to Osu so that strangers should not remove them from the ruin.

The private plantations the last 25 years before the sale

The westernmost plantation, belonging to the merchant G. Lutterodt, was „*De Forenede Brødre*" (The United Brothers), of which the time of erection is untraceable. Wulff visited it in 1837. The ruins were found in the following way: At Sesemi it was said that about 1½ miles towards W there were remains of another stone-house, but nobody would guide us to it. They called the place "Hitoto" and it could be found from the village Boi. The people of Boi did not know the name "Hitoto", but on our explanation that a ruin was said to lie there, they told us that the place was called "Ytoto". To our question who had built it, we received the answer "the Dutch". (This might fit in with the fact that the Dutch fort at Accra was situated more to the W than Christiansborg). Then we asked the meaning of "Ytoto", and an old man answered: "Properly, the name is Lutterodt, but we Gafolk cannot say Lutterodt and so it is called Ytoto". Later, one of the oldest townspeople told us that it was not the Dutch but the Danes who had built the house. The previous use of it was also known.

Fig. 13 shows the measurements of the existing foundation. There are two buildings built at right angles. The big building, 49 x 19 feet, has had 3 rooms with a terrace along the whole length of the house. The orientation of this terrace deviates from others by not facing the sea and the breeze; from the map behind it appears that it has been facing the path leading to the plantation.

After his dismissal as an assistant to the Governor's Council Georg Lutterodt became a private merchant at Accra until his death in 1857. Another merchant owning a plantation was Henrik Richter, a son of the former governor J. E. Richter. His plantation lay at the Akwapim mountains, the place is unknown, but probably it was one of the plantations already described. J. F. Svanekjær owned the plantation "*Den Nye Prøve*" (The New Attempt). In 1828 Svanekjær applied for support to reestablish his plantation after the ravage of Ashantis. Later he had to pay substantial damages for some alleged irregularities of the accounts from his time as a warehouse keeper around 1816. The plantation was sold by auction to cover the loss. In 1834 it was given up to have the loan repaid previously granted for the running of the plantation. Which of the plantations belonged to Svanekjær cannot be said with certainty to-day. Present members of the family at Accra said that they owned Pompo; none of them had ever been there, however.

In 1843 it was reported that the plantations of Lutterodt, Richter and Svanekjær had nearly no production.

The area between Christiansborg and Akwapim was measured by the mill-builder Grønberg in 1837. The map drawn on basis hereof can be seen behind. Grønberg had worked on the mill during its construction in 1826 and was later manager of Frederiksgave for a number of years. On his map Thonning ascribed the measuring to an assistant named Herbst, who only drew the map, however. This shows the roads around Christiansborg, the mill, the fort Prøvesten, and Richter's house. Further, the roads from Frederiksberg to Akwapim, the old one from 1802 across Legon Hill and the more western from 1826. The plantations indicated on the map are: De Forenede Brødre, Frederiksgave, Bibiase and Pompo. Daccubie lies N of Pompo outside the edge of the map in the small valley behind the mountain Adjemante. Further is shown the concentration of African villages along the foot of the mountains, e.g. Jadufa, Abokobi and Boi. We did not know this map when investigating in Ghana, but found it later in the State Archives at Copenhagen.

The results of the Danish experiments on plantations

The Danes were not the first to experiment on plantations in Guinea. The Dutch established cotton plantations at Shama and Axim about 1760, but these were abandoned already 10 years later. The English, however, made no such efforts, but followed with attention the Danish experiments. Interesting in this connection is a report of 1811 from the English governor, printed in Report from the Select Committee on Papers Relating to the African Forts, 1816, (here cited from Adams): "The Governor of the Danish Fort at Accra, having formed a plantation about fifteen miles up the country, it might be desirable not to molest him in the prosecution of a work which may, by the force of example, turn greatly to the benefit of Africa. It was commenced about three years past, and coffee is already brought to great perfection. It may therefore be thought right not to attack Christiansburg".

This paper is not aiming at giving an estimate of the apparently poor results of the Danish efforts. It is beyond doubt that the Danish government was interested in a development of these estates as a financial background for the maintenance of the forts and the administration on the Gold Coast; quite substantial amounts were granted repeatedly and also the sending out of Thonning as an "expert" was motivated by this line of thought. Monrad rejected that inter-tribal African conflicts should be of importance, but he emphasizes the lack of interest shown by the Danes in Guinea — the

trade was more profitable. Obviously, this absence of insistence has been of great importance. Flindt, who long worked energetically, had chosen a wrong place. But as was natural, some unsuccessful attempts were inevitable. Also to-day the introduction of new crops and methods into the Tropics involves problems.

The most positive result has been the demonstration effect towards the Africans. The intention was to induce the Africans to cultivate the soil, create a demand for their products and offer commodities of interest to Africans in return. To get hold of these they were to produce goods selling well. The justice of these thoughts is proved by the development in the palm oil trade, which later greatly influenced the agricultural structure of the Gold Coast — and its economy. Around 1820 small quantities were exported from Ada and Keta; Wulff reports in 1841 that his trade will concentrate on palm oil. In 1842 his first shipment leaves the Gold Coast.

The trade with palm oil

In 1843 (G. J. 541/1844) governor Carstensen (governor 1842-50) pointed out the advantages of palm oil to merchants in Denmark. The same year Carstensen settled a conflict among the Akwapims by confronting them with the threat to stop the palm oil trade (G. J. 538/1844). The reports do not give much information on the extent of this trade, but English merchants stressed it and pressure from this side constituted one of the arguments for the English purchase in 1850. Most of the palm oil was produced by people allied with the Danish Governor's Council, partly on the sand-bar at Keta, partly in the Akwapim mountains, and the trade was effected by Danish merchants (*Reports from the Select Committee*). After 1850 a tremendous development took place. In the sixties the annual export of palm oil was about 450.000 litres. The farmers at Akwapim grew wealthy from this trade which enabled them to start the growing of cocoa about 1890, they had the necessary funds for purchase of land N of the mountains, for financing the forest clearing, planting of cocoa trees and for the costs of maintenance until the cocoa trees yielded something. The Africans made roads and bridges to ensure the transport to the coast and all this was financed via the palm oil (*Polly Hill*). It would be interesting to get an economic-historical description of the palm oil production and its connection with the Danish activities on the Gold Coast.