

The Coming and Spread of the Salvation Army in Ghana: 1922-2012

Evang. Isaac Boapeah
Central University College

Abstract

The Salvation Army is a Christian denomination and a charitable organization which started in 1865 in East London by the Rev. William Booth and his wife Mrs. Catherine Booth who broke away from the Methodist Church. The Army works with a philosophy that “heart to God and hands to man”. It also uses military titles. In Ghana, the Salvation Army has health centres and educational institutions. The Army has its presence in 126 countries as of today. The Army got established in Ghana in 1922 through King Hudson. This work looks at how it has spread throughout Ghana.

Introduction

The Salvation Army is a Christian church denomination and a charitable organization with the philosophy that ‘heart to God and hand to man’. The Salvation Army in Ghana is a member of the Christian council of Ghana.

This work looks at how The Salvation Army (The Army) came to Ghana, then Gold Coast, and has spread to all the ten political regions in Ghana. It briefly looks at the establishment of the Army in London before it came to Ghana. This study also briefly throws some light on the religious setting within which the Army flourished in Ghana. This is considered because one of the factors that makes a crop to do well include the very land on which it is planted.

Ghana has a pluralistic religious environment. Elom Dovlo has noted that it is common to find people of different religious beliefs living together in the same house. The religions in Ghana are mainly Christianity, Islam, African Traditional Religion (ATR) and Oriental Religions (religions that originate from the Eastern world).¹ Constitutionally, Ghana is a secular state; however, the constitution permits freedom of religion.² From the 2012 national housing and population census, 71.2 % of the populations are Christians, 17.6% are Moslems, and ATR has 5.2%, Oriental Religions 0.8% and no religion 5.2%.³

The religious scene in the Gold Coast before the arrival of The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army arrived in the Gold Coast in 1922. This part of the study looks at the religious scene in the Gold Coast before and around 1922. The essence of this is to find out the religious setting within which The Salvation Army came and flourished.

By 1922, the religions one could notice in the Gold Coast were African Traditional Religion, Islam and Christianity. It is possible there were few people who professed other religions like Hinduism and Buddhism, but their presence could not be felt.

ATR is the oldest religion in the Gold Coast. It could be found in all parts of the country. The situation was such that every traditional king or chief of the Gold Coast had a Traditional Priest who helped him with spiritual matters. In the Gold Coast, most traditional areas had festivals they celebrated. The Traditional Priest played very important roles in the celebration of the traditional festival.

Most of the towns in the Gold Coast had taboos to be observed. Such taboos were normally given to the communities through the Traditional Priest. Should there be a break of a taboo which could result in disaster on the community, the Traditional Priest performed sacrifices to atone for the break of the taboo.⁴

ATR was receptive, such that when one was serving a god and did not get the desired results, one could abandon that god and go for another god that would provide the desired request. The receptivity of ATR allows new gods and new religions to be introduced into any community if that god or religion does not pose any threat to it (ATR).⁵ As a result, Islam and Christianity found comfortable grounds in the Gold Coast.

Islam is the first foreign religion that entered the Gold Coast. It entered through the northern parts of the country in the 15th century AD. Moslems who came to the Gold Coast initially did not have in mind coming to spread Islam. They came basically as traders but eventually found their religion established in the Gold

¹ Elom Dovlo, ‘Engagement of Muslims and Christians in Post Independence Ghana’ *Journal of African Christian Thought*, Vol. 7 No. 2, (Dec, 2004) pp. 48-55.

² *Constitution of the Republic of Ghana* (1992), Accra, Assembly Press of Ghana Publishing Corporation, pp. 27-28.

³ www.ghanembassy.org/index.php?page=population

⁴ John J. Smith *African Religions and Philosophy*, England, Clays Ltd, (1990), pp. 58-61.

⁵ Asare K. Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, Nigeria, Kucena Damian (Nig) Ltd, (1978), pp. 27-34.

Coast.¹

In the early stages of Islam in the Gold Coast, it was found in the Northern parts of the country. With time, it spread to the Southern parts of the country.² Islam in the Gold Coast influenced both great and small. Some Islamic religious practices mixed with some practices of African Traditional Religion of the north of the Gold Coast. The fifth Asantehene (Chief of Asante Kingdom), Nana Osei Kwame, was converted to Islam. He was removed from his office because he wanted to establish Koranic Law as the civil code for the Asante Kingdom.³

Moslems who migrated to the South of the Gold Coast stayed in the *Zongos* (the isolated quarters where Moslems who migrated to the south of the Gold Coast). Islamic spiritualists (called *malams* in Ghana) used to prepare charms and amulets. These are mystical objects which are kept to protect the holder against evil spiritual attacks and also it could be used to harm enemies spiritually. The mystical objects attracted some people of the south to Islam; this was because there was the belief that harms and disasters were caused by witches and other evil spirits.⁴ There was therefore the desire to be protected from these evil spiritual powers in some of the natives, south of the Gold Coast.

Christianity is the second major foreign religion that entered the Gold Coast. It entered in 1482 through the Roman Catholic Franciscan Friars who accompanied the Portuguese traders. At that time Christianity did not have significant influence on the natives. Christianity was found mainly in the forts and castles.⁵

In the 19th century, other European missionaries came to the Gold Coast and this time succeeded in planting churches in many parts of the Gold Coast. Christian missions that were established before 1922 included the Anglican Church, Methodist Church, the Basel Mission Church (currently the Presbyterian Church of Ghana) and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.⁶

European Missionaries who came to the Gold Coast from the 19th century onwards were mostly people who had been educated within the scope of the enlightenment, who related all occurrences to scientific causes and effects only.⁷ For example, they thought that diseases could only be caused by germs. This was contrary to the native African worldview that the spirit world could influence the material world either negatively or positively.⁸

The Western mission churches had liturgies that were solemn. They did not seem to have solutions to the spiritual problems that the Gold Coast converts were facing. This gave room for the later establishment of African Independent Churches (AIC). For example, in 1917, one Anim N. Peter who was of a Presbyterian background started a prayer group at Asamankese in the current Eastern Region. By faith and prayers, he got testimonies of healing without medication.⁹ He was encouraged by the testimonies and so started a kind of revival that the church should use only 'Faith Prayers' for healing. This was because most sicknesses were believed to be caused by evil spirits which should be fought spiritually through prayers. This revival spread quickly throughout Eastern Region. The support Anim received pointed out that there was a quest for Christian solution to the problems which the mainline churches had not addressed in the Gold Coast.

It was against this background that when King Hudson (Amoako Atta) traveled and met The Salvation Army he was convinced that the Army was a kind of church that would be good for him and his people in the Gold Coast.¹⁰ He saw The Salvation Army liturgy to be vibrant (very spiritual and effective) as compared to the solemn liturgy of the Methodist Church which he and his family were attending in the Gold Coast. He became more interested in The Salvation Army and his desire became a reality when he was trained a pastor of the Army and was commissioned to come and open branches of the Army in the Gold Coast. We now turn our attention to the establishment of The Salvation Army.

Foundation of The Salvation Army at East London

The Salvation Army was founded by William Booth and his wife Catherine. William Booth was an ordained minister of the Methodist Church in England. After four years of successful probation he was ordained a minister

¹ Cephass N. Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, a Study of the Development of the Charismatic Renewal in the mainline churches in Ghana*, The Netherlands, Boekencentrum Publishing House (2006), p. 31

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, pp. 27-34

⁵ Ogbu U. Kalu (ed), *African Christianity, An African Story*, South Africa, Business Print Centre, (2005) pp. 26-36.

⁶ Kinsley E. Larbi, *Pentecostalism the Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, Accra, Blessed Publication, (2001) p. 16.

⁷ Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, p. 43.

⁸ Opoku, *West Africa Traditional Religion*, pp. 27-34.

⁹ J. Kwabena Asomoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics, Current Developments within the Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*, Leiden, African Christian Press, (2005), pp. 23-26.

¹⁰ James Oduro (n. d.) *The Salvation Army*, p.15.

in 1858.¹ He had already married Catherine Mumford in 1855.

In 1857 he was appointed to minister at Brighthouse. In 1858 he was transferred to the Methodist Church at Gateshead. The chapel at Gateshead could seat one thousand and two hundred (1200) people but only one hundred and thirty (130) people were present at the first meeting. Before Rev. William Booth was posted there church attendance was always low. In a few weeks over two thousand people were crowding to hear Booth preach. He became the talk of the town and the Methodist Church where he ministered was often referred to as the converting shop.²

William Booth preferred traveling from place to place for evangelism but he was rather given a station. Everywhere he went to preach he found more sinners repenting and therefore felt he was called to evangelize and not to pastor a church. He also felt that the converts he was making should be given special care and properly integrated into the Methodist Church but the Methodist Church did not share that opinion with him. Women were not easily permitted to speak in public in those days. But one day whilst Catherine Booth was sick in bed she felt the Holy Spirit inspiring her to preach Christ in public. She told the husband who permitted her to do so. With that Catherine became a public preacher.³ The couple felt they had been called to minister to sinners and bring them to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. William wrote to the president of the Methodist New Connexion Conference asking for permission to make him an evangelist, only to go round and evangelize to bring sinners to the church. He took this decision with his wife Catherine Booth. The request was discussed at length but at the end the conference did not grant the request. The Booths felt the Church was not allowing them to do what God wanted them to do so they resigned quietly from the Methodist Church in 1861.⁴

On resignation they had to give up the accommodation of the Methodist Church yet they had no money to rent an apartment. Mr. and Mrs. Mumford, the parents of Catherine Booth gave them a chance to stay with them in their home. William Booth felt free to organize the kind of revival meetings he was interested in which the Methodist Church did not allow. He was noted for using the Penitent Form (Mercy Seat: a chair or any low table he would put in front of his platform for people who want to talk to God to kneel in front and pray).

The converts at his revival meetings were former drunkards and prostitutes who were not welcomed to join some of the existing churches. Booth started organizing meetings with the new converts for prayers and Bible Studies. This meeting kept increasing in number and so many branches started getting formed. These meetings under became a Christian movement called the East End London Christian Mission and William Booth was known then as the East End London Evangelist. The East End of London was a poverty stricken zone; inhabitants there were very poor in those days, infrastructure was not well developed there. The meeting places included carpenter's shops, a room behind pigeon shop (very bad scent entered the room), room used for playing skittles, theatre halls and club houses and shops (unusual places for church meetings).

After three years, in 1864, there were thirteen stations. When many branches developed outside the poverty stricken East London, the name of the movement changed to The Christian Mission.

The Christian Mission added social services to its programmes and this was to be part of The Salvation Army programmes worldwide to date.

In 1878 The Christian Mission had forty five out stations, each with a full time evangelist. In that year, three topmost executives of the Christian Mission namely George Railton, Bramwell Booth and William Booth met to discuss the annual report. Railton wrote that the Christian Mission was a '*Voluntary Army*'. William Booth agreed that it was an army, however, he did not like the idea that it was voluntary since 'voluntary' meant spare time work so instead of '*Voluntary Army*' William Booth wrote '*Salvation Army*'. Since then the Christian Mission became known as '**The Salvation Army**', fighting for God against Satan for the salvation of souls from all evil deeds. Elijah Cadman, an evangelist of the Christian Mission described William Booth as the General of the Army. The title remained with William Booth as the first General of The Salvation Army. Cadman ranked himself a Captain at his station. The Salvation Army though a Christian domination adopted military strategies and titles as parallels to Christian activities.⁵ To date the international head is ranked the General and in the Salvation Army there is only one General at any given time.

Now the Salvation Army is operating in one hundred and twenty six countries including Ghana as an international religious and charity movement. It has hospitals, clinics, schools and colleges in most countries and in London it has a bank (Reliance Bank Limited).⁶

¹ Taylor M. Gwendoline, *William Booth Prophet and General*, England, Impressions Direct Ltd,(2003) p.17.

² Ibid, p. 23.

³ Gwendoline, *William Booth*, p. 23.

⁴ Clifford W. Kew (Ed) , *Catherine Booth; Her Continuing Relevance*, Britain, Campfield Press, (1990), pp. 16-22.

⁵ Gwendoline, *William Booth*, pp. 41-42.

⁶ Charles King and Philppa Smale, *The Salvation Army 2005 Year Book; A year for Children and Youth*, England, Page Bros (Norwich) Ltd, (2005), p. 49.

The Arrival of The Salvation Army in Ghana

In 1902 a native of the Gold Coast who worked abroad met The Salvation Army and introduced it into the Gold Coast at Cape Coast, Saltpond and surrounding communities in the Central Region. He introduced drums and clapping of hands into Christian services which was an innovation; he only introduced The Army style of worship into the existing Churches. This innovation could not be seen after the First World War.¹

The Salvation Army was officially introduced into the Gold Coast on 23rd August, 1922 by King Hudson known natively as Amoako Atta. Amoako Atta was a native of Agona Duakwa in the Central Region. His formal education was up to middle school (basic education). He was brought up in a as a Methodist. He was a successful farmer and businessman, who owned a vehicle as a young man.²

In 1921, King Hudson read about the activities of the Salvation Army in seventy countries. He was touched, especially by the fact that the Army was fighting strongly against alcoholism. He wrote to the General who was then General Bramwell Booth that he wished to be a Salvationist and to be trained as an officer.³ Hudson wanted a more active church (a church with vigorous worship and praises) than the solemn Christianity he was seeing in the Gold Coast. Before he could get his reply he was on his way to London.

On 24th December, 1920 he got his house and shop (stall) burnt to complete ashes when his driver left a piece of lit cigarette in the garage which caught fire with the petrol in a gallon there. In his desperation he traveled in early 1921 to the United Kingdom to visit his uncle for greener pastures. Whilst in London, on one Sunday at a street corner not far from Oxford circus, he met Salvationists in an open air meeting. He was attracted and followed the Salvationists to Regent Hall (Chapel). He became converted and a soldier (an adult member of The Salvation Army) at the Ranks Corps (Ranks branch).⁴

King Hudson was sure that the practices and principles of The Army would be accepted by natives of the Gold Coast hence it was reported that he made this declaration, "This is the religion for me and for my people." He applied for officership and was accepted. King Hudson started his pastoral training on 19th August, 1921. He was commissioned after successful training by General Bramwell Booth on 15th May 1922 as a Lieutenant.

Hudson was commissioned to go and 'open fire' (start branches of the Army) in his country. He arrived in the Gold Coast on 22nd August 1922 and on 23rd August 1922 he was at Duakwa his home town. He went to the chief of the town and told him that he had brought a church which would be good for the natives of Duakwa. A big durbar was held in his honour and Amoako Atta preached to the gathering. It was a one man open-air show. He played drums, sang songs, blew the trumpet intermittently, his Army flag was fixed at his side. Some thought that he was out of his senses due to what they saw: One man singing, beating the drums, marching, blowing the trumpet, and waving the Army flag all intermittently. His popular song was "whoever wants should come."

The durbar ended with two opinions; some thought he was out of his mind whilst others accepted the message of The Salvation Army. Early converts that Hudson made were his immediate relatives; his mother and Sisters, Mr. J. K. Asiedu and Micah Gyan; the latter became an officer. Within a week he made 50 converts.

A corps (a branch) was established at Agona Duakwa as the first Corps in Ghana. Salvationists in Ghana called it the Mother Corps. The next Corps was established at Agona Nkum (often referred to as Father Corps). Other early Corps in the Central Region were at Agona Swedru, Odobeng, and some nearby villages.

The Army quickly moved, through the evangelism of King Hudson, to other regions of the country. After a few branches had been established in the Central Region, the spread of the Army in that region became very slow. Hudson and his people shifted attention to other regions. Perhaps their focus was on nationwide spread than to remain in one region. For example the corps at Cape Coast, the capital of the region as at 2012 was only sixteen years old with a small congregation. The Winneba branch has no proper standing, since it is the University of Education students who when in school keep the number a bit high; when they are on vacation the remaining congregation is very often not more than fifty.⁵ The implication is that in the course of time the Winneba branch did not get effective people to maintain it. Also the church did not devise effective evangelistic strategies and policies to increase its membership. Other branches in the Central Region include Kuntense, Nyarkrom, Odoben, Osedzi, Bobikuma, Apam, Senya Breku, Sweduro, Winneba, etc.

¹ James Oduro (n.d) *The Salvation Army*, p. 23.

² James Oduro (n.d), *The Salvation Army*, p.23.

³ Cyril Barnes (n .d), *Ghana Salvation Army*, (unpublished), p. 1.

⁴ James Oduro (n. d), *The Salvation Army*, pp. 13-25.

⁵ James Oduro (n .d), *The Salvation Army*, p . 25.

Source: Mrs. Stella Nyumuah who was attending school at the University of Education Winneba in 2012, she was interviewed several times in June, 2012 at Koforidua.

Spread to Greater Accra Region

In December 1922, Ensign and Mrs. Charles V. Roberts were appointed as the first British and European missionaries of The Salvation Army to the Gold Coast. They were until that appointment working in The Salvation Army in Nigeria. (The Army got to Nigeria two years before it got to the Gold Coast). They settled in Accra and opened a branch at James Town. The James Town Corps was later moved to Tudu possibly due to accommodation problem. From Tudu the corps was moved to Mamprobi and eventually settled there to date. Ideally when the Army was moving to Tudu they could still have maintained the James Town branch. Moving from Tudu to Mamprobi too they could still have maintained a branch at Tudu. The Army by then had not conceived the idea of getting more than one branch in a town.

Officially it said that a Denmark trading company in the country saw that Tudu would be a good trading centre and the Army also wanted a larger and more conducive place for worship hence the Church agreed to move to Mamprobi, which was then a quiet area. The Salvation Army was the first institution to be established in Mamprobi.¹

The Mamprobi Corps remained the only corps of the Army in the whole of Accra for a long time. This was because some elders of the Mamprobi Corps and the national leadership opposed the establishment of other branches within Accra with the thought that if some of the members break away from the Mamprobi Corps to form a new Corps the Mamprobi Corps would collapse. However with the expansion of the Accra Metropolis more of the members of the Mamprobi corps moved to stay at other suburbs. Due to such change of environment accompanied by cost of transportation to church programmes, some salvationists joined other churches. This could be one of the reasons for which in some years the national membership reduced. Those who did not want to join other churches forced to open branches of The Army nearby or at suburbs where they lived. Eventually branches of The Army got established at Accra New Town, Lapaz, Dakuman, Bubuashie, Ashaiman, Osu, Tema Communities two and eleven, Nungua and Madina. In the early 1990s the Accra New Town Corps which used to fellowship in a classroom acquired a land and put a chapel at Kotobabi and so they moved to Kotobabi.

The Madina Corps was established in 1994. It started with the initiative of one Mrs. Elizabeth Ntem and Major Paul Afful. Mrs. Ntem was one of the executives of the Mamprobi Corps. On retirement from the Bank of Ghana, she moved to stay in the house she had put up at Madina. She felt the need to get a branch of the Army at Madina. This idea was supported by Major Paul Afful who was in charge of the Mamprobi Corps. The Madina Corps started with about five people at the house of Mrs. Ntem. With the help of Major Paul Afful, a classroom was acquired for meetings at the Madina Number One JSS School. As at 2012 the Madina Corps has resident pastor and a chapel almost completed.²

Some of the founding members of the Madina Corps in addition to Mrs. Ntem were Mr. Kokroko, (First Corps Sergeant Major - CSM), Mr. and Mrs. Dater, Miss Sylvia Debrah, Miss Felicia Donkor and Mr. Anane Maxwell. In 2002 Mr. Kwadwo Boateng (popularly known as Kwaboat) who was a member of The Army at Ash town, Kumasi, came with his family to stay in Accra at Ashale Botwe New Town; because the Army had no branch there, he decided to fellowship with the Madina branch. He formed The Precious Blood Family (a singing group) which admitted non-Salvationists. The songs and choreography of this group kept reviving the Madina Corps and attracted the youth to remain in the corps. This group was sometimes featured on a television station called TV3. Other branches in Greater Accra region are: Osu, Ashiaman, Bubuashie, Darkuman, Kotobabi, Kwashieman, Nungua, etc.

Spread to the Eastern Region

In 1924, Captains Wickings and Daily, with the assistance of Ensign King Hudson, opened branches at Aburi and Nsawam. Within the 1920s, King Hudson had succeeded in planting branches at other towns of the Eastern region like Begoro, Asiakwa and Nkawkaw.³

In 1927, The Salvation Army spread to the Krobo land in the Eastern Region. The late Major Mensah started the Army work at Somanya. The Somanya Corps was stabilized and Mr. J T Nyarko was appointed an envoy to it in 1929 to oversee it. Nyarko was later trained to be a full-time pastor and he rose to the rank of a Brigadier before retirement. Within the Krobo land the Army got branches in the following towns: Huhunya, Obawale, Aketebour, Samlesi, Klo-Agogo, Bisa and Oterkpolu.

The work in the Krobo land had a language problem. There was the absence of Krobo speaking

¹ Source: Major Samuel Amponsah (chartered Accountant), the Secretary for Administration interviewed in his house in December, 2006.

Also Major George Aidoo, a retired pastor of The Salvation Army, related much of this information on this page in an interview with him at his residence at Koforidua in December, 2006.

² Source: Mrs. Elizabeth Ntem who was a secretary for the Mamprobi Corps and one of the founding members of The Madina Corps. She was interviewed in August, 2006 at her residence at Madina.

³ James Oduro (n. d) *The Salvation Army*, p. 32.

officers and literate members to translate sermons and other ministrations. This problem eventually led to the collapse of some of the branches and those that did not collapse became dormant. In 1943, the late Major Apotsi Nartey was appointed a teacher and an envoy at Samlesi. His appointment brought some revival to the Corps and its surrounding branches. From the 1990s to date, The Salvation Army was still active in some Krobo towns like Somanya, , Samlesi, and Aketebour.¹

In the 1920s, The Army got branches at Koforidua Asokore and Akuapim Larteh (The Chapel of the Army at Larteh Akuapim is not too far from the Larteh 'Akonnedi' Shrine). In 1979, Major Benjamin Ofori who was the commanding officer of the Asokore Corps supported the idea that the Army should get other branches within the Koforidua municipality. That year the Koforidua Corps was started in a free accommodation at the Legion Hall. Some of the founding members were Mr. Agyena Wiredu and Maame Kate Sarpomaa. The meeting place was later moved to a room at the Cocoa Marketing Buying Centre near the railway crossing along the Koforidua Bunso road. They later had to go to one of the classrooms of the Government Secretariat School at Koforidua Ogua.

With challenges for place of worship, one member Ante Ema Ankoma offered her shop to be used as place of worship from 1994-2005 when they got a chapel.

In 2004 the Koforidua Corps was blessed when a donation received by the Ghana Territory from The Salvation Army USA West Territory through the Ghana Territorial Headquarters (THQ) was granted to the Koforidua Corps. The THQ used the donation and put up a chapel that can seat about two hundred and fifty people on the plot of land the Koforidua Corps had already bought. That chapel was commissioned on the 20th March, 2005 by the then Territorial Commander (TC) and Territorial President of Women Ministries (TPWM) Col. Graeme and Anne Harding. In attendance at the commissioning was Nana Agyei Boateng the Municipal Chief Executive of the New Juabeng Municipality.

The Asiakwa Corps of The Salvation Army in the Eastern Region was believed to have started around 1922-1924. It was one of the Corps established by Adjutant King Hudson. The then Chief of Asiakwa, Nana Kwasi Kwadjo, gave The Army a vast portion of land on which are the current Chapel, Mission House, Primary and Junior Secondary Schools of The Salvation Army.²

1922 is said to be the year when The Salvation Army got to Begoro as the second Christian denomination there; the first Church at Begoro was the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. The Begoro Corps was one of the branches established by Ensign King Hudson.

At Begoro, The Army was embraced by the royals of the town. The early corps elders were chiefs and sub chiefs who had not given up their traditional practices outright. The then Chief, Nana Kwatum, gave The Salvation Army a large portion of building plot (about twenty hectares) free of charge on which are the current chapel, schools (Primary A & B, JSS A & B), mission house, clinic and the rehabilitation centre. He also gave a farming land in the forest to be cultivated to finance the Corps. As at 2012, some of the building plots had been encroached upon due to lack of proper documentation on the land.

In the 1960s and the 1970s, Begoro was a district head office of The Salvation Army where the District Officer (DO) stayed. During the tenure of office as the DO, Capt. J.E Amoah (who later became Colonel and a TC) decided to move the Army district office to Koforidua since Koforidua was the Political administrative capital for Eastern Region and most of the Churches (other Christian denominations) were having their district offices at Koforidua. This idea was highly objected to by the Begoro Corps but the THQ supported it so in the late 1970s the Begoro district office was moved to Koforidua to a house that the THQ had put up at Koforidua Old Estate. The name of the district was therefore changed from Begoro District to East Akim District.³

The Spread to Nkurakan

Nkurakan is a developing town of about thirty inhabitants. It is about five kilometers from Koforidua, the Eastern Regional capital. It is one of the Krobo tribe dominated towns. Dwellers there are mostly crop farmers and traders of foodstuffs.

Known records of attempts of The Salvation Army Church to establish its presence there was in 2010. In that year a team of The Salvation Army Students and Associates (SASAF), about forty students from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, University of Ghana, Legon, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast and other tertiary and senior high schools in southern Ghana in their 2010 missions programme joined The Salvation Army Church, Koforidua Old Slaughter House branch for a three - day crusade

¹ Source: Mr. Joshua Nyumuah a native of Somanya and resident at Nkurakan near Koforidua, interviewed in June, 2010 at Koforidua.

² Source: Madam Beatrice Afumaa, who had been a member of the Asiakwa Corps since 1974 and Major (retired) Comfort Appiah of the Army, a native of Asiakwa. Both were interviewed on 2nd January, 2007 at Asiakwa.

³ Also confirmed by Mr. George Antwi, a former head teacher at Begoro Salvation Basic Schools and Major (retired) D. Abankwa, a native of Begoro; both were interviewed at Begoro on December 26, 2006.

at Nkurakan. The students were there for one week but the crusade was done for three days. During the day these energetic students went on house to house evangelism and also broadcasted the gospel at dawn.

The focus of SASAF Mission 2010 was to open a branch of The Salvation Army at Nkurakan.¹ At the end of the one week outreach there some new converts were won to begin an outpost (a new branch in The Salvation Army terms). The outpost was to be taken care of by Mr. Joshua Nyumuah and Mrs. Stella Nyumuah. The couple was both members of The Salvation Army Church, Old Slaughter House branch but resident at Nkurakan.

The Nkurakan outpost started church services in the hall of Mr. Nyumuah. The couple started building an apartment attached to their house as a temporal chapel. This outpost could in no time collapsed. The reasons were that about two months of its establishment Mr. Nyumuah travelled to Denmark, Europe, for occupational assignment by KROBDAN, non-governmental organization that he was working with. At the same time, his wife who could have held the fort in his absence also travelled to the University of Education Winneba to pursue her masters education in Guidance and counselling. In their absence there was no substantive person to man the Nkurakan outpost hence its collapse.

In 2012 another team of The Salvation Army trainee pastors from The Salvation Army Officers (pastors) Training College at Tema Community 11 led by their training principal, Lt Col. Samuel Baah as part of their field training went to Nkurakan to reinforce the outpost there. This team was also supported by the Koforidua Old Slaughter House branch of the Salvation Army. They held another three-day crusade at Nkurakan in the month of April. At the end of their three days there the Nkurakan outpost was revived and the membership there rose to forty one persons.

By 2012, KROBDAN, an NGO that Mr. Nyumuah worked with had built structures and offices for the company at Nkurakan. With the help of Mr. Nyumuah, the Nkurakan outpost was given a big hall at premise of KROBDAN for Sunday church services, Bible Studies and prayer meetings.

In order that the Nkurakan branch does not collapse, Mr. and Mrs. Nyumuah with their three children and three relatives transferred their membership from the Old Slaughter House branch to join the Nkurakan outpost. There is the hope that the Nkurakan branch would not collapse again.²

In the 1990s when Major Emmanuel Duodu was the District Officer of the Nkwakw District, he encouraged an effort to get the Army spread to the Afram Plains. A Corps was firmly established at Donkokrom and Capt. Amankwa was sent there to pioneer the work at Donkokrom and the surrounding villages.

Other areas where the Army is doing well in the Eastern Region include Akim Oda and the surrounding areas which form the Akim Central District and Asamankese and the surrounding areas which form the West Akim District of the Salvation Army. The Salvation Army has spread in the Eastern Region more than in any other region in Ghana.

Spread to Ashanti Region

When Major Thompson was in charge of the Gold Coast Division, he sent Brigadier Usher, then a Captain to open a branch in the Ashanti Region. The first town in the Ashanti Region was at Fomena on 29th January, 1924. Later that same year Captain Gyan was sent to assist Captain Usher. In April 1925, the two went to Kumasi to 'open fire' there. The planting of the Corps at Kumasi was one of the few planned expansions by the national head office. In Kumasi, the first Corps was established at Ash town. On May 9, 1927 the first Kumasi was commissioned by Adjutant Cromwell who was assisted by Capt. Gyan. As at 2012 in Kumasi the Army had branches at Old Tafo, Suame and Kwadaso.³

In the Ashanti Region, The Salvation Army has its presence in towns including Morso, Dadease, Bipoa, Wiamaase, Tetrem, Nyamfa, Dampong, Asuafo, Obuasi, Nkwanta, Jamasi and Kofiase. The Army has two administrative divisions in the Ashanti Region namely Ashanti Central Division with Divisional Headquarters (DHQ) at Kumasi and the Ashanti North Division with DHQ at Ashanti Mampong.

Spread to Brong Ahafo Region (BA)

Available information indicates that some Salvationists in Ashanti Region migrated to work in Brong Ahafo Region and eventually established a branch at Wamfie. The Wamfie Corps was under the Ashanti Division until other branches were established in Brong Ahafo (BA) region before the BA district was formed in 1994. Towns in BA where the Army has branches include Sunyani, Bechem, Aboabo, Brekum, Wenchi, Tachieman, Jema,

¹ Source: Mr. Paul Boakye, a member of The Salvation Army Students and Associates, Legon chapter(an Mphil Political Science student) who was part of the team that went Nkurakan in 2010.

² Source: Mr. Kingsley Agyina, the Secretary of The Salvation Army Church, Old Slaughter House branch who was part of the crusade in both 2010 and 2012.

³James Oduro (n. d) *The Salvation Army*, p. 35.

etc. There are other villages also where the Army has its presence.¹

Spread to the Volta Region

The spread of The Salvation Army to the Volta Region was by the initiative of a chief of the region at Bowire. In 1931, the chief of Bowire sent a petition to Staff Captain Ashe, the Accra District Officer, to come and open a branch in his town.

The same chief sent a second time to Staff Capt. Ashe, this time with \$2.00 to pay for the first transport fare of the Army Officer to visit the king and to see how best to start the Army work there. One Captain Mensah was sent to go with the chief's messenger for a kind of feasibility study of the area and later appointed to start the work there. The chief gave a vast portion of land for a chapel, mission house, school and farming to generate income to run the church.

The very year the Army was established at Bowire, there came a strong storm which destroyed some houses including the shrine of the most powerful god in the town. This gave the natives hope in the potency of the gospel the Army had brought.

In 1935, a corps was established at Woe. It started when Messrs. Dotsey Baglo and Gbatami Dewo, and Madams Alexandria and Comfort Nyeefiawoo Dateamekpor, all from the Volta region became converted into the Army in Nigeria. On their return home they established a branch at their hometown and it is there up to date.

Other towns in the Volta region where the Army has its presence include Adaklu-Abuadi, Kpeve-Tormu, Kpogadzi and Ho. The district office of the Army was at Adaklu-Abuadi from 1973 until the tenure of office of Major George and Dorcas Aidoo as D Os who arranged and transferred the DHQ to Ho, the political regional capital. Some D Os who had worked in the Volta district include Captain D. Amehia (1973-1976), Capt. E Appiah (1976-1978) Capt. E. Duodu (1987-1991) Capt. E. Amofa (1991-1993), Capt. George Aidoo (1993-1996) and Capt. Mudiesco Kudedzi.²

Spread to Northern Ghana

The Northern District of The Salvation Army as at 2006 comprised corps and societies in the Northern Region, Upper East and Upper West Regions. Before 1988 Col. Moses Obiri had attempted to spread the Army to the Northern parts of Ghana but he was not successful.

In 1988 the THQ appointed Major Daniel Abankwa as an evangelist to the north. He formed an evangelism team from some members of Ashanti Division to help him to plant the church there. After the initial crusades the evangelism team came back to Kumasi and Major Daniel Abankwa and family (wife and children) remained at Tamale. His wife and children: Gideon Abankwa, Timothy Abankwa and John Abankwa (now a professor in USA), constituted the first members of the Tamale corps. The sons could play the drums and trumpets so they formed the band for open air programmes which attracted many souls to Jesus Christ.

Language was a problem. A Presbyterian who was a native of Tamale volunteered to be translating the sermons of Major Daniel Abankwa. His service was a great breakthrough for the Army. He later became a Salvationist. Evangelist Major Abankwa and his pioneering team were able to spread the Army from Tamale to Torno, Kumbugu, Sandema, Bolgatanga, Tsutsuga and Yendi. In 1990 Capt. Mudiesco Kudedzi was sent to the Bolgatanga Corps to oversee it and its surrounding towns and villages whilst Major Abankwa was at Tamale.

From 1990-1994 The Army work in the Northern Ghana was called Northern Area. From 1995 it became the Northern District, meaning it had increased in membership and had also spread to many areas. Notable pastors of the Army that worked in the North in addition to the aforementioned two include Capt. S. Oklah, Capt. James Oduro, Major Stephen Ghansah and Capt. and Mrs. Yeboah.

Spread to the Western Region

The Salvation Army got to the Western region rather late. By the early 1990s the Western district was established with the district head office at Secondi. Towns and villages where the Army has branches in the Western region include: Adesu Nkyiasi, Agona Nkwanta, Akyemkrom, Gyaenkonatabuo, Agave, Enchi, Manso Amenfi, Sambreboi, Dixcove, Takoradi, Tarkwa, Bogoso and Bonsa.

CONCLUSION

The Salvation Army was formed in 1865 in London. It came to Ghana in 1922 through King Hudson (Amoako Atta). It came to meet Christianity and other religions already established in the country and had continued to

¹ James Oduro (n. d) *The Salvation Army*, p. 54.

² James Oduro (n. d) *The Salvation Army*, pp. 54-56.

Also Major George Aidoo (rtd) was interviewed in May, 2005 at Koforidua. He was once a District Officer of the Volta Region.

exist alongside other Church denominations. At the early stages of the Army (in the 1920s), it seemed there was the urge to spread to many parts of the country. Some of the branches that were opened existed for a few years and collapsed. Some of the reasons for the collapse could be that some of the members did not get solutions to problems they were having and also there was a lack of personnel to man the branches.

From the 1950s the spread started getting slow and not very serious effort was made to 'open fire' that is establish new branches. However by few planned and many unplanned ways the Army has spread to all the ten regions in Ghana.

The Salvation Army is not as wide spread in Ghana as compared to many Christian denominations in Ghana. In Ghana one may have to travel across about ten to twenty towns and villages before one comes to meet a branch of the Army. Meanwhile in these entire towns one finds branches of some other Christian denominations like the Presbyterian Church, the Catholic Church, the Pentecost Church, the Methodist Church, etc.

An enquiry into why the Army does not have many branches in Ghana reveals a number of possible causes such as:

1. No strategic planning toward spreading. Most of the existing branches do not have any plan to give birth to other branches. For a church to grow there must be the intention for growth.¹
2. There is also lack of human resources to man the spread of many branches of The Salvation Army in Ghana. This can be traced to the Army's policy on the full time pastoral work. In the Salvation Army, there is no tent ministry as of 2012. The negative impact of the absence of tent ministry in The Salvation Army in Ghana is treated in another paper. This paper however has not given detailed records on the establishment of many branches due to lack of adequate available.
3. The already established branches, districts or divisions do not budget for planting of new branches.
4. When a new branch emerges, the support: human resources and financial support to help its growth is lacking.

Bibliography

- Asare K. Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, Nigeria, Kucena Damian (Nig) Ltd, (1978), pp. 27-34.
- Cephas N. Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism, a Study of the Development of the Charismatic Renewal in the mainline churches in Ghana*, The Netherlands, Boekencentrum Publishing House (2006), p. 31
- Charles King and Philppa Smale, *The Salvation Army 2005 Year Book; A year for Children and Youth*, England, Page Bros (Norwich) Ltd, (2005), p. 49.
- Clifford W. Kew (Ed) , *Catherine Booth; Her Continuing Relevance*, Britain, Campfield Press, (1990), pp. 16-22
- Constitution of the Republic of Ghana* (1992), Accra, Assembly Press of Ghana Publishing Corporation, pp. 27-28.
- Dovlo Elom, 'Engagement of Muslims and Christians in Post Independence Ghana' *Journal of African Christian Thought*, Vol. 7 No. 2, (Dec, 2004) pp. 48-55.
- J. Kwabena Asomoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics, Current Developments within the Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*, Leiden, African Christian Press, (2005), pp. 23-26
- John J. Smith *African Religions and Philosophy*, England, Clays Ltd, (1990), pp. 58-61.
- Kinsley E. Larbi, *Pentecostalism the Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, Accra, Blessed Publication,(2001) p. 16.
- Ogbu U. Kalu (ed), *African Christianity, An African Story*, South Africa, Business Print Centre, (2005) pp. 26-36.
- Taylor M. Gwendoline, *William Booth Prophet and General*, England, Impressions Direct Ltd,(2003) p.17.
- <http://thornrainer.com/2014/06/seven-factors-hindering-evangelism-churches/> (March, 2016)
- www.ghanembassy.org/index.php?page=population

¹ <http://thornrainer.com/2014/06/seven-factors-hindering-evangelism-churches/> (March, 2016)