

2022

Entry Nr. 425 Otsétse

Aaron Spencer Fogleman
Northern Illinois University, aaronfogleman@niu.edu

Robert Hanserd

Follow this and additional works at: <https://huskiecommons.lib.niu.edu/history-500africanvoices>



Part of the [Africana Studies Commons](#), [African History Commons](#), [African Languages and Societies Commons](#), [American Studies Commons](#), [Caribbean Languages and Societies Commons](#), [Digital Humanities Commons](#), [English Language and Literature Commons](#), [Latin American History Commons](#), [Missions and World Christianity Commons](#), [Other French and Francophone Language and Literature Commons](#), [Other German Language and Literature Commons](#), [Other Spanish and Portuguese Language and Literature Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Entry Nr. 425 Otsétse, Huskie Commons, Northern Illinois University, Fogleman, Aaron Spencer and Hanserd, Robert, *500 African Voices*, <https://huskiecommons.lib.niu.edu/history-500africanvoices/248>

This Oral History is brought to you for free and open access by the Other Faculty Publications at Huskie Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in 500 African Voices by an authorized administrator of Huskie Commons. For more information, please contact jschumacher@niu.edu.

Aaron Spencer Fogleman and Robert Hanserd (eds.), *Five Hundred African Voices: A Catalog of Published Accounts by Africans Enslaved in the Transatlantic Slave Trade, 1586-1936* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 2022).

<i>Catalog number:</i>	425
<i>Name(s) of African providing account:</i>	Otsétse = John Davis
<i>Date account recorded:</i>	1854
<i>Date account first published:</i>	1854
<i>Date of entry creation:</i>	27 September 2021

Source: Account printed on p. 19 of S. W. Koelle, *Polyglotta Africana*. London: Church Missionary House, Salisbury Square, Fleet Street, 1854.

Comments:

Koelle's remarks (p. 19) –

“Okam is situated west of “Atam, as the ‘Okams call Ekamtulufu and some other neighbouring countries; east of ‘Alike and ‘Odsenye; also near ‘Idasanawur, Usobo, Iteraga, ‘Ola, and Ogbodon.”

Text of Account:

p. 19:

“Okam.*-- From Otsetse, or John Davis, of Freetown, born in Ofesem, where he lived till about his twenty-second year, when he was kidnapped, and at the end of one year sold to the Portuguese. He has been in Sierra Leone thirty years, with a few countrymen remaining.”

* Referring to Otsetse's spoken language.

(See facsimiles below.)

6. 'Okām.—From Otsétse, or John Davis, of Freetown, born in Ofésēm, where he lived till about his twenty-second year, when he was kidnapped, and at the end of one year sold to the Portuguese. He has been in Sierra Leone thirty years, with a few countrymen remaining.

Remarks.—'Okām is situated west of 'Atām, as the 'Okāms call Ekāmtulūfu and some other neighbouring countries; east of 'Alíke and 'Odšénye; also near 'Idşánāwūr, Usóbo, 'Iterága, 'Ola, and Ogbódon.

am," i. e. cannibals.—From Albárka, of Freetown, born in the town of Gáraka, whence he was sent, in about his twelfth year, to Bóúsi, as part of the annual tribute in slaves. He lived in Bóúsi till about his twenty-eighth year, and as there are a great many Dsáráwas in Bóúsi, and he occasionally returned to his native country, he always retained a perfect command of his mother-tongue. He has been in Sierra Leone three years, and is the only Nyamnyám.

Remarks.—Gáraka, the Dsáráwa capital, is three days' journey from Bóúsi, where the Póló "Yákúba" resides, to whom Dsáráwa is tributary. Dsáráwa is west of Babárbáre, i. e. Bórnu, and east of Tsóutson.

3. Kóro.—From Gbála, or Sam John, of Allenstown, born in the village of 'Etera, on the small river Bóga, where he was taken in war by the Lápías in about his nineteenth year, and sold to 'Abébére, i. e. Hausa, for a horse. He was one year on his journey to the sea, and has been four years in Sierra Leone, with three countrymen. He has a little impediment in his speech, so that I am doubtful whether a certain sound is the English "th," or "z," or "s."

Remarks.—Kóro is west of Potáki and Lápía, south-east of Adáma, south of Ngóudádsé, north of Ngóá Kóturkó. Also four days' journey from Bása, two days from Mába, four days from Gbáli, and one week from Núpe; from 'Abébére, i. e. Hausa, one week, and, e. g., from Káno two weeks, and three weeks from Mándara.

4. Hám, or Dsáhám, or Fúhám, called "Dsába" by the Páras, i. e. Hausas.—From Dséthám, or George Harding, of Freetown, born in the town of Rídsál, where he was taken in war by the Páras seven years ago. He is now about thirty years of age, and has been in Sierra Leone three and a-half years, with three countrymen.

Remarks.—Rídsál is nearly one day's journey from a long range of mountains (dsódsóli, i. e. mountain; tsét, i. e. hill). Hám is situated east of Kóro; also one day's journey from Fákoi', two days from Gbáli, four days from Pára, i. e. Hausa, two days from Fai, and one day from Fúngó. The Háms call the Phúla "Fáto," and are stiled by them "Káfirí."

5. Akurákura.—From 'Otu, or John Macaulay, of Waterloo, born in 'Atám-Nómúnu, whence he was sold in about his fifteenth year to the Akurákura town "Agurágor," where he grew up, married, and had a child about eight years of age when he was sold to the Spaniards. He has been in Sierra Leone twenty years, with about six individuals, who, like himself, were brought to Akurákura as slaves, and thus learnt the language.

Remarks.—Agurágor is situated on the river Ojónro, i. e. Kálábá. Akurákura is west of 'Abiri, where a different language is spoken; east of 'Afia, where they speak 'Ibó.

6. 'Okám.—From Otséte, or John Davis, of Freetown, born in Ofésém, where he lived till about his twenty-second year, when he was kidnapped, and at the end of one year sold to the Portuguese. He has been in Sierra Leone thirty years, with a few countrymen remaining.

Remarks.—'Okám is situated west of 'Atám, as the 'Okáms call Ekámtulúfa and some other neighbouring countries; east of 'Alíke and 'Odshénye; also near 'Idshánáwur, Usóbo, 'Iterága, Ola, and Ogbádon.

7. Yásúa.—From Otén, or Sam Pratt, of Freetown, born in Ndúro, where he lived till about his twenty-second year, when he was sold by the chief, and brought to the sea by way of Ashante. He has now been ten years from his home, and four in Sierra Leone, where four more individuals understand this language.

Remarks.—Ndúro is seven days' journey from Rába. Yásúa is east of Góáli, south-west of 'Oza, i. e. Hausa; also near Kámáli and Núpe.

8. N'kí.—From 'Obí, or William Renner, of Freetown, born in the town of Búárgbá, two miles from Káko, the capital, where he was seized in his nineteenth year for a debt of his father's, and sold. After a two years' stay in Kálábá, he was brought to Sierra Leone, where he was at once enlisted as a soldier, which he has been now nearly twenty years. He has one countryman in Sierra Leone, and two on the Island of Ascension.

Remarks.—N'kí is east of Ekámtulúfa, west of Bódse, where the same language is spoken, also west of Bóbi, which has a different language; north of Mámhá; south of Bénére, where also N'kí is spoken.

9. Kámáli.—From Kéáuta, in Waterloo, born in the town of Magóúata. He was kidnapped by the Phúla when about twenty-six years of age, and is now about sixty. —Also from Láse, of Charlotte, born in Magóúata, was about thirty years of age when kidnapped, and is now about sixty-five. There are at present about fifteen Kámális in Sierra Leone.

Remarks.—Magóúata is two days' journey from Rába on the Koára. Kámáli is west of Gbárki, east of Tágbá; also near Góáli, Kuráífa, Bárába, and Bása.

10. Alége.—From 'Obé, or Sally Thomas, of Wellington, born in the village of Mógbe, nearly a day's journey from Alége, the Alége capital, where she was sold by relatives in about her fifteenth year. After a stay at Obáne of one and a-half years, she was brought to Sierra Leone, where she has now been thirteen years, with only one countryman, who has forgotten part of his language, but was present and assisted her when she gave me the specimens.

Remarks.—Alége is four days' journey from Obáne; west of Mánga, with a different language; east of Alárukúe, also with a different language.

11. Pénin.—From Déwo, or John Smith, of Regent, born in the town of Ndúkóre, where he also married and lived for two years. He has been in Sierra Leone about thirty years, with six countrymen.

Remarks.—Pénin is east of Pándem, west of Dóbátúrom; also near Bása, Mbáir, and Pásór. In Pénin most of the men are naked, but the women cover themselves with leaves before and behind.

12. Búte.—From Göl, or Thomas Klein, born in the town of Kúé, where he was taken in war by the Phúla, who are there called Tebése, in about his nineteenth year. They soon sold him to the Hausas, who brought him to Yóriba and sold him to the Portuguese. He has been in Sierra Leone three years, with only one boy and one girl of the Búte country.

Remarks.—Búte is west of Képare, east of Mbér, south of Mfím, and within three weeks' journey from the Phúla country Adáma.

13. Múrúndo or Búrúndo.—From Bira, or George Bailey, of Freetown, born in the town of 'Okúma, one day's journey from the sea, where he lived till his nineteenth year, when he was kidnapped and sold. He has been four years on the Island of Ascension, and eighteen years in Sierra Leone, with about a dozen of his country-people, his wife being one of them.

Remarks.—Búrúndo borders on the sea, and is situate west of Mbúrúke, east of 'Ire, i. e. Kálábá, and of Usá-le.

14. Undáza.—From Yápánda, or Martha Pratt, of Lomley, born in the town of Ppeme, in the Ubiéure District, whence she was removed when a child to the very lengthened town of Nsógadiwapei, where she was taken in war, when her first child was just able to walk. She was about one year on her journey to, and now about ten in, Sierra Leone, where she is the only individual of Undáza.

Remarks.—Undáza is west of 'Undámá. It is also four days' journey from Búteke, where cannibals reside, one day from Bándshána, one day from 'Urgómu, and Bákúta is reached by walking ten days' journey in the direction towards the sea.

This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).