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OF W. HUYDECOPER

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(This translation, by Professor G. W. Irwin, is provisional,
and its use is therefore restricted. A definitive
translation, however, will follow.)



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In our 'village of 8 dwellings', 28th April 1816.

This morning at 6 o'clock I took a hasty leave of the General and the others at Elmina, and set out with my men along the beach. We turned into the bush behind Christena's plantation, and made towards Abra Camp. After travelling for some distance we arrived at Foeampong. This village we found still inhabited, and we went through it without disturbing anyone. Next we arrived at Caboecer Esservie's place, which was unoccupied. His is a fine village, and well built.

The track from Elmina thus far could be made into a good one quite easily. A few large trees would have to be cleared away, but this could be done with little trouble. The name of this place is [illegible] Annoe. Most of its inhabitants have fled to Elmina or to the Fantés. I rested here for a while, and gave my men a drink from the chest.¹

We set out again soon, however, for we wanted to spend the night at a more suitable spot. For this reason we passed straight through Simboe without stopping. We noticed that it had been plundered by the Ashantis, but not burnt. From Simboe to Afontoe the track was very bad for travelling in a hammock, being narrow and inconvenient. Their difficulties took some of the heart out of my bearers, for a short time ago this track was suitable for horses. Along the whole way we saw nothing remarkable, though the song of the birds in the trees gave me special pleasure.

At Afontoe we took some food and had a lengthy pull at the gin bottle. With this to encourage us, we set out again at once with renewed good spirits, and so continued until we arrived at this 'village of 8 dwellings'. It also is empty, though undamaged. The Ashantis made a point of not burning it because they use it as a resting place.

On the way we met several Ashantis who had been sent by the General of the army to Elmina to tell the three officers² there to return to camp immediately because their leave of absence had expired long since. When the forward scouts³ of this Ashanti party learnt from us that we were bound for Kumasi, they were so pleased that they immediately shouted to their companions that they should give way to us. This the remaining Ashantis, with every appearance of pleasure, did, shouting, "Out of the way! Out of the way! Here comes the son of the Company that rules the Dutch fort!" and made so much noise that I could hear them from my position at the rear of the column. As we went past, each man bowed deeply, and with great respect. I gathered from one of them that General Appiah is very angry with his envoys. He has sent several messages to them, but has received no reply. They have been at Elmina for a long time, and he has bound himself with several powerful oaths to carry them off by force as soon as he arrives at Elmina.

We passed through two Fante villages, but do not know their names.

The envoys at Elmina have sent me a message, suggesting that I await them at Simboe. I have replied, however, that I intend to go as far as my people can carry me, and will wait for the envoys there. (I did in fact wait for them in our 'village of 8 dwellings' until darkness arrived, but they did not come.)

I have retained the services of two Ashantis as guides to show me the way, and have had to pay them a bottle of drink, a handful of cardoes tobacco and a pipe. [Short indecipherable passage follows.]

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1. Kelder, lit. 'cellar'.
 2. Vaandrigen, lit. 'ensigns, cornets, sub-lieutenants'.
 3. Voorlopers, lit. 'precursors, forerunners, heralds'.

In our 'village of 8 dwellings', 29th April 1816.

This morning I was up early and took a walk in the bush to see whether the soil was good or not. It seemed to me that something could be made of it. I discovered several cabbage-like plants,⁴ which tasted excellent.

I waited for the envoys from Elmina until 9 o'clock, but learnt from passers-by that they are not expected to leave there until Wednesday. I therefore ordered my men to prepare immediately, and we began the journey to Abra.

At Abra Bettingua, 29th April 1816.

We left our village at about half past nine o'clock, and having passed through some 15 or 16 hamlets, arrived safely at this place. Twelve men were here to meet us. They had been sent by General Appiah to carry my baggage. The sabeldrager⁵ informed me, in the name of his master, that I was to stay here until further orders. I sent the man back, and also his sword, bearing my compliments to the General, and seeking to know if I might stay the night where I was. Meanwhile a 'great officer'⁶ arrived, greeted me, and told me that he had come to conduct me to my provisional lodgings, where I would stay until orders came from the Camp.

By this time I was much embarrassed by the great crowd of sight-seers that had collected, and feared for the safety of my possessions. I was therefore glad to be in a fairly safe place. The house was well equipped, and had two good windows and a door. The press of people continued, many coming to look at me again and again. I asked them in a friendly manner to leave me in peace for a while, but little attention was paid to my request. Finally, the 'great officer' was good enough to post two armed soldiers in front of my house, and this helped a great deal.

This place is the left wing⁷ or vanguard of the encamped army. There are certainly more than 3,000 men here in all. I gave the officers a drink, which they accepted with high good humour. When they had finished their refreshment, they returned with more than a hundred men to thank me. They also brought the empty bottles back.

After about an hour, Appiah's sabeldrager returned with orders that I should enter the Camp immediately. I am bound to say that all the men of the vanguard seem very pleased at my presence. It is hard to put my feelings into words. I am receiving most friendly treatment, and everyone is very obliging. But despite all the courtesy the constant visiting has been very tiring for me.

Soon we set off again, and arrived at Abram at 4 o'clock. I have little to say about this place, except to complain about the clamour and throng of people. Good God! What a crowd! I thought to myself, "How is it going to be possible to get through them without a troop of soldiers?" And indeed it was with great difficulty that we forced our way. I had my feet on the soldiers' heads, which they bore with great good humour.

When I had dismounted from my hammock, a 'great officer' of Appiah's staff came to greet me, and led me to a place where there were three huts. These, on Appiah's orders, had been cleaned and made

4. Koolplanten, lit. 'cabbage-plants'.

5. lit., 'sword-bearer'.

6. Groot vaandrig.

7. Script here is almost illegible. 'Left wing' is a possible reading, but no more than that.

ready for us, their usual occupants having been obliged to remove themselves. This officer is called Cudjo Apannij, and he is renowned as a very brave man.

My belongings were stored in my hut, and my flag set up outside. I had hardly been installed for a quarter of an hour, when two of Appiah's boys brought me two wooden bowls containing roast pork and mashed pechang.⁸ They also brought a message from Appiah informing me that I should take my rest in this hut until next day, when he would provide me with better accommodation. He commended me into Cudjo Apannij's care. The huts we were given were wretched affairs, situated right in the midst of the soldiers' quarters. Mine was 5 feet long, 5 feet wide and most uncomfortable. It was not even 5 feet high.

I had sat down to eat when I suddenly heard a frightful yelling and shouting outside. Being curious, I asked what the noise meant. To my surprise the answer was that the troops of General Barriekie were trying to take me by force from those of General Appiah, and were assembled outside for the purpose. The result was the greatest confusion. Barriekie claims that he is the youngest of the commanders⁹ and that in consequence all white men would be put in his charge. Appiah denies this, and now Barriekie is ready to fight to get me away from Appiah. The dispute became very serious. Appiah's men, with their guns at the ready, dared Barriekie's to come on. Matters reached such a pass that I began to be frightened. I sent my boy with my staff and chain to Appiah to urge that nothing foolhardy be done and that it would be sensible to settle the palaver at once. But his men shouted, "No! No! We won't yield him up. We gave him lodging first. He shall not go. He is our master, and we will die for him." Let Barriekie himself come here if he dares." Despite all this Appiah went with my boy to see Barriekie in order to settle the palaver. His men continued to shout, "We will fight!" and refused to let me go. At last my boy returned and told me that everything had been put off until the morning. At this everyone calmed down immediately. Appiah, however, was still mistrustful, and had 50 men sleep around my hut to protect me against possible night attack. I was not myself quite reassured, and had all my own men spend the night outside my hut as well.

In Camp Abra, 30th April 1816.

This morning the soldiers began to quarrel among themselves again, and made enough noise to raise the Devil. The turmoil soon became just as bad as it had been the night before. Once more I sent my boy with the staff and chain to ask Appiah to settle the affair. A solution to the trouble must have been quickly found, and Appiah apparently lost the argument, for I soon had orders to move my quarters.

To settle this palaver cost me four bottles of drink, for I had to pay the men who had kept guard on my hut during the night and also had to pay for the use of the hut itself. I felt I must give my own men a bottle, too.

The camp seems to be unusually full of troops. As soon as I have paid my compliments, I will go for a walk and have a look at it.

In Camp Abra, 1st May 1816.

No news today. I have enough provisions to last my men 4 days. About 12 o'clock I received two trays of food from General Appiah, and

8. Obscure. Pechang could be piesang, from Mal. pisang = 'banana' or here, presumably, 'plantain.'

9. Obscure. The sense might be "the most junior of the commanders".

from the 'great officer' Cudjo Apannij 8 small kantjes¹⁰ and one (illegible) of gold to buy meat. I was in no position to refuse these gifts, and passed them on to my men.

I have not yet received permission to go out, nor has any of the three generals communicated with me. My hut is almost over-run with people. Some come to greet me in Appiah's name, some in Barriekie's. Others come from Amanqua and others again from Youw Kokroko. They say, "I am the King's son, I am the King's brother," etc., and all of them take a drink from me. Those sent by the generals come preceded by the sword and accompanied by 8, 10 and sometimes 15 men. Each has his stool with him, and here they sit until they have finished their drinks. They say that, if I do not give them something to drink, the royal family will be offended. Six 'great officers' visited me one after the other. I did not dare refuse their requests. It was unlucky that I had my 5 ankers¹¹ in view and not locked up in chests where they might have escaped notice. Altogether my visitors, about 50 in all, emptied a good 7 bottles.

I sent General Appiah a bottle from the chest and two flasks drawn from keg. To Barriekie I sent one bottle from the chest and another drawn from keg. To Amanqua and Youw Kokroko the same as to Barriekie and, in return for my lodging, one bottle from the chest to Cudjo Apannij. Otherwise, nothing of interest to report today.

In Camp Abra, 2nd May 1816.

This morning General Appiah sent to greet me and inquire after my welfare. I dispatched my boy to pay my compliments in return and to express my best thanks for the General's courtesy towards me. At ten o'clock I sent him two fine fowls baked in the pan which, so he told my boy, tasted very good. In exchange he supplied me with palm wine and food. My men, however, have not yet received anything from anybody.

Today Appiah offered to place one of his sons in my service, giving me leave to take the boy with me and employ him as I see fit. The lad seems willing and capable, and I have accepted the charge.

I have become terribly weary of the constant stream of officers and royal relatives who come to visit me. They are still appearing at my lodgings, despite the great numbers who came yesterday and extorted so much liquor from me. Already one and a half chests of drink have been emptied. Moreover, one whole chest was lost on the way here, when one of the bearers dropped it and smashed 10 bottles. This is a serious matter, for one cannot replenish stocks of liquor in these parts. I have consoled myself by giving vent to some quite unnecessary abuse, which can do me no good.

Up to now I have neither seen nor spoken to any of the four generals. General Appiah has sent word that he much regrets his inability to visit me. If he came, he says, the other generals would suspect him of holding secret talks with me. I must not disclose my mission until the envoys have returned from Elmina. When they are back, then everything can be discussed publicly. This disappointing information does not please me at all. If it were not that some of the King's presents were left behind, I would not have the patience to stay here any longer. The matter is out of my hands, however, because I do not know when the envoys are to return.

This afternoon I took a walk through the camp to see how big it was. After an hour and a half I became so tired that I had to come back. It would not be possible to reach the end of the camp in a day's march.

10. Kantje by the dictionary means 'small piece of lace'. Could the meaning here be pieces of trade cloth used as currency?

11. Anker, a keg of a capacity of 1 anker. 1 anker = ca. 9 gallons.

General Amanqua's camp is at least one hour away from Appiah's and Barriekie's. General Youw Kokroko's is still further off. He commands 3,000 troops, and my estimate is that there are at least 10,000 under the command of Appiah, Amanqua and Barriekie.¹²

When I returned from my walk, General Appiah's sword-bearer came to see me. He told me that, when evening came, I was to move to lodgings in Barriekie's camp. Agreement had finally been reached that I must change my lodgings. At this news I cleared out of my poor little hut, and set out at once for my new house, with all my baggage following behind me, my flag going on before, and accompanied by more than two thousand men. Singing away, the soldiers brought me into the presence of General Barriekie, who was sitting in state surrounded by some of his officers. He gave my hand three times and pressed mine warmly. I was then provided with a stool and a bottle of watered liquor. All watched while I tried it. Then Barriekie stood up and said that he was putting me in the charge of a sword-bearer who would conduct me to my new house. He added that if I lacked for anything I should let him know. He also told his people that no one was to be allowed to plague or pester me. (This order was in vain; I was soon overwhelmed even more than before.)

I had been in my house only a short while when the General came in person to ask if I was properly accommodated. I answered that I was, though to speak truth I was feeling very miserable. I must not forget, of course, that I am in a Camp and not in a village. This hut I am now in is certainly better than the one I was given by Cudjo Apannij. When I left there, I gave Apannij 4 fathoms of panegoed¹³ and a bottle of drink, and to the officer who commanded the 50 men who kept watch over me I gave two fathoms. When Barriekie had been seated for a while, I let him have a dram or two out of one of my bottles. He thought, however, that I was presenting him with the whole bottle, and took it away with him when he left. I watched it go with a heavy heart.

I hear the envoys are due to arrive tomorrow morning. I hope this is so, for I am not at all accustomed to a military life. All the time I keep hearing, now from this direction, now from that, the sound of pipes and horns. I sit trembling in my house, and wonder if my bravery will soon be put to the test and whether I will be forced to set out for Kumasi without waiting for the arrival of the envoys.¹⁴ I hear from many people that Appiah is definitely resolved to attack Commany. This action on his part, if it is to happen, will be solely at the instigation of the Elmina chief,¹⁵ Jan Nieser, and his ternegrandes¹⁶¹⁷ Other Ashantis say that Appiah has no orders to do anything other than fetch Cudjo Koena and the rest of the Fantes who are in hiding at Commany. I had a few words with Appiah in the name of General Daendels, urging him to abandon his resolve. The matter was handled secretly. Everyone should seek to advance the interests of his master and suppress an unlawful chief whenever this is possible.¹⁸

This Jan Nieser has often been the cause of disobedience on the part of the people of Elmina against the Government. His constant inciting of the population and his numerous villainies were the cause of his being thrown out of Accra, though this banishment does not seem to have taught him much of a lesson. This wicked man, this root of all evil, who has long

12. The initial figure of the total "10,000" given here is unfortunately blotted. It could be a 1, a 4 or a 6.

13. Meaning unknown, but obviously a type of cloth.

14. Last two sentences in this paragraph are very obscure.

15. Lit., koning, but 'chief' seems a better translation than 'king'.

16. Terregrandes - 'older'.

17. Here again, original is very obscure.

18. Ditto.

been a thorn in the flesh to us, is now in a fair way to bring down the Government of Elmina itself. He spreads wickedness which all know about, but none dare speak of. I myself make no bones about saying that this man is not only overweening and ambitious but a ringleader and a trouble-maker, and if he is not watched carefully by General Daendels, he will be Emperor of Elmina yet. The man Adam knows him well, and much may be learnt from Adam by means of soft words. He is trustworthy, moreover, and will say in Nieser's presence anything the Governor wants him to say. I have often heard him describe how Jan Nieser talks: "Now I am king over all. The white men dare not do anything to me. They have to come to me if they want anything." I have also many times heard how the onderkoning,¹⁹ by name Aboe, says to his master (for his is Nieser's slave), "You are our lord. We want no one over us but you," at which the 'Emperor' laughs in great glee so that his belly shakes.

Tomorrow I will present my compliments to Generals Appiah, Amanquah and Youw Kokroko. There has not been an opportunity before. General Barriekie has honoured me with a visit, and is proving very affable.

In the Camp, 3rd May 1816.

This morning I had my hammock prepared, and went to present my compliments to the generals.

First to my landlord, who received me in a most friendly manner. He made no comment on the fact that I had come, however. I paid him my compliments standing up.

From there I went to greet Appiah. This I did in the name of the General of Elmina. Again, I performed my duties standing up or, I should rather say, I stood because no stool was produced for me.

From there to Amanquah, who was indisposed. They say he is mad, and cannot tell one person from another. The cause is thought to be that he put a mad woman to death and she has been vexing his spirit ever since.

Lastly I went to Youw Kokroko's camp, which lay in flat and low-lying ground. I quickly saw that here I was meeting a real general, and one who understood his profession. As soon as he learnt of my arrival, he sent to ask me to take a seat under a large tree, since he was not yet ready to receive me. Accordingly I went and sat under this tree. Before long I heard a drum being beaten. At this signal armed soldiers came running from all directions, with their officers following behind them. Everyone assembled under another tree nearby. Then the general, splendidly attired in a white cloth,²⁰ appeared from his dwelling and took his seat among his men. He had me approach, escorted by an officer and four soldiers. At his request I returned to my hammock and sat in it (he wished to see one), and approached again. My reception was fit for a king. The General stood up, shook me by the hand three times and offered me the stool next to his. My visit gave him much pleasure. He gave me a bottle of drink for my bearers, which I passed on to them and which they finished on the spot. I stayed for at least an hour, then took my leave and rode off in my hammock.

I had not been in my house an hour when General Youw Kokroko came to pay his compliments to me. We sat talking for a good while. I gave him a bottle of gin²¹ from my chest as a present. He is very intimate

19. Lit., 'vice-roy,' but the word is often used by the Dutch in the sense of 'second-in-command'.

20. Paantje, a diminutive of paan, which comes from Port. pano. "A cloth which negroes use to surround their bodies from the waist to the knees or somewhat lower" (Van Dale).

21. Genever (mod. jenever), i.e. Hollands, or Dutch, gin.

with me for so short a period of acquaintance. He asked me whether or not I had brought something for him from Elmina. I said I had not, explaining that the General at Elmina had not known for certain that there were more than three generals in the Camp. The envoy whom he, Youw Kokroko, had sent to Elmina, had neither swords nor staffs with him, and the General had not known whether to pay him honour or not. This envoy had, however, asked for a flag, and the General had provided me with one. I had also been ordered to find out the truth about the exact number of Ashanti generals when I reached the Camp. This information I now had, and I would write to the General and request that a present similar to those already delivered should be sent to General Youw Kokroko. At this he expressed much satisfaction, and thanked me.

I will indeed write to General Daendels at the first opportunity, and suggest that Youw Kokroko has his share of favours. He is of the same rank as the other generals.....22

I have forgotten to mention that Youw Kokroko sent me a bunch of bananas and 2 chickens. He wanted to take the flag away with him. I told him, however, that he must be patient until the envoys come back from Elmina. Then the other presents will be distributed, and he will get his flag.

4th May 1816.

This morning I received greetings from Generals Appiah and Barriekie and sent them mine via my boy.

I went for a walk today and found myself outside Appiah's hut. I therefore called on him. He is an excellent old man, kind-hearted and obliging. I had no sooner returned home and was busy writing than he walked right into my hut. Laughing, he took me by the hand, and said, "I have come to see you. You need not send messages to me." I invited him to sit on my bed, which he did. I told him that I was very distressed that the envoys from Elmina had not arrived yet. He said they would definitely be here today. He accepted a dram and went away.

Just at that moment I learnt to my great joy that the envoys from Elmina had indeed arrived. Before long the most senior of them, Awarrie and Djesie, came to see me. Adoe, however, did not appear. Awarrie and Djesie greeted me breast to breast, after the fashion of the Portuguese when two friends meet after a long parting. They were still dressed as for a journey, and their men had their muskets on their shoulders. They told me that they had not had the honour of any further conversation with General Daendels since the time I left, which had vexed them. I gave them something to drink and they went on their way.

I was indeed very glad to see these envoys. They have promised me that tomorrow they will without fail publicly give an account of their mission, so that I will be able to leave here quickly.

I have bought half a fat hog for 3 fathoms of cloth and 1 bottle of drink.

5th May 1816.

Last night there was a general jollification throughout the Camp. Drums, flutes and horns sounded and all the caboceers danced. For the Ashantis today is a good Sunday.²³ By late at night the clamour was dying down, but with the coming of dawn the tumult started up again. Festivities lasted until about noon or 1 o'clock, when the senior general, Appiah, took his seat on his chief's stool under a great arch. There he received the greetings of everyone present in order of seniority. I was the first

22. Obscure.

23. I.e. the Kwasi-adae. This has reference to the Akan Aduanan calendar

to be invited to pay my respects, then came General Barriekie, then a 'great officer' representing Amanqua, and then General Youw Kokroko. After this all the dignitaries²⁴ and officers came up in turn.

Appiah withdrew for a moment to his house and returned with three English gold pieces which he gave to me. With these I bought a sheep, which was carried to my hut in a golden vessel by Appiah's own sword-bearer. This man I dashed 2 fathoms of panegoed. (He had made a point of asking my boy if he might have something by way of a present.) As Appiah was leaving the assembly, he said to me that I ought now to visit Barriekie, Amanqua and Youw Kokroko and bid them good morning. This I immediately did. From Barriekie I received a sheep and some bananas, and from Youw Kokroko another sheep, 10 taminees and 2 bunches of bananas. From Amanqua, however, I got nothing. To the men who brought the sheep to my hut I gave 2 fathoms of panegoed each. All this visiting reminded me of New Year's Day at Elmina, when children run from house to house collecting their presents. To tell the truth, I felt more than a little ashamed. However, to be allowed to visit great men on festival days such as this is a considerable honour.

Appiah told me that the envoys would not be received in audience today, this being a day when no business may be done. At least, this is what he said to me in public. Later, at about 3 o'clock, he sent word that he and the other dignitaries were conferring and were ready to listen to what I and the envoys had to say to them. I immediately prepared myself and rode off to the meeting in my hammock.

Djesie, speaking for all the envoys, described the experiences they had had at Elmina. He gave his recital in great detail, recounting all that had transpired between the envoys and the General, listing the kindnesses which he and the others had daily received at the General's hands, and speaking warmly of the chest of gin and other liquor which had been provided. His report was so favourable, indeed, that it rejoiced me to hear it.

Next, Djesie scotched the lies spread abroad by Coena, and told the real truth about the Commany affair. When he had finished speaking, I took my instructions from my pocket and remarked that everything that Coena had told then as coming from the chief and terregrandes of Elmina was nothing but a pack of infamous lies. I said that no messages, however authenticated, should be accepted by the Ashantis as truly from Elmina unless somebody directly representing the General of Elmina were present and even then the person present must be able to prove that the General had in fact sent him. The Ashanti generals expressed agreement with this.

I then spoke to them very earnestly about General Daendels's wishes concerning Commany. I said it was definitely my superior's desire that the Ashantis should not go there, and that it was hoped General Appiah would desist if he had an attack on Commany in mind. To these words, however, I received no answer. Appiah said that he and his colleagues would sleep on the matter and let me know tomorrow what they had decided. I suspect that they are determined to take Commany and, when there, will demand the surrender of all the Fantes who have taken refuge in the town. If the Commany people refuse to yield these fugitives up, then the Ashantis will burn the town and kill all the inhabitants, who will have brought this fate on themselves by their own obstinacy. I cannot, however, state any of these things with certainty. I am merely repeating here what the young men in the Ashanti army tell me.

On the whole I did not really expect that all my business here would be completed today. Meanwhile I thank God that we have got on

24. Grooten. Perhaps 'elders' would be a better translation.

thus far and that I will be able to continue my journey this coming Tuesday. On Monday, we are told, it is not permitted to travel. I have asked Appiah to provide some men for me: 12 as an escort and 12 to carry my goods. He has promised to arrange this.

I have handed their presents over to the generals and have given General Youw Kokroko his flag. They are all very pleased, and have asked me to write to General Daendels to express their thanks. This I will do.

I have also inquired about the presents for the King which the envoys have brought with them. Awarrie says he has what he is responsible for, but cannot speak for Djesie. Adoe, who is Amanquah's envoy, and Enpho,²⁵ who represents Appiah and is also his linguist, have not brought anything. They say that two chests of gin were by ill luck dropped and the bottles inside smashed to pieces. To prove the falsity of these absolute lies, I asked to see the broken chests, but they were not forthcoming. I warned the envoys that unless by tomorrow the chests had been sent to me, I would tell the King when I saw him that his representatives were thieves. They seemed, however, to pay no attention to my threats.

The peace made with the Fantes is as follows: that the Ashantis will remain in Fante territory until Cudjo Koema has been captured; that so long as he is not in Ashanti hands the Fantes must not take it amiss if some of their people are 'panjared' and sold by the Ashantis, who have to keep themselves in food while in foreign territory; and that the Fantes must similarly not object if some of their people are done away with for similar reasons. Apart from this, nothing has been decided. Here in the Camp, killing goes on daily. I will say nothing of the murders because the subject is too horrible. It is clear, however, that a true peace has by no means been concluded yet.

At Abra, 6th May 1816.

Nothing happened today. This morning I prepared to leave here, and was willing, if necessary, to travel without an escort. I have received no answer from Appiah about Commany. It is probably true that he intends to go there. This afternoon I sent a message to him, specifically to get at least some information on the subject, but in vain. I have therefore taken leave of the other generals without raising the matter again.

I received from Djesie a sheep, 2 ^[illegible]₂₆ of gold and some bananas, for which I gave his boy 2 fathoms of cloth; from Awarrie 2 ^[illegible]₂₆ of gold, a chicken and some bananas. I have settled my account with my servant (who is a junior officer of Barriekie's), and am paying him 2 fathoms of cloth for his services and for the use of the huts. He has been of the greatest value to us while we have been here in the Camp.

I learnt yesterday that Cobbena Esservie has been seen on the road with 6 others. The Ashantis have been out looking for them, but none of the party has been captured yet.

Manqua Mankesu, 7th May 1816.

Today at 6 o'clock I left Abra, travelling without an escort. Appiah definitely promised to give me some men to act both as an escort and as bearers, but he does not seem to have meant it. My hammock men have thus to carry my luggage as well as me.

Between Abra and this place we went through thirteen villages. All had been burnt and some of the houses pulled down. The distance from Abra to here is ten hours, for nine of which I have had the honour of walking on my bare feet. There was no chance

25. Spelling doubtful.

26. Looks like a conventional symbol. Might stand, perhaps, for 'ackies'?

whatever of my being carried. The pathway was unmade, rough and muddy, with numerous large tree-trunks fallen across it. During the whole journey we never had even four feet of straight track; it was a case of 'to the left for two feet, then to the right for three feet,' and so on. The going was very difficult, and delays frequent.

The village we are in now was at one time inhabited by three nations, Ashantis, Fantes and Assins. All traded here. At present, however, there are no inhabitants, and the village has been partly burnt.

Before I left Abra, Barriekie paid me a final visit, and brought me 10 barrels of 'King's gunpowder'.²⁷ I discovered that these had been tampered with and the gunpowder adulterated, and I refused to accept them. I asked him to send the barrels to the capital, and when I arrive there I will discuss the matter with the King. More than two pounds of powder, moreover, have been stolen out of each barrel.

Barriekie has also promised to send after me the gunpowder brought by the envoys and intended as a present from the General at Elmina to the King. So far I have seen nothing of it. (It is as well I had the full details of these presents from the General before I left. Otherwise the King would certainly not be likely to receive all of them!) During the ceremony at the Camp, General Youw Kokroko said he would supply men to carry this powder to the capital, pointing out that he and I will both win much honour by such an arrangement . . .²⁸ But the King will learn the truth in the end.

During the journey today we saw abbaco trees and lantas, which yield good timber for planks, and are also suitable for ships' masts and spars.

Everything in this village seems very dear. For a few bananas, which we got from some Ashantis, I had to pay one gold piece per bunch,²⁹ and even then the bargain was concluded with difficulty and after much chattering. In the Camp I could not buy anything at all. Everything there was reserved for the soldiers.

I am not accustomed to so much walking, and it has made me very sick. I am suffering from a severe headache and pains in the knees. According to what the Ashantis say, I will have to walk for two days before we reach the River Bossum Pra, after which I will be able to ride again. This news has made me very uneasy, for I fear the onset of illness.

During the journey today the rain beat down heavily and it has been raining almost all night so far with fearful thunder and lightning. The villages in these parts are not separated much one from another.

In the village of Fossu, (an Assin settlement), 8th May 1816.

Today at six o'clock we began our journey again with renewed courage. To our great disappointment the track was even worse than it had been yesterday. It was very rugged throughout, and no one seems to be maintaining it at all. More than 50 tree-trunks, which had been blown down by storms, lay across it, and made our progress difficult and slow.

From Marqua Mankesu to this place is an eleven hour march, and I myself did the whole distance on foot. Along the way there were no villages at all where we could rest. We therefore halted for our midday rest at a place by the side of the track near a wide and swiftly-flowing stream, and there waited for the rearmost bearers to catch up. We crossed this stream by means of a tree-trunk, which lay across it and served as a bridge. It must have fallen there naturally, for men's hands could never have moved it. We also waded through several other streams, some of which were quite deep. Water taken from beneath the drip-stones provided a wonderfully clear and refreshing drink.

We have suffered many misfortunes on this journey. We are hungry, since neither money nor blandishments can procure us food. Heavy rain

27. Lit. 'Koning's kruid.'

28. Short of secure passage here.

29. Guesswork. Script is very obscure. May be 'ackie' again.

has fallen constantly about our ears, and an umbrella is useless because of the thickness of forest through which we have to move. I doubt if Robinson Crusoe had more trouble than we have experienced on this Ashanti journey. The whole way we have been trudging through water, often up to our belts. At last this evening we arrived, hungry and exhausted, at this place. I was so tired I fell asleep on two chests and did not awake till morning. I am still suffering from a severe headache. It is worse than any I have known before.

Tankeminsé Asie, in Assin, 9th May 1816

We set off today at 7 o'clock, but made little progress. My legs are most painful, and I have blisters on both my feet, which is very unpleasant.

It rained all day, and there was heavy thunder. We hope to reach the River Pra tomorrow. We are very hungry. Eating unripe paw-paws³⁰ and green bananas has given my men the belly-ache.

Wrenki, 10th May 1816. Assin.

We could not get far yesterday, and today was no better. I am being held back by my headaches and foot blisters. It is unlucky the track is not easier; if it were, my men could carry me.

On the way we saw a huge tiger in the middle of the path. He must have been hungry, for he was swishing his tail from side to side in a fearsome manner. He was so close that I thought of having a shot at him, but found that my double-barrelled gun was forward in the column with my boy. A finer animal I have never seen. For a long time he stared boldly at us, but seeing us come too close bounded off the track and disappeared in a flash.

Not having been able to reach the river, we decided to halt for the day in this village. We will cross tomorrow.

Here the four officers, who were to follow us, caught up with the column. Two of them are General Appiah's men, and two are Barrickie's. With them is a dora of the King's³¹ with a large golden plate hanging from his neck. He told me he had orders to conduct me across the river and that the other three and he³² would accompany me to the King's capital. He has been sent on orders from General Youw Kokroko, and has with him the 10 barrels of powder which I refused to take delivery of from Barrickie. I will not disclose what I have discovered concerning these barrels until I am in the presence of the King.

Heavy rain until late at night.

Tjetjeweirij, 11th May 1816. Assin.

We set off this morning at 6 o'clock and reach the River Pra at ten. While we were resting, a kind of canoe appeared and ferried us across. This canoe was of average length, but narrow, like those of the coast Negroes. Both ends were very square. It was, however, a good canoe and made the crossing with a heavy load.

The river here is both wide and deep. In the dry season its volume is much less, and from mid-October to March one does not need a canoe to get across. Small canoes can safely use it in the dry, but at the present time they are not practicable, because of the roughness of the waters.

This is a very large village, attractive to look at, and well laid out. All the menfolk are away at the war, and thus the only inhabitants are women. One of our guides has sent a man on ahead to let the capital know of our arrival here and to find out on which day we should enter it. We may have to stay where we are for a while and then continue on slowly. The guides tell me they have orders from Appiah that the caboceers of each village we enter are to provide us with

30. Lit., papajen. (Papayas are not quite the same as paw-paws.)

31. Dora is underlined in the MS. I am doubtful about the first letter.

32. Sic. The arithmetic is obscure here.

all we need free. But this means nothing. All we are receiving is a few bunches of bananas here and there. I have been forced to give my men gold with which to buy their food.

Up to now we have been obliged to issue out a dram or two of drink at each village we have passed through. The result is that our 5 chests are fast being emptied. If I had not added water occasionally, the liquor would have run out at the Camp. However, the two officers whom I sent back to Elmina this morning have orders to ask the General to send me one or two additional chests. Drink is, after all, the main solace³³ of this kind of journey. To each of the officers I have given a fathom of cloth and 2 bottles of drink. (I should add that, when we crossed the river, I gave 2 fathoms and a bottle to the fetish priest of Pra. The two officers tried very hard to persuade me to let them have 3 fathoms of panegod, but in the end agreed to accept the two fathoms and the drink. I promised that, if they brought me my two chests of drink from Elmina, I would reward them with 6 fathoms of panegod. They went off muttering to themselves.

12th.

Today we took things easily, and will leave tomorrow. May the Good God protect me if I have to travel for long on foot!

We are 5 days from the capital now. The villages hereabouts are quite exhausted because of the need to supply the troops which have been drawn from them, and famine rules everywhere. The wife of the caboceer of this village presented me with two chickens and some yams. I thanked her with a bottle of drink.

Very heavy rain today, lasting until nightfall.

Assarnan, 13th May 1816. Assin.

Today I rode in my hammock from 6 o'clock in the morning until 2 in the afternoon. The road was very muddy and slippery, however, and the dangers considerable. Twice I fell out of the hammock, but happily took no hurt. Two of the bearers have slight bruises on the shoulders, and two of the baggage men have been badly hurt through stumbling while carrying heavy chests. Unfortunately we have no wound-plasters³⁴ with us. Several of the men have been cut about the body by sharp sticks.

I intend to make a list of all the places we have passed through since the Pra and will pass through before we finish our journey. Then I will be able to tell how many villages there are between the Pra and the capital.

We were very hungry again all today. No food could be bought in any of the seven villages we went through. Everything is very scarce and very expensive. In this area the distances between villages are small. The wife of the absent caboceer of this one gave me a chicken and a bunch of bananas, and I thanked her with a bottle of drink.

This village is the capital of the Assins, and the place of residence of their King. The whole area, however, is now under the rule of the Ashanti King. It seems that all the Assins have gone to the war under the command of General Appiah.

[Note in margin: "N.B. This village is not the capital. We shall reach the capital tomorrow."]

Akkrovrone, 14th May 1816. Assin.

Arrived here after a journey of nine hours at about 5 o'clock. We left Assarnan at 6, and came to Anzang, the capital of the Assins at about 11. At my bearers' request, I dismounted from my hammock and paid my respects to the King's wife.³⁵ She was dressed in her husband's regalia with sandals on, a long pipe in her mouth and accompanied by a troop of women with guns on their

33. Sieraad, lit. 'ornament'.

34. Lit., pleisters. 'Bandages' may be a better translation.

35. Probably the Queen Mother rather than the King's wife?

shoulders. Two other women played on flutes and horns. After greeting her, I went and sat under a large tree nearby in order to receive her compliments in return. She gave me two chickens and 2 bunches of bananas, and I thanked her, on the advice of my guides, with 2 bottles of drink.

After resting for a while we left this capital, and travelled on for a considerable distance without stopping. We had to cross numerous streams, whose waters came up to our waists and flowed more swiftly even than the Pra. Several of these streams, indeed, seemed to be tributaries of the Pra. The last of them we crossed was four feet deep and ran extremely strongly. Over rivers like these ropes are stretched for travellers to hang on to.

Assarman and Anzang villages are well built and laid out. The place we are in now is pleasant, too. We will spend a few nights here.

Monsai, 15th May 1816. The last Assin village.

Got under way at dawn. The track was reasonably dry, though still bad for hammock travel. I must have covered half this journey on my bare feet!

Nothing special happened today. An exceptionally tall mountain rears up straight in front of us, and I expect we shall have to go round it.

16th.

We have not advanced today. The guides objected to any forward movement until the King's permission has been received. They say the messenger will be here tomorrow, and will bring orders from the King about how we are to proceed.

Dompo Assie, 17th May 1816. Ashanti village.

Today we spent 2 hours climbing the large mountain I mentioned earlier, and took 1 hour to come down again. The path up was very difficult and steep. At the summit we found three brooks, which ran with sweet, fresh water.

We passed through two villages, neither of any consequence. The first was called Quisa and the second Fommona. At Quisa we saw a snake impudently seize a large chicken by the neck and try to slip away with it. This happened in the market place. The weight of the chicken hampered the snake's movements, however, and one of the boys jumped up and quickly dispatched it. It was an extremely long snake and very beautiful. I have had it cleaned and will keep the skin.

18th May 1816.

I was up early this morning and made ready to continue the journey. Once again, however, the guides came to me and said we could not leave until the King's answer had been received. They assured me that, if they were so foolish as to allow me to proceed without permission, they ran a real danger of losing their heads immediately we arrived in Koemassie and I, they said, would be unlikely to be received in a friendly manner by the King. I therefore had to be content, and abode by their wishes.

On this whole journey we have not seen much that one could call especially remarkable. The district where we are now is very cold. I have noticed, too, that the days seem longer than at Elmina, but one would need a good time-piece to establish the truth of this.

19th.

Nothing happened today. The messenger has not yet returned.

Adedemassie, 20th.

As a result of strong protests on my part we travelled a little further today, making for Akankawa Assie. On the way we met the men we dispatched to see the King. They brought the welcome news that the King sends me his best wishes, and assures me that he is awaiting my arrival with impatience.

He has decided that my entry should take place this coming Wednesday, the 22nd, and I must not fail him on that day. He is very pleased the General is sending an ambassador to visit him.

We continued, therefore, in high good humour until we reached the village belonging to the King's son, who received us in a friendly manner and gave us good lodgings. He presented me with a large fat sheep and 10 bunches of bananas. His name is Owoesoe and this place is called Adiaben. I have written down all the villages from the Pra River onwards and will append a list of them at the end of this diary.

Addjabin, 21st 1816.

Today we started on our way earlier than usual because, now the end is at least in sight, we were anxious to get on. We passed through 9 villages, two of them very large ones. The place we were in now belongs to one of the sons of the late Vice-roy³⁶ of Ashanti. In appearance this man is very like General Youw Kokroko. I had the pleasure of spending the night in his village and of a few hour's conversation with him.

He gave me a large fat sheep and 10 bunches of bananas as presents, and urged me to visit him again after I had spent some time with the King and provided His Majesty would allow it. I have accepted his kind invitation and will certainly visit him again if the pressure of business will allow. I took my leave of him and returned to my lodgings, but later in the evening he called on me again and accepted a cup of tea and a glass of gin. He has asked for a whole bottle of gin, and I have promised to let him have one the day after tomorrow.

The King's capital of Koena ssie, 22nd May 1816.

Today it looks as if I shall before nightfall have the great good fortune to see and even to speak with the King of Ashanti. We began our journey with this expectation, and arrived at the capital very early. When we arrived at a hamlet called Kookoe, we received orders to halt, while we took refreshment, set our clothes in order, etc.

From now on there are no more villages by the side of the track. Having eaten and drunk, we continued on our way, and at about 12 o'clock were met by four sword-bearers, each with a golden sword on his shoulders. These men greeted me in His Majesty's name, and told me that I and my men must wait for a while with them in a small hamlet, because the Generals and caboccers had not yet arrived at the capital. At this we moved off the track for a short distance to the left, and were led to a small hamlet of about twelve houses. Here I have concealed all my baggage, for the sword-bearers warned me that it would be quite impossible to have my chests carried through the great press of people we would meet on our way to see the King. When this had been done, two sword-bearers went off to report to the King that I had arrived, and we awaited orders to proceed further. After an hour they returned and told me that His Majesty's desire was that I should set off immediately because he and his assembly were waiting. I therefore left at once, with the four sword-bearers leading the way.

When I came into the town itself³⁷ what a sight met my eyes! The road was so full of people that neither sticks nor swords could keep them away from me. Many blows were rained on heads and backs before it was possible for my men to get my hammock through. We were in this stifling throng for more than an hour.

Orders then came through that we were to wait until further notice under a nearby tree, since the assembly was not in fact yet ready to receive us. And so we sat under this tree, but the people pressed closer and closer, streaming in from all sides in the hope of catching a glimpse of me. After we had been under the tree for a quarter of an hour, a house was pointed out to me as a possible refuge where we might be free of constant observation by the crowd. We therefore moved into this house

36. See n. 19.

37. In het voorstadt, lit., 'into the suburb.' Voorstadt is always a difficult word to put into a suitable context.

this house and were able to enjoy a moment's peace.

At two o'clock I received orders from 4 more sword-bearers sent by His Majesty that I was to present myself at the capital, dressed in proper attire. With all eight sword-bearers leading the way, I set out, reaching the capital after half an hour's journey.

And what a tumult greeted me there! A king could not have expected more honour than was done to me today. There are more than 50 thousand people in this place. His Majesty has summoned all the lesser kings from the surrounding countryside for today's assembly. Everyone of them was splendidly adorned with gold, and each had more than 50 soldiers in his retinue. There were golden swords, flutes, horns, and I know not what else in profusion. At the assembly I counted more than 50 large umbrellas (this figure does not include small ones.)

When I saw all this, I felt very grateful for His Majesty's courtesy towards me. I got out of my hammock, and walked from person to person, shaking each by the hand until I came to the King. I bowed to His Majesty three times. No word was spoken during these proceedings. I must have shaken the hands of two hundred people today. Throughout the ceremony music was provided by drums, which were in position all around us, and the whole affair was marked by perfect order. Behind the King stood at least 100 men with muskets. They seemed quite as well disciplined on parade as European soldiers. 50 or 60 women were grouped around His Majesty, wearing golden ornaments of great value. But there was so much to see that I cannot now recall it all.

I also had to pay my compliments to the King's women. They were standing apart from the men. There were at least 200 of them, all handsome and decked with large pieces of fetish gold. I did not shake hands with them for it is not the custom.

His Majesty led me to a raised place under a tall tree where I sat to receive the appropriate return greetings from the King and from all his councillors, generals, captains and others. And now I experienced the glory of being a king myself, sitting in such majesty as I would have expected to find only in Europe. There was I, enthroned on a large Negro stool on a kind of platform, with my flag planted about 20 paces in front of me and all my men behind. Each king in turn came to greet me, to the accompaniment of loud music and great numbers of soldiers, and riding in a sort of basket under a great umbrella. The kings remained in their baskets until they were about 10 paces distant from me, when they dismounted with dignity and advanced towards me on foot. Each shook hands cordially three times and then three times again. These proceedings lasted from 3 o'clock until 6. Then His Majesty in full splendour came to greet me himself, sitting in a basket like the others, and accompanied by women carrying swords, golden basins³⁸, gold and silver water jugs, etc. He came up to me and shook my hand three times. For at least 5 minutes he stood looking at me, and then said, three times: "Welcome! Welcome! Welcome!" and, laughing in a friendly way, added, "You will do³⁹. I like you." Then he said once again, "Welcome!" and withdrew, accompanied by a vast throng of his followers. After this 10 other persons greeted me, all of them dignified by large umbrellas. It was past 7 in the evening before the ceremony ended. His Majesty's 'great linguist' approached, and told me that I should now follow him and he would show me my lodgings. He also offered me four jars of palm wine, which were a present from the King. I accepted these with pleasure, and set out for my house.

I could hardly make my way along the street because of the crowds surrounding me. When I at last reached my house, I immediately closed the door and freed myself of the importunities of the public.

38. Lit., gouden punch kommen = 'golden punch bowls'.

39. Lit., Gij zijt mooi= 'You are nice,' or 'You are handsome.'

I saw more than 60 of the most important generals today. General Peekoe (that is, former General, for he is now the First Linguist) has sent me two jars of palm wine as a present.

23rd May 1816.

About 7 o'clock General Poekoe and two of the royal sword-bearers came to tell me that His Majesty wished to be informed today of the objects of my mission. All the state councillors have been called together for the purpose. I am to hold myself ready for the King's summons.

About 10 o'clock General Poekoe reappeared and conducted me in state to His Majesty's audience. Accompanied by 25 soldiers I was carried in my hammock very slowly and in a dignified manner the length of two streets to where the assembly was. I could discern the place from a distance because of the 13 or 14 umbrellas there. I stopped the hammock a little way away, dismounted and with my hat under my arm bowed three times to His Majesty, who gave me his hand and had me sit down a short distance away from him. I was greeted by his three linguists (all generals) and then His Majesty asked me about my mission. I was about to speak when other linguists came over and told me His Majesty wanted me closer. So I approached until I was only a step or two distant, and a stool was offered me. I demurred, saying it was not lawful for me to be seated when I was speaking in the name of my Government. Standing before him, therefore, I made this speech to the King:

"Your Majesty! The reasons which have prompted my mission are concerned with several very important matters which it is not suitable to mention in public. My duty requires that I should speak about them to Your Majesty alone, and in the security of your Palace. If your Majesty will allow it, and will be pleased to appoint the time, I shall regard it as a great honour if I am permitted to discuss these important affairs of state with you later."

His Majesty expressed great delight, and answered, "Say no more. That is enough. I understand you."

But I continued, "I have brought with me a few small presents for Your Majesty, which come from my master, General Daendels, with his affectionate greetings and also with assurances of the highest esteem from His Majesty, the King of the Netherlands. I hope your Majesty will be pleased to accept these presents as a token of my master's consideration for you. We can speak later about other matters at a time Your Majesty shall decide."

At this the King announced that he would receive the presents in his palace, and the assembly broke up. I set off for my house to fetch them; but General Poekoe caught me up to tell me that he would have to accompany me when I conveyed them to the King. I replied, "Good. Let us go to my house together."

Having collected the presents, we went to His Majesty's dwelling. We had to go through several buildings before we reached the King's own apartments. We found him sitting in the middle of a large group of people high up in a kind of gallery. I saluted him, and asked if the presents should be opened, to which he agreed. The case containing the staff was opened first, and I presented the staff to the King with these words, "My master ordered me to place this staff in Your Majesty's own hands."

The King accepted his gift with every appearance of delight

and laughed aloud.

The second present was the umbrella with the two tuffen ⁴⁰ which I handed over with a similar speech. His Majesty was overjoyed, and asked me to put the umbrella back in its case, saying, "We are only Negroes after all. We could never pack it in so neatly ourselves."

The third was the hat. The King took it in his hand, looked at it, and said, "Well, the Dutch are still the Dutch. Since we cut off the trade route, we have not been receiving presents like these from anyone." (I took this as a good sign, for he made this remark in an undertone to his immediate circle.)

The fourth was the chest of liquor. I had to take a draft from every bottle to prove that there was no harm in any of the contents.

The last was the flag, which I presented with the words, "My master said that Your Majesty should place this flag on top of your house, as befits so great a King."

His Majesty said, "But what if the flag becomes worn?"

"In that case," I replied, "the general will send you another one."

And the King said, "That is all right then. I will have a flagstaff made."

The whole company exhibited the greatest pleasure and satisfaction as a result of this presentation. I took my leave and returned home.

At eight o'clock in the evening. At 7 o'clock I was summoned secretly by His Majesty, who wished me to impart to him the confidential intelligence in my possession. I set out at once, and on arrival at His Majesty's found the following persons assembled, General Poekoe, General Adoe Akwa Atta, Amanquatia, illegible general of the capital, Quatje Coffie, and three linguists. His Majesty sat under a large umbrella, with 6 soldiers behind him. Four lamps were alight.

After a pause the King gave me a glass of neat brandy. It was at least four times the ordinary size of glass.

His Majesty asked if I had my paper with me. I answered, "Yes"

Then he said, "Let me see the paper."

Giving it back to me, he said, "Read."

I read a few words, but he broke in, "Yours is not like the paper I had from General Turaine."⁴¹

"No," I said. "This is in dutch, the other was in English."

"Very well," he said. "Tell me what it all means and what is the news you bring me."

I therefore consulted my instructions and began to translate them, article by article, into the Negro tongue.

40. Meaning as yet unknown.

41. Spelling doubtful.

His Majesty said, "Let your boy speak for you."

"No, Sir," I replied. "He cannot be allowed to. Moreover, he would not be able to comprehend the meaning of the Dutch sufficiently well."

"Continue, then," said the King. "I will hear you."

Thereupon, I translated word for word everything that my instructions said. At the end everyone present clapped their hands together, and exclaimed, "Now all will be well. This is what we have wanted for a long time."

His Majesty was very pleased at my ability to speak his language and marvelled at it. He said, "Now we can have a chat with each other every day. No interpreters will be necessary, and there will be no need for everyone to know what we say."

I sat awhile longer and exchanged a few more words with His Majesty, then took my leave and went home.

24th May 1816

This morning I sought permission to ask a request of His Majesty and this was immediately granted. I dressed myself and went to pay my call. His Majesty was most friendly and, showing me some silver ware, asked why such beautiful things were not sent to him any more. I realized that these were the presents the Dutch Government had given him from time to time in the past. I replied that the recent lengthy war had prevented the importation of such things, but now the sea route was open again the General would be bringing goods of this kind out again and would send some to His Majesty. I also mentioned that the Ashanti envoys had asked in Elmina for a silver cup and that the General had told them that he would send for one. At this His Majesty expressed satisfaction.

About the shortage of the 9 Allegible of gunpowder the King has complained unceasingly, though I have pointed out to him that the whole cargo has not yet arrived. He should send to the Camp immediately for the remainder.

I stayed at home for the rest of the day. I had been told that I should not venture out until the King had sent someone to accompany me on a round to the state dignitaries. The need to conform to custom thus restricted me to my house.

25th May 1816.

Note in margin: "Today received presents from King -- three o'clock."

Yesterday evening the King warned me through General Poekoe to hold myself in readiness today and await the arrival of his representatives, who would then conduct me around the city. I am to pay my duty calls on all the generals, captains, caboceers, etc. Two sword-bearers duly arrived, accompanied by others of the King's entourage, and we made the rounds. The whole proceeding must have lasted a good 4 hours. According to a list I kept, we visited 58 persons. They were mostly the King's brothers, sisters, nephews, uncles, etc., and various generals and other dignitaries. I had to travel the whole distance in my hammock.

I had hardly been at home for ten minutes when word was brought that the King wanted to see me again. I immediately went to the palace where I found him seated among his councillors. We shook

hands and I was asked to sit down. The Hinguit called Adoe Say brought me a bottle of drink.

The King said, "Tell me again about the Commany palaver. This matter must not be put off. We must send messengers to Apia, for I have not told him to attack Commany."

I took out my instructions and read out (in translation) the article dealing with Commany. I described the close bonds there now were between the Dutch and the English nation. I also told the King about the unlawful rule over Elnina which Mr. Nieser has obtained by giving presents to the terregrandes. I said that Nieser and the terregrandes had conspired together to send Koema to Appia -- entirely without the knowledge of the General, their master -- in order to persuade Apia to capture Commany and kill all the inhabitants. I said the General was very incensed about this, and had sent me to Apia to tell him that he must take no action whatever against Commany. Coema's message to Apia was dispatched quite contrary to the General's wishes. Since Apia had given me no precise or definite answer concerning the affair, I was now requesting His Majesty to send word at once to stop any action by him. We were completely united with the English now. If any harm came to Commany, the General would be angry and would be forced to intervene.

To all this the King replied, "But what do the Negroes themselves say?"

I thereupon told him the truth, and did not mince matters. The Negroes of Elnina, I said, were so ill-disposed that, without any reference to their master, the General, they had conspired with the 'king and emperor,' Mr. Jan Nieser, to send a message to General Apia, urging him to attack Commany and slaughter the inhabitants. This had much disturbed the General, my master, and he had sent me to Apia to tell him to pay no attention whatever to this message. Apia, however, although I pressed him, had given me no satisfaction in the matter. I therefore was now requesting His Majesty to issue orders designed to cancel any projected attack on Commany, and to issue them with all speed.

The King appeared to be more or less angry with Apia, and said, "I did not send Apia against Commany, but merely to seek for Cudjo Koema, Saffroku and Krala. I will immediately dispatch 2 sword-bearers to stop him. You, too, must send someone to Elnina to let the General know of what my message to Apia consists. I will here and now say all there is to be said in the presence of my young men."

He then made the following speech to the sword-bearers: "Today you will go to the Camp. You will tell Apia that I did not order him to make any attack on Commany, but merely to track down and capture Cudjo, Koema, Saffroku and Krala, who have done injury to me. No attack must be made on Commany at the request of the Elninas and without the knowledge of the General. A king's orders are to be obeyed; those of his subjects are not. Why did he, Apia, not comply with the request of the envoy the General sent to him? He is to obey no orders except those that come from the General at Elnina. If he disobeys me, the result will be on his own head. Tell him that I do not wish to see any more disunity between the English and the Dutch, and that, now we are at peace, I wish no harm to the English. Tell Apia to send someone to Elnina to finish this palaver and to write a letter to the English informing them that, if the Commany people give back to us the Fantes who have taken refuge there, there will be general peace -- we know that Anocance and Mottje are concealed there and are being protected by the Commanys -- but if they do not do this then we will force them to give the refugees up. Tell Apia that there is only one king of Elnina and that is the General. He alone can give orders and no one else. Tell Youw Kokroko that I did not send him south to fight against Commany, but to find out where Apia was. Tell him to listen only to the orders of the General of Elnina. If the General says, 'Stay here,' he is to stay, and if the General says, 'Do this,' he is to do it. When the General of Elnina says anything, it is just the same as if I were saying it."

When His Majesty has finished delivering this message, I asked him about the meeting at Dinkiro in September. He said the Commany palaver was a more urgent matter. He would, however, think about the other and would later ask me to communicate his views to the General. Nothing could be done, in any case, until the Messengers had returned.

During the three days we have been here we have certainly ~~not~~ lacked for palm wine. The King sends me every day four Jars of 5 gallons.⁴²

26th May 1816.

Early this morning, at six o'clock, I was summoned by His Majesty and asked to write a letter to the General. I sent for paper, pen and ink and wrote it at once in the palace. It contained a request to the General from the King. The King asks that, at the first opportunity, an order be sent to Europe for some lengths of old Dutch chintz, some plain red, black and green velvet (from Holland also), some medicines and a quantity of sugar. The last two are to be brought back by the bearer of the letter.

I do not know who told these people that tea is the best cure for all illnesses. His Majesty and his elders⁴³ are always asking me for tea, and I have brought only a small quantity with me. I dare not refuse the requests, and my supply is exhausted. I have therefore besought the General, in the same letter that I have written to him on behalf of the King, to favour me with a few pounds by return.

Having some spare time this evening, I take the opportunity to record that this place is very large. There are at least 60,000 inhabitants. The streets are very clean and straight, and the houses excellently built. The latter are fairly tall, but mostly of one storey only. They are constructed of wood. There is not much plaster-work, but what there is has been very neatly done. The entrances of some of the houses are so oddly made that⁴⁴

The King's palace is very large and grand, particularly when one remembers that it is situated so far in the bush. At Elmina I have heard it said that the

King of the Ashantis has gold and silver doors. This is not true, though he does possess a small window, one and a half feet by one foot, which has its beams overlaid with gold. And it is the same with the 'silver doors'.⁴⁵ It is very true, however, that the King is very rich indeed in gold, silver and other metals. Yesterday, when I visited him, I counted 60 golden bells and more than 60 golden plates suspended from the necks of various slaves. The King himself had a chain round his neck, at least 3 ells long and entirely composed of 'imitation melnis bushes'.⁴⁶ And on the second occasion that I visited him, he had on another chain which was decorated with all manner of shells, animals, etc. Sewn on to his shoes were large pieces of gold and on his right hand four pieces of gold which together must have weighed at least 50 ounces. Adorning his whole body were certainly 100 ounces of gold. The stool he sat on was partly covered with gold; the arms were of that metal and the heads of the nails likewise. In a word, there was gold everywhere. Each slave must have had a good five ounces around his neck.

When I had finished writing the letter for the King this morning, he said to me, "Today I am going to tell all my elders the contents of the message you have written. There is no harm in my doing so. If I do not tell them, they will say I do not trust them. I am their master, but it is unwise to let them become dissatisfied." Thereupon he summoned all the generals and had his linguists tell them the contents of my instructions. They all expressed themselves contented.

I think the King intends to begin construction of the great road to the coast before the end of the rainy season. I gathered as much from one of the

42. The word 'each' follows 'gallons' in the MS, but has been crossed out.

[?]

43. Lit., groten.

44. " . . . nen welgangen op pleinem uitlopende, zig zelve dikwijls niet meer weet uit te helpen." Most obscure.

45. Obscure.

46. Lit., nagemakte melnis struiken.

linguists.

When I first arrived here I told his Majesty that during my stay I would be entirely at his service and that this was my master's desire. (There is nothing in my instructions on the subject, it is true.) His Majesty was very pleased to hear me say this, and remarked, "So long as you remain here, you also are a king. You are my child. I will certainly ask you to do what I require." I said that since he was a Dutchman at heart and had always regarded the Dutch as his brothers, and since, moreover, I served the Dutch King, I was completely ready to obey his orders. This statement of mine gave him especial pleasure, and he said again, "You are my son and my brother."

Present received from Poekoe.

27th May 1816.

I paid some official calls this morning, and greeted some 42 people. While on my rounds I saw a eunuch. He was as fat as a pig.⁴⁷ I also saw some women who had been mutilated for disobedience; their ears, noses, and even their lips had been cut off. I have never seen the like and the sight affected me deeply. Some of the wounds were quite fresh.

Presents received.

28th May 1816.

Presents received. See list.

The weather being bad today, I did not go out. The fact that it rained all day, however, did not prevent the usual crowd of sightseers from visiting me. During my stay here no day has gone by without at least 2-300 people calling. I regret most of all that I have no more drink to give my visitors. On most days one of the caboceers brings me some palm wine.

Sent my own presents to the King.

29th May 1816.

Today is 'Good Wednesday' for the Ashantis. Everyone goes to congratulate the King on this holy and propitious day, and so I went too. As soon as the King saw me coming, he stared at me very threateningly. I saw his look, but went up to him and it was soon clear that he was pleased I had come to greet him. He gave me his hand and said, smiling, "thank you for yesterday," and told the assembled company what I had sent him.

Then he raised his hand and all the big drums, horns, etc. began to play. Amid the din he pointed to a seat opposite him, and immediately I sat down the music stopped. Soon the King stood up again to return to his house. The music played until he had disappeared, ceased while he was in the house, and began as soon as he came back. Hardly had he resumed his seat when his four linguists brought me a very large sheep and a bottle of drink, and presented them with the King's compliments (though His Majesty was present and sitting directly in front of me). I now had to take the sheep away, but first went hat in hand to thank the King. After a short time all the caboceers stood up and took their leave. I did the same, and returned home. On arrival there I found that, as usual, palm wine had been provided.

During the afternoon I went out with the intention of visiting some farms⁴⁸ and learning something about the local agriculture. I am not competent to say much about the soil myself, not having the necessary

47. Lit., 'fat as a mole'.

48. Tuinen, Lit., 'gardens'.

knowledge; such an investigation should be carried out by an intelligent and experienced farmer. Bananas, however, appear to grow well everywhere. Indeed, they are to be seen in such abundance that I can hardly think the soil is infertile. I can say with certainty that from Assin right through to here the soil is very red and stony. More than this I cannot say.

More presents received at midday. See my gift schedule.

General Poekoe and the linguist, Adoesaij, came to ask if they might buy cloth. I could not easily let them make any purchases, because none of my cloth is really for sale. At their pressing request, however, I gave Poekoe a whole length,⁴⁹ reckoning half of it as a present and charging for the other half four English gold pieces. To Adoesaij I gave 4 fathoms of cloth as a present. One of the King's children saw me handling cloth and wanted to buy 2 fathoms, which request I could not refuse, and made him a present of that amount.

Three of my hammock men have asked for advances of cloth to be debited against the wages they will receive on our return to Elmina. I have granted this request, and have given them 7 fathoms, worth 7 conventional symbol of gold.⁵⁰

30th May 1816.

More presents received today. See the gift schedule.

In the afternoon a funeral custom was celebrated and I went to see it. To my sorrow I had to watch a fine healthy youth done to death at the interment of the corpse. This spectacle was very horrifying, at least to anyone who values life, but the Ashantis looked on without betraying any emotion. As soon as the King arrived on the scene the youth was brought forward. His right hand was held firmly in a block of wood.⁵¹ A dagger had been thrust through one cheek and out the other, so that he could not talk or cry out. In this miserable and harrowing state he passed close in front of me, and I was greatly affected by what I saw. I could not, however, abate his suffering. He was then taken to a position facing the King in the middle of the open space where the custom was to take place. After some ten minutes his right hand was cut off with a large breadknife. He at once fell down, and the same knife was used to sever his head from his body.

The King asked me if I was not afraid. I said I was not, but that the sight distressed me. "Oh," said the King. "This is nothing. It happens here quite frequently." I learnt from bystanders that this very morning two men and a woman had met their deaths in the same way.

1st June 1816.

I visited the King today and obtained samples of the chintzes and velvets he requires. I will keep them to send to the General when opportunity offers. Otherwise, no news, except that some more presents came and I have added them to my schedule.

Marginal insertion: "Nothing happened on the 31st May."

2nd June 1816.

Today I had the honour of a visit from His Majesty, which took me quite by surprise. He had his new staff in his hand, and was accompanied by more than a hundred men, bearing guns banded with gold, swords, gold cups, shells, etc. We sat together for a quarter of an hour, and then His Majesty continued his journey.

49. Guesswork. Dutch reads: een prs. lang. p.

50. This symbol looks like: 'Ell'

51. Lit., zijn regter hand in een grota blok.

This is the first visit I have had from the King. Very soon after he had left one of his sword-bearers came back to my house to summon me to the presence. I caught the King up while he was still in the street. He said to me, "Come, my boy, come with me." When we reached the palace, he gave me all his silver ware and asked me to have it cleaned. This I agreed to arrange.

3rd June 1816.

Nothing occurred today. General Poekoe invited my boy to spend the night gambling with him, which I allowed.

More presents received, though of little consequence. I am beginning to get a little rest now, and am not so tired as I was a while ago.

4th June 1816.

No news. Some presents of gold and bananas received, but little of either.

5th June 1816.

This morning the King sent for me to tell me about the death of Cudjo Coema. The excellent nature of this news prompted His Majesty to offer me a glass of gin.⁵² Our drinks came from one of the chests I had brought him, which before today he had not broached. The body of Cudjo Coema has been sent to General Apia. The jubilation is general, for now the Fantis will open the trade route to everyone. The news arrived last night.

6th June 1816.

One of the hammock men is chronically ill and I am nervous lest he should die here. I have sent him back to Elnina with 12 days' maintenance.

Otherwise, nothing happened.

7th June 1816.

No news. Some presents received.

8th June 1816.

This afternoon I was sitting quietly in my house when I was summoned by General Poekoe and offered, in the name of the King, a very young girl for my wife. I accepted her with the greatest pleasure. She is a nice girl, and will dispel my boredom by keeping me company, at least for half the day. Poekoe says that I may take her with me to Elnina, but whether she has been given to me as a present or merely to help me get through the empty hours here, I do not know.

Otherwise no news. Presents received.

9th June.

Nothing happened.

10th June.

Nothing happened. Some presents received.

11th June.

Nothing happened. Presents received.

12th June.

This morning I learnt from Poekoe that the cow which he has been sheltering for me is about to die. I sent some boys to fetch the animal, and had it killed to provide a meal for all my men. For my own part I did not dare to eat any of the meat. Because disease is so rife I have been compelled to kill a sheep every day from the 9th to the present. All would otherwise have died.

52. Lit., witte Geneva.

13th June.

No news.

14th June.

This morning the King sent for me and showed me the captured wife, child and sister of Cudjo Coema. They looked very miserable and starved, and could hardly stand upright. They will all be killed. While I was there, they were being interrogated about various matters which I could not properly understand.

Otherwise, no news.

15th June.

Today I once again had the privilege of speaking with the King. I took the opportunity to ask him for his decision regarding my mission. He said, "I will let you know my answer after this coming Adaij, (or 'Good Sunday'), and will also fix a day for your departure. Stay with your men meanwhile. You are always welcome, and I am pleased you are here. If you went away, when again would I have such a good friend near me? Everything is going very well." He spoke in so friendly a fashion that I could not say any more. But I did tell him that it would be very pleasant for me to know how matters stood regarding my mission, for then I would wait more easily, since the General had ordered me to send my men back if it appeared I would be delayed a long time. But he said merely, "After this Adaij you will know everything."

16th June.

Today being 'Good Sunday' or Adaij, the dignitaries of the neighbourhood have assembled in all their glory. The King did me the honour of inviting me to accompany him and his elders⁵³ to the fetish-place. I accepted his offer and rode there beside General Poekoe.

When we arrived at the outer gate of the fetish-place, everybody sat down on one side, while the King alone, with Poekoe and the linguists, entered. I remained outside and did not dare go in. For such temerity people have had their heads cut off before now. We sat for about half an hour, and then suddenly the music began and everyone stood up to greet the King. First Poekoe came out, with the others, and after then, the King, who was in his full glory and covered with large pieces of gold. He sat in his basket.⁵⁴ The men with him numbered more than a thousand.

I was to one side, with my hammock by me and my hat in my hand. When the King, travelling in his basket, arrived opposite me, he halted and considered me for ten or fifteen minutes. Then he put out his hand, shook mine, and said, "Sir,⁵⁵ remain by my side." And so we went on together. Then the company reached the palace, the King sat under a large tree, and accepted the greetings of his elders, one by one.

On this festival day I was able to see the true magnificence of the King of the Ashantis, and of the senior general, Amanguatia, and of Quatje Coffie, Poekoe, Adoom Atta [short illegible passage], etc., etc.

When the greetings were over, the King stood up, disappeared for a moment, and returned with 2 sheep, which were led in behind him. He gave one to me and one to the ambassador from Malabar.⁵⁶ This ambassador has been here since before the army left. He is a king, but has in all this time had only one audience with His Majesty of Ashanti. They say he may well be kept here a whole year before he receives another.

When we had finished our drinks, the King stood up and we all accompanied him to his palace, entering by one door and leaving by another. The assembly then broke up.

53. Lit., groten.

54. Lit., korf.

55. Lit., mijn meester.

56. Spelling highly doubtful.

I am not in a position to say that the King of Ashanti is a man who knows what he is about. He can argue like a lawyer. His disposition is a happy one, and he engages in much joking and raillery. He is a thick set man, and well covered. When he is seated, he is surrounded -- even when there is no assembly -- by more than a hundred princes.⁵⁷ All of these men have an elephant's-tail switch in their hands, and they watch to see that not so much as a fly alights on the King's body. When he spits, they wipe the floor with their fingers (as we do with our feet), and they are so quick to perform this task that they almost fight for the privilege.

17th June.

Nothing happened. Some presents received from the senior general, Amanquatia, as per the gift schedule.

18th June.

Today I again had the honour of a visit from the King. He came especially to ask me to write a letter to the General, enclosing some pieces of chintz and velvet. I said that I would willingly do this, provided he gave me some indication of how my mission was progressing and how I should arrange matters with regard to my men. I pointed out that the charges which Elmina will have to pay for their maintenance are growing daily. I also said that I wished to know whether or not the King intended to go to Dinkira to meet the General. If he did, then it would be appropriate for me to send my men back to Elmina. The King replied, "I will talk to you about that tomorrow. Make sure you are ready to take leave of me, for he who goes out on legitimate business ought not to remain out long,"⁵⁸ and this is true above all in matters of such great importance as we are considering now." He then talked awhile about the cleaning of his silver ware, and sent for 4 spoons and 4 forks. These he gave to me, together with a large salver, and requested that my boy should clean them. After this he left.

19th.

About 7 o'clock this morning General Poekoe came to request, in the King's name, that I accompany him to the palace, because the King was holding a council and wished me to be present. I set out at once with Poekoe, and on arrival at the palace found assembled the most senior generals, Quatje Coffie and Adoem Atta, and the three linguists, with the King at their head. I took my seat next to Poekoe's.

At first we talked about the war. The King told me that he would not be able to go to Dinkire. He said that, if he did so, it would be the ruin of Dinkira and all the surrounding villages. Even in his own capital, he said, he could not move down the street without thousands of people accompanying him. He proposed, however, to begin constructing the road from his capital through Dinkira and Wassaw at once, on the one condition that I wrote by express post to the General to settle a small dispute which had arisen between Ashanti and Wassaw. This dispute had not been caused by Ashanti, but rather by the people of Elmina.

Some time ago the Elminas had sent envoys by sea to Accra⁵⁹ and thence overland to Ashanti, bringing a request from the Chief of Elmina and his terregentes that the Ashantis should be sent to fight the Fantis and the Wassaws. The grounds were that these two nations were hoping to murder the chief and terregentes of Elmina, and burn their town. He had been putting off sending his soldiers to punish the Fantis and the Wassaws,

57. Princen. This word can also mean 'prizes', and perhaps the sense here is 'slaves'.

58. Lit., want die voor goeden zaken uitgaat, moet niet lang uitblijven.
an Ashanti proverb?

59. Reading doubtful.

since it was by no means his wish that these nations should suffer so grievously at the hands of an enemy, but now the situation had changed. The Wassaws had recently confiscated some presents the Elminas were sending to him, as King of Ashanti, and had turned the Elmina envoys back, refusing to allow them to come to see him. He was therefore somewhat angry with the Wassaws.

There were, however, no other important palavers outstanding and, in order that everything might be arranged conveniently and without delay, he wished me to send a letter as soon as possible by the hand of his Acra⁶⁰ to the General. This letter is to state that if the General wants the road built quickly then, on receipt of the letter, he is to send someone to the Wassaw caboccer to discuss the whole matter. The caboccer is to be asked if he has any other palaver with the Ashantis and, if the answer is, Yes, whether such palavers can be dealt with by the General. The Wassaws must make apology to the Ashanti King, and drink an oath in the presence of the King's representatives. This oath will bind the Wassaws to settle all matters peacefully with the King. They must further swear that, when the envoy has returned from this mission, the King will be able to begin the construction of the road without any interference, and all parties may then live and trade in peace one with another.⁶¹ If these things are duly sworn, the King will immediately begin preparations for making the road. All the materials are ready, and the men to do the job have been assigned. The King hopes to start on the road this month. It is only the matter of the assurance that must be obtained from the Wassaws that is delaying him, since without these he cannot allow the work to proceed.

20th.

The King summoned me again today and, through his linguists, told me that he has detailed a number of officers and men to begin building the road at once. If any Wassaws cause trouble,⁶² he has given orders that they are to be destroyed. He asked me what I thought of this plan. I replied that, since it was the General's desire that all existing palavers should be minimized as much as possible and that there should be no bloodshed, the King must not on any account carry out this scheme. The General had come to Africa to bring peace to the whole country in so far as was in his power, and had no wish to spill blood. The General would certainly open the trade routes and would do so without ruining the Wassaw country by sending armies into it.

At this the King withdrew for a moment with his councillors and, on their return, I was asked where the General desired to have the road. I answered, "Between Commanij and Elmina, though more towards the Elmina side, then running through Great Commanij to Asanankoen Village, Epon Village, Odekoe Village and Sanka as far as Brunicoera, and then along the broad plain behind Cand's plantation, and through the Jout⁶³ villages to Elmina. He then indicated that the King was most desirous to begin the project at once and to drive the Wassaws out of their country. He said that everything would be carried through to a conclusion and that he would do and that he would do what his master had ordered. It would not be necessary for the Wassaws to be actually removed from their homes.⁶⁴

The King, however, was not yet satisfied, and held another council to reconsider what I had said. He then announced that he did have a palaver

60. Presumably Okra.

61. The whole paragraph up to this point is a very free translation indeed and I am not yet satisfied with it. The MS is very hard to understand.

62. Lit., gekheid maken = make foolishness.'

63. Tout, Tont, Zout, etc?

64. There is considerable confusion in the text here. It looks as if, when the councillors returned, they did so without the King, and that it was a linguist who conveyed to Huydecooper the information contained in the last three sentences of this paragraph. It is by no means clear who 'he' is supposed to be.

that must be settled with the Wassaws, and that the road could not be built without fighting. Having thus changed his mind again, he proposed that I should write to the General to inform him of the serious nature of this palaver, and in my letter that I should suggest that the Wassaws swear an oath in the presence of the Ashanti Accra at the General's fort (he did not say how this could be arranged) to the effect that they had nothing against the King of Ashanti; that they would render satisfaction to him if the palaver should be settled; that, if the Wassaws promised this, the General would himself receive what they offer by way of compensation [and transmit it to Ashanti], and then the King will order the road to be built; and that there shall be no interference in this road-building on the part of the Wassaws. Not to cause trouble will be the best course for the Wassaws to adopt; otherwise, they will bring such ruin on themselves that they will never recover from it.

My letter to the General is also to say that word must be sent to the Wassaw caboceer, Entceffer, to inform him that the General will be building a full scale road through his country, and that if he shows the least enmity as a result of this he will pay for it with the loss of his villages.

I would not have opposed the King's desire to punish the Wassaws had I not been convinced that they are amongst the best customers we have. I could not have answered for it, if an army had been let loose on people who have had continuous commercial relations with us and who have never failed to come to visit us even in time of trouble.

All these matters having been thoroughly aired, a further meeting was arranged for tomorrow.

21st.

The Wassaw palaver was resumed today, and everything discussed yesterday was agreed to. The decision is that tomorrow the messengers will depart for Elmina to arrange for the oathtaking. They will be there in 9 or 10 days, and will suggest to the General how the palaver should be settled.

Seizing this moment as my opportunity, I earnestly besought the King to allow my bearers to return to Elmina too, but he would not hear of it. He said, "So long as you are here, you must be carried wherever you go." After much persuasion, however, he did agree to allow half of my men to depart. When I got back to my house, I warned the men concerned to be ready to leave tomorrow for Elmina. My announcement was greeted with many expressions of discontent. I explained that the costs of our continued stay here were already too high and were rising higher every day, and that there was not enough for so large a body of men to do. I said, too, that I could not risk keeping them any longer, because I might be obliged to pay out of my own pocket all wages due when we all eventually returned to Elmina. There was a long argument. In the end, seeing that I could achieve nothing by persuasion, I detailed the slaves⁶⁵ and the three free negroes to remain behind to carry the hammock and act as porters for my baggage, and ordered 13 men without further prevarication to return to the coast. I also said that, if they refused to go, I would withhold their Elmina allowances and maintenance from tomorrow onwards. They reconciled themselves at last to departing.

22nd

Today the King came to see me to ask if the letter for Elmina was ready. I said it was, and had already been sealed. I showed it to him, and in his presence gave it to my messenger, The messenger had already been handed my golden chain and staff and was to set off at midday.

65. Lit., landsslaven.

The King had my boy sent to the palace and there made him, together with his own Accra, swear that they would be in Elmina within 9 or 10 days. He gave them $\frac{1}{2}$ indecipherable of gold for their subsistence.

23rd.

I have not tasted a drop of gin for ten or twelve days. I asked the King today if he would let me have back one of the bottles I had earlier presented to him. He sent me, however, a bottle of watered rum, which I accepted and passed on to my men. Otherwise, no news.

The King says that the General must keep a thousand of the best guns for him: two each for 500 men.

24th June 1816.

The King sent for me to tell me that he has had to halt the express messenger I had sent to Elmina at a place about three hours from here to await receipt of a vessel⁶⁶ he is having made out of wood as a present for the General⁶⁷

25th.

Today in the afternoon the King, accompanied by General Poekoe, came to see me. They brought with them the glasform His Majesty mentioned yesterday. They waited while I packed it up, and asked me to write the General a letter about it. Then both the present and the letter were dispatched with my boy, and when the King and Poekoe had seen this done, they left.

28th.

From the 26th until today, no news.

29th.

This evening the man returned whom I had sent to Elmina on the 26th of last month with a letter for the General. He brought with him a reply from the General, which ordered me to inquire the King's intentions and then return to Elmina. If however, the King for any reason wishes to retain my services, I am to stay a while longer.

Having read the General's letter I made a full report of its content to the King, including the remarks concerning the reprehensible behaviour of General Appiah. I explained that the General was requesting that strict orders be sent to the Ashantis encamped near Elmina telling them to withdraw from that region, because they were achieving no useful purpose there. I also spoke about the palaver of Anonnoe, Coema and Motje, and explained that, in the General's opinion, the King had been completely misled about their behaviour. Apia, too, has not been obeying the King's orders. To all this, His Majesty listened with astonishment, and shook his head to indicate his displeasure.

I handed over to the King the sugar, tea, medicines, etc., that had accompanied the General's letter. He was delighted, and thanked me for the trouble I had taken with half an anker of rum for my own use.

30th.

Nothing happened.

31st July 1816.

Nothing happened.

2nd.

Today the King visited me, but imparted no information as to what he wishes to do following the receipt of the new orders from the General.

66. Lit., een glas.

67. Short indecipherable passage.

He said to me, "Will the General really come here?" I replied that the General would certainly do so.

3rd.

The King said to me today that I must remain here until an answer comes back from Elmina concerning the Wassaw palaver. After that I will be allowed to leave at once in order to report to the General.

I have to record that some very serious rumours have been circulating here these past three days. They are being spread by certain Ashantis who have returned from the coast. Some soldiers among them affirm that Mr. Jan Nieser and the Elmina terregentes told them (giving it out as positive truth) that General Daendels was a very bad man, who had been sent out from Holland to make a dupe of the King of Ashanti; that General Daendels proposed to murder the whole Elmina population with guns; that he had not come here to trade, but to mislead the peoples of Africa; that he had sent me as his envoy to trick the Ashanti King into building a great road through the Wassaw country; that, when this road has been finished, the General would be able, together with the Wassaws, to plunder the goods and murder the men and women of the Ashanti nation; and many similar incitements and villainies. In all this Mr. Nieser, bush nigger⁶⁸ that he is, is in alliance with the foolish dim-witted elders of Elmina, men who constantly oppose the Government and always seek to set themselves above it, and who are unable to realise that in time of war it is only the Government that can keep an enemy away from them and protect them. In connexion with these unworthy rumours, I take leave to observe that Mr. Nieser is a bad servant to the Government, and has long deserved to be brought to book. He is a gallowsbird (though he may well die in his bed as an honest man), and on one pretext or another is very likely to be killed sooner or later by his own people, just as he himself made away with President Hogenboon.

Among other things he has told the Ashantis that he intends to arrange for the 'sword of the seven quarters' to be taken out of the hands of Adan and given either to Quandaha or to the bonko known as Konnuu. He intends doing this because the General is so intimate with Adan and discloses secret matters to him alone, and never to Mr. Nieser. Mr. Nieser also says that he has found a way to damage the General's reputation with the negroes. It is therefore fortunate that the General has the greater part of the negroes on his side. Otherwise Mr. Nieser's statement to the terregentes that the General had sent me to the King of Ashanti to ask for troops to come and murder the Elminas would undoubtedly cause panic among the common people. If they once became convinced that the Ashantis were about to attack them, they would almost certainly try to get in first, and would murder the General and all his officials before the latter even knew the reason for the attack on them.

My advice to General Daendels is to carry the attack to Mr. Nieser, and demand a disclosure of all his dealings with the negroes. Then the General will see Mr. Nieser for what he is and always has been. The Negroes have long wished to banish Mr. Nieser from the town -- he has already been driven for ever from Accra -- but dare not do so for fear he may be under the General's protection. If it were not for this Mr. Nieser would have been dealt with in the time of General de Veer. A word from the General and the guns brought to readiness would be quite enough to deliver Elmina from Mr. Nieser, though this should not be attempted unless there are trustworthy soldiers in the fort and a warship in the roads with

68. Lit., wilde neger The translation is not a happy one, perhaps, but this is what a coastal mulatto might well have said, had he been speaking English.

cannon-balls able to overawe the town.

There is not one negro in Elmina who has not some complaint to make about Nr. Nieser. Every negro would like to see him gone. He is thought to have suborned half the garrison, which is why I refer to the need for a warship.

4th.

Nothing happened.

9th.

From the 5th until today nothing of consequence occurred. I continually hear rumours about the behaviour of Mr. Nieser, who is saying that the General has not come to the Coast to do good but to bring disaster to everybody. It is also said that the General has invited the Elmina negroes into the fort for a palaver, though on what subject I have not been told. I much hope that this latter rumour is not true, for I have no doubts about the general wickedness of Mr. Nieser's activities. He is up to knavish tricks of all kinds.

10 July 1816.

Serious news has been received today from the army of General Youw Kokroko. The report is that he has fought with the Fantis and as a result has lost a large number of men and two of his 'great officers'. These officers were brothers to the King. They are said to have fought very bravely and to have caused much slaughter among other opponents. His Majesty is much affected by the death of his brothers, and by way of consolation has cut off the heads of some Fanti prisoners of war.

I have not wished before to speak of the numerous Fantis who have been beheaded in the time I have been here. To my certain knowledge there have been 80 of them, men, women, and Children. Among them was the Peul⁶⁹ of Cudjo Coema, who met a most miserable end. From midday until evening there was dancing, and amid this excitement for executioners came up to the Peul and one after another stabbed and sliced at his body. Then he was cut in the shoulders with whale-bone knives of the type that women use,⁷⁰ and pepper was rubbed into the wounds. Then there was more cutting and stabbing in the sides and face. His ears were hacked off, then his arms. And so it went on until he could no longer stand, and only then was his head severed from the body. The head was sent around the town, so that everyone could see who it was that had been killed.

11th.

I have noted today with much concern that His Majesty appears to be paying attention to the baseless rumours being spread among the Ashantis by Mr. Nieser and the terregentes. He seems a little cool, and is no longer so well disposed towards me as before. When my boy gets back from the coast I will know more . . .⁷¹

12th.

Today I learnt to my astonishment that the Elminas have dared to presume to send ambassadors to the King. This has been done by permission of their chief, Mr Nieser, but without the knowledge of Governor General Daendels. The envoys are to give the King information along the lines of the rumours I have already described. They are going to declare that everything that I, in the General's name, have told the King is false,

69. Obscure.

70. Met vrouwe baleine messen. Literally, the translation could be 'with knives made from female whale-bone', but this seems unlikely!

71. Four or five illegible lines follow (due to ink showing through from the other side of the page).

and will discredit my mission by every means in their power. They will assure the King of the sincere friendship of Mr. Nieser and his terrenrandes, and will insinuate that the General's friendship for His Majesty is insincere. Thank God the King has not yet seen these envoys and has refused to received their message! I for my part will keep my ears open, and will note everything down that I hear, in order to be able to make a full report to my master when opportunity offers. I will tell him that he has in the Dutch fort a traitor, who presents himself as a white man with a black exterior, whereas in truth he is a negro through and through, a trouble-maker, a disturber of the Government's peace. There will come a time when the only way suitably to reward Mr. Nieser will be by fitting a halter round his neck.

The entry into the town of the Elmina envoys is fixed for next monday, the 15th. Then they will state publicly and in my presence the lies they have brought with them. I will thus have the opportunity to expose their iniquity, and will undermine their reputations so far as lies in my power.

The Cabo Corso people have also sent an embassy, though for what purpose I do not yet know.

13th July.

Nothing new.

14th.

General Poekoe tells me that I must be present tomorrow when the Elmina and Cabo Corso envoys arrive. I am glad to hear this, and will be satisfied if I can defend my master against the treachery of Mr. Nieser.

15th.

About 3 o'clock the King held a council of notables to receive the envoys from Elmina and Cabo Corso. Those from Cabo Corso, however, alone appeared. It is said that one of the Elminas is sick, and their entry into the capital has been postponed until further orders. The rumours to the detriment of the General, my master's reputation are now worse than ever. The King already knows the contents of the messages the Elminas have brought with them, and a criminal could not be worse represented than the General is being to the King at the present time. The King, however, is prepared to await patiently the return of his accra from Elmina. He expects this man will be able to inform him if the General is as bad as is painted or no.

The real purpose of the Elminas is to have me driven away from here in disgrace and to destroy the good name of my master. The King has already been told that the General is his declared enemy, and will have nothing to do with the people of Ashanti. It is also being said that I have come here to threaten the King, and to this His Majesty is supposed to have replied: "This is all very well, but supposing the information is correct, what can I do? I cannot murder the General's envoy, nor send back the presents I have received from him. Whether he brings me good or bad palavers, I can do nothing but send him safely home. I can do no more, even supposing these rumours are true."

I hear the Cabo Corso people have brought presents, but do not know what these are.

The day before yesterday a white horse arrived here for the King. A camel was also expected, but is hold up on the way because of swollen feet. These animals have been sent from Sarago, a place some fifteen days from here. I understand they are intended as presents for my master. I have seen the horse. She is a small beast, and neat and handsome.

16th.

God, Shepherd of Heaven and Earth, may Your blessings be with us!

Most worthy and respected General!

It is with the greatest pleasure that I now have the Honour to inform Your Excellency of the considerable satisfaction I feel as a result of the meeting I have had today with His Majesty of Ashanti. His Majesty showed the greatest consideration towards me.

This morning I had the privilege of presenting to him my greetings, upon which occasion His Majesty asked me if I know of the expected arrival at his capital of envoys from Elmina. I answered that I did know of this, and said to him most earnestly that if these envoys brought any false reports with them about my master, he should clap the lot of them in irons and hand them to me to be sent under strong escort to Elmina and there delivered to my master for the rascals they are. His Majesty, laughing aloud, agreed to my request. I have therefore thought it proper to inform Your Excellency of this encouraging attitude on the part of the King.

The envoys have not yet arrived but, I believe, will be here tomorrow. It will soon be seen how I, as Your Excellency's ambassador, will deal them.

Hoping my faithful duty and attachment to Your Excellency is apparent in this letter,

I have the Honour to subscribe myself,

Your Excellency's very Loyal
and Obedient Servant,

[signed] W. Huydecoper.

16th July 1816.
(Not sent until the 18th.)

The evening of the 16th.

In order to sift the real intentions of the Elminas from the numerous rumors that are going about, I bought two jars of palm wine today and invited the envoys sent by Mr. Samuel Brew to visit me. To my horror and amazement I learn that, so the Cabo Corso people believe, the terregrandes from Elmina propose to say these terrible things to the King:

That the Elminas have come to request the King to send an army against Commany to plunder it and then to go on to Elmina, murder the General and destroy the fort; that the General came to the Coast with no other purpose than to threaten the King of Ashanti and kill the Elminas; and that it is for this reason that they, the Elminas, have come to visit the King and gain his support.

Good God! This news makes me very apprehensive. How can one understand the workings of a mind like that of Mr. Nieser? A man would have to be a monster to stir up the Elminas yet again to murder white men. It is easy to see how this has happened. After the death of President Hoogenboom no punishment whatever was meted out to the Elminas, nor even any investigation ordered from Europe. They have therefore become so bold as to try to persuade the Ashantis to commit a murder -- a murder of which they, the Elminas, can subsequently plead ignorance. They will, if they can, lay

all the blame on the Ashanti King.

The Elminas are arriving tomorrow. I shall apprise myself of everything that takes place, and pass the information to my master without delay. My master must take great care, and not on any account visit Great Commany at this time. May God protect him against all the assaults of the devil and frustrate the evil designs of those like Mr. Nieser who wish to encompass his death! 72

17th July,

At nine o'clock this morning it was reported to the King that the Elminas envoys were at Assaforheem and were requesting permission, on their arrival in the capital tomorrow, to present to His Majesty their greetings. The King is already somewhat wary of this disreputable embassy. He has sent no reply whatever to their messages, though they have sought permission to enter his capital three or four times. Realizing that they were going to receive no answer from the King, they have now entered the capital of their own accord, to the accompaniment of many expressions of contempt from the inhabitants. To the Ashantis, anyone who arrives without having honour done him by the King is an object of scorn and is cursed by the common people.

Their lies will bring the Elminas down in ruin. They do not seem to understand that the King of the Ashantis is an intelligent man, who will quickly see through them. A known scoundrel could not have been received with less honour than these Elminas. Because they could not obtain the ear of the King, they were obliged to have their palaver with General Poekoe. He, however, gave them no answer, and walked out on them in the middle of their recital. They have not seen him since. The King's linguists similarly imbued with suspicion and mistrust, has also rejected them. They have had, therefore, to wait a very long time and then withdraw without receiving any satisfaction or encouragement. Their presents have not yet been accepted. Tomorrow will show whether they will be admitted to audience and, supposing they gain access, what they will say.

I will be careful to record exactly everything that happens. I am confident the King's answer will not be contrary to our interests, but I will hold my peace now. Everything will be known after the great assembly has been held.

18th

Honour continues to be done to me on all sides. The Elminas, on the other hand, have not yet spoken to the King, nor have they even been seen by him. Their abuse will be publicly stated tomorrow. I know, however, that their lies cannot damage us. Tomorrow I will know whether my presence here has been advantageous to my master or not. All will be in the open soon. My reward, however, will have to be especially great, or else I am not the man to be entrusted with such large affairs of state. If I am not able to crown my labours with success, I will hand everything over to those the Government thinks more capable of pleading its cause in important palavers like this. I am convinced that in this present matter my life is at stake. The curse of the Elminas and of their chief, Jan Nieser, has now been laid on me. The end of it all will be my death. I am a young man, only just arrived in the country.⁷³ Mr. Jan Nieser's tricks are notorious, yet I am certain that all I say can be substantiated. I am being very careful not to say anything about him that I cannot prove, for I know him well.⁷⁴

72. A rough paraphrase only. Text here is illegible in places.

73. Pas in het land gekomen. This seems an odd phrase to use if Huydecoper was a mulatto. Its sense may be that Huydecoper thinks of himself as young, and 'only just abroad in the land.'

74. Obscure here, but the sense is right, I think.

19th July 1816.

The envoys have still not seen the King, even for the purpose of greeting him. They sent a message of felicitation to me on behalf of the Chief and Under-chief⁷⁵ of Elmina, and inform me that they have as yet neither been seen by nor spoken to the King. For this reason they do not dare to greet me in person. As soon as the formalities are complete, they say, they will come to see me.

The men who brought this message extracted no word from me. I answered all they said with a mere bow. They are much downcast to see me here, for they realize that, if I were not present, they could blacken the General's character much more easily.

20th.

Today the King sent for me to listen to the messages brought by the Elminas. I have already referred frequently to these, but not in full detail, because I did not wish to involve myself in their lies. The King has finally let them have their say, however, and the following are the untruths they spoke:

That the General, from the time of his arrival in the country, has had nothing to do with the people of Elmina and has not paid them their subsistence money; that the General has driven all the white boys⁷⁶ out of the fort, and the three Government boys also; that he has taken away all the guns from the fort and from the batteries, and has sent most of them to Europe, his object being to strip Elmina of its defences and leave it an easy prey to its enemies; that the General has interdicted all trade with the Elminas, but not with the Wassaws; that the General is in alliance with the Commanys and will not let the Elminas make war on them; that, however if they persist in this war, he will settle the Commany palaver with 2,000 ounces of gold and will then teach Elmina Town and its inhabitants such a lesson with his guns that not a stone in Elmina will remain standing;

That the King of Ashanti must therefore help Elmina to bring about the total destruction of Commany and, this done, must turn against Elmina and, if the General resists, must cause him to be murdered, as was done in the case of President Hoogenboom; that, if the King of Ashanti will not supply men to fight on the side of Elmina against Commany, the Elminas will destroy their homes, flee to Kumasi and live among the Ashantis;

That the General is the greatest enemy the Ashantis have, and has been sent from Europe to find out just how powerful their King is; that it is always being said in Europe that the Ashanti King kills men everyday and is a very bad man; that the General has therefore to try to gain admittance to the King's domains and, if successful, will fight Ashanti; but if, on the other hand, the Ashantis appear too strong, the General is to shoot Elmina to pieces and return to Europe; that the General's sole object in sending me to Kumasi is to spy on the King and assess his strength; that the General is in alliance with the Cabo Corsos, the Commanys, and the Wassaws and has built a powerful fortress at Commany; that, on my return, with the desired information, the General will begin to set his various plans in motion (all this was claimed by the envoys as emanating from the General's own lips, having been overheard, so they said, by one of the boys who served the white men in the fort);

That (in my absence) the General had written to Cabo Corso to ask for warships from England; when Elmina had been destroyed, these warships would be used to take off his men and all their goods;

That the General had sent an exploring party up the River Ancober to see how far it was navigable by ships sent to engage the Ashantis in battle; that it was the General's purpose, as soon as opportunity offered, to see whether Dinkira, one of the chief provinces of the Ashantis, could not be

75. Lit., onderkoning.

76. Lit., de Blanken jonsens. Presumably this means 'mulatto youths.'

captured, for, if it could, then its possession would make an assault on the Ashanti capital easier to launch; it was fortunate indeed that Dinkira could not be reached from the sea; news of this scheme of the General's had been received at Elmina before the General had even arrived on the Coast;

And, further, to prove that the information they possessed about the General's intentions towards the Ashanti King was true, the Elmina envoys stated:

That the General had seized one of the King's men and, placing him in the open space outside the fort, had had him beaten until he nearly died -- and this, despite the fact that the man was guilty of no offence; that, on an earlier occasion, when two of the King's criers came into the fort to ask the General something, he had said: "I do not want to have anything to do with Ashanti," and immediately attacked them and drove them from the fort;

That, Quamena Bietoe Aqua having thus been beaten, the Elmina terregentes went to see the General to pacify him and warn him that the man belonged to the Ashanti royal family; but that the General had sent them away without an answer; and that, further, when it was apparent that the Ashanti soldiers in the area were so angry that they were liable to attack the fort and kill the General, Mr. Nieser and the terregentes, determined to ward off trouble, had pacified the injured man with presents;

That President Hoogenboom had been murdered because, during the recent war, he attempted to hand over to the Fantis some Ashantis who were sheltering at Elmina; that there had been many palavers with President Hoogenboom about such matters; that an additional cause of his death had been his habit of shooting off his guns at Elmina Town and threatening to burn it to ashes; it was because of the murder of President Hoogenboom that the General refused to pay subsistence allowance to the Elminas and himself planned to burn the town;

That the General had sent me to Kumasi without telling the elders of Elmina and, finally, that they now declared that they spoke on behalf of the united people of Elmina in saying that everything I had told the King since my arrival was utterly false and their advice to the King was to disgrace me and never allow me to return to Elmina.

1 I did as much as I could to rebut these statements but in vain. All present had already been bridled and there was nothing I could say. The King, however, had everyone withdraw to one side, and then asked me straight out if I had come to Kumasi to threaten him. To this I answered roundly: "I am a white man. Everything my master has set down in my instructions I have declared to you. If you do not believe me, I am willing (though I had never done the like before) to drink and swear an oath that all I have said in my master's name is the truth. I dare swear moreover, that it is the Elminas themselves who have told Your Majesty the greatest lies conceivable."

The King replied that I was apparently not completely in my master's confidence, because the General had failed to inform the terregentes of my projected mission and this had irritated them. "However," he said, "I will settle this trouble between you and the Elminas and you can depart together."

I quickly answered that I had sent by my master to achieve results, not to palaver. The Elminas must stand firmly by their accusations, because on my return I would report personally to the General and would tell him word for word what had been said. Nothing could be settled until then. I could not undertake any palaver without my master's instructions, nor say anything at all on my own responsibility. All I was

concerned with now was to have the King bear witness to the accusations and threats that were being made and to defend my master against the charges being held against him.

The Elminas questioned why I was defending the General in this way. They claimed that I would not be doing it if I were not in his service, and asserted that it was the white men who had taught me my trade and quickened my wits. I would never be hungry as long as I took the white men's part. I would always be on their side and would never forsake my benefactors as long as I lived. The Elminas said, too, that they could not discuss secrets in my presence, because it has long been known to whose ears such confidential matters would be recounted the moment I had the opportunity of doing so. And then they stood like dumb men, staring at me in silence.

I told the King that, when I returned to Elmina, he must send some of his men with me to see if these envoys would employ the same words before the General as they had so freely used in the presence of the King. His Majesty would then be able to judge for himself where the truth lay. I would be willing to swear that when the time came, not one of these Elminas would dare to face the General. I assured the King that I would neither conceal nor fail to mention everything that had taken place during the present palaver.

The King gave instructions that no one was to say a word about any shame that had been put upon me, and that if anyone gave it out that I was a liar he would be put to death.

He also said that I would be allowed to drink the purification oath that I longed for.

21st.

The Elminas are being abused on all sides because of their attempt to bring me into disfavour with the King and embroil him with the General.

Nevertheless I am forced to record that most Ashantis hate and curse the General, because of his action in ordering Quamena Boetu Aqua to be beaten and refusing to grant his request.

22nd.

Today the Elminas received their presents from the King. These were a cow, 2 lbs 10 [indecipherable], 40 bunches of bananas and 30 yams. There are 20 of these Elminas in all.

I learnt today that the requisitions sent from Tjetjewerry Village have long since been filled by the General. I asked for two ankers of drink and 2 lengths of panegeed. They have not yet arrived however, and I have sent 2 men to fetch them. I did this with the King's knowledge. Maintenance for these men, 1 [indecipherable].

23rd.

The Elminas have killed their cow and have sent me a piece of it. This I accepted but gave to my men.

Nothing to do, except live in memories until we have the good fortune to be in our own country again and can talk once more with our friends.

26th July.

From the 24th to the 26th I visited the King again and again hoping to be allowed to drink my oath and purify my master of the lies the Elminas have put him. The King told me I could do so tomorrow and I went home contented with this.

27th

I learn today that Mr. Simons has been sent here by the General with

the King's stool.⁷⁷ He is expected within a few days.

29th.

On the 28th I heard that the Elminas had tried several times to have an audience with the King, but in vain. The King will not see them.

Today I joined forces with the Elminas in demanding an audience. I was granted one, but they were not accorded the privilege.

The Elminas are very low, and are suffering greatly from hunger. Everyone despises them, the King not least. He continually gives out that he recognizes no ruler in Elmina but the one who supplies him with his powder, guns, drink, etc. The white men are his masters, he says, and he always obeys them. He talks all the time in this way to his generals, and they pass his remarks on to me afterwards.

The boys whom I sent to Donpo Asie arrived on the 22nd instant, but without bringing back any letters or other goods. When he heard about this, the King became very angry. He blames Apia and Barriekie. He has sent the same boys straight back again to tell the two generals that, if they do not want to bring disgrace on themselves, they must forward immediately everything the General has sent, including letters and without omitting any item whatever. If they do not, they will soon see what will befall them. The King was so angry that he ordered two men (who had done him no harm) to be butchered in the presence of all his generals. After this he calmed down a little.

My boys have thus been sent back for the missing goods. For my part I hope they will return with everything, for we are practically out of cloth and drink, and have nothing to use as presents to give members of the King's family and other persons who call.

30th.

I tried again today to persuade the King to let me drink my oath in order to prove to all present that everything I have said to him in my master's name is true. If he will not allow this, I will not be able to tell him the contents of letters sent here from now on from Elmina, for it will be impossible for him to distinguish truth from falsehood in my recital. Seeing my unhappiness the King said, "Tomorrow without fail I will let you have your wish." I therefore went home satisfied.

31st.

Today very early I waited on the King in order to purify my master's name and was at last permitted to do so.

The King sent for the Elminas, and when they had taken their seats he said to me, "What have you today?"

I stood up and told him that I had come to drink the oath and prove thereby that everything I had said in the name of my master, General Daendels, was the absolute truth, that my master had received from the King of Holland the words which I had read out from my instruction, and that everything the Elminas had said throughout this affair would be established by means of my oath as nothing but infamous lies and falsehoods. With this the King and his councillors were well pleased, and shouted, "The words of white men are always true. If they were not, this man would not ask so frequently to drink the oath."

The Elminas now began to look very miserable and dared not raise their eyes from the ground. They were at last convinced that their execrable plan to bring shame upon General Daendels and upon the master in Holland who had sent him to Africa had failed.

77. lit., stool. Probably 'chair' is meant since the Dutch would hardly be sending a stool to the King of Ashanti.

The King then asked the Elninas, "What, then have you people to say? The white man asks that he may drink the oath to prove that all he has said on behalf of his master is absolute truth and to prove also that all your words are infamous lies, full of villainy and incitement and fit to be accursed and condemned by all honest men. What do you say, then? Defend yourselves. Shall he drink the oath or not? The white man says you are liars. What say you?"

Then Poekoe stood up, and said to the King, "We have nothing against the white man's drinking the oath," and then, quivering with emotion, "The elders of Elmina have sent this embassy to us, but its members have given no sign, nor have they spoken any word to show whether what they say is the truth or not. Let the white man defend his master."

At this everyone burst out laughing. The Elninas were no longer showing the courage they had exhibited on their arrival. They had thought to bring a charge against me, but it was clear to all present that I was a better advocate than they. There were three Ashantis standing with the three Elmina envoys, thus six in all, six advocates against me alone. Yet I was the only one that had dared to speak in the assembly and had proved myself stronger than them all. The King's words had been somewhat harshly spoken, and the Elninas and their friends were so shaken and fearful that they could find little to say. Yet had I had no powerful allies on my side, I would certainly have lost the palaver, and for this reason. The Elninas had already bribed the three Ashantis who stood with them, and these men were ready to lay into me.⁷⁸ But the Good God was with me, and had forewarned the King of the Elninas' plan. God kept me, who have so often committed myself to His protection, safe and unharmed.

The man Adoesaij was also of great service to me. There was nothing that I said that he did not immediately and accurately convey to the King. When therefore my words were compared to those of the Elninas, mine were always found to be true. Everytime I touched on this or that wrong done to me or to my master, he reported what I had said to the King, and by means of his influence the King was won over to my side.

The King was now convinced that lies had indeed been spoken. He therefore had the oath brought in a copper basin. Once more he asked the Elninas if they had anything further to say against me which could be washed away by the drinking of this oath. They, however, remained silent.

Addressing myself to the King, I swore my oath in these words:

"I swear that the General, my master, sent me to you in all sincerity and without any hidden plans in his mind; I swear that all the powder, shot and firearms which my master has brought with him are for no other purpose than to be sold impartially to all merchants who care to buy; I swear that my master is a most sincere friend of the Ashantis and will never show any enmity towards their King; I swear that the King of Holland is the best friend the King of Ashanti has and that he sent the General to Africa to bring peace and unity; I swear that everything I have said in his name is the absolute truth;

I swear that the General and the King of Holland intend to trade with all men as brothers, without choosing one side or the other or making war, and that trust may always be placed in them; I swear that I was not sent here to spy on the King of Ashanti or to assess his military might with a view later on to making war on him . . .⁷⁹

78. Lit., on mij in de war te helpen.

79. Short illegible passage.

I swear that everything the Elninas have come here to tell the King is untrue, and damnably untrue, that everything they say they have been told to say by someone else, and this if one single word of all that they have said is true, this my oath will surely kill me."

When I had spoken these words, the oath was administered to me three times, and I took it with the greatest satisfaction. The King and his nobles all praised me for this act, and congratulated me on having won my contest against the Elninas, when they now looked at out of the corners of their eyes. All the Ashantis were convinced of the unshakeable truth of my cause.

Everything was now concluded, and the King asked the Elninas whether, in the changed circumstances, they would visit me from time to time. They dared not say no. The King then berated them, saying, "Do you not know that this man is your master? I do not understand this matter at all. You must at once visit your master in order to greet him. He is my master, too, and none of us can oppose our masters." From this the Elninas could see that the King was on my side, and they replied, "Tomorrow we will call on our lord,⁸⁰ and present our compliments to him.

My servant was also obliged to drink the oath and swear that he knew nothing to the General's detriment, that everything the Elninas had said against the General was untrue, and that, if he knew any bad things about the General and did not reveal them, he wished the oath would kill him.

Report on all this sent today to Your Excellency.

1st August 1816.

Today we had the pleasure of a visit from our greatest enemies. They regretted undertaking their present mission deeply, and assured me they had nothing against me personally and had only been acting on the orders of the terre-gerentes. I paid little attention to what they said, and merely note it for the record.

I gave them four jars of palm wine, which they drank greedily. Under the influence of the wine, their miseries came pouring out, and they more or less begged my pardon for the lies they had told. I was not impressed, and will when occasion offers make them feel their miseries more sorely still.

2nd August 1816.

I have done as much as I can to find out whether or not it is Mr. Nieser who has been advising the terregerentes in this matter of the mission sent to Kumasi with the object of encompassing my death. To my annoyance, however, I have discovered nothing yet. Secretly I am convinced that Mr. Nieser has guided the affair from the start. Tomorrow or the day after I will bring over one of the young men belonging to the mission and will question him as closely as possible.

3rd.

Nothing happened.

4th.

With the greatest difficulty in the world I managed to persuade one of the young men to visit me so that I could find out what he knew of Mr. Nieser and the circumstances surrounding the embassy from the Elninas. I was fortunate enough to discover that Mr. Nieser is indeed at the bottom of everything

The embassy did not expect to find me here. Its members believed that I would already have left for Axin by the time they arrived. They realize now that they were ill-advised to disclose the objects of their mission while they were still at the Camp. Their intentions came to the ear of the King and then they had no choice but to stick to what they had

already said, even though the same things had now to be imparted to the King in my presence. They could not at that stage change their story. If they had any idea that I was still at Koemassie, they would never have talked about the purpose of their mission while at the Camp.

Today the King has sent more men to Dampo Asie to inquire after the missing cloth and letters and the 2 ankers of drink.

5th.

Nothing happened.

6th.

This afternoon the King summoned me and the Elminas to the palace and asked us if we knew anything about the Cobbina Esservie palaver -- in particular, how much gold the Ashantis had taken from him. I answered that I knew nothing of the gold, but that on the General's orders I had handed over the least 10 slaves to Djesie, Awarrie and Adoe. Some of the rest of the story was known to me, but the Elminas would be better acquainted with the facts, since they had spent three days palavering on the matter with these self-same Ashantis.

7th.

One of the Ashantis who, in alliance with the Elminas, tried to traduce the General and bring evil upon me, was today subjected to a great indignity. The King had him placed in the stocks.

8th.

The King is very incensed against Appie and Barriekie. He has sworn to punish them, not only for stealing the 2 ankers of drink and the panegood, but also for holding back the letters sent by the General. These letters may well have been torn up or thrown away. The generals know very well that, no matter how busy the King and his councillors have been with affairs of state, the letters should not have been delayed or destroyed. The King refused to be placated in this matter, and has withdrawn to his plantation. He will not listen to any entreaties on behalf of these two men.

The drink and the letters have still not arrived.

The King returned this evening.

9th.

Today Barriekie sent a two-gallon jar and a piece of glascodeen⁸¹ to the King with the request that they be given to me. I would not, however, receive them. I can accept nothing until the letters are produced. I sent word to the King that he must not take it amiss if I refused gifts in this way.

I understand that a long letter accompanied the presents, and that everything had been dispatched before the army had even set out on its return journey to here. I do not know what important instructions for me and what information for the King this letter may contain. The King has sent a message to Barriekie saying that if he seeks his own downfall he will keep the letter and abide by the consequences.

10th August 1816.

Today the King sent still more boys to Apia and Barriekie to fetch the General's letters. All the army chiefs are much in disfavour because of the way in which, so the soldiers say, they have been trading at Elmina. They have disobeyed the orders of the Elmina general; they have sold stolen prisoners to the Elmina merchants two or three times over; and the goods captured by them they have kept for themselves without sending a portion of them, as custom demands, to the King.

81. Meaning unknown. (Fourth and fifth letters are doubtful).

All the Ashantis have been informing on one another, so the King knows everything there is to be known.

The combined army of Apia and Barriekie has been ordered to come here at once. It has already been at Dampo Asie more than 36 days, though this place is only 12 hours away. Jow Kokroko's army is the only one that is free from guilt. It is expected here on the 14th instant, and the forces of Apia and Barriekie on the 26th. Amanqua's will also be here soon.⁸²

11th.

This evening the akra and other messengers returned from Elmina with letters from the General. I do not yet know the contents of the letters. I have sought an audience with the King several times, but he is too busy with other matters, and has told me to wait until they have been dealt with. He and his generals are discussing the Wassaw palaver and have time for nothing else. He will appoint a day soon when the contents of the letters can be made known.

The originals of these letters, dated 24th and 29th May 1816, I still have not seen. I gather they are the ones retained by Generals Apia and Barriekie together with the drink, etc., and about which the King is so angry. Their contents are now presumably somewhat out of date, because the armies have taken so long on their return journey. Nevertheless, when they come, I will read them to the King and note his answers.

I am puzzled that the General does not appear to have received my letters dated 16th and ultimo July, and the copy of my journal to 3rd July. I sent these with some merchants who were taking tusks to Elmina and asked me for a note of commendation to my people there. I can guess what has happened, however. The Elminas have prevailed upon Apia to prevent the transmission of all letters to here from Elmina and from Elmina to here. They have done this by claiming that the General is a bad man and is threatening the King.

12th.

Obtained no audience.

I learn that the Elmina terregrandes and Mr. Nieser have again sent a plea to the King urging him to supply men for an attack on English Comnany. The King has not replied. The message from the Elminas was brought by the same Ashantis who carried the General's letters.

13th.

Again I could obtain no audience, though I tried several times. I want to inform the King how angry the General, my master, will be to learn that the contents of his letters are still unknown to His Majesty.

All the generals are very busy with palavers. Apia and Barriekie are said to fear for their heads because of the numerous irregularities they have committed.

14th.

No audience.

General Jow Kokroko arrived today with his army and was received with great ceremony. He has lost 15 men dead.

Today we received more presents of gold than we have for some time past. This is good, for the treasury is nearly empty. Since my supply of sheep ran out, I have been forced to give my men 1 indecipherable as maintenance money, and have been able to persuade them to accept it only with much trouble.

15th.

Again no audience.

The King is still palavering with his officers.

18th.

From the 16th until today I have tried by all possible means to gain access to the King, but in vain. The King sends to tell me that he has no time to spare, but that I must not take this amiss. The letters will be attended to in due course and he will give me a very favourable answer.

19th.

I was visited today by the King of Mampon, bu name Attokra, and by General Joww Kokroko. To provide for them I bought 2 beerglasses full of rum for 2 [Indecipherable] of gold.

20th.

At the King's request I accepted to-day a 3-gallon anker and 1 piece of long paneroed from General Apia. I also agreed to accept the 2-gallon jar and the piece of glascodeen which Barriekie sent me some time back.

These two generals have fallen into deep disgrace, partly because they did away with the General's letter, but also because they have been selling stolen prisoners.

The King has already confiscated more than twelve hundred ounces of gold as well as goods and slaves from various officers, and most of the culprits have been fettered and placed in log.⁸³

No audience, His Majesty is still palavering.

21st.

General Poekoe came today to tell me in the King's name that I must have patience until after His Majesty has celebrated his New Year. Then the letters will be opened. The New Year will be held during the next four days, the 22nd, 23rd, 24th and 25th instant.

I asked if it was not possible even for me to speak to the King, but received the answer, "Not possible."

22nd.

Today various greater and lesser kings⁸⁴ began arriving here to take part in the New Year. There are four horses in the town, one of which is of normal size. Three of them belong to the King.

The camel which I mentioned some time back died on the way here. The length of the journey and its arduous nature were too much for the beast. Bad food and inexpert care also contributed to its death.

23rd, 24th and 25th.

These were not audience days, and it was impossible even to reach the open space in front of the palace. More than a hundred and fifty thousand people are present in the town, many from the surrounding districts.

Because of the New Year festivities I have had the opportunity of seeing the King's wives. They number three thousand, three hundred and thirty-three. All are very well turned out, wearing costly cloths and gold ornaments.

On the 25th the King held military parades and tested the capabilities of his officers.

I have spent a great deal of drink and cloth because of these celebrations, and have had to give to my boys for New Year presents notes of hand payable at Elmina for two fathoms and for one fathom of cloth in each case.

30th.

From the 26th until today I have asked repeatedly for an audience.

83. Lit., in dubbele blokken en boeijens geslagen, - "in log"

84. 'Chiefs and paramount chiefs,' but this seems anachronistic.

and at last one is fixed for tomorrow. The contents of the letters will then be read.

Ultimo August.

This morning the King sent for me. First, he referred to the request that the River Bosumpra should be explored, stating that this was impossible for negroes since they had no boats. It could be better done by white men.

On the subject of a meeting with the General, His majesty said that he had already explained that he could not leave his capital in order to stay in other places without ruining them. He looked forward, however, to a visit from the General as soon as the highway⁸⁵ had been completed.

Concerning the maintenance of peace on the Coast, the King said, there is no more to be discussed. His armies have almost returned home, and no ~~further~~ orders can or need be given them.

These are his answers to the duplicate letter of 24th May 1816.

His answer to the letter dated 29th May is: He would like to have them (cows, horses, etc.)

Regarding the letter of 24th July the King said, "What does the General want me to do now? He wishes to save men's lives, and yet the Wassaws will not visit him to settle the palaver. The General takes the position that all negotiations have now been broken off. Nevertheless, I will have the highway made; and as quickly as possible."

The King then asked me, on my return to Elmina, to thank the General for sending him the mirror. He is very anxious to see the writing desk to which the mirror belongs,⁸⁶ for he cannot understand what this can be like. I said it would be sent to him.

He said that he would let me take my departure within a few days.

Primo September 1816.

Today General Barriekie was tried in public from 8 o'clock in the morning until 5 at night and has been execrated on all sides. It is feared that, even if he does not lose his head, he will be deprived of all his possessions and removed from his caboccer's stool. There were six men opposed to him at the hearing.

Otherwise no news.

2nd September

Today General Barriekie was dethroned from his stool.⁸⁷ All his possessions have been taken away from his, and he, who once had 30, now has only one wife left. The King has also confiscated all Barriekie's slaves. Later another person will be elected to sit on the stool. Barriekie's ankles have been shackled for three days. He has been put in log and is still there.

4th

From the 3rd until today I have done my best to make the King order the cutting of the highway to begin, but his answer always is, "Good, good. Have patience. Everything will come out all right."

5th.

I sought an audience and, on being admitted to the King's presence, requested that he would be so good as to drive the highway through to the

85. Lit., de groote weg. (From now on, translated as 'highway')

86. Lit., de spiegel secretaire.

87. Lit., ontroond van de stoel. 'Destooled' sounds anachronistic.

least as quickly as possible, because the General very much wanted to pay his visit during this present month.

At this the King became a little short with me. The reasons, he said, why the work had not been started before now were to be found at Elmina. Every report he was receiving from there gave the General a bad character. He went on, "The cause of my present attitude to you is that merchants returning from Elmina bring nothing but bad news and ill reports of your master. They all say that the General is only waiting for your return before destroying Elmina Town with his guns."

Against this attack I defended myself and my master as much as a man could. The King said at last, "If you will take the whole palaver on yourself and settle it at Elmina so that no palavers whatever are outstanding, I will at once let you go and will begin building the highway. But, as I understand the matter, your master is a very irascible man, and will certainly burn the town."

I said that obviously I dared not take the whole palaver on myself, but that, if he thought fit, he should send one of his own men to accompany me to Elmina to settle it. The affair was not between the General and the Elminas alone, I said, because the King of Holand was a party to it and must be consulted.

The King seemed satisfied with this reply, and said, "Now I am convinced that my people are accusing your master somewhat too vehemently. But let the General come here. Then it will be seen what manner of man he really is. I for my part will not say bad things about him."

And, finally, the King said, "I am fearful lest the General will revenge himself because of all the accusations that have been levelled against him. I know all the Elminas say is not true, but I am worried about the possibility that the General will take revenge against them."

I said that the General would be able to deal satisfactorily with the Elminas.

8th.

For three days now I have been trying hard to persuade the King to order the construction of the highway. All he says is, "It will be done."

Three weeks ago he sent men to Tando to fetch the General's letters, but they are not back yet.

12th.

Nothing happened.

I have not spoken to the King since the 9th instant. No news on the 10th, 11th or today.

15th August 1816.

I have not spoken to the King for the past three days.

Yesterday evening I was told that the King would let me go within a few days, and would also begin building the highway. He is now most distrustful of me because of the evil news being received from Elmina.

16th August.

This morning the King sent for me and, with every sign of goodwill, said that, since the small rains were about to begin, he would allow me to leave very soon and would also start constructing the highway.

When the rains were over, the General would be able to visit him.

He is still puzzled about the delay in the receipt of the letters sent by the General via Tando. It is said that Tando is to bring them himself, and that the General told him to do this.

The small rains have started.

I impressed once again on the King the sincerity of the General's feelings towards him, but all he said was, "Good, Good."

17th.

Today two slaves arrived, bearing the original letter signed by the General at Elmina on 24th May 1816. They belonged to General Barriekie, now dethroned. I read the contents of the letter to the King, who said, "You have told me all this before."

I said, "That is so, but Your Majesty will now understand the General's purpose all the better."

He laughed and said that he had understood perfectly well the first time and had already given his answer. White men, he said, were indeed wiser than negroes.

18th.

No audience with the King today.

Yesterday I saw a number of Malabar negroes.⁸⁸ They were dressed like Turks. They live in various of the King's towns, and had walked 10 hours to get here. One of them told me that he knows Tomboektoe, Houssa and Kagna well, but that no Ashanti is familiar with these places because the King's highways do not run there. Cong is 60 to 80 hours distant from here, and belongs to the King. The King's domains stretch for about 400 hours. His villages are at least ten thousand in number, mostly acquired by war. This total of villages does not include those belonging to the King on the Accra and Appolonia sides.

19th.

All quiet today. Most of the Kings and caboceers have returned to their villages. I now await the King's order for the cutting of the highway.

20th.

Yesterday a man was abruptly beheaded in the street. The reason was that he had put dishonour on the King by neglecting to run away as fast as he could when the King's wives came upon the scene. For this he lost his head in a flash.

When these women are abroad in the streets, they are accompanied by small boys with staffs. It is their staffs that indicate that these women are royal wives. Even the King's brothers are obliged to get out of their way, or run the risk of losing their heads as the common people do. No caboceer, however important he may be, dares to remain on the street if he sees any of these women approaching.

21st.

The King has sent word that he wishes me to attend him tomorrow. He wants to talk about the highway.

No other news.

88. See fn. 56 above. The spelling is quite clear this time.

22nd.

Early today to the palace, but the King was unable to talk to me. All the nobility are discussing with him the matter of my departure. I was told to go home and await a further summons. This I did.

About 11 o'clock General Poekoe sent for me. Arriving at the palace I found all the royal linguists assembled. They gave me 2 ounces of gold as a present, and told me that it was the King's will that I should not leave yet, not in any event until the highway had been started. The King had sent me these two ounces, and now asked me to be patient and await the return of the messengers he had sent to Wassaw. He was hoping these messengers would find out what answer the General had made to the Wassaws. If they returned with good news, he would let me go immediately. If the news was bad, he would send an army to cut the highway through and bring the Wassaws to a sense of obedience. They were failing to carry out the orders of their master and his. In this way, the King said, he was ensuring that the General's wishes would be brought to fruition by the quickest possible means. Moreover, the General's letters had not yet arrived. All this made me more than ever incensed against the Caboceer Tando, who is delaying these letters for such a long time.

The King is well disposed towards me again, and is convinced that the Dutch are his true friends. He is very anxious that I should leave so that I can bring the General back with me on my next visit.

23rd.

Today I hoped to send one of my boys to Elmina, but the King forbade it. He distrusted the Wassaws, he said, for they had prevaricated in their dealings with the General's messengers. I am not to send any letters to Elmina from now on. If a messenger should be panyared by the Wassaws, the King would have to punish them. The General would not want me back until I had completed my mission, even if this meant delaying my departure longer than expected.

No news is good news.

24th.

No news. Incessant rain. Heavy thunder all day.

28th.

During the last four days it has rained from morning until night. The small rains are here and in the bush they are worse than the main rainy season.

29th.

Heavy rain again today. I fear the rivers will become swollen and my return journey will soon be impossible.

At midday General Jow Kokroko visited me and saw me sitting miserably at table, dining most humbly off a plate of choking malaget paté.⁸⁹ He was very sad to see me thus, and asked if I sat like this every day. Hearing that I did, he went home and sent me a sheep and 12 yams, so that I could have a better dinner tomorrow. I was much touched by his friendship, which far surpasses that of other persons here.

89. Lit., met een bord malaget van stikkende paté.

30th.

No news. Have not seen the King for several days now.

Primo October 1816.

Heavy rain. Did not leave the house.

2nd.

Today is the Small Addaij, or Good Wednesday. I paid my respects to the King but, of course, could discuss no business with him.

3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th.

No news. Heavy rain. Presents received from Boating, King of Djuabin. See list.

7th.

I went to see the King to ask if the messengers were yet back from Wassaw. He replied, "No. Be patient. They will come."

8th.

No news. Heavy rain and thunder.

9th.

I learn that for 20 days past the King has not been seen in public. He is said to be busy with his fetish, engaged in the task of preparing for war. Whether this is true or not I do not know.

11th.

Heavy rain all yesterday and today. No news.

12th.

I understand all trade routes have been closed, and that no merchants are allowed to go to Elmina until after my departure thence. Whether this is the truth or not I do not know.
Fine weather.

13th.

Nothing happened.

14th. October 1816.

I hear a great fête will be held here next Monday, but the occasion for it I do not yet know.

15th.

Most of the merchants have now left. They have gone to Accra, Annamaboe and Cape Coast, well laden with 50 large tusks. They say the prices set by the General at Elmina are too high and also that, now the General is in alliance with Mr. Nieser, no Ashanti will trade at Elmina any more. Mr. Nieser has deceived the General into selling guns at 8 (indecipherable) and is being allowed to adulterate gunpowder at discretion. He is destroying the trade of Elmina just as he once did that of Accra. It was because of actions like these that Mr. Nieser was expelled from Accra some time back.

The merchants say, further, that if the General and Mr. Nieser are one, the General cannot be a friend of the Ashantis, for all nations know Mr. Nieser for the greatest scoundrel in the world.

The merchants also say that Mr. Nieser adulterates barrels of powder openly and without shame. During their last visit to Elmina they saw him doing this. At Accra Mr. Nieser used to adulterate ankers of drink, and now he is no doubt doing the same thing at Elmina.

Guns are obtainable at the Cape and other places for 4 or 5 (indecipherable). It is entirely Mr. Nieser's fault that they are not obtainable at Elmina except at the high price of 8 (indecipherable).

I have learnt all this from General Quatje Coffie, who is well versed in commercial matters. He is strongly opposed to the construction of a highway to Elmina, and all because of Mr. Nieser's activities there.

16th.

The great fête I mentioned on the 14th instant is to take place on the 20th. Various Fanti envoys are coming here to seek the King's pardon, submit themselves to him and serve him from now on. They have money with them with which to buy from him a peace settlement. The latter must be arranged before any other business can be transacted.

Heavy rain this evening.

17th.

To the palace today, but did not see the King. He is busy with his fetish.

19th.

No news yesterday and today. I sought an audience, but could not obtain it. The King places all blame on Caboceer Tando, and claims that it is he that is holding up my departure. His Majesty seems ashamed when he sees me.

20th.

Today is the Great Adaij, or Good Sunday. All the chiefs have come into the town to greet the King. On these occasions no business may be done. The Fanti envoys arrive tomorrow.

21st. October 1816.

Today I once again urged the King to begin the construction of the highway, but he said that, since the Fanti envoys were arriving this afternoon, I must wait until they had completed their palaver. I was disappointed, but had to agree to what he proposed.

The Fantis have seen the King, but with what result I do not yet know.

22nd.

Today I requested yet again that the highway should be begun, but the King said I must continue to be patient, and not make things too difficult for him. All would be arranged soon.

Heavy rain this evening.

23rd.

Today the King suggested that, as he had no opportunity to begin the construction of the highway, I should be allowed to leave. Later on, when he had more time, the highway would be started. He realized that for me to spend so long here without being able to communicate with the General might well be dangerous for me. He went on, "The General will be very pleased about everything in the end, and I prefer to have the matter of the highway settled before you leave. I have not yet been told what the Wassaws wish to do in connection with this business, and also the letters from the General have not yet been sent on by Tando. I am waiting for Tando. I do not want you to go before all outstanding palavers have been settled."

24th.

Today I was told the purpose of the Fanti mission. It is as follows. The Fantis wish to serve and obey the King of Ashanti and have brought him gold so that their allegiance may be made binding. The King, however, has told them that he cannot accept them as his subjects until he has consulted the representative of Aduokoe. It is Aduokoe whom he recognizes as chief of all the Fantis. This representative must therefore be summoned and, if he approves, the King will acknowledge that everything the Fantis say is the truth. If the Fantis wish to transfer their allegiance, they must also surrender to him the subsistence⁹⁰ paid to him by Cape Cors and Annamaboe. If they do not do this, he will send his whole army to compel the submission of all Fantiland. The Fantis must also pledge them-selves never to commit hostilities against Elmina for, if they do, they risk a terrible fate.

Heavy rain this evening.

25th.

Requested the King to allow me to leave, for I fear for the future. He replied, "Do not be afraid. The General sent you to me. You must therefore wait. The General will be quite satisfied with you."

26th.

Today I again requested the King to begin the highway so that I might leave. But he said, "Be easy in your mind. Your master is now sending another envoy and so you will be hearing good news soon. Do not try to alter the course of events, for your cause is good. Go home now and await your friends. They will be here in a few days and you will be very happy. A white man and a soldier are coming with Tando."

This news made my heart leap with joy. I will soon be seeing my colleagues here and will be able to return home with them.

27th.

During the past 5 days more than 200 men with ivory and gold have left for Elmina alone. The King has issued strict orders that no one must write any letters. I plan, however, to bribe one of the soldiers to take a letter for me to the General. It may be, of course, that none of the soldiers will take the risk.

To my great delight General Poekoe visited me this afternoon. He told me in the King's name that I will be welcome at the palace every day if I wish it, and may come to talk about this and that with His Majesty.

90

Lit., Kostgeld. See Douglas Coombs, 'The place of the "Certificate of Apologie" in Ghanaian history,' Trans. Hist. Soc. Ghana., III, 3 (Achimota 1958), 180-1 for a discussion of the meaning of Kostgeld, or 'subsistence'.

From this I deduce that I am in favour and the Elminas are not.
Heavy rain this evening.

28th.

I did not dare to visit His Majesty today. He asked why and I sent word that I had a headache, and begged him to excuse me. He replied that I ought nevertheless to put in an appearance at the open place (in front of the palace?) in order to see the oath being administered to the followers of Barriekie. I went there but saw nothing.⁹¹

The King is said to have reviewed 1420 men.⁹⁶ Abo Adie has been placed on Barriekie's stool, and Barriekie himself has been made the overseer of a small river.

I had no conversation with His Majesty today. Heavy rain this evening.

31st October 1816.

Attended His Majesty every day for the past three days.

No news.

Heavy thunder and rain.

Primo November 1816.

Today I put it to His Majesty that he should begin the highway, but he said, "I must await the arrival of the new envoy and hear his news. I am told that the General at Elmina has settled the Wassaw palaver. It is possible also that the General has heard about the lies told by the Elminas and is sending someone to find out what the situation here really is."

Fine weather.

2nd.

I sat awhile with the great King of the Ashantis today. I noted, but did not remark on the fact, that His Majesty is full of contempt for someone. It is probably the Elminas. I have often been told that he says, "White men speak the truth. Some other people, however, will be found out in the end and disgraced."

3rd.

With the King this morning. He gave me a bottle of gin, but the Elminas did not get a drop. He certainly seems to have something against them. They saluted him, but he did not even look in their direction.

The rumours say that the General's envoy, Pieter Woortman, is bringing good news with him, and that the King thinks better of the General than he did. But all will be known when Pieter arrives here.

6th November 1816.

No news for the past three days. The rains are slackening off and in a few days should be over.

91. The exact meaning is obscure in these passages.

7th.

Today in my presence the King sent a boy to Tando, with this message: That, whether or not Tando came himself, he must at least let the General's envoy through; that Tando's actions are not pleasing to the court at Koemassie; and that he must remember that he will have to render an account of these actions later, which account had better be satisfactory.

I have sent a message myself to Pieter, to the effect that he should not wait on Tando but come straight through with the King's messenger. Pieter is only three days' distant from here, and Tando is still at Dinkira.

8th.

Today another party of merchants left for the Coast, some making for Elmina and the rest for Kap Kors and Annamaboe. They have been complaining very strongly about the changes in trading arrangements at Elmina and put the blame for the alterations on Mr. Nieser.

Several large tusks have arrived here for the King. They are probably to be sent to the General.

9th.

The King tells me that Pieter, and Tando also, will be here within a few days. Otherwise no news.

10th.

No news.

11th.

His Majesty, coming to see me at my house, told me that he is much distressed to find that the Elminas are such liars and are in a position to do so great a man as the General such harm.

12th.

No news. The weather is excellent now and the rains have stopped.

13th.

Today being Good Wednesday, or Small Aday, all the chiefs went to greet the King. I did likewise, but was not able to speak with him on business.

14th November 1816.

This afternoon Pieter Woortman arrived here at the capital and saluted me and my men. The King is busy making custom over one of his nephews, and told Pieter to lodge with his travelling companion, the caboceer Tando. He has not yet asked him any questions. I have not so far received any letters nor even seen Pieter.⁹² I imagine both Pieter's and Tando's statements will be heard tomorrow.

His Majesty came to my house and stayed talking for a full hour. He told me that the Elminas were saying very bad things about the General, the King of Holland and me, and asked if I could not settle their palaver with me before him.

92. Perhaps the word 'alone' should be added here to make sense, though it is not in the text.

I answered that this was for His Majesty himself to decide, but that I certainly could not do anything for the Elminas. They well deserved the punishments they would receive at the General's hands.

The King replied that I ought to persuade the General to forgive them. The General would be able to control their future behaviour. He himself was convinced that they had wrongfully slandered the General. I said merely that it might well be that the Elminas ought to be punished a little more yet for their great indiscretions. At this His Majesty laughed aloud.

When he left he gave me a sheep and my men 6 £ of gold to buy tobacco with.

15th.

Today Serjeant Woortman, Tando and I were with the King. I translated the contents of the letters for him very carefully, and handed over the fine suit of clothing sent by the General. His Majesty was delighted with his present, and said to me, with every sign of satisfaction, "I am much obliged to the General our master for these things." The letter addressed to His Majesty also gave him much pleasure.

He said, "These are no doubt the clothes of the King our master, or has the General had them made for me?"

I said the General had had them made especially for His Majesty before his departure from Europe.

The King then asked where was the hat that went with the suit. I said I had brought him this already. He denied, however, that this was so, and said that later he must be supplied with the hat that belonged to the suit. And so I had to promise that the General would send him another hat.

His Majesty then said, "I am very pleased the General is coming here. I will be able to discuss everything with him personally. I wish him to know that I think highly of the Dutch and welcome everything that they do to improve my country."

I said that the General had given me 15 or 16 days to get back to Elmina. The King said that he could not let me go until after the Great Aday or Good Sunday which is due to be held on 1st December next.

The General is satisfied with the arrangements about the 12 horses and 50 cows, bulls, etc., but what will be the price, the King wished to know, of the slaves? It had been understood that the General wanted 100 slaves. I replied that at Elmina nowadays a slave fetched 1 (illegible) 8 £ at the most, and for this reason there was no slave trade there any more. The King laughed and said nothing.

I then asked His Majesty whether Serjeant Woortman might leave tomorrow. But he replied, "Well, now. I will give you my answer in the morning."

He went on, "Now everything is in order. I believe now that you have indeed told me what the General my master wished you to tell me. The Elminas nearly spoiled things for you. I expect you to discuss everything with the General on your return and there will be a strong bond between us for ever."

I said to His Majesty, "The General my master will put me, on my return, under the command of Adam." 93

The King said that this was satisfactory to him; but that I must nevertheless give him my assurance that I would return. He, the King, regarded me as his confidant now. If the General came without me, it would be taken amiss.

To this I replied that I was but an official and had no say in such matters. If the General ordered me to, I would of course come, but more I could not promise. The King said that, in that case, I must write to the General to make him promise to bring me, which I said I would do.

16th.

When I visited the King today I asked him to allow Woortman to leave early tomorrow morning and to take with him His Majesty's answers concerning the Wassaw and English Commany palavers and the matter of the highway. But he said that I must be patient.

The King gave Woortman for his subsistence 2 E and 14 yams.

17th.

I was sick today and did not see the King. Wortman went to the palace but did not, however, speak with the King. His Majesty is making custom over one of his nephews and will be conducting little or no business during the next 3 or 4 days.

18th.

To the King this morning and asked that Woortman might now be allowed to fit His Majesty's trousers, viz. 1 pair of pantaloons and 2 pairs of under-drawers. The King kept us waiting for at least three hours before seeing us. The coat does not fit him, but he tried on the shirt and waistcoat for a moment or two. He complained greatly about how hot they were, and quickly took them off.

He said, "When the trousers are finished and handed over to me by Woortman, I will say goodbye to him and he may leave about the next Great Aday or Good Sunday." After this Woortman and I went home.

19th.

About 12 o'clock at night the King sent for me and gave me the following information:

1st. That since Tando, contrary to His Majesty's orders and against His Majesty's wishes, made peace with the Wassaws without stipulating any conditions, His Majesty has decided to reject this peace treaty; he will, however, abide by the settlement that his good friend, General Daendels, makes in his behalf; everything will be finalized when the sum of money agreed on is placed in his hands and when he receives a confirmatory letter from the General; 94

2nd. That it is the custom among the negroes that, when a woman commits adultery and injures her husband thereby, separates from him for a time and then wishes for a reconciliation, she first sends a sheep, chickens, etc. on before her, and then later comes herself to settle the real matter at issue; Tando in his negotiations with the Wassaws has not stipulated any of these things and has thus not been able to collect any damages from the Wassaws;

94. An obscure passage. The translation is by no means a literal one, but the sense is right, I think.

3rd. That (illegible) the Akra took to Elmina the letters containing the request that the General should settle the Wassaw palaver, but Tando prevented the Wassaws from going there; Tando claimed that he himself could set everything in order; the result was that the Wassaws failed to appear before the General and did not go to Great Commanij either; Tando, with a view to filling his own purse, took the whole matter upon himself, and said that it was the King's wish that he, Tando, should arrange everything; he claimed the Wassaws did not want to go to Elmina; he also told them that it was he alone who could settle the palaver; only if they found he could not do so were they to place their case before the General; the result of all this is that nothing has been achieved.

His Majesty has therefore the following proposals to make to the Wassaws:

(The next page in the diary is blank, except for the words, "See under 6th December 1816".)

20th.

We went to fit the King's trousers for him today, which pleased him very well. He asked me to write to the General requesting that a pair of stockings⁹⁵ be sent to him via Woortman and also some cloth trousers⁹⁶ and drawers for his daily use, with a royal hat.

21st.

No news.

22nd.

The King has given me very firmly to understand that I cannot leave here until all outstanding palavers with the General have been settled. If I go away now, he says, this will lend credence to the reports spread abroad by the Elminas that the General has evil intentions with regard to Ashanti. The King agrees, however, that I should dismiss my boys and bearers in order to reduce my expenses. He will supply me with the necessary men when the time comes for me to depart. I curbed my distress at the receipt of these orders, and was silent. It seems the King is listening to the Elminas again.

23rd.

I asked the King if Woortman might leave, but he said, "Wait until I give you instructions in the matter. Now at last as a result of your persistence I have decided to begin the highway." The work will start next Good Sunday or Great Aday, and Bieter can report to the General our master on the progress of this work." His Majesty added that how the workmen were divided was no business of mine. He would attend to everything, and the General's wishes would be followed.

24th.

The King again took up the suggestion that I should be charged with settling the Wassaw palaver. The constant sending of messengers back and forth, he says, prolongs things unduly and more important matters are delayed.

95. Lit., baarzen, which has no meaning in Dutch except as the plural of Baars, 'a spiny-finned river fish'. Baarzen here is probably a corrupt plural of bas, French for 'stocking'.

96. Lit., een lakense broek.

He proposes that I discuss the whole thing with my patron,⁹⁷ General Poekoe, and then report back to him. In this way all the various points can be dealt with.

This afternoon various merchants arrived here from Elmina. They say that the General is not treating the Ashantis well at all. When they bring their wares to him, he forces them to accept in exchange goods they do not want, and if they object he takes a stick to them. The King is very annoyed at this treatment of his merchants. I am keeping silent in the matter. If I venture any remarks they are likely to be rejected, and this will tend to make the merchants' reports seem more truthful than in fact they are.

25th.

I suggested to the King today that he should make some reply to the General's letters and also that he should fix the time when the highway will be opened. His Majesty said the highway would be begun eight days from now.

28th.

From the 26th until today the King and his councillors discussed the false reports circulated by the Elminas. The Elminas pressed continuously for the acceptance as true of the reports recently received from the town. I stood firm, and pointed out that I could not allow my master to be covered with lies in this way, and that I could not agree to the suggestions being put forward. I said that I could not allow my master to be blackguarded and that, together with Pieter, I would make a full report at Elmina of everything that has occurred.

So involved in this business have the Ashantis become that, when they heard my remarks, they immediately threatened that, if I did indeed tell the General everything, they would consider Pieter and me as their enemies. They said, too, that if the General heard my report in full he would inevitably burn down the town of Elmina and destroy the houses with his cannon, and in so doing would himself become an enemy of the Ashantis. They said that unless I listened to the King's entreaties he would do nothing for me. The Elminas, though the white men are their masters, have always been brothers to the Ashantis. If the General heard the whole story he could not fail to ruin Elmina. It was because the Ashantis had not wanted him to learn everything that they had had me drink the oath, by which I purified him of the lies the Elminas had put upon him. The Elminas, so the Ashantis said, had only told lies through fear.

I stood firm, and stated again that the General must be told everything. I said that the King was not concerned in the matter. The Elminas, I insisted, must be punished, and taught not to make false statements to a King as great as the King of Ashanti. These false reports of theirs would certainly have caused a *rapture* if I had not been here and had not understood the negro tongue. As regards the King and what he ought to do, if he had sent one of his generals on so weighty and important a mission (as the General my master had sent me), and if then another general had sent one of his slaves along afterwards, and this slave had worked in opposition to the King's wishes and had made the King out to be a bad man and, if, on top of all this, the King's own envoy had kept the slave's actions secret so that the King heard about them from someone else -- what then? Would not His Majesty punish the general's slave by cutting off his head?

When they heard this question, everyone present was dumbfounded. The chiefs began to mutter among themselves, "The white man is right. The white man is right. This is serious. What shall we do?"

The King then took me by the hand, and said, "Bronie, you are behaving today in a very hard and obstinate way. Could you not do me a favour, and cut out of your book all mention of this business?"

I said. "No. I cannot and may not do this. I cannot be unfaithful to my master, but must make everything known to him."

"Then you wish to bring ill fortune to Elmina?"

"No," I said. "My mother, my wife and my children, indeed, my whole family all live at Elmina. I could hardly wish to harm it."

"What must I do then, Bronie?"

I told the King that he could not do better than let me write everything down and send it to the General. For his part he could have one of his own men accompany me, and this man, speaking on the King's behalf, could entreat the General to let the Elminas off with but a small punishment. It was certainly true that there was nothing the General would not do for His Majesty. This would be the best method, I said, of persuading the General to be lenient.

The King, however, said that he feared the General would not pardon the Elminas and, if he did not, this would bring shame upon Ashanti. His Majesty would not listen to what I said, and insisted that I must remove from my book everything I had written.

I said (and it was true) that I had prepared three letters to the Councillors at Elmina requesting, on the King's behalf, that they should influence the General to mitigate the punishment given to the Elminas; that the forgiveness meted out by the General would thus be at the King's instigation; that the Elminas would never be able to tell these lies again, since punishment would be hanging over them; and that, in consequence, the King would be in no danger of suffering dishonour at the General's hands.

But the King became angry, and said, "Who among us can read? You talk like this to cheat me, and make me lose my town, yes, even a town as great as Elmina. This is no good at all. We must decide differently from this. Come here tomorrow and bring the three letters, and we will see what can be done to ensure Elmina's well-being and to pacify the General at the same time."

I said that, since the General had told Wortman to stay no longer than 2 days, he would have to leave for Elmina this same evening, and that I intended to send my entire journal with him, so that the General might be acquainted with what had been happening here.

The King replied that Woortman would have to stay until tomorrow, and that it was he, the King, who decided what we envoys did in such cases as this. Then he stood up and left us perplexed. We went home.

29th.

This morning early the King summoned me and the Elminas. He asked me if I still intended to make a full report to the General, or if I would rather do him a service and write to the General what he himself would dictate.

Once again I said it was impossible for me to deceive my master. If I did so, I would break my oath to the King of Holland, and bring disaster on myself.

"Well, now," said the King. "Your master at present knows nothing of this business. Everything that has happened, has happened here in my capital ...⁹⁸ By making you drink the oath I have purified the General of all the ill that has been spoken of him. You must now listen to me, and do what I say. It is not always necessary that great men know everything that occurs. If you do not do as I ask, you are inviting the General to ruin my town of Elmina and are falling out with me and making yourself my enemy. But go your ways, and let everything be upon your own head."

At these words of the King's I became very anxious in my mind, and decided that I would have to agree to what His Majesty was proposing. It was true, after all, that he was trying to prevent harm to the town of Elmina.

(I took into account, too, the fact that the Elminas and the 3 linguists had already agreed to withdraw all the lies they had told and throw themselves on the King's mercy. I felt I had to yield a little,⁹⁹ and listen to His Majesty's suggestions.)

The King then proposed the following, which I agreed to under duress, since I did not wish to cause a breach between His Majesty and the General:

The Elminas said to the King that they feared Your Excellency¹⁰⁰ because, from the time of your arrival in the country until now, you did not sign any contract with them nor did you transact any business with them; with regard to Your Excellency's character and whether you were a friend or an enemy the Elminas had no opinion; but because Your Excellency persistently prevented them from marching against Commanij, they had felt it necessary (not knowing what Your Excellency had in mind in thus restricting their actions), to send to the King of the Ashantis for men, because they did not trust Commanij. By making me swear the Great Oath, the King purified Your Excellency of all the wrong done to you and with this aspect of the matter the King and all his councillors are entirely satisfied. The King has now brought about a reconciliation between the Elminas and me, and has told the Elminas very firmly that they must always serve your Excellency faithfully, saying to them. "The General is my master and your master both. If the General does not treat you well, he is not my friend. If you do not obey and serve the General, you are my enemies. I will always choose the side which is in the right." The Elminas then asked the King to reconcile the General to them and seek his pardon for them because they came here without his permission. They said they had failed to request a permit from the General solely because of their fear of Your Excellency.

To the King's suggestion that the above should constitute the written record of events here I have agreed. I quite see that there must be no unnecessary palaver between myself and the Elminas.¹⁰¹ It is best that we follow the King's wishes or else the chief object of my mission will be thrown away.

Everything was now done, and the King sent for a large bottle of rum and a fat sheep for our sustenance, saying that these were to show that we were friends and would remain so.

98. Short indecipherable passage here.

99. Lit., de bot vieren. ('To pay out a rope' is een touw bot vieren.)

100. At this point the text takes on the form of a letter or explanation addressed directly to General Daendels.

101. There is considerable amplification and paraphrasing here. The text is highly elliptical.

He then made all my men and those of the Elminas swear on their lives that everything that had happened here would remain here, and that no-one would repeat any of it at Elmina, lest rumours came to the General's ears and caused trouble. Each man had to speak the following words:

"If, when I am in Elmina, I ever say one word about this palaver between the white man and the Elminas to anyone, whoever he may be, I break the Oath of the King of the Ashantis and forfeit either my head or the sum of 120 preguns." (A pregun is 2 (indecipherable)).

Woortman had to swear too, and then everything was finished. I must state, however, that the true story as originally told by the Elminas is accurately recorded in my journal under date 20th July, and that I have not dared to remove this entry. The three letters written to their Honours, Messrs. van Voit,¹⁰² Malet and Oldenburg, were torn up in the presence of the King and all his chiefs. This was done on His Majesty's orders.

The King gave me his hand, and said, "The highway will be begun on Monday. The General our master will then be able to come here and enjoy my hospitality."

The joy of the Ashantis was unbounded.
(I have removed the original report from my journal.)

30th November 1816.

Went to the King, and requested that Woortman might now be allowed to depart. His Majesty said he might leave next Tuesday.

Primo December 1816.

(Marginal note: "Today is Great Aday, or Good Sunday.")

The King asked me this morning if I were not very happy that the highway is to be begun tomorrow. I said I would be a lot happier if I myself were taking the news about it to the General. The King said, laughing, "You cannot go until all palavers are finished. You are jealous of Pieter because you cannot go with him."

2nd December.

This morning in my presence the King issued his instructions to the various chiefs who are to supervise the construction of the highway. They asked for 6 preguns or 3 to 8. ¹⁰³ I have advised the General of this request in my letter of today's date.

Immediately the money was paid over, the highway was begun. It is more than forty feet wide. The King, all his chiefs and I went to look at the work this afternoon. His Majesty was well pleased.

3rd December.

Woortman was ready to leave today, but the King stopped him. The reason is that the Wassaw envoys are due tomorrow, and the King wants Woortman to hear what they have to say before he goes.

102. Spelling doubtful.

103. Sic. Meaning obscure.

4th ditto.

Today the Wassawa arrived. There are 4 of them. They have greeted the King and have been sumptuously received.

I went to look at the highway, and found the labourers working cheerfully away. They tried to persuade me to send for presents for them.

5th.

Today the Wassaws disclosed the purpose of their mission. It appears to be of small importance. They say that Tando told Caboceer Eltefor that the King wanted to know whether Eltefor wished to discontinue his allegiance to Ashanti . . . Two chests of gin have arrived for the King . . . Everyone present expressed contempt for both Tando and the Wassaws. 104

6th December.

The King summoned both me and the Elminas today with a view to examining with us the Wassaws' intentions. They were asked whether they were going to co-operate with the General in settling the palaver or whether they regarded him as a fool and were planning to impose on him and delay the building of the highway. The King told them that, if they had anything to say, they should say it. He assured them that the General would, from compassion alone, make allowances for their stupidities if they been guilty of any. But the Wassaw envoys answered that they were only small boys, and would have to discuss these great matters with their masters.

At this all the generals, officers, etc., stood up and, at the King's order, raised their swords and swore this oath to the honour of our General, all speaking very seriously. Each in turn said these words:

"I swear by the Great Oath of Cormantijn that, since the General our master has charged the King of the Ashantis with the task of building a highway in order that the said General may honour our King by visiting him here in his capital, this highway shall be constructed without any changes of plan, and that, if any man opposes the General's wishes in this matter, I will take up arms against him and prove that I am the faithful servant of King Saij.

I further swear that if Eltefor or any of the Wassaws tries to deceive the General with trickery or opposes his passage (to the capital), I will take up arms and will, without mercy, drive Eltefor away from the highway, in order that the highway may be constructed where the General wants it. This I swear by the Oath of Cormantijn and Saturday."

Then the King gave orders that, in honour of the General, every man present should pass in turn before me and take a second bath. And they all very willingly held up their swords and, with the blades almost touching my nose, spoke these words:

104. An extremely obscure passage. The nearest I can get to the Dutch is: "Dat Tando aan de Cabocier Eltefor had gaan zeggen, dat de Koning vraagd indien Eltefor hem niet langer wil calio haren. hij hem Tando foefoe terre op de rug moeten gooijen ten bewijzen hij de Koning niet meer wil trouwen en zonde 2 kelders genever voor de Koning. Waarover elk een zeer gr??? wierd, en Tando met de Wassasche verragten."

"Bronie, I swear by the Great Oath of Cormantijn; I swear by Saturday and by my King Saij; that since your master the General wants the highway built, it shall be built; and if anyone tries to delay the General by prevaricating,¹⁰⁵ I will remove the very roof from his house.

I swear by the Honour of your General that, if any man tries to prevent the highway now decided upon from being built, he will pay for it with his goods, his slaves and his head. I swear that the wishes of the General our master will prevail."

When all this was over, the Wassaws were left in no doubt that this was no joking matter, and they muttered terribly against Tando. They claimed that Tando had deceived them badly. They all said that they now saw clearly that this was a serious business.

7th December.

Went to look at the highway today. The work is going on well. General Quatje Coffie is beginning to dig the roots up out of the ground.

Wortman is ready to set off this evening. The King made the following speech to him:

"Pieter! You are now ready to depart, accompanied by my envoys and by those of the Elminas. Go with God's blessing. Greet the General my master heartily on behalf of me and all my officers. Tell him that, although the Elminas have done wrong so far as he is concerned, he must, out of consideration for me, pardon and forgive them. The Elminas and I are now united, and wish always to honour and serve him to the best of our ability. Tell him we desire no other master than the Dutch, and that he is the chief of us all.

Tell the General my master that I expect him here with as little delay as possible and that the highway will soon be open. With regard to the Wassaw palaver, I ask that he let me know by express messenger whether the Wassaws intend to pay or not, so that I can decide on my course of action concerning them. If they wish to please me, they will keep out of the way. Otherwise they will become children of death."

8th December.

No time to spare today. I have been busy for some time writing a letter on the King's behalf to the General, and today have managed to finish it. Woortman leaves tomorrow.

9th.

This morning at 5 o'clock or daybreak Woortman departed. I have urged him not to spend 70 days on the return journey, and not to be tricked by the Ashantis into taking more than 14.

I walked for two hours down the highway, and found it all ready on this side. All that remains is for the roots to be dug out of the ground. When removed, these roots will be handed over to the Queen and her slave-girls for the making and sweeping of floors. 106

105. Perhaps "by humbugging him" would be a better translation.

106. Lit., om gelijk vloers te maken, en schoon te vegen.
(Mod. Dutch gelijkvloers = 'on the ground floor.')

10th.

No news. My eyes are now fixed on the arrival of the General, because I expect to be able to return home with him. I see very clearly now that the King hopes to keep me here until His Excellency comes.

17th.

From the 11th until today, no news. Have not spoken with the King in all this time.

18th December.

I went to look at the highway today, and noticed it was not the same width along the whole of its length. I reported this to the King, and he said my wishes in the matter would be attended to tomorrow.

The workmen complain bitterly that they are not receiving any drink. I told them to wait a little and they would get some. In the meantime they must carry on cheerfully. They were grateful for my words, and went back to their tasks yelling and singing with excitement.

20th.

Did not see the King. No news yesterday and today.

21st.

No news.

23rd.

No news yesterday. This morning I wrote a letter to the General for the King, stating that His Majesty is sending the General a slave-girl with ivory and 2 (illegible) 4 E/ in gold. The girl is to buy some fine cloth on His Majesty's behalf.

On these occasions the King is very pleased when he appends his cross. He says, "Look, I also can write. What do you think, is not my hand better than yours?"

28th December 1816.

No news since the 24th. I have been three times to examine the work on the highway. It is going on but slowly, and the labourers keep asking for drink.

30th.

Yesterday the King forbade me to write any letters of any kind either to the General or to my own people without his permission. Nor am I to give any messages to the merchants, but must patiently await the return here of the King's Akkra. His Majesty is determined that no one shall leave before the answer concerning the Wassaws has been received. He says that if I send any letters I will become a very bad friend of his.

I noticed today that the workmen have not got on much further with the construction of the highway. They are becoming very disgruntled.

31st December 1816.

No news.

Primo January 1817.

Today being New Year's day I went to call on the King, and received from him a present of 1 (illegible) 2 £ of gold, 1 sheep and 10 yams. He asked me what my master would have given me for New Year if I had been at Elmina. I said I would certainly have received 5 (illegible) from my master.

The King said, "Will the present be kept for you, then, because you are away?"

"Without a doubt," I said. "It will be kept for me very faithfully."

The Elminas received 9 £.

4th January 1817.

Nothing happened from the 2nd until today. The highway is going ahead very slowly, at least on this side of the capital. The Kings of Adiabon and Bekwaij are praised by the people for the good work their men are doing.

5th January.

Today I asked the King if the highway might be pushed forward more quickly, for it is hardly progressing at all. He said, "I will look at it myself tomorrow, and give orders for the work to be speeded up."

6th ditto.

This afternoon His Majesty and all the chiefs went to look at the highway. I do not yet know what they thought of it. I am told that the son of the most senior general, Amanquatia, arrived last night from Elmina and has brought some letters for me.

7th January 1817.

Very early this morning I was summoned by the King. His Majesty handed me a letter from the General our master which had been brought by the son of Amanquatia. It contained good news, for it praised the friendly treatment received by him from our General. The King was most pleased to receive this report, which indicated the true feelings and good intentions of the General towards him.

The letter, however, also touched His Majesty a little on the raw. He told me that the General must understand that in sending me he had sent a good friend to the King of the Ashantis, and must therefore not object if I stay here a long time. Nor should the General be vexed if I am not allowed to leave until all outstanding matters have been decided. For my failure to communicate with the General, His Majesty accepts full responsibility. From the time the Elmina envoys arrived he had absolutely forbidden the writing of letters. This prohibition was to last until the arrival of Tando. It was Tando, with his lies and untruths, who had interminably delayed matters. Otherwise someone would unquestionably have been sent to Elmina to settle the Wassaw palaver. The King repeated that he took upon himself alone any blame that might otherwise fall on me. He knows I would have written the necessary letters to Elmina if I had been allowed to do so. A settlement of the whole matter has been much delayed because of the untruths the Elminas have been telling him.

Regarding the slaves, cows, horses, etc., His Majesty has already sent an answer to the General via his Accra.

A report concerning the highway has also been sent by the same means.

His Majesty's refusal to allow any letters to be written stems from the statements made by the Elminas on 20th July 1816. Because of what they said, he decided to institute inquiries with a view to finding out, first, whether their statements were true and, secondly, whether I had been acting against his orders and had sent any information to the General without his knowledge. If I had in fact been going behind his back, he would then and there have refused further dealings with the General, and would have regarded my mission as a deliberate deception. This is why, in order to prevent any disunity between my Government and the King, I have adhered to His Majesty's orders, and have kept everything in my head and within the pages of my journal, so that I will be in a position to recount everything personally when I return to Elmina and place this my journal on the Council table there. Your Excellency ¹⁰⁷ must therefore not condemn me, for I have never been unfaithful to Government, no, not even when our affairs were at their lowest ebb. Your Excellency instructed me to behave with prudence, and I have always remembered this and have sought to please the King in all my actions. The Government ought not to blame me in this matter; its judgment should rather fall on the King of the Ashantis. I am sure there is no one, apart from my enemies, who is seeking to bring me into disfavour with Your Excellency or to damage my good name, and this is why I am content to let my journal show how I have been conducting myself since my arrival in this place. The King is my witness that I have continually pressed him for permission to leave and that my request has always been refused.

The King said to me, "The General my master has sent you to me, and would not be pleased if you were to depart without my approval. The General would not like it, moreover, if they Commanys and the Wassaws were attacked, yet neither of these two palavers has yet been brought to a satisfactory conclusion. How then can the General require you to return empty-handed? It was the General who asked that the nations might be spared ¹⁰⁸ and outstanding matters settled by negotiation. Otherwise my weapons would long since have driven the highway through the Wassaw country, though this is precisely what the General has always hoped to avoid. You must stay here until these two palavers have been settled, or at least until there is some agreement on terms."

The King's arguments have convinced me that he is in the right, and that what I have been saying about leaving is illconsidered.

8th.

I again sought the King's permission to leave. ¹⁰⁹ He became angry, and said, "I agree that you must on no account offend the General your master. Write him a letter, therefore, which I will send to him protected by my staff. Beg his pardon for your silence. It is certainly true that, if I had not forbidden it, you would have written to him every week.

The General will pardon you as soon as my boy arrives at Elmina with the letter. If he does not, he goes against my wishes, for you did not come here on your own account but on his.

107. Huydecoper relapses here into direct speech again.

108. I.e., spared the destruction of war.

109. Sic., though this is an odd entry in view of the sentence that precedes it.

With regard to the Elmina palaver you can make your own report to the General, but your book must positively not be allowed to leave here before you do. Full responsibility for anything that might happen would fall on you if the book were to be sent away from here. I have long regarded Elmina village as mine.

The fact that you have not been able to write to the General is due to me, and my boy, when he reaches Elmina, will explain everything to your master on my behalf. If the General is truly my friend, as he says he is, he will surely not accuse you of misleading the Government by your silence. Go home now, and do not be afraid. Write a short letter to your master, and lay everything on me."

The King's words gave me some reassurance, but I was not entirely satisfied. I asked him coldly whether or not it was true that I had once told him that the General would be angry with me if I did not write in full to Elmina.

To this the King replied, "I see now that you spoke truly on that occasion. Nevertheless I am not going to see my town of Elmina shot at with cannons and burnt to the ground because of the wickedness and villainy of bad rulers. I told you before that I did not believe the Elminas' story; otherwise I would not have allowed you to drink the oath in order to purify your master's name. When you did that we all realized that you had right on your side."

Despite these further reassurances from His Majesty, I was still not easy in my mind. I had to agree, however, to a letter being dispatched and to not going myself. The letter went off today.

I ventured to ask the King about Djesie, but he would not hear a word on the subject. He says Djesie is such a rascal that he cannot let me see him. Djesie has apparently stolen a great deal from the King and is in disgrace.

Regarding the slaves, cows, horses, etc., intended as return presents for the General I have received no answer as yet. The King says he will give his reply when I finally leave.

9th January 1817.

Many people visited me today. This was solely because of the very friendly reception given by the General to the son of Amanquatia in Elmina. Now all the Ashanti merchants are intending to trade with the General. The more than two thousand merchants who went to Annamaboe and Caap Corse are now back home again, and most of them report heavy losses. The few who went to Elmina praise the General's trading methods very highly, but complain about the preference given to the son of Amanquatia. Everyone is now providing himself with trading notes 110 in order to do business with Elmina.

General Poikoe's cashier or treasurer has been instructed by the King to send some 25 ounces of gold to Elmina for the purpose of buying gunpowder. The King wishes to see if the General will meet him in the matter of price, or whether he will treat him as on a par with his subjects. For this reason I have thought it necessary to write a letter (which will follow later) to the General, requesting him to make a distinction between the King's trade and that of all other persons, and to treat the King's representatives as he did the son of Amanquatia. By these tactics Elmina can gain the whole of the Ashanti trade.

The Ashantis complain very bitterly about the English and their agents, saying that they were very ill received at the Cape.

Affodoe Cudjo and Quassie (illegible) complain that the (illegible) at Elmina have treated them very badly. These two young men tell me that they had made fine profits trading, but, they say, "The white men in the fort gave us their word that the account was settled, but when we were outside the fort we were forced by some of the men there to hand over money. 111 These men said to us, 'The white men made a mistake in their reckoning; you owe us such and such an amount.' We refused to pay and were very badly treated." 112

I have no doubt that this story is a tissue of lies but, since it will reflect badly on the General's reputation if repeated, I feel obliged to report it now.

I have counted up all the trifles the King is sending to market. I wished to test to see whether he was including the bulk of his goods now or later. 113

Affodoe Gudjo is now the confidant of Mr. Nieser and therefore wants watching.

10th January 1817.

Today I went on foot to look at the highway. To my astonishment I found that the roots of the trees that have been cut down are already growing up again, and there are numerous holes at least three feet deep. The men are working very slowly.

I learnt this evening, however, that the highway on the Insadjiesoe 114 side is well advanced. The overseer is present there all the time himself.

11th.

No news.

12th.

This being the Great Adaji or Good Sunday, the King gave me and the Elminas a sheep to share among us.

Amanquatia's son has been complaining to his father about the brusque reception accorded him by Mr. Nieser. He says he went to Mr. Nieser's house to present his father's compliments and, when he had been taken into the main room . . . 115

15th.

No news from the 13th until today. I have noticed that the merchants are now anxious to set out for Elmina without delay.

16th.

Early today His Majesty went to his plantation. He will be returning on Monday next. I asked if I might accompany him, but he said this was out of the question. "I am going to make fetish," he told me, "and will be back very soon."

111. Lit., engels.

112. This paragraph is very roughly translated. The MS is so unclear that I can make out only three words in four.

113. Meaning obscure.

114. Spelling doubtful.

115. The next five lines are completely illegible.

19th January 1817.

From the 17th until today there has been nothing to report. The town is quite empty. Everyone has gone to Brimman with the King.

I am very surprised that the King's accra has not sent back any messages about the state of affairs at Elmina. His Majesty gave his positive instructions that he was to send someone back within thirty days to let us know whether or not the Wassaws were ready to reach agreement. It appears he has forgotten these orders.

20th.

His Majesty returned today in great pomp from Brimman. During the journey back he sent for me by exprss messenger. I hastened to obey his order, and met him at a village called Kroboe. He asked me to help him put on his suit of clothes. I did this and then accompanied him back to the capital, travelling in great splendour.

I must say that His Majesty looked very well. In all the villages along the way men, women and children came running out to see him in his uniform. All exclaimed that they had never before seen such beautiful clothes. The name and high reputation of our General were proclaimed aloud, the blessings of God were invoked, and the hopes of all the people for his long life were fervently expressed. Everyone execrated and hooted at the Elmina envoys because of the lies they had told about the General their lawful master. The women shouted, "O Lord, let this General who pleases us so well come here so that we may give him proper thanks for the great honour he has done to our King Saij."

The streets were so full that people were imploring one another to make room so that everyone could see the King.

When I had dressed the King in his clothes, he stood in front of a large mirror and praised the General's generosity many times. He gave me his hand, and said, "Brother, your master is my master. When you return home, tell him that I thank him yet again for the beautiful things he has sent me. I will always wear these clothes in the General's honour."

He said he preferred breeches to trousers, since the former showed off his calves better. ¹¹⁶ I said the General would send him some breeches as soon as there was an opportunity.

21st.

Today His Majesty summoned me and handed to me two letters from the General. One was addressed to me. I translated mine first and then the one addressed to the King. From His Majesty's expression I could see that the contents of the letters did not please him. He said, "What bad things have you been doing here to make the General so angry with you? You have always told me everything that has been in the letters you have received, have you not? As for the return presents of slaves, cows and horses, I have always said that I would send them when you leave here. Have you not told your master this in your letter?"

116. Lit., hij wenschte liever een korte broek te her?????, om zijne kuiten te laten zien.

I replied, "Although my master states that I am to supply him with full information about these matters on my return, I have in fact written a full account in my journal and also in the letter I sent with Woortman. I do not understand why my master is so dissatisfied with me. He has now requested that Your Majesty let me go. I would therefore be acting in direct disobedience of his orders if I were to remain here, as you have so often suggested I should, until the return of your accra. I am clearly out of favour and I certainly do not want my position to become worse. My master is unlikely to believe that Your Majesty forbade me to communicate to him the false reports circulated by the Elminas or, indeed, that I was unable to leave here without your permission. I will therefore not stay here one day longer, and I now request answers to all the questions which, from time to time, I have translated and put to you for your consideration. I will leave here early tomorrow morning or, at the latest, on the morning of the day following. Please give me your answers."

To this His Majesty replied, "Very well then, Sir! Your master seems to think he has sent you to a king of little importance and not to the King of the Ashantis. I have nothing to say to you, except that your master apparently does not value my friendship. Otherwise he would surely be more patient and would be willing to wait until I give you your congé in the proper manner. You may go tomorrow, but you will hear nothing further from me."

I said I could not leave him like this, and that he could not mean me to depart in so abrupt a fashion. It would not be in conformity with the friendship which has always existed between the Ashanti nation and my government.

"Your master understands perfectly well that, when he insults you in his letters, he is insulting me. Go then, and make your report to your master."

And so, in accordance with my masters immutable instructions, I held my peace and sorrowfully left the palace.

22nd.

Sought an audience today, but in vain. The King sent to tell me that he had nothing to say to me, and that I should obey my orders. I pressed as hard as possible for a different answer, but the message came back, "Obey your master's orders. He has offended me deeply with these strict orders of his. His last two letters have not pleased me."

I said to the messengers, "I cannot leave like this, without my proper congé."

But I was again told that I could go, and that a message would be sent to the General to thank him for the insult he had paid to the King of the Ashantis. The King's young men also assured me that His Majesty would not see me again and that I might leave Coemassie tomorrow, since that was what I desired.

I am in great perplexity. The King wants me to stay; the General my master insists that I go. What shall I do? To go will irritate the King; not to go will bring me into disfavour with the Government. In the circumstances the General's letter is the best counsellor. I will leave here tomorrow without fail. I prefer to risk the King's displeasure than the General's.

23rd.

In accordance with the awful ¹¹⁷ orders repeatedly received from the General, and notwithstanding the refusal of the King to give me permission, I left here today. We began our journey in the afternoon, because I was anxious to obey the letter of 8th January which said we should not sleep another night in Coemassie. We had not been long on the way, however, when various officers barred our passage. They asked me where I was going.

I replied, "To Elmina."

"Where is the King's token?¹¹⁸ Where is the King's swordbearer who should be preceding you? Without these you will not be allowed to go beyond Assafoe. You must return."

I went resolutely on but, on arrival at Assafoe, was opposed by Senior Officer Quatje Coffie, who asked to be shown the King's token.

I said the King had told me I might leave.

"No," he said. "That is untrue. You are travelling without the King's permission. Stay here, and I will immediately ask the King whether he has given you leave to go or not."

I was thus prevented from continuing, and my boys had to be recalled.

I had been waiting a good two hours when I saw approaching in the distance a number of senior officers being carried in litters. Coming up to me they asked sternly in the name of the King why I was travelling on foot, why I had left at all, and why I had not waited until the King arranged for me to depart with the same dignity with which I had come.

I said the King knew all my reasons and that I definitely wanted to leave. But General Poekoe and the 3 royal linguists said that the King most earnestly desired me to return, and would speak to me tomorrow about my eventual departure. I rejected what they said, and explained that the King had often told me he would let me go. I therefore could not wait any longer and would continue on my way. It was no trouble to me to travel to Elmina on foot, especially since my master appeared to think I had only been staying in Coemassie for my own pleasure.

But my protests were of no avail. I was brought back to Coemassie, and was told that the King would see me tomorrow. I was then conveyed, in an extremely irritated frame of mind, to my old quarters. However, nothing worse has happened so far.

24th January 1817.

I thought the King would summon me today to discuss my return journey, but nothing has happened. God knows when I will finally get away from here.

25th.

This afternoon the King sent for me to attend an assembly of the chief officers. He asked me once more why I wished to leave, whether my master wanted to break off all ties of friendship with Coemassie, and why my master should want me to go without waiting for him, the King, to give me my congé in the proper manner.

117. Lit., vrezelijk.

118. Lit., bewijs = 'certificate, proof'.

I said my master would never be the cause of a broken friendship, but that he wanted me back so that he could send a white European ¹¹⁹ to replace me. He considers a European would promote his interests better than I can, and that I am not a suitable person to act as envoy between him and the King of Ashanti. The longer I remain here, he believes, the more likely it is that friendship between the two parties will diminish rather than increase. This is why I have been instructed to leave no later than two days after receiving the General's letter. If I do not comply with this order, my fate will be upon my own head. To avoid offending either His Majesty or the General, I had begun my journey on the appointed day, but had been 'panyared' by Senior Officer Quatje.

"But when you asked me if you might leave, did I not say, No? Did I not say that you must wait until the accra has returned, after which I would arrange for you to be conducted to Elmina with a small escort?"

I said the King had indeed used these words, but that I had also said that I would not sleep in Coemassie from the coming Thursday onwards, because I was sure the General would not believe the King was in fact restraining me. "After this," I went on, "Your Majesty said, 'Go ahead, then, and obey your master's orders.' When Your Majesty told me this, I thought the way was clear for me to depart. But Your Majesty did not mean it, and sent orders to Assafoe to bring me back again, and so it has come about."

"Am I to understand, then, that you left here solely because you feared your master, and not at all because you were lacking in respect for me?"

"Yes," I said. "I left simply because of the direct orders I received from my master. If I have offended Your Majesty thereby, I beg your pardon. I request that I may be allowed to go. My master is very angry with me. Please let me leave today. Otherwise the consequences will be serious for me."

The King replied, "No, I will not allow you to go. You must wait. Tomorrow I will send messengers to your master to find out the cause of his displeasure. When these messengers have returned, but not before, you will be allowed to leave within three days. Do not ask me about this matter until my men have come back, or we will become bad friends, you and I. To have given you such strict instructions about leaving here, your master must have something against me. Supposing I had sent one of my boys to Elmina, and had then dispatched my accra after him to tell him to pack up and go and not to spend even one more day there or face the consequences, and the General have said? Would he not have decided that I had become his enemy?"

I could make no answer.

The King went on, "I could almost believe now that the Elminas spoke truly, and the General really is my enemy. Do not ask me about your departure until my messengers come back from Elmina."

There was general agreement with the King on all sides, and I went sorrowfully home.

26th January 1817.

This morning the King sent for me to ask if I could tell him how many muskets the General would give him for 50 preguns. I said I could not say, because the General would not make the same price for the King of Ashanti as for other and lesser persons.

119. Thus phrased, presumably, because Huydecoper was a mulatto. 'European white man' might be better.

28th and 29th.

No news.

30th.

Today the King had me write a letter to the General. He asked for various quantities of guns and gunpowder, and also wanted to know how much the General would charge for 10 guns, and what the price would be for 10 barrels of powder. He hopes to buy a considerable quantity of both these items, but needs exact information as to price before he can make his calculations.

There was a big fire in the town today. Several houses were gutted.

I have mistakenly put "23rd January" on today's letter, and it cannot be altered.¹²⁰

30th.¹²¹

The King has told me that his boys will definitely be leaving here today. I will therefore have to stay in this place for some 30 to 35 days more. I asked what would happen if the boys were not back by the stipulated time, but the King dismissed my question. He is sure they will return as promised.

31st January 1817.

No news.

Primo and Secunde February 1817.

No news.

3rd.

No news.

4th.

To my amazement my boy, Myzang, returned today from Elmina without bringing with him either letters or other messages from the General. I am most disconsolate about this. All my friends have become my enemies. Many false reports are constantly being spread abroad by the Ashantis and are believed by the people here. But I think them of no consequence. When I am back in Elmina myself, I will be able to set the record straight.

5th.

Today being the Small Adaij, I received 9 Ɔ for my subsistence, and the Elmina envoys and I shared the gift of a sheep.

7th.

No news yesterday and today.

8th.

This afternoon a number of houses were consumed by fire, and man was burnt to death. He was on the roof of one of the houses when the fire sprang up all around him, and he fell through the roof into the inside of the house.

120. Lit., ik heb abusivelijk de brief van heden gedagtekend on 23e januarij en moest zijn.

121. Sic. There are two entries for 30th January.

It was impossible to help him, and we saw before our eyes the spectacle of a fine young man lamentably engulfed by the flames. The cause of this misfortune was the strong harmattan. 300 houses were burnt down.

9th, 10th, 11th, 12th.

No news.

13th.

I visited the King today. Laughing, he said to me, "We have offended our master by our delays. When you reach Elmina, you will certainly receive correction. And if the General comes here I will get my share too. What will our punishment be, my friend?"

I matched his banter, saying that . . . 122 the punishment would become worse and worse the longer I stayed here.

The King said, "Be patient. Everything will be all right, I am only waiting for the return of the boys I sent to our master with a view to persuading him to remit your punishment. When they come back you will certainly be able to leave. Do not be sad. Your master will forgive you. He now knows the whole story, and will realize that it is I who have been the cause of his dissatisfaction with you."

14th.

Today the King's two horses died. It has been bitterly cold here for the past 50 days. The air is very stimulating and healthy. The climate would be about equal to that of Europe in April. For some time now I have been suffering from chillblained hands.

15th.

Spoke with the King today about the beauties of Europe. He asked me what the white men thought of him. Did they picture him as an ordinary man, or as a savage, who cut other men's heads off without cause? He went on, laughing, "Huydecoper, when you get back home, ask the General to represent me to the King (who is master of us all) as a righteous man. The nations think of the King of Ashanti as a bad man. You yourself can bear witness that this is untrue. I do not punish without reason, nor do I make war unless there is occasion for it. When our friend, the General, comes here, he will see all my actions for himself, and will praise me in his letters to Europe. But tell me, Huydecoper, do you think the General will still come here?"

I said there was no doubt of this whatever. The General was only awaiting my return. The King would have to let me go, for the General would not come until he had first seen me.

"Ah, well," said the King. "You will be leaving as soon as the boys that I have sent to the General come back. It will not be long now."

23rd.

During these last days I have been asking the King if I might prepare for my departure, so as to be ready to leave immediately the accra and the horn-blower arrive. They are expected within a day or so. But the King always replies, "I am waiting for the three boys who have gone to find out the reason for your recall,

and also the current price of guns and gunpowder. Until they return you cannot leave."

(Marginal note: "Received ½ sheep, this being Good Sunday.")

24th.

Today the Elmina envoys and the King's girgo¹²³ arrived, but not the accra. They brought letters dated 18th January, and these letters I immediately read out to the King. His Majesty is still convinced that the General has been deceiving him and, so far from doing anything about the Commany palaver, is throwing dust in his eyes by bringing in irrelevant considerations and thus seeking to deceive him all the more. Anything I could say was useless. The King became angry and (next three words illegible) my master. I said I could not defend my master with lies.

25th.

Asked the King today if I and the Elmina envoys might leave. He became very angry and, refusing to answer, slammed the door in our faced, mumbling that he had no wish to keep us here for ever, and that he would let us go when it suited him. We were contemptuously sent home like bad boys, with no chance to discuss the date of our departure further. We protested that our master needed us at Elmina, but the King chose not to believe us and would not even look in our direction. And so we came home in disgrace.

26th.

Today the King of Dinkira arrived here, accompanied by a huge following, and was splendidly received. He has come to be present at the entry into the capital of the armies of Apia and Amanqua, and also to defend himself against the suspicion, voiced by some, that he is an enemy to the King of Ashanti. He arrived with three hundred soldiers.

The King is vexed with us today because, he says, we press him too hard about our departure. Unhappily we are watched wherever we go and thus cannot run away.

27th. Feb 1817.

Various chiefs have been arriving to see the review of the armies of Apia and Amanqua. This review will take place next Monday. The King has been prevaricating all this time about my departure. He is determined that I shall witness the review of his armies before I leave.

28th.

No peace today at all. From all directions chiefs, etc., are arriving to see the armies. Everything has become very expensive, a bunch of plantains costing two tackoes. For some days now I have not possessed even tuppence¹²⁴ with which to buy food. I cannot reach the King, and so cannot ask him for subsistence money. I am reduced to eating fried plantains, and there is great distress in my house. I cannot even borrow money, and yet we see plainly that the envoys who come regularly from Elmina are fully laden with presents sent by our master.

From Primo to 2nd March.

Still people are pouring into the town, which is jam-packed. Most of the newcomers are sleeping in the streets, for no accommodation is to be had.

123. Spelling doubtful.

124. Lit., een dubbeltje.

3rd.

Today the armies of Apia and Amanqua arrived. There was shooting from 10 in the morning until nightfall, and at least 50 barrels of gunpowder must have been expended. The two armies taken together number some 30 or 35 thousand.

This morning there was a heavy thunderstorm. Hail fell the size of musket-balls. I held some of the hail-stones in my hands for several minutes before they melted.

9th March 1817.

Between the 4th and today there has been a continuous uproar. Everywhere in the suburbs there is musket fire and the making of custom for the dead. More than 80 people have been put to death, and over 100 barrels of powder shot off. There has been no chance to see or speak to the King. We are suffering severely from hunger and have no money to buy food. Fish is unobtainable, and plantains now cost 3 tackoes a bunch.

10th, 11th, 12th and 13th instant.

No news. No audience or speech with the King.

14th March 1817.

Today the goods arrived, having come through Accra. Cudjo Abranta brought 60 panegoeden, 35 five-gallon ankers of gin and 30 rolls of tobacco. He complained that Mr. Carillon had removed several ankers of drink and had openly watered the remaining ankers in his own sight and in that of many other persons. I said there ought to be 80 pieces of panegoed and 40 five-gallon ankers, but he assured the King that he had received the goods as they were now.

15th.

I learn that the King has had letters from the King, but whether this is true I know not. I tried to see the King this evening to find out the facts, but could not gain admission. Since the armies returned he has not been much seen in public.

16th.

Summoned by the King this morning. He handed to me two letters from the General dated 15th February 1817, the contents of which I read out to him in translation and demanded an immediate answer. The letters referred to the King's purchase of powder and guns and also requested the supply, as soon as possible, of several thousand pounds of cotton without seeds, and also of a quantity of the seeds themselves. Both of these commodities the General wishes to buy, and he asks for fulfilment of this order within 16 days. The King said, "Good. I will give you my reply tomorrow. My thanks for the sugar, tea, etc., though I have not seen them yet. I am glad to have the 19 barrels of gunpowder."

His Majesty objected strongly to the prices quoted for guns and powder, and tried to persuade me to fix these at 9 £ per barrel of powder and 4½ £ for a gun. I contented myself with asking him if he thought that the goods he was being offered had been stolen, and that all he had to do was to send boys to Elmina to collect them.

His Majesty is very satisfied with the presents he has received. I asked him what these were because, when packages are received from the General, they are never opened in my presence. I told the King that I always knew in advance what he ought to receive, because the letters gave full details. But all he would reply was that everything arrived in due course, that he was very satisfied, and that he wished me to thank the General most warmly.

17th March 1817.

Early this morning I went to the palace with my Instructions and all the letters received from the General. I hoped for an answer to everything at once, but my visit proved valueless. No matter what I did I could not obtain entry. I went to the palace three times, but did not see the King on any occasion.

At 7 o'clock this evening Jack Mars arrived with two letters from the General. I went at once to the King with the news, but had no better success than before. We had been cooling our heels for two hours when our patron, Poekoe, told us in the King's name that we must go home and come back in the morning.

18th.

With Jack Mars to the King. The letters were read out in translation and an immediate answer sought, not only to those dated 5th instant but also to the ones dated 15th February. Mars has positive instructions to leave here next Friday. All the King would say, however, was that he would give us his answer tomorrow.

I said that, if he did not answer today, he would bring me into disfavour with my government again.

He replied, "Do not worry. Mars will leave at the appointed time." And there was no more to be said.

19th.

Today being the Small Adaij or Good Wednesday, I called on the King, but could not talk business. Mars received 9 £ and the Elminas and I jointly one sheep.

20th.

Employed all possible means to persuade the King to let Jack Mars depart, but in vain. His Majesty assured me that Mars would leave tomorrow morning without fail. "What?" I said. "Is this like the waiting Captain Scholtij's had to do?"¹²⁵ But I could not move the King. Nor can Mars simply go away, or he will be brought back by force as I was. Here in Coemassie one needs the patience of Job to stand all that happens.

23rd.

During these past few days I have never ceased trying to persuade the King to give me his answers so that Mars can leave. His Majesty has said simply that Mars may go tomorrow and that I may attend at the palace with all my letters and Instructions in order to receive the royal answers point by point. I said that it would once more bring me into disfavour with the General if His Majesty kept Mars beyond the stipulated time as he had done in the case of Woortmann. But he said, "The General, for my sake, will not be angry any more."

24th March 1817.

This morning at 7 o'clock the King sent Mars a farewell present of 9 £ of gold and a message to me that he would summon us both straight away and give us his answers, so that Mars could leave tomorrow. But still we had no success, for His Majesty did not in fact summon us.

125. Lit., wat ik zeide ontrend het wagten van Capt'n Scholtij's of niet. The meaning of this is obscure to me. It may be a literary reference, or may possibly relate to some previous incident of Dutch history on the Coast.

3rd.

Today the armies of Apia and Amanqua arrived. There was shooting from 10 in the morning until nightfall, and at least 50 barrels of gunpowder must have been expended. The two armies taken together number some 30 or 35 thousand.

This morning there was a heavy thunderstorm. Hail fell the size of musket-balls. I held some of the hail-stones in my hands for several minutes before they melted.

9th March 1817.

Between the 4th and today there has been a continuous uproar. Everywhere in the suburbs there is musket fire and the making of custom for the dead. More than 80 people have been put to death, and over 100 barrels of powder shot off. There has been no chance to see or speak to the King. We are suffering severely from hunger and have no money to buy food. Fish is unobtainable, and plantains now cost 3 tackoes a bunch.

10th, 11th, 12th and 13th instant.

No news. No audience or speech with the King.

14th March 1817.

Today the goods arrived, having come through Accra. Cudjo Abranta brought 60 panegoeden, 35 five-gallon ankers of gin and 30 rolls of tobacco. He complained that Mr. Carillon had removed several ankers of drink and had openly watered the remaining ankers in his own sight and in that of many other persons. I said there ought to be 80 pieces of panegoed and 40 five-gallon ankers, but he assured the King that he had received the goods as they were now.

15th.

I learn that the King has had letters from the King, but whether this is true I know not. I tried to see the King this evening to find out the facts, but could not gain admission. Since the armies returned he has not been much seen in public.

16th.

Summoned by the King this morning. He handed to me two letters from the General dated 15th February 1817, the contents of which I read out to him in translation and demanded an immediate answer. The letters referred to the King's purchase of powder and guns and also requested the supply, as soon as possible, of several thousand pounds of cotton without seeds, and also of a quantity of the seeds themselves. Both of these commodities the General wishes to buy, and he asks for fulfilment of this order within 16 days. The King said, "Good. I will give you my reply tomorrow. My thanks for the sugar, tea, etc., though I have not seen them yet. I am glad to have the 19 barrels of gunpowder."

His Majesty objected strongly to the prices quoted for guns and powder, and tried to persuade me to fix these at 9 £ per barrel of powder and 4½ £ for a gun. I contented myself with asking him if he thought that the goods he was being offered had been stolen, and that all he had to do was to send boys to Elmina to collect them.

His Majesty is very satisfied with the presents he has received. I asked him what these were because, when packages are received from the General, they are never opened in my presence. I told the King that I always knew in advance what he ought to receive, because the letters gave full details. But all he would reply was that everything arrived in due course, that he was very satisfied, and that he wished me to thank the General most warmly.

28th, 29th, and 30th March 1817.

Have neither spoken with the King nor picked up any news.

31st March 1817.

This afternoon the two swordbearers returned who went with the accra to Elmina. A new Wassaw embassy accompanied them. The accra and the others have remained in Wassaw. I have not heard the substance of the new embassy's mission. It seems the accra is going to be successful in his attempt to settle the Wassaw affair, and that the present highway will link up with one running through Wassaw country.

Primo April 1817.

Nothing happened.

Koemassie, 2nd April 1817.

Saij Toetoe Quamie,
King of all the Ashantis
To
His good friend Governor-
General H.W. Daendels
At
Elmina

My dear friend,

Huydecoper is now leaving and I must advise you, my dear friend, that the matter which is in dispute between English Commany and me has now reached such a pass that I am obliged to regard you as prejudiced and as favouring the side of the Commanys rather than my own.

When my troops were at Abra and ready to march on English Commany and Wassaw, you requested through your envoy, Huydecoper, that I should not attack Commany. If I did so, you said, my actions would displease you. A long exchange of letters ensued, and you undertook to settle the affair on my behalf and also to collect for me the sums of money that had to be paid. Now all this has come to nothing, and the Commanys refuse to serve me or to render satisfaction to me. Nevertheless you, my good master, prefer that these people should not be attacked. What am I to think of you? I cannot believe that you will now dissociate yourself from this affair, and let me go my own way.

The Wassaws are willing to serve me. Do you wish me to send my armies to destroy them, while letting off scot free those who cause daily harm to me and my people? In truth, this cannot be, my friend. If the Commanys will not settle their palaver with me, then there is nothing for it but for them to take up arms and await the arrival of my armies.

You, my good friend and master, are the chief of the Elminas and also their protector. Their safety is in your hands. The Commanys continually badger the Elminas and steal from them. Yet you require that I pay no attention to this, and ask that the Commanys be spared. This cannot be. If the Commanys will not yield to me, there will soon be no Commany.

Let them be asked once again what is their final word. If this matter is not settled and my troops are sent against Commany, there need be no further talk of satisfaction.

Your friend wishes you, the Governor-General of the Coast of Guinea, every blessing and all prosperity and good health.

This is the mark X of Saij Toetoe Quamie, King of all the Ashantis.

Done before me,

(Signed) W. Huydecoper.

P.S. Regarding the forts which Your Excellency wishes to build along the roads, I will give Your Excellency my answer after the Commany affair has been decided. I do not yet know whether these forts will be to protect me or Commany. Soon Your Excellency will have my answer to **everything**.

The above letter was most carefully dictated to me by the King today, 2nd April. He asked me if I would take it with me. I had brought along all the General's letters once again, but His Majesty would not consider them. So long as the Commanys, he said, were his mortal enemies, and so long as the General refused to approve the administration to them of their just punishment, he would take no decisions on the General's letters.

It would have been a simple matter, said the King, for the General to have settled this Commany palaver. If the sums of money demanded were too great, they could, after proper negotiation, have been reduced. It was just this aspect of the problem that he had let to the General. He would have been very pleased to accept whatever the General was able to collect and send to him. But now the whole affair had been dragging on too long. The Commanys were refusing even to serve him, much less to render the satisfaction due. He had frequently and most earnestly requested the General either to deal with these people himself or leave them to the Ashantis, but this the General had been unwilling to do, and had, on the contrary, sought forgiveness for them. In consequence, said the King, he had been forced to the conclusion that the reports spread abroad by the Elminas were true, and that the General was indeed his enemy and an ally of the Commanys.

If he had known that the General intended to keep him on a string in this way,¹²⁸ he would not have withdrawn his armies so quickly. He had always considered that he possessed no friends, no, nor any brothers or masters, dearer to him than the Dutch. He had always been ready to open his heart and mind to them at all times. But now he could almost believe that these best friends of his had failed him, for the General's attitude in the Commany affair had made him very suspicious. He had written to the General in the letter taken by Woortmann that he wished to consult with the General, and he had been hoping the General would visit him. The General had often said that he was willing to do this. But now, it appeared, all that was past, and the General had only been deceiving him.

His Majesty continued, "The Wassaws were willing to compromise, and the General instructed me to treat with them because they were afraid to go to Elmina.

128. Lit., indien hij te voren geweten had, de Generaal de zaak maar op sleep touw zoude houden.

They have behaved badly towards both the Elminas and me. Their palaver is now finished.¹²⁹ Shall the obstinate and boastful Commanys be spared? This cannot be. If they will not serve me, I intend to teach them that they are not so important in this world that they can palaver with one of the officers of King Saij, much less fight against the King himself. It may be that they have never served me before. This is no matter. They will do so now, and I will force them to leave the Elminas in peace. The only reason why I am angry with the Commanys is because, during the Fanti wars, they continually ill-treated and imposed on my village of Elmina.

I cannot at present give my answers to all the General's letters. This must wait until the General decides either to withdraw altogether from the Commanys palaver or to settle it on my behalf. Moreover, when my people were at Caap Cors, the English did not treat them properly when making up the accounts. The General must do his best to sort this matter out and arrange for the due payments to be forwarded to me. • 130

The Wassaws have requested that they pay me only 60 preguns with remission of the remainder. This shows that they ... 131

3rd April 1817.

The King sent for me again today to discuss his private trading problems. He reiterated that he could not answer the General's letters until he knew His Excellency's intentions with regard to the Commanys. He had appointed the collector,¹³² General Cudjo Abrantja, and his senior horn-blower, officer Kwamie Dendoe, to accompany me when I leave, though when this will be I do not yet know.

4th and 5th.

Have neither seen nor spoken to the King. No news therefore.

6th.

Today was Good Sunday or the Great Adaij. Before a public assembly of more than two thousand people, the King handed me four young slaves as presents for the General, saying, "As soon as you reach home, give my greetings to the master of us all and assure him of my continuing respect. These slaves are from my own household. Two of them have gold about their necks. Of these one is called Accra Saij and the other Bossom (illegible). The other two slaves have no gold. The General may baptize these slaves if he wishes and have them bear his mark. You and I, Huydecoper, will speak later about my private trading.

For yourself here is a young slave to go with the girl you have already received, and also 2 (illegible) 4 E in gold and a large elephant's tusk. I present these to you in return for the friendship you have shown me and for the services you have rendered during your stay here."

The Elminas have been given a boy to pass on to the chief of Elmina and as presents for themselves a cloth each. For their subsistence . . ."133

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129. The first three sentences in the paragraph are a rough translation only. The text is most obscure.
130. Rough translation only. Text is obscure.
131. The MS unaccountably breaks off here at the bottom of a page. On the next page another entry begins.
132. Lit., ontvanger = 'collector of taxes', etc.
133. Text again unaccountably breaks off. (I suspect these breaks are not lengthy.)

These Elmina fellow-subjects of mine are the worst rascals one could find anywhere in the world. Cudjo Akon and Akkoe have consistently done our cause as much harm as they could. They are traitors through and through. If I had not been here, troops would already have been sent against Commany. All the Kings Officers are persuaded that the General is an enemy of Ashanti. Because of my protests the King himself is to some extent on our side, but his subordinates are by no means of a like mind. During the discussion of the Commany palaver they all said that, if the General was not prepared to settle it, he had no right to expect the King to forgive the Commanys or spare them. The General, they said, should stop meddling in the Commany palaver, and leave it to Ashanti to do as it wishes and enforce Commany's obedience.

The Ashanti chiefs also say that the General has deliberately deceived the King regarding the building of the highway. The General's statement that he will visit Coemassie is not believed. If the General wants to come here, it is first necessary that the Ashantis should be convinced that he is their friend. Many accusations have been levelled at the General from all sides. This is not pleasant, and certainly gives no indication of Ashanti goodwill.

All the time the Elminas are sending via the merchants messages to the King asking him for troops and stating that the General is hostile to the Ashantis but friendly to the Wassaws. As proof they adduce the fact that the General says he is coming here but never does. They are apprehensive that the Dutch will desert them and cannot be reassured about this.

7th April 1817.

From morning until night I have been employing every means at my disposal to persuade the King to let me leave here, but in vain. He says he will not let me go until his own business matters are in order. In consequence I cannot expect to leave until some 8 days from today.

I can see very easily through all His Majesty's subterfuges. One of his secretaries, who is also his uncle and is named Aquassie Kankema, has always been most loyal to the General. He is a very wise old man and was the first friend we made here. I have not dared to mention his name before because Coemassie politics are so different from our own. This man was the only member of the court who would speak against the Elminas in the King's presence and denounce their statements for the lies they were. He was never able to convince the majority, it is true, but I cannot fail to praise him for the good opinion he has of our government and for the way in which he has defended us. I have made him the General's commercial agent here because of his loyalty and also because of his close relationship to the King.

8th.

Nothing happened. Did not see the King.

9th April 1817.

For the whole day I have been in conference with the King, discussing his trading ventures. The values he places on guns, powder, etc., are quite unacceptable. He has been trying to

bludgeon me into agreeing to a price of 4 £ for a gun and 12 £ for a barrel of powder worth 1 (illegible) 12. He makes it out that it will be my fault if these prices are not accepted. I rejected what he said absolutely, and asked if he thought I was foolish enough to believe I had the power to fix prices in this way. But despite all my arguments he intends to hold firm, and says that if the General will not sell him guns at 4 £ and barrels of '1000-negro-cartridges'¹³⁴ at the value of 1 (illegible), there will be little trading done between the Dutch and Ashanti.

14th.

During these last days I have lost no opportunity of speaking to the King or of trying to persuade him to issue the necessary orders for me to leave tonight, but to no avail. I was told I could not go because the Assin and Assikoema armies are today passing before His Majesty in review, and he therefore had no time to speak to me on business. And so I had to return home, angry and disconsolate. This afternoon I was obliged to watch the armies shooting off their muskets. Between three and four thousand men took part. I could see no point in the display, except insofar as it demonstrated that the King of the Ashantis is indeed a mighty king.

The day before yesterday the Wassaw palaver was settled. Since the General has not chosen to intervene, the King has decided that the Wassaws must pay 400 preguns only, instead of the 190 (illegible) originally demanded. If the Wassaws refuse to agree to this sum, they will lose their heads.

15th and 16th April.

No news. Tried all day to see the King, but there was no chance of it. The rains have been falling heavily for 8 or 9 days now, with frequent thunder-storms.

17th.

This morning the King had me write a letter to the General. He will only accept guns at 4 £ each and 1 (illegible), and then only if each barrel contains 1000 negro cartridges.¹³⁵ I told the King that these prices are meaningless. Guns are 8 £ at Elmina and 1 (illegible) barrels go for 1 (illegible) 10. But he became angry with me because I refused to go surety for him. He is convinced the General will agree to these prices.

I also asked the King to take a decision about the subsistence money which has long been paid to the King of Akkim, but which has now been transferred to the Ashantis by right of conquest. If this matter is not settled the Ashantis will not be able to trade at Accra with the Dutch, but only with the English and Danes. I pointed out that, strictly speaking, only the subsistence monies of Dinkira, Elmina, etc., had been surrendered to His Majesty.

18th.

Did not speak with the King.

19th.

Today I prepared myself to leave Coemassie this evening, but the King prevented me.

¹³⁴. Lit., kruid van 1000 neger. (See n. 135.)

¹³⁵. Lit., mids ieder vatje inhoud 1000 neger patroonen.

He claimed he wanted to send some men to the General to be trained as carpenters and smiths (Three words missing). Consequently I will not be able to leave until the 22nd instant.

20th.

Received the following farewell gifts:

Amanquatia	4	Ƙ
Poekoe	5	"
Quatje Coffie	4	"
Cudjo Akroe kroewa	4	"
Adoe Saij	2	"
Otie	2	"
Jouw Kokroko, 1 cloth and 1 pig	-	
From the King himself	9	"
Owoesoe Quantabisa, 1 cloth	-	

(illegible) 1,14 Ƙ 136

21st.

Today the King placed 3 boys in my charge. Two are destined to be carpenters and one a smith. His Majesty said he would later send more boys who would serve the General at table, and learn how to clean silver, glassware, plates, etc.

22nd.

Today the King's final permission was granted for me to leave. First, however, I and my party had to swear once more that the General was a good friend to the King and would never desert him or combine with other nations against him in war; that the General, for the King's would forgive the Elminas for the lies they had told about him and, though he might punish them individually, that he would not fight them or destroy their town with his cannon, since this would make the Ashantis very angry.

When these oaths had been sworn, some malabours brought out a kind of Bible, and I had to kiss this book three times 137 to prove to the King that the General was truly his friend.

Occasie, 22nd April, in the evening.

Left Coemassie at 5 o'clock this evening and have stopped here to rest for the night. From Coemassie to this place the highway is completely overgrown. The trees have not yet been cut down and the pathway has not been levelled.

On my departure from Coemassie the King gave me a salute of 15 guns (the gunfire having to compete with a thunderstorm). He said that, when we reach Elmina, the General must honour us with a similar number of rounds, for this will show he really is a friend to the King of the Ashantis. He has given me as escort, and also to act later for him in the palavering with the Commanys, two officers named Cudjo Abranta and Quamie Dendoe, accompanied by a tjutjus. 138 He wishes to hear from this man's very mouth whether the Commanys will finally yield to him or not.

Adiabin, 23rd April.

After waiting in vain for my escort I left Occasie today and will stay the night here. I understand the escort left Coemassie this morning.

136. The addition of this column leads one to suppose that 1 (illegible) = 16 Ƙ.

137. Guesswork. The next reads: en mij drie malen op deze ??? slaar

138. Criers.

The highway from Occasie to here is very bad. Indeed, practically nothing has been done to it. There are numerous large trees and the pathway has not been levelled at all. It seems, therefore, that the frequent reports made to the King by the overseer for this section were false.

The chief of this place has cleared very well the small stretch of the highway that he was responsible for. The roots, however, are still in the ground and the surface has not yet been made smooth. This chief is at present at Coemassie.

Assanssie, 146 24th April 1817.

I waited at Adiabin for the officers, but with no result. I therefore set out on my journey again. This village, where I arrived this evening, is very neat and pretty. Between Adiabin and here the highway has been partly cut through, though the stumps and roots are growing again fast. On the way we noticed three small and wretched villages, all of which accepted gold and promised to prepare for the highway by cutting down trees and rooting out stumps, but the task has clearly been beyond them. The inhabitants consist mostly of old women.

We crossed three streams today, all of which ran most dangerously. They must be very bad in the rainy season. Little rain has fallen here yet and the track is very dirty.

Assikanssie, 25th.

Left Assanssie 139 this morning early, and reached here, having passed through three villages which hardly deserved the name. In several places the highway is fairly good, despite the roots and tree-stumps that still remain. There are many ruts in the track, some of them five feet deep. This is a very small village, containing possibly 20 people.

Ajankremoe, 26th April 1817.

Left Assikanssie very early this morning and, after passing through four wretched villages, arrived at this place, which is equally miserable. We are already beginning to sense the onset of famine. The countless merchants who have passed this way have stripped the forest bare. I have just paid 2 tackoes of gold for a bunch of bananas.

The highway from Assikanssie to here is very bad indeed, and the presence of more than 100 gold-mining pits makes it very dangerous. It is impossible to imagine that the inhabitants of these villages are capable of constructing their share of the highway properly. The overseers have shamefully deceived the King. His Majesty has been under the impression that the highway in these parts was more or less ready for use. He asked me to make a close inspection of it, and send by report back with Quamie Dendoe. (This officer and his companions have not caught up yet.)

Bettiassie, 27th April 1817.

Between Ajankremoe and this village the road has been cleared of creepers, but the trees have not yet been cut down. Close to the village itself a few trees have been felled, but this has not improved the highway.

We passed three huts belonging to the King's hunters.

28th.

Yesterday my bearers complained strongly that they were tired, and so I did not continue the journey. The delay will not only benefit my men, but will enable the missing officers to catch me up.

Insadjusie, 29th April 1817.

Between Bettiasie and here not a tree has been cut down. The fallen leaves have been swept to one side, but otherwise no work has been done on the highway at all. Yet the overseer for this section gave us to understand in Coemassie that the track had been cut through and the road cleared. The King is being kept in complete ignorance of what is really happening. The caboceer or chief of this place has made a very good job of one part of his sector. He seems to be the only overseer who has done the work properly.

Famine reigns in these parts also.

The officers whom the King gave me for an escort have still not arrived. I will therefore have to wait here for them for three or four days. I can proceed no further than here unless I have these men with me.

30th April 1817.

The officers have still not arrived. No news, except that we are suffering somewhat from hunger. The caboceer and his 'secretary' 140 have presented me with two bunches of bananas and 6 tacks of gold.

1st May 1817.

This evening one of the officers, Quamie Dendoe, arrived. Cudjo Abratja and the tjutjuo, however, have not come yet. I am obliged to wait, because without these men I can go no further.

2nd.

Sent a letter to the General by express to inform him of my progress.

I learn that the General has sent someone to Coemassie. This man avoided meeting me by going through Assin. He has already arrived at Coemassie.

3rd.

The letter I wrote yesterday has been brought back. This is due to Cudjo Akon. 141 The chief of this place has forced me to tear the letter up and let the express messenger go on without it. He says he is carrying out the orders of the King, which are that I must not be permitted to forward any letters or writings of any kind. However much I might try to convince him that there was no harm in any of my letters, he was not to let me write any, not even a few lines. Akon has often said openly that writing is a dangerous business and must be discouraged. Cudjo Abranta 142 has not arrived yet.

4th.

Today the King's tjutjuo arrived here.

140. Lit., secretaris. In Dutch, sometimes = 'town clerk'.

141. Spelling doubtful.

142. Alternative spelling.

5th and 6th.

No news. Cudjo Abrantja has not come yet.

7th.

This afternoon the collector of the King of Ashanti's subsistence monies ¹⁴³ appeared. At Accra fort, when he arrives to collect subsistence money, he is accustomed to receiving a salute of seven guns, and he therefore expects to be accorded the same honour when he reaches Elmina. We are leaving here on the 10th instant. We are suffering badly from hunger, and cannot even buy bananas.

8th.

No news.

9th May.

Our whole company is now assembled and we will be ready tomorrow to shake the dust of this famine-stricken village from our shoes.

Inbroebajim, 10th May.

This morning we left Insadjusie and on reaching here found that we had no choice but to sleep in the bush. This place is named as written above. Along the highway from Insadjusie to here the trees have been stripped but none has been cut down. The track is very bad.

Biepokoko, 11th May.

From Inbroebajim to here the track is as bad as it was yesterday.

Again we had to sleep in the bush.

Cajrékoe, 12th May.

Today we reached the first Wassaw village. It is very small. The inhabitants are hostile to Ashantis and barely consented to sell us some bananas, though the trees hereabouts are heavily laden with them.

A good hour before we reached here the highway finally gave out.

13th.

Today is 'evil Tuesday'¹⁴⁴ for the Ashantis, and all my attempts to get them moving were unsuccessful. After much trouble we were able to persuade the inhabitants to sell us some bananas. No presents have been given us by the Wassaws.

Prassie, 14th May.

We were on the march today from very early this morning until 5 o'clock tonight, keeping to the made track. This track is very hard on the feet, but very smooth. Indeed it is a better road for horses than the one from Coemassie to Cairékoe. The trees here are all very small and can be cleared away easily.

143. Lit., kostgelden

144. Lit., de slegten dingsdag.

The ground, moreover, is uniformly flat. This village has been newly built and so there is no food to be bought. The large trees have been stripped and the saplings are not bearing yet.

Doemamba, 15th May 1817.

From Prassie to here the track is unmade and very bad. I have been on my feet since Cairékoé and they are now sore and swollen. Not a bunch of bananas can be had at this place, and the men are eating unripe paw-paws. We arrived here very late because we had so much trouble crossing the River Bossum Pra. I am told this river is full of rocks, and one cannot travel down it to the coast in a boat.

Bandoe, 16th.

From Doemamba to here is a considerable journey. It took us at least four hours. I was offered a night's rest at Dadiessie, but declined this with thanks. Twice we had to swim, which delayed us. The rainy season is beginning to make itself felt in these parts.

The King's envoys have still not arrived. If it had not been for these people, I would have been home 10 or 12 days ago.

17th.

No news. Have not set eyes on the caboceers of this place.

Great Commany, 18th May 1817.

From Bandoe to here is a very long way by a very poor track.

After we had been waiting here an hour the two officers finally caught us up. They will leave with us immediately for Elmina.

Names of the villages between the River Bosumpra and the King's capital:

No.		
1.	Para sue	
2.	Tjetjewerrij	
3.	Numiassue	
4.	Apadja	
5.	Ato biawa sue	These are all
6.	Bekkwamin	Assin villages
7.	Assarmanij	
8.	Anzang (chief village)	
9.	Akkrofrome	
10.	Monzaij	
11.	Quissa	
12.	Fommena	
13.	Dompo Assie	
14.	Tjabossu	
15.	Embedoema	
16.	Essamie Enkwanta	
17.	Dottie sue	
18.	Akkankewa Assie	
19.	Adedewa Assie	
20.	Samfoe	
21.	Kroaba (?Kroala)	Ashanti
22.	Edjun Assie	villages
23.	Amou affoe	
24.	Adjuabinba	
25.	Assumandja	
26.	Biepo sue	
27.	Adjumamoe	
28.	Adoenkoe	
29.	Sakkraka	
30.	Adiabin	
31.	Di (?De) Dossuwa	
32.	Konkermassie	
33.	Adassie	
34.	Enkankewa assie	
35.	Okasie	
36.	Affafar (?Assafar) heein	
37.	Koemassie (the King's capital)	

(List of presents received by W. Huydecoper.)

(List of presents received by Sjt. Woortman.)

LIST OF PRESENTS

MONTH AND DAY	NAMES OF PERSONS FROM WHOM PRESENTS RECEIVED	Cows.	Pigs.	Sheep.	Yams.	Bunches of Plantains	GOLD		Tacks.
							₦	₦	
1816 MAY	At Abra. Received from:								
6	Apia (for a sheep)	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-
"	Barriekie	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
"	Jouw Kokroko	-	-	1	2	2	-	-	-
"	Djesie	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	-
"	Awarrie	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
"	Cudjo apannij	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
		-	-	3	2	2	-	8	-
	At Adiabin.								
21	Owoesoe quanta biesa (Chief)	-	-	1	-	10	-	-	-
	At Koemasie.								
25	From the King	1	1	1	100	200	4	14	-
27	General Poekoe	-	-	-	25	20	-	7	-
"	General Adoematta	-	-	1	10	10	-	4½	-
"	Quacoe piepiem	-	-	-	-	6	-	1	-
"	Apia's wife	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-
28	Saij Cudjo and Saij Jouw	-	-	-	-	6	-	2	-
"	Assiantijn	-	-	-	-	4	-	4	-
29	Quatje Coffie (General)	-	-	1	20	10	-	8	-
30	Adjuwa pienaman and Ecoea	-	-	-	-	4	-	1	-
"	Adoemma	-	-	1	8	10	-	8	-
"	Jouwa Odiflee	-	-	1	-	10	-	6	-
"	Quacoe pon	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-
"	Bekko Saij (Chief)	-	-	-	20	20	-	8	-
"	Nuaffer	-	-	-	-	4	-	1	-
"	Adoe	-	-	-	-	6	-	1	-
"	Koko	-	-	-	-	4	-	1	-
	Carry forward	1	1	9	185	330	8	12	-

DATES	NAMES	Cows.	Pigs.	Sheep	Yams.	Bunches of Plantains	G O L D		
							Oz	£	Tacks
	Brought forward	1	2	13	247	526	13	7	4
1816 JUNE	8 Otjirie	-	-	-	-	12	-	3	-
"	Adoe nunkrie	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4
"	Debbera Cudjo	-	-	-	-	6	-	1	4
"	Assiantijn	-	-	-	-	4	-	1	4
"	Ponwarrij	-	-	-	6	8	-	1	4
"	Apia	-	-	-	-	6	-	4	-
"	Korrantinna	-	-	-	12	-	-	1	-
10	Cobbia	-	-	-	-	4	-	1½	-
"	Ankra	-	-	-	-	10	-	4	-
"	Attawa Kuisie	-	-	-	-	4	-	1	-
"	Fossue	-	-	-	-	10	-	3	-
"	Adoe toetoe	-	-	-	-	4	-	1½	-
"	Dendoe bin	-	-	-	6	4	-	1	-
11	Owoesoe Ackotia	-	-	-	-	10	-	3	-
13	Oduro	-	-	-	-	10	-	6	-
"	Tandc	-	-	-	-	6	-	1	4
15	The King	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
17	Amanquatia	-	-	1	40	20	-	9	-
"	Coffie Sram	-	-	-	-	6	-	1	-
30	Odiffee	-	-	-	-	6	-	1	4
JULY	5 Jow Sekkerij	-	-	-	-	10	-	6	-
"	Kwadoe	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
25	Quamin Dendoe	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-
"	Aboadje	-	-	-	-	3	-	1	-
OCT	6 Boatin	-	-	-	20	-	1	-	-
SEP ¹	21 From the King	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
		1	2	15	331	671	20	1	4

(signed) W. Huydecoper.

1. Sic. The September entry has been added after the October one.

N. B. Also received at various times from the King 1 ^{es} 9 E and 3 or 4 sheep, and from Jow Kokroko 3 E gold and 1 sheep.

Gold 1 - 12 E

(signed) W. Huydecoper.

Serjeant Woortman received in presents from the King
1 ^{es} 2 E
(added later)

Woortman, for departure	9 E
The men	1 ^{es} 12 E
Departure	6 E
My boys	9 E

1st January 1817. Received as presents for the New Year
1 ^{es} 2 E , 1 sheep and 16 yams.

On 5th February received for subsistence 9 E and $\frac{1}{2}$ sheep.

23rd Feb. $\frac{1}{2}$ sheep.

19th March $\frac{1}{2}$ do.

" March as a present from the King 9 E .

24th April. Received for my departure 1 sheep, 1 tusk,
2 ^{es} 4 E gold, 1 tiger skin, 1 stool with cushions and 1 cloth.

20th April 1817. Received from the King	9 E ,
from others	1 - 14

es2 - 7

Insadjusue, 30th April 1817. From the Chief and his
linguist, 6 tack^s.

THE JOURNAL OF THE VISIT TO KUMASI

OF W. HUYDECOPER

28 April 1816 to 18 May 1817

From:

General State Archives, The Hague:

Archives of the Dutch Settlements on the Guinea Coast,
349 : Journal of the Settlements.

For use in the Department of History and Institute of
African Studies, University of Ghana, only.

(This translation, by Professor G. W. Irwin, is provisional,
and its use is therefore restricted. A definitive
translation, however, will follow.)



In our 'village of 8 dwellings', 28th April 1816.

This morning at 6 o'clock I took a hasty leave of the General and the others at Elmina, and set out with my men along the beach. We turned into the bush behind Christena's plantation, and made towards Abra Camp. After travelling for some distance we arrived at Foeamong. This village we found still inhabited, and we went through it without disturbing anyone. Next we arrived at Caboecer Esservie's place, which was unoccupied. His is a fine village, and well built.

The track from Elmina thus far could be made into a good one quite easily. A few large trees would have to be cleared away, but this could be done with little trouble. The name of this place is [illegible] Annoe. Most of its inhabitants have fled to Elmina or to the Fantés. I rested here for a while, and gave my men a drink from the chest.¹

We set out again soon, however, for we wanted to spend the night at a more suitable spot. For this reason we passed straight through Simboe without stopping. We noticed that it had been plundered by the Ashantis, but not burnt. From Simboe to Afontoe the track was very bad for travelling in a hammock, being narrow and inconvenient. Their difficulties took some of the heart out of my bearers, for a short time ago this trace was suitable for horses. Along the whole way we saw nothing remarkable, though the song of the birds in the trees gave me special pleasure.

At Afontoe we took some food and had a lengthy pull at the gin bottle. With this to encourage us, we set out again at once with renewed good spirits, and so continued until we arrived at this 'village of 8 dwellings'. It also is empty, though undamaged. The Ashantis made a point of not burning it because they use it as a resting place.

On the way we met several Ashantis who had been sent by the General of the army to Elmina to tell the three officers² there to return to camp immediately because their leave of absence had expired long since. When the forward scouts³ of this Ashanti party learnt from us that we were bound for Kumasi, they were so pleased that they immediately shouted to their companions that they should give way to us. This the remaining Ashantis, with every appearance of pleasure, did, shouting, "Out of the way! Out of the way! Here comes the son of the Company that rules the Dutch fort!" and made so much noise that I could hear them from my position at the rear of the column. As we went past, each man bowed deeply, and with great respect. I gathered from one of them that General Appiah is very angry with his envoys. He has sent several messages to them, but has received no reply. They have been at Elmina for a long time, and he has bound himself with several powerful oaths to carry them off by force as soon as he arrives at Elmina.

We passed through two Fante villages, but do not know their names.

The envoys at Elmina have sent me a message, suggesting that I await them at Simboe. I have replied, however, that I intend to go as far as my people can carry me, and will wait for the envoys there. (I did in fact wait for them in our 'village of 8 dwellings' until darkness arrived, but they did not come.)

I have retained the services of two Ashantis as guides to show me the way, and have had to pay them a bottle of drink, a handful of cardoes tobacco and a pipe. [Short indecipherable passage follows.]

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1. Kolder, lit. 'cellar'.
 2. Vaandrigen, lit. 'ensigns, cornets, sub-lieutenants'.
 3. Voorlopers, lit. 'precursors, forerunners, heralds'.

In our 'village of 8 dwellings', 29th April 1816.

This morning I was up early and took a walk in the bush to see whether the soil was good or not. It seemed to me that something could be made of it. I discovered several cabbage-like plants,⁴ which tasted excellent.

I waited for the envoys from Elmina until 9 o'clock, but learnt from passers-by that they are not expected to leave there until Wednesday. I therefore ordered my men to prepare immediately, and we began the journey to Abra.

At Abra Bettinqua, 29th April 1816.

We left our village at about half past nine o'clock, and having passed through some 15 or 16 hamlets, arrived safely at this place. Twelve men were here to meet us. They had been sent by General Appiah to carry my baggage. The sabeldrager⁵ informed me, in the name of his master, that I was to stay here until further orders. I sent the man back, and also his sword, bearing my compliments to the General, and seeking to know if I might stay the night where I was. Meanwhile a 'great officer'⁶ arrived, greeted me, and told me that he had come to conduct me to my provisional lodgings, where I would stay until orders came from the Camp.

By this time I was much embarrassed by the great crowd of sight-seers that had collected, and feared for the safety of my possessions. I was therefore glad to be in a fairly safe place. The house was well equipped, and had two good windows and a door. The press of people continued, many coming to look at me again and again. I asked them in friendly manner to leave me in peace for a while, but little attention was paid to my request. Finally, the 'great officer' was good enough to post two armed soldiers in front of my house, and this helped a great deal.

This place is the left wing⁷ or vanguard of the encamped army. There are certainly more than 3,000 men here in all. I gave the officers a drink, which they accepted with high good humour. When they had finished their refreshment, they returned with more than a hundred men to thank me. They also brought the empty bottles back.

After about an hour, Appiah's sabeldrager returned with orders that I should enter the Camp immediately. I am bound to say that all the men of the vanguard seem very pleased at my presence. It is hard to put my feelings into words. I am receiving most friendly treatment, and everyone is very obliging. But despite all the courtesy the constant visiting has been very tiring for me.

Soon we set off again, and arrived at Abram at 4 o'clock. I have little to say about this place, except to complain about the clamour and throng of people. Good God! What a crowd! I thought to myself, "How is it going to be possible to get through them without a troop of soldiers?" And indeed it was with great difficulty that we forced our way. I had my feet on the soldiers' heads, which they bore with great good humour.

When I had dismounted from my hammock, a 'great officer' of Appiah's staff came to greet me, and led me to a place where there were three huts. These, on Appiah's orders, had been cleaned and made

4. Koolplanten, lit. 'cabbage-plants'.
5. lit., 'sword-bearer'.
6. Groot vaandrig.
7. Script here is almost illegible. 'Left wing' is a possible reading, but no more than that.

ready for us, their usual occupants having been obliged to remove themselves. This officer is called Cudjo Apannij, and he is renowned as a very brave man.

My belongings were stored in my hut, and my flag set up outside. I had hardly been installed for a quarter of an hour, when two of Appiah's boys brought me two wooden bowls containing roast pork and mashed pechang.⁸ They also brought a message from Appiah informing me that I should take my rest in this hut until next day, when he would provide me with better accommodation. He commended me into Cudjo Apannij's care. The huts we were given were wretched affairs, situated right in the midst of the soldiers' quarters. Mine was 5 feet long, 5 feet wide and most uncomfortable. It was not even 5 feet high.

I had sat down to eat when I suddenly heard a frightful yelling and shouting outside. Being curious, I asked what the noise meant. To my surprise the answer was that the troops of General Barriekie were trying to take me by force from those of General Appiah, and were assembled outside for the purpose. The result was the greatest confusion. Barriekie claims that he is the youngest of the commanders⁹ and that in consequence all white men would be put in his charge. Appiah denies this, and now Barriekie is ready to fight to get me away from Appiah. The dispute became very serious. Appiah's men, with their guns at the ready, dared Barriekie's to come on. Matters reached such a pass that I began to be frightened. I sent my boy with my staff and chain to Appiah to urge that nothing foolhardy be done and that it would be sensible to settle the palaver at once. But his men shouted, "No! No! We won't yield him up. We gave him lodging first. He shall not go. He is our master, and we will die for him." Let Barriekie himself come here if he dares." Despite all this Appiah went with my boy to see Barriekie in order to settle the palaver. His men continued to shout, "We will fight!" and refused to let me go. At last my boy returned and told me that everything had been put off until the morning. At this everyone calmed down immediately. Appiah, however, was still mistrustful, and had 50 men sleep around my hut to protect me against possible night attack. I was not myself quite reassured, and had all my own men spend the night outside my hut as well.

In Camp Abra, 30th April 1816.

This morning the soldiers began to quarrel among themselves again, and made enough noise to raise the Devil. The turmoil soon became just as bad as it had been the night before. Once more I sent my boy with the staff and chain to ask Appiah to settle the affair. A solution to the trouble must have been quickly found, and Appiah apparently lost the argument, for I soon had orders to move my quarters.

To settle this palaver cost me four bottles of drink, for I had to pay the men who had kept guard on my hut during the night and also had to pay for the use of the hut itself. I felt I must give my own men a bottle, too.

The camp seems to be unusually full of troops. As soon as I have paid my compliments, I will go for a walk and have a look at it.

In Camp Abra, 1st May 1816.

No news today. I have enough provisions to last my men 4 days. About 12 o'clock I received two trays of food from General Appiah, and

8. Obscure. Pechang could be piesang, from Mal. pisang = 'banana' or here, presumably, 'plantain.'

9. Obscure. The sense might be "the most junior of the commanders".

from the 'great officer' Cudjo Apannij 8 small kantjes¹⁰ and one illegible of gold to buy meat. I was in no position to refuse these gifts, and passed them on to my men.

I have not yet received permission to go out, nor has any of the three generals communicated with me. My hut is almost over-run with people. Some come to greet me in Appiah's name, some in Barriekie's. Others come from Amanqua and others again from Youw Kokroko. They say, "I am the King's son, I am the King's brother," etc., and all of them take a drink from me. Those sent by the generals come preceded by the sword and accompanied by 8, 10 and sometimes 15 men. Each has his stool with him, and here they sit until they have finished their drinks. They say that, if I do not give them something to drink, the royal family will be offended. Six 'great officers' visited me one after the other. I did not dare refuse their requests. It was unlucky that I had my 5 ankers¹¹ in view and not locked up in chests where they might have escaped notice. Altogether my visitors, about 50 in all, emptied a good 7 bottles.

I sent General Appiah a bottle from the chest and two flasks drawn from keg. To Barriekie I sent one bottle from the chest and another drawn from keg. To Amanqua and Youw Kokroko the same as to Barriekie and, in return for my lodging, one bottle from the chest to Cudjo Apannij. Otherwise, nothing of interest to report today.

In Camp Abra, 2nd May 1816.

This morning General Appiah sent to greet me and inquire after my welfare. I dispatched my boy to pay my compliments in return and to express my best thanks for the General's courtesy towards me. At ten o'clock I sent him two fine fowls baked in the pan which, so he told my boy, tasted very good. In exchange he supplied me with palm wine and food. My men, however, have not yet received anything from anybody.

Today Appiah offered to place one of his sons in my service, giving me leave to take the boy with me and employ him as I see fit. The lad seems willing and capable, and I have accepted the charge.

I have become terribly weary of the constant stream of officers and royal relatives who come to visit me. They are still appearing at my lodgings, despite the great numbers who came yesterday and extorted so much liquor from me. Already one and a half chests of drink have been emptied. Moreover, one whole chest was lost on the way here, when one of the bearers dropped it and smashed 10 bottles. This is a serious matter, for one cannot replenish stocks of liquor in these parts. I have consoled myself by giving vent to some quite unnecessary abuse, which can do me no good.

Up to now I have neither seen nor spoken to any of the four generals. General Appiah has sent word that he much regrets his inability to visit me. If he came, he says, the other generals would suspect him of holding secret talks with me. I must not disclose my mission until the envoys have returned from Elmina. When they are back, then everything can be discussed publicly. This disappointing information does not please me at all. If it were not that some of the King's presents were left behind, I would not have the patience to stay here any longer. The matter is out of my hands, however, because I do not know when the envoys are to return.

This afternoon I took a walk through the camp to see how big it was. After an hour and a half I became so tired that I had to come back. It would not be possible to reach the end of the camp in a day's march.

10. Kantje by the dictionary means 'small piece of lace'. Could the meaning here be pieces of trade cloth used as currency?

11. Anker, a keg of a capacity of 1 anker. 1 anker = ca. 9 gallons.

General Amanqua's camp is at least one hour away from Appiah's and Barriekie's. General Youw Kokroko's is still further off. He commands 3,000 troops, and my estimate is that there are at least 10,000 under the command of Appiah, Amanqua and Barriekie.¹²

When I returned from my walk, General Appiah's sword-bearer came to see me. He told me that, when evening came, I was to move to lodgings in Barriekie's camp. Agreement had finally been reached that I must change my lodgings. At this news I cleared out of my poor little hut, and set out at once for my new house, with all my baggage following behind me, my flag going on before, and accompanied by more than two thousand men. Singing away, the soldiers brought me into the presence of General Barriekie, who was sitting in state surrounded by some of his officers. He gave my hand three times and pressed mine warmly. I was then provided with a stool and a bottle of watered liquor. All watched while I tried it. Then Barriekie stood up and said that he was putting me in the charge of a sword-bearer who would conduct me to my new house. He added that if I lacked for anything I should let him know. He also told his people that no one was to be allowed to plague or pester me. (This order was in vain; I was soon overwhelmed even more than before.

I had been in my house only a short while when the General came in person to ask if I was properly accommodated. I answered that I was, though to speak truth I was feeling very miserable. I must not forget, of course, that I am in a Camp and not in a village. This hut I am now in is certainly better than the one I was given by Cudjo Apannij. When I left there, I gave Apannij 4 fathoms of panegoed¹³ and a bottle of drink, and to the officer who commanded the 50 men who kept watch over me I gave two fathoms. When Barriekie had been seated for a while, I let him have a dram or two out of one of my bottles. He thought, however, that I was presenting him with the whole bottle, and took it away with him when he left. I watched it go with a heavy heart.

I hear the envoys are due to arrive tomorrow morning. I hope this is so, for I am not at all accustomed to a military life. All the time I keep hearing, now from this direction, now from that, the sound of pipes and horns. I sit trembling in my house, and wonder if my bravery will soon be put to the test and whether I will be forced to set out for Kumasi without waiting for the arrival of the envoys.¹⁴ I hear from many people that Appiah is definitely resolved to attack Commany. This action on his part, if it is to happen, will be solely at the instigation of the Elmina chief,¹⁵ Jan Nieser, and his terregrandes¹⁶¹⁷ Other Ashantis say that Appiah has no orders to do anything other than fetch Cudjo Koema and the rest of the Fantes who are in hiding at Commany. I had a few words with Appiah in the name of General Daendels, urging him to abandon his resolve. The matter was handled secretly. Everyone should seek to advance the interests of his master and suppress an unlawful chief whenever this is possible.¹⁸

This Jan Nieser has often been the cause of disobedience on the part of the people of Elmina against the Government. His constant inciting of the population and his numerous villainies were the cause of his being thrown out of Accra, though this banishment does not seem to have taught him much of a lesson. This wicked man, this root of all evil, who has long

12. The initial figure of the total "10,000" given here is unfortunately blotted. It could be a 1, a 4 or a 6.
13. Meaning unknown, but obviously a type of cloth.
14. Last two sentences in this paragraph are very obscure.
15. Lit., koning, but 'chief' seems a better translation than 'king'.
16. Terregrandes — 'seller'.
17. Here again, original is very obscure.
18. Ditto.

been a thorn in the flesh to us, is now in a fair way to bring down the Government of Elmina itself. He spreads wickedness which all know about, but none dare speak of. I myself make no bones about saying that this man is not only overweening and ambitious but a ringleader and a trouble-maker, and if he is not watched carefully by General Daendels, he will be Emperor of Elmina yet. The man Adam knows him well, and much may be learnt from Adam by means of soft words. He is trustworthy, moreover, and will say in Nieser's presence anything the Governor wants him to say. I have often heard him describe how Jan Nieser talks: "Now I am king over all. The white men dare not do anything to me. They have to come to me if they want anything." I have also many times heard how the onderkoning,¹⁹ by name Aboe, says to his master (for his is Nieser's slave), "You are our lord. We want no one over us but you," at which the 'Emperor' laughs in great glee so that his belly shakes.

Tomorrow I will present my compliments to Generals Appiah, Amanqua and Youw Kokroko. There has not been an opportunity before. General Barriekie has honoured me with a visit, and is proving very affable.

In the Camp, 3rd May 1816.

This morning I had my hammock prepared, and went to present my compliments to the generals.

First to my landlord, who received me in a most friendly manner. He made no comment on the fact that I had come, however. I paid him my compliments standing up.

From there I went to greet Appiah. This I did in the name of the General of Elmina. Again, I performed my duties standing up or, I should rather say, I stood because no stool was produced for me.

From there to Amanqua, who was indisposed. They say he is mad, and cannot tell one person from another. The cause is thought to be that he put a mad woman to death and she has been vexing his spirit ever since.

Lastly I went to Youw Kokroko's camp, which lay in flat and low-lying ground. I quickly saw that here I was meeting a real general, and one who understood his profession. As soon as he learnt of my arrival, he sent to ask me to take a seat under a large tree, since he was not yet ready to receive me. Accordingly I went and sat under this tree. Before long I heard a drum being beaten. At this signal armed soldiers came running from all directions, with their officers following behind them. Everyone assembled under another tree nearby. Then the general, splendidly attired in a white cloth,²⁰ appeared from his dwelling and took his seat among his men. He had me approach, escorted by an officer and four soldiers. At his request I returned to my hammock and sat in it (he wished to see me), and approached again. My reception was fit for a king. The General stood up, shook me by the hand three times and offered me the stool next to his. My visit gave him much pleasure. He gave me a bottle of drink for my bearers, which I passed on to them and which they finished on the spot. I stayed for at least an hour, then took my leave and rode off in my hammock.

I had not been in my house an hour when General Youw Kokroko came to pay his compliments to me. We sat talking for a good while. I gave him a bottle of gin²¹ from my chest as a present. He is very intimate

19. Lit., 'vice-roy,' but the word is often used by the Dutch in the sense of 'second-in-command'.

20. Paantje, a diminutive of paan, which comes from Port. pano, "A cloth which negroes use to surround their bodies from the waist to the knees or somewhat lower" (Van Dale).

21. Genever (mod. jenever), i.e. Hollands, or Dutch, gin.

with me for so short a period of acquaintance. He asked me whether or not I had brought something for him from Elmina. I said I had not, explaining that the General at Elmina had not known for certain that there were more than three generals in the Camp. The envoy whom he, Youw Kokroko, had sent to Elmina, had neither swords nor staffs with him, and the General had not known whether to pay him honour or not. This envoy had, however, asked for a flag, and the General had provided me with one. I had also been ordered to find out the truth about the exact number of Ashanti generals when I reached the Camp. This information I now had, and I would write to the General and request that a present similar to those already delivered should be sent to General Youw Kokroko. At this he expressed much satisfaction, and thanked me.

I will indeed write to General Daendels at the first opportunity, and suggest that Youw Kokroko has his share of favours. He is of the same rank as the other generals.....22

I have forgotten to mention that Youw Kokroko sent me a bunch of bananas and 2 chickens. He wanted to take the flag away with him. I told him, however, that he must be patient until the envoys come back from Elmina. Then the other presents will be distributed, and he will get his flag.

4th May 1816.

This morning I received greetings from Generals Appiah and Barriekie and sent them mine via my boy.

I went for a walk today and found myself outside Appiah's hut. I therefore called on him. He is an excellent old man, kind-hearted and obliging. I had no sooner returned home and was busy writing than he walked right into my hut. Laughing, he took me by the hand, and said, "I have come to see you. You need not send messages to me." I invited him to sit on my bed, which he did. I told him that I was very distressed that the envoys from Elmina had not arrived yet. He said they would definitely be here today. He accepted a dram and went away.

Just at that moment I learnt to my great joy that the envoys from Elmina had indeed arrived. Before long the most senior of them, Awarrie and Djesie, came to see me. Adoe, however, did not appear. Awarrie and Djesie greeted me breast to breast, after the fashion of the Portuguese when two friends meet after a long parting. They were still dressed as for a journey, and their men had their muskets on their shoulders. They told me that they had not had the honour of any further conversation with General Daendels since the time I left, which had vexed them. I gave them something to drink and they went on their way.

I was indeed very glad to see these envoys. They have promised me that tomorrow they will without fail publicly give an account of their mission, so that I will be able to leave here quickly.

I have bought half a fat Hog for 3 fathoms of cloth and 1 bottle of drink.

5th May 1816.

Last night there was a general jollification throughout the Camp. Drums, flutes and horns sounded and all the caboceers danced. For the Ashantis today is a good Sunday.²³ By late at night the clamour was dying down, but with the coming of dawn the tumult started up again. Festivities lasted until about noon or 1 o'clock, when the senior general, Appiah, took his seat on his chief's stool under a great arch. There he received the greetings of everyone present in order of seniority. I was the first

22. Obscure.

23. I.e. the Kwasi-adae. This has reference to the Akan Aduanan calendar

to be invited to pay my respects, then came General Barriekie, then a 'great officer' representing Amanqua, and then General Youw Kokroko. After this all the dignitaries²⁴ and officers came up in turn.

Appiah withdrew for a moment to his house and returned with three English gold pieces which he gave to me. With these I bought a sheep, which was carried to my hut in a golden vessel by Appiah's own sword-bearer. This man I dashed 2 fathoms of panegoed. (He had made a point of asking my boy if he might have something by way of a present.) As Appiah was leaving the assembly, he said to me that I ought now to visit Barriekie, Amanqua and Youw Kokroko and bid them good morning. This I immediately did. From Barriekie I received a sheep and some bananas, and from Youw Kokroko another sheep, 10 taninees and 2 bunches of bananas. From Amanqua, however, I got nothing. To the men who brought the sheep to my hut I gave 2 fathoms of panegoed each. All this visiting reminded me of New Year's Day at Elmina, when children run from house to house collecting their presents. To tell the truth, I felt more than a little ashamed. However, to be allowed to visit great men on festival days such as this is a considerable honour.

Appiah told me that the envoys would not be received in audience today, this being a day when no business may be done. At least, this is what he said to me in public. Later, at about 3 o'clock, he sent word that he and the other dignitaries were conferring and were ready to listen to what I and the envoys had to say to them. I immediately prepared myself and rode off to the meeting in my hammock.

Djesie, speaking for all the envoys, described the experiences they had had at Elmina. He gave his recital in great detail, recounting all that had transpired between the envoys and the General, listing the kindnesses which he and the others had daily received at the General's hands, and speaking warmly of the chest of gin and other liquor which had been provided. His report was so favourable, indeed, that it rejoiced me to hear it.

Next, Djesie scotched the lies spread abroad by Coena, and told the real truth about the Commany affair. When he had finished speaking, I took my instructions from my pocket and remarked that everything that Coena had told them as coming from the chief and terregrandes of Elmina was nothing but a pack of infamous lies. I said that no messages, however authenticated, should be accepted by the Ashantis as truly from Elmina unless somebody directly representing the General of Elmina were present and even then the person present must be able to prove that the General had in fact sent him. The Ashanti generals expressed agreement with this.

I then spoke to them very earnestly about General Daendels's wishes concerning Commany. I said it was definitely my superior's desire that the Ashantis should not go there, and that it was hoped General Appiah would desist if he had an attack on Commany in mind. To these words, however, I received no answer. Appiah said that he and his colleagues would sleep on the matter and let me know tomorrow what they had decided. I suspect that they are determined to take Commany and, when there, will demand the surrender of all the Fantes who have taken refuge in the town. If the Commany people refuse to yield these fugitives up, then the Ashantis will burn the town and kill all the inhabitants, who will have brought this fate on themselves by their own obstinacy. I cannot, however, state any of these things with certainty. I am merely repeating here what the young men in the Ashanti army tell me.

On the whole I did not really expect that all my business here would be completed today. Meanwhile I thank God that we have got on

24. Grooten. Perhaps 'elders' would be a better translation.

thus far and that I will be able to continue my journey this coming Tuesday. On Monday, we are told, it is not permitted to travel. I have asked Appiah to provide some men for me: 12 as an escort and 12 to carry my goods. He has promised to arrange this.

I have handed their presents over to the generals and have given General Youw Kokroko his flag. They are all very pleased, and have asked me to write to General Daendels to express their thanks. This I will do.

I have also inquired about the presents for the King which the envoys have brought with them. Awarrie says he has what he is responsible for, but cannot speak for Djesie. Adoe, who is Amanquah's envoy, and Enpoh,²⁵ who represents Appiah and is also his linguist, have not brought anything. They say that two chests of gin were by ill luck dropped and the bottles inside smashed to pieces. To prove the falsity of these absolute lies, I asked to see the broken chests, but they were not forthcoming. I warned the envoys that unless by tomorrow the chests had been sent to me, I would tell the King when I saw him that his representatives were thieves. They seemed, however, to pay no attention to my threats.

The peace made with the Fantes is as follows: that the Ashantis will remain in Fante territory until Cudjo Koema has been captured; that so long as he is not in Ashanti hands the Fantes must not take it amiss if some of their people are 'panjared' and sold by the Ashantis, who have to keep themselves in food while in foreign territory; and that the Fantes must similarly not object if some of their people are done away with for similar reasons. Apart from this, nothing has been decided. Here in the Camp, killing goes on daily. I will say nothing of the murders because the subject is too horrible. It is clear, however, that a true peace has by no means been concluded yet.

At Abra, 6th May 1816.

Nothing happened today. This morning I prepared to leave here, and was willing, if necessary, to travel without an escort. I have received no answer from Appiah about Commany. It is probably true that he intends to go there. This afternoon I sent a message to him, specifically to get at least some information on the subject, but in vain. I have therefore taken leave of the other generals without raising the matter again.

I received from Djesie a sheep, 2 ~~illegible~~²⁶ of gold and some bananas, for which I gave his boy 2 fathoms of cloth; from Awarrie 2 ~~illegible~~²⁶ of gold, a chicken and some bananas. I have settled my account with my servant (who is a junior officer of Barrickie's), and am paying him 2 fathoms of cloth for his services and for the use of the huts. He has been of the greatest value to us while we have been here in the Camp.

I learnt yesterday that Cobbena Esservie has been seen on the road with 6 others. The Ashantis have been out looking for them, but none of the party has been captured yet.

Manqua Mankesu, 7th May 1816.

Today at 6 o'clock I left Abra, travelling without an escort. Appiah definitely promised to give me some men to act both as an escort and as bearers, but he does not seem to have meant it. My hammock men have thus to carry my luggage as well as me.

Between Abra and this place we went through thirteen villages. All had been burnt and some of the houses pulled down. The distance from Abra to here is ten hours, for nine of which I have had the honour of walking on my bare feet. There was no chance

25. Spelling doubtful.

26. Looks like a conventional symbol. Might stand, perhaps, for 'ackies'?

whatever of my being carried. The pathway was unmade, rough and muddy, with numerous large tree-trunks fallen across it. During the whole journey we never had even four feet of straight track; it was a case of 'to the left for two feet, then to the right for three feet,' and so on. The going was very difficult, and delays frequent.

The village we are in now was at one time inhabited by three nations, Ashantis, Fantés and Assins. All traded here. At present, however, there are no inhabitants, and the village has been partly burnt.

Before I left Abra, Barriekie paid me a final visit, and brought me 10 barrels of 'King's gunpowder'.²⁷ I discovered that these had been tampered with and the gunpowder adulterated, and I refused to accept them. I asked him to send the barrels to the capital, and when I arrive there I will discuss the matter with the King. More than two pounds of powder, moreover, have been stolen out of each barrel.

Barriekie has also promised to send after me the gunpowder brought by the envoys and intended as a present from the General at Elmina to the King. So far I have seen nothing of it. (It is as well I had the full details of these presents from the General before I left. Otherwise the King would certainly not be likely to receive all of them!) During the ceremony at the Camp, General Youw Kokroko said he would supply men to carry this powder to the capital, pointing out that he and I will both win much honour by such an arrangement . . .²⁸ But the King will learn the truth in the end.

During the journey today we saw abbaco trees and lantas, which yield good timber for planks, and are also suitable for ships' masts and spars.

Everything in this village seems very dear. For a few bananas, which we got from some Ashantis, I had to pay one gold piece per bunch,²⁹ and even then the bargain was concluded with difficulty and after much chattering. In the Camp I could not buy anything at all. Everything there was reserved for the soldiers.

I am not accustomed to so much walking, and it has made me very sick. I am suffering from a severe headache and pains in the knees. According to what the Ashantis say, I will have to walk for two days before we reach the River Bossum Pra, after which I will be able to ride again. This news has made me very uneasy, for I fear the onset of illness.

During the journey today the rain beat down heavily and it has been raining almost all night so far with fearful thunder and lightning. The villages in these parts are not separated much one from another.

In the village of Fossu, (an Assin settlement), 8th May 1816.

Today at six o'clock we began our journey again with renewed courage. To our great disappointment the track was even worse than it had been yesterday. It was very rugged throughout, and no one seems to be maintaining it at all. More than 50 tree-trunks, which had been blown down by storms, lay across it, and made our progress difficult and slow.

From Manqua Mankesu to this place is an eleven hour march, and I myself did the whole distance on foot. Along the way there were no villages at all where we could rest. We therefore halted for our midday rest at a place by the side of the track near a wide and swiftly-flowing stream, and there waited for the rearmost bearers to catch up. We crossed this stream by means of a tree-trunk, which lay across it and served as a bridge. It must have fallen there naturally, for men's hands could never have moved it. We also waded through several other streams, some of which were quite deep. Water taken from beneath the drip-stones provided a wonderfully clear and refreshing drink.

We have suffered many misfortunes on this journey. We are hungry, since neither money nor blandishments can procure us food. Heavy rain

27. Lit. 's Koning's kruid.

28. Short obscure passage here.

29. Guesswork. Script is very obscure. May be 'ackie' again.

has fallen constantly about our ears, and an umbrella is useless because of the thickness of forest through which we have to move. I doubt if Robinson Crusoe had more trouble than we have experienced on this Ashanti journey. The whole way we have been trudging through water, often up to our belts. At last this evening we arrived, hungry and exhausted, at this place. I was so tired I fell asleep on two chests and did not awake till morning. I am still suffering from a severe headache. It is worse than any I have known before.

Tankeminsie Asie, in Assin, 9th May 1816

We set off today at 7 o'clock, but made little progress. My legs are most painful, and I have blisters on both my feet, which is very unpleasant.

It rained all day, and there was heavy thunder. We hope to reach the River Pra tomorrow. We are very hungry. Eating unripe paw-paws³⁰ and green bananas has given my men the belly-ache.

Wrenki, 10th May 1816. Assin.

We could not get far yesterday, and today was no better. I am being held back by my headaches and foot blisters. It is unlucky the track is not easier; if it were, my men could carry me.

On the way we saw a huge tiger in the middle of the path. He must have been hungry, for he was swishing his tail from side to side in a fearsome manner. He was so close that I thought of having a shot at him, but found that my double-barrelled gun was forward in the column with my boy. A finer animal I have never seen. For a long time he stared boldly at us, but seeing us come too close bounded off the track and disappeared in a flash.

Not having been able to reach the river, we decided to halt for the day in this village. We will cross tomorrow.

Here the four officers, who were to follow us, caught up with the column. Two of them are General Appiah's men, and two are Barriekie's. With them is a dora of the King's³¹ with a large golden plate hanging from his neck. He told me he had orders to conduct me across the river and that the other three and he³² would accompany me to the King's capital. He has been sent on orders from General Youw Kokroko, and has with him the 10 barrels of powder which I refused to take delivery of from Barriekie. I will not disclose what I have discovered concerning these barrels until I am in the presence of the King.

Heavy rain until late at night.

Tjetjeweirij, 11th May 1816. Assin.

We set off this morning at 6 o'clock and reach the River Pra at ten. While we were resting, a kind of canoe appeared and ferried us across. This canoe was of average length, but narrow, like those of the coast Negroes. Both ends were very square. It was, however, a good canoe and made the crossing with a heavy load.

The river here is both wide and deep. In the dry season its volume is much less, and from mid-October to March one does not need a canoe to get across. Small canoes can safely use it in the dry, but at the present time they are not practicable, because of the roughness of the waters.

This is a very large village, attractive to look at and well laid out. All the menfolk are away at the war, and thus the only inhabitants are women. One of our guides has sent a man on ahead to let the capital know of our arrival here and to find out on which day we should enter it. We may have to stay where we are for a while and then continue on slowly. The guides tell me they have orders from Appiah that the caboceers of each village we enter are to provide us with

30. Lit., papajen. (Papayas are not quite the same as paw-paws.)

31. Dora is underlined in the MS. I am doubtful about the first letter.

32. Sic. The arithmetic is obscure here.

all we need free. But this means nothing. All we are receiving is a few bunches of bananas here and there. I have been forced to give my men gold with which to buy their food.

Up to now we have been obliged to issue out a dram or two of drink at each village we have passed through. The result is that our 5 chests are fast being emptied. If I had not added water occasionally, the liquor would have run out at the Camp. However, the two officers whom I sent back to Elmina this morning have orders to ask the General to send me one or two additional chests. Drink is, after all, the main solace³³ of this kind of journey. To each of the officers I have given a fathom of cloth and 2 bottles of drink. (I should add that, when we crossed the river, I gave 2 fathoms and a bottle to the fetish priest of Pra.) The two officers tried very hard to persuade me to let them have 3 fathoms of panegood, but in the end agreed to accept the two fathoms and the drink. I promised that, if they brought me my two chests of drink from Elmina, I would reward them with 6 fathoms of panegood. They went off muttering to themselves.

12th.

Today we took things easily, and will leave tomorrow. May the Good God protect me if I have to travel for long on foot!

We are 5 days from the capital now. The villages hereabouts are quite exhausted because of the need to supply the troops which have been drawn from them, and famine rules everywhere. The wife of the caboceer of this village presented me with two chickens and some yams. I thanked her with a bottle of drink.

Very heavy rain today, lasting until nightfall.

Assaman, 13th May 1816. Assin.

Today I rode in my hammock from 6 o'clock in the morning until 2 in the afternoon. The road was very muddy and slippery, however, and the dangers considerable. Twice I fell out of the hammock, but happily took no hurt. Two of the bearers have slight bruises on the shoulders, and two of the baggage men have been badly hurt through stumbling while carrying heavy chests. Unfortunately we have no wound-plasters³⁴ with us. Several of the men have been cut about the body by sharp sticks.

I intend to make a list of all the places we have passed through since the Pra and will pass through before we finish our journey. Then I will be able to tell how many villages there are between the Pra and the capital.

We were very hungry again all today. No food could be bought in any of the seven villages we went through. Everything is very scarce and very expensive. In this area the distances between villages are small. The wife of the absent caboceer of this one gave me a chicken and a bunch of bananas, and I thanked her with a bottle of drink.

This village is the capital of the Assins, and the place of residence of their King. The whole area, however, is now under the rule of the Ashanti King. It seems that all the Assins have gone to the war under the command of General Appiah.

[Note in margin: "N.B. This village is not the capital. We shall reach the capital tomorrow."]

Akkrovome, 14th May 1816. Assin.

Arrived here after a journey of nine hours at about 5 o'clock. We left Assaman at 6, and came to Anzang, the capital of the Assins at about 11. At my bearers' request, I dismounted from my hammock and paid my respects to the King's wife.³⁵ She was dressed in her husband's regalia with sandals on, a long pipe in her mouth and accompanied by a troop of women with guns on their

33. Sierand, lit. 'ornament'.

34. Lit., pleisters. 'Bandages' may be a better translation.

35. Probably the Queen Mother rather than the King's wife?

shoulders. Two other women played on flutes and horns. After greeting her, I went and sat under a large tree nearby in order to receive her compliments in return. She gave me two chickens and 2 bunches of bananas, and I thanked her, on the advice of my guides, with 2 bottles of drink.

After resting for a while we left this capital, and travelled on for a considerable distance without stopping. We had to cross numerous streams, whose waters came up to our waists and flowed more swiftly even than the Pra. Several of these streams, indeed, seemed to be tributaries of the Pra. The last of them we crossed was four feet deep and ran extremely strongly. Over rivers like these ropes are stretched for travellers to hang on to.

Assarman and Anzang villages are well built and laid out. The place we are in now is pleasant, too. We will spend a few nights here.

Monsai, 15th May 1816. The last Assin village.

Got under way at dawn. The track was reasonably dry, though still bad for hammock travel. I must have covered half this journey on my bare feet!

Nothing special happened today. An exceptionally tall mountain rears up straight in front of us, and I expect we shall have to go round it.

16th.

We have not advanced today. The guides objected to any forward movement until the King's permission has been received. They say the messenger will be here tomorrow, and will bring orders from the King about how we are to proceed.

Dompo Assie, 17th May 1816. Ashanti village.

Today we spent 2 hours climbing the large mountain I mentioned earlier, and took 1 hour to come down again. The path up was very difficult and steep. At the summit we found three brooks, which ran with sweet, fresh water.

We passed through two villages, neither of any consequence. The first was called Quisa and the second Fommana. At Quisa we saw a snake impudently seize a large chicken by the neck and try to slip away with it. This happened in the market place. The weight of the chicken hampered the snake's movements, however, and one of the boys jumped up and quickly dispatched it. It was an extremely long snake and very beautiful. I have had it cleaned and will keep the skin.

18th May 1816.

I was up early this morning and made ready to continue the journey. Once again, however, the guides came to me and said we could not leave until the King's answer had been received. They assured me that, if they were so foolish as to allow me to proceed without permission, they ran a real danger of losing their heads immediately we arrived in Koemassie and I, they said, would be unlikely to be received in a friendly manner by the King. I therefore had to be content, and abode by their wishes.

On this whole journey we have not seen much that one could call especially remarkable. The district where we are now is very cold. I have noticed, too, that the days seem longer than at Elmina, but one would need a good time-piece to establish the truth of this.

19th.

Nothing happened today. The messenger has not yet returned.

Adedemassie, 20th.

As a result of strong protests on my part we travelled a little further today, making for Akankawa Asie. On the way we met the men we dispatched to see the King. They brought the welcome news that the King sends me his best wishes, and assures me that he is awaiting my arrival with impatience.

He has decided that my entry should take place this coming Wednesday, the 22nd, and I must not fail him on that day. He is very pleased the General is sending an ambassador to visit him.

We continued, therefore, in high good humour until we reached the village belonging to the King's son, who received us in a friendly manner and gave us good lodgings. He presented me with a large fat sheep and 10 bunches of bananas. His name is Owoesoc and this place is called Adiaben. I have written down all the villages from the Pra River onwards and will append a list of them at the end of this diary.

Addjabin, 21st 1816.

Today we started on our way earlier than usual because, now the end is at least in sight, we were anxious to get on. We passed through 9 villages, two of them very large ones. The place we were in now belongs to one of the sons of the late Vice-roy³⁶ of Ashanti. In appearance this man is very like General Youw Kokroko. I had the pleasure of spending the night in his village and of a few hour's conversation with him.

He gave me a large fat sheep and 10 bunches of bananas as presents, and urged me to visit him again after I had spent some time with the King and provided His Majesty would allow it. I have accepted his kind invitation and will certainly visit him again if the pressure of business will allow. I took my leave of him and returned to my lodgings, but later in the evening he called on me again and accepted a cup of tea and a glass of gin. He has asked for a whole bottle of gin, and I have promised to let him have one the day after tomorrow.

The King's capital of Koenassie, 22nd May 1816.

Today it looks as if I shall before nightfall have the great good fortune to see and even to speak with the King of Ashanti. We began our journey with this expectation, and arrived at the capital very early. When we arrived at a hamlet called Koekoe, we received orders to halt, while we took refreshment, set our clothes in order, etc.

From now on there are no more villages by the side of the track. Having eaten and drunk, we continued on our way, and at about 12 o'clock were met by four sword-bearers, each with a golden sword on his shoulders. These men greeted me in His Majesty's name, and told me that I and my men must wait for a while with them in a small hamlet, because the Generals and caboccers had not yet arrived at the capital. At this we moved off the track for a short distance to the left, and were led to a small hamlet of about twelve houses. Here I have concealed all my baggage, for the sword-bearers warned me that it would be quite impossible to have my chests carried through the great press of people we would meet on our way to see the King. When this had been done, two sword-bearers went off to report to the King that I had arrived, and we awaited orders to proceed further. After an hour they returned and told me that His Majesty's desire was that I should set off immediately because he and his assembly were waiting. I therefore left at once, with the four sword-bearers leading the way.

When I came into the town itself³⁷ what a sight met my eyes! The road was so full of people that neither sticks nor swords could keep them away from me. Many blows were rained on heads and backs before it was possible for my men to get my hammock through. We were in this stifling throng for more than an hour.

Orders then came through that we were to wait until further notice under a nearby tree, since the assembly was not in fact yet ready to receive us. And so we sat under this tree, but the people pressed closer and closer, streaming in from all sides in the hope of catching a glimpse of me. After we had been under the tree for a quarter of an hour, a house was pointed out to me as a possible refuge where we might be free of constant observation by the crowd. We therefore moved into this house

36. See n. 19.

37. In het voorstadt, lit., 'into the suburb.' Voorstadt is always a difficult word to put into a suitable context.

this house and were able to enjoy a moment's peace.

At two o'clock I received orders from 4 more sword-bearers sent by His Majesty that I was to present myself at the capital, dressed in proper attire. With all eight sword-bearers leading the way, I set out, reaching the capital after half an hour's journey.

And what a tumult greeted me there! A king could not have expected more honour than was done to me today. There are more than 50 thousand people in this place. His Majesty has summoned all the lesser kings from the surrounding countryside for today's assembly. Everyone of them was splendidly adorned with gold, and each had more than 50 soldiers in his retinue. There were golden swords, flutes, horns, and I know not what else in profusion. At the assembly I counted more than 50 large umbrellas (this figure does not include small ones.)

When I saw all this, I felt very grateful for His Majesty's courtesy towards me. I got out of my hammock, and walked from person to person, shaking each by the hand until I came to the King. I bowed to His Majesty three times. No word was spoken during these proceedings. I must have shaken the hands of two hundred people today. Throughout the ceremony music was provided by drums, which were in position all around us, and the whole affair was marked by perfect order. Behind the King stood at least 100 men with muskets. They seemed quite as well disciplined on parade as European soldiers. 50 or 60 women were grouped around His Majesty, wearing golden ornaments of great value. But there was so much to see that I cannot now recall it all.

I also had to pay my compliments to the King's women. They were standing apart from the men. There were at least 200 of them, all handsome and decked with large pieces of fetish gold. I did not shake hands with them for it is not the custom.

His Majesty led me to a raised place under a tall tree where I sat to receive the appropriate return greetings from the King and from all his councillors, generals, captains and others. And now I experienced the glory of being a king myself, sitting in such majesty as I would have expected to find only in Europe. There was I, enthroned on a large Negro stool on a kind of platform, with my flag planted about 20 paces in front of me and all my men behind. Each king in turn came to greet me; to the accompaniment of loud music and great numbers of soldiers, and riding in a sort of basket under a great umbrella. The kings remained in their baskets until they were about 10 paces distant from me, when they dismounted with dignity and advanced towards me on foot. Each shook hands cordially three times and then three times again. These proceedings lasted from 3 o'clock until 6. Then His Majesty in full splendour came to greet me himself, sitting in a basket like the others, and accompanied by women carrying swords, golden basins³⁸, gold and silver water jugs, etc. He came up to me and shook my hand three times. For at least 5 minutes he stood looking at me, and then said, three times: "Welcome! Welcome! Welcome!" and, laughing in a friendly way, added, "You will do³⁹. I like you." Then he said once again, "Welcome!" and withdrew, accompanied by a vast throng of his followers. After this 10 other persons greeted me, all of them dignified by large umbrellas. It was past 7 in the evening before the ceremony ended. His Majesty's 'great linguist' approached, and told me that I should now follow him and he would show me my lodgings. He also offered me four jars of palm wine, which were a present from the King. I accepted these with pleasure, and set out for my house.

I could hardly make my way along the street because of the crowds surrounding me. When I at last reached my house, I immediately closed the door and freed myself of the importunities of the public.

38. Lit., gouden punch kommen = 'golden punch bowls'.

39. Lit., Gij zijt mooi = 'You are nice,' or 'You are handsome.'

I saw more than 60 of the most important generals today. General Poekoe (that is, former General, for he is now the First Linguist) has sent me two jars of palm wine as a present.

23rd May 1816.

About 7 o'clock General Poekoe and two of the royal sword-bearers came to tell me that His Majesty wished to be informed today of the objects of my mission. All the state councillors have been called together for the purpose. I am to hold myself ready for the King's summons.

About 10 o'clock General Poekoe reappeared and conducted me in state to His Majesty's audience. Accompanied by 25 soldiers I was carried in my hammock very slowly and in a dignified manner the length of two streets to where the assembly was. I could discern the place from a distance because of the 13 or 14 umbrellas there. I stopped the hammock a little way away, dismounted and with my hat under my arm bowed three times to His Majesty, who gave me his hand and had me sit down a short distance away from him. I was greeted by his three linguists (all generals) and then His Majesty asked me about my mission. I was about to speak when other linguists came over and told me His Majesty wanted me closer. So I approached until I was only a step or two distant, and a stool was offered me. I demurred, saying it was not lawful for me to be seated when I was speaking in the name of my Government. Standing before him, therefore, I made this speech to the King:

"Your Majesty! The reasons which have prompted my mission are concerned with several very important matters which it is not suitable to mention in public. My duty requires that I should speak about them to Your Majesty alone, and in the security of your Palace. If your Majesty will allow it, and will be pleased to appoint the time, I shall regard it as a great honour if I am permitted to discuss these important affairs of state with you later."

His Majesty expressed great delight, and answered, "Say no more. That is enough. I understand you."

But I continued, "I have brought with me a few small presents for Your Majesty, which come from my master, General Daendels, with his affectionate greetings and also with assurances of the highest esteem from His Majesty, the King of the Netherlands. I hope your Majesty will be pleased to accept these presents as a token of my master's consideration for you. We can speak later about other matters at a time Your Majesty shall decide."

At this the King announced that he would receive the presents in his palace, and the assembly broke up. I set off for my house to fetch them; but General Poekoe caught me up to tell me that he would have to accompany me when I conveyed them to the King. I replied, "Good. Let us go to my house together."

Having collected the presents, we went to His Majesty's dwellings. We had to go through several buildings before we reached the King's own apartments. We found him sitting in the middle of a large group of people high up in a kind of gallery. I saluted him, and asked if the presents should be opened, to which he agreed. The case containing the staff was opened first, and I presented the staff to the King with these words, "My master ordered me to place this staff in Your Majesty's own hands."

The King accepted his gift with every appearance of delight

and laughed aloud.

The second present was the umbrella with the two tuffen ⁴⁰ which I handed over with a similar speech. His Majesty was overjoyed, and asked me to put the umbrella back in its case, saying, "We are only Negroes after all. We could never pack it in so neatly ourselves."

The third was the hat. The King took it in his hand, looked at it, and said, "Well, the Dutch are still the Dutch. Since we cut off the trade route, we have not been receiving presents like these from anyone." (I took this as a good sign, for he made this remark in an undertone to his immediate circle.)

The fourth was the chest of liquor. I had to take a draft from every bottle to prove that there was no harm in any of the contents.

The last was the flag, which I presented with the words, "My master said that Your Majesty should place this flag on top of your house, as befits so great a King."

His Majesty said, "But what if the flag becomes worn?"

"In that case," I replied, "the general will send you another one."

And the King said, "That is all right then. I will have a flagstaff made."

The whole company exhibited the greatest pleasure and satisfaction as a result of this presentation. I took my leave and returned home.

At eight o'clock in the evening. At 7 o'clock I was summoned secretly by His Majesty, who wished me to impart to him the confidential intelligence in my possession. I set out at once, and on arrival at His Majesty's found the following persons assembled, General Poekoe, General Adoe Akwa Atta, Amanquatia, illegible general of the capital, Quatje Coffie, and three linguists. His Majesty sat under a large umbrella, with 6 soldiers behind him. Four lamps were alight.

After a pause the King gave me a glass of neat brandy. It was at least four times the ordinary size of glass.

His Majesty asked if I had my paper with me. I answered, "Yes".

Then he said, "Let me see the paper."

Giving it back to me, he said, "Read."

I read a few words, but he broke in, "Yours is not like the paper I had from General Turaine."⁴¹

"No," I said. "This is in dutch, the other was in English."

"Very well," he said. "Tell me what it all means and what is the news you bring me."

I therefore consulted my instructions and began to translate them, article by article, into the Negro tongue.

40. Meaning as yet unknown.

41. Spelling doubtful.

His Majesty said, "Let your boy speak for you."

"No, Sir," I replied. "He cannot be allowed to. Moreover, he would not be able to comprehend the meaning of the Dutch sufficiently well."

"Continue, then," said the King. "I will hear you."

Thereupon, I translated word for word everything that my instructions said. At the end everyone present clapped their hands together, and exclaimed, "Now all will be well. This is what we have wanted for a long time."

His Majesty was very pleased at my ability to speak his language and marvelled at it. He said, "Now we can have a chat with each other every day. No interpreters will be necessary, and there will be no need for everyone to know what we say."

I sat awhile longer and exchanged a few more words with His Majesty, then took my leave and went home.

24th May 1816

This morning I sought permission to ask a request of His Majesty and this was immediately granted. I dressed myself and went to pay my call. His Majesty was most friendly and, showing me some silver ware, asked why such beautiful things were not sent to him any more. I realized that these were the presents the Dutch Government had given him from time to time in the past. I replied that the recent lengthy war had prevented the importation of such things, but now the sea route was open again the General would be bringing goods of this kind out again and would send some to His Majesty. I also mentioned that the Ashanti envoys had asked in Elmina for a silver cup and that the General had told them that he would send for one. At this His Majesty expressed satisfaction.

About the shortage of the 9 illegible of gunpowder the King has complained unceasingly, though I have pointed out to him that the whole cargo has not yet arrived. He should send to the Camp immediately for the remainder.

I stayed at home for the rest of the day. I had been told that I should not venture out until the King had sent someone to accompany me on a round to the state dignitaries. The need to conform to custom thus restricted me to my house.

25th May 1816.

Note in margin: "Today received presents from King -- three o'clock."

Yesterday evening the King warned me through General Poekoe to hold myself in readiness today and await the arrival of his representatives, who would then conduct me around the city. I am to pay my duty calls on all the generals, captains, caboccers, etc. Two sword-bearers duly arrived, accompanied by others of the King's entourage, and we made the rounds. The whole proceeding must have lasted a good 4 hours. According to a list I kept, we visited 58 persons. They were mostly the King's brothers, sisters, nephews, uncles, etc., and various generals and other dignitaries. I had to travel the whole distance in my hammock.

I had hardly been at home for ten minutes when word was brought that the King wanted to see me again. I immediately went to the palace where I found him seated among his councillors. We shook

hands and I was asked to sit down. The Linguist called Adoe Say brought me a bottle of drink.

The King said, "Tell me again about the Commany palaver. This matter must not be put off. We must send messengers to Apia, for I have not told him to attack Commany."

I took out my instructions and read out (in translation) the article dealing with Commany. I described the close bonds there now were between the Dutch and the English nation. I also told the King about the unlawful rule over Elmina which Mr. Nieser has obtained by giving presents to the terregrandes. I said that Nieser and the terregrandes had conspired together to send Koema to Apia -- entirely without the knowledge of the General, their master -- in order to persuade Apia to capture Commany and kill all the inhabitants. I said the General was very incensed about this, and had sent me to Apia to tell him that he must take no action whatever against Commany. Coema's message to Apia was dispatched quite contrary to the General's wishes. Since Apia had given me no precise or definite answer concerning the affair, I was now requesting His Majesty to send word at once to stop any action by him. We were completely united with the English now. If any harm came to Commany, the General would be angry and would be forced to intervene.

To all this the King replied, "But what do the Negroes themselves say?"

I thereupon told him the truth, and did not mince matters. The Negroes of Elmina, I said, were so ill-disposed that, without any reference to their master, the General, they had conspired with the 'king and emperor,' Mr. Jan Nieser, to send a message to General Apia, urging him to attack Commany and slaughter the inhabitants. This had much disturbed the General, my master, and he had sent me to Apia to tell him to pay no attention whatever to this message. Apia, however, although I pressed him, had given me no satisfaction in the matter. I therefore was now requesting His Majesty to issue orders designed to cancel any projected attack on Commany, and to issue them with all speed.

The King appeared to be more or less angry with Apia, and said, "I did not send Apia against Commany, but merely to seek for Cudjo Koema, Saffroku and Krala. I will immediately dispatch 2 sword-bearers to stop him. You, too, must send someone to Elmina to let the General know of what my message to Apia consists. I will here and now say all there is to be said in the presence of my young men."

He then made the following speech to the sword-bearers: "Today you will go to the Camp. You will tell Apia that I did not order him to make any attack on Commany, but merely to track down and capture Cudjo, Koema, Saffroku and Krala, who have done injury to me. No attack must be made on Commany at the request of the Elminas and without the knowledge of the General. A king's orders are to be obeyed; those of his subjects are not. Why did he, Apia, not comply with the request of the envoy the General sent to him? He is to obey no orders except those that come from the General at Elmina. If he disobeys me, the result will be on his own head. Tell him that I do not wish to see any more disunity between the English and the Dutch, and that, now we are at peace, I wish no harm to the English. Tell Apia to send someone to Elmina to finish this palaver and to write a letter to the English informing them that, if the Commany people give back to us the Fantes who have taken refuge there, there will be general peace -- we know that Amocance and Mottje are concealed there and are being protected by the Commanys -- but if they do not do this then we will force them to give the refugees up. Tell Apia that there is only one king of Elmina and that is the General. He alone can give orders and no one else. Tell Youw Kokroko that I did not send him south to fight against Commany, but to find out where Apia was. Tell him to listen only to the orders of the General of Elmina. If the General says, 'Stay here,' he is to stay, and if the General says, 'Do this,' he is to do it. When the General of Elmina says anything, it is just the same as if I were saying it."

When His Majesty has finished delivering this message, I asked him about the meeting at Dinkira in September. He said the Commany palaver was a more urgent matter. He would, however, think about the other and would later ask me to communicate his views to the General. Nothing could be done, in any case, until the Messengers had returned.

During the three days we have been here we have certainly ~~not~~ lacked for palm wine. The King sends me every day four Jars of 5 gallons.⁴²

26th May 1816.

Early this morning, at six o'clock, I was summoned by His Majesty and asked to write a letter to the General. I sent for paper, pen and ink and wrote it at once in the palace. It contained a request to the General from the King. The King asks that, at the first opportunity, an order be sent to Europe for some lengths of old Dutch chintz, some plain red, black and green velvet (from Holland also), some medicines and a quantity of sugar. The last two are to be brought back by the bearer of the letter.

I do not know who told these people that tea is the best cure for all illnesses. His Majesty and his elders⁴³ are always asking me for tea, and I have brought only a small quantity with me. I dare not refuse the requests, and my supply is exhausted. I have therefore besought the General, in the same letter that I have written to him on behalf of the King, to favour me with a few pounds by return.

Having some spare time this evening, I take the opportunity to record that this place is very large. There are at least 60,000 inhabitants. The streets are very clean and straight, and the houses excellently built. The latter are fairly tall, but mostly of one storey only. They are constructed of wood. There is not much plaster-work, but what there is has been very neatly done. The entrances of some of the houses are so oddly made that⁴⁴

The King's palace is very large and grand, particularly when one remembers that it is situated so far in the bush. At Elmina I have heard it said that the

King of the Ashantis has gold and silver doors. This is not true, though he does possess a small window, one and a half feet by one foot, which has its beams overlaid with gold. And it is the same with the 'silver doors'.⁴⁵ It is very true, however, that the King is very rich indeed in gold, silver and other metals. Yesterday, when I visited him, I counted 60 golden bells and more than 60 golden plates suspended from the necks of various slaves. The King himself had a chain round his neck, at least 3 ells long and entirely composed of 'imitation nelnis' bushes.⁴⁶ And on the second occasion that I visited him, he had on another chain which was decorated with all manner of shells, animals, etc. Sewn on to his shoes were large pieces of gold and on his right hand four pieces of gold which together must have weighed at least 50 ounces. Adorning his whole body were certainly 100 ounces of gold. The stool he sat on was partly covered with gold; the arms were of that metal and the heads of the nails likewise. In a word, there was gold everywhere. Each slave must have had a good five ounces around his neck.

When I had finished writing the letter for the King this morning, he said to me, "Today I am going to tell all my elders the contents of the message you have written. There is no harm in my doing so. If I do not tell them, they will say I do not trust them. I am their master, but it is unwise to let them become dissatisfied." Thereupon he summoned all the generals and had his linguists tell them the contents of my instructions. They all expressed themselves contented.

I think the King intends to begin construction of the great road [to the coast] before the end of the rainy season. I gathered as much from one of the

42. The word 'each' follows 'gallons' in the MS, but has been crossed out.

47

43. Lit., grotem.

44. " . . . nen welgangen op pleinen uitlopende, zig zelve dikwijls niet neer weest uit te helpen." Most obscure.

45. Obscure.

46. Lit., nagemakte nelnis struiken.

linguists.

When I first arrived here I told his Majesty that during my stay I would be entirely at his service and that this was my master's desire. (There is nothing in my instructions on the subject, it is true.) His Majesty was very pleased to hear me say this, and remarked, "So long as you remain here, you also are a king. You are my child. I will certainly ask you to do what I require." I said that since he was a Dutchman at heart and had always regarded the Dutch as his brothers, and since, moreover, I served the Dutch King, I was completely ready to obey his orders. This statement of mine gave him especial pleasure, and he said again, "You are my son and my brother."

Present received from Poekoe.

27th May 1816.

I paid some official calls this morning, and greeted some 42 people. While on my rounds I saw a eunuch. He was as fat as a pig.⁴⁷ I also saw some women who had been mutilated for disobedience; their ears, noses, and even their lips had been cut off. I have never seen the like and the sight affected me deeply. Some of the wounds were quite fresh.

Presents received.

28th May 1816.

Presents received. See list.

The weather being bad today, I did not go out. The fact that it rained all day, however, did not prevent the usual crowd of sightseers from visiting me. During my stay here no day has gone by without at least 2-300 people calling. I regret most of all that I have no more drink to give my visitors. On most days one of the caboceers brings me some palm wine.

Sent my own presents to the King.

29th May 1816.

Today is 'Good Wednesday' for the Ashantis. Everyone goes to congratulate the King on this holy and propitious day, and so I went too. As soon as the King saw me coming, he stared at me very threateningly. I saw his look, but went up to him and it was soon clear that he was pleased I had come to greet him. He gave me his hand and said, smiling, "thank you for yesterday," and told the assembled company what I had sent him.

Then he raised his hand and all the big drums, horns, etc. began to play. Amid the din he pointed to a seat opposite him, and immediately I sat down the music stopped. Soon the King stood up again to return to his house. The music played until he had disappeared, ceased while he was in the house, and began as soon as he came back. Hardly had he resumed his seat when his four linguists brought me a very large sheep and a bottle of drink, and presented them with the King's compliments (though His Majesty was present and sitting directly in front of me). I now had to take the sheep away, but first went hat in hand to thank the King. After a short time all the caboceers stood up and took their leave. I did the same, and returned home. On arrival there I found that, as usual, palm wine had been provided.

During the afternoon I went out with the intention of visiting some farms⁴⁸ and learning something about the local agriculture. I am not competent to say much about the soil myself, not having the necessary

47. Lit., 'fat as a mole'.

48. Tuinen, Lit., 'gardens'.

knowledge; such an investigation should be carried out by an intelligent and experienced farmer. Bananas, however, appear to grow well everywhere. Indeed, they are to be seen in such abundance that I can hardly think the soil is infertile. I can say with certainty that from Assin right through to here the soil is very red and stony. More than this I cannot say.

More presents received at midday. See my gift schedule.

General Poekoe and the linguist, Adoesaij, came to ask if they might buy cloth. I could not easily let them make any purchases, because none of my cloth is really for sale. At their pressing request, however, I gave Poekoe a whole length,⁴⁹ reckoning half of it as a present and charging for the other half four English gold pieces. To Adoesaij I gave 4 fathoms of cloth as a present. One of the King's children saw me handling cloth and wanted to buy 2 fathoms, which request I could not refuse, and made him a present of that amount.

Three of my hammock men have asked for advances of cloth to be debited against the wages they will receive on our return to Elmina. I have granted this request, and have given them 7 fathoms, worth 7 conventional symbol of gold.⁵⁰

30th May 1816.

More presents received today. See the gift schedule.

In the afternoon a funeral custom was celebrated and I went to see it. To my sorrow I had to watch a fine healthy youth done to death at the interment of the corpse. This spectacle was very horrifying, at least to anyone who values life, but the Ashantis looked on without betraying any emotion. As soon as the King arrived on the scene the youth was brought forward. His right hand was held firmly in a block of wood.⁵¹ A dagger had been thrust through one cheek and out the other, so that he could not talk or cry out. In this miserable and harrowing state he passed close in front of me, and I was greatly affected by what I saw. I could not, however, abate his suffering. He was then taken to a position facing the King in the middle of the open space where the custom was to take place. After some ten minutes his right hand was cut off with a large breadknife. He at once fell down, and the same knife was used to sever his head from his body.

The King asked me if I was not afraid. I said I was not, but that the sight distressed me. "Oh," said the King. "This is nothing. It happens here quite frequently." I learnt from bystanders that this very morning two men and a woman had met their deaths in the same way.

1st June 1816.

I visited the King today and obtained samples of the chintzes and velvets he requires. I will keep them to send to the General when opportunity offers. Otherwise, no news, except that some more presents came and I have added them to my schedule.

Marginal insertion: "Nothing happened on the 31st May."

2nd June 1816.

Today I had the honour of a visit from His Majesty, which took me quite by surprise. He had his new staff in his hand, and was accompanied by more than a hundred men, bearing guns banded with gold, swords, gold cups, shells, etc. We sat together for a quarter of an hour, and then His Majesty continued his journey.

49. Guesswork. Dutch reads: een prs. lang. p.

50. This symbol looks like: 'EII'

51. Lit., zijn rechter hand in een grote blok.

This is the first visit I have had from the King. Very soon after he had left one of His sword-bearers came back to my house to summon me to the presence. I caught the King up while he was still in the street. He said to me, "Come, my boy, come with me." When we reached the palace, he gave me all his silver ware and asked me to have it cleaned. This I agreed to arrange.

3rd June 1816.

Nothing occurred today. General Poekoe invited my boy to spend the night gambling with him, which I allowed.

More presents received, though of little consequence. I am beginning to get a little rest now, and am not so tired as I was a while ago.

4th June 1816.

No news. Some presents of gold and bananas received, but little of either.

5th June 1816.

This morning the King sent for me to tell me about the death of Cudjo Coema. The excellent nature of this news prompted His Majesty to offer me a glass of gin.⁵² Our drinks came from one of the chests I had brought him, which before today he had not broached. The body of Cudjo Coema has been sent to General Apia. The jubilation is general, for now the Fantis will open the trade route to everyone. The news arrived last night.

6th June 1816.

One of the hammock men is chronically ill and I am nervous lest he should die here. I have sent him back to Elmina with 12 days' maintenance.

Otherwise, nothing happened.

7th June 1816.

No news. Some presents received.

8th June 1816.

This afternoon I was sitting quietly in my house when I was summoned by General Poekoe and offered, in the name of the King, a very young girl for my wife. I accepted her with the greatest pleasure. She is a nice girl, and will dispel my boredom by keeping me company, at least for half the day. Poekoe says that I may take her with me to Elmina, but whether she has been given to me as a present or merely to help me get through the empty hours here, I do not know.

Otherwise no news. Presents received.

9th June.

Nothing happened.

10th June.

Nothing happened. Some presents received.

11th June.

Nothing happened. Presents received.

12th June.

This morning I learnt from Poekoe that the cow which he has been sheltering for me is about to die. I sent some boys to fetch the animal, and had it killed to provide a meal for all my men. For my own part I did not dare to eat any of the meat. Because disease is so rife I have been compelled to kill a sheep every day from the 9th to the present. All would otherwise have died.

13th June.

No news.

14th June.

This morning the King sent for me and showed me the captured wife, child and sister of Cudjo Coema. They looked very miserable and starved, and could hardly stand upright. They will all be killed. While I was there, they were being interrogated about various matters which I could not properly understand.

Otherwise, no news.

15th June.

Today I once again had the privilege of speaking with the King. I took the opportunity to ask him for his decision regarding my mission. He said, "I will let you know my answer after this coming Adaij (or 'Good Sunday'), and will also fix a day for your departure. Stay with your men meanwhile. You are always welcome, and I am pleased you are here. If you went away, when again would I have such a good friend near me? Everything is going very well." He spoke in so friendly a fashion that I could not say any more. But I did tell him that it would be very pleasant for me to know how matters stood regarding my mission, for then I would wait more easily, since the General had ordered me to send my men back if it appeared I would be delayed a long time. But he said merely, "After this Adaij you will know everything."

16th June.

Today being 'Good Sunday' or Adaij, the dignitaries of the neighbourhood have assembled in all their glory. The King did me the honour of inviting me to accompany him and his elders⁵³ to the fetish-place. I accepted his offer and rode there beside General Poekoe.

When we arrived at the outer gate of the fetish-place, everybody sat down on one side, while the King alone, with Poekoe and the linguists, entered. I remained outside and did not dare go in. For such temerity people have had their heads cut off before now. We sat for about half an hour, and then suddenly the music began and everyone stood up to greet the King. First Poekoe came out, with the others, and after them, the King, who was in his full glory and covered with large pieces of gold. He sat in his basket.⁵⁴ The men with him numbered more than a thousand.

I was to one side, with my hammock by me and my hat in my hand. When the King, travelling in his basket, arrived opposite me, he halted and considered me for ten or fifteen minutes. Then he put out his hand, shook mine, and said, "Sir,⁵⁵ remain by my side." And so we went on together. When the company reached the palace, the King sat under a large tree, and accepted the greetings of his elders, one by one.

On this festival day I was able to see the true magnificence of the King of the Ashantis, and of the senior general, Amanguatia, and of Quantje Coffie, Poekoe, Adoen Atta [short illegible passage], etc., etc.

When the greetings were over, the King stood up, disappeared for a moment, and returned with 2 sheep, which were led in behind him. He gave one to me and one to the ambassador from Malabar.⁵⁶ This ambassador has been here since before the army left. He is a king, but has in all this time had only one audience with His Majesty of Ashanti. They say he may well be kept here a whole year before he receives another.

When we had finished our drinks, the King stood up and we all accompanied him to his palace, entering by one door and leaving by another. The assembly then broke up.

53. Lit., groten.

54. Lit., korf.

55. Lit., mijn neester.

56. Spelling highly doubtful.

I am not in a position to say that the King of Ashanti is a man who knows what he is about. He can argue like a lawyer. His disposition is a happy one, and he engages in much joking and raillery. He is a thick set man, and well covered. When he is seated, he is surrounded -- even when there is no assembly -- by more than a hundred princes.⁵⁷ All of these men have an elephant's-tail switch in their hands, and they watch to see that not so much as a fly alights on the King's body. When he spits, they wipe the floor with their fingers (as we do with our feet), and they are so quick to perform this task that they almost fight for the privilege.

17th June.

Nothing happened. Some presents received from the senior general, Amanquatia, as per the gift schedule.

18th June.

Today I again had the honour of a visit from the King. He came especially to ask me to write a letter to the General, enclosing some pieces of chintz and velvet. I said that I would willingly do this, provided he gave me some indication of how my mission was progressing and how I should arrange matters with regard to my men. I pointed out that the charges which Elmina will have to pay for their maintenance are growing daily. I also said that I wished to know whether or not the King intended to go to Dinkira to meet the General. If he did, then it would be appropriate for me to send my men back to Elmina. The King replied, "I will talk to you about that tomorrow. Make sure you are ready to take leave of me, for he who goes out on legitimate business ought not to remain out long,"⁵⁸ and this is true above all in matters of such great importance as we are considering now." He then talked awhile about the cleaning of his silver ware, and sent for 4 spoons and 4 forks. These he gave to me, together with a large salver, and requested that my boy should clean them. After this he left.

19th.

About 7 o'clock this morning General Poekoe came to request, in the King's name, that I accompany him to the palace, because the King was holding a council and wished me to be present. I set out at once with Poekoe, and on arrival at the palace found assembled the most senior generals, Quatje Coffie and Adoen Atta, and the three linguists, with the King at their head. I took my seat next to Poekoe's.

At first we talked about the war. The King told me that he would not be able to go to Dinkira. He said that, if he did so, it would be the ruin of Dinkira and all the surrounding villages. Even in his own capital, he said, he could not move down the street without thousands of people accompanying him. He proposed, however, to begin constructing the road from his capital through Dinkira and Wassaw at once, on the one condition that I wrote by express post to the General to settle a small dispute which had arisen between Ashanti and Wassaw. This dispute had not been caused by Ashanti, but rather by the people of Elmina.

Some time ago the Elninas had sent envoys by sea to Accra⁵⁹ and thence overland to Ashanti, bringing a request from the Chief of Elmina and his terregentes that the Ashantis should be sent to fight the Fantis and the Wassaws. The grounds were that these two nations were hoping to murder the chief and terregentes of Elmina, and burn their town. He had been putting off sending his soldiers to punish the Fantis and the Wassaws,

57. Princen. This word can also mean 'prizes', and perhaps the sense here is 'slaves'.

58. Lit., want die voor goeden zaken uitgaat, moet niet lang uitblijven. an Ashanti proverb?

59. Reading doubtful.

since it was by no means his wish that these nations should suffer so grievously at the hands of an enemy, but now the situation had changed. The Wassaws had recently confiscated some presents the Elninas were sending to him, as King of Ashanti, and had turned the Elnina envoys back, refusing to allow them to come to see him. He was therefore somewhat angry with the Wassaws.

There were, however, no other important palavers outstanding and, in order that everything might be arranged conveniently and without delay, he wished me to send a letter as soon as possible by the hand of his Acra⁶⁰ to the General. This letter is to state that if the General wants the road built quickly then, on receipt of the letter, he is to send someone to the Wassaw caboceer to discuss the whole matter. The caboceer is to be asked if he has any other palaver with the Ashantis and, if the answer is, Yes, whether such palavers can be dealt with by the General. The Wassaws must make apology to the Ashanti King, and drink an oath in the presence of the King's representatives. This oath will bind the Wassaws to settle all matters peacefully with the King. They must further swear that, when the envoy has returned from this mission, the King will be able to begin the construction of the road without any interference, and all parties may then live and trade in peace one with another.⁶¹ If these things are duly sworn, the King will immediately begin preparations for making the road. All the materials are ready, and the men to do the job have been assigned. The King hopes to start on the road this month. It is only the matter of the assurance that must be obtained from the Wassaws that is delaying him, since without these he cannot allow the work to proceed.

20th.

The King summoned me again today and, through his linguists, told me that he has detailed a number of officers and men to begin building the road at once. If any Wassaws cause trouble,⁶² he has given orders that they are to be destroyed. He asked me what I thought of this plan. I replied that, since it was the General's desire that all existing palavers should be minimized as much as possible and that there should be no bloodshed, the King must not on any account carry out this scheme. The General had come to Africa to bring peace to the whole country in so far as was in his power, and had no wish to spill blood. The General would certainly open the trade routes and would do so without ruining the Wassaw country by sending armies into it.

At this the King withdrew for a moment with his councillors and, on their return, I was asked where the General desired to have the road. I answered, "Between Commanij and Elnina, though more towards the Elnina side, then running through Great Commanij to Asanankoen Village, Epon Village, Odekoe Village and Sanka as far as Brunicoera, and then along the broad plain behind Cand's plantation, and through the Jout⁶³ villages to Elnina. He then indicated that the King was most desirous to begin the project at once and to drive the Wassaws out of their country. He said that everything would be carried through to a conclusion and that he would do and that he would do what his master had ordered. It would not be necessary for the Wassaws to be actually removed from their homes.⁶⁴

The King, however, was not yet satisfied, and held another council to reconsider what I had said. He then announced that he did have a palaver

60. Presumably Okra.

61. The whole paragraph up to this point is a very free translation indeed and I am not yet satisfied with it. The MS is very hard to understand.

62. Lit., okheid noken = 'make foolishness.'

63. Tout, Tont, Zout, etc?

64. There is considerable confusion in the text here. It looks as if, when the councillors returned, they did so without the King, and that it was a linguist who conveyed to Huvdecooper the information contained in the last three sentences of this paragraph. It is by no means clear who 'he' is supposed to be.

that must be settled with the Wassaws, and that the road could not be built without fighting. Having thus changed his mind again, he proposed that I should write to the General to inform him of the serious nature of this palaver, and in my letter that I should suggest that the Wassaws swear an oath in the presence of the Ashanti Accra at the General's fort (he did not say how this could be arranged) to the effect that they had nothing against the King of Ashanti; that they would render satisfaction to him if the palaver should be settled; that, if the Wassaws promised this, the General would himself receive what they offer by way of compensation [and transmit it to Ashanti], and then the King will order the road to be built; and that there shall be no interference in this road-building on the part of the Wassaws. Not to cause trouble will be the best course for the Wassaws to adopt; otherwise, they will bring such ruin on themselves that they will never recover from it.

My letter to the General is also to say that word must be sent to the Wassaw caboocer, Entceffer, to inform him that the General will be building a full scale road through his country, and that if he shows the least enmity as a result of this he will pay for it with the loss of his villages.

I would not have opposed the King's desire to punish the Wassaws had I not been convinced that they are amongst the best customers we have. I could not have answered for it, if an army had been let loose on people who have had continuous commercial relations with us and who have never failed to come to visit us even in time of trouble.

All these matters having been thoroughly aired, a further meeting was arranged for tomorrow.

21st.

The Wassaw palaver was resumed today, and everything discussed yesterday was agreed to. The decision is that tomorrow the messengers will depart for Elmina to arrange for the oath-taking. They will be there in 9 or 10 days, and will suggest to the General how the palaver should be settled.

Seizing this moment as my opportunity, I earnestly besought the King to allow my bearers to return to Elmina too, but he would not hear of it. He said, "So long as you are here, you must be carried wherever you go." After much persuasion, however, he did agree to allow half of my men to depart. When I got back to my house, I warned the men concerned to be ready to leave tomorrow for Elmina. My announcement was greeted with many expressions of discontent. I explained that the costs of our continued stay here were already too high and were rising higher every day, and that there was not enough for so large a body of men to do. I said, too, that I could not risk keeping them any longer, because I might be obliged to pay out of my own pocket all wages due when we all eventually returned to Elmina. There was a long argument. In the end, seeing that I could achieve nothing by persuasion, I detailed the slaves⁶⁵ and the three free negroes to remain behind to carry the hammock and act as porters for my baggage, and ordered 13 men without further prevarication to return to the coast. I also said that, if they refused to go, I would withhold their Elmina allowances and maintenance from tomorrow onwards. They reconciled themselves at last to departing.

22nd

Today the King came to see me to ask if the letter for Elmina was ready. I said it was, and had already been sealed. I showed it to him, and in his presence gave it to my messenger. The messenger had already been handed my golden chain and staff and was to set off at midday.

The King had my boy sent to the palace and there made him, together with his own Accra, swear that they would be in Elnina within 9 or 10 days. He gave them $\frac{1}{2}$ indecipherable of gold for their subsistence.

23rd.

I have not tasted a drop of gin for ten or twelve days. I asked the King today if he would let me have back one of the bottles I had earlier presented to him. He sent me, however, a bottle of watered rum, which I accepted and passed on to my men. Otherwise, no news.

The King says that the General must keep a thousand of the best guns for him: two each for 500 men.

24th June 1816.

The King sent for me to tell me that he has had to halt the express messenger I had sent to Elnina at a place about three hours from here to await receipt of a vessel ⁶⁶ he is having made out of wood as a present for the General⁶⁷

25th.

Today in the afternoon the King, accompanied by General Poekoe, came to see me. They brought with them the glasform His Majesty mentioned yesterday. They waited while I packed it up, and asked me to write the General a letter **about it**. Then both the present and the letter were dispatched with my boy, and when the King and Poekoe had seen this done, they left.

28th.

From the 26th until today, no news.

29th.

This evening the man returned whom I had sent to Elnina on the 26th of last month with a letter for the General. He brought with him a reply from the General, which ordered me to inquire the King's intentions and then return to Elnina. If however, the King for any reason wishes to retain my services, I am to stay a while longer.

Having read the General's letter I made a full report of its content to the King, including the remarks concerning the reprehensible behaviour of General Appiah. I explained that the General was requesting that strict orders be sent to the Ashantis encamped near Elnina telling them to withdraw from that region, because they were achieving no useful purpose there. I also spoke about the palaver of Anonance, Coena and Motje, and explained that, in the General's opinion, the King had been completely misled about their behaviour. Apia, too, has not been obeying the King's orders. To all this, His Majesty listened with astonishment, and shook his head to indicate his displeasure.

I handed over to the King the sugar, tea, medicines, etc., that had accompanied the General's letter. He was delighted, and thanked me for the trouble I had taken with half an anker of rum for my own use.

30th.

Nothing happened.

31st July 1816.

Nothing happened.

2nd.

Today the King visited me, but imparted no information as to what he wishes to do following the receipt of the new orders from the General.

66. Lit., een glas.

67. Short indecipherable passage.

He said to me, "Will the General really come here?" I replied that the General would certainly do so.

3rd.

The King said to me today that I must remain here until an answer comes back from Elmina concerning the Wassaw palaver. After that I will be allowed to leave at once in order to report to the General.

I have to record that some very serious rumours have been circulating here these past three days. They are being spread by certain Ashantis who have returned from the coast. Some soldiers among them affirm that Mr. Jam Nieser and the Elmina terregentes told them (giving it out as positive truth) that General Daendels was a very bad man, who had been sent out from Holland to make a dupe of the King of Ashanti; that General Daendels proposed to murder the whole Elmina population with guns; that he had not come here to trade, but to mislead the peoples of Africa; that he had sent me as his envoy to trick the Ashanti King into building a great road through the Wassaw country; that, when this road has been finished, the General would be able, together with the Wassaws, to plunder the goods and murder the men and women of the Ashanti nation; and many similar incitements and villainies. In all this Mr. Nieser, bush nigger⁶⁸ that he is, is in alliance with the foolish dim-witted elders of Elmina, men who constantly oppose the Government and always seek to set themselves above it, and who are unable to realise that in time of war it is only the Government that can keep an enemy away from them and protect them. In connexion with these unworthy rumours, I take leave to observe that Mr. Nieser is a bad servant to the Government, and has long deserved to be brought to book. He is a gallowsbird (though he may well die in his bed as an honest man), and on one pretext or another is very likely to be killed sooner or later by his own people, just as he himself made away with President Hogenboom.

Among other things he has told the Ashantis that he intends to arrange for the 'sword of the seven quarters' to be taken out of the hands of Adan and given either to Quandaha or to the bonko known as Konnuu. He intends doing this because the General is so intimate with Adan and discloses secret matters to him alone, and never to Mr. Nieser. Mr. Nieser also says that he has found a way to damage the General's reputation with the negroes. It is therefore fortunate that the General has the greater part of the negroes on his side. Otherwise Mr. Nieser's statement to the terregentes that the General had sent me to the King of Ashanti to ask for troops to come and murder the Elminas would undoubtedly cause panic among the common people. If they once became convinced that the Ashantis were about to attack them, they would almost certainly try to get in first, and would murder the General and all his officials before the latter even knew the reason for the attack on them.

My advice to General Daendels is to carry the attack to Mr. Nieser, and demand a disclosure of all his dealings with the negroes. Then the General will see Mr. Nieser for what he is and always has been. The Negroes have long wished to banish Mr. Nieser from the town -- he has already been driven for ever from Accra -- but dare not do so for fear he may be under the General's protection. If it were not for this Mr. Nieser would have been dealt with in the time of General de Veer. A word from the General and the guns brought to readiness would be quite enough to deliver Elmina from Mr. Nieser, though this should not be attempted unless there are trustworthy soldiers in the fort and a warship in the roads with

68. Lit., wilde neger The translation is not a happy one, perhaps, but this is what a coastal mulatto might well have said, had he been speaking English.

cannon-balls able to overawe the town.

There is not one negro in Elmina who has not some complaint to make about Mr. Nieser. Every negro would like to see him gone. He is thought to have suborned half the garrison, which is why I refer to the need for a warship.

4th.

Nothing happened.

9th.

From the 5th until today nothing of consequence occurred. I continually hear rumours about the behaviour of Mr. Nieser, who is saying that the General has not come to the Coast to do good but to bring disaster to everybody. It is also said that the General has invited the Elmina negroes into the fort for a palaver, though on what subject I have not been told. I much hope that this latter rumour is not true, for I have no doubts about the general wickedness of Mr. Nieser's activities. He is up to knavish tricks of all kinds.

10 July 1816.

Serious news has been received today from the army of General Youw Kokroko. The report is that he has fought with the Fantis and as a result has lost a large number of men and two of his 'great officers'. These officers were brothers to the King. They are said to have fought very bravely and to have caused much slaughter among other opponents. His Majesty is much affected by the death of his brothers, and by way of consolation has cut off the heads of some Fanti prisoners of war.

I have not wished before to speak of the numerous Fantis who have been beheaded in the time I have been here. To my certain knowledge there have been 80 of them, men, women, and Children. Among them was the Peul⁶⁹ of Cudje Coema, who met a most miserable end. From midday until evening there was dancing, and amid this excitement for executioners came up to the Peul and one after another stabbed and sliced at his body. Then he was cut in the shoulders with whale-bone knives of the type that women use,⁷⁰ and pepper was rubbed into the wounds. Then there was more cutting and stabbing in the sides and face. His ears were hacked off, then his arms. And so it went on until he could no longer stand, and only then was his head severed from the body. The head was sent around the town, so that everyone could see who it was that had been killed.

11th.

I have noted today with much concern that His Majesty appears to be paying attention to the baseless rumours being spread among the Ashantis by Mr. Nieser and the terregentes. He seems a little cool, and is no longer so well disposed towards me as before. When my boy gets back from the coast I will know more . . .⁷¹

12th.

Today I learnt to my astonishment that the Elminas have dared to presume to send ambassadors to the King. This has been done by permission of their chief, Mr Nieser, but without the knowledge of Governor General Daendels. The envoys are to give the King information along the lines of the rumours I have already described. They are going to declare that everything that I, in the General's name, have told the King is false,

69. Obscure.

70. Met vrouwe baleine messen. Literally, the translation could be 'with knives made from female whale-bone', but this seems unlikely!

71. Four or five illegible lines follow (due to ink showing through from the other side of the page).

and will discredit my mission by every means in their power. They will assure the King of the sincere friendship of Mr. Nieser and his terrenrandes, and will insinuate that the General's friendship for His Majesty is insincere. Thank God the King has not yet seen these envoys and ~~has refused to received~~ their message! I for my part will keep my ears open, and will note everything down that I hear, in order to be able to make a full report to my master when opportunity offers. I will tell him that he has in the Dutch fort a traitor, who presents himself as a white man with a black exterior, whereas in truth he is a negro through and through, a trouble-maker, a disturber of the Government's peace. There will come a time when the only way suitably to reward Mr. Nieser will be by fitting a halter round his neck.

The entry into the town of the Elmina envoys is fixed for next monday, the 15th. Then they will state publicly and in my presence the lies they have brought with them, I will thus have the opportunity to expose their iniquity, and will undermine their reputations so far as lies in my power.

The Cabo Corso people have also sent an embassy, though for what purpose I do not yet know.

13th July.

Nothing new.

14th.

General Poekoe tells me that I must be present tomorrow when the Elmina and Cabo Corso envoys arrive. I am glad to hear this, and will be satisfied if I can defend my master against the treachery of Mr. Nieser.

15th.

About 3 o'clock the King held a council of notables to receive the envoys from Elmina and Cabo Corso. Those from Cabo Corso, however, alone appeared. It is said that one of the Elminas is sick, and their entry into the capital has been postponed until further orders. The rumours to the detriment of the General, my master's reputation are now worse than ever. The King already knows the contents of the messages the Elminas have brought with them, and a criminal could not be worse represented than the General is being to the King at the present time. The King, however, is prepared to await patiently the return of his accra from Elmina. He expects this man will be able to inform him if the General is as bad as is painted or no.

The real purpose of the Elminas is to have me driven away from here in disgrace and to destroy the good name of my master. The King has already been told that the General is his declared enemy, and will have nothing to do with the people of Ashanti. It is also being said that I have come here to threaten the King, and to this His Majesty is supposed to have replied: "This is all very well, but supposing the information is correct, what can I do? I cannot murder the General's envoy, nor send back the presents I have received from him. Whether he brings me good or bad palavers, I can do nothing but send him safely home. I can do no more, even supposing these rumours are true."

I hear the Cabo Corso people have brought presents, but do not know what these are.

The day before yesterday a white horse arrived here for the King. A camel was also expected, but is held up on the way because of swollen feet. These animals have been sent from Sarago, a place some fifteen days from here. I understand they are intended as presents for my master. I have seen the horse. She is a small beast, and neat and handsome.

16th.

God, Shepherd of Heaven and Earth, may Your blessings be with us!

Most worthy and respected General!

It is with the greatest pleasure that I now have the Honour to inform Your Excellency of the considerable satisfaction I feel as a result of the meeting I have had today with His Majesty of Ashanti. His Majesty showed the greatest consideration towards me.

This morning I had the privilege of presenting to him my greetings, upon which occasion His Majesty asked me if I know of the expected arrival at his capital of envoys from Elmina. I answered that I did know of this, and said to him most earnestly that if these envoys brought any false reports with them about my master, he should clap the lot of them in irons and hand them to me to be sent under strong escort to Elmina and there delivered to my master for the rascals they are. His Majesty, laughing aloud, agreed to my request. I have therefore thought it proper to inform Your Excellency of this encouraging attitude on the part of the King.

The envoys have not yet arrived but, I believe, will be here tomorrow. It will soon be seen how I, as Your Excellency's ambassador, will deal them.

Hoping my faithful duty and attachment to Your Excellency is apparent in this letter,

I have the Honour to subscribe myself,

Your Excellency's very Loyal
and Obedient Servant,

[signed] W. Huydecoper.

16th July 1816.

(Not sent until the 18th.)

The evening of the 16th.

In order to sift the real intentions of the Elminas from the numerous rumours that are doing about, I bought two jars of palm wine today and invited the envoys sent by Mr. Samuel Brew to visit me. To my horror and amazement I learn that, so the Cabo Corso people believe, the terregrandes from Elmina propose to say these terrible things to the King:

That the Elminas have come to request the King to send an army against Commany to plunder it and then to go on to Elmina, murder the General and destroy the fort; that the General came to the Coast with no other purpose than to threaten the King of Ashanti and kill the Elminas; and that it is for this reason that they, the Elminas, have come to visit the King and gain his support.

Good God! This news makes me very apprehensive. How can one understand the workings of a mind like that of Mr. Nieser? A man would have to be a monster to stir up the Elminas yet again to murder white men. It is easy to see how this has happened. After the death of President Hoogenboom no punishment whatever was meted out to the Elminas, nor even any investigation ordered from Europe. They have therefore become so bold as to try to persuade the Ashantis to commit a murder -- a murder of which they, the Elminas, can subsequently plead ignorance. They will, if they can, lay

all the blame on the Ashanti King.

The Elminas are arriving tomorrow. I shall apprise myself of everything that takes place, and pass the information to my master without delay. My master must take great care, and not on any account visit Great Commany at this time. May God protect him against all the assaults of the devil and frustrate the evil designs of those like Mr. Nieser who wish to encompass his death! 72

17th July,

At nine o'clock this morning it was reported to the King that the Elminas envoys were at Assaforheem and were requesting permission, on their arrival in the capital tomorrow, to present to His Majesty their greetings. The King is already somewhat wary of this disreputable embassy. He has sent no reply whatever to their messages, though they have sought permission to enter his capital three or four times. Realizing that they were going to receive no answer from the King, they have now entered the capital of their own accord, to the accompaniment of many expressions of contempt from the inhabitants. To the Ashantis, anyone who arrives without having honour done him by the King is an object of scorn and is cursed by the common people.

Their lies will bring the Elminas down in ruin. They do not seem to understand that the King of the Ashantis is an intelligent man, who will quickly see through them. A known scoundrel could not have been received with less honour than these Elminas. Because they could not obtain the ear of the King, they were obliged to have their palaver with General Poekoe. He, however, gave them no answer, and walked out on them in the middle of their recital. They have not seen him since. The King's linguists similarly imbued with suspicion and mistrust, has also rejected them. They have had, therefore, to wait a very long time and then withdraw without receiving any satisfaction or encouragement. Their presents have not yet been accepted. Tomorrow will show whether they will be admitted to audience and, supposing they gain access, what they will say.

I will be careful to record exactly everything that happens. I am confident the King's answer will not be contrary to our interests, but I will hold my peace now. Everything will be known after the great assembly has been held.

18th

Honour continues to be done to me on all sides. The Elminas, on the other hand, have not yet spoken to the King, nor have they even been seen by him. Their case will be publicly stated tomorrow. I know, however, that their lies cannot damage us. Tomorrow I will know whether my presence here has been advantageous to my master or not. All will be in the open soon. My reward, however, will have to be especially great, or else I am not the man to be entrusted with such large affairs of state. If I am not able to crown my labours with success, I will hand everything over to those the Government thinks more capable of pleading its cause in important palavers like this. I am convinced that in this present matter my life is at stake. The curse of the Elminas and of their chief, Jan Nieser, has now been laid on me. The end of it all will be my death. I am a young man, only just arrived in the country.⁷³ Mr. Jan Nieser's tricks are notorious, yet I am certain that all I say can be substantiated. I am being very careful not to say anything about him that I cannot prove, for I know him well.⁷⁴

72. A rough paraphrase only. Text here is illegible in places.

73. Pas in het land gekomen. This seems an odd phrase to use if Huydecoper was a mulatto. Its sense may be that Huydecoper thinks of himself as young, and 'only just abroad in the land.'

74. Obscure here, but the sense is right, I think.

19th July 1816.

The envoys have still not seen the King, even for the purpose of greeting him. They sent a message of felicitation to me on behalf of the Chief and Under-chief⁷⁵ of Elmina, and inform me that they have as yet neither been seen by nor spoken to the King. For this reason they do not dare to greet me in person. As soon as the formalities are complete, they say, they will come to see me.

The men who brought this message extracted no word from me. I answered all they said with a mere bow. They are much downcast to see me here, for they realize that, if I were not present, they could blacken the General's character much more easily.

20th.

Today the King sent for me to listen to the messages brought by the Elminas. I have already referred frequently to these, but not in full detail, because I did not wish to involve myself in their lies. The King has finally let them have their say, however, and the following are the untruths they spoke:

That the General, from the time of his arrival in the country, has had nothing to do with the people of Elmina, and has not paid them their subsistence money; that the General has driven all the white boys⁷⁶ out of the fort, and the three Government boys also; that he has taken away all the guns from the fort and from the batteries, and has sent most of them to Europe, his object being to strip Elmina of its defences and leave it an easy prey to its enemies; that the General has interdicted all trade with the Elminas, but not with the Wassaws; that the General is in alliance with the Commanys and will not let the Elminas make war on them; that, however, if they persist in this war, he will settle the Commany palaver with 2,000 ounces of gold and will then teach Elmina Town and its inhabitants such a lesson with his guns that not a stone in Elmina will remain standing;

That the King of Ashanti must therefore help Elmina to bring about the total destruction of Commany and, this done, must turn against Elmina and, if the General resists, must cause him to be murdered, as was done in the case of President Hoogenboom; that, if the King of Ashanti will not supply men to fight on the side of Elmina against Commany, the Elminas will destroy their homes, flee to Kumasi and live among the Ashantis;

That the General is the greatest enemy the Ashantis have, and has been sent from Europe to find out just how powerful their King is; that it is always being said in Europe that the Ashanti King kills men everyday and is a very bad man; that the General has therefore to try to gain admittance to the King's domains and, if successful, will fight Ashanti; but if, on the other hand, the Ashantis appear too strong, the General is to shoot Elmina to pieces and return to Europe; that the General's sole object in sending me to Kumasi is to spy on the King and assess his strength; that the General is in alliance with the Cabo Corsos, the Commanys and the Wassaws and has built a powerful fortress at Commany; that, on my return, with the desired information, the General will begin to set his various plans in motion (all this was claimed by the envoys as emanating from the General's own lips, having been overheard, so they said, by one of the boys who served the white men in the fort);

That (in my absence) the General had written to Cabo Corso to ask for warships from England; when Elmina had been destroyed, these warships would be used to take off his men and all their goods;

That the General had sent an exploring party up the River Ancober to see how far it was navigable by ships sent to engage the Ashantis in battle; that it was the General's purpose, as soon as opportunity offered, to see whether Dinkira, one of the chief provinces of the Ashantis, could not be

75. Lit., onderkoning.

76. Lit., de Blanken jongens. Presumably this means 'mulatto youths.'

captured, for, if it could, then its possession would make an assault on the Ashanti capital easier to launch; it was fortunate indeed that Dinkira could not be reached from the sea; news of this scheme of the General's had been received at Elmina before the General had even arrived on the Coast;

And, further, to prove that the information they possessed about the General's intentions towards the Ashanti King was true, the Elmina envoys stated:

That the General had seized one of the King's men and, placing him in the open space outside the fort, had had him beaten until he nearly died -- and this, despite the fact that the man was guilty of no offence; that, on an earlier occasion, when two of the King's criers came into the fort to ask the General something, he had said: "I do not want to have anything to do with Ashanti," and immediately attacked them and drove them from the fort;

That, Quamena Bietoe Aqua having thus been beaten, the Elmina terregentes went to see the General to pacify him and warn him that the man belonged to the Ashanti royal family; but that the General had sent them away without an answer; and that, further, when it was apparent that the Ashanti soldiers in the area were so angry that they were liable to attack the fort and kill the General, Mr. Nieser and the terregentes, determined to ward off trouble, had pacified the injured man with presents;

That President Hoogenboom had been murdered because, during the recent war, he attempted to hand over to the Fantis some Ashantis who were sheltering at Elmina; that there had been many palavers with President Hoogenboom about such matters; that an additional cause of his death had been his habit of shooting off his guns at Elmina Town and threatening to burn it to ashes; it was because of the murder of President Hoogenboom that the General refused to pay subsistence allowance to the Elminas and himself planned to burn the town;

That the General had sent me to Kumasi without telling the elders of Elmina and, finally, that they now declared that they spoke on behalf of the united people of Elmina in saying that everything I had told the King since my arrival was utterly false and their advice to the King was to disgrace me and never allow me to return to Elmina.

1 I did as much as I could to rebut these statements but in vain. All present had already been bridged and there was nothing I could say. The King, however, had everyone with ~~the~~ ^{draw} to one side, and then asked me straight out if I had come to Kumasi to threaten him. To this I answered roundly: "I am a white man. Everything my master has set down in my instructions I have declared to you. If you do not believe me, I am willing (though I had never done the like before) to drink and swear an oath that all I have said in my master's name is the truth. I dare swear moreover, that it is the Elminas themselves who have told Your Majesty the greatest lies conceivable."

The King replied that I was apparently not completely in my master's confidence, because the General had failed to inform the terregentes of my projected mission and this had irritated them. "However," he said, "I will settle this trouble between you and the Elminas and you can depart together."

I quickly answered that I had sent by my master to achieve results, not to palaver. The Elminas must stand firmly by their accusations, because on my return I would report personally to the General and would tell him word for word what had been said. Nothing could be settled until then. I could not undertake any palaver without my master's instructions, nor say anything at all on my own responsibility. All I was

concerned with now was to have the King bear witness to the accusations and threats that were being made and to defend my master against the charges being held against him.

The Elminas questioned why I was defending the General in this way. They claimed that I would not be doing it if I were not in his service, and asserted that it was the white men who had taught me my trade and quickened my wits. I would never be hungry as long as I took the white men's part. I would always be on their side and would never forsake my benefactors as long as I lived. The Elminas said, too, that they could not discuss secrets in my presence, because it has long been known to whose ears such confidential matters would be recounted the moment I had the opportunity of doing so. And then they stood like dumb men, staring at me in silence.

I told the King that, when I returned to Elmina, he must send some of his men with me to see if these envoys would employ the same words before the General as they had so freely used in the presence of the King. His Majesty would then be able to judge for himself where the truth lay. I would be willing to swear that when the time came, not one of these Elminas would dare to face the General. I assured the King that I would neither conceal nor fail to mention everything that had taken place during the present palaver.

The King gave instructions that no one was to say a word about any shame that had been put upon me, and that if anyone gave it out that I was a liar he would be put to death.

He also said that I would be allowed to drink the purification oath that I longed for.

21st.

The Elminas are being abused on all sides because of their attempt to bring me into disfavour with the King and embroil him with the General.

Nevertheless I am forced to record that most Ashantis hate and curse the General, because of his action in ordering Quamena Boetu Aqua to be beaten and refusing to grant his requests.

22nd.

Today the Elminas received their presents from the King. These were a cow, 2 lbs 10 [indecipherable], 40 bunches of bananas and 30 yams. There are 20 of these Elminas in all.

I learnt today that the requisitions sent from Tjetjewerry Village have long since been filled by the General. I asked for two ankers of drink and 2 lengths of panegoed. They have not yet arrived however, and I have sent 2 men to fetch them. I did this with the King's knowledge. Maintenance for these men, 11 [indecipherable].

23rd.

The Elminas have killed their cow and have sent me a piece of it. This I accepted but gave to my men.

Nothing to do, except live in memories until we have the good fortune to be in our own country again and can talk once more with our friends.

26th July.

From the 24th to the 26th I visited the King again and again hoping to be allowed to drink my oath and purify my master of the lies the Elminas have put him. The King told me I could do so tomorrow and I went home contented with this.

27th

I learn today that Mr. Simons has been sent here by the General with

the King's stool.⁷⁷ He is expected within a few days.

29th.

On the 28th I heard that the Elminas had tried several times to have an audience with the King, but in vain. The King will not see them.

Today I joined forces with the Elminas in demanding an audience. I was granted one, but they were not accorded the privilege.

The Elminas are very low, and are suffering greatly from hunger. Everyone despises them, the King not least. He continually gives out that he recognizes no ruler in Elmina but the one who supplies him with his powder, guns, drink, etc. The white men are his masters, he says, and he always obeys them. He talks all the time in this way to his generals, and they pass his remarks on to me afterwards.

The boys whom I sent to Donpo Asie arrived on the 22nd instant, but without bringing back any letters or other goods. When he heard about this, the King became very angry. He blames Apia and Barriekie. He has sent the same boys straight back again to tell the two generals that, if they do not want to bring disgrace on themselves, they must forward immediately everything the General has sent, including letters and without omitting any item whatever. If they do not, they will soon see what will befall them. The King was so angry that he ordered two men (who had done him no harm) to be butchered in the presence of all his generals. After this he calmed down a little.

My boys have thus been sent back for the missing goods. For my part I hope they will return with everything, for we are practically out of cloth and drink, and have nothing to use as presents to give members of the King's family and other persons who call.

30th.

I tried again today to persuade the King to let me drink my oath in order to prove to all present that everything I have said to him in my master's name is true. If he will not allow this, I will not be able to tell him the contents of letters sent here from now on from Elmina, for it will be impossible for him to distinguish truth from falsehood in my recital. Seeing my unhappiness the King said, "Tomorrow without fail I will let you have your wish." I therefore went home satisfied.

31st.

Today very early I waited on the King in order to purify my master's name and was at last permitted to do so.

The King sent for the Elminas, and when they had taken their seats he said to me, "What have you today?"

I stood up and told him that I had come to drink the oath and prove thereby that everything I had said in the name of my master, General Daendels, was the absolute truth, that my master had received from the King of Holland the words which I had read out from my instruction, and that everything the Elminas had said throughout this affair would be established by means of my oath as nothing but infamous lies and falsehoods. With this the King and his councillors were well pleased, and shouted, "The words of white men are always true. If they were not, this man would not ask so frequently to drink the oath."

The Elminas now began to look very miserable and dared not raise their eyes from the ground. They were at last convinced that their execrable plan to bring shame upon General Daendels and upon the master in Holland who had sent him to Africa had failed.

77. lit., stool. Probably 'chair' is meant since the Dutch would hardly be sending a stool to the King of Ashanti.

The King then asked the Elminas, "What, then have you people to say? The white man asks that he may drink the oath to prove that all he has said on behalf of his master is absolute truth and to prove also that all your words are infamous lies, full of villainy and incitement and fit to be accursed and condemned by all honest men. What do you say, then? Defend yourselves. Shall he drink the oath or not? The white man says you are liars. What say you?"

Then Pookoe stood up, and said to the King, "We have nothing against the white man's drinking the oath," and then, quivering with emotion, "The elders of Elmina have sent this embassy to us, but its members have given no sign, nor have they spoken any word to show whether what they say is the truth or not. Let the white man defend his master."

At this everyone burst out laughing. The Elminas were no longer showing the courage they had exhibited on their arrival. They had thought to bring a charge against me, but it was clear to all present that I was a better advocate than they. There were three Ashantis standing with the three Elmina envoys, thus six in all, six advocates against me alone. Yet I was the only one that had dared to speak in the assembly and had proved myself stronger than them all. The King's words had been somewhat harshly spoken, and the Elminas and their friends were so shaken and fearful that they could find little to say. Yet had I had no powerful allies on my side, I would certainly have lost the palaver, and for this reason. The Elminas had already bribed the three Ashantis who stood with them, and these men were ready to lay into me.⁷⁸ But the Good God was with me, and had forewarned the King of the Elminas' plan. God kept me; who have so often committed myself to His protection, safe and unharmed.

The man Adoesaij was also of great service to me. There was nothing that I said that he did not immediately and accurately convey to the King. When therefore my words were compared to those of the Elminas, mine were always found to be true. Everytime I touched on this or that wrong done to me or to my master, he reported what I had said to the King, and by means of his influence the King was won over to my side.

The King was now convinced that lies had indeed been spoken. He therefore had the oath brought in a copper basin. Once more he asked the Elminas if they had anything further to say against me which could be washed away by the drinking of this oath. They, however, remained silent.

Addressing myself to the King, I swore my oath in these words:

"I swear that the General, my master; sent me to you in all sincerity and without any hidden plans in his mind; I swear that all the powder, shot and firearms which my master has brought with him are for no other purpose than to be sold impartially to all merchants who care to buy; I swear that my master is a most sincere friend of the Ashantis and will never show any enmity towards their King; I swear that the King of Holland is the best friend the King of Ashanti has and that he sent the General to Africa to bring peace and unity; I swear that everything I have said in his name is the absolute truth;

I swear that the General and the King of Holland intend to trade with all men as brothers, without choosing one side or the other or making war, and that trust may always be placed in them; I swear that I was not sent here to spy on the King of Ashanti or to assess his military might with a view later on to making war on him . . .⁷⁹

78. Lit., on mij in de war to helpen.

79. Short illegible passage.

I swear that everything the Elninas have come here to tell the King is untrue, and damnably untrue, that everything they say they have been told to say by someone else, and this if one single word of all that they have said is true, this my oath will surely kill me."

When I had spoken these words, the oath was administered to me three times, and I took it with the greatest satisfaction. The King and his nobles all praised me for this act, and congratulated me on having won my contest against the Elninas, whom they now looked at out of the corners of their eyes. All the Ashantis were convinced of the unshakeable truth of my cause.

Everything was now concluded, and the King asked the Elninas whether, in the changed circumstances, they would visit me from time to time. They dared not say no. The King then berated them, saying, "Do you not know that this man is your master? I do not understand this matter at all. You must at once visit your master in order to greet him. He is my master, too, and none of us can oppose our masters." From this the Elninas could see that the King was on my side, and they replied, "Tomorrow we will call on our lord,⁸⁰ and present our compliments to him."

My servant was also obliged to drink the oath and swear that he knew nothing to the General's detriment, that everything the Elninas had said against the General was untrue, and that, if he knew any bad things about the General and did not reveal them, he wished the oath would kill him.

Report on all this sent today to Your Excellency.

1st August 1816.

Today we had the pleasure of a visit from our greatest enemies. They regretted undertaking their present mission deeply, and assured me they had nothing against me personally and had only been acting on the orders of the terregentes. I paid little attention to what they said, and merely note it for the record.

I gave them four jars of palm wine, which they drank greedily. Under the influence of the wine, their miseries came pouring out, and they more or less begged my pardon for the lies they had told. I was not impressed, and will when occasion offers make them feel their miseries more sorely still.

2nd August 1816.

I have done as much as I can to find out whether or not it is Mr. Nieser who has been advising the terregentes in this matter of the mission sent to Kumasi with the object of encompassing my death. To my annoyance, however, I have discovered nothing yet. Secretly I am convinced that Mr. Nieser has guided the affair from the start. Tomorrow or the day after I will bring over one of the young men belonging to the mission and will question him as closely as possible.

3rd.

Nothing happened.

4th.

With the greatest difficulty in the world I managed to persuade one of the young men to visit me so that I could find out what he knew of Mr. Nieser and the circumstances surrounding the embassy from the Elninas. I was fortunate enough to discover that Mr. Nieser is indeed at the bottom of everything

The embassy did not expect to find me here. Its members believed that I would already have left for Axin by the time they arrived. They realize now that they were ill-advised to disclose the objects of their mission while they were still at the Camp. Their intentions came to the ear of the King and then they had no choice but to stick to what they had

already said, even though the same things had now to be imparted to the King in my presence. They could not at that stage change their story. If they had any idea that I was still at Koenassie, they would never have talked about the purpose of their mission while at the Camp.

Today the King has sent more men to Dampo Asie to inquire after the missing cloth and letters and the 2 ankors of drink.

5th.

Nothing happened.

6th.

This afternoon the King summoned me and the Elninas to the palace and asked us if we knew anything about the Cobbina Esservie palaver -- in particular, how much gold the Ashantis had taken from him. I answered that I knew nothing of the gold, but that on the General's orders I had handed over the least 10 slaves to Djesie, Awarrie and Adoe. Some of the rest of the story was known to me, but the Elninas would be better acquainted with the facts, since they had spent three days palavering on the matter with these self-same Ashantis.

7th.

One of the Ashantis who, in alliance with the Elninas, tried to traduce the General and bring evil upon me, was today subjected to a great indignity. The King had him placed in the stocks.

8th.

The King is very incensed against Appie and Berrickie. He has sworn to punish them, not only for stealing the 2 ankors of drink and the panegoed, but also for holding back the letters sent by the General. These letters may well have been torn up or thrown away. The generals know very well that, no matter how busy the King and his councillors have been with affairs of state, the letters should not have been delayed or destroyed. The King refused to be placated in this matter, and has withdrawn to his plantation. He will not listen to any entreaties on behalf of these two men.

The drink and the letters have still not arrived.

The King returned this evening.

9th.

Today Barriekie sent a two-gallon jar and a piece of glascodeen⁸¹ to the King with the request that they be given to me. I would not, however, receive them. I can accept nothing until the letters are produced. I sent word to the King that he must not take it amiss if I refused gifts in this way.

I understand that a long letter accompanied the presents, and that everything had been dispatched before the army had even set out on its return journey to here. I do not know what important instructions for me and what information for the King this letter may contain. The King has sent a message to Barriekie saying that if he seeks his own downfall he will keep the letter and abide by the consequences.

10th August 1816.

Today the King sent still more boys to Apia and Barriekie to fetch the General's letters. All the army chiefs are much in disfavour because of the way in which, so the soldiers say, they have been trading at Elnina. They have disobeyed the orders of the Elnina general; they have sold stolen prisoners to the Elnina merchants two or three times over; and the goods captured by them they have kept for themselves without sending a portion of them, as custom demands, to the King.

81. Meaning unknown. (Fourth and fifth letters are doubtful).

All the Ashantis have been informing on one another, so the King knows everything there is to be known.

The combined army of Apia and Barriekie has been ordered to come here at once. It has already been at Dampo Asie more than 36 days, though this place is only 12 hours away. Jow Kokroko's army is the only one that is free from guilt. It is expected here on the 14th instant, and the forces of Apia and Barriekie on the 26th. Ananqua's will also be here soon.⁸²

11th.

This evening the akra and other messengers returned from Elmina with letters from the General. I do not yet know the contents of the letters. I have sought an audience with the King several times, but he is too busy with other matters, and has told me to wait until they have been dealt with. He and his generals are discussing the Wassaw palaver and have time for nothing else. He will appoint a day soon when the contents of the letters can be made known.

The originals of these letters, dated 24th and 29th May 1816, I still have not seen. I gather they are the ones retained by Generals Apia and Barriekie together with the drink, etc., and about which the King is so angry. Their contents are now presumably somewhat out of date, because the armies have taken so long on their return journey. Nevertheless, when they come, I will read them to the King and note his answers.

I am puzzled that the General does not appear to have received my letters dated 16th and ultimo July, and the copy of my journal to 3rd July. I sent these with some merchants who were taking tusks to Elmina and asked me for a note of commendation to my people there. I can guess what has happened, however. The Elminas have prevailed upon Apia to prevent the transmission of all letters to here from Elmina and from Elmina to here. They have done this by claiming that the General is a bad man and is threatening the King.

12th.

Obtained no audience.

I learn that the Elmina terregrandes and Mr. Nieser have again sent a plea to the King urging him to supply men for an attack on English Comnany. The King has not replied. The message from the Elminas was brought by the same Ashantis who carried the General's letters.

13th.

Again I could obtain no audience, though I tried several times. I want to inform the King how angry the General, my master, will be to learn that the contents of his letters are still unknown to His Majesty.

All the generals are very busy with palavers. Apia and Barriekie are said to fear for their heads because of the numerous irregularities they have committed.

14th.

No audience.

General Jow Kokroko arrived today with his army and was received with great ceremony. He has lost 15 men dead.

Today we received more presents of gold than we have for some time past. This is good, for the treasury is nearly empty. Since my supply of sheep ran out, I have been forced to give my men 1 indecipherable as maintenance money, and have been able to persuade them to accept it only with much trouble.

15th.

Again no audience.

The King is still palavering with his officers.

82. A small, highly obscure passage omitted here. It concerns the payment of maintenance money.

18th.

From the 16th until today I have tried by all possible means to gain access to the King, but in vain. The King sends to tell me that he has no time to spare, but that I must not take this amiss. The letters will be attended to in due course and he will give me a very favourable answer.

19th.

I was visited today by the King of Mampon, bu name Attokra, and by General Jouw Kokroko. To provide for them I bought 2 beerglasses full of rum for 2 [Indecipherable] of gold.

20th.

At the King's request I accepted to-day a 3-gallon anker and 1 piece of long paneroed from General Apia. I also agreed to accept the 2-gallon jar and the piece of glascodeen which Barriekie sent me some time back.

These two generals have fallen into deep disgrace, partly because they did away with the General's letter, but also because they have been selling stolen prisoners.

The King has already confiscated more than twelve hundred ounces of gold as well as goods and slaves from various officers, and most of the culprits have been fettered and placed in log.⁸³

No audience, His Majesty is still palavering.

21st.

General Poekoe came today to tell me in the King's name that I must have patience until after His Majesty has celebrated his New Year. Then the letters will be opened. The New Year will be held during the next four days, the 22nd, 23rd, 24th and 25th instant.

I asked if it was not possible even for me to speak to the King, but received the answer, "Not possible."

22nd.

Today various greater and lesser kings⁸⁴ began arriving here to take part in the New Year. There are four horses in the town, one of which is of normal size. Three of them belong to the King.

The camel which I mentioned some time back died on the way here. The length of the journey and its arduous nature were too much for the beast. Bad food and inexpert care also contributed to its death.

23rd, 24th and 25th.

These were not audience days, and it was impossible even to reach the open space in front of the palace. More than a hundred and fifty thousand people are present in the town, many from the surrounding districts.

Because of the New Year festivities I have had the opportunity of seeing the King's wives. They number three thousand, three hundred and thirty-three. All are very well turned out, wearing costly cloths and gold ornaments.

On the 25th the King held military parades and tested the capabilities of his officers.

I have spent a great deal of drink and cloth because of these celebrations, and have had to give to my boys for New Year presents notes of hand payable at Elmina for two fathoms and for one fathom of cloth in each case.

30th.

From the 26th until today I have asked repeatedly for an audience

83. Lit., in dubbele blokken en boeijens geslagen, - "in log"

84. 'Chiefs and paramount chiefs,' but this seems anachronistic.

and at last one is fixed for tomorrow. The contents of the letters will then be read.

Ultimo August.

This morning the King sent for me. First, he referred to the request that the River Bosunpra should be explored, stating that this was impossible for negroes since they had no boats. It could be better done by white men.

On the subject of a meeting with the General, His majesty said that he had already explained that he could not leave his capital in order to stay in other places without ruining them. He looked forward, however, to a visit from the General as soon as the highway⁸⁵ had been completed.

Concerning the maintenance of peace on the Coast, the King said, there is no more to be discussed. His armies have almost returned home, and no further orders can or need be given them.

These are his answers to the duplicate letter of 24th May 1816.

His answer to the letter dated 29th May is: He would like to have them (cows, horses, etc.)

Regarding the letter of 24th July the King said, "What does the General want me to do now? He wishes to save men's lives, and yet the Wassaws will not visit him to settle the palaver. The General takes the position that all negotiations have now been broken off. Nevertheless, I will have the highway made, and as quickly as possible."

The King then asked me, on my return to Elnina, to thank the General for sending him the mirror. He is very anxious to see the writing desk to which the mirror belongs,⁸⁶ for he cannot understand what this can be like. I said it would be sent to him.

He said that he would let me take my departure within a few days.

Primo September 1816.

Today General Barriekie was tried in public from 8 o'clock in the morning until 5 at night and has been executed on all sides. It is feared that, even if he does not lose his head, he will be deprived of all his possessions and removed from his caboccer's stool. There were six men opposed to him at the hearing.

Otherwise no news.

2nd September

Today General Barriekie was dethroned from his stool.⁸⁷ All his possessions have been taken away from him, and he, who once had 30, now has only one wife left. The King has also confiscated all Barriekie's slaves. Later another person will be elected to sit on the stool. Barriekie's ankles have been shackled for three days. He has been put in log and is still there.

4th

From the 3rd until today I have done my best to make the King order the cutting of the highway to begin, but his answer always is, "Good, good. Have patience. Everything will come out all right."

5th.

I sought an audience and, on being admitted to the King's presence, requested that he would be so good as to drive the highway through to the

85. Lit., de groote weg. (From now on, translated as 'highway')

86. Lit., de spiegel secretaire.

87. Lit., ontroond van de stool. 'Destooled' sounds anachronistic.

Coast as quickly as possible, because the General very much wanted to pay his visit during this present month.

At this the King became a little short with me. The reasons, he said, why the work had not been started before now were to be found at Elmina. Every report he was receiving from there gave the General a bad character. He went on, "The cause of my present attitude to you is that merchants returning from Elmina bring nothing but bad news and ill reports of your master. They all say that the General is only waiting for your return before destroying Elmina Town with his guns."

Against this attack I defended myself and my master as much as a man could. The King said at last, "If you will take the whole palaver on yourself and settle it at Elmina so that no palavers whatever are outstanding, I will at once let you go and will begin building the highway. But, as I understand the matter, your master is a very irascible man, and will certainly burn the town."

I said that obviously I dared not take the whole palaver on myself, but that, if he thought fit, he should send one of his own men to accompany me to Elmina to settle it. The affair was not between the General and the Elminas alone, I said, because the King of Holand was a party to it and must be consulted.

The King seemed satisfied with this reply, and said, "Now I am convinced that my people are accusing your master somewhat too vehemently. But let the General come here. Then it will be seen what manner of man he really is. I for my part will not say bad things about him."

And, finally, the King said, "I am fearful lest the General will revenge himself because of all the accusations that have been levelled against him. I know all the Elminas say is not true, but I am worried about the possibility that the General will take revenge against them."

I said that the General would be able to deal satisfactorily with the Elminas.

8th.

For three days now I have been trying hard to persuade the King to order the construction of the highway. All he says is, "It will be done."

Three weeks ago he sent men to Tando to fetch the General's letters, but they are not back yet.

12th.

Nothing happened.

I have not spoken to the King since the 9th instant. No news on the 10th, 11th or today.

15th August 1816.

I have not spoken to the King for the past three days.

Yesterday evening I was told that the King would let me go within a few days, and would also begin building the highway. He is now most distrustful of me because of the evil news being received from Elmina.

16th August.

This morning the King sent for me and, with every sign of goodwill, said that, since the small rains were about to begin, he would allow me to leave very soon and would also start constructing the highway.

When the rains were over, the General would be able to visit him.

He is still puzzled about the delay in the receipt of the letters sent by the General via Tando. It is said that Tando is to bring them himself, and that the General told him to do this.

The small rains have started.

I impressed once again on the King the sincerity of the General's feelings towards him, but all he said was, "Good, Good."

17th.

Today two slaves arrived, bearing the original letter signed by the General at Elmina on 24th May 1816. They belonged to General Barriekie, now dethroned. I read the contents of the letter to the King, who said, "You have told me all this before."

I said, "That is so, but Your Majesty will now understand the General's purpose all the better."

He laughed and said that he had understood perfectly well the first time and had already given his answer. White men, he said, were indeed wiser than negroes.

18th.

No audience with the King today.

Yesterday I saw a number of Malabar negroes.⁸⁸ They were dressed like Turks. They live in various of the King's towns, and had walked 10 hours to get here. One of them told me that he knows Tomboektoe, Houssa and Kagna well, but that no Ashanti is familiar with these places because the King's highways do not run there. Cong is 60 to 80 hours distant from here, and belongs to the King. The King's domains stretch for about 400 hours. His villages are at least ten thousand in number, mostly acquired by war. This total of villages does not include those belonging to the King on the Accra and Appolonia sides.

19th.

All quiet today. Most of the Kings and caboceers have returned to their villages. I now await the King's order for the cutting of the highway.

20th.

Yesterday a man was abruptly beheaded in the street. The reason was that he had put dishonour on the King by neglecting to run away as fast as he could when the King's wives came upon the scene. For this he lost his head in a flash.

When these women are abroad in the streets, they are accompanied by small boys with staffs. It is their staffs that indicate that these women are royal wives. Even the King's brothers are obliged to get out of their way, or run the risk of losing their heads as the common people do. No caboceer, however important he may be, dares to remain on the street if he sees any of these women approching.

21st.

The King has sent word that he wishes me to attend him tomorrow. He wants to talk about the highway.
No other news.

88. See fn. 56 above. The spelling is quite clear this time.

22nd.

Early today to the palace, but the King was unable to talk to me. All the nobility are discussing with him the matter of my departure. I was told to go home and await a further summons. This I did.

About 11 o'clock General Poekoe sent for me. Arriving at the palace I found all the royal linguists assembled. They gave me 2 ounces of gold as a present, and told me that it was the King's will that I should not leave yet, not in any event until the highway had been started. The King had sent me these two ounces, and now asked me to be patient and await the return of the messengers he had sent to Wassaw. He was hoping these messengers would find out what answer the General had made to the Wassaws. If they returned with good news, he would let me go immediately. If the news was bad, he would send an army to cut the highway through and bring the Wassaws to a sense of obedience. They were failing to carry out the orders of their master and his. In this way, the King said, he was ensuring that the General's wishes would be brought to fruition by the quickest possible means. Moreover, the General's letters had not yet arrived. All this made me more than ever incensed against the Caboecer Tando, who is delaying these letters for such a long time.

The King is well disposed towards me again, and is convinced that the Dutch are his true friends. He is very anxious that I should leave so that I can bring the General back with me on my next visit.

23rd.

Today I hoped to send one of my boys to Elmina, but the King forbade it. He distrusted the Wassaws, he said, for they had prevaricated in their dealings with the General's messengers. I am not to send any letters to Elmina from now on. If a messenger should be panyared by the Wassaws, the King would have to punish them. The General would not want me back until I had completed my mission, even if this meant delaying my departure longer than expected.

No news is good news.

24th.

No news. Incessant rain. Heavy thunder all day.

28th.

During the last four days it has rained from morning until night. The small rains are here and in the bush they are worse than the main rainy season.

29th.

Heavy rain again today. I fear the rivers will become swollen and my return journey will soon be impossible.

At midday General Jouw Kokroko visited me and saw me sitting miserably at table, dining most humbly off a plate of choking malaget paté.⁸⁹ He was very sad to see me thus, and asked if I sat like this every day. Hearing that I did, he went home and sent me a sheep and 12 yams, so that I could have a better dinner tomorrow. I was much touched by his friendship, which far surpasses that of other persons here.

89. Lit., met ~~een~~ bord malaget van stikkende paté.

30th.

No news. Have not seen the King for several days now.

Primo October 1816.

Heavy rain. Did not leave the house.

2nd.

Today is the Small Addaij, or Good Wednesday. I paid my respects to the King but, of course, could discuss no business with him.

3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th.

No news. Heavy rain. Presents received from Boating, King of Djuabin. See list.

7th.

I went to see the King to ask if the messengers were yet back from Wassaw. He replied, "No. Be patient. They will come."

8th.

No news. Heavy rain and thunder.

9th.

I learn that for 20 days past the King has not been seen in public. He is said to be busy with his fetish, engaged in the task of preparing for war. Whether this is true or not I do not know.

11th.

Heavy rain all yesterday and today. No news.

12th.

I understand all trade routes have been closed, and that no merchants are allowed to go to Elmina until after my departure thence. Whether this is the truth or not I do not know.

Fine weather.

13th.

Nothing happened.

14th. October 1816.

I hear a great fete will be held here next Monday, but the occasion for it I do not yet know.

15th.

Most of the merchants have now left. They have gone to Accra, Annamaboe and Cape Coast, well laden with 50 large tusks. They say the prices set by the General at Elmina are too high and also that, now the General is in alliance with Mr. Nieser, no Ashanti will trade at Elmina any more. Mr. Nieser has deceived the General into selling guns at 8 (indecipherable) and is being allowed to adulterate gunpowder at discretion. He is destroying the trade of Elmina just as he once did that of Accra. It was because of actions like these that Mr. Nieser was expelled from Accra some time back.

The merchants say, further, that if the General and Mr. Nieser are one, the General cannot be a friend of the Ashantis, for all nations know Mr. Nieser for the greatest scoundrel in the world.

The merchants also say that Mr. Nieser adulterates barrels of powder openly and without shame. During their last visit to Elmina they saw him doing this. At Accra Mr. Nieser used to adulterate ankers of drink, and now he is no doubt doing the same thing at Elmina.

Guns are obtainable at the Cape and other places for 4 or 5 (indecipherable). It is entirely Mr. Nieser's fault that they are not obtainable at Elmina except at the high price of 8 (indecipherable).

I have learnt all this from General Quatje Coffie, who is well versed in commercial matters. He is strongly opposed to the construction of a highway to Elmina, and all because of Mr. Nieser's activities there.

16th.

The great fête I mentioned on the 14th instant is to take place on the 20th. Various Fanti envoys are coming here to seek the King's pardon, submit themselves to him and serve him from now on. They have money with them with which to buy from him a peace settlement. The latter must be arranged before any other business can be transacted.

Heavy rain this evening.

17th.

To the palace today, but did not see the King. He is busy with his fetish.

19th.

No news yesterday and today. I sought an audience, but could not obtain it. The King places all blame on Caboceer Tando, and claims that it is he that is holding up my departure. His Majesty seems ashamed when he sees me.

20th.

Today is the Great Adaij, or Good Sunday. All the chiefs have come into the town to greet the King. On these occasions no business may be done. The Fanti envoys arrive tomorrow.

21st. October 1816.

Today I once again urged the King to begin the construction of the highway, but he said that, since the Fanti envoys were arriving this afternoon, I must wait until they had completed their palaver. I was disappointed, but had to agree to what he proposed.

The Fantis have seen the King, but with what result I do not yet know.

22nd.

Today I requested yet again that the highway should be begun, but the King said I must continue to be patient, and not make things too difficult for him. All would be arranged soon.

Heavy rain this evening.

23rd.

Today the King suggested that, as he had no opportunity to begin the construction of the highway, I should be allowed to leave. Later on, when he had more time, the highway would be started. He realized that for me to spend so long here without being able to communicate with the General might well be dangerous for me. He went on, "The General will be very pleased about everything in the end, and I prefer to have the matter of the highway settled before you leave. I have not yet been told what the Wassaws wish to do in connection with this business, and also the letters from the General have not yet been sent on by Tando. I am waiting for Tando. I do not want you to go before all outstanding palavers have been settled."

24th.

Today I was told the purpose of the Fanti mission. It is as follows. The Fantis wish to serve and obey the King of Ashanti and have brought him gold so that their allegiance may be made binding. The King, however, has told them that he cannot accept them as his subjects until he has consulted the representative of Aduokoe. It is Aduokoe whom he recognizes as chief of all the Fantis. This representative must therefore be summoned and, if he approves, the King will acknowledge that everything the Fantis say is the truth. If the Fantis wish to transfer their allegiance, they must also surrender to him the subsistence⁹⁰ paid to him by Cape Cors and Annamaboe. If they do not do this, he will send his whole army to compel the submission of all Fantiland. The Fantis must also pledge them-selves never to commit hostilities against Elmina for, if they do, they risk a terrible fate.

Heavy rain this evening.

25th.

Requested the King to allow me to leave, for I fear for the future. He replied, "Do not be afraid. The General sent you to me. You must therefore wait. The General will be quite satisfied with you."

26th.

Today I again requested the King to begin the highway so that I might leave. But he said, "Be easy in your mind. Your master is now sending another envoy and so you will be hearing good news soon. Do not try to alter the course of events, for your cause is good. Go home now and await your friends. They will be here in a few days and you will be very happy. A white man and a soldier are coming with Tando."

This news made my heart leap with joy. I will soon be seeing my colleagues here and will be able to return home with them.

27th.

During the past 5 days more than 200 men with ivory and gold have left for Elmina alone. The King has issued strict orders that no one must write any letters. I plan, however, to bribe one of the soldiers to take a letter for me to the General. It may be, of course, that none of the soldiers will take the risk.

To my great delight General Poekoe visited me this afternoon. He told me in the King's name that I will be welcome at the palace every day if I wish it, and may come to talk about this and that with His Majesty.

⁹⁰ Lit., Kostgeld. See Douglas Coombs, 'The place of the "Certificate of Apologie" in Ghanaian history,' Trans. Hist. Soc. Ghana, III, 3 (Achimota 1958), 180-1 for a discussion of the meaning of Kostgeld, or 'subsistence'.

From this I deduce that I am in favour and the Elminas are not.
Heavy rain this evening.

28th.

I did not dare to visit His Majesty today. He asked why and I sent word that I had a headache, and begged him to excuse me. He replied that I ought nevertheless to put in an appearance at the open place (in front of the palace?) in order to see the oath being administered to the followers of Barriekie. I went there but saw nothing.⁹¹

The King is said to have reviewed 1420 men.⁹⁶ Abo Adie has been placed on Barriekie's stool, and Barriekie himself has been made the overseer of a small river.

I had no conversation with His Majesty today. Heavy rain this evening.

31st October 1816.

Attended His Majesty every day for the past three days.

No news.

Heavy thunder and rain.

Primo November 1816.

Today I put it to His Majesty that he should begin the highway, but he said, "I must await the arrival of the new envoy and hear his news. I am told that the General at Elmina has settled the Wassaw palaver. It is possible also that the General has heard about the lies told by the Elminas and is sending someone to find out what the situation here really is."

Fine weather.

2nd.

I sat awhile with the great King of the Ashantis today. I noted, but did not remark on the fact, that His Majesty is full of contempt for someone. It is probably the Elminas. I have often been told that he says, "White men speak the truth. Some other people, however, will be found out in the end and disgraced."

3rd.

With the King this morning. He gave me a bottle of gin, but the Elminas did not get a drop. He certainly seems to have something against them. They saluted him, but he did not even look in their direction.

The rumours say that the General's envoy, Pieter Woortman, is bringing good news with him, and that the King thinks better of the General than he did. But all will be known when Pieter arrives here.

6th November 1816.

No news for the past three days. The rains are slackening off and in a few days should be over.

91. The exact meaning is obscure in these passages.

7th.

Today in my presence the King sent a boy to Tando, with this message: That, whether or not Tando came himself, he must at least let the General's envoy through; that Tando's actions are not pleasing to the court at Koemassie; and that he must remember that he will have to render an account of these actions later, which account had better be satisfactory.

I have sent a message myself to Pieter, to the effect that he should not wait on Tando but come straight through with the King's messenger. Pieter is only three days' distant from here, and Tando is still at Dinkira.

8th.

Today another party of merchants left for the Coast, some making for Elmina and the rest for Kap Kors and Annamaboe. They have been complaining very strongly about the changes in trading arrangements at Elmina and put the blame for the alterations on Mr. Nieser.

Several large tusks have arrived here for the King. They are probably to be sent to the General.

9th.

The King tells me that Pieter, and Tando also, will be here within a few days. Otherwise no news.

10th.

No news.

11th.

His Majesty, coming to see me at my house, told me that he is much distressed to find that the Elminas are such liars and are in a position to do so great a man as the General such harm.

12th.

No news. The weather is excellent now and the rains have stopped.

13th.

Today being Good Wednesday, or Small Aday, all the chiefs went to greet the King. I did likewise, but was not able to speak with him on business.

14th November 1816.

This afternoon Pieter Woortman arrived here at the capital and saluted me and my men. The King is busy making custom over one of his nephews, and told Pieter to lodge with his travelling companion, the caboceer Tando. He has not yet asked him any questions. I have not so far received any letters nor even seen Pieter.⁹² I imagine both Pieter's and Tando's statements will be heard tomorrow.

His Majesty came to my house and stayed talking for a full hour. He told me that the Elminas were saying very bad things about the General, the King of Holland and me, and asked if I could not settle their palaver with me before him.

92. Perhaps the word 'alone' should be added here to make sense, though it is not in the text.

I answered that this was for His Majesty himself to decide, but that I certainly could not do anything for the Elminas. They well deserved the punishments they would receive at the General's hands.

The King replied that I ought to persuade the General to forgive them. The General would be able to control their future behaviour. He himself was convinced that they had wrongfully slandered the General. I said merely that it might well be that the Elminas ought to be punished a little more yet for their great indiscretions. At this His Majesty laughed aloud.

When he left he gave me a sheep and my men 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ of gold to buy tobacco with.

15th.

Today Serjeant Woortman, Tando and I were with the King. I translated the contents of the letters for him very carefully, and handed over the fine suit of clothing sent by the General. His Majesty was delighted with his present, and said to me, with every sign of satisfaction, "I am much obliged to the General our master for these things." The letter addressed to His Majesty also gave him much pleasure.

He said, "These are no doubt the clothes of the King our master, or has the General had them made for me?"

I said the General had had them made especially for His Majesty before his departure from Europe.

The King then asked where was the hat that went with the suit. I said I had brought him this already. He denied, however, that this was so, and said that later he must be supplied with the hat that belonged to the suit. And so I had to promise that the General would send him another hat.

His Majesty then said, "I am very pleased the General is coming here. I will be able to discuss everything with him personally. I wish him to know that I think highly of the Dutch and welcome everything that they do to improve my country."

I said that the General had given me 15 or 16 days to get back to Elmina. The King said that he could not let me go until after the Great Aday or Good Sunday which is due to be held on 1st December next.

The General is satisfied with the arrangements about the 12 horses and 50 cows, bulls, etc., but what will be the price, the King wished to know, of the slaves? It had been understood that the General wanted 100 slaves. I replied that at Elmina nowadays a slave fetched 1 (illegible) 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ at the most, and for this reason there was no slave trade there any more. The King laughed and said nothing.

I then asked His Majesty whether Serjeant Woortman might leave tomorrow. But he replied, "Well, now. I will give you my answer in the morning."

He went on, "Now everything is in order. I believe now that you have indeed told me what the General my master wished you to tell me. The Elminas nearly spoiled things for you. I expect you to discuss everything with the General on your return and there will be a strong bond between us for ever."

I said to His Majesty, "The General my master will put me, on my return, under the command of Adam." 93

The King said that this was satisfactory to him, but that I must nevertheless give him my assurance that I would return. He, the King, regarded me as his confidant now. If the General came without me, it would be taken amiss.

To this I replied that I was but an official and had no say in such matters. If the General ordered me to, I would of course come, but more I could not promise. The King said that, in that case, I must write to the General to make him promise to bring me, which I said I would do.

16th.

When I visited the King today I asked him to allow Woortman to leave early tomorrow morning and to take with him His Majesty's answers concerning the Wassaw and English Commany palavers and the matter of the highway. But he said that I must be patient.

The King gave Woortman for his subsistence 2 E and 14 yams.

17th.

I was sick today and did not see the King. Wortman went to the palace but did not, however, speak with the King. His Majesty is making custom over one of his nephews and will be conducting little or no business during the next 3 or 4 days.

18th.

To the King this morning and asked that Woortman might now be allowed to fit His Majesty's trousers, viz. 1 pair of pantaloons and 2 pairs of under-drawers. The King kept us waiting for at least three hours before seeing us. The coat does not fit him, but he tried on the shirt and waistcoat for a moment or two. He complained greatly about how hot they were, and quickly took them off.

He said, "When the trousers are finished and handed over to me by Woortman, I will say goodbye to him and he may leave about the next Great Aday or Good Sunday." After this Woortman and I went home.

19th.

About 12 o'clock at night the King sent for me and gave me the following information:

1st. That since Tando, contrary to His Majesty's orders and against His Majesty's wishes, made peace with the Wassaws without stipulating any conditions, His Majesty has decided to reject this peace treaty; he will, however, abide by the settlement that his good friend, General Daendels, makes in his behalf; everything will be finalized when the sum of money agreed on is placed in his hands and when he receives a confirmatory letter from the General; 94

2nd. That it is the custom among the negroes that, when a woman commits adultery and injures her husband thereby, separates from him for a time and then wishes for a reconciliation, she first sends a sheep, chickens, etc. on before her, and then later comes herself to settle the real matter at issue; Tando in his negotiations with the Wassaws has not stipulated any of these things and has thus not been able to collect any damages from the Wassaws;

94. An obscure passage. The translation is by no means a literal one, but the sense is right, I think.

3rd. That (illegible) the Akra took to Elmina the letters containing the request that the General should settle the Wassaw palaver, but Tando prevented the Wassaws from going there; Tando claimed that he himself could set everything in order; the result was that the Wassaws failed to appear before the General and did not go to Great Commanij either; Tando, with a view to filling his own purse, took the whole matter upon himself, and said that it was the King's wish that he, Tando, should arrange everything; he claimed the Wassaws did not want to go to Elmina; he also told them that it was he alone who could settle the palaver; only if they found he could not do so were they to place their case before the General; the result of all this is that nothing has been achieved.

His Majesty has therefore the following proposals to make to the Wassaws:

(The next page in the diary is blank, except for the words, "See under 6th December 1816".)

20th.

We went to fit the King's trousers for him today, which pleased him very well. He asked me to write to the General requesting that a pair of stockings⁹⁵ be sent to him via Woortman and also some cloth trousers⁹⁶ and drawers for his daily use, with a royal hat.

21st.

No news.

22nd.

The King has given me very firmly to understand that I cannot leave here until all outstanding palavers with the General have been settled. If I go away now, he says, this will lend credence to the reports spread abroad by the Elminas that the General has evil intentions with regard to Ashanti. The King agrees, however, that I should dismiss my boys and bearers in order to reduce my expenses. He will supply me with the necessary men when the time comes for me to depart. I curbed my distress at the receipt of these orders, and was silent. It seems the King is listening to the Elminas again.

23rd.

I asked the King if Woortman might leave, but he said, "Wait until I give you instructions in the matter. Now at last as a result of your persistence I have decided to begin the highway. The work will start next Good Sunday or Great Aday, and Bieter can report to the General our master on the progress of this work." His Majesty added that how the workmen were divided was no business of mine. He would attend to everything, and the General's wishes would be followed.

24th.

The King again took up the suggestion that I should be charged with settling the Wassaw palaver. The constant sending of messengers back and forth, he says, prolongs things unduly and more important matters are delayed.

95. Lit., baarzen, which has no meaning in Dutch except as the plural of Baars, 'a spiny-finned river fish'. Baarzen here is probably a corrupt plural of bas, French for 'stocking'.

96. Lit., een lakense broek.

He proposes that I discuss the whole thing with my patron,⁹⁷ General Poekoe, and then report back to him. In this way all the various points can be dealt with.

This afternoon various merchants arrived here from Elmina. They say that the General is not treating the Ashantis well at all. When they bring their wares to him, he forces them to accept in exchange goods they do not want, and if they object he takes a stick to them. The King is very annoyed at this treatment of his merchants. I am keeping silent in the matter. If I venture any remarks they are likely to be rejected, and this will tend to make the merchants' reports seem more truthful than in fact they are.

25th.

I suggested to the King today that he should make some reply to the General's letters and also that he should fix the time when the highway will be opened. His Majesty said the highway would be begun eight days from now.

28th.

From the 26th until today the King and his councillors discussed the false reports circulated by the Elminas. The Elminas pressed continuously for the acceptance as true of the reports recently received from the town. I stood firm, and pointed out that I could not allow my master to be covered with lies in this way, and that I could not agree to the suggestions being put forward. I said that I could not allow my master to be blackguarded and that, together with Pieter, I would make a full report at Elmina of everything that has occurred.

So involved in this business have the Ashantis become that, when they heard my remarks, they immediately threatened that, if I did indeed tell the General everything, they would consider Pieter and me as their enemies. They said, too, that if the General heard my report in full he would inevitably burn down the town of Elmina and destroy the houses with his cannon, and in so doing would himself become an enemy of the Ashantis. They said that unless I listened to the King's entreaties he would do nothing for me. The Elminas, though the white men are their masters, have always been brothers to the Ashantis. If the General heard the whole story he could not fail to ruin Elmina. It was because the Ashantis had not wanted him to learn everything that they had had me drink the oath, by which I purified him of the lies the Elminas had put upon him. The Elminas, so the Ashantis said, had only told lies through fear.

I stood firm, and stated again that the General must be told everything. I said that the King was not concerned in the matter. The Elminas, I insisted, must be punished, and taught not to make false statements to a King as great as the King of Ashanti. These false reports of theirs would certainly have caused a rupture if I had not been here and had not understood the negro tongue. As regards the King and what he ought to do, if he had sent one of his generals on so weighty and important a mission (as the General my master had sent me), and if then another general had sent one of his slaves along afterwards, and this slave had worked in opposition to the King's wishes and had made the King out to be a bad man and, if, on top of all this, the King's own envoy had kept the slave's actions secret so that the King heard about them from someone else -- what then? Would not His Majesty punish the general's slave by cutting off his head?

When they heard this question, everyone present was dumbfounded. The chiefs began to mutter among themselves, "The white man is right. The white man is right. This is serious. What shall we do?"

The King then took me by the hand, and said, "Bronie, you are behaving today in a very hard and obstinate way. Could you not do me a favour, and cut out of your book all mention of this business?"

I said. "No. I cannot and may not do this. I cannot be unfaithful to my master, but must make everything known to him."

"Then you wish to bring ill fortune to Elmina?"

"No," I said. "My mother, my wife and my children, indeed, my whole family all live at Elmina. I could hardly wish to harm it."

"What must I do then, Bronie?"

I told the King that he could not do better than let me write everything down and send it to the General. For his part he could have one of his own men accompany me, and this man, speaking on the King's behalf, could entreat the General to let the Elminas off with but a small punishment. It was certainly true that there was nothing the General would not do for His Majesty. This would be the best method, I said, of persuading the General to be lenient.

The King, however, said that he feared the General would not pardon the Elminas and, if he did not, this would bring shame upon Ashanti. His Majesty would not listen to what I said, and insisted that I must remove from my book everything I had written.

I said (and it was true) that I had prepared three letters to the Councillors at Elmina requesting, on the King's behalf, that they should influence the General to mitigate the punishment given to the Elminas; that the forgiveness meted out by the General would thus be at the King's instigation; that the Elminas would never be able to tell these lies again, since punishment would be hanging over them; and that, in consequence, the King would be in no danger of suffering dishonour at the General's hands.

But the King became angry, and said, "Who among us can read? You talk like this to cheat me, and make me lose my town, yes, even a town as great as Elmina. This is no good at all. We must decide differently from this. Come here tomorrow and bring the three letters, and we will see what can be done to ensure Elmina's well-being and to pacify the General at the same time."

I said that, since the General had told Wortman to stay no longer than 2 days, he would have to leave for Elmina this same evening, and that I intended to send my entire journal with him, so that the General might be acquainted with what had been happening here.

The King replied that Woortman would have to stay until tomorrow, and that it was he, the King, who decided what we envoys did in such cases as this. Then he stood up and left us perplexed. We went home.

29th.

This morning early the King summoned me and the Elminas. He asked me if I still intended to make a full report to the General, or if I would rather do him a service and write to the General what he himself would dictate.

Once again I said it was impossible for me to deceive my master. If I did so, I would break my oath to the King of Holland, and bring disaster on myself.

"Well, now," said the King. "Your master at present knows nothing of this business. Everything that has happened, has happened here in my capital ...⁹⁸ By making you drink the oath I have purified the General of all the ill that has been spoken of him. You must now listen to me, and do what I say. It is not always necessary that great men know everything that occurs. If you do not do as I ask, you are inviting the General to ruin my town of Elmina and are falling out with me and making yourself my enemy. But go your ways, and let everything be upon your own head."

At these words of the King's I became very anxious in my mind, and decided that I would have to agree to what His Majesty was proposing. It was true, after all, that he was trying to prevent harm to the town of Elmina.

(I took into account, too, the fact that the Elminas and the 3 linguists had already agreed to withdraw all the lies they had told and throw themselves on the King's mercy. I felt I had to yield a little,⁹⁹ and listen to His Majesty's suggestions.)

The King then proposed the following, which I agreed to under duress, since I did not wish to cause a breach between His Majesty and the General:

The Elminas said to the King that they feared Your Excellency¹⁰⁰ because, from the time of your arrival in the country until now, you did not sign any contract with them nor did you transact any business with them; with regard to Your Excellency's character and whether you were a friend or an enemy the Elminas had no opinion; but because Your Excellency persistently prevented them from marching against Commanij, they had felt it necessary (not knowing what Your Excellency had in mind in thus restricting their actions), to send to the King of the Ashantis for men, because they did not trust Commanij. By making me swear the Great Oath, the King purified Your Excellency of all the wrong done to you and with this aspect of the matter the King and all his councillors are entirely satisfied. The King has now brought about a reconciliation between the Elminas and me, and has told the Elminas very firmly that they must always serve your Excellency faithfully, saying to them. "The General is my master and your master both. If the General does not treat you well, he is not my friend. If you do not obey and serve the General, you are my enemies. I will always choose the side which is in the right." The Elminas then asked the King to reconcile the General to them and seek his pardon for them because they came here without his permission. They said they had failed to request a permit from the General solely because of their fear of Your Excellency.

To the King's suggestion that the above should constitute the written record of events here I have agreed. I quite see that there must be no unnecessary palaver between myself and the Elminas.¹⁰¹ It is best that we follow the King's wishes or else the chief object of my mission will be thrown away.

Everything was now done, and the King sent for a large bottle of rum and a fat sheep for our sustenance, saying that these were to show that we were friends and would remain so.

98. Short indecipherable passage here.

99. Lit., de bot vieren. ('To pay out a rope' is een touw bot vieren.)

100. At this point the text takes on the form of a letter or explanation addressed directly to General Daendels.

101. There is considerable amplification and paraphrasing here. The text is highly elliptical.

He then made all my men and those of the Elminas swear on their lives that everything that had happened here would remain here, and that no-one would repeat any of it at Elmina, lest rumours came to the General's ears and caused trouble. Each man had to speak the following words:

"If, when I am in Elmina, I ever say one word about this palaver between the white man and the Elminas to anyone, whoever he may be, I break the Oath of the King of the Ashantis and forfeit either my head or the sum of 120 preguns." (A pregun is 2 (indecipherable)).

Woortman had to swear too, and then everything was finished. I must state, however, that the true story as originally told by the Elminas is accurately recorded in my journal under date 20th July, and that I have not dared to remove this entry. The three letters written to their Honours, Messrs. van Voit,¹⁰² Malet and Oldenburg, were torn up in the presence of the King and all his chiefs. This was done on His Majesty's orders.

The King gave me his hand, and said, "The highway will be begun on Monday. The General our master will then be able to come here and enjoy my hospitality."

The joy of the Ashantis was unbounded.
(I have removed the original report from my journal.)

30th November 1816.

Went to the King, and requested that Woortman might now be allowed to depart. His Majesty said he might leave next Tuesday.

Primo December 1816.

(Marginal note: "Today is Great Aday, or Good Sunday.")

The King asked me this morning if I were not very happy that the highway is to be begun tomorrow. I said I would be a lot happier if I myself were taking the news about it to the General. The King said, laughing, "You cannot go until all palavers are finished. You are jealous of Pieter because you cannot go with him."

2nd December.

This morning in my presence the King issued his instructions to the various chiefs who are to supervise the construction of the highway. They asked for 6 preguns or 3 to 8.¹⁰³ I have advised the General of this request in my letter of today's date.

Immediately the money was paid over, the highway was begun. It is more than forty feet wide. The King, all his chiefs and I went to look at the work this afternoon. His Majesty was well pleased.

3rd December.

Woortman was ready to leave today, but the King stopped him. The reason is that the Wassaw envoys are due tomorrow, and the King wants Woortman to hear what they have to say before he goes.

102. Spelling doubtful.

103. Sic. Meaning obscure.

4th ditto.

Today the Wassawa arrived. There are 4 of them. They have greeted the King and have been sumptuously received.

I went to look at the highway, and found the labourers working cheerfully away. They tried to persuade me to send for presents for them.

5th.

Today the Wassaws disclosed the purpose of their mission. It appears to be of small importance. They say that Tando told Caboceer Eltefor that the King wanted to know whether Eltefor wished to discontinue his allegiance to Ashanti . . . Two chests of gin have arrived for the King . . . Everyone present expressed contempt for both Tando and the Wassaws. 104

6th December.

The King summoned both me and the Elminas today with a view to examining with us the Wassaws' intentions. They were asked whether they were going to co-operate with the General in settling the palaver or whether they regarded him as a fool and were planning to impose on him and delay the building of the highway. The King told them that, if they had anything to say, they should say it. He assured them that the General would, from compassion alone, make allowances for their stupidities if they been guilty of any. But the Wassaw envoys answered that they were only small boys, and would have to discuss these great matters with their masters.

At this all the generals, officers, etc., stood up and, at the King's order, raised their swords and swore this oath to the honour of our General, all speaking very seriously. Each in turn said these words:

"I swear by the Great Oath of Cormantijn that, since the General our master has charged the King of the Ashantis with the task of building a highway in order that the said General may honour our King by visiting him here in his capital, this highway shall be constructed without any changes of plan, and that, if any man opposes the General's wishes in this matter, I will take up arms against him and prove that I am the faithful servant of King Saij.

I further swear that if Eltefor or any of the Wassaws tries to deceive the General with trickery or opposes his passage (to the capital), I will take up arms and will, without mercy, drive Eltefor away from the highway, in order that the highway may be constructed where the General wants it. This I swear by the Oath of Cormantijn and Saturday."

Then the King gave orders that, in honour of the General, every man present should pass in turn before me and take a second oath. And they all very willingly held up their swords and, with the blades almost touching my nose, spoke these words:

104. An extremely obscure passage. The nearest I can get to the Dutch is: "Dat Tando aan de Cabocier Eltefor had gaan zeggen, dat de Koning vraagd indien Eltefor hem niet langer wil calio haren hij hem Tando foefoe terre op de rug moeten gooijen ten bewijzen hij de Koning niet meer wil trouwen en zonde 2 kelders genever voor de Koning. Waarover elk een zeer gr??? wierd, en Tando met de Wassasche verragten."

"Bronie, I swear by the Great Oath of Cormantijn; I swear by Saturday and by my King Saij; that since your master the General wants the highway built, it shall be built; and if anyone tries to delay the General by prevaricating,¹⁰⁵ I will remove the very roof from his house.

I swear by the Honour of your General that, if any man tries to prevent the highway now decided upon from being built, he will pay for it with his goods, his slaves and his head. I swear that the wishes of the General our master will prevail."

When all this was over, the Wassaws were left in no doubt that this was no joking matter, and they muttered terribly against Tando. They claimed that Tando had deceived them badly. They all said that they now saw clearly that this was a serious business.

7th December.

Went to look at the highway today. The work is going on well. General Quatje Coffie is beginning to dig the roots up out of the ground.

Wortman is ready to set off this evening. The King made the following speech to him:

"Pieter! You are now ready to depart, accompanied by my envoys and by those of the Elminas. Go with God's blessing. Greet the General my master heartily on behalf of me and all my officers. Tell him that, although the Elminas have done wrong so far as he is concerned, he must, out of consideration for me, pardon and forgive them. The Elminas and I are now united, and wish always to honour and serve him to the best of our ability. Tell him we desire no other master than the Dutch, and that he is the chief of us all."

Tell the General my master that I expect him here with as little delay as possible and that the highway will soon be open. With regard to the Wassaw palaver, I ask that he let me know by express messenger whether the Wassaws intend to pay or not, so that I can decide on my course of action concerning them. If they wish to please me, they will keep out of the way. Otherwise they will become children of death."

8th December.

No time to spare today. I have been busy for some time writing a letter on the King's behalf to the General, and today have managed to finish it. Woortman leaves tomorrow.

9th.

This morning at 5 o'clock or daybreak Woortman departed. I have urged him not to spend 70 days on the return journey, and not to be tricked by the Ashantis into taking more than 14.

I walked for two hours down the highway, and found it all ready on this side. All that remains is for the roots to be dug out of the ground. When removed, these roots will be handed over to the Queen and her slave-girls for the making and sweeping of floors. 106

105. Perhaps "by humbugging him" would be a better translation.

106. Lit., om gelijk vloers te maken, en schoon te vegen.
(Mod. Dutch gelijkvloers = 'on the ground floor.')

10th.

No news. My eyes are now fixed on the arrival of the General, because I expect to be able to return home with him. I see very clearly now that the King hopes to keep me here until His Excellency comes.

17th.

From the 11th until today, no news. Have not spoken with the King in all this time.

18th December.

I went to look at the highway today, and noticed it was not the same width along the whole of its length. I reported this to the King, and he said my wishes in the matter would be attended to tomorrow.

The workmen complain bitterly that they are not receiving any drink. I told them to wait a little and they would get some. In the meantime they must carry on cheerfully. They were grateful for my words, and went back to their tasks yelling and singing with excitement.

20th.

Did not see the King. No news yesterday and today.

21st.

No news.

23rd.

No news yesterday. This morning I wrote a letter to the General for the King, stating that His Majesty is sending the General a slave-girl with ivory and 2 (illegible) 4 E/ in gold. The girl is to buy some fine cloth on His Majesty's behalf.

On these occasions the King is very pleased when he appends his cross. He says, "Look, I also can write. What do you think, is not my hand better than yours?"

28th December 1816.

No news since the 24th. I have been three times to examine the work on the highway. It is going on but slowly, and the labourers keep asking for drink.

30th.

Yesterday the King forbade me to write any letters of any kind either to the General or to my own people without his permission. Nor am I to give any messages to the merchants, but must patiently await the return here of the King's Akkra. His Majesty is determined that no one shall leave before the answer concerning the Wassaws has been received. He says that if I send any letters I will become a very bad friend of his.

I noticed today that the workmen have not got on much further with the construction of the highway. They are becoming very disgruntled.

31st December 1816.

No news.

Primo January 1817.

Today being New Year's day I went to call on the King, and received from him a present of 1 (illegible) 2 £ of gold, 1 sheep and 10 yams. He asked me what my master would have given me for New Year if I had been at Elmina. I said I would certainly have received 5 (illegible) from my master.

They King said, "Will the present be kept for you, then, because you are away?"

"Without a doubt," I said. "It will be kept for me very faithfully."

The Elminas received 9 £.

4th January 1817.

Nothing happened from the 2nd until today. The highway is going ahead very slowly, at least on this side of the capital. The Kings of Adiabon and Bekwaij are praised by the people for the good work their men are doing.

5th January.

Today I asked the King if the highway might be pushed forward more quickly, for it is hardly progressing at all. He said, "I will look at it myself tomorrow, and give orders for the work to be speeded up."

6th ditto.

This afternoon His Majesty and all the chiefs went to look at the highway. I do not yet know what they thought of it. I am told that the son of the most senior general, Amanquatia, arrived last night from Elmina and has brought some letters for me.

7th January 1817.

Very early this morning I was summoned by the King. His Majesty handed me a letter from the General our master which had been brought by the son of Amanquatia. It contained good news, for it praised the friendly treatment received by him from our General. The King was most pleased to receive this report, which indicated the true feelings and good intentions of the General towards him.

The letter, however, also touched His Majesty a little on the raw. He told me that the General must understand that in sending me he had sent a good friend to the King of the Ashantis, and must therefore not object if I stay here a long time. Nor should the General be vexed if I am not allowed to leave until all outstanding matters have been decided. For my failure to communicate with the General, His Majesty accepts full responsibility. From the time the Elmina envoys arrived he had absolutely forbidden the writing of letters. This prohibition was to last until the arrival of Tando. It was Tando, with his lies and untruths, who had interminably delayed matters. Otherwise someone would unquestionably have been sent to Elmina to settle the Wassaw palaver. The King repeated that he took upon himself alone any blame that might otherwise fall on me. He knows I would have written the necessary letters to Elmina if I had been allowed to do so. A settlement of the whole matter has been much delayed because of the untruths the Elminas have been telling him.

Regarding the slaves, cows, horses, etc., His Majesty has already sent an answer to the General via his Accra.

A report concerning the highway has also been sent by the same means.

His Majesty's refusal to allow any letters to be written stems from the statements made by the Elminas on 20th July 1816. Because of what they said, he decided to institute inquiries with a view to finding out, first, whether their statements were true and, secondly, whether I had been acting against his orders and had sent any information to the General without his knowledge. If I had in fact been going behind his back, he would then and there have refused further dealings with the General, and would have regarded my mission as a deliberate deception. This is why, in order to prevent any disunity between my Government and the King, I have adhered to His Majesty's orders, and have kept everything in my head and within the pages of my journal, so that I will be in a position to recount everything personally when I return to Elmina and place this my journal on the Council table there. Your Excellency ¹⁰⁷ must therefore not condemn me, for I have never been unfaithful to Government, no, not even when our affairs were at their lowest ebb. Your Excellency instructed me to behave with prudence, and I have always remembered this and have sought to please the King in all my actions. The Government ought not to blame me in this matter; its judgment should rather fall on the King of the Ashantis. I am sure there is no one, apart from my enemies, who is seeking to bring me into disfavour with Your Excellency or to damage my good name, and this is why I am content to let my journal show how I have been conducting myself since my arrival in this place. The King is my witness that I have continually pressed him for permission to leave and that my request has always been refused.

The King said to me, "The General my master has sent you to me, and would not be pleased if your were to depart without my approval. The General would not like it, moreover, if they Commanys and the Wassaws were attacked, yet neither of these two palavers has yet been brought to a satisfactory conclusion. How then can the General require you to return empty-handed? It was the General who asked that the nations might be spared ¹⁰⁸ and outstanding matters settled by negotiation. Otherwise my weapons would long since have driven the highway through the Wassaw country, though this is precisely what the General has always hoped to avoid. You must stay here until these two palavers have been settled, or at least until there is some agreement on terms."

The King's arguments have convinced me that he is in the right, and that what I have been saying about leaving is illconsidered.

8th.

I again sought the King's permission to leave. ¹⁰⁹ He became angry, and said, "I agree that you must on no account offend the General your laster. Write him a letter, therefore, which I will send to him protected by my staff. Beg his pardon for your silence. It is certainly true that, if I had not forbidden it, you would have written to him every week.

The General will pardon you as soon as my boy arrives at Elmina with the letter. If he does not, he goes against my wishes, for you did not come here on your own account but on his.

107. Huydecoper relapses here into direct speech again.

108. I.e., spared the destruction of war.

109. Sic., though this is an odd entry in view of the sentence that precedes it.

With regard to the Elmina palaver you can make your own report to the General, but your book must positively not be allowed to leave here before you do. Full responsibility for anything that might happen would fall on you if the book were to be sent away from here. I have long regarded Elmina village as mine.

The fact that you have not been able to write to the General is due to me, and my boy, when he reaches Elmina, will explain everything to your master on my behalf. If the General is truly my friend, as he says he is, he will surely not accuse you of misleading the Government by your silence. Go home now, and do not be afraid. Write a short letter to your master, and lay everything on me."

The King's words gave me some reassurance, but I was not entirely satisfied. I asked him coldly whether or not it was true that I had once told him that the General would be angry with me if I did not write in full to Elmina.

To this the King replied, "I see now that you spoke truly on that occasion. Nevertheless I am not going to see my town of Elmina shot at with cannons and burnt to the ground because of the wickedness and villainy of bad rulers. I told you before that I did not believe the Elminas' story; otherwise I would not have allowed you to drink the oath in order to purify your master's name. When you did that we all realized that you had right on your side."

Despite these further reassurances from His Majesty, I was still not easy in my mind. I had to agree, however, to a letter being dispatched and to not going myself. The letter went off today.

I ventured to ask the King about Djesie, but he would not hear a word on the subject. He says Djesie is such a rascal that he cannot let me see him. Djesie has apparently stolen a great deal from the King and is in disgrace.

Regarding the slaves, cows, horses, etc., intended as return presents for the General I have received no answer as yet. The King says he will give his reply when I finally leave.

9th January 1817.

Many people visited me today. This was solely because of the very friendly reception given by the General to the son of Amanquatia in Elmina. Now all the Ashanti merchants are intending to trade with the General. The more than two thousand merchants who went to Annamaboe and Caap Corse are now back home again, and most of them report heavy losses. The few who went to Elmina praise the General's trading methods very highly, but complain about the preference given to the son of Amanquatia. Everyone is now providing himself with trading notes 110 in order to do business with Elmina.

General Poikoe's cashier or treasurer has been instructed by the King to send some 25 ounces of gold to Elmina for the purpose of buying gunpowder. The King wishes to see if the General will meet him in the matter of price, or whether he will treat him as on a par with his subjects. For this reason I have thought it necessary to write a letter (which will follow later) to the General, requesting him to make a distinction between the King's trade and that of all other persons, and to treat the King's representatives as he did the son of Amanquatia. By these tactics Elmina can gain the whole of the Ashanti trade.

The Ashantis complain very bitterly about the English and their agents, saying that they were very ill received at the Cape.

Affodoe Cudjo and Quassie (illegible) complain that the (illegible) at Elmina have treated them very badly. These two young men tell me that they had made fine profits trading, but, they say, "The white men in the fort gave us their word that the account was settled, but when we were outside the fort we were forced by some of the men there to hand over money. ¹¹¹ These men said to us, 'The white men made a mistake in their reckoning; you owe us such and such an amount.' We refused to pay and were very badly treated."¹¹²

I have no doubt that this story is a tissue of lies but, since it will reflect badly on the General's reputation if repeated, I feel obliged to report it now.

I have counted up all the trifles the King is sending to market. I wished to test to see whether he was including the bulk of his goods now or later. ¹¹³

Affodoe Gudjo is now the confidant of Mr. Nieser and therefore wants watching.

10th January 1817.

Today I went on foot to look at the highway. To my astonishment I found that the roots of the trees that have been cut down are already growing up again, and there are numerous holes at least three feet deep. The men are working very slowly.

I learnt this evening, however, that the highway on the Insadjiesoe ¹¹⁴ side is well advanced. The overseer is present there all the time himself.

11th.

No news.

12th.

This being the Great Adaji or Good Sunday, the King gave me and the Elminas a sheep to share among us.

Amanquatia's son has been complaining to his father about the brusque reception accorded him by Mr. Nieser. He says he went to Mr. Nieser's house to present his father's compliments and, when he had been taken into the main room . . . ¹¹⁵

15th.

No news from the 13th until today. I have noticed that the merchants are now anxious to set out for Elmina without delay.

16th.

Early today His Majesty went to his plantation. He will be returning on Monday next. I asked if I might accompany him, but he said this was out of the question. "I am going to make fetish," he told me, "and will be back very soon."

111. Lit., engels.

112. This paragraph is very roughly translated. The MS is so unclear that I can make out only three words in four.

113. Meaning obscure.

114. Spelling doubtful.

115. The next five lines are completely illegible.

19th January 1817.

From the 17th until today there has been nothing to report. The town is quite empty. Everyone has gone to Brimman with the King.

I am very surprised that the King's accra has not sent back any messages about the state of affairs at Elmina. His Majesty gave his positive instructions that he was to send someone back within thirty days to let us know whether or not the Wassaws were ready to reach agreement. It appears he has forgotten these orders.

20th.

His Majesty returned today in great pomp from Brimman. During the journey back he sent for me by exprss messenger. I hastened to obey his order, and met him at a village called Kroboe. He asked me to help him put on his suit of clothes. I did this and then accompanied him back to the capital, travelling in great splendour.

I must say that His Majesty looked very well. In all the villages along the way men, women and children came running out to see him in his uniform. All exclaimed that they had never before seen such beautiful clothes. The name and high reputation of our General were proclaimed aloud, the blessings of God were invoked, and the hopes of all the people for his long life were fervently expressed. Everyone execrated and hooted at the Elmina envoys because of the lies they had told about the General their lawful master. The women shouted, "O Lord, let this General who pleases us so well come here so that we may give him proper thanks for the great honour he has done to our King Saij."

The streets were so full that people were imploring one another to make room so that everyone could see the King.

When I had dressed the King in his clothes, he stood in front of a large mirror and praised the General's generosity many times. He gave me his hand, and said, "Brother, your master is my master. When you return home, tell him that I thank him yet again for the beautiful things he has sent me. I will always wear these clothes in the General's honour."

He said he preferred breeches to trousers, since the former showed off his calves better.¹¹⁶ I said the General would send him some breeches as soon as there was an opportunity.

21st.

Today His Majesty summoned me and handed to me two letters from the General. One was addressed to me. I translated mine first and then the one addressed to the King. From His Majesty's expression I could see that the contents of the letters did not please him. He said, "What bad things have you been doing here to make the General so angry with you? You have always told me everything that has been in the letters you have received, have you not? As for the return presents of slaves, cows and horses, I have always said that I would send them when you leave here. Have you not told your master this in your letter?"

116. Lit., hij wenschte liever een korte broek te her?????, om zijne kuiten te laten zien.

I replied, "Although my master states that I am to supply him with full information about these matters on my return, I have in fact written a full account in my journal and also in the letter I sent with Woortman. I do not understand why my master is so dissatisfied with me. He has now requested that Your Majesty let me go. I would therefore be acting in direct disobedience of his orders if I were to remain here, as you have so often suggested I should, until the return of your accra. I am clearly out of favour and I certainly do not want my position to become worse. My master is unlikely to believe that Your Majesty forbade me to communicate to him the false reports circulated by the Elminas or, indeed, that I was unable to leave here without your permission. I will therefore not stay here one day longer, and I now request answers to all the questions which, from time to time, I have translated and put to you for your consideration. I will leave here early tomorrow morning or, at the latest, on the morning of the day following. Please give me your answers."

To this His Majesty replied, "Very well then, Sir! Your master seems to think he has sent you to a king of little importance and not to the King of the Ashantis. I have nothing to say to you, except that your master apparently does not value my friendship. Otherwise he would surely be more patient and would be willing to wait until I give you your congé in the proper manner. You may go tomorrow, but you will hear nothing further from me."

I said I could not leave him like this, and that he could not mean me to depart in so abrupt a fashion. It would not be in conformity with the friendship which has always existed between the Ashanti nation and my government.

"Your master understands perfectly well that, when he insults you in his letters, he is insulting me. Go then, and make your report to your master."

And so, in accordance with my masters immutable instructions, I held my peace and sorrowfully left the palace.

22nd.

Sought an audience today, but in vain. The King sent to tell me that he had nothing to say to me, and that I should obey my orders. I pressed as hard as possible for a different answer, but the message came back, "Obey your master's orders. He has offended me deeply with these strict orders of his. His last two letters have not pleased me."

I said to the messengers, "I cannot leave like this, without my proper congé."

But I was again told that I could go, and that a message would be sent to the General to thank him for the insult he had paid to the King of the Ashantis. The King's young men also assured me that His Majesty would not see me again and that I might leave Coemassie tomorrow, since that was what I desired.

I am in great perplexity. The King wants me to stay; the General my master insists that I go. What shall I do? To go will irritate the King; not to go will bring me into disfavour with the Government. In the circumstances the General's letter is the best counsellor. I will leave here tomorrow without fail. I prefer to risk the King's displeasure than the General's.

23rd.

In accordance with the awful ¹¹⁷ orders repeatedly received from the General, and notwithstanding the refusal of the King to give me permission, I left here today. We began our journey in the afternoon, because I was anxious to obey the letter of 8th January which said we should not sleep another night in Coemassie. We had not been long on the way, however, when various officers barred our passage. They asked me where I was going.

I replied, "To Elmina."

"Where is the King's token?¹¹⁸ Where is the King's swordbearer who should be preceding you? Without these you will not be allowed to go beyond Assafoe. You must return."

I went resolutely on but, on arrival at Assafoe, was opposed by Senior Officer Quatje Coffie, who asked to be shown the King's token.

I said the King had told me I might leave.

"No," he said. "That is untrue. You are travelling without the King's permission. Stay here, and I will immediately ask the King whether he has given you leave to go or not."

I was thus prevented from continuing, and my boys had to be recalled.

I had been waiting a good two hours when I saw approaching in the distance a number of senior officers being carried in litters. Coming up to me they asked sternly in the name of the King why I was travelling on foot, why I had left at all, and why I had not waited until the King arranged for me to depart with the same dignity with which I had come.

I said the King knew all my reasons and that I definitely wanted to leave. But General Poekoe and the 3 royal linguists said that the King most earnestly desired me to return, and would speak to me tomorrow about my eventual departure. I rejected what they said, and explained that the King had often told me he would let me go. I therefore could not wait any longer and would continue on my way. It was no trouble to me to travel to Elmina on foot, especially since my master appeared to think I had only been staying in Coemassie for my own pleasure.

But my protests were of no avail. I was brought back to Coemassie, and was told that the King would see me tomorrow. I was then conveyed, in an extremely irritated frame of mind, to my old quarters. However, nothing worse has happened so far.

24th January 1817.

I thought the King would summon me today to discuss my return journey, but nothing has happened. God knows when I will finally get away from here.

25th.

This afternoon the King sent for me to attend an assembly of the chief officers. He asked me once more why I wished to leave, whether my master wanted to break off all ties of friendship with Coemassie, and why my master should want me to go without waiting for him, the King, to give me my congé in the proper manner.

117. Lit., vrezelijk.

118. Lit., bewijs = 'certificate, proof'.

I said my master would never be the cause of a broken friendship, but that he wanted me back so that he could send a white European ¹¹⁹ to replace me. He considers a European would promote his interests better than I can, and that I am not a suitable person to act as envoy between him and the King of Ashanti. The longer I remain here, he believes, the more likely it is that friendship between the two parties will diminish rather than increase. This is why I have been instructed to leave no later than two days after receiving the General's letter. If I do not comply with this order, my fate will be upon my own head. To avoid offending either His Majesty or the General, I had begun my journey on the appointed day, but had been 'panyared' by Senior Officer Quatje.

"But when you asked me if you might leave, did I not say, No? Did I not say that you must wait until the accra has returned, after which I would arrange for you to be conducted to Elmina with a small escort?"

I said the King had indeed used these words, but that I had also said that I would not sleep in Coemassie from the coming Thursday onwards, because I was sure the General would not believe the King was in fact restraining me. "After this," I went on, "Your Majesty said, 'Go ahead, then, and obey your master's orders.' When Your Majesty told me this, I thought the way was clear for me to depart. But Your Majesty did not mean it, and sent orders to Assafoe to bring me back again, and so it has come about."

"Am I to understand, then, that you left here solely because you feared your master, and not at all because you were lacking in respect for me?"

"Yes," I said. "I left simply because of the direct orders I received from my master. If I have offended Your Majesty thereby, I beg your pardon. I request that I may be allowed to go. My master is very angry with me. Please let me leave today. Otherwise the consequences will be serious for me."

The King replied, "No, I will not allow you to go. You must wait. Tomorrow I will send messengers to your master to find out the cause of his displeasure. When these messengers have returned, but not before, you will be allowed to leave within three days. Do not ask me about this matter until my men have come back, or we will become bad friends, you and I. To have given you such strict instructions about leaving here, your master must have something against me. Supposing I had sent one of my boys to Elmina, and had then dispatched my accra after him to tell him to pack up and go and not to spend even one more day there or face the consequences, and the General have said? Would he not have decided that I had become his enemy?"

I could make no answer.

The King went on, "I could almost believe now that the Elminas spoke truly, and the General really is my enemy. Do not ask me about your departure until my messengers come back from Elmina."

There was general agreement with the King on all sides, and I went sorrowfully home.

26th January 1817.

This morning the King sent for me to ask if I could tell him how many muskets the General would give him for 50 preguns. I said I could not say, because the General would not make the same price for the King of Ashanti as for other and lesser persons.

119. Thus phrased, presumably, because Huydecoper was a mulatto. 'European white man' might be better.

28th and 29th.

No news.

30th.

Today the King had me write a letter to the General. He asked for various quantities of guns and gunpowder, and also wanted to know how much the General would charge for 10 guns, and what the price would be for 10 barrels of powder. He hopes to buy a considerable quantity of both these items, but needs exact information as to price before he can make his calculations.

There was a big fire in the town today. Several houses were gutted.

I have mistakenly put "23rd January" on today's letter, and it cannot be altered.¹²⁰

30th.¹²¹

The King has told me that his boys will definitely be leaving here today. I will therefore have to stay in this place for some 30 to 35 days more. I asked what would happen if the boys were not back by the stipulated time, but the King dismissed my question. He is sure they will return as promised.

31st January 1817.

No news.

Primo and Secunde February 1817.

No news.

3rd.

No news.

4th.

To my amazement my boy, Myzang, returned today from Elmina without bringing with him either letters or other messages from the General. I am most disconsolate about this. All my friends have become my enemies. Many false reports are constantly being spread abroad by the Ashantis and are believed by the people here. But I think them of no consequence. When I am back in Elmina myself, I will be able to set the record straight.

5th.

Today being the Small Adaij, I received 9 ƛ for my subsistence, and the Elmina envoys and I shared the gift of a sheep.

7th.

No news yesterday and today.

8th.

This afternoon a number of houses were consumed by fire, and man was burnt to death. He was on the roof of one of the houses when the fire sprang up all around him, and he fell through the roof into the inside of the house.

120. Lit., ik heb abusivelijk de brief van heden gedagtekend on 23e januarij en moest zijn.

121. Sic. There are two entries for 30th January.

It was impossible to help him, and we saw before our eyes the spectacle of a fine young man lamentably engulfed by the flames. The cause of this misfortune was the strong harmattan. 300 houses were burnt down.

9th, 10th, 11th, 12th.

No news.

13th.

I visited the King today. Laughing, he said to me, "We have offended our master by our delays. When you reach Elmina, you will certainly receive correction. And if the General comes here I will get my share too. What will our punishment be, my friend?"

I matched his banter, saying that . . . 122 the punishment would become worse and worse the longer I stayed here.

The King said, "Be patient. Everything will be all right. I am only waiting for the return of the boys I sent to our master with a view to persuading him to remit your punishment. When they come back you will certainly be able to leave. Do not be sad. Your master will forgive you. He now knows the whole story, and will realize that it is I who have been the cause of his dissatisfaction with you."

14th.

Today the King's two horses died. It has been bitterly cold here for the past 50 days. The air is very stimulating and healthy. The climate would be about equal to that of Europe in April. For some time now I have been suffering from chillblained hands.

15th.

Spoke with the King today about the beauties of Europe. He asked me what the white men thought of him. Did they picture him as an ordinary man, or as a savage, who cut other men's heads off without cause? He went on, laughing, "Huydecoper, when you get back home, ask the General to represent me to the King (who is master of us all) as a righteous man. The nations think of the King of Ashanti as a bad man. You yourself can bear witness that this is untrue. I do not punish without reason, nor do I make war unless there is occasion for it. When our friend, the General, comes here, he will see all my actions for himself, and will praise me in his letters to Europe. But tell me, Huydecoper, do you think the General will still come here?"

I said there was no doubt of this whatever. The General was only awaiting my return. The King would have to let me go, for the General would not come until he had first seen me.

"Ah, well," said the King. "You will be leaving as soon as the boys that I have sent to the General come back. It will not be long now."

23rd.

During these last days I have been asking the King if I might prepare for my departure, so as to be ready to leave immediately the accra and the horn-blower arrive. They are expected within a day or so. But the King always replies, "I am waiting for the three boys who have gone to find out the reason for your recall,

and also the current price of guns and gunpowder. Until they return you cannot leave."

(Marginal note: "Received ½ sheep, this being Good Sunday.")

24th.

Today the Elmina envoys and the King's girgo¹²³ arrived, but not the accra. They brought letters dated 18th January, and these letters I immediately read out to the King. His Majesty is still convinced that the General has been deceiving him and, so far from doing anything about the Commany palaver, is throwing dust in his eyes by bringing in irrelevant considerations and thus seeking to deceive him all the more. Anything I could say was useless. The King became angry and (next three words illegible) my master. I said I could not defend my master with lies.

25th.

Asked the King today if I and the Elmina envoys might leave. He became very angry and, refusing to answer, slammed the door in our faced, mumbling that he had no wish to keep us here for ever, and that he would let us go when it suited him. We were contemptuously sent home like bad boys, with no chance to discuss the date of our departure further. We protested that our master needed us at Elmina, but the King chose not to believe us and would not even look in our direction. And so we came home in disgrace.

26th.

Today the King of Dinkira arrived here, accompanied by a huge following, and was splendidly received. He has come to be present at the entry into the capital of the armies of Apia and Amanqua, and also to defend himself against the suspicion, voiced by some, that he is an enemy to the King of Ashanti. He arrived with three hundred soldiers.

The King is vexed with us today because, he says, we press him too hard about our departure. Unhappily we are watched wherever we go and thus cannot run away.

27th. Feb 1817.

Various chiefs have been arriving to see the review of the armies of Apia and Amanqua. This review will take place next Monday. The King has been prevaricating all this time about my departure. He is determined that I shall witness the review of his armies before I leave.

28th.

No peace today at all. From all directions chiefs, etc., are arriving to see the armies. Everything has become very expensive, a bunch of plantains costing two tackoes. For some days now I have not possessed even tuppence¹²⁴ with which to buy food. I cannot reach the King, and so cannot ask him for subsistence money. I am reduced to eating fried plantains, and there is great distress in my house. I cannot even borrow money, and yet we see plainly that the envoys who come regularly from Elmina are fully laden with presents sent by our master.

From Primo to 2nd March.

Still people are pouring into the town, which is jampacked. Most of the newcomers are sleeping in the streets, for no accommodation is to be had.

123. Spelling doubtful.

124. Lit., een dubbeltje.

3rd.

Today the armies of Apia and Amanqua arrived. There was shooting from 10 in the morning until nightfall, and at least 50 barrels of gunpowder must have been expended. The two armies taken together number some 30 or 35 thousand.

This morning there was a heavy thunderstorm. Hail fell the size of musket-balls. I held some of the hail-stones in my hands for several minutes before they melted.

9th March 1817.

Between the 4th and today there has been a continuous uproar. Everywhere in the suburbs there is musket fire and the making of custom for the dead. More than 80 people have been put to death, and over 100 barrels of powder shot off. There has been no chance to see or speak to the King. We are suffering severely from hunger and have no money to buy food. Fish is unobtainable, and plantains now cost 3 tackoes a bunch.

10th, 11th, 12th and 13th instant.

No news. No audience or speech with the King.

14th March 1817.

Today the goods arrived, having come through Accra. Cudjo Abranta brought 60 panegoeden, 35 five-gallon ankers of gin and 30 rolls of tobacco. He complained that Mr. Carillon had removed several ankers of drink and had openly watered the remaining ankers in his own sight and in that of many other persons. I said there ought to be 80 pieces of panegoed and 40 five-gallon ankers, but he assured the King that he had received the goods as they were now.

15th.

I learn that the King has had letters from the King, but whether this is true I know not. I tried to see the King this evening to find out the facts, but could not gain admission. Since the armies returned he has not been much seen in public.

16th.

Summoned by the King this morning. He handed to me two letters from the General dated 15th February 1817, the contents of which I read out to him in translation and demanded an immediate answer. The letters referred to the King's purchase of powder and guns and also requested the supply, as soon as possible, of several thousand pounds of cotton without seeds, and also of a quantity of the seeds themselves. Both of these commodities the General wishes to buy, and he asks for fulfilment of this order within 16 days. The King said, "Good. I will give you my reply tomorrow. My thanks for the sugar, tea, etc., though I have not seen them yet. I am glad to have the 19 barrels of gunpowder."

His Majesty objected strongly to the prices quoted for guns and powder, and tried to persuade me to fix these at 9 £ per barrel of powder and 4½ £ for a gun. I contented myself with asking him if he thought that the goods he was being offered had been stolen, and that all he had to do was to send boys to Elmina to collect them.

His Majesty is very satisfied with the presents he has received. I asked him what these were because, when packages are received from the General, they are never opened in my presence. I told the King that I always knew in advance what he ought to receive, because the letters gave full details. But all he would reply was that everything arrived in due course, that he was very satisfied, and that he wished me to thank the General most warmly.

17th March 1817.

Early this morning I went to the palace with my Instructions and all the letters received from the General. I hoped for an answer to everything at once, but my visit proved valueless. No matter what I did I could not obtain entry. I went to the palace three times, but did not see the King on any occasion.

At 7 o'clock this evening Jack Mars arrived with two letters from the General. I went at once to the King with the news, but had no better success than before. We had been cooling our heels for two hours when our patron, Poekoe, told us in the King's name that we must go home and come back in the morning.

18th.

With Jack Mars to the King. The letters were read out in translation and an immediate answer sought, not only to those dated 5th instant but also to the ones dated 15th February. Mars has positive instructions to leave here next Friday. All the King would say, however, was that he would give us his answer tomorrow.

I said that, if he did not answer today, he would bring me into disfavour with my government again.

He replied, "Do not worry. Mars will leave at the appointed time." And there was no more to be said.

19th.

Today being the Small Adaij or Good Wednesday, I called on the King, but could not talk business. Mars received 9 ƒ and the Elminas and I jointly one sheep.

20th.

Employed all possible means to persuade the King to let Jack Mars depart, but in vain. His Majesty assured me that Mars would leave tomorrow morning without fail. "What?" I said. "Is this like the waiting Captain Scholtij's had to do?"¹²⁵ But I could not move the King. Nor can Mars simply go away, or he will be brought back by force as I was. Here in Coemassie one needs the patience of Job to stand all that happens.

23rd.

During these past few days I have never ceased trying to persuade the King to give me his answers so that Mars can leave. His Majesty has said simply that Mars may go tomorrow and that I may attend at the palace with all my letters and Instructions in order to receive the royal answers point by point. I said that it would once more bring me into disfavour with the General if His Majesty kept Mars beyond the stipulated time as he had done in the case of Woortmann. But he said, "The General, for my sake, will not be angry any more."

24th March 1817.

This morning at 7 o'clock the King sent Mars a farewell present of 9 ƒ of gold and a message to me that he would summon us both straight away and give us his answers, so that Mars could leave tomorrow. But still we had no success, for His Majesty did not in fact summon us.

125. Lit., wat ik zeide ontrend het wagten van Capt'n: Scholtij's of niet. The meaning of this is obscure to me. It may be a literary reference, or may possible relate to some previous incident of Dutch history on the Coast.

I went to him again this evening, but he said he had no time to spare and that I should return tomorrow morning with Mars and bring my letters and Instructions. He will give us his replies then and Mars can leave immediately afterwards.

25th.

This evening Jack Mars is getting ready for his departure from Coemassie at 5 o'clock tomorrow morning. As ordered I went to see the King, taking with me all my letters and Instructions. He said he had no time whatever to spare, but the Mars could leave tomorrow and would take with him the King's decision about the supply of cotton seeds. These will have to be planted during the coming rainy season. He could not at present obtain the quantity of cotton asked for, but would send some in a little while. He wished first to see if the General would meet him in the matter of price. 100 pounds of cotton without seeds he could not supply for 1 (illegible). Cotton seeds are always hard to obtain, because their owners keep them themselves for planting out. Ten pounds of cotton with the seeds removed weigh only 5½ pounds, and thus a hundred pounds of seedless cotton will be very expensive.

In his letter to the General the King requests that he may be supplied from with Europe with some silver utensils, such as soup bowls, large basins, etc., in exchange both for the cotton already delivered and for that still to be sent (three illegible words).

The King's replies to the other letters and to my Instructions he will give not to Mars but later to me, and I may expect to leave Coemassie within 8 or 10 days. I learn that the Viceroy of Elmina, 126 by name Aboe, is coming here to put the King further against the General and to ask for troops for an attack on English Commanry.

Anandako, Affodoe Cudjo and Quassie Bonkoe are enemies to the General and seek, in alliance with Mr. Nieser, to bring all my good work to nothing. Affodoe Cudjo and Quassie Bonkoe ill-treat the common people continually in the General's name. Many reports of their wicked behaviour are circulated here.

26th March.

Jack Mars left at 5 o'clock this morning. He has been given 9 days to get to Elmina.

The Fanti envoys who were here some time ago are back again. They report that caboceers Amona Annoe and Aduckoe have now surrendered to the King of Ashanti all claims to the subsistence money 127 of Annamaboe and Cape Cors, that the Fanti caboceers have all agreed to pay great sums of money to the Ashantis, and that the Fantis will now serve the King. Aduckoe, however, was not represented in the previous embassy and has sent men with the present one. He has to pay 1,000 preguns, and if he does not the King will seize his person, for it was Aduckoe who said he would make war on the King. He has now withdrawn this boast and agrees to serve Ashanti.

27th.

I hear that the King and several of his chiefs have been collecting cotton and that their wives are busy removing the seeds so that I can take a quantity of pure cotton with me when I go. I do not know if this is true.

126. Lit., onderkoning.

127. Lit., kostgelden. (See n. 90 above.)

28th, 29th, and 30th March 1817.

Have neither spoken with the King nor picked up any news.

31st March 1817.

This afternoon the two swordbearers returned who went with the accra to Elmina. A new Wassaw embassy accompanied them. The accra and the others have remained in Wassaw. I have not heard the substance of the new embassy's mission. It seems the accra is going to be successful in his attempt to settle the Wassaw affair, and that the present highway will link up with one running through Wassaw country.

Primo April 1817.

Nothing happened.

Koemassie, 2nd April 1817.

Saij Toetoe Quamie,
King of all the Ashantis
To
His good friend Governor-
General H.W. Daendels
At
Elmina

My dear friend,

Huydecoper is now leaving and I must advise you, my dear friend, that the matter which is in dispute between English Commany and me has now reached such a pass that I am obliged to regard you as prejudiced and as favouring the side of the Commanys rather than my own.

When my troops were at Abra and ready to march on English Commany and Wassaw, you requested through your envoy, Huydecoper, that I should not attack Commany. If I did so, you said, my actions would displease you. A long exchange of letters ensued, and you undertook to settle the affair on my behalf and also to collect for me the sums of money that had to be paid. Now all this has come to nothing, and the Commanys refuse to serve me or to render satisfaction to me. Nevertheless you, my good master, prefer that these people should not be attacked. What am I to think of you? I cannot believe that you will now dissociate yourself from this affair, and let me go my own way.

The Wassaws are willing to serve me. Do you wish me to send my armies to destroy them, while letting off scot free those who cause daily harm to me and my people? In truth, this cannot be, my friend. If the Commanys will not settle their palaver with me, then there is nothing for it but for them to take up arms and await the arrival of my armies.

You, my good friend and master, are the chief of the Elminas and also their protector. Their safety is in your hands. The Commanys continually badger the Elminas and steal from them. Yet you require that I pay no attention to this, and ask that the Commanys be spared. This cannot be. If the Commanys will not yield to me, there will soon be no Commany.

Let them be asked once again what is their final word. If this matter is not settled and my troops are sent against Commany, there need be no further talk of satisfaction.

Your friend wishes you, the Governor-General of the Coast of Guinea, every blessing and all prosperity and good health.

This is the mark X of Saij
Toetoe Quamie, King of all
the Ashantis.

Done before me,

(Signed) W. Huydecoper.

P.S. Regarding the forts which Your Excellency wishes to build along the roads, I will give Your Excellency my answer after the Commany affair has been decided. I do not yet know whether these forts will be to protect me or Commany. Soon Your Excellency will have my answer to everything.

The above letter was most carefully dictated to me by the King today, 2nd April. He asked me if I would take it with me. I had brought along all the General's letters once again, but His Majesty would not consider them. So long as the Commanys, he said, were his mortal enemies, and so long as the General refused to approve the administration to them of their just punishment, he would take no decisions on the General's letters.

It would have been a simple matter, said the King, for the General to have settled this Commany palaver. If the sums of money demanded were too great, they could, after proper negotiation, have been reduced. It was just this aspect of the problem that he had let to the General. He would have been very pleased to accept whatever the General was able to collect and send to him. But now the whole affair had been dragging on too long. The Commanys were refusing even to serve him, much less to render the satisfaction due. He had frequently and most earnestly requested the General either to deal with these people himself or leave them to the Ashantis, but this the General had been unwilling to do, and had, on the contrary, sought forgiveness for them. In consequence, said the King, he had been forced to the conclusion that the reports spread abroad by the Elminas were true, and that the General was indeed his enemy and an ally of the Commanys.

If he had known that the General intended to keep him on a string in this way,¹²⁸ he would not have withdrawn his armies so quickly. He had always considered that he possessed no friends, no, nor any brothers or masters, dearer to him than the Dutch. He had always been ready to open his heart and mind to them at all times. But now he could almost believe that these best friends of his had failed him, for the General's attitude in the Commany affair had made him very suspicious. He had written to the General in the letter taken by Woortmann that he wished to consult with the General, and he had been hoping the General would visit him. The General had often said that he was willing to do this. But now, it appeared, all that was past, and the General had only been deceiving him.

His Majesty continued, "The Wassaws were willing to compromise, and the General instructed me to treat with them because they were afraid to go to Elmina.

128. Lit., indien hij te voren geweten had, de Generaal de zaak maar op sleep touw zoude houden.

They have behaved badly towards both the Elminas and me. Their palaver is now finished.¹²⁹ Shall the obstinate and boastful Commanys be spared? This cannot be. If they will not serve me, I intend to teach them that they are not so important in this world that they can palaver with one of the officers of King Saij, much less fight against the King himself. It may be that they have never served me before. This is no matter. They will do so now, and I will force them to leave the Elminas in peace. The only reason why I am angry with the Commanys is because, during the Fanti wars, they continually ill-treated and imposed on my village of Elmina.

I cannot at present give my answers to all the General's letters. This must wait until the General decides either to withdraw altogether from the Commanys palaver or to settle it on my behalf. Moreover, when my people were at Caap Cors, the English did not treat them properly when making up the accounts. The General must do his best to sort this matter out and arrange for the due payments to be forwarded to me. • 130

The Wassaws have requested that they pay me only 60 preguns with remission of the remainder. This shows that they ... 131

3rd April 1817.

The King sent for me again today to discuss his private trading problems. He reiterated that he could not answer the General's letters until he knew His Excellency's intentions with regard to the Commanys. He had appointed the collector,¹³² General Cudjo Abrantja, and his senior horn-blower, officer Kwamie Dendoe, to accompany me when I leave, though when this will be I do not yet know.

4th and 5th.

Have neither seen nor spoken to the King. No news therefore.

6th.

Today was Good Sunday or the Great Adaij. Before a public assembly of more than two thousand people, the King handed me four young slaves as presents for the General, saying, "As soon as you reach home, give my greetings to the master of us all and assure him of my continuing respect. These slaves are from my own household. Two of them have gold about their necks. Of these one is called Accra Saij and the other Bossom (illegible). The other two slaves have no gold. The General may baptize these slaves if he wishes and have them bear his mark. You and I, Huydecoper, will speak later about my private trading.

For yourself here is a young slave to go with the girl you have already received, and also 2 (illegible) 4 Ɔ in gold and a large elephant's tusk. I present these to you in return for the friendship you have shown me and for the services you have rendered during your stay here."

The Elminas have been given a boy to pass on to the chief of Elmina and as presents for themselves a cloth each. For their subsistence . . ."133

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129. The first three sentences in the paragraph are a rough translation only. The text is most obscure.
130. Rough translation only. Text is obscure.
131. The MS unaccountably breaks off here at the bottom of a page. On the next page another entry begins.
132. Lit., ontvanger = 'collector of taxes', etc.
133. Text again unaccountably breaks off. (I suspect these breaks are not lengthy.)

These Elmina fellow-subjects of mine are the worst rascals one could find anywhere in the world. Cudjo Akon and Akkoe have consistently done our cause as much harm as they could. They are traitors through and through. If I had not been here, troops would already have been sent against Commany. All the Kings Officers are persuaded that the General is an enemy of Ashanti. Because of my protests the King himself is to some extent on our side, but his subordinates are by no means of a like mind. During the discussion of the Commany palaver they all said that, if the General was not prepared to settle it, he had no right to expect the King to forgive the Commanys or spare them. The General, they said, should stop meddling in the Commany palaver, and leave it to Ashanti to do as it wishes and enforce Commany's obedience.

The Ashanti chiefs also say that the General has deliberately deceived the King regarding the building of the highway. The General's statement that he will visit Coemassie is not believed. If the General wants to come here, it is first necessary that the Ashantis should be convinced that he is their friend. Many accusations have been levelled at the General from all sides. This is not pleasant, and certainly gives no indication of Ashanti goodwill.

All the time the Elminas are sending via the merchants messages to the King asking him for troops and stating that the General is hostile to the Ashantis but friendly to the Wassaws. As proof they adduce the fact that the General says he is coming here but never does. They are apprehensive that the Dutch will desert them and cannot be reassured about this.

7th April 1817.

From morning until night I have been employing every means at my disposal to persuade the King to let me leave here, but in vain. He says he will not let me go until his own business matters are in order. In consequence I cannot expect to leave until some 8 days from today.

I can see very easily through all His Majesty's subterfuges. One of his secretaries, who is also his uncle and is named Aquassie Kankema, has always been most loyal to the General. He is a very wise old man and was the first friend we made here. I have not dared to mention his name before because Coemassie politics are so different from our own. This man was the only member of the court who would speak against the Elminas in the King's presence and denounce their statements for the lies they were. He was never able to convince the majority, it is true, but I cannot fail to praise him for the good opinion he has of our government and for the way in which he has defended us. I have made him the General's commercial agent here because of his loyalty and also because of his close relationship to the King.

8th.

Nothing happened. Did not see the King.

9th April 1817.

For the whole day I have been in conference with the King, discussing his trading ventures. The values he places on guns, powder, etc., are quite unacceptable. He has been trying to

bludgeon me into agreeing to a price of 4 £ for a gun and 12 £ for a barrel of powder worth 1 (illegible) 12. He makes it out that it will be my fault if these prices are not accepted. I rejected what he said absolutely, and asked if he thought I was foolish enough to believe I had the power to fix prices in this way. But despite all my arguments he intends to hold firm, and says that if the General will not sell him guns at 4 £ and barrels of '1000-negro-cartridges'¹³⁴ at the value of 1 (illegible), there will be little trading done between the Dutch and Ashanti.

14th.

During these last days I have lost no opportunity of speaking to the King or of trying to persuade him to issue the necessary orders for me to leave tonight, but to no avail. I was told I could not go because the Assin and Assikoema armies are today passing before His Majesty in review, and he therefore had no time to speak to me on business. And so I had to return home, angry and disconsolate. This afternoon I was obliged to watch the armies shooting off their muskets. Between three and four thousand men took part. I could see no point in the display, except insofar as it demonstrated that the King of the Ashantis is indeed a mighty king.

The day before yesterday the Wassaw palaver was settled. Since the General has not chosen to intervene, the King has decided that the Wassaws must pay 400 preguons only, instead of the 190 (illegible) originally demanded. If the Wassaws refuse to agree to this sum, they will lose their heads.

15th and 16th April.

No news. Tried all day to see the King, but there was no chance of it. The rains have been falling heavily for 8 or 9 days now, with frequent thunder-storms.

17th.

This morning the King had me write a letter to the General. He will only accept guns at 4 £ each and 1 (illegible), and then only if each barrel contains 1000 negro cartridges.¹³⁵ I told the King that these prices are meaningless. Guns are 8 £ at Elmina and 1 (illegible) barrels go for 1 (illegible) 10. But he became angry with me because I refused to go surety for him. He is convinced the General will agree to these prices.

I also asked the King to take a decision about the subsistence money which has long been paid to the King of Akkim, but which has now been transferred to the Ashantis by right of conquest. If this matter is not settled the Ashantis will not be able to trade at Accra with the Dutch, but only with the English and Danes. I pointed out that, strictly speaking, only the subsistence monies of Dinkira, Elmina, etc., had been surrendered to His Majesty.

18th.

Did not speak with the King.

19th.

Today I prepared myself to leave Coemassie this evening, but the King prevented me.

134. Lit., kruid van 1000 neger. (See n. 135.)

135. Lit., mids ieder vatje inhoud 1000 neger patroonen.

He claimed he wanted to send some men to the General to be trained as carpenters and smiths (Three words missing). Consequently I will not be able to leave until the 22nd instant.

20th.

Received the following farewell gifts:

Amanquatia	4	£
Poekoe	5	"
Quatje Coffie	4	"
Cudjo Akrooe kroewa	4	"
Adoe Saij	2	"
Otie	2	"
Jouw Kokroko, 1 cloth and 1 pig	-	
From the King himself	9	"
Owoesoe Quantabisa, 1 cloth	-	

(illegible) 1,14 £ 136

21st.

Today the King placed 3 boys in my charge. Two are destined to be carpenters and one a smith. His Majesty said he would later send more boys who would serve the General at table, and learn how to clean silver, glassware, plates, etc.

22nd.

Today the King's final permission was granted for me to leave. First, however, I and my party had to swear once more that the General was a good friend to the King and would never desert him or combine with other nations against him in war; that the General, for the King's would forgive the Elminas for the lies they had told about him and, though he might punish them individually, that he would not fight them or destroy their town with his cannon, since this would make the Ashantis very angry.

When these oaths had been sworn, some malabours brought out a kind of Bible, and I had to kiss this book three times 137 to prove to the King that the General was truly his friend.

Occasie, 22nd April, in the evening.

Left Coemassie at 5 o'clock this evening and have stopped here to rest for the night. From Coemassie to this place the highway is completely overgrown. The trees have not yet been cut down and the pathway has not been levelled.

On my departure from Coemassie the King gave me a salute of 15 guns (the gunfire having to compete with a thunderstorm). He said that, when we reach Elmina, the General must honour us with a similar number of rounds, for this will show he really is a friend to the King of the Ashantis. He has given me as escort, and also to act later for him in the palavering with the Commanys, two officers named Cudjo Abranta and Quamie Dendoe, accompanied by a tjutjus. 138 He wishes to hear from this man's very mouth whether the Commanys will finally yield to him or not.

Adiabin, 23rd April.

After waiting in vain for my escort I left Occasie today and will stay the night here. I understand the escort left Coemassie this morning.

136. The addition of this column leads one to suppose that 1 (illegible) = 16 £.

137. Guesswork. The next reads: en mij drie malen op deze ??? slaar

138. Criers.

The highway from Occasie to here is very bad. Indeed, practically nothing has been done to it. There are numerous large trees and the pathway has not been levelled at all. It seems, therefore, that the frequent reports made to the King by the overseer for this section were false.

The chief of this place has cleared very well the small stretch of the highway that he was responsible for. The roots, however, are still in the ground and the surface has not yet been made smooth. This chief is at present at Coemassie.

Assanssie, 146 24th April 1817.

I waited at Adiabin for the officers, but with no result. I therefore set out on my journey again. This village, where I arrived this evening, is very neat and pretty. Between Adiabin and here the highway has been partly cut through, though the stumps and roots are growing again fast. On the way we noticed three small and wretched villages, all of which accepted gold and promised to prepare for the highway by cutting down trees and rooting out stumps, but the task has clearly been beyond them. The inhabitants consist mostly of old women.

We crossed three streams today, all of which ran most dangerously. They must be very bad in the rainy season. Little rain has fallen here yet and the track is very dirty.

Assikanssie, 25th.

Left Assanssie 139 this morning early, and reached here, having passed through three villages which hardly deserved the name. In several places the highway is fairly good, despite the roots and tree-stumps that still remain. There are many ruts in the track, some of them five feet deep. This is a very small village, containing possibly 20 people.

Ajankremoe, 26th April 1817.

Left Assikanssie very early this morning and, after passing through four wretched villages, arrived at this place, which is equally miserable. We are already beginning to sense the onset of famine. The countless merchants who have passed this way have stripped the forest bare. I have just paid 2 tackoes of gold for a bunch of bananas.

The highway from Assikanssie to here is very bad indeed, and the presence of more than 100 gold-mining pits makes it very dangerous. It is impossible to imagine that the inhabitants of these villages are capable of constructing their share of the highway properly. The overseers have shamefully deceived the King. His Majesty has been under the impression that the highway in these parts was more or less ready for use. He asked me to make a close inspection of it, and send by report back with Quamie Dendoe. (This officer and his companions have not caught up yet.)

Bettiassie, 27th April 1817.

Between Ajankremoe and this village the road has been cleared of creepers, but the trees have not yet been cut down. Close to the village itself a few trees have been felled, but this has not improved the highway.

We passed three huts belonging to the King's hunters.

28th.

Yesterday my bearers complained strongly that they were tired, and so I did not continue the journey. The delay will not only benefit my men, but will enable the missing officers to catch me up.

Insadjusie, 29th April 1817.

Between Bettiasie and here not a tree has been cut down. The fallen leaves have been swept to one side, but otherwise no work has been done on the highway at all. Yet the overseer for this section gave us to understand in Coemassie that the track had been cut through and the road cleared. The King is being kept in complete ignorance of what is really happening. The caboceer or chief of this place has made a very good job of one part of his sector. He seems to be the only overseer who has done the work properly.

Famine reigns in these parts also.

The officers whom the King gave me for an escort have still not arrived. I will therefore have to wait here for them for three or four days. I can proceed no further than here unless I have these men with me.

30th April 1817.

The officers have still not arrived. No news, except that we are suffering somewhat from hunger. The caboceer and his 'secretary'¹⁴⁰ have presented me with two bunches of bananas and 6 tacks of gold.

1st May 1817.

This evening one of the officers, Quamie Dendoe, arrived. Cudjo Abratja and the tjutjuo, however, have not come yet. I am obliged to wait, because without these men I can go no further.

2nd.

Sent a letter to the General by express to inform him of my progress.

I learn that the General has sent someone to Coemassie. This man avoided meeting me by going through Assin. He has already arrived at Coemassie.

3rd.

The letter I wrote yesterday has been brought back. This is due to Cudjo Akon.¹⁴¹ The chief of this place has forced me to tear the letter up and let the express messenger go on without it. He says he is carrying out the orders of the King, which are that I must not be permitted to forward any letters or writings of any kind. However much I might try to convince him that there was no harm in any of my letters, he was not to let me write any, not even a few lines. Akon has often said openly that writing is a dangerous business and must be discouraged. Cudjo Abranta¹⁴² has not arrived yet.

4th.

Today the King's tjutjuo arrived here.

140. Lit., secretaris. In Dutch, sometimes = 'town clerk'.

141. Spelling doubtful.

142. Alternative spelling.

5th and 6th.

No news. Cudjo Abrantja has not come yet.

7th.

This afternoon the collector of the King of Ashanti's subsistence monies 143 appeared. At Accra fort, when he arrives to collect subsistence money, he is accustomed to receiving a salute of seven guns, and he therefore expects to be accorded the same honour when he reaches Elmina. We are leaving here on the 10th instant. We are suffering badly from hunger, and cannot even buy bananas.

8th.

No news.

9th May.

Our whole company is now assembled and we will be ready tomorrow to shake the dust of this famine-stricken village from our shoes.

Inbroebajim, 10th May.

This morning we left Insadjusie and on reaching here found that we had no choice but to sleep in the bush. This place is named as written above. Along the highway from Insadjusie to here the trees have been stripped but none has been cut down. The track is very bad.

Biepokoko, 11th May.

From Inbroebajim to here the track is as bad as it was yesterday.

Again we had to sleep in the bush.

Cajrékoe, 12th May.

Today we reached the first Wassaw village. It is very small. The inhabitants are hostile to Ashantis and barely consented to sell us some bananas, though the trees hereabouts are heavily laden with them.

A good hour before we reached here the highway finally gave out.

13th.

Today is 'evil Tuesday'¹⁴⁴ for the Ashantis, and all my attempts to get them moving were unsuccessful. After much trouble we were able to persuade the inhabitants to sell us some bananas. No presents have been given us by the Wassaws.

Prassie, 14th May.

We were on the march today from very early this morning until 5 o'clock tonight, keeping to the made track. This track is very hard on the feet, but very smooth. Indeed it is a better road for horses than the one from Coemassie to Cairékoe. The trees here are all very small and can be cleared away easily.

143. Lit., kostgelden

144. Lit., de slegten dingsdag.

The ground, moreover, is uniformly flat. This village has been newly built and so there is no food to be bought. The large trees have been stripped and the saplings are not bearing yet.

Doemamba, 15th May 1817.

From Prassie to here the track is unmade and very bad. I have been on my feet since Cairékoe and they are now sore and swollen. Not a bunch of bananas can be had at this place, and the men are eating unripe paw-paws. We arrived here very late because we had so much trouble crossing the River Bossum Pra. I am told this river is full of rocks, and one cannot travel down it to the coast in a boat.

Bandoe, 16th.

From Doemamba to here is a considerable journey. It took us at least four hours. I was offered a night's rest at Dadiessie, but declined this with thanks. Twice we had to swim, which delayed us. The rainy season is beginning to make itself felt in these parts.

The King's envoys have still not arrived. If it had not been for these people, I would have been home 10 or 12 days ago.

17th.

No news. Have not set eyes on the caboceans of this place.

Great Commany, 18th May 1817.

From Bandoe to here is a very long way by a very poor track.

After we had been waiting here an hour the two officers finally caught us up. They will leave with us immediately for Elmina.

Names of the villages between the River Bosumpra and the King's capital:

No.		
1.	Para sue	
2.	Tjetjewerrij	
3.	Numiassue	
4.	Apadja	
5.	Ato biawa sue	These are all
6.	Bekkwamin	Assin villages
7.	Assarmanij	
8.	Anzang (chief village)	
9.	Akkrofrome	
10.	Monzaij	
11.	Quissa	
12.	Fommena	
13.	Dompo Assie	
14.	Tjabossu	
15.	Embedoema	
16.	Essamie Enkwanta	
17.	Dottie sue	
18.	Akkankewa Assie	
19.	Adedewa Assie	
20.	Samfoe	
21.	Kroaba (?Kroala)	Ashanti
22.	Edjun Assie	villages
23.	Amou affoe	
24.	Adjuabinba	
25.	Assumandja	
26.	Biepo sue	
27.	Adjumamoe	
28.	Adoenkoe	
29.	Sakkraka	
30.	Adiabin	
31.	Di (?De) Dossuwa	
32.	Konkermassie	
33.	Adassie	
34.	Enkankewa assie	
35.	Okasie	
36.	Affafar (?Assafar) heein	
37.	Koemassie (the King's capital)	

(List of presents received by W. Huydecoper.)

(List of presents received by Sjt. Woortman.)

LIST OF PRESENTS

MONTH AND DAY	NAMES OF PERSONS FROM WHOM PRESENTS RECEIVED	Cows.	Pigs.	Sheep.	Yams.	Bunches of Plantains	GOLD		
							oz.	fl.	Tacks.
1816 MAY	<u>At Abra.</u> Received from:								
6	Apia (for a sheep)	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-
"	Barriekie	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
"	Jouw Kokroko	-	-	1	2	2	-	-	-
"	Djesie	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	-
"	Awarrie	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
"	Cudjo apannij	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
		-	-	3	2	2	-	8	-
	<u>At Adiabin.</u>								
21	Owoesoe quanta biesa (Chief)	-	-	1	-	10	-	-	-
	<u>At Koemasie.</u>								
25	From the King	1	1	1	100	200	4	14	-
27	General Poekoe	-	-	-	25	20	-	7	-
"	General Adoematta	-	-	1	10	10	-	4½	-
"	Quacoe piepiem	-	-	-	-	6	-	1	-
"	Apia's wife	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-
28	Saij Cudjo and Saij Jouw	-	-	-	-	6	-	2	-
"	Assiantijn	-	-	-	-	4	-	4	-
29	Quatje Coffie (General)	-	-	1	20	10	-	8	-
30	Adjuwa pienaman and Ecoea	-	-	-	-	4	-	1	-
"	Adoemma	-	-	1	8	10	-	8	-
"	Jouwa Odiflee	-	-	1	-	10	-	6	-
"	Quacoe pon	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-
"	Bekko Saij (Chief)	-	-	-	20	20	-	8	-
"	Nuaffer	-	-	-	-	4	-	1	-
"	Adoe	-	-	-	-	6	-	1	-
"	Koko	-	-	-	-	4	-	1	-
	Carry forward	1	1	9	185	330	8	12	-

DATES	NAMES	Cows.	Pigs.	Sheep	Yams.	Bunches of Plantains	G O L D		
							Oz	£	Tacks
	Brought forward	1	2	13	247	526	13	7	4
1816									
JUNE	8 Otjirie	-	-	-	-	12	-	3	-
"	" Adoe nunkrie	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4
"	" Debbera Cudjo	-	-	-	-	6	-	1	4
"	" Assiantijn	-	-	-	-	4	-	1	4
"	" Ponwarrij	-	-	-	6	8	-	1	4
"	" Apia	-	-	-	-	6	-	4	-
"	" Korrantimma	-	-	-	12	-	-	1	-
"	10 Cobbia	-	-	-	-	4	-	1½	-
"	" Ankra	-	-	-	-	10	-	4	-
"	" Attawa Kuisie	-	-	-	-	4	-	1	-
"	" Fossue	-	-	-	-	10	-	3	-
"	" Adoe toetoe	-	-	-	-	4	-	1½	-
"	" Dendoe bin	-	-	-	6	4	-	1	-
"	11 Owoesoe Ackotia	-	-	-	-	10	-	3	-
"	13 Oduro	-	-	-	-	10	-	6	-
"	" Tando	-	-	-	-	6	-	1	4
"	15 The King	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
"	17 Amanquatia	-	-	1	40	20	-	9	-
"	" Coffie Sram	-	-	-	-	6	-	1	-
"	30 Odiffee	-	-	-	-	6	-	1	4
JULY	5 Joww Sekkerij	-	-	-	-	10	-	6	-
"	" Kwadoe	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
"	25 Quamin Dendoe	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-
"	" Aboadje	-	-	-	-	3	-	1	-
OCT	6 Boatin	-	-	-	20	-	1	-	-
SEP ¹	21 From the King	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
		1	2	15	331	671	20	1	4

(signed) W. Huydecoper.

1. Sic. The September entry has been added after the October one.

N. B. Also received at various times from the King 1 ~~es~~
9 ~~£~~ and 3 or 4 sheep, and from Jow Kokroko 3 ~~£~~ gold and 1 sheep.

Gold 1 - 12 ~~£~~

(signed) W. Huydecoper.

Serjeant Woortman received in presents from the King
1 ~~es~~ 2 ~~£~~

(added later)

Woortman, for departure	9 £
The men	1 es 12 £
Departure	6 £
My boys	9 £

1st January 1817. Received as presents for the New Year
1 ~~es~~ 2 ~~£~~, 1 sheep and 16 yams.

On 5th February received for subsistence 9 ~~£~~ and ½ sheep.

23rd Feb. ½ sheep.

19th March ½ do.

" March as a present from the King 9 ~~£~~.

24th April. Received for my departure 1 sheep, 1 tusk,
2 ~~es~~ 4 ~~£~~ gold, 1 tiger skin, 1 stool with cushions and 1 cloth.

20th April 1817. Received from the King 9 ~~£~~,
from others 1 - 14

~~es~~2 - 7

Insadjusue, 30th April 1817. From the Chief and his
linguist, 6 tack^s.