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# “WE SYMPATHISE WITH THE MINES FOR PILFERY THAT GOES ON BUT . . .”

African Interests in Gold Coast Mines, Protecting Gold, and the Politics of Legislation, 1907–1948

E. SASU KWAME SEWORDOR

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**ABSTRACT:** For decades, the British colonial establishment in the Gold Coast believed that setting its gaze on goldsmiths was pivotal to eliminating pilfering of gold from the mines. This assumption, commonly without concrete proof, hardened colonial paranoia and was shared with Ashanti Goldfields Corporation. Both entities thought that the continuous access to gold by goldsmiths, coupled with increasing gold theft were enough basis to surveil goldsmiths—the supposed pivotal actors in a fledgling illicit trade in stolen mine gold. Yet, the problem remained. As this study shows, there was a paucity of successful prosecutions against persons caught in possession of stolen mine gold, and none against a goldsmith. Ultimately, it is argued that from 1907 to 1948, central colonial laws meant to regulate the growing gold mining industry and protect its finds in the Gold Coast reveal negotiations that more than realizing their primary principle(s), increasingly limited access to gold by many indigenes. While the latter sustained an emergent illicit market for pilfered gold from the mines, it simultaneously sparked a misplaced colonial state-led surveillance that targeted goldsmiths.

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## Introduction

The “Golden Stool” (Akan: *Sika’dwa Kofi*)—a notable Asante regalia of chief sacral meaning and political importance—when on display, could capture the admiration of a present-day visitor to Kumase. Many distant observers of *Sika’dwa Kofi* may come away impressed that this gold regalia shaped after an indigenous domestic Akan stool alongside its accessories have remained unaltered since it was, according to Asante folklore, charmed from the firmament by *Ɔkɔmfo* (priest) Anɔkye.<sup>1</sup> Contrary to this widely known oral tradition, an application from the Asante Paramount Chief (Akan: *Asantehene*) Osei Agyeman Prempeh II on 26 May 1943 detailed a request, through Kumase’s Chief Commissioner, to the Manager of Konongo Gold Mines Ltd. for an intended purchase of 30.475 oz. of gold worth £153.14.6d “for repairing part of the ornaments of the Golden Stool.”<sup>2</sup>

Since the rise of Asante as a major Akan or inland kingdom—*c.* seventeenth century—until the late colonial period, its central role as a site for producing gold cannot be overlooked. As can be observed of Prempeh’s application letter, the extent to and ease with which gold could be accessed and used previously had evolved remarkably. The administrative format of the *Asantehene*’s letter (which had to go through Kumase’s Chief Commissioner first) tells an apparent formal way of purchasing gold under British authority at the time. This point raises important questions about the climate of events that may have continuously reshaped the gold industry as a critical component of the Gold Coast economy without failing to evaluate the colony’s interaction with world gold marketing and colonial geopolitics. Along this line, this paper puts forward that from 1907 to 1948, central colonial laws meant to regulate the growing gold mining industry and protect its finds in the Gold Coast reveal complex exchanges. More than realizing their primary principle(s), these laws increasingly limited access to gold by many indigenes—especially goldsmiths—for customary use.

Consequently, Africans engendered their agency as they contested their “disadvantage” both on and off legal grounds. While the latter sustained an emergent illicit market for pilfered gold from the mines, it simultaneously sparked misplaced colonial state-led surveillance that targeted goldsmiths. As will be further shown, the fall-outs of the emergent gold mining industry birthed uncertainties and exigencies that continuously informed revised colonial laws on gold mining, while sharpening critical African voices in the Gold Coast Legislative Council (now on, the Council).

The making and application of this legislation, chiefly the Gold Mining Products Protection (or G.M.P.P.) Ordinance, were informed by a new colonial economic experience that significantly differed from the cash crop economy

established by the 1880s.<sup>3</sup> In the early 1900s, deliberations in the Council led to the granting of concessions, respecting the lines along which to shape commercial or industrial gold mining.

Whether goldsmiths stole gold from the mines or not is beside the point. Rather, the first main concern is to address how the menace of stealing gold produced by mines informed protective colonial legislation to check pilfering and de facto control gold access. The consequences of this legal intervention, beginning in 1907, are shown not only via the uneasy feelings of some African members of the Council. The efforts of organized political groups and goldsmiths were also influential. Secondly, the making of the G.M.P.P. Ordinance is traced to highlight the pivotal role of the Council as a crucial site for legal interventions that framed the gold mining industry. The episodic nature of these encounters chiefly informed the chronological and illustrative way that this essay is organized. Finally, and focusing directly on agency, the responses by Africans to the regulations that seriously restricted their access to gold are shown and evaluated. While African legislators engaged the law in the Council, others took to petitions or crime (in both individual and organized capacities) to contest colonial authority.

In order to reconstruct these aspects of legislative interventions in the Gold Coast gold industry, several sources were consulted from Ghana's Public Records and Archives Administration Department's holdings at Accra and Kumase. A combination of debates of the Council, colonial administrative correspondences, and court reports were central. Through the Council's minutes, the original concern from which the G.M.P.P. Ordinance was conceived is clarified. The same records also bring out the changing principles for modifying the G.M.P.P. Ordinance against the continuously changing contexts that the law was dispensed. For the details of enforcing the G.M.P.P. Ordinance, letters, memos, and reports circulated amongst political officers are insightful. Court records and petitions enrich our knowledge of the application of the G.M.P.P. Ordinance as it unfolded on the ground, and inform us of which forces against which its revisions were sharpened. With their rich perspectives "from below," they complement the top-down lens offered in the Council's minutes. Crucially too, they document perspectives and voices reflective of how Africans were thinking as they bore the practical effects of the G.M.P.P. Ordinance and explain the rationale behind their reactions to colonial power. Altogether, these sources unearth an important part of Gold Coast's economic and legal past.

This essay is positioned as an intervention in historical literature on Gold Coast gold mining. Partly, it is intended to further break the deep emphasis of scholarly research with timelines that close at the beginning of the twentieth century,<sup>4</sup> following the examples of Ayowa A. Taylor and

Jeff Crisp.<sup>5</sup> Without discrediting the foundational contribution of Raymond E. Dumett’s *El Dorado in West Africa*, and the recent addition through Cassandra Mark-Thiesen’s *Mediators, Contract Men, and Colonial Capital*—both dwelling on the period 1875–1909—this study extends the temporal and thematic dimensions of Gold Coast mining histories that have previously been covered. Taking a cue from the predominant focus on colonial capitalism, corporate enterprise, labor, and entrepreneurship, the intention here is however one of departure; that is, to concentrate on the changing dimensions of indigenous access to gold by interrogating the making and evolution of the G.M.P.P. Ordinance. Originally crafted in 1907 as central to giving a sprouting mechanized gold mining industry shape, the Ordinance remains latent in scholarly literature.

Taylor’s description of the period of 1939–1956 as one of decline in her study of the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation can be gainfully linked to this essay.<sup>6</sup> Beyond signposting Goldfields’ dwindling economic fortunes as Taylor shows, the period insightfully ties in with the simultaneous rise in gold pilfering and underscores the intention of Goldfields to sternly cut out permit-less goldsmiths from its premises, especially after 1947. Further, it provides the setting to convincingly explain how Goldfields used its legally-backed autonomy (through its trading right) to cover its vulnerability to gold loss, in lieu of any simplistic argument that only sees the firm’s action as maligning goldsmith entrepreneurship without cause.

Crucially, the essay brings to the fore the legal foundation upon which the gold mining industry was initially cast. What this contribution does is to foreground the gold and related enterprises in the legal frames through which they were operationalized, demonstrating how contemporary politics about gold protection shaped local access to gold, particularly that produced by mines. Delving deeper into the legal frames central to this study, several clusters of African agents (e.g., law makers and goldsmiths) emerged not as passive actors. Though their agenda and interests were distinct in different ways, these overlapped sometimes.

## **J. Mensah Sarbah et al: The G.M.P.P. Ordinance, and Making a Gold Industry, 1907–1909**

Of the many subjects John Mensah Sarbah and his contemporary African “unofficial” members of the Council—including Wulf Henry Grey, J. P. Brown, and Thomas Hutton Mills<sup>7</sup>—seriously debated, draft laws on gold and related affairs were important. Prior to the major initial legislation to regulate mechanized gold mining in the Gold Coast in the early 1900s, there were some growing European interests alongside known indigenous methods

of extracting and processing gold.<sup>8</sup> Between the Portuguese arrival on the Gold Coast in 1471 and the British Crown's establishment of the Gold Coast Mining and Trading Company in 1825, English Captain Thomas Wyndham's interest in gold as a commercial commodity predated the Dutch and Danish.<sup>9</sup>

Formed with an object to "introduce a better method for working the mines and pits" nonetheless, the Mining and Trading Company of the English paid little attention to mining compared to trade. It took the enthusiasm of a Frenchman, Pierre Bonnat—sometimes described as the father of modern Gold Coast mining<sup>10</sup>—to actualize the pending potentials of a gold industry mined with mechanical engineering tools, particularly at Tarkwa up to his death in 1882.<sup>11</sup> "Before his death," a Gold Coast Chamber of Mines report said, "many concessions had been granted in the Tarkwa district and a substantial amount of European capital had been invested in companies formed to work them."<sup>12</sup> The same Mines report further recorded mining activities at Tamsu, Abosso, and so on, which resulted in significant gold outputs from 1884 to 1889. Yet, it singled out Ashanti Goldfields, to which it credited the production of almost half of the Colony's overall gold output by the late colonial period.<sup>13</sup>

These events precipitated the so-called "Jungle Boom" in gold mining in West Africa in the 1890s,<sup>14</sup> but which collapsed in 1902—followed by the abandoning of concessions held by up to 400 original mining companies that worked it. Yet, like that of Ashanti Goldfields, some concessions were later mined by successor companies who revamped operations in original concessions. To concretely illustrate the transition from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century, the operations of local merchant-promoters of industrial mining needs emphasis. Key among them was J. M. Sarbah and J. P. Brown who held shares in an African-owned mining firm called Ashanti Exploration Company (est., 1891).<sup>15</sup> The involvement of Sarbah and other Euro-African businessmen in nineteenth-century prospecting intersected with the subsequent European domination of the industry over indigenous interests as their own entrepreneurial ventures declined. I argue that the Council becomes a crucial site to renegotiate territorial claims by expatriate mining firms under what Dumett calls a "state-backed concessionaire-imperialism."<sup>16</sup>

It was not until 1889 that an African was appointed to the Council.<sup>17</sup> Theoretically, the Council represented an advisory body, secondary to the Executive Council and *de facto* one of an official majority of European colonial officials. This notion underpinned how European politics played out and the underlying spirit that instructed the business of the Council.<sup>18</sup> In effect, a paternalistic tendency guided the interactions in the Council and shaped the extent to which African members could negotiate colonial

politics of legislation as well as defining their individual politics. In the Council meeting of 29 April 1907, a bill titled “An Ordinance for the more effectual prevention of illicit dealings in and thefts of unwrought gold and gold compounds, and for the licensing of goldsmiths and dealers in gold”—first read on 4 March 1907—was re-introduced, debated, and read for a second time.<sup>19</sup> Leading the “unofficial” African voices, Sarbah—son of J. Sarbah Sr., an Oxford-trained lawyer who was an extraordinary and unofficial member of the Council in 1900 and 1901–1910 respectively<sup>20</sup>—started by encouraging his African legislator colleagues to support the bill. Further, his attempt to clarify the principle of the bill was recorded as follows: “it relates to the prevention of illicit dealings in and thefts of gold by persons employed by mining companies.”<sup>21</sup> Unlike Sarbah, Messrs. Brown and Hunt saw no need for a separate law to check gold thieving since general laws for checking stealing already existed.<sup>22</sup> Another point of disagreement amongst some “unofficial” members hinged on the jurisdiction(s) to which the bill should be applied. Sarbah thought the bill should only be prescribed for those mining districts in which gold was sourced or suspected to be stolen. Critically departing from this position, Hunt’s take was that: “If people steal gold in one part of the Colony there is nothing to prevent him from selling it in another part, and the practical result of adopting Mr. Sarbah’s suggestion would merely be that the purchasers or receivers of stolen gold would establish themselves in those districts to which the provisions of the Bill had not been applied.”<sup>23</sup> These opposing views notwithstanding, the introduction of the bill was not hindered; it was carried and read for the second time. Above all, the recognition of the novel nature of the bill in the Gold Coast warranted heed to similar laws elsewhere in the British Empire—notably South Africa—as guide.

The bill particularly aroused the attention of those colonial subjects who wished to express their concerns about how the incipient law was to practically reform their own realities in ways they thought of as endangering. Accordingly, the Gold Coast Aborigines’ Rights Protection Society (A.R.P.S.) in collaboration with the Native Goldsmiths Association (N.G.A.) wasted no time in joining the debates by petitioning the Council. The petition was strategically transmitted so that its official receipt coincided with a sitting of the Council on 2 September 1907, when the last reading of the bill was (initially) due. The submission of the petition led to the postponement of the third reading so that due consideration could be given to the petition.<sup>24</sup> Yet, it is unclear as to what consideration the bill actually received before early 1909 when it re-appeared in minutes of the Council. What is evident though is that in the Council meeting of 15 February 1909, Governor Rodger intimated that a re-drafted bill had “received careful consideration and has

been drafted with a view to meeting the objection raised by local goldsmiths and also the Native Unofficial Members of Council, that the provisions of the original Bill pressed with undue severity on native workers in gold.” Also: “It was generally recognized that every possible protection should be given the native goldsmith’s craft, rightly characterised by Mr. Sarbah as one of great antiquity.” These insights are suggestive of some negotiations that may have ensued to review the original bill behind the scenes. Yet, it is difficult to clearly explain the delay in considering the petition by the Council.<sup>25</sup>

Later, on 15 February 1909, Attorney-General Arthur Hudson motioned for a second reading of the bill. The full attention not given the 1907 petition, co-written by the N.G.A., was still fresh in Sarbah’s mind—especially since he held that the pivotal question of amalgam gold thieving by Europeans from the mines, chiefly highlighted by the petition, remained unattended. Sarbah was forceful, and critical: he reminded the Council that the law was originally introduced in the wake of stealing of amalgam from the mines by European employees, and not Africans. As a partial solution, he advocated for searching the employees, “including managers, either when they are at the mines or when they are leaving” under the power of a District Commissioner or a Police Superintendent. Hutton Mills—a Cambridge-law graduate, and unofficial member of the Council from 1898–1900, and again 1909–1918<sup>26</sup>—seconded Sarbah’s opinion.<sup>27</sup>

In an ensuing debate, William Griffith (the Chief Justice), alone admitted thieving of amalgam gold. On the question of searches under law, Arthur Hudson, Herbert Bryan (the Colonial Secretary), and John Rodger (Governor), indicated similar but different modes practiced by Ashanti Goldfields, and elsewhere per Western Australian and Rhodesian laws. Rodger added that he had no hesitation granting mine managers his consent should they press for compulsory search under Gold Coast law, or plan to include it in their employment contract.<sup>28</sup> The 1909 revisiting of the bill signposted the colonial administration’s admission of some existing shortcomings in regulating the gold mining industry and gave it attention. Despite these failings, 1909 marked a turning point towards concretely regulating Gold Coast’s gold mining industry and was fundamental to further legal framings of the industry.

As the bill’s title partly hints, licensing became a crucial handle for the colonial administration to monitor possession of gold by Africans, beginning with goldsmiths—whose profession naturally made them the most probable dealers in gold. Two licenses were to be issued under law—i.e., “Goldsmith License A” and “Hawker License B”; both of which expired on December 31 each year.<sup>29</sup> Chief Commissioners and District Commissioners

were responsible for issuing the license types “A” and “B” respectively.<sup>30</sup> Upon expiration, a license holder was expected to apply to the Commissioner of Police within his district for renewal.<sup>31</sup> Progressively from March 1909 on, the Acting Secretary for Mines, J. W. Lowry, supervised a massive colony-wide exercise to compile a register of goldsmiths, beginning particularly in Asante.<sup>32</sup> British colonial officers and African chiefs cooperated mainly to create a copious database of goldsmiths in parts of the Colony including the four provinces of Asante. Though predominantly a trade plied by the locals, goldsmithing in Asante was not limited to the Akan people. Goldsmiths of ethnic Gã and Fante identities were present in Asante by 1909, and had been joined by some Lagosian elements.<sup>33</sup> The cosmopolitan make-up of the Asante goldsmith business does not only show the extent to which the growth of the gold mining venture in this area had attracted ethnic minority artisans into a core Akan mining district. More importantly, the huge numbers of gold artisans particularly directed colonial attention to licensing goldsmiths working in Asante ahead of enforcing the G.M.P.P. Ordinance when it was applied there on 10 August 1910.<sup>34</sup>

The making of the G.M.P.P. Ordinance in part was significantly informed by some local opinions backed by the weight of critical argumentation. Opinions held by several “unofficial” members of the Council were sometimes shaped by observations they had made on site visits, which translated into the quality of arguments some Africans made during debates. For example, Sarbah’s concern at the early stages of fine-tuning the draft form of the G.M.P.P. Ordinance that it “should be amended as not to endanger or restrict at all the possession and general use of gold dust and nuggets by the people of this country” needs emphasis.

Clearly outraged by one of the bill’s provisions to punish goldsmiths by conviction or loss of license, Sarbah dwelled on his personal encounters with goldsmiths to make a submission captured in the minutes of the Council meeting of on 29 April 1907 as follows:

Mr. Sarbah states that he sees no necessity for this clause. Goldsmiths are not engaged in the mines, nor is there any proof that some of them have been abetting the stealing of gold. From enquiries he has personally made, local goldsmiths, as a matter of fact, do not use gold amalgam in their trade. He has been informed that when sometime ago, Accra Goldsmiths purchased in open market some gold amalgam, which a manager of one of the mining companies sold, with their efforts, they found it quite unsuitable for use nor did they know how to refine it. He is quite convinced that a great deal of amalgam has been stolen at the mines and dredgers by the Agents and hands there employed who carried it to England. He suggests that the Bill be referred to a special Committee of the Council.<sup>35</sup>

Sarbah's enthusiasm unfortunately did not receive Governor Rodger's approval. Rodger however assured Sarbah of his readiness to attend to "any representations made by persons interested [in the bill]" prior to the third and/or final reading.<sup>36</sup> By dismissing Sarbah's submission, Rodger inevitably begged the question of Sarbah's interest in the bill. Put otherwise, to what end was Sarbah appointed as a Council member in the first place if not to promote the interests of the Gold Coast people? Rodger's contradictory posture is sharpened when read against the merit of Sarbah's point—i.e., if the principle of the bill was to protect mines against the stealing of amalgam gold as Rodger himself alluded in 1909,<sup>37</sup> and if indeed goldsmiths did not use gold amalgam for their trade, "nor [was] there any proof that some of them have been abetting the stealing of gold" as Sarbah claimed, then Rodger's resort to his veto as Governor was dubious.<sup>38</sup>

It is difficult to place the N.G.A. and A.R.P.S. in an existing collaborative relationship before they jointly petitioned the Council respecting the bill in 1907. Yet, the A.R.P.S. had by this time become foremost an anti-colonial body with influential connections abroad and also enjoyed some presence on the Council.<sup>39</sup> Consequently, there can be little doubt that the certain elitist "unofficial" members of the Council willingly allied with the A.R.P.S. in order to stretch the length of available legal options to contest and negotiate colonialism. It is along this line that Sarbah's contention on 29 April 1907, concerning whether the bill would "endanger or restrict . . . possession and general use of gold" for Gold Coasters is illuminating. Representing an extended A.R.P.S. anti-colonial activism on the Council, Sarbah strongly cautioned that the "ancient" trade of goldsmiths would be most drastically affected if his fears were indeed real.<sup>40</sup> Granted that goldsmiths at the time became professionals by apprenticeship and usually had very little Western formal education,<sup>41</sup> Sarbah in 1909 could clearly imagine how fruitless an unaided expression of interest by the goldsmiths in the amendment of the bill before its third reading—say by petitioning the Council—could have been. Sarbah's compatriot, J. P. Brown—who was a co-founder and once President of the A.R.P.S.<sup>42</sup>—on 2 September 1907 laid before the Council a timely joint-petition on behalf of the N.G.A. and A.R.P.S. as a way of exploiting the opening Rodger had left for further review of the bill before it became law.<sup>43</sup> This move was quite insightful, in part due to the fact that labor organizations by 1907 or 1909 were few and far between.<sup>44</sup> This partially explains the exchanges between the N.G.A. and A.R.P.S. since both groups were interested in the bill of 1907. These events signaled an opportune exploit by the A.R.P.S. to sustain itself as a champion of local interests in the Colony and maintain popular appeal.<sup>45</sup>

## Nana Ofori Atta and Co.: Towards a Further Amendment of the G.M.P.P. Ordinance, 1938

Between 1909 and 1938, the G.M.P.P. Ordinance was amended at least once, in 1926.<sup>46</sup> Building on the claim that previous versions meant to curtail the supposed theft of gold from mines had already proved misguided, this section explores the dilemma of colonial officials as they struggled to update the G.M.P.P. to achieve its full goal. Since the problem that warranted the passing of the G.M.P.P. still existed, the spirit of the law remained stable.<sup>47</sup> On 15 March 1938, Acting Attorney-General, L. E. V. M’Carthy, moved for a second reading of a bill to amend the G.M.P.P. Ordinance to improve the existing law. The premise of M’Carthy’s argument dwelled on the difficulty in proving the illegality of mine gold in possession of suspects. As a result, many prosecutions had failed to substantiate allegations that an accused illegally possessed a specific portion of gold concerned in an investigation despite cited instances of overwhelming basis for doubt. Consequently, law enforcement was left frustrated. For M’Carthy, the way out was to convince the Council to grant that a person “reasonably suspected” to possess mine gold be made to “satisfy the Court that he obtained gold in question in a lawful manner.” M’Carthy was however not oblivious of the fact that gold was not an uncommon item under certain conditions.<sup>48</sup>

Apparently setting himself up as easy prey, the combined voices of the erudite and intrepid orator *Omanhene* (Paramount Chief) of Akyem Abuakwa, Ofori Atta, and Nana Hima Dekyi XII (i.e., the *Omanhene* of Upper Dixcove and Western Provincial Member of the Council) vociferously contested reasonable suspicion as forming a legitimate principle of the amendment bill as it seemed to them subjective at best, and frivolous at worst. Thus, the central principle of the amendment bill could not stand, especially as access to gold was possible in many customary ways (like inheritance), making gold not uncommon as personal possession amongst locals. Additionally, the two therefore argued that the amendment bill unjustly subjected Gold Coasters to uninformed malice under legal guise since gold, irrespective of the method by which it was extracted, looked alike and there was no seriously definitive technique of making a distinction. As Atta and Dekyi XII understood it, M’Carthy was merely entertaining indolent logic as he perceivably aimed to shift the task of proving guilt (or failing to) to accused Africans—which essentially contradicted a natural duty of the prosecution to prove the guilt of an accused person.<sup>49</sup> Without mincing his words, Atta retorted: “We sympathise with the mines for pilfering that goes on but we say, Sir, that gold is ours and we have the means of digging it. Therefore, we should not unnecessarily be interfered with if we have our own gold. That is our case.”<sup>50</sup>

Though seemingly defeated, M'Carthy would not go down easily. Again, he admitted the abundance of gold and its possession in the hands of Africans. But for him, that was a point which strengthened his argument and his attempt to drive same home clearly. He rebutted that if gold was plentiful, then the prosecutors faced an even more arduous task of persuading themselves of any reasonable cause for doubt, let alone proceeding to convince a court. M'Carthy added that in the court, the prosecution was similarly expected to explain its reasoning for doubt. It was not until this was done that an accused was asked to say anything at all. To conclude his submission, M'Carthy opined that he saw no reason why an accused should find difficulty to demonstrate his/her innocence, granted the principle of the amendment bill he had introduced was upheld. With these cogent arguments, the amendment bill was carried on vote and read for the second time.<sup>51</sup> Having been read twice, the third merely completed a procedural requirement before a bill (be it an original or amendment) became law, normally after receiving the assent of the Governor.<sup>52</sup> As of 1938, attempts to prosecute G.M.P.P. Ordinance offenders was fraught with frustration and had left its meaningful delivery with gaping loopholes. The central concern respected the severe handicap in prosecuting persons "reasonably suspected" to be in possession of mine gold.

By 1938, the influence of the new crop of African representatives—commonly chiefs—who had begun replacing the local intelligentsia present in the Council since the World War I (WWI) period was marked. Yet, unlike their predecessors, their politics were distinctly individual, despite sharing the zeal characteristic of the group of elite or mostly Western-trained Africans before them. In contrast, the new groups' politics reflected the geographically-linked basis that informed who was admitted into the Council; i.e., usually Paramount Chiefs with influence over a designated polity or territory. Their political concerns were therefore local in the territorial sense, yet gained extended appeal or effect when other "unofficial" African members of the Council (especially chiefs) shared similar concerns that affected the jurisdiction in which they exercised authority. Gold mining being a convenient example, as an economic activity common in the Eastern and Western provinces of the Gold Coast, and thus sparked the interest of Atta and Dekyi XII. That some chiefs could agree at times was an important basis for more than collaborating to question colonialism; it made maneuverings possible.<sup>53</sup>

## **For Empire/Colony?: Surveilling Crime, Labor (Union) Anxiety, and Petitions, 1939–1948**

In the year following the 1938 amendment of the G.M.P.P. Ordinance, WWII broke out and further plunged both the British metropole and colonies under its authority into, above all, economic uncertainties. With this new reality came political implications since the two were tied. As WWI had done before, WWII made far more serious demands on resources from colonies to sustain the balance of the British empire. Sooner rather than later a gold shortage grew, owing to the meager amounts produced since mines lacked regular supplies of, among other things, machinery, explosives, and fuel.<sup>54</sup> A related challenge with effects beyond the mines was the drastic reduction in gold access throughout the Gold Coast. Furthermore, Crisp has documented the increasing tensions between mine workers and management during the same period that Taylor states that the profit margins of Goldfields took a nosedive.<sup>55</sup>

The gold mining industry dwindled considerably so that not only did these mining enterprises become frustrated, but the colonial administration itself realized the need for a swift intervention. Accordingly, in 1942, there was an official order to several mines to temporarily close down; those relatively small mines that were affected included Konongo Gold Mines, Gold Coast Main Reef, Gold Coast Banket Areas, Bremang Dredging, South Banket Areas, and Ashanti-Adowsena<sup>56</sup>—leaving a handful of mining enterprises in operation, but not without persisting difficulties. As can be imagined, the dissolution of Konongo and other mines put a large number of their laborers out of their jobs. Interestingly, while the closing of these mines appeared to have catered for one menace—briefly at least—it birthed a new dilemma for the colonial administrators, centered on the creation of surplus labor. A systematic plan to reintegrate some of the laborers into other parts of the colonial labor economy while returning others to their home communities began. Yet, these processes of managing extra labor unleashed an air of labor anxiety that was nuanced far beyond what the colonial authority may have perceived.

While the deepening mark of hardship presented by the war was assured, same could not be said about the success of the colonial administration’s intervention. Many Gold Coast colonial subjects were left with few choices for bracing the economic storm. What resulted was the adaptation of different modes of survival, one of which manifested in the shape of a complex network of illicit trade in commercially mined gold, and thus further beset both the already troubled mines and the colonial administration with more worry.

In September 1943, for instance, three persons were convicted in connection with crimes committed at Konongo Gold Mines Ltd; two of the accused, Charles D. de-Graft Dickson and J. E. Kwachi, who were employed as Mill workers at Konongo Mines, were charged with stealing gold mining products. The third, Yaw Sarfu—an uncle to Dickson—was charged with possessing mercury.<sup>57</sup> All three pleaded guilty as charged and received a six-month imprisonment sentence, a fine of £2 or one month imprisonment, and £3 or six weeks imprisonment respectively.<sup>58</sup> Quite displeased with these sentences, the Superintendent of Police informed the Chief Commissioner of Asante: “I consider these sentences, especially those against Nos. 2 and 3 accused [i.e., Dickson and Kwachi] unsatisfactory and far from acting as a deterrent against gold stealing.”<sup>59</sup> “In my [previous] letter” the Superintendent of Police again wrote later on 27 October 1943:

I expressed disappointment at the sentences imposed on *three employees* of the Konongo Gold Mines Limited who were charged and convicted for stealing gold from that Mine. These persons were members of *an organised gang* whose operations I believe to be connected with the other operations referred to in your *secret letter* S. 31/43 dated 23.8.43. [Emphasis added]

I have this morning been informed by the Registrar of the Divisional Court at Kumasi that His Honour The Judge has reduced the sentence of C. D. de Graft Dickson from 6 months to three months from [the] date of conviction. I had no knowledge that any appeal concerning this accused was before the Supreme Court.

These light sentences by a Magistrate and reduction of sentence by His Honour The Judge again bring to light what I consider to be a big gap between Police or Government’s knowledge of a certain situation and the lack of such knowledge by the Officers who deal with criminal offenders brought before them. May I suggest for consideration that there should be some liaison or method of approach between Police and Magistrates and Judges so that those Officers may be able to take legal cognizance of matters which, for reasons of policy or security, it is not possible to bring to their notice in open court. An attempt to do this by an individual Police Officer may be resented and regarded as an attempt to influence or prejudice a trial Magistrate or Judge, unless authority exists for imparting such knowledge under justifiable circumstances.<sup>60</sup>

The note of existing gaps in colonial administrative bureaucracy and communication shines through the points raised by the Superintendent of Police. As it turned out, such inconsistencies raised about colonial law enforcement and judicial proceeding had opened a gap of dissatisfaction, taken up by nagging internal complaints as some convicts walked away with reduced terms of imprisonment as Dickson did. Also, while the obvious discord in

the descriptions of the three convicts in the colonial records cited above may be worth indicating, there is clarity about the fact that at least Dickson was related to Sarfu. Yet, a far more serious enquiry emerges when close attention is paid to the central criminalized actors: was the colonial state losing out on its attempt to fight gold pilfering because it had hitherto (mis) directed attention to goldsmiths as primary suspects? This provocation partly instructs the following paragraphs, where the new atmosphere of labor vulnerability and anxiety as well as crime that had become characteristic of the gold mining industry will be centered in the contexts of shifting external colonial geopolitics and internal resistance (even if subtly) against the legitimacy of colonial authority.

As of March 1942, some colonial officials had begun to sense the possible consternation that could be brought by any miscalculated management of the labor fluidity that was to follow the closing of several mines. The Chief Commissioner of Asante, E. G. Hawkenworth, wrote to the Colonial Secretary, relaying an observation of one of his deputies, the District Commissioner of Juaben, that the Konongo Gold Mines Limited planned to close in six months' time “on account of the difficulty now experienced in obtaining the necessary equipment from overseas.” Despite noting that the Chamber of Mines was informed, his sense of alarm raised by Africans set to lose their jobs when Konongo Mines closed was clear as there were no concrete plans to manage potential challenges of unemployment—without which, he mused “I am afraid there may be serious discontent, and a danger of demonstrations and disturbances.”<sup>61</sup> More than signaling incipient danger, the District Commissioner's admonishment formed an early position to rationalize colonial surveillance while thinking through alternate ways to appropriate the soon-to-be unemployed mine laborers for the benefit of the empire.<sup>62</sup>

By December, the discussions about the many mine laborers to be put out of employment was afoot and being given serious logistical attention by top administrative officials including the Colonial Secretary, Commissioner of Labor, and his deputy.<sup>63</sup> Some 8,199 workers from the Gold Coast, Nigeria, Liberia, Ivory Coast, and others (classified as “Miscellaneous”) were estimated to become unemployed.<sup>64</sup> As the hands of ex-mines employees increasingly became idle, anxieties created by unassured ways of sustenance outside the mines could no longer be imagined to be anything other than severe.

It did not take too long for the colonial surveillance machinery to be tested as the clouds of illicit trade fell over the gold mining industry. The content of a letter from Sergeant Percy Eckel (then Acting Commissioner of the Gold Coast Police) to the Colonial Secretary provides incredible details

about a counter gold pilfering investigation at Sekondi-Takoradi in October 1943. In this case, two Africans suspected to be in possession of 42 bars of gold from the mines—to the tune of over £1100—were carefully tracked and eventually arrested after being tricked by police personnel who posed as pilots of the Royal Air Force and interested clients. Despite pleading innocent, the culprits faced charges including possession of gold mining products, conspiracy to sell stolen gold, obstruction of peace officers, and resisting arrest. At the end of the initial hearing, their defense counsel, Mr. R. S. Blay<sup>65</sup> managed to secure a bail of £1000 each and the case was adjourned to 4 November 1943.<sup>66</sup> Irrespective of how the case proceeded or ended and the fact that the names of the African culprits were not disclosed in Sergeant Eckel's letter, this instance gives evidence of an established sophisticated syndicate directed by African agents with bases in strategic urban and commercial cities such as Sekondi to easily facilitate their trade. Interestingly too, the targeting of Royal Air Force pilots as potential buyers is striking and depicts the careful selection of customers to ensure the export of gold (purportedly stolen from the mines) out of the Colony with little or no trace. To return to Sarbah's claim in 1907 that mine gold thieving was mainly done by Europeans employees of the mines for outward transport,<sup>67</sup> it may be suggested that this smoking gun (even if it was purely guesswork) appears to have informed the identification of trade hotspots and potential clients despite the change in the dynamics of illicit gold trade by 1943, with respect to its facilitators. It is therefore crucial to examine Sarbah's thinking further as a lens to understand concretely the shifting roles of actors involved in gold stealing since the early decades of the twentieth-century Gold Coast.

Assuming one agrees with Sarbah that goldsmiths were not engaged in the mines by 1907, and there was no evidence to suggest that they abetted the stealing of gold, that claim could no longer hold completely true by the mid-1940s. Gold pilfering was no longer predominantly a European enterprise, if it was so before. Not only had Africans evidently become enabling actors who continued the chain of transit to sell pilfered gold outside the mines, as seen in Sekondi in 1943, for instance. Moreover, it can be argued that the chain of illicit mine gold trade with actors such as the Sekondi culprits could have as well been facilitated by interlocutors including goldsmiths, miners, and their relatives like Yaw Sarfu. It is worth noting that the attraction of engaging in the ongoing cartel of illicit gold trade appeared to have gained some social endorsement since persons convicted of stealing gold and/or gold mining products, to the surprise of some colonial officers, were not always stigmatized. C. Dickson's return from gaol is a case in point; upon release, he was met with public celebrations at Konongo amidst brass band music, a party, and thanksgiving service at a local Catholic church.<sup>68</sup>

Evidently, the shortage of gold in circulation was becoming alarming from late 1943 into 1944. Again, the centrality of gold products from mines, particularly its protection from theft had arisen in the highest levels of provincial and state correspondences.<sup>69</sup> Around November 1944, Hawkenworth revealed in a letter to the Colonial Secretary that he had recently learned from Kumase’s Commissioner of Police “that the theft of Gold from mining Companies appears to be on the increase.”<sup>70</sup> In their conversation it was also said that keen attention was being paid to licensed goldsmiths and the existing legal position of the G.M.P.P. Ordinance in relation to approved ways goldsmiths were allowed to purchase gold from banks. While lamenting some unclear portions of the law, Hawkenworth importantly noted the fact that goldsmiths were still in business despite the gold shortage. This point thus set up a premise to suggest that the goldsmiths worked with/on only stolen gold or crushed gold ornaments of artistic worth.<sup>71</sup>

The shortage had become so severe that on 27 November 1944, the Council considered some prevailing suggestions to import gold bars from England.<sup>72</sup> The possibility of getting gold bars locally “was [found to be] impracticable, coupled with the difficulties which would be entailed in valuation, accounting and taxation routine.”<sup>73</sup> By December 1945 at least, the sale of gold by the banks to goldsmiths—registered or not—was prohibited by the colonial administration and left next to no “legal” means of acquiring mine gold. In the Obuase district alone, 97 goldsmiths were recorded to be working irrespective of the gold shortage and this firmed-up colonial suspicion of a deep-rooted illicit market for gold.<sup>74</sup> Against this background, it was suggested by the District Commissioner of Obuase to the Chief Commissioner of Asante that the issuing of licenses to goldsmiths be suspended in the following year (that is, 1946) until gold became available and thus accessible legally from the banks. The District Commissioner concluded: “Then it may be possible to institute check on the goldsmiths by making them produce a certificate of purchase from the bank together with a periodical list of work done.”<sup>75</sup> The frustration of the colonial establishment had thickened so much that it was almost clueless about how to proceed on its unproven suspicions of an existing black market for gold.

Meanwhile in the Council, Nana Kwame Gyebi Ababio (First Ashanti Member) on 7 May 1948 informed members about a discussion he had with Colonial Secretary Robert Scott a year before, where he commented on restrictions placed on the purchase of gold by goldsmiths. Addressing the Council, Scott is reported to have responded to the matter raised by Nana Ababio previously in March 1947: “Honourable Members desire to ascertain whether arrangements could not be made with the United Kingdom Control under which a proportion of locally produced gold could be retained by the

Gold Coast for use in the country.” He continued by indicating that this was not done since WWII-era difficulties. A further call was made to salvage distress in the gold industry as things had worsened. By 1948, the colonial administration was overwhelmed by illicit trade in gold from mines and was also compelled to make legislative concessions like making the Labour Ordinance more inclusive for African employees including miners.<sup>76</sup> Yet, whether such interventions by the colonial authority proved enough to maintain its legitimacy in the eyes of the ordinary Gold Coast subject is a valid question. When the 1940s closed, the colonial grip on the Gold Coast was cracking up as anxiety generally surged.<sup>77</sup> The vitality of the mining industry—as the foremost spine of the colonial economy—was no longer promised as several companies folded. An episode of how goldsmiths particularly, as individuals and as groups, experienced, negotiated, and rationalized these changing circumstances will be examined forthwith.

### Sample Petitions

On 4 March 1947, one Amishadai Kwesi Obeng directly petitioned the Governor. By so doing, he bypassed colonial formality which prescribed that he send his appeal via a District Commissioner, and then the Chief Commissioner of Asante since he lived within their jurisdiction.<sup>78</sup> Central to Kwesi Obeng’s petition was the following issue: Obeng, a licenced goldsmith, at Kibi (Akim), risked losing his license. This situation was due to a report by a client who contracted Obeng about six years before to repair gold trinkets valued at about 10/- in cash. Obeng became sick and could not undertake the job, but failed to return the trinkets. Further treatment of his illness took him to Akin Wenchi, where he attempted to renew and transfer his license—but was informed of its confiscation owing to complaints made against him by the said client. Obeng however confessed that “as your petitioner had no intention to misappropriate, returned the said trinkets to the complaints before police, and further explained the above circumstances to them as that was the cause of his inability to do work for them before the time.”<sup>79</sup>

Cases such as Kwesi Obeng’s presented the colonial authority with an opportunity to firm up its grip on goldsmiths and demonstrated the eagerness to apply state power to curb suspicions of illicit dealings in gold. As a thumbnail, license confiscation as meditated in early 1945 had begun to see some enforcement even if it was not a formal colonial law as it provided the most feasible handle to check clandestine gold trade among Gold Coast indigenes. Colonial surveillance coupled with serious difficulties that goldsmiths sometimes found themselves in immediately following WWII only increased their woes. The closing words of Obeng’s petition, “That your petitioner

[is] now praying for the return of his Licence to enable him to maintain his dependants,” were most indicative of his desperation and vulnerability to the exercise of colonial powers despite his clearly non-maligned intent for dealing in gold and searching for a new economic avenue elsewhere. It is unclear if Obeng eventually received his license again.<sup>80</sup>

It appears that responding to petitions from goldsmiths had become quite a frequent part of colonial correspondence and documentation such that a legal basis had been established to send these appeals directly to the Governor for his intervention. As shown in another case involving one Kofi Wusu (of Nsuta), his address of a petition to Kumase’s Chief Commissioner was noted to be misdirected since “Section 4(7) of Cap[tion] 126” of the Gold Coast Ordinance (Vol. 2)<sup>81</sup> had provided for petitions seeking “restoration and renewal of . . . Goldsmith’s Licence” to be directed at the Governor in case the police refused a renewal application for instance.<sup>82</sup> Having withdrawn an earlier petition and replaced it with another, Kofi Wusu’s second petition, dated 19 August 1947, hinged on at least one charge: practicing as a goldsmith without license during an intermittent period between the expiration of his license on 31 December 1945 and February 1946—affecting also Kojo Anowuo and Kwami Gyasi, his apprentices—for which he had been previously convicted and mulcted £15 by a court.<sup>83</sup> Despite grievances expressed by the defendant’s counsel against the ruling, there was no appeal filed. Thus, Kofi Wusu and his apprentices were left without legal permit to practice their trade—a sure warrant for his petition.

In early September 1947, Kofi Wusu appeared to have found compassion with the Acting District Commissioner of Mampong who kindly suggested to the Chief Commissioner of Asante—in spite of knowing about Wusu’s previous conviction—“that Kofi Wusu be given a very severe warning that any future breaches of the Cap[tion] 126 [of the Gold Coast Ordinance (Vol. 2)] will lead to the permanent confiscation of his licence.”<sup>84</sup> He further said “I recommend that the petition be allowed and the petitioner’s license be renewed on condition that he remains at Nsuta, where he will possibly be less likely to fall by the wayside again. Adequate supervision can be maintained under those circumstances.”<sup>85</sup> As the above quote illustrates, even in cases where petitioners may have attracted a favorable countenance of some colonial administrators, with respect to restoring confiscated goldsmith licenses, they were not entirely free from conditions that in Kofi Wusu’s case, for instance, restricted where he could freely go to ply his trade. Consequently, Wusu’s restriction to a defined geographical location enhanced police “supervision” and *de facto* surveillance. More than creating an anxious relationship between Wusu and the colonial administration, it intensified tensions between him and his apprentices who sometimes flouted Kofi’s

order not to open and operate his goldsmithing shop in his absence. On the other hand, Wusu also in 1946 once misled his apprentices to work under the assumption that his license had been successfully renewed.<sup>86</sup> Indeed, Wusu's statement during the 1946 trial provides a window into his relations with one of his apprentices: "I am very strict with my apprentices, as I did not like the way of my apprentice, I refused to pay the fine for him even though if I had wanted I would have paid it."<sup>87</sup>

Another interesting point about the episode from Kofi Wusu's case is the reading by many goldsmiths relating to what distinction there may have been between what it entailed to be recognized as a goldsmith as an inherited professional skill in the customary sense, and what it meant under colonial law—that is, by acquiring a permit/license. Wusu told the court, "I have been a Goldsmith for over 27 years. I have never done anything wrong in connection with my business." By these words, he maintained the impression that he had held a license for over two decades, though in fact he only first received one in 1945 as established to the court by Sub-Inspector of Police, Samuel J. Okoampah.<sup>88</sup> Indeed, Kofi Wusu was not the lone proponent of this notion that blurred customary understandings of what it meant to be a goldsmith with what the colonial administration and its subsidiaries like courts admitted as constituting the same term. In part, the next cases—turning now to union-based expression of goldsmiths' interest via petitions—give further clarity to this point.

The wave of petitions that found their way into various colonial offices in 1947 particularly began to take a new course, but one that was no less powerful. On 28 April 1948, a plea—unlike what the Chief Commissioner of Asante had previously seen—landed on his desk. It was signed by Joseph Elimah and Kwami Dappah "For and on behalf of 27 Goldsmiths" in Obuase. Like the content itself, the officials copied perhaps made a deep impression on the Chief Commissioner that those 29 men seeking audience were to be taken seriously when he read the petition the following day.<sup>89</sup> This petition generally registered a protest by the Obuasi Goldsmiths Association, and specifically indicated their attempt to "correct" and even question colonial authority. The petition was rooted in unfolding events that had eventually brought goldsmiths on the Ashanti Goldfields concession at Obuase into the colonial radar exactly a year before.

In correspondences dated April 1947—between Kumase's Superintendent of Police and Chief Commissioner in Asante, and the Acting Commissioner of Police in Accra—a colonial intent to liaise with Goldfields' management to control, very strictly, the number of goldsmiths working on the company's property is apparent.<sup>90</sup> These official musings had been inspired by similar conversations between Goldfields' Manager, Mr. Gale, and the

Superintendent of Police in Asante, to reduce the number of goldsmiths working on the company's grounds to 16. Gale noted “that it was only out of courtesy that Goldsmiths were permitted to operate in Obuasi which is entirely owned by the Corporation.” Next, the most contested question, being secondary licenses (or “certificates of approval”) issued by Goldfields, was visited. These documents solidified Goldfields' legal capacity to select goldsmiths formally admitted into its premises. In the end: “It was suggested that, in order to ensure that only holders of the Corporation's certificate were issued with Goldsmiths licences no Goldsmith licence will be issued in respect of the Obuasi area unless the applicant was in possession of the Corporation certificate endorsed by the Assistant Superintendent of Police at Obuasi.”<sup>91</sup> By this declaration, not only was a fertile ground laid for collaboration, but also it signaled the quaint way that colonial authority would begin to be exercised in the interest of the state, and when necessary, also deflected onto facilitating entities like Goldfields to guard its own interests.

As though to appease colonial conscience, the “usual precaution” said Superintendent Danton, “would of course be taken in regard to the addresses of any Goldsmiths licenced.”<sup>92</sup> Having said so, Danton supported an existing suggestion that repositioned the secondary role of Goldfields' permits to take precedence (in this case) over the primary goldsmiths license in a way. That the so-called “certificates of approval” were assuming serious dominance over the Gold Coast goldsmith licenses issued by the police is evident. On the other hand, Goldfields was increasingly exerting influence in the theatre of colonial politics regarding goldsmith agitations.<sup>93</sup> Apparently, “although the Government Police are the competent authorities to issue Goldsmith's licences the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation have the trading right to vet those issued by the Government Police and ... unless they [i.e., Goldfields] sanction the licences the Police will not issue.”<sup>94</sup> Again, a (chrono)logical wrinkle and powerplay is self-evident. While such considerations to finetune political action about the number of goldsmiths to be allowed at Goldfields' premises were ongoing, a total of 35 goldsmiths were at work on the Corporation's site and 41 other licensed goldsmiths plied their trade off-site, but within the Obuase and Adanse district.<sup>95</sup>

Less surprising, it may appear, against the events of the previous year, the opening paragraph of the 1948 petition quickly drew Goldfields into the picture by noting that out of the 27 licensed goldsmiths in Obuase, six were denied license renewal after 1947 despite the fact that they had been “resident[s] of Obuasi since their birth and have no other profession than a Goldsmith work.”<sup>96</sup> Further, the implications of prioritizing “certificates of approval” over the primary license was that it complicated procedures for goldsmiths and left them subject to the caprices of ongoing schemes of power

politics in the colonial gold mining industry. For instance, if a goldsmith at Obuase needed approval from Goldfields before successfully acquiring a primary license, as lobbied by Superintendent Danton, the enforcement of goldsmiths licensing regulations—and its accompanying authority—in this area invariably came heavily under the company’s sway. With this in mind, one can thus imagine how easily Goldfields was thrust into a vital position of power to advance its own interests within formalized colonial institutional practices.

Danton’s lobby appeared to have received endorsement from his superior in Accra since Mr. Gale’s prowess to effect serious decisions is subsequently evident in the Obuasi Goldsmiths Association’s petition. Indeed, for both the colonial state and Goldfields, instrumentalising goldsmith licenses was a crucial way to deal with shared challenges such as the stealing of mine gold and the monitoring of gold purchase, circulation, and use by goldsmiths in particular. Against these odds, the goldsmiths continued to voice their grievances in the ongoing affair. Their collective energy is best represented by quoting their own words at length. The excerpt below is illustrative:

That on the 19th instant at the instance of the Mines Manager, all the goldsmiths at Obuasi were invited by the Superintendent of Police, Obuasi to informed them that from now on all should buy their gold through the government by Permit from the Police. Quantity of gold purchased should be recorded and examined by the Police.

That before the purchase of any trinket made in gold from anybody other than the Government, should also be reported to the Police, who will test the weight and see that the Ordinance is complied with, any infringement will lead to the forfeiture of one’s licence.

It must be remarked that the entire Goldsmith Association in the Gold Coast have objected the above clause in the Ordinance and appealed to His Excellency the Governor in Council a reply of which have not yet been received. We fail to see why the Goldsmiths in Obuasi alone be forced to accept this clause.

We were further told that if we fail to accept such a decision we would not be allowed by the Mines Manager to carry on our trade in Obuasi.

That we are citizens of Adansi since 40 to 50 years now. We have our buildings and other properties on the land. Why should we be deprived from our birth rights[?]

Attempts were made by the Police to close our workshops and we protested. We therefore humbly appeal to you in order to take steps to avoid disturbances in Obuasi between the Goldsmiths, the Mines Manager and the Police.<sup>97</sup>

The claims made in this petition (and others)<sup>98</sup> did not go unnoticed by the Governor, its ultimate target audience. Consequently, from July, correspondences flowing to and from key actors began to investigate the content of the petition.<sup>99</sup>

The dominant issues of these correspondences were, first, goldsmiths’ resistance against attempts to remove them from their work stations by Goldfields in particular; second, the permit system of gold buying and mandatory recording of such transactions; and third, protecting their interest as goldsmiths in the face of unfriendly positions in colonial law and institutional practices. Regarding the reduction of goldsmiths at Goldfields and the consequent removal of many, the practice was predicated upon an arrangement starting from 1941 thereabouts. Per this arrangement, Goldfields continuously made efforts to remove goldsmiths without “certificates of approval” (or “company permits”). The need to manage the number of goldsmiths on the company’s premises grew with alarm as security concerns became quite difficult to handle. Responding to the Acting District Commissioner at Bekwai about one petition’s allegations against Goldfields, Mr. Gale said: “The number of Goldsmiths in the village increases the difficulty of supervision, especially as they strongly object to the provisions of the Gold Coast Ordinance by which the source of the gold must be recorded.”<sup>100</sup> To concretize such fears, the case of the conviction of one Kofi Agyari at Bekwai (then a Goldfields worker) for possessing mine gold officially valued at £69.8.0 was stated. These difficulties were further complicated by the presence of a large number of goldsmith apprentices in addition to their masters. Purging the figure of goldsmiths by Goldfields to 21—as “a long standing arrangement . . . [to] check against Gold stealing”—was thus not entirely unfounded.<sup>101</sup>

M. D. Mackenzie, Goldfields’ Security Officer, clarifies the procedure for issuing “company permits.” Noting that it was based on a first-apply-first-considered basis, he added that a successful application was the case only “providing nothing [compromising] is known against the man’s character. If the applicant proves satisfactory we issue a Permit which the applicant has to sign.” On the said permit appeared extracts from the Gold Coast Ordinance, including binding conditions that demanded goldsmiths to “. . . purchase gold from a Bank,” “. . . purchase gold jewellery from Bona Fide sources,” and “. . . to keep record of all sales and purchases.”<sup>102</sup> To these Mackenzie added, “I would like to point out that the above extract from the Gold Coast Ordinance is law and not a local rule instituted by the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation.”<sup>103</sup>

These insights erase any doubt, at least those legally premised, that Goldfields may have maliciously infringed on binding contracts with the petitioning goldsmiths. Yet, the legalities of the questions at hand were of

little substance to the goldsmiths in the face of their crumbling livelihood. For them, they only saw attempts to frustrate what interested them at least, and moreover, rob them of their “birth right” by the impending eviction which Goldfields appeared to be bent on fulfilling. Here too, the assumption that goldsmithing was for most of the petitioners a lifelong practice (resonating with Kofi Wusu’s case above) needs reemphasis as it remained pivotal to appeals usually made by Obuase goldsmiths. “Some of these Goldsmiths without permits” Mackenzie asserted, “state that they have been living in Obuasi for a considerable number of years. This may be true, but they have not been operating as goldsmiths for a considerable number of years” as far as Goldfields could tell.<sup>104</sup> Ultimately, the negotiations to which the petition(s) chiefly invited Goldfields seemed a lost course for its authors.

The foregoing developments must inform critical readings of the eventual response from the Governor’s office, arriving in 1949 after investigations about the petition(s) from the Obuase Goldsmiths Association. The response letter, addressed to the Chief Commissioner of Asante was instructive: “I am directed by the Governor to inform you that the petition has been carefully considered by His Excellency who [unfortunately] regrets that he is not prepared to interfere in the matter of the discretion exercised by the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation in conjunction with the Police Authorities in the issue of Goldsmiths licences in Obuasi. . . .”<sup>105</sup> The Chief Commissioner of Asante carried on the message to the petitioners through the Acting District Commissioner of Bekwai.<sup>106</sup> It can be stated that the consternation that engulfed Obuase in the late 1940s respecting goldsmiths’ anxieties is reflective of a “test tube” to regulate and effectively surveil the activities of goldsmiths. What was achieved, depending on its reading as successful or not, was an experience that was sure to inform colonial administrative responses to similar situations elsewhere, given that similar grievances were shared by members of an existing national body of goldsmiths (and silver-smiths) who were seriously aggrieved by certain provisions of the G.M.P.P. Ordinance of 1947.<sup>107</sup> The Governor’s verdict did not quite close the matter as similar issues on secondary licensing resurfaced in the first few years of the following decade.<sup>108</sup>

For almost five decades, the colonial establishment led itself on to believe that setting its gaze on goldsmiths was pivotal to eliminating/managing the menace of gold pilfering from the mines. This assumption, commonly without concrete proof, hardened colonial imaginations into a paranoia, and was shared with Ashanti Goldfields Corporation—both of whom thought that the continuous access to gold by goldsmiths (despite shortages in the 1940s especially), coupled with increasing gold theft were enough basis to guess that goldsmiths were central to a fledging illicit trade in stolen mine gold. Colonial administrators thus placed the smiths under surveillance through

tightened laws and regulations, rigorously enforcing what to them was a rational panacea. Yet, the problem remained. As the paucity of successful prosecutions against persons caught in possession of stolen mine gold show, none was even a goldsmith.

## Conclusion

The major episodes sketched above—i.e., the making and constant refinement of law to guide the gold mining industry—can be seen as serious investments of capital into the colonial economy both by the formal administration and gold mining companies like Goldfields in a course they may initially appear to have won. Yet, it is maintained that such efforts only succeeded, ironically, in attaining the reverse of what was legally intended if we remind ourselves of the founding principle of the G.M.P.P. Ordinance—being, to protect gold won by the mines from thieving. On the other hand, African actors (i.e., goldsmiths and members of the Council) themselves failed to exert any consistently effective assault on breaking down the unmistakable extractive logic that underpinned the colonial enterprise, as the establishment of a European-dominated gold mining industry demonstrates.

Nevertheless, the 41-year period examined here represent glimpses in and out of legal grounds where Africans sought to navigate conditions they could not fully control—be it in the Council or colonial courts. The effort of the Africans to negotiate these realities was however not meaningless since it partly succeeded in confusing official colonial calculations as to how best to deal with gold losses from the mines by putting its full gaze on goldsmiths through instrumentalising goldsmiths’ licensing for surveillance reasons above all. In the end, gold stealing remained despite anti-theft mechanisms put in place at the mines, and elsewhere. Instances of huge amounts of gold that eloped into clandestine trading networks through some African mine employees, furthered by criminal syndicates, only revealed the cluelessness in which the colonial entity and its subsidiaries were caged.

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## Notes

1. See T. M. McCaskie, "Komfo Anokye of Asante: Meaning, History and Philosophy in an African Society," *The Journal of African History*, 27, No. 2, Special Issue in Honour of J. D. Fage (1986), 318.

2. See among others, ARG 1/1/199 "Letter from Asantehene O. A. Prempeh II, Kumasi, to Chief Commissioner, Kumasi," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 26 May 1943; "Letter from Acting Chief Commissioner, Kumasi, to General Manager, Konongo Gold Mines, Konongo," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 21 June 1943; "Letter from Asantehene O. A. Prempeh II, Kumasi, to Chief Commissioner, Kumasi," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. July 9, 1943. See also ARG 1/1/180, "Letter from District Commissioner, Kumasi, to Chief Commissioner H. C. Stevenson, Kumasi," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 2 May 1939. The latter reports a common Asante culture of reshaping or remolding extant gold ornaments when thought to be out of fashion. It also indicated a similar case where ornaments attached to the Golden Stool that had gone missing after the death of Agyemang Prempeh I were replaced after Prempeh II took office and thus had little historical value as antique as such.

3. Raymond E. Dumett, *El Dorado in West Africa: The Gold-Mining Frontier, African Labor, and Colonial Capitalism in the Gold Coast, 1875–1900* (Ohio/Oxford: Ohio Uni. Press/James Currey, 1998), 16–17; 122; 272–277.

4. For notable examples, see Raymond E. Dumett, *El Dorado in West Africa*; Cassandra Mark-Thiesen, *Mediators, Contract Men, and Colonial Capital: Mechanized Gold Mining in the Gold Coast Colony, 1879–1909* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2018).

5. Ayowa A. Taylor, "An Economic History of the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation, 1895–2004: Land., Labour, and Capital and Enterprise" (PhD diss., London School of Economics and Political Science, University of London, 2006), 40–41; Jeff Crisp, *The Story of an African Working Class: Ghanaian Miners' Struggle, 1870–1980* (London: Zed Books Ltd., 1984).

6. Taylor, "An Economic History," 99–102.

7. For extensive details about these historical actors, refer to Michel R. Doortmont, *The Pen-Pictures of Modern Africans and African Celebrities by Charles Francis Hutchison: A Collective Biography of Elite Society in the Gold Coast Colony* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2005).

8. Dumett, *El Dorado*, chapters 3–6.

9. EC 1/11, Gold Coast Chamber of Mines, *Gold from the Gold Coast* (London: P. C. Millard and Sons, December, 1950), P.R.A.A.D.–Accra.

10. This note should be differentiated from the making of a modern gold mining industry in Ghana/the Gold Coast: an enterprise that economic historian, Raymond E. Dumett, rightly contends was established by more than a single person. See Dumett, *El Dorado*, 91. The connection between one M. J. Bonnat mentioned by Dumett and Pierre Bonnat referred to in this work is not completely clear.

11. EC 1/11, Gold Coast Chamber of Mines, *Gold from the Gold Coast* (London: P. C. Millard and Sons, December, 1950), P.R.A.A.D.–Accra.

12. *Ibid.*

13. Ibid.

14. It is unclear what relationship may exist between this point and what historian Cassandra Mark-Thiesen has described as “gold rushes during the colonial period in Africa” occurring first from 1879 to 1885. See Mark-Thiesen, *Mediators*, 8; see also chapter 1. See also Dumett, *El Dorado*, 8–9.

15. Dumett, *El Dorado*, 281–283.

16. Ibid., 280.

17. David E. Apter, *The Gold Coast in Transition* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1955), 136.

18. Ibid., 137.

19. The bill’s original title subsequently evolved and by 1909 had become the “Gold Mining Products Protection Ordinance.” For convenience sake, an abbreviation of the later name (G.M.P.P.) will be adopted throughout this work. See ADM 14/1/9, “Legislative Council Debates Minutes, 1906–1911,” P.R.A.A.D.–Accra, 297–298. 14 March 1907; ADM 14/2/27, “Legislative Council Debates, 1938,” Issue No. 1, P.R.A.A.D.–Accra, 47–49. 17 March 1938.

20. Doortmont, *The Pen-Pictures*, 387–388. On Sarbah, see S. Tenkorang, “John Sarbah, 1864–1910,” *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, 14, No. 1 (1973): 65–78.

21. ADM 14/1/9, “Legislative Council Debates Minutes, 1906–1911,” P.R.A.A.D.–Accra, 316. 29 April 1907. Evidence from a report on the 1905–annual meeting of Ashanti Goldfields Corporation Limited shareholders indicates that lawmakers intended registering goldsmiths in connection with gold losses, but not necessarily to pass such a law. *The Economist*, “Ashanti Goldfields Corporation, Limited,” 16 December 1905, 2036.

22. Ibid., 316–317.

23. Ibid., 317.

24. Ibid., 344–345. 2 September 1907.

25. Ibid., 407–408. 15 February 1909. In the absence of concrete evidence to clarify this gap, it may be guessed that urgent contemporary subject matters such as the Cerebrospinal Meningitis in the Northern Territories (from c.1906) and Bubonic Plague (c.1907–c.1909) seemed to have preoccupied the attention of the Council and which may perhaps partially explain the delay. See S. Gundona, “A Study of health conditions and disease control in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, 1897–1957” (M.Phil. dissertation, University of Ghana, 1999), 10–12; Hermann W. von Hesse, “*Wɔmɔnyɔ Adabraka Wɔyamɔ Gbɛ*” (“We’re Going to Adabraka to Secure Space”): Ga Architectural and Urban Authenticity and Colonial Urban Planning in Accra, c. 1877–1908,” in *Replenishing History: New Directions to Historical Research in the 21st Century in Ghana*, edited by N. Y. B. Spong and J. Otto Pohl (Banbury: Ayebia Clarke, 2014), 120–24.

26. Doortmont, *The Pen-Pictures*, 261–65.

27. ADM 14/1/9, “Legislative Council Debates Minutes, 1906–1911,” P.R.A.A.D.–Accra, 407–8. 15 February 1909.

28. Ibid., 1–3.

29. See ARG 1/1/37, "Asking a List of the names of the jewellers and Goldsmith working in Ashanti," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. The legally recognized definition of a "goldsmith" per the bill of 1907 loosely meant "A worker in gold." See ADM 14/1/9, "Legislative Council Debates Minutes, 1906–1911," P.R.A.A.D.–Accra, 319. 29 April 1907.

30. See *Ibid.*, 2–3. 15 February 1909. See also, Dumett, *El Dorado*, 322–323 (n. 106).

31. See ARG 1/1/37, "Asking a List of the names of the jewellers and Goldsmith working in Ashanti," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 1909–1912.

32. See *Ibid.*, "Letter from the Ag. Secretary for Mines, Tarkwa, to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 1 March 1909.

33. See *Ibid.*, "Asking a List of the names of the jewellers and Goldsmith working in Ashanti," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 1909–1912. See also, ARG 1/1/199, "Gold Industry," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 1942–1950; "Letter from Bello Lagos, Nigeria to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 8 August 1947; ARG 1/1/150. "Yoruba Community-Kumasi," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 1932–1933.

34. ARG 1/1/37, Letter from the Chief Commissioner of Asante to others, P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 5 February 1912.

35. ADM 14/1/9, "Legislative Council Debates Minutes, 1906–1911," P.R.A.A.D.–Accra, 320. 29 April 1907.

36. *Ibid.*, 320–321.

37. *Ibid.*, 407–408. 15 February 1909.

38. See Apter, *The Gold Coast in Transition* 137–138. In an amendment of 1940, the issue of goldsmith losing their license or being convicted reappears. See ADM 14/2/35, "Legislative Council Debates, 1940," P.R.A.A.D.–Accra, 47–78. 2 October 1940.

39. Mark-Thiesen, *Mediators*, 123; D. E. K. Amenumey, *Ghana: A Concise History from Pre-Colonial Times to the 20th Century* (Accra: Woeli Publishing Services, 2011), 151–159.

40. ADM 14/1/9, "Legislative Council Debates Minutes, 1906–1911," P.R.A.A.D.–Accra, 316. 29 April 1907.

41. Dumett, *El Dorado*, 322 (n. 106).

42. More than being a member of the A.R.P.S. and thus sensitive to the African viewpoint in the Council, Brown's father, Emmanuel Peter Brown of Cape Coast, was a goldsmith. See Doortmont, *The Pen-Pictures*, 142–44; Amenumey, *Ghana*, 151–161. Further, Brown had a considerable experience in the mining industry as a Director of Ashanti Concessions Limited (1891) and co-developer of the Obuasi Concession (later Ashanti Goldfields Corporation) in Asante. Dumett, *El Dorado*, 280–283.

43. ADM 14/1/9, "Legislative Council Debates Minutes, 1906–1911," P.R.A.A.D.–Accra, 344–345. 2 September 1907.

44. Indeed, it was not until 1914, for instance, that the Goldsmiths Association League (G.A.L.) was established at Kumase. Unlike the N.G.A. that appeared quite sensitive to the broader politics of the Gold Coast Colony, the G.A.L. was particularly founded with an intent to pursue goldsmiths known to conduct themselves unprofessionally and met out deserving punishments. For this reason, the G.A.L. sought

patronage from the colonial establishment. See ARG 1/10/1, “Letter from Kwamin Dwinfu and 18 others, Kumase, to Chief Commissioner, Kumasi,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 23 June 1914.

45. For further details on previous interventions by the A.R.P.S., see Amenumey, *Ghana*, 151–61.

46. ADM 14/1/11, “Legislative Council Debates Minutes, 1915–1926,” P.R.A.A.D.–Accra, 8–9+12–13. 22–23 February 1926.

47. See ADM 14/2/27, “Legislative Council Debates, 1938,” Issue No. 1, P.R.A.A.D.–Accra, 47–49. 15 March 1938.

48. *Ibid.*

49. ADM 14/2/27, “Legislative Council Debates, 1938,” Issue No. 1, P.R.A.A.D.–Accra, 48–50. 17 March 1938.

50. *Ibid.*

51. *Ibid.*, 53–55.

52. ADM 14/2/3, “Legislative Council Debates, 1916–1917,” P.R.A.A.D.–Accra, 8–14. 25 September 1916. On procedure for converting bills into law, see ADM 14/2/7, “Legislative Council Debates, 1938,” Issue No. 1, P.R.A.A.D.–Accra, 82. 22 January 1921.

53. Richard Rathbone, “Kwame Nkrumah and the Chiefs: The Fate Of ‘Natural Rulers’ Under Nationalist Governments,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Vol. 10 (2000), 46–51.

54. ARG 1/5/1/26, “Letter from Colonial Secretary, Accra to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 24 December 1942; “Letter from General Manager (Konongo Mines), to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 12 June 1942; “Letter from Chief Commissioner, Ashanti, to Colonial Secretary, Accra,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 18 June 1942; “Letter from Colonial Secretary, Accra, to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 15 February 1943.

55. Crisp, *The Story*, 56–89; Taylor, “An Economic History,” 90–102.

56. *Ibid.*, “Letter from Ag. Colonial Secretary, Accra, to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 20 May 1942.

57. *Ibid.*, “Letter from Superintendent of Police, Ashanti, to Acting Commissioner of Police, Accra” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 1 September 1943.

58. *Ibid.*, “Letter from Superintendent of Police, Ashanti, to Acting Commissioner of Police, Accra” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 27 October 1943.

59. *Ibid.*, “Letter from Superintendent of Police, Ashanti, to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 16 September 1943.

60. *Ibid.*, “Letter from Superintendent of Police, Ashanti, to Acting Commissioner of Police, Accra,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 27 October 1943.

61. ARG 1/5/1/26, “Letter from Chief Commissioner, Ashanti, to Colonial Secretary, Accra,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 14 March 1942.

62. *Ibid.* See also, *ibid.*, “Letter from Chief Commissioner, Ashanti, to Colonial Secretary, Accra,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 25 May 1942.

63. *Ibid.*, “Letter from Colonial Secretary, Accra, to Chief Commissioner, Tamale,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 22 December 1942.

64. Of the total number, 1,493; 2,355; 952; 1,315; 1,067; 698; 60; and 259 were listed to come from the Western Province, Central Province, Eastern Province, Ashanti, Nigeria, Liberia, Ivory Coast, and as Miscellaneous respectively. See *Ibid.*

65. Between 1940–1944, lawyer R. S. Blay was the member in Council for Sekondi. G. E. Metcalf, *Great Britain and Ghana: Documents of Ghana History 1807–1957* (England: Gregg revivals, 1994), 672–73. See also, Amenumey, *Ghana*, 204. Later, Blay became a founding member of the United Gold Coast Convention, one of several vice presidents at its establishment in 1947. See ADM 23/1/1277, “United Gold Coast Convention,” P.R.A.A.D.–Cape Coast. 1947–1948.

66. ARG 1/5/1/27, “Letter from Acting Commissioner of the Gold Coast Police, Accra, to Colonial Secretary, Accra,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 28 October 1943.

67. See ADM 14/1/9, “Legislative Council Debates Minutes, 1906–1911,” Part 2, P.R.A.A.D.–Accra.

68. Such amazement is seen in ARG 1/5/1/27, “Letter from Superintendent of Police, Ashanti, to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 17 December 1943. The foregoing source is silent as to why Dickson was jubilantly welcomed. However, he was depicted as a well-connected man and probably his return was celebrated given his social repute rather than marking a view that he may have been wrongfully incarcerated.

69. *Ibid.*

70. ARG 1/1/199, “Letter from Chief Commissioner, Ashanti, to Colonial Secretary, Accra,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 3 November 1944.

71. *Ibid.*

72. This situation was not entirely new as a similar one had arisen in early 1926, but then regarding the importation of sovereign into the Gold Coast in view of existing local shortages and the practical cease of gold won by indigenous methods. Here too, a suggestion was made by Council on 22 February 1926 to “sanction purchases by the Banks of gold from the Companies engaged in the local gold mining industry; the objective being to assist gold-smiths in their business, by empowering them to purchase (under the authority of a Police Permit) locally won gold from Banks for the purposes of their craft.” See, ADM 14/1/11, “Legislative Council Debates Minutes, 1915–1926,” P.R.A.A.D.–Accra. p.8–9. 22 February 1926. However, as conditions turned out in the 1940s, the implementation of importing gold bars for local goldsmiths was considered impractical.

73. ARG 1/1/199, “Letter from Acting Secretary of the Chamber of Mines, Tarkwa, to Colonial Secretary, Accra,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 6 December 1944.

74. *Ibid.*, “Letter from District Commissioner, Ashanti, to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 27 December 1945. For the full list, see list enclosed with the letter.

75. *Ibid.*

76. ADM 14/2/51, “Legislative Council Debates, 1948,” Issue No. 2, P.R.A.A.D.–Accra, 91–92. 21 July 1948. The introduction of new and/or review of existing legislations will follow in subsequent months: for example, “An Ordinance to amend the Trade Unions Ordinance, 1941” and “An Ordinance to provide for the imposition

of duty on gold won.” See ADM 14/2/52, “Legislative Council Debates, 1948,” Issue No. 3, P.R.A.A.D.–Accra, 15. 7 September 1948; *Ibid.*, 25–28. 8 September 1948.

77. Frederick Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: The labour question in French and British Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 248–260.

78. ARG 1/1/199, “Letter from Chief Commissioner, Ashanti, to Mr. A. K. Obeng, Bekwai,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 10 March 1947. For instances where petitions were sent administratively or indirectly to the governor, see *Ibid.*, “Letter from Acting District Commissioner, Mampong, to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 3 September 1947.

79. *Ibid.*, “Petition from Mr. A. K. Obeng, Bekwai, to Governor, Accra,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 4 March 1947.

80. *Ibid.*

81. See ADM 4/1/125, “Laws of the Gold Coast Colony,” Vol. 2, P.R.A.A.D.–Accra. 1928.

82. ARG 1/1/199, “Letter from Acting District Commissioner, Mampong, to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 3 September 1947.

83. *Ibid.*, “Petition from Kofi Wusu, Nsuta to District Commissioner, Mampong,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 19 August 1947. See *Ibid.*, for the ruling on a case, C.O. Police vs: Kofi Wusu and two others (Case No. 22/46). 5 April 1946.

84. *Ibid.*, “Letter from Acting District Commissioner, Mampong, to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 3 September 1947.

85. *Ibid.*

86. *Ibid.*, for ruling in the case of C.O. Police vs: Kofi Wusu and two others (Case No. 226/46). 5 April 1946.

87. *Ibid.*

88. *Ibid.*

89. *Ibid.*, “Petition from Joseph Elimah and Kwami Dappah (for and on behalf of 27 Goldsmiths), Obuasi to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 29 April 1948. Also copied were the District Commissioner of Bekwai-Obuasi and Labour Officer of Kumase.

90. *Ibid.*, “Letter from Superintendent of Police, Ashanti, to Acting Commissioner of Police, Accra,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 21 April 1947. This attempt to reduce the number of goldsmiths to 16 must be taken in view of an existing quota arrangement to admit a maximum of 21 goldsmiths by Goldfields. ARG 1/1/199, “Minute from Asst. District Commissioner, Obuasi, to Secretary to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 27 May 1948.

91. *Ibid.*, “Letter from Superintendent of Police, Ashanti, to Ag. Commissioner of Police, Accra,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 21 April 1947.

92. *Ibid.*

93. *Ibid.*, “Petition from Joseph Elimah and Kwami Dappah (for and on behalf of 27 Goldsmiths), Obuasi, to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 29, April 1948.

94. *Ibid.*, “Minute from Asst. District Commissioner, Obuasi, to Secretary to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti,” P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 4 June 1948.

95. *Ibid.* "Letter from Superintendent of Police, Ashanti, to Acting Commissioner of Police, Accra," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 21 April 1947.

96. *Ibid.*, "Petition from Joseph Elimah and Kwami Dappah (for and on behalf of 27 Goldsmiths), Obuasi, to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 29 April 1948.

97. *Ibid.*

98. For other instances where the colonial authorities were petitioned, see *Ibid.*, "Petition from Kofi Mensah (President of Obuasi Goldsmiths Association), Obuasi, to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 7 July 1948.

99. See *Ibid.*, "Letter from Superintendent of Police, Ashanti, to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 19 July 1948; "Letter from Acting District Commissioner, Bekwai, to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 2 July 1948; "Letter from Chief Commissioner, Ashanti, to Colonial Secretary, Accra," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 4 August 1948; "Letter from Acting District Commissioner, Bekwai, to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 13 August 1948; "Letter from Mr. Gale (Gen. Mines Manager, Goldfields), Obuasi, to Acting District Commissioner, Bekwai," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 6 August 1948; "Letter from Chief Commissioner, Ashanti, to Colonial Secretary, Accra," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 22 December 1948; "Letter from Colonial Secretary, Accra, to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 29 August 1949; Letter from Chief Commissioner, Ashanti, to Acting District Commissioner, Bekwai," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 3 September 1949.

100. *Ibid.*, "Letter from Mr. Gale (Gen. Mines Manager, Goldfields), Obuasi, to Acting District Commissioner, Bekwai," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 6 August 1948.

101. *Ibid.* see also, *ibid.*, "Minute from Asst. District Commissioner, Obuasi, to Secretary to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 4 June 1948.

102. *Ibid.*, "Letter from M. D. Mackenzie (Security Officer, Goldfields), Obuasi, to District Commissioner, Obuasi," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 24 June 1948.

103. *Ibid.*

104. *Ibid.*

105. *Ibid.*, "Letter from Colonial Secretary, Accra, to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 29 August 1949.

106. *Ibid.*, Letter from Chief Commissioner, Ashanti, to Acting District Commissioner, Bekwai," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 3 September 1949.

107. *Ibid.*, "A Resolution by the Gold Coast Gold and Silversmiths Trade Union," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 31 October 1947.

108. See *Ibid.*, "Letter from Giles Hunt, to Chief Regional Officer, Ashanti," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 15 September 1953; "Letter from Clerk of Council, Accra, to Assistant Government Agent, Obuasi," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 17 September 1953; "Letter from Chief Regional Officer, Ashanti, to Permanent Secretary, Accra," P.R.A.A.D.–Kumase. 6 October 1953.