

was an advocate of African Colonisation. He wished to see that part of our nation which was despised and kept in a state of bondage and degradation in Christian countries returned to the land of their ancestors carrying with them the light of Science and Religion and diffusing it through the vast benighted regions. By this means he hoped that our curse would be converted into a blessing and Africa speedily brought to enjoy all the advantages of Civilisation and Christianity.

"My friends Captain Cuffee was a judicious and good man. His thoughts ran deep and his motives were pure. Such was his reputation for wisdom and integrity that his neighbours consulted him in all their important concerns and oh ! what honour to the son of an African Slave the most respectable men in Great Britain and America were not ashamed to seek him for counsel and advice."

Nineteenth Century Chiefs' Medals

By SIR ROBERT HALL, K.C.M.G.

(1st President of the Sierra Leone Society)

AMONG the heirlooms of a number of the Paramount Chiefs of Sierra Leone, and also in the possession of commoners of chiefly descent, are to be found medals presented, at one time or another during the nineteenth century, as marks of loyalty or friendship. Other such medals were conferred for gallantry.

The first recorded presentation is by the Governor of the West Coast of Africa to a sergeant of the Royal African Corps, as a reward for gallantry, on 7th April, 1818.¹ There is no record whether the presentation was made for services in Sierra Leone or elsewhere along the coast. There may be a fair presumption that it did not relate to Sierra Leone, because the Governor of that time, Lieut.-Colonel (later Sir) Charles McCarthy, "Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief in and over the Colony of Sierra Leone and its dependencies"² (which dependencies amounted in practice to St. Mary's Island in the Gambia, authority over the Gold Coast forts not being transferred till 1821), was away visiting the Isles de Los and the Gambia during March and April, 1818, only returning to Freetown on 27th April.³

The medal thus conferred was struck originally in 1814 as a reward to North American Indian Chiefs who had given their help to the United Kingdom during its war with the United States between 1812 and 1814. Such medals had been presented at intervals since 1714 "as tokens of friendship, to mark the conclusion of treaties, in order to win their allegiance or as rewards for services against enemies".⁴ There are three sizes, respectively 3 in., 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ in., and 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. in diameter, with a bust of King George III, wearing a laurel wreath, on the obverse and the Royal Arms on the reverse. The date, 1814, appears on the reverse. The largest size was struck in the greatest numbers and is the only one known in Sierra Leone.

¹ Tancred, *Historical Record of Medals*. Spink and Sons, 1891.

² West African Treaties, Part II, Sierra Leone. H.M.S.O., African No. 411, circa 1891. Treaty No. 7.

³ MS. communication from C. H. Fyfe, who adds that he has found no reference to the presentation in McCarthy's despatches nor in the Sierra Leone *Royal Gazette*, which was then appearing regularly. I am much indebted to Mr. Fyfe for a number of references and suggestions.

⁴ Jamieson, *Medals awarded to North American Indian Chiefs, 1714-1922, and to Loyal African and Other Chiefs within the British Empire*. Spink and Sons, 1936.

It is a fine piece of workmanship, the designer being one of a family of die engravers, the Wyons, who did most of the work of Government and the Royal Mint during the first half of the nineteenth century.

It is known that there were other presentations previous to that of 1818, though the recipients are not recorded. McCarthy, in the course of a despatch in 1815, said that the presents sent out for chiefs in 1812 were exhausted and asked for a new supply, including "24 Silver Medals with the print of His Majesty with silver chains" and in 1818 he asked for another twenty-four medals.¹

The first Chief known to have received such a medal was Bai Simera, on 19th April, 1822, at the hands of Lieutenant (later Major) Laing of the 2nd West India Regiment. Lieutenant Laing had been commissioned by Sir Charles McCarthy to make his way through from Freetown to the Sulima (the present Yalunka) country in order to open up a route for merchandise from the interior, establishing friendly contacts with the chiefs as he went. Starting off up the Rokel River with a party of fifteen, of whom eleven were carriers and two soldiers, he chose a route along the south bank of the river, leaving three of the four major Timne chiefs of that day to the north. These, following his own spelling,² were Famare in the Scarcies area, Ali Karlie of Port Loko, and Ba Kobala of Macabele. Laing paid his respects to the last but does not record the passage of gifts. In dealing with Bai Simera, the intermediary was another chief, Pa Kombo, who accepted, after some hard bargaining, "a handsome gold and silver mounted pistol, four fathoms of blue baft, four bars of powder, four bars of tobacco, and four bottles of rum," while for Bai Simera there were "a jug of rum, a piece of white baft, six bars of powder, four bars of tobacco, also a large plated medal of King George the Third".³ The negotiations nearly broke down over the medal, because Pa Kombo demanded a silver chain with the medal. Laing, however, had fixed a scale of presents from which he was not going to swerve and in the end Bai Simera preferred to keep the medal as it was than to return it as Laing suggested.

¹ Despatches Nos. 40 of 27.10.1815 and 147 of 11.5.1818 in Public Record Office, C.O. 267/40 and 267/46 (communicated by C. H. Fyfe).

² Laing, A. G., *Travels in the Timannee, Kooranko, and Soolima Countries in Western Africa*. John Murray, 1825, p. 69 *et. seq.*

³ Laing, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

A week later Laing gave another medal to Ba Korro or Koroo—the name is spelt differently on different pages—of Mabung, which, from its position on Laing's map, is clearly Mabang, in Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom: and at the next stage, at Mayosso, the chief, Ba Yosso, although pleased with his present "wished to have a medal to wear round his neck, like Ba Simera and Ba Korro, in which I readily gratified him".¹ After this, no presentations are recorded until Laing reached his destination, Falaba. Here, after several days of courtesies between the chief and Laing, the chief received an impressive present, which included five firearms, a sabre, a cocked hat with a gold band, a laced coat, and a medal of King George IV and a silver chain.² Laing may not have been correct here in his description. It is true that King George IV had been on the throne for two years, but neither Tancred nor Jamieson record a medal as having been struck during his reign and, as will appear later, the King George III medal continued to be presented to other chiefs for several years to come. On the other hand, the authorities have no record of a later, Victorian, medal which is well-known in Sierra Leone, and they could conceivably have overlooked a George IV one because no example was to hand.

Laing returned through Koranko country and made friendly contact with one of the two principal chiefs, Ballansama. There is no mention of any other medal being presented, though one might like to guess at one for chief Ballansama, who gave Laing "a gold ear-ring to present to Governor M'Carthy, as a token expressive of his desire to be on terms of friendly intercourse with him and his people".³

None of the medals presented by Laing are, so far as at present known, extant. Several specimens, however, may still be seen of the next recorded group of issues by or on behalf of Governor Sir Neil Campbell, 1826–27. In September, 1826, following up the treaties and expedition of Governor Sir Charles Turner, Sir Neil Campbell sent an officer to the Sherbro and Gallinas country with swords and medals for James Cleveland, the Tuckers and King Siaka, whose names are recorded in a despatch.⁴ The distribution was not confined to those mentioned in the despatch, since between

¹ Laing, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

² Laing, *op. cit.*, p. 256.

³ Laing, *op. cit.*, p. 433.

⁴ Despatch No. 26 of 1826 in Public Record Office, C.O. 267/73 (communicated by C. H. Fyfe).

the Tucker country on the Kittam River and King Siaka's land, Gallinas, medals were also given to an ancestor of Paramount Chief Brima Zorokong of Yakemo-Kpukumu-Krim and to John Manna Kpaka, a forebear of John Harris, Section Chief of Suba in the Kpaka Chiefdom. The former of these is only vouched for by tradition, having been destroyed by fire a number of years ago, but the latter is still extant, being again one of George III, dated 1814.¹

The medal given to King Siaka also exists, as part of the regalia of Paramount Chief Madam Woki, a description of which has been recorded by Dr. M. C. F. Easmon. Dr. Easmon makes a slip in describing the medal as oval, but otherwise correctly records it as of George III, 1814²: in addition, he implies that Manna, Siaka's son, was also believed to have had such a medal. On the basis of local tradition, he supposes that the medals were connected with a treaty between King Siaka and the British Government, in which the trader "Sell" Rogers was an intermediary. There may well have been some understanding early in the nineteenth century, but local tradition has been misled by the date on the medal. No formal treaty which is on record was negotiated till 1882, from which year the stipends to chiefs in this area date, and this treaty does not refer to any earlier one. The evidence therefore confirms that of the Laing presentations, that there was no necessary link between the conclusion of treaties and the giving of medals.

The next recorded presentation is probably linked with the recognition of Fatimah Brimah as chief of Bacca Loko by Sir Neil Campbell. In December, 1825, sovereignty was transferred to the British Crown, in a period when the chieftaincy was vacant, and a year later Sir Neil Campbell went to Port Loko, confirmed the treaty and also confirmed the appointment of a new chief, Fatimah Brimah.³ The family tradition of the Paramount Chief is that the medal was presented by Governor Campbell in 1826 and this sounds as though it were correct. The medal, again George III, is in the possession of the chief, who keeps with it another unusual relic, a Queen Victoria 1½d. piece.⁴

Another similar medal is in the possession of Paramount Chief

¹ MS. communication from District Commissioner, Pujehun.

² M. C. F. Easmon, "The Massaquoi Crown," *Sierra Leone Studies*, 1st series, No. xxii, p. 84.

³ West African Treaties, op. cit. Treaty Nos. 13 and 16.

⁴ Personal communication.

Bai Samura of Sanda Loko, Bombali District, whose tradition is that it was presented to a predecessor, Samura Renjia, who ruled over the united Mabolé chiefdoms.¹ It is possible, but not likely, that the presentation is connected with a treaty, since none was made till 1837, between Governor H. D. Campbell and Ali Karlie Samura. There are reports, not yet substantiated, that medals of this type are in the possession, or were in the possession of forebears of the Paramount Chiefs of Tonko Limba (Kambia), Sanda Magbolonto, Marampa, and Kafu Bullom (Port Loko); so that if these prove to be true, there is fairly good coverage of the north-western part of Sierra Leone, especially having regard to the larger chiefdoms of that period.

Thereafter record and tradition alike are silent for forty years. A medal was struck in the time of William IV (1830-37) but the only record of issue in the Royal Mint is of three being sent as presents to Kings of the Gambia in September, 1832.² These, incidentally, were struck with the same reverse as the George III medal and therefore with a quite inaccurate date, 1814, though the year of accession, 1830, appears on the obverse. An example in the Coins and Medals Department of the British Museum has had the error corrected by the 1814 date being cut away and 1830 engraved in its place. After Queen Victoria's accession a medal was also struck, dated 1840, but again none are known in Sierra Leone at present, although 146 of various sizes were struck, some of which went to Indian Chiefs in Canada, as well as to African Chiefs.³

Around 1870 two types of medal were struck specially for Sierra Leone. Their workmanship is distinctly inferior to that of earlier ones. The Queen's head has a poorly defined outline and the reverse is engraved instead of being struck in relief. Each is just under 3 in. in diameter, one type having the words "Sierra Leone" engraved at the top of the reverse and the other "Sierra" at the top and "Leone" at the bottom. In spite of the special issue, none of these medals is known to exist in the country except one of the latter which was bought in England for the Monuments and Relics Commission in 1953.

There is, however, a record of a presentation at this time which very likely was of one of this type of medal. The famous African

¹ MS. communication from District Commissioner, Bombali.

² Tancred, op. cit.

³ Tancred, op. cit.

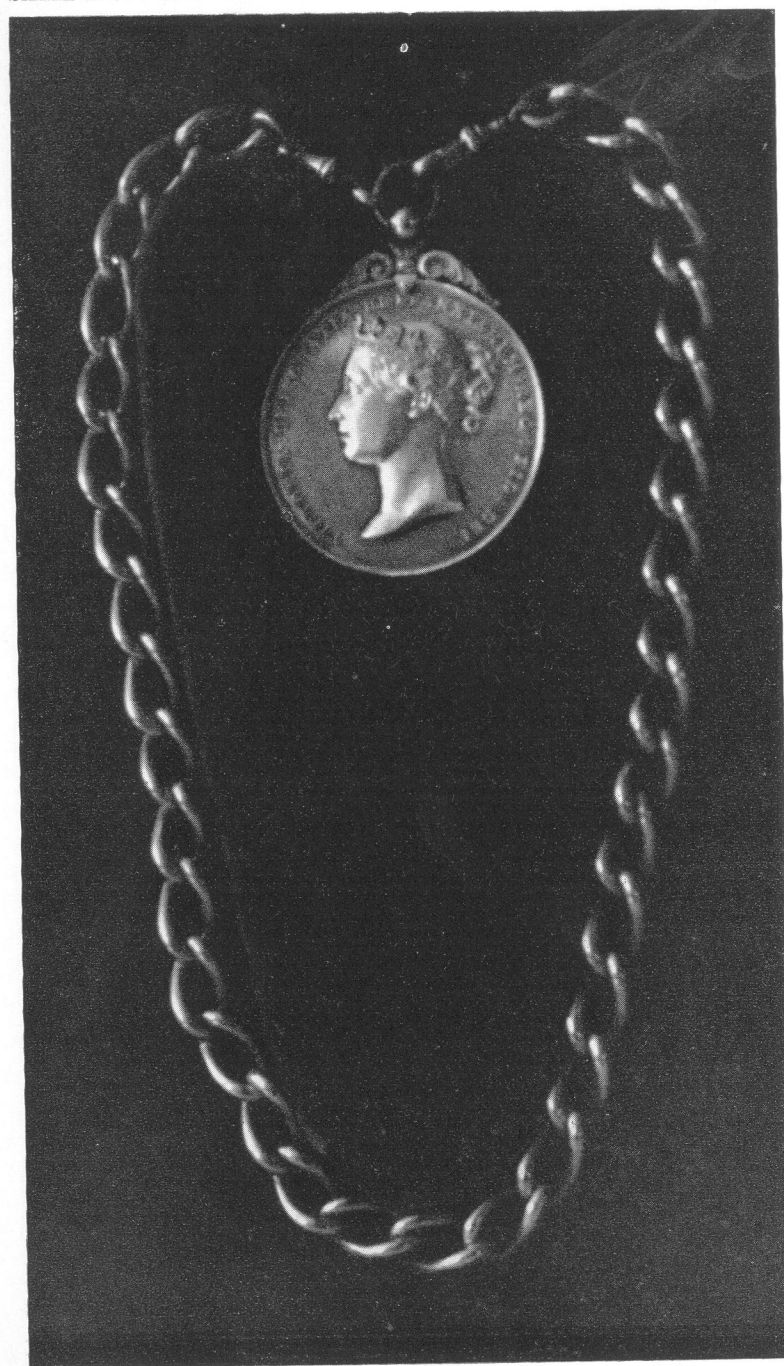
explorer, Winwood Reade, about whom there is a brief account in *Sierra Leone Studies*,¹ made a journey to Falaba and later through Falaba to the River Niger in 1869. He was financed by Andrew Swanzy, a Fellow of the Geographical Society, and travelled purely for the sake of knowledge, which culminated in his universal history, *The Martyrdom of Man*. His projected journey to the interior of Sierra Leone offered the opportunity of opening a fresh route for trade from Falaba and he received support both from the wealthy Freetown trader, Heddle, and from the Governor (then Sir Arthur Kennedy). The Governor, more fortunate than his present-day successor, "has, it seems, a small fund at his disposal, into which he can dip his hand for a matter of this kind without a formal decree of the Council and consented to subscribe 100 l."² Besides, he was given a policeman's uniform, in which he could dress one of his men and "it is the custom to give the native chiefs who are friends and allies of Sierra Leone silver-plated medals and I have also a number of these to distribute". He notes, confirming what has already been said, that the medals were first struck in one of the American wars for Red Indian chiefs who fought on the British side.

Reade started into the interior from Port Loko, following a route well to the north of the Rokel River and found no occasion to present a medal till he reached Big Boumba (Bumban, Biriwa Chiefdom, Bombali District) in February. There he found the chief, Sankelle, unwilling to let him go further so he "undid the parcel in which the medals were contained and taking one of them joined the palaver" and started to exercise his powers of persuasion. "If you send me back, you will lose the friendship of the Governor; you will never see a white man in Boumba again. Why do that? See," said I, producing the medal, "the Governor offers you his hand. If you let me pass, you shall have this medal: you shall become the ally of Sierra Leone." Here I opened the morocco case and showed them the medal in its red velvet bed, shining like the best refined silver. "Will you take it or leave it?" asked I.

The offer worked, the medal was presented and Reade went on. It was clearly the first medal he had issued, because he goes on to say that no one, including his personal staff, knew that he had the

¹ Hargreaves, J. D. "The Evolution of the Native Affairs Department." *Sierra Leone Studies*, New Series, No. 3.

² Winwood Reade. *The African Sketch Book*, vol. ii. Smith, Elder and Co., 1873, p. 373.



CHIEFS' MEDAL, c. 1875-1887

[Obverse. Scale $\frac{3}{4}$]



CHIEFS' MEDAL, c. 1875-1887
[Reverse. Scale $\frac{2}{3}$]

medals in his possession. But unfortunately he records no other such present, nor is any other referred to in his official report to the Governor.¹ It seems not unlikely that Reade was prepared for an awkward situation at Bumban, because the Governor's official despatch on Reade's travels² mentions the giving of this medal, adding that the chief had not drawn a stipend to which he was entitled for twenty years, because the letter of entitlement was in English and therefore unintelligible.

Of a similar period is a smaller medal, $1\frac{3}{4}$ in. in diameter, with the words SIERRA LEONE on the reverse at the top and AWARDED FOR LOYALTY at the bottom. This also has a struck obverse and an engraved reverse. None of these, so far as at present known, is extant in Sierra Leone, but there is one in the collection of Messrs. Spink and Son, of London. This was presented to Chief Humpha Rango of Dodah in 1875, his name being engraved on the edge of the medal.³ The services which he gave were in helping a party of police to quell disturbances, the episode being described in Major Crookes' *History of Sierra Leone*.⁴

The last medal of the series at present is something of a mystery. It is a handsome piece, $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. in diameter, of much better design than the previous issue, of solid silver (this having been checked by the Department of Geological Survey), struck on both sides, and undated. But it is not recorded by Jamieson nor is it known of in the Royal Mint, nor has an example been traced in the collection of the British Museum. An opinion from the Department of Coins and Medals, British Museum, based on a cast made by the Sierra Leone Government Railways, states: "It differs from the other Sierra Leone awards in that both sides bear a struck design, but in common with the Chief Humpha Rango type is the swivel mount, unlike all earlier awards, but resembling the George V mounts. In addition, details of both dies are quite unlike the 1840 series. On these grounds I should put on it a date c. 1875-87. One would expect the Jubilee bust on later Mint issues of Victoria."⁵ There are seven examples so far known about in Sierra Leone.

¹ op. cit., p. 391.

² Despatch No. 133 of 1869 in Public Record Office, C.O. 267/301 (communicated by C. H. Fyfe).

³ Jamieson, op. cit.

⁴ Crookes, J. J., *A History of the Colony of Sierra Leone*. Brown and Nolan, Ltd., of Dublin, 1903, p. 240.

⁵ MS. communicated by J. P. C. Kent, Assistant Keeper.

Two pairs, belonging to the Government, are mounted in cases made by the long defunct Sir Alfred Jones Trade School. The other three are held by descendants of those chiefs who originally received them.

The first of these to come to light is held by ex-Paramount Chief Kande Kole of Samaia, Tambakha Chiefdom, Bombali District. His tradition is that it was presented to his grandfather, who was chief of the united Tambakha chiefdoms, by Governor Sir Frederic Cardew (1894–1900). Of the same period is a despatch asking if a medal might be given to Alimami Sattan Lahai, whose predecessor had been killed by the Sofas and his medal stolen, and adding that the chiefs coveted such medals as a distinction.¹ Another is in the possession of Paramount Chief Ndomawa Gbanya of Bauya, Moyamba District, who believes it to have been given to his grandfather of the same name for services rendered to the Government in Ashanti. Chief Gbanya did in fact raise some Mende volunteers to serve in the Ashanti war, just before the separation of the Gold Coast from Sierra Leone in 1874.² The third so far known belongs to Paramount Chief Alimami Jaia KaiKai of Panga-Kabonde, Pujehun District, whose tradition is that it was given to his grandfather, Momo KaiKai, in 1888, following the making of a treaty. The medal was accompanied by a certificate, now burnt, and a crown and a velvet robe with appliqué designs, which the present chief still wears on ceremonial occasions. The general treaty covering a good deal of the Pujehun District is an agreement signed on 16th May, 1885, entered into by a number of chiefs before Governor Sir Samuel Rowe, providing for abandonment of war and opening of trade routes: to this Momo Kei, Chief of Foindoo in the Barrie Country, was a party. The agreement was not immediately effective, since a further one, of 10th February, 1887, admitted that war fences, including one at Pujehun, had been set up again, and the signatories, including Momo Kei Kei, chief of Yonnie, agreed to be fined if there were further breaches. If the present chief's date of 1888 for the gift of the medal is correct, the supplementary agreement must have been effective.

¹ Despatch No. 86 of 1895 (communicated by C. H. Fyfe).

² Despatch No. 43 of 5.2.1874, C.O. 267/326 (communicated by C. H. Fyfe, who adds that there is a picture of the "Kossohs", as they were called, lined up for inspection at Prah-Su, with their wives in the background, in the *Illustrated London News* of 28.2.1874).

There remains a puzzle—a medal uncouth in appearance, but whether a counterfeit or the result of fire is unresolved. Until very recently this was in the possession of the late Paramount Chief Kande Bockari of Sela Limba, Bombali District, who claims that it was given to a previous chief Bockari Maninka at the time of the Sofa war (1893) and has since been damaged by fire. It is, however, larger, 3 in. in diameter, than the medal just described or its predecessor, and it is not made of silver nor does it show any signs of plating. It is made of an alloy consisting of tin and zinc with small quantities, up to 1 per cent, of nickel and copper; i.e. a Britannia metal,¹ but the Royal Mint has no knowledge that an alloy of tin and zinc has ever been used for official medals.² The medal shows a head of Queen Victoria, very faint, and any lettering which there may have been is invisible now on the obverse, and on the reverse the Royal Arms.

A medal is, or was, in the possession of Seri Modu, at one time, until removal from the post, Alimami of Lungi in Kafu Bullom chiefdom, Port Loko. He declines to show it, however, and it is possible that it is no longer in his possession. He claims that it was given to his grandfather when he came into treaty relationship with Government. Treaties, however, in which the name Alimamy Dalla Mahomadoo appears, with variations of spelling, belong to an earlier era. Thus, in No. 22 of 8th April, 1836, Governor Campbell "declared his intention of paying to the Chief Alimamy Dallu Mahomadoo the arrears of the custom now due and to continue to that chief the annual payment of the same so long as he might act for the family of the late Bey Mauro" to whom he had succeeded. He is referred to as Chief of Medina, Bullom shore. He appears again as a witness to Treaty No. 24 of 16th April, 1836, with a number of Timne chiefs and as an adherent to the same treaty, which was one for freedom of trade, abolition of slavery, and maintenance of peace, on 11th April, 1837, in consideration of an annual payment of 450 dollars. This stipend was confirmed in a treaty made four years later, No. 26 of 13th February, 1841, with thirty-seven Timne Chiefs, large and small. The importance of the Chief of Medina is evinced in a clause where he is to receive one-fourth of a sum in commutation of customs dues, a share equal to that of the Chief of Port Loko, who is referred to as *the* Chief of the

¹ MS. communication from Director of Geological Survey, Sierra Leone.

² MS. communication from Chief Clerk, Royal Mint.

Timnes. But in the definitive treaty No. 57 of 27th February, 1857, which still regulates the payment of stipends to the Timne chiefs, Medina is not mentioned, though Dalla Mahomadoo was in close touch with the Colony until after 1860.

Gossip states that the medal in question is one of the George III series, and this is possible since Governor McCarthy arranged the cession of the Isles de Los through him in 1818.¹

¹ MS. communication from C. H. Fyfe.

FOOTNOTE

A further communication from C. H. Fyfe was received too late for incorporation in the text. This clarifies the story considerably. Public Record Office series CO 267/349 contains a despatch from Governor Havelock, No. 228 of 18.12.1882, in which he recommends that medals be again awarded to chiefs. He recites that the large silver medals of George III and IV were highly prized, but not so those issued by Governor Kennedy in the 1850's. A memorandum by Lawson, Government Interpreter, is enclosed, saying that Kennedy's medals were first issued in 1853: they were only of pewter or something similar and the chiefs stopped wearing them because of being mocked by the traders. Queen Victoria approved a new issue and, subsequently, its design: her Secretary, in conveying her approval, added that she hoped that the medals would not again be allowed to deteriorate.

The despatch does not mention the medal of c. 1840 and it may be presumed that it was not issued in Sierra Leone. It seems likely that Kennedy's medals were those of poor design and engraved, not struck, reverses, with the words "Sierra Leone", and that they were used during both his governorships (1852-54 and 1868-72). Fyfe has a reference to the issue of at least three in 1870, one of them to the Bai Bure, of Kasse Chieftdom, of that time. But Winwood Reade (above) mentions that his medals were silver-plated and the specimen in the hands of the Monuments and Relics Commission is not pewter.

Sierra Leone and the Suppression of the Slave Trade

By A. W. H. PEARSALL

(Research Assistant, National Maritime Museum, London.)

GREAT BRITAIN'S long struggle against the slave trade began in 1808. Her main instrument against the trade was the Royal Navy, and, for various reasons, the West African Coast was the principal scene of operations. For the next sixty years, therefore, British warships were to be found on the coast in this humanitarian task, and naturally Sierra Leone, as the chief British possession in West Africa, was used as a base. It is therefore appropriate that in this special number of the *Sierra Leone Studies*, the West African squadron should find a place.

It is not proposed to deal more than necessary with the diplomatic aspect of the suppression of the slave trade, as that has already been adequately done. Rather will the general plan be to describe the force, disposition and tactics of the West African squadron itself, and subsequently to give some account of the ships and men, and of the organization built up to support them. The omission of the diplomatic aspect should not allow us to forget, however, that the impetus behind the anti-slave trade policy came very largely from Lord Palmerston and other Foreign Secretaries, without whose efforts the struggle might well have been abandoned.

British warships were sent to the West Coast as soon as the slave trade was abolished by the Act of 1807, but, as an independent command, or "Station", the West Coast of Africa squadron lasted from 1819 to 1869, with two intervening periods, when, for reasons of economy or administration, it was placed under the Commander-in-Chief of the Cape of Good Hope Station. In practice, this change made little difference to the squadron, as there was still a Senior Officer who carried on the general work. Throughout its existence, the Station was commanded by a Commodore, except only for the period 1831-39 (the first under the Cape Station), when a Commander was the Senior Officer.

The sole purpose of the squadron's existence as a separate command was to carry out the policy of suppressing the slave trade. Its force was therefore a reflection of the importance attached at any given time to that policy. A few warships would, no doubt, have been maintained on the Coast in the normal way for trade protection purposes, but the force would have been neither so large nor so