

Experiencing Village Life in Ghana

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Late last night we returned from Nkonga-Ntumda, Joseph's home village, having spent a most memorable weekend, and while it's still fresh in my mind I will fill you in on the details. What a reception we got! For months I have been wanting to get out of Accra and get a taste of village life, and I tell you, we got not only a taste but a banquet as well.

It's a small village of about 2,000 people near the Volta River and so beautiful! We arrived late at night, exhausted after the day's journey and completely coated with red dust after having bounced and bumped nine miles into the "bush." We were greeted by seemingly hordes of children shouting and cheering. The full moon was shining, the "talking drums" were talking, so you can imagine the scene.

We were immediately taken to the chief's house where we shared the traditional round of schnapps-this is something like the American Indian peace pipe; every chief welcomes his guests with schnapps, first pouring a small amount as libation to the gods, and then offering it to his guests.

The next day, Sunday, we were guests of honor at their "Akwasidae" Festival. I tell you, I never shook hands with so many people in my life. I think it would be very difficult to be a movie star or politician! We made the rounds greeting the chief, queen mother, all the elders, spiritual leaders, etc., and all the time a woman was fanning us and there was much drumming and cheering. You know, us missionaries really enjoy the Ghanaian dancing, so when we joined in the traditional "Adowa" dance, this really raised a chorus of cheers.

In all, I was really grateful to have this experience. They gave us such a warm welcome I really learned something about hospitality. Of course the people are poor and work hard to survive by farming. When one woman pointed out the village farms an hour's walk away up the side of a steep mountain, my respect really went out to them. After the festival we had the chance to walk around the village and meet many of the people. One man was over a hundred, and came up to me with such a bright smile and ready handshake, I can't forget him.