



<p><i>Guinea Introduction</i> September 2001</p> <p>Part 02, Ch. 13 CRF Media Chronicles</p>	<p>Final: 11/20/12 Time: 21:18</p> <p>© 2013 Carl and Arline Ryan</p>
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Carl: It is Sunday, September the 8th, and we are attending the worship service of Nongo Baptist Church. We arrived in Conakry, Guinea late yesterday afternoon on schedule, but because of airline problems, our luggage took another three days to catch up with us. Thankfully, we each had a change of clothes plus the files needed for the the web site seminar to proceed as planned for Monday morning.

We were staying with Ron and Sharon; ... the same place as our visit last year. After church Sunday, we spent some time looking around the area.

Overlay: Next to Ron and Sharon's House

Monday morning Ron opened the seminar which was being held in a small meeting room located in the walled-in compound where Ron and Sharon lived. The opportunity to meet more of the missionaries who were serving in the area was a blessing for us. It was especially good to see Steve and Susan and Baby Eric. They were again living in Dantomba among the Toura. What a delight to meet Eric born in Abidjan in June 2001. We had been anticipating holding this precious little guy.

Overlay: Steve, Susan and Eric

Arline: This first day of the seminar got off to a slow start but still it was a good day with the 14 attendees eager to get going for the second day.

Everything was going well when, ... mid-afternoon on Tuesday, **September 11, 2001**, ... we received the alarming news by phone of the Muslim terrorist attacks in New York, Washington D.C. and then Pennsylvania. This was devastating news to us. Besides our concern for our families in the United States, our safety was at risk because 99% of the population of Guinea is Muslim. We gathered in a circle and earnestly prayed before deciding to stop the seminar for the day. The news from the radio was chilling.

The following day we continued the seminar. Our families back home were all OK and we were OK. Praise God! Our hearts were heavy. Still, everyone spent the morning working on their own web site and the seminar closed at noon. We handed out diplomas, gave out goody bags and took a group picture. It was deemed to be most successful but not enough time.

Thursday morning the group all came out to Ron and Sharon's for brunch. The food was excellent but uppermost on our minds was the safety of ourselves and those back home.

We spent that afternoon at the Christian and Missionary Alliance Guest House talking with the other missionaries including Steve, Susan and Eric.

Carl: Finally, Friday morning we loaded up the Landcruiser of Bob and Amy Little and we were off for the long drive up-country.

Overlay: Map

Our first stop was at a park-like setting with a stream and waterfall. The six of us, ... Bob, Amy, their neighbor boy Amadou, Marie, Arline and I ... enjoyed this refreshing stop. It seemed strange that the place was almost deserted and the facilities were in bad shape.

Continuing on, the scenery was lush, green vegetation intermixed with homes scattered up along the hillsides. Mamou is 133 miles from Conakry and we arrived at 5 o'clock. Everyone met at Wyman and Michelle Dobbs home, ... located behind high walls, ... where we would be staying.

We were able to move freely about the city as well as talk with the neighbors of the missionaries.

Overlay: The Diallo Family

Overlays: Local people scenes

- Main street in Mamou
- School Uniforms
- Furniture Factory
- Mamou Outdoor Market
- Wyman Dobbs
- Studying the Koran

Arline: This parking lot is where Bob gave a ride to a really creepy guy. Bob's willingness to give rides to a complete stranger really bothered me. Furthermore, they always got in the back seat with me and I was very uneasy!

Overlays: Local scenes

- Barber Shop
- Mamou Indoor Market
- Michelle Dobbs
- Muslim Prayer Board
- Sweet Potato Garden
- Trail up hill overlooking Mamou
- Marie and Christian Academy
- Laurie Albright

On one of our excursions, we visited a bakery. It was a very productive operation and, despite sanitary concerns, the loaves of fresh bread were delicious.

Overlay: Mamou Bakery

Overlay:

- Mosque in Dalaba
- Across from Mosque
- Bob Little

Carl: Next door neighbors invited Wyman and I to the funeral of one of their relatives.

Overlay: Dobbs' Neighbors

Overlay: Funeral at Timbo

It was in the town of Timbo about twenty miles from Mamou. It appeared that everybody was there and dressed in their finest.

Several men proudly displayed their red and white checkered head scarves indicating their pilgrimage to Mecca. Some of

the ladies prepared a huge caldron of rice for the guests. Offerings of money was recorded. The ladies sang a mournful chant and, during the events, I was ushered into a small room to photograph the body all wrapped up in a sheet. Later, I was asked to return to the room and take more photos. It was a remorseful display of respect and condolences to the family of a much revered matriarch.

Sadly, this was done in the name of the Muslim god, Allah, and with the hope that the deceased would be ushered into their heaven. Not far away, was another ritual; ... one that only the men and boys attended. It was time for one of the required five daily prayers. Of course, the belief is that this activity will help on their way to heaven.

Overlay: Back in Mamou

Arline: While Carl and Wyman were attending the funeral, Amy and I went out to visit their neighbors.

Overlay: Amy Little

Arline: What an adventure! I was graciously welcomed inside homes and given permission to take pictures because I was with Amy, their trusted friend. Carl could not have gotten these scenes with the women. Inside one home, two women were measuring out corn. We went outside and viewed the cleaning of peanuts. The kids had a great time sorting them! There were pictures of a lady washing her feet before prayer. Amy explains:

Amy's comments from video on-camera audio:

The real devout ones will do this 5 times a day. The wash first before they pray.

Arline: To be with a blind grandmother as she prayed in her small room touched me deeply. The children playing a dancing game outside were fun to watch. The kids here use whatever is available to create a happy time. There were people and scenes that will forever be imprinted upon my heart.

Overlay: Smile!

Overlay: Jewelry Shop in Mamou

Overlay: On the way to Dalaba

Carl: Friday evening, the Little family, Marie, Arline and I traveled about an hour North to Dalaba (DAH-la-ba) and Tinka (TEEN-kah) for a couple of days of rest and relaxation.

Overlay: CMA Retreat Center – Steve Albright in middle

We stayed at the Christian and Missionary Alliance Retreat Center called Tinka.

Overlay: Views from CMA Retreat Center

While there, Bob and I drove approximately 25 miles on further to Ditin Falls (Dee-Teen).

Overlay: Ditin Falls

This was a spectacular view off in the distance. As we got closer, the mist formed a rainbow but, again, there were only a few people here. This is what the general area is like further north in Kankolable (Kahn-ko-LAH-bay)... about two or three hours from Dalaba over rough roads. Bob and Amy, along with two other families, may move there soon. They much prefer working in small villages.

As we would expect, farming was primitive but the long growing season, rich deep soil and plenty of rainfall result in large crops of produce.

We spent our last few days in the home of the Albright's who were in Conakry at that time. Here we were able to work quietly writing the scripts and preparing a draft video of the chapter we called "The Familiar Path". Bob Little wrote a short script for the chapter, "When Two Paths Meet". After completion of the scripts, the missionaries did the narrations.

We were surrounded by a culture that continues to hold on to an ancient way of life and one that is subjugated by the belief in Islam. However, there are a few in this area who believe in Jesus Christ. We attended a church service with most of these Christians in Mamou. The men all sat in a circle in the middle of the room with the women and children on mats along the walls. Being here with these believers worshiping together touched our hearts.

Overlay: On the way back to Conakry

Returning to Conakry, we were reminded of the hazards along the long, narrow and poorly maintained highway with this overturned truck.

Overlay: Making charcoal to sell in Conakry

Overlay: Back in Conakry

Overlay: Road to CMA Guest House

Arline: While waiting for the time to return home and praying that flights would be available to the United States, we stayed at the CMA Guest House compound with several other missionary families.

Overlay: Missionary Kids

We were able, ... at last, ... to see some of the devastation from the terrorist attacks on America. Fortunately, the airlines were back flying to almost normal. But the calm would be short lived. We all knew that America would strike back at the Taliban terrorists located in Afghanistan.

On Sunday, we visited the church where we worshiped while in Conakry last year.

Overlay: Eglise Baptist Church

After sharing communion with these believers, we drove a few miles to an old building and another service in a small church.

Overlay: Lambandji Susu Fellowship Church

This was a special event to honor Ron and Sharon for their work in Guinea. They were moving to Senegal Monday. We said goodbye to them at the airport as we flew out of the country, but in different directions.

Overlays:

- Near Mamou Guinea
- Our farm near Cassville, Missouri

It was a great comfort to land at Chicago's O'Hare Airport and walk on U.S. soil again. We were back "home" ... TWO days prior to the beginning of bombing in Afghanistan.

Overlay: Our home!

Thank you God!

During the following weeks, we finalized the Guinea videos and distributed several hundred on VHS tapes and CDR's.

In 2004, after completing three more trips to West Africa, we combined all of the videos from that area on a DVD entitled "Hope for the Hopeless". We had 1,000 copies made for distribution.

Overlay: CRF Media Chronicles

© Filmed in 2001

Narrators: Carl, Arline

Background Music:

112-22 CRF Media West Africa-2 -Guinea

From: *Out of Africa* soundtrack

- OA-11 - *If I Know a Song*
- OA-10 - *Let the Rest of the World Go By*
- OA-12 - *You are Karen*
- OA-3 - *Have You Got a Story*
- OA-1 - *I Had a Farm*



The Familiar Path

Ch. 14 (9:48) Filmed September 2001

Proud and stoic, the Fulani are the largest nomadic people group in the world. For centuries they wandered many paths across the vast African sub-Saharan.

Today about 30 million of these people stretch across West Africa – from Senegal to the Sudan, an area larger than the continental United States.

About 200 years ago, some of these cattle herders followed a path to the mountainous region of central Guinea known as the Fouta Jalon.

Settling here, they built grass-roofed huts and their cattle grazed nearby. Ample rainfall, cool-mountain air, and fertile soil supported the cultivation of fruits, vegetables and grains.

This area is now home to nearly three million Fulani who have their own language, Pulaar. They proudly call themselves the Fulbhe.

Today, fewer families are herding livestock though many still choose the path of village life. Here they work closely as a family community growing rice, peanuts, sweet potatoes, and vegetables.

For others, the potential for employment and economic gain has attracted them to the city where they work as merchants, skilled laborers and for the government. However, ties to extended family in the village remain extremely strong, compelling them to return down the familiar path home for sicknesses, weddings and deaths.

Regardless of where they settle, family is the center of their focus with their lives woven together.

The majority of people live hand-to-mouth ... a life of insecurity that lacks the opportunity to change. Yet these proud and hearty people survive, refusing to give up.

The Fulbe are proud not only of their history, their land, and their language ... they are also proud to have Fulbe character. A deeply-rooted and highly-valued character trait is to be cunning.

From early in life, they develop clever but often-devilish plans to achieve their objectives of wealth, position and respect. Those who obtain their goals are held in high esteem regardless of the tactics used. This trait must be carefully managed to achieve the most honor. They go to great lengths to avoid shame. It would be unthinkable for one with money in-hand not to help his extended family. However, this comes in direct conflict with gaining individual wealth.

In order to hold onto their wealth, many have chosen to invest their cash into buildings. These partially completed structures appear throughout the area – from the large cities to small villages. Some are under construction. Some are very old. These roofless buildings may never be occupied, but they are a possession that proudly indicates wealth, just as cattle once did for the Fulbe

A vital part of "being Fulbe" is a deep and compelling desire to be accepted into paradise when they die. To do this, the Fulbe have chosen the path of Islam. The Fulbe are very proud of their religion and the fact that they are the ones who brought Islam to West Africa. The Fulbe see themselves as the guardians of Islam. Islam's dominance is ever present throughout the Fouta Jalon with over 99% of the Fulbhe following Islam. Mosques can be seen in every direction and variety from the large and ornate to the small and simple. Special arrangements of rocks and gravel cover the landscape, convenient to anyone passing by at prayer time.

The Fulbe spend their lives working to gain enough favor or blessing to be acceptable to God. They believe no human can have a personal relationship with God, but that by following the laws of their holy book, the Koran, then maybe ... just maybe, their good favor will outweigh their bad, and they will be allowed entrance to paradise. Islam, however, is also mixed with the animistic practices of manipulating the spirit world and Fulbe traditions that have been handed down for generations.

Following in these familiar footsteps, they begin trying to gain favor with God early in life. When a baby is one week old, the father sacrifices a goat or sheep to bring blessing to his child's life. The baby's head is shaved as part of the ritual. At a young age, children begin to learn Koranic teachings in the Arabic language. This is thought to be God's language and thus pleasing Him. The colored robe signifies a circumcision has taken place, which is the rite of passage into Islam

In adulthood, they must get even more serious about their religion in order to ensure they have enough of their life remaining

to please God. Therefore, along with praying five times daily, the Fulbe will fast from sunup to sundown for one month each year. Religious festivals and events punctuate their lives. Fridays are days to receive extra blessing. This is accomplished by attending a mosque for prayer and giving money to the poor. The red and white scarves proudly displayed by some are indicative of a pilgrimage to Mecca which each Muslim wants to take before death.

Even in death, they make one last attempt at gaining God's approval. They feel many people must come to their funeral to show God how respected they were. Therefore, they faithfully attend the funerals of others to ensure many will attend theirs. They dress in their finest garments and give money to the family, which is carefully recorded and announced to all. Closest family members watch and pray over the body until the appointed time when only the men are allowed to accompany the body to the mosque for prayer and burial.

Even though the Fulbe's life is devoted to gaining favor with God, their religious rituals are like their washing before prayer, only affecting them outwardly with little impact on their hearts. Most people have compartmentalized their lives to the point that, besides prayer times, little thought of God or religion even occurs. The Fulbe believe in one God yet, they see Him as the source of both good and evil making it hard to trust Him. Their lives are full of uncertainty and questions because this "lack of trust" permeates all their relationships.

The Fulbe are unaware that the path they have chosen will not lead them to God.

Six different mission agencies are working among the Fulbe. Unfortunately, the progress has been slow in leading them to a personal relationship with God. In the eyes of the Fulbe, rejecting Islam is rejecting family, culture, and even, "being Fulbe." Only a few have been willing to pay the huge cost of losing family, livelihood and possibly life.

These followers know that Jesus is a treasure worth any cost. They want to spread the Good News of Jesus to people in the villages, throughout the Fouta Jalon of Guinea, and across the sub-Sahara of Africa.

Listen to a Fulbe brother who is paying the cost to follow Jesus:

"I ask that you not forget my people. We followers are few. Pray for us as you think of us in the morning, ... the afternoon, ... and at night. Specifically pray we will have the strength to spread the Good News of Jesus.

Much work needs to be done to give the Fulbe an opportunity to choose the path that leads to eternal, abundant life.

Would you be willing to take the unfamiliar path of assisting missionaries walking among the Fulbe?

Pray for those who will walk with the Fulbe and show them the path of peace.

Pray that Fulbe followers will not stumble.

Pray for the Fulbe in the morning, at noon and evening.

<http://www.fulbefouta.com/>



Where Two Paths Meet

Ch. 15 (2:50) Filmed September 2001

Centuries ago in a land far away there was a blind man wandering aimlessly in the wilderness. Others did not know he was blind because he acted like he knew where he was going. They followed him and wore a path that leads to nowhere. The Fulbe are still following that path that so many have traveled before them.

One day a man came along who was walking a different path and only a few followed him at first. But the more people that went his way, the more visible his path became. It is a different path and there is a cross point where it meets with the old familiar path. So now there is a choice about which path to take.

The Fulbe are at a cross point and they must ponder the path. Do they take the one their forefathers have traveled for so long, or do they take the new path? Those that have taken the new path confidently say that it is the only way to get there. Many don't believe them. The majority say they are crazy and not worth following. Yet their life is attractive. The path they have taken is not.

The Fulbe are at a crosspoint of two separate paths. They must leave one to get on the other, but it will cost them everything to leave the one they are on. It will take every ounce of commitment of their heart, soul, and mind to come to this same place. They will see that the footsteps they followed were necessary. Then they will be confident to continue the journey that will last forever. They will have found the path to paradise

PRAY that they will ponder the path they are on.

PRAY that they will choose the path that leads to life.

PRAY for those few who have chosen the right path to be so filled with the presence of God that others will have confidence to go the way they went without giving up.

PRAY they will count the cost.

We need your help blazing a new trail through the bush. Come help us, but know it will cost you everything too.

PRAY that the Fulbe will not be so attracted to the end result that they take shortcuts to get there. There are no shortcuts on the path of God.