



Smithsonian

National Museum of African Art

Macdonald Calabar photographs,
EEPA 1996-019, circa 1895

Paul Wood

2011

Eliot Elisofon Photographic Archives, National Museum of African Art
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Eliot Elisofon Photographic Archives, National Museum of African Art
Title:	Macdonald Calabar photographs
Date:	circa 1895
Identifier:	EEPA.1996-019
Creator:	MacDonald, Claude Maxwell, Sir, 1852-1915
Extent:	135 Negatives (photographic) (dupe negs; black & white; 4 x 5 in.) 135 Photographic prints (albumen; black & white; 14 x 21 cm.) 135 Photographic prints (copy prints (2 v.); black & white; 8 x 10 in.)
Language:	English .
Summary:	<p>Photographic album formerly belonging to Major General Claude Maxwell Macdonald (1852-1915), Commissioner, Oil Rivers Protectorate, in West Africa, circa 1895. The album contains photographs of the consulate general in Old Calabar, Opobo and Bonny. Images, such as the arrival of Lady Macdonald in 1895 (returning from a home leave), interiors of British residences, and (named) group portraits of the British reflect colonial life and infrastructure. Native and British troops are depicted as well. Several images show the results of the British attacks on Brass and Nembe, in retaliation for King Nana's unwillingness to cooperate. Several images were taken of chiefs, among them a copy photograph of a 1882 image of King Nana of the Benin River, King Jaja of Opobo, King Koko of Brass, King Duke IX of Old Calabar, and King George Pebble of Bonny. Perhaps the most outstanding imagery is a series "On the way to Benin," which contains the photograph of an altar, a crucified woman, a forest path, and a contingent of British colonials. Several remarkable photographs depict Cross River masquerades with head crests, dances of Kru "Boys," and portray women of the Niger Delta. One photograph, showing the bronze sculpture of a Benin horseman placed on a rug in front of a wall (very likely taken in Nigeria), is of great interest for art historians. This particular figure left Benin before the city was ransacked and destroyed by the British Punitive Expedition in 1987, and, according to William B. Fagg, eminent historian of Nigerian art, came to the Merseyside County Museums, Liverpool, UK, as early as 1892 (note that Macdonald arrived in the Oil Rivers Protectorate in 1891).</p>
Container:	Item 135
Container:	Box 1
Container:	Volume 1
Container:	Volume 2

Administrative Information

Provenance

Purchase, 1996. Conserved through a preservation grant funded by the Smithsonian Institution Women's Committee, 2006.

Restrictions

Use of original records requires an appointment. Contact Archives staff for more details.

Conditions Governing Use

Permission to reproduce images from the Eliot Elisofon Photographic Archives must be obtained in advance. The collection is subject to all copyright laws.

Arrangement

Images indexed by negative number.

Bibliography

Geary, Christraud M. "Early Images from Benin at the National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institution." *African Arts*, 30, Summer 1997, pages 44-53, 93

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Types of Materials:

Black-and-white photographs
Photographic prints

Places:

Africa
Nigeria

Container Listing

Consulate General [photograph] : Old Calabar, Arrival of Lady Mac, 1895

1 Print (b&w; 14 x 19.5 cm.)

Collector: MacDonald, Claude Maxwell, Sir, 1852-1915

Language: English.

Notes: Right front view of the Consulate General, Old Calabar, Niger Coast Protectorate (Oil Rivers), 1891, during the arrival of Lady Macdonald at the residence, January 1895. Accompanying caption reads, "Consulate General Old Calabar, Arrival Lady Mac January 1895.

Donated by Blake Robinson, 1997.

Place: Africa
Nigeria -- History -- 1851-1899
Oil Rivers Protectorate -- 1885-1893
Niger Coast Protectorate -- 1893-1899

Consulate General [photograph] : Old Calabar, 1891

1 Print (b&w; 13 x 18 cm.)

Collector: MacDonald, Claude Maxwell, Sir, 1852-1915

Language: English.

Notes: View of front facade of the Consulate General, Old Calabar, Niger Coast Protectorate (Oil Rivers), 1891. Accompanying caption reads, "Consulate General Old Calabar, 1891."

Place: Africa
Nigeria -- History -- 1851-1899
Oil Rivers Protectorate -- 1885-1893
Niger Coast Protectorate -- 1893-1899

Old Calabar [photograph] : Consulate Hill and Buildings, ca. 1895

1 Print (b&w; 15 x 20 cm.)

Collector: MacDonald, Claude Maxwell, Sir, 1852-1915

Language: English.

Notes: View of the consulate buildings, background, and hill, foreground, at Old Calabar, Niger Coast Protectorate (Oil Rivers), ca. 1895. Accompanying caption reads, "Consulate Hill and Buildings, Old Calabar."

Place: Africa
Nigeria -- History -- 1851-1899
Oil Rivers Protectorate -- 1885-1893
Niger Coast Protectorate -- 1893-1899

Old Calabar [photograph] : View from Consulate Looking up River, ca. 1895

1 Print (b&w; 15 x 19.5 cm.)

Collector: MacDonald, Claude Maxwell, Sir, 1852-1915

Language: English.

Notes: View from the Consulate, Old Calabar, looking up river. From left to right; river, road, and a hospital; Niger Coast Protectorate (Oil Rivers),

ca. 1895. Accompanying caption reads, "View from Consulate, Old Calabar: Looking up River."

Place: Africa
Nigeria -- History -- 1851-1899
Oil Rivers Protectorate -- 1885-1893
Niger Coast Protectorate -- 1893-1899

EEPA 1996-190117: Trading establishment [photograph] : Calabar, 1894
1 Print (b&w; 13 x 18 cm.)

Collector: MacDonald, Claude Maxwell, Sir, 1852-1915

Language: English.

Notes: Title source: Photographic album.

Citation source: Archives staff.

Trading establishment in Calabar, Niger Coast Protectorate (now Nigeria). Photographer unknown, ca. 1894.

African Link published by African Link (Shelton, CT: 2001). LL01-225

Place: Africa
Nigeria -- History -- 1851-1899
Niger Coast Protectorate -- 1893-1899