

## Promoting Liberia's Culture-Many Extols Two Traditional Writers

08/11/09 - M. Welemongai Ciapha, II +231) 077119511, wciapha@FrontPageAfrica.com

Harper, Maryland County -

**A**frican writings and novels are acclaimed to Nigeria, Kenya and few other countries who have over the years produced the best books on the African continent but mostly promoting their culture which is now taught in many schools across Africa.

In the African writers series, Nigerians and Kenyans are the regarded the best writers but yet still some African countries are making progress to get on par with these countries that have well developed writing industry.

Liberia, the oldest country on the African continent over the past produced some good writers including the late Bai T. Moore whose novel, Murder in the Cassava Patch became one of the best African novels in the 19th century.

Besides Bai T. Moore, there were other writers-Wilton Sankawolo, Joseph S, Guanu and a few others who wrote novels and books about the culture of Liberia to promoting it in the international circle.

With Bai T. Moore, Sankowo dead and Guanu now aged; there have not been publications in the recent years that portray the rich culture of Liberia for incoming generations to read and reflect the past.

Although there have been fewer publications by Liberians but those writings have mainly focused on politics rather than Liberian culture which needs international recognition after years of negative image characterized by the long years of civil conflict.

One of the latest publications about Liberian culture was written by two Liberians from the Southeastern County of Maryland which highlights the traditional practice of the people of that county.

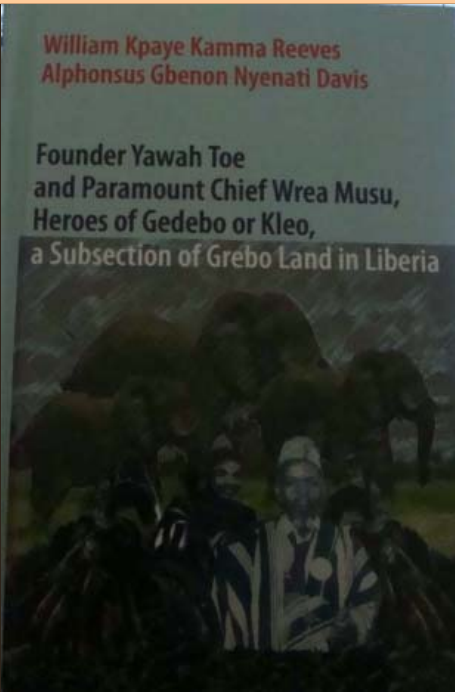
The book highlights the rich culture and tradition of the Gedebo or Kleo people in a book titled: "Founder Yawah Toe and Paramount Chief Wrea Musu, Heroes of Gedebo or Kleo, a Subsection of Grebo Land in Liberia".

Written by William Kpaye Kamma Reeves and Alphonsus Gbenon Nyenati Davis, vetran teachers and published by the Africana Homestead Legacy Publishers, Cherry Hill, New Jersey, USA, the book explains the tale and folklore of the founder of the Gedebo Chiefdom, Chief Yawah Toe dating to the 16th century of members of the Grebo ethnic group living in Gedebo, Maryland County and an oral history of their famous Paramount Chief Wrea Musu who ruled the Gedebo Chiefdom and the amalgamated Gedebo-Nyenebo Chiefdoms from 1928 to 1965.

The book focuses greatly on the adventurous and expeditious but blessed process through which Yawah Toe founded the Gedebo Land; having to combat opposing forces while seeking a secure dwelling place and daily bread for his family in the jungles of the then unknown but fertile land.

News of the book has been joyfully received by thousands of Maryland citizens particularly those hailing from Gledobo Chiefdom including Junior Senator Gloria Maya Musu Scott (Maryland Unity Party), granddaughter of the famous and venerable Chief Wrea Musu whose 43 year ruled strengthened and prospered the self belief and determination of the Gedebo or Kleo people.

### LITERARY CULTURE



*The latest Liberian literary effort titled: "Founder Yawah Toe and Paramount Chief Wrea Musu, Heroes of Gedebo or Kleo, a Subsection of Grebo Land in Liberia"; highlights the rich culture and tradition of the Gedebo or Kleo people.*

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**What is your honest opinion about the findings and recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia?**

- The Commission's report was fair and balanced.
- The Commission's report was not fair and balanced.
- The Commission omitted key players, protected others.
- Findings and Recommendations should be respected by all parties for the sake of peace, no matter what.

Speaking a day after she received a copy of the historic book, Senator Scott described as overwhelming the joyfulness and appreciation of the Gedebo people and the entire population of Maryland County, especially the student populace to the two veteran school teachers (William Kpaye Kamma Reeves and Alphonsus Gbenon Nyenati Davis).

Senator Scott said she was particularly moved by the patriotic courage of the two men to begin a process of digging out the historic facts about Liberia's rich culture and traditions, something she noted will go a long way in addressing some of the inconsistencies, misinformation and disinformation that cloud the tribal, religious, cultural traditional and political history of Liberia.

She promised to make a formal presentation of the book to the Ministry of Education upon receipt of the first consignment in the near future.

"I am really elated, and I must say that we are elated. The people of Gedebo and the people of Maryland County as a whole are grateful to these two great men who've taken their precious time, effort and resources to prepare what I consider a solid treasure for all of us and generations yet unborn. We say hats off to them; may God continue to multiply their blessings. I am particularly grateful and appreciative because my family background is recognized and venerated in such an esteemed endeavor", she averred.

Meanwhile, it has been gathered that citizens from Maryland County; especially students are expressing appreciation to Teachers Kamma Reeves and Nyenati Davis for their effort aimed at enriching the libraries of schools in the county and beyond.

William Kpaye Kamma Reeves was born in Kablake, Gedebo, Maryland County. In 1955 he graduated from Our Lady of Fatima High School in Harper City, and the next year started teaching in its elementary division. He earned a bachelor's degree in education from the Maryland College of Our Lady of Fatima in 1959. Also working as an administrator, he became acting principal of the Tubman-Wilson Institute (TWI) in Zwedru in 1965, vice-principal of TWI in 1969, principal of TWI in 1973, and principal of Bishop Jwule High School in Zwedru from 1978 to 1990. He fled Liberia's civil war in 1990 and now lives in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA.

Co-author Alphonsus Gbenon Nyenati Davis was born in Heweken, Gedebo, Maryland County. He also graduated from Our Lady of Fatima High School in 1955 before studying at the Tubman National Institute of Medical Arts (TNIMA) School of Nursing where he earned an RN (Registered Nurse) diploma in 1958. Teacher Nyenati Davis earned a French language certificate and a diploma in anesthesia at the Institute of Anesthesiology. He also earned a B.sc. degree in education from the College of Our Lady of Fatima, Harper City in 1969. He served as a nurse-anesthetist at the J.J. Dossen Memorial Hospital in Harper and taught French. He left Liberia in 2000 and now resides in the U.S., in Charlotte, North Carolina.

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