International Boundary Study

No. 129 – October 13, 1972

Liberia – Sierra Leone Boundary

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1. <u>BOUNDARY BRIEF</u>

The Liberia–Sierra Leone boundary is approximately 190 miles long and is demarcated by rivers or pillars throughout. Inland from the Atlantic Ocean, it follows successively the left bank of the Mano, the thalwag of the Morro, and the meridian of approximately $10^{\circ}26'18"$ W. as demarcated in 1930. The boundary continues northeastward, utilizing the thalwegs of the Mauwa and Magowi, and then extends by short straight-line segments and various small rivers to the Guinea tripoint on the left or south bank of the Makona.

II. <u>HISTORICAL BACKGROUND</u>

Used by the British as a haven for freed slaves, the first group of settlers to reach the present territory of Sierra Leone arrived at the site of Freetown in 1787. The Sierra Leone Company was organized in 1791 to administer the settlement, and the company was granted a royal charter eight years later. Because of heavy financial burdens, the settlement, along with the adjacent coastal area, was annexed by the British as a crown colony in 1808.

During the early part of the 19th century, Freetown was the residence of the British Governor, who also administered The Gambia and the Gold Coast. The British sphere of influence was gradually extended inland by the development of trade relations and the work of religious missions. In 1896 a British protectorate was declared over the hinterland, which thereafter was administered separately from the colony.

In 1816 the American Colonization Society was given a charter by the United States Congress to settle freed slaves on the west coast of Africa. During the administration of President James Monroe, the U.S. Government supplied funds and assisted in negotiations with African rulers for the cession of land in the present-day territory of Liberia. In 1822 the first of the freed slaves landed on Cape Mesurado at the site of Monrovia, and two years later the political entity was named Liberia.

Other settlements for freed slaves followed, with the Maryland Colonization Society in 1827 establishing what was later known as the African State of Maryland at Cape Palmas. Quakers sponsored the Pennsylvania Young Men's Association, which founded the settlement of Grand Bassa at the mouth of the Saint John in 1835, and the Mississippi Colonization Society started a settlement at the mouth of the Sinoe in 1838.

Later in 1838 the settlements at the mouths of the Saint John and Sinoe joined with Liberia to form the Commonwealth of Liberia with a governor appointed by the American Colonization Society. In 1847 Liberia became an independent republic with a constitution modeled after that of the United States. During 1857 the African State of Maryland agreed to annexation by the Republic of Liberia as Maryland County.

An Anglo–Liberian convention of November 11, 1885, established the Mano river as the

boundary between Sierra Leone and Liberia from the Atlantic Ocean to a somewhat indefinite point in the interior. To the north a proces verbal of June 25, 1903, demarcated a line from the right bank of the Wulafo (Ou Lafou),[1] at the point where the 13th meridian west of Paris intersects the river, and then followed this meridian to the Mano.[2]

A Franco–Liberian agreement of September 18, 1907, indicated it was physically impossible to apply the theoretical lines of their boundary convention of December 8, 1892, and that as far as possible natural topographical lines should be used to prevent future disputes. Article I of the 1907 agreement stated that the Franco (Guinean)–Liberian boundary would begin at "The left bank of the Makona River, from the point where that river enters Sierra Leone to a point to be determined, approximately five kilometers south of Bofosso." Thus the sector formerly a part of the Liberia–Sierra Leone boundary between the Oudalfou and Makona became a part of the Guinea–Sierra Leone boundary.

An Anglo–Liberian convention of January 21, 1911, readjusted the northern and southern parts of the 1903-meridian sector of the Liberia–Sierra Leone boundary in accordance with natural features and tribal divisions. In the north the Kailahun area east of the meridian between the Makona and Mauwa was transferred by Liberia to Sierra Leone in exchange for an area west of the meridian between the Morro and Mano. Article 1 of the 1911 convention affords the transfer of territory as follows:

> (a.)   The line marking the western boundary of the Republic shall start from the meeting point on the Moa River of the Tengea and Kunyo sections of the Kissi country, and shall be continued in a southerly direction to a point on the Maia River, so that it corresponds, between these two points, with the western boundary of the Tengea section and the eastern boundaries of the Kunyo and Tungi sections of that country.

> (b.)   From this point the boundary shall follow the course of the Maia, Makwoi, and Mauwa Rivers to the point where the Mauwa River intersects the provisional line laid down by the Anglo–Liberian Boundary Commission of 1902–3.

> (c.)   From this point the boundary shall follow the provisional line mentioned above until it reaches the point where that line meets the Morro River.

> (d.)   From this point the boundary shall follow the Morro River to the junction of that river with the Mano River.

> (e.)   From this point the boundary shall follow the provisional line to the sea-coast.

In accordance with the 1911 convention, a demarcation of the boundary between the Makona and Mauwa by a joint commission in 1913–14 was approved by an agreement of

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[1] Also known as Uldafu and Oudalfou, the Wulafo is a headwater tributary of the Meli located east of Timbekundu.

[2] An Anglo–French treaty of June 26, 1891, previously had indicated that the boundary between the spheres of influence (Sierra Leone and French Guinea) of the United Kingdom and France followed the 13th meridian west of Paris from the 10th parallel southward to Timbekundu.

June 19–26, 1917. An exchange of notes between Liberia and the United Kingdom on January 16–17, 1930, approved a later demarcation of the meridian boundary between the Mauwa and Morro.

Following a Constitutional Conference in London in 1960, Sierra Leone became independent on April 27, 1961, with a parliamentary form of government. In April 1971, it adopted a republican constitution.

III. ALIGNMENT

Inland from the Atlantic Ocean, the left bank of the Mano at low water was established as the Liberia–Sierra Leone boundary by the Anglo–Liberian convention of November 11, 1885 as follows:

> II.   The line marking the north-western boundary of the Republic of Liberia shall commence at the point on the sea-coast at which, at low-water, the line of the south-eastern or left bank of the Mannah [Mano] River intersects the general line of the sea-coast, and shall be continued along the line marked by low-water on the south-eastern or left bank of the Mannah River until such line or such line prolonged in a north-easterly direction intersects the line or the prolongation of the line marking the north-eastern or inland boundary of the territories of the Republic, with such deviations as may hereafter be found necessary to place within Liberian territory the town of Boporu and such other towns as shall be hereafter acknowledged to have belonged to the Republic at the time of the signing of this Convention.

In 1903 a commission marked the starting point of the boundary on the coast by a cairn located southeast of the town of Mano Salija on the sandbar that separated the Mano from the Atlantic Ocean.

The Anglo–Liberian convention of January 21, 1911, which transferred the territory between the Mano and Morro from Sierra Leone to Liberia, established the thalweg of the Morro as the boundary for 51 miles between the meridian of the 1903-proces verbal and its confluence with the Mano. Article 2 of the convention also reemphasized that the 66-mile sector now formed by the Mano was not based on the thalweg of the river: "The boundary-line along all rivers and streams, other than the Mano River, shall be the 'thalweg,' and such rivers and streams shall be open to the free navigation of both countries."

The 18-mile meridian sector is part of the boundary delimited by the proces verbal of 1903 between the thalwegs of the Morro and Mauwa. The 13th meridian west of Paris was defined as 10°39'46".5 W. of Greenwich by the 1903 proces verbal. Although available information does not indicate a redefinition of the line by treaty, the meridian of approximately 10°36'18" W. of Greenwich was demarcated with 69 pillars or cairns by a boundary commission in 1930.

The convention of January 21, 1911, which transferred the territory east of the 1903 meridian from Liberia to Sierra Leone, determined the boundary to be the thalwegs of the

Mauwa and Magowi for 25 miles and then various small rivers and straight-line segments for 30 miles to the Guinea tripoint located on the left bank of the Makona. In 1913–14 the Anglo–Liberian commission delimited and demarcated the sector from north to south by 165 pillars or cairns and the thalwegs of 95 small rivers or streams. The proces verbal of the commission, containing the boundary information, was approved in an agreement of June 19–26, 1917.

The alignment of the sector between the Makona and Magowi, in accordance with the agreement of 1917, is as follows:

The boundary starts on the left bank of the river Makona (Moa) at the point where the Dundugbia stream flows into the Makona from the south-east; from thence the boundary proceeds up the centre of the bed of the Dundugbia to where the Pe Ye flows into the Dundugbia on its left bank:

thence up the bed of the Pe Ye to its source and from there in a straight line 112^x at 224° true to a cairn on the Bedu (B)—Mendikoma (L) road:[3]

the above cairn also marks the head of the Pe Kpondo stream, down the bed of which the boundary proceeds to where the Pe Kpondo joins the Pe Loli: thence down the bed of the Pe Loli to where the Pe Loli joins the Pe Lakondo: thence down the bed of the Pe Lakondo to where the Pe Lakondo joins the Pe Balu:

thence up the bed of the Pe Balu to where the Bundekwala joins the Pe Balu and up the Bundekwala to its source: this point is marked by a cairn on the Kondoma (B)—Kundaru (L) road:

from the above cairn in a straight line 72^x at 176° true to the head of the Pokie stream: down the bed of the Pokie to where it is joined by another stream from the west:

from the junction of these two streams in a straight line 200^x at 162° true to a cairn on the Bongbollu (B)—Pelu Aun (L) road:

from the above cairn in a straight line 150^x at 162° true to the head of the Pe Pulo: down the Pe Pulo to its junction with the Duya:

down the bed of the Duya to its junction with the Kassama:

up the bed of the Kassama to its junction with the Pe Balu:

up the bed of the Pe Balu to its south-eastern source;

thence in a straight line 100^x at 124° true to the head of the Burungburungdu which crosses the Kamagbodu (B)—Ngawkum (L) road:

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[3] The exponent "X" used on distance figures indicates the measurement is given in yards. The use of the capital "B" and "L" in parentheses indicates British and Liberian, respectively.

down the bed of this Burungburungdu to its junction with the Pondea: down the bed of the Pondea to its junction with the Pe Pau:

up the bed of the Pe Pau to its source:

from the source of the Pe Pau in a straight line 100^x at 240° true to the head of the Burungburungdu running into the Massabanga stream:

down the Massabanga to its junction with the Memangora:

down the Memangora to its junction with the Kwepea:

down the Kwepea to its junction with the Pe Pompo:

up the Pe Pompo to its source: from thence in a straight line 155^x at 220° true to a cairn on the Saama (B)—Sodu (L) road:

from the above cairn in a straight line 150^x at 240° true to the head of the Pe Porrong:

down the Pe Porrong to its junction with its southerly branch:

up this southerly branch of the Pe Porrong to its westerly source: thence in a straight line 190^x at 282° true to the head of the Burungburungdu which runs into the Pe Wunde:

up the Pe Wunde about 600^x to a point on its left bank:

thence in a straight line 150^x at 210° true to a cairn on the right bank of the Pe Singa:

up the Pe Singa about 530^x to the head of its western source:

thence in a straight line 75^x at 181° true to the head of the Pe Bimbe:

down the Pe Bimbe about 200^x south-west of the Bombodu (B)—Nyandessu (L) road to where a small affluent running about 342° true flows into the Pe Bimbe; up this affluent to its head: thence in a straight line 270^x at 160° true to the most northern source of the Kwake:

down this branch of the Kwake about 300^x to its junction with a branch from the south:

up this branch to its head:

thence in a straight line 130^x at 126° true to the most northern source of the Sunolore:

down this branch of the Sunolore to its junction with the most southern branch:

up this branch to its head:

thence in a straight line 180^x at 204° true to a cairn on the Konniandu (B)—Nyandessu (L) road:

from the above cairn in a straight line 340^x at 204° true to a cairn on the right bank of the Dakka river:

thence up the centre of the bed of the Dakka to its junction with the Pundea:

thence up the centre of the bed of the Pundea to its junction with the Bandabwilling:

up the Bandabwilling to its source on the Baamba (B)—Kongbama (L) road:

down a branch of the Lolokbaw to its junction with the branch from the south:

up the branch from the south to its source:

thence in a straight line 110^x at 168° true to a cairn on the Kodu Bendu (B)—Kongbama (L) road: thence in a straight line 40^x at 160° true to the head of the Kotu Bindi:

down the Kotu Bindi 230^x to where a small affluent joins it from the south-west:

up this affluent to its source; thence in a straight line 50^x at 208° true to the source of the Boia:

down the Boia—about 160^x —to its junction with the Niandia:

down the Niandia—about 500^x —to where a small affluent joins it from the south west:

up this affluent to its source: thence in a straight line 80^x at 240° true to the head of a small stream (no name).

down this stream about 200^x to its junction with a stream (no name) from the west:

up this stream about 200^x to its junction with a branch from the south:

up this branch about 500^x to its source:

thence in a straight line 250^x at 243° true to the highest point of Bandarada hill:

thence in a straight line 50^x at 145° true to a cairn on the Kodu Bendu (B)—Sadu Bendu (L) road:

thence in a straight line to the source of an affluent of the Pe Nuro (this point is 280^x at 160° true from No. 68 cairn):

down this affluent to its junction with the Pe Nuro:

down the Pe Nuro about $1,400^x$ to where a small affluent joins it from the west:

up this small affluent to its source.

thence in a straight line 90^x at 237° true to the head of the Pe Yanga:

down the Pe Yanga to its junction with the Koia:

down the Koia about 250^x to where it is joined by the Dalla Koia:

up the Dalla Koia to its source.

thence in a straight line 210^x at 234° true to a cairn on the Barradu (B)—Makaw (L) road:

from the above cairn 155^x at 242° true to a cairn in the Pe Haun.

thence 120^x down the Pe Haun to where it is joined by a small affluent from the west:

up the small affluent to its source:

thence in a straight line 30^x at 275° true to a cairn on the easterly road between Barradu (B) and Melima (L):

thence in a straight line 170^x at 265° true to a cairn on a small watercourse (no name):

thence in a straight line 85^x at 255° true to a cairn on the Pe Haun:

up the Pe Haun about 200^x to a small affluent which joins the Pe Haun from the west:

up this small affluent to a cairn on the Barradu (B) Melima (L) westerly road:

thence along the high ground about 240^x to the head of a branch of the Njede:

down this branch to its junction with the main stream of the Njede:

from above junction up another branch of the Njede to a cairn on the Kundaw Bengu (B) Gbemaru (L) road:

from the above cairn down the Pe Pompo to its junction with the Teya:

down the Teya to its junction with the Keya:

up the centre of the bed of the Keya about 170^x to where a small watercourse flowing north joins the Keya on its left bank:

up this small watercourse to it head:

thence in a straight line 520^x at 174° true to a cairn on the Kundunkawl (B)—Boya (L) road:

from the above cairn in a straight line 110^x at 202° true to the head of a small affluent running south into the Pe Pau: down this small affluent to its junction with the Pe Pau:

down the Pe Pau about 920^x to where a branch runs into it from the south-east:

up this branch about 500^x to where a small affluent runs into it from the south:

up this small affluent to its head:

thence in a straight line 330^x at 170° true to a cairn on the Lawa (B)—Dunggowa (L) road:

from the above cairn in a straight line 450^x at 194° true to a cairn on the Lawa (B)—Konniandu (L) road:

thence in a straight line 77^x at 184° true to where the old Lawa (B)—Konniandu (L) road crosses the Dundia river—(this place is known by a large slab of rock on the left bank of the Dundia):

thence about 75^x down the Dundia to where the Pe Shianda joins it from the south-east:

up the Pe Shianda about 230^x to where a small affluent joins it from the west:

up this small affluent to its head and on in a straight line to the head of the Pe Saia:

down the Pe Saia to its junction with a branch from the south-east:

up this branch to its head:

thence in a straight line 160^x at 160° true to the head of a small affluent of the Mendi Nuro:

down this affluent to its junction with the Mendi Nuro:

up the Mendi Nuro about 80^x at 62° true to where a branch joins it from the south:

up this branch to its head:

thence in a straight line 70^x at 157° true to a cairn on the Fangamadu (B)—Konniandu (L) road:

thence south about 110^x down a small affluent of the Sangedu stream:

down the Sangedu to a point about 520^x beyond where the Fangamadu (B)—Bolloning (L) road crosses the Sangedu:

thence in a straight line 240^x at 167° true to a point on the Fogbo river:

up the Fogbo about $2,200^x$ to a small affluent running into it from the south-east:

up this affluent to its head—about 30^x:

thence in a straight line 84^x at 158° true to the head of the north branch of the Letung:

down the north branch of the Letung about 300^x to its junction with a branch from the south-east:

up the south-east branch of the Letung about 350^x to the head of its southern source:

thence in a straight line 22^x at 133° true to a large Kurungkurungdu (Durre) tree:

from this tree in a straight line 74^x at 112° true to the head of the Pe Pompo:

down the Pe Pompo to its junction with the Gbakkanja:

down the Gbakkanja about 800^x to where the Pe Pompo flows into it from the south-east:

up the Pe Pompo to the head of its southern branch:

thence in a straight line 490^x at 222° true to a cairn on the right bank of the Mani:

down the centre of the Mani about 160^x to the junction of the Mani and the Gbondeng:

up the Gbondeng to the head of its southern branch:

from the head of the southern branch of the Gbondeng in a straight line 50^x at 230° true to the head of a small stream flowing west into the Boia:

down this small stream to its junction with the Boia—about 250^x:

up the bed of the Boia about 130^x to where a small stream flows into it from the west:

up this small stream to its source and thence in a straight line about 120^x at 300° true to the head of the Gberremma:

down the Gberremma to where the Pe Pompo flows into it from the south-east:

(the Pe Pompo flows down the re-entrant between the two masses of Bindimba hill):

up the Pe Pompo about 280^x to a point where the line leaves the Pe Pompo:

thence in a straight line 200^x at 280° true to a point on a stream (no name):

up this stream about 520^x to its source:

thence in a straight line 200^x at 220° true to the highest point of the southern summit of Bindimba hill:

thence in a straight line 300^x at 204° true to the head of an affluent of the Kotuya:

down this affluent to its junction with the Kotuya:

down the Kotuya to a point 500^x below where the Gorahum (B)—Togbombu (L) road crosses the Kotuya:

thence in a straight line 200^x at 290° true to the Pe Nkila:

up the Pe Nkila to its source: thence in a straight line 390^x at 215° true to the source of the Bettiye:

down the Bettiye to its junction with the Nikka Boia: down the Nikka Boia to where the Pe Banda flows into it from the west:

up the Pe Banda 360^x to its western source: thence in a straight line 170^x at 250° true to a large Banda (Ngue) tree:

thence in a straight line 190^x at 203° true to the head of an affluent of the Pe Pompo:

down this affluent to the Pe Pompo: down the Pe Pompo to the Magowi.

APPENDIX

I. Documents

1. Convention between Great Britain and Liberia, for the Settlement of certain Claims preferred by British Subjects against the Republic of Liberia, and for the Settlement of the North-Western Boundaries of the Republic. Signed at Freetown, November

11, 1885 [Ratifications exchanged at Monrovia, April 27, 1888]. <u>British and Foreign State Papers</u> (BFSP), Vol. 76 (1884–5), pp. 88–90.

2. <u>Proces-Verbal</u> drawn up by the Commissioners for the delimitation of the Anglo–Liberian Boundary. Signed at Mano Salija June 25, 1903. Edward Hertslet, <u>The Map of Africa by Treaty</u>, 3 vol., 3rd Edition (London: Harrison and Sons, 1909). Vol. 3, pp. 1136–40.

3. Convention between the United Kingdom and Liberia respecting the Boundary between Sierra Leone and Liberia. Signed at Monrovia, January 21, 1911 [Ratifications exchanged at Monrovia, May 13, 1911]. Great Britain <u>Treaty Series No. 16</u> (1911), <u>Cd. 5719</u>.

4. Agreement between the United Kingdom and Liberia respecting the Boundary between Sierra Leone and Liberia from the River Makona or Moa in the North to the River Magowi in the South [with map]. London, June 19/26, 1917. Great Britain <u>Treaty Series No. 9</u> (1917), <u>Cd. 8589</u>.

5. Exchange of Notes between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Liberian Government regarding the Boundary between Sierra Leone and Liberia. Monrovia, January 16/17, 1930. Great Britain <u>Treaty Series No. 17</u> (1930), <u>Cmd. 3543</u>.

II. <u>Maps</u>

<u>Sierra Leone</u> 1:50,000; published by the British Directorate of Overseas Surveys for the Sierra Leone Government; 1969-71; sheets (N to S) 72 (Koindu), 84 (Nyandehun), 83 (Pendembu), 94 (Baiwala), 104 (Faiama), 112 (Gorahun), 117 (Fairo), and 118 (Sulima).

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