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Navigating Trade and Interaction: *The British Navy Expedition to Aboh on the Niger River*

By Chuka Odike

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FEATURE
IMAGE

British navy expedition on the Niger River going to the Igbo town of Aboh. Photo From Views on the River Niger. London: John Murray And Ackerman, 1840.

Article image · caption retained from the published Ozikoro article

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The British Navy expedition to the Niger River, specifically to the Igbo town of Aboh, was part of a broader effort by the British to explore West Africa and establish trade relations. Aboh, led by its king at the time, Obi Ossai, was a significant Igbo trading center along the Niger River.

One of the early and notable expeditions was led by Captain William Allen, and the images and documentation from these expeditions were published in the book *Views on the River Niger* (1840). This book provides visual representations and accounts of the journey. The illustrations often depict the British naval vessels navigating the wide expanse of the river, encounters with local peoples, and views of the natural landscape.

The town of Aboh is portrayed as an essential stop for the British during their journey because of its strategic location for palm oil trade, a critical economic resource at the time in hinterland Igbo. The images from this publication typically include river scenes, native canoes, local settlements, and interactions between British explorers and the indigenous population.

This expedition is significant in the context of British interest in the Niger River for both trade and the eventual colonization of the region. It also marked one of the first attempts at deeper interaction between the British and the people of the lower Niger, including the Anioma people and Igbo in general.

Allen, W. (1840). Views on the River Niger. London: John Murray and Ackerman.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chuka Odiike

I'm a dedicated civil engineer with a passion for infrastructure development and community empowerment. With a strong background in engineering, my work focuses on creating sustainable solutions for urban and rural development projects. Outside of my professional career, I'm deeply interested in Igbo history and culture. I actively explores ways to impact society by using historical lessons to inspire and educate others about the rich cultural heritage of the Igbo people, aiming to bridge tradition and modern development.



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