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Eboe Town: *A Cultural Landmark of Igbo Heritage in Belize*

By Chuka Odike

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FEATURE
IMAGE

**Eboe Town in Belize City, Belize in
the 1829 Honduras almanack.
Columbia University.**

Article image · caption retained from the published Ozikoro article

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It existed until the mid-19th century, when it was destroyed by fire, but played a significant role in shaping the local Creole culture. The town's population was predominantly of Igbo (Eboe) descent, along with individuals from other African groups such as the Ashanti from Ghana. According to Renate Johanna Mayr in *Belize: Tracking the Path of Its History* (2014), members of the "Eboe" tribe were particularly well represented in the Bay Settlement. Auctioneers in Kingston, Jamaica, often advertised "Eboe Negroes" as prime choices, as noted in historical documents.

Eboe Town, a significant historical neighborhood in Belize City (formerly known as the Bay Settlement), emerged as a center of African culture in the early 19th century, with a notable presence of Igbo descendants, alongside individuals from other African ethnic groups, such as the Ashanti from present-day Ghana. Predominantly settled by enslaved Africans brought to Belize through British trade networks, Eboe Town played an essential role in forming the Creole identity and social fabric of the region. The town's name, "Eboe," likely originated from a localized pronunciation of "Igbo," reflecting the high representation of Igbo people in Belize during this period.

According to historian Renate Johanna Mayr in *Belize: Tracking the Path of Its History* (2014), Igbo individuals were well-represented in the Bay Settlement, and in Jamaica, auctioneers specifically advertised "Eboe Negroes," highlighting the Igbo's reputation as hard-working laborers. Historical documents suggest that Igbo culture strongly influenced local traditions, language, and practices in the settlement.

The Eboe people settled in a specific area near the mouth of the Belize

River, which later became Belize City. Historical maps continued to refer to this section as “Eboe Town” until the 1850s.

Located strategically at the mouth of the Belize River, Eboe Town functioned as a communal hub where descendants of African heritage, particularly the Igbo, preserved and shared their cultural identities. This area remained an identifiable landmark on local maps until a fire in the mid-19th century led to its destruction. However, its impact on Belizean culture and society is preserved in local narratives and oral histories collected by institutions like Belize’s National Institute for Culture and History (NICH)

For more information, see the Eboe Town oral history from the Institute for Social and Cultural Research (NICH).

The enduring legacy of Eboe Town highlights how African diasporic communities contributed to shaping the identity of the Caribbean and Central America, with Igbo cultural practices, spiritual beliefs, and community structures continuing to resonate in Belizean Creole culture.

Mayr, R. J. (2014). Belize: Tracking the path of its history. LIT Verlag Münster.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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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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