Ghana Republic Souvenir
Ghana Information Services, on behalf of the Government of Ghana, wish to take this opportunity of thanking those who have helped to produce this record of the events of 1st July 1960. In particular they wish to thank Keith Jopp who wrote the text, J. G. Amamoo for his eye-witness accounts of the events, Kofi Antubam, who was responsible for designing the symbols of the new Parliamentary Chamber and the State Regalia, and who has supplied the references for the descriptions on chapter 6.

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Foreword

By Tawia Adamafio
Minister of Information and Broadcasting

No event could be of greater importance in the history of our country than that of the 1st July 1960, and the days which followed the promulgation of the Republican Constitution for Ghana. It is with real pleasure, therefore, that I introduce this souvenir of a great occasion.

The Ghana of today is rooted deeply in the past history of the African continent, and her peoples are traditionally linked with the members of the vast Sudanic empires which flourished more than a thousand years ago. The induction into office of our first President, Osagyefo Dr Kwame Nkrumah, one of the greatest sons of Africa of all time, was an occasion which links us with a great cultural, artistic, and political heritage which is entirely African, entirely indigenous, and upon which many of the symbols and ceremonies of Republican Ghana are based.

This souvenir, therefore, has been compiled not only to record the historical fact of our modern development, or to portray with a wealth of colourful pictorial detail the greatness of a great occasion, but also to underline the meaning and significance of the many forms of traditional symbolism adopted for the new Republic. Indeed, it may be said in some measure to interpret the Republic itself—the only form of democratic government historically logical to our peoples.

The aims and aspirations of our young nation are frequently and sometimes wilfully misunderstood and misinterpreted. It is my hope that this publication will serve to enlighten our critics and remove some of the misunderstandings which exist outside our borders.

June 1962

[Signature]
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'History,' wrote Sir Walter Raleigh in the preface to his History of the World, 'hath triumphed over time.'

Like all great truths, these words find their echo down the ages. Wherever history is made, time's order is overthrown and centuries are spanned as swiftly as minutes.

So with the new Republic of Ghana. The inauguration of the first President, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, on 1st July 1960 was an event which linked this rapidly developing country in West Africa with a great empire that flourished in the Western Sudan for a thousand years before it was overthrown by Islam in 1076. For, according to tradition, the ancestors of the present people of Ghana were members of this ancient Ghana Empire who fled south before the invaders and found refuge in the West African forest area, later to be known as Ashanti, and along the coastal plains.

Against a background of such antiquity, the 'discovery' of the Gold Coast by Portuguese gold traders in 1471, and the coast's subsequent contact with the English, Dutch, Swedes, Danes and Brandenburgers, must seem comparatively recent. Moreover, it was not until the nineteenth century that Europeans reached the interior and only in the twentieth century was British rule - which began with the Bond of 1844 between Queen Victoria and certain chiefs along the coast - established throughout the country.

Modern Ghana is thus rooted far more deeply in ancient African history than is often realised. But the new Republic is significant for still other reasons than this. With its birth, the struggle for freedom which reached its peak in the years after the second world war was brought to a close.

Much has been written about this struggle, for it captured the imagination not only of dependent Africa but of thinking people everywhere. The formation of the Convention People's Party by Dr. Nkrumah in 1949 with the battle cry of 'Self-Government Now'; the party's positive action policy which led to the imprisonment of Nkrumah and other party members in 1950; the 1951 general election from which the CPP emerged victorious; the immediate release from
prison of Dr Nkrumah to take office, first, as Leader of Government Business and, later, as Prime Minister; the 1954 constitution whereby the country became virtually self-governing; and the continued pursuit by the CPP government of full independence which was eventually achieved on 6th March 1957 amid nationwide rejoicing – all these events have been too fully described elsewhere to need detailed repetition here.

What does require emphasis is the fact that, even with the attainment of full independence, the constitution of Ghana had nevertheless been enacted, not by Ghana’s own legislature, but by the Parliament of the United Kingdom. Thus it provided for a system of parliamentary government similar to that of the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth countries, in which Parliament consisted of the Queen and the National Assembly, the latter being elected for five years on a basis of universal adult suffrage.

Clearly, it is a fundamental right of a free and independent people to make their own constitution. Moreover, though the constitution which had been inherited from the United Kingdom Parliament had served the newly independent Ghana well enough, it embraced provisions, institutions and customs which were deeply alien to the country’s history and traditional way of life. As a result, as Ghana herself matured into freedom, the need for constitutional reform became more and more insistent.

But even this is still not the full story behind the new Republic. At no stage along the hard road to freedom did the government of Ghana regard independence as an end in itself. Seven years, almost to the day, before his inauguration as President, Dr Nkrumah tabled a Motion of Destiny in the Assembly. The actual date was 10th July 1953 and in his speech introducing the Motion the Prime Minister (as he was then) declared: ‘Self-government is a means to an end, to the building of the good life to the benefit of all, regardless of tribe, creed, colour or station in life. Our aim is to make this country a worthy place for all its citizens, a country that will be a shining light throughout the whole continent of Africa, giving inspiration far beyond its frontiers.’

These words express an ambition far broader than independence, an ambition covering both the country’s internal development and the role it felt called upon to play in resurgent Africa. As far as the former objective is concerned, there can be no doubt that much has been achieved, though much still remains to be done. In the ten years that have passed since the CPP first became the governing party, a revolution has taken place in almost every sphere of the national life, from education, health and social services to the provision of adequate communications and public services and the diversification of agriculture and industry which is recognised to be essential if the country’s economic dependence on cocoa is to be reduced.

As far as Ghana’s external influence is concerned, the record is no less impressive. It includes, among other notable achievements, the historic conference of In-
dependent African States held in Accra in 1958, the Union of Ghana and Guinea in 1958 and of Ghana, Guinea and Mali in 1961, and, of course, Ghana's strong support of the United Nations, her resolute condemnation of apartheid in South Africa and her important contribution towards solving the crisis in the Congo.

Once again, the policy behind all this is best expressed by quoting from a speech on foreign policy given by Dr Nkrumah in December 1959: 'In Ghana we regard our independence as meaningless unless we are able to use the freedom that goes with it to help other African people to be free and independent, to liberate the entire continent of Africa from foreign domination and ultimately to establish a Union of African States.'

It is against this wider objective that the decision to adopt a republican constitution must be set if it is to be seen in its true perspective. For, just as political independence was essential to the country's social and economic progress, so constitutional reform was essential if Ghana were to play her part in the great and ultimate aim of Africa free and united.
The New Constitution

‘The political personality of Ghana has matured with astounding rapidity. We have passed from internal self-government to sovereign independence within four years and in three years more have produced and ratified a republican constitution as unique among the constitutions of the world as the spirit of the nation it expresses.’

So spoke the last Governor-General of Ghana, His Excellency the Earl of Listowel, PC, at the farewell state dinner held in his honour at the Ambassador Hotel, Accra, on Wednesday 29th June 1960.

Yet, rapid as was the change-over to republicanism, it was made, as Lord Listowel was later to declare, ‘in accordance both with the letter and the spirit of the present constitution.’

Thus, as a first step, a Bill was presented to and passed by the National Assembly – a Bill to which Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, as Head of State, gave her Royal Assent and which became the Constituent Assembly and Plebiscite Act. Under this Act, a Constituent Assembly, composed of members of the National Assembly, was set up with power to enact a Republican form of Constitution.

The Government then laid its proposals for the new constitution before the Assembly on the principle that ‘it is the duty of the Government and of the elected representatives of the people in the Constituent Assembly to advise what is, in their view, the most suitable form for the Constitution of the Republic of Ghana.’

At the same time, however, the draft constitution clearly recognised that ultimately all powers of the State come from the people and that it was for the people, and not primarily for the Constituent Assembly, to determine the form of the Constitution. Accordingly, the Constituent Assembly, after discussing and approving the Government’s draft, proceeded to submit the proposals to the people by way of a plebiscite.

The plebiscite itself was held between 19th and 26th April 1960 and was heralded in a broadcast to the nation by the Prime Minister on the evening of 6th March.

‘On this day,’ Dr Nkrumah began, ‘the third anniversary of our Independence, I salute you, people of Ghana, and ask you all to look ahead with me into the future.'
'As you know, there has for some time been a great desire by many of us that Ghana should adopt a Republican form of government. With this in mind, the Government has drawn up proposals for a new Republican Constitution.

'You, people of Ghana, are asked to study these proposals and, with the best interests of the country foremost in your minds, to decide whether or not these constitutional proposals are acceptable.

'The Convention People’s Party and the Government believe that the authority to govern a State should spring from the people and that the people’s right to exercise these powers is based on the principle of “one man – one vote”. Only when this principle is adopted throughout the length and breadth of Africa can the misery and oppression which prevail in many parts of this continent come to an end. It is our aim to strive with all our might to bring this about.'

The Prime Minister then went on to outline the proposals whereby Ghana should become a Sovereign Unitary Republic, with Parliament, consisting of a President and the National Assembly, as the supreme law-making body. He concluded:

'Countrymen, Ghana depends on each one of you to do your duty and I feel sure that you will rise to the occasion and do it well.'
The weeks following this broadcast were taken up with preparations for the plebiscite and with Presidential campaigns. For, in addition to expressing their views on the proposed Constitution, Ghanaians were also to be asked to choose between the Prime Minister and Dr J. B. Danquah to fill the office of first President – provided, of course, that the change-over to republicanism were approved.

In the event, the double function of the plebiscite proved a sensible and time-saving precaution. For the results on the constitutional issue showed that the people of Ghana were overwhelmingly in favour of a Republic, the actual voting figures being 1,092,692 in favour and 131,393 against. The decision concerning the choice of first President was similarly clear-cut. Dr Nkrumah polled 1,015,740 votes and Dr Danquah 124,623 votes.

Clearly, the country had provided the Government with all the support it needed for its proposals. Accordingly a bill was framed for the new Constitution and after various amendments the final text was agreed to by the Constituent Assembly on 29th June.

Meanwhile, early in May, Dr Nkrumah had attended the Commonwealth Prime Ministers’ Conference in London. Here he announced the results of the plebiscite and expressed his country’s wish to remain within the Commonwealth after becoming a Republic – a proposal which was unanimously approved.

In this way, with due observance of constitutional procedure and with complete adherence to the principles of democracy, the state of Ghana formulated and ratified the fundamental principles according to which her people should be governed.

There remain those principles themselves. As Lord Listowel said, they are unique among the constitutions of the world, for they have been evolved after careful
consideration of the historical form of government in Ghana in the past and with
the express purpose of enshrining the country’s own traditions while meeting her
present and future needs.

Thus, the concept of a ceremonial head of state, who reigns but does not govern,
is quite contrary to the historical tradition and true character of Ghana. For centu-
ries, the Ghana people were governed by their Chiefs – Chiefs to whom they gave
great powers, but only so long as they scrupulously observed the traditional code
of conduct appropriate to their high office, and dealt justly with their people. The
moment they deviated from these rules they were deposed. It is in recognition of
this traditional and essentially democratic form of government that the Constitu-
tion of Ghana provides for a President who is Head of Government as well as Head
of State and who is responsible to the people by whom he is elected.

At the same time, the Constitution has been so devised that as far as possible the
person chosen as President shall be the leader of the majority party in the Assembly.
This has been done in the conviction that, to ensure a healthy political life, political
parties in Ghana must be organised on a national basis. Thus the President is closely
linked to his party and to the National Assembly, since he is advised by a cabinet
of not less than eight ministers who must all be members of the Assembly. Moreover,
though he is not himself a member of the Assembly, he is entitled to address
it and to send messages to it when he so desires.

In this way, both the National Assembly and the political party which wins a
general election are closely associated in the running of the State, for only thus
can strong and efficient government be secured in Ghana.

The National Assembly itself retains its one-chamber structure and continues to
be elected by the people on the basis of universal adult suffrage with a general
election and, simultaneously, a Presidential election, once at least in every five
years. The President can dissolve the Assembly before the five-year period ends,
but in doing so he must submit himself for re-election – a provision which ensures
that any conflict between the National Assembly and the President will be resolved
by the decision of the people.

Parliament, which consists of the President and the National Assembly, retains
so much of the legislative power of the State as is not reserved by the Constitution
to the people. On the other hand, Parliament has no direct power to alter the basic
principles of the Constitution. Only the people can do this, and only after they have
been consulted in a referendum ordered by the President will Parliament be en-
titled to make any law which alters these basic principles.

Again, Parliament cannot make any law which extends its own life, for it is
essential that the people should be regularly consulted on the choice of President
and of members of the National Assembly.

No less essential is the fact that the Constitution is based firmly on the rule of
law and leaves no scope for arbitrary action or for discrimination against any
individual or community. Thus, it guarantees the existence and the judicial powers
of the Supreme Court (which has become, under the Republic, the final Court of Appeal), the tenure of office of judges and of the auditor-general. It also specifies that no taxation can be imposed or armed forces raised, except by the authority of Parliament.

Moreover, this insistence on the rule of law is further emphasised by a provision which requires that a new President must declare his adherence to certain fundamental principles which recognise the ultimate authority of the people and the need to preserve freedom and justice and the independence of Ghana from alien domination.

And finally, attention is drawn to two other, most important, provisions contained in Articles 49 and 50 and in Article 2 of the Constitution.

The first of these provisions concerns the country’s historical background. Thus, under Articles 49 and 50 it is written that ‘there shall be a House of Chiefs for each Region of Ghana’ and that each House ‘shall have such functions relating to customary law and other matters as may be provided by law.’ In short, the Constitution guarantees Chieftaincy in Ghana and in doing so pays tribute to the country’s traditional form of government – a form in which, as we have seen, its own democratic roots are to be found.

Article 2, on the other hand, looks to the future and is alone sufficient to justify the use of the epithet ‘unique’ to describe the Constitution. This was the article to which Dr Nkrumah referred in his pre-plebiscite speech when he said: ‘So deep is our faith in African unity that we have declared our preparedness to surrender the sovereignty of Ghana, in whole or in part, in the interest of a union of African States and territories as soon as ever such a union becomes practicable. The keynote of the Constitution which we are putting before you is: one man – one vote and the unity of Africa, namely, the political union of African countries.’

Never before in the history of nations has an independent state so declared its willingness to surrender its sovereignty to the greater ideal of international strength and unity.
On 1st July 1960, Ghana became a sovereign unitary Republic within the Common-wealth of Nations. But there was far more to this historic occasion than the day of climax itself. Ceremonies and functions had to be performed to usher in the new era and farewells had to be made to old friends and past associations.

On the purely practical level, seemingly endless preparations had to be made for the visitors flocking to Accra, the capital city and focal point of the celebrations. From towns and villages all over Ghana, from many other countries throughout the vast continent of Africa, from Asia and Europe, from Australia and the Americas, they would come in their thousands and tens of thousands. Some would be official delegates, bearing messages of friendship and good will from their people at home to the new Republic; others would be private well-wishers; still others would be specially invited guests; many would be interested spectators with a job to do – reporters, cameramen, photographers. All would be welcomed, and made to feel at home.

So it was that, as the end of June approached, the tempo of life in Accra, always brisk and bustling, reached a new crescendo. Miles of coloured lights began to unwind along the main roads and thoroughfares – a complex web spun across the face of the city promising glittering nights to come. In the business quarters, bunting billowed and flags flew as stores and offices covered the face of commerce with the colours of rejoicing – and hoped for fine weather.

Workers on their way home at the end of the day would pause to watch the spectators’ stands going up outside Parliament House and the State House and remember, with a mixture of nostalgia and anticipated pleasure, the days of the celebration that had accompanied Independence three years before.

In front of the Ambassador Hotel, where most of the official delegates and many distinguished guests would be staying, the flag posts were erected one by one, ready for the flags of the nations that would share, through their representatives, in Ghana’s coming jubilation. Britain, the United States of America, the Soviet Union, Pakistan, Czechoslovakia, Holland, Switzerland, Italy, Australia, Ceylon, Canada, Germany, India, France, Japan, Belgium, Malaya, the United Arab Re-
public, Mali, Libya, the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, Algeria, Guinea, the Cameroons, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Morocco, Tunisia – before long, all these would find their colours flying in the clear Accra air.

Elsewhere, too, the hum of activity resounded. In ministries and government departments, proclamations were being drafted, warrants drawn up, designs considered. All over the city, school children were being rehearsed and armed forces drilled for the grand parade to be held at Accra Sports Stadium on 2nd July. Last, but by no means least, the Government printers were kept hard at work on a small library of publications connected with the Republic, including the Official Programme of the Inaugural Celebrations.

The first event on this programme was for Wednesday 29th June at 8 pm,
Kroho Edssel, Minister of Transport and Communications, greeting members of the Russian delegation.

J. N. Foncha, Premier of Southern Cameroons, stepping from his aircraft at Accra.
The Earl of Listowel, the last Governor-General, inspecting the guard of honour outside Parliament on 30th June.

Sir Milton Margai, Prime Minister of Sierra Leone, at Accra airport.
and it proved to be one of the most splendid occasions in the five days of pomp and splendour that followed. Then, under the glittering lights of the Ambassador Hotel’s Arden Hall, named after Sir Charles Noble Arden Clarke, the governor under whose wise guidance the Gold Coast had entered Independence three years before and who had become Ghana’s first Governor-General, a State Dinner was held for the Earl of Listowel, the country’s last Governor-General.

It was also an occasion tinged with sadness. As the Prime Minister said in his speech at the dinner: ‘I know that I am speaking for every Ghanaian when I say that our feelings tonight are those of both joy and sadness. We are happy to have reached the end of the road and are looking forward with every confidence to our new life in our Republic . . . But we are indeed sorry that all this means we have to say goodbye to Lord Listowel.’

Yet the time for final parting had not come yet. On Thursday morning at 9 am, Lord Listowel performed his last State function – the prorogation of Parliament. His opening words were stirringly simple: ‘I come to prorogue this Parliament and to bid you all farewell. By midnight tonight, the Monarchy of Ghana will cease and a new Republic will be born.’ And he ended with this message from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II:

‘Mr Speaker and Members of the National Assembly:

‘From midnight tonight I shall cease to be your Queen. In one sense, this is the end of an old association which began just over one hundred years ago when, on behalf of my great great grandmother, the late Queen Victoria, Governor McLean signed the Bond of 1844.

‘This formal relationship, thus begun, gradually developed until Ghana became
in March 1957 a fully independent nation of which I was Queen. I rejoice to note the great strides in development, education and social services which have taken place in Ghana since independence, and I am happy to think that these are carrying to completion the devoted work performed over so many years under my sovereignty and that of my predecessors...

'I am proud that I am Head of a Commonwealth in which every nation may choose for itself the form of Government which best suits it; now that Ghana has chosen for itself a Republican form of Constitution, it will not affect the interest which I have always taken and shall continue to take in the welfare of its people...

'On this last occasion when I shall have the opportunity of addressing you as your Queen, I wish to convey to the President elect, the Members of the National Assembly and the people of Ghana, my best wishes for the future. I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may guide the destinies of the new Republic and secure peace and happiness for its people.'

So spoke the Queen. Nor was the Prime Minister any less conscious of the solemnity of the occasion. After paying tribute on behalf of the National Assembly to the Governor-General, he emphasised that Ghana had adopted a Republican Constitution 'not through any lack of affection for Her Majesty, nor because of any dissatisfaction with the way in which the Office of Governor-General has been discharged... but because of our convictions that we need a form of Government which will more truly interpret the aspiration and hopes of the people of Ghana and give full expression to the African personality.'

Dr Nkrumah then reminded his listeners that, just as the Governor-General must feel sorrow at leaving Ghana, he too felt a similar sorrow in that this was the last occasion upon which he would speak in the House as Prime Minister and a Member of the National Assembly.

'This National Assembly,' he continued, 'has been an historic body. I have known it from its beginning. I have lived in it. I have seen it carry through great constitutional changes. I myself have been a fighter within its ramparts. It has been the foundry which has forged and moulded the new framework of our Nation.'
‘Though from midnight tonight I shall cease to be a Member of Parliament and cease to be an active participant in this august Assembly, I am certain that I shall not lose that personal and intimate connection which I have established with this House. I believe that no constitutional change can affect the personal bonds which have been established in the ten years that we have worked together . . .

‘I realise, however, from my own regrets at leaving the Assembly, how much greater a break it must be for the Governor-General both to leave office and to depart from Ghana. Our good wishes and our goodwill go with him, and I am certain that, though he may no longer be Governor-General of Ghana, many opportunities will occur in the future for fruitful co-operation between us.’

Then, for the last time, Dr Nkrumah spoke the words he had so often spoken in the past.

‘Mr Speaker, I beg to move.’

The time was 10.15, but a full morning still lay ahead. First, there was the return drive of the Governor-General to the State House where at 11 am the Speaker of the National Assembly gave a party for Members of Parliament. Then, at 12.30, the Prime Minister held a reception at Flagstaff House, while at 1 o’clock members of the Diplomatic Corps were entertained to luncheon by the Governor-General.

Meanwhile, incoming planes were arriving thick and fast at Accra international airport where the Minister responsible for protocol, Mr Krobo Edusei, had gone time and time again during the past three days to welcome official delegations and important visitors.

An early and most important arrival was that of President Sekou Toure of Guinea who reached Accra with his official party on 28th June. In view of the special links between Ghana and Guinea, Dr Nkrumah was at the airport to meet him, and so was a large and enthusiastic crowd. After inspecting a guard of honour mounted by the Ghana Regiment, M Sekou Touré drove off to the State House with Dr Nkrumah along a route lined with thousands of cheering Ghanaians and Guineans resident in Ghana.

Other internationally-known figures who had also arrived by Wednesday included Lord Hailsham, leader of the United Kingdom delegation; General K. M. Sheikh, Minister of the Interior, Pakistan; Sir Milton Margai, Prime Minister, Sierra Leone; V. K. Krishna Menon, India’s Defence Minister; President Modibo Keita of the Mali Federation, and many more.

The complement of VIPs was approaching full strength, too. The most venerable – and one of the most venerated – of these was Dr W. E. B. DuBois, the nonagenarian President of the National Association for Advancement of Colored People. It must have been a most moving moment for the doctor, who has been described as the chief architect of Pan-Africanism, as his plane touched down on Ghana’s soil, since for years he had not been permitted to leave the United States and had thus missed Ghana’s independence celebrations.
Dr Nkrumah speaking at the state banquets at the Ambassador Hotel given to the Earl of Listowel prior to his departure from Ghana.

The first President of Ghana, Osagyefo Dr Kwame Nkrumah, in the grounds of Government House, Osu, formerly known as Christiansborg Castle.
It must also have been a delight to him to find himself among his fellow guests, all of whom had in one way or another contributed to Ghana’s progress and welfare. Fenner Brockway, the British MP who has for so long championed the cause of dependent peoples; Dr Clark Belfield, the renowned West Indian physician; Mrs Richards, a British housewife noted for her assistance and hospitality to Ghanaian students in London; Mr and Mrs Claude Barnett, the well-known Negro journalists; Dr Hastings Banda, leader of the Nyasaland Malawi Party; Mr Walter Phillips, Chairman of the Board of the Trustees of Lincoln University, USA, where Dr Nkrumah studied and taught – all these, and again many more, had been invited by the Ghana government and by 6.15 on the eve of Republic Day most of them had been safely gathered in.

And now it was time for the Governor-General to make his farewell broadcast to the nation. As earlier that day in the Assembly, Lord Listowel began by reviewing Ghana’s achievements in the political, economic and social fields. Then he went on to consider the distinguishing qualities of the people of Ghana as he had come to know them – their happiness, good humour and tolerance.

‘If I had to single out one characteristic,’ the Governor-General declared, ‘it would be that of tolerance. In many parts of the world today we can see the sad and
sordid spectacle of racial intolerance, and all the sorrow and tragedy that follow it.

‘As we all know, Ghana has had its critics since it became a free and sovereign nation. But no one can possibly deny the just claim of the Government and people of this country that we have here a genuinely tolerant society, in which people of many races are living together in peace and security, and working for the common good of the country in an atmosphere of real friendship and understanding. This is a remarkable achievement and one of which every person in Ghana can be proud.’

The broadcast ended with a message of goodwill to ‘your new President and my old friend, Dr Kwame Nkrumah’ and to the people of Ghana, wishing them ‘every success and much happiness in the future. Good night, and good luck to you all.’

An hour later, at the airport where a large crowd had assembled as a mark of affection and respect, Lord Listowel boarded the special Ghana Airways plane which was to take him away from the country he had served so well. Under brilliant floodlights and to the ceremonial playing of the Ghana Police band, he had been received by Dr Nkrumah, inspected the guard of honour and shaken hands with Government Ministers and other dignitaries.

Now, as he stood a solitary figure in his uniform at the entrance to the plane, the first guns of a 21-gun salute were fired by a detachment of the Ghana Army and the last fanfare was sounded.

Within a matter of minutes, the plane had taxied along the runway and was airborne. For a second, it seemed to hover, caught in the floodlights. Briefly, almost unbelievably, the crowds could see a smiling face, a waving hand, and the sound of their cheering rose in response. Then the plane was lost to sight in the deep tropical night.
CHAPTER 4

Republic Day

With the departure of the country’s last Governor-General, the hours of the monarchy in Ghana were fast running out. As midnight struck on that night of 30th June, the ships lying in Accra harbour blew their sirens and the bells all over the city tolled out. The Republic was now an official fact.

But it still remained to transform the fact into a living reality and the next five days were devoted, triumphantly, to this. Triumphantly, because there was much to celebrate. Not only was the Constitution the form of government which the people themselves had chosen fairly and freely. It also honoured, as a later chapter shows, their age-old traditions and customs. What could be more natural than that the spirit of tradition should respond in kind?

In the event, the response proved overwhelming. The art of celebration has always come naturally to the people of Ghana and there was much drumming and dancing and singing in Accra and elsewhere during these five days. There was also much pomp and splendour as the Chiefs and the people arrayed themselves in all the glowing brilliancy of their traditional robes.

This, then, was the pattern of celebration – a pattern of solemnity and joy, of thoughtfulness and exuberance, which began early on the morning of Republic Day at the State House. Here, in the Great Hall, Dr Kwame Nkrumah was installed as the first President of the Republic of Ghana before leading citizens of the country and official delegates from abroad.

For the first time in the modern history of the country, an official function was accompanied by the playing of the traditional Atupan drums. For the first time, too, the State Crier made his announcement in a language of Ghana, and for the first time the Sword of State, the Presidential Chair and the President’s Personal Standard were used.

All these things represented a break with the immediate past and a return to the country’s age-old heritage. As such they would be recognised and welcomed throughout the country. Meanwhile, the focus of attention centred on the President’s Oath of Office:

‘I, Kwame Nkrumah, do solemnly swear that I will well and truly exercise the
‘I, Kwame Nkrumah, do solemnly swear that I will well and truly exercise the functions of the high office of President of Ghana . . .’

Ghana’s first President on the balcony of the State House, after he had taken the solemn oath of office.
functions of the high office of President of Ghana, that I will bear true faith and allegiance to Ghana, that I will preserve and defend the Constitution, and that I will do right to all manner of people according to law, without fear or favour, affection or ill-will. So help me God.'

To the people massed in the grounds of the State House and beyond, the Atupan drums sounded the news that the oath had been duly taken. Then followed the President’s solemn Constitutional Declaration:

‘On accepting the call of the people to the high office of President of Ghana, I, Kwame Nkrumah, solemnly declare my adherence to the following fundamental principles:

‘That the powers of Government spring from the will of the people and should be exercised in accordance therewith.

‘That freedom and justice should be honoured and maintained.

‘That the union of Africa should be striven for by every lawful means and, when attained, should be faithfully preserved.

‘That the Independence of Ghana should not be surrendered or diminished on any grounds other than the furtherance of African unity.

‘That no person should suffer discrimination on grounds of sex, race, tribe, religion or political belief.

‘That Chieftaincy in Ghana should be guaranteed and preserved.

‘That every citizen of Ghana should receive his fair share of the produce yielded by the development of the country.

‘That, subject to such restrictions as may be necessary for preserving public order, morality or health, no person should be deprived of freedom of religion or speech, of the right to move and assemble without hindrance or of the right of access to courts of law.

‘That no person should be deprived of his property save where the public interest so requires and the law so provides.’

Again the drums sounded, the talking drums of Ghana, beating out their messages: ‘Listen, Ghana! Listen, Ghana! Noble Tweneboa Kodua, the drummer, has bestirred himself to bring the people news of their President, ‘head of a nation of free men... Ghana’s symbol of freedom’ and to wish him: ‘Live long, live long, live to a good old age. Life to Ghana! Life to Africa’!

Cheering broke out as the drumming ceased, and grew deafening as the President appeared on the balcony of the State House. He stood motionless to receive a 21-gun salute, then, with President Sekou Touré at his side, he waved to acknowledge the applause of the crowd.

It was a gesture which President Nkrumah was to repeat countless times that day, yet it was one which he continued to make with obvious pleasure, always smilingly and buoyantly. And this despite an official programme which had begun with his arrival at the State House at 8.23 that morning and would not end until more than twelve hours later.
Ministers taking their oaths of office as members of the first Cabinet of the Republic of Ghana. LEFT, Krobo Edusei, Minister of Transport and Communications (later Minister of Industries) and BELOW, E. K. Bensah, Minister of Works and Housing (later Minister of Construction and Communications).
President Kwame Nkrumah with members of his Government. On his right is Sekou Touré, President of Guinea, and on his left is Sir K. A. Korshah, Chief Justice of Ghana.

President Sekou Touré speaking at the state luncheon held in the Ambassador Hotel.
Thus, immediately after his inauguration, he set off on a state drive of the city in an open car with President Sekou Touré still at his side. For mile after mile he remained standing in the car to receive the ovation of hundreds and thousands of Ghanaians from all walks of life.

Then, on his return to the State House, he issued commissions to the Chief Justice, appointed his first Cabinet and other Ministers and approved the institution of Ghana’s own orders, awards and honours, all of which were set forth in the Republic Day issue of the Ghana Gazette published later that morning.

His next public engagement came at 6 o’clock, when he made his first broadcast to the nation as President. Under the circumstances, he might well have permitted himself the luxury of complacency, couched in a few well-chosen words, but his actual speech struck a very different note. As the first few seconds showed, this was to be no stock ‘ceremonial’ broadcast, but a stirring call to the people of Ghana to mobilise themselves for a new revolution – the national revolution for economic and social reconstruction and the national effort to build Ghana into a beautiful and prosperous nation.

This, Dr Nkrumah warned, was a prodigious task, calling for iron determination, great sacrifices and for unity and co-operation among all the people.

Then, turning to world affairs, he condemned those African leaders ‘who are attempting to temporise by arranging behind the backs of their people’ and reaffirmed his country’s complete support for African unity in the following words:

‘We shall not relax in our efforts to foster the concept of African unity and the creation of real political union of African States and I feel confident that in time our African compatriots will come to see our line and to know that Africa’s sala-
tion lies only in a political union of African States.'

A few minutes later, and the President was on his way to the Accra racecourse. Here, a display of fireworks was to round off the official celebrations for the day, but first Dr Nkrumah had yet another important function to perform and another speech to make. The function was the lighting of the flame of African freedom, and the speech, which preceded it needs to be quoted in full:

‘Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen:

‘We have come here tonight to light the torch of African Freedom. This perpetual flame which we are about to light will not only enshrine the spirit of the Republic of Ghana, but will also provide visual aid for the African Freedom Fighters of today and tomorrow. We shall draw inspiration from this perpetual flame for the struggle of African emancipation.

‘Day after day and year after year this flame will reflect the burning desire of the African people to be free – totally free and independent, fettered by no shackles of any nature whatsoever – and their ability to manage and direct their own affairs in the best interests of themselves.

‘I light this flame not only in the name of the people of Ghana but also in sacred duty to millions of Africans elsewhere now crying out for freedom. And I charge
all of us here present to remember that this great struggle of the African emancipation is a holy crusade to which we must constantly stand dedicated and which must be prosecuted to a successful end.

'Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen: I now light this flame and may it burn perpetually and constitute a symbol of victory for our cause.'

An hour later and the sky above the racecourse, which had glittered and sparkled with a million soaring lights, resumed its evening dark. The National Anthem of Ghana was played, then the President was escorted to his car.

With his departure, the crowds began to disperse into the city, there to celebrate in the streets and cafes, the clubs and their own homes. And as they celebrated, the flame of African freedom continued to burn, brightly through the night.
So Republic Day was celebrated in Accra and so the days of celebration continued. Saturday 2nd July began with a meeting of the National Assembly at the State House at which the Speaker and the Members took the Oath of Allegiance, and ended with a State Ball at the Ambassador Hotel.

Between these two occasions came a third, which took place during the afternoon and in brilliant sunshine at the Accra Sports Stadium.

This was the Grand Parade of the Armed Forces, Voluntary Bodies, Uniformed Organisations and Services and Schoolchildren – a complex title, yet one which gives only a vague idea of the scope and variety of the display and no idea at all of its precision and smartness.

Indeed, this event proved to be exactly what long and careful rehearsal had intended it should be – a unique and inspiring spectacle. For now, for the first time, a President of Ghana inspected the armed forces of the Republic of Ghana, took the salute as those forces marched past, reviewed them as they advanced in review order, took the salute again as aircraft of the Ghana Air Force flew past in formation and finally addressed them as their Commander-in-Chief, exhorting them to be ‘obedient, loyal and courageous.’

‘I am highly impressed,’ Dr Nkrumah continued, ‘by your superb martial bearing and smart turn-out.’ High praise, certainly, but praise which could have been extended, with justice, to the manifold ‘bodies and organisations’ that followed: the schoolchildren, who gave an intricate and precisely timed display symbolising their country’s National Flag; the Builders Brigade, with the implements of their trade, who formed themselves up so that they spelt out a gigantic GHANA across the arena; the Young Pioneers, boys and girls between 8 and 14 years, proudly carrying models of the services in which they were being trained; the women market sellers, who marched so sure-footedly and with such dignity under their headloads of market produce; the members of the Ghana Nursing Service, neat, brisk and efficient behind their leader, whose briskness and efficiency seemed to grow with every swiftly swinging step; and many more.

It was the Police who brought the parade to a close. In their squadrons and
The religious service which was held in Accra Sports Stadium on Sunday 3rd July
detachments they marched past the President and advanced again in review order. It was the Police, too, who gave three cheers for Dr Nkrumah, but there were fifty thousand people in the stadium that afternoon and the resulting hurrahs echoed out far beyond the strong arm of the law. Finally, when the last cheer had died away, the fifty thousand stood for the National Anthem, and standing, watched the President drive away to prepare for the State Ball.

By the time that glittering assembly had danced their last, a new day had dawned – Sunday 3rd July. In the morning, an inter-denominational service was attended by a large congregation, including Dr Nkrumah, his Ministers and many overseas delegates and visitors. And in the afternoon, a football match, ending in a diplomatic, but unintentional, draw was played at the Accra Sports Stadium.
between Ghana and Egypt. Once again, the President, apparently tireless, was there, together with President Sekou Touré and other distinguished visitors.

The rest of that day was free — a much needed period of rest and relaxation before the second great State Ceremonial of the celebrations — the State Opening of Parliament. This took place shortly after 9 o’clock on Monday morning, but the crowds had been flocking towards Parliament House long before that. And, as with the Presidential inauguration three days before, the occasion provided proof in plenty of the new Republic’s desire to give its traditions permanent place in the very centre of the national life.

Thus it was the Marshal, no longer the Sergeant-at-Arms as under the Monarchy, who led the Speaker’s procession into the House at twelve minutes past nine that morning: a Marshal who carried a new and magnificent mace (see page 51) and a Speaker who had discarded the full-bottomed wig of five days ago and donned traditional Ghana dress. Moreover, they entered a chamber which had been entirely refurbished since the prorogation of Parliament and now stood complete with new and symbolic carvings, and with the members’ benches arranged in the shape of the letter ‘U’ to present the nation’s representatives, for the first time, as a solid phalanx despite different political party affiliations.

With due solemnity, prayers were said, then the Speaker took the chair, and the mace was placed in position, not on the table as formerly, but upright before it, like the traditional linguist’s stick of the Ghana chieftaincy.

Meanwhile, outside the House, the traditional drums known as Fontomforom heralded the approach of his Excellency the President and within minutes a 21-gun salute, fired by a troop of the Ghana Reconnaissance Squadron, was signifying his arrival. Dr Nkrumah then took the Presidential Salute and inspected a guard of honour formed by troops of the Ghana Regiment, with the President’s Colour and the Army Band, before advancing towards the House.

Here he was met by eight linguists representing the regions of Ghana and witnessed with them a typical Ghanaian custom — the pouring of a libation with a
The great parade at Accra sport stadium: the Ghana armed forces (ABOVE) and the President acknowledging the cheers.
The grand parade of the armed forces (TOP), voluntary bodies (CENTRE), uniformed organisations and services (BOTTOM) and schoolchildren.
prayer for the welfare and happiness of the President, his people and country.

As the last words of the prayer died away, a new sound filled the air – the piping of the Mmenson, or traditional seven horns. To their playing, the President, robed in a magnificent Kente cloth, was conducted into the Chamber by the Speaker, who had come into the lobby to receive him. Immediately preceding him was the Sword Bearer also in traditional dress, bearing the Sword of State while behind came his State and Military officers.

Slowly, the procession moved through the midst of the Chamber, while Members and visitors stood rigidly to attention. Slowly, the President mounted the footstool of the Seat of State designed in the form of a stool and adorned with traditional Ghanaian symbols (see page 52). Slowly, he bowed three times to the Assembly, then took his seat.

With each action, with each carefully planned piece of ritual, a precedent was being established. For as long as the Republic of Ghana remained free, independent and unfettered, this would be the manner in which her Presidents came to open Parliament. But the pomp and circumstance of the occasion was only part of its significance. As the Members and visitors thronging the Chamber resumed their seats, the President rose to deliver his first Sessional Address.
As in his broadcast to the Nation three days earlier, Dr Nkrumah spoke vigorously and with confidence. He also spoke as both Head of State and Head of the Government, combining the formal with the practical, the general with the particular in a way which would have taxed the powers of a less skilled orator.

What could be more stirring, for example, than these passages:

'Mr Speaker, we of this generation must reflect on the extraordinary good fortune we have enjoyed. We do not merely live in exciting times. We are creating the history of our nation as we translate into practical reality the dreams and visions of our forefathers. In twelve years from the fateful days of 1948 we have witnessed a remarkable transformation in our national life and have, through tenacious effort, worked steadily to our goal. We have, moreover, started a movement that has set the whole of Africa ablaze and which aims to blast the last bastions of colonialism, imperialism and racialism from the face of the African continent.

'I am conscious of the gravity of the responsibility which the highest office in the nation has placed on me, but in the discharge of this responsibility I am comforted by the knowledge that I can rely on the support, co-operation and loyal service of Members of the National Assembly in the fulfilment of the great expectations and trust which our people cherish under this new regime.

'We must remember, however, that our struggle is not yet over. We have merely moved into a new phase. Our efforts must be constantly devoted to the aim of giving every individual the opportunity of living a fuller, richer and more useful life to prepare himself for greater devotion to the service of Ghana and of Africa.'

'To the service of Ghana and of Africa.' This, indeed, was the current theme, the over-riding objective. But what of the means of reaching it? On this, the President, as Head of the Government, was explicit:

'Since this is the first formal meeting of the Republican Parliament, it is my duty to outline to you the policies which the Convention People's Party Government will follow during this session.

'I will start by making it quite clear that the operation of the Republican Constitution will not in any way involve a change of policy as far as our foreign relations are concerned. Ghanaian foreign policy will continue to be one of positive neutralism and non-alignment. As I have explained many times before, this does not imply that Ghana will be a mere silent spectator of world events.

'On the contrary, the Government will continue to take positive steps through the United Nations Organisation to promote and maintain peace and security among all nations . . . To that end, the Government solemnly re-affirm their faith in the Charter of the United Nations and undertake to be friends with all nations and enemy to none.

'The Government will continue to denounce the arms race and the manufacture and testing of nuclear weapons anywhere in the world . . .

Then followed a proposal which was to be welcomed by the world press as one
The state dinner: Sir Arku Korshie, Chief Justice, speaking

President Kwame Nkrumah greeting chiefs and other guests at the state garden party in the grounds of Government House
of the most outstanding solutions of the disarmament problem – the proposal 'that all uncommitted non-nuclear countries of the world, particularly of Africa and Asia, should summon themselves into a conference with a view to forming a non-nuclear third force – a war-preventing force – between the two blocs of the so-called East and West.'

'I have stated elsewhere,' the President went on, 'that we in Africa have a vested interest in peace. There must be an enduring peace in the world to enable us, the new emergent countries, to consolidate our hard-won freedom and to reconstruct economically and socially the possessions of our heritage devastated by colonialism and imperialism. As far as Africa is concerned, our resolution is unshakeable... The Government will continue to work for African unity and independence and will endeavour in accordance with that objective to make the political union of African States a living reality. It is against this background that we must view the significance of the presence at the celebrations ushering in the Republican Constitution of my brother President Sekou Touré of the Republic of Guinea. Together, Guinea and Ghana will continue to wage war on the old and the new colonialisms until both the independence and unity of Africa are achieved...

'Turning to South Africa, the Government is unalterably opposed to the in-
human policy of apartheid practised by the South African Government and will relentlessly continue to fight against this policy. Our delegation to the Conference of Independent African States held at Addis Ababa was instructed to give very strong support to the plan for the boycott of South African goods together with the taking of economic sanctions against South Africa.

'...The Government will give every support to the Political Bureau which the leaders of the banned African nationalist organisations of South Africa have decided to set up here as the mouthpiece of their people...'  

Then followed an account of the Government’s domestic policy during the coming session – the intensified programme of industrialisation with particular reference to the Volta River Project for the supply of abundant and cheap power, the diversification of agriculture, the plans to expand the country’s social services, education programme, health service and communications and transport system.

And finally, these historic words:

'Mr Speaker, Members of the National Assembly, in the earnest hope that Divine Providence may guide your deliberations and further the welfare of our people, I now leave you to the successful discharge of your duties.'

Within minutes, the Mmenson were sounding again as the President left the
House. The State Opening of the first Republican Parliament was over, and now the inaugural celebrations themselves were drawing to a close.

Only two important functions still remained on the official programme. The first, a luncheon to be given that morning by the President; the second, a garden party to be held at Government House, Osu, on the following afternoon.

Both occasions would be in the nature of farewells. But in the event, it was the luncheon which, though first in time, provided the clearest expression of what the Republic meant to Ghana and to one, at least, of her distinguished guests.

To take the guest first. This was none other than President Sekou Touré of Guinea, the guest of honour, who, after expressing his country’s warmest wishes and congratulations, referred to ‘the genuine solidarity that binds the people of Ghana and the people of Guinea together in one and the same struggle, whose aim is to shape the historic destiny of all the peoples of Africa within the framework of peace, based upon social freedom and democratic progress.’

But President Sekou Touré was, in fact, replying to a speech of welcome by President Nkrumah, which included the following words:

‘The ceremonies which we have witnessed in the last few days represent the outward expression of the deepest aspirations of our people to re-discover their ancient heritage, as Africans, and to re-dedicate themselves to work for the emancipation and unity of African peoples everywhere. The fundamental principles of the Republican Constitution which we have adopted are the recognition of the ultimate powers of the people and the obligation to support the movement of the Union of African States.’

There can be no better summary of the aims and significance of the Republic than these extracts – and no more fitting conclusion to the days of celebration.
The 1961 republic day parade of the armed forces

The President making his sessional address to Parliament 4th July 1961, one year after the inauguration of the republic.
‘I have told them that their ideal should be, not to become pseudo-European, but to aim at progress . . . based upon that which is best in their own institutions, religion, their manners and customs . . . We are here among them to help them by grafting on to their institutions such of our own as will enable them to take their place in the commonwealth of civilised nations, not as denationalised (people) but as an African People who will become . . . greater . . . because they have not bartered the wealth of their past . . .’

Thus wrote the British anthropologist, R. S. Rattray, in 1923 after many years of service in what was then the Gold Coast. His words reflect all that was most enlightened among British colonial servants (while in no way justifying colonialism itself), but they deserve quotation for another reason. For, though written nearly forty years ago, they provide the simplest, most direct and most complete summary of the fundamental significance behind Ghana’s new form of government. This is the ideal that was realised on 1st July 1960—a careful synthesis of retention and rejection, coupled with a clear recognition of the value of the ‘wealth of the past.’

Moreover, the aim, as Rattray prophesied, is to enable Ghana to take her place among the nations, not as the pale shadow of an alien ethos and culture—uneasy and ineffectual as all such shadows must be—but as a full participant, in possession of her own character and heritage, yet fully alive to the aspirations and achievements of modern man.

Thus, as we have seen, it would be mistaken to suppose that the Republic signifies the complete rejection of all the lessons that have been taught under colonialism. Some graftings, proving sound, have flourished; others, unacceptable to the rootstock, have withered or been cut away or adapted. The concept of democratic government, with free speech, thought and worship, the value of an efficient civil service, the administration of justice on a nation-wide scale, the importance of education not merely as a scholastic training but as the ladder to a mature mind, health services, social welfare, economic development, technical and scientific progress—Ghana has assimilated all these and more, eagerly and gratefully.
At the same time, she has made alterations to suit her special circumstances. For example, as mentioned earlier, the principle of democracy was implicit in the system of chieftaincy, and it is in recognition of this traditional fact that the Republic has an elected President who is head of government as well as head of state, rather than a ceremonial figurehead. Similarly, in justice, the new Republic is pursuing an organised programme of law reform, eliminating the United Kingdom statutes inherited from before independence.

In more subtle ways, too, the new Republic has drawn freely on the ‘wealth of the past’ as Rattray termed it. Some mention of this has already been made in the preceding pages. For example, the new U shape of the Parliament Chamber, besides presenting the nation’s representatives as a solid phalanx, also emphasises the fact that the concept of an organised opposition was unknown to traditional forms of government in Ghana. The dais in the Chamber, incidentally, is decorated with carvings depicting the birth of a nation and the various functions performed in traditional courts, while other examples are to be found in the dress of the Speaker, the Marshal and the Sword Bearer on ceremonial occasions.

Then there are the Antupam drums, which were played at the first Presidential inauguration and will be played at all succeeding inaugurations. These traditional talking drums are a reminder that the drum language has from time immemorial been the means of communicating important news for the people of the West African coast. As rapid as telecommunication, the talking drums of Ghana are not limited by distance, provided sufficient drummers are present to receive the message and pass it on. Nor is the drum language a form of Morse or signalling by some other pre-arranged code. On the contrary, as Rattray himself in his role of anthropologist pointed out, it is used to sound or speak actual words and ‘is looked upon, heard and understood’ as being only a modification of the people’s own spoken tongue. The language itself depends on tones, accent, stress, loudness, periods or stops, and speeds to create a rhythm, musical intonation and melody.
whereby ‘noble Tweneboa Kodua the drummer’ actually announced to his listeners the swearing in of the President and his inauguration.

Another type of traditional talking drum was heard at the State Opening of Parliament—the Fontomforom, which has an age-old association with State Ceremonies and Festivals. Here, too, it will be remembered, the Mmenson were sounded, the traditional seven horns also used for centuries at State Ceremonies and Festivals and well suited to such occasions. For their sound is melodically sonorous and suggestive of great pomp. And here, a libation was poured—another traditional rite still practised widely in Ghana today, while the President was received outside the House by eight linguists, the linguist being a high official of the traditional chiefs’ courts who interprets the language of the court.

Finally, there is the complex interweaving of symbols in the State Chair, the State Regalia and the Staffs of Office of the eight linguists. Details of these are given in the following pages and make it abundantly clear that in this respect, too, the new Republic has realised the ideal of Rattray. For these symbols are all deeply rooted in Ghana’s past—so deeply rooted, indeed, that their origins are in some instances shadowed in antiquity. In this, however, they bear out the testimony of Nietzsche when he wrote: ‘Every tradition grows ever more venerable—the more remote is its origin, the more confused its origin is. The reverence due to it increases from generation to generation. The tradition finally becomes holy and inspires awe.’

It is in this spirit of awe, and prompted by a deep feeling of reverence, that the people of Ghana have now accorded a permanent place in the national life to their traditions.
The Ghana Mace

Role of Authority of Parliament.
The design of the Ghana Mace is
made up of various Ghanaian
traditional symbols.

The Flying Eagle, symbolising the
State of Ghana

'Kontonkuroti', symbol of the
common sharing of responsibility

'Nyamedua', a stool symbol of the
presence of God in society

'Hwemdua', symbol of critical
evaluation

'Gye-Nyame' (except God), a
symbol of the omnipotence of
God

'Kudu-Pono', a symbol of lasting
personality

'Mbaadwa', symbol of the presence
and effect of feminine power in
society

'Dwanimmen', symbol of manly
strength

'Hye-wo-nhye' (burnt but unburnt),
symbol of imperishability

'M-Nka-Bi' (no one bites another),
symbol of justice

'Kuntunkantan' (bent only to
straighten), symbol of the pride of
state
The Seat of State

The Seat of State is made up of the following main symbols, all of which are taken from traditional Ghanaian stool symbolism:

'Osramfa' (the crescent moon) forming the actual seat; it symbolises the influence feminine disposition and nature has in the well-being of society and state.

'Okosuasu' (the egg-shaped or oval of egg) back-rest symbolises perfection in all that is beautiful in the existence of the society.

'Kontonkurowi' (the rainbow) on which the seat rests, symbolises the common sharing by all of the responsibility for the prosperity and well-being of the state.

'Kuntun-Kantan' or 'Anantwurum' (the bow legged) directly under the rainbow, symbolises all that comes under detestable pride in the collective attitude of society or state.

'Akorobie' (the pine-apple) done in gold and black lines in front of an oval back-rest, symbolises the sovereignty of the state.

'Dadebene' or 'Ahokerawo' (that which quickens to life at the back...
of the back rest) ‘Abankuo’, an architectural motif done usually in relief on the wall against which the royal chairs stood. It symbolises the power of life in the existence of society. A serious examination of this symbol shows that it is made up of two large crescent moons meeting at the top and bottom to represent the idea and existence of female beauty in society. The square at the centre symbolises the male power in society. The circle represents God’s presence in society ‘GHANA SOROMA-BIRE’ (the black star of Ghana), symbolising the supremacy of the nation over all the part-particle states that compose it.

‘AMANNUM’ the five-sided figure set within the star) symbolises old age and dignity – it is used here to assert the idea that as a nation Ghana may be young, but as a people Ghanaians are old.

‘PURUM’ (the circle set within the five-sided figure) symbolises the sanctity and the presence of God in society. Lines have been extended from the centres of the five-sided symbol of dignity to meet at a point at the centre of the circle. This is done to assert the Ghanaian’s respect for the sanctity, wisdom and dignity of old age.

‘OWO-KOFORO-ADOBE’ (the zigzag symbol used on the arm rest and as a border in the oval shaped back-rest) symbolises the exercise of prudence and diplomacy in human relationship.

‘AKOSANE’ (the wheel-like symbol set towards either end of the front of the base) is the Ghanaian symbol of reincarnation.

FOOT STOOL ‘KERAPA (MUSUYIDE)’, the border symbol, signifies good fortune. It has a cushion which bears at the centre of it a ‘NKYIN-KYIM’, the symbol of selfless and unquestioning service to one’s particular society or master.
The Chair of State

The chair of State at the State House. There are the following six significant parts to the Ghana Chair of State at the State House, counting from the top:

The top-rest of a black star and two eagles represents the nation Ghana. The five-sided geometric figure at the centre of the star is called 'ananum' and it symbolises old age, (Ghana for ever)

The back-rest consists of an 'adinkra-ene', a traditional Ghanaian three-circled symbol of sovereignty, and a 'kerpa (musuyide)', symbol of good fortune

The box-like seat has a red cushion bearing a black 'nyiki-nykum', symbol of selfless service. The red colour stands for youthful life and vigour

The rectangular hand rests represent 'mbenstuo' (manliness) and bear on the sides a frieze of a zigzag motif called 'owo-koforo-Adobe', symbolising the exercise of wisdom or prudence. It will be observed that this symbol of wisdom appears in several parts of the
chair. This is an attempt to express the Ghanaian tradition or conception that the head of state must be an embodiment of the qualities of wisdom.

The side stands on which the seat rests have the form of ‘Adom’, symbol of God’s grace.

The foot stool or rest bears on the front of it a ‘Eshankera’, symbol of a perfect house or home of joy. White wood as opposed to brown or any other colour wood was used to symbolise the Ghanaian traditional idea and practice of associating a living ruler with purity, sanctity and guiltlessness. The whole chair is adorned with real gold to give an overall appearance of yellow or golden colour, which symbolizes life and sovereignty of state.