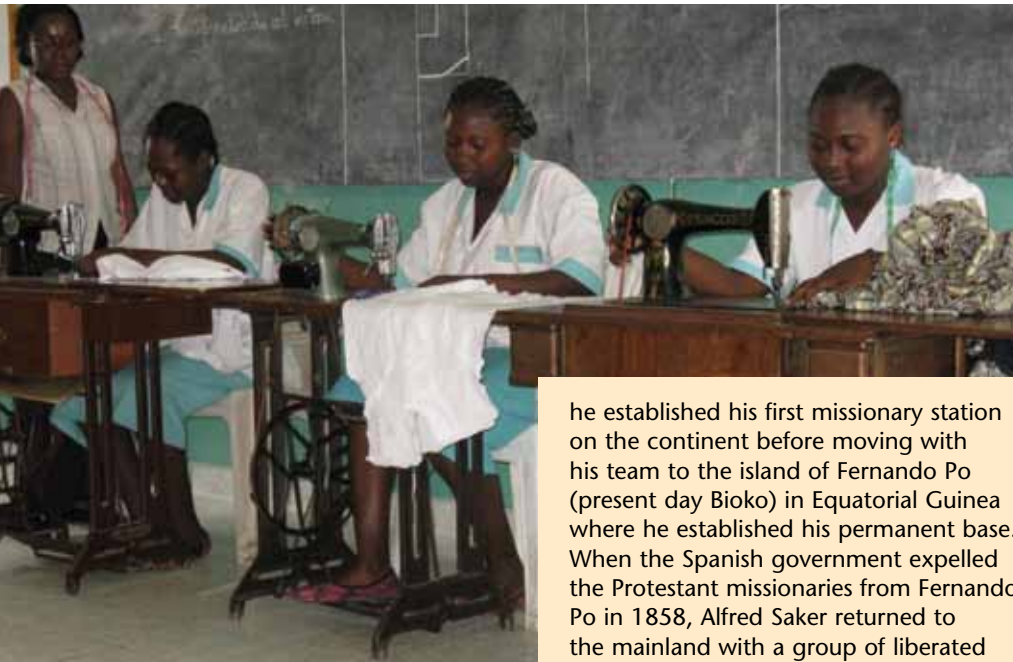


# In the footsteps of Saker



he established his first missionary station on the continent before moving with his team to the island of Fernando Po (present day Bioko) in Equatorial Guinea where he established his permanent base. When the Spanish government expelled the Protestant missionaries from Fernando Po in 1858, Alfred Saker returned to the mainland with a group of liberated slaves. He bought a large portion of land from a local and established his new permanent station. The small group built a school, a church, and other buildings for the mission, thereby founding the city of Victoria, now Limbe. From here the team travelled along the coast teaching carpentry and agriculture to the tribes and establishing churches, dispensaries and centres of care and training a great number of Cameroonian pastors, tailors, shoe-makers, masons and carpenters.

These infrastructures are still amongst the most needed, not only in the town of Limbe 150 years later but also in the whole country. But the merit of Saker resides in the fact that he laid down plainly the essence and the components of the missionary work, ministry to the whole man.

In remembering Saker and his work in Cameroon we, at the Barnabas Centre and Grace Church, have been very much encouraged in the philosophy of the ministry that we have adopted and to which we try to stick. This can be summarized in the following terms: being continually conscious of our mission which is to glorify God as we gather and grow strong disciples in the Lord through Bible teaching, living worship, loving fellowship and compassionate outreach.

In the footsteps of Saker, who did not focus on the preaching alone, we are conscious that the compassion aspect of

the work is crucial and thankfully there is an established structure with which this aspect of work can be addressed. Barnabas Cameroun is an association of evangelical Christians that was created in the 90s with the purpose of encouraging Christians in the country and promoting activities in the fields of evangelism, Christian education and development.

The Barnabas Cameroun initiative came as the result of realising that the solutions to the spiritual needs and some of the material and social problems should be found mainly by Cameroonians themselves, using biblical principles and their own resources.

Barnabas now owns a piece of land on which a Christian centre was built. Apart from hosting Grace Church for the time being, Christian activities and other development activities take place in this centre. One of such activities is the practical professional training to young people. Barnabas is also looking to research and discuss questions such as corruption in the light of the Bible, contributing to a pool of ideas to help Christians generate work for themselves and for others, educate Christians that are illiterate.

In the immediate future, Barnabas Cameroun will be seeking to consolidate the present achievements by extending its centre and Christian library to help meet the needs for Christian education and training.

Our prayer is that as we commemorate 150 years of the town that was established by Saker, we might better appreciate his ministry amongst the people of Cameroon and may God grant us the wisdom and the means to follow his steps.

**Anatole Lordon**

2010 in Cameroon will be marked by series of celebrations, all of them in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the nation. Though this is something of a milestone to commemorate, there was another commemoration that took place in December 2009 with less celebration than I expect this one will be. It was the 150th anniversary of the creation of the former town of Victoria now known as Limbe in the South West region of Cameroon. But what is so special about this small town of less than one million population?

The answer is that for the Christian community this is one of the first marks of the Christian mission on the Cameroon soil. Alfred Saker, the most important English Missionary in West Africa according to David Livingstone, arrived on the coast of Cameroon in 1845 where