

My life's work has involved the acquisition, compilation, and understanding of primary source materials concerning the lives and times of individuals in the Sokoto Caliphate. I have retraced on horseback the movements of Shehu Usman 'dan Fodio's hijira as the enemy pursued him and his followers during the Jihad. I have spent countless hours in Land Rovers far off the beaten track to find and interview individuals who knew about women's education. Over a period of twenty-nine years in Nigeria, Sarkin Kudu (later Sultan Maccido) facilitated my transportation and introductions, Waziri Junaidu provided me with documents in Arabic, Fulfulde and Hausa ajami, and others like Sidi Sayudi and Muhammadu Magaji facilitated my research by translating the Arabic and Fulfulde into Hausa. Traditional women scholars and descendants of educated women teachers afforded me access to oral and written testimonies about the Fodio family with genealogies and personal information about the histories of the region's people not available in any history text.

I have published extensively on these topics, including a biography of Nana Asma'u and numerous volumes related to Fodio family history. In addition, I have co-authored with Beverly Mack three volumes on the life and works of Nana Asma'u. Nevertheless, there remain many primary source materials in my holdings that have not yet been worked into a cohesive publication on the Sokoto Caliphate from the perspective of its women, their poetic and activist works, and the Shehu's advocacy for women's rights and obligations. This material needs to be made available to other scholars in published form. With this in mind, I have entrusted to Beverly Mack a vast store of my primary research materials, with the expectation that she will pull them together for such a publication.



Jean Boyd

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