

White Baby - Old Kuata, Bakiti Chief

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Anna Gertrude Snyder

The article was written after Gertrude Snyder returned home. Author of "Grandma's Story", Gertrude describes the birth of Anna and the commotion it caused with the natives never having seen a White Baby.

WHITE BABY IN LUEBO CAUSED A COMMOTION.

Bakiti Tribe in Congo Free State
Made a Great Time Over Anna
Gertrude Snyder.

YOUNGSTER HELD A RECEPTION.
Interesting Experience of American
Missionaries—Curios Brought Home
to Brooklyn.

Mrs. DeWitt W. Snyder, wife of the Rev. D. W. Snyder, the missionary in charge of the station at Luebo, in the Kassai River country, Congo Free State, West Central Africa, who returned from a two years stay with her husband in the land of superstition on Thursday, and whose illness with Congo fever at the home of her mother, Mrs. E. B. Wood, at 305 Stuyvesant avenue, was told of in the Eagle Friday, brought with her a very large collection of interesting curios and souvenirs of her trip and residence in Africa. This collection consists of all sorts of African native articles from the smallest bit of a toy to great battle axes, spears and native cloths, weapons and animal skins and relics.

Finally it was decided in council that the best thing to be done was to take a good look at the little baby. Among those who looked upon Anna Gertrude with favor was the great chief of the most friendly of all the tribes thereabouts—old Kuata, leader of the Bakiti tribe, one of the most powerful of the rulers of the wilds, who had, for some time,



Old Kuata, Bakiti Chief,
A Friend of the Europeans.

Mrs. Snyder has presented many of the souvenirs and curios to her mother and to her friends and in their home the interesting things are being shown to the intimate friends of the family. Among the collection of articles brought back from Africa by Mrs. Snyder is a large number of photographs of scenes and views showing the characteristics of the country and the natives of the section of country in which the Snyders lived in carrying on their missionary work.

One of the most interesting experiences of Dr. and Mrs. Snyder during their stay in Congo State occurred shortly after the birth of a girl baby to Mrs. Snyder about ten months ago. The baby was the only white one ever born in that section of the wilds of Africa and a few days after the arrival of the little one the native servants in the Snyder household circulated the news among their less civilized and superstitious brethren. In a short time the word had gone abroad in the jungles and through the small negro villages that a strange thing had occurred in their country. The birth of a white baby was an event entirely inconsistent with their idea of African jungle life and they could not understand if it was an ill omen or a blessing on the several tribes. Many of the wise old native heads contended that the little visitor was surely a great and powerful god, and they forthwith declared the arrival of little Anna Gertrude Snyder brought to them messages of good cheer and the blessings of the unseen powers. Other old natives, less civilized and more superstitious, took an opposing view and there were days of discussion and whisperings in the woods about Luocho. The natives could not agree whether such a thing ought to be allowed or not. It was an event without precedent and it troubled their narrow foreheads to decide what should be done about the newcomer in their midst.

Old Kuata, Bakiti Chief,

A Friend of the Snyders.

Shown a friendly disposition toward the white men who had invaded the country to spread the word of the gospel and to tell the natives of Christ and His sacrifice for the peoples of all the world. This old chief had often visited the Snyder household to pay his respects to the white people, always presenting some strange and interesting curio or trifle to show his good will and friendship. Kuata argued long in favor of the white baby. He proposed that his entire tribe repair in a body to the house of the Snyders and ask to be allowed to see the little one. His counsel prevailed and one day the Snyders were surprised to see in the distance, marching in their peculiar disorder, a great tribe of blacks, under command of old Kuata, who was headed for their home.

Mr. and Mrs. Snyder did not know at first what to think of this show of men and women in force, but old Kuata quickly relieved their anxiety by telling of the purpose of the natives to show their interest in the arrival of the baby by appearing as a tribe and asking the privilege of seeing the little one. The request was granted and the blacks swarmed about Mrs. Snyder as she proudly showed her child after the true American mother's manner. The old and young black men and women vied with each other in praising the baby and such a jabbering and taking on was never heard before in Luocho. The result of the visit was that the child was at once declared to be a welcome visitor and many of the creatures suspected that the baby was a fetch. Old Kuata at once gathered his people and proposed a native dance in honor of the baby and the blacks then made the woods and village streets resound with their loud shouts of joy and the wild sounds of their crude musical instruments. It was a feast at once and little Anna Gertrude Snyder was the recipient of many valuable presents from old Kuata and his people.

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