Cavalry wearing lifidi (padded armour).

“Before me lies the history of Nupé, a history wide and deep and full of meaning. I can travel back into the thirteenth century ...”
Nigeria 100 Years Ago

Granaries in Mokwa.

“From six to seven in the morning is given up to work. Then Martius sallies out with his satellites to survey and make plans of the compounds, houses, stables, barns, corn-bins and mosques.”

Groundplan of two compounds in Mokwa

Inside a domed construction in Bida

Ground plan of the Benu’s compound in Bida.

“When the great exit-door is open to the front I can see everything that happens on the market square beneath the ancient trees, and at its back can always gaze upon the little courtyard where we take our afternoon siesta.”

The Mosque and Katamba in Bida

Ground plan of the Benu’s compound in Bida.
A village scene in Mokwa.

“What I must here set down is idyllic. Let us take a peep into the jolly, happy, peaceful life which runs its course in the small provincial town of Mokwa in Nupéland”
A female weaver working at an vertical loom. “They are beautiful plaiters, weavers and hut builders. They are good workers in iron, potters and wood carvers and no despicable producers of articles made of leather and fells”
An ornamented brass container produced in Bida.

“Bida is an industrial city, and, next to Kano the largest in Africa and, in many respects, as Kano people assured me, very much its superior. Every one works at his trade in Bida in the quarters assigned to his guild from early morn to dewy eve”
Festive procession of the Emir of Bida and his royal suite.

“All around us were the signs of varied and vigorous life. Really fine horses, richly caparisoned with gold and silver embroidered trappings, carried noblemen in magnificent flowing robes introduced by the Arabian merchants trading with the Mediterranean”
Male and female Ello masks in Mokwa.

“The Lilly of Mokwa had to accept the missionaries, those missionaries who had taken away from him and his people their greatest pleasure namely, the ceremonial of the mask and burned the masks, saying that they were evil and of the Devil”
Player of Kakatshi at the royal court in Bida.

“For the first time I saw the wonderful trumpets, although in the Emir’s absence they were not blown to-day”