



**BONNY ISLAND FOUNDATION**  
USA & CANADA

**Unity And Service**

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# IBANI MEN TRADITIONAL DRESS

**By Dr. Leslie M. Green**

Our style of dressing was influenced a great deal by our interaction with European traders and Missionaries who traded and mingled with the Kings, Chiefs and people of Bonny before the creation of the entity known as Nigeria. Being the first within our region to make contact with the outside world, it became inevitable, that Christianity, education and our mode of dressing would spread to our neighbors in due course. The different styles of dresses in and around the south south and south east of Nigeria are all modifications of the Ibani style of dressing. The Ibani cap is acknowledged by all to have been worn and introduced by Bonny People to the Nigerian fashion scene. The cap is an adaptation of the smoking cap or lounge cap worn in Victorian England to keep the hair from smelling of tobacco after smoking. It was also worn in winter and by sailors for warmth. The design of the 'two for a bob shirt' worn in 15th century England by commoners and workers was adopted and renamed Etibo by the Ibanis. The Feni material became popular in Bonny after English sailors who used them as warm clothing during their voyages, gave them out as gifts or 'dash' while trading at Bonny. The George wrapper now widely used all over Southern Nigeria is named after King George Oruigbiji Pepple of Bonny. King George Oruigbiji Pepple introduced the George wrapper to Bonny in 1870 after his return from England.

## ETIBO

ETIBO is generally worn by young men and adults in the community as informal wear. The two-for-a-bob shirt which later became known as a two-bob shirt and was eventually named the Etibo shirt by the Ibani People. The Etibo is an elongated free flowing shirt, extending to the knee and usually made of white cotton material. It has a short rounded hard collar with a single stud at the neck and is worn over a trouser or wrapper. It is never tucked in. It can have a long or short sleeve. Socks are not worn with shoes when wearing the Etibo.





### REGATTA SHIRT

The Regatta shirt is worn by young men and adults as a semiofficial dress and is also worn on festive occasions. It is similar to the etibo but has a pleated or other design on the breastplate area of the chest, with a three-stud button hole and is often a long-sleeved shirt. It is worn with a matching fedora hat, boater straw hat, bowler hat or Ibani cap.

### HALF DON

Half Don is worn by adults, men of substance, titled citizens, Chiefs and the King. The Half Don is pretty much like the Don with the only difference being in their respective lengths. The Don extends below the ankle while the Half Don does not extend to the ankle.



### JUMPER

This is the formal or official dress of the Ibani man. It is worn by adults, men of substance, titled citizens, Chiefs and the King. It is usually made of more expensive material and extends to the knee. It is worn over wrapper or matching trousers, walking stick, bowler hat, fedora or Ibani cap. The front of the garment is designed with a ladder or fish grill design. It accommodates three stud button holes with an attached chain-link.





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## DON

The Don is worn by men from the age of 50 years and above, heads of households, men of substance, Chiefs and the King. The Don extends from the shoulders to the space between the feet and the ankles. It is made of silk or other expensive material. It has a short front collar, a pleated or other design on the breast plate area extending to the lower abdomen and four stud button holes connected by a gold or silver chain. A white shirt with a short round hard collar with a single stud button hole is worn under the Don. The Don has long sleeves which are folded back at the wrist to expose the bright cotton or lace shirt worn underneath the Don. The Don can be worn over wrapper or matching trousers with an Ibani cap, Bowler hat, Boater straw hat or Top hat.

