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**AFRICAN FARMERS IN COLONIAL KIGEZI, UGANDA,
1930-1962: OPPORTUNITY, CONSTRAINT AND
SUSTAINABILITY.**

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Thesis submitted for the degree of Ph.D.,

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ABSTRACT

Focusing on the changing relationship of land and political authority, this thesis examines the implementation of colonial policies related to agricultural development and land tenure. It looks in particular at how policies were received by local populations and how they affected longer term land use change, up to the period of Independence. The study focuses on the area of Kigezi, in southwestern Uganda. It is an empirical study using archival sources in Uganda and the UK as well as a large number of interviews with farmers from the area. The themes around which the thesis focuses include the role and functioning of the colonial state; consideration of the population / environment debate; questions of sustainability and longer term land use change; and changing political authority and the implications for access to land.

The thesis opens by examining some of the themes and broader debates which it will contribute to and gives background information on the geographical, economic, administrative and early history of the district. Chapter 2 examines agricultural development in Kigezi from the arrival of British colonial authority laying the foundation for a deeper analysis into land and politics in Kigezi. It looks at policies related to the production and marketing of both cash crops and food crops, and suggests that the failure of the British to fully appreciate the vitality of the food crop sector in Kigezi was a major misunderstanding and weakness on the part of the British.

Chapter 3 focuses on the growing concern over soil erosion seen from the 1930s. It details the formulation of colonial policy and evaluates the implementation of these policies, finding that Kigezi differed from other schemes in colonial Africa, in that the policies were implemented with little resistance from local populations. It suggests that pre-colonial methods of prevention of soil erosion, the gradual introduction of the policies, the emphasis on propaganda and incentives, and the efficient working of the structure of chiefs explain the success of the Kigezi scheme.

The following chapter looks at the colonial policies related to land tenure and how they were implemented in Kigezi. In particular it looks at granting of titles, the policies of consolidation and enclosure and farm planning, and shows how some individuals took advantage of the opportunities offered by these policies. As the colonial period progressed authority over land became linked to positions of political authority in the colonial state.

Chapters 5 and 6 are case studies which illustrate the importance of the relationship between political authority and control over the access of land. The first study looks at the policy of swamp reclamation, while the second looks at Kalengyere Estate which was leased for the growing of pyrethrum and later returned to the local population. Both these studies show how land was distributed or allocated to the local population during the 1950s, and illustrate the influence of political authority on the allocation of that land. They also illustrate clearly how colonial policies presented the opportunity for some individuals to substantially increase their access to land. The final chapter concludes and discusses briefly some of the developments seen in this district in the post-independence period.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADC	Assistant District Commissioner
ALG	African Local Government
AO	Agricultural Officer
CMS	Church Missionary Society
DAO	District Agricultural Officer
DC	District Commissioner
DFO	District Forestry Officer
DMO	District Medical Officer
DVO	District Veterinary Officer
EARC	East African Royal Commission
ENA	Entebbe National Archives
KDA DC	Kigezi District Archives, District Commissioner's Office
KDA DoA	Kigezi District Archives, Department of Agriculture
LTPP	Land Tenure Pilot Project
NAC	Native Anglican Church
PC	Provincial Commissioner
PCWP	Provincial Commissioner, Western Province
PRO	Public Record Office, Kew, London
RC	Roman Catholic
RH	Rhodes House
TOL	Temporary Occupation Licence
WDD	Water Development Department

GLOSSARY

In Rukiga "ki" is pronounced "chi" and for this reason references are frequently made in correspondence, memoranda and reports to the "Chiga". Additionally "l" and "r" are sometimes used interchangeably. Thus, in quotes the spelling is used as written, otherwise the most commonly used spelling (for example, Kalengyere) is used. Many of these words are actually Luganda words, and were used for administrative purposes all over the country.

<i>baraza</i>	public meeting
<i>bazungu</i>	Europeans or white people (plural)
<i>bukungu</i>	sub-parish (plural)
<i>butongole</i>	sub-parish (plural) (alterative for <i>bukungu</i>)
<i>ensya</i>	new
<i>gombolola</i>	sub-county
<i>lukiko</i>	government
<i>miluka</i>	parish (plural)
<i>mitala</i>	small area, used for survey purposes (plural)
<i>mukungu</i>	sub-parish (singular)
<i>muluka</i>	parish (singular)
<i>mutongole</i>	sub-parish (singular) (alterative for <i>bukungu</i>)
<i>mutala</i>	small area, used for survey purposes (singular)
<i>mtwale</i>	<i>saza</i> chief of Bufumbira
<i>muzungu</i>	European or white person (singular)
<i>saza</i>	county
<i>wimbi</i>	millet

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

"...definite action must not be long delayed in regard to the Kigezi overpopulated areas if the fertility is to be maintained ... It is obvious that the overpopulated areas cannot maintain an expanding population. With the present high natural increase in population the time would very soon come when there would be insufficient land for all cultivators..."¹

"...it must be re-emphasized that the settled highlands of [south-west] Uganda are at a high risk of permanent damage by accelerated erosion. Urgent measures must be employed to alleviate this dangerous threat that continues to haunt the highland inhabitants."²

"[In the Rukiga county of Kigezi] soil erosion and degradation has reached alarming proportions on steep slopes due to poor cultivation techniques".³

Kigezi⁴, in the south western corner of Uganda (see Map 1), is an area that, for many years, has been perceived to be at risk from serious ecological damage and environmental degradation. Predictions of major environmental catastrophe, food deficit and the unsustainability of the agricultural system, have however not manifested themselves. Rather, it appears that the district has successfully avoided such problems and has absorbed an increasing rural population. Kigezi is an area of intensive agricultural production with a dense population. It is unusual being an area where land, rather than labour, is the limiting factor of production. Land shortage has been perceived to be a problem for many years. Colonial officials put forward a number of policies to try to deal with the problems as they saw them - namely land degradation, land shortage and fragmentation. This thesis will examine the solutions put forward to these 'problems' by colonial officials, which included soil conservation policies from the 1930s, a resettlement programme and in the 1950s the policies of consolidation, enclosure and the granting of titles, and the responses and reactions of African farmers to these policies.

Kigezi district is striking for the great variabilities that are found within its boundaries -

¹ J.W. Pursglove, 'Report of the overpopulated areas of Kigezi', (1945).

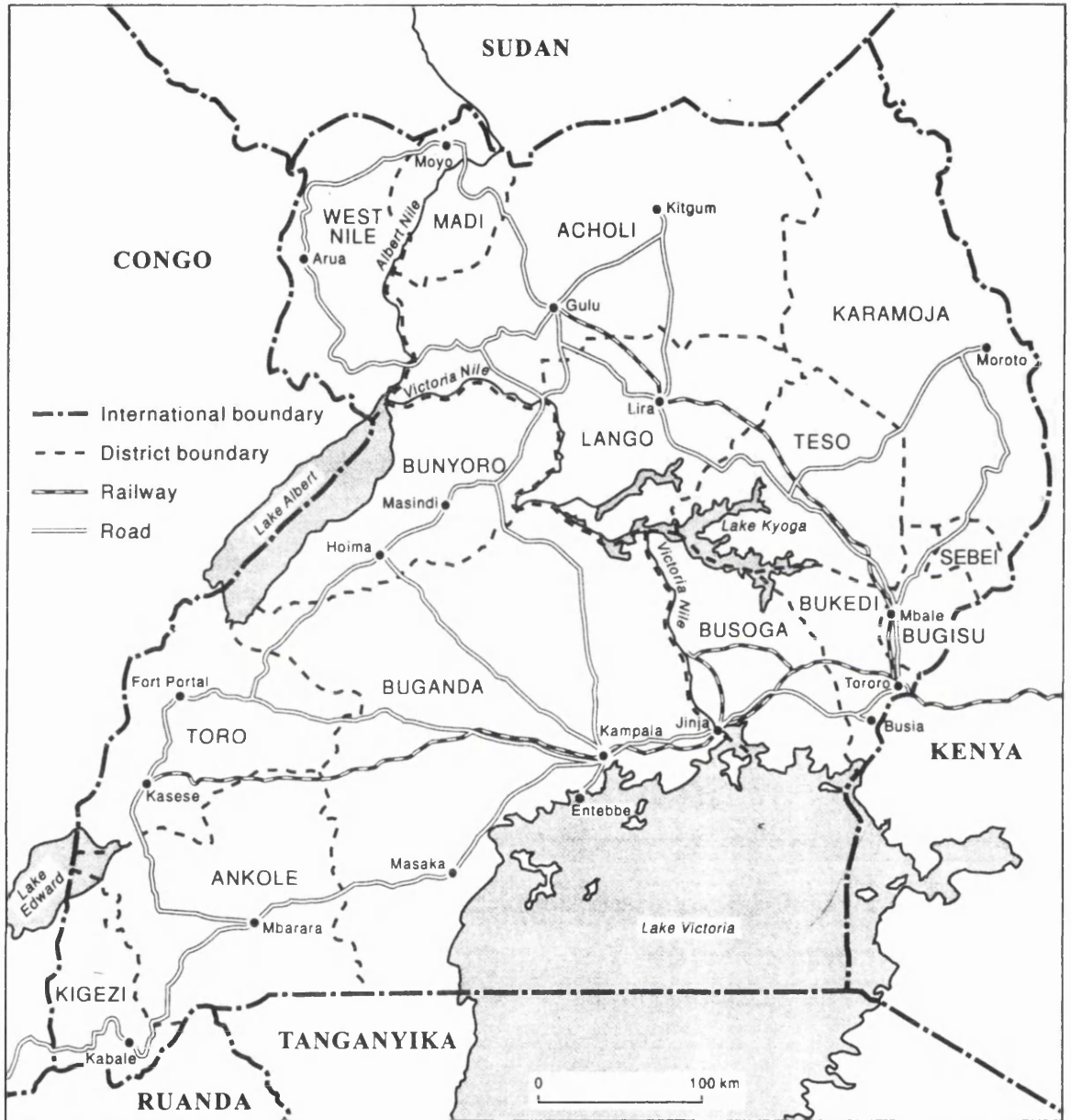
² F.D.K. Bagoora 'Soil erosion and mass wasting risk in the highland area of Uganda', *Mountain Research and Development*, 8 2/3 (1988), 173-82.

³ Ministry of National Resources, National Environment Information Centre, *State of the Environment Report for Uganda* (Kampala, 1994), 26.

⁴ This thesis examines Kigezi District, although the focus of attention is on the area of present day Kabale District, around Kabale town, which was part of the larger Kigezi District during the colonial period. See Map 2.

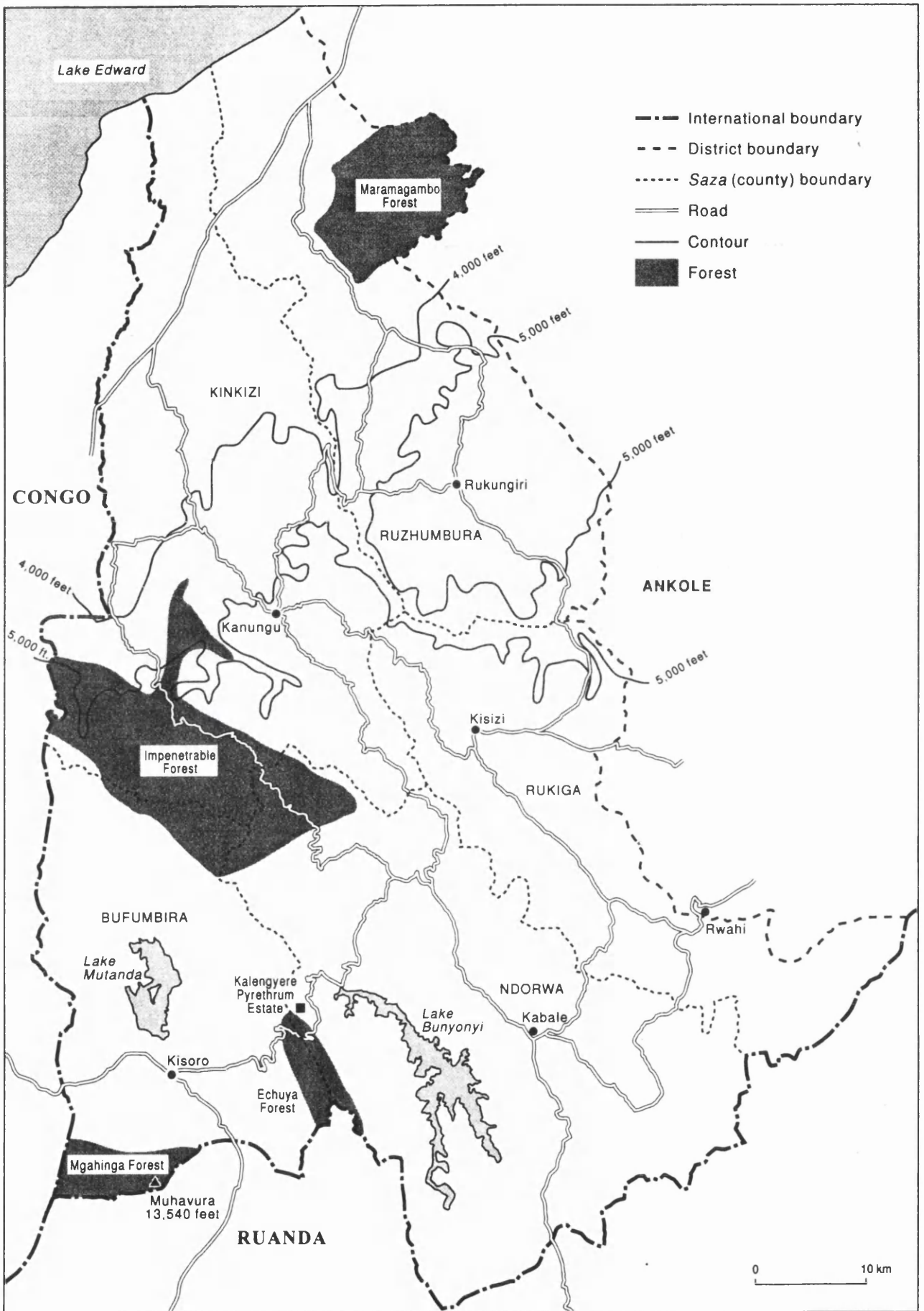
in terms of geology, topography, and agricultural systems, as well as ethnicity and population density. This study will focus on the part of the district that makes-up present day Kabale district - that is the *sazas* of Ndorwa and Rukiga (see Map 2). However, some colonial schemes were implemented throughout the wider district of Kigezi, and where relevant these will be examined.

Map 1



UGANDA, SHOWING DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

Map 2



KIGEZI DISTRICT, SHOWING SAZA (COUNTY) BOUNDARIES

Several themes will be developed in this thesis, some with a particular historical emphasis, others with a more developmental approach. The thesis will consider issues around the role and functioning of the colonial state - looking at both the formulation of policy and implementation of that policy. These will be examined in the context of the "cash crop vs food crop" dichotomy, concerns about soil conservation, and issues around the granting of titles to land. Taking a more developmental approach, consideration will be given to the population/environment debate and questions of sustainability, longer term land use changes, and intensification of land use in the face of population pressure. Modernisation, the individualisation of land tenure, changing political authority and the implications for access to land will also be examined.

The thesis will examine the responses of African farmers to colonial policies, testing the colonial hypotheses of agricultural development and land use on which development plans were based. The reasons behind policies, and the reasons for particular reactions to those policies by African farmers, can be seen in terms of: a) the opportunities that they offered; b) the constraints or limitations that they resulted in; and c) the desire for sustainability - both of natural resources and the environment, and also for the reproduction of households.

Being a thesis that examines essentially developmental issues in a historical context, the relevant literature is extremely broad and diverse. The literature on agricultural development within the colonial context is large⁵ and has focused in particular on the spread and growth of cash crop production.⁶ This reflects the emphasis given by the colonial state on the need to find suitable cash crops that would provide a firm revenue base for individual colonies. This may, in part, explain why less attention has been paid to those areas that, for various reasons (ecological unsuitability, distance from transportation links etc) were never producers of major cash crops. However, such areas

⁵ C.C. Wrigley, *Crops and Wealth in Uganda: A Short Agrarian History* (Nairobi, 1959); E.A. Brett, *Colonialism and Underdevelopment in East Africa: The Politics of Economic Change 1919-1939* (London, 1973); G. Kitching, *Class and Economic Change in Kenya: the Making of an African Petite Bourgeoisie 1905-1970* (New Haven, 1980).

⁶ S. Bunker, *Peasants against the State - The Politics of Market Control in Bugishu, Uganda 1900-1983* (Chicago, 1987); J. Vincent, *Teso in Transformation* (Berkeley, 1982); A. Richards, F. Sturrock and J.M. Fortt, *From Subsistence to Commercial Farming in Buganda* (Cambridge, 1973); S. Berry, *Cocoa, Custom and Socio-economic Change in Rural Western Nigeria* (Oxford, 1975); P. Hill, *Migrant Cocoa Farmers of Southern Ghana* (Cambridge, 1972).

were of course still influenced by state policies. The studies of the impact of colonial policies within such areas, and in particular the effects of colonial policies on food crop production are relatively few.⁷ Chapter 2 of this thesis will examine attempts to find a single successful cash crop in Kigezi, and will illustrate the failure of the colonial state to fully appreciate the vibrancy of the food crop economy. This resulted in a lack of attention on improving the productivity of this sector. A further point, crucial to understanding the successes and failures of colonial agricultural development in Kigezi, is that farmers tend to be 'risk adverse';⁸ this may prevent them from responding to market demands to maximise production of cash crops in the way that might be predicted by market or commodity theory.

From the 1930s the colonial state in East Africa became increasingly concerned with the issue of sustainability.⁹ Such concerns about the environment can be seen all over colonial Africa and there are a number of studies of areas where these concerns played a major influence in the formulation of agricultural policy.¹⁰ Many of these studies examine soil conservation policies in the context of the growth of nationalism and their role in this political process, and thus examine the success or failure of these policies in

⁷ J. Pottier, 'The politics of famine prevention: Ecology, regional production and food complementarity in western Rwanda', *African Affairs*, 85 (1986), 207-37. H.C. Moore and M. Vaughan, *Cutting Down Trees: Gender, Nutrition and Agricultural Change in the Northern Province of Zambia 1890-1990* (London, 1994) - especially chapter 4 'Cultivators and colonial officials: Food supply and the politics of marketing'.

⁸ See R. Bates, *Essays on the Political Economy of Rural Africa* (Cambridge, 1983); M.P. Collinson, *The Economic Characteristics of the Sukuma Farming System* (Dar es Salaam, 1972).

⁹ D.M. Anderson, 'Depression, dust bowl, demography and drought: The colonial state and soil conservation in East Africa during the 1930s', *African Affairs*, 83 (1984), 321-43. For growth of concerns in Southern Africa context see W. Beinart, 'Soil erosion, conservationism and ideas about development: A southern African exploration, 1900-1960', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 11 1, (1984), 53-83.

¹⁰ In relation to such policies in Kenya see D.W. Throup, *The Economic and Social Origins of Mau Mau, 1945-53* (London, 1988); D.W. Throup, 'The origins of the Mau Mau', *African Affairs*, 84 (1985), 399-433. J. Heyer, 'Agricultural development policy in Kenya from colonial period to 1975', in J. Heyer (ed), *Rural Development in Tropical Africa* (London, 1981), 90-120. For examples from Tanzania see A. Coulson, 'Agricultural policies in mainland Tanzania', in J. Heyer (ed), *Rural Development in Tropical Africa* (London, 1981), 52-89; R. Young and H. Fosbrooke, *Smoke in the Hills: Land and Politics Among the Luguru in Tanganyika* (London, 1960); D.W. Malcolm, *Sukumaland, An African People and the Country: A Study of Land Use in Tanganyika* (London, 1953); S. Feierman, *Peasant Intellectuals: Anthropology and History in Tanzania* (Madison, 1990); J.L. Gibling, *The Politics of Environmental Control in NorthEastern Tanzania 1840-1940* (Philadelphia, 1993); G. Maddox, J.L. Gibling and I. Kimambo (eds.), *Custodians of the Land: Ecology and Culture in the History of Tanzania* (London, 1996). For studies outside Eastern Africa see W. Beinart and C. Bundy, *Hidden Struggles in Rural South Africa: Politics and Popular Movements in Transkei and Eastern Cape* (London, 1987). Also S. Wallman, *Take Out Hunger: Two Case Studies of Rural Development in Basutoland* (London 1969). K. Showers, 'Soil erosion in the Kingdom of Lesotho: Origins and colonial response, 1830s-1950s', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 15 2 (1989), 263-86.

essentially political or social terms.¹¹ Few examine the methods used by the colonial state to ensure their implementation,¹² and even fewer look at the success or failure of these policies in environmental, agricultural or technical terms.¹³ This is perhaps unsurprising as there are few examples where these policies were implemented successfully for long enough to enable any technical measures of success to be made. But this thesis focuses on an area where a number of soil conservation policies were implemented successfully and is the first study of the process of implementation and the reception given to the policies by the local population in Kigezi.¹⁴

In the latter part of the colonial period there was a shift in the emphasis of colonial policy towards individualism in relation to the tenure of land. This arose partly from the belief that the concerns about sustainability could be dealt with by giving individual farmers absolute control over their land through the granting of titles. The circumstances surrounding the implementation of such schemes in other areas, and most notably Central Province, Kenya,¹⁵ were very different. Here, underlying political concerns were paramount to the decision to implement such policies and as a result there was strong financial backing with a large number of staff dedicated to pushing these measures through. With this administrative support it is perhaps unsurprising that the scheme was successfully implemented. This thesis will look at an attempt to introduce similar land reform policies but without the equivalent administrative and financial back up and support. It will consider how, irrespective of whether or not the policy was overall

¹¹ For example see L. Cliffe, 'Nationalism and the reaction to enforced agricultural change in Tanganyika during the colonial period', In L. Cliffe and J. Saul (eds), *Socialism in Tanganyika* (Vol 1) (Nairobi, written 1964, publ 1972); G.A. Maguire, *Towards "Uhuru" in Tanzania: the Politics of Participation* (London, 1969); I.N. Kimambo, *Penetration and Protest in Tanzania: The Impact of the World Economy on the Pare, 1860-1960* (London, 1991).

¹² Although Feierman does give some detail; *Peasant Intellectuals*. Also see Showers, 'Soil Erosion in the Kingdom of Lesotho', 263-86.

¹³ Although this is attempted in various case studies in J.C. de Wilde, *Experiences with Agricultural Development in Tropical Africa*, 2 Vols, (Baltimore, 1967). Also see M. Tiffen, M. Mortimore and F. Gichuki, *More People, Less Erosion: Environmental Recovery in Kenya*, (Chichester, 1994).

¹⁴ The only literature written specifically on this subject in Kigezi includes that by colonial officials: J.W. Purseglove, 'Land use in the overpopulated areas of Kigezi District, Uganda', *East African Agricultural Journal*, 12 (1946), 139-52; J.W. Purseglove, 'Resettlement in Kigezi, Uganda', *Journal of African Administration*, 3 (1951), 13-21; and a number of short studies of localised areas which focus on causes of problems - for example E.R. Kagambirwe, 'Causes and consequences of land shortage in Kigezi', (Kampala, 1973) but make no attempt to place these in the historical context nor assess the solutions put forward by the colonial state, or farmers responses to them.

¹⁵ See M.P.K. Sorrenson, *Land Reform in the Kikuyu Country* (Oxford, 1967) and D.W. Throup, *The Economic and Social Origins*.

successfully implemented, individuals within the community took opportunities that the attempts to introduce policies provided to strengthen their claims to land.

A broader theoretical literature relating to land tenure will also be addressed. The so-called "evolutionary" process in the development of land tenure with a move towards individualisation as a result of increasing population and integration with the market,¹⁶ will be considered. The process by which individual titles were granted and the effect that this had on the politics of land are central concerns of this thesis. The questions of whether the granting of titles to land has an influence on the investment in, and productivity of, land¹⁷ has grown in importance. This has been partly due to the apparent conviction of the World Bank¹⁸ of the value of titles, believing that indigenous tenure systems acted as a constraint on agricultural development because of the effects of insecurity of tenure on investment. More recent findings have not supported this view and have called for more "gradualist" approaches with an "adaption paradigm" in place of the "replacement paradigm".¹⁹ There is also an extensive literature on the access to, and control over, land that people have through membership of social networks,²⁰ sometimes protected through the influence of customary law.²¹

¹⁶ J.P. Platteau *et al.*, 'The evolutionary theory of land rights as applied to sub-saharan Africa: A critical assessment', *Development and Change*, 27 (1996), 29-86. J.P. Platteau, *Formalization and Privatization of Land Rights in Sub Saharan Africa: a Critique of Current Orthodoxies and Structural Adjustment Programme's* (London, 1991).

¹⁷ See case studies in R.E. Downs and S.P.Reyna (eds), *Land and Society in Contemporary Africa* (Hanover, 1988); de Wilde, *Experiences with Agricultural Development*; T.J. Bassett and D.E. Crummey, *Land in African Agrarian Systems*, (Madison, 1993); D.A. Atwood, 'Land registration in Africa: The impact on agricultural production', *World Development*, 18 5 (1990), 659-71; R. Barrows and M. Roth, 'Land tenure and investment in African agriculture: Theory and evidence', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 28 2 (1990), 265-97.

¹⁸ World Bank, *Land Reform* (Washington, 1974).

¹⁹ J.W. Bruce and S.E. Migot-Adholla (eds), *Searching for Land Tenure Security in Africa* (Washington, 1994) 96, 261. Also S.E. Migot-Adholla *et al.*, 'Indigenous land rights systems in Sub Saharan Africa - A constraint on development?', *World Bank Economic Review*, 5 11 (1991), 155-75.

²⁰ S. Berry, 'The food crisis and agrarian change in Africa', *African Studies Review*, 27 2 (1984), 59-112; S. Berry, *No Condition is Permanent: The Social Dynamics of Agrarian Change in Sub Saharan Africa* (Wisconsin, 1993); P. Shipton and M. Goheen, 'Understanding African land-holding: Power, wealth and meaning', *Africa*, 62 (1992), 307-26; Downs and Reyna (eds), *Land and Society*; Bassett and Crummey, *Land in African Agrarian Systems*.

²¹ K. Mann and R. Roberts, *Law in Colonial Africa* (London, 1991); E. Colson, 'The impact of the colonial period on the definition of land rights' in V. Turner (ed), *Profiles of Change: African Society and Colonial Rule* (Vol 3) of L. Gann and P. Duignan, (eds.) *Colonialism in Africa* (Cambridge, 1971); M. Chanock, *Law, Custom and Social Order in Malawi* (Cambridge, 1985); L. Fallers, *Law without Precedent: Legal Ideas in Action in the Courts of Colonial Busoga* (Chicago, 1969); S. F. Moore, *Social Facts and Fabrications: Customary Law on Kilimanjaro 1880-1980* (Cambridge, 1986); H.W.O. Okoth Ogendo, 'Some issues in the study of land tenure relation in African agriculture', *Africa*, 59 1 (1989), 6-17.

The important question of the impact of population growth on the intensification of agricultural production is central to this thesis.²² Following Malthus,²³ some have argued that population growth rates are such that it will simply not be possible to maintain adequate food supplies, and environmental decline will inevitably result.²⁴ Others have taken on the "Neo-Malthusians", and argued that there are few resources which are not replaceable,²⁵ while increased population density actually induces positive changes which offset the decrease in the land available.²⁶ Boserupians see population growth as the stimulus for intensification of agriculture which is accompanied by technical change.²⁷

A number of studies have examined the relationship between increased population and agricultural intensification.²⁸ Examining Boserup's thesis, Pingali and Binswanger show that there is a "remarkable degree of substitutability of capital and labour for land, so that in the long run returns to agricultural labour appears to decline quite slowly as population density increases."²⁹ They suggest that farmer generated technical change is capable of sustaining slow and steady population increases with modest increases in agricultural output, but may not be capable of supporting rapidly rising populations. At this stage, large scale technical changes need to take place. They note that while farmer based innovations and the intensification of agricultural systems are constrained by agro-climatic conditions, a pattern can be observed in the degree of investment in the land. In the early stages of intensification there is almost no investment - land is simply cleared, but tree stumps are left. As intensification increases the tree stumps are removed and boundaries

²² B.L. Turner, K. Kates and G. Hyden, *Population Growth and Agrarian Change in Africa* (Gainesville, 1993); Berry, 'The food crisis and agrarian change'.

²³ T.R. Malthus, *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (London, 1798).

²⁴ See for example P.R. Ehrlich, *The Population Explosion* (New York, 1990) and L.R. Brown, *The State of the World* (New York, 1992).

²⁵ C.L. Jolly, 'Four theories of population change and the environment' *Population and Environment*, 6 1 (1994); D.J. Hogan, 'The impact of population growth on the physical environment', *European Journal of Population*, 8 (1992), 109-23.

²⁶ E. Boserup, *The Conditions of Agricultural Growth* (Chicago, 1987) and E. Boserup, *Population and Technological Change* (Chicago, 1981).

²⁷ See Turner *et al*, *Population Growth and Agrarian Change* for case studies of high density population areas which examine how intensity of agriculture has changed, how these changes came about and the consequences of such changes.

²⁸ See for example P. Pingali, Y. Bigot and H.P. Binswanger, *Agricultural Mechanisation and Evolution of Farming Systems in Sub Saharan Africa* (Baltimore, 1987); H. Ruthenberg, *Farming Systems in the Tropics* 3rd edition (Oxford, 1980).

²⁹ P. Pingali and H.P. Binswanger, 'Population density and farming systems: the changing locus of innovations and technical change', in R.D. Lee *et al* (eds), *Population, Food and Rural Development* (Oxford, 1988), 5.

of plots are more clearly defined. The most easily worked soils, on which cultivation begins, are also the most susceptible to erosion, and so protective devices such as ridging and the construction of terraces are used - these were used in the pre-colonial period in some of the more densely populated parts of Sub-Saharan Africa.³⁰ Harder to work soils are increasingly cultivated as population continues to increase, with labour intensive measures such as drainage being undertaken once population pressure makes this remunerative. Additionally as farming intensities increase more labour intensive fertilizer techniques such as composting and manuring are increasingly used.³¹

Thus, in areas of high population density where increased agricultural output can no longer come about through the extension of land under cultivation, there must be a move towards the more intensive use of land. This entails increasing the frequency of cultivation (by reducing fallow periods) and increasing labour and technical inputs so that output per unit area of land increases. As Turner *et al* observe, such growth does not necessarily improve per capita production which normally needs technological change,³² including land improvements such as irrigation and the construction of terraces. These technical changes take place in a step pattern as thresholds of demand are met and the investment is made.³³ Each step involves major improvements in land productivity and improvement in per capita production.

Turner *et al* suggest that "long term population growth and economic development usually do not take place without intensification and agricultural growth, although intensification and agricultural growth do not inevitably follow population growth and are not necessarily beneficial or sustainable."³⁴ The case studies examined in Turner *et al*'s volume suggest that "substantial increases in the overall low population densities of Sub Saharan Africa can be matched by increases in agriculture, even in areas that are relatively poorly endowed for cultivation." They found greater variability as to the way that increasing population generates diversification in labour, market orientated production, capital investment in agriculture and adoption of modern technology, although in all cases studies

³⁰ W. Allan, *The African Husbandman* (Edinburgh, 1965), 386.

³¹ Pingali and Binswanger, 'Population density and farming systems.'

³² Turner *et al*, *Population Growth and Agrarian Change*.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 406.

economic diversification was on the rise.

In connection with environmental impacts, these findings suggest that "degradation of a severity that destroys agriculture does not necessarily follow from high population pressures or intensive agriculture."³⁵ They concluded that severe environmental degradation was associated with agriculture in three circumstances: 1) extreme rural densities where economic diversification was not able to substitute adequately for the increasing population; 2) physically or biologically vulnerable areas; and 3) areas where the socio-economic organisation impedes the implementation of conservation strategies.

They note that

"relatively stable environmental conditions are noted for most of the highlands cases of eastern Africa... despite large populations and ... [with one exception] long term intensive cultivation. ... Farmers in these areas have managed their lands, even under severe pressure, in a manner that has permitted sustained use to date. These observations indicate that where farmers have extensive knowledge about the environment that they manage, perceive that their capital and managerial investment is in their own interest, and have a socioeconomic organization facilitating this management, environmental problems can be confronted successfully."³⁶

The findings of Turner *et al* are corroborated by those of a more recent study by Tiffen *et al.*³⁷ This examined the Machakos area of Kenya, where concerns amongst colonial officials about the unsustainability of the agricultural system led them to attempt to implement various soil conservation policies from the 1930s. Strong opposition by the local population led, however, to the abandonment of these policies. What is so significant about this case study is that in the post-colonial era the productivity of the area appears to have increased as people have decided to invest (with both labour and capital) in their agriculture, doing many of the things that they have refused to do when instructed to in the colonial era. The study, an example of post-colonial intensification, concludes that an increase in population density over a 60 year period, combined with a favourable policy environment induced environmentally positive changes in land utilisation. They suggest that population density was the key and Malthusian outcomes were avoided by migration, diversification of incomes (and an increase in non-agricultural incomes) and agricultural intensification through new technology, improved livestock etc. Other studies have also

³⁵ Ibid., 409.

³⁶ Ibid., 409.

³⁷ Tiffen, Mortimore, and Gichuki. *More People, Less Erosion*.

suggested that global correlations between population growth and environmental degradation cannot be extended to a local level. For example, a recent study in Kenya has found that at a district level woody biomass increased at a rate greater than population growth.³⁸

Another aspect of this literature is the often weak relationship between empirical evidence and state action. In the case of Machakos, Tiffen *et al* illustrate how the district was believed to be on the edge of disaster environmentally and these concerns were used to justify a whole set of state -enforced measures. Officials believed that Machakos was beginning a process of linear decline which, unless interventions were put into place, would get steadily worse. Tiffen *et al*'s study makes the point that such linear decline is not necessarily applicable - rather ecological systems can be seen as regenerative around patterns or cycles that can be short, medium or long term.

Such findings have been further reinforced by work carried out in Guinea which have shown that forest cover increased in the savannah region as a direct result of population growth.³⁹ These examples show that established opinion about environmental problems may be poorly founded. Cases such as these may have resonance for Kigezi if it can be shown that the agricultural problems of the district were not quite what colonial officials perceived them to be. Recently published material⁴⁰ has shown how policies founded on environmental orthodoxies, narratives and 'received wisdoms' have often proved both harmful to African farmers and ineffective in ecological terms. The studies examine a number of narratives (for example on erosion⁴¹ and land and capital⁴²) and all agree that these 'received wisdoms' have had the effect of promoting external intervention in the control and use of natural resources, which in turn can have negative consequences for local people. The debate around the entrenchment of myths, and that concerning

³⁸ P. Holmgren, E.J. Masakha and H. Sjöholm, 'Not all African land is being degraded: A recent survey of trees on farms in Kenya reveals rapidly increasing forest resources', *Ambio*, 23 7 (1994), 391-5.

³⁹ M. Leach and J. Fairhead, 'The forest islands of Kissidougou: social dynamics of environmental change in West Africa's forest savanna mosaic', (Report for the ODA, 1994) and J. Fairhead and M. Leach, 'Contested forests: Modern conservation and historical land use in Guinea's Ziama Reserve', *African Affairs*, 93 (1994), 481-512. The latter stresses that "forest histories have important implications for how one understands both forest ecology and people's social and political relationship with currently forested land."

⁴⁰ M. Leach and R. Mearns (eds), *Lie of the Land: Challenging Received Wisdom on the African Environment* (London, 1996).

⁴¹ M. Stocking, 'Soil erosion: breaking new ground' in *ibid*.

⁴² M. Tiffen, 'Land and Capital: Blind spots in the study of the resource-poor farmer' in *ibid*.

positive land use changes associated with increasing population densities, is not directly discussed in this thesis. However other research carried out concurrently has made similar findings, in particular related to increasing fallow periods and frequencies in association with increasing population densities, which are discussed in Chapter 7.⁴³

The literature on Kigezi itself is sparse and is dominated by religious issues - both of a contemporary nature⁴⁴ and traditional religions (in particular in relation to the cult of the Nyabingi.⁴⁵) There is also a colonial literature on land issues in the district,⁴⁶ but few works assess the policies of the colonial period, or people's reactions to them.⁴⁷ The only major anthropological study of Kigezi is that by Edel, who conducted fieldwork in 1933. It is apparent that by the time the book came to be published in 1957,⁴⁸ other concerns such as a more formalised approach with a focus on kinship relationships, had impinged.

⁴³ K. Lindblade, J.K. Tumahirwe, G. Carswell, C. Nkwiine and D. Bwamiki, 'More People, More Fallow - Environmentally favorable land-use changes in southwestern Uganda', (Report prepared for the Rockefeller Foundation, 1996).

⁴⁴ A.G. Ginyera-Pinyewa, *Issues in Pre-Independence Politics in Uganda: A Case Study on the Contribution of Religion to Political Debate in Uganda in the Decade 1952-62* (Kampala, 1976); B. Turyahikayo-Rugyema, 'The introduction of Christianity on East African societies - A case study of the Bakiga of south west Uganda', *Makerere Historical Journal*, 2 (1976), 57-72. A.C. Stanley Smith, *Road to Revival* (London, 1946).

⁴⁵ This thesis will not attempt to deal with this aspect of Bakiga society and history. The literature includes M.J. Bessell, 'Nyabingi', *Uganda Journal*, 6 (1938), 73-86; F.S. Brazier, 'The Nyabingi cult: Religion and political scale in Kigezi 1900-1930', (EAISR, 1968); S. Feerman, 'Healing as social criticism in the time of colonial conquest', *African Studies*, 54 1 (1995), 73-88; J. Freedman, *Nyabingi: The Social History of an African Divinity*. (Tervuren, 1984); H.B. Hansen, 'The colonial control of spirit movements in Uganda', in D.M. Anderson and D.H. Johnson, *Revealing Prophets: Prophecy and History in Eastern Africa* (London, 1994), 143-63; E. Hopkins, 'The Nyabingi Cult of Southwestern Uganda', in R.I. Rotberg and A.A. Mazrui, *Protest and Power in Black Africa* (New York, 1970), 258-336; M. Rutanga, 'Nyabingi movement: People's anti-colonial struggles in Kigezi, 1910-1936', (Kampala, CBR Working Paper, 1991). B. Turyahikayo-Rugyema, 'The Origins and Development of the Nyabingi Cult', *Makerere Historical Journal*, 2 (1976), 145-66. B. Turyahikayo-Rugyema, *Philosophy and Traditional Religion of the Bakiga in South West Uganda* (Nairobi, 1983).

⁴⁶ Purseglove, 'Land use in the overpopulated areas of Kigezi District'; Purseglove, 'Resettlement in Kigezi'; J.C.D. Lawrance, *Fragmentation of Agricultural Land in Uganda* (Entebbe, 1963); J.C.D. Lawrance, 'A pilot scheme for grant of land titles in Uganda', *Journal of African Administration*, 12 (1960), 135-43; J.M. Byagagaire and J.C.D. Lawrance, *Effect of Customs of Inheritance on Sub-Division and Fragmentation of Land in South Kigezi, Uganda* (Entebbe, 1957).

⁴⁷ Although there are some exceptions including Occasional Papers from the Department of Geography, Makerere for example R.J. Tindituza, and B.M. Kateete, 'Essays on land fragmentation in Kigezi District', (Occasional Paper 22, Geography Dept, Makerere, 1971). Also R.E. Yeld, 'The Family and Social Change: A Study Among the Kiga of Kigezi, South West Uganda', (PhD, Makerere, 1969). Also more recently work by MISR and Land Tenure Centre, University of Wisconsin 'The Rujumbura Pilot Land registration scheme - Kigezi (Rukungiri District): The Impact of Titling on agricultural development' (MISR and the Land Tenure Centre, University of Wisconsin, 1988); M. Roth and J. Cochrane and W. Kisamba-Mugerwa, 'Tenure Security, credit use and farm investment in Rujumbura Pilot land registration scheme, Uganda', in Bruce and Migot-Adholla (eds), *Searching for Land Security*.

⁴⁸ M.M. Edel, *The Chiga of Western Uganda* (Oxford, 1957), 18.

The influence of different debates and paradigms make the resulting ethnography sometimes unclear and not entirely conclusive, and the book is difficult to use. In using it as an ethnographic source therefore, it has been treated with great caution, and in general it is only used in corroboration with other materials, and especially with interviews with local farmers. It is also used in descriptive terms and not for the analysis it offers of Bakiga society. Other works that will be referred to include studies carried out from the mid-1950s on, for example, Bakiga chiefs,⁴⁹ the history of migration,⁵⁰ causes of fragmentation,⁵¹ land disputes⁵² and a more recent work on district politics since 1947.⁵³

With many gaps in the secondary literature, this thesis necessarily draws very extensively on primary materials. Information on the formulation of broader policy has come from both the Public Record Office, and to a lesser extent from the Entebbe National Archives.⁵⁴ This material is largely in the form of memoranda and correspondence on policy and proposed changes to policy.⁵⁵ The largest source found for both the implementation of different policies and discussion of the existing and changing situation was that of the 'archives' in the Kabale District Offices. This was not an archive as such, but rather a number of storerooms containing piles of uncatalogued and unorganised files.⁵⁶ While this was initially extremely difficult to use, it proved to be an extraordinarily rich source containing a wide variety of exceptionally revealing material. The files mainly contain correspondence and reports that passed both between the District Administration in Kigezi and the colonial administration in Entebbe, and between and

⁴⁹ P.T.W. Baxter, 'The Kiga', in A.I. Richards, *East African Chiefs: A Study of Political Development in Some Uganda and Tanganyika Tribes* (London, 1960), 284.

⁵⁰ P.G. Powesland, 'History of migration' in A.I. Richards (ed), *Economic Development and Tribal Change: A Study of Immigrant Labour in Buganda* (London, 1954).

⁵¹ Kagambirwe, 'Causes and Consequences of Land Shortage'.

⁵² J.Y. Obol-Ochola, 'Customary Land Law and the Economic Development of Uganda', (Dar-es-Salaam, LLM, 1971).

⁵³ K.T. Connor, 'Kigezi', in J.D. Barkan, (*et al*), *Uganda District Government and Politics, 1947-1967* (Madison, 1977).

⁵⁴ Documents for this period are largely not catalogued in the Entebbe National Archives [hereafter ENA], but a small number of useful files were found.

⁵⁵ For example discussions around the changes in land tenure legislation and the formulation of the Land Tenure Statement of Policy, were received by the CO and are located in files at the Public Record Office [hereafter PRO]. eg see PRO CO 822/877.

⁵⁶ Different rooms contained files from the District Commissioner's office, (Kabale District Archives, District Commissioner's office [hereafter KDA DC]) and the Department of Agriculture (Kabale District Archives, Department of Agriculture's Office [hereafter KDA DoA]). The DCs files had once been catalogued, but the catalogue could not be located, nor were the files in any order.

within different departments of the District Administration, and in particular between the offices of the District Commissioner (DC) and the District Agricultural Officer (DAO).⁵⁷ As such, they revealed information on almost all aspects of colonial administration, and in particular the formulation and implementation of the policies that are relevant to this thesis.

The most significant concern about this material was that the 'African voice' might not be heard clearly enough through these colonial files. It was however found that the voice of Bakiga farmers did come through surprisingly clearly. In addition over 100 interviews were conducted with elderly farmers relating to the events being discussed in the thesis. A wide range of information was gathered relating in particular to their experiences of, attitudes to, and understanding of colonial agricultural and land tenure policies, see Appendix I and Map 6.

Before the structure of the thesis is outlined (1.5), the following three sections will provide details of the background to the district that is essential to provide a firm foundation for an understanding of the analysis that follows.

1.2 - Population and Migration

Kigezi is located in southwestern Uganda bordering Rwanda and Zaire (see Map 1) and covers an area of approximately 2,000 square miles. It lies at an altitude of between 1500m and 2759m above sea level. The mean annual rainfall is 1000mm, and the distribution of rainfall is bimodal, with peaks in March-April and October-November, and dry seasons from June-July and December-January. Precipitation is usually gentle and evenly distributed.⁵⁸ Temperature ranges between a minimum of 9^oC to a maximum of 23^oC. The district is made up of undulating hills with steep slopes. Many of the valley bottoms were once papyrus swamps, although most have been drained during the last 50 years, and are now cultivated or used for pasture. The soils of Kigezi are derived from the Karagwe-Ankolean series and are largely red loam soils.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Generally the files had simply been closed and left untouched. They had not been sorted, nor had items been "weeded" from them. However, confidential files were stored elsewhere and were not located.

⁵⁸ Notes for EARC, J.W. Purseglove, Oct 1951, PRO CO 892 15/7.

⁵⁹ J.D. Jameson, (ed) *Agriculture in Uganda* (Oxford, 1970) 2nd ed, 47.

That the region of Kigezi has experienced an extremely long history of human settlement and in migration is confirmed by recent research on swamp pollen core and radiocarbon dating. This suggests that clearing of forests in the Kabale area started more than 4,800 years ago with further clearing around 2,200 years ago.⁶⁰ Agriculture concomitant with more permanent settlements was probably established around 2,000 years ago.⁶¹

The people of Kigezi are Bakiga, Banyaruanda and Bahororo. Both Banyaruanda (found predominantly in Bufumbira in the south) and Bahororo (found predominantly in the north in Kinkizi and Ruzhumbura) are caste societies made up of pastoralists (Tutsi and Bahima respectively) and agriculturalists (Hutu and Bairu). Kigezi is surrounded by such cultural areas in the form of Ankole and Ruanda, but the area of present day Kabale district (colonial *sazas* of Ndorwa and Rukiga) is populated largely by Bakiga, who are not a stratified society. (See Map 2)

The area of southern Kigezi is one of high population density, which appears to be the result of both in-migration over a sustained period and high natural increase. Early evidence from European sources suggested that this area was sparsely populated. Jack observed that there were "few signs of human occupation" in Rukiga in 1913, although in some valleys there were "traces of former cultivation." He suggested that this was as a result of a serious famine, and "in the short time during which we were in this country there were distinct signs of the return of natives to some parts."⁶²

⁶⁰ A. Hamilton, *et al* 'Early forest clearance and environmental degradation in South West Uganda,' *Nature*, 320, (1986), 164-7.

⁶¹ D. Taylor, 'Late quaternary pollen records from two Uganda Mmires: Evidence for environmental change in the Rukiga highlands of southwest Uganda', *Palaeogeography, Palaeobotany and Palynology*, 80 (1990), 283-300. D.L. Schoenbrun, 'The contours of vegetation change and human agency in Eastern Africa's Great Lakes region: ca 2000 BC to ca AD 1000', *History in Africa*, 21 (1994), 302.

⁶² Major E.M. Jack, *On the Congo Frontier, Exploration and Sport* (London, 1914), 191. See also lecture to Royal Geographical Society, 14 April 1913. *Geographical Journal*, VI (June 1913), 545.

Table 1 - Population Statistics for Kigezi District.⁶³

Year	Population
1921	206,090
1931	226,080
1948	395,529
1959	493,444
1969	647,988
1980	751,980
1991	994,679

Whilst statistics produced by early censuses must be treated with some caution, being unreliable extrapolations of very small surveys, they are nonetheless worth noting as they do suggest that there was a substantial increase in population over the period under discussion. The proportion caused by natural increase, and that by immigration, would be very difficult to determine but high rates of in-migration from Rwanda are likely,⁶⁴ until the early 1940s from when migration was restricted.⁶⁵ In southern Kigezi, as a result of the dense population, relatively small acreages of land are available for farming, and the system of inheritance has resulted in fragmentation of land holdings and widely scattered plots.⁶⁶ It was estimated that by the mid-1940s the average acreage under cultivation was under 3 acres per taxpayer, which was equal to under half an acre per resident person.⁶⁷

Migration has played a significant role socially, economically and politically in the history of this area. Migration has historically consisted of both long-term⁶⁸ and short-term⁶⁹

⁶³ These figures are for Kigezi District. When this district ceased to exist the combined figures for Kabale, Kisoro and Rukungiri are used. Sources: Kabale District Archives; Uganda Govt Statistical Abstracts, 1966; Uganda 1991 Population and Housing Census.

⁶⁴ B. Langlands, 'Population geography of Kigezi', (Geography Department, Occasional Paper 22, Makerere, 1971).

⁶⁵ Purseglove, 'Report of the overpopulated areas'.

⁶⁶ Byagagaire and Lawrance, *Effect of Customs of Inheritance*.

⁶⁷ Purseglove, 'Kigezi Resettlement'.

⁶⁸ For details of the migration of the major clans of Bakiga see B. Turyahikayo-Rugyema, 'A history of the Bakiga in south western Uganda and northern Rwanda c1500-1930', (Michigan, PhD, 1974), 56. He concludes that "All the available information points to Rwanda as the origin of the Bakiga."

⁶⁹ See Section 1.4. Temporary migration was mainly young men going to areas such as Buganda for anything from six months to three years to work for Baganda farmers as labourers, or to, for example, the Lugazi Sugar Factory, and Kilembe Mines. Additionally the government was involved in organising formal contracts for Bakiga workers through labour agencies. Powesland, 'History of Migration.'

(ie for both settlement and labour migration), and has been both spontaneous and government-organised. In the case of permanent migration there is a long history of movement by families on their own initiative. Edel has written that the

"whole picture of land use and land rights must be seen against a whole background of considerable mobility, rather than fixed relationship to a particular area of land. Any period of 10 to 20 years will normally see a total redistribution of the people in any neighbourhood. Household by household, the members of the village move away, often in different directions."⁷⁰

She notes that:

"Groups of brothers can move away into bush land if they can find any that is unclaimed. Any close kinsman may follow and claim nearby land, because he feels safe where other members of his lineage live. Sometimes a group of brothers move on to land that some other group already claims, establishing their rights by fighting for it."⁷¹

Migration needs therefore to be seen as an inherent part of Bakiga life. It follows that the clan should not be seen as a static descent group as through marriage, patronage, blood brotherhood etc (for which migration is important to all) individuals could be incorporated into the clan or lineage. Baxter, who describes the structures of clans and lineages, explains:

"The Kiga are divided into about 30 exogamous clans, each segmented into a number of lineages of varying depth. The unit of local residence is usually a maximal lineage consisting of between 100 and 1000 adult males and occupying between 1 and 20 square miles of territory.... The history of lineages reveals a constant process of fission, usually correlated with migration. This occurs every 3 or 4 generations in those lineages which have had high reproduction and survival rates... in almost every case the point of fission has been a woman, since the descendants of different wives of the same man tend to separate from each other. ...This process of fission accompanied by migration of segments, has been a constant feature of the expansion of the Bakiga as the population has increased. But this was not an isolated process; it was accompanied by another which paralleled it. I have no record of migration to a distance by a segment where there has not also been an accompanying pressure on the land. Segmental relations were unlikely to become gravely exacerbated except in conditions of land shortage, which were associated with accusations of witchcraft among the women, or quarrels and fights among the men over cultivating rights in different fields. On some occasions, however, this hostility might be externally directed and the locally resident members of a clan might join together to evict from a neighbouring area members of another clan."⁷²

⁷⁰ Edel, *The Chiga*, 18.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 16-7.

⁷² Baxter, 'The Kiga', 283.

Baxter also mentions that, "On the death of an elderly or respected head of a compound his sons are expected to leave the old site and move a short distance away so that they, and their mothers, may not be constantly reminded of their grief."⁷³ Appreciating the extent of population mobility amongst Bakiga is important to understanding the Bakiga agricultural system, their reception to some colonial policies, and the complexities of their land tenure system.

1.3 - Authority and Administration

Assessing pre-colonial systems of authority is difficult from this distance, although there are a number of sources which can be drawn upon. These suggest that while there was no formal system of chieftainships amongst Bakiga, authority was exercised at a lower level, although sources disagree as to whether this authority was through the clan, lineage or household.

Following a visit to Kigezi in 1919-20, Roscoe observed: "There was no supreme chief, but the tribe was divided into clans which were ruled by their own elders and lived completely isolated from each other."⁷⁴ His description is superficial and appears simplified, as he states that "one clan could not associate with members of another", while failing to mention that marriage had to take place between different clans, and this inevitably meant contact.

In the most detailed study of Bakiga, Edel has argued that they were an "independent one-class peasant people" who were not united, had no tribal organisation and no formal authority beyond that exercised by the father on his household.⁷⁵ There was thus no recognisable system of government and "in place of institutions of the kind so admired among the Baganda, superstition and witchcraft seemed paramount among the Bakiga."⁷⁶ There were no individuals or groups of individuals with authority over others. Edel states that

"apart from the nascent power of the Nyabingi priests, there was no authority which crossed clan lines. The Chiga are, in short, a people united only in their

⁷³ Ibid., 284.

⁷⁴ J. Roscoe, *The Bagesu and Other Tribes of the Uganda Protectorate. The Third Part of the Report of the Mackie Ethnological Expedition of Central Africa* (Cambridge, 1924).

⁷⁵ Edel, *The Chiga*, 3.

⁷⁶ F.S. Brazier, 'The incident at Nyakishenyi, 1917', *Uganda Journal*, 32 (1968), 17.

common disunity; a group of relatively homogenous culture, divided into independent exogamous clans, which are related through a network of intermarriage, but are engaged in almost constant feuds, these clans are not static units, but are themselves subject to a fissioning process which characterizes Chiga groups at all levels."⁷⁷

In relation to the clans, or *oruganda*, Edel states that

"The clans.. have structural significance, placing an individual in a very wide sense *vis-a-vis* the rest of the Chiga as a member of a particular exogamous group; their implications for in-group relations however, are minimal. Clan members have no common required participation in any activities, no common leaders, or form of authority, no common lands. ... The Chiga do not consider the clan as an essentially fixed and static grouping. Clans may and do subdivide along lines of previous lineage division."⁷⁸

As for the lineage, or *mulyango*, Edel notes that while it is "not marked by any structure of ceremonial or authority within the group ... [it] does have a kind of unity, particularly in its external relations."⁷⁹ However, Edel stresses that the lineage "does not own the land which its members occupy. House-plots and garden-plots are owned by individual households. The relation of the lineage to its land is a matter of safety, or peaceful co-residence, rather than of joint ownership".⁸⁰

While land ownership was entirely individualistic, it was not considered to be wealth (which was in the form of wives and cattle) worthy of accumulating for its own sake.⁸¹ Edel states that there were considerable differences in the amount of property owned by individuals, there was, however, no class differentiation and no political significance in patronage as no patron was powerful enough to benefit from the relationship. Individuals that had power, and from that the ability to accumulate wealth, were priests, medicine men, rain-makers, and to a lesser extent diviners, as they were widely feared by the population.⁸² However, the extent of this power is difficult to comprehend and it seems that even Nyabingi priests had to be backed by constant threats of physical or super-

⁷⁷ Edel, *The Chiga*, 27-8.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 22-3.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁸¹ *Ibid.* Also M.M. Edel, 'Property Among the Chiga in Uganda', *Africa*, 11 (1938), 325-41.

⁸² Also see Tibenderana who suggested that the fear of the supernatural was crucial to methods of peacekeeping in the 19th century, and because of their strong belief in spirits, Bakiga "successfully manipulated supernatural forces to control interpersonal relations." P.K. Tibenderana, 'Supernatural sanctions and peacekeeping among the Bakiga of western Uganda during the 19th century', *Journal of African Studies*, 7 (1986), 150.

natural violence. Edel notes that the essence of "legal procedure" was action of the offended party - either to right an injury by retaliation or to compel payment of an obligation. However there were great differences between offences committed within, and those outside, the lineage, and offences within were only the concern of the parties immediately involved. Edel describes a system of arbitration of offences and accusations by a "Tribunal" of respected elders - but it had no power to enforce its decisions.⁸³

Edel notes that it was not entirely clear whether there had in the past been a "greater degree of lineage cohesion" and individuals were sometimes referred to as "having been 'leaders' or 'elders' of various lineages." However, her findings suggested that

"such leadership was not specific or institutionalized. A man who happened to be a rain maker performed his rites for members of his lineage. And such a body of power and knowledge tended to be hereditary, setting up a family line of leading men in a lineage who could make rain. Individuals known for their fighting prowess also had considerable prestige. Their opinions might be sought and their advice followed, but they had no power to command obedience or enforce decisions."⁸⁴

She notes that the Rukiga word closest to chief, *mukama*, was not applied to lineage elders, but "only to priests of Nyabingi, officers of a new cult which had swept the land just before the coming of the British... but there is no evidence that lineage elders or anyone else had anything like comparable powers before that time."⁸⁵

Edel's findings have been widely accepted,⁸⁶ and with reference to political authority Baxter has reiterated that "Within the hill or valley area occupied by a maximal lineage there was no institutionalized political authority."⁸⁷ Referring to "talk of past lineage meetings and the election of lineage heads", Baxter writes

"If there was such an organization it was certainly embryonic, because there is no other trace of it left today. ... Within a lineage area individual family heads who combined wealth with wisdom could become respected leaders of opinion, both political and legal, but they had no formally recognized authority. There were also

⁸³ Edel, *The Chiga*, 112-22.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ For example B.K. Taylor, *The Western Lacustrine Bantu: Nyoro, Toro, Nyankore, Kiga, Haya and Zinza* (London, 1962). Also Baxter, 'The Kiga', 278-310. For a detailed discussion of the contemporary nature of land ownership in Kabale District, which stresses the social links which bind together groups of people in relation to land claims see J. Bosworth, 'Land, Gender and ideology: the case of Kabale', (Draft copy of PhD thesis, 1996).

⁸⁷ Baxter, 'The Kiga', 284.

men who obtained authority within limited spheres, as for example, rainmaking and war, but such authority was not institutionalized and did not survive a man's period of active success within that sphere. Outside the clan there was no political authority. .. When threatened by an alien power, a temporary defensive clan grouping (alliance would be too strong a word) might occur."⁸⁸

That said, other of Edel's findings have been questioned - both in relation to authority over land and authority more broadly. Obol-Ochola disagrees with Edel's assertion that land holding was individualistic, arguing that ownership was determined by membership of clans and the clan elders were regarded as land controlling and allocating authorities. But he provides little evidence to back up this claim, beyond saying that he reached this conclusion after discussions with elders. He does not question the possible motives of clan elders in claiming land allocating powers, indeed he does not see the elders as having any agendas of their own with respect to power over such a valuable and scarce commodity as land. Turyahikayo-Rugyema argues that there was a certain degree of political organisation at a lineage level in some lineages⁸⁹ and writes that each clan paid allegiance to its "leaders".⁹⁰ He and Rutanga put forward the case that a group made up of the heads of families, called *abakuru b'emiryango*, met together to settle disputes that extended beyond the limits of a family or household. Although this body could not impose sanctions or formulate laws, they argue that its decisions were normally followed as failure to do so would risk being ostracised by the elders and community. However, the extent of the powers of such leaders is not clear. The only formally recognised power was that of a father over his household; although at a higher level (ie lineage) respected elders might become leaders of opinion whose advise was sought to settle disputes etc, but they had no formal powers to enforce their decisions.

What is certainly clear, is that colonial administrators found no systems of government that they could recognise, understand and incorporate in order to establish an administration in Kigezi. This, however, did not alter the way that they established their administration; they did what they did elsewhere in Uganda, appointing Baganda Agents as a layer of administration over the top of the existing situation. British administration

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ B. Turyahikayo-Rugyema, 'Bakiga institutions of Government', *Uganda Journal*, 40 (1982), 14-27.

⁹⁰ Turyahikayo-Rugyema, 'A History of the Bakiga', 169. Re institutions of government see Turyahikayo-Rugyema, 'Bakiga Institutions of Government'; and traditional religion see Turyahikayo-Rugyema, *Philosophy and Traditional Religion*. The latter examines the Nyabingi, the impact of Christianity in the early colonial period and the Revival movement from 1920-1940. Also see Rutanga, 'Nyabingi Movement'.

of Kigezi District came relatively late in comparison with the rest of the Uganda Protectorate. It was not until after the Anglo-German-Belgian Boundary Commission of 1911 had settled the different colonial claims to the area, that civil administration could begin.⁹¹ From 1909 until 1913, Kigezi was administered by Political Officers, and in 1913 Kigezi's first DC was appointed. Kigezi was divided for administrative purposes into counties (*sazas*), sub-counties (*gombololas*), parishes (*miluka: pl; muluka: sing*) and sub-parishes (*mukungu* or *mutongole*). The pattern of administration followed that seen in other parts of Uganda with Baganda agents used at the *saza* and *gombolola* levels, below which local people were chosen to assist them.⁹² With an agent or chief at each administrative level, a hierarchy of authority was established, each chief being directly accountable to his superior. All the chiefs (with the exception of the lowest rank) were salaried employees of the Administration, and for some years *bukungu* also received a small salary.⁹³

"With the lack of any suitable indigenous political organisation as an administrative foundation, coupled with the unfriendliness of the Bakiga, institutionalised in a spirit cult, it is perhaps not surprising that the British turned once again to the Baganda as agents of imperialism."⁹⁴

During the early period of the colonial administration the most serious threat to the peace of the district appeared in the form of the Nyabingi cult, which was to periodically rise up and threaten the authority of the British and their agents. The intervention of the First World War⁹⁵ brought the administration of the district to a virtual standstill and shortages of personnel meant that it was not until after the war that anything more than superficial administration began. Wartime retrenchments also meant that during this period Baganda Agents, in districts such as Kigezi, worked under less supervision, than might normally have been the case.⁹⁶ At this time, according to Connor, the presence of the

⁹¹ See W.R. Louis, *Ruanda-Urundi 1884-1919* (Oxford, 1963), 79-91, 194-9. Also J.M. Coote (with postscript by H.B. Thomas), 'The Kivu Mission 1909-10', *Uganda Journal*, 20 (1956), 105-12. Also H.B. Thomas, 'Kigezi Operations 1914-17', *Uganda Journal*, 30 (1966), 165-73.

⁹² B. Turyahikayo-Rugyema, 'The British imposition of colonial rule on Uganda: The Buganda agents in Kigezi, 1908-30', *Transafrican Journal of History*, 5 (1976), 111-33. For wider discussion of the use of Baganda Agents see A. Roberts, 'The Sub Imperialism of the Baganda', *Journal of African History*, 3 (1962), 435-50. In Kinkizi and Rujhumbura pastoralist chiefs were accepted; while in Bufumbira the most prominent Mutusi chief was chosen as the *saza* chief, with Agents to assist them. In part because of the rivalry between Bakiga clans Agents were initially used alone in Bakiga areas.

⁹³ Baxter, 'The Kiga'.

⁹⁴ Brazier, 'The incident at Nyakishenyi', 17.

⁹⁵ For details of operations in Kigezi see: Thomas, 'Kigezi Operations', and Louis, *Ruanda-Urundi*, 207-31.

⁹⁶ Brazier, 'The incident at Nyakishenyi', 18.

Baganda agents led to considerable discontent; "they met resistance because they represented an attempt to change the political loyalties and behaviour of people".⁹⁷

In establishing an administration in Kigezi the British had two intentions. Firstly, to create a single centralised administration rather than three separate tribal administrations, even though Kigezi was an area of three main tribal groups. Secondly, it was planned that in time local people would take over from the Baganda agents. However, for a number of reasons (the First World War and the activities of the Nyabingi) the first Mukiga *gombolola* chief was not appointed for a decade. The Native Authority Ordinance of 1919 set out the role of chiefs and gave them both executive and judicial powers.⁹⁸ The chiefs were responsible for the supervision of tax collection and public works, and they worked in the courts. Courts were established from 1916 at *gombolola* level with the *gombolola* chief hearing disputes, which could then be referred up to the *saza* court, while appeals could be made to the District Court. By far the majority of cases were heard and dealt with by the "native courts" and the cases were reviewed by District officials on tour. These courts dealt with cases of theft, disobedience (for example maintaining famine reserves, sanitary conditions etc), tax default, etc, and they could punish through imprisonment, corporal punishments and fines. Through the courts the chiefs therefore had extremely wide powers, and it was not until the mid-1950s that the process of separating the judiciary from executive began to take place.⁹⁹ Thus, from the beginning of British rule, the Government, through the chiefs, extended its control into a wide range of matters including private concerns such as bridewealth, famine reserves and methods of cultivation.¹⁰⁰ The chiefs were placed in an extraordinarily powerful position. It was not until the 1950s that this was to change to any significant extent.

Elliot, an official in Kigezi from 1921 to 1922, has confirmed that in this early period the administration "worked through the Chiefs entirely, they had to impose any orders, directions etc. which we might give." He recalls how much of their time was taken up

⁹⁷ Connor, 'Kigezi', 229. For further details of the Baganda agents in Kigezi see Turyahikayo-Rugyema, 'The British imposition of colonial rule'. Also E.N. Bisamunya 'Buganda Agency 1911-24' and D.J.W. Denoon, 'The allocation of official posts in Kigezi 1908-1930', in D.J.W. Denoon (ed), *A History of Kigezi in South West Uganda* (Kampala, 1972).

⁹⁸ Connor, 'Kigezi', 229.

⁹⁹ Kigezi District AR 1915-16 and WPARs 1925, 1931, 1945, 1949 and 1956.

¹⁰⁰ Edel, *The Chiga*, 125-7.

with

"hearing court cases, most of them civil actions between the parties concerned, and in effect appeals from the decision of their Chief and his Elders which one of the parties disagreed with. The Chiefs could deal with all minor offenses but anything serious had to be referred to us and tried in Kabale."¹⁰¹

Even at the time it was acknowledged that there were difficulties involved with the Baganda agents. In 1920 DC Phillips, described how the local population had become "submerged, incoherent and voiceless."¹⁰² From 1922, the use of Baganda agents was phased out with the appointment of the first Mukiga *gombolola* chief in 1922. The process continued steadily, and by 1930 three *saza* chiefs and all the lower chiefs were indigenous to the area.¹⁰³ This brought with it further changes to the systems of authority. For the first time men from the area could be appointed with power over non-family members, and over people from different clans and lineages. Younger men could have authority over older men and this new local elite could intervene in what had previously been entirely family matters - for example bridewealth, land inheritance, and matters concerning day to day life, such as agriculture.

"A hierarchy of courts and councils parallels that of the chiefdoms. The chief of a unit at any level is *ex-officio* chairman of both within his unit, and a member of the next highest council. Lower grade courts can impose no penal sanctions and have no clerks or police. Lower grade councils are advisory; they control no funds or staff and cannot initiate anything without the consent of a higher council. One of their principal functions is to elect representatives to the next highest council and to send motions up to that level. Both courts and councils meet informally as business or cases arise. Sub-county [*gombolola*] courts are gazetted, meet once or twice a week on fixed days and are empowered to fine and imprison. County courts meet at intervals to deal with cases sent up from the lower courts. ...Sub parish chiefs are responsible for seeing that members of their sub-parish pay their taxes, register births, marriages and deaths, obey the veterinary, agricultural and sanitary regulations, perform their communal labour, maintain their famine reserves and carry out similar statutory obligations. They do this by exhortation and if that fails, by prosecution. In this they have to achieve a nice balance between not incurring the hatred of their neighbours by excessive keenness and not losing their jobs by incurring the wrath of their superiors."¹⁰⁴

In the early colonial period chiefs had wide ranging powers and authority over others. They themselves were answerable to the DC - they were appointed by him and their

¹⁰¹ Diary of J.R.McD. Elliot, Rhodes House [hereafter RH] MSS Afr s 1384 #28.

¹⁰² Kigezi District Annual Report 1919-1920 - Quoted in Brazier, 'The incident at Nyakishenyi', 18.

¹⁰³ Denoon, 'The Allocation of Official Posts'; Baxter, 'The Kiga'. The *saza* chief of Bufumbira was known as the *Mtwale*.

¹⁰⁴ Baxter, 'The Kiga', 289-90.

powers were derived from him. This situation changed in 1935 when a system was introduced whereby nominations were put forward by existing *saza* chiefs for new appointments - but the final say still rested with the DC. For some years the powers of the chiefs were increased, and they were able to execute these powers with little reference to anyone else. However, from the mid-1940s changes were introduced to the structure of the administration so that those powers were gradually taken away from the chiefs and handed over to councils made of both chiefs and elected members, the latter eventually forming the majority.

Ngologoza records that a "native council"¹⁰⁵, called *wilaya*, was established pre-1932, while Baxter notes that there was such a central native council "from the early days"¹⁰⁶ which was purely advisory and consisted of a majority of chiefs and some nominated members. Its members were appointed by the DC¹⁰⁷ and it initially had no powers, and met about three times a year for discussions with the DC. From 1945 it no longer had a majority of chiefs.¹⁰⁸ Councils with selected members were also established at *saza*, *gombolola*, and *muluka* level in 1945, and over the next few years their powers were more clearly defined, while the proportion of elected members increased. In 1946, it was recorded that these councils "now realise that they have sufficient authority to act when necessary as a check on the behaviour of minor chiefs."¹⁰⁹ *Miluka* councils were given the power to nominate the names of their chiefs, with the final decision being left to the *saza* councils.¹¹⁰ Thus, when the Protectorate Government passed the African Local Government Ordinance in 1949, which started district level Councils throughout Uganda, Kigezi already had "a number of years of experience with its Native Council of Chiefs."¹¹¹

Further changes were made to local administration over the next few years, and there was a gradual increase in the responsibilities of the councils at all levels. However, as chiefs still dominated the councils, these increased responsibilities effectively gave greater power

¹⁰⁵ Paulo Ngologoza, *Kigezi and Its People* (Kampala, 1969), 101.

¹⁰⁶ Baxter, 'The Kiga', 288.

¹⁰⁷ Connor, 'Kigezi', 230.

¹⁰⁸ Baxter, 'The Kiga', 288.

¹⁰⁹ WPAR, 1946.

¹¹⁰ Baxter, 'The Kiga', 288-9.

¹¹¹ Connor, 'Kigezi', 230.

to the chiefs. Under the provisions of the African Local Government Ordinance of 1949, the District Council could make bye-laws. Its functions and powers were further increased with the passing of the District Administration (District Councils) Ordinance in 1955. From 1956, chiefs formed a minority on all the councils, their powers significantly reduced. At the same time the separation of the judiciary from the executive also reduced the powers of chiefs. Responsibility for certain services was transferred to the District Council which could run services, control budgets, pass bye-laws, appoint and dismiss chiefs.

Up until 1956, then, the councils were dominated by their chiefs, in part because of their "personalities and experience" but also because "the executive powers of a chief were so considerable that they could make day to day life unpleasant for those who consistently opposed them."¹¹² Whenever the Protectorate Government introduced policies such as those related to soil conservation, they looked to the chiefs to support them and convince the rest of the population. As increasing responsibilities were handed over to Councils with elected members, the balance of power shifted. In some cases individual chiefs did succeed in continuing to dominate their councils (see chapter 6), and it could still be said in the mid-1950s that "chiefs, in their various capacities, are judges, legislators and executives."¹¹³

Baxter's study of the chiefs¹¹⁴ of Kigezi in the mid-1950s found that the political dominance of the Hima and the Tutsi had to a certain extent been perpetuated under the modern bureaucratic system. "Although they had lost their absolute dominance in their own areas, they nevertheless hold many more chiefdoms in the district that their numbers alone would justify."¹¹⁵ He found that this was not merely old men who were relics of an old system; nor was it simply direct succession or nepotism. Rather, it was a result of the Tutsi and Hima, a) being wealthier and this being able to afford school fees as well

¹¹² Baxter, 'The Kiga', 289.

¹¹³ Ibid., 289.

¹¹⁴ Unfortunately he fails to look into any relationship with land ownership. For studies of such a relationship elsewhere see H.W. West, *Land Policy in Buganda* (Cambridge, 1972) and H.W. West, *Mailo Policy in Buganda: A Preliminary Case Study in African Land Tenure* (Entebbe, 1964); and J. Vincent, 'Colonial chiefs and the making of a class: A case study from Teso, eastern Uganda', *Africa*, 47 (1977), 140-59. In Kenya see N. Humphrey, *The Kikuyu Lands: The Relation of Population to the Land in South Nyeri* (Nairobi, 1945); and M.P.K. Sorrenson, *Land Reform in the Kikuyu Country - A Study in Government Policy* (Nairobi, 1967).

¹¹⁵ Baxter, 'The Kiga', 292.

as the loss of labour when a child went to school, and b) having received more encouragement from the missions to send their children to school.¹¹⁶ Educational qualifications were extremely important in the selection of chiefs. By the early 1950s there was little chance of being appointed a higher chief without education. On the other hand, an educated person would not be attracted to the lower chieftainships as more could be earned as a schoolteacher or clerk: Thus "While there is a tendency for higher chiefs to be progressively more educated the educational qualification of lower chiefs do not appear to be improving,"¹¹⁷ wrote Baxter.

As was seen all over Uganda the shift from autocratic rule to something more democratic, did not progress entirely smoothly.¹¹⁸ As Connor has asserted

"As greater influence was exercised by the people themselves, there was increasing interplay between the more traditional elites seeking places in the new government and the newer elite who had been educated and acquired new, valuable skills... As more people participated in the political process, new cleavages were generated in the social fabric of Kigezi, and individuals as well as groups competed for political influence."¹¹⁹

The most notable of these cleavages was religion, which by the late 1950s played a crucial role in Kigezi politics. Missionary activities had begun in 1913, with the arrival of African catechists in the district, and in the early 1920s the first European missionaries from the Church Missionary Society (1921) and White Fathers Mission (1923) arrived. A large number of churches and schools were quickly established throughout the area. According to Connor, in some areas people took the religion of their chief, while in others access to a church or mission school determined which religion was adopted.¹²⁰ In the 1930s, there was a revivalist movement - known as the Balikole, or 'Twice Born' movement, which stemmed from the CMS. But religion became an enormously divisive factor in district politics. At District Council elections the candidates

"stood primarily as either a Protestant or a Roman Catholic. Pagan voters, and the majority of the population are pagan, had therefore to declare themselves publicly as supporting one party or the other. (Voters had to line up behind the candidate they supported.) Religious affiliation, in this context, overrode both tribal and clan

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 294.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 300-2.

¹¹⁸ See Richards, *East African Chiefs*.

¹¹⁹ Connor, 'Kigezi', 229-30.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 230.

sentiment."¹²¹

As colonial local government became more representative, it increasingly reflected social divisions - religion, ethnic grouping, clan - as well as divisions seen at the level of national party politics. In the run up to independence these deep cleavages and the "intrusion" of national party politics, eventually rendered the local council unworkable in Kigezi and led to the District Council being dissolved.

1.4 - Taxation, Trade and Labour

Very soon after establishing their administration, the British insisted that Bakiga should participate in compulsory labour (*luwalo*) and pay poll tax. *Luwalo* labour obligations began in 1912 and initially involved each adult male working for 10 days, later increased to 30 days (2 sessions of 15 days each).¹²² Ssebalijja, a Buganda agent in Kigezi at the time, notes that "It was difficult to select labourers for work - and indeed it was not so much selecting labourers as arresting them. Every man selected fled."¹²³ In 1924, a *luwalo* commutation rate of Shs 3/- was introduced (available only for certain groups) "to enable the upper classes to fulfil their national obligations."¹²⁴ In 1931 it was observed that difficulties in finding means of earning cash meant that very often those who were permitted to commute their *luwalo* were not able to do so.¹²⁵ From 1935 commutation was widened so that anyone who had the cash (and had already paid their Poll Tax) could pay off their *luwalo* obligation.¹²⁶ At 6/-, commutation quickly became very popular.

In addition to *luwalo* labour, from 1915 Bakiga also had to pay poll tax. At first collections were low, but they increased steadily. Anyone who failed to pay their tax was employed on Government work the following year.¹²⁷ Ssebalijja notes that Bakiga thought poll tax "a sham, and at first regarded it as repaying a debt, until they discovered that the debt was never completely cancelled, but was a permanent feature."¹²⁸ Thus

¹²¹ Baxter, 'The Kiga', 302.

¹²² Western Provincial Annual Report [hereafter WPAR] 1933.

¹²³ Y. Ssebalijja 'A history of Rukiga and other places', 11.

¹²⁴ WPAR, 1924.

¹²⁵ WPAR, 1931.

¹²⁶ See WPAR, 1935 and KDA DC GenPol.

¹²⁷ Poll Tax Rates were initially Shs 6/- (with a higher rate for Bahima and Aliens) and were increased in 1928 to Shs 7 (16/- for Bahima and Aliens). KDA DC MP136.

¹²⁸ Ssebalijja, 'A history of Rukiga', 14.

initially payments were often made in labour, and it was only after 1935 that payment by cash for both poll tax and *luwalo* became widespread.

The most common way of earning cash to pay Poll tax and later *luwalo* was initially by wage labour and the sale of livestock.¹²⁹ As a result, collections were badly hit by rinderpest outbreaks in 1919 and 1929. In 1929, the DC observed that "Salt exchanged for livestock, sold to alien traders for cash for tax is the source of by far the greater part of Government Revenue in this District."¹³⁰ This trade had been an important one for many years and was remarked upon by Jack:

"The only trade that we discovered was between these regions [Southern Kigezi] and Ruanda and the Katwe salt lake. The route (a well worn and much used one) passes to the East of Muhuvura and then westwards to the Ruchuru valley [west of Lake Mutanda]. Large herds of sheep and goats are constantly being brought along this road and are bartered usually at some meeting place in the Ruchuru valley for the much desired Katwe salt. We were told that one goat would buy a packet of salt with which on the return to Ruanda 2 goats could be purchased, so that the trade would appear to be a lucrative one."¹³¹

Cash for tax was also earned through paid labour, and in 1922 there was more volunteer labour available in Kigezi than funds to make use of it.¹³² From the early 1920s the practice of seeking work in Buganda on cotton farms, and later on municipal works and in mines in Ankole became more common.¹³³

From the very earliest days of colonial rule, administrators were faced with the dilemma of how to get sufficient labour in the southern and central part of the country for the needs of government, planters and African (particularly Baganda) farmers. From about 1907, the ease with which Baganda could make money by growing cotton meant that the demand for labour exceeded supply. Planters, who at that time had some political clout, were keen that the government should either give less encouragement to cotton (and other non-plantation economic crops), or should implement coercive labour policies.¹³⁴ The government did indeed implement a system of compulsory paid work, known as *kasanvu*.

¹²⁹ See KDA DC MP23 1923 and KDA DC GENPOL.

¹³⁰ WPAR, 1929.

¹³¹ Lecture to Royal Geographical Society, 14 April 1913. See *Geographical Journal*, VI (June 1913), 545.

¹³² WPAR, 1922.

¹³³ See for example WPARs 1922, 1923, 1937.

¹³⁴ Wrigley, *Crops and Wealth*, 34-5.

This inefficient form of labour had the effect of lowering wage rates. *Kasanvu* was abolished in 1922 on instruction from London. But in the years that followed cotton acreage increased, and with it the demand for labour by Baganda farmers. The solution was to encourage the inflow of labour from outlying districts - in particular West Nile and Kigezi - and from neighbouring countries - in particular Ruanda-Urundi.¹³⁵ In 1925, with the demand for labour in Buganda still high, the flow from Ruanda-Urundi fell dramatically due, it was thought, to Belgian intervention. The Labour Department then renewed efforts to recruit within the Protectorate. This led to the declaration that "the production of cotton should not be actively stimulated by propaganda in ... Kigezi until such time as labour difficulties in the more central district of the Protectorate become less acute."¹³⁶ Cotton was not well suited to Kigezi, but the policy was applied more broadly to discourage any export cash crops. It was not until 1928 that government ended this restriction in Ankole and Kigezi, and began to actively encourage "suitable economic crops."¹³⁷

The migration of workers from Ruanda-Urundi into Uganda¹³⁸ has to some extent overshadowed the movement of people within the country. The statistics available suggest that labour migration from the Western Province as a whole was significant, although it is not possible to determine what proportion of this labour was from Kigezi District.¹³⁹ It was reported in 1923 that "Large numbers of men wander to Buganda for work",¹⁴⁰ and a road count in September 1924 of migrants moving into Buganda found that 65.4% were from the Western Province.¹⁴¹ Estimating the flow of labour from Kigezi is particularly difficult for the earlier part of the colonial period. However, estimates in 1951 suggested that 29,000 men from Kigezi were migrating; while in 1954 an estimated 30-40,000 men were leaving each year; and in 1959 it was estimated that 40-50% of the total

¹³⁵ Wrigley suggests that after 1920 there was a change in policy when "the need for wage labourers began to carry less weight than the administrators' desire to stable and settled societies, this policy was reversed. Everything possible was now done to foster local agriculture and so to keep the young men at home, in the bosom of their families and under the authority of their chiefs." Wrigley, *Crops and Wealth*, 55.

¹³⁶ Powesland, 'A history of migration', 30. No source for this quote.

¹³⁷ Letter to Dir of Ag from Chf Sec (Copies to PCWP and DCs Ankole and Kigezi), 28 June 1928. KDA DC MP 132 ff107. Most correspondence on this subject was confidential and has not been located.

¹³⁸ Richards, *Economic Development and Tribal Change*.

¹³⁹ For example in WPARs 1922, 1923, 1937.

¹⁴⁰ WPAR ,1923.

¹⁴¹ Powesland, 'A history of migration', 29.

adult male population were absent from Kigezi at any one time.¹⁴² Labour migration was undoubtedly very important to the economy of Kigezi district.

1.5 - Structure of thesis

The background discussion of political authority and colonial government set out in this introduction provides the starting point for our analysis of colonial policies. The chapters that follow will consider the role and functioning of the colonial state; they will examine the formulation and implementation of various policies relating to agriculture and land tenure. Farmers' reactions to those policies and the reasons behind these reactions will be explored. The question of which colonial policies acted as a constraint on development and which as an opportunity for development, and who were the beneficiaries, will be raised. Consideration will be given to concerns about sustainability in this intensively cultivated area, and to the intensification of land use. The process of extensification, illustrated by the expansion of agriculture into swamps will also be examined. Increasing colonial emphasis on individualism in the context of both agriculture and land tenure, and the implications of this on access to, and authority over, land will be investigated, and will be illustrated using case studies.

Chapter 2 will outline the agricultural development of Kigezi from the arrival of British colonial authority, thus laying the foundation for a deeper analysis into land and politics in Kigezi. Factors that influenced the formulation of agricultural policy in Kigezi district will be outlined and then the situation during the early colonial period, in terms of the production of, and trade in, food crops will be examined. The efforts made by the Agricultural Department towards cash crops will be detailed, before returning to food crops to examine the impact of colonial policy on this sector in the latter part of the colonial period.

Concerns over soil erosion emerged during the 1930s and had a major influence on colonial agricultural policy. Chapter 3 will focus on these concerns, beginning by detailing colonial encounters with Kigezi agriculture up to 1943, looking at both indigenous methods of soil conservation and earliest colonial policies. It will then look at colonial policy up to 1953, examining the development of ideas and policy around soil

¹⁴² Annual Report of the Labour Department, 1951, WPAR's 1954 and 1958.

conservation. The implementation of policy in Kigezi during the Purselove era, from 1944-53 will be examined, in particular looking at the major resettlement scheme and the soil conservation measures known as *plani ensya*. Finally, other colonial examples will be outlined in order to enable comparisons to be drawn with Kigezi.

By the early 1950s the development of ideas in relation to African land tenure were influencing broader agricultural policy. Chapter 4 will look at the colonial policies related to land tenure and how they were implemented in Kigezi. It will first examine the background to the East African Royal Commission (1952/3), looking at both Uganda-wide policies and policies and perceptions at a district level. It will look in detail at the EARC, in particular the Land Tenure Proposals and the policy advocated for granting of titles. It will also examine the policies of land consolidation, enclosure and farm planning. It will conclude by looking at other examples of similar policies in other parts of East Africa to allow Kigezi's experiences to be set in the wider context.

Chapters 5 and 6 each present case studies to examine in detail the relationship between political authority and control over land. The first will look at how reclaimed swamp land was distributed to the local population during the 1950s. The second will examine how land was returned to the local population after being leased to the Kalengyere Pyrethrum estate. Both these chapters will also illustrate some of the contradictions within colonial policy. The final chapter will draw together the main themes of the study, and will briefly consider Kigezi's experience in the post independence period.

CHAPTER 2 - DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE

This chapter will outline the history of colonial agricultural development in Kigezi and will lay the foundation for a deeper analysis of land and politics in Kigezi. It will first outline broader agricultural policy in the British colonies and some of the factors that influenced the formulation of that policy. The next section will examine the situation in Kigezi during the early part of the colonial period, in terms of the production of, and trade in, food crops, while the following section will consider in detail the efforts made by the Agricultural Department to encourage cash crops. The final section will return to food crops to examine the impact of colonial policy on this sector in the latter part of the colonial period.

Colonial authorities were clearly obsessed with finding a cash crop in Kigezi, but this obsession had little to do with Kigezi itself. Rather there was a deeply ingrained colonial view that 'agricultural development' inevitably meant the development of a cash crop suitable for export to Buganda and beyond. It followed that such a crop had to be low bulk and high value in order to cover the cost of transport and be economic. This imperial way of thinking led colonial officials to think of Kigezi as peripheral, and they ignored, or were blind to, the fact that Kigezi was, in fact, central to a food production system and market that straddled international boundaries and encompassed Ruanda and Ankole. Relatively little attention has been given to the production and marketing of local foodstuffs,¹ while much of the interest in colonial African agricultural history has focused on the so-called "cash crop revolution". It is clear, however, that there were many regions producing surplus foodstuffs for export to surrounding areas. Tosh has observed that the "success in producing a cash crop was intimately dependent on the relationship between

¹ A notable exception is Pottier's work eg 'The Politics of Famine Prevention'. He looks at the inter and intra regional food flows and questions the simplistic notion of transfers from surplus producing areas to food deficient areas. He concludes that "The available data on food flows in pre-colonial and early colonial western Rwanda suggest that the royal taxation system and the trade in non-foodstuffs (including cattle) constituted the two basic mechanisms through which the flow of food from surplus producing to food deficient regions was made possible." (231) Other non foodstuffs he discusses include goats, hoes, salt, tobacco and bracelets. Also see R. Gray and D. Birmingham *Pre Colonial African Trade - Essays on Trade in Central and Eastern Africa before 1900* (London, 1970); D. Bryceson, 'Peasant cash cropping versus self-sufficiency in Tanzania: A historical perspective' (IDS Bulletin 192, 1988); D.W. Cohen, 'Food production and food exchange in pre-colonial Lakes plateau region' in R.I. Rotberg (ed) *Imperialism, Colonialism and Hunger: East and Central Africa* (Massachusetts, 1983); J.L. Giblin, *The Politics of Environmental Control in Northeastern Tanzania, 1840-1940* (Philadelphia, 1992) esp chapters 1 and 2; and D.S. Newbury, *Kings and Clans: Ijwi Island and Lake Kivu Rift 1780-1840* (Madison, 1992).

that crop and the established complex of food crops," and describes the effect of cash crop production on food crops as "complex and often inhibiting."² In the case of Lango, he shows that while the colonial government tried, with initial difficulties, to introduce cotton as a cash crop, "the Langi already had a market crop of their own ...[sesame]... and other Lango food crops [and they] continued to produce food surpluses."³ While it has been acknowledged in the case of West Africa⁴ that farmers produced food surpluses for a considerable period of time before colonialism, the same cannot be said for the rest of tropical Africa and "the staples of everyday consumption are usually dismissed as beyond the range of market demands." However, any entrepreneurial activity depended on the production of considerable food surpluses, and these cannot have been merely due to "normal surpluses";⁵ rather African cultivators must have been "planning regular food surpluses in the light of market demands."⁶ In the case of Kigezi it would seem that there were regional food demands⁷ which explain the production of surpluses and food flows from Kigezi.

By examining British policies, in particular the concentration on so-called economic or cash crops; their failure to recognise the potential that African food crops had for making a substantial contribution to the local economy; and the introduction of tight marketing controls, this chapter will illustrate some of the contradictions and weaknesses of colonial agricultural policy. It will show that Kigezi district was producing surpluses of foodstuffs for trade, and the failure of the administration to take this into account partly explains their inability to successfully introduce a cash crop to the district. The food and cash crop dichotomy has resonance for Kigezi in the way that it affected colonial policy, but here food crops were cash crops and the failure of the colonial administration to fully appreciate this was crucial. Bakiga farmers responded to opportunities that cash crops offered in ways that colonial officials sometimes found surprising. This chapter will

² J. Tosh 'The Cash Crop Revolution in Tropical Africa: An Agricultural Reappraisal', *African Affairs*, 79, (1980), 80.

³ J. Tosh 'Lango agriculture during the colonial period: Land and labour in a cash crop economy', *Journal of African History*, 19 (1978), 415-39.

⁴ eg C. Meillassoux (ed), *The Development of Indigenous Trade and Markets in West Africa* (London, 1971); and A.G. Hopkins, *Economic History in West Africa*. (London, 1973).

⁵ A normal surplus as defined by Allan as the balance left over in a year of good yield after subsistence requirements have been met. Allan, *An African Husbandman*, 38-48.

⁶ Tosh, 'The Cash Crop Revolution'. 90.

⁷ Pottier, 'The Politics of Famine Prevention.'

suggest that these responses were in part due to the risk adversity of farmers; in part due to the constraints that colonial officials often themselves placed on production through marketing controls; and in part due to the sustainable nature of the existing Bakiga agricultural system.

2.1 - Formulation of Agricultural Policy

Understanding the nature of changing colonial attitudes to agricultural development is essential to understanding what happened in Kigezi, and so this section will outline wider colonial influences that shaped that policy.

At the beginning of the twentieth century the principle of *laissez-faire* economics was widely held. The role of colonial governments was seen to be the creation of an environment in which market forces could work, and so lead to development. At the same time demands on the Treasury meant that each colonial government was under pressure to become self-supporting. The publication of Lugard's *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*, in which he put forward the view that Britain should develop her empire for both the "advancement of the subject races" and for the "development of its material resources for the benefit of mankind"⁸ was hugely influential. Although Britain never formalised its colonial agricultural policy (except a small publication in 1945), we can see that at this time Departments of Agriculture were seen as 'revenue raising' departments, whose aim was to increase yields and thereby maximise the wealth of people and the revenues of the governments.⁹

It was not until around 1920 that the possibility of Uganda developing a substantial plantation sector was finally ruled out, and Uganda's development went ahead on the lines of a peasant economy.¹⁰ Wrigley has concluded that "the people were not taxed in order that they might be made to grow cotton, rather they were urged to grow cotton in order that they might be able to pay taxes."¹¹ The same principles can be applied to all other

⁸ Lord F.J.D. Lugard, *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa* (Edinburgh, 1922), 606.

⁹ For further details see G.B. Masefield, *A History of the Colonial Agricultural Service* (Oxford, 1972), and G.B. Masefield, *A Short History of Agriculture in the British Colonies* (Oxford, 1950), 73.

¹⁰ See Wrigley, *Crops and Wealth*, 21-43; C. Ehrlich, 'The Uganda Economy 1903-45' in V. Harlow, E.M. Chilver and A. Smith, *History of East Africa* Vol 2, (Oxford, 1965), 409-13 and 423-9; and R.M.A. Van Zwanenberg with A. King, *An Economic History of Kenya and Uganda, 1800-1970* (London, 1975), 64.

¹¹ See Wrigley, *Crops and Wealth*, 16.

cash crops. Having agreed that Uganda should develop through peasant production, the Department of Agriculture set about finding a suitable cash crop and persuading peasant farmers to grow it. The initial focus was on cotton, and later coffee. Working in close collaboration with chiefs, efforts were directed at increasing acreages, providing seeds and offering advice about planting. Technical innovations were few, yields per acre hardly changed and the processing and marketing sectors were placed in the hands of Asians and Europeans.

Masefield has argued that an increased realisation of the extent of malnutrition in the colonies in the late 1930s¹² led the Colonial Agricultural Service "to step up research on food crops as compared with that on cash crops which had preoccupied the staff at an earlier period."¹³ However the extent to which this occurred is debateable. The two editions of Hailey's *African Survey* illustrate the rhetoric. In the 1938 edition, Hailey observed that while:

"the improvement in cash crops is important ... the primary aim among a people who are almost entirely dependent on their individual agricultural efforts for their food must be the improvement of subsistence crops..."¹⁴

In the second edition he again called for more emphasis on foodstuffs, suggesting that little had actually changed since 1938.

"... efforts made to secure an increase in agricultural production ... have been directed mainly to the improvement of cash crops and especially to those grown for export market ...and... is reflected in promotion of numerous institutions engaged both in research and field work on particular crops. But the need for a general improvement of subsistence cultivation is also recognised and is now receiving attention."¹⁵

In Uganda any increased attention on food crops that there may have been was focused largely on famine crops, and in particular on finding more disease resistant cassava varieties. As Kigezi was not suitable for cassava this increased effort had negligible impact on the district.

¹² In 1939 a paper on nutrition in the colonies was published by the Colonial Office - Nutrition in the Colonial Empire, 2 vols, Cmd 6050, (1939).

¹³ Masefield, *A History of the Colonial Agricultural Service*, 70.

¹⁴ Lord W.M. Hailey, *An African Survey: A study of problems arising in Africa south of the Sahara*, (London, 1938), 961.

¹⁵ Lord W.M. Hailey, *An African Survey: A study of problems arising in Africa south of the Sahara*, (London, 1957), 902-3.

The Colonial Development Act of 1929 had made funds available for development schemes considered to be mutually beneficial to both the colonies and the UK. It was, however, not a great success as colonial governments did not initiate the large development schemes and few acceptable applications were put forward. Partly due to British budgetary considerations, and partly because the money remained unspent, the funds were repeatedly reduced.¹⁶ During the late 1930s there was an increased awareness of social and political unrest in a number of colonies which forced the CO to review its development policy, and from that came the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940. With its passing it was hoped that the mechanism for development expenditure would be improved, and there was a shift in the type of expenditure with an increase on social welfare expenditure, in particular education. Little money was actually spent until after WW2, and the sums available were increased by Acts of 1943, 1945, 1950, 1955 and 1959.¹⁷

The immediate impact of the Second World War on agricultural policy was firstly that both country and district self-sufficiency in food was emphasised in order to reduce the necessity of imports; and secondly, a number of crops were considered to be high priority - and their production was to be given all possible encouragement.¹⁸ These included pyrethrum which was briefly grown as a plantation crop in Kigezi (see Chapter 6). Following the Second World War the production of cash crops was to be both expanded and diversified, the idea of the "progressive" peasant farmer was encouraged and there was an increased belief in technology as being the solution to problems. Increased mechanisation and large scale enterprises were planned and managed by the state: for example, the cultivation of unused land in south Busoga and northern Bunyoro.¹⁹ In the postwar period there was an increase in state controlled marketing, and greater involvement of the government in the development of agriculture. Uganda's economy continued to grow and cotton and coffee accounted for by far the greater proportion of

¹⁶ S. Constantine, *The Making of British Colonial Development Policy, 1914-1940* (London, 1984).

¹⁷ See D.J. Morgan, *Official History of Colonial Development* (London, 1979) and M. Havinden and D. Meredith, *Colonialism and Development, Britain and its Tropical Colonies, 1850-1960* (London, 1993).

¹⁸ Order of priority agreed at Interterritorial Conference in Nairobi for essential war industries in Uganda were: 1. Rubber; 2. Sugar, 3. Tin 4. Sisal and pyrethrum; 5. Timber. Letter to All DCs from Famine Commission, 19 March 1943. KDA DC MP-EOC ff25.

¹⁹ Wrigley, *Crops and Wealth*, 68.

exports: in 1955, 77% of all exports were cotton and coffee.²⁰ However, this growth occurred without any significant structural change in the economy or significant change in pattern of cultivation,²¹ and the Government, aware of the dangers involved in depending on these two crops, attempted to diversify agricultural production.

The realisation that development in Uganda would not come through agriculture alone led also to a shift towards mining and secondary industries. Of the Development Plans drawn up by government, the most important was the Worthington Plan of 1946.²² This stated: "The next ten years should be devoted to a production drive, while increasing social services at a rate greater than population increase."²³ During the governorship of Hall (from 1945), development policies included large scale industrial projects, such as the Owen Falls Dam, Tororo cement factory and Kilembe copper works. In the agricultural sector there was a drive towards increasing productivity through intensification, and in 1954 the Agricultural Productivity Committee was set up. However, the area under cotton continued to expand.²⁴ The idea of group farming was also developed in the years after the Second World War, and farm planning services became an important activity during the 1950s. In part, this can be seen to have been influenced by the East African Royal Commission, and its attitudes towards individualisation of land tenure (which will be examined in Chapter 4).²⁵ Other trends in thinking that influenced colonial policy include the recognition in the late 1930s of the value of agricultural extension work, although it was not until after the Second World War that the CO formalised these ideas.²⁶

Finally, mention should be made of the way that lack of resources and personnel affected

²⁰ Ibid., 74-5.

²¹ D.A. Lury 'Dayspring Mishandled? The Uganda Economy 1945-60' in D.A. Low and A. Smith, *History of East Africa* Volume 3 (Oxford, 1976), 212.

²² Wrigley, *Crops and Wealth*, 68.

²³ E.B. Worthington, *A Development Plan for Uganda* (Entebbe, 1947).

²⁴ Lury, 'Dayspring Mishandled', 223.

²⁵ Masefield, *A History of the Colonial Agricultural Service*.

²⁶ The influence on policy of fears about soil erosion from the 1930s will be examined in Chapter 3. The evolution of these concerns has been traced elsewhere but to suggest that "soil erosion... in Uganda... was monitored and treated only in those areas where it seemed likely to threaten the cash crop economy" is clearly inaccurate as the case of Kigezi will show. Anderson, 'Depression, Dust Bowl', 335.

the ability to implement policy.²⁷ Up to 1934, Kigezi had no DAO of its own, but shared with Ankole. There was then a period of 5 years with its own DAO, followed by 2 years of sharing until 1941.²⁸ The Department of Agriculture got around the problem of shortages of personnel by working through the chiefs as much as possible, and the concept of "indirect rule" was crucial. There is ample evidence of this policy in Kigezi District, and it can be seen as fundamental to the day to day workings of the department.

Throughout the colonial period agricultural policy was geared towards economic viability and emphasised the development of "cash crops" rather than food crops. This over-riding concern to find a suitable cash crop led to a tendency to take insufficient account of individual systems and contexts and an inadequate understanding of the dynamics of local economies and local agricultural and exchange systems. The next section will examine how policies worked in the Kigezi case, looking first at the system in place in the early part of the colonial period.

2.2 - Food crops, up to late 1930s.

This section will look at food cropping systems in the early part of the colonial period. It will suggest that surpluses of food were frequently produced and that there was a vibrant trade in foodstuffs and livestock.²⁹ It will show that colonial authorities failed to recognise the significance of the role food crops were playing in the local exchange economy. This failure to understand the system that was in place helps explain why colonial interventions to introduce new crops met with so many difficulties (discussed in section 2.3).

Bakiga agricultural methods were frequently described in very favourable terms by early colonial authorities. For example in 1921 the DC wrote that the people were Kigezi were "...most industrious, especially in Rukiga where the population is densest, in the cultivation of their food crops. They use a hoe far superior to that in use in Buganda and

²⁷ There is evidence that shortages of personnel meant that there were situation when the Native Administration had (admittedly small sums) money allocated for agriculture, but was unable to spend it, and it seems that this was due to lack of personnel, eg in 1946/47 - see KDA DoA 16/A/1.

²⁸ See for example: KDA DoA 008.

²⁹ One difficulty is that colonial officials when they refer to trade usually mean trade carried out by outside traders, rather than "internal" trade or exchange. There is very little information concerning local markets in foodstuffs or small livestock.

the Eastern province."³⁰ The first DAO wrote "The Bakiga are by nature and necessity keen agriculturalists and hard workers."³¹

The administration did recognise the significance of the food trade during times of food shortages in surrounding areas, but this did not lead to a shift in focus away from cash crops. In 1917, it was reported that as a result of food shortages in Ruanda County (later known as Bufumbira) people "have had to purchase food in Rukiga which they have been able to do. There has consequently been no starvation."³² And, again, a decade later Bakiga were selling to their neighbours to the north who suffered shortage: "The Rukiga people have been able to dispose of their surplus supplies by selling to the people in Rushenyi where there was a distinct shortage."³³ In 1929, the DC observed that as a result of "a very great shortage of food in Ruanda Belge adjacent to our boundary ... many natives come over to purchase food."³⁴ In 1946, it was reported that food shortages in the southern part of Kigezi were being complicated by the famine being experienced in Ruanda and as a result a "strict system of frontier guards had to be introduced to prevent the export of foodstuffs from Kigezi into that country. The measure of the severity of the famine in Belgian Ruanda and the magnitude of the temptation to export foodstuffs to the country may be assessed from the fact that a wife could be bought for a basket of maize."³⁵

Apart from references to trade in times of food shortages, there are also reports of trade under "normal" conditions. Observations by non-officials of a local trade in foodstuffs include that by Roscoe, writing of the period 1919, who said that "what [each woman] could spare after her household needs were satisfied she bartered for goats and sheep."³⁶

³⁰ Letter to PCWP from Adams, DC, 12 Oct 1921. KDA DC MP 10 ff44 - Requesting that an Agricultural Officer visit Kigezi to assist in the formulation of agricultural policy. See also WPAR, 1933.

³¹ Report for the Year, 1935, Wickham, KDA DC AGR-MNTH ff53.

³² Kigezi District Annual Report 1917-18.

³³ WPAR, 1927.

³⁴ Letter to PCWP from DC, 27 July 1928, KDA DC MP 132 ff109.

³⁵ WPAR, 1946.

³⁶ Roscoe, *The Bagesu and Other Tribes*, 168. Major Jacks described Rukiga in 1910 as "dead and deserted" as the result of a recent serious famine some years previously. This area "produced practically nothing then" in sharp contrast to the area of Bufumbira which he described as "rich". He wrote of how arranging food supplies from Bufumbira was "an easy task. Food came pouring in as soon as the natives found it could be exchanged for the much desired beads or cloth." Jack, *On the Congo Frontier*, 196. (Jacks was the Chief British Commissioner of International Boundary Commission to delimit British, German and Belgian frontiers, 1910).

The anthropologist Edel also described how "even in older days ... [there was] some direct barter and sale, and rudimentary markets did exist." Because of interclan feuding these were dangerous places and it was not until the coming of the British that markets came to be considered safe, and increased in importance with women selling "surplus products" such as grain or beer.³⁷ Interviews with elderly farmers also suggest that in the pre-colonial period the bartering of food took place, in particular for livestock³⁸, while salt³⁹, ornaments and blacksmithing goods, such as hoes, were also bartered.⁴⁰

In 1933 the DC observed, giving an example of trade under "normal" conditions, that "the sale of food accounts for much of the money paid in Poll Taxes"⁴¹ and pointed to the markets which served Ankole, Ruanda and the Congo as evidence. A report from 1938 illustrated the point further: "The sale of food crops again provided a useful source of income to many ... [although] there is a tendency to oversell the stock of beans and peas ... and so to cause local scarcity. The export of foodstuffs from the district had to be prohibited during part of the year."⁴² The previous year it was observed that

"maize, beans and peas, are sold out of the district to Belgian Congo... and mining areas of Ankole. The trade is partly... by natives who walk across the district boundaries to local markets with small loads, and partly by Indians who buy up foodstuffs in large quantities at Kabale and send it through in lorry loads. There is no means of assessing the volume of this trade, but there is no doubt that the total tonnage involved is very considerable."⁴³

A *mutala* survey conducted in 1939 recorded that there was a "large internal trade in beer and this must be regarded as one of the main sources of income. Food crops (sorghum, beans, maize, sweet potatoes and peas) are sold at Kabale and Lutobo markets."⁴⁴ This confirms the production of regular surpluses and writing some years later, Purseglove observed:

"The two main sources of income in the district are labour and the sale of food...

³⁷ Edel, *The Chiga*, 89-90.

³⁸ Interviews with 30/b, 59/a, 61/a, 63/a and 91/a.

³⁹ For details of the Katwe salt trade with salt being traded for livestock see C.M. Good 'Salt, trade and disease: Aspects of Development in Africa's Northern Great Lakes Region' *International Journal of African Historical Studies* V, 4 (1972), 543-86. Salt traders were also mentioned by Elliot (RH), in WPARs, and when lorries replaced human portage.

⁴⁰ Interviews with 16/b, 17/b, 30/b, 93/a, 94/a.

⁴¹ WPAR, 1933.

⁴² WPAR, 1938.

⁴³ Agricultural District Annual Report for 1937, Maselfield, KDA DC AGR-MNTH ff98.

⁴⁴ J.W. Purseglove, 'Kitozho Mutalla survey', 1940.

Prior to the ban on the exportation of foodstuffs from Kigezi District in January 1943, some cultivators sold their surplus food for export outside the district, while there was a large trade in the exchange of food for goats from Ruanda. In addition there was, and still is, very considerable trade in beer and to a lesser extent in food. This internal trade is one of the main sources of income."⁴⁵

While official agricultural policy focused on the development of cash crops (see section 2.3), it was occasionally observed that local food crops were potential economic crops, although policy remained unchanged. In 1921 it was noted that the cultivation of beans and peas was well known in Western Province, they were easy to grow and were fairly drought resistant, and so the cultivation of these crops should be encouraged. Hamsworth made enquiries as to whether a market could be found both within and outside Uganda for beans and peas and suggested that European potatoes might be a profitable crop,⁴⁶ but nothing came of his enquiries. Some years later when the government planned to buy large quantities of beans and groundnuts preferably from within Uganda,⁴⁷ it was recorded by the DC that the district could supply large quantities of peas and beans if their purchase was guaranteed.⁴⁸ However, high transport costs meant that Kigezi was ruled out as a possible supplier.⁴⁹ Thus, while it was acknowledged that foodstuffs were marketable and were already being widely traded at local markets, and with surrounding districts, there was no attempt by the administration to further encourage or promote this trade, partly because of the conviction that crops had to be traded with central Uganda, and therefore had to be able to cover transport costs.

The trade in food surpluses was linked to that in livestock, with people converting surplus food into stock, in particular goats.⁵⁰ Earliest colonial reports from Kigezi District suggest that livestock was considered to be "the main financial asset of the District";⁵¹

⁴⁵ Purseglove, 'Report on the Overpopulated areas of Kigezi', 21. Purseglove was the single most influential colonial official in Kigezi, whose background will be outlined in more detail in Chapter 3.

⁴⁶ Notes on the "Prospects for Agriculture in Western Province, 1921" by Capt Hamsworth, (Asst DAO) KDA DC MP10 ff26Enc.

⁴⁷ Letter to PCWP from Treasurer, E'be, 1 July 1928. KDA DC MP132 ff108.

⁴⁸ Reply to letter to DC Kigezi from PCWP, 22 Nov 1928, KDA DC MP 132 ff140.

⁴⁹ Report on visit to Kigezi by the Director of Agriculture, 1932, Entebbe National Archives, [hereafter ENA] H43/4 ff1.

⁵⁰ For example: "Our trade from long [sic - ago] was in peas, beans, sorghum, and these were exchanged with cows and goats from outside our country." Letter to DC, DAO and SecGen from Kigezi Traders (13 signatories including Tomasi Bushundugwire, Titto Masozera and Nicola Kisilibombo) 11 May 1948, KDA DoA 006/A/2 ff85.

⁵¹ WPAR, 1923.

"Trade in small stock, sheep and goats ... is undoubtedly the largest export business of the District. There is also a considerable local trade. A very large amount of this small stock comes from Belgian territory."⁵² In 1928 it was reported that there was a "large and flourishing trade in the export of goats"⁵³ Livestock need to be seen as a both a medium of exchange and, being used as bridewealth, a vital part of Bakiga social organisation. To increase labour and reproductive power a family would increase their herd, often through the exchange of surplus food for livestock. To understand the way that the local economic system worked (and from that how colonial policies impacted upon this system) we need to understand the relationships between different sectors of the economy and the changing terms of trade between those sectors. While there is evidence of a thriving trade in livestock, and in particular in small stock, there are no reliable price statistics to enable these changing terms of trade to be unravelled. Although the precise shifts in the terms of trade may be impossible to quantify, we can presume that at times of food shortage in Ruanda (the main source of livestock) the terms of trade shifted in favour of the Bakiga, in the same way as has been observed in Kenya when famine in pastoral areas enabled Kikuyu cultivators to exchange surplus food for livestock on very favourable terms, thus acquiring more wives and household labour and increasing cultivation even further.⁵⁴ Additionally the failure of cash crops in Kigezi may be tied with the fact that Bakiga could convert surplus food crops into livestock with relative ease.

As the following section will show, there were periods when different cash crops were adopted by Bakiga as they provided good opportunities for immediate profit. However, constraints such as disease, marketing difficulties, or simply falling prices, meant that none of these cash crops played a sustained role in the agriculture of the district in the way that cotton and coffee did in much of the rest of Uganda. There was therefore no one major turning point when cash cropping became worthwhile; rather, there were short term opportunities - farmers succeeded at different times with different crops. Crucially, however, (and recognised by some officials when a crop being encouraged was not being well received) was that farmers could and did make profits by the sale of surplus foodstuffs. Understanding the centrality of food cropping within the Bakiga agricultural

⁵² WPAR, 1924.

⁵³ WPAR, 1928.

⁵⁴ Kitching, *Class and Economic Change* .

system is crucial to understanding agrarian change in the district, and the failure of the state to recognise the significance of food crops as part of the exchange economy helps to explain the failure of the policy of finding a suitable cash crop. The failure to create a single sustainable cash crop also meant that the administration failed to produce a set of "progressive farmers" associated with one crop, although in the 1950s this was to change with policies related to land tenure and swamp reclamation (chapters 4 and 5).

Thus, despite evidence of a thriving trade in foodstuffs and livestock, and occasional observations that African food crops had the potential for being economic crops, on the whole few efforts were made to increase local food production or to encourage this trade.⁵⁵ This indifference towards food crops shifted in the 1940s when the administration went from virtually ignoring (or not promoting the production of) food crops to placing tight controls on the marketing of foodstuffs. The policies to control the movement of food from Kigezi, and the constraints that these policies placed on production, will be examined in more detail in section 2.4, but before that we must consider the issue that was given highest priority by the colonial administration - the search for a suitable cash crop.

2.3 - Cash Crops

The administration initially viewed 'agricultural development' as the development of various cash crops, which was linked to ideas of modernisation and monetarisation. At the same time, it was felt that local food production should be protected and that economic crops should not displace food crops. This section will look in turn at the principal cash crops that were attempted, showing to what extent they succeeded.⁵⁶ All were initially heralded as a success as Bakiga farmers took advantage of the opportunities they provided for making short term profits. However, all ultimately failed as farmers were unwilling to endanger the sustainability of their production systems.

⁵⁵ It is clear from administration files that there was some debate amongst officers of the benefits of encouraging economic crops versus food crops. A Criticism by S McCombe, DAO, of Memo on "Kigezi District Economic Policy, By LA Matias, ADC, (1944) KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff11. Also Memo on Agriculture in Kigezi by McCombe sent to DAO 15/5/44, KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff12.

⁵⁶ In addition to those discussed below, pyrethrum and tea were also attempted. The former was grown as a plantation crop during the 1940s and is examined in detail in Chapter 6. Tea was experimented with, but was ruled out because of the lack of processing facilities in the district and high transport costs. See ENA H145/2; KDA DoA 009crops and KDA DoA 001/2.

2.3.1 - Coffee

Before a DAO had been permanently allocated to Kigezi efforts had begun to find a suitable cash crop that could withstand high transport costs. The first and most significant cash crop attempted was coffee. The southern part of the district, with its high altitude and ample rainfall, did at first appear to be an area ideally suited to coffee, in particular to high value arabica. As early as 1914 chiefs, many of whom were Baganda Agents, began to take up coffee production,⁵⁷ but without a DAO little progress was made for several years. In 1921 the Annual Report referred to the proposal "to try the development of coffee growing by natives on lines similar to those tried on the foot hills of Elgon"⁵⁸ and for a number of years there were high hopes that Kigezi would develop into a highly productive coffee region.⁵⁹ At the first meeting on the future agricultural policy for the district (held in 1923) it was decided that the production of coffee was to be strongly encouraged, seedling nurseries were to be established at all *saza* headquarters and seedlings would be "distributed to all chiefs and *Wakungu* [lowest ranking of chief] desirous of having them and later to *Bakopi* [peasants]."⁶⁰ The following year four coffee instructors were sent to Kigezi and it was reported that the *saza* headquarters seed beds were doing well, and it was "considered that coffee is the most important crop for the District and every encouragement should be given to it."⁶¹ The expansion of coffee cultivation continued and it was planned that by the end of 1929 "every peasant in the suitable areas of the District should be in possession of healthy coffee plants".⁶² In 1929 alone 54,000 coffee trees were planted in the district and 1931 saw the first sales of Kigezi coffee: "1.5 tons of Lukiko arabica coffee from the experimental plots were sold at prices ranging from 14 to 18 cents".⁶³ Snowden, an Agricultural Officer who toured Kigezi in 1929, while critical of some aspects of the organisation of the crop, recommended that "coffee planting should proceed as fast as the necessary plants can be

⁵⁷ Kigezi District Annual Report, 1914.

⁵⁸ WPAR, 1921.

⁵⁹ Similar for example to Bugishu. See Bunker, *Peasants against the State*. Climatically southern Kigezi was not suitable for cotton.

⁶⁰ Meeting of 8 Nov 1923 at Kabale to discuss "Kigezi District Agricultural Development." Present: PCWP, DC, DAO (Ankole and Kigezi), Agents of Rukiga and Kinkizi, Mtware of Bufumbira, *saza* chief of Ruzhumbura and Advisor of Bufumbira, KDA DC MP132 ff15.

⁶¹ WPAR, 1924.

⁶² WPAR, 1928.

⁶³ WPAR's, 1929 and 1931.

raised"⁶⁴ once changes had been made. The next year "considerable enthusiasm" for coffee cultivation amongst the people of Kigezi was observed.⁶⁵

In 1932 Tothill (Director of Agriculture) visited Kigezi and decided that arabica coffee was the "only economic crop suited for development on an export basis" and although he mentioned the pest antestia⁶⁶ as presenting "something of a problem",⁶⁷ it was felt that with careful supervision it could be overcome. Plans were made for some reorganisation of the industry and for an increase in the number of trained African instructors. But, without a DAO based in Kabale the problem of antestia became increasingly serious.⁶⁸ During the mid-1930s the acreage increased from an estimated 500 acres in 1934 to 1,800 acres in 1936.⁶⁹ Despite an estimated one million seedlings being distributed, the supply was insufficient to meet demand.⁷⁰ The policy of giving an equal number of seedlings to anyone who wanted them was abandoned in 1934, as agricultural personnel were overstretched. More efficient use of their time could be made if farmers considered to be more capable were given more plants. This meant that many of the chiefs did especially well.⁷¹ The optimistic rhetoric of a "bright future"⁷² for coffee continued but the problem of antestia was by 1935 described as a "very serious menace".⁷³ A number of solutions were put forward, including the introduction of "weekly [antestia] bug picking days"⁷⁴, the introduction of more resistant strains and the substitution of robusta for arabica. Following a visit by Stedman-Powell, the Acting Senior Agricultural Officer, Kampala, the growing of arabica was reported to be an "uneconomic proposition" due to

⁶⁴ Diaries of JD Snowden, Agricultural Officer, Tours of Uganda, 1929-30. RH MSS Afr s 921 ff255.

⁶⁵ WPAR, 1930.

⁶⁶ Antestia is a serious coffee pest which particularly affects wetter areas, causing the coffee berries to fall off. Open pruning discourages antestia, and there are a number of effective insecticides. J.D. Acland, *East African Crops* (London, 1971), 82. See also D.S. Hill and J.M. Waller, *Pests and Diseases of Tropical Crops* Vol 1, (London, 1982) and J.D. Tothill, *Agriculture in Uganda* 1st edition (London, 1940), 340-8.

⁶⁷ Letter to PCWP from Tothill, 25 Oct 1932, ENA H43/4 ff1.

⁶⁸ WPAR, 1932.

⁶⁹ Agricultural Report by Wickham for Aug-Sept 1934, KDA DC AGR-MNTH ff17. And 1936 figure according to Perham, who visited the district. RH MSS Perham 521/9.

⁷⁰ WPAR's, 1934 and 1935.

⁷¹ Agricultural Report by Wickham for Oct 1934, KDA DC AGR-MNTH ff18.

⁷² WPAR, 1934.

⁷³ Report for Year 1935 by Wickham, KDA DC AGR-mnth ff53.

⁷⁴ Agricultural Report by Wickham for June 1935, KDA DC AGR-MNTH ff32. Also Report on tour of Rukiga by ACA Wright (ADC) in 1937, KDA DC MPI39 ff34.

antestia.⁷⁵ This news was greeted with alarm by the DC, who had not appreciated the threat that antestia held for the coffee industry.⁷⁶ Planting continued into the mid-1930s, with a shift towards robusta coffee which was more able to resist antestia. But by 1939 all planting had virtually ceased.⁷⁷

The marketing of coffee was brought under the Native Produce Marketing Ordinance in September 1934, and by 1936 three markets had been established in the district and up to 6 licences were issued for each market. The prices offered were considered to be satisfactory when compared with those in Kampala at the time, but were lower than those in Ankole. It was suspected that buyers worked together to keep prices down, and as a result the DAO kept a careful watch on the market to protect the growers.⁷⁸ By 1937 it was apparent that, contrary to marketing legislation, coffee was being smuggled as "sellers can get higher prices in Belgian Congo, Ruanda and Ankole and can sell every day".⁷⁹ The small fine was an inadequate deterrent. The DAO reported that local people smuggled at night to avoid being seen, and made changes to the marketing arrangements in order to rectify the situation. The quantity of coffee officially marketed continued to rise despite a fall in prices because of the slow maturation of trees until a maximum of 343 tons was reached in 1942. From 1942 the volume fell and it came to be accepted that, due to antestia, coffee no longer had a future in Kigezi. See table below. In the early 1950s there was a revival of interest in coffee growing following a rise in prices, but the coffee industry in Kigezi was never the success predicted.

⁷⁵ Report on visit to Kigezi April 1936 by Stedman-Davies, Acting Senior Ag Officer, Kampala; KDA DC AGR-MNTH ff58.

⁷⁶ KDA DC AGR-MNTH ff58Enc. It is clear that this is an example when the administrative staff worked closely with the agricultural staff.

⁷⁷ WPAR's, 1935-1939. It is not clear why antestia caused such insurmountable difficulties in Kigezi. Other areas of Uganda such as Bugishu managed to overcome the problem through manual picking of bugs and application of insecticides. Neither Jameson nor Tothill answer this question.

⁷⁸ Perham Papers - RH MSS Perham 521/9.

⁷⁹ Annual Agricultural Report for 1937, Masefield. KDA DC AGR-MNTH ff98. The relevant marketing legislation was the Native Produce Marketing Ordinance - see 2.4 for brief explanation.

Table showing tons of Arabica coffee sold:⁸⁰

*	1933	9 tons
*	1934	28 tons
#	1935	63 tons
+	1936	82 tons
+	1937	99 tons
+	1938	188 tons
~	1942	343 tons
*	1946	41 tons
*	1947	22 tons
*	1948	24.5 tons

2.3.2 - Tobacco⁸¹

From about 1940 attempts were made to introduce tobacco as a peasant crop, initially under the supervision of a local planter and trader in the district named Stafford.⁸² The Agricultural Department took over responsibility in 1942, but there were many problems with tobacco and it is clear that it was not a popular crop amongst local people.⁸³ Acreage targets were set, which were often met only by compulsion.⁸⁴ Once planted the tobacco was often ignored by farmers, resulting in poor leaf quality.⁸⁵ Stafford had agreed to purchase the entire tobacco crop, but stood to make substantial losses when the nicotine content of the tobacco produced was lower than he had expected - due, he felt, to a lack of supervision by the DAO.⁸⁶ In his defence, the DAO pointed out that most of those who had planted nicotine tobacco had:

"done so not voluntarily but as a result of something more than gentle persuasion, they felt that they had discharged an unpleasant duty on behalf of those in Authority when they had completed planting their respective plots; in some cases

⁸⁰ Sources - * - WPARS
- Perham Papers - RH MSS Perham 521/9
+ - Annual Reports of the Department of Agriculture
~ - PRO CO 892 15/7

⁸¹ Flue and fire cured tobacco are both for smoking, while nicotine tobacco contains larger quantities of nicotine which was extracted for use as an insecticide before synthetic insecticides. Acland, *East African Crops*. However it was reported that nicotine tobacco was sold locally for smoking purposes, WPAR 1952.

⁸² Stafford had various business interests - including Kigezi Industries. He had a nicotine extraction plant in Hoima, and planned to build another in Kigezi if production justified it.

⁸³ The refusal by some CMS followers to plant tobacco (although this was not the smoking variety but was used for insecticide) sheds light on the extent to which "persuasion" was used to "encourage" farmers to grow a crop that was being promoted by the Dept of Ag. See KDA DC MP2A.

⁸⁴ Chiefs Monthly Newsletter - Nov 1948, Tobacco, KDA DoA 16/A/1 ff72.

⁸⁵ In the early stages of growth tobacco need frequent weeding. As the plant approaches maturity 'topping' has to be performed to remove the flower heads, excess leaves and side shoots and suckers. It is thus a labour demanding crop if a good harvest is to be produced.

⁸⁶ Letter to SAO, Masindi from Stafford, 27 April 1942. KDA DC MP2A ff37

no subsequent attention was given to the crop."⁸⁷

The DAO of Toro, de Courcy Ireland, was called in to report on the problems associated with tobacco in Kigezi. He found that rapid expansion with inadequate supervision had given insufficient time for growers to learn about the crop, and that the plots were too small to give remunerative returns. Chiefs had "pressed" unwilling people to grow tobacco: "varying degrees of compulsion [were] used" and they had often chosen "unsuitable" farmers. Acreage targets were expected to be met before payment was made for the previous crop, and in the areas chosen for tobacco growing there were already alternative cash crops:

"...flax growing was more popular than tobacco planting in Kashambya and Rwamuchuchu, while in Bubale and Kyanamira the people could make good money by selling peas, beans and English potatoes, ... so on the whole they did not see the need at the present moment for another economic crop."⁸⁸

The strength of the local market in food crops was a clear disincentive for farmers to experiment with untested cash crops.

Following de Courcy Ireland's report, a number of changes were made, notably a switch to voluntary growers and payment for the harvest before farmers planted the next season's crop. As a result, tobacco became more popular, with two crops per year. By 1946 it was not possible to meet the demand for seedlings, and from 1946 to 1949 the acreage under tobacco and volume of leaf produced rose considerably. Production was almost entirely on a very small scale; in 1947 the average acreage per grower was one-tenth of an acre.⁸⁹ The quality of the leaf improved, and Stafford established his factory near Kabale. Production increased rapidly: by 58% from 1946 to 1947; and by 63% from 1947 to 1948.

⁸⁷ Letter to SAO, Masindi from McCombe, DAO, 12 Oct 1942. KDA DC MP2A ff69.

⁸⁸ Report by de Courcy Ireland (DAO, Toro) on trip to Kigezi in connection with nicotine tobacco, written December 1942. KDA DC MP2A ff85. See Map 3 for gombololas mentioned.

⁸⁹ WPAR, 1947.

<u>Nicotine Tobacco</u> ⁹⁰	<u>Acreage</u>
Kigezi - 1946	997 acres
Ankole and Kigezi - 1947	2,022 acres (of which 1,603 Kigezi alone)
Ankole and Kigezi - 1948	2,765 acres (of which 2,115 Kigezi alone)
Ankole and Kigezi - 1949	2,957 acres

However the success was shortlived. By 1950 it was reported that "Tobacco is nowhere a popular crop with native growers... [and] production of nicotine tobacco in Ankole and Kigezi showed a drop. Increased prices failed to stimulate production to any appreciable extent."⁹¹ But it seems that the amount of tobacco being grown had not fallen; rather the amount sold to Kigezi Industries had fallen. The administration acknowledged that a reason for the fall in sales was that "a considerable amount is exported in headloads to Ankole and Ruanda for smoking or snuff" while much was also "sold locally for smoking purposes".⁹² Thus having been encouraged to grow tobacco for the factory, Bakiga farmers, much to the annoyance of officials, began to sell on the local market where the price was as good and marketing was easier. In 1953, following the decline in the amount of tobacco bought forward for sale and a drop in price of nicotine extract, the operation of the nicotine extraction plant became uneconomic and the state ceased to encourage the growing of high nicotine content tobacco. From then onwards there was no further mention of nicotine tobacco, although it becomes clear that other types of tobacco grew in importance. Flue cured tobacco was grown, especially in the north of the district, and officially was sold to Kigezi Industries, although "large quantities" were also sold to unlicensed buyers.⁹³ In 1955 it was reported that air-cured tobacco was "becoming the main economic crop in Kigezi,"⁹⁴ yet this was rarely mentioned in agricultural or administrative reports because its marketing was not controlled by government. Despite a lack of administrative support⁹⁵ the crop clearly grew to be of considerable importance and in 1958 a "very significant" increase in production of air cured tobacco was reported, which was finding a "ready" market in Buganda, and it was recorded that it was possible

⁹⁰ Kigezi figures from WPAR's. Combined figures for Kigezi and Ankole from Department of Agriculture Annual Reports.

⁹¹ WPAR, 1950.

⁹² WPAR, 1951 and 1952. See also KDA DoA 019/B/2 ff96 - re preventing smuggling of tobacco for sale in Ankole, 1950. "When sold locally the nicotine tobacco is used for mixing with 'kiboko' or used as a filling for cheroots of particularly dynamic properties." WPAR, 1952.

⁹³ Department of Agriculture Annual Report, 1956.

⁹⁴ WPAR, 1955.

⁹⁵ Contradictory reasons were given in administrative reports for this lack of support. WPAR 1956 stated that it was not economic and so was not worth encouraging. The Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture said it was being discontinued owing to the risk of over-production.

that "this unofficial crop is the largest single money producer in the district."⁹⁶ In 1959 it was estimated that the crop grown that year (mainly in the south of the district) was worth some £48,000.⁹⁷ Here, then, is an example of a crop which provided opportunities for profit and which was taken up readily by Bakiga, despite the lack of government encouragement.

2.3.3 - Flax

In the early 1940s trials began with flax cultivation.⁹⁸ The crop quickly became popular in both Kigezi and Ankole, and by the mid-1940s supplies to the government factory at Kisizi exceeded the capacity of the plant.⁹⁹ From 1947 the crop was purchased from the grower for cash, in place of the old method of issuing a ticket redeemable two or three months later,¹⁰⁰ and in 1948 a Flax Officer (Mr Fennell) was appointed to work exclusively on developing the flax industry, giving an indication of the importance that was attached to the success of flax as a cash crop. Initially optimistic predictions were made of the expected success of flax, but by 1948 the quality and quantity of the output was reported to be "disappointing".¹⁰¹ Despite higher prices in 1951 both the acreages and sales of flax had fallen, and the factory was operating at a loss. Some officials suggested that the decline in flax cultivation was due to labour shortages generated by out-migration,¹⁰² but it seems more likely that it was because "the return for flax is appreciably lower than that which can be obtained from other crops or from wage earning."¹⁰³

Also, pasmo disease had a devastating impact on the flax crop from about 1948.¹⁰⁴ This disease affected the yield and quality of the fibre and farmers were advised not to plant flax on plots that had previously had flax on them. The quality was so poor during the flax buying season of late 1949 that about 30% of the straw was found to be unusable and

⁹⁶ WPAR, 1958.

⁹⁷ WPAR, 1959.

⁹⁸ For full details see KDA DoA 009exp-c.

⁹⁹ KDA DC AGR3-4. Also WPAR, 1946.

¹⁰⁰ WPAR, 1947.

¹⁰¹ WPAR, 1948.

¹⁰² WPAR, 1951.

¹⁰³ WPAR, 1952.

¹⁰⁴ It is clear from Department of Agriculture Annual Reports and archival evidence that pasmo was of great significance. eg: KDA DC AGR3-4.

it was decided that no flax should be planted for one season in 1950. Similar attempts to improve quality were made in later years, but without success and the administration considered dropping flax altogether. By 1953 the Flax Officer believed that it would be difficult to rekindle enthusiasm for the crop because of the low cash return, but the Director of Agriculture felt that having succeeded in reducing the amount of disease, the crop should not be abandoned and he suggested an intensive planting campaign in late 1953. Prices to growers were increased to encourage production, but it was found that the only places where flax was popular were those without alternative crops that could be sold for cash. In 1955, as a result of these problems, the Flax Officer recommended abandoning the industry.¹⁰⁵ He observed that some people (particularly in Ruzhumbura) had pointed out that flax had the disadvantage of not being able to be used as food if there was a poor harvest of food crops. Writing some years later, Fennell admitted that crop had never been particularly popular and "in the main was grown by the women for 'pin money'".¹⁰⁶ The introduction of new seed with a higher proportion of high grade was not able to make the industry pay and so in 1955 the flax industry was abandoned altogether. Thus, the experience with flax supports the view that where Bakiga already had crops that provided them with a cash income (including food crops) they did not switch to crops encouraged by colonial officers.

2.3.4 - Black Wattle

From the very early days of the British administration black wattle trees had been planted around Kabale to provide timber, building poles and fuel and were found to flourish.¹⁰⁷ During the 1920s and 1930s black wattle, a legume, was mentioned in connection with forestry programmes - such as the extension of Native Administration black wattle plantations, and the practice of "encouraging each adult native to plant 20-25 trees [black wattle, eucalyptus and nsambya] annually for his own use."¹⁰⁸ The methods of enforcement are unclear, but they undoubtedly quickly achieved their aims as it was remarked that "coppices of wattle trees, planted on the hill-tops, along the roads, and around the homestead, form a marked feature of the landscape".¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Report to Director of Agriculture from Fennell, 19 April 1955, KDA DC AGR3-4 ff89.

¹⁰⁶ G.A. Fennell, 'Flax', in Jameson, *Agriculture in Uganda*, 228-9.

¹⁰⁷ Annual Report, Kigezi District, 1916-17.

¹⁰⁸ WPARs, 1931 and 1934.

¹⁰⁹ WPAR, 1932.

The possibility of the establishment of a wattle bark industry was first mentioned in 1933, but was discounted as not being practicable at that time.¹¹⁰ The suggestion was again raised in 1936 when the DAO, Wickham, wrote to the Director of Agriculture asking if, now that there was cheaper method of tannin extraction, the development of the industry might be feasible. Nearly all households had a wattle plot; "these plots are an asset to the District and if in addition there were prospects of making the bark a cash crop a large increase in planting could easily be bought about by means of more vigorous propaganda."¹¹¹ Wickham's prompting led to experiments by the Agricultural Chemist to find a cheap and practical way of extracting tannin from the wattle bark. Samples were sent to the Imperial Institute in 1938, but an unfavourable report on the quality quashed hopes.¹¹² No further mention was made of possibility of a wattle bark industry until the late 1940s, although the planting of wattle trees for poles and fuel continued.

1949 saw a dramatic increase in the price being offered for wattle bark.¹¹³ A substantial trade in bark developed very rapidly, to an estimated 1,000 tons valued at £4,000 to £5,000 in 1949.¹¹⁴ District officials saw wattle as being "an attractive cash crop to the peasant farmer."¹¹⁵ However, they also believed that there was a need to regulate the marketing of bark as they considered that the owners of the trees were getting a very poor deal: Traders were buying trees from owners, stripping them of the bark, and selling the wood (for poles and fuel) back to the original owners.¹¹⁶ The extremely high prices being offered meant that trees were being cut down when they were still immature and the quality of the bark being sold was very poor. In order to introduce marketing controls wattle bark had to be placed on the Produce Marketing Schedule with official sanction of the Department of Agriculture. However, much to the annoyance of district officials, the Director of Agriculture ruled out any official encouragement of black wattle for Kigezi

¹¹⁰ Letter to Dir of Ag and Senior Ag Off, K'la from RT Wickham, DAO Kigezi, 16 Oct 1936 KDA DoA 009crops.

¹¹¹ Ibid. Also letter to Dir of Ag and Senior Ag Off, K'la from RT Wickham, DAO Kigezi; 28 Dec 1936, KDA DoA 009crops.

¹¹² WPAR, 1938.

¹¹³ India, the major consumer, had ceased trade with South Africa, the major producer, for political reasons. See Kitching, *Class and Economic Change in Kenya*, 62-7; Also M. Cowen, *Capital and Household production: the case of Wattle in Kenya's Central Province 1903-64* Unpubl PhD, (Cambridge, 1979).

¹¹⁴ WPAR, 1949.

¹¹⁵ Letter to Provincial Forest Officer from St Clair Thompson, DFO Ankole and Kigezi, 30 March 1949, KDA DoA 008/B/1 ff5.

¹¹⁶ KDA DoA 008/B/1.

District as he felt that the high prices offered would only last as long as it took for trees planted in India (the major consumer) to reach maturity (about 8 years). In the event, he was to be proved right.

Without official government sanction it was difficult for the District Administration to control marketing but nonetheless the DC tried to impose some controls through the use of propaganda, persuasion and local rules. Chiefs were informed that people should not cut down too many trees as that would endanger future pole and fuel reserves, and that anyone wishing to fell the trees to sell the bark should apply to his *gombolola* chief.¹¹⁷ From January 1950 the District Administration tried to prohibit the felling of black wattle trees for the export of bark,¹¹⁸ but people got around this easily by claiming that they were cutting for poles and timber.¹¹⁹ In May 1951 wattle was gazetted under the Native Produce Marketing Ordinance,¹²⁰ and no person could sell or buy wattle without a buying licence. Applicants had first to build wattle bark stores (to specifications determined by government) and only after the store was inspected would the licence to buy wattle be granted.¹²¹ But delays in making decisions and disagreement with Entebbe over policy,¹²² meant that for some months the marketing of wattle continued in a chaotic fashion. This resulted in sales of immature and badly stripped bark and Kigezi soon got a reputation of poor quality bark; consequently the price offered dropped substantially in 1951. This did not come as a surprise to the District Administration - as early as September 1949 the PAO had voiced his concerns that the quality of the product being exported would deteriorate if efforts were not made to train instructors in the methods of preparing bark.¹²³ On a visit to see the black wattle industry in Kiambu the DAO and DC had realised the poor quality of Kigezi bark by comparison with Kenyan.¹²⁴

¹¹⁷ Letter to SecGen from DC, 13 Oct 1949, KDA DoA 008/B/1 ff26.

¹¹⁸ Letter to DAO from DC, 2 Jan 1950, KDA DoA 008/B/1 ff46.

¹¹⁹ See for example KDA DoA 008/B/1 ff84, ff97.

¹²⁰ KDA DoA 008/B/1. Full details of marketing legislation in 2.4.

¹²¹ By 1951 licences for 40 such stores were granted throughout Kigezi. KDA DC AGR3/1/1.

¹²² Detailed in District Team minutes 1951+ KDA DoA 11/A/1.

¹²³ Letter to Dir of Ag from de Courcy Ireland, PAO, 14 Sept 1949, KDA DoA 008/B/1 ff20.

¹²⁴ They pointed out that conditions there were quite different, and in particular Kiambu had a large agricultural and technical staff working exclusively on the industry. Minutes of Meeting of District Team, 24 Aug 1951, KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff81.

As a result of the sudden price falls in 1951, very little bark was sold from late 1951, and it was felt that "considerable harm has been caused to this potential industry in Kigezi District."¹²⁵ By the time an officer had completed training at Kiambu in methods of preparing bark in April 1952,¹²⁶ it was too late. In the first 6 months of 1952, only 43 tons of wattle bark were bought in the district, compared to approximately 2,000 tons in the same period of 1951.¹²⁷ The wattle bark industry in Kigezi was never to recover.¹²⁸ The experiences of wattle illustrates again how short-term opportunities for profit were seized upon but in this case the rush to make a quick profit jeopardised the sustainability of this potentially successful crop.

2.3.5 - Cereals

Some food crops, notably wheat and maize, were considered as possible cash crops for Kigezi. Experiments with wheat began as early as 1915-16 and it was believed that if the problem of milling facilities could be overcome, wheat might be successful as a large demand for flour in the Congo was anticipated.¹²⁹ Cultivation continued for a few years, but at a low level as without a mill there was little demand. However, large quantities were grown in neighbouring Ruanda.¹³⁰ In 1951, wheat was reported to be increasingly popular for local consumption, and was mentioned as one of a number of crops sold to earn cash,¹³¹ with Patel of Maziba Industries providing milling facilities. Only small quantities were exported as the cost of transport rendered it uneconomic,¹³² and although the area was suited to this crop it was never a great success in Kigezi. However, the failure of the government to encourage the crop and to assist in the provision of processing facilities suggests a lack of foresight as this was a cash crop that had also been taken up readily for local consumption, and might have done well.

The milling facilities established in 1928 at Maziba were also used for grinding maize. Although maize became a popular crop, administrative records include very little reference

¹²⁵ WPAR, 1951.

¹²⁶ Minutes of Meeting of District Team, 27 Feb 1952, KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff95.

¹²⁷ Minutes of Meeting of District Team, 21 July 1952, KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff99.

¹²⁸ KDA DC AGR3/1/1 and KDA DoA 011/A/1.

¹²⁹ Annual Reports, Kigezi District, 1915-16 and 1916-17.

¹³⁰ WPAR, 1933.

¹³¹ WPAR, 1951.

¹³² KDA DoA 006/A/2.

to it¹³³ and no effort was made by the Agricultural Department to encourage its cultivation. Despite this, by 1937 maize was one of a number of food crops said to be earning large sums of money for the district;¹³⁴ in 1946 Kigezi exported 120 tons of maize,¹³⁵ but the harvest was much greater as this figure ignores maize grown for local consumption and hand-milled, as well as that traded at local markets, or smuggled across district or international boundaries.

The local administration discouraged maize production, notably because maize was a "greedy feeder ... conducive to erosion" and because the returns per acre were small.¹³⁶ The Director of Agriculture was concerned that once mills were installed they would inevitably act as an encouragement for people to grow maize, contrary to government policy. He was "most anxious" not to encourage maize "except in those areas where we have undertaken to produce a crop for supply to the East African Cereals Pool." He noted that "Maize is a crop which African growers take to very readily, and it is a soil exhausting and erosion encouraging crop and its extension would be detrimental to the increased production of our established economic crops, such as cotton, coffee and oil seeds. Extension beyond local needs would ultimately result in an unsaleable surplus of maize..."¹³⁷ The concerns about soil erosion were reiterated: "any move of the part of the people towards a "maize economy" might well have disastrous effects on the fertility of the soil and soil conservation generally."¹³⁸

The reasons for the rejection of maize as a cash crop were threefold. Firstly concerns about "unsaleable surplus", and marketing controls seen in the context of East Africa, secondly the impact that maize might have on other economic crops (not relevant in the case of Kigezi) and finally concerns over soil erosion. However the evidence suggests that maize would have been an ideal crop for Bakiga, being a food crop and therefore suited to 'risk averse' farmers. However, wider considerations meant that this was not to be.

¹³³ Only mentioned in passing in for example WPAR, 1931.

¹³⁴ WPAR, 1937.

¹³⁵ WPAR, 1946. For more re exporting of Maize in time of food shortages in March 1943 see KDA DC MP4II.

¹³⁶ Letter to PAO from Purseglove, DAO, 20 July 1946, KDA DoA 006/A/1 ff139. Re application by Mr Santa Singh Carpenter to erect a maize mill. The one mill in the district, run by AK Patel of Maziba Industries, was considered to be sufficient to deal with the local crop.

¹³⁷ Confidential letter to Chf Sec from AB Killick, Dir of Ag 15 June 1948, KDA DoA 6/A/3A ff15.

¹³⁸ Letter to Commissioner for Commerce from DC, 20 Sept 1951, KDA DoA 6/A/3A ff189.

Although efforts to introduce cash crops were broadly unsuccessful, there is ample evidence that whenever the returns were sufficiently good Bakiga were quick to take up the opportunities presented. Bakiga were also quick to switch back to food crops if the returns on the cash crops fell below those of food crops, the latter of which had the added advantage of providing insurance in case of a poor harvest. The failure to make Kigezi a truly cash crop economy would seem to be in part due to the inability of the administration to recognise the significance of the food crop trade to the economy. This, and the deeply entrenched belief that the production of cash crops for export was essential to ‘agricultural development’, led colonial policy to focus entirely on producing a cash crop that could cover the cost of transport. The significance of transport can be illustrated by the success of a scheme in which government organised and, more crucially, subsidized, the transport of vegetables for the Kampala market. The promotion of European vegetables for the urban market, began in 1951,¹³⁹ with the selection of a number of farmers who were provided with seed and advice by the Agricultural Department. It was arranged that Kigezi Industries would buy the vegetables and transport them to Kampala, and this was crucial to the success of the scheme, indeed its very survival.¹⁴⁰ Not included in the vegetable scheme were onions, potatoes or peas although, as section 2.4 will show, these had been exported for some years and made a significant contribution to the local economy. The economic viability of a number of cash crops have been ruled out because of transport costs, and we can consider whether had similar support been given to such crops as was given to vegetables, they might have been established successfully. In attempting to introduce cash crops the state was trying to replace an already successful system which was producing surpluses of food crops for sale and there is evidence of a vibrant trade in these surpluses and in livestock. The following section will examine the marketing policies surrounding food crops and will suggest that the failure of the administration to recognise the contribution that food crops were making to the local economy was one of their greatest weaknesses.

¹³⁹ Examined in detail in F. Scherer, *The Development of Small Holder Vegetable Production in Uganda* (Munich, 1969).

¹⁴⁰ The value of vegetables sold through Kigezi Industries rose from £192 in 1951, to £2,329 in 1952, £3,045 in 1953 and £3,500 in 1954. (WPAR's) It continued at a similar scale throughout 1950s and although it was a successful enterprise it was only open to a select group of farmers (maximum of about 500) and was tightly controlled. For details see KDA DoA 006/A/3A; KDA DoA 11/A/1; KDA DC AGR4/II and PRO CO 892 16/6 (pp53-5) and District Team Minutes, 1951 onwards.

2.4 - Marketing and smuggling food crops, 1940-60.

Despite constraints in the form of controls by the state on external markets, we have seen how Bakiga were opportunistic in their reactions to the introduction of different cash crops. While failing to acknowledge the significance of the local foodstuffs sector and believing that it was not economically viable, the administration extended its policy of marketing controls here also. This section will show how Bakiga reacted in a similarly opportunistic manner to food crop marketing controls; as efforts to control marketing increased, so did Bakiga's efforts to get around these controls and dispose of their surpluses. The repercussions of the constraints related to marketing controls (in particular the evidence of smuggling) provides us with further confirmation of the importance of the production and trade of foodstuffs. Information about the trade in foodstuffs within Kigezi is very scarce and there is virtually no empirical data on local markets, but by looking at the controls placed on the exports of food from the district we can surmise what was happening within the district.

Marketing controls were introduced for two main reasons. Firstly, there was a protective impulse to prevent traders extracting higher profits at the expense of farmers. The idea of the "greedy middleman", usually an Indian trader, is a recurring theme in the economic history of East Africa.¹⁴¹ The second reason, applied specifically to food crops, was the desire to maintain district self-sufficiency¹⁴² by controlling the export of all foodstuffs from each district. Both these concerns were alluded to by the DAO when the possibility of controlling sales of peas, beans and maize under the Native Produce Marketing Ordinance was first discussed in 1939:

"Considerable quantities of these food crops are sold annually in Kigezi District, but very poor prices are usually paid and it is impossible to control the sale in any way... By gazetting them under the Ordinance it might be possible to get a higher price for the cultivators, and to control the sale of excess quantities at times when food is fairly short but when it is still not necessary to prohibit the sale of food crops altogether. It is probable that the sum of these crops brings more money into the district than economic crops such as coffee, and I think it would be advantageous to control this in such way to ensure that the cultivators get a fair

¹⁴¹ For examination of processing and marketing policy in Uganda and the role of middlemen in cotton see for example Ehrlich, 'The Uganda Economy 1903-45'; and Brett, *Colonialism and Underdevelopment* (chapter 8). The Report of the Uganda Cotton Industry Commission (1948) declared itself "shocked" at the evidence of "widespread, deliberate cheating of the grower ... organised on a systematic and widespread scale."

¹⁴² For discussion of economic paternalism see Lury, 'Dayspring Mishandled'; and C. Ehrlich, 'Some social and economic implications of paternalism in Uganda', *Journal of African History*, iv 2, (1963), 275-85.

deal."¹⁴³

It is significant that the DAO acknowledged the economic value that these crops were contributing to the local economy, although none were receiving support from the Department in terms of technical advice or assistance with marketing and transport.

Two major pieces of legislation, the Native Foodstuffs Ordinance (1919) and the Native Produce Marketing Ordinance (1933), controlled the marketing of food crops and cash crops respectively. The Native Produce Marketing Ordinance (1933) imposed severe limitations on the marketing of virtually all cash crops not already covered by specific legislation (eg cotton). Under the legislation the Governor could pronounce an area a "declared area" in which no one could buy a specified product without a licence. This licence would specify a building at which the applicant planned to buy the produce, and specified buying centres were established.¹⁴⁴ Under the Native Foodstuffs Ordinance (1919), the purchase or barter of foodstuffs for purposes of resale or export from the district, could be prohibited and the prices of any foodstuffs fixed.¹⁴⁵ Through these devices the administration could theoretically control the trade in selected agricultural produce.

The combined effects of the Second World War,¹⁴⁶ shortage of foreign exchange, and adverse weather conditions resulted in food shortages across much of Uganda in 1943, and marketing regulations were tightened up under the Defence (Control of Famine) Regulation (1943). This empowered the Director of Supplies to "exercise such powers as may seem to him necessary for the conservation, maintenance and distribution of all foodstuffs."¹⁴⁷ The purchase of African foodstuffs for resale or export was accordingly prohibited, districts were to maintain adequate reserves against famine, and any surplus food had to be made available to feed labour employed in essential industries. Traders had to apply for export licences and submit monthly purchase returns to the DC,¹⁴⁸ and it

¹⁴³ Letter to McEwen, Acting PAO, from Purseglove, DAO, KDA DoA 010crops, 23 May 1939.

¹⁴⁴ Laws of Uganda, 1935, Vol III, 1292-6.

¹⁴⁵ Laws of Uganda, 1923, Vol I, 590.

¹⁴⁶ In Kigezi the crops given priority during WW2 included pyrethrum, flax and wheat and the DAO was informed that "every encouragement should be given in increased production of peas and beans" so that any surplus could be exported to other districts. Letter to DAO from SAO, WP, 26 Jan 1943, KDA DC MP4II ff154.

¹⁴⁷ Laws of Uganda, 1943, 271.

¹⁴⁸ Letter to Dir of Ag from McCombe, DAO, 4 Jan 1943, KDA DC MP4II ff74.

was ruled that ..."anyone holding over 200lbs of listed foodstuffs (beans, cassava, maize, peas, rice, mtama etc) should return them to DC".¹⁴⁹ This did not affect ordinary Africans, but was aimed at those Africans and Asians engaged in wholesale or retail trade.

One side effect of the 1943 food shortages was that district officials had to send telegrams and reports detailing surpluses available. This gives some insight into production levels of African foodstuffs that normally went unreported. It becomes clear from these reports¹⁵⁰ that the most densely populated areas of Kigezi, in particular Ndorwa and Rukiga, were indeed important food exporting counties. Little or no food was officially available for export throughout 1943, although this had to be enforced through a "strict system of frontier guards ... to prevent the export of foodstuffs from Kigezi [into Ruanda]".¹⁵¹ Despite adverse weather conditions it was not necessary to import food into Kigezi. When food exports from the district were allowed again they were strictly controlled and throughout the 1940s the system of permits for the purchase and export of food products continued, and whenever it was considered that local supplies were threatened, these permits were withdrawn. In 1946 all buying permits were cancelled to safeguard local food supplies owing to lack of rain,¹⁵² and from then onwards the issuing of permits for export of potatoes, maize, peas, beans and groundnuts was even more tightly controlled. At a discussion of the Kigezi Native Council it was "agreed unanimously" that foodstuffs export should not be permitted except by those already with permits from the DAO. This decision was made as it was "essential that Kigezi District should be self supporting in regard to food."¹⁵³

While discussing ways of increasing district productivity, Purseglove noted that the major drawback to the production of foodstuffs for exchange was that the returns per acre were too low, so it was necessary to plant a large acreage (which was becoming increasingly

¹⁴⁹ Under Legal Notice no 84 under "Defence (Control of Famine) Regulations of 1943" (of March 1943). KDA DC MP4II ff194.

¹⁵⁰ For example see Telegram to DC from Administer, E'be, 2 Feb 1943, KDA DC MP4II ff136. Food Crop Notes, Jan 1943, Kigezi, KDA DC MP4II ff165 and Memo on Notes on Food Position in Kigezi by the DC written in February 1943, KDA DC MP4II ff139.

¹⁵¹ WPAR, 1946.

¹⁵² In July 1946 prices in WP were fixed for groundnuts, simsim and pigeon peas. See Letter to DAO from MG de Courcy Ireland, PAO, WP, 15 June 1946, KDA DoA 006/A/1 ff114.

¹⁵³ Letter from DAO to Lalji Vasanji and Company, AK Patel, Musa Noormohomed Tejani and Prabhudas Kalidas Thakrar (traders of Kabale), (no date, late 1946, or later) KDA DoA 006/A/1 ff175.

difficult) to get a reasonable return. He felt that

"it is obviously undesirable to limit the production of foodstuffs as adequate supplies must be retained for local consumption and any surplus is of great value to the district in times of general food shortage; yet a higher valued economic crop would produce a higher monetary return per acre and correspondingly less land would be used. Perhaps this could be achieved by maintaining present ban on export of food from overpopulated areas."¹⁵⁴

It is paradoxical that while officials did not want to limit foodstuff production they planned to ban food exports, in the hope that "higher value" crops would be grown. This overlooks the fact that farmers were making rational decisions about production choices in terms of the land and labour demands and the returns of different crops. Being 'risk averse', the 'insurance' that growing food crops provided compared with non-food economic crops was also crucial. It seems that while Purseglove, whose overriding concerns were related to environmental sustainability (as chapter 3 will show), recognised the value of surpluses in time of food shortages, he gave insufficient recognition to their value under "normal" conditions. His failure to see that if the food ban was maintained Bakiga farmers would not necessarily switch to crops considered by the colonialists to be more ideal, illustrates this.

Even in a bad year, such as 1948 when a "severe drought" affected the southern part of the district from May to August, no food had to be imported; in fact, over 2000 tons of food (valued at over £16,000) were actually sold for export.¹⁵⁵ This figure is likely to be an underestimate, as it only includes produce sold legally under permits which were only issued if the *gombolola* chief could assure the DAO that there was a surplus of food in his *gombolola*. As a result of continued poor weather and "the need to ensure all local food supplies" the DC cancelled all permits to export food in 1949.¹⁵⁶ *Saza* chiefs were told to assess the food situation in their *sazas*, and take any action that was necessary such as "stopping of beer brewing or the complete prohibition of all sales of food for export."¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ Purseglove, 'Report on the Overpopulated areas of Kigezi', 21.

¹⁵⁵ WPAR, 1948.

¹⁵⁶ Notice by DC, 11 July 1949, KDA DoA 6/A/3A ff36.

¹⁵⁷ Letter to all Saza Chfs from DC, 8 July 1949, KDA DoA 6/A/3A ff38.

Much of the legislation¹⁵⁸ to control food exports was aimed at large scale traders and transporters, the majority of whom were Indians. They were warned that it was their duty "in the interests of the community" to ensure that any foodstuffs leaving the district on their lorries had permits, and failure to do so could lead to prosecution for conspiracy under Section 380(1) of the Penal Code.¹⁵⁹ The DAO observed that there was a "considerable illicit trade in produce" and that both Indian and African traders had "evaded the regulations by illicit export so that it is impossible to gauge what surpluses may arise."¹⁶⁰ He noted that because of this he was being forced to tighten controls which in turn hampered trade, and so he asked for the cooperation of Indian traders. A group of African traders complained that they were being excluded from the foodstuffs trade,¹⁶¹ an accusation that was strongly denied by the DC. This illustrates a phenomenon that was seen all over East Africa in the post-war period, of ex-servicemen returning to their home areas, and trying to get involved in retailing and transport. The limited number of licences available resulted in complaints against both chiefs (who were involved in the allocation of licences) and Indian traders, who were usually established traders with licences. The DC explained that when foodstuffs were in excess of local needs permission would be given to either Africans and Indians to buy the surplus for sale locally (to large employers of labour) or for export. He explained how traders were given permits saying:

"reliable buyers who have been in the foodstuffs trade for many years and have built up trading connections with employers of labour (who require feedings stuffs) and who have the proper facilities for buying the produce and taking it away (ie reliable weighing scales and lorries) have been commissioned to buy the crops."¹⁶²

He observed that more European potatoes had been exported by Africans than by Indians up to the end of the April 1948. But this must have been according to his records of legal exports - later in this chapter we will see that there were considerable quantities leaving the district illegally and there is no way of knowing the figures of total exports for either

¹⁵⁸ As well as the system of permits, there were also price controls, although how these were enforced, except for larger buyers is not clear. Letter to Bjordal Mines from Purseglove, DAO, 9 March 1949, KDA DoA 6/A/3A ff19 and Letter to DAO from Bjordal, 10 March 1949, KDA DoA 6/A/3A ff20.

¹⁵⁹ Letter to various India traders and transporters from DC, 4 Oct 1949. KDA DC AGR4/2 ff4.

¹⁶⁰ Letter to the Indian Association of Kabale from DAO, 13 Dec 1948, KDA DoA 006/A/2 ff356.

¹⁶¹ Letter to DC, DAO and SecGen from Kigezi Traders (13 signatories including Tomasi Bushundugwire, Titto Masozera and Nicola Kisilibombo). 11 May 1948, KDA DoA 006/A/2 ff85.

¹⁶² Letter to President, Kigezi Traders Association from DC, 25 May 1948, KDA DoA 006/A/2 ff102. Reply to ff85.

group of traders. It was stated that "it is the policy to encourage growers to export themselves rather than to sell locally"¹⁶³ but while this may have been official policy, it was clear that the regulations made this difficult. Permission to export was only given if the application was "supported by a letter as to your character by the *gombolola* and *saza* chiefs, and the Secretary General."¹⁶⁴ The individual also needed suitable scales, and proof that he had sufficient funds to buy the goods before the DAO would consider the application. Thus, while the foodstuffs trade was theoretically open to all, in reality it was only available to those considered to be reliable, trustworthy, and with the necessary contacts and capital. Many small-scale producers got around these constraints by smuggling their produce out of the district, and although this illegal trade is difficult to quantify, it seems to have been of significant proportions. Indeed as a result of smuggling the district administration eventually admitted that their policy of controlling exports had failed and acknowledged there were genuine surpluses available for export.

The illegal trade in foodstuffs was present throughout the 1940s and there are many references to it.¹⁶⁵ One of the major difficulties for the administration in terms of enforcing the marketing legislation was that Kigezi and neighbouring Ankole had different export policies; for example, peas could be exported from Ankole, but not from Kigezi, although they were not grown extensively in Ankole.¹⁶⁶ In late 1949, food exports from Kigezi were restricted to European potatoes but large quantities of peas (amounting to over 200 tons in 3 months) were declared by Masaka wholesalers and nearly all of these were believed to have originated in Kigezi.¹⁶⁷ In the light of this, the DAO Kabale informed the Director of Agriculture that while no export of peas was allowed from Kigezi he had

"long suspected and reported... that field peas were being taken out of Kigezi without permits, despite Police road blocks ... Undoubtedly fairly large quantities have been taken as head-loads to Rwahi in Ankole and it is very difficult to

¹⁶³ Letter to an Asian trader from DC, Sept 1948, refusing permission to export. KDA DoA 006/A/2.

¹⁶⁴ Letter to Mr S Nanyulwabake, Kagarama, Bubale from DAO, 2 June 1948, KDA DoA 006/A/2 ff124.

¹⁶⁵ For example in mid 1949 a shortage of food in Kabale Township market was reported, as less food was being brought into the town as "appreciable quantities are being exported by some licit and illicit traders." Letter to DC from Sempala, Secretary, Ug Af Civil Servants Assoc, Kabale Branch, 11 July 1949, KDA DoA 6/A/3A ff39. Further refs re foodcrops for sale, 1948 See KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff15.

¹⁶⁶ For example in 1950 it was reported that "of the 505 tons of peas purchased and exported from Ankole it is probable that most of these came from Kigezi district." Table on Sales of African Agriculture produce in 1950 in Memorandum by Purseglove for EARC. PRO CO 892 15/7.

¹⁶⁷ Letter to PAO, Buganda from DAO, Masaka, 28 Nov 1949, KDA DoA 6/A/3A ff75.

prevent this entirely, although the chiefs have again been asked to cooperate in this matter. Even so, I have difficulty in believing that the very large quantities which were exported through Masaka District have left Kigezi in this way."¹⁶⁸

The implication was that large scale traders were also involved in smuggling.

By July 1950 district officials were in favour of allowing the export of peas.¹⁶⁹ The Secretary General pointed out that people with surplus peas were "taking them to other places privately [smuggling] and there they get poor prices, and some who are found out get into trouble whereas the peas are their own... If people are allowed to sell their surplus peas, it will encourage them to grow more."¹⁷⁰ The DC admitted that the prohibition on pea¹⁷¹ exports from Kigezi was a failure, as "we know quite certainly that large quantities reached Buganda and Bunyoro... Last year's [1949] happenings do prove that some people here have a genuine surplus and I think the time has come to allow them a permit to export from this District."¹⁷² However it was decided that permits would only be granted if the request for them was "supported by a letter from the local gombolola chief assuring me that the owner has a genuine surplus."¹⁷³ Following this, the Director of Agriculture withdrew his opposition to allowing export for peas from Kigezi.¹⁷⁴ The DC informed all chiefs that the exports would be allowed, but only by those issued with permits and it would be the duty of the chiefs to see that only people with "genuine surpluses" sold them for export and that they should "arrest any traders buying illegally from people who have not got a genuine surplus of peas."¹⁷⁵

February 1951 saw the ending of the complete prohibition of food exports and the re-introduction of the permit system, as well as the ending of the price controls for peas, beans, maize, sweet potatoes, European potatoes, sorghum, dried fish and bananas. However the DC warned that if sellers asked very high prices he would not hesitate to

¹⁶⁸ Letter to Dir of Ag, from Purseglove, DAO, 21 Dec 1949, KDA DoA 6/A/3A ff77.

¹⁶⁹ Letter to Dir of Supplies from Dir of Ag, 18 July 1950, KDA DC AGR4/2 ff124.

¹⁷⁰ Letter to DC from Secgen, 31 July 1950, KDA DC AGR4/2 ff127.

¹⁷¹ Peas were not the only crops that were smuggled out of Kigezi. In late 1950 the SecGen wrote to the Saza Chiefs of Rukiga and Ndorwa telling that the their chiefs should do all they could to stop people exporting sorghum to Ankole, because they had heard that the price being offered in other parts of Uganda was high. Letter to Saza Chfs Rukiga and Ndorwa from Secgen, 26 Oct 1950, KDA DoA 6/A/3A ff122.

¹⁷² Letter to Dir of Ag from DC, 4 Aug 1950, KDA DC AGR4/2 ff128.

¹⁷³ Letter to Dir of Ag from DC, 4 Aug 1950, KDA DoA 6/A/3A ff111.

¹⁷⁴ Letter to Dir of Supplies from Dir of Ag, 10 Aug 1950, KDA DoA 6/A/3A ff112.

¹⁷⁵ Letter to SecGen and All Saza Chfs from DC, 12 Aug 1950, KDA DoA 6/A/3A ff113.

reintroduce controls.¹⁷⁶ That same month the DAO observed that despite the prohibition on the purchase of all foodstuffs for resale or export without permits "very considerable quantities of foodstuffs have been illegally purchased or exported from Kigezi, especially peas, sorghum and bulo."¹⁷⁷ He asked again for the cooperation of all chiefs to try and prevent this trade, saying he was only prepared to issue permits for the export of surplus produce, if he "receive[d] the assurance of you and your chiefs that there are adequate food and famine reserves in that area." He was not prepared to issue any general permits for daily purchase of sorghum, peas, beans or bulo except to employees of labour, and if there were surpluses in any of these foodstuffs he would arrange a market for the produce on a specified day. Other foodstuffs including European potatoes, maize, wheat, groundnuts, sunflower seed, castor seed, and onions could also only be purchased and exported by those with permits which were only given on evidence of a certificate from the *gombolola* chief that they were not needed for local food supplies.¹⁷⁸

While the state attempted to regulate exports through permits, people continued to trade illicitly without permits. In 1951 the police at Kabale were actively seeking new ways of preventing smuggling:

"...this business of peas and beans leaving Kigezi is a matter of grave concern in which the PC and the Commissioner of Police are taking a very active interest even to the extent of considering the posting of a European Officer on roving patrol specifically for that purpose."¹⁷⁹

When the DC of Kigezi visited the Rwahi market in Ankole, he found a large quantity of Kigezi foodstuffs for sale: mainly peas, beans, maize and sorghum. The sellers claimed to have licences but none could produce them.

"several people from Kigezi were caught taking foodstuffs [to Rwahi] and as the stores are so close to the boundary and are well up the hill from any Ankole population I am sure that practically all the produce bought there comes from Kigezi and I would be very grateful if permits for the purchase of foodstuffs could be withheld from the store owners."¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶ Notice from DC, 30 Jan 1951, KDA DoA 6/A/3A ff132. For details re Prices paid for food crops 1950 - see DoA 006/A/3A.

¹⁷⁷ Letter to Saza Chiefs from Purseglove, DAO, 7 Feb 1951, KDA DoA 006/A/3A ff135. Prohibition of export under Legal Notice no 23 of 1943.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Letter to OC Police Masaka from OC Police, Kabale rec'd 20 June 1951, KDA DC AGR4II ff5.

¹⁸⁰ Letter to DC Ankole, from DC (Duntze) Kigezi, 4 July 1951, KDA DC AGR4II ff7. Licences issued under Controlled Produce Regulations, Legal Notice No 23 of 1943.

The DC Ankole agreed to cancel the Controlled Primary Produce permits that had been given to shops at Rwahi market and to "prevent the opening of further shops in this place which are likely to drain Kigezi food supplies."¹⁸¹ However, Ankole's DC pointed out by that "These African buyers [at Rwahi market] are certainly getting the rough end of the stick - for it is a known fact that the majority of the peas and sorghum come out of Kigezi by lorry and are sold to Mbarara and Masaka merchants."¹⁸² The DC Kigezi acknowledged that it was "true that produce does leave Kigezi on lorries but everything possible is done to prevent this",¹⁸³ confirming that the bulk of the smuggling was done on a fairly large scale by traders using lorries. It was estimated that during 1951 as much as 1,000 tons of peas had been "sold and illegally exported" from the district.¹⁸⁴ The DC feared that "the illegal export [of peas] from Kigezi [had] assumed alarming proportions of late and might well lead to serious consequences locally should there be a famine."¹⁸⁵ When in 1952, "sales of foodstuffs... showed a considerable drop over the previous year, but the acreage planted did not fall proportionately,"¹⁸⁶ it was assumed that much of this drop was accounted for by local consumption; but it seems more likely that smuggling accounted for the apparent fall.

The effect of the regulations on sales of food crops were discussed by the District Council in October 1951 and the "difficulties" that growers were experiencing in not having a legal market for food crops were noted. The Council observed that "When [the growers] are not allowed to sell the excessive food, they are tempted and forced to sell them secretly to unlicensed traders who export them. When such growers are found out they are tried in law-courts and are punished for their food!"¹⁸⁷ The Council requested that permission be granted to allow the export of food for sale, as this would lead to an end of the smuggling of food and would provide a way for growers to earn money.

No changes were made, and 1953 saw the introduction of important new marketing legislation. The Produce Marketing Ordinance was a complex piece of legislation which

¹⁸¹ Letter from DC, Ankole, 11 July 1951, KDA DC AGR 4II ff11.

¹⁸² Letter from DAO, Ankole to DC, Kabale, 2 Aug 1951, KDA DC MP4II ff12.

¹⁸³ Letter to DAO from DC Kigezi, 23 Aug 1951, KDA DC AGR4II ff13.

¹⁸⁴ WPAR, 1951.

¹⁸⁵ Letter to Commissioner of Commerce from DC, 2 May 1951, KDA DoA 6/A/3A ff153.

¹⁸⁶ WPAR, 1952.

¹⁸⁷ Excerpt from Minutes of District Council, 15-18 Oct 1951, KDA DC AGR4II ff32.

replaced the Native Produce Marketing Ordinance, the Native Foodstuffs Ordinance and parts of the Defence (Controlled Produce) Regulations. Under the new Ordinance all produce had to be defined as one of four different types - Controlled Produce (which included maize and beans), Specified Controlled Produce (including tobacco and wattle bark), Scheduled Produce, or Declared Foodstuffs. Powers to deal with Controlled Produce and Specified Controlled produce were conferred on the Commissioner of Commerce and tended to involve permanent marketing arrangements with some delegation of powers to authorised officers. Scheduled Produce were included separately to enable powers to be given to the DC specifically to enable control of the movement from his district of produce which constituted the normal famine reserve crops, which included millet, sweet potatoes and (in Kigezi only) peas. Additionally foodstuffs of any kind could be made Declared Foodstuffs if the Governor believed that a district was suffering or threatened with food shortages. The movement of Declared Foodstuffs from the district was prohibited except under the authority of the DC. The new law thus gave the DC the powers to maintain control over the marketing and trade of all agricultural produce in his district.¹⁸⁸

The legislation led to discussions amongst the District Team as to which category of produce certain crops, notably peas and European potatoes, should belong. The DC recommended controlling export from the district to "ensure a fair price to the grower, a steady supply at a reasonable cost to down-country consumers, and the conservation of reasonable stocks for consumption within the District."¹⁸⁹ He also recommended that other European vegetables should be subject to some degree of controlled marketing to enable a small industry to be built up, and recommended that field peas be gazetted as Scheduled Produce. He noted that potatoes were being grown and eaten in increasing quantities and were becoming a staple food crop, but traders and lorry-drivers were taking advantage of seasonal demand, and were making excessive profits at the expense of the grower. The DC observed that although "A local system of permits for the purchase and export of European potatoes, issued by Agricultural Officer, has been in operation for a number of years.... these permits have no legal value..."¹⁹⁰ It is clear, however, that

¹⁸⁸ Circular Memo on Produce Marketing Ordinance, 1953. Written for guidance of Administration officers, by Commissioner of Commerce. KDA DoA 006/A/3B ff26.

¹⁸⁹ Letter to PC from JA Burgess, DC, 25 April 1953, KDA DC AGR4II ff137.

¹⁹⁰ Letter to Commissioner for Commerce from Burgess, DC, 8 May 1953, KDA DC AGR4II ff139.

enforcing the system of permits was another matter.

The Commissioner for Commerce recommended that field peas be gazetted as Scheduled Produce, but was unable to make the same recommendation for potatoes. He felt that the intention behind encouraging the cultivation of European potatoes was to provide an export crop, but that Scheduled Produce was supposed to be produce that was the normal famine reserve crop and was therefore a major part of the diet.¹⁹¹ But the DC resolutely defended his position:

"The main European potato growing areas coincide with some of the most densely populated areas, where food shortages can reasonably be termed imminent at all times. In these areas European potatoes form a large and important part of the diet. ... It is difficult to produce figures on the consumption of European potatoes, ... in parts of Ndorwa and Rukiga sazas, where they are grown, they do comprise an important part of the diet, as do sweet potatoes. Control of European potatoes is therefore required primarily to safeguard the internal food supplies, and also to control the exportable surplus in an orderly manner to the maximum benefit of both the grower and the ultimate consumer."¹⁹²

The suggestion that food shortages were "imminent at all times" was no more than a colonial myth. These densely populated areas were, in fact, important food exporting areas where the production of surpluses of food crops was common. Even during the severe drought of 1943 (which had affected that area in particular) no food imports were necessary and severe measures had to be taken to prevent exports. The same thing occurred in 1948 when, despite the drought, large quantities of food were exported. The assertion that shortages were 'imminent' justified marketing regulations which acted as a constraint on production and ultimately did more harm than good.

1953 and 1954 again saw warnings of imminent food shortage,¹⁹³ and at this stage it is worth speculating whether shortages might actually have been caused by the agriculture department's own policies. The tight controls on food exports from the district may well eventually have had a negative impact on production levels. Indeed, in 1954, the DAO observed that there were "considerable decreases in the planting of some of the most

¹⁹¹ Letter to PC from MA Maybury (Commissioner for Commerce), 24 June 1953, KDA DC AGR4II ff145.

¹⁹² Letter to PCWP, from DC, 23 July 1953, KDA DC AGR4II ff150. My emphasis.

¹⁹³ See for example: Letter to "The 10 Gomb Chfs" from P.Kakwenza, Saza Chf Ndorwa, 11 Aug 1953, KDA DC AGR4II ff151; Letter to Dir of Ag from DAO, 17 Aug 1953, KDA DoA 0006/A/3B ff12; Letter to Saza Chf Ndorwa and Rukiga from DC, 6 April 1954, KDA DC AGR4II ff158; and others in KDA DoA 006/A/3B.

important food crops", and he called for the *saza* chiefs to "take steps to ensure that the planting of food crops is increased in your area with the coming rains."¹⁹⁴ At no stage was it acknowledged by officials¹⁹⁵ that the district's agricultural policy may have been responsible for this fall in production, as increased production was not only not being encouraged, but was positively obstructed by the lack of markets for surplus produce.

In conclusion, this chapter has shown that the immediate concern of the colonial authorities was to find suitable cash crops for the district and agricultural officials focused their attention on so-called economic crops that could make profits despite the high transport costs. From the mid-1930s a series of cash crops was tried in turn, none with any great long term success. As each new crop was introduced Bakiga took any opportunity available to them and for short periods they seem to have made reasonable sums of money from cash crops. Meanwhile, food crops received very little attention from colonial officials in terms of increased production, while on the marketing side there was an increasing trend toward state intervention. The state gave inadequate recognition to the contribution that the foodstuffs trade made to the local economy, and local food crops were never considered to be potential economic crops. The perception that Kigezi was in a peripheral location to an export market; rather than being central to a food market and production system, was a great weakness in colonial agricultural policy in Kigezi, and was inevitably a constraint on what might have been a very successful sector.

The trade in foodstuffs was most clearly brought to the attention of officials during times of crisis, and in particular when famine in Ruanda threatened and the demand for food from Kigezi increased. When the requirements for district self-sufficiency were brought to the forefront of colonial policy in the post-war period, legislation to prevent the export of foodstuffs from the district was more tightly enforced, and this is when smuggling became recognised as a serious concern. This intervention in the exchange of foodstuffs inevitably prevented the working of the free market, as people officially had no market for their surpluses. This acted as a constraint on production, and it seems eminently possible that ultimately these policies had an adverse effect on production levels.

¹⁹⁴ Letter to All Saza Chfs from DAO, 23 Aug 1954, KDA DC AGR4II ff163.

¹⁹⁵ The EARC (1955) criticised the complex structure of marketing controls, which resulted in "a degree of inflexibility which was inhibiting economic advancement". It called for a change in policy to create more favourable conditions.

CHAPTER 3 - SOIL CONSERVATION to 1953

An important influence on colonial agricultural policy seen from the 1930s was the growing concern over soil erosion, which will be examined in this chapter. The first section will focus on the situation in Kigezi during the very early stages of colonial rule: outlining the indigenous methods of erosion prevention and examining the earliest policies. The following section will shift to a wider focus and will examine how policy developed in Uganda up to the early 1950s. The next section will then return to Kigezi to examine the implementation of that policy in the district during the decade that Purseglove was in office as DAO. The final section will set the Kigezi example in a wider context.

In the pre-colonial period there were methods of erosion prevention which were modified by early colonial officials. These were sufficiently close to the local system to be adoptable without necessitating major changes to the agricultural system, and without needing large labour inputs. As the colonial period progressed the obsession of the colonial authorities with the threat of soil erosion and their desire for "orderliness" in agricultural systems grew, and more far-reaching measures were brought in. This coincided with the appointment of John Purseglove as DAO of Kigezi, a dynamic individual who introduced a resettlement scheme and formalised the soil conservation policies of the district into a set of measures which collectively became known as *plani ensya*.¹ This chapter will examine how these policies were implemented, without any apparent opposition from local people. The evidence that farmers were, at the very least, not strongly opposed to the policies² raises many questions. Studies elsewhere in colonial Africa have shown the opposite (see section 3.4). A number of reasons can be identified that might explain Kigezi's apparently anomalous position. These include differences related to the measures themselves; the methods of implementation; the incentives provided to implement the measures and resulting from the measures; and the effect of the existing socio-political structure and system of land tenure on the measures. Additionally, the rise of nationalism may be a crucial ingredient missing in Kigezi, as in other areas this facilitated the articulation of discontent. Before looking at the policies

¹ *Plani ensya* means "New Plan" and is a phrase which entered the Rukiga language, and is still remembered today.

² Interviews with elderly men and women, Kabale District, July-September 1995.

implemented by the British we will examine the pre-colonial agricultural system. The evidence does indeed suggest that part of the reason for the success of colonial policies was because these measures were close to (and indeed were adaptations of) indigenous methods of erosion prevention.

3.1 - Colonial Encounters with Kigezi Agriculture up to 1943

3.1.1 - Pre-colonial Indigenous methods

Given the long history of agriculture and in-migration it is probable that the pre-colonial Bakiga agricultural system was highly adaptative to demographic pressure through agricultural change and was a relatively innovative agricultural system which included significant elements of soil conservation practices.³ This section, focusing on the situation in Kigezi during the very early stages of colonial rule, will present evidence, mainly in the form of observations by early administrative officers and visitors to the area, of indigenous methods of soil conservation.

Roscoe visited Kigezi 1919-20 and wrote about the agriculture:

"Their fields extend up the mountains and are marked off from each other by ridges where the weeds and stones are gathered together. After a few seasons the fields become regular plateaux, for the rains wash the earth from the higher ground against these ridges and form terraces raised above the lower fields. As I wandered along a path on the side of a mountain and looked over to the opposite side of the valley the fields looked as though they were laid out in terraces and fenced."⁴

In another description of the same visit, he wrote:

"When a man and his wife set to work to prepare new land for sowing, they first cut down the trees, shrubs and tall grass, which were carried to the lowest boundary of the field, for the fields were in practically all cases on the sides of hills. The rubbish from the field was heaped up and burned, the burned trees and stones and earth forming a barrier against which more earth was washed when the rainy season came, so that by degrees the hillsides became terraces with the cultivated plots."⁵

An administrative officer, JR McD Elliot has written about the period 1920-25 that "there

³ For a collection of detailed studies of pre-colonial agricultural technologies, including terracing, ridging and irrigation see J. Sutton et al, in Special issue on 'History of African Agricultural Technology and Field Systems', *Azania*, XXIV (1989).

⁴ J. Roscoe, *The Soul of Central Africa: A General Account of the Mackie Ethnological Expedition*, (London, 1922), 101. Visit to Kigezi (1919-1920). Interestingly Masefield (DAO 1937-38) could not recall seeing such ridges - Interview 18 April 1996.

⁵ Roscoe, *The Bagesu and other tribes*, 168.

was not much pressure on the land at that time but some people were already starting terrace cultivation";⁶ and notes "Even in those comparatively early days (1922) the Bakiga in particular were growing their crops on terraces which shows they had some idea of soil conservation."⁷

Snowden, a visiting Agricultural Officer to the district in 1929 described the agricultural methods he saw. Concerning the hillsides: "cultivation starts at the bottom of the plot, so that the soil is gradually brought down and banks are formed on the foot of each plot. These banks tend to stop soil erosion to some extent."⁸ Edel, who was in the district in 1933 noted that

"Fields are almost always wider than they are deep... People work their fields... in horizontal strips... The slight terracing which is necessary for most of the fields, because of the steep hillside slopes, marks off horizontal boundaries, which are usually little steps 9 inches or so deep."⁹

Discussing soil fertility the Director of Agriculture wrote in 1935 (ie before any significant administrative effort had been expended in Kigezi) that "In many densely populated counties the inhabitants have been driven by dire necessity to terrace their lands, and this practice already obtains in parts of Kigezi."¹⁰ Another visitor, in 1936, wrote that the area around Kabale was "densely populated and the cultivation is contour ridges (and needs to be as the slopes are nearly vertical!)",¹¹ suggesting that the indigenous system included aspects aimed at longer term sustainability. A detailed survey of Kitozho *mutala*, carried out in 1939, described how "the cultivators worked up-hill, and during every digging the soil is moved about a foot down the hill. This often results in high steps being formed between plots, and views from a distance gives the effect of terracing."¹² These benefits of these methods were recognised by colonial officials, and it was observed that in the Kigezi highlands "the native has developed his own anti-erosion measures: he grows his crops in strips across the slopes, with intervening strips

⁶ Papers of J.R. McD. Elliot, RH MSS Afr s 1384, #33.

⁷ Papers of J.R. McD. Elliot, RH MSS Afr s 1384, #2a.

⁸ Snowden, Report to Director of Agriculture on Tour of Kigezi District, 16 Nov 1929. RH MSS Afr s 921, ff258.

⁹ Edel, *The Chiga* (2nd edition), 202.

¹⁰ "Notes on Preservation of Soil Fertility" prepared by Dir of Ag, ENA H175/1/II ff5 or H218/I ff16(1), quote re Kigezi para 24.

¹¹ Papers of DW Malcolm, (Secretary to Lord Hailey 1935-36) RH MSS Afr s 1445 Box 2, File 3, In Uganda from Dec 22 1935 to 19 Jan 1936. (Used with kind permission of Rhodes House Library.)

¹² Purseglove, 'Kitozho mutalla survey'

of uncleared land, and this system leads to the formation of natural terraces. In addition some individuals have built small terraces."¹³ The DC described the soil conservation policies that followed in the 1940s as being "solidly grounded in traditional procedure"¹⁴ suggesting that officials acknowledged that they were adaptations of traditional methods.

Photographs illustrating indigenous agricultural practices have been found, from 1911,¹⁵ 1935¹⁶ and 1938,¹⁷ all of which pre-date administrative efforts in relation to soil conservation. These show that cultivation was along the contour, and vertical "banks" between plots can be made out. The banks had the effect of reducing the gradient of each plot as well as catching any soil or other debris washed down the slope by rain, and thus would have acted as a soil conservation measure.

¹³ Tothill, *Agriculture in Uganda*, 87.

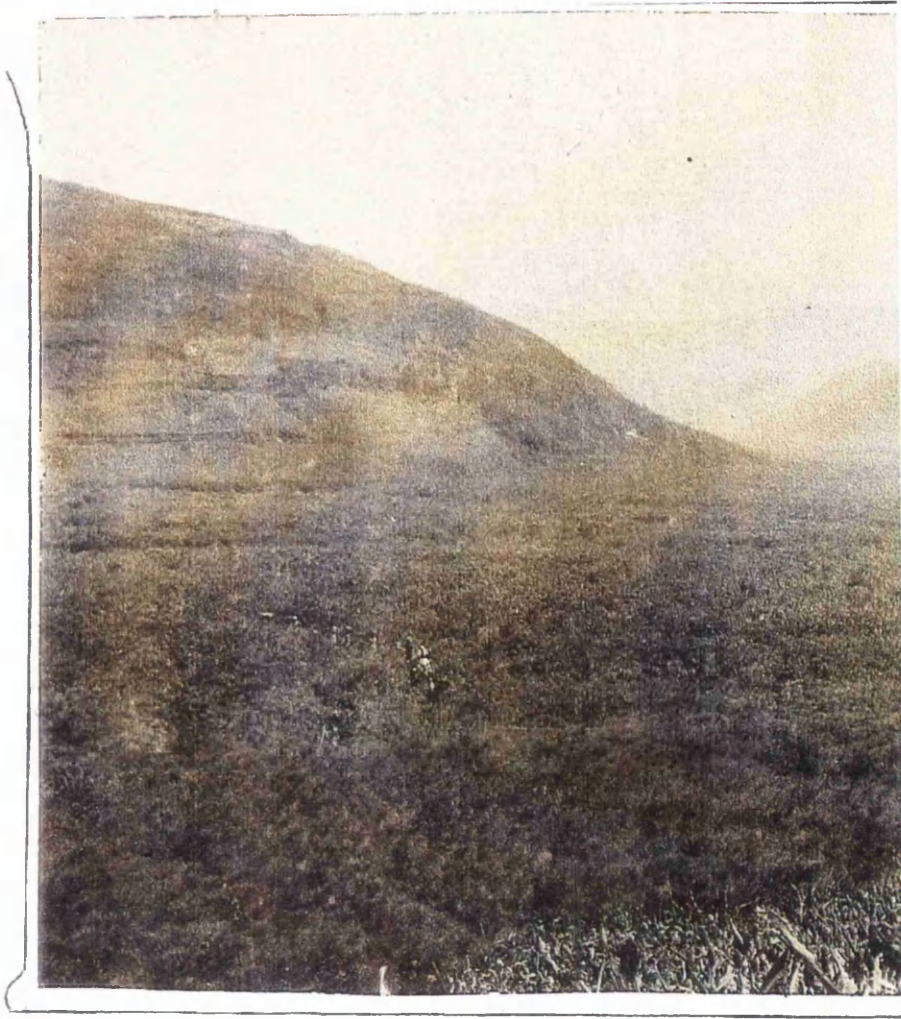
¹⁴ Notes on the System of Land Tenure in Kigezi written by DC, for EARC, 1950. PRO CO 892 15/9 pg47.

¹⁵ Photographs of Major R.E. Jacks (Surveyor on Anglo-German-Belgian Boundary Commission, 1911). PRO CO 533/57. Reproduced with kind permission of the PRO.

¹⁶ Photographs of D.W. Malcolm, (Secretary to Lord Hailey, Visited Uganda Dec 1935 to Jan 1936). RH MSS Afr s 1445. Box 3, Album II - photo of Lake Bunyonyi with terraces in the background. Also Box 4, Album III - photo of hillsides showing contour cultivation, with strips or trash lines along contour. (Reproduced with permission of the Rhodes House Library, Oxford).

¹⁷ Photograph in collection of Miss Edith Baring Gould, CMS Acc 28z5. Lake Bunyonyi, 1938. Can see "steps" in background on hills around Lake Bunyonyi. Reproduced with kind permission of the CMS Collection, Birmingham University Library.

Photographs of Kigezi District showing contour cultivation on hillsides, with strips or bunds along contour, before colonial policies were implemented.

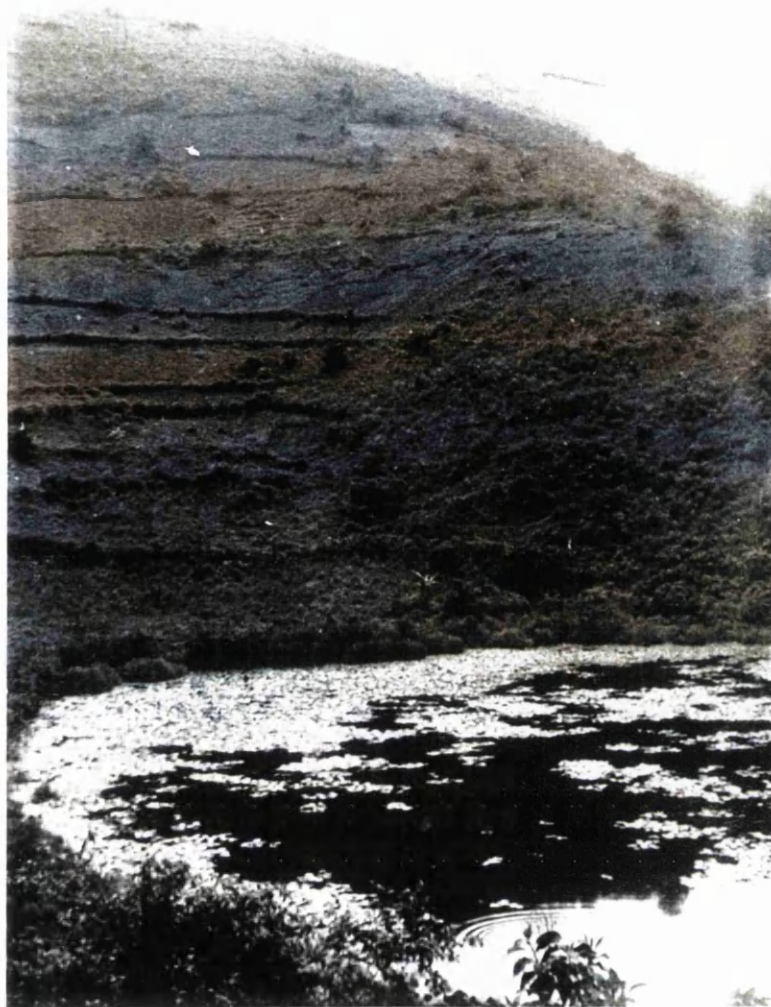


Source: Photographs of Major R.E. Jacks (Surveyor on Anglo-German-Belgian Boundary Commission, 1911). PRO CO 533/57. Reproduced with kind permission of the PRO.



Source: Photograph in collection of Miss Edith Baring Gould, CMS Acc 28z5. Lake Bunyonyi, 1938. Reproduced with kind permission of the CMS Collection, Birmingham University Library.

Photographs showing bunds or steps and trashlines on hillsides.



Source: Photographs of D.W. Malcolm, (Secretary to Lord Hailey, Visited Uganda Dec 1935 to Jan 1936). RH MSS Afr s 1445 (Albums II and III). Reproduced with permission of the Rhodes House Library, Oxford.

Although evidence from the pre-colonial period is scanty, there seems little doubt that at the time of the arrival of the British the Bakiga agricultural system was highly adapted, suited to local conditions and sustainable. Bakiga sited their narrow plots along the contour and left strips between the plots, so that over time "ridges" or steps formed and the steepness of the plot gradient was reduced and terraces of sorts (or at least plots of a lower gradient) built up. Crops were planted along the contour, while the system of mixed cropping and use of legumes (with peas and beans being amongst the principal crops) also helped to preserve soil fertility.¹⁸ Additionally, the use of trash lines and "rough tillage" also protected the soil.¹⁹

3.1.2 - Soil Conservation measures in the early colonial period, up to 1943.

This section will show how the perception of there being "a problem" with Kigezi agriculture grew during the 1930s, and how policies were put into place at a local level to address this. As early as 1921, it was observed that land in southern Kigezi was intensively cultivated and "barely suffices for present needs";²⁰ and in 1929 concerns were recorded about the "insufficiency"²¹ of land for the population around Kabale. In 1935, it was observed by DAO Wickham that crop yields were falling because of soil exhaustion in a 10 mile radius of Kabale. He observed that it was

"probable, though not yet determined, that all crops in this area are ... deteriorating in yield, or quality. ...The reason for this state of affairs is clearly over population and soil exhaustion. There is not enough land available for the essential item in the rotation - fallow - to be included at the proper intervals. Land is cropped on an average of 4 years out of 5, twice a year, and moreover during the fallow it is heavily grazed by sheep and goats. In addition nearly all the land where crops are grown is on a steep slope, causing heavy erosion."²²

He estimated that the area cultivated by the average household had halved from 12 to 6 acres in the previous decade, and predicted that as yields fell there would be an increased tendency to encroach on land that should be left to fallow, resulting in an increase in the

¹⁸ For further details about intercropping, particularly with peas, see Tothill, *Agriculture in Uganda*, 179. Also how peas were broadcast in unweeded plots, and the trash left behind on the plots and sweet potatoes were planted on "long contour mounds" 127.

¹⁹ Interviews with 20/b and 16/a respectively. Rough tillage: see Tothill, *Agriculture in Uganda*, 127.

²⁰ Letter to PCWP from JE Phillips, Acting DC, 26 Jan 1921, KDA DC MP69 ff2.

²¹ Note on "Land insufficiency around Kabale", 1929, by JE Phillips, DC, KDA DC MP69 ff34.

²² Report for Year 1935 by Wickham, KDA DC AGR-MNTH ff53. Wickham was the first officer to give a more detailed picture about Kigezi and we rely on his early descriptions. However he was killed in a car accident shortly after Masfield's arrival in the district in 1937, none of his papers survive and it has been impossible to make a critical evaluation of his time in Kigezi.

momentum of soil deterioration. Wickham saw the problem as having two related aspects - soil erosion due to cultivation of steep hillsides, and soil exhaustion due to lack of fallow and continuous cultivation caused by overpopulation.²³ He warned that "the position will inevitably and steadily become worse"²⁴ and the area might cease to be self-supporting in food.

G.B. Masefield²⁵ who replaced Wickham as DAO in 1937, made similar observations when he expressed concern about the effect that falling yields of *wimbi* was having on the ability to collect sufficient famine reserves in some areas of Ndorwa. He wrote

"how far low yields may be due to excessive population resulting in exhaustion of the land, and how far to initial unsuitability of the soil remains uncertain... Natives state that the yields of *wimbi* in this area have deteriorated within living memory."²⁶

In some areas he found "very little" cultivable land resting, "scarcely any" available for expansion; "as cultivation expands, the grazing area is contracted, while the number of stock is still on the increase. Emigration has in fact already begun from this area."²⁷ Masefield quickly established a programme of propaganda and anti-erosion measures. Some the earliest enquiries about grasses suitable for terracing came from the missions, who were concerned about the protection of their land. The missions were advised to plant lemon grass or else a "layer of cut elephant grass one foot thick and 2 to 3 feet wide laid in a strip along the contours will hold up the soil in a surprising manner ... natural terraces will soon be formed if this layer is replaced as soon as it rots down"²⁸ and a request was

²³ Letter to DC from Wickham, DAO, Kabale, 5 Sept 1935, KDA DoA 009exp-c ff10. Note that soil "erosion" (eg sheet or gully erosion) and falling soil fertility or soil exhaustion are sometimes used interchangeably.

²⁴ Report for Year 1935 by Wickham, KDA DC AGR-MNTH ff53.

²⁵ Masefield was DAO in Kigezi from Feb 1937 to June 1938. He had been educated at Winchester and Oxford. He received a Colonial Agricultural scholarship with the first year at Cambridge and second at the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture in Trinidad. From ICTA he was posted to Uganda, and after periods as DAO in Ankole, Kigezi and Mbale he was appointed Soil Conservation Officer in Buganda. Masefield recalled that his interest in soils began as an undergraduate at Oxford: "I was thrilled with soils... I don't know why, but I just took to soils and that is why I took to soil conservation." Interview 18 April 1996. His career after leaving Uganda is of significance as he went on to an Oxford lectureship and wrote several books on the subject of Tropical agriculture.

²⁶ Notes on Food Crops and Famine Reserves in Kigezi, Masefield, May 1937. KDA DC AGR-MNTH ff81. Sorghum, peas and beans were not used as famine reserves because of their poor storage qualities, while cassava did not grow well at this altitude.

²⁷ Monthly report, July 1937, by GB Masefield, KDA DC AGR-MNTH ff87. Referring to Buhara and Kamuganguzi gombololas, Ndorwa.

²⁸ Letter to Dr NM James, CMS, Syira, PO Kabale from Haig, Senior Ag Off, K'la, 13 July 1937. Also letter of 30 Aug 1937 - Letter to Senior Ag Off from Masefield, DAO) KDA DoA 009crops.

made by Masfield for cuttings of grasses suitable for contour terracing in the district.²⁹

By the latter part of 1937, Masfield was concentrating propaganda work on anti-erosion measures,³⁰ and had sent out a circular to all his staff and to all chiefs on contour hedges and other anti-soil erosion measures. He observed that there had been "a good deal of talk lately about soil erosion in Uganda. As far as I can see, no catastrophe is imminent to Kigezi agriculture from this cause... [although] the exhaustion of soil fertility is already becoming a problem in certain overcrowded areas of Kigezi." He asked the DC to help in "spreading knowledge of these measures, whether by speaking in lukikos or otherwise."³¹ The notes he circulated included advice that plots should be in strips across the slope and should be no more than 30 yards down a slope (or 20 yards on steep slopes) and that there should be a 5 yard strip of grass between plots. He recommended the building of "ridge terraces" at the bottom of the plot, running along the contour, and using a "sod bank", hedges or grasses, contour rows of mulch, weeds and crop debris that would help terraces to form.³² The introduction of improved crop rotations was also advised.³³ It is clear that these measures, in particular having plots along the contour with strips of grass between plots and "ridge terraces" at the bottom of the plots, were actually adaptations of methods that were already in use. This may explain why the policies were relatively readily accepted by farmers.

Masfield never spelt out precisely how he ensured that his policies were carried out, although when he reported that the work on anti-erosion measures had shown considerable progress, he said that this was "largely due to the circular sent by the DC to all chiefs on contour hedges"³⁴ and reported that he had had the "fullest cooperation from the Administration".³⁵ Oral sources confirm that the policy was administered not merely through Agricultural Department staff but largely through the system or network of chiefs. Masfield himself recalled how he measured the contours on a hillside at Kachweckano

²⁹ Letter to Senior Ag Officer from Masfield, 22 Oct 1937. KDA DoA 009crops.

³⁰ Monthly Report for Oct 1937 by Masfield, KDA DC AGR-MNTH ff95.

³¹ Letter to DC from Masfield, DAO, 23 Oct 1937, KDA DC AGR6I ff2. Enclosing Notes on anti-erosion measures.

³² Notes on anti-erosion measures for cultivators in Kigezi, by GB Masfield, to be circulated to all District staff. Enclosed in letter to DC from Masfield, DAO, 23 Oct 1937, KDA DC AGR6I ff2.

³³ Letter to DC and DMO from DAO, 18 March 1937. KDA DoA 010crops.

³⁴ Monthly Report for Oct 1937 by Masfield, KDA DC AGR-MNTH ff95.

³⁵ Annual Report for 1937 for Kigezi District, by Masfield, KDA DC AGR-MNTH ff98.

farm, marked them with sticks and then planted elephant grass along these lines with crops between. He then showed chiefs around and "the chief would say that he would tell people to do it."³⁶ Thus by 1938, before soil conservation policy had been formalised in Uganda as a whole, local concerns and the presence of Masefield, a recently trained dynamic DAO with a particular interest in soils, who was up-to-date with ideas about soil erosion from America, meant that soil conservation measures had begun in Kigezi and were one of the routine subjects discussed by officials while on tour.³⁷ Masefield recalls that the "subjects covered in ... *lukikos* were very largely [related to] soil erosion in Kigezi in those days."³⁸

As well as propaganda (through chiefs and district officials on tour), demonstration plots were also used to get the message across. Masefield believed that "One may waste a lot of time talking... about anti-erosion measures, but the actual sight of a holding which is properly terraced etc is much more effective."³⁹ By mid 1938 about seven demonstration plots had been established.⁴⁰ He suggested that the training of agricultural instructors at Bukalasa should be made more relevant to districts outside Buganda, and that "something more should be done of the agricultural instruction of women. Women do the lions share of cultivation, and are responsible for some of the glaring instances of soil erosion. One does not touch them in *Lukiko* speaking, and the instructors do not appear to say very much to them, although I am constantly urging them to do this."⁴¹ Despite this, little attention was paid to women.

In early 1940, Stuckey, Masefield's successor, expressed concern about soil erosion in areas where pyrethrum was to be grown under lease to Europeans. Large areas of hillside had been cleared which were "likely to cause serious erosion unless adequate steps are taken to prevent it."⁴² The estate manager was told to take steps to stop erosion on the

³⁶ Interview with Masefield, 18 April 1996.

³⁷ Subjects covered at *lukikos* on safari included: coffee mulching, timber and black wattle planting and the planting of contour erythrina hedges to avoid soil erosion. See ADC, Wright's Safari in Rukiga, 15 Feb 1937 to 3 March 1937, KDA DC MP139 ff34.

³⁸ Interview with Masefield, 18 April 1996.

³⁹ Letter to Senior Ag Officer from Masefield (on leave), 26 May 1938, KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff4.

⁴⁰ Interview with Masefield, 18 April 1996.

⁴¹ Letter to Senior Agricultural Officer from Masefield, DAO, 26 May 1938. KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff4.

⁴² Letter to Sen Ag Off from Stuckey, DAO, 25 Jan 1940, KDA DoA 008.

land.⁴³ Concerns were also expressed over agricultural conditions on Bwama Island⁴⁴ in Lake Bunyonyi, where "owing to soil erosion some of the land has had to be abandoned."⁴⁵ Stuckey visited the island and recommended that more land needed to be fallowed, that strip cultivation (with bands of uncultivated land running on the contour to help check erosion) be introduced to enable land to be fallowed, and that very steep and badly eroded areas be taken out of cultivation altogether.⁴⁶ Commenting on these recommendations, the PAO said that

"bundling has not been suggested as to attempt this would be a work of considerable magnitude. I think that this strip cropping will serve the purpose, and if a success it will be a useful demonstration of something which other people in Kigezi are much more likely to follow than bunding."⁴⁷

However, as we shall see, both strip cropping and bunding⁴⁸ were ultimately used in Kigezi, and it was bunding that was more acceptable to Bakiga farmers, being closer to indigenous methods and taking less land out of production.

Much anxiety over soil erosion was associated with cattle and the growth in numbers of livestock. Following a visit to the district in 1939 the Governor raised this question and as a result Fiennes (the Veterinary Department's "expert" on erosion in Eastern Province) wrote a memorandum on erosion due to stock. He admitted knowing little about Kigezi and stressed that anti-erosion measures should be suited to differing topographical and climatic conditions, but made some suggestions nonetheless. These were largely of a technical nature about the use of bunds and terraces, and it is of interest that many of these recommendations were based on experiments done in the USA.⁴⁹ The "deep rooted desire among the Bakiga to acquire goats,"⁵⁰ their reluctance to sell their goats and the

⁴³ Enclosure to Letter to Stafford from HB Thomas, Land Officer, 23 Jan 1940, setting out conditions on which Government agreed to cultivation of pyrethrum in Kigezi by Moses and Stafford. KDA DoA 008. See Chapter 6.

⁴⁴ This was established by the CMS as a hospital and treatment centre for lepers in 1930/31.

⁴⁵ Letter to Senior Ag Officer from GF Clay, Dir of Ag, 7 Feb 1940, KDA DoA 008. Referring to letter to Director of Agriculture from Director of Medical Services.

⁴⁶ Letter to Senior Ag Office, WP from Stuckey, 18 April 1940, [page torn] KDA DoA 008.

⁴⁷ Letter to Dir of Ag from EF Martin, Senior AO, WP, 1 May 1940, KDA DoA 008.

⁴⁸ Strip cropping is the method of resting and cultivating alternate strips of land. Bunds are the vertical steps between plots of land. If there were already ridges or steps then it would be relatively easy to adopt bunds. But if they were being introduced from "scratch" (as apparently in this case) then bunding was labour intensive and therefore more problematic.

⁴⁹ Letter to DC from Dir of Vet Services, 12 May 1939. Enclosing memo on Soil Erosion in Kigezi by Fiennes KDA DC MP148 ff293.

⁵⁰ Letter to Dir of Vet Services from WA Allen, DVO, Mbarara, 3 April 1939, KDA DoA 13/A/1 ff1.

dangers associated with overstocking received some attention, especially as goats thought to be worse eroders than cattle. Allen, the DVO of Ankole and Kigezi, found that in the *gombolola* of Bukinda, (Rukiga) hillsides were increasingly losing their grazing value because of the heavy number of stock: "The Saza Chief Rukiga has definitely stated that conditions have changed during the 20 years of his adult experience, and that already the shortage of grazing is being felt, particularly in areas such as that around Mpalo, where population is particularly concentrated."⁵¹ The possibility of encouraging a goat trade with Kampala and introducing castration to produce a more marketable animal was discussed by the administration, but never followed up. Despite these concerns about the dangers of a large goat population, the DVO acknowledged that the "most striking evidence of erosion appears to be due, not to the goats and sheep, but to the cattle"⁵² as they climbed to the hill tops to reach grazing.

At a national level concerns over the threat of soil erosion also emerged, as Section 3.2 will show, but although district officials kept senior officials up to date with progress in relation to soil conservation measures these reports⁵³ made little impact; Kigezi received little attention and the "Kigezi situation" did not enter the debate at a national level. It was not until after a tour in July 1941 by the Deputy Director of Agriculture that the extent to which anti-erosion measures were being carried out in Kigezi was fully appreciated by senior officials. He reported that Kigezi was "intensively cultivated with plots on very steep slopes. ... There has, however, been an almost spectacular development of lines of elephant grass at the tops and bottoms of plots. I was told that Masfield started this and it is certainly the exception rather than the rule to see plots without elephant grass strips."⁵⁴ In 1951 the Deputy Director of Agriculture, Watson compared the district then to 1938 when "the farming pattern was ...a "patchwork" type, with no attempt being made

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Letter to Senior Ag Officer from YM Kaidzi and AK Mulera, African Ag.al Assts, 9 April 1941, KDA DC AGR6I ff7Enc. In addition two memoranda had been written on this subject in Kigezi according to the DC. Letter to Senior Ag Officer, Masindi from DC, 12 April 1941, KDA DC AGR6I ff7. They were a letter of 27 May 1938 addressed to Chairman of Committee on Small holdings and Agricultural extension and a memo on the Soils of Kigezi with notes on Soil Erosion written by Mr GB Masfield in (about) Feb 1938. Neither of these have been found. The collection of material was in response to a request by the Director of Agriculture in 1941 for reports as to the extent of soil erosion in all districts, the causes of it, and the measures that were being taken to remedy the situation. Letter to Senior Ag Officer Masindi from GW Nye, for Dir of Ag, 6 March 1941, KDA DC AGR6I ff5.

⁵⁴ Report on 'Tour of Western Province, 7-19 July 1941, by Deputy Director of Agriculture, KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff6.

to preserve or improve the land". He noted "it is obvious that spectacular advances have been made in the matter of reorientation of holdings coupled with a more rational type of general agriculture."⁵⁵ His comment reveals something very important about the attitudes of colonial authorities, and that was the failure to recognise that while the indigenous system may have resulted in "patchwork" cultivation, it was not necessarily ignorant of soil conservation. Some individual officers did recognise the benefits of the indigenous system. An example of a more "enlightened" officer was McCombe, DAO in 1941/2, who wrote:

"There is often much in the indigenous methods of cultivation which it is a mistake to ignore and to assume that the actual tillage and planting methods are easily capable of improvement. The surprising feature of Agriculture in the Kabale area is that crop yield is on its present level... I attribute this largely to the use of legumes and the apparently careless method in which they are planted."⁵⁶

Here was an officer who saw the benefits of the system in place. By 1942 all plots were supposed to be of a uniform size of 16 yards down the slope and 38 yards across with a contour strip of about 4 feet width left uncultivated between the plots which formed the foundations for a permanent bank, the upper side of which was planted with elephant grass.⁵⁷ McCombe observed that "Kigezi had an established system of planting elephant grass on the contour and what I have introduced is an addition to and not a disturbance of the older system."⁵⁸

The indigenous system of Bakiga agriculture therefore included a number of important elements to ensure the sustainability of the resource base. These included the use of legumes, rough tillage and trash lines, and cultivation that led to the formation of ridges, creating a terracing system of sorts, albeit of a patchwork or haphazard nature. This haphazardness led some colonial officials to believe that the system did not include elements of soil conservation. The first anti-erosion measures to be put into place by Masfield (elephant grass strips and recommended plot width of 30 yards) and McCombe (similar to the earlier measures but with narrower plots) were modifications to the

⁵⁵ Letter to DAO from TY Watson, Deputy Director of Agriculture, 2 Oct 1951, KDA DC AGR6I ff67.

⁵⁶ Note by McCombe (DAO) on Matias's (DC) Memo on "Kigezi District: Economic Policy", KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff11. No date, probably early 1944. Matias's memo never found.

⁵⁷ Letter to Senior Ag Officer from McCombe, DAO, 18 Jan 1943. KDA DC AGR6I ff11. For more detail re measures in McCombe's time see Letter to Saza Chiefs from McCombe, DAO, 29 June 1942, KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff7.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

indigenous system, and so could with relative ease be adopted by the local population and absorbed into their system. In particular the use of strips along the contours and encouragement of "ridge terraces" at the base of plots can be seen to be closely related to the ridges or steps described in the pre-colonial system. We will see how as the colonial period progressed there was a gradual move towards a more orderly system of agriculture. When Purseglove arrived he modified the system further and added alternate strip cropping, a more significant change to the indigenous system (see section 3.3). However by the time Purseglove arrived the "colonial mind" was changing. Before looking at the implementation of policy during Purseglove's time, we will first examine how colonial thinking about soil conservation had developed.

3.2 - Development of colonial policy to 1953.

This section will look at the development of ideas and discussions around soil erosion in the wider colonial context. It will demonstrate the growing perception in the colonial mind that soil erosion was a serious problem, up to the early 1950s when issues around land tenure came into prominence.

The process by which policies of agrarian reform, and in particular those related to soil conservation, emerged and evolved during the 1930s have been examined by Anderson.⁵⁹ The experiences of the "Dust Bowl" in the USA in the 1930s clearly demonstrated the dangers of soil erosion, while the realization that East Africa's population was growing rapidly and the threat of drought and famine, added to these concerns. The policies that evolved in response to this were broadly similar across East Africa and much of the discussion of the direction that policy should follow occurred on an East Africa-wide basis. As early as 1929 a conference was held to discuss soil erosion in the Tanganyikan context and the resulting lengthy report was circulated to officials in East Africa. The conference recommended that a Standing Soil Erosion Committee⁶⁰ should be appointed to consider the measures that should be adopted in Tanganyika to deal with the problem, which if left unchecked would "result in much land becoming unfit for agricultural or

⁵⁹ Anderson, 'Depression, Dust Bowl, Demography.' For growth of concerns in Southern Africa context see Beinart, 'Soil Erosion, Conservationism.'

⁶⁰ The Standing Committee on Soil Erosion met for the first time in June 1931, then again in February in 1932, but then not again for nearly 6 years. J. Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*, (Cambridge, 1979), 348.

pastoral purposes."⁶¹ The report was sent to CO in London, brought to the attention of Stockdale (the CO Agricultural Adviser) and the question of soil erosion in East Africa was considered by the Council for Agriculture and Animal Health in February 1930. The Council felt that the issue was of "considerable importance to some of the other colonies in East Africa [and that] soil erosion should be viewed as an East African problem."⁶²

In 1932 a conference of East African soil chemists attended by Martin, Uganda's Soil Chemist, was held at Amani, Tanganyika, and the problems of shifting cultivation and soil erosion were discussed.⁶³ In 1935, the Teso Informal Committee was set up to investigate the situation in Teso, an area where cotton yields had been seen to fall in the previous few years.⁶⁴ Its report, published in 1937, recommended resettlement from overpopulated areas, reduction of livestock numbers and the use of soil conservation measures. In the same year Tothill, the Director of Agriculture, expressed concern that increased human and cattle populations and the expansion of cash crops had put the agricultural system, which had relied on shifting cultivation to restore fertility, under great pressure. "There are indications that the old system is not standing the strain"⁶⁵ he wrote, citing examples from Teso. He spoke of the need for the system to be modified, and discussed changes in particular in relation to cotton and coffee, through improved rotation, planting methods, manuring and mulching. He concluded that

"The old system of agriculture developed by the indigenous population in Uganda was excellent from a soil fertility point of view. With the rise of population, the increase of food crops, of cash crops, and of cattle, serious strains are being put upon the old system and there is proof that soils in some parts of the Protectorate are losing their fertility. The old system requires to be modified."

It is clear that this discussion focussed largely on the situation in Buganda and Eastern Province, both major cash crop producing areas. It was felt that the standard of agriculture

⁶¹ Report on Informal Conference to discuss soil erosion in the Tanganyikan context, held in May 1929. PRO CO 822/26/9 ff1.

⁶² Minute by Stockdale, 27 Feb 1930, PRO CO 822 26/9.

⁶³ Conference of Soil Chemists, 1932. PRO CO 822/47/3.

⁶⁴ D.J. Vail, *A History of Agricultural Innovation and Development in Teso District, Uganda* (Syracuse University, 1972), 127-35. Kerr, the Commissioner for Cooperative Development, writing a memo for EARC in 1953 described some of the background to soil conservation. Kerr, an agricultural officer in Teso in 1930, wrote that he was "struck by the loss of soil fertility and soil erosion on the agricultural experiment station and Teso District where ploughing with ox-ploughs had at that time developed extensively" PRO CO 892 15/7.

⁶⁵ Notes on Preservation of Soil Fertility under conditions of Native Agriculture in Uganda, by Tothill, Director of Ag written July 1935, ENA H175/1/II ff5. Also see ENA H218 I ff16(1) and KDA DC AGR-MNTH ff44Enc.

in these areas was low and becoming lower as a result of increased acreages coming under cotton and a reduction in resting periods, and there were concerns about the effect on yields that this might have.⁶⁶ To facilitate the formulation of longer term programmes for soil conservation the Agricultural Survey Committee was established in 1935.⁶⁷ Under its direction *mutala* surveys were carried out all over Uganda and the report published in 1938.⁶⁸

Perhaps the most significant of all the reports at this time⁶⁹ was that by Stockdale, the Agricultural Advisor to the Secretary of State to the Colonies. He visited Uganda in January 1937, travelling through Buganda, Eastern Province and Bugishu. He examined the problems related to increasing acreages of cotton and other cash crops. He concluded that Uganda could not hope to continue its agriculture based on the "traditional" system of shifting cultivation as economic crops had been introduced into the system. He noted the "disastrous results of soil erosion" which could be seen in "many parts of the USA" and concluded that this problem would have to be met by "the inauguration of better systems of agriculture, involving strip cropping and the development of mixed farming in which animal husbandry plays an important part."⁷⁰ Stockdale's report was circulated

⁶⁶ Letter to Chf Sec from Tothill 31 July 1935, ENA H218/1 ff16. Enclosing Notes by Tothill on "Preservation of soil fertility under conditions of Native Agriculture in Uganda" (14pgs).

⁶⁷ Memo by E.L. Scott for the "Instruction and Guidance of the Agricultural Survey Committee" 1935 ENA H233 ff26. There was a great deal of discussion about the formation of Agricultural Survey Committee, in particular who should be on it and who should be the Chairman. Tothill agreed to carrying out the survey and agreed that the formation of a long range agricultural programme based on the results of the survey was the function of his department. However the Committee appears to have been unclear about its functions and was constantly trying to redefine its role. ENA H233.

⁶⁸ J.D. Tothill, *Report on Nineteen Surveys Done in small Agricultural Areas in Uganda with a View to Ascertaining the Position with Regard to Soil Deterioration*. (Entebbe, 1938).

⁶⁹ Other publications not already mentioned include article by F. Stockdale on "Soil Erosion in the Colonial Empire" *Empire Journal of Experimental Agriculture*, V 20 (1937); The 1938 edition of Hailey's *An African Survey*, includes an entire chapter on soil erosion. This chapter was written by Mrs Huxley - for details see RH MSS Afr s 1814 (Pedler). N.V. Brasnett, 'Soil Erosion', *Uganda Journal*, 4 (1936), 156-61. Published in 1937 was E.J. Wayland and N.V. Brasnett, *Report on Soil Erosion and Water Supplies in Uganda* (Entebbe, 1937). This considered the problem of soil erosion in Uganda, and looked in detail at Karamoja, Ankole and West Nile. Only mention of Kigezi was in relation to the provision of an Assistant Conservator of Forests for Kigezi and Ankole. PRO CO 822/82/6 ff13. Also see R.N.T.W. Fiennes, 'Soil erosion and Agricultural Planning', *Uganda Journal*, 6 (1939), 137-47, which are general accounts without any references to specific places in Uganda; also articles in *East African Agricultural Journal*.

⁷⁰ Report by Sir Frank Stockdale KCMG CBE (Agricultural Adviser to the Secretary of State for the Colonies) on his Visit to East Africa, Jan-March 1937. Produced by Colonial Advisory Council of Agriculture and Animal Health (CO, July 1937) ENA H253. Also PRO CO 822/77/11 ff22. For details of Stockdale's role in the rhetoric and policy formulation see Anderson, 'Depression, Dust Bowl', 341-2. After reading Stockdale's report Masefield wondered if Stockdale had selected Richardson as Deputy (Director of Agriculture, 1937) partly because of his concerns about soil erosion and because he "evidently want native cultivation rules enforced" and in the Lake Province (Tanganyika) where Richardson had come from, the rules were already enforced. Masefield,

to all Agricultural Officers who were advised to "give consideration to ... the practicability of introducing simple native cultivation rules to ensure that such crops as coffee, cotton and tobacco are only planted on sites approved by them and that the necessary measures - terracing, contour bunding and ridge cultivation - are practised, to prevent erosion [and] preserve the fertility of our soils."⁷¹ The focus on cash crops is clear.

Senior administrative officials were keen to observe that most of Stockdale's recommendations on anti-erosion measures were "under practical consideration by the Agricultural Survey Committee at the present time."⁷² The Governor pointed out that the Government had in fact been attending to these matters before Stockdale arrived and he said that "Although, fortunately, the menace of desiccation and soil erosion is not as pressing here as in some other countries, no time must be lost in planning and executing an intensive campaign on all possible fronts."⁷³ He believed that the "offensive" should be a part of a general scheme, centrally coordinated and that this could be done most effectively through the Agricultural Survey Committee.

Annual conferences were held for Directors of Agriculture at which policy on the coordination of agricultural research (including soil erosion), and the findings of such research were discussed on an East Africa-wide basis.⁷⁴ Information gathered in one

RH, Letters Home 1936/7. (Embargoed, so not fully catalogued.)

⁷¹ Letter to All AO's from A Richardson, Ag Dir of Ag 9 Oct 1937, KDA DoA 001/C.

⁷² Letter to Chf Sec from PC, Eastern Province, 26 Oct 1937, ENA H253 ff124.

⁷³ Excerpt from the Text of the Acting Governor's Address to the LegCo at meeting held on 22 Nov 1937, ENA H205/3 ff11. Stockdale's report also discussed see PRO CO 822/77/11.

⁷⁴ PRO CO 822/106/5; PRO CO 822/109/10 1940; PRO CO 822/109/11; PRO CO 822/115/6 1944. Soil erosion was also discussed at the 1938 Conference of Governors of Uganda, Kenya and Tanganyika. The Uganda Government memorandum entitled "Control Measures Hitherto Adopted and the Results Achieved" focussed on Teso and Buganda. (PRO CO 822/88/6 ff8.) When in 1938 the Agricultural Survey Committee became involved in discussions about the budgetary provisions to be made for soil and water conservation, the expenditure agreed upon was for Eastern Province and Buganda. (For further details see letter to Director of Ag, Chairman of Ag.al Survey Committee from AE Forrest, Acting Chf Sec 14 July 1938, ENA H205/3 ff25; ENA H205/3 ff27 - £10,000 for "bundling" in the Eastern Prov; Notes on Soil Conservation and Water Supply Schemes in 1939 Estimates. ENA H205/3 ff54-57, ENA H205/3 ff71 and ff72.) The focus of Buganda and Eastern Province also clear from The review of Soil Conservation in Uganda by Dr Tempany (CO Adviser on Agriculture). (No date, but probably written 1942), ENA H205/3 ff87. Also see the papers presented on soil conservation at the Conference on Rural Betterment in Uganda held in 1942. (Report and Proceedings of the Conference on Rural Betterment, Papers: 1) "Aspects on the Maintenance of Fertility in Overcrowded Areas" - CEJ Biggs which covered the area around Kampala in the county of Kyagwe, in relation to over-cropping with cotton and maize, also some mention of Teso and Lango. 2) "Practical Problems in Connection with Strip Cropping" - RK Kerkham - discussed experiments at Serere Farm with a new layout (with strip cropping) carried out in 1940 - which appeared to have been quite effective in checking erosion in the year since it began. 3) "Gully Erosion in Buganda" by GB Masefield. PRO CO 536 210 (40287/1) ff4.

colony was shared at such conferences, for example in 1940 a memorandum from Nyasaland about improving husbandry practices was circulated.⁷⁵ Ideas from further afield were also gathered: Tothill went to India and South Africa in 1938 and his notes were circulated around the Department.⁷⁶ In 1938/39 Colin Maher, from Kenya, and H.R. Hosking, from Uganda, were sent to the USA to study erosion control measures such as contour bunding and strip cropping.⁷⁷

This section has shown the development of policy at both a national and wider level, and it is clear that up until the early 1940s Kigezi, not being a cash crop producing area, was not a part of that discussion. Instead the focus was on Eastern Province and Buganda which were the major cotton producing areas (and therefore the income generating areas for the Ugandan administration) and Kigezi was rarely mentioned. From this emphasis it is clear that concerns about cash crops were crucial but it should be stressed that these 1930s initiatives (such as the Agricultural Survey Committee) were not necessarily prompted by concerns over soil erosion, but rather by concerns over cotton yields. It later, however, suited the administration to present these initiatives as responses to concerns about soil erosion. The lack of attention given to Kigezi was to change quite suddenly and before long Kigezi's soil conservation measures were held up as an example to the rest of Uganda, indeed to the colonial world. Nevertheless there were in fact measures in place before the 1940s, both indigenous systems (3.1.1) and modifications and adaptations to those systems that were introduced by the early DAOs (3.1.2). The following section will examine the implementation of policies in Kigezi at the time when attention focussed on the district and the final section will look at how similar policies

⁷⁵ Conference of Directors of Agriculture, May 1940. Memo by the Dept of Ag Nyasaland "The Adaptation or Modification of Existing Native Agricultural Practices Towards Better Husbandry, Memo by Dept of Ag, Nyasaland." ENA H304 ff1.

⁷⁶ Notes by Tothill CMG DSc (Director of Ag) on various aspects of Indian and South African agriculture, with particular reference to items of possible practical value to Uganda. (Jan-March, 1938) Included references to forms of soil conservation used, and bunding mentioned. Had 300 printed and circulated around Dept of Ag. ENA H280 ff1.

⁷⁷ Maher, "A Visit to USA to Study Soil Conservation." Department of Agriculture, Nairobi, 1940. PRO CO 892 15/7. Colonial administrators continued to look beyond East Africa to learn from the experiences of others. In 1955 LH Collett, the Chief Soil Conservation Officer, of Basutoland visited Kigezi and discussed soil conservation measures and methods of enforcement. Report on Collett's visit to Uganda, 14-22 Oct 1955; KDA DoA 19 ff211. Collett's Report on Soil Erosion in the USA, 1938, had been circulated to East African colonies, PRO DO 35/936/Y579/12. District officials in Kigezi also tried to learn from the efforts being made in Ruanda and in 1955 the DAO, PAO and DC visited Ruanda. Report by EW King, DAO, on visit to Ruanda 18 April 1955. KDA DoA 019 ff162. For further information re visit to Ruanda in 1954 see Minutes of Kigezi District Team Meeting, 1 April 1955. KDA DoA Teammins.

were experienced in other colonies to enable Kigezi's experiences to be set in the wider context.

3.3 - Implementation of soil conservation measures at district level - The Purseglove era - 1944-53.

It was the famine of 1943 that brought Kigezi's agricultural system under closer colonial scrutiny, the district quickly coming to be seen as a model for the successful implementation of conservation measures. This coincided with the arrival of Purseglove as DAO. He was a catalyst for many new development initiatives, in particular the resettlement scheme and *plani ensya*. Purseglove had graduated in first position in 1936 from the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture in Trinidad. Like many of the graduates of this course he developed an acute awareness of soil erosion and was only too keen to put this knowledge into practice. He was appointed Agricultural Officer in Uganda in 1936, DAO Ankole and Kigezi 1938-39, before being appointed DAO in Kigezi in 1944, where he remained until 1952. The longevity of his stay may in part explain Purseglove's influence and impact.⁷⁸ It has said that perhaps one of the reasons for his success was his great enthusiasm; that he took the time to learn Rukiga and was interested in Bakiga customs, and, for example, the use of medicinal plants.⁷⁹ The impact that he made on Bakiga farmers is striking and many informants remembered him: Semu Kamuchana recalled "Purseglove ...was a good man and looked after his workers well."⁸⁰ Byagagaire told of the songs written about Purseglove,⁸¹ while Ngollogoza also praised him, recalling the nickname that Purseglove was given: "'Kyarokyezire' meaning there is plenty of ripe ready food in their area."⁸²

This section will look at the implementation of soil conservation measures during this period. The state employed the stick and the carrot in introducing these policies: the 'stick' of enforcement in which chiefs and regulations played a prominent role, and the 'carrot' of propaganda, competitions and educational courses.

⁷⁸ CV and Aide Memoir - RH MSS Brit Emp s 476. Has been described as a "Pioneer of Rural Development". He was the subject of the first monograph to be produced by Wye College on important individuals in Tropical Ag.al. There is now an annual Purseglove Lecture (as from 1993).

⁷⁹ E. Clayton, *Purseglove: A Pioneer of Rural Development* (Wye, 1993).

⁸⁰ Interview with 24/a. Also with 35/a, 57/a, and 62/a.

⁸¹ Interview with Byagagaire, Kampala, 21 Sept 1995.

⁸² Ngollogoza, *Kigezi and its People*, 94.

The famine of 1943 led to a ban on migration from Ruanda into Kigezi and on all food exports from Kigezi. This event led to an increased awareness of the importance of food production in the Kabale area, as well as concern that Kigezi itself might be vulnerable to famine. After a visit to Kigezi in early 1944, the Director of Agriculture spoke in strong language about the "devastated area around Kabale" and emphasised the need for soil conservation measures saying that it was "essential to do all possible to get narrow strips made compulsory without delay ... [as] the present anti-erosion lines are too wide apart and are of little use in checking erosion."⁸³ Some months later, in November 1944, a committee was established to investigate and report upon Kigezi's overpopulated areas.⁸⁴ Consisting of an officer from Administration, Forestry, Veterinary and Agriculture Departments, the Committee had only one meeting; thereafter all the work was left to Purseglove. He carried out a series of traverses in a 12 miles radius of Kabale (all within Ndorwa and Rukiga) to assess whether the areas were "overpopulated", and if so to what extent. See Map 3. But it is clear that before the study had even begun it had been decided that these areas were overpopulated. There is no doubt that the area studied was an area of very high population density, as these figures indicate:

	people per sq mile
Whole of Kigezi	155.2
Whole of Ndorwa	210.1
5 overpopulated <i>gombololas</i> in Ndorwa	359.8
Busuru <i>muruka</i> of Kitumba	717.9 ⁸⁵

⁸³ Letter from Maidment, Acting PAO to DAO 10 Feb 1944, KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff9. Quoting notes made by Director of Ag following visit to Kigezi.

⁸⁴ Purseglove, 'Report on the Overpopulated Areas of Kigezi'.

⁸⁵ Purseglove, 'Report on the Overpopulated Areas of Kigezi', para 17. The "overpopulated" *gombololas* were Kyanamira, Kitumba, Buhara, Kamuganguzi and Bubale (all in Ndorwa), and Rwamuchuchu in Rukiga.

Map 3



SOUTHERN KIGEZI, SHOWING GOMBOLOLA (SUB-COUNTY) BOUNDARIES OF NDORWA AND RUKIGA

Purseglove found that "The main problem at the moment is soil exhaustion... it would appear that overcultivation has resulted in soil exhaustion and a deterioration in soil structure, with a consequent reduction in the amount of water absorbed by the soil."⁸⁶ Quoting from Jacks and Whyte, *The Rape of the Earth* he stated that "although serious erosion is not yet a problem we cannot afford to be complacent and wait for it to become so." He concluded that the area around Kabale could not continue to support an increasing population and that it would be "most unwise to continue under the present conditions in the hope that further soil deterioration and erosion will not take place."⁸⁷ These findings appeared to confirm many of the earlier fears that serious environmental degradation was likely to occur in the area unless dramatic steps were taken. The reaction to the report was to intensify soil conservation measures and initiate a resettlement scheme. Purseglove believed that grass fallows were essential to the maintenance of soil fertility, and in order to increase the proportion of land resting, and introduce a policy of strip cropping with every third strip resting, he suggested moving people out of the "over-populated" areas into less populated areas to the north. In the areas left behind there would be some "reorganisation"⁸⁸ of agriculture, the distance between bunds would be further reduced (thus narrowing the strips) and a more orderly system of alternate strip cropping would be introduced. These policies, which became known as *plani ensya*, differed from those of the earlier period in that they necessitated an increase in the proportion of land to be taken out of cultivation and demanded greater labour inputs.

Before examining these policies it should be stressed that although Purseglove played a crucial role in bringing Kigezi to centre stage, his findings were not particularly groundbreaking or innovative. On the contrary many officials had previously discussed the problems of over-population, soil erosion and falling yields.⁸⁹ But by the time Purseglove arrived Kigezi's reputation as an "over-populated" district was firmly entrenched. What Purseglove served to do was to greatly increase the attention that was focused on the

⁸⁶ Ibid., para 13.

⁸⁷ Ibid., paras 13 and 93.

⁸⁸ Ibid., para 94.

⁸⁹ Interestingly the possibility of moving people had arisen much earlier, as Masefield recalled: "What struck me [soon after arrival in Kigezi] was that they were very soon going to run out of land, the holdings already barely big enough ...so did a safari in [northern Kigezi] to check the soils in that plain before I could advise people to move there... All I could do was to say that I thought it was essential to do something and here's a soil map to show the soils [in the less well populated areas]". Interview with G.B Masefield, 18 April 1996.

district. The reputation that Kigezi gained in this period is one that it has never been able to shake off. Rather, it has been continually reiterated and elaborated. Allan, for example, has written of the Kabale area that:

"All the usual symptoms of over-population in such an environment were [by 1941] very evident: almost continuous cultivation and consequent soil degradation, subdivision and excessive fragmentation of land, ... intense competition for land and the buying and selling of holdings. In this area livestock are not very numerous and the cultivation of cash crops throughout Kigezi is on too small a scale to have had any significant effect on the population-land balance."⁹⁰

Researchers have consistently repeated many of these ideas, often without substantiation,⁹¹ and it is only recently that some of these myths, such as continuous cultivation, have been put to the test.⁹²

3.3.1 - Resettlement Scheme⁹³

Purseglove considered that it was necessary to resettle about one third of the population of the overpopulated part of the district, which he calculated to be 20,000 people.⁹⁴ He assessed possible resettlement areas and selected two regions, one in Rujhumbura and the other in Kinkizi.⁹⁵ (See Map 2) It was realised that the scheme would eventually have to extend into areas outside Kigezi, and from 1953 resettlement into Ankole and Toro began. Purseglove acknowledged that the scheme could only hope to alleviate the problem as "the provision of an inexhaustible supply of land for a rapidly increasing African population is impossible."⁹⁶ Purseglove suggested that farmers who did not cooperate with the reforms in the over-populated areas "should be the first to move, which would thus provide a definite incentive for people to carry out the necessary reforms... Latest arrivals.. should be the next to move."⁹⁷ However, the District Team was less draconian

⁹⁰ Allan, *The African Husbandman*, 182-4.

⁹¹ For example Bagoora 'Soil erosion and mass wasting'; Ministry of National Resources, *State of the Environment Report*, 26; and E.M. Tukahirwa (ed), *Environmental and Natural Resource Management Policy and Law: Issues and Options. Summary* (MISR and Natural Resources and World Resources Institute, Washington, 1992).

⁹² Lindblade, Tumahairwe, Carswell, Nkwine and Bwamiki, 'More People, More Fallow'.

⁹³ For a detailed study of Resettlement Scheme and in particular the effects on the family see Yeld, 'The Family and Social Change'.

⁹⁴ Purseglove, 'Report on the Overpopulated Areas of Kigezi', para 96.

⁹⁵ The initial areas of resettlement in Rujhumbura were in the *gombololas* of Ruhinda, Nyakagyeme and Buyanja; in Kinkizi in the *gombololas* of Kirima and Kambuga.

⁹⁶ Memo by Purseglove on Shifting Cultivation in Western Province written in Oct 1951. para 18. PRO CO 892 15/7.

⁹⁷ Purseglove, 'Report on the Overpopulated Areas of Kigezi', para 101.

in approach, insisting that "any scheme of resettlement which was undertaken would have to be entirely on a voluntary basis."⁹⁸

It has been said about the Kigezi Resettlement Scheme that "the general principle adopted was to dangle a carrot to entice settlers away from the overcrowded area whilst simultaneously applying a few pricks behind";⁹⁹ this analogy is particularly apt. A number of incentives were put forward to encourage resettlement, such as the remission of taxes for two years, the provision of transport, transit camps and food rations for the settlers.¹⁰⁰ This decision to provide food rations, and the occurrence of local food shortages, led to sudden increases in the numbers wanting to migrate, and this forced the administration to halt further resettlement on a number of occasions for a few months.¹⁰¹ It was decided that only those settlers who could feed themselves should be allowed to migrate¹⁰² and fines were imposed on those who went to the Resettlement Area "solely to get free food and without any genuine intention of settling, and who now had returned to their former homes."¹⁰³

But the most important incentive for people coming from an area as densely populated as south Kigezi, was the prospect of being able to lay claim to large areas of land. The precise manner in which land was allocated to resettlers remains unclear. Indeed, in the planning stages of the resettlement scheme, more attention was paid to how land that resettlers left behind would be reallocated, than how land in the resettlement area would be allocated. It was suggested that resettlers' land would be left to the chief who would reallocate it. However, once resettlement got underway it became clear that settlers preferred to leave their land with relatives in case they wanted to return, and the administration had to recognise this right. Chapter 4 will discuss this in more detail and

⁹⁸ Minutes of District Team Meeting, 8 Sept 1945, KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff23. The District Team consisted of the DC, ADC, DAO, DVO, and DMO. They were first created in 1945 and initially met about twice a year, then later about four times a year, to discuss district policy and progress.

⁹⁹ Memo written by Kerr, Commissioner for Cooperative Development, for EARC in 1953, PRO CO 892 15/7.

¹⁰⁰ Purseglove, 'Report on the Overpopulated Areas of Kigezi', para 102.

¹⁰¹ Free food for a number of months was part of the "resettlement package" offered. See letter to Napire Bax, Director of Tsetse Research, Chinyanga, Tang and Dir of Tsetse Control, K'la from Purseglove, 15 March 1947, KDA DoA MP12/2 ff70. Also letter to Saza Chfs of Ndorwa, Rukiga, Ruzhumbura and Kinkizi (Copy to Resettl Chf) from Ngololgoza, 18 Feb 1948, KDA DC MP125/1 ff337.

¹⁰² Letter to all Saza Chfs from DC, 22 Oct 1949, KDA DC Dev4/1/II ff134.

¹⁰³ Minutes of Meeting of District Team, 6 Oct 1950, KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff67.

show that it was significant as it represented an erosion of chiefs' authority over land.

As for the land in the resettlement area itself, it was initially planned that as few controls and regulations as possible should be placed on the resettlers. The lack of regulations associated with resettlement is striking, particularly when comparisons are made with other schemes. Most significantly, no limit to the amount of land was set, although about 12 acres per family was recommended as sufficient. Obol-Ochola has suggested that land was "given" to individuals by a specially constituted Resettlement Allocation Authority which was made up of chiefs from all levels.¹⁰⁴ No archival evidence has been found to confirm this and it does appear that in the very early stages of the scheme individuals could choose the land they desired. However, this uncontrolled system could not have continued indefinitely without chaos ensuing, and some control of land distribution appears to have been given to the Resettlement Chief who was specially appointed to the area. This was in part a response to results of a survey which found that:

"a number of people, among whom was a high proportion of people related to chiefs, had more land than was necessary but, in implementation of a District Council resolution of 1947, these people will share with their children and relations who are not yet resident in the area."¹⁰⁵

Another survey in 1951 found that "the average acreage of cultivable land taken up per taxpayer was 26.7 acres"¹⁰⁶, and it was noticed that "the area available for new settlers in North Kigezi was also reduced to some extent by "land grabbing" on the part of "people with influence".¹⁰⁷

The cooperation of the chiefs was undoubtedly paramount to the success of the scheme,¹⁰⁸ and it is of more than passing interest that at least one of the chiefs benefitted personally from the resettlement scheme. The Secretary General,

¹⁰⁴ Obol-Ochola, 'Customary Land Law'.

¹⁰⁵ Survey undertaken in Resettlement Area, 1950, PRO CO 536/223 40391 ff8.

¹⁰⁶ Memo by Purselove on Shifting Cultivation in Western Province written in Oct 1951. PRO CO 892 15/7.

¹⁰⁷ Annual Report, PAO, WP, 1961. Quoted in D.G.R. Belshaw, 'An outline of resettlement policy in Uganda, 1945-63', in R. Apthorpe (ed), *Land settlement and Rural Development in Eastern Africa* (Kampala, 1968).

¹⁰⁸ Purselove, 'Kigezi Resettlement' 147; Purselove, 'Resettlement in Kigezi', 17. Also letter to Dir of Ag from Purselove, 28 April 1947, KDA DoA MP12/2 ff87.

Ngologoza,¹⁰⁹ was amongst the first group to claim land in the resettled area, but he did not resettle his family on the new land as was intended. A memorandum referring to chiefs and others claiming large pieces of land in the resettlement area confirms the fact that Ngologoza was not the only person who saw opportunities for accumulation: DC Matias commented to Purseglove that it was "too late this planting season to do anything about the absentee landlords!"¹¹⁰ Thus, in the first few years of the resettlement scheme there were ample opportunities for accumulation of land, and something of a land rush took place. The haphazard and uncontrolled situation inevitably led to a 'free for all' and those in positions of power and wealth exploited the situation and accumulated land. Even when some controls were put into the hands of local authorities (either a Resettlement Chief or a broader group, such as a committee), who were supposed to allocate the land, those with power, such as Ngologoza, were able to do much as they wanted, and some accumulated large areas as a result. From around 1955 controls were put into place and the amount of land each family could take was limited to 10 acres. The significance of the offer of unlimited land as an incentive to resettle is clear, as soon after these controls were instituted resettlement became less popular, and settlers argued strongly to be allowed more than 10 acres.¹¹¹

There is ample evidence that in addition to these individuals who took the opportunities offered by the resettlement scheme to accumulate, there were also settlers who were not particularly wealthy or powerful. This raises the question of the extent to which compulsion was used to get people to move. The resettlement scheme has always been presented as an entirely voluntary scheme, but it is difficult to assess how much pressure was applied to individuals to migrate by local chiefs, or by family members. There is some evidence of compulsion being used. For example a medical officer who visited the resettlement area, reported that there was "dissatisfaction among settlers... some [of whom

¹⁰⁹ Ngologoza - Mukunga Chief from 1923, rose to Gombolola Chief in 1929; Saza chief in 1936; Sec General in 1946; Chief Judge in Kigezi 1956 and Chairman of Appts Board 1959. Ngologoza probably inherited land in Rwanyana, Rubaya (where he was born); he obtained land as part of the first group of settlers in Gombolola Ruhina in Rujumbura; and a decade later as part of the land tenure pilot project had 2 plots of land registered in Mwanjaari, Gombolola Kituma, Saza Ndorwa and one in Katooye. Ngologoza, *Kigezi and Its People*, 81-99.

¹¹⁰ Note to John (Purseglove) from Mat (Matias) [on safari] from Nyakageme, 10 Oct 1946, KDA DoA MP12/1 ff160.

¹¹¹ Report to DC from Ngologoza, SecGen 8 Oct 1955 on Visit to Bigodi in Kibale, Toro to find out why the 23 settlers rejected the 10 acres. KDA DoA 010resett ff98. Circular by King, DAO to SecGen, Saza and Gomb Chfs. 22 Nov 1955, KDA DoA 010resett ff108.

were] involuntary pioneers."¹¹² In 1950 the DC, expressing concern that criminals were being sent to Resettlement Area, wrote:

"It has come to my notice that persons with many convictions in the courts are being sent to the Resettlement areas ... This is a very undesirable practice as not only does it bring the Resettlement Area into disrepute but gives the Chiefs in Resettlement Areas additional difficulties when they already have sufficient work. In future no person with a criminal record should be sent to Resettlement Areas without the prior approval of the Saza Chief of Kinkizi and Ruzhumbura."¹¹³

A number of chiefs were told to "instruct your people who have less than 10-20 shambas to go and take up land"¹¹⁴ and this, and the suggestion that people could be "sent" (whether they had criminal records or not) raises many questions about how "voluntary" the movement of people was. It is extremely difficult to answer this question, and in particular to assess the levels of pressure from families¹¹⁵, or from local chiefs. The only report of compulsion being used, that has been found, was that of a man who complained to the Secretary General that he was being forced to resettle despite having several plots for cultivation. In response to this complaint Ngologoza wrote to the *gombolola* chief telling him that as the man had sufficient land he should not be forced to go.¹¹⁶ This makes us wonder if, had the man had what was perceived by the chief or by the Secretary General to be "insufficient" land, would he in fact have been made to leave.

Nonetheless, as Chapter One made clear, migration was not unusual for Bakiga and the scheme should be seen as an extension of a process that was already occurring. This fact was acknowledged by officials who noted that the resettlement scheme did "little more than accelerate or facilitate a natural process of emigration which is continually in progress."¹¹⁷ Purseglove himself observed that unassisted resettlement continued to take place alongside the scheme and he estimated that by the end of 1946 approximately 2,500 unassisted emigrants had moved out of Kigezi into Ankole and Belgian Ruanda. This is

¹¹² Report to District Medical Officer by DD McCarthy, for Director of Medical Services, 7 May 1949. KDA DC MP 105/BI ff183.

¹¹³ Letter to Saza Chfs Ndorwa and Rukiga and Gomb Chfs of Kyanamira, Bubale; Maziba; Buhara; Kamuganguzi; Kabale Station; Kitumba; Rwamuchuchu; Bukinda from DC, 26 June 1950, KDA DC Dev4/1/II ff270.

¹¹⁴ Letter to 5 Gomb Chfs from Rukereluga, Mtwale, Bufumbira, 11 Feb 1950, KDA DC MIS 121, ff281.

¹¹⁵ Yeld examines family pressure to resettle, and suggests that those with weaker claims to land within their household were particularly vulnerable to such pressure. Yeld, 'The Family and Social Change'.

¹¹⁶ Letter to Gomb Chf Rwamuchuchu from Ngologoza, 6 Sept 1947, KDA DC MP125/1 ff319.

¹¹⁷ Letter to R Day, Uni of London, Institute of Edu, from DC, 20 April 1950, KDA DC Dev4/1/II ff238.

more than the 1,500 who moved as part of the resettlement scheme in the same period,¹¹⁸ which puts the success of the scheme into context.

It is clear then, that during the late-1940s the attention of the District Administration was focused on the resettlement scheme and a great deal of effort was put into ensuring that it was a success.¹¹⁹ Given this administrative effort it is perhaps not surprising, that the scheme was consistently presented as a great success.¹²⁰ While the administration wanted to resettle the landless, or near-landless, the evidence on the use of compulsion suggests that to some extent at least, chiefs were able to send who they wanted. Juxtaposed to this aim was the desire that the resettlement scheme should be seen to succeed with farmers following the soil conservation rules and making a success of their new farms. For this reason agricultural officials may have been quite happy that 'progressive' farmers were amongst those opportunists resettling and accumulating.

3.3.2 - *Plani ensya*

This section will outline the implementation of the policies which collectively became known as *plani ensya*, and which involved the "reorganisation" of agriculture in the so-called overpopulated areas once the resettlement programme had begun. Strip cropping was a central part of this. Purseglove put forward the proposal that all land on slopes of over 20° would be taken out of cultivation and a system of strip cropping would be introduced in which land would be rested in rotation with two years cultivation and one of rest under grass (or four and two respectively).¹²¹ The resting strip could be grazed. Plots would be a width of 16 yards on slopes of up to 15° and 12 yards on slopes of 15-20° with a bund of grass or trash of a minimum of three feet. Purseglove noted that "Once the system of strip cropping ... has been established, automatic control of the number of

¹¹⁸ Report by Purseglove, Jan/Feb 1947, KDA DoA 12/2 ff27.

¹¹⁹ Minutes of Kigezi District Team, KDA DoA 11/A/1. Problems that were dealt with include the clearing of tsetse fly from the resettlement areas, dealing with health problems (especially malaria), and finding suitable economic crops to make the areas more attractive to settlers.

¹²⁰ On receipt of the annual reports on resettlement various officials at the CO commented in minutes on the "strikingly successful scheme" which was a "very great achievement." See for example file on Settlement scheme in Kigezi District (1950), PRO CO 536/223 40391.

¹²¹ It is of interest to note that just a few years earlier in a discussion of agricultural policy at a national level it was noted that "strip cropping could be successfully introduced only where there is plenty of land." Minutes of 2nd Meeting of the Rural Devt Sub-Comm, Entebbe, 19 Feb 1942, PRO CO 536 210 40287/1 ff20. This is of interest as here was strip cropping being introduced in Kigezi, despite this observation that it could only be successfully introduced in areas with plenty of land.

people on the land will be accomplished. One strip in three must always be resting and this can be maintained by the minimum of supervision by the Administration, agricultural staff and chiefs." He did, however, acknowledge that the main difficulty would be that the strip lines, in the process of being reorganised, would cut across existing plots, and some reorganisation of tenure would be necessary.¹²² As the 1940s progressed the soil conservation measures undertaken including strip cropping, bunding, introduction of more organised system of fallow, and the encouragement of the use of manure.¹²³ Additionally, all paths had to be hedged, compost pits were encouraged and a variety of measures were applied to household compounds. The next section will examine how the administration ensured that these measures were carried out looking at both the use of coercive measures: "the stick" and also at the measures based more on persuasion and incentives: "the carrot". The photographs on the following pages show cultivation in Kigezi during this period: in southern Kigezi where contour cultivation is clear; in northern Kigezi where hillsides had been opened up with strip cropping; and at Kachweckano where the "ideal" pattern of strip cropping can be seen.

¹²² Purseglove, 'Report on the Overpopulated Areas of Kigezi', paras 98-99 and 102.

¹²³ For further details of soil conservation measures see KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff19 and ff23 - Minutes of Meeting of Kigezi District Team 14 May 1945 and 8 Sept 1945. Also KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff27 - Letter to Dir of Ag from Lytton, Devt officer. [Ag Dept] 1 Nov 1945 - notes on measures nec for Ag as related to pop pressure. Also Notes on District Agricultural Plan by Purseglove 4 Oct 1950. KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff66.

Photographs of Kigezi District from 1940s.



Source: Photographs belonging to the Purseglove family

Photographs of Kigezi District from 1940s.



Source: Photographs belonging to the Purselove family.

Photographs of Kigezi District from 1940s.



Source: Photographs belonging to the Purselove family.

Photographs of Kigezi District from 1940s.



This shows a part of Kachweckano Farm, with the recommended one in three strips resting, and shows contour bunds in the background.

Source: Photographs belonging to the Purselove family.

Photographs of Kigezi District from 1940s.



This photograph shows chiefs and staff of the Department of Agriculture standing in front of a hillside that has alternate strip cropping. It is taken in Ruzhumbura in northern Kigezi, which is more arid, and less densely populated than the southern part of the district.

Source: Photographs belonging to the Purseglove family.

Monthly reports sent to the DAO by Assistant Agricultural Officers confirm that by the late 1940s most of the soil conservation work was a matter of routine, and that the role of chiefs was crucial to the implementation of these soil conservation measures.¹²⁴ For example, it was reported that part of Bukinda where soil conservation measures had been neglected had been visited and

"steps were taken by the chiefs to see that new grass strips were well laid out. ... The chiefs and the Agricultural instructors were reminded about [the use of elephant grass]. ... it is hoped that good results will be achieved if the gombolola chief and muruka chief ... remain industrious and devoted... In Nyakasiru muruka, there is a progressive work about soil conservation measures... This is mainly due to the organising ability of the muruka chief."¹²⁵

Purseglove wrote in 1948 that the success of the soil conservation measures "has been achieved through the direct approach of departmental officers and the district team generally to the peasant farmers concerned working through the medium of the native authority."¹²⁶ The colonial authorities thus placed much responsibility on chiefs for ensuring that their "patch" followed the required measures; if they failed to do so, they were punished accordingly. Additionally, chiefs at each level (*saza*, *gombolola* etc) were responsible for ensuring that all the chiefs at the level below them carried out the work expected of them. By working through this hierarchy the administration ensured that conservation measures were carried out, and it is clear that punishments to chiefs were meted out without hesitation. In 1949 the *saza* chief of Ruzhumbura reported that he had "dealt with" the *gombolola* chief of Kagungu, his minor chiefs and the Agricultural Instructor of the area about the "negligency of the Soil Conservation work" in Kagungu. He tried the chiefs in the *saza* court and found that the *gombolola* chief was not helping his sub-chiefs and the Agricultural Instructor, and so he was warned that if he did not improve he would be fined.¹²⁷ Just a few days later the *saza* chief took this case further

¹²⁴ There was one AAO for each county, they provided the link between the DAO and farmers, and until 1954 they were all Africans. In 1954 the Agricultural Productivity Committee recommended increased staffing levels for Kigezi, and some of the Sazas had European Officers in charge, and they became known as Field Officers. The AAO's reports (either in English or Rukiga) kept the DAO informed of all the agricultural news in the counties, and alerted him to any problems. They covered their movements that month, and changes in staff, meteorological information, internal food position, economic crops, other production, pests and disease, experiments, soil conservation, education and resettlement. Usually the reports just gave a couple of sentences on each subject, although occasionally it seems that more information was requested on a particular area, and the report was therefore more detailed. Monthly reports 1949-51 to DAO from Ag Asst, KDA DoA 19/B/2.

¹²⁵ Report on Agriculture in Bukinda by AAO, Rukiga sent to DAO, 25 Nov 1949, KDA DoA 19/B/2, ff56.

¹²⁶ Letter to PAO from Purseglove, DAO, 9 June 1948, "Land Utilization and Agrarian Reconstruction in Kigezi, and efforts in Kigezi in recent years to re-organise the land on a sound ag.al basis..." KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff51.

¹²⁷ Letter to DAO from Kitaburaza, Saza Chf Ruzhumbura, 12 Nov 1949, KDA DoA 16/A/1 ff87.

reporting that as no improvements in soil conservation measures were seen he had sacked one *muluka* chief and two *bakungu* chiefs, and fined four other chiefs.¹²⁸ Oral sources have confirmed that the work was supervised by *muluka* or *gombolola* chiefs along with agricultural department staff;¹²⁹ most informants could recall that Wednesdays¹³⁰ were for *plani*: In the words of Ann Joventa: "every Wednesday [a] trumpet was blown and then men and women all woke up and went to do *plani*. ...*Plani* was done in a group."¹³¹

It is widely believed today¹³² that a soil conservation byelaw was in force throughout the colonial period, but in fact there was no such byelaw in place until 1961.¹³³ Instead "Agricultural Rules" made under the Native Authority Ordinance were used, which were only clarified in 1954 when it was decided that all rules should be "codified", consolidated into a pamphlet and then issued to chiefs.¹³⁴ The Agricultural Rules in place in 1954 (there were 15 in total) included: the width of contour strips (16 yards or 10 yards on steep slopes), width of bunds (2 yards), that bunds should be permanent, that alternate strip cropping should be practiced where possible, that grazing areas should be set aside where possible, and that grass burning should only be done with the permission of a

¹²⁸ Letter to DAO from Kitaburaza, Saza Chf Ruzhumbura, 28 Nov 1949, KDA DoA 16/A/1 ff90. Also on KDA DC AGR6I ff38. There are a number of other examples of similar action being taken against chiefs eg Bubale, Ndorwa in 1950 - See Report by AAO, Ndorwa, 1 May 1950, KDA DoA 19/B/2, ff92.

¹²⁹ Interviews, Kabale District, July-August 1995. (Eg 1/b; 4/a; 28/a; 32/b; 51/a 96/a).

¹³⁰ It was also found that on Tuesdays all Church-goers were expected to go and work for their Church.

¹³¹ Interview with 51/a.

¹³² For example amongst District Officials, Interview with Mutabazi, DAO, July 1995.

¹³³ A telegram sent to the DAO requesting that copies of all agriculture bye laws in force in the district be sent to the PAO (Telegram to DAO from PAO 5 Sept 1950, KDA DoA 16/A/1 ff112) was replied to: "No repeat no agricultural byelaws Kigezi. All control under Native Authority Ordinance." (Telegram to PAO from DAO 5 Sept 1950, KDA DoA 16/A/1 ff113.) See also letter from Director of Agriculture requesting that any draft byelaws under consideration should be forwarded to the Dept of Agriculture first so they could make comments. (Letter to all PAO's from Dir of Ag 16 Jan 1953, KDA DoA 16/A/1 ff139.) It was not until late 1958, much later than might be expected, that a Soil Conservation Byelaw was drafted. This was discussed by district officials and Department of Agriculture staff from 1958 and throughout 1959 (Minutes of Natural Resources Sub Committee of Kigezi District Team. Eg on 2 Nov 1959, 30 Dec 1958, 6 July 1959, 2 Nov 1959, 4 Jan 1960 and 14 March 1960. Also appendices to minutes of meetings discussing in detail drafts of byelaw. KDA DoA Teammins. For further information see KDA DoA ADMIN2/1; KDA DoA 106 ff29, ff30, ff34; KDA DC ADM20/L/3 and KDA DoA 106.) In early 1960 it was reported that "the Crown Law Office was unable to accept the present wording of the proposed Bye Law" and it had to be redrafted. When the byelaw was eventually approved by the District Council in October 1961 the PCWP observed that "These Byelaws ... are now in a form that is acceptable to the DAO, though they are not entirely satisfactory. In particular, the penalty clause is ridiculously low." Approved by District Council 18 Oct 1961 and signed by PCWP 15 Jan 1962. Kigezi Soil Conservation Bye Laws, 1961, KDA DoA 106 ff37. Letter to PCWP from DC, 4 Jan 1962, KDA DoA 106 ff38. However that district officials were able to implement the soil conservation regulations perfectly adequately without a byelaw, as Agricultural Rules alone were quite sufficient.

¹³⁴ Letter to DMO, DVO, DFO and DAO from DC, 6 Jan 1954, KDA DoA 11/A/2, ff1.

chief.¹³⁵ The Agricultural Rules were enforced by the lower courts and it is perhaps for this reason that it has not been possible to locate any court returns, or details of the punishments imposed.

The chiefs had powers to enforce the Agricultural Rules. If an individual failed to follow the soil conservation rules - for example if bunds were dug over and not replaced - that person was logged in the "warning register" by the local chief and given 14 days to comply. If he still failed to follow the rules he would be taken to court and if found guilty would be fined, and ordered to comply within 7 days.¹³⁶ No archival evidence has been found as to precisely how the work on *plani* days was enforced or who turned out, and informants were inconsistent in their replies as to who actually did *plani*: Some, such as David Mashoki, said that it was just tax payers;¹³⁷ while others said that women and children were also expected to work.¹³⁸ No court records survive of the punishments imposed for failing to carry out the measures, but oral evidence suggests that fines and short terms of imprisonment were the most common punishments,¹³⁹ while working for the *gombolola* chief was also mentioned by James Katabazi and others as a punishment.¹⁴⁰ It seems that the threat of a fine alone was usually enough to make a farmer implement the measures required of him. As Kazlon Ntondogoro said:

"The parish chief continued to come to inspect and if he found that anyone had cultivated badly he could take them to the gombolola headquarters and fine them. People feared these fines and always cultivated in the proper way."¹⁴¹

On occasions some chiefs were over enthusiastic in their efforts to ensure that their areas were meeting requirements. In 1951 the Secretary General wrote to all *saza* chiefs saying that it was "not desirable that married women should be compelled to work on the "plan ensya" ...[nor should]... work on "plani ensya" be done daily. This work should be done by men, girls, and boys only, and should only be done once every week."¹⁴² That such

¹³⁵ Memorandum on "Agricultural Rules" in letter to DC from DAO, 5 Feb 1954. KDA DoA 11/A/2 ff5.

¹³⁶ Letter to Saza and Gomb Chfs from DC, 3 Aug 1951, KDA DC AGR6I ff62. In 1951 there was a tightening up of the rules, and whereas previously people had been allowed to wait until the crops had been harvested before repairing the damage (or returning the strip to rest) it was decided that this should be changed so no period of grace was given.

¹³⁷ Interview with 59/a.

¹³⁸ Interviews with 61/a; 91/a; 98/a.

¹³⁹ Interviews with 3/a; 7/a; 21/b; 22/a; 30/b; 32/b; 51/a; 63/a.

¹⁴⁰ Interviews with 52/a; 53/b; 59/a.

¹⁴¹ Interview with 56/b.

¹⁴² Letter to Saza Chfs from Ngol. Secgen, 23 Oct 1951, KDA DC AGR6I ff70.

a warning should need to be given supports the view that chiefs had the authority to ensure that people turned up for *plani*.

The successful implementation of measures in the Kigezi scheme was noted with surprise by a Kenyan official following his visit to Kigezi. He was clearly particularly impressed with the degree of cooperation and noted:

"The central administration seem able to persuade the tribal leaders of the desirability of soil conservation practices and good husbandry generally, and once persuaded, the chiefs and councillors seem to have little difficulty in enforcing good agricultural behaviour on their people. In the case of a particularly recalcitrant person, a fine of a shilling is apparently enough to make him change his ways."¹⁴³

The official, who was himself in charge of the Makueni Settlement scheme (See 3.4), put forward a number of suggestions for the high level of cooperation between the District Team and the chiefs: firstly, the degree of continuity in administration; secondly, the power and prestige of the chiefs; and thirdly, the fact that the chiefs were also members of the native courts, so that they were often both prosecutor, judge and jury. His comment on this was that while it might "seem an odd legal conception ... in the case of soil conservation measures, it appears to produce results. The senior native courts have powers of corporal punishment which they regularly exercise."¹⁴⁴ Further evidence which suggests the effectiveness of the "stick" can be seen in the explanation given for the success with which Kigezi had sustained its increasing population:

"Credit for this falls to the industry and common sense of its people allied to a strict and authoritarian system of administration which exacts obedience to the orders necessary to maintain soil conservation and maintenance of fertility."¹⁴⁵

As well as regulations and implementation with the use of the "stick" there was also a great deal of effort spent on education, propaganda, and incentives to persuade and encourage the carrying out of soil conservation measures. These fall into three categories; education, competitions and propaganda.

¹⁴³ Balfour (Officer in Charge, Makueni, PO EMALI) to The Commissioner, A.L.U.S., N'bi, 15 Sept 1950 reporting on Visit to the Kigezi Resettlement Scheme. PRO CO 892 15/8 ff1. Kenyan officials were interested in the scheme in the light of similar efforts being tried at this time in the Makueni and the Machakos Settlement Areas, in Kenya.

¹⁴⁴ Report by Balfour on Visit to the Kigezi Resettlement Scheme, 15 Sept 1950, PRO CO 892 15/8 ff1.

¹⁴⁵ Memo for the Governor on Resettlement, by Sub Committee of District Team. KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff115.

Purseglove established courses at Kachweckano¹⁴⁶ for chiefs, employees of Agricultural Department, school teachers and others to teach them the rudiments of conservation methods.¹⁴⁷ Chiefs had to attend at least one course, at which lectures and practical demonstrations were given by the DAO. "The main idea of the course was that people should understand the reasons why certain agricultural operations should be done throughout the district."¹⁴⁸ In the examination held at the end of the course there was a clear emphasis on erosion and soil fertility, which made up 75 percent of the questions. Chiefs of lower levels also attended lectures, given by Agricultural Assistants, on a monthly basis.¹⁴⁹

Purseglove wrote in 1948 that the "education of chiefs, instructors and teachers, by Kachwekano courses etc of the fundamental reasons for soil conservation and through them of the people themselves, has been an important factor in the scheme.... This approach [is] of greatest significance as no lasting result can be achieved unless the mass of the people understand the fundamental reasons behind the change [sic change]."¹⁵⁰ Byagagaire, an AAO in the 1950s, recalled that the most important thing was to "first of all teach chiefs and public opinion leaders ...[about] why [the policies] were necessary. These are elders in the village - old men - they are not chiefs or councillors, but they are highly regarded in the village, their word is highly respected... you had to convince them."¹⁵¹

Oral evidence confirms the widespread impact of these courses upon chiefs and ordinary farmers alike.¹⁵² It is noteworthy that many women went on these courses. The courses

¹⁴⁶ An experimental farm near to Kabale belonging to the Department of Agriculture. Established 1938.

¹⁴⁷ At the first course 11 Gomb Chfs; 16 Muluka chiefs and 3 instructors attended. (List of Gomb and Muluka chfs going on course at Kachweckano - 1 July 1946 to 6 July 1946, KDA DoA 16/A/1 ff21. At a second one held later in the year 17 gomb, 20 muluka chiefs and 6 members of Staff of Ag Dept (called "instructors") attended. Letter to All Saza and Gomb Chfs, DC and PAO, WP from Purseglove, 4 Nov 1946, KDA DoA 16/A/1 ff31.

¹⁴⁸ Letter to Saza Chfs from Ngol, SecGen 7 Nov 1947, KDA DoA 16/A/1 ff50.

¹⁴⁹ Letter to DAO from [?illeg] SAA i/c Ruzhumbura 25 Feb 1953, KDA DoA 16/A/1 ff133.

¹⁵⁰ Letter to PAO from Purseglove, DAO, 9 June 1948, "Land Utilization and Agrarian Reconstruction in Kigezi, and efforts in Kigezi in recent years to re-organise the land on a sound ag.al basis..." KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff51.

¹⁵¹ Interview with J.M. Byagagaire, Kampala, 21 Sept 1995. He also recalled that one of their policies was that they never toured the area by car, but rather always walked and camped. Byagagaire, from northern Kigezi, worked alongside Purseglove during vacations while doing a diploma in agriculture at Makerere. He was AAO in Kigezi 1953-57 and was appointed as DAO in May 1962.

¹⁵² Interviews with 3/a; 13/a; 15/a; 53/b; 62/a; 65/a; 70/a; 79/a; 91/a; 94/a and 96/a.

seem to have been an efficient way of 'spreading the word'. As Bishisha said: "when they came back they organised public gatherings to tell people about what they had learnt [at Kachweckano]."¹⁵³ Oral sources confirm that people were very well informed about the reasons behind the soil conservation measures, suggesting that the propaganda campaign to explain the measures was generally effective. Many informants¹⁵⁴ told of how the efforts to explain to people the reasons for the measures, combined with the threat of punishment was sufficient to ensure that the majority of people complied.

Competitions were another popular feature of the campaign. In 1946 Purseglove introduced an annual soil conservation competition, which became an important event in the local calendar.¹⁵⁵ A cash prize was awarded to the *gombolola* judged to have made the biggest advance in soil conservation work during the year, which was spent on a feast attended by the people living in that *gombolola*, as well as by District Officials.¹⁵⁶ Additionally small cash prizes were awarded to the *gombolola* chief, the *muluka* chiefs and the Agricultural Assistant (of between 10 to 20/-),¹⁵⁷ which acted as an additional incentive to them to ensure that the measures were carried out.

Whenever other agencies of propaganda could be employed they were harnessed to Purseglove's scheme. The missions were involved in implementing soil conservation measures in so far as it was their responsibility to follow the guidance of the Agricultural Department on land they leased, and land on which they had schools. The AAO in particular worked through mission employees and teachers,¹⁵⁸ school farms were targeted and in 1949 a school garden competition was introduced.¹⁵⁹

The Western Province Demonstration Team also had a role to play. During the Second World War Army Mobile Propaganda Units had toured Uganda giving displays and film

¹⁵³ Interview with 62/a.

¹⁵⁴ Interviews with 24/b, 32/b, 56/a, 77/a, 79/a, 92/a and 96/a.

¹⁵⁵ Letter to PAO from Purseglove, DAO 19 July 1946, KDA DC AGR61 ff14. Also interviews eg 92/a.

¹⁵⁶ See for example articles in "Kigezi Newsletter" (also known as "AGANDI") in Rukiga was produced by the district administration. (Copies found of drafts in English only) First issue in Oct 1950, but not known for how long it was published, nor how widely read.) Mainly propaganda about resettlement, agricultural competitions, prizes, sports day, new roads etc. eg KDA DC SCW7-1-I ff38a.

¹⁵⁷ Results of 1958 Soil Competition, KDA DoA 218A ff30.

¹⁵⁸ Report on Agriculture in Bukinda by AAO, Rukiga sent to DAO, 25 Nov 1949, KDA DoA 19/B/2, ff56.

¹⁵⁹ KDA DC AGR61 ff39. For role of missions in reforestation plans see Letter to Principals RCM and CMS from St Clair Thompson, DFO 16 July 1947 "Re Mission Plantations.", KDA DoA 008/B/1 ff1.

shows and it was decided that these should be adapted for use in peace time. There was to be one entirely self-contained and fully mobile team (a leader and 12 members, all Africans, mainly ex-service men) in each Province. The aim was that through the use of films, plays and demonstrations they would "arouse interest in and stimulate action towards improved standards both in the home and on the farm."¹⁶⁰ From 1947 this team worked in Kigezi giving performances on, amongst other things, agricultural matters. During their tour in June 1947, they gave performances at 14 different places in the southern part of Kigezi.¹⁶¹ The shows lasted between three and four hours and covered "Physical Training Display, Agricultural Demonstration, and a concert with music dancing and some items of Educational value."¹⁶² Following these performances leaflets in the vernacular were distributed, for example one explained the causes of soil erosion and suggested ways to check soil erosion.¹⁶³

The Western Province Demonstration Team played an important part in promoting the planting of temporary leys on the resting strips, which would be used for grazing and so increase the use of manure. This was introduced from around 1949 and in this year the planting of grass leys was added to the marking of the Soil Conservation Competition.¹⁶⁴ This policy, however, presented the administration with some of the greatest difficulties. From the beginning there were reports of the Demonstration Teams having problems both gathering people together to work with them planting leys and getting land on which to plant the leys. In 1951, the Secretary General wrote to the *gombolola* chief of Kitumba saying that he had been "sorry to learn from the Demonstration Team that the members do not get many gardens in which to plant grass" and he tried to encourage the chief to gather his people on *plani* day to plant grass leys on the resting strips.¹⁶⁵ But problems continued and it was reported that in Buhara "much if not most" of the work was being nullified by inadequate weeding and the demonstration plots were poorly located being

¹⁶⁰ Memo on role of Demonstration Teams by Dept of Public Relations and Social Welfare, by CMA Gayer, Dir of PR and SW, 2 Jan 1947, KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff38.

¹⁶¹ Itinerary for June Visit of WP Demonstration Team, KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff43 and letter to DMO, DAO, DFO, Kigezi from Carr, the Welfare Officer, Mbarara, 10 April 1947, KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff42.

¹⁶² Memo re organisation of WP Demo Team from Snowden, ADC, 21 May 1947, KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff43Enc.

¹⁶³ Letter to Purselove from Dennis Carr, PR and SW Dept, Mbarara, 26 April 1947, KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff40. Leaflet on "Soil Erosion", KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff40Enc. It is not clear if this leaflet was ever distributed.

¹⁶⁴ Memorandum re 1949 Soil Conservation Competition, KDA DC AGR6I ff27.

¹⁶⁵ Letter to Gomb Chf Kitumba (copies to Saza Chf Ndorwa, DC, DAO and Demo team) from Secgen, 6 Oct 1951, KDA DC AGR6I ff68.

too scattered over the *gombolola* for people to appreciate their existence and usefulness. Very often the plots belonged to people with "very little interest in grazing them and therefore are not bothering to weed and maintain them properly. They seem to have very little idea of the underlying reason for the planting of these leys."¹⁶⁶ As might have been expected, the chiefs were criticised for not making enough effort to encourage people to maintain and graze the plots but it seems that the problems went deeper and that the whole plan was very badly thought out. Indeed we can speculate as to whether all the people being asked to plant these leys were, in fact, cattle owners. From the lack of references to this policy in the years that followed it seems that it was quietly, and without fuss, dropped from the agenda.

By the early 1950s it could be reported from Kigezi that "cultivation has been developed on true strip cropping lines, which is now generally practised throughout the district"¹⁶⁷ and that "Perhaps the most striking development in connexion with "Plani Ensyā" is not only the widespread use of properly planned alternate strip cropping, but also in the utilisation of grass strips."¹⁶⁸ In 1950 the DC wrote of the "universal adherence" to the rules requiring both strip-cropping and bunding and stated that they were "well understood and diligently followed by the great mass of the people."¹⁶⁹ In this respect, the experience of Kigezi stood in stark contrast to other parts of eastern Africa. What appears to have been some discontent at policies surrounding the planting of grass leys meant that this policy met with difficulties and rather than pushing on regardless, the administration abandoned the policy. Besides this no references to any widespread feelings of opposition to the policies in Kigezi have been found, rather there are numerous reports and oral evidence to suggest that most of the policies were successfully implemented.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁶ Letter to DAO from G Symons, DVO, 27 March 1952, KDA DC AGR6I ff75.

¹⁶⁷ Notes on Shifting Cultivation in Western Province, by Purseglove. Prepared for EARC. PRO CO 892 15/7.

¹⁶⁸ Letter to DAO from TY Watson, (Deputy Director of Agriculture) 2 Oct 1951. Following visit to Kigezi. KDA DC AGR6I ff67.

¹⁶⁹ Notes on the System of Land Tenure in Kigezi written by DC, for EARC, 1950. PRO CO 892 15/9 pg47.

¹⁷⁰ In the early 1950s there was some criticism in the vernacular press about soil erosion measures in Buganda when it was reported that there had been "persistent criticism of the anti-erosion campaign in progress in Buganda" although, according to the officer in charge of the campaign it was "accepted quite happily except in the neighbourhood of Kampala." Monthly Political Surveys: Uganda (EAF 96/15/01/A) SECRET file, PRO CO 822/381 - 1951-53. Even without a vernacular press in Kigezi one might expect to find references to discontent in the archives, in for examples files on "Petitions and Complaints" which were seen.

3.3.3 - Reassessment.

From the early 1950s there was a shift in conservation policies as colonial concerns about agricultural productivity became increasingly linked with issues around land tenure, and this coincided with Purseglove leaving the district. Before examining issues around land tenure in the following chapter this section will show how, with a change in DAO, the policies of the 1940s were reassessed.

When Purseglove was replaced as DAO, King, the new officer observed that the value of resettlement scheme was often overstated as it had never managed to achieve the resettlement of the natural increase of population.¹⁷¹ By 1953 22,002 people had been resettled, while there had been an estimated population increase of 64,280 so that it was "obvious that the problem had only been scratched."¹⁷² Having failed to even keep up with natural increase, the scheme had also failed to reorganise the agricultural system in the way suggested by Purseglove. Like officials before him, King spoke of "the growing land pressure... becoming increasingly evident... [and] evidence [of] very marked decrease in grazing areas, both as regards the actual area and also the quality of the grazing." With a clear hardening of attitude he proposed further resettlement and noted that

"it is becoming increasingly obvious that this can only be achieved by forcibly evicting people from the heavily populated areas, whatever mask may be used to hide that force. In this connection it is considered that the resettlement scheme has never been voluntary except in one military sense."

He estimated that at least 50,000 people needed to be removed from Kigezi recommending that married seasonal emigrants (to Buganda and elsewhere) should be made to take their families with them. As a marked decline in the birth rate was most unlikely, he felt that resettlement was the only answer but noted that it would "not succeed unless very strong pressure is brought to bear and severe penalties inflicted on those who subsequently return."¹⁷³

¹⁷¹ Letter to PAO from King, DAO, 7 May 1953, KDA DoA 012-3 ff8. Further assessment and reports re Resettlement Scheme: Report to Dir of Ag from DAO, 1 July 1953, on Kigezi Resett Scheme and Overpopulated Areas, KDA DoA 012-3 ff11; Letter to Dir of Ag from DAO, 2 Oct 1953, re increased drive for resettlement in 1953, KDA DoA 012-3 ff17. Also re grazing in Bugangari resettlement area 1953 see KDA DoA 012-3 ff14.

¹⁷² Memo on Governor on Resettlement by Sub-Committee of Kigezi District Team (1953) KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff115.

¹⁷³ Letter to PAO from King, DAO, 7 May 1953, KDA DoA 012-3 ff8. He also suggested draining swamps - a subject that will be examined in detail in Chapter 5.

Other officials agreed that while the resettlement scheme had led to a "lessening of pressure" the figures were totally inadequate, as natural increase exceeded the numbers moved and Kigezi was more densely populated in 1954 than in 1946. To get a "real breathing space", about 100,000 people (ie 7 years increase) would have to be moved, which would "require a colossal organisation and an expenditure of about £250,000."¹⁷⁴ DC Fraser summed up the feeling amongst officials that "resettlement by itself is a somewhat sterile solution to the district's problems" as it would have to continue indefinitely on a very large scale. Instead, he suggested more effort should be put into finding ways for Kigezi to support a greatly increased population.¹⁷⁵

While the resettlement scheme continued but without the commitment that was seen during Purselove's time, the emphasis on soil conservation remained;¹⁷⁶ "soil conservation is the end all and be all of effort in Kigezi,"¹⁷⁷ wrote the DC in March 1954. To meet the effort additional staff were appointed and from 1954-55 there was supposed to be a European official at the *saza* level.¹⁷⁸

At around this time increased concerns over loss of grazing were expressed. The DVO Symons, calculated that "within 8 years at the present rate, there will be no uncultivated land remaining."¹⁷⁹ Symons was strongly critical of the strip cropping policy, observing that the grass on resting strips was often of inferior quality with much weed and bush growth, and was poor compared to natural grazing. Moreover it was very difficult to graze cattle, especially larger herds, on resting strips. He observed the practice which he said "often happens", particularly in the grazing areas of northeastern Kigezi, where a hill was opened up for cultivation and after three years, rather than cultivating the intermediate strips, further land was opened up higher up the hill. He wrote that "the obvious reason

¹⁷⁴ Letter to Dir of Ag from Todd, DAO, 8 March 1954 "Kigezi Ag.al Policy". KDA DoA 11/A/2 ff9.

¹⁷⁵ Letter to PCWP from Fraser, DC, 3 Feb 1954 re land utilisation, rehabilitation and resettlement in Kigezi. KDA DoA 11/A/2, ff3.

¹⁷⁶ Continued concerns to maintain soil conservation measures seen in 1954 for eg when letter sent to all Saza Chiefs reminding them of these measures - eg to plant sweet potatoes in continuous ridges along the contour, to use bunds on recently opened strips, that strips should not be too wide, that eroded paths should be closed etc. Letter to "All in charge, Sazas" from DAO, 2 Sept 1954 re tour of Kigezi during August. KDA DoA 11/A/2 ff27.

¹⁷⁷ Letter to DC from Deputy Dir of Ag, 26 March 1954, KDA DoA 11/A/2 ff10.

¹⁷⁸ Record of Meeting of Agricultural Productivity Committee with District Team and Standing Committee of Kigezi District Council, 2 Oct 1954, KDA DoA 11/A/2 ff1.

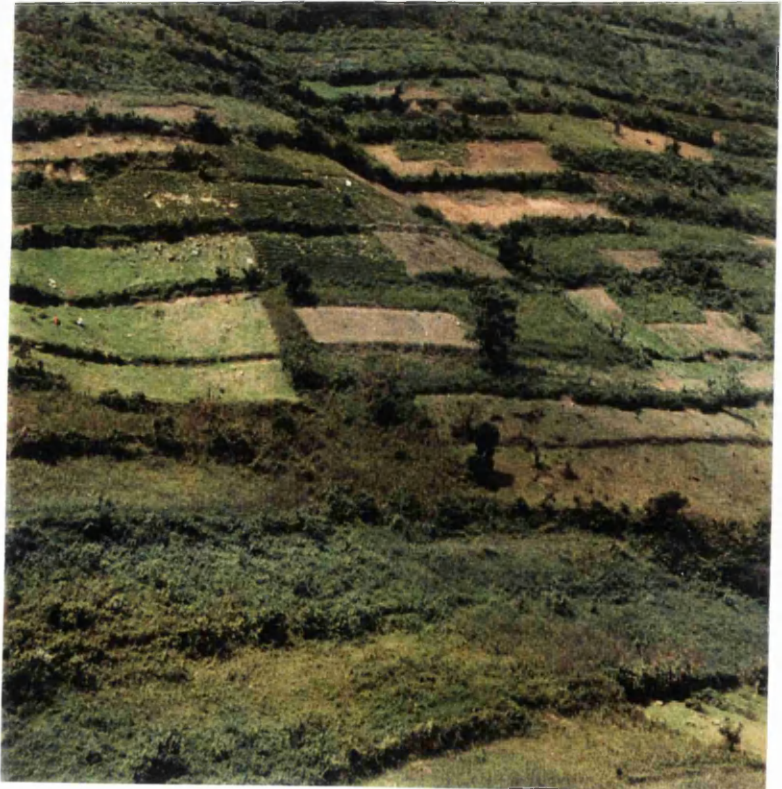
¹⁷⁹ Letter to DC from GB Symons, DVO, 12 March 1953, KDA DoA 13/A/1 ff318.

for this is that the Chiefs like to produce an orderly pattern of alternate strips and the more strips then the more points they consider they will score for the Agricultural Competition. This is an obvious waste of grazing lands."¹⁸⁰ The Agriculture Department itself admitted in the early 1950s that "most authorities" had agreed that alternate strip cropping was a "wasteful method of land utilisation" and it was virtually impossible to graze the resting strips. Instead a "block layout" was suggested with parallel strips along the contour separated by grass washstops or bunds of about three yards.¹⁸¹ This marked a return to something much closer to the pre-colonial indigenous system, and a system of horizontal plots separated by strips or bunds exists today, although the bunds or washstops are significantly narrower than three yards, as can be seen in the photographs overleaf.

¹⁸⁰ Letter to DC from GB Symons, DVO, 12 March 1953, KDA DoA 13/A/1 ff318. Also mentioned in letter to Saza Chf Ruzh from King, DAO, 8 May 1953, KDA DC AGR6I ff201. Referring to Kebisoni and Buyanzha gombololas, Ruzhumbura.

¹⁸¹ Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, 1953, 42-3. Also Annual Reports for 1954 and 1955.

Photographs of present day Kabale District.



Photographs taken by the author.

The evidence thus suggests that the system of alternate strip cropping introduced during Purseglove's time in office had been applied too broadly and over too wide an area. In applying a single formula, grazing lands had in fact been excessively reduced in some areas. The shift in policy towards the promotion of block cultivation¹⁸² had been suggested by the Deputy Director of Agriculture as early as 1951 following a visit to Kigezi¹⁸³ but it was not until 1954 that the Department of Agriculture began experiments in Ruzhumbura to test the effectiveness of block cultivation.¹⁸⁴ In 1956 it was agreed that in certain areas "better use can be made of the land if the system of alternate resting and cultivating strips is abolished and block cultivation introduced."¹⁸⁵

During the mid 1950s there was an increased emphasis on a "more rounded" approach to soil conservation, and the allocation of marks in the Soil Conservation Competition was altered to reflect this.¹⁸⁶ Todd, the DAO who succeeded King, observed that

"In past years many people have opened up steep and impressive hillsides specially for the competition, mulching and digging of compost pits has been done specially for the competition and not as a regular feature of agriculture. Everyone in Kigezi now knows the importance of soil conservation and the time has come when the competition must be judged to some extent on the intelligence with which conservation measures are applied."¹⁸⁷

3.4 - East African Comparisons.

To appreciate the exceptionality of Kigezi's experience we need to consider the broader picture of local colonial rural development programmes throughout eastern Africa.¹⁸⁸ The striking difference between Kigezi and other places where soil conservation measures were implemented on so large a scale is the lack of opposition to the proposals in Kigezi. This section will explain Kigezi's apparently anomalous position. There are a number of reasons which might contribute to the success or failure of a soil conservation scheme,

¹⁸² Applied to northern parts of Kigezi, Ruzhumbura.

¹⁸³ Letter to DAO from TY Watson, 2 Oct 1951. KDA DC AGR6I ff67.

¹⁸⁴ See Report by Mr Byagagaire re block cultivation in Kala-Muko sent to DAO, 22 June 1954, and forwarded to DC, 29 June 1954. KDA DC AGR6I ff230. Extract from Minutes of Kigezi District Team Meeting, 1 June 1954, KDA DC AGR6I ff232. Minutes of Ruzh County Team Meeting, 14 May 1954, KDA DoA 16/A/1 ff160. Minutes of Kigezi District Team Meeting of 1 April 1955, KDA DoA Teammins.

¹⁸⁵ Letter to Secgen, Saza Chfs and Field Officers from EW King, DAO 23 May 1956, KDA AGR6II ff30.

¹⁸⁶ Letter to all Gomb Chiefs, Bufumbira from Mtwale, Buf 3 July 1954, Detail allocation of marks for 1954 Soil Conservation Competition. KDA DoA 16/A/1 ff163.

¹⁸⁷ Letter to Saza Chfs and all Agric in charge, Sazas from Todd, DAO, 2 June 1954, KDA DC AGR6I ff226.

¹⁸⁸ M. Stocking, 'Soil conservation policy in colonial Africa', *Agricultural History* 50 (2) 1985. This examined policy in nine African countries.

which fall broadly into three categories: a) The actual measures being introduced: their closeness or distance from the indigenous system of agriculture; the amount of labour required to carry them out; their appropriateness for the local area; and the affect that carrying them out will have on productivity (the incentives for carrying them out); b) The methods by which the measures were implemented: the use of propaganda and education; the length of time taken to implement the measures and the efforts made to enlist the support of the community; and c) the effects that such measures might have on existing social and political structures; the presence or absence of major local political divisions or tensions, or nationalist politics; and finally the effect of and on the existing system of land tenure. With these broad categories in mind, let us briefly outline five other groups of schemes which can be contrasted with Kigezi.

Uluguru Land Usage Scheme¹⁸⁹

The Uluguru Land Usage Scheme (ULUS), introduced during the early 1950s, was designed to "improve" the land in the Uluguru Mountains through the construction of bench terraces and introduction of other conservation measures. The discontent over terracing became a "vehicle of protest against Native Authority,"¹⁹⁰ led to rioting in 1955, and the scheme had to be abandoned. Various reasons have been put forward for the failure of the scheme and the first major study by Young and Fosbrooke looks at reactions to the scheme in terms of local political dynamics and conflicts into which the discontent over terracing fed. While it is impossible to say if the discontent would have become apparent had it not been for the existence of these local political tensions and divisions it is clear that the conservation schemes played a significant part. Over most of the area the difference between bench terracing and the methods already in place was much greater than was the case in Kigezi. Maack has observed that the residents of Mgeta on the western side of the mountains, had practised terracing since the early 1900s, and that its benefits were clear in this environment.¹⁹¹ In this area the people were in general

¹⁸⁹ For broad outlines of policies experienced in Tanganyika and reactions to them see A. Coulson, 'Agricultural Policies in Mainland Tanzania', in J. Heyer (ed), *Rural Development in Tropical Africa* (London, 1981), 52-89. Also L. Cliffe "Nationalism and the reaction to enforced agricultural change'. Also see Giblin, *The Politics of Environmental Control*. These studies examine soil conservation measures and reactions to them, in the context of essentially political processes, and examine their influence on the growth of nationalist politics.

¹⁹⁰ See Young and Fosbrooke, *Smoke in the Hills*.

¹⁹¹ P.A. Maack, 'We Don't Want Terraces!' Protest and Identity under the Uluguru Land usage Scheme' in G. Maddox (ed), *Custodians of the Land: Ecology and Culture in the History of Tanzania* (London, 1996), 159.

"sympathetic with the broader ULUS"¹⁹² and the measures were more successfully implemented, supporting the view that the closeness to the existing system of agriculture was important.

The labour inputs required for the construction of bench terraces was large and colonial officials initially introduced targets of 'yards of terraces' to be built. When this failed, all taxpayers had to work on the terraces for three days a week.¹⁹³ This was an extraordinarily high demand to make and it is entirely unsurprising that the policy was hugely unpopular. In addition to being very costly to introduce in labour terms, it was found that bench terraces were actually totally inappropriate for the area; indeed with the exception of the western side, they were actually detrimental to the soil. Tests showed bench terraces to be unsuitable with the fragility and thinness of the soil,¹⁹⁴ and officers in the field themselves questioned their suitability. It is of interest that these officers were not in a position to adapt or change the policy when problems arose. This contrasts with Kigezi, where the measures were both planned and implemented by officers working in Kigezi itself, and when a case arose of a policy being misconceived (grass leys) officials had the sense to drop it. In Uluguru bench terraces had a largely negative effect on the productivity of the area with yields on treated plots actually declining. The exception was the western area of Mgeta, where farmers could produce high valued foodstuffs on these terraces and thus "for them terracing was a worthwhile effort."¹⁹⁵ Iliffe has suggested that the failure to offer incentives in the form of cash crops to the farmers, meant it was never worth the farmers while investing time and labour into the measures proposed and this contributed to the failure of the scheme.¹⁹⁶ In Maack's words "the Waluguru resisted efforts to combat soil erosion because they derived few benefits from their labour."¹⁹⁷ Overall, therefore, the measures being introduced can be seen to have been ill thought out and unsuited to the area, and without the incentives of cash crops to make the measures worth carrying out.

¹⁹² See Young and Fosbrooke, *Smoke in the Hills*, 147.

¹⁹³ Maack, 'We Don't Want Terraces!', 158.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 156.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 160.

¹⁹⁶ Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*, 474.

¹⁹⁷ Maack, 'We Don't Want Terraces!', 153.

The methods used to implement these measures have nowhere been examined in great detail and how much 'persuasion' was used is unclear. Young and Fosbrooke have observed that "The attempt to enlist the support of the clan leaders had limited success"¹⁹⁸ and the timetable used to introduce this scheme suggests that the speed with which the programme went ahead may have been its greatest downfall. The scheme was first proposed in proposed in 1947 by A.H. Savile, the senior Agricultural Officer, and the ambitious terracing programme was introduced in 1950. This was very different from the gradual implementation of measures seen in Kigezi and was perhaps a case of 'too much, too soon'. The presence of local political tensions and rising nationalist politics must have assisted in the articulation of discontent, and Iliffe has observed that "drudgery and political conflict also killed the Uluguru scheme."¹⁹⁹ Maack has noted that the Wuluguru felt betrayed by the Native Administration at a time when new forms of political expression were becoming available. Additionally the measures became associated with the loss of land (as forced migration had been discussed earlier in connection with soil conservation measures) which added to suspicions about the scheme.²⁰⁰

Crucially, the British failed to fully understand the Wuluguru land system, which included individual rights of ownership, individual use rights and complex patron-client relationships. Unsurprisingly farmers were unwilling to invest large quantities of time and labour on land that was not theirs. This is in contrast to Kigezi where, as we shall see in Chapter 4, individual security of tenure was strong, and the measures did not threaten the system of land tenure in place. Young and Fosbrooke have observed that the ULUS "struck at two sensitive topics: the land ... and the social system which governed the use of the land"²⁰¹ which crucially in the case of Kigezi seems to have been avoided. In the one instance when this could have happened when the grass leys policy was introduced and all Bakiga, including non-cattle owners or owners of small herds had to plant leys for use as grazing, the policy was not accepted by Bakiga and was soon dropped by the administration.

¹⁹⁸ See Young and Fosbrooke, *Smoke in the Hills*, 147.

¹⁹⁹ Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*, 474.

²⁰⁰ For further details of the disturbances in Uluguru see PRO CO 822/807.

²⁰¹ Young and Fosbrooke, *Smoke in the Hills*, 146.

Sukumaland Scheme

The Sukumaland Scheme, initiated as a result of growing concerns about environmental degradation, particularly related to grazing, aimed to establish a "sound" balance of population and livestock with resources. The scheme involved a number of different elements including the resettlement of people from overpopulated areas, clearing of areas of tsetse, cattle marketing regulations, soil conservation practices (tie ridging) and agricultural practices aimed at requiring people to adopt mixed farming and to intensify their agriculture.²⁰² The policies aimed at the intensification of agriculture failed and the "bitter hostility"²⁰³ aroused by the measures led eventually to their abandonment in 1958. The resettlement part of the scheme was more successful and large areas were cleared of tsetse; but, as Iliffe has observed, "instead of encouraging balanced peasant husbandry, the Sukumaland scheme stimulated a capitalist land rush."²⁰⁴ Besides this expansion of the area available for grazing and cultivation (through bush clearance) most controls collapsed and there were few lasting achievements.²⁰⁵ The resettlement scheme in Kigezi also stimulated a land rush to some extent and a number of individuals claimed large areas of land for its own sake. However, there is no evidence that this applied to the majority of settlers, who appear to have genuinely migrated. Part of the reason that resettlement was a success in Kigezi was probably because migration was an inherent part of Bakiga life, while the absence of regulations and controls was also crucial.

Usually looked at in relation to the growth of nationalism,²⁰⁶ there is a need to put aside the implications of the political movement for the Sukumaland scheme and to assess other influences. In this McLoughlin has observed that there were "undoubtedly shortcomings of an economic, sociological and technical character which would in any event have greatly impaired its effectiveness."²⁰⁷ These shortcomings include problems with the measures themselves, the methods by which they were implemented and the effect of the measures on existing political and social structures and divisions within the society. It has

²⁰² Malcolm, *Sukumaland, An African people and the Country*.

²⁰³ Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*, 474.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 474.

²⁰⁵ P.F.M. McLoughlin, 'Sukumaland' in J.C. de Wilde, *Experiences with Agricultural Development in Tropical Africa*, Vol 2, (Baltimore, 1967).

²⁰⁶ Maguire, *Towards "Uhuru" in Tanganyika*. A study of micro-politics, the political consequences of the scheme and the development of nationalism in Sukumaland.

²⁰⁷ These shortcomings are examined in detail in P.F.M. McLoughlin, 'Sukumaland.'

been found that although tie-ridging had positive soil conservation results and improved yields, any improvements were on average in the long term and so only became evident after a long period of years.²⁰⁸ Additionally to be effective, tie ridging had to be done in January which was a busy time in the agricultural calendar and so the measure was inappropriate for the existing agricultural system, as it reduced the total area that could be cultivated by a given labour force. The attempts to introduce the use of manure into the system through mixed farming also failed as "the additional output due to the use of manure was not worth the considerable extra labour required to produce and apply the manure."²⁰⁹ Thus, the incentives to carry out the measures were insufficient or entirely lacking.

Attempts to control cattle numbers also met largely with failure. According to McLoughlin the government "probably underestimated the degree of rationality underlying the livestock holding policies of the Sukuma"²¹⁰ while at the same time relying on inadequate research as to the "carrying capacity" in what were widely variable conditions across Sukumaland. In the words of Maguire "it appears that Sukuma resistance to the content of specific measures, as well as to the methods of enforcement, may have been inspired as much by rationality as by ignorance, as much as economic considerations of self interest as by politics."²¹¹

In terms of the methods of implementation used, it has been observed that "Since the administration was evidently convinced that there was neither the time nor the trained staff necessary to persuade the majority of farmers and herders of the desirability of the measures contained in the Development Scheme, primary reliance was placed on the enforcement of a series of regulations by the Native Authorities."²¹² The tendency to enforce the policies from above through the Native Authority meant that as hostility to the scheme grew it developed against the Native Authority. This discontent was capitalised upon by TANU and the opposition to the regulations and struggle for independence "were mutually reinforcing and became very closely identified with each

²⁰⁸ McLoughlin, 'Sukumaland', 429. Also see Coulson "Agricultural Policies in Mainland Tanzania", 57.

²⁰⁹ McLoughlin, 'Sukumaland', 426.

²¹⁰ Ibid., 422.

²¹¹ Maguire, *Towards "Uhuru" in Tanzania*, 31.

²¹² McLoughlin, 'Sukumaland', 419.

other during the 'fifties."²¹³ As Iliffe has observed, TANU provided the means by which the tensions within the society could be expressed.²¹⁴

Usambara Scheme

The Usambara Scheme was implemented from 1950 as a result of the familiar colonial concerns about over population, loss of grazing and poor agricultural productivity. These concerns led to formulation of a series of measures including soil erosion control through the construction of ridges on hillsides, removing land on slopes of over 25⁰ from annual cultivation, and resettlement. The measures were eventually abandoned in 1957 due to the opposition by the local population.²¹⁵

Feierman's study, which is essentially a history of peasant political discourse, examines the resistance to the scheme in the context of the domestic economy and systems of land tenure and the role that "peasant intellectuals" played in this opposition. Other non-political reasons for the failure of the scheme include the inappropriateness of the measures, the speed with which they were introduced, the reliance of coercion over persuasion and the land use system that was in place.

The soil conservation measures being introduced were ridges on hillsides - both along the contour and down the hill, which created a sort of grid of raised squares.²¹⁶ Working these ridges necessitated digging in a way that was dramatically different from the indigenous system of working along the hillside.²¹⁷ The labour demands involved in building the ridges were extremely high and those households who coped best were those with cash incomes (to hire workers) and those with resident men. Each taxpayer had to put a certain amount of land under tie ridge cultivation, with the area being increased each successive year. How much effort was put propaganda, education and the use of persuasion is unclear, but the scheme began in 1950 with a pilot project²¹⁸ and expanded slowly to 1952, then spread very quickly over the rest of Usambara. Over most of the

²¹³ Ibid., 420.

²¹⁴ Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*, 559.

²¹⁵ Feierman, *Peasant Intellectuals*. Usambara Conservation scheme see PRO CO 822/1366.

²¹⁶ Ibid., 181.

²¹⁷ Ibid., 188.

²¹⁸ Pilot project met with many problems - see Feierman, *Peasant Intellectuals*, 169-76.

area, and with little preparation, people were asked to introduce measures far removed from their system with an inadequate understanding of the reasons behind the measures. The number of court cases increased in the early 1950s as punishments were given for failing to follow the measures suggesting that implementation through enforcement was crucial.²¹⁹

One of the most significant reasons for the problems with the scheme may have been the failure to recognise that some land in Sukumaland was considered to be of a type that could be lent, rent free, to those in need for subsistence. The Shambaa's complex agricultural system enabled them to exploit the highly variable local agro-ecological environment, by borrowing pieces of land in slightly different environments. This system needed flexibility, and the introduction of tie ridges upset this flexibility as it made lending land problematic. People were not prepared to build ridges on land that they were only borrowing, while someone who had invested such time and effort into their land would be less inclined to lend it. Additionally if a borrower improved some land and then continued to use it, he would, under local rules, have established some ownership claims to that land. As a result of this an owner would be unlikely to lend a piece of land more than once to any one person, while a land-poor person would have to build new ridges on newly borrowed land each year. Fallowing of land was also made problematic as ridges would need rebuilding after a period of fallow.²²⁰ The loaning of land also occurred in Kigezi but was perhaps less of a problem as by the time soil conservation measures were introduced loans occurred largely on a short term basis, and loaning land did not undermine individual ownership. Also the gradualness with which they were introduced may have made this less of a problem, although this is impossible to prove.

The feelings of discontent grew in Usambara and the scheme became "enmeshed with opposition to the native authority".²²¹ Feierman has observed that if people saw their chief as a rainmaker serving their interests they did not hold him responsible for enforcing the measures; whereas if the chief was not a rainmaker he was "saddled" with the

²¹⁹ Ibid., 176.

²²⁰ Feierman, *Peasant Intellectuals*, 182-3.

²²¹ Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*, 474.

responsibility of the scheme.²²² When the scheme was abandoned in 1958 the measures such as terracing and use of manure that it had introduced only survived on those plots producing vegetables for the Tanga market. Thus it can be seen that where the production of high value crops provided the incentives farmers found it was worth their while investing their labour in the measures. As Iliffe has written, here, like Uluguru, was an area where

"the government could not offer incentives to make worthwhile the drudgery involved in schemes which attacked only the symptoms and not the causes of deprivation. Successful schemes took place only in regions which were able to develop within the framework of the colonial economy."²²³

Thus, it can be seen that the Usambara scheme was another ill conceived scheme where the measures being introduced required impossibly large labour inputs and were far removed from the traditional system of agriculture. The speed with which the policies were to be introduced meant that little time or effort was spent explaining the reasons behind the measures and implementation was largely through enforcement by the Native Authority. The lack of a high value cash crop over most of the area meant that there was little incentive to carry out the measures and with rising nationalism it was unsurprising that the growing political movement should harness this discontent.

Pare Development Plan

The Pare Development Plan of 1953²²⁴ is of particular interest to this study as the stimulus for the plan came from a document that was sent to Pare District entitled "The Significance of Kigezi District as a Model for Development", by ACA Wright.²²⁵ Using the Kigezi model as a base the DC of Pare, Smithyman, put together a five-year Development Plan. This was first circulated in 1955 and involved making the under-utilised areas of the lowlands economically viable while intensifying conservation

²²² For a detailed examination of how political and social cleavages enabled the articulation of discontent see Feierman, *Peasant Intellectuals*.

²²³ Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*, 474.

²²⁴ Kimambo, *Penetration and Protest*, 14-5 and 136-54.

²²⁵ Wright had been a junior agricultural officer in Kigezi in the late 1930s. References to this paper were found in the Kabale Archives, but the paper itself was not traced. Wright was also seconded to Sukumaland in 1951 as a research officer to investigate land tenure, stock holding and to advise on the implementation of economic and social problems. Maguire has written of Wright that he was a "man with foresight and of independent mind but insufficiently appreciated in his time ... he would have spent more money on material infrastructure while taking more time to convince people by persuasion and example of the value to them of economic and social change." He had apparently "decried the restrictive legislation and compulsory techniques associated with massive agricultural schemes" in Tanganyika. Maguire, *Towards "Uhuru" in Tanzania*, 39.

measures in the highlands, and in the longer term expanding cash crop production. The success of the Kigezi resettlement scheme was particularly appealing to the planners in Pare, but, as Kimambo has argued, unlike in Kigezi there was no suitable land with adequate water supply for settlers in Pare.

Soil Conservation Rules were approved by the Pare Council in March 1955, although measures preceded this by a few years. A literacy campaign which began in the late 1940s had, from 1951, included elements of soil conservation (such as the planting of trees and elephant grass hedges for stall feeding cattle), but with the exception of the introduction of elephant grass which solved the problem of fodder shortage, "the soil conservation lessons were a complete failure",²²⁶ and in 1953 the mass campaign came to an end.²²⁷ From 1953 the soil conservation programme was handed over to the Native Authorities, the "atmosphere changed" and the strategy adopted was that of "applying force ... to implement unpopular regulations."²²⁸ With the exception of a brief period in the early 1950s which coincided with a mass literacy campaign, the method of implementation of soil conservation measures was by force through unpopular regulations, and became "an instrument of coercion".²²⁹ Kimambo records that large numbers of people were prosecuted in the local courts for failure to follow regulations and an atmosphere of revolt developed in Upare.²³⁰

In 1954 three demonstration areas were chosen in North Pare, and a year later the measures were extended to the rest of Upare. They included the construction of tie ridges on lesser slopes and the planting of strips of permanent crops on the contour of steeper slopes. Burning and the grazing of stubbles was prohibited. The appropriateness of these measures, and their effect on productivity have not been assessed. However opposition to the measures grew and there were widespread suspicions about the government's motives. The presence of TANU members in the area provided a channel for this discontent and

²²⁶ Kimambo, *Penetration and Protest*, 132. Although later Kimambo recalls that "the soil and water conservation programme, ... during the community development period received good cooperation from the people" - in fact probably more accurate to say that some aspects received good cooperation, and these were the aspects that made economic sense.

²²⁷ Kimambo, *Penetration and Protest*, 132.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, 125.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, 148.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 148-9.

"by 1957 the unpopular agricultural regulations were becoming unenforceable in many parts of Tanganyika because of successful political mobilisation under TANU."²³¹

Central Province, Kenya.

In Central Province a scheme of terracing was implemented through communal labour.²³² The system of implementation adopted was of coercion, not persuasion, and people were required to work two mornings a week, and those who failed to do so were fined.²³³ As Throup has observed

"the alternative strategy of attempting to educate the population to follow approved techniques of 'sound' land use was dismissed as too slow, since it was considered that immediate action was necessary. Consequently the palliative anti-erosion measures were introduced without the understanding and support of the peasantry. This was a fatal error."²³⁴

In Murang'a narrow-based terraces, which initially took less labour to build, but in the long-term had greater labour demands because of high maintenance needs, were considered by the administration to be most appropriate, but in fact were particularly unpopular. In addition there was little incentive to carry out the terracing as the production of high value cash crops was not an option for these farmers. This compares, for example, to Meru and Embu where broad based terraces and the opportunity to grow coffee meant that the measures were worthwhile and therefore more acceptable.

The high level of male migration meant that most of the work fell on women and this fact was seized upon by political activists. In July 1947, Kenyatta spoke publicly against women being made to build the terraces, the next day they did not turn out to work, and by September the agricultural campaign had collapsed.²³⁵ Thus the activists of the Kenya African Union, under Kenyatta, played a crucial role in mobilising the opposition to communal terracing which fed into wider discontent. By the 1950s the Agricultural Department's belief that progressive cultivators should be rewarded with the right to grow high value cash crops began to be accepted by the administration and there was a move towards encouragement of individual enterprise, and in 1954, with the Swynnerton Plan,

²³¹ Ibid., 149.

²³² Throup, *The Economic and Social origins of Mau Mau*; D.W. Throup, 'The Origins of the Mau Mau'.

²³³ Sorrenson, *Land Reform*.

²³⁴ Throup, *The Economic and Social origins of Mau Mau*, 70.

²³⁵ Ibid., 152-3.

a commitment to the positive role to be played by the small scale African producer. The Swynnerton Plan was in part a political device implemented as a counter-insurgency measure to the Mau Mau, and will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter. However "compulsory terracing had destroyed any chance there might have been of gaining new collaborators as [the Kikuyu] had been irredeemably alienated from the colonial regime."²³⁶

Machakos, Kenya.

Efforts were also made to control soil erosion in the semi-arid Machakos District.²³⁷ The rehabilitation programme included closing areas for rehabilitation, compulsory soil conservation works and destocking. Some years earlier in 1938 a policy of compulsory destocking had met with total non-cooperation and 1,500 Akamba marched to Nairobi, camping there for six weeks until the order was rescinded and the policy abandoned.²³⁸ This, combined with concerns about the loss of land to Europeans, meant that Akamba were deeply suspicious of government policies.

The first attempts to introduce a mechanical soil conservation unit in 1946 met with popular resistance with people throwing themselves in front of tractors to stop them from working.²³⁹ Initially all able bodied adults had to work communally for two days a week under the direction of the chiefs and headmen but, as cultivation gave ownership rights under traditional law, people did not want soil conservation work done on their land by others even if it was for free. As in Murang'a the type of terrace being introduced in this area was the narrow-based terrace which was easier to build initially but, because of maintenance needs, required a larger long-term labour input, and was subject to collapse in storms. Bench terraces were thought to be inappropriate for African farmers due to the lack of tools and the time taken to build them - but once constructed they were more permanent and stable. From about 1949 it seems some farmers began building bench terraces for the growing of vegetables and by the mid to late 1950s, when market access had improved, so the adoption of bench terraces increased. Similarly it has been observed

²³⁶ Ibid., 209-10.

²³⁷ Tiffen, Mortimore and Gichuki, *More People, Less Erosion*.

²³⁸ For details see J.F. Munro, *Colonial rule and the Kamba: Social change in Kenya Highlands 1889-1939* (Oxford, 1979).

²³⁹ de Wilde, *Experiences with Agricultural Development*, Vol 2.

that there was a "much greater and continued interest in bench terracing in higher hill areas, when this work could be directly associated with the introduction of new and profitable crops such as coffee."²⁴⁰ Machakos in the 1940s however did not offer the attractive farming opportunities seen for example in Nyeri, where from the 1950s bench terraces became acceptable as they were associated with the introduction of coffee, a highly profitable crop. This evidence therefore supports the argument that incentives in the form of market opportunities are crucial, combined with tenurial security, a persuasive approach and choice of technologies.²⁴¹

A resettlement scheme at Makueni, in Machakos, offers direct comparisons with Kigezi. The Makueni resettlement scheme began with the clearing of bush in 1945, and the first settlers moving in 1948 on holdings of 20-30 acres.²⁴² Estimates of the number resettled vary - De Wilde suggests that 2,250 settler families with 12,000 people were ultimately resettled at a cost of £149 per settler.²⁴³ Tiffen *et al* state that by 1960 there were 2,187 registered settlers which represented 12,000 to 16,000 people.²⁴⁴ Until 1957, the settlers got free rations for one year and had 5 acres of land ploughed free of charge. However the holdings were too large to enable adequate bush control and encroachment of bush, and therefore tsetse was a problem.²⁴⁵ Tiffen *et al* observe that there were a wide range of rules for settlers to follow, especially related to bush clearing and rotation, and the "ley system proved impossible to maintain because of its heavy labour requirements."²⁴⁶ This stands in contrast to the Kigezi scheme where settlers were largely left to 'get on with it', unfettered by regulations.

Having examined these other schemes we can suggest a number of possible reasons for

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 97.

²⁴¹ Tiffen, Mortimore and Gichuki, *More People, Less Erosion*, 256.

²⁴² de Wilde, *Experiences with Agricultural Development* Vol 2, 109. Throup however suggests that the holdings were much larger "each settler needed 120 acres compared to the five acre plots they had cultivated in their former locations." It is not clear if this is the acreage that each settler needed, or each was actually allocated. Throup, *Economic and Social Origins of Mau Mau*, 70.

²⁴³ de Wilde, *Experiences with Agricultural Development* Vol 2, 109. Although unclear if this cost is per settler family or settler individual.

²⁴⁴ Tiffen, Mortimore and Gichuki, *More People, Less Erosion*, 53.

²⁴⁵ J.C. de Wilde, *Experiences with Agricultural Development in Tropical Africa*, Vol 2, (Baltimore, 1967). Throup states that 664 families were moved by end of 1952 at cost of £18,340. Throup, *Economic and social origins*, 70.

²⁴⁶ Tiffen, Mortimore and Gichuki, *More People, Less Erosion*, 164.

the apparent lack of opposition to the measures in Kigezi. These include: the degree to which the measures being introduced differed from indigenous methods of erosion control; the amount of additional labour input that was necessary to implement the measures; the extent to which local conditions were taken into account in the formulation of these schemes; the extent to which the colonial state invested in propaganda, education and persuasion in their efforts to implement the measures; the increase in productivity resulting from the measures and thus the incentive to invest the time and labour in the measures; the level of political activity in the area (and presence or otherwise of local political divisions) at the time of implementation. In addition, and in particular in Kenya, the suspicions of the motives of the government, and the fear of losing land to the Europeans added an element that was largely absent in the case of Kigezi.

Conclusion

From the time that Purseglove wrote his report in 1945 on soil conservation work in Kigezi,²⁴⁷ the Administration in Entebbe and the CO in London, were most impressed by the progress made in the district. By 1949 it was reported that in Kigezi "soil conservation work has been spectacular and alternate strip cultivation on the contour has now become an integral part of life in the district."²⁴⁸ The success was such that Kigezi became a 'show piece' for the administration and a visit to the schemes became part of many official visitors' itineraries. Eventually Purseglove had to ask the CO to stop sending him visitors, saying they were getting "rather embarrassed" by the numbers and it was proving very time consuming taking people around the district.²⁴⁹ The 'carrot and stick' method of implementation appeared to be successful. Thus, by the early 1950s, it could be reported that "cultivation has been developed on true strip cropping lines, which is now generally practised throughout the district."²⁵⁰ and the "widespread use of

²⁴⁷ There was also attention on soil conservation efforts in other parts of Uganda. For example in Buganda a report was written on "The progress of Sayi" which was a mutala in Buganda where various soil conservation techniques were being tried. Letter to Nye from Dir of Ag, Uganda, 13 Nov 1950. Enclosing information about Sayi Mutala in Kyagwe, Buganda. PRO CO 536/222 40095 ff3.

²⁴⁸ Letter to Chf Sec from JM Watson, for Dir of Ag, 29 Sept 1949, KDA DC AGR6I ff37. Also see Minute from Mr Nye, 20 July 1950 following letter to S of S from Acting Governor, 5 July 1950 Enclosing "Soil Conservation Report 1949." PRO CO 536/222 40095 ff1. Again the word "spectacular" was used.

²⁴⁹ Settlement Scheme in Kigezi District. Letter to Rogers (CO) from Steil (Chief Sec's Office, E'be), 5 May 1951, PRO CO 536 40391 ff6.

²⁵⁰ PRO CO 892/15/7.

properly planned alternate strip cropping ... [and] the utilisation of grass strips"²⁵¹ was recorded. The success story of Kigezi has been repeated many times - for example Wrigley has written: "The show-piece of soil conservation was undoubtedly the terracing of the steep hill-sides of Kigezi, which was one of the most spectacular pieces of agricultural engineering in Africa."²⁵²

The planting of grass leys on resting strips was perhaps the one measure of all those introduced that was totally inappropriate (being for the benefit of those who owned large numbers of stock), implying a major change in land use, and it is probably for this reason that the policy was rejected by the local population. Apart from this, no references to any articulation of serious opposition to the policies in Kigezi have been found²⁵³ and the interviews suggest that there was generally understanding of the measures. That the department was flexible enough to drop this part of the scheme when discontent became apparent is noteworthy and suggests that greater attention was given to Bakiga reception of the policies than was seen elsewhere.

There is evidence to suggest that the Bakiga agricultural system included a number of measures which assisted in soil conservation, and the earliest colonial policies can be seen as modifications of these systems. That Bakiga cultivated in a manner which led to the formation of "steps" between the plots is indisputable; and when the first policy of planting elephant grass in strips between the plots was introduced these were likely to have been along these ridges - thus being a modification of the indigenous system rather than a major transformation of it. These measures began some years before Purselove arrived in the district, and this gradual introduction of measures was crucial to the success of implementation. In comparison to similar schemes elsewhere, there was in Kigezi a greater attempt to educate and provide incentives to carry out the measures. This, combined with widespread propaganda, education and courses for chiefs and others, is

²⁵¹ Letter to DAO from TY Watson, (Deputy Director of Agriculture) 2 Oct 1951. Following visit to Kigezi. KDA DC AGR6I ff67.

²⁵² Wrigley, *Crops and Wealth*, 77.

²⁵³ In the early 1950s there was some criticism in the vernacular press about soil erosion measures in Buganda when it was reported that there had been "persistent criticism of the anti-erosion campaign in progress in Buganda" although, according to the officer in charge of the campaign it was "accepted quite happily except in the neighbourhood of Kampala." Monthly Political Surveys: Uganda (EAF 96/15/01/A) SECRET file, PRO CO 822/381 - 1951-53. Even without a vernacular press in Kigezi one might expect to find references to discontent in the archives, in for examples files on "Petitions and Complaints" which were seen.

important in explaining the successful implementation. It is also relevant that soil conservation propaganda and measures were introduced in Kigezi over a long period, beginning in the mid 1930s, and although the Purseglove era saw a stepping up of the measures, the foundation which earlier policies provided was crucial. The role that Purseglove, a particularly dynamic individual, played is also significant, as was the fact that he served in Kigezi for such a long period. Finally, the structure of chiefs was a particularly efficient way of ensuring that measures were carried out, and the system of working directly through chiefs, placing responsibility on them, and the policy of giving them authority to both judge and punish, meant that the administration was broadly successful in getting these soil conservation measures carried out.

This chapter has therefore shown that Kigezi's soil conservation measures were successfully implemented. There are, however, a number of different measures of "success" and it may be that Kigezi was seen as successful because the policies were introduced without any strong resistance from local populations (for the reasons outlined above) and so it was seen as politically and socially successful in the short term. In the colonial situation the manifestations of success or failure were being judged on political or social terms (as distinct from assessments on agricultural or environmental terms). Whether the policies were a success in the long run in the technical or agricultural sense, is however a different question: in other words was it the implementation of policies that was successful, or the policies themselves that were a success. Kigezi may have been technically no more of a success than other schemes - for example the resettlement of 20,000 people in Kigezi was presented as a "success"; while the resettlement of 12,000 people in Makueni Settlement scheme was presented as an enormous failure.

It does seem possible that the scale of some elements of Kigezi's measures were more muted than was suggested at the time. In particular Purseglove's policy of resting one strip in three would have taken out of cultivation an impossibly large proportion of the land given the population pressures at that time. While this aspect may have been implemented in the short term, it is unlikely that it could have succeeded in the longer term. Indeed, this is hinted at in the reassessment of the Purseglove era, when there was a move towards block cultivation, while Department of Agriculture Annual Reports confirm that these aspects could not be implemented in the long term. Purseglove's aims also involved the reorganisation of tenure as strips cut across existing plots. What seems

more likely was that the plots (which ran along the contour anyway, and had banks or steps between them) were "tidied up" along the lines of the ridges, which effectively became bunds, and there were no major changes in ownership. This was confirmed in an interview with Byagagaire,²⁵⁴ and today bunds frequently also act as boundaries between different owners. As the 1950s progressed a more rounded approach began to be taken and with the publication of the EARC Report, the promotion of farm planning, consolidation and enclosure grew. The recognition of the importance of the individualisation of land tenure and issues around tenure became increasingly important in the making of agricultural policy and will be examined in the following chapter.

²⁵⁴ Interview with Byagagaire, 21 Sept 1995.

CHAPTER 4 - LAND REFORM

Land reform was to be the most significant element of the colonial encounter with Kigezi in the post war period. The following three chapters will focus on these most ambitious and far reaching policies, the implications of which still reverberate to this day. By the early 1950s colonial policies were being considerably influenced by the development of ideas in relation to African land tenure. This is most striking in the years following the publication of the East African Royal Commission. This chapter will look at colonial policies related to land tenure and how they were implemented in Kigezi.

The first section of this chapter will look at the early part of the colonial period and will assess ideas about land and "ownership" from the perspective of both outsiders and Bakiga, and it will show how the difference between perception and reality manifested itself. The next section will look at the findings of the EARC and examine how the report influenced colonial policy. It will illustrate the changes that were made to colonial policy in the 1950s and in particular will look at the granting of titles, the policy of land consolidation and enclosure and the introduction of farm planning. The chapter will conclude by considering land reform in Kigezi in comparison with other parts of east Africa.

4.1 - Colonial land tenure to the early 1950s.

4.1.1 - Land Tenure in Uganda

Under the 1902 Uganda Order in Council, the 1903 Crown Land Ordinance (and subsequent amendments to it), all land in the country not held in private title was declared to be Crown Land. Under Agreements signed with leaders of the four kingdoms of Buganda, Ankole, Toro and Bunyoro *mailo* land was allocated to chiefs.¹ But apart from grants made to non-Africans before 1902 and *mailo* land allocated to chiefs in the Agreement States, all land in Uganda was Crown land, the ownership of which was legally vested in the Crown while the rights of Africans were protected.²

¹ West, *Land Policy in Buganda*; C.K. Meek, *Land Law and Custom in the Colonies* 2nd edition (London, 1949).

² For more details see Hailey, *An African Survey*, 2nd edition, 723-6 and 786-8.

Once this legislation was in place, few changes were made to it until the early 1950s. However, there were discussions about the possibility of introducing new legislation and on more than one occasion Land Tenure Ordinance's were drafted and then dropped.³ These discussions arose in part for political reasons, and in part out of the belief that sustainability could be maintained and agricultural productivity increased if there was a move towards individualism in land tenure. In 1950, the reasons given for not introducing land legislation included recognition that: "the right of natives to occupy Crown Land has been legally established" and that legislation in relation to land was likely to "arouse suspicion of the Protectorate Government's intentions."⁴ Instead it was decided to make a pronouncement about the Government's policy on land outside Buganda and in 1950 there was detailed discussion in the CO about whether making the statement would reassure people, or add to their concerns.⁵ This pronouncement on Land Policy stated that rural Crown land was held "in trust for the use and benefit of the African population."⁶ Not long after this statement was made the possibility of a Royal Commission to examine various questions related to land and agriculture in East Africa began to be considered.⁷ Before looking at the EARC it is necessary to examine the nature of tenure as it was understood within Kigezi.

4.1.2 - Policy and perception in Kigezi.

This section will outline as far as is possible the policies related to land tenure that were followed at a district level, and in doing so will examine how colonial officials perceived the indigenous land tenure system. Official policy in Kigezi was concerned with the protection of African interests: there was to be no alienation of Crown land to non-

³ For example for more re Colonial Mind and African land tenure during mid 1940s see: PRO CO 536 215 (40336) - Land (Tenure) Legislation, 1944-46.

⁴ Minute to Mr Nunsam from JH Harris about land legislation in Uganda, discussion of despatch to J Griffiths (S of S for C) from JH Hall 16 March 1950, Land (Tenure) Legislation 1950-51, PRO CO 536 223/40336.

⁵ Discussion was initially by letters and telegrams and then in meetings when Hall visited London. For more details see PRO CO 536 pg12 onwards - for eg Drafts of Statement on Land Policy pg 18, and ff17.

⁶ Land Policy of the Protectorate of Uganda, *Uganda Gazette*, Vol XLIII, No 30, 1950. For further details re 1950 statement see PRO CO 536 eg Press Statement on 11 June 1950 re "Land Policy in Prot of Ug"; ff18 - Press cuttings of statement, from 11 July 1950. Further discussion in 1951 and '52 about taking Land Policy Statement one step further and changing Crown Land to African Trust Land. Also for discussion in 1952 (in connection with Wallis report and devt of local govt) re dangers of "cristallis[ing] a variety of ancient customs" in relation to land tenure see PRO CO 822/345. For further details on colonial thinking re African land tenure see *Journal of African Administration*, special issue on land tenure, October 1952.

⁷ For more on colonial thinking re African land tenure generally see Malcolm's Papers and Pedler (re Hailey, 1938) RH MSS Afr s 1814. Also Papers on Land Tenure by Informal Committee 1945 - RH MSS Afr s 1445.

Africans in freehold. This was weighed against the need for economic development, so leasehold estates were occasionally granted (eg Kalengyere Pyrethrum Estate, see Chapter 6), while leaseholds to missions were also made.

Descriptions of pre-colonial and early colonial land tenure are confused and sometimes contradictory, especially in relation to the role that clan leaders/elders, lineage heads/elders and early colonial chiefs played in land related decisions. In all probability Kigezi's was a highly variable and flexible system without a single set of solid principles, and it was this that led to such lack of clarity on the part of the colonial administrators. The earliest colonial officials perceived Kigezi as being densely populated. In 1919 Phillips, one of Kigezi's first DCs, submitted to the PCWP the following declaration for ratification:

"Owing to density of population, in the inhabited areas, and the extremely strong feeling among the clans as to the alienation of their lands, whether fallow or cultivated, it has been explained to the indigenous population by the PC that such lands will not be alienated without their consent (obtained only after individual explanation to those interested that land thus granted would cease to belong to them)."⁸

Although he did not spell out the role of clans it does seem significant that he mentioned clans in connection with land. This was circulated to all chiefs and in 1921 Phillips again took a strong stand on the position of land in Kigezi. To assess how much land might be available for alienation, each district was asked to provide details of "areas to which tribes in occupation had no valid claim."⁹ Phillips replied that there were no such areas in Kigezi as "all agricultural land is generally intensively cultivated, except in the closed (Sleeping Sickness) area. It barely suffices for present needs."¹⁰ This was regularly reiterated by succeeding DCs.¹¹

A fairly small area of land was leased for churches and schools to the two missionary organisations in the district, the CMS and the White Fathers, usually under Temporary Occupational Licences. By 1948 the WFM had 300 acres at Rushoroza and the CMS (or

⁸ Copy of letter to PCWP, from Phillips, DC 5 Sept 1928. KDA DC General Policy Book, Quoting declaration by Phillips made in 1919 which was ratified by PCWP in letter to DC Kigezi, 7 Oct 1921.

⁹ Letter to DC from PCWP, 14 Jan 1921, KDA DC MP12 ff1.

¹⁰ Letter to PCWP from JE Phillips, Ag DC, 26 Jan 1921, KDA DC MP12 ff2. The Sleeping Sickness area was in northern Kigezi.

¹¹ Eg WG Adams, stated in 1922 that there was no land available for alienation except possibly in parts of Ruzhumbura where population density was not so high. Letter to PCWP from WG Adams, DC, 28 Dec 1922. KDA DC MP12 ff52.

Native Anglican Church as it was then called) had 322 acres in Bubale, Ndorwa, while both had additional smaller plots throughout the district.¹² When these areas were granted to the missions, those people living on the land were given notice prior to eviction.¹³ There were also a few evictions for government purposes. One such example was when the government experimental farm at Kachwekano was established in 1937, when three households living inside the farm boundaries had to be moved out and they were given notice but no compensation for the land.¹⁴

Despite official policy that there would be no major alienations of land the local population were sufficiently concerned about the possibility for Phillips, on his return to the district in 1928, to state that "In view of statements in the Press that applications for Land in the Kigezi District may be expected in the near future, the [1919] undertaking assumes considerable importance."¹⁵ He asked that the undertaking be brought to the notice of the Governor and noted that the area around Kabale was suffering from land shortage:

"The struggle in the high country for a sufficiency of cultivable and productive land is becoming more acute, and is a frequent cause of litigations and sometimes even physical violence. ... The immigration of so many foreign banyaRuanda has made the struggle for sufficiency of arable land for the people a still more acute difficulty."¹⁶

Being a non-Agreement district there were no formal links between land ownership and chieftainships or other government appointed positions in Kigezi - ie there was no *mailo* land. Some of the Baganda Agents in the district had been granted Certificates of Occupancy for land they held in Kigezi.¹⁷ These certificates were issued by the Native

¹² KDA DC LAN 9f. For more details re missions, alienation of land, TOLs and use of labour by missions from people living on this land see KDA DC GENPOL BK.

¹³ The oral evidence on whether compensation was paid for the land itself, or merely for the loss of crops, is contradictory. For example Tofus Kigatire suggested that no money had been given when the missionaries "told us to leave their land", although she did recount that her mother had been given some money as compensation for a ficus tree that had belonged to her father. However Dorothy Mary Katarahweire reported that "the old men were given rupees and then [they] gave away their land."

¹⁴ For full details see: KDA DoA 009exp.

¹⁵ Copy of letter to PCWP, from Phillips, DC, 5 Sept 1928, KDA DC General Policy Book, opp pg10. Quoting declaration by Phillips made in 1919 which was ratified by PCWP in letter to DC Kigezi, 7 Oct 1921.

¹⁶ Note on "Land. Insufficiency, round Kabale, for population." 1929. KDA DC MP69 ff34.

¹⁷ Additionally some were allocated *mailo* land in Buganda, eg Erasito Musoke, Political Agent, in Kigezi applied for and was granted in January 1930 land in Buddu "in satisfaction of a War Service Allotment" KDA DC MP58 ff1.

Authority, based on continuing cultivation, and were granted without a survey of boundaries.¹⁸ They were also used in Toro and Ankole from the 1920s and their main aim was to

"enable any native to make use of as much Crown Land as he requires for himself, for purposes of cultivation or residence, without fear of disturbance, or the liability to pay rent, tithes etc to other natives."¹⁹

They were introduced to provide a sense of security, and it was hoped that this in turn would encourage people to plant permanent crops and make improvements in agriculture generally. They also provided a "convenient answer"²⁰ to the occasional demands for *mailo* grants. There is also evidence that some certificates were also granted to Bakiga chiefs in the late 1920s and early 1930s.²¹

With the exception of these certificates of occupancy, and mission leaseholds and Temporary Occupation Licences, no land was alienated in Kigezi. In 1930, during discussions of a draft land ordinance, and perhaps partly in response to Phillips' urging, a minute was issued by Governor Gowers which made clear that there would be no land alienation in Kigezi:

"I consider that Kigezi is too densely populated to permit any European settlement. ... far from any land being available for alienation in Kigezi it appears to me that ... the land is actually insufficient for the present and probable future wants of even the existing population and its livestock."²²

In the years that followed there were occasional discussions as to what was meant by "ownership" of land in Kigezi. One such documented case concerned a CMS teacher who wanted to reclaim land that had belonged to his father which he claimed had been taken away by chiefs from his mother after his father's death, because they claimed she was unable to cultivate it. An administrative officer wrote that he was unable to assist and

¹⁸ For example see Case of Abdulla Namunye, former agent in Kigezi, "granted in 1921 the occupation of about 60 to 65 acres of land at Kitaho Busaza Gomb, Bufumbira County." KDA DC MP58 ff134.

¹⁹ Letter to DC Ankole and Toro from Sandford, PCWP, 29 Nov 1937. (Copy to DC Kigezi) KDA DC MP60A ff31.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Letter to Land Officer, Chairman of Land Ord Comm, E'be from WG Adams, PCWP, 30 March 1932, KDA DC MP57 ff57. Minutes between Governor and Chf Sec various dates in mid- 1923, KDA DC MP69. Letter to DCs of WP from PCWP, 13 Sept 1923, enclosing Resolution No 20. "Land for Ex Agents and Native Advisers." KDA DC MP69 ff20. See also for example KDA DC MP58 ff3 - Y Wava-Muno "Indigenous chief. Plantation created by himself at own expense." (Kebisoni, Ruzhumbura) Signed by Phillips 24 April 1930; and KDA DC MP58 ff4 - J Kichamwa "Senior indigenous chief. Plantation created from his own resources." Located Busanya, Bufumbira. Signed by Phillips, 25 April 1930.

²² Copy Governor's Minute 38, SMP No L8/2, 11 Dec 1930, KDA DC MP57 ff57Enc.

stated that

"There being no individual ownership of land here, any plot becomes the property of the man who cultivates it. If however it remains uncultivated for a long period, in practice about 5 years, or if the owner leaves the gombolola, the chief can reallocate it to the first applicant. Obviously it would not be fair, in a country as thickly populated as this, to allow eligible land to lie fallow for long period when there are people who are anxious to cultivate it.

Equally obviously it would be unfair, when land has since been reallocated, to take it away from its owner, to give it back to someone who may have had a claim to it many years previously."²³

Before being sent out, however, this letter was reinforced and the final version read:

"I am at a loss to understand the purport of your letter, which implies ownership of land, an idea quite foreign to the local economic system."²⁴

The suggestion that there was no individual ownership of land in Kigezi was directly contradicted by the findings of 2 *mutala* surveys carried out in the late 1930s. Wickham's survey of Kasheregenyi *mutala* found that land was cultivated "on an individualistic basis,"²⁵ while Purseglove's survey of Kitozho stated that land ownership was individual, not communal, and that there was "an absolute security of tenure to the peasant cultivator and his heirs so long as he keeps the land under cultivation. The peasant is protected from anyone encroaching on his fallow land, for having once cultivated it he has permanent rights. Land which is definitely abandoned may be reallocated by the chiefs."²⁶

A more detailed examination of the same area, by Wright, found that:

"A man can own as much land as he can cultivate and defend with the assistance of his clansmen. This became modified, with the establishment of a settled administration to the principle that a man can own as much as he can cultivate in a year, together with as much as he can prove was the area of his cultivation in previous years. This latter will no doubt be further slowly modified by a lukiko decision not to recognise fallow land for more than 7 years unless the land is hedged."²⁷

This study outlined the methods by which newcomers to an area might get access to land,

²³ Draft reply to Orpwood from DC, KDA DC MP57 ff83enc. Probably drafted by ADC.

²⁴ Letter to DC from Orpwood 3 Jan 1935. See also Letter to Rev Orpwood (CMS) from DC, 3 Jan 1935, KDA DCMP57 ff83.

²⁵ Tothill, *Report on the Nineteen Surveys*; R.T. Wickham, 'Agricultural survey of Kasheregenyi Mutala', (1938).

²⁶ Purseglove, 'Kitozho Mutala Survey.' Also gives details of all "foreigners" in the muluka and how they had received land, including through blood brotherhood, and from chief.

²⁷ A.C.A. Wright, 'Kitojo Mutala Survey' (1938) This is the same as "Kitozho mutala".

and including by establishing "by reciprocal gifts the right to remain in a certain area as part of the particular social group who happened to dwell there." This could be through blood brotherhood or marriage. Alternatively, according to Wright, the stranger might be given seed for one field and land on which to plant it by the clan head of the area that he planned to settle. In return the occupier would bring a harvest gift of two or three times the value of what he had received. But "even if the seed was not given the harvest gift was expected, but it appears to have been not so much a form of rent as a recognition of overlordship and a claim for protection."²⁸ Once the man had established himself permanently and collected a group of 15-20 people around him he would be recognised as a family head and would cease to make the payment. According to Wright the establishment of an administration had tended to "wipe out this system of seasonal gifts, which might have developed into a system of renting", however there is evidence that the system did not in fact simply disappear. Writing in 1956, JM Byagagaire (AAO Kigezi), described how land could be loaned for a short period of time (1 or 2 crops) in which case the borrower is known as "*Enturami*" and he would give the owner gifts of part of the harvest and beer as a sign of appreciation. Byagagaire refers to this type of loaning as "free". Alternatively "rent" known as "*Isoko*", can be paid to the owner in the form of cash or free labour by the tenant.²⁹

Oral sources confirm that the system of harvest gifts in return for loaning land continues to this day.³⁰ Informants stressed that the borrower is under no obligation to give the gift, but that not doing so would make borrowing in the future harder.³¹ Ebriahim Kagangure and Semu Kamuchana suggested that in return a borrower might do labour for the lender.³² Informants relate that people nowadays are more cautious about lending land

²⁸ Ibid., 12-14.

²⁹ Note on Background of Land Fragmentation in the Over-Populated Areas of Kigezi District - by JM Byagagaire, AAO Kigezi. KDA DoA 12/b ff153.

³⁰ Meaning of words: From interviews: to rent (for money)= *kupangisa*; to lend (they would bring a "gift" in return)= *namwatira*; to lend in return for labour = *kukwata* (although this can also mean to lend land out of generosity, with no strings attached); to lend for free = *kukwatira* (this can also mean to give to your children). According to Bosworth *kukwata* resembles the contract described by Edle in the 1930s in which the semi-dependent males worked for a benefactor in return for use of land. In the 1990s borrowing continues in this form - the amount of labour varies, and those who borrow now are usually women in difficult positions. Bosworth does not give the word used for lending of land to a family member or neighbour for use with no reciprocal obligation. She describes this as "very uncommon" in the two villages she studied. Further discussion re Bosworth's findings on role of clans and lineage in Chapter 1.

³¹ See for example interviews 15/a; 16/b; 21/b; 34/b and 56/b.

³² See for example interviews 16/b and 24/b.

than in the past and are more inclined towards very short term lending (1 or 2 seasons) and this seems to be associated with a number of rulings (at an unknown date) that ruled ownership in favour of a person who had been borrowing land.³³ However this very same observation that the lending of land had become less common because of the risk of losing loaned land was made by Wright in 1938. He also reported that

"the matter [of loaning land] however (except for those plots which the peasants' actually occupy) has ceased to be in [the peasants] hands but is in the control of the mukunga chief who distributes land ... The chief has a right to apportion abandoned land (itongo) to persons who are in need of land to cultivate but he has no right to do this with fallow land; it is however, upon the original occupier to establish his claim that it is fallow land and not bush."³⁴

From this it seems that at some time before 1938 government appointed chiefs had been given authority over land, in particular in the allocation of so called 'abandoned land'. Wright also suggests that clan heads had a role to play in connection with the allocation of land to newcomers, while clans had in the past played an important role in the defence of land.

The question of how long land could be left before being considered "abandoned" and the security of tenure on fallow land was a great concern amongst agricultural officials as insecure tenure of fallow land would be a barrier to maintaining fallow periods. This issue was raised by the Agricultural Survey Committee³⁵ which expressed the opinion that in a large part of the Protectorate, including the Western Province "the peasant has no security of tenure of the land, on which he lives and cultivates."³⁶ In response to this Sandford, the PCWP, stated that it was his impression was that "cultivation in this Province is still generally conducted largely on a communal basis."³⁷ The DC Kigezi disagreed that the peasant had no security of tenure as "in actual local practice a peasant has a good title to all land which he is cultivating or which is lying fallow. The native courts are very jealous of the rights of a cultivator to his land and deal severely with any

³³ See for example interviews 56/b; 92/a; and 98/a.

³⁴ Wright, 'Kitojo Mutala Survey', 14, 17.

³⁵ The Agricultural Survey Committee was discussed in Chapter 2. It was established to gather information about different agricultural systems in Uganda (the various mutala surveys) and it produced the report on "Nineteen Agricultural Surveys."

³⁶ Quoted in letter to DCs Toro, Ankole and Kigezi from PCWP, 31 May 1937, KDA DC MP60A ff26.

³⁷ Letter to DCs Toro, Ankole and Kigezi from PCWP, 31 May 1937, KDA DC MP60A ff26. In response to enquiry by Ag Survey Committee. Sandford wrote to the DCs of WP enquiring into the security of tenure in each district.

attempted usurpation." He outlined the main aspects of the land tenure system, saying "The right of inheritance to cultivated and fallow land is recognised as also the right of an owner to abandon his property." The decision as to whether land had been abandoned or not depended on if the person's house had been abandoned and if it had been the chief would allot such land to any applicant. The DC had never come across communal cultivation in the district, although it was "usual" for a person to "seek assistance" from friends when breaking his ground and gathering his harvest. In return for this, he would give them food and beer, while paid labour was not unknown. However, both the plot and the harvest belonged to the individual, not the community.³⁸

The DAO echoed these views: "I know of no cases of communal cultivation in this District, and cannot believe that this remark is intended to apply to Kigezi. In all the mitala surveys we have carried out in this District, we have found cultivation to be entirely on an individual basis."³⁹ The consensus amongst those who had studied the agriculture of the area was that land tenure was individualistic and this applied to land that was cultivated or had been cultivated. Sometime before the mid-1930s chiefs had been given various powers over land including the right to allocate land that was considered to have been abandoned. In 1940 it was noted that in Kigezi there existed *etongo* land which was

"land traditionally cultivated by a family which, even though it is not being occupied or cultivated, cannot be used by anyone without the *etongo* owner's consent... Nowadays, with increasing population, when a man has inherited in this manner more land than he requires to support his family it is custom to loan parts of it to natives outside his family. He is, however, under no obligation to do so, and the land is still regarded as his. Natives to whom the loan may be granted usually repay the favour in kind."⁴⁰

None of the sources thus far mentioned refer to the selling of land but in 1940 it was noted by the DC that "there is a recent tendency towards the sale of land in the Bakiga areas." When such sales came to his notice he "impressed on chiefs, whose consent to a sale is required, the necessity for ensuring that a money grabbing old man does not dispose of his property to the detriment of his heirs."⁴¹ Thus, by 1940 it was necessary

³⁸ Letter to PCWP from DC, 16 June 1937, KDA DC MP60A ff28.

³⁹ Letter to DC from Masefield, DAO, 5 June 1937. KDA DC MP60A ff27. Copy in KDA DoA 010crops

⁴⁰ 'Land tenure in Western Province', compiled by N.S. Haig with the assistance of (amongst others) GB Masefield and R.T. Wickham, in Tothill, *Agriculture in Uganda*, 30.

⁴¹ Letter to PCWP from DC, 29 March 1940, KDA DC MP60A ff32.

to gain the consent of the chief prior to making a sale; but whether this was merely a case of informing the chief, or whether permission had to be sought is unclear.

In 1945, Purseglove was sure that matters could be more firmly defined:

"There exists an absolute security of tenure to the present cultivator and his heirs as long as he keeps the land under cultivation or can prove that he has cultivated it... He can rent, will or sell this usufruct of his land. With the present density of population, the definition of ownership is clearly demarcated. All cases regarding encroachment on fallow land or disputes on land matters are taken to the gombolola courts if they cannot be settled without litigation. A man wishing to cultivate in a new area will approach the chief and inform him where he wishes to open up new land, and provided there is ample spare land in the area and he is not encroaching on residents fallow plots, he will have no difficulty in obtaining land."⁴²

Chiefly authority over other people's land was most obvious at times of disputes, through the working of the *gombolola* courts. Additionally, chiefs had some authority related to the allocation of unoccupied land, a role that according to Wright had in the past belonged to clan heads.

The launching of the resettlement scheme in the 1940s led to discussion as to what should happen to resettlers' land on their migration. Purseglove's original plan involved all land over 20⁰ being taken out of cultivation and a third of all cultivated land being rested at any one time. This would "involve a change in the present system of land tenure" as the strip lines would cut across existing plots and this, Purseglove realised, would be the "greatest difficulty of the scheme." His report stated that "it will have to be decided whether [cultivators] should receive land on the strips proportionate to the land they already possess, with an additional acreage for limited expansion and the production of economic crops, or whether they should receive land according to the size of their families."⁴³ It appears therefore that Purseglove considered introducing more far-reaching land reform with a "fairer" distribution of land. Some years later, he wrote that by allocating land to previously land-poor individuals "a fairer distribution" of land had been made possible.⁴⁴ But the suggestion that such a redistribution of land had in fact

⁴² Purseglove, 'Report on the Overpopulated Areas of Kigezi', para 68. Purseglove drew heavily from Wright's *mutala* survey in his description of the early colonial Bakiga land tenure system.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 99.

⁴⁴ Memo put forward to EARC on Shifting Cultivation in Western Province, by Purseglove, 16 Oct 1951 (33 pgs + appendices), PRO CO 892 15/7.

occurred seems questionable.⁴⁵

Before the resettlement scheme was launched it was undecided as to whether land left behind by settlers would be "allocated by the chiefs to people with insufficient land" or whether those moving would give it to their relatives.⁴⁶ In the event, it soon became clear that people left their land to relatives or friends so that they could reclaim it if they wished to return. Some individuals wanted to sell their land, and in 1951 the District Council passed a resolution allowing this. However, it was the duty of the chief to see that the land was not sold to anyone who was not a "native of Kigezi".⁴⁷ The Council also decided that "a chief has no power to give away a man's land, no matter how long he stays away. If the people see that his land or banana plantation is growing into a bush, they can use such an area as a grazing area, until the owner come back and takes his land back."⁴⁸ This seems to suggest that some limitations were being placed on the authority of the chiefs, perhaps in reaction to over-zealous chiefs allocating land that they considered had been abandoned.

Writing in 1951, Purseglove stated that whereas in the pre-colonial period, people could occupy land where they liked, so long as people living nearby did not claim it, as land had become scarce there was a tendency to ask the chief to "allocate the land." When strip cropping had been introduced on communal grazing or unoccupied land it was the *muluka* or *mukunga* chief who allocated the land to the cultivators:

"It is believed that the authority of the chiefs in the allocation of land and their interest in land generally has shown some decline in Bunyoro, Toro and Ankole, whereas in Kigezi this has been strengthened, largely due to the pressure of population and their greater interest in soil conservation and better utilization generally."⁴⁹

It would appear, therefore, that the power of chiefs to make decisions about other people's land had steadily increased since their positions were created. This increased power for chiefs coincided with increasing land scarcity. Chiefs had authority in settling disputes; allocating increasingly scarce unoccupied land to newcomers; and allocating abandoned

⁴⁵ No other references to this were found in archival sources, or from oral sources.

⁴⁶ Purseglove, 'Report on the Overpopulated Areas of Kigezi District', 72.

⁴⁷ Extracts from Kigezi District Council Minutes, KDA DC LAN 12/I ff69A. Resolution 14/51.

⁴⁸ Extracts from Kigezi District Council Minutes, KDA DC LAN 12/I ff69A. Resolution 6/52.

⁴⁹ Memo put forward to EARC on Shifting Cultivation in Western Province, by Purseglove, 16 Oct 1951 (33 pgs + appendices), PRO CO 892 15/7.

land. The latter must inevitably have been an area of great contestation - for who was to decide whether land was abandoned or merely fallowing for a long period? Perhaps as a result of this contestation there appears to have been, from the mid-1950s, some limitations placed on chiefs' power over land. This in turn raises the whole question of whose authority chiefs were replacing and in particular how the role and authority over land of clan elders and household heads had changed.

In the early 1950s the DC acknowledged that the system of land tenure in Kigezi was "in a state of change and development";⁵⁰ a new basis for recognition of ownership was accepted, which was "the principle that a man could lay claim to all the land which he had actually under cultivation plus all that he had cultivated in the previous years and had not actually abandoned." Courts were increasingly recognising the continuation of rights of occupancy over land rested for periods of up to 20 years, which the DC saw as part of a "trend towards a popular view of land-ownership closely approximating to European ideas." The District Council had recently sought to amend customary law so that there was no limit to the length of time for which a man could abandon land without losing his right to it, with the effect that people could "fallow" their land indefinitely. The DC stressed that land ownership was individual and "a man has perfect freedom to dispose of his acres as he thinks fit, and without reference to any clan or more general authority." This freedom was one of the main ways that an old man could maintain authority over his family and so was crucially important to the Bakiga social system. However,

"his ownership is to a very large degree dependent on his use of the land, and his rights do not extend over areas which he is legally held to have abandoned by his failure to cultivate. Nor are they yet absolute in the sense that he can lease his land over any long period. A servant who is given permission to cultivate certain plots may in time establish his own independent rights over them by raising children or being buried in that place."

It was generally accepted that fallow land and land which had just been harvested could be used communally for grazing. The DC suggested that since the Second World War there had been a

"very significant development in the direction of a recognition of outright ownership of land in the sense in which it is understood in Europe. The practice

⁵⁰ "Problems in each district from Land Tenure and custom", Memo #6 - Notes on the System of Land Tenure in Kigezi, written by DC, 7 March 1953 (6pgs), Preliminary Information for the Royal Commission on Land and Population, 1953, PRO CO 892 15/9. Outlines the history and traditions of Bakiga - excellent overview of colonial perceptions. Much of this is drawn from Wright's *mutala* survey, with some elaboration.

of "okusigira eitaka", first introduced in 1946 or thereabouts, is now relatively common and means, in effect, the assumption of authority to dispose of land which a man proposes to abandon."⁵¹

When settlers left south Kigezi as part of the resettlement scheme their land "was not re-allocated by chiefs, elders or clan-heads but by the direct designation of its late occupiers." This may imply that he thought it once would have been re-allocated by these people - but the evidence for this is complex and sometimes contradictory.

The DC observed that while there had been selling of land in the past, more commonly it was the crops grown on the land that were sold. He predicted, however, that "before long the land itself will become an item of widely used currency, and from there it will be but a short step to enclosure and the final disappearance of what is typically Bantu in 'Kiga land customs."⁵² The prediction that enclosure would follow automatically totally ignores the problems associated with enclosing fragmented land, and was hopelessly optimistic.

On the question of settling land disputes it was noted that these were "taken in the first instance before the Muluka Council" and although this body had no legal powers, most cases were settled at this level. The most common causes of land litigation in Kigezi in the 1950s included cases of disputes over encroachment, inheritance, and attempted frauds during sale, as well as disputes over leases: "The more important men in the District often gave land to their retainers on payment of an annual tribute of beer or some portion of the crop. Often this tribute was not collected regularly and the holder of the land after a lapse of time would claim it as his own and deny the lease."⁵³ Additionally there were disputes between private individuals and the *lukiko* over *lukiko* land. There was no clear definition of what *lukiko* land was or how much there was. The cases were "settled by local knowledge, as to whether the land has been recognised as *lukiko* land for some considerable time." Disputes involving chiefs included encroachment by the chief as a private individual; claims against a chief who alleged in turn that the land was *lukiko* land; and claims aimed at gaining recognition of ownership of a piece of land. Finally

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Notes on Land Cases in Kigezi for Information of EARC, written by APS Sheridan, ADC. KDA DC LAN 12/I ff32.

there were claims by settlers against their deputies or *abasigire* who were often relatives who were supposed to look after their land in case they wished to return to "ensure that the chiefs cannot say the land has been abandoned." Cases would arise when a deputy alleged that the land was his: "The right to leave land and yet retain ownership of it by appointing a deputy is I believe a completely new right, which is now well recognised by the courts."⁵⁴ This illustrates well that whatever "customary tenure" was, there is no suggestion that it was static; particularly as the area was under pressure from in-migration. Migrants and their ideas about land tenure would have influenced the existing system; indeed the Bakiga land tenure system may be depicted as an amalgamation of systems layered upon each other.

Roscoe, who visited the district in 1919-20, gives us our earliest European description of the Bakiga land tenure system that was not authored by a colonial official. He stated that

"The members of each village claimed as their own the side of the hill on which the village was built, and any intrusion by strangers was fiercely resented and often led to strife and bloodshed... When a man wanted land he applied to the head of the village for it, and an annual rent of a pot of beer was often imposed. Land thus granted was handed down from father to son and anyone who intruded on it or questioned the owner's right to it ran a grave risk of being speared down on the spot."⁵⁵

It is not clear from this if the annual payment of beer would continue indefinitely or if it could eventually be paid off in full - so that all rights to the land could effectively be bought. Roscoe also observed that wars between the clans were "fairly common" and that the "commonest cause of clan fight[sic] was intrusion upon clan land. When a stranger took possession of clan land, there would first be a fiery dispute with the real owner, who would then appeal to his village for help in expelling the invader."⁵⁶ His evidence, although rather fragmentary, does suggest that clans were the most important grouping for defence purposes and the clan would be expected to assist in the protection of land rights. His reference to the village, the head of which a newcomer could apply to for land, may be referring to an extended household or a lineage. Another observer who stresses the role of the clan is Geraud, a White Father who was based in Kigezi, who has written that "in the past the clan was also a political organisation with territorial boundaries. The chief of

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Roscoe, *The Bagesu and other Tribes*, 163-4.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 174.

the clan was the chief of the land"⁵⁷ but he gives no details of what authority such a person would have, or how they reached this position.

Edel's anthropological study of 1933 gives us a more substantial account.⁵⁸ Edel has recorded that a man established his claim over land by marking its boundaries with a hoe, and having acquired title by doing this (even if he did not work the field) he "retains it indefinitely, that is, as long as precise memory remains." She stated that

"Ownership [of land] is essentially individualistic ... individuals, particularly adult male family heads, have exclusive claim. This claim is acquired through manufacture, gift, certain forms of seizure, purchase or inheritance. The owner is in all cases free to dispose of an article recognised as his in many different ways. ...The relationship implied [by the Rukiga word used] is not physical possession of the object, but rather that one has the privilege, denied to others, not merely of using it, but also of delegating its use or leaving it unused..."⁵⁹

But she goes on to say that "the Ciga have not developed the notion of the right of the individual to legislate about the disposal of his property after his death"; the patrilineal clan itself "does not share actively in land ownership."⁶⁰

For Edel, land rights were "essentially individual household rights."

"The lineage whose members live in a particular area guarantees their common security by defining the locus of probable good relations and peaceful settlement of most disputes. But it does not assign or regulate land, which is acquired by its different component segments on the basis of individual claims stacked out when the area in questions was first settled."⁶¹

On the question of selling and lending land, Edel writes:

"Once a man has staked his claim to a field or a house-site, it belongs to him and after his death, his heirs, so long as precise memory remains. He may rent it to someone else and, under some circumstances, may even transfer it altogether, but no-one else may use it without his permission... While permanent transfer of land did not happen very often, it was possible. One man... and his uncle, who shared a common plot of land, had sold it to another man for a goat; this gave the purchaser full and permanent rights to it."⁶²

⁵⁷ F. Geraud, 'The Settlement of the Bakiga', in Denoon (ed) *A History of Kigezi*, 29.

⁵⁸ Edel undoubtedly had an influence on colonial officials and references to her ideas can be found in Wright's *mutala* survey, although not references specifically to land tenure.

⁵⁹ Edel, 'Property among the Ciga', 325-41.

⁶⁰ Edel, 'Property among the Ciga'; Also see M.M. Edel 'The Bachiga of East Africa' in M. Mead, *Cooperation and Competition among Primitive Peoples* (New York, 1937), 127-52.

⁶¹ Edel, *The Chiga*, 99.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 100-2.

Giving a further example, she states: "There was some disagreement as to whether such outright transfer of land was a standard traditional form, though no-one doubts its present validity." Transfers on a more temporary basis were "more usual", for example borrowing for one or two seasons. In this case a small fee would be agreed upon, for example a hoe. Alternatively "the loan may be described as a gift, for which ... some return would be expected."⁶³

People would sometimes give the use of land on what Edel has described as a "kind of patronage basis". In this case, the borrower would do a day's work for the owner, give the owner a basket of the harvested crop and share their beer with him when they brewed. This relationship appears to have been of a longer term nature, although "there is always the risk that he may ask for the land to be returned. This sort of relationship is most usual for a man who is living away from his own kinsmen in a semi-dependent status."⁶⁴

In what appears to be an extract from a letter written at the time of her fieldwork Edel has also asserted that "Property is personal, but the group has limited veto powers. Land is acquired by clearing it, and it may be lent or even alienated. Its owner is the head of the household, but when a wife or borrower cultivates the field it is known as hers or his. The person who did the work owns the crops."⁶⁵

Obol-Ochola, writing in the early 1970s, takes a very different view on individualism.⁶⁶ He states that interviews with Bakiga elders had "established beyond reasonable doubt that land holding was based on, and determined by, membership of clan and it was not

⁶³ Ibid., 102.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 102.

⁶⁵ Introduction by Abraham Edel in Edel, *The Chiga*, 2nd edition, xxviii. This new edition includes an introduction by Abraham Edel containing extracts of letters from May Edel during her time in Kigezi and four additional chapters. This quote appears in the introduction, and seems to be an extract from a letter, although this is not entirely clear.

⁶⁶ Obol-Ochola's views are in contrast to other authors who have broadly agreed with Edel's findings. Taylor agreed that while the system of ownership was individualistic, the membership of lineage "guaranteed the common security of individual "owners" by peaceful settlement of most disputes." He also notes that although it was not discussed by Edel it was "likely... that strangers wishing to settle in a lineage area would seek the permission of the head of the extended family or lineage." (Taylor, *The Western Lacustrine Bantu*, 122.) That there was no institutionalised political authority over land is in contrast to neighbouring areas. For example see J.R. Fairhead 'Fields of struggle: towards a social history of farming knowledge and practice in a Bwisha community, Kivu, Zaire'. Here households were annually allocated land which reverted back to wider communal control when it was fallowed (p60). Lineage councils of elders decided on the fields to be used, crops to be planted and land to be allocated to each household. There is no evidence of similar controls in Kigezi. For details of other neighbouring areas see Taylor, *The Western Lacustrine Bantu*, 122.

individualistic as suggested by Edel"⁶⁷ He stated that individual claim is now established but the vestiges of clan rights were strong, particularly as one got further away from Kabale into rural areas. Obol Ochola does not consider that clan elders might be expected to claim that land ownership depended on membership of the clan in an attempt to reassert their own authority, while such an opinion needs to be seen in the context of the contemporary political environment in Uganda: in the years following Obote's "Move to the Left" evidence of communal land tenure is likely to have been being actively sought.

What of the views of Bakiga?⁶⁸ The only written source is that of Ngologoza, who states only that Bakiga "settled disputes according to lineages."⁶⁹ In a discussion of population growth, he writes that in the late 1920s the payment of chiefs depended on the number of people a chief administered, which meant that some chiefs encouraged people to migrate into their area.

"This created a problem to the natives of his area as the chief normally deprived them of all their land, to give it to new-comers, who had no right of land at all. Whenever the owner of the land tried to complain and forward the case to higher courts of laws, the chief would tell him that he had no land since all of it was crown land, and at times, they would say it belonged to the district council. If it were not that the chiefs gave themselves the power to allocate land, some people would not have the problems that they are facing now."⁷⁰

But indications of Bakiga perceptions are also to be found in colonial archival sources. In oral evidence for the EARC, Ngologoza (then Secretary General) mentioned "clan land-givers"⁷¹ who could allocate land to people in need. More details were given in a memorandum drawn up by senior chiefs and others to be presented to EARC⁷² which outlined the "Old Land Tenure" of Kigezi:

"There has always been individual land ownership, and every inhabitant has

⁶⁷ Obol-Ochola, 'Customary Land Law', 223. Obol Ochola was not a Mukiga, but was from Northern Uganda.

⁶⁸ Turyahikayo-Rugyema, 'The history of the Bakiga.' Unfortunately this thesis fails to examine the pre-colonial land tenure system mentioning only that "when land was still plentiful, people moved from one area to another with ease, searching for more fertile land when the cultivated areas had become exhausted" (p280). There is no discussion of authority specifically over land.

⁶⁹ Ngologoza, *Kigezi and its people*, 8.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 74.

⁷¹ Oral evidence collected at Meeting of Hudson, Gaitskell and Sykes of the EARC and the Standing Committee, Kigezi Local Government, 22 Dec 1953, PRO CO 892 16/6, Memo #18, evidence of Ngologoza, SecGen.

⁷² In readiness for the arrival of the EARC efforts were made to gather relevant information and a meeting, attended by senior chiefs and others, was held with DC to discuss Land Tenure see: Letter to DC from Secgen, 5 Dec 1953, KDA DC LAN 12/1 ff22.

always exercised full powers over his land, so that he could: A) Sell it whenever it was necessary for him to do so; B) Lease it to anybody he liked; C) Give it to any relative who deserved his help in this matter freely. Whenever there were land transactions between individuals they would get the approval of Clan Elders."

The memorandum continued that with the arrival of the British this system of land tenure changed, and as the salaries of Baganda Agents were determined by the number of people in their area the Agents welcomed in-migrants. They

"began allocating other people's land to these people, in spite of grumbles and disputes from landowners ..[which].. were not responded to since all Agents were out and out for more and more people in their areas."

After the Baganda Agents left "people resumed their old system of land tenure. But the present land tenure does not give individuals full powers as originally."⁷³ Exactly what was meant by this is not clear. To blame Baganda Agents seems over-simplistic, particularly as they were replaced by indigenous chiefs at all levels by 1929, and the evidence suggests that indigenous chiefs also used the powers over land assigned to them. It is possible that the suggestion that the approval of clan elders was needed for land exchanges was a myth that was being created by the clan elders themselves: as the chiefs saw their powers' over land being threatened, they sought ways to re-define their authority by re-creating this authority through their position as clan elders.

Interviews with elderly farmers reveal Bakiga perceptions of the land tenure system in the early colonial period. Informants agreed that individuals had the right to do whatever they wished with their land, and this fundamental right has changed little⁷⁴ as in the words of Kamuyebe "everybody had to use his land in anyway he wanted"⁷⁵ and this included the right to transfer ownership. In connection with land disputes and the allocation of unoccupied land, informants were inconsistent about the role that clan members and elders, and government appointed chiefs, played. Andrea Nyakarwana and Ebriahim Kagangure said that clan elders had the power to allocate unoccupied land to migrants who wanted to settle.⁷⁶ Christopher Karubogo said that a stranger coming into an area (if he wasn't brought there by a friend) would not start cultivating without permission

⁷³ Memo drawn by Kigezi Special Meeting held in Kabale Council Hall on 8-9 Dec 1953 to be presented to EARC through DC re land Tenure in Kigezi, KDA DC LAN 12/I ff29enc.

⁷⁴ Interviews 60/a; 56/a; and 65/a.

⁷⁵ Interview with 60/a.

⁷⁶ Interviews with 12/a and 16/a.

from (more broadly) "old people".⁷⁷ It was observed by Kwatiraho, that in the past people would not live in an area if you were of a different clan unless you went to that area as a servant (paid in some way, cash, food, or allowed to use land).⁷⁸ On the question of settling disputes, some informants said that clan elders played a role, but that this was simply rooted in memory and experience.⁷⁹ Esther Ellevaneer Bushoberwa and Andrea Nyakarwana made it clear that the role of clan members was only advisory and they had no power to ensure that their decisions were implemented.⁸⁰ In the words of David Mashoki:

"In the past there were old people in the clan and those used to settle people's disputes and what they decided was done [because] they were respected."⁸¹

It was generally agreed that with the coming of the British appointed chiefs were given power over land, and again it seems that this authority was most notable when disputes over land arose, or when unoccupied land was allocated.⁸² Joy Constance suggested that if you were not satisfied with the decision of the clan members you could then take the dispute to the government chiefs, initially going to the *bukungu* chief, and then on up to *muluka* and *gombolola* chiefs, before going to the District Court.⁸³ Phyllis Rwakari and David Mashoki said that chiefs would not try to settle land disputes without first approaching family members and clan elders, and that this remained unchanged.⁸⁴

In the words of Byagagaire:

"Clan elders legally had very little power, but in practice they were respected, but anybody who is not pleased [with a decision] can appeal against it [by going to the local courts]. ...A clan elder is an old respectable person. After there were government appointed chiefs the role of clan elders was progressively reduced.... but don't forget that most of the chiefs were clan elders. This colonial government was clever. They didn't appoint anybody, no, most of these chiefs were actually clan elders."⁸⁵

In summary the oral sources indicate that in the past clan elders, and more recently

⁷⁷ Interview with 55/a.

⁷⁸ Interview with 53/a.

⁷⁹ Interviews 1/a and 97/a.

⁸⁰ Interviews with 6/b and 12/a.

⁸¹ Interview with 59/a.

⁸² Interview with 59/a. Although some informants disagreed, eg interview with 65/a.)

⁸³ Interview with 1/b.

⁸⁴ Interviews with 30/b and 59/a.

⁸⁵ Interview with J.M. Byagagaire, 21 Sept 1995. Byagagaire was Assistant AO in the 1950s, and was the first Ugandan DAO in Kigezi.

appointed chiefs, had some powers over land issues. These were largely restricted to resolving inheritance disputes, allocating unoccupied land, and approving other transfers.⁸⁶ Any authority that clan elders may have had was more by virtue of their age, and the status that this gave them, than a formal position or role. The changeover from the clan elders having authority to appointed chiefs having that authority was probably not immediately obvious as initially many chiefs would in fact have been elders of clans. By the time that a "new" type of chief was more widely in place (younger, and more importantly literate⁸⁷) the powers of the chiefs were being restricted.

Thus far this chapter has demonstrated the colonial perception of the system of land tenure in place in the early colonial period, as well as the perceptions of others. While there seems generally to have been broad agreement that land tenure was individualistic (with the few exceptions mentioned above) there are confused and sometimes contradictory views (from Bakiga, colonial officials and others) of the role that individuals (such as clan elders/leaders, lineage elders/leaders and colonial chiefs) played in land related decisions. It is also quite likely that the ambiguities in the sources reflect actual ambiguity on the ground. It may be that the long history of in-migration has meant that different ideas and practices in land tenure (and different interpretations of those systems) have been layered on top of each other, and this has added to Kigezi's complexity. Observers, such as Edel, have perhaps tried to make sense and systematise a situation that did not in fact have a clear "system". The following section will examine the policies of the latter part of the colonial period, which were implemented on top of this highly complex situation.

4.2 - East African Royal Commission and its impact

The most significant challenge to indigenous ideas of land tenure in Kigezi came as a result of the East African Royal Commission, 1953-5. During 1951 the possibility of establishing a Royal Commission began to be discussed and it is clear that this stemmed

⁸⁶ The following case will illustrate the kind of authority that a chief might have over land, besides inheritance disputes and allocation of unoccupied land. Physs Rwakabirigi told of how her brother-in-law had wanted to sell some land to someone unrelated to him when he was migrating, but her husband also wanted to buy it. Her husband went to the muluka chief and told him that he wanted to buy this land and the muluka chief ruled that somebody outside the family was not supposed to buy the land if there was a brother who was able to buy it and so her husband was able to buy it. Interview with 82/a.

⁸⁷ Baxter, 'The Kiga', 282-3.

in particular from problems related to land in Kenya. The principal stimulus behind the EARC⁸⁸ was Sir Philip Mitchell, the Governor of Kenya, who was keen to be seen to be doing something about the problems of land shortage amongst the Kikuyu without giving them any land or taking any from the White Highlands.⁸⁹ Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lyttleton outlined the reasons for the proposed commission:

"Briefly ... the problem is this. The rapid increase of the African population is causing severe over-crowding in some of the African districts. This is leading some Africans to demand that European farmers, particularly in the White Highlands of Kenya, should be dispossessed in their favour. We cannot agree to this, nor would it be any solution to the agricultural problem. Something, however, must be done to meet the real African difficulties which come not only from the present shortage of fertile land, but also from the need to adjust the traditional African life to modern social and industrial conditions".⁹⁰

Within Uganda reactions to the proposed EARC were fairly muted. An editorial in the *Uganda Post* declared that there was no reason for the Royal Commission to visit Uganda as "land in Uganda, and particularly in Buganda, is already in the hands of the natives and, therefore, there is no need for external interference."⁹¹ A later edition of the same newspaper reiterated this and implied that dealing with all land in East Africa in the same category was an indication that the territories of East Africa were gradually being federated.⁹² These suspicions continued to be expressed in the local press in early 1953.⁹³

The terms of reference of the EARC were:

"Having regard to the rapid rate of increase of the African population of East

⁸⁸ If want details re setting up of the EARC (1951) showing emphasis on Kenya from CO point of view see PRO CO 822/147/1. Discussion of who should be on it, terms of reference, programme etc see PRO CO 822/708, 709, 710, 711 etc. For further discussion of how determination of policy was on Kenya, and not on Uganda and for general attitude of CO to land tenure (but not specific to Uganda) and re formation of the Land Tenure Advisory panel (met from mid-1940s). If need more on EARC see: PRO CO 822; CO 892 and CO 993. Also see Note by African Studies Branch of the CO on the land tenure aspects of the EARC in 'The EARC and African Land Tenure', *Journal of African Administration*, 8 2 (April 1956), 69-74.

⁸⁹ Mitchell published an article in the Times on "Land and Population in East and Central Africa", (published on 24 and 25 Sept 1952 to coincide with announcement of EARC) which outlined some of the problems that the EARC would examine, as seen by the Kenyan administration. See PRO CO 822 147/1. Detailed discussion of terms of reference and membership of Commission see PRO CO 822/708, re timing of announcement re EARC which became linked with Kenyan political difficulties see PRO CO 822/709 and discussion of amount of time to be spent in each country see PRO CO 822/711.

⁹⁰ Minute by Lyttleton to PM, 6 March 1952, Re Proposed RC. PRO CO 822/708 ff9.

⁹¹ Editorial in *Uganda Post* by JW Kiwanuka, *African Affairs Fortnightly Review*, 30 Oct 1952, PRO CO 822/424 ff39.

⁹² *African Affairs Fortnightly Review*, 29 Jan 1953, PRO CO 822/425.

⁹³ Monthly Political Surveys: Uganda (Secret. 1953), PRO CO 822/382.

Africa and the congestion of population on the land in certain localities, to examine the measures necessary to be taken to achieve an improved standard of living, including the introduction of capital to enable peasant farming to develop and expand production, and to frame recommendations thereon with particular reference to:

1) The economic development of the land already in occupation by the introduction of better farming methods;

2) The adaptations or modifications in traditional tribal systems of tenure necessary for the full development of the land."⁹⁴

The eight members of the EARC toured East Africa for several months between February 1953 and February 1954.⁹⁵

The Report of the EARC was published in 1955. The report argued that efficient mixed farming would not be possible under traditional systems of land tenure, and therefore there should be a move towards properly demarcated smallholdings and encouragement of 'progressive farmers.'

"Policy concerning the tenure and disposition of land should aim at individualisation of land ownership and mobility in the transfer of land which, without ignoring existing property rights, will enable access for economic use."⁹⁶

The EARC recognised that there was a need for a bold and positive step by the government to guide the development of land tenure to meet the requirements of the 'progressive' elements of society. It warned that if the barriers of free land exchange were not removed it would indefinitely retard the prosperity of the people of East Africa. It also recognised the importance of protecting existing property rights and stated that a legal process of adjudication of customary rights must be established; that there should be no registration of land below a certain size; and that registration must accommodate local needs and command a measure of local support.

The findings of the EARC were discussed in great detail in London⁹⁷ as well as in

⁹⁴ *Report of the East African Royal Commission, 1953-55* (London, 1955), xi.

⁹⁵ For further details see H. Macmillan, 'The East African Royal Commission' in D.A. Low and A. Smith, *History of East Africa* Vol 3, (Oxford, 1976). Appendix 1, 544-57. Details of members of EARC in KDA DC LAN121 ff11.

⁹⁶ *Report of the East African Royal Commission*, 428.

⁹⁷ Papers written by various officials in connection with different aspects of the Report including the recommendations on individualisation of land tenure give an indication of some of the technical issues around the recommendations, as well as demonstrating colonial thinking in relation to the recommendations. For example comments on Recommendations on the "Tenure and Disposition of Land" Chapter 23 of the Report of the Report of the EARC see PRO CO 822/874 ff1 - Note by African Studies Branch; ff2 - Comments by Simpson on Land Tenure. Detailed discussion within CO about Land Tenure chapter (includes memos on land

Uganda. In private correspondence Governor Cohen admitted that he was "very disappointed"⁹⁸ with the Report, although he conceded that the land tenure section was "very valuable." The EARC did have a profound impact on ordinary farmers in Kigezi in the years that followed its publication, as colonial officials attempted to implement its recommendations, through the granting of titles, consolidation, enclosure, and farm planning.

Whilst Ugandans had shown "very little interest" in the Report initially,⁹⁹ the Land Tenure Proposals that followed the publication of the EARC Report made a much greater impact. The Government of Uganda accepted the major recommendations,¹⁰⁰ and published the Land Tenure Proposals on 6th January 1956. These put forward the proposal of confirming individual customary tenure by adjudication of the land and registration of title.¹⁰¹ The proposals had "the object of introducing a system of individual land tenure which will be more suited to the efficient development of farming than the customary systems of tenure which have (outside Buganda) hitherto prevailed."¹⁰² The Ministry of Lands was created shortly afterwards, with Mungonya appointed as Minister.

Reactions to the proposed changes need to be examined on three levels: colonial officials in London, reactions within Uganda, and in Kigezi. The CO was taken rather by surprise at the speed with which the Uganda Government published the Land Tenure Proposals, believing that more discussion might have been beneficial.¹⁰³ The use of the term

ownership pre-EARC, individualism etc) see PRO CO 822/874. For more on Colonial Mind see PRO CO 822/877.

⁹⁸ Letter to Perham from Cohen, 2 Aug 1955. RH MSS Perham 514/5 ff38+.

⁹⁹ Letter to Miss Wix of Af Bureau from Richards, 9 Jan 1956. RH MSS Afr s 1681, File 18. For reception to Report by people at Makerere see RH MSS Perham 518/6 - EARC, - Background to the EARC: ff2 - Address by Prof FB Wilson (Dept of Ag) on EARC and Agric; ff6 - JL Joy (Ag Econ, Mak) Ag Economics and Report; ff23- JE Goldthorpe (Sociologist, Mak) EA Society and Report; ff27- RC Pratt (Pol, Mak) - Political Implications of Report.

¹⁰⁰ For more details of Uganda Government's reaction to EARC report see Uganda Government's Despatch on the EARC Report, 1956. Also Telegram from Crawford, Ug to S of S for C, 23 May 1957 re "Royal Commission Report" discussion of this despatch, PRO CO 822/1613 ff11.

¹⁰¹ Uganda Government, *Land Tenure Proposals* (Entebbe, 1955).

¹⁰² "Brief for Debate in House of Lords on a Motion by Lord Hudson. Land Use in Uganda, Summary, Confidential." Enclosed in letter to WAC Mathieson from Cohen, 16 June 1956, enclosing brief for Lord Hudson's motion in House of Lords, which Hudson was persuaded to postpone. PRO CO 822/946 ff7 and ff7Enc.

¹⁰³ The S of S for C had not even seen the Proposals. See Telegram to Cohen from Lloyd, 9 Jan 1956. (Immediate, Secret and Personal) PRO CO 822/877 ff7. Further details of CO reactions to Land Tenure Proposals, and of procedures to be followed for adjudication etc by people in CO in PRO CO 822/877.

"African land" in place of Crown land, caused particular concern amongst colonial officials. Much of the discussion that followed the proposals was concerned with the legality of introducing changes to land tenure. The Uganda government was keen to avoid having to amend the law as they wanted to avoid public debate over the proposals, which they felt might lead to suspicion as to the intentions of the Government. There was a feeling that the proposals should be put into place with little fuss and Ugandans would then see their advantages.

The considerable divergence of opinion between the CO in London and officials in Uganda is most striking in their discussions of the Land Tenure Proposals. Simpson, the CO's Land Tenure expert, criticized the use of "active and forceful propaganda" as being the wrong approach saying "if the people really do not want it, why bother?"¹⁰⁴ He believed the principal reason for a system of land registration had been missed, saying "It is only necessary, or desirable, in areas where land is being transferred, (ie areas where there are economic pressures)." He was also very critical of Uganda's use of the term "granting" of title - which he said "gets them utterly and completely on the wrong foot." Instead they should be "recognising" title and until they did so they would "continue to receive the hostility which they describe." He ended his note, which was not to be sent to Uganda, by saying that "Their basic approach is wrong, but they do not believe me when I tell them so, or think it is important even though they continue to get this stoney reception." The EARC itself spoke of the "confirmation" of individual land rights.

Despite what has been called the "moderate tone and manifest flexibility"¹⁰⁵ of the proposals the reaction to them within Uganda was generally negative. The proposals were discussed in District Councils and there was the widespread suspicion that they were part of an attempt to alienate land. Officials noted that

"Active and forceful propaganda has been conducted for a long period to try and sell the idea of land titles to a generally hostile local population. Except in Kigezi and Ankole Districts, this propaganda has met with little success despite the fact that the new gospel (as the land tenure proposals have almost become) has been

¹⁰⁴ Comments by Simpson re Note for Brigadier Hotine's Visit to Uganda, enclosed in letter to Simpson from Smith, 23 Oct 1957. Comments for information only - not for reply to Uganda. PRO CO 822/1407 ff20B & ff20D. His emphasis.

¹⁰⁵ Obol-Ochola, 'Customary Land Law', 254.

put across with all the zeal and fervour of a religious creed."¹⁰⁶ But reactions varied from one district to another: At one end of the scale (the most opposed) was Lango, where there were disturbances in Lira outside the hall where Minister of Land Tenure was discussing the proposals. These disturbances were apparently directed against the African Public Relations Officer in the Local Government because he supported the proposals.¹⁰⁷ The District Council of Bugisu, in eastern Uganda, appointed a sub-committee to study the proposals and it was reported that the majority of members of the committee were in favour, but that when the committee held meetings at *gombolola* level considerable opposition was expressed, apparently "stirred up in all cases by local dissident members of the committee."¹⁰⁸ In Ankole, although the District Council did give formal approval to the proposals in 1958 this did not happen without opposition.¹⁰⁹ Colonial authorities dismissed the opposition to the proposals as merely: "organised by political parties for political ends,"¹¹⁰ while one political party, Uganda National Congress, was blamed in particular.¹¹¹

In Kigezi the reaction was rather different. The proposals were submitted to Kigezi District Council in 1956 and a campaign began, led by the Ministry of Lands, to persuade first senior chiefs and then ordinary people, of the benefits of titles. Mungonya, the newly appointed Minister of Land Tenure, and Lawrance, Permanent Secretary to the Minister, visited the district on several occasions in 1957 and 1958 to discuss the proposals and to persuade people of their value.¹¹²

Copies of the proposals were distributed to all *saza* and *gombolola* chiefs in Kigezi who were told to submit any queries they had. The DC stated that "no resolutions should be passed ..[until we have ensured that] the proposals have been properly understood."¹¹³ The questions asked indicate the concerns of chiefs: many simply asked why there was

¹⁰⁶ Note for Brigadier Hotine's Visit to Uganda, enclosed in Letter to Simpson from Smith, 23 Oct 1957, PRO CO 822/1407 ff20B.

¹⁰⁷ Extract from Uganda Monthly Intelligence Report, Oct 1956. PRO CO 822/1407 ff2.

¹⁰⁸ Confidential Note on Land Tenure Proposals (25 Nov 1957). Enclosure to letter to Matheison from Lawrance, 7 Nov 1957. PRO CO 822/1407 ff18.

¹⁰⁹ To Sec of State from Acting Gov. er. Ug Confidential. PRO CO 822/1407 ff25.

¹¹⁰ Note on Land Tenure Policy, Surveys for Land Titles prepared by Ministry of Land tenure, for Brig Hotine prior to his visit to Uganda, 29 Oct 1957, PRO CO 822/1407 ff12.

¹¹¹ Confidential note on the Land Tenure Proposals, 25 Oct 1957, PRO CO 822/1407 ff18.

¹¹² For more details see KDA DC LAN12II.

¹¹³ Letter to Gomb and Saza Chfs from DC, 12 March 1956, KDA DC LAN12II ff1.

a need for titles, while others expressed more specific concerns such as what would happen when a title holder died, and what would be the position of swamps.¹¹⁴ A land tenure sub-committee was established in early 1958 and this met *saza* councils to get their views, while the public was also invited to submit memoranda and was apparently given the opportunity to meet the Sub-Committee.¹¹⁵

Ngologoza (Secretary General) and Lwamafa (member of the LegCo for Kigezi) were both quickly persuaded of the advantages of the proposals, and they and other officials then cooperated with the DC to help lobby support. According to Obol-Ochola (quoting oral sources) officials who opposed the proposals were sacked by Ngologoza for being "reactionary and unprogressive."¹¹⁶ The senior officials who lobbied in support of the proposals were the first to apply for adjudication and registration in early 1957 and others quickly followed. Thus the opposition of the District Council turned to support and in late 1957 the Kigezi District Council passed a resolution approving the grant of freehold titles which then got under way.

4.3 - Titles, consolidation, enclosure and farm planning.

Before a land title could be granted and registered it was necessary to establish that the land was owned by the individual under "native custom". Legal Notice No.91, "Crown Land Adjudication Rules", was issued in 1958 and explained the procedure to be followed for adjudication. Adjudication Committees were established to examine all questions of ownership and boundaries. These Committees were elected from the people resident in each *muluka*¹¹⁷ by all the taxpayers in that *muluka*, the *muluka* chief chairing the Committee. Voting was by show of hands and the chairman had the casting vote. A person applied to be adjudged as the owner of their land, and the Adjudication Committee confirmed the boundaries and ownership of the land. Once it was satisfied that the applicant was the owner, the certificate would be referred to the DC. Unless there were any problems, he would forward a copy of the certificate to the *gombolola* chief. Appeals

¹¹⁴ See various letters to DC from Chiefs, KDA DC LAN12II.

¹¹⁵ Letter to Chairman District Council, from Ngologoza, Chairman Land Tenure Sub Committee, 15 Feb 1958, KDA DC LAN12-II ff109. Also Letter to Clerk of Kigezi District Council from Ngologoza, Chairman Land Tenure Sub Committee, 14 April 1958, ff116.

¹¹⁶ Obol-Ochola, 'Customary Land Law', 276. No evidence has been found to support this, however confidential files on this issue were not seen.

¹¹⁷ Adjudication committees were initially at *muluka* level, but this was later changed to the lower level of *bukungu*. See KDA DC LAN 12/II for more details.

could be made to the District Native Court (the highest Native Court in the country) and their decision was final.¹¹⁸ Appeals could only be made for a period of 30 days from the time that it was received by the *gombolola* chief. After this period the person could apply to the Director of Lands and Surveys to be registered as the freehold proprietor of his land.¹¹⁹ Only after ownership had been confirmed could the survey be carried out, and on completion of survey, the Certificate of Title was issued to the owner on payment of a fee.¹²⁰

The Adjudication Committee had power to overrule findings of civil courts. Membership of this body was obviously very important and before the pilot project began there was some discussion as to who should be on the committee. Initially, each committee was to cover a *muluka*:

"Members of the committee should be chosen by the people of the *muluka* at a public meeting, presided over by the *muluka* chief. There is nothing to prevent *muluka* councillors from forming the basis of the committee, if they are chosen, but every effort must be made to include those clan elders who are normally associated with land matters. Although the people of the *muluka* should have complete freedom of choice, the names of the committee should be subject to formal approval by a higher authority, either the District Commissioner, the Secretary General or the *saza* chief, who should satisfy himself that the committee has been properly chosen, is of the correct size and contains some representation of traditional land authorities."¹²¹

Officials evidently believed that some individuals had authority over land matters. But, despite reference to "traditional land allocators,"¹²² officials never spelt out who these might be, or precisely what their role was.¹²³ It is significant therefore that well into the

¹¹⁸ Lawrance, 'Pilot Schemes for grant of Land Titles'. See also KDA DC LAN12-VA for details re adjudication procedure followed etc.

¹¹⁹ Notice "Crown Land Adjudication Rules" KDA DC LAN12II ff119. For full details see Crown Lands (Adjudication) Rules, Legal Notice No 91 of 1958, KDA DoA 154 ff29. Gazette, 1 May 1958 announced that these Rules had been approved and applied to Kigezi. Letter to Perm Sec, Min of Land Tenure from DC, 3 May 1958, KDA DC LAN12-II ff1.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Land Tenure Policy: Grant of Title: Kigezi. Record of Meeting held at Kabale, 29 March 1957 (Confidential) (Present: Minister of Land Tenure; Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Land Tenure; DC etc) PRO CO 822/1407 ff7.

¹²² Letter to Mr Matheison from Lawrance, 7 Nov 1957, enclosing "a note recently prepared for member of Executive Council giving the most recent position concerning the implementation of Govt's Land Tenure Proposals, (Confidential) 25 Oct 1957, PRO CO 822/1407 ff18.

¹²³ Another reference to "clan elders" came from Watts, a member of the Lands and Survey Department, who referred to the adjudication process saying that "The original grants were decided by clan leaders on the basis of occupation and ratified at huge meetings on the ground." Papers of Mrs AG Watts (nee Budge) (Worked in Lands and Survey Dept 1945-47 and 1955-60) - Women Administrative Officers in Colonial Africa; Uganda:

1950s clan elders were being mentioned as being associated with land matters. It could be that they did indeed have authority over land, and had always had that authority and were simply trying to protect it. Or it could be that chiefs were attempting to legitimise their authority by emphasising their status as clan elders.

The majority of titles in Kigezi were granted systematically as part of the Land Tenure Pilot Project (LTPP), but some sporadic titles were granted outside the pilot project area. Sporadic titles were granted for parcels of land that were physically isolated from other land being granted titles, whereas systematic grants were made when an area was selected (such as the pilot project area) and the whole area was adjudicated. The systematic method was much cheaper, but this method could only be used if there was close to 100% agreement in the areas concerned. The reasons behind the granting of the handful of "sporadic" titles in Ndorwa and Rukiga seem to have been largely political. In particular, they can be seen as an incentive to senior chiefs to approve the Land Tenure Proposals.

Titles were requested by Ngologoza and nine others for land held in Ndorwa and Rukiga as early as March 1957.¹²⁴ At a discussion of the granting of sporadic grants it was stated that "The more important the grantee, the more likely are people to follow his example. Some priority should therefore be given to senior chiefs."¹²⁵ Officials of the Land and Surveys Department were not at all keen on this: one noted that sporadic grants were "not my idea but one which the politicians were trying to foist onto us."¹²⁶ Lawrance (Uganda's Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Land) admitted that sporadic grants were "being given in the Kabale area for "political" reasons."¹²⁷ The EARC had also been against the granting of sporadic titles in principle, saying "the sporadic adjudication of individual holdings has many drawbacks," but noted that

"while on tour they had noticed a number of progressive African farmers who would welcome a final adjudication of rights in their holdings and the opportunity

RH MSS Afr s 1799, Box VIII (40).

¹²⁴ Letter to Min of Land Tenure from Ngologoza, 28 March 1957, KDA DoA 17A-2 ff200. The address on this letter (Mwanjari, Gomb Kitumba, Ndorwa) shows that Ngologoza did indeed live in Ndorwa, and therefore was not living on his land claimed as part of the resettlement scheme. Eight of these individuals got sporadic grants.

¹²⁵ Record of Meeting held at Kabale to discuss land tenure policy, 29 March 1957. PRO CO 822/1407 ff7.

¹²⁶ Letter to Simpson (CO's Land Tenure Specialist) from Smith, Land and Surveys Department, Uganda 23 Oct 1957. PRO CO 822/1407 ff20A.

¹²⁷ Letter to Simpson from Lawrance, 28 May 1958. PRO CO 822/1407 ff27.

for having their titles registered... In these cases the additional expense and difficulty of individual adjudication and registration would be justified and would be likely to stimulate local support for carrying out systematic adjudication."¹²⁸

The process by which sporadic titles were adjudicated was ostensibly the same as systematic grants, and a number of adjudication committees were set up specifically for the sporadic grants. However, there is evidence that the sporadic grants were given 'special treatment'; sometimes surveying began before the adjudication process was actually complete in order to speed up the granting of titles.¹²⁹

By December 1958, the surveys in respect to the 13 parcels of land within a 4 mile radius of Kabale belonging to 8 notable individuals (including Ngologoza, Kakwenza and other senior chiefs) had been completed¹³⁰ and presentation of these titles was made at a public ceremony held in Kabale on 23rd January 1959 by the Minister of Lands and Mineral Development.¹³¹ We can only speculate as to whether these chiefs were offered the chance of having their land adjudicated and titles granted in return for passing a resolution in the District Council to approve of the Land Tenure Proposals, and for persuading more junior chiefs that the district should go ahead with the proposals.

Once Kigezi District Council had formally accepted the principle of granting titles in October 1957, a pilot project began in Nyakaina *muluka*, *gombolola* Buyanzha in Ruzhumbura, in the northeast of the district, see Map 4. Discussing Kigezi district as a whole, Lawrance admitted that "from a technical point of view, it would have been difficult to have found a more unsuitable area." The pilot scheme was chosen "partly by the number of applications received, partly by the wish to avoid unduly difficult terrain

¹²⁸ *Report of the East African Royal Commission*, 351.

¹²⁹ Note on "Land - Kigezi District" ("Record of Discussions: Director of Lands and Surveys; Perm Sec Land Tenure; DC Kigezi and others, April 1958") PRO CO 822/1407 ff23Enc.

¹³⁰ Letter to DC from Anderson, Staff Surveyor, Kabale, 24 Dec 1958. Enclosing list of owners, location of land, adjudication certificate number etc. KDA DC LAN12-II ff145 and ff145Enc. These individuals were Paulo Ngologoza, Paulo Kakwenza, Tadewo Mbafundizeki, Coronerio Rukuba, John Lwamafa, Petero R Ntungwa, Sebastiano B Rwabyoma, and Gabrieri Tiragana. Most of the 13 plots were in Kyanamira, the others in Kitumba.

¹³¹ Letter to Paulo Ngologoza, Paulo Kakwenza, Tadewo Mbafundizeki, Coronerio Rukuba, John Lwamafa, Petero R Ntungwa, Sebastiano B Rwabyoma, Gabrieri Tiragana from DC, 2 Jan 1959, re presentation and grant of title, KDA DC LAN12-II ff148. There was actually a complaint in late 1958 against one of these sporadic titles, that of Ngologoza concerning his land in Katokye. The complaint was made after the one month given for appeals, and so was dismissed. Letter to Gomb Chf Kyanamira (Copies to DC, SecGen, Saza Chf Ndorwa and Mr P Bitaka) from Ngologoza, 3 Dec 1958. KDA DC LAN 12/5 ff12. and Letter to Chf Judge from DC, 8 Dec 1958 ff14.

and partly by the wish to avoid fragmented or severely subdivided areas."¹³² The choice of area was therefore made so that the problems of trying to implement consolidation could be avoided. Additionally, Buyanzha had been a resettlement area and so the desire for security of tenure on what, for some, was relatively newly acquired land may have been particularly strong. Explaining why Nyakaina *muluka* was chosen, the DC noted that

"Not only have a large number of applications for title already been received from this area but it has the additional advantage that the vexed problem of ownership of the grazing areas will not arise on any large scale in this particular *muluka*."¹³³

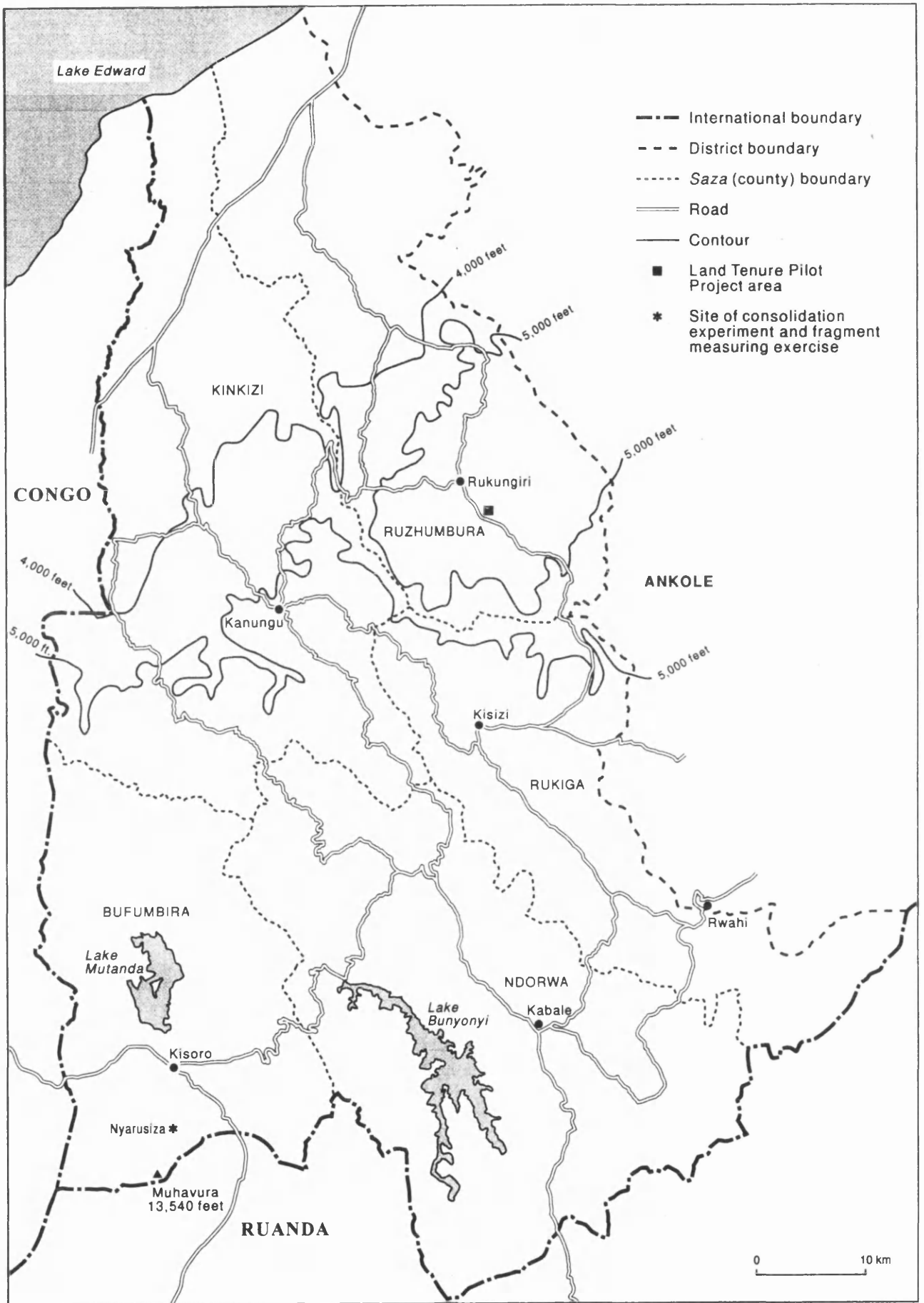
When consideration was being given as to which area should be next to be adjudicated, the DC recommended a *muluka* where "there are a number of important and influential landowners in that area and they were those who helped to give a lead to the rest."¹³⁴ The concerns that the project should be seen to be a success were therefore important in explaining why this area, in the north of the district, was chosen.

¹³² Lawrance, 'A Pilot Scheme for grant of land titles', 137.

¹³³ Letter to Perm Sec, Min of Land Tenure from DC, 3 May 1958, KDA DC LAN12-II ff1.

¹³⁴ Letter to Whittaker from Fraser, DC, 17 Sept 1958, KDA DC LAN12-II ff129. It did however lie partly outside the mapping area that the Land and Survey Department had specified the next adjudication area should be within.

Map 4



KIGEZI DISTRICT

Nyakaina covered an area of about 7 square miles and work began in September 1958. By the end of September 478 applications from the Nyakiana Pilot Scheme area had been received and the Chairman of the adjudication committee informed district officials that there were "200 more properties in Nyakaina miruka [sic] than were originally estimated."¹³⁵ This came as something of a surprise to both the DC and Lands and Survey Department staff who were concerned that this would upset the timetable of the pilot project. However they decided that as it was the first pilot scheme it "should be carried through to its logical conclusion"¹³⁶ and that they should complete all the applications in the entire *muluka*. The *saza* chief suspected that many of the owners of these properties worked outside the district.¹³⁷

A number of problems were encountered during the LTPP. Changes were made to improve the procedure - for example the paperwork that Adjudication Committee had to deal with was reduced; the size of Adjudication Committee was increased so that (as the work was unpaid and time consuming) members could miss occasional sessions without holding up the work of the committee. In November 1958, it was decided to shift from *muluka* to *butongole* adjudication committees.¹³⁸ A number of appeals were lodged, mainly on the grounds of encroachment of boundaries, while others challenged customary title. Appeals were dealt with in the District Native Court.¹³⁹

Soon after the surveys had been done there were requests for the names on the certificates to be changed as land had been sold, or people had inherited land on the original owner's death. The pilot project also revealed the problem of land exchanges or inheritance occurring between the surveying and issuing of title, and it was felt that a "Registrar of Titles" should be established to register the heirs of registered land. To do this it was first necessary to have a system of certification of heirs and the issue of what role clan elders should play again arose in discussions. Central government felt that it should not

¹³⁵ Letter to Whittaker from Fraser, DC, 4 Oct 1958, KDA DC LAN12-II ff130 and letter to Fraser, DC from Whittaker, 15 Oct 1958, KDA DC LAN12-II ff131.

¹³⁶ Letter to Fraser, DC from Whittaker, 15 Oct 1958, KDA DC LAN12-II ff131.

¹³⁷ Letter to Whittaker from Fraser, 3 Nov 1958, KDA DC LAN12II ff132.

¹³⁸ Letter to Fraser, DC from Whittaker, 15 Oct 1958, KDA DC LAN12II ff131. Also letter to DC from Ngologoza, Chairman, Land tenure Sub-Comm (Chf Judge), 23 Dec 1958, ff144.

¹³⁹ With one exception, which went to the Uganda High Court although was apparently abandoned. Obol-Ochola, 'Customary Land Law', 298-9.

participate directly in the certification of heirs, which should be done either by Native Courts or by clan leaders. The Land Tenure Committee of the Kigezi District Council favoured clan leaders, with appeal to Native Courts, but the Minister of Lands recommended Native Courts. The reasons that he gave for this were largely of a practical nature, for example it would be difficult to list all the clan leaders, the fact that many clan leaders were illiterate and:

"Since there was to be an appeal to the courts, there would appear to be no point in giving the clan leaders this function. Courts should take the advice of the clan leader in all cases. ... Experience elsewhere has shown that certification of heirs by clan leaders often leads to serious delays."¹⁴⁰

The issue was further discussed at a meeting of the Kigezi District Council Standing Committee which debated who should issue certificates when land changed hands through sale or inheritance.

"The possibility of Clan leaders being responsible for issuing the certificates as opposed to Court was considered as the favourable way, as it was a general opinion that it is in conformity with the tribal customs and the idea of Government interfering in the individual private ownership of land was considered unfavourably; the Committee however felt that the grieved party should have the right of appeal to Court. ... it was agreed that the decision of who should issue [such] Certificates ... should be referred to Low[er] Councils and eventually to District Council, who would then recommend to Government, the procedure best suited to the district."¹⁴¹

It does seem that some reassertion of the authority of clan elders was being attempted and it is possible that chiefs, realising that their powers were being squeezed, were trying to reestablish authority by virtue of being old men.

By December 1959, out of the total of 5,500 properties in the Ruzhumbura pilot scheme about 3,000 had been adjudicated and 2,000 surveyed. It was hoped that the scheme would be completed by the end of 1960,¹⁴² although it was not until March 1962 that

¹⁴⁰ Record of a Meeting between the Minister of Land and Min Devt and General Purposes Committee and Land Tenure Committee of the Kigezi District Council on 5 Jan 1960. KDA DC ADM 9/7 ff46enc.

¹⁴¹ Record of Meeting of Kigezi District Council Standing Committee, 5 Jan 1960 Present: SecGen: FK Kitaburaza, (Chairman); Councillors: P Itumeineho; G Katabazi; P Rukeribuga; Itazyia; JB Bitwaari; AG Bazanyamaso; Y Tinzara. Mr Z Mungonya - Minister of Lands and Mineral Devt; Mr J Lawrance - Perm Sec to Min of lands and Min Devt; Kigezi: Purcell - DC; K Anderson - Staff Surveyor. KDA DC ADM 9/7 ff46.

¹⁴² Note on "Land - Kigezi District" prepared by Ministry of Land and Mineral Devt. Sent to DAO for comments 1 Dec 1959. KDA DoA 154 ff90.

over 6000 plots had been adjudged.¹⁴³ It is of interest to note that by April 1968 only 1800 titles had actually been paid for and collected.¹⁴⁴ It seems that people felt that having had the boundaries marked with concrete blocks, and knowing that the certificate was there if they ever needed it, was enough. Obol-Ochola has observed that most of the registered proprietors continued to sell and lease land under customary law without registering these arrangements. He concluded that the "introduction of freehold has no immediate and direct result on agriculture ... From the point of view of economic development of Kigezi the introduction of registration of land titles had very little or no impact at all. The scheme has merely alleviated boundary disputes and had no immediate and direct bearing on economic developments."¹⁴⁵ Similar conclusions were reached in a recent study which attempted to assess the effect of increased ownership security on farm productivity. It concluded that there was greater security in the LTPP area, with fewer disputes on titled land. However, the extent to which titled farmers invested more in the land depended on the supporting institutions and facilities which in this area had been largely lacking since the late 1950s. Therefore they concluded that "land titling alone only sets a foundation for agricultural and general economic development."¹⁴⁶

The fact that people frequently did not buy their titles led the Department of Lands and Surveys to introduce a fee to be paid before survey began to recuperate some of their costs. Writing after independence, Whittaker, who worked for the Ministry of Lands and Survey, said that "After we completed the 7000 titles in the Ruzhumbura Scheme, we said we would not do any further work unless we got an instalment of fees first (the instalment being Shs 50). There seems to be no difficulty in getting instalments."¹⁴⁷

Thus the area selected for the LTPP was chosen in part because the problem of fragmentation was not thought to be too serious. It was hoped that titles could be granted

¹⁴³ KDA DC LAN 8/II - In 1961 the possibility of a systematic survey around Kabale was discussed, but appears it never happened.

¹⁴⁴ Commissioner for Lands, quoted in Obol-Ochola, 'Customary Land Law', 307-8.

¹⁴⁵ Obol-Ochola, 'Customary Land Law', 328-31.

¹⁴⁶ For more recent studies on the long term impacts of the scheme see MISR and the Land Tenure Centre, University of Wisconsin 'The Rujumbura Pilot Land Registration Scheme: Kigezi (Rukungiri District). The Impact of Titling on agricultural development', (1988). And Roth, Cochrane and Kisamba-Mugerwa 'Tenure Security, credit use' in Bruce, and Migot-Adholla (eds), *Searching for Land Security*.

¹⁴⁷ Letter to JCD Lawrance from R Whittaker, (no date, post independence) Copy in possession of author (from JCDL).

with ease to plots where the sticky problem of consolidation did not have to be confronted. Whilst surveying and the granting of titles were administered by the Department of Land and Surveys, consolidation and enclosure, which the administration saw as the essential precursor to titles in the southern part of the district, were administered by the Department of Agriculture. If the principal aim of the Department of Agriculture in the 1940s had been implementing soil conservation measures, their principle aim in the late 1950s became consolidation.

Efforts to consolidate land had first been made in Kigezi as part of the resettlement scheme when it was hoped that land left behind by settlers would be "reorganised" into something more orderly, and fragmented plots would be brought together. However, people chose to leave their land with relatives as an insurance in case things went wrong, or else they sold it, and consolidation was never a success as part of the resettlement scheme. In the mid-1950s more serious attempts at consolidation were made, hand in hand with the granting of titles. The EARC proposed legislation that would provide "an opportunity for limiting future subdivisions of ... [fragmented] land, by including a prohibition on the registration of subdivisions below a certain size... every opportunity offered should be taken to demonstrate the disadvantages of inheritance laws, causing subdivision and dispersal of holdings."¹⁴⁸ Part of the reason that consolidation was closely linked with the land tenure policies was that air surveys (which substantially reduced the cost of surveying and granting titles) would only be possible if land was enclosed by a hedge visible from the air. The initial aim was that titles would only be granted to consolidated land, which effectively meant that titles were granted either to individuals with large plots, or in areas where consolidation was unnecessary as plot sizes were larger to start with, such as Rujhumbura.

Anticipating that the problem of fragmentation would make it impossible to grant titles in the southern part of the district, the Department of Agriculture began a programme of land consolidation from 1956. A safari around Ndorwa and Rukiga to establish local feelings towards consolidation found that most farmers had land on hill tops, hillsides and in the valleys, scattered over a wide area; while many felt that consolidation might have been a good idea the general feeling was that fragmentation had gone too far, and it was

¹⁴⁸ *Report of the East African Royal Commission*, 356.

too late to consolidate. They also stressed that with scattered plots they had a variety of soils and climatic conditions and were suspicious of losing out during exchange for consolidation.¹⁴⁹ This view is consistently expressed to this day¹⁵⁰ and in the words of Byagagaire, who worked for the Department of Agriculture in the 1950s:

"The idea [of consolidation] was excellent, but it was impracticable ... the crops which grow [well] here are different to those which grow elsewhere. Productivity is very different, especially at the bottom of the hill - it can be 3 or 4 times different. The problem is how many acres to give for a plot that is different fertility."¹⁵¹

DAO King's "Notes on Land Consolidation", which laid out the advantages of consolidation and explained the procedures to be followed, was circulated in March 1957.¹⁵² At this time consolidation and farm planning, which were closely associated, were high priorities for the Department. King wrote:

"As a result of the reports of the Royal Commission and the Agricultural Productivity Committee it was decided to secure better land utilisation by farm planning and land consolidation. ... Land consolidation has not yet commenced, though considerable propaganda has been put over on the subject; there is a hope that a small pilot scheme may be started during this year."¹⁵³

Consolidation was undoubtedly King's 'pet-subject': "The first essential step towards increased agricultural productivity in Kigezi is to secure consolidation of fragmented holdings."¹⁵⁴ A propaganda campaign was launched and field officers were informed that their "main effort should be directed towards achieving land consolidation."¹⁵⁵ Members of the District Team were asked by the DAO to encourage consolidation on the lines of the circular which he had drawn up, and issued to chiefs down to *gombolola* level.¹⁵⁶ But difficulties soon emerged, such as when the DAO noted that while some consolidation and enclosure was taking place in Buhara, Ndorwa, this was only taking

¹⁴⁹ Letter to DAO from TF Ellis, Field Officer, Ndorwa and Rukiga, 28 July 1956, KDA DoA 17A-2 ff34. This coincided with an increase in the number of European staff in the Department, with a European officer in each *saza*, following the recommendations of the Agricultural Productivity Committee.

¹⁵⁰ Interviews with farmers, Kabale District, July-September 1995.

¹⁵¹ Interview with J.M. Byagagaire, 21 Sept 1995.

¹⁵² "Notes on Land Consolidation" by EW King (in English and Lukiga), KDA DC LAN 8I ff124.

¹⁵³ Notes on Agriculture, by EW King, DAO (March 1957), KDA DoA 12/B ff350.

¹⁵⁴ Letter to J. King, Director of Ag from EW King, DAO, 9 April 1957, KDA DoA 17A-2 ff214. Reply to letter to PAOs from J King, Director of Ag, 1 April 1957, asking each DAO to name the one enterprise they would like to see accomplished. KDA DoA 17A-2 ff209.

¹⁵⁵ For example Letter to Field Officer, Bufumbira from King, DAO, 13 March 1957, KDA DoA 12/B ff351.

¹⁵⁶ Minutes of Kigezi District Team Meeting, 5 April 1957, KDA DoA TeamMins.

place "where the land is fragmented amongst members of one family."¹⁵⁷

As part of the move towards enclosure and consolidation chiefs were instructed in December 1957 that all ALG holdings should be enclosed with live hedging (after they had ensured that there are no disputes over it).¹⁵⁸ A cautionary note was sounded that there might be a move to enclose common land or land to which people did not have recognised rights.¹⁵⁹ In some areas this did happen, and it appears to have been a greater problem in northern Kigezi, where cattle played a more prominent part in the agricultural system. A number of reports of the enclosure of communal land reached the administration.¹⁶⁰ Byagagaire, a Muhororo from northern Kigezi, commented:

"When land titles came it led to land enclosure. When somebody got his land title he enclosed his land, so you could no longer graze there. ... before people realised what was happening [someone] could acquire a part of the [communal] land and enclose it. People might convince the public that they should be allowed to keep itif they could say that my grandfather used to use it. ...when people were trying to get title... they started to say that my grandfather used it."¹⁶¹

In the south of the district there was already little communal land and individual rights were firmly entrenched even without the enclosure of land.

The reasons behind the strong desire to enclose were outlined in a government circular which stated that

"Enclosure promotes or helps to create individual rights over, or ownership of, land in conformity with the recommendations of the Royal Commission... Individual ownership in turn encourages greater care of the land and increased investment of capital and labour on it. ... Enclosure helps to provide security of boundaries and a consequent reduction in litigation. Finally it enables aerial survey, which is far cheaper and quicker than ground survey, to be used in the grant of registered titles to Africans. Without enclosure it will prove impossible to grant titles to Africans on a large scale."¹⁶²

¹⁵⁷ Letter to Field Officer, Ndorwa from King, DAO, 29 Nov 1957, KDA DC AGR 6II ff79.

¹⁵⁸ Letter to Saza and Gomb Chiefs from SecGen, 30 Dec 1957, KDA DC LAN8I ff170. Churches were also advised to enclose all their church and school land. Note on "Land - Kigezi District", April 1958. PRO CO 822/1407 ff23Enc.

¹⁵⁹ Note on "Land - Kigezi District" ("Record of Discussions Director of Lands and Surveys; Perm Sec Land Tenure; DC Kigezi and others, April 1958"). PRO CO 822/1407 ff23Enc.

¹⁶⁰ For example letter to Field Officer, Ndorwa from DVO, 3 March 1959 - re enclosure of communal land in Kyanamira. eg KDA DoA 154 ff50,

¹⁶¹ Interview with J.M. Byagagaire, 21 Sept 1995.

¹⁶² Circular Standing Instruction, No 3 of 1959 - Enclosure on Agricultural Land, Issued by Ministry of Natural Resources, E'be, 10 Feb 1959. KDA DoA 154 ff89.

Farmers were to be encouraged to enclose land "which is recognised as their property according to native custom" but enclosure was not to be encouraged in areas of "severe fragmentation." It was suggested that if the majority of people in an area owned fragmented holdings then systematic consolidation would be "justified and desirable" before any enclosure took place; while if the majority of people owned unfragmented plots then consolidation should be carried on a "voluntary and sporadic basis" only, and enclosure should be encouraged.¹⁶³ In south Kigezi the former applied, but as we shall see, systematic consolidation utterly failed.

From 1957 it was considered that it was "all too obvious that any permanent improvement in land use depends on consolidation of fragmented holdings and the total enclosure of land"¹⁶⁴ and "intensification of propaganda towards land consolidation and enclosure" was planned.¹⁶⁵ A demonstration site to show the benefits of consolidation was planned in Kinkizi in January 1958,¹⁶⁶ and in this year enclosure became part of Soil Conservation Competition. Several *gombololas* who had failed to gain a place in the finals were informed that they might have done so had they enclosed more of their land. In particular, areas of recent settlement (in the northern part of the district) where plots were not fragmented were advised to concentrate on enclosure.¹⁶⁷ By 1960 "land use", and in particular the consolidation of fragmented holding and the enclosure of holdings, or marking of boundaries as well as farm layout were significant parts of the competition.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Memo on "Agreed Land Policy: Kigezi" 19 Feb 1958, KDA DoA ADMIN 2/1 ff48. Also: Draft Circular Standing Instruction: Rational Occupation of New Land and Planned Settlement - Natural Resources Committee; Land Use Sub Committee - Memoranda produced for first meeting on 9 Jan 1958 in Ministry of Natural Resources, E'be, KDA DoA ADMIN 2/1 ff33Enc. And Memo on Land Policy in Kigezi and Consolidation circulated at meeting of Land Use Sub-Committee - from Perm Sec, Ministry of Natural Resources, 16 Jan 1958, ff34. Minutes of Meeting of Natural Resources Sub-Comm at Ministry of Natural Resources, 9 Jan 1958, ff37.

¹⁶⁵ Minutes of First Meeting of Natural Resources Sub-Committee of Kigezi District Team held 2-3 Dec 1957; Appendix B - Land Policy: Kigezi Draft, KDA DoA ADMIN 2/1 ff22.

¹⁶⁶ Letter to Field Officer, Kinkizi from EW King DAO, 27 Dec 1957 re Land Consolidation Demonstration at Rugyeyo, KDA DC LAN8I ff169.

¹⁶⁷ Letter to Gomb Chf Rubaya from King, DAO, 11 Oct 1958, KDA DC AGR 6II ff102. See also KDA DoA 218A re emphasis of 1958 soil conservation competition.

¹⁶⁸ Proposed draft of New methods of Marking Soil Con Competition - Copy of outline sent to Field Officers for their comments, 18 Dec 1959, KDA DoA 218/A ff99. Also comments on amendments by Field Officers, KDA DoA 218/A ff109. Report on Annual Soil Cons Comp, 1959, for Sir Andrew Cohen Shield by Ellis, 20 Nov 1959, KDA DoA 218A ff93.

All did not proceed smoothly. Officials encountered problems with the order of enclosure, registration and consolidation. Ideally they wanted land to be consolidated, then enclosed with live hedges that could be seen from the air for aerial surveys, and finally a title granted. It was realised that this was not always happening and that enclosure was occurring on unconsolidated land. The DAO wrote that while he wanted to encourage enclosure, he was anxious that "people's enthusiasm for such work must be directed to the enclosure of their consolidated holdings."¹⁶⁹ He outlined in a letter to chiefs and heads of missionary societies the benefits of enclosure and stressed that

"Enclosure should only be undertaken on consolidated holdings. ... individuals should not enclose a whole series of small scattered plots, as this not only makes good land use impossible but will also hinder if not prevent any subsequent grant of title."¹⁷⁰

As was seen in the case of soil conservation measures much of the work of the Agricultural Department was directed through the hierarchy of chiefs who were responsible for trying to ensure that policies were implemented. It can also be seen that titles were the "carrot" offered to those who enclosed: *saza* chiefs were informed "If people are to secure titles over the next few years it is important that enclosure should start now, on consolidated holdings."¹⁷¹

The Agriculture Department focused their attention on small areas to try and get consolidation under way. Before doing this a "fragment measuring exercise" was begun in January 1959 in Bufumbira, see Map 4, with the aim of establishing what was a suitable unit for a future consolidation scheme. As it might be "difficult to get people to agree to consolidation,"¹⁷² it was initially thought that the area for the exercise should be as small as possible, but at the same time it should contain the majority of fragments owned by the landowners in that unit. The DC felt that to "get the exercise accepted at all" the area should be of more or less uniform soils even if such a unit area did not contain the majority of the fragments owned by the land owners in that unit.¹⁷³ An

¹⁶⁹ Letter to Gomb Chf Kyanamira from DAO, 19 May 1958, KDA DC AGR 6II ff89.

¹⁷⁰ Letter to SecGen, all Saza and Gomb Chfs and Mission Supervisors, from King, DAO, 3 Sept 1958, KDA DoA 154 ff2.

¹⁷¹ Letter to All saza Chfs, Kigezi from King, DAO, 14 Oct 1958, KDA DoA 154 ff6. Also see Letter to Saza Chiefs Bufumbira, Rubanda and Rukiga and gomb and Miluka chfs in these Sazas, from Kitaburaza, SecGen, 18 Nov 1959, KDA DoA 218A ff94.

¹⁷² Letter to Fraser, DC from Whittaker, 6 Jan 1959, KDA DC LAN 12/II ff154.

¹⁷³ Letter to BB Whittaker (Deputy Dir lands and Surveys) from Fraser, DC, 12 Jan 1959, KDA DC LAN 12/II ff155. Also copy on KDA DoA 154 ff33.

additional reason why the experimental area in Bufumbira was chosen was that it was the birthplace of the *saza* chief.

The fragment measuring exercise met with difficulties. In April 1959, the Secretary General visited the people of Kabindi, Nyarusiza (southern Bufumbira, near Mgahinga) to try and establish why they were refusing to participate. He explained the benefits of knowing the boundaries of their land, as well as the benefits of enclosure and titles to try to persuade them to allow the Survey Department to continue with the work. The people apparently told the Secretary General that a clear explanation of why the work had started had not been given to them and while explaining the exercise the *Mtwale* (*saza* chief of Bufumbira) had threatened them with imprisonment. They told the Secretary General that having heard the reasons behind the scheme they were happy to allow it to go ahead,¹⁷⁴ and by July 1959 over 1000 fragments had been measured. However, officials did not succeed in gathering information about additional plots owned by people outside the area of experiment,¹⁷⁵ and the District Team could find no way to stimulate consolidation.¹⁷⁶

It is clear that success at measuring fragments was a long way from achieving consolidation. From late 1958, attention focused on Bufumbira and it was reported that certain chiefs from there had been "invited to send interested land owners to visit other parts of the district where some voluntary consolidation had taken place and ... to choose suitable areas in their gombololas to begin the process."¹⁷⁷ Despite this, by the end of the year the DAO reported that "unfortunately no progress was being made."¹⁷⁸ It was decided that incentives should be offered; "Farmers with consolidated holdings will be given priority when coffee seedlings are issued,"¹⁷⁹ and people with land of over 2 acres would be the first to be offered titles.¹⁸⁰ Where some consolidation was going ahead (eg in Busanza, western Bufumbira) it was observed that this was largely the result of the

¹⁷⁴ Letter to DC from SecGen, 13 April 1959, KDA DC LAN 12/II ff177.

¹⁷⁵ Minutes of meetings of Natural Resources Sub Committee of Kigezi District Team, 4 May 1959 and 6 July 1959, KDA DoA Team Minutes.

¹⁷⁶ Minutes of meeting of Natural Resources Sub Committee of Kigezi District Team, 6 July 1959, KDA DoA Team Minutes.

¹⁷⁷ Minutes of meeting of Natural Resources Sub-Committee, 3 Nov 1958, KDA DoA Team Minutes.

¹⁷⁸ Minutes of meeting of Natural Resources Sub-Committee, 30 Dec 1958, KDA DoA Team Minutes.

¹⁷⁹ Letter to Field Officer, Bufumbira from DAO, 13 March 1959, KDA DoA 154 ff55.

¹⁸⁰ Note (no author) on letter to Mtwale Bufumbira from DC, 24 Oct 1959, KDA DC LAN 12/2 ff7.

"very energetic chief" and that this "would provide a good fillip to consolidation and enclosure if this area could be considered as the next one for systematic grant of title."¹⁸¹ Efforts were made in a number of different localities in Bufumbira, and while it seemed initially that some would succeed¹⁸² they in fact came to nothing. Finally, it was suggested that

"titles might be given to a few people who wanted titles even if consolidation did not take place in order to encourage the idea of consolidation. The Chairman would consider arranging for the grant of titles to people with 2 acres of more in areas of Bufumbira where this action might encourage people to consolidate in due course."¹⁸³

The Department considered turning their attention to Ndorwa, where it was believed that there was a "genuine demand"¹⁸⁴ and which would be more convenient to supervise, but this was later ruled out and efforts continued in Bufumbira. It was decided "at the specific request of the Land Tenure Committee, backed by the DC" that five sporadic grants should be made "to prominent persons having economic, unfragmented holdings in order to provide a "bait" to other people to consolidate."¹⁸⁵

It is clear that the administration was very keen for consolidation to succeed. But, by December 1959 it had "not yet proven possible to gain agreement of the people concerned to consolidate on a systematic basis"¹⁸⁶ in Bufumbira. The Department of Lands and Surveys determinedly continued to reiterate to district administrative and agricultural officers that consolidation should precede the granting of titles, and that propaganda should continue to persuade people of the "necessity and benefits of consolidation." Where

¹⁸¹ Letter to JCD Lawrance, Officer of Minister of Land Tenure from EW King, DAO, 27 May 1958, KDA DoA Saf1/3 ff77.

¹⁸² For example in Nyakabeya, Muganza, Chahi: Letter to DC from P Rukeribuga, Mtwale, Bufumbira, 15 Oct 1959, KDA DC LAN 12/2 ff3. Re the people of Nyakabaya deciding they no longer wanted to consolidate their land and the Mtwale trying to persuade them otherwise. Also see letter to Mtwale Bufumbira from DC, 15 Oct 1959. KDA DoA 154 ff86. re Meeting of 10 Oct 1959 with people of Chahi and the procedure to be followed.

¹⁸³ Minutes of meeting Natural Resources Sub Committee of Kigezi District Team, 2 Nov 1959, KDA DoA Team Minutes.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Note on "Land - Kigezi District" prepared by Ministry of Land and Mineral Devt. Sent to DAO for comments, 1 Dec 1959, KDA DoA 154 ff90. Also see: Note about Land in Kigezi by Lawrance, "made for record purposes only, after recent visit to Kigezi" enclosed with Letter to PCWP from Lawrance, Perm Sec for Min of Land Tenure, 26 April 1958 KDA DC LAN12II ff118. Covers enclosure, consol, land titles and farm planning. Also see Minutes of Meeting of Natural Resources Sub Committee of Kigezi District Team, 4 Jan 1960, KDA DoA Team Minutes.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

incentives were needed the main ones to be offered would be "the security of Titles and the opportunity to grow cash crops, particularly arabica coffee."¹⁸⁷ All these were a complete failure and systematic consolidation was never to succeed in southern Kigezi.

Realising that consolidation was always going to be very problematic, the question of how to control further subdivision was raised. Government felt that it had "an obligation to ensure that the money is not wasted through excessive sub-division with consequent deterioration of agricultural efficiency"¹⁸⁸ and that somebody should have power to lay down the minimum size of land that could be registered, while an inheritance bye-law would lay down the size of land that could not be sub-divided.¹⁸⁹ The General Purposes and Land Tenure Committees¹⁹⁰ and the Standing Committee¹⁹¹ of Kigezi District Council wanted such control to be exercised by local agencies, possibly *saza* councils, and not by Government agencies. They felt that farmers were fully aware when a plot was uneconomical to farm and tried to bring their land together or buy more land, and opposed any involvement of Central Government in the laying down of a minimum size of land that could be registered. In the event, the question was referred to the lower courts for discussion, and the proposal got nowhere.¹⁹²

The belief that consolidation and enclosure were a vital part of the move towards a greater agricultural efficiency was an important part of colonial thinking from the mid-1950s. It was believed that the granting of titles could never be fully carried out unless and until enclosure had occurred, and this in turn necessitated the consolidation of fragmented holdings. However, consolidation proved to be a major stumbling block for the colonial state. Unlike the LTPP, this was a policy that was to be executed by the Department of

¹⁸⁷ Record of Meeting on Consolidation and Land Titles in Kigezi, 6 Jan 1960. Attended by Mr Z Mungonya (Minister of Lands and Mineral Devt), Mr J Lawrance (Perm Sec to Min of Lands and Min Devt), FK Kitaburaza (SecGen), R Harvie (DAO), K Anderson (Staff Surveyor), RM Purcell (DC). KDA DC ADM 9/7 ff40.

¹⁸⁸ Record of a Meeting between the Minister of Land and Min Devt and General Purposes Committee and Land Tenure Committee of the Kigezi District Council, 5 Jan 1960. KDA DC ADM 9/7 ff46enc.

¹⁸⁹ Record of Meeting of Kigezi District Council Standing Committee, 5 Jan 1960 Present: SecGen: FK Kitaburaza, (Chairman); Councillors: P Itumeineho; G Katabazi; P Rukeribuga; Itazyia; JB Bitwaari; AG Bazanyamaso; Y Tinzara. Mr Z Mungonya (Minister of Lands and Mineral Devt); J Lawrance (Perm Sec to Min of Lands and Min Devt); Purcell (DC); K Anderson (Staff Surveyor). KDA DC ADM 9/7 ff46.

¹⁹⁰ Record of a Meeting between the Minister of Land and Min Devt and General Purposes Committee and Land Tenure Committee of the Kigezi District Council, 5 Jan 1960. KDA DC ADM 9/7 ff46enc.

¹⁹¹ Record of Meeting of Kigezi District Council Standing Committee, 5 Jan 1960. For attendance see footnote above. KDA DC ADM 9/7 ff46.

¹⁹² Ibid.

Agriculture and they found that there were many obstacles in the way of persuading people of the benefits of consolidation. It is somewhat ironic that they offered incentives to encourage consolidation - including titles for those who consolidated. Titles thus became not only the end goal, but also the means by which consolidation was to be carried out. On a number of occasions the efforts of individual chiefs to promote consolidation were lauded, while the suggestion of handing out a small number of titles to those who consolidated their land to act as a "bait" to others is very likely to have benefitted in particular those wealthier members of the community who had large areas of land. But, for the majority of the populace consolidation of their fragmented holdings was simply not feasible for reasons that will be examined below.

The final policy to be examined from this period is that of farm planning. This involved enclosure by hedging, laying out fields for arable production and grazing and the drawing up of a working plan for the holding, covering internal layout of the farm, and rotations to be followed.¹⁹³ In the same way that ultimately (because of the failure of consolidation) only individuals with larger holdings could get titles, it was noted early on that only farmers with holdings of at least 5 acres should apply for farm planning.¹⁹⁴ This did not therefore apply to the average Bakiga peasant farmer, but was geared towards the so-called "progressive" farmers and those with "economic" holdings.

Before looking in more detail at the progress of the farm planning service it is crucial to examine the link between farm planning and issues around the ownership and tenure of land. Farm Planning in itself was not supposed to have any formal link with the granting of titles or confirmation of ownership. The Agricultural Department tried to stress this point and keep the two separate in people's minds. It was noted that farm planning was "essentially an agricultural extension tool and has no sinister connotations with the Land Tenure Proposals."¹⁹⁵ At the same time, it was initially hoped that those having their farms planned would have the boundaries of their land certificated, but this suggestion was rejected by the Standing Committee because of the fear that it would "lead to suspicion as being the forerunner of Land Tenure Proposals on which the Council has not

¹⁹³ For details of the plans used see Allan *The African husbandman*, 396-404.

¹⁹⁴ Circular letter from EW King, DOA, 13 July 1956, re Applications and arrangements for farm planning. KDA DoA 17A-2 ff2.

¹⁹⁵ Memo of Farm Planning Policy, 1956. RH MSS Afr s 1209 Dept of Agriculture (3) ff354.

given a statement."¹⁹⁶ The Standing Committee only passed the resolution approving farm planning after "several hours" were spent explaining that farm planning should not be confused with the Land Tenure Proposals.¹⁹⁷ The Committee however recommended that individuals could apply to have their farm planned, but added that

"all arrangements regarding ownership should be settled by the chiefs concerned in consultation with the neighbours, relations and clan elders prior to an application being sent to the DAO. The application must be certified correct by the Muruka and Mukungu chiefs of the area concerned that the boundaries have been checked by all concerned and are correct and that there are no present or future disputes on that land."¹⁹⁸

Anyone who had already applied had to get a statement from their *muluka* and *mukunga* chiefs to certify that this procedure had been followed.

Officials within the Agriculture Department were anxious about having both a Land Registration Service and a Farm Planning Service going ahead at the same time. The Director of Agriculture was concerned that there would be "a great deal of suspicion aroused over Government's Land Tenure proposals" and the legislation would take some time to pass. He argued that the Department should "divorce" itself from the Land Tenure and Registration Authorities, and

"should go ahead quietly, as in Kenya, and advise farmers on the benefits to be obtained from consolidation, farm planning and get farm mapping done by our own staff... While I do not suggest for a moment a policy of non-cooperation with the Ministry of Land Tenure we, as a Department, cannot afford to get mixed up in politics or political controversy about land tenure or registration. We want to remain as the farmers advisers and friends; let us therefore train our own survey staff and make a quiet start as indicated above."¹⁹⁹

Taking this cautious, low key approach, the Department began to advocate farm planning, and by August 1956 it was reported that there had been "some favourable response." Most of the applications for planning were coming from Rujhumbura where, "some of the leading land owners, including the Secretary General, have been most keen to have their

¹⁹⁶ Notice Sent from Secgen to DC, 13 Sept 1956, KDA DC LAN12EAR ff45.

¹⁹⁷ Copy of Standing Committee Resolution on farm planning (13 Sept 1956) forwarded by DAO to Senior Asst AO, Mbarara, 8 March 1957. KDA DoA 17A-2 ff185.

¹⁹⁸ Notice Sent from Secgen to DC, 13 Sept 1956, KDA DC LAN12EAR ff45. Also see Letter to Sec Gen, Saza and Gomb Chfs from King, DAO, 17 Sept 1956, KDA DoA 17A-2 ff60. And Circular memo Kabale, 13 Sept 1956, KDA DoA 17A-2 ff68.

¹⁹⁹ Letter to EW King, DAO, from JGM King (Dept of Ag), 4 June 1956, KDA DoA 17A-2 ff13.

farms planned."²⁰⁰ One of the first to be planned was a 52 acre farm, in the Rukungiri area of Rujhumbura, which belonged to Kitaburaza, the Secretary General.²⁰¹ The applications that were received were of holdings of about 30 acres in size, in which cattle were most important. It was anticipated by the district agricultural staff that about 50 land owners would want their holdings planned, and after this progress would be slower. However, by April 1957, while there had been over 100 applications for farm planning services, only 11 had been surveyed and just 3 actually planned.²⁰² Progress was clearly very slow. This was not because the holdings had to be consolidated prior to planning as all the holdings being planned were already consolidated.²⁰³ In the longer term the Department of Agriculture were keen that consolidation should occur as a precursor to farm planning; but they were aware that "the first aim must be to accustom the people to the idea of having their farms planned."²⁰⁴ As only farms of over 5 acres could apply for planning and so it is not surprising that applications were from Rujhumbura where farm sizes were larger.²⁰⁵ It is important to stress that farm planning was occurring on holdings that were atypical of holdings in Kigezi, particularly the southern part.

While farm planning continued on a small scale in the north of the district, it was realised that in the south it was "impracticable at least until consolidation takes place"²⁰⁶ The officers in charge of farm planning and land utilisation disagreed with the DAO over the relationship between farm planning and consolidation. They reported that

"Farm planning must not get mixed up with land tenure or consolidation except when consolidation is a precursor to farm planning. If farm planning, registration

²⁰⁰ Letter to Perm Sec Min of Natural Resources from DRN Brown, (for Dir of Ag), 2 Aug 1956, KDA DoA 17A-2 ff14.

²⁰¹ Report to Dir of Ag from Officer in Charge, Farm Planning and Land Utilisation (drafted by Mr Low). Report on Western Province Tour, February 1957. KDA DoA 17A-2 ff195.

²⁰² Letter to PAO from Ag DAO, 23 April 1957, KDA DoA 17A-2 ff221.

²⁰³ Letter to Dir of Ag from EW King, DOA, 24 Aug 1956, KDA DoA 17A-2 ff33.

²⁰⁴ Letter to DAO from JT Wilson for Dir of Ag, 31 Aug 1956, KDA DoA 17A-2 ff36.

²⁰⁵ Although no certificates of occupancy or title deeds were given by the Agriculture Department to farms they had planned there seems to have been a tendency for those who had received their land relatively recently, or in an unusual way, or who had disputes over their land wanted it to be planned, as they felt that (although it had no legal standing) the process of planning did imply some legal status. For example the case of JW Lwamafa who had been given land by the *muluka* councillors of *muluka* Kigaga, *gombolola* Nyakagyeme in 1950, and disputes over the boundaries had been resolved by the then *saza* chief (now SecGen) and the *saza* council. Letter to DAO from JW Lwamafa, CMS, Kabale 15 Feb 1957, KDA DoA 17A-2 ff178. Lwamafa was the LegCo representative for Kigezi. He had also been a recipient of a sporadic title. A number of applications for farm planning also mentioned specifically the desire for titles - eg KDA DoA 17A-2 ff148.

²⁰⁶ Report to Dir of Ag from Officer in Charge, Farm Planning and Land Utilisation (drafted by Mr Low). Report on Western Province Tour, February 1957. KDA DoA 17A-2 ff195.

and consolidation are linked, farm planning may well have a set back from which it may never recover."²⁰⁷

They believed that the method of survey must be satisfactory for eventual registration, but they did not consider this link between the methods as "a connection of principles."²⁰⁸ It is clear, therefore, that there was a debate within the Department of Agriculture. It is also clear that the administration's efforts to keep farm planning and land titling separate in people's minds were not entirely successful. For example, in April 1957 the *Mtwale* of Bufumbira applied for his land to be surveyed and the Secretary General's response indicates that people were linking the two. The Secretary General explained that there were

"two systems in which land can be surveyed namely Farm Planning which the Agricultural Department has already undertaken in some parts of the District, and Land Survey under which Land Titles can be given to Land Holders."²⁰⁹

The *Mtwale* was told that if he wanted his farm planned then he should apply to the DAO, but that at this stage it was too early to apply under the Land Tenure Proposals which had not been discussed by the District Council. However, when it suited them, the administration was prepared to see farm planning and land tenure closely linked in propaganda. An example of this can be seen in a piece of propaganda about the advantages of consolidation and farm planning which noted that "a number of people in Kigezi have begun to realise the importance of farm planning, while others are now taking much interest in the proposals of having their land holdings registered so that they can be granted land titles as a security for those holdings."²¹⁰ The rest of the article discussed the importance of consolidation, but it is clear that titles and security of tenure were a crucial part of the propaganda. Farm planning was part of the Agricultural Department's policy of encouraging progressive farmers and shows greater emphasis on individualism. Some individuals took the opportunity of getting their farms planned as a way of strengthening their authority on the land at a time when there was no opportunity for getting a legal freehold title.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Letter to the *Mtwale*, Bufumbira, from FK Kitaburaza, Sec Gen, 30 April 1957, KDA DC LAN81 ff133.

²¹⁰ Memo by P Bitatwe, Asst Information Officer, WP, sent to DAO for comments, 22 May 1957. KDA DoA 17A-2 ff269.

4.4 - The Kigezi case compared.

Most of the land tenure reforms introduced in Kigezi during the 1950s were not widely successful. Consolidation and enclosure largely failed, while the granting of titles succeeded only in the LTPP area, an area chosen because of its differences from the rest of the district, and with a few sporadic titles granted to local "big men" for political reasons. Farm planning was only ever relevant to those farmers with large holdings of whom there were very few in the south of the district. But how typical of wider processes was the Kigezi experience? This section will look at Central Province, Kenya, where a similar scheme of consolidation and registration was largely successfully implemented.²¹¹ Here the colonial government introduced far reaching policies of consolidation, enclosure and registration. Reform did not intend to alter the amount of land held by any one family, but rather planned to reduce litigation that had grown over land issues and to produce more efficient agricultural units. In the light of Mau Mau, political reasons were of paramount importance and here the enormous differences between the political and administrative situation (in terms of funds available and staffing levels) in Kenya and Uganda need to be stressed.

Up to and during the 1940s, communal control over Kikuyu land was being eroded and transformed into individual ownership, and this led to an increase in litigation over land. The administration was wary about encouraging individual control for fear that this would further reduce communal control and so would lead to worsening soil deterioration, and possibly to an increase in landlessness. However, demands for recognition of individual title meant that there was, from 1943, an informal register of land rights in some parts of the country. The declaration of the Emergency in October 1952 changed the situation dramatically, and the administration quickly came to see land reform as a possible solution to some of the political problems of the Central Province, and so was prepared to devote staff and finances to reform. Many thousands of Kikuyu were detained under emergency regulations, and from June 1954 over a million Kikuyu were moved into villages. The process of villagization has been called the "master stroke"²¹² in bringing the rebellion to a speedy end and by the end of 1955 the security situation had improved. The administration then began to see villagisation as a positive long term policy, rather than

²¹¹ Sorrenson, *Land Reform*. Also carried out in other parts of Kenya, but Central Province is the only case that has been fully documented in the public domain.

²¹² *Ibid.*, 110.

merely a punitive measure.

The detention of leading politicians who might have opposed land reform, and the control that villagisation gave the administration over the Kikuyu people, meant that the Emergency provided a golden opportunity to push consolidation through without opposition. The aims of consolidation and registration can be seen to have been threefold: firstly, to end increasing and expensive litigation; secondly, to bring forward an agrarian revolution; and thirdly, there were significant political aims. Although the latter was not stressed in any public discussion of the scheme at the time it is clear that this reason was of paramount importance. In particular it was hoped that consolidation and registration would lead to the development of a group of prosperous middle class farmers - in the words of Berman and Lonsdale "a harmonious society of prosperous villages and sturdy yeoman farmers immune to appeals of political radicalism."²¹³ These aims were combined with the Swynnerton Plan of 1954, in which for the first time the role and importance of the small scale African producer in the Kenyan economy was recognised. Experiments had suggested that a large demand for labour could be created on the newly consolidated farms, and they would help to absorb the surplus population. Consolidation was to be rushed through as it was hoped that it would be complete before politicians were released.

Although officials stressed that reform was only carried out where the majority wanted it, Sorrenson has observed that villagisation had "broken the will" of the Kikuyu masses who could hardly be expected to resist consolidation.²¹⁴ Additionally, and crucially, once adjudication had begun everyone had to partake or risk being left out. It seems in fact that the Kikuyu were not particularly keen on consolidation, but were very keen to be able to stake their claims to land, and therefore to have titles. The promise of titles was made by the administration while they were trying to convince the Kikuyu to support consolidation, despite the fact that at the time there was no legal provision for titles. Rapid progress was made in consolidation of Central Province, and by September 1958 and mid-1959 it was largely complete in Kiambu and Nyeri respectively. There were problems experienced in Fort Hall (Murang'a) which slowed completion down considerably, as many fragments

²¹³ B. Berman and J. Lonsdale, *Unhappy valley - Conflict in Kenya and Africa. Violence and Ethnicity*. (Book 2) (London, 1992), 254.

²¹⁴ Sorrenson, *Land Reform*, 242.

had to be re-measured. The surveys were often found to be inaccurate and it was only with aerial surveys that corrections to the registries could be made.

Kenya's experiences were seen as a model for other colonies and officers from Uganda²¹⁵ and Tanganyika visited Central Province to see the progress being made in consolidation. These officials acknowledged that they lacked the powers that Kenyan officials had to enforce the policy, and noted that "the detention of large numbers, the large-scale security measures and closer administration had resulted in a greater compliance of the population."²¹⁶ The scheme was successful in achieving the consolidation and registration of land but we need also to ask how much changed on the ground, and what the social implications of these changes were? In the case of consolidation it seems that many apparently single units actually supported more than one family (because of the desire to create "economic units", and the linking together of brothers land) and in the case of registration it is clear that many subdivisions and transactions in land (whether sale or inheritance) remained unrecorded. Within a few years of completing the process of consolidation and registration it was realised that the land rights recorded in the register were conforming less and less with the situation on the ground. Other significant social implications that registration had were that only cultivation and residence rights were recognised, and so those with lesser rights inevitably lost out. Indeed, the creation of a larger landless class appears to have been a calculated element of the process. In relation to how authority over land has changed in Kikuyu in the face of consolidation and registration, Mackenzie has concluded that "in the present situation of struggle over rights to land, both women and men legitimate claims to land through customary as well as statutory law. Neither of these spheres has watertight, impermeable boundaries."²¹⁷

²¹⁵ Officials in Uganda tried to learn from Kenya's experiences - A memo on the procedures for consolidation that were being followed in Kenya was circulated to Land Use Sub Committee of Kigezi District for information. Memoranda produced for first meeting of Natural Resources Committee; Land Use Sub Committee, Entebbe, 9 Jan 1958. Appendix on Procedure for Consolidation in Kenya, KDA DoA ADMIN 2/1 ff33Enc. Visit to Kenya to see consolidation by DC, DAO (1955/56) see KDA DC LAN 12I. In May 1959 a larger party consisting of both officials and chiefs from Kigezi visited Kenya to see the land consolidation methods adopted in Central Province. Included DAO, ADC, Asst SecGen, Kigezi District Council, Saza Chief Rubanda, 2 Gomb Chfs, 1 Muluka Chief, 1 District Councillor and 2 cultivators. KDA DoA 154 ff41.

²¹⁶ Observations by JCD Lawrance and EW King (Department of Agriculture, Uganda) in Sorrenson, *Land Reform*, 239-40.

²¹⁷ F. Mackenzie "A piece of land never shrinks": Reconceptualising land tenure in a smallholding district, Kenya', in Bassett and Crumney (eds) *Land in African Agrarian Systems*, 213. Also see Berry, *No Condition is Permanent*, 101.

Other examples of land reform during the colonial period experienced a degree of failure closer to Kigezi than Central Province. For example attempts in Nyasaland²¹⁸ (including consolidation and technical improvements) have been described by De Wilde as a "complete failure".²¹⁹ The so-called Village Reorganisation schemes began in the late 1950s and had to be abandoned having been entirely unsuccessful. This aimed at persuading "more progressive communities to make a corporate effort towards better land use", and aimed at an "orderly system of land use" over larger areas.²²⁰ The reasons for this failure appear to have been political opposition, the failure to explain the programme adequately, as well as an absence of obvious benefits to the farmers of the reforms in the form of increased opportunities to grow cash crops or the granting of titles.²²¹ In fact the changes suggested by the Agricultural Department often had the effect of reducing productivity in the short term. An earlier scheme called the Master Farmers scheme had offered farmers the opportunity of having their farms planned - the aim being the creation of "individual yeoman farmers with a secure but negotiable title to his land."²²² This scheme was also generally a failure as the inducements on offer were inadequate, while departmental finances meant that the numbers who could have their farms planned were limited.²²³

Lacking the funding and the political pressure that was seen in Kenya these other schemes are more like Kigezi. None was a success and it is evident that the political pressure to succeed (and thus financial backing) were as crucial to explaining the success of land reforms. Central Province and Kigezi stand at opposite ends of the spectrum. There were three principal reasons for failure in Kigezi: resources, timeliness and politics.

The single most important reason for the failure in Kigezi compared with Central Province related to the strength and powers of the administration in Central Province, and especially the resources available to them. The policy of villagisation and the powers of the

²¹⁸ Chanock, *Law, Custom and Social Order*, 230-3. Traces the development of customary law of land tenure, but no discussion of registration or titles.

²¹⁹ de Wilde, *Experiences with Agricultural Development* Vol 1, 140.

²²⁰ Allan, *The African Husbandman*, 422-4.

²²¹ de Wilde, *Experiences with Agricultural Development*, Vol 1, 140.

²²² Allan, *The African Husbandman*, 422.

²²³ For a detailed examination of the scheme and its effectiveness, see O.J.M. Kalinga, 'The Master Farmers' Scheme in Nyasaland, 1950-62: A study of a failed attempt to create a 'Yeoman' Class', *African Affairs*, 92 (1993), 367-87.

emergency regulations, combined with staffing and finance levels that Kigezi would never approach, meant that the administration had the capability of pushing through a policy that may not have been particularly popular. This unique administrative and political situation; the great desire amongst the Kikuyu to strengthen their claims to their land, which registration would achieve; and the fact that people must have been acutely aware that if they did not participate in consolidation they risked being left out altogether, meant that there was a certain inevitability that the scheme would proceed successfully.

De Wilde has noted that while enclosure, consolidation (if necessary) and registration are likely to prove most useful in areas with a combination of population pressure, fragmentation and litigation this, in itself, may not be enough. He cites the case of Kigezi where

"despite a high degree of population pressure and land fragmentation, the farmers there have never shown a great interest in taking advantage of possibilities of consolidation and registration. They were never enabled to see ... that profitable opportunities for tree crop development, dairying or other types of farming could be realised if holdings were consolidated. Thus they apparently saw no immediate and significant benefits that would offset the risk that they might lose valuable fragments of land in the process of land exchange essential to consolidation."²²⁴

In addition to these "profitable opportunities", De Wilde stresses the importance of timeliness of intervention. The evidence would support this: it was simply too late for southern Kigezi as population pressure and fragmentation had developed to such a degree that intervention was impossible. Exchange would have disturbed too many vested interests: there were too many permanent houses, wood lots, etc as well as simply too many fragments. Local farmers could foresee that consolidation in this situation would have caused such disruption that they rejected it outright. It seems, in fact, that Kigezi was well ahead of many other areas in colonial Africa in the effects of population pressure. At a time when changes were beginning in Kikuyuland, similar processes were well under way in Kigezi. This strengthening of individual tenure made consolidation much harder to achieve, and can in part explain the failure of this part of colonial land reform. Additionally, although it is very difficult to prove in a study such as this, is the possibility that there was in Kigezi a much greater ecological variability than elsewhere, and this

²²⁴ de Wilde, *Experiences with Agricultural Development* Vol 1, 146-7. Kigezi was included in the study, but unfortunately the results from Kigezi were not ready at the time of publication and so there is not detailed discussion of the findings.

simply made the possibility of consolidation too risky for farmers to even contemplate.²²⁵

But politics presents the third, and perhaps the most intractable factor. This chapter has presented evidence of the varying roles that both clan leaders and chiefs played over land, and people's perceptions of these roles. The evidence suggests that these roles were not clear-cut or straightforward, but were complex and variable. Not only did the roles change over time (which we would expect) but it seems that at any one time the precise nature of that role was open to interpretation.

The complexities of, and contradictions in people's (both outsiders and Bakiga) perceptions of the power that individual's had over other people's land has been shown. It has been suggested that there were in fact a number of different systems layered on top of each other with migration contributing to the complexity of the system. It seems that by the 1930s community control was already considerably weakened in Kigezi - perhaps because of population pressure and the fluidity of local populations with high rates of migration. Security of tenure for most farmers was individual and strong, so long as they could prove that they, or their forefathers, had cultivated the land. However concerns that lending land for cultivation to outsiders might lead to claims of ownership, meant that lending of land, even by the 1930s, was only very short term. These borrowers of land can be likened to the *ahoi* of Kikuyu. In Kigezi it is seems unlikely that elders were involved in the "supervision" of sales by the time of the early colonial period - however they may have applied pressure to prevent land being sold to outsiders.

The role of clan elders in land issues in Kigezi is debateable. What is less contentious is that colonial officials gave some authority over land to chiefs, although the extent of this authority is difficult to know with any precision. There is no evidence to enable us to assess the rationality behind this decision, however the outcome was that the authority became tied to the position of chief, rather than the fact that the individual was aged, experienced and trusted. Thus, there was a shift from a consensual process of decision making by elders, to a more dictatorial situation with an individual colonial chief (who

²²⁵ Tiffen has noted that in Machakos the Akamba refused titling for as long as consolidation was a condition, as they "valued having land in different ecological niches." Tiffen, 'Land and Capital', 175.

initially would have been an elder) having that authority. The problems that this inevitably created would have been compounded as the chiefs got younger. Chiefs became increasingly important up to around the mid-1940s, from when their powers began to be diluted. Up to this period the chief can be seen as the "agent of articulation", or the link between how the state imposed its policies (shaped by its views of land tenure) and how farmers reacted. Having been given authority over land by the state, chiefs may, in some circumstances, have had an interest in suppressing the rights of clan elders; while in other circumstances chiefs might have wished to emphasise their own status as clan elders in order to legitimise their own authority. As the 1950s progressed the authority of the colonial chiefs over land was reduced by the state and there were perhaps greater incentives for the chiefs to play this card by saying they were clan elders. This may explain the occasions during the 1950s when there appear to have been attempts by senior chiefs (who were probably the last of the older, illiterate chiefs) to convince colonial officials of the role that "clan elders" had held. It is possible that they foresaw that some formulation of authority was going to take place, and that the position of chieftainship itself would no longer be enough to hold on to that authority. The contestability of their authority will be examined in closer detail in the next two chapters.

CHAPTER 5 - SWAMP RECLAMATION

This chapter will be the first of two case studies to examine in detail the relationship between political authority and control over land. By examining how reclaimed swamp land (the only large areas of new land that became available from the 1950s) was distributed among, allocated to, or claimed by, the local population we can see how the relationship between power and land actually worked on the ground.

The chapter will take a broadly chronological approach to trace the changing uses of swampland. It will show how swamps were used largely as sources of reeds and fibres, while their margins were an important reserve of land which local communities used during particularly dry years. From the early colonial period this function of swamps was observed by colonial officials. They ordered that sweet potatoes be planted on swamp edges whenever food shortages were predicted. During the 1940s, as land shortage became more acute, the possibility of swamp reclamation began to be discussed seriously. The large-scale reclamation, organized by the Protectorate Government will be detailed, as will the spontaneous or haphazard reclamation that occurred without practical support from the government. People's reactions to colonial policies of reclamation - both support and opposition - will also be examined. The final section will examine official policy that reclaimed swampland should be divided into fairly small plots and distributed equitably between local people. Each of the three largest swamps will be looked at in turn, to show how this policy worked out in practice. In many areas the reclamation of swamps had the effect of removing from the majority of the local community the "insurance" that the swamp had provided and resulted in increased inequality of land ownership.

Of Kigezi's 2,040 sq miles, swamps occupied 183 sq miles.¹ Most swamp was found in the densely populated southern part of the district, (see Map 5) and inevitably when consideration was given to ways of increasing agricultural production, officials looked to the swamps which were felt by some to be a wasted resource, being largely uncultivated.

¹ Annual Reports.

Table showing area of swamps in Kigezi, and areas suitable for reclamation.²

Swamps	Total area in acres	Areas suited for drainage and cultivation
Kiruruma South	5,950	4,300
Kiruruma North	3,000	1,870
Kashambya	2,020	1,830
Kigyeyo	6,250	470
Others	<u>7,700</u>	<u>3,500 (approx)</u>
TOTAL	12,920	10,820

² Sir Alexander Gibb and Partners (Africa), *Water Resources Survey in Uganda 1954-55* (Entebbe, 1956). PRO CO/822/886 (57/6/014).

Map 5



SOUTHERN KIGEZI SHOWING SWAMPS

5.1 - Swamps in Kigezi agriculture.

Swamps had many uses prior to reclamation, most importantly as sources of papyrus and grasses for thatching, ropes, baskets and mats.³ Swamps, and in particular their margins, were also important for dry season cultivation and so were an important "reserve" of land. Informants confirm that the swamp edges would be cultivated during the dry season to help prevent famine.⁴ Swamps were also used to some extent for the watering of cattle, but it does not appear that their primary use was grazing. Studies from the 1930s confirm that they were not especially important as grazing sites.⁵ In 1933 it was reported that "Natives... [of Kigezi] have always been known as industrious cultivators ... their cultivation of the swamps testifies to this."⁶ The earliest colonial efforts in connection with swamps were to encourage people to plant along their edges, particularly at times of food shortage, and whenever famine loomed orders were sent out through the chiefs to this effect. In 1929 it was reported that "A great deal of care and labour has been spent in Kigezi in the draining and planting on the papyrus swamps."⁷ Colonial officials recorded that planting in the swamps was unpopular partly because of the damage done to crops by the sitatunga antelope,⁸ but it is probable that in addition land shortage at this time was not sufficiently serious to make the additional labour input necessary for swamp cultivation worthwhile.

In late 1934 Wickham, Kigezi's DAO, reported that slight local shortages of food crops meant that famine reserves were being drawn upon and he noted that "A large quantity of sweet potatoes have recently been planted on beds in swampy valleys."⁹ A few years later he wrote that the practice of cultivating sweet potatoes in swamps

"was inaugurated here by the Administration and that it has never had more than the tacit sanction of the Agricultural Department. ... it is a precautionary measure against famine. Pressure of population is not the primary reason for the use of swampy land; the practise is adopted in both densely and sparsely populated areas.

³ Interviews with for example, 20/b, 90/a, 92/a, 98/a and J.M. Byagagaire 21 Sept 1995.

⁴ Interviews with 24/b, 63/a, 91/a, 92/a.

⁵ Purseglove, 'Kitozho Mutala survey.' Kitozho is located on edge of Kashambya and the study discusses cattle grazing but makes no mention of swamp grazing. Edel confirms that there were not "designated grazing grounds" and cattle fed on "whatever land happened to be unused for gardening" and her lack of any mention of swamp grazing suggests it was not very important. Edel, *The Chiga*, 2nd edition, 213.

⁶ WPAR, 1933.

⁷ WPAR, 1929.

⁸ WPAR, 1931.

⁹ Monthly Report for October 1934, by RT Wickham, KDA DC AGR-MNTH ff18.

... The practise certainly helps in the reclamation of swamp land and for this, if for no other reason, should not be discouraged."¹⁰

The earliest efforts by the colonial administration to encourage the cultivation of sweet potatoes in swamps were remembered by many informants,¹¹ who credited this policy for having prevented famine. Additionally, in the early colonial period the Forestry Department was involved in the planting of eucalyptus along the edges of swamps,¹² and this continued for several years.¹³

Swampland was not individually owned in the way that land on the hillsides was by this time. The use of swamp resources such as papyrus, which at this time were ample, was open to all people living in the area. Disputes arose when individuals or institutions tried to claim a part of the swamp as their own for the gathering of these resources. There is a recorded case of this from 1957, when a dispute arose between an individual and the Catholic Church over the right to take papyrus from a swamp that the church claimed as its own. This individual complained that grass that he had collected from the swamp had been taken from him and he questioned how the church had been able to take the swamp.¹⁴ The DC believed that this swamp was supposed to be communal land which could not be reserved exclusively for either church,¹⁵ and when the *gombolola* chief investigated the case it was found that the swamp was indeed not RCM land, and the church ordered to pay back the grass.¹⁶

5.2 - Reclamation of swamps

The policy of reclamation transformed these disputes over access and use. From the earliest years of colonial rule the possibility of reclaiming swamps in Kigezi was

¹⁰ Letter to DAO Ankole from Wickham, DAO Kigezi, 12 Sept 1938. Reply to letter from Stuckey, DAO Ankole, 7 Sept 1938. KDA DoA 010crops. Enquiring as to the success and methods of cultivation of sweet potatoes in swamps.

¹¹ Interviews with 8/a, 13/a, 20/b, 21/b, 55/a, 56/a, 62/a, 71/a, 76/a, 79/a, 92/a and 94/a.

¹² WPAR, 1931.

¹³ For example see WPAR, 1934. Ngologoza confirms that swamp reclamation and the planting of eucalyptus trees by the administration began as early as 1929 around Kabale. He writes that complaints against swamp drainage (because of the need for the grasses in them) were ignored by the DC. Ngologoza, *Kigezi and its People*, 114.

¹⁴ Letter to Saza Chf Ndorwa from A Kasilingyi (Muluka Kigongyi, Gomb Kabale) 26 March 1957 (Copies to Sec Gen, DC, Gomb Chf Kyanamira). KDA DC LAN8/I ff122.

¹⁵ Letter to Saza Chf, Ndorwa from DC, 4 April 1957, KDA DC LAN8/I ff123.

¹⁶ Letter to Saza Chf Ndorwa from Mr A Kasilingye (of Muluka Kigongyi, Gomb Kabale) 9 April 1957, KDA DC LAN8/I ff126.

discussed. In 1930, in response to information about opportunities offered by the Colonial Development Fund¹⁷, the DC put forward a proposal for the "Assistance by Machinery or other means (eg cash) to drain some of the many swamps in Kigezi."¹⁸ Nothing, however, came of it. In 1935, in the light of what he believed to be a reduction of the acreage of cultivable land available to families, Wickham suggested that the "first and immediate step" should be to reclaim the "swamp land which every householder has more or less at his door step."¹⁹ He noted that some drainage had already been done around Kabale by planting sweet potatoes on swamp edges. Throughout the 1930s, warnings were regularly made about the density of the population and the reaction to this was to call for the reclamation of swamps.²⁰ Fears about overpopulation and risk of famine brought swamps into prominence. No large-scale action was taken until after the 1943 famine, when the planting of potatoes in swamps was seen to have had a major affect in preventing serious loss of life: Sweet potatoes, planted in communal plots on swamp edges, had made the "greatest contribution to averting a food shortage."²¹ Calls for planting sweet potatoes (not necessarily communally) were made throughout the colonial period whenever it was believed that shortages of food were likely.²²

According to Kagambirwe, small areas of swamp were reclaimed due to local demand for land. This was "carried out by the local populace under the supervision of experts,"²³ from about 1942, in Maziba and Kashambya. Government assisted reclamation began in the early 1940s: In March 1945 Purseglove reported that he had visited Kashambya Swamp to arrange "further drainage".²⁴ It was observed in 1947 by Huxley that "Swamps being drained in blocks and left in equal blocks to maintain springs etc",²⁵ while in

¹⁷ Circular Memo from Chief Secretary re the Colonial Devt Fund, 29 May 1930, KDA MP105 ff1.

¹⁸ Letter to FH Rogers, DC, 31 July 1930, KDA DC MP105 ff2.

¹⁹ Report for Year 1935 by Wickham, KDA DC AGR-MNTH ff53.

²⁰ Letter to Supt Ag.al Education, K'la from Wickham, DAO, 2 Sept 1936, KDA DoA 009-EXP-C ff24. Also see WPAR, 1938.

²¹ Food Crop Notes, Jan 1943, Kigezi, KDA DC MP4II ff165. Also see Letter to Famine Commissioner from DC, 25 Feb 1943, KDA DC MP-EOC. They were considered "special famine measure" in areas where famine was certain or probable. Copy of letter to AOs, from Sen AO, WP, 15 Jan 1943 enclosing letter from GW Nye, Atg Dir of Ag, 12 Jan 1943 re food shortages, KDA DC MP4II ff152.

²² For example see Letter to all Saza and Gomb Chfs from Duntze, DC, 7 Jan 1951, KDA DC AGR4II ff39. Letter to Dir of Ag from DAO, 17 Aug 1953, KDA DoA 6/A/3B ff12. Also Letter to All Agric Staff in Charge, Sazas from AO, 9 June 1955, KDA DC AGR4II ff170 and Letter to all Saza Chfs and AOs from TF Ellis, DAO, 4 May 1962, KDA DC AGR4II ff189.

²³ Kagambirwe, 'Causes and Consequences of Land Shortage' 73.

²⁴ Monthly reports of the Dept of Agriculture, KDA DoA 007.

²⁵ Huxley Papers, RH MSS Afr s 782, Box 2, File 1, Item 4 - Notebook. Visited Kigezi April-May 1947.

October 1951 Purselove wrote that a drained swamp in Rukiga had "been almost continuously cultivated for ten years."²⁶ In 1946 it was noted that, largely because of the pressure on land, swamp drainage was taking place, both by the central government, by the district administration and "the people."²⁷

However "faulty drainage" was reported to have led to an increase in malarial infection and it was felt that careful planning was necessary in future. It was enthusiastically reported that the drainage of these swamps had "added considerable areas of fertile arable and pasture land to parts which were and still are in urgent need of using all land which can possibly be made available."²⁸ The greatest efforts initially concentrated on Kashambya swamp which was the focus of much experimental work. However, this was the scene of one of the most serious failures in swamp reclamation and parts of the first swamps drained by Hydrological Department (Kashambya and Nyanza) became sterile or "dead". Things began well and good yields were recorded: it was found that yields of sorghum on a part of the Kashambya swamp drained in 1943 were 27% higher in 1946 and 77% higher in 1947 in the swamp than on neighbouring hillsides.²⁹

However, while these positive reports about yields continued³⁰ it is clear that reclamation generally was not going smoothly. Parts of Kashambya and Nyanza swamps suffered serious damage from fire and were rendered unproductive.³¹ There were also problems with controlling the level of the water table, which flooded crops when too high,³² and when too low caused acidification and sterility. In February 1949, it was noted that "considerable deterioration"³³ was apparent in Kashambya swamp. Similar problems were

²⁶ Memo on Shifting Cultivation in Western Province by Purselove, Oct 1951, PRO CO 892 15/9. One source suggests that drainage of Kashambya was initiated in 1942 by Lazaro Kabumba who drained part of the edge of the swamp near Kisizi, and having achieved good results drew the attention of the administration to this, who then started drainage. Kagambirwe, 'Causes and Consequences of Land Shortage', 95. A different source suggests that the administration began drainage by digging a channel near Kisizi in 1942. Ngologoza, *Kigezi and its People*, 114.

²⁷ WPAR, 1946.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Monthly Report, October 1948, DAO to PAO, KDA DoA 007.

³⁰ Monthly Report to DAO from Asst AO, Rukiga, 30 May 1950. KDA DoA 19/B/2 ff93.

³¹ Monthly Reports, August 1948, DAO to PAO, KDA DoA 007. References to fire in 1946/7 in WPAR, 1949. Purselove felt (1949) that it was important that the District Council discuss methods of preventing fires on drained swamps. Letter to DC from Purselove, DAO, 6 Sept 1949, KDA DoA 16/A/1 ff84.

³² Minutes of Kigezi District Team meeting, 5 Nov 1948, KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff57. Also Monthly Report to DAO from Asst AO of Rukiga, 30 May 1950. KDA DoA 19/B/2 ff93.

³³ Monthly Report, DAO to PAO, February 1949, KDA DoA 007.

seen at Nyanza. The positive reports that additional land was being made available for cultivation and grazing³⁴ continued, while attempts were made to solve the problem of sterility began from 1950 by flooding the two swamps.³⁵ Inadequate technical knowledge was resulting in serious damage to the swamps. In 1951, the DC acknowledged that the draining of Kashambya swamp had been "too efficient,"³⁶ the water table had dropped too much and severe damage had been caused. In March 1951, much to the annoyance of the District Team,³⁷ the Hydrological Officer, Norman, was recalled from the District (having only been posted there in January 1951) and did not return until January 1952.³⁸

During 1951 the District Team became increasingly concerned at the "rapid deterioration"³⁹ of the drained parts of Kashambya and felt that they were not being kept informed of events by the Hydrological Department. Cooperation between the District Administration and Hydrological Department was seriously lacking, and neither were prepared to accept responsibility for the deterioration and sterility of Kashambya, or to pay for the programme of work necessary to rehabilitate and maintain this swamp.⁴⁰

Meanwhile discussions began about the possibility of draining another swamp in the southern part of the district. This was initiated by Rycx, a Belgian planter with an estate on the Ruanda side of border, who having drained the swamp on his side of the border, needed the flow of water from the southern end of the Kiruruma Swamp to be controlled. In April 1951, the District Council recommended that, because of the problems that Rycx was experiencing with flood water coming from Uganda, the swamp should be drained at his expense.⁴¹ This recommendation was "given on the understanding that swamps will be drained in such a way that water in them will not be dried and that there will remain in them enough grass and papyrus for people to use."⁴² It took until February 1952 for the costs of drainage to be assessed, and for Rycx to confirm he would pay for

³⁴ Minutes of Meeting of District Team, 24 July 1950, KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff63.

³⁵ Monthly Reports, DAO to PAO, May 1950, KDA DoA 007.

³⁶ Letter to Dir Hyd Survey, from DC, 21 April 1951, KDA DC Dev4-4II ff41.

³⁷ Minutes of Meeting of District Team, 13 March 1951, KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff71.

³⁸ KDA DC DEV4-4II ff84.

³⁹ Minutes of meeting of Kigezi District Team, 24 August 1951, KDA DC Dev4-4II ff55.

⁴⁰ For further details see KDA DC DEV4-4II and KDA DoA 11/A/1. How this disagreement was resolved remains unclear.

⁴¹ Minute of Kigezi District Council, April 1951, KDA DC DEV4-4II ff49.

⁴² Ibid.

constructing the channels.⁴³

Official policy towards swamp reclamation was laid out in the 1952 District Plan for Kigezi, which stated that swamps formed the "largest single reserve"⁴⁴ of potentially arable land in the district. As would be expected given the events of the previous few years the Plan noted that there was a need for considerable investigation before large scale reclamation was undertaken. 1953 to 1955 were years of discussion, debate and experimentation into the rehabilitation of dead swamps and future drainage of other swamps. The District Team was informed by the Hydrological Department that it should work out a programme of priorities in relation to swamp drainage and were reminded that the ALG should set aside funds for the maintenance of any drainage or irrigation work that was carried out.⁴⁵ District officials, however, appear to have been unsure of which direction to take in swamp reclamation policy. In the light of the shortage of grazing areas the DVO, Symons, called for increased swamp drainage.⁴⁶ The DC, however, felt that it was not possible to put forward a programme of priorities for swamp reclamation "until the land utilisation problem of the district was established."⁴⁷ He noted that the EARC had suggested that reclaimed swamps be used to support the population of areas chosen for rehabilitation, while those area were rested. Official policy was to continue experimental work while further swamp drainage was to be "undertaken on demand from the local gombolola councils."⁴⁸

In order to "draw on the experiences"⁴⁹ of Ruanda, a visit by the DAO, PAO and DC to see reclaimed swamps took place in 1955. Although swamps in Ruanda and Kigezi were superficially similar, it was found that in Ruanda they were mostly clay, while the Kigezi swamps were mainly peat. Methods of reclamation were therefore different. It was observed that in Ruanda land was allocated to individuals, on condition of him "obeying

⁴³ Letter to DC from Ngologoza, 28 March 1952, KDA DC DEV4-4II ff96. Re Minute 6/51 of Kigezi District Council April 1951 (ff49).

⁴⁴ District Plan for Kigezi, Revised and Amended Dec 1952, KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff106.

⁴⁵ Minutes of Meeting of District Team, 17 Feb 1953, KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff108.

⁴⁶ For example in letter to DC from GB Symons, DVO, 12 March 1953, KDA DoA 013-A-1 ff318.

⁴⁷ Extract from Minutes of District Team Meeting, 4 Jan 1954, KDA DC DEV4-4II ff166.

⁴⁸ Letter to Dir of Ag from King, DAO, 26 May 1955, KDA DoA 19 ff177.

⁴⁹ Extract from Minutes of District Team Meeting, 4 Jan 1954, KDA DC DEV41IV ff23.

cropping instructions."⁵⁰

The Agricultural Productivity Committee recommended in 1955 that priority should be given to swamp reclamation but it was noted that hydrological staff were overstretched and "it was not possible to make any marked progress during the year."⁵¹ There was clearly disagreement within the administration over how far reclamation should be taken. The PAO stated that he felt "strongly" that "swamps should be left alone as far as possible."⁵² However the Director of Agriculture was more in favour of reclamation, but

"the question of swamp reclamation in Kigezi must be approached with caution, I consider that we should find out more about the reaction of these highly organic soils to continuous cultivation; ...so as to be in a position to advise if and when the need arises which it undoubtedly will, at a later stage."⁵³

The situation was clarified when the survey by the consulting engineers, Sir Alexander Gibb and Partners, was published in 1956,⁵⁴ recommending that about 11,000 acres of peat swamp in the district could be developed. The method of drainage thought to be best suited was to clear the swamp of vegetation and to build up the peat soil into cambered beds.⁵⁵ The water level was then maintained at a level near or above the level of the furrows between the beds and the crop grown above the saturated soil on the tops of the beds. Having received the approval from those technically qualified to judge, from 1957 official policy was in favour of large-scale reclamation.

Large scale drainage began and good progress was recorded.⁵⁶ It was recommended that the reclamation of 1,000 acres in the Kiruruma Swamps, which had been agreed by the District Council, should go ahead in those areas which were both acceptable to the local

⁵⁰ Report by EW King DAO on visit to Ruanda, 18 April 1955, KDA DoA 19 ff162. Another visit had taken place in 1949 when the differences between swamps in Kigezi and Ruanda were noted but (perhaps because of changes in personnel) this earlier visit was not referred to.

⁵¹ WPAR, 1955.

⁵² Letter to Dir of Ag from GW Anderson, PAO, WP, 5 Dec 1955, KDA DoA 19 ff215.

⁵³ Letter to PAO, WP from Dir of Ag, 24 Dec 1955, KDA DoA 19 ff217.

⁵⁴ Sir Alexander Gibb and Partners, *Water Resources Survey*.

⁵⁵ Some Observations on Swamp Reclamation in Kigezi. Recommendations of the Consulting Engineers. Written by PP Howell, 14 March 1957. Enclosure to letter to DC from PP Howell, Min of Natural Resources, 20 March 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff147Enc.

⁵⁶ Agriculture Department began experiments in 1957 with tea in swamps. Much discussion about setting up these experimental plots. Not clear whether large scale experiments with tea were ever actually carried out in full, but seems possible that problems with the lack of processing facilities ruled out the possibility of growing tea in this area early. eg see KDA DoA 001/2 ff1 and ff3, ff5, ff10. Also see KDA DC DEV4-5 A ff135 ff136, 143.

councils and technically suitable.⁵⁷ By the end of 1958, 150 acres were ready for cultivation.⁵⁸ During 1959, 120 acres in Kashambya were opened for cultivation, while in Kiruruma South, 200 acres were cultivated.⁵⁹ "Steady progress"⁶⁰ continued to be made on the agreed programme of reclamation with extensive areas of swamp being drained.

In addition to the large scale reclamation organised by the administration reclamation was also carried out spontaneously on the part of local people. This not only included the cultivation of swamp margins, but also the drainage of larger areas by the combined efforts of communities. One case is that of Kitumbwe swamp, in Bufumbira where local people got together, collected money and bought hoes to dig trenches and drain the swamp. 60 acres of this swamp were "reclaimed by the spontaneous and unaided effort."⁶¹ It was only brought to the attention of the administration when there was a dispute over which *gombolola*, rather than which individuals, should be able to use the reclaimed swamp. When this dispute arose the recent history of the swamp was outlined and it was reported that in 1950 the people of Nyakabande, Bukimbiri and Chahi (the *gombololas* neighbouring the swamp) had held a *baraza* to discuss the possibility of draining the swamp. The people were divided on this suggestion, and later that year when the DC was touring the area a group requested that they should be allowed to cultivate the swamp. The DC and *Mtwale*, Bufumbira, agreed to the request, advising the people to reserve some of the swamp for grass and other necessities. Having received permission, the people of Nyakabande and Bukimbiri "united with intent to improve the swamp. They collected money and bought about 17 spades, and they themselves ... made 12 trenches to drain the swamp"⁶² and then planted food crops.

Soon afterwards the people of Chahi also started to cultivate the swamp, despite not having taken part in draining it. At some time between 1950 and 1952 the *Mtwale*

⁵⁷ Natural Resources Committee - Land Use Sub-Committee, Entebbe, 6 Jan 1958. KDA DoA 001/2 ff18.

⁵⁸ WPAR, 1958.

⁵⁹ WPAR, 1959.

⁶⁰ Water Resources Sub-Committee, 13 April 1959. Swamp Recl Progress Report, WDD E'be, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff72.

⁶¹ WPAR, 1954.

⁶² Letter (and translation) to DC from SecGen, Ngologoza, 9 Feb 1952 (Copy to *Mtwale*, Bufumbira), KDA DC DEV4-4II ff85.

awarded the people of Chahi an equal part of the swamp, and the people of Nyakabande and Bukimbiri complained to the Secretary General about this decision. As a result of this complaint the Secretary General and *Mtwale* visited this area,⁶³ and decided that

"Chahi should lose the case, as they were lazy, they should not get the whole portion given to them by Mtwale Bufumbira. But it was agreed in the Baraza that it is a native custom, not to kill say a cow and eat the whole meat alone, there is usually "Urubavu rwa bagabo" that is to say "A rib for the other man or neighbour". Therefore Nyakabande and Bukimbiri people agreed to give Chahi people a small portion which had not been cultivated yet."⁶⁴

Thus an additional part of the swamp, that had been reserved for papyrus, was allocated to Chahi. This case became an example to others, and in 1957 it was explained to a group of chiefs visiting it that "all the work done had been done in cooperation of the people ... by collecting money to purchase shovels etc."⁶⁵ It was noted that patches of the swamp had been left for papyrus.

But spontaneous reclamation might also cause technical difficulties. In later years concern was expressed that the uncontrolled and haphazard reclamation of swamps by local people was endangering the long term fertility of swamps as it might "result in the complete drying out of swamps if not checked."⁶⁶ It was decided that a byelaw should be considered to control the use of land in swamps. Spontaneous reclamation suggests that in these areas land shortage was more acute than elsewhere in the district and this made the heavy labour costs involved in cultivating on cambered beds worthwhile. In these areas there was not merely passive support of reclamation - it was translated into action on the part of the local people. This was not the case in all areas, however.

Reactions to reclamation were mixed. Local people had two major concerns: firstly, the loss of papyrus, thatching materials and water supplies, and secondly, suspicions that Government (or Europeans) would take the reclaimed land for themselves. Additionally,

⁶³ Baraza on 8 Jan 1952, at Nduga Hill, attended by: Mtwale Bufumbira, Gomb Chfs Nyakabande, Bukimbiri and Chahi, the councillors of the concerned areas and about 400 people from the three Gombs.

⁶⁴ Letter (and translation) to DC from SecGen, Ngologoza, 9 Feb 1952 (Copy to Mtwale, Bufumbira), KDA DC DEV4-4II ff85.

⁶⁵ Report of visit of Commission to Bufumbira - members of Commission were chfs and Councillors from Bubale, Buhara, Kashambya, Kitumba and Kamuganguzi. Visit to Kitumbwe in Gomb Bukimbiri, Bufumbira. KDA DC DEV4-5A ff165.

⁶⁶ Extract of Minute of Meeting of Natural Resources Sub-Comm of Kigezi District Team, 2 Oct 1961, KDA DC DEV4/5 C ff178.

having seen that the first drained swamps went sterile, people were understandably suspicious of the potential consequences for productivity.

With regard to the first reason for opposition, the temporary DAO, Brown, reported in July 1948 that

"Discussion with local worthies revealed a widespread apprehension of any general programme of swamp draining. Kigezi is a district of very short grass and swamps ... the only thatching material is papyrus or swamp grass. ... The people fear that swamp drainage may reduce supplies of these essential materials below the requirement or at least make longer journeys necessary to collect them."⁶⁷

In the years that followed the administration readily acknowledged this problem related to swamp drainage:

"The problem in regard to swamps in Kigezi ... is that while the need for more land for cultivation becomes more and more necessary as time goes on there remains nevertheless the need for papyrus for thatching rope and mat making etc for domestic use. In the absence of other suitable grass in Kigezi it is essential that adequate stocks of papyrus and other swamp grass should remain."⁶⁸

Following a visit to Ruanda in August 1949, to see swamp reclamation work it was reported that "The chiefs ... returned adamant that no further swamp drainage should be done in Kigezi."⁶⁹ The administration found this antipathy towards swamp drainage difficult to understand,⁷⁰ but the visit had also highlighted the problems associated with reclamation and the one drained peat swamp that was seen that was similar to swamps in Kigezi "had been a failure and the swamp was now unproductive."⁷¹ The opposition expressed by the chiefs therefore was really entirely unsurprising. An intelligence report noted that survey work on swamps was being

"regarded by some responsible Africans, including the Secretary-General and Saza Chiefs, as being dangerous owing to possible suspicion on the part of the general populace that the European will survey and drain the large swamps which provide much needed papyrus. Assurances have been given that nothing of this kind is intended."⁷²

However, eventually, this is exactly what did happen.

⁶⁷ Monthly reports of the Dept of Agriculture, KDA DoA 007.

⁶⁸ Letter to Dir Hyd Survey, from DC, 21 April 1951, KDA DC Dev4-4II ff41.

⁶⁹ Monthly Report, DAO to PAO, August 1949, KDA DoA 007.

⁷⁰ WPAR, 1949.

⁷¹ Monthly Report, DAO to PAO, August 1949, KDA DoA 007.

⁷² Political Survey, Monthly Review, September 1949, Outside Buganda. PRO CO 537/4716 ff4.

With regard to the second reason for opposition, it was reported in 1948 that "Further extension of swamp drainage work in Kigezi has been held up by the opposition of the District Council who, somewhat stupidly, fear that the land will be taken from them."⁷³ It was noted that discussions about swamp drainage were being "confused by the introduction of political side issues."⁷⁴ Some years later it was suggested that the "fear of Africans' that they will be called upon to pay rent is an important obstacle to further swamp drainage."⁷⁵ A visiting journalist observed that Bakiga were

"almost neurotic in their suspicions: they even resent suggestions that the swamps that lie at the bottom of some of the valleys where papyrus reeds like millions of feather dusters grow in a twelve foot layer of rich, black, stinking humus, should be drained and turned to agriculture. They cannot conceive that the white men do not covet the land."⁷⁶

It was noted that the suspicious view of the Africans were "typical of the suspicion with which Africans throughout Uganda regard any proposal affecting land rights or tenure."⁷⁷ However, following the publication of the Government's policy statement on land tenure in 1950, what the administration had described as the "baseless suspicion of Government's intentions regarding land utilisation and in particular swamp reclamation"⁷⁸ waned. But, in some areas the suspicions remained and when the Hydrological Department attempted to rehabilitate the "dead" Nyanza swamp by flooding it and renewing their efforts to reclaim it⁷⁹, the opposition became clear. Given that the first attempts had been such a failure this opposition is not surprising; as the *saza* chief observed:

"The people were much grieved and they disapproved the proposal, because their wells, grass and papyrus ropes would disappear as before, whereas it has been their wish to have their swamp reserved for the sake of obtaining those necessities from it."⁸⁰

Overturning the opposition to swamp reclamation was not easy. In 1953, it was observed

⁷³ WPAR, 1948.

⁷⁴ WPAR, 1949.

⁷⁵ Monthly Report, Dec 1960, DAO to PAO, KDA DoA 007.

⁷⁶ Patrick O'Donovan, "Valley of Suspicion". Article in *The Observer*, 25 June 1950.

⁷⁷ Political Survey, Monthly Review, September 1949, Outside Buganda. PRO CO 537/4716 ff4.

⁷⁸ WPAR, 1950. In 1951 it was recorded that these suspicions were a thing of the past and the District Council approved a proposal to drain part of Kiruruma South. WPAR, 1951.

⁷⁹ Letter to Saza Chf Ndorwa from DC (Copy to Gomb Chf Maziba and DAO), 31 Dec 1952, KDA DC DEV4-4II ff123.

⁸⁰ Letter to DC from Kakwenza, Saza Chf Ndorwa, 19 Jan 1953, KDA DC DEV4-4II ff124. Another translation on KDA DoA 022/C ff55.

that swamp drainage "meets with considerable political opposition"⁸¹ and the same reasons for opposition (loss of papyrus etc) were repeatedly given.⁸² A memorandum distributed to chiefs called for a more positive attitude to swamp reclamation, stating that there was a great need for more cultivable land and pointing out that whenever swamp drainage had been suggested in the past there was a "bitter outcry" against it. Using strong 'scare tactics', the memorandum asked "Have you got more swamp land in this district that you need? Will your children be able to eat papyrus when the land is too crowded to grow their food?"⁸³ It argued that as any programme of drainage would take years to complete it was not too early to consider it, and asked whether reassurances that water and papyrus supplies would be protected would make people more agreeable.

Although it was reported in 1955 that the population was "becoming more receptive,"⁸⁴ there is evidence that the opposition continued. Examples of the way that opposition was articulated include a *gombolola* chief advising people not to sell the survey team food (or to ask for much higher prices) because "he does not consider the survey party to be performing a function the result of which will be to the benefit of the people."⁸⁵ Another earlier example was of the vandalism of equipment being used by the Hydrological Department. Water pipes being used to measure water levels in Kashambya were filled with stones by local people who, it was reported, "believe that the pipes etc are being put in by Europeans because they want to "steal" the swamp from the local people."⁸⁶ In late 1956 the DC wrote to a number of chiefs⁸⁷ to categorically deny that swamps were being drained so that the land could be given to Europeans, or because there was oil under the swamps. In the same year, reclamation work in the three major swamps was proposed, but

⁸¹ Letter to PAO from King, DAO, 7 May 1953, KDA DoA MP12/3 ff8.

⁸² Meeting of Hudson, Gaitskell and Sykes of the EARC and the Standing Committee, Kigezi Local Govt Kabale, 22 Dec 1953, PRO CO 892 15/9 Memo # 18.

⁸³ Memo on Land written 1953 by Burgess, DC. KDA DC LAN8/I ff60a.

⁸⁴ Letter to DC from Executive Engineer, Hydrological Survey, Kabale, 14 Oct 1955, KDA DC LAN12EAR ff116. Reply to request for comments on EARC Report.

⁸⁵ Letter to DC from Owen, Hydrological Officer, WDD, 7 Nov 1956, KDA DC DEV4/5A ff84. Also see Letter to Perm Sec, Min of Natural Resources from AG Odell, for Director WDD, 24 Dec 1956 (copy to DC) KDA DC DEV4/5A ff106. And letter from Director of WDD warning that if the people of Kigezi "persist in their present attitude of not wanting help in reclamation" he might withdraw his staff. Letter to DC from Director of WDD, 27 Nov 1956, KDA DC DEV4/5A ff97.

⁸⁶ Monthly Reports, DAO to PAO, February 1950, KDA DoA 007.

⁸⁷ Letter to Gomb Chf, Buhara from DC, 17 Dec 1956 (+ translation). KDA DC DEV4/5A ff104. Also Letter to Gomb Chfs of Bubale, Kamuganguzi, Kitumba, Buhara, Kumba, Rwamucucu, Kashambya from DC, 2 Jan 1957, ff110.

"local opposition necessitated the deferment of these schemes."⁸⁸

In addition to non-cooperation and passive resistance there was also active opposition. It was reported that a group of 9 people had expressed their objections physically by preventing porters from planting out experimental tea plots in the swamp at Bubale.⁸⁹ They had apparently been "armed with pangas and spears",⁹⁰ and were found guilty in the *gombolola* court and fined Shs 20/- each. They were also accused of frightening the two individuals (Batuma and Kibirigi) who had given their plots for the tea experiments, but there was insufficient evidence for this case.⁹¹

Because reclamation could not go ahead without the approval of the local *gombolola* council officials made every effort to get Kigezi chiefs to support their schemes, as they had with soil conservation and land tenure policies.⁹² However, in early 1957 a number of *gombolola* councils rejected the draining of swamps. The Kitumba and Buhara *gombolola* councils opposed the draining of the swamp because, while it acknowledged that people would like to use the swamp for cultivation, there was too great a need for thatching material, ropes and papyrus for baskets and mats. The Buhara *gombolola* council instead suggested draining a small part of the swamp, but if draining that small part affected the rest of the swamp in any way they wanted the work to stop immediately.⁹³ Other councils, such as Bubale,⁹⁴ made similar decisions. Despite the efforts of the Secretary General and *saza* chief to persuade them of the benefits, the Ikumba⁹⁵ *gombolola* council were also against swamp drainage although 13 of the 30 *gombolola*

⁸⁸ WPAR, 1956.

⁸⁹ Translation of Letter to Saza Chf from Y Mulera, Gomb Chf Bubale (Copies to Field Officer Ndorwa, DC and SecGen) 5 July 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff158.

⁹⁰ Letter to Gomb Chf Bubale from SecGen, 12 July 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff159.

⁹¹ Translation of Letter to Saza Chf from Y Mulera, Gomb Chf Bubale (Copies to Field Officer Ndorwa, DC and SecGen) 5 July 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff158. Kibirigi was the *gombolola* chief of Ikumba. Further details about Batuma in 5.3.3.

⁹² With this in mind a visit to Ruanda to inspect swamp reclamation efforts made there was planned for a group of "some of the influential Kigezi chiefs". It was believed that they "would then appreciate the possibilities of swamp reclamation work so that such a visit would encourage them to have similar works carried out on their swamps." Minutes of meeting in DC's Office with PCWP, DC, DAO, SecGen, Director WDD, WG Owen WDD Officer, 23 Jan 1957, KDA DCDEV4-5 A ff119.

⁹³ Letter to DC (Copy SecGen) from P Kabagambe, Chairman Buhara Gomb Council, 11 Feb 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5 A ff129.

⁹⁴ Gomb Council Bubale - Minute of 12 Dec 1956 re Swamp Reclamation, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff134.

⁹⁵ Minute No 1/57 of Ikumba Gomb Council, KDA DC DEV4-5 A ff132.

council members present felt that some portions of the swamp should be drained.⁹⁶ Kashambya Council was so opposed to the drainage of a part of the Kashambya swamp that they asked that those trenches that had already been dug "should be immediately filled in with soil."⁹⁷ The reasons given repeatedly were the need to maintain supplies of papyrus and other grasses.

Howell, from Ministry of Natural Resources, visited Kigezi in March 1957 to try and persuade the Special Standing Committee of the District Council of the benefits of swamp reclamation and stressed that it was not the intention of the Government to use the reclaimed land. Rather, it would "advise and provide facilities" for this work, so that people could get more land for cultivation. He warned that if the people of Kigezi did not want these services they would be withdrawn as there was a demand for them in rest Uganda.⁹⁸ The Committee itself appears to have been convinced but felt it necessary to represent the people of Kigezi who had "not yet realized the good intention behind this work"⁹⁹ and they asked for more time to explain the benefits to the people. By 1957, formal approval had still not been given.

Following this visit, Howell recommended that things should not be rushed until "the method has been proved and the objections of the people have been shown to be wrong or to have been met by careful planning."¹⁰⁰ He noted that the "considerable local opposition"¹⁰¹ that had been raised was the main obstacle to reclamation. Going through all the objections that had been raised by chiefs and others in the district, he noted that the fear that reclamation would lead to the loss of essential grasses was understandable, but that by ensuring that reclamation of the swamp was controlled, sufficient areas of grasses would be maintained. Howell suggested that officials should attempt to assess how large an area would need to be left under natural cover, but Fraser (DC) felt it was

⁹⁶ Letter to DC from P Kibirigi, Gomb Chf Ikumba, 17 Jan 1957, KDA DC DEV4/5A ff112.

⁹⁷ Letter DC from Kange, Gomb Chf Kashambya, 14 Feb 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff131.

⁹⁸ Notes of Discussion held between Mr Howell and Special Standing Committee, 6 March 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff150.

⁹⁹ Notes of Discussion held between Mr Howell and Special Standing Committee, 6 March 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff150. Statement by Chairman of the Committee (F.K. Kitaburaza)

¹⁰⁰ Letter to DC from PP Howell, Min of Natural Resources, 20 March 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff147.

¹⁰¹ Some Observations on Swamp Reclamation in Kigezi. Recommendations of the Consulting Engineers. Written by PP Howell, 14 March 1957. Enclosure to letter to DC from PP Howell, Min of Natural Resources, 20 March 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff147Enc.

preferable to accept local opinion.¹⁰² Howell commented that

"The general reluctance of the Council to the idea of reclamation is held to be largely political but there is considerable truth in some of these objections and an element of truth in others. Further investigation of these problems is therefore desirable so that authoritative answers can be given."¹⁰³

If agreement could be reached for the reclamation of a small area of swamp the successful results would be demonstrated and "once a real start has been made, present objections may vanish." He stressed that "great patience" was necessary in the attempt "to gain the confidence of the people to bring about a change in attitude, involving eventually a definite demand for assistance in reclaiming the swamps, rather than the present attitude, which is either one of adamant opposition or very reluctant agreement."¹⁰⁴

Having made it clear that parts of each swamp would be left undrained to provide papyrus, there was by September 1957 an "advance in the official attitude"¹⁰⁵ of the District Council which agreed that parts of both North and South Kiruruma Swamp should be drained, with other parts left to provide grasses and papyrus. The Council stated that before anywhere was drained local people, chiefs and councillors should be given the opportunity to indicate which parts were to be drained and which left; if there were problems in the undrained areas, draining would be stopped. The DC commented to the Secretary General that he was glad that the Council was now supporting swamp drainage and local councils should now set aside suitable areas for reclamation.¹⁰⁶

As with other colonial policies, the administration sought the assistance of senior chiefs to help persuade lower chiefs and councillors of the advantages of reclamation.¹⁰⁷ Senior chiefs toured the district discussing swamp reclamation and on a number of occasions the opinions of the *gombolola* council was swayed soon afterwards, and resolutions passed to support the reclamation proposals.¹⁰⁸ But many *gombololas* remained divided. In

¹⁰² Ibid. Note in margin, in Fraser's handwriting.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Letter to Dir of WDD from Fraser, DC, 20 Sept 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff166.

¹⁰⁶ Quoted in letter to Dir of WDD from Fraser, DC, 20 Sept 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff166.

¹⁰⁷ See Letter to SecGen from Fraser, DC, 20 Sept 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff167. Also letter to Saza Chf Ndorwa from Kitaburaza, SecGen, 24 Sept 1957 ff168.

¹⁰⁸ Letter to SecGen from Gomb Chf Kitumba, 11 Oct 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff173. Also Letter to SecGen from Plasid Kibirige, Gomb Chf Kumba 7 Oct 1957, ff174 and ff175 - Minute of meeting of Gomb Bubale - signed Y Mulera, Gomb Chf Bubale, 5 Oct 1957.

Kamuganguzi the population's of four *milukas* appeared to support drainage when it was raised in *barazas*, but the *gombolola* council rejected the proposal to drain the swamp. However, at the same time it was reported that "farmers are now cultivating the swamp ... and they are still extending on."¹⁰⁹

By December 1957, all the *gombolola* councils covering the area of the Kiruruma North swamp had recommended reclamation of specified areas.¹¹⁰ But the position of Kiruruma South was less straightforward. Two of the councils (Kitumba and Buhara¹¹¹) agreed, while one (Kamuganguzi) rejected the proposals. The DC believed, however, that the resolution of Kamuganguzi council was contrary to the wishes of the people as expressed in *baraza* held at *miluka* level, and in view of this he and the Secretary General foresaw no difficulty in overruling this council if necessary.¹¹² Indeed, as will be seen below the failure of the *gombolola* council to approve reclamation here did not prevent it from going ahead.

Having shown that in some areas there was strong opposition to swamp drainage, it must be stressed that in other areas there was support, including that illustrated by the occurrence spontaneous reclamation carried out by local communities without the practical support of the administration. In January 1950, the Director of Hydrological Survey was informed that local inhabitants of Bufumbira were "very keen" to have the Mumwalo swamp reclaimed as soon as possible.¹¹³ In another example a few years later it was reported that the local inhabitants near the part of the Kiruruma South Swamp known as Kjasiaru¹¹⁴ were "anxious" to have this part of the swamp reclaimed, and it was agreed to make a "show piece" of this area and so demonstrate what could be done.¹¹⁵ It was noted that the residents, *saza* and *gombolola* councils "strongly recommended" that this

¹⁰⁹ Letter to SecGen from PB Butto, Gomb Chf Kamuganguzi, 12 Oct 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff180.

¹¹⁰ Agreement reached by Gomb Councils - KDA DC Dev4-5A ff174+.

¹¹¹ Letter to DC from Gomb Chf Buhara, 29 Oct 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff189.

¹¹² Letter to Dir of WDD from DC, 2 Nov 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff187.

¹¹³ Note for Info of the Interdepartmental Comm on Swamp Reclamation sent from Dir of Hyd Survey, 10 Jan 1950, KDA DoA 22/C ff1.

¹¹⁴ Kitaburaza, SecGen, corrects this - saying it was known as Chasi.

¹¹⁵ Minutes of meeting in DCs Office with PCWP, DC, DAO, SecGen, Director WDD, WG Owen WDD Officer, 23 Jan 1957, KDA DCDEV4-5 A ff119.

part should be drained.¹¹⁶ Other sources confirm that there were cases of strong support and local people were very enthusiastic that the swamp should be drained because of land shortage in their area.¹¹⁷

Attitudes towards swamp reclamation varied enormously and even today opinions about swamp reclamation are very mixed.¹¹⁸ The fact is that some areas (and individuals) supported reclamation before other areas and individuals. The advantages of reclamation would have been most obvious to those individuals suffering from land shortage, who also had ample labour as cultivation in swamps is labour intensive. It could be that communities as a whole were against reclamation (because of the need to maintain papyrus supplies) but individuals supported it because of their land requirements. These individuals included chiefs (who had cash incomes with which to pay labourers) and through the *gombolola* councils they put forward requests to have swamps reclaimed in order to increase their access to land. The chiefs, as chapter 4 showed, were losing their authority over land more broadly and so were seeking authority over land which they had previously ignored. Additionally once some individuals started cultivating the swamps people realised that the community resource was going to be lost, and so then focused on the benefits to be had for them as individuals. The diversity of attitudes towards swamp reclamation which resulted from these factors is crucial to the issues surrounding the allocation of swampland after it had been reclaimed.

5.3 - Distribution and allocation of swamps.

Having outlined the efforts of the colonial administration to reclaim swamps, and seen that there was both opposition and support for this policy, this section will examine how the swampland was shared out. Before doing this it should be observed that there was a fundamental contradiction within the aims of the administration: on one hand there was a desire to improve agricultural productivity by encouraging the progressive farmer working in units of an 'economic size', and on the other hand was the desire for an equal and fair distribution of the new land. This latter concern led the administration to put into place structures to ensure that it occurred. Often, however, these commendable aims

¹¹⁶ Letter to Water Devt Off from DC, 7 Jan 1957, KDA DC DEV4/5A ff111. The Standing Committee of the District Council passed Resolution 45/56 in relation to Kiruruma Swamp in Rugeyo/Kinkizi.

¹¹⁷ Kagambirwe, 'Causes and Consequences of Land Shortage', 101.

¹¹⁸ Interviews with farmers, Kabale District, August-Sept 1995.

failed: either because the structures were put into place too late and people had already claimed land; or because people ignored them or found ways around them; or because the administration was itself not entirely convinced that this was best. Officials were inclined to 'turn a blind eye' to farmers who were considered to be 'progressive' who laid claim to larger areas of land. As a result, the distribution of swampland was sometimes highly inequitable and resulted in the loss of an important reserve of land for the majority of the local community.

Ownership of swampland did not become a political concern until the mid-1950s. But it is apparent that earlier officials had been concerned and discussions about the ownership of future reclaimed swampland began from the late 1940s. One of the earliest suggestions raised the possibility of "renting" reclaimed swamps as "development areas." The "obvious advantage that [swamps] have to offer is that they will be no-mans-land with no hampering traditional, hereditary or other rights existing over them except as regards communal rights to take out residual papyrus and sedge" was noted by the DC.¹¹⁹ He considered whether it would be possible to "treat such areas as Native Administration estates under the control and direction of the Native Administration," as he believed that this would give the Native Administration a real interest in developing these areas which he felt would not happen otherwise. This suggestion came to nothing and would, in all probability, have been completely unworkable. In fact his prediction proved to be overly pessimistic, as in time individuals did develop these areas. The whole question of ownership of swampland was closely connected with the problem of paying for the reclamation work and the maintenance of drainage channels. Initially it had been felt that those who were using the reclaimed land should be responsible for the maintenance of channels,¹²⁰ but it was later decided that this would be the responsibility of local government.¹²¹

Besides these observations there was little discussion during the first few years of swamp reclamation of how the land would be allocated. In discussions with Howell, in 1957,

¹¹⁹ Two memos to DAO - this one not signed but must be from DC Burner (other from DFO), Not dated. Probably June 1948. KDA DoA 11/A/1 ff50.

¹²⁰ Water Resources Sub-Committee, 13 April 1959. Swamp Rec Progress Report, WDD E'be, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff72.

¹²¹ Letter to Perm Sec Min of Natural Resources from Dir of WDD (copy to DC) 22 May 1959, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff73.

chiefs raised the question of precisely how rights to reclaimed swampland would be determined and plots distributed, and they noted that natural swamps were communally owned and could "be used freely by anyone".¹²² Howell recorded that

"Much swampland is already reclaimed and utilized by the people themselves so a reasonable solution is presumably possible, given that sufficient areas of natural swamp are retained to meet the needs of those who do not live in the immediate vicinity. This point ...requires further investigation."¹²³

DC Fraser felt that an investigation was unnecessary, and argued "It has worked perfectly well so far without investigating. The chiefs allocate it."¹²⁴ The Director of Water Development Department (WDD) commented that the question of the ownership of reclaimed swampland had been "overcome without undue difficulty in areas previously reclaimed"¹²⁵ Giving more detail about this system, the DC explained:

"Land reclaimed from swamps will be distributed to people who are in the vicinity... This land will be completely the property of the people to whom it will be allocated, save for reserved parts for the purpose of grazing as the Gombolola Council shall direct. Neither the Protectorate nor Local Government shall utilize reclaimed land in any way without first consulting the people and the councils where the reclaimed land is, since the land will have been the property of the people."¹²⁶

But the Ministry of Natural Resources and the district administration disagreed over the procedures to be followed for the allocation of swampland. District officials stated that: "The normal procedure should be followed when the area is ready for occupation, ie the local chiefs will allocate the reclaimed area to private owners."¹²⁷ Officials of the Ministry of Natural Resources believed, however, that, given the cost to the government of reclamation, the government should "retain some control over land use or allocation in order to insure optimum productive use of the land" although they were unsure how practicable this was. Initially they suggested that the land should be handed over to the

¹²² Quoted in enclosure to letter to DC from PP Howell, Min of Natural Resources, 20 March 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff147Enc.

¹²³ Some Observations on Swamp Reclamation in Kigezi. Recommendations of the Consulting Engineers. Written by PP Howell, 14 March 1957. Enclosure to letter to DC from PP Howell, Min of Natural Resources, 20 March 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff147Enc.

¹²⁴ Ibid. (Note in margin in Fraser's handwriting)

¹²⁵ Letter to Perm Sec, Min of Natural Resources from Director of WDD, 28 March 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff148. Hydrological Department and Water Development Department seem to be used interchangeably.

¹²⁶ Letter to Dir of WDD from Fraser, DC, 20 Sept 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff166.

¹²⁷ Letter to Perm Sec Natural Resources from DC, 6 Nov 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff188. Also in KDA DoA 001/2 ff13.

Agriculture Department¹²⁸ and when the district administration ruled that out, saying it would be allocated to individuals by the chiefs, the Ministry put forward a number of other issues for consideration. They raised many questions, such as whether allocations should be subject to approval or veto by a local working party of the District Team; whether land use should be regulated, and if so by whom and on what legal basis; and whether any general principles should be promulgated for the guidance of local authorities, such as size of holdings, relation in place and area to occupant's other holdings, and use of land. Having raised these questions they agreed to leave the District Team to establish the local machinery to consider and propose answers to these questions, with a view to ensuring that swamps were developed efficiently and productively.¹²⁹

It was not until May 1959 that it was decided that a "development plan for each swamp must be drawn up before reclamation work was commenced."¹³⁰ Swamp Planning Committees¹³¹ were established to be responsible for the overall planning (or zoning) of each of the large swamps and to decide which areas were to be cultivated, grazed, reserved for *lukiko* use, and left for papyrus.¹³² The Swamp Committees' plan was referred to the *gombolola* councils and reconsidered by the Committee in the light of comments by the councils before a final decision was taken.¹³³ Through this system it was intended that a final plan would be made "in the light of the comments of the local people."¹³⁴ However, it is clear that there were occasions when the recommendations of the *gombolola* councils were contradicted by the Swamp Committee. Significantly, the Swamp Planning Committee had no statutory authority to make reallocations or to remedy what had already taken place,¹³⁵ and it was to be the responsibility of the *gombolola*

¹²⁸ Draft Memo by Ministry of Natural Resources. Water Resources Sub Committee re Work in Kigezi, 24 Oct 1957, KDA DC DEV4-5A ff181.

¹²⁹ Natural Resources Committee - Land Use Sub-Committee, Entebbe, 6 Jan 1958. KDA DoA 001/2 ff18.

¹³⁰ Minute of Water Resources Sub-Committee, Min of Natural Resources, 6 May 1959, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff69.

¹³¹ Committees were to be made up of DC, *saza* chief, Field Officer, Water Devt Engineer; and the relevant *gombolola* chiefs. Letter to Collin, (Field Officer), Kabega, and *saza* chief from DC, 15 May 1959, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff68. Also KDA DoA 218-A ff55.

¹³² Minutes of Natural Resources Sub Committee of Kigezi District Team on 7 Sept 1959. Attended by DC, DAO, ADC (LS), DVO, SecGen, Field Officers, Forestry Superintendent. KDA DoA Teammins.

¹³³ Letter to Saza Chf Ndorwa, Collin (Field Officer), Kabega (Water Devt Eng); Gomb Chfs Buhara, Kamuganguzi and Kitumba, 23 May 1959, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff70.

¹³⁴ Letter to Saza Chf Rubanda, Gomb Chf Bubare, D Collin Field Officer, Rubanda and D Kabega Water Devt Engineer from Purcell, DC, 15 June 1959, KDA DC ADM 9/7 ff13.

¹³⁵ Minutes of Natural Resources Sub Committee of Kigezi District Team on 7 Sept 1959. Attended by DC, DAO, ADC (LS), DVO, SecGen, Field Officers, Forestry Superintendent. KDA DoA Teammins.

chiefs to ensure that the plans were complied with.¹³⁶ This was important as the Committees were often established too late as drainage, and in some cases cultivation, was already well under way.

Land in small swamps would remain communal "so long as the local people so desire", and its use would be controlled by *gombolola* chiefs, while in the three large swamps land would be allocated on the basis of individual ownership by a *saza* chief with the Field Officer's advice. It was recommended that plots would be a minimum of 1,000 sq yards with more for large families and a maximum acreage of 5 acres was agreed,¹³⁷ "depending upon the need of a man and his family and his capacity to develop the land properly."¹³⁸ It was noted that land allocated in these swamps "becomes fully and individually owned by the person to whom it is allocated. A person to whom such land is allocated may grow on it any crops he likes."¹³⁹

Up to 1960, the situation with regards to allocation of swampland was, however, confused as the principles of allocation were still under discussion. The hesitation and wavering on the part of the district administration was almost certainly caused in part by the fundamental contradiction mentioned above: that is, the desire to increase agricultural productivity by encouraging the formation of a group of progressive farmers, and the feeling that the distribution of land should be fair and equal. This debate was probably being carried out at all levels of administration, and the District Team was split as to whether the swamps should be divided into small plots for food production, or "larger units of an economic size with the object of creating mixed farms."¹⁴⁰ When the Government restated official policy in January 1960,¹⁴¹ the argument in favour of the progressive farmers seems to have come out on top:

"The ultimate objective of policy will be to turn the cultivated parts of planned

¹³⁶ Memo on Swamp Land issued by DC to all Saza and Gomb Chfs, 22 Jan 1960, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff111.

¹³⁷ Minutes of Natural Resources Sub Committee of Kigezi District Team on 2 Nov 1959. Attended by DC, DAO, SecGen, DVO, Field Officers, Forestry Superintendent. KDA DoA Teammins.

¹³⁸ Memo on Swamp Land issued by DC to all Saza and Gomb Chfs, 22 Jan 1960, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff111.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Minutes of Natural Resources Sub Committee of Kigezi District Team on 2 Nov 1959. Attended by DC, DAO, SecGen, DVO, Field Officers, Forestry Superintendent. KDA DoA Teammins.

¹⁴¹ Memo on Swamp Land issued by DC to all Saza and Gomb Chfs, 22 Jan 1960, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff111.

swamps over to proper economic sized mixed farms in the hands of those who have proved themselves most capable of using the land to best advantage. Such farms will qualify for grant of title."¹⁴²

The following section will demonstrate that allocation did not proceed as planned and efforts had to be made to prevent "irregularities in procedure".¹⁴³ Swamp committees proved ineffective;¹⁴⁴ *gombolola* chiefs were not ensuring that the plans agreed to were being followed; and land was not being allocated in accordance with the guidelines.¹⁴⁵ Somewhat belatedly, from about October 1962, discussion began amongst district officials as to the possibility of drawing up a "Control of Swamps Byelaw" to deal with the problems of controlling plot sizes, responsibility for maintenance of water channels and the role and membership of Swamp Committees.¹⁴⁶ Given that reclamation was by this time well and truly under way, and in some cases was complete, such legislation was coming far too late, as the following analysis of Kashambya, Kiruruma South and Kiruruma North swamps will illustrate.

5.3.1 - Kashambya

The total acreage of Kashambya was approximately 2,020 of which 1,830 was estimated to be reclaimable.¹⁴⁷ Drainage of parts of Kashambya began earlier than other swamps, dating back to the early 1940s. Unfortunately there is no evidence as to how the land was allocated at this time. It was reported in 1958 that 60 to 70 acres of the area that were reclaimed in 1957 were under cultivation¹⁴⁸ with sweet potatoes,¹⁴⁹ and it is clear that cultivation of parts of Kashambya began before official distribution or allocation of that land had taken place.¹⁵⁰ It was not until July 1959 that the Kashambya Swamp Committee was formally appointed to draw up plans for the use of swamp.¹⁵¹ By this

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Extract from Minutes of Meeting of Natural resources Sub-Comm, 3 July 1961, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff151.

¹⁴⁴ Letter to County Chfs Rukiga, Ndorwa, Rubanda from DC, 22 July 1961, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff152.

¹⁴⁵ Letter to Gomb Chfs of Kashambya, Buhara, Kamuganguzi, Kitumba, Bubale, Ikumba from DC, 10 June 1960, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff117.

¹⁴⁶ For details of bye-law see KDA DoA 106.

¹⁴⁷ Alexander Gibb and Partners, *Water Resources Survey*.

¹⁴⁸ WPAR, 1958.

¹⁴⁹ Letter to Gomb Chf Kashambya from people of Muluka Kitunga, Gomb Kashambya, 2 June 1958, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff18. Also ff23.

¹⁵⁰ Letter to DC from Dir of WDD, 23 Sept 1958, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff32.

¹⁵¹ Letter to Saza Chf Rukiga, from DC, 25 July 1959, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff82.

time (and thus prior to its official allocation) 468 people (including churches and schools) living around the swamp had annexed land.¹⁵² After being informed of this, the DC stated that future allocations of swampland should be made by the *saza* chief in consultation with the Field Officer.¹⁵³ The following year careful supervision by the chiefs was necessary to ensure that people were not cultivating areas not zoned for cultivation.¹⁵⁴ This part of the swamp was inspected by the *saza* chief who confirmed that it was being cultivated by people who were "just sharing the swamp by themselves" including parts of the swamp set aside for grazing. He arranged to meet the people to divide up the land and indicate where they should cultivate.¹⁵⁵ Pegs to mark the different zones were removed by local people, replaced by the *gombolola* chief,¹⁵⁶ but were ignored.¹⁵⁷ The DAO tried repeatedly to ensure that only those allocated land by the *saza* chief and Agricultural Assistant, Rukiga (on behalf of the Field Officer) were cultivating,¹⁵⁸ but without success.¹⁵⁹ There were also complaints that part of the swamp zoned for grazing and thatching was gradually being cultivated.¹⁶⁰

It is clear that the Kashambya Swamp Committee was functioning badly and the zones agreed to by the Committee were being disregarded. The DAO noted that his letters to the Committee were being ignored but he was only in a position to advise.¹⁶¹ The Agricultural Assistant (Rukiga) tried to prevent cultivation in the swamp until the Committee had met to consider the issue, but for unexplained reasons the committee kept delaying meetings.¹⁶² When they finally met, in August 1961, it was noted that the NAC had acquired a larger piece of land than that of the RC mission. It had been agreed

¹⁵² Letter to DC from Gomb Chf Kashambya, 30 Sept 1959, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff92.

¹⁵³ Letter to Gomb Chf Kashambya from DC, 16 Oct 1959, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff94.

¹⁵⁴ Letter to Gomb Chf Kashambya from Ellis, DAO, 8 June 1960, KDA DoA 218-B ff6.

¹⁵⁵ Letter to Gomb Chf Kashambya from Katabazi, Saza Chf Rukiga, 30 June 1960 re Distribution of Kantale Swamp. KDA DoA 218-B ff9.

¹⁵⁶ Letter to DAO from Gomb Chf Kashambya, 11 July 1960, KDA DoA 218-A, ff11.

¹⁵⁷ Letter to Saza Chf Rukiga from Ellis, DAO, 15 June 1961, KDA DoA 218-A ff69.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Complaints included that the *saza* chief had allocated land from the swamp at Kitanga to both churches and to a prison, while refusing to allocate it to ordinary individuals. Letter to Secgen from 22 people of Kashambya, Rukiga including E Kashongo and P Bwegyeko of Kashambya, Rukiga, 27 July 1961, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff156.

¹⁶⁰ Letter to Saza Chf Rukiga from Major TF Ellis, Ag DAO, 15 June 1961, Re Kashambya Swamp. KDA DC DEV4-5B ff162A.

¹⁶¹ Letter to DC from DAO, 12 Aug 1961, KDA DoA 218-B ff83.

¹⁶² Letter to Saza Chf Rukiga from Ag Asst i/c Rukiga, 12 Aug 1961, KDA DoA 218-B ff84.

that missions (like individuals) should not own more than 5 acres of swampland, but it was argued that as this land had been drained by the mission themselves it should not be included in the 5 acres allowed.¹⁶³ Thus, those who were able to invest the labour in draining and clearing the swamp were able to avoid the restrictions on the amount of swampland that could be held. While dealing with this dispute the Agricultural Assistant wrote "I have a queer feeling that swamps in Rukiga should not be left to the *saza* chief Rukiga alone due to the many complaints coming in."¹⁶⁴ The *saza* chief was not seen as being impartial in his decisions over swampland. Additionally, the *gombolola* chief Kashambya was not ensuring that the swamp plan was being followed in relation to allocation of land in swamps.¹⁶⁵ People continued to encroach on land allocated for grazing in Kashambya,¹⁶⁶ and it is unclear whether there was ever any formal allocation of agricultural land. It was observed that "people who have cultivated in the swamp regard the land as theirs" and that this should be borne in mind "when the time comes to allocate land to people."¹⁶⁷ It appears, therefore, that having cultivated land prior to formal allocation people's ownership of that land soon became well entrenched.¹⁶⁸

In the Kashambya swamp around Kitozho those who currently have land in the swamp include both societies and individuals. Oral sources confirm that as well as government allocation there were less formal means of claiming land, with those who cultivated near the swamp taking a part of it. Informants noted that those who were physically strong or who had the means of clearing the swamp ended up with large parts.¹⁶⁹ In the words of Kazlon Ntongoro: "Those who didn't cultivate because of laziness and ignorance are

¹⁶³ Letter to DAO from Asst AO, Rukiga, 9 Jan 1962. KDA DoA 218-B ff153. Also see Minutes of Meeting of Kashambya Swamp Comm, 20 Jan 1962, KDA DC DEV4/5C ff205.

¹⁶⁴ Memo by ADC re Minutes of Swamp Comm Meeting held at Kashambya Gomb HQ on 21 Aug 1961, KDA DoA 218-B ff98.

¹⁶⁵ Extract of Minute of Meeting of Natural Resources Sub-Comm of Kigezi District Team, 2 Oct 1961, KDA DC DEV4/5C ff177.

¹⁶⁶ Minutes of Kashambya Swamp Comm, 5 April 1962, KDA DC DEV4/5C ff225.

¹⁶⁷ Letter to Saza Chf Ndorwa from DC, 18 Oct 1961, KDA DC DEV4/5C ff180.

¹⁶⁸ A recent report on the Kitanga part of the Kashambya swamp stated that those living on the edge of swamp extended their cultivation into it. "There was no central allocation body. People and institutions from within the two [local] parishes ... and outside (eg Kabale town), acquired quantities of their choice. ... the richer and the local educational institutions ... have acquired bigger chunks of land through influencing the relevant district authorities." Kabann Kabanukya and D Musakweta, 'Kitanga Demonstration Site, Socio-Economic Survey', (IUCN, Kampala, 1994), 22.

¹⁶⁹ For example interviews with 54/a 55/a 56/a 71/a. Accusations of bribery taking place were also made. By for example 53/b.

regretting."¹⁷⁰ There is no doubt that some people just took land, without formal allocation, and when the high productivity of the swampland became clear there was probably a rush to claim land. There remains in the area around Kitozho a comparatively large proportion of unreclaimed (and probably technically unreclaimable) swamp, which has survived as a communally owned resource reserved for papyrus and other grasses.

5.3.2 - Kiruruma South

The total area of this swamp was 5,300 acres, of which 4,300 could be reclaimed.¹⁷¹ Work began in 1957 to clear the main channel and by the end of 1958, 150 acres had been drained and local residents were cultivating the reclaimed area. Almost immediately complaints were made that "people have started taking land" in the drained part of the swamp "without proper arrangements".¹⁷² The Secretary General, who noted that the Field Officer, Collin, had "tried to stop these people who have been taking it up, but they refused," was unclear as to what steps should be taken as some people had already taken land. It was realised that the areas agreed by the *gombolola* councils (for reclamation and those reserved for grass) were different from the areas according to the members of the Swamp Committee. These contradictory recommendations delayed the allocation process as it was necessary to refer the decisions of the Swamp Committee back to the *gombolola* councils to see if they would accept the recommendations of the Committee.¹⁷³

By 1959, about 800 acres were dry enough for the papyrus to be cut. However, in contrast to Kashambya where cultivation began almost immediately, in Kiruruma South the situation was more complex. In some areas this did happen, but in others reclaimed land was not used for some time. While it was noted that the increase in cultivation was slower than had been expected it was also observed that "a large number of isolated patches are being used either for grazing, thatching grass or cultivation ... [in an] apparently haphazard way."¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁰ Interview with 56/b. Similar statements by many others eg 71/a 79/a.

¹⁷¹ Alexander Gibb and Partners, *Water Resources Survey*.

¹⁷² Letter to DC from Kitaburuza, SecGen (Copies to WDD, Saza Chf Ndorwa, Gomb Chf Buhara, Field Officer Ndorwa and Rubanda) 12 March 1959, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff54.

¹⁷³ Report of "Visit to Kiruruma South Swamp with Saza (Ndorwa) Swamp Committee, 21 March 1959 by Katende, Eng Asst, WDD. KDA DC DEV4-5B ff61.

¹⁷⁴ Water Resources Sub-Committee 13 April 1959, Swamp Recl Progress Report, WDD E'be, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff72.

Although it was felt that "units of an economic size"¹⁷⁵ should be made available when the land was divided up, the Field Officer, Collin, was at the same time keen to ensure that the distribution of swampland was fair. He decided to prevent people from cultivating "until a satisfactory method of allocation had been agreed upon,"¹⁷⁶ and orders were given that no-one was to cultivate the drained area.¹⁷⁷ Referring to the Buhara part of the swamp, Collin stated that he wanted to ensure that "every person should receive a part equal to his friends, and nobody to get more than the other."¹⁷⁸ Collin's aim was that the swamp should be divided into equal parts and allocated as quickly as possible so that people could begin cultivation but there is evidence that some chiefs were not cooperating with him in this aim.¹⁷⁹ The problem of different sites being drained from those desired by the local people was noted by Collin, who observed that in some cases (eg Buhara) the people had not been adequately consulted. "The Gombolola Chief at the time of choosing the site did not accurately convey the opinion of the council and people. ... as [because of the lack of accessibility of thatch supplies] ... local opinion was against drainage."¹⁸⁰ He commented that people had registered to receive land in some areas while in others no one had registered and drained land had been left to fall derelict. It is clear, therefore, that in this swamp there were widely varying reactions to the availability of reclaimed land.

In some areas people continued to claim pieces of swampland before allocation¹⁸¹ despite administrative efforts to prevent this. In July 1961, complaints were made that part of Kiruruma South in Buhara had not been distributed according to official policy and a number of *miluka* chiefs had reserved large areas for themselves, which they were not cultivating and were refusing to share with others. It was suggested that a Swamp Committee for Buhara be formed which could investigate the matter, and if necessary redistribute the land,¹⁸² but the outcome of this dispute is unclear.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Letter to DC from Collin, Field Officer (Ndorwa and Rubanda) 6 May 1959, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff65.

¹⁷⁷ Letter to Gomb Chf Buhara from Kakwenza, Saza Chf Ndorwa, 17 July 1959, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff83. Referring to Field Officer's Letter of 14 July 1959 (not enclosed).

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Letter to DC from Collin, Field Officer (Ndorwa and Rubanda) 6 May 1959, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff65.

¹⁸¹ Letter Saza Chief, Ndorwa from Collin, Field Officer, 12 March 1960, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff112.

¹⁸² Letter to Saza Chief from Exec Eng WDD, 3 July 1961, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff150.

¹⁸³ Letter to DC from Saza Chf Ndorwa, 13 July 1961, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff153.

In addition to land being cultivated by chiefs who were not prepared to share it, the situation arose of individuals cultivating parts of the swamp which had not been approved for reclamation by the *gombolola* council. Reclamation had not been approved by the Kamuganguzi *gombolola* council and so the WDD did little in that area. However, about 500 acres of the swamp in Kamuganguzi was, by July 1961, "under heavy cultivation in spite of the council's resolution."¹⁸⁴ While the WDD felt that this was an indication that people now realised the benefits of swamp cultivation, it is more likely that some had always supported reclamation and that once they had begun cultivating others joined in for fear of missing the opportunity. The WDD were concerned about the risks of cultivating a swamp which had not been properly reclaimed and hoped that the *gombolola* council would formally accept reclamation so that the proper technical measures could be put into place.

By the time of the first meeting of the Kiruruma South Committee, in September 1961, it is clear that people had claimed and cultivated land without allocation. The swamp committee, however, agreed that the proper policy should be followed and land allocated equally with chiefs assisting with marking boundaries.¹⁸⁵ In February 1962, the *saza* chief asked *miluka* chiefs to draw up lists of people (and the size of their households) who wanted land and then "land would be allocated according to the size of family and ability of develop the land usefully."¹⁸⁶ The Committee decided that, as the people themselves had organised the drainage of the part of the swamp that was already being cultivated, they should not be interfered with.

The *saza* Swamp Committee was reduced to the *gombolola* level in July 1962 and the *gombolola* chief was in charge of allocation,¹⁸⁷ although this may have always been the case in practice. But later that year it was noted that the policy over swamps was under review including "the possibility of making the swamp committee the sole body

¹⁸⁴ Letter to SC from Exec Eng WDD, 3 July 1961, re Kiruruma South Swamp, Kamuganguzi Gomb. KDA DC DEV4-5B ff149.

¹⁸⁵ Minutes of (1st) Meeting of Kiruruma South Swamp Comm on 5 Sept 1961, KDA DC DEV4/5C ff172.

¹⁸⁶ Minutes of Meeting of Kiruruma South Swamp Comm held Kamuganguzi Gomb HQ, 13 Feb 1962, KDA DoA 218-B ff161.

¹⁸⁷ Minutes of Meeting of Kiruruma South Swamp Committee, 10 July 1962, KDA DC DEV4/5D ff40.

responsible for allocating land in swamps,"¹⁸⁸ which suggests that even then the allocation of swampland was confused. Perhaps in part because of this there were reports during the 1960s from all over Kigezi that swamps that were reserved for grazing or grasses were being taken over for cultivation.¹⁸⁹

Oral sources confirm that the swamp around Muyebe was allocated to local people by chiefs. While some informants said that those who were physically strong got more land,¹⁹⁰ others stated that the plots were of equal sizes (of 100 yards X 100 yards).¹⁹¹ It is probably therefore that those who had begun to cultivate land prior to allocation were allowed to keep their plots, while those who waited until formal allocation were given equal sized plots. Additionally, many informants explained the difference in sizes of plots seen in Kiruruma South today by the fact that swampland was bought and sold,¹⁹² and accumulation had therefore occurred.

5.3.3 - Kiruruma North

According to Gibb's Report Kiruruma North was 3,000 acres of which 1,870 was reclaimable. As with the other swamps, the situation of allocation was complicated. Kiruruma North is of particular interest as there is clear evidence that parts of the swamp were allocated equitably along the lines of official policy, while in other areas large pieces of reclaimed land were taken by a small number of individuals prior to allocation. These individuals often had links with the colonial administration,¹⁹³ and therefore access to information, knowledge and the money to pay wage labourers to assist in the clearing of the swamps. This swamp has been the scene of a large number of transactions of swampland that have resulted in the increased differentiation of ownership.

Official reclamation of Kiruruma North was held-up "due to the lack of agreement on the

¹⁸⁸ Letter to Saza Chf Ndorwa from DC, 24 Dec 1962. Comments on Minutes of Kiruruma South Swamp Committee, 14 Nov 1962, KDA DC DEV4/5D ff41.

¹⁸⁹ Meeting of Swamp Comm of 3 Gombs - Kamuganguzi, Buhara and Kitumba on 6 July 1965, KDA DC DEV4/5D ff137.

¹⁹⁰ Interviews with 58/a 61/a 62/a 63/a.

¹⁹¹ Interview with 57/a 59/a 63/a. Wilson Rwambonera (57/a) added that those who knew the European who did the measuring got more.

¹⁹² Interviews with 34/a 60/a 63/a.

¹⁹³ See below. For example Batuma, Makara, and the Asst AO mentioned in R.J. Tindituza, 'Study on Land Tenure at Nyarurambi Parish'. Asst AO who employed labourers to help him clear land in swamp at Nyarurambi Parish, Rwamucucu, and so got a large plot of land in the swamp.

area chosen"¹⁹⁴ and did not begin until April 1959. However, it is clear that some 'unofficial' reclamation and cultivation of land had occurred much earlier: in 1955 there was a dispute over reclaimed swampland at Kumba. After the RC mission reclaimed part of the swamp¹⁹⁵ a group of ten people wrote to the DC complaining that the mission had cultivated the swamp and planted trees without their consent. The mission had thought that there would not be complaints "as it belonged to no body".¹⁹⁶ To resolve the dispute, the *gombolola* council decided they could keep half of this part of the swamp for growing foodcrops, while the rest "will remain [unreclaimed] for the people in which to cut grass... [and as a] watering place."¹⁹⁷

Discussions about the future use of Kiruruma North swamp began in June 1959, when a plan for the swamp was drawn up.¹⁹⁸ Prior to this it was noted that in parts of Kiruruma North local opinion was against drainage, and Collin believed that the people of the area might passively accept drainage but would not cultivate the drained land. He noted that in parts there was little cultivation on swamp margins, which suggested that land pressure was not too acute.¹⁹⁹ However, this was not the case along the whole of Kiruruma North as it is clear that in some places the swamp was already being cultivated prior to official allocation. Just a few days after the swamp planning procedure had been outlined, chiefs were reminded that until the land was allocated

"it remains communal land for which the chiefs are responsible. Until the use of this swamp has been properly planned in July no one should be allocated land there or permitted to take land there for himself."²⁰⁰

By this time, however, some individuals had already taken large pieces of land and a meeting planned for July to decide what to do about these individuals was delayed for several months. In September 1959, it was observed that

"large areas of land had already been taken by various people in advance of reclamation. In one particular instance, 57 acres had been taken and the person in

¹⁹⁴ Water Resources Sub-Committee 13 April 1959, Swamp Recl Progress Report, WDD E'be, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff72.

¹⁹⁵ Letter to DC from Kakwenza Saza Chf Ndorwa, 21 April 1955, KDA DC LAN8-6I ff53.

¹⁹⁶ Quoted in letter to DC from Gomb Chf Kumba, 23 May 1955, KDA DC LAN8-6I ff59.

¹⁹⁷ Letter to DC from Gomb Chf Kumba, 23 May 1955, KDA DC LAN8-6I ff59.

¹⁹⁸ Letter to saza chief Ndorwa and gomb chf Buhara, Kamuganguzi and Kitumba and Field Officer from DC, 30 June 1959. KDA DoA 218-A ff63.

¹⁹⁹ Letter to DC from Collin, Field Officer (Ndorwa and Rubanda) 6 May 1959, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff65.

²⁰⁰ Letter to Saza Chf Rubanda and Gomb Chf Bubare from DC, 23 June 1959, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff75. Also see in KDA DC ADM 9/7 ff14.

question had already expended a considerable sum on putting in his own drainage channels and on tree planting. This appeared to indicate a complete breakdown of the traditional system whereby these swamps were regarded as communal until such time as they were reclaimed and allocated through Chiefs. The absence of public protest on the subject was most surprising, particularly in view of the loud opposition expressed to swamp reclamation 2 years ago on the grounds that they must be retained for communal purposes."²⁰¹

With the policy regarding land allocation under review a meeting of senior chiefs and district officials was held to consider what action should be taken over those who had already occupied land in Kiruruma North. It was decided that the *gombolola* chief of Bubale should draw up a list of all those people claiming and occupying swampland and a committee would investigate the claims of these people and recommend whether or not they should be allowed to keep the plots, or a part of them. It was noted that

"As a guide to the investigating committee the meeting expressed its unanimous view that if people had invested money and labour in swamp land and were using the land they claimed, or were capable of using it, effectively and beneficially they had a moral right to be confirmed in their occupation of that land."²⁰²

It can be seen that the argument was swinging in favour of the progressive farmers, although at the same time it was decided that no further occupation of swampland would be permitted except by allocation.

The 50 people with land in the swamp included Batuma²⁰³ with over 50 acres, Bagacwa with 30 acres, 35 people with land of between 1 and 2.5 acres, and 12 people with plots of under 1 acre.²⁰⁴ The committee allowed the 37 people with plots of over 1 acre to keep their land and their claims were confirmed. They were told to "demarcate their plots with posts at each corner in the presence of the Gombolola chief and Field Officer"²⁰⁵

²⁰¹ Minutes of Natural Resources Sub Committee of Kigezi District Team on 7 Sept 1959. Attended by DC, DAO, ADC (LS), DVO, SecGen, Field Officers, Forestry Superintendent, KDA DoA Teammins.

²⁰² Record of Meeting on Land Allocation in Kiruruma North Swamp held at Bubale Gomb HQs on 14 Sept 1959, Attended by SecGen, Field Officer, Ndorwa, Saza Chief, Rubanda, Gomb Chf, Bubale, Forest superintendent and Purcell. KDA DC DEV4-5B ff90. At this meeting the committee was appointed. It consisted of the saza chief Rubanda, the Field Officer Rubanda, gomb chief Bubale and two Bubale councillors.

²⁰³ John Batuma was educated to S3, then trained to be a veterinary assistant. Went to Entebbe until 1953 for 3 yrs. After he qualified worked in Kabale, Mukono and Mbarara. Batuma's wife is the daughter of Mukonde a saza chief. In 1963 went to Israel to study poultry keeping. Came back, working for Veterinary Dept. Then formed a wholesale company, Kigezi African wholesalers. His land at Bubale is in one piece of 160 acres (of which 30 acres was originally his fathers) on this he has a freehold title. In total he has about 240 acres of which some he described as being "leased". Interview with John Batuma, 14 Sept 1995. Also evidence that Batuma was a councillor who sat on the Kiruruma North Swamp Committee. KDA DC Dev4-5B ff147.

²⁰⁴ Letter to DC from Gomb Chf Bubale, 12 Sept 1959, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff91.

²⁰⁵ Letter to Saza Chf Rubanda from DC, 30 Nov 1959, KDA DC ADM 9/7 ff26.

to ensure that they did not extend their property. The 12 others, all with plots of under an acre, were informed that they would have to lose their land but would be allocated new plots when more had been drained. It was decided that those who had planted trees but whose claims were not upheld would be allowed to keep the trees, but they had no claim to the land. Thus those administrative officers arguing in favour of large mixed farms were winning the debate; Kagambirwe confirms that the swamp committee did on occasions go against official policy in giving farmers more than five acres of swampland if they had undertaken the drainage on their own initiative.²⁰⁶ The DC reminded the *saza* chief that

"In future nobody should be allowed to take any part of the swamp unless it has been allocated to him by yourself on the advice of the Field Officer.... everybody in the area of the swamp ...must apply to you if they want to occupy land in the swamp. Will you please also ensure that the swamp zoning plan is strictly followed and adhered to."²⁰⁷

An interesting aspect of swamp allocation began to appear in 1960, when some of those who had been allocated land in the swamps did not actually cultivate it.²⁰⁸ The Secretary General asked that the *gombolola* chiefs in the affected areas should "see to it that these shares are cultivated as required as it appears a sheer waste of time giving them out and yet they are not cultivated."²⁰⁹ Some of those not cultivating their swampland had taken it prior to allocation²¹⁰ and had planted trees. This was a particular problem in the area around Bubale.²¹¹ In August 1960 it was decided on the advice of the Hydrological Department that planting trees in reclaimed swamps was not desirable, and should only be permitted in certain areas at specified distances from the drainage channels.²¹² Crucially, it appears that people who had claimed large areas of swampland planted trees

²⁰⁶ Kagambirwe, 'Causes and Consequences of Land Shortage', 84, 89.

²⁰⁷ Letter to Saza Chf Rubanda from DC, 30 Nov 1959, KDA DC ADM 9/7 ff26.

²⁰⁸ Further details of people not cultivating swamp land they had been allocated. See Minutes of Meeting Of Kiruruma Swamp Committee, 28 July 1961, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff155.

²⁰⁹ Letter to Gomb Chfs of Buhara and Kashambya from Kitaburaza SecGen, 7 Nov 1960, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff130.

²¹⁰ For example Mujingo and Nyakashezo. Letter to Saza Chief, Ndorwa from Collin, Field Officer (Ag), 12 March 1960, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff112.

²¹¹ Minute of Natural Resources Comm, 5 Sept 1960 Minute 30/60 - Swamp Reclamation ff129A. Also see Letter to Saza Chf Ndorwa from DC, 24 Aug 1960, re meeting at Bubale on 20 Aug 1960 re planting trees, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff126.

²¹² Issue of planting trees on swamps - see KDA DC DEV4-5B ff120+ - seems it was often done soon after allocation, but against govt policy. Effect on water level of trees (and on fishponds) KDA DC DEV4-5B p/c ff120. Re transplanting trees away from main channel see Letter to Gomb Chf Bubale, from saza Chf Rubanda, 20 Oct 1960, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff129.

as a way of securing their ownership of them. To explain how some of these very large plots came about Byagagaire (who was Assistant AO at the time) gave an example:

"There was [one man] cleverer than my father - he put his house here, came and planted some trees here, there [ie scattered]. [Later] ...this man said my land ends where my trees are - and he had put his trees all over. My father who decided not to plant trees anywhere, he didn't want to plant them far, he got this [small area]. So it was really just the people who saw the opportunity."²¹³

He continued:

"If there was a man like Batuma who went somehow without people noticing went and reclaimed 10 acres. He just claimed it! It was public land. Nobody claimed it as his own land. So if he went and removed water, and fenced it and claimed it. ... I think people who got this land just went and cultivated there and claimed it."²¹⁴

The dispute about trees led to a closer investigation of the claimants. Out of 13 mentioned whose residence was given 7 were from Kabale or Rugarama (the CMS Mission station just outside Kabale town), some distance from the locality of Bubale.²¹⁵ This leads us to ask how many of those being allocated swampland were not local to the area?

As further swamp was reclaimed chiefs were again told to begin land allocation immediately "as the people are starting to come in on their own" and delays would make it difficult to distribute equally or fairly.²¹⁶ The Secretary General asked the *saza* chief of Rubanda to see that the committee fulfilled its tasks and that "land is distributed evenly."²¹⁷ Before this could take place, people again moved into the swamp and started cultivating. The DC was informed that "large numbers" of people had moved into the recently cleared part of the swamp, and this was occurring without individual plots being allocated by the *saza* chief in accordance with policy.²¹⁸ The *saza* chief was informed that he should "take immediate steps to stop any further occupation of land in this swamp until the Swamp Committee meets, and you have allocated land in accordance with the

²¹³ Interview with J.M. Byagagaire, 21 Sept 1995.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Letter to Gomb Chf Bubale and Saza Chf Rubanda, from DC, 17 Jan 1961, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff134. Enclosing list from Gomb Chf Bubale to Field Officer of those who have cut trees and those who have left them.

²¹⁶ Letter to SecGen from Exec Eng WDD, 1 June 1961, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff140.

²¹⁷ Letter to Saza Chf Rubanda from SecGen, 5 June 1961, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff142. In the case of the Kiruruma North swamp the committee was to be made up of *saza* Chief (Chairman), Field Officer, *gombolola* chief, Muluka Chief, Mukungu Chief and One Councillor.

²¹⁸ Letter to Saza Chf Rubanda, from DC, 14 June 1961, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff145.

agreed procedure." The position of those who had occupied land without official allocation was to be decided by the Swamp Committee who were told to "meet as a matter of urgency ... [as] ..it is essential to establish control without delay. It is important that you should then allocate the land quickly."²¹⁹

Meetings continued to be held restating official policy and confirming that no-one should cultivate the swamp before allocation. Those who had cultivated land prior to official allocation were told that they could harvest their crops but would have to abandon the land to the person allocated it.²²⁰ However, this was not applied universally and some farmers were allowed to keep their plots. Despite these statements, part of the swamp reserved for use of building materials (papyrus etc) began to be cultivated.²²¹

Formal allocation of land around Bubale took place in late June 1961, when 80 people were allocated land in plots of 50 times 50 yards.²²² It was reported that all land, including that which was already being cultivated, was allocated. The *gombolola* chief stated that "No disputes took place during this allocation" and explained that the cultivation that had been taking place was mainly sweet potatoes - as a temporary and precautionary measure against famine.²²³ But there is no doubt that there already existed some much larger plots in the Bubale area, and 37 individuals with plots of over an acre (including Batuma with a plot of 57 acres) had had their ownership confirmed in November 1959.²²⁴ Here, both the policies of encouraging the progressive farmer and of ensuring the fair and equal distribution of swamp land were being attempted alongside each other. This appears to have been possible as the demand for reclaimed land was

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Minutes of Meeting held at Miles 5 and 7 on 15 June 1961 about Kiruruma Swamp. Present - Field Officer, Ndorwa and Rubanda; Saza Chf Rubanda; Gomb Chf Bubale; The Two Milukas, Bubale and Rugarama. KDA DC DEV4-5B ff147. The Kiru North swamp committee would consist of the ADC, Water Devt Officer, Field Officer (Ndorwa/Rubanda) *saza* chief Rubanda, *gombolola* chief Bubale, two miluka chiefs, Bubale and Rugarama and two Councillors, Mr J Batuma and Mr S Tahobitagwa.

²²¹ Extract from Minutes of Meeting of Natural Resources Sub-Comm held 5 June 1961, "Minute 19/61: Allocation of land in Swamps. KDA DC DEV4-5B ff143.

²²² Letter to DAO from Gomb Chf Bubale, 27 June 1961, KDA DoA 218-B, ff72.

²²³ Letter to DC from Gomb Chf Bubale, 21 June 1961, KDA DC DEV4-5B ff148.

²²⁴ There is also evidence that when it was decided in November 1961 that the Veterinary Asst i/c of each County should be a member of various Swamp Committees(Letter to County Chfs of Rukiga, Ndorwa and Rubanda from DC, 25 Nov 1961, KDA DC DEV4/5C ff187) Batuma (Veterinary Asst Ndorwa) managed to get on the Swamp Committee of Rubanda, because the Veterinary Asst Rubanda did not have much experience in swamps. (Letter to Saza Chf Rubanda from JC Allen, DVO Kigezi, 8 Dec 1961, KDA DC DEV4/5C ff190).

localised and varied over a relatively small area. So, for example, a few miles north of Bubale, at Mile 10, reclaimed land was remaining uncultivated after allocation and it was recognised that here there was not a great demand for land but people "only took over these plots purely for the sake of owning land in the swamp."²²⁵

Oral sources were gathered from two different parts of Kiruruma North - firstly at the southern end close to Kabale town, and secondly in the area of Bubale. They will be looked at separately as the final outcomes of swamp allocation were quite different in these two areas.

In the southern part of Kiruruma North the swamp plots are relatively small and mainly cultivated. Esther Ellevaneer Bushoberwa explained how

"The government made a call on all people and then gave each one a part. They used strings to measure out a part for each. Leaders like muluka and gombolola chiefs did the measuring. We all got the same size plots."²²⁶

The calling of public meetings and the use of a tape measure to allocate equal plots of land was mentioned by a number of informants, including Semu Kamuchana and Phyllis Rwakari.²²⁷ Everyone was allowed to cultivate the swamps²²⁸ and were given equal portions of land, while many said that it was due to ignorance or laziness that some did not cultivate the swamp.²²⁹ Others, for example Paulo Bakinagaga, stressed the importance of having access of labour to help with the clearing of reclaimed swampland: "Those who had 3 or 5 children or who were physically strong got big land because they cleared a big part."²³⁰ It was observed by Edna and Sulumani Rutindapora that women

²²⁵ Letter to Saza Chf Rubanda from FX Rugunda, Eng Asst, 16 July 1963, KDA DC DEV4/5D ff63. Piecemeal evidence from the years after independence suggests that increasingly individuals took any opportunity to lay claim to swamp land: land that had been allocated to the ALG was "leased" to Batuma. (Letter to Chairman, Kigezi Land Board from WB Rutankundira, Saza Chf Rubanda, 2 April 1964, KDA DoA 218-B ff271. Letter to Chairman, Kigezi Land Board from DC, 8 April 1964, ff273; and Minutes of North Kiruruma Swamp Comm, 10 March 1964, KDA DC DEV4/5D ff95.) Also parts that had been zoned for papyrus were taken up by small numbers of individuals. (Case of 43 individuals taking land. Letter to Chairman, Kiruruma North Swamp Comm from Sam Rugyereka, (Secretary Kigezi Land Board) 6 May 1965, KDA DC DEV4/5D ff131. Another case of 7 people taking land. Complaints at meeting of Swamp Comm, 17 June 1966, KDA DC DEV4/5D ff179.)

²²⁶ Interview with 6/a.

²²⁷ For example interviews with 24/b 30/b.

²²⁸ Interviews with 8/a 22/a 24/a 26/a 27/a 28/a 29/a 32/b.

²²⁹ Interviews with 7/a 8/b 15/a 17/b 20/a 32/b 33/a.

²³⁰ Interview with 8/b. Also 16/b.

could get swampland.²³¹ But Edsa Georgna stressed the importance of links with the administration when it came to being allocated large pieces: "My husband was working with the bazungu ... and he was able to get a big swamp land"²³² while Semu Kamuchana and Phyllis Rwakari observed that those who were working in other parts of the country missed out.²³³

It was suggested by Paulo Bakinagaga that people were not supposed to sell the swampland that they had been allocated without first referring back to those who had allocated it,²³⁴ and this appears initially to have been the official policy. However, in practice it is clear that sales of land began to take place soon after the swampland had been allocated.²³⁵ There is also evidence of less voluntary exchanges of swampland, for example Phyllis Rwakari told of how her, and other people's land in the swamp "was just taken by force" and is now used as a dairy farm. She said that she "just kept quiet" when this happened.²³⁶

The swamp around Bubale is quite different, being mainly large dairy farms of exotic cattle owned by a few individuals. In theory, the same process of allocation was used in all the large swamps but it is clear that this was not always the case, and exceptions to the 5 acre rule were made here. Interviews carried out in Bubale confirm that although the government was involved in the allocation process, it did not proceed smoothly. While there does appear to have been some allocation by the government of equally sized plots of land,²³⁷ there was clearly a good deal of 'land grabbing' in this swamp. Informants noted that those who had the money to employ labourers that could clear larger areas of swamp.²³⁸ It was said by one individual that "those who had money got bigger land,"²³⁹ while another claimed that officials had been bribed.²⁴⁰ In particular it is clear that those areas that were zoned to be left for thatch were later cultivated unofficially. Discussing

²³¹ Interviews with 13/a and 14/a.

²³² Interview with 15/a.

²³³ Interview with 24/b 30/b.

²³⁴ Interview with 8/b.

²³⁵ Interviews with 8/a 24/b 21/b 28/a 30/a.

²³⁶ Interview with 30/b.

²³⁷ Interview with 95/a.

²³⁸ Interviews with 96/a 98/a.

²³⁹ Interview with xx/a.

²⁴⁰ Interview with xx/a.

these areas, an informant noted "later the rich people wanted more parts and they used it."²⁴¹ Another told of how "the rich said that the government said that land is theirs and so they put there their cows. [We] kept quiet, [and]... did not report it anywhere."²⁴² It is also clear that sales of swampland²⁴³ occurred frequently.

Two interviews were conducted with owners of large dairy farms: Batuma²⁴⁴ and Makara.²⁴⁵ Both had worked with the colonial administration (as a Veterinary Assistant and Medical Assistant respectively), and both had employed labourers to clear the swampland. Both now own more than one dairy farm, (Batuma has about 240 acres and Makara 50 acres), on which they have exotic cattle for milk production. Makara explained that those with swampland had got it because "it was just there without an owner" and explained that by the time the government came some people had already done some drainage. After the government put in the main central trench everybody was allowed swampland but "some didn't care but the clever ones cultivated." He recalled that there had been rumours that Europeans wanted to take the swampland, and implied that it was this that prompted people to start using it.²⁴⁶ He had seen government drainage schemes in other parts of the district, and so showed his labourers how to dig the trenches and cut down the reeds. He explained that they had been the first to drain the swamp because they were the ones with money, who saw the future, and that the government had praised their efforts. Makara could not recall the working of any committee involved in the allocation of swampland, although he stated that in some areas swampland was allocated to people who later sold it to others, such as himself and Batuma.

Batuma recalled that:

"The allocation of the swampland worked very well. If you were living near the swamp which was being reclaimed, they gave according to the family. If you had a big family they gave you more - less family you got less land. ... The field officer, gombolola chief, the assistant agricultural officer and the local chiefs were the ones who did the allocation. They marked boundaries. The size of the plots was dependent on the family size. I had a big family and afterwards some people

²⁴¹ Interview with xx/a.

²⁴² Interview with xx/a.

²⁴³ Interviews with 96/a, 97/a and 98/a.

²⁴⁴ Interview with John Batuma, 14 Sept 1995.

²⁴⁵ Interview with 94/a.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

near me decided to sell their plots to me."

Batuma claimed that allocation took place after the construction of drainage channels by the government. He stated that there was not enough land to go round and that the decision as to who should get the land depended on whether you lived near the swamp, if you had a big family, and if you were not lazy. He asserted:

"There was no corruption at all by that time. Some people were not interested. They thought that digging in the swamp was a lot of work. There was no struggle. They learned afterwards when we were allocated swamps and we were growing vegetables which were doing very well, and now the cows are doing very well. Now there is a struggle."²⁴⁷

He explained that during the Amin period vegetables could not be transported to Kampala and as a result people sold their plots to him.²⁴⁸ His comments are very much as one would expect, and illustrate well how individuals could take the opportunities offered by the contradictions that existed within colonial policy, and use those to their own ends.

²⁴⁷ Interview with John Batuma, 14 Sept 1995.

²⁴⁸ Interview with John Batuma, 14 Sept 1995.

Photograph showing small plots in Kiruruma South Swamp.



Photograph showing large dairy farms around Bubale in Kiruruma North Swamp.



Photographs taken by the author.

Conclusions.

This chapter has shown how the colonial desire for the "fair" distribution of swampland sat uncomfortably alongside the policy of encouraging the progressive farmer. Partly as a result of this contradiction, and also because of the inadequacies of the structures put into place to ensure equality, large areas of reclaimed swamp fell into the hands of a few farmers. The swamp committees, which were supposed to ensure the sensible zoning of swamps and the fair distribution of land, were very often set up too late, and even once established they were often ineffectual. As a result in some places swampland was distributed in a way that only benefitted a few farmers, while the rest of the community lost access to the resources of unreclaimed swamps. Thus the fears of many Bakiga when swamp reclamation was first suggested were proved to be well founded.

Originally, swamps had served surrounding communities and were owned and utilised on a communal basis. When reclaimed, they became privately owned. They were a reserve of land that, because of intensification, became high potential maximum utility land, the value of which rose with increasing land pressure. That certain individuals foresaw what was happening enabled them to manipulate the structures that the state had put into place to regulate the allocation. The occurrence of spontaneous reclamation; peoples' reactions to the policy of reclamation; the way that reclaimed land was taken up; and the success of government policy over allocation all varied widely. These differences can be accounted for partly by local variations in population density and settlement patterns, as well as by the different actions of individuals. It is clear that there were situations where individuals capitalised on the potential of acquiring access to land very rapidly, taking advantage of the opportunities offered to them. In Kiruruma North, for example, it was probably variations in population density and thus variations in demand for land, and the presence of a few energetic individuals with access to the necessary knowledge and labour, which meant that some areas were the scene of disputes soon after reclamation, while in others areas reclaimed land was largely ignored. During the allocation of swampland, chiefs were desperate to hold onto their power over land. They were aware that their powers were being squeezed and so they began to look for new (sometimes marginal) land to take control of, and this intensified their interest in swamps. The next chapter examines another area of 'newly available' land and shows how a chief sought to gain control over it by using all the powers he had; manipulating colonial policy; and taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the contradictions within colonial policy.

CHAPTER 6 - KALENGYERE PYRETHRUM ESTATE

This chapter is the second case study to examine in detail the relationship between political authority and control over land. It will investigate the case of the Kalengyere pyrethrum estate, where a failed experiment with a plantation cash crop had important implications for land ownership. Land was leased to a European planter and following the failure of the scheme the land was returned to the local population. By examining how it was redistributed on being returned, this chapter will illustrate how those in positions of authority, or those with links to such people, were able to gain access to this land. The chapter opens by looking at the background to the allocation of land, showing how the land first came to be leased as a pyrethrum estate. The following section will examine what happened when pyrethrum ceased to be grown at the estate and plans began to return the land to local people. Certain people within the community succeeded in gaining access to this land, despite having no previous claims to it. The final section will look briefly at Kalengyere's experiences since independence, and in particular at how the land was taken from the cultivators for a second time in the 1980s.

6.1 - Lease of Land - the Pyrethrum estate

Pyrethrum was grown in Kigezi as a plantation crop by two Europeans (Stafford and Moses) on land leased to them for that purpose. This is the only example of such a lease in Kigezi. The decision to lease land in this overpopulated part of the district went against the norm and needs to be seen in the context of the needs of the wartime economy, with pyrethrum being declared a priority crop. This chapter will focus on the land at Kalengyere (See Map 2), which was leased to Moses, but it should be stressed at the outset that the lease in itself is not the focus of this chapter, which is more concerned with the opportunities that the failure of pyrethrum presented.

Experimental planting of pyrethrum began in the late 1930s by the Agricultural Department. In January 1940 the Department gave Stafford and Moses all the pyrethrum seed that they had in excess of the Department's requirements. The same year Stafford and Moses obtained concessions, on a Temporary Occupation Licence, to establish pyrethrum plantations. Moses was leased 400 acres under the name of "H.M. Syndicate" under a 5 year leasehold at an annual rent of Shs. 400/-, the rent being subject to revision,

and the leasehold continuing thereafter from year to year.¹ Conditions included that for every four acres of pyrethrum one acre of trees should be planted for firewood. The lessee also agreed to follow all regulations concerning soil conservation.²

Production of pyrethrum at Kalengyere began in 1946³, but just four years later in 1950 the American wartime stockpile was released and as a result prices collapsed.⁴ The ending of the artificially high wartime prices meant that pyrethrum production was no longer economic in Kigezi and in late 1952, HM Syndicate surrendered part of the Kalengyere estate,⁵ remaining with 300 acres which were not developed any further. By 1953, high population densities in the area around Kalengyere led to the observation that "the continued alienation of this Estate is becoming something of a political issue in the District."⁶ Eventually Moses admitted that he could not comply with the conditions required of him to develop the estate⁷ and the Land Officer served HM Syndicate with a Notice to Quit by the end of 1954.⁸ During the 1950s there were a number of occasions when it was suggested that pyrethrum might again be a suitable cash crop for the district, but only ever as a peasant crop rather than a plantation crop.⁹

Informants living in the area around the Kalengyere Research Station, which is on the grounds of the old Kalengyere Pyrethrum Estate, remember clearly how the land had been "borrowed" from them so that a *muzungu* [European] could grow pyrethrum there. They recall that at that time the land was under fallow - parts of it had been used, but other parts had never been used, although in the words of Pascal Makabore: "people claimed

¹ Enclosure to Lloyd S of S for C, 27 Jan 1941 - enclosing the schedules of alienations of land which have been approved during 1940. PRO CO 536/208 40060 (Alienation of land) ff2 Table A - Return of Grants of Freehold and leases of land. Stafford was also leased 400 acres.

² Letter to Stafford from HB Thomas, Land Officer, 23 Jan 1940. Enclosure to Letter to DAO Ankole [?and Kigezi] from GF Martin, Senior AO WP, 6 Feb 1940, KDA DoA 008. Also see Letter to Sen AO from Stuckey, DAO, 25 Jan 1940. KDA DoA 008.

³ For further detail re the planned extension of Kalengyere to 600 acres, and problems experienced in getting sufficient labour see KDA DC MP4II, and PRO CO 537/1508 (40342/1).

⁴ Kigezi pyrethrum scheme, written Kampala, 20 Dec 1955, KDA DC AGR3-7 ff2A.

⁵ These were probably those acres within the forest reserve - there is no mention of them being returned to the local population. Letter to HM Syndicate from Land Officer (E'be), 10 Dec 1952, Copy sent to DC, Kigezi, KDA DC LAN 8I ff38.

⁶ Letter to Land Officer from Burgess, DC, 15 May 1953, KDA DC LAN8I ff44.

⁷ Letter from Land Officer to Chf Sec (Copy to DC), 3 Nov 1953, KDA DC LAN8I ff68.

⁸ Letter to HM Syndicate from Land Officer, 24 Dec 1953, KDA DC LAN8I ff71.

⁹ Further details in KDA DC AGR3-7; KDA DoA Teammins; KDA DoA 11/A/2 and KDA DoA 19.

it as theirs."¹⁰ However, proximity to the Echuya Forest Reserve meant that crop raiding was a problem on the land which later was to become the pyrethrum estate, and for this reason the land was considered to be rather marginal land for food crops.¹¹ Bakihimba Deodanta recalled that:

"when the government demanded this land people didn't complain instead they were grateful to the government for protecting them because the land was bushy and wild animals from it used to destroy their crops so when the government reduced the forest, they felt happy."¹²

Miriano Tibesigwa stated:

"We used to cultivate there peas, millet and beans and these were destroyed by buffalos so when a *muzungu* borrowed it when he wanted to grow pyrethrum we agreed because we had a hope that he would chase away these buffalos to the bamboo forest and so our land was taken in such a way. We were happy that it was taken because the pigs used to destroy our crops and when the *muzungu* cultivated pyrethrum they no longer destroyed our crops."¹³

Thus, it seems that farmers saw an advantage in allowing pyrethrum to be grown as it acted as a buffer between the forest animals and their food crops.

Informants were clear that the land had been loaned and not given. In the words of Pascal Makabore:

"The government said it was going to cultivate that land for a short time and then give it back to the owners. No compensation was given ...When the chiefs told them that the government wanted to use the land for a short time, people agreed to leave the land."¹⁴

Michael Zebikire stated that "Kalengyere was once owned by our parents and then when the *bazungu* wanted to cultivate pyrethrum they borrowed this land and they said that after harvesting the pyrethrum we shall get our land back."¹⁵ The promise that the land would be returned to them was of great significance¹⁶ and as Nyasio Bandonde said: "When the chiefs told us that after the pyrethrum program, we shall get our land back we didn't

¹⁰ Interview with 72/a.

¹¹ Interviews with 84/a and 86/a.

¹² Interview with 73/a.

¹³ Interview with 89/a.

¹⁴ Interview with 72/a.

¹⁵ Interview with 83/a.

¹⁶ Interviews with 84/a and 85/a.

mind, we used another."¹⁷ Michael Zebikire and Jacob Mwangi recalled that they were glad to have the opportunity of working for wages.¹⁸

The promise that the land would be returned to them, combined with the fact that wild animals had been raiding their crops, and the pyrethrum estate would act as a buffer from the forest, meant that people had not objected strongly to the land being leased to Moses. The oral evidence also suggests that the people using the land before the estate was leased for pyrethrum were largely from the Basakulo clan, which, the following section will show, became significant when the reallocation of land began.

6.2 - Returning of land to local people

The last pyrethrum was planted at Kalengyere in 1946, the last pickings took place in 1951, and from mid 1952 there was no manager at the estate, which was effectively abandoned.¹⁹ However, the estate was not formally surrendered until the end of 1954 and the reallocation of land did not take place until 1956.

This section will first look at the events that took place before the formal allocation of land into plots of 10 acres (a sizeable plot for this area), and then examine the allocation itself. In late 1953, a year after the estate was effectively abandoned, the *askari* at Kalengyere (an employee of H.M. Syndicate) wrote to the *saza* chief asking to be allowed to let people use the land, although HM Syndicate had expressly forbidden this.²⁰ The *saza* chief replied that this was impossible and people would have to be patient and wait until it was clear which acres would be available for cultivation.²¹ However the evidence suggests that prior to official allocation some people did use the land - most notably the *gombolola* chief, Mbuguzhe, who used it for both grazing and cultivation, while apparently preventing others from doing so.²² In the 13 years since the land had first

¹⁷ Interview with 88/a.

¹⁸ Interviews with 83/a and 84/a.

¹⁹ It seems that Moses left the country without making arrangements - for example it was reported that his two horses had been left running wild. Letter (plus translation) to DC, Kigezi from S Kibandama, Gomb chief, Bufundi, 4 March 1953 (Copies sent to Sec Gen and Saza Chf, Ndorwa). KDA DC LAN8I ff42.

²⁰ Letter to Saza Chief Ndorwa from Andereya Mulego (Guardman Kalengere Estate), 12 Oct 1953, (copies to DC, Kigezi; HM Syndicate and Gomb Chf Kishanje) KDA DC LAN8I ff62.

²¹ Letter to Anderea Murego, Guardsman Kalenjere from Yeremiya Bigombe, for Saza Chf, Ndorwa, 20 Oct 1953 (Copies to Comb Chf Muko; DC, Kigezi; HM Syndicate) KDA DC LAN8I ff66.

²² Letter to Chairman, Kigezi District Council from CAR Mbuguje, Gomb Muko, 11 April 1955 (Copies to DC, Kigezi, SC, Ndorwa), KDA DC LAN8I ff154.

been leased, when pressure on land was such that this land was only cultivated occasionally, the demand for land had increased and some members of the population living around the Estate now wanted access.

The administration decided that from the first day of 1955 Kalengyere would become public land and would be "opened to settlement and cultivation by the local people."²³ However, allocation was delayed and before it took place a group from the basakuru clan wrote to the DC asking to be allocated land from the estate. They stated that they were the original owners of the land which was their "former land" on which they had grown peas and millet. They asked the DC "not to consider Karenjere land as that which has no owners."²⁴ The DC replied that this was "not a matter for me to decide but for your own local government which will certainly take note of the recommendations of the gombolola council".²⁵ The Standing Committee of the District Council agreed that "the land should be given to people in units, ie so many acres per man"²⁶ and should be allocated to the people who had occupied it before. The *saza* chief Ndorwa was asked to count the number of people who had possessed land at Kalengyere, so that the amount of land to be given to each person could be calculated.

However the Muko *gombolola* council had other ideas, believing that the land should be divided into a part for grazing and a part for cultivation. The *gombolola* chief, Mbuguzhe, himself a Munyaruanda, explained to the DC that the resolution of the *gombolola* council had been reached because if the council allowed people to share the land by themselves "there would be a quarrel among them; because Syndicate occupied this land while it was a bamboo forest. By then it belonged to nobody."²⁷ With reference to those parts which were known to have been cultivated in the past, Mbuguzhe stated that it was "not possible

²³ Letter to Forest Superintendent, Kabale (Copy to DC and Sec Gen) from DFO Ankole/Kigezi, 6 Jan 1955, KDA DC LAN8I ff88. Also ff89 - Telegram to Land Officer from DC 18 Jan 1955; ff90 - Telegram from Lands, E'be to DC, 27 Jan 1955; Letter to Sec Gen from DC, 27 Jan 1955, KDA DC LAN8I ff91.

²⁴ Letter (with Translation) from a group of Abasakuru (a clan) from Karenjere, Muko to the DC, 6 Feb 1955, KDA DC LAN8I ff95.

²⁵ Letter to Banyenzaki and friends, Karengere from DC, 1 March 1955, KDA DC LAN8I ff97. By this time the *gombolola* council consisted of a majority of elected members. However it was noted that this council was "apathtic" and easily led by the "energetic" Mbuguzhe. Notes by NBC, March 1956 and by GR Barnes, Feb 1957. KDA DC Chiefs File.

²⁶ Extract Minute of Standing Committee Meeting, 25 Jan 1955, KDA DC LAN8I ff96.

²⁷ Letter to DC Kigezi from A Mbuguje, Chairman Gomb Muko, 8 March 1955, KDA DC LAN8I ff98. Re meeting of 20 Jan 1955.

for their owners to mark out the boundary along their shambas; because it is a long time since they last cultivated these shambas." For these reasons, Mbuguzhe stated that the *gombolola* council had decided to divide the Estate into two parts - one for cultivation and one for grazing. Allocating half the estate to grazing was a blatant attempt on the part of the *gombolola* chief and council to gain control of 150 acres of this land for the predominant cattle owners of the area who were mainly Banyaruanda. It was even acknowledged that the area chosen for grazing adjoined "the cattle bandas of Mr A Mbuguje."²⁸ The *gombolola* council suggested that the other half of the estate should be "shared among people and be cultivated." Those who were to be given land were those who lost their land when the *gombolola* headquarters and school were built at Muko and then "those who have no sufficient shambas but who are natives (BASAKURA)."²⁹

Following the decision of the *gombolola* council³⁰ the Secretary General visited Kalengyere and found that many people living in the area did not agree with the decision. He reported that "We saw more than 200 people who met us, and the majority of this number were against Muko Gombolola Council's report in which it is stated that the largest area of the Estate should be reserved for grazing purposes."³¹ Instead, he recommended that "the most part of this area should be set aside for cultivation purposes and that each individual should be allocated 10 acres, on which they could both cultivate and graze their cattle. It was also observed that many people were taking up and occupying land, and the *gombolola* chief was instructed to "stop further encroachment."³² However, the evidence suggests that he was one of the main offenders.

Following this visit the *gombolola* council met again in April 1955 and reversed its decision about dividing the land into grazing and cultivation, deciding instead to divide all the land into plots of 10 acres suitable for mixed farming, as recommended by the Secretary General. The council decided that the first people to be allocated land should be those who lost their land when the Muko *gombolola* headquarters were built, and that

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ There is evidence that the *gombolola* council was weak and was manipulated by Mbuguje (see below) - also possible that it was actually dominated by Banyaruanda.

³¹ Letter to DC from Ngologoza, 25 March 1955, KDA DC LAN8I ff100.

³² Letter to Gomb Chf, Muko and Saza Chf Ndorwa from DC, Kigezi, 31 March 1955, KDA DC LAN8I ff101.

"Those who will follow are all people rich and poor in land." The council tried its best to argue that the recipients of land should be those who could follow soil conservation rules and especially those with cattle who had "manure also to fertilize their shambas." The council accordingly decided that it would "select those who are known ... to keep their soil and work hard according to the soil conservation laws; so the same applies to the rich people who have been selected by this council that they know how to keep their animals knowing the importance of manure and using it in their shambas."³³ The council also observed that the "Government should not be bothered by the false rumours stating that they were cultivating there before this land was owned by Syndicate."³⁴ The evidence therefore suggests that the population of this area was sharply divided into Bakiga of the Basukura clan and Banyaruanda, who dominated the *gombolola* council.

Mbuguzhe made no attempt to hide the fact that he was very keen to acquire more land for his cattle. He asked the Secretary General to be allowed 15 acres of land at Kalengyere. From this letter it is clear that (through his position as a chief) he had gained access to this land soon after it was abandoned by HM Syndicate: "I began to use this area as grazing place for my cattle during December 1953." He stated that following a visit in 1954 the PCWP and DC, Fraser, had "thanked me very much how I began to fertilize this area" and the DC "[as a way of] thanking me [for] the work of improving grazing places he gave me the assistance from the money of the Community Development Veterinary Department and built me two paddocks in which now my cattle are living."³⁵ He recalled that when Ngologoza had visited in March 1955 he also "thanked me very much how I fertilised these grazing places [and] said that I should some times make meetings with my people on this area and teach them how to fertilise their shambas by using cow dung to fertilise their grazing places." He planned to invest in planting improved grasses and fencing in the area, as well as building a dam and improving his stock through selective breeding. Clearly aware of the aims of the Agricultural Department to encourage the progressive farmer, he wrote: "If I am allowed I will change this place completely and it will be a good example for the people whom are near it and for visitors." And on the question of ownership: "There is nobody stating that this land was

³³ Copy of Minutes (and translation) of Gomb Meeting, Muko, 2 April 1955, KDA DC LAN8I ff102A.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Letter to Chairman, Kigezi District Council from CAR Mbuguje, Gomb Muko, 11 April 1955 (Copies to DC, Kigezi, SC, Ndorwa), KDA DC LAN8I ff154.

cultivated by his father or grandfather except Syndicate."³⁶

The District Council rejected Mbuguzhe's application, deciding that he should not be allocated more than 10 acres.³⁷ A number of council representatives were selected to assist with the allocation of the land. It was later confirmed that 40 acres were to be reserved for the District Council (the Department of Agriculture had plans for trials for the rehabilitation of exhausted land), but as there were no funds to maintain a demonstration plot at the time it was decided that the 40 acres were to be "entrusted to a good farmer - a muruka chief if available could do."³⁸ Nothing was done about allocation for several months and in February 1956 the *saza* chiefs of Ndorwa and Bufumbira and other senior chiefs and administrators³⁹ went to Kalengyere and explained to the people that the estate had to be measured anew and then it would be divided into plots of 10 acres each.⁴⁰ Soon after this a group of people complained to the DC about the *gombolola* chief:

"When Europeans went away some of us went and cultivated our land and there we were fined and put into prison [because we had no right to] cultivate the land. The main thing that displeases us is that the Gombolola Chief himself takes pulani people on Wednesday to cultivate peas for him ... whilst he had prevented us from cultivating there. Sir, we can show you the place where he has harvested field peas of August 1955"⁴¹

They asked that these matters concerning Mbuguzhe be investigated, and a meeting with the complainants was held. No action was taken, however, and it was recorded that the *gombolola* chief was in fact "entitled to cultivate within boundary."⁴² It appears therefore that, prior to allocation, Mbuguzhe was being treated as an exceptional case, and was being allowed to use the land at Kalengyere. As we shall see Mbuguzhe became a

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Kigezi District Council, Minute 5/55, Enclosure to Letter to DAO from DC, 15 Aug 1955, KDA DoA 012A ff188.

³⁸ Letter to DC from Ngologoza, SecGen, 30 Aug 1955, KDA DoA 012A ff181.

³⁹ Those chosen by the District Council to go to Kalengyere and help allocate the land on 9 Feb 1956 were P Kakwenza (Saza Chief, Ndorwa), P Rukyribuga (Saza Chief Bufumbira), P Ntungwa (Gomb Chf Kyanamira), E Mbaleba (Gomb Chf, Kabale), M Rugamba (Engineering Asst, Kigezi), J Bitwari (Forest Superintendent), S Batuma (Councillor), Fennel (A.O.) and Merchant (Field Officer) Letter from Ngologoza, (Sec Gen), 30 Jan 1956, KDA DC LAN8I ff108 and ff109.

⁴⁰ Letter to Sec General from P Kakwenza (Saza Chief Ndorwa), 10 Feb 1956 re Distribution of Karengyere land and visit to Kalengyere on 9 Feb 1956. KDA DC LAN8I ff109.

⁴¹ Letter and translation to DC from Muhure, Biribwandara, Mwangi, Lubu and 15 others, 4 March 1956, KDA DoA 012B ff37. Also on KDA DC LAN8I ff110 - slightly different translation.

⁴² Minute re meeting held with complainants, 4 April 1956. KDA DC LAN8I ff110. No explanation was given as to why he should be entitled to cultivate there.

significant player in the allocation of Kalengyere land. He was a Munyaruanda and had been described as an energetic chief⁴³ but it was noted that he did not get on well with his minor chiefs and tended to have a "holier than thou" attitude. It was also observed that he tended to do things for the "enhancement of his own reputation rather than the benefit of the people" and that he was "not afraid to make considerable use of the authority of the law on recalcitrant households and has little difficulty in controlling an apathetic council."⁴⁴ The rest of this chapter will illustrate the way that a chief in a position such as Mbuguzhe's could 'flex his muscles' and succeed in getting his own way. By using some of colonial officials' own developmental or modernist arguments, for example, about mixed farming and units of economic size, he could effectively manipulate colonial policy in order to increase his access to land.

It was not until May 1956 that a group of senior chiefs and officials went to Kalengyere to allocate the land to the people. By this time it had been measured and found to total 330 acres. The District Council took 40 acres and the remaining 290 acres were to be allocated to 29 families, each taking 10 acres. The Secretary General asked the *gombolola* chief of Muko to send him a "list of people with very little land who are selected by the Gombolola Council to be given this land", and informed that they should all be at Kalengyere on the day.⁴⁵ Thirty people were allocated land on 11 June 1956, but there is no clear indication from archival sources as to how they were chosen, except that the allocation was "at the discretion of the District Council Representatives."⁴⁶ In fact, oral evidence suggests that these representatives were presented with a list drawn up by the *gombolola* council under the firm direction of Mbuguzhe. The representatives simply assisted with allocating specific plots to those individuals. Jacob Mwangi stated:

"If you paid bribes your name would be registered ... they wrote on small pieces of paper and then those whose names were registered would pick a paper and the number of the paper was the part that you were supposed to cultivate. Only one

⁴³ Evidence that Mbuguzhe was one of the wealthiest members of the local community - note re tax returns KDA DC ADM9-7 ff41.

⁴⁴ Notes by NBC, March 1956 and by GR Barnes, Feb 1957. KDA DC Chiefs File.

⁴⁵ Letter from SecGen, 11 May 1956, to those chiefs and officials selected to help with the allocation: P Kakwenza, P Rukyeribuga, E Mbaleba, P Kabagambe, E Bashungula, JB Bitwari, E Mahuku, J Bygagaire, R Kibandama, L Bisezano, HK Bwire. KDA DC LAN 8I ff116.

⁴⁶ F Kashwiga, Biraro, Banyenzaki, Sebyenda, Bifakubaho, Kalegyesa, Kiboga, A Barisa, Bangana, Rukakare, Kashakwabuhake, S Karema, Kihembe, Munyabwisya, Sebahunde, Bafakworora, Nyagasole, S Sebikirane, Sebutozi, Kahorote, Karyarugokwa, A Kiraea, Rwembwa, D Kabeba, T Busoge, Miranga, Mbuguzhe, Kafuko, Gabashaizha and Kabairu - Odd extra piece. Kalengyere New Settlement: Initial Rules (Instructions), KDA DoA 17A-2 ff257.

man among [those who cultivated there originally] cultivated again and he also gave bribes."⁴⁷

The oral evidence also indicates that those selected all had links with the *gombolola* chief, and all but one were Banyaruanda. The importance of ethnicity was clear in the minds of the informants, as indicated by the words of Miriano Tibesigwa:

"Only one of those who cultivated there originally got his land back [and he] also bribed. It was originally cultivated only by Basakulo, but later Mbuguzhe gave it to the Banyaruanda."⁴⁸

Nestori Rwakahesi explained that when the *gombolola* chief came to allocate the land he "gave it to those he liked particularly Banyaruanda, as he was a Munyaruanda. They went to him to ask for land and were given it, we also asked but were not given it."⁴⁹ Pascal Makabore recalled:

"The *gombolola* chief was not from this area and so *beene waabo* [those with something in common - his own people] came with him. When he was giving a report he sent a list of names and then included in their names."⁵⁰

A number of informants mentioned the giving of bribes to Mbuguzhe in return for the allocation of land.⁵¹ Michael Zebikire stated that "the chiefs were corrupt and so they gave the land to those who bribed them. ...The *gombolola* chief chose his own people to cultivate it... Mbuguzhe was a Tutsi. ...he only gave to those who bribed him."⁵² The bribes were not necessarily cash, and Zebikire reported seeing people cultivate for Mbuguzhe, or doing other work for him, in return for being given the land.⁵³ Jacob Mwangi related:

"There came a *gombolola* chief called Mbuguzhe, a Tutsi, people bribed him and he gave them land and we who cultivated there originally said that we cannot give bribes for our land so we let them take our land."⁵⁴

Others recalled that some of those who had been allocated land were those who had lost land when the new *gombolola* headquarters and schools were built, and this was their compensation; but they were not the ones that had used the land at Kalengyere

⁴⁷ Interview with 84/a.

⁴⁸ Interview with 89/a.

⁴⁹ Interview with 87/a.

⁵⁰ Interview with 72/a.

⁵¹ eg interviews with 85/a, and 89/a.

⁵² Interview with 83/a.

⁵³ Interview with 83/a.

⁵⁴ Interview with 84/a.

originally.⁵⁵ However, it should be noted that all these informants were Basakulo and a number of observations must be made with respect of their accusations of bribery and that allocation was along the lines of ethnicity. Firstly, it is perhaps to be expected that those who were not allocated land at Kalengyere (for whatever reason, be it legitimate or not) might feel some bitterness at having missed this opportunity to increase their access to land. They might therefore seek explanations for this that involve no shortcomings of their own. Secondly, it should be noted that today accusations of bribery are common in relation to land disputes, and people may assume that this has always been the case. That said, these accusations are long after the event and it is perhaps impossible to know for sure where bribery did in fact take place. We shall see in the following section that while there is no evidence of accusations of bribery at the time, there were accusations that Mbuguzhe used communal labour for his own purposes, which may amount to the same thing. What is important, however, is that people believed that bribery did take place and the way that the chief handled the case enabled these accusations to seem very possible.

On receiving their land, Kalengyere's new residents had to agree to certain rules about development. The government had great problems in ensuring that their instructions were followed. The failure of individuals to live on the land (and sometimes to even cultivate it) may suggest that they had claimed land without a great personal need (ie they were speculating on a future demand for land), or that it was being used solely for grazing. There is also evidence that, contrary to regulations, Mbuguzhe exchanged land: It is possible that those with whom he exchanged land may have only ever been owners on paper, and may have been allocated the land on behalf of Mbuguzhe, who planned to claim it at a later date. All those allocated land had to agree to a set of rules governing agriculture which were in addition to all the usual agricultural rules in the District. It was noted that

"The person receiving 10 acres of land is in fact acquiring something of very considerable value. In return it is only right that he should show that he will utilise that land to the best possible advantage. It is therefore suggested that each person should be given the following simple instructions which he should follow, after completion of the major items, he should be given full right of occupancy but not before he has proved himself."⁵⁶

⁵⁵ eg Interview with 73/a

⁵⁶ Kalengyere New Settlement: Initial Rules (Instructions), KDA DoA 17A-2 ff257. These initial rules did not in fact mention that sales or exchange of land were not allowed.

The rules included that the families allocated land should live within the boundaries of the 10 acres, the perimeter of the 10 acres should be permanently hedged or fenced. All bunds were to be continuous and follow the contour, and be permanent and completely covered with grass. A number of other soils conservation measures were also stressed.

In late 1956 (six months after the allocation), it was observed that the land at Kalengyere was "almost entirely under peas."⁵⁷ From the time that land was allocated officers tried, without success, to ensure that the rules were being followed by the new owners.⁵⁸ Officials from the Department of Agriculture visited the area to assist in the marking out of bunds, but it is clear that the efforts of the department were not being reciprocated by the owners of the plots. The "people of Kalengyere" complained that the Field Officer had threatened that he would advise the *gombolola* council to confiscate their land if they did not complete building houses and fencing their land by July 1957. They said that heavy rains had prevented them from being able to build, but they had now started the work as instructed and requested an extension until July 1958. They expressed concerns about the lack of water in the area and were looking forward to the government "arranging to make water supply available there." They were clearly annoyed with the Field Officer saying he was

"always telling us that this land is not our own land and that it may be taken from us in future whereas it seems that the Lukiko gave us this land in exchange of our land it took for the building of the Gombolola Unit and DCs Rest Camp. Some of us had possessed land among the Kalengere Estate since long ago before the land was used for "Amauwa" [pyrethrum] and after the land was released back, it was reverted to us the former owners. Sir, does it mean that if we make a mistake ... by not farming the land properly or by not following proper soil conservation, or if we do not make homes in the land, the land will be confiscated from us by our Council?"⁵⁹

The DC acknowledged that the question of rights of occupancy was a difficult one as having been allocated the land, it would be very difficult to do anything even if people failed to carry out the conditions that they had agreed to. He noted to the Secretary General that

"When these people were allocated the land in the written conditions drawn up by the DAO with your agreement it was stated that they would not be "confirmed in

⁵⁷ Monthly report, Dec 1956, by KS Ferguson, ADC (LS), KDA DoA 010resett ff150.

⁵⁸ Letter to SecGen from DC, 12 June 1957, KDA DoA 17A-2 ff273A.

⁵⁹ Letter to Sec Gen (translation forwarded to DC) from D Banyenzaki and people of Kalengere, 7 June 1957, (Copies set to Saza Chf, Ndorwa, Gomb Chf Muko, Gomb Council Muko.) KDA DC LAN8I ff142.

their right of occupancy" until they had proved that they intended to fulfil the conditions. I do not think it was ever suggested that the Gombolola Council or anybody else would "confiscate" the land. The most that could be read into this statement would be that possibly grant of final title could be deferred until they had done so. Even this however is a matter which needs very careful consideration, and I do not propose to make any statement on the subject without first consulting the Minister of Land Tenure. I would prefer to see the conditions carried out without recourse to any such methods."⁶⁰

Nonetheless, seven individuals, including Mbuguzhe, were warned that if they were unwilling to build bunds, houses and follow other instructions "it means that he does not want the land he was given by the District Council, and he should inform the Secretary General as soon as possible."⁶¹

By mid 1957, most of the conditions imposed at the time of the allocation on the recipients of the land had still not been carried out and a councillor from Muko wrote to explain the "difficulties" faced by these farmers. He wrote that they were "very sorrowful" because they were "being forced" to enclose their land with fences made of Biko trees which were difficult to obtain. They were also facing difficulties building their houses and said that the Field Officer had "suspended any cultivation of food crops in the estate on the grounds that bunds should be effected whereas these are existing at present."⁶² The DAO replied that it had been agreed by the Standing Committee of the District Council that those receiving land at Kalengyere "should satisfy certain conditions of occupancy ... in return for the very valuable gift of land"⁶³ and if they failed to do so they should return the land to the *lukiko*.⁶⁴ The Department of Agriculture had marked out the bunds but not all were built and the DAO felt that it was "essential therefore to insist that bunding be properly completed before further cultivation takes place, otherwise all our work and expenditure will have been wasted."⁶⁵ As for the problems related to housing and enclosure by fencing, the DAO felt that the difficulties of getting materials were not insurmountable and the department had assisted with providing transport, while steps were

⁶⁰ Letter to Sec Gen from DC, 18 June 1957, KDA DC LAN8I ff143.

⁶¹ Letter from P Kakwenza, Saza Chf Ndorwa, to Kikare, Karyarugokwo, Milanga, Kafuko, Gabashaija, Banyenzaki, Mbuguzhe, 25 June 1957, KDA DC LAN8I ff147.

⁶² Letter to Chairman, Kig Dist Council from Efuraimu Bisegano, A Councillor of Muko, 19 Aug 1957, KDA DC LAN8I ff153.

⁶³ Letter to Sec Gen from EW King, DAO, 27 Aug 1957 re ff153, KDA DC LAN8I ff155.

⁶⁴ Letter to E Bisegano (District Rep, Gomb Muko) from Kitaburaza, SecGen, 7 Sept 1957, re letter of 19 Aug 1957 (ff153), KDA DC LAN8I ff157.

⁶⁵ Letter to Sec Gen from EW King, DAO, 27 Aug 1957 re ff153, KDA DC LAN8I ff155.

being taken to improve the water supply. The rules were reiterated to the tenants and deadlines for their completion given. Bunds were to be completed by January 1958, plots were to be hedged and houses built by 30 June 1958, and plot owners were not allowed to sell their plots without permission: "If any plot owner wishes to dispose of his plot, he should apply to Secretary General through the Saza Chief, stating his reasons for this. Permission will only be granted provided very good reason can be produced."⁶⁶ These conditions had been agreed to originally when the plots were allocated, but almost all tenants had failed to observe the conditions.

As would be expected once the issue of ownership had been raised, those who had been allocated plots wanted to formalise their ownership and requested titles for their land;⁶⁷ however, nothing seems to have come of this at this stage.⁶⁸ Despite the rule that land should not be sold, there is evidence that some of the plots may have been acquired by different individuals on behalf of Mbuguzhe. The Secretary General criticized Mbuguzhe for having exchanged land saying: "It was clearly stated ...that.... the new land owners ... have no right to sale[sic] any of the acres given to them before consulting the District Council which gave them the land."⁶⁹ Mbuguzhe's application to create a large grazing area had been turned down; he should not have exchanged that land without consulting the District Council; and those who had exchanged their plots without permission would have to explain their actions. Two individuals who exchanged land with Mbuguzhe were reminded of the rules that were read to them when they were allocated the land, including that they were not supposed to exchange. In response to a statement by one of the individuals that "if a person gives a cow to his friend how is it that the giver prevents the receiver to ... exchange the cow" the Secretary General replied:

"Has any of you seen where a person gives a cow to another person and at the same time the giver instructs the receiver how to look after the cow so given? ... You should ... realise that the land was not entirely given to you, but it was entrusted to you, and an eye kept on how you utilize the land before it becomes purely your own property, but if you have failed to utilise the land in accordance with the simple rules issued to you, you should automatically return the land back

⁶⁶ Letter (in Eng and Lukiga) from DC to Gombolola Chf Muko, Muluka Chf, Muko and All Tenants of Kalengere Estate, 5 Sept 1957, KDA DC LAN8I ff156a.

⁶⁷ Reference to request for titles in letter to Gomb Chf from DC, Muko, 5 June 1957, KDA DC LAN8I ff138.

⁶⁸ Mbuguzhe did eventually get a title, but there is no evidence as to when this happened.

⁶⁹ Letter to A Mbuguje Gomb Chf, Muko from SecGen, 13 July 1957. Re Land Exchange - Kalengere Estate. Reply to letter dated 21 June 1957, in respect of land exchange [not enclosed] KDA DC LAN8I ff148.

to the giving authority and you should have no power to have it exchanged."⁷⁰

As a result of the failure to develop the land at Kalengyere and the issue of exchanges of plots the Secretary General and other senior chiefs visited Kalengyere in September 1957 and met the 29 farmers occupying land at the Estate.⁷¹ The Secretary General reported that all but one or two farmers had done nothing to their holdings. Mbuguzhe, who had cleared his land and created a grazing area, assured the visiting chiefs that he planned to utilise the land according to the agreed instructions as soon as he had time. They saw the land which four people (Kafuko, Karyarugokwo, Gabashaija and Kabairu) had exchanged with Mbuguzhe and noted: "it was understood they were persuaded to exchange their land" and it was decided that these exchanges should be cancelled and "each tenant revert to his own first holding."⁷²

Two of these four individuals (Kafuko and Gabashaija) were reported to be wanting to give up their land,⁷³ and the possibility that Mbuguzhe knew this when he "exchanged" land with them cannot be avoided - thus he would have gained their plots and kept his own. It was also never clear how Mbuguzhe intended to exchange 4 plots of 10 acres for 1 plot of 10 acres. The chiefs decided that the land of all those who wanted to give up their land (including those who had exchanged with Mbuguzhe) should revert to ALG and be reallocated to new tenants.⁷⁴ But Mbuguzhe argued that

"it is in accordance with our Customary laws, that a person has a full right to exchange a land with any body else and to give it as a gift to his friend or to sell it to another person. No resolution has ever been passed to abolish this practice by our District Council... instead the Agricultural Department in this district has issued many circulars to advise and encourage people to consolidate their plots of land with their friends by means of exchanging. The Committee, throughout their trial of this case, did not show me any person who is alleged to have accused me that I had exchanged this plot of land against his will."⁷⁵

Mbuguzhe later reiterated that he had not persuaded those who exchanged and sold land to him to do so and argued that there was "nothing wrong in exchanging and buying land

⁷⁰ Letter to Mr Kafuku and Mr Karyarugokwe from Secretary General, 13 July 1957. Re Kalengyere Estate Land Complaints. KDA DC LAN8I ff149.

⁷¹ Letter to Gomb Chf. Muko from Kitaburuza SecGen, 10 Sept 1957, KDA DC LAN8I ff158.

⁷² Report dated 27 Sept 1957 by SecGen on visit to Kalengyere Estate on 25 Sept 1957. KDA DC LAN8I ff164.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Letter to Ministry of Local Government from Mbuguje, 29 July 1957, KDA DC Chiefs File.

in the past until in September last when a circular was passed by the DC restricting this habit."⁷⁶

The question of tree plantations on the Estate was also a bone of contention. These had reverted to the ALG when Moses had abandoned the estate, although Mbuguzhe now claimed one of the plantations saying that he had bought the trees from the ALG.⁷⁷ Mbuguzhe argued that he had bought the trees in 1955, before Kitaburaza was Secretary General, and had got a receipt for them signed by the Forest Superintendent.⁷⁸ The issue of the ownership of the trees seems to have obscured the question of the ownership of the land on which the trees stood. In late 1957 the correspondence on this issue was moved into a confidential file and developments from then are difficult to trace. However some correspondence exists and in April 1958, Mbuguzhe admitted that Miranga and Kafuko and a "few others" had "exchanged" their land with him two years before.⁷⁹ Mbuguzhe claimed that Kitaburaza (Secretary General) and Kakwenza, (Saza Chief Ndorwa) "through personal envy and jealous ideas ... came against me stating that it was not good for me to have exchanged the land." He accused Kakwenza of "encouraging Mr Miranga to occupy my house which I built on the land I had exchanged with him. He had occupied it few days ago after pushing out my calves. I immediately forced him out [and]... now Kakwenza is advising him to use force and re-occupy it."⁸⁰

Mbuguzhe also wrote to the Secretary General saying that he was concerned about the action of the *saza* chief and he regarded these as "threats and violence" which were against the law, and were "simply because the[se] individuals had exchanged their plots of land with me and some sold it to me." He noted that there was no law against exchanging and selling of land in Kigezi and in fact the Protectorate Government

⁷⁶ Letter to SecGen from Mbuguzhe (Gomb Muko), 15 Nov 1957, Re: Your report on Karengere dated 27 Sept 1957, KDA DC LAN8I ff165. Mbuguzhe was right that the written rules did not mention the sale or exchange of land, although it was apparently mentioned to them at the time of allocation that they had no rights of sale without consulting the District Council. It was also mentioned in writing in July 1957 (and perhaps earlier, but not found). Letter to Mbuguzhe from SecGen, 13 July 1957. KDA DC LAN8I ff148.

⁷⁷ Report dated 27 Sept 1957 by SecGen on visit to Kalengyere Estate on 25 Sept 1957. KDA DC LAN8I ff164.

⁷⁸ Letter to SecGen from Mbuguzhe (Gomb Muko), 15 Nov 1957, Re: Your report on Karengere dated 27 Sept 1957, KDA DC LAN8I ff165.

⁷⁹ What precisely was meant by exchange is unclear - given that he was talking about several plots it is unlikely it can have been a straight swop - but must have been meaning either a sale or a gift.

⁸⁰ Letter to the OC Police, Kigezi from A Mbuguje, Gomb Chf, Muko, 2 April 1958, KDA DC LAN8I ff178.

encouraged the policy of land consolidation. He argued that while the Secretary General said that the District Council was not prepared to tolerate the policy of exchanging and buying land, in fact this practice did not conflict with customary laws and had never been abolished by the council.⁸¹ He predicted that the Council would realise that the Protectorate Government's policy was of consolidation and noted that the Secretary General himself and other members of the Council had visited Kenya to see consolidation and had reported favourably on it. He also noted that the DC's Circular of 5th September 1957, which said that anyone wishing to buy or sell land at Kalengyere should first seek permission from the Secretary General, did not actually prohibit the buying and selling of land, and was not circulated until after he had exchanged and purchased these pieces of land. In this letter Mbuguzhe mentions some 60 acres which were being taken from him - it is clear therefore that by this time he had got substantially more than the 10 acres originally allocated to him. And there were also tree plantations in addition to the 60 acres.⁸²

Mbuguzhe's behaviour caused grave concern and as early as July 1957 a meeting of the Appointments Committee was held and details of his misdemeanours spelt out. Mbuguzhe had failed to carry out instructions in connection with a visit to the area by the Governor in June of that year, and he was being uncooperative with the Field Officers. It had been learnt that

"the reason why a number of plots had not been developed was that the gombolola chief had bought them for himself or acquired them by exchange. These plots and the gombolola chief's own original plot given to him by the Lukiko Committee remained completely undeveloped except for some slashing of grasses and shrubs to improve the grazing... It has subsequently been learnt that the gombolola chief unlawfully used communal labour to slash the shrubs on his plots. The gombolola chief and muluka chief also unlawfully used some of the lukiko's 40 acres to plant their own peas. They did not ask anybody's permission."⁸³

It was alleged, that at a meeting to inspect the estate on 24th June 1957 (when it was found that very little work had been done in the year since the plots had been allocated), Mbuguzhe was rude to the Field Officer and DC. In response to the DC's question of why he had acquired extra plots without permission, Mbuguzhe said it was because he "wanted

⁸¹ Letter to SecGec from Mbuguje, 1 April 1958, KDA DC LAN8I ff179.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Statement read to the Appointments committee meeting of 19 July 1957. KDA DC Chiefs file.

a large farm to develop properly" and he accused the Field Officer of "interfering too much with native affairs."⁸⁴ As a consequence, Mbuguzhe was charged with neglect of duty as a chief and conduct unbecoming his position as a chief. The charges included that he had "(1) without permission acquired plots at Kalengyere which had been allocated by the DC for development as 10 acre individual holdings; (2) without permission cultivated land reserved by Lukiko at Kalengyere for a model holding and failed to develop his own plot and those which he had unlawfully acquired; (3) [made] unlawful use of communal labour on his own land and (4) disrespectful conduct to the DC and his officers." Following statements by Mbuguzhe the Committee decided that he was "guilty by his own admissions" to counts 1 to 3, his apologies with respect to count 4 was taken into account, and it was decided that he should be fined Shs 300/- and would be warned he would be dismissed if he continued to behave in this manner.⁸⁵ In the event, he resigned in April 1958.

The efforts by the Agricultural Department continued throughout 1958, in particular to ensure that those allocated land built houses on it. By March 1958, 12 of those allocated land had not built houses, while 14 others had built houses but were not living in them. They were instructed that the houses should be built and lived in by 16 April 1958,⁸⁶ and were reminded that they were "the very lucky ones as a great number of farmers had applied for land here" and land in Kigezi was "becoming a very valuable asset." Later that year the new *gombolola* chief of Muko, Semiryangi, reported that progress with the hedging of land at Kalengyere was going well, 17 people lived on their land and most of them had marked their boundaries and planted hedges.⁸⁷ However the dispute with Mbuguzhe continued⁸⁸ and in 1959 the Field Officer, Collin, visited Kalengyere and, in a most revealing report, stated:

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Mbuguzhe appealed against this judgement but this appeal was rejected. The disputes over his land continued however, and in January 1958 he was "attempting to sue the SecGen through a Muganda Advocate for "confiscating 60 acres of his land" - presumably reference to Kalengyere". He applied to resign with effect from April 1958 provided he could return to the Community Development Department, and indeed he did resign on 16 April 1958. Letter of 29 July 1957 to Ministry of Local Government from Mbuguje. KDA DC Chiefs file.

⁸⁶ Letter to Kashakakabaki, Sebahunde, Rwembonyi, Rwabashaija, Kafuko, Rutaba, Kabairu, Rukakare, Kihembe, Karyarugokwe, Bangano and Kamugisha from Saza Chf Ndorwa, 17 March 1958. KDA DC LAN8I ff174. Letter to S Karema and others Tenants of Karengyere listed below from Bashungula, for Saza Chf, Ndorwa, 17 March 1958, KDA DC LAN8I ff175.

⁸⁷ Letter to DC from DR Semiryangi, Gomb Chf Muko, 19 Dec 1958, KDA DC LAN8I ff202.

⁸⁸ Miranga filed a case against Mbuguzhe on 4 June 1958, KDA DC ADM9-7 ff25.

"The land in dispute is part of the old pyrethrum estate which was formed on the land of the complainants. On 11 June 1956 the land was allocated by ballot to 30 tenants. The Gombolola Chief Mbuguzhe was however allowed to select his own plot and did not take part in the ballot. Only friends, relatives and servants of the gombolola chief or ALG were allocated land. The piece of land selected by Mbuguzhe was in the middle of the block of some 60 acres at mile 31. By means of threats and physical violence he has obtained control of all this land. The original occupants now maintain, quite rightly in my opinion, that they have a better claim to the land than Mbuguzhe. ...The only way to prevent further theft by Mbuguzhe is to eject him from Karengere. This would be quite feasible as he has not followed the conditions of tenancy laid down at the time of allocation."⁸⁹

While there is no archival evidence of further action taken against Mbuguzhe, enquiries on the ground show that this land is still used by Mbuguzhe's family, suggesting that he was allowed to remain in situ. As the following section will show, this is particularly ironic as all the other inhabitants of the estate were later turned off their land. Having acquired a title to his land, Mbuguzhe was the only one able to remain.

6.3 - Kalengyere since independence

At the time of allocation the government was supposedly relinquishing all rights of ownership of this land. However, as we have seen, the government did attempt to use the fact that it has distributed the land as reason enough to maintain some control over it, in connection with both the way that it was used, and transferred. Apart from a plot of about 25 acres that was allocated to the Department of Agriculture⁹⁰, the rest of Kalengyere seems to have been cultivated normally throughout the 1960s. However, in the 1970s there was renewed government interest in the land at Kalengyere. In 1972 enquiries began about the possibility of the district administration taking the land for a highland crop research station. As a result of the political turmoil in the country, it was not until November 1982 that the Ministry of Agriculture was formally assigned the land. Those living on the land were informed in December of that year that they should stop cultivation and leave the land after they had harvested their crops. They petitioned the Commissioner of Lands and Surveys asking that if they had to leave they should be adequately compensated, or given alternative land, but this was not to be. By 1987 they were still cultivating the land, although the threat of eviction remained present. The District Executive Secretary of

⁸⁹ Letter to DC from DC Collin, Field Officer, Rubanda, 3 June 1959, KDA DoA 154 ff70.

⁹⁰ At some stage a small area of about 25 acres (probably that part reserved for use by the Agricultural Department as a demonstration plot) was given to Veterinary Department for the Mugisha Wool Group and then to Agricultural Department for the Potato Project. For details see KDA DC AGR3-7.

Kabale wrote that "there is no justification for the people to claim the land as theirs. The people cannot hold the government from undertaking a national project on public land."⁹¹ By 1989 the area was being referred to as a Research Station and around that time evictions began.⁹² Today the area forms the Kalengyere Highland Crops Research Station, under government administration. Oral sources confirm that the land at Kalengyere was taken for a second time, and that no compensation was given to those who lost their land. Mbuguzhe, having titles to the land he acquired at Kalengyere, was the only one able to retain his land and his children still use it today.⁹³

This chapter has shown that the failure of a developmental experiment created an opportunity for certain individuals to increase their access to land. This is not an example of a customary dispute; rather it shows how during the colonial period disputes around land were mediated by politics. It has shown how land issues were open to abuse, and that even when attempts were made to be 'fair' or 'egalitarian', a powerful chief combined with an easily led council could disrupt these plans. And there was little that could be done to prevent it. It has also illustrated some of the contradictions in the aims of the colonial state, and shown how these were used by the chief to argue his case. By virtue of his position as chief, Mbuguzhe was able to use some of the land at Kalengyere prior to allocation for both grazing, and the cultivation of peas. His request to be allocated a larger plot than most was rejected but he succeeded in increasing the size of his holding by exchanging or buying land with others who had been allotted land. He also bought trees and then tried to claim the land that trees were on. Through these means he gained access to at least 60 acres at Kalengyere. After allocation some people did not cultivate their land, perhaps because of labour shortages or because they had requested the land without any intention to cultivate, but had claimed it on behalf of others or for grazing. That some people may have wanted the land solely for grazing fits with the findings that Banyaruanda with links to Mbuguzhe were the ones who were allocated land, and this was

⁹¹ Letter to Perm Sec, Min of Local Govt from Nyanza wa Mishonga (for DES, Kabale), 8 July 1987, Kalengere Highland Crops Project, KDA DC AGR3-7 ff14. DES was the highest level officer in the district administration post-independence.

⁹² For further details see: Letter to DAO from GFK Bakainaga, Supervisor of Works, Kabale District Admin, 30 June 1989, "Re: Kalengere Highland Crops Research Station". KDA DC AGR3-7 ff15. Letter to Supervisor of Works, Kabale Distr Admin from DAO, 30 June 1989, KDA DC AGR3-7 ff16. Letter to Supervisor of Works, Kabale Distr Admin from DAO, 3 July 1989, KDA DC AGR3-7 ff17. Letter to Supervisor of Works, Kabale Distr Admin from Komyombi Bulegeya, DAO, 22 Aug 1989, KDA DC AGR3-7 ff18.

⁹³ eg interviews with 83/a and 72/a.

at the cost of Bakiga of the Basakuru clan. The significance of both ethnicity and bribery is difficult to prove, but the perception that they were relevant is unquestionable, and the way that the case was handled makes them difficult to rule out. That the land should be taken from the mainly Banyaruanda farmers after independence and that Mbuguzhe was able to retain his having secured a title to this land is the final irony.

CHAPTER 7 - CONCLUSION

Kigezi of the 1990s has a very clear reputation and image: it is widely considered to be an area suffering from the effects of overpopulation that, should no interventions be made, will experience severe environmental damage to the serious detriment of its population. This thesis has revealed that these apparently indisputable beliefs go back many decades. It has examined the policies put into place as a result of these concerns. Having traced Kigezi's experiences we now need to ask what their broader implications are and what they tell us about broader processes.

This thesis has not attempted to trace developments within Kigezi in the post colonial period,¹ but there is no doubt that the concerns about sustainability have been continually reiterated, and the concept of Kigezi as an "over-populated" district on the verge of disaster is one that has become firmly entrenched in the minds of both researchers and Bakiga themselves. However, while there is clear evidence that the population of the district has grown consistently, none of the envisaged environmental disasters has struck. These two factors taken together would lead us to suggest that local farmers have found ways of managing their land in such a way that productivity is maintained whilst serious degradation is avoided. These issues were examined in research conducted concurrently with the thesis.

In addition to providing a spring board for the stepping up of the soil conservation policies in the mid 1940s, Purseglove's 'Report on the overpopulated areas of Kigezi District' also provided a detailed survey of land use in the district in 1945. To assess the overpopulated areas Purseglove had conducted 14 transects in the area around Kabale town covering a distance of some 32 miles. In January 1996 a repeat survey was conducted following (and elaborating) Purseglove's methodology.² The transects formed the core of the study, while community Rapid Rural Appraisals, and both household and individual interviews were also conducted to collect information about land holdings, livelihood strategies and management techniques used on different plots. This range of methods enabled us to gather quantitative information on land use change since 1945,

¹ Partly because this would have been unmanageable for one thesis, and partly because of predicted problems with sources.

² Lindblade, *et al* 'More People, More Fallow.'

community perceptions of change, and detailed field histories as recalled by individual farmers. The study set up a diachronic comparison which enabled an assessment to be made of land use and agriculture at two points in time over a 51 year period. This study can therefore act as a template against which we can measure the findings of the thesis on colonial change. Like the Purseglove Study, the repeat survey made no attempt to measure the social effects of change, such as the prevalence of landlessness,³ migration, reliance on remittances etc. However, even though these issues were not addressed directly, implications can be drawn from the findings.

It is widely believed and has been consistently repeated by researchers,⁴ that fallow periods (both length and frequency) have been consistently falling for several decades.⁵ This would fit with models of intensification that suggest that when there is no longer any land to extend cultivation into, farmers will intensify production by increasing the intensity of cultivation (by reducing fallow) and increasing other inputs and technologies such as labour and intercropping. It is also recognised that unless counteractive measures are taken shortening fallows will lead to the depletion of soil fertility and will lead inevitably to lower yields.

The results of the study were surprising. Contrary to popular belief and to the models of intensification discussed in Chapter 1, it was found that fallow periods had actually increased in terms of both frequency of fallow and length of fallow.⁶ The study also found that natural swamps had virtually disappeared (as would be expected with extensification), woodlots had more than doubled (which, given that trees are now a high value crop, would also be expected) and grazing areas had decreased with a striking move of grazing areas into valley bottoms (often reclaimed swamps.) There has been a clear

³ In fact the method of choosing the households to interview (only households whose land fell along the transect were interviewed - one for each mile of transect) was such that landless households were automatically excluded from the study.

⁴ For example Bagoora 'Soil erosion and mass wasting'; Ministry of National Resources, *State of the Environment Report*, 26; and Tukahirwa, *Environmental and Natural Resource Management*.

⁵ Both Bakiga and outside researchers have expressed this view. However, when detailed questions are asked about, for example, plot histories, it becomes clear that the generalised view that land is so short that people can no longer fallow their land can not be extended to the specific as at the same time as saying this, farmers give details of the plots that they fallow.

⁶ In 1945 51% of the transect was cultivation and 19.4% was resting, in 1996 the figures were 43.3% and 33.8% respectively. Fallow periods of six months or less had declined from 51% to 12% or 7% (depending on method of estimating fallow length used); while fallow periods of six months to a year had increased from 29% to 51% or 68% (depending on methodology used).

shift to improved livestock for milk production by a small number of farmers, which has almost certainly been accompanied by an increased differentiation of livestock ownership.

The study assessed land management practices in use. Its findings suggested that Kigezi farmers have realised that if they want to maintain the fertility of the soil they cannot afford to reduce fallow periods. They have therefore found other ways of increasing production through both intensification (using increased intercropping, and the use of manure and household wastes) and through extensification into areas of land not previously considered suitable for cultivation. This can clearly explain the cultivation of swamps in Kigezi - in 1943 these were largely uncultivated as the labour required to drain them was too large to render this a viable option. However, about a decade later the situation in some areas had changed and swamp cultivation was taking place. This did not occur uniformly across the district but was dependent on local variables. The availability of household labour was not the only factor - indeed Chapter 5 showed clearly that waged labour employed by those with sufficient cash incomes (who were often themselves employees of the colonial state, and therefore had better access to knowledge about the potential of swamps for cultivation) was crucial. Today, virtually all swampland in the district is cultivated or grazed,⁷ and the limits to extensification have therefore been reached.

These findings support the research discussed in Chapter 1 that suggests that global correlations between population growth and environmental degradation cannot necessarily be extended to the local level. Farmers in Kigezi have used a variety of methods to maintain their system of sustainable agriculture through the intensification of production, and the extensification into previously marginal (and labour intensive) land such as swamps. In addition they may have diversified their incomes and it appears that people are earning an increased proportion of their income by labouring for others, from trade and from other off-farm income. We can suggest that the social costs of the transformation that Kigezi has undergone are likely to include: increased differentiation in the ownership of land (and in particular productive land such as swamp land); increased differentiation in the ownership of livestock; an increased occurrence of landlessness or effective landlessness; increased vulnerability in times of drought because of the loss of

⁷ In 1945 7.4% of the transects were undrained swamps; in 1996 the figure was 0.1%.

the insurance that swamps provided; and increased reliance on remittances. There is a need for an examination of these factors in order to understand more fully the consequences of the changes that have occurred in Kigezi.

It is clear that some of the farmers of Kigezi have, against all predictions, managed their farms in such a way as to maintain production while they have simultaneously avoided serious environmental degradation. This is not to say that absolutely no such environmental degradation exists⁸ - but simply that it has never reached the proportions envisaged. Some farmers have seized on opportunities that have been presented to them (although some individuals are been 'quicker off the mark' than others) that will maximise production and maintain sustainability. Those policies which acted as a constraint on production, presented too many risks or no improvement in sustainability were rejected.

That some farmers took these opportunities, suggests that some were risk takers. While the evidence on the experience in relation to cash crop failure suggests that Bakiga farmers were unwilling to risk untested cash crops given their successful, sustainable and safe, food crop production system, the evidence from other aspects of agricultural development is rather different. In cases such as claiming land as part of the resettlement scheme, getting land titles, farm planning and most strikingly in the case of investing labour in reclaiming swamps prior to government allocation, it can be seen that some individuals took risks which yielded great rewards.

The thesis has detailed agriculture and land reform policies introduced by the colonial authorities and shown that they were implemented with varying degrees of success. It has examined farmers responses to these policies and shown that the policies either acted as a constraint on production (and were therefore rejected as far as possible), or provided opportunities for some members of the community (although not necessarily all) to increase their production, increase their access to land, or strengthen their claims on land.

That colonial attempts to find a successful cash crop failed can in part be explained by

⁸ Environmental degradation in terms of loss of habitat has undoubtedly occurred with the drainage of swamps. For the purposes of the *More People, More Fallow* study we used the term degradation in the way that Tiffen *et al* used it: "... the degeneration of the natural resource base to a point where the costs of restoring it to a level where it can support people at a reasonable standard of living becomes prohibitively high." (p14).

their failure to realise the existence of the vibrant food crop production system. Their obsession with so called 'economic crops' blinded them to this fact. This is not to say that Bakiga did not take to some cash crops, for whenever the returns justified the risks involved Bakiga did indeed embrace certain cash crops. None of these was to be of any lasting success, however, and this can in part be explained by the constraints imposed by colonial marketing policies, which Bakiga did their best to evade.

Focusing on colonial concerns about sustainability the thesis has shown how a range of policies were introduced to attempt to safeguard the sustainability of an area whose natural resource base was believed to be under great pressure. For a variety of reasons (some planned and some unintentional but fortunate) the administration was broadly successful in getting these measures to protect the sustainability of the area introduced. In part this must be explained by the fact that Bakiga found that the measures did not act as a constraint on production - but rather provided them with the opportunity to increase productivity. Other examples suggest that the incentive to carry out the measures in terms of increased productivity would have been essential to the success of their implementation. Further explanations for the apparently successful implementation, which is in such stark contrast to other areas where similar attempts were made, include: the earliest colonial policies can be seen as modifications of the Bakiga agricultural system which included elements of soil conservation; the measures were introduced in Kigezi over a long period, and the earlier policies provided a crucial foundation; greater effort was put into education, propaganda, and the provision of incentives to carry out the measures, and as a result there was generally an understanding of the reasons behind the measures; the system of working directly through chiefs, placing responsibility on them, and the policy of giving them authority to both judge and punish, meant that the administration was broadly successful in getting these soil conservation measures carried out. It also appears that these measures were more appropriate to the Bakiga agricultural system than measures introduced in other areas, and that the Agriculture Department was flexible enough to drop that part of the scheme that was realised to be inappropriate to the local agricultural system, which may suggest that greater attention was paid to local reception of policies than elsewhere.

Kigezi's colonial experience has always been presented as a great success. There are examples of similar successful implementation of schemes being reported, when in fact

very little changed on the ground,⁹ but in Kigezi there is enough strong evidence of successful implementation by, for example, visiting Agricultural officers, to rule this out. There are, however, a number of different measures of "success" and in the colonial situation the manifestations of success or failure were being judged on political or social terms (as distinct from assessments on agricultural or environmental terms). It may be that Kigezi was seen as successful because the policies were introduced without strong resistance from local populations and so it was seen as politically and socially successful in the short term. Whether the policies were a success in the long run in the technical or agricultural sense, is however a different question: was it the implementation of policies that was successful, or the policies themselves that were a success? This thesis is not qualified to say whether the measures introduced in Kigezi were technically, agriculturally or environmentally more of a success than schemes in other areas. It does seem possible that the scale of some elements of Kigezi's measures were more muted than was suggested at the time. In particular Purseglove's policy of resting one strip in three would have taken out of cultivation an impossibly large proportion of the land given the population pressures at that time and while this aspect may have been implemented in the short term, it is unlikely that it could be practised in the longer term. While this thesis has not attempted to examine any post-independence policies, nor to say whether the colonial policies were successful in meeting their environmental aims, recent research discussed at the beginning of this chapter suggests that local farmers have successfully maintained the sustainability of their agricultural system despite a steadily increasing population.

Very different from the successes seen in soil conservation was the failure to introduce land reforms such as consolidation and registration of land. The Land Tenure Pilot Project was itself implemented successfully, but this is entirely unsurprising as officials' great desire for the LTPP to be seen to succeed, led them to choose an area where the policies could be implemented with relative ease. In particular, consolidation was not necessary; while in the south severe fragmentation meant that consolidation prior to the granting of titles was essential. Thus, while these measures could be successfully implemented in the pilot project area, the story in the south of the district was very different, and introducing consolidation proved to be impossible. There are a number of

⁹ For example Thackway Driver, 'Soil conservation in Mokhotlong, Lesotho, 1945-56: A success in non-implementation' (AHS, SOAS, 1996).

additional reasons to explain the failure of consolidation in southern Kigezi: there was only weak financial and administrative support for consolidation from the colonial state; concerns around the maximisation of production may have predominated for colonial officials, whilst amongst Bakiga concerns were focused around the minimisation of risk. Southern Kigezi is undoubtedly an area of great climatic and ecological variability which convinces farmers that having scattered plots is vital. Whilst it would be very difficult to prove that there is greater diversity in Kigezi than in other areas where consolidation succeeded, there is no doubt that the variability seen in Kigezi would inevitably make consolidation harder. Additionally, the long history of dense population and in-migration had resulted in a land tenure situation that had evolved to the extent that individualism was firmly entrenched and farmers realised that consolidation would have quite simply been too disrupting to even contemplate. While other earlier reforms to the agricultural system had been close enough to indigenous methods to be relatively easily adopted, in the southern part of the district consolidation would have involved such dramatic changes from this indigenous system that it was rejected outright. This policy provided Bakiga with no obvious benefits and indeed would have acted as a constraint on productivity, and was therefore a failure. However, in the process of trying to implement land reform colonial officials put into place systems and opportunities for contestation which could (and were) used by some individuals to increase their access to land or to get titles to land, and thus strengthen their claims on land.

Some individuals foresaw that on reclamation swamps became high potential maximum utility land. They were able to take advantage to the opportunities presented to them through the manipulation of the structures that the state had put into place to regulate the allocation. There was a fundamental contradiction within colonial aims, with the desire for a "fair" distribution of swampland, combined with wanting to encourage the progressive farmer who had started reclamation himself. This contradiction meant that when a few individuals did claim large areas of swampland the administration allowed this to go ahead. The case study of Kalengyere also illustrates very clearly the contradictions within colonial policy, with the chief actually quoting colonial policies back to officials to prove his point.

There were undoubtedly enormous differences in the way that areas experienced swamp reclamation in terms of the degree of spontaneous reclamation, the reactions of the people

to the state's policies, the way that reclaimed land was taken up, and the success of government policy over allocation. These differences can be accounted for in part by local variations in population density and settlement patterns, as well as by the different actions of individuals. Thus, some individuals who were in a position to (for example by virtue of their position within the colonial state) saw reclamation as an opportunity to increase their access to land. Indeed individuals saw other policies as providing similar opportunities - for example through the granting of sporadic titles and titles in the north of the district, through the allocation of land at Kalengyere, and through farm planning. It is clear therefore that these were situations where individuals capitalised on the potential of acquiring access to land taking advantage of any opportunities available to them. Thus a certain combination of circumstances in different parts of the district led to different outcomes, and it is this that explains the differences in cultivation patterns that are seen in the district's swamps today.

In trying to implement these policies colonial officials depended on colonial chiefs in this system of indirect rule. This system was open to abuse, and in fact many decisions about the implementation of development schemes were left to chiefs. Thus, in some instances, those who were planning development had little or no role in its implementation. Formulating overarching policies in the way that the central government wanted in an area of such local diversity, was inevitably prone to many difficulties, and the obvious way around this was to transfer power to local authorities. But chiefs were not developers, rather they were bodies of control and coercion. By using chiefs as their agents some of the policies of the colonial era were therefore vulnerable to misuse and manipulation.

The land reforms which the colonial administration attempted to introduce in Kigezi with varying degrees of success, had implications for power relationships within the local communities in which they were applied. The relationship between political authority and control over land can be seen in a number of ways. Firstly, in terms of a direct relationship (ie people being allocated land for their own use because of their position within the colonial state) and secondly the power that individuals (eg government appointed chiefs or clan elders) had over other people's land - both in terms of decisions about its use and about access and transfer.

As Kigezi was not an Agreement district the first of these is of less significance in this

district and (with the exception of a handful of certificates of occupancy) there were supposed to be no formal links between the position of chieftainship and land ownership. There is however some evidence that there were some links that continued throughout the colonial period. By the early 1950s there were a number of complaints being made that people were using or claiming ALG land as their own.¹⁰ In particular chiefs, who had cultivated ALG land whilst serving as chiefs, had after retiring or being transferred attempted to maintain use of, or sell, that land.¹¹ Of the various disputes involving land and chiefs the best documented is Kalengyere but there were others, such as a long and complex dispute that arose in 1956 between Ngologoza (Secretary General from 1946-56) and Kitaburaza (who succeeded Ngologoza as Secretary General),¹² and disputes over the enclosure of land by individuals (including chiefs) who did not own that land.¹³

More complex, but of more relevance to the case of Kigezi is the second relationship: the power that different individuals had over other people's land and in particular the role that clan elders and chiefs played. In the context of soil conservation policies the role of government appointed chiefs was paramount to the success of the policies, and the regulations imposed through the system of chiefs was crucial. But there is also evidence that the support of influential members of the community, including clan elders, was also vitally important. Through these soil conservation policies chiefs were given authority to make decisions about other people's land and to punish them if they failed to follow the prescribed regulations. These powers were extremely far reaching in terms of controlling the way that people cultivated their land, but there is no evidence to suggest that with these powers came the authority to make decisions about the transfer of land.

Chiefs were given the authority to become involved in land disputes through their work

¹⁰ For example Ndajimana who was accused of planting black wattle trees on ALG land. Letter to Gomb Chf Bubale from Ngol, SecGen, 18 June 1951. KDA DC LAN8/6/I ff1.

¹¹ For example the case of AK Beyanga who had been the *mukungu* chief of Murkarangye, (Gomb Kamuganguzi) from 1942 to 1947 and had cultivated ALG land allocated for him. He continued to cultivate the land for 15 years until a succeeding *mukungu* chief attempted to take the land over. The case went up to the Saza Courts but not clear how it ended. Letter to DC from AK Beyanga, Gomb Kamuganguzi, 26 March 1957, KDA DC LAN8/6/I ff69.

¹² See letters between SecGen (Kitaburaza) and Chief Judge (Ngologoza) from August 1956, Petitions and Complaints file: KDA DC MIS 12 (Pt6). Also Letter to Ngologoza from Kitaburaza, 18 Oct 1957, KDA DC LAN 12-II ff95.

¹³ See letters in Petitions and Complaints file, 1955-56, KDA DC MIS 12. Also KDA DoA 154 ff50, and KDA DC AGR 6II ff119.

in the courts, and in the early part of the colonial administration they also had some authority over the distribution of unused land. The powers of chiefs increased steadily during the colonial period up to the mid 1940s. From then changes began to be made to the structure of local administration and authority shifted to the local councils made up of elected members. By 1956 the councils had a majority of elected members and thus the power of chiefs had been reduced (although there are examples where an individual chief still dominated his council, such as Kalengyere). Also from the mid 1950s the process of separating the executive from the judiciary began, further eroding the power of chiefs. A clear example of this erosion of the power of the chiefs is when the land left by resettlers was left to relatives rather than being re-allocated by the chiefs. In the face of this erosion in their powers chiefs did a number of things. Firstly, as the two case studies showed, the chiefs tried desperately to hold on to any power that they might have had over land. Older chiefs claimed that the power had in fact always belonged to clan elders - so that they could hold on to it in that way. At the same time older chiefs were increasingly being replaced by younger, literate men, and so old men, who were not chiefs, also claimed that clan elders should play an important role in land. Secondly, chiefs switched their attention to land that they had previously ignored looking for new (sometimes marginal) land to take control of. The intensified interest in swamps, which had not previously been the focus of their attentions, illustrates this well. Thus reclaimed swamps provided the perfect opportunity for chiefs to attempt once more to regain control over land and through the workings of the swamp committees they attempted to cling to some of the powers that they had held once.

The findings of this thesis suggest that Kigezi's experiences were quite different from other colonial examples. In some policies, most notably soil conservation, the colonial state was broadly successful in ensuring implementation. In others, in particular land consolidation, titling and controlling the allocation and distribution of newly available land, the state was largely unsuccessful. The evidence suggests that Bakiga farmers, by making what are unexpected management decisions, have been broadly successful in maintaining the sustainability of their agricultural system. Additionally, some individuals have been greatly rewarded by taking risks to increase their access to land and strengthen their claims to that land.

Since the late 1940s people have adopted both intensive and extensive approaches to

maintain production. The intensification approach has occurred more generally, while the extensification approach has been characterised by accentuating differentiation, and the move into more marginal areas has been particularly beneficial to those with existing resources. Extensification, which has been occurring from the late 1940s to the present, appears now to have reached its limit, as there no more swamps to drain, there is no more land to extend into. We can speculate therefore that southern Kigezi is now reaching another critical moment, which will necessitate a shift in which intensification will predominate.

The extensive nature of change in swamps amounted to an undermining of traditional land use practices. Backed by the colonial state, the modernists or progressive farmers seized the initiative and moved into land that had been preserved under indigenous controls. This removed from the community an important reserve of land, which had acted as a safety net for use in times of poor rainfall. Once swamps are permanently used by a small minority, there is no going back, the safety net is lost forever, and thus vulnerability is likely to increase. In addition to increased vulnerability it is likely that there are other social costs to the changes seen in Kigezi, such as increased landlessness or effective landlessness; greater pressure on social networks as a means of maintaining access to land; and increased differentiation, but these are difficult to measure in tangible ways. We can speculate whether the extensive responses to land pressure have, for some, resulted in a short term benefit, at a long term cost for the majority. Having used the extensive option there may have been less intensification than might otherwise have occurred. Additionally having used extensification to its limit, it cannot be used again and whereas in the early 1940s there were two options (extensification and intensification), now there is only one: intensification. This narrowing of options and increased vulnerability for most of the farmers of Kigezi must mean that the next few decades are critical. In the past farmers have been remarkably responsive to challenges to the sustainability of their production system. Whether they can continue to be so remains to be seen.



APPENDIX

Oral Sources.

Interviews were conducted in a number of different areas as varying distances from Kabale town. They were chosen in part to cover all the major issues being examined in the thesis, in part by accessibility, and in part by contacts with people in the area. Using a loosely structured and open ended questionnaire elderly men and women were asked a broad set of questions, firstly to uncover the background of the individuals, then their understanding of changes to agriculture and colonial agricultural policies, before moving on questions related to land ownership. In areas near to swamps questions related to reclamation were also asked; while in the area around Kalengyere the history of the pyrethrum estate was looked into. See Map 6 for location of interviews. All but three interviews were conducted in Rukiga through an interpreter. They were taped and then fully transcribed and translated.

Rugarama, Kirwa and Ruhita. Rugarama is one of the hills just outside Kabale town on which the CMS established their main mission. Many of the residents living in the area were made to move off their land when the schools and hospital were built. As most had land outside the area defined as church land they could do so. Kirwa and Ruhita are near to Rugarama, and are down in the valley to the north of Kabale town. People living in this area are living on the edge of the swamp and so were questioned about swamp reclamation. (Interviews number 1-22, 51).

Kitozho. This area was initially chosen as a 1939 *mutala* survey of Kitozho existed. However as a result of the absence of a map in the survey and a lack of clarity about boundaries (there is a village, and a parish called Kitozho) it remained unclear if the area chosen was in fact the same as that studied in the *mutala* survey. It is located on the edge of Kashambya swamp, and in this section much of the swamp remains undrained. (Interviews number 52-56, 64-71, 75-82).

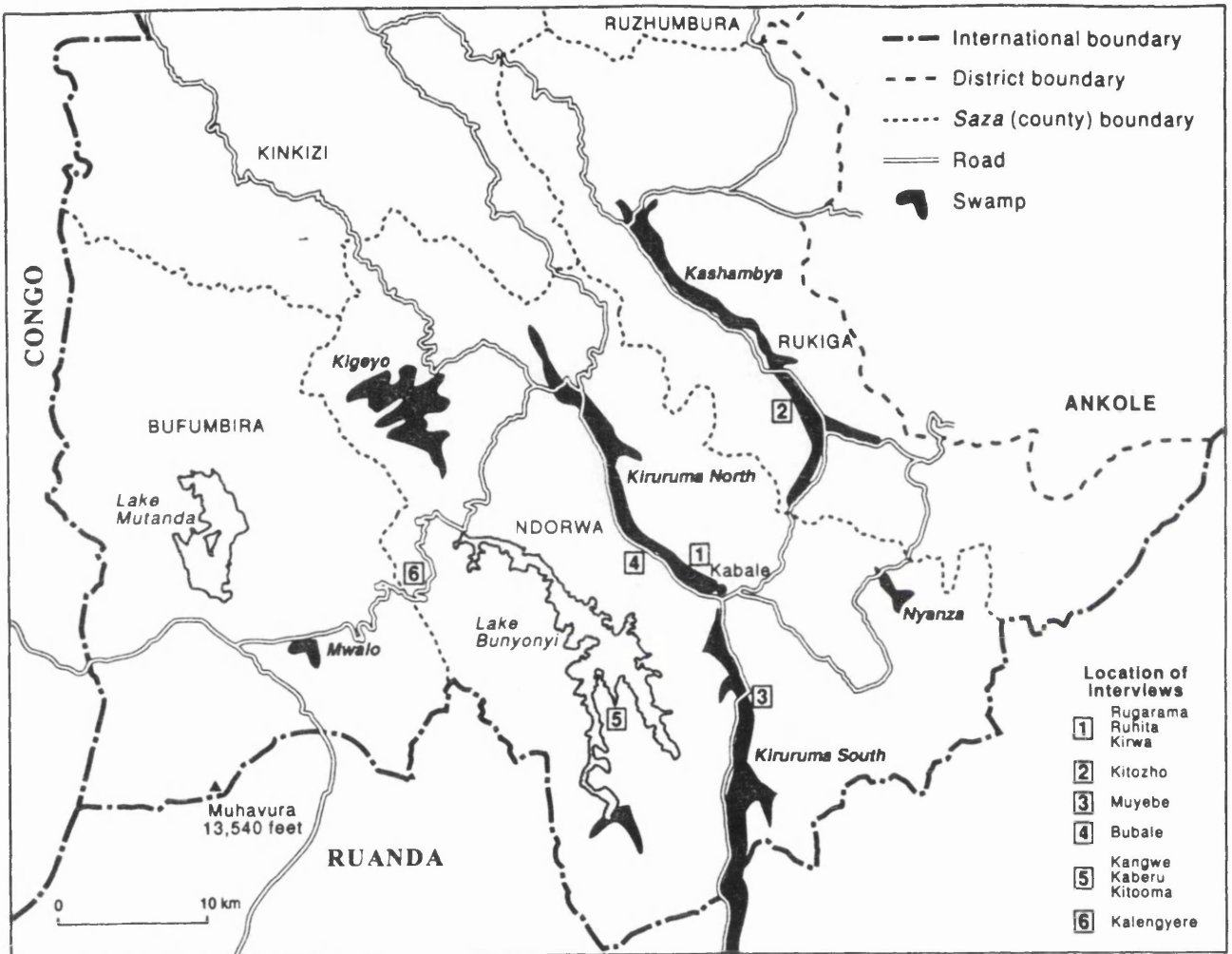
Muyebe. This is an area on the edge of Kiruruma South swamp most of which has been drained. The swamp in this area consists of small plots, land owned by Swamp Societies, and some larger farms. (Interviews number 23-34, 57-63).

Bubale. This area is on the edge of Kiruruma North swamp. It was specifically chosen as it is in the site of some of the large dairy farms on the reclaimed swampland. Individuals who do not own swampland were interviewed, as well as those who do. (Interviews number 91-99).

Bufuka, Kangwe, Kaberu, and other places across Lake Bunyonyi. This area was chosen as it was further from Kabale town, and quite inaccessible, being reached by canoe. It was hoped that this would remove any bias in the selection of areas in terms of more accessible areas being the only ones who had experienced colonial policies. It appears in fact that there was little difference in the experiences of this area in terms of the implementation of colonial policies when compared to elsewhere. (Interviews number 35-50).

Kalengyere. Individuals were selected who lived in the area around Kalengyere Research Station. This enabled questions to be asked specifically on the history of the Kalengyere Pyrethrum Estate. (Interviews number 72-74, 83-90).

Map 6



SOUTHERN KIGEZI SHOWING LOCATION OF INTERVIEWS

Bibliographical information of informants

The following pages give brief background information about the informants. Unless otherwise stated all informants were married, or widowed; were Bakiga and were (or had been) primarily cultivators. (P2 = Primary 2 level of education)

Number - Name, (Male or Female) (Place of residence, date of interview) Tape Number/Side, Counter numbers.

1/a - Joy Constance (F) (Rugarama, 6/7/95) 1/A 000-263.

Second interview (1/b) 2/8/95 (10/A 196-end; 10/B 000-078)

70 years old, Musigi clan, Protestant, lived in Rugarama 40 years, moved several times before that because of husband's job as a catechist. Was involved in a land dispute when her husband's brother sold land that they considered was their's. Her brothers and an uncle migrated to Toro.

2/a - Tofus Kigatire (F) (Rugarama, 6/7/95) 1/A 264-581; 1/B 000-093

Second interview (2/b) ??/8/95 (22/A 000-155)

Musigi, primary school education, Protestant. Worked in Rugarama clinic, and at Bwama leper center. Husband from Bufumbira (was a Catholic, but converted on marriage). They spent some time in Masaka, wanted to migrate to Rujhumbura but the land they wanted was apparently taken by someone else. Her family were made to move from land they had occupied at Rugarama when the schools were built.

3/a - William Rutahembya (M) (Rugarama, 6/7/95) 1/B 094-199.

Musigi, born in the area, never moved. Some of his sons have migrated and he has their land. He has also bought some land.

4/a - Mary Turyashemererwa (F) (Rugarama, 6/7/95) 1/B 200-326.

Musigi, married to a Mufumbira. Age probably 70 +. No education. Lived in the area for about 50 years (since marriage).

5/a - Dorothy Mary Katarahweire (F) (Rwere, nr Rugarama 10/7/95) 2/A 000-179

Aged about 70, Musigi, no education, Protestant. Used to live where school now is in Rugarama and had to move.

6/a - Esther Ellevaneer Bushoberwa (F) (Rwere, 10/7/95) 2/A 179-314

Second interview (6/b) (Rugarama, 2/8/95) 10/A 000-196

70's, Musigi, Protestant. Educated to P4. Was a potter in the past. Came to this area after they were moved from Hornby School on Rugarama. Was left some land by her parents, and was later involved in land dispute over this land which went to court, and which she won.

7/a - Pascal Bisigabusha (M) (Rwere, nr Rugarama 10/7/95) 2/A 314-573

65 years old, Musigi, Nightwatchman at the Hornby School. Catholic. Always lived here, some of family have migrated including his father.

8/a - Paulo Bakinagaga (M) (Rugarama 10/7/95) 2/B 000-176

Second interview (8/b) (Rugarama 2/8/95) 10/B 078-351

92 years old, Musigi, watchman at the church. Spent one year at the church

school. Converted from Catholic to Protestant. Never migrated. Worked on building the church.

- 9/a - Ruth Rukramale (F) (Ruhita, 13/7/95) 3/A 000-093
Muzooba, Mufumbira, no education, Protestant, age unknown. Family members migrated to Toro and Kihihi and sold their land.
- 10/a - Beatrice Birarara (F) (Ruhita, 13/7/95) 3/A 093-274
56, Muhesi, no education, Many of family members migrated.
- 11/a - Dorcus Koruharo (F) (Ruhita, 13/7/95) 3/A 274-505
Age unknown, Musigi, no education, Protestant. Her husband bought some of the land she now cultivates.
- 12/a - Andrea Nyakarwana (M) (Ruhita, 13/7/95) 3/B 000-153
Musigi, Protestant, no education, never lived elsewhere. Inherited and bought the land that he has. Cultivator and owns some cattle.
- 13/a - Edna Rutindapora (F - wife of 14/a) (Ruhita, 13/7/95) 3/B 156-434
Second interview (13/b) (Ruhita, 2/8/95) 11/B 000-276
Mukimbiri, Protestant, no education.
- 14/a - Sulumani Rutindapora (M - husb of 13/a) (Ruhita, 13/7/95) 3/B 156-434
Second interview (14/b) (Ruhita, 2/8/95) 11/B 000-276
Musigi, worked for government in the past as a labourer. Protestant, no education. This is the place of his birth, although he has moved around locally.
- 15/a - Edsa Georgna (F) (Ruhita, 13/7/95) 4/A 000-154
Second interview (15/b) (Ruhita, 2/8/95) 11/B 276-end; 12/A 000-037
80, Muzigaaba, no education, Protestant. Moved to Ruhita 1939. Many family members have migrated because of insufficient land. Husband used to work for *bazungu*, and she says was able to get a large piece of swamp land as a result.
- 16/a - Ebriahim Kagangure (M) (Kirwa, 13/7/95) 4/A 154-530
Second interview (16/b) (husband of 51) (Kirwa,2/8/95) 11/A 000-497
75 years old, Musigi, no education, Protestant, born in Kirwa. Worked in Rujhumbura as a trader, trading peas and cow ghee. Many family members have migrated. Still owns cattle, and bought (with cash) most of the land he now owns.
- 17/a - Beatrice Mauda (F - wife of 18/a) (Kirwa, 13/7/95) 4/B 000-168
Second interview (17/b) (Kirwa, 2/8/95) 12/A 037-203
64, Muzubiki, no education, Protestant. Moved to Kirwa from Rugarama when made to move by the Church.
- 18/a - Josea Kagarea (M - husband of 17/a) (Kirwa, 13/7/95) 4/B 000-168
Musigi, no education, Protestant. Watchman for forestry department in the past. All land is inherited.
- 19/a - John Kijagye (M) (Kirwa, 13/7/95) 4/B 168-270
80, Musigi, no education, Protestant, born nearby, came to Kirwa about 40 years

ago. Inherited some land, and also bought 6 plots.

- 20/a - Musa Zaram (M -husb of 21/a) (Kirwa, 13/7/95) 4/B 270-580; 5/A 000-119
Second interview (20/b) (Kirwa, 2/8/95) 12/A 203-end; 12/B 000-164
83, Musigi, Protestant, P2 education. Worked as a catechist, had lived on Church
land. Children are well educated with at least one son working overseas and
obviously sending money home - relatively well off.
- 21/a - Zipora Zaram (F -wife of 20/a)(Kirwa, 13/7/95) 4/B 270-580; 5/A 000-119
Second interview (21/b) (Kirwa, 2/8/95) 12/A 203-end; 12/B 000-164
78, Mumgura, no education, married in 1936, saved in 1939. Protestant. Member
of Kigezi Mother's Union.
- 22/a - Matia Rutembwe (M) (Kirwa, 13/7/95) 5/A 120-425
70, Musigi, P4. Full Gospel Church. Born in Ruhita, lived in Kirwa since 1939.
Worked in missionary clinic. Joined the army in 1943 and had reached as far as
Mombasa when war ended. Most land is inherited, bought one plot.
- 23/a - Agnes Kamuchana (F - wife of 24/a) (Muyebe, 19/7/95) 5/B 000-205
67, Mushogye, no education, Protestant.
- 24/a - Semu Kamuchana (M - husband of 23/a) (Muyebe, 19/7/95) 5/B 000-205
Second interview (24/b) (Muyebe, 9/8/95) 16/B 173-537
65, Murihira, P2, Protestant. Currently RCI chairman. Inherited and bought land.
Has land in swamp. Lends some of his land to relatives and friends as he has more
than he and his wife can cultivate. In return those who borrow do labour for him.
Has a large piece of swamp land which he bought from his half brother and others
when they migrated.
- 25/a - Esther Mukabazungu (F) (Muyebe, 19/7/95) 5/B 206-360
About 66, Mugahe, Protestant, no education. Cultivates land left to her by her
mother-in-law. Her sons also use it.
- 26/a - Bahirwa Ntamukiza (F) (Muyebe, 19/7/95) 5/B 360-484
Munyagi, Protestant. Born Kamuganguzi. She uses her husband's land (in
swamp) which has a title as it is all in one place. Her sons are buying land.
- 27/a - Yonia Rutabyama (F) (Muyebe, 19/7/95) 6/A 000-089
65, Murihira, no education, Protestant. Has never bought land, has land in swamp,
and one cow.
- 28/a - Alice Torikoko (F) (Muyebe, 19/7/95) 6/A 089-253
About 80, married 1936. Murihira. No education, Protestant. Husband was a
catechist so lived in many places (all in Kigezi). Father was a parish chief with
lots of cattle. Bought some land, and has land in swamp.
- 29/a - Dorothy Kihimakazi (F) (Muyebe, 19/7/95) 6/A 253-347
Musigi, no education, Protestant. Husband was a sub-parish chief and lived in a
few different places. Bought all their land. Used to have land in the swamp but no
longer.

- 30/a - Phyllis Rwakari (F) (Muyebe, 19/7/95) 6/A 347-563
 Second interview (30/b) (Muyebe, 9/8/95) 15/A 376-end; 15/B 000-225
 90's. Muzigaba, no education, Protestant. Husband a catechist who worked in Rwanda for 2 years. Husband migrated to Toro with one of his wives, and died there. She remained with one son and cultivated the land that he left behind. She used to have land in the swamp. She has sold some of the land because of poverty, and the remaining land is now cultivated by her neighbours who in return provide her with food.
- 31/a - Freda Mary Nyinoburo (F) (Muyebe, 19/7/95) 6/B 000-097
 Musigi, no education, Protestant. All land she uses now was inherited by husband. Used to cultivate in the swamp, but no longer.
- 32/a - Udes Kamyembe (F) (Muyebe, 19/7/95) 6/B 097-232
 Second interview (32/b) (Muyebe, 9/8/95) 16/A 024-261
 78, Murihira. No education, Protestant. One son and daughter have migrated to Toro. Some of the land she uses was her in-laws. Her own parents also gave her some land when they migrated after all their daughters were married. She stressed that even her brothers had no rights to, or say on, this land. She also uses the swamp land that her husband got.
- 33/a - Audrey Tindimutuma (F) (Muyebe, 19/7/95) 6/B 232-400
 Mugyeyo. No education, Protestant. Husband was a catechist and lived in various places for 6 years. Daughters migrated to Masaka. Uses swamp land.
- 34/a - Sera Zikanga (M) (Muyebe, 19/7/95) 6/B 400-end; 7/A 000-026
 Second interview (34/b) (Muyebe, 9/8/95) 17/A 209-407
 84, Mugyeyi, no education, Protestant. Many family members migrated. All land inherited, not bought. All land is together, and has a title.
- 35/a - Samuel Mugasha (M) (Bufuka, Bunyonyi, 21/7/95) 7/A 025-226
 67, Muyundo, P6, Protestant. Trained to be a catechist, and used to work for the government. Born on other side of lake, lived here 38 years. Inherited and bought land, and hires out some of his land.
- 36/a - Edreda Kitusi (F) (Katooma, Bunyonyi, 21/7/95) 7/A 227-506
 Mwinika, no education, Protestant. Bought some land and gave it to her grandson.
- 37/a - Zereda Bagabura, (F)(Kangwe, Bunyonyi, 21/7/95) 7/B 000-105
 60, Mukongwe. No education, Protestant. Born in Bufundi. All land was inherited by husband.
- 38/a - Amoss Tiwange (M) (Kangwe, Bunyonyi, 21/7/95) 7/B 105-259
 Muyindo, no education, Protestant. Worked on Bwama for Dr Sharp. Inherited and bought land.
- 39/a - Abel Stephen Rwakairu (M) (Kaberu, Bunyonyi, 21/7/95) 7/B 259-484
 96, Munnyundo. No education, Protestant. Born in Kashambya, parents migrated when young. Saved in 1935, worked as Catechist. Spent a few years in Toro with his son who had migrated, but returned when son died. Land is both inherited and

bought.

- 40/a - Zechera Rutakahweire (M) (cousin of 39/a) (Kaberu, 21/7/95) 8/A 000-226
About 90. Muyundo. No education, Protestant. Born Kashambya. His and 39's fathers were brothers and migrated together to this area. Has both inherited and bought land.
- 41/a - Violet Tumwine (F) wife of 40/a (Kaberu, Bunyonyi, 21/7/95) 8/A 226-312
No education, Protestant.
- 42/a - John Kiyanje (M) (Katooma, Bunyonyi, 21/7/95) 8/A 312-562
About 75. No education, Protestant. Born on Bwama Island but family was made to move when he was very young. Did building work on Bwama and also twice went to Buganda to work for about 6 months.
- 43/a - Yoweri Basizoli (M) (Katooma, Bunyonyi, 21/7/95) 8/B 000-094
About 75. Munyundo. No education, Protestant. Lived here about 10 years. Never married. Landless. He and his brother had some land, most of which his older brother sold when he migrated to Kihhi. He also migrated with his brother but came back. A little land was left for him and his mother, but he later sold it to buy clothes for his mother. Lives with the help of his neighbours who give him food.
- 44/a - Alfred George Rutisire (M) (Kirwa, Bunyonyi, 22/7/95) 8/B 095-252
75, Muyundo. No education. Protestant. Worked in Entebbe, Kampala and Masaka etc spending a few years at each as a houseboy. One of his brothers migrated. All land was inherited.
- 45/a - Grace Nshemereirwe (F, wife of 44/a) (Bunyonyi, 22/7/95) 8/B 252-359
About 70, Mukongwe. No education, Protestant. Lived here since her marriage.
- 46/a - Daudi Mugisha (M) (Bunyonyi, 22/7/95) 8/B 359-end; 9/A 000-026
76, Munyundo. No education, Protestant. Lived on lake shore for 5 years. Worked in Buganda for 8 months in banana plantations. Inherited and bought land.
- 47/a - Fredas Tumwine (F, wife of 46/a) (Bunyonyi, 22/7/95) 9/A 026-117
60, Munyangabo. No education. Protestant. Born Kasheregyenyi.
- 48/a - Eria Kanyma (M) (Kitooma, Bunyonyi, 22/7/95) 9/A 117-342
75, Munyangabo. No education. Protestant. Lived here for 45 years. Worked Masaka 11 years, Mbale 2 and a half years. Worked on Bwama with Drs Sharp and Parry in 1935 as a houseboy. Most land is inherited, also bought 2 plots.
- 49/a - Kizirooni Sebukingandu (M) (Habugarama, Bunyonyi, 22/7/95) 9/A 342-578; 9/B 000-096
81. Mugyesera, (Tutsi) Munyuruanda. Started paying tax 1931 (they counted his teeth to see if he was old enough). Worked for Sharp for 20 years as houseboy. Went to Rugarama in 1921, and came to this area in 1944 (when he married.) Also lived in Kampala for 3 years, and Burundi for 7 years with the Sharps.

- 50/a - Shaka Nzarwahabi (M) (Rwamugasha, Bunyonyi, 22/7/95) 9/B 096-385
100 years. Born on Bunyaga (small island in the lake) where people had fled to from the Batwa. No education, Protestant. Had had 2 children when Bwama Clinic was being built and he worked as a foreman making bricks. Worked as a catechist on Bwama and in other areas in Kigezi.
- 51/a - Ann Joventa (F) (wife of 16) (Kirwa, 2/8/95) 11/A 000-497
67, Protestant, no education, born at Bugongi. Attended course at Kachweckano for vegetable growing.
- 52/a - James Katabazi (M) (in English) (Kitozho, 8/8/95) 13/A 000-end; 13/B 000-045
53, Musigi, Protestant, retired county chief. Worked in Rubanda, and traded further afield.
- 53/a - ES Kwatiraho (M) (Kitozho, 8/8/95) 13/B 045-423
Second interview (53/b) (Kitozho, 29/8/95) 23/A 000-493
65, Muzigaaba, P3. Currently is postmaster and trader with a small duka. Joined up in WW2 as a medical assistant and went to Kenya and then to Cairo. His father migrated to Kitozho from Kabale while he was at war, and he joined him when he returned. Two wives.
- 54/a - Harriet Jane Blacka (F) (Kitozho, 8/8/95) 14/A 000-161
60s. Mugyeyo, no education, Protestant.
- 55/a - Chritsopher Karubogo (M) (Kitozho, 8/8/95) 14/A 161-349
About 75, Musigi, P3. Cultivator. Worked as post runner in the past. Protestant. This is his place of birth. His father migrated (with him) but after a few years he returned. Worked in Buganda for 5 months.
- 56/a - Kazlon Ntondogoro (M) (Kitozho, 8/8/95) 14/A 349-end; 14/B 000-045
Second interview (56/b) (Kitozho, 15/8/95) 18/A 000-end; 18/B 000-020
About 72. No education, Protestant. Went to Buganda for between 8 months and a year, several times when he was young. 2 wives. Nephew of 64 (56's father was 64's elder brother).
- 57/a - Wilson Rwambonera (M) (Muyebe, 9/8/95) 15/A 000-207
73, Murihira. P5, Protestant. Worked at Kilembe copper mines for 2 years. Father, uncles and half brothers migrated. Both inherited and bought land. Has swamp land.
- 58/a - Cosia Rutabyama (M) (Muyebe, 9/8/95) 15/A 207-376
90s, Murihira. P3, Protestant. Lived in Kabale for 10 years. All land is bought.
- 59/a - David Mashoki (M) (Muyebe, 9/8/95) 15/B 225-end and 16/A 000-024
65, Mushambo, P6. Protestant. Migrated for work for a year at a time. Some of his relatives migrated to Toro and Ankole as part of the Resettlement Scheme (got free transport). Most land is inherited, also bought some. Has some swamp land which he was allocated. Land dispute with his sister who after her marriage tried to claim a share of their parents land. Went through the local courts up to the District Court, and he eventually won.

- 60/a - Mr Kamuyebe (M- husband of 32) (Muyebe, 9/8/95) 16/A 261-501
82, Mugahe. No education, Protestant. Some of his children migrated to Toro. Most of his land is bought, also inherited some.
- 61/a - Nathanel Rutanga (M) (Muyebe, 9/8/95) 16/B 000-173
81, Murihra, P1, Protestant. Born across the swamp. Moved here 1940. Worked in Kilembe copper mines for 10 years. Lends or hires out some of his land, has land in swamp and has a title.
- 62/a - N Bishisha (M) (Muyebe, 9/8/95) 17/A 000-209
Mugahi, P4, Protestant, Shopkeeper, Both inherited and bought land.
- 63/a - John Patrick Rusese (Muyebe, 9/8/95) 17/A 407-end; 17/B 000-071
About 62, Murihiri. P3. Bicycle repairer. Joined the army for 3 years and went to Kenya and Egypt. Worked in Kilembe for 1 and a half years. Elder brother migrated to Toro. Has land in the swamp. Never bought land.
- 64/a - Daniel Bamanya, (Kitozho, 15/8/95) 18/B 020-358
Claimed to be 100, and born before *bazungu* arrived. (Uncle of 56). No education, Protestant. Used to trade in goats and cows. Never migrated, some of his sons migrated to Toro. Inherited and bought land. Two wives.
- 65/a - Stanley Katanzi, (Kitozho, 15/8/95) 18/B 358-end; 19/A 000-243
62, Muzigaba, P2, Born Rugarama, came to Kitozho 1966. Migrated to work to Kabale, Kisoro. Traded in skins to Masaka, Kampala and Mbale. Both inherited and bought land.
- 66/a - Daudi Bujigi, (Kitozho, 15/8/95) 19/A 243-end; 19/B 000-029
Over 90. No education. Born near Lake Bunyonyi, family migrated when he was very young. Recalled being made to carry luggage for *bazungu* during early colonial period.
- 67/a - Ida Mary Bagakimu (wife of 66/a) (Kitozho, 15/8/95) 19/B 029-166
60, Musigi, Protestant.
- 68/a - George William Mbaguta, (Kitozho, 15/8/95) 19/B 166-280
About 71, Musigi, Protestant, no education. Always lived in the area. Went to Tororo and then to Egypt in WW2. Also worked in Buganda cultivating for about a year.
- 69/a - Danieli Rwabukye, (Kitozho, 15/8/95) 19/B 280-end; 20/A 000-122
90s, Munyangabo, Mutwa. Catholic, P2, born near Kabale. Came to this place to work (for wages, and use of land) for a wealthy (non-mutwa) man who considered him as one of his sons and later gave him land. Also worked in Buganda cultivating, and this is how he paid his bride price.
- 70/a - Patricia Akokyega, (Kitozho, 15/8/95) 2-/A 122-470
70, Muhimba, Catholic, no education. Family migrated when young. Husband used to cultivate in Buganda for money. All the land she uses was bought.

- 71/a - John Bahigaine, (Kitozho, 15/8/95) 20/B 000-230
74, Musigi, cultivator. Protestant, P5. Went to Tororo, and then as far as Nairobi in WW2. Cultivated for money in Buganda for one year and both inherited and bought land.
- 72/a - Pascal Makabore, (Kalengyere, 16/8/95) 20/B 230-end; 21/A 000-147
68, Muzigaaba. No education, Catholic. Spent about 2 months mining silver. Most of his land is bought. Also hires some. Parents used to have land in Kalengyere.
- 73/a - Bakihimba Deodanta, (Kalengyere, 16/8/95) 21/A 147-406
70s, Musigi. Lived in Kabale as a child. No education. Most land was inherited by her husband, although he also bought some. Her husband never cultivated in Kalengyere.
- 74/a - Baraba, (Kalengyere, 16/8/95) 21/A 406-end; 21/B 000-076 (Problem with tape.)
50s, Catholic. Headmaster of local school. Interview in English.
- 75/a - Banyagente Purikeriya (F) (Kitozho, 29/8/95) 23/B 000-197
Muzigaba, no education, Catholic. Never migrated or worked elsewhere. None of the land she used was bought.
- 76/a - Fredas Worinawe (F) (Kitozho, 29/8/95) 23/B 197-end; 24/A 000-052
No education, Protestant, born in the area, and never lived elsewhere. Cultivates the land her husband inherited. Sons migrated and she also has some of their land, the rest they sold. Remembered a campaign to eradicate syphilis.
- 77/a - Misaki Kazimaire, (M) (Husband of 78/a) (Kitozho, 29/8/95) 24/A 052-298
Musigi, no education, Protestant. Went to Buganda to cultivate coffee for 3 years. Bought some land. After their parents died his sister tried to claim some land of their father's although she was married. He said he won the case (but see below). Some of his brothers migrated.
- 78/a - Mauda Kijarubi (F) (Wife of 77/a) (Kitozho, 29/8/95) 24/A 298-559
About 60. Muzigaaba, no education, Protestant. Never left the area since marrying. She said that 77's sister won the case, took three pieces of land and is still cultivating them.
- 79/a - Elnathan Katahikire (M) (Kitozho, 29/8/95) 24/B 000-315
75, Muhiga, Protestant. Clerk and then parish chief of this parish. Also worked for a while in Kamwezi. Bought more land than that which he inherited.
- 80/a - Keziah Kahimakazi (F) (sister of 79) (Kitozho, 29/8/95) 24/B 315-539
50, Protestant. Got her name because she lived amongst the Bahima, but was not married to one. Married but never had any children and as a result when her husband died his family took his land, and she came back to her home area. She stays with her nephew.
- 81/a - Elphas Rwakabirigi (M) (Kitozho, 29/8/95) 25/A 000-206
76, Musigi, Protestant, no education. Went to Tororo, Nairobi and Mombasa in WW2. Bought some land from his older brother when he migrated.

- 82/a - Physs Rwakabirigi (F - wife of 81) (Kitozho, 29/8/95) 25/A 206-end; 25/B 000-070
Early 70s. Muzigaaba, Protestant, no education. Before her marriage lived in Rwamucucu, but besides that has not moved.
- 83/a - Michael Zebikire (M) (Kalengyere, 30/8/95) 26/A 000-261
75, Musakulo, no education, Catholic. Born Muko. Work in Bubale mining silver for about 3 months. Most land is inherited, some bought. Used to cultivate land at Kalengyere, which was cultivated by people of different clans.
- 84/a - Jacob Mwangi (M) (Kalengyere, 30/8/95) 26/A 261-end; 26/B 000-229
76, Musakulo, 1 year of education, Catholic. Worked in silver mine at Bubale for 2 months. Bought land is larger than that he inherited. His father used land at Kalengyere. His son migrated and wanted to sell his land. 84 didn't want the land sold to anyone else, and so he bought it off his son.
- 85/a - Matias Rukundo (M) (Kalengyere, 30/8/95) 26/B 229-end; 27/A 000-028
69, Musakulo. Catholic. Cultivated in Buganda for 1 year. All land is inherited. Members of his family migrated. He used to cultivate his parents land at Kalengyere.
- 86/a - Augustine Byarufu (M) (Kalengyere, 30/8/95) 27/A 028-242
Late 60's, Musakulo. No education, Catholic. Never worked elsewhere. One of his wives is a Munayruanda. Inherited land and bought some from those who migrated. Sons migrated. Worked for wages on the pyrethrum estate.
- 87/a - Nestori Rwakahesi (M) (Kalengyere, 30/8/95) 27/A 242-503
79, Musakulo. No education, Catholic. Never worked elsewhere. Inherited and bought land.
- 88/a - Nyasio Bandonde (M) (Kalengyere, 30/8/95) 27/B 000-134
67, Musakulo. No education, Catholic. Worked in Buganda cultivating. Went three times for between 3 months and a year. All land is inherited.
- 89/a - Miriano Tibesigwa (M) (Kalengyere, 30/8/95) 27/B 134-225
Musakulo. No education, Catholic.
- 90/a - Lissen Birema (M) (Kalengyere, 30/8/95) 27/B 225-end
80s. Musakulo. No education, Catholic. Born Mutolere where parents had migrated because of famine. Came here soon after and lived here ever since. Used to cultivate peas at Kalengyere.
- 91/a - Raphael Kakutu (M) (Bubale, 1/9/95) 28/A 000-253
68, Musigi, P2, Catholic. Small trader in the past. Lived here 9 years. Moved from nearby to set up shop. Never worked elsewhere. Mostly inherited land, also bought. Sons and grandsons have migrated.
- 92/a - Elisa Kabungurira (M) (Bubale, 1/9/95) 28/A 253-end; 28/B 000-182
84, Musigi. 1 year of school, Protestant. Worked on survey in 1935-36 (perhaps a *mutala* survey?). Lived one year in Kinkizi making armlets and leg ornaments. Inherited and bought land. Some of his children migrated to Toro and Bunyoro.

Used to cultivated in the swamp but when it was drained it was taken by others.

- 93/a - Nora Nyarufunjo (F) (Bubale, 1/9/95) 28/B 182-end
Late 80s, Muhaka, Protestant, No education, midwife. Moved here recently when husband died to be near relatives.
- 94/a - Andrew Makara (M) (Bubale, 1/9/95) 29/A 000-424
74, Musigi, P6, Catholic. Born in the area, worked in Kisoro, Rukungiri etc as Medical Assistant. Inherited and bought land, and reclaimed some for himself in the swamp. Dug channels before the government dug the large channel. Has woodlot, diary farms etc, and hires out land for cash. In total has 100-150 acres, and has a title on some of it.
- 95/a - Andrew Kabonyi (M) (Bubale, 1/9/95) 30/A 000-276
90. Muzigaaba. No education, Catholic, used to do some trade in potatoes, maize and beans to Kampala for sale. Bought and inherited land. Sons in Kampala. Was allocated land in swamp but later sold most of it, although still has a small plot.
- 96/a - Daniel Kayabuki (M) (Bubale, 5/9/95) 29/B
70, Musigi, no education, Protestant. Worked in Kinkizi doing mining. Bought and inherited land. Some land was taken from him by the government who planned to build an airstrip (post independence). Sons have migrated. Had land in the swamp which he later sold.
- 97/a - Ishaka Rwantare (M) (Bubale, 5/9/95) 29/B and 30/B
76, Musubuki. Church school for a short time, Protestant. Worked for a brief time for the *bazungu*, and did some trade. Bought and inherited land. Two sons have migrated. Used to cultivate in the swamp but sold the land.
- 98/a - Kamuhire Lazaro (M) (Bubale, 5/9/95) 30/B; 31/A
78, Musigi, Protestant, retired school master, trained as teacher. Worked all over Kigezi at different schools. Bought and inherited land. Hires it out for cash (or part of harvest). Was involved in land dispute with someone who used his land while he was away teaching and then tried to claim it as his own. He won the case. Owns land in the swamp.
- 99/a - John Batuma (M) (Kabale, 14/9/95) 32
50s, Musigi, S3, Veterinary Assistant. Worked in Entebbe, 1950-1953, and in Kabale, Mukono and Mbarara. Married to the daughter of Mukonde, a *saza* chief. Has visited Israel to study poultry keeping. Formed a wholesale company, Kigezi African Wholesalers. Owns land at Bubale in one piece of 160 acres (of which 30 acres was originally his fathers) on this he has a freehold title. In total he has about 240 acres of which some he described as being "leased". Also owns Highland Hotel and other businesses. Interview in English.
- 100/a - J.M. Byagagaire (M) (Kampala, 21/9/95) 33
Muhororo from northern Kigezi, worked alongside Purseglove during vacations while doing a diploma in agriculture at Makerere. He was AAO in Kigezi 1953-57 and was appointed as DAO in May 1962, making him the first Ugandan DAO of Kigezi. Interview in English.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1) Archival sources

Public Record Office, Kew.

This contained correspondence and reports that were sent between the Colonial Office in London and the Ugandan Administration in Entebbe (and occasionally Kigezi district). The most significant classes were:

CO 536 - Uganda, Original Correspondence. This class contains correspondence and memoranda relating specifically to Uganda from the earliest colonial period to 1951. From this date correspondence was either placed in the Regional classes (East Africa, CO 822) or into subject files (eg Economic, CO 852). CO 536 is used in conjunction with the Registries of Correspondence (CO 682).

CO 822 - East Africa, Original Correspondence. This class contains material on the whole of East Africa. It increases dramatically in importance from 1951 when the Country classes ceased to be used.

CO 537 - Supplementary Correspondence. This contains material that was withheld from the country of subject classes, and is material of a secret, or more confidential nature.

CO 892 - East Africa Royal Commission. This class proved to be an incredibly rich source. It contains an enormous amount of material collected by the Royal Commission, including memoranda submitted by district officials and members of the public.

Entebbe National Archives, Uganda.

It was hoped that the Entebbe National Archives would contain a wide range of material relevant to this thesis, particularly correspondence and memoranda between the central and district administrations. However, the inadequacy of the catalogue for the period, and in particular the latter part of the colonial period, meant that only a relatively small amount of information was gleaned from this source.

Kigezi District Archives, Kabale.

The Kigezi District Archives is not an archive as such, but rather a collection of storerooms, attic rooms and cupboards in which are stored closed files of the district administration. Despite the difficulties encountered in working in this archive, the rewards were enormous. Some of the files of the District Commissioner's office had once been sorted, renumbered and a catalogue presumably made, but this was never located. At least three file numbering systems appear to have been used at different times, but explanations could not be found for any of them. Given this complex and chaotic situation, it was decided that the original file reference would be used. Where there was no reference number a shortened version of the file title was used (eg TEAM-MIN for District

Team Minutes). There was no apparent relationship between the filing systems of the District Commissioner's office (eg DEV4 and MP68) and the Department of Agriculture's office (eg 11/A/1 and 16).

Other archival collections.

The Rhodes House library contained a number of collections of papers of individuals who had worked or visited Kigezi, which proved to be of value. These included the diary of J.R.McD. Elliot, (MSS Afr s 1384) who was a district officer in Kigezi in the early 1920s; papers of Snowden, including Report to Director of Agriculture on Tour of Kigezi District, 16 Nov 1929 (MSS Afr s 921); and the papers of DW Malcolm, (Secretary to Lord Hailey 1935-36) (MSS Afr s 1445) who visited Uganda from 22 December 1935 to 19 January 1936.

The Church Missionary Society Archives in the Special Collection of the University of Birmingham Library was used but little material of direct relevance to this thesis was found with the exception of the photograph reproduced in Chapter 3.

Private papers of JW Purseglove, JCD Lawrance and GB Masfield.

The papers of the former were particularly rich containing the Kitozho Mutalla Survey (parts by both Purseglove and Wright), and the 'Report on the Overpopulated areas of Kigezi' by Purseglove, as well as numerous photographs, cuttings and papers related to Purseglove's time in Kigezi.

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