EUROPEANS AND THE KIKUYU TO 1910:
A STUDY OF RESISTANCE, COLLABORATION AND CONQUEST

by

THOMAS TOULSON
B.A.(Hons.), University of British Columbia, 1970

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
Department of History

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
February, 1976
© Thomas Toulson
In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the Head of my Department or by his representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.
ABSTRACT

The thesis deals with the Kikuyu tribes of East Africa, their early history, ethnography and relationships with Europeans to 1910. Kikuyu society is described as in flux resulting from its migration to a new habitat from Shungwaya. Peripheral areas of the habitat were stressed by the proximity of the Masai, Arab and Swahili traders, European explorers, armed traders, officials of the Imperial British East Africa Company and latterly officers, civil and military, of the Protectorate Administration.

Masai proximity forced the Kikuyu into a defensive posture and conditioned their attitudes with respect to the intrusion of others. Evidence presented suggests that Kikuyu were initially hospitable to coastal traders. By the 1870's, however, Kikuyu were reluctant to allow free passage of Arab and Swahili caravans. Hostility had been engendered by Arab and Swahili propensities for raiding Kikuyu mashamba for food and departing the area without making restitution.

European attitudes toward the Kikuyu were influenced by rumours of Kikuyu ferocity deliberately spread by coastal and Wakamba traders. Early explorers were prepared to "fight every inch of the way" across the Kikuyu habitat. European apprehension coupled with Kikuyu suspicion featured prominently in the early contact period.
These attitudes and the occasional violent clashes were conditioning factors in the subsequent, more extensive, relationships between Kikuyu and Europeans.

Kikuyu ethnography is examined and reveals tribal society as being acephalous and egalitarian. Power resided in the hands of elders who assumed authority after successfully negotiating a scale of ascendancy incorporated in the rites du passage. Provision was made within the system for young men to rise to positions of eminence and to be hurried along the road to seniority. Known as athamaki, they were in no sense chiefs. Because military affairs played a large part in Kikuyu life—the threat of the Masai, the behaviour of Arab and Swahili traders, the intrusions of European travellers, armed traders, IBEA Co. men and the Protectorate Administration—athamaki of military ability swiftly rose to prominence.

Lugard's attempts to establish the Imperial British East Africa Company are dealt with at some length. Company failure to establish itself successfully in Kikuyuland is seen as being due to manifold factors; under financing, poor communications, lack of control over African levies, poor leadership and recognition by the Kikuyu of the Company's intention to settle the area permanently. Hostility against the Company was greatly exacerbated by the use of Masai and Kikuyu armed levies for raiding, and the death of Waiyaki, a Kikuyu athamaki of local eminence. 1895 saw the end of Company hegemony and its replacement by imperial authority.
The effects on the Kikuyu tribes by armed traders are analyzed. John Boyes, described by himself as "King of the WaKikuyu", Gibbons and others, are seen as dacoits who affected to some considerable degree the attitudes and disposition of Kikuyu with whom they came into contact. As with the Company, divide and rule tactics were practised and armed traders allied themselves with athamaki collaborators against other Kikuyu opposed to the European presence. Though the armed traders profoundly disturbed the Kikuyu between 1895 and 1900, the Protectorate Administration was powerless to prevent their activities.

Conquest of the Kikuyu tribes was two-phased. The first phase (1895-1902) is referred to as a "holding" exercise. During the period obvious preparations were made to tighten the administrative net on Kikuyuland. The armed traders were arrested and deported. Masai were beginning to be contained in areas away from Kikuyuland. Roads began to radiate north into the Kikuyu interior from the new administrative centre of Nairobi. Ukamba Province was split and Kikuyuland became Kenia Province. The critical problem of the Mombasa-Lake Victoria railway traversing the Kikuyu habitat was solved. The Protectorate Administration possessed an elite cadre of Kikuyu collaborators on whom they relied to render aid in the subjugation of other Kikuyu. A re-organization of military forces was taking place and by 1902 the Protectorate Administration was in a strong position to make a concerted effort to dislodge and defeat
the remaining pockets of Kikuyu opposition.

The second phase of the Kikuyu conquest is seen as a "military" exercise: it lasted roughly eight years (1902-1910). Subjugation of the Kikuyu, founded on a policy of mounting strong punitive expeditions, was barbaric and excesses were common. "Overkill" was substituted for the traditional military tactic of skirmishing. "On the spot" decision-making was more the rule than the exception. Contrary to the expressed intention of senior officials, punitive expeditions, led by junior military officers and supported by consenting junior civil officers, inflicted large numbers of casualties, burnt huts, destroyed crops, and crippled the Kikuyu economy by confiscating thousands of cattle and goats. Both junior officers and Commissioner Eliot himself falsified casualty figures; thus giving London a wrong impression of events. By 1910, after sustained military action, Kikuyu resistance was eliminated.

The thesis concludes that Kikuyu athamaki rose to prominence in the military atmosphere of the colonial enterprise. As collaborators athamaki became the prime agents of change in the transitory process from tribalism to colonial administration. They heralded a powerful and sustained disruption of tribal society and speeded the processes of change. The imperial order, ever watchful for means to achieve its objectives at minimum expense, used athamaki for its unique purposes. Conversely, athamaki used the Protectorate
Administration to realize their own ambitions. Alliances between athamaki and Europeans were reciprocal in both construction and purpose. There existed a dual realization that one element could not proceed without the concurrence or aid of the other. Some initiatives thus remained in Kikuyu hands within the colonial order. Collaborating athamaki became junior partners in the colonial enterprise—and prospered accordingly.

European penetration radically affected Kikuyu society. Stressed by the intrusions of Arabs, Swahili and Masai and the effects of migration, Kikuyu society was further influenced by the European presence. The European impact opened up serious rifts in Kikuyu society, disturbed traditional rankings of dominance and hierarchy, and sharpened already existing cracks in the tribal socio-political firmament. Kikuyu resistance was weakened by the use of athamaki and finally smashed by superior military forces. The thesis concludes with the suggestion that Professor T.O. Ranger's hypothesis on connexions between primary resistance movements and modern mass nationalism, may, in the Kikuyu case, have some basis in truth.
Between 1880 and 1914 African history abruptly changed course as Europeans arrived on the African continent intent upon a permanent presence. Described in manifold ways, "resilient", "flexible", "incoherent", "opportunistic" and even, "a succession of unco-ordinated responses to different types of stimulus", the British brand of Empire grew from the fact that her territorial interests were acquired as much by accident as design, lay scattered over the map, contained a broad spectrum of human ethnicity and had been brought into the imperial fold by methods ranging from leasing to conquest. Historians have paid much heed to these processes, writing of the invasion and "pacification" of Africa as part of European political or diplomatic history.

Only recently has African historiography changed its traditional approach by developing uniquely African perspectives. Case studies, confined often to backwaters of imperialism, are beginning to reveal new interpretations of the European intrusion. "Pacification" of the natives, long the parlance of traditional historiography, is beginning to be seen rather as "conquest." Early wars of resistance were called nothing more than "rebellions" and were seen by Europeans to be only of minor consequence. To Africans "rebellions" were of major consequence: they were traumatic events which conditioned Afro-European relationships both at the time and later.
Confirmed in modern case studies, also, is the fact that European influence on the ground lagged behind its presence on the map by twenty years. What was said to be "possessed" territory by the colonial power was held only by a handful of men confined by, and subject to, the pressures of often hostile Africans. Seeking no virtue in consistency for its own sake, early colonial administrators, merely occupying the ground on which they stood, were guided only by an "idea" of colonial rule not yet committed to paper: Lugard's principles of Indirect Rule were not to come until 1923. Charged with the monumental task of imposing their will over tribal Africa, colonial administrators, therefore, conditioned by western notions of hierarchy, scoured the bush looking for Africans upon whom they could drape a mantle of "chieftainship." Where "chieftainship" existed, the colonial regime often succeeded in grafting itself on to the established order. Where "chieftainship" did not exist Europeans were forced to create chiefs; an artificial process which tended to exacerbate native hostility.

Traditional historiography, also, tends to show only European initiatives in the colonising process. The case study approach is beginning to verify more clearly that Africans frequently took the initiative in dealing with the invaders. This thesis, a study of Kikuyu-European contact, shows clearly that some Africans, doubtless for their own advantage, aided and abetted European endeavours. They offered themselves to the invaders as intermediaries and subsequently as "chiefs" of the colonial administration. Under the circumstances, a "thin on the ground" administration, poor communications and a
penurious Treasury, the invaders gratefully accepted overtures of collaborators. But Kikuyu collaborators were not merely pawns in the colonial process: they were essentially realists who saw the folly of resistance and the advantages of collaboration. Alliances between Kikuyu and Europeans were thus necessarily two-way in construction and purpose. Within any compact there existed a dual realization that one element could not proceed without the other. A mutually acceptable balance of power, whose tilt was determined by bargain and concession, was therefore manifest as the lynchpin of the early colonial administration.

This thesis, a case study of Kikuyu-European contact during the early years of colonial enterprise, seeks to examine and analyse the issues outlined above.

Chapter 1 of the thesis, The Kikuyu: An Ethnohistorical Background, is devoted to a description of the Kikuyu tribes of East Africa, the geography of their habitat, their early history and the influence upon them of the Nilo-Hamitic Masai peoples. One influence attributed to Kikuyu and Masai proximity is that of acephaly: there were no chiefs. Areal instability precluded the possibility of a polity similar to the static Bantu of Uganda. This did not mean that Kikuyu polity was not adequate to meet the needs of Kikuyu society or was not malleable enough to adjust to conditions imposed by the environment. The social order, for example, was permeable enough to allow co-operation with other tribal groups. Masai took Kikuyu wives and land transactions took place between Kikuyu and Wanderobo. Traditions of the Masai were thus transferred to the Kikuyu, including
circumcision methods and acephaly. But while acephaly prevailed and thus no chiefs existed, there were, as Professor D.A. Low has asserted, "if not chiefs then other prominent individuals of some considerable consequence" about whom the socio-political affairs of the tribes revolved. These observations are to some extent corroborated in the literature of early European travellers who met and dealt with individuals they incorrectly deemed to be chiefs.

Two sub-chapters, entitled, Age Organization and Rites De Passage and Territorial Organization, Sets and Leadership, respectively, analyse in detail the Kikuyu socio-political order. They reveal that despite acephaly Kikuyu polity was sophisticated and egalitarian. The evidence strongly supports a contention that while acephaly prevailed, "individualism" was provided for within the social order. Kikuyu of ability (muthumaki (sing.) and (athamaki) (pl.) were said by the tribe to "appoint themselves for leadership." Kikuyu possessed of exceptional qualities of personality, ability--"charisma"--were recognized and moved more rapidly through the rites de passage to seniority ahead of their lesser endowed contemporaries. Some athamaki showed ability in tribal law while others were regarded as leaders in religion and politics. Local affairs of the Kikuyu tribes thus often revolved around athamaki although real power was invested in grades of elders. The threat imposed by outsiders, Masai, Arab and Swahili traders, armed European traders and explorers, the Imperial British East Africa Company and Protectorate Administration, enhanced considerably the rise to prominence of athamaki skilled in the military arts. These men, seen
as 'chiefs' by Europeans ignorant of Kikuyu polity, were to play a
large part in subsequent attempts to establish or superimpose over the
in African History*, in a prelude to a chapter entitled "The Historian
and Stateless Societies," points out the difficulties inherent in
establishing colonial administrations over so-called stateless societies.

Not unnaturally, European officials endeavoured to bring
these stateless societies into the orbit of the colonial
administration, but time and again they were frustrated
because they could find no institutions of authority
and no traditional leaders who would act as responsible
officeholders in a state bureaucracy. When they failed
to find a "native authority", the Europeans frequently
tried to impose one on the society.¹

Imposing a single "native authority", a chief, over tribes whose decision-
making was traditionally collective, was for the colonial authorities
often disastrous and tyrannical. "Not unnaturally", Collins remarks,
"the association between peoples of stateless societies and the European
administration was, in the early years, characterized by raids and
uprisings suppressed in turn by punitive expeditions. By any standard
such a relationship could hardly be called administration."²

Chapter 2, *Early Contacts*, deals with Kikuyu responses to the
intrusion of so-called *wageni*, or foreigners. Evidence suggests that
Kikuyu were familiar with trading processes through their neighbours,
the Wakamba. Between 1830 and the 1860's, Wakamba middlemen held a

¹Robert O. Collins, ed., *Problems in African History* (New

trading monopoly between the coast and Mount Kenya. After 1860, however, Wakamba trading suffered a decline at the hands of Arabs and Swahili traders who successfully by-passed the Wakamba entrepot around Machakos. By 1870 large Arab and Swahili led caravans were penetrating or skirting the Kikuyu habitat. Ngongo Bagas, located at the southern tip of Kikuyuland, was used extensively as a staging area for caravans proceeding up the Rift Valley to Lake Victoria. From Ngongo Bagas parties of caravan porters and armed levies raided Kikuyu smallholdings and foraged for food. Their behaviour and the fact they made little or no retribution for provisions taken caused local Kikuyu to become extremely hostile to all intruders.

Joseph Thomson, an early European explorer, recorded incidents of Kikuyu hostility when attempting a traverse of the Kikuyu habitat in 1883. Others, notably von Hohnel and Count Teleki, were also attacked by Kikuyu. There is evidence that Europeans were deterred from penetrating the area by false rumours about Kikuyu fierceness spread by Arabs, Swahilis and Wakamba who did not want to lose to Europeans a trading monopoly in Kikuyu ivory. In consequence early Europeans were prepared to "fight every inch of the way" through and around the Kikuyu habitat. Kikuyu were seen by early European intruders as being "less friendly" than others tribes, "turbulent and treacherous", "secretive, more conservative and difficult to understand." There is little doubt that such expressed attitudes by early Europeans heavily conditioned attitudes of Europeans who arrived later. European apprehension coupled with Kikuyu suspicion of their motives featured prominently during the early
contact period. These attitudes and occasional violent clashes became important factors in subsequent, more extensive relationships between Kikuyu and Europeans.

The first sustained interaction between Europeans and Kikuyu took place after 1889 and was associated with the efforts of the Imperial British East Africa Company to effect a permanent presence in Kikuyuland. The effects of this presence are dealt with in Chapter 3, The Imperial British East Africa Company. The effort to establish the IBEA Co. in East Africa was derived from the diplomatic imperative to occupy the Nile headwaters and thus deny other European powers, notably the Germans and French, from establishing themselves strategically in the area.

At the van of the scramble for British hegemony in Uganda was a company column led by Frederick Lugard. Leaving Mombasa in 1889, Lugard tarried at Ngongo Bagas for time enough to build a station at Dagoretti, an area located on the southern tip of Kikuyuland. It was here that Lugard attempted to extend Company influence by involving himself with Kikuyu athamaki—men he termed 'chiefs'—in blood-brotherhood ceremonies. He was undeniably impressed by the Kikuyu he met. His account is replete with complimentary descriptions of Kikuyu. It is considered probable that his success in establishing good rapport was due to the power of his personality and the possibility that Kikuyu athamaki considered his presence as being temporary. Three years later, on his return from Uganda, Lugard changed his opinions on the Kikuyu. He saw them now (1893) as "treacherous", and "embittered."

Kikuyu response to the presence of the IBEA Co. had changed drastically in just three years. Reasons for Kikuyu hostility are suggested
to be associated with Company intentions to remain in Kikuyuland permanently. Moreover, the previous patterns of wageni behaviour were being repeated as smallholdings were raided with Company condonation. Furthermore, Company officers were practising a policy of divide and rule—no doubt forced upon them by circumstances of austerity and poor communications. Europeans were "using" athamaki, as indeed, athamaki were "using" Europeans. Kikuyu were fighting Kikuyu, a situation which, even if traditional, was exacerbated to a large degree by the involvement of the Company. Willingly drawn into the conflict and seen as 'chiefs' by Company officers, athamaki gained personal advantages at the expense of their fellow Kikuyu. Other Kikuyu athamaki who resented the Company intrusion paid the penalty of non-collaboration. Waiyaki, a prominent muthumaki of Lugard's acquaintance, one who had undergone with Lugard the blood-brotherhood ceremony, was deported only to die in the process. His death rallied the resistors to a point where the Company presence in Kikuyuland became untenable. In 1895, after a formal investigation by Sir Gerald Portal, the Company was relieved of its responsibilities in East Africa. From then on East Africa became the responsibility of the British Government. The troubles of the Kikuyu habitat, remained, however, for by now athamaki had learned to fight their local wars with help from the white intruders. Furthermore, other forces, notably armed European traders, invested Kikuyuland and made worse an already exceedingly turbulent situation.

Chapter 5 of the thesis, Armed Traders, deals with the effects on the Kikuyu of Europeans who acted not as representatives of established
commercial ventures but as private individuals motivated by an urge for adventure and an eye for the main chance. The traders moved across Kikuyuland seeking out friendly and powerful athamaki with whom they could do business. Karuri, one of Low's "prominent individuals", engaged himself in the game for his own set of unique motives. He became "something of a personage" in the Protectorate Administration. Wagombi and Karkerrie, other eminent athamaki, aided and abetted Boyes in particular, while Gutu engineered a relationship with Gibbons, as a result of which the trader was deported and his Kikuyu cohort became Paramount Chief of the Embu.

Importantly, armed traders and their Kikuyu collaborators, acting in concert and for their own purposes, were responsible together for fomenting further Kikuyu hostility. Athamaki recognized the value of their association with armed traders and should not be considered as merely reactors to the European presence. Their parts in the process of interaction were active: they, like the armed traders, initiated and shaped events for their own purposes. They created their own destiny as much as they influenced that of the tribe.

Significantly, the embryo Protectorate Administration, poorly financed, thin on the ground and without visible strength at its back, did little to prevent the joint activities of armed traders and athamaki. Boyes was freely able to peddle his influence from one muthumaki to another. By 1900 he was able to refer to himself, not without some truth, as King of the Wakikuyu.

Chapter 5, The Conquest, falls into two parts; namely, First
Phase (1895-1902): A "Holding" Exercise and Second Phase (1902-1910): A Military Exercise. The first sub-chapter deals with the coming of government (1895) to East Africa. The embryo Protectorate Administration inherited a territory which had been profoundly disturbed by a succession of wageni. Moreover, governance of the territory had been couched by London in the broadest terms. Practical administration, therefore, was devolved onto District Officers who were often unaware or unconcerned with so-called policy. Some officers were experienced; others not. Those hired from the Company generally adapted themselves well while others, lacking both experience and motivation, degenerated to ineffectiveness. Thus the quality of administration depended much upon the quality of its members. Good or bad, administration of the Kikuyu was in the early years carried out "on the spot."

An example of "on the spot" administration is Francis Hall, a former Company employee hired by the Protectorate Administration in 1895. Hall was naturally suited to meet the rigorous demands of life on the African frontier. He was notably very successful in gaining influence over Kikuyu athamaki. In particular his association with Kinanjui, a muthumaki of some local eminence, aided the establishment of the Protectorate Administration in the Fort Hall area. Known to Hall as his Fidus Achates, Kinanjui collaborated with the British and later, like Karuri, became an important servant of the colonial regime. Hall's use of athamaki, while successful to a degree in the area under his jurisdiction, served further to divide the Kikuyu and thus make more hostile those tribal elements who chose resistance to collaboration. This
made final pacification of the Kikuyu impossible without the aid of strong military forces.

The period 1895-1902 saw the British develop strong military forces in preparation for conquest of the native tribes. Moreover, the period saw administrative, political and economic changes which made it easier for the authorities to deal with dissident tribes—especially the Kikuyu. Kikuyuland, formerly part of Ukamba Province, became Kenya Province. The railway, now completed past the Kikuyu habitat, could be used as a means of bringing troops from the coast. Roads were constructed and radiated from Nairobi into Kikuyuland. The Masai, always considered a threat to the Administration and the Kikuyu, were removed from the proximity of Kikuyuland. By 1902 the armed European traders had been arrested and deported. Now the Protectorate Administration was in a position to penetrate the Kikuyu interior with the express intention of subduing the remaining pockets of tribal hostility.

The period 1902-1910 saw the King's African Rifles, supported by police and numerous African levies, invade the Kikuyu interior in what modern parlance might refer to as "search and destroy" missions. Military tactics changed from traditional skirmishing to "overkill". With the object of overcoming all resistance, strong patrols raided Kikuyu itura, destroyed huts and killed without discrimination. Acts of barbarism were much in evidence and both sides gave no quarter. Cattle were confiscated and sold on the open market to help finance the expeditions.

Contrary to edicts issued by higher authorities, military officers took the initiative in field operations against the interior
Kikuyu. Disputes broke out between junior military and civil officers on the conduct of operations. Reports to superiors were often "toned down" while on one occasion even the Commissioner falsified casualty figures. The Commissioner of the Protectorate turned a blind eye toward the activities of punitive expeditions. Thus lacking direction from higher authority, military officers took the conduct of operations into their own hands by making "on the spot" decisions. By 1910 the Kikuyu tribes had capitulated voluntarily or had been "put down" in blood. The pax Britannica was a fact in Kikuyuland.

The final chapter, the Conclusion, sums up the evidence as presented. By the mid-nineteenth century Kikuyu society had completed its migration from its coastal dispersal point, Shungwaya, to its new habitat. Kikuyu tribes were fractious, unstable and acephalous. The social system was, however, fairly sophisticated and egalitarian. Proximity to the Masai forced the Kikuyu into a defensive posture and thus conditioned tribal attitudes, especially those living on the southern periphery of the habitat, against the intrusion of others.

Acephaly was traditionally a Masai custom adopted by the Kikuyu: it did not preclude the development of individualism in a society dominated by elders who made collective decisions. Young Kikuyu possessed of unusual talents were encouraged and rewarded by being hurried through the rites de passage to early seniority. Known as athamaki, they were in no sense chiefs. Since military affairs played a large part in Kikuyu life—the threat of the Masai, the provocative behaviour of wageni, the intrusions of European travellers, Company
men, armed traders and the Protectorate Administration—it was natural that athamaki predominant in military affairs rose to prominence.

In attempting to establish themselves the European intruders, whether Company men, armed traders or Protectorate Administration officers, were faced with the imperative of "finding" the chief. But no chiefs existed—only athamaki. Whether Europeans were aware of the non-existence of chiefs is unknown: certainly they referred often to chiefs in the early literature.

The conquest of the Kikuyu was made easier by European organizational and technical superiority: but athamaki collaborators aided and abetted the process. They offered themselves to Europeans as intermediaries. They were realists faced with the inevitability of conquest: they could either resist, collaborate or simply acquiesce. Those who chose to resist were swept aside. Others, probably the majority, chose to acquiesce. Many decided to collaborate. The decision to collaborate was doubtless motivated by the prospect of personal gain. There is evidence that leading collaborators became appointed chiefs under the auspices of a benevolent and grateful colonial regime. Importantly, athamaki were not merely pawns in the colonial process: they might better be seen as realists who possessed acumen to foresee the folly of resistance and the advantage of collaboration. Certainly they were not simply objects or victims of change set in motion by aliens. Their actions in aiding the establishment of the British ensured that once the pax Britannica was a fact, they, as intermediaries in the process, could continue to play that role. In this way some
initiatives always remained in Kikuyu hands within the colonial order: athamaki became, in effect, partners in the colonial enterprise. Certainly the activities of collaborators, both during and after the establishment of colonial government, heavily conditioned the course of political, social and economic change in Kikuyu society. Moreover, their attitudes and reactions speeded the pace and processes of change and thus heralded a powerful and sustained disruption of Kikuyu society.

The early European administration was of the "on the spot" variety. Little or no control over field officers was exercised by the centre. There is much evidence to suggest that field officers were left much to their own devices and that in consequence decisions taken were essentially of a pragmatic nature. So-called "policy" amounted to nothing more than a set of guidelines couched in broad diplomatic, rather than detailed administrative, terms. Moreover, the early administrators lacked the "teeth" to enforce themselves: the ease with which undesirables like Boyes and Gibbons roamed the area is evidence of the inability of the Administration to prevent them. Thus the quality of the Administration was a function of the quality of its men on the ground. Some officers rose to the occasion admirably by acquitting themselves to the daily rigours of life in the hostile environment of Kikuyuland: others degenerated into ineffectiveness.

By 1902 the Protectorate Administration was beginning to put its house in order and was subsequently thus able to venture into the interior in force. Pockets of Kikuyu resistance were eliminated and new administrative stations constructed in areas formerly avoided by the
Administration. The previous policy or tradition of pacification became, during the period, a programme of conquest.

Radical changes took place in Kikuyu society as a result of the colonial imposition. The European impact opened up serious rifts, steepened existing cleavages and disturbed the social order by disrupting the traditional power structure. Professor Ranger's suggestion that there may be a connexion, psychological or otherwise, between primary Kikuyu resistance and that which continued to plague the British until 1963, may well have some basis in fact. Certainly there is work to be done in the area of early African resistance to the European invasion and its relationship, if any, to later reactions.

The writer is indebted to the University of British Columbia Library which was extremely helpful in obtaining sources and allowing him to hold books for protracted periods of time. It is not easy to write a thesis some five hundred miles away from the University Library! The writer would also like to express gratitude to his wife, Rosina, for her toleration in "living" with this thesis--sometimes morning, noon and night. Also grateful thanks must be extended to Professors Robert V. Kubicek and Fritz Lehmann of U.B.C. History Department. Each in his way, by toleration, humour, and suggestion, aided the writer in overcoming a marked propensity for laziness. Finally, I dedicate this thesis to my Kikuyu friends: to Daniel Maina with whom I sat many hours discussing

the Kikuyu socio-economic system and the ravages of John Boyes. To Miano Wambugu who, over my years in Kikuyuland, showed me every bit of that beautiful yet troubled country. And, of course, to my good friend Mahommed Maalum, a most unusual man in a most unusual period of my life.
### TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>THE KIKUYU: AN ETHNOHISTORICAL BACKGROUND</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Age Organization and Rites De Passage</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Junior Warrior Grade (mumo)</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senior Warrior Grade (anake)</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learning Elder Grade (karabai)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Junior Elder (Athamaki mbule omwe)</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senior Elder (Athamaki mbule egeri)</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Priest (Ukuru)</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Territorial Organization, Sets and Leadership</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>EARLY CONTACTS</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>THE IMPERIAL BRITISH EAST AFRICA COMPANY</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>ARMED TRADERS</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>THE CONQUEST</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First Phase (1895-1902): A &quot;Holding&quot; Exercise</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second Phase (1902-1910): A Military Exercise</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>CONCLUSION</strong></td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>APPENDICES</strong></td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BIBLIOGRAPHY</strong></td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1

THE KIKUYU: AN ETHNOHISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Kikuyu people live in the present Central Province of Kenya. They are closely affiliated with two smaller tribal groups related in language, culture, and physical character, known as Embu and Meru. The three tribes inhabit or surround five major administrative centres; Kiambu in the south, Fort Hall in the centre and Nyeri in the north. Embu and Meru respectively reside within proximity of the towns of Embu and Meru.

Each area has its own tribal name. The Kiambu people, for example, are known as Karura; the Fort Hall people, Metume; while those of Nyeri are known as Gaki. Sub-tribal names for the Embu peoples are Embu, Mbere, Ndia and Kichugu. Meru sub-tribal names are Igembe, Tigania, Imenti, Miutini, Igoji, Mwimbi, Muthamba, Chuka and Tharaka.

The geographic habitat of the Kikuyu, the Central Province, stretches from the site of the present city of Nairobi at 5,500 feet, west along the Kiambu southern and Masai northern perimeter, to the Rift Valley escarpment. The Aberdare Mountains, 12,000 feet at the southern extent, run north to cut-off the western perimeter of the Central Province from the Rift Province, and thus constitute a natural western boundary. To the north of the boundary there exists the high and undulating White Highlands and beyond, to the east, the dry savannah and acacia country reaching Mount Kenya. The Mount Kenya massif, with its snow-covered
peaks, Lenana and Batian,\textsuperscript{6} forms the natural eastern boundary of the province. South of the mountain the boundary proceeds in the direction of Nairobi across the Embu plain and the cultivated Thika area.

The topography of the Central Province is greatly influenced by the proximity of both the Aberdares and the Mount Kenya massif. Notably the Kikuyu homeland is homogeneous and ecologically distinct from other areas within its proximity. Moreover, natural obstacles make access and exit into the province difficult for the cross-country traveller. Fast rivers, flowing from east to west and west to east off Mount Kenya and the Aberdares respectively, spate high in the rainy seasons and have carved deep valleys into the rugged terrain. The high and often spine-backed ridges, thickly forested with mature deciduous trees and bamboo, rise in rows across the terrain and provide formidable obstacles along the north-south traverse. The major river, the Tana,\textsuperscript{7} drains the area, crosses the dry savannah immediately east of Mount Kenya and flows into the Indian Ocean north of the coastal city of Mombasa.\textsuperscript{8} It carries with it much of the rich topsoil of the Kikuyu core-areas.

The Kikuyu tribes are Bantu speaking. The Bantu\textsuperscript{9} of Kenya fall broadly into three geographic divisions, the lacustrine, coastal and central. The Kikuyu tribes are of the central group of peoples. They emanate from a much larger body referred to by Seligman as the "Eastern Bantu." In this group are also included the WaChagga and similar tribes of northern Tanzania together with the WaTeita of south-east Kenya and the Wa-Pokomo of the Tana River area of Kenya.\textsuperscript{10}

Current research suggests that the Bantu invaded Kenya in two
waves. The first group left the interlacustrine area north and west of Lake Victoria and settled immediately east of the lake. Soja suggests that this wave probably entered Kenya about "the last half of the first millennium A.D." and continued to spread eastwards settling in areas where there was abundant water supply. They displaced or absorbed the existing pre-Caucasoid and Bushmanoid populations.

The second wave, including those of the Kikuyu tribes, spread out from the temporarily settled area of Mount Kilimanjaro, Voi and Teita, and proceeded north along the coast. This is established by oral tradition among the Kikuyu tribes, the WaKamba and the WaTeita. Moreover, the same oral tradition, also, has it that this Bantu group finally assembled and dispersed to their present core-areas from a place somewhere between the Juba and Tana rivers.

The exact place of final dispersal, known in oral tradition as Shungwaya, is located by V.L. Grottanelli and others as being some 260 miles north of the present site of Mombasa.

The Kikuyu tribes are said to have moved west toward their final settlement area about A.D. 1200-1300 but there is substantial dispute over the accuracy of this date. Generally the date is associated with the southern thrust of the nomadic Galla in the area. Experts on the Galla indicate that this thrust took place as late as 1600. The links which help identify groups dispersed from Shungwaya are those of language, age-set and class systems. In this regard there are distinct similarities between the coastal and southern Bantu and the Bantu groups who penetrated inland along the Tana River toward the Mount Kenya area.
North-Eastern Africa, 12th–17th centuries showing southern limits of Galla Thrust (16th century), the Kikuyu and Nilotic settled areas and the Kikuyu emigration route from Shungwaya.

Lambert has it that the early Kikuyu migrants left Shungwaya and journeyed inland along the natural water-course of the Tana River until they reached their first settlement point somewhere in the vicinity of southeast Mount Kenya. From this point they gradually spread southwards towards the present site of Kiambu and Nairobi. A study and analysis of the age-set genealogy has allowed him to trace the dates of arrival at various places along the route.\(^\text{20}\) These are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chuka (southeast Mount Kenya)</td>
<td>1300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embu (southeast Mount Kenya)</td>
<td>1425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Hall</td>
<td>1545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiambu</td>
<td>1800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lambert's findings are supported by L.S.B. Leakey, a noted authority on early Kikuyu history, but in somewhat vague terms. He refers, for example, to the Kikuyu as beginning to occupy the Fort Hall district "several hundred years ago." Saying nothing of Shungwaya he suggests that increased numbers in the sixteenth century forced the Kikuyu to seek fresh living room to the west.

The movement southwards across the Chania River into what is now known as the Kiambu district of Kikuyuland started about that time, as did a movement northwards into an area called Nyeri, lying at the foot of Mount Kenya.\(^\text{21}\)

There is little doubt that as they moved the Kikuyu tribes were influenced by culture-contact with other tribes. Oliver remarks, for example, that the Meru preserve the memory of cattle keeping people of Hamitic origin called Mwoko. Using Lambert as his source (\textit{Systems}, pp. 12-13.) he says that "clashes between the Meru and Mwoko continued until the time of a
Meru age-class which had been in the warrior stage in about 1760."

Moreover, Oliver observes, "The Kikuyu show in their initiation customs and age-classes as well as in their appearance and adornment the clearest signs of influence from the Nilo-Hamitic and Hamitic sources, but none at all of the chiefly institutions of the interlacustrines." (Bantu).

This point is interesting in view of the acephalous traditions of the Nilo-Hamites. Huntingford suggests, on the basis that acephalous Bantu are and have been traditionally located within close proximity of the acephalous Nilo-Hamites, that the former may well have taken the tradition from the Nilo-Hamites. The tribes having no chiefs, he observes, are generally located north of the present Tanzanian-Kenya border and nearer to Nilo-Hamites than those with chiefs. To substantiate the hypothesis he cites the fact that out of 101 tribes in the three East African territories; Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania, 45 had no chiefs, 47 had district chiefs and 9 had central chiefs. "Acephaly", he therefore concludes, "is an earlier form than rule by chiefs... and that..." one can conceive of the adoption of rule by a chief through culture contact or conquest, but the reverse process is not likely.

It is at this point we must pause to consider the general effect of other ethnic migrations upon the Kikuyu. What is especially significant is the effect upon the Kikuyu tribes of the pastoral Nilo-Hamites (Masai) and the Hamitic Galla and Somali peoples. Both groups formed ethnic barriers to the west and east of the Kikuyu core-area. Because the Masai were war-oriented, the Kikuyu peoples were forced to consolidate themselves behind the natural protection of the peripheral forest belt. Thus the
forest belt became a natural frontier to the east, west and south of the Kikuyu homeland. Where the forest was thin the Kikuyu built fortified villages to form a kind of 'Maginot Line' which made Masai raiding expeditions more difficult to accomplish successfully. In this way the security of those living behind the strip was enhanced.\(^{26}\) Hence we may infer that the Kikuyu tribes, once settled in the area between the forest-covered high Aberdares and Mount Kenya, were safe from their enemies as long as they remained within the confines of their island.\(^{27}\) Soja refers to the land outside the forest belt as a "forest moat" and says that it did not become integrated within the established life patterns, either grazing or agriculture, of any tribal group.\(^{28}\) It was in effect a no-man's land behind which the forest belt provided a natural sanctum for the agriculturally disposed Kikuyu. Thus wherever there was forest, "high ground and fertile ground other peoples held them (the Masai) at bay."\(^{29}\) Providing the Kikuyu did not venture forth from their island fastness, they were safe from the marauding pastoralists who roamed to the north, to the west and to the south. The bleakly forested slopes of Mount Kenya protected their island from any easterly intrusion.

We have seen (Oliver, p. 9) that the fabric of traditional society was not so well constructed as that of the interlacustrine Bantu of Uganda. Few, if any, African societies in early Kenya achieved a level of socio-political organization similar to that which prevailed to the west near the head of the Lake. The acephalous peoples consisted typically of associations, kinship groups and popular segments united in response, it may be presumed, to the environment and the threat of the Masai and other
militarily oriented peoples. Dependence upon agriculture and animals required an organizational structure more complex, sophisticated and larger than that of the primitive hunting-gathering groups. But due to the lack of external culture-contact and stimulus from more "advanced" societies, the traditional systems of social and political organization lacked the characteristics of the Uganda Bantu in whose territories kingdoms, minor states, chiefs and headmen flourished. It was here that "kingdoms tended ... to form in clusters, with one or more large kingdoms at the centre of the cluster, and a host of smaller ones scattered around the peripheries." It was here that had developed a bureaucracy "without paper, ink, desks, or telephones, in which power was wielded by officials who held their offices during the king's pleasure, and who could be transferred from post to post, promoted, demoted, and even destituted, by a nod of the divine head or a syllable from the divine mouth." From the top of the hierarchical structure there descended a host of civil servants of decreasing importance--ranging from the king himself, his immediate relatives and higher officer-bearers, to provincial, district and local chiefs. In contrast, the only significant change in the Kikuyu life-style seems to have been a transition from hunting to an agrarian economy--forced upon the tribe because of the nature of its new environment and the proximity of the Masai beyond the "moat".

Perhaps it was a lack of areal stability which precluded the development of a more sophisticated political organization. Kikuyu society was in flux. Groups formed, broke-off and re-formed, rose to local prominence and declined in a sort of social undulation influenced by prevailing
socio-political and environmental conditions. Perhaps this syndrome was a manifestation of the constant search for new areas containing the prerequisites for existence. Water, grass for grazing animals, forest and ridges for protection, constituted the cardinal tribal desires. The imperative to meet these requirements created a fluid population only loosely or locally organized. Indeed, it is suggested that the constant search for new land did not manifest the emergence of new political forms and social organization, but rather caused a revision to earlier forms of socio-political organization. Moreover, even Kikuyu "local associations were mainly the result of a family's need for some apparatus to regulate claims upon land or the problems arising from the juxtaposition of different families in an agricultural society." Perhaps it was the socio-political and geographical environment which determined the nature of Kikuyu political organization. Each ridge, isolated from others by forest and often impassable rivers, became a natural point of defense for those living on the back of its spine; each had its elders and its councils of defense.

Sporadic raiding by the Masai often aggravated the situation and efforts to resist by the ridge-based defence councils gave way to further tribal friction and conflict. Fighting usually took place between Kikuyu and Masai but this is not to imply that fighting was always confined to these tribal groups. Sometimes, for example, Masai fought Masai and such periods, no doubt, gave respite to the beleagued Kikuyu. On occasion Kikuyu fought Kikuyu. There is evidence to suggest, also, that periodically Kikuyu segments allied themselves with Masai against other Kikuyu.
The suggestion that areal instability precluded the possibility of a more sophisticated political organization is well based; especially if comparison is made between that of the Kikuyu and the Bantu of the northwest. But this does not mean that the Kikuyu traditional socio-political system (to be described in more detail in this thesis) was not adequate to meet the needs of Kikuyu society or was not malleable enough to adjust to the new conditions imposed upon it by a change in environment—political or geographical. To be sure there was a lack of stability caused by the constant movement and counter-movement of people across the landscape; but also, irrespective of this human flux, there developed a semblance of social stability founded on the dictates of necessity. This embryo stability must have been portable and well-rooted in Kikuyu tradition not to have been seriously shaken or even dismembered permanently by the constant pressures of war and movement. As time passed this growing stability became permeable enough to allow absorption of outside groups and clusters of people related or sometimes not ethnically related. There is evidence, for example, that numbers of Masai took Kikuyu wives without incurring cultural friction. There is evidence that Wanderobo, previously occupying the area settled by the Kiambu Kikuyu, were both absorbed into the tribe and allowed to parley with Kikuyu on legitimate business over the possession of land.

Thus it is possible to say that social structures were developed or evolved for purposes of constructive political action. Where possible, class-lines, different ethnic linkages and small-scale communities did not prevent co-operation where and when such was deemed to be of advantage. The evidence suggests that the stressful situation was not always met by
military conflict. Often it was met by a system of adjustment in the spirit of social, political and economic co-operation. The passage of time saw this system evolve to a point where physical and ethnic boundaries, although fused, became more constant and identifiable.\(^{38}\)

The socio-political and cultural environment now began, for example, to provide the traditionally acephalous Kikuyu with 'chiefs'. Low observes:

> It is customary to affirm that the Kikuyu had no chiefs, and this, by and large, is true. The inhabitants of each ridge into which the country was divided rarely owed allegiance to anyone beyond, and were frequently at war with their neighbours. But on occasions sociological norms can be misleading. For the Kikuyu were throwing up, if not chiefs, then "prominent individuals" of some considerable consequence.\(^{39}\)

Early European accounts give evidence of the existence of local Kikuyu leaders and by the 1880's these personages became distinct in the literature. Sir Richard Burton, for example, speaks of two Kikuyu leaders named Mundu Wazeli and Kippingo.\(^{40}\) Father Cagnolo refers to Karuri of Metume (Fort Hall) and Wangombi of Gaki (Nyeri).\(^{41}\) John Boyes, the self-styled "King of the Kikuyu", a European adventurer who lived among the Kikuyu during the early European penetration, mentions the exploits of Karkerri and Karoli.\(^{42}\) Governor Hardinge's report, Africa No. 6 (1903), p. 7, quotes "several Chiefs of considerable importance, such as Kinanjui (sic) and Karuri, each of whom can put several hundred warriors into the field" together with, "a multitude of smaller Chiefs." All of these prominent Kikuyu possessed charismatic qualities and ability recognized and allowed for by the traditional socio-political structure of the tribe. Their rise to power, albeit local, was not outside of the acephalous order,
but within it. Many were leaders of men in war and probably displayed marked physical and mental capacities in this area. Because the environment called for military skills, associated with Masai and latterly European interference in Kikuyu affairs, they tended to rise to positions of prominence within the tribal structure. Notably, this was because the tribal structure provided for such exigencies; provided for men of ability to assume positions of socio-political leadership. These men were to form the nucleus of appointed Kikuyu Chiefs under the aegis of the forthcoming embryonic British Colonial Administration.

Age Organization and Rites De Passage

The Kikuyu tribe is divided into two halves. Every Kikuyu male child is inducted into one or the other halves at birth. One half of the tribe is known as Maina and the other half, Mwangi. A male child assumes the tribal half of his grandfather. For example:

Grandfather . . . . . . . Mwangi
Father . . . . . . . . . Maina
Son . . . . . . . . . . . Mwangi

or

Grandfather . . . . . . . Maina
Father . . . . . . . . . Mwangi
Son . . . . . . . . . . . Maina

One tribal half, either Mwangi or Maina, "rules" the tribe for a period of time before formally handing over authority to the other half. The period that one half is in power seems to vary considerably and there are substantial differences of opinion on its length. One source says 30 years;
another 20-30 years, while Hobley says 15 years. Kenyatta says "... one generation (held) office of government for a period of thirty to forty years ..." Prins states that 30-40 years is the best time lapse as it is in: "best harmony with the idea of the duration of a physical generation fundamental to the principle of alternation of both halves." Here it is important to note that Kikuyu "time" was not measured in solar or lunar years but by "generations" or "age-sets" (see Cagnolo below). Thus, differences in years suggested by the foregoing sources are of little use in determining the period between Kikuyu "governmental" changeovers. The fact of the matter is that the change-over ceremony, itwika, took place periodically and no consensus opinion exists on the time span of the ruling half.

A point consistent with the system of ruling halves, is that a male child could only be informally known as Mwangi or Maina. Formal recognition of his tribal half was only accorded when he assumed the status of junior elder of the ruling half or conversely junior elder of the non-ruling half. Nevertheless, according to the principle of the alternation of patrilineal generations, it was known at birth into which tribal half the child would move. After circumcision the young male passed through two grades of non-elder, mumo and anake, before being accepted into the elder category. If born a Mwangi, and this was not the ruling half, he was accorded the name Mwangi Irungu. Irungu identified him as not being destined for the ruling half. Presumably, if during the period of his social ascendency the itwika took place and power changed hands, he relinquished the Irungu identifier and became merely Mwangi. At this time the young warrior class of Maina, previously destined for power, became Maina Irungu.
Kenyatta states that the last itwika was celebrated about 1890-98. Lucy Mair gives the dates as being 1890-1903 and says the ceremony "took about a dozen years to complete." The handing-over of power "was organized separately, and at different times, in different parts of the country (and) the areas which co-operated for this purpose were much wider than those which did so for any other." There are two points of significance here. Firstly, since the last ceremony took place between 1890 and roughly the turn of the century, then it is apparent that the handing-over of power to the Mwangi fraternity was coincident with early attempts by the British to establish an administration. This may or may not have affected British efforts, but it is of some significance to relate the fact that the next itwika (1925-28) to herald ascendancy of the Maina group was declared illegal and proscribed by the administration. There is a good possibility that since Independence the Kenya authorities have, for symbolic or political purposes, re-instituted the itwika. The second point concerns Professor Mair's assertion that the itwika tended to involve more distant segments of the tribe than any other kind of ceremony. This is interesting in view of the fact that the socio-political and geographic environment was at the root of Kikuyu social system and that, in consequence, tribal affairs tended to emanate and be dealt with on a local level. The effect of the itwika, we see, was one of consolidating the tribe by giving its members, far and wide, some cultural identity. British proscription of the event (1925-28) may, therefore, have been predicated on the assumption that this same cultural identity could likely be converted into a political identity; especially in view of the fact that the time in question was one of Kikuyu
political instability.

Prins states that the real significance of the itwika was that it brought together all segments of the Kikuyu into a corporate unit and served generally as an integrative influence. Importantly it served to transfer power from one group to another by social agreement rather than power struggle and showed also the inviolability of a tribal constitution which could be and was regularly carried out without tension. This view, broadly speaking, is in concert with that expressed by Mair. Although cautious about seeing the itwika as a total integrative influence, Professor Mair sees the itwika as being, among other things, a means to issue proclamations on matters of rules or orders or to reassert generally recognized rules of tribal conduct.

Sometimes proclamations have been made at handing-over ceremonies... the Kikuyu sometimes summoned meetings for the purpose... we have no clear picture of the way in which a decision was taken to make such announcements; nor do we know whose business it was to proclaim them... examples given by some Kikuyu elders were the prohibition of witchcraft; the announcement that habitual thieves should be executed; orders to protect supplies of food in times of famine... orders regulating the use of land, for example that certain tracts of forest should be left standing as a defence against enemies, or that a salt-lick should be open for general use. It is doubtful whether this activity would entitle one to say that the government of the Kikuyu included organs of legislation. If legislation means making rules of general application which change or extend the existing body of rules, none of these examples really fits the definition. Some are reassertions of recognized rules, others are
orders dealing with specific situations. They do demonstrate, however, that collective decisions could be taken in such emergencies as famine. We do not know how wide an area was covered by any of these orders, though it is fairly safe to say that it is not likely to have been the whole Kikuyu country . . . we do not really know how such assemblies were composed, or whether they consisted of people who combined for other purposes of government. 54

The sociological implications of the itwika become evident on closer analysis. Although the deposed half, for example, was technically powerless, it continued to aid and advise on judicial and other matters. The new ruling segment was judged competent to implement its responsibilities as during its period of power its members acted as consultants to each elder grade in the social pattern. When power changed hands, over the period of the itwika, each elder moved from his position of non-power to a corresponding position of power. Many Kikuyu, however, never rose to higher elder status. This was because if the itwika took place, say, at 25 years of age and at a time when a tribesman was too young to hold elder status, 30 to 40 years later might see him dead. This is especially significant in view of the probability that longevity, prior to colonial rule, was perhaps only 45-55 years. A further implication is that if a man actually lived long enough out of office to experience the itwika, he would automatically be accepted into the highest ruling elder grades without actually having had the ruling experience of the lower elder grades. Thus, unless he had taken his non-ruling duties seriously enough to learn by simulation or osmosis all ceremonial procedure, cultural law, and other duties of
elder office, his judgement may well be deemed faulty.

Sets or age groups play a significant part in Kikuyu socio-political life. Males (and females) were inducted formally into the tribe and thus onto the lowest rung of the ladder of rank. Ceremonies were generally conducted on a yearly basis although according to prevailing conditions, like war or catastrophe, they were missed from time to time. Formal indoctrination of age-sets into the political life of the tribe was carried out by means of circumcision.

Circumcision was more than mere ceremonial activity; it was also a symbolic act which represented values embodied in the age-class system with all its education, social, moral and religious implications. As Leakey points out, it was the beginning of a series of rites de passage through which each Kikuyu would pass. Kenyatta is more explicit when he regards it as "the conditio sine qua non of the whole teaching of tribal law, religion, and morality." Its real significance seems to be that the act marked the new status arrived at by the indoctrinates; it meant that those circumcised became pledged for future institutional activity. It marked the beginning of seniority progression; it was the foundation of an assured elitism provided for by tradition and socio-political structure.

The ceremony (irua) is complex and beyond the scope of this thesis. What is important, however, is the fact even the ceremony has about it a certain duality. Cagnolo observes that the young male Kikuyu may be circumcised by the so-called Kikuyu or Masai fashion respectively. While he notes that both methods are in fact very similar in technique;
i.e. incision rather than circumcision, the significance of whether one or the other method was used lies in the fact that the method determines all subsequent initiation rites. This is not to suggest that one method is 'superior' or produces 'superior' individuals in terms of social or political status. What can be inferred from this finding is that the Kikuyu tribes were not historically isolated to the degree that culture-contact did not take place with other tribes. The fact that a technique known as the 'Masai' method was used in Kikuyu circumcision rites strongly suggests that Kikuyu tribal lore was not singularly of Kikuyu origin. The tribal structure, it could be deemed, was obviously viable enough to absorb those parts of another culture which were workable and not alien to established Kikuyu socio-political practice.

The foregoing could not be said of the Masai or the Hamitic Somali. Their cultures appear not to have been influenced or altered much by the proximity of the Kikuyu; rather the reverse seems to be the case. Obviously where the "moat" was thinnest, culture-contact and its affects upon the Kikuyu were strongest.

As has been pointed out, each age-set comes forward for circumcision on a yearly basis. For purposes of identification and perhaps a convenient method of locating 'historical time', successive sets of initiates are given a name corresponding to significant events associated with the year of circumcision. This is important resource material for anthropologists, ethnographers, historians and others concerned with investigating Kikuyu tradition or history. By process of inquiry among elders and a knowledge of social relationships, it is often possible to reconstruct the past on the basis of the names and name-associations of circumcised
groups.

Cagnolo has been successful in tracing the names of years from 1840 to 1932 by this method. Of interest in the Cagnolo list is the year 1903 and the name-association given to the age-set of that year. Venereal disease has a European heritage and is not thought to have been present in Africa before the advent of the European on that continent. The use of **Venereal disease** as an age-set identifier suggests that 1903 was significant to the Kikuyu in that they first contracted it from European carriers.

The year 1926 is also of some interest and indicative of the march of European technology in Kikuyuland. Other years signify manifestations of the European administrative presence. In 1919, for example, we have the **Registration Certificate**; in 1923 the **Flag**; while in 1930 the name-association, **Modern Practices** indicates increasing Kikuyu knowledge and awareness of the concept of "modern" and, perhaps, its implications as introduced by the colonial administration. Yet other years record famine, disease, plague and the presence of animal plagues. The discovery of gold in Kakamega is recorded as being in 1913.61

Kenyatta asserts that "men circumcised at the same time stand in the very closest relationship to each other. When a man of the same age-group injures another it is a serious magico-religious offence. They are like blood brothers; they must not do any wrong to each other... the age-group is thus a powerful instrument for securing conformity with tribal usage... it binds men from all parts of the country (even) though they be circumcised hundreds of miles apart. The age-groups do more than bind men of equal standing together. They further emphasize the social grades
of junior and senior, inferior and superior. Thus we see the partially binding influence of the *itwika* and we have Kenyatta's assertion that age-groups and circumcision rites were powerful instruments for further tribal conformity.

After the circumcision rites initiates for that year proceed together into the first of six sequential grades of progressive seniority. This progression is associated with the Kikuyu tradition suggesting that various public functions are best performed by persons at different stages of life. The advance of the tribesman from warrior to elder is thus marked by significant social events in his life. The first step, the initiation ceremony (*irua*) is followed usually by marriage, the birth and maturation of children and the menopause of the tribesman's wife. Progression, it should be noted, is not automatic. The aspirant to a higher stage must be accepted by his prospective peers.

Respective grades are as follows and will be discussed, for purposes of clarity, in sequential order:

- Junior Warriors (*Morika ya mumo*)
- Senior Warriors (*Morika ya anake*)
- Learning Elders (*Morika ya karabai*)
- Junior Elders (*Morika ya kiama ya mbule omwe*)
- Senior Elders (*Morika ya kiama ya mbule egeri*)

**Junior Warrior Grade (*mumo*)**

This is the first grade into which circumcised males enter. As warrior recruits they had little or no say in political, religious, or social affairs. Most of the time in this grade, six to seven years, seems
### THE KIKUYU SOCIO-POLITICAL ORDER
WHERE MAINA IS THE RULING HALF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POWER GROUPS</th>
<th>Decision-Making Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MUMO (Junior Warrior)</td>
<td>First Grade. Entry on Circumcision About 14 Years of Age.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANAKE (Senior Warrior)</td>
<td>Second Grade. 20-28 Years of Age.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KARABAI (Learning Elder)</td>
<td>Marriage Mandatory for Upward Mobility. 28-45 Years of Age.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBULE ONWE (Junior Elder)</td>
<td>Child Entering MUMO and Wife in Menopause for Upward Mobility. 28-45 Years of Age.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBULE ECERI (Senior Elder)</td>
<td>About 60 Years of Age. Peer Group Acceptance and Possessing Chattels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UKURU (Priest)</td>
<td>By Election</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SHADOW GROUPS</th>
<th>Observation of Power Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MWANGI IRUNGU</td>
<td>No Decision-Making Responsibilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IRUA (Circumcision)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M A I N A (Ruling Half)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M W A N G I (Non-Ruling Half)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITWIA (Changeover Every 25-40 Years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MWANGI IRUNGU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Decision-Making Responsibilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SHADOW GROUPS</th>
<th>Observation of Power Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MWANGI IRUNGU</td>
<td>No Decision-Making Responsibilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
to have been spent singing songs, learning and performing dances, military skills, and travelling over the country. Sheep tending, considered the work of boys, was now given over to the more serious job of tending cow herds. This was important work and an appropriate task for a young warrior; especially in view of the fact that the Nilo-Hamitic Masai were of the cattle-complex peoples and liable to raid for the purpose of procuring cows. Thus their protection and retrieval was the work of warriors.

The corporate nature of the junior warrior grade is evidenced in their living habits. Frequently they were housed in barracks together with those of the Senior Warrior Grade (ena'ke). During war, or threat of attack, both grades could be mustered to form regiments on a territorial basis. Thus the whole tribe could be organized to act against the invader as a territorial whole. Each age-set (seven in number) had its own spokesman who was allowed to listen to the deliberations of the higher councils. This individual, known as athamaki wa riika (leader of the age-set), was evidently chosen for his leadership qualities. Kenyatta says that age-set leaders were actually chosen during the circumcision ceremonial activities. Lambert observes that a boy's natural inclination toward leadership would manifest in early childhood. Often at this age he would arrange the affairs and play of others; he would dominate his peer group until such time as he was challenged by another. He would affect "a superior knowledge of the grown up life and be something of a hero to his social equals in the homestead." In the northern areas of Kikuyuland and around the present site of Nyeri (Gaki) there was actually a formal recognition of youthful leadership. The best boys in this area were referred to as njama and feted ceremonially.
If disputes arose within the warrior grades the young leader would act as adjudicator. Often he was a war leader. Thus it seems reasonable to infer that his prestige was founded on his ability to fight, to organize and control men in war and peace, to manipulate events for corporate satisfaction——thus enhancing his reputation further among his elders——and to show "different" or superior qualities of "body and brain."

Senior Warrior Grade (anake)

This was the second grade into which young warriors passed after having served a six to seven year apprenticeship in the Junior Warrior Grade. Prins states that this grade and its responsibilities stand out more clearly than the junior grade. Responsibilities amounted to the maintenance of civil order and the policing of festivals and markets. Notably, senior older councils used members of this grade to supply information against offenders and make arrests. Politically their duties involved the giving of advice in war and acting as intermediaries between Junior Warriors and the Elders' councils. Thus it can be seen that as mature warriors their primary concern was warfare but at the same time they were being acquainted with political and judicial responsibility of a minor nature. No doubt because of their age (20-28) their duties were beginning to take on a more mature aspect; especially those married men nearing the end of their time in the Senior Warrior Grade and shortly to proceed to the Elder grades.

Military regiments were organized on a district (rugongo) basis. Larger military organizations than district size are not recorded in the
literature nor can evidence be found in the oral tradition.

The army was broken down into regiments, six in number for the Junior Warrior Grade (one for each year of the annual set) and six for the Senior Warrior Grade (one for each year of the annual set).\(^{70}\) Each regiment was led by a captain; each was divided into 'files' led by a lieutenant. Six captains were allowed into the council of war consisting of all senior warriors (njama ya ita).

These leaders were chosen by their particular groups at general or public assembly. They were men who had proved by their own actions, their capability of leadership; had shown bravery in wars; impartiality in justice, self-sacrifice; and above all, discipline in the group. A man with these qualities was able to attain a high position and esteem in the community, especially when he retired from the activities of a warrior.\(^{71}\)

The task of formulating plans, mobilizing warriors, and leading the army into combat was not the responsibility of members of the Senior Warrior Grade. These duties fell to selected members of the next higher grade (Junior Elder Grade) who had in the past distinguished themselves in military leadership or who possessed magical powers (mundu mugu wa ita --war magician).\(^{72}\)

**Learning Elder Grade (karabai).**

Entry into this group was based upon fulfillment of social obligations. Kenyatta cites marriage as being a pre-condition.\(^{73}\) Prospective Learning Elders were also required to pay to established elders in the grade, a fee of one goat. Membership would also depend on the date of
birth of a first or further child. In the latter respect the time of entry was associated with entry of a man's son or sons into the Junior Warrior Grade.

Organized on a district (rugongo) basis, there was within the grade a council of elders known as Kiama gia Kamatimu. Hobley gives the literal translation of this term as, "those who sit away." This infers that they were not yet considered qualified to act as members of the higher councils. Prins describes their function as being primarily concerned with learning judicial procedure by observing court methods, acting as intermediaries or servants of the higher courts and generally carrying out minor functions. A small number of them, variously cited as eight or nine, were allowed to participate in the tribal half ceremony (itwika). Ceremonially, they acted as skinners or procurers of sacrificial animals on official occasions.

**Junior Elder (Athamaki mbule omwe)**

Athamaki mbule omwe or literally, "legislative elders of the first goat" sat as junior officials on the Council of Peace (kiama gia mataathi). Though they shared this privilege with elders of the next senior grade (mbule egeri) or ("second goat") they were not yet admitted into the highest tribal councils as advisors. Also, it should be noted, only those of the ruling half of the tribe, Maina or Mwangi, were allowed to take their places on the Council of Peace.

Entry into Junior Elder status depended upon the time the child of a prospective elder was circumcised or entered the grade of Junior
Those entering the grade were approximately 45 years of age providing their earlier progression had been normal and unhindered (non-payment of dues). Kenyatta cites the grade as being divided into two halves, each with established functions. Hobley says that in fact two separate grades existed each with its own duties and responsibilities.

Senior Elder (Athamaki mbule egeri)

Athamaki mbule egeri or literally, "legislative elders of the second goat" must be regarded as a ruling division having senior administrative and legislative responsibilities. Entry into the grade depended, as in previous cases, on age and social accomplishments. The ruling half, Maina or Mwangi, sat on the Council of Peace as advisors.

It is interesting to note, with regard to age and social accomplishments as qualifications for progression, that such were no longer entirely necessary for promotion from mbule egeri to the most senior grade, Ukuru (Priest). If the case warranted; for example the death of Ukuru members, mbule egeri could be elected to the highest office by popular acclamation. Thus we see that the system allowed social progression to the highest grade on the basis of merit and personal suitability. In this way fairly young men (50-55 years of age) who had showed great capability, knowledge and judicial expertise during their progression through the lower grades, could rise to the top leadership positions.
Priest (Ukurů)

This grade represented the peak of Kikuyu socio-political progression. Entry into the grade was based upon the individual having achieved certain social qualifications. All his children, for example, had to have been circumcised and his wife was to be past child-bearing age. Middleton says elders of this grade identified themselves by carrying a bunch of leaves (maturanguru) and by means of a special ear-ring. They were allowed to make sacrificial offerings to the Kikuyu God (Ngai) on behalf of their community, decide the dates of circumcisions, the time of the itwika ceremony (change of power) and to conduct thahu (ritual uncleanness) removal proceedings. Arbitration of legal disputes was also within their jurisdiction. One of their most important duties was to summon the kiama (council) "for the discussion of questions of national importance." The last statement is most interesting in view of the fact that socio-political matters are often thought to have been conducted only on a local or territorial basis.

Contrary to the foregoing statement that Ukuru fulfilled certain social qualifications before entry into the grade, some evidence strongly suggests this not to be entirely the case. The literature contains, for example, statements that relatively young men became Ukuru. The explanation, according to Mair,

...is that here the heredity principle plays a part—not in the sense that the status of ritual elder is reserved for a particular lineage, but in the sense that every lineage has to have a ritual elder. This would be easy to understand in a society where the spirits of the ancestors bulk so large in religious belief, since such spirits are always believed to be concerned only with their own descendants and approachable only by them.
Moreover, she asserts that in some lineages probably more than one old man attained this status although it is entirely possible that the senior tribesman of any lineage who is also its secular head, has to be an Ukuru "even if through some accidental circumstance he is a relatively young man." 84

Territorial Organization, Sets and Leadership

The Kikuyu grades were organized on two levels; village and district. Here the word "village" is used for want of a better expression. The village as Europeans understand it was not traditional to the Kikuyu tribes. The European concept was introduced later and was a forced measure adopted by the British to counteract Mau Mau. 85 In fact, until the advent of Mau Mau in 1952, the Kikuyu had lived in small familial clusters atop the numerous ridges. Perhaps the Kikuyu word itura more aptly expresses the concept rather than "village." Notably it should be seen as a word bearing political rather than territorial connotations.

Each itura possessed a council of elders comprising representatives from the ruling half of the elder grades. Prins spotlights this as being the key territorial governing unit. 86 Certainly its deliberations embraced the key areal unit of the tribe; the itura or ridge. In terms of importance it was placed above the homestead or family governing body and below the district (rugongo) council. It had jurisdiction over all itura-area socio-political affairs and legal cases. Authority within the council rested with those members drawn from mbule egeri and Ukuru. The itura council was known as the 'council of nine.'
The district (rugongo) was the largest territorial unit. There is only slight evidence to suggest that matters of great importance were decided at a higher level than the district. The council comprising nine elders from each ridge (klama kinene) was sometimes known as the 'big council'. Meeting only occasionally and for specific purposes, they are probably best described as guardians of tribal lore, custom and culture. The exalted and venerable Ukuru of the council were empowered to decide the date of the itwika for handing over power to the relevant tribal half (Mwangi or Maina) ... They also decided the name designation and circumcision dates of the forthcoming annual age-sets. When necessary they formulated case law, changed customary law and adjudicated cases of crime or breaches of tribal custom. Theirs was the final court of appeal to the litigant who had progressively taken his case through the lower elders' councils. Importantly, they were more often than not disregarded, as potential chiefs or sources of liaison, by the British Colonial Administration.

Names of Kikuyu grades were both status and function oriented. Youth, learning elder, elder and priest, as terms used to describe function, all give indication of social responsibility within the tribal socio-political organization. Youths within the junior warrior grade were necessarily associated with fighting, the physical defence of the tribe, its cattle and its chattels. Middle groups, senior warriors and learning elders aged between, say 25 and 50, assumed typically "middle" roles of a quasi-political nature. Priests, who were "great", exalted and "old", were close to the centre of judicial, magical and religious power. Their status was based upon peer acceptance, age, and membership of the ruling
half of the tribe (Mwangi or Maina).

The annual set existed independently of grades, tended to cut across tribal divisions and was corporately independent. Demonstrating tribal solidarity by group action, its members referred to each other as "brother" or "my tribal equal." The basis of their kinship was found in the fact that they had entered Kikuyu socio-political life together as peers. The use of such terms as "brother" or "my tribal equal" would suggest the concept of equality among those of the annual set. And yet a closer examination of the Kikuyu socio-political structure reveals more than a suggestion that political equality did not prevail. Despite the presumption that Kikuyu society was corporate, there is strong evidence to support a contention that individualism existed and, moreover, was actually provided for. We have, for example, Low's assertion that the Kikuyu "were throwing up, if not chiefs, then some 'prominent individuals' of some considerable consequence." Certain individuals (muthamaki) were said by the Kikuyu to "appoint" themselves for leadership "in childhood" and to proceed more rapidly than their peers to a senior grade. Leadership, indeed as in European societies, was seen in the context of personality, ability and generally charismatic qualities. He so possessed and recognized could expect to proceed more rapidly through the various grades to leadership and seniority. Thus scope was afforded the especially endowed and in this way the system avoided "die-hard rule by the decrepit or senile."

That leadership and its qualities were important is seen in the Kikuyu proverb, Ire gothua ndongorya itikinyagera nyeki, "The goats having a lame leader do not arrive in the grass." Translated, this proverb would
suggest that "leadership is everything." Lambert quotes a Kikuyu proverb to the effect that a leader is "ruled by his head and not by his heart" and that "he looks before he leaps and never loses his temper." On the matter of leadership a government report states:

... the-to-us somewhat indefinite quality of "Ugambi" (leadership) is a complex of intelligence, personality, good reputation, social and economic success, and a sound heredity. Real wealth counts but is not essential. "Ugambi" is more than a mere appointment. It implies something of the "common decency" of the English "gentleman", something of the "ungwana" of the Swahili ... a mugambi is primus inter pares because of his exceptional courage and upright character, manifested in youth and maintained in manhood. ...
war leaders or exceptional warriors. Hence the socio-political structure made provision for "leaders" in war, in law, in religion, in politics, etc. The latter proficiency, politics, was important in that its exponents became known over wider geographical areas than others whose responsibilities and reputations were local. Lambert cites the phrase **muthumaki wa bururi** (leader of the country) as being used to describe such men. Moreover, if the personality and leadership qualities of such men were exceptional, they could and often did become local autocrats about whom the affairs of the tribe revolved. Low's assertion that the "Kikuyu were throwing up, if not chiefs, 'prominent individuals' of some considerable consequence" obviously refers, therefore, to **athamaki**. Moreover, also, Wazeli and Kippingo of Burton's experience, Karure of Fort Hall and Wangombi of Gaki (Nyeri) known to Cagnolo, Karkerri and Karoli of John Boyes' acquaintance and the powerful and influential Kinanjui known to both Governor Hardinge and District Commissioner Ainsworth, were all **athamaki** and men who had displayed a talent for leadership. It would not take long for the British to realize the importance of incorporating these men into an Administration intent upon establishing dominion over the Kikuyu but plagued by personnel shortages and shoe-string budgets.
FOOTNOTES

1The Kikuyu people are variously referred to as Kikuyu, Akikuyu, Agikuyu, Gikuyu, Gekuyu or Gekoyo. The correct designations, according to John Middleton, "The Kikuyu and Kamba of Kenya" in Ethnographic Survey of Africa, ed. D. Forde, (London: International African Institute, 1953), p. 11f, are Mukikuyu (pl. Akikuyu) for the people, Ukikuyu for the country and Kikikuyu for the language. He notes Gekuyu and Gekoyo as being phonetic renditions and probably more accurate in verbal description of the people than the commonly used Kikuyu. Throughout this thesis the term "Kikuyu" will be used to refer to the inhabitants of the core areas, Kiambu, Fort Hall and Nyeri, while the term "Kikuyu tribes" will be used to encompass those of the three core-areas together with the closely affiliated Embu and Meru tribes.

2An area previously designated Ukamba, Kenia Province (1901) (variously Kenya Province), Kikuyu Province (Proclamation 54, 1924) and subsequently to the present, Central Province (Proclamation 109, 1933). See S.H. Ominde, Land and Population Movements in Kenya, (London: Heinemann, 1968), pp. 9-10-12, and figs. 1,55,1,6, 1.7.


6 So-called after two eminent Masai encountered and cultivated as collaborators by early British administrators.

7 Known locally as the Sagana River, becoming the Tana east of Mount Kenya. The Kiswahili phrase, "Damu wa Afrika" (Blood of Africa) is descriptive of the Tana outfall into the Indian Ocean north of Malindi and refers to the typically red soil of Kikuyuland discolouring the sea at that point.

8 Mombasa is the second major city of Kenya and is the "greatest port of the African littoral." It is linked by rail and road to Nairobi and Lake Victoria. See Fitzgerald, pp. 229-230.

9 Bantu, a linguistic term, has been given an ethnic connotation and in this context is used to describe many peoples of southern and eastern Africa who may have had a common origin in what is now central Nigeria. See Roland Oliver, Journal of African History, vol. 7, (1966), pp. 361-76.


Huntingford, passim pp. 58-93.

V.L. Grotanelli, "A Lost African Metropolis" in Afrikanistische Studien, (Berlin: n.p., 1955), p. 236. See also G.S.P. Freeman-Granville, "The Coast 1498-1840" in Oliver and Mathew eds., History of East Africa, pp. 129-168. See also A.H.J. Prins, where Shungwaya is "probably rightly identified with the vast deserted site of Bir Gao or Port Durnford." Prins observes, also, that the Kitab-al Zanuj "and their oral traditions claim Shungwaya as being the dispersal point for the Kikuyu, Meru etc..."

Which would locate Shungwaya roughly between the Juba and Tana rivers.

Huntingford, pp. 58-93.

Gervase Mathew suggests that Galla pressure from the north forced the Shungwaya Bantu to move westward about 1600.

Some current research is at variance with the established view that Shungwaya was the final dispersal point of the Kikuyu tribes. See, for example, J. Forbes Munro, "Migrations of the Bantu-speaking Peoples of the Eastern Kenya Highlands: a Reappraisal," in Journal of African History, vol. 8, (1967), pp. 25-8. See also, Satish C. Saterwal, "Historical Notes on the Embu of Central Kenya" in Journal of African History, vol. 8, (1967), pp. 29-38. Here Saterwal states that the main source of the Shungwaya hypothesis, H.E. Lambert, Systems of Land Tenure in the Kikuyu Land Unit, (Capetown: School of African Studies, No. 22, 1950) is in fact more cautious on the matter of Shungwaya than those who have copied from it. Saterwal states further that Kikuyu origin at Shungwaya has no basis in fact and unless authentic archaeological evidence is forthcoming, it cannot be said decisively that Kikuyu tribes migrated west to their present core-areas from Shungwaya. Moreover, this view is supported by the finding that some coastal peoples who remember Shungwaya, do not mention Kikuyu tribes as being there. Nor, it is further emphasized, do the traditions of the Kikuyu tribes themselves point to Shungwaya as being a place of congregation and ultimate dispersal--except, perhaps, with the exception of the Meru. See also, B.G. McIntosh, "The Eastern Bantu Peoples" in Zamani: A Survey of East African History, eds. B.A. Ogot and J.A. Kieran, (Nairobi: EAPH, 1968), pp. 200-205.
Cultural and linguistic similarities, it should be noted, exist between the Bantu WaGiriama, who remained in the coastal area, and the Kikuyu migrants who proceeded west along the Tana watercourse.

Lambert, i-iii.

L.S.B. Leakey, *Mau Mau and the Kikuyu*, (London: Methuen, 1952), p. 2. For a more contemporary viewpoint see B.G. McIntosh, pp. 209-10. "It would be too simple . . . to assume that the migrations from Shungwaya took place in close succession, or that the migrants moved swiftly through empty lands. The departures from Shungwaya of the proto Pokomo, Kamba and Kikuyu may be said to belong to the thirteenth and fourteenth and those of the Nyika, Meru and Taita to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In the course of the migrations several temporary resettlements were made at Kirao and at other places, and many peoples took circuitous routes and retraced their steps before settling permanently. And finally, although the Eastern Bantu were multiplying in numbers more rapidly than any other peoples, the process of absorption of pre-existing peoples and of expansion into their modern habitants was far from complete at the start of the nineteenth century." For an account of Meru migrations see Jeffrey A. Fadiman, "Early History of the Meru of Mt. Kenya," in *Journal of African History*, vol. 14, (1973), pp. 9-27.


Photographs in Fr. Cagnolo, *The Akikuyu*, (Consolata Mission, 1933) indicate remarkable similarities in dress, posture and hair style between Masai (Nilo-Hamitics) and Kikuyu (Bantu).


Huntingford, p. 91.

For a comprehensive discussion on Masai-Kikuyu relations see William L. Lawren, "Masai and Kikuyu: An Historical Analysis of Culture Transmission" in Journal of African History, vol. 9, (1969), pp. 571-583. "The history of Masai-Kikuyu relations fell into two distinct periods; one relatively short, the other much longer. The first period commenced with the initial contact of the Masai and Kikuyu, which has been placed at about 1750. During this time, at least some segments of both tribes were living on the plains in the vicinity of Mount Kenya, and in this environment the Masai undoubtedly raided the Kikuyu quite frequently. Although some contact of a less bellicose nature apparently took place, the period was essentially one in which conflict between the two tribes was the order of the day...

The second period began in the late eighteenth century with the movement of the Kikuyu into the forests south of the Chania River. Having left a broad belt of forest around their new territory which the Masai found very difficult to penetrate, the Kikuyu throughout the nineteenth century were left relatively free from Masai attack. Occasional raids took place, but relations were generally peaceful."

Soja, p. 11.


See Great Britain, Foreign Office, Report by Sir A. Harding on the Condition and Progress of the East Africa Protectorate From Its Establishment to the 20th July, 1897, (Africa No. 7, 1897), Cmd. 8683, p. 24. "In places villages are found of 200 or 300 houses, and elsewhere there are clusters of hamlets extending pretty continuously for from half a mile to a mile, and containing perhaps a 1000 inhabitants. The general rule throughout the province is, however, except among the Masai... that families of from 30 to 100 settle in separate villages, each having its own granaries and stockade for cattle... huts are thatched bee-hive structures universal throughout Central Africa."
Ibid, pp. 22-3. The Masai of Kenia or Kikuyu District, consisted of one tribe, the Naivasha (or Kinangop Masai), whose "chief" was Lenana, and the broken remnants of seven other tribes, the Dogelani, Buruko, Ligoradi, Matapatu, Kurukoni, Gikinuka and Kapte Masai. "Once their own flocks and herds were decimated by the great cattle plague, the Masai, a purely pastoral people, were compelled by famine to depend not partially as before, but exclusively on raids, and about half, or perhaps more, of the warriors of a given tribe would be absent for a long period on a foray, leaving the kraal, which with them, owing to the dislike of the whole race for any manual labour, is never stockaded or provided with defensive works of any kind, protected by only a few hundred men... The Wakikuyu would be on the watch for these raiding expeditions, and as soon as one was well on the way would swoop down on the undefended kraal in overwhelming numbers, and the raiders would return with their spoils only to find their houses in ashes, and the women and children whom they had left behind there carried off to be sold as slaves." According to Hardinge, "The total number of Masai in the Kenia District, including the Wanderobbo (sic) (a helot Bantu race servile to both the Masai and Kikuyu) (was) estimated by Mr. Ainsworth... to be... 23,000. This total excluded some 40000 old men, women and children andn832 Elmoran, or warriors, under the close supervision of a British officer based at Ngongo Bagas." By contrast Ainsworth estimated the number of Kikuyu in the district as being in the region of 300000... "although other experts estimate this figure as being too high."


Great Britain, Cmd. 1626, p. 7. "They seem (the Kikuyu) in many ways intermediate between that tribe (the Wakamba) and the Masai, and may, perhaps, be hybrids. It is certain that the famine of 1882 gave rise to some curious relationships between the two tribes. In some cases the Masai settled in the richer Kikuyu districts near Mount Kenya, and took Kikuyu wives, and in others they entered the service of Kikuyu Chiefs (sic) and formed a sort of mercenary force. It is conceivable that similar events in the remoter past may have affected the physical
characteristics of the whole race." See also, Sutton, in Zamani, pp. 93-4. "The Bantu who live in the Highlands east of the Rift Valley (Kikuyu, Kamba, Chagga, etc.) . . . have absorbed many non-Bantu elements. These include, besides, hunter-gatherers and Southern Cushites, pastoralists of diverse origins . . ." Lawren, p. 577 points out, also, that "there was a continual tendency of the two tribes (Masai and Kikuyu) to intermarry . . . there are traditions which indicate that remnants of the Laikipiak and other Masai-speaking peoples settled and intermarried with the Kikuyu. The endogamous restrictions of the Kikuyu traditionally regarded both intermarriage and blood-brotherhood as useful implements toward the cementing of friendly relations."

"Although "absorbed" into the Kikuyu tribe, the Wanderobo were not accorded the same privileges by the Masai. See Great Britain, Cnd. 8683, p. 23 in which Hardinge points out that the Wanderobo was ", . . A helot tribe or rather caste, formed out of various conquered and enslaved neighbouring tribes of Bantu race, constitutes the servile class among the Masai, and performs the necessary domestic and manual labour . . . This race . . . is known as the Eldorobo (sic) . . . they are forbidden to marry Masai women, and their kraals are separate from those of their Masai masters. This is the only approach in the province to any regular system of domestic slavery."

Leakey, Mau Mau, pp. 3-4-5. See also Leakey, The Stone Age, p. 98 and C. Dundas, "Notes on the Origin and History of the Dorobo and Kikuyu Tribes" in Man (1908), p. 76.

Care must be taken in attempting delineation of ethnographic boundaries: especially those of the geographer who tends to draw hard and fast lines. Any map purporting to show early tribal areas is "suspect" and should be interpreted in terms of approximation rather than actual fact. Accurate maps require information more than is presently available. What can be said positively, with respect to the location of Kikuyu tribes, is that they occupied roughly the area under discussion.

A difficult problem also is the identification of definite social boundaries. The cultural landscape can be characterized by its complexity and socio-territorial fluidity. Clusters of people existed in ethnically circumscribed cells. They were often homogeneous in the core areas but mixed on the peripheries due to Masai and Kikuyu intermarriage.


Cagnolo, The Akikuyu, passim.


The word "tribe" is often used as a relative term by people who consider themselves civilized, as a way of describing societies they do not regard as civilized. Thus the word has derogatory connotations. Its use in this thesis should not be construed as being concerned with levels of civilization but rather with political divisions of large populations calling themselves by similar names and speaking similar languages.

Writers of papers on African subjects frequently find it difficult to decide whether they should write in the present or past tense. Some of the sources in this thesis are almost one hundred years old and what they say may no longer be true; especially in view of the fact that traditions, customs, indeed the whole cultural life of Africans, has changed drastically, or at least been modified by the influence of alien culture-contact and conquest. In this thesis both tenses have been used. The past tense signifies that the institution referred to is now extinct or has changed to such a degree that it is now virtually unrecognizable. The present tense refers to a custom or institution which is known to have existed and which, although possibly altered by the passage of time, nevertheless still exists as part of tribal life.


49 Kenyatta, Facing, p. 196.


51 No doubt in the spirit of 'harambee'!

52 Prins, East African, pp. 117-8.

53 Mair, Primitive, pp. 103-4.

54 Ibid.

55 Leakey, Mau Mau, pp. 22-27.

56 Kenyatta, Facing, pp. 133-5.

57 Ibid. "The irua (ceremony) marks the commencement of participation in various governing groups in the tribal administration, because the real age groups begin from the day of the physical operation."


59 Hobley, Bantu, p. 77.

60 See Kenyatta, Facing, p. 210 "... my grandmother (Kenyatta's) on my father's side, was a Masai woman called Mosana ... my aunt ... was married to a Masai chief called Senden, and was treated as the head wife. Exchange visits were made on both sides, and I had the opportunity of visiting her and stayed there for some months as a member of the family."
Cagnolo, _The Akikuyu_, pp. 199-202. See also age-set names in Hobley, _Bantu_, pp. 88 and 92. Middleton, "The Kikuyu," p. 34, states that "the names for any one year may vary over different parts of the country . . . how far differently named rika (age-sets) are regarded as being related cannot be seen from the material. These names are clearly linked, however, through the Districts of Kiambu, Fort Hall (and) Nyeri."

Kenyatta, _Facing_, p. 115.

---

See Mair, _Primitive_, pp. 98-9. "Payment was traditionally made in goats to provide feasts for these superiors. The first payment is made as part of a man's wedding ceremonies: this is regarded from one point of view as payment for the right to marry, while from another it is the fee for entry into the lowest grade of elders . . . . Men go on paying further goats until the requisite number have been paid for full membership of the body of elders. To enter this body a man should have a child old enough to be initiated; but he cannot enter until he has made the requisite payments, and if he has not made the payments he cannot have his child initiated either. This is the kind of circumstance which may lead to the postponement of initiation, and so place a man in an age-set most of whom are younger than he is."

Kenyatta, _Facing_, p. 140. "Generation sets about to be circumcised were given tasks which were liable to demonstrate to elders and the people generally the worth of the initiates. Feats of manhood involving hunting, skirmishing in mock war and dancing for long periods of time, afforded the potential leader to show his worth and skill." See also Lambert, _Kikuyu_, pp. 103-4.

Lambert, _Kikuyu_, pp. 100-1.

---

Prins, _East African_, p. 105.


Marriage was a mandatory requirement for entry into the elder grades.
It is interesting to note that the concept of district (rugongo) was already established in the Kikuyu tradition before the advent of colonialism. Thus British use of the concept for administrative purposes was not foreign to the Kikuyu and fitted in well with the existing infra-structure.

The age of Senior Warriors ranged from 20-28. That only six sets existed is conjectural. The evidence on this point is often vague and thus not worth considering. Suffice it to say that there may have been more than six age-sets in this grade.

Kenyatta, Facing, p. 200.

This is interesting in view of the fact that Mau Mau (1952) regiments employed against the British, war magicians, seers or soothsayers.

Kenyatta, Facing, p. 200.

Hobley, Bantu, p. 211 and Mair, Primitive, p. 99.

Prins, East African, p. 108.

Kenyatta, Facing, pp. 108, 201, 221 and Hobley, Bantu, p. 94.

It is important to note that all socio-political affairs at the elder level were conducted only by the ruling half of the tribe; i.e. either Maina or Mwangi. Leakey, Mau Mau, p. 37, however, says there was provision made to call on non-ruling elders should the ruling half need advice on matters foreign to them.

Ibid., p. 213, cites other qualifications for acceptance into the grade. "Some . . . never become members of the Ukuru grade; the consent of the other members of the grade is necessary and they do not approve of a candidate who is not well-endowed with worldly goods, or again, prospective candidates may be considered unlucky." Pp. 212-9 give an excellent description of the initiation ceremonies for prospective Ukuru.

Middleton, Kikuyu, p. 36. See also, Kenyatta, Facing, pp. 204-5.

Hobley, Bantu, p. 212.

Mair, Primitive, p. 100.


Prins, East African, p. 110.

If the 'big council' was indeed formulated on a district level and those who constituted its membership did in fact decide age-set names and itwika dates, then it follows that itwika dates and age-set names must have varied from district to district. However, it is interesting to note that only minor variations occur in itwika dates and age-set names throughout the Kikuyu core areas, i.e. Kiambu, Fort Hall and Nyeri. This fact would therefore suggest that some form of coordination existed between tribal councils located in the Kikuyu core-areas.

89 Low, "The Northern," p. 311.

90 Lambert, Kikuyu, pp. 100-1.


92 Much of the Kikuyu language is proverbial.

93 Lambert, Kikuyu, pp. 100-1.

94 Ibid.
Chapter 2

EARLY CONTACTS

Initial Kikuyu response to the wageni, Arab, Swahili or Wakamba, was conditioned by their behaviour in Kikuyuland. There is some evidence to suggest that Kikuyu were at first hospitable to coastal traders because they were familiar with trading processes through contact for sometime with Wakamba middlemen. By the 1870's, however, the Kikuyu were apparently reluctant to allow wageni passage through Kikuyuland to the Lake. This appears due to the fact that traders regularly foraged Kikuyu smallholdings in search of food and departed the area without making restitution. Increased friction between Kikuyu and wageni is borne out by the evident fear exhibited by caravan porters as they neared or skirted Kikuyuland.

The first European to see Kikuyuland was John Ludwig Krapf, a CMS missionary located at Rabai, near Mombasa. In 1848 he travelled north to the Wakamba country (Kitui) and saw the twin peaks of Mount Kenya. In 1860 a book of his travels described the mountain.

The snow-capped mountain bears various names among the native tribes. The Wacamba (sic) call it Kima ja Kegnia, Mountain of Whiteness. Snow-white Libanon; other tribes Kirania, or Ndur Kengnia; the Wakuafi, Orldinio eibor, White Mountain; it was only seen by myself.

Since none of the terms with which Krapf describes the mountain are of Kikuyu origin, it is doubtful that he actually penetrated Kikuyuland. His statement, however, that the mountain "had only been seen by myself"
and his wanderings in the area, inspired others to mount exploratory expeditions. It was not until 1883-4, fully 50 years later, however, that Joseph Thomson successfully traversed the area in an attempt to discover a route to Victoria Nyanza.\(^5\)

Thomson's journey took him through Masai country and by August 1883 he found himself on the southern periphery of Kikuyuland at Ngongo Bagas (later Ngong). Having without trouble negotiated his way through Masailand, he now faced with trepidation the task of penetrating the Kikuyu "moat". "We had not gone far before we found that the Wakikuyu were literally swarming the forest, on the look-out for an opportunity to dye their spears in blood or to capture goods."\(^6\) Thomson proceeded north, undeterred, but fearful of an armed clash with the Kikuyu. "Our sensations were rather queer traversing these forest depths, kept as we were continually on the alert, and in momentary expectation of encountering poisoned arrows launched from among the trees."\(^7\)

In search of water Thomson was forced to penetrate the Kikuyu forest "where a pond was known to exist in disagreeable proximity to the Wa-Kikuyu." It was here that . . . "a volley of guns upset any feeling of security (then) a commotion was heard among the cattle, and warning voices that the Wa-Kikuyu were stampeding them . . . We fired aimlessly into the forest, in the hope of frightening the disturbers of our peace . . . several arrows were shot from the bush." Subsequently it was found that the "cause of the original volley had been an attempt to massacre one small party (of wagéni) by creeping up on them." The raiders, Thomson relates, were discovered after they had attempted to kill a porter. The
clash continued: "A prompt volley . . . scattered the murderers, several having thus been wounded, and one left dead . . . two of the coast porters were either speared or captured." Further indication of the terror experienced by Thomson and his men is his observation that "not a soul slept the livelong night" and that a "continuous fusilade was kept up as our sole protection. Numerous arrows were launched into the camp . . ." 8

In February 1887, Count Teleki von Szek and Lieut. von Hohnel, proceeded inland intent upon exploring the area north of Mount Kenya. Spending April and July in Taveta, at the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro, the expedition marched north on roughly the same heading taken by Thomson four years earlier. By August they had reached Ngongo Bagas and from there they proceeded through Kikuyuland. Possibly influenced by Thomson's account, published in 1885, both explorers did not relish the idea of passing through the area in "which dwelt the dreaded people of Kikuyu." 9

Ngongo Bagas, however, was safe and was to Hohnel an "oasis in the wilderness to caravans." Notably it was in the vicinity of Ngongo Bagas that "foraging", the source of friction between Kikuyu and the wageni had traditionally taken place. Moreover, the location of Ngongo Bagas was "safe" since it was situated atop hills in open country. Kikuyu warriors dared not venture beyond the forest edge and into open country occupied by Masai. There is some evidence to suggest, however, that trading actually took place at Ngongo Bagas between Kikuyu and the caravans. This was possible because the Kikuyu used intermediaries to make contact with the wageni across the "moat". At Miansini, a place situated close to Ngongo Bagas, the Kikuyu sent the helot Wanderobo to act as "go-betweens" in the
trading process.  

To further substantiate rumours of Kikuyu hostility, von Hohnel observed that before the arrival of Teleki's expedition little was known of the land or people of the Kikuyu . . . "with the result that countless tales were afloat of the fierceness and hostility of the natives." This comment seems to have been based upon the case of a previous caravan which had attempted "to enter Kikuyu from the east, and had been destroyed." Whether the case cited was based on rumour is not known. What is known, however, is that Ngongo Bagas had been used as a caravan staging place for many years. Thomson recorded the fact that caravans of 1200 to 1500 men had often been seen at Ngongo Bagas and all of them had expected to obtain further provisioning from the Kikuyu. Jumbe Kimemeta, Teleki's guide and himself a frequent visitor to the area in search of ivory, had been seen by Thomson at Mianzini in possession of ivory taken "from regions never before reached by coastal caravan." Significantly it was Kimemeta who tried to dissuade Thomson from taking the Wakamba route back to the coast. Kimemeta was also responsible for initiating rumours of impending Kikuyu attacks on Teleki's expedition. It was he, also, who advised Teleki and von Hohnel that it would not be possible for them to pass through Kikuyuland.

Perhaps it is speculative to suggest that Kimemeta (and other coastal traders) did not wish to compete with whitemen in the lucrative ivory-bearing areas of the Aberdares and Mount Kenya. It is possible that rumours of Kikuyu hostility could have been spread by hunters intent upon precluding Europeans activity in the ivory business.
Rumours of Kikuyu hostility were spread also by Wakamba traders who wished to maintain a position as middlemen in the trading process between inland areas and the coast. The case of Wakamba rumours about Kikuyu hostility is of particular significance, especially with respect to the effect such tales had on Europeans who, it seems, prepared themselves to "fight every inch of the way" through Kikuyuland.

Wakamba trade with the coast had been taking place since 1836 and well before Europeans made their presence a fact in the interior. Krapf and others have stated that trade relations between Wakamba and the coast commenced during and after a great famine. It is known, also, prior to 1836 a great deal of local trading went on and consisted mainly of the exchange of foodstuffs, poison for arrows, and possibly iron implements. According to Wakamba oral tradition, this trade took place with the Kikuyu and Embu. The post-1836 coastal trade developed, however, in a much more sophisticated fashion and placed the Wakamba solidly in the position of being trading middlemen between the coast and the Kikuyu. By 1848-9 Krapf reported that the Wakamba coastal trading traffic was substantial: "The Swahili purvey to the Wakamba cotton fabrics (Americano), blue calico, glass beads, copper, salt luaha, blue vitriol (zinc) etc. and receive in exchange chiefly cattle and ivory." By the 1840's large caravans were reported to be seen between Wakamba country and the coast. Krapf estimated that Wakamba coastal safaris consisted often of as many as 300-400 persons carrying large amounts of ivory. By the latter half of the century, however, the Wakamba lost their trading monopoly to Arab and Swahili traders and reverted to their role of "middlemen" in the trading process. Moreover,
Arabs and Swahili began to penetrate beyond Wakamba country in an effort to reach the ivory-bearing areas of Kikuyuland. In fact Wakamba country had now ceased to be the East African entrepot. Traders bent on commercial activity in Kikuyuland and beyond, forced by their new activity a decline in Wakamba economic ascendancy. Hence the strong suggestion that rumours of Kikuyu hostility were designed deliberately to deter travellers from proceeding north into Kikuyuland.

Initial European experiences with the Kikuyu, however, seemed to vary from extreme hostility to friendliness. Kikuyu attitudes and responses to the European invasion seemed to vary from ridge to ridge; from one part of the country to the other. In the southern periphery of Kikuyuland von Hohnel and Teleki met with implacable resistance while further to the north they were amazed at assistance offered them by friendly and cooperative Kikuyu. Both men were able "to secure faithful guides" who would warn them of impending opposition on the part of Kikuyu planning to resist further penetration of their homeland. Indeed, Hohnel observed that one of the most remarkable aspects of the journey through Kikuyuland was the "honesty and faithfulness" displayed to both himself and his companion by their Kikuyu guides. H.J. Mackinder, in 1900, substantiated Hohnel's remarks by praising the loyalty of his Kikuyu guides during an ascent of Mount Kenya. Von Hohnel speaks of Teleki, also, as being regarded by some Kikuyu as being a "white samaki (sic), or chief." On this occasion some of Teleki's men were involved in a blood-brotherhood ceremony with the Kikuyu, were received in a friendly fashion and "returned to camp with heavy sacks of sweet potatoes."
Conversely, however, despite the friendly behaviour of some Kikuyu others adopted an openly hostile attitude toward the strangers. We have, for example, Thomson's account of harassment and von Hohnel and Teleki refer to the need to fight their way through several areas of Kikuyuland. There exists, therefore, something of a contradiction about Kikuyu attitudes toward wageni: the evidence reveals both hostile and friendly relationships.

Manifold reasons account for Kikuyu attitudes toward wageni. Undoubtedly the major reason for hostility is associated with the propensity for caravans to raid Kikuyu smallholdings for food; especially, in the staging area of Ngongo Bagas. There had been a well established tradition of raiding across the "moat" and as caravans became larger to the necessity of feeding more porters increased. Furthermore, it was not the habit of caravan owners to offer restitution for provisions taken. Also, Ngongo Bagas was an "oasis in the wilderness". It was here that caravans were forced to provision after their long march across the dry scrub to the south-east; here the travellers saw the verdant slopes of Kikuyuland abounding with fresh produce. Indeed, perhaps the "greatest problem facing the Kikuyu was their very prosperity." It was at Ngongo Bagas, also, that Kikuyu, used to trading as the evidence suggests, sent their intermediaries, the helot Wanderobo, to trade produce for beads, blankets, "americani" and perhaps, later, firearms. The logic of sending intermediaries lies, of course, in the fact that in this event there was then no need for Kikuyu to leave their island fastness and conversely there was thus no reason for wageni to cross the "moat" and trespass Kikuyu smallholdings for food.
Typical Layout of Kikuyu Mashamba, early 1900's, near Fort Hall. From Richard Meinhertzhagen, *Kenya Diary, 1902-1906*, London: Witherby, 1957, p. 104. Perhaps the "greatest problem facing the Kikuyu was their very prosperity."
Traders, their African levies and unsuspecting explorers, who did cross the "moat" were therefore at once "suspect" and thus "fair game" for the waiting warriors.

Kikuyu attitudes were conditioned to a large extent, also, by the behaviour of Europeans. White travellers tended to believe that firing "a few shots" for the purpose of "overawing the people" or, as Thomson put it, "firing aimlessly into the forest" were the only means of dealing with their unwilling hosts. Von Hohnel, indeed, after his talk of Kikuyu "honesty and fairness" went on to assert that "to employ force (was) the only means of creating the necessary impression." The "necessary impression" meant, of course, to implant into the Kikuyu a fear of the whiteman.

There is little doubt that Europeans were conditioned to fight the Kikuyu even before they arrived in Kikuyuland; Kimemeta and the Wakamba rumour-mongers had seen to that. Where, significantly, Kikuyu had been 'touched' by the wageni they were hostile: in areas beyond the fringe of Kikuyuland, within the interior and removed from the scene of abrasive contact, relationships between wageni and the tribesmen were tenuous but often friendly as the experiences of Teleki, von Hohnel, Thomson and Mackinder clearly indicate. Lugard was later to affirm these findings on his visit to Kikuyuland in 1890. But European apprehension coupled with Kikuyu suspicion (particularly among those who knew of or had first-hand experience of scavenging caravans) featured prominently in the initial contact period. These attitudes and the occasional violent clashes of this period were important conditioning factors in subsequent, more extensive
relationships, between the Kikuyu and European armed traders, European and African employees of the British East Africa Company and the Protectorate Administration.
FOOTNOTES

1Kiswahili (foreigners)

2For perhaps the most comprehensive account of Wakamba trading activities see John Lamphear, "The Kamba and the Northern Mrima Coast" in Richard Gray and David Birmingham, eds., Pre-Colonial Trade: Essays on Trade in Central and Eastern Africa before 1900, (London: OUP, 1970), pp. 75-101. A useful review of Wakamba trading patterns is in Isaria N. Kimambo, "The Economic History of the Wakamba,"1850-1950," Hadith 2, Bethwell A. Ogot, ed. (Nairobi: EAPH, 1970, pp. 70-103. Some reference to Wakamba trade is also to be found in Satish C. Saterwal, "Historical Notes," pp. 34-5, "... the Kamba established the ivory trade links between the coast and the foothills of Mt. Kenya during the 1830's. They exploited this trade through the 1840's and 1850's, but during the 1860's the traders from Zanzibar successfully established routes to the Mt. Kenya region, by-passing Kamba country, and captured the trade in that area from the Kamba."


4Ibid., pp. 10-11.


7Ibid.,
8. Ibid., pp. 91-2-3.


10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid., p. 102.


15. Ibid., pp. 572-3.


18. Von Hohnel, *The Discovery*, p. 287. This is a specific reference to Fischer, a European explorer who, notably, never actually crossed Kikuyu-land but who appears to have been influenced by his own porters into making this statement.


21 Krapf, Travels, pp. 248, 287.

22 This is substantiated by Thomson's observation that he witnessed caravans of 1200 to 1500 persons as far north of Wakamba country as Ngongo Bagas. Obviously the Wakamba habitat had by the 1870's ceased to be the interior entrepot and that now the trade fulcrum had shifted to Ngongo Bagas. For an informative account of the ivory trade see R.W. Beachey, "The East African Ivory Trade in the Nineteenth Century" in Journal of African History, vol. 8, (1967), pp. 269-90. The ivory trade had already been well exploited by Arabs and Swahilis; routes into the interior were well established by the 1870's. (see Gerald W. Hartig, "The Victoria Nyanza as a Trade Route in the Nineteenth Century" in Journal of African History, vol. 11, (1970), pp. 535-552) but by the 1880's Europeans were greatly involved to the detriment Arabs, Swahilis and the interior tribes. "Filibustering expeditions into northern Kenya and Lake Rudolf region, commencing with that of Teleki [ineak883]ocontænasdssthroughouttherid83ost tTelèki0speaksof]... the "ever-increasing store of ivory." He acquired a great quantity "...After Teleki came Chanler, Newman, Donaldson-Smith and Frazer..." Delamere and Atkinson..."p. 84.

23 In the mind of the European, doubtless conditioned by rumours and his own experience, Kikuyu steadily acquired a reputation for truculence and untrustworthiness. Eliot referred to them as being "less friendly" than other tribes. C.W. Hobley described the Kikuyu as "turbulent and treacherous... secretive, more conservative and more difficult to understand than other tribes." Major J.R.L. Macdonald said that the Kikuyu "were about as treacherous as could be" while Colonel Richard Meinherztzagen, Kenya Diary, 1902-1906, (London: Witherby, 1957), pp. 79-80, made the prediction that "in the end they will cause a lot of trouble."


26 Richards, ed., Some Historic, p. 103.

27 E.A. Alpers, "The Nineteenth Century: Prelude to Colonialism" in Zamani, pp. 247-8. See also Captain C.E. Stigand, The Land of Zinj, (London: Cass, 1966, ed.), p. 238. "The Kikuyu are really immensely rich, as they have everything the heart could desire in abundance. I have never seen raw natives anywhere who have such copious and various supplies of food.

29 See Richard Crawshay, "Kikuyu: Notes on the Country, People, Fauna and Flora" in the *Geographical Journal*, vol. 20, (1902), p. 39. Travellers in Kikuyuland said Crawshay, "owe any rough treatment they have to complain of either to their ignorance of 'savoir faire' . . . or more frequently to the secret misconduct of their followers."
Chapter 3

THE IMPERIAL BRITISH EAST AFRICA COMPANY

At this point we must consider the effects on the Kikuyu of European penetration of the "moat" by officials and African employees of the Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEA Co.).

In 1886 a boundary was drawn to separate German East Africa from the British East African sphere. One consequence of the definition of the new boundary was the channelling of British penetration toward Lake Victoria from Mombasa. The British recognized that effective communications with the hinterland were imperative for prospective government, economic progress and political expediency.\(^1\) For these reasons railroad construction from Mombasa to the Lake began in 1895.\(^2\)

Although Germans and British had agreed on the location of the border between their respective claims, the hinterland around and beyond Lake Victoria remained in dispute. In 1887, with the endorsement of the British Foreign Office the British East Africa Company was founded.\(^3\) A year later the organization possessed a Royal Charter, subscribed capital of 240,000 pounds and had changed its name to the Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEA Co.). Like its forerunners in India and Canada, the Company's mandate included the administration and development of the territory under its jurisdiction.\(^4\) The area included the British sphere of influence, negotiated with the Germans in 1886 and extending north of
the Anglo-German boundary, together with the Sultan of Zanzibar’s domain—a strip of territory extending along the coast some 200 miles by 10 miles wide. An annual tithe of 10,000 pounds, extending for a period of 50 years, was paid to Sultan Barghash in rent, while all customs levied were collected by the Company. Flying its own flag, minting its own money, printing its own postage stamps, the Company became a corporate dominion: it recruited an army and built up the town of Mombasa to serve as its East African Headquarters. From Mombasa the edicts of the "Administrator" were passed down to junior officers resident "up-country" on the route to the Lake. Caravans were regularly despatched into the interior as the future of trade was thought to be around the head of the Lake and in particular, Buganda.

Buganda was a matter of the utmost importance to both Germans and British. The Agreement of 1886 had not been clearly defined. According to the document the border between Anglo-German respective spheres of influence stopped at the eastern shore of the Lake; furthermore the northern boundary of the British sphere stopped to the east of the Nile and thus did not encompass the Kingdom of Buganda. How, the Germans, asked, could the British claim paramountcy over an area not included in the 1886 Agreement? What was important, therefore, in the eyes of both parties—more so the British because of political ambitions in Egypt—was the actual occupation of Buganda and the Nile source. For these reasons there commenced a 'scramble' whose antagonists, Karl Peters of the Colonization Society, acting for the German Government, and Frederick Dealty Lugard of the British East Africa Corporation, acting for the British Government, became the willing instruments of imperial policy. Hence the urgent dispatch of
Lugard, ostensibly a Company employee, to reach Buganda, annex it in the name of the British Government and make peace with its ruler (Kabaka) Mwanga.8

Lugard's expedition to Buganda left Mombasa in August 1889. It included a military force of Sudanese askari armed with Snider rifles and a Maxim gun.9 By October 1889 the safari had successfully flanked the dry scrub of the Taru, followed the course of the Sabaki River and had reached Kikuyuland. For a month or more Lugard lingered in the area; first at Ngongo Bagas and latterly at a site to be known as Dagoretti. At both locations he proceeded to build and occupy Company stations, or "forts", as he preferred to call them.

It was in the area of Dagoretti that Lugard attempted to extend Company influence over the Kikuyu by involving himself with Kikuyu notables in "blood-brotherhood" ceremonies. Confirmation of the rites took the form of lengthy speeches pledging eternal and friendly alliances between parties. Thus it is evident that Lugard saw the validity of the ceremonial approach to friendship, over that of the formal treaty. He saw, for example, the impracticality of the "treaty" when used in the same form customary in Europe "I felt that I could not honourably pledge the Company's protection to distant tribes, whom they had no means whatever of protecting . . . while the cession of all rights of rule . . . was, in my opinion, asking for more than was fair."10 Clearly more equitable—and perhaps as valid—was the ritual of blood-brotherhood. At least the ceremony provided an "understanding" of more significance to the Kikuyu than a piece of paper written in a foreign language and incorporating the
Lugard’s routes to and from Uganda, 1890 and 1892


Lugard’s route on his preliminary journey from Mombasa to Machakos, January-April 1890 followed the Sabaki River and the north-eastern route along the Athi River to Kibwezi, on both the outward and return journeys.
semantics of European diplomacy.

Shortly after taking part in a blood-brotherhood alliance with the Kikuyu (October 1890), Lugard described his feelings on the matter.

Apropos of the treaty business . . . Miroo and others came to say that some hostile Kikuyu had bolted with some of their cattle, and they came to ask me for a few men to go and fight. This to them seemed most natural as I am to them a blood brother.\(^{11}\)

Typically of Lugard he felt he evaded the implications of the request for aid by Kikuyu to fight other Kikuyu, "rather cleverly". "I said that . . . we would fight if the Masai came raiding close to our fort but I could not fight against the Kikuyu because I had come here to make peace and friendship with all Kikuyu, and if I fought against some that would prevent my purpose, and perhaps on my return I pass thro' their country and then they would consider me an enemy.\(^{12}\) Lugard pursued his logic by explaining that Kikuyu seeking his aid in an alliance might contravene a previous treaty or blood-brotherhood ceremony he or any of his associates might have with other clans.

. . . Jackson (who of course was my 'brother') had made blood brothers with chiefs in the interior, hence they were my brothers, and perhaps these were the very ones . . . against whom they wished me to fight. I did not know, and it was manifestly impossible to fight against possible blood brothers.\(^{13}\)

Lugard's major point, however, was his explanation to the Kikuyu that their internal disputes resulted only in minor consequences. Far more serious consequences would manifest, he suggested, should the British become involved in inter-tribal disputes. "When the Kikuyu fight," he told his "blood-brothers", "a man gets his skull cracked at worst. If
the British fight and bring guns, many, many men die. I don't wish to kill Kikuyu."¹⁴ Thus he "rather cleverly", to use his own expression, conveyed to the Kikuyu that notion that the British were not to be trifled with.

Contrary, however, to his expressed aversion to the formal treaty, Lugard did in fact use this means to ensure Kikuyu allegiance to the Company. He did not adhere to the standard procedure of using "printed treaty forms",²⁵ but rather made out his own forms of documents. Moreover he was careful to conclude treaties with Kikuyu he deemed to be "chiefs". Thus it must have been evident to him that there were in existence Kikuyu who could be referred to as "chiefs" simply because they appeared to possess some socio-political influence over local tribal affairs.

Lugard left Dagoretti on November 2, 1890, bound for the head of the Lake and the kingdom of Buganda. He had gained a favourable impression of the Kikuyu. Tribesmen he encountered were "really charming savages" with "most intelligent faces, high foreheads, well-shaped heads, and intelligent eyes and expression. The chief and his brothers and relatives were especially so." Eiyeki (sic) introduced Lugard to his brothers, Miroo, Kahusu and Muriakarara who were seen to be "three capital fellows."¹⁷ The Kikuyu 'chiefs' seemed also to have great influence.

. . . In the evening on a word of command, half a dozen warriors rushed forward with long sticks to clear the camp of Kikuyu . . . they went at it with a will, and some got mercilessly lashed out of camp. A few big warriors were treated less roughly, but the sticks flew around them, and the ground was beaten, and amid much clamour (they were) forced to clear out.¹⁸
An indication of the genuine respect and hospitality shown Lugard by the Kikuyu was the custom of spitting on the hands before shaking hands. "It was obviously quite bone fide", Lugard asserted. "Some seemed overjoyed to see Dualla (Lugard's guide) again and spat profusely before shaking hands, but it seemed a mark of respect and friendship to do so, and the more cordial (Kikuyu) did it more than once . . . ."

Lugard was especially struck by the extent of Kikuyu cultivation and remarked that this fact seemed "to mark the Kikuyu as an industrious race. Their paths," he observed, "were broad and good" and were obviously designed to serve defensive purposes." Kikuyu smallholdings were irrigated "very successfully," with little water courses around their plots.  

Kikuyu with whom Lugard impressed the idea of friendship with Wakamba "agreed readily and liked the idea of going to Machakos and bringing loads up from there." "The people," Lugard stated, "seem of an excellent disposition, and stand chaff without quarrelling. I have seen a man robbed of a handful of potatoes, and take it all as a joke. I have hardly had a complaint of any sort." They were "really very nice fellows, so intelligent, and such good-mannered, civil fellows for savages . . . . Their faces betoken great intelligence, and so do their high foreheads and good shaped heads." He was, he said, "more favourably impressed by them than by any other tribe (he) had yet met in Africa." Moreover, he remarked, "... I had no hesitation in trusting myself alone among them, even at considerable distances from camp . . . . I found them honest and straightforward."  

By 1893, however, despite his experiences and the sentiments he had expressed about the Kikuyu three years earlier, Lugard's attitude had
changed considerably. "I very greatly deplore the mismanagement (of the Kikuyu) which had practically closed a country which bade fair to be the most promising for commercial development between the coast and the Lake, and has converted the fair promise of friendship and peace into hostility and bloodshed, so that the people have become a treacherous and embittered enemy, who now massacre any detached men they can catch . . ." 26

There is little doubt that subsequent to Lugard's first visit to the area relationships between wageni and Kikuyu had deteriorated. By the mid-1890's Kikuyu looked upon most newcomers with the greatest fear and suspicion. Open hostility was rampant and killing not infrequent. These attitudes were to set the tone of ensuing relationships between Kikuyu and the Company, the traders, the embryo Colonial Administration and, not the least, among Kikuyu themselves. What factors caused a deterioration in relationships? Why had the Kikuyu become, in a comparatively short period of time, "a treacherous and embittered enemy"?

Three reasons tend to highlight the obvious demise of Kikuyu-Company relations. The first concerns the forced evacuation of Dagoretti by Lugard's subordinate, George Wilson. Here it should be recalled that Dagoretti had been constructed as a means to provision Company caravans bound for the Lake. True Lugard had seen Kikuyuland as being a place not unlike the English countryside and thus suitable, "in the far future" for white settlement: but at that time his intention was not to "settle" at Dagoretti. His concern was merely to establish for the Company just one of a string of provisioning bases between the coast and the Lake.
The Kikuyu, however, saw Dagoretti as a permanent settlement. For them to be harrassed by passing caravans was one thing; for them to have the wageni permanently in their midst was another. They had endured the attentions of the coastal marauders and from their experiences with Thomson, Teleki, von Hohnel and some armed traders, they were well aware of the "fire-power" of Europeans. True they had been kind to Lugard—a European—but as an "individual". Now the Kikuyu were confronted not with Europeans as "individuals" but rather with the potential of Europeans en masse. Lugard, through probably the power of his personality, had indeed established a rapport with the athamaki, especially Waiyaki, but his departure left a vacuum hard to fill. George Wilson, responsible for Dagoretti, was frequently sick and thus indisposed to engage himself in the time-consuming activities of African diplomacy. Purkiss, another Company man, was young and inexperienced. Nelson's brief tenure at Dagoretti was ill-fated by a mutiny of Company askari. Thus in a relatively short period of time, Lugard's good example and foundations for the future were wrecked. The Company was forced to desert Dagoretti and retire to the comparative safety of Machakos.

The second reason explaining a change in Kikuyu attitude can be ascribed to the behaviour of ill-disciplined Company levies. Kikuyu suspicions and hostility generally seemed to have been exacerbated by Company attempts to arrest tribesmen for alleged stealing. As a result fighting often broke out, houses were burned and livestock confiscated. Typical of these incidents was the prevention of Company employees from drawing water and the activities of askari, who, on a journey to Machakos looted and
killed goats.\textsuperscript{29} The early literature abounds with such incidents and the retaliatory tactics of both sides. Even Jackson's caravan was accused of stealing crops and violating women.\textsuperscript{30} Of major significance, however, is the way the Kikuyu became violently involved not only with the Company but with each other. Company officials and retainers got themselves embroiled in tribal squabbles by siding with one against the other. There is on record, for example, an instance of a Kikuyu persuading a large number of Company men to accompany him on an expedition to recover alleged stolen cattle. Proceeding on the pretext of seeking food, the expedition was "successful" and returned to its Company base with the looted stock.\textsuperscript{31} Both Company administrators, Purkiss and Nelson, were faced with a serious breakdown of administrative machinery in southern Kikuyuland: and most of their troubles can be traced to lack of control over their African levies. In 1892, moreover, the situation was worsened considerably by the decree that all Company stations should be self-supporting. Now it appears that official carte-blanche had been given to raid for food or stock—a situation that was naturally to exacerbate the problem and one which inevitably lead to an escalation of the turmoil. Hence Lugard was able to say with justification that the Kikuyu "became estranged (and) hopelessly disaffected."

The evacuation of Dagoretti was only a temporary respite. Soon the Company was back to the station in strength; intent this time in establishing a more permanent presence. In the territory of Lugard's old friend, Waiyaki, work commenced on a new station to be named Fort Smith after the leader of the expedition. But around the area of the new facility relations between the Company, its supporters and the Kikuyu, did not improve. The
death of Maktubu and the arrest and subsequent death of Waiyaki served fur­ther to engender increased hatred and hostility.

The third reason explaining a change in Kikuyu attitude is asso­ciated with the deaths of Maktubu and Waiyaki. Maktubu, a Nyasa, was a Company levy who had served under Thomson and von Hohnel. Described by Thomson as a man endowed with "an utter absence of tact in dealing with men under him" he had almost shot Martin\(^{32}\) and had quarrelled perpetually with Dualla.\(^{33}\) The Company often despatched him to forage for food and to act generally as an intermediary in dealing with Kikuyu around Fort Smith. In mid-1892 Maktubu was induced to accompany a Kikuyu collaborator, Kamau Wamagata, on a journey to a village to collect a marriage dowry. Both men took with them several Kikuyu and fifteen Company askari. On arrival at the village in question they demanded the repayment of the dowry and a fight broke out. The invaders, outnumbered and without aid from Fort Smith, were almost all killed. A survivor subsequently reported that Maktubu and his followers had been killed while innocently searching for food. In August 1892 the Company sent a strong expedition to punish the Kikuyu re­sponsible for Maktubu's death.\(^{34}\)

Meanwhile, the muthumaki Waiyaki, blood-brother of Lugard, fearing he might be punished for events surrounding the Maktubu incident, went to see Purkiss of the Company. Soon an argument ensued during which the Kikuyu drew his sword (simi) and attempted to kill the European. A scuffle took place and Waiyaki appears to have been struck on the head with his own weapon. Overpowered and beaten Waiyaki was handcuffed and left outside overnight. On August 19, 1892 he was escorted by Company askari on a jour­ney to exile on the coast. But Waiyaki never reached Mombasa: he died and
The affair of Waiyaki is of importance in view of his personal change of attitude toward the whiteman. Whereas it is only possible to interpolate from the evidence collective Kikuyu attitudes, it is possible, in the case of Waiyaki, to trace with certainty his personal change of attitude. Just a few years before his death, for example, he had been instrumental in aiding Teleki's safe traverse of Kikuyuland. Lugard found common cause with him in the ceremony of blood-brotherhood—a fact which is well recorded in Lugard's writings. Even other European employees of the Company, notably Purkiss and Smith, had earlier developed a relationship with Waiyaki of mutual trust. Waiyaki had, for example, displayed remarkable tact in returning to the Company its stolen property on more than one occasion. But in the short time between Lugard's first visit to Waiyaki's area, and the establishment and operation of the Company station (Forth Smith) Waiyaki's personal attitude toward the strangers undeniably changed: the presence and activities of the whitemen—and their collaborators—haddoubtedly contributed profoundly to that change.

The demise of Waiyaki incited Kikuyu to further hostile acts. In consequence relationships between the Company and people living in its proximity continued to deteriorate. Purkiss appears during this period as being virtually a captive within the confines of Fort. Smith; while outside waged an escalation of friction and hostility for the next four years. By 1893 Portal commented that the Kikuyu were "a thoroughly bad lot" with "a bad name, which sticks to them like a burr, and the stranger . . . treats them accordingly." Another statement, typical in its extreme, was that the
Kikuyu should be "shot on sight" — a sentiment not calculated to create a favourable atmosphere and certainly a radical departure from Lugard's impression of Kikuyu as being "really nice fellows".

There is no doubt that had the Kikuyu been capable of acting collectively against the Company, of mounting concerted attacks upon Company stations or employees, the Europeans would have forced to withdraw Kikuyuland. But acting together, for common cause, was obviously not possible for the Kikuyu. Cracks in the firmament of tribal society were well recognized; the Company's salvation lay in its ability to perceive which ones it would exploit to its advantage — where and how far to drive home a wedge — and thus sustain itself in Kikuyuland. In consequence the Company increasingly sought out Kikuyu collaborators, involved itself in petty and personal tribal affairs, and generally sided with one group (or individual) against another. The Maktubutaffair, for example, is evidence enough of Company willingness to become involved in tribal disputes — albeit, in this case, unofficial involvement. Official sanction, however, was not long in coming. Kikuyu "friendlies" began to actively seek the aid of the Company against other Kikuyu. Moreover, the Company responded reciprocally when it needed allies. Punitive expeditions were now often comprised of Company employees and Kikuyu warriors. Significantly, athamaki were now able to settle old scores, reap the rewards of victory in livestock and generally extend their influence over larger areas of the country — all at the expense of their enemies, real or imagined, and with the aid of the Company.
A factor which tended to complicate an already complex situation was the settlement of Masai around the Company stations in southern Kikuyuland. No doubt Company officials saw the advantage of placing several hundred Masai warriors between themselves and the Kikuyu. Providing the Company could successfully maintain good relations with the Masai—and traditionally they had been good—the young moren could be conveniently used as a Company defense force. By 1894 several hundred Masai were quartered around Fort Smith, an area into which they had never previously ventured in force and which for many years had been solidly Kikuyu. Soon the initial group of Masai were joined by others and by July, 1894 there were substantial numbers of Masai warriors living in Kikuyuland enjoying the protection of the Company. Because of their warlike tradition the Masai made excellent fighting material to supplement Company expeditions against dissident Kikuyu. Furthermore, the Company did not need to incur the expense of feeding and housing them as it did in the case of its own askari. Kikuyuland was rich in foodstuffs and provided an adequate source of sustenance to support the Masai. Thus for these reasons, foraging of Kikuyu smallholdings became a common occurrence.

In January 1893 ForthSmith was attacked and Purkiss was forced to seek the aid of Ainsworth at Machakos. For six days in January 1893 the fort was besieged completely. On his arrival in Kikuyuland, Portal found Purkiss "practically a prisoner with all his people." Portal observed to Rodd that "the European in charge does not dare venture two hundred yards from his stockade without an armed escort."
Meanwhile punitive expeditions continued. Francis Hall undertook major raids, from his base at Fort Smith, on Kikuyu itura in the area. Large numbers of cattle, sheep and goats were confiscated as Hall testifies in his diaries. "The next day I counted the spoils, 922 sheep and goats and six cattle." On another occasion, aided this time by 15 Nubians, 87 Masai and 50 "loyal" Kikuyu led by the muthumaki, Kinanjui, Hall attacked a Kikuyu itura and captured 550 goats and seven head of cattle. Not satisfied at the results Hall decided to

loose off my pack of war-dogs again and, as I had got information as to the whereabouts of their stock, I hoped to get a good haul and settle the matter. The same 'bobby pack' went again, though there were over 100 Masai this time... The expedition was a grand success, for they captured 800 goats and 16 head of cattle and burnt a lot of villages.

To make matters worse, in terms of Kikuyu/Company relationships, all this was going on when famine was beginning to make itself felt in the country. Between 1894 and 1899 the Kikuyu were hit by a series of natural disasters which sapped their resistance to the invaders. In 1894 and again in 1895 swarms of locusts descended on Kikuyuland, to be followed in rapid succession by drought, plague and severe food shortage. Mass movements of Kikuyu took place in a search for food. These factors added further to the general turmoil. Now chaos reigned in Kikuyuland and its most eminent white witness, Sir Gerald Portal, emissary extraordinary of Her Majesty's Government, spared not the Company and its officers in his description of it.
Portal's journey from the coast to Uganda and return was a significant landmark in the demise of the Company. Until recently Consul-General, Zanzibar, Portal was esteemed by Salisbury and recommended for high office by Lord Cromer. Selected to report on the operations of the Company, he advised the Foreign Office that Mackinnon's brainchild, The Imperial British East Africa Company, was "on its deathbed from a combination of penuriousness, false economy and reckless extravagence." The British Government, he asserted, should allow the Company to expire rather than prolong its activities by misplaced efforts at assistance. Both the official account of Portal's journey and his private correspondence condemned the Company. The so-called Mackinnon Road, he said, was no more than overgrown path and Company administration along its whole length was virtually non-existent. Company maps, purporting to show a series of stations or posts from the coast to Uganda, did not convey the true state of affairs. Some stations had been abandoned while others were inadequately staffed and defended. Worse still, the surrounding tribes had been alienated by Company employees occupying the stations. Company facilities in Kikuyuland, he noted, were actually besieged for long periods of time. No doubt this was due to the 1892 Company declaration that its interior stations should be self-supporting—a situation which meant that Company employees were forced to raid Kikuyu shambas for food.

Portal's report was subsequently presented to the British Government and its major recommendations suggested that Great Britain should declare a Protectorate over East Africa. Furthermore the route to Uganda should not be the "overgrown" Mackinnon Road, a useless means of moving troops.
to Uganda in defence of the strategically important Nile source, but rather the railway. Thus the death-knell of the Company was sounded: having uttered it with such damning eloquence, Portal died within a month.

Broadly speaking the Imperial British East Africa Company was successful in extending British influence in East Africa. Despite a shoe-string approach the Company's outstanding achievement, whether by design or fortuitous accident, lay in the establishment of a British presence and a denial of German ambitions. The Company's failure, however, lay in an inability to resolve problems of its presence among the Kikuyu. Lugard had shrewdly negotiated his passage through Kikuyu-land, was unusually impressed by Kikuyu and had developed a friendly relationship with eminent muthamaki, notably Waiyaki. Using tact, diplomacy and a suggestion of force, Lugard had departed the area optimistic about the possibilities of Company settlement. But subsequent events proved otherwise.

George Wilson, left in charge of Company affairs, was often sick and thus indisposed to give time and trouble to the intricacies of African diplomacy. Others like Purkiss and Nelson proved inexperienced and thus ill-equipped to build constructively on Lugard's foundation. Both officers were unable to contain the Company's African levies, some of whom were Kikuyu, from raiding, thieving, and generally harassing the native population. Indeed, by 1892, Hall actually encouraged the plunder of native smallholdings by Company employees.

In the furore and hostility engendered by the Company presence, Waiyaki, the muthumaki of whom Lugard had thought so highly, was arrested
and deported, to die subsequently in the hands of the British. Kikuyu hostility escalated to a fever pitch, perhaps engendered by Waiyaki being seen as a patriot: a muthamaki who had made a genuine remonstration against the establishment of the Company, while other eminent Kikuyu were collaborating for their own selfish reasons.

By 1895 Portal found Kikuyuland in a turmoil and practically untenable. His recommendations that the British Government take over the country were accepted and soon the Company administration in Kikuyuland was brought to an end. The troubles, however, remained, for by now Kikuyu athamaki had learnt to use the British to fight their local wars and other forces were at work, notably armed traders, whose presence exacerbated an already exceedingly turbulent situation.
FOOTNOTES


3It is significant that the chartered company was a time-honoured implement which had laid the foundations of much of the British Empire. More significant, perhaps, is the fact that laying these foundations had been carried out without straining the Treasury purse or appealing to the tax-payer. For years businessmen had been pooling their assets, sometimes with Royal sanction, and instituting companies like the Hudson's Bay Company, the British East India Company, and others. Often laws were made by companies, taxes collected, administrative and military forces instituted not to mention the development of a great deal of lucrative commerce.

During the latter part of the nineteenth century Great Britain gave her assent to the creation of four chartered companies and endowed them with extensive political and commercial privileges. Three of these companies were associated with the African sphere of enterprise and provided much of the impetus for imperial expansion in West, South and East Africa. Since all three companies were inaugurated in the space of nine years it may be presumed that British officialdom, which had acquired the habit of looking askance at private oversea companies, began to view such undertakings with a new air of respectability. The changing political climate of the second period of imperial expansion, particularly the

"... The parsimony of the Treasury ... was the direct cause of the calling into existence of these chartered companies."

4See Robinson and Gallagher, Africa, pp. 199-200. "... by 1887 Salisbury no longer objected to the notion of private enterprise occupying the coasts and eventually the whole sphere allotted under the Anglo-German Agreement. The sooner this territory was occupied, the better ... But if this was to be done, it would have to be without public expense. Mackinnon had founded his British East African Association and the Foreign Office began to encourage him to establish it on the mainland.


6"George Mackenzie arrived in Zanzibar as managing director in October 1888. It was Mackenzie's responsibility to organize the headquarters at Mombasa, to conciliate the local population, and to formulate a plan of action for commercial development." See Galbraith, Mackinnon, p. 150.

7The Times, London, 27 March 1890. "We are witnessing the process known in private life as 'trying it on' ... The Karl Peters expedition is clearly and avowedly intended to cut us off from the interior, by establishing German influence at the back of our territory."

Perham, Lugard, vol. 1, pp. 206, 460 "... the only person who has up to the present time benefited by our enterprise in the heart of Africa has been Mr. Hiriam Maxim." (A remark attributed to Sir Charles Dilke.)

Perham, The Diaries, p. 318.

Ibid.

Ibid., p. 344.

Ibid. Reference to (Sir) Frederick Jackson, Company officer subsequently absorbed by the Protectorate Administration (1895) and placed in charge of the Mau District. From 1911-18 Jackson was Governor of Uganda Protectorate.

Perham, The Diaries, p. 345.

Ibid., p. 318. "I also made a treaty, but as I do not believe in the printed treaty forms of the Company by which a man gives his land and all his rights of rule to the Company in exchange for their 'Govt. and protection,' I made out my own treaty form. This Company's treaty is an utter fraud. No man if he understood would sign it, and to say that a savage chief has been told that he cedes all rights to the Company in exchange for nothing is an obvious untruth."

Variously referred to in the early literature as Waiyaki, Wayaki or Wyaki.

Ibid., p. 314.

Dualla was a most unusual Somali guide and caravan headman. He had been with Stanley in the Congo and had accompanied, also, the Von Hohnel/Teleki expedition. He spoke English, Arabic, Swahili and Somali. He had travelled in Europe and America and had lived for some time in England. His home was in Aden. He was, says, Lugard, "the most energetic, valuable native I have ever met, thoroughly trustworthy and very conscientious and willing. His fault lay in his rough and arbitrary methods with the men... He was feared and disliked by the men. ... Porters were treated as mere beasts of burden. Flogging—sometimes with great cruelty—chaining of men together in gangs... beating men who lagged behind in the rear of the caravan... abandoning others on the march who were unable to come on..." Lugard would not allow him to flog porters and had "quite a personal affection for him..." See Lugard, *The Rise*, pp. 302-3.


Ibid., p. 316.

Ibid., p. 338.

Ibid.


Ibid.

Lugard, *The Rise*, pp. 336-7. Not only Lugard was disturbed by the turn of events. Thomson, "East Africa" commented that "The country had been thrown back into a worse condition of anarchy and savagery than it was twenty years ago. European travellers, however well-armed and protected, cannot now go where formerly a solitary individual armed only with an umbrella could formerly pass with safety."
27 Perham, *Lugard*, vol. 1, p. 203. See also Lugard, *The Rise*, pp. 335-6. Wilson was dismissed by the Company for his action in withdrawing Dagoretti. According to Lugard "the fault did not lie with Wilson." E.R. Vere-Hodge, *Imperial British*, pp. 24-6 says that Wilson's career was not ruined by the unfortunate circumstances of Dagoretti for "later he rose to high rank in the service of the government of Uganda."

28 Vere-Hodge, *Imperial British*, pp. 76-7. "Captain Nelson, late of the Emin Pasha Relief Expedition, was sent to Kikuyu during 1892, but his brief influence does not seem to have been benign. He engaged in punitive expeditions of a questionable nature not only against the Kikuyu but against more pacific tribes like the Taita. Soon after his arrival at Kikuyu there was a mutiny against the garrison, while Nelson himself died a short while after this episode.


33 Ibid., pp. 284-6 and von Hohnel, *The Discovery*, vol. 1, pp. 201-2. See also p. 103 for description of Martin's activities.


Masai warrior classes.


Miller, The Lunatic, pp. 310-5. See also Vere-Hodge, Imperial British, pp. 76-7. "As for Kikuyu, Portal described it to the Foreign Office as being 'practically in a state of siege and in constant danger from the hostility of the natives.' The Company's influence, he declared, was only being maintained by 'sending almost daily looting and raiding parties to burn the surrounding villages and seize the crops and cattle.' Moreover, Purkiss, Vere-Hodge observes, was never intended to be more than an assistant at the fort but through a stroke of fate became the Company's Acting Superintendent at the "chief trouble spot."

Portal to Rodd, from Nzoi, 22 i. 93, F.O. 2.60 quoted in Oliver, "British Occupation," p. 56.


Ibid., p. 441.


Galbraith, Mackinnon, p. 214.

Oliver, "Some Factors," pp. 49-64. See also Johnston, "The East African," p. 569." . . . (The Company) . . . secured for us, bit by bit, the whole vast area between the Indian Ocean, the Congo State, the Egyptian Sudan, and the confines of Somaliland. They outbid and outwitted equally patriotic Germans, as sensible (sic) as we were of the supreme advantages--strategic and economic--of Equatorial Africa."
CHAPTER 4

ARMED TRADERS

During the early years of the British administration and before serious efforts were made to pacify the Kikuyu, well-armed European traders who were not representatives of established commercial undertakings profoundly disturbed Kikuyu life and significantly influenced administrative action. The most important armed trader was John Boyes. Acting for himself, motivated by profit and an urge for adventure, Boyes penetrated the heartland of Kikuyuland in search of trade.

Boyes was in his mid-twenties when he landed in East Africa. He had served as a trooper in the Matabele War until he heard of profits to be made trading ivory in East Africa. In 1898 he arrived in Mombasa to be greeted only by the scantest courtesy. "Whitemen, whether travellers or hungers," he remarked, "were by no means welcome." In consequence he determined to pursue his activities outside the knowledge or the jurisdiction of the authorities.  

Boyes' first commercial venture in East Africa failed: but he was not deterred. On his way back to the coast after an abortive mission to feed British troops in Uganda, he saw in the green and fertile Kikuyu mashamba an opportunity to provision both Government stations and railway officials with garden produce. Even at this point destitute and barely able to sustain himself he had lost no desire for further adventure. Here
was the perfect opportunity for him to penetrate hitherto unexplored
country, repair previous misfortunes and indulge his propensity for in-
trigue and power among the tribesmen.

Boyes' ambitions, however, were almost thwarted once more by
officialdom. The District Commissioner, Naivasha, concerned about Boyes'
welfare (or perhaps his sanity), decreed that the trader should not en-
ter the Kikuyu interior from his district. Official remonstrations, how-
ever, were to no avail as Boyes contrived to enter Kikuyuland by a devious
route. Accompanied by native retainers he traversed the high bamboo
slopes of the western Aberdares, crossed the twelve-thousand foot moorlands
and dropped down the eastern side into Kikuyuland. Kikuyu warriors gath-
ered to meet him.

"They were certainly a wild-looking lot," he observed, "with their
bodies smeared all over with grease and red clay, or in some cases, a kind
of whitewash, in which patterns were drawn according to the fancy of each
individual, while fastened to the leg was a rattle, with an iron ball in
side, which as they moved about, made a noise very much like a railway
train." "Many of them," he went on, "wore wonderful headresses, made of the
skin of the colubus monkey, and all were armed with spears and shields." As
many as five hundred warriors were drawn up ready to defend their itura.
Boyes asked to see the "chief" and the Kikuyu muthumaki, Karuri, stepped
forward.
It was a strange meeting, and one which was to have great consequences for both of us. As time went on Karuri was to become my friend and right-hand supporter, while I, in turn, was to have an influence over him and his people which was to raise him to a position of a great chiefy and myself to supreme power in the country—a virtual King of the Kikuyu. 

Thus the trader, Boyes, and his Kikuyu friend Karuri, aided each other in their respective ambitions. Boyes was to become, as he so aptly put it, "King of the Kikuyu" while Karuri gained even greater power as a muthumaki. Moreover, indirectly Boyes was responsible for the elevation of his friend to the status of "an important personage" in the Protectorate Administration of 1912.

Significantly, Boyes' acceptance by this segment of the Kikuyu tribe was based upon his willingness to take part in internecine warfare. "They came," he said, "to implore my help for themselves." Boyes responded with characteristic bravado. "My duty was clear . . . these people had brought the trouble on themselves by befriending me, and the least I could do was to give them such help as I could." The intrepid Boyes then joined in the conflict and aided Karuri to defeat his enemies. The incident was of the greatest value to Boyes as now his reputation was established as what he termed "a useful member of the community." Karuri showed his gratitude by urging Boyes to remain in Kikuyu country.

... Karuri came to ask me if I would stop in his country. ... I said if he would sell me flour and food-stuffs I would come back to him. ... I told him the flour was for friends of mine who were coming along the caravan road.
Boyse departed Karuri's country and made for the nearest point to the caravan route where railway surveyors were at work. Here he built a storage hut from which he sold his flour and produce. Within a short period of time he realised a great profit. Excited with the possibilities of making higher gains, he purchased quantities of beads, "amerikani" and other goods from passing Arab traders and sent word to Karuri to provide porters to carry his purchases back to Kikuyuland. He had begun to trade on a reciprocal basis with Karuri, a fact which doubtless contributed greatly to the muthumaki becoming a man of wealth, power and enhanced prestige both within and outside Kikuyu society.

Meanwhile Boyes, now named Karianjahi, (eater of dolichos lablab or beans), continued to operate between the storage hut and Kikuyuland. Not content to sell his produce to railway workers he actually began to supply Protectorate officials in Naivasha, "where the need for food was so desperate that they (government officers) turned a blind eye to the violations of the law and drew up a contract for a regular provisioning service."7

By the end of May 1899 the railway had reached mile 327 from Mombasa to the Lake—a place appropriately named by the Masai as Nakusontelon or "the beginning of all beauty." The plain at this point was bisected by a stream, the Uaso Nairobi (cold water) and it was this name which was given to the railhead and administrative centre. Situated immediately south of "the beginning of all beauty"—the Kikuyu territory—Nairobi appeared almost overnight as a collection of wooden and corrugated iron shacks in which worked railway and Protectorate officials.8 Ainsworth,
Sub-Commissioner at Machakos, moved his headquarters to Nairobi and established himself as the senior government officer in the area. Perhaps this move was the first official step in the development and subsequent emergence of the city as being the principal administrative and commercial centre of East Africa. Certainly it brought both Europeans and Kikuyu into closer contact. The redoubtable Boyes echoed his sentiments on the choice of location as being "beyond his imagination!"

A further factor which contributed to the socio-economic development of the area was the inauguration in 1900 of a daily railway service between Mombasa and Nairobi. The Kikuyu areas were no longer isolated and were now increasingly exposed to influences brought by Europeans from the coast. Moreover, the long arm of government, still centred in Mombasa, could reach out with comparative ease and come to rest in some hitherto impregnable redoubt of tribalism. Also, in support of government, troops could be dispatched with speed and efficiency previously not possible.

During the ensuing few years the imperial presence, initially exerted only along the traverse of the Mackinnon Road and now along the line of the railway, would consolidate itself in Nairobi and then irrepressibly burst out over the "moat" and pour forth its agents into Kikuyuland.

Meanwhile, however, the crucial food shortage observed by Boyes continued to concern the embryo Administration. In consequence, with an eye for the main chance, Boyes continued to play the role of middleman between the Kikuyu and European. He was thus able to enlarge the area of his activities by making longer treks north into the Chinga and Gaki country. Here he established networks of Kikuyu suppliers and centralised
trading stations. Significantly he was able to carry on trading activities successfully in Kikuyu areas where the Company, a trading organization operated by businessmen of international reputation, had been unable to make more than a modicum of progress.

Having developed, after only a short period of time, an extensive trading practice, Boyes became increasingly ambitious. True he was able to traverse much of the country freely but his wanderings were confined to areas where Karuri possessed influence. Now, in an effort to enhance business and his own influence, he began to seek free access to all parts of Kikuyuland. Shrewdly he deduced that "the constant state of civil war," he had observed was probably a direct result of his presence. "They (the unfriendly Kikuyu) strongly resented my intrusion into the country," he remarked, "and any of the natives known to be friendly towards me, or wearing any of the cloth I had given them, were immediately marked down for attack." Thus he resolved to settle matters by attacking the dissident clans using an army of trained Kikuyu warriors. This private army of Karuri's best young warriors were taught parade-ground drill, scouting, sentry duty, elementary tactics, target practice and the use of the latest British Army rifles. Dressed resplendently in pressed Khaki, Boyes' askaris were soon put to work subduing those who chose to oppose him.

... we were soon among them and engaged in a warm hand-to-hand fight, which lasted until we had beaten off the invaders and followed them right back into their own country. ... having administered severe punishment, we camped for the night in the enemy's district.
Boyes gives the impression, however, that his military expeditions were not always destructive. Indeed, it seems that he was not averse to making, where such a course of action suited his purpose, an occasional dramatic peace-making bid. The prospect of having to deal with the Mount Kenya (Gaki) athamaki, especially Wagombi (sic) and Karkerrie (sic) gave the trader cause for trepidation. Wagombi had "a most murderous reputation" and was said to be very treacherous. Previous Arab and Swahili expeditions were reported to have been completely wiped out when attempting to traverse the region. Moreover, the Gaki Kikuyu possessed firearms and the King of Tato (sic). Karkerrie, their muthumaki, was reputed to have been responsible for similar murders. But Boyes was not deterred: he approached the Sub-Commissioner, Mombasa, with a request for more rifles. Once more the official was uncooperative and repeated his earlier statement that "whitemen were not wanted in the country." "Such," remarked Boyes with obvious contempt, "was the class of administrator approved by Downing Street for the opening of a new country." A "good" administrator, as far as Boyes was concerned, was one who would allow him to continue to wreak havoc around the countryside. Boyes failed to appreciate that a "good" administrator, from the Government viewpoint, would have been one who proscribed his activities and who took action to ensure they were not repeated. Thus Boyes was right about the "poor class of administrator" for the wrong reasons.

Undeterred by the increasingly inflexible attitude of the authorities, Boyes departed on his safari to the Mount Kenya area. He took with him 100 of his trained men, 30 of whom were armed with rifles. In consideration of the possibility that the presence of the Union Jack might influence
the athamaki to be friendly, Boyes purchased a flag to be carried at the head of this and subsequent expeditions. This habit was to draw the ire of Government officials and thus help to hasten the end of the trader's activities in Kikuyuland.

Proceeding north to meet the powerful athamaki of Gaki, the safari encountered hostility in the Chinga country. Huts were abandoned and tribesmen clustered on surrounding hilltops issuing threats. It was again clear to Boyes that the Kikuyu "did not want a whiteman in their country." Boyes, it will be recalled, had now heard this sentiment expressed both by European administrators and the Kikuyu. Moreover, even his ally Karuri, while accepting Boyes, had said that "he did not want any more white people in the country (and) they (the Kikuyu) did not mean to have any strangers."

Contact was made with two elders who relayed a message to the local athamaki that Boyes wished an audience. Soon Bartier (sic) and Henga (sic) arrived. They were observed to be "both young men and very intelligent for savages." Presents were exchanged and information given as to the disposition of the people in the next district (Tato). The muthumaki of Tato, Karkerrie, was said to be treacherous—a statement which supported what Boyes had been told earlier by Karuri. Ominously, the chief rainmaker of the district, "a tall fine looking man" made complicated the evident entente by declaring that no good would come of a friendship with the white man. Once more Boyes had been reminded of his unwanted presence. Once more, Boyes remained undeterred.

Striking north towards Gaki, the safari passed through thickly populated areas where sheep and cattle grazed and Kikuyu tended their shambas.
Boyes likened the scene to a peaceful English landscape. Soon the expedition was greeted by a party of Kikuyu sent by a "big chief" and "powerful witch doctor," named Muga wa diga (Muga son of Diga). Muga was described as an "old man, very active for his years, and far more intelligent than the majority of natives." His manner, Boyes noted, was friendly, helpful and informative. Boyes failed to note, however, that Muga's disposition was probably based upon a fear that the white stranger would tarry a while in the area! Muga was keen to see Boyes leave as soon as possible and even offered to guide him to Wagombi's camp! Another muthumaki, Katuni (the Lion), the "tallest" Kikuyu Boyes had ever seen, decided also to accompany the safari out of the area.

Arriving at Karkerrie's itura the expedition was met by the muthumaki himself. Boyes was surprised at the apparent friendly greeting, especially in view of what he had been told about Karkerrie. The mood changed, however, during the trading process—apparently over Boyes' possession of a clock—and soon he was forced to extricate himself by holding Karkerrie at the point of a pistol. Subsequently, however, the issue was resolved and Boyes was able to convince the "chief" to take part in a Pigasangi ceremony. Significantly, the Pigasangi ceremony, as far as Boyes was concerned, represented a step in the right direction! The ceremony differed, for example, from that of "blood-brotherhood" taken by Lugard. The blood-brotherhood ceremony established a friendly relationship with the individual whereas Pigasangi cemented friendly relationships with the whole clan and other clans represented at the ceremony. Boyes' ambitions, were to pacify the country by whatever means, force or diplomacy, in order to establish a
trade monopoly in a peaceful setting. Now he was in a position to use a Kikuyu custom which would preclude the use of force. His plan was to participate in Pigasangi with the three most powerful athamaki in the northern part of Kikuyuland, namely; his friend Karuri, his new found acquaintance Karkerrie and muthumaki of the Gaki people, Wagombi. This was an ambitious venture which demanded the skills of a seasoned diplomat and great courage; qualities which Boyes, even though inexperienced and ill-educated, seemed to possess. But first he had to persuade Wagombi.

I had heard a lot of talk about Wagombi, and was very anxious to visit him and, if possible, make friends with him, as my aim was to get all the country under control and put a stop to the fighting and bloodshed so that it would be safe for caravans to pass through it and trade. The natives were beginning to see that I had their interests at heart . . .

Hearing of Boyes' approach, Wagombi came out to meet him. Boyes was impressed. "I found him a fine, tall fellow, in his bearing and appearance every inch a chief, and in his speech a good deal more brisk than any Kikuyu I had met." Obviously, Boyes was describing not a "chief"—none existed—but a powerful warrior muthumaki, a charismatic individual who, by virtue of his military prowess, had been hurried along the road to leadership ahead of his fellow Kikuyu. Perhaps he fitted more appropriately into the category of leader cited by Lambert, namely; muthumaki wa bururi or leader of the country. Certainly he was one of Low's "prominent individuals;" a man whose personality and leadership qualities were so exceptional that he had evolved into a local autocrat about whom the affairs of the Gaki clans revolved. Kenyatta's description of Wangombe (sic) suggests that the Kikuyu "chief" (Kenyatta's term) acquired his fame
out of many incidents from his boyhood to the days of his eldership, and because his personality stood out in the various age-groups in which he held leadership, he finally attained his supreme position as a great and wise ruler. For his unselfish devotion to his people, and for maintaining good relations with the neighbouring countries, his good name has been passed from generation to generation to live in the memory of his people.17

Boyes camped at Wagombi's and traded ivory. Kenyatta describes Boyes as being a "pale-faced stranger (Mothongo) (who) visited Wangombe" and who was given a friendly welcome and was entertained.

This Mothongo was in touch with others of his kind who had already settled in Chief Waiyaki's territory, and he sent news to his friends of the beauty of the country and its prosperity, and the goodwill of its chief. A few moons passed, and the Mothongo with his caravans used to go to and fro buying food and ivory.18

During his stay he took part in the Pigasangi ceremony he so urgently desired between himself, Wagombi, Karkerrie and Muga wa Diga. Against the objections of his hosts Boyes "managed the matter eventually by the aid of presents." Moreover, he successfully overcame the problem of the location of the ceremony by tactfully arranging to conduct it at a point roughly equidistant from the three respective spheres of influence. The participants then converged on the site and took part in the ceremony under a Union Jack. On completion of the rites Boyes, the realist, suggested that all return to their homes with haste as the temper of the people might change and "there would be trouble."19

Perhaps what established Boyes' authority in Kikuyuland without question was his military defeat of the Chinga clans. It will be recalled that he had experienced trouble with the Chinga people on his way north to
meet Wagombi. On his return to Karuri's region news reached him that three Goanese traders had been murdered in Chinga country. On reaching Bartier's camp the rumours about the murder were confirmed. The Chinga people had joined forces with those from Mahigga (sic) to wipe out the Goanese safari. The country was in a state of ferment and Boyes witnessed some five-thousand armed tribesmen preparing themselves for an attack on his expedition. Burying his ivory, Boyes took flight south toward the safety of Karuri's sphere of influence. Attack after attack was made upon his depleting column of 'friendlies,' each being repulsed with heavy casualties on both sides. In desperation Boyes sought the sanctuary of Bartier's territory and soon it became evident to him that his Pigasangi agreement with Wagombi and Karkerrie was to pay dividends. Both athamaki sent large numbers of warriors to his aid. "The whole country was thrown into a state of excitement: the war fever was at its height: but my blood brothers had rallied nobly to my help, and big forces of armed warriors were coming in every hour from the different friendly chiefs to support me, until I had a force of several thousands of finest, fighting men in the country camped at Bartier's."20 At this point Boyes described a wild scene where his new followers "danced themselves into the wildest passion, numbers of them going into hysterical fits, and jabbing their spears into the tree trunks in imitation of killing their enemies, while their breath sobbed in great gulps." Soon the bloodthirsty throng swept through the Chinga country, burning itura; Kikuyu killing Kikuyu at the behest of the white intruder. At the conclusion of this frenzy the Chinga clans ceased to exist as a dissident force. "From this time on," Boyes
paused to remark, "I had complete control of the country." A truly remarkable achievement—if we are to believe Boyes—especially in view of the fact that the Company had failed in similar enterprises and that the feat had been achieved while the Protectorate Administration purported to "rule" the country.

John Boyes, of course, was not the only trader associated with the Kikuyu. According to Boyes there were other traders operating in the vicinity of the railway. Indeed, as the railway construction progressed and in consequence of the daily railway service from Mombasa to Nairobi, more trading activity was engendered. In the wake of construction, therefore, came other private entrepreneurs. An Indian duka (store) was opened in Naivasha. Mr. and Mrs. Walsh, lately settled in the Protectorate, also opened a store and trading business in Naivasha. Mrs. Walsh was reputed to be the first white woman settler in East Africa. Both she and her husband operated a legitimate transport business taking goods from the Nairobi railroad to Government stations and railway construction sites up the Rift Valley. Other traders, however, were operating in not so legitimate a fashion.

Boyes' first partner, Gibbons, was in business with a Mr. Findlay; both being engaged in the provision of ivory and produce for government and private buyers. During a severe altercation with the Kikuyu, from which Gibbons was lucky to survive, Findlay was speared and subsequently died. Until September 1903 Gibbons continued to trade alone with the Embu to the south and south-west of Mount Kenya.
According to oral tradition as analysed by Saterwal, up the establishment of the British administration in the Embu area (1906) only a few Europeans had ventured into the region and those natives who had come into contact with them "found the experiences regrettable." One of these Europeans was probably Gibbons who had, "about 1900, established himself in Kabare (Gicugu division, some fifteen miles west of the Embu border) in alliance with a man called Gutu who was later (under the British Administration) made the Paramount Chief of Gicugu Division." In 1917 the Provincial Commissioner was to refer to Gutu as a man who had had previous unhealthy exposure to a "European freebooter named Gibbons."

Gibbons' exploits in and around Embu are still recalled locally and Saterwal gives evidence of one incident which leaves little doubt as to the effects of the armed trader's presence. An expedition, lead by Gibbons was brought to the Embu-Gicugu border by the Gicugu war councillors, who assured the Embu war councillors that the European's intentions were peaceful and that he wished only to buy ivory. The Embu then escorted him three or four miles deep into their own territory, and he camped in a neighbourhood called Kariari. They told him about the hunters who had ivory. During the next two or three days he and his retainers made three trips for ivory. On the first two trips he took the hunter's ivory but made no payment. The Embu warriors and war councillors discussed his odd behaviour widely, and decided to force the issue during his third trip. When he came to the third hunter's neighbourhood, he met the war councillors intent on demanding payment from him. He took the ivory, promised to make payments in his camp, and marched towards his camp. On the way, the Embu warriors ambushed his party, killed some of his retainers, captured their guns, and recovered the ivory. The trader ran to his camp and promised to pay the next morning for the ivory he had purchased earlier. During the night he escaped with his retainers.
The circumstances of Gibbon's arrest are interesting in that they serve further to reveal his personal calibre and the nature of his activity among the Embu clans. At Fort Hall, Meinhertzhagen, an army officer seconded to the Protectorate Administration for pacification purposes, was advised by his superior officer, Hinde, that

a low class man called Gibbons with some 30 armed Swahilis had installed himself in the Embu country south-east of Mount Kenya and was collecting hut tax and extorting ivory from the natives. He had hoisted the Union Jack to give Government protection to his nefarious actions.

Boyes, it will be recalled, was in the habit of doing the same thing—for presumably the same purpose.

After a day's march from Fort Hall, Meinhertzhagen and his askaris reached Gibbons' armed camp. Using surprise and taking advantage of a dozing sentry, the party were able to infiltrate the surrounding zariba (protective thorn enclosure) and subdue Gibbons' 'friendlies,' Gibbons himself was arrested at the point of a revolver.

He woke with a start, made an effort to produce a revolver from under his pillow, and swore an oath. . . . I then told him that I arrested him on a charge of illegally collecting hut tax and despoiling the natives . . . 26

The captive did not acquiesce easily and used "the most provoking language." Worse still, local natives arrived on the scene and adopted a menacing attitude toward the Government force. "They were all armed," observed Meinhertzhagen, "and they wanted to know why we were removing their 'Government official,' how they were going to be paid for the ivory they had given him, and a host of other awkward questions."27 Meinhertzhagen advised them
that their complaints should be registered with the senior Protectorate officer in Fort Hall, "to which they said they did not recognize Fort Hall or the British Government." Their menacing attitude continued and the arresting officer was forced to detain as hostages Gibbons' 14 concubines, supplied to him by the local muthumaki. Finally Gibbons was charged with "raiding the natives, with taking by force native women, with illegally collecting Government taxes for his own benefit, and with murder in having shot a native during one of his raids." He was despatched to Nairobi for trial—the results of which are not known.

A Maltese sailor, Martin, was another European involved in East African trade. He had first traversed the country with Joseph Thomson and was said to be the first white man to venture among the Masai. Martin (or Martini—his real name) had first arrived in East Africa off an American ship which had grounded close to Zanzibar. After crossing Masailand and Laikipia with Thomson, he alternated between supervising caravans from Mombasa to Uganda and acting as an officer of the Sultan's army (Zanzibar)—in which capacity he became an employee of the Company. When the British Government took over the Company's territory and declared it a Protectorate, Martin became an employee of the Government. Strangely enough, with all his trading enterprise, Martin could not read or write. He was subsequently taught to write his name, on reaching the rank of District Officer, by Sir Frederick Jackson. Martin may have been the target of Sir Clement Hill's remark that the Protectorate Administration would continue to be of low quality "so long as Civil Servants were enlisted from the gutter." By 1912 Martin had survived the rigours of East African trading and the even more trying, perhaps, administrative
life. He was, according to Boyes, by then the manager of a rubber forest estate at Mabira.

Yet another freebooter was the ill-fated Trader Dick, killed by Masai in November 1895. According to Ainsworth, administrator of the area in which the incident took place, a safari left Kikuyu for Eldama Ravine carrying 800 loads of food and stores. The caravan comprised some 870 Africans of whom 756 were Kikuyu. On the return journey the safari was attacked by Masai. Andrew Dick, in the vicinity with two French visitors, decided to intervene and was speared. Losses in this incident included 546 Kikuyu porters killed. A subsequent enquiry revealed that members of the safari were almost wholly to blame as acts of violence and larceny had been committed against the Masai by members of the caravan.

Analysis of the evidence shows little doubt that the Kikuyu were profoundly disturbed by the abrasive presence of armed traders. Acting not as representatives of established commercial ventures, but as private individuals motivated by urge for adventure and personal gain, John Boyes, Gibbons and others severely aggravated an already developed Kikuyu aversion to wageni. Kikuyu attitudes were probably, it should be noted, based more on a defensive rather than an aggressive posture: their neighbours, the war-like Masai, for example, had long been in the habit of crossing the "moat" to raid the southern periphery of Kikuyuland. Kikuyu hostility toward intruders, therefore, was already a tradition before the advent of Arab and Swahili traders and early European expeditions. Notably, the cardinal difference between early intruders, the Company, armed
traders and the Protectorate Administration, is that the former were transients while the latter were intent upon permanent presence. Of the earlier group, the Masai, for example, were itinerant raiders who returned always to their habitat outside the "moat." Arab and Swahili traders were invariably "passing through" or skirting the edges of Kikuyuland. European explorers like Thomson, von Hohnel, Teleki and others, were never intent upon establishing themselves in Kikuyuland on more than a temporary basis. The turning point, that which tended to harden Kikuyu attitudes into aggressive hostility, therefore, came with the approach and settlement of the second group of intruders; the Company and its uncontrolled African soldiery, European armed traders and finally the Protectorate Administration; all, significantly, intent upon a permanent presence, a veritable "occupation" of Kikuyuland. Moreover, a complicating factor faced by each wave of occupation lay in a sort of progression of Kikuyu hostility. Each new alien force inherited Kikuyu hostility engendered by its predecessors. The Company arrived in Kikuyuland to be met by initial friendliness—an attitude which quickly soured when Company employees raided smallholdings in much the same way as had Arab and Swahili traders. The Company practised tactics of divide and rule and in this way tended to create an even more fractious Kikuyu community than had hitherto existed. On the demise of the Company the armed traders inherited, therefore, a chaotic state of affairs where there existed among this fractious community Kikuyu collaborators willing to cast in their lot with Europeans, and others to whom the European "occupation" was anathema. Kikuyu 'touched' by the Company
were, broadly speaking, either friendly or hostile, either willing to collaborate or anxious to kill.

Like the Company—and later the Protectorate Administration—the armed traders seized upon the idea of using Kikuyu collaborators to best advantage. Desire for profit, personal power and trading monopoly drove the traders to seek out the most influential Kikuyu in areas formerly influenced by the Company and outside. Often traders offered athamaki the services of their personal armies—as called "friendlies" or "levies"—as trained forces to be disposed against unfriendly Kikuyu. Traders gained favour, also, by dispensing presents, perhaps rifles, beads or the coveted "amerikani" cloth. Boyes, like his predecessor Lugard, contrived to extend his personal influence over larger areas of the Kikuyu interior by use of the Kikuyu custom of blood-brotherhood (Pigasang'i) taken in concert with groups of the most powerful athamaki collaborators. Significantly, acting as an individual motivated by personal reasons and not like Lugard who was concerned with matters on a 'grand scale,' Boyes successfully peddled his influence over larger areas of the Kikuyu interior in a way that had not been possible during the short period of Company "occupation" or indeed during the first few years of the Protectorate Administration.

John Boyes, therefore, ill-educated, inarticulate, a trooper in the Matabele wars, acting for his own selfish reasons and outside of the sanction of legitimate authority, became the most influential whiteman in Kikuyuland. By 1903, fully eight years after the British Government had taken over the administration of the Protectorate, he could boast that he
had become a veritable "King of the Wa-kikuyu" and that he had "complete control of the country."

But in Boyes' boasting we see exposed an example of his well-developed personal vanity. Sudden peace after years of traditional Kikuyu hostility to intruders is hardly conceivable. What in fact Boyes and others had succeeded in doing was to exacerbate an already exceedingly turbulent situation left by the Company. Indeed, in a moment of logic Boyes pronounced that he created in Kikuyuland a major problem by the fact of his own presence! The evidence, also, of Gibbons' activities in Embu tends to substantiate this finding. Wherever both trod in Kikuyuland, wherever they stopped even for short periods of time, their activities were shrouded in an atmosphere of intrigue and hostility.

The "peace" of which Boyes spoke was probably based upon, as one officer put it, "a sulky acquiescence" and not a genuine spirit of cooperation. Furthermore, Boyes' notion of "peace" may have been more due to the potency of the Martini-Henry rifle than the powers of his personal diplomacy. Certainly both played a part in his activities; one obviously supported the other. In these aspects of his activities (and those of Gibbons) we must accord Boyes the ability and the initiative to have survived the exhaustive rigours of life as an alien in Kikuyuland. But here, importantly, we must consider that the armed traders were not entirely isolated, were not alone in their efforts to sustain themselves and their activities. They were aided and abetted by athamaki, Low's "prominent individuals," Kikuyu who were willing to indulge themselves in the game for their own set of unique motives. Karuri, for example, implored Boyes to help him subdue other Kikuyu. Wagombi and Karkerrie
did not hesitate to send aid and thus save the trader from death when he was being attacked by the Chinga clans. Gibbons and Gutu helped each other in Embu, much to Gutu's ultimate advantage. By 1917, as we have seen, Gutu was Paramount Chief of the Embu while according to Boyes his good friend Karuri was as early as 1912 a man of some eminence in the colonial hierarchy! Thus the legacy of tribal hostility and social turbulence inherited by the Protectorate Administration, cannot wholly be attributed to the armed traders—although they were undoubtedly catalysts in the processes of European and Kikuyu interaction. It would be more accurate to say that the armed traders and their Kikuyu collaborators, the *athamaki*, acting in concert and for their own unique reasons, were responsible together for fomenting further traditional Kikuyu hostility toward 'outsiders.' Undoubtedly *athamaki* recognized the value of their association with the armed traders and indeed were not merely 'reactors' to the European presence. Their parts in the process of interaction were active; they, like the armed traders, initiated and shaped events for their own discreet purposes. They indeed created their own destiny as much as they influenced that of the tribe.

The armed traders, Boyes and to a lesser extent, Gibbons and others, gained by acting as middlemen in the trading process between Kikuyuland and European administrators, between Kikuyuland and the approaching railway. Notably the armed traders were actually allowed to operate by an Administration whose representatives, on more than one occasion and according to Boyes himself, expressed their displeasure at his presence. Doubtless traders were allowed to continue their activities because, regardless
of their tendency to arouse the Kikuyu to hostility and violence, the Administration, between 1895 and 1900, was too thin on the ground and lacked the necessary force at its back to prevent them. The very products obtained and brought to administrative centres by the armed traders were, for example, necessary for the daily sustenance of the Protectorate Administration. Therefore, remarkable as it seems, the Government was forced to allow Boyes, in particular, a free "reign" as self-styled "King of the Wa-kikuyu." By 1902, however, the Government was able to strengthen its position to a point where it could effectively turn its attention more seriously toward the activities of the traders, muster its military and administrative forces and penetrate more deeply into Kikuyuland for the purpose of "pacifying" the Kikuyu and instituting an all-encompassing pax-Britannica.
FOOTNOTES

1 According to Boyes, John Boyes, p. 70, there were only "about ten white men who were independent traders and hunters in the whole of . . . the East African and Uganda Protectorates . . . we were told plainly that we were not wanted . . . we were not even allowed guns and ammunition with which to protect ourselves." Least of Boyes' worries, however, was the arms proscription: within a short time both he and his levies were carrying the latest British Army rifles!

2 Mashamba (pl) is Swahili for cultivated plots of land and can be loosely interpreted as near to the English concept of garden. For notes on the shamba system see B.F. Oland, "The 'Shamba' System of Plantation Development" in East Africa Agriculture and Forestry Journal, vol. 27, (1962), pp. 82-3.

3 Boyes, John Boyes, p. 73.

4 See Stigand, The Land, pp. 244-5 for a later (1913) description of Karuri who had become a Kikuyu of great influence and prestige.

5 Karuri was later made a Chief by the Administration. Boyes, p. 73, noted that "This important personage, who today (1912) collects the Hut Tax for the British Administration, would hardly be recognized as the savage warrior chief who stepped forward to meet the first white man he had ever seen in his own country."

6 Boyes, John Boyes, p. 77. Noteworthy is the fact that Karuri remarked that he "did not want any more white people in the country" and that the Kikuyu " . . . did not mean to have any (more) strangers" in their midst. Perhaps Karuri considered that in view of the troubles encountered as a result of Boyes' presence, one white man in that part of Kikuyuland was enough!

7 Miller, The Lunatic, p. 409. See also Boyes' remarks, John Boyes, p. 67, regarding trading with government officials " . . . Food was wanted, I found, for the Government stations on the caravan road, as well as for the surveying parties on the line of the Uganda Railway, and as it was worth a rupee a pound, I thought I saw a good chance of
making some money by trying my luck in the Kikuyu country."


9Boyes, John Boyes, pp. 82-3.

10The writer was District Officer, Chinga, 1953-56. Boyes was still referred to and his exploits related often by the old men of the district.

11Boyes, John Boyes, p. 77. Presumably Karuri tolerated Boyes, even though the latter was a whiteman, because in a sense they were "birds of a feather". Both were ambitious and were "aware" of the need for a mutually satisfactory arrangement; Boyes to trade freely and Karuri to extend his influence with the aid of Boyes' private army. But Karuri was shrewd enough to realise the overall effect of Boyes' adventures: wars which hitherto had been local were now escalated and the country generally was in a turmoil.

12My underline. It is notable that so many so-called "chiefs" met by Boyes were observed by him to be "young men". This would suggest that such individuals were muthumaki and not tribal elders.

13An interesting facet of the early European literature is that natives observed as "young", "tall", "good-looking", "fair-skinned", "strong", "thin-lipped", seemed also to be associated with "chieftainship". Descriptions such as "old", "short", "ugly", "black", "weak", "thick-lipped", were terms associated with "savage", "backwardness", "follower" and "ignorance". Obviously Europeans possessed a "physical" image of leadership derivative, perhaps, of their own romantic heritage; misleading in the extreme, it might be added.
14. Boyes, John Boyes, p. 143. Was Boyes aware that his very presence was probably more than anything else the major cause of "fighting and bloodshed?" It is apparent from his narrative that he justified his presence and his activities by rationalizing that he had native interests at heart!

15. Ibid., p. 144. Note again Boyes' favourable description of someone he considered to be a leader as being "... a fine, tall fellow ... every inch a chief."


17. The memory of Wangombe was preserved through his son who became a powerful Government-appointed chief of the Nyeri district.


20. Ibid., pp. 180-1.

21. See ibid p. 42 for a description of their meeting at the coast and their arrangement to form a trading partnership.

22. Ibid., p. 99.


24. Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid., p. 121.

Ibid., p. 122.

Tate, "Two African Explorers," p. 454.

Huxley, White Man's, p. 51.

Meinhertzhan, Kenya Diary, p. 132.

The high number of Kikuyu porters is evidence of the influence of both traders and Government officers in getting Kikuyu to carry loads up and down the Rift Valley. Perhaps cooperative athamaki were responsible for recruiting the Kikuyu.


This remark is generally attributed to G.A.S. Northcote, a Political Officer in the service of the Protectorate Administration.

Barber, Imperial, p. 94. "Because there was no government control, no government protection, the traders and hunters lived a lawless, often violent life. This was the price to pay for unlimited hunting and trading. Traders who lived in unadministered territory, who joined in tribal wars and who had at their disposal comparatively great wealth could expect nothing else. Sheer self-preservation dictated that most traders went about heavily armed and established their own means of defence against tribes. In 1903 P.H.G. Powell Cotton
wrote that traders "would being pressure to bear on any tribe which caused them trouble, even going as far as to carry out punitive expeditions to revenge their personal grievances. . . usually the traders were able to protect themselves because of their guns."

37 Yet another veritable "King" who gained great influence over tribes to the west of Kikuyuland was the famed elephant hunter W.D.M. Bell. Bell, a Scotsman whose hunting ability became legendary in his own time, was known as the "King of Karamoja." See Barber, ibid., pp. 97-8 for a description of his activities.
CHAPTER 5

THE CONQUEST

First Phase (1895-1902): A "Holding" Exercise

Sir Gerald Portal's indictment of the Imperial British East Africa Company contained but one apparent compliment: "It should be remembered, in justice to them, that in face of many initial difficulties they succeeded in marked contrast to the neighbouring colonies in establishing their influence without bloodshed and by their own unaided efforts."^{3}

Portal, of course, was not correct in his reference to the Company establishing its influence "without bloodshed;" there had been some killing. The matter of "bloodshed;" however, was to loom very large in the activities of the new masters of the East African Protectorate. Some tribes, especially the truculent and often hostile Kikuyu, were to be pacified in nothing less than blood.

In March 1895, Sir Arthur Hardinge, Consul-General, Zanzibar, advised the British Foreign Office that he was prepared on their behalf to takeover the East African possessions of the now defunct Company. He would, he said, absorb into the Protectorate Administration as many former Company employees as possible. On 1 July 1895, official transfer of responsibility took place. Hardinge now assumed a legacy founded principally upon the Company's inability to resolve problems posed by its
presence among the tribes—particularly the Kikuyu.

Hardinge's instructions for the government of the territory were vague and couched in the broadest terms. He was obligated, for example, to concern himself with the terms of respective treaties signed between Great Britain and other powers interested in Africa although, notably, just how he was to be guided on the matter of administration was far from clear. Perhaps the most specific suggestion regarding administration of the Protectorate was couched in the Foreign Office directive alluding to the development of legitimate trade, safe circulation of traders and travellers, the need not to unduly interfere with tribal government, native habits and customs and to attempt to confer on the natives the benefits of civilization. Herein lay the basis for an administration which typically solved its problems locally, "on the spot," and without reference to anything more than a broad set of principles: a position made even more necessary by the lack of good communications between the coast and the interior. Directives from Mombasa to Kikuyuland took eleven days—which meant an elapsed period of some three weeks between despatch of a directive and receipt of a reply.

Hardinge patterned the Protectorate Administration on the Indian precedent.

Police officers and magistrates were lent by the Indian Government, and the medical staff came from India. Some Indian legislation . . . was applied in the Protectorate without modification . . . the judicial powers of officials were also modelled on Indian precedents.
Moreover, it was decided that jurisdiction, duties, powers of the Commissioner and Consul-General would be equated with the Indian model. Sub-Commissioners, Collectors and Assistant Collectors were to correspond to equivalent orders of rank in India. Sir Clement Hill, responsible for the Africa Department at the Foreign Office, spent much of his time at "the India Office in search of Indian precedents and experience."

The Protectorate was then divided, for administrative purposes, into four provinces. Each province was again divided into districts. Provinces were administered by Sub-Commissioners and districts by Collectors (later District Officers) and Assistant Collectors (later Assistant District Officers). The Protectorate headquarters, located at Mombasa, was staffed by a supreme council of Lt. Lloyd Mathews, R.N., now First Minister to the Sultan, Cracknell and Strickland as judicial and financial officers respectively, and Hardinge himself. Essential services such as finance, customs and shipping, justice, road and inland transport, health, posts and telegraphs, public works and the military, were all based in Mombasa—notably some 350 miles from the southern periphery of Kikuyuland.

Of the resolution to absorb into the Protectorate Administration former Company employees, it is apparent that Hardinge was prepared to take anyone who would offer his services. With few exceptions all persons subsequently hired had served either in Zanzibar or with the Company's mainland contingent. A few had experience in other parts of Africa. Francis Hall, for example, had lived and worked in South Africa,
Dr. S.L. Hinde, a physician by profession, had participated in military adventures in the Congo while John Ainsworth, later to become well-respected in his administrative endeavours among the Kikuyu and Kamba, had served a trading company in the Congo. The remaining Company men hired to form the administrative core of the Protectorate Government, had been recruited directly from Britain, possessed little African experience and had earned from Lugard the contemptuous description of "Mackinnon's raw young Scots."  

Cut-off from Mombasa and the daily direction (such as it was) of the policy-makers, officers were forced into making ad-hoc decisions to meet the crises with which they were confronted. As a one-man oligarchy the District Officer was called upon to make the most profound decisions affecting both himself and his African charges. Obliged to journey to the far reaches of his assigned territory, mostly on foot, the neophyte District Officer endured the hardships of topography, of the elements and not the least of tribal hostility in the performance of his duties. "Of the variety of very able men under whom or with whom I served in the early years," observed one officer, "one died of drink, two died of black-water fever, a fourth was suspected of taking drugs, which, in a dangerous situation, induced unwarranted optimism; he was murdered. A fifth ended in a home for inebriates. A sixth committed suicide. A seventh, suffered the pains of delirium tremens and was believed, subsequently, to have drowned himself in the Red Sea." Perhaps isolation and disorientation from "normal" life enjoyed in Britain—together with the threat to life and limb issuing daily from enclaves of African..."
predominance—were the reasons why the weaker specimens degenerated to ineffectiveness. Undoubtedly only the strong were "useful" in the pursuit of administrative efficacy.

The "strong" prospered. Men like Ainsworth, Hinde, Hall and others succeeded quickly to the mantle of high responsibility and formed the elite corps of administrative leadership on whom successive Governors consistently relied. All were men, it seems, imbued with the styles and ethics of later Victorian colonialism—characteristics which influenced the development of the Protectorate Administration. One set of characteristics evolved, for example, out of the British peculiarity and preference for improvisation based upon precedent rather than principle. Common sense and experience ranked above ideas. All of the greatly touted "qualities" of the public schoolboy would be emphasized; for example, the tradition of the gifted amateur over the professional and expert. The early literature on East Africa written by administrators, C.W. Hobley, K.R. Dundas, C. Eliot and W.S. Routledge, to name just a few, abounds with a sort of polished amateurism in practically every field of East African endeavour. Early District Officers, it seems, were men who recorded or reacted to what they saw in the absence of background knowledge or scholarship. Into their diaries and Blue Books went descriptions of men, animals, mountains, plants and countless other things perceived around and about the urgent and often dangerous daily business of the pax Brittanica. As observers and recorders of facts, these men played a unique role in the shaping of the character of East African administration. Until the ascendancy of the anthropologist,
sociologist, economist and African historian, expertise on tribal society and its problems of adjustment to the alien invaders, expertise on the invaders themselves and their problems of adjustment to tribal society, was almost the exclusive province of the seasoned District Officer. The exotic experience of East Africa, found in the writings of the period, reports, pamphlets, idle ramblings, letters and books, has thus provided a solid foundation of knowledge on which later legatees have been able to build.

Individualism is perhaps the most common characteristic observed among District Officers; either as a quality endowed naturally, gained from previous experience or forced upon them by circumstances of "policy" emanating from so far away. Native administration thus tended to be shaped by local initiatives and was of necessity designed to meet the daily exigencies of a given situation or crisis. "On the spot" administration thus became the vogue: it was administration based upon local and critical needs rather than that which was designed to meet long-range criteria.

An example of effective "on the spot" administration is the case of Francis Hall. Preoccupied with controlling his district in southern Kikuyuland, Hall received little guidance from his superior Ainsworth at Machakos or from the coast. He constantly complained about the shoestring administration and lack of help, of poor policy and little or no constructive progression. He resolved, therefore, in quite obvious fashion, to take matters into his own hands by resorting to any means at his disposal to administer his area of Kikuyuland. Thus he began increasingly to rely upon the cultivation of Kikuyu athamaki as a means
to control the population and increase the security of his administration. Kinanjui, said by Hall to be his "Fidus Achates," supported his European ally in many administrative and personal endeavours. Using a judicious combination of force and diplomacy, and with the aid of Kinanjui, the intrepid Hall managed to win a degree of confidence from surrounding Kikuyu tribesmen. Astute enough to realise, also, Kikuyu proclivities for internecine warfare, now aggravated by his own presence, the previous influence of the Company and the ambitions of the athamaki, Hall used effectively a "divide and rule" strategy to his advantage.

The ambitions of athamaki is a matter of some importance in an analysis of Hall's success. Hall undoubtedly found himself involved in a power struggle between competing athamaki. Resentment of Hall may have been based on the possibility that some athamaki feared his presence would tend to supplant their own influence among local Kikuyu. Using Kinanjui to the greatest advantage, Hall was able to drive a wedge between the competing tribal factions by playing one off against the other. Aided by armed "friendlies," Kikuyu and Masai, Hall was thus able to secure his presence in the immediate area around Fort Smith and later Mbirri (Fort Hall). Significantly, Hall's success in implementing the pax paralleled Kinanjui's success in gaining for himself more power.

The two men thus acted in concert for the same purpose—to accrue power. Essentially the only difference between Hall and Kinanjui in respect of their pursuit of power, was that Hall's ambitions were less personal than those of his friend. Perhaps, also, Kinanjui's success lay in the fact that he had presented himself and his services to the British—albeit the
Company—at a time when the all-powerful muthumaki, Waiyaki, had been deposed. Relationships between the Company and the Kikuyu during the period of Waiyaki's demise were at a particularly low ebb. Hall was no doubt elated at the prospect of being served by another muthumaki who, while not as powerful as Waiyaki, could become a useful ally and catalyst in the affairs of native administration. As far as the British were concerned Kinanjui thus provided an answer to the problem of "finding the chief" in an area where no chiefs existed because Kikuyu polity was based upon a system of elders. The fact that Kinanjui was seen as a Kikuyu "chief" by the British may have been one more reason for Kikuyu resentment of alien intrusion. As far as the Kikuyu were concerned the key question was, "how could Kinanjui be a 'chief' when no Kikuyu chiefs existed?" On the other hand, as Mungeam points out it seems likely that, for other Kikuyu, Kinanjui (sic) inspired inspiration as well as respect. He was, after all, a 'success story' in that he was a Kikuyu who had succeeded in playing the British at their own game, and had achieved power and authority as a result.

Hall's efforts in promoting athamaki, while initially causing Kikuyu unrest, paid handsome dividends later. Through the advantage of continuity (Hall served the Company and the Administration in the same geographic areas) many of Hall's early Kikuyu contacts accepted posts with the government and thus formed the nucleus of a Kikuyu 'official establishment.'
Indeed

by 1909, when an analysis of local 'chiefs' was made in the Kiambu Record Book, it is apparent that many of the leading 'chiefs' began their years of authority in the 1890's, seeing service with Hall and Ainsworth. Not a few began their lives in comparative poverty, and only gradually became wealthy and powerful, mainly through the British connexion. Almost all seem to have secured their official status through the practical test of their loyalty to the government rather than through any position in Kikuyu society.11

Hall died in 1901 after contracting dysentery on a punitive expedition against the Kikuyu. Dr. Radford, who tended him during his fatal illness, paid tribute by saying, "... his name was a talisman and his memory will live long among the Wakikuyu as a man to be feared, respected and loved."12 No doubt he was "feared" and "respected" by his Kikuyu enemies--of whom he had a large number--and "loved" by those he had promoted: Kikuyu athonaki, who were few in number. Hobley, a fellow administrator, commented that Hall was "a gallant soul, who did more than any living man to establish the pax Brittanica among the Kikuyu, who were then a very turbulent and treacherous tribe."13

The case of Hall serves to illustrate probably as well as any the nature of "on the spot" administration in Kikuyuland. With few policy guidelines, either from the coast or his immediate superior, Ainsworth, no official Government military force at his back, poor administrative resources and low funds. Hall's contribution, that which gained him the unusual eulogies of his fellow administrators, was based upon his qualities as an individual endowed with a set of personal characteristics suited to the 'frontier' existence of Kikuyuland. Perhaps he epitomized the
life of the early District Officer in East Africa. Faced with the problem of meeting the needs of his own existence, of introducing alien attitudes and value-systems to a generally intransigent population, of expanding his influence without incurring the wrath of the administrative centre (Mombasa, Nairobi or London) or indeed that of the natives, Hall exemplified a tradition of individualism engendered by a set of unique circumstances: circumstances which undoubtedly contributed to his early and untimely death. Significantly, because of the continuity of his tenure (1893-1900) as a Company man and then as a Protectorate Administration employee, he was able successfully to develop a native firmament, a nucleus of useful intermediaries, on which his successors could graft their influence. Moreover, Hall epitomized, also, the early period of administrative establishment in Kikuyuland (1895-1900); a time of only slight expansion, of "settling in"—gaining a "toe-hold"—among Kikuyu immediately adjacent to government stations; a time, significantly, when administrative action came often in the form of "responses" to Kikuyu provocation rather than the later period (1900-1910) when Government set its face against the Kikuyu in a much more determined and planned fashion.

The establishment of Ainsworth's new Provincial Headquarters in Nairobi—a place strategically located for dealing with the Kikuyu and now reached by the railway—heralded the beginning of a policy of the use of military force in the subjugation of the Kikuyu. Moreover, an important administrative change took place in the latter part of 1901 when "the Commissioner decided to detach the northern part of the Kikuyu country consisting of Fort Hall, Nyeri, Meru and Embu from the administration
of Ukamba and thereby institute a new province to be called the Kenya, later the Kikuyu province. In effect this meant that Kikuyuland had become an administrative unit divorced from the vastness of Ukamba, was now to be administered from Nairobi—the future communications centre of the Protectorate—and was thus more proximate to the scene of impending pacification. Furthermore, Dr. S.L. Hinde, a man possessed of previous military experience in the Congo, was appointed Sub-Commissioner of the Province with headquarters in Kiambu—a new station which superseded Fort Smith. Also, a new station was built on the old Dagoretti site together with a network of roads extending throughout southern Kikuyuland as far as Fort Hall. For these reasons it is obvious that the administrative net was closing on the Kikuyu.

But first the Protectorate Administration was faced with the problem of the armed traders, particularly John Boyes, who represented, in a sense, a challenge to imperial authority. Moreover, worse still, many armed traders were regarded by the Kikuyu as being members of the Administration. Thus tribal turbulence engendered by the armed traders might have been attributed, by the Kikuyu, to the Administration and, moreover, the effects of this turbulence might have been construed by the Administration as making their task of pacification that much more difficult. Boyes and others had to be removed from Kikuyuland if a programme of pacification was to be successfully implemented. Ainsworth's concern is reflected in his description of Boyes activities and subsequent arrest.
During the earlier period of our occupation, we sometimes heard of a reputedly powerful chief known as Karuri who lived somewhere west of Mount Kenya. Later on there were rumours at intervals of a white man living with Karuri... enquiries made by Hinde revealed that a white man possessing firearms was living in close association with Karuri. Native stories were to the effect that the white man had assisted the chief in raids on other natives. Hinde thereupon proceeded to Karuri's where he found a white man named Boyes whom he ordered to accompany him to Fort Hall. The outcome of this was that Boyes, with the cattle he claimed as his property, was sent to Nairobi on a charge of dacoity. There were, however, no witnesses produced to enable the charge to be proved. Karuri, who also appeared in Nairobi in connection with the case, stated that Boyes had bought most of the cattle while other had been given to Boyes by himself. The outcome of the matter was that Boyes was discharged.\footnote{16}

Importantly, however, Boyes never returned to Kikuyuland as a trader and thus the Protectorate Administration, now better organized and able to sustain itself without his help,\footnote{17} was rid of his perturbing influence.

A matter, also, of some concern to the Protectorate Administration, was dealt with between 1901 and 1904 and concerned the future of the Masai. The Masai, described by Low as "the hinge of Kenya," despite their fierce reputation as warriors, had proved not to be too intolerant of alien advances through their traditional territory. Weakened by civil war and the devastating effects of famine, the tribe took to raiding the Kikuyu and other tribes in search of subsistence. While the tendency for raiding aided the British considerably in their efforts to secure militant allies against the Kikuyu, it began increasingly to disturb them between 1901 and 1904. Moreover, the Masai themselves began to show an increasing uneasiness, as did the Kikuyu, at the prospect of their lands being taken by an influx of European settlers. Greatly influenced by their laibon\footnote{18} Lenana, a collaborator cultivated by Ainsworth and others, the Masai thus,
in 1904, concluded an agreement with the British which called for their movement *en-masse* into two geographically delineated reserves. This agreement precipitated subsequent movements of Masai (1908, 1911 and 1912) and, although each occasion caused much friction and, indeed, even an appeal to the High Courts, the "problem" of Masai tradition (raiding) and the proximity of the tribe to other tribes and European settlers, was resolved. Now the Masai were safely isolated and controlled, albeit loosely, by the Protectorate Administration. Now the British (1902-1910) could turn their attention towards Kenya Province and specifically the still large pockets of Kikuyu resistance --especially since the reorganization of the Administration's military inheritance from the Company.

In summary, the period 1895 to 1901 had been perhaps, for the Protectorate Administration, only something more than a "holding exercise." But progress of some significance had been made. The railway, for example, had successfully by-passed Kikuyuland and was on its way, practically unencumbered, to the Lake and the all-important Nile-source. Boyes and the armed traders had been removed by swift and decisive administrative action. The delicate matter of Masai and settler inter-relationships had also been partially resolved. Moreover, with Masai moran loosely controlled and now confined to a reserve habitat, the prospect of inter-tribal warfare was considerably reduced. Significantly, due to the efforts of men like Hall, the Protectorate Administration now possessed an elite cadre of influential friends within the southern interior of Kikuyuland. Furthermore, the Kikuyu habitat had been
declared an administrative unit—a Province—and was to be administered from a centre (Nairobi) proximate to the area. Men and materials necessary for a sustained effort against the interior tribes were just hours away while the roads on which they would presumably march were beginning to penetrate north from Nairobi into the Kikuyu heartland.

Pacification of the Kikuyu was by 1901 about to commence. Now larger areas of Kikuyuland were to be claimed; if necessary by military means and thus at the expenditure of much Kikuyu blood.

The key ingredient to successful subjugation of the Kikuyu was an efficient and well-trained military force. But the Protectorate Administration had not been fortunate in the quality of its military legacy from the Company. Indeed, Colonel H. Moyse-Bartlett has gone as far as to say that "... the Imperial British East Africa Company made no comprehensive efforts to organize proper forces for the maintenance of its authority." Sir Arthur Hardinge commented that the Company was a "European administration ... with no visible force at its back." It appears that the development of the Company's military force had probably been more pragmatic than planned. Troops had been drawn from various East African tribes, differed widely in quality and were seen as a "curious hotch-potch ... with no common status and no central control." The earliest Company force had been commanded by a naval officer, Lt. Lloyd Mathews, seconded from the coastal anti-slavery patrol. On the promotion of Mathews to "General" in the forces of the Government of Zanzibar, the force was commanded by Captain G.P. Hatch and, according to Sir Gerald Portal, improved considerably in its military performance.
An early problem had been the selection of suitable African recruits. Some officers preferred Sudanese to Zanzibaris while others, notably Mackinnon, considered the possibility of recruiting in Zululand or even Sierra Leone. But the cost of transportation was prohibitive and the use of Zulus thought impractical. The Company had then sought permission to recruit Punjabis, but the Indian Government opposed the proposition in favour of troops drawn from the Delhi area—and Mackinnon raised such a force.  

For the protection of caravans traversing the route from the coast to Uganda, the Company had relied mainly on armed Swahili levies who, untrained, were paid little more than the porters they guarded. Each askari carried a muzzle-loader firearm; a weapon often found useless because cap powder would not ignite when dampened by seasonal rains. Desertions were common and the consequent loss of firearms was great. Since traders, Arab, Swahili and European alike, had been distributing firearms to the interior tribes for years, deserters served to extend and intensify this pattern. Noteworthy is the fact that widespread distribution of arms was a considerable factor in subsequent difficulties experienced by Government when it attempted pacification of the interior tribes.

Company posts, designed to sustain caravans, had been located at strategic points along the route inland from Mombasa to the Lake. Each post was manned by European officers and armed African levies. Among the facilities was a hut at Tsavo, mentioned by Portal, and the stations (forts) at Ndi (sic), Machakos in the Wakamba country, Dagoretti started by Lugard, Kikuyu (later Fort Smith) and Mbirri (later Fort Hall) built
by Francis Hall. Dagoretti and Fort Smith were situated on the southern periphery of Kikuyuland, just north of the "moat," while Mbirri (Fort Hall) lay some 50 miles into the interior. Each Kikuyu station was of sturdy construction and included a stockade, deep ditch filled with panjis anánd a boma surrounded by barbed wire. Fortified construction of this kind had been necessary owing to the Kikuyu practice of laying siege on Company property for long periods of time.

The military force inherited from the Company by the Protectorate was essentially poorly organized and thus lacked the cohesiveness necessary to be placed in the field against dissident tribesmen. True the force was armed; but so were the tribesmen. Fortunately certain Kikuyu clans, thanks to the efforts of people like Francis Hall, had been pacified and were now cooperating with the new Administration—especially in areas where ambitious athamaki were located. Boyes' old friend, Karure wa Gakure, is an excellent example of the aid collaborators rendered to officers of the Protectorate Administration. Karure's former connection with Boyes had sufficiently impressed him with the value of cooperation with whitemen in authority—even though Boyes' authority was somewhat specious. In 1900 Karure thus entered into "an agreement with the Protectorate officials, which enabled the British to bring Murang'a under their control largely without the use of punitive expeditions." Moreover, in order to consolidate his alliance with the Protectorate Administration, Karure rendered assistance to the CMS and other missions attempting to establish themselves in the area. Pacified clans, led by cooperative athamaki, would continue to play a useful part in the pacification process.
But other clans, often those physically removed from the immediate peripheries of Protectorate stations, were frequently hostile, less malleable than those under friendly athamaki and maintained an overt resistance to Government. Thus if force and consent were to be the twin-pillars on which the Protectorate Administration was going to base its authority, opposition, the withholding of consent, the refusal to collaborate, would auger poorly for Government prestige: disobedience would soon generate progressively from one clan to another in a continuing escalation leading to full-scale war. This the Protectorate Administration could ill afford. Pacification policy, therefore, although founded on a military solution, was to be performed on a piecemeal basis. Each pocket of Kikuyu resistance was to be eliminated when the moment was propitious, when the Protectorate Administration was sufficiently prepared to mount a punitive expedition and when provocation, the "incident," provided an excuse or justification for military action. Moreover, the "skirmish," something of a tradition in previous imperial military engagements, was to be precluded in favour of complete conquest, a sort of military "overkill," where dissident tribal elements were to be smashed to a point of no recovery.

At this point and with respect to punitive expeditions, it is interesting to compare the dictates of central authority, both the Foreign Office and the Protectorate Governor, with the facts. Both the Foreign Office, in the person of Lord Lansdowne, and Commissioner Sir Charles Eliot (1900-1904) were against a policy of mounting punitive expeditions. In laying down a set of principles Lansdowne minuted:
It is essential that officers should realise the broad lines on which His Majesty's Government wish to work in the development of the Foreign Office Protectorates. That policy is to spread their influence over the natives, and to teach them by degrees the advantages of civilization by attracting them to European centres, but only to push on outposts where there is a fair prospect of commerce, or where their establishment will be well received by the natives. It is not the wish of His Majesty's Government to force their way amongst tribes who are hostile, and, though it is unfortunately unavoidable at times to make a display of strength, action likely to provoke such a contingency should be, if possible, avoided.29

Lansdowne's statement was thus a clear indication as to how London viewed the matter of punitive expeditions. Commissioner Sir Charles Eliot was no less adamant on the matter: "I am penetrated with the conviction that it is useless to spend lives and money on subduing the barbarous inhabitants of barren deserts, and that punitive expeditions are a mistake."30 Thus we see that policy which emanated from the Foreign Office in London or the administrative centre in Nairobi, was not the same as that which was planned and executed "on the spot." Punitive expeditions were a fact of life and did take place despite the dictates of central authority. Moreover, the location of "on the spot" was not Nairobi, only some 50 miles from the geographic centre of Kikuyuland, but smaller areas like administrative posts, Kikuyu itura, spineback ridges, river crossings, forest tracks, and a host of other isolated environs of Kikuyuland. Obviously a great disparity existed between the policy-makers, even though, as in the case of Commissioner Eliot, some were near to the scene of the action, and the Protectorate Administration's local agents. Did this disparity of purpose suggest a lack of central control? Was it due, perhaps, to poor communications? Suffice to say, for the
purposes of this thesis, that such a disparity existed--of this there is little doubt.\textsuperscript{31}

**Second Phase (1902-1910): A Military Exercise**

By 1900 the Protectorate Administration began to prepare itself for police or military action in support of its efforts to effect a measure of control over the population. In 1901 a force of Protectorate Police was organized. The force totalled as high as 2000 men armed with Martini-Henry rifles. While predominantly African, the force also contained an Indian contingent and later a small number of Europeans recruited mainly to deal with an increasing number of white settlers.\textsuperscript{32} Most constables were concentrated in the towns, trading centres and settled areas. By 1902 a senior British officer, with previous experience in India, was appointed as Inspector General. Soon he secured the services of five British army drill instructors and the result, according to Robert Foran--an early recruit--was "a marked improvement in the drill, bearing, discipline and general appearance of the African ranks."\textsuperscript{33} Known as the British East Africa Police, by 1905 the force had expanded considerably and had established stations in Nairobi and Kisumu. Paramilitary in function the BEAP was led by mostly inexperienced but keen British army lieutenants seconded to duty in East Africa. Knowledge of police duties came through a process of trial and error--("and mostly the latter prevailed")--which emanated from a rigorously comprehensive on-the-job-training.
Although the BEAP was capable, and often participated in, military incursions, by far the more potent force was the East African Rifles (later King's African Rifles). Formed in 1895, under Captain Hatch, the East African Rifles were a re-organized legacy of the Company inherited by the Protectorate Administration. The regiment consisted of "two British officers, 300 Punjabis, 100 Sudanese (raised later to 250), 300 Swahilis and a 'mixed'fforce'd of 200 men." In 1895 the Protectorate had been divided into three military districts, namely, Seyyidieh and Tanaland, the Province of Ukamba (later split to form Ukamba and Kenya Provinces) and Jubaland. By 1900 the force had accrued much experience in fighting East African wars. It had participated in the Sudanese mutiny in Uganda, the Mazrui rebellion and the suppression of Wakamba slave-traders. In 1901 Hatch increased the establishment of the regiment to 1500 men and moved its headquarters to Nairobi. The Ukamba detachment was raised to four companies with posts at Machakos, Taveta and inside Kikuyuland at Mbirri (Fort Hall). Masai were recruited to supplement the Mbirri contingent.

Useful and experienced, however, as the BEAP was, by 1901 and at the behest of none other than the pacific Eliot, the force was reorganized. On November 5 the Foreign Office gave instructions to the effect that from January 1, 1902 the BEAP would become one regiment (6 battalions) to be styled the King's African Rifles. The total strength of the regiment was in 1902 some 104 officers and 4,579 men. Noteworthy at this time, also, was the separation of civil and military authority—with the subordination of the military being emphasized.
As commanders-in-chief, H.M. Commissioners were responsible for defining the object and scope of the military operations, but not for undertaking their immediate direction. Military authority was never to be exercised in opposition to, or in competition with, that of the civil power. . . .

This edict is interesting in view of what had been pointed out with respect to differences between central policy and local practice. Obviously now any military action would have to have the prior assent of the civil administration. Did this in effect mean that the highest civil authority, the Commissioner (later Governor), was informed of every military action? Or was it more likely that this instruction was interpreted by the military to mean punitive expeditions were agreed upon, "on the spot," locally, between subordinate officers of the King's African Rifles and subordinate officers of the Protectorate Administration? In view of Eliot's aversion to punitive expeditions, and those of the Foreign Secretary, it is likely that at least, as far as punitive expeditions were concerned, decisions on how, when and where, to undertake them were left to subordinate field officers. Furthermore, it is probable that those in high civil authority, Foreign Secretary, Commissioner, Governor, etc., possessed only a cursory knowledge of plans for punitive action. Indeed, perhaps in many instances, high officials were informed of events after they had taken place.

With the formation of a well-equipped, trained and experienced body of troops, the King's African Rifles, the Protectorate Administration was now in a position to react militarily to tribal hostility or provocation. The military position thus secured, at least temporarily until the next KAR reorganization (1905), administrative and military officers in
Kikuyuland turned their faces to the task of pacification: where the KAR was to act in supporting the gradual extension of native control from Nairobi to Mount Kenya. In the vanguard of administrative thrusts into Kikuyuland between 1901 and 1910, the troops did not support the administration as much as the administration supported the troops. Subjugation of the Kikuyu, with few exceptions, was a military exercise. Where pockets of resistance were found punitive expeditions were mounted with the express intention of "putting down" the incalcitrants: there was no quarter. Barbaric excesses were common and despite Eliot's comment that martial exercises should not be "allowed to override the greater claims of justice and good policy," the military ship sailed through Kikuyuland in a wave of blood and "overkill."

Boyes related that in 1901 he and Captain Wake hammered the people of Kariara for allegedly killing a Swahili along the railway line. Near Fort Hall the Gaturi Kikuyu put up a small amount of resistance and were put down easily. The Muruka Kikuyu, however, were not so easily cowed. Previously responsible for the murder of Haslam, a Company officer, the clan had accrued for themselves a reputation as troublemakers. In mid-1901, according to Meinhertzhagen, they had attacked McLellan's camp killing three porters and a policeman. A punitive expedition was carried out under S.L. Hinde and Harrison which, evidently, was insufficient in its extent and purpose: by 1902 the Muruka had retaliated by killing five Indian traders.
On 4th September Captain F.W.O. Maycock led a punitive expedition of five British officers. 115 rifles 3 K.A.R., 60 police and 300 levies into the Maruka country, and by 25th October had covered it with patrols. Some resistance was met and the expedition lost one man killed and 13 wounded. About 300 cattle and 2000 sheep and goats were taken.40

It had been a grizzly affair as is evidenced in Meinhertzhagen's account. He had given orders, for example, that in one area, "every living thing except children should be killed without mercy." Later he was to say that "every soul was either shot or bayoneted . . . we burned all the huts and razed banana plantations to the ground,"41 Meinhertzhagen's part in this grim affair was conditioned by the treatment accorded a settler by angry Kikuyu:

. . . the natives caught a settler yesterday, a white man who was trying to buy sheep . . . they dragged him to a village near the forest, where they pegged him down on the ground and wedged his mouth open; then the whole village, man, woman and child, urinated into his mouth till he was drowned. . . . As this took place yesterday, before the expedition entered the country, it cannot even be extenuated under the provocation of an attack by Government . . . the horrible death they have meted out to my countryman fills me with anger . . . it does not incline me to feel too merciful . . . I shall teach the offending village such a lesson at dawn tomorrow as will long be remembered among the Wakikuyu.42

Meinhertzhagen's drastic action on this occasion haunted him for many years and, in 1956, he noted that even then he was not sure of the correctness of his actions. "My reason," he said, "for killing all adults, including women, was that the latter had been the main instigators of not only the murder but the method of death, and it was the women who had befouled the corpse before death."43 Naturally, since a
civil officer was present and in view of the recent higher edict on the matter of administrative protocol—"the object and scope of military operations"—he was consulted on the action. "McClean, who was with me as Political Officer, was naturally consulted; though he refused to give his consent to my action, he told me he would not interfere if I thought it was just punishment, so the responsibility is entirely mine." So much for the control of military officers by members of the civil administration! Here is a prime example of "on the spot" decision-making by subordinates in both the arms of government. Doubtless this action was made the subject of a report to higher authority well after the event. Certainly permission could not have been gained from higher authority before the action took place. We shall see the results of a later military action when details of enormous casualties were transmitted to Commissioner Eliot.

In 1902 the military launched an attack on the Gaki area. The reason for the foray was associated with the murder of Goanese traders operating in the Tetu section of Nyeri. Led by Meinhertzhagen, Barlow, Hemstead and Hinde, the assault was a two-pronged affair emanating respectively from Naivasha and Fort Hall. Meinhertzhagen reached the trouble spot on December 2 and was forced to fight every inch of the way, confiscating cattle and burning huts. On that day alone he killed 20 Kikuyu at the price of two of his own troops killed and five wounded. By the end of the second day of the engagement he had confiscated over 700 head of cattle and 1000 sheep and goats. On the night of December 4 his camp was savagely attacked by Kikuyu warriors and he was able to
sustain a signal victory by killing nearly forty of them. His own losses were, as always, very light. "I must own," Meinhertzhagen remarked, "I never expected the Wakikuyu to fight like this." However, despite the resistance of the Kikuyu, hostilities came to an end with the capture of the local muthumaki, Gakere.45

But Hinde, doctor turned soldier and administrator, persisted in his efforts to subdue the Kikuyu of this area to a point where future troubles would be entirely eliminated. Moreover, he wished to build a new Protectorate Administration post on the commanding site of Nyeri. Significantly, higher authority (Eliot) had not been consulted specifically on the matter of founding the new facility.

Provision for a new station in north Kikuyu country had, however, been made in the current estimates, and in the absence of further evidence it seems that Hinde seized upon the excuse of the murdered Indians (sic) to push north and open up the district . . . later . . . Eliot expressed his satisfaction with the choice of the new site.46

Herein we see yet another excellent example of "on the spot" decision-making where action was taken locally on the initiative of subordinate officers of, in this case, the Protectorate Administration.

The column now moved off toward Mahiga on the excuse that local Kikuyu were harbouring Tetu livestock. Returning to the Nyeri vicinity after the Mahiga sortie, Hinde's force then commenced a series of "mopping up" operations designed to confiscate large numbers of cattle, sheep and goats. The area was now in a turmoil of killing, pillage and generally punitive activity; the Kikuyu were incensed to a point of escalating the whole affray. A desperate bid was made to dislodge the attackers by
assaulting their camp. Faced with superior arms and tactical strength the Kikuyu were repulsed with a loss of 50 warriors. At this point further Kikuyu attacks foundered and the fighting ended. Gakere, the muthumaki who had chosen not to throw in his lot with the British, was deported to Kismayu. Soon a group of elders sued for peace and from them was extracted a promise of security for travellers and the construction of a new road linking their side of the Aberdare Mountains with Naivasha. By the end of 1902, therefore, open hostilities in this area had ceased. By 1904 Hinde was able to report that the "Nyeri district was 'free from trouble,' with Africans coming into the station and allowing traders to enter their country without molestation."  

Meanwhile, however, the Mathira clans were becoming once more hostile. In 1899 they had been involved in the killing of Mackinder's porters. In 1903, shortly after the occupation of the Nyeri area, they attacked a number of caravans passing through the country. A British officer was also assaulted in the performance of his duties. The proximity of the white Administration in Nyeri was obviously stirring up the Mathira Kikuyu to a fresh wave of hostile activity. Since the so-called "chiefs" were also of doubtful allegiance, according to Meinhertz-hagen, a punitive expedition was necessary "to put them in the right frame of mine and to 'show them the flag.'" An attack was therefore mounted in three columns under the command of Captain Dickson, Meinhertz-hagen and Humphrey respectively. One column marched to Mathira from Fort Hall via Embu. Hundreds of livestock were confiscated, warriors were killed and huts put to the torch. Another column advanced south from
the new administrative homa at Nyeri and joined the first group near Ndia. Here they captured nearly 800 head of cattle, 2200 sheep and goats and killed 796 Mathira Kikuyu. In one itura they collected firewood and roasted the looted livestock. Even heavier casualties were inflicted on this raid than had been the case in previous punitive expeditions. The official report stated that some 400 Kikuyu had been killed. Meinhertzhagen, however, said that 1,500 killed was a modest figure. On Commissioner Eliot's instructions, however, the larger figure was omitted from Meinhertzhagen's report on the operation. "... Eliot feared that Hinde would get into trouble if such a large casualty list reached England." But even the figure of 400 killed caused some concern in London. But the matter was played down: "Hill deprecated the operations, and Lansdowne agreed that it would be better not to express approval." Whatever the actual figure, however, the fact was that the Mathira Kikuyu were finished as a native force to be reckoned with; soon they were collecting livestock and ivory and sending them to the Protectorate Administration as tokens of peace.

The next operation of significance was mounted against the Embu. Sporadic attacks had been suffered in this area by collaborators and mail runners. Itura known by the dissidents to have paid hut-tax were singled out as targets. Units of the King's African Rifles were despatched to the scene in May and June 1903. Thereafter unarmed caravans were able to traverse the area unmolested. Later in the year the armed trader Gibbons was arrested in the area by Meinhertzhagen. There is little doubt that his presence among the Embu had been a disturbing
influence. (See p. 100-2 this thesis).

On 20 February 1904 Brancker and Meinhertzhagen, under the command of Captain F.A. Dickinson, prepared themselves for a punitive expedition against the Iraini Kikuyu. Meinhertzhagen, remarked on the reasons for the expedition as due to the fact that the clan had been sending insulting messages to Hinde, stopping caravans from passing through their country and murdering several policemen. "They must learn their lesson," he remarked. The plan called for a two-pronged attack from Nyeri to the north and Fort Hall to the west. Notably, the expedition was to be accompanied by Humphrey, a civil officer. In typical fashion, Meinhertzhagen's sentiments regarding the attitudes and activities of civil officers had been expressed in a letter to his commanding officer a short time before the expedition he was now preparing:

I did not intend to stand interference in military operations from civil officials. They could control the general policy but must not interfere with operations.

Moreover, in respect of "orders" from higher authority, Meinhertzhagen pointed out that they were "sketchy in the extreme" and that the leader of the assault, Captain Dickinson, "obviously does not intend to be worried too much about them . . . never mind my orders . . . Just carry on and don't worry me too much. I'll back you up in anything you do." The fact that Meinhertzhagen had expressed his aversion to interference on the part of civil officers, coupled with the remarks of his superior, is one more indication of the lack of direction from higher authority. Sentiments thus expressed suggest beyond doubt that punitive operations
were decided upon and carried out by officers, usually military, actually, "on the spot."

On 24 February 1904 the expedition left Nyeri and Fort Hall respectively. Meinhertzhagen's column included some 250 Masai levies and 60 rifles led by Humphrey, the Political Officer, Adams and an Australian settler, Elder. The latter person had been given a contract by Hinde to dispose of captured stock on a commission basis.

By evening of the 27th Mr. Elder was able to count his profit on the basis of 325 cattle and 550 sheep and goats captured. In the early morning he departed on his way to Fort Hall and a public auction where the cattle, sheep and goats were to be sold. The column then proceeded to Guti's village. Guti, it will be recalled, was the collaborator with whom the freebooter Gibbons had been associated. At this point the column was attacked by 12 armed natives and a fight ensued which was complicated by the charge of a full-grown lion.

Adams, like an ass, shot at the lion and wounded him... I took the first 4 natives and bowled them over, killing the last as he was just going to spear Adams. My men rushed up, and between us we disposed of the rest, shooting them all... I swore at Adams for shooting lion when we were being attacked by niggers.53

Soon the column was attacked from the branches of nearby trees and Meinhertzhagen "got two machine guns up and poured a hail of bullets" into the foliage. "... as the niggers showed themselves we picked them off with riflefire. Five fell with sickening thuds."54 The day ended with the infliction of "considerable casualties on the enemy" but "only 46 cattle and 79 sheep" were confiscated.
The excitement of the previous few days had by now raised the blood of the Masai levies: they were killing indiscriminately and Meinhertzhagen was forced to kill three of them in order to restore order among members of his own force. The civil officer, Humphrey, was reputed to have been at first furious at Meinhertzhagen's behaviour "but later thought (he) had acted wisely but perhaps too harshly." Of this grizzly affair Meinhertzhagen remarked that Commissioner Eliot would doubtless take a serious view of his actions and thus he (Meinhertzhagen) would not report it.

On the following day, 3 March 1904, Meinhertzhagen received a letter from his military superior, Captain Dickinson, ordering him to retreat the area and move in the direction of the Tana River. But Meinhertzhagen disagreed with Dickinson's orders and persuaded the civil officer to move deeper into Kikuyu territory. Thus we see two sides of Meinhertzhagen. At the beginning of this operation Meinhertzhagen had written his colonel saying he "did not intend to stand interference in military operations" and on this occasion we see him encouraging a civil officer to "interfere" in a military operation. We see, also, that the initiative in this case was clearly taken by Meinhertzhagen: he was now acting contrary to the orders of his immediate superior and had presumably influenced a civil officer to support him in carrying out a course of action suitable for his own purposes.

Meinhertzhagen continued to kill Kikuyu.

Today we had several small brushes with the enemy, who . . . are now showing more fight. We killed some 24 of them today . . . for about ten minutes we had a good stand up fight . . . we bagged three of them.
Soon, however, casualties were so great that Meinhertzhagen decided to return to Fort Hall for rest and replenishment. He was proud to record that his column had killed 796 Kikuyu and had captured 782 cattle and 2150 sheep and goats. Brancker's column had captured 300 cattle and 6000 sheep and goats, while Dickinson's group confiscated 602 cattle and 4500 sheep and goats. Notably, Meinhertzhagen observed that the accompanying civil officer, Humphrey, was "still not clear in his mind regarding the division of responsibility between military and political officers when serving together on a column." A letter from Dickinson, however, was considered to be appropo—"for guidance"—(as) "Humphrey is a bit inclined to interfere, and this should put things right." Thus when Meinhertzhagen wished to avoid carrying out Dickinson's orders he turned to Humphrey for help: conversely, when Meinhertzhagen was concerned about Humphrey interfering in military matters, he turned to Dickinson for help! Importantly, the initiative on both military and civil matters was being taken by Meinhertzhagen—a prime example of "on the spot" decision-making.

The 7 March saw the end of operations in Iraini as Kikuyu "chiefs" submitted to Government in Fort Hall and offered to aid the Administration in an attack on the Embu. Thereafter, on the 8 March 1904, the Embu expedition, comprising 66 King's African Rifles, 15 Police and 400 Masai levies, together with 150 Kikuyu spearmen from the recently defeated Iraini Kikuyu, left to engage the Embu. After several skirmishes, during which the column inflicted losses on the Embu, the troops returned to Fort Hall. Notably Meinhertzhagen felt, in this occasion, that the
expedition had not indulged itself sufficiently in "overkill," that the Embu "had not been sufficiently hammered" and that he would "like to go back at once and have another go at them!" Nevertheless, 250 Embu had been killed and some 2000 cattle, sheep and goats confiscated. Despite, however, the severity of the Embu expedition, Sub-Commissioner Hinde (Fort Hall) appeared still to be concerned about control of the area. One month after Meinhertzhagen's attack on the Embu, Hinde minuted to Eliot that the "upper Iraini and Embu are defiant, and will probably shortly recommence their raids on the friendly natives in the Fort Hall District and Mumoni, in the Kitui District."

The evidence seems to suggest that Embu were disturbed by British use of Kikuyu in punitive expeditions against them. D.A. Low asserts that the 1904 attack was a response to Embu attacks on "Kikuyu who had submitted to British jurisdiction." Here we see an example of the implications of a divide and rule policy. In the Embu case the British had used against them the conquered Iraini Kikuyu—their neighbours—and thus Hinde's concern about Embu intransigence was a direct result of his policy to smash them with the aid of conquered levies. Hence, because the 1904 expedition did not "smash" the Embu, was not an "overkill" operation, native defiance in the area continued. Moreover, the Embu continued to mount attacks on Iraini Kikuyu who had cast in their lot with the British. Moyse-Bartlett supports this conclusion by stating that "the Embu were still very restless, and showed unremitting hostility towards any tribe friendly to the British."

Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that the Embu showed hostility to conquered Kikuyu clans
now used against them in punitive expeditions; a response caused by a policy of divide and rule.

In mid-1905 the British were forced to return once more to Embu. Hinde's "concern" about the south-east corner of his domain had to be eliminated. It was not, however, until June 1906, that matters came to a head. As a result of the killing of Iraini Kikuyu "protected" by the Protectorate Administration, the Embu were attacked by a large punitive expedition intent upon a final solution to the problem. Supported by police and units of the King's African Rifles, Captain Maycock combed the "broken, wooded ridges and deep marshy valleys of the lower slopes of Mount Kenya" looking for opportunities to smash hostile pockets of Embu. "A number (of Embu) were killed and large quantities of stock captured, most of which however was returned." By the 19 July 1906 all resistance was at an end and the police and K.A.R. withdrew at a cost of 2 men killed and 14 wounded. The Embu District Record Book records that thereafter, "the tribe submitted and the present Embu station was started, the Civil Administration taking charge in July 1906." At the same time a garrison of K.A.R. was moved from Nyeri to Embu until 1908 when it was moved to Meru. Notably, two years after the removal of occupation forces, fighting again broke out on the Embu border. In 1910, therefore, owing to the truculence of the Tharaka and Mutejwa people, a patrol under Lieutenant L.H. Soames consisting of half 'A' Company, 2 K.A.R., was ordered to carry out punitive measures. A few casualties had to be inflicted, and the lesson was sufficient to restore order and ensure the future cooperation of the tribe.
It had taken fully six years to subdue the Embu.

There were two almost distinct periods of pacification; namely, the periods 1895 to 1902 and 1902 to 1910. For summary purposes it may be seen that the early period, 1895 to 1902, saw the Protectorate Administration inherit from the Company a territory which had been profoundly disturbed by wageni and European armed traders. Moreover, government of the territory was initially based upon a set of criteria outlined in the broadest terms. Practical administration, therefore, was devolved onto District Officers faced with the day to day problems of implementing the pax. Some officers were experienced and others not. Former Company men generally adapted themselves well while others lacking experience and motivation degenerated to a point of ineffectiveness. An example of effective "on the spot" administration was the case of Francis Hall. Hall appears to have been a person naturally endowed with personal characteristics suitable to meet the strenuous demands of frontier life. During his short tenure as a Protectorate Administration official in southern Kikuyuland, Hall was able to successfully engender influence among several notable athamaki. Athamaki, particularly Kinanjui, collaborated with Hall for purposes of personal prestige and advantage. Since there was no established tradition of "chieftainship" among the Kikuyu, however, members of the tribe, it is surmised, found it difficult to understand the British concept of "chief." The use of athamaki instituted in effect a policy of divide and rule. Some Kikuyu "cooperated," for personal advantage, while others became increasingly hostile. Hostile Kikuyu may have been perceived by other Kikuyu as being "patriots" while
Kinanjui and others considered traitors. Notably, the Administration's influence was confined to areas under the domination of the athamaki and often within proximity of former Company stations.

In broad terms the period 1895 to 1902 may be seen as a time when the Protectorate Administration began to "settle in," gain a "toe-hold" within the regions under its jurisdiction. The period may be exemplified by a suggestion that the Administration undertook little more than a "holding exercise" in the interior regions—especially Kikuyuland. The Administration, however, did during this period begin to prepare itself for the effective pacification phase. For example, the former Ukamba Province was roughly halved to make way for Kenia Province—an administrative creation which embraced Kikuyuland. Moreover, the Provincial Administration was re-located to Nairobi—a growing centre within close proximity to the scene of impending efforts to pacify the Kikuyu. With the completion of the railway from Mombasa to Nairobi and beyond, communications were improved and thus made Kikuyuland accessible to troops and military materials. Roads were also constructed linking Nairobi with the southern interior of the new province. Furthermore, negotiations, although protracted, were commenced with the Masai. The object of these negotiations was to effectively remove the Masai from prospective trouble sites, areas of possible conflict between Masai and Kikuyu, Masai and European, settlers; or Masai and the Protectorate Administration. In preparation, also, for the 1902 to 1910 phase of subjugation, the Protectorate Administration removed from the Kikuyu interior a number of armed traders, who, for some years had constituted a disturbing influence on the Kikuyu.
The period 1902 to 1910 may be seen as a time when the Protectorate Administration tightened its grip on Kikuyuland. By 1902 the Company military legacy, previously poorly organized and led, was re-organized to form properly constituted para-military and military units. Led by professional soldiers from the British or British-Indian army, equipped with the latest rifles, patrols of the King's African Rifles, police and armed levies, invaded the Kikuyu interior on the slightest provocation. Military tactics changed from the traditional skirmishing to "overkill." With the object of a total elimination of all resistance, strong patrols raided Kikuyu itura, put huts to the torch and killed often without discrimination. Acts of barbarism on both sides were common. During these forays military officers took the initiative in the field and actions were often quite contrary to the dictates of higher civil or military authority. Disputes broke out between subordinate civil and military officers as to the conduct of operations. Areas of responsibility were not clearly defined and reports to higher authority were purposely "toned down." Commissioner Eliot was either aware of what was taking place in Kikuyuland or turned a blind eye to the proceedings—leaving matters to those on the spot. Subjugation of the Kikuyu was ideally a joint venture; civil and military officers were to work side by side. In effect civil officers were often present on punitive expeditions but, if we are to take Meinhertzhagen's behaviour as typical—and there is no reason to doubt it was not—then clearly initiatives in the field were taken by military officers. In effect, therefore, the establishment of the Protectorate Administration was almost entirely a military affair. Moreover,
the confiscation of cattle in large numbers—to be sold in the markets of Fort Hall—guaranteed the continuing sustenance of expensive military adventures and seriously disrupted Kikuyu economy to a point where further resistance was useless. By 1910 the pax Britannica was a fact in Kikuyuland.
FOOTNOTES

1"Galbraith, Mackinnon, p. 235 and quoted from correspondence. Mackenzie to F.O., 11 April 1894, F.O. 2/73, P.R.O.

2G.H. Mungam, British Rule in Kenya, 1895-1912, (London: OUP, 1966), p. 17. Mungan states also, in respect of the matter of policy, that "local matters could be referred back to London. If they were urgent they could be decided on the spot, and the decision sent to London for approval, which was generally forthcoming. But in the international ferment of the 1890's the Foreign Secretary was, on the whole, far too occupied with weighty international matters to concern himself with the minutiae of an obscure African Protectorate. Indeed, one of his main anxieties seems to have been that it should remain obscure... He (the Foreign Secretary) entrusted the day to day supervision of the territory to Sir Clement Hill (who) had very little knowledge of practical administration."

3Ibid., pp. 50, 58-9. "The very titles of East African officers were modelled on Indian precedents. In May 1898 it was emphasized that the jurisdiction, powers and duties of the Commissioner and Consul-General in the East Africa Protectorate should be equated with those of the Governor-General; Governor or Lieutenant-Governor of India; Sub-Commissioners with Commissioners; Collectors with Collectors or Deputy Commissioners; and Assistant Collectors with Assistant Collectors or Assistant Commissioners."

4Ibid., p. 16.

5Ibid., p. 47. See also Great Britain, Cmd. 3683 (1897) passim for details of the early East African Protectorate administrative structure. Harding recommended "that four provinces should be created...; Coast, Ukamba, Tanaland and Jubaland." Kikuyuland was incorporated into Ukamba Province and was to be administered by Ainsworth from Machakos--some 50 miles south of Kikuyuland.

6See Goldsmith, John Ainsworth, for details of Ainsworth's career.
7. Mungeam, British Rule, p. 49.


9. Sir Charles Eliot, Governor of the East African Protectorate (1900-1904) was perhaps an exception. He was a distinguished scholar "more like a don or priest than high official." See Meinhertzhagen, Kenya Diary, p. 31. Eliot's fields of interest were many and varied and included a brilliant command of languages and a scholarly knowledge of the common sea-slug.


15. Ibid. Later to be known as the Central Province (1933).

16. Ibid., pp. 56-7.

17. Interestingly, despite the Administration's former aversion to Boyes, he is reputed to have taken part in a Government sponsored punitive expedition during 1902.

18. Probably more accurately translated as "soothsayer" rather than "chief."


Moyse-Bartlett, The King's, p. 95.


It is apparent that throughout the early history of the Protectorate the Indian Government was unwilling to do little more than dispense advice and second token numbers of Indian troops.

R.W. Beachey, "The Arms Trade in East Africa," in Journal of African History, vol. 3, (1962), pp. 451-67, gives a well-developed account of the history of arms and the arms trade in East Africa. Commenting on the matter of arms distribution through deserters, Beachey says that "There are many instances of arms falling into the hands of natives as a result of carelessness or of largesse on the part of Europeans. Caravans were often attacked or sometimes discarded their supplies, before commencing the long journey to the coast. Many cases of desertion accounted for the loss of firearms." In summing up the impact of the arms trade on East Africa, Beachey declares that between 1885 and 1902 "two points stand out. First, the immense volume of trade . . . during the period there must have entered the German and British sphere some 1,000,000 firearms, well over 4,000,000 lbs. of gunpowder and many million caps and rounds of ammunition. The second point is, where did all these weapons go?

Swahili (sharpened pieces of hardwood or bamboo placed closely together and designed to impede the forward progress of an attacker).
27 Swahili (a cluster of administrative buildings).


29 Lansdowne to Eliot, 19 July 1901, F.O., 2/443 and quoted in Mungeam, British Rule, p. 79.

30 Eliot to Lansdowne, Confidential, 1 October 1901, F.O. 2/450 and quoted in ibid.

31 Mungeam, British Rule, pp. 84-5 has said that Eliot appears to have turned a comparatively blind eye to what was going on in his more distant areas. He left his local officers to do what they thought best and backed them up to the extent of omitting vital statistics to minimize the harsh realities of life on the frontier." Furthermore, the Eastern Province of Uganda was added to the East Africa Protectorate in March 1902 and "the many challenges of the new territory increasingly occupied Eliot's attention."


34 Moyse-Bartlett, The King's, p. 102. Much of the information on the formation of both the East African Rifles and the subsequent King's African Rifles has been derived from this excellent and standard work.

35 Ibid., p. 130.
The Meru territory (north-east of Mount Kenya) was an exception and was occupied without fighting because the clans in this area sought the protection of the British against their tribal enemies. In other areas administrators resorted to ingenious gambits designed to overcome prospective hostility. Among the Tharaka Kikuyu, for example, Ainsworth used organized dancing in an effort to aid his personal program of pacification. Hayes-Sadler preached the playing of gramaphone records in order to convey the messages of his administration. See Charles Dundas, "African Crossroads," (London: Macmillan, 1955), p. 27 and Huxley, "Whiteman's," vol. 1, p. 226.


Moyse-Bartlett, *The King's*, p. 204.


Ibid., p. 50.

Ibid., p. 52.

Ibid.

Ibid., pp. 64-75.

47 Ibid.


49 Mungeam, *British Rule*, p. 84.


51 Ibid., p. 136.

52 Ibid., p. 139.

53 Ibid., p. 140. Adams, a drug addict, died in 1906.

54 Ibid., p. 141.

55 Ibid., p. 144.

56 Ibid., pp. 145-6.

57 Ibid.

58 Ibid., p. 152.


60 Low, "British East," p. 25.


63 Moyse-Bartlett, The King's, p. 206.

64 Saberwal, "Historical Notes," p. 38.

65 Moyse-Bartlett, The King's, p. 206.


67 Moyse-Bartlett, The King's, p. 206.
By the mid-nineteenth century Kikuyu society had completed its migration from Shungwaya to its present habitat. Tribes constituting the Kikuyu were institutionally uncentralised, egalitarian, acephalous and unstable.

Instability was a condition of several factors. The constant search for water, grass, agricultural land, gave forth to a fluid situation where pockets of Kikuyu formed, broke off and re-formed, rose to local prominence and declined in an undulation determined by prevailing local conditions. Proximity, also, to marauding Masai, forced the Kikuyu into a defensive posture which conditioned their attitudes with respect to the intrusion of others.

Like the Masai, the Kikuyu were composed of constituent tribal polities, with authority residing in the hands of elders of one generation and handed down to succeeding generations at regular intervals of time. The itwika, a ceremony devised to enable one group to take over power from another, served to transfer authority in an orderly way and without friction. Elders clearly controlled Kikuyu polity but only at a local level. The tribe as a whole did not act in concert for either social or military purposes.

Perhaps the most significant ceremony associated with tribal integration was the irua. The irua served to identify yearly age-sets through collective circumcision. Each age-set was given the name of a
significant event taking place during the year of collective circumcision. Indoctrinates were said to be bound together by the "very closest association to each other." Kikuyu then progressively became Junior Warriors, Senior Warriors, Learning Elders, Junior Elders and finally Senior Elders. Those who displayed the necessary qualities and lived long enough, attained the venerable status of Priest.

Age-sets contained ruling and non-ruling halves of the tribe (Mwangi or Maina). The ruling half carried out legislative and governmental tasks while the non-ruling half "observed" the machinery of power at work. When power changed hands (itwika) former non-ruling elders became ruling elders; former ruling elders became non-ruling elders. Thus Kikuyu polity was egalitarian. Importantly, the Kikuyu possessed no chiefs. Chieftainship, a newer form of polity, could be reasonably associated with more "settled," more static, Bantu populations like the Buganda, while acephaly is more traditionally a form of socio-political organization practised by pastoralists like the Masai. It is more than probable, therefore, that Kikuyu acephaly, as a system of government, was "borrowed" from the Masai.

Significantly, acephaly did not preclude the development of individualism. Indeed, individualism in Kikuyu society was actually encouraged. Young men possessed of unusual personal characteristics, leadership qualities, attributes in military, legal and political affairs, were hurried along the road to seniority. Known as athamaki, young men so possessed were in no sense chiefs. Because tribal power was in the hands of elders, athamaki were never seen as leaders of the tribal community.
but rather as men possessed of exceptional talent. Since military affairs played a large part in Kikuyu life—especially in view of the marauding Masai—the prominence of many *athamaki*, Waiyaki, Karure, Kinanjui and others, may have been derived from their respective military abilities. Furthermore, since imperialist attempts to impose sovereignty over Kikuyu were founded upon military means, it is natural that *athamaki* possessed of military skills rose to prominence either as collaborators or resistors. Punitive patrols, skirmishes, cattle confiscation, indeed the whole atmosphere of the colonial enterprise, engendered, therefore, the rise of Kikuyu skilled in the military arts.

The conquest of the Kikuyu was made easier by the organizational and technical superiority of the alien power. Conquest would have been much more difficult, more protracted, had the Kikuyu, however, been wholly opposed to helping the process. "Finding the chief" was typically the problem of the alien power. Being "found" was frequently the response of Kikuyu *athamaki*. Indeed, some Kikuyu could not wait to be "found"—they offered themselves! Importantly, the imperial problem—"finding" the chief—rarely took into account African aspirations or initiatives in the colonial process. Kikuyu faced with the inevitability of conquest could either resist, collaborate or simply acquiesce. Only recently, it seems, have scholars given consideration to African rationality on the matter of choice. Africans, the Kikuyu especially, have been variously described as men dedicated to "doom and darkness," to "ignorance" and "savagery," over whom clever and sophisticated imperialists were able, without much trouble, to impose the trick of Indirect Rule. African
resistors, like Waiyaki, have been seen, furthermore, not as patriots but as individuals pursuing lost causes and lost prestige. Kikuyu athamaki who accommodated themselves to the imperial presence—who, indeed, "offered themselves before they were 'found'"—might reasonably be described as realists, "individualists" attuned to change and possessed of acumen sufficient to enhance significantly their personal authority.

The Kikuyu could not avoid conquest: military action against them was too strong—especially after 1902. But they were not simply objects or victims of processes of change set in motion by the European invaders. Kikuyu themselves contributed to these changes by effecting a balance of power. The "balance," even when tipped in the European favour, ensured that some initiatives remained in Kikuyu hands within the colonial order. Tribal traditions and Kikuyu aspirations thus preserved rendered always the possibility of negotiation with the European power. Kikuyu could and often did bargain agreements, could moderate the aggressive thrust of the Protectorate Administration and did assert themselves as junior partners in the colonial process. Alliances between athamaki and Europeans were therefore necessarily two-way in both construction and purpose. Within any compact there existed a dual realization that one element could not proceed without the concurrence or aid of the other. In this way a mutually acceptable balance of power, whose tilt was determined by bargain and concession, was manifest as the lynchpin of the colonial administration.

Some Kikuyu profited exceedingly by making full use of the balance of power—especially individual athamaki who showed a marked ability to
turn situations to their own advantage. A wide variety of gambits were employed to produce advantages for both individuals and groups. Kinanjui, Hall's former *Fidus Achates*, became something of a "personage" in the colonial administration. Karure, Wangombe and his son, Nderi, Gutu and others rose to prominence under the auspice of a grateful *pax Britannica*. Often given the grandiloquent title of Paramount Chief each was nothing of the kind: they were merely *athamaki* or "individualists." Furthermore, the collaborators later developed into a class who were power and money oriented like their mentors. Certainly the collaborative nexus heavily conditioned the course of political, social and economic change in Kikuyu society. As collaborators *athamaki* were the prime agents of change in the transitory process from tribalism to a colonial economy: they acted as essential intermediaries, as tax collectors and labour bosses for and on behalf of the colonial power. In so doing they speeded the processes of change and thus heralded a powerful and sustained disruption of tribal society.

Most European administrators, men like Ainsworth, Hall and others, appeared aware of the limits of their power and thus approached the problem of imperial expansion on a pragmatic basis. Plagued by shortages of money, the Administration was thin on the ground—and knew it. Little by little, therefore, it was forced to exert influence by use of collaborators, tactics of "divide and rule" and small military adventures. Where Kikuyu strength was evident initial penetration was avoided. Pockets of Kikuyu resistance developed in areas remote from regions under the jurisdiction of government officers or friendly *athamaki*. 
These pockets were left on their own until such time as the Protectorate Administration acquired the means to eliminate them by force. Then well-armed forces were despatched and Kikuyu who further resisted were hunted, scattered and finally crushed. Initial British penetration of the Kikuyu interior was due, therefore, to a series of complex permutations between administrators like Ainsworth and Hall, and sets of Kikuyu allies. Subsequent penetration was a much more predetermined and organized affair involving strong military forces. Moreover, whereas it might be said that initial efforts at penetration were associated with "pacification," subsequent European presence in and around Kikuyu pockets of resistance, was clearly associated with military conquest.

Military conquest of the Kikuyu was not a policy condoned by central authority. Both Eliot and Landsdowne were opposed to punitive actions against Africans. Yet during the period of their tenure as policy-makers, violence against the Kikuyu was more the rule than the exception. Eliot, indeed, located only a few miles from the scene of action, appeared either unaware of the extent of violence or turned towards it a blind eye. Perhaps he realized that, given the problem of daily communications with officers on the ground, it was virtually impossible to control events. Accordingly he either could not or would not contain local officers. Thus it is evident that administrative decisions or plans for punitive action were formulated on the spot. Moreover, reports of local events were either "toned down" by junior officers or were never submitted. When made aware of high Kikuyu casualty
figures, indeed, even Commissioner Eliot himself was not averse to tampering in such a way as to convey to London an incorrect impression of events. There is no doubt that during the period of Eliot's tenure little control was exercised over both administrative and military officers in the field.

A matter also of some significance—on the subject of administrative control—was that while administrative predominance over military affairs had been established by edict, in actual fact the reverse was taking place.

"Military authority," the order had stated, "was never to be exercised in opposition to, or in competition with, that of the civil power." And yet, it is patently obvious, at least from Meinhertzhagen's account, that the so-called "superiority" of the civil power over military officers in the field was nothing more than a farce. Humphrey, for example, a civil officer attached to punitive expeditions, was seen to be something of a "nuisance" who, it appears, gave consent, albeit "grudging," to wanton pillage and barbarity.

Decisions to burn villages, confiscate cattle and to kill Kikuyu without discrimination, were made locally and without
regard to the dictates of the administrative centre. "Pacification," a moderate approach to the imposition of the pax in Kikuyuland, was therefore turned into "conquest" by "on the spot" junior officers. The conquest of Kikuyuland falls into two distinct phases; 1895-1901 and 1902-1910. The first phase, 1895-1901, may best be described as a "holding exercise" during which the British "prepared" themselves for further penetrations of Kikuyuland. The Protectorate Administration's military inheritance from the Company was nothing more than a "hotch-potch," a rabble with no central authority or local control. Indeed, the Company's failure in Kikuyuland can be partly attributed to the fact that it was unable to maintain its presence through constructive and sustained use of force. Moreover, Company levies, Masai "friendlies" and others, actually had contributed to the Company's demise: their raids on Kikuyu shambas, latterly condoned and even encouraged, tended to exacerbate Kikuyu hostility to a point where the Company's position became untenable. Thus when the Protectorate Administration inherited the Company's "hotch-potch" it was as powerless as the Company had been to expand its range of operations. Furthermore, Kikuyu hostility continued at much the same level of intensity as during the period of Company tenure.

During the first phase, also, Kikuyu hostility was fanned by the influence of the armed traders. Whereas the Company had been only moderately successful in the cultivation of athamaki, it is apparent that John Boyes, acting only for himself, used them effectively over large areas of Kikuyuland. He became, to use his own words, "King of the
Wa-kikuyu." Moreover, Boyes' activities among the Kikuyu actually took place while the Imperial power "ruled" Kikuyuland. This was not so remarkable a feat when it is considered that the Protectorate Administration was powerless to stop him. Boyes' rise to prominence can thus be seen as deriving from the obvious weakness of the Protectorate Administration: it simply lacked the "teeth" to enforce its will over all of the Kikuyu and the armed traders.

The latter period of the first phase (1900) saw the Protectorate Administration begin to reorganize itself in preparation for its more permanent establishment in the interior. A police force was inaugurated and the "hotch-potch" reconstituted into the King's African Rifles. Kikuyuland became Kenia Province (sic) and its administration moved to Nairobi. The railway, now completed beyond the fringes of Kikuyuland, improved communications from the port of Mombasa. Kikuyuland, also, became more easily accessible via roads radiating from Nairobi. Importantly, the Masai threat was removed from the southern periphery of the new Province. Finally, the armed traders were arrested and removed from the area. By 1902 the Protectorate Administration was ready to engage any remaining hostile Kikuyu.

The second phase, 1902-1910, may best be described as being a time of military conquest. With little or no provocation, British led African askari of both the police and King's African Rifles, together with hordes of "friendlies," invaded Kikuyuland. Notably, military tactics changed from the traditional skirmish to "overkill." With the object of the elimination of all dissidents, patrols penetrated pockets of
resistance, killed men, women and children without discrimination and put native huts to the torch. Acts of barbarism were common on both sides. Cattle and goats, essential to the Kikuyu economy, were confiscated and sold to help finance expeditions. Athamaki joined in the rampage when expedient: others brought their respective areas of jurisdiction into the imperial fold. In this way resistance was smashed and by 1910 the pax Britannica was a fact in Kikuyuland. The Kikuyu had not been pacified: they had been conquered. Moreover, they had been conquered from both outside and inside their social order; by Europeans and athamaki in a complex and sustained interaction.

European penetration radically altered Kikuyu society. Already in flux, stressed by problems of recent settlement in a new habitat, the attentions of wageni looking for ivory and produce, and marauding Masai, Kikuyu society was further divided by European intrusion. Reacting to European influence, the Company, the traders, or the Protectorate Administration, competitive elements in Kikuyu society embraced either collaboration by action, collaboration by acquiescence, or resistance. The European impact thus opened up serious rifts in Kikuyu society; it sharpened existing cleavages and disturbed traditional rankings of dominance and hierarchy. It produced, also, an unevenness in development between regions dominated either by collaborating athamaki or resistors: while one region, for example, was gaining through association with Europeans, another, perhaps only a few miles away, was being smashed. These factors contributed significantly to the creation of even deeper social and political disunities. The history of the Kikuyu and their subsequent relationships with the British would prove to be a strong reflection of
the traumatic effects of the early imperial presence.
APPENDICES


Appendix B  Notes on the Protectorate Administration, Ukamba Province, 1895-1897.
Notes on the Composition and Activities of Military Forces, Ukamba Province, 1897.
Notes on the Police Establishment, Ukamba Province, 1895-1897.
Notes on Roads and Communications, East Africa Protectorate, 1895-1897.
Notes on Revenue and Expenditure, 1895-1897.

### Appendix A

**Kikuyu Age-set Names and Name-Associations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kyangige</td>
<td>Year of the locusts</td>
<td>1932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magoko</td>
<td>Wattle bark</td>
<td>1931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mambo leo</td>
<td>Modern Practices</td>
<td>1930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mogwongo</td>
<td>Elephant tusk</td>
<td>1929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyendano</td>
<td>Love</td>
<td>1928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyangige</td>
<td>Year of the locusts</td>
<td>1927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kya ndege</td>
<td>Year of the aeroplane</td>
<td>1926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karebe</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>1925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gachithe</td>
<td>Cow Tail used as ornament</td>
<td>1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bendera</td>
<td>Flag</td>
<td>1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kya hiti</td>
<td>Year of the Hyaenas</td>
<td>1922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gathetha</td>
<td>Beads or necklace</td>
<td>1921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matoto or noti</td>
<td>notes</td>
<td>1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kepande</td>
<td>Registration certificate</td>
<td>1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ndarama</td>
<td>Drum</td>
<td>1918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kya Lyoa</td>
<td>Year of the famine</td>
<td>1917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gechogwa</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>1916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firimbi</td>
<td>whistle</td>
<td>1915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gathuthe</td>
<td>species of weed</td>
<td>1914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romemo</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>1913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohere</td>
<td>Scabies</td>
<td>1912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Njaramba</td>
<td>Courageous</td>
<td>1911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanorya</td>
<td>Kind of disease</td>
<td>1910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makanga</td>
<td>Cotton clothes</td>
<td>1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gethei</td>
<td>Maize mill</td>
<td>1908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Njege</td>
<td>Porcupines</td>
<td>1907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngara</td>
<td>Rats</td>
<td>1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyoto</td>
<td>Wolves</td>
<td>1905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machai</td>
<td>Iron sheets</td>
<td>1904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gatego</td>
<td>Venereal disease</td>
<td>1903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamande</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>1902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Njangiri</td>
<td>wanderers</td>
<td>1901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ndimo</td>
<td>kind of chalk</td>
<td>1900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

Notes on the Protectorate Administration,
Ukamba Province, 1895-1897.

Table Showing Names, Administrative Positions and Pay of European Officers in Ukamba Province (1897).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-Commissioner</th>
<th>Teita District (D.O.)</th>
<th>Pay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J. Ainsworth (H.Q. Machakos)</td>
<td>500 pounds/year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J.V. Weaver</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E. Goldie Taubman</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F.G. Hall</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C.R.W. Lane</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E. Russell</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not yet organized</td>
<td>NIl</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Cost of Ukamba Province Administration: 2050 pounds/year
Total Cost of Kenia District (Kikuyu Tribal Area): 650 pounds/year

It can be seen from the foregoing table that Ukamba Province, a vast area, was in 1897 administered by 6 officers including one Sub-Commissioner, John Ainsworth, who doubled as a District Officer in the Athi River District. Kenia District population is estimated at 300,000 Kikuyu and approximately 23,000 Masai and was actually administered by only two officers, Francis Hall and E. Russell. This gives approximately a ratio of 160,000 natives per officer! It is thus hardly surprising that little control was exercised over regions beyond the immediate vicinity of Protectorate Administration stations. In Kenia Province (or Kikuyuland) the Administration was indeed "thin on the ground".
Notes on the Composition and Activities of Military Forces,
Ukamba Province, 1897.

(a) The total military force for the East African Protectorate in 1897 was 1,120 men. Of this number the Ukamba contingent numbered 144 although there were some 200 levies recruited from local African tribes who were employed "for the defence of the European stations against possible attacks by hostile natives..." Use seems to have been made of certain Africans to act as leaders of the armed levies. Of some significance, as can be determined from the table below, is the fact that Swahili and Sudanese troopers were used extensively in Kikuyu, Wakamba and Masai tribal areas. The length of their service was normally three years.

Ukamba Province
Troop Disposition (1897)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>African</th>
<th>Caps</th>
<th>Lts</th>
<th>Sgts</th>
<th>Corp.</th>
<th>Bug</th>
<th>Ptes</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kikuyuland (Swahili troops)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machakos (Sudanese troops)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngongo Bagas (Sudanese troops)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) Noticeable from the foregoing table is the fact that the Kikuyu area had considerably more troops stationed than Wakamba or Masai territory. Machakos, the key administrative base of Ukamba Province, was garrisoned by only 53 troops compared to 70 for Kikuyuland. Perhaps it can usefully be inferred from this that both the Masai and Wakamba tribes were considered less of a threat than the Kikuyu. In the case of the Masai there were reasons to believe that their military power was on the wane by the end of the nineteenth century. Notably, permanent barracks were built at Ngongo Bagas whereas troops quartered in Kikuyuland lived in temporary huts. This would indicate that the military authorities had considered the need for a permanent occupation of Masai territory whilst troops in Kikuyuland were free to move in any direction from their temporary quarters. Not a well disciplined force, their chief offences seem to have been "irregularities when on duty"—a phrase of the most ominous connotations.
Notes on the Police Establishment,
Ukamba Province, 1895-1897.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ukamba Province</th>
<th>Cost (Rupees)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Machakos</td>
<td>2,040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outpost</td>
<td>3,736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kikuyu</td>
<td>10,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngongo</td>
<td>included in Kikuyu above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kibwezi</td>
<td>4,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ndi</td>
<td>4,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Cost Wages</strong></td>
<td>29,268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arms, Ammunition, rations.</strong></td>
<td>68,108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Cost</strong></td>
<td>97,376</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note the higher cost of police services for Kikuyu/Masai areas in comparison to remainder of Ukamba Province. This may be indicative of the amount of police activity necessary to sustain the administration of the area. Notably, Ukamba Province in which Kikuyu, Masai and Wakamba tribes were resident, cost more for police services than the combined total of the remaining three provinces of the East Africa Protectorate, i.e. in police wages 29,268 rupees against 23,088 rupees.
The only true road ran from Mazeras, near Mombasa, to the Kedong River on the eastern boundary of the Uganda Protectorate. The road consisted of two sections. The first section ran from Mazeras to Tsavo, a distance of 185 miles, and was referred to as the Mackinnon Road. Named after the founder of the Imperial East Africa Company it was subsequently referred to by Sir Gerald Portal as nothing more than an "overgrown track".

The second section of the road ran from Kibwezi to Kedong, a distance of 130 miles, and on to Victoria Nyanza on the Lake. At a convenient point a branch road was constructed west to the administrative centre of Machakos and thence to Athi, Nairobi and Kikuyu. The Province of Ukamba, seen by Hardinge as the "most uncivilized division of the territory" was better provided with roads than the other Provinces and the construction of roads was "welcomed by local Headmen." At Machakos the Wakamba even volunteered to construct roads "at their own expense." The remaining roads throughout the Protectorate were mere paths cut through the bush which, according to Hardinge, were well-known and well used.

Along the main road to Uganda various means of transportation were tried. The first section proved difficult for carts hauled by bullocks due to the presence of Tsetse Fly. The second section, between Kibwezi and Kikuyu, was considered free of Tsetse Fly and thus passable by Bullock cart. Transport between Kibwezi and the coast by rail was possible after 1897. Experiments were conducted with camels but proved unsuccessful due to the high mortality rate of the beasts. Horses were used and to some extent donkeys also. By far the most popular method of transportation was the use of human porters. African porters were recruited mostly in Mombasa, Rabai and the Teita country to the southeast of Mount Kilimanjaro. Notably some Kikuyu had been persuaded to carry loads but were found unsuitable for long distances. Hardinge reported that in 1897 about 1,100 known porters resided in the Mombasa area and 600 of this number were distributed at key points along the road to the Lake. In Rabai, also, about 1000 men were available to supplement the regular work force on a part-time basis. Few would traverse the northern reaches of the road through Kikuyu country.

The average wages of porters amounted to approximately 10 rupees per month. (A Rupee was worth approximately 1 shilling and twopence sterling.) Each porter was paid also 4 rupees per month for posho (maize meal). Head porters were paid 20 to 50 rupees per month. Porters could carry about 70 pounds on their heads. 2,500 loads per year were required to sustain Protectorate Administration stations along the road: 7000 loads
were required yearly to sustain the British in Uganda.

A private firm, Smith, Mackenzie Company was initially given the contract for cartage to Uganda. In 1897, however, the Administration took on the responsibility only to give it up to armed European Traders like John Boyes.

The following table illustrates the cost of porterage and the number of loads to key administrative stations along the road in the year 1897.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loads of Trade Goods, Expend. (approx)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provisions and Stores. in Rupees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ndi Station 786 5,895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kibwezi 91 1,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machakos (Admin. H.Q.) 763 19,075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kikuyu 136 3,672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong> 1,776 30,462</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that Machakos, the administrative centre for Ukamba Province, including the Kikuyu areas, had the highest expenditure, while Kikuyu, a sub-station in Kikuyuland, received considerably less in stores, goods and general provisions. This may be indicative of the fact that Government stations in Kikuyuland provisioned themselves locally--often at the expense of the Kikuyu.

**Mail**

Mail communications were of the utmost necessity to the Administration resident in the interior. Oversea mail came by steamer to Mombasa and thence overland to the various administrative stations. For the interior part of the journey mail was carried by runners who covered great distances in comparatively short periods of time. The first 110 miles, to Ndi, was covered in four days. At Ndi the mail was transferred to Wakamba runners sent down from Machakos by Sub-Commissioner Ainsworth. Wakamba runners then travelled the next 245 miles to Kikuyu where they handed their loads to Masai. Each load for this part of the journey was 30 pounds weight. Masai runners then carried their loads the next 245 miles to Eldama Ravine. The total distance of 495 miles was covered in 20 days or approximately 25 miles per day. Twenty-six loads were dispatched inland per month.

**Posts and Telegraphs**

To 1897 there was no completed telegraph line inland. A line was being built, however, along the line of the railway at that time under construction.
The Protectorate was connected by telegraph from Mombasa to Zanzibar and Europe. Thus the interior could be reached from England via Mombasa and then the normal mail service delivery by runner. The cable was constantly breaking down and was very inefficient.
Notes on Revenue and Expenditure, 1895-1897.

(a) Revenue and expenditure for 9 months between the creation of the Protectorate and the beginning of the financial year were as follows:

Actual receipts ...... 22,865 pounds
Actual expenditure ... 77,920 pounds

Of the sum expended, 12,750 pounds were paid as rent and interest to the Sultan of Zanzibar; 18,327 pounds was spent for military expeditions for "establishing the authority of the Government." Ordinary expenditure (sic) was 46,843 pounds and thus a deficit of 23,978 pounds was manifest. Grants-in-Aid amounted to 50,975 pounds between July 1 1895 and April 1 1896.

(b) 1896 receipts rose slightly to 32,670 pounds while expenditure rose to 134,346 pounds. Higher expenses included the cost of quelling the rebellious coastal peoples, payment to the Sultan of Zanzibar and the purchase of the former IBEA Co. Mackinnon Road trading station and sundry mortgages from the defunct Company. Administrative work cost 91,464 pounds and collected revenue was 32,670 pounds. Thus there was in 1896 a deficit of 58,794 pounds; a rise of 25% in administrative costs over the previous year.

(c) Commissioner Hardinge pointed out that it is only natural that expenditure should be more than revenue in an underdeveloped country. But he was optimistic in forecasting the future; in ten years from 1897 he foresaw the end of Grants-in-Aid.

(d) Hardinge pointed out that two provinces, Tanaland and Seyyidich, were in 1897 self-supporting but cautioned optimism when considering Ukamba and Masailand. He observed money was hardly known by the tribesmen and payments were made in kind. Here, also, the largest expense to be anticipated was that of the maintenance of military forces (31,600 pounds); an amount which "really equals the whole of the receipts of the Protectorate." Still, he pointed out, given the size of the territory and the warlike nature of the Kikuyu and Masai, the number of troops (1,120 in 1897) was not unduly large.

(e) As of 1897 there was no form of direct taxation. This was because various Treaties signed with coastal Arabs and heads of coastal tribes, forbade the collection of direct taxes. Hardinge saw the
possibility of a direct tax levy of the expiration of the Treaties. Direct tax, he envisaged, could either be extracted directly or on a house or hut. In the interior, where the Treaties were not operative, "some District Officers (were) desirous of imposing a hut tax at once." Here Hardinge counselled restraint by arguing that "the native takes some time to understand why he should pay a tax for the right to use a house or piece of ground which is his own." Further, he suggested, "the conception of a contribution towards the maintenance of the Administration in return for benefits and protection which he derives from it (the tax) is as yet quite foreign to his mind (the native), and, slow as he is to apprehend new ideas, it is not to be expected that it should quickly become familiar to him."

The effect of precipitating an early imposition of hut tax would be, Hardinge pointed out, "to drive the natives away from the neighbourhood of stations where we wish to encourage them to settle...while if its collection in remote districts were left in the hands of still insufficiently educated native Headmen, great abuses and injustices might result."

Hardinge saw districts which lent themselves to easy tax collection as being desirable places to commence collection. Moreover, he reasoned that a policy of divide and rule had its advantages as far as tax collection was concerned. For example, if one segment of a tribe was about to attack another, then the tribe about to be attacked would submit to the collection of tax in return for Government protection.

Hardinge saw also the advantages of imposing tax on static tribes like the Kikuyu rather than pastoral tribes like the Masai. Static tribes, agriculturalists like the Kikuyu, were thus easier prospects for the imposition of foreign administrations, foreign economic and value systems, than other tribes. Indigenous tax systems also aided the imposition of tax collection by the Administration. Where Africans, chiefs or otherwise, were in the habit of exacting retribution from subjects, for example, ivory, the "idea" of payment to authority for services rendered, was well inculcated into the African mind.
Appendix C

Commissioners and Governors of the East Africa Protectorate 1895-1912.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sir Arthur Hardinge</td>
<td>1895-1900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir Charles Eliot</td>
<td>1900-1904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir Donald Stewart</td>
<td>1904-1905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir James Hayes Sadler</td>
<td>1905-1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir Percy Girouard</td>
<td>1909-1912</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


Articles


Documents

