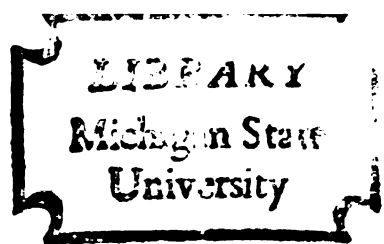


THE ORIGINS OF INDIRECT RULE
IN NORTHERN NIGERIA,
1890-1904

Thesis for the Degree of Ph. D.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
ROBERT WILFRED HANNAH
1969

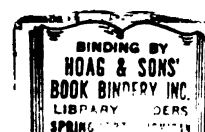


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thesis entitled
**The Origins of Indirect Rule in Northern Nigeria,
1890-1904**
presented by
Robert W. Hannah

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for
Ph.D. degree in History

Jane Hooker
Major professor

Date February 21, 1969



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ABSTRACT

THE ORIGINS OF INDIRECT RULE IN NORTHERN NIGERIA, 1890-1904

By

Robert Wilfred Hannah

This thesis is concerned specifically with British Imperial policy in Northern Nigeria from 1890 to 1904. Imperial policy as reflected in Northern Nigeria consisted of two concurrent motivations, and it is one of the principle conclusions of this study that the two are inextricable. The first is the diplomatic process of final boundary delimitation which was completed in 1904, with the conclusion of the Anglo-French Entente. The second are the bureaucratic procedures fostered in the Colonial Office which were designed to facilitate internal control and stability. These procedures were dexterously molded by Frederick Lugard (later Lord Lugard), into a policy of 'Indirect Rule' within Northern Nigeria, and it has generally been assumed, quite correctly, that the basic tenets of Lugard's system of Indirect Rule were operative by 1904. Hence, the purpose of this thesis is to accurately and logically link the diplomatic settlement of Northern Nigeria's boundaries with

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its corollary, yet unique, internal organization--Indirect Rule--within the context of British Imperial policy.

Quite naturally, British policy in West Africa from 1890 to 1904 reflects the abstruse variants of the European Balance of Power during those years. To a lesser extent British interest and motivation for control of Northern Nigeria came from the lobbies of several trading companies, the varying proclivities of Foreign and Colonial Office personnel, and from internal pressures both African and French.

For the most part, however, the British Government deemed West Africa intrinsically valuable for only a few brief moments during this period, and then, only by a few specially interested people.

Moreover, most of those who eventually appeared in Northern Nigeria and collaborated in the development of Indirect Rule came with a real sense of mission. Indeed, the best of the Colonial Office personnel, and here I have in mind especially Lord Lugard, had an incipient sense of British Commonwealth. Though they arrived after most of the basic territorial decisions had been made, very real conflicts continued between French, German, English, and African elements right up until 1904.

In terms of over-all British foreign policy these local officials were prone to overestimate the significance of minor clashes. Yet in the emerging History of Africa these once small events take on large and not exaggerated significance, if for no other reason than that the new nation states

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Robert Wilfred Hannah

of Africa received their physical form and legacies of government from the fitfull events of these crucial years.

In sum, the aim of this thesis is to integrate carefully the original research that I have done into the exact nature of the final boundary delimitation of Northern Nigeria, and, into the elements that constitute the true origins of Indirect Rule, so that their current significance can be properly related to British diplomacy from 1890 to 1904.

THE ORIGINS OF INDIRECT RULE
IN NORTHERN NIGERIA,
1890-1904

By
Robert Wilfred Hannah

A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of History

1969

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PREFACE

This thesis was the result of a number of compromises, based in large part upon their practicability. I had visited West Africa, in particular Nigeria, before entering upon my doctoral program at Michigan State University, and wished to pursue this interest. It was also my intention to find a topic that would incorporate British Colonial history.

In this respect "The Origins of Indirect Rule in Northern Nigeria, 1890-1904" became an excellent choice. For, while an enormous amount of secondary material has been published on Indirect Rule, and upon Frederick Lugard, no one has ever concerned themselves with the formation of Indirect Rule in Nigeria in more than a cursory manner.

In this respect, I should like to thank a number of people for the aid they have given me in completing this dissertation, in particular, Dr. James Hooker who supervised my entire Ph.D. program from course work through thesis. The dissertation itself has hinged: upon my uncle, Arthur J. Hannah, who invited my wife and me to live with him at his home in Kaduna during the Nigerian portion of my research in the summer of 1966; upon the African Studies Center at Michigan State University, who provided funds for my research

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at the British Public Record Office in London during the summer of 1967; upon Sir Eric Ashby, who gave me invaluable advice and aid in gaining access to British Archival materials; upon Mr. J. D. Keir, at the United Africa Company Ltd. in London; upon my father, without whose aid and encouragement this dissertation could never have been attempted; and most especially upon my wife, Susan.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	Page
PREFACE	iii
I. A. THESIS DEFINITION	1
B. THESIS CHAPTER OUTLINE	3
II. A. THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF COLONIAL EXPANSION	6
B. BRITISH COMMERCE IN WEST AFRICA--THE ROYAL NIGER COMPANY	16
III. A. INTERNATIONAL PRECIS	32
B. THE BERLIN CONFERENCE OF 1885.	36
C. THE BRUSSELS ACT OF 1890	42
D. LORD SALISBURY--ARCHITECT OF BRITISH TROPICAL AFRICA	43
IV. A. DIPLOMACY AND INTERNAL AFFAIRS, 1890-1895.	52
B. THE NIGER COMMISSION	62
C. PROBLEMS CONCERNING THE TREATY STRUCTURE WITH INDIGENOUS STATES.	77
V. THE ANGLO-FRENCH SETTLEMENT OF 1898	96
VI. MOUNTING PRESSURES FOR COLONIAL OFFICE CONTROL	112
A. CONTINUED COMPETITION--FOR LAKE CHAD	112
B. THE WEST AFRICAN FRONTIER FORCE.	118
C. THE LAST OF THE INDEPENDENT AFRICANS	135
D. THE END OF SOVEREIGNTY FOR THE ROYAL NIGER COMPANY	140
VII. THE ROLE OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE	152
VIII. A. NOTES ON FREDERICK LUGARD.	184
B. THE FRUSTRATIONS OF BEGINNING A COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION.	189

TABLE OF CONTENTS--Continued

CHAPTER	Page
C. ILORIN, IMPETUS THROUGH NECESSITY FOR INDIRECT RULE	194
D. THE SITUATION AFTER FIFTEEN MONTHS	214
E. ALDER BURDON--CHIEF ADVOCATE FOR FULANI RULE	219
F. A POLICY, ITS COROLLARIES, AND A PUBLIC DEFINITION	223
G. THE FINAL BOUNDARIES FOR A LAND "INDIRECTLY" RULED	231
IX. SUMMARY	238
BIBLIOGRAPHY	241

**THE ORIGINS OF INDIRECT RULE
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CHAPTER I

A. THESIS DEFINITION

This thesis is concerned specifically with British Imperial policy in Northern Nigeria from 1890 to 1904. Imperial policy as reflected in Northern Nigeria consisted of two concurrent motivations, and it is one of the principal conclusions of this study that the two are inextricable. The first is the diplomatic process of final boundary delimitation which was completed in 1904 with the conclusion of the Anglo-French Entente. The second are the bureaucratic procedures fostered in the Colonial Office which were designed to facilitate internal control and stability. These procedures were dexterously molded by Frederick Lugard (later Lord Lugard), into a policy of "Indirect Rule" within Northern Nigeria and it has generally been assumed, quite correctly, that the basic tenets of Lugard's system of Indirect Rule were operative by 1904. Hence, the purpose of this thesis is to accurately and logically link the diplomatic settlement of Northern Nigeria's boundaries with its corollary, yet unique, internal organization--Indirect Rule--within the context of British Imperial policy.

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Quite naturally, British policy in West Africa from 1890 to 1904 reflects the abstruse variants of the European Balance of Power during those years. To a lesser extent British interest and motivation for control of Northern Nigeria came from the lobbies of several trading companies, the varying proclivities of Foreign and Colonial Office personnel, and from internal pressures both African and French.

For the most part, however, the British Government deemed West Africa intrinsically valuable for only a few brief moments during this period, and then, only by a few specially interested people.

Moreover, most of those who eventually appeared in Northern Nigeria and collaborated in the development of Indirect Rule came with a real sense of mission. Indeed, the best of the Colonial Office personnel, and here I have in mind especially Lord Lugard, had an incipient sense of British Commonwealth. Though they arrived after most of the basic territorial decisions had been made, very real conflicts continued between French, German, English, and African elements right up until 1904.

In terms of over-all British foreign policy these local officials were prone to overestimate the significance of minor clashes. Yet in the emerging History of Africa these once small events take on large and not exaggerated significance if for no other reason than that the new nation states of Africa received their physical form and legacies of government from the fitful events of these crucial years.

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B. THESIS CHAPTER OUTLINE

The second chapter of this thesis consists of two sections which together broadly form "the setting." The Anglo-French-German competition in West Africa during the last decade of the 19th century is meaningless without understanding something of the intellectual and theoretical differences which underlay colonial acquisitions in those countries. Equally a part of the prelude to this dissertation is the commercial and economic history of West Africa, so often dealt with in separate studies. Its integration is essential for two reasons; first, because England chose to make a commercial venture into the vehicle of Empire, and second, because the influence of the Royal Niger Company, its founder and chief advocate George Goldie-Taubman (later Sir George Goldie), has important significance in the later history and government of Northern Nigeria. In particular, an attempt is made to define the ambiguous role the Company played between commercial profit-maker, vehicle for British international diplomacy, and progenitor--as the first

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administrator in Northern Nigeria--of certain elements in Indirect Rule.

The European determinents of African policy are contained in chapter three as they applied to the Niger region. Most important, of course, is the Berlin Conference of 1885 and its relevant Niger clauses. But, as British West African international policy and Lord Salisbury are nearly inseparable for the time span of this thesis, his personality and the Anglo-French conventions of 1889 and 1890 and the Anglo-German "Heligoland" Treaty of 1890 are dealt with as a unit.

The fourth chapter combines these elements in following as closely as possible the languid course of diplomatic affairs and harried events within Nigeria between 1890 and 1897. The fifth chapter continues these events, particularly the consummation of the "Borgu Crisis" and the role of Mr. Chamberlain through the conclusion of the Anglo-French Convention of June, 1898.

Between June of 1898 and January of 1900 a series of events occur which have much significance for the future course of government in Northern Nigeria. Chapters six and seven contain these separate yet related facets. Under sub-heads chapter six deals: with the quasi-military French expeditions which began converging on Lake Chad during this period; with African elements, particularly Rabeh, who occasionally impeded their completion; with Lugard and the West African Frontier Force (W.A.F.F.): and with the Royal

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Niger Company's last months as "sovereign" administrator in Northern Nigeria. Chapter seven covers the same time period, but is concerned with the extremely important, though unobtrusive, considerations which passed through the Colonial Office as to just how Nigeria should be governed after sovereign rights of the Royal Niger Company had been purchased by His Majesty's Government.

The eighth chapter proceeds to show how Frederick Lugard, with the aid of a few trusted assistants and Residents in Nigeria in the first three years of his administration, proceeded to develop the system of Indirect Rule.

These, then, are the elements that make up the "Origins of Indirect Rule in Northern Nigeria." It is not the aim of this thesis to restructure West African history or make radical interpretations. Rather, it is an attempt at careful and accurate research into a period of history to this point never adequately researched or brought within easy access of the interested historian.

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CHAPTER II

A. THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF COLONIAL EXPANSION

Both British and French colonialism as it developed in the 18th century was mercantilist in theory and strongly oriented toward plantations in the New World. The trade with the Orient in spices and luxury goods, though it captured the imagination, played only a minor role in the value of overseas trade. In the latter part of the 18th century and early 19th century, however, differences between the British and French patterns developed. Primarily, England continued to export large numbers of settlers to the temperate parts of the world. France on the other hand could count in dozens of colonists what the British could count in thousands. Equally important, liberal British thought was coming to the conclusion that colonies on the mercantile pattern were simply not worth it. Not only were the overseas British unrepresented in Parliament, but they resented not being able to manufacture their own goods, trade with whomsoever they pleased, and govern themselves. Adam Smith and Jeremy Bentham in particular lent strength to this conclusion in their respective works; An Enquiry into the

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Nature and Cause of the Wealth of Nations and Bentham's
Manual of Political Economy.¹

In England, then, Liberalism came to be associated with anti-colonialism, as it had been proved, both in theory and by the experience of the revolt in the American colonies, that their loss had indeed not been harmful to trade, but in fact had fostered it. British Liberalism also came to include anti-slavery and the concept that non-intervention in local affairs, unless it was absolutely necessary for the protection of trade, was preferable to annexation.

However paradoxical it may seem, it was in the nineteenth century, during which the predominant trend in 'informed' opinion was averse from colonial expansion, that the masses were most stirred by what took place overseas. Previously, the only people in Europe who had bothered about the colonies were small groups of traders and shipowners; and they had been mainly interested in them from the trading point of view. It was the appearance of philanthropists and the development of the great protestant missionary societies which caused the native inhabitant of the colonies to attract the attention, the compassion and the affection of the British people. One cannot overemphasize the true disinterestedness, the generosity and the human and christian feelings of brotherhood the British showed. Stirred by the propaganda of the opponents of slavery, who, at meetings, in publications and through sermons, awoke a desire to be of service, roused passions and supplied everyone with an object for his natural compassion, they agreed to the enormous sacrifices which their governments had approved for the sake of the black slaves.²

¹Published respectively in 1776 and 1793-5.

²Henri Brunshwig, French Colonialism 1871-1914: Myths and Realities (London: Pall Mall Press; 1964), p. 9.

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Cynics have often belabored British intentions, but a careful analysis of British policy through 1870 will clearly reveal the sincerity of British motives.

In 1837, Lord Durham's report on the conditions in Canada paved the way for the recognition of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa as independent states within the framework of the British Empire.³

Likewise, when the Delta of the Niger became the most important center for the export of palm oil, it became necessary for the British to occupy Lagos in 1852 to protect their traders. Necessary as it had been, on the vote of credit for this settlement, on June 26, 1865, the House of Commons adopted the following resolution:

That all further extension of territory or assumption of government, or new treaties offering any protection to native tribes, would be inexpedient, and that the object of our policy should be to encourage in the natives the exercise of those qualities which may render it possible for us more and more to transfer to them the administration of all the governments, with a view to our ultimate withdrawal from all, except, probably, Sierra Leone.⁴

Such British popular good-will towards dark-skinned peoples and reluctance to annex their lands did not mean that

³See Lord Durham's Report: An Abridgement of Report on the Affairs of British North America, ed. G. M. Craig (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart; 1963).

⁴The full text of the report of the "1865 Commission" which recommended no further extension of the Lagos Territory, may be found in several places, including P.R.O. CO 806, 2 and in the British Sessional Papers. See also, Brunshwig, ib. cit., Ch. 1 and 8.

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British enterprise had resigned from the colonial field.

(The role of British commerce on the Niger is dealt with in section "B" of this chapter.) Indeed, despite the disbelief of critics:

British liberals saw nothing inconsistent in being opposed to colonial expansion whilst at the same time creating the settlements which trade and philanthropy required, and no discrepancy between their humanitarianism and the benefit they derived from trade. Why should that which was good not be as profitable as that which was evil? And why should they have refused the profits which were there for the taking? Had they not strikingly shown again and again that they did not allow the profit motive to deflect them from their course and that they often subordinated white to native interests?⁵

French colonial policy followed a totally different path.

From the time of Cardinal Richelieu's attempts designed to increase the King's glory vis a vis Spain, French colonial policy was often motivated solely by thoughts of prestige. True enough, France had adopted the plantation system like everyone else, but unlike England there were not enough French involved, especially after the loss of Canada, to bring criticism effectively to bear at home. Colonies were simply an aspect of power and prestige, perhaps most important for the Navy, but like any other part of Government they had to be paid for. During the Napoleonic Wars, France had plenty of time to get used to not having colonies. And, not only was no significant portion of French commerce or French society seriously hurt, sugar beets had obviated the dependence of West Indian sugar cane. Moreover, in France, the revolution

⁵Brunshwig, op. cit., pp. 12-13.

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brought the vote to rural farmers. Not only was population not expanding as rapidly as elsewhere in Europe, but France never indulged in industrialism to the extent that England did. The results were several; first, fewer people were forced off the land and into overcrowded towns, which in itself reduced the numbers of Frenchmen so desperate that they would leave France; second, slower industrialization made for slower accumulation of capital, which meant that France, unlike England could absorb most of her own excess capital without overseas investment; third, France, unlike England never became dependent on imported foodstuffs to feed her populace, thus obviating the necessity to export manufactured goods to pay for food imports; and fourth, but by no means least, the French peasantry, provided with a vote, became a conservative block that was not about to see its agricultural prosperity ruined by colonies and hence was little moved, either by inclination or necessity, to be swayed by the humanitarian zeal displayed in England for dark-skinned peoples.

Hence, whereas British colonial policy tended to develop as a response to the necessities of trade, French colonial policy was simply an aspect of domestic or foreign policy of a government wishing to maintain its popularity. Indeed, it is striking to note that the Colonial Department of France was, until 1894, a subdivision of the Navy.⁶ French traders

⁶See F. H. Hinsley, "International Rivalry, 1885-1895" in Vol. III of The Cambridge History of the British Empire

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were found here and there, but often they were more prominent in terms of the naval interests they represented than as commercial ventures.

Until 1870 or thereabouts, nationalism--that peculiar product of Europe and the French Revolution--was a liberal idea. In short the political left believed that a group of people had the right to govern themselves based upon principles of language, proximity, and race, rather than upon the conservative notion that sovereignty rested with a monarch over whatever abstruse bits of territory or populace he could lay claim.

Between 1870 and 1890, however, nationalism switched from the left to the right of the political spectrum with tremendous implication for Africa. In the first place, neither German nor Italian nationalists felt that their destinies had been fulfilled. Perhaps it was only time that was needed for them to feel pride and complacency in their achievements. In any case, unrequited Italian nationalism, in addition to Ethiopia, began to look toward the North Coast of Africa as a proper place for further expansion. German nationalists on the other hand, began to feel, like France, that Germany's new found power demanded that she, like other powers, have colonies.

(London: Cambridge University Press, 1967). See also Brunshwig, op. cit., Ch. 1 and 8.

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France, of course, had reacted strongly to the defeat of 1871 and a certain group within France determined that if the insults of Alsace-Lorraine were not to be immediately challenged, the best place for France to re-establish her credit as a great power was to gain a large colonial empire. The origins of this new French imperialism, aside from army pressure, rested mainly with scientific and intellectual persons, particularly those connected with the Paris 'Société de Géographie,' which was the most important of a number of similar societies. This society blossomed from a tiny group to a membership of over 2000 between the years 1873 and 1880 and contained many of the most influential of French politicians.⁷

It is interesting that scientists, politicians and intellectuals sponsored colonial acquisitions and not the commercial community. By comparison, it will be noted that in Britain 'The Royal Geographical Society' had for decades as distinguished a clientele as any society in England, and both before and after 1870 it remained scrupulously uncommitted in the colonial field.⁸

⁷Brunshwig, op. cit., p. 24.

⁸Which is not to say that individual members were not involved in, nor took great pride and pleasure in, England's Empire. The Royal Geographical Society was simply never involved in the same manner as was the 'Société de Géographie' as an active lobbyist for empire, no matter how much it might have contributed to it.

See for example, Records of the African Association, 1788-1831: Association for Promoting the Discovery of the Interior Parts of Africa, ed. Robin Hallett (London and New York: T. Nelson, 1964).

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For whatever reasons, British free trade came increasingly under pressure in many parts of the world. Unlike their competitors who could justify colonies as an aspect of European prestige, the change from a doctrine opposed to expansion to a policy of conquest was difficult in London. The initial reaction was the resuscitation of the 17th century scheme of chartered companies.⁹ The first to appear in Africa was the Royal Niger Company in 1887, which had evolved out of the United African Company of 1879 and subsequently the National African Company of 1882.¹⁰ The principle architect of the Royal Niger Company was Sir George Goldie whose influence on Northern Nigeria forms a part of this study.¹¹ The Royal Niger Company was soon followed by the Imperial East Africa Company, also in 1887, and then by Cecil Rhodes' British South Africa Company in 1889. It was almost immediately recognized, however, that, faced with determined, government sponsored, foreign attempts at exclusion, these companies could not compete.

In particular, French expansionists found willing allies in the Army and Navy. For, in the colonies, French soldiers

⁹E. A. Benians, "Finance, Trade and Communications 1870-1895," in Cambridge History, op. cit., p. 227.

¹⁰J. E. Flint, Sir George Goldie and the Making of Nigeria (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), Ch. 4.

¹¹Without question Flint's biography, ibid., Sec. "B" of Ch. 2, supersedes all other references on Goldie and on the Royal Niger Company. Hence, this dissertation has not dwelt at length on him nor material covered so well by Flint concerning Company history.

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and sailors could win laurels and medals, earn promotions, and attempt to recover the tarnished honor of 1871. Trade often had a small role in this process, and the French electorate either did not care, or was so convinced of its necessity, that it did not balk at the expense involved. In British colonial history no such opportunity had been presented to military men since the days of Clive and Hastings in India--to win fame and fortune for themselves at little thought for the commercial or budget realities of finance.

Bismarck, for his part, if one can ever really believe any one particular statement the man made, would probably have preferred to follow the British policy of making those concerned pay the costs of colonies.¹² On December 10, 1885 he told the Reichstag:

I am absolutely opposed to founding colonies in a manner which I regard as unsound: namely, obtaining a territory, installing officials and a garrison, and then inviting people to come and live in it. I do not think

¹²Henry Ashby Turner, Jr., in his essay "Bismarck's Imperialist Venture; Anti-British in Origin?" which forms the second chapter of Prosser Gifford and Wm. Roger Louis' Britain and Germany in Africa; Imperial Rivalry and Colonial Rule (Yale University Press: New Haven and London, 1967), attempts to deal with Bismarck's colonial motivations. In doing so, Turner tries to refute, among others, the interpretation of Bismarck's colonial policy as put forth by A. J. P. Taylor in Germany's First Bid for Colonies 1884-1885 (London, 1938). Turner also reviews other standard interpretations, such as those put forward by Erich Eyck (and subsequently challenged by William O. Aydelotte), Mary E. Townsend and Taylor. The success or failure of his article must be judged by one more familiar with Turner's source material than is the present writer.

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it is possible to create colonies artificially. What is entirely another matter is whether the Imperial Government has a duty to grant its protection when this is called for by subjects who have embarked on colonial undertakings whereby Germany's excess population can find a natural outlet. Reference has been made to the expenses the Treasury will have to meet if this scheme is to be effective. I intend to spend nothing for this purpose, but to leave the colonies in question to the enterprise of the traders who have founded them.¹³

Like England, he granted sovereign powers to chartered companies, the first to the disreputable Luderitz and his German South West Africa Company in 1885. Another went to the equally devious, although indomitable, Carl Peters and his East Africa Company in 1886.

As for France, Jules Ferry had set her upon the course of colonial expansion in 1881.¹⁴ Although forced from power in 1885 he continued to plead his case. The connection which Ferry drew between protectionism and colonization did not really exist, of course.¹⁵ The colonies did not supply French industry with a profitable monopoly because French industry could not supply them. The policy of expansion surely cost France more than it brought in.¹⁶ Nonetheless, Ferry saw his hoped for policy of protection enacted in 1892.

¹³As quoted in Henri Brunshwig, L'Expansion allemande outre-mer (Paris, 1957), pp. 130-131.

¹⁴In 1881, France chose a small incident to invade Tunis. See Ch. III, Sec. A.

¹⁵Discours et opinions de Jules Ferry, Vols. V and VI, pub. avec commentaires et notes par Paul Rubiquet (Paris, A. Colin).

¹⁶Brunshwig, Colonialism, p. 96.

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It becomes evident then, that the forces tending toward the partition of Africa stem in part from the differing theoretical and practical experiences of colonialism in the competing European countries. In West Africa the most important competition was between England and France. From the British standpoint, however, there were another set of factors which affected the "European" diplomatic partition of Africa--the history of British Commerce on the West Coast of Africa, particularly on and around the Niger delta and Middle Niger, itself. It is to this that we must now turn our attention.

B. BRITISH COMMERCE IN WEST AFRICA-- THE ROYAL NIGER COMPANY

The story of British West Africa cannot be told without reference to the historic developments of British enterprise. In particular, of course, it is necessary to define the ambiguous role the Royal Niger Company, or its founder and guiding spirit George Goldie-Taubman (later Sir George Goldie), played between commercial profitmaker, vehicle for British international diplomacy, and progenitor--as the first administrator in Northern Nigeria--of certain elements of "Indirect Rule." It must be stressed, however, that Northern Nigeria, as opposed to Southern Nigeria and the riverain areas, never was of much value commercially, although the territory was

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always assumed to be a potentially valuable one.¹⁷

Although British expansion into Northern Nigeria came relatively later, and also faster, than expansion into other areas, it was partially a product of four hundred years of trading activity in the Niger delta region. In any case, to understand the tremendous impact of George Goldie and the Royal Niger Company on Northern Nigeria, and Indirect Rule, the background of the trade must be sketched.

Prior to 1700 there are four descriptions of trade in the Niger Delta, and innumerable accounts after that date.¹⁸ Nonetheless, all describe a situation which remained relatively similar over nearly the first 350 years of contact with European traders. Brass rods, spirits, in some cases firearms, and a few other items were exchanged with the inhabitants of these coastal delta towns principally for slaves and ivory. The situation was unique in that the Niger Delta presents many miles of swamps, flood plains, and dense jungles that were unhealthy, unknown and therefore

¹⁷See for example, Edmund D. Morel, Affairs of West Africa (London: Heinemann, 1902).

¹⁸The Esmeraldo de Situ Orbis describes accurately the Rio Real region and what could be the town of Bonny during the Portuguese period between 1450 and 1550; Dapper's Description de l'Afrique in 1686 speaks of Old Calabar when Dutch merchants dominated the Niger Delta trade; John Marbot made two voyages to Rio Real in 1578 and 1582; and the extant Abstract of a Voyage of New Calabar River, or Rio Real in the year 1699 records James Barbot's similar voyage to the area. See G. I. Jones, The Trading States of the Oil Rivers: A Study of Political Development in Eastern Nigeria (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 33-42.

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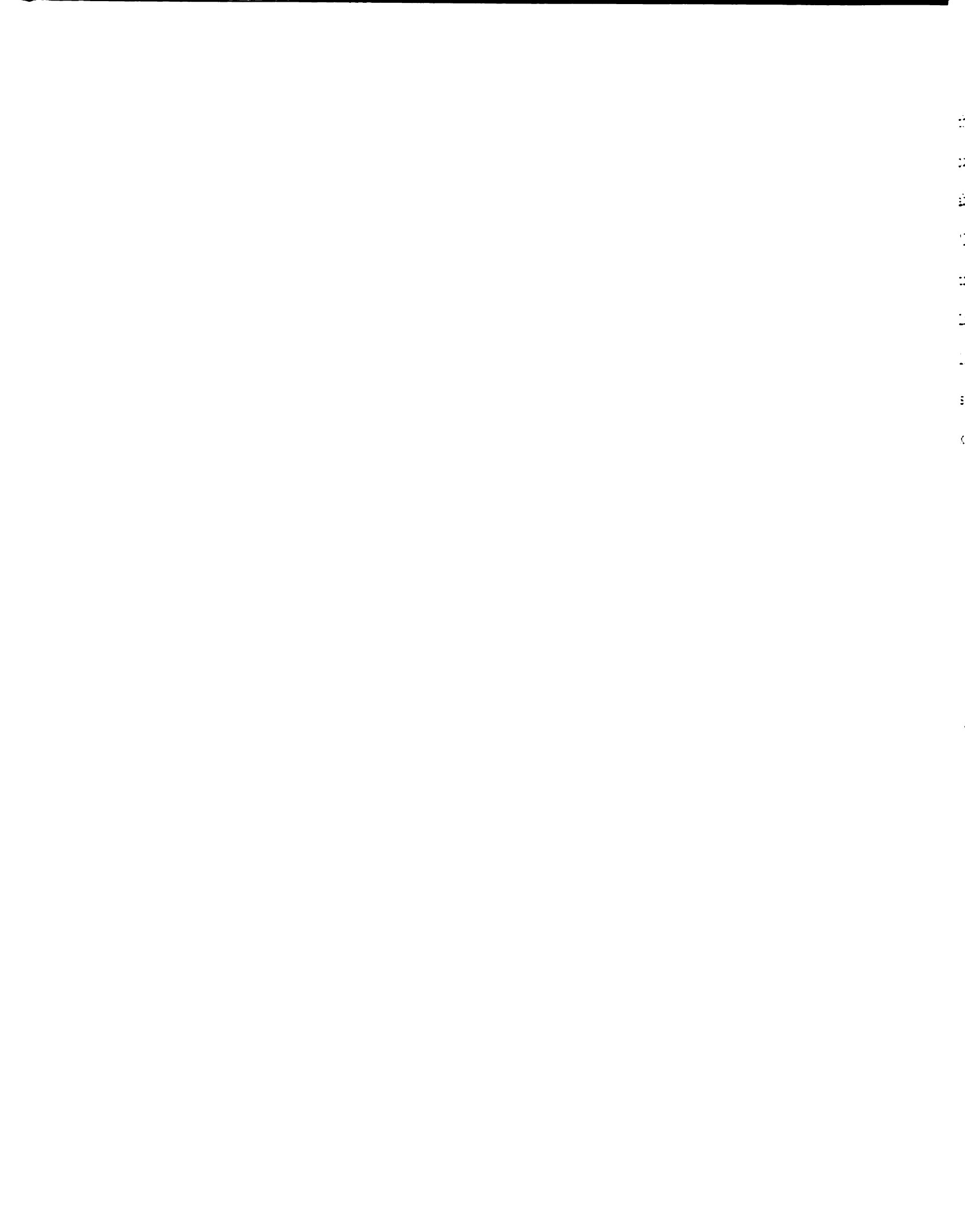
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unpenetrable to European merchants. In this area a number of towns grew up, which, although entirely dependent for their food supplies upon the interior, were easily able to keep the European merchants away from the interior and the sources of slaves and ivory.¹⁹

In 1807 this situation was radically changed by the abolition of the legal status of slavery, and consequently (although by no means immediately) the slave trade, by England. It was especially important for the Niger Delta because by this time the principle traders in the region were Liverpool slavers. As companies had extensive experience and holdings in the region, they were faced with either turning to legitimate trade or going bankrupt. Fortunately, a revolution in European cleanliness saved the day.²⁰ As life became dirtier with the spreading industrialization, the recognition that washing was essential to health gained greater acceptance. Making soap (basically from tallow) that would produce a good lather required blending with vegetable oils. Fortuitously for Liverpool, palm oil proved to be

¹⁹Nor surprisingly, Bonny, which was the first of the important trading towns of the Niger Delta, was situated at the east end of the delta where the swamps were not as extensive as elsewhere and relations with the interior were easier. Old Calabar or Efik, even farther to the east and out of the Niger complex completely, was the other early center of Eastern Nigerian trade. Over the decades the trade and towns spread westward in the delta, with Akassa eventually becoming a principle trading port near the home of the famous, or infamous, Brassmen that so plagued 19th century merchants. See *ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

²⁰Flint, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-12.



the best for the purpose. As the principal source of palm oil was the Niger delta region, Liverpool merchants were able to turn their shipping and capital resources into "legitimate trade."²¹ The paradox of the world's foulest trade being shifted to the cleanest is striking. Nonetheless, Liverpool was producing nearly 30,000 tons of soap a year by 1850.²² By 1870 bulk export of the raw palm oil reached the same figure of 30,000 tons.²³ By this time the delta was known to the world as the Oil Rivers. Even so:

. . . The development of a 'legitimate commerce' made no revolution in the basis of Afro-European relations. The elaborate system of native middle-men through which the slave trade had passed was adapted to the palm oil trade in the same way that the Europeans had adapted their own organization. The pattern of trade remained the same.²⁴

Numerous energetic people had tried to break the hold of the coastal states and to get to the interior where the palm oil was grown and processed.²⁵ Essentially however,

²¹"Legitimate trade" in this instance has the dual meaning of legitimate morally as well as legitimate legally after 1833.

²²By 1850 certain amounts of palm oil was also used as an industrial lubricant. Jones, ibid., p. 10.

²³K. O. Dike, Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), pp. 97-127.

²⁴Flint, op. cit., p. 11.

²⁵Among the more famous attempts were those of MacGregor Laird in 1838 and Thomas Fowell Buxton in 1841. A combination of political unrest and disease was the undoing of both and a particular disaster for Buxton. Information about the interior was gradually accumulating however, and when Barth crossed the Benue River new interest was stimulated about opening regular trade with the interior sources of the oil trade. Laird was the most energetic of the merchants to re-enter the

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cut-throat competition among the British merchants themselves prevented action.²⁶

This situation was dramatically changed with the sudden emergence of George Goldie-Taubman into the picture.²⁷ By 1879, even though he was:

. . . completely 'green', without more knowledge of the Niger than that provided by one brief visit, with no

race for the interior. He organized various Liverpool merchants into an African Association to lobby for their interests and likewise was a leader in procuring the arms necessary to defeat the coastal establishments (especially the Brassmen) and provide safe conduct for their river traffic. Throughout this period the British government was a negative and vacillating factor.

²⁶Flint, *op. cit.* In chapter two Flint deals with the problems faced by the merchants in the coastal peoples who wished to impede their getting to the interior.

²⁷In 1875 the smallest of the three major competitors for the Oil Rivers trade was in financial trouble. Goldie's family was persuaded to purchase the company owned by Holland Jacques and in charge of its assets sent the hitherto errant member of the family to Nigeria to see what could be done about the situation. The results were little short of amazing. At the time of Goldie's first trip there were two companies larger than his own; they were Miller Brothers and a freelance company under James Pinnock which specialized in the Oil Rivers trade.

The Taubman family was itself a wealthy merchant family with extensive holdings in many enterprises. George had inherited a small, though quite sufficient estate as a young man and had used it to philander in the company of an Egyptian girl. On his return he was forced, by a compromising situation, into marriage with a family governess. Perhaps this can explain his desire, as well as his family's desire, for him to get out. In any case, at 33 he had done little to be proud of. His original plans on leaving for Nigeria, indeed, had been to cross the desert and get to Egypt. Nevertheless, he eventually succeeded where others of more experience had failed.

experience of trading or shipping, or even that which another career might have given him;²⁸

and without financial power, George Goldie had formed a monopoly of the Liverpool trading interests in the Oil Rivers area.²⁹ Goldie's United African Company, in which he was not even the principal shareholder, was to become the agent of British Imperialism in Nigeria. In 1879 and in the next few years thereafter, however, the Company had other problems.³⁰

The principal problem of the new Company was its success. The monopoly effected lower prices, but lower prices brought in new competition uncontrolled by Goldie's monopoly. If the competition had been simply other British merchants, Goldie's original triumph would have become a dismal failure. Competition was not British, however, it was largely French. French designs, political as well as commercial, were also a serious threat to the Company's existence, particularly as

²⁸Flint, ibid., p. 31.

²⁹Goldie's magnetism has to be lauded because "the amalgamation of the Niger firms meant that a group of tough hard-headed business men like John Edgar of the West African Company with widespread interests in cotton, palm oil, chemicals, and the manufacture of ice, or individuals like James Pinnock, put their trust in a young man of no proven talents, known to be something of a profligate, who had already bungled an army career, made an unfortunate marriage, and who was yet only thirty-three years old." Ibid.

³⁰Goldie's company went through a number of name changes before settling upon the Royal Niger Company, by which it has become generally known. This name was, however, adopted only after the company had been granted political powers over Nigeria by the British Parliament.

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long as Britain adhered to the recommendations of the 1865 Committee.³¹ In the longer run, however, French intervention was to provide Goldie with potentially advantageous political possibilities.³²

In the delta region French intervention was direct and immediately showed its results. Wherever Goldie's Company established some sort of paramount trading position the French intervened by direct treaty arrangement.³³ As an example, in Nupe in 1880 Goldie had persuaded the local Emir to go along with his monopoly. Some sub-chiefs (Baloguns) were offended and signed a treaty with the French. In the battle, or skirmish, that followed Goldie's Company was the loser, and Nupe was not the only such example. By 1882 the French commercial interests in the Oil Rivers region had been consolidated into a single company and were as great as those held by Goldie's United African Company.³⁴

³¹Among other things the "1865 Committee" recommended not assuming further commitments in Africa. See footnote 2.

³²See Chapter III, Sec. "B" for applicable sections and related material on Berlin Act of 1885, this thesis.

³³Unlike later French ventures in West Africa, the *Compagne Francaise de l'Afrique Equatoriale* was indeed a bona fide commercial venture and represented a real economic, as well as political threat to the National African Company.

That threat, it must be admitted, was in part due to the fact that there was little enough profit for one company on the Niger and that if two competed both might go bankrupt.

See financial returns of the National African Company, variously found in Flint, op. cit., U. A. C. Archives and in P. R. O. sources such as Blue Books for Colonies, etc.

³⁴Flint, op. cit., p. 42.

By this time Goldie was playing for higher stakes. In 1881 Parliament had granted a charter to the British North Borneo Company.³⁵ Goldie was immediately struck by the resemblances to the Nigerian situation and he worked ceaselessly to create the same benefits for his own Company in Nigeria. Although the odds were not at all in Goldie's favor, British fears of growing French influence had been steadily heightened and the events in 1884-1885 gave Goldie his opportunity.

Of primary importance was the impending convening of the Berlin Conference. Goldie was shrewd enough to realize that this might be the appropriate moment to demonstrate his complete control of the Niger, indeed perhaps the last opportunity, to gain recognition as a chartered company. Hence, despite their nearly equal size, Goldie spent most of 1884 attempting to buy the "Compagne Francaise de l'Afrique Equatoriale." Only in October of 1884 was the purchase of the French Company agreed to, at a price of £60,000 or 6,000 fully paid shares of the National African Company.

At the same time Goldie was arranging this purchase, he had been actively moving to consolidate his treaty position

³⁵The Borneo Company based its claim to rule on agreements signed with local Muslim rulers giving them exclusive monopoly over trade and all rights to deal for them with foreign powers. Such treaties were quite similar to ones already signed by the National African Company with Niger area chiefs, including some with Moslim potentates.

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within Nigeria, particularly the Middle and Upper Niger. The capstone of his efforts was the mission of Joseph Thomson, who signed treaties on behalf of the Company with the powerful Emirs of Sokoto and Gandu in 1885.³⁶ These treaties, at least in their European version, gave to the Company exclusive trading rights and control over relations with other European powers.

In the meantime, Goldie had hurried off to Berlin to lobby for whatever gains his new paramount position might gain for his Company. In this respect, from the minute book of the National African Company, it is interesting to note that at a meeting on January 11, 1885,

the question was raised as to the special expenses incurred by the Vice-Chairman (George Goldie) in Berlin during the Conference. . . . It was resolved on Mr. James Hutton's motion that towards defraying the heavy expense incurred by Vice-Chairman, Mr. Taubman-Goldie in Berlin on behalf of the Company, the Board vote £100 to be paid in addition to his traveling expenses.³⁷

Because of the rules laid out at Berlin³⁸ these feats put Goldie in a paramount position to become the agent of British imperialism. Nonetheless, the granting of a charter by Parliament involved a good deal of persuasion on the part

³⁶For details see J. Thomson, Up the Niger to the Central Sudan (Good Words; XXVII, 1886).

³⁷U. A. C. safe files 1/5008.

³⁸See Chapter III, Sec. "B" this thesis.

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of Goldie and his associates.³⁹ Not the least of the objections came from Goldie's Liverpool merchant associates who realized that the old system even with its drawbacks had its advantages; principally that there were no taxes to be paid. In spite of their objections the charter was issued on July 10, 1886 and the Royal Niger Company came into existence with both administrative and political powers to supplement its commercial interest in Nigeria.

The grant of a charter, based on the treaties negotiated by the company, imposed upon the company the responsibilities undertaken by Great Britain in the Niger Navigation Articles of the Act of Berlin. In essence, the charter prohibited monopoly, enforced duty arrangements agreed to at Berlin, and bound the company to submit to Her Majesty's government in regard to dealings with foreign powers. The budget of this new chartered company was fixed at £90,000 per year through 1895, that being deemed sufficient for operating expenses. Under the charter, in 1887, the now Royal Niger Company submitted over 200 treaties, including the agreements with Sokoto and Gandu, to Her Majesty's Government. These treaties delimited the sphere of the company; hence, in October 1887, proper notification was issued by the Foreign Office to the

³⁹A great deal of backroom London politicking was involved in order for Goldie to even have a chance. Some of this was outright bribery by using company positions as bait. This background information is dealt with in detail by Flint, op. cit., Chapters III and IV.

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signatory Powers of the Berlin Act placing these areas, newly acquired, under the protection of the British Crown.

The British Protectorate of the Niger District comprises the territories on the line of coast between the British Protectorate of Lagos and the right or western river bank of the mouth of the Rio del Ray. It further comprises all territories in the basin of the Niger and its affluents, which are, or may be for the time being, subject to the government of the National African Company, Ltd., [Royal Niger Company], in accordance with the provisions of the charter of said Company, dated the 10th of July, 1886.⁴⁰

Under the charter the administrative organization which Goldie set up has been of utmost importance for subsequent Nigerian history. Ultimate power of course rested with Goldie and his Board of Directors in London. In Africa authority was divided; but what is most significant, and least surprising, is that the posts were simply new titles for old commercial positions. The chief trading agent for the company now became the "Agent-General," and so on. The foundation of the administration was the District Agent. The District Agents were in fact merely the company's European trading agents under a new name."⁴¹ More importantly they held powers under all three branches of administration, administrative, judicial, and constabulary or military. The District Agent was responsible for a large area and was

⁴⁰Sir Edward Hertslet, ed., The Map of Africa by Treaty, Vol. I (London: F. Cass, 1967, reprint), pp. 127-156.

⁴¹Flint, op. cit., p. 92.

solely responsible to the Agent General. This type of organization did not change throughout the company's tenure in Africa.

Goldie's emphasis on the role of the District Agent cannot be overstated. Stemming directly out of Nigeria's commercial past, it was of necessity a form of indirect rule and was applied originally in Eastern Nigeria where strong kingship was not present. Obviously, it bore little resemblance at this stage to either Fulani or Buganda situations that easily fit what we have come to think of as models for "Indirect Rule." Goldie's theory of thus indirectly ruling was never carried out to any great extent, but it is not hard to see the reasons for its appeal to a hard-headed monopolist like Goldie. It would be cheaper than paying company employees!⁴²

The Company, however successful as the agent of British imperialism, was not without its detractors. Particular criticism came from Liverpool merchants and traders, and the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, who were very bitter at the tariffs and duties which the Royal Niger Company imposed

⁴²Flint, *ibid.*, claims a much greater role for Goldie in institutionalizing Indirect Rule than in fact seems warranted (pp. 96 and 258). "Goldie played a direct part not only in beginning effective indirect rule in the Emirates but also in actually playing down the policy which Lugard was instructed to follow."

The points of dispute rest on Flint's use of the words "effective" and "instructed" however, much will be said on both points later.

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upon any new competitors.⁴³ Criticism reached such peaks that in 1889 an official inquiry was held into the position of the Company. The inquiry was conducted by Sir Claud MacDonald, her Majesty's Commissioner,⁴⁴ and it resulted in the dismissal of all the more important charges made against the Company's administration. MacDonald's observations have a certain bearing on the later history of the Middle Niger.

The Commissioner ascended the Niger from its mouth to Rabba, in Nupe, very little short of the rapids which impede navigation at Boussa, and also up the Benue to beyond Yola. His report states that from the Niger mouth to Lokoja, the Company had 209 treaties. The company paid subsidies to the various chiefs with whom they had these treaties of £1,284. MacDonald was convinced that these treaties were, with two exceptions, understood and upheld by the native signatories.

On the Benue River from Lokoja to Garua beyond Yola, subsidies to the extent of £293 per year were being paid. The Commissioner wrote that:

for the entire distance they [the Company] have complete command of the waterway from an administrative point of view, and it would be possible for any European to proceed from Lokoja to Garua in a steam launch without fear of molestation. This, some few years ago, would have

⁴³Ibid., pp. 188-192, but see also U. A. C. Archives, and CO 694/1.

⁴⁴Flint, ibid., chapter seven, original in FO 84/1940 MacDonald to Alisbury 12/6/89 Inc. 1.

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been an utter impossibility, and it is entirely due to the energy, skill, and perseverance of the Company that this large and beautiful and attractive country has been opened up.⁴⁵

On the Niger itself from Lokoja to Rabbah there were only three treaties, but these included the important Emirs of Nupe, Sokoto and Gandu. In total, in areas north and west of the Benue, subsidies totalling £4,425 per year were paid, however the bulk of this money went to the three principal states of Nupe, Gandu and Sokoto. In regard to this area the Commissioner said:

If the Company have little jurisdiction on land, they have undoubtedly complete jurisdiction and control over the waterway from Lokoja up to Rabbah, and if they were to withdraw from their factories, the river would most certainly not be safe, and merchants would run great risk in trading above Lokoja.⁴⁶

Indeed, Sir Claud MacDonald summed up:

I consider the Nupe treaty, even without the Gandu one, is sufficiently strong, and gives sufficiently extensive powers, to justify the company applying for a charter. On the strength of the Gandu treaty, which I believe to be a bona fide one, I consider the company to be de jure the rulers in Nupe.⁴⁷

The importance of the Commission's report stems not entirely from its content but from the date when it was written. For after 1890, France and England began to compete for control of the Middle Niger, particularly the rapids at Boussa which impede navigation on the Upper Niger. As this

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid.

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competition increased in intensity, the Royal Niger Company reacted in two ways: first, by drawing more precise treaties; and second, by signing new treaties wherever they thought that their current treaty network was not complete. Hence by 1894, the total list of treaties was something over 350. The French, however, were able by that same time, 1894, to invalidate certain of the company's treaties by having signed their own set of agreements in areas where Company jurisdiction was not completely augmented by a proper treaty system.⁴⁸

Commercially, Goldie was left little time to enjoy control of so vast an area, indirectly or otherwise. From 1894 on, it became increasingly apparent that the company would sooner or later lose its position. Goldie gradually became deeply involved in a campaign to persuade Parliament to buy the assets of the Company at inflated prices.⁴⁹ Naturally, he was reluctant to expand the company when sale was imminent, and its control in Nigeria suffered accordingly. Perhaps the long haggling over price, and Goldie's knowledge of the disrepair of organization, sapped his enthusiasm, for he later declined an opportunity to become the first Governor of the eventually constituted Protectorate of Northern Nigeria in 1900. At the time he was only fifty-four.

⁴⁸The relative importance of these native treaties is dealt with in Chapter IV, this thesis.

⁴⁹Flint, op. cit., p. 307.

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The history of West African commerce is not particularly elevating. The men who engaged in it were a tough lot, and their methods, as the slavers who preceded them, were often not salubrious. Goldie, in particular, had his faults, but he and his company were not without a vision--a British Nigeria. Largely through their efforts, enough of Britain's claim was intact by 1898 so that Joseph Chamberlain could rescue the bulk of their dreams.

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CHAPTER III

A. INTERNATIONAL PRECIS

For the first seventy years of the 19th century, Africa engendered but sporadic European concern. To be sure, William Wilberforce made England the bastion of anti-slavery relatively early in the century, and in so doing spared the world the untold misery of an Africa partitioned while slavery remained legal. But for the most part, outside the white Cape Colony, parts of Algeria and Egypt, Africa remained the Dark Continent: intrepid adventurers occasionally penetrated the interior of Africa and returned to present their papers to the geographical societies; equally intrepid missionaries returned to England to fulminate against the slave trade; and only a few merchants braved the rigors of the enclaves along the coasts of Tropical Africa to return with the various products, particularly palm oil, upon which commerce could be built. There seemed little reason to foresee any radical change.

By 1871, however, events in Europe heralded drastic alteration in Africa's status. First importance must be laid upon the completion of the Suez Canal in 1869. This engineering feat of De Lesseps, financed by French capital, opened

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up the whole East Coast of Africa, without mentioning the fundamental geo-political re-evaluations which its completion necessitated in the eastern Mediterranean, India, and the Far East. Equally important were the events of 1871 in Europe. For the first time since 1848, or perhaps even 1815, Europe achieved a certain stability which enabled her component states to look outside Europe and to begin to compete with England for the raw materials of the non-white world. The conclusion of the Franco-Prussian war did not, of course, signal the commencement of any "scramble" for colonies. First Europe had to decide to let the decision of 1871 stand, which, although threatened severely, it did.

Benjamin Disraeli quickly perceived the significance of Suez to the British Empire. When opportunity presented itself in 1875, he was quick to purchase 40% of the stock in the Suez Canal Company from the bankrupt Khedive Egypt on his own authority, a move that was quickly endorsed by his cabinet and Parliament.¹ Although overshadowed in Europe by

¹In all fairness to Disraeli, this purchase was not "a bid for exclusive supremacy in Cairo. It was intended only to give the British a voice in the management of the waterway and to keep the balance of influence even with France." Robinson and Gallagher, Africa and the Victorians (New York: St. Martins Press, 1961), p. 83. See also W. F. Moneyppenny and G. E. Buckle, Life of Benjamin Disraeli (1910-1920), Vol. IV, pp. 330-340 and Vol. V, p. 449.

Nonetheless Disraeli's attitude was radically different from his predecessors and he was an avowed imperialist. See, for instance, J. R. M. Butler "Imperial Questions in British Politics" in Vol. III of Cambridge History, p. 40.

From economic motives of expansion approached from an imperial rather than commercial viewpoint, see W. Schlote,

the Near Eastern Crises in the succeeding years, Disraeli's assertion that Africa was an important corollary in British Imperial Policy was to have immense repercussions. Disraeli's colonial expansion was not everywhere popular, however, and after unpleasant and nasty little wars in South Africa and India, Gladstone and the Liberal free-traders were returned to office.

Despite Gladstone, events in Africa were beginning to churn at a faster pace. In 1881, with Bismarck's blessings and Salisbury's prior consent² France--rather Jules Ferry--chose to exploit a small incident and to invade Tunisia. The French action infuriated the Italians,³ but the momentum

British Overseas Trade from 1700 to the 1930's (Oxford, 1952); A. K. Cairncross, Home and Foreign Investment (1953); Brindley Thomas, Migration and Economic Growth; and H. Feis, Europe, the World's Banker 1870-1914 (New Haven, 1930).

²Though not in office in 1881, Salisbury, as party to the negotiations of the Berlin Treaty of 1878, had "given a hint to Paris that 'we should not have the slightest jealousy or fear' if French statesmen sought an extension of their African territory in the direction of Tunis." A. L. Kennedy, Salisbury 1830-1903: Portrait of a Statesman (London: John Murray, 1953), p. 128.

Lady Gwendolyn Cecil in her Life of Robert, Marquis of Salisbury, goes even farther and states that, in return for British occupation of Cyprus, Salisbury had agreed to reserve Tunis as an area for French expansion.

³The French action also irritated the new Liberal government in England who had "only grudgingly recognized the commitments undertaken by Salisbury." F. H. Insley, "International Rivalry in the Colonial Sphere, 1869-80," in Cambridge History, p. 108. But the French had in part decided to act because of quarrels with Italy over Tunis, The French being "more anxious to deny Tunisia to other Powers than to acquire it herself." Ibid.

Of course, the best source for this information is Documenti Diplomatici Italiani, however, more convenient

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for partition had begun in earnest. A year later, in 1882, Gladstone was forced against his wishes to take a strong stand in the Arabi revolts in Egypt. Even the Liberals could not stand idle while France consolidated complete control of the Eastern Mediterranean, as her paramount position in Syria, Egypt, Algeria, and now Tunis indicated she soon would have. Paradoxically, France was prevented by internal crisis from joining England in her Egyptian venture, and the anti-colonial Gladstonians were forced to bear the onus of British occupation of Egypt--a course of affairs it might be added which did not displease the majority of the English electorate, although it gave Gladstone's Conservative opposition no end of jibes and amusement.

The colonial parties in each of the respective European states were by now in full swing.⁴ Perhaps the most astute of those with designs on Africa was Leopold II of Belgium. The tergiversations and chicanery of Leopold's Congo policy

sources include: C. A. Julian, Histoire de l'Afrique du Nord; Jules Ferry in Les politiques d'expansion imperialistes; M. Emerit "Aux origines de la colonisation française en Tunisie--L'affaire de Sidi Tibet," in Revue Africaine; and Jean Ganiag, Les origines du protectorat français en Tunisie.

⁴Not to mention forces such as the Church Missionary Society in West Africa; the Wesleyans, the Basel Mission, the Presbyterians, and the Roman Catholics on the West Coast of Africa; the London Missionary Society; the White Fathers; and the Livingstonia Central African Trading Company, who all played their part in African partition--but were not particularly significant in Northern Nigeria.

From the standpoint of Nigeria and trade thereon, the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce was the most active British lobby concerned with Northern Nigerian questions. See, for example, Morel, op. cit.

are legend, but by 1885 they had borne fruit.⁵ The Berlin Conference of that same year, which had stamped the Congo Free State as the exclusive sphere of Leopold, also added the final stimulus to French, German and English interest in partition of Africa by setting out the rules for its dismemberment.

B. THE BERLIN CONFERENCE OF 1885

The Berlin Conference of 1885, and the Berlin Act which culminated its efforts, is not a significant turning point in European diplomatic history. For Africa, however, there is no more important date; indeed, one can posit the modern history of Tropical Africa from its conclusion. Why Bismarck sponsored this conference is still subject to debate;⁶ nonetheless, all European parties with interests in Africa convened. They agreed among themselves as to what the ground rules should be for the partition of Africa.

At this Conference, Northern Nigeria was not a significant question, but formed an adjunct to the question of navigation and trade on the Niger.

During the opening meeting of the Conference in 1884, The British Ambassador was able to make a bland assertion:

⁵There is a mass of written material on this phase of African History, i.e., Leopold II's assertion of sovereignty over the Congo. For a short, yet readable, synopsis of this period see Ruth Slade King Leopold's Congo (Oxford University Press, 1962), esp. Ch. 3. There are, however, many volumes devoted solely to this question, too numerous to list here.

⁶Turner, op. cit.

that owing to the spirit of enterprise of the National African Company, commerce on the Niger was entirely at that time in British hands; that the most important tribes had been efficiently placed under the protection of Great Britain; and that the coast and interior portions of the river were sufficiently under British control for Her Majesty's Government to be able to regulate navigation.⁷ How laconic that statement was has already been indicated, in that Goldie's purchase agreement of the "Compagnie Francaise de l'Afrique Equatoriale" had sat barely long enough for the ink to dry.

Be that as it may, the Berlin Conference decided not to create an international commission for the Niger, as had been done for the Congo, but to leave to the riverain powers responsibility for applying to the Niger the principles of free navigation to which the Conference adhered. This responsibility was formally accepted by Great Britain and France, which were then the only riverain powers, and was duly recorded in the Act of Navigation.⁸ France, of course, had extensive claims in the upper waters of the Niger, though she was effectively excluded by the monopoly of the National African Company from the Middle and Lower Niger.⁹ It is

⁷For the influence of the Niger Company at Berlin, see Protocol No. 1, page 11 (French text) at the Berlin Conference. In Hertslet, op. cit.

⁸Articles XXX and XXXI of Berlin Act. See Hertslet, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 483-484.

⁹The National African Company could effectively block all competition, for while the Berlin Act forbade discrimination

interesting to note, however, that special provision was made at the Berlin Conference, that any regulation for the navigation of the Niger which might be drawn up by Great Britain or France in their respective spheres would only be legal provided that these regulations were not opposed to the spirit of the engagements entered into.¹⁰ Granted that these rules were complied with, all nations, and their ships, had to be "treated on a footing of perfect equality," both as regards access to and protection on the Niger.

The fifth chapter of the Berlin Act contains a "Act of Navigation for the Niger." From this navigation act, the following articles have special bearing on this dissertation.¹¹

Article XXVI

The Navigation of the Niger, without excepting any of its branches and outlets, is and shall remain entirely free for the merchant ships of all nations equally, whether with cargo or in ballast, for the transportation of goods and passengers. It shall be regulated by the provision of this act of navigation, and by the rules to be made in pursuance of this act.

In the exercise of this navigation, subjects and flags of all nations shall be treated, in all circumstances, on a footing of perfect equality, not only for the direct navigation from the open sea to the inland course of the Niger, and vice versa, but for the great and small coasting trade, and for boat trade in the course of the river.

and insured free access to the Niger, such safeguards were valueless if non-company ships could not navigate the Boussa rapids to get to French Territory, and could not procure land for their own coaling stations--prohibitive restrictions being placed on such by the Company.

¹⁰Protocol No. 5, page 149, French text.

¹¹See Hertslet, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 481-484.

Consequently, on all the course and mouths of the Niger there will be no distinction made between the subjects of the riverain states and those of non-riverain states; and no exclusive privilege of navigation will be conceded to companies, corporations, or private persons.¹²

Article XXVII stipulates that no restrictions, obligations, landing or other dues shall be imposed on navigation; that no transit dues, river tolls, or differential duties, with the exception of taxes or duties which shall be the equivalent for services rendered to navigation itself, shall be levied on ships or goods.

Article XXVIII legislates that the affluents of the Niger are, in all respects, "subject to the same rules as the river of which they are tributaries."

Article XXIX, though not unusual in its wording, has specific interest for this thesis because the principle point of dispute during the "Borgu Crisis" of 1897-1898 was the French desire to gain access to the Boussa Rapids, which impede all river traffic from the mouth of the Niger to the French portion of the River. By this article, should the French gain access to Boussa and effectively solve the navigational problems these rapids present, she could break the effective British monopoly of the Niger. This article reads as follows:

The roads, railways, or lateral canals which may be constructed with the special object of obviating the in-navigability or correcting the imperfections of the river route on certain sections of the Niger, its affluents, branches, and outlets, shall be considered in

¹²Ibid.

their quality of means of communication, as dependencies of this river, and as equally open to traffic of all nations.

And, as on the river itself, so there shall be collected on these roads, railways, and canals, only tolls calculated on the cost of construction, maintenance, and management, and on the profits due to the promoters.

As regards the Tariff of these tolls, strangers and the natives of the respective territories shall be treated on a footing of perfect equality.¹³

A declaration is embodied in Articles XXXIV and XXXV of Chapter VI of the Berlin Act relating to the essential conditions to be observed in order that new occupations on the coast of the African continent may be held to be effective. It is striking that these conditions were not difficult to fulfill, even if they were subject to differing interpretation. The text of these Articles is as follows:

Article XXXIV

Any Power which henceforth takes possession of a tract of land on the coasts of the African continent outside of its present possessions, or which, being hitherto without such possessions, shall acquire them, as well as the Power which assumes a Protectorate there, shall accompany the respective act with a notification thereof, addressed to the other Signatory Powers of the present Act, in order to enable them, if need be, to make good any claims of their own.

Article XXXV

The Signatory Powers of the present Act recognize the obligation to insure the establishment of authority in regions occupied by them on the coasts of the African Continent sufficient to protect existing rights, and, as the case may be, freedom of trade and of transit under the conditions agreed upon.¹⁴

¹³Ibid., p. 483.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 484-485.

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¹⁷Ibid

The British Commission which examined the Berlin Act had reservations about Articles XXXIV and XXXV above, respecting the occupation of the African Coast. Chiefly, the British Commission was concerned that since the declaration "only had the African Coast in view"¹⁵ its restrictive character made it less useful than it should be. They would have preferred "that the rules which are about to be settled for the acquisition of new possessions in Africa should be applicable to the whole African Continent."¹⁶ In particular the British noted that as the coasts "are very near being occupied for the whole of their extent," hence, if these articles were strictly limited to the unoccupied coasts they would have little meaning.

The French ambassador, Baron de Courcel, did not agree. Granting that there existed "but little available territory on the coast" these territories made amends;

by possessing an importance which justifies new arrangements of which they would be the object. Along the seashore, moreover, the ground is truly defined, whilst, in regard to territorial delimitations, there is much that is uncertain and unknown in the interior of Africa.¹⁷

In part because the "coastal character" of these two articles was not removed, the British and German governments fixed their respective spheres of influence in the Gulf of

¹⁵Parliamentary papers (C-4361) page 214 annex 1 to Protocol No. 8.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid.

Guinea in May, 1885.¹⁸ The Lower Niger, of course, was to remain in the British sphere. Duties were to be levied solely for meeting the necessary expenses for carrying out the obligations of the protectorate under the decree of Berlin. Once German objections had been removed, the British government could officially declare a protectorate over the Niger. And, on June 5, 1885, such a protectorate was duly notified to the powers in accordance with the Act of Berlin.¹⁹ A further agreement was reached with Germany the following year prolonging the coastal definition inland to the town of Yola, leaving that town within the British sphere.

C. THE BRUSSELS ACT OF 1890

Although chronologically somewhat ahead of sequence, the Brussels Act of 1890 is the second international agreement with bearing on this thesis. Articles VIII and IX are principally concerned with slavery and how to stop it. In particular they refer to the circumstances under which a party might, or might not be armed, which has special reference in that the activities of certain French missions within what was, by the English version at least, the British sphere of influence, were constant sources of friction.

¹⁸Parliamentary Papers, 1885, Africa No. 6 (C. 4442), LV, p. 551.

¹⁹See Hertslet, Vol. I, op. cit., pp. 127-156.

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By the 8th article of the Brussels Act²⁰ the powers decided among other things, that firearms, especially rifles and improved weapons, as well as ammunition, should be prohibited in the territories comprised between the 20th parallel of north latitude and the 22nd parallel of south latitude and extending westward to the Atlantic Ocean and eastward to the Indian Ocean and its dependencies. The other relevant clause, paragraph four of the 9th article runs as follows:

Besides the measures directly taken by governments for arming the public force and the organizations of their defense, individual exceptions shall be admitted for persons affording sufficient guarantees that the arms and ammunition delivered to them will not be given, assigned, or sold to third persons, and for travelers provided with the declaration of their government stating that the weapons and ammunition are destined exclusively for their personal defense.²¹

To get somewhat ahead of the story, this section did not answer the question of what rights an armed party might have in travelling in disputed territory.

D. LORD SALISBURY--ARCHITECT OF BRITISH TROPICAL AFRICA

Lord Salisbury was the most influential European in the peaceful partition of Africa.²² This olympian statesman was

²⁰Hertslet, Vol. II, op. cit., pp. 488-516.

²¹Ibid.

²²There are many sources for Salisbury; the best, of course, are the Salisbury Papers at Christ Church and the incomplete biography by his daughter Lady Gwendolyn Cecil,

in office for all but two of the years between 1886 and 1902, and for most of this period he combined the office of Prime Minister and Secretary for Foreign Affairs into one. It is worthy of note that Salisbury's first two cabinet posts were as Secretary for the India Office, the second of which was served under Disraeli. Salisbury had also toured the colonies (South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand) in his youth and maintained fond remembrances of them.

It must be borne in mind, however, that when Salisbury's Second Ministry first came to power in 1886, the Berlin Conference of 1885 had just determined the criteria for the dismemberment of Africa between the several states. England stood grandly isolated from the European treaty structure, and it seemed entirely possible that as colonial fervor grew, Europe might combine against England. Certainly anywhere in the world that French, German, Russian, or even Japanese imperialism turned, it ran into British commercial interests which often had maintained for years a monopoly of the best and most lucrative trade items and territories. Salisbury was also constantly distracted from his favorite occupation, that of the formation of Foreign Policy, by the continuing Irish crises.

Salisbury was convinced, however, that there was plenty of room in the world for the imperialisms of all the major powers to co-exist peacefully. It only remained for England

op. cit. Most useful of the shorter works is Kennedy's one volume book, op. cit.

to make concessions at the proper times to prevent any untoward European coalition. Africa needed close attention, however, as the rules laid down at Berlin in 1885 postulated that occupation meant more than previous treaties with African chiefs, whose validity was often in doubt. In a way this format meant that African land acquisitions would not be terribly expensive, as a small expedition could, in a loose way, "occupy" a quite large piece of territory. In particular, in West Africa the French were willing to make the arrangements and to provide the money for military expeditions. Salisbury was constrained by a Parliament that had not yet grown accustomed to the necessity of annexation and would not vote credits to govern what England already possessed, let alone consider annexations of land that had doubtful utility.

As it was also clear that the chartered companies could not meet the challenges of the French or Germans in 1889, Salisbury negotiated a West Africa Agreement with France. This Convention effectively defined the boundaries of the Sene-Gambia, Gold Coast, and Dahomey-Slave Coast (Lagos) boundary as they extended inland from the coast.²³

With the disappearance of Bismarck, Salisbury was able to negotiate the famous Africa-Heligoland treaty of June 28, 1890.²⁴ The principle arrangements were that English control

²³Parliamentary Papers, 1890 (C. 5905), Africa No. 3.

²⁴Parliamentary Papers, 1890 (C. 6046), Africa No. 6.

of the Island of Zanzibar and Pemba was recognized by Berlin in return for the strategic North Sea Island of Heligoland. The British, however, also were keen to prevent hinterland disputes in East Africa, and although Cecil Rhodes' much desired railroad route from the Cape to Cairo was blocked by German Tanganyika extending to the Belgian Congo, British control of the Kenya hinterland was valued for its proximity to the headwaters of the Nile. In West Africa, a rather minor portion of the agreement delimited an Anglo-German demarkation on the Gulf of Guinea and extending inland for enough to prevent riverain disputes.²⁵

Salisbury's grasp of the African situation is amply illustrated by his defense of the Anglo-German treaty in the House of Lords on July 10, 1890. In particular, Salisbury was replying to criticism from Lord Rosebery, who had chided Salisbury for ever allowing the Germans access to Africa in the first place. His reply was apt, as it cleverly exonerated his government from the charge of having been the innovator of any aggressive imperialism.

Up to ten years ago we remained masters of Africa, practically, or the greater part of it, without being put to the inconvenience of protectorates or anything of that sort, by the simple fact that we were masters of the sea and that we have had considerable experience in dealing with native races. So much was that the case that we left enormous stretches of coast to the native rulers in the full confidence that they would go on under native rulers and in the hope that they would gradually acquire their own proper civilization without any interference on our part.

²⁵See Hertslet, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 85.

Then, suddenly, we found out that that position, however convenient, had no foundation whatever in international law. We had no rights over all these vast stretches of coast, both on the West and East coasts of Africa. We had no power of preventing any other nation from coming in and seizing a portion of them.²⁶

In the same statement before the House of Lords, Salisbury's concern for a proper delimitation of Africa is manifest, and although he was specifically referring to the East African Anglo-German rivalry, he could just as well have been speaking of the West African Anglo-French disputes.

I will say that, during these negotiations, it occurred to me more than once that it might be wiser to break them off altogether and to allow the years to pass over us until the natural progress of civilization and the struggle for existence should have determined in a far more effective way than can be done by protocols and treaties, who are to be supreme, and in what parts of that vast continent each nation is to rule. But, on reflection, we could not convince ourselves that that, though for the most part comfortable course, would be our duty; because, in front of this advancing tide of colonization, there are numbers of men of both nationalities,--men of energy and strong will, but not distinguished by any great restraint over their feelings,--who would be urging in every part where rivalry existed and the two Powers touched, the claims of each nation to supremacy in each particular piece of territory; . . . trying to establish by means which must constantly degenerate into violence, the supremacy of that nation for which they were passionately contending. . . .

. . . I fear that if the existing state of things had gone on, harmony between the two countries might not have been long maintained.²⁷

Though criticism of his African policies did not cease, Salisbury did not slacken his efforts for peaceful boundary delimitation in Africa.

²⁶Lady Gwendolyn Cecil, op. cit., Vol. IV, pp. 225-226.

²⁷Ibid., p. 228.

In part because of the success of this Anglo-German agreement France was re-stimulated to seek further agreement with England in their African areas of conflict. The major points of the Declaration exchanged between the Government of France and England on the 5th of August, 1890, concerned the interior of West Africa and the Island of Madagascar.²⁸ In short, France accepted English control of Zanzibar for a reciprocal recognition of French control of Madagascar. In West Africa England consolidated a somewhat shaky control of the Niger through George Goldie's Royal Niger Company, by giving France the vast stretch of territory extending from her Algerian possessions to a line drawn from the Eastern end of Lake Chad at Barruwa to Say on the Upper Niger. This famous Say-Barruwa line was modified to the extent that all territory which could rightly and fairly be included within the kingdom of Sokoto should fall within the British sphere of influence. Upon this point much will be said later.²⁹ Further, the Agreement stipulated that a joint Committee would meet periodically in Paris to determine the final Anglo-French West African boundaries. These negotiations lasted intermittently for most of the period of the dissertation, 1890-1904, until final agreements were reached in 1904.³⁰

²⁸Parliamentary Papers, 1890 (C. 6130), Africa No. 9.

²⁹For the full text see Hertslet, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 739.

³⁰The final on the ground delimitation convention, based on the Anglo-French Entente of 1904, was not signed until

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Nothing better illustrates the steady rationalism, and humor, of Salisbury than his concluding remarks before the House of Lords concerning the Anglo-French treaty of 1890.³¹ His oft quoted statement that the vast stretches of land left to France between the Mediterranean and the Say-Barruwa line were what agriculturalists would call "light" aptly illustrates his sentiments. "Light" the land certainly was--consisting exclusively of the Sahara Desert--and Salisbury could rightly congratulate himself for having swapped valueless territory for the Niger and an end to much French hostility. Nevertheless, it was an unfortunate remark since the French representatives were quite as aware as he that the Sahara had little value, but had hoped to use this great new swatch of blue on the map of Africa as a sop to the colonialists and public opinion.

Great in importance as the Say-Barruwa line was, its limitations should be noted, as the solution of its defects forms the diplomatic portion of this thesis. Primarily, the Say-Barruwa line was an East-West line. It gave France a great stretch of the Sahara between Algeria and the Say-Barruwa line but did not define the lateral extensions which France might or might not be able to claim. Naturally, conflicts arose. They came first in the hinterland of the Gold Coast, where British interests were effectively excluded by

29 May 1906 and ratified on 29 August 1906. See Hertslet, ibid., Vol. II, pp. 843-847.

³¹Cecil, op. cit., Vol. IV.

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the French. A second area left undetermined was the Sudan, but Fashoda, of course, eventually set the eastern limits of the French expansion in the direction of the Upper Nile. The third area of conflict, with which this thesis will be concerned, were the French attempts to make a south-east end run around Say, by extending the hinterland of Dahomey into Borgu on the Middle Niger. In this the French were only partially successful and control of the Niger above the all important Boussa Rapids remained in British hands. The fourth area of conflict, with which this thesis is also concerned, came over what could fairly be included in the kingdom of Sokoto. In this area the French made certain territorial gains, but there is no doubt that Lugard and Lansdowne were able to exploit the French desire to have a watered route from Dakar to Lake Chad to British advantage.

In sum, then, by the end of 1890 the diplomatic process of West African boundary delimitation was well under way. The precedents for the agreements of 1889 and 1890 were a combination of the pressures of European diplomacy and the internal thrusts of imperialism as it developed in England, France and Germany toward Africa. It is the final chapters of West African boundary delimitation which concern the remainder of this thesis. Until 1897, the story continues to be largely, but not completely, one of the European diplomacy. After mid-1898, as the crisis in Borgu settles down, the center of interest increasingly shifts to internal

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developments in Northern Nigeria as the impending transfer of the sovereign rights of the Royal Niger Company to the Government approaches. With the approach of Government control, the development of Indirect Rule takes the major part of this thesis. It would be difficult to determine which process has had the most effect on Nigeria, the final boundary settlement, or Indirect Rule.

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CHAPTER IV

A. DIPLOMACY AND INTERNAL AFFAIRS, 1890-1895

Lord Salisbury and most members of parliament were well satisfied with the Anglo-French West African agreement of 1890. They probably would have been delighted had the subject never come up in diplomatic debate again. However, in part due to Lord Salisbury's own tactless remarks regarding the relative worth of the Sahara Desert, which had been assigned to France, certain individuals within the French government were determined that they would right the slights to French prestige in West Africa by assuring themselves control of a port on the Middle Niger below the rapids at Boussa. Obviously, this was not going to be an easy task, as the rights of the Royal Niger Company were well established in the Middle and Lower Niger, both by international treaty and by Anglo-French accords. In fact, the French Colonial parties were faced with the prospect of negating the rights of the Royal Niger Company in the Niger without coming into serious conflict with Great Britain, or for that matter, Germany.¹

¹Germany had claims in Togo, the Kameruns and a possible claim on Gando.

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The first steps of the French Colonial Party were taken in 1891 and 1892. A certain Lieutenant Mizon was sent on an expedition by a commercial syndicate in France² to explore beyond Yola on the Benue, an area outside the Company's limits. Mizon's party consisted of a Captain of Dragoons and several non-commissioned officers, beside natives. They were armed with rifles and a Hotchkiss gun which was mounted on a steam launch in which they were conveyed. They entered the Niger through a little-used creek without giving any notice to the company, and soon became involved in disputes with the natives, during which Lieutenant Mizon and others were wounded.³

Once aware of the Mizon party, the Royal Niger Company allowed them free use of the river, as stipulated by the Berlin Act of 1885, but would not allow Mizon to call for fuel or provisions at any of the Company's ports until the apparent military nature of the expedition was explained. It will be remembered, however, from Sir Claud MacDonald's report,⁴ that anyone using the Niger, yet unable to use

²At least according to a statement made by M. Waddington, the French Minister to Lord Salisbury in Apr., 1891, and recorded on page 8 of a long "Memorandum on the Claim of Great Britain and France in the Basin of the Middle and Lower Niger" compiled by Colonel William Everett, C.M.G., then the assistant Adjutant-General in the intelligence division of the War Office in November, 1897 as Confidential African (West) No. 539. Found in CO 879/50.

³Ibid., or Memorandum of Sir Clement Hill 6 May 1895. CO 879/50.

⁴See footnote 44, Chapter II, this thesis.

Company ports of call, would be in a very difficult situation, to say the least. The restriction on using Company facilities was, however, lifted on three conditions:

(1) that the expedition would engage to respect the laws of the Company while within their jurisdiction; (2) that it would not use cannon and rifles within Company jurisdiction; and (3) that Mizon would not attempt to go overland through the British territories.⁵ Mizon paid scant heed to these stipulations, however.

The British government contended that the action of Lieutenant Mizon involved a breach of Section 4 of the 9th Article of the Brussels Act.⁶ The French government on the other hand contended that the limitations placed on the transit of the expedition by water up the Niger were inconsistent with the 26th and 30th articles of the Berlin Act, which stipulate that all agents and/or companies or persons must have equal treatment and must be accorded equal protection on the River Niger. They argued that M. Mizon's expedition did not possess a military character and that the Company could not expect their regulations to be observed when they had never been published.⁷

⁵Everett, op. cit., p. 9.

⁶Hertslet, op. cit.; see Chapter III, Section C, this thesis.

⁷Everett, op. cit., p. 10 in CO 879/50.

Despite the quibbling nature of the argument, the stakes were large. In particular, the French had two goals: one, of course, was a port on the navigable course on the Niger below Boussa; the second, was concerned with heretofore unclaimed territory east of Yola. It will be remembered that the Anglo-German delimitation had reached only as far as Yola, and territory to the North and east of Yola had a direct bearing on French interest in the Congo. Indeed, this area had a potentially crucial significance by virtue of its proximity to Lake Chad which had become the focal point of communication between French West Africa and French Equatorial Africa. After considerable exchange of diplomatic notes and discussion at the Niger Commission meetings in Paris, little was accomplished but the annoyance of both parties to the dispute.⁸

Lieutenant Mizon did, however, continue his travels toward Yola, and if his methods were highhanded, the Niger Company for its part was never cooperative. On the 25th of May 1893, in fact, the Niger Company sent a long letter complaining of M. Mizon's proceedings and claiming £100,000 in damages.⁹ In part, because of the Company's complaints, and

⁸For correspondence relative to this question see M. Waddington, 31 August 1891; Mr. Phipps No. 196, 27 July, 1891; to the Marquis of Dufferin No. 198, 1892; To the Marquis of Dufferin, No. 222, 1892, as well as Sir Clement Hill's memorandum of 1895, op. cit.

⁹There is quite a bit of reference material pertaining to this incident. The most concise statements are set forth in a memorandum and other documents with an enclosure in a

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after a further exchange of notes, the French government sent out instructions to M. Mizon to return home to explain his conduct. However, his successor was to proceed on the mission beyond British territory.

Perhaps not surprisingly, M. Mizon at first declined his orders as authentic, considering the obstructive nature of the Royal Niger Company to this point. To further complicate matters, as Mizon was proceeding down the river on the "Sergeant Malamine," his craft was seized by the Niger Company's authorities on the ground of having been engaged in commerce in contravention of regulations and without paying custom duties.¹⁰ He was tried and formally condemned

letter from the Company to the Foreign Office. (Niger Company to Foreign Office, May 25, 1893). Flint, *op. cit.*, also has a rather complete discussion of the incident.

Specifically, the acts of Lieutenant Mizon for which the Company asked compensation are as follows:

1. That he (Mizon) had disregarded his formal written agreement to respect their (Company) territory up to beyond Yola, on the south bank of the Benue, and to 100 miles beyond Ribago on the north bank of that river.

2. That he had stopped their coastal vessels and had threatened to fire on them.

3. That he had raised the incident with the Emir of Muri with whom they had concluded a treaty in 1885 (30th of January, see treaties concluded between the Royal Niger Company and native chiefs).

4. That he had made a treaty with the Sultan of Mure and had supplied him with arms and ammunition.

5. That he and his soldiers personally used cannon and rifles to assist the Sultan of Mure in capturing the important pagan town of Kwana, under British protection, and had reduced to slavery all the inhabitants who were not killed during the attack or subsequently starved in the bush." See Everett Memorandum CO 879/50.

¹⁰See Chapter III, Section "B", footnote 7, Hertslet, *op. cit.*, this thesis.

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on the charge. Although both sides were doubtlessly irritated, the actions of both Mizon and local Company officials in no way rendered easy the diplomatic tasks of settlement.

The Mizon expedition brought clearly into focus the incomplete nature of the British Protectorate of Nigeria, even though in the agreement of 1889 a clause had been inserted¹¹ by which the line of demarcation between the British possessions in the colony of Lagos and the French possessions on the Slave Coast¹² had been definitely determined.

In Article IV, Section 1 of the Brussels Act, it was stated that the line of demarcation "shall be identical with that meridian which intersects the territory of Porto Novo at the Ajarra Creek." The article goes on to say that "it shall follow the above-mentioned meridian as far as the 9th degree of north latitude, where it shall stop." Hence, it is clearly seen that from the coast to the 9th degree of north latitude no question could arise between the Niger Company sphere of influence and the French sphere of influence.

The problem which faced the French and British representatives was then to determine the boundary line between this 9th degree of north latitude and Say on the Upper Niger.

In this region the British, and in particular the Royal Niger Company, had come to assume that the territory fairly

¹¹Article IV, Section 1.

¹²The present country of Dahomey.

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belonged to them, as the Company held that Borgu was a nominal tributary of Gando which was tributary to Sokoto, the latter two both having signed valid treaties with the Royal Niger Company. The French for their part had either to demonstrate that the treaties signed by the Royal Niger Company with Gando or Sokoto were invalid, or that parts of Borgu had never formed any part either of the spheres of influence of Gando or Sokoto.

Moreover, to the north the French were becoming more and more aware of the inconveniences which the Say-Barrua line posed upon French communications between French West Africa and French Equatorial Africa. Barrua on the eastern shore of Lake Chad was of particular concern, for should the Say-Barrua line continue operative, the French would be faced with the inconvenient problem of going to the north and east of Lake Chad, an area largely desert, in order to maintain any sort of communication between French Equatorial Africa and French West Africa by land. Moreover, the Lake Chad region had a certain strategic importance for French aims in the Sudan and Upper Nile.

But M. Mizon's mission was not the only expedition which French capital and ingenuity had sent into the heart of Africa. During the same period, one Lieutenant Monteil was commissioned to explore the Lake Chad area, which by 1893 he had done. In so doing, Monteil had crossed, knowingly, or unknowingly, into what nominally came under the British sphere

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of Nigeria in Bornu south of the Say-Barrua line and in the northeast corner of what is today Nigeria. Monteil was struck, as indeed is anyone who looks at a map of West Africa, with the superior advantages of a route between French Equatorial Africa and French West Africa which passed south and west of Lake Chad. He, therefore, entered Bornu and contracted a number of treaties with local potentates, in particular at Kuka. Bornu, of course, had never come under the jurisdiction of Sokoto or any of the Fulani Emirates. Nonetheless, it would be necessary for France, in order to gain any of the Bornu territory, substantially to call into doubt the Say-Barrua portion of the agreement of 1890.

Indeed, in both Bornu, south of Lake Chad, and in Borgu east of Middle Niger, the French government had begun the process of denegrating the diplomatic arrangements which had been made previously. In July 1893 M. Hanotaux informed Mr. Phipps¹³ that Captain Monteil had obtained important information relative to the district of Say-Barrua, which might affect the line of demarcation, and that he had been received in Kuka in Bornu south of the Say-Barrua line. It was at the same time stated in French papers that in defiance of the 1890 agreement Monteil had concluded a treaty with the Sultan of Sokoto, an area expressly reserved to British protection.

The French government proceeded to develop the theory that while Great Britain was debarred by this line from

¹³Mr. Phipps was then one of the British commissioners at the Paris Niger Commission meetings.

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advancing northward, or France southwards over the Say-Barrua line, France was free to enter and acquire the territories to the south of it from any other quarter. M. Hanotaux, in fact, wished to be allowed to examine any British treaties which would interfere with such actions.

Mr. Phipp's instructions as to how to reply were recorded on the 26th of August 1893:

As regards to the limitation to the east of the Niger, I have to observe that the production of treaties is unnecessary and inadvisable. By the arrangement of 1890, the boundary line between the British and French spheres was drawn from Say in the Niger to Barrua on Lake Chad, the line to be deflected so as to leave the entire kingdom of Sokoto on the British side. The French have no right to interfere to the south of that line nor the British to the north of it: Neither party has any concern with treaties concluded by the other within its own sphere. If, therefore, M. Monteil concluded a treaty with Bornu affecting territories south of Barrua, the treaty is as invalid as are M. Mizon's treaties of engagements in the Benue district. The contention put forward in the French press that Sokoto only, with its dependencies, is placed by the agreement within the British sphere, is totally untenable; it is contrary to the spirit of the agreement, and also to its letter, as it has never been pretended that Barrua, which belongs to Bornu, is a dependency of Sokoto. You must, consequently, decline to enter into any discussion as to the validity of British titles in the British sphere.¹⁴

In February 1894, M. Casimir-Perier,¹⁵ in upholding the right of M. Mizon to act as he had done at Yola, reverted to the argument that the arrangement of 1890 did not apply, and could not be interpreted as settling the question of the

¹⁴Earl of Rosebery to Mr. Phipps, 26 August 1893.

¹⁵M. Casimir-Perier was at that time serving as French Commissioner to the Niger Commission sitting in Paris.

respective spheres of influence south of the Niger and the Benue.

M. Hanotaux subsequently amplified this argument, asserting that the recognition by England of the French sphere of influence to the south of her Algerian possessions was in compensation for the recognition of the British protectorate over Zanzibar, and did not imply any settlement of the British sphere of influence.¹⁶ Not surprisingly, Lord Rosebery lost no time in refuting this proposition of M. Hanotaux.

Goldie, of course, was particularly alive to the threat posed by French interference in the middle stretches of the Niger, particularly the rapids at Boussa. Should the French be able to insert themselves on the Niger below the rapids at Boussa, Goldie's hard-won monopoly of trade on the Niger would be at an end. Hence, when it was rumored that France was commissioning a new mission to negotiate treaties in the eastern part of Borgu, particularly at Nikki, Goldie was ready. He commissioned Captain Frederick Lugard to form a commission and head to Borgu, particularly to Nikki via Kishi, and to negotiate treaties throughout the territories of Eastern Borgu, which today is in Dahomey.¹⁷ This famous "race to Nikki" which ensued is but one of the more colorful episodes of the early Borgu crisis.

¹⁶See too, Marquis of Dufferin No. 64 Africa, March 4, 1894.

¹⁷The details of Lugard's mission are covered exhaustively in Margery Perham's Diaries of Lord Lugard (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1959), 4 vols.

Goldie, like most of the British cabinet, had little commercial interest in the Bornu region of northeast Nigeria. But all were concerned that if the French were able to call into doubt sections of the 1890 agreement, they would have less trouble in calling into doubt the more important sections relating to Borgu in eastern Nigeria.

At this juncture Lord Salisbury's conservative ministry, with the addition of Joseph Chamberlain at the Colonial Office, was returned to office. For the next three years, between 1895 and 1898, the settlement of the eastern boundary of Nigeria hung fire, and though it did not become the spark to ignite Europe, the period has come to be known for good reason as the "Borgu Crisis."

In short, this period represented a clash of wills between the imperially minded Chamberlain--who was determined to push to the very limit of possibility British expansion in the world--and elements of the French Colonial Society equally determined to extend French interest in West Africa to the utmost.

B. THE NIGER COMMISSION

After bringing the events of the Middle and Lower Niger to 1895, it is necessary now to turn with some detail to the diplomacy and actions of the Niger Commission. It will be recalled that the final paragraph of Clause 2 of the Convention of 1890 stated that such a Commission would meet from

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time to time in Paris.¹⁸ This Commission was empowered to examine the whole question, or questions, of the Niger as well as other West African territories, which should arise between England and France.

The first of these commissions was appointed in 1892, the commissioners being Mr. Phipps and Sir Joseph Crowe for Great Britain, and M. Hanotaux and M. Haussmann for France. This first Commission, in part due to the Mizon controversy, found it impossible to reach agreement on any question relating to African boundary controversies. In principle, however, the Boundary Commission did agree that the line between spheres west of the Niger should run from Say to the northwest angle of the neutral zone, the hinterland of the Gold Coast, and thence to the French town of Bonduku. But the two governments could not reach so easy a conclusion and negotiations were temporarily broken off.

In 1894 another effort was made to arrive at a settlement. A line which would have been drawn from the termination on the 9th parallel of the eastern frontier of Dahomey to the intersection of the Niger by the 12th parallel of north latitude was discussed by Mr. Phipps and Mr. Hanotaux.

¹⁸See Hertslet, *op. cit.*, and Chapter III, Sec. "D" this thesis. The Public Record Office in London also has an enormous amount of material which emanated from these discussions scattered throughout FO and CO files. The reports, etc., are collected, however, for the purposes of this thesis the partial references for the later years in CO 446 series were quite sufficient.

Practically speaking, this line formed a continuation of the eastern frontier of Dahomey to the Niger in the north. The chief problem involved here, however, was a divergence of opinion respecting the position of Nikki. It will be noted had this line been accepted, Nikki would have been in French territory. However, as both the exact position of Nikki and that of parts of the Niger River itself were matters of contention, none of the participants involved was disposed to make a good settlement. The Royal Niger Company in particular was indisposed to see Nikki assigned to any French sphere. For its part the Company considered Nikki to be one of the residences of the Sultan of Borgu, with whom they had a treaty.¹⁹

Nonetheless, a basis for negotiation was in principal agreed upon by Mr. Phipps and Mr. Hanotaux in 1894:

As for the delimitation of British and French spheres of interest west of the Niger, a line traced eastward from the Dahomey frontier, running along the Niger to the 12° parallel, will be recognized as the line of separation. This line of partage acknowledges to France a large part of Borgu and Gourme, and the English will renounce all trade conducted by her west of the altered line.²⁰

Despite this tentative arrangement, neither the French nor English governments were again disposed to proceed and active negotiations were terminated indefinitely.

At the beginning of 1896, on the settlement of certain disputes in Siam and Tunis, Salisbury decided that a favorable

¹⁹Everett, op. cit., p. 31.

²⁰Mr. Phipps, No. 226, 9 October 1894.

opportunity had appeared for proposing to the French that the Niger Commission should resume its meetings. Paris was agreeable and new commissioners were appointed. For Great Britain, they were Mr. Howard and Sir Augustus Hemming and for France, M. Larrouy and M. Roume. Soon after their appointment, however, Colonel Everett replaced Mr. Hemming, who had been in the meantime appointed Governor of British Guinea, and had proceeded to his post. Serious negotiations began in the fall of 1896.

The British Commissioners, in the case of the Say-Barrua line, were instructed to take the basis of agreement between Mr. Phipps and M. Hanotaux as the starting point for further discussions.²¹ The French commissioners for their part declined to admit that the Phipps-Hanotaux conversations in any way formulated positions of agreement. They implied that they were merely a "Premier avant project." They chose to revert to a former contention of their government, hinted at earlier, which interpreted the Declaration of 1890 in the following manner.²²

1. That the Say-Barrua line debarred Britain from advancing northward over this line. However, France was free to acquire territories not belonging to Sokoto to the south of that line from any other quarter.

²¹See Marquis of Salisbury No. 33 Africa, 7 February 1896.

²²British Commissioner's Dispatch to Marquis of Dufferin, 15 February 1896.

2. That France had treaties concluded by Monteil in the triangle Say-Argungu-Gomba territory, moreover, which did not belong to Sokoto and hence should belong to France.

3. That France had rights at Yola, where a French post still existed.²³

4. That as Sokoto clearly had never controlled Bornu and as neither France nor Great Britain had a treaty with Bornu, France was entirely free to enter and contract treaties with Bornu as she chose.²⁴

Not unnaturally, Lord Salisbury, who had negotiated the Convention of 1890, was much disturbed by such denigration of the value of the Say-Barrua line. After hearing of the French commission's reasoning, Lord Salisbury addressed a long dispatch to Lord Dufferin which was intended to prove conclusively;

that I signed in the full belief that the line was a separation between French and British possessions, the French to the north and the British to the south. But it does not only prove what my own interpretation was, it proves also what was the interpretation of M. Waddington himself attributed to it. I know that he read the speech, because three or four days afterwards he wrote to me a letter which I now possess, commenting on another portion of it; and he would certainly have called my attention to my erroneous conception of the operation

²³Yola, of course, being the extreme limit of the British sphere of influence on the Benue.

²⁴It will be remembered, of course, that while Bornu had no particular commercial value to the Royal Niger Company, it had a large strategic value for France, as control of Bornu would give France a well-watered trade route south of Lake Chad between her West African and Equatorial African possessions.

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of the treaty on the Sultanate of Bornu and the shores of Lake Chad, if he had been at variance with his own interpretation of the agreement. From what I know of M. Waddington, and I had known him for a great number of years, it is absolutely impossible that he should have known that I was signing the treaty in belief that the line was a limit between French and British possessions when in his view it was a form of words which would permit the assertion of a claim to French territory to the south of that line.²⁵

It must be stressed that Lord Rosebery had not made concessions during the Niger Commission meetings of 1893 and 1894 to which Lord Salisbury was unaware. Indeed in a dispatch of the 26th of August 1893, he remarks,

The French have no right to interfere to the south of that line (Say-Barrua line), nor British to the north of it; neither party has any concern with treaties concluded by the other in its own sphere. If, therefore, M. Monteil concluded a treaty with Bornu affecting territory south of Barrua, the treaty is as invalid as are M. Mizon's treaties or engagements in the Benue district.²⁶

Although Lord Salisbury was surprised to find that the French had suddenly formed a new interpretation of the convention of 1890, knowledgeable people in the Colonial Office who had been keeping close track of affairs within France were aware of the internal pressures to which all French politicians were then being subjected by colonial advocates. This pressure continued to mount until by August 31, 1895 Sir Percy Anderson,²⁷ in a memorandum could state: "Attempts

²⁵No. 56, Africa, Foreign Office, 21 November 1896.

²⁶Rosebery to Niger Commission, 26 August 1893, as in Everett, op. cit.

²⁷Anderson was one of a number of "old hands" who had some special competence in West African affairs. He figures prominently in correspondence regarding Nigeria.

made in the French press to escape from the Say-Barrua line, though probably dishonest, have been supported by French statesmen in recent negotiations." In this same memorandum, however, Sir Percy Anderson goes on to note that the Niger Company, in particular Sir George Goldie, has presented its own equally ambitious plan for the partition of West Africa.

In essence, the Niger Company would have preferred to see a line drawn south from Say so as to meet the northern extension of the Dahomey-Lagos border at the 9th parallel accepted as the final definition of the territory of Northern Nigeria. This ambitious proposal would, of course, have left Nikki, including most of what is today Northern Dahomey, within the Royal Niger Company's sphere of operations and monopoly. Although this definition of the future of Northern Nigeria was politically impracticable from the standpoint of London, the Niger Company had good reason other than mere aggrandizement for proclaiming it.

It must be remembered that at the time of the convention of 1890, the Niger Company had some scattered treaties with chiefs to a distance of some 300 miles up river of Say. It can be assured that Sir George Goldie would not have relinquished them except on the understanding that territory south of the Say-Barrua line would remain in perpetuity in the exclusive sphere of the Royal Niger Company. Indeed, the Royal Niger Company could point to the fact that public opinion within France in 1889 and 1890 was far less frenetic than

the present situation. In fact, a map, published in Le Temps on August 13, 1890, assigned to the Niger Company exactly such a line as Goldie continued to propose: a perpendicular southward line from Say to the coast of Kotonou.

Nonetheless, despite the protestations of Lord Salisbury, Lord Rosebery, and Sir George Goldie, the second article of the Declaration of 1890 was not entirely specific in the meaning which it attached to the Say-Barrua line. In failing to define the meaning of the line exactly, the French government could probably rightly conclude that the British government had tacitly admitted the possibility of a French advance to the south of this line from another quarter.²⁸

It must further be recognized, of course, that by 1896 the inconvenience of the Say-Barrua line to French hopes for a West African empire had become obvious to all concerned. To make the best use of the great stretches of territory in Central, West, and Equatorial Africa to which France had by now laid claim, France needed two things from what had hitherto been assigned to the Royal Niger Company. First, they needed a navigable port on the Niger to insure that the hinterland of Dahomey and the Kingdom of Mossi, now under control of Captain Toutee, would have a proper outlet to the sea. And second, they needed the aforementioned route south of Lake Chad to connect their West African and Equatorial

²⁸Everett, op. cit., p. 26. Or so later rueful inquiry indicated.

African possessions.²⁹

To return to the Niger Commission meetings themselves, on 26 April, after several meetings in the latter part of February and April, the British commissioners proposed a boundary line according to the following formula. The Boundary would extend eastward from the intersection of the 9th parallel of latitude with the meridian forming the eastern frontier of Dahomey along the 9th parallel as far as 1° east of Paris (3°20' east of Greenwich), and thence northward along the meridian up to its intersection with a line drawn direct from Say to Barrua. According to Everett, who by then was an active participant in negotiations,

in making this proposal, the British commissioners said that they were actuated solely by conciliatory motives, and by a desire to satisfy to their utmost the wishes of France, and to obtain a settlement along the line which would be satisfactory to their respective governments. They also requested their colleagues to take note that, in the event of such a settlement not being arrived at, they would not relinquish any of the claims made by them to the territory which they were now about to propose to abandon.³⁰

The French commissioners, however, declined to accept this formula as a basis for discussion. They made the following counter proposal:

That a line starting from the eastern frontier of Dahomey at its intersection with the 8th degree of

²⁹(The Germans had as yet made no effective occupation of the northern territories of Cameroon which abutted Lake Chad and which in theory would break French communications as effectively as the British sphere of interest in Bornu. The French had good reason to hope that they could dislodge both the English and German interest on the shores of Lake Chad.)

³⁰Ibid., p. 32.

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north latitude should follow that parallel eastward to the Niger, and then that river up to Say, the right bank falling to France and the left bank to Great Britain.³¹

Principally, of course, this proposal would give to the French government a very convenient stretch of the Niger below the Boussa rapids upon which she could link her rail lines and communications to the interior and at the same time have a navigable port to the open sea.

Characteristically, Lord Salisbury was not disposed to see territory given up easily, and in a note to the Marquis of Dufferin on May 12, 1896, he records the following:

Her Majesty's Government has learned with surprise the nature of the counterproposal now made by the French Commissioners, which would deprive Great Britain of the whole of her sphere of influence to the west of Niger and north of the 9th parallel of latitude. The basis of the agreements of 1890 and 1894 was the existence of two spheres requiring to limitation by commission, and this has also been the basis of subsequent negotiations to which I have referred.

The present proposal is an entirely new departure. It renders the past work of the commission inoperative. It leaves no ground open for future discussion by them. It substitutes absolute surrender by one party for an amicable arrangement between the two powers. The plan proposed by the British commissioners had the latter subject in view, but the counterproposal is wholly unacceptable.³²

Upon learning of Salisbury's expostulations, the French government, or in particular M. Hanotaux, made the following counter-proposal.

³¹See British Commissioner's Dispatch, 8 May 1896.

³²British Commissioner's Dispatch, 23 May 1896.

The boundary, as before, would start from the intersection of the meridian forming the eastern frontier of Dahomey with the 8th degree in north latitude, but, instead of following the parallel eastward, it should proceed in a straight line drawn obliquely to the intersection of the 9th parallel of latitude with the 4th meridian of longitude east of Greenwich, and then, follow this parallel eastward to the Niger, to be drawn along the right bank of that river, as before, to Say.³³

As this proposal also gave the French government the requisite stretch of navigable Niger below the Boussa rapids, it was, of course, rejected by the British commissioners.

Despite this unseemly intransigence on the part of the two Commissions, and in spite of Salisbury's strong words, there is little doubt that due to increasing Anglo-French tensions had Lord Salisbury and the British Foreign Office been left entirely in charge of affairs in West Africa, France would have received large concessions in the Middle and Lower Niger. In October Lord Salisbury was friendliness itself when speaking with Courcel on West African subjects.³⁴ Doubtless, British success in Egypt had the end effect of driving French politicians to seek greater gains in West Africa, while stimulating Salisbury's overtures. Nevertheless, as late as December 31, 1896, Everett could write in private to Sir Clement Hill that:

Thinking how bent the French are on getting to the Niger below the rapids--I discovered why it might constitute a very satisfactory quid pro quo, for, at least, the triangle of territory which lies south of the 9th parallel in Hanotaux's second proposal.

³³Courcel to Hanotaux, 3 October 1896; D.D.F., XII, No. 468, as in M. Robinson and Gallagher, op. cit., p. 403.

³⁴Ibid.

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Briefly, it consists in such a rectification of the western frontier of the Gold Coast agreed to July 1893 as would give the colony all that is wanted in Gaman. Though I have no knowledge of how such an exchange would be viewed by the Colonial Office, I should think they would gladly sacrifice this bit of Lagos for the Gaman country, and I believe the French would agree without even formal protest. I need not now go into details, but, if we got this, together with Bona, Lobi, and a frontier to the north, leaving Dafina and Yatenga to France and giving up Mossi, and if, in addition, we obtained, the best we ought fairly to obtain in any case, the 14th parallel of latitude from the Niger to Lake Chad, the French might have Borgu and the right bank of the Niger down to Liaba and welcome. So far as we know, it is a worthless tract of country which would never be of much use to us or to anyone else.

There would remain the question of the port. You know Goldie's views as well as I do. He has said to me more than once, If ever the French get a port on the Niger, I will sell up the whole business and clear out. As long then, as the Niger Company are there, I do not see quite how that port is to be managed; but if Her Majesty's government took over the administration and were prepared to spend a little money--which Goldie cannot afford to do--neither I nor Howard can see any solid objection to the arrangement. Only we ought not let them have a port opposite Jebba or Rabba, or any other place just in the bend of the river, if we can help it. . . . To escape from this difficulty I should propose to modify Hanotaux's line from the intersection of the east Dahomey frontier with 8 degree latitude the intersection of 9 degree latitude with 4 east longitude, by producing it to the Niger instead of turning it eastward along 9 degrees latitude. I believe it would cut the Niger somewhere in the vicinity of Arenberg, but, in any case, I should be inclined to let the French have that place so that their amour propre might be satisfied. They would then have a port on the navigable portion of the Niger, and we could establish ourselves firmly at Jebba, or Rabba, and turn all the trade from the east down the river.³⁵

Hence, despite the apparent cordiality between the British and French commissioners and the willingness to make some concessions at least on the part of the British

³⁵Col. Everett to Sir Clement Hill, 31 December 1896; CO 879/48.

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commissioners, and in particular Lord Salisbury, Anglo-French relations in the Middle Niger were approaching a point of crisis by the end of 1896.

Early in 1896 Captain Toutee purchased a piece of land on the Niger from the King of Bajibo and constructed a fort garrisoned with French troops. At the time,³⁶ the French declared this territory to be "no man's land" and hence felt they had as much right as anyone to occupy the land. Although it is not exactly clear why, if this territory was "no man's land," the French felt obliged to purchase the territory, the action of Toutee in building a garrison and fort on the Niger spurred the Royal Niger Company, in particular Sir George Goldie, to action; and after repeated and urgent protests, initiated by both George Goldie and Joseph Chamberlain, the French were eventually induced to quit Fort Arenburg. This fort was subsequently garrisoned by troops of the Royal Niger Company, and the fort itself was renamed Fort Goldie.

For its part, the Company had been having its problems with native Emirs farther south, particularly in Nupe and Ilorin. Hence, Sir George Goldie decided that it was necessary as well as opportune for the Royal Niger Company to make a definitive showing of force. An expedition to Nupe would have the dual effect of reinforcing Royal Niger Company control there and demonstrating to the French government the effective power possessed by the Company. Hence, in the

³⁶British Commissioner's Dispatch, 23 May 1896.

winter of 1896-1897, Sir George Goldie himself conducted an expedition against the Emir of Nupe.

The preparations for this expedition quite naturally caused the French government some anxiety, and they made representations on the subject to the British government.³⁷ The French were particularly concerned lest the Royal Niger Company not restrict its operations to the lower reaches of the Niger around Nupe and Ilorin, but continue northwards.

The French government was not satisfied with the assurances made during November, however, and on 8 December 1896, the French Minister for the colonies stated in the Chamber that M. Ballot, the Governor of Dahomey, had received instructions to return to his post and consolidate the existing rights of France in that region.

Sir George Goldie's operations were successfully concluded about 25 February 1897, and resulted in the complete submission of both Nupe and Ilorin.³⁸ Goldie, however, was greatly concerned by reported information that a French expedition had occupied Boussa territory and that a French resident had been installed there.

In fact, Goldie's information was correct. A force under one Lieutenant Bretonnet of the French navy, originating from Dahomey, had proceeded as far north as Ilo on the Niger and thence descended to Boussa, leaving detachments at

³⁷British Commissioner's Dispatch, 21 November 1896.

³⁸See Flint, op. cit., Chapter 11.

various posts on the righthand bank of the river as they descended. Goldie immediately telegraphed the information to the Council of the Royal Niger Company to bring the Bretonnet mission to the attention of the government immediately.

On March 9, 1897, Henry Morley, Secretary of the Council of the Royal Niger Company addressed the following urgent message to the Under Secretary of State:

The Council cannot too strongly urge on Her Majesty's government the necessity of immediate representations being made to the French government with a view of the prompt withdrawal of this expedition from territory within the British sphere.

The Council cannot but feel that such an encouragement is all the more flagrant when it is remembered that the French government received an assurance from Her Majesty's government that the recent operations of the Company should not extend north of Bajibo. Had it not been for this assurance, the Governor of the Company on receiving news of the approach of this expedition, would have proceeded direct to Boussa prior to undertaking the march on Ilorin.

The Council further wish to point out that the French government claimed the right to such assurance on the ground that, in their view, the territory on the right bank of the river in this region was in dispute--and there could be no other ground for asking for an assurance of this nature--pledge given should surely have been mutual and equally applicable to any French expedition operating in the hinterland of Dahomey. The Council wish to draw special attention to the fact that the Company's troops are in occupation of posts in Boussa territory, that there is subsequently grave danger of collision at any moment unless this aggressive action on the part of the French officials is immediately put a stop to.³⁹

The danger of a possible clash in Borgu was made all the more serious by the aggressive and sometimes belligerent

³⁹Henry Morley, Secretary of the Council of the Royal Niger Company to the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, 9 March 1897; CO 879/50.

imperialism of the new minister for the colonies, Joseph Chamberlain. Indeed Chamberlain, a man of strong opinions, had some sharp disagreements with Lord Salisbury on the relative value of the West African empire.⁴⁰ In any case with public feeling already running high over Egypt, especially in France, this new Borgu crisis had the potential for even more seriously impairing relations between England and France.

Before dealing with the details and repercussions of the "crisis in Borgu," it is necessary to retrace the events of the preceding decade to determine the relative merits of the treaties which both the Royal Niger Company and the French government had negotiated with the various Emirs, kings, and chiefs of the Upper and Middle Niger region. For, despite the tempers and military interventions into the Niger region, the eventual settlement of 1898, was based for the most part on the presumed legality and jurisdiction of the potentates with whom these various treaties were signed.

C. PROBLEMS CONCERNING THE TREATY STRUCTURE WITH INDIGENOUS STATES

In general terms, the whole crisis in Borgu, indeed the whole question of delimitation of the Anglo-French spheres of influence in the Middle Niger, can be subsumed under three headings. The first consists of the disputed claim of Great

⁴⁰See Robinson and Gallagher, *op. cit.*, pp. 402-409.

Britain to the whole of Borgu under the treaty of 1890 with the King of Boussa. In other words, was the King of Boussa sovereign over the whole of Borgu as the Royal Niger Company would like to claim; or was the French contention more accurate that Borgu contained a number of more or less sovereign entities which had no governmental or feudal duties of obligation to one another? If, of course, the British claim could be substantiated, then the whole of the petty bickerings of the Niger Commission would be largely irrelevant.

The second problem concerned what might properly be claimed as the extent of the authority of the King of Nikki. This question, of course, assumes that the King of Nikki owed no allegiance to the King or Emir of Boussa. It also includes the problem of the validity of the treaty which Captain Lugard signed at Nikki in 1894. This treaty had its validity seriously challenged by the French deputies at the Niger Commission in Paris. Indeed, the doubt which they were able to cast upon the validity of this treaty eventually had much influence on the British Commissioners, and in particular Lord Salisbury.

The third question, which is not subsumed in the answer to the first, consists of the claim of Great Britain to Gurma in Gando under the treaty of 1894 with the King of Gando. The problem was somewhat similar to that of the King of Boussa in Borgu; just exactly how much territory properly fell under British protection and jurisdiction by right of a valid treaty with the Emir of Gando?

The implications involved in answering these three complicated and highly complex questions would form the bulk of a very large thesis. It is possible here only to deal in a general and rather brief manner with the problems which these questions present.

In regard to the first question--the title of the King of Boussa to sovereignty over Borgu--the French claim, that the King of Boussa did not have feudal sovereignty in its European sense, seems to have the weight of logic behind it. The Royal Niger Company, of course, and Sir George Goldie in particular, claimed on the authority of Lander⁴¹ that Boussa was, indeed, the predominant kingdom and that Keioma and Nikki were subordinate rulers of a kingdom which except for these large cities was practically one. What Lander actually said was that:

The kings of Boussa had the reputation of being the greatest monarchs, next to the sovereigns of Bornu, between that empire and the sea; and this enviable distinction is acknowledged by every rival chief. Yet it cannot be owing either to their power, their state, or their opulence, for of all the Borgu rulers, they are perhaps the poorest and feeblest. The superior dignity of the kings of Boussa, and the honor and reverence which are universally paid them, have arisen, it is said, from the respectability of their origin, for they are believed to be descendants of the oldest family in Africa, which in ancient times, long before the introduction of the Mohammedan religion, was the great head of the fetish: hence the profound respect which is yet shown them by the professors of the new faith, and those who still

⁴¹See Bibliography, Section III, nos. 114 and 115.

cling to the superstitions of the old, and the influence which they exercise as far as their name is known.⁴²

Clapperton in his volumes about his expeditions of 1825 and again in 1830, which in part went through Borgu, helps to clarify this situation. Clapperton found the Borgu kingdom divided into four petty states of Nikki, Kiama, Wawa, and Boussa; of which Boussa "was considered the head and Nikki the next."⁴³ Clapperton further states that in case of conflict the King of Boussa had certain rights of arbitration which were generally respected.⁴⁴ Clapperton goes on to say, moreover,⁴⁵ that the King of Nikki was descended from a younger branch of the family of the King of Boussa, information which tends to facilitate understanding of the relationship between Nikki and Boussa.

In his travels of 1830 Clapperton found that although the King of Boussa was "acknowledged to be the greatest of the sovereigns of Borgu, . . . Nikki was the most powerful monarch in all of Borgu."⁴⁶ Hence, in Borgu as a whole it becomes evident that only the original members of the ruling

⁴²Richard and John Lander, Journal of an Expedition to Explore the Course and Termination of the Niger (London: John Murray, 1832), Vol. II, p. 106.

⁴³Hugh Clapperton, Journal of a Second Expedition into the Interior of Africa from the Bight of Benin to Soccatoo (London: Cass, 1966), quote taken from initial edition, p. 117.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 103-105.

⁴⁶Ibid., Vol. I, p. 233 and Vol. II, p. 134.

family resided at Boussa on the Niger. And, while retaining the respect of other branches of the family, those branches which moved west soon came to overshadow the parent city of Boussa in wealth and power. This interpretation seems to be corroborated by later evidence of contemporary and reliable sources. In Ilo, a town north of Boussa on the Niger, Mr. Wallace, then Agent-General for the Royal Niger Company in Nigeria, noted in the early 1890's, that the King of Ilo was by custom usually either a half brother or an elder brother of the King of Boussa.⁴⁷ Ilo was a relatively important town, and it would seem probable that it need not have owed Boussa any allegiance, if it were not sanctioned by custom, based on special proximity alone. This position of customary respect extended south as well, and it is stated by Lieutenant Barton, who commanded the Company's post at Liaba during the early 1890's, that the King of Wawa was a blood relation to the King of Boussa and when called upon furnished the latter troops without hesitation.⁴⁸

It is interesting to note, moreover, that in territories further west of Nikki, particularly in Kiama and Bue, the rulers there at the time of debate over the delimitation of French and British spheres on the Middle Niger were both full

⁴⁷See proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society for December, 1896, a paper by Mr. Wallace entitled "The Hausa Territories."

⁴⁸See Niger Company to Foreign Office, September 24, 1897.

brothers of the King of Nikki,⁴⁹ a rather interesting case of westward movement of ruling families.

Quite naturally Sir George Goldie had a somewhat different version of the authority of the King of Boussa. The following statement records his view:

I visited Boussa on the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th of February last 1896. During my stay I had two long interviews with the King. In the course of conversation I alluded to my journey up from Jebba, and asked him how far south his kingdom extended on the west bank of the river. He answered at once, "as far as the frontier of Ilorin," and although I tried to shake him on this point, he adhered to his statement that there was no gap whatever between his territory and that of Ilorin.

I asked him whether Ilo, up river, really belonged to him. He replied in the affirmative. When I asked him how it was that Gomba, lower down, did not belong to him he made no reply, and I learnt afterwards that this intrusion of Gando across the river at Gomba is a very sore point with the King of Borgu.

As the Niger Company has treaties with Nikki and Keioma, as well as with Boussa, I was not concerned to obtain conclusive evidence on the question of the mutual dependence or otherwise of these states; . . .

. . . In short, I feel convinced that the present position in Borgu is very much the same as it was when Lander first visited it in 1831, when he found that Boussa was the paramount, and Keioma and Nikki the subordinate rulers of the kingdom practically one, owing to the necessity of constant defense, which has lasted for 80 years, against the Foulah advance which has swept away all the great pagan kingdoms to the east of the Niger.⁵⁰

Despite Sir George Goldie's evidence to the contrary, there seems to be no particular reason to call into doubt the

⁴⁹See an article by F. D. Lugard in The 19th Century, June, 1895, p. 902. See also, British Commissioner's Dispatch, 21 March 1896.

⁵⁰Statement used as evidence by Everett, op. cit., pp. 78-79, from Goldie.

French claim that Borgu consisted of a number of nominally independent states. The evidence does seem good, of course, that the various components of Borgu, or at least their rulers, were related by certain mutual ties of kinship and loyalty. However, there seems no reason to assume that there was any strict regulation of priority between the various components of Borgu. Certainly there were no priorities which could be so interpreted in European law and treaty formalities. None that would make it possible to construe one loosely related part of Borgu as being included within the sphere of influence of one of the great European powers simply by virtue of another of these loosely inter-related parts of Borgu signing a treaty with any European nation, at any rate.

It was also of considerable interest to the Commissioners sitting in Paris to discover the exact northern limits of Borgu. The most easily identifiable spot in the northern boundary is the City of Ilo. Quite naturally, in a memorandum on the subject,⁵¹ Sir George Goldie states that the King of Boussa included Ilo within his domain. Lugard in his Journals of 1894 also states that Ilo is well within the boundary of the Emir of Boussa.⁵² However, Lugard never got farther north than Nikki, his testimony on the subject is questionable.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²See Perham, Diaries, op. cit.

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Perhaps the most conclusive proof that the territory of Boussa went at least as far north as the town of Ilo is contained in the testimony of Captain Toutée, as quoted in Colonel Everett's memorandum,⁵³ that Ilo is "a large town inhabited by people of the Borgu race, and governed by a chief who is the eldest brother of the King of Boussa and the youngest brother of the King of Nikki." Although this in itself is not conclusive proof of Ilo's relationship to Boussa, Captain Toutée seemed convinced enough of the connection that the treaty which he concluded with the Chief of Ilo did not seem to have been included among those notified to Her Majesty's government by Baron de Courcel on the 4th of March 1896.⁵⁴

It is significant, however, that Captain Toutée placed the northern limit of Borgu between Ilo and Kirotachi, somewhat north along the River Niger. Hence, in the final convention of 1898, when Ilo became the boundary, the British Commissioners did make a slight concession. However, they did retain the town of Ilo in the British sphere of influence.

As to the second question, about the extent of authority of the King of Nikki, it would seem an understatement to suppose that the boundaries given by Lugard, de Coeur, or Ballot represent anything like the actual boundaries or views of any African ruler.

⁵³Everett, op. cit., p. 74.

⁵⁴See Baron de Courcel to the Marquis of Salisbury, 4 March 1896.

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It will be recalled that in the famous race to Nikki, Lugard arrived first, and on 18 November 1894, negotiated a treaty with what he thought to be a legitimate representative of the King of Nikki. Lugard had hardly left the town of Nikki before a French officer, Captain de Coeur, arrived from Dahomey. He concluded a treaty with the King of Nikki on 26 November 1894. Some few months later M. Ballot arrived in Nikki, escorted by a strong force at his back, and had no difficulty in signing a third treaty with the King of Nikki. These treaties were signed on 20 and 21 January 1896.

The principal difficulty concerning Lugard's treaty with Nikki, despite the fact that he had arrived first, centers on the fact that, by his own admission,⁵⁵ Lugard did not deal directly with the King of Nikki. The reason, Lugard states, was that the King of Nikki supposedly had a fear of actually meeting with white men and hence designated some of his principal chiefs to sign the treaty for him. Lugard does, however, give an additional reason--that the King of Nikki was reportedly blind or nearly so. Furthermore, Lugard did not meet with the best of receptions in Nikki, and contrary to the proposed instructions of Goldie, who sent Lugard on his mission, he did not proceed farther north, but returned from Nikki to Jebba and thence homeward.

⁵⁵See Perham, Diaries, op. cit.

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Quite naturally, de Coeur and Ballot did their best to discredit the validity of the British treaty and to build up the value of their own, not, however, without reason. Both de Coeur and Ballot insisted that the copies of the treaty which Lugard left behind him were not properly signed or at least not signed in a way which they supposed most African chiefs were capable of doing.

The French had discovered, much to their credit, that most African Emirs in the western part of Africa knew enough Arabic to sign their own name in Arabic even if they were not, normally speaking, scholars or literate. Most of the British treaties, on the other hand, were signed in a manner in which the interpreter took the hand of the chief or signing dignitary and helped him trace an "X" in the proper space on the treaty form. In most cases, this "X", when coupled with the declaration by the interpreter and witnesses that the chief had understood all clauses of the treaty, sufficed.

In the case of Lugard's treaty with Nikki, however, this method, coupled with the admitted failure actually to treat with the King himself, coupled with evidence coming to light later that the King of Nikki was not blind as Lugard had supposed, lent strength to the French position. In particular, the treaty signed by M. Ballot in January 1895 was, in European terms, valid in all respects. The British had rather wryly to admit that the considerable force which accompanied M. Ballot on his mission may have accounted for part of his

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success; however, there was little that the British Commissioners could do in the latter part of 1896 to remedy the situation.

To Lugard's credit it must be remembered that the treaties he signed prior to reaching Nikki were of inestimable value for the British position. In particular, the treaties Lugard concluded with the King of Kishi on 13 October, 1894, and at Kioma, were in no way impugned by subsequent French expostulations.

The third question which confronted the Niger Commission was the status of the King of Gando and the limits of his kingdom. This was important because, although Gando was clearly secondary in importance and influence to Sokoto, it nevertheless controlled, or was presumed to control, a large stretch of territory to the southwest and northwest of Sokoto itself. In terms of the Niger Delimitation Commission, this meant that the status of the Kingdom of Borgu was relevant on the left bank of the Niger between Borgu and whatever might fairly be deemed to come under the kingdom of Sokoto as contained in the Convention of 1890.

As it turned out, the relative position of Gando meant little in the final delimitation of territory. And by the 1898 Convention, the only significant portion of the boundary whose claims Gando in any way affected was a short stretch of territory between Ilo on the right bank of the Niger and the arc of territory with a 100-mile radius, its center being

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in Sokoto, which formed the final decision of the 1898 Commission.

The history of the treaty structure with Gando, however, is very relevant to the position of Sokoto. Hence, a detailed discussion of the Gando question is not out of place: indeed it forms a very convenient introduction to the whole problem of Sokoto and the northwest arc of territory of what is today Nigeria. The question of Sokoto and the northern boundary between Sokoto and Lake Chad, and the influence of Sokoto on Lugard's eventual system of Indirect Rule form the bulk of the latter half of this thesis.

Without repeating what can be read in detail elsewhere,⁵⁶ the Empire of Sokoto was established sometime around the turn of the century (circa 1800) by Othman dan Fodio. Dan Fodio was a Moslem reformer, and after initial conquests centered around Sokoto, he deputed lieutenants to continue the spread of the faith, i.e., the Tijamiya version of the Muslim faith. With remarkable vigor a comparatively small number of men, most of whom were Fulah or Fulani by race, conquered a very large proportion of what today consists of Northern Nigeria, Northern Dahomey, Northern Togo, parts of the Cameroon, and a large part of what is today in Niger and Chad.

⁵⁶Although there are many sources devoted particularly to the Empire of Sokoto. Perhaps as good as any from the standpoint of this thesis is John D. Hargreaves, Prelude to the Partition of West Africa (New York and London: Macmillan Co., 1963 and 1966).

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The general pattern of this Fulani conquest was such that each of the lieutenants designated by dan Fodio tended to set himself up as Emir of the region which he had conquered; and allocate his fief in a somewhat feudal manner among those of his followers who had supported him in war. All of the various Emirs, however, originally owed both spiritual and secular allegiance to dan Fodio and Sokoto. Sometime around 1817 dan Fodio died and subsequently this great empire was more or less divided between his heirs.

No matter what the subdivision of power, all the Emirs who claim some sort of Fulani origin continued, at least in a nominal manner, to owe spiritual as well as secular allegiance to Sokoto. As it happened, however, the immediate heir of Othman dan Fodio did not receive Sokoto, but Gando and a number of provinces heretofore subject only to Sokoto. Through vigorous leadership, the Emirs of Gando though spacially not far distant from Sokoto, quickly consolidated for themselves a power within the empire second only to that of Sokoto. Despite the relative position of military strength, however, it was never questioned either by those in Gando or by anyone else in the Sokoto empire that the Emir of Gando owed his immediate allegiance to the Emir of Sokoto, his near kinsman as well as overlord.⁵⁷ It is significant to

⁵⁷For the original information on the political events in early Sokoto, see H. Barth, Travels and Discoveries in North and Central Africa: being a journal of an expedition undertaken under the auspices of H. B. Majesty's Government (New York: Drallup, 1896), Vol. IV, M. Clapperton, op. cit., and Landers, Travels, op. cit., Vol. II.

add that the one territory which consistently eluded the control of Sokoto was Borgu, although for a time Sokoto did have control of the Town of Boussa.

Hence, in 1885, when the Royal Niger Company, or as it was then, the National African Company, at the instigation of Sir George Goldie, was attempting to secure its monopoly on the whole Middle and Lower Basin of the Niger, the Company was careful to conclude treaties with both Sokoto and Gando. The agent delegated for this job was a Mr. Joseph Thomson who, on June, 1885, concluded a treaty with Sokoto and on the 13th of that same month concluded a treaty with Gando. By the treaty with Sokoto, the Sultan transferred to the National African Company its entire rights to the country on both sides of the River Benue and of the rivers flowing into it throughout his domain.

This clause, of course, is of some interest as Lieutenant Mizon in 1891-1893 attempted to reassert the French claim on the City of Yola, a city already assigned to England by the Anglo-German Conventions of 1889 and 1893, and which had clearly once been part of the empire of Sokoto and still maintained nominal allegiance to it.

Thompson's treaty with Gando was of a similar nature with that of Sokoto, ceding the entire rights of the Emir to the National African Company. The Company, however, did not rest securely with these treaties of 1885, and in 1890, this time under the auspices of the Royal Niger Company, treaties

were again signed with both the Sultan of Sokoto and the Emir of Gando. In the second treaty the Niger Company obtained full and complete power and jurisdiction over all foreigners visiting or residing in any part of the King's domain or dominions.

Reacting to French intervention in 1892 and 1893, the Royal Niger Company once more in 1894 sent out its Agent General, Mr. Wallace, again to treat with the Sultan of Sokoto and the Emir of Gando.

With respect to this third treaty with Gando, dated 4 July 1894, concluded with one Omoru, the Sultan of Gando, the Sultan recognized that the company received their power from the Queen of Great Britain and that they were Her Majesty's representatives to the Sultan. The Sultan also undertook not to recognize the representatives of any other white nation. It was furthermore stated in this treaty that the country of Ilorin and the country of Gurma were included in the Sultan's domains, the latter extending to Libtako. Perhaps feeling guilty at the immense possession which the Sultan of Gando had conceded to the Royal Niger Company, a clause was inserted to the effect that an annual subsidy of some 2,000 bags of cowries had been paid annually to the Sultan by the Company for the nine preceding years. This clause undoubtedly was fostered by Sir George Goldie who feared that it might be implied by other powers that the Sultan of Gando did not fully understand the clauses of the treaty on which he had put his "X".

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The relation of Gondo to Sokoto was never questioned by the French in any way; in fact, was admitted by M. Ballot in a report dated April 5, 1893.⁵⁸ What the French did try to infer, however, was that Gondo's relationship with Sokoto did not necessarily mean that all the territory which was nominally tributary to her was necessarily fully within her power. This, of course, makes sense because the original empire of Sokoto was based predominantly on control of the caravan routes which extended from one center of population to another and tended to avoid areas that were either unsettled or through which travel was extremely dangerous, as, for example, the pagan areas of Bauchi. Hence, the French could claim with some justification that a good share of the territory claimed in the west by the Sultan of Gondo was, in fact, seldom disturbed in any manner by the Sultan, who claimed that the area was nominally tributary to him. This, of course, was not a condition that was new in 1890. A similar conclusion could be reached by carefully studying Barth's comments on Bongo and Sokoto made during his travels in 1853. Hence, despite Gondo's undoubted subordinate relationship to Sokoto and despite its undoubted claim to a quite large tract of territory, especially to the west of that city, it was in fact very difficult for the British commissioner to maintain with justification Gondo's claim to even that small bit of

⁵⁸See enclosure 1 in British Commissioners Dispatch, 20 March 1896.

territory between Ilo and the 100-mile arc surrounding Sokoto itself.

In summary, then, the basic delimitation problems of the western boundary of Nigeria between Dahomey and Lagos prior to 1897 were: one, tense feelings engendered by dual occupation of various points along the Niger, and two, differing, but not insupportable claims of sovereignty. Hence, the position of the delimitation commission could be summed up as follows.

First, it must be remembered that without the second portion of Clause 2 of the Declaration of the 5th of August 1890, the whole of the territory that was in dispute south and east of Say would without difficulty have long since been included within the British sphere of influence. But the clever French interpretation of the second part of this Article prevented outright British control.

The French contended that the Say-Barrua line was a limit to northward expansion of the British interests only. They felt it did not preclude the French government from signing treaties south of that line provided their parties came from any other quarter than from the north. Hence, the French asserted that all territory on the right bank of the Niger down to a lateral extension of the boundary line which reached the 8th parallel between Dahomey and Lagos extending westward until it reached the Niger should belong to France.

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It can, on the other hand, clearly be established that the Niger Company had clear claim to the cities and districts of Boussa, Kiama, Kishi, and Ilisha despite French counter-claims. But the claim of the Niger Company to the whole of Borgu based on an 1890 treaty with a King of Boussa rested on a somewhat doubtful and shaky assertion that the whole territory of Borgu, including the Kingdom of Nikki, was subservient to Boussa.

It has also been shown that despite Captain Lugard's previous treaty with Nikki, the French counterclaim that Lugard's treaty had serious flaws must be admitted to have a good deal of validity to it. Likewise, the extensive claims of the Royal Niger Company, based on its treaties with the Sultan of Gondo, to the west of that city extending to Say are extremely difficult to prove. Especially when the French could produce treaties as they rapidly were able to, with various cities, throughout territory that was once undeniably within the empire or sphere of interest of Gondo.

All this information becomes extremely relevant at the beginning of 1897, when for the first time Sir George Goldie found a kindred spirit in the Colonial Office in the person of Joseph Chamberlain. Chamberlain, as already pointed out, was fully prepared to exert the full weight of British power to gain what he could in West Africa for the Royal Niger Company.

It is perhaps significant that had Chamberlain appeared on the scene but a few short years earlier, he might have

prevented large cessions of territory to France, particularly the hinterland of Dahomey. As it was he clearly saved as much as he could, preventing the French from gaining a port below the rapids at Boussa on land controlled by France, and barely averting a rather serious incident on the Middle Niger which might in the tense situation of 1897-1898 have led to serious European repercussions.

CHAPTER V

THE ANGLO-FRENCH SETTLEMENT OF 1898

The preceding chapter has examined in some detail the relative merits of the Niger treaty system, its flaws, and the difficulties of reaching suitable settlement in the Middle Niger based upon those treaties. Diplomacy, however, proceeds at a slow pace unless the principals on both sides seriously desire a settlement.

Prior to late 1897, there had been little determination on the British side to bring negotiations of the Niger Commission to any speedy conclusion. There were good reasons, of course, for Lord Salisbury's lack of interest, or rather preoccupation with other parts of the world.¹ To his mind, he had already conceded much to France in this part of the world. And in any case, his attention had been riveted elsewhere in Africa.

In M. Hanotaux the French, on the contrary, possessed a statesman of vigorous imagination who was determined to push France's new African empire to the limits of its

¹See F. H. Hinsley, "British Foreign Policy and Colonial Questions, 1895-1904," in Vol. III of The Cambridge History of the British Empire, op. cit., to note how minor an issue the Niger must have seemed to Salisbury.

logical possibilities. Certainly, with reference to West Africa, the French possessed a superior colonial system in terms of organization. And throughout most of the period with which this thesis deals the French were far more ready to commit men and money to advancing their territorial interests.²

The fervor with which Hanotaux approached African questions can be appreciated from reading his own apologia, Le Partage de L'Afrique.³ In the simplest terms, Hanotaux' grand dream was the utmost extension of France in Africa. He hoped for uninterrupted possession from the Mediterranean to the Congo and from the Atlantic to the Red Sea. Immediately after the formation of the Meline Cabinet of the end of April 1896, Hanotaux helped formulate a policy by which France from then through 1898 would aim at confronting Britain with a series of accomplished facts. That is, Britain was to wake up one day and discover that French troops were actually in possession of much of what, prior to then, British traders had presumed was British territory.⁴ A part of this plan, of course, refers to Captain Marchand, who was to insure French

²See, for instance, Robert Dee Ceix in Historie Generale, ed. by Ernest Lavisse and Alfred Rambaud, Vol. 7, pp. 720-730.

³Especially pages 132-135, and page 155.

⁴See, for instance, Andre LeBon, in his La Politique de la France en Afrique, 1896-1898, especially page 66. M. LeBon was himself the Minister for the Colonies in the Moline Cabinet.

access to the Upper Nile. In West Africa the Governor of Dahomey, one M. Ballot, was to carry out during 1897 a series of "fanwise" treaty-making expeditions.⁵ The effect of these French missions had already been noted, and by mid-1897 the French had effectively called into doubt the clause of the Convention of 1890 which had given all territory south of the Say-Barrua line to Britain.

What would have happened had not Joseph Chamberlain chosen this time to assert his vigorous personality, in terms of the West African empire, is open to doubt. Most probably a good share of what is today Western Nigeria would be part of Dahomey and Northern Nigeria would be part of Niger. It is interesting to note that already, by July of 1897, Goldie had written to the Colonial Office in discouraged terms that he no longer felt the Royal Niger Company was capable of withstanding French pressure.

I think it is desirable, in Imperial interests, that the administration of Nigeria should no longer be conducted by a company which is also engaged in trade, and by trade I mean only trade, and not monopolies of land or minerals which are general in all civilized communities. This duality of the Niger Company's functions has produced a bitter hostility amongst a handful of persons in Liverpool, which has had serious international effects. Their continuous and carefully organized communications to the French press during the last two years have greatly contributed to excite French feeling against the Niger Company and England, and have naturally given ground for confident expectations of the triumph of France and French political interests over the Niger Company's interests. Now, political interests of the Niger Company are those of Great Britain.⁶

⁵Ibid., p. 67.

⁶Sir G. T. Goldie to the Colonial Office, 21 July 1897; CO 879/48.

In this same note, Goldie then went on to hope that perhaps something could be made of Sir John Kirk's scheme for administration of the Niger. Failing that, he would suggest,

A. That the private rights of the Niger Company should be bought out; B. That Nigeria, the Niger Coast Protectorate and the Colony of Lagos, should be thrown into one West African territory. C. That a West African Council should be created for the active administration of the West African Territory, with functions analogous to those of the Council of the Governor General in India--I do not refer to the India Council at home--or those of the Governor of the West African Coast Colony. D. That the West African Council should be controlled by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, just as the Council of the Governor General in India is controlled by the Secretary of State for India, or as the Governor of a Crown colony is controlled by the Secretary of State of the Colonies. E. That the members of the West African Council should be men of African experience and should hold their seats permanently, subject to removal by the Secretary of State. F. That the West African Council should sit in London and not in West African territory, thus differing from the Governor General's Council in India, who sit at Calcutta and Simla, and from the Governors of West Africa coast colonies, who reside, as much as the climate permits, in their colonies. G. That the West African territory should be divided into districts, each locally administered, under the West African Council by two administrators or executive officers, who would alternate with each other, as do the Niger Company's executive officers and judges, with their terms (one year each) overlapping sufficiently to allow some weeks of residence together, so as to admit a complete continuity of knowledge.

According to Mary Kingsley "Mr. Chamberlain alone of all our statesmen, saw the great possibility and importance of West Africa."⁷ Undoubtedly this is an accurate statement, but as Chamberlain's biographer notes⁸ the Colonial Secretary was

⁷Mary Kingsley, West African Studies (3rd ed., New York: Barnes and Noble, 1964), p. 307.

⁸J. L. Garvin, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1934), Vol. III, pp. 202-205.

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too preoccupied with administering Victoria's Jubilee Season to take any effective interest in West Africa until late in 1897. Garvin writes that when Chamberlain finally did have time to examine carefully the West African papers which had piled up during his Jubilee preoccupation, he was much disturbed. He was increasingly upset by Lord Salisbury's placid acceptance of French ambitions. "My own idea was that the only hope of a peaceful arrangement was to convince the French, from the first, that they had tried our patience too far and that they must give way or take the consequences."⁹ Chamberlain, however, did not limit himself to retrospective and reflective notes. He was seriously disturbed at the French penetration of what he considered valid British claims, and most especially Chamberlain wished to bargain hard with France and make sure that whatever gains she got in West African territory were reciprocated by British gains elsewhere.¹⁰

Chamberlain was not the only person seriously disturbed by French encroachments on the Niger itself, particularly below the rapids at Boussa. Goldie often voiced his distress to the Colonial Office.¹¹ In particular, Goldie reminded the

⁹Chamberlain to Lord Selbourne, from Interlaken, 12 September 1897 as quoted in Garvin, *ibid.*, p. 204.

¹⁰See, for instance, Mr. Chamberlain to Governor McCallum, 23 July 1897, in CO 879/48, for a more detailed description of Chamberlain's policy towards the Niger.

¹¹See, for instance, Royal Niger Company to Foreign Office, July 27, 1897; CO 879/48.

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Colonial Office of the treaty rights and accepted position of the Royal Niger Company in the Niger Territory. This position, he noted, often had been tacitly recognized by France as late as 1895.

Goldie had good right to be somewhat despondent. The position of the Company had deteriorated seriously in the confluence area of the Niger and Benue, particularly at Nupe and Ilorin. Furthermore, the Company's influence was seriously undermined in the upper stretches of the Niger as French missions penetrated the area and made things difficult for Company traders and emissaries. Goldie was disconsolate because he knew that the Royal Niger Company could not finance expeditions on the scale of the French government. Indeed, if the treaties with the major Emirs were going to be invalidated, as in July it seemed evident they might be, then it was useless for the Niger Company, or for anyone, to try and occupy a series of towns scattered throughout such a wide territory. Any such action would, of course, call forth from the French an occupation of towns, perhaps more towns, in the same general area of somewhat of a checkerboard pattern. Such competition would, of course, be ruinous financially to any chartered company.

Chamberlain's response to growing French pressure was to create a capable West African Frontier Force, (WAFF), which could effectively meet any French military challenge in the Niger area. The creation of such a force, naturally, must be

handled tactfully, both to receive parliamentary approval and not to offend the often sensitive Goldie. Chamberlain's main problem was to assure that the British position in Nigeria did not deteriorate to the point where such a force would be useless. The obvious answer was some sort of resuscitation of the military efforts of the Royal Niger Company. This was not the easiest of tasks, for Chamberlain who was not inclined by personality or by inclination to take advice from the often irascible and high-handed Goldie, no matter how greatly esteemed the latter might be in government circles.¹²

It was equally galling for Sir George Goldie to be brushed aside from the territory which he quite rightfully could take credit for holding within the British sphere. It will be recalled that in the first month of 1897 Goldie had conducted a quite brilliant little campaign against the Emirs of Nupe, Ilorin and the Markum of Nupe. He had been prevented then, on the direct wishes of Lord Salisbury, from taking his small but victorious force north along the Niger to dispute with France for possession of Borgu.¹³

One hardly blames Goldie for resenting Chamberlain's attitude so clearly outlined in a letter of Chamberlain to Lord Selbourne on September 19, 1897:

¹²Garvin, op. cit., p. 209.

¹³For the details of Goldie's expedition and his dealings with both Chamberlain and Salisbury, see Flint, op. cit., Chapters 10-12.

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Now Goldie seems refractory and practically refuses to move. . . . I should like to tell him that British government do not understand the contract with the company as he does, nor do they agree that he is to take all the profits and that we are to spend hundreds of thousands or possibly millions in securing his claims against the French, and that he is then to step in and enjoy without cost all the security that we have gained for him.

If this is his view, our best course will be to expropriate him, lock, stock, and barrel, pegging the capital value of his property but allowing nothing for good will or future profits since these are altogether dependent upon the expeditions we are to make. In fact I should take a very high line with him and tell him that in this crisis he must be with us or against us, and that we cannot allow him to dictate terms.¹⁴

Goldie's intransigence was equalled in the fall of 1897 by the persistence of the Quai d'Orsay. It may have been that the French methods of M. Hanotaux were based upon a profoundly false estimate of British psychology.¹⁵ Nonetheless, the issue at stake had begun to come to a head: whether the full command of the Lower Niger and its basin would remain in British hands or whether French pressure on this 600-mile stretch of river would succeed in joining that territory to other French possessions in West Africa.

Chamberlain fully recognized Hanotaux' policy of "effective occupation." He was determined that England should not give in as easily as they had in Sierra Leone and the Gambia and by December 1, 1897, he had come to open disagreement on this subject with Salisbury.

¹⁴Garvin, op. cit., p. 210.

¹⁵As quoted in Garvin, ibid., see Le Patage de L'Afrique, p. 87.

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I regret that I am unable to agree with the proposals in the Foreign Office memorandum that we should concede to France a position on the west bank of the Niger in the neighborhood of Jebba, and a right of way across our territory from there to the northern territory of Dahomey. I believe that a grant to another European nation of an enclave in British territory is unprecedented and would lead to the most serious complications in the future. There is some confusion in the dispatches between a definite concession of a port on the Niger, and what is called free access to the Niger, and free navigation of the river. . . . In any transaction the sacrifice made on both sides should be similar in character. Doubtful claims may be exchanged for doubtful claims and rights; but the French only proposed to abandon doubtful claims in exchange for the surrender of us of undoubted rights.

The above is written on the assumption that the French propose to deal with West Africa by itself. If they seriously suggest a general settlement, including Egypt and Newfoundland, the circumstances would be entirely altered and must be regarded from a new point of view. I do not think that we ought to yield a jot to threats.¹⁶

Chamberlain had good reason to be discouraged. Events in Paris indicated, in part due to the disturbing events of the Dreyfus case, that French opinion was aroused to the point where conflict might break out over the Niger.¹⁷ Throughout January and February Chamberlain fought doggedly in Cabinet sessions to prevent any cession of a French corridor to the Niger through British territory. In February 1898 Chamberlain was able, through dexterous manipulation of disturbing reports from the Niger, to obtain acquiescence in the House of Commons to his already formed West African Frontier Force.¹⁸

¹⁶Chamberlain to Salisbury, December 1, 1897, Garvin, pp. 212-213.

¹⁷See Sir E. Monson to Lord Salisbury, 14 January 1898.

¹⁸See, in particular, debates, House of Commons, February 8, and more especially Hansard's 4th Series, Vol. 53, columns

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Not only did Chamberlain receive Parliamentary approval for his West African Force, but he also made the significant

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But if a few in Parliament were concerned, the French was more so. On the 10th of April, 1898, for instance, the Journal Des Debates, headed an article on West Africa "La France et L'Angleterre dans L'Ouest African," which Monson noted had all the appearance of a semi-official inspiration (Monson to Salisbury, 20 April 1898 in CO 446/2). In this article the author indicated that British troops in Nigeria (over 5,000) were to be carried up the Niger in gunboats and disembarked at a spot only 10 days march from Sokoto. "It is therefore desirable that the approaching Anglo-French delimitation may confirm the treaty of 1890, as far as regards the Say-Barrus line, if it be wished to avoid further difficulties in the future."

On the 15th of April 1898, Le Matin commenting on the Niger negotiations noted that Her Majesty's government were planning to raise a large force for the Niger territory. In a note from a communication from Monson in Paris on the 25th of April, referring to an article from the Journal Des Debates of April 19th, 1898 relative to Lugard, it was noted "the French persist in magnifying our Frontier Force, and in sending it to Sokoto." (CO 446/2) In general the article did not mind if Lugard was sent to Sokoto but they seemed worried lest Lugard not abide by the Say-Barrua line of 1890. The article intimated quite strongly the French government must not be forced to fall back both in Borgu and along the Niger north of Ilo.

Such agitation in the French, and German, press continued up to the convention signing during June. Indeed, even after the convention signing, Le Temps complained of the greater value of British gains (see Gosselin to Salisbury, June 22, 1898; CO 446/2).

The German press, while only mildly concerned over the West African Frontier Force did react over Gandu. Indeed the National Zeitung on the 11th of June, 1898, rather plaintively noted that Germany had notified both England and France of Germany's treaty with Gandu. In commenting on this article, Gough noted that although "attention has frequently been called to the German claims on Gandu, for a long time past the Colonial Party have not seemed to expect that Gandu would be actually taken possession of by Germany, but the claim is always brought up as an object of value which can be exchanged for territory elsewhere." (See Gough to Salisbury, June 18, 1898; CO 446/2.)

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choice of its leader, Captain F. J. Lugard. Lugard had a number of excellent qualifications for the job: in particular he had been active in East Africa in the Uganda consolidation and was already familiar with the Niger region via his treaty expedition to Nikki in 1894 at the behest and direction of Sir George Goldie. Though Chamberlain appointed Lugard not without reservations, he actually had little choice as Lugard was one of the few people who was acceptable to Sir George Goldie, who was at this point still quite reluctant to aid the Colonial Office to any significant degree.¹⁹

In any case, Goldie had good reason for objecting to the formation of the West African Frontier Force. In particular, its formation seemed to indicate, and would most certainly appear to Parliament, as though the Royal Niger Company was not capable of protecting and controlling the territories which Parliament had committed to her charge. Knowing of the West African Frontier Force's near completion, Goldie had even threatened at one point in February to rush Company troops to Boussa to confront the French occupation of that territory. Indeed, in his biography of Goldie, Flint makes much of the eventual placement of the West African Frontier Force as it was dispatched by Chamberlain, implying that its moves were anti-Company as well as anti-French.

¹⁹The organization of Lugard's force, its qualifications, and the effective leadership of his second in command, Willcocks, may be studied in detail in M. Perham's edition of Lord Lugard's Diaries.

For whatever reasons, the first months of 1898 were extremely tense. Not only were French and British garrisons in dual occupation along many points of the Middle Niger, but they were often within shouting distance of one another. In February, Hanotaux had been forced to repudiate a French expedition which had penetrated Sokoto with the aim of calling into doubt the protected position of the empire in the Convention of 1890.²⁰ In April and May, when elements of the West African Frontier Force began to disperse themselves throughout the area, it often seemed likely that a small incident in this part of the Niger might be the signal for a more general confrontation.²¹ Suffice it to say that it was due in large measure to the patience of both French and British officers, in particular to Willcocks, that some inadvertent spark did not ignite extremely volatile public sentiments.

Events on the Niger, however, were extremely strained until the latter part of May,²² when after extremely arduous negotiations in Paris, which, if might be added, often had seemed likely to fall apart, settlement of the Niger question seemed imminent. Indeed there was general optimism that the

²⁰See Garvin, op. cit., p. 216.

²¹For the details of the Borgu crisis of April, May and June, 1898, during which time Lugard was physically present, see Perham, Diaries, op. cit.

²²Ibid.

negotiations of the Niger Commission might finally bear fruit. In general, it was assumed that the pending division would leave those parts of Borgu to which the Company had good claim in British hands: in particular, Kiama, Kishi, Boussa up to Ilo, and those portions of Gondo between Ilo and an 100-mile arc centered Sokoto which were not irreparably invalidated by French military action.

Suddenly, however, on June 1, 1898, Hanotaux demanded the British cession of the town of Ilo on the Niger. The reaction of Salisbury and Chamberlain to this demand was typical. Salisbury, very true to his formula that the world contained room for both French and British imperialism to co-exist, was inclined to accede to Hanotaux' demand. In a note to Chamberlain on June 2, 1898, is the following:

I think we have come to a critical point on the West African negotiations and must consider our further course carefully. . . . I cannot find that we have any claim to Ilo by treaty *eo Nomine* . . . on the other hand, Lugard's telegram (received by me this morning) of the 31st May is very grave. It means that we cannot take any measures for meeting the French concentration at Ilo, without finding ourselves at war with Gondo and Sokoto. It will be a war in which we shall be very far removed from our base, and in which we shall have to meet the two most powerful principalities of those regions. We know so little about those countries that we cannot discern what sort of difficulty it will be that this contingency will open to us--but it may be very grave and its cost will certainly buy out the value of Ilo a hundred times over. I say nothing about the quarrel with the French--for this is familiar ground. I therefore should confidently counsel the abandonment of Ilo. . . . The decision of yesterday in the French Chamber seems to me to lend considerable urgency to this view.²³

²³The speech here referred to by Salisbury was by Monsieur Paul Des Chanel in the French Chamber. Garvin, *op. cit.*

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To Chamberlain the demand for Ilo by Hanotaux should be met with an equal assertion. To him Salisbury's view was an admission of weakness. On the same day that he received Salisbury's note, June 2, he replied:

I have very anxiously considered your letter, as I feel that a wrong decision may lead to momentous consequences. . . .

I cannot agree with you that the cession of Ilo would not be a climb-down.

From the first, the Colonial Office have always attached the greatest of force to the retention of this place. . . .

As regards to the future, it is becoming clear that the so-called Empire of Sokoto is in a state of disillusion like that of the great mogul in the time of Clive. I imagine that in accordance with the precedent a small European force, with perhaps Indian auxiliaries and modern armaments would be able to establish our authority, but we shall have a very great responsibility for the future government of this vast country. . . .

Although, therefore, I am most anxious to meet your wishes, I have reluctantly come to the conclusion that I have gone to the extreme limit to which, especially charged with these interests, I am entitled to go, and that on the side of the Niger at any rate I could not defend any further surrender.

As at Bona--which you will remember you were told on the authority of the French Commissioners a fortnight ago was the only obstacle to a settlement--I am ready to give way. . . .

I think that we shall not be the greatest losers even if the present negotiations fall through. In that case, I hope we may take steps to put ourselves in a better position before they are resumed. There is no reason why we should not follow the example of the French and occupy places in their hinterland which would give us something to exchange when they are tired of the danger and expense of the present situation.²⁴

²⁴Ibid.

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Salisbury's reply on June 3, the following day, is classic:

I am wholly unconvinced of the value of Ilo: and I cannot discover on what our claim to it rests. But I should prefer giving up Ilo because our title to Bona seems to me positively bad. It will be a pity if we break off the negotiations, for it will add to our difficulties in the Nile valley. . . . If we are to send British or Indian troops in the hope of fighting another Plassey with Lugard as our Clive and Sokoto as our Bengal, the prospect becomes very much serious. Our Clive will be in no danger of being astonished at his own moderation. There is no loot to get except in Goldie's dreams. If you wish to come to terms, it would be prudent to do so before we take Khartum. We shall get nothing out of the French assembly after that event.²⁵

Nonetheless, despite Salisbury's sarcasm, he acceded to Chamberlain's wish not to give up Ilo. And, making Chamberlain a good prophet, Hanotaux consented to settle on June 8, 1898.²⁶ The Anglo-French convention was signed on June 14, 1898. In a note to Lord Salisbury on June 15, 1898, Sir E. Monson noted that the British government had obtained "that, which at the outset, it appeared impossible, or at the least supremely improbable, would ever be recognized as theirs."²⁷

Curiously enough, the Meline Cabinet which had lasted for over two years, one of the longest in the history of the Third Republic, fell the day following the signature of the convention. M. Hanotaux, that brilliant statesman, and originator of French African policy, so successful in retrospect,

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶See British Documents on the Origins of the War, Vol. 1, p. 156.

²⁷Sir E. Monson to Lord Salisbury, June 15, 1898.

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never held high office again. It is to his credit that, although in the final event he was forced to concede to the British government positions on the Niger, which he once hoped to claim as French, his policy was one of brilliant success. He consolidated French Equatorial Africa and French West Africa, despite the humiliation the policy he initiated in sending Captain Marchand the Upper Nile meant for France.

It is now time to turn to the precedents, of which the boundary settlement prior to 1898 formed so important a part, of the development and historical accretion of elements in the history in Nigeria that developed by 1904 into what we now know and call "Indirect Rule."

CHAPTER VI

MOUNTING PRESSURES FOR COLONIAL OFFICE CONTROL

A. CONTINUED COMPETITION--FOR LAKE CHAD

From January through June of 1898, the British Colonial Office, in particular Mr. Chamberlain, had been particularly interested in the retention of as much of Borgu under British rule as was possible. The French government, due to the vision of M. Hanotaux, had had much wider interests in African spheres of territory. But, as it became clear to the French government that Borgu might lead to serious trouble, should they press more vigorously than they already had been doing to extend French claims in that region, the French government began to extend its energies in other directions.

By the middle of 1898, such energies were aimed at the last relatively large section of Africa to which none of the major European states laid claim. This region consisted of the territory to the east, northeast and southeast of Lake Chad. The principal geographical feature of this area is the Shari River, which is the major tributary to Lake Chad. Politically the territory was then usually referred to as Baghirmi.

For the purposes of this thesis, the importance of French interest in Lake Chad centers upon the French military missions which were sent toward the lake to secure it for France. These missions, their successes, failures, and contacts with African elements were the stimulus for both British and German governments to continue their efforts to solidify and delimit their "pen and ink" acquisitions. In particular, the score or so of French missions and their dealings with Africans in presumed British territory was more than ample rationale for the continuance of the West African Frontier Force, though the Borgu Crisis had passed, and for the continued pressure to adhere the possessions of the Royal Niger Company to the Colonial Office in a more secure manner.

The French government had already, by 1898, sent a number of missions toward the Chad region. These missions had but two good avenues of approach; those from the west, which must necessarily come very close to the Say-Barrua line if the missions were proceeding from either French Guinea or French Dahomey,¹ and those from the southwest, which had to come up the Congo basin through the French Congo. In either case these French missions excited considerable attention, in the west from the British in Nigeria and in the

¹Due to the fact that the Say-Barrua line extends to the limit of watered routes, east-west, on the south of the Sahara.

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For a time the two missions which most concerned the British colonial service in Nigeria were the Voulet-Chanoine mission and the Forreau-Lamy mission.

The Voulet-Chanoine mission originally left the hinterland of French Guinea on the extreme upper Niger under Captain Voulet and Lieutenant Colonel Klobb. It proceeded to the town of Sansanne-Houssa up-river of Say by water. Meanwhile Captain Chanoine proceeded by land to the same town across the bend of the Niger. The two groups joined forces on the 2nd of January, 1899,³ where Lt. Col. Klobb turned back toward Timbuktoo and Voulet and Chanoine proceeded towards Say. Things did not go well for this party as they proceeded to cross the Eastern frontier of Nigeria via Zinder toward Lake Chad. British authorities in Nigeria who, through the first part of 1899, had no contact whatsoever with Sokoto were fearful lest this mission cross into British territory.⁴

²Indeed by September of 1898, the French government had seven military, or quasi-military, expeditions converging toward the Shari basin. See in particular reports from Director of Military Intelligence in CO 446/1-3, but also the rather considerable press commentary and Colonial Office memoranda especially in CO 446/2.

³See Daily Chronicle, London, December 21, 1898.

⁴Despite some official minuting on the subject, it seems certain that the French mission did remain in French territory. For Colonial Office press clippings and commentary see CO 446/1-3, and also CO 446/4.

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During April 1899, the force ran into some serious fighting with Taureg bands, and as a consequence of fighting and hard marching in desert country, had serious trouble and mutiny among its porters. During the repercussions of this mutiny a certain Lieutenant Peteau was sent home by Captain Voulet as "wanting in enthusiasm and energy,"⁵ but more probably on account of Peteau's lack of enthusiasm for the harsh cruelties meted out by Voulet and Chanoine as punishment. In spite of trouble, however, the mission finally reached Zinder during July 1899. In the meantime, however, word of the difficulties and cruelties perpetrated by the Voulet mission had reached Paris, and Klobb was instructed to follow the mission and take over command. Incredible as it may seem, Lieutenant Colonel Klobb, Lieutenant Meynier, plus several escorts, were shot on Voulet's orders as they approached the mission near Zinder. The mission was, of course, immediately outlawed by the French government, but it is hardly surprising that the presence of a renegade force of up to 600 armed natives under French leadership should cause the Colonial Office much concern.

Before any French expedition could be put together to punish Voulet, his own actions caught up with him, and upon being deserted by the bulk of his forces, he was eventually killed by a combination of his own troops and local elements.

⁵See West Africa Confidential No. 1, September 11, 1899
in CO 446/5.

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A second French mission, the Forreanu-Lamy mission, left Algeria in November 1898. This expedition was very large and included more than one thousand camels for carrying baggage and supplies. Its purpose was to cross the Sahara by way of the old caravan routes and eventually to link up with other French missions heading toward Lake Chad from the west and south. Forreanu and Lamy also ran into considerable trouble, again from Taureg attacks, and were lost to European observers for a period of several months. This mission finally succeeded in reaching the Shari via Air and Ghat though much reduced in size. Upon reaching the Shari basin, the remnants of the Fourreanu-Lamy mission were attacked by elements of the former Egyptian renegade Rabeh's army. In one of these actions Lamy was killed.⁶

French missions which were sent toward Baghirmi via the French Congo had more success and in general caused the Colonial Office less concern. One group, under M. Gentil, had succeeded in reaching Lake Chad by 1897. Gentil had some success in establishing a French colonial administration in Baghirmi. However, before his work was completed he had been driven out by Rabeh. Due to the danger presented by Rabeh, two other French missions were sent out via the French Congo. One was under a Lieutenant Bretonnet and another under M. Behagle. Behagle preceded Bretonnet, and in chasing

⁶In honor of this brave man, Fort Lamy was named for him and is today the Capital of the State of Chad.

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Rabeh he crossed over German territory and into British Bornu where Rabeh was able to mass overwhelming numbers and destroy his force.⁷

In themselves, none of these missions should have caused either the German or the British government undue alarm. Communications were poor, however,⁸ and as neither the British nor the Germans had any type of military influence in the Lake Chad-Bornu region, they were understandably nervous about the various French missions, some of which were of considerable size. The British government was particularly handicapped because in 1898-1899 transfer of the Royal Niger Company to the Colonial Office was not complete. Indeed, when Colonel Lugard had returned to London in the fall of 1898, Willcocks, next in command of the W.A.F.F., had all he could do to maintain order in the Borgu sections of the Niger.

The German response was equally slow. However, by the middle of 1899 the German government had sponsored two expeditions in the Cameroons. One under Von Turtkemer was operative in the south and had the additional duty of reconnoitering the lower parts of the Nigeria-Cameroon-Gulf of

⁷See Le Depeche Colonile, Paris, 16 November 1898; Le Temps, Paris, 15 November 1898, and 23 December 1898; and Daily Chronicle, London, 29 November 1898.

⁸A good bit of the British information on French missions in the Sudan and Chadic regions came from M. Jago, in British legation at Tripoli, whose information filtered thward via the caravan routes which crossed the Sahara. h sources of information quite naturally left anyone free assume the worst of the various French Missions. His reports are scattered throughout CO 446/1-10.

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Guinea border. The second expedition under Captain Van Kamptz was directed to the north to garrison various points in the north and on the shores of Lake Chad, lest the German government continue to be embarrassed by having French missions chasing recalcitrant Africans through its territory with impunity.⁹

In any case, despite the settlement with France in 1898, continued French pressure in the Lake Chad area where British influence was non-existent made it necessary for some sort of British presence in the area, lest Whitehall have West African questions re-opened through inaction. Questions, indeed, which from the British standpoint had been tidily settled and hopefully put away.

B. THE WEST AFRICAN FRONTIER FORCE

The creation of the West African Frontier Force by Chamberlain, touched upon in chapter five, undoubtedly helped to pave the way for the Anglo-French settlement of 1898, if for no other reason than that both the French and German governments ascribed to this Force large ambitions in terms of territorial occupation.¹⁰ It is not the purpose of this thesis to follow in detail the various movements of the

⁹See Lascales to Colonial Office, Berlin, 18 July 1899; in CO 446/5.

¹⁰See, for example, Sir F. Lascales to the Marquis of Salisbury, Berlin, March 5, 1898; CO 446/2.

West African Frontier Force. However, as the Force itself, and in particular, Frederick Lugard's association with the Force had a certain influence on the subsequent history of Northern Nigeria, certain information about the Force is quite relevant; but it will be necessary to backtrack in time to the period of the Borgu Crises.

Chamberlain, it will be recalled, took steps towards forming the W.A.F.F. prior to its actual approval by Parliament. The primary training of the Force, which was to consist mostly of West Africans, principally Yorubas and Hausas, was originally conducted by Colonel Pilcher of the Lagos Protectorate. The Royal Niger Constabulary,¹¹ however, was also to make available certain of its forces to be at the disposal of the West African Frontier Force. These latter troops were sent north into Borgu prior to the actual arrival of the W.A.F.F. troops proper.¹²

A note from Mr. Antrobus to Mr. Wingfield and Lord Selbourne on March 15, 1898, describes part of the problems of organizing the Force.

From this telegram and from Colonel Pilcher's letter referred to by the Director of Military Intelligence in 3590, it would appear that Colonel Pilcher did not quite understand his position, which is, I think correctly stated by Colonel Lugard in 4683.

¹¹The military arm of the Royal Niger Company.

¹²It is interesting to note that Goldie had wished to proceed to Borgu after his successful Bida campaign in the fall of 1897, but had at that time been restrained by Chamberlain. See Flint, op. cit., Chapter 11.

Until Colonel Lugard arrives, Colonel Pilcher's business is simply to equip and train his battalion.

I attach a semi-private letter which I have received from the Director of Military Intelligence. There is no doubt a dual control at the present time; but, as Colonel Pilcher is not or ought not to be taking the field, there is not a triple control.

The dual control cannot be avoided as long as the company exists; but, Colonel Lugard is to have the command of the forces which have advanced from Lagos as well as the West African Frontier Force, it will not become a triple one when the new force is ready. The Director of Military Intelligence has not yet seen our dispatch to Lagos on February 18 explaining this.

The turning back of the two companies of the West African Frontier Force to which the Director of Military Intelligence refers was due to Colonel McCullum's disregarding his orders not to send them through Ilorin without 'very strong reason'.

It would be well, I think, to explain to Colonel Pilcher that the company acted with the approval of Her Majesty's government and that it would not be desirable that he should be consulted as to the Sokoto expedition; and to say that at the present his duties are necessarily confined to the equipment and training of his battalion.¹³

A minute was added to this letter by Lord Selbourne to the effect that Colonel Lugard would have exclusive command of the West African Frontier Force, Colonel Allen's column, and all the troops that the Royal Niger Company could spare:

so that there will then not be a triple nor a dual but a single command. It should also be explained to him [Pilcher] that the necessity for the Niger Company's column to be sent to Sokoto was due to the invasion of the French onto the left bank and that either that column had to go as it did or no force could have been sent at all.¹⁴

It is not difficult to understand, however, that each of the various officers in charge of one or another of the

¹³Antrobus to Wingfield and Selbourne, March 15, 1898; 446/1.

¹⁴Ibid.

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heretofore independent forces on the Niger was eager to face the possibility of action with the French in command of the forces he had trained. Each was repeatedly told by the Colonial Office, however, that Lugard would have complete control when he arrived. Lugard finally appeared on the Niger on March 31, 1898. However, it was not until the 5th of April that the complicated command route of Chamberlain at the Colonial Office through Goldie of the Royal Niger Company to Morley at Company headquarters in London sent orders to the Niger Company forces to return to Ilo after their Argangu expedition to await the arrival of Colonel Lugard.¹⁵

All this activity did not escape the notice, and probably was intended not to escape the notice, of the French or German press.¹⁶ On the 3rd of March the Kolonial Zeitung, in a long article commenting on the French-British confrontation in Borgu, gave the following assessment of British military preparations on the Niger.

Under these circumstances, it appears to us to be probable that the English intend a great coup against the Hausa States, the military weakness of which they have realized. Hence the considerable armaments, and the rapidity with which regiment after regiment is sent up the Niger. It is hoped by this energetic action, and by a victorious entrance into Gandu and Wurnu, to wipe out of existence the claims raised by Germany on account of her treaty with Gandu, and any claims which may be advanced by the French. The skirmishing against France is only intended to conceal the true object of this expedition.

¹⁵Morley's orders to the Niger Company forces were sent on 5 April 1898 from London; CO 446/3.

¹⁶See footnote 18, Chapter III, this thesis.

As regards the attitude of Germany in this matter, we cannot assume that the British government will take over the territory of the Royal Niger Company and convert it into a Crown Colony before the question of Gandu has been completely settled. As the German treaty with Gandu, which secures considerable rights to us, was officially notified some years ago, they will neither date nor be able simply to ignore it.¹⁷

By the 12th of April, 1898, Lugard had left for Jebba.

The Niger Company expedition to Argungu, despite reliable information in February that at least three French officers and some 300 men had camped near Argungu during February, found no French in occupation of the town, which was clearly within the British sphere of influence.¹⁸ The expedition of the Royal Niger Constabulary so far to the north quite naturally weakened intermediary posts, such as Fort Goldie, to a dangerous degree. Hence, Lugard arrived at an opportune moment for displaying the power of the W.A.F.F. vis à vis the Niger Constabulary and for exerting Colonial Office authority in the Borgu Crisis.

The Argungu occupation, with its implied invasion of Sokoto, stirred sections of the British press. Interest was great enough, indeed, that on the 22nd of April, 1898, Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. M. Lambert both asked questions in

¹⁷Which rights it might be added the British proceeded to ignore. See Lascales to Marquis of Salisbury, March 5, 1898; CO 446/2.

¹⁸See Memorandum by F. Bertie, April 27, 1898; CO 446/1.

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Parliament as to whether the French were in Argungu.¹⁹ Mr. Chamberlain's reply is interesting. He stated that to a similar question addressed to the French government on February 22 M. Hanotaux had replied to Sir E. Monson on the following day that "according to his information obtained from the Minister for the Colonies, no French force has entered Sokoto or the Country of Argungu, and that no expedition has been sent into these regions." According to Chamberlain, M. Hanotaux reaffirmed these assertions verbally on the 25th of February and again on March 6. On the latter date, M. Hanotaux stated that there were no French forces on the east of the Niger south of the Say-Barrua line, that the strictest orders had been given long ago that no movement was to be made across the Niger, and that France had no designs on territory lying east of the river or to the south of the Say-Barrua line. Mr. Chamberlain went on to say, however, that on 19 March Sir E. Monson had reported from France that the Ministry for the Colonies had received information from Dahomey to the effect that Captain Casamajou, in spite of orders to the contrary, had passed through Argungu on his way north but that he had had few European companions and a small following. On March 25th M. Hanotaux had further repeated that the expedition under Captain Casamajou was privately organized and that it had been

¹⁹The questions of Dilke and Lambert were raised on 22 April 1898; see Houses of Parliament in CO 446/3.

ordered to keep north of the Say-Barrua line, but had apparently been forced to go in the neighborhood of Ilo and Argungu in search of supplies. M. Hanotaux insisted that this modification of the original itinerary was unauthorized. By April 22nd, Chamberlain was able to assure Parliament that he had received information from Colonel Lugard that a much smaller force than had heretofore been assumed had indeed been in Argungu but had gone north. In summation "it appears from this that both sides were more or less misinformed, as our reports greatly exaggerated the numbers of the expedition, of the presence of which in Argungu the French were in the first instance entirely unaware."²⁰

This incident, like many others in the Borgu crisis, was easily blown out of proportion by lack of adequate or timely information. But bland assurances by Mr. Chamberlain did not quiet Parliamentary concern. On April 25th Mr. Labouchere, in the House of Commons, inquired if the government was intending to purchase any rights of the Royal Niger Company; and if so, which ones, and what fiscal arrangements might there be. The question was evaded publicly and the Member answered privately.²¹ However, Mr. Wingfield in a note on the subject noted that Goldie was:

very chary of giving us all of the assistance we wanted for the establishment of the Frontier Force in Lokoja,

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Houses of Parliament, op. cit., CO 446/3.

and in consequence of his hesitation we made repeated representations to the Foreign Office and the Treasury as to the desirability of a speedy settlement. The Treasury finally answered in No. 257/secret that 'it is not possible to define the company's true position until the investigation now being held in Paris had been to an end.' In 278/secret the Foreign Office replied that the subject 'is matter for the consideration for the Chancellor of the Exchequer.' We have heard nothing more officially.²²

By May the Royal Niger Company expedition was returning to Jebba.²³ However, Brodie had been sent on to Sokoto to check on the possibility of French activity there.

As the crisis in Borgu steadily intensified, the Colonial Office was driven to consideration of all possible means to improve its position vis à vis the French. On May 27, 1898, the draft of a telegram to Colonel Lugard by Butler and Antrobus entitled "Proposed Occupation of parts in hinterland of Dahomey" suggested that in order to equalize matters they were:

anxious to know whether, in the event of the negotiations at Paris failing you will then be in a position to establish posts in the hinterland of Dahomey, in Garubari, Nikki, Gurma, or Torode. The French are at present in our hinterland, but we are not in theirs, and it may become very desirable that the position should be equalized. Report fully your views as to whether or when of movement with this object in mind could be made. If such a movement is made, it would be preferable that places should be occupied which are free from French troops, but we might make a joint occupation as the French have done at Kishi.²⁴

²²See minute by Mr. Wingfield, ibid.

²³Pilcher to Colonial Office; CO 446/3 (page 28).

²⁴Draft of telegram to Col. Lugard by Butler and Antrobus, 22 May 1898; CO 446/3.

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From the foregoing, it is obvious that from the moment Lugard set foot in Nigeria he and his West African Force were plunged into the intricate problems of European diplomacy, Colonial Office and Foreign Office red tape, and the difficulties and bitteresses which divided authority in Nigeria. What is significant is that Lugard's experiences in Nigeria between March and September of 1898 heavily influenced his policies when he returned in December of 1899 to take over formal control of the protectorate of Northern Nigeria on January 1, 1900. And from the Colonial Office standpoint, there was just enough pressure from the Liverpool interests, that when Lugard was able to put forth a unique and workable rationale for government in Northern Nigeria, the Colonial Office was indeed happy to have the pressure removed from their operation.

After the signing of the Anglo-French convention in June of 1898, Willcocks²⁵ and Lugard proceeded to organize and occupy the territory assigned to England. He was somewhat delayed in this process by sending part of the West African Frontier Force to Eastern Nigeria into Ibo country at the request of the Royal Niger Constabulary, a request Lugard felt honor bound to grant in that the Royal Niger

²⁵Not the least of Lugard's important decisions was his request that Col. Willcocks should be his second in command, an officer heretofore in the shadow of Pilcher but whose abilities appealed to Lugard. His choice, it might be added, was an apt one. Lugard to Colonial Office, 3 April 1898; CO 446/1.

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Constabulary had been generous with its troops.²⁶

Before leaving the crisis of Borgu, it may be noted that it was Willcocks who was in charge of the forces which moved toward Keima and on into Kishi territory, that had been occupied by French soldiers even though it was clearly within the British zone.²⁷

At the same time, Lugard wrote the Colonial Office concerning Sokoto that:

the position, then, as regards Sokoto, is that he has ordered the British out of the country, his latest letter announces his [Emir of Sokoto's] intention of fighting the white man, and he is stated to have sent letters to Zaria, Kano, et cetera, with this object, while representatives of the Royal Niger Company have sent a letter declaring him to be an enemy.²⁸

This information from Lugard on the difficulty which would be encountered by the force going north in Sokoto disturbed Salisbury greatly in the latter part of negotiations at Paris and was part of the reason why Salisbury felt that concessions should be made to France.

Even after the territorial delimitation had been agreed upon in 1898 in Paris, Lugard's problems in Nigeria had but begun. His initial complaints centered on the difficulty of requesting gunboats for the use of his troops on the Niger. This request was seemingly a simple one, and not expensive

²⁶See CO 446/1 (p. 143).

²⁷See Lugard to Colonial Office, May 22, 23, and 24; CO 446/1.

²⁸29 May 1898; CO 446/1.

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support for imperial troops.²⁹ However, numerous difficulties with the Niger Company prevented speedy action.

Indeed, the major problem confronting Lugard during August, September, and October of 1898 were his relations with the Royal Niger Company. Goldie by this time knew that his tenure on the Niger was limited. He was both bitter and pecuniary toward the government and took out his frustration in part on the West African Frontier Force.³⁰ The Company attempted to insist that all military supplies and stores be bought through the Company.

The company, of course, it will be remembered, had a legal monopoly of trade on the Niger. However, such a monopoly was irritating to Lugard when the quality of goods available was poor and prices inflated. To make matters worse, the Royal Niger Constabulary forces had been stationed at many points in Borgu upon the evacuation of French forces. The Company, it must be admitted, had made substantial financial contributions during the Borgu crisis. They were, however, at this point short of funds and had neglected to pay certain of their forces which were near mutiny by October.³¹

²⁹See Lugard to Colonial Office, 10 August 1898; CO 446/1.

³⁰See Flint, op. cit.

³¹See Lugard to Colonial Office, 10 October 1898; CO 446/1.

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Salisbury was worried about the consequences of a possible mutiny. Others in the Colonial Office and War Office were concerned about French actions in Bornu and the possibility of raids by Rabeh into British territory. Much of this concern over the reliability of the Constabulary forces came from the Foreign Office who were worried lest the Anglo-French convention of June not be ratified in Paris. It had, of course, yet to pass the French Chamber and would not be passed until December.

A third area of particular grievance to Lugard was the insolent behavior and the depredations of the Emir of Ilorin, who had badly mistreated a few of his soldiers. More important to Lugard was his wounded pride when the Emir's insolent behaviour could not immediately be punished. Lugard had first to officially consult with the agent-general of the Niger Company whose treaty with Ilorin gave him original jurisdiction.³² Quite naturally Watts, then acting agent-general of the Royal Niger Company, on orders from Goldie, wished to prevent the West African Frontier Force from usurping the company's sovereignty in Ilorin.³³ Goldie, moreover, was in deep negotiation with the Foreign Office and the Treasury over exactly how much the Royal Niger Company was

³²There is a quite large amount of correspondence on the subject of Ilorin in CO 446/3, but also in CO 446/1.

³³See Goldie to Colonial Office, 13 October 1898; CO 446/3.

to be paid for turning over its presumed rights and properties to the government. At such an inconvenient point in his negotiations, he would not be pleased with any indication of misrule or lack of company ability to control territory under its charge.

Nonetheless, a long letter from Lugard to Antobus from Ilorin on 22 October 1898 makes abundantly clear Lugard's frustration and annoyance. He was especially upset over high prices charged by the company, the gross continuation of slavery, and by the insolent behavior of the Emir of Ilorin.

No doubt the initial mistake was ever sending out imperial forces with imperial officers to act under the orders of a few traders. It does not do--the Niger Company naturally (and I don't blame them) want to make out a fine case (for valuation) for themselves, and they therefore pretend to have rule of this country. Believe me, beyond the walls of their warehouses, they haven't got nor ever have had a single bit of power. It is easy enough to keep in with a native ruler if you wink the other eye at slavery, et cetera, and that is exactly what they have done. This I had from Watts himself.³⁴

By October Lugard had also formed definite opinions on the external political situation of Northern Nigeria. In a signed copy of a foreign Office minute³⁵ Lugard makes the devious suggestion that although England by the convention of June 14, 1898, was prevented from crossing a meridian through the center of Lake Chad and although England specifically admitted that the eastern shore of Lake Chad was French,

³⁴CO 446/1.

³⁵Minute to Niger No. 21341 found in CO 446/3 signed by Lugard in London on 10/17/98, but dated Foreign Office 27 October 1898.

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there was still the possibility that England could procure an interest in Wadai to the east of Lake Chad. This area was about the last piece of Africa which had not been specifically claimed by any European power.

English control of this area would have dashed any French hopes for continuous passage between French Equatorial Africa and French West Africa. After commenting on the various French missions which might be heading in that direction, Lugard suggested that due to the British position in Nigeria it would be difficult to get to Wadai by way of Nigeria, a good solution might be an advance on Darfur nominally in pursuit of the Khalifa from the Egyptian Sudan. From thence, although a considerable distance, it would not be difficult for a mounted party to reach Wadai. To Lugard

it would later be an invaluable asset to exchange if necessary or in settlement of the Egyptian and Tunisian questions, for it would stand in the way of the junction of their northern and southern territories. It is also commercially a very important place--and politically no less as being the mainstay of Senoussi--who is to the French in the Sahara, Tunis, and Algeria, what Samory was in the west, but a vastly more dangerous (because religious and fanatical) adversary.³⁶

What is more important than the impracticability of this wild scheme was the fact that Lugard very quickly adopted some very ambitious plans both for Nigeria and for the British empire.

After returning to London in the late fall of 1898, Lugard spent considerable time and concern defending the

³⁶Ibid.

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independence of the West African Frontier Force from those who, like Sir R. Moore, would have preferred an amalgamation of military forces preparatory to a total amalgamation of the territories of Nigeria.³⁷ Others, like Lord Selbourne, were simply of the opinion that

The particular situation which made it necessary to apply to Parliament for this Force has passed away, and though Colonel Lugard refers to the French and German expeditions converging on Lake Chad it can scarcely be seriously suggested that these movements threaten our territories. In these territories there are no signs at present of unavoidable danger. Borgu has, no doubt, a turbulent population, but it is an unpromising country commercially and future developments do not lie that way. Sokoto is quiescent, and by all accounts, Rabeh will not trouble us if we do not trouble him, and he does not lie between us and Kano, another important town to which we want access. Our expedition so far as we can see will be confined to the punishment of robber tribes which infest the river banks, and these tribes are pagan and at feud as far as they dare with the Mohammedan powers. I venture to think, therefore, that the opinions which Mr. Chamberlain has expressed that the time has come for a material reduction in the strength of the W.A.F.F. is not controverted successfully by Colonel Lugard's argument. . . .

. . . It would, therefore, be a serious matter to accept his view, and it would encourage him to contemplate military operations which, from our point of view, it is most important to avoid, which have a fascination for every officer in the force. In the meantime we have to be excessively careful about our civil expenditure; thus, while we are spending this great sum on the Force, we cannot afford £500 for a dredger for the Niger, which is required to make navigation reasonably possible.³⁸

³⁷Memorandum by Sir Ralph Moor on advisability of amalgamation; CO 446/3 (p. 162). For Lugard's position re: maintenance of strength of the West African Frontier Force, see his memorandum on the 24 August 1899; CO 446/8, in that useful as this little force had been, Lugard was concerned for its survival.

³⁸Minute appended to Lugard's memo, *ibid.*, 24 August 1899; CO 446/8.

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Lugard, of course, held strongly for an independent W.A.F.F. He was very definite that such a force should be modelled on Indian precedents, with regular officers and long leaves that would procure superior ones.

From Lugard's return to London in late 1898, until his reappearance in Nigeria just prior to Northern Nigeria becoming a formal protectorate on the 1st of January 1900, the West African Frontier Force, the Colonial Office's chief instrument of regulation, was under the command of Willcocks extremely capable officer. Willcocks' reports are models of lucidity.³⁹ As the crisis situation calmed down on the Borgu frontier border area he devoted a major part of his attention to keeping the West African Frontier Force in good order, to pacifying regions close to the Niger and Benue within reach of Jabba, and to reopening such trade routes as immediately affected his own supply and communication. This work required a number of tiny but necessary punitive actions at various points throughout his command. In particular, in December and January 1898-1899, Willcocks experienced certain trouble with the Emir of Zaria, with blockages of trade at Ilo and with certain misdeeds by robbers in Kontagora.⁴⁰ In Borgu Willcocks proceeded with the occupation and delimitation of territory. In the Middle Niger a Royal Niger Company officer was stationed at Ilorin, and for the first time that town was

³⁹Which may be read in CO 446/4.

⁴⁰See Report for 11 January 1899; CO 446/4.

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relatively quiet. Likewise at Bida and Jebba, Willcocks contented himself with such improvements in sanitation and troop quarters as he could.

In his report of April 1, 1899, Willcocks asks that he be allowed to establish at least a formal claim to the left bank of the river north of Ilo. Primary concern continued about Sokoto and the possibility that the Sultan might decide to attack a British garrison in imitation of Rabeh's successes against isolated French missions. Willcocks was convinced that any such attempt by Sokoto to attack the British near or on the Niger would result in catastrophe for Sokoto. He was, however, quite wisely content to let the situation remain for the present. Willcocks, however, had become concerned again with the conduct of the Emir of Bida and Emir of Kantagora. He reported slave trading to be growing and respect for British sovereignty limited.

In his report for July 17th, Willcocks dealt with the difficulty which arose when West African Frontier Force and Royal Niger Constabulary Forces were stationed close together. Careful as he had been to avoid conflict with the Niger Company, trouble arose principally because the older and more experienced Royal Niger Constabulary Forces were paid on a lower scale with fewer amenities than those of the West African Frontier Force.

By August when Willcocks also had left for London and the command of the West African Frontier Force was under

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Major Festing, requests for permission to bypass Mr. Wallace and the Company for various necessities, including labor, were more frequently received at the Colonial Office.⁴¹ In September various squabbles arose over just which forces should escort various telegraph construction parties which the Colonial Office had encouraged to facilitate communications in the Northern Nigeria territory.⁴² By this time Chamberlain was in no mood to kow-tow to the Royal Niger Company and insisted that imperial troops should be used in such an important matter as communication. On the Niger by September 20, 1899, a telegraph line between Jebba and Lakoja was complete. It meant a step forward in communication⁴³ and in Colonial Office control, in that the awkward control measures used for the W.A.F.F., through the Royal Niger Company, had now been eliminated.

C. THE LAST OF THE INDEPENDENT AFRICANS

To this point the Africans in Nigeria have been of only passing notice. In the question of the Borgu boundary, the African chiefs themselves had no bearing. It was only their treaties, or rather those that they had signed, which were

⁴¹See Festing to the Colonial Office, 25 August 1899; CO 446/4.

⁴²See telegram of Festing to Colonial Office, 20 September 1899; CO 446/4.

⁴³Festing to Colonial Office, 20 September 1899; CO 446/4.

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debated in Europe. The Sultan of Sokoto, of course, has come into the picture, but he had, and still remained, outside the effective control of either the British or the French. Though already in partial dissolution, the Sokoto empire had enough structure to withstand British invasion and modification. As a military power, however, Sokoto meant little because even if it was potentially dangerous, it had been carefully circumscribed as being within British territory and given time would be reduced.

The last of the great African chieftains to pose as a real military threat to the European interests and military expeditions was Rabeh.⁴⁴ Rabeh was a fascinating man, and not enough is known about him.⁴⁵ In terms of this thesis, the concern with Rabeh caused the West African Frontier Force and the very considerable damage which he did to several French expeditions have only passing significance. What is important in terms of this paper is that Rabeh was in many ways a typical West African ruler. He was spacially not far removed from Sokoto and many of the nominally subservient Emirs which made up the empire of Sokoto, but Rabeh has left no imprint on the future of Nigeria. In this sense, a short description of Rabeh's forces is useful in highlighting the

⁴⁴In particular Hiatu, the renegade Prince of Sokoto and Malam Jibrella, operative in and around Zaria-Kano.

⁴⁵For details on Rabeh, see long report of Military Intelligence in FO 2/242.

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fact that the British had a choice of indigenous authorities with whom to work in implementing indirect rule.

As a young man Rabeah, probably the freed son of a slave woman, was in the forces of Zubehr Pasha who operated a large slave raiding force on the Middle and Upper Nile. It is clear that Rabeah was one of Zubehr Pasha's outstanding lieutenants between the years 1872 and 1874. In 1878 the Cairo authority decided to put a stop to the activities of Zubehr Pasha's successor with whom Rabeah was now associated. Rabeah wisely fled, and with a body of well armed slave soldiers proceeded from Dar Sula west toward Lake Chad in a district between Darfur and Wadai. Between 1880 and 1890, Rabeah and his forces operated as far east as the Upper Nile and as far west as the Lake Chad basin. His success as a military leader was not based as much on superior numbers as upon superior organization. Rabeah's army used strict Egyptian organization and wherever possible he equipped his soldiers with modern rifles, although the majority of his soldiers had outdated weapons.

By about the year 1892, Rabeah and his forces--variously estimated as between 500 and 15,000 armed troops--had moved eastward and were more or less permanently established in the Chad basin. Rabeah's semi-mobile organization depended upon the tribute of conquered areas and such trade with the outside world as he could effect, particularly for supplies such as gunpowder. Rabeah was often in contact with one Haitu, a renegade Prince of Sokoto, who was in control of several

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provinces of Wadai and collected tribute from much of Baghirmi south of Lake Chad. For a time, Rabeh remained in the delta of the Shari River west of Lake Chad, but he occasionally moved south and east of Lake Chad to Dikwoa in German territory and Kuka well within what became defined as British Bornu on the southeast of Lake Chad.

Rabeh was obviously unpopular with the established Emirates of West Africa. Sokoto refused all dealings with him. Remnants of older authorities in Wadai and Baghirmi, whenever possible, rose in revolt. Nonetheless Rabeh looks very much like many other African chieftains who preceded him. He shows particular similarity to Samory who caused both the French and British extreme difficulty in the hinterland of the Gold Coast a decade previously.⁴⁶ Rabeh had a core army of well armed and mounted cavalry supplemented by disciplined soldiers. It was estimated on good authority that if pressed, Rabeh could probably have put an army into the field of some 20 to 30 thousand men.⁴⁷

Such a well disciplined and mobile force could and did cause the French, German, and British governments some concern. It was the French, however, who most often came into

⁴⁶For information on Samory, the best readily available source is G. E. Metcalfe, Great Britain and Ghana: Documents of Ghana History 1807-1957 (on behalf of University of Ghana by Nelson & Sons, Ltd., 1964).

⁴⁷See Memorandum by Col. Everett, December 19, 1898, p. 4; FO 2/242.

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conflict with Rabeh. The territories of Baghirmi, Wadai, and the Shari basin were indispensable to their grand vision of African empire. Prevented by British occupation of the Niger and Benue from easily resupplying their forces, Rabeh was undoubtedly directly and indirectly responsible for the catastrophe that befell more than one French mission isolated and cut off from all European help. In 1897 Gentil, after reaching Baghirmi, wisely turned south and retired when Rabeh moved from Kuta in British Bornu southwest to meet his challenge. Likewise, in 1879-1898, the massacre of Casamajou's expedition at Zinder no doubt was related in part to the presence of Rabeh's large forces in Bornu.

In retrospect, however, Rabeh plays a small part in the history of West Africa. The French were eventually able to concentrate enough military power to defeat him, and although certain repercussions developed when French forces chased the last remnants of Rabeh's forces into British Bornu after 1900, his passing left West Africa essentially undisturbed.

In comparison it is worth much attention to note that the relative stability of the Moslem Emirates of the Sokoto empire and perhaps their military degeneration, lent themselves much more readily to European bureaucratization. As a secondary point it should be emphasized that communication routes between Chad and the Upper Nile were essentially unfettered. Only the artificial boundaries of French, German, and British partition of Africa has made the distance between Northern Nigeria and the Sudan seem difficult.

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D. THE END OF SOVEREIGNTY FOR THE ROYAL NIGER COMPANY

Before turning to the new arrangements which were gradually evolving in the Colonial Office for the takeover and administration of the new territory of Northern Nigeria, a few notes on the closing two years of Company rule are necessary. The declining days of the Company in Northern Nigeria as a sovereign agent of the British Crown are detailed well by Flint in his biography of Sir George Goldie.⁴⁸ Hence, there is no need for repetitive detail here. Nevertheless, it is essential that the position of the Company be reviewed lest the last few petty acts of Sir George Goldie mar the image of what was otherwise an herculean effort of free enterprise and furtherment of imperial interests.

In the first place, it must be remembered that the Royal Niger Company, though it had posed as a colonial administrator, was the only privately operated company to make modest though steady profits by trading in tropical Africa during the 15 years of its charter.⁴⁹ The balance sheets of the Company between 1887 and 1899 show an increasing volume of trade, sound management, and steady return to its stockholders. It must be remembered that the Company was bound by charter to try to stamp out the slave trade, and remarkable for its time, Goldie did not allow his Company to deal in arms or

⁴⁸Flint, op. cit.

⁴⁹See U.A.C. Archives and Parliamentary Papers (C-9372).

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liquor. Indeed, in 1895 the Company was specifically noted by the Church Missionary Society which said, "the Company's most honorable distinction, however, is that it has made itself the center of resistance of the spirit trade on the west coast."⁵⁰ The West African trade was a rough game, and it redounds to both the Company's and to Goldie's credit that they resisted so well what undoubtedly could have been a major source of revenue.

It must also be remembered that Goldie had received little credit for what he had done. The entire reign of the Royal Niger Company in Northern Nigeria had been a constant source of embitterment to the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, the center of the palm oil trade and soap industry, whose various members very much resented the monopoly of the Royal Niger Company. They had continuously sent a stream of protest and letters, both to Parliament and to the French press.⁵¹

Goldie, then, had good reason to feel aggrieved during the Borgu crisis. He had upheld British interests for some 10 years singlehandedly, but as soon as the Foreign Office entered the list on behalf of the Company's claims, Chamberlain sent Imperial troops under the command of the West African Frontier Force into what had heretofore been Royal Niger

⁵⁰See Goldie to Colonial Office, 9 March 1899; CO 446/5.

⁵¹See Houses of Commons, op. cit., in CO 446/3 for example, but see also, Flint, op. cit., Chapter 5.

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Company territory. Goldie's own efforts at considerable cost to the Company's treasury, including his own brilliant little campaign against Nupe and Bida during the previous years, were largely ignored.

On May 24, 1897, at the prodding of the members from Liverpool, the subject of the eventual demise of the Royal Niger Company had come up for debate in the House of Lords. Although Lord Salisbury and others spoke very favorably of the efforts of both Goldie and the Royal Niger Company, the impression could not escape one that the usefulness of the Royal Niger Company was near its end. From then until the Company's demise on January 1, 1900, Goldie became increasingly bitter, his relationship with Mr. Chamberlain becoming particularly acrimonious.

In terms of military expenditures alone, the Royal Niger Company had good cause to resent the criticism which now came from many quarters. Between 1886 and 1899 the Company engaged in no less than 56 punitive expeditions in one or another part of its territory.⁵² These expeditions ranged from minor skirmishes of a few men lasting but a few days to expeditions of several hundred men lasting weeks. The details of these various expeditions over the 15 years of the Company's rule do not make particularly enlightening reading. For the most part, river-borne troops would land at some spot

⁵²See file 1/5050, U.A.C. Archives.

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where a recalcitrant village or tribe had either raided Company property or for one reason or another refused dealings with them. The methods of the Company were quite simple and direct. If no appropriate member of the dissident tribe or village was immediately forthcoming, one or more villages were burned, crops destroyed, and shrines despoiled. Such fighting as there was usually consisted of one or more ambushes prepared by the local inhabitants with such weapons as they possessed. The results were nearly always the same: The ambushers were scattered, a few killed, and after completing their mission the force would return home.

The expense of the Royal Niger Constabulary was proportionately great. For instance, in the year 1891 when the Company in its revenue and expenditure account listed a total revenue for the year as £89,667 on which the Company netted some £21,000, the Company estimated it spent some £26,000 in equipping and arming its forces.

In that year alone the Company sent out four major military expeditions. On January 7th, Major Ewart and eight other Europeans took 160 troops with two Gardner guns to the town of Oguta to carry out punitive operations against local tribes that had previously attacked a Company station there. The force arrived by boat on the 8th, and after leaving thirty men to protect the station, proceeded to the village of Osun nearby and destroyed it, meeting little resistance. They then returned to Oguta, the Company station, where the force remained for a week, should further trouble break out.

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When nothing happened, forty men with one European officer were left to garrison the station, and the rest returned to permanent quarters. In April 1891, Major Ewart again took a force of 130 men plus European officers "to punish the inhabitants of Zehibu for trouble they were giving the Company."⁵³ After shelling the town from both land and river, it was occupied and proper measures taken. In August, another 160-man mission under the command of Subcommandant Ringer on the boat Kano went to the town Opal on a punitive mission.

The town was shelled for some time and afterwards burned by a landing party put on shore for the purpose: But, unfortunately, while the landing operations were being carried out, thirteen men were lost by drowning through the swamping of the surf boat.⁵⁴

Two days later the same force shelled and burned another town, and two days later shelled and burned another town, presumably all for misdemeanors against the Company.

Not all the missions were so easy, however. In September, Major Ewart took a force of some 300 officers and men on a punitive mission to Abatshi in retribution for acts of aggression carried out against the Company. On the 19th of September one town was destroyed

and on the following day the force marched to Abatshi burning all villages on the way, but the town itself they did not attack until the 23rd. Then they had first to cross a swamp and afterwards ascend a steep hill under a heavy fire before they reached the town, which, however, after four hours hard fighting they

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Ibid.

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took and completely destroyed, together with three others in the neighborhood.⁵⁵

This force, after subsequently destroying several other towns in the area, returned to permanent quarters. Unlike other expeditions, however, this party suffered 43 killed and wounded, two missing, and two dying of fever contracted on the expedition. The justice of these various missions will not here be debated, particularly as the Company has not left sufficient evidence as to the cause for these missions that one can accurately judge just how necessary their severity may have been. Nonetheless, four expeditions of over 100 men, ranging to 300 men, in one year was a stiff cost to bear for a dividend-paying trading company whose primary motive was profit and whose total revenue was in no wise excessive.

When it became clear to Goldie after the May debate in the House of Lords in 1897 that the Company's sovereignty in Nigeria would soon be bought, it is not surprising that he turned to a number of schemes to put his influence and investment to good use. Nor does one blame him for publicly attempting to produce the best picture of the Company position possible.

One of the more intriguing elements of this last year-and-a-half of Goldie's administration on the Niger was a long series of correspondence between Goldie and one Herr Woermann, in which the latter tried desperately to convince Goldie that he should take an interest in the formation of a German

⁵⁵Ibid.

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Cameroon company.⁵⁶ Herr Woermann had received a concession from the German government, in part due to his connection with The Colonial Zeitung, for trade in the Yola area of the Cameroon. What Woermann hoped to do was to establish a line of trade to the middle Cameroon by way of the Benue River. The Adamawa section of the Cameroon was isolated by mountainous terrain from the Gulf of Guinea. Hence, in a sense it would be easier to ascend the Niger and the Benue than to haul goods overland through German territory. Unlike the Niger, the Benue was navigable, at least for a few weeks of the year as far as Yola, and under the terms of the Berlin Conference of 1885 legitimate trade could not be debarred from navigable parts of the river. Woermann hoped, by convincing Goldie to take half the stock of this new company, to utilize his immense experience and influence on behalf of the German company.

Goldie seemed at first interested in Woermann's proposals. However, as it became more clear to the German that while it was possible to navigate the Benue as far as Yola, it was possible to do so only for at best two months of the year, the latter began to lose some interest.⁵⁷ By the beginning of 1899, however, Goldie was rapidly becoming more and more

⁵⁶See Günther Jantzen, "Adolf Woermann; ein politischer Kaufman in den Wand Uingen und sponnungen der imperialistischen Epoch des Reiches" in Europa und U'bersee (Hamburg; Festchift jur E. Zechlin, 1961), p. 716.

⁵⁷For the Goldie-Woermann correspondence see FO 2/242.

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discouraged with events in Nigeria. In a letter to Woermann on January 19, 1899, Goldie's bitterness took a philosophical turn:

One last remark. I do not think you need anticipate any jealousy on the part of the Niger Trading Company (if it continues mine) toward Germans going to Garua. It was a different matter before political boundaries were settled, and when British political rights had to be protected. For the policy of the past, whether good or bad, I am personally responsible. The position is now entirely changed, and there seems no reason why each nation should not encourage, as far as it can, development of its neighbor's territories, which will indirectly help to develop and enrich its own.⁵⁸

Retrospective calmness was not Goldie's strong suit. By February, 1899, Goldie was again in dispute with members of the Colonial Office over military rights in the Royal Niger sphere of influence. In particular, Goldie was irate that Sir R. Moor, Governor of the Niger Coast Protectorate, wished to cooperate with the West Africa Frontier Force in putting down the rebellious town of Efoqe within the Royal Niger Company's sphere. Mr. Flint, then the acting agent-general for the Company, telegraphed Goldie asking whether he should cooperate or not. Goldie's reply was a terse rebuttal that neither the Niger Coast Protectorate nor the West African Frontier Force could act in the territories before a change of administration took place. Goldie's primary concern was that the activity of imperial forces within the Niger Company's sphere of influence could not help but diminish the value of the territory the Company was ceding to the government at a

⁵⁸Goldie to Woermann, 19 January 1899; CO 446/5.

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time' when the treasury was attempting to work out a monetary settlement with the Company. He was irritated because in 1899 the difficulties that the Company in administering the territory

were aggravated by the introduction into the territory of the West African Frontier Force with a very large number of officers, many, or perhaps most, of whom were senior to the officers of the Company's troops, and all of whom very properly felt themselves to be imperial officers entirely independent of the government of the region in which they were quartered.

By an order declaring them to be on active service in a foreign country, they and their actions were entirely removed from the cognizance of the courts of the Company's territories, so that the natives in those territories who had hitherto looked to the Company for justice and who considered themselves aggrieved by members of the West African Frontier Force, had to be nonsuited in the Company's courts.

I wish to make it quite clear that I am not raising any complaints of any kind whatsoever against any of the imperial officers in the Company's territories, nor against the system that has been adopted. I may say that the officers of the West African Frontier Force have shown themselves, on the whole, most amiable and sensible. Had it been otherwise, Nigeria would have been months ago in a state of complete chaos. The evils of which I complain, and which I long ago prophesized to Her Majesty's government, are evils inseparable from a knowledge of approaching dissolution, and from a system of dual control, and from the sudden introduction into such regions of large numbers of Europeans who are independent of the laws of the country and inexperienced in the habits and ways of the native populations.

I venture to think that it does some credit to the Company's officials on the spot and, perhaps, to those who direct them from this office, that such an extraordinary state of affairs has not long before now led to more serious friction and even to disaster.

If, however, the West African Frontier Force and the troops of the Niger Coast Protectorate were to undertake joint military operations in the Company's territories in supersession of the action Company's troops, the last bond of discipline and pride which has held together the staff of the Royal Niger Company would be dissolved, and I fear that the Council could no longer support even the

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present shadow of responsibility for the maintenance of order in the Company's territories.⁵⁹

There is much to be said for Sir George Goldie's position in the matter. However, the Colonial Office had their own view of affairs on the Niger. Sir R. Moor and the West African Frontier Force were desirous of maintaining what order they could and proceeded into Niger Company territory. Henry Morley in a sharp note to the Foreign Office on 2 March 1899,⁶⁰ was extremely bitter about the medley of authority then present in Northern Nigeria and complained that the Company's position had been undermined for the last 12 months and that letters from all parts of the country indicated this to be the case. In a note on this letter, Francis Bertie in the Colonial Office noted that the

Position is, as the Niger Company point out, exceedingly difficult. The Niger Company themselves admit that they do not care to go to any special trouble administering their territories when they expect to lose their charter any day, and yet they adopt the attitude of the dog in the manger toward those who, knowing that they will be responsible eventually, endeavor to keep matters straight now. We have experienced exactly the same difficulty when the officer in command of the West African Frontier Force has proposed to take drastic measures.

In the present case I think the Company have exaggerated their grievance. Sir R. Moor states that since 1892 the Protectorate has paid subsidies to several Sobo and Quale towns in order to keep the roads open, and that it is to the subsidized towns that the visit is to be paid. We cannot, therefore, take this as a very striking instance of the evil on which the Company's letter insists the confusion of authorities in the native mind. The suspicion rather is that the Company have fastened on this incident as a text from which to preach once more

⁵⁹Goldie to the Under Secretary of State, Foreign Office, 21 February 1899 (from a copy in); CO 446/5.

⁶⁰An addition to No. 5970 of 9 March; as copied in CO 446/5.

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the necessity for some definite arrangement as to transfer, the necessity which we feel as much as they.

In the present case, Agent General Flint has solved the immediate difficulty by entering a formal protest, giving good advice as to the strength of the escort, and only communicating with home by mail. No doubt Sir R. Moor has by this time done all that he wished to do in Sobo.

I would suggest that we propose to the Foreign Office to telegraph to Sir R. Moor that pending definite arrangements for the transfer of the administration, he must communicate with home by telegraph whenever he deems action in the Company's territory necessary: The Company might be informed of this, for their consolation. I expect that it would always be possible to effect some compromise with the Company as to any action to be taken, as we did over the Ilorin affair last October.⁶¹

This note was duly initialled by Chamberlain himself on 27 March.

Doubtless, both the Royal Niger Company and the Colonial Office had valid arguments to present. It would be redundant to detail all the various complaints that filtered back and forth from the Company to the Foreign Office and the Colonial Office. Doubtless conditions in Northern Nigeria had certainly deteriorated to a point, but one suspects a good bit of validity in the Colonial Office claim that Goldie was building up a better case for the Company than actually existed. Be this as it may, to assume that because the last years the Royal Niger Company were not glorious ones, that Nigeria owes little to the Royal Niger Company and to Sir George Goldie, would be difficult to justify. In fact, one hardly needs to go further than to re-emphasize that had it not been for the vigorous action of Sir George Goldie and

⁶¹March 11; CO 446/5 (p. 194).

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the Royal Niger Company, there would have been no British Northern Nigeria. For this alone, the Royal Niger Company deserves a better place than that which it usually receives.

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CHAPTER VII

THE ROLE OF THE COLONIAL OFFICE

Despite the impact of European excursions into West Africa, the West African Frontier Force, African military elements, and the declining years of the Royal Niger Company upon Indirect Rule in Northern Niger, by far the most significant events between June 1898 and January 1900 were publicly unobserved and unobtrusive minutes passed back and forth at the Colonial Office. These committee reports, minutes, and consultations with knowledgeable persons by lesser-known Colonial Officer servants, particularly Mr. Antrobus and Sir Edward Wingfield,¹ are the bureaucratic foundation of Indirect Rule in Northern Nigeria. True enough, these men only laid the base for Lugard's great experiment. Nevertheless, the competence and skill they showed in their work rather tends to reaffirm one's faith in the machinery of government bureaucracy.

After the settlement with France in June of 1898, it was clear to all concerned, the Government would soon be forced

¹Sir Edward Wingfield was Permanent Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies from 1897-1900.

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to take over the Royal Niger Company's territory in Nigeria. Chamberlain's first move was to form a Niger Committee composed of the Earl of Selbourne, Sir George Goldie, Sir Clement Hill, Sir Ralph Moore, R. L. Antrobus, and Sir H. McCallum, to come to some tentative conclusions about the proper future course of the Niger's territories.

Though informal in nature, the report these men issued was of the utmost value for the future of Nigeria because in a general way it outlined the course of Colonial Office policy for the next 25 or 30 years.

Among other things, the committee considered such basic questions as whether the future administration of the three territories of Lagos, Niger Coast Protectorate, and the Niger Company's territories should be united, or if not, what criteria should be used to determine the separate divisions. They then considered how such units should be administered; where their seats of government should be; the future arrangement of military forces; what customs duties should be; if there should be a customs union; what types of taxation were possible; what the estimated cost of any future administration might be; what policy should be adopted toward Sokoto, Bornu, and Rabeh; and whether and where railways might be built.

The fundamental question, of course, upon which the Committee came to a conclusion was separation versus amalgamation of government for the Niger territories. Upon this question, the future administration of Lagos, Niger Coast

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Protectorate, and Niger Company territories, the committee was united and quite specific: "We are of opinion that the object to be aimed at is the eventual establishment of a governor-general for the whole of the territories, resident in the territories."²

However, despite their preference for one governor-general, the committee felt that there were a number of reasons, principally ecological, which would make it impossible under the then present circumstances to get any but a young man to do efficient work in West Africa. Indeed, they were convinced that even a young man would require much time away from West Africa to recover his health; that is, up to a third of the time.³ Moreover, the committee thought the absence of telegraph lines and roads, which made communication difficult, meant that for a time authority must be divided. But in order that any future amalgamation be simple, the committee recommended that for the time being the divisions of Nigeria should each report separately to the Colonial Office.⁴

²See Report of the Niger Committee, C.O. 17887, page 2; CO 446/3.

³In respect to health, Sir George Goldie noted accurately, as it turned out, that in time it would be possible to establish an healthful Nigerian "Simla" in the Bautshi highlands. (In time the lovely Jos "Hill Station" was established there, and the writer can attest to its pleasant qualities.)

⁴The writer failed to discover just what lay beneath this highly dubious assertion that control from London was more practical than a Nigerian-based control, but the point is not here worth belaboring.

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Hence, the committee concluded that there should for the present be a Maritime Province and a Soudan Province; that the Soudan Province should consist of those regions governed by Moslems but including certain Moslem Yorubas in what otherwise might be the Maritime Provinces, as the members were convinced that:

both banks of the Niger must be under one jurisdiction on account of the international questions which will probably arise in connection with the use of the river; and also because if there are different jurisdictions on opposite banks, the administration of the criminal and civil law will be more difficult.⁵

Hence, the line which the committee suggested as the boundary line between the two hypothetical provinces, the Maritime and Soudan, would leave the Dahomey boundary at approximately the 9th parallel, run east and then south, including Ilorin and all Yoruba country in the Maritime Province, to Ida on the Niger, and then east from Ida to Ashaku, a town on the German border, but actually in German territory. They proposed that the seat of government for the Soudan Province should, for the present, be at Lokoja, the confluence of the Niger and Benue.

The Committee tended to think that if the Maritime Province should again be divided that the Lagos territory should remain as one, and the rest, with a capitol at Asaba, should be administered as the eastern province. The committee was split on whether or not this would be an advisable step.

⁵Niger Committee Report, op. cit., p. 4.

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Concerning the future administration of the provinces, all were agreed that whether two or three in number, the provinces must be divided into divisions and districts. In this respect, it is interesting that Sir H. McCallum, whose experience was totally in the south of Nigeria, suggested that native chiefs could be organized in village and district councils and might very possibly be useful in doing much of the local administrative work, such as tax collection and law enforcement.

In military affairs, the committee was convinced that if there were to be a division of authority, military forces should also be divided. However, they insisted that the organization should be the same and that in case of emergency a general officer should be appointed to take command of all forces. Such provincial units would have an advantage in that each force could be locally bilingual, that is to say, in the north English-Hausa or in the Lagos area Yoruba-English, and yet have the potential for maximum use of combined forces in any area.⁶

Not surprisingly, the committee recommended a customs union, and they proposed that the Lagos tariff should be universally adopted.

On financial affairs, the committee was not overly optimistic. They estimated that the three territories--Lagos, Niger Coast Protectorate, and Niger Company's territories--

⁶Ibid., p. 6.

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had combined receipts of approximately £432,000. Their estimates for total civil expenditures in the three territories was £348,000 and a like sum for military expenditures.⁷

What this meant was that the treasury was immediately faced with the prospect of a £300,000 deficit, should affairs on the west coast of Africa remain as they were. What they could be reasonably sure of, however, was that with parts of Northern Nigeria still not under control of the British Crown, for at least the next few years the costs could only go up.

The conclusions one may draw from these figures are obvious. First, imperialism, at least as far as West Africa was concerned, was not immediately a paying proposition. Second, it was clear to all that administrative costs in these new colonies should be reduced to the absolute minimum. And third, that any administrator with expensive or expansive ideas about colonial administration would have to be a smooth salesman indeed.

As an afterthought to these prognostications, the committee also dourly commented that the upcoming Brussels Liquor conference might serve to diminish estimated revenue by checking the importation of spirits at Lagos and the Niger Coast Protectorate by international agreement.

Another recommendation contained in a later section of the report that was to have immense importance for the

⁷Ibid., pp. 8-9.

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future of Northern Nigeria concerned the problem of taxation. Obviously part of the answer to colonial administration lay in effecting some sort of efficient tax scheme on Africans. With the exception of Sir George Goldie,⁸ the committee was unanimous in assuming that it would not be prudent at the present time to impose any form of direct taxation on natives, but that in due time a village tax of some form or other could gradually be imposed. Again, a very prophetic comment was added by Sir H. McCallum, who suggested that:

some form of internal taxation may be devised from which payment can be made to the chiefs who, in consequence of British intervention, have been or will be deprived of former sources of income, the principal one of which was slave trading.⁹

In retrospect one suspects that Colonel Lugard read these passages with the utmost care.

In reference to the problems of Sokoto, Bornu, and Rabeh, the committee was guided by the advice of Sir George Goldie, who almost alone was knowledgeable on these subjects. He quite correctly assumed that the Sultan of Sokoto would not voluntarily receive a British resident unaccompanied by overwhelming military superiority. He also assumed, quite correctly, that it would be useless to try to communicate with Sokoto until the "Fula power" was crushed. He insisted that no general coup de main should be planned but that each Emir

⁸Ibid., p. 10.

⁹Ibid., pp. 10-11.

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and Emirate should be taken in turn, hence, gradually extending British control without precipitating general warfare or greatly increasing military costs. The committee agreed with Sir George Goldie and stated that since the problem of French interference was not then so great, the problem of Sokoto could wait until a new governor of the Northern Provinces was appointed.

The last few pages of the report are concerned exclusively with communication in the new colonies. The committee was unanimously of the opinion that a railroad linking Kano and navigable water should be built down the valley of the Kaduna to its junction on the Niger. They were not equally unanimous as to whether the railroad should be continued from the Niger to Lagos or to some port on the lower Niger already accessible to ocean-going vessels of large size.¹⁰ The breakdown, generally, of the committee was that Sir George Goldie and Sir R. Moor were convinced of its efficacy, having the greatest interest in having the line extended down to a port on the Niger, and Sir H. McCallum, whose primary interest was at Lagos, feeling that the line should be extended from Jebba to Lagos.

The final paragraph recommended that the change of administration should take place at the first opportunity, which, they thought, would be January of 1899.

¹⁰The Lagos harbor at this point would only accommodate ships of a draft of less than 9 feet, and removal of the sandbar at the entrance of the harbor was estimated at nearly 1 million pounds in 1898.

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Over the course of the next two years, this report was the stimulus for much thought and copious minute making inside the Colonial Office. The principal questions of concern were the future administration of the Niger territories and the question of amalgamation of Lagos and the Oil Rivers section of the Niger Coast Protectorate.¹¹ Mr. Antrobus and Mr. Wingfield were the origin of many of the suggestions which eventually were put into practice. However, they were often corrected or over-ruled by their superiors in the Colonial Office.

The question which most concerns this thesis, of course, is the future administration of the Niger Company territories, in particular, those parts which became Northern Nigeria. A long handwritten minute dated November 13th by Mr. Antrobus to Sir Edward Wingfield contains many thoughts eventually embodied by Lugard into indirect rule as we know it.¹²

It must not be supposed that Mr. Antrobus was working in the dark. He had met often with both Lugard and Goldie and relied heavily on their advice. Moreover, by November Mr. Chamberlain had already decreed that for the present there should be three administrations in the Niger territory. They were to be Lagos, the Niger Coast Protectorate, and the

¹¹These questions are dealt with largely, though not exclusively, in files 25517 and 18809 for Northern Nigeria; CO 446/3.

¹²CO 446/3.

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Company's territories, with some modification of boundaries, principally the removal of Niger Company territory below Ida to the Niger Coast Protectorate. It was also obvious by November that the transfer date of January 1, 1899, was impractical, and the date for transfer was tentatively set back to June 1899.

To begin with, Antrobus first suggested that the Niger Coast Protectorate should be renamed Niger Coast and that the territories in the interior should be termed the Niger Soudan. From there, relying heavily on the advice of Goldie, Antrobus suggested that the head of each of the three administrations should be styled Governor to "convey both to the British public and to the natives of West Africa, as well as to foreign powers, a better idea of the position which we claim in the territories than any such title as commissioner or high commissioner."¹³ But concerned over precedence, Antrobus noted that a governor seemed to imply a colony. Hence, he thought that one or two of the new colonies could be constituted somewhat on the same lines as Lagos or the Gold Coast, where there was at that time a very small colony and a very large protectorate. Antrobus suggested that as Jebba would probably constitute the capitol of the Niger Soudan, perhaps country for some five miles around that town might be constituted to form a colony.

¹³Ibid.

Obviously, these suggestions were impractical as they would have needlessly complicated an already confused situation for the sake of vague terminological precedence. They were quickly rejected by Lord Selbourne and Mr. Chamberlain. Nonetheless, Antrobus reported that Goldie and Colonel Lugard agreed on a rather unique suggestion for administering the northern territories. They suggested that

difficulties might arise in consequence with slavery if any territory were actually annexed, and they suggest that we should take a new departure and set up a governor of a protectorate without any colony.¹⁴

Antrobus noted that either proposal might be acceptable but the legal position of the territories in question would have to be defined more accurately than at present.

The legal position of Nigeria was indeed complicated. Lagos, in 1898, comprised a small colony and a small protectorate, but the larger part of the territory supervised by the Governor of Lagos was "nothing but a sphere of influence." The Niger Coast Protectorate, on the other hand, had only local jurisdiction under the African Orders in Council, although the legal minded British were prone to believe that certain powers had been acquired by sufferance over the years, and duties were collected to provide for the expenses of administration. In the Niger territories, of course, the Company had acquired administrative rights by treaties with native rulers, most of which had been duly notified in the London Gazette of 18 October 1887.

¹⁴Ibid.

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As to the internal boundaries within Nigeria, Antrobus was not definitive. He noted that Colonel Lugard had made a good case for the inclusion of Saki near the Dahomey border and below the 9th parallel being included in the Niger Soudan. But, in general, Antrobus could foresee only minor modifications in the Niger Committee report of Lord Selbourne in August. One interesting note, however: Antrobus agreed with the Niger Committee that Yoruba country should be left to Lagos, but he felt that Ilorin should be retained or placed in the Niger Soudan.¹⁵ Interestingly enough, Antrobus indicated that the Niger Soudan would have to have some sort of enclave at the Forcados mouth of the Niger if the Niger territory were to be deprived of its land below Ida. Antrobus suggested that this enclave would be modeled after the French ones and should be "subject to the laws for the time being in force"¹⁶ in the Niger Coast.

Antrobus was also convinced that although ultimate authority would lie with the Queen via her orders in council, that there should also be local legislative authority in each of the provinces. Because of the difficulty in administering these ill-defined areas where communication was so difficult, he suggested that governors alone should make the laws, either by ordinance or by proclamation for the present.

¹⁵Ilorin did have a Moslim Emir, with traditional allegiance to Sokoto, however, the principal population was, and is, largely Yoruba.

¹⁶Op. cit., Antrobus Memorandum.

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Although several other points were dealt with in this minute, it is significant to note once again the close communication between Antrobus, Goldie, Lugard, and Sir Ralph Moor.

In commenting upon Antrobus' long minute, Wingfield was very insistent that the title of governor was not appropriate for a protectorate and would mean quite a different thing than the governor of a colony.¹⁷ Wingfield also had numerous comments on the precedents for the establishment procedure and whether they should come under letters patent or orders in council. He was particularly derisive in rejecting any notion that a small bit of territory should be designated as a colony for the sake of the title of the local administrator. Wingfield also felt that an enclave at the mouth of the Niger for processing goods destined for the Niger Soudan, a term of which he approved, was a petty matter better left for a later date. He was much more concerned as to the form of the instrument revoking the charter of the Royal Niger Company, a matter which he felt would require careful consideration.

In replying to Wingfield's suggestion, Antrobus noted on September 6th that he agreed in general, but had an interesting suggestion as to the names for the new colonies.

In CO 25517 I proposed, in accordance with the suggestion of Sir George Goldie, 'Niger Coast' and 'Niger Soudan'; and you suggested 'British Soudan'. I think,

¹⁷Minute by Sir Edward Wingfield, November 26th, ibid.

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however, that it would be better to avoid the use of 'Soudan'; and, as 'Nigeria' has become a familiar term (although, strictly speaking, it should be 'Nigritia') I would suggest 'Southern' and 'Northern' or 'Lower' and 'Upper' Nigeria. The term British Soudan will probably be wanted someday for the country to the east of the line just settled with France, as the French already call the country to the west of it the 'French Soudan'.¹⁸

Interestingly enough, as these minutes worked their way up through the Colonial Office, Lord Selbourne's only comment was that although he agreed with the foregoing, he had a distinct preference for Northern and Southern as against Upper or Lower Nigeria. Joseph Chamberlain, for his part, made but one comment on this long exchange, that

Northern and Southern are really more descriptive--but Upper and Lower are more euphonious to my ear. But I do not care of those which it is.

It must be Nigeria--and not Soudan.¹⁹

The legal position of the upcoming transfer was a complicated one. The Lagos situation was particularly complex but does not concern us here.²⁰ As for Northern and Southern Nigeria, it was eventually concluded that both an order in council under the Foreign Jurisdiction Act and instructions to the governor by way of his commission would be the most appropriate way of establishing the new administrations. The order in council was to be the same for Northern and Southern Nigeria and might be modeled on the South African

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Minute by Joseph Chamberlain, October 4th, ibid.

²⁰For details see HBC to Mr. Antrobus and Sir Edward Wingfield, April 28, 1899; CO 446/3.

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order in council of 9 May 1891, under which Rhodesia's High Commissioner legislated for the territory. This would allow the governor to make laws by proclamation and would not create an executive or legislative council.

Instructions to the governor were to be modeled on the Gibraltar instructions on 22 June 1876, insofar as they would be applicable. For the first time, it becomes evident that the rights of existing officers of the Royal Niger Company were to be abolished and those who would remain were to be reappointed under new provisions. The existing court structure of the Royal Niger Company, however, was to be maintained insofar as it was possible. But there was considerable confusion over just exactly which records Sir George Goldie and the Company still retained²¹ and what of the remainder was public in nature.

There were also considerable questions, and many legal implications, over what should be the proper disposition of land which the Royal Niger Company and George Goldie wished to preserve for the Company to facilitate continued trading operations. The rest of the land within the Niger Company's territories, of course, would be ceded to the government. It was reported that Goldie approved of the following clause:

The government of the territories within the limits of this order and all powers in relation to the government vested in or exercised by the Company shall cease to be

²¹Much had been destroyed in the Akassa Brass raids (see Flint, op. cit., Chapter 9), and most other Royal Niger Documents were destroyed by U.A.C. officials during depression years housecleanings.

vested in or exercised by the Company, and all rights of administration and government which but for this order might have been exercised by the Company in relation to any such territory shall become vested in Her Majesty and be exercised in Her name by the governor of British Nigeria.²²

But it was noted by Antrobus and others in the margin that this clause did not sufficiently deal with the land question and must be carefully reconsidered.

As to exactly how the Company's charter might be revoked, it was decided that the best manner was to follow the last clause of the charter granted to the National African Company on July 12, 1886. This clause gave to Her Majesty, or Her Majesty's Council, power to revoke the charter if Her Majesty's Council found it expedient by so acting under powers of the great seal.²³

This series of memoranda²⁴ is unusual in Colonial Office files in that it contains a few minutes by Lugard himself.²⁵

The minutes of both Lugard and Antrobus centered mostly on the structure of the native court system. Both were concerned that the widest possible jurisdiction be left to residents, or political agents, and to district courts

²²Antrobus Memorandum, op. cit., CO 446/3 (p. 455).

²³It was noted by Sir Clement Hill that any precedents from British East Africa, i.e., the Imperial British East Africa Company, were not relevant because the Company had received its presumed rights from the Sultan of Zanzibar.

²⁴CO 446/3.

²⁵Rather, Lugard minuted in the margin a note by Antrobus of May 15, 1899; CO 446/3.

wherever possible under native jurisdiction. The precedent here was the Gold Coast, but it reflected careful thought and insight into the potential advantage of leaving whatever local disputes that could be done so easily in the hands of local Africans. This would, of course, have the dual advantage of linking the local power structure to the British government by enforcing traditional prerogatives, and of relieving British administration of a dull, time-consuming, and costly punitive establishment.

Lugard's marginal notes of May 1899, on the efficacy of entrusting all criminal proceedings in native hands, reflects the mature judgment of his years in Uganda and his more recent West African experience.²⁶

For all of Lugard's influence, the principal dispute at the Colonial Office was between Sir R. Moor and Sir H. McCallum. The former was convinced that the maritime provinces of Lagos and the Niger Coast Protectorate could easily be governed by one man. McCallum, on the other hand, was equally convinced that the maritime provinces should have two and had his way.²⁷ The basis of this debate initially was a letter from Moor to the under-secretary of state for

²⁶Ibid. It is interesting, however, to note that much discussion on potential forms of administration can be found in Northern Nigeria 18809 in CO 446/3, which deals for the most part with Lagos.

²⁷McCallum was Governor at Lagos and Moor the Niger Coast. See Antrobus to Wingfield, August 26, 1898; CO 446/3.

the Colonial Office, Selbourne.²⁸ Sir Ralph Moor had many reasons, including reduced costs, for suggesting the unification of Lagos and the Niger Coast Protectorate. What is particularly striking, however, are the administrative suggestions which his letter contains. While Sir Ralph Moor would not have labelled them as such, his proposals come very close to being an exact definition of what Lugard proceeded to initiate in Northern Nigeria under the term of Indirect Rule.

V. As regards to the administration being carried on by one man, I am strongly of the opinion that this could be effectively done. I am here giving an opinion without having very full knowledge of the territories of the Lagos colony, but of the rest of the territories I have as full a knowledge as any European resident there, and I may add that during the past seven years I have spent probably six or eight months in the Lagos colony itself. To enable a man to do so is to my mind merely a question of formation of a competent staff and the proper splitting up of the territories into divisions. There would probably require to be six, or at the most, seven of these, in charge of which reliable divisional officers would require to be placed. Such divisions would again be divided into districts, three or four as circumstance and locality might require, and in charge of such would be a district officer with necessary assistance. These officers would keep in touch with native councils, chiefs and tribes generally and fully informed divisional officers of all going on-- they would also carry out the routine work of administration. The divisional officers would thus have a good general report of the circumstances of a division, and their duty would be to inform themselves by personal contact and influence with the native chiefs and tribes of the actual state of affairs for report to the administrator, to whom periodical reports on laid-down lines would be made in addition to particular detailed reports of events, etc. as they occurred. The administrator thus deals with territories and divisions which he inspects periodically, visiting all headquarters and

²⁸18 August 1898; CO 446/3.

districts. This, I am of the opinion, could be effectively done at least two or three times each year by which means I am of the opinion that the administrator would establish and retain such necessary personal influence with the chiefs and tribes as would enable him to carry on effective government. I am of course taking for granted that the administrator should spend a very considerable portion of his time in moving about the territories, for in my opinion it is not possible for a man to be an able administrator in Africa without almost continuous contact with the natives. The European element is too small and individually changing to really govern the natives, and it is through the chiefs that this must actually be done. The administrator would of course move about carrying all important correspondence with him and have all such forwarded to him wherever he might be. Present steamship system in the protectorate, Niger territories, and I think Lagos lend themselves to this conveniently and only requires supplementing by mail canoe system.²⁹

One familiar with the Lugard administration from 1900 through 1904, cannot fail but to appreciate the practical wisdom of Moor's suggestions, even though he was directing them not at the organized Moslem Emirates but at loosely organized pagan villages in the south. It is highly probable, indeed, that Lugard was able to read this note by Moor. Even if he had not, however, the two were in frequent contact with one another at the Colonial Office and in Nigeria. It is hard not to become convinced that in his early years in Northern Nigeria Lugard leaned heavily on advice gleaned early from experienced hands such as Moor, even though he modified

²⁹Ibid., p. 2. However, Sir R. Moor was not the only one who had theories on the future government of Northern Nigeria.

One interesting letter that somehow got in NN 30394 CO 446/8 was a note from Wallace to Colonel Pilcher, then in command of the West African Frontier Force and dated the 9th of June, 1899. It spells out Wallace's rather unique theory of government in Nigeria.

their suggestions to a great degree in his own administration of Northern Nigeria.

Such speculation about Lugard's contact with Moor, however, is redundant. For by October many of Moor's suggestions had been incorporated into future plans for Nigeria.

With regard to the appointment of these residents, I am to explain that it is proposed eventually to divide Northern Nigeria into five divisions, Kano, Nupe, and Ilorin, the Benue, Borgu, and Bornu (Sokoto and Kano crossed out). Each of which will be in charge of a resident, but that for the first few years it will only be necessary to have political agents or residents for the three first divisions, and that it is in Chamberlain's opinion, essential that Mr. Wallace, Mr. Watts, and Mr. Hewby should remain in charge of affairs in those divisions. The residents will be the principal executive officers after the governor, and the senior residents (and not, as in an ordinary colony, the colonial secretary) will succeed to the administration of the government in the governor's absence. The salary of the colonial secretary was therefore fixed at a much lower rate than in the neighboring colonies, and it was at first proposed in consideration for the very important duties which the residents had to discharge that the salary of the first resident should be £1,200, rising to £1,500 a year, and that of the others £900, rising to £1,200 a year, and that there should also be duty allowance attached.³⁰

By November 13th, Antrobus could minute further refinements of the system on a draft of the Nigeria orders in council. He also gave warning to future Colonial Office personnel that Lugard was developing widespread ambition.

I would call the legislative enactments 'proclamations' and not 'ordinances': and, if the use of the term 'governor' is likely to mislead Colonel Lugard, I would call him 'high commissioner' or 'commissioner', although 'governor' is the most convenient term. I am afraid that Colonel Lugard has gotten it into his head that we are going to set up a regular colonial

³⁰Antrobus to Chamberlain, 11 October 1899; CO 446/6.

administration in Nigeria; but, as Sir George Goldie has said to me the other day, what we really want to establish is a kind of 'diplomatic administration'. It is impracticable and undesirable to govern or try to govern the country in the Queen's name as if it were a colony. We should simply try to maintain peace and order through the native rulers making them comply with our wishes, if necessary or desirable in extreme cases, by the use of our military force.³¹

By this time it had also been agreed upon by Sir George Goldie and Lugard that the second in command in Northern Nigeria, or the first full resident, would be Mr. Wallace, a man of long experience and service with the Royal Niger Company in Nigeria.

Important as the theoretical considerations for the future government of Northern Nigeria may have been, they were not the principal cause of delay. The Lords of the Treasury, from the Colonial Office standpoint, were exasperatingly slow in approving proposed expenditures. Before any action would be taken by them, the Treasury demanded departmental organization charts in extreme detail, careful estimates of all proposed revenue and expenditure, and complete salary schedules for all types of government employees.

It fell, naturally, to Colonel Lugard to prepare these charts and present them to the Colonial Office in turn to be handed to the Treasury. This work was detailed and time consuming, as indicated by the literally hundreds of pages of handwritten notes which Lugard presented to the Colonial

³¹Copy of Orders-in-Council minutes by Antrobus on 13 November 1898; CO 446/6.

Office on the subject of the future administration of Northern Nigeria.³² One marvels at the tenacity and vigor with which Lugard attacked his problem.

In all of Lugard's estimates, one is constantly struck by two characteristics. First, Lugard was a thorough and competent individual, but he had a very noticeable tendency to get carried away by the eloquence of his own organization. He was constantly rebuked by members of the Colonial Office for proposing a much too complicated and expensive administration for a territory which, practically speaking, was simply not worth it. Second, most of Lugard's work lacks any reference at all to an overall theory of government which might take unique advantage of affairs in Northern Nigeria. Lugard, it seems, was more concerned with mimicking governmental procedures in established colonies, such as the Gold Coast, than in proposing radical innovations. This is not, however, surprising, as what few parts of Nigeria the Royal Niger Company actually did administer in a working manner were soon to be transferred to Sir Ralph Moor's Southern Nigeria, and Lugard was faced with the prospect of initiating a totally new administration.

It is also only fair to admit that the advice of the Treasury Department was sound as well as penurious. For instance, it vehemently rejected a proposal of Lugard's to

³²Lugard's proposals for organization of the new government proclamations and so forth are scattered throughout CO 466 and CO 879. The majority are to be found in CO 446/6-8.

pay the lower orders of the proposed government reduced leave pay, noting that in tropical countries where health is always in danger, such a system would probably mean that the less well-to-do would stay until their health did break down.³³ It must also be remembered that the Treasury had the ticklish problem of making a settlement with Sir George Goldie. Goldie, not unnaturally, wanted more for the presumed rights of the Royal Niger Company than they were worth, and negotiations with him were long and protracted.

So slow were negotiations with the Treasury Department, in fact, that on the 6th of June Edward Wingfield, at the request of Mr. Chamberlain, directed a 21-page typed memorandum to the Treasury, in which he reviewed the situation and urged more speedy action in approving estimates for Northern and Southern Nigeria.³⁴ This memorandum reviews the financial arrangements for both Northern Nigeria and Southern Nigeria and, except for a few departments, is reasonably accurate. The Exchequer replied that suitable progress was being made between the Exchequer and Sir G. T. Goldie, in that once this agreement on the purchase price of the rights of the Royal Niger Company had been agreed to, there would be less difficulty in approving estimates for Northern and

³³See Boards of Treasury to Colonial Office, 14 January 1899; CO 446/6.

³⁴See C. O. 10272 Northern Nigeria; CO 446/6.

Southern Nigeria.³⁵

On the 10th of October, 1899, the Colonial Office formally received a copy of a letter from the Royal Niger Company accepting notification of the government's intention to revoke her charter. The letter, though not unique in itself, was the impetus for a number of Colonial Office minutes which are particularly pertinent for Northern Nigeria because the final arrangements for Lugard's departure could now be made.³⁶

In a long minute from Monson to Antrobus on the 13th of October, Monson noted:

this may be the proper opportunity to consider the question of Colonel Lugard's appointment as governor. We cannot officially notify it to him until the Treasury have approved the estimates, and the Queen's pleasure has been taken.³⁷

In a marginal note Antrobus expressed doubt as to whether Lugard could be called Governor. It was, of course, eventually decided that the term "High Commissioner" might be more appropriate, and as such Lugard left for Northern Nigeria. In his minute, Monson concurred with Lugard's own suggestion that he leave on 1 December so as to arrive in Northern Nigeria at the beginning of January and be present on the transfer date.

³⁵A copy of which was received by the Colonial Office 28 June 1899, and was included in C.O. 16680; CO 446/6.

³⁶See Northern Nigeria file No. 27494; CO 446/5.

³⁷Ibid.

Monson also suggested that Lugard

should send in a statement of the policy and objects which he would recommend--he has been asked, by Mr. Chamberlain's instructions, for this, but has not yet supplied; and having regard to Colonel Lugard's large conceptions and the necessity of reducing them to reasonable dimensions, it might be added that, while Mr. Chamberlain has not been able to authorize all the expenditures which Colonel Lugard has proposed, he considers that sufficient provision will be made for the purposes of taking over the administration and inaugurating the new government; that the new work to be undertaken should be proceeded with gradually as permitted by the materials with which Colonel Lugard will be supplied, and which Mr. Chamberlain is confident he will use to the best advantage.³⁸

Monson also thought that it would be appropriate to notify Sir R. Moor of the impending change and further tell him that from the Royal Niger Constabulary, Southern Nigeria was to receive one-third and Northern Nigeria two-thirds of those forces.

In a minute by Antrobus on October 21st, he noted that we have now got things fairly entrained for taking over the administration on the 1st January. Sir R. Moor's estimates for Southern Nigeria have been sanctioned, and he may be relied upon to carry out his part of the matter satisfactorily.³⁹

Antrobus, however, was not quite so confident that Lugard would follow exactly the Colonial Office's wishes.

The Treasury have at last sanctioned the appointment of the civil officers required for Northern Nigeria, and I understand they will raise no further difficulty as to the rest of the civil estimates although they have not formally approved of them. . . .

He [Lugard] is still very much disappointed at not being allowed more than £85,000 a year for civil services;

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Minute by Antrobus, October 21, 1899, ibid.

although I have reminded him that Mr. Chamberlain's view was that the expenditure should be limited to £50,000 (or at most £60,000) a year, and that £85,000 which has been agreed to is exclusive of the cost of the West African Frontier Force. I think that he makes a great mistake in wanting to set up an expensive administration. The country is not ready for it; and the more money we spend on the salaries of officials, the less chance we shall have of getting funds eventually for roads, et cetera, which will be required for the development of the country.⁴⁰

To these minutes Lord Salisbury fully agreed. However Chamberlain noted on 23 October that he wished to have a conversation with Lugard before he left as "I am a little afraid that he wants to go too quickly."⁴¹

Lugard's requested memorandum explaining his proposed procedures and submitting observations on expenditures and estimates was handwritten on 2 November from his London residence at 39 St. James Place, S.W., and received by the Colonial Office the following day.⁴² With the covering letter, the memorandum included some 12 pages of closely written notes and observations. In it Lugard did his best to allay Colonial Office fears that he was thinking of governing in extravagant terms:

I making these remarks I have been prompted by the feeling that it is difficult to realize in England the conditions of government in a country in West Africa 400 miles from the sea, with no existing accommodations, for large numbers of Europeans, and almost prohibitive expense involved in the necessary system of leaves and

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Minute by Joseph Chamberlain, 23 October 1899, ibid.

⁴²See Northern Nigeria file No. 30394; CO 446/8.

invalidings; and I am anxious that any proposal should not bear the imputation of extravagance.⁴³

Lugard was at pains to assure the Colonial Office that he had no special aims at military dominance over Rabeh, Bornu, or toward conquering and smashing the Fulani power of Sokoto.⁴⁴

Aside from these assurances, Lugard's proposals were highly practical and again are striking for their lack of any overall theory of government which formed such a predominant place in Lugard's reports to the Colonial Office in the succeeding two and three years. Lugard's comments centered on railroad construction, navigation, and the proposed administrative organization.

The strength of the West African Frontier Force was, however, of much concern to Lugard for two reasons. First, of course, he considered a strong military establishment necessary as long as Rabeh and Sokoto remained outside British authority. Second, Lugard was much concerned over the extent and suppression of slave raiding then rampant in most of Northern Nigeria.

Weakened though the Sokoto empire was, in 1899 it still required and received a tribute from most of the subordinate Emirs south and east of Sokoto. The tribute was given to

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴For Colonial Office concern over Lugard's possible military expeditions, see typewritten minutes by Selbourne attached to Memorandum by Lugard on the needs of the West African Frontier Force, August 24, 1899; CO 446/8.

Sokoto largely in slaves and horses. This slave tribute had a particularly unsettling effect throughout Northern Nigeria because, although the number of slaves sent to Sokoto was often not great, the corresponding havoc wrought by slave raids, largely in pagan areas of the north, was extensive. Indeed, if the required tribute to Sokoto had not been necessary, the various Emirs would have had to invent an excuse for slave raiding, because a good share of their revenue was derived from the pillage which accompanied slave raids. Lugard was only too well aware that the depopulation and unsettled conditions which this continued activity wrought in Northern Nigeria must cease if his administration was to have order--or in the long run hope to establish any type of commercial trading upon which an administration could finance itself.

Eloquent as Lugard could be on the question of slavery, however, the Foreign Office was dubious about the additional expenses required for slave-raiding suppression operations. As Lord Selbourne noted:

The particular situation which made it necessary to apply to Parliament for this force has passed away, and though Colonel Lugard refers to the French and German expeditions converging on Lake Chad, it can scarcely be seriously suggested that these movements threaten our territories. In those territories there are no signs at present of unavoidable danger. Borgu has no doubt a turbulent population, but it is an unpromising country commercially, and future developments do not lie that way. Sokoto is quiescent, and by all accounts Rabeh will not trouble us if we do not trouble him, and he does not lie between us and Kano and other important towns to which we want access. Our expedition so far as we can see will be confined to the punishment of robber tribes which

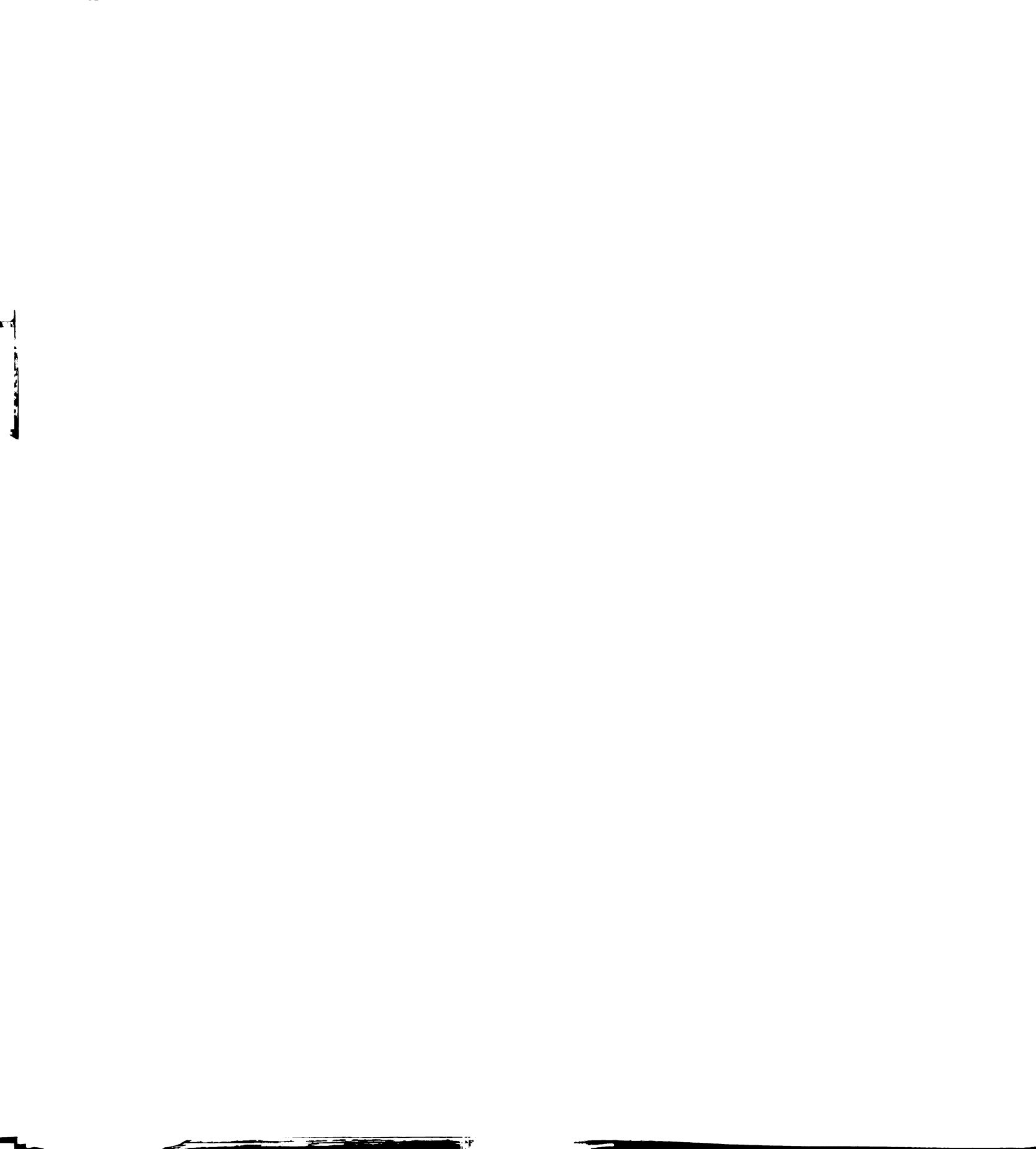
infest the river banks, and these tribes are pagan and at feud as far as they dare with Mohammedan powers. I venture to think, therefore, that the opinion which Mr. Chamberlain has expressed that the time has come for a material reduction in the strength of the West African Frontier Force is not controverted successfully by Colonel Lugard's arguments. The considerations which he mentions are likely to remain the same for many years, and there will probably be no better case three or four years from now for making a reduction than there is at present; it would therefore be a serious matter to accept his views and it would encourage him to contemplate military operations which from our point of view it is most important to avoid, but which have a fascination for every officer in the force.⁴⁵

It was, however, noted in another minute addressed to Antrobus that:

There are two methods of repressing the institution: (1) Total abolition, binding on both slave and master. I presume that there can be no question of adopting this step at present in Northern Nigeria. Not only is the holding of slaves legal, by religion and long usage, in these territories, but the sudden discontinuance of the system would produce an enormous dislocation of all social conditions; the owner, who is dependent on his slaves for the cultivation of his estates and for every other form of his wealth, would be impoverished by their loss; and the slaves themselves, though not immediately, would to a great extent fall into idle habits and bring about a general economical loss. The other method is to grant permissive freedom, by the abolition of the legal status of slavery; the slave then acquires civil rights and could leave his master or sue him for ill treatment. This is the plan which has been adopted, not only in Lagos and the Gold Coast, but in India, where no act of emancipation has been found necessary. The result is that slavery dies a natural death, but gradually and with little friction. This method is adopted in the present draft.⁴⁶

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶A minute addressed to Mr. Antrobus on 9 September 1899, concerning Lugard's disposition regarding Nigeria; CO 446/8 (pp. 160-165). (The initials of the memorializer are undecipherable, but it may have been Wingfield, himself, although more probably a legal clerk assigned the task of interpretation.)



Despite the detailed concern in the Colonial Office over the possibility that Lugard might initiate military action over Rabeh, French missions, or termination of slave-raiding, it must be stressed that in Lugard's November 2nd memorandum, about his proposed plans for the coming year, no very definite line for immediate action was indicated.

Indeed, in a long attached minute, Antrobus noted that Lugard's memo

seems to be on the right lines. Colonel Lugard does not now dwell as he used to do, on the need of an establishment comparable to those in the colonies like the Gold Coast or Lagos. He appears to be inclining towards Sir George Goldie's idea of a 'diplomatic administration'; and he only insists upon the necessity which we also recognize of securing two main things: (1) Improved means of communication . . . and (2) the protection of traders.⁴⁷

As for slavery, Lugard did suggest that slave raiding should be checked by force, to which Antrobus agreed, but minuted sharply that Lugard must submit any proposed large expedition to a decision of the Secretary of State. This was in part due to his fear that any attempt to end slave raiding, let alone slavery, might make it more difficult to leave Sokoto alone for the time being. Antrobus was concerned that while a very good thing, the termination of slave raids might just possibly produce a reaction in Sokoto, but he hoped for the best.

⁴⁷Antrobus minute of November 19th, op. cit., file 30397; CO 446/8.

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More significantly,

there is an allusion in Colonel Lugard's memorandum to certain districts as having 'already been taken under the direct rule of the company'. As far as I can learn, the area of such districts is very limited indeed. The company, like the East India Company in India and the Royal Africa Company and its successors, the 'company of merchants trading to Africa' on the Gold Coast, in the 16th and 17th centuries, has established factories; and, like the East India Company, it has on a small scale raised an army and engaged in wars. It has even abolished the legal status of slavery! But it has not actually governed, I think, any territory in the sense in which a colony forming part of the Queen's dominions is governed, and we must be on our guard against being led by Colonel Lugard to attempt to exercise a jurisdiction which we are not in a position to exercise effectively. Direct rule implies annexation, and annexation means that the laws of England with regard to slavery apply; but the company has not attempted to abolish slavery, and we are not strong enough to do more than endeavour to put a stop to the slave raiding at present.⁴⁸

The only succeeding minutes of interest are Antrobus' notes that for the time being no expensive survey should be contemplated until various officers and administrators in Northern Nigeria could look over the territory, particularly in the Bida-Zaria-Lokoja triangle, to determine what the best railroad route from Zaria might be, and Lord Selbourne's minute of the 29th of November that Lugard's search for a Simla was probably one of the most important things that should be undertaken as a health measure. This, of course, was eventually done.

There is no better way, indeed, of indicating the attitude and concern of the Colonial Office servants, than

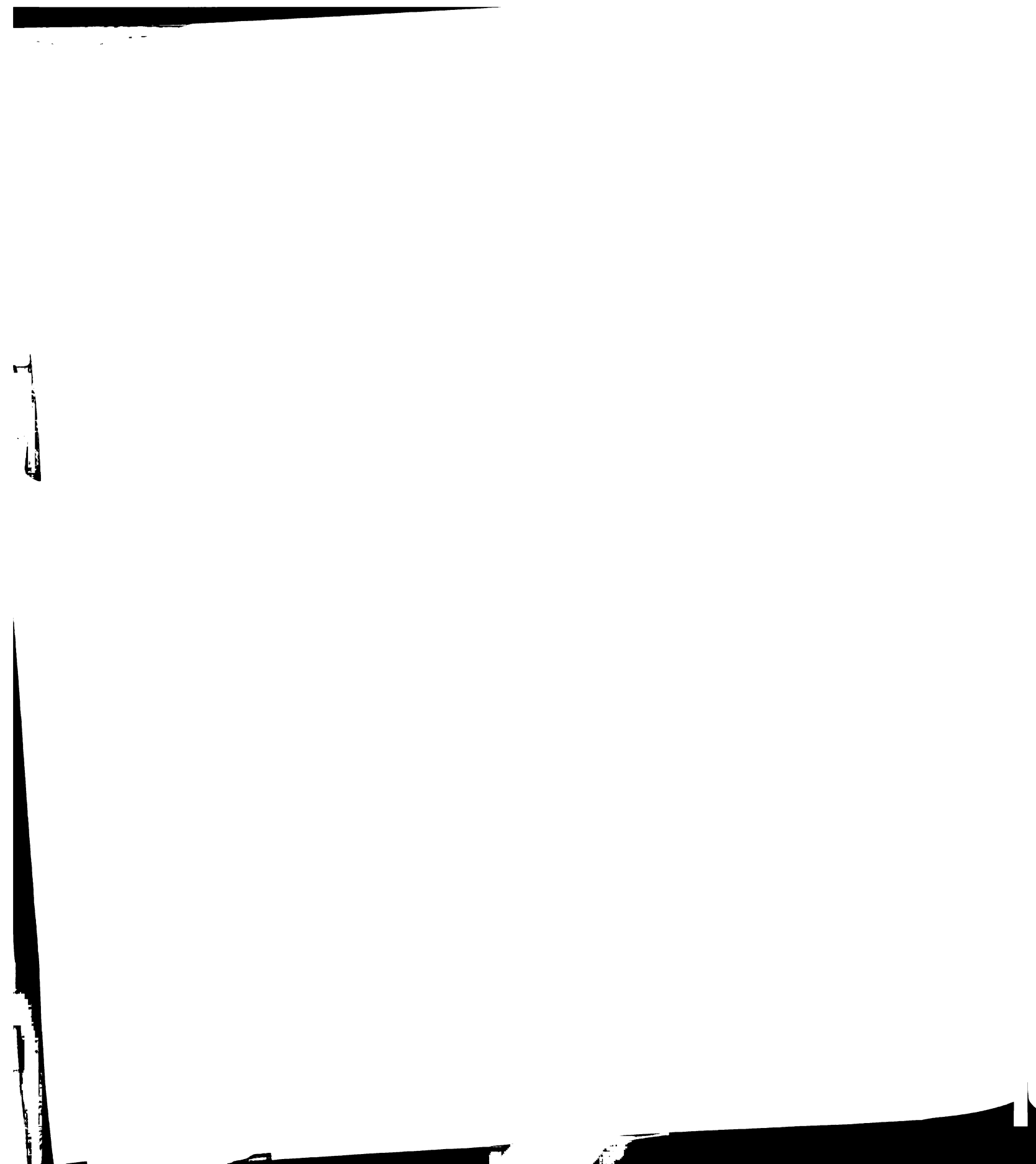
⁴⁸Ibid.

Antrobus' concluding remarks about Lugard's exuberant plans for future administration:

I am afraid that Colonel Lugard has yet to learn that, although from time to time we get able men like himself by a sort of accident to go to West Africa, and although a competent engineer is occasionally tempted by an enormous fee from some syndicate to go out to inspect a gold mine, we have as a rule the greatest difficulty in getting competent men to go to West Africa even temporarily.⁴⁹

Undoubtedly, "old hands" at the Colonial Office did lay the base for Northern Nigeria. Once Lugard again set foot in Nigeria, however, he proved such dour denigration unjust, and just how well the "men in the field" could do when given the opportunity. It is to this chapter of Indirect Rule that we now turn.

⁴⁹Ibid.



CHAPTER VIII

A. NOTES ON FREDERICK LUGARD

Frederick Lugard is, as an individual, a vastly interesting man. Much has been written about him; hence, any detailed character analysis is inappropriate.¹ Nonetheless, although it was not the purpose of the research to study Lugard, inescapably one forms impressions which have a bearing on the problems this thesis presents.

At the time he took over his duties as High Commissioner of Northern Nigeria, England had few more qualified or more distinguished colonial servants, and none more outstanding in Tropical Africa. Nonetheless, he had and still has, his detractors. Some thought his military background and habits of mind might unsuit him for delicate internal negotiations.² Keen observers in the Colonial Office, including such "old hands" as Antrobus and Wingfield, but also Salisbury and Joseph Chamberlain himself, had reservations about Lugard's grandiose and costly ambitions for administering Northern Nigeria.

¹In particular, see M. Perham, Diaries, op. cit.

²See E. Morel, Affairs, op. cit.

Indeed, one is convinced that chief among Lugard's motivations for his work was his own driving ambition. If tropical Africa was to be the vehicle of his career, so be it. But Lugard, aside from his African expertise, knew the levers of power and where they lay, in London as well as in Africa. He put his knowledge to good use in both places.

Lugard's first opportunity had come in East Africa in the early 1890's, and he had done well, being partly responsible for the retention of Uganda within the empire. But East Africa was not the place where ambitious careers could be made, especially as Lord Baltimore and others were preempting the field. Lugard knew it.

As Lugard's interest gravitated toward West Africa, he inescapably came into contact with Goldie. The two men respected each other, and although each had good reason for initially cultivating the other, they remained on friendly terms even after the transfer in 1900. This was unique, as Goldie could not stand competition and had few friends. Reading through Lugard's papers at Rhodes House, one is at first bemused and then certain that both men were either the greatest propagandists for the "Victorian ethic" in the British Empire--a faith which to a student of more cynical times seems absurd--or they really believed in the virtues and duties of a "Kipling-like" world. The thought strikes one that a man of wildly misspent youth redeemed by colonial success, such as Goldie, and a son of a socially mobile

middleclass family, like Lugard, are not such unlikely subjects to hold so vigorously to such a credo. But whatever, they spent much time convincing others, as well as each other, of their faith in this "Victorian ethic" which was about to close.

Upon reflection, however, cynical second-guessing of their motives is unworthy, for even if in his heart each acted with other motives in mind, in their public functioning which is the concern of this thesis, each acted as a true believer. It was the last throes of an age. In 1897 when Goldie led his tiny forces in the battle against Nupe and Bida, Cecil Rhodes' "great vision" in South Africa had not yet been completely discredited even by the Jameson raid. Nonetheless, where else in the world could the chairman of the publicly owned stock company, albeit possessed of a royal charter, lead a private force to battle in one of the last "nearly unknown" parts of the world, on a mission which could promise its shareholders nothing but smaller dividends, and yet have the knowledgeable public proclaim his altruism on the part of the empire.

Like Goldie, Lugard shared the myths of the Victorian Empire, and like him, he played his role well. Lugard could at times be pompous, be incredibly petty,³ make crude and

³For examples of this tendency, see replies by Lugard to nearly any Resident Report, especially Burdon, for period 1903-1906. Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna Branch (hereinafter referred to as NNAK), in particular S.N.P. 7; ILORPROF 4/1; and MINPROF series, especially 6/1.

incorrect estimates of African character based on rather primitive anthropological intuition, and yet be marvellously effective as an administrator in Africa. Lugard had an enormous appetite for detailed work and long hours. He set an example of energy and efficiency that would be hard to match. His code of personal behavior was of the highest, and it is no mean compliment to him, and to men like him, that in a situation where an unlimited opportunity for graft and personal corruption presented itself, he tolerated it neither in himself nor among those who worked for him. It might here be added that the assumption for service was that a man would live largely along in Northern Nigeria, where slavery and concubinage were commonplace, for some nine months or more before returning home, yet the usual presence of African "consorts" for colonial administrators which grew up in French Africa was frowned upon and men were returned home for being publicly incontinent.

As an administrator, as a Victorian, and as a military man, Lugard craved order. If he made superficial judgments-- it was impossible, for instance, for one who was not a "gentleman" to gain a position as a resident under Lugard⁴--

⁴"I have the honour to inform you with reference to the application made by Mr. C. T. Reaney for appointment as an Assistant Resident, that I have made Confidential enquiries and have received a very good account of him from Sierra Leone. I am, however, informed that he is not a gentleman by birth though 'he has good manners and is presentable in society.' In these circumstances I would deprecate his appointment to the Political Department in which above all it

his criteria, when strictly enforced, created an effective system. When once Lugard had determined a policy, he was very sharp in demanding that it be scrupulously adhered to by his subordinates. If, as sometimes it meant in Northern Nigeria, a Fulani Emirate had to be constructed where one could barely have been discerned previously, no matter. Just or unjust, treating Fulani "willy-nilly" as a ruling elite procured a cheap, efficient, and loyal vehicle for administration. When it soon became apparent that a policy of "indirect rule" through the Fulani met with nearly universal applause and approval, Lugard, with aplomb, played to his audience for all it was worth. In this respect, Lugard was doubtlessly no worse nor better than any Colonial Office servant.

Lugard's political reports and correspondence to London often bore but tangential congruence in the early years of 1900 and 1901 to the actual internal affairs of Northern Nigeria. But what made Lugard the effective administrator he was, was that in time things did begin to look similar to the picture he had long ago presented London. In an age of jets, he would not have had the time, but he did have the

is necessary that the Officers should be gentlemen by birth and education. If it is not so, the result is that they have little influence and friction arises with Military and other officers who are liable to look down on such Officers and to resent the assumption of authority which as Civil Judicial Officers they must necessarily exert." In Wallace to Onslow, 12 February 1903; C.S.O. 27/3; NNAK.

time, and it is to his credit that considering the resources at his disposal he did so well.

B. THE FRUSTRATIONS OF BEGINNING A COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION

When Frederick Lugard first arrived in Northern Nigeria in January of 1900 as High Commissioner for the territory of Northern Nigeria, he faced a unique and not altogether enviable task. As High Commissioner, he was responsible for a large territory, indeed a third as large as British India, which, with the exception of a few towns on the Benue and Niger Rivers, he could not travel safely. Much of this vast expanse of Northern Nigeria had yet to see a white man, let alone submit to British government. Moreover, Lugard's powers were highly anomalous. Northern Nigeria was a very new protectorate only born on paper a few days before by the Orders-in-Council of December 27, 1899.

In spite of the impressive tables of organization which Lugard had compiled in 1899, he had few assets upon his arrival in Nigeria. He was not even granted the local rank of Brigadier General to insure that he would outrank the commanding officer of the West African Frontier Force, until 9 January 1900.⁵ He had a political staff of nine men, three of whom would be transferred from his service by October,

⁵See No. 17, Northern Nigeria Dispatches from Secretary of State, January 1900; S.N.P. 1; NNAK.

either from incompetence or by desire to serve in the Boer War in South Africa, and a fourth would be dead. Of the remainder, only William Wallace, Mr. Hewby, and McClintock had had any previous experience with the Royal Niger Company in an administrative post.⁶

Wallace, Lugard's second in command, had, of course, served for years in the Niger with the Royal Niger Company. He was an experienced hand and was invaluable to the new High Commissioner. Of the remainder, only Major Alder Burdon, who had served with the Royal Niger Constabulary, and David Carnegie, who died in November, had seen service in Nigeria. Indeed, the only place of significance to which Lugard felt safe in sending a resident was Jebba, where he placed Carnegie. All others were posted in and around the Niger-Benue confluence area.

True, Lugard did have the elements of a competent military force in his share of the West African Frontier Force. In its commander he had Wilcocks an experienced and able leader of proven talents in West Africa. Unfortunately, the outbreak of the Ashanti War in the Gold Coast shortly after Lugard's arrival in Northern Nigeria deprived him of all but a few escorts of a force that was none too large in the first place.

⁶Mr. Watts, who at one time was considered for service, stayed with the Company as Agent-General.

On top of these problems, Lugard was faced with a constant stream of directives from Chamberlain in London, many of which must have annoyed him as they diverted his energies from expanding his sphere of influence.⁷ The principal problem for Lugard was his continued dependence on the Royal Niger Company. He did not even possess enough manpower to collect duties on materials sent into and out of Northern Nigeria.⁸ Indeed, the Company was "entitled to retain its stations and waterside depots with customary rights of access,"⁹ which meant that friction would continue. Lugard was not even sure which of the Company treaties transferred to the protectorate were still valid or what subsidies he should pay.¹⁰ Not only that, but Lugard had to go through lengthy procedures to buy certain steamboats, hulks, various

⁷For any number of examples see S.N.P. 1; NNAK.

⁸Until a transport Agent was established at Burutu, Niger Company agents were responsible for receiving and transporting the Protectorate stores up the Niger River. Northern Nigerian Dispatches from Secretary of State, July 10, 1900; S.N.P. 1/2; NNAK.

⁹Chamberlain to Lugard, 9 January 1900; in No. 18 of Northern Nigeria Dispatches from Secretary of State for the Colonies; S.N.P. 1/2; NNAK.

¹⁰It will be recalled that most of the treaties signed by the Royal Niger Company, or the then National African Company, had stipulated that the Company pay a subsidy for the various rights granted to the Company (see Chapter IV, this thesis). Chamberlain sent Lugard all the information he had in No. 32 of N.N. Dispatches from Secretary of State for the Colonies, January 25, 1900; S.N.P. 1/2; NNAK which included 481 treaties listed by the company in December 1897, their rights and obligations, etc. See also No. 190 and No. 224 N.N. Dispatches from Secretary of State (August 6 and September 4, 1900), for further correspondence; S.N.P. 1/2; NNAK.

supplies, and buildings for the protectorate administration from the Company, as their status had not been cleared up in the transfer proceedings of the previous year.¹¹ Lugard was not sure about the correct policy in regard to keeping the Niger and Benue Rivers open for trading ships of foreign nations, specifically France and Germany.¹² Nor could Lugard have done much about such navigation of the Niger, as Chamberlain was much concerned about relations with France and Germany and would have tolerated no independent action.

At a time when he had no troops to spare, he was directed by the Colonial Office to proceed at full speed with construction of roads, telegraph lines, and railroad surveys, to protect boundary delimitation parties and to settle his boundary differences with Southern Nigeria and Lagos. It is small wonder that by August Lugard could write the following discouraged letter to Sir George Goldie:

Your letter of July 30 reached me last night, a brief note entirely occupied with the subject of my receiving a 'K'. I agree that the High Commissioner of Northern Nigeria should be on an equal footing with the High Commissioner of Southern Nigeria. From the personal point of view--whether one is keen on the handles to the name or otherwise--I think that one cannot help

¹¹See Chamberlain to Lugard, April 18, 1900, No. 97, N.N. Dispatches from Secretary of State; S.N.P. 1/2; NNAK. (For original list of items in dispute, though not in itself particularly significant, see Lugard to Chamberlain, Dispatch No. 11, January 25, 1900.)

¹²Chamberlain used, and then sent on to Lugard, a Memorandum by Sir George Goldie, November 10, 1899, on Free Navigation of the Niger in helping to determine his own policy. Chamberlain to Lugard, December 24, 1900, N.N. Dispatches from Secretary of State No. 320; S.N.P. 2/1; NNAK.

looking at it from the man-on-the-street point of view, and that proper and legitimate self-respect compels one to do so. That point of view is I take it as follows. I was sent out to raise a new force--organize it de novo, and without any assistance whatever, in my rooms in London, to invent for my requirements from a button or a tintack to technical war material and bases. The organization was original. When the Colonial Office were at a loss to get doctors, and nurses, I selected first class men through my own friends and so with the transport, et cetera. I worked continually until 4 a.m. I came out and made the whole thing a going concern, and did not go very far from sacrificing my life to do it. The far smaller simultaneous venture of the War Office at Sierra Leone was a fiasco, all the officers asked I believe to leave the West African Regiment and come to the West African Frontier Force. Many had only gone because they confused the names. The Force is acknowledged to have been a complete success from the first. It was I who brought Wilcocks, Fitzgerald, and others who made it. The Colonial Office could not have got them. Separately I was charged with the French crisis, a policy which I told Mr. C. I thought wrong and impracticable. I went, however, to carry it out loyally for him. My dispositions here turned the tables on the French, and forced a settlement. The man on the street asks whether anyone before has been summoned from a distant place--throwing up his appointment there, to raise a force 3,000 strong and command it with 200 Europeans and to deal with International crisis (commanding Lagos troops and Royal Niger Company troops as well), and has been 'rewarded' by a half-pay Lieutenant Colonelcy, which removed me from my regiment (where this rank would now have come by mere seniority) would not have been out of place and would have gratified me. Then after another full year of harrassing work, I am sent out here as H.C. Porter and MacDonalld were knighted before they started or immediately after. I remain a Lieutenant Colonel junior to my own commander, and in reply to my question am I 'Commander in Chief' or not (asked officially last December and again later), I do not even get a reply while a silly title of Brigadier General is conferred on me though I said I did not want these spurious in loco and temporary ranks. I only speak of the work I have done for this present government in my present appointment, when looking at it from the man-in-the-street point of view without any rancour or disappointment--for you know I am not likely to be embittered by much--I say to myself that the time for a K.C.M.G. has gone by.¹³

¹³F. Lugard to Sir G. Goldie, 11 August 1900: No. 28 MSS, British Empire, s. 57; Lugard Papers, Rhodes House Library, Oxford, p. 95.

Goldie's reply to Lugard on the 31st of August 1900 is interesting for the light it throws on their relationship and on conditions in London at that time.

I really think you are quite mistaken in supposing that your efforts are not appreciated in Downing Street. I believe that they realize the labors of organizing an imperial administration in Northern Nigeria are enormous, considering the inadequate means at your disposal and that they will be more than satisfied if you do this (and maintain peace) before you come home in the spring. I lay stress on maintaining peace because the Boer War has brought about a great change in public opinion at home. I believe that 'the 40 millions, mostly fools' as Carlyle says, who have the last word in our policy, are heartily sick of the idea of war, anywhere, for any object. The timidity shown in the treatment of the Chinese question by journals which formerly beat the drum on every trivial opportunity, is one of many proofs of this remarkable change. The Ashanti Affair has fallen quite flat and publicists talk of it and other little wars as nuisances. No one can say how long this reaction will last; but I think it must be for some years. I throw this idea out for your guidance as the result of wide and careful inquiry since I arrived home.¹⁴

C. ILORIN, IMPETUS THROUGH NECESSITY FOR INDIRECT RULE

Despite Lugard's discouragement, he had by August of 1900 accomplished much. Indeed, in retrospect it becomes very clear just how much Lugard did do in the first year-and-a-half of his residency in Northern Nigeria. For, although Lugard controlled but a minute fraction of the territory of Northern Nigeria, he was forced to do a good bit of serious thinking about just how best to organize and make use of his puny resources.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 96.

It must be remembered that:

the administrative policy of the Company, with a comparatively small staff of energetic young men, largely engrossed in commercial development, was modest and simple. Their aim was to maintain friendly relations with the important Mohammedan chiefs, while keeping trade routes open by any means feasible; and to put a stop to, or at any rate to check, slave raiding among the pagans,¹⁵

by the various Mohammedan Emirates.

The best of the men who worked for Lugard and who remained within the organization often had had previous experience with the Royal Niger Company on either the Niger or Benue Rivers. The rationale for government between the Company and Lugard's protectorate was, of course, vastly different. While the Royal Niger Company had been quite content to pay subsidies to various chiefs for the rights and privileges to trade, Lugard was neither inclined by temperament nor by the terms under which he took over control of the new protectorate to continue with such a hat-in-hand policy toward the various Fulani slavers.

Significantly, Lugard made no attempt to continue a policy of subsidization of local rulers. Should he have chosen to proceed with such a policy, there would have been ample precedent from British India for exactly such a policy. He was determined, however, from the outset that he and the British

¹⁵Quote taken from Gazetteer of Muni Province, which is a history of the Province by J. M. Fremantle through 1919. The copy available was a much thumbed typewritten manuscript and I could find no record of its ever having been printed. S.N.P. 15, No. 84; NNAK.

government which he represented should have ultimate control and should dictate terms to Africans rather than pay for their favors.

One is tempted to wonder if the policy that Lugard was to follow in Northern Nigeria would have been the same if from the very beginning he had possessed an adequate military force, or at least not have had the best of his West African Frontier Force sent to Ashanti in the Gold Coast. As it was, Lugard barely had time to station his first two Residents before he was divested of his military. Dr. David Carnegie was sent to Ilorin via Jebba, and Hewby was placed in charge of the Benue districts, an area of which he had been in control for at least six years under the Company.

Two things are significant in this original disposition of manpower. First, the Benue districts under Hewby that bordered the river were largely pagan, and except for Moslem slave raids along this territory were under nothing but local rule. Judging from the records in the National Archives in Kaduna, Hewby must have been in fairly close touch with Wallace and Lugard via river communication, for there is no early record of written communications between them. In any case, it is apparent that Hewby was very sensitive to Lugard's theories and practice of organization. Even later, when he became Resident at Bornue, his reports are models of effective administration and show little disposition to puzzle over

theoretical questions of government.¹⁶

Ilorin, then, was the only Muslim Emirate with which Lugard had contact in these first months of the year 1900. Fortunately, contact between Jebba, Ilorin, and Lokoja were sufficiently poor to require written reports from Carnegie. These early reports from Ilorin are very significant for several reasons. First, Lugard had the highest regard for Carnegie, who was inclined in his reports to philosophize on the merits of the Fulani Muslim system of rule in Ilorin. Lugard considered carefully this "instruction to myself." Carnegie's first report dated April 21st, is a personal letter to Lugard.¹⁷ He was primarily concerned with transportation and the boundary between Lagos and Northern Nigeria. He noted, however:

I have found the people everywhere, excepting Igbete and one other place, most kind and friendly though sometimes suspicious at first, and I have used every endeavor to give them confidence and explain that the white man is their friend and, I think, the sight of white men travelling about peaceably has already done a lot towards gaining their confidence.¹⁸

¹⁶Bautchi Province Monthly Report No. 2 (March, 1902) from Temple, Resident. Are three pages on "The System of Government at Bautchi" and these were sent by Lugard to Burdon and Abadie for remarks on the system as opposed to the system used by the Fulani. S.N.P. 15, No. 39; NNAK.

¹⁷Carnegie first Report--a letter, no title or heading--of April 21, 1900; S.N.P. 15, No. 11; NNAK

Carnegie was first sent to Jebba, but soon thereafter went south to Ilorin where the principal indigenous authority lived.

¹⁸Ibid.

Carnegie was early convinced, as he noted in this letter, that a Resident to be effective must continually be touring his province.

Lugard's reply of April 23rd, is significant chiefly for the cordiality accorded Carnegie. In later years Lugard was extremely sharp, to the point of being snippish, with Residents who did not follow his instructions to the letter. But reading the letters of Lugard to his early Residents, one is convinced that Lugard was feeling his way towards an administration of Northern Nigeria and that until he found the correct method he was quite willing to accept suggestions. Nonetheless, once a method had been decided upon, he insisted upon its being followed by everyone point by point.

In this early letter, he wrote:

I have the honor to acknowledge your letter of April 21. I am very glad to hear all is going well with you. Please always send a small, rough tracing of your survey with every report, so that I may have an indication where you are. I have no notion where Igbeti is. Since it is doubtful whether it is in Lagos, or Northern Nigeria territory, you must be careful to take no action except with the concurrence of the Lagos authorities. In reply to your question as to whether I will authorize you to settle the Lagos-Northern Nigeria frontier, this is an intergovernmental matter and can only be done with the consent of the Governor of Lagos. I will ask whether he will depute an officer to meet you and settle it. Otherwise all you can do (if in the neighborhood of the frontier) is to carefully cross-question the chief and elders of the villages as to who is their Suzerain, whether they pay tribute to or acknowledge. Ilorin, or Oyo, and for how long they have done so, and what was the position in old times. Put down the evidence in a formal and clear manner, and leave it to be decided between Sir W. MacGregor and myself on which side of the frontier each town is to be. From Otto, near Ikirum, to Aeidi the frontier was thus settled by Captain Bower and myself. Endeavor to bring back a good map of your routes. I am

asking the acting PMO to send you medicines to Igbeti. As I have shown you, it is not in my power to decide offhand whether this shall be in Northern Nigeria or not. If you meet the Ibadan Resident, or one later deputed to arrange the frontier, you would of course represent the interests of Ilorin, or any other chiefs of this protectorate, and get as much included in his territory as you could.

When sending a report, try to keep the different points under separate headings, and just put down briefly points, so that they may be easy to refer to in the file, keeping official questions, et cetera, out of a private note, and vice versa.¹⁹

Although Ilorin at first seemed important to Lugard in terms of the boundary question with Lagos, its importance rapidly increased. In following reports Carnegie began to describe the system of government as he found it in Ilorin. He was disposed to admire the potential of the Fulani system of government. It must be remembered, however, that the principal population of Ilorin was Yoruba. Its proximity to Oyo and some of the great Yoruba states in the south gave the Emirate of Ilorin a character wholly different from Emirates farther north of Sokoto, Gandu, and Kano. In particular, the court system and the tax system, though in a woeful state of disrepair and confusion, were in theory far more highly organized than those of the Fulani Emirates in the north.

Lugard was at first skeptical of size or power of the Fulani Emirate at Ilorin. However, as noted, he was disposed to extend its sway as far as possible in his boundary dispute with Lagos. This was not an unimportant first step. For, if

¹⁹Lugard to Carnegie April 23, 1900 (in reply to April 21st note), from Government House, Northern Nigeria, S.N.P. 15, No. 11; NNAK.

the Fulani kingdom, or its historical precedents, were to be used for a boundary determinant, then it stood to reason that the Fulani could not easily or quickly be disposed of by a new British authority.

In his report covering April 12th to May 3rd, Carnegie detailed the system of courts in Ilorin. He noted that in some small towns the king tended to judge all cases himself. He reported to Lugard that in his opinion the best policy to follow would be that if the king was to judge cases he must employ a Mallam²⁰ to keep records of cases and send them to Jebba. At Ilorin, where the Fulani system was most intact, the chief judge, or Alkali, was the final arbiter of cases. However, "all small cases are settled by the chiefs, such cases as petty debt, small theft, disputes about women, and so forth."²¹ Any plaintiff could, in theory, go direct to the Alkali unless he was a Yoruba in certain districts of Ilorin, in which case he would go to his own king.

The usual course is for the plaintiff to go first to his chief, who settles the case if small, or sends it on to the Alkali if too big for him. The Alkali settles it with or without consulting the king as he may think fit. The Hausa population used to have a separate judge but he died and no one has been set up in his place. The Yoruba people have no judge. They desire one. The immediate chief of any plaintiff settles small cases. Important ones are passed on to the Yoruba king, who in some cases again passes them on to King Suli or the

²⁰In this case a Mallam was defined in the conventional sense of a literate (Arabic) Moslem schooled in the Koran.

²¹Carnegie's Assistant Resident, Jebba, Report on Native Courts for April 12-May 3, 1900; S.N.P. 15, No. 11; NNAK.

Alkali. No records are kept. The only book used is the Koran on which litigants swear to speak true, and from which in delivering judgments the Alkali purports to read a text applicable to the case before him, so covering the most glaring injustice by the announcement that it is the judgment of God.²²

Carnegie noted that court fees varied according to the means of the litigant and that injustice was rampant, often the highest bidder winning the case, or in some cases where a poor man and a rich man are in dispute, the poor man wins, the rich man being bled for the benefit of the judge who in gratitude to the poor man "for bringing him a victim makes the poor man a present."²³ (Beside this clause Lugard placed the wry comment "excellent".²⁴)

In attempting to expand the area of his control Lugard, upon the arrival of Dr. Dwyer in July of 1900, sent him to Ilorin to replace Carnegie and intended to send Carnegie north into Nupe Province which included the town of Bida. Bida, of course, had been subdued by Sir George Goldie's campaign of 1897, but in the interim had fallen totally away from any British authority. Dwyer, like Carnegie, had the full respect of Lugard, and like Carnegie, was a competent administrator not disinclined to ponder openly in his reports to Lugard on the theory of government in Northern Nigeria.

It is significant, however, that the second powerful Fulani Emirate which Lugard hoped to bring under his control

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid.

was Bida. Like Ilorin, Bida had had much contact with the Yoruba kingdoms to the south as well as a long history of contact with Europeans. Although the Emir of Bida had been highly obstreperous from the British point of view for several years, in theory Bida was, like Ilorin, one of the more highly organized and complex of the territories which had fallen under the control of the original Fulani Jihad.

On July 10th, Carnegie made his last report from Ilorin, and after noting he had turned over affairs to Dr. Dwyer, proceeded by a new route to return to Jebba. This report is among the more enlightening of his early reports. In commenting upon one small chief, Carnegie noted

he is tributary to the Emir of Ilorin, and I have told him that he must continue to pay tribute to the Emir, a matter he has neglected of late. He is not an exceptional case--many smaller Boles have given up paying tribute to the Emir, saying that they had instructions from the white man to do so. In every case I have insisted that the old methods of paying rent shall again be practiced. For as I see it, the discontinuance of such feudal customs would in no way tend to lessen the feeling of the ruling Emir that he has been robbed not only of his power but of his just rents. A system of rents prevails by which all tribute eventually filters through to the Emir--the smallest farmer pays rent to the Bole of his village, who holds his land from one of the Ilorin Baloguns, who again hold it from an Emir by paying yearly tributes. Similarly, the toll taken at the gates (of which there are sixteen) of the town, the markets, et cetera.

5. During my stay in Ilorin, I managed to (apparently) gain the confidence of the Emir, whom I always treated as a gentleman, and am convinced that his own views and feelings toward the government are all that could be expected or at present desired. Unfortunately, his chiefs and advisers are of a different opinion, and though outwardly polite enough, yet make little secret of their desire and even intention (avowed though I think quite unlikely to go further than words or passive

obstruction unless some abnormal turn were given to affairs) to have no white man in Ilorin.²⁵

Carnegie proceeded in a rather detailed manner to discuss the political situation at Ilorin and noted that many of the principal Baloguns of Ilorin resented his presence and were keenly aware that Carnegie had no military force to back him up.

Had I any force with which to make a demonstration, the situation would have been easier. Having no more than two policemen, I realized that I might find myself in a somewhat ignominious position. . . .

I am of the opinion that a detachment of what number can be spared should be stationed at Ilorin. There is not the least doubt but that the Ilorin people have an excellent idea that the Ashanti trouble has taken many soldiers out of the country, and it is conceivable that some order or act on the part of the assistant Resident might tempt them to open hostility.²⁶

Carnegie proceeded in this report to speak of the Emir as rather shrewdly denying the rumors which Carnegie brought to him. Carnegie implied in his report that the Emir might be a suitable vehicle for government had he proper force to back up his demands.

Lugard's reply to this interesting memo is significant:

In acknowledging your report of July 1- I desire to express to you my appreciation of the indefatigable and most useful work you have done while in the Ilorin province both political and surveying work.

2. I note with interest your description of the system of tribute to the Emir, should be glad of your opinion as to whether it would be feasible for the

²⁵Carnegie to Lugard--Report for July 10, 1900; S.N.P. 15, No. 11; NNAK.

²⁶Ibid., paragraph 12.

government to take half of this 'rent', and the Emir the other half.²⁷

In an undated note replying to Lugard's memorandum of July 17th, Carnegie noted that

I think that formerly the system of tribute to the Emir of Ilorin was carried out with far greater regularity than at the present time. One of the Emir's grievances is that since the white man has come to his country many of the head men of outlying villages have refused to pay any rent, giving an excuse that they have been ordered to bring all their produce to Jebba and that the paying of rent had been discontinued by the white man. Whenever I met with such a case, I insisted that the old system should be reverted to. A noticeable case is that of Ajidungaria . . . I think that until all the head men are made to understand that they must pay rent as before, and until the system is working again that it would be inadvisable to take any steps towards a government participation in this tribute.²⁸

Lugard, of course, followed Carnegie's advice to the letter and for a period of three years took no substantial part of the re-established tribute system. It is interesting, however, how quickly Lugard fastened upon the traditional system of Fulani taxes as a future means of government support. Lugard was, of course, very conscious of the expense of his administration and that the Treasury constantly were giving him sharp reminders of it. Be that as it may, it is worth underscoring again that in Ilorin the tax system was in better working order than perhaps anywhere else in Northern Nigeria.

²⁷Lugard to Carnegie, July 17, 1900 (in reply to July 10th Report); S.N.P. 15, No. 11; NNAK.

²⁸Carnegie to Lugard, undated, however, is both a reply to Lugard's July 17th, and a further explanation regarding the tax system. S.N.P. 15, No. 11; NNAK.

It must be remarked in passing that Carnegie's policy of instructing subordinate chiefs to pay their duties to the Emir willingly was very much in conflict with the policy heretofore followed by the Royal Niger Company. In a letter of the 4th of August, 1899, Henry Morley writing to Walter Watts, the senior executive officer for the Company in the Niger territories makes clear the company position:

You are requested to do all in your power to let imperial officers understand that a ruler is not necessarily 'raiding' because he is attacking a village which, in the hope of outside aid, have refused to pay his taxes or otherwise obey him as a sovereign. It is no business of ours and it will be no business of the imperial government to interfere unnecessarily between native princes and their subjects.²⁹

Thus, early in his tenure in 1900, Lugard on the advice of his Residents began a shift in emphasis of the relationship between the government and the various native chiefs which quickly assumed major proportions, eventually culminating in a radical shift in policy.

Dwyer's first report dated August 18th, is significant in a number of respects. First, Dwyer made some very interesting remarks on the political situation at Ilorin, the shrewdness of which is perceived by their replicability at a later date in other Emirates. In speaking of the Emir, Dwyer states:

I gather from what he told me he has not very much power. The chiefs of the town are the people I expect

²⁹Henry Morley (Secretary) to Walter Watts, Senior Executive Officer, Niger Territories, 4 August 1899; LOKOPROF; NNAK.

to have some difficulty with later on should I try to introduce some improvements.³⁰

What particularly exercised both the Emir and Dwyer was the crime rate in the city itself. The Emir requested that Dwyer aid him in catching and killing a number of particularly obnoxious thieves to which Dwyer replied that he told the Emir:

to catch the thieves by all means, and I would punish them. I told him also that I would do all in my power to help him to restore order in his town, but that he must give me every help also to do so.³¹

Dwyer was also particularly alive to the corruption of the local court system, which operated principally by tribe; and to the trouble caused by Africans wearing bits and pieces of British uniforms in the absence of the West African Frontier Force, and extorting money from outlying villages in the name of the white man.

Lugard's reply contains a number of insights on his plans for the future of Northern Nigeria:

1. I concur in your plan of parcelling later on Ilorin into districts and holding the head man of each responsible.
2. As regards your statement that you went to salute the Emir on your arrival at Ilorin, and to tell him you intended visiting him on the morrow, was this Mr. Carnegie's practice? Did he not rather insist on the Emir coming to see him?
3. I note your remarks about the prevalence of murder and theft at Ilorin. Theft is perhaps best dealt with by a native court, though, of course, the death penalty, which even in the case of murder, cannot be carried out without confirmation by me, would never be sanctioned in

³⁰Dwyer to Lugard, Report of August 18, 1900 regarding political; S.N.P. 15, No. 11; NNAK.

³¹Ibid.

cases of theft. I know that the Emir has little power over his Baloguns, and later I may send a force to deal with them, but this matter must wait, as must the establishment of a proper 'native court', which would also require a larger force to support you than you have at present.

4. As regards your acceptance of a present, please note instructions re: presents.³²

In a followup report of August 13th (albeit grammatically undistinguished), Dwyer further elaborated the unsettled conditions at Ilorin. After reviewing all the reports from various areas within the Province, Dwyer decided that the best way to cope with the state of affairs:

was to back up the Emir in every way I could and therefore took every opportunity in impressing on the people I came in contact with and sending word to the chiefs that I would only recognize the Emir as possessing any authority in the town, and that if the Emir gave an order for the good of the town and if the order was disregarded, I would help the Emir with my advice to do what he was to do and hinted pretty strongly that I would help him with force also if necessary. I have also made a rule to do all my work through him, I mean to say in his name. If I wish for a witness from the town or district, I no longer send a policeman but the Emir's messenger, and I give orders (that) if they refuse to come in at his request I will send the police, arrest them, and punish them for refusing to obey their king. I am exceedingly glad to inform you excellency that this line of policy has had exceedingly good results. The Emir and his followers are very much pleased, and the last report I had from the scribe were to the effect that Bida would have to look after itself. The Emir plus the white man were too strong for them to tackle [the townspeople]. I have also sent messengers to some of the outlying towns that they must remember in the future to obey the Emir's orders which they of late have simply ignored.³³

³²Lugard to Dwyer, August 31, 1900; S.N.P. 15, No. 11; NNAK. (Drafted but not actually sent according to note by Lugard.)

³³Dwyer to Lugard, Report of August 13, 1900; S.N.P. 15, No. 11; NNAK.

After further remarking on the nuisance involved with the various Baloguns of the outlying towns who since the demise of the Royal Niger Company simply had refused to obey or pay tribute to the Emir, Dwyer noted that these Baloguns

wished him [the Emir] to be a mere figurehead. The Emir is very much liked by the people of the town, and they would all willingly follow him if they thought he were strong enough to protect them from the harsh rule of the chiefs against which at the present time he is powerless.

Unless a new policy is introduced into the town, I do not hesitate one moment in saying Ilorin will always be a thorn in the flesh of the government and a constant source of annoyance to your excellency. The policy I recommend is to break the power of the chiefs. This is an absolute necessity if a healthy state of affairs is to exist, it is impossible to go on in the present way. The question now arises how this is to be done!! Either by (a) keeping a strong detachment of West African Frontier Force here and seizing and deporting out of the country the ringleaders amongst the chiefs, the Balogun Alanauri especially. (b) Support the Emir in a forceable manner. I do not think your excellency would consider this first suggestion so I will pass on to the next. (c) This I consider to be the best means for meeting the case. What I should like to suggest is that, though remembering what you said on the 'S.S.Heron' as to the responsibility of incurring any unnecessary expense, advisability of subsidizing the Emir, the amount to be decided by your excellency. The expense incurred in doing this would amply repay the government in the end, and that I should be able to promise the Emir the aid of the government in seeing that his orders were carried out if they were conducive to the well-being of the town.

If this were done, what would be the result! Instead of having a mere figurehead as Emir, you would have one comparatively rich and powerful. Instead of having the insolent crowd of Baloguns and petty chiefs acting on their own responsibility and obeying no one, you would have them all gathered in and put under the control of the Emir. Thus doing away with their scattered independence. You may ask me how this policy would break the power of the chiefs? My answer would be that the native is smart enough in 'seeing which way the wind blows'. If he saw the Emir supported by government and able and willing to protect them from the chiefs, they would very soon flock to him and within a very short space of time the Baloguns would find their power gone. And they could not hope to cope against the Emir's orders

then. And if they gave any trouble, the Emir would be strong enough himself to turn them out of town if it were sanctioned by the Resident stationed here for the time being. Of course, did Your Excellency see your way to granting the subsidy, it would only be on the understanding that the Emir carried out faithfully all orders Your Excellency might give, did he shuffle or attempt to procrastinate in the manner so dearly loved by all the natives, the allowance would be stopped until the orders were carried out. In placing before Your Excellency this suggestion I wish to state that it is not one that has been jumped at. I most carefully considered it from all sides and it appears to me to be the best, safest, and surest way to make the district a success instead of a disgrace. I most sincerely trust Your Excellency will see your way to approve this suggestion. Grant the Emir a pension and give me permission to state what I have already done, that you will support the Emir in carrying out orders that are for the benefit of law and order, and I will guarantee that at the end of my term of service I will hand over the district to Your Excellency in an infinitely more healthy state and one that would be permanent. And I would not require any escort to do this except the ten civil police.

In considering the towns of the district, I think they ought to be made to recognize the Emir as their chief and to pay a tribute to him. This would not be in the least a hardship. I do not know if I have made it clear to Your Excellency what I am aiming at. I wish to gather into my hands all the scattered units who now have independent action so that my power would be enormously increased at the smallest outlay of labor.

The Emir would recognize the importance of keeping in the good graces of the government and would do all he could to carry out my instructions. Sincerely trusting Your Excellency will give a favorable consideration to my suggestion as to subsidy.³⁴

Lugard's reply to Dwyer of September 3, 1900, is equally important, and the tone of thoughtful consideration which Lugard gave to Dwyer's comments is especially indicative, in that he was already in the process of turning out a new set of memorandum to his Residents regarding political affairs.

³⁴Ibid.

I am very glad indeed to hear that the unrest has passed or is passing away. There is, after a great deal of excited talk among these people, which fizzled out but however little you may believe of such reports please always keep me informed. I fully concur in your action re: the Emir. He alone should be recognized as having any delegated authority, and everything including arrest of any person under his jurisdiction must be done through him in the town of Ilorin. This was, I understand, always done by Mr. Carnegie in accordance with instructions.

The question of the Baloguns' power is one I have often considered and the solution which has appeared to me to be the best is the one you named first--viz: After finding out for certain which of the Baloguns is the most ill-disposed, arrest and probably deport him. The effect on the others would be very great indeed and I do not suppose they would give any further trouble. Such a step, however, if I decide upon it must await the return of the troops from Ashanti.

I am very greatly averse to subsidizing any chiefs, I am almost inclined to think that the payment should be the other way,--but I do not object to paying a small sum in return for some definite work. For instance, if a native escort is established,--a small initial subsidy for its maintenance though in a rich town like Ilorin I should not be much inclined to do this or for roadmaking, et cetera. As for supporting the Emir,--that is the policy already, but if it came to a conflict between him and the Baloguns the same position would be reached as in the former proposal;--and he would soon precipitate that conflict if he felt certain that we would support him by force. As I have said, we cannot do that to any effective extent at the present moment. Meanwhile I should be glad if you would accumulate a case against Alanauri (or whomsoever is the worst) without letting it be known that you are doing what you are doing. Collect, I mean, sufficient evidence of his hostility or misgovernment. Later when I can take a stronger line, I can then either act on this evidence or let the king precipitate the conflict and act in his name in seizing Alanauri. Since you so strongly urge the subsidy, I would like to discuss the point with you verbally, and I have already telegraphed to ask you to come to Jebba. I am inclined myself to doubt whether it is advisable even from your own point of view. The hostile party will immediately raise the cry that the Emir has gone over to the English and is in their pay and has sold his country. The payment of a tribute by outlying villages; this too is a question requiring much consideration. I am about to draft a memo to political officers which will deal with it. I am extremely glad to note the interest and zeal you are showing

in your work. You may always count on my support and personal attention to every question you raise, let me know before you make any new departures whatever and I will give it careful attention and if necessary discuss it with you; and unless it is contrary to any principles which I am bound I shall most probably agree and help you in carrying it out.³⁵

Dwyer's reports to Lugard for October 24th and November 5th are equally long and interesting documents. In particular, his report of October 24th deals with the installation of a native court system. Both these reports are heavy with marginal notes by Lugard. Dwyer noted that establishing a native court system under the control of the Emir was very acceptable to him, although the Alkali was most reluctant to offer up any sort of written report on the proceedings of his court. For some reason, they were quite willing to offer a verbal report but not a written one. "They believe that by making them give a written report I am setting a snare for them."³⁶

Essentially, the system which Dwyer set up was that the Emir would have his own court, presided over by an Alkali, as the chief court, that each of the four principal Baloguns should hold court in their own quarters of the town, and that each court should consist of three members.

To lessen the danger of abuse and corruption, I insisted that no sentence pronounced in the courts of the Baloguns should be lawful unless the Emir's consent was first

³⁵Lugard to Dwyer, September 3, 1900 (in reply to Report of August 13th); S.N.P. 15, No. 11; NNAK.

³⁶Dwyer to Lugard, Report of October 24, 1900; S.N.P. 15, No. 11; NNAK.

obtained. The Emir and chiefs readily agreed to this and expressed themselves more than satisfied.³⁷

Dwyer was under no illusion that this reform would bring about immediate justice, but he was sanguine in the hope that with patience and time English standards of justice, if not the letter of the law itself, would gradually be introduced.

By making the Emir the head of each court, I have given him a great deal more power than he ever had and as each court must get his sanction before a sentence is imposed, I hope by this means to prevent in great part the scandalous injustice that used to take place and thus holding the Emir responsible for every case decided, through fear he will I think give me a fairly correct report of what is going on in the courts. I will now give you a list of the courts.³⁸

Lugard's marginal note reads as follows:

I think the Balogun courts should have power to inflict petty punishment and be compelled to refer all over a fixed amount to the Emir's court. Otherwise in effect, the regulation will never be observed and if it was the Emir's court would be overworked.³⁹

In a further marginal note, Lugard stated that:

The Emir's court has power of passing sentence of death but not of execution without reference. The powers I think are clearly laid down in Proclamation 5.⁴⁰

Emphasis must again be placed on the fact that as late as September of 1900 the only Moslem Emirate in all of Northern Nigeria with which Lugard had any real contact was

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid., Lugard's marginal note to Dwyer's report.

⁴⁰Ibid., Lugard marginal note.

Ilorin. Doubtlessly Lugard had many conversations with Wallace, Hewby, Dwyer, Carnegie, and others about the situation that they knew to be in effect in other parts of Northern Nigeria, which one or another of them had visited in their long combined tenure in Northern Nigeria. Nonetheless, these all-important memoranda by Carnegie and Dwyer succinctly trace the pattern of British government as it evolved.

At Ilorin Lugard and his Residents were short of actual military power due to the Ashanti war, they had little money to spare, and no particular authority to command the native rulers in Northern Nigeria. Indeed, the proclamation which created Northern Nigeria had simply stated that the government was taking over the rights and duties of the Royal Niger Company as embodied in their treaties, most of which, it will be remembered, were subsidy treaties, whereby the Royal Niger Company paid the Emir for the right to trade.

Lugard, of course, had good reason to extend the power of the Emir where possible. First, in the boundary clash with Lagos it was in his interest to place as much territory as possible under Ilorin. Second, if this was his policy it did not make sense after establishing the political boundaries of the Emirate to destroy the institution upon which it rested. Third, and most important, however, were the practical considerations. As suggested by Carnegie and Dwyer, supporting the Emir, and in turn using his support to

facilitate order and in the long run finance the territory,⁴¹ had much to commend itself. Especially as Lugard could look to the future with little prospect of largely increased finances or manpower supplements. In short, if the terms of sovereignty could somehow be reversed so that there was no question but that the government had all ultimate power, then it made much sense to create or support the most powerful district authorities, i.e., the Emirs, that one could find to work through. Though not here formulated in detail, this was Indirect Rule, a policy which in the process of the next year-and-a-half evolved into a theory that would one day have repercussions throughout the British colonial world.

D. THE SITUATION AFTER FIFTEEN MONTHS

It is not necessary to review in detail all the reports of the various Residents as they came in to Lugard for the remainder of the year 1900 and for the first half of 1901. Hewby continued to make good progress in the Upper Benue district in establishing native courts at most of the major towns and implementing some form of British control. Dwyer's success in Ilorin has already been mentioned. In Borgu a new Emir was installed, Kiama, who proved exceptionally amenable to the theory and practice of rule through the British.⁴²

⁴¹Lugard to Dwyer, op. cit.

⁴²Much has been said earlier (Borgu Crises) on the dilapidated conditions within Borgu. See BORGDIST; NNAK.

In February of 1901, Lugard and Wallace, plus a military expedition visited Bida. Upon meeting resistance from the old Emir, a new Emir was installed:

Following the custom in British India, I gave him a letter of appointment containing the conditions on which he held the Emirate. These, briefly, were, that he should rule justly and in accordance with the laws of the protectorate, that he should obey the High Commissioner and be guided by the advice of the Resident; that the minerals and wastelands should be the property of the Crown. In the case of Kontagora, I wrote to the Emir of Sokoto, asking him to nominate a successor, and explaining the reason I had deposed the chief.⁴³

Most of the events for the period from 1 January 1900 to 31 March 1901, however, are reasonably well outlined in Lugard's first annual report for Northern Nigeria.⁴⁴ The reports by Carnegie, Dwyer, and presumably the advice of Wallace and Hewby, are incorporated, for although Lugard made no grand theoretical proposals for new departures in administering Northern Nigeria, he did make tentative and pregnant suggestions.

In particular, he noted that

The Fulani rule has been maintained as an experiment, for I am anxious to prove to these people that we have no hostility to them, and only insist on good government and justice, and I am anxious to utilize, if possible, their wonderful intelligence, for they are born rulers, and incomparably above the Negroid tribes in ability. It was with this object that I invited Sokoto to nominate a new Emir for Kontagora, and have hopes that the effect of such a message may lead to a better understanding between us and the Mohammedan rulers.⁴⁵

⁴³Lugard's Annual Report for 1901, p. 341. (Also available in volume form, Lugard, Annual Reports--Northern Nigeria, 1900-1901.)

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 340.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 347.

In another part of this report coming under the subhead "Policy in the Coming Year," Lugard states:

The policy which I am endeavoring to carry out as regards the natives of the protectorate may, perhaps, be usefully summarized here. The government utilizes and works through the native chiefs, but avails itself of the intelligence and powers of governing of the Fulani caste in particular, but insists upon their observance of fundamental laws of humanity and justice. Residents are appointed whose primary duty it is to promote this policy by the establishment of native courts, in which bribery and extortion and inhuman punishment shall be gradually abolished. Provincial courts are instituted to deal with non-natives, and to enforce those laws the protectorate, more especially which deal with slave raiding and slave trading, the import of liquor and firearms, and extortion from villages by terrorism and personation. If an Emir proves unamenable to persuasion or to threat, and will not desist from such actions (as in the case of Kontagora and Bida) he is deposed, and in each case a Fulani or other successor recognized by the people has been instituted in his place. The traditional tribute (except that of slaves) paid by villages to their chief is insisted upon, and its incidence and collection are being regularized so as to prevent extortion or an undue burden on agriculture or trading classes. I recognize the obligation of the chiefs to contribute to the revenue in return for the enforcement of their dues resulting from this system, and, in return, for the protection of the roads from the robbers which used to infest them, and for the improvement of communications, et cetera. But I have not as yet formulated any definite line of action in this connection, since it is one which needs the utmost tact, and I should prefer to discuss it with the chiefs themselves on my return to the protectorate before forming any definite conclusions. It is probable, moreover, that in so vast a country one uniform and inflexible method may not be adapted to all districts. If, indeed, we are able to succeed during the first year or two in abolishing the revenue which has accrued to the Emir by the enslaving of the pagan tribes, and, by substituting a better system of tribute from the support of the villages, to secure that no discontent was felt that the change, we should, in my opinion, have achieved no mean success. But I hope that before long we shall be able to go still further, and to obtain a tangible return for the expenditure incurred.

Among the wholly uncivilized pagan tribes, who owe no allegiance to a paramount chief, it is often difficult to apply these principles of rule, and the political officers

have to undertake a more direct responsibility owing to the difficulty, and often impossibility, of establishing native courts, and to the lawless habits of the people. Among these tribes it is my policy to centralize authority, as far as it may be, in a recognized chief, and to introduce the civilizing agency of trade, while repressing all inter-tribal quarrels.

In the first year, some small progress along these lines has been made, and I look for increasing results in the coming year with somewhat more adequate and more fully organized staff of capable and zealous political officers.⁴⁶

Lugard's annual report was not published until 1902, and before much feedback could get to Lugard, events inside Northern Nigeria had propelled him by their own logic towards many improvements and rationalizations of his system of Indirect Rule. Nonetheless, contemporary comment when the report was issued is interesting because it must have encouraged Lugard to proceed with the system he envisioned.

Edmund Morel's book, Affairs of West Africa, has already been alluded to.⁴⁷ Its author was a member of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce and his remarks about Nigeria were not altogether friendly toward either Lugard nor the government in general. Nevertheless, he noted the chief points to be gathered from Lugard's report were (1) the maintenance of Fulani rule, (2) the necessity of taking in hand the affairs of Bornu, (3) the advisability of accepting with great caution mere accusations of slave raiding, (4) the harm perpetrated by crude information, (5) recognition that more good can be effected "by getting in touch with the people" than by a

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 355.

⁴⁷E. Morel, Affairs, op. cit.

"series of punitive expeditions and bloodshed," and (6) that Lugard felt that there should be no compulsory religious training.

A program such as this cannot fail to command universal approval, and if Sir F. Lugard is determined to unflinchingly carry it out he can count upon the thoroughgoing support of every single person in this country who takes a lively interest in British West Africa. Nay more, he can rely with confidence upon receiving the most strenuous backing should it at any time become apparent that, in his attempts to get his own way, he is not being sufficiently seconded by the home authorities, or that the policy of Downing Street in specific directions makes the attainment of that program difficult if not impossible.⁴⁸

Such praise from a generally unfriendly source could not help but have been noticed by a man as sensitive to criticism as was Lugard. In any case, upon his return in the early fall of 1901 after several months sojourn in England, Lugard was determined to put the administration of Northern Nigeria on a rational formula. He began to issue a series of political memoranda to his Residents of wide-ranging scope.⁴⁹

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 88.

⁴⁹Lugard's Political memoranda have been collected and are currently available only through University of Michigan Microfilms under F. B. Lugard, Political Memoranda--1906.

These memoranda have been dealt with by numerous authors, and it is not my intention to reconstruct each in detail. In general they were concerned with such matters as taxation, slave control, the native court system, proper form for reporting to the High Commissioner, what to do about freed slaves, accounts, the use of troops, prevention of extortion, judicial encouragement of trade, recognition of chiefs, coinage, and the like. In sum, they form the most obvious official source for the early institution of Indirect Rule in Northern Nigeria. Indeed, most of these memorandum were written between November of 1901 and March of 1902, although Lugard revised and updated most of them before publishing the collected series.

E. ALDER BURDON--CHIEF ADVOCATE FOR FULANI RULE

In the meantime, one of the most inveterate Fulaniphile Residents in Northern Nigeria was given his chance, in Nupe (or Bida) Province. Although at this distance it is hard to determine exactly what influence Alder Burdon had upon Lugard, it is certain that he represented an extreme in pro-Fulani sentiment. Pro-Fulani sentiment, of course, played a role in the development of Indirect Rule as it was this rather small group of Northern Nigerians who would benefit most directly. Indeed, the Sultan of Sokoto, himself, could not have picked a more able or devoted spokesman than Burdon.

Indicative of his attitude is Burdon's report for November 3, 1901, in which he states:

The general line of policy that I have followed since my arrival here has been an endeavor to uphold authority of the constituted rulers, the Emirs of Bida . . . to restore their allegiance, to the first-named three, those pagan districts which were formerly tributary to them but which of late years, owing to the action of European authorities, have tried to make themselves independent; and to avoid as far as possible all interference with native law and custom.

(2) My experience with savage tribes on the Benue convinced me that they were utterly incapable of governing themselves. The village headmen have no authority over the followers--there is no law but force--such tribes must be ruled directly by Europeans, and the number of Europeans needed to make such rule effective will be very great. The Pagan Nupe is not as bad as those of Bussa. . . . The history of Nupe prior to the Fulani conquest when the country was constantly in a state of war, and anarchy, proves the inability of the aboriginal pagan Nupe to govern himself.

(3) But the Fulani has changed all this, and the proof of his ability to govern well is the prosperous cultivation and densely populated country which composes the greater portion of this province. The Emirs have their Ajeles or magistrates distributed throughout the country; they

have their system of taxation (as far as I can see is a very light one) they have an effective policy system, a reliable native court, and a most effective prison and penal code. Power is decentralised, authority over and responsibility for different parts of the country being delegated to the principal officers of the court. In short the land is ruled. Methods may be rough in many cases inconsistent with modern English ideas. But the proof that they are suited to the native, that they are efficient and beneficial to both rulers and ruled is the happiness, peace and prosperity that we have found.

(4) We have only to uphold this system modifying it gradually where necessary and one English official with each native ruler will be ample. Break down the system, encourage the pagan to renounce his allegiance and make himself independent and an English magistrate will be required for each pagan village.

(5) The first thing to remember about the Pagan Nupe is that he is an inveterate liar. . . .

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 (11) As to native laws and customs, whether as regards slavery, tribute, the laws of debt, pawning of labor, et cetera, I feel most strongly that they must all (whether right or wrong except where widespread misery may be caused) be upheld and legalized until we have sufficient knowledge of the customs themselves to see how they can be bettered, sufficient knowledge of the native, his character and needs, to legislate beneficially sufficient influence over the native mind to convince him of the benefit to be gained by such legislation. . . .

(12) Again, the result of breaking down a social custom before instituting some other arrangement to take its place can but result in chaos. Slavery versus hired labor is the simplest example. But take the law on debt, as far as I can find out there is no such thing as imprisonment for debt. There is certainly no such thing as the payment of interest. If we break down the custom of pledging personal labor, whether in the person of the debtor or that of one of his children or relatives, are we going to introduce some other security for the loan? Or are we going to try interest and compound interest and reduce the middle- and poor-class farmer to a state of utter dependence and destitution to which their custom has brought the small Indian land owner. . . .

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 (14) I feel diffident after speaking of the results of my policy for fear of seeming to boast, but I think it is my duty. Naturally the Emir and his principal officers are most grateful, but what appears to me more important than that is that I believe I have gained the gratitude and confidence of the middle class in Bida and even in the better portion of the slave population. I have been

told by more than one middle-class trader Mallam that I am known to that class as 'man who is putting the country straight'. I have much indirect evidence that wherever my influence has reached the country is settling down in security. I am told by many, both by the Emir and his officials and by the middle classes, that my policy has prevented the ruin of Bida, for if the old state of things had gone on the town would have been deserted. Whereas now trade is just beginning to flourish again.⁵⁰

In his replies to such memoranda, and there are dozens in a similar vein, Lugard often was irritated and sometimes even waspish over Burdon's zealous protection of the Fulani. He was in particular worried that Burdon not attempt to put pagan groups under Fulani overlordship who had not historically owed them some sort of a tribute.⁵¹ Indeed, Lugard could go so far as to state that:

Here again you touch the root of the question, and it seems to me that you do not quite grasp my meaning. I wish to try whether we can succeed in ruling the country through the Fulani not by the Fulani. They have ruined and depopulated the country. Everywhere are traces of the devastation they have wrought. Henceforth they must be our puppets and adopt our methods and rules.⁵²

But again, Bida, like Ilorin, was a well organized Emirate, and its contact with Yorubas to the south had given it many institutions of long-standing duration which were not found elsewhere in Northern Nigeria.

⁵⁰Burdon (Report No. 5) to Lugard, November 3, 1901; Minna Provincial Record Book; MINPROF 6/1; NNAK.

⁵¹Lugard to Burdon, December 27, 1901; MINPROF 6/1; NNAK.

⁵²Lugard to Burdon, January 9, 1902 (No. 19 in response to Burdon's No. 10), paragraph 10; MINPROF 6/1; NNAK.

Most important, however, Burdon had striking success and reaped lavish praise from Lugard for his efforts.⁵³

Burdon could not resist the temptation to get back at Lugard for criticizing his methods and in his December 31, 1901, report there appears the following laconic comment:

(14) I can assure Your Excellency that I have not been blindly courting popularity with the Fulanis. Only if the country is to be ruled through them, which I see now is the policy approved by yourself, they must be upheld except where they flagrantly are in the wrong. The Emir of Bida is very pleased at the idea of being the medium of the messenger from Your Excellency to the Emir of Kano; but what he would like far better than that is to be allowed to send a letter from you with one of his own to his Suzirain the Emir of Gondo and through him to the Sarikin Musulmi of Sokoto. He is very anxious for the latter to be conciliated first, for he says that if his subordinate Emirs such as Kano, Zaria, and he accept the English government without his, i.e. Sokoto's, approval . . . he will be the more bitter against the government.⁵⁴

Burdon's admitted success in bringing the province of Bida under British sway undoubtedly meant more to Lugard than his over-exhuberance. Burdon was also a shrewd observer, and his reports on the system of courts and taxation are monumental works of insight and anthropological observation.⁵⁵ In any case, Lugard recognized Burdon's talent, and when Sokoto was finally captured in March of 1903, it was Burdon whom Lugard appointed as Resident in this all-important city.

⁵³See replies of Lugard to Burdon's reports, most of which are contained in MINPROF 6/1; NNAK.

⁵⁴Burdon to Lugard, December 31, 1901 (Report No. 6), paragraphs 11 and 12, MINPROF; NNAK.

⁵⁵See, for instance, Burdon's Report No. 1 of January 31, 1902, MINPROF 6/1; NNAK.

F. A POLICY, ITS COROLLARIES, AND A PUBLIC DEFINITION

Lugard's policy as it evolved in the latter part of 1901 and 1902--to support the Fulani wherever possible--necessitated a number of corollary policies at least three of which have had immense importance in terms of the later development of Nigeria.

Primary concern centered on formulating a policy toward slavery, the more important because of the interest it generated in London. Since the Fulani had traditionally taken their tribute in slaves from most of the surrounding towns, especially pagan areas, it would be difficult to abolish totally the system for a number of reasons, the most practical being that you would immediately impoverish the very group whom you wished most to conciliate. Lugard was also concerned lest freed slaves, no longer tied to their masters and some sort of productive work, would complete the confusion and destruction of the cities which were the last reservoir of what order remained in Northern Nigeria.⁵⁶

Lugard, therefore, made a compromise, based on an Indian precedent. He prohibited slave raiding, slave trading, and slave selling in open markets. However, he did not outright abolish slavery. He hoped by this policy to prevent the ravages of slave raiding; to allow slaves legal status and

⁵⁶Lugard's final policies were set forth in his Political Memoranda, *op. cit.*, however, the early development of his policies can be best traced through comments with Dwyer, Burdon and Featherstone Cargill, the first Resident at Yola.

recourse to courts if they were grievously mistreated; and yet prevent the vast bulk of the slave population from freeing itself and wandering aimlessly throughout Northern Nigeria, increasing the problem of disorder. Lugard was largely successful in this venture, and although elements of slavery have remained even to the present, for the most part slavery died a natural and easy death.

The second policy of major importance was Lugard's land policy. Land had unique implications for Lugard's administration in Northern Nigeria, because he felt that ultimate sovereignty over the land must reside with him or the British government. He was thus very careful to trace land ownership which, as in most parts of Africa, is based upon entirely different concepts from those of western Europe.

In general, land in Nigeria was not owned in a western sense, that is, it was not a buyable commodity. Nevertheless, a man who used land, farmed on it or lived on it, had rights to it that could not be taken from him as long as he was in possession or actively working the land. Unused land, however, was generally free, upon the consent of the local council, elders or Emir, for occupancy by anyone willing to work it. Trees, crops, buildings, etc. could be privately owned in a sense much closer to that of western Europe. In pagan areas it was very difficult to assume, or find out, who exactly did own land. In the Moslem areas, especially in the better organized Emirates, however, when pressed, most

people, according to Lugard's information, would eventually agree that ultimate title to the land probably rested with the Emir and through him, therefore, in the Sultan of Sokoto. If this were so, Lugard reasoned, then if he were to defeat militarily the Moslem Emirates he could claim by right of conquest--the same right of conquest that the Fulani had used to take it from its previous owners. Then he, as the representative of the British government, would hold ultimate title to all land in Northern Nigeria. Hence, Lugard was most anxious for it to appear that he had conquered the various Emirates of Northern Nigeria and that it was by his grace that he had reappointed Emirs to serve under him.

It must be remembered that such policy was a complete reversal of the Royal Niger Company practice of subsidizing the Emirs for the right to trade,⁵⁷ hence admitting that they held ultimate title to the land. By the terms of the protectorate of Northern Nigeria, Lugard was bound by these treaties as their inheritor. Nonetheless, he was most anxious that he should gain a superior authority. Obviously then, Lugard was very anxious for the military conquest of the northern states of Gondo, Sokoto, and Bornu for it was these states which held the key, albeit a shaky one, to sovereignty.

London, of course, was most anxious not to have a war in Northern Nigeria, especially as things had gone so badly

⁵⁷See Goldie Memorandum contained in footnote 12, op. cit., this chapter.

in South Africa.⁵⁸ Hence, Lugard had been forced to use a policy long advised by knowledgeable people in West African affairs--that of subduing one Emirate at a time. And, due to the lack of the W.A.F.F. there had been no choice but to make this a peaceful process. Of course, the success that Dwyer and Burdon had had at Ilorin and Bida is very important. The Fulani were no fools, and it quickly became clear to them that the British were prepared to deal with them on very favorable terms. Indeed, as both Dwyer and Burdon pointed out, a British presence had in fact greatly increased the power of the Emir, not lessened it.

By the end of 1902, British progress in Northern Nigeria included control of the important Emirates of Ilorin, Bida, Kontagora, Yola, Borgu, and Zaria. Despite the fact that in each successive state, or Emirate, Lugard's Residents found less trouble in coming to terms with the Emir, Lugard was determined that the final tier of Emirates, Kano, Sokoto and Bornu, must fall by conquest. In a large part, his motivations stemmed from long-range consideration of sovereignty, based in large measure on the peculiar nature of land tenure in Northern Nigeria.

The third area of immense importance for the future of Nigeria was the taxing power of the administration. Very

⁵⁸Indeed Chamberlain went to lengths to try and prevent Lugard's leading any such conquest. Best secondary source is D. J. M. Muffett, Concerning Brave Captains (London: Andre Deutsch, 1964).

quickly, it will be remembered, Lugard had hit upon the idea, from a report by Dwyer in Ilorin, that it might be possible to insist that all former tributary areas return to their old custom of payments to the Emir and then to take a portion of this payment for the British government.⁵⁹ Lugard recognized that in time this might form the basic source of revenue for the administration of Northern Nigeria. And, as the most populous and well organized part of black Africa, it was not inconceivable that in time the British administration could receive a not inconsiderable sum from such a tax base. This question, however, was intricately tied up with currency rates; that is, there must be a monetary form other than slaves for the payment of taxes.

Lugard, of course, was wise enough to move slowly in the direction of taking a share of the tribute for the government. He recognized that such a step, if done too prematurely, might undo the work of the Residents in making friends and working through the Fulani. His first steps at internal revenue production, then, were aimed at the caravans and upon market taxes of one sort or another. In 1900 and 1901 this revenue proved quite feasible, and not unproductive, for the simple reason that Northern Nigeria was so unsettled that caravans were forced to move in extremely large groups for

⁵⁹See Dwyer's Reports in S.N.P. 15, No. 11; NNAK. For another account of the process, however, see C. W. J. Orr, The Making of Northern Nigeria (1911). New Introduction by A. H. M. Kirk-Greene (2nd ed., London: Cass, 1965).

their own protection.⁶⁰ By 1902 and 1903, however, the bulk of Northern Nigeria was beginning to settle down and reach a sort of order. This meant that caravans could break themselves down into smaller units and no longer had to travel by the most well used routes. Hence, collection became infinitely more difficult. Necessarily then, by the end of 1902 and 1903, Lugard was well upon his way toward rationalizing a system of taxation by tribute based, of course, on ultimate control of land.

By late 1902 and by the beginning of 1903, Lugard was prepared to move militarily toward the north. These military movements have been covered elsewhere,⁶¹ and it is only here necessary to state that a small, but well trained force of British officers and African troops, firing modern weapons was more than a match for Fulani horsemen or spearmen in medieval armor, no matter how great the latter's numerical superiority. One suspects, indeed, that these battles need never have been fought and that British Residents would have been accepted in due time by the Northern Emirates; but this is a question beyond the scope of this dissertation.

What is significant is that when Lugard finally got to Sokoto and installed a new Emir, the previous Emir having fled, he was able to make a small speech in which he laid

⁶⁰See Orr, ibid., for most lucid account of process.

⁶¹Muffett, Captains, op. cit.

down the basic tenets of Indirect Rule.⁶²

These events at Sokoto were concluded in March, and although there was some concern that the dissident remnants in the various Emirates of Kano, Sokoto, and Katsina might be able to stir up enough anti-British sentiment to start a religious jihad, these fears were effectively put to rest by a small group of British cavalry which followed and harried the Fulani forces, effectively breaking them up. By this time, Hewby, accompanying a small British force in Bornu, had made extremely successful progress in bringing this large area, never under obligation to Sokoto and once the center of a great empire, under some sort of order and nominal British control.

It was only after the completion of these monumental events in Northern Nigeria that Lugard returned to England and commenced work upon his annual report for 1901-1902. It is, and has remained, the classic statement of Indirect Rule, for in it Lugard suggested the policy, after the fact, which he had intended to following during the year 1902. It must be remembered that these statements were a bit tongue-in-cheek because Lugard had already accomplished in 1903 what he was in a way prophesying would happen in a report

⁶²Reproduced in several places, in slightly varying forms. For what one assumes is the most "official" version see Appendix III to Lugard's Annual Report 1902: "Address by Lugard to the Sultan, Waziri, and Elders of Sokoto regarding the conditions of British rule, reasons for war, etc. (March 21, 1903)." Annual Reports 1900-1911.

for the previous year.

The following excerpt represents the kernel of Lugard's policy as he wrote it in his annual report:

The Fulani, therefore, held their Suzarnty by right of recent conquest, nor had time enough elapsed for those rights to have become stereotyped by sales and transfers of titles as in an older community. But this rule of the Fulani had rendered them hateful to the bulk of the population, who would welcome their overthrow, and I can myself see no injustice when the transfer of the Suzarnty thus acquired to the British government by the same right of conquest . . . What they have won by conquest they lost by defeat. . . .

. . . But, in my view, the tradition of British rule has ever been to arrest disintegration, to retain and build up again what is best in the social and political organization of the conquered dynasty, and to develop on the lines of its own individuality each separate race of which our great empire consists. . . . I believe myself that the future of the virile races of the protectorate lies largely in the regeneration of the Fulani. Their ceremonial, their colored skins, their mode of life and habits of thought, appeal more to the native populations than the prosaic businesslike habits of the anglo-saxon can ever do.

Nor have we the means at present to administer so vast a country. This, then, is the policy to which, in my view, the administration of Northern Nigeria should give effect, viz. To regenerate this capable race and mold them to ideas of justice and mercy, so that in a future generation, if not in this, they may become worthy instruments of rule.⁶³

Such a policy was, of course, persuasive to many. Lugard was even able to convince many at the Colonial Office and at the Treasury that it was an experiment which could be, in both short- and long-run, efficient and less costly than any other. With the help of his wife, Flora Shaw Lugard,⁶⁴ this system of

⁶³Ibid., Report for 1901.

⁶⁴Lugard's personal life was a bit unusual, in a platonic sort of way. Flora Shaw had, at one point in her career, held a torch for George Goldie, and did not marry Lugard until

"Indirect Rule" was soon to be elevated into a high principle of British Imperial trusteeship. That is, it made a very handy rationale for ruling areas which had no particular economic or social value; one could simply imply that, like Kipling, the British empire was doing its best to elevate another part of the colored areas of the world.

G. THE FINAL BOUNDARIES FOR A LAND
"INDIRECTLY" RULED

It would, of course, be highly improper to imply that Lugard spent most of his time pondering questions associated with the theory of administering Moslem Emirates. True, it was cause for concern, but the bulk of Lugard's time and energy was spent in more routine matters of administration; affairs generally, moreover, that concerned the Colonial Office more than what particular means Lugard used to rule Africans, Moslem or pagan.

In particular, Lugard spent a good bit of time in conversation with London over navigation rights on the Niger,

after they had come together via friends during Lugard's Nigerian exploits for Goldie. They were both, then, in rather youngish middle age. Flora Shaw, had been, however, for a number of years the African correspondent for the Times, and was an excellent publicist and writer. Her ability to help her husband's career is obvious, and after visiting Northern Nigeria several times in the early years wrote her influential A Tropical Dependency: an outline of the ancient history of the Western Soudan with an account of the modern settlement of Northern Nigeria (London: J. Nisbet & Co., 1905). This book helped to fix the term Indirect Rule in the public mind.

liquor prevention laws, game ordinances, slavery regulation, questions concerning missionary societies, the correct procedure for making proclamations, innumerable dispatches over personnel, payments, emoluments, et cetera, and perhaps most important, over the boundary delimitation commissions between French, German, and British territories.

Although dispatches concerning the Boundary Commission are numerically but a small part of the total correspondence between Northern Nigeria and London, they form an extremely important segment of the correspondence for a number of reasons. Most obvious, of course, was that the boundary delimitation commissions were of concern to the War Office and the Foreign Office as well as to the Colonial Office and the administration in Northern Nigeria. And Anglo-German Boundary Commission had been in operation since the beginning of the British protectorate in Northern Nigeria. The principal area of contention, however, centered on the boundary line as it reached around Yola and headed north toward Lake Chad. The British Resident at Yola was Featherstone Cargill, and he spent a goodly proportion of his time on this matter.⁶⁵

The Yola question was intricate for a number of reasons. First, Yola as a city was the center of the one Emirate of

⁶⁵ See Yola (Adamawa) Provincial Reports, Provincial Recurrent Reports, Vol. I; in particular reports of September 2, 1901, December, 1901 and January, 1902. Yola Provincial Office Papers; NNAK.

Yola. However, most of the territory once controlled by this Emir was now in German Adamawa. The proportion of Fulani in this far-distant corner of the Sokoto empire was very small. However, it produced a large proportion of the slaves which yearly were sent to Sokoto. The German government possessed no easy route to the interior of the Cameroon; hence, they were concerned that if possible they have a route by way of Yola on the Benue River to the interior of German Adamawa. Moreover, the German army officers in command of this part of the Cameroon were not particularly skilled in dealing with African groups. They tended to want to administer directly and hence had much trouble with dissident factions. Punitive raids were common, and German officers were not particularly concerned with stamping out slavery.⁶⁶

Hence, for a number of reasons, Cargill and Lugard were quite anxious to delimit the border and prevent, if possible, slaves from coming into Northern Nigeria from German Adamawa.

In 1900 and 1901, the War Office and Lugard were also vitally concerned with maintaining some sort of control over the northern Emirates Gondo, Sokoto, and Bornu. If one studies the map of Northern Nigeria as defined by the Anglo-French Convention of 1898, one notices that the 100-mile arc stretching around Sokoto, which was there defined as

⁶⁶Ibid.

that portion of Northern Nigeria which should fairly fall within the empire of Sokoto, extends far enough to the north to reach the desert. What this meant in terms of French communication to Zinder and Lake Chad was, that to have a watered, hence passable, route to Lake Chad from West Africa, it was necessary to go through British territory. In 1900 and 1901 no British authority had got to Sokoto, and the French felt free to move into Sokoto and into territory in Bornu claimed by Britain, with impunity. Obviously this was embarrassing both to Lugard and to the War Office. The Foreign Office was not particularly happy about the situation either as the French blandly replied when complaints were made about these incursions that as no British authority existed in the territory, the British were not in very good position to make complaint.

The Colonial Office for its part had long considered the possibility of swapping an additional piece of Northern Nigeria for certain rights still held by France, particularly fishing rights in Newfoundland. From the minute it became clear that it was highly desirable, from the French point of view, to reduce the arc of 100 miles to the north of Sokoto by some 20 or 30 miles, notes were passed back and forth between Northern Nigeria and inside the Colonial Office as to just what compensation the French might be willing to give for this relatively worthless piece of land.⁶⁷

⁶⁷Otherwise worthless except for a few cases which would facilitate communications between Dakar, Zinder, and Lake

Lugard, in his dispatches to the Colonial Office, was prone to over-estimate the value of this stretch of land to France.⁶⁸ The Colonial Office, for its part, was perfectly well aware of the fact that any exchange of territorial rights between England and France rested with the Foreign Office and was outside their own control. The best that they could do was send a stream of minutes suggesting to the Prime Minister and the Foreign Office that such a trade was possible.

When, in fact, European conditions made a rapprochement between England and France possible, a slice of Northern Nigeria was eventually traded to France for her last remaining rights in Newfoundland. At the same time, the enclaves which France had claimed on the Niger as possible way stations to her own territory on the upper part of the Niger were receded to Britain.⁶⁹ These stations had fomented an immense amount of correspondence but had, in the long run, proved valueless to the French and nothing but a nuisance to the British administration.

Chad. The best single source is a collection of papers regarding this question sent by Martin Gozelin to the Under Secretary of State Colonial Office February 21, 1901; CO 446/18. This series includes minutes by all of the principals involved plus maps and correspondence with the French on the subject.

⁶⁸Ibid., especially minute by Sir Montagu Ommaney (then Permanent Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1900-1907), of July 26th.

⁶⁹There was a considerable correspondence between Lugard and London on this question. Again, however, the principle issues are dealt with in ibid.

In short, although the final on-the-ground boundary was not officially agreed to until 1906, Northern Nigeria had taken shape with the signing of the Anglo-French Entente of 1904. By that time Indirect Rule had been well enunciated and was on its way toward becoming a fact of administration.

It would be incorrect, however, to leave the question of the development of Northern Nigeria without noting that there were many who questioned the validity of Indirect Rule as a thesis upon which to govern Northern Nigeria. In particular, Festing who eventually became Resident at Katsina, and who had worked for Lugard prior to the latter's transfer to Hong Kong in 1906, sent a good many minutes to Lugard's successor, McCallum, concerning Indirect Rule.⁷⁰ In short, it was felt by many of the Residents who eventually were placed in the northern tier of Emirates, that the conditions upon which Lugard had formulated his policies were more applicable to the southern Emirates than they were to those of the north. They felt that Lugard had perpetrated evils which far outweighed the benefits of an indigenous control. One may indeed wonder if they were not correct, in view of Nigeria's current unhappiness.

⁷⁰See, for instance, confidential letter of Major Arthur Festing, acting resident of Kano, 22 February 1907; S.N.P. 6/64 1907; NNAK. Or, papers, confidential letter by Festing (Kano), and Palmer (Katsina), of August 1907, recommending changes in taxation system based on Emirate traditional taxes. S.N.P. 15, No. A6; NNAK.

Despite criticism, at the time and since, over the merits of Indirect Rule, most of the system won instant success. In part, of course, this was due to the simultaneous final delimitation of Northern Nigeria's northern and eastern boundaries. For while it is true that part of the Sokoto 100-mile arc was ceded outright to France, the boundary east to Lake Chad and then south to Yola was determined by historical "tributary spheres-of-interest" for the Emirates of Zinder, Bornu and Yola (Adamawa).

All this does not imply that the final Anglo-French, or Anglo-German delimitation in any way represented a true picture of these Emirates. The deliberations of three wise men and a Tiv witch-doctor over tea in Piccadilly might have produced an equally solubrious solution. What is important is that the rhetoric of the discussion centered upon who once paid tribute to whom and where. Such discussion only added plausability and much credence to Lugard when he, and his admirere, piously entoned the wisdom of the system.

Hence, by 1904, Indirect Rule for Northern Nigeria was a fact.

CHAPTER IX

SUMMARY

This dissertation has traced the development of Indirect Rule in Northern Nigeria between 1890 and 1904. No attempt has been made to restructure West African history, or even to imply that Indirect Rule was a new idea fostered by the brilliance of one man. It was not.

Indirect Rule as it developed in Northern Nigeria under the aegis of Frederick Lugard did, however, provide a "mantle of purpose" for the last years of the British Empire for non-white (if not black) areas of the world where no other rationale could be presented, or for that matter invented. Indeed, Indirect Rule probably was not needed by the remnants of the Empire until after the turn of the century.

In any case, Indirect Rule did not leap from the weeds upon Lugard as he rode victorious into Sokoto. It was, rather, the accretion of years, whose components had divergent origins.

The basic source, of course, was the Anglo-French-German competition for power, prestige and resources which finally reached even the relatively valueless lands of Tropical

Africa. Being the richest, England was least eager to compete, and chose to let a commercial venture carry the discomforts of the Niger as well as the flag. Being richest meant, of course, that British commerce fared best, as George Goldie's National African Company demonstrated. England did bestir itself enough to be a co-signer of the Berlin Act of 1885 and the Brussels Act of 1890. For the Niger this meant the advent of the Royal Niger Company and a commercial sovereignty.

Events in Europe did not leave Goldie's Nigerian venture alone, however. Very soon French, German, and even Russian pressures on England forced her to define her African and West African interests. From here the story of Indirect Rule takes on more localized flavor as French pressure on a British Chartered Company elicits increased Colonial Office and Foreign Office interference. International boundary quibbles, the Borgu Crisis, French missions to Lake Chad, Rabeh, Joseph Chamberlain, Sir George Goldie, Sir Edward Wingfield and most important Lugard, himself, all become part of the story.

The determining factors still must rest with the peculiar set of circumstances with which Lugard was faced on January 1, 1900. He had few resources, few men, no military forces to speak of, and an immense area to govern. He did have, however, imagination, receptivity to good ideas, and the peculiar Fulani Moslem Emirates with which to deal.

1

Whatever the success or failure of the system, Lugard did maximize his resources. Nor does one blame him for trumpeting this success, whether or not it worked well elsewhere. For better or worse, Lugard gave to the British Empire a new term--Indirect Rule.

This dissertation has aimed at bringing the development of Indirect Rule within the reach of the casual historian in a scholarly manner, yet without spoiling an intriguing chapter of African, and British Colonial History. Its success or failure rests on how well it achieved these goals.

1

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The potential source materials for this dissertation cover a wide range. The archival materials available are substantial, both in England and in Nigeria. There is a plethora of published travel narratives, diaries, accounts of civil servants and military men involved in the partition of Africa, and scholarly works related to Africa all published during, or shortly after, the time span of this thesis. A number of current historians have concerned themselves largely, or partially, with Northern Nigeria and their monographs and essays comprise a third large area of potential sources. Finally, there are a number of scholarly journals which from time to time devote a portion of their space to Nigerian questions.

As the stated purpose of this thesis is to accurately link the process of final boundary formation in Northern Nigeria with Indirect Rule, I have unabashedly used archival material as the basis for this dissertation. I have done this for a number of reasons. First, the current journal sources have been thoroughly searched and found wanting. There are, of course, many articles with tangential applicability but no one article anywhere has made a factual

contribution to this thesis that I did not personally verify in archives in London or in Kaduna. For reasons unbeknown, the current historians concerned with Northern Nigeria have largely ignored the period between the Berlin Conference, or perhaps the Anglo-French agreements of 1889, and Lugard's conquest of Sokoto in 1903. The exceptions are the general historians such as Crowder who do not cover the period in any detail, the biographers of the participants, Dame M. Perham (Lugard) and J. Flint (Goldie), and those who have recently concerned themselves with indigenous history such as Basil Davidson and Kirk-Greene.

The contemporary published sources have caused a certain difficulty. These can in many cases correctly be termed "primary" sources as they were written by persons concerned with Nigeria and West Africa, or by knowledgeable people who had access to informal sources of information denied to the present historian. Nonetheless, the very fact that so much was written and published about Africa, and the West Coast of Africa in particular, indicates that these numberless authors were speaking to a large and relatively interested audience. "Nationalism" and "Empire" were indeed popular themes throughout Western Europe, particularly if one could claim a share in the epic of African partition and national aggrandizement: but if one couldn't do that a few gory details about jungles and savages, or semi-titilating descriptions and pictures of naked black women would do the

trick. In short, one becomes increasingly skeptical of the contemporary material, even when it originates from the pen of participants. The agents of Empire, such as Goldie and Lugard were, though more articulate, equally as guilty as the "jungle horrors" writers in presenting a picture that often did not jibe with actuality. In this area then, I have tried to give a more comprehensive, albeit selected, list of more useful contemporary works. This list is admittedly biased toward those who wrote in English. Those interested in French or German sources should consult authors such as H. Brunschwig and H. Rudin.

One footnote must be added to this synopsis. Contemporary journals such as Le Bulletin du Comite de l'Afrique Francaise have been enormously valuable as a cross-check for dates, movements of expeditions and often for the signed articles written by participants. This source in particular does not appear in the footnotes to the text in proportion to its usefulness.

I. Archival Sources

A. National Archives Kaduna. The Nigerian National Archives at Kaduna can claim much credit for collecting in one place most extant historical materials from throughout Northern Nigeria. The organization of the branch at Kaduna leaves something to be desired, however. In general, groups of materials were brought to the archives from the various provincial capitals as well as from Kaduna itself. (Kaduna

was the British capital for the Northern Region.) In general the Kaduna material has been labeled S.N.P. (Secretariat Northern Provinces) followed by a group number and provincial records received a designation such as SOKPROF (Sokoto provincial files). Within each group or S.N.P. series items and files received a chronological number--one suspects in order of their coming out of the truck--the lower numbers in each series generally corresponding to the earlier dates and so forth.

A number of Index Books and Guides have been prepared for the aid of the researcher. Again, these are generally carbon sheets of the acquisitions lists as they were first filed at the archives. Plans were afoot during the summer of 1966 to improve this situation, but doubtless political troubles have made such attempts difficult. Unfortunately, some of the series most useful to my research did not as yet have indexes. Series without indexes include:

In S.N.P. 1 there are three sub-divisions: (no index)

- 1) S.N.P. 1/1 consists of 23 vols. of dispatches from Northern Nigeria to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1902-1912.
- 2) S.N.P. 1/2 contains 52 vols. of dispatches from the Secretary of State to Northern Nigeria, 1900-1912.
- 3) S.N.P. 1/3 contains W.A.F.F. dispatches 1903-1905.

S.N.P. 2 (no index) is made up of register books and lists of correspondence.

S.N.P. 3 contains the telegram books, one series concerning telegrams from the Secretary of State to the Governor and one series concerning telegrams from Nigeria to the Secretary of State. This series includes acknowledgements. (no index)

S.N.P. 4 has no index, but is made up of (1) tax record books, (2) local leave record books, (3) departure record books and (4) all purpose books.

S.N.P. 5 comprises letter books; circular letters from Secretariat Northern Provinces to political officers in the field. No index but contains 28 vols.

Of the non-indexed series, S.N.P. 1 was by far the most useful as it supplemented the materials collected at the Public Records Office, London, particularly C.O. 446/various.

S.N.P. 6-21 consist of filed papers--in file jackets--and are principally (1) minute papers of (2) subject files.

S.N.P. 6-14 are annual files, by year, the practice being to open a new file on each topic each year. Minute papers were used for all administrative purposes in the North between 1900 and 1913. S.N.P. 15 is an unnumbered series of miscellaneous subjects dating between 1884 and 1960.

The following Indexes and Guides are available:

1. S.N.P. 6 & 8.
2. S.N.P. 7
3. S.N.P. 15 unnumbered series.
4. S.N.P. 17/0, 1, 2 series.
5. S.N.P. 17/3, 4, 5 series.
6. S.N.P. 17/17, K. C series.
7. S.N.P. 18, 19, 20.

8. A Provisional Guide to Official Publications at the National Archives Kaduna; compiled by J. C. Enwere; August, 1962.
9. Special list of annual and half-yearly reports among the Nigerian Secretariat Record Group; compiled by J. C. Enwere, 1963.
10. List of files from provincial office Lokoja; compiled February, 1960, "original."
11. Records of Provincial Office Onitsha compiled in 1961.
12. Special list of records related to historical and anthropological and social studies among provincial administration record groups; compiled 1962.
13. Special list of materials concerned with tribal and related studies among Kaduna secretariat record books; compiled in 1962.
14. An inventory of records of secretariat of Northern Province, 1963.
15. Simple list of records removed from provincial office Ilorin. (Ilorinprof.)
16. Simple list of papers removed from provincial office Minna; (Minprof.), Vol. 1 and Vol. III in 1964.
17. Simple list of records removed from the divisional office Borgu. (Borgdist.)
18. Class list of papers removed from the provincial office Sokoto. (Sokprof. 2/1-4/1), 1964.
19. List of papers removed from district office Biu, 1964.
20. List of papers removed from district office Yola, 1960-1961.

The following items were particularly useful.

S.N.P. 1

S.N.P. 3 --although many telegrams were in code and only partially readable.

S.N.P. 5

S.N.P. 6 (Confidential)

S.N.P. 6/1 8-58 for 1904

S.N.P. 6/2 60-131 for 1906

S.N.P. 6/3 148-429 for 1907-1909

S.N.P. 7 (Annual Numerical Minutes Papers--Open)

S.N.P. 7/1 1-2655. Nos. 1-205 are especially valuable as they contain one of the few extensive amounts of material for the years 1900-1904. This series contains a remarkable variety of information from estimates, provincial reports and accounts to notes on the native staff.

S.N.P. 15 (Unnumbered Series)

S.N.P. 15/1 1-66 is also an exceptionally useful series with varied content.

S.N.P. 15/3 Nos. 367, 369, 371-374 were also consulted as regards taxation, Fulani-Habe rule and land tenure.

S.N.P. 17/8 8884

S.N.P. 18/1 Nos. 25, 26, 28, 35, 46, 56

S.N.P. 18/2 98

S.N.P. 18/3 110

S.N.P. 18/4 118, 120, 128

LOKOPROF (files from provincial office at Lokoja)

Nos. 2-11 and 29

BORGDIST 276-327

ILORPROF 4/1 457

MINPROF 1/1, 4/1, 6/1 and acc. nos. 1-9

SOKPROF 1-7, 89, 2173, 2174

Yola provincial office papers 1-7, 57, 84, 89, 109, 144, 158, 162, 196, 471, 474

Biu district office 77-197

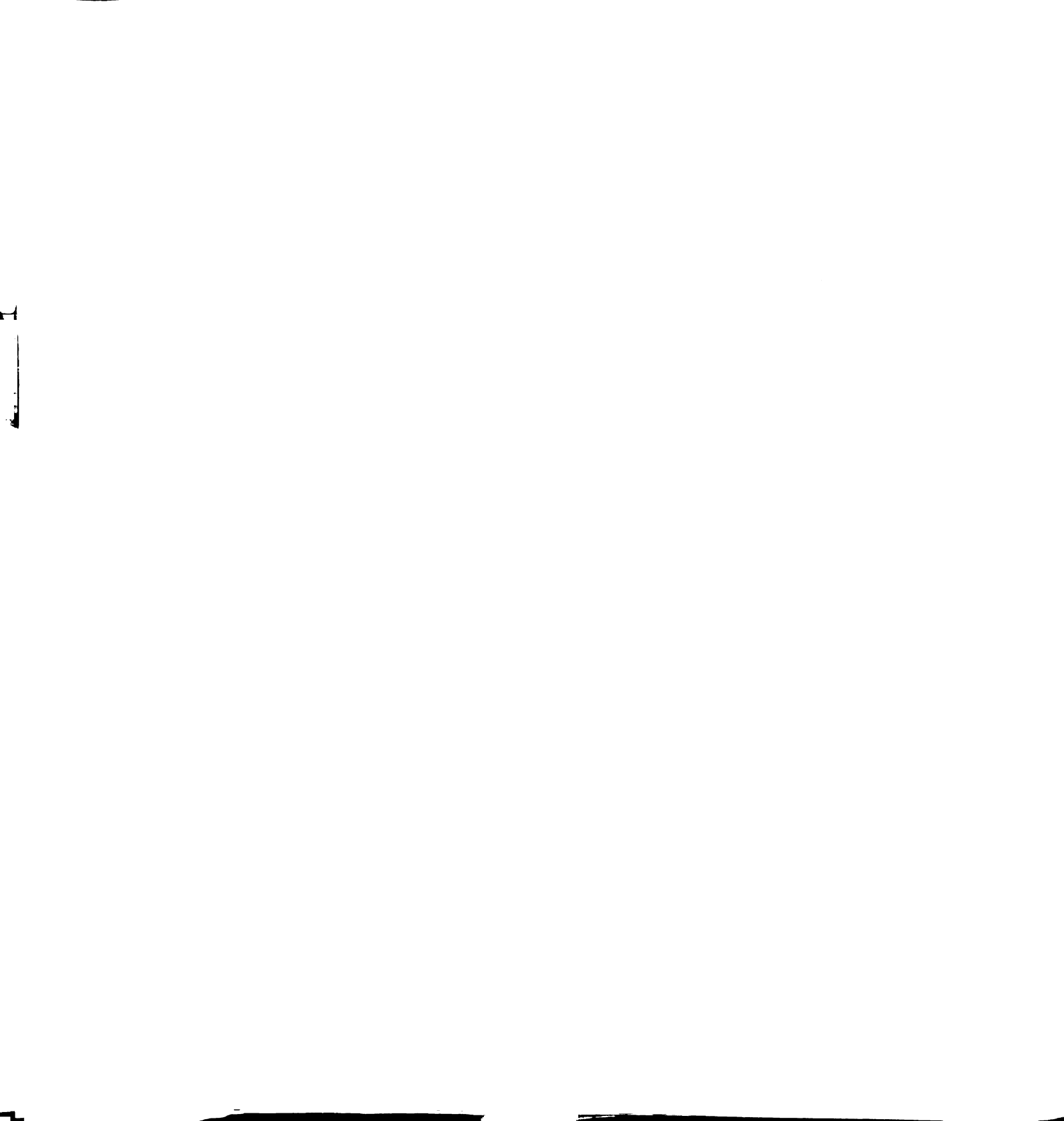
From Enwere's Provisional Guide to Official publications at the National Archives Kaduna

Nos. 85-254

Memoranda nos. 401-478

Periodical Issuances nos. 500-519

Gazettes nos. 521-587



Records related to historical, anthropological, and social studies among provincial record groups contain lists of histories of each district and each tribe in all of Northern Nigeria. Mostly they are written after 1910. Particularly useful was No. 46 (J1) which is a history of Yola.

Nos. 1-36 included in the "Special list of materials concerned with tribal and related studies among Kaduna secretariat group (S.N.P.) are also helpful.

B. National Archives Ibadan. Unfortunately, the time allotted to be spent at the Nigerian Archives at Ibadan was made next to valueless due to political disorders interrupting all phases of civil bureaucratic operations during our time at Ibadan. Fortunately, the Ibadan archives contained little that was relevant to this thesis, although it also is a mine of information on Nigeria.

Of particular note were the ONPROF (Onitsha) 2 and 8 series, the first being "C" annual files 1898-1913 and the latter being an Unnumbered series files from 1896-1955. Most useful was the C.S.O. 1/27, 28, 30 and 31 numbers. No. 27 consists of 13 volumes of Northern Nigeria Confidential Dispatches to the Colonial Office 1901-1908. No. 28 consists of 14 volumes of Northern Nigeria Confidential Dispatches from the Colonial Office 1901-1913. No. 30 holds 17 volumes of N.N. W.A.F.F. Dispatches from the Colonial Office 1900-1913. No. 31 contains 13 volumes of N.N. circular dispatches from the Colonial Office 1882-1913.

C. Public Records Office, London (P.R.O.). Unquestionably the P.R.O. is the most important source for this dissertation, as for most other topics where former British

colonies are concerned. The amount of material available is overwhelming; C.O. 446/1-48 and C.O. 879/8-95 various, were the most useful, however.

C.O. 446/1-48

Contains Original Correspondence from 1895 to 1905. In all C.O. 446 contains 114 volumes covering the years 1898 to 1913. The volumes themselves are immense, ranging from five to nine or ten inches in thickness, and cover every aspect of Government in Northern Nigeria from highly significant minutes in the Colonial Office to the petty details of government, internal and external relation with the French, Germans and natives, and financial consideration.

C.O. 879/various

C. O. 879 consists of the Confidential Print for Africa. It contains 116 volumes sub-divided into 1037 chronological divisions bound in the 116 volumes. The detailed description of this series takes the first 85 pages of Public Record Office Handbook No. 8 List of Colonial Office Confidential Print to 1916 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1965), so there is no necessity for detailed description here. In brief, the following list of items was researched:

C.O. 879/20-259
 C.O. 879/21-270, 274
 C.O. 879/27-345
 C.O. 879/28-355
 C.O. 879/29-365
 C.O. 879/31-386
 C.O. 879/37-446
 C.O. 879/43-492
 C.O. 879/35-410, 411
 C.O. 879/59-591, 594
 C.O. 879/62-619
 C.O. 879/8-77
 C.O. 879/9-92, 94A
 C.O. 879/24-319
 C.O. 879/34-410
 C.O. 879/45-506
 C.O. 879/48-52A, 524
 C.O. 879/49-534
 C.O. 879/50-538
 C.O. 879/58-580
 C.O. 879/61-609
 C.O. 879/72-684

C.O. 879/79-713
 C.O. 879/80-718
 C.O. 879/82-737
 C.O. 879/65-642
 C.O. 879/86-767
 C.O. 879/92-841

- C.O. 465/4 Northern Nigeria
 C.O. 465 contains 14 volumes of miscellanea concerned with Northern Nigeria. Volume 4 is principally useful for Blue Books for the year 1903 and certain statements by Lugard on the political franchise.
- C.O. 587/1 Northern Nigeria
 Contains 3 volumes of Proclamations for the years 1900-1913 for Northern Nigeria.
- C.O. 585 Northern Nigeria
 Is a series of 6 volumes containing Register of Out-Letters. Was not very useful.
- C.O. 586 Northern Nigeria
 Contains 4 volumes of Government Gazettes for 1900-1913.
- C.O. 584 Northern Nigeria
 Consists of 7 volumes of Registers of Correspondence. Is only useful as a check of dates.
- C.O. 444 Niger Coast Protectorate
 This series contains 4 volumes of original correspondence with the Niger Coast Protectorate 1899. Only points of interest are certain jurisdictional matters over transfer of R.N.Co. rights that were to be split between the two territories.
- C.O. 537 Africa, West
 Contains 16 volumes of Original Correspondence 1884-1909; however relatively little has direct bearing on Northern Nigeria.
- C.O. 694 Africa, West
 Is a single volume of secret correspondence 1889-1898.
- F.O. 2 General Correspondence, Africa
 Only a few volumes of this series are specifically related to Northern Nigeria. This is an extremely useful series, however, because it contains vast (983 volumes) amounts of tangential materials especially on native elements unobtainable elsewhere. Volumes of special interest are:

F.O. 2/118
 F.O. 2/119
 F.O. 2/167
 F.O. 2/168
 F.O. 2/169
 F.O. 2/242
 F.O. 2/243
 F.O. 2/244
 F.O. 2/245

F.O. 93 and F.O. 94 consist of the original drafts of treaties and conventions signed with foreign powers. Those with special reference to this thesis are:

F.O. 93/36-16 General Act of the Berlin Conference
 F.O. 93/36-18A Convention between Great Britain and Germany over Gulf of Guinea and Kameruns, 1885.
 F.O. 93/36-55 Final boundary convention, Yola-Chad, 1906.
 F.O. 93/36-60 Convention defining Dikoa, Yola perimeters.
 F.O. 93/6-22
 F.O. 93/33-138, 145, 176, 196, 173, 218, 150, 165
 F.O. 94/848 Convention of 1904 (Anglo-French).

D. United Africa Company Archives (U.A.C.). The U.A.C. is the successor to the Royal Niger Company and contains in its vaults certain interesting materials relating to the period prior to 1900. Unfortunately, the Company ran into extremely difficult times during the early and middle thirties, and did not really come out of the doldrums until World War II. Old-hands at the Company's main offices on Blackfriars assured me that "tons" of records were indiscriminately burnt during this "belt-tightening" period. What is left, however, was useful in a certain sense, in that it convinces one that Goldie's great claims on the part of empire were concern for himself and other "higher-ups" at the Royal Niger Company. Every-day business did not concern itself with the uttermost

extension of Company power. One is also sure that Goldie, himself, took care to destroy any incriminating records about his activities, as Flint reports he did with his private papers.

A complete list of materials contained at the U.A.C. archives for the period 1890-1904 is as follows:

<u>Safe No.</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Details</u>
1/5541	1899	Analysis of Constabulary Accounts.
1/5542	1898-1899	Constabulary Vouchers.
1/5072	Pre-1900	Positive of a Microfilm of some of the pre-1900 Records taken by the University of California, November, 1951.
1/5070	1889-1897	Chairman's Speeches at Annual General Meetings.
1/5069	1882	Spare prints and photostat copies of Annual Reports and Accounts.
1/5057	1899	Prints of papers presented to both Houses of Parliament on the revocation of the Charter of The Royal Niger Company in 1899.
1/5053	1885-1897	Bundle of odd correspondence with the Foreign Office between 1885 and 1897, mainly relating to the activities of the French in territories claimed by the Royal Niger Company.
1/5052	1889	Various Annual General Meeting Notices from 1889.
1/5047	1842	Report from the Select Committee on the West Coast of Africa.
1/5045	1899	Niger Subscription Library Catalogue.
1/5038	1899	Copy of Royal Charter, Royal Niger Company.
1/5036	1882	Directors Reports and Balance Sheets.

<u>Safe No.</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Details</u>
1/5027	1899	Sundry Books and Papers relating to Constabulary and issue of Medals.
1/5026	1899	Treasury Minute and Appendices re the Revocation of The Royal Niger Company's Charter and The Royal Niger Company Act, 1899.
1/5008	1882-1886- 1886-1889	Minute Books No. 1.
1114	8/7/1882	Certificate of Incorporation of the National African Company Limited.
With Public Relations	-	Old Treaties and Regulations of the National African Company Limited.
With Public Relations	12/11/1884	Original Authorization from H.M.'s Government to declare Protectorate throughout the Company's Territories.
With Public Relations	1894	Prints (5) of Niger Navigation Regulation 1894 and collection of Territorial Regulations specially affecting Traders, Visitors, and Residents.
With Public Relations	5/2/1897	Photocopy of promise made by the Emir Mohammed to the Royal Niger Company that the Company should rule NUPELAND.
1/5063	-	Print of Niger Flag (with explanation) and original roughdrafts of Flag.
1/5062	-	Reproduction of painting of Sir George Taubman-Goldie, P.C., C.C.W.G., LL.D.
1/5059	-	Photocopy of Scroll inside Nine-pounder Shell.
1/5060	-	Sundry Books and Papers relating to the Royal Niger Constabulary, including notes of punitive Expeditions, records of personnel engaged and rolls of men entitled to medals and clasps.
1/5044	-	Niger Constabulary Reports, etc.
1/5463	-	Royal Niger Company FLAG.
1/5056	-	Various Pamphlets and Correspondence between the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce and the Foreign Office.

In addition to the foregoing list of materials contained in the U.A.C. safe, the following additional documents and materials are available.

- (1) Minute books 1882 onwards, including some graphs.
- (2) A narrative of Company History by Mr. Haywood, 19 pages.
- (3) An history of the Company through 1938 by Mr. Moreby in pamphlet form.
- (4) Original documents in Public Relations Department Library. These include:

Royal Niger Company 1886-1888

Letter book of the Royal Niger Company containing extracts copied from reports made by the Company's agents on the subject of new products. The extracts cover the period 9/5/1886 to 8/3/1888 and deal with shea butter, pepper, hemp, jute, indigo, camwood, tin, rubber, etc. The letters of William Wallace and Joseph Flint are prominent. Comments are made on the development of the economy and on trading conditions generally.

Royal Niger Company 1885-1890

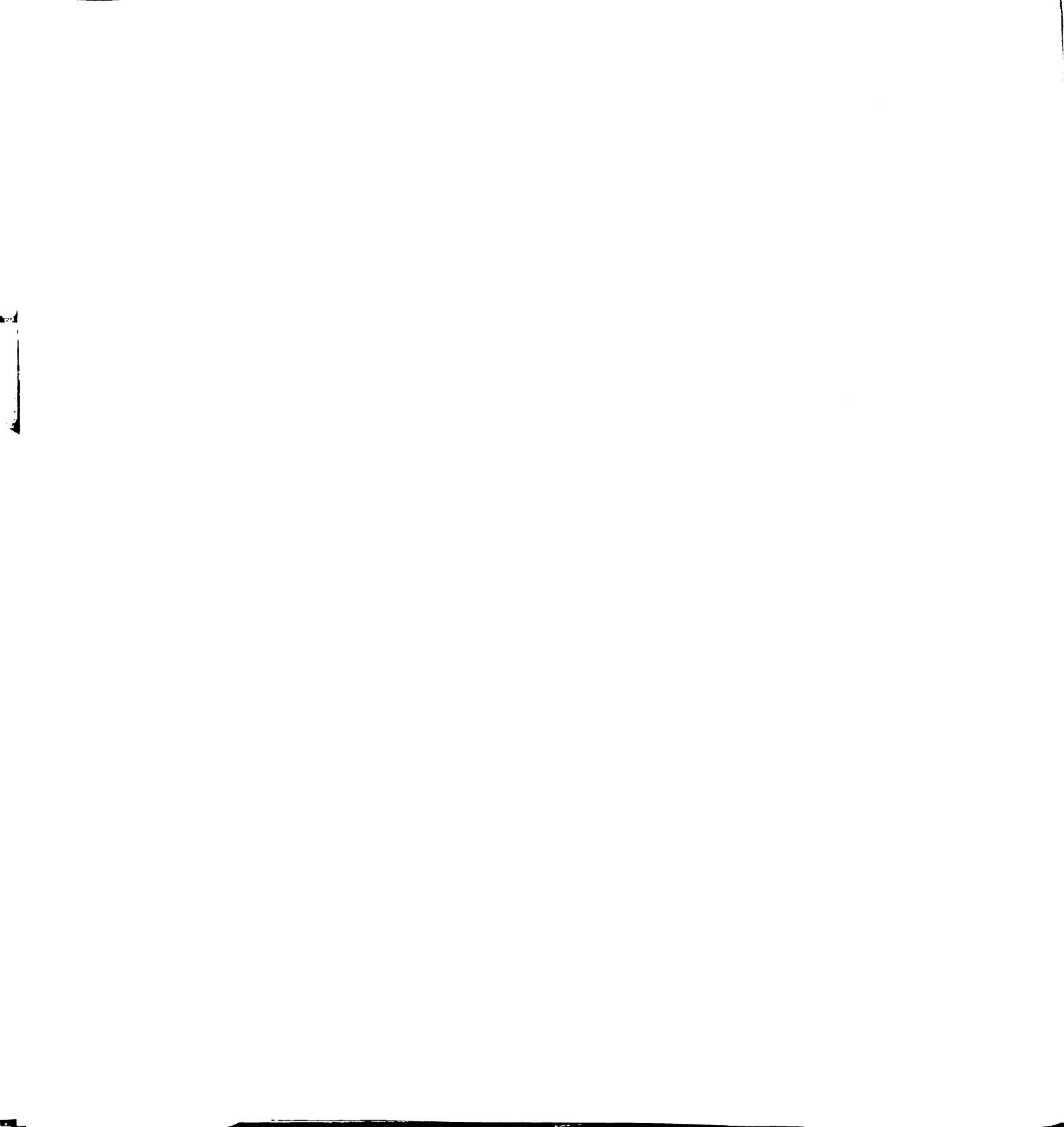
Letter book of the Royal Niger Company containing correspondence between officials of the Company at Lokoja (J. Flint, O. A. King and W. Wallace) and the states of the Niger and Sudan area, including Nupe, Bida, Zaria, Idah, Gendu and Sokoto. This is a fairly full collection containing information on political and commercial relations. The Arabic originals and translation together with a copy of out-letters cover the period March 1885 to 14 April 1890.

Lokoja Station 1896-1897

Journal of the Lokoja Station, containing the correspondence between officials of the Company (including Wallace, Satts and Thomas) and the rulers and officials of Nupe, Bida, Lapai, Nassarawa, Kuta and (?) Lafiagi. Arabic originals, translation and copy of reply covering the period 7/6/1896 to 23/12/1897.

Logbook 1898 to 1914

Captain H. E. Ratsey's Logbook containing a description of 55 of the Royal Niger Company's stations on the Niger and Benue, together with numerous maps of their location and an estimate of the value of the property. The original entries appear to have been made in 1898 and 1899. Substantial additions were made in 1899 and 1900 and further short notes added up to May 1914.



Akassa Rising 1895

The official report of the enquiry into the Akassa Rising of January 1895.

Royal Niger Company 1894-1899

Contains: (1) Copy of the Royal Niger Company's Charter, (2) Copies of Niger Navigation Regulations, and (3) Papers presented to Parliament in 1899 concerning the revocation of the Royal Niger Company's Charter.

E. Rhodes House Library, Oxford--Lugard Papers. The

Rhodes House Library contains a good deal of interesting and useful material concerning colonial affairs. Indeed, at the present time

Mr. J. J. Tawney, Director
Oxford Colonial Records Project,
Institute of Commonwealth Studies,
Queen Elizabeth House,
20/21 St. Giles, Oxford

is in the process of collecting a really first-rate series of private papers relating to Britains colonial past. Of particular use, however, are the following items.

MSS. Brit. Emp. S. 57-60, 62, 63, 65

These are the most relevant volumes of Lugard's diaries. Each volume is a smallish thin volume of letters and extracts typed on both sides of the pages by Lugard's brother E. J. Lugard. Almost no originals are present, however, there does not appear to be too much biased selection by Lord Lugard's brother in favor of that individual. The volumes include material from Lugard's private and public correspondence with his brother, his wife (Flora Shaw Lugard), Sir George Goldie and many others.

MSS. Afr. r. 81

This is a manuscript book apparently written from a diary and not intended for publication by one R. P. Nicholson--who, masquerading under the name of R. Popham Lobb--served as Lugard's Private Secretary. The manuscript is titled "Northern Nigeria 1900-1905."

MSS. Afr. s. 958

This reference refers to a compilation by C. Reynolds of Dwyer's reports, 1902-1908. The minuted originals, of course, were of utmost value to this dissertation--but are available at Kaduna.

II. Parliamentary Papers

A clear and concise Guide to Parliamentary Papers by P. and G. Ford (Oxford, 1955; 2nd ed., 1956), makes any re-statement of organization gratuitous. For an excellent "select list" of sessional papers for Africa one may also consult Volume III, The Empire-Commonwealth of the Cambridge History of the British Empire, pp. 792-824.

Among the more relevant numbers consulted for this thesis are the following.

1875, LII (C. 1343). West Africa--Papers re: H. M. Possessions.

1878, LXXXIII (C. 2059), (C. 2081), (C. 2083), (C. 21080), (C. 2014), Corres. re: Congress of Berlin, text of treaty etc.

1884-1885, LV (C. 4284), (C. 4360), (C. 4205), (C. 4241). West African Conference--Correspondence.

1885-1885, LV (C. 4442). Arrangement between Britain and Germany re: spheres of influence in Africa.

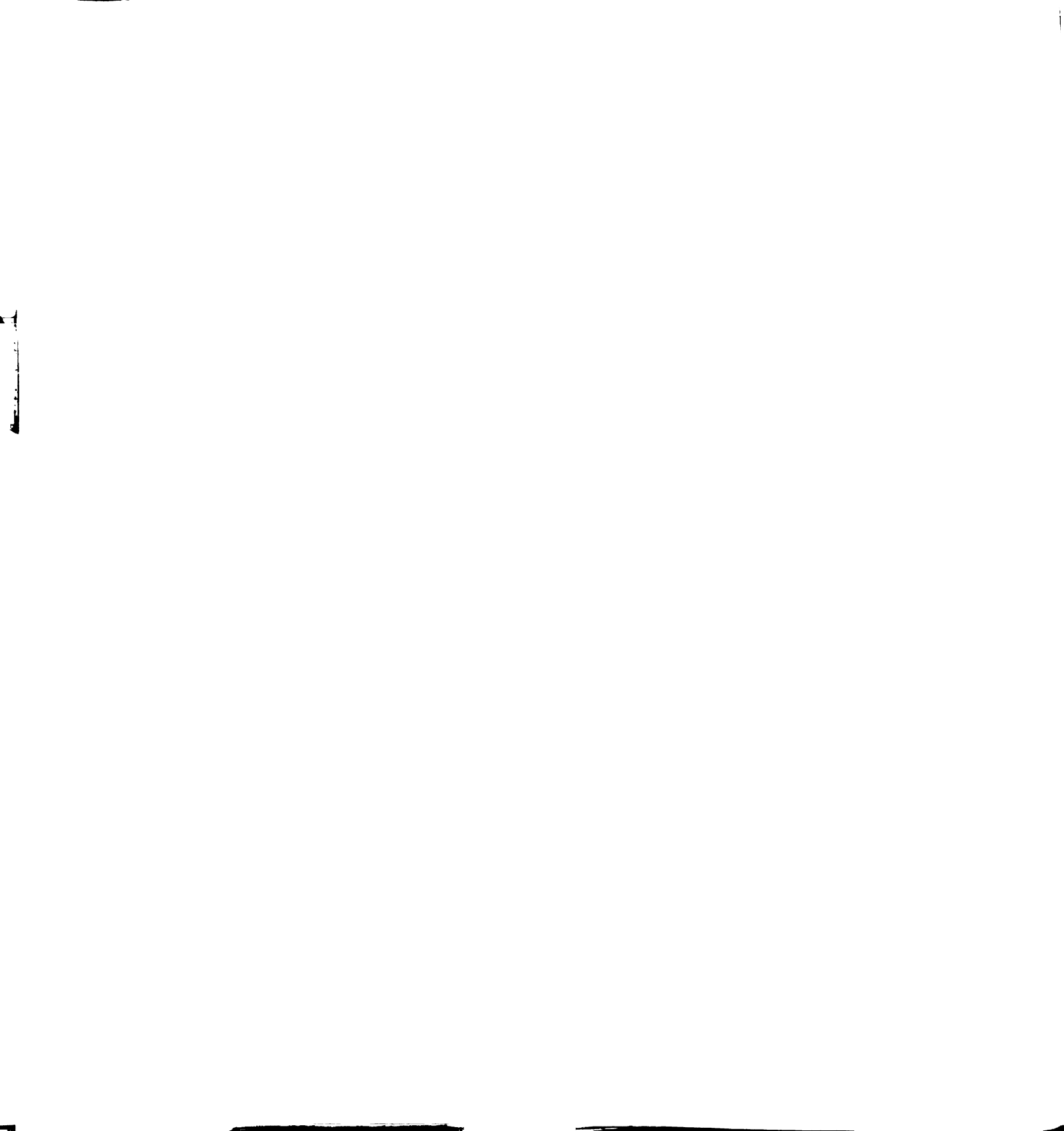
1887, LX (C. 4957). Lagos--Negotiations with warring interior tribes.

1888, LXXIV (C. 5365). West Africa--Papers re: opening trade.

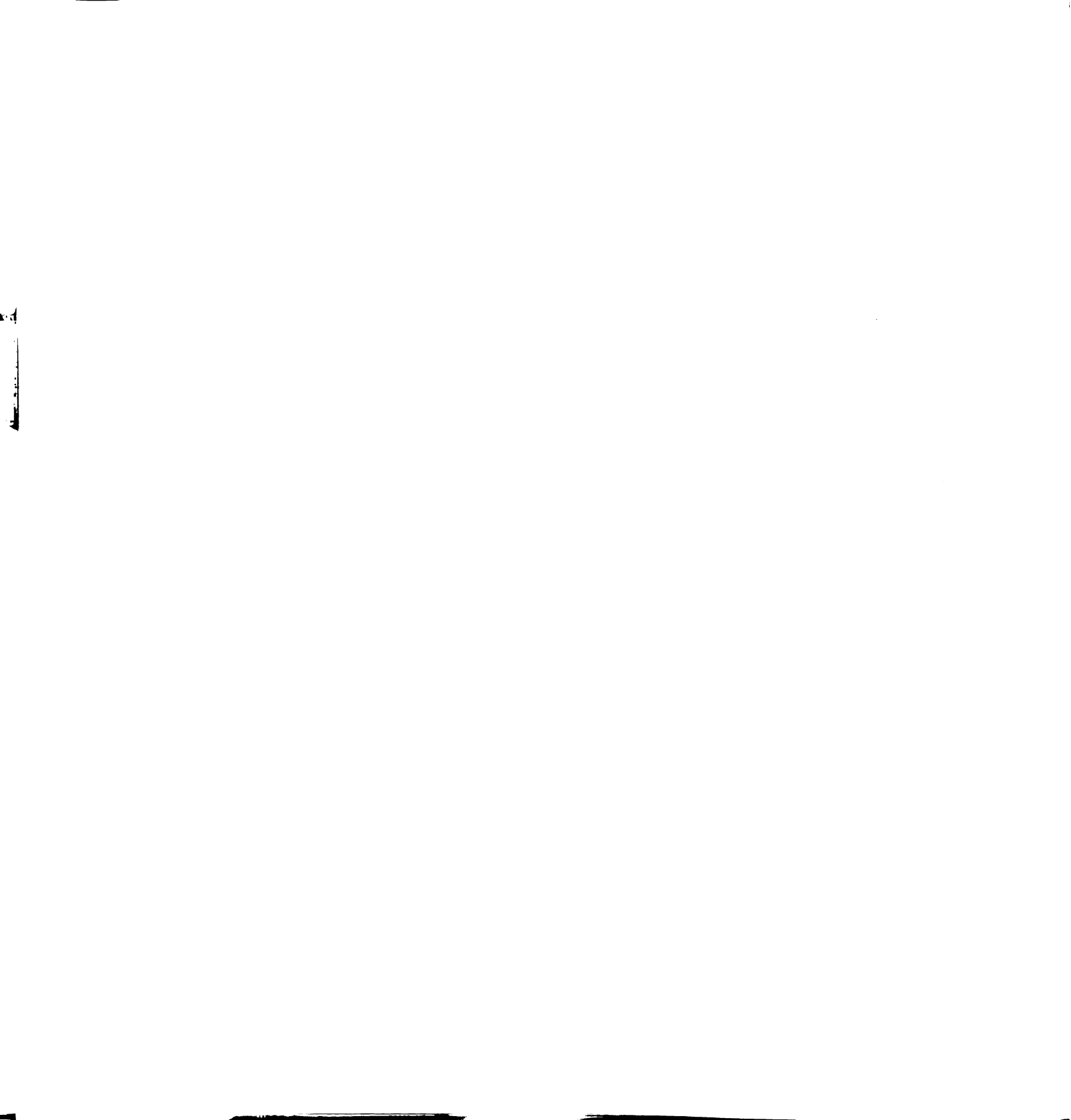
1890, LI (C. 5905). Anglo-French West African Agreement, 1889--Correspondence.

1892, LVI (C. 7601). West Africa--Papers re: Anglo-French arrangements on frontiers and commercial interests.

1893-1894, LXII (C. 7163). West Coast of Africa--Correspondence.



- 1893-1894, LXII (C. 7227). Lagos--Report by Carter on Interior Expedition, 1893.
- 1893-1894, CIX (C. 7026), (C. 7230). Anglo-German agreements re: boundaries in West Africa.
- 1895, LXXI (C. 7916). Niger Coast Protectorate--Report on Administration, 1894-1895.
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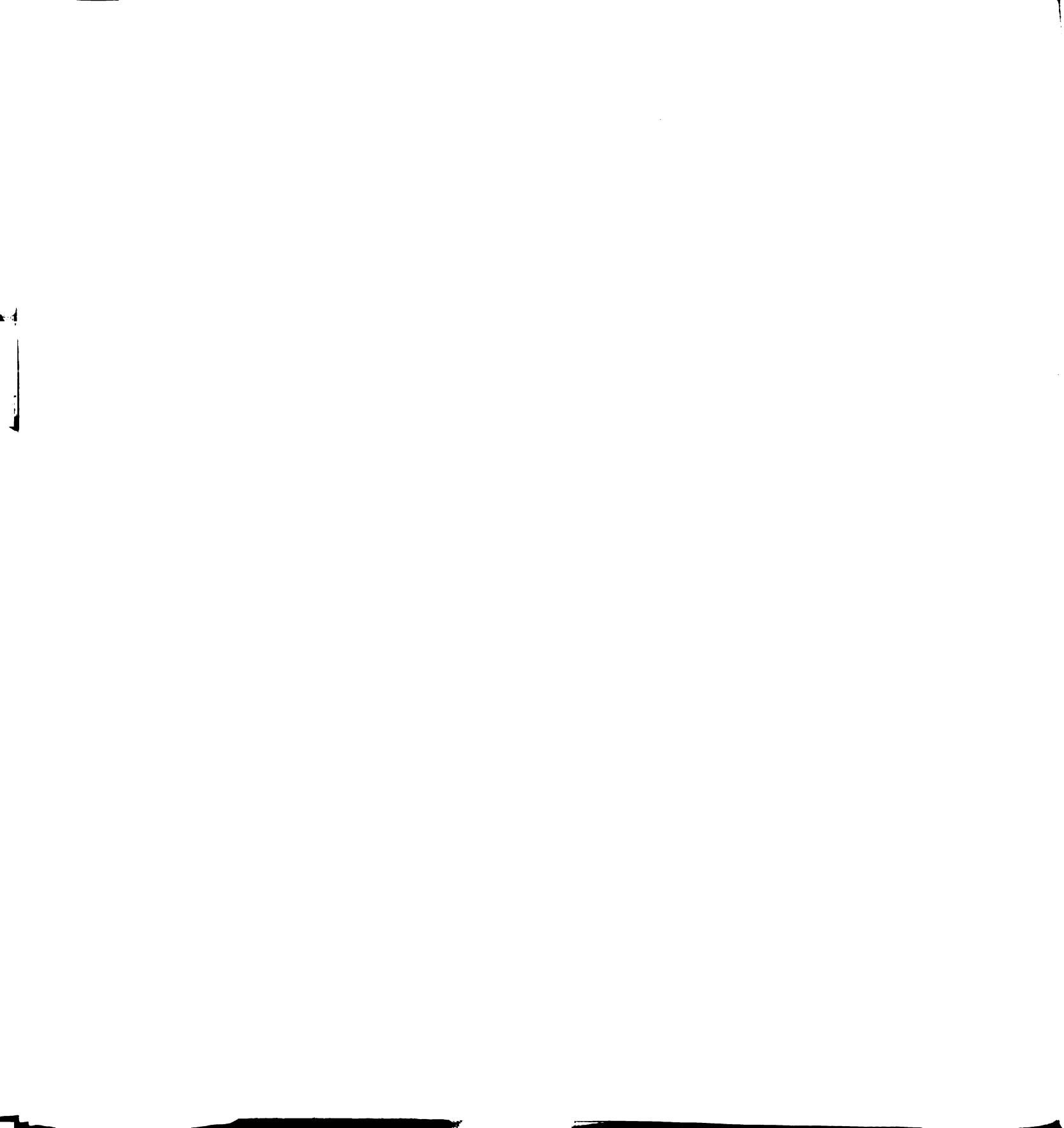
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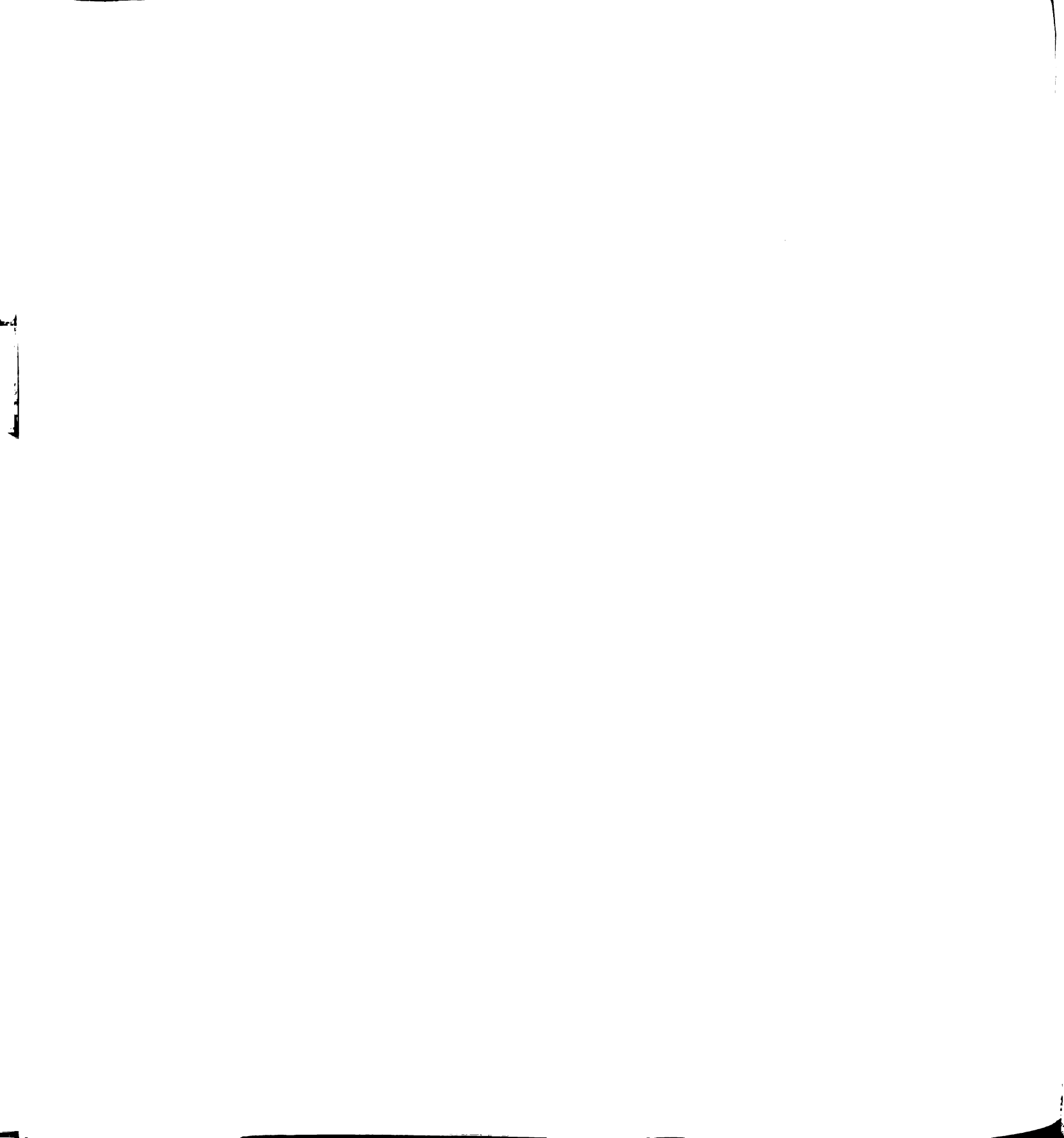


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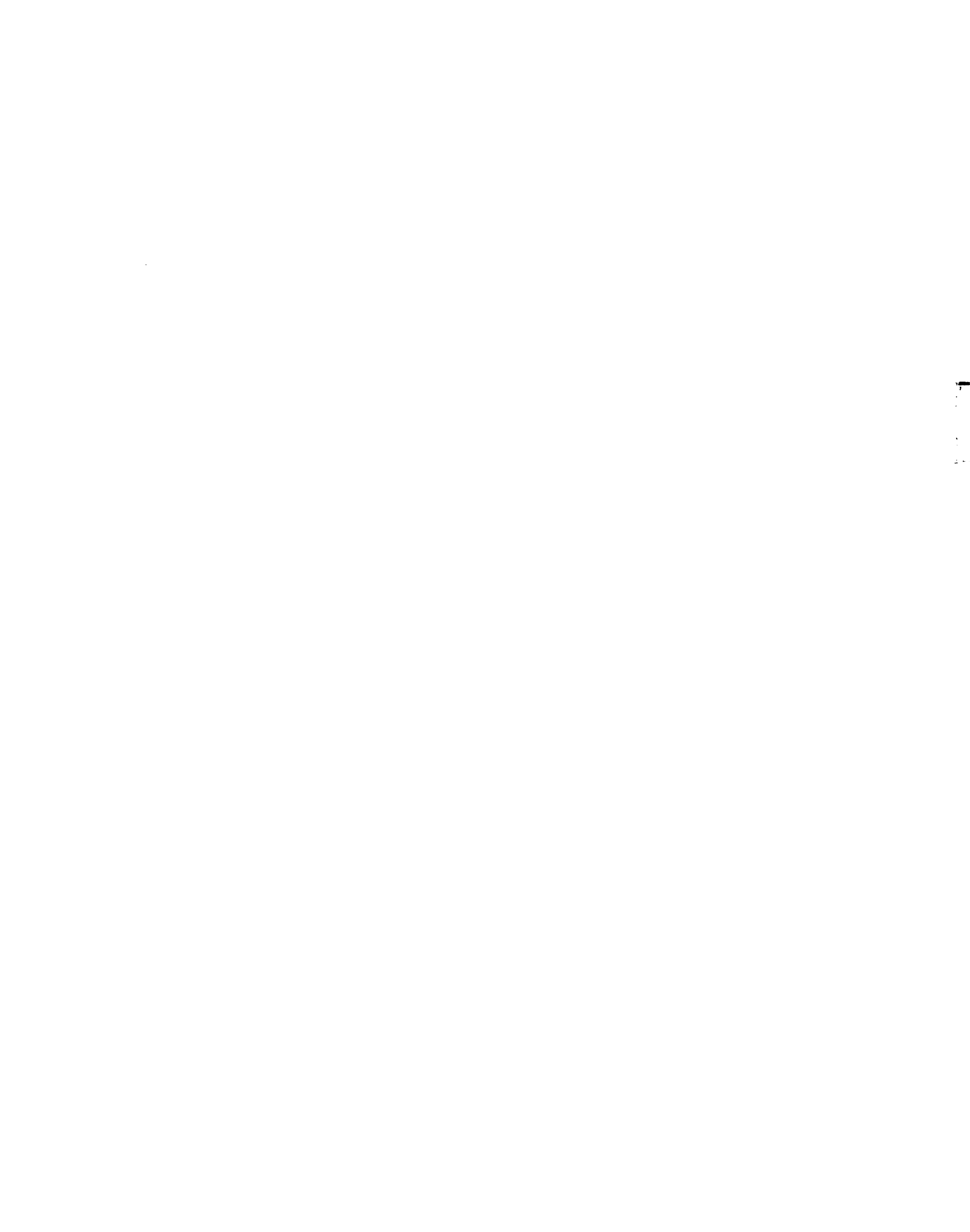


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