The British in the Sudan 1898–1956

Edited by Robert O. Collins
and Francis M. Deng

St Antony's/Macmillan Series

THE BRITISH IN THE SUDAN, 1898–1956

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THE BRITISH IN THE SUDAN, 1898–1956

The Sweetness and the Sorrow

Edited by

Robert O. Collins and
Francis M. Deng

Palgrave Macmillan

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To Richard Hill

A friend, a scholar and the
very best of the British in
the Sudan

So now when pensioned Governors their aged limbs relax,
Their failing powers employed on schemes to outwit Income Tax,
With weeping and with laughter still shall the tale be told,
How once we governed the Sudan in the brave days of old.

E. A. Balfour, *Nil Return from Northern Province*

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Notes on the Contributors

Robert O. Collins is Professor of History at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Educated at Dartmouth College, Balliol and Yale, he has taught African history at Williams College, Columbia, and the University of California. Having devoted thirty years to research in the Sudan he has written extensively on the Southern Sudan, including his four-volume series beginning with *The Southern Sudan, 1883–1898: A Struggle for Control* (1962); *King Leopold, England and the Upper Nile, 1899–1909* (1968); *Land beyond the Rivers: The Southern Sudan, 1898–1918* (1971); and more recently *Shadows in the Grass: Britain in the Southern Sudan, 1918–1956* (1983).

Francis M. Deng received his LL.B. degree from Khartoum University and studied at the University of London and received a Doctor of Laws from Yale University. As a scholar and public servant he has written extensively on the Dinka including his prizewinning book *Tradition and Modernization: A Challenge for Law among the Dinka of the Sudan*; *The Dinka of the Sudan, Dynamics of Identification: A Basis for National Integration in the Sudan; The Dinka and their Songs;* and *Dinka Folktales.* In 1972 he was appointed the Sudanese Ambassador to the Scandinavian countries and then served as his country's Ambassador to the United States, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, and the Sudanese Ambassador to Canada. He is currently the Sudanese Ambassador to Ethiopia.

Michael S. Coray is Associate Professor of History at the University of Nevada, Reno, teaching courses in African, Afro-American, and American history. His current research interest centres on an investigation of the black populations of the states and territories of the Pacific West in the mid-nineteenth century. He took his doctoral degree at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

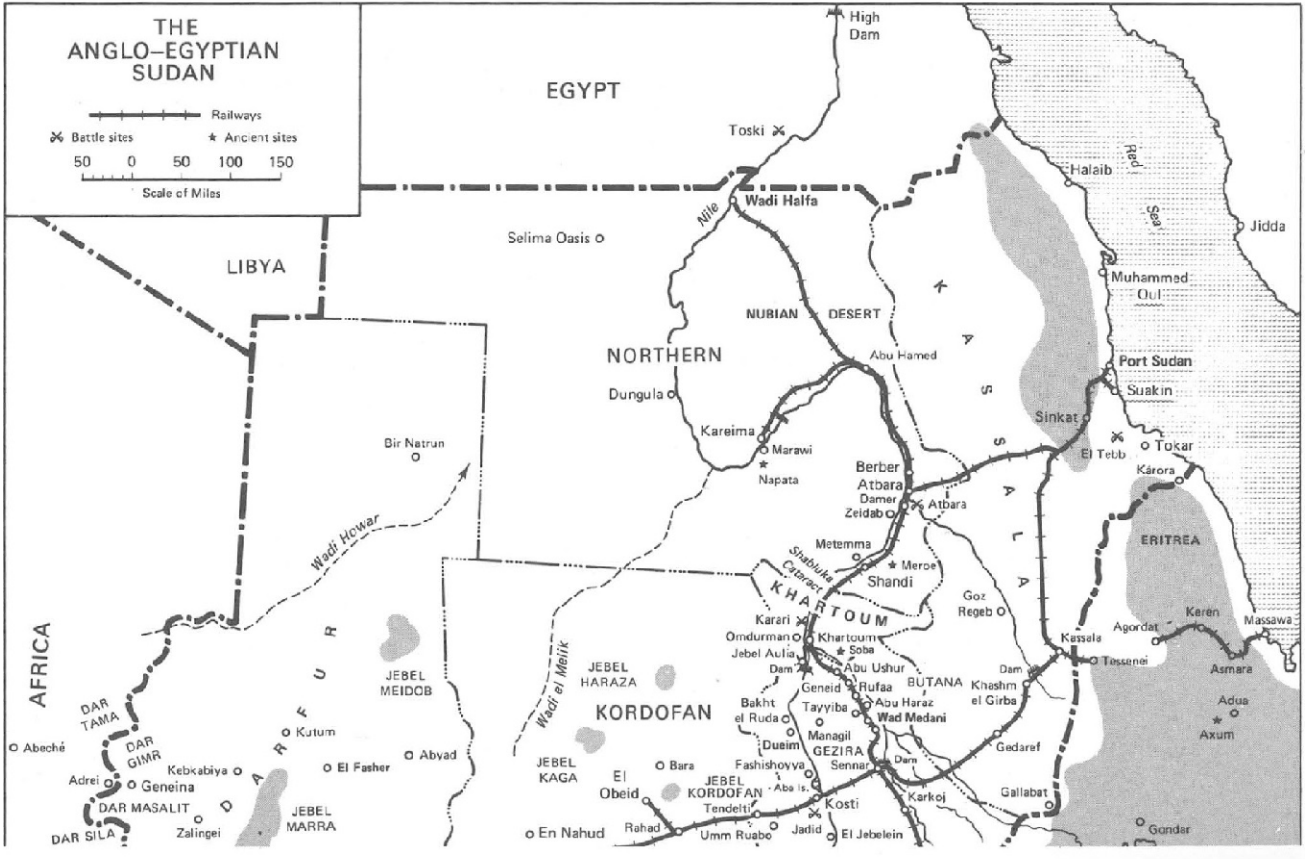
Gail S. Schoettler earned a B.A. with honours in economics from Stanford University and an M.A. and Ph.D. in African history from the University of California, Santa Barbara. She is currently the Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Personnel and a member of the

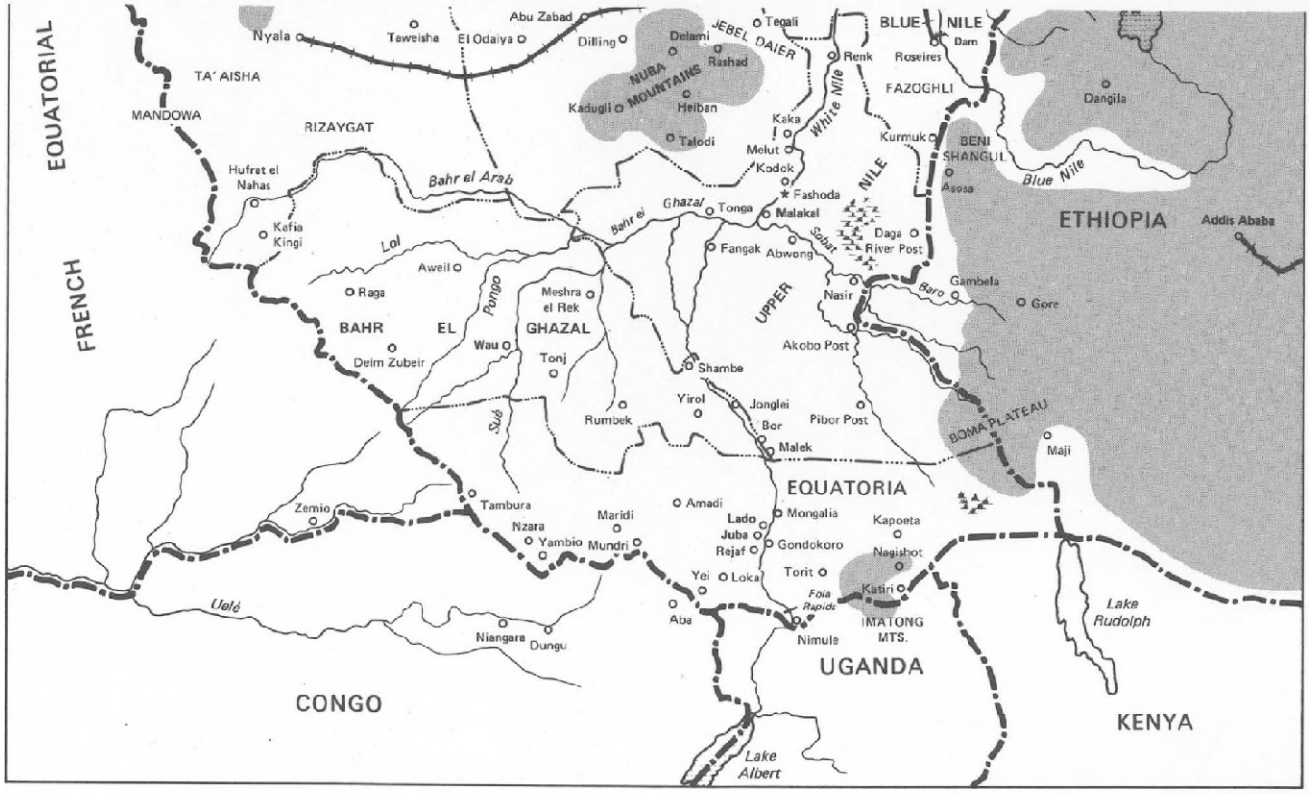
Governor's Cabinet. She lives in Parker, Colorado, with her husband and three children, serves as president of the Douglas County School Board, and is a trustee of the University of Northern Colorado.

John W. Frost took his B.A. degree from Stanford University and Ph.D. from the University of California, Santa Barbara, during which he conducted research in the Sudan as a Fulbright Scholar. Apart from his academic interests, he was a former member of the United States Davis Cup team, playing numerous times at Wimbledon and throughout the world. He lives with his wife and daughter in Indian Wells, California.

Thomas Fuller has conducted research in Uganda, Kenya, the United Kingdom and the United States on the period of British rule in Africa. He has been a recipient of a Fulbright Research Fellowship and, most recently, from the National Endowment for the Humanities for work in public and community history. At the present time he is a research historian with the Community and Organization Research Institute at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and an executive member of the California Committee for the Promotion of History.

Jack Bermingham is Assistant Professor at Pacific Luthern College. His most recent book, *Chinese and African Professionals in California* (1982), co-authored with Edward Clausen, is to be shortly followed by a history of Botswana. He received his Ph.D. degree from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and has taught at the University of the West Indies in Jamaica.


THE ANGLO-EGYPTIAN SUDAN
Railways
Battle sites
Ancient sites
50 0 50 100 150
Scale of Miles
EGYPT
High Dam
Toski
Wadi Halfa
Nile
Selima Oasis
LIBYA
Red Sea
Halaib
Jidda
Muhammad Oul
NUBIAN DESERT
NORTHERN
Abu Hamed
Port Sudan
Suakin
Dungula
Kareima
Marawi
Napata
Sinkat
Tokar
El Tebb
Karora
Bir Natrun
Berber
Atbara
Damer
Zeidab
Atbara
Wadi Howar
Metemma
Shabluka Cataract
Merowe
Shandi
ERITREA
KHARTOUM
Goz Regeb
Karari
Omdurman
Khartoum
Jebel Aulia
Soba
Abu Ushur
Kassala
Agordat
Keren
Massawa
Tessenei
Asmara
AFRICA
DAR TAMA
DAR GIMR
DARFUR
JEBEL MEIDOB
JEBEL HARAZA
Wadi el Melik
KORDOFAN
BUTANA
Khashm el Girba
Dam
Geneid
Rufaa
Abu Haraz
Wad Medani
Tayyiba
Bakht el Ruda
Managil
GEZIRA
Dueim
Sennar
Gedaref
Adua
Axum
Abeché
Kutum
Abyad
Kebkabiya
El Fasher
Adrei
Geneina
DAR MASALIT
DAR SILA
Zalingei
JEBEL MARRA
JEBEL KAGA
El Obeid
Bara
JEBEL KORDOFAN
Fashishoyya
Aba Is.
Tendelti
Kosti
Karkoj
Gallabat
En Nahud
Rahad
Umm Ruabo
Jadid
El Jebelein
Gondar


EQUATORIAL
FRENCH
Nyala
Taweisha
El Odaiya
Abu Zabad
Dilling
Delami
Rashad
JEBEL DAIER
Tegali
BLUE
NILE
Dam
Renk
Roseires
NUBA MOUNTAINS
Kadugli
Heiban
Talodi
TA' AISHA
MANDOWA
RIZAYGAT
FAZOGHLI
Dangila
Kaka
White Nile
Kurmuk
BENI SHANGUL
Melut
Kodok
Asosa
Blue Nile
Hufret el Nahas
Bahr el Arab
Fashoda
NILE
Kafia Kingi
Bahr el Ghazal
Tonga
Malakal
ETHIOPIA
Addis Ababa
Lol
Sobat
Daga
River Post
Fangak
Abwong
Aweil
Raga
Pongo
Meshra el Rek
UPPER
Nasir
Baro
Gambela
Gore
BAHR EL GHAZAL
Wau
Akobo Post
Deim Zubeir
Tonj
Shambe
Yirol
Jonglei
Sub
Rumbek
Bor
Pibor Post
BOMA PLATEAU
Malek
Maji
EQUATORIA
Zemio
Tambura
Amadi
Mongalla
Kapoeta
Nzara
Yambio
Maridi
Mundri
Lado
Juba
Rajaf
Gondokoro
Nagishot
Torit
Yei
Loka
Katiri
Uelé
Foia Rapids
Aba
IMATONG MTS.
Lake Rudolph
Niangara
Dungu
Nimule
UGANDA
CONGO
KENYA
Lake Albert

Preface

In his celebrated book, *The Human Factor in Changing Africa* (1962), Melville J. Herskovits observed that 'Whenever peoples having different customs come together, they modify their ways by taking something from those with whom they newly meet. They may take over much or little, according to the nature of intensity of the contact, or the degree to which the two cultures have elements in common, or differ in basic orientation. But they never take over or ignore all; some change is inevitable.' What happened when colonial masters and their subjects met and intereacted as two sets of peoples, representing different races, cultures, backgrounds, values, and outlooks? This question itself does not necessarily imply a value judgement about colonialism; in human or moral terms the answer could be negative or positive or both. But just as Herskovits's observation implies a certain 'give and take' in human values, the question is not devoid of positive expectations in terms of cross-cultural understanding, appreciation and influence, elements which of necessity involve the very being of the interacting individuals.

Writings on colonial experiences have generally tended to view the situation in terms of the policies and the collective identities of the rulers and the ruled, leaving little or no room for the individuals most directly involved with the implementation of colonial policy, their conception of these policies, their role in adapting the policies to the context, their evolving view of 'the others' and the extent to which they are, in fact, influenced and perhaps changed. Colonialism has, of course, been universally condemned as a fundamental subjugation and exploitation of people, kindred to slavery, and a negation of basic human rights. Hence the post-war commitment of the world community to the decolonisation process which, with the exception of a few outstanding pockets, has liberated the continent of Africa, at least from the crude forms of colonialism, in the remarkably short time of less than three decades. But, notwithstanding the inherent indignities of colonial domination, this intense human experience, which brought together peoples otherwise very far removed from one another, must pose challenging issues about the value of human interaction, especially when viewed from the perspective of the interacting individuals. As we

move away from the colonial trauma, this point, which has often been overlooked, will need increasingly to be emphasised to bring about an equilibrium in our view of history and its substantive bequests to present and future generations.

Two incidents may help to elucidate the positive human perspective implied in this approach. One is recorded by K. D. D. Henderson, former Governor of Darfur Province (1949–53), who also served in a number of other capacities during his long colonial career in the Sudan. As he came to depart from the Sudan at the end of colonial rule, Henderson had a moving exchange of sentiments with a leading personality of Darfur. This particular *shaykh* said to him that as he was an old man he did not expect to see Henderson in this life, and as for the next, his religion told him that there was no room in Heaven for non-Moslems. Presuming that Henderson's religion said the same about non-Christians, he concluded that he hoped both were wrong and that they would meet again in Heaven.

The next incident occurred in 1969 when Francis and his brother Bol Deng returned from the United States and Europe respectively to their dying father. Since he died in Cairo, they flew the body back to the Sudan and on to Abyei, his administrative centre in southern Kordofan, where he was buried with all the rituals due to a Dinka Divine Chief. As it was during the peak of the civil war between the Northern and the Southern Sudanese, Northern security forces infiltrated the crowds of the mourning Dinka, generating an atmosphere of extreme tension that was aggravated by the death of the man they considered their protector against Arab intimidations and threats of imminent death. It was in that charged atmosphere that the eldest member of the ruling clan requested to speak with Francis and Bol. Sitting on the burial scene, somewhat removed from the crowds, but nevertheless surrounded by onlookers and heavily guarded by the security forces, they listened to what the old man had to say. He immediately went to the point by asking whether, in their travels abroad, they had come in contact with the former British colonial administrators. They said they were in touch with some of them. The old man seemed suddenly exhilarated; an air of ignorant but innocent optimism characterised his expression. Were they *really* in touch with them? Their response was even more assuringly affirmative. He then recounted that, as the British were leaving the Sudan, the District Commissioner in Abyei had told them, the elders, that they, the British, were leaving but would keep a close watch on the developments in the Sudan. Should the Sudanese fail to get along together, they, the British, would be back. 'Would you please go and tell them that we have failed to get along together!'

These two stories demonstrate at least two aspects of the British rule in the Sudan which are recognised as positive. The first, illustrated by the story of the *shaykh*, deals with the quality of human relationships which the British maintained even, and perhaps especially, with their subjects in remote rural areas of the Sudan who were the least touched by Western civilisation. The second, illustrated by the Dinka elder, shows what was perhaps the greatest, most visible achievement of British rule in the Sudan, the establishment of peace, security and the dignity of tribal autonomy, contrasting sharply with the perpetual suffering the African tribes had undergone at the hands of successive waves of invaders and slavers that had ravaged the country, especially the Southern Sudan, from the beginning of time.

Despite the remarkable progress made in the decolonisation process, Africa has, of course, not yet fully liberated itself from the colonial yoke, and there may indeed be other dimensions of colonialism that go far deeper than military occupation and administrative domination. It might therefore be argued that the time for reappraisal and recognition of these positive attributes has not yet arrived. But a pattern has evolved whereby colonial powers, and especially the British and the French, tend to maintain close relations with their now independent former colonies. While some people have dismissed the contribution of the former colonial powers to their former colonies as the correction of, or compensation for, the wrongs committed in the past through colonial exploitation, co-operation between the developed nations of Europe and the developing countries of Africa might perhaps be facilitated by understanding and appreciating the more positive aspects of the colonial experience. The history of colonialism indeed seems to show that the human factor has an overriding, long-term potential for placing the colonial experience in a more complete perspective, for despite the appalling indignities of slavery and slavelike practices it is none the less consoling to know that the inherent moral vitality of humanity will sooner or later bring freedom to the slave, that the freedman and his former master can become equals, and that their former relationship might indeed provide a basis for co-operation in partnership and even friendship. Colonialism is part of an experience. Experience nourishes the heritage of a people. That heritage provides a necessary catalyst for the confidence and the vitality needed to overcome the present and future challenges embedded in the ongoing experience of mankind – life itself.

Colonialism was part of the experience and the heritage of the Sudanese and can neither be lightly dismissed nor discarded into the trashbin of

lost causes. It is part of the Sudanese heritage, that heritage which is the catalyst to overcome future challenges in the Sudan. There are libraries filled with learned disquisitions on colonialism in which the Sudan is no exception. Indeed, the editors in different but strikingly parallel research and writings have sought to elucidate the colonial experience in the Sudan under British rule. Unknowingly each of the editors worked independently on different projects but with the same objectives. In 1973 Francis Deng set out to preserve the 'experience' of British rule in the Sudan by taped interviews with leading Sudanese. The interviews were conducted from a well-prescribed format in which similar questions were asked of each Sudanese notable interviewed. The meeting began with first impressions and continued on through their lifetimes of interpersonal exchanges with the British administrators. The *insightful* comments brought forth a whole Sudanese perspective of the British as rulers of the Sudan. At approximately the same time Richard Hill wrote to Robert Collins from 'a pleasant room in King's College, Cambridge, on a cloudless day' during a conference on the Middle East in July 1975. He suggested an entirely different technique by which to describe British administration in the Sudan through the memoirs, diaries and letters of former British officials whereby they themselves would tell of their life in the Sudan and their relationships with the Sudanese. The Sudan Archive at the School of Oriental Studies, Durham University, already possessed an impressive reservoir of such documents, and there were others scattered throughout Britain in the possession of former British officials or their families. Richard Hill urged Collins to take on the task of collating these relevant materials with 'an introduction and editorial comment'. Hill's invitation was accepted with alacrity and Collins wrote to him several weeks later that 'the Political Service has been of great interest to me and one which today attracts surprisingly greater interest'. At that time Collins was deeply involved in administrative responsibilities as Dean of Graduate Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and so in order to launch the project he invited his former students who had taken their doctoral degrees under his supervision to become participants. Most were pleased to take on the responsibility for the chapters which follow that would revolve around a common theme. The task of collecting the manuscripts then began during the year 1976 and 1977. Richard Hill was assiduous in his help, making several trips to the Sudan Archive at Durham. Tom Fuller made two journeys to Britain in order to collect specific materials from former members of the Sudan Civil Service for inclusion in his chapter. The documentation was circulated among the contributors in order to extract relevant passages

for their respective chapters. The primary objective in editing was to inform the reader of what actually took place in the British administration of the Sudan. Too many memoirs of the Empire have been filled with romantic remembrances of sunsets, children going off to school and dung fires at sunrise without ever really telling about the frequently tedious tasks which an administrator had to deal with day by day. Slowly the topics began to take shape.

In the summer of 1979 Collins and his wife Janyce spent several months in Khartoum during which they had long and enjoyable evenings with Francis Deng talking about British colonialism, the Sudan Political Service and British rule in the Sudan. It was during one of these discussions that it became quite obvious to them both that they were pursuing the same objectives along parallel lines. On the one hand Robert Collins had amassed a large body of memoirs, diaries and letters of British officials, while Francis Deng had compiled critical interviews with important Sudanese about their attitudes and assumptions towards the Condominium. The result, of course, was obvious, and by combining the research of both they hoped to produce a more balanced and valuable volume – a tale of two cultures.

The task of editing such a volume is directly proportional to the number of participants. Thus, while each contributor was free to develop the theme of his or her chapter from the product of his or her research, the two editors reserved final editorial prerogatives to avoid duplication while maintaining consistency of purpose and uniformity of construction. Consultation followed at the mercy of the mail and the space of continents which delayed the completion of the manuscript, but in the end, we hope we create a sense of complete inclusion in the final draft by all the participants.

Such a volume as *The British in the Sudan, 1898–1956*, must be based on the words and writings of others. Consequently, many are those who have contributed to its conclusions, which are, however, the sole responsibility of the editors. To those who have freely given of their time by interviews we are deeply grateful. To those who have granted permission for us to use their memoirs, letters and diaries we are indebted. To those who have willingly let us use the writings of relatives we hope to have justified their trust. To each contributor we have appreciated their patience and understanding. The Ford Foundation, the Hoover Institution and the Committee for Research of the University of California, Santa Barbara, have provided funds to help in the completion of this volume, but of course they are in no way responsible for its conclusions. The final organisation and the in-

troductory chapter were reviewed, revised and completed during the productive sojourn of Robert Collins and his wife at the Rockefeller Study Center at the Villa Serbelloni, Bellagio, in May 1979. Subsequently the final manuscript was completed during Collins's sabbatical leave from the University of California, Santa Barbara, as Senior Associate Member at St Antony's College, Oxford. The editors are deeply indebted to the Warden, Fellows and the Editorial Board of the College for their encouragement and recommendation that the book be published in the St Antony's/Macmillan Series. Thus in conjunction with the Hoover Institution, who will publish the volume in the United States, and Macmillan, who will publish in the United Kingdom, we extend our gratitude to Peter Duignan of the Hoover Institution and Tim Farmiloe of Macmillan. Philip Winter very kindly helped with the proofs. Finally, a very special appreciation belongs to Mrs Dorothy Johnson, whose patience, endurance and interest have been a constant and devoted source of support for these many years.

Robert O. Collins
Francis M. Deng

Illustrations

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The Sudan Archive, University of Durham

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The Sudan Archive, University of Durham

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Popperfoto

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The BBC Hulton Picture Library

The editors and publishers would like to thank Lesley Forbes, archivist at the University of Durham, for illustration research and advice.

1 Introduction

ROBERT O. COLLINS

On New Year's Day 1956 the flags of Great Britain and Egypt were hauled down all over the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, and the blue, yellow and green flag of the Republic of the Sudan was raised in their place. Thus ended the Condominium, fifty-seven years of British and Egyptian rule in the Sudan, which began after the collapse of the authoritarian Mahdist State on the battlefield of Karari in 1898 and closed with the inauguration of an independent, democratic Sudan in 1956. Dominated by the British, the Condominium is the decisive epoch in modern Sudanese history, that era in which the introduction of Western ideas and institutions by British officials combined with the less conspicuous revival of Egyptian cultural influence to change for ever the traditional patterns of Sudanese government and society. Egyptian (or in the early years Turko-Albanian) ascendancy had come to the Sudan in the nineteenth century with the armies of Muhammad 'Ali, only to be eclipsed after 1881 by the meteoric rise of the Mahdist State. Later, Egyptian cultural influence returned with the Anglo-Egyptian armies and remains undiminished to this day. The impact of the British was even greater. They sought to modernise the Sudan by applying technology to the subsistence economy on the one hand, while grafting the liberal institutions of England to the authoritarian, traditional society of the Sudan on the other. Although British officials brought the technology of Europe and the parliamentary democracy of England to the Sudan, they themselves were ironically neither democrats nor scientists, but administrators who believed that their political tradition and imperial heritage invested them with a unique ability to rule and who assumed that the triumphs of Western technology endowed them with a cultural supremacy. Sure of their institutions, convinced of their cultural superiority, their ideas and institutions dramatically altered the customary Sudanese relationships of tribe, religion, and home, creating conflicts and tensions which compromised even the most ordinary,

everyday tasks and disrupted even the most accepted customs. Here then, within this cauldron of modernisation, lies the substance of the modern history of the Sudan, a product of the interaction of two cultural reagents, Britain and Egypt, with indigenous Sudanese society.

The Republic of the Sudan is a vast land of nearly a million square miles and some eighteen million inhabitants. It stretches southward from the Second Cataract of the Nile at 22° north latitude to Lake Albert near the equator. The population is overwhelmingly rural, but an urban complex, consisting of the three cities of Khartoum, Omdurman and Khartoum North, had developed at the junction of the Blue Nile and the White Nile. Khartoum was founded on the site of a small village in 1824 as the headquarters of the Egyptian Army in the Sudan. An administrative centre in a strategic geographical position, Khartoum developed rapidly until destroyed and deserted by the Mahdists in 1885. After the defeat of the Mahdists in 1898, Khartoum was rebuilt by the British as the capital of the Sudan and remains today the administrative centre of approximately 180 000 inhabitants where influence from both the West and the East mingles with the Sudanese intelligentsia. Across the White Nile is Omdurman. Originally little more than a ferry crossing, Omdurman became the Mahdist capital after the destruction of Khartoum, and since that time it has grown into a sprawling Sudanese city with 200 000 inhabitants. Across the Blue Nile from Khartoum is Khartoum North. With a population over 100 000, Khartoum North is more a residential and industrial suburb of Khartoum than an autonomous city. Beyond this growing urban centre, numerous towns are scattered throughout the provinces, generally as administrative headquarters or, as in the case of Port Sudan and Wad Madani, the result of economic development. Although the centre of governmental, intellectual and economic life, the cities and towns are the habitation of only a small minority of Sudanese.

Originally Sudan meant Bilad as-Sudan, the 'land of the Blacks' of the medieval Moslem geographers, which extended across Africa from the Red Sea to the Atlantic, between Arab and African cultures. The generic name Sudan is still applied to this extensive region, but it specifically refers to those territories in the basin of the Nile which now constitute the Democratic Republic of the Sudan. Opening northward to the expansive wastes of the Libyan and Nubian deserts, the Sudan is confined in the central and southern provinces by the Red Sea and Ethiopia to the east, the Great Lakes of Central Africa to the south, and the massif of Jabal Marra to the west. The rivers and streams of the Sudan, almost all of them part of the Nile River system, play a

preponderant role in Sudanese life, while the amount of rainfall governs conditions in the enormous areas beyond the reach of the rivers.

The Nile, of course, is the dominant physical feature of the Sudan. The annual flood of the main Nile reaches its peak below Khartoum in late August and early September, when it expands to sixteen times the volume of its lowest stage in April. Between mid-July and mid-September over half the total volume for the year passes through the Sudan, and after confinement in Lake Nasser flows to Egypt and the sea. North of Khartoum irrigation is essential for cultivation. Here, scattered along the Nile between Shandi and Dunqula, are some twenty depressions which are annually flooded and drained to provide crops and grazing land, but an even larger number of feddans (one feddan equals 1.038 acres) are irrigated by lifting the water from the Nile to the fields above. Traditionally, the *shaduf* (counterbalance dipper) and the *saqiya* (water wheel) were employed for this purpose, but since the Second World War the use of mechanical pumps has permitted a rapid expansion of Nilotic irrigation. South of Khartoum rainfall increases, but remains so variable that irrigation is desirable. The Gezira Irrigation Scheme, for instance, is completely dependent on the water stored behind the Sennar and Al Rusayris Dams, which flows by gravity through a network of canals to be drawn off when required into fields of cotton and food crops. In the eastern Sudan two rivers, the Qash and the Baraka, which are not in the Nile system, provide water for flush irrigation. Rising in the highlands of Eritrea, the rivers rush down to the plains during the rains in a series of spates to disappear into deltas, the Qash and the Tukar, respectively, upon which irrigated crops are grown.

Rainfall largely determines the way of life and the physical characteristics of the land beyond the Nile and its tributaries. In the extreme north along the present Egyptian–Sudanese frontier there is almost no rainfall, and only about one inch annually at Marawi, two hundred miles to the south. The only cultivation possible is that which can be irrigated by the tribes settled along the river banks. These peoples claim different origins. In the north along the southern extremity of Lake Nasser dwell the Nubians (the Sukkut and the Mahas), Moslems who still speak Nubian dialects which have given way but grudgingly to Arabic. Farther south along the Nile lives a larger group of peoples who, although having intermarried with the indigenous Nubians, describe themselves as Arabs and claim descent from a common Arab ancestor, Ibrahim Ja'al. Although the historical accuracy of such ancestry is doubtful, these Sudanese people, called collectively the Ja'aliyin, take great pride in their common pedigree. Two groups in particular among the numerous

Ja'ali tribes, the Danaqla and the Ja'aliyin, have played important roles in the history of the Sudan. Located in the historic region of Dunqula, whence they derive their name, the Danaqla (men of Dunqula) have the strongest Nubian element of any of the Ja'ali tribes. Beyond, between the Atbara and the Sabaluka Gorge, live the Ja'aliyin (plural of Ja'ali), who have adopted the Ja'ali appellation as their own tribal name. In modern times all of these tribes have felt the pressure of increased population on their lands, so that many have emigrated – the Nubians to Egypt as servants, the Danaqla and the Ja'aliyin to Kordofan and the Southern Sudan as merchants and traders. Those who have remained behind continue the rhythmic life of settled villagers governed by the rise and fall of the Nile whose waters maintain their crops, flocks and herds.

Along this extensive reach of the Nile from lower Nubia to Sabaluka, only one tribe, the Shayqiyya, does not claim a Ja'ali descent. More aggressive and restless than their neighbours, the Shayqiyya alone of the riverine tribes resisted the invading forces of Muhammad 'Ali in 1821, were defeated and then enlisted in the Turko-Egyptian army as irregular cavalry. During their Egyptian service they established colonies all over the Sudan, and today the Shayqiyya are among the most vigorous and adaptable of Sudanese peoples.

East and west of the Nile dwell the nomadic Arab tribes known as the Juhayna, a general term embracing those Arab tribes who do not claim Ja'ali origins. To the west of the Nile live the Kababish, who roam deep into Kordofan and Darfur with their camels and sheep and who once controlled the *Darb al-Arba'in* (the Forty Days Road), the great caravan route from the western Sudan to Asyut in Egypt. To the east of the Nile, between the Atbara and the Blue Nile, rainfall is sufficient to provide seasonal grass. The area is known as the Butana and is dominated by the camel-owning, nomadic Shukriyya. Just as the existence of the villagers is governed by the rise and fall of the Nile, the life of these camel people is regulated by the annual cycle of the dry and rainy seasons. The Kababish, for instance, wander southward in the dry season in search of grazing and then reverse their direction in the rainy season, moving north and west to the fresh grass and the pools left by the rains. The Shukriyya remain close to the Blue Nile during the dry season but then pursue the rains north and east into the interior of the Butana. Southward from the latitude of Khartoum the rains permit limited cultivation and extensive grazing on the grasslands which stretch west from the Nile across southern Kordofan and Darfur. These plains are inhabited by tribes, known as the Baqqara, or cattle-owning Arabs, claiming Juhayna origins but influenced culturally and physically by

intermarriage with African peoples from the south and west. Excellent horsemen, fanatical fighters and emotional in their religion, the Baqqara nomads, chief among whom are the Rizayqat and Ta'aisha tribes, conform, like the camel-owning tribes, to the cycle of seasons, moving south in the dry weather and north to higher ground with the rains. One other important Arab subgroup, the Rufa'a, have in the past frequently been included among the Juhayna Arabs, but, like the Shayqiyya among the Ja'ali, the Rufa'a possess unique origins which distinguish them from the other Juhayna tribes. Originally a nomadic people who grazed their herds and flocks on either side of the Blue Nile, all except the southern section upstream near the Ethiopian foothills have today adopted a settled, riverine existence.

Interspersed among the Arab tribes are numerous islands of non-Arab peoples, indigenes who have preserved their own cultures from the tides of Arab migrants who have passed them by or surrounded them. Far to the east in the Red Sea Hills are the largest non-Arab group in the Northern Sudan, the Beja, camel-owning Moslems who, except for the 'Ababda, speak their own Cushitic language. The 'Ababda are the most Arabised of the Beja; they speak Arabic and live partly in Egypt, and at one time they controlled the caravan route from Kurusku across the Nubian Desert to Abu Hamad. The more southern Beja tribes, the Hadendowa, Bisharin and Bani 'Amir, are much less affected by Arab influences, having remained in the mountain vastness of the Red Sea Hills until the eighteenth century, when they expanded down on to the plains of the Atbara and the Qash rivers. West of the Nile in the Nuba Mountains a group of indigenous, non-Arabic-speaking, pagan, African peoples have been isolated in the hilltop villages by the Arabs who seized the plains below. The Arabic language makes no distinction between the Nuba of Kordofan and the Nubians near the Egyptian frontier, resulting in a long-standing controversy on the possible relationship between the two. In the far west a third important non-Arab people, the Fur, dwell in the protection of Jabal Marra. Here the Fur maintained their identity against the conquering Arabs and preserved their own dynastic Moslem State in Darfur (land of the Fur) until 1916.

The southern limit of the Baqqara is the Bahr al-'Arab, a tributary of the Bahr al-Ghazal flowing west to east and forming a natural frontier between the Arab, Moslem North and the African, pagan South. Between the Bahr al-'Arab and the Great Lakes of Central Africa is the land known as the Southern Sudan, whose four million inhabitants differ dramatically from the Northern Sudanese.

Ethnically the North claims to be Arab, the South is African. In religion the North is Moslem, the South is predominately pagan with a sprinkling of Christians and Moslems. The North speaks mostly Arabic, the South some eighty different languages. Culturally the North is linked to Egypt and the wider Arab world, the South to Africa and the cultures of the peoples of Zaire, Uganda and Kenya.

Although today the leaders of the Sudan are striving to bind the disparate peoples of the North and the South with the cords of Sudanese nationalism, they are confronted by this wide cultural divergence and haunted by Southern hostility left over from historic conflicts and from the seventeen years of disturbances and civil war in the South from 1955 to 1972. Moreover, the Southern Sudanese themselves cannot claim any cultural homogeneity such as Arabic or Islamic, which have played such a vital role in binding together the Northern Sudan, and the internal rivalries and cultural differences within the South have hampered the Southern Sudanese from acting in common against the North. The many and complex institutions and cultures in the Southern Sudan defy brief description, but generally the Southern Sudanese have been divided into three great linguistic subfamilies: Eastern Sudanic, Central Sudanic and Adamawa–Eastern.[1]

Eastern Sudanic is a subfamily of the Chari–Nile branch of the larger Nilo-Saharan language family. It contains some ten branches, three of which are represented in the Southern Sudan. Along the Nile corridor the Nilotic branch of Eastern Sudanic is dominated by three large and powerful tribes: the Nuer, the Dinka and the Shilluk. The Nuer live in the most inaccessible areas of the great swamps of the Nile and until the Condominium have been left alone by conqueror and administrator alike. The Dinka, numbering nearly a million, are the single largest tribal group in the Sudan today. Like the Nuer, their single-minded concern for cattle dominates their economic, social, religious, and aesthetic life; all activities revolve around the cattle camp and the seasonal migrations from the marsh lowlands in the dry season to the high ground in the wet. The Shilluk inhabit the west bank of the Nile north and south of Fashoda, but, unlike the Nuer and the Dinka, the Shilluk keep only a few cattle and cultivate the land, for which their neighbours despise them. Perhaps it is their settled way of life or the fact that Shilluk land is concentrated near the river that accounts for the distinctive Shilluk institutions of political organisation revolving around the Reth or Divine King. The Nuer, the Dinka and the Shilluk are the principal but by no means the only Nilotic-speaking peoples in the Southern Sudan. At the foot of the Ethiopian escarpment live the Anuak, who depend on

sheep and goats rather than cattle for subsistence. On the western fringe of the Dinka are small groups of Nilotic-speaking cultivators (the Jur, Luo, Bor and Dembo), while south of the Dinka are the Bari and related tribes (the Fajelu, Kakwa, Nyangbara, Mandari and Kuku), who in the depredations of the nineteenth century lost their large cattle herds and were reduced to agriculture. Beyond, in the mountains to the south and east on the Uganda border, dwell isolated clusters of Nilotic-speaking peoples (the Latuka, the Dongotoro, the Lokoya and the Lango), offshoots of early migrants who have remained independent, settled farmers.

Scattered on the fringe of the great funnel of Nilotic-speaking peoples clustered along the Bahr al-Jabal and its tributaries are two additional branches of the Eastern Sudanic subfamily. East of the Nile live the Murle, the Longarim and the Didinga group, while west of the Nile on the plains of the Bahr al-Ghazal are pockets of the Njangulgule and the Shatt, who form the third group of Eastern-Sudanic-speaking peoples in the Southern Sudan. None display the passion for cattle of their Nilotic neighbours, preferring a subsistence economy based primarily on cultivation with only small numbers of livestock.

The Central Sudanic languages, like the Eastern Sudanic, are a subfamily of the Chari–Nile branch of the Nilo-Saharan language family. The vast majority of African peoples speaking languages of the Central Sudanic subfamily lie outside the basin of the Upper Nile and are represented in the Southern Sudan by only three small, weak tribes – the Kreish, the Moru and the Bongo.

The third language group, the Adamawa–Eastern, is a subfamily of the Niger–Congo branch of the larger Congo–Kordofanian family. The numerous subfamilies of Niger–Congo, of which Adamawa–Eastern is only one, also include the large number of related Bantu languages. Like Central Sudanic, the vast number of linguistic groups included in the Adamawa–Eastern subfamily inhabit territory outside the Sudan, but the eastward encroachment of these African peoples has left a large block of Azande-speaking people on the Sudan side of the Congo–Nile watershed. Unlike the Nilotes, they are tillers of the soil, disciplined to a central authority and organised for expansion. During the nineteenth century the Azande and related peoples pressed north and east into the Southern Sudan, pushing back the smaller, weaker Central-Sudanic-speaking tribes on to the Nilotes and, by the end of the century, actually coming into contact with the Nilotic fringe.

The differences between the Northern and Southern Sudan are not only confined to the race, religion, language and culture of their

inhabitants, but to their land as well. The luxuriant, verdant grasslands, swamps and forests of the South form a striking contrast to the arid plains and rocky outcrops of the North. Physically the Southern Sudan is an undulating plain rising from the swamps of the Nile south and west to the Congo–Nile Divide and the Uganda frontier, where the vegetation is green and lush and the configuration of the land is broken by ridges and low mountains. Some of the mountains, the most famous of which is Jabal Rajjaf, emerge conical-shaped from the surrounding plain, presenting the illusion of great height, while others, like the Imatong Mountains on the Uganda frontier, are but one of a chain of mountain ranges, some of which tower to a height of over 10 000 feet. To the west, along the Congo–Nile Divide, the rising plain culminates in long, parallel ridges separated by steep ravines from which rise the rivers and streams of the Nile. Near the Divide the grasslands of the Bahr al-Ghazal are interspersed with gallery forests, named for the effect of interlocking branches high above the ground. Gradually these forests thicken and then elide to form the great tropical rainforest that stretches far into Zaïre.

Thus the Sudan was a vast and diverse land into which the British came in 1898. In the late nineteenth century the Sudan was sucked into the orbit of European imperial diplomacy. In 1885 the Turko-Egyptian Administration of the Sudan was overthrown by Muhammad Ahmad, al-Mahdi, and upon Gordon's death at Khartoum Egyptian rule on the middle and upper Nile came to an end. Upon the death of the Mahdi shortly after his triumph at Khartoum, the governing of the Sudan was bequeathed to his successor, the Khalifa 'Abd Allahi. For the next thirteen years the Khalifa's autocracy ruled the Sudan without external threats or internal interference with the Nile waters. That water was vital to the very life of Egypt and the British, like the Egyptians, found themselves dependent upon it to maintain their control at Cairo and Suez, the lifelines to the East and Britain's Oriental Empire. By skilful diplomacy Britain was able to contain Italian and German thrusts towards the Nile and its precious waters, but after 1896 it became increasingly clear to the British Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury, and his coterie of advisers, the official minds which governed the empire, that diplomacy would not keep the French from bestriding the Nile at Fashoda several hundred miles south of Khartoum. It was time to call upon the big battalions to redress the inadequacy of diplomacy.

In 1896 Lord Salisbury ordered Sir Herbert Horatio Kitchener commanding the Anglo-Egyptian Army in Egypt to begin the long-awaited advance up the Nile. Kitchener and his subordinates had been

preparing for this eventuality since the day that Gordon had lost his life and won martyrdom at Khartoum on 26 January 1885. The Egyptian Army had been rebuilt by British officers and equipped with the latest weaponry. The British public, with Gordon's death still vivid, had been skilfully prepared to demand vengeance for his death by a host of popular books about tyrannous conditions in the Sudan and the misrule of the Khalifa by the adroit orchestration of Reginald Wingate, the Director of Military Intelligence of the Egyptian Army.

Once given permission to advance, Kitchener pushed steadily but cautiously up the Nile to the Atbara River, where on 8 April 1898 he encountered the army of the Khalifa's lieutenant, Mahmud Ahmad. At the Atbara the Mahdists fought with superb bravery, but they were overwhelmed by the superior technology, organisation and discipline of the Anglo-Egyptian troops. After his victory on the Atbara Kitchener spent four months preparing for the final advance to Omdurman. By now Salisbury was thoroughly alarmed by the French drive to the Nile, and additional British troops, gunboats and artillery were sent up the Nile to ensure the defeat of the Mahdists. While Kitchener prepared to advance, the Khalifa massed an enormous army of some eighty thousand men at Omdurman to overwhelm the infidel invaders in one final battle. Early in the morning of 2 September 1898 the Khalifa hurled his troops at the Anglo-Egyptian defence perimeter which Kitchener had drawn up by the Nile at Iqayqa, six miles north of Omdurman. To the west lay the Karari Hills, and swarming down to the plains at their base came the Ansar, to hurl themselves with matchless courage against Kitchener's machine guns. By midday the Battle of Karari was over. Eleven thousand Ansar lay dead; some sixteen thousand were wounded. Kitchener lost forty-eight killed and 382 wounded.

When he saw that the day was lost the Khalifa returned to Omdurman to rally his reserves. He failed and rode off with his bodyguard to Kordofan, where he remained a fugitive until November 1899. Then a British force under General Wingate cornered him at Umm Diwaykarat. Once again the machine gun decided the battle. The Khalifa of the Mahdi lay dead upon his sheepskin rug. The Mahdiya had ended.

Five days after the defeat of the Khalifa on the plains of Karari, a steamer filled with his followers arrived from the south. They reported to have been shot at by Europeans, and an examination of the bullets lodged in the steamer showed them to be of French manufacture. Marchand had reached Fashoda. Kitchener acted at once. He opened the special orders given to him by Lord Salisbury for use if he came across Europeans on the upper Nile. The orders instructed him to

contest their claims. With a powerful flotilla Kitchener steamed south to Fashoda, where he met Marchand on 18 September. The intrepid French captain refused to withdraw, and Kitchener, rather than shoot down the small French force, referred the matter to London. The long-expected Fashoda crisis was on. At first both the French and the British governments refused to give way, and both prepared for war. The French, however, could not fight. Their navy was in deplorable condition. The army was demoralised and weakened by the Dreyfus affair, and Marchand himself could hardly have been supported at his isolated outpost. The French thus gave way, and in the Anglo-French declaration of March 1899 limited French eastern expansion at the Nile watershed. This was a great British diplomatic victory, but it did not entirely secure the Nile basin. Having eliminated the French from the Nile, the British were now confronted by the forces of the Congo Free State. King Leopold II had long dreamed of becoming a Nilotic power, and for a decade had expended vast amounts of men and money to establish a foothold on the river. In 1897 his force had driven the Mahdists from Rajjaf and founded a Congolese post there. Now Leopold revived his legal claims to the Bahr al-Ghazal, which would have given the Congo Free State control of the myriad of Nile sources which rise on the Congo-Nile watershed. Having been prepared to fight a major war to push the French from the Southern Sudan the British were not about to hand over the Bahr al-Ghazal to Leopold. Many years of acrimonious negotiations followed, until Leopold finally capitulated in 1906. By 1910 the Nile Basin from its source to its mouth was at last securely British.

Having conquered the Sudan the British now had to administer it. But the administration of this vast land was complicated by the legal and diplomatic problems which had accompanied the conquest. The Sudan campaigns had been undertaken by the British to protect their imperial position as well as the Nile waters, yet the Egyptian treasury had borne the greater part of the expense, and Egyptian troops had far outnumbered those of Britain in the Anglo-Egyptian army. The British agent in Cairo, Lord Cromer, did not simply want to hand the Sudan over to Egyptian rule, for that would mean the extension to the Sudan of the capitulations, those privileges to Europeans and Americans which had done so much to hamper the task of modernisation in Egypt. Moreover, those Englishmen who concerned themselves with such matters were convinced that the Mahdiya was the result of sixty years of oppressive Egyptian rule in the Sudan, and no British Government was prepared to hand back the Sudanese to a form of administration against

which they had once before revolted. The alternative was, of course, to annex the Sudan outright to the British Empire, but this would have been a shocking violation of Egypt's historic claims and her contributions to the river war.

The solution to Britain's dilemma was the Condominium, an ingenious scheme created by Lord Cromer and approved by the Egyptian Government in the Anglo-Egyptian agreement of 1899. The Sudan was given a separate political status. Sovereignty was jointly shared by the Khedive and the British Crown; the Egyptian and the British flags were flown side by side. The claims of the Ottoman sultan were ignored, and no European privileges were allowed. Egyptian legislation was not to be applied in the Sudan; rather, the government of the Sudan was invested in a Governor-General appointed by the Khedive but nominated by the British Government. The Governor-General was responsible for the complete military and civil organisation of government in the Sudan, an authoritarian arrangement with which the Sudanese were well acquainted from past experience. The name Condominium was of course bogus. To political theorists joint sovereignty is a contradiction because sovereignty cannot be shared, and in reality there was no equal partnership between Britain and Egypt. From the first Britain dominated the Condominium, leaving the Egyptians with feelings of bitter humiliation at supposedly being manoeuvred out of their historic rights by a clever legal agreement. So long as Britain remained in Egypt the Condominium functioned smoothly, but once in control of their own affairs the Egyptians sought equal partnership in the Sudan. This the British refused to recognise, and from that point the Condominium became a source of embarrassment and friction in Anglo-Egyptian relations.

The principal task facing the Anglo-Egyptian forces after their victory at Karari was the pacification of the plains of the Sudan beyond the rivers. The Khalifa was still at large and had to be hunted down, but of even greater danger were a host of local risings in the Northern Sudan, usually sparked by the preaching of a holy man proclaiming himself to be the Prophet Jesus (al-Nabī'Īsā), or another Mahdi, to drive the infidel out of the Sudan.[2] Indeed, most Sudanese in these early years did not distinguish between the British and the Turks who had previously ruled, referring to the Condominium simply as *al-Turkiya al-Thaniya*, the second Turkiya. Soon after the Khalifa's death a band of Sudanese arose in anticipation of the coming of the Prophet Jesus. In 1903 a Mahdi declared himself in Kordofan, and in 1904 another Jesus appeared at Sinja on the Blue Nile. In 1908 a larger rebellion broke out

in the Gezira, led by a former Mahdist amir, 'Abd al-Qadir Muhammad Imam, known as Wad Habuba, and in 1912 one of his followers established himself as a Prophet Jesus in Kordofan. Some of these rebels were condemned as heretics and exiled. Others were captured, tried and hanged. A few were shot down in hard-fought military engagements. Virtually all of these revolts were messianic in character and limited to a few immediate followers of a local holy man. Nevertheless the persistence of such risings created an obsession with security on the part of British Officials that long outlived its cause. Before the outbreak of the First World War these local religious rebellions had become decidedly less frequent and the acceptance of the administration by the Sudanese had increased greatly, yet the administrative policies of the Sudan Government remained conditioned by fears of insecurity for many years thereafter.

Only in the Southern Sudan were these fears justified. Before the occupation of the southern provinces could begin, the Nile and its tributaries had to be cleared of matted vegetation called the sudd. By 1901 the river routes to the south had been opened after a herculean effort by hundreds of Mahdist prisoners under the command of Major Peake Bey and his British engineers, but even today it requires great effort to keep the Nile free to navigation by removing annually the sudd and the more recent but more insidious water hyacinth. Once the river was open, an Anglo-Egyptian expedition was rushed into the Bahr al-Ghazal, as much to frustrate the claims of the Congo Free State as to extend British administration. Here British officers established a network of posts throughout the province and along the Bahr al-Jabal in the former Equatoria Province. But the construction of government posts garrisoned by Sudanese troops and managed by British officials did not mean that the Pax Britannica was imposed on the vast reaches of the countryside surrounding the isolated stations. At first the Southern Sudanese regarded the British as just another invader who would undoubtedly attempt to suppress their independence and exploit their human and natural resources. By cajolery, gifts and peaceful displays of force, and at other times by offers of protection, threats and even the use of punitive military expeditions, the British officers gradually overcame the Southerners' traditional but justified suspicions of strangers. For the first twenty-five years of British rule in the Southern Sudan the district officials were invariably military officers. Known affectionately throughout the British Empire as the 'Bog Barons', they remained in the southern provinces, and usually in the same district, for many years, spoke English or an African language rather than Arabic, and closely

identified themselves with the people they ruled. They trekked throughout the countryside visiting chiefs, villages and tribal gatherings. On occasion they were accompanied by a well-armed escort, but a lonely district officer tramping through the bush with a butterfly net and a few porters frequently made a greater impression than companies of well-disciplined troops. With or without arms, however, the purpose was the same – to establish the authority of the Sudan Government, hopefully by peace, but if necessary by war. So long as they kept the peace in their district and spent as little money as possible, the Bog Barons were left alone by the central government, an attitude these officers did nothing to discourage. But this indifference on the part of the central authorities resulted in few attempts at modernisation, and a generation was to pass before the handful of British officers could claim that they had unquestioned control throughout the length and breadth of the southern provinces.

Administration in the Northern Sudan was more sophisticated. The aim of the Administration in the Moslem Sudan was to modernise, not just pacify. The first Governor-General was the conqueror of Karari himself, Lord Kitchener, but in 1899 he left for the South African War, and his former aide Sir Reginald Wingate was appointed to succeed him. As the Director of Military Intelligence of the Egyptian Army since 1889, Wingate knew the Sudan and became, during his long tenure as Governor-General (1899–1916), devoted to its people and their prosperity. His tolerance and trust in the Sudanese resulted in policies which did much to establish confidence in Christian, British rule by a devoutly Moslem, Arab-oriented people. Moreover, the Sudan in these early years was particularly suited to Wingate's obsession with the most petty problems and the most obscure details, for the Sudan Government was small and its problems, though great, never so numerous as to confuse priorities. Only in his later career, when the position of the Governor-General changed from that of an office manager to that of a corporation director, did the mass of detail to which he had so long been accustomed confuse the formation of wider policies.

During the Wingate years the Sudan Government was advised by the curious figure of Rudolf von Slatin Pasha. Slatin had visited Egypt and the Sudan in 1874, where in Khartoum he had met Eduard Schnitzer, the famous Emin Pasha, who was on his way to join Gordon in Equatoria. Slatin liked the Sudan and asked Emin to recommend him to Gordon. Four years passed, but Gordon did not forget. In July 1878 Slatin was invited to join the Egyptian Administration, and upon completing his military service in Austria he arrived in Khartoum to begin an

association with the Sudan that did not end until 1914. In 1881 Slatin was appointed Governor-General of Darfur (*Mudir 'amm Dar Fur*), where he tried to stem the tide of Mahdism, failed, turned Moslem, and surrendered to the Mahdists. Thereafter he was servant, slave and adviser to the Mahdi's successor, the Khalifa, until he escaped from Omdurman to Egypt in 1895. Although his dramatic flight and subsequent best-seller, *Fire and Sword in the Sudan*, made him a romantic and dashing figure to be cultivated by the great and near great, his role in the conquest of the Sudan and the administration of the Condominium was intrinsically more important. In constant attendance on the Khalifa during his captivity, Slatin was privy to the innermost secrets of the Mahdist State, which, after his flight to Egypt, were promptly placed at the disposal of Wingate, the Director of Military Intelligence. The plans of the Anglo-Egyptian conquest were based in no small degree upon Slatin's experience of the Mahdiya. This same knowledge soon proved even more valuable to the newly created Sudan Administration. As Inspector-General of the Sudan he became the 'grey eminence' behind Wingate. Slatin supplied the information, Wingate the policy, and together they fashioned the direction and spirit of the Anglo-Egyptian Administration in the Sudan. The professional association was accompanied by an equally deep personal attachment. This happy and halcyon relationship came abruptly to an end in 1914 when Slatin, torn between his love for the British in the Sudan and his Austrian homeland, resigned from the Sudan service and devoted himself to the work of the Austrian Red Cross.

Below the Governor-General the Sudan was divided into provinces, and each province into districts. Each province was the responsibility of a British Governor and each district that of a British officer with an Egyptian or Sudanese *ma'mur* (assistant) and a small clerical staff and police force. At first the governors reported directly to Wingate, but after 1910 the informal meetings of the Governor-General's staff were reorganised into a formal council, the principal members being the Civil Secretary, the Legal Secretary and the Financial Secretary. Thereafter the Governor-General, particularly after Wingate's departure, meddled less in the daily administration, deliberately becoming a figure of awe and symbol of authoritarian rule, while the governors reported to the various secretaries. The power of a secretary depended as much on the ability and personality of the individual as on his position within the bureaucracy. By its nature the office of Civil Secretary was concerned with the execution of internal policy, and under the efficient and brilliant tenure of Sir Harold MacMichael (1926–33) the office of Civil Secretary

became the single most powerful office after that of the Governor-General.

At first the British staff consisted of British officers seconded from the Egyptian Army, but unlike the Southern Sudan, where military officers remained until the end of the Condominium, civilians were recruited as early as 1900, mostly from Oxford and Cambridge universities, to supplement and to replace military men. These civilian administrators soon evolved into a small elite known as the Sudan Political Service, which in fact ruled the Sudan as an offshoot of the Sudan Civil Service, the latter containing the hierarchy of lesser administrative officers and technical personnel. Candidates for the Sudan Political Service were selected by an interviewing board of members of the Sudan Government, who quite naturally tended to choose men in their own image – men of impeccable character with good family connections, sound personality, athletic achievements and an English public school education. Thus character, health and prowess on the playing-fields were better qualifications for admittance into the service than intellectual ability. Although the need for sound, competent, steady men was clearly most desirable for service in a country like the Sudan, with its taxing climate and lonely spaces, the recruitment of men of similar attainments tended to convey conformity rather than creativity, duty rather than initiative and paternalism rather than tutelage. The service was always small in number, never more than one hundred and fifty at any one time, and no more than four hundred in the whole history of the Condominium. These administrators were accorded wide latitude in running their districts, another factor which contributed to their *esprit de corps*. But their very confidence, knowledge and devotion to the Sudanese frequently obscured their judgement and made them slow to react to the new forces which modernisation unleashed in the Sudan. In spite of such provincialism – even narrowness – uniformity and conservatism, the Sudan Political Service created a viable state from the conglomeration of disparate parts and differing peoples which threatened to disintegrate at the end of the Mahdiya.

Modernisation in the Sudan was at first slow. Taxes were purposely kept light, and the Sudan Government consequently had few funds available for development. In fact the Sudan remained dependent for many years on an Egyptian subvention. Nevertheless, vernacular, technical and primary schools were begun, more to provide the Administration with clerks and artisans rather than to instruct the Sudanese in the broader concepts of liberal learning. Economic development depended on communications, and railways, telegraph

and steamer services were expanded, particularly in the Gezira in order to launch the great cotton-growing scheme of that region. Although the war delayed the beginnings of that most spectacular of African agricultural projects, the meticulous planning required for its success took place between 1905 and 1914. During the First World War the Sudan Government extended its administration to Darfur, where the autonomous sultan, 'Ali Dinar, was killed in a brief campaign in 1916; his province was taken over by British administrators, and the final delimitation of the western boundary of the Sudan, provided for in the Anglo-French declaration of 1899, was at last completed in 1924.

The First World War itself was a dramatic demonstration of the loyalty of the Sudanese to the Anglo-Egyptian Administration. The Sudanese not only ignored the call of the Ottoman Turks to the *jihad* (or Holy War), but provided the Allies with moral and material support. Among the vast majority of Sudanese, particularly the tribal *shaykhs* of village and steppe, the British officials had built up a great reserve of trust which created political stability in a traditionally volatile land. The Sudan Government clearly suited traditional Sudanese society precisely because it was authoritarian and paternal without being oppressive.

One group of Sudanese, however, was gradually drawn away from the traditional political and social framework. These were the Western-educated, middle-class elite, who had adopted many ideas and manners from European culture. Under the leadership of Sir James Currie a programme of vernacular elementary schools, technical schools and primary (later called intermediate) schools was implemented to expose a limited number of Sudanese to the rudiments of Western education and to prepare them to serve the government as clerks and artisans. Foremost among the schools was the Gordon Memorial College, opened in 1902 with funds solicited after Kitchener's appeal in 1898 for a suitable memorial to Gordon's name. The college originally consisted of a primary and technical school, but later evolved into a secondary school and ultimately into Khartoum University. Educated in these schools to the mysteries of Western technology, and inculcated with the cultural and political values of Great Britain stressing independence and liberal democracy, the new middle-class Sudanese, like others elsewhere in the Middle East and Africa, turned less and less to the tribe for inspiration and saw in the British Administration that dependence and acceptance of authority they had been taught to reject. Scorned by the British officials, who preferred the illiterate but contented fathers to the 'half-educated', rebellious sons, and adrift from their own customary tribal and religious affiliations, these Sudanese turned for encourage-

ment and sympathy to Egyptian nationalists in the Sudan, and from that association Sudanese nationalism in this century was born.

Ironically the first sputterings of Sudanese nationalism did not derive its inspiration from Egypt. In 1921 'Ali 'Abd al-Latif, a former Dinka army officer who claimed to have been unjustly treated by a British officer, formed the United Tribes Society to work for the independence of the Sudan under its tribal leaders. His exhortations soon led to his arrest in 1922 and brief imprisonment. In 1924 he was back again. This time, however, his rudimentary political ideas had become, under Egyptian tutelage, more subtle. Not only was he prepared to co-operate with the Egyptians, but he formed the White Flag League whose purpose was to drive out the British and establish a united Egypt and Sudan under the Egyptian monarchy. 'Abd al-Latif's conversion was not simply gross opportunism, for he himself symbolised the basic dilemma of nationalism in the Sudan which later plagued more sophisticated nationalists – an independent Sudan or unity with Egypt. Today it is impossible to assess accurately whether unity with Egypt was, to Sudanese nationalists, merely a political manœuvre to embarrass the British or a real commitment to a united Nile Valley. The establishment of an independent Sudan today has obscured the embryonic attitudes and feelings of the early nationalists.

In June 1924 the White Flag League demonstrated in Khartoum, and 'Abd al-Latif was again arrested. In August the cadets of the Military School demonstrated in Khartoum and were supported by the mutiny of the Egyptian railway battalion at Atbara. Both these disturbances were firmly suppressed. Although many of the Sudanese elite sympathised with the demonstrations, the country remained quiet. Then suddenly, on 19 November 1924, Sir Lee Stack, the Governor-General of the Sudan, by virtue of his office the Sirdar or Commander-in-chief of the Egyptian Army, was assassinated in Cairo. The British retaliated with obstinate fury, and Viscount Allenby, the British High Commissioner in Egypt, sought to use the incident to end the growing tension between the British and the Egyptians in the Sudan. He demanded that all Egyptian officers and men be withdrawn from the Sudan within twenty-four hours. The Egyptian detachments, at the point of British bayonets, were at once placed on trains and sent down the Nile, but at the same time part of the 11th Sudanese Battalion mutinied in sympathy and barricaded themselves in the military hospital in Khartoum. When they refused to surrender they were annihilated by British artillery. The Sudan Government urged the British Government in London to terminate the Condominium, but this was too bold a step, and the Condominium

continued theoretically in force, though for all practical purposes Egyptian participation in the Sudan ceased to exist. The Egyptian Army had been sent home to Cairo. It was followed by a stream of lesser Egyptian officials, clerks, technicians and teachers. Sudanese filled some of their places, Lebanese staffed others, but the rest remained empty, and the modernisationof the Sudan was consequently constricted.

The Sudanese revolt of 1924 was not as important as the reaction to it. The discontent in the Sudan had been limited to a tiny minority, largely subverted by Egyptians. The overwhelming number of Sudanese tribesmen and leaders alike remained steadfastly loyal to their British rulers. The British repaid this devotion with confidence, but they viewed with alarm the new class of educated Sudanese they had created. Ironically, just as Wingate had sought to protect the Sudan against a rising of the tribes, his successors now sought to check the Sudanese elite, whose liberalism could not be reconciled with the authoritarianism of imperial rule. The Military School was closed. Courses designed to train junior administrators were abandoned, and Gordon College and its products were regarded with suspicion if not contempt. Greater reliance was placed upon converting the tribal authorities into agents of the Administration rather than handing administrative duties to Western-educated Sudanese civil servants. Such a policy not only helped to remedy the loss of Egyptian officials, but it coincided with the colonial policy of indirect rule which was then being hailed as the key to the stable advancement of dependent peoples. Indeed, the whole trend of British policy in the Sudan until the Second World War was to isolate the Sudanese elite, who were watched, suspected and even feared. Governor-General Sir John Maffey succinctly betrayed this attitude when he wrote in 1927:

> The granting of powers to native magistrates and sheikhs is more in keeping with the prime principle [devolution of authority to tribal chiefs], but here again unless such machinery stands on a true native and traditional basis it is off the main drive. Advisory Councils cropped up as a possible means to our end but the proposal was not well received and I think there were good grounds for hesitation. Later on in certain intelligentsia areas, when we have made the Sudan safe for autocracy, such Councils may be innocuous or even desirable. Also Advisory Councils to Chiefs would be in keeping with the broad principle. Otherwise Advisory Councils contain the seeds of grave danger and eventually present a free platform for capture by a pushful intelligentsia.

If the encouragement of native authority in the true sense of the Milner formula is our accepted policy, before old traditions die we ought to get on with the extension and expansion in every direction, thereby sterilising and localising the political germs which must spread from the lower Nile into Khartoum.

Under the impulse of new ideas and with the rise of a new generation, old traditions may pass away with astonishing rapidity. It is advisable to fortify them while the memories of Mahdism and Omdurman are still vivid and while tribal sanctions are still a living force. The death of two or three veterans in a tribe may constitute a serious break with the past.

Such anxiety on my part may seem far-fetched to those who know the outlying parts of the Sudan. Perhaps it is, for I realise the wide range of differing conditions. But I have watched an old generation give place to a new one in India and I have seen how easily vague political unrest swept over even backward peoples simply because we had allowed the old forms to crumble away. Yet the native states in India remain safe and secure in the hands of hereditary rulers, loyal to the King Emperor, showing what we might have done if we had followed a different course. We failed to put up a shield between the agitator and the bureaucracy.

Political considerations are still easy in the Sudan. But nothing stands still and in Khartoum we are already in touch with the outposts of new political forces. For a long time the British Administrative Officer in the Sudan has functioned as 'Father of the People'. In many places he will for a long time so continue. But this cannot last. The bureaucracy must yield either to an autocratic or to a democratic movement and the dice are loaded in favour of the latter. If we desire the former, the British Officer must realise that it is his duty to lay down the role of Father of the People. He must entrust it to the natural leaders of the people whom he must support and influence as occasion requires. In that manner the country will be parcelled out into nicely balanced compartments, protective glands against the septic germs which will inevitably be passed on from the Khartoum of the future.

Failing this armour we shall be involved in a losing fight throughout the length and breadth of the land.[3]

Before the outbreak of the Second World War a profound change came over the Sudan Government and was reflected in the new spirit with which the British officials approached the task of governing the

Sudan. New men came out from Britain, recruited in the same manner as their predecessors and from the same institutions, but with a remarkably different attitude. Born in time of war, reared in the unsettled decade which followed and educated in the Depression, these young administrators were in many ways better trained in administrative techniques but possessed little of the Olympian confidence which had enabled their Victorian forerunners to extend British control to the farthest reaches of a vast and inhospitable land. These new men were no longer convinced that Great Britain held a divinely appointed monopoly on the art of governing and for the first time questioned by what right, other than conquest, the British should rule the Sudanese. Most of these new men then occupied junior administrative positions; two decades later, however, they were the senior officers who effected a smooth transition from Condominium to independence. Much of their liberalism and tolerance was embodied in an older but remarkable administrator, Sir Douglas Newbold, who joined the Political Service in 1920. He was appointed Civil Secretary in 1939 and did much to lay the foundations for a transfer of power from an authoritarian imperial regime to an independent parliamentary democracy which his successor, Sir James Robertson, carried out a decade later.

The change in the attitude of the government was accompanied by the growth in the number of educated Sudanese who sought to make their presence felt through the Graduates' General Congress. In the important Anglo-Egyptian treaty of 1936 Britain and Egypt had reached a partial accord which enabled Egyptian officials to return to the Sudan. As in 1924 the Sudanese had not been consulted. The traditional *shaykhs* and chiefs could not have cared less, but the new Sudanese elite were bitterly resentful that neither Britain nor Egypt bothered to solicit their opinions. They began to express their grievances through the Graduates' General Congress, which had been established in February 1938 as an alumni association of Gordon College and soon embraced all educated Sudanese. At first the Graduates' General Congress confined its interests to social and educational activities, but after the visit of the Prime Minister of Egypt, 'Ali Mahir, to the Sudan in 1940 the Egyptians sought to use the Congress against the British by encouraging the organisation with financial and moral support to turn increasingly to political action. In 1942 the Congress officially put forth its claims to act as the spokesman for Sudanese nationalism. The Sudan Government abruptly refused to consider such a sweeping demand. Hitherto the Sudan Government had regarded the Congress with paternal benevolence, but not even the good will of Newbold could welcome the

constitutional and political implications of such a claim when the British were desperately fighting the Italians in Ethiopia and the Germans in Egypt. When the Sudan Government rejected their claims the Congress split into two groups: a moderate majority which was prepared to accept the good faith of the government, and an extremist minority led by Isma'il al-Azhari which, under the slogan 'Unity of the Nile Valley', turned to Egypt. By vigour and demagoguery Azhari soon consolidated his influence throughout the towns and among the educated extremists. By 1943 his supporters had won control of the Congress and organised the Ashiqqa' (Brothers), the first genuine political party in the Sudan. Seeing the initiative pass to the extremists, the moderates formed the Umma (Nation) Party, designed to co-operate with the British toward independence under the patronage of Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi, the posthumous son of the Mahdi.

At this point the traditional authoritarianism of Sudanese society emerged to compromise the liberal democracy advocated by the Sudanese elite. Hitherto they had been divorced, and those Sudanese educated in Western political ideas and cultural ways had been adrift from the mass of Sudanese who were content to remain aloof from politics and continue their dependence upon their traditional authoritarian leaders. Now the new political forces, ideologically strong but numerically weak, called upon the Sudanese masses to redress the balance between the rulers and the ruled. It was a powerful combination with sweeping implications, for traditional Sudanese society in the Northern Sudan was still very much divided between the riverine population, the Awlad al-balad, and the western nomads. By associating themselves with the opposing political programmes of the Sudanese elite, they revived ancient religious rivalries and cultural feuds which had temporarily been laid to rest by the imposition of British imperial rule.

On the one hand was Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman, the leader of the Ansar, the Mahdists, who had inherited the allegiance of the thousands who had followed his father and who were now prepared to follow the son. A man of consummate ability and shrewdness, Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman had supported the British in both great wars and had been suitably rewarded by power and influence. He now sought to combine to his own advantage this power and influence with the ideology of the Umma. On the other was Sayyid 'Ali al-Mirghani, the leader of the Khatmiyya brotherhood, the great religious rival of the Mahdists. As Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman's fortunes advanced during the interwar years, those of Sayyid 'Ali had seemed, by comparison, to decline. The

Khatmiyya had supported the Egyptian Administration in the nineteenth century but was eclipsed by Mahdism, only to be revived in the early years of the Condominium and nurtured by the British, who sought a counterweight to the influence of Mahdism. Alarmed by the resurgence of Mahdism, Sayyid 'Ali, although he personally remained aloof from politics, threw his support to Azhari and to Egypt, whose history was so closely bound up with his own. At the same time Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman identified himself with the Umma and continued to cooperate with the Sudan Government.

Thus the religious and cultural rift among the Northern Sudanese which had conditioned their past and was now deepened by all the emotional and secular fanaticism of twentieth-century politics. The competition between the Azhari–Khatmiyya faction, remodelled in 1951 as the National Unionist Party (NUP), and the Umma–Ansar group quickly rekindled the old suspicions and deep-seated hatreds to sour Sudanese politics for years and eventually to strangle parliamentary democracy in the Sudan.

Although the Sudan Government had crushed the initial hopes of the Congress the Administration was aware of the pervasive power of nationalism among the elite and sought to introduce new institutions to associate the Sudanese more closely with the task of governing. Under the leadership of the Governor-General, Sir Hubert Huddleston, who had former experience in the Sudan, and the guidance of the Civil Secretary, Sir Douglas Newbold, an Advisory Council was established for the Northern Sudan consisting of the Governor-General, his secretaries, and twenty-eight Sudanese. Unfortunately the Advisory Council satisfied neither the Sudanese nor the Egyptians. The Egyptians regarded it as yet another clever British device to exclude Egyptian participation in the governing of the Sudan. The Sudanese intelligentsia regarded it as merely a debating society, for its decisions could not be enforced. Moreover, the council was made up mostly of tribal elders, whose traditional attitudes worked to the advantage of an authoritarian administration and against the liberalism demanded by the elite. Finally, affairs in the Southern Sudan were excluded from the deliberations of the council, and for the first time in this century the Southern Sudan loomed as a divisive influence.

Until Sudanese and British officials began to ponder the future of the Sudan, the southern provinces had long been ignored by the central government except when troops or money were required. The central administration in Khartoum was dominated by officials whose background and service had been in the Northern Sudan. They had little

knowledge and no previous experience of the South and were content to leave those eccentric Bog Barons alone in return for pacification of the South at the lowest possible cost to the Sudanese treasury. Once the Southern Sudan was brought more or less under British control in the late 1920s the central authorities could no longer ignore its administration. They first had to recognise the fundamental differences between the Northern and Southern Sudanese and fashion their policy accordingly. Racially, the North claims to be Arab, the South African. In religion the North is Moslem, the South is pagan and Christian. The North speaks Arabic, the South some eighty different African languages. Once having acknowledged these distinctions the Sudan Government sought to apply the principles of indirect rule which had become so fashionable in the North. But for the government to follow the precepts of indirect rule and 'build up a series of self-contained racial and tribal units with structure and organisation based, to whatever extent the requirements of equity and good government permit, upon indigenous customs, traditional usage, and beliefs', Southern Sudanese, African participation in the administration and the revitalisation of their customs would be necessary but hardly possible if such customs were continually eroded by contacts with the Arabic-speaking peoples of the Northern Sudan.[4] Consequently, under the direction of MacMichael a 'Southern Policy' was fashioned in 1930 to encourage indigenous growth by eradicating Northern Sudanese, Moslem, Arab influences. For nearly two decades thereafter the Southern Sudan was sealed off from the North and the vestiges of the Arab, Moslem presence gradually rooted out.

Like most administrative decisions the policy of exclusion was not without precedent. Wingate had encouraged Christian missionary work in the Southern Sudan, not so much because he himself was a devout Christian, but because by sending Christian missionaries to the pagan Sudan he could more easily keep them out of the Moslem North and at the same time build a Christian bulwark against the spread of Islam southward up the Nile. Until their expulsion in 1964 Christian missionaries, particularly the Catholic Verona Fathers and the Anglican Church Missionary Society, provided most of the Western education in the Southern Sudan. Although staffed by devoted missionaries and teachers whose influence was widespread, neither the missionary societies nor the government ever had sufficient resources to produce a class of educated elite. Wingate's religious programmes had their secular counterpart, and in 1910 he ordered the formation of an Equatorial Corps of Southerners for service in the South, commanded by British

Officers speaking English and practising Christianity. Not only did the Equatorial Corps replace the Northern Sudanese garrisons, who had been primarily responsible for spreading Islam and Arabic, but its formation created a non-Moslem, non-Arab reserve for use against any uprising in the North. By 1918 most Northern troops had left the South, and Sunday replaced Friday as the official day of worship. Twelve years later MacMichael's Southern Policy extended the exclusion of Northern Sudanese to include not only Arabic-speaking Moslem troops but merchants, teachers and technicians as well.

To the Northern Sudanese nationalist the Southern Policy appeared to be a typical Machiavellian plot by which the British were to divide and rule, and further, a scheme to sever the South from the North to create for the former a different, if not separate, status. The strict silence which the government maintained about Southern affairs only increased the suspicions of the Northerners, who in their ignorance attributed deep, dark designs where none in reality existed. For years Southern Policy was one of 'the main topics of [well-informed] conversation at effendis' tea parties in Omdurman'.[5] When Northern Sudanese began agitating to transform the Advisory Council into a legislative one, the policy of exclusion and the future status of the Southern Sudan could no longer be ignored. Was the South to be represented in any future legislative council and thereby irrevocably committed to the Sudan as a whole, or was it to remain outside of the council, developing political maturity until it should be able to take part in the council's deliberations or even choose different political ties? The question was resolved at a conference of British officials and Northern and Southern Sudanese representatives at Juba in 1947. The Southerners determined to send delegates to a legislative council of a united Sudan, and the Sudan Government correspondingly decided to abandon its policy of excluding Northern Sudanese from the South. Thus, just at the time when the pace of Sudanese nationalism quickened, the Southern Sudanese arrived on the political scene, with their largely uneducated, clearly unsophisticated and predominantly tribalised and tradition-oriented societies.

If the Egyptians had regarded the creation of an Advisory Council with suspicion, they adamantly refused to accept British proposals for a legislative council. As in the past, however, the British paid little heed to Egyptian fulminations and unilaterally forged ahead to meet Sudanese objections by holding elections for a council. These elections were boycotted by Isma'il al-Azhari's pro-Egyptian Ashiqqa', giving control of the new Legislative Council to the Umma. The Egyptians reacted with panic as they saw the unity of the Nile Valley slipping from them and in

October 1951 unilaterally abrogated the Anglo-Egyptian agreement of 1936 and proclaimed Faruq King of Egypt and the Sudan. These hasty and ill-considered actions only managed to alienate many Sudanese from Egypt. As for the British, they not only refused to recognise the abrogation but went one step further in their courtship of the Sudanese and introduced in 1952 a self-governing statute for the Sudan into the Legislative Council.

The Egyptian Government would probably have never agreed to self-government for the Sudan if the old structure of Egyptian politics had not been suddenly swept away by the Nasser–Naguib revolution in Egypt in July 1952. The military men who took control at Cairo were not only more flexible than their predecessors, but more understanding of Sudanese aspirations. On the one hand, they sought an accommodation with Britain. On the other, they set out to re-establish Egyptian influence in the Sudan. By 1953 they appeared to have been extraordinarily successful in implementing both policies. On 12 February 1953 the Condominium, Britain and Egypt, signed an agreement granting self-government for the Sudan and self-determination within three years for the Sudanese. The military rulers of Egypt had recognised on their part the realities of Sudanese nationalism, while the British on theirs had accepted certain modifications, all of which were proposed by Egypt to the advantage of the Sudanese and toward the restoration of close ties between the Sudanese political parties and the military regime in Egypt. Elections for a representative parliament to rule the Sudan followed in November and December 1953. The Egyptians threw their support behind Isma'il al-Azhari, the leader of the Ashiqqa'–Khatmiyya coalition recently recreated as the National Unionist Party, who campaigned on the slogan 'Unity of the Nile Valley'. This position was opposed by the Umma Party, which had the less vocal but pervasive support of British officials. Led by Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman, the Umma campaigned for an independent Sudan. To the shock of many British officials and to the chagrin of the Umma Party, which had enjoyed power in the Legislative Council for nearly six years, Azhari's NUP won an overwhelming victory.

At once Egyptians, British and many Sudanese interpreted the victory as a mandate for Azhari to fashion some form of association between the Sudan and Egypt. This soon proved to be a grossly misleading interpretation. By voting for the NUP the electorate had simply expressed their wish for freedom from British control, not for union with Egypt. Because the Umma had co-operated with the British for so long in the Legislative Council, they were widely regarded as tools of the

administration and lacked national support. Many Sudanese were also highly suspicious of the dynastic ambitions of Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman. The real meaning of the election soon became apparent to the astute Azhari, and he realised that a large and powerful segment of the Sudanese population, tribesmen and intelligentsia alike, while anxious to end British rule, was also bitterly opposed to union with Egypt. In March 1954 when Naguib visited Khartoum he was greeted by huge protest demonstrations in which several people were killed. Gross Egyptian propaganda and rumours of Egyptian bribery of Sudanese politicians were given credence by the ridiculous behaviour of Egyptian Government officials visiting the Sudan. Moreover, the Sudanese, having suddenly discovered themselves masters of their fate, were not about to hand over their destiny to Egypt.

This revelation was made clear by the mutiny and rebellion which swept through the Equatoria Province of the Southern Sudan in August 1955. In the preparations for self-government and self-determination the wishes of the South were given little notice. The competent but paternal British administrators left, their places taken by inexperienced and frequently intolerant Northerners. Offended, confused and misunderstood by Northern politicians, the Southern Sudanese soon erupted, first in a mutiny by the Equatorial Corps, then in disorder and rebellion throughout the province. Nearly three hundred Northern Sudanese were killed before the revolt was suppressed, but the restoration of order was long and difficult. The rebellion had numerous causes, among them the great racial, religious and linguistic gulf between the Northern and Southern Sudanese, but fundamentally it was a reaction to Northern Arab domination in the administration of the Southern Sudan. Sobered by the realities of discontent and the responsibilities of political power and authority, Isma'il al-Azhari disowned his own campaign promises of union with Egypt and declared the Sudan an independent republic on 1 January 1956, to be henceforth guided by an elected representative parliament. The liberalism of the present appeared to have triumphed over the traditional authoritarianism of the past.

By this time the British had departed. They left behind their patrimony and example among the diverse peoples and land that make up today's Democratic Republic of the Sudan. Diversity there was and still is, but the British officers found the Sudan as one and as one they turned it over to the Sudanese and left in the only manner they knew – as gentlemen. The concept of oneness thus remains, and although many Sudanese and non-Sudanese alike regard its diversity as a hopeless

obstacle to the creation of a modern nation-state, differences do not always weaken and divide. Dissimilar cultures and divergent resources, as some nations have learned, can be fused into a unique synthesis even more viable than either of the separate parts alone. The task of the Sudanese today is to submerge their differences in the process of modernisation from which a new, stronger and more prosperous society will emerge.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. I have employed the African linguistic classification of Professor Joseph H. Greenberg, 'The Languages of Africa', *International Journal of American Linguistics*, XXIX, 1 (Jan 1963).
2. The appearance of a Mahdi in Moslem eschatology is associated with the second coming of Jesus after the manifestation of the Mahdi. Thus after the death of Muhammad Ahmad more than one individual proclaimed himself to be the Prophet Jesus.
3. 'Minute by His Excellency the Governor General' (Sir John Maffey), 1 Jan 1927, Civil Secretary's Archives, I/9/33, Central Records Office, Khartoum.
4. Memorandum on Southern Policy, 25 Jan 1930, by Sir Harold MacMichael, Bahr al-Ghazal, I/1/1, Central Records Office, Khartoum (CRO).
5. 'Undated Notes on Southern Policy', by D. J. Bethell, Bahr al-Ghazal, I/1/2, (CRO).

2 In the Beginning

MICHAEL S. CORAY

> Very few here in the Sudan are of the type which comes from Eton and Winchester and which staffs the Diplomatic service. On the other side very few come from manual working-class parents.
>
> The least stuffy are in the Political Service which, though part of the Civil Service of the country, is nominally distinct for reasons of snobbery. The Political Service draws its men chiefly from those who get Second Classes (less frequently Third Classes) in the Honours Schools of Oxford and Cambridge. Those I have met are modest men of character but without flashiness. In brief, an elite, after their fashion.
>
> RICHARD HILL

Of the many characteristics of British rule in the Sudan perhaps the least appreciated today, but of profound importance to the men who came out to the Nile and the lands beyond, was the Christian principle of moral obligation, an obligation which the Church and English society transformed into a Duty. In the iconoclastic world of today, organised religion is frequently treated with indifference or outright hostility, while commentators on contemporary life tend to overlook the power of Christianity upon the individual personality in the past in the ruthless search to uncover the more mercenary motives which shape present-day society. Too often those who should know better come to accept the immutability of current attitudes and assumptions about man's relationship with his fellow men. The rather simple notion that the British who came out to the Sudan were the product of a different period in history and representatives of a superior civilisation was assumed with certainty reinforced by Church and country. Such an attitude approved and dispensed with implacable rectitude has been criticised for its implicit chauvinism, pretension and hypocrisy. That the British would accept Duty as a fundamental foundation of Christianity and then carry out that obligation with altruistic zeal for the enlightenment and elevation of those not so fortunate has often been dismissed as transparent rationalisation for less noble economic and political motives. There is, to be sure, truth to this charge, but while hindsight

may enhance the persuasiveness of such criticism, it has not compromised the fact that the British who came out to the Sudan believed and were driven by a deep sense of Christian Duty which was the very foundation of their commitment to the Sudanese and in turn shaped British administrative policy in the Sudan. The very symbol of this Christian trusteeship was Charles George Gordon.

In an age without heroes the pervasive impact on Victorian society of Gordon's death at Khartoum in 1885 seems incomprehensible today. Hundreds of biographies dwell on the deep, abiding Christian faith of this practical mystic, a faith that was the essence of his character and personality.

> When all else has been said, the outstanding fact about Gordon was that he was a man who believed in God through Jesus Christ and was so gloriously certain of God. Some of those who have written about him – not very wisely for their own sakes – have failed because they wrote without any knowledge of that central secret of his life. But to us ordinary folk who with many failures try to look to God to give us the strength to be true to the best we know, such an outstanding example of faith in God give us hope.[1]

This faith made a deep and lasting impression upon the subconscious mind of England and the men who learned of Gordon's life and death as children. His commitment and example was emblazoned upon their minds and souls and travelled with them to the banks of the Nile. 'His Memory has been deeply cherished by the peoples of the British Empire. He has many titles to their regard. His place in our history is assured. But above all, will be remembered that sense of honour which united him to a helpless Native community whose safety and welfare had been committed to his charge.'[2] Indeed, Gordon was never far from the British officials in the Sudan. His statue before the Palace in Khartoum was a daily reminder of his service, and astride his great camel he watched over the British trusteeship with a stern countenance. Lest any forget, the anniversary of his death was one of the highlights of the Sudan year where his deeds, martyrdom and legacy were conferred upon those who ruled the Sudan from the pulpit of Khartoum Cathedral reminding a rapt audience of Tennyson's Epitaph for Gordon's grave.

> Warrior of God, man's friend, and tyrant's foe,
> Now somewhere dead far in the waste Soudan,
> Thou livest in all hearts, for all men know
> This earth has never borne a nobler man.[3]

Although a few of the British officials in the Sudan were poets of sorts and most liked Tennyson, they did not need a poet's ethereal call to accept trusteeship in the Sudan. They were not evangelists, nor missionaries, nor men of fiery faith. They were too practical for any displays of emotion, too self-conscious of their mission to glorify it. The Right Reverend Llewellyn Henry Gwynne, the first Bishop of Khartoum, who, of all Churchmen, best knew the Sudan, its peoples and its rulers, wrote of the Gordon symbol.

> Looking back and taking into consideration all that happened before and after the time of Gordon, the one and only happening that could begin the redemption, the civilizing and educating, the progress of the people of the Sudan, was the death of some great Christian man whose death would stir the people of his own race to redeem and lift up and develop the people bought by his sacrifice.
>
> If Gordon had lived and returned home to England having saved the garrisons in the Sudan he would have accomplished a great deal by his life, but the country would be given back into the hands of the Egyptians and it is no offence to the Egyptians in any way to say that they could not possibly have created such an administration in the Sudan; that in less than half a century a whole people have been benefited to such an extent that a great foreigner who knew the Sudan before and after Gordon's time stated that never in the history has a people so benefited from another race as the people in the Sudan have from the British.[4]

But British officials did not need eulogies by the great and near great to accept Gordon's legacy. To them he was an inspiration, not a saint. The very personification of the British in transition in the Sudan, Sir Douglas Newbold, summed up his colleagues reverence for Gordon in plain language. 'There is no need to canonise Gordon – he would have hated it – but we need not be ashamed – least of all in a world war – to commemorate his courage and his service to the Sudan. He *did* have faults and he did make mistakes, but on that day 60 years ago he paid for them in full.'[5]

If Charles Gordon was the spiritual inspiration, he was not the catalyst for the development of a Sudan Civil Service. That role was filled by the indomitable Lord Cromer, British Agent and Consul-General in Egypt from 1883 until his retirement in 1907. Deeply committed to his belief that European nationals in the Sudan must be prohibited from developing the special privileges that had proven so

disruptive to the proper administration of Egypt, Cromer devised the Sudan Conventions in 1899. When the Conventions were formalised in the form of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium Agreement of 1899 the Sudan acquired a separate political status from Egypt which permitted the development of a separate administration for the Sudan unhindered by the Capitulations which had burdened British reform in Egypt. Although the immediate administrative needs could be filled by British military officers seconded from the Egyptian Army, Cromer had long suspected that a prolonged period of military rule would be impractical in the Sudan.[6] The outbreak of the South African War in 1899, and the consequent recall of seconded officers by the War Office, confirmed this suspicion and underscored Cromer's opinion that the use of military personnel for administrative purposes would act to impede the development of continuity. As a remedy for this situation, Cromer decided to obtain a cadre of 'active young men, endowed with good health, high character and fair abilities – not the mediocre by-products of the race, but the flower of those who are turned out from our schools and colleges' to serve as the nucleus of a Sudan Civil Service.[7] They would come from the colleges of Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Dublin and London. Proud, robust products of British universities, they would require strength of character and physique to endure the hardships and desolation of the Sudan for duty, service and adventure. Many would find the relatively high rates of pay, generous annual leaves and mandatory early retirements more tangible incentives for service. But whether they were attracted by these material rewards or driven by a sense of Christian obligation, those who embarked on such service came directly to shape the future of the Sudan.

The actual recruitment of civilians for Sudan Government service began in 1901. The only formal eligibility requirements were for applicants to be between the ages of twenty-one and twenty-five, and to be completing their university degree at the time of application. Formal application for both the Egyptian and Sudan Civil Service was made through the Appointments Committee of the respective universities where the applicant was only asked to submit a certificate of birth, fill out the appropriate forms and supply a list of references who could testify to his general character, his possession of any special qualifications, and his intellectual abilities.[8] Professor E. G. Browne at Cambridge and Professor D. S. Margoliouth at Oxford were always on the look out for promising candidates for service in the Sudan who they would encourage to apply. Applications were then sifted by an *ad hoc* committee composed of representatives of the Ministries in which

vacancies would occur. Here, the 'less eligible' candidates were eliminated until the list was reduced to the equivalent of four times the number of vacancies. Those who managed this hurdle were designated 'Provisional Selections' and were thereby eligible for the final round of selection. Here the candidate was faced by a medical examination and an oral interview with the Final Selection Board at its annual August meeting in London. The Board was usually composed of the Sudan Agent in London, the Civil Secretary and two or more Provincial Governors depending upon who was on leave. This process marked a departure from the procedures established by the Indian and Colonial Services, where final selection was based on a written competitive examination given by the participating universities. No such examination awaited applicants for the Sudan Civil Service, and although of demonstrable academic achievement, not having to bother with yet another set of tests following the rigours of the final university examination was an inducement to apply. Those who were not disqualified on medical grounds were asked whether they preferred service in Egypt or the Sudan and on the basis of their replies were placed on the Egyptian or Sudan lists.

Acceptance of an assignment signalled the end of the initial phase of the selection process. Each successful candidate was expected to spend an additional probationary year, at his own expense, studying such subjects as Arabic, First Aid and elementary surveying at Oxford or Cambridge. Additional proficiency in subjects such as musketry, military drill and the care of equipment was encouraged for those on the Sudan list, but was in no way obligatory. Success in Arabic, on the other hand, was of crucial importance, for the seniority of each group of candidates would be determined by their respective scores on the compulsory Arabic examination administered at the end of the probationary year. Those who passed the examination would be given a second medical examination before receiving final approval or rejection from the Selection Board. Approval was accompanied by a set of orders which included where and when the individual was to report, as well as a list of the equipment he would be expected to bring to the Sudan.[9]

The military officers who had won the Sudan and stayed on to administer it, looked upon these raw civilian recruits, these 'Boy Scouts', with deep scepticism.

> Jones, of Balliol, and Smith, of Trinity, who attained the supreme distinction of a university Blue, and possible also the minor honour of a First Class, may be disposed to give themselves airs at the outset. It

does not last. They speedily discover that these unpolished products of the orderly room and the barrack square have learnt a good many things which are not, as yet, imparted beside the Isis and the Cam. The soldier training, for instance, teaches those humble but necessary virtues of order, punctuality, and discipline, which are, perhaps as useful for practical purposes as the best public school or university 'tone'. . . . Such attainments as he does possess may also inspire rather less respect than they did at home; and they do not always impress his older military mentors. One of them, a veteran of thirty-seven, who held high office under the Sudan Government, had no esteem for the New Civilian, and imparted to me unfavourable opinions of this young gentleman.

'I am not a university man', said this unbeliever, 'so perhaps you can tell me what they *do* learn at Oxford and Cambridge that can be of the smallest use to anybody? When we get them out here we have to begin teaching them the simplest things, which we stupid British officers learnt before we left Sandhurst. We have to teach them manners. . . . We have to teach them book-keeping, office accounts, map measuring, how to docket papers and draw up reports, the elements of land surveying; surely these are things that their schoolmasters might have taught them before they sent them out to us. Of course, they know all there is to know about Latin and Greek——! . . . But what on earth is the use of that *here*? The only foreign language we want, besides Arabic, is French; and apparently these accomplished students have not found the time to learn French. They can play cricket, I believe; but that isn't much use in a country where there's no turf. They had much better teach them to ride decently, and to shoot and give them some military drill, which, you know, we have to put them through when they come out. It seems to me that their real education only begins when we take them in hand.'[10]

As newly appointed Third Inspectors, these young men entered their careers in the Sudan Civil Service under certain conditions. Each appointee was required to spend his first two years in the Sudan as a 'probationer' and could be dismissed from service on the grounds of unsuitability with only two months' notice. If any question remained as to his fitness at the end of the probationary period, that status could be extended until such time as his superiors could make a decisive recommendation. Probationers were required to pass examinations in law and Arabic by the end of their probationary period, and the Service

placed great stress on the fact that its personnel could 'not be married or engaged to be married' prior to the completion of probation.

Once such obstacles had been overcome the future looked bright indeed. Permanent officials in the Sudan Civil Service could look forward to increases in pay and responsibility. Generous leaves of ninety days per year were mandatory, and because such leaves were not calculated until one reached Alexandria, an individual who was stationed in some remote district might be away as much as five months from his post in any given year. The deep concern for the effects of the Sudan's harsh climate can be found in any of Conrad's novels, but justified for permanent officials a prolonged annual holiday during the English summer season. Even the formidable Civil Secretary of the Sudan Government, Sir Harold MacMichael, remembered with fond nostalgia the attractive prospect for a young man to spend his summers in the English countryside.[11] Moreover, pensions were calculated on an average of one's salary during the last three years of service and could, by voluntary retirement, begin after just twenty years of service. Those who chose to continue in the Sudan could remain until the mandatory retirement age of fifty. Advancement in the Sudan Civil Service, then, was fully expected by all so long as one's work and conduct proved satisfactory.[12]

Shortly after the First World War the Sudan Civil Service began to undergo subtle changes. Civilians who were engaged primarily in administrative functions in the provinces or Khartoum came to be known as members of the 'Political Service' in distinction to those who served on military, departmental and technical staffs within the Civil Service. The title 'Inspector' was replaced by 'District Commissioner' and 'Assistant District Commissioner' although nearly twenty years before Kitchener had referred to these administrative officials as 'District Officers'.

> The political officers who served in the Sudan before the First World War were on the whole less academically educated, if rather less provincial in outlook, than the men who entered the service immediately after the war. . . . They had, after all, ties with Egypt and, through Egypt, with the wider Islamic world, denied to entrants to the Sudan Government service, particularly after 1924. Life in the Sudan was rougher in the early days, with less electricity, less ice, less contact with home; political officers lived less hurriedly, they travelled slowly by camel or horse or donkey and spent more time drinking coffee with the local worthies. They were not oppressed, as were their successors,

> by paper-work. They ruled paternally without much theory behind their rule.
>
> After the war the civil service grew in numbers and technical complexity. . . . The new personnel were seen to be much like civil servants everywhere with their devotion to secretarial tidiness and their passion for capital letters. The social origins of the new establishment were manifest in the turn of its speech and the conduct of its correspondence – its mandarin respect at the lower clerical levels for inst., ult. and prox.
>
> The post-war men came with a more urgent sense of mission than their leisurely predecessors. Most had come through the campaigns of the greatest war in history and looked with amused disdain upon the petty soldiering which was all the older men had experienced in the way of war. These battle-tried youths, like the junior British officers in the Egyptian Army who had gone to fight in the South African War, had seen the generals making tragic mistakes, and they paid scant deference to their elders in the Sudan; dug-outs, old stiffs, they called them.[13]

The very personification of the new men were the well-known 'Twelve Apostles', the Class of 1920, who arrived in Khartoum infused with these attitudes and ideas.[14] More important, however, were the changes that occurred in the method of recruitment. The selection of candidates was entrusted to the senior members of the Service rather than to the University Appointments Committee.

> A few [senior members of the Service] who might be in England in the spring or summer would visit Oxford and Cambridge, enlist the aid of the Appointments Boards and interview College tutors, see the candidates themselves and judge their qualifications in the light of the information gleaned and the personal impressions made. A fairly high percentage failed to qualify and were rejected by this preliminary board; the remainder were summoned to attend before the final board, similarly composed of other senior members of the Service, at about the time when the results of the final University examinations were known.[15]

This change in the selection process was more than procedural. The choice of candidates, particularly those who would be destined for administrative roles, had become strongly influenced by a factor which previously had been viewed as merely incidental.

> athletic distinctions in the University or international field [became an important qualification for consideration]. The reason is that we were proud of them [such distinctions] and did not regard them as altogether irrelevant. There was an old saying, years ago, that the Sudan was a country of blacks ruled by 'blues'. The quip derived its modicum of justification from the fact that in selecting candidates regard was had less to intellectual brilliance than to qualities of leadership and physical stamina – in fact to Lord Cromer's desiderata. ... Generally speaking, only those who had 'taken honours' at their University were accepted, though a few 'pass men' were also taken if outstandingly suitable, and those with first class 'honours' were not commonly available. The majority of candidates who were even selected for interview had taken second or third class 'honours', and from among these the final choice usually fell upon those who had achieved distinction in the athletic world. The 'athletic' criterion was of course replaced by that of war service in the years 1919–1922, but was subsequently resumed, and the years preceding the Second War saw a remarkable number of distinguished athletes recruited for the Sudan Political Service.[16]

The policy of recruiting athletic individuals appeared to be confirmed by the belief that life in the Sudan demanded more than average physical stamina. Members of the Service, whether administrators or technicians, were subjected to the combined stress of a debilitating climate, physical isolation, the absence of European women and the psychic assaults of strange cultures and languages. The potential for a rapid descent into a 'Heart of Darkness' increased daily. Involvement in athletic pursuits, in such circumstances, provided an invaluable safety-valve for the release of tensions and the maintenance of psychic and physical health so essential for morale in far-off places. Bishop Gwynne, who had been a well-known soccer player for Derby County and instrumental in guiding his team to the semi-finals of the Football Association Cup, was a strong advocate of sport in the Sudan.

> It has often been said that the British working in the Sudan stood the climate better than the Egyptians even though the Egyptians [were] brought up as it were next door and during part of the year had to endure a certain amount of heat. If that is true I feel that one must put down as one of the reasons for standing the climate better is the love of games. While the Egyptian and indeed the Sudanese [in] very hot weather would lie down in his house after his work was over, the

British official sallied forth to ride or play polo or golf or tennis or squash rackets. At first the candidates for the political service were chosen because of the powers of leadership which the Council of selectors looked for. The result was that we had a large number of blues from the Universities. It was thought that if a man had been exceptionally good at games, especially if he won his blue, he would probably be the captain of the college football and cricket teams or stroke of the college boat.

[Athletic ability increases] the amenities of life which also means considerable help in standing the climate.[17]

Even before the recognition of the criterion of 'athleticism', such prowess was an observable factor in the selection process. H. C. Jackson commented on the class of eight probationers in 1907. 'I think we had been chosen by the Appointments Board mainly because we were athletes.'[18] One had captained rugby at Oxford and for Scotland; a second was captain of the Cambridge XI. There was an Oxford soccer Blue, a Middlesex cricketer, and a rugby player for Somerset County.[19] 'It was thought that men who liked outdoor sports would not only be physically fitter than those accustomed to a more studious and sedentary existence, but would also be more inclined to lead an active life of riding or shooting.'[20] From these early years before the First World War when nearly half of the members of the Political Service had achieved athletic distinctions the numbers of Blues steadily declined, and despite recognition for war service, less than 15 per cent of the Service after the Second World War played for Oxford or Cambridge.[21] The increase in amenities and transportation had clearly undermined the argument for men of extraordinary athletic ability, while the increasing complexities of governing a people aroused by political and economic nationalism tended to make athletic distinction interesting but no longer overwhelmingly relevant. Nevertheless, athletics was important and in the history of the Sudan Political Service a third of the officials had been distinguished athletes or, as Collie Knox, the Private Secretary to Governor-General Sir Geoffrey Archer, put it, 'the governing of the Sudan is in the hands of old Blues'.[22]

Too many people, then as now, associate athletic ability with a third-class mind. Brawn, not brains, is still a popular conception of the athlete, and in the Sudan Political Service the importance of athletic prowess has been criticised as 'producing the paradox of sound, competent, but often unimaginative and uncreative administration'.[23] There may indeed be some truth in this observation, but it does not mean that the men of the

Sudan Political Service were not particularly bright. In fact they were extraordinarily intelligent. One out of ten had gained a First Class University Degree, a record matched at best in the empire only by the Indian Civil Service, while the scholarly achievement of those with Second Class University Degrees who wrote of the Sudan and its people is impressive in scope and scholarship. Certainly the stereotype of 'first-class hearties with third-class minds' was never the case in the Sudan.[24] In the words of Lord Vansittart, Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office responsible for the Sudan, 'I have never wavered in my conviction that the Sudan Civil Service was the finest body in the world: they were all picked men, scholars and athletes.'[25]

The adoption of an 'athletic' criterion did emphasise, however, the priority which the Service gave to personality over intellect. This emphasis, along with the absence of competitive examinations for entry, allowed the Sudan Civil Service to compete successfully with the more established services until the early 1930s. As Sir Harold MacMichael pointed out, the chief competitors of the Sudan Civil Service:

> would naturally have been the Indian and Home Civil Services and the Colonial Service; but the former group demand so high a standard of intellect that it gave little chance to the average man, and entrance to the latter was also at that time ruled almost entirely by competitive examination. To the undergraduate of good health and reasonable ability a Service which demanded less in the way of examinations and offered a career in which initiative would have full scope, coupled with the prospect of an open-air life, with exploration and big game shooting thrown in, held a greater appeal. Hence the relevance of athletic details.[26]

During the interwar period, however, competition from the other services, and from private firms as well, began to take its toll.

> The Colonial Office in particular was broadening the basis of its selection, and a number of great industrial concerns were on the look-out for precisely the type of man which [the Sudan Civil Service] wanted, and they were prepared to offer terms so generous that we could not compete with them. The Sudan, nevertheless, succeeded each year in getting the few good men it needed in spite of competition, and the standard was never allowed to fall.[27]

While the standard may not have fallen, the gentle winds of change

and the exigencies of recruitment did cause a significant degree of bending. Shortly before the Second World War the Service abandoned the practice of requiring a qualifying year of study in Arabic prior to final selection. That this step made the Sudan Civil Service more attractive is undeniable, but this additional appeal was itself not the reason for the change.

> [The qualifying year] was found to be unsatisfactory for several reasons and the practice was only maintained for those who were younger and less mature than their fellows. The majority were given a three months' course of Arabic at the School of Oriental Studies in London. They were then sent to the Sudan and, generally speaking, kept for a few months in Khartoum for training before being posted to the provinces. When possible they were attached to older men already serving, but in the early years so meagre was the staff that it was not unusual for a young man of twenty-three or four to find himself in charge of a district which was the size of an English county, or Wales or Scotland, with only an Egyptian *Mamur* [civilian administrative assistant] or two and a few Egyptian or Syrian clerks of most modest attainments to assist him. He was required to pass within his first two years ... qualifying examinations in Arabic and Law, failing which he would not be eligible for the normal rise of pay [but could remain in the Service].[28]

The manpower shortages which accompanied the Second World War brought other modifications to the recruitment and composition of the Sudan Civil Service.

> As the military element in the administration was gradually replaced by the civilian there were engaged each year, in addition to the pensionable members of the Political Service, a number of rather older men, aged from, say, twenty-seven to thirty-five, for service in the southern provinces or areas where troubles were particularly likely to occur. These were drawn for the most part from among ex-officers of such bodies at the King's African Rifles, or other units, whose experience was likely to be of use, and were engaged on contract terms – usually two years, extendable for further periods. In the interim between the two World Wars longer contracts were often substituted, in the interests of continuity, for seven to ten years, with the prospect of a gratuity on retirement, and in a few cases these most valuable ex-officers served even longer and settled down to a more or less patriarchal phase of administration.

> During the Second World War little recruitment was, of course, possible, but from 1941 to 1944 a few young men were selected on probation from the armed forces and the Universities by retired members of the Political Service. . . .
>
> For the rest, so far from being able to maintain the Political Service at full strength during the Second World War, the Sudan suffered acute shortage, for many of their best men were freed to serve in military administrations in neighboring theatres of the war. . . . It is no exaggeration to say that during the war and the immediate post-war period the Sudan Political Service provided staff and in many cases exercised control of the military administrations of the Middle East. That this was possible without any dislocation of affairs in the Sudan, which was left with only a skeleton cadre, reflects high credit both upon a Service which had organised and maintained a regime of justice and amity and upon the Sudanese who had come to realise its value.[29]

Applications to join the Service increased following the war when the procedure of operating through preliminary and final selection boards at the universities or at London was revived. Only a few of those recruited after 1945, however, were given pensionable terms of service. The vast majority were employed on the contract system that had been initiated earlier. The decision to make such a basic alteration in the nature of appointments for members of the Sudan Civil Service was the result of the changing relationship between Britain and Egypt, the growth of viable political parties among the Sudan's educated elite, and the first waves of a growing nationalism that began to sweep Asia and Africa following the Second World War. The combination of these new developments brought the Administration to a realisation that the era of British rule in the Sudan, not unlike the era of trusteeship elsewhere, was drawing to a close.[30] A promise of self-government for the Sudan in 1947, meanwhile, underscored the wisdom of not strapping the country with a body of expatriate personnel who might be entitled to financial compensation upon their replacement by Sudanese.[31]

Wisdom became policy in 1948 when the Anglo-Sudanese Committee made public its recommendations. As early as 1939 the influential Civil Secretary, Sir Douglas Newbold, had foreseen that the time was imminent when it would be essential to introduce Sudanese into the upper echelons of the Administration. Thereafter he employed all of his considerable powers of persuasion and authority to overcome the opposition to Sudanisation by the senior British officials. They regarded

the continuation of the Sudan Political Service essential not only to Britain's position on the Nile, but for the country's future which they deeply believed they held in trust. Newbold's determination to introduce Sudanese into higher office ultimately prevailed.

> We have evidence that the British Government do not propose to allow the Egyptian Government to raise any controversial Sudan question during the war, we have a breathing space in which I consider we should strengthen the Sudanese share in the Government by accelerated Sudanisation as well as by Local and other Councils. Under the Treaty Britain can only compete with Egypt on equal terms in the Sudan, or at most as senior partner. The Sudanese can, if we put them in the position, compete on terms of legal priority. We should be in as strong a position to keep Egyptians out of the Political Service as we are in keeping them out of the Medical Service.
>
> Except in the more primitive areas, and especially the Southern Sudan, the District Office is ceasing or will cease to be the Father of his People, the Hakim el Dar. We may deplore this, and many Sudanese villagers may deplore it as Dorset villagers deplore the passing of the squire, but like the subject of detribalization – whether to preserve it or destroy it – it need not be argued. The answer is the inexorable march of events. Admittedly the first decade of Sudanese D.O.'s will mean some deterioration in standards, but we must devise some means of training and education and travel and reading which will raise their professional standard and equip them for one of the most honourable and fascinating tasks in Africa.[32]

Immediately following the war the Anglo-Sudanese Committee was appointed in 1946 to develop a process that would allow the 'Sudanisation without loss of efficiency' of the entire Civil Service:

> the proportion of first division administrative posts (*i.e.* in the Political Service) held by Sudanese throughout the country was to rise from 14.3 per cent. in 1948 to 21.4 per cent. in 1952 and 54.5 per cent. in 1962 . . .
>
> In February, 1953, Great Britain and Egypt signed an Agreement which heralded the end of the Condominium and the grant of self-government to the Sudan preparatory to that country determining for itself whether it should be independent or linked in some form to Egypt. There was, of course, no more recruitment of British staff for the Political Service after that date, and to ensure 'the free and neutral

> atmosphere requisite for self-determination' it was agreed that the Sudanisation of the Administration, the Police and the Sudan Defence Force should be completed before the choice was made. This was speedily – far too speedily – achieved, with the consequence that the British Political Service, which at the end of 1952 had still numbered 144, had by 1955 ceased to exist and been replaced by Sudanese.[33]

Devolution did not come as a surprise to those who had served in the Sudan Civil Service. Some, like John Winder, a former foils Blue on the Cambridge fencing team, entertained few illusions as to their immediate roles or the eventual outcome of their efforts.

> In 1927, when I entered the Service the administration was entirely British – no strings were attached, the job was to govern only for the well being of the Sudanese. This had been facilitated from the very first by the law passed by the first Governor General [Sir Herbert Horatio Kitchener] under which foreigners were [prohibited] from owning any land in the country. The country was for the Sudanese and for the Sudanese only.
>
> The Political Service ... was then, from the very first, devoted purely and simply to foster the well being of the Sudanese. It had Gordon always as a backcloth with his missionary determination and devotion to duty and with the ideal of raising the Sudanese, the most miserable and impoverished of people in 1898, into a self confident and prosperous nation. ... Recruitment to the Service was recruitment to the Sudan for life until retirement unlike that to the Colonial Service which was not recruitment to any specific country but to the Colonial Empire at large. Recruitment was thus, in some sense a dedication of oneself to the Sudan and the Sudanese. In many members of the Service this feeling was very strongly imbued.[34]

That years of hindsight appear to have confirmed Winder's belief that the members of the Political Service were the trustees of the Sudan and Sudanese is as understandable as it is axiomatic. Yet his memories of the beginnings of his service in the Sudan foreshadow little of his later self-confidence. Instead they underscore the uncertainty and disappointments facing a 'new boy' as he began a career in the Political Service in 1927.

> Have you ever doubted that the earth is round? Well take a pair of

binoculars and stand on the bridge of a vessel passing through the Suez Canal. You will see the earth just kicking down ahead of you as you look along the line of the Canal. I doubt if one ever tires of the Suez Canal. The ship's movement is slow and one glides along between the two banks, occasionally passing over vessels tied up; at night there is the powerful beam of the searchlight on the bows lighting up the waters with a [silvery] beam. One has the feeling of passing altogether into other climes and other worlds – as indeed one is for beyond Suez is another world, the world of the Orient with heat greater than you have known, with smells other than you have met and people dressed differently from what you have been used [to]. For us, we felt we were nearing the end of our voyage and the sight of the hills rising on the west, the Red Sea Hills, were like a sight of the promised land. It was moving to think we should probably spend the best days of our lives behind those hills, and we wondered what was in store.

One Sunday morning we sighted Sanganeb light and about midday entered Port Sudan harbour. [I] remember it was a cloudy day with a curious haze over everything. This far up the Red Sea it rains in the winter and rains were hanging about when we got to Port Sudan. It was hot and sticky. We naturally expected we should be met but no one came aboard. We ought to have been met, but for . . . some reason or another no one had bothered to tell the staff in Port Sudan that we were due. Moreover it was a Sunday, a holiday in Port Sudan (unlike the rest of the northern Sudan where the Moslem Friday Holiday is kept) and there was a cricket match on – so we were not met. The hatches were soon off and the [stevedores] swarmed on board. These were red tinted men with curious gollywog hair – the Fuzzie Wuzzies [Beja tribesmen] of Kipling. They make excellent stevedores as being trained to lift water from deep wells from childhood's days they have great strength of shoulder and arm – ideal for shifting cargoes in confined space. They are no use as quay labour since they cannot carry. The quay labour was Yemenese, small yellow men speaking the sharp staccato Arabic of the Arabian [Peninsula]. The Fuzzie spoke the language of the hills, *To Bedawi* as it is called. We found our classical Arabic of little value at all as spoken Arabic – With no one to meet us we all felt pretty lost, but eventually a British customs official came aboard, very annoyed at having to turn out on a Sunday afternoon, but decent enough to take us poor probationers under his wing and tell us how to carry on. Apparently sleepers had been booked for us and lay in the siding near the quay. But first we had to

pass his customs. In England we had been given to understand our baggage would be passed through, but apparently this was not the case and we had to find quite a lot of money before we were free. Most of us had by this time little enough cash on us and most of us left the quay with hardly anything at all – one man I know had to borrow to clear himself. It was evening when all was done and we had stowed our kit in the sleepers. We decided the best thing would be to [proceed by] a rowing boat across the harbour to the Hotel on the other side and there wait till our train left at about ten that night, from the town station. Eventually we walked to the station though it was hot and distant simply because we felt we had to husband our few remaining piastres and a taxi would be too expensive. It was not a very welcoming arrival and when I was stationed a few weeks later in Port Sudan, I make it my business each year to go abroad and deal with the difficulties of the next batches of Probationers when they arrived.

The train duly left at 10 [p.m.]. A long train with sleepers, first, second, third and fourth class carriages. The coaches were all white, with double roofs to keep them cool, with tinted glass in the windows to prevent glare and shutters to keep [out] the sun. The sleepers were excellent and roomy, though we were doubled up in them and we soon made ourselves comfortable. At last the swarm of passengers and those seeing them off separated and the train slowly moved off. We found ourselves slowly moving away. The line bends round and gradually climbs above the Town and we could see the lights below us, the brilliant arc lights of the quay area and the greater beams of the lights on the coal transporters. Very quickly one seemed to leave the heat and the haze of Port Sudan behind and on reaching the first station the air was clear and the sky filled with myriads of stars. It grew cooler as we climbed. The rise was steady at first but shortly we began to enter the hills and the gradient increased. The hills looked black and stark in the star light, the rocks we passed looked as if they had just been molten and just cooled as the night descended. We passed up a dry watercourse, with stunted woody grass and one could see how the summer rains had washed the bed clear. The line was a single one with passing places only at stations. Every now and again the train stopped to take up water and we were able to get down and savour the smell of the cool night desert air. Eventually we turned in.

We awoke to a different landscape. The hills had disappeared or were only faintly visible in the east. We were now on a vast gently sloping plain of sand and gravel, with rocky [outcrops], with more grass and wider sandier watercourses. We saw our first hill camels,

smaller beasts with browner hair than we had seen in Egypt. We passed flocks of sheep and goats and Fuzzie shepherds standing free, white 'tob' flung carelessly over shoulders, arms resting characteristically along their curved camel sticks, carried across their shoulder blades. Many wore the 'tiffa' from which they get their name of 'Fuzzie-Wuzzie', with a porcupine quill sticking in it – highly useful for scratching! As the day grew hotter we saw [our] first mirage: trees looked as if they were standing in water and a train coming in the opposite direction seemed to be crawling through a lake; the sharp outcrops had shimmering outlines. It was a hard dry world. In time we reached Atbara. This is where the Port Sudan line joins that from Wadi Halfa and where the Nile is first seen. Atbara is the headquarters of the railway system and just as in other parts of the world it seems impossible to pass through a railway headquarters without an interminable wait. Lots of officials seem to have to inspect, the engine is probably changed and on this [occasion] as it was now [evening] lots of [people] came to the station to meet friends travelling. The Restaurant fills with visitors, meeting people coming off leave or to have a last drink with someone going up country. The platform [was] swarming with black, brown and yellow people, milling round, shouting greetings, clasping each other with both arms round the shoulders, slapping hands noisely. But in time the whistle goes and we draw slowly out, cross the Atbara bridge and move away again into the countryside. Much of the time we are now in view of the river, fringed with date palms and with much more cultivation than we have seen heretofore. *Dhows* are tied up by the bank. In the morning they will spread their immense sails to catch the steady north wind which will drive them and their [loads] of dates up river to the markets of Khartoum and Omdurman. It is evening again. We pass through larger villages but see little of them save brown and brick houses with numerous white clothed people [thronging] the stations when we stop. Eventually it is night and we turn in for the second time on that train. We are beginning to feel it is a long journey.

Dawn finds us in Khartoum. We are not yet used to getting up with the sun and some of us are a bit slow in 'showing a leg', much to the annoyance of a young man in riding apparel and a polo helmet who has ridden his white pony to the station to meet us and escort us to the Sudan Club where we are to stay. We discover this is the Assistant Civil Secretary (Personnel) whose office is mainly responsible for our immediate future. He guides us to the Sudan Club, riding along on his polo pony while we lumber along in horse-drawn four wheelers. The

Sudan Club is a large white building, with deep shady verandahs covered with bougainvillea and surrounded with shady lawns. It has a new swimming bath with Greek columns, tennis courts and squash courts. Quite a lot of the officials live here, bachelors and it is here we are to be put up for our short stay in Khartoum. After breakfasting the first thing, apparently, we are expected to do is to go and make ourselves mobile. In those days there were few cars in Khartoum and many of the roads which are now tarmac were then only sand. There were two main types of transport other than the gharris we had come from the station in – donkeys and bicycles, and it is bicycles we have to have. We go to an Armenian called Mr O'Hanian (sounds pretty Irish to me, but it seems he was an Armenian) and here furnish ourselves with bicycles he hires and mounting these move off to the Secretariat where the boss of all things, the Civil Secretary, wants to see his new boys. After being briefed by the Personnel section, meeting the Deputy C[ivil] S[secretary] we were [ushered] into [his] presence [Sir Harold MacMichael], a thin man with an aquiline nose, swaying his tortoiseshell glasses to and fro in his right hand. After some pleasantries he asks us where we would like to be stationed, not that what we say is likely to make much difference to his decisions, which have been probably taken some time before. I remember I asked to be stationed in Wadi Halfa and this caused some surprise since Wadi Halfa is not a very popular station being the [headquarters] of a small and very poor province, mostly sand and Nile cataracts. I dare say this request of mine may have had some influence on the fact that I was detailed to go there. It happened in fact that there was a vacancy and one of us had to go there in any case – so why not send me there who seemed to want to be posted there. I had my reasons for selecting Wadi Halfa. In the first place I knew it was small but I thought that the fewer people there were between me and the Governor, the more quickly I might be given things worthwhile to do and so learn my job the sooner. Then too I thought the Arabic there would be pretty good and as I had to pass my Arabic exams as soon as possible that seemed an asset. Finally I knew certain people who might be spending the next winter in Egypt and I imagined they might find time to come up the Nile as far as Wadi Halfa and visit me. Anyhow I was detailed for Halfa. The Governor of Halfa happened to be in Khartoum at the time and was doing his best to get an Assistant District Commissioner with some experience, and he was far from pleased when the news was broken to him that he would have to put up with a Probationer.

'Anyhow can he play tennis and is he any good at bridge?' he asked of me. Of course no one knew the answers but he was mollified when informed that I did do both these things, though my quality was unknown. In fact he soon discovered about my prowess at bridge – such as it was – since a few days later I found myself setting out for Wadi Halfa on the same train as he was on, together with his wife and a friend of hers and I had to 'make a four' for the next twenty-four hours. This would have been a bit nerve racking anyhow but it was made worse by the fact that I had meanwhile lost my voice in the dry dusty air of Khartoum and as I could only croak out 'Two spades' or 'Three hearts', whatever my call might be, it was all a little difficult for the new recruit.

I remember we reached Wadi Halfa the evening of December 23rd, just before Christmas. I was to stay with the District Commissioner and his wife. He was a man on a short contract, a soldier and a man with a grudge on life. He spent much of his time running down his superiors and I am glad to say he did not remain in the Service more than another year. Christmas in the Sudan is of course quite unlike Christmas in the northern climes, but everyone made the most of it and on this occasion I remember we all went to the tiny church in the morning and there was a party for all the Europeans in the Club in the evening. One thing amused me a good deal and that was the showers of telegrams which arrived with Christmas greetings from Sudanese, merchants, officials and the like. Most of them were of course sent off in the local post office only a few yards away, but it was a simple and inexpensive way of remembering the occasion.

My new boss was one of those men who think the quickest way of teaching a new man his job is to make him do it. With this method I think I agree as there is certainly nothing more deflating for a keen new boy than being made to hang about watching someone else doing something which he of course hardly understands. Anyhow it had been decided that I was to be thrown into the desert of the 3rd Cataract and made to look after a gang of labourers trying to make a road suitable for motor traffic. On Christmas Eve I had been [introduced] to a camel policeman and told he was to be my nurse. The good man, in [recompense] for the arduous task of shepherding the tyro had just been given a stripe. He was to earn it.

He and the camels which were to carry my baggage went off ahead and I followed about midday in a truck to a point about 25 miles up the river which was road head. Here was my policeman with his camel and another for me to ride and I was left there. It was my first serious

acquaintance with a camel and I admit I was more than half scared of the beast which started growling and grumbling as soon as I approached him. However my policeman held the beast down until I was settled in the saddle and I was able to survive the forward sway, the backward lurch and the staggering of its feet which is the camel's way of getting going. Once up one feels frightfully high above the ground and completely helpless. With a horse one has stirrups and a bridle and there [are] reins which one imagines can be used to guide the animal. Not so with a camel. One is perched up high on a sort of tray and one has only a bit of rope looped round his nose to try and influence him by. True, one has pummels on the saddle and that allows one to grip the thing a bit with one's knees but as for the rope, one knows at once one would be unable to make any impression on his movements. When a camel is on its feet it usually looks disdainfully round wondering in which direction it would like to move off and mine did just that. However my policeman was soon up too and the camel decided he had better follow his camel and all was well. As I rode this camel a great deal during the next week or two, I got to know him fairly well (if one can ever be said to know a camel, which I doubt) and there was little vice in him. I learnt to make the gutteral noises to make him understand that he was to kneel down, to tap him on the knees with one's camel [stick] if he was slow about it, to thrust my heels into his shoulders to make him move faster and to guide him adequately with the single string round his nose. He was only a hired camel and not a first class one and even at the trot he was not very comfortable. A really good trotting camel, as I was to learn a few weeks later, is a real joy – comfortable, speedy and strong.

At some time in the past an effort had been made to lay a railway line through this country I was in. Most of the rails had been removed but the bridges over the *wadis* in some cases remained and there was, for the most part, an embankment on which the rails had been laid. The idea was, so far as possible, to use this embankment as the basis of my road. In some places the bank had been washed away by erosion by the river and at others blowing sand had completely covered it to a depth of many feet, but wherever possible this earthwork would form a fairly good riding surface for motor vehicles in comparison with the desert on either side. Where it could not be used we had to clear a track through the rocks on one side or the other, getting back again to the line as soon as we could. My labourers were some twenty in number, Sayidis [professional labourers] from Upper Egypt, and grand men for earth moving. Of course I could hardly talk to them as my Arabic

was still completely missing, [but] I had to have long discussions with my policeman and gradually I began to get a fluency in a few words and phrases. The policeman had to act as interpreter as he was supposed to know what I might be trying to say, and we [got] along somehow.

I put up in the rest house belonging to the *Omda* of Sarras.[35] The *Omda* was the local potentate but nevertheless a pretty humble old man. He was most hospitable and insisted in sending me coffee after my meals and occasionally joining me when we did our best to pass the usual pleasantries. Every morning and afternoon I would ride out on my camel to where the track was to go and this meant a good deal of careful prospecting ahead if time was not to be lost and energy wasted. We had nothing but picks, shovels and crowbars so we were unable to shift rocks of any great size. On the other hand we did not want the road to wind about too much and a little greater distance to travel would be better than lots of tight corners. But mostly we tried to keep to the old railway line and I well remember coming to where a small bridge had been washed away. The great railway girders were lying there still, not so very many yards away down the *wadi*, but how to get them back was a problem. I felt sure that if I could get them back to the track I could secure them enough for vehicle traffic across them. I had never realised before how dependent we are on wheels for moving heavy objects. Here, of course, there were no wheels of any kind and I could find no trees suitable for converting into rollers. In any case the rollers would have sunk into the sand. Nothing I could engineer was any use. There lay the girders – here stood the old bridge site, but never the twain should meet. There was no means of getting them together and the road had to come down off the quite high bank at this point and up it again on the other side of the *wadi*. However the road we made was quite a good one and I was immensely proud of it and thought I was doing a grand job. One day after a week or so of road making, news reached me that I had been transferred from Wadi Halfa Province to Port Sudan in the Red Sea Province and that I was to down tools and return to Wadi Halfa. I was frightfully disappointed. I knew the quick move could have nothing to do with me personally and that I was merely one cog in a number of other moves, but I had really [become] interested in what I was doing and it seemed like letting myself down to leave it so soon. I mounted my camel after fond farewells with the *Omda* and the gang and rode the fifty miles back to Halfa. I met the Governor at his gate and he asked me how many miles of road I had made. When I told him I supposed it might

> be as much as five miles – very proudly – he snorted that he had only fifty pounds to take the road through to Delgo [Dalqū]. This was a matter of fifty miles, so perhaps I had not done as well as I thought.[36]

The abundant idealism and enthusiasm of the Winder memoirs was not always a common characteristic of the members of the Political Service. The 'new boy' recollections of Paul James Sandison, a contemporary of Winder in the Political Service, provide a different perspective of the goals and anxieties of young British officials as they launched their careers in the Sudan.

> Early in December 1928 eleven 'active young men, endowed with good health, high character and fair abilities – not the mediocre by-products of the race, but the flower of those who are turned out from our schools and colleges' disembarked from [the] s.s. Chindwin, a tub of the Henderson steamship company, at Port Sudan. Fortunately they did not know that the great Lord Cromer, formerly British High Commissioner in Egypt and the Sudan, had so described them and the rest of the Sudan Political Service. They might have been moved to unseemly mirth. They were stimulated by the prospect of their first job – only one of them had been employed before. They had liked the absence of competitive examinations in their selection, and had found their interviewers, senior members of the service, congenial. They had done three months in London studying Arabic and Law, entirely at their parents' or tailor's expense. They looked forward to the happy day when they would report in Khartoum, and their pay – L 40 a month – would begin. In those far-off days it was thought 'common' to talk about money, so I did not mention that the three months [of study] had doubled my 'going-down' debts, and that I had had to leave a trail of post-dated cheques behind me. As I got to know the others better, I sensed that most of them were in the same boat.
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> Various persons in strange uniforms told us what to do, greeted us, or ignored us. We stood about [in] white sun-helmets rather self-consciously, noticing that everyone else, except those in uniform, appeared to be in small khaki affairs. We later learned that these were 'Bombay Bowlers', and each [of us] bought one, throwing away the expensive white objects. We admired the Fuzzy-Wuzzy dockers, naked to the waist, sweating and singing. We got into a white train of sleeping cars, with tinted glass windows. We were en route for Khartoum, fame, we hoped, and fortune – we rather wondered.
>
> The next morning as we woke up, two to a compartment, we saw

through the carriage window a level and featureless plain. It was apparently quite black and remarkably like a gramophone record. [A companion] and I looked at each other. The unspoken thought was: 'When is the next train back to Port Sudan?' Almost at once, we realised that the tinted glass had exaggerated the horror of the situation – which was, however, still level and featureless – but grey.

After a lot more desert, the train only travelled at 25 miles an hour, we arrived in Khartoum – and were billeted in the Sudan Club. It was the most encouraging thing we had seen since Port Sudan. A deep-verandahed, cool, two-storied building on the river front, it was set in a framework of tall date palms and green trees. There were lawns, tennis and squash courts and a swimming bath – The operative words were shady and cool. Waiters in long white robes with green cummerbunds moved silently about, dispensing fresh lime and soda or afternoon tea. Alcohol was not usually drunk until after sunset. The members of the club were all white senior officials. There were, I subsequently found out, a number of junior officials in the country, of unmistakeable whiteness, but they were not members. Although new boys, we were on the right side of the great divide.

The next few days were spent in visits to the various departments – education, health, agriculture, etc. We were courteously received by the Headmaster in each case, given cups of Arabian coffee, and told of problems and policies. The key visit was to the head of our branch of the service, the Civil Secretary. Here our postings were to be given to us. Sir Harold MacMichael [the Civil Secretary] had started as we were doing and had risen to the top. . . . Of his competence and intelligence there was no question. He now told us where we were going. As the revelation was in alphabetical order, and I came last, suspense was my portion. . . .

At last it came. I knew none of the thirteen eminent [Provincial] Governors and [because] it seemed as if my ten fellow probationers had been scattered over most of the provinces, I was apprehensive. 'Ah, Mr. Sandison. Umm. . . . I'm afraid we are sending you down to Mongalla. We have had a casualty. We have never had so young a man in the South. It will be difficult for you to pass your Arabic examination, as the language is not spoken there. You will have to try very hard.'

As all increases in pay depended upon success in the examination, it looked as if my overdraft would have to become a long-term credit. There were, of course, compensations. Big-game shooting, naked savages and cannibals. Fortunately I was not to know the worst for

> some time. Sir Harold was convinced that only those speaking the Arabic tongue were capable of being administered. The rest just had to be looked after, on a care and maintenance basis. I had been doomed to start as a nursemaid to cannibals![37]

Faced with the near certainty that he would fail to pass the mandatory Arabic examination, and thereby fail to qualify for any pay increase, a less than sanguine Paul James Sandison set out to acquire the necessities for survival in the land of cannibals – a year's supply of provisions, a liberal reserve of whisky, the latest in big-game hunting rifles and the services of a cook and houseboy, neither of whom understood English. After he had increased his indebtedness by £E 128, Sandison boarded the Nile steamer for his journey to Mongalla.

> The Nile steamer, a stern-wheeler like a smaller model of the Mississippi steamers in 'Gone With the Wind', took the mail from Khartoum to Mongalla and Rejaf every fortnight. It connected with the Bahr el Ghazal, and gave the province headquarters at Wau its link with the outside world. The journey of a thousand miles as the crow flies, to Rejaf, took fourteen days, and the return, with the current, ten. The only place on the way of any importance was Malakal, headquarters of the Upper Nile province. South of Malakal lay the 'sudd', papyrus-filled swamps, where half the water of the Nile evaporated. This produced a Turkish bath climate over about 100,000 square miles. It was the home of the Dinka and Nuer tribes, naked, long-legged, polygamous people. The men are magnificently endowed by nature for procreation, the women quite able to stand up to them. An American tourist on the postboat said to his young daughter on sighting the first group 'Come over to the other side, Sadie, I don't want for you to be disappointed.'
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> The main channel through the sudd is incredibly tortuous. At one stage of the journey a solitary tree is sighted in the sea of waving papyrus heads. It appears, first on one side, then on the other, ahead, astern, for three whole days. As the steamer pushes along four or more barges, at least one each side and two in front, it is awkward to steer round the frequent hair-pin bends. The only way is to shut down the engine, hit the edge of the channel with an almighty crash, and let the current swing you round. It needs great judgment to make impact at the right place. The Sudanese 'reis' [raˈīs] the helmsman, pilots his incredible craft quietly and efficiently.
>
> There is absolutely nothing for the passengers to do except shoot at

crocodiles sunning themselves on mudbanks. Even this was stopped a few years later. I have never been able to work up much sympathy for the crocodile, even when we are told that he is in danger of extinction. His playful habit of seizing people and dragging them to his lair through its underwater entrance to be consumed at leisure, offset, to my mind, any lovable qualities he might have. He is not like the man-eating lion, generally an old chap who cannot catch more active game. The crocodile appears to prefer human prey. One of the first pieces of advice to newcomers was how to escape if seized by a croc. Ignore the pain, feel along his snout for the eyes, press them both very hard, and he will release you. All adventurous conservationists should note. Fortunately I never had to use the remedy, but I know someone who did, and who got away with it.

There was only one other English-speaking passenger [with the exception of the American tourist and his family] – a road engineer called Murray. He was returning to the South to work on a road linking Rejaf, where the steamer was halted by rapids, and the Uganda border at Nimule, about a hundred miles away. Like many men who have lived in the wilds, he was taciturn, and I found it difficult to learn much from him. Only once was he roused to anything approaching mirth. It was at the great meeting of the southbound and the northbound steamers. On a wide and straight stretch of water near Malakal the two unwieldly bunches of barges approached each other. Their paddle wheels stopped turning. Their crews shouted greetings. But the solitary passenger on the deck of the other boat, lying stretched out over two long steamer chairs, made no sign. He looked near death. 'Good Heavens', I said to Murray, 'Who's that?' Murray positively giggled. 'That's Chaworth-Musters' [Captain R. H. Chaworth-Musters], he said, 'He's the chap you're replacing!'[38]

Fourteen days after his departure from Khartoum the Nile steamer deposited a less than enthusiastic probationer at Mongalla. Before him stood the challenge of adjusting to a new physical environment, the rigours of a new job and the unforeseen social divisions which existed between British civilian and military personnel in the Sudan.

From the boat there was little to be seen except a neat gravelled road, and some single-storied houses, partially hidden by croton hedges and a mess of banyan, neem and Persian lilac trees. The usual gang of prisoners arrived to unload cargo, and a single tall, grey-haired man in the uniform of our service. Major Robert Berkeley

Black S.O.R.A.M.C. [Senior Officer, Royal Army Medical Corps] had been Mongalla province medical officer, then a district commissioner, and now acting Governor. He was reputed to have combined district administration and medical practice, and on occasions to have used his office desk as an operating table. He walked me off to breakfast in his house, only a few hundred yards from the landing. We passed a peculiar-looking shed, made, I was told, of asbestos string woven in and out of wire mesh panels. The whole structure was raised on a forest of iron pipes, some six feet above the ground.

'That's your house', said Major Black, 'It's really a rest-house, but we've nowhere else to put you. You see, Chaworth-Musters was in an outstation.' Major Black had a largish house, built in the same way.'

My shed had three rooms, each about ten foot by eleven, a narrow wooden verandah on the two long sides, and at one corner a cage of mosquito wire just big enough to take a camp bed. There was a separate kitchen and a living room for servants some yards away, and in the opposite direction a small building containing a bucket latrine. A water supply, piped from the river, gave a single stand-pipe and tap near the kitchen. This was an amenity of which we Mongallese were very proud. Not all province headquarters had a piped water supply. There was no water in the house, nor fittings of any kind. Camp furniture was the order of the day. I am glad to say that it was quite the nastiest house I was ever allotted in the Sudan. But at the time I could not know that.

The Acting Governor had quite pleasant furniture, china and silver, and his verandahs were deep enough for long 'steamer' chairs. His turbanned servants had that air of solemn grandeur which goes with service to a high-ranking officer. He told me that the Governor [A. W. Skrine] himself was seriously ill, high up on the Imatong mountains. He was too ill to be moved, and the province doctor, an R.A.M.C. [Royal Army Medical Corps] officer, was in attendance. The Deputy Governor [John Noel ('Whiskers') Richardson] was on tour. Major Black and I were the only British civilian officials in the station. There were four British officers, the headquarters staff of the Equatorial Corps of the Sudan Defence Force [also present at Mongalla].

'You needn't pay any attention to them', said Major Black, 'As a matter of fact, we're hardly on speaking terms with them.' He did not offer any explanation, and it was only later that I heard that this particular civil/military impasse had been caused by the previous Deputy Governor [Major R. G. C. Brock] whose aim had apparently been to command both the province and the army at the same time.

This tension made things a little difficult for me during the next few days. Before breakfast one walked around the station, seeing that the working parties of prisoners were cutting the grass, weeding the roads, clipping the neat croton hedges, and not idling their time away in the shade of a tree. From time to time one would see other uniformed figures, with different uniforms and different badges in their Wolseley helmets. One deduced that they were officers in the Equatorial Corps. Sometimes they appeared to be drilling their soldiers. By careful planning it was possible to avoid them. But one morning something went wrong. I met one of them face to face. By his badges of rank he seemed to be a Brigadier. There was nothing else for it. I saluted. He returned my salute affably, and, horror upon horror, spoke.

'I'm Moysey [Captain F. Moysey]. I command here. You must be the new boy. Come and dine in mess tomorrow.' We went our several ways.

I reported the meeting to Major Black in some trepidation. He laughed and said: 'Of course you must go.' So at 7:30 in my white dinner jacket, rather self-conscious with a six foot black cummerbund wrapped round my middle, I turned up at the mess. The atmosphere was pleasant and kindly. I was given a good dinner, and a lot to drink. At about 10:30 Moysey Bey said: 'We will now play the province game.'

Everyone filed out of the ante-room, and at the door each was provided by the mess waiter with some form of firearm – shotguns, pistols, sporting rifles – the lot. I got a service revolver. Outside the mess were two private motor cars – Moysey's bullnosed Morris and a 'T' model Ford. We piled in and set out along the only road leading to Torit. The country was flat and sparsely wooded, mostly scrub acacia with a few larger trees.

By now it had been explained that the game was called 'Eyes'. Whenever the eyes of a wild animal were picked up by the headlights, the cry would go up. The assembled company would fire, and the car would follow the animal, whatever it was, and wherever it went – into the bush, across water runnels – anywhere until it was despatched. It was not long before the cry did go up, and, so it appeared to me, everyone discharged his piece. I was unfortunately wedged in the nearside corner of the front seat. The windscreen had been opened fully, so those in the back could fire straight ahead, if need be. Need was, until the hyaena as our quarry was, jinked to the left. It then felt as if all the fowling pieces in the back seat were being discharged close to my left ear. Not to be outdone, I emptied my revolver in the general

direction of the prey. He fell to this concerted attack, and, I am thankful to say, we found no other victims that night. It was clear to me that the game laws, humanity and all considerations of prudence were suspended for the duration of the province game. It may well have been some kind of initiation ceremony for the 'new boy'. At any rate, from that night I was officially known as the Bush Baby – the name of a small noctural rodent common to those parts. The ban on fraternization also seemed to have gone.

Soon after this, the Deputy Governor, Whiskers Richardson, came back from tour. Life became more serious for me. I had to be taught my trade. For the present this seemed to consist of checking endless forms and returns, analysing them and presenting them to him. I also re-organized the strictly confidential files – a task given to every new entrant when you cannot think of anything else for him to do. I also learned that I had to serve two masters – the Governor in his office and Captain Robert Chevalier Cooke M.C., the district commissioner of Rejaf and Mongalla districts as his assistant for Mongalla. I seldom saw him, as although Rejaf and Mongalla were only fifty miles apart by river, they were ninety miles by road. There was no telephone, but we could send telegrams to each other. As assistant district commissioner I migrated from the splendour of the Governor's office to the squalor of the district office, in the middle of the market. There I had my first real contact with the Sudanese, for I was the local magistrate. My powers were fairly limited until I had passed the law examination, but I could try the less serious crimes and, subject to confirmation, award a sentence of six months imprisonment or L 25 fine.

My first case was one of sodomy between two small boys in a public place. They got a beating. I would have let them off, but Garang Lado, my sergeant-major of police, said that the practice was anathema instead of being the national pastime as it was further north. My next [case] was much more difficult. A British Bimbashi in the Sudan Defence Force came to see me in some perturbation.[39] He was a little older than me, and had played the province game that night. He revealed that Moysey Bey's second-in-command, who was absent on patrol, had a native wife. The night before, this naughty girl had been found in suggestive circumstances with the second-in-command's sergeant-major. The Bimbashi had come to the civil arm to see that justice was done, and he obviously felt from all points of view – moral, disciplinary and legal – that swift retribution should be exacted by me for this well-nigh treasonable conduct. I was in a perplexity, for although adultery was a crime under the penal code of the Sudan,

there was no evidence that adultery had been committed. Even if there had been evidence of copulation, it was more than doubtful whether the girl and the second-in-command were joined in any form of matrimony. The Bimbashi kept saying:

'What *will* the Bey do, when he comes back again?' kept thinking: 'Will this produce another civil/military crisis?' In the end, Solomon produced an acceptable answer. The Bimbashi should charge the sergeant-major with conduct prejudicial to good order and military discipline, and I would order that the girl should return to her father's house and there remain until the Bey returned. This appeared to work, as, when the Bey did come back, the subject was not referred to.[40]

I had already engaged an Egyptian book-keeper from the Governor's office to help me with my Arabic, and every afternoon we did an hour's classical study. It was tough going – January and February, the cool months in the Northern Sudan, are the hot [ones] in the South. This meant from 100 to 105 degrees Fahrenheit (38° to 40°C) in the shade, with a relative humidity of over 85%. You sweated all the time. In [the Second World War] the United States military authorities estimates that with a temperature of 105°F. a human had no energy left for physical exertion; it was all used in maintaining him. I can state from personal experience that this is an exaggeration – but only just. There were, of course, no punkahs or electric fans in the house. Moreover, classical Arabic differs from the colloquial about as much as Chaucer from the Daily Mail. To make it worse, even the colloquial was only spoken in Mongalla by people from the North. Locals, in so far as they spoke anything except their vernacular, had a pidgin of the pidgins, allegedly based on Arabic and called by us, Mongallese. . . . It was tiresome having to learn three words for everything – but my Bank's solvency depended upon it. So we struggled with Thatcher's Arabic Grammer and Tales from the Arabian Nights. . . .

Then there were three exceptional items to keep us busy – the move of province headquarters, the Ilembi triangle, and the future of the Southern Sudan. They are in inverse order of importance, but in the order of their solution. As a 'new boy', of course, I had no hand in their solution. I could only watch and devil.[41]

Given the differences in their personalities and experiences, the 'new boy' recollections of John Winder and Paul James Sandison demonstrate the effectiveness of the calculated recruitment and training policies of the Political Service. Both of these Oxford graduates began

their careers with only the most minimal formal preparation, either intellectual or emotional, for the conditions they would face or the responsibilities they would assume. But despite this, or perhaps because of it, both managed to establish successful careers in the Service. Administrative competence, it seems, could be acquired most readily in the pressing conditions of front-line service as a colonial administrator, where the young probationer could expect no more than the occasional intervention of a distant supervisor. Armed with only the most meagre familiarity with Arabic and the solid sense of themselves that was implicit in the traditions of the English Public School and Oxbridge, probationers in the Political Service had little choice but to reproduce the patterns of paternalistic rule that had been created by those who had risen to seniority in the Service.

Quite a different propensity, however, characterised those who served as professionals in the Sudan Civil Service. Although they were selected by the same recruitment formula employed for the Political Service, the backgrounds and training of Sudan civil servants contrasted sharply with that of their compatriots. Attracted by an interest or background in commercial or industrial careers a professional could not embark upon a career in the Sudan until he had acquired the knowledge necessary for the practical application of his skills. So, rather than spend a year pondering the mysteries of Arabic in the comfortable confines of the School of Oriental Studies in London, the future civil servant undertook a year of intensive professional training in a specific technical field. This process virtually assured the civil servant that he would begin his career with a level of professional competency that was almost unknown among his administrative counterparts. It also ensured that the technical services of the Sudan were constantly improved by an infusion of specialists who had been trained in the most modern application of their professions.

Given the structure of the society from which they had come it is also not surprising that British officials in the Sudan would view such differences in background and vocation as appropriate bases upon which to organise their own social structure. Richard Hill was a recruit to the railway traffic management and began his long association with Sudan Government Railways after completing his studies at Oxford and a rigorous one-year training programme administered by the Great Western Railway. Within a fortnight of his arrival in the Sudan, Hill wrote.

> I have been in this country long enough to have formed some early

impressions of my immediate surroundings. The Sudan Railways and Steamers are staffed by an elite of senior officials assisted by a body of British junior officials, Egyptian officials and artisans and a vast remainder of Sudanese officials, artisans and labourers.

The British railwaymen are divided into two social groupings: the senior officials, the civil counterpart of the army officers, have their own clubs at Khartoum, Atbara and Port Sudan. The British junior officials, corresponding with the non-commissioned officers of the army, have their clubs at these centres. The wives of British officials whether senior or junior, seem much alike as to social origins, education and awareness, and, by their very equality tend to lessen the social gulf. The gulf is further removed in Atbara where most senior officials are members of both clubs, and all big functions are really joint senior–junior functions.

My immediate circle of friends are all senior officials of my own grade. Jacobs [R. G. Jacobs] and Willoughby [J. L. Willoughby], both traffic men, are Old Westminsters. Roger Cockburn [R. D. Cockburn] and Richard Darvall [R. G. Darvall] (accounts) are the only Cambridge men in our department; I am the only Oxford man. Mrs. Darvall is the only woman graduate. The rest of those women I have met are no doubt excellent wives but are otherwise inconspicuous.[42]

Weeks later Hill expanded upon his early perceptions of his fellow civil servants.

Every British male resident is expected to attend a minimum of two rifle practices a year. District engineer G. C. Griffith and I went to the rifle range at Wad Medani at 6:30 a.m., the advertised hour, only to find that nobody else had arrived. After waiting for an hour people began dribbling in. The officer in charge of us arrived among the last comers, well over an hour late.

This is an example of the off-handishness which appears to be all too common among the British. After living in this country for some time they seem to lose their sense of time; they drift along, some of them, without regard for punctuality. If Sudan Railways were run on the haphazard lines of some other government departments there would be no need to look for revenue because there wouldn't be any. . . .[43]

After only a month of experience of British society in the Sudan I naturally find it far different from any that I have previously lived

> among. In my own department the men are interesting and intelligent during office hours but they seem to have less resources for the rest of their waking hours. Their leisure is standardized. After the universal siesta or at least rest they play tennis. A minority play golf in the sand. Then they sit in their homes or at the club playing bridge with them and their colleagues' wives. Bridge is the great enemy of good talk. Hence the talk is mostly vapid once the conversation moves from trains and permanent way. Politically these civil servants are naïve; on their jobs they are hardworking, keen. This much I can generalize with confidence.[44]

Despite the generally high quality of their university educations, Hill was compelled to lament the inability that he shared with his peers to converse with educated Sudanese in Arabic. The training of civil servants did include instruction in Arabic dictation, prose composition, and translation, but it was quite insufficient for application in their work. Moreover, the examination at the end of their probationary period was not of equal difficulty to that administered to probationers in the Political Service. Richard Hill's concern for the acquisition of language skills had more than one motive.

> A lack of Arabic prevents my meeting Sudanese and Egyptians except through the superficial medium of a language foreign to them. But I am beginning to pick up sounds and, with the help of Shaigi Effendi at Wad Medani who is trying hard to teach me Arabic, I can recognize many words already. The great thing is to be literate as these Semitic languages cannot be understood apart from the verbal tableaux. You acquire the verb and you have the key to all. I am beginning my instruction in Arabic by attending on Shaigi Effendi three times a week. . . . Unfortunately the Effendi is not conversant with the art of teaching Arabic to brash foreigners. I find the language difficult. Thatcher's Grammar is beyond Shaigi Eff. and quite beyond me; it has been compiled by an unusually turgid linguist who never tries to endear his subject to his reader. Yet the elements of the language must be mastered if I am to be taken on the establishment after my two years' probation, and if I am to be able to move among educated Sudanese people.[45]

Richard Hill did manage to develop a mastery of Arabic that would allow him to move among the educated Sudanese, but not before he

would summarise his perceptions as a 'new boy' of the life-style of British officials in the Sudan.

> I have been in this country for half a year, long enough to know that the social life of the British is monotonous in the extreme. Everybody I know plays tennis and bridge; I don't, won't and can't. The married ones marry excellent housekeepers who seem to have no interest in the [Sudanese] people, other than their servants. The platitudes of one dinner party become the platitudes of the next. Conversation is consistently kept at the mental pace of the slowest-witted women of the party. The women confine us to the ghetto.
>
> But is this a just evaluation? I rarely meet junior officials and their wives socially, so that I am basing my [evaluation] solely on the wives of the military – about the most standardized – and the senior officials. Nevertheless in Europe, even in Oxford, you can choose your companions; here we're too few and you can't.[46]

The most balanced and succinct portrait of those who served the Sudan in administrative or technical capacities may be the one provided by Thomas Richard Hornby Owen. After a career in administration that began with a posting to the Bahr al-Ghazal Province in 1927 and ended with the governorship of that province from 1948 to 1953, Owen set down his unusually thoughtful assessment of himself and his peers.

> In selecting an officer for service overseas what are the principal points of character to look for? I recollect sitting on a selection board when one of the candidates in reply to the question 'What made you want to serve in the Sudan?' replied 'Oh, I always wanted to serve in the Sudan, Sir, ever since seeing "Tarzan of the Apes".' He was not selected; but many worse reasons have been given, for he clearly felt a natural attraction. The first quality of all that I should look for would be the capacity for liking people; judgment, initiative, brains, self-confidence and the whole gamut of virtues can be nullified by a lack of this quality, and some of the most successful administrators were *not* the most brilliant men but men who loved the country and the people they were serving and were loved by them.
>
> In this respect those who served in the Sudan were privileged. I have no illusions and know that my colleagues were not all paragons, that the Government we served made errors, that I personally made some gross ones, and that among the Sudanese themselves, from the highly

civilized urban intellectual to the bush-living primitive, there were thugs and scoundrels, as there are from Chicago to Vladivostok. Yet in nearly all that kaleidoscopic mass of humanity there were contrasting virtues; above all there was character – a character which you do not readily find elsewhere in Africa. ... Much of the surroundings in the Sudan were, by most standards, ghastly; conditions of life were often uncongenial; frustrations were as common as elsewhere in the world; yet looking back and seeing things in perspective I know that I was privileged to serve in the finest administrative service the earth can show and among the most lovable people.[47]

NOTES AND REFERENCES

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4. The Rt Rev. Llewellyn Henry Gwynne (1863–1957), Bishop of Egypt and the Sudan (1920–45) and Bishop in Egypt (1945–6), 'Makers of the Sudan', unpublished MS., n.d., p. 19, Sudan Archive, School of Oriental Studies, University of Durham, Durham, England (SAD).
5. Lecture by Sir Douglas Newbold, Civil Secretary, Sudan Government, on the Sixtieth Anniversary of the death of Charles George Gordon at the Clergy House Supper Club, Sunday 28 Jan 1945, *The Sudan Diocesan Review*, II, 5 (Jan 1950) 15.
6. Gwynne, 'Makers of the Sudan', p. 21.
7. *The Sudan Political Service, 1899–1956* (Oxford, n.d.) p. 1. The introduction to this volume, frequently known by those not included as 'The Book of Snobs', was written by Sir Harold MacMichael ('Macmic'), formerly Civil Secretary of the Sudan Civil Service, hereafter cited as MacMichael, *Sudan Political Service*.
8. Provisions were also made for the entry of personnel who did not have university training. Applications, by such individuals, based on the 'special qualifications' which they possessed, could be made directly to the Secretary to the Selection Board, Cairo. Egyptian Ministries of Finance and Interior and Sudan Administrative Service, 'Egyptian and Sudanese Services: Information to Candidates' (Cairo, 1913) p. 1 (SAD).
9. Ibid. pp. 1–3.
10. Sir Sidney Low, *Egypt in Transition* (London, 1914) pp. 82–3.

11. Interview with Sir Harold MacMichael by Robert O. Collins, 14 Nov 1962.
12. 'Information to Candidates', pp. 4–5.
13. Richard Hill, *Slatin Pasha* (London, 1965) pp. 140–1.
14. In 1920 there were, in fact, two batches of Probationers. The first came out to the Sudan in the spring and became known as 'The Twelve Apostles'. The second arrived in November. The Twelve Apostles were as follows: A. J. Arkell, C. L. Armstrong, S. G. Budgett, C. G. Davies, C. A. Fletcher, J. A. de C. Hamilton, J. M. Humphrey, F. D. Kingdon, R. C. Mayall, Edington Miller, Douglas Newbold and C. H. L. Skeet.
15. MacMichael, *Sudan Political Service*, p. 4.
16. Ibid.
17. Gwynne, 'The Value of Games on the Administration', unpublished MS., n.d., p. 154 (SAD).
18. H. C. Jackson, *Sudan Days and Ways* (London, 1954) p. 15.
19. Ibid. and A. H. M. Kirk-Greene, 'The Sudan Political Service: A Profile in the Sociology of Imperialism', paper presented at the Twenty-third Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, Philadelphia, 16 Oct 1980, p. 9. This paper was published in the *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 15, 1 (1982) 21–48.
20. Jackson, *Sudan Days and Ways*, p. 15.
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22. Collie Knox, *It Might Have Been You* (London, 1958) p. 205.
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24. Kirk-Greene, 'The Sudan Political Service', p. 29.
25. The Rt Hon. Lord Vansittart in his Foreword to Jackson, *Sudan Days and Ways*, p. vii.
26. MacMichael, *Sudan Political Service*, p. 4.
27. Ibid. p. 5.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid. p. 6.
30. For a full discussion of Sudanese nationalism and the demise of British rule in the Sudan see: M. A. Al-Rahim, *Imperialism and Nationalism in the Sudan* (Oxford, 1969), and Peter Woodward, *Condominium and Sudanese Nationalism* (Totowa, N.J.) 1979.
31. MacMichael, *Sudan Political Service*, p. 7.
32. Sir Douglas Newbold, Civil Secretary, to Provincial Governors, 28 July 1942, Dakhlia II/1/3, Central Records Office, Khartoum, quoted in Woodward, *Condominium and Sudanese Nationalism*, p. 32.
33. MacMichael, *Sudan Political Service*, pp. 7–8. Kirk-Greene, 'The Sudan Political Service', Appx III, provides the following breakdown of universities from which came the recruits for the Political Service. Oxford 180, Cambridge 103, others 29, and the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, 19. See Appendix I, Table 1.
34. John Winder, 'Sudan Political Service Memoir', unpublished MS., n.d., pp. 5–6, SAD.
35. Sayidis were professional labourers from Upper Egypt who were the principal diggers of the Suez Canal. Omda (*'Umda*). The Omda was the head of an administrative unit, the *'Umudiyyah*, which originally consisted of

people from several villages who recognised a common leader to whom they owed personal allegiance. Under the Condominium this allegiance became defined as a territorial unit.

36. Winder, 'Memoir', pp. 8–15, 17–20.
37. Paul James Sandison, 'The Unfinished Memoirs of Paul James Sandison (1928–54), of the Sudan Political Service', unpublished MS., 1974, pp. 3–5, in possession of Mrs P. J. Sandison. We are deeply grateful to Mrs Annette Sandison for permission to quote from her husband's memoirs.
38. Ibid. pp. 6–8.
39. *Bimbashi* is the colloquial Egyptian and Sudanese rendering of the Arabic *bikbashi*, which is derived from the Turkish *binbasv*, meaning literally head of a thousand men, and in the Egyptian army of Muhammad 'Ali Pasha a battalion commander. In the Sudan Defence Force the rank was equivalent to a senior major in the British Army.
40. 'Perhaps the most striking characteristic of British administration in the Sudan was the high moral code which was not only believed but practised by British officials. This was largely the work of Sir Reginald Wingate, or more accurately, Lady Wingate, who during Sir Reginald's long tenure as Governor-General would not tolerate deviation from the strict moral code which the Wingates expected of their subordinates. The morality of sexual abstinence was so deeply ingrained during Wingate's seventeen years in the Sudan that it set the pattern of behaviour for British officials until the end of the political service in 1956.' Robert O. Collins, *Land Beyond the Rivers: The Southern Sudan 1898–1918* (New Haven, 1971) p. 232.
41. Ibid. pp. 8–13, 15. Griffithes Wheeler Thatcher, *Arabic Grammar of the Written Language* (London, 1927), was the standard textbook from which British members of the Sudan Civil Service struggled to learn Arabic. A revised edition of Thatcher's Grammar, published as *A New Arabic Grammar of the Written Language*, by J. A. Haywood and H. M. Nahmud (Harvard University Press, 1965) is neither turgid nor unattractive to the student. John Haywood was formerly in the Sudan Government Department of Education.
42. Richard Hill, 17 Jan 1929, 'Notes of Service in the Sudan 1927–48', pp. 47–9, unpublished Notes 'transcribed from three original notebooks without alteration or addition or suppression except where indicated', in possession of the author. We are deeply grateful for Richard Hill's permission to quote from his 'Notes'.
43. Ibid. 15 Feb 1929, pp. 59–60.
44. Ibid. 20 Feb 1929, pp. 60–1.
45. Ibid. 17 Jan 1929, pp. 49–50.
46. Ibid. 12 June 1929, pp. 75–6.
47. T. R. H. Owen, 'Sudan Days', unpublished MS., based on memoirs, 1960–1, p. 2 (SAD), and Rhodes House Library, Oxford. T. R. H. Owen was affectionately known as the Poet Laureate of the Sudan not only for his prolific and frequently ribald verse, but his sharp pen which spared neither superior nor subordinate.

3 Memories of the Sudan Civil Service

JOHN W. FROST

We were a motley crew, the British servants of the Sudan Government, with a wonderful variety of idiosyncrasies, failings, aptitudes and tastes. But no man need ever fail in his job or lack satisfaction in it provided he had the humanity to like and elicit the liking of the people themselves. Indeed many of the best-loved and most remembered officials were those whose affability or whose eccentricities imprinted them on the public memory and who were not rated in the confidential files as aces.

T. R. H. OWEN

Upon the formation of the Sudan Civil Service its leaders set about to establish not only the conditions of service but the traditions and relations among its members and between them and the Sudanese. Salaries in the Civil Service were fixed and depended upon promotions and seniorities. Apart from the position of Governor-General and the special post of Inspector-in-General the pay scale was broken down into various categories.[1] At the top were the Legal and Financial Secretaries whose salaries began at £E 1500 per year with a rise of £E 100 every two years up to £E 1800.[2] Next were the Civil Secretary, and the Directors of Works, Agriculture and Forests, Railways, and Steamers. These started at £E 1200 and were raised £E 100 every two years up to £E 1500. In Category 'C' were the Sudan Agent, the Governors of Provinces, the Directors of Prisons, Customs, Surveys, Telegraphs and the Sudan Medical Department. Finally came the Inspectors – later called (Assistant) District Commissioners. A beginning Third Inspector was paid £E 420 per year, rising to £E 480 after two years. After fourteen years' duty he would have been earning £E 900 as a First Inspector. this salary scale varied little during the years leading up to the First World War.

How far would such salaries go in the Sudan in the early years of the century? The senior British officials lived extremely well. When the

Reverend Llewellyn Gwynne, the head of the Anglican Mission in Khartoum, arrived in the country soon after the occupation he built a hut of mud and took pride in the fact that his was the only 'substantial' dwelling in Khartoum apart from the Palace, but by the end of the first decade the top administrators were living in splendid houses along the banks of the Nile, with personal servants attending to household chores and landscaping while the near-by Sudan Club was available for social and recreational activities. A lesser position and salary meant a somewhat lower standard of living. Harold MacMichael, who later became the Civil Secretary, arrived in 1905, and wrote home to his mother 'I have now got a wooden table and a shelf for books in my room and that is about all the furniture I want'. Yet he certainly did not suffer. His normal routine was breakfast and lunch at home and supper at the Club. He had a servant at home to cook his meals, which were plentiful and inexpensive – soup, fish, mutton, two vegetables, and sweets and coffee. Dinner at the Club cost him 16 P.T. and about 25 P.T. at the Grand Hotel. He bought a white Arab horse for £E 25, which he rode every day, and he hired a *sayce* (groom) for £E 1 10s a month.[3]

Soon after the occupation Khartoum became the headquarters of the British Administration, which was also represented in the outlying provincial centres such as El Obeid (Al Ubayyid) and Wad Madani (Wad Madanī). In the early years of the Condominium life in these towns had few amenities. Gwynne visited Wad Madani in 1900 and found the ranking British officer disconsolately camped out in his tent, the town itself consisting of a few mud *tukls* (huts). The British began building permanent structures, however, and even created new towns such as Kosti (Kūstī).[4] Soon enough there were office buildings, railway stations, houses for administrators and clubhouses. There were also remote stations such as Zalingei in Darfur, Yambio in the Bahr al-Ghazal and Gambila in the Upper Nile where a British administrator was cut off from his compatriots for months at a time. Life in these isolated posts was Spartan, the hazards numerous – scorpions, stinging flies, snakes, crocodiles and parasitic worms, not to mention tropical diseases like malaria, blackwater fever, yellow fever and dysentery.[5]

The dangers and demoralising effects of duty in the Sudan had been unknown by these officials when growing up in England. Moreover, they were not made less trying by the weather. In the summer the temperature at midday was like a blast furnace punctuated by sticky, oppressive rains and periodic dust storms, the famous haboobs (*habūb*) accompanied by their gale-force winds and frequently sharp rain which caked the dust to

the skin. Captain H. C. Franklin described a haboob during which the roofs of several station buildings in an outlying post were blown completely off. 'It was incredible that huge blocks of brick and mortar could be lifted several yards as in the case at El Ein [Al 'Ayn] and Seleima [Salīmah].[6] Winter months in the Sudan compensated somewhat for the brutal heat of the long summers. Cooled by the steady north wind which blows up the Nile in the winter, the nights were cold, but the brilliant sun under cloudless skies brought warmth and ideal temperatures.

Nevertheless the stout in mind and body managed to surmount these obstacles of nature. Admiral W. Scott Hill, who served in the Sudan from 1904 until 1914, concluded that for those in good health the climate was 'not disagreeable despite the heat'. He argued that 'few officials have carried away on retirement any disabilities originating in the Sudan, and most have gone into retirement in good health and enjoyed it for many years'.[7] Admiral Hill was right. Retired British officials from the Sudan have been noted for their longevity, but that may have been partly attributed to the recognition of the inclement climate and the policy to contend with it by three months' annual leave for British officials during the torrid summer. Whether it was this policy or the fact that robust and athletically inclined individuals were recruited into the Sudan Civil Service, these British officials have lived remarkably long lives, far beyond the actuarial average of any life-insurance company.[8]

Probably the most serious threat to British officials in the Sudan was loneliness, which always hovered about the beleaguered British adminstrators in the outposts. Even in Khartoum it was a very real problem, especially in the early years. In their retirement virtually all the former officials of the Sudan service vividly remember the sense of desolation that they experienced in the Sudan. The usual escape from an isolated life, frequently monotonous work, and the demoralising effects of the climate was liquor. Against its immoderate consumption were the assiduous admonitions of both the senior officials and spiritual counsellors like Bishop Gwynne. Overwork was another intemperance against which one had to guard. During his first appointment in 1909 to Kassala Robin Baily suffered a severe nervous breakdown from sun fatigue and lack of rest. Sent home to England, he recovered, returned to the Sudan and became Governor of Kassala Province. Conversely Harold MacMichael thrived on work – it was part of his recreation. Upon arriving in the Sudan he was assigned to the Civil Judge's Court, and although faced with the daily monotony of 'everlasting disputes about land ownership', he spent much of his free time at the judge's house

helping out with additional cases. His superior skill in Arabic and the knowledge he acquired of the Sudan resulted in numerous articles and books which acted as his relief from an overdemanding work schedule.

To alleviate loneliness and boredom the Administration sought to encourage the traditional British love of games and clubs and energetically fostered both. In 1902 the British officers in Khartoum were permitted to use a part of the Palace as a club, and an asphalt tennis court was constructed for them. Later, dirt courts were built, which were then converted into lawn before the First World War. Tennis provided the main recreational activity for the administrative community during the two hours of relaxation before sundown, but outdoor squash racquets at the Sudan Club was also popular. In 1903 the Khartoum Cricket Club was formed and located its grounds just in front of the government offices. The military companies of the various British battalions all had their teams. Gwynne organised a civilian side, and there was no difficulty raising players among the British administrators, many of whom had earned their Blue at the university. A golf course was laid out to accommodate Governor-General Wingate's passion for the game. Resembling one oversize sand trap, Wingate and the Reverend Gwynne would dutifully plod from one tee to another. Although Gwynne was known to call upon God and was not beyond trying to extract religious concessions from Wingate on the sandy greens, the game did not enjoy widespread popularity. The rifle range was next to the golf course, shooting competing with riding as one of the two favourite pastimes of the military officers. In fact, the literature given out to prospective candidates for the Egyptian–Sudanese Civil Service up to the outbreak of the War in 1914 included the following clause. '§17. It is desirable that candidates should be able to ride, and those who are not accustomed to riding should take lessons. . . . A knowledge of military Drill, musketry, and care of Equipment is extremely desirable in the Sudan.'[9] There was splendid hunting in the country, and Gwynne best remembered Colonel John Collinson, the first Governor of Kassala Province, as 'a just and upright administrator, a great shot whose exploits were the talk of the natives. A Syrian pony was shown in Khartoum from which [he] shot two lions in the early morning right and left'.[10] Those administrators who had come out without much background in riding were given lessons and in some cases a good measure of tenacity was involved in the learning. Robin Baily recalled a situation that hardly could have been amusing to him at the time. 'One early morning when I was riding home my steed took control and bolted. My feet came out of the stirrups and I had to cling on to the saddle. In the

John Gilpin style I careered passed the Gov. General on his morning ride with his glittering escort. I could not even raise my hand in salute. The perverse beast did not stop till he reached his stable. Then he stopped so abruptly that at last I fell off. In my defence I say I became a fair horseman and polo player.'[11]

Since the fall of Omdurman, in 1898, Wadi Halfa had been the headquarters of the Sudan Railways, and prior to the development of Port Sudan on the Red Sea and the railway connecting it with Khartom, it had handled all rail traffic routed to the capital. During these years there was a sizeable British colony at Halfa which was very active in tennis, squash racquets and cricket. According to Gwynne the various administrative departments – Headquarters, Locomotive and Carriage – all had cricket sides which competed against one another as well as against teams from military units passing through Khartoum. When the Railway Headquarters was shifted to Atbara in 1908, excellent sport facilities were developed at the new location, and along the line running from Atbara to Port Sudan a recreational retreat began to grow up around the railway station at Erkowit, nearly four thousand feet above sea-level. Here the weather was pleasantly cool all year, and the Governor-General built comfortable residences for himself and Lady Kitty Wingate, and his staff, including, of course, adequate sporting facilities. Erkowit was the symbol if not the magnificent replica of the famous Indian hill-stations of Simla, Mussourie, Naini Tal and Darjeeling, to which the Indian government headquarters retired with the onset of the summer heat.[12]

Spiritual life for the British in the Sudan was fostered by the example of the Wingates and especially by the driving energy of Gwynne. From the very beginning he had been frustrated in his fervid ambition to bring Christianity to the Moslem population by Cromer, Kitchener and Wingate in turn, who feared that any religious agitation might result in a revival of the *jihad* or holy war that had destroyed the Egyptian regime in the Sudan and resulted ultimately in the Anglo-Egyptian conquest. Gwynne was warned frequently and sometimes in harsh terms against proselytising among Moslems. Indeed official concern ran so deep during the first several years of British occupation that a printed notice was posted in public places announcing that if a Sudanese were found talking with a missionary both parties would be arrested. There is no evidence that this pronouncement ever precipitated any action by the police.

Gwynne, however, was not the man to become disheartened and immediately set about cultivating the Wingates and appealing to their

deep and genuine religious feelings. He played golf with the Sirdar and joined the Khartoum Lodge of the Masons, which the Governor-General regarded as the real bond of the British in the Sudan.[13] Despite all his efforts Gwynne was unable to reverse Cromer's policy in regard to missionary activity in the Northern Sudan, but he was able in 1902 to extract a concession, 'a very great concession on the part of Lord Cromer', to replace his school for Coptic Christian girls in Khartoum with one for all faiths operated by the Church Missionary Society.[14] The restraints that Wingate placed upon Gwynne's enthusiasm were derived wholly from administrative concerns. Personally Wingate was a very devout Christian and a man of firm moral character. Thus it was not simply to placate the indefatigable Gwynne by keeping him busy, but a sincere concern for the spiritual welfare of the 300 British officers and men garrisoned at Khartoum that he appointed him chaplain to the troops to reinforce their spiritual and moral values. Gwynne tackled the task with his customary zeal. In Khartoum he organised a church choir and had a religious study group of about fifteen, which met at the Clergy House in the early evening directly after tennis or polo. His efforts were fully rewarded in 1912 upon the completion of the Anglican Cathedral in Khartoum adjacent to the Palace and a towering symbol of the British presence in the Sudan.[15]

The Governor-General and Lady Wingate were most anxious that Christian religious services should be started among the small, growing communities in the outstations, and accordingly Gwynne visited Wadi Halfa in 1902, where he formed a choir and held concerts.[16] He found that nearly all were responsive to his spiritual guidance, but he could never persuade the officials at Halfa to join in a study circle. It was particularly disappointing since Captain E. C. Midwinter, the influential head of the Sudan Railways, was his good friend and the son of a clergyman. At Atbara a temporary church had been built with the transfer of the railway's headquarters, and within a short time a substantial and very attractive building took its place.[17] The town of Wad Madani had grown rapidly because it had become the centre for the enormous cotton scheme in the Gezira, and Gwynne remembered the church there as a 'live' one with an active parochial church council and a series of governors and senior officials from the various departments who strongly supported its activities over the years.[18]

Thus the Church played a vital role in the life of the members of the Sudan Civil Service. Far distant from their homeland, aloof from the Sudanese and subject to jealousies and differences within their own Service, individual British administrators in Khartoum still managed to

find meaning to their own lives, positive purpose in their work and some sense of unity with their compatriots from the Church. The Church stood as the haven for the Christian British in the Sudan, providing spiritual comfort for the lonely and the bored, and, above all, serving as a bridge over the chasm that separated the British from their homes. 'I pine at times for England [where] I find that England in my church in the Sudan.'[19] And that Church in the Sudan was personified by Bishop Gwynne, a simple man who earnestly believed in the civilising mission of the British Empire and constantly conveyed this message to the officials who worshipped with him. He deeply revered the memory of General Gordon whose martyrdom at Khartoum was 'the one and only happening that could begin the redemption, the civilising and educating, the progress of the people of Sudan'.[20] This was the British mission, and Gwynne preached it from the Cathedral in Khartoum, from the parish churches in Wad Madani, Atbara, Port Sudan and from the 'Church Saloon'. He later wrote: 'Never in history has a people so benefited from another race as the people in the Sudan have from the British.'[21] His task so long as he served the British community was to prevent moral backsliding and to foster the civilising duty of his fellow countrymen.

Although the Anglo-Egyptian Army had temporarily established its headquarters at Omdurman following the defeat of the Khalifa on the plains of Karari in 1898, there was no question that Khartoum, Gordon's headquarters, would be the capital of the Sudan. With incredible enthusiasm, Kitchener turned all of his legendary passion for detail to the rebuilding of the city:

> the debris of the old town of Khartoum was cleared away by soldiers of the Egyptian army and eventually a plan and lay-out for the next town was prepared under Lord Kitchener's personal direction. The new lay-out was primarily designed to satisfy military requirements, its most striking features being wide thoroughfares and also subsidiary diagonal streets contained in rectangles which divided the town into a series of Union Jacks containing a number of streets radiating from central points in each rectangle at which machine guns could be set up commanding them.[22]

When Wingate became Governor-General in December 1899 he continued the work begun by Kitchener. He established his residence in the unreconstructed Palace and vigorously pursued the development of Khartoum as the seat of British administration in the Sudan. Barracks were built along the Blue Nile beyond the Gordon College, now

Khartoum University, and the College itself began taking students in 1902. At the same time shops, offices and two banks were opened, as well as a hospital for Sudanese and Europeans. The foundation stone of the Cathedral was laid in 1904. The Khartoum Club for Junior and the Sudan Club for Senior officials were added later. To the west of the Palace a zoo was laid out – a special project of Lady Wingate – situated next to the Grand Hotel, while along the bank of the river the houses of the senior officials of the Administration were constructed. The main avenue along the river was lined on either side by the famous wild fig trees making a very pleasant walk from the zoo, past the Palace, to the barracks on the other end of the town. Away from the river were the important shops of the Greek, Italian and Armenian merchants—Morhig, Capato, Vanian, Lorenzato – and a small hotel.

In the beginning the only transportation in Khartoum was by donkey, which cost about £E 22 in 1900 'and when properly trained, would shuffle along over the sand in a kind of a trot so even and level that you need not rise in your stirrups'.[23] As the town grew *gharris*, or horse-drawn carriages, came into operation, and in 1908 there appeared the first motor-car in the Sudan for the use of the Governor-General. The railroad station had moved across the river from Khartoum North to the centre of town, and Sirdar Avenue, lined on either side by banyans in double rows, led from the station directly to the Palace.

Until 1906 almost all passengers and goods coming into Khartoum had travelled from Port Said or Alexandria in Egypt by full-gauge rail to Luxor, where they were transferred to a narrow-gauge line running from Luxor to Shellal (Shallal). At Shellal passengers and goods embarked on a steamer to Wadi Halfa and then by rail again from Halfa to Khartoum. The length and many transfers made this a slow and expensive route both in and out of the Sudan, and an alternative was soon sought. The only other viable approach to the heartland of the Sudan was the Red Sea, but here the water in the harbour at the old port of Suakin (Sawakin) was too shallow for large steamships to anchor. To the north, however, was a site that would provide a fine, deep-water harbour, and there the construction of Port Sudan began in 1906.[24] A Khartoum–Suakin railway had been completed a year earlier, and it was extended on up to the new town. By 1911 the railway network, which had resulted in the formation of two new towns – Atbara and Kosti – also stretched westward to El Obeid. Exports and imports increased at a pace with the transportation to get them in and out of the Sudan, stimulating a rising prosperity in the years before the First World War.[25]

Throughout these early years the Sudan had become increasingly popular with European nobility attracted to the bracing winter climate of the middle Nile Valley and the huge herds of big game. Moreover, the Sudan was quite accessible to aristocrats wintering in Egypt or tourists on their way to Kenya and South Africa, particularly since it was the land which had captivated the literate public of Europe during the Mahdiya by its antiquity, romance and barbarism. If these attractions were not sufficient for the regulars from the great spas of central Europe, there was always the hospitality of Rudolf von Slatin Pasha, Inspector-General of the Sudan. Slatin was the epitome of a nineteenth-century romantic adventurer whose early career in the Egyptian Administration, captivity, and escape from the Khalifa had made him the toast of Europe. Together these two cronies, 'Rex' and 'Rowdy' as they affectionately addressed one another, literally ruled the Sudan to the increasing dismay and then consternation of the bright, able and increasingly knowledgeable members of the Political Service. To them Slatin was the 'grey eminence' and an Austrian at that, who towered above open criticism, impregnable by his intimate knowledge of the Sudanese which he confided to Wingate and in return was protected by him. But this symbiotic relationship was based as much on affection and friendship as mutual need. Good old Rex was delighted to introduce Rowdy to the aristocratic, stately homes of England where his coloured past, captivating charm and inexhaustible supply of stories of the savage Sudan entranced his hosts and their guests. 'Everything about him was immaculately turned out: his camping equipment, his uniform, his horses. He rode well, shot passably, played a competent hand at bridge and waltzed to perfection. His table was the best in Khartoum. He was pursued even into old age by admiring, possessive women.'[26]

During his fourteen years as Inspector-General Slatin spent his summers at the spas of Europe where he cultivated his aristocratic associations. He was with King Edward's party at Marienbad in 1904, and he regularly attended the birthday mass in Bad Ischl for the Emperor Franz Joseph who made him a baron of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In return Slatin extended invitations to visit the Sudan where he could repay hospitality in Khartoum and arrange for their reception at the Palace. To the disgust of the overworked and unostentatious officials of the Political Service the entertaining of this steady stream of European nobility unrelieved by the visit of a former President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt, was a trying duty, but to Slatin a pleasurable obligation he carried off with great charm and tact.

If Slatin enjoyed basking in the company of royalty, Wingate was

keenly aware of the importance of favourable public opinion in England toward the Condominium, and to that end he entertained a great many guests from home and did his utmost to cultivate the British press and public. Admiral Hill remembered the twice-weekly arrival of the train from Wadi Halfa at Khartoum North. 'Apart from princelings, sportsmen and eccentrics, many distinguished folk came as guests of the Governor-General – the Duke of Connaught and family, Lord Roberts and his sisters, Lord Winterton, Sir Henry Wellcome ... Winston Churchill.'[27] However, Wingate was less comfortable with royalty than was his Inspector-General, and in a letter written to a friend in 1911 he expressed his impatience. 'We are expecting the king of the Belgians here on Monday – the king of Saxony arrives from the White Nile tomorrow, but fortunately only stays here 24 hours. We have had rather a plethora of royalties up here and my wife and I will not be sorry for a short spell at Erkowit.'[28]

The wealthy and the titled sometimes found their way into the provinces, where they became the responsibility of the local governor. 'Some of them were an awful nuisance,' complained Robin Baily. 'Overworked commissioners were ordered to organise, say, for a German Count, a safari party, a guide and also the presence at a convenient spot of a first rate specimen of the particular wild beast which the visitor wished to shoot.' 'Still there was "only a trickle" of winter visitors' according to Baily, '[and the] evolution of the capital into a winter tourist centre had not begun. Everybody knew everybody.'[29]

When Baily wrote that 'everybody knew everybody' he did not mean that the members of the British community socialised with each other on the basis of equality, or that there was commingling between British and Sudanese. British officers who had been seconded to the Egyptian Army were separated from each other by military as well as social rank. The Governor-General was the Sirdar, which title served both military and social functions. Military ranking under him included, in ascending order, *Bimbashi*, *Qa'immaqam*, *Miralai*, *Liwa'*, and *Fariq*. Corresponding social titles began with the rank of *Qa'immaqam*, who, along with the *Miralai*, was socially a *Bey*, while *Liwas* and *Fariqas* were *Pashas*. It was these social titles, *Bey* and *Pasha*, that were used on an everyday basis to address an official. Perhaps following the lead set by Kitchener during the very early years of British occupation, the members of the military seemed to share a distaste for obligatory social functions. Of course, this is really no wonder since full-dress uniform meant white helmet with gilt spike and chinstrap, replaced in the evening by the *tarbush*, gold-laced overalls, a double-breasted white jacket with gilt loops and epaulets,

with gilt rank indications on the sleeves. Admiral Hill was relieved whenever the heads of the various departments were all in Cairo for the annual budget meeting when 'one had only to deal with deputies and life was uncomplicated by any social doings'.[30] There was, however, one regular and compulsory event for the higher military officers – the famous morning ride of 'Master', Governor-General Sir Reginald Wingate – apparently to impress the local population as much as anything, when the ranking officers in full regalia rode in attendance to the Sirdar on his daily tour of Khartoum. What the Sudanese thought has not been recorded.

Civilian administrators, as well as the military, found the formal occasions trying. Harold MacMichael wrote to his mother of these 'cheerless' *levées* which he was required to attend 'merely consisted of walking past the Sirdar in rows and shaking hands. . . . I rode a donkey from the house in my frock coat and helmet! and my boy carried my tarbush which I put on when I got to the Palace. Every single official and officer in the place had to be there and also lots of merchants and the sheikhs of various tribes.'[31] He was expected to call upon the wives of officials 'turning up' in Khartoum. 'Four or five come by every train,' he objected. 'A beastly nuisance,' he called them.[32] He 'lunched with the Sirdar . . . Sirdar was complimentary.' 'Dinner with Slatin and Clayton and Count and Countess Hunyadi and a Prince.'[33]

The senior officers in the Political Service all seemed to enjoy the privileges of higher rank. The junior officials, as befitting their position, were not so fortunate and kept scrupulously segregated with their own Mess and Club. The gulf between senior and junior officials frequently caused social embarrassment if not tension, made particularly more acute by the growing number of wives coming out to Khartoum after the First World War.

> Oswald's [Oswald Leak] quick promotion from junior to senior has made it rather awkward as most people make friends in the junior set & stick together as they get promoted. Now we can't mix with the juniors very much & nearly all the seniors have been here ten or twelve years at least & naturally have their own sets of friends, so we shall have to 'bide a wee' & make friends by degrees.[34]

Elevation to senior status resulted in more pay, advantageous social connections and a sense of importance. It did not always mean more fun.

> But they [wives of senior officials] are fearfully 'clickish' & they all

had the most elaborate frocks I have ever seen. So personally I should much prefer to belong to the junior club which is much jollier & we know heaps of people who belong to it. But it is a recognized thing to belong to the Sudan Club if you are a senior & I don't think you can belong to both.[35]

The social gap among British officials in the Sudan Civil Service may have been tolerable in Khartoum but in the provinces where there frequently existed only a facility for senior men a lone junior officer could be cruelly isolated. Captain Franklin, a Traffic Inspector for Sudan Railways, was stationed in El Obeid in 1913 where he was refused admittance to the British Mess and for his evenings out had to be content with visiting the local store run by an amiable Greek merchant. As a further reminder of his position he was politely informed not to park the railway carriage in which he was quartered near the residences of the senior officials. Although Franklin enjoyed the company of a Public Works Inspector and a construction foreman and wrote in his diary that 'there was no need to worry about company of the mighty', his inferior status clearly rankled.[36]

If there was discrimination and jealousy within the respective ranks of the military and civilian administrators, it existed between the two as well. From 1901 and 1904 there were fourteen civilians recruited from Oxford and Cambridge for service in the Sudan, and although their terms of service were attractive, they were also vague and the pension conditions were not clearly stated. These insecurities may have contributed to their feeling that they were generally neglected and despised by the military officers, sensitivities which did not seem to abate until after the First World War. In 1911 C. A. 'Chunky' Willis, a 1905 probationer from Magdalen College, Oxford, was returning from leave to the Sudan. While in Cairo he heard a rumour that Slatin Pasha was on his way out as Inspector-General of the Sudan, and it caused him to speculate about the possible fate of the other military administrators. 'I expect that a good many changes will occur after about six months. Then I hope that a good few will get notice to quit – and will be got rid of with great pomp and ceremony. Phipps, Macewen, Cameron, Savile, Townsend are all eligible to go – the sooner the better.'[37] Willis's hopes were not immediately realised, however, and he had to serve for a time, very uncomfortably, under Savile Pasha in Kordofan.[38]

On the other hand the military officers were often provoked by the frequently overbearing attitude of the civilian recruits who flaunted their university education and connections to form their own cliques. Such subtle, and not so subtle, snobbery was all the more galling to the

military officers since the civilians' knowledge of Latin conjugations was of little use in a land where the practical arts of military training were better suited to the Sudan. But the combination of intellectual ability, connections and physique to withstand the rigours of the Sudan ultimately prevailed. The crucial test was Arabic, and its command soon set the civilians apart from the military officials. This difference was made more pronounced by the requirement for selection to the Political Service of a postgraduate year of Arabic followed by an examination which must be passed to advance from probationary status. This knowledge of the language of the people was critical in shaping the outlook of these civilian recruits toward the Sudanese, which soon became quite different from that of their military counterparts, few of whom spoke Arabic.[39] Robin Baily admitted: 'In the Sudan for most of the time we were talking with the Sudanese far more than anyone else. We knew all about their troubles and needs. We were in the queer position of being looked upon as superior men – far more important beings than our Provincial Governors and departmental chiefs – mostly retired military gentlemen. We became convinced that we knew more about the Sudan than our seniors with the exception of the Governor-General.'[40]

In the early years the British military governors had ruled firmly but distantly. Despite Bishop Gwynne's praise of John Collinson, the first Governor of Kassala, that 'he loved the natives as all his fellow officers did', or of Colonel H. W. Jackson, 'whose name was a legend in Dongola', socialising between the rulers and the ruled was generally limited to the formal levees.[41] Moreover, cultural contact between British military officers and Sudanese was often frustrated by regulations incomprehensible even to Bishop Gwynne. 'I remember Major Bunbury who was an official at one of the Sudanese Battalions had taught some of his Sudanese soldiers to throw the ball at the wicket. For some reason or other it was decided that they were not to teach the natives to play cricket; whether it was considered policy from the people at Headquarters I don't know but the fact remains that none of the schools or colleges have taught so far to play cricket.'[42] The Sudanese were not permitted to join the British Clubs, neither were the Egyptian officers, who formed their own. At best social relations between British and Sudanese were benign. At worst they were quietly hostile as in Sennar Province where the first Governor,Colonel G. F. Gorringe Bey, who, 'though he was known to all his friends as a kindly man . . . was very much feared by the natives. It was said that many of them were so frightened that they left the Province'.[43]

The First World War brought change to the Sudan. At the outbreak a

circular was issued among the Administration calling for everyone to stay on his job, but in fact many of the soldiers left immediately for active military service. Their sudden absence was to hasten the transition from a military to a civilian dominated Administration. The vacancies left by the departed soldiers were filled in part by Sudanese, who now had their first chance to participate in the actual running of government. It also meant that the workload of the civilian administrators and the few remaining military officers increased significantly, drastically altering the traditional routines of conducting government which were more symbolic than productive.

With the diminution of the administrative staff the customary precaution against fatigue, the midday siesta, was unceremoniously abandoned to be replaced by long days and nights at the office. In addition to lengthy hours, the compulsory annual leaves, which hitherto had been regarded as an absolute necessity to maintain health and sanity, were quietly not approved for the duration of the War. Exhaustion claimed its casualties. Chunky Willis was summoned from his post at Dongola (Dunqula) to Khartoum where he became Deputy Director of Intelligence. There, during his off-duty hours, he set about the reorganisation and updating of files, which had been poorly maintained by Slatin Pasha. After almost three years without leave and overwork he became seriously ill and was sent back to England for rest. Captain Franklin, the Assistant Traffic Inspector stationed in El Obeid, was sent on temporary leave from fatigue. There were others who even after a brief sojourn in the more salubrious climate of East Africa were worn and haggard by months on end in the Sudan.

Adversity usually brings together those who experience it, and although the War years strained the health of British administrators in the Sudan it encouraged a cohesiveness and sense of unity that was only equalled again in the Sudan Civil Service in the Second World War. With every man taxed to the limit by his responsibilities there was less time for social snobbery, and the class and rank barriers seemed temporarily to relax. Franklin had been a malcontent. The pages of his memoirs are burdened with the bitterness of slights from his superiors. Yet his memories of these few War years were generally happy ones, tinged with the feeling of acceptance. Through the intercession of a friend he had been asked to join the Mess at El Obeid, from which he had been formerly excluded. He was taught to play golf and helped to revive the course. There were evenings with his guests from the Senior Officers' Mess playing his gramophone records on his veranda and evenings of bridge. He named acquaintances and mentioned their achievements in

sport at Oxford or Cambridge. Franklin remembered the day when news arrived of the War's end and the celebrations of the small British community in El Obeid. 'We all went into the Greek cafe to break the news and immediately the billiard table was loaded with bottles of champagne [and] a crowd who had gathered marched off to the Mudrieh [mudiriyya] to congratulate the Governor. . . . A dinner was arranged for all Britishers in El Obeid at the Mess that evening. It was a remarkable turnout and ended about midnight with a torchlight procession with (candles) to the Governor's house.'[44]

Sir Lee Stack had served as Civil Secretary to the Sudan Government during the War and immediately after, in 1919, succeeded Wingate as Governor-General. As the Private Secretary to Wingate from 1904 to 1907 and then as Sudan Agent and Director of Intelligence, Cairo, 1908–14, he had little experience of provincial administration in the Sudan, and when he moved into the Palace as Acting Governor-General in 1917, he found himself largely dependent upon the reports and advice of civilian administrators. Most of the heads of Departments and provincial governors were civilians by this time, and the spirit of the British Administration, as well as the lives of individual British officials who had remained during the War, had produced a feeling of close comradeship among the civilians as the military character of the Administration steadily receded. The number of married officials in Khartoum was growing and sharply increasing the number of friends and relatives who would come out to visit. Also, more and more winter vacationers were finding their way to the capital of the mysterious and romantic land of Gordon and the Mahdi. A full slate of festivities appeared to complete the 'Khartoum season' – horse-racing, yachting, tennis tournaments and parties at the Sudan Club and the Grand Hotel. Formal dances were held once a fortnight on Thursday throughout the winter.

> It was the first dance of the season at the Sudan Club & Oswald [Leak] booked a table & we went to dinner & danced after. The regimental band of the Leicesters played & it was all most beautiful. It is a splendid club & most exclusive. We had dinner on the grounds & it just looked like fairy land all the tables lit with red lamps & decorated with some tropical plants & all the men in evening dress & the ladies in lovely frocks. . . . There is a ballroom inside & out & it was a gorgeous night with a little breeze.[45]

Indeed, Khartoum days merged one with another as did work and play.

> We have been playing golf every afternoon lately & both feel much better for the exercise & also it helps you to make friends. We played with two men yesterday & they came back here with us & played bridge, which I am learning & we are meeting them again on Sat. & going to one of their houses after. Oswald is very keen on bridge & is a very good player so I've got to make an effort to play for his sake. I fear I shall never be brilliant at it though.[46]

The city at the confluence of the Nile rivers was changing, inexorably being drawn into a wider world. Even the incidence of malaria declined as the authorities inaugurated a vigorous campaign to eradicate it. During the years between the two World Wars there was a standing joke among the British community in Khartoum that the most powerful official in the Sudan was the Inspector of Drains.

> He [G. W. Price] didn't explain that the reason there are no mosquitoes is owing to the constant and never ending vigilance on the sanitary people's part & also by the cooperation of every person in Khartoum. Every house is inspected & samples of water examined once a week & if you see a mosquitoe you must report it at once or you are liable to be fined, also if you have water standing anywhere on your property you will be fined, as if you left a thimble full of water for five days here you would have mosquitoes from it & at the present moment there are several of the 'big wigs' down with malaria, newly contracted, through not draining their own gardens properly.[47]

Captain Franklin was in Khartoum in 1923 and was impressed with the Kitchener School of Medicine, which was nearing completion, the new Post Office and the White Nile Bridge, which would soon connect Khartoum with Omdurman. He observed that the horse-drawn taxis were slowly being replaced by motorised ones. Prosperous merchants began importing their own automobiles during the 1920s. In fact, the most splendid automobile in Khartoum at that time belonged to a 'large, statuesque lady' who was proprietress of a brothel near the west end of the railway cantonment.[48] Richard Hill, then a junior official in the Traffic Department of Sudan Railways, owned a BSA bicycle, which he had bought secondhand for £E 5.5 soon after his arrival in 1929. On his salary of £E 40 per month Hill's choice was between the BSA and a donkey, but the bicycle had all but replaced the donkey as a means of transportation in the British community.

Perhaps the most dramatic but least recorded change in the Sudan

Civil Service following the War was the increasing presence of English wives and women. In the early years of the Condominium wives were not permitted to come out to live with their husbands with the exception of Lady 'Kitty' Wingate, the wife of the Governor-General. Wingate, as well as Cromer, was convinced that the Sudan was 'not a woman's country'.[49] The Sudanese had only just been defeated, the country was hardly pacified, and for a decade the government in Khartoum genuinely feared that Moslem fanaticism would erupt at any time when women would not be simply a nuisance but a liability. In 1924 Robin Baily, then Deputy Governor of Khartoum, confirmed these fears when Sudanese troops mutinied in Khartoum, refused to surrender and were annihilated by artillery: '[r]ifles and machine guns friendly and hostile rattling in the dark streets, bullets flying about and desperate spirits lurking in the shadows. One felt happy when all the women were safe in the Palace. Women cramp one's style in a show like this.'[50]

If the spectre of spearwielding fanatics at the gates of Khartoum was not enough to deter the coming of women, the harsh climate and lack of amenities and medical facilities should have. Moreover, English women could hardly entertain well-bred Sudanese ladies confined by the strictness of Sudanese society to the home and family. Finally, it was argued, wives would require attention and place demands on officials which would only interfere in their already difficult task of administration and result in domestic tensions. When the Rev. Llewellyn Gwynne was finally given permission to open a girls' school in Khartoum, he was frustrated to find there was no woman teacher available. Characteristically, Gwynne designated himself 'the first headmistress'. No, it would be better for all concerned if the women remained in the drawing-rooms and kitchens of England.

On paper and over drinks these arguments appeared overwhelming, but despite their cogency they ultimately dissolved before the eternal needs of man and woman, changing times, and different perspectives on the role of women in English society. Indeed the segregation of wives to the British Isles by Wingate, 'the inexorable Sirdar', became an increasing irritant among officials despite the fact that few have ever discussed the subject in their memoirs. Finally, the then Archdeacon Gwynne was asked to intercede with the Governor-General on behalf of a group of officials in Khartoum, and he was successful. The policy was relaxed permitting selected wives to join their husbands in the capital. Here they brought dramatic changes in the style of life and were largely reponsible for the social activities of the Khartoum season, solidification of social stratification and the invasion of the splendid isolation of men.

> There is a ladies room at the [Sudan] Club which we can always use & part of the gardens & a tennis court. The rest is only open to ladies once a fortnight, but they are trying to alter it to once a week for the dances this winter.[51]

Male privacy was soon decimated by the feminine onslaught. Within two years Percy Coriat reported woefully to his wife that the women had taken over the Sudan Club every day from 3 to 8 p.m. driving the men elsewhere. 'Khartoum is simply crammed with wives, thirteen new brides this season and it's a perfectly awful place to be in.'[52] Many of the wives would have agreed with Gladys Leak. 'First impressions of Khartoum does not improve on acquaintance. The greatest part of the town is just a collection of hideously ugly square mud houses filthy dirty little better than pig styes & one finds it not a very stimulating environment to live in.'[53] This impression became ever more real and oppressive as the cool evenings of the Khartoum season gave way to the bitter heat and sad farewells of spring when the wives returned to a salubrious summer in Britain. 'Khartoum is absolutely, deadly dull. There's nothing to do, nothing to see & if you meet anyone, nothing to talk about & I suppose it will be like this till people return from leave next winter.'[54]

If the ladies might survive, if not take over Khartoum, the provinces were a different matter and the prevailing attitude of the Administration until late in the 1930s was to discourage wives joining their husbands in the outstations where amenities were few and conditions decidedly unhealthy. Exceptions, of course, were made. Wingate relented when one of his favourites, Major Chauncey H. Stigand, lay convalescing at the Palace from a close encounter with an elephant. 'In these pathetic circumstances, the adamant Chief relaxed, and on his return from leave [in 1913], Chauncey was accompanied by Mrs. Nancy Stigand [of Washington, D.C.].'[55]

Others came out to the provinces, women who were considered sufficiently adaptable to the difficult living and social situations in the rural Sudan. Both K. C. P. Struvé and 'Chunky' Willis, Governors of Upper Nile Province, had their wives with them at Malakal, but despite the loathsome reputation of the Upper Nile it was by no means a matter of course that the wives of provincial governors should be permitted to live in the Sudan with their husbands. The Governors in turn often opposed the idea of their own District Commissioners having wives come out to the Sudan and certainly not for the entire year. Robin Baily, Governor of Kassala Province, who was himself married, offered

Geoffrey Barter the post of District Commissioner Hadendoa District in 1928 with the stern warning that Mrs Barter was to remain in the Sudan only 'one hundred days in the year, between November and April'.[56]

Once in the Sudan the wives adapted remarkably well if not with ingenuity to the dearth of amenities and the climate but confined themselves to the household and a routine largely shaped by the duties of their husbands. In fact one day was much like another in the Governor's household or the District Commissioner's home. Mrs Baily wrote to her father of her typical Sudan day. 'Called at 6:00; breakfast at 8:15; mending, writing, and washing until 2:00, when lunch would be served; sleep until 3:45; tennis until 5:45; tea; dinner outside in the garden at 8:15.'[57] Most of the British wives followed similar routines. Few sought to occupy their time with intellectual or social activity stretching beyond the demands of the household, Club and Church. Hardly any sought out Sudanese women, and frequently such attempts were misguided such as the British lady who tried to teach Scottish songs to the Sudanese girls. There were exceptions, of course, particularly the School of Midwifery opened in 1923 in Omdurman by Mrs Crowfoot, the wife of the Director of Education, and two sisters named Wolf, affectionately known as the 'Midwolves', whose graduates practised throughout the Sudan.

One aspect of life in the Sudan which many British wives in the provinces and districts regarded with excitement at the time and remembered with great fondness years later was the Trek. Most British officials and every member of the Political Service spent several months every year trekking around their districts discharging their administrative responsibilities. Although made as pleasant as possible by servants, camp gear, and the people, fauna, and flora, trekking was hard work without the amenities of the *mudiriyya*. 'Sun and heat during the day, cold and early rising in the dark (this time of year), burnt grass to ride through and mud instead of water to wash in.'[58]

Whether it was a relief from the boredom and loneliness of the outstation, the excitement of seeing the rural people and animals, or a determination to show that women can do as well as men under difficult circumstances, most ladies loved to trek in spite of its embarrassing problems. 'I should so have liked a cast iron tummy during these trekking days – it was always letting me down, & the question of privacy on these flat plains [of the Upper Nile Province] where a distant horizon was the rarest thing to stop ones vision was a constant difficulty.' Sometimes the trek was by lorry; 'when we'd just less than ½ way [to Yirrol] our lorry had its usual breakdown & was quite determined not to go . . . we were about 8 miles & 8 miles with the heat of the day just

arriving is a very long 8 miles'. More often trekking meant walking for there was no other way.

> I dressed myself in cotton jodhpurs . . . & clambered up & down the squenchy sud . . . everytime the helping hands managed to pull me up out of some of the less firmly trampled sud I stumbled into water & I became full of red ants. . . . We spent about three hours of this. No matter how early we started we'd always have some of the White Tropical Heat before reaching shade & our halt.

Nevertheless, Kathleen Coriat who trekked with her husband in very difficult terrain summed up the attitude of most British women in the Sudan on Trek; 'he [her husband Cory] knew by now I loved trek & could take what ever work had to be done. He knew leaving me behind would be much worse to me than any trekking.'[59]

Although the War had clearly dissolved the dominance of the military officials in the Sudan Government and had proved a rallying cause that broke down the social barriers between senior and junior civilian officials, the return of peace also brought the return of these barriers. One's background, education, and connections established social standing. One's official rank established position in the hierarchy of administration. From the beginning of the Condominium there had been a gulf between officials of the Sudan Civil Service which was the natural differences of age and experience but also a product of the social barriers accepted by British society. In the Sudan this distinction was first made more apparent by the requirement of the political officers to know Arabic. In fact the name 'Political Service' to distinguish those administrators from other officials in the Sudan Civil Service did not come into current usage until the 1920s when its acceptance did nothing to tarnish the glamour of being an elite that was already recognised by its members. A 'Political Service' had been prominent in India, and members of the Sudan's Political Service had been called upon to fill important positions throughout British occupied territories in the Middle east during the First World War. Thus it was in keeping with precedents elsewhere that relations with the Sudanese, the educated as well as the 'relatively unlettered tribal worthies' was left in the hands of the Sudan Political Service while the other members of the Civil Service confined their lives in the Sudan to their job, their Club, their household and their Church, in that order.

There were some officials from both groups who deplored this dichotomy. Robin Baily protested against 'the endless dinner parties

and dances with competition as to whose were the smartest ... disdaining those officials who regularly arrived at their offices with hangovers', He deplored the fact that there was no social contact between his countrymen living the 'good life' and their Sudanese subordinates who were 'relegated to dismal rows of houses in the dusty back parts'.[60] Richard Hill from his perspective in Sudan Railways was equally appalled at the failure of the British in the Sudan to mix as a group and in the mid-1930s predicted an eventual end to their continued presence in the country. Ten years later the gap between the rulers and the ruled had become so great that Hill's prophecy was rapidly becoming a reality to those few in Khartoum at the very centre of the Sudan Government. In frustration, if not futility, the Civil Secretary, Sir James Robertson, issued a circular on 1 January 1946, defining the relationship expected by the Government of British officials to their Sudanese colleagues. Like the voice crying in the wilderness Robertson received a very mixed response for his efforts to order what he could not command. He wrote to his governors with bitterness tempered by sadness and perhaps with a bit of longing for the 'Genial Barons' of past decades.

> I feel very strongly that members of the British population, and this refers especially to those in the bigger towns, are far from living up to the policy of the Government, i.e. to further the interests of the Sudanese. This is the major cause of suspicion and dislike of the British by the Sudanese. Many British seldom make any attempt to get into contact with their Sudanese staff or to meet them socially and influence them in a friendly way. It is little use planning for the political, economic, and educational future of the Sudan if we fail over the 'personal' factor. What is needed is a real change of attitude and outlook. I believe that it is on a change of spirit that the main hope of retaining our influence and power for years to come depend. I should be grateful if you would personally encourage British officials to get to know and make friends with Sudanese officials. It is not always easy, but a real effort on these lines would pay a handsome dividend alike to the Sudanese and to ourselves.[61]

Generally speaking, those members of the Political Service who were stationed outside of Khartoum were in closer touch with the Sudanese, and for that reason some of them preferred provincial postings. Baily prided himself on being 'one of those who were foremost in cultivating pleasant relations with Sudanese officials *outside* office hours ... British

officials [in Khartoum] were mostly too busy entertaining each other and their wives and the wives' holiday women friends to have much time for Sudanese'.[62] Time and progress only accelerated the pace of British social life in Khartoum and in direct proportion increased its isolation. Like his contemporaries, Sir Douglas Newbold longed for the open spaces of Darfur and Kordofan as he reluctantly and often bitterly fulfilled his social obligations in the capital while Civil Secretary from 1939 to 1945.

> I'm sorry I couldn't get to Cyprus and I'm sorry I haven't written, but this place is the nearest approach to Hell that one can imagine, a mixture of heat, noise, boiled shirts, and very many people. I suppose it's necessary, for our imperial mission, that we should herd, like fatted cows for the slaughter, dolled up and penned up on each others' lawns or verandahs, drinking murderous cocktails and talking unadulterated bilge to unknown people. This is called 'etiquette' or 'making contacts' or 'bon voisinage'. It seems to me a costly and futile way of wearing out expensive dinner jackets. N.B. I have a drinks party to-night then a dinner party. It is now (4 p.m.) 113°F. It may drop to 95° by dinner time. – 'Yes, Mrs. Birtwhistle, it *has* been a warm day. I expect it's the humidity in the air. How tempting the Nile looks! Yes, I wonder what Hitler's after (a little more fish? No?). He always seems to want something more, does he not? No, I think I prefer the Bibby to the Henderson boat. Do you know Mrs. Buggins? No, of course you don't – I forgot her husband was in a lower grade, etc.'[63]

T. R. H. Owen agreed. 'Social advantages the capital certainly had,' he admitted, but 'life in the metropolis' was a life 'out of regular and constant touch with the Sudanese.'[64] As a District Commissioner in Kassala Province (1932–6) Owen learned the Beja language to supplement his Arabic and via long conversations acquired deep respect for the integrity and learning of the tribal shaykhs and religious leaders. He enjoyed his daily rounds among the Sudanese and in the Red Sea Hills he found amiable recreation at hand – hunting, fishing, and mountaineering. It must be pointed out, however, that as far as British–Sudanese relations were concerned official policy from 1924 forward favoured the British administrator in the provinces. Prior to that time the government, fearful of a new Mahdi who might appeal to the rural tribes, encouraged the growth of an urban cadre of college-trained Sudanese junior administrators. But the unrest and rebellion in Khartoum during

the summer of 1924, although not a plot of the Sudanese civil servants, resulted in British distrust of them that lasted until the Second World War. While the educated elite were isolated the provincial tribal authorities, the *shaykhs* and elders ironically returned to prominence and were favoured by the Administration.

Not all provincial officials were interested in cultivating friendships with the Sudanese, particularly in the technical branches of the Civil Service. Atbara, the Headquarters of Sudan Railways, was 'the capital of the British ghettos in the Sudan' for the exclusiveness and provincialism of its British community.[65]

> [Most] Everyone who lived in Atbara was connected with the railways and their devotion to their most important work gave to outsiders the impression of a local patriotism and a guild fidelity jealous of interference. No doubt it was all the romantic stuff about the desert which made Atbara seem an uninspired place with its rows of neat bungalows and tidy gardens.[66]

Most of the technical officials were of limited cultural background. Graduates of provincial universities or technical colleges, they were not trained to look much beyond 'the restricted bounds of office, workshop and depot'.[67] Their work, as one of them put it, was 'to improve efficiency, not to mess about with natives' souls'.[68] Richard Hill was unconvinced that promotion from junior to senior grade changed attitudes much, and he was especially resentful of the 'stupid, pigheaded manner affected by some of the junior British officials to the natives'.[69] It was discouraging to him that the government failed to realise that the earnest but narrow technical officials were in as close contact with the Sudanese as were the Political Service officers yet were so ill prepared to represent anything beyond their work.

The same was true in Port Sudan despite its location on an international waterway. Here the British community took Sunday as their day of rest as the international shipping and mercantile world worked to a Sunday schedule while in deference to Islamic custom throughout the rest of the Moslem Sudan the British policy recognised Friday as the official religious holiday. The favourite pastime among the British community in Port Sudan, which numbered about 200 out of a total population of 15 000, was cricket, while for further social and recreational life there were the separate clubs for the senior and junior officers. Inland from Port Sudan in the Red Sea Hills at Gebeit a military detachment was stationed. Here contact between British troops

and the local Beja people was for all practical purposes limited to occasional sports days organised by the Administration, but the British found difficulty in getting to know the local population without knowing the language, *Ta Bedawi.*

Given the lack of any but the most superficial contact with the Sudanese the British in the Sudan fashioned their own way of living corresponding to the only life they knew in Britain and providing a modicum of comfort and security with which to better deal with the elements. In the far north, for instance, Wadi Halfa was a transfer town from Egypt to the Sudan through which passed a host of visitors and officials to relieve the tedium of British residents sweltering in the summer heat which ranged well over 120°F. Yet even Wadi Halfa had some advantages. There was a conspicuous absence of rainfall and consequently little danger of malaria. Captain Franklin spent four contented years there during the late 1920s when he served as Honorary Secretary of the Club, which itself consisted of card room, billiard room, bar and a spacious veranda. Near by was a hard tennis court and a nine-hole golf course. Franklin took pleasure planting flower-beds along the bank of the Nile, and the Governor, H. C. Jackson, held an annual horticultural show in which local Sudanese were invited to participate. Celebrated visitors still came up the Nile from Cairo despite the fact that in later years most traffic into the Sudan passed through Port Sudan. They were always welcome and frequently spent the night.

At exactly the opposite end of the Sudan in the far south the life of the British official was even more isolated and certainly more hazardous in tropical Africa than the asceptic surroundings of the Nubian Desert at Halfa. In 1928 Paul James Sandison arrived in the Sudan and was sent south to begin his career. He had been assigned originally to Mongalla, but soon after his arrival he was ordered to Meridi to take over while the District Commissioner was on leave. Only twenty-three years old, he was excited and confident despite the fact that he neither knew the local language nor had any idea about methods and principles of administration. He spent a long day of briefing with the District Commissioner, after which they dined on the standard entertaining menu of peanut soup, roast guinea-fowl and crême caramel. The next morning Sandison was on his own in Meridi, 'the most delightful place I ever saw in the Sudan. It was on top of the world. The ground fell away in all directions. There was a breath-taking view of endless forests below'.[70] Behind the hospital was a promontory where he was quartered and where the lawn was surrounded by flowering trees. In the garden and round the office were red, pink and white oleanders, frangipanis, hibiscus and roses.

In spite of the lush surroundings Sandison's strongest feeling that morning in Meridi was 'apartness. . . . It was not really loneliness, there was too much to find out and to do for that. . . . There seemed to be a kind of invisible curtain separating me from the other people in Meridi. Everyone was a little constrained in my presence. I was learning what it is like to be the boss, and the boss of a strange people in a strange country, at that'.[71] But Sandison did eventually feel loneliness. He remembered his departure from Meridi. 'I must be frank, and say that I was quite content to leave. The comparative loneliness was a new experience, and a small dose, two months, would do.'[72] Nor did loneliness disappear when he was transferred to the provincial headquarters at Mongalla. Here too that inescapable sense of isolation, 'the feeling of being at the end of nowhere' although there were a few of his compatriots living there, 'a little group of experienced and patriarchal officers'.[73] It was the weather and his living conditions which ultimately depressed him in Mongalla. In January and February, when it was cool in the Northern Sudan, temperatures in the South were about 100°F, with humidity averaging about 85 per cent. In later years he remembered his house as 'quite the nastiest' that he had ever been allotted in the Sudan. There was no fan, no water and the furniture was field kit. Evenings were hot, and mosquitoes droned against the netting. 'You sat in a pair of . . . mosquito boots, having taken your quinine, drinking a tepid whiskey and water and trying to read by the light of a paraffin pressure lantern.'[74] The reading was the weekly edition of *The Times*, which came at least a month out of date, or maybe a learned journal, or the *Saturday Evening Post*. The whiskey was tepid because the only way of cooling water was to hang it in a canvas water bag in the shade. Sandison had engaged an Egyptian bookkeeper from the Governor's office to help him with his Arabic, and every afternoon they did an hour's classical study in the steaming heat of his house.

There were few diversions in Mongalla. Settlers from Kenya would occasionally arrive in expensive safari cars in search of adventure, while more eminent tourists, like the Prince of Wales, or the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, would hire a steamer at £E 120 a day and would perhaps invite their compatriots to dinner. There was the pleasure of seeing the wild animals grazing or the hippo wallowing in the river. He expected to be sent north to an Arabic-speaking post at the end of 1929, but his reassignment was accelerated, and at the beginning of October he moved to Darfur, where smallpox had broken out and extra help was needed. From the isolation of the Southern Sudan Sandison now found himself far to the west at a station even more remote than Meridi or

Mongalla. Darfur had only been added to the Sudan in 1916 when the Sultan 'Ali Dinar had unwisely declared war against the British on behalf of the Turks.

The provincial headquarters was the Sultan's traditional capital at El Fasher, and officials were stationed at outposts throughout the province. Sandison was assigned in 1929 to Kutum, north of Jabal Marra. Kutum consisted of a *wadi* – a dry river-bed – which was rimmed by great boulders, themselves almost totally submerged in sand. Atop the sand drift and boulders was the official quarter of Kutum, the offices, the prison, the police station and the officials' houses, while down below in the *wadi* were date palms, vegetable gardens, a small market, a mosque and a shop. Compared to Mongalla accommodations in Kutum were luxurious, complete with a sofa, a dining table and several chairs, plus odds and ends for the kitchen and pantry.

Sandison shared the station with another British official, the two having been carefully chosen according to background and tastes to hope for compatability. That was especially important in a station like this, which was so remote that months might pass without an official visitor, and even with good will officials would tend to get on one another's nerves and end up not speaking. When Sandison arrived in Kutum the District Commissioner was still on leave with his new wife, an Australian. Wives of British officials were permitted to stay with their husbands in Darfur only with the express permission of the Governor-General, Sir John Maffey, and on the condition that they leave the province by 1 April to avoid the 'unhealthy season'. The Civil Secretary, Harold MacMichael, had proposed that C. G. Dupuis should be posted to Darfur as Governor. Maffey concurred but objected to Mrs Dupuis accompanying her husband. MacMichael interceded on her behalf and Maffey reluctantly compromised. 'I recollect that the lady is of suitable age and of considerable medical attainments. ... Mrs. Dupuis may make a home for herself. So you see I have got over my critical prejudice and am prepared to meet you more than half way when we discuss the matter.'[75] The stations in western Darfur – Nyala, Zalingei and Gineina (Junaynah) – were even more remote than the provincial capital of Darfur, and when the heavy rains came they became completely inaccessible to the only three qualified doctors in the whole vast province. Certainly this fact was a valid consideration not to have the wives remain in these stations during the rains, but it should not be used to obscure Maffey's fundamental objections to marriage by his subordinates.[76]

Sandison's probationary period was up early in 1930 when he took

and passed his Arabic examination. He did less well on his law examination, but he still received his £E 60 a year increase in salary and his first home leave. He set out for England from Kutum on 8 March and arrived in England a month later. The return journey needed only twenty-two days, and within a few days upon return the District Commissioner and his wife departed for their four-month leave. Sandison had a distant but quite comfortable and happy relationship with his superior and missed the presence of him and his wife, especially since the accepted attitude of British administrators in the outstations toward the Sudanese was one of strict formality. 'We may have been wrong but that is how we saw it. Political officers had much in common with the Captain of a ship. The ship's company are his subordinates. If he entertains them it is purely formal. He does not gossip with them. He does not discuss his actions with them. His command is their law.'[77]

The following year Sandison was transferred to Zalingei, on the western side of the mountains from Kutum, and although it was only 180 miles by road it was a different world from the one where he had been living. Here there were forests and flowing water from Jabal Marra, which rose over 10 000 feet only fifty miles east of Zalingei. The total population did not exceed 250, with Sandison and the British Resident, Edmund D. M. Batty, being the only officials. The two lived about a hundred yards apart in uncomfortable, rectangular houses, with thatched roofs and six-foot verandas all the way around. There was mosquito netting over the doors and windows, which were without glass. The summer rain storms were often attended by violent winds, and wooden shutters had to be closed over the windows. Water was stored in large jars on the veranda and was heated for a bath over an open fire outside. The bath itself was a folding canvas one. Evenings were usually spent in mosquito cages away from the house, in order to avoid the interior darkness and feeling of oppression. Near by were the servants' huts and one extra that served as a kitchen.

Soon after Sandison's arrival Batty himself went on leave, and Sandison was left alone. At first his work kept him busy, but as the rains came, the official work became less and loneliness and depression set in. Letters from home were a great joy but even *The Times*, a month and a half late, began to pall, so that official correspondence from El Fashar was welcome because it had to be answered within twenty-four hours in order for the postal camel to start its return journey. Loneliness encouraged him to weigh the possibility of taking a Sudanese wife. There was sufficient precedent for it, but there were 'moral considerations' that he could not overcome and there were practical reasons why he should

not, such as the prevalence of venereal disease and the fact that 'most native wives . . . would expect the interests of their family to become your principal concern'.[78] Anyway, what he really yearned for was polite English conversation.

Sandison's several reassignments, some coming before he even learned much of local ways, was not unusual. From the beginning of the Condominium Cromer was adamant that British officials not become 'too dug-in' at any post. He had not wanted the Sudan to produce any *Nabobs*, as had India, but even in the Sudan this ideal could not overcome the special needs of certain districts, particularly in the South, for continuity of administration. These needs were met by the 'Bog Barons'. 'Bog Baron' was the term of affection or derision, depending on the point of view and position of the individual member of the Political Service, applied to former military officers seconded to the Sudan Government on variable contracts from two to ten years, renewable upon satisfactory service. Unlike those recruited into the Sudan Political Service from the universities, they received upon retirement no pension but a substantial gratuity, but most important they were assigned to remote hardship stations for many years. Major 'King' Larken, 'Tiger' Wylde and Captain King, for instance, all served over twenty years in the same districts where, left alone by the central and provincial administrations, they ruled the Africans of their District unencumbered by the normal constraints of a bureaucracy. Isolated by the land, aloof by nature and eccentric by temperament, they surrounded themselves by an aura of mystery, romance and infallibility in their satrapies beyond the Bog. Here they kept the peace in 'a swampy and pestilential land inhabited by large, strong, and warlike tribes who wanted little or nothing to do with the Sudan Government, and who at first distrusted all attempts to provide the rudimentary services associated with modern administration'.[79] The areas over which these men ruled were vast and isolated and with communication to and from the capital being difficult the government remained more or less indifferent to the Southern Sudan and to the Bog Barons through the first three decades of the century. What contact there was usually resulted in misunderstanding, but it cannot be said that the Barons courted official attention. Major Larken was famous for regarding the Sudan Government, including the Governor-General, with benign indifference, protecting himself from any unwanted intrusion by posting sentinels along the road leading to his district headquarters. When Governor-General Sir Lee Stack actually did arrive in Zandeland on a a rare tour of inspection, he was only sufficiently swift to glimpse the tailgate of the commissioner's

vehicle disappearing in the distance.[80] These individuals direct from the stories of Somerset Maugham or Joseph Conrad were self-sufficient and not without redeeming idiosyncrasies. Larken dined every evening in a dinner jacket. They did not need the companionship of the mess, and in contrast to Sandison and his colleagues from Oxford and Cambridge, they thrived on isolation so long as they had the understanding and the loyalty of 'their' people. Although not in the Bog as long as others, Colonel J. F. H. Marsh was one of the Barons. As the British Resident at Gambila, his word was law along the Ethiopian border adjacent to the Upper Nile Province. Gambila was a unique station. It was an enclave jutting into Ethiopia on the Baro River ceded to the Sudan Government in 1902 to open up, facilitate and tax the profitable coffee trade of the western highlands whose only viable outlet was down the Nile. The singular peculiarity of Gambila was its accessibility only a few months of the year when the Baro was in spate. After the flood the Baro returned to a stream and the District Commissioner to his isolation. Thus Colonel Marsh's chief concerns were checking exports and imports and, of course, keeping the peace on the frontier. This was no easy task and involved tactful dealings with the non-Sudanese Africans of western Ethiopia where the rule of the Emperor was virtually non-existent and their continuing disputes with the Anuak and Nuer from the Sudan who moved back and forth across the border to their best advantage. According to an official report from the Governor of Upper Nile, K. C. P. Struvé, Marsh 'did not administer the S.G. Penal Code or Civil', but simply ran an arbitrary justice 'which nobody questions'.[81]

These Bog Barons may have become intoxicated by their omnipotent authority. Some may have feared their own civilisation and found solace away from their own culture to which they had little, if any, desire to return. They all, however, possessed a strong sense of duty as they perceived it and a deep patriotism for their country, which as a nation had been bestowed with the duty to rule the less fortunate. And so it was with Colonel Marsh. 'He considers, without joking and with every justification, that his business it to keep British prestige high in Abyssinia so far as he is locally able, and he certainly does so.'[82]

> Marsh was a man of 43 who having been in command of a British Battalion finds it difficult to bear any other discipline but his own, and he thrives on an independent job like Gambila. He is the son of the town clerk of Ryde, and was himself a solicitor until the war discovered his military capacity. He has no pretensions to breeding, but is very typical of his sort, honest, rather blunt, quite devoid of any

> literary or aesthetic appreciation, a Philistine, but an efficient and conscientious public servant, who hates not getting his own way and generally has quite adequate reasons for having it. His Arabic is bad enough to be almost incomprehensible, and he has no gift of tongues. But he does not mind living alone at Gambila indefinitely, and although he tries to disassociate himself as far as he can from the Sudan Government, so as to have his own show, he is amenable enough. He is at least a round peg in a round hole, and one may be thankful for that.[83]

The nearest British neighbour to Colonel Marsh lived 200 miles away, and as the Gambila mail came by Nuer canoe it sometimes did not arrive at all. The Colonel kept in touch with the daily affairs of the outside world by radio. His office and the prison were built of mud and thatched with palm leaves, and he had a quay wall built at the riverside where boats tied up. It rained eight months out of the twelve, and the rest of the time the climate was hot, steamy and fetid.

At least Colonel Marsh did have the luxury of a red-brick bungalow with a verandah covered by mosquito mesh. The few brick structures that existed in Upper Nile Province had been built since 1919. Prior to that time all permanent buildings were of concrete block and had corrugated iron roofs which absorbed and retained the heat. In 1926 the District Commissioner at Akobo still had a house of the tin-roof variety and made his discontent known. The other house at Akobo, the 'good one', had bats permanently nested in the living-room. At Fangak the District Commissioner's House was 'small but not bad'. At Renk the District Commissioner's bungalow was made of wood and was regarded throughout the province as 'a scandal' as it was very hot and gave no protection against mosquitoes. Living conditions were generally so unpleasant in the province that the Governor proposed a rotation system whereby officials who had had a long period of 'roughing it could go to some relatively quiet and healthy station in Mongalla for a few years'.[84] It was Mongalla that Sandison had found so desolate and uncomfortable.

The Upper Nile was the lost province in the Sudan about which no one seemed to care. Upon his retirement in 1926 Governor Struvé expressed his resentment of the central government at Khartoum for having neglected his province. In his handing-over notes to Chunky Willis, the new Governor, he wrote: 'I hope you will not have all the bitterness of working in a Cinderella province and being told you are in a backward sideshow.'[85] At the local level Willis inherited a situation

fraught with discontent. Numerous personnel were unhappy with their housing, one of the District Commissioners was subject to fits of depression which usually ended up in alcoholic bouts, and the British engineers living in Malakal were barely on speaking terms with the remainder of the British community. Fortunately, matters improved. The unhappy District Commissioner resigned, the friction centring about the engineers was resolved and the housing problem improved by extensive repairs and new construction. As in the other provinces recreational facilities received a high priority. There was excellent fishing and shooting in the Upper Nile, and in Malakal a rough tennis court had been laid out just outside the Deputy Governor's (E. G. Coryton) window, much to his irritation. His exasperation found some compensation in the fact that his new Governor, Chunky Willis, was a polo player. Together they formed a club, bought ponies and played on a sandy field across the Nile. 'There is now something to talk about all and every day and although they only play twice a week, ponies, games and even sticks are an endless topic of conversation.'[86] On 4 January 1927 the Malakal Polo Club was founded with full affiliate membership in the Middle East Polo Association.

If Halfa, Mongalla, Zalingei and Gambila were the remote outposts of empire in the extremities of the Sudan, in the heartland lay that island of land between the Blue Nile and White Nile known as the Gezira (Ar. Al-Jazrah, the island). Here on this fertile and gently-sloping plain the possibility of cotton-growing was recognised as early as 1839, but the development of large-scale cultivation only began in 1904 when an American, Leigh Hunt, was granted a concession at Zeidab (Al-Zaydāb) in 1904. The British were in fact desperate for revenue. The fragile, marginal environment of the Sudan could not withstand the calamitous years of drought, famine, war and internal disruption during the Mahdiya. The Anglo-Egyptian military triumph at Omdurman in 1898 may have avenged the death of Gordon thirteen years before but saddled the victors with an unproductive land. The British Government having contributed men and money to its conquest were not about to pay for the administration of this desolate country. The burden thus fell at first on the Egyptian Government, but from the very outset British officials set out to sever the Egyptian connection beginning with the financial subvention. To accomplish this objective the Sudan would have to become financially independent. In the first decade of the twentieth century large-scale cotton appeared the only means to produce revenue and the Gezira the obvious and natural location to undertake the financial regeneration of the Sudan.

With the powerful support of the British Cotton Growing Association and particularly the Lancashire cotton industry, then coming under intense overseas competition, a reluctant British Government authorised a loan to the Sudan Government in 1913 for construction of the necessary dam and irrigation canals. Delayed by the War the Sennar Dam was finally completed in 1925 and from that time onward land placed under irrigated cultivation has steadily increased. When the British era came to a close upon the declaration of Sudan independence in 1956, over two million *feddans* were under irrigation on the island between the two Niles.

The Gezira Scheme made the Sudan a financially viable country. Under the management of the Sudan Plantation Syndicate, the Sudan Government and the Sudanese it has long been regarded as a model of economic development in which the technical skill of private enterprise was combined with the paternalism of the Sudan Government and the labour of the Sudanese to create a viable economy in the Nile Basin. The Gezira may have given the Sudan economic independence, but the land possessed none of the desolate attractions of the remote outposts in the extremities. 'South of Khartoum one can stand in an apparently absolutely flat plain of grey cracked clay, where the thin natural vegetation has all been cleared and where there is neither hill nor a village nor a tree nor a blade of grass in sight in any direction.'[87] The British Director of the Gezira Scheme, Arthur Gaitskell, dwelt on the hostile environment. 'Gezira was a land of mirage. At dawn in winter the horizon stood up like a pink cliff circling a giant hollow in which a curious reflection of light disclosed villages and fields beyond the range of normal sight.'[88]

To Bishop Gwynne the Gezira meant changes which he observed over a twenty-year period. 'The cotton plantations have altered the whole scenery. Instead of small struggling villages with mud huts one motors along the banks of the canals and every now and then coming across the well-equipped bungalows of the British Inspectors. Round each Bungalow are trees and gardens very often beautifully kept with shrubs, flowering trees, flower beds, and vegetables. Here and there are clubs for the British officials where they play polo and tennis and meet wherever possible at least once a week with their wives and children.' The headquarters of the Scheme at Wad Madani was 'the Metropolis of the Gezira' but beyond the Gezira itself was 'flat with no hills in sight as far as the eye could reach'.[89]

Richard Hill's assessment of the Gezira was less charitable than the Bishop's. Kosti 'is a flat, dreary dorp [of] about 10 000 people' but 'no

uglier than other Sudanese towns'. While the Sudanese lived in mud brick houses, as they did throughout much of the country, the British lived in ones made of burnt brick 'of distorted shapes as though carelessly moulded'. After Kosti Hill was assigned to Wad Madani for another short tour. This town described by Bishop Gwynne as 'the Metropolis of the Gezira' was to Hill a 'Klondyke . . . where the only part which verges on beauty is the Blue Nile river bank with its lines of overshadowing trees'. He was more impressed by the offices of the Governor, which were made of well-fashioned burnt brick.[90]

The economic prosperity of the Sudan, which had been heightened by the Qash and Gezira cotton developments, began to deteriorate in the late 1920s. Hit hard by the stagnation in international trade and by adverse local weather conditions the economy reached its bottom in 1932 and did not reverse itself until seven years later. The depression affected the Administration in many ways: the diminution in the number of British officials and their partial replacement by less-experienced Sudanese, the consequent reduction in services and salary cuts for those British officials who remained.[91] Like other officials, Hill's earnings were reduced by 7½ per cent from £E 600 per year to £E 555, of which amount he sent £E 252 back to England in order to maintain his home. Like his colleagues through these depression years he practised rigid personal economy and found that Khartoum was not necessarily terribly expensive. The Sudan Club, where he took his meals, offered good value and for his occasional splurge he would dine and dance at the relatively expensive Grand Hotel, where in 1937 the cost of a dinner was about P.T. 40. Good poplin shirts at Nicola Kronfli's store sold for the same price. His regret at the time was that there was not the opportunity for him to live in a service car on the railway line so that he could further economise.

Along with the cut in salary came an increased workload. 'For a second winter season,' Hill complained in 1934, 'I have run the Khartoum Traffic district without the assistance of another District Official. . . . To run this district alone means long hours for yourself and slave-driving for your office staff.'[92] But if the demands on British officials during the depression years had increased by forced economies the pressure of work became even greater when War broke out in Europe in September of 1939. To face the Italian threat from Ethiopia the Sudan Defence Force tapped the civilian government for staff. The enemy actually occupied Kassala for a few months in 1940, but were routed a year later in Eritrea, and when the Germans lost at El Alamein late in 1942, the sense of military urgency abated in the Sudan.

Fifteen years of depression and War had done much to change the character of British rule in the Sudan reflected in the individual officials themselves and of the decline of empire in general. The men who came out to the Sudan during these years were a new generation conceived in War, reared in the roaring twenties, and achieving maturity in the Depression. Slowly, inexorably, the deep personal self-confidence which had taken the British to the ends of Empire was steadily eroded by the decline of that Empire on the one hand and new creeds which challenged the old order on the other. No longer was the duty to rule accepted as a law of nature endowed by God upon Englishmen. And with their confidence once shaken, doubt as to their mission took its place amidst a world in which new attitudes and relationships among men were born.

And so it was in the Sudan as throughout the Empire. Depression and War had spawned these new attitudes and produced the changing personal relationships within the Sudan Civil Service which were reflected in the changing relationships between the British, particularly the officials of the Political Service, and the Sudanese. On 19 November 1954 the Chief Justice of the Sudan, the Hon. W. O'B. Lindsay, spoke these words of the departed and the departing.

> The days of a benevolent paternal rule by a privileged powerful body of enlightened British administrators have gone, but I am confident that in other spheres the influence of the British example and the British way of life will continue to make a deep impression for the ultimate benefit of the country.[93]

The formal receptions were over, the officials speeches delivered. All that was left were the farewell parties which followed one upon another with halcyon nostalgia. 'I remember those last few moments of the evening and the wonderful calm of the river in the gaudy sunset. My last tea party was over.'[99]

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The second Governor-General of the Sudan, Sir Reginald Wingate, wanted a personal liaison officer between him and the Sudanese *shaykhs* and notables. The obvious choice was Rudolf von Slatin Pasha whose experience as the Egyptian Governor of Darfur and later prisoner in attendance on the Khalifa gave him an intimate knowledge of the Sudan and particularly Sudanese personalities. Wingate offered him the unique post of Inspector-General at £E 2000 a year, which included net pay of

£E 1200 plus travelling allowance of £E 200 and pension of £E 600. Slatin was also given a choice plot of land on the Nile as a gratuity.

2. The Egyptian pound (£E) was composed of 100 piastres (P.T.) and had a value of £1–0–6d, or £1 was worth P.T. 97½.
3. Harold MacMichael to his mother, Hon. Sophia Caroline Curzon, daughter of the 4th Baron Scarsdale, 21 Oct, 17 Nov, and 8-11 Dec 1905, SAD. Rather than try to relate the above salaries and prices to today's inflated values it is possibly more useful to relate the cost of living to income. For example, a Third-Class Inspector on a salary of £E 420 would have spent about 10 per cent of his earnings for all his meals at home and for a full-time cook to prepare them. After fourteen years this official's salary would have risen more rapidly than costs. For instance, a supper at the Grand Hotel cost 25 P.T. in 1905 and only 40 P.T. as late as 1937.
4. Richard Hill, 'Notes of Service in the Sudan 1927–48', 20 Mar 1929, p.63. 'Kosti is of course the Greek slang word for Constantine. The place was uninhabited before the railway came here but it was only a few hundred yards from the village of Goz Abu Juma. But Kosti, a Greek trader, set up his shop at the new rail–river tranship station and the local people insisted on calling it Kosti. The founder's family still own the shop which he created. The name is Zografos.
5. Malaria was endemic in Khartoum since its founding in 1824, but was greatly exacerbated by the cultivation of cotton in the Gezira, which then precipitated a vigorous campaign in the capital to eradicate the mosquito breeding pools.
6. Captain H. C. Franklin, 'Memoirs, Sudan, 1911–32', unpublished MS., n.d., p. 23, SAD.
7. Admiral W. Scott Hill, 'Some Sudan Memories, 1904–14', unpublished MS., n.d., pp. 22–3, SAD.
8. The former Civil Secretary, Sir Angus Gillan, who retired from the Sudan Political Service in 1939 after thirty years of service died at 95 years of age. Sir George Schuster, the former Financial Secretary, died at the age of 101.
9. Egyptian and Sudanese Civil Services, 'Information to Candidates' (1913) p. 2, SAD.
10. Bishop L. H. Gwynne, 'Makers of the Sudan', unpublished MS., n.d., p. 24, SAD.
11. R. E. H. 'Robin' Baily, 'Early Recollections of the Sudan', unpublished MS., 1909, SAD. *The Diverting History of John Gilpin* by Cowper describes the wild ride of John when he loses control of his horse while on a trip to celebrate with his wife their twentieth wedding day.
12. A precipice on one of the walks near Erkowit was affectionately and universally known as 'Kitty's Leap' promoting an official notice from Sudan Railways Headquarters at Atbara with the following instructions for visitors and tourists. 'Out of respect for a celebrated lady the beauty-spot hitherto commonly known as "Kitty's Leap" will be referred to in the future as "Lady Wingate's Seat".' Erkowit became something of a Greek monopoly with thirty-seven in residence among the small population in 1941 which inspired the following doggerel by J. M. H. (John Miller Hunter).

The isle of Greeks! The isle of Greeks!
Where Lady Kitty loved to leap,
Where British Pashas wielded cleeks,
Where 'Master' used to dine and sleep,
The cooling mists enwrap it yet,
But all its glory has now set.

The scions of Augean Mews,
The alien foes, the dancing whores,
Have got the rooms which they refuse
To weary folk from Britain's shores.
Their shouts re-echo east and west
Around the island of the blessed.

Aching I sat and mopped my brow
And watched a free-born ballet Miss
Consorting gayly with a low
Levantine grocer. She was his.
Beyond three miles she must not stray,
But, when the sun set, where were they?

Place me inside this Attic hive,
Where only Frosty-face[1] and I
Have got no right to be alive.
There, bee-like, let me sting and die.
An isle of greeks shall ne'er be mine!
Send me to Halfa! I resign!

[1] The Nazir of the Hadendoa.
From *Sudan Verse*, ed. K. D. D. Henderson and T. R. H. Owen, (London, Chancery Books, 1963) pp. 28–9.

Today Erkowit is a popular honeymoon resort for Sudanese from the Nile towns and cities.

13. Robert O. Collins, *Land Beyond the Rivers, The Southern Sudan 1898–1918*, (New Haven, 1971) pp. 287–307.
14. Wingate to Gwynne, 31 Jan 1902 in H. C. Jackson, *Pastor on the Nile*, (London, 1960) p.66.
15. The first proposal to build an Anglican Cathedral in the Sudan came from Lord Cromer in 1900 and was welcomed by Sir Reginald Wingate so long as the building of a church remained a private, non-government undertaking. Mr Weir Schultz was retained to design a cathedral suitable, not only to the memory of Gordon, but to the future of Christianity in the Sudan as well. The cathedral was laid out in the shape of a Latin cross and constructed of red and yellow sandstone from Jabal al-Awliya' south of Khartoum. The architecture is an eclectic combination of Gothic and Byzantine design with all the solidity of a fortress. The foundation stone was laid on 7 Feb 1904 and the cathedral consecrated on 26 Feb 1912 by the Bishop of London.
16. The holding of religious services to British officials outside of Khartoum

was strongly supported by the Governor-General of the Sudan and of the highest priority to Bishop Gwynne, who was literally an Itinerant Bishop. On 7 Feb 1929 his unremitting efforts to secure a railway car were successful when he dedicated the famous 'Church Saloon', a 47-feet-long railway-car half a Chapel and Sanctuary, the other living quarters for Chaplain and servants. In twenty years the Saloon travelled a half-million miles and held over 600 services. *The Sudan Diocesan Review*, vol. II, 7 (1950) 29–30.

17. Supported by the British Railway Community concentrated at the important railway junction and maintenance shops at Atbara, the church began service in 1906 when the railway headquarters were transferred from Halfa. For thirty-one years a building by the Nile originally intended as a Club served as the church where services were conducted by laymen who worked for Sudan Railways. Although a site for a church had been selected early in the history of the town on Church Avenue, the foundation stone was not laid until 16 Mar 1933 by the Rt Rev. L. H. Gwynne. Designed by Sir Herbert Baker and consecrated the Church of Philip the Deacon on 28 Feb 1938. *The Sudan Diocesan Review*, vol. I, 1 and 2 (1949) 21.
18. The Rev. Gwynne first visited Wad Madani in April 1900 where he stopped for two days. As the modern town grew the British community worshipped in the Church Missionary Society Girls' School until the new church, St Paul's, was built on an excellent site under the leadership of the Governor of the Blue Nile Province, Robert Bardsley. Designed by Leonard Martin of London and constructed of Jabal Moya granite and Soba bricks by E. Dentamaro, who also donated the white Carrara marble paving. Numerous others contributed their time and energy and the first service was conducted by the Rev. B. J. ('Uncle') Harper on Christmas Day 1930 and consecrated by Bishop Gwynne on 27 Feb 1931. The total cost was £E 13 000. *The Sudan Diocesan Review*, vol. VIII, 21 (1955) p. 13.
19. Richard Hill, 'Notes of Service in the Sudan 1927–1948', p. 91.
20. Gwynne, 'Makers of the Sudan', p. 19, SAD.
21. Ibid.
22. A lecture by E. G. Sarsfield-Hall to a Town Planning Conference at Welwyn Garden City, 1933, quoted in E. G. Sarsfield-Hall, *From Cork to Khartoum: Memoirs of Southern Ireland and the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan 1886 to 1936*, (Kendal, 1975) p. 102.
23. Gwynne, 'Makers of the Sudan', p. 63, SAD.
24. In the summer of 1904 Peter Lord who had been working as an assistant to Captain E. C. Midwinter, the Chief Engineer of the Sudan Military Railway, was sent to Suakin to prepare the old harbour for steamships. In August Lord and Commander Drury were ordered in the S.L. *Clysma* to establish a light at Sanganeb reef so that ships bound for Suakin could stand off at night since the thirty-five mile approach through the reefs could only be safely accomplished in daylight. After completing the foundations for the Sanganeb light, they were forced to take shelter from a storm at Shaykh al-Barghuth. Uninhabited for lack of water the harbour was far superior to Suakin. Lord and Drury conducted a survey, took soundings, and wrote to Khartoum and Cairo of its advantages. Lord Cromer was interested but let the matter drop when informed by the Royal Navy that Suakin was the only possible port. Later that year the Hon. Anthony Pelham joined Lord at

Suakin and learned of the alternative harbour. He wrote to his parents of the observations made by Lord and Drury, whereupon his father took the matter up in the House of Lords. Wingate was furious and the young Pelham received a stern rebuke from the Civil Secretary to desist from any criticism of Sudan Government policy. But Shaykh al-Barghuth could not be so easily dismissed. When the Director of Public Works, Captain M. Ralston Kennedy Bey, visited Suakin to make plans for its reconstruction, he had heard about Shaykh al-Barghuth from Drury, visited the site and immediately refused to spend another piastre on Suakin. His intervention resulted in the inevitable Commission of Inquiry and ultimately to the birth of Port Sudan. Colonel Peter Lord, 'The Birth of Port Sudan', *The Sudan Diocesan Review*, vol. IX, no. 26 (1956) p. 29.

25. In 1900 government revenue had stood at £E 156 888 and expenditure at £E 331 918. In 1913 the respective revenue and expenditure were £E 1 654 149 and £E 1 614 007 respectively.
26. Richard Hill, *Slatin Pasha*, (London, 1965) pp. 72–3.
27. Admiral Scott Hill, 'Some Sudan Memories', p. 33, SAD.
28. Sir Reginald Wingate to W. E. Brunyate, 17 Mar 1911, Wingate Papers, SAD.
29. Baily, 'Early Recollections', p. 8, SAD.
30. Admiral Scott Hill, 'Some Sudan Memories', p. 8, SAD.
31. MacMichael to his mother, 1 Dec 1905, Rhodes House Library, Oxford.
32. Ibid., 10 Nov 1905.
33. MacMichael, 'Diary Selections, 1908', 11 and 12 Apr 1908, SAD.
34. Mrs Gladys M. Leak to her mother, 24 Oct 1924, unpublished letters, Rhodes House Library, Oxford. Oswald Leak was the Manager of the Khartoum Power Station for the Public Works Department.
35. Mrs Leak to her mother, 15 Nov 1924.
36. Franklin, 'Memoirs, Sudan, 1911–32', p. 15, SAD.
37. Charles Armine ('Chunky') Willis, 'Diary', 2 Aug 1911, SAD. Major St C. M. G. MacEwen retired in 1912, Lt-Col. P. R. Phipps in 1914, Lt-Col. C. H. Townsend in 1917, Lt-Col. A. Cameron in 1921, and Lt-Col. R. V. Savile in 1923.
38. Lt-Col. R. V. Savile Pasha served as Governor, Kordofan Province, from 1909 to 1917. By 1913 Willis had been transferred to the Red Sea Province. See Willis, 'Diary', Aug–Dec 1911 for such entries as: 'It took me a long time to get through my own work and especially after the post came in and in which I received a letter from Savile saying I am not to go to the Club! Write to expostulate and to press the matter home.' Willis, 'Diary' (Nahud, Kordofan, 2 Oct 1911).
39. Originally all candidates for the Political Service had to do a full year of graduate study in Arabic, but prior to the Second World War this practice was modified for the majority to a three-month course at the School of Oriental and African Studies of London University.
40. Baily, Misc., SAD. Sir Reginald Wingate, the Governor-General, was fluent in both Arabic and Turkish and as the former Director of Intelligence for the Egyptian Army had acquired a profound knowledge of the Sudan and the Sudanese.
41. Gwynne, 'Makers of the Sudan', pp. 24–6, SAD.

42. Gwynne, 'The Value of Games on the Administration', unpublished MS., n.d., p. 155, SAD.
43. Gwynne, 'Makers of the Sudan', p. 85, SAD.
44. Franklin, 'Memoirs, Sudan, 1911–32', p. 23, SAD.
45. Mrs Leak to her mother, 1 Nov 1924, Rhodes House Library, Oxford.
46. Mrs Leak to her father, 11 Nov 1924, Rhodes House Library, Oxford.
47. Mrs Leak to her mother, 24 Jan 1925. George Ward Price was a Special Foreign Correspondent for the *Daily Mail* visiting Khartoum to write a series of articles on the Sudan.
48. Richard Hill, 'Notes of Service in the Sudan', 14 May 1929, p. 74.
49. Michael Langley, *No-Woman's Country* (London, 1950) p. 9.
50. Baily to his father, Nov 1924, Misc. letters, SAD.
51. Mrs Leak to her mother, 1 Nov 1924, Rhodes House Library, Oxford.
52. Percy 'Cory' Coriat to his wife Kathleen ('Kay') Coriat, 19 Dec 1926, Coriat Papers, unpublished letters and diaries, Rhodes House Library, Oxford. We are grateful for the permission of Mrs Coriat to quote from her memoirs and those of her husband.
53. Mrs Leak to her mother, 5 Mar 1925, Rhodes House Library, Oxford.
54. Mrs Leak to her mother, 29 Mar 1925, Rhodes House Library, Oxford.
55. Sir Reginald Wingate, 'Memoir' in C. H. Stigand, *The Lado Enclave* (London, 1923) p. xxix.
56. R. E. H. Baily to G. H. Barter, 23 Mar 1929, Misc. letters, SAD.
57. Mrs Baily to her father, 1922, Baily, Misc. letters, SAD.
58. Coriat to his wife, 2 Mar 1927, Rhodes House Library, Oxford.
59. Kathleen ('Kay') Coriat, 'Handwritten Reminiscences of the Upper Nile Province, 1929–30', unpublished MS., n.d., Rhodes House Library, Oxford.
60. Baily, 'Early Recollections', p. 5, SAD.
61. Sir James Robertson ('John Willy') to All Governors, 11 May 1946, Robertson Papers, SAD.
62. Baily, Misc., 1932, SAD.
63. Sir Douglas Newbold to W. B. Kennedy-Shaw, 10 May 1939, quoted in K. D. D. Henderson, *The Making of the Modern Sudan: The Life and Letters of Sir Douglas Newbold* (London, 1953) p. 109.
64. Owen, 'Sudan Days', p. 187, Rhodes House Library, Oxford.
65. Richard Hill, 'Notes of Service in the Sudan', pp. 24–39.
66. Ina M. Beasley, 'Before the Wind Changed: People and Places in the Sudan', unpublished MS., p. 58, Rhodes House Library, Oxford.
67. Richard Hill, 'Diary of Richard Hill (1931–1948)', p. 93A. In possession of the author. We are grateful to Richard Hill for permission to quote from his diaries.
68. Ibid. p. 289.
69. Ibid. p. 105.
70. Sandison, 'Unfinished Memoirs', p. 39.
71. Ibid., p. 40.
72. Ibid. p. 50.
73. Ibid. p. 54.
74. Ibid. p. 14.
75. Governor-General Sir John Maffey to Civil Secretary, Harold MacMichael, 27 Apr 1927, MacMichael letters various, SAD.

76. In 1931 the position of Private Secretary to the Governor-General, Sir John Maffey, was offered to G. R. F. Bredin, who explained that he was engaged to be married and was thus directed to the post of Assistant Civil Secretary, that of Private Secretary being offered to Martin Parr, a lifelong bachelor. Since the duties of the Private Secretary were regarded as too demanding to be shared with a wife, the Governor-General was overheard to remark, 'These young men seem so reluctant to take on the Private Secretary's job that they are prepared to plunge into matrimony in order to escape it!' Although this official posture regarding marriage dissolved in the flames of war, eyebrows were still raised among the British community in Khartoum over a 'mixed marriage' between an official in the Political Service and a Roman Catholic girl in education or a District Commissioner who had the temerity to marry a divorced woman. There were, of course, the infrequent scandals by officials taking up with their colleagues' wives, the price of which was resignation from the service.
77. Sandison, 'Unfinished Memoirs', pp. 81–2.
78. Ibid. p. 138. The District Commissioner Edmond Dalton Montague Batty died at Zalingei on 27 Nov 1931.
79. Robert O. Collins, 'The Sudan Political Service', *African Affairs*, vol. 71, no. 284 (July 1972) p. 298. BOG was a convenient acronym for Bahr al-Ghazal.
80. Ibid. p. 299.
81. K. C. P. Struvé, 'Reports, 1926', in possession of John W. Frost.
82. Struvé, 'Province Personnel, 1926', in possession of John W. Frost.
83. Struvé, 'Memorandum, 10 October 1926', in possession of John W. Frost.
84. Struvé, 'Notes', 30 Apr, 27 Sep, 2, 14 Oct and 27 Nov 1926, in possession of John W. Frost.
85. Struvé, 'Handing-Over Notes, 1926', in possession of John W. Frost.
86. Coriat to his wife, 8 Jan 1927, Rhodes House Library, Oxford.
87. K. M. Barbour, *The Republic of the Sudan* (London, 1961) p. 180.
88. Arthur Gaitskell, *The Gezira: A Story of Development in the Sudan* (London, 1959) p. 26.
89. Gwynne, 'Makers of the Sudan', pp. 144–5, SAD.
90. Richard Hill, 'Notes of Service in the Sudan', pp. 65–6.
91. While virtually all British officials sustained salary cuts, MacMichael curiously approved increases for the four senior governors. Robin Baily was furious, resigned and passed into retirement but not before severely lecturing his friend. 'I have also expressed bewilderment that you, who most of all men hate humbug, have not used your position to crash through it. I do not like public school loyalty among senior officials when it interferes with their loyalty to the Country. All this "face saving", "white-washing", "sops" have not been good for the reputation of the Govt.; the less so at the time of an emergency when we all looked for a lead in unselfishness and self-sacrifice.' It was not one of 'Macmic's' finer moments. R. E. H. Baily to Sir Harold MacMichael, 16 Oct 1932, 'The MacMichael Papers', Rhodes House Library, Oxford.
92. Richard Hill, 'Diary of Richard Hill (1931–1948)', pp. 46–7.
93. Speech by the Hon. W. O'B. Lindsay, Chief Justice of the Sudan at the reception of the Chief Justice and the Judges of the High Court on 19 Nov 1954 in honour of the retiring members of the Sudan Political Service. *The Sudan Diocesan Review*, vol. 8, no. 20 (Dec 1954) p. 23.
94. Dr J. F. E. Bloss, 'Khartoum Diary', unpublished MS., p. 159, in possession of the author. We are grateful to Dr Bloss for permission to quote from his diary.

4 The Genial Barons

GAIL S. SCHOETTLER

> His day would start at dawn with a gentle awakening shake from his house-boy bringing him a cup of tea.
>
> E. G. SARSFIELD-HALL

The early years of British rule in the Sudan were primarily devoted to establishing security, political administration and stabilising the economy. Military officers supervised the customs offices, police and prisons during the first decade of the twentieth century. Gradually, however, the civilian administrative officials replaced the military officers. The vast size of the Sudan combined with slow and difficult transportation encouraged a variety of 'active and ingenious men, dropped into remote places', to devise their own methods for governing the Sudanese. From 1900 to 1920 the central government struggled to standardise and finance these conflicting systems of administration in a diverse land with a contrast between North and South that remained an irreconcilable dilemma throughout the Condominium.[1] By 1914 the North was reasonably peaceful, even prosperous, but many of the Southern Sudanese still remained beyond the administrative control of the government in Khartoum while others continued to be embroiled in tribal disputes and outright resistance to British authority.

Following the First World War events in Egypt had important repercussions all the way up the Nile to Khartoum. Nationalism in Egypt brought the end of the Protectorate in 1922 while Egyptians carried its seeds into the Sudan. The nature of Sudanese nationalism and the reaction to it was quite different from that in Egypt. British officials regarded nationalism in the Sudan as an Egyptian transplant confined to a small group of the urban population to whom no political concessions should be made at the expense of the overwhelming mass of Sudanese in the rural areas who remained untouched by ideas of nationalism and democracy. This critical difference soon resulted in an administrative policy in the Sudan divergent from that which the British followed in Egypt. As a result the Sudan Government circumscribed the youthful

urban educated elite and placed greater reliance upon the traditional leaders who held sway in the countryside. An unforeseen by-product of this policy was the increasing independence of the Sudan Government in directing its own affairs and confirmation to the members of the Political Service that they were the trustees of the Sudanese first and the Condomini second. In fact the Sudan Political Service was quietly, almost imperceptibly, becoming an autonomous government.

Thus after the climactic disturbances of 1924 appeared to convince the British authorities that a new vigorous policy was necessary, they set out to alter the structure of government by promoting the traditional leaders and tribal organisation in what came to be known as Native Administration. This policy was ensured by the arrival of Sir John Maffey as Governor-General in 1926. Arriving in the Sudan from India where he had observed the nationalists steadily erode the authority of the traditional rulers, Maffey sought to reduce reliance upon the educated Sudanese by enhancing the power of the tribal *shaykhs*. The duty of the Political Service was to shield the older generation from the corrosive effects of the new.

> We were in a transitional stage between the direct, paternal rule of the British administrator and the indirect rule exercised by a natural leader of the people. His authority was being extended over the whole of the district, and to cover more and more facets of government. His own court tried all serious crime except homicide, and the courts of his Shartais dealt with less serious cases. The Resident was retreating more and more into the background, advising, assisting and prompting. We still controlled health and education above the primary level. We still expressed ourselves freely to Shartais on the subject of taxation, but it was soon to be handed over to the Emir. He had agreed to a phased transfer of responsibility as he had to 'play himself in' gradually.[2]

Even in the early days of their rule some British officials were looking to a change in the direct rule of the Political Officers.

> We criticised the absence of a future policy – this paternal rule could not go on for ever. It would have killed us off as indeed it killed my successor at Shendi.
>
> Great though the prestige we were earning, we were the first to realize that the prestige of the white ruler is in inverse ratio to his numbers.[3]

In 1927 the Financial Secretary, Sir George Schuster, succinctly summed up the subtle but self-evident principle of the Sudan Political Service. 'The best way of maintaining good relations with the natives and the avoiding of the growth of any feeling of resentment against an alien domination is to restrict the British officials to a small body of first class men.'[4] Acting on this dictum the Civil Secretary, Harold MacMichael, prepared a memorandum dated 12 March 1928 in which he argued that the Political Service had reached its maximum size of 152 men for a country of a million square miles and about six million people. 'I do not think this is excessive.'[5]

Of those Sudan Political Officers who wrote about their experiences, all seemed to feel that the Service had moved beyond Baily's criticism and had led the Sudanese to responsible independence. They argued that the underlying philosophy of British rule had been to prepare the Sudanese for self-government as rapidly as possible, and they believed it had been successfully implemented. British rule 'lasted but half a century', Chunky Willis observed, 'but when it withdrew it left a thriving and growing population whose capacity to manage their own affairs compares well with any of the new African "nations" '.[6]

> There is at the present time a strong prejudice against anything in the nature of colonial rule. The fact that backward people have been brought forward to a higher standard of living and culture is looked upon as a shameful and disgraceful thing. Yet, historically, the nations colonized by Rome still display advance over those who were not so fortunate, and equally those positions of the world that came under the administration in more recent times of Great Britain, France, Holland and Belgium compare favourably with those areas that did not suffer that grevious afflication.
>
> Nevertheless the accusation of 'imperialistic colonization' is used as a term of abuse to justify any nationalist claims without any appreciation of the benefits to the colonized or the sacrifices of the colonizers.
>
> As far as the Sudan is concerned . . . its administration had nothing whatsoever to do with the Colonial Office or Whitehall and its liaisons with the British Government was through the Foreign Office which avoided any decisions of an administrative kind.
>
> A juster line of criticism would follow the tendency of all administrators to make assumptions from their own background and tradition and endeavour to apply these to a people who neither know nor appreciate them . . . officials are prone to encourage the adoption

> of customs and way of life with which they themselves are familiar, without considering whether such are appropriate to the native climate, habits or temperament.
>
> What was striking about the early days of the Administration was the cooperation of the natives to help out. True, the Government schemes were for the benefit of the natives, but they had to be convinced of it and as a matter of fact, did cooperate, making the relations between the Administration and the people exceptionally friendly. This lasted a long time, and those who served in that Administration still feel warm sentiments of affection to the people with whom they worked.[7]

Paul Sandison echoed Willis's justification of British administration.

> A folk tradition of unrecognised achievement, the noble savage against the brutal and predatory European, was emerging. In fact, the peoples of the Sudan had done little on their own to make their passage through this world more comfortable. Some had adopted slavery to this end. But the great inventions of the plough and the wheel were unknown. They had little knowledge of natural law, and a great reliance on magic to influence supernatural forces. Violence was close to the surface, and the blood feud an every-day menace. In political organization they had not got beyond the tribe – in essence an extended family – except by conquest, and the emergence through war of a dominant tribe or faith.[8]

Virtually without exception their colleagues agreed with Willis and Sandison that it was the British presence which had enabled the Sudan to progress from a rudimentary level of development to proud independence.

There was some difference of opinion among members of the Political Service as to what constituted the most appropriate method of governing. Officers posted to the Northern Sudan tended to argue for governing according to Sudanese concepts of traditional authority, while those sent to the South often felt that British culture provided a sounder basis for the evolution of administration. Robin Baily and T. R. H. Owen, respectively, defined these two views.

Baily wrote.

> Perhaps my uppermost feeling were that where tribal authority was strongest the people were least vulnerable to religious fanaticism: that

> the hereditary chiefs were slowly regaining the authority they had lost during the Mahdiya and that it was up to the government to encourage the tendency wisely, and that it was up to us to govern the country not simply according to western ideas but according to the ideas of the wisest Sudanese.[9]

Owen believed, on the other hand,

> that a primitive, pagan, African culture has very little future at all before it and does not possess those elements of adaptability and creative innovation which are the essence of survival value; and that its fate must be either slow supersession by and absorption into a higher culture or equally slow but equally certain extinction.[10]

These divergent views were reflected in the administrative techniques each officer implemented in his own isolated enclave during the first quarter of the twentieth century. As communication improved, however, the Governors-General did try to establish a more uniform policy that involved the development and utilisation of 'native authorities', otherwise known as Indirect Rule. None the less, there was little question as to who held the real power. An American visitor to the Sudan in the late 1920s, Marshall Bond, identified this in his description of a dinner he attended at the Palace with the Governor-General and Lady Maffey in Khartoum.

> All stood in silence while the anthem was played, and drank the toast. It gave one a realization that the power that is holding this vast country in peace and prosperity and happiness and that has saved it from the chaos and misery and despair of thirty years ago, is just this little group of Englishmen who in the name of the King stand here to administer justice, to enforce law and order and good health, and who by the prestige of that magic word hold all the wild savage forces of this vast continent in order and obedience.[11]

Having been introduced to the Sudan and the administrative routine of the government the young Probationers departed for their assigned stations.

> When I first went to the Sudan, to the Blue Nile Province, the Governor was [Sir] Arthur Huddleston, and I had a tremendous respect for him because he was a most kindly man but very hard-

> working, and he wanted his people to work hard too, and I always remembered the – well – very enthusiastic way he looked on his job, and this I think was infectious and we got it from our seniors that this was our life, and our job was to look after the Sudanese, you know, help them on their progress and their evolution. And one other gentleman who was a Deputy Governor [R. E. H. Baily], he told us that our job – and this was the first day we were in Khartoum – our job was really that we should be genial barons.[12]

Sometimes the new men worked under the supervision of an experienced District Commissioner; sometimes they were on their own. Given these circumstances many of the new officials found their Sudanese assistants to be essential and invaluable advisers on the ways and customs of their districts. These men interpreted the language, law and social structure of the Sudanese to the uninitiated Political Officer. Sandison wrote of his ma'mur in Kutum, Muhammad Effendi al-Hajj al-Amin, that while he was one step below Sandison in rank he was 'of course, infinitely above me in knowledge of people and experience'. He added.

> He was of a well-known Sudanese family, probably having a slave mother as he was very dark in colour. Educated at the Gordon College, he spoke excellent English. No one could have been more courteous or helpful to a newly-joined probationer. He had a great sense of humour, and a power of tactful instruction which never aroused resentment. I remember him with the greatest respect and affection.[13]

Once posted to their districts the British officials had a substantial array of duties, usually performed in isolated locations. A 1913 Civil Service brochure described the Inspector's responsibilities and his peripatetic life.

> An Inspector of a Province sits as a Magistrate to deal with criminal and civil cases; he has also to investigate complaints, to supervise the collection of revenue, and the manner in which the Police carry out their duties. He will be compelled to lead an active life, and much of his time will be spent in travelling on horse and camel back.[14]

In many ways the history of England is the history of the judicial process. Steeped in history, the members of the Political Service were

deeply conscious that their own political institutions had evolved from the seeking and dispensing of justice. The Mahdiya and its collapse before the forces of Kitchener had eroded the traditional authority of those whose responsibility it had been to settle civil and criminal disputes. In the first decades of the twentieth century the British officers sought to fill this vacuum not only to settle disputes, but to establish their own authority in the Sudan. They were the new rulers as much by their control of the judicial process as by force of arms. This process, however, could only be rational if the British officials had some understanding of, if not appreciation for, local law and custom. Given the differences of language and culture this was not always an easy task. In the early years most of the District Commissioner's time was devoted to long hours listening to intricate disputes usually involving crops, cattle and women and, when not listening, trying to write down the customary law for every tribesman. The diversity between the Northern and Southern Sudan was clearly delineated in their respective traditional systems of justice. In the North, Islamic law and structure prevailed, while in the South each tribe had its own customary law. The Sudan Government valiantly sought to promote standardised principles of justice while still taking into account individual characteristics and customs.

Soon after the establishment of the Condominium Government the British began to introduce the rule of law. The Sudan Penal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure were derived from the Indian Penal Code, 'a wholly admirable code', according to T. R. H. Owen, 'which gives full power to authority while in no way prejudicing the individual's chances of fair play and which is, above all, comprehensible by any person of normal intelligence and free from quibbles and obscurities'.[15]

The principal problem with the Sudan Penal Code was that it directly involved the British official in literally thousands of disputes which he was expected to adjudicate. Not only were cases frequently tried through an interpreter with all the hazards of translation, but the British officials were often ignorant of local custom and tribal law. If these obstacles to justice were not sufficient to make the most fair-minded judge shudder with uncertainty, the sheer number of the cases virtually immobilised the Political Officer by absorbing time which could have been put to other equally important administrative needs. K. D. D. Henderson reminisced about the trials and tribulations of justice in Wad Madani in those days.

> I was posted to Wad Medani on December 26th [1926] and the Gazira Scheme was just getting under way. You see the dam was

> opened in '25, I suppose, so the whole Gazira was the great sort of development area, and canals were being expanded in all directions and things were really moving. So that life there was very interesting, but of course the trouble about Medani was that you didn't get out and meet the people: you were always tied to your desk and it was in the old days of direct rule, when the D.C.'s tried every little tiddlywinking case. So I would sit there sometimes trying up to twenty summary trials a day which, later on, a bench of Magistrates simply flicked through in no time. You didn't have to record evidence in a summary trial. Of course, you got a remarkable insight into the seamy side of life. There wasn't a lady out of the red light quarter in Medani whom I didn't know personally because they were permanently in on the thing. There was a lady called Aisha El Hadendawai who had had twenty-four previous convictions I think before I ever got there at the age of nineteen and how many she had while I was there I don't know. . . . But life had mainly tended to be a bit perverse and it was only when you got to the East Bank [of the Blue Nile] that you got on the back of a camel and rode into a village and got to know people. In Medani your contacts were with the notables and one tended to move more with the sort of upper stratum of Sudanese life, and indeed in the Law Courts with the lower stratum, but the chaps you didn't see a great deal of were the ordinary shaykhs and people.[16]

To fulfil this need for knowledgeable magistrates Gordon College began to train Sudanese in both Islamic and customary law so that the vast number of court cases could be delegated to a growing cadre of informed judges.

> Ewen and Duncan . . . seemed to be permanently preoccupied with courts of law. At first I thought it was rather out of proportion. What about schools? What about medicine? What about economic progress? But I soon realized that in fact courts of law were at the heart of the whole problem. At least for the negroid sedentaries, a majority of the people of Darfur, our first and most important task was to establish the rule of law. For centuries the only government they had known as the absolute and unpredictable rule of the Sultan, usually exercised by his slaves. Our second task was to inculcate the idea of equality under the law. The poor man had the same rights as the rich and powerful. Both of these were quite revolutionary concepts, even to the best of chiefs. They were concepts which had to be accepted at large before there could be any progress.

> Perhaps our over-riding concern was for the public peace. Despite the augmentation of water supplies through deep boreholes and surface reservoirs, there was never enough water and grazing. Some tribes 'owned' water and land. Some did not. The owners were all too ready to defend their rights by force of arms. Men with hungry and thirsty animals were not slow to take what they needed by force. Our duty was to enforce the rule of law, and see that the public peace was not broken.
>
> Wells were often places of violence in this arid country. It was unusual to see a village hard by the wells. It was too dangerous a place to live. A few years later, I found a new village right on top of a well centre. The elder who was with me said:
>
> 'We moved down from the top of the 'goz' last year. . . . We don't have battles at the wells nowadays.'
>
> I asked him the name of the new village. 'Gussa injumat,' he said, 'The women's hair has a rest.'
>
> They no longer had to carry the heavy pots full of water up the long hill on their heads. An incidental benefit from the rule of law.[17]

After 1924 the Sudan Government began to develop local and tribal courts. These took much of the burden of civil litigation from the overworked District Commissioners, who could now turn to neglected administrative matters. District judges riding circuit relieved the civil case-load of the Political Officer still further. Nevertheless the District Commissioner was still responsible for criminal cases, as T. R. H. Owen explained.

> In some Province capitals and big cities there would be magistrates of the Legal Department, and a Judge of the High Court would travel on circuit and conduct a certain proportion of the Major Courts (i.e. a Court of three magistrates empowered to try the biggest cases and to pass any sentence authorised by law): but over the bulk of the country the exercise of the criminal law was in amateur hands.[18]

Owen pointed out that the judicial powers of the Political Officers were limited until they had passed examinations on Sudanese law.

> But knowledge of LAW with a capital L was not obligatory; and it was to the eternal credit of the Legal Department that, while by advice and criticism and comment they strove to keep amateurs on the right lines, and were quick to pounce upon anything which upset the interests of

> true justice, they scarcely ever interfered with an otherwise just judgment on purely procedural and technical grounds or allowed mere legalism to pervert equality.[19]

Officers who had not yet passed the law examination could try less serious crimes and impose sentences of up to six months in prison or a £E 25 fine, usually subject to confirmation by a superior.[20] This system was cumbersome because a new officer had to have most of his judgments reviewed, while a more senior official could deal with the same cases summarily. The volume of work was enormous. During his first year in the Sudan, for example, John Winder tried 1800 summary cases and 50 to 60 non-summary (requiring review) cases.[21] Gradually, however, the Native Courts assumed more of the burden.

> The weightiest item of a District Commissioner's legal work lay in presiding over Major Courts for the trial of the bigger crimes, especially murder. His powers as a magistrate sitting alone, which extended to two years' imprisonment, came to be less and less used as Native Courts advanced in numbers and competence, until towards the end they were nearly confined to the trial of such matters as the illicit possession of arms (which few native authorities will take seriously enough), traffic offences or others involving technical police work, and cases involving the police or officials themselves.[22]

There were major advantages to the implementation of the Native Courts system in addition to relieving the Political Officers judicial chores.

> Nothing achieved more in establishing a tradition of justice and law-abidingness than the steady growth, from the twenties, of the system of native courts. These, as has already been explained, administered not a code but local custom, tempered by the advice, supervision and occasional interference of Sudanese and British officials. There is nothing really anomalous about such a system working side by side with, though independently of, a system of Government courts and a Penal Code. For it is only be administering custom on a legal basis, modifying and improving it, and enforcing its judgments upon the people, that sound custom can crystallize into code, varying codes draw together, and so a body of law arise which is of wide application and meets with general acceptance. It means the growth of an indigenous code instead of the imposition of a foreign

one, and though as civilization advances the two may ultimately merge the process has been both educative and healthy.

When native courts were started in the twenties many doubts were expressed of the advisability of granting criminal powers to authorities who were not only untrained in law but in a great many cases illiterate. There were fears of bribery and corruption. There were misgivings that barbarous practices might spring up and flourish surreptitiously under the cloak of the law.

These fears were, with very few exceptions, belied. The experience was, in fact, a humbling one, which showed that impartiality is not the perquisite of one race and our own methods are not the only ones for arriving at truth in fact or equity in decision.[23]

The judicial structure varied from district to district. In the Hadendowa District the Sharia cases were heard by each tribe, not by the Sharia Courts. These were primarily cases of divorce and inheritance. In other types of civil cases the *nazir* acted as a distributing agent. The District Commissioner referred cases to the *nazir*, and individual Sudanese brought their own disputes to him. The *nazir*, in turn, sent these cases to *ad hoc* boards of *omdas* and *qadis* and later reviewed their decisions, approving some, rejecting others and referring some to the District Commissioner.[24] G. H. Barter complained that local *shaykhs* were too reluctant to use their judicial powers, preferring to wait for the tribal meetings where cases could be heard by a court.[25]

Sandison, however, reported that the *qadi* in Kutum preferred to administer his own justice.

> 'Mawlana' ('Our Ruler') the qadi . . . dispensed Islamic personal law in his own Sharia Court . . . he was educated, intelligent, tolerant. He regarded us officially as infidels, or at least heretics. But he was a realist. This infidel government gave him complete freedom to be the head of the local Muslim community, to administer Islamic law, and to enjoy a very reasonable living. He had no desire to lead or even to foment a Holy War.[26]

In Kutum the lower level Sudanese officials or office employees were frequently unofficial legal advisers.

> the office messenger, who sat at the door . . . heard all the complaints before they were borne inside to us. Office messengers were sometimes powers behind the throne. Poor man's lawyers, they advised pet-

> itioners on the conduct of their cases, – and District Commissioners on the credibility of petitioners. One had both to be aware of, and be thankful for office messengers. One had to see that, if they were not entirely incorrupt, they were at least not extortionate.[27]

The organisation of the courts in the South was less structured than in the North. The local British official conducted the proceedings and rendered judgments. Usually, he was also the one who ensured that judgments were carried out. Sandison described the casual recording of the substance of cases and the ensuing testimony. Some tribes were literate and maintained written records, but they were few.

> The courts of the small tribal sections had no written records of cases. The almost 'total recall' memory of the people was sufficient. If someone were asked what had happened, he would stiffen up, his eyes would glaze, and out it would all come, almost word for word. I noticed, though, that this did not happen when they were giving evidence before me. Then it was not a question of memory, but self-interest.
>
> In the more important local courts Azande clerks had been appointed. They could write their own language in Latin characters. I had to get them to read the record aloud, so that my interpreter could translate it to me.[28]

Owen found that judicial procedures and record-keeping of these courts 'improved greatly' as education and literacy spread among ruling families. The courts in the North kept records in Arabic while those in the South usually used English. No matter which language was used, 'to study the records of a court was to gain a deep insight into the customs, tendencies, failings, and values of the community concerned and to place a finger on the pulse of public conduct and social principle'.[29] Clearly the courts became a central focus of community activity, feelings and tradition.

> Frequently, in both Government and Native Courts, . . . the Court had to facilitate, and sometimes (with a simple accused) virtually conduct the defence as well as the prosecution. This was not difficult, and the very fact that the accused was not represented by counsel made the court doubly considerate of his interests.[30]

Even in the Major Courts, in which important criminal cases were

tried, the structure and procedures varied significantly from European models. Custom and common sense helped to shape the adaptation of the law to Sudanese needs. In the Major Courts, for example, the President was assisted by two Sudanese members, usually *shaykhs* or chiefs, 'whose penetrating examination, shrewd perception of points which might have escaped a European, and level-headed judgment were of the highest value'.[31] Owen observed that the experience of serving with such men eventually enabled the Political Officer to develop a 'nose' for the validity of evidence and testimony.

It was not uncommon for the Sudanese members of the court to know the families and family history of the men involved in the court proceedings. While this might cause concern in a British court Owen found that it usually 'made for common sense and equity'.[32]

> A court was trying a rather woolly case of alleged animal theft in which the complainant claimed one direct eye-witness called Ali. Alis being as common as Johns the President asked the complainant which Ali – was it the elderly Ali who lived at Um Roka? Yes. Was it the Ali who had a scar on his left cheek? Yes. Was he *sure* that it was *that* Ali – the one who possessed the large white donkey and whose son had married the niece of the omda of Shigeig? Yes, it was. There was a slight pause and then the President gave a grunt. 'He is blind. He has seen nothing for seven years. Next case.'[33]

There were cases in which custom clashed with the concept of justice held by 'civilised societies'. Under these circumstances the punishment was often tempered. Owen discussed the case of a Beja man who had killed his sister because she was pregnant by an unknown lover. Since she refused to name the man her brother could not avenge the insult to his sister's honour by killing her lover. Consequently, he was 'bound by his tradition to take her life, for the primitive moral code is often puritan and sometimes mercilessly mosaic'. Although the Beja man was condemned to death, his sentence was commuted to ten years on the recommendation of the Sudanese members of the court.[34] Custom clearly influenced the application of the law.

Owen thought that the dual court system served the Sudan very well and was instrumental in developing an able native judicial mechanism and judiciary. The greatest weakness was in the execution of judgments, which frequently were recorded, but left to themselves to be carried out. This resulted in numerous petitions to the District Commissioner by the complainant seeking redress. In the administration of justice, however,

the courts performed admirably. Instances of injustice and corruption were rare.[35] The merger of law and custom gradually led to a judicial system uniquely suited to the diversity of the Sudan and to the development of Sudanese judges who interpreted and administered the law fairly and appropriately in their own jurisdictions.

Despite these heavy judicial responsibilities British administrators found there were times when they had little to do. At Meridi in the Southern Sudan, near the Congo, Paul Sandison was told by the District Commissioner he replaced.

> Everything closes down in the rains. . . . Everyone is cultivating. They are too busy to kill each other. You can't mend the roads or resthouses until autumn. If you take the people off the land for any reason, they won't have enough to eat next year.[36]

Later in his career Sandison was sent to Kutum and Zalingei, in Darfur. His description of one long period at Zalingei illustrates the activities and feelings inspired by a lonely post.

> For the first month or two after Edmund [Edmond Dalton Montague Batty] left, there was no time to feel lonely. The office occupied from nine until two every day, a few cases to try, routine inspections of police weapons, ponies and saddlery, and the cash and accounts to check. Before breakfast every day I rode or walked round the station, seeing that prison working-parties were repairing roads, burning rubbish, planting trees, or merely carrying water in 10-gallon tanks slung on a pole between two men – all the routine maintenance jobs. Once or twice a week I would ride across the Aribo to Hamidiya, the Emir's headquarters, and discuss local affairs with him. This took most of the morning as it involved both green tea and coffee. In return he sent visiting Shartais to call on me. I also went round the hospital at least once a week, chatting with Mohammed Kheir, the 'Assistant Doctor', who was in charge, and the patients. . . .
>
> Almost imperceptibly, however, I began to feel lonely. As the rains got heavier, and everyone was busy with their crops, all other activities slowed down, or stopped. There was no road maintenance to be done. Tax gathering stopped. Even homicides lessened. During the murder season, when the crops had been safely gathered in, and the merissa [beer] flowed, the Resident's office was very busy. The rains were almost a closed season for killings. I began to feel slightly claustrophobic. The mountains leaned in on me. The haraz forests

> were gloomy and monotonous. There were days and days of dull cloudy weather. It was too dark to see in the house, and the room on the verandah was oppressive. Even the joys of the weekly edition of 'The Times', a month and a half out of date began to pall.[37]

To relieve the boredom, assuage his curiosity and keep his sanity Sandison began to compile a Fur glossary and grammar. Every afternoon he laboured with an Arabic-speaking Furawi and shortly before dark he would walk up into the hills, or down into the wadi collecting botanical specimens which he carefully labelled. The rest of the day became rigid routine, so desperately important in maintaining equilibrium.

> I explored the virtues of routine. If the whole day was mapped out, one went from one task or occupation to another almost automatically. Ride before breakfast; office 9 until 2; an hour's sleep after lunch; walk and try to shoot a guineafowl for the pot; inspect the government vegetable garden; two whiskies before dinner; read or gramophone music; to bed at 10:30. Once a fortnight the mail arrived – it had been once a week until the Great Depression hit the world.[38]

Duties varied from station to station, depending on the local political structure, economy, culture and climate. Writing in 1911, Chunky Willis described his daily activities in Kordofan. On 23 August he spent the day travelling by horseback in the rain, soaked through. Most of the next morning was dedicated to reviewing accounts, then touring a new school. In the afternoon he hunted before enjoying an evening of talk with the District Commissioner.[39] Another day, Willis wrote letters, inspected the police, prison, hospital and a potential site for a waterwell which appeared to him to be in the wrong place. While examining the 'Club' books he found an error of thirteen bottles of beer and vowed to cancel the 'Club's' licence if the error could not be rectified or explained.[40]

Willis's duties one October day included reviewing the Mudir's court and wading through office work from 9 a.m. to 2.45 p.m. and again from 3.30 p.m. to 5.45 p.m., after which he 'was worn to a shred'. Although he had planned to go on tour despite the persistent rain, his sick camel prevented him. His other worries for the day included the Zung, who were causing trouble again, and a prevalent rumour that the government planned to take the district's school-children to Egypt to become soldiers.[41]

While in the South, at Mongalla and Meridi, Sandison was responsible for such diverse duties as maintaining the Christian cemetery, rounding up slave-raiders and ivory-hunters, killing marauding crocodiles and lions, repairing roads and eradicating disease. At Mongalla:

> Before breakfast, one walked around the station, seeing that the working parties of prisoners were cutting the grass, weeding the roads, clipping the neat croton hedges, and not idling their time away in the shade of a tree.[42]

After breakfast he proceeded with such major administrative tasks as the eradication of trypanosomiasis to halt sleeping sickness, no small job in a province of 70 000 square miles.

> It had been necessary to move the whole population of the infected areas, many thousands of people, away from running streams, the favourite haunt of the tse-tse fly which carried the disease. The people were allotted areas on which to build their houses, and in which they had to remain. Wherever a road crossed a stream all shrubs and tall grass growing within a radius of fifty metres of the crossing had to be kept short – no easy matter in a climate where one species of grass, *Imperata cylindrica*, could grow nine inches in one night. Everyone had to be checked for infection twice a year, and the sick had to be isolated and treated. It was a formidable undertaking, but finally it eliminated the disease.[43]

Many times the duties an official performed in one assignment were unrelated to those of future posts. John Winder first went to Wadi Halfa, where he supervised road construction. Then he was moved to Port Sudan, a post carrying very different responsibilities. Fortunately for Winder his immediate subordinate was a very knowledgeable Sudanese, who explained the workings of the Port to him. In addition to the usual judicial work Winder acquired the duties of coroner, building inspector and overseer of refuse collection, rat control, butcher shops and taxation.

A major facet of the Port administration was the supervision of pilgrims travelling to Mecca. Most pilgrims embarked from Suakin, and Winder found himself responsible for their well-being. Because disease was such a critical problem the Sudan Government operated quarantine camps for both departing and returning pilgrims. It ensured that each pilgrim had a passport and adequate money for a round-trip steamer

ticket. Winder was responsible for supplying enough ships and trains to carry all the pilgrims.[44] Finally, there was always the need to intercept potential slave traders who used the pilgrimage and its incumbent turmoil to slip captives to Mecca.[45]

South-west of Port Sudan, on the Nile, lies Shendi, another post occupied by Sudan Political Officers. Robin Baily described the conditions and his responsibilities there from 1911 to 1915.

> There were many more children than adults. The former Sheiks had been murdered or had fled, and those who returned had lost all their authority. There was only one person whom these people would trust, their British Commissioner, now me. It was a station of some 150 miles of Nile and about 80 miles of inland prairie. On the river banks and in the prairie was privately owned land which the owners held sacred. Land quarrels, sometimes bloody, were frequent. One was a Bow Street Magistrate and a Civil Judge. Every case was brought before me, from murders down to a hen claimed by two old women. I covered these distances partly by camel and partly by a boat with no other means of propulsion than its lateen sail. It was infested with insects and also with rats. As I lay panting on the roof at night I would see one or two of these sitting on my tummy cleaning their whiskers. Assessing the cultivation taxes was part of my job. One had no time for measurement, one used ones eye to estimate acreage and yield. There was a tax of a few pence on each date tree. There were about a hundred thousand date trees and their owners trusted no one but an Englishman to count them.[46]

Travel was a never-ending facet of life for the British officials in the Sudan. During the early part of the twentieth century communication was very slow, but had the advantage of bringing the District Commissioner into closer and more leisurely contact with the people of his district. In Kordofan and Darfur village *shaykhs* usually accompanied the British official on part of his tour. There was time to discuss problems, hopes and fears, to exchange news and to build confidence, trust and co-operation.[47]

The drawbacks of travel were many for those who endured them. Willis wrote of his first trip to Kordofan in 1906.

> Fortunately there was a young Irish Bimbashi going too; he at least more or less knew the way and had experience of camel travel. Without his kindly aid I think we might have had tougher experiences

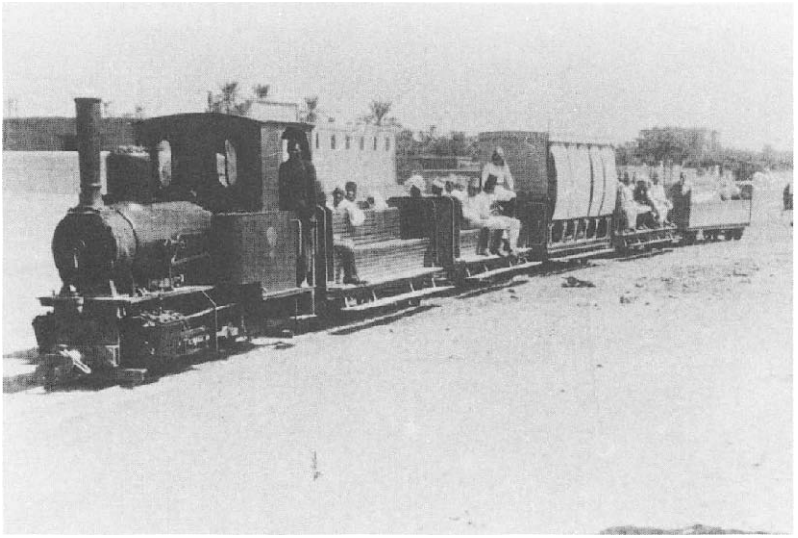
than we did. People try to be romantic about the camel, but they are wrong. He may know the 100th name of God, but otherwise he is an unkindly creature, ready to kick, bite or belch filthy matter over his would-be benefactor. A walking camel is sheer purgatory to ride. The muscles of back and neck after an hour or two become one solid ache, and to do the normal thirty odd miles or so a day, it means ten hours of it at least. Then if you are travelling East or West, half the time the sun is in your face, scorching your lips and skin and dazzling the eyes, or alternatively heating up the backbone till you feel it is just fit for marrow bones. Of course, in time you learn to travel by night – and work by day, and sleep where you can.

However, the journey from Dueim to El Obeid took 4 or 5 days according to the transport and it was mostly through a grass called 'Heskenit' which has a little crown of thorns round the seed, and it grows about two foot high, and if you walk through it you spend hours removing the thorns from your self and your clothing. The wind blows the thorns into your clothes at night, and it is a major pest and it covers hundreds of miles of Africa.

As it was January, the cold north wind was blowing. Either you did not grease your lips, and your lips chapped from the cold, or you did grease and your lips fried from the sun and split – which was worse? We reached the last rest-house . . . and indeed we rested in it. But no self-respecting farmer would put his cow into it. A rest-house consisted of four or sometimes three walls, supported at the corners by wooden poles, the walls and roof of maize or 'dura' stalks – and that was all. The sanitary arrangements were the wide, wide world – there was plenty of that, modified by 'heskenit' and water you carried with you.

Once in El Obeid, the housing was crude. My house consisted of a yard in which one corner contained the kitchen, the other a thunder box with an outside connection so that the bucket could be removed from outside. The accommodation was a bedroom and a sitting room, with a stairway outside leading to the roof on which one slept. The walls were about 18 inches of mud brick fortified by a mixture of dung, blood and soil, plastered on with care, and if done with skill a very fair protection against the rains. The application was annual and smelly, but worth while.[48]

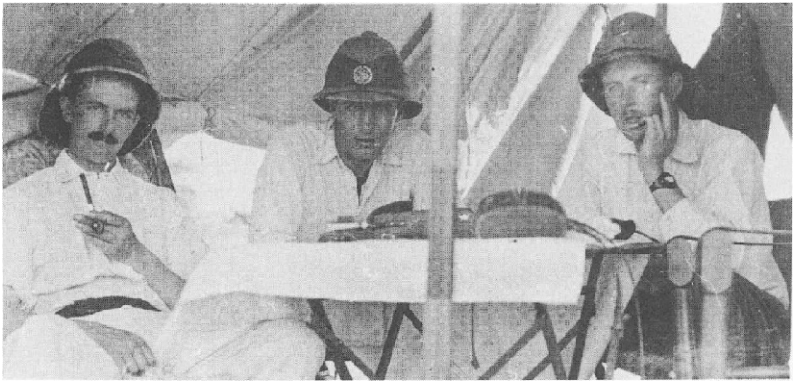
The introduction of Model T Fords, ferries and roads eased travel in the late 1920s, but diminished the opportunities for casual talk with the Sudanese. Upon returning to the Sudan for a visit following the War,



1a Tram in Khartoum, *c.* 1905

1b The Governor-General's car, *c.* 1907 – the only motor-car in the Sudan at that time

2a Room in H. A. MacMichael's house, Khartoum, *c*. 1905

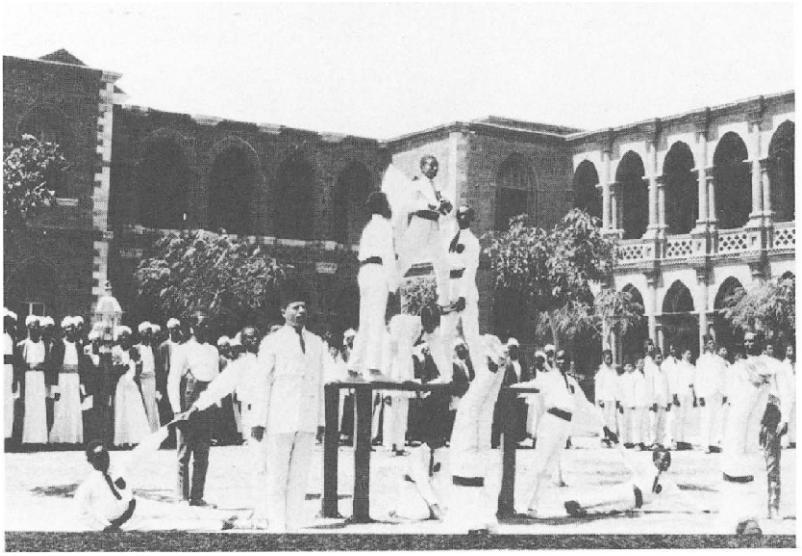


2b H. A. MacMichael, J. A. Gillan and Pembroke, Um Gozein, 1910

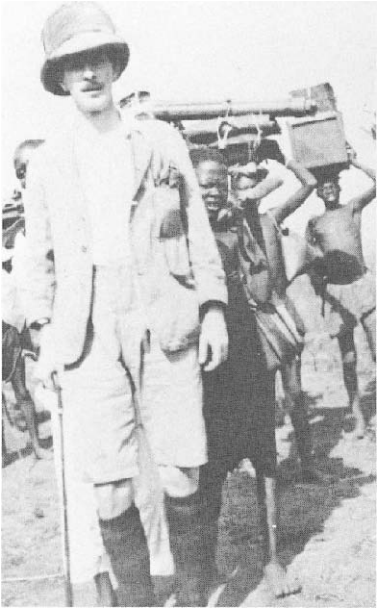
3a Interior of the Governor's house, Malakal, Upper Nile Province, 1935

3b Sir Reginald Wingate and Rudolf von Slatin at Balmoral, 1910

4a Ushur assessment, near Omdurman, 1909



4b Gordon College, *c*. 1910

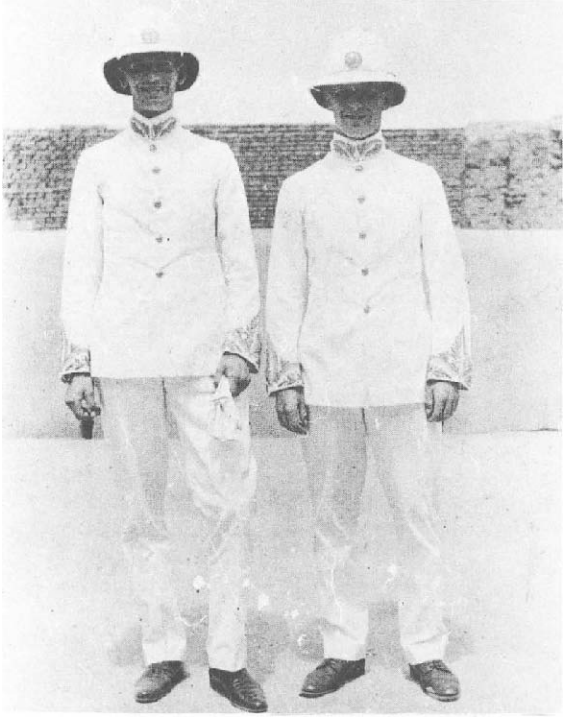


5a Major P. M. Larken on Trek, 1911–16

5b Fancy dress party at El Obeid, Christmas 1921

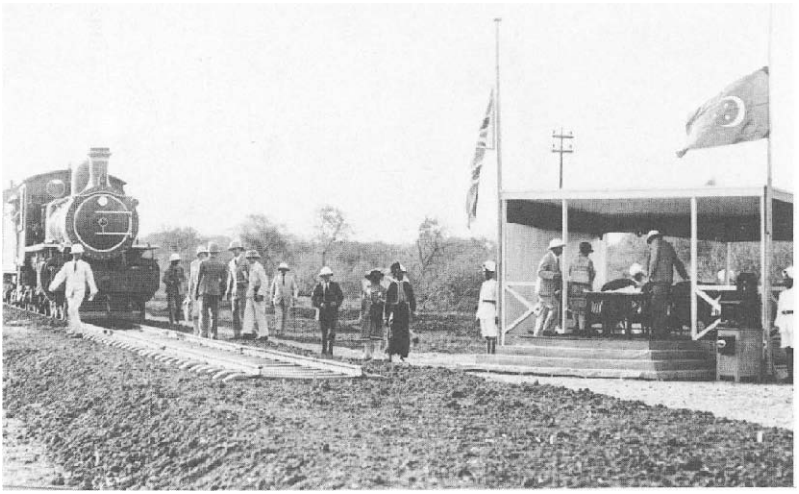
5c Farewell to the Governor, Kordofan, 1922

6a *Lady Baker* hospital steamer in Bahr el Ghazal province, *c*. 1926



6b Raw recruits – C. G. Dupuis and Hon. A. M. Asquith, Khartoum, 1909

7a Training of Nuba Police – these men are poor shots at a target but seldom miss a running man. In the centre is John Kenrick, District Commissioner of Rashad



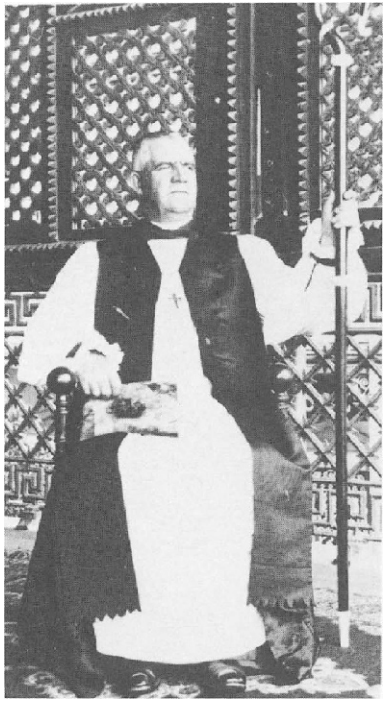
7b Official opening of Kassala–Gedaref–Senar Railway, *c.* 1929

8a Swarm of locusts, Sudan

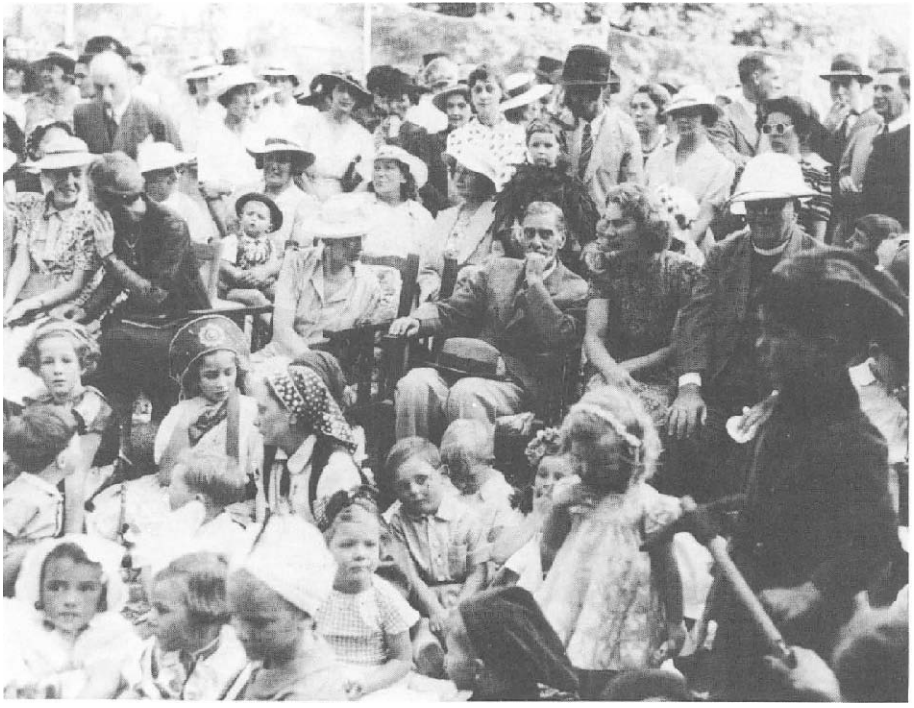
8b Guiding, 1934. Mrs J. A. Gillan with the Omdurman Girl Guide Company

9a Steamers *Beatrice* and *Claud* at Jokan, 1935

9b King's day garden party at the Palace, Khartoum, 17 January 1935



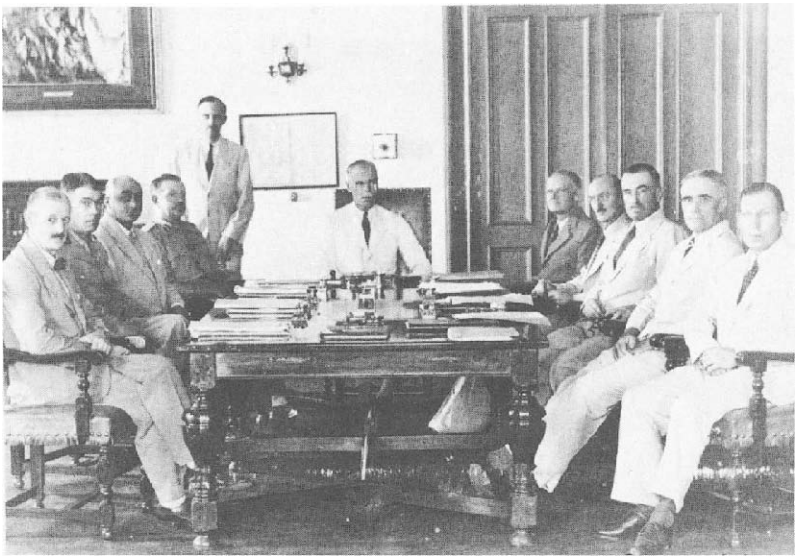
10a Bishop Llewelyn Gwynne, in full robes



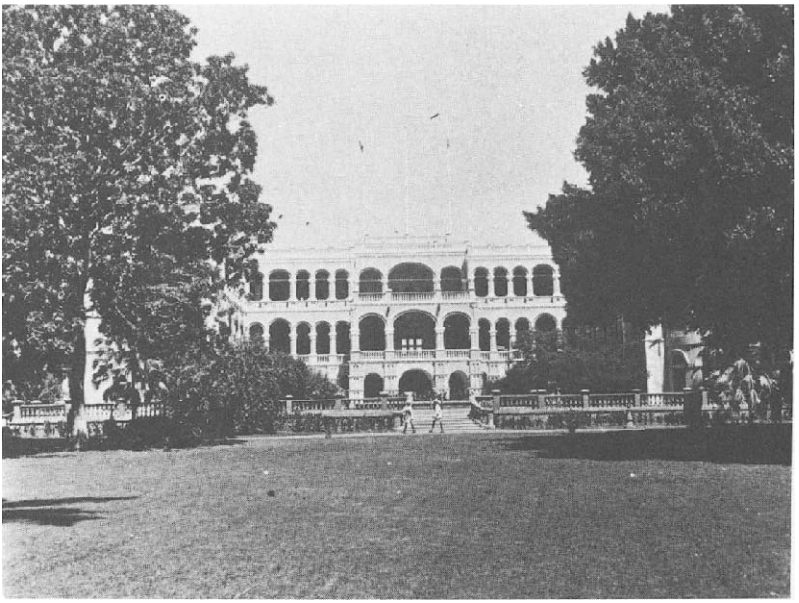
10b One of Bishop Gwynne's children's parties, *c.* 1935. The Governor-General, Sir Stewart Symes, and Bishop Gwynne are centre-right

11a Midwifery Training School, Omdurman, 1937. The Inspectress (Miss M. E. Wolff), the Matron (Miss G. L. Wolff), Staff Midwives, Cook, Kissa-maker, 'Handy-Andy'

11b J. Winder listening to Nuer on Zeraf Island, Upper Nile Province, *c.* 1940



12a 500th meeting of the Governor-General in Council, *c*. 1942. L to R: J. D. Tothill, E. D. Pridie, D. Newbold, B. O. Hutchinson, K. D. D. Henderson, Secretary (standing), Sir H. Huddleston, T. P. Creed, F. Rugman, R. V. H. Roseveare



12b The Governor's Palace at Khartoum – the palace is built on the spot where General Gordon met his death

Slatin was visibly upset by the introduction of the automobile and the distance it produced between the rulers and the ruled. Improved communications meant that District Commissioners, particularly in the North, made fewer major decisions themselves. More directives were issued by the central government in Khartoum. In the South, however, the 'Bog Barons' were more isolated and continued to exercise considerable power.[49]

When Sandison was transferred to Darfur he inherited seven baggage camels, one trotting camel and two horses. All these animals were necessary, he learned, 'to take me to the scene of any trouble anywhere'. Trouble could be an outbreak of disease, tribal battles or disputes over grazing or water.

> The problem was that anywhere except in the desert you would have to pay grazing and water dues, generally in kind, to the lords of that part of the land. If you went to the wrong part of the desert, you might pay with your life, or the loss of your camels. All this made a lot of work for us. There never seemed to be enough water and grazing to go round. Herds built up over the years until bad rains or disease decimated them, – and then started to build up once again.[50]

Sandison's district encompassed 32 000 square miles, of which 16 000 square miles were inhabited. In 1927 the District Commissioner and his assistant each travelled 3000 miles, 150 days on camelback, at the rate of 20 miles per day.[51]

Disease control was a principal impetus to the incessant travel. In the South sleeping sickness required constant vigilance and drastic prophylactic measures. Relapsing fever was a major problem in the North:

> relapsing fever . . . is a louse-borne disease, generally fatal if untreated. It responds almost miraculously to a single intravenous injection of an arsenical compound called '606', or, if you prefer tongue-twisters, Norarsenobillon. The infection was brought from West Africa by the hordes of pilgrims who go to Mecca through the Sudan. It caused many thousands of deaths in Darfur before it was controlled, or died down. Owing to the quickness and simplicity of the treatment it was an ideal epidemic for laymen to handle, – no hospitalization, no nursing, just one jab.
>
> The snag was the delousing of everyone else in the area, to hinder the spread of the infection. Everyone had to take a hot shower. Everyone's clothes had to be boiled. Everyone wore a bunch of

> amulets, magical writings sewn up in little red leather cases, on their left arm or round their necks. They had paid what were in their eyes large sums for these. Boiled amulets tended to come apart, and were certainly illegible. As practically no one could read, and as the writing was gibberish anyway, this was not as important as the coming apart. Doubts were also expressed as to whether boiling so many charms together might not induce a cross-fertilization of magic. Would an amulet against childlessness clash with a love charm?
>
> When you appreciate that there was no question of getting people to leave their homes and animals for delousing; that there was no means of heating water except in earthenware pots over wood fires; that Muslim women strenuously object to stripping in public; that the only transport was camels – you will begin to see that there were difficulties.[52]

Smallpox was another killer that the Sudan Government was determined to eradicate.

> The theory was simple. By the time the disease was reported from a place, the infection would already have been carried to other villages by the normal movement of people. It was therefore essential to find out where people had gone for some days before the beginning of the outbreak, and visit and vaccinate all the people in those villages. This was the most important part of the whole procedure. You can imagine infection as an invisible wave radiating outwards from places where the disease was active. We had to try and halt that wave.[53]

Curbing the spread of disease was no simple task. Villagers, used to the Mahdist raids of the recent past, feared the government. Consequently, it was necessary to surround a village suspected of having a smallpox victim during the night and move in quickly before anyone left in the morning. The infected individuals were located and treated. Before the entire village could be vaccinated the procedure had to be demonstrated on one of the government officials, usually Sandison, who received dozens of 'vaccinations'. Once the village was fully protected, the officials continued on to other villages in recent contact with the infected village.

> So we went on, and on, and on. Some days we had tiny villages, little groups of huts. Two policemen were enough for these, one to watch and one to vaccinate. Some days we had big villages which

needed the whole party. For me it was very interesting, as one learnt so much about everyday Fur life. For the rest of us it became very boring. No one worried about contracting the disease. The Muslims believed that Allah would not betray them while they were doing good to the Faithful. I did not worry because it was a minimal risk, and as a matter of routine all our vaccinations had to be kept up to date.

This mass vaccination had to be kept up for eighteen months, before we got the better of the epidemic. It had an enormous effect on the relations between government and people. Although thousands of people died, the rest came to realize that those who had been vaccinated tended not to. The general public began to bring their friends to government dispensaries, and we could expand the health service. It was no longer necessary for District Commissioners to carry medical panniers on trek and act as amateur untrained doctors.[54]

It was not always so easy to win the confidence of the people. In some cases the results were disastrous. Willis described the government's attempt in 1928 to treat a cattle disease among the Shilluk in the South.

There was an outbreak of cattle disease and the appropriate serum was despatched to Malakal. As an example the serum was tried out on the Government herd and that of the Ret of the Shilluk (the Ret is the living embodiment of the tribal spirit and he is therefore the spiritual leader of the tribe – not king). As a result both herds were exterminated and the hope of introducing modern methods of prophylactics was indefinitely postponed. It was a great satisfaction to hear, years later, that a permanent veterinary officer had been posted to the province and he had won the confidence of the people to such a degree that he could issue orders for cattle to stand by on specified dates at watering places and they all turned up punctually and confidently.[55]

As in many other parts of the world where disease has been a significant factor in population control, the government's success at reducing the incidence and severity of disease spurred rapid population growth. Hunger, always a problem in the South, became an important concern for the government.

The real problem of the south is and will be food. During my time, practically every tribe went hungry for a month or two every year

> because the soil is so difficult that they cannot grow enough grain to maintain life.[56]

Willis advocated implementing a large grain-growing scheme, but that would have required a massive change in the cultural patterns of the Nilotic people of the South and, consequently, was not pursued.

Throughout the Condominium years sporadic attempts were made to grow cash crops. The efforts required vigilance on the part of the Political Officers because the concept was unpopular among the Sudanese.

> Some of these thoughts were vaguely in my mind as I got ready for my first administrative 'trek'. A British agricultural inspector was coming over from Yambio to 'go with me'. This was really a polite way of saying 'to hold my hand', and I was very grateful. Our joint task was to see that the required acres of cotton had been sown, and had been weeded after the plants had emerged. We would report defaulters to the local chief's court for action – generally the imposition of some 'fatigue' work for public purposes – extra road-mending, or grass cutting for sleeping sickness control.[57]

Because the Sudan Government was expected to be self-supporting, tax collection was a very important, if frustrating, responsibility of the British officials. The Hadendowa District Annual Report for 1931 listed specific instructions for the District Commissioner on tax collection, another unpopular activity. The Report suggested that Sudanese leaders were unlikely to be efficient tax collectors and should be supervised in every detail. The task was 'an expert business' that could only be learned by trial and error and disappointment.[58] T. R. H. Owen reported the difficulties of tax collection when undertaken by reluctant native authorities. The collector might have to collect £E 5 of produce from one part of his district and £E 2 from another, which could be 100 miles away. Different areas yielded different types of in-kind tax revenues, and created the opportunity for complaints about unfair and unequal tax burdens.[59] The District Commissioner needed to ensure that tax collectors did not take bribes and that they issued fair assessments.

At Port Sudan the District Commissioner was responsible for taxing the profits of traders. Since small traders seldom kept regular accounts, there was a large margin for error in estimating profits. The District Commissioner was aided in his duties by a board of local traders, all of whom knew a great deal about every other trader's business. In addition,

no trader wanted to seem less successful than his colleagues. The combination of rivalry and a broad information network was instrumental in helping the District Commissioner of Port Sudan collect reasonable taxes.[60]

In the Northern and Western Sudan tribal meetings provided the District Commissioner with an opportunity to discuss taxation as well as other issues and to hear cases. The tribes could present their concerns to the D.C., elect leaders, discuss intertribal conflicts, and enjoy contests and festivities. Sandison always went to the meeting with a list of items to be discussed, notably tax arrears.[61] Owen commented that territorial meetings were attractive to the District Commissioner in inverse proportion to the amount of work required. If the tribal leaders had been functioning effectively there was little work for the Political Officer to do.[62]

The press of routine tasks for many officials was such that there was often little time for secondary responsibilities or special activities. In his 1931 Annual Report, G. M. Barter, the District Commissioner of the Hadendowa District lamented that 'I fear that I get less opportunity of supervising Gebeit School than I could wish . . . if I had time, I should like to start a troop of scouts at these schools.'[63] In addition to the constant routine of tax collection, disease and pest (locust) control, record-keeping and reporting, judicial work and maintenance, there were such duties as surveying, supervising well upkeep and periodic town or district inspections.

The District Commissioners felt a great need to learn the customs and needs of the people of their districts. They struggled to learn Arabic or the local language and to understand the traditional laws and culture. Frequently they resisted government schemes that would disrupt customary patterns of life. Willis, for example, urged the government not to divert the Nile to fill dams at Jabal Aulia (Jabal al-Awliya') and Aswan because that would disrupt the annual Nile flood in Nuerland. 'This would mean that the system of grazing by which the natives burnt down the tall grass and let the young grass come up to feed the cattle might no longer work, and the very life and spirit of the tribe was endangered.'[64]

Religious leaders were central to the social structure of people in both North and South. British officials often found it valuable to work with Moslem holy men and tribal 'medicine men', as these individuals generally elicited great respect, particularly in times of crisis. In some cases, however, the District Commissioner would arbitrarily remove or imprison a troublesome religious leader.[65] At times, kujurs or medicine

men required government protection. On one of his tours Robin Baily found a girl who had been badly beaten because she was a witch. To solve the problem of the villagers' enduring hostility, 'we founded in an out of the way spot a new village – for witches and medicine men only'.[66] His solution to a persistent problem clearly involved a deep understanding of village beliefs and politics. When the Sudan Government decided to eliminate female circumcision, Willis persuaded them to work through the Board of Ulema rather than promulgating unilateral laws which would be resented greatly.[67]

British attitudes toward the Sudanese ranged from benevolence to contempt. Some officers developed love and a deep respect for the people of the Sudan; others considered them far beneath the British in culture and intelligence. Of these latter, Richard Hill observed.

> The Sudanese see in us something comical; we see in them something that preserves us from pompous solemnity. That is not a bad base for an understanding. The Englishman who takes himself seriously in this country quickly gets god-like & stuffy and obtuse; his services are an embarrassment to his government and, worse, his Sudanese colleagues cease to laugh at him; he merely bores them.[68]

T. R. H. Owen expressed a deep devotion to the Sudanese, particularly the Hadendowa, in his writing. 'Of the several motives which have impelled me to write I think the main one is love – love of the country and its peoples.'[69] While some British writers scorned the Hadendowa and other nomadic peoples as uncultured savages, Owen believed that 'only a virile and adaptable people could have achieved [independence], a people whom it was a privilage to serve'.[70]

Owen's comments illustrate an underlying dichotomy in the approach of British personnel to service in the Sudan. Many saw the Political Service as an opportunity to serve mankind; others believed themselves to be primarily bearers of a higher civilisation to a subservient, savage mass of humanity. Even Owen described the Hadendowa in ethnocentric terms, despite his fondness for them. 'One was safer,' he wrote, 'among barbarous, independent, lovable primitives than is a bank clerk ... in an American or English city.'[71] Owen's almost light-hearted recounting of the accidental death of a Beja man would indicate an undervaluing of the life of an African. The man was struck on the head by a palm nut which, 'despite ... the thickness of the Beja skull, stretched him dead'.[72] Owen further believed that Africans lacked a sense of organisation, concentration and motivation.

Undoubtedly most Europeans attempting to govern Africans and guide them into some pattern of European civilisation experienced considerable frustration. Most believed that the superiority of their ways would be clearly evident to the Africans. When it was not, they could only ascribe the Africans' lack of interest in European civilisation to stupidity or barbarism. The acceptance of European ideas by an African tribe, on the other hand, was cause for paternalistic pride.

> And yet, after all these centuries of vilification, their administrators have found them a fascinating if exasperating task, they have shown a dawning adaptability to civilization greater than their reputation would warrant, and without having any illusions I can testify to their qualities and to having had more good friends among them than in almost any part of the Sudan.[73]

Bishop Gwynne exemplified the paternalistic, self-righteous attitude of many British in the Sudan. He referred to the Sudanese as the 'child races', so naturally, the Europeans who worked with them were self-sacrificing and inspiring.[74]

> I have spent nearly half a century in Africa and [have] witnessed, through a splendid administration run for the most part by British in the Sudan and by the sacrificial lives and work of missionaries of different Churches and denominations, the development spiritually morally and physically of the African which is well on the way to make him an equal partner in the development of their race and country.[75]

Gwynne's feelings are more typical of missionaries and travellers in the Sudan than of British Political Officers. Most of the writings of members of the Political Service reflect a commitment to duty and to the idea that they held power as a trust for the Sudanese, rather than a condescending superiority and aura of personal sacrifice. The discharge of this trust required the very best men and the very best in them. Upon sailing away on the *M. V. Shropshire* into retirement in October 1932, Robin Baily reminded his friend, Sir Harold MacMichael, of this fundamental truism of British rule in the Sudan.

> I am one of those 'simpleminds' (& from memories of past conversations so I think are you) who believe that the finest pieces of work of the Almighty are the first rate Englishmen and Englishwomen; that are in the position of a dominant race, should try to

> display only our best to the natives; that, if we make this our standard all classes, not only the Sheikhs, will continue to respond to our lead. But that, if we, out of weakness, out of a desire to avoid hurting people's feelings, bolster up rottenness, we shall lose our position until finally your office with its English clerks & perfect files, will have nothing left to do but to record concisely & correctly under the appropriate headings (copies to all Governors & Heads of Departments) the end of that goodwill of the ruled to the rulers.[76]

Richard Hill took his role as a public servant of the Sudanese people seriously. He clearly liked and respected them and worked for the improvement of Sudan Railways staff relations. He enjoyed knowing the people as his friends. 'It is pleasant to meet so many Egyptians for once on terms of perfect equality, such hospitable people they are,'[77] he wrote in his diary. Hill had little patience for his countrymen who adopted an arrogant or self-serving posture.

> Two things strike me forcibly about the British personnel in the Sudan. One is the way in which some fall into the ways of intrigue and sharp practice common to the native people. The second is the stupid, pig-headed manner affected by some of the junior British officials to the natives.[78]

He did feel, however, that 'British culture has more to offer than Mahdist culture'.[79] Those Sudanese who suffered the pillaging of the Khalifa's troops no doubt would have agreed that the extension of law and peace under the British was preferable to the predatory inclinations of the Mahdists. Hill's comment specifically states 'Mahdist', not 'Arab', culture; in general he expressed great respect for the Arab customs, values and history.

Robin Baily also reflected on the dignity of the Sudanese. In a letter to a Political Officer he wrote.

> You appear to me to realise that it is right to treat them with general courtesy, not merely because it is politic so to treat them, but, and this is vastly more important, because the nomad, especially the Hadendoa of breeding, is a gentleman and desires to be regarded as such by us who are trustees of his Destiny.[80]

An unknown British writer, possibly a soldier, who accompanied the Governor-General and Sirdar, Sir Lee Stack, on an inspection tour in 1921, expressed a high degree of contempt for the Sudanese.

> An old woman whose son was imprisoned for theft came up on to the grandstand, threw herself at Lady Stack's feet and clasped her round the legs imploring a pardon for her son. Only with the greatest difficulty could they get rid of her. The performance ended with prizegiving and a liberal distribution of cake, sardine sandwiches, tea and beer!
>
> The party then went on with H.E. [His Excellency, the Governor-General] to inspect the Civil Hospital and School when the boys gave an excellent display of physical training, and club swinging, and also were put through their paces in a class-room. We all returned to the 'GEDID' about 12:30 p.m., and whilst casting off, threw half-millieme pieces amongst the huge crowd that had assembled to bid farewell.[81]

Later, he added: 'I understand that they pay their taxes regularly and so perhaps one cannot expect more from wild savages such as these.'[82] Although his lack of concern for non-Europeans was not indicative of most Political Officers, it was reflected in some writings of travellers and casual visitors. Certainly, the Sirdar, his wife and their escorts demonstrated little sympathy for a frantic, pathetic old woman. Perhaps the perceived need for pomp and aloofness from the governed occasionally superseded consideration for human needs and suffering.

In general the officers of the Sudan Political Service saw themselves as trustees of the Sudanese, charged with guiding them into a 'civilised' future, as Europeans defined the term. Most saw the Sudanese, particularly the Southerners, as primitive, even barbaric, but capable of improvement. Many British officials, on the other hand, truly respected their Sudanese assistants. The system of colonial rule was paternal and the implementers of that rule, in the Sudan as elsewhere, viewed their charges much like children to be taught the rudiments of Western civilisation. Because their long service in one country was unique in Britain's empire the Sudan Political Officers had a greater opportunity to appreciate the people they ruled and to understand the bases of their customs and cultures. For most this advantage led to respect and fondness for the Sudanese, despite their firm belief in the superiority of British civilisation.

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5 The Professionals

THOMAS FULLER

> The British technician so often combined a high standard of efficiency in his job with a singular obtuseness to all outside it. He could match tireless devotion to his technical duty with complete insensitivity to his surroundings. He could have encyclopaedic knowledge of his club's golf scores and no knowledge at all of the Sudanese people or of their language. Yet he could be kind and friendly.
>
> But this was not to his discredit. His own education may have been – probably was – narrowly technological. Some spoke only the dialects of their districts and were strangers to the things of the mind. They were, after all, hired for their technical expertise and it would be unreasonable and quite unjust to have expected more from them.
>
> RICHARD HILL

The Anglo-Egyptian reconquest of the Sudan in 1898 was as much a feat of British technical skill as the political imperatives of the British Empire. Kitchener's military engineers not only contributed to the successful conduct of the campaign, but also established the beginnings of the modern technical infrastructure that became the foundation for the British political administration of the Sudan during the next half century. The dynamics of engineering policy and technical capabilities were critical in the political and economic development of the middle Nile basin. Necessity, as well as Kitchener's personal inclination, resulted in the secondment of military personnel to become the mainstay of the British Administration in the Sudan during the early years of British rule. Like the political officers, most of the senior and junior technical officials were first chosen from the ranks of the military because of the problems of pacification and the dearth of a civilian manpower pool which an impoverished country could not afford. Lack of funds kept the growth of government departments to a minimum with small or non-existent staffs. Although Departments of Agriculture and Forestry, Education, Game Preservation, Medical, Posts and Telegraphs, Public Works, Railways, Steamers, Surveys, Veterinary and Irrigation were officially constituted after 1900 with headquarters in

Khartoum, the expansion of their staffs, especially field inspectors in the various provinces, took place slowly and sporadically throughout the Wingate years. As the government budget grew and technical services were needed, a new staff member here and a field inspector there were recruited and assigned. During the first two decades, however, most technical matters in the rural districts were confined to promoting agriculture, road-building and medical problems supervised by political administrators composed of British military officers and their young civilian district officers.[1]

The military officers who dominated technical affairs in the Sudan until after the First World War were a motley crew.

> Railways, Posts, Telegraphs, Works and Surveys were in the hands of Sappers, the Steamers and Boats Department, as it was then known, was run by two naval engineers, two ex-marine sergeants and about thirty marine engineers from Britain, Italy and Greece, with Bimbashi Azmi and some other junior officers from the Egyptian Army.
>
> Other departments had a background of N.C.O.'s from the British Army filling posts as storekeepers, technicians, and clerks and somewhat invidiously classed as 'second-class officials', but all of great value.[2]

This motley crew dominated the two most important technical departments during these early years – the Steamers and Railways Departments. Both provided the critical technology and management of communications and transport that were essential to administrative control and expansion throughout the rivers and the land. They were thus both closely tied to military policy and were staffed by military personnel. Their primary task was to keep the Nile and its tributaries open, particularly to the South, to supply the military and administrative posts and provide viable transport for nascent trade.

> The Steamers Department was formed immediately after the fall of Omdurman, when Kitchener selected Engineer Commander Bond [W. G. R. Bond] to take charge of everything that floated, and any repair facilities he could find. ... Facilities and craft available included a semi-derelict boat yard on the river front at Omdurman, with a workshop that had deteriorated from the days of Baker and Gordon. ... One or two of the odd paddlers were soon got going

again, and one, the *Tahra*, found under construction, was completed ... she was a side-paddler of the type brought out by Sir Samuel Baker, with a box boiler whose safety valve was set at seven pounds, and like her sisters, a great devourer of fuel.... To these vessels were added the gunboats of the expedition and a number of native sailing boats and miscellaneous hulks.

Apart from the three screw gunboats surviving from Kitchener's expedition and stationed as guardships at Roseires, Khartoum and Mongalla respectively – and more ornamental than useful – every steamer, whether side-paddle or stern-wheeler, was converted to peaceful use – the smaller gunboats for the Governors of the Southern provinces, the larger for commercial transport, providing monthly services to Gondokoro and other services up any river when conditions permitted....

Communication to the South was by water, camel or mule, with the donkey as the local taxi. The only means of reaching Wau in the Bahr el Ghazal was by water and that impossible for the greater part of the year, though small launches got through with the mail with some difficulty and much uncertainty. Hence the whole year's supplies for troops, civilians and trade goods were carried in a fleet of steamers and barges which waited near the junction of the Bahr el Ghazal and the White Nile for conditions to become practicable. Always a gamble, the river was only open for about ten weeks and subject to blocks and interruptions as already described.

To the Steamers Department the flood season is one of intense activity, every possible craft being pressed into service. During the winter one or more steamers had been beached on the falling Nile, wholly or party rebuilt, holes and dents in their three-sixteenth-inch plates patched and straightened, their machinery overhauled in the workshops, and floated off when the river rose again.

Then at the earliest opportunity, they and their barges would be loaded up and set forth up the Blue Nile to Roseires, the Bahr el Ghazal to Wau, and the Sobat to Gambela in Abyssinia, creeping up as the rise of the flood permitted.[3]

Every staff but particularly the Steamers Department had to cope with shortages of equipment and supplies as well as manpower in these early days. Officers were constantly urged and by necessity forced to improvise by using local materials or devising new ways to achieve results with obsolete equipment. Resourcefulness and innovation were the principal characteristics of success on the job.

> [In the Steamer department] the scrap heap of bits of machinery which had accumulated through the years, was often the object of an evening stroll by my Chief [Commander W. G. R. Bond] and myself, when we would have 'brainwaves' as to the utility of some items. It included a collection of excellent and ornamental brass cannon from the ill-fated Hicks Pasha expedition, all of which, with two exceptions kept as trophies – were converted in the foundry into useful parts of machinery. Two traction engines, with cylinders joined end for end, provided power for a specially light stern-wheeler, whose hull was the boat Marchand had man-handled from the West Coast to Fashoda. Drawing only a foot of water she was able to ascend the Sobat river to Gambela in Abyssinia, before ordinary vessels could manage it.[4]

The Railway department was similar to the Steamers in that it was a natural extension of the military administration. The department's importance as a means for extending political administration and establishing greater security over the vast territory of the Sudan ensured its rapid extension. By 1914 over 1500 miles had been laid, connecting the major centres of the North, El Obeid, Khartoum, Kosti and Port Sudan, by a network of rails which in the next decades would greatly aid impending economic development projects.

H. C. Franklin served as District Traffic Inspector of the Sudan Railways from 1911 to 1932. His account of those days with the Railways indicated the dominance of Kitchener's military legacy.

> When I first went to the Sudan . . . in 1911 from the Old Great Eastern Railway . . . I had no idea of the conditions I was to find in that vast country. . . . Heads of departments were, with the exception of the loco[motives], British officers who served under Kitchener. Head of Traffic department was Captain E. O. A. Newcombe. . . . Most of the clerical staff were Egyptian with a good sprinkling of Gordon College trained Sudanese. The porters were Egyptian labour corps conscripts and under the charge of Egyptian army officers. . . . [When I arrived in the Sudan] I was able to speak only a few words of Arabic and this gave me a rather depressed feeling and for two pins I would have packed up. So I set to work to learn the language and this was made necessary as I was sent out to Musmar inspecting wayside stations en route. I met a P. W. [Public Works] Inspector at one of the stations, who had been in the country three or four years and he taught me quite a lot and by the time I reached Musmar was able to make myself understood. . . .[5]

The daily routines of District Traffic Inspectors varied from district to district, but they all faced similar problems one time or another. The experiences of H. C. Franklin on the Kosti–El-Obeid line were typical of these early railwaymen.

> It was my first but not the last of my experiences in this direction, due so I was informed to the lack of culverts. It was an amazing sight to see miles of water on each side of the line, and to me a wonder the track stood up to it, as it was the track had to be patrolled after a rain storm and no train was allowed to proceed after dark. One of the main worries of the Engineering Department staff was the growth of weeds and grass and how to keep it down. It grew so quickly that in 24 hours it was two inches high and in 48 commenced to cover the rails. I have had to get passengers to help clear the rails when a train had been brought to a halt by the grass covering the rails so that the engine could not get a grip. I also had on one occasion to assist the engine crew to clear the track of crawling locusts and I once saw a cloud of locusts blot out the light of the sun when in flight. . . .
>
> The Kosti district was the most interesting from all points of view to any of the Railway at this time. One could literally see the country developing. . . . I enjoyed the journey to and from El-Obeid–Kosti. The intermediate stations were cut out of scrub and as the amenities for natural requirements in the fourth- [class train accommodations] was nil and that in the 3rd class not much better, there was a rush at the stations to seek cover . . . I had the station staff widen the strip for hygenics sake.[6]

The advantage of military officers as technicians were obvious. Not only were they the only experienced personnel available but their generalised skills and willingness to take on tasks 'with courage and common sense' were important assets. Gradually, as the country required more specialised administrative skills, the disadvantages of relying on military officials became more apparent, and despite their technical proficiency their lack of experience and training in economic and commercial development resulted in efforts to replace them by a more permanent cadre of civilians. The hiring of civilians, however, began at first on a limited scale. In 1901 the first three civilian British doctors arrived in the Sudan even prior to the establishment of a civil medical service. By 1904 most technical departments were being formed and the need for junior-level officers was quite apparent. In 1905 a Civil Service Board was instituted to select young men for the lower ranks of the administrative departments, including the technical services. The Board

sought the same class of men as for the administrative service to fill the positions of department heads, assistant directors and other senior professional officials. Since they would have to work and interact in harmony with political officers it was deemed important to have them drawn from the same social background.[7] Thus department heads and senior staff had for the most part university backgrounds. As the technical services grew, various standards and selection procedures evolved. Some departments had their own criteria for the junior ranks. Some even had specific examinations to prove technical competence. Usually, advertisements of positions were posted in appropriate centres in England, at colleges and university departments specialising in agriculture, engineering and other needed fields, or with commercial concerns which often recommended individuals.

Up to 1918, however, technical recruitment and selection procedures were rather haphazard despite recognised needs. There were some highly qualified men attracted for service in departments such as the medical service. Four out of seven of the senior British doctors in 1912 were Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons. By the late 1920s college graduates were being attracted in large numbers to the Railways, contributing to that department's high ratings for hard work and efficiency.

Not all departments were that fortunate. The early difficulties of the Agricultural Department demonstrated the problems of budget deficiencies, staffing and administrative discontinuity encountered during the first decades of the twentieth century.

> The first step in agricultural administration had to wait until 1903, and even then development lagged well behind other spheres of administration until after the First World War. Prior to 1910, there were two departments detailed to deal with agriculture. The department of woods and forests was established in 1903 with one director and a subordinate staff of six. However, owing to the shortage of manpower it was 'considered best . . . for each Mudir to be ex-officio Director of Woods and Forests within his own Province . . .'. The department of agriculture and lands fared even worse. Restricted to two British officials and one clerk, it could hardly even cope with its clerical duties. There was not even a director for the department. Hence the head of the department of woods and forests was called upon to serve as acting director of agriculture and all matters relating to lands and development had to be dealt with by the civil secretary's office.
>
> The absence of a proper departmental head was rectified in 1905

> when it was decided to engage a professional director and to incorporate the functions of agriculture and lands into one department. The new director who was a British estate agent, turned the department into 'a Central Estate office for Government properties . . .' much to the detriment of agricultural development and agricultural education which continued to suffer from neglect. As a result the hoped-for improvements were negligible and in 1910, when the director of the department resigned, it was therefore decided to try yet another reorganization. The lands section, which had hitherto been the main stay of agricultural administration, now became part of the legal department, while agriculture and forests were united under the directorship of a former provincial governor. Detailed instructions regarding the functions of the new department were laid down by the governor-general's council. The main spheres of activity were to be agricultural development and education, while a special committee was to be set up to deal with future concessions. The department, however, remained as weak as before, and was a constant cause of concern to Wingate and the central administration.
>
> In 1915 the department of agriculture and forests suffered yet another upheaval. Following the resignation of its director, it was decided to split it once again. The agricultural section was affiliated to the civil secretary's office, while that of forests was put under the financial secretary. Thus seventeen years after the reconquest, and with the Gezira development scheme nearing realization, the Sudan government was left without any department or personnel capable of undertaking this major project. This was clearly one of the great failures of the new administration.[8]

Other departments struggled to overcome constant criticism and an image of inadequate performance. The Public Works Department tried but in the history of the Condominium never quite succeeded.

> Most of the criticism was levelled against the low standard of buildings erected by the department for provincial government officials. This criticism increased as time went on but failed to bring about any apparent improvement. In his report for 1906, Wingate tried to justify the department by saying that the low standard of buildings was due to budgetary reasons. In 1911, however, Wingate made an inspection of the Southern provinces following which he wrote that the government houses were: 'miserable huts which are tumbling down . . .' The department was also attacked for devoting

most of its energy and money to Khartoum, a criticism shared by most central departments. In 1908 the public works department was decentralized. District engineers were appointed in all the provinces, with instructions to submit their plans to the central department who would act as the supervisor and co-ordinator of the work. However the reorganization did not prove successful, and the whole system had to be reversed. The failure of this department can be traced to a number of reasons. The budget was never sufficient, yet instead of limiting its projects, the department erected cheap buildings of poor quality. Communications also hampered its progress, as in many cases building materials had to be transported by camel. Lastly, most of the department's staff was either unqualified or lacked the ability to adapt their knowledge to local conditions.[9]

The Sudan achieved its first year of financial self-sufficiency in 1913. This event produced a rise of expectations and possibilities for future development that resulted in the approval and implementation of many programmes and plans for the economic diversification of the country during the following decade. Large-scale projects such as the elaborate irrigation plans for the Gezira cotton scheme, the dam construction on the Nile river at Sennar in the 1920s and the general growth of trade and commerce necessitated large support staffs of engineers, scientists and other specialists. During the two decades after the First World War a rapid expansion of the technical personnel in all departments occurred. Provincial staffs were increased and their departmental headquarters in Khartoum assumed greater importance within the central administration. By 1930 over 800 British personnel were serving in the various technical departments of the government.

Perhaps the foremost example of the increase in the number of professional personnel was the growth of the Agriculture Department during this period. Despite the importance of agriculture in the Sudan the management of agricultural affairs throughout the middle Nile Valley had remained confused, scattered and shuffled about during the first fifteen years of British rule. Like other departments, problems of understaffing, insufficient financial support or lack of a proper mandate for co-ordinated development left agricultural questions largely to be overseen by the political officers in the districts and provinces.

Ironically, neglect in developing government technical services resulted in opportunities for private commercial interests to play a pioneering role in agricultural development. One of the most successful concession companies in the Sudan was the Sudan Plantations Syn-

dicate established in the first part of the century to promote cotton cash-crop production on the fertile alluvial soils alongside the Nile river. The Syndicate took over early government experimental stations in the Gezira after 1910 when the advisers of the Agriculture Department proved insufficient in both experience and numbers to continue the operation. At that time the Agriculture Department consisted only of its Director, Colonel E. B. Wilkinson, a former soldier who had been governor of Kassala Province and was a keen gardener, two Egyptian agricultural assistants and three trained British agriculture officials.[10] By 1913 successful irrigation studies by the Egyptian Irrigation service and the Syndicate indicated the potential for large-scale cotton production. These efforts convinced the British Government to support continued technical studies and to co-ordinate efforts with the Syndicate in order to implement the final plans.[11]

The Syndicate possessed the necessary financial resources as well as a manpower pool of British technical officials – engineers, irrigation and soil specialists, and agricultural field inspectors. Most of these men came from public schools and universities, some from highland crofts, yet few had agricultural degrees. Many of the Syndicate officials had served in Egypt, where they had supervised peasant agricultural production. Agricultural development in the Gezira called for men who liked the out-door, open-air life style in remote places, men who had 'energy, honesty, and executive ability, a sense of humour and tolerance, a capacity for getting people to work and working with them'.[12]

Men like Frank Brown went out to the Gezira in 1923 to work for the Syndicate because they did not see much chance of a good job in the United Kingdom, or did not want an office life. The pay at £E 400 a year was below that of the Political Officer in the government service, but was quite sufficient to live comfortably. As a junior inspector he got up at 6 a.m. to go around the fields supervising tenants and advising on crop sowing prior to an 8.30 breakfast. Between 9.30 a.m. and 1 p.m. he spent more time in the fields, 'checking the sowing, the watering, the gathering, and at last the burning of the stalks'. Lunch was at 1 p.m., usually, and until 4 p.m. one stayed indoors, as was customary for the British in the Sudan. Between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. another round of field work ensued. Syndicate inspectors, in a similar manner to the government officials, had to learn Arabic and pass an examination to obtain salary increases.[13] Long before the government had a similar number of employees the Syndicate often had over a hundred British field inspectors employed at a time, although many left after their initial contracts expired. Some men, like Frank Brown, remained in the Sudan

and worked their way up in the company until the concession was relinquished to the Sudan Government in 1950.

After the First World War government agricultural efforts became more visible. In 1919 a Gezira Research Farm was opened near Wad Medani to carry out the necessary scientific research related to cotton production and other cash crops. A number of technical officials and experts were employed by the Agriculture Department to oversee experimental farms, provide extension services to different provinces and draft and enforce agricultural ordinances, such as cotton and marketing regulations and licences for ginning. By 1930 the Agriculture Department had added a staff entomologist, a soil chemist, several plant physiologists and specialised research scientists. Soil scientists began gathering detailed profiles of soil conditions throughout the territory and vegetation mapping commenced in many districts.

The agriculture staff faced an overwhelming range of difficulties, and despite the array of specialists, their numbers were never sufficient to meet all the problems that confronted them. The variety of climates, from the dry desert of the northern provinces, to the tropical southern regions, challenged even the best trained official. Yet, even if their education had been in the area of tropical agriculture, many officials admitted ignorance of proper methods. Much was achieved by trial and error and learning in the field. Given such a situation even modest successes, such as eradication of a pest, or improvement of a crop, were considered remarkable. Effectiveness in his job frequently derived only from an official's long-term experience, yet continuity of duty was often undermined by the need to move officials from one district and province to another. By the late 1920s, however, some governors recognised the need for competent technical advisers in their provinces and began to review their work with the same critical insights usually applied to their administrative officers.

> *G. R. Davies.* Has been in the province [Upper Nile] about five years and knows it thoroughly. Has worked specially among the Shilluks but has seen the whole, having trekked through from Renk via Jonguls to Melut, from Melut via the Yabus and Dega to the Jokan Mouth, and various treks in the Nuer country with Coriat [P. Coriat, District Commissioner, Upper Nile, 1922–31, 33–4] and Lee [J. M. Lee, District Commissioner, Upper Nile, 1920–9].
>
> He is very quiet and diffident, but can get through a lot of work and is very keen and competent. Has carried out the organisation of cotton-growing almost single-handed, since in the beginning I was too

short-handed to help him much with the D.C.s. The fact that his department complained this year that the province yield had not come up to their expectations was caused by our refusal to press on the cotton-growing by measures (such as fines, &c.) which would cause it to be resented by the people; We wished to get it grown by desire and for cultivators to realise that it was to their advantage to grow it, and not to enforce it to the neglect of their ordinary forms of cultivation. This has been justified by the continued and parallel cultivation of dura, with great advantage to the province in this year of shortage.

Davies has for his work a tug and living-barge, which is distributed between him and Stewart as may be required. He is greatly liked and trusted by the Shilluks.

J. B. Stewart. Only recently appointed. A very silent Scot, very keen and I should think has plenty of technical knowledge. He has been given the special duty of dealing with the Sobat and tributaries, and is generally stationed at Akobo. My particular wish is to encourage cotton-growing among the Garjo Nuers on the Sobat, Pibor and Khor Nyanding, but Lee has been rather overcome by their opposition which I think is largely due to merchant propaganda against it, as introducing an enterprise which will tend to spoil their opportunities of keeping the Nuers to dura-growing alone, giving them opportunities of making high profits by trading with trade-goods only and preventing the introduction of money. As Stewart does not know the language he is at a disadvantage. This year I instructed Lee to press on the cotton-growing matter, and seed has been issued to certain villages; but I think there is much to be done and that this very fertile area should have special attention devoted to it. If Stewart could learn Nuer, a lot could be done with that very large tribe.

The original form of assistance given by the Department was a complete failure, consisting of about six low-class *Egyptians* (!) up as overseers!!! They immediately started calling themselves Mamurs, and rapid action had to be taken for removal before spears did the work prematurely. A third inspector was also a failure, since we were unable to arrange for his disposal. I think two are sufficient for full utilisation of their time.[14]

Agricultural officials were required to possess basic knowledge, but more important, to demonstrate drive and imagination. They also had to be tempered by scepticism about the application and effectiveness of western techniques and have the willingness to see wisdom in traditional practices when necessary.

> Bill [Turnbull], like most of our agricultural inspectors had been trained at the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture in Trinidad. He was a graduate, young, enthusiastic, – and frank. The promotion bug, arch-enemy of frankness and self-criticism, had not yet bitten him. He was willing to admit that he knew relatively little about tropical agriculture, and, in fact, that very little was known about it anywhere.
>
> As we were going along, he pointed out what a mess Zande cultivation seemed to be. Plants of every kind were jumbled up together, – an untidy mass of sweet potatoes, chillies, tomatoes, herbs, *hibiscus sabdariffa* for making a soft drink . . . and many others. He told me that when he had first arrived in the district he had suggested to a conference of chiefs and sub-chiefs that they should tell the people to plant the different crops separately, and in rows, so that they could be weeded. He felt that the oracle had spoken, but they, apparently, did not. In their turn they suggested that he should demonstrate this method on a trial plot, and if, after two years, it increased yields and decreased work, then they would adopt it. The trial was made, and was a complete failure. Letting the sun in on the bare soil between the rows burnt up the humus and dried out the soil. Bill said: 'That's something they didn't teach me in college.' Since 1929 it has been recognized that soil cover is very important in the tropics, but at that time it was not.[15]

The daily routine of an agriculture inspector varied, of course, from province to province and from decade to decade. Yet certain regular responsibilities were similar in all cases. Essentially during the 1920s one promoted new agricultural development where there had often been none, none at least in the sense of producing crops for export or sale. G. F. March, a young graduate of Wye College who went out to the Sudan in 1921–2 after some prior experience as an officer in the Egyptian Army, recalled that his first assignment was to supervise cotton-growing at Tokar in Kassala Province. A day's routine consisted of making certain the land was divided properly for the crops, that sufficient water was available and that cotton sales were properly managed. The job required immense time in the field inspecting from Kassala to the Nuba Mountains as well as supervising experimental plots located near the district headquarters as an inspiration for the local headmen to grow cotton.[16]

One of the most feared and awesome threats to agriculture in the Sudan was the locust. The depredations in the Northern Sudan of the

desert locust (*Schistocerca gregaria* Forsk.) were more than matched by the voracious migratory locust (*Locusta migratoria migratorioides*) in the South. As the most dangerous and persistent pest in the Sudan the locust challenged man's energy and ingenuity to devise an effective method of eradication. Organised campaigns of destruction were begun as early as 1914 and by the 1920s government entomologists worked closely with local District Commissioners and police to mobilise poison, flame throwers and aircraft to destroy the locust swarms.

> Killing hoppers is very like a small military campaign: one's scouts have to tell one where the enemy is and the way he is moving. Then one had to decide where and with what forces to meet him. One used to await him in some dry wadi, where there was plenty of bush and dry grass. Here one would construct a zariba in some depth in the path of the on-coming hoppers, which were, at the same time, being gently persuaded by other workers to move along into the trap. Here they came, the wadi floor black with them and with one's own side swishing them into the wadi with brushes and guiding their van in the direction they were wanted to go. With men banging cans and shouting behind the zariba to prevent the hoppers passing through, others would continue to urge them into the bush and grass until it was black with them, crawling and swarming on every blade and twig. Then came the moment to attack. With garden syringes filled with paraffin which was blown over lighted faggots we would set fire to the zariba, which, being bone dry flared up immediately and sizzle the hoppers in their thousands and still we drove more and more into the furnace. In this way one swarm would be utterly destroyed. Then, again over night hoppers would roost in trees and bushes. They would not stir till the sun was well up and this gave us time to go round, again armed with our paraffin-filled syringes and set the bush on fire. When there was not enough grass or stuff to make a zariba with, we had to dig trenches, drive the hoppers in and tread them to death. This was nothing like so satisfying a method as that of burning, nor in fact so efficacious.
>
> I had various gangs working like this over a matter of say, 100 square miles of country and I used to ride from one to another and organise operations. I had not been more than ten days on the job when I was visited by the Chief Government Entomologist – the great locust king – who came to see how our campaign was going. He brought with him a new weapon of destruction to try out – poisoned bait. We used a good deal of this and found it most valuable. It was

made of bran mixed with a proportion of molasses and arsenic which, when wet, smelled most appetising and the locusts were immediately attracted. In due course they died out, being cannibals, their brothers eat their dead comrades and they too died in heaps. It was a most efficient and labour-saving method of destruction as one man riding with a bag of the stuff could deal with a whole swarm of hoppers by himself, merely spreading the bran ahead of the marching army and leaving them to eat it, or, if the hoppers were not yet on the march he could circle them and leave them to eat whichever way they decided to move. Care had to be taken not to leave heaps of the material lying about as it was then dangerous to sheep and goats – well spread out it did not affect them. Much larger areas could be covered with a given force and if the scouting was well done it was most effective, but it was no fun at all; there was no battle, no excitement and no hard sweaty work. By burning the hoppers one had the satisfaction of knowing they were definitely if bloodily killed but with the poisoned bran one had to go back later on just to see the corpses.[17]

By the late 1920s the need for more accurate information about the agricultural conditions of the country became paramount. In 1927 the Civil Secretary issued a memorandum from the Central Economics Board to all Governors, Department Heads and District Commissioners requesting administrative staff to compile reliable data particularly regarding agriculture to aid in solving the various economic problems in the Sudan.[18] 'It appears to me to be time to ask for a general survey of the province from an agricultural point of view, to show what areas are suitable to this or that type of cultivation, and to collate this information with the actual conditions of the people, e.g. whether they have an adequate, excessive or inadequate food supply, what labour is available, what means of removing produce, till the Government is in a position to concentrate efforts on the most effective and economic objectives.'[19]

The Medical Department was one of the most notable and effective professional departments of the Sudan Government. The doctors, perhaps more than any other officials, came into close personal contact with the Sudanese and as the healers of the sick engendered deep personal feelings of gratitude among the people which the British administrative officials were striving to emulate as administrators. Medical facilities were established at the very beginning of the British occupation by the military officers who set up hospitals in the administrative centres of Khartoum, Atbara and Port Sudan. Soon

thereafter, medical treatment was expanded as rapidly as staff and equipment would permit into the rural areas where out-patient and bush dispensaries were opened. To better understand and control tropical diseases and epidemics special research and treatment facilities were developed.

In much the same manner as the Agriculture Department, the Medical Department owed much to a private company, the famous pharmaceutical firm, The Wellcome Laboratories, which promoted research and development in tropical medicine. With the enthusiastic support of the Sudan Government Mr H. S. Wellcome established The Wellcome Tropical Research Laboratories in 1903 and began an intensive research programme with well-equipped facilities. The staff devoted itself to investigation and analysis of both medical and agricultural problems. While its chemical and entomological sections carried out important pest-control work long before any organised government efforts in such fields, the medical laboratories worked on sanitation and public health problems in the rapidly growing towns. Many outstanding European medical scientists were attracted to the Sudan for special appointments as a result of The Wellcome Laboratories reputation and high standards of medical research, and their reports published between 1904 and 1911 served as important guides and handbooks for later government research efforts. In 1920 The Wellcome Laboratory was formally incorporated into the Medical Department which in 1925 was renamed the Sudan Medical Service. By this time 'every Province had its province medical inspector and headquarters hospital, with a varying number of medical officers and hospitals in the districts and a network of dispensaries and small dressing stations sited in all centres of any importance'.[20]

> A province medical inspector was responsible for all the medical work in the province – both curative and preventive medicine. Each province was divided into a number of districts, and a large district would have its own hospital usually run by Sudanese doctors. Upper Nile was the only province with only one hospital. There were eight districts each under a district commissioner and to say they were rural is somewhat of an understatement as five of them were cut off from Malakal for seven months of the year. British officials in the Sudan had three months leave a year, and reckoned that those in the south only worked two to three days a week. These cynics claimed that they had at least four to six weeks in the Sudan travelling to and from leave, and that in touring their area they spent six weeks just walking while

on tour. After deducting the one day a week off duty the actual number of working days was minimal. It may sound a very easy life but this is far from true, certainly the facts might be partly true but it was far from being an easy life. . . .

On an average day you went and did your outpatients at 7 a.m. You went home for breakfast at quarter or half past 8 and came back at 9:30 and worked till 2 p.m. You came home [and] had lunch. You did your ward work, your cases, saw any old cases, then you did your operations. You are back again in the evening at half past 5 or 6 and do your evening rounds. You could be called up of course any time of day or night.[21]

Medical work, especially in the provinces, required much trekking to remote areas for periodic visitations or to combat emergency situations. Trekking consumed even more time in the Southern Sudan where distances between communities were great and roads frequently impassable or non-existent. Dr John Bloss's experiences in the Upper Nile Province in the late 1940s called not only for physical endurance, but for detailed planning by staff and others to make the trips into the bush successful.

Bor was 250 miles by road from Malakal and our visits there were always carefully planned because there was a great deal of medical work to be done, in both the rainy or dry seasons. In the rains the *Lady Baker* would leave Malakal taking patients and their relatives home from the hospital, spend five or six days at Bor, and return with a fresh load of patients. In the dry season the steamer was sent down, but we would go by car. The main lorry with our equipment would be sent ahead to cross the ferry over the River Sobat the night before, and the second lorry in which we travelled would follow the next morning. Once over the ferry we would make for Waat, a hundred miles from Malakal. Here the road branches off to Waat and Akobo and Pibor along the Eastern border and having done all our work there cross over from Pibor to Penkgo, arriving at Bor where the *Lady Baker* would be waiting. Sometimes we added a trip to the Ethiopian border at Pochala and to the Boma in the round journey and returned from the Boma through Equatoria province striking northwards later to reach Bor.

At Bor the district commissioner always warned the dispensaries and the chiefs of our imminent arrival and there would be crowds waiting to see us, with plenty of patients willing, if necessary, to come

to the hospital at Malakal for treatment. Journeys would be made to Kongor and Duk Faweil and wherever we had our dispensaries. If our own lorries could not bring in patients the district commissioner organised merchants' lorries or loaned his own for this purpose. Cases for minor operations were brought in to Bor, operated on and the medical assistant in charge of Bor dispensary would carry out any after treatment when we had gone.

The patients for Malakal with their relatives and baskets of luggage were listed, given 'tickets', and awaited our final departure. Embarking them all on the last day was always a task requiring patience and sympathy. The blind were led on board and placed in special places where they would do themselves no harm, others would scramble aboard sitting in little family groups, contented and happy at last to be on the way. The women folk came to look after their children or other relatives and soon got down to preparing food and doing the chores for the patients they accompanied. It was from Bor that on one occasion we returned with our record load of passengers and relatives, a total of just short of a hundred and fifty souls![22]

On other occasions the trips to remote areas were less routine. Emergency situations called for quick action, especially if the fear of an epidemic disease such as smallpox was reported. In the late 1940s such a report was received by Bloss at Malakal.

Just before Christmas there was another report of the same disease occurring among the Nuong Nuer who live on the west bank of the river, north of Shambe, inland from Lake Jur. These peoples were rarely visited, even by their own district commissioner and I doubt if any doctor had been in the area since the early thirties. The epidemic had spread from the Bor Dinka across the river to the Aliab Dinka between whom there was a lot of traffic. From the Aliab Dinka it had spread north to Shambe and then to the Nuong Nuer. To make matters even more complicated there had been a small confined outbreak of the real violent smallpox among the Dinka in the Rumbek area, and it was obvious that in this situation we had to take pretty definite action. The only way to get there was to go to Shambe, collect porters, and walk up through the country, vaccinating as I went. The length of the journey, and the time to be taken would depend on the conditions found when we got there. . . .

[Upon arriving in Nuer country] we vaccinated more than 200 people in this little settlement, but neither saw nor heard of any

disease such as smallpox or chickenpox. It was quite a busy morning, for apart from vaccinating we saw many children with chronic eye disease, some with ulcers, and there were plenty of scratches and wounds to dress. There was the usual demand for injections and these we did after everyone else had been treated. We left about noon, for according to reports our next and most important stop was not very far away.

It was in fact three and a half hours journey first along the left bank of the river, then following this high ridge of land through open scrub country. I rode most of the way and as the path was pretty clear we went at quite a good pace. Everyone by now had heard of our approach, but the cattle camps were deserted and I was told that they were all rather scared at such an unheralded visit. In one place we arrived to find a few of the girls and women by their huts but as soon as they saw us they scampered off into the scrub forest behind them. Eventually we reached our destination and made camp. There was a small grass hut used by the district commissioner when he last came which was cleaned out and I settled in. It was a bleak place in all conscience. The grass on the high ridge was short, and dry, the forests seemed a long way away from us, and to the east was a wide grassy swamp, still under water, which led to Lake Jur. The steamer had arrived that morning and we could just make out its mast above the grass of the swamp.

The next morning we started as before; some more vaccinations followed by treatment of eyes and ulcers. As very few people came in, that afternoon I sent out the police and dressers to the nearby cattle camps. When they returned they said everyone would come in tomorrow and had apologised because they did not know what the doctor was here for. They certainly did come and we were kept very busy for another three days seeing and treating cases. We even traced a few cases of the smallpox, all very mild, and I was once more assured that it was not the serious kind of smallpox which they knew had broken out near Rumbek. That I had come here because of *this* disease seemed to them quite incredible; they laughed. In three days we vaccinated close on two thousand people, as well as having records of treating a thousand for some complaint or other. Some were seriously ill and needed hospital treatment but it would be wrong to force them to come in to Malakal. Anyone who wished to come was offered a place on the steamer.[23]

The members of the medical service were not always appreciated. One

District Commissioner believed the service received more support from the Administration than it deserved. Furthermore, he viewed visits from public health officials as an inconvenience since they tended to search 'for things which you wish to conceal and with which after his departure you yourself will be expected to deal. . . . The Public Health Officer is, by trade and definition, a snooper, and ranks in the estimation of many officers with auditors and income-tax collectors as a creature not on the protected list. In their search for ways to remove possible mosquito breeding grounds, discover a potential epidemic disease and other medical concerns, the health officer upset many a station's patterns and routines.'[24] Despite the complaints, however, in the end, the medical officer was an inestimable benefit to both the Sudanese and British communities in the Sudan.

The early 1930s were difficult times for the Sudan's developing and vulnerable economy. The emerging prosperity of the previous decade, with annual increases in revenue enabling extensive major capital expenditure by the government on public services, came to an end as the full effects of the world-wide Depression settled over the Sudan. The government was forced to take economy measures in every area. Staff assignments in all departments were cut back to minimum needs, and in some cases further. In general over 20 per cent of the more than 1000 British officials were released, and almost 800 Sudanese and Egyptian employees terminated. Some departments suffered more than others.

> [In the Railway Department] a reduction in the numbers of staff employed, amounting to about 31 percent of British, about 33 percent of Egyptian, and almost the whole of the Greeks, who were on the staff roll at the beginning of 1931, was effected during the course of 1932. Train and steamer services were reduced, several stations were closed, workshops went on short time, many men went on unpaid leave, and all but lowly-paid staff were mulcted of varying percentages of their pay.[25]

By the mid-1930s financial stability began to return to the Sudan and government expenditures on social services and capital development entered another round of expansion reminiscent of the period before the Depression. New demands were placed on technical departments and the technicians. Efforts to cope with these new priorities varied from department to department and many officials faced frustration trying to adapt to this period of retrenchment and redesign. The Public Works Department was the department most maligned by the British in the

Sudan from the beginning of the Condominium until its end. Its image never improved from the early days and it remained the butt of standing jokes and wry humour at tea and dinner parties.[26] The infamous 'P.W.D.' exemplified, however, the struggles of a department and its employees in confronting the new conditions of the 1930s.

> In 1926 the department had just emerged from a period of reorganization consequent on the assumption by it of various duties formerly devolving on the Military Works Department of the Egyptian Army. At that time the great bulk of the work concerned the maintenance and construction of buildings; a beginning was being made in the development of water supplies but this was largely dealt with by special staff working under the instructions of consulting engineers; ancillary services such as workshops and motor transport were purposely designed to meet departmental needs rather than those of the Government generally and were merely offshoots of the Stores organization. Generally speaking the department in 1926 was a building department and for the most part it was staffed by officials having architectural knowledge and versed in the building trades. An era of prosperity then dawned on the Sudan and expansion and development became the order of the day. Not only were there large building programmes to be undertaken but demands arose for engineered roads and for the installation of water supplies in various parts of the Sudan; concurrently, the ancillary services were faced with new demands not only from the department but from outside and special organizations had to be created for mechanical engineering work and for motor transport. This period of expansion lasted until the end of 1930 and, during these five years, the work output of the department was almost doubled. To meet the new conditions it was necessary to strengthen the staff by means of permanent and temporary appointments and the occasion was taken to select officials properly equipped to deal with the more varied order of work as well as certain specialists. By 1931, however, the Sudan found itself, in common with other countries, a victim of the world-wide financial crisis and programmes of expansion and development were brought to a halt. Whereas in 1930 the total expenditure incurred by the department amounted to £ 648,179, the comparable figure in 1931 was only £ 341,028; in 1932 this had been further reduced to £ 179,947. The changed conditions necessitated the drastic retrenchment of staff and it was inevitable that the process should involve the sending away of many engineers and others who had proved their

> value. The staff which remained was left with the invidious task of confining itself to the maintenance services with such inadequate funds as to leave an inevitable legacy for the future; no capital works were financed except those few which could clearly be shown as revenue producing within a short period of time. Since 1932, however, a gradual improvement in the financial situation of the Government has taken place and the staff of the department, as reduced in the days of acute depression, has found itself heavily taxed to keep pace with the again increasing demands which have followed. . . . Responsibilities now cover a much wider range and in so far as it should be the function of a Public Works Department to be the technical helpmeet of all departments of a Government, rather than a department within itself, great progress has been achieved. . . . Notwithstanding the improvements which have been secured, no claim is made that the present organization is perfect. It is indeed far from perfect and much remains to be done before the department will be able to give in the fullest measure the service which the Government has the right to expect.[27]

The very demands upon the Public Works Department mitigated against it operating as a cohensive unit. Not only was it one of the largest departments in the Sudan Government but the British personnel came from more diverse backgrounds and education than the Political Service and carried out an infinite number of tasks each requiring different skills. There was Malcolm Lees, later the Director of Works, whose primary interest was road and airfield construction. W. R. Ahern, the Chief Mechanical Engineer, who spent his whole career in the Sudan in Khartoum overseeing the water and power needs of the city, and Adam Petrie, who became the Master of Works and later supervised the construction division responsible for all new capital building in the Sudan. Petrie remembered that the P.W.D. was not a very 'happy department'. Its large numbers, varied personalities and different professional and technical perspectives did not find a common ground, made more rigid by a sharp division between the senior and junior personnel.[28]

Despite the vicissitudes of the 1930s and early 1940s these years witnessed the growing pre-eminence of the technical services which had not gone unnoticed nor unresented by the political administrators in the Sudan Government. Since the beginning of the expansion of technical personnel in the 1920s many political officers, anxious to preserve their status and image as the builders of empire, resented the centralisation

and growth of bureaucracy in Khartoum by the professional and technical departments. To the members of the Political Service it appeared that their prerogatives of provincial administration and responsibilities to rule the Sudanese were being inexorably eroded by the duties and responsibilities of technical officials whose loyalty was to a department head in Khartoum and not to the Governor or District Commissioner in the provinces.

In the mid-1930s a few senior officials were convinced that the future of the Sudan lay in its economic development led by the technical services. Sir Stewart Symes, Governor-General 1934–40, hoped to implement a development policy which would pull the Sudan out of the quagmire of the Depression years. Besides altering political policy, and demanding an increased role for the Sudanese staff in the administration of the country, he stressed the rising importance of the technical branches of government, believing that under the auspices of a technocracy the British could provide a developing economy to sustain a future independent Sudan.[29] Although few denied the importance of the technical services in developing the Sudan, Symes's ideas met a rising tide of resentment from those officials who regarded the judicial process and sound political administrative practice as the foundation of British rule in the Sudan. In the 1920s the sharp increase in the numbers of technical personnel began the differentiation between the specialist and the political officer. By the 1930s, although many political officers resented the loss of some autonomy over affairs and development in their area, most recognised the need to share and work as a part of a larger British effort to solve the challenge to British rule and the extension of the British trusteeship in the Sudan. Like the history of British administration in the Sudan, the subtle and sensitive relationship between the technicians and the political officers was very personal. 'One had to get on with one's district officials. . . . You discussed your thoughts about how things might go very often in the evening drinking in their houses, sitting in their houses having tea. . . .'[30] Many of the District Commissioners had a 'love–hate' relation with the technical personnel, appreciating their indispensable services on the one hand, while resenting the intrusion into their territory on the other.

> With Departmental officials one was in only slightly less close touch. With all their departmental loyalties and professional variety they still formed a Province team. Duty and friendship apart, it paid to know exactly to whom to turn in an emergency. When all the lights in the town went out, as they frequently did, and telephone inquiry

elicited the stock explanation that a bat had hung itself upside down on the wires and caused a short-circuit, it was useful to know to whom and in what terms to address remonstrance or stimulus to ensure the extrication of the electrocuted bat (if it was not mythical) and restoration of the current. When no telegrams could be sent (telegrams were sent by wireless) because the transmitters were out of order and the expert sent to mend them had gone into hospital with hallucinations that he was being assaulted by the daughters of djinns and the rest of the staff had tried to mend the transmitters with a cold-chisel, it was well to know and to be a friend of the amateur-expert in the P.W.D. who might providentially solve the crisis. Postal staff as a matter of fact were particularly important friends, for in a far country prompt delivery of mails counts much towards ones sanity and perspective.

The technical official was of course in constant demand as adviser and expert, for the fortunes of any Province are bound up with the regular technical sciences and their exponents – Foresters, Agriculturists, Veterinary officers, Engineers, and doctors, while wandering comets who dealt in obscure diseases, ceramics, Trade Unions, geophysical data and other 'occasional' subjects would sometimes pass through our denser provincial atmosphere before their orbit took them back to Khartoum. On the whole we generally felt that our department [officials] were the goods, and doing their level best, while their Khartoum Headquarters were scandalously neglectful of our interest and ignorant of the local conditions.[31]

The late 1940s and early 1950s should have been the golden years of the technical services. With over forty years of growth and experience, technical agents were presumably in a position to advise and direct the new efforts for the development and modernisation of the Sudan. Yet the changing circumstances of British rule during the post-war years left many officials uncertain as to how to proceed and how to adjust to the new political changes in the colonial situation. These were the years of decolonisation and the coming of independence to the Sudan. The time and energy of most British officials was consumed in every branch of government with the preparation for the handing over of the institutions of government to the Sudanese. Yet commitments to economic development and projects proposed years before had to continue in every technical department. Plans long delayed because of the war or because of insufficient funds were revised, analysed and, in many instances, acted upon. After the Second World War 'money was a little

freer'. For a brief period British technical staffs once again expanded as new men, mostly on short-term contracts, came to the Sudan to assist in this new phase of economic expansion. Some efforts were far-reaching in their scope, such as the Zande Scheme. Others, like the medical development plan of the early 1950s, were more an intensification of earlier proposals.[32]

The Zande Scheme in the Southern Sudan epitomised a new type of development project, one whose goal included both the social as well as the economic growth of an African community. Where the Gezira had been the focus of economic development during the interwar years, the attention of senior government officials shifted to the Southern Sudan after the Second World War in a belated attempt to make the South self-sufficient. In 1938 Dr J. D. Tothill was appointed Director of Agriculture and Forests and in 1943 submitted specific proposals for 'An Experiment in the Social Emergence of Indigenous Races in Remote Regions' with the object of 'the complete social emergence and the social and economic stability of the Zande people'.[33] Tothill sought self-sufficiency for the Azande in order for them to emerge from the remote areas of Central Africa as 'happy, prosperous, literate communities, based on agriculture and participating in the benefits of civilisation'.[34] The Zande Scheme was to be only the beginning in economic self-sufficiency in the Southern Sudan by which the Azande would produce and manufacture cotton goods, soap, and coffee to obtain money for indispensable imports. If successful, the Scheme or modification thereof, could be duplicated elsewhere in the Southern Sudan and Central Africa.

Hugh Ferguson took part in the planning of the Zande Scheme and remained as the chief agronomist with the Scheme for the Agriculture Department from 1945 to 1955 while Allan McCall was the Provincial Inspector of Agriculture for Equatoria and the Senior Agriculture Inspector in Yambio in charge of the Zande Scheme.

> When I first went down there it was a very primitive area. The first aim of the Agriculture Department was to try and increase the food supply and to introduce a cash crop. The cash crop was cotton . . . a lower type of cotton from the Gezira, but still very reasonable quality cotton. Our main job was to try and see that they produced the cotton in reasonable quantities so you could run a ginnery economically, but also to ensure that the people then cultivated their old cotton plots with food crops. . . . As an extension officer you were trying to do the usual job of trying to educate people

> into taking a greater interest in better cultivation. This is a very difficult thing to decide yourself, – what is better cultivation in those sort of areas. We had to do a great deal of experiments to find out what was better cultivation. A lot of people have tried to introduce methods in the tropics that were very bad and we had to make sure that we did not make a lot of mistakes. . . .
>
> Before the Zande scheme we and one agriculture officer [were the only supervisors] for Meridi and Yambio, a vast area. When the Zande scheme was initiated we had an increase of at least five more. . . . In addition to that . . . the other technical services, forest and surveys, provided assistance. The Agriculture Department was mainly concerned with producing the food crops, and to an extent, cash crops, cotton and other crops. Our main concern was to ensure that enough cotton was produced. We did this with the help of the DCs who were also trying to develop other crops as well as cotton. . . . We had a large supervisory force, cotton supervisors who went around to check that the amount of cotton we wanted was produced.[35]

The development of Zandeland meant, of course, construction on a scale hitherto unknown in the Southern Sudan, which placed an added burden on the Public Works Department. In its efforts to build houses, schools, industrial factories and ginneries required by the Scheme, the P.W.D. was in a steady state of consternation owing to the difficulties of obtaining materials, such as corrugated iron, or the complete impossibility of procuring other supplies. Much experimentation was carried out using local materials where they could substitute for expensive and scarce imported building supplies.[36] But these temporary difficulties ingenuity and money could overcome. More fundamental were the conceptual foundations of the Scheme itself. Despite the scale of the Zande project, and the large investment of technicians, equipment and infrastructure, its achievements were seen as incomplete, primarily because of the disagreement and uncertainty of purpose among the various British technical staff assigned to implement the project. Moreover, many technicians proved unable to communicate the goals of the project to the Azande. In many ways the Zande Scheme seemed to demonstrate the long-standing grumblings of the political officers that technology and planning alone could not resolve the difficulties of development.

After the War almost every department of the Sudan Government revived plans for expansion of services requiring an enlargement of

staffs which had been postponed by the hostilities. Yet before any plan could be approved or any action initiated the Administration had to recognise the new political realities in the Sudan which involved the incorporation of the Sudanese in the development of their country. Such was the case with the medical services' new ten-year major development plan which was authorised in 1951 after the service had been reorganised as the Ministry of Health under the direction of a Sudanese physician.

> The plan proposed expansion over a period of ten years during which a further fourteen hospitals would be built and another 150 dispensaries, with increases in the necessary training establishments to provide the staff. It was a good plan, and an attempt to provide an equal share of medical services for all the provinces. One of its main aims was to create a much larger specialist cadre to be stationed at each province headquarter hospital, and to separate the administrative and preventive medicine services from the hospital services. It was felt that the two had gone along together as far as was possible. The time had now come when the demands on each were such that each had to have its own staff. These plans provided for a British Director up to 1960 and for the building up of a large number of Sudanese and British specialists all over the Sudan.[37]

Dr John Bloss remembered the development plan as a great step forward for the medical services and enthusiastically looked forward to assisting its implementation when he joined the headquarters staff in 1951.

> I had a clear and an interesting future ahead of me. Apart from seniority and better qualifications I had more experience of service all over the country than any other doctor – Sudanese or British – in the headquarters, and went in as assistant director younger than anyone who had been there for nearly twenty years.
>
> At that time we were a complete team in headquarters. The Minister, the director, and another assistant director and I worked together, and discussed all our problems on an informal basis as well as when occasion demanded a formal basis. Every Saturday morning there was an informal conference. We had every reason to believe that we were wanted and were really contributing to the progress of medical work in the Sudan. We all felt we were working together for the country and the people.
>
> Apart from planning and development there were at that time a

whole host of problems. Supplies of drugs, dressings, instruments, and equipment were very complicated and our stocks were enormous, worth perhaps one and a half million pounds. Purchases had to be planned months ahead. New drugs were always in demand, and difficult to get. No sooner had supplies of a new drug come in than a better one appeared and the old supplies were considered out of date. Conditions of storage of items under tropical conditions had to be watched to ensure that wastage was reduced to a minimum.

There were endless problems over the conditions of service of pay and leave. A new revision of grading and of rates of pay was being put into effect to cover all government officials and employees and as the department was the second largest employer in the country such a revision implied continual discussion and debate with unions and with the financial authorities. The training schools each had their own boards of study with examinations. There were new therapeutic advances in the treatment of diseases such as tuberculosis and leprosy. ... In the field of public health – advances in insect control and control of other disease vectors such as snails in respect of bilharzia, all required their own special study, and a knowledge of the country so that the most practical methods of applying modern advances could be effected.

A new teaching hospital was being built in Khartoum at a cost of just under a million pounds. ... Design, staffing, and equipping this hospital presented many complications and every year costs rose and alterations had to be made.

By the third year of the plan in 1954 further complications and problems appeared.

There had been enormous increases in wages and in costs of materials, and the Public Works Dept. had neither the staff nor the materials to complete many approved projects. Planning had become a question of getting things done where possible and this had meant deviations from the original proposals. Taking everything into consideration, a considerable amount of new buildings had been completed, but it was not only buildings that mattered. The staff for new hospitals or dispensaries had to be trained and the main building proposals for training schools were just those which were so large that they had been delayed. The Minister wanted the plan revised and there was undoubted political pressure from those areas which had backed his party. A variety of compromises were proposed including

the suggestion of starting a hospital, or two or three hospitals, with a couple of wards in each area, a procedure which would keep them quiet anyway even though it meant that the wards could never be used because other necessary hospital buildings were not there; nor were the doctors, or the housing for the staff.

Such matters, simple in the extreme, yet very often rather aggravating, and with them parliamentary questions, and replies to press criticisms took up much of our office time.[38]

The British technicians who lived and worked in the Sudan after the Second World War found themselves at the apex of their influence. The demands for their skills and advice in managing the economic development of the country had given rise to an expansive technical bureaucracy with many powers over various aspects of the Administration. 'The war period caused much more sharing of memos', Malcolm Lees, the Director of Public Works, recalled. Post-war projects created 'a whole sense of urgency about planning and economic development such that political administrators recognised many of these requirements went beyond their own capabilities; thus the need for more staff and more co-operation. Just in the Public Works Department's case, capital works programmes increased to four times its pre-war size.'[39] Despite the intensified development activity and the resulting demand for professionals, the technicians as a whole faced both practical and personal dilemmas as they tried to carry out their work at a time of rapidly changing expectations and perspectives.

On the practical side was the very real problem of obtaining sufficient staff to undertake new departmental projects. Even with increased budgets the task was not always easy. A major consideration, indeed a political reality, was the requirement to hire and advance as many trained Sudanese as possible within the ranks of the department staff, particularly at the upper levels.[40] While most department administrators realised this as a necessary goal, many argued against rapid Sudanisation, believing the efficiency of the technical services would be impaired.

While the Sudanese may have had enough qualified men to carry on their own government there was no doubt that for the best interests of the people it would be necessary for a large proportion of British officials, mainly on the technical side, to stay on and help. It was simply that the British officials had behind them knowledge and experience which the Sudanese lacked. The political service was

> obviously doomed as their posts were the very ones which both parties wanted for senior Sudanese. I think that most of us accepted this change and felt it could be effected with a minimum dropping in efficiency, but as far as technical services, health, education, engineering, irrigation and the such like, there were only a handful of Sudanese who could fill posts of responsibility. The Sudan had reached the stage when administration was reasonably straightforward but progress in technical development was far more complicated and required experience and knowledge which Sudanese technicians in the main lacked. There was very little, if any, real anti-British feeling in the Sudan at this time, and the general opinion was that most of the British technical staff would stay on because they liked their work, were reasonably well paid, and because there was no one to replace them. The Anglo-Egyptian agreement of February 1953 promised independence three years from the appointed day, which would be the day the new government was sworn in. The question was not one of immediate discharge but of how many would be staying on after that three year period, which would terminate about 1958. We doubted if the Sudanese would be able to get rid of all British officials or have enough of their own technical staff by that date. Our worries were not for the immediate future of 1954 or 1955, but for the future in 1958 and 1959.
>
> Against all this there were those who argued that we would be out next year [1954] and instanced India, Pakistan, Palestine, and Abadan. The events of those countries were certainly warnings, but they were examples that appeared to have steadied rather than stimulated the Sudanese politicians. Very few of us ever thought that our exodus from the Sudan would follow on the lines of these examples.[41]

From the perspective of the senior British officials Sudanisation therefore was not a solution to the immediate skilled manpower needs of their departments. To obtain specialists the government, as it had done in the past, recruited qualified expatriates, British for the most part, but also others from the Commonwealth or the Continent. Yet post-war realities had changed the prospects of a career in the Sudan for an Englishman. No longer could a young recruit expect to establish a lifelong career in the Sudan. The days of twenty- or twenty-five-year careers as a technical official in a British-ruled overseas territory had gone with the wind as plans for eventual independence were being drafted in most British colonies. In the Sudan, as elsewhere, British

technicians were needed but were hired on short-term contracts or as consultants and specialists for specific tasks. Under these circumstances, however, it was difficult to attract highly qualified specialists. Not only were the terms of service limiting to their careers, but offers from other colonial territories or new opportunities at home in post-war Britain no longer made service in the Sudan attractive.[42]

Many of those that were recruited into the Sudan after 1945 were ex-service men who often did not have the public school or university backgrounds of the earlier generation of senior or junior officials. Very soon it became apparent these new men had different attitudes and values about work in an imperial dependency, attitudes that differed considerably from the career officials who prided themselves on the importance of efficient work and the maintenance of proper social attitudes towards the Sudanese. There arose a murmur of complaints and concern about the deterioration of work standards and lack of respectful relationships with senior British officials as well as Sudanese. 'There was a slight falling off of efficiency, or attempts to be sufficient in many cases', recalled one career official.[43] 'Since the pay was good and the contract established, few men worried about getting fired.'[44] After the War many a senior official recognised that in mixing with the Sudanese 'there was never the depth of feeling [by the new recruits] compared to the ones that were there for a longer time'.[45] Khartoum officials were acutely aware of these problems. Frustrated by these personnel problems and determined to secure employees who would maintain a proper and respectful relationship with the Sudanese during the important years of devolution, the Governor-General in December 1947 circulated a memorandum to all British officials, emphasising the need for all employees to maintain proper standards of conduct and work, and if not to look elsewhere for a job.[46]

On the personal side those final years were both rewarding and frustrating for professionals, especially for those who had finally obtained a senior position from which they hoped to influence and guide the implementation of various projects. As the last British Director of Agriculture, Allan McCall, remembered his circumstances in this period of transition.

> When I became Director of Agriculture [in 1952], one had got to the stage where one knew that independence was going to come reasonably soon and this was sad in a sense because I had become Director at a young age. [McCall was the youngest Director of Agriculture] I felt I had a tremendous challenge in front of me because

> I was going to have, if things had gone normally, another ten years in which to put over what I wanted to do in the Sudan. I felt when I became Director that I had a greater opportunity to make a mark than any other of my predecessors because they had come to the position towards the end of their service and they did not have the opportunity [to have a wide impact]. Well, very quickly after I had become Director I realized my time was not going to be ten years, but it was possibly going to be two or three and as you can imagine, this made life much more difficult. I had to bring any projects which were in being to a stage where they could be successfully handed over to the Sudanese staff that was coming along. One did not therefore go breaking into a lot of new projects that one knew were going to be in their early stages and therefore much more difficult to carry on. One had not exactly to put a brake on development, but one had at least to steady things up and to get them to a stage where they could be more easily handed over. This was behind my thinking all the time while I was Director. Perhaps this meant I could not really think in terms of initiating a lot of new agriculture projects which one was anxious to do. Now that the war was over we had more money, much more money coming along. The Sudan in particular made a great deal of money out of cotton prices which went up through the roof in 1950, 1951. There were definitely opportunities for more development in agriculture. I personally considered we had done a great deal of our homework properly; we had done a great deal of basic research to enable us to see how development should proceed.[47]

As final plans for independence began to take shape, further frustrations began to occupy the thoughts of many technical officials.

> The two major problems of all British officials at this time were worry and uncertainty. No one could envisage a gradual planned handover under the new government policy and yet it did not seem likely that there would be a mass dismissal of everyone at short notice. The impetus which dominated the speed of government actions was the headlong race to complete national independence with a special marked distrust towards all British officials. Rapid changes were going to take place within the next year, we could all see this clearly, but who would go when and under what conditions was far from clear.[48]

By 1954 the general pace of events overcame the professionals who

had hoped their positions would remain viable for several years since they were convinced that the Sudanese needed them to carry on the operation of the country. And, unlike the political officers whose positions had been terminated in 1954, many technicians had not been asked to leave. Yet fears of the unknown were multiplied by uncertainty so that by mid-1954 they themselves took the initiative and resignations were being handed in at an ever-increasing rate.

> The main reason undoubtedly was the rapid Sudanization of the administration and the immediate drop in standards, coupled with the open distrust of anything and everything that a British official said or did. No real skilled artisan is prepared to work under an inexperienced and inadequately qualified master and this in fact is what was happening. Secondly, there was undoubtedly the effect of others going. As it became obvious that many were leaving those who might have hung on decided to go as well. Thirdly, the compensation terms were attractive, whereas the terms at which officials would stay on were most unattractive. Anyone staying on agreed to sacrifice promotion of any kind, and might have to face instant dismissal. Lack of security of tenure was the big fear that loomed ahead and the official could not afford to ignore the compensation that was dangled before his nose with the deliberate intention of getting him out.[49]

Many British technicians ended their careers in the Sudan believing their work had been a significant success. They had helped to create and maintain the important structures of a modern economy and considered their departments to be run efficiently given the limitations of the country. This legacy would remain. From another perspective, however, the professionals generally failed to foster the transfer of important and necessary attitudes, values and skills regarding the proper and skilful management and supervision of economic changes in the Sudan. How British presence and performance altered Sudanese concepts, outlooks and desires for economic and social change within Sudanese society were questions seldom discussed by British technicians. In fact, the British professionals held a rather narrow, limited view of their role in the Sudan. They were, above all, preoccupied with their own affairs, which left little time to contemplate the larger questions of trusteeship which were better left to the political officials whose job it was.

> At the same time Government has insisted on maintaining a fairly high degree of technical efficiency in the country. The only criti-

cism on this score, that I have heard of the Sudan Railways is that they are too efficient, too far ahead of the general standard of efficiency in other technical branches of the Government, and thus out of tempo with the average pace of development. With the increasingly high level of education among the Sudanese there has arisen a small technical elite whose handling requires great tact and sympathy. You can't have it both ways. The language qualifications in Arabic required of British technical officials is low. A British technical official is already a man of some training and experience in his calling before he comes to the Sudan. What he lacks so often is the right cultural background to fit him to work well with the Sudanese whom he is teaching to take over his job. In 1947 and again in 1948 there have been serious strikes on the Sudan Railways. Yet among the British officials of the Railway Mechanical Department, the biggest single employer of artisan labour in the Sudan, there was not a single British official who had enough Arabic and enough imagination to deal directly with mobs of angry men. The initiative was taken entirely out of their hands by the strikers' leader, Usta Sulaiman Musa, who possessed all the gift of the gab, and none of the responsibility, of the British technical chiefs.

The theory in the past was that in its relations with the Sudanese people the Government could rely on the Political Service alone. . . . The fact that the British technical official is every bit in as close contact with the educated Sudanese as is the Political Officer seems never to have occurred to the Government.

So there has been presented to the educated Sudanese two very different kinds of British: the average member of the Political Service, almost always the product of a middle-class environment and a liberal education, who can talk to them in their own language about other things than 'shop', and the technically-trained, earnest but narrow-grained average member of the technical services whose range of culture is as narrow as his horizon, and who has nothing but 'shop' to communicate to them. I was recently rebuked by a British technician for failure to appreciate his point of view.[50]

In retrospect British technical officials in the Sudan introduced and tried to direct major economic and social changes which had an impact on the lives of the country's people. Few British agents concerned themselves to any great degree with the consequences for the Sudanese of these changes. Many British believed there would be time later for such concerns. Like most officials the bearers of technology assumed

that Britain would remain in the Sudan for decades longer; time enough to carry out proper reforms and modernisation of Sudanese communities when they believed that the Sudanese would be more fully prepared to adapt and to adopt.

> It is true that the assumptions on which we worked were based on a paternalistic outlook towards the people we ruled, and the changes we sought for them were what we, and not they, thought were good. The achievements of our work up to the time of the final hand-over were there for all to see, and it is my belief that we need not be ashamed of them.[51]

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. During the course of British administration in the Sudan from 1899 to 1956 over 1000 British staff were hired in both senior and junior positions to serve with the various technical departments of the government. Information about how the agricultural inspectors, the mechanical engineers, the medical officers, the surveyors and the many others in these departments carried out the technical and economic tasks of the government is sparse by comparison to the information possessed about the life and duties of political administrators. Few technical specialists kept extensive diaries or wrote memoirs about their activities or attitudes towards their work. Usually senior officials or departmental directors did keep notes or prepared field reports about their actions. Some information is available from memoirs of political officers who were closely involved with departmental affairs. A more general picture can be gained from examining broader studies about the patterns of British administration or accounts from other territories. Yet it is only when the above sources of information can be combined with personal accounts or memoirs by the technicians and specialists themselves that a fuller picture and understanding of the role these departmental officials played in the administering of the Sudan is possible.

   I would like to acknowledge the co-operation and interest of those former members of the Sudan Civil Service I interviewed during 1977–8. Their time in relating their working experiences added valuable insight into the role of the professional department employees. I want to acknowledge also the support provided by an American Philosophical Society Research Grant towards conducting a portion of those interviews. Special thanks go to Dr John Bloss and Richard Hill for assistance and suggestions in contacting former members of the Sudan Civil Service.
2. Admiral Scott Hill, 'Some Sudan Memories', pp. 20–1 (SAD).
3. Ibid. pp. 8–10, 24–7.
4. Ibid.
5. Franklin, 'Memoirs', p. 1.

6. Ibid. pp. 1–2.
7. Cyril Ehrlich, 'Building and Caretaking: Economic Policy in British Tropical Africa, 1890–1960', *Economic History Review*, 26, 4 (1973) 649–67.
8. Gabriel Warburg, *The Sudan under Wingate: Administration in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, 1899–1916* (London, 1971) p. 68.
9. Ibid. pp. 67–8.
10. Arthur Gaitskell, *Gezira: A Story of Development in the Sudan* (London, 1959) pp. 62–3.
11. In 1909 Charles E. Dupuis, formerly Inspector-General of Irrigation in the Sudan of the Egyptian Ministry of Public Works, was appointed Under Secretary of State for Public Works in the Egyptian Government and his Deputy, P. M. Tottenham, succeeded him as Inspector-General of Irrigation in the Sudan. 'One of my earliest jobs was recruitment of staff, and I got Boris Harris, a Rugger Blue, who helped me with the Gezira works, Christopher Gurney who retired early and made a name for himself in Norfolk, and Standish Waller, as good a trio as one could want. In 1911, when inspecting along the Blue Nile, I noted the granite bar across the river at Makwar and having a full knowledge of Dupuis's views about the Gezira Canal, realised its possibilities as a site for the dam, which had to be high enough to command the Gezira plain, and also provide some storage. I quickly asked Grabham for his geological views, and also got the Sudan Government permission to call on the Cleveland Bridge Co., who were busy elsewhere in the Sudan, to make borings to show the extent of the rock. In 1912 when Lord Kitchener and the Governor-General were returning from the official opening of the railway in El Obeid, I joined the train at Kosti and, on the way to Sennar, showed to Sir Reginald my design for the dam *I had in mind.* It was designed on very slim, Indian type lines, for there was then no money and no Sudan Loan Act. In November 1912, as Sir William and Lady Willcocks were in Khartoum, as guests of the Wingates, for the dedication of the Cathedral by the Bishop of London, Sir William was glad, as an old friend, to go with me to Sennar, inspect the site of the proposed dam and give me his expert opinion on the project proposed. At the same time, I got him to inspect the Gebel Auliya site which I had suggested for the dam that he, in 1907, had proposed so as the tail reach of the White Nile could be used as a reservoir, and also help to reduce high floods in Egypt. His hearty approval of both Sennar and Gebel Auliya sites and projects encouraged me to complete them in 1913, the year in which the Sudan Loan Act for 3 million for the primary purpose of irrigating the Gezira was passed. In 1914, in light of the Loan Act, a Commission consisting of Sir Arthur Webb, Murdoch MacDonald and Mr Maclure, was appointed to inspect and report on both sites and projects. Lord Kitchener and the Governor-General's visits to the sites synchronised with those of the Commission, who quickly approved both sites and projects. I then went on leave, and thus ended my 9 happy years in the Sudan.'
    (P. M. Tottenham in *The Sudan Diocesan Review*, 23, 67 (Autumn 1972) 25–6.)
12. Gaitskell, *Gazira*, pp. 100–4.
13. Interview with Frank Brown, former General Manager, Sudan Plantations Syndicate, 5 Nov 1978, Athelstaneford, Scotland. The work of an Agricul-

tural Inspector was immortalised in a well-known doggerel by H. G. Balfour-Paul:

Sweaty Block Inspector with gin-soaked arm-pits
Trotting through the cotton on an old brown mare,
With a cargo of horse-whips,
Whiskey-flasks, monocles,
Polo-sticks, poker-dice, and Lotion for the Hair.

Half-starved Tenant in his Standard Vanguard,
Mowing down a passing herd of tick-thic goats,
With a cargo of scent-bottles,
Tooth-sticks, prayer-mats,
Petitions to the Governor, and Ten Pound Notes.

Merissa-shop Proprietress from mosque-proud Tabat
Bouncing in a taxi on her big black bum,
With a cargo of beer-bottles,
Beer-bottles, beer-bottles,
Half a case of Sherry, and some Fine Old Rum.

14. K. C. P. Struvé to C. A. Willis, 'Handing-Over Notes', July 1926, SAD.
15. Sandison, 'Unfinished Memoirs', p. 46.
16. Interview with G. F. March, former Director of Agriculture, 10 Dec 1977 (Hawkhurst, England). The experience of March in Tokar is reminiscent of the Monthly Report from the Eastern Jabals, Nuba Mountains, for February 1940.

Um Berumbeita's a horrible sight,
Cotton unpicked and the ground is white:
Abbasia is all pretty clean;
Kalogi as well have little to glean;
Abu Gobeiha's record crop;
Talodi, on totals, comes out top.
Everyone else has worked like a brick,
But the old Baggari he *will* not pick,
The total is good and the prospects bright –
But Um Berumbeita's a horrible sight.

17. John Winder, 'Sudan Political Service Memoir', pp. 24–5, SAD.
18. Central Economic Board Minutes, No. 534, 2/5, Civil Secretary's Office, 13 Mar 1927, SAD.
19. C. A. Willis, Governor, Upper Nile, to Directors of Agriculture Department, Medical Services, and Secretary, Health and Education, 'New Proposals', 1931, SAD.
20. Owen, 'Sudan Days', p. 123, Rhodes House Library, Oxford.
21. Dr John F. Bloss, 'People of the Swamp: An Account of the Nilotic People of the Upper Nile Province in the Sudan Republic', p. 30, unpublished MS., in possession of the author. Also interview with Dr Bloss on 4 Dec 1977 (Woking, England).

22. Bloss, 'People of the Swamp', pp. 53–4.
23. Ibid. pp. 79–86.
24. Owen, 'Sudan Days', p. 129, Rhodes House Library, Oxford.
25. Richard Hill, *Sudan Transport: A History of Railway, Marine, and River Services in the Republic of the Sudan* (London, 1965) p. 99.
26. *The Song of the PWD* was a favourite at British Christmas parties in the Sudan:

Sing of the Public
    Works Department ever,
Sing a song of Juba town –
    The height of their endeavour.

Back to your crowbar,
    Your pickaxe and your shovel
And build us some more new houses,
Yes, build us some more new houses.
    'Cos ours let in the rain!

Sing a song of jerry-built houses,
    P.W.D.
Tell a tale of fearful spouses,
    P.W.D.
Cracks in the walls and leaks in ceilings,
Hamper our social dealings,
And offend our finer feelings
    P.W.D.

27. Public Works Department *Annual Report, 1935*, pp. 1–4, SAD.
28. Interview with Malcolm Lees, former Director of Public Works, 11 Nov 1978, Milford-on-Sea, England; W. R. Ahern, former Chief Mechanical Engineer, 3 Dec 1977, Kew, England; and with Adam Petrie, former Divisional Engineer, 4 Nov 1978, Arbroath, Scotland.
29. See Sir Stewart Symes, *Tour of Duty* (London, 1946), and Mohamed Omer Beshir, *Revolution and Nationalism in the Sudan* (New York, 1974) pp. 118–23.
30. Interview with Allan McCall, former Director of Agriculture, 30 Nov 1978, Great Abingdon, England.
31. Owen, 'Sudan Days', pp. 102–3, Rhodes House Library, Oxford.
32. Interview with C. B. Tracey, Sudan Political Service, 1923–48, and former Governor, Northern Province, 1944–8, on 11 Nov 1978, Lymington, England.
33. J. D. Tothill, unpublished memorandum, Ministry of Agriculture, Khartoum, quoted in Conrad C. Reining, *The Zande Scheme* (Evanston, 1966) p. 143.
34. Ibid.
35. McCall interview.
36. Petrie and Ahern interviews.
37. Dr John Bloss, 'Khartoum Diaries', pp. 32–3. In possession of the author.

38. Ibid. pp. 19, 33–4.
39. Lees interview.
40. See Sudan Government, 'Report of the Committee on the Sudanisation of the Civil Service', Khartoum, 17 June 1948, SAD.
41. Bloss, 'Khartoum Diaries', pp. 28–9.
42. 'Report on Colonial Recruitment, 1 Feb 1947', SAD.
43. McCall interview. Also see Lees interview and John Winder, 'Memoir', SAD.
44. Petrie interview.
45. McCall interview.
46. Governor-General to British officials, 17 Dec 1947, SAD.
47. McCall interview.
48. Bloss, 'Khartoum Dairies', p. 107.
49. Ibid. p. 182.
50. Richard Hill, 'Diary'.
51. Sir James Robertson, *Transition in Africa: From Direct Rule to Independence: A Memoir* (New York, 1974) p. ix.

6 The Thin White Line

JACK BERMINGHAM
and
ROBERT O. COLLINS

Merciful Lord, we beseech Thee to cast Thy bright beams of light upon our Mission, that its members being enlightened by the doctrines of Thy blessed Apostles and Evangelists may so walk in the light of Thy truth that they may attain to thy light of everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Collect of St John the Evangelist's Day.
The Prayer of the Gordon Memorial Mission.

On 3 December 1957, nearly one year after the independence of the Sudan, the Rt Rev. Bishop Llewellyn Henry Gwynne died in Epping, England. He was 94. As symbolic as the lowering of the flags at the Palace in Khartoum, the death of the beloved bishop marked the passing of an era in the history of Britain in the Sudan. Bishop Gwynne came to Khartoum in 1899, the year after the Battle of Omdurman as a missionary of the Church Missionary Society, and although consecrated the Suffragan Bishop of Khartoum in 1908, appointed Deputy Chaplain-General in France during the First World War, and thereafter Bishop in Egypt and the Sudan, he remained always at heart and in purpose a missionary. He was not only the symbol of the British Church in the Sudan, he was its inspiration, organiser and defender. By force of character and personality he brought the British community leadership in its faith and the Christianity of the Anglican Protestant Church to the Sudanese. To his flock, the British in the Sudan, he was 'Uncle Greatheart', the 'Abuna' (Ar., our father) and the dear old 'Bish'. His life set the example of the moral and ethical standards of the British Administration.

Even in those early days his complete integrity and sympathetic personality had gained the allegiance of a British community that was predominately masculine and military in composition. In homely

> language, by precept and example, he called for the reflection on the meaning of Christian profession. For him, a natural leader with a practical bent of mind, its implication was clear: it required the dedication of all his faculties and abundant energy to the service of the Cross.
>
> That was the source of his inspiration and the guiding motive of his life and labours. His approach to his fellow men was always an individual one, with a kindly tolerance of human frailties and the conviction that they could be overcome. His personal appeal was as counsellor and friend rather than censor. To countless men and women he lent a helping hand in time of stress. To countless others the example of his life and tireless ministry gave hope and encouragement.[1]

Upon the death of Gordon the Church Missionary Society of the Established Church of England had founded the Gordon Memorial Fund and upon the reconquest of the Sudan sought to begin the Christianisation of the Sudan at Khartoum in Gordon's name. The Society displayed little interest in the Southern Sudan at that time, for the memory of Gordon could most appropriately be consecrated by working in the Northern Sudan among the people to whom he was devoted and by whose hand he had died. Indeed the death of Gordon was the inspiration to Llewellyn Gwynne to spread Christianity throughout the Sudan. To Gwynne:

> Gordon was the Christian adventurer; ever since he was a lad Gordon felt a presence, a power, a guidance not his own, guiding him and controlling his life and actions. Everything he did he put his whole soul into with an inner consciousness of an urge to take certain actions and decisions and persevere with them whatever hardships or difficulties were ahead.[2]

Gwynne never lost the inspiration of Gordon and his martyrdom. After his death Lord Rugby, formerly Sir John Maffey, Governor-General of the Sudan, wrote.

> In a personal way he seemed to feel himself to be a chosen instrument for justifying all that General Gordon had done and suffered. The verdicts of history have not all been kind to Gordon, but reverence grows into the thing reverenced, and in defence of a noble tradition Bishop Gwynne built up a simple eloquence which stirred old echoes in all our hearts.

> Nobody with a sense of atmosphere could fail to link that spirit of service with the inspiration which Bishop Gwynne brought to all aspects of public and private life in the Sudan He came in the earliest days. No offer could tempt him to go elsewhere. Others came and went. He stayed, bridging the gulf between Cromer and Faruk, timeless it seemed as Old Nile.[3]

He arrived in Khartoum when missionaries were first permitted to travel to the Sudan. Although he had hoped to carry out evangelisation in Khartoum where Gordon had died among the Moslem population, he was forbidden. Lord Cromer was deeply suspicious of missionaries. He had had enough of Christian missionaries in Egypt and, like the Capitulations, was not going to have Christians proselytising in the Moslem Sudan. Kitchener informed Gwynne with imperious finality in January 1900 that he would not permit missionary work in the Northern Sudan, particularly since the Egyptians had spread rumours that Britain had conquered the country to impose Christianity on Sudanese Moslems. The missionary societies were dismayed and indignant. Gwynne's reaction was typical.

> The authorities are right to keep missionaries for a time from certain kinds of missionary work such as street preaching and tactless aggressive measures. But for Lord Cromer to come down here and promise that no missionary work should begin, and for Lord Salisbury to make it his business to warn us to keep quiet here is only pandering to a few fanatics at Cairo who are just as keen about throwing over British control as they are about keeping out Christianity. Lord Cromer knows or ought to know that we are on our way to the Pagans. Whatever part he is playing in keeping back Christian missions from the Sudan is a part that some day Britain will be ashamed of. If they think that British justice and natural gifts for colonizing–civilization are of themselves going to lift up these Sudanese, they are very much mistaken.[4]

Numerous British officials had privately pressed Gwynne to urge the Church Missionary Society to direct its efforts towards the peoples of the Southern Sudan, and in March the Deputy Governor-General, Colonel H. W. Jackson, reaffirmed the prohibition against proselytising in the North, urged Gwynne to go south, and above all to 'go slowly, Gwynne, it will be best for all of us'.[5] Wingate already had enough fanatical Moslems on his hands in the Northern Sudan. Cromer agreed.

The Church Missionary Society, however, openly regarded missions in the South as but a temporary obstacle to operations in the North, and despite repeated refusals stubbornly clung to the hope that they would eventually be permitted to seek converts among the Moslems.

To keep him out of trouble Wingate appointed Gwynne chaplain to British troops in Khartoum, with whom his athletic prowess and straightforward manner made him popular. His intelligence checked his evangelism and convinced him that his only chance of success at Khartoum was to cultivate the important British officials and gradually wear down their administrative prejudice against missionaries in a Moslem land. He played soccer with the troops, golf with the Sirdar. He joined the Khartoum lodge of the Masons, which Wingate regarded as the real bond of the British during their early decades in the Sudan. His tactics were not without success. Wingate was captivated, particularly when the golf scores were compared; Lady Wingate was charmed. Gwynne recorded that she was 'moral but not spiritual; played the organ but was against missionaries. She doesn't know what to make of me.'[6]

On 7 January 1903 Cromer arrived at Khartoum from a tour of the White Nile during which he had visited the Catholic mission at Lul and the American mission at Doleib Hill. He came away impressed with their devotion and the work they were doing among the Shilluk and the Nuer. Encouraged by the Christian start in the Southern Sudan he observed: 'I do not think that the time has yet come when mission work should be allowed in the Moslem part of the Sudan.'[7] Gwynne was crushed and bitterly wrote that: 'it seemed to me . . . as if someone had smashed my face in public, only much more than that, it was as if He whom I serve was dishonoured at that table'.[8] But Gwynne did not give up. On the following day he asked for an interview and once more pleaded for permission to begin work. When Wingate added his support, even the indomitable Cromer gave way. He allowed Gwynne to establish a CMS school in Khartoum open to all. 'You know Gwynne', Wingate concluded, 'this is a very great concession on the part of Lord Cromer.'[9] Athletic prowess and personality had triumphed where evangelism and theology could not.

Cromer's concession did not mean a reversal of policy. Proselytisation was still forbidden in the Moslem Sudan, but the demands of the missionaries, particularly the CMS, pressed Cromer to define his missionary policy ever more precisely. Even Cromer the Proconsul could not long remain immune to the demands of Exeter Hall. He tried to persuade the Society to give up its aspirations in the North and follow the Catholics and Presbyterians to the Southern Sudan. His pleas were

ignored, but Cromer persisted, arguing that to those who demanded religious liberty in principle in order to proselytise in the Sudan in practice, a large field of activity had been opened to them in the Southern Sudan. The populous lands of the South could more than absorb the energies of the CMS. The Presbyterians and Catholics had already begun; why not the Anglicans? Gwynne surrendered gracefully and prepared to go to the South.

Six members of the Gordon Memorial Sudan Mission arrived at Mongalla on the upper Nile in January 1906. They were at once discouraged from settling there by the British officials who regarded the British missionaries with suspicion and concern lest they create trouble in the province. They were advised to go ninety miles downstream to Bor, and there they established first their station at Malek among the Dinka.

> Later on he [Lt-Col. Angus Cameron, Governor, Mongalla Province] seemed to think he had gone too far and wished us not to settle permanently inland till a Govt. station was established there. I need hardly say I left all negotiations with him entirely to Gwynne, whose tact and patience are admirable but even Gwynne got to a point where he could give no more and told Cameron plainly that he was condemning the missionaries for a year to a most unhealthy place and with but few people to work amongst and wrote Cameron a careful letter in which he told him what he was going to say to the Sirdar, Wingate.[10]

The combination of his friendship for Gwynne and his genuine religious commitment and belief that the Christian duty of his officials was the moral foundation of British administration in the Sudan, helped Wingate to a satisfactory compromise. Gwynne's prayers were answered. 'I have worked every possible string all the way down and by the help of our God we shall leap over the walls of opposition.'[11] He did not perceive that this dispute was only the first of many between the demands of Caesar and the expectations of God.

In order to provide some experience for the new missionaries at Malek the Rev. Dr A. R. Cook, a veteran missionary of the CMS for some fifteen years in Uganda, was asked to assist the British missionaries in the Sudan to establish their station. In his Progress Report to the Parent Committee he reviewed the work of the mission in which he clearly reaffirmed the evangelical objectives as the first priority of the Gordon Memorial Mission.

If one thing more than another is impressed upon the mind of the missionary as he is permitted to work in the mission field year after year, it is the absolute truth of the old truism (reverently speaking) that God answers prayer. It will be a matter of no surprise therefore to the many who have been praying for the success of the new venture in the Sudan that God has answered believing prayer and that the tentative beginnings of the Mission bid fair to develop into strong foundations, while the door of opportunity has been set so widely open that the eager labourers can scarcely grasp the boundless opportunities before them. Seldom has a mission been started with more prayer; from the earliest supplications of the Hero of the Sudan as he stood at his beleaguered post and his gaze wandered towards the Equatorial Provinces of the Sudan, where he had spent so much toil and travail of soul over – witness his earlier journals – to the spontaneous invitation given by Lord Cromer and the Sirdar to the CMS to evangelize those vast regions itself surely the long looked for answer to the prayers of many for years past, the mission has been conceived and cradled in prayer and therefore the Committee of this Society which has 'attempted great things for God' may surely 'expect great things from God'.

Before giving a brief account of the present condition of the mission it will be well to indicate how the mission itself is not something abruptly new in the policy of the Society but is itself a part of an organic whole, being in fact only a link, albeit a very important one in the chain of mission stations seen by the prophetic eye of Krapf 60 years ago as he laboured at his lonely post at Mombasa. How the heart of that old veteran would have rejoiced could he have seen how the enormous gaps that once existed in his hypothetical chain were being steadily filled up till as the Church of Christ lengthened her cords as well as strengthened her stakes a thin 'white' line spanned the Dark Continent from shore to shore.

The critic may remark that the planting of a single mission in the centre of an area of several hundred thousand square miles is a condition of affairs very far removed from the evangelization of that area. Granted, but the point is that the Society has been led in the providence of God to select strategic points from which influence for good will radiate out to perhaps great distance. A well thought out plan of campaign directed from such a strategic centre will include not only direct pastoral and teaching work but medical, educational and industrial agencies the effect of which will be felt for many miles round, while the itinerating journeys of the missionaries will carry the

> Glad Tidings much further afield. . . . Given a due supply of Spirit-filled men, and later of women, and it requires no special courage to prophesy that Dinkaland may well follow in the footsteps of Uganda. It must be remembered that in these pagan countries of Central Africa there is no entrenched and rooted national religious bigotry to overcome for they have not yet been Islamized, indeed their whole experience of Mohammadanism has been such as to make them loathe it, for as they plaintively say, first the Arabs came and then the Dervishes both promising protection and friendship but both pillaging, raiding, and destroying carrying off their women and children for slaves and wiping out whole districts. Their simple nature worship will probably offer but slight resistance when fairly contrasted with the Gospel of the Grace of God which offers a true liberty not only of the body but of the spirit and points the way to a life beyond the grave.[12]

Cook's beliefs and visions could not be sustained. Without the discipline of the Roman Catholics or the determination of the Presbyterians, the Anglican missionaries were soon divided over the operation and future of the mission. When Dr Cook returned to Uganda the differences could no longer be resolved. Inexperienced, selfish and opinionated, his successors soon proved incapable of carrying on the task to which they were deeply committed – the evangelisation of the peoples of the Southern Sudan. Although they identified the problems and their source – 'these temporary hitches . . . are merely a proof that the Devil will not surrender his own without a struggle, We Know Who is for us' – doubt began to erode the confidence of the missionaries in their undertaking:[13]

> Perhaps you will say 'but when does the Missionary work come in?' Well I wish I could tell you of numbers of men, women, and children crowding round us, eager to listen and to learn the wondrous truths which are stored in our missions [but I cannot]. . . . We must be prepared here to work very, very slowly and not to expect to see the fruits of our labours for many years perhaps, and it may be not even then. It is the life more than the lip which is going to preach Missionary sermons here.[14]

To the missionaries their failings were not of themselves, for none could question their energy, enthusiasm and faith, but the unhealthy site of the station which incapacitated some missionaries, the lack of support

by the government and its officials, and the indifference or resiliency of the local population to the Christian message overwhelmed the inexperienced and sapped the spiritual strength of the contentious. Quinine helped to alleviate malaria, but it was a prophylatic not a cure for official suspicions.

> I regret to say that the mission has not received the sympathy and support from the Government which our missionaries were led to expect. Through the indifference and apparent dislike of missions the Mudir [Governor] seems to have thwarted any effort to extend even the ordinary courtesies due from one English gentleman to others seem to be absent in his case. . . . As to Evangelistic work that will be very slow indeed. The mental capacity of a Denka at the present moment is very small and full of cow and corn. He cannot listen for more than a few moments and when you have made him tell you back what you have told him he then asks for some corn or tobacco because hunger is hurting. It will be a long time before we use our gross of slates![15]

Gwynne's intelligent and practical mind, however, soon got to the heart of the matter.

> ours [missionaries of the CMS] are very much younger than the missionaries of the American United Presbyterians and the Italian Roman Catholics. This accounts for the amount of illness, for the mistakes, for the errors in judgment which indeed one must expect from men of their age, men who left home for the first time 18 months ago. . . . Mistakes have been made – had to be made by such young men in so great an enterprise, but they are mistakes of good, holy men who have the highest and noblest aims, ideals of duty.[16]

Only Gwynne's intervention and intimate relationship with Wingate kept the mission alive, but by 1908 not even his optimism and full measure of Christian charity would belie the failures of the British missionaries. In May 1908 the mission was closed and did not reopen until the end of the year. Wingate had enthusiastically encouraged and supported the Gordon Memorial Mission, resolved differences between the missionaries and his officials, and quietly protected his fellow co-religionists and countrymen against the growing strength of the Italian Catholic mission in the Bahr al-Ghazal. He was dismayed and annoyed at the British failure and began to use his most potent political weapon. He

advised Gwynne that if the Anglicans did not seize the initiative in the Southern Sudan he could not restrain the Catholics.

> It was no threat of the Sirdar when he mentioned the persistent requests of the Roman Catholics for more stations in the Sudan to take any of our sphere away from us but merely to point out in view of the suggested reduction of our staff on the Upper Nile that at the rate the Roman Catholics were pouring priests into the Bahr al-Ghazal he could not for any length of time keep the C.M.S. sphere unoccupied.[17]

Wingate put it more bluntly to J. F. V. Buxton of the Parent Committee of the CMS. 'If anything happens on the Upper Nile which compels CMS to move to Uganda, I shall not be able to keep out the R.C.'s.'[18]

Gwynne did not need Wingate's ominous threats for him to reinvigorate the Anglican missionary effort. Despite the financial plight of the Society new missionaries were recruited to continue the work at Malek and to meet an even greater challenge across the river. In December 1909 King Leopold, sovereign of the Congo Free State, died, and in accordance with the Anglo-Congolese Agreement of 1906 the Lado Enclave was transferred to the Sudan. Although the Society took up this new challenge – indeed given the purpose of their mission they could hardly refuse – it was done so with reluctance. The Society had just passed through its most difficult financial years, during which expenditures far exceeded receipts. It first sought interdenominational support from other Protestant societies. There was 'the Sudan band' from Australia and New Zealand who had been inspired by W. Gardner's THE REPROACH OF ISLAM to evangelise among 'pagan tribes threatened by the incursions of Mohammedan preachers'.[19] The Roman Catholics, however, were even more dangerous than the Moslems and the Eastern Sudan Evangelical Mission offered to provide financial support to keep the Catholics at bay, but their constitution and aims were too fundamentalist for the CMS to accept their money.[20] In the end, however, Wingate's intervention again proved decisive.

> I know that they [the Roman Catholics] would welcome ... an opportunity of largely increasing their stations, and in that case unless British Protestant Missions showed a similar activity, the Southern Districts would probably be Christianized far more largely by the former than the latter.[21]

While on leave in London in July 1912 Wingate preserved the Azande for the British missionaries if the 'CMS could strongly say that they intended to evangelize the Azande' by opening a station at Yambio in the autumn. The Society agreed.[22] Having secured the Society's base in the Southern Sudan, Gwynne joined the British Army at the outbreak of the war and became an instant Major-General and the Deputy Chaplain-General to the British Forces in France. On the upper Nile the work of evangelization continued under the direction of Archdeacon Archibald Shaw, who had been in charge of local operations since the elevation of Gwynne as Suffragan Bishop of Khartoum in 1908. By the end of the First World War the CMS had made considerable advances and there was no longer any question that it would not survive as a powerful force in the modernisation of the Southern Sudan. Even the Moslem threat from Northern Sudanese soldiers and traders was receding. In 1917 the last Moslem troops were withdrawn from Mongalla Province, replaced by an Equatorial Corps consisting of English-speaking, Southern Sudanese. By 1926 additional Equatorial troops had been recruited and trained to take the place of the Moslem garrisons in the Bahr al-Ghazal. The logical conclusion to the withdrawal of Northern Sudanese troops followed soon after in 1930 when the Sudan Government actively sought to eliminate all other Moslem, Arabic, Northern Sudanese influence from the Southern Sudan. With a monopoly on education, the support of the Administration and the power of the Government employed to keep out Islam and Arabic, the Christian missionaries were given a respite from Moslem pressure. The greatest threat now came, not from the outside, but from their Christian rivals within.

Cromer and Wingate had foreseen the possibilities of religious conflict if different Christian denominations were turned loose in the Southern Sudan. Even if their own intelligence and judgement had not perceived the potential problems of religious rivalries, they had the tragic experience of the religious wars in Uganda to remind them. Thus, if missionary societies were permitted to go to the upper Nile, they were to be strictly segregated. Each missionary society seeking to work in the Southern Sudan – the Italian Catholics, the British Anglicans and the American Presbyterians – were given a sphere within which to carry out their education and evangelistic activities, but under no circumstances were they to proselytise outside the boundaries set for them on the map of the Southern Sudan by the Governor-General. The missionaries could preach the Word of Christ, but as far away from rival de-

nominations as the British authorities could manage. Designed to resolve any potential problems between the Government and the missionary societies the principle of the sphere system was continually compromised by practical problems. Nevertheless, no other issue of missionary activity in the Southern Sudan haunted the conscience of the missionaries and their principles of spiritual freedom while harassing exasperated British administrators as 'the Sphere System'. From its inception the Catholics refused to accept the Sphere System since it violated the fundamental tenet of all Christian proselytisation that there are no secular boundaries to the Teachings of Christ. The British Protestants were more practical if not hypocritical. They too had to agree that Christianity knew no secular barriers, but were sufficiently realistic to know that they could not compete for pagan souls against the resources of the Catholic Church without the protection of the Sphere System. Gwynne resolved this dilemma.

> I quite agree with your [Baylis] principle. We ought to recognize no boundaries to our operations for Christ, but as the Government and the R.C.'s have made them let us keep them for the present. The time will come when these spheres must be broken down, but not now. Please keep them going for the present and trust your man on the spot.[23]

The theme of contradictory objectives between the religious and the secular authorities begun when the British missionaries first arrived at Mongalla in 1906, now assumed enlarged proportions and deeper tensions. None knew better than the missionary that the path to Christ was never easy, but the ultimate goal – the conversion to Christ must never be compromised. Nowhere in the Sudan did this objective face its greatest challenge than in Omdurman. Whether in the Moslem, Northern Sudan or in the non-Christian South the aim of the British missionaries was unequivocal. Indeed, their purpose had been defined centuries before and had survived schism, doubt and metaphysical confusion; cultural differences, geographical disparities and religious rivalries. Put simply by Miss E. K. W. Maxwell, the aim of the British missionary was 'to lay foundations on which shall be built a strong Church of Christ in the Sudan'.[24] Or as Miss H. A. Norton wrote in 1931: 'We covet the Sudan best for the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.'[25] Their purpose was so clear, so simple, so straightforward that it was never questioned by themselves. The means, however, were, for how best to build the Church of Christ in the Sudan was a subject of constant scrutiny, self-conscious debate and frequent disagreement which re-

flected not only the views and experience of the missionaries in the Sudan, but the opinions and beliefs of those with the CMS at home in Britain. There were those who vehemently maintained that no secular phenomena should influence the dissemination of Christ's Teachings. Such advocates were more numerous in Britain than in the Sudan. Comfortable and secure in London, they had little appreciation for the realities of Omdurman:

> you cannot describe to a meeting at home the vileness and sin which are never far from the daily path even of our lady missionaries. If it were possible to make those at home who send out missionaries realise these things, it would surely make them more incessant and earnest in their prayers.[26]

Dr Lloyd continually had to remind his audience at home of the practical problems of Christian evangelism in a Moslem land which did not always fulfil the expectations of the more fervent members of the Society in the United Kingdom.

> In a fanatical Mohammed Country such as the Sudan, the actual evangelistic work of our institutions is one unceasing problem. To some of us it always seems that not nearly enough is being done. They feel that nothing should hinder the fullest, fiercest, more constant presentation to the people of the Gospel. To others, no less enthusiastic, it seems that the evangelistic work being done in so fanatical a country has only been rendered possible by years of patient plodding . . . these workers feel that the results so far attained are by no means negligable, and that a few more years of patient, loving tactful presentation of the Love of God in Christ will win an increasing result.
>
> There seem to be just two fundamental rules.
>
> (1) Having decided to preach the Gospel in the Northern Sudan through institutional works see that those institutions in buildings, equipment, in the technical qualifications of the staff in their whole existence are first rate.
>
> (2) Let all that you do be done in Love. Opposition there will always be. Every inquirer or convert has got to take up his cross. But courteous sympathy, loving presentation of our message, in life as well as in word will keep us from going wrong.[27]

The British missionaries in the Sudan were acutely aware of the conditions under which they lived and worked.

> Our methods of presenting the Gospel have to be adapted to local conditions. My address to a group of out-patients is greeted either with stony silence or vigorous protest. The same address, given personally to two or three convalescent patients in the ward is received with courteous and interested consideration.[28]

All the British missionaries seemed to agree that in the Sudan the way to build the Church of Christ was to heal the sick and to treat the mind. Health and education were the two vehicles by which the Word could be transported throughout the land. Although viewed only as a means to an end by the missionaries, they found support from a government which looked upon these two activities as an end to a means. To heal the sick was always more popular, if not persuasive, than to impart alien information, and the CMS hospitals in the North in Omdurman and in the South at Lul flourished. The work of the medical missionary was not always glamorous.

> General view of the work of the missionary accomplished during the year comprises 'checking', putting away stores, gardening, mending, and making all the linen of the hospital, a variety of jobs from mending clocks to making towel-horses, finding out how to remain on a native donkey saddle (no stirrups or pommel) when called to go out to a case in the town, learning Arabic, assisting in any capacity in the operating theatre, starting the new women's ward with no stock to start it on, nursing sick missionaries, and generally supervising the nursing, cleaning, catering, and everything else in the whole hospital.[29]

As for the missionary doctor the work was gruelling and selfless. Dr Edmund Lloyd had to remind the Society that he was not an idle incumbent on their paltry payroll.

> I myself . . . am returning for my twenty-second year of work in the Sudan after getting through last year without a breakdown by the skin of my teeth. Remember that for six days a week, I have to work as hard and as quickly as may be, goaded thereto by a pathetic crowd of inpatients and outpatients: that twice daily I have to give evangelistic addresses; and that, on Sundays, I have really to set up and put my back into it. The Sunday morning Arabic service is the crown of the week's work, the ward work can by no means be neglected, and in the evening is our little English Service to which a number of people outside the hospital come.[30]

To the missionaries who laboured daily within the confinements of the Moslem society of Omdurman they sometimes seemed to be in the comfortable rear echelon compared with the hardships of the front-line missionaries in the South.

> It is one of our privileges, who live in the lap of luxury within the pale of civilization, to be able to speed on their way those who are going to brave isolation – lions and mosquitoes and cannibals and the discomforts of such things as bullock carts or no carts at all and tents and grass huts and only a travelling bath and a cupful of water.[31]

At Lul in the Southern Sudan Dr Kenneth G. Fraser and his wife established a hospital among the Moru in 1920 where he laboured long hours until his death on 9 January 1935, treating thousands of patients every year while preaching the Gospel.

> In the morning we just have a hymn and prayers and then set to work. The Babies are yelling and the ulcers are smelling, and everyone is wildly speculating as to who will be last and who first to be attended to. And so we take our opportunity in the evening when their minds are receptive.
>
> Here we daily try to practise what Schweitzer calls the art of preaching without words and in the evening at sunset we love our daily Gospel service on the hospital verandah. The soil is primitive, almost painfully so and infinite patience is required but we are sure of the seed which is the Word of God and we are only concerned with getting it into the right place.[32]

So great the need in the South with its many tropical diseases and so successful was Dr Fraser at winning confidence among both the Moru, but also their more conservative Nilotic neighbours that in 1921 'some sympathetic chiefs seeing us one day more than usually driven, assured us that when we had cured all the sick in the Moru tribe, we should then have nothing to do but lie in our Hammocks all day'.[33] That year Dr Fraser personally treated over 2000 patients. The material rewards were virtually none, the spiritual satisfactions many. In 1926 he wrote that his six years since founding the hospital at Lul 'have been the happiest years of our life', and with every passing year the ability to bring a few Sudanese into the Christian Church through the magic of medicine produced intense personal gratification.[34]

> Both my wife and I feel that what we gave out of ourselves to those

> delightful people, in the early days when they were still savage, we are gettingback from them in Christian fellowship especially with the few who have learnt to 'walk in the spirit'.[35]

By 1927 over 400 Southerners came to the Sunday service at Lul Church 'built under the shadow of a tree at the foot of which in former days slaves were brought to be classified according to value before being tied by the neck in gangs'.[36] Slowly Dr Fraser wrote as early as 1922, 'definite signs of a seeking after something deeper than education or relief from suffering and that a certain number would readily declare their faith in Jesus Christ if called upon to do so'.[37]

Doctors in the Sudan were few and missionary doctors even fewer. Thus the main evangelical effort had to come through education. The school was a more pervasive and more easily established institution than a hospital whose instructors required less training than a physician and consequently were more readily obtainable. By definition the missionary is a teacher, and since literacy was so closely allied with the spread of the Gospel, education became the principal medium of proselytisation. Moreover, mission strategy was dependent upon the rapid dissemination of Christianity. There would never be the human or material resources from Britain alone to build the Christian Church in the Sudan. This objective could only be accomplished by the Sudanese themselves, who as teachers would establish out-schools to train yet more Christians until they multiplied and carried the Christian message to the most remote corners of this vast land. It was a chain reaction which required a detonator, the Mission School.

As the first CMS mission at Malek had tragically demonstrated, it was not always a simple matter to convince the Sudanese of the value of an alien education despite the fact that it was reported from Malek in 1930 that 'the old spirit of pig-headed independence is breaking down'.[38] As late as 1937 the Rev. R. S. Macdonald wrote from Zaraf Island.

> In spite of much propaganda, we have failed to get as many school boys as we should like. . . . The Nuers here have no experience of education and no desire for it. . . . One suspects that the boys sent are those considered useless for anything else.[39]

Or if they could attract students to the school the link between education and evangelism, which appeared so obvious in theory, was not automatic in practice.

> The condition of the people is so primitive that it is difficult to imagine the obstacles which have to be surmounted in turning a raw native boy, though of the highest class in a tribe, into a 'Christian Gentleman'. Power of the Gospel is working – boys showing reliability and a sense of responsibility – but of the purely evangelistic work the results are not so encouraging. We have a small Church on the Govt. post, though work in such a place is anything but easy. We have Sunday Services and weekly meetings and classes in the Church and a few of the military police are regular attenders and two of them are catechumens. . . . It is more and more plain that the hope for the evangelisation of the district lies in the boys who are living with us during the school terms and daily learning the Word.[40]

To the despair of the missionaries attendance at the boarding school at the mission station was regarded as the only way to become a Christian, a view which if allowed to persist would effectively stifle evangelization to the heathen masses beyond the mission compound. 'It is still very difficult to fight the idea that to be a Christian means to come and live at the Mission station.'[41] But teachers were trained, and they did go out and teach. The missionaries were uneasy.

> I would especially ask for prayers for the elder boys in the school. There are some who will very soon be men and will have to return to their villages. We don't want any to go back who cannot be teachers and we don't want any teachers who are not Christians. What we want to see in these big boys is a definite change of heart through the Lord Jesus Christ received into the heart and life as Saviour and Master. If we can but see this the future of the work in this district is assured.[42]

The Rev. E. C. Gore wrote from Yambio in August 1927 where he had thirteen out-schools.

> A fresh impetus had been given to evangelistic work on the part of the native Christians who had been encouraged to go out to surrounding villages on Sundays or Saturday to the more distant ones. As the result of this weekly preaching some have come forward as learners. . . . I regard the progress in the country as a most hopeful sign for it had seemed for a time as if we had got into an isolated and stagnant state and were reaching only those who came to the station itself.[43]

There were, however, backsliders to the new influences of civilisation which have 'rushed in like a mighty sea upon those pagan tribes'.[44] Some were sucked into sin by the secularism of the government.

> The influence of secularism seems to be apparent to a great extent and is obviously luring some of the professing believers to the more attractive government positions. A number of Christians, too, it is sad to say, have fallen in other ways perhaps more grossly. . . . But on the other hand, the unmistakable faith and absolute consecration of some of the Christians and catechumens manifests beyond doubt the working of the Spirit of God . . . God is undoubtedly calling out His people, notwithstanding the humorous satanic drawbacks.[45]

Others were backsliders to more grievous sins or rather old customs.

> Some thirty odd [Dinka boys] are being prepared for baptism, but they need a great deal of prayer, as the Devil is very strongly entrenched and is making repeated attacks to get hold of some of them. . . . This year . . . the most leading light and one who has done most noble work in helping Archdeacon Shaw in translating the Scriptures has fallen into the sin of bigamy. After much prayer and continual striving he still holds to his way, and has had to be cut off from the fellowship of the Christian Community.[46]

The Rev. E. C. Gore at Yambio himself complained of backsliders employed as informants by the anthropologist E. E. Evans-Pritchard and in exasperation declared that 'the Zande seems an expert in passive resistance; he is like plastic clay which lacks the quality of hardening'.[47]

Women's education was a particular problem for the British missionaries to which they devoted much time and effort. In the North the cultural prejudice against educating women was an enormous obstacle to improve the role of Sudanese women in society let alone hoping for a conversion to Christianity. Yet it was precisely the fact that girls were second-class citizens which made them appear more vulnerable to Christian proselytisation than their brothers. In the South there were no Islamic cultural strictures as to the place of women. Their position in society may have been more mobile, but was inextricably intertwined with the mores of a male-dominated culture. Here the task of the missionary took on an additional dimension. Not only was the education designed to make women more aware of their potential beyond bride-wealth and childbearing, but they were essential to provide Christian wives for Christian husbands leaving the mission schools as teachers.

> We must have Christian women if we are successfully to combat immorality and polygamy. A Christian family would be a far stronger centre and far more secure against temptation and attack than a Christian man can ever hope to be.[48]

In the North the British missionary educationalists sought to relate their teaching to home life, replacing academic subjects with practical courses designed to manage the household and to demonstrate the practical applications of the Scriptures. 'It is then our aim to prepare the women of the Sudan to take their places and fulfil their appointed task in the Christian Sudan of the future.'[49]

> I feel our aim ought to be to fit them for the lives we know they will have to live in the future, and not to count the value of the school from the number of girls it sends on to the Central School for higher education. . . .[50]

The practical curriculum began in the most elementary school, the Murada School in Omdurman.

> The first half of September we were busy getting suitable apparatus prepared in Arabic or with Arabic figures for our little ones, and also preparing the room. We have now started with 20 small children from 4–7 and my teacher and students are slowly grasping what our aim is in educating these little ones in the 'Play Way'. At first some of the mothers complained that they would not send the children 'just to play' but an 'open morning' when all the mothers were invited to come to see what we were doing, has changed many of them and they were very pleased with all they saw.
>
> They have had many stories told them beside the Bible stories and one day as I was asking them what stories they liked best a small Sudanese child (a Moslem) interrupted some others saying, 'The best story of all is the Jesus Story'. We do pray that these little ones may be led to love the Lord Jesus from their childhood and that our teachers may lay a firm foundation for an abiding love and faith in Him as they grow older.[51]

In the South the role of the missionary wife was to promote girls' education by running a boarding-school. Mrs Gore had a rather flourishing girls' school at Yambio with a curriculum of native handicrafts, weaving and pottery. Mrs Price at Malek had a school with four girls, and Mrs Macdonald had three girls at Akot in contrast to a

vigorous boys' school with some eighty boys. Girls' education remained painfully limited and those who learned an alien education let alone became Christians, were not always considered 'good wives' if not married to Christian men and thrust back into the traditional society.

The life of the British missionary was never easy. Indeed, the members of the Political Service admired their fortitude and perseverance. The missionaries died – the Rev. W. 'Willie' Hadow of blackwater fever. They brought their families to Africa, and they became ill.

> Doctor Fraser told us we must get our little daughter Kathleen out of the country at once. After nearly losing her twice on the path we caught the Oct. 8 boat down river . . . reached Port Sudan about Oct. 21 where Kathleen was so ill that the doctor gave up hope and sent her to hospital to die. However, when the steamer arrived we took her on board unconscious. On reaching Suez I left my wife and child to go to England alone, whilst I returned to Yambio via Cairo arriving at Yambio about Dec. 4. On Dec. 22 I was left in charge of Yambio. But such bad news arrived from England of my wife's inability to get shelter – this too with a child who was still trembling on the brink of death and also a little one expected – all this so got on my nerves that I was forced to leave Yambio and go to England – with Mr. Shaw's permission – and at my expense.[52]

There was loneliness which was not fully alleviated by a leave programme by which a missionary received an annual holiday in the Sudan alternated with a short furlough in England. Virtually every missionary has recorded how they returned to the Sudan spiritually and physically reinvigorated from a leave in Britain. The holiday in the Sudan was less successful, frequently as lonely as the station they had left behind and particularly unsatisfying to the lady missionaries.

> One of our lady missionaries, whose companion had had to leave unexpectedly, was heard to remark that she always continued her afternoon walk till it was quite dark, because the empty house in the dusk was more 'creepy' than at any time of the day. How was that for a holiday? Remember that, when at their station some of our lady missionaries are entirely alone, living by themselves and also without English friends nearby.[53]

Loneliness was all too often accompanied by the discouragement that haunts anyone who seeks to convert but the pain of which can only be

felt by those who attempt to convince others of their convictions without success.

> It is so easy to become disheartened when reading accounts of baptisms in pagan lands, and to wonder whether it is that one is lacking in enthusiasm or whether one is rather less Christian than other missionaries. It is possible that a long stay in a Mohammedan country does produce that effect. Enthusiasm is nourished by result and it is difficult to continue enthusiastic while one beats one's head against a stone wall.[54]

Language was, of course, always a barrier to the missionary purpose, particularly in the Northern Sudan. In the South the language of administration was either the vernacular or English. At Yei C. L. Price could manage within two months to be understood in the local vernacular, Bangala, with its simple grammar and some six hundred words. In the North, however, Arabic was essential and to many a British missionary a frustrating obstacle to evangelization. Upon taking over from Miss Jackson at the Central School in Omdurman Dorothy Pole wrote.

> I found it quite difficult especially as I was by no means good at Arabic. The most trying thing was the quarrels which arose between girls and teachers and teachers and servants. I found it practically impossible to find out the true cause of the quarrels but fortunately they blew over.[55]

Dr H. N. Wright of the CMS Hospital in Omdurman was even more emphatic that Arabic was necessary for every British missionary, not just doctors and teachers. The British Protestants, however, always seemed to be obsessed by the value of Arabic to their enemies, thus the need to learn it, and never really troubled themselves to look upon Arabic as also the language of their fellow Christians.

> With no clergymen in the Mission and no Church of England parson who can speak the language in the N. Sudan it is absolutely impossible to do any fruitful evangelistic work. How can we form a Church with no Arabic-speaking clergyman? We laymen are doing our best but need a qualified clergyman. Either we must have a suitable parson immediately or we must be prepared to feed that [the American Presbyterian] Church. A further scheme would be unity

with the Americans but this is far from being valued at present, for the Americans do not trust us nor our theology.[56]

Spoken Sudanese Arabic had to be accompanied by a reading knowledge as well. From the Society's schools, which were Christian islands in a Moslem sea, proselytisation would remain isolated, and the Northern Sudan Mission at Omdurman soon began the use of Christian literature in Arabic for evangelistic purposes, placing an added burden on missionaries struggling to speak the colloquial language.

> It is now clear that Sudanese Arabic, the colloquial language of the people ... can be fairly represented in the normal characters. The advantage of this for a semi-literate people is obvious. ... New opportunity to pioneer new literature and issue stories of the Gospel.[57]

It was, however, Islam which troubled the British missionaries the most. Not only was the combination of militant Islam in the society of the Northern Sudan a barrier to Christian evangelism, but Islam was one of the great monotheistic religions of the world, a religion of the Book, which could hardly be dismissed as a barbarous cult like so many of the animistic religions of the Southern Sudan. Each missionary had to satisfy his own conscience to explain to himself why Christianity rather than Islam. It was not always easy.

> I have been very conscious of the fact that I have no stirring tales of converts to relate. These happenings have made me realise the necessity of justifying my position and giving some explanation of the fact that there are practically no apparent converts from Mohammedanism after more than twenty years of missionary effort in the Sudan.
>
> I have therefore tried to think this out for myself and see if I really think the effort worth while; so that I may have an answer to give to those who decry missions or ask to see the results. I have found that the most difficult problems one experiences in this connection is that of combating half-truths. So many good people take comfort in the fact that the Moslem religion teaches people to worship the true God and certainly has some moral good in it, for example, enjoying abstinence from alcoholic liquor. They think, in a vague way, that it is quite a good religion and, anyhow, good enough for strange Eastern folk. These estimable people, who, as a rule, examine politics far more

closely than religion, know too that any attempt to tamper with religion gives an excuse for revolt, and this convinces them that it is better to leave the Moslem to his religion. So people may well get a wrong impression and think either that missionary work among Moslems is a failure or that it is unnecessary.

Such impressions force those of us who have been set to work amongst Moslems to examine more closely our own beliefs and ideas about God and to search for signs of spiritual advancement among people in contact with Christianity. We need to produce evidence for ourselves and others showing wherein the Christian is superior to the Moslem Faith.

As to Christianity being superior to Mohammedanism there is of course no doubt on the part of those who have taken any pains to study the Mohammedan religion or have been in real contact with Moslem people. . . . my small experience has convinced me . . . the Moslem religion fails right at the root of all things, namely the conception of God. They have not Christ's revelation of God as Love and the Father of All. It is because we have had the true revelation of God and realised through the Incarnation of the value of Human Life our civilisation is so much higher than that of the Moslem world. . . . If, when we have roused the people of the Sudan to think and to see that the Moslem conception of God makes Him less noble than some men and women He has created, we can show them the true picture of God in Jesus Christ; thus I believe they will acknowledge Him as the Word of God, a living Word that became flesh for us men and our salvation.[58]

Once having resolved the intellectual and spiritual challenge of Islam the British missionary sought to contest its presence in its very heartland, indeed buoyed up by the 'very hardness of Islam'.

The more one realises the essential hardness of Islam, the more I believe that even a faintly Christ-like attitude of service and love to God and man cannot but surprise the Sudanese, arrest their attention, and in due time lead them 'to go and do likewise'.[59]

Or as Mr R. Whitwell could write nearly ten years later.

So we are at the stage of seed-sowing in many different directions. In the Sudan, Islam seems to hold its adherents with undiminished power. . . . When you meet the great bodies of Sheikhs present at the

> official receptions and realise a little all they represent, it is no wonder that men hesitate before leaving the fortress of Islam. The Government attitude is still that of conciliation of Moslem sentiment as the first plank in its policy. . . . Many feel that a final settlement of the political question, with the removal of fear that Egypt may some day return to power in the Sudan would free a multitude to confess Christ openly.[60]

All of which led to the continued plea for more recruits for this vast land devoid of Christ.

> There is not a single missionary of any Society in the thickly populated agricultural districts of Dongola and Berber, between Atbara and the Egyptian border along the Nile. . . . I look forward to the day when the CMS can spare us men to 'occupy' the Northern Sudan in some real sense. At present we are simply islands of influence in three large towns and in the Nuba Mountains.[61]

Success finally came for the British missionaries in Omdurman. In 1933 three young Sudanese Moslems converted to Christianity. After nearly a generation of tireless work in hospital, school and pulpit, the Society which had expected success much earlier, had achieved its first victory:

> all the town [Omdurman] knew of it . . . and the news went out that all who had been there had been 'made' Christians. The town was shocked, and started to deal with the situation in its own way. Many of those who had attended the service were personally warned against the danger of Christianity . . . all workers in connection with the Hospital were persecuted on their way to and from the Hospital. . . . The main gate was picketed and people were urged not to come for treatment.[62]

The *furor* eventually died down, the sick came again to the hospital, but the piercing of Islam's impenetrable shield by the conversion of the three Sudanese was not forgotten. The British officials of the Sudan Government were not amused.

The missionary policies which Lord Cromer and Wingate had established in the Northern and the Southern Sudan at the beginning of the Condominium had gained the sanctity of saneness and sensibility. The British missionaries were forbidden to proselytise openly in the North, but they could operate schools and hospitals. The British

missionaries in the South could proselytise as well as operate schools and hospitals so long as they remained inside the sphere allotted to them. With the passage of time and the sympathy and the exasperation of the British officials both policies were steadily eroded. The officials sought valiantly to maintain the policies on the one hand while giving way in practice on the other. The result was friction greased by the bonds of God and country.

Despite the Wingate restrictions the Sudan Political Service was not hostile to missionaries. Quite the contrary, they not only looked to them to provide services to the Sudanese which they rather embarrassingly could not, but the belief in the missionary mission went deeper than just the material offerings of medicine and education. A large proportion, over a third, of the members of the Political Service were themselves the sons of clergymen and to those who did not know the life of the parsonage, the Anglican Faith was an integral part of their lives. It transcended the reality of the spirit and was embodied in the very Constitution of Britain crowned by the monarchy. In this context the Anglican religion and the message of Jesus Christ was a component of their secular life. There could be no separation of Church and State in the imperial service. The rulers could hardly deny their faith from the Sudanese while introducing the more secular aspects of the *Pax Britannica.*

> That assumption [not to implant Christianity in the Southern Sudan] was that we should be logical and honest, and that in refusing to introduce a pagan population to our own creed, we also refuse to introduce them to the motor car, the wireless, the aeroplane, King Cotton, and, above all, Education.
>
> You cannot have it both ways. If we were going to upset African life in one direction, we must be prepared to do so in all directions. If we did not think it wrong to introduce a man to the results of applied science and the results of letters (both of which have revolutionised the African mode of life and rendered the traditional outlook hopelessly inadequate in two generations) we could not hold it mistaken to introduce him to the faith which has been the main-spring of our civilisation for nineteen hundred years.
>
> In fact opposition or even indifference to the work of missions could only have been fully justified by a policy of maintaining Africa as a human zoo, a policy never tenable in theory and now seen as ludicrous in the light of history.[63]

If British officials could justify the support of the missionary efforts of

their countrymen on such principles, they were not blinded by their faith. Like the missionaries themselves these administrators were practical men with an unambiguous job to do and a sense of duty to fulfil it. To them religion was essential, morally and spiritually, but this did not mean obscured by the philosophical intricacies of doctrinal theology.

> The Anglican Ascendency was utterly devoid of proselytizing zeal and emotionally restrained in its religious profession. Almost all its members were sons of the British public schools and the inheritors of the attitudes prevailing in them. In politics, so far as they had any political views, they were imperialists and they believed unquestionably in Britain's civilizing mission. Their religion more then reflected an imperial outlook; it was a religion suited to imperial rulers. In the expression of their faith they were moderate low Churchmen, Evangelicals in a general way; a high proportion at the top were Freemasons.[64]

Perhaps because they were British and Anglicans the improprieties perpetrated by the missionaries, indiscretions at least in official eyes, were all the more exasperating. 'Our administrators take such an interest in everything that concerns us, and we are so close in friendship to them that it becomes rather a disadvantage when we differ entirely from their point of view.'[65] The British missionaries were all the more difficult to deal with when supported by the same God. As imperial administrators they constantly groped in dismay for a missionary organisation chart by which problems could be resolved by a tea-time chat with the bishop and find it soon sorted out at the mission station. Indeed, the relations of the British administrators with the Italian Roman Catholic missionaries were correspondingly smooth and direct by the discipline of the Catholic Church which they found annoyingly absent in the Church Missionary Society.

> To the eye of the well-wisher and an administrator the greatest weakness of the Protestant missions has always been their democratic character. A missionary's post is a quasi-military one: yet Protestant staff were far too frequently absent from their field-posts attending a series of conferences, and when a firm decision was required it was too often difficult to extract and sometimes appeared to be arrived at on the democratic principle of one-vote-per-man instead of by a direct and governing mind.[66]

In the end the District Commissioner reconciled the problems brought upon him by the missionary presence with a sense of resigned inevitability that in the end some 'Good' would come of his support. This did not mean that he should not be wary, and if his priorities might be relaxed by another English-speaking hospitable face in a lonely district, the senior officials in Khartoum, surrounded by ample British companionship, consistently reminded their officers to beware. 'In general District Commissioners should correspond as little as possible with missionaries on any controversial subject. . . . Any loose phraseology . . . is apt to be seized on.'[67]

Despite their faith the missionaries were not invulnerable in any disputation with the Sudan Government.

> As the Society's representative who is charged with the task of negotiating with a Government, one feels in an unenviable position when one can appreciate just how badly the Society has failed to implement its promises to send out the qualified men on whose presence in the field the Government have relied in formulating the whole of their education policy in one area . . . it must be stressed that for the work to be efficient and effective these few recruits must be considered as no more than an earnest of our intention to man our Missions better in the future than we have in the past.[68]

The problem of too few missionaries was never resolved. It was, however, more a cause on the part of government officials for sympathy rather than condemnation. Here the onus to meet commitments fell upon the Society. When the initiative to circumscribe missionary activities for administrative reasons – security, indigenous customs, local religious sensibilities – the Government found itself on the defensive. Inevitably, to defend policies which their common sense found eminently just and suitable did not mitigate the unpleasant position of appearing to obstruct the spread of their own faith. Such was the Conscience Clause Crisis of 1926.

In 1903 Lord Cromer had reluctantly permitted Gwynne to open a CMS school in Khartoum. At the time Wingate had shrewdly observed that this was a 'very great concession on the part of Lord Cromer'. It was. The school became the thin edge of the wedge of proselytisation, for it was quite impossible to segregate secular from religious instruction. The British officials tried, by requiring a signed statement from parents before their child could participate in religious teaching at school. Such an unwieldly bureaucratic procedure was a bother for the parents, most

of whom were only semi-literate, and an example of government interference to the missionaries. It may have absolved the Government from any charge of favouritism and could be cited when called upon to demonstrate their neutrality, but the procedure was quite unenforceable and promptly ignored, ignored that is until some irrate and influential Moslem parent complained. Then the creaky mechanism of State would shift into gear, and much to the dismay of the Society, which could hardly condone openly the secular authorities determining religious matters, the Conscience Clause was required and enforced.

> The Government Regulations under which missionary work is allowed in the Northern Sudan are very strict. In practice for twenty-two years they have not been properly enforced. I was never given any instruction by C.M.S. concerning them, and found schools being run in the N. Sudan as they had been in Egypt.
>
> These regulations are hardly a form of 'conscience clause' – the parent has to give permission in writing before the Principal has power to give any child religious instruction or allow her to be present at prayers.
>
> This has never been done the seven years of my work in this country.
>
> We have frequently had trouble with fanatical girls (whose parents allowed us verbally to teach anything we liked) and have not insisted on them reading aloud in class, writing examinations, etc. – But we have required their presence. In practice I have found this so-called religious objection was often naughtiness and a desire to defy authority.
>
> Here in Omdurman we were known as a Christian school – the more important Moslems sent their girls to the Govt. Girls School run by an English lady with Koranic teaching – others allowed their girls to come here, in spite of the Christian religion and atmosphere, for the sake of the better, higher education they received. . . .
>
> When the regulation was enforced this autumn it seemed to us to be a simple question – should we be more consistent with our practice and motive here in the N. Sudan (which we understood to be evangelisation) to keep our schools definitely Christian and only have those who signed; or should we accept those who would not sign, making some other arrangements for them during the Scripture period?
>
> With the feeling in the town it was certain that no Moslems would sign if he need not – I should then have had over 30 girls for whom I

should have had to make special arrangements. We felt this was more inconsistent (not having any instructions [from the Society] to guide us) than to regretfully inform the parents that we hated the regulation that we hoped it might be removed but that pending such action we would continue our practice of giving religious instruction to all who come to the schools.

We were respected for our action which was felt to be consistent with our practice by all with whom I talked. . . . There is no doubt that through all this trouble in connection with Mission Schools the religion of Christ is being discussed in the homes of the people of this town as has never been the case before. We pray that some at least may be brought to enquire more carefully into it and that His name may be glorified here and His Kingdom spread.[69]

The missionaries might rejoice that Christianity, despite the unfortunate circumstances, was the principal topic of conversation in Omdurman, but it also differentiated British missionaries from British officials.

We as English were considered the same as the Govt. so that it was not thought the order [the Conscience Clause] could apply to us but only to the American missionaries and their schools between whom and the Govt. there has frequently been friction. However, on the Friday before the school opened the Mufti had a speech read at the mosque forbidding the signing of these forms ordering all pupils boys and girls to be sent to Govt. Islamic schools.

At a meeting of the missionaries within reach, it had been decided to line up with the Protestant Americans and declare our schools to be frankly Christian and based on Christian teaching. . . . Owing to this attitude many in the town realized for the first time that we and the Govt. were separate and not part of one and the same thing. The term 'Americani' is commonly used for Christian missionary and 'Inkilizi' means Government.[70]

The net loss to the CMS Girls' School was twenty-five Moslem girls whose parents 'dare not go against the decree of the Mufti' but that appeared a small price to pay to maintain the Christian sanctity of the school. The Government could respect missionary beliefs, but the Society was in the Sudan at the tolerance of the Government whose price was education for Christianity. 'Apparently CMS is pledged to Government to allow children of objecting parents to attend their schools for

secular education only.'[71] So the children returned to school, the missionaries adjusted to the regulation and the British officials hoped that conscience would remain quiet while Sudanese children learned to read and write.

In the South conscience also compromised policy. That conscience which devoutly believed in the liberty to preach the Word of Christ without secular obstruction found the arbitrary boundaries of the Sphere System anathema, indeed by their very presence a challenge as formidable, and to some, even more immediate than the Moslem threat. The intentional attempts to compromise the Sphere System is the least edifying activity of the Protestant and Catholic missionary effort in the Southern Sudan. Although there were thrusts and counterthrusts by each denomination, the Italian Catholics, the Verona Fathers, who far outnumbered the British Protestants, were generally on the offensive, while the British defended their turf with vigilance and righteous indignation. Caught in the middle was the hapless British District Commissioner, who had many more pressing duties than to mediate between angry religious factions, neither of which exhibited a surfeit of Christian charity.

Catholic encroachments into the Anglican sphere were invariably perpetrated by the 'itinerant' teacher or the 'lost' priest. The itinerant teacher would be an African Catholic convert who upon baptism would appear in the village of his extended family or clan within the Anglican sphere where he would establish a 'school' primarily devoted to the propagation of the faith. The 'lost' priest was usually an energetic Catholic missionary who was not very good at geography but an expert at detecting Africans who had not yet heard the message of the Roman Catholic Church. Most peculiar to both the forays of the itinerant teachers and the lost priests is that they never seemed to wander in the direction of thousands of souls within their own sphere who had never seen a Christian missionary. The Anglican defenders were led by the Venerable Archdeacon Shaw, 'whose reaction to criticism of the CMS was to take the war into the enemy's camp and to accuse the Roman Catholics of "invading" the CMS sphere'.[72] Meanwhile at the front line the Rev. E. C. Gore would fire off his salvoes from Yambio, a particularly vulnerable bastion. Raging against further Catholic encroachments into the CMS sphere, despite Bishop Stoppani's pledge to abstain, Gore demanded action from the Governor of the Bahr al-Ghazal, R. G. C. Brock, not sympathy.

> They simply don't understand what it means to play the game. . . . I

> protest any further delay in defining the boundary. Since it is now perfectly obvious that the RC's can't be trusted within an inch but they will take a mile, they should be turned back into their own sphere hocus pocus. . . . Unless this is done I am afraid the D.C. can say goodbye to any hope of peace and quiet in said Barugu [a proposed District Headquarters]. . . . We have held our hand, hitherto hoping that the RC's would do likewise but we shall now push ahead. Already boys collected here by one of the Fathers for mass have threatened to burn our books.[73]

The Governor thought the problem could be resolved locally by a friendly chat. This was wishful thinking. Gore responded: 'I cannot agree that your correct position is to sit on the fence. I thought your administrative duties to be impartial rather than neutral. . . . Will you please take the necessary steps to stop them? When I get letters from our teachers telling about their troubles with the RC's it makes me quite ill. We cannot let ourselves be cut off from Barugu. We cannot consent to having Italians or their agents anywhere between here and Yambio.'[74] Annoyed, exasperated, and 'sick of the business', Brock let the dispute pass northward to Khartoum and London with the speed and power of divine will. The Governor-General, Sir John Maffey, found himself between Archbishop Hinsley and the Secretary-General of the CMS. The Catholics wanted their schools within the CMS sphere to remain and to be recognised by the Government. The CMS wanted to preserve the sanctity of the Sphere System. To cut the Gordian knot, Maffey was prepared to alter the boundary to acknowledge the Catholic *fait accompli*, 'warning them that no further encroachment will be permitted by the government.'[75] The Government's position was explained to Archdeacon Shaw by the Secretary for Education and Health, J. G. Matthew.

> The jealous opportunism of the Roman Catholics, which I freely admit was overlooked by government officials, has given the Roman Catholic Mission a standing in Iriwo's [Azande] country which cannot be disregarded. To declare Iriwo's country an open sphere would abrogate the sphere system, which certainly none of the C.M.S. want and would saddle Gore with innumerable petty conflicts. The only solution to maintain the sphere system is to hand over Iriwo's country to the Roman Catholics.[76]

Barugu was a long way from Khartoum and an even greater distance

from London. While Archdeacon Shaw strongly protested against the Society's decision to accept the fact of Catholic encroachment the Catholics moved to consolidate their bridgehead by establishing a boarding-school at Barugu where they 'desired to emulate the CMS society who had been installed there for sometime who at the time had not withdrawn in pursuance of government orders'.[77] Chaos and 'hooliganism' were the result. The District Commissioner, J. W. G. 'Tiger' Wyld, ordered in the police:

> to patrol the main street during church services and to deal with any school boys or adherents of either mission who might seek to interfere with or incite indignation on the part of the congregation of the opposite persuasion during devotions. This is a terrible state of affairs especially for the subjects of Chief Iriwo who regard with surprise and consternation the rival institutions of the white men competing for the well being of their souls. There is nothing magic about Barugu. It was selected as a CMS station when the government proposed making it a headquarters. It is not anywhere near Chief Iriwo's more thickly populated area. There can be no motive of the R.C. mission in selecting it for special attention other than that of competing with the CMS while they are still in occupation or counteracting their influence and activities as soon as they should withdraw.[78]

Today Barugu is a small village of no importance since it never became the District Headquarters, yet around it in 1933 rallied the forces of Protestantism and Catholicism, British and Italian, consuming the energies of the authorities from the District Commissioner to the Foreign Office and the opportunity for the new Governor-General to preserve the Sphere System by revising it.

Sir Stewart Symes arrived in Khartoum with very different ideas as to the future administration of the Sudan than those of his predecessors. Administratively he wanted to press the economic development of the Sudan through professional and technical experts who would revolutionise the way of life of both Northern and Southern Sudanese who had become, in his judgement, too dependent upon the Political Officer as the father of the people. In religion the Sphere System was an anachronism to Symes.

> It can be nothing more than this – as I see it – for an official partition of human souls on simple geographical lines is indefensible on moral Christian grounds. Where the principle of the sphere is seriously

challenged, to attempt to treat it as a 'Chinese Wall' is liable to lead to a breakdown – an abandonment of the whole system. Without any formal or general repudiation of the sphere system, I propose therefore where any practical difficulties arise between separate denominational bodies, frankly to recognize that the virtual abrogation of the system in particular localities is unavoidable and to endeavour to arrange local agreements by direct negotiation between the heads of the denominational bodies concerned, government acting as sympathetic (and neutral) arbiter between them. If such agreements can be contrived on a broad Christian European basis with government assistance and compliance with their terms, a *modus vivendi* may be achieved which will reconcile the interests of the people, the administration, and the Missions. In the areas where such agreements are in force, government intervention other than arbitral will be exercised, usually for the maintenance of public security and secure convenient distribution of mission centers engaged in medical and educational work. I am also personally convinced that government action towards mission enterprise in general ought not be governed by narrow political national considerations. In a country like this we have no constitutional mandate to favour Protestants or Roman bodies as such. We have no right to assume that our Christian principles can only be inculcated by our own nationals. Our individual preferences in these matters should not be allowed to govern official action or obscure the probability – as I see it – that the ultimate issues may be between Christianity, Islam or Bolshevism, between European civilization and African and Asian concepts rather than the immediate divergence of British and Latins or Protestants and Roman Catholics.[79]

Symes then put all the pressure that a determined Governor-General could bring to bear on the religious societies to settle their differences. While proclaiming 'the Sphere System is still in existence where interdenominational difficulties arise it is recognised that virtual abrogation of the boundary in particular localities may be unavoidable. Local agreements should be worked out by direct negotiation' which will provide 'for gradual and pacific interfacing which sooner or later is inevitable'.[80] On 4 March 1935 the representatives of the missionary societies surrendered to Caesar. At a conference at Juba attended by the Rt Rev. Monsignor Orler, Bishop of the Bahr al-Ghazal; Rt Rev. Monsignor Zambonardi, Prefect Apostolic, Bahr al-Jabal; the Rt Rev. A. L. Kitching, Bishop of the Upper Nile; and the Venerable Archibald

Shaw, Archdeacon of the Southern Sudan, both the Roman Catholics and the Anglican Protestants agreed to behave. The Sphere System would remain in existence, but neither mission would approve nor disapprove of another mission entering any area. Neither mission would recommend or oppose members of another mission carrying on their work by legitimate means. Each pledged not to provoke friction, interfere in the other's work, not to seduce one another's converts, and any complaints would be settled between the two societies without reference to the Government.[81]

Was the Sphere System dead? No one knew. Thoroughly chastened by Symes's intervention and bluntly informed by their bishops to act in the Christian spirit, religious peace returned to the Southern Sudan as the world went to war. The Juba Agreement was reaffirmed in 1945 by the Rt Rev. A. M. Gelsthorpe and Mgr Orler and in the immediate post-war years the two denominations lived harmoniously until 1949 when under the leadership of the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop David Matthew of Mombasa and his new vigorous Bishop of the Bahr al-Ghazal, Edward Mason, the Catholics sought to increase their educational and proselytising efforts in the Southern Sudan. In October 1949 Archbishop Matthew opened his assault on the Sphere System by asking the Sudan Government to renounce it officially. Matthew had chosen his time carefully for the CMS was only beginning to recover from the War and was in no position to blunt another Catholic offensive. The Civil Secretary, Sir James Robertson, wrote to T. R. H. Owen, the Governor of the Bahr al-Ghazal. 'In view of your recent remarks about the staffing position of the CMS and the AIM [African Inland Mission], I have come to the conclusion that we can no longer justifiably resist the Roman Catholic's application to establish a mission at Rumbek. The Governor-General has agreed.'[82]

The views of the Governor-General, Sir Robert Howe, were essentially those of Sir Stewart Symes eighteen years before.

> The exclusion policy cannot in my view be justified if any particular sphere remains largely untouched because the particular persuasion which occupies it is unable adequately to work it and has to leave the greater part of it untouched because of lack of men and money. The CMS have had to abandon some of their existing stations in Lakes District to the AIM and even if the AIM is prepared to send more missionaries there I would still not oppose the wish of the VFM [Verona Fathers Mission] to open a mission at Rumbek where there is a growing community of RC converts. I am not particularly

impressed by the arguments that trouble is bound to arise from an attempt by the RC's to subvert the other's flock.[83]

Put in the simple, straightforward language for which the Civil Secretary, 'John Willie' Robertson was well known.

> The upshot is that we maintain the sphere system where the mission running any particular sphere is coping satisfactorily and putting up a reasonable show. Where they are not doing so we allow others to come in if they wish.[84]

The longer the Sphere System survived the shorter its significance. If the British missionaries had to be constantly vigilant against the encroachment from without, whether Moslem or Roman Catholic, the changing times, personalities and conceptions of the role of the Anglican missionary in British Africa produced tensions within the Society. Like the Sudan Political Service, new men came out to the Nile after each of the World Wars and quite understandably they came with new ideas to further the work of the administration and of the missions. Since the number of British in the Sudan, whether political or religious, was so small, their personalities were proportionately of greater importance in policy and practice. And this importance became all the more significant since the CMS missionaries prided themselves on their individual initiative in contrast to the institutional discipline of the Verona Fathers. The older men were certainly 'missionary heroes' – the original Thin White Line – Shaw, the Rev. C. A. Fox Memorial Missionary, among the Dinka, Gore and his wife in Zandeland, Gibson and his wife with the Bari, Ewell to the Nuer, and Dr Kenneth Fraser and his wife among the Moru. They were also intense evangelists, more fundamentalist in their views and sceptical of the 'new truths' of social science which seemed to erode the Christian message and compromise their years of experience in Africa. The new men were young, bright as new men are, well-trained, and experienced, not so much in Africa but in war. The Society tried to steer a middle course but was never bedazzled by qualifications if motivation was paramount. 'One or two of the most prominent experts connected with African education laid special insistence on the subordination of technical to other qualifications in the early stages of experimental work. We take quite as many risks in our location of fully qualified technicians to posts which they can only hold down if they develop a generous love and understanding of the human material with which they have to work.'[85]

To diffuse the tensions between the old missionary heroes and the new men was the task of the new Assistant Bishop to Egypt and the Sudan, the Rt Rev. A. Morris ('Gelly') Gelsthorpe, an assignment to which he applied all of his consummate tact and diplomacy.

> Morris quietly and unwaveringly gentles the 'ship' upon its way. He is 'heavenly-minded' – none so delightfully and graciously heavenly-minded as he – but it is deceptive in some ways, for he has a clean-run view of practical common-sense which often, with surprising un-obtrusiveness, informs the whole.

Or as one missionary more pithily described his skills:

> Yes, the Bishop is meek. He is so meek he inherits the earth before one knows it.[86]

Before Gelsthorpe arrived on the Upper Nile there had been no check on the domination of the older missionaries. The secular authorities were disturbed. They genuinely cared for the work of the British missionaries and were dependent upon them for what little education was available to the Southern Sudanese. They could not be blind however to the 'constant feuding between missionaries of the old style and the new, many of them completely congenitally incapable of cooperating with anyone'. The missionary heroes felt that the 'new style missionaries were too much interested in anthropology and insufficiently sound on Genesis'. Thus the young men, precisely 'the type of men we want out here', did not remain but left the Sudan at the same time that their superiors were bitterly complaining to the authorities 'about the loss of certain territories to the RC's when they can't even manage their own house'.[87] The problem became more acute with every passing year. Gelsthorpe sought to channel the energies of the older missionaries:

> the dominant personalities which cannot do other than prevent the younger generation (now missionaries of experience) from shaping their work in ways which must to some extent differ from the wonderful past. I am quite sure there is no one to blame. The situation is due to the circumstances under which they are placed. It is the old problem of the old regime in conflict with the new regime. There is the old regime of order and discipline with spiritual power working through every branch of the work. . . . On the other hand there have

> arrived in the station missionaries of a younger generation with great respect for the past and a desire to uphold the traditions, but they are now missionaries of experience entering on the most vigorous years of life. They have rather different methods of discipline and their own ways of working, and in fact if they try to carry on the ways and methods of an older generation they will fail.[88]

Despite their internal differences the British missionaries had a very positive and generous view of themselves which may have sustained their labours but which was not always apparent to their secular well-wishers in the Administration.

> However, you will be thinking that we are developing a mutual admiration society in S. Sudan; and I suppose we are; for upon my word, as I looked around at Conference [Mission Conference and Diocesan Council of the Southern Sudan] and let my imagination go with my eye, it seemed to me that we had a real company 'of great ones'; and some of them 'very great and very true'. 'Men who have hazarded their lives for the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ' was the thought which came to me, and with it all gaiety of heart and good humour and an ever present sense of fun. I wanted to make a third of them Bishops on the spot (and some of them would wear the purple with royal humility and grace and lovableness); so perhaps it is as well we give allegience to the doctrine of Apostolic Succession and have no voice in the matter. We have a Mission crowd it must be hard to beat in any land.[89]

Although there were several issues – polygamy, Christian marriage and ordination – which elicited division and widespread discussion among the British missionaries, the principal topic of debate between them and the Government was education. The problem was starkly simple. The Southern Sudan, for better or for worse, was being inexorably drawn into the larger world beyond the sudd. To survive and compete in that world one had to know it, and the only way to transmit that knowledge was through education. From the inception of the Condominium the task of education in the Southern Sudan had been entrusted for reasons of finance and faith to the missionary societies. The Government and the societies could never, however, agree on a common objective. The Government wanted Southerners educated to become agents of the Administration and later leaders of their people. The missionary societies were in the Southern Sudan to evangelise, to

teach the Word of Jesus Christ, to convert the Africans to Christianity. So long as the missions bore the full cost of instruction the authorities could hardly complain about the curriculum. When the Sudan Government, however, in an effort to accelerate and intensify the pace of education in the South subsidized the missionary educational effort, its officials began to interfere at every level of the educational process. The missionaries were now called upon 'to provide education for Sudanese boys and girls which would pass muster as "genuine" education and not simple Christian evangelism and nurture'.[90] These conflicting objectives between Christ and Caesar, hitherto dormant, now become an open reality. No one saw this more clearly than Archdeacon Shaw, who steadfastly argued against accepting the Government's money. He was overruled, the Government provided the financial subsidies to the societies for education, and with the money sharp criticism of the educational enterprise of the British missionaries.

> The teaching in CMS Schools is by native teachers who have no training whatsoever. They are left to their own resources without any experience and in some cases not even completing a full elementary course. The missionaries have little sense of what's going on in the classes. They do not devote time and attention to the organization of the teacher's work. The whole future turns upon this question of the provision and efficiency of the native teacher. Education should be the help meet rather than the bond servant of religion. Surely, it is not asking very much of them in return for the funds allocated to them. They should take steps to see that the education which they provide is the best possible under the circumstances and not regard it as a little but unimportant adjunct to their real work of evangelism. Almost all the mission schools are religious. The gospel is enough to learn, but they don't have to learn all four. The CMS could do better, first, if they secured sufficient new staff with the right educational bias; second, widen the narrow horizon of their religious outlook; third, adopt the same attitude of lively interest in education. The older missionaries under the autocracy of Archdeacon Shaw are indifferent to the importance of method and organization in education. I am convinced of the necessity of technique in teaching to which they only pay lip service to such advice and criticism. Their staff is overworked and without money, but this is no excuse for failure to improve and profit by advice. The narrowness of religious views drives away promising younger staff. They could do well to purge some of its staff and make way for new outlooks and staff required. Married men with

> families are a great handicap. The Southern Sudan is no place to rear children, it reacts on a man's work. The missionary families invariably find living in harmony difficult. The autocratic rule of Archdeacon Shaw could come to an end. There is very little to show for his thirty years work among the Dinka. He has become an anachronism, a modern Ulysses, always roaming with a hungry heart then rushing madly about the country in a motor car, generally by night, never stopping any reasonable length of time in one place, neglecting his correspondence, ignoring the Resident Inspector's Reports, not only an Archdeacon but an Arch constructionist and a past master in sophistry in the wheeling of plausible excuses for his own and his mission's shortcomings. Its not so much a matter of what they have left undone. Most of the criticism is the spirit in which they have tackled their problems, a spirit of evasion and frustration that has been too frequently evinced.[91]

The CMS was hardpressed to meet the Government's challenge. The African Secretary of the Society, the Rev. H. D. Hooper, in November 1937 'could not entertain' the Government's proposal to expand education by opening three middle schools 'to missionaries with educational qualifications who would make the care of the schools their main task' in return for doubling the subsidy.[92] Not surprisingly, the Government's educational projects, even if the Society could not find the manpower, were enthusiastically endorsed by the newer missionaries despite the grumbling about money undermining and corrupting the evangelical mission.

> Bring up the children in the family of God and train them for citizenship in the Kingdom of Heaven. That is the policy of the CMS in the Southern Sudan, and the policy endorsed and supported by the Government. . . . There is no better way of influencing a people than by gathering the children into a boarding-school; there is no better way of learning language than by trying to teach in it; there is no better way of understanding the mind of a people than by studying their attempts at self-expression; there is no better way of understanding the Scriptures than by trying prayerfully to translate them; in short there is no better way of evangelization than through elementary education.[93]

Although the Second World War delayed the secular intrusion into the educational monopoly of the missions, Bishop Gelsthorpe knew it

could not be indefinitely postponed and that the CMS must be ready to shoulder its share in the Southern Sudan if it were to maintain its position to carry on evangelical work. He warned the Society of the events to come.

> There is one important development possible in the future. During the next ten years it will become clear whether the Government can continue to leave the education mainly to the missions. It has been possible to do so in these early stages. But in due course it will be possible to see from the results how far the experiment has been justified. I believe most people looking at it from the Government angle are and will be satisfied. They certainly have been extremely considerate and trustful. Yet there are signs such as the demand for the Government new intermediate school at Malakal, and one or two smaller ventures in that Province which are contemplated. Then there is not the unnatural desire on the part of the D.C.'s for village schools to be more under their own hand and with local chiefs having more to say. Yet as a mission we must keep tight hold of our responsibilities for these village schools and retain powers of appointment of teachers, discipline, and training. I believe we shall see it through but there are some delicate times ahead.[94]

The War came to an end and the bishop's predictions came true. The Sudan Government moved vigorously to establish schools in the South as did the Roman Catholics.

> I hope, therefore, that in the spirit of the 1935 agreement you will agree to my putting forward the request of the Civil Authority for permission to open a Mission School [of the Verona Fathers] there [Rumbek]. ... This action of mine is not proposed in a spirit of entering a field of unlimited religious competition, which I would consider detrimental to both. It is my intention that the safeguarding clauses of the 1935 agreement be strictly adhered to, and that all steps should be taken to avoid not only competition, but if possible, even misunderstandings.[95]

As the CMS lost its monopoly upon education within its sphere, new challenges opened for the care and support of the Church in the Northern Sudan and the establishment of an indigenous Protestant Anglican Church in the Southern Sudan. The first challenge was partly in response to the Society's failure to establish a strong Christian Church among the Northern Sudanese and partly to administer to the spiritual

needs of the rapidly growing numbers of Southerners drifting north into the urban areas in search of work.

> The Church in the Northern Sudan is going to consist in the future mainly of Southerners and those converted by Southerners. So I hope those who come [to the Diocesan Synod, 8–9 February 1951] with you from the South will in their prayer and preparation keep evangelism as their main objective. The young Church of the South striking out on this missionary enterprise is going to be greatly strengthened within itself. The Southern Church must from the beginning realise its responsibilities for evangelising the North. So far we have talked about it. Now is the time to do something. Of course still more important is the fact that the campaign is going to give an impetus to the native Church of the North. The whole stage is set and arrangements made for Sudanese Christians to be received increasingly into the white congregations, but they are coming very slowly. In the Three Towns I hear only of about 12 being likely to be ready for Baptism this year. In 10 years few British will remain and the Sudanese at the present rate will be quite unable and unprepared to take over the responsibilities in the Cathedral and Chaplaincies. There are several thousands of Southerners now in the Three Towns. Only a handful are coming to services. Yet most of them are potential Christians. Experience has shown that only their own people can really touch their hearts. So I emphasise again the vital importance of careful preparation for the evangelistic campaign from the South to the North in February.[96]

The second and by far the most important legacy of the British missionaries was their effort to build an African Church in the Southern Sudan. In the end it was the most lasting and fitting epitaph to those British missionaries, old and new, who as a Thin White Line played a role in the British presence in the Sudan out of all proportion to their numbers.

> The pioneering work started by Bishop Gwynne and Archdeacon Shaw was begun and has been continued on strictly evangelical lines. ... The Lord Christ has been the centre of the picture, revealed through Holy Scripture. His message carried by the Church. It has been realized from the beginning that in order to establish the Kingdom strongly there must be education, medical work, development of literature.
>
> During recent years there has been a great impetus in the

missionary work through fuller cooperation with the government especially in the development of Schools. . . . The fears which some had that in this closer cooperation the mission would lose its evangelistic emphasis have been found to a great extent to be unrealized. The educational missionaries, both young men and young women, have been efficient in their school work but have themelves insisted that the strongest emphasis in true Christian education must be evangelistic.

The time has now come when individual missionaries can no longer, maintain that personal contact with individual converts which is the privilege of the pioneer missionary. There have been thousands of baptisms, confirmations, and the need for the regular administration of the sacrements has become a real problem. There is also the need for discipline, organization, and all that pertains to the establishment of an indigenous Christian Church in the land. We are now in the process of forming this Church. We flounder at times: we make mistakes: missionaries suffer at times from strain and overwork under climatic conditions which are generally trying and tiring especially when overdue home leave is postponed year after year. Yet the Church has taken root and is growing. . . . There is a consciousness of spiritual power within the individual and within the infant Church as a whole.[97]

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7 In the Eyes of the Ruled

FRANCIS M. DENG

> The British had a tremendous sense of mission, most of them, a real sense of mission, and were really idealistic. These D.C.'s came from Oxford and Cambridge just after their schooling with all the idealism of young people, and lived amongst a people who respected them and, many times, loved them and whom they loved. Many of my friends had allegiance, really to the Sudan. The British administrator in the Sudan was not the kind of civil servant who was transferable by the Colonial Civil Service. He was a civil servant of the Sudan. His allegiance was not to the British Government. His allegiance was to the Sudan Government.
>
> DA'UD 'ABD AL-LATIF

Memories are one-dimensional, the reflection embedded in the mind of experience seen and heard then passed through the filters of inheritance and culture to remain. With age and reflection remembrance of things past becomes more distinct and often distorted. The trivial assumes importance far beyond the moment of its reality, the unpleasant is mellowed and frequently replaced by a belief in the goodness of man. And sometimes the opposite may take place. What remains is an image created by events, produced by memory, and passed on by the storyteller or his more pretentious rival, the historian. Yet, it is the collective memory of individuals which becomes history, but history too often stripped of the human experience which in fact actually shaped and executed the policies scholars seek to explain, often without reference to the human condition. In the Sudan, in the twentieth century, the British came to rule and have recorded their memories with the knowledge and humility that they were indeed one-dimensional. But there can be no rulers without the ruled, and in the end any attempt to delve into the remembrance of the governors would be incomplete without the memories of them by the governed. Thus, 'In the Eyes of the Ruled'.[1]

First encounters are frequently the most memorable since a child's mind still remains uncluttered by the extraordinary. Moreover, remembering usually starts at the beginning when a novel event produces the unforgettable impression. To the Sudanese, as boys, the British were

regarded with a mixture of superstition, awe, fear, respect and admiration before their first personal encounter with an individual Englishman. As an amorphous group the British were known as the new Turks 'just as tough as those Turks who were here before the Mahdiya', in the words of Babu Nimr, although perhaps more aloof and not as given to wanton violence as the old Turks. Reflecting back on those early memories the British seemed to some as phantoms who rode through towns on white horses, leaving children standing beside the road in wonderment. To others in the rural villages the British were agents of a distant but all-powerful government who appeared twice a year and then only to collect taxes on date trees and animals. But the impression in young minds of the government as an omnipotent force was so pervasive that even those who regularly saw British administrators regarded them with 'fear and restraint', while village urchins in their games boasted that 'even the Government cannot do this'.

The appearance of the British colossus in the eyes of the Sudanese children was dramatised by Da'ud 'Abd al-Latif. His first encounter with an Englishman occurred when he was brought at the age of six or seven before the District Commissioner sitting at a high table as judge. Da'ud had witnessed a theft in one of his father's shops and was called to testify in court. 'I was a small kid about two feet tall, trying to answer a person the others treated nearly as a god.' Anticipating that he would be beaten, the young boy burst into tears. This indelible first impression left Da'ud 'Abd al-Latif with an animosity toward the British that took many years to overcome.

Da'ud's childhood experience was not unique. Yusuf Badri recalled a similar traumatic encounter with alien authority which was imprinted on his consciousness at twelve years of age with such vividness that subsequent years of congenial relations with British officials could never quite efface it. On his way to school in his town of Rufa'a, he was confronted by the District Commissioner. 'I remember his name very well, Mr Richardson [John Noel ('Whiskers') Richardson]. I was wearing European shoes, not *marcoub*, the locally produced shoes, but imported shoes. He said, "Why are you wearing these?" I replied, "Well," and gave a sheepish answer. I still remember it. I said, "These were given to me by my brother who bought them from a shop." He sent me back in a furious temper to change my shoes and put on my *marcoub*, the native shoes. By the time I got back to school, I found the whole school paraded and Mr Richardson was inspecting the shoes of the pupils. Every boy wearing European shoes was sent home to change into Sudanese shoes.'

The two chiefs, Babu Nimr and Zubayr Ahmad al-Malik, however, were by virtue of their fathers' positions in regular contact with British administrators and as children developed favourable impressions of the officials they met as 'very reasonable, good people'. Zubayr al-Malik believed that the Sudanese tribes who had been divided by internecine warfare during the Mahdiya particularly welcomed the British as 'people of good government'. When his elderly grandmother took twelve-year-old Babu Nimr to meet the District Commissioner, W. F. Crawford, she was shocked by Babu shaking hands with the D.C. rather than making the traditional tribal greeting, the deep bow. ' "How can you do that?" admonished his grandmother. "Why don't you bend for your father?" "No, No" replied Crawford, "a man greets a man with his hands. He doesn't greet him with his shoulders." ' Babu Nimr never forgot this first meeting and throughout his life retained his favourable impression of Englishmen.[2]

As they grew and matured, the sharply defined childhood portraits of the British became more blurred, if not confused, by close association with their English teachers at school and later the Gordon Memorial College. Zubayr Ahmad al-Malik remembered a spirit of co-operation, particularly in sports. 'We did not have anything against them. We were in fact quite happy with them.' Jamal Muhammad Ahmad was even more enthusiastic. He referred with affection to 'Billy' Williams [C. W. Williams], Warden of Gordon Memorial College, as 'kindly, devoted to games . . . a father figure to everybody in the college at the time.' And there was the tutor of his hostel at the College, A. B. Theobald, who was a stern taskmaster, but remembered for his strong personal interest in each boy and his academic progress. Later, after Jamal and his fellow students had graduated from the College, they 'used to go back to him as young teachers, young clerks, young bookkeepers, and so on' with their problems where they found him 'a very different man altogether from that disciplinarian character we used to know at the College'.

Williams and Theobald were in fact the continuation of a tradition of close, personal interest in the individual student at the Gordon College, which was a direct transfer to the Sudan of the British public school and university education of which they themselves were the products. Although such principles were founded with the College, they were perhaps best epitomised during the Wardenship of 'Dougie' Udal [N. R. Udal]. 'The relations between Mr Udal and the students were really intimate,' recalled Yusuf Badri. 'He used to go around the hostels. You could feel his presence at every moment. It was not a feeling of fear but of sympathy and paternal relations. . . . I felt so much for him that when

I met him during his visit to the Sudan in 1952 – I was then Principal of the school and Mr Udal must have been in his seventies – I kissed his hand when I saluted him, a sign of Sudanese respect; that is, you exaggerate in showing your feelings of deep respect and gratitude. What I did is not normally done by Sudanese to the British, but it shows the human influence of Mr Udal on his students.' Badri reminisced: 'The life in the College was really a model which every graduate felt he must adopt. Of those of us who went through the Gordon College, nobody can deny that he has been influenced very much by the atmosphere of the College and by the cultural impact of the British tutors, which came in quite smoothly. There were a few arrogant reactions on the part of some of them, which were, perhaps, not meant in the way it appeared.'

For others, their experience at the Gordon College was not so positive. Muhammad Abu Rannat dismissed his association with his English tutors as a 'relationship of distance'. Da'ud 'Abd al-Latif arrived at the College with a firm attitude toward the British which had been established much earlier. His relations with his English teachers 'were not good'. He regarded his English language and literature tutor 'as oppressive and conceited', bent on a degree of discipline the free-spirited young Da'ud considered 'not acceptable'. His earlier feelings of 'enmity' toward the British were strengthened by his reading of Leftist literature critical of colonialism. Da'ud had fallen under the influence of a Greek bookseller who 'pushed me by giving me Karl Marx'. In 1936, when the Italians occupied Abyssinia, Da'ud's Anglophobia was so strong that he considered learning Italian 'to help the Italians enter the Sudan. We hoped the Italians would come, fight the English, and send them away from the Sudan.' Da'ud's English tutor remained ignorant of his pupil's reading matter. 'I never told him anything, nor did I discuss my readings with him. All he was concerned with was whether I wrote my English well.' And naturally, the more Leftist tracts Da'ud read, the more his English improved.

Moreover, Da'ud freely admitted that his English teachers were not particularly negative toward him. 'On the contrary, some of them, one or two among them, were very sympathetic with me because I was the top of my class and usually tutors like clever boys.' Eventually, however, Da'ud's rebelliousness provoked his dismissal from the Gordon College. The students had staged a strike over a decrease in the starting salary for Sudanese civil servants, and British intelligence, according to Da'ud, determined sixteen students to be the instigators, including himself. The British then sought to teach him a lesson by refusing him employment for seven months. When they finally did hire

him as a government employee, they sent the 'troublesome boy' to a remote district as a further reminder to behave himself despite the availability of a young trainee from that district who sought the position and Da'ud's expressed desire to remain in Khartoum, precisely where the British did not want him.

Expelled from Gordon College at the age of seventeen, Da'ud spent the next seven years working as a bookkeeper in Damer and then Wadi Halfa. Unknown to Da'ud, it was precisely his independent spirit which had propelled him into confrontation with the British authorities that set him apart from many of his contemporaries and ironically demonstrated the qualities of leadership which his adversaries respected. In the end it brought him to the attention of his first direct British superior. While working in the office of the District Commissioner at Wadi Halfa in the Northern Province he summoned his courage to reprove the District Commissioner, T. F. G. Carless, for insulting an elderly Sudanese accountant. Carless had told the old man, '*Na'al Abook*', which literally means, 'Damn your father!' When his Sudanese superiors in the office shrank back, fearing his wrath, Da'ud marched up to Carless and told him, 'According to the ways of our people, and according to the customs anywhere in the world, what you did was wrong.' The D.C., bemused that 'a small boy like this, who is in Scale J, is the one who should tell me that I am wrong', apologised to the old man and thanked Da'ud, instructing him to continue to speak out if he saw evidence of impropriety. Six months later, he offered Da'ud a scholarship for a special training course for Assistant Mamurs. Da'ud refused, saying this would make him an 'informant of the English'. Unperturbed, if not impressed, Carless then arranged for Da'ud to study the cultivation of date trees in Brazil, a plan more agreeable to him. The Munich crisis intervened, prohibiting the sending of Sudanese abroad, and Da'ud consented to be interviewed for the Assistant Mamur course after all.

He was rejected, refused acceptance to the course on the grounds that he was too short, despite the recognition by the Board of Examiners that he was the brightest candidate before them. Incensed, he fired off a letter to Carless remarking, among other acid observations, that 'the Board must have been interviewing candidates for porters at the Khartoum Railway Station rather than selecting sub-Mamurs for the administration'. This cheeky rebuke so impressed the influential Civil Secretary, Sir Douglas Newbold, when he was shown the letter by Carless, then in Khartoum with the Department of Economics and

Trade, that Newbold took a personal interest in Da'ud, who was accepted into the course for Mamurs the following year without an interview.

Yusuf Badri's first relationship with a British superior was also 'quite unpleasant'. He had left the Sudan to take a degree in pharmacy at the American University of Beirut. He returned to the Sudan and joined the Sudan Medical Service at Wad Medani Hospital and was, by his own admission, 'a swollen-headed young man with lots of ideas and self-conceit. I thought I must do something in the arrangement of the hospital pharmacy and the way medicines were dispensed, that sort of thing. There were certain things – I do not want to blow my own trumpet and call them innovations – which I thought I was going to bring about. I was checked up by the Senior Medical Inspector [Dr F. H. Goss]. He took me into his office and said to me, "Why did you do this, Yusuf?" I said, "I used my discretion." He banged his desk, saying "I don't want discretion!" '

Like Da'ud 'Abd al-Latif, Yusuf felt indignation rather than fear, a feeling that his superior 'was a wicked man ... I went back to my dispensary and wrote my resignation addressed to the Director, Sudan Medical Service, with a copy to Dr Goss and a copy to the Governor of the Blue Nile Province [R. C. Mayall]. I don't know why I sent that copy to the governor. Dr Goss was really perturbed about it. Anyway, he made a challenge to me. He gave me his own car and asked me to go and inspect the dispensaries in the Gezira. Wad Medani Hospital was the mother hospital for all the dispensaries in the Gezira. This was in 1937. I made the tour and wrote the report.' In the meantime Yusuf's resignation had reached the desk of the Director of the Sudan Medical Service, Sir Eric Pridie, who was a friend of Yusuf's father, who allowed the whole matter to drop quietly. Yusuf had still not regained the good graces of Dr Goss, however, who sought at every opportunity to find fault 'and I must say that my relations with Dr Goss were very severe, very tense indeed'. Three years later, Yusuf did indeed resign from government service.

Amin Hasun responded to British authority in a far different manner than either Da'ud 'Abd al-Latif or Yusuf Badri. Rather than being offended by the demands of his first British superior, G. W. Power, the head of the Personnel Office, Sudan Railways, Amin had nothing but admiration for him. 'His name was just like his features – he was powerful,' recalled Amin. The bell summoning him to Power's office was 'music in my ears.' He valued enormously Power's instructions and

demands as a learning experience, and at times he would even wake in the middle of the night to jot down notes on what Power had asked him to do the following day.

Jamal Muhammad Ahmad was also impressed by the first Englishman with whom he worked closely perhaps because the relationship was not that of superior to subordinate, but one of mutual personal affection. Jamal was co-editor of a youth magazine, *Al-Sibyān*, with an Englishman, Robin Hodgkin.[3] 'I don't think I worked with a person, neither before nor after,' he stated, 'whom I liked so much.' Jamal lauded Hodgkin's energy, inventiveness and vigour. . . . 'He would take an article to the printers and compose it himself, he would repair a car if a car went wrong, he would be able to spend a terrible, dreary night in awful rainy weather in the open countryside. . . . He was a tiny man, but with stamina – mental stamina and physical stamina. I cannot spare any praise for Robin Hodgkin – anything I say about him is less than he really deserves. To be close to him meant actually talking about everything openly, discussing things and socially mixing, just to go to their home as we do in the Sudan – without appointments – which I now consider a most inconvenient thing to do; but at the time it was quite a natural thing because the society was not so large as it is at the moment. Then the fact that his wife was also an educationalist made the group, so to speak, hang together. But there was much more to it than getting people together. I mean there was that personal thing.'

Indeed, the relationships like that between Jamal Muhammad Ahmad and Robin Hodgkin were remembered with great attachment long after the official tensions and disagreements had subsided with the ebb and flow of different personalities and changing perspectives. Such feelings and friendships were the human experience that transcended the confines of a bureaucracy and are found in any society despite the cultural differences which may seemingly divide two individuals. For some the relationship, although warm and cordial and characterised by respect and trust, remained close in a business rather than in a social sense. Babu Nimr believed the District Commissioners 'respected me because I never told them a lie. I always told the truth, and my word was always highly regarded by them'. Even when he was a child, the then District Commissioner, G. R. F. Bredin, respected him. 'He considered me as a personality with a future, and never treated me as a child.' This same close but official relationship between Babu and the British remained throughout his chieftainship.

For others the fine line between official and social relations disintegrated before genuine friendship. Such an affinity arose between

Muhammad Abu Rannat and the Chief Justice of the Sudan, Sir William Lindsay, who became 'great friends'. 'He [Lindsay] liked me very much and we were frank with each other. We used to speak about everything. . . . In fact, the recommendation for me to become Chief Justice Designate emanated from him.' This closeness included social as well as official contact with the British. 'Some of them asked me to go with them in their social life, for example, to a party or dinner.' Similarly, Ahmad Mahjub was personally as well as officially close with J. A. Hartley, Assistant Director of Education. 'He never gave me the feeling that I was in any way unequal to him, except for age and experience. . . . I went to his house and he came to mine. He knew my people. It was quite customary for him to take me for a drink, or for me to take him for a meal. We took turns paying for meals. . . . So I think it was quite a close relationship, apart from the work side.'

Da'ud 'Abd al-Latif was more cynical about what it meant to be close to the British in the Sudan. Officials like T. F. G. Carless, or later the distinguished Civil Secretary, Sir Douglas Newbold, 'looked after him'. They were 'concerned that I be "contained" '. Da'ud recalled that it was Carless who convinced Newbold that he was 'politically-minded' and that he would 'either be with them or against them'. Newbold 'used to really give me a great deal of care and attention. All the young people he thought were intelligent, he would keep correspondence with them, wherever they were. If one was in Nyala and one was wherever, he would write to him and ask him how the district was going. He [Newbold] began to co-operate with them, just as, or even better than, he was co-operating with the English officials'. Newbold provided Da'ud with ready access to him, at home and in his office. He had tea with Da'ud and his friends weekly, lent them books and discussed government matters with them. 'He would give us the impression that we were important people.'

Yusuf Badri also perceived the more formal but not unique distinction between a working relationship with a British official and a personal friendship. During the early 1950s Yusuf worked closely with the Director of Education, D. H. Hibbert, who, in Badri's opinion, was 'a pretentious person. He pretended that he liked the Sudanese and wanted to associate with them. Socially, he was quite pleasant, but when you came to the reality – to business transactions – one would feel a bit of his impudence. I think he was imprudent. I may be a bit influenced by his behaviour toward me. We were administering quite a voluminous amount of money – a grant given by the Sudan Government to Al-Ahfad College for building and purchasing equipment. . . . I felt that he

was suspecting our – I won't say honesty – but the way we were disposing of the money, to such an extent that I had to talk to him. Incidentally, he taught me English in 1930 when I was in third-year secondary school, so he was my teacher and I had some sort of respect for him. But this last behaviour compelled me to be a bit insolent, to the extent that I said to him, 'Well, Sir, this money has been appropriated by the Legislative Assembly and not by the Ministry of Education, and it was a grant given in the name of Shaykh Babikr Badri, more or less a personal sort of grant.'[4] And then he interrupted me quite furiously and said in Arabic – I still remember his words quite clearly – "If this man [Shaykh Babikr Badri] with the ideas doesn't die, we won't rest." '

Badri admitted that perhaps his own independence of mind 'to be a free man to consider things the way I wanted them to be' and never again to be employed as a government servant after his resignation from the Sudan Medical Service 'must have given me some sort of irritating attitude toward my British bosses when they compared me with the other Sudanese subordinates'. There were, however, other officials in the Education Department who came to handle relations with their Sudanese colleagues in quite a different way. 'A man like Jamieson [W. B. de la M. Jamieson], who became Assistant Director of Education, and others handled problems quite differently from their predecessors. They gave time to listen to arguments. You felt that they considered it as part of their responsibility, and there was always a very pleasant human relationship. For instance, Lang [W. M. Farquharson-Lang], whenever we got at loggerheads, he would send in a note regretting the whole thing, and he would ask you for a cup of tea or for dinner and elaborate on the problem. Jamieson would come over himself to the school [Ahfad] during the day and sit in your office and discuss the disagreements until you saw eye-to-eye. So there was certainly a difference among the British in the way they reacted in carrying out their duties.'

The presence of British women in the Sudan presented a unique set of relationships reflected in the sharp differences and frequently baffling attitude toward them by the Sudanese. Perhaps, because of his family tradition of education for women as well as his own iconoclastic spirit, Yusuf was more comfortable with English women than his Sudanese colleagues. He was deeply impressed with their activities 'with Girl Guides and in bazaars and fairs to raise funds for social and voluntary organizations on behalf of Sudanese women'. English ladies like Mrs John Crowfoot, the wife of the Director of Education, and Mrs Gelsthorpe [Dr Elfrida Widborne], the wife of Bishop A. M. Gelsthorpe, who 'was the medical officer of the hospital in Omdurman and

quite popular among Sudanese families, associated themselves very freely and comfortably with so many Sudanese homes'.

Others were more reserved and uncertain about the role of the British woman. Zubayr Ahmad al-Malik accepted the fact that there was social 'mixing' but 'I can't really tell you that there was full integration or association'. What social contact there was between English women and the Sudanese was 'confined to a certain class of the very educated or the very enlightened, or those holding high posts ... among most people, there wasn't much contact'. Social interaction increased with the passage of time; it 'occurred later', according to Zubayr, 'after people like Newbold came onto the scene. At the beginning there was a kind of bar. They were somewhat aloof.'

Da'ud 'Abd al-Latif pointed out that the English wife generally remained in the Sudan only six months out of the year. 'In April all the British would go back to England because they thought they could not stand the heat of May. They would stay up to April, and that was the period during which they would try to invite to their homes [Sudanese] officials they cared about. Their wives became a sort of decoration, making tea and things like that.' Most Sudanese men felt awkward in the presence of English women. 'The Sudanese as a whole are not accustomed to the small talk which is polite in the presence of ladies. We were not accustomed to emancipated women ... and did not know what to say and what not to say.'

Only the exceptional English woman played an active role in politics. One that Da'ud knew well, Lady Robertson, the wife of the Civil Secretary, Sir James Robertson, 'took a very active role in politics, without the word "politics". ... She knew the Sudanese who were friends of her husband, important Sudanese. She would invite them to tea and talk to them.' Apparently, Lady Robertson used tea parties, according to Da'ud, to intercede subtly and indirectly for her husband when he disagreed with Da'ud and other Sudanese civil servants and political figures. Da'ud would go to her when he and Sir James had a misunderstanding. 'She would do her best to prepare her husband and channel him quietly in the right direction. She understood that her husband was sometimes hot-tempered, and so she would make all possible efforts not to anger the staff members.' She was, however, the exception rather than the rule.

Jamal Muhammad Ahmad was even more outspoken in his assertion that the great majority of English women did not fit into Sudanese society. There were two main barriers: language and culture. 'Although the Sudanese were very generous with what they had, they always

thought that the standard of living of the English was so high that they shied away from inviting them to their homes. . . . The English wives on their part always wondered if inviting the Sudanese would be a happy occasion or would be an embarrassing one, where everybody would just sit there and sip tea. . . . I am sure, thinking of it now, each side wanted very much to know the other side. But this cultural barrier kept the parties apart, except for the occasional families. One must never forget that there were far fewer Englishmen in the Sudan than is commonly supposed, perhaps only eight hundred in a country of one million square miles. Thus chances for social integration were never great in the first place.'

What Sudanese–British, man–woman contacts did occur, Jamal averred, 'took the form of very stuffy, formal, polite relationships. The Sudanese would be called into a British home, usually for tea. Meals were rather rare because meals meant handling forks and knives, and for some, forks and knives were not such a great amusement. Tea was all right because you just drank tea and had a bit of cake. It was stuffy because there was this tremendous effort on the side of the hostess to keep you happy. . . . I can't remember at all calling anyone by his first name. It was always "Sayyid so-and-so" and "Mister so-and-so". I even remember some sticky person telling you what to dress for coming to tea.' Jamal explained that one D.C. was in the habit of inviting his Sudanese subordinates to tea, adding 'Come in your shorts'. Ultimately, Jamal realised that the Englishman was trying to make the Sudanese feel comfortable, 'instead of going and ironing your pair of trousers and having a nice shirt . . . but at the time we thought it was just a way to order us about . . . we resented it. . . . At one stage, one or two people used to go in pairs of trousers just to establish their personality'.

If the cultural barrier put a definite strain on social contacts, it created, in Jamal's opinion, an unbreachable wall in so far as sexual relations between Sudanese men and English women were concerned. 'They didn't excite us much, really . . . there was the general view of the word *khawāja*, which did not mean the epitome of cleanliness . . . the general feeling was that there are people who are different from us . . . so there was nothing exciting about them at the time.'[5] Babu Nimr 'did not doubt the femininity in their [the English women's] behaviour; but one did not look at them the same way one would look at a Sudanese woman. . . . When you see a Sudanese woman, you look at her with a certain look. I personally did not look at British women with that look. They too probably felt the same way. These things have their own eyes and their own hearts. . . . [They] did not exist between us and the English, but of course, they exist between us and the Sudanese women.'

In Da'ud's opinion, 'we did not believe English women were sexually accessible. So any interest which there might have been was very theoretical. The country was, in those fifty years of British rule, so scandal-less, as one Englishman put it, that that in itself was a scandal. No rape took place; not even a flirtation that could anger the husband or another European.' During the brief time the English woman remained in the Sudan, her husband 'would fully insulate her. They would get together for their tea or coffee in the garden and gossip. After that, they would go gardening . . . her husband was on top of her day and night, protecting her'.

Amin Hasun agreed. He may 'have heard of Sudanese very interested to see the White Women and running after them', but did not think it ever came 'to the extent of sexual intercourse. I would never believe it. . . . Nobody would dare to do it at all . . . because we had their respect. And it is in our nature that we should not do that, especially with foreigners.'

Ahmad Mahjub, however, knew positively of 'certain instances where relations really existed between English women and Sudanese men in this country, even at the time of British rule. . . . Although the Sudanese looked upon them with respect, no human being is infallible.' Ahmad Mahjub, however, was considerably younger than Jamal, Da'ud or Amin Hasun and belonged to a different post-war generation. He felt that British men 'always respected the place of the woman in the Sudan as a lady in the background who didn't see men'. Although a 'very few' people might be aware of affairs that were taking place, the 'general consensus . . . was that it was just inconceivable for an Englishman to have relations with a Sudanese woman or vice versa'.

Muhammad Abu Rannat 'heard about only two or three cases' of such affairs during the entire period of British rule, but like Jamal, dismissed them 'as gossip. The few isolated incidents of sexual affairs between Sudanese men and English women were based on hearsay.' According to Jamal, rumours invariably circulated about young D.C.'s in remote areas such as Sawakin or the wilderness of Darfur having 'rubber women . . . because the Sudanese couldn't explain how a man could live without a woman. . . . There was that sort of story going around. Whether it was a joke or not is immaterial; it indicated that people were a little puzzled, especially in a country where you are allowed to marry four and have love with about four hundred. . . . It's just this unknown life, because the D.C. after doing his job . . . went back home, and the poor fellow just had to do with what he had.'

If heterosexual affairs were the subject of gossip with little evidence, so too was homosexuality. There were rumours of homosexual tenden-

cies among the British in the Sudan which some assumed to have substance. Others like Amin Hasun ignored them. 'We lived as subordinates to them. We were not supposed to know that secret.'

As time passed, earlier attitudes and assumptions changed. Understanding grew with interaction and suspicion, if not hostility, moderated with age and experience. Perhaps, Newbold was right for even Da'ud 'Abd al-Latif, after joining the Administration, came to the eventual conclusion that there were no apparent differences between their attitude and his. 'I began to see that they were trying to improve the country, and if we could help in any way, it would be better. . . . We began to achieve more by co-operating, rather than by passiveness.' This was quite a turnabout for a man who admittedly had harboured little but 'enmity' for the British throughout his school and early years in the Civil Service. 'We created a clique in the administration which decided that "No Sir" was as good as "Yes Sir" if you were honest. The British, too, began to see that "No Sir" was not necessarily an indication of enmity. They started to treat us as friends, and our advice began to carry weight. When we said, "This is not acceptable to the Sudanese," they would think twice before carrying it out.'

Illustrating with one notorious example of an eccentric District Commissioner, Babu Nimr observed with the passage of time a slight deterioration in relations between the local tribal leaders and the British D.C.'s. 'The older District Commissioners were different in the way they treated people; their manners with the people were really very good. The younger ones that came later, and this is my own view, were not like the very first ones. The first ones were carefully selected, very highly selected, and the later ones, I think, were not selected very carefully.' An example of the older generation of British administrators whom he admired was Sir James Robertson. Babu vividly recalled his first conversation with him. When first appointed District Commissioner in Kordofan, Robertson asked the Chief whether a D.C. should be gentle or tough. Babu replied, 'The District Commissioner should be a little gentle; he should not be very tough. . . . He is an Englishman and a District Commissioner, and if he were also to be very tough, people would fear everything he did. If he asked people questions, they would answer him in fear and would not tell him the truth. They would be too afraid, and you would build your policies on things that are not true, things said out of fear. The District Commissioner should be a man with a cool heart. It is enough that he is the District Commissioner.' The Chief, on the other hand, added Babu, 'must be tough because people don't honour him well. They say he is just the son of this woman or the

son of that man. . . . But if they know he is tough, then he can do his job. Otherwise, they will dismiss him lightly.' Babu was impressed by Robertson's reply. ' "I am tough, and I can tell the people who genuinely approve of me." '

Jamal Muhammad Ahmad was struck by the fact that the relationship between the British and the Sudanese was always so formal. 'Making a joke for an Englishman was not becoming', said Jamal. 'After all, he was a ruler. Even if he were a teacher or a surveyor, he considered himself a ruler. . . . On our side we were also self-conscious. We would not make a joke because we would think. "Well, this is my superior. He may take it against me." I was the Secretary for the Sudan Cultural Centre for a number of years. It amuses me now to think that in those many years, I can't remember a jocular lecture or a witty talk in the Centre given either by a Sudanese or an Englishman. It was all as serious as you could make them, very instructive and educational.'

The chiefs and the civil servants were divided whether the English were equals or masters during the period of colonial rule. The chiefs, who perhaps more than the civil servants, felt the veiled power of the British impinge upon traditional authority, which then became dependent upon the government, never assumed that they and the British were equals. 'They pretended to be equal', stated Zubayr Ahmad al-Malik, 'but one didn't really believe it. These people were people who had come to rule. Yes, they did serve the Sudan, but, of course, don't forget that in the first place they were serving their own country, their people, and themselves, and they knew that.' The English, according to Zubayr, stressed to him their desire to be fair. 'We do not commit wrongs knowingly', he said they told him. 'It is only that, in some cases, we are misled by some people. So we make a wrong decision on the basis of wrong evidence.' But there were limits to the fairness of the British, Zubayr pointed out. They told him, 'When it appears to us that we have made a mistake, we don't go back on our justice because it affects the integrity and the dignity of government.'

Babu agreed that the British were 'rulers and superiors. But their superiority was not a tough one. It was a very gentle one. It was a soft, gentle superiority. They did not tell you that they were your Lords. But you yourself knew it. . . . There are people who tell you that they are your Lords. With the English, you knew it by yourself.'

The Sudanese civil servants rationalised British superiority in a different way. Both Amin Hasun and Ahmad Mahjub treated the English as superiors not because they were English, but because they deserved the deference due to senior officials or elders. 'In our

upbringing,' Ahmad Mahjub pointed out, 'your elder is your superior, irrespective of who he is.' To the Sudanese who were teachers the question of superiority was neither so prominent nor troublesome. To Jamal Muhammad Ahmad the teaching profession encouraged a feeling of equality between the British and the Sudanese in contrast 'to the Mamurs and the sub-Mamurs who used to salute so formally. As teachers, we mixed fairly frequently and freely, and I don't think even then they gave one the feeling of being masters.' The 'absolutely free atmosphere' of the Gordon College Students' Union, where students said 'whatever they wanted' and 'the teachers, whether English or Sudanese ... took part in discussions and everything, quite openly', explained to Jamal why the college students 'were so vocal and articulate in the wall papers and in their debates. ... Things only came to a head when those very nationalistic orations were made; then students would pour out into the streets, then get beaten up by the police, not by the teachers. ... There was no barrier between the teachers and the taught. But, of course, there was a barrier, a bit of hostility, between the students and the outside forces who were responsible for law and order.'

The position of a Sudanese Principal was not the same as that of a fellow teacher, and when Yusuf Badri had numerous British subordinates working under his direction, there were conflicts beyond the normal tensions between employers and employees. Some of the British teachers accepted the situation and rationalised their position by adopting 'a missionary attitude – that they were here to teach the Sudanese students under difficult conditions. ... Others were rather official about it, and they did not accept it'. Most of the British, Badri reasoned, were 'just ordinary human beings ... some of them were quite up to scratch, so to speak. ... Others were very materialistic and wanted to get as much money as they could out of the institution. Others were very conscientious. On the whole, the excellent ones were less in number than the poor ones.' A few of the British found working under Sudanese 'really quite strange to them ... this might have been due to differences in cultural views, traditional backgrounds. You could not see eye-to-eye with each other. It was quite noticeable with a few of them at that time.' These airs of superiority appeared to some of the Sudanese to take the form of insensitive snobbery. Da'ud 'Abd al-Latif was acutely conscious that many British thought that 'most Sudanese, when they found money, became drunkards'. Consequently, Da'ud and his friends in the Administration 'did not drink at all to refute what was a common criticism of the Sudanese educated elite at that time'. Da'ud and his friends wanted to make certain that the British could not use the

argument that in a time of crisis a Sudanese in a key post might be drunk, as an excuse not to promote the Sudanese in the Administration to positions of importance. So, he and his peers in the Civil Service adopted an admittedly 'puritanical attitude' toward drinking. 'Most of the English drank', added Da'ud, 'but few of them did it excessively. . . . Nearly everybody ended their day with their two or three whiskies. One of the very clear features of the evening of a D.C. in the Sudan was his bottle of whiskey and his book of English fiction. As soon as the sun set, the whiskey bottle and the soda and the English fiction were on the table in the garden.'

To the Sudanese the British were acutely conscious of the ethnic and cultural diversity of the Sudan and quickly perceived the regional loyalties which many British officials adopted. The British, observed Ahmad Mahjub, 'were very knowledgeable about people divided into areas, and one may . . . attribute that to the fact that a young chap would come straight from Oxford or Cambridge and be sent to a rural area, any remote place. He would study that area and know the characteristics of everybody and their attitudes toward people which vary from one area to another. There are those Sudanese who are honest and tell the truth, there are those who mince their words, there are those who are crafty – and the English knew them. They could differentiate.'

The British often 'gossiped' about one region when they had been transferred to another, according to Yusuf Badri. 'Some of them did it in an uncharitable way which aroused hostility. When they went to the Western Sudan, the English were told to behave in such-and-such a way because the Western tribes are rather fierce and that most of them belonged to the old Mahdist rebellious tribes. When they went to the East, they were told that the Eastern people were wild, and that they might kill a person without any cause, that life was nothing to them. When they went to the South . . . they were told that the Dinka were a very arrogant people. . . . They usually tried to give the impression that there was a great difference between the South and the North. "You Northerners", they would say, "are the slave traders and you treat Southerners like *Abeed*! [Ar. pl. *'abīd*, slaves]. Don't call them *Abeed*! There are no slaves any longer." And they would say about the Southerners that they were lazy people, that they were contented with what they had and were impervious to any progress.' Amin Hasun agreed that the British 'were highly impressed with people who came from the North', attributing this to their greater familiarity with Northern Sudanese. But Ahmad Mahjub, a Northerner, simply pointed out that strong regional loyalties were espoused by individual British

administrators, and that 'in nine cases out of ten the English had more confidence in a Southerner'.

Da'ud 'Abd al-Latif elaborated further on this critical point in understanding British rule in the Sudan. 'There was a regional enthusiasm by the D.C.'s. There were people who loved the Southerners very much and those who loved the Northerners very much. The D.C.'s and governors of the South ... loved the Southern thinking. They would analyse it and think that the Southerner, because he was a man of the bush, was very careful about his first step, while the Northerner, being a desert man, was only careful about his last step. This pattern became so strong that many of the D.C.'s when they went from the South to the North would not succeed.'

The British acknowledgement of regional differences was further complicated by the missionaries of different religious groups who competed for influence in the Southern Sudan. Da'ud recounted that 'after Kitchener came, the missionaries pushed very strongly in order to get spheres of influence in which to proselytise. So they [the Sudan Government] gave them spheres of influence [in the Southern Sudan], where Islam did not predominate as in the North. These spheres of influence [for the proselytisation of Christianity] did not leave the door open for Islam. The conflict then emerged not with Moslems, who were denied entrance to the South, but between the spheres of influence of the Catholics and the spheres of influence of the Protestants. This made Islam to be associated with the North and Christianity with the South, creating a certain pattern'. Ironically, Da'ud elaborated, 'the [British] administrators in the [Southern] Provinces who were against the missionaries were more numerous than the administrators who were with them. I worked in Equatoria as the Governor. It was the opinion of the Bishop [Rt Rev. Oliver Allison] that I was the closest Governor to them and [despite the fact that I was] the first Sudanese Governor of Equatoria. He was more comfortable with me, a Moslem, than he had been with a Protestant Englishman. The [government] files of the South are full of complaints by District Commissioners against the missionaries.'

Moreover, there were other kinds of differentiation beside regional loyalties which the British made. There were 'those kind of English', mentioned Da'ud, 'who loved the camels and the nomads and didn't like the town people at all'. Then there were fashionable comparisons between the Sudanese and other colonised people. Indeed, the British had been 'really original in their treatment of the Sudanese in contrast with their handling of other native populations in their Empire'. Da'ud

believed that this was due to the similarities between the Sudanese and the British peoples. 'By their nature, the English are a shy people,' Da'ud theorised, 'and they hate a man who throws his weight about. The Sudanese, too, are the same – they are very shy. Somehow, much of what makes the English laugh also makes the Sudanese laugh. In addition, the Sudanese don't have the colour bar. Sudanese don't have a special respect for the White nor a disrespect for the Black. On the contrary, the Sudanese are so confident that they are the best people in the world that it is impossible for them to think that there is somebody who can look down on them. As a result, the Sudanese worked with the English as equals in a way which did not exist in other parts of the Empire.'

There were also generational differences in the way individual British administrators conducted their dealings with the Sudanese. Da'ud believed that in 'our generation [the 1930s and 1940s] the English D.C. was more comfortable with the Shaykh in traditional Sudanese society than he was with the educated. . . . We discovered that the chief was appealing because he was still addressing himself to the D.C.'s vanity more than to his mind. But later on, the top-level administration learned that they could go nowhere with the tribal chiefs, and that their future was with the civil servants, the educated. After that, the British administrator began to look down on the political movement outside the Civil Service more than they respected it.

'There were, of course,' explained Da'ud, 'two approaches – two political movements – in the country: the movement of those who were contained inside the Civil Service, who would say, "This doesn't work and this would be better", and the movement of those who were in the streets and who would shout, "We want the Unity of the Nile Valley!" and things like that. In the eyes of the British the outside movement was childish and despicable. . . . They took them as people completely misled and for whom there was no use.'

In fact there was a decided change in British policy towards the emerging Sudanese national movement following the strikes by Gordon College students in the 1930s. The student strike of 1931 began, explained Yusuf Badri, 'because the government decided to pay the graduates of the Gordon College £E $5\frac{1}{2}$ a month, whereas it had been £E 8 a month. This was quite a big drop in salary, and the reason was the general worldwide economic crisis of 1929–31. The financial condition of the Sudan was very stringent indeed. Well, we did not accept that. There was some sort of national feeling that there was money, but that the British were making the drop only to gain more for

themselves. How about this army of British officials who were living in well-furnished houses? This was our reflection when we walked around Khartoum. . . . There was a sort of deeper feeling [than money] which culminated in the strike.'

The Administration of Governor-General Sir Stewart Symes instituted a 'policy of containment' with regard to the young educated Sudanese. Da'ud explained that the senior members of the Political Service were concerned about the younger generation of Sudanese students who read *The Nation* and *The Statesman* and absorbed ideas about groups like the Fabian Society in 'book clubs'. To counter this 'subversive' activity the British actively recruited potential dissidents into the Administration. This had a profound effect on the Sudanese nationalist movement. 'The critical minds became associated with British rule', leaving 'the non-critical minds to work in the political field to take up the banner of nationalism.' Avidly reading Socialist literature, active in the Leftist discussion groups, and a visible strike leader at the Gordon College, Da'ud 'Abd al-Latif was an obvious choice for greater inclusion into the decision-making process.

'After I joined the School of Sub-Mamurs . . . I gave a speech . . . I was the first sub-Mamur to be asked to become the Secretary of the Graduates' Club, and as the Secretary I made a speech on the occasion of Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman's visit to Dunqula. I said that it was historic because for the first time the British had allowed the sons of the country to go back to their homeland. . . . This was published by *The Nile* newspaper. It was translated and given to the Assistant Secretary of Administration [Office of the Civil Secretary] who decided that I should be disciplined.[6] "First", he said, "you should apologize and write a letter of apology for what you said." I said to him, "I will not write a letter of apology. I will write a letter of resignation." I wrote my letter of resignation and left.'

'All of this went to Sir Douglas Newbold. Sir Douglas immediately said, "Let this boy come and see me." When I went to see him, first of all, he met me as a senior man. He got up and met me at the door as though I were a very important man. He seated me and gave me coffee and talked to me about everything, including English literature and poetry, except the topic about which I had come to him. After that, he said to me when I came to leave, "Forget about this case. It is nothing." After Sudanese Independence, I found a note he had written on me for the file. The note read as follows: "This boy is politically-minded; he will either be with us or against us. I prefer that he be with us. Therefore, he should not be transferred, except with my consent. He will be looked after by me. I will ask him to write to me always." '

The nationalist movement outside the Civil Service, according to Da'ud, 'was marked with various slogans ... as "To Hell with the British" and "Leave the country" ', which actually helped the nationalists within the Civil Service 'who were trying to convince the British of the worthiness of the Sudanese to be independent by working hard and taking over authority. Those who were in the streets helped those who were at the desks to take more responsibility. The more there was an outcry the more the British had to hand over to those who were ready to take over and do the job.... They [the two nationalist groups in and out of the Civil Service] didn't plan it together, and there was no bridge between them. Quite a number of the Sudanese who were at the desks did not like the political movement, and they thought it was a kind of hypocritical and demagogic thing. In spite of that, these demagogues helped the ones who were not demagogues and were being trained as civil servants. They helped them to get promoted. So the translation of the slogans into practice was done at the Civil Service end. There would have been no use in the slogans if there was nobody who would take over. So there were twin movements without anybody planning it. In fact, they didn't like each other.'

To Da'ud, Yusuf Badri and many of their colleagues the turning-point by which was established the commitment of the British in the Sudan to Sudanese Independence was the so-called Sidqi–Bevin agreement of 1948. 'The Sidqi agreement with the British [Government]', related Da'ud, 'was to give the sovereignty of the Sudan to Egypt with the help of the [British] Civil Service here. The Sudan Government practically collapsed.'[7] At this point the British administrators in the Sudan sided with the Sudanese. When Da'ud threatened to go out into the street with the 'outside' political movement to protest, his superior, K. D. D. Henderson, told him, 'Wait, you will not be alone ... we may go all of us into the streets.' Yusuf Badri vividly remembered Henderson being 'quite vocal and sincere' in his protestations on behalf of the Sudanese and gratefully acknowledged how many British officials led by the Governor-General, Sir Hubert Huddleston, and the Civil Secretary, Sir James Robertson, who were 'sympathetic with the Sudanese against any foreign intervention, whether from the British Foreign Office in London or from the Egyptian Foreign Office in Cairo. They were loyal to the Sudanese, not to the Condominium. All of the British Civil Servants, from the Governor-General on down, made a representation to the British Government, protesting the agreement with Egypt.'

To Da'ud the British created Sudanese nationalism 'by example.... The British loved their country and demonstrated that immensely. That taught the Sudanese also to love his country.... Allegiance to the Sudan

as a whole was a novel idea which the Sudanese intellectual had to grasp if he were to take over. There was a European machine built in the country; the government was a European machine, just like a Rolls-Royce. If you want to drive it, you will have to learn how to drive it. You can't put a camel man to look after it.'

For Zubayr al-Malik Sudanese nationalism was a movement that drew on the entire populace. 'Some people would control their feelings, but essentially they wanted independence. There were people in whom this feeling was more obvious, and they showed their enmity against Whites; those were the first people who demonstrated and spread the feeling. ... It went through many stages, and the feeling, of course, started in small degrees. ... It was there ... from 1921 or 1922. It was growing very slowly in small degrees until 1924, when there occurred differences between the British and the Egyptians. The feeling then intensified and went on; it never stopped until independence.'

Jamal Muhammad Ahmad had a distinctive perspective on the nationalist movement which embraced the historic traditions of the resistance of Sudanese peoples to alien intruders. 'For the educated, for our seniors,' he mused, 'the British were only a passing phase because even soon after the reconquest of the Sudan, there were sporadic movements against the British ... the Dinka resisting the British, Darfur resisting, and 'Ali Dinar resisting very much. That was soon after the conquest, which goes to show that there was a feeling that the British were an extraneous body in the Sudan. ... I mean you cannot talk about a nationalist uprising, but it is an indicative sign. We resented the conquest. Then, things became calmer until 1923. And then there was the army uprising in '24 in liaison with the Egyptians, of course.[8] And only twelve years later there was the beginning of a nation, a Sudanese national movement in the [Graduates' General] Congress of 1938. ... In 1942, the note was presented to the British administration, and independence came in 1956. ...[9] So, as you can see, I don't think the British administrators had much peace and quiet in the Sudan. Things happened every ten years ... you can see the periodic upheavals, very much like somebody running a longish course, but having a breathtaking pause and then resuming the running again.'

Despite their affection and belief in the British officials of the Sudan Government, to the Sudanese, there was an ever-present ambiguity about their ultimate aims and loyalties of the rulers. No words, actions or legislation could overcome these lingering and paradoxical doubts that the British would not leave the Sudan. To many British officials, whose lives and careers were committed to the Sudan as well as to the

Sudanese themselves, these undercurrents of uncertainty which welled up from the depths of Sudanese feelings were unfathomable. Some British officials were stoic. Others sought futilely to comprehend only to be frustrated by their own self-delusion that they really 'understood' the Sudanese. And there were those who were simply hurt, feeling that their integrity proven over years of selfless service appeared at the very end, to be compromised. Perhaps this was the greatest challenge to the British in the Sudan which, at the end, they met with dignity and humility from that vast store of culture, tradition, education and commitment. Nevertheless the doubts were there, and many Sudanese remained unconvinced that the British would actually leave the Sudan until their imminent departure proved otherwise.

'It had never come to my mind that they would leave the Sudan,' declared Amin Hasun, 'although they had shown their good intentions by educating us. But I didn't think that they would leave . . . so early.' Ahmad Mahjub was similarly unaware that the British would leave and said with astonishment, 'Well, when you are in a state, as we were just before they left, it never dawned on anybody that they would leave, and for that matter, so easily. They did, and I think for quite a while, we really wondered whether they would be coming back or not. It was not clear whether it was true or a dream – but they left.'

To others the course of events could no longer belie the reality that the British would indeed leave the Sudan. Zubayr al-Malik recalled that two years before Independence he concluded that the British would have to leave for 'their position was weakened and that they were going . . . the opposition to them became more open, replacing caution and fear . . . the hatred began to intensify, although, up to the last minute – until the English left – no one was convinced about the end. The English were not convinced . . . they were diehards.' Their view 'was that the Sudanese were extremely immature and they needed some guidance from the British until they were . . . capable of shouldering such a responsibility'.

Babu Nimr recalled the moment when he had his first idea that the British might leave within his lifetime. 'When Sudanese Nationalism first started, I personally, and many people like me out there, felt that the English would eventually go. They might leave after a hundred years or so. We were not thinking of years. These were rulers present and, for the time being, staying. But when the nationalist movement started and the Advisory Council was established in the 1940s, one felt that the locusts in the gourd were beginning to move. . . . In a gourd, all those locusts are alive. Once they wake up, they spring up, and rush out of the gourd.' It was during one of the sessions of the Advisory Council in the '40s when

the Governor-General [Sir Hubert Huddleston] said in his opening address that in twenty years time the Sudan might become independent.[10] 'I personally laughed,' Babu remembers. 'I laughed with a sense of relief that it would take only twenty years. We never thought that in . . . even a hundred years the English would leave. . . . But when he said they were going to leave in twenty years and that we would be at liberty like them, I thought that was wonderful. I laughed a lot. I was very happy.'

Having arrived at the conclusion that the British would indeed leave the Sudan, many Sudanese were equally convinced that most of the British officials did not welcome their impending departure nor approved of the nationalist movement. They had spent their lives in the Sudan where they had forged a deep love of the country and friendship for countless individual Sudanese. Amin Hasun reflected pensively that the British 'were very sorry indeed; they didn't like to leave. I don't think they were interested in colonizing us. I think it was because of the human relations between us, the friendships.' 'Of course, there was a definite resistance to the idea of leaving the Sudan among many Englishmen', remarked Ahmad Mahjub ironically, 'but funnily enough, those who were closest to me, meaning people like John Hartley, could see the day when we would run our own country. He always expected it and he always defended the idea of us taking over one day.' Zubayr al-Malik was more indifferent, 'They didn't like it [leaving the Sudan]. They didn't hate it either. They didn't block it and they didn't like it. Of course, this is natural.'

Natural and understandable it might have been, but the British ambivalence towards the nationalists remained to the very end. Babu Nimr observed that although the English 'didn't really like the nationalist movement', that they 'would not say ugly words' to show that they felt the Sudanese 'who worked for self-rule and then independence were really against them'. But Babu recalled several instances when their animosity towards Sudanese nationalism emerged. He recounted conversations with former British administrators while in England for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953. He was asked: ' "You say you don't want the English; you tell us to go. Haven't we served you well? Haven't we done a good job for you?" ' Babu sensed the hurt and rejection in the plaintive questions, 'We had not appreciated their work; we had not appreciated somebody who had treated us well; we had not returned his favour.'

'I said,' continued Babu, ' "Oh, by God, you have done a good job for us in the Sudan. What you have done for us we will never forget. You have done everything well. In 1899 the Egyptians said, "Sudan is ours."

You said, "No. Let us bring him up together like our child. We will leave him alone until he has grown up enough to manage his own affairs." Our neighbour said we belonged to him, and you said, "No. Let us enter on equal terms to raise this child." And when you and the Egyptians made amendments in 1936, you, the English, refused again. You preserved our own for us. Now when we say, "We do not want you," we are not asking for anything other than what you have preserved for us. Now we feel that we are old enough to take control of what is ours; what you have kept for us. . . . Now, I have nothing. When I get mine, the man who did me some good, I will never forget." '

Other British officials subdued their emotions over leaving by efforts at rational discussion. Jamal Muhammad Ahmad remembered a former provincial governor inviting three or four members of the Graduates' Congress to tea every other day to discuss the issue of independence. 'That inevitable tea, of course. And we sat there and argued with him logically. We were not hitting each other in the face, but we were arguing why they should go and he was arguing back why they should stay. It was as liberal as that. . . . We were not that wild in our demands . . . and on their side they could see that the whole world was moving towards this. Kwame Nkrumah and Jomo Kenyatta were holding their conference in Manchester and were talking about African independence – not about the independence of Kenya – they were talking about the independence of Africa.[11] In India the British were making a hobby of jailing Nehru and unjailing him. . . . And, of course, in Egypt there was a big movement of students against the British occupation. And they could see that we were not that immune from currents coming from abroad.'

And so the end came to British rule in the Sudan with all the deep emotions flowing beneath the calm exterior the Sudanese had come to learn and respect from their rulers. The traditional equanimity did not desert the British official in his closing days. It would have been unthinkable, but the Sudanese have never forgotten the style as well as the substance of the departure of the imperial presence.

'The Englishmen in the Education Department,' observed Ahmad Mahjub, 'were, on the one hand, more open-minded than the political people. They expected it and they didn't mind at all. . . . There were those who were really delighted to see that the Sudanese were getting on and were going to run their country; they even gave up their compensations for the Sudanese.' There were those, on the other hand, 'who just could not visualize the possibility of their leaving or of this country really keeping together if they left'.

'Even when they lost hope and were leaving,' recollected Babu Nimr,

'their behaviour never changed. They were very faithful until the very last minute. I met Tibbs [C. M. G. Tibbs] in Nahud on the last day. He was about to depart. His luggage was in the car. Even then, he was still working. There were files not yet completed; he took them to work on. We parted with him at Fulah where we took a photograph of him and said, "Goodbye! Goodbye!" He took his work and finished it in the Headquarters. He left the files in the Headquarters and then departed.' Zubayr al-Malik recalled a similar scene. 'The D.C. who was with us, although he was leaving tomorrow, was working in his office the day before. There was no negative feeling.'

Da'ud recognised that those British civil servants in the middle of their careers were 'a little bit irritated . . . it was tragic because they lost a career and they were sent to the world without a particular skill in anything saleable in Europe. Their experience was in many cases irrelevant. . . . But they took it patiently, and we were, also, generous to that kind of person. The Sudanisation Committee gave everyone of the Civil Service £E 8000 as compensation for the loss of their careers, and £E 8000 was good money at the time.[12] The young ones were not irritated at all. They thought independence was wonderful when it came. He already had the experience of five or six years in the bush, which would be useful, and he could sell himself anywhere else. For the older man, it was the completion of a mission, and . . . he was proud of that mission'.

All that was left to do before lowering the flags was to hold the final farewell parties. The Sudanese came from near and far from all persuasions to give their respects and say goodbye. Amin Hasun received an airplane ticket from Port Sudan to Khartoum to attend the farewell party for Paul Sandison, the outgoing Commissioner of Labour. 'I went to his house and stayed until he left,' remembered Amin. 'During the three days I stayed, he was always feeling sorry. . . . I noticed that Mr. Sandison was about to weep when he was saying goodbye to us, and on my part it was the same.' Ahmad Mahjub recalled those days. 'I think they were all very sad to go . . . they had great respect for the Sudanese. They loved them. They loved their integrity. They were attached to this country. They knew they were safe here.'

Perhaps, Babu Nimr best summed up the pathos of departing. 'Of course, we were pleased with our independence. But as friends and people with whom we had lived and worked happily together, we felt sad when they left. We felt sad, not for love of Colonial rule, but for love of them as friends.'

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. In 1973 I interviewed the eight Sudanese whose responses to my questions concerning the British and their life in the Sudan form the contents of this chapter. There was Babu Nimr, al-Zubayr Ahmad al-Malik, Muhammad Ahmad Abu Rannat, Da'ud 'Abd al-Latif, Jamal Muhammad Ahmad, Ahmad Mahjub, Amin Hasun Abdallah and Yusuf Badri. These men ranged in age from 48 to their late 60s. All of them had been civil servants, most of them senior civil servants under the British with the exception of Babu Nimr, who as *Nazir* (Chief) of the Missiriya from the age of 13 had been in a close working relationship with British regional administrators. Zubayr Ahmad al-Malik began his career as a civil servant before becoming the *Nazir* of the Danaqla. The questions which I posed during the interview covered a broad spectrum of the colonial experience in sequential framework, including preconceptions, initial contact, occupational relationships, personal relations, changes in attitudes, the position of British women in the Sudan, relationships between men and women, political and social stratification, the Sudanese nationalist movement, independence, the departure of the British, comparisons between the British as rulers and as individuals, particular likes and dislikes about the British, and finally their evaluation of British rule in the Sudan. In compressing such a comprehensive and ambitious range of the British experience into a single chapter, I have sought to retain the spirit as well as the content of their replies to my inquiries.
2. Walter Ferguson Crawford was an Australian from St Paul's College, Sydney University, and then a Rhodes Scholar at New College, Oxford.
3. *Al-Sibyān* (*The Lads*) was a pioneering youth magazine under the editorial direction of Robin Hodgkin and Awad Satti, designed to provide appealing reading material for thousands of Sudanese who left school with only an elementary reading knowledge of Arabic. It was an astonishing success, selling over 15 000 copies every fortnight and still today a best-seller in the Sudan.
4. Al-Ahfad University College for Women emerged from a private primary school which was established at the village of Rufa'a by Babikr Badri (1860–1954), the Father of Sudanese Women's education. In 1933 Ahfad College became an intermediate school and in 1943 a secondary school and in 1966 a university college for women. Al-Ahfad today is the largest of all non-government educational institutes in the Sudan with a total enrolment of 800 boys and 600 girls from grades four to twelve and 150 students in the University College for Women.
5. *Khawāja* is a general term for 'Westerner' or 'Western Christian' used especially for merchants. As non-Moslems, they are not ritually clean, thus taking on a kind of polite perjorative meaning.
6. Dunqula and the Northern Province was a stronghold of Sayyid 'Ali al-Mirghani, the leader of the Khatmiyya religious following and the arch-rival of Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman. Since Sayyid 'Ali's loyalty to the Sudan Government was long-standing and unquestioned, the British regarded 'Abd al-Rahman's forays into Khatmiyya territory with deep misgivings.

As for Sayyid 'Abd al-Rahman, he could plead that he was simply visiting the homeland of his father, the Mahdi, who was born near Dunqula.

7. The difficult negotiations in 1946 between Ernest Bevin, the Foreign Secretary of the Labour Government, and Isma'l Sidqi Pasha, the veteran Egyptian politician, to revise the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936, produced the Sidqi–Bevin Protocol by which Britain and Egypt agreed to co-operate in the Sudan 'within the framework of the unity between the Sudan and Egypt under the common crown of Egypt'. The Egyptians interpreted this Protocol to mean that Britain had accepted the singular sovereignty of Egypt over the Sudan. There were loud protestations and Sudanese delegations left for London, but the implacable and unanimous hostility of the British Sudan Political Service, symbolised by the adamant stand of the Governor-General, Sir Hubert Huddleston, was decisive. Bevin never really meant to abandon the Sudan and the Protocol was brushed into the dustbin of history.
8. In 1921 'Ali 'Abd al-Latif, a Dinka officer, formed the United Tribes Society to work for the independence of the Sudan under its tribal leaders. He was arrested in 1922 and briefly imprisoned. Two years later he founded the White Flag League in 1924 whose purpose was to drive out the British and establish a united Egypt and Sudan under the Egyptian monarchy. 'Abd al-Latif was again arrested in June, but in August the cadets of the Military School demonstrated in Khartoum and were forcibly suppressed.
9. The educated Sudanese established the Graduates' General Congress in 1938 as a means to make their opinions on the Sudan Government's policies known. In 1942 the Congress officially sought to act as the spokesman for Sudanese nationalism. The Sudan Government refused their demands, but became acutely aware of the grievances of the educated Sudanese elite for inclusion in governing the Sudan.
10. On 15 May 1944 an Advisory Council for the Northern Sudan was established, consisting of twenty-eight ordinary members, with the Governor-General as President and the Civil, Financial and Legal Secretaries as *ex-officio* Vice-Presidents. All the ordinary members were Sudanese and most were tribal chiefs, generally from the Province Councils. The educated Sudanese were hostile to the Advisory Council since they did not feel that its members represented their views. On 17 April 1946 the Governor-General, Sir Hubert Huddleston, said in his Opening Address to the Fifth Session of the Advisory Council: 'The Government is aiming at a free independent Sudan which will be able as soon as that independence has been achieved to define for itself its relations with Great Britain and Egypt. . . . I feel confident that in twenty years time the Sudanese will be governing their own country assisted by a certain number of non-Sudanese specialists and technicians.'
11. The Fifth Pan-African Congress was held in October 1945 under the joint chairmanship of Dr W. E. B. DuBois and Dr Peter Milliard. Attended by over 200 delegates, mostly Africans, the theme of the meeting was African Nationalism and Marxist Socialism. The Congress adopted several declarations, among them the determination of colonial peoples to be free and the condemnation of monopolistic capitalism.
12. A joint British and Sudanese Committee of Civil Servants had been formed

as part of the Administrative Conference of 1946 to submit a detailed proposal for the progressive replacements of expatriates in senior posts of the Sudan Civil Service. The Committee reported to the Advisory Council a scheme for Sudanisation, reducing the number of British officials from 694 in 1948 to 232 in 1962. Recruitment of foreigners on pensionable terms was stopped in 1947. Thereafter, non-Sudanese were recruited on contract and paid an expatriation allowance. In February 1954 a new Sudanisation Committee was established under the provisions of the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of 1953 to eliminate the British from the army, the police and the Administration.

Appendix: An Educational Profile of the Sudan Political Service

The editors are deeply indebted to A. H. M. Kirk-Greene for permission to use his Tables and Explanations thereof which he compiled for his paper 'The Sudan Political Service: A Profile in the Sociology of Imperialism' presented on 16 October 1980 at the Twenty-third Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association held in Philadelphia and subsequently published in the *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 15, 1 (1982) 21–48, and privately by A. H. M. Kirk-Greene, St Antony's College, Oxford.

What, then, is the evidence for the assertion that the Sudan was a country of Blacks and Browns administered by Blues?[1] The question is best answered by an examination of the statistics assembled in Table 1.

A number of points call for comment in this table. One is the periodisation of the Blue imperative. It seems to have been at its most spectacular in the opening decade of the Service (Out of 56 graduates appointed to the Sudan Political Service between 1902 and the outbreak of the First World War 27 had a Blue.) Consistent during the interwar years, once the overriding demand of war service had given way, in about 1925, to the 'normal' entry of direct from school to university out of 181 graduates appointed between 1919 and the outbreak of the Second World War, 47 had represented their university at sport, just over 30%. After the Second World War it became quite unremarkable (or unimportant) for during the post-war period only 7 of the 54 graduates appointed to the Sudan Political Service had a Blue, less than 15%. These three periods may be usefully categortised, in so far as the Sudan Political Service is concerned, as the years of colonisation, of consolidation and of demission. Out of the whole forty-eight years of annual recruitment (there was no intake in 1916–18, and again in 1933 or 1940, in only twelve years was there not a single Blue among the entrants. Two-thirds of those appointed in 1902, 1909 and 1913 were Blues, as were almost half of those appointed in 1906, 1915, 1925 and again from 1934 to 1939 inclusive, while as many as three-quarters of the 1932 intake were Blues.

The data on which Table 2 has been constructed are not susceptible to such a high degree of comprehensiveness and accuracy as those on which Table 1

[1] By 'Blue' is meant the traditional Oxford and Cambridge recognition of a person who has represented his university at a major sport in the annual varsity contest between the two universities. The term became commonly applied to those who represented their universities at major sports other than Oxford and Cambridge.

TABLE 1 *Number of 'Blues' in the Sudan Political Service, 1901–52*[a]

Period of recruitment	*Total graduate appointments*[b]	*Blues gained*							
		Rugby	*Cricket*	*Athletics*	*Rowing*	*Hockey*	*Soccer*	*Shooting*	*Other*
1901–18	63	6	5	4	5	3	3	0	2
1919–44	193	14	7	7	6	3	3	6	12
1945–52	54	1	1	1	0	2	0	0	2
TOTALS	310	21	13	12	11	8	6	6	16

[a] Predominantly gained at Oxford or Cambridge, these also include three comparable distinctions earned by members of the Service at T.C.D., St Andrews, Sydney and Rhodes Universities.

[b] This total includes appointments made to those who did not attend a university, but went to the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, or, occasionally, to no post-secondary institutions. They numbered about 80 over the period.

[c] These include 12 men who gained a Double Blue and one who had a Triple Blue.

rests. The reasons for this are several. First, not every degree specified has been classified. Second, for some of the post-1918 and more of the post-1942 entries, an unclassified 'war degree' is shown, denoting that the person took a shortened B.A. in two years against the standard three (though, in the event, these were frequently classified). Third, a few of the entries in the biographical register are misleading enough to suggest an error, e.g. 'Class' should probably read 'Part'. None the less, the data are reliable enough to present an unarguably accurate composite portrait of the general academic qualifications of the Sudan Political Service as a whole.

A number of points with respect to Table 2 deserve to be made. The preponderance of Oxbridge over other universities is staggering, accounting for nearly 90% of the total of approximately 310 graduates in the Service, ignoring those who spend the extra year there after graduating from another university. Within this figure too, the proportion of Oxford to Cambridge graduates is equally marked, in the ratio of almost 2 to 1. . . . Out of some 80 officials with a regular military background, a fifth were graduates from the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, a source continually tapped right through from 1899 to 1950. The first civilian to be taken from a university other than Oxford or Cambridge or from the Royal Military College was M. S. Macdonnell from Dublin, who was accepted in 1905. In 1924, nine of the ten successful candidates were from Oxford; *pari passu*, in the final year of recruitment, 1952, every candidate was a Cambridge man.

Even allowing for an above-average margin of error in the list of Firsts, the net result is an impressive one indeed: at least ten per cent of the Sudan Political Service held a First-Class Honours degree, a figure half as high again as the average number of Firsts awarded in the arts at Oxford and Cambridge before the 1950s. Between 1904 and 1910 at least one First was among each year's intake (always in single figures), and again for most of the interwar years. Out of the four successful candidates in 1932, two had a First-Class degree (and three had Blues!). During the final ten years of British recruitment into the Sudan Political Service, only one man had gained a First, J. W. Meadows, who came in at the very end having originally been appointed Inspector of Education (not that a First was *de riguer* for the last-named department: J. A. Hartley was appointed to it in 1929, on the strength of an unredeemed Third in both parts of his Tripos – and a Blue, of course!). Comfortably less than a third of the Sudan Political Service had been placed in the Third Class. Oxford provided three of the undistinguished Fourths, Cambridge one.

History was the principle subject read (76) followed by Classics (67, including 10 Firsts, half of them from Cambridg). If there were such a creature as the average Sudan Political Service man, he was likely to have had a Second or Third in one of these subjects from Oxford (plus a Blue, of course), with the classics gradually giving way to history from the mid-1920s: in 1908 every successful candidate had a degree in classics and in 1906 more than half, while, in 1928 7 out of the 16 recruited had a degree in history. Relative to the usual subjects read by applicants for a career in colonial administration, a high percentage, 11% of the successful applicants, had a degree in one of the sciences. Although there were few officers with a degree in anthropology, B. A. Lewis went back to take his as a second degree twenty years later, P. P. Howell

TABLE 2 *Class and subject of Degree-holder in the Sudan Political Service, 1899–1952*

	First-Class Honours													*Second-Class Honours*												*Third-Class Honours*												*Others*	
	Classics	History	Law	Pol/Econ.	Eng. Lit.	Geog.	Mod. Lang.	Anthrop.	Maths.	Nat. Sci.	Mech. Sci.	Chemistry	Agric.	Classics	History	Law	Pol/Econ.	Eng. Lit.	Geog.	Mod. Lang.	Anthrop.	Maths	Nat. Sci.	Mech. Sci.	Chemistry	Agric.	Classics	History	Law	Pol/Econ.	Eng. Lit.	Geog.	Mod. Lang.	Anthrop.	Maths	Nat. Sci.	Mech. Sci.	Chemistry	Agric.		
Oxford	3	2	3		1	1	1		2				1	28	22		6	5	3	3	2			3	3	2		22	22	3	9		1	3		1			1	Classics IV:	2
																																								Law IV:	1
Cambridge	5	1	1					1?	2	1				6	18		5		1	4	6	4		3	3		1	1	8	3		1	3	2	1	4	5	1		P.P.E. IV:	1
Trinity College, Dublin	1?		1						1								1																							Moral Sci. II:	1
																																								Econ. II:	1
St Andrews	1														1		1																							Medicine II:	1
																																								Theology III:	1
Glasgow							2																																	Orient. Lang. III:	1
Edinburgh																	1					1																		History IV:	1
Aberdeen																				1																					
London															1		1							1																Edinb: Vet. (no class)	1
Wales		1?																																						T.C.D.: Medicine (no class)	1
TOTAL	10	4	5	0	1	1	3	1	5	1	0	0	1	34	42	11	9	4	7	9	4	1	7	6	2	1	23	30	6	9	1	4	5	1	5	5	1	1	0		
TOTAL	32 Firsts													140 Seconds													93 Thirds													5 Fourths	

1. Under class of degree, the Cambridge 'Pass' degree has been equated with the Oxford 'Fourth'.
2. Under subject, a commonly understood terminology has been used rather than the special vocabulary, e.g. at Oxford, Law is called Jurisprudence, Classics are known as Lit.Hum., or Greats, and Politics is subsumed under P.P.E. (Politics, Philosophy and Economics), also known as Modern Greats. Anthropology is not offered as a First degree at Oxford. Engineering has been grouped under Mechanical Science.

advanced to a D.Phil. ten years on, in general terms it may be said that the Sudan made anthropologists and not the other way round.

Table 3 summarises the college affiliation at Oxford and Cambridge of the successful candidates, and Table 4 relates to the schools from which they came.

Too much importance should not be attached to the college influence, though there were cases when one joined the Sudan Political Service because he had known, either at college or school, and admired someone who had joined a year or two earlier. Sometimes Sudan Political Service officials also spent a few days on leave back in their own college, on the look-out for likely

TABLE 3 *University and College affiliation of the Sudan Political Service, 1899–1952*

Oxford	New College	17	Queen's	8
(180)	Magdalen	16	Corpus Christi	6
	Oriel	16	Balliol	6
	Brasenose	15	St John's	6
	Christ Church	13	Hertford	5
	Worcester	10	St Peter's	5
	Trinity	10	Pembroke	4
	Merton	9	Lincoln	4
	Wadham	9	Keble	3
	Exeter	8	St Edmund Hall	2
Cambridge	Trinity	17	St John's	4
(103)	King's	12	Jesus	4
	Pembroke	11	Christ's	4
	Magdalen	8	St Catherine's	4
	Trinity Hall	6	Caius	4
	Clare	5	Emmanuel	4
	Queens'	5	Sidney Sussex	2
	Peterhouse	5	Downing	1
	Corpus Christi	5	Selwyn	1
Others	Trinity College, Dublin	7	Aberdeen	1
29)	Edinburgh	6	Sydney	1
	St Andrews	4	Victoria	1
	London	3	Poitiers	1
	Glasgow	2	Wales	2
	Wales	2	Lincoln's Inn	1
R.M.C.	Sandhurst	19		

[a] These figures allow for the graduate from a university under 'Others' who then went on to Oxford or Cambridge for one year or more.

[b] While the total for Cambridge corresponds with that given by R. C. Mayall in *Sudan Political Service*, ed. H. MacMichael, n.d. p. 7 note, there is a discrepancy of 2 in the Oxford total. Since Mayall's figures are clearly wrong in his Oxford total for 1941–4 (4 against 6 in the text, pp. 71–3), I have not given him the benefit of the doubt against my count. The difference remains statistically insignificant.

recruits to the Service. The explanation of the dominance of Trinity at Cambridge because of its status as the largest of the Cambridge colleges is not confirmed by the Oxford experience where Christ Church was the biggest college: there the lead of New College and Magdalen College seem to be related to the traditional connection with Winchester and Eton respectively – a relationship also reflected in the King's–Eton link at Cambridge.

TABLE 4 *School provenance of the Sudan Political Service, 1899–1952*

Winchester[b]	30	Sedbergh	7
Eton[b]	21	Rossall	6
Rugby[b]	20	Glenalmond[a]	5
Marlborough	19	Merchant Taylors'[b]	5
Edinburgh Academy[a]	14	Repton	5
Charterhouse[b]	13	Sutton Valence	5
Haileybury	11	Bedford	4
Clifton	9	Fettes[a]	4
Shrewsbury[b]	9	Monkton Combe	4
Wellington	9	Radley	4
Cheltenham	7	St Paul's[b]	4
Christ's Hospital	7	Sherborne	4
Harrow[b]	7	Tonbridge	4

Three each from: Berkhamsted, Blundell's, Downside, Durham, Glasgow Academy,[a] Lancing, Malvern, St Bee's, St Edward's, Uppingham, Westminster.[b]

Two each from: Aldenham, Bradfield, Bromsgrove, Cardiff High School, Dover College, Giggleswick, Leeds Grammar School, Liverpool College, Llandovery College, Merchiston,[b] Mill Hill, Oundle, St John's Leatherhead, St Laurence Ramsgate, St Peter's York.

One each from 57 schools, including Ampleforth, Bloxham, Campbeltoun Grammar School,[a] Canford, City of London, Cranleigh, Dean Close, Denstone, Dollar Academy,[a] Dover, Dulwich, Dundee High School,[a] Felsted, George Watson's,[a] Gordonstoun,[a] Highgate, Hurstpierpoint, Hyman's College, King's Canterbury King William College (I.O.M.), Loretto,[a] Monmouth, Perse, Portarlington, Robert Gordon's College,[a] St George's Weybridge, Taunton, United Service College, University College School Warwick.

Overseas schools included *two* each from Geelong (Austr.) and St Andrew's (S.A.). and *one* each from Sydney Grammar School (Austr.), Wellington (N.Z.). Houghton (S.A.) and the English School, Cairo.

[a] Scottish schools.
[b] Clarendon schools.

Despite the interest of Table 4, where the role of Winchester is outstanding, representing something approaching 8% of the whole Service, the school influence is even harder to evaluate, although it was sometimes felt that Edinburgh Academy – or even the Scottish schools in general – had developed a special relationship *vis-à-vis* recruitment to the Sudan Political Service. It is noticeable how after 1945, applicants from the top public schools are overtaken by those from the then less well-known ones.

Bibliographical Note

There are four principal repositories for collecting the memorabilia on Britain in the Sudan – The Sudan Archive, School of Oriental Studies, Durham University, Durham; Rhodes House Library, Oxford; the Central Records Office, Khartoum; and papers in the possession of private individuals. Of the four the most important is the Sudan Archive begun by Richard Hill and which has grown into a voluminous collection and the principal repository for the papers of the British who served in the Sudan. In April 1981 Durham University sponsored the Sudan–Durham Historical Conference to which came over 250 former British civil servants who had served in the Sudan. Their enthusiasm was incalcuable and resulted in the inauguration of the Sudan Archive Fund to support and enhance the work of the Archive to which many additional collections of papers have since been donated. No research scholar or interested person can possibly gain an understanding of the Condominium without examining the rich resources at Durham.

There are several important collections at the Rhodes House Library – Coriat, MacMichael, T. R. H. Owen – but they are limited compared to the documentation at Durham. The Central Records Office in Khartoum has few personal memoirs but, of course, massive documentation of official memoranda and papers all under the watchful and tolerant eye of its long-standing guardian, Muhammad Ahmad Ibrahim Abu Salim. Finally, there are the personal papers still retained in the possession of the writer or their relatives – Willis, Sandison, Hill – which will hopefully find their way to Durham. The editors are most grateful to have access to these very personal files.

There is a vast literature about the Sudan written by the British who served during the Condominium, but this volume has sought to reveal the British in the Sudan from their own pens and memories.

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