

## FOREWORD

The preservation on microfilm of documents in the Kenya National Archives has a history beginning in 1963. In that year, Mr. D. Charman, Chief Archivist of the Kenya Government, sought assistance to collect archival material which was known to exist at outposts scattered throughout Kenya. The importance of many of these documents was especially great since a fire had destroyed most of the first copies of reports housed in Nairobi. Throughout 1964 and 1965 representatives of the Kenya Government, the Program of Eastern African Studies of Syracuse University, and the National Science Foundation of the United States developed a plan whereby these documents, in varying stages of decay, would be safeguarded and made available to scholars on microfilm.

The records to be microfilmed contained information on events as recent as 1963 and many were classified as "secret" or "confidential." Due to the desires of the Kenya Government to maintain normal archival control over the collection and those of Syracuse University and the National Science Foundation to make it available to scholars residing in North America, an agreement was reached whereby Syracuse would provide the films to scholars on an individual basis, through interlibrary loan, but would not duplicate them for sale. In addition, Syracuse would require of each viewer a signed pledge that no manuscript based on, or making use of, the Kenya records would be published without the express consent of the Kenya National Archives. Only the Legislative Debates, which had already been published and made available at several locations in Europe and Africa, would be available for purchase at cost. Syracuse University would see to the purchase and shipment to Kenya of equipment and materials. The Kenya National Archives would make negative films for itself and Syracuse, as well as a set of positives for scholars in Kenya. The reproduction of positive films for interlibrary circulation in North America would fall to Syracuse University.

The heavy expenditures of this project were underwritten in December, 1965, by a generous grant from the U. S. National Science Foundation and by substantial, although smaller, contributions from the Syracuse University Library, the Program of Eastern African Studies and the Kenya National Archives. Despite problems of technical coordination over long distances, the far-flung documents were collected, organized, and microfilmed under the supervision of Mr. Nathan Fedha, who had by then succeeded Mr. Charman as Kenya's Chief Archivist. In June, 1966, Syracuse received the first installment of sixty-six negative reels and an additional ninety-one reels arrived in December, 1966. Positive copies of the collection became available to scholars in the United States and Canada in February, 1967.

The documents in the collection of 157 reels are divided into the following seven sections:

- (1) Provincial and District Annual Reports (66 reels).
- (2) Provincial and District Record Books (16 reels).
- (3) Provincial and District Handing Over Reports (14 reels).
- (4) Miscellaneous Correspondence (11 reels).
- (5) Intelligence Reports (12 reels).
- (6) Secretariat Circulars (5 reels).
- (7) Debates of the Legislative Council and the National Assembly (33 reels).

As source material for historical and scientific study, the microfilms have exceeded expectations. They provide a remarkably full account of the political, social, economic, and religious problems of development in equatorial Africa. The progress of education, medicine, sanitation, agriculture, forestry, and many more specialized categories of development is recounted in detail. The microfilms also contain material for many historical and anthropological studies of the various tribal groups. Much of the oral history of the different peoples has been preserved by some of the more zealous district officers. Although the full value of the microfilms cannot be assessed until many detailed studies have been made, it is evident that they constitute an invaluable record.

Several steps were taken to facilitate use of the microfilms. A Catalogue of the Kenya National Archive Collection on Microfilm at Syracuse University compiled by Nathan W. Fedha, Chief Archivist of the Kenya National Archives and by John B. Webster, Head of the Bibliographic Section of the Program of Eastern African Studies at Syracuse University, was published as Occasional Bibliography #6 in April, 1967. This Catalogue... also described the interlibrary loan procedures for utilizing the microfilms and was distributed to libraries at universities with African studies programs, while individuals would purchase copies for fifty

cents. The collection was also described in Vol. X, no. 1, 1967 of the African Studies Bulletin, p. 93, and library journals. At Syracuse the films were kept under close surveillance in the Manuscript Division at Carnegie Library, but they were made freely available to all students, faculty, and visiting scholars who wished to view them in the library. They were also made easily available to scholars at other institutions through the normal channels of interlibrary loan, once the applicant had signed his pledge to the Kenya Government. The only restriction imposed was that the documents on microfilm could not be reproduced.

Soon after the microfilms were made available, it became evident that a guide in the form of an annotated index should be compiled. For example, at the end of the first semester at least twenty students in the history department had written term papers from the films, and several Ph. D. dissertations and M. A. theses were in preparation. The heavy use of the films by scholars visiting Syracuse, and by graduate students and faculty elsewhere using the interlibrary loan indicated that there was a pressing need for a comprehensive, annotated index. There were thousands of documents, all loosely organized under a few general headings, and apart from the very brief Catalogue... by Fedha and Webster, there was no key to the factual content. A scholar, to feel confident of a thorough search for material, often had to peruse the whole.

The preparation of an annotated index thus appeared desirable for many reasons. Although it could not be expected to have a wide sale, a guide would be a very important reference work. If properly compiled, it would enable documents, subjects, and persons to be located rapidly. It would suggest many fertile topics for research. It would be a useful work in many libraries, especially in East Africa, Britain, and the United States, and it would be valuable to many scholars with an interest in the humanities and social sciences.

In June, 1967, the Program of Eastern African Studies assigned two senior graduate students, Robert Maxon and Leon Spencer, to assist with the preparation of the index. The two were especially well qualified. Both held M. A. degrees, knew Swahili, and were concentrating on Kenya history in studying for their doctorates. Maxon had lived three years in Kenya, and Spencer had field experience in West Africa. During the summer of 1967 and 1968 and the intervening semesters, the two carefully read and took notes on approximately 102 reels and completed the annotation and indexing of the Annual and Quarterly Reports, the Political Record Books, and the Handing Over Reports. The PRB and HOR sections were typed under their supervision. Maxon and Spencer made many of the important decisions in determining the length of the work, its organization and form of annotation, the cross-indexing, and the printing and binding. At the end of the summer of 1968, Maxon and Spencer left to pursue independent research projects in Kenya. Rodger F. Morton was then assigned a graduate assistantship to annotate the Miscellaneous Correspondence section and to supervise the completion of the guide. Jean R. Surena prepared the LegiCo section and another graduate student, P. David Wilkin, provided valuable assistance to the project in compiling the major share of the Intelligence Reports. Miss Judy Breslof was responsible for putting the Organization and Personality Index into final form.

Several others made valuable contributions. Fred G. Burke, Director of the Program of Eastern African Studies until September, 1968, played a major role from 1964 onward in stimulating American interest and support for this microfilming project and constantly imparted to all concerned his usual enthusiasm and sense of direction and purpose. John B. Webster provided valuable assistance as Syracuse's technical coordinator throughout late 1965 and 1966. Mrs. Gloria Katz, the Program's financial expert, held all to a strict accounting of expenditure. Mrs. Ann Gaither and Miss Judy Breslof, whose patience, good cheer, and uncommon alertness were most appreciated, did the typing of the photo-offset forms.

The expenses of preparing this Guide... are being largely met through a second National Science Foundation Grant awarded in February, 1967. Indeed, without the understanding, interest and encouragement of Dr. Murray Aborn, the Foundation's Program Director of Special Projects in Social Sciences, the preservation of these valuable records and the preparation of this Guide... would probably never have been undertaken.

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