

CHAPTER EIGHT

Urbanite Dwellers (Waswahili, Abajuni, Arabs, Asians, Europeans)

WASWAHILI

The word Swahili is derived from the Arabic Sawahil plural of Sahel. Sawahil usually means 'Coastlands' or land of the edge. Writing in their book *The Swahili, Reconstructing the History and Language of an African Society, 800 - 1500*, Derek Nurse and Thomas Spear have given a most appropriate and befitting description of the people referred to as Swahili in writing thus:

Our basic point is that the Swahili are an African people, born of that continent and raised on it. This is not to say that they are the same as other African peoples, however, for in moving to the coast, participating in Indian Ocean trade and living in towns their culture has developed historically in directions different from those of their immediate neighbours. It is also not to say that they have not borrowed freely from others. Arabs have been trading along the coast for a long time and many have remained to settle and to become Swahili. They have influenced the development of coastal culture but the influence has gone both ways and the result has been a dynamic synthesis of African and Arabian ideas within an African historical and cultural context. The result has been neither African nor Arab but distinctly Swahili.

The history of the people today known as Swahili and the Swahili language they speak is inseparable from the history of the Arabs and the Shirazi who originally came from Arabia and Siraf in Persia, some of them ending up settling permanently in the East African Coast.

The Islamic religion is also a major integral part of this process in creating a new community transcending continental and racial barriers. The oldest known recorded history about the Swahili, long before the Islamic influence is *The Periplus of the Erythrean Sea* (c. A.D 130 _ 140) and Ptolemy's *Geography* (c A.D 150). Many of the rest of the historical records were written by the Arabs in southern Arabia and the Persian Gulf. In addition Al-Masudi who visited the coast c. 915, Ibn Battuta who stopped there in 1331 A.D added their voice to the record and a number of Portuguese writings from the early sixteenth century provide an important picture of Swahili history and society.

All these point out to early trading and settlements of the people from Arabia and Persian Gulf in the East African Coast. On the first recorded Arab arrivals to the coast, A.H.J Prins has written:

The first arrivals on the African scene are said to have been two princes, co-regents of Oman, belonging to the Julanda dynasty, who opposed themselves to the invasion of Arab troops under Hajjaj, the governor of Iraq, on behalf of the unmayyad Khalifs in Damascus. They were compelled to flee from their native country and left for East Africa, together with their followers, in A.H. 77 (A.D 696). This is the story of Suleiman and Said, victims of All _ Arab conquest of all Arabia. It may well have had many parallels of which we shall never hear. Even in their case the place of their new settlements is unknown. The same Khalif who ordered the conquest of Oman (i.e. Abd al-Rashid el-Malik bin Marwan, A.D. 685 _ 705) also sent Syrian colonists to Lamu, Pate, Malindi, Zanzibar, Mombasa, and Kilwa according to the (very late) town chronicles of Lamu

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and Pate respectively. The latter source also mentions the arrival of Persian colonists on the scene at the behest of the Khalif Abbaside Harun al-Rashid (A.D 786 _ 809).

On this early migration of people from Arabia and the Gulf, Neville Chittick in an article in Zamani has written thus:

The number of Muslims who had so far settled on the coast must have been small; as late as about A.D 1150 the towns of the mainland from Barawa South are described as pagan. This is according to al-Idrisi who, however, did not appear very reliable. We know from al-Masudi that in the tenth century the Island of Qanbalu (Comoros) had a mixed population of Muslims and Zenj pagans; the former, presumably Arabs, had conquered it long enough before for the Muslims to have adopted the Zenj language. The ruling family was of the Muslim group. There are other indications of Arab immigration in this period; there was a colony of Muslim at Merka, probably dating from the tenth century and also as we shall see at Manda near Lamu and at Unguja Ukuu in Zanzibar. Probably most of these migrants came from the Persian Gulf; those at Merka came from the great port of Siraf and de Barros tells us of the coming of a group of refugee people from Al-Ahsa near Bahrein on the opposite side of the Gulf, who are supposed to have founded Mogadishu and Barawa.

Shirazi

The history of the East African Coast and the Swahili is closely related to the Shirazi who dominated early coastal trade, settlements and governance before the Omanis established themselves in Zanzibar. Some Coastal Swahili-speakers have long stressed the difference between themselves and their neighbours, emphasising their descent from migrants from Shirazi in Persia and Arabs from Arabia who had come to the East African Coast centuries earlier to trade and who stayed to settle, built coral towns and ruled the territories. When the Europeans visited the coast in the nineteenth century, Swahili towns appeared to be products of a Persian and Arabian diaspora that had spread along the coast. On the early migration from Persia, Neville Chittic has written as follows:

Some of these immigrants came from Persia, as we know from two thirteenth century inscriptions in Mogadishu. Of outstanding importance was the group of people associated with the name Shirazi, although whether the immigrants were all or mainly Persians is doubtful – Shirazi was the capital of Fars which controlled the eastern side of the Gulf, where there were many Arabs too; and the name of the capital town is often given for that of the province.

There is evidence to show that a majority of the early traders and settlers along the so called Zanj coast at that early stage came from Persia, whether they were of Persian or Arab nationalities, but Persians seem to have been dominant. In the book *The land of Zinj*, G.H Stigand has written:

Another story says that in 400 Hejra there were seven brothers, sons of Sultan Hassan: Of these one Ali was the son of an Abyssinian slave, while his brothers were sons of a Persian princess. He fell out with his step-brothers, and so left Hormuz in the Persian Gulf and set out for the African coast. He passed Mogadishu and Brava, at which places he found Arabs of different sects and continued his journey till he arrived at Kilwa. Here he bought land and fortified the place, gave it the name of Kilwa and subsequently enlarged it by annexations, and then called himself Sultan.⁵

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Writing in the 1890s Justus Strandes observed:

Shirazi Sheikhs are described as the earliest rulers and according to the History of Kilwa found by the Portuguese, Muhammad the son of Ali bin Hasan, the founder of Kilwa, is considered to be the first of the line. These written accounts are confirmed by the verbal traditions of the native inhabitants. Many buildings now lying in ruins are characteristic of Shirazi buildings. Even today the inhabitants of whole villages like to boast of Shirazi descent. The fact that it is generally the chiefs or the village notables, members of the ruling families of the past, who usually describe themselves as being descendants of the old Persian emigrants, confirms the credibility of the claim.

As is natural, the centuries which have passed, and the continued intermarriages with the native Africans have done much to efface the characteristics of the original stock. The products of many centuries of intermarriages are not, however, pure Bantu and it is indeed remarkable how frequently the Aryan physiognomy and bearing distinguishes these people from the Africans amongst whom they live.

The traditions of Mombasa recall the original ruler as Mwangi Mkisi, another woman and the Shirazi as Shehe Mvita. In Vumba the Shirazi are remembered as establishing Vumba Kuu and the eight Shirazi towns to the North, while on Tumbatu Island off Zanzibar, the first Shirazi married a local woman to give rise to the Timbatu people. Similar Shirazi traditions can be found elsewhere along the Mrima coast of northern Tanzania and on Pemba, Mafia, and the Comoro Islands. All portray similar patterns of immigration, interaction and integration, with the Shirazi or their offspring emerging as dominant. Although the themes that run through these traditions are similar, it is not all clear what they mean. Was the coast really conquered or settled by people from Shirazi? What is the significance of the common patterns of gift giving, marriages and creation of new ruling dynasties that are portrayed?

During the eighth through the eleventh centuries, Shirazi largely dominated trade to the coast through the port of Siraf on the Persian Gulf but most of the sailors were Arabs. By the eleventh century the centre of the Indian Ocean trade was changing to southern Arabia and the Red Sea. The paucity of Persian loan words in Swahili and general lack of Persian inscriptions on mosques and tombs along the coast cast serious doubts as to whether most of the East African immigrants came from Persia. A few of the traditions trace the immigrant influence to Arabs from Oman, Muscat or Syria but evidence of Arab influence along the coast before 1100 A.D is also little since the coastal people had not yet converted to Islam.

In conformity with the African and Arab social practice of maintaining genealogies as proof of one's social status, people under the influence of Shirazi or Arab peoples who had assimilated to local communities seem to have changed their genealogy to reflect their new or desired social identity. Derek Nurse and Thomas Spear on this have written:

Arab names and genealogies also frequently contain a place name from which an ancestor came as a nisba or family name, but this too could be changed to reflect more prestigious origins if desirable. Thus, after the demise of Shirazi and Siraf, people of the successor town of Fal adopted the nisbas al_Sirafi and al_Shirazi even though they were from neither city. The situation in East

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Africa must have been similar, with Swahili adopting this nisba Shirazi, since many of the Arab traders with whom they dealt with, some of whom settled along the coast, had come from Shirazi.

Despite having been so dominant in trading, Islamisation and governance of a very big area for a very long time, the Shirazi name and influence gradually declined to the point of nearly being forgotten.

The original speakers of the Swahili language are the Bantu of equatorial and southern Africa. The earliest period of Swahili history lasted from the ninth to the twelfth centuries, when people speaking the Swahili language spread down the coast of eastern and southern Africa to found a number of small fishing, farming and iron working villages and established the basic foundations of Swahili society and culture. The second period includes the changes that took place in Swahili society and culture with the expansion of trade and foreign settlements from the twelfth century until coast commerce was destroyed by the Portuguese immigrants in the sixteenth century, by which time the primary structures of the Swahili society had become fully established.

The fallacious perception that the most important feature of Swahili is its Arabic component is disapproved by Derek Nurse and Thomas Spear who have written:

Swahili is clearly an African language in its basic sound system and grammar and is clearly closely related to Bantu languages of Kenya, northeast Tanzania and the Comoro Islands, with which it shared a common development long prior to the wide-spread adoption of Arabic vocabulary. Though some Arabic words were assimilated into Swahili before A.D. 1500, most are attributable to the post-Portuguese period. The Arab material is a recent graft onto an old tree.¹⁴

The two writers who are linguists have continued to state as follows:

Let us take words of Arabic origin in Swahili, since they have given rise to such a variety of inaccurate and misleading claims. Arabic loans are clustered in various fields of cultural vocabulary relating to jurisprudence, trade, religion, non-indigenous flora and maritime affairs. It is these specialized vocabularies that have led to statements that up to 50% of Swahili vocabulary is of Arabic origin. But the level of frequency of Arabic loans in basic vocabulary is very much lower. Some of the major sound changes that took place during the historical development of Swahili had already occurred by the beginning of the second millennium after Christ, and most were complete by A.D. 1500. Most vocabulary of Arabic origins has not been affected by these changes and thus is likely to have entered Swahili after 1500. The only sound change that affects Arabic loans to any extent is loss of the sound /i/. But loss of /i/ is very late in the sequence of Swahili sound changes and can actually be seen in progress in eighteenth and nineteenth century Swahili Literature.

An apt description of the Swahili-speaking people or groups has been given by Professor Ahmed Idha Salim in an article appearing in Hadith 6 in which he has stated:

The Swahili speaking groups are a composite body which I wished (and wish again) to present as an interesting example of a people who are united by certain cultural and ethnic ties and who yet display periodic bouts of strain and disunity. Reluctance to separate them as "Arab and Swahili", because of these ties, is reflected in the use of the hyphenated term "Arab-and-Swahili". The word

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"Arab" is maintained in the term to express the persistence of certain sections of the Swahili-speaking people to be regarded as such during colonial times, although they had a strong strain of African blood and could not speak Arabic.

As has already been seen, the Swahili language developed out of the close relationship through trade and intermarriages between the indigenous Bantu population, Persians mainly from Shirazi and Arabs from Arabia and the influence of the Islamic religion. Many modern Swahili are of Arab/Shirazi descent, either wholly or in part. Arabs were absorbed in the Swahili communities just as non-Swahili Africans were and it is known that Arab immigrants settled in the East Africa coast from the fourteenth century onwards. Shirazi Islam was introduced during c. 1050-1075 and triumphed in all the major settlements within fifty years. However, Persians who settled may have been few until an influx of them migrated into Zanzibar in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries.

Swahili Social Life

A Swahili is principally a person who lives in or around a traditional Swahili settlement, mji or its modern equivalent, majengo. The typical mji was small with a population of between 1500 and 5000 or even fewer people. Before c.1800 the population of the large settlements such as Lamu Town and Siyu in the seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries could have been about 10,000 with Pate topping 20,000 inhabitants. The sparseness of the total Swahili population which was spread out along some 2400 kilometres of coastline and offshore Islands and its lack of military zeal may have had implication for the coast's economic history. Swahili settlements drew their income largely from trade between the interior and the outside world but a large number of Swahilis throughout the ages must have made their living from agriculture or herding, or by being craftsmen. Swahili caravans trading into the interior came to an end when Indian merchants began to move and settle in the interior in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Perhaps the most important consequence of the smallness of most Swahili settlements was a parochial Swahili life. A Swahili might perceive himself as an urban creature and quite different from the rural dwelling villagers around him, but he resembled them much more closely than he resembled town dwellers in other countries.

Like all other people the Swahili have their peculiar traits. Swahili sub-culture in terms of dominant themes has been described by A.H. J Prins in a study of the Sub-culture of maritime Northern Swahili and analysed in terms of ten 'basic traits' or 'dominant themes' isolated from the empirical data gathered from the life and literature of the Swahili. According to Prins:

The more important themes are: pragmatism, inquisitiveness, looseness of structures, adaptability, absence of norms, ambivalence, inclination towards risk and competitiveness.

Names for Swahili social and political institutions, segments of them and sub-segments apart from mji include kabila, the taifa, the mlango, and the mbari; also the ukoo, the ahali, the uladi and the utanzu; and still more, other localised terms and usage. The meaning of many of these institutional terms is deliberately vague, permitting a flexibility of practice over time characteristic of much else in Swahili political culture. James de Vere Allen in this regard has written:

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The Swahili settlement is called in Swahili mji, plural miji, miji-kenda, like Makayachenda, basically means 'Nine Settlements', have 'Nine tribes,' and the Swahili mji or its Northern dialect equivalent mui can sometimes also be translated 'tribe' or 'clan'. All we need to note here is that they, too, had fingo charms buried beneath their gateways: they too had regalia items including either a drum (ngoma) or a side blown horn (siwa, but also in some contexts, baragumu, mbiu, jumbe or zumbe), and a broad bladed spear (fumo); that they too from an early date had graves both inside and outside the settlement, including those of important and unimportant people in both places; and that they too were regarded as sacred, as basically pre-Islamic rituals such as the Zinguo demonstrate.

It is important to understand that as a result of the population movements during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Swahili expanded by assimilating other peoples giving them the Swahili identity. The lowland pastoralists were gradually absorbed, with Katwa and Garre becoming the Bajuni and most Segeju were absorbed into communities in other Swahili settlements. However, when the Shungwaya successor states which had sprang up north of Mombasa eventually collapsed and most trade-routes to the interior disappeared, all traces of kinship between the Swahili and inland peoples were lost.

Today the Swahili area consists of a coastal belt and a number of islands extending from the mouth of the Juba River in the north to Lurio River beyond Cape Delgado in the south. The 1,800 kilometres stretch extends to a depth of between five and ten kilometers inland from the shore line except for two areas at the Kenya-Tanzania border south of Mombasa inhabited by the Digo and Segeju respectively.

The Swahili are divided into three main groupings on a combination of cultural and geographical considerations as follows:

1. The Northern (and Middle) Swahili include those Swahili living north of the Tana River — Lamu Island, Bajuni and the splinter group of Amarani in the Benadir. Closely associated to this grouping are the Swahili living south of the Sabaki River who include those of Malindi, Mombasa and Vumba.
2. The Southern Swahili are the watu-wa-mrima of the Tanzania coast including Tanga and watu-wa-Rufiji. Next to them are the mgao Swahili and those living north of Mozambique and the island of Kerimba.
3. The third group consists of the Island Swahili of Pemba and surrounding islands, Zanzibar and Tumbatu as well as the Mafia archipelago.

Others are the Swahili of the Congo, Islamised and often detribalised Swahili-speaking interior communities such as in Dodoma or Tabora and Comoro archipelago.

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ABAJUNI

The history of the Abajuni people is similar to that of the Waswahili to the extent of being almost the same in origin and composition. Briefly, Abajuni are a coalition of Cushitic-speaking pastoralists with Bantu-speakers. Both groups history extends to the Juba history of Africans, Shirazi and Arabs who have intermixed to form Abajuni community or tribe.

According to Mijikenda history, they lived in Shungwaya close to people they call Kilio who are also known as Segeju or Katwa. The Segeju/Katwa people were the first to leave Shungwaya travelling towards the south and were followed by the Digo before other Mijikenda also migrated to the south. Traditions collected in 1920 are that some of the Abajuni were in origin Garre (Gerra, Gurreh, Gare etc).

An unpublished Garre tradition collected at Mandera in 1930 by a British colonial administrator J.W.K. Pease touches on the Garre-Katwa link.¹ In what is now northern Kenya, Garre were defeated by the Borana and they fled eastwards to Rahanweyn country near the lower Shebelle. Two sections are said to have been left behind; the Gabbra and Rendille. Both the Gabbra and Rendille are acknowledged to have a Garre component. On this James De Vere Allen has written:

The ancestral Garre fled at first as far as Afmadu (on Lac Dera near where it joins the Lower Juba – an established junction for various long distance routes). There they spent some time and dug the famous wells. Then they split, the majority crossing the Juba and moving on to Audegle and other places. But a small party from the Kilia, Bana and Birkaya [sections] . . . turned aside at the Juba to make for the Coast between Kisimayu and Lamu where they settled with the Bajuni. Here we have an unmistakable reference to the Katwa or 'Eight of the Bana', although it may be significant that the Kilia (the Aweer Kili and the Wakilio or a-kilio of Bajuni, Swahili, Digo and Segeju traditions) are mentioned separately from the rest. Bana, Birkaya and Kilia sections still exist among the Garre.

According to A.C. Hollis, (Hollis, AC, 'The Wasegeju', typescript, Rhoes House Library, Exford, M.S. Afri. 1272 (B)-)2 the Kilio clan first arrived 'in Shungwaya', to which it had been led by its leader, Avruna. In Shungwaya they encountered sixteen other clans of their own tribe who had arrived at an earlier date. In time, Avruna became hakim or 'arbitrator'. At first all went well but in time Avruna began to make sexual claims upon his female subjects. His two brothers deserted him, each leading a separate group of Kilio out of Shungwaya. James De Vere Allen has written:

One settled with his descendants in Barawa while the other took his followers to Chovai, a small island settlement (now Swahili-speaking) near the Bur Gau inlet. The leaders of the Autila clan rebelled against Avruna and slew him, forcing the remaining members of his clan into exile. (The Autila are still the senior clan among the Bajuni Katwa).

Leadership of the Kilio refugees passed to a younger brother of Avruna, Bole, who took them first to Mwachhi and Emethi (now known as Mea and Emezi on the mainland opposite Lamu) and then to nearby Dondo, where they split. Bole's own group lived for a while at Magogoni (opposite Pate Island) as 'guests' (or clients) of the ruler of Pate Town, but later crossed to Siyu to help defend it against Pate. As a reward they received half the settlement of Siyu and an equal share in its government. A second group took to the forest and became the Aweer, while a third

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moved inland to Maranga, in Mount Kenya area and hence to Kiluluma, from where they went to become the Segeju. On the above referred defence help to Siyu by Wakatwa/Segeju, James De Vere Alen has written: . . . but Burton, describing the rout of a mid-nineteenth century Zanzibari force sent to bring Siyu's leaders to heel, mentions among the defenders 'Bajuni warriors . . . [who] charged in a firm line, brandishing spearheads. Like those of the Wamaasai a cubit long, and shouting as they waved their standards wooden hoops hung around with the dried and stuffed spoils of men . . . Although later traditions were somehow less detailed, they made the same point that the Segeju and all the northern groups referred to especially the Katwa, were somehow the same. The Swahili of Vanga and some Digo still call the Segeju Wakilio.

The Abajuni confederation of communities claim to consist of eighteen clans (Kamasi, although the term is unknown in other Swahili dialects save that of Siyu). The eighteen are known as the 'Ten of the Miuli and the eight of the Bana (Kumi za Miuli na Nane za Bana)'. James De Vere Allen has written:

The non-Bajuni (Northern Swahili) Katwa are very probably also former pastoralists. They live mostly in the settlement of Siyu but some may also have lived in Pate Town. (Neither Siyu nor Pate Town is or ever has been a Bajuni settlement, though the other two principal places on Pate Island, Faza and Kizingitini, are now effectively Bajuni, and, although it is a bare hour on foot from Siyu, its Katwa have little connection with the non-Bajuni Katwa of Siyu and seldom intermarry with them. However, many Katwa now also live in Mombasa, where one of the Tisa Taifa or 'Nine Tribes' is the a-Katwa, including both Bajuni and non-Bajuni Katwa and distinct from another Taifa known as Bajun.

The Arabs and Shirazis component of the Abajuni community came to fore in the early twentieth century when the question of the "native" and "non-natives" was introduced by the colonial government through introductions of the 1934 ordinance. There were the non-native (Waungwana) or "free men" and natives who were taken to be of slave descent. The non-natives (Arabs, Asians and Europeans) paid the high status personal tax of Kshs. 20 instead of the Native Poll Tax of Kshs. 15. The Arab/Shirazi element of the a Abajuni organised themselves into racially exclusive National Union of Abajuni under the leadership of Ahmed Jenneby to fight for recognition of higher status for themselves. On this subject, Professor Ahmed Idha Salim has written:

Arabs (WAARABU)

The Arabs can be classified in four groups in the East African coastal area. The first group consists of those Arabs who have not yet become Swahili-aised and includes descendants of those who have established themselves on the coast since the rise of the Omani dominion over Zanzibar in the 18th century. It also includes those who may not have emigrated from Arabia in remote times but who nevertheless have come not very long time ago and claim Arab descent and consider them Arabs.

The second group of Arabs is made up of remnants of once powerful families and "tribes" that arrived before the advent of the Portuguese. Where such remnants were weak in numbers, they coalesced to form new tribes such as the Mvita of Mombasa or the "Three tribes" of Kilindini. When they lost 'tribal' identity, they remained Wa-ungwana, "the noble people", and as such they

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are still clearly distinguished in places like Lamu. Neville Chittick on class stratification among the inhabitants at the coast has written thus:

The inhabitants can be considered as falling into three classes in most of the important settlements. The ruling clan (except where a recently arrived immigrant group had succeeded in making itself dominant) was of mixed Arab and African ancestry, brown in colour, well read in the faith of Islam. Such would probably be also the landowners, the skilled artisans and most of the religious functionaries and merchants. Inferior to them (in many cases in a state of slavery) were the pure-blooded Africans, some of them recently arrived who performed the menial tasks and tilled the fields. Apart from both were the transient or recently settled Arabs, still incompletely assimilated into the society.

The third group is the one known under the name Shihiri, from Shehr on the Hadhrami coast. This group consists of, among others, petty traders from Hadhramout known under the name Shihiri (from Shehr). They are generally not regarded as equals by the second category of the 'true' Arabs who, although they speak Swahili, and hardly speak any Arabic, still consider themselves primarily as Arabs. However, they possess genealogies showing their lines of descent from forebears in Arabia and many can still name the first ancestors who set foot in Africa. Professor Ahmed Idha Salim has written thus:

The third group, the Hadhrami Arabs, have had a long association with the coast that can be traced back before Islam. Some Hadhrami Arabs integrated themselves over these centuries becoming part and parcel of the coastal people whilst others remained a fluid factor coming seasonably for trade or at best settling down for some years to earn a livelihood before returning to retire in Hadhramout, their original home.

The fourth category of Arabs consists of Africans who may have quite an amount of Arab blood and who refer to themselves as Wa-Arabu (not Wa-Manga, a name reserved for the second group). The Bajuni are a case in point; they have gone as far as to identify their original "clans" which bear the unique names mostly of historical sites on the coast of Jubaland, being connected with the authentic names of tribes in the interior of present-day Arabia.

Social and Political Organisation

Before the Portuguese came to East Africa a number of independent states existed in the East African coast. They struggled to preserve their independence against the Portuguese and later against the Arabs of Oman. Portuguese officials deposed local princes at will. The 17th century of Portuguese supremacy, was preceded or in some cases accompanied by the downfall of the leading Shirazi dynasties. Joint action by local Swahili and allies called in from Oman terminated Portuguese rule. In return for their aid, the Imams of Oman were recognised as sovereigns of the coast. The local Omani dynasty at Mombasa emerged for a time as the leading power on the coast and its last decade merged almost imperceptibly with the sultanate of Zanzibar's ascendancy. However, civil wars in Oman and Persian invasions kept the Imams occupied for nearly a century and the Swahili towns were again free to forge their own independent destiny. In the meantime, Oman political influence of a local kind was not entirely extinguished even during the century-long gap between the war with Persia and Omanis' Yarubi dynasty and the creation of a Busaidi realm centred on Zanzibar. F.J. Berg has written:

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The Mazrui, a clan of Omani Arabs in the service of the Yarubi Imams, established themselves as hereditary rulers of Mombasa soon after the brief Portuguese reoccupation and presided over yet another revival of this famous old city state. Under Mazrui rule Mombasa power reached its zenith, outstripping that of the Shirazi and Malindi dynasty. For many years, Pemba and the mainland from Tanga past Malindi owed allegiance to Mombasa. Even Pate passed briefly under Mombasa influence, first as an ally and later as a virtual protectorate. The political history of the coast from 1750 to 1840 can in fact be read mainly as a struggle between two Omani dynasties, the Mombasa based Mazrui and the Muscat-based busaidi, with all but the very best last victories going to the Mazrui.

The Mazrui during their rule entered into an alliance with an amalgam composed of two hostile groups of Swahili tribes which acknowledged members of an Omani family as heads of state because of the impossibility of coming to an agreement among themselves. This served Mombasa well enough to dominate most of the northern coast for several decades after 1750.

In the meantime, Britain signed the first consular agreement with the Sultan of Zanzibar in 1839. Thereafter, with a British naval fleet ordered to proceed to Zanzibar as a signal for a British blockade of the Island, on 5th June 1873, Sultan Barghash signed the treaty forbidding the maritime export of slaves from the coast of the mainland to other parts of the Sultan's dominions or to foreign countries. The treaty ordered the closure of all slave markets in the Sultans' dominions and forbade British Indians from possessing or acquiring fresh slaves.

On 24th May, 1887, Sultan Barghash accepted Mackinnon application for a concession on behalf of his company, the British East Africa Association (BEAA) to administer, in the Sultan's name and develop the coast between Vanga and Kipini. This is what later became the ten mile strip of Kenya Colony and Protectorate after the British government took over from the British East Africa Company in 1895. The ten mile strip remained Zanzibars' territory under British protection until after Britain paid off the Sultan of Zanzibar and an agreement of territorial surrender to Kenya was signed by the Prime Minister of Zanzibar Mr. Shamte and the Prime Minister of Kenya Mzee Jomo Kenyatta in 1962 just before Kenyas independence in 1963. Entrenchment of the Islamic or Khadhi Courts in the Kenya Constitution was part of the settlement reached, without which Kenya would have become independent without the ten miles strip territory. The British government paid an annual of sterling pounds ten thousands to the Sultan as rent for the ten mile strip of land. The Sultan maintained a permanent representative at Mombasa with the title of Liwali of the Coast until at independence. The last Liwali was Sir Barrak Hiwawy and his deputy was Salim M. Muhashamy.

Emigration from south-eastern and southern Arabia in the meantime took place in the early eighteenth century and by the end of the century, a process of re-Arabisation seems to have begun on the coast, in which Arab kinship, values, and elements of material culture gained prestige at the expense of Swahili culture. Swahili society in the long run was considerably modified by this process, which took roots after the Omani authority was reasserted in the 1820s and 1830s. The Omani Arab period thus ranks with the era of Shirazi colonisation as one in which the impact of the middle East upon the coast was remarkable. Migration from Shungwaya by the Mijikenda people and others due to gradual dessication of the area between the Tana and the Juba, Somali pressure and attacks by the Galla had taken place by 1700 or earlier and they were settled in approximately the same areas where they now live. Because of widespread insecurity

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on the mainland the seventeenth century was also a time of resettlement and migration for people into towns. F.J.Berg has written:

Inhabitants of Swahili settlements on the north coast fled south, sometimes accompanied by Nyika. Pemba, the Bajun Islands and Mombasa absorbed some of the refugees. Most of the Twelve Tribes which comprise the present Swahili population of Mombasa occupied the Island in this period, including those which formed the Thalatha Taifa, larger of the two Swahili federations which reconstituted the old Shirazi city state. And it is possible that many of the little Swahili towns along the Mrima of Tanzania were founded as part of the same shift of population.

In the meantime, people from places as far distant as Kilwa and Barawa had gradually moved into Mombasa after the fall of the Shirazi dynasty. Their presence in the city made it the unofficial capital of the Northern Swahili. F.J.Berg has written thus:

When the Mazrui first arrived, native and immigrant Swahili had sorted themselves out into two antagonistic federations. One — the largest, though comprising of only three tribes, the Thalatha Taifa — had its headquarters at Kilindini Town on the western side of Mombasa and occupied a few villages on the mainland. The smaller group made up of nine tribes, the Tisa Taifa — was identified with the oldest and most resent Swahili population and lived mostly in Mombasa Town or Mvita. The first task of the Mazrui was to make peace between the federations, something they achieved while still representing the Imam of Oman. By 1746 they asserted and successfully defended their independence from Oman and were acknowledged by the Swahili as heads of state at Mombasa.

Though often strained, the unity of the Mombasa polity never broke down under their rule. Quarrel among Thalatha Taifa and Tisa Taifa and succession disputes between rival Mazrui claimants sometimes flared, but never so long or so divisive as the civil wars of Pate.

British colonial administration and colonial laws and regulations introduced another dimension in the society provoking reactions and acting as a catalyst for increased divisions on the basis of social status or class consciousness among the citizens. These regulations more broadly also divided the people in the East African protectorate and later, the colony of Kenya into 'Natives' and 'Non-Natives', with the former having an inferior status and being subjected to underprivilege, so that the term completely lost its basic meaning of "being indigenous" or belonging to the country. The people affected by these laws and regulations were mainly the twelve tribes. Because of the extremely mixed ethnic composition of these groups, it was extremely difficult to draw a line and divide the various groups into "Natives" and "Non Natives". When the line was drawn, it proved to be arbitrary and provoked a hostile reaction from those who felt they were categorised as "inferior" (the twelve Tribes, Bajunis and Shirazis). They therefore presented arguments of similarity of culture with the more 'superior' Arabs, with Zanzibar Arab rulers testifying to their past high status and privileges and giving genealogies linking them with Arabia. Professor Ahmed Idha Salim has written the following about them:

Briefly then, the twelve tribes are made up of two 'confederations' — the Three Tribes (Wa-Changamwe, Wa-Kilindini and Wa-Tangana) and the Nine Tribes (Wa-Mvita, Wa-Jomvu, Wa-Kilifi, Wa-Mtwapa, Wa-Pate, Wa-Faza, Wa-Shaka, Wa-Bajuni and Wa-Katwa). Tradition has it that the Wa-Mvita and the Wa-Jomvu are the descendants of the original 'Shirazi' settlers among

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indigenous African people, whose last Sultan, Shehe bin Misham, was defeated by the Sultan of Malindi, who also could claim Shirazi blood.

Asians (WAHINDI)

Coming of Asians to East Africa

The Kenyan people referred to as Asians or Indians originated in places which are now in India or Pakistan. Many people wrongly believe that all of them came to East Africa and Kenya in particular as indentured labourers and artisans for the construction of the Uganda Railway. In this book an attempt has been made to identify some of the individuals who arrived and settled in this part of the world long before the British came to East Africa and thereafter. Indian ships were calling at East African ports centuries before the British even knew East Africa existed. Al-Biruni, the Arab historian, wrote ca. 1000 AD.

The reason why in particular Somanat [Somnath in Kathiawar] has become so famous is that it is a harbour for seafaring people, and a station for those who went to and from between Sofala, in the country of Zandj [East Africa], and China.

Ibn Battuta, the great Arab traveller who visited East Africa in the 13th century, noted that Indians as well as Arabs were trading there. When Vasco Da Gama sailed into Mombasa in 1498, he noted the presence of "four vessels belonging to Christians from India", and it was an Indian Muslim captain, Kana Maalim Mohamed, from cutch whom da Gama found in Malindi who showed the pioneer Portuguese navigator the way to India. Indian masons were used in building Fort Jesus in the 16th century. Bohra pioneer were settling in Lamu by the middle of the 19th century, while Ismailis' records shows that their settlement in Zanzibar began in the 16th century, and that by the 18th century there were already 450 Ismaili families living there. Kirk, the British consul in Zanzibar, wrote the following in 1874:

The head of the principal Bhatia [Hindu] house here, that of Wad Bhima, is 5th in descent from the founder of the Zanzibar firm; and several khojas [Ismailis] can show a still longer ancestry.

In 1838, the Ismailis built their first East African Jamatkhana; and in 1839, since all the Indians were British subjects, the British government signed a treaty with the sultan whereby [British-derived] Indian law was introduced into the Sultan's realm. Cynthia Salvadori has written thus:

Encouraged by the Sultan, many more traders and a multitude of artisans followed: by 1857 there were 5-8000 Indians in Zanzibar — mostly Ismailis (2,725), assorted Hindus (814) and Bohras (543). Under the pax sultannica, business strife-torn Mombasa began to improve, too, with Zanzibar-based traders branching out and other merchants coming directly from India. When Burton visited Mombasa in 1850, he noted 50 Hindus and 30 Indian Muslims. The memons [religious sect] record that their two pioneer families arrived about that year; in 1867 the first (known) Ismaili landed. In 1870, the Sultan posted a Bhatia Hindu as his chief customs controller in Mombasa and by 1880, the Parsi firm of Cowasjee Dinshow had an agent at Lamu. Settlement was not transitory: in 1880, the Memon merchants and Cutchi Sunni artisans were building a mosque in Mombasa — and in 1882, a Khoja Ithnasheri moved from Zanzibar to open a real estate agency there.

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In 1887, Sir William Mackinnon who already had vested interest in the Indian Ocean through his shipping business based in Bombay founded the British East African Association.

In 1888, the association was given a royal charter and its name was changed to the Imperial British East African Company — IBEAC. Mackinnon through his Bombay-based company brought qualified Indian personnel to implement his IBEAC undertaking to develop and administrate the Sultan's coastal strip leased for £11,000 per year by an Agreement signed between His Highness Seyyid Hamed bin Thwain, Sultan of Zanzibar and Her Britannic Majesty's Government signed at Zanzibar, 14th December 1895. The Agreement provided among others "that as regards his possession on the mainland and adjacent islands, exclusive of Zanzibar and Pemba, the administration shall be entrusted to officers appointed direct by Her Britannic Majesty's Government, to whom alone they shall be responsible. The Agreement shall not affect the sovereignty of the Sultan in the above mentioned territories of the treaty rights of Foreign Powers."

The Agreement created the 10 miles coastal strip and hence the bases for entrenchment of the Kadhi Court in the Kenya's Constitution at independence as a requirement for ceding the territory from Zanzibar to Kenya. IBEAC which had its base in Mombasa, brought from Bombay its own guards and police, clerks and accountants and many of the latter were goans. The Company entered into treaties with many native African leaders with a view to trading with their people but in the process, it over extended itself. In 1895, the British government cancelled the IBEAC's charter and assumed responsibility for the territory and officially created the British East African Protectorate. The Protectorate administration took over most of the IBEAC's assets, including its personnel — and hence its Indian orientation. The Indian Rupee continued to be the currency and the money was banked in Bombay banks, often by Parsi bankers and the legal system was an extension of Indian law, often practised by Parsi lawyers.

All of the lower ranks and some of the higher posts in the protectorate administration were filled by Indians. The ranks of the British (mainly ex-India) officered police and army were filled predominantly by Punjabis, primarily Muslims and Sikhs. At that time, the protectorate was, for all practical purposes, a province of British India, administered from Bombay. C. Salvadori has written:

Thus it was only logical that, when the decision was made to build the IBEAC-surveyed railway west into the interior of Africa, the foreign office should look east to India for help. British engineers were seconded from the India government, "old hands" familiar with the complex ways of Indians, fluent in Urdu/Hindustani. The contract to supply material, labour and personnel was given to Karachi based Indian entrepreneur, A. M. Jeevanjee; the Punjab was his recruiting ground. He despatched the first dhow-load of 350 men from Karachi in 1895. The following year over 2,000 more men disembarked at Mombasa; by 1899 there were 18,000 Indians working on the Railway. By the time (1901) the Railway finally reached Lake Victoria, it had taken a total of 31,895 Indians to build it. Although the majority were simple coolies, there were thousands of skilled employees, artisans, mechanics and drivers; storekeepers, accountants and clerks; surveyors, draftsmen and engineers; and medical officers too.

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In addition to the Railway builders, many more Indians came on their own, the majority being shop-keepers, barbers, tailors, etc to serve the Railway workers' hordes while others trekked into the bush together with the first British administrators. These adventurous traders supplied not only the few Europeans, but also the increasingly import consuming Africans who began congregating around the government administrative outposts. In 1902, a (Kenya) government notice inviting Indian farmers to come and take land in the protectorate was published in India and a number of farmers, particularly Patels came. When the Railway was completed, the great majority of Railway employees returned to India but about 6,000 elected to stay on. Some continued as employees of the Railway, others joined government administration and others became business people, professionals and independent artisans. By 1905 there were about 7,000 Indians in the protectorate who it has been estimated accounted for 80% of its capital investment and business activities.

To appreciate the pioneers' times and patterns of their arrival and settlement, individual persons have been picked as case studies. The stories of their movements and encounters have been narrated so as to enable the reader to form a clearer picture of how these people became part of the history of this country and the very important part they played to open up the country for modern economic, cultural, social and political development. Obviously, these are not the only individual Indian/Asian people who came and settled in the country during the time in reference, they are only a representative sample.

Lieutenant Emery

From "The Diaries of Lieutenant Emery" in *The British in Mombasa 1824-1826* by Sir John Grey (Passim) and quoted by Cynthia Salvadori in the book *We came in Dhows*, we find that Asians (Indians) had been working in Mombasa for such a long time that the British Government had appointed Indian officers in its service to senior positions as early as before 1825. Salvadori has quoted Lieutenant Emery thus:

(March 19, 1825 —) "This forenoon I gave the appointment of collector of Customs (vacant by the death of Mr. George Phillips) to Ladhu, the Banyan, for his services in that department since the English took the place, which office he has filled with the strictest attention. According to form, I invited him to the customs house accompanied by several of the chief Banyan and (Muslim) Indians and (on) our arrival there the guard belonging to the establishment fired three volleys. I then read his appointment and according to form presented him with a shawl and a turban purchased by the establishment. On our leaving three volleys were again fired. We returned to the house accompanied by all the Banyans and Indians of the place. I then read the instructions to Ladhu and he took his oath according to his religion.

Manackjee Aspiandiarjee Nanabhai

One of the other earliest Indians in East Africa, but whose name is not remembered, was in Zanzibar in 1842 when Queen Victoria sent a dismantled state coach as a present to the Sultan. He is the one who put it together. However, the name of another one of the earliest Indians is remembered. His name is Manackjee Aspiandiarjee Nanabhai Mistry (alias Wadia of Surat). He hailed from Bombay (Mumbai) and arrived in Zanzibar sometimes between 1845 and 1850. Hosheng Kased in his book *Parsee Lustre on the Emerald Isle of Zanzibar* (ms) has written:

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There he established himself, carrying on trade and local business. According to census records in the official archives of Zanzibar, it appears that until the year 1861 Mr. Manackjee was the only Parsee resident of Zanzibar. In that year he returned to India and brought back his wife and children to Zanzibar — and fellow Parsee. By 1875 they were numerous enough to warrant the formation of the Zanzibar Parsee Zarathoshti Arjuman. (In 1884 the name Shapoorji Pestonjee Talati appears as one of the eight members of the Arjuman's managing committee; we believe this was the father of Dinshow Shapurji Talati of Faza — see "Like Sugar in Milk".

Haji Dewji Jamal

The great-grandfather of the late Hussein Jaffer of Mombasa, Haji Dewji Jamal, owned sailing dhows in India and opened his first African branch at Zanzibar in about 1860 where he moved to, trading under the name "Dewji Jawal & Co.". In about 1870 he opened a second branch in Lamu which was then the principal port of Kenya and in about 1880 he established another in the Comoros Islands. His son, Sheriff, helped him to run the business, mostly in Zanzibar, while Jaffer and Nasser on maturing managed the Lamu business and Nazerali looked after the Mombasa branch.

While Pirbhai was managing the Comoros branch, his other son, Jan Mohamed, remained in the Bombay office. All the sons were involved in the family business. Their fleet of dhows transported timber, textiles and foodstuffs from India and exported cloves, copra, ivory, sea shells and boriti etc, from East Africa. Haji Dewji Jamal died in 1905 and his great, great, great grand-children are traders in Kenya today.

Abdulla Dattoo

Abdulla Dattoo sailed from India to Zanzibar in 1870 looking for business opportunities. He worked as an employee there for years before he moved to Mombasa in the early 1880s. Abdulla Dattoo went back to India in 1883 and married Sakinabhai who came to live with him in Mombasa and all their children were born there. Their first born was a son, Gulamhussein, born in 1884 followed by Mohammedali, Akbarali, Sherbanu, Fatma and Kulsum. The eldest son, Gulamhussein, was sent to India for studies where he learned to speak fluent Persian, Arabic, Cutchi, Gujarati and English in addition to the Swahili which he already knew. On return, he became a court interpreter at Mombasa law courts and dressed very elegantly, in the western style. After sometime, he resigned and started his own business in the style of "Dattoo Auctions" in 1920. His brother Akbarali went to Nakuru and started an auctioneering business there in about 1937. Mohamed was employed in Uganda and settled there. During the interviews of Gulamali Dattoo of Mombasa by C. Salvadori, Gulamali gave the following account:

But my father stayed in Mombasa and became a notable member of society here as you see from this photograph where he's with Zaghloor Pasha and his comrades, and the Sultan's Liwali in Mombasa, Mbarak Ali Hinaway. Zaghloor Pasha and the other four Egyptians had been fighting for "Uhuru" in Egypt. During World War I the British Government had deported them to the Seychelles. They were released in 1923 and were going back to Egypt by sea via Mombasa, where this photograph was taken. They stayed here for about a week at Visram Villa, the residence of Seith Allidina Visram (Seith Allidina had died but the Villa was still there).

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Kassim

Abdulrasul A. Kassim Lakha of Nairobi has traced his family history back seven generations, to a forebear named Sumar and then down through his son Teraj and his grandson, Manji to Abdulrasul's grandfather's grandfather Lalji who had four sons: Punja, Virji, Lakha and Kalyan. Lakha had only one son, Kassim, who was born in the year 1852.

Kassim at the age of 18 years came to Zanzibar where he was employed by the Sultan Sayed Bargash. When he felt settled, he called his family over who included his mother (his father had died) and wife, Ratanbai Pradhon and they arrived in Zanzibar in 1871. In 1880, Kassim and Ratanbhai's daughter Kursha were born and in 1884 a son, Mohamed, was born.

When Kassim was working for the Sultan he got to know many parts of the Sultanate which included Pemba and the coastal strip towns of Mombasa, Malindi and Lamu. After about ten years, Kassim, his mother, his wife and the two children moved to Lamu where he opened a small shop selling rations and other trade goods. The family increased with the birth of Fatma, Alibhai, Hussein, Sikina, Rahimtulla and Jena. After he had been in Lamu for some years, Kassim was appointed Mukhi of the Jamat Khana and he served for many years.

British Consul in Zanzibar

From the Letters of John George Haggard, vice consul in Lamu 1884-1885, as quoted by C. Salvadori, we find that Sir John Kirk, the British Vice consul in 1875, visited Lamu and interacted with the Indian community, thus:

At Lamu the fifty Indian traders asked him for the protection of the British Government, pointing out that they had been obliged to follow the British anti-slavery policy at a great loss to themselves and had made no claim for compensation for freed slaves and considered, therefore, that they were entitled to expect the British to uphold their just rights.¹⁸

Partly because of this, Sir John Kirk decided to post a vice-consul Mr. Jack Haggard to Lamu. Two months later Mr. Haggard wrote the following letters mentioning Indians for the first time:

Lamu, May 1, 1884

I pitched my tents outside the town on the other side of the creek and after doing all the honour went into town to see the British subjects. There are five in Sizu [Siyu], all Indians . . .

Lamu, July 6th 1884

In view of the approaching scarcity the Hindi traders here by my advice ordered down a lot of rice from India . . .

Lamu, July 10th 1884

The Hindus are glad I have come for many things, but they bitterly complain of my having stopped swindling. In their opinion, I have done them a cruel wrong . . .

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Lamu, July 30th 1884

I was successful in obtaining a new interpreter . . . a first rate man, speaking and writing sufficiently well Arabic, Swahili, Hindustani and English. By race he is a barstard between a Hindu and a Swahili . . .

Lamu, Sept. 3rd 1884

The smallpox is raging terribly . . . only yesterday a Hindu came to complain to me of two dead bodies burned in front of his doorstep . . .

Lamu, May 11th, 1885

Not long ago a British Indian here received a native newspaper from Bombay via Zanzibar . . .
(95)

Gurdit Singh

Gurdit Singh came to Kenya at the age of 32 years as a cashier employee of the Bank of India, reaching Mombasa from India after forty five days by dhow. As a cashier with the Bank, he travelled to remote areas of the country, living in tents and keeping his money bags under the bed.

When later on he reached Nairobi, he saw good business prospects and he left the Bank to return to Lahore to recruit artisans such as carpenters, masons and blacksmiths. He returned to Nairobi with about fifty people and capital for the business. Among the people he brought were Labh Singh Sagoo, Bulaka Singh, Bhawal Mal, Bhawani Shankar and Nauhria Ram Maini who later became important personalities in the Indian community. From an interview with Trilok Singh Nayer of Nairobi by C. Salvadori we find the following account:

My father established his own furniture business in Nairobi and did very well. He made good quality furniture and was the first person in Kenya to import teakwood from Burma. He did so well that by 1913 he had enough money to build one of the most prestigious buildings in Nairobi, the Nayer building, now known as Kipande House and occupied by the Kenya Commercial Bank and considered as one of the "historic" buildings in Kenya. and of course he owned other notable properties in town.²⁰

After he got settled in Kenya, Gurdit Singh brought his wife Danyanti to Kenya and all his eleven children were born in Kenya. Trilok Singh Nayer who was the sixth child was born in 1919 and has continued to say the following about his father:

He was also a prominent person amongst the Indian community at large. People like Allidina Visram, Suleman Virjee, they were my father's friends — I saw them in our house. At one point he was chosen by the Indian National Congress here to represent the Indian communities to the Governor of those days. And then he had a disaster in his business. He lost all his wealth. How he lost it I can't say. I was too young to understand what was going on, so I never thought to ask him. I just know that he became very worried. What I regret is that I was so young that I didn't realise what was going on, and that I wasn't old enough to help him. But even in those bad times

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— my mother told me he would do what he could to help other people. In 1932, when I was only thirteen, he took us all back to Lahore. This photo [appearing in We came in Dhows] of my father was taken early that year, here in Kenya, shortly before we left. Soon after we got to India he died. He was 75 years old.

The mother and children remained in India for five years and then returned to Kenya and settled.

Kapur Singh

Kapur Singh was the first Indian Inspector of police in Kenya. He joined the police force in India and served in Baluchistan before he was seconded to Kenya in 1895 to work with the Kenya Police. In an interview with Mohinder Kaur Sandhu of Nairobi by C. Salvadori, the granddaughter of Kapur Singh gave the following account:

Kapur Singh became greatly respected, not only because of his rank in the police force but also in his community. He had the honour of laying the foundation stone of the first Sikh temple in Nairobi. Although the building, the Singh Sabha Gurdwara, has been greatly altered, the original plaque with his name is still there. He also laid the foundation stones of mosques in Nakuru, Kisumu and Mombasa. That shows not only how respected he was but also how good intercommunal relationships were in those days.²⁴

Kapur Singh was already married before he came to Kenya but his wife stayed in India except for one brief visit to Kenya. They had three sons and a daughter. The daughter died, one son stayed in India, but two sons followed their father to Kenya and also joined the police. One was Laxman Singh and the other was my father or Satbachan Singh, who was born in 1900.

On Satbachan Singh, Shah Niwas Awan of Nairobi/Chicago has made the following comment: "Satbachan Singh was not at all what one thinks of as a typical policeman. He was a very gentle man. He never raised his voice, never got angry."

Abdul Wahid

He came to Kenya in 1897 and was employed by the Railways as a train guard. After some years, he resigned and started his own business supplying wood fuel to the Railway and he made good money. Before and during the World War I he spent a lot of time in the forest supervising the cutting and transportation of trees where he saw many wild animals and developed love for them. He first settled in Nakuru where he built his business. Afterwards, he moved his headquarters to Nairobi before World War I where he bought many properties and built for himself a mansion on Ngara Road where he had a zoo with many animals. He kept lions and even a Bengal Tiger and trained elephants for riding. The monkeys and chimpanzees were kept in cages and so were the big carnivores. The herbivorous wandered freely in a big field where there were lots of trees. In an interview with Cynthia Salvadori, the retired chief Justice of Kenya, Abdul Majid Cockar, a grandson of Abdul Wahid gave the following account:

He had two elephants, local elephants trained to be ridden. He had those special seats made for them. My younger brother Hamid and I used to ride them down to the river, the Nairobi River which flowed below the house. He had trained the elephants himself, with the help of local people. He didn't have any Indian elephant men. His staff were all Africans. He had one man, Mami, a Maragoli, who worked with him for forty years. Mami had been like a parent to my father in the forests, and he was like a parent to us kids.

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Abdul Wahid lived like a Maharaja, concludes the former Chief Justice.

Pherozeshow Nowrojee

He came from Bombay (Mumbai) and joined Uganda Railway as a fireman. In 1902 he became a shedman, and on 1st November, 1903 he became an engine driver. As an engine driver he was posted to Voi, Makindu and finally Nairobi. Makindu then was a bustling station and marshalling yard where passengers disembarked for dinner; it had a police post, and an estate of railway quarters. Train crews were changed there, engines took water and passenger meals were taken on board. The Sikh temple was then built of wooden beams and corrugated iron sheets. Engine driver Nowrojee was posted there for a number of years. E.P. Nowrojee, the father of Feroze Nowrojee, a Nairobi senior advocate and a fearless campaigner for democracy, was born there on 16th May, 1905.

Driver Nowrojee's engine was always immaculately clean and his trains ran on time and within two years of becoming a driver, he was one of those chosen to drive the Duke of connaught's special train (1906) on sections from Mombasa to Nairobi and back. The Duke officially opened the Jevanjee Gardens that month, and the East African Standard in its report of the occasion also recorded: "The Duke's special train was driven up by drivers Pinto and Nowrojee". His grandson Feroze Nowrojee has given the following account:

Perhaps his work fueled his independence. He did not take kindly to tyranny, petty or otherwise. On one occasion he was awaiting a train at Nairobi station. Grandpa passed the time pacing along the edge of the platform. A government official (European) was doing the same. The two eventually overlapped. The official, confident by virtue of his pigmentation of right of way said, "Get out of the way." He must have been taken aback, but we could have predicted it, when Grandpa replied, "Get out you." On another occasion, famous in family history, Grandpa disagreed with the governor's assessment of the effect of the injuries that Grandpa had suffered in a war time (1916) train collision. Each side persisted. The governor finally insisted that his position be accepted by Grandpa. Again we could have told Sir Henry Belfield. Predictably, Grandpa resigned from the Railway and went away.

He came back three years later (1919). In all, Grandpa remained an engine driver for thirty years. He retired from the Railway in May, 1933. He died as he had lived — on the Railway. On 18th August 1936, while travelling as a passenger from Nairobi to Mombasa, he died mid-journey on the train. His contribution to the fact that the working railway man had built and run a monument that still serves our country, he left to the Railway. His independence of mind and spirit, he passed on to his son.²⁶

Peter Zuzarte

Peter Zuzarte, a goan, came to Kenya via Aden and Zanzibar and arrived in Mombasa in 1897. He then walked to Baringo which was at the time in Uganda Province of the British East Africa Protectorate. In Baringo he served as a district clerk under Geoffrey Archer, the District officer, who later on became Governor General of the Sudan. He was then posted to Naivasha which was also in Uganda Province on the border and from there he was transferred to Eldama Ravine. While there, he resigned and started his own business and also met and married a Maasai woman who gave birth to Joseph Murumbi in 1911. He later on moved to Londiani where he again set up a shop.

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From an interview by Anne Thurston with Joseph Murumbi in Kenya Past and Present, Joseph Murumbi who became the second Vice-President of the Republic of Kenya said:

My mother grew up in Eldama Ravine area. She was the daughter of Murumbi, the Laibon of the Uasin Gishu Maasai. He, my grandfather, never was able to come to terms with the British. Sir Fredrick Jackson, in his book Early days in East Africa, called him "the one-eyed Cyclops — an evil man" (in fact, Jackson was describing another local leader). On one occasion my grandfather incited the Maasai warriors and the Sudanese, who had been stationed in Eldama Ravine by Lord Lugard, to be moved to Uganda when needed, to rebel against the British. They nearly killed the district Commissioner and afterwards a nine foot stone wall was built around the District Commissioner's house for protection. My grandfather was deported to Narok then and on two other occasions. The third time he died there.

Peter Zuzartes' shop was situated in an area reserved for European shops, away from the main Indian trade area. Mr. Murumbi recounts that: "By some wangle his father set it up on a plot which was in the name of an American lady — whom he did not know." The only other shop in the European area was the post office. He has further stated:

My father's shop was a corrugated iron building, rather a large shop, and attached at one end was our residence, behind was a kitchen. It was the only shop in the area where one could buy drinks and a good range of supplies. I remember as a child seeing the Boer settlers, arriving in wagons pulled by teams of oxen, stop at my father's shop to buy their supplies. After Londiani, where there was a railhead, there was no other real source of supplies until Kitale or Eldoret. When there weren't many customers, I would sit in the shop with my father and he would teach me the alphabet . . .

Although I don't remember the incident as I must have been very young,

Teddy Roosevelt (he later became president of America) once came to Londiani and, my father's shop being the only place where he could buy supplies, he called there and saw the roses. He and my father exchanged information about grafting roses. My father was a keen gardener; it was a skill he developed himself.

Asked if there were children he played with, Mr. Murumbi said: "there were several Indian shopkeepers, although as I've said they were in another section of Londiani, and there were two children. However, I don't remember playing with anybody other than our dogs, my mother and my father. The dogs, Jack Russels, were called Roddie and Spot, and were very important to me as a child." Those of us who knew Murumbi at the family level know that he exhibited reserved traits and love for dogs to the end of his life, a sure heritage from his upbringing.

Allidina Visram

For more than twenty years before the construction of the railway, Allidina Visram had already established business outposts in East Africa including Uganda. According to his business letterhead in a letter written in Mombasa to the Mombasa District commissioner dated 2nd September, 1912, and published in We came in dhows, he had altogether sixty six (66) branches of his business.

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Allidina had come to East Africa as a penniless immigrant boy and was employed at Bagamoyo in present Tanzania and yet managed to build an astonishing business empire. Although Allidina lived most of the last years in Uganda, prior to that he lived for some time in Mombasa. His only son Abdul Rasul by his wife Sonbai was born in Mombasa. He was born into incredible wealth and was not interested in business. He seemed to spend much of his time playing cards. He was a very generous person and the Aga Khan gave him the title of "Vazir" most probably for his contributions to the Aga Khan rather than any actual work he did for the community. Abdul Rasul who seemed to be sickly died, some say, of tuberculosis and others thought due to alcohol drinking in Mombasa in 1922 and is buried in the Ismaili cemetery there. He only outlived his father by a few years.

Although at one time Allidina Visram was probably the best known person in East Africa, now even his name is virtually unknown to the average Kenyan. There are just two physical reminders of his presence in Mombasa. One is a bronze bust of him that was commissioned and erected by Allidina's chief agent in Mombasa, who was the son of Allidina's original employer in Bagamoyo, Sewa Haji Paroo. It was originally in Pigot place but it was moved and now is hardly noticeable amongst the trees in Treasury Square Park.

The other reminder is much more conspicuous. It is Allidina Visram School, a huge, ornate building overlooking the sea, close to where the old Nyali Bridge used to be. In colonial times each community —Europeans, Indians, Goans and Africans had their own schools. The Indian community had a small school in a warehouse near the centre of Mombasa. The Indians were eager for their children to be well educated and as their number grew it was obvious that better facilities were needed. And so, around 1920, the Allidina Visram school was built.

Seth Ibrahim Karimbux

He landed in Mombasa in the year 1896 with two rupees in his pocket. He was accommodated and given food by Indians living in the town but he had to find his own way of making a living. When he could not find employment, he decided to set up a small sweet meat business and he spent the two rupees on the ingredients and utensils and sat down by the road side and made his first halwa which was spoilt and he lost his two rupees. Fortunately, one of the shopkeepers agreed to give to him on credit flour, sugar etc and he started his little business again and little by little he made a success of it. He later on built a small kiosk and succeeded in business by selling fruits and a few essential commodities as well as sweets. In those days credit was freely given and a lot of bad debts were experienced and almost all his hard-earned money was lost this way.

With the little he had remaining, he decided to travel to Nairobi with a group of people travelling by ox-carts. On the way he met an acquaintance who borrowed money from him promising to pay back in Nairobi. He never saw the "friend" again and once more became financially stranded. In Nairobi he approached various shopkeepers to let him sell their goods on a commission basis and he made a reasonable amount of money for himself. In the meantime, the merchants directed him to go and market the goods in Nakuru. He joined a small party of Indian transporters on their way to Nakuru using donkeys and ox-carts. The journey passing through wild jungles was long, tedious and dangerous. At that time he wondered if he had made the right decision in coming to this strange land but took courage to explore the future.

At that time Europeans were settling in Kenya, many of them Dutch people who stopped by the side of Lake Nakuru on their way to Eldoret. He opened a small shop there in a small tent. At

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night, the lions would kill their transport animals and within their hearing from the tents, they would drink water out of their drums. As transportation using donkeys and ox-carts was a very fast growing business, he started his own transport caravan going from Nakuru to Eldoret, Kisumu, Lake Baringo and other places. When together with his African employees he ran out of food on the way, they would barter things like umbrellas and beads for goats which they would eat. Sometimes they were caught in between tribal fighting and would be ordered by European administrators to stay where they were for days or months, until the situation was brought under control. Eventually he stopped relying on Nairobi merchants and went for goods from Mombasa by his own ox-carts which took between six and eight months to bring goods to Nakuru.

In an interview, published in *We Came in Dhows*, the grandson of Seth Ibrahim Karimbux, Tehsin Karimbux who is also a member of the fourth generation of the family living in Nakuru, Tehsin Karimbux quoted his grandfather as having said:

It was my business to travel on foot from place to place and I learned this land of Kenya inch by inch, by day and by night. The local inhabitants would run miles away when they saw strange people, white and brown. They were much frightened by us. Life became so interesting that now I could see the light and hope for the future in this land.

The small settlement called Nakuru was growing. The land around Lake Nakuru was being allocated freely to the new settlers. The railway line was coming up behind us and bringing in more settlers. In 1900 the railway reached Nakuru on its way to Kisumu. Business picked up so fast that it was impossible to even close my eyes and rest for five minutes. I was a happy young man with a comfortable amount of money.

Osman Allu

He arrived in Kenya between 1894 and 1896 aged about 17 years and died here in 1973 aged 96 years. He told his history to his grandson Yakub Allu who was born here in 1938.

Osman Allu worked for Allidina Visram as a salesman and bookkeeper before he started his own business. He always said that Allidina Visram was a great merchant and an enterprising man, the kind who would take risks. He gained a lot of knowledge about business by working for him.

Osman Allu went into partnership with a man called Mohamedally Ratansi and they walked up to Nyeri where the European settlers were starting a station; there, they started the first shop in 1901 or 1902. Nyeri then had only that shop and the government station. Thereafter they put up a shop in M[rang'a (Fort Hall) and a sawmill in Karatina from where they supplied the sleepers for the track when the railway line was being laid to Nanyuki. Osman Allu and his wife Jomabai had three sons and five daughters, all born in Nyeri. He helped to build a proper Indian school in Nyeri in the late 1920s and he was a big contributor to the building of the present Nyeri Mosque at about the same time. He contributed to the building of the Catholic Consolata Mission Hospital at Nyeri, and to the Tumutumu Hospital, which was run by the Church of Scotland. His grandson Yakub Allu of Nanyuki in an interview has recounted:

My grandfather had started doing business in Nairobi with insurance (with "Pioneer" aptly named) and property. He built a large building on Bazaar Street you can see the OA [Osman Allu] Logo and the date 1938 on the front and back. When my uncle Abdul married he took over the shop in Nyeri and in 1945 my grandfather moved to Nairobi. He bought a big house near the

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Suleiman Verjee Gymkhana on Forest Road. I think that the main reason he went to Nairobi was to provide a family base there, where all of us grandchildren could live while continuing our schooling. That house was like a family boarding house, supervised by my grandfather, and because of that I grew up with him and knew him so well.

Dharamshi Kala

He opened a shop in Mombasa in 1898 before moving to Nairobi and then opening a shop at the Rift Valley escarpment where his first child Gordhan D. Kantaria was born. He then moved to Limuru where many Europeans had started settlements. One farmer, a Mr. Caine who had a mixed farm growing coffee and other crops, had leased plots to Indians to build shops on. There were about twelve dukas (shops) built of iron sheets all in a line in the then usual shop-in-front and dwelling accommodation behind pattern. The shop like the others sold rations and supplies to the Africans working for Mr. Caine's farm and other farms nearby. They were all Ag[ky].

Then in 1921 a law was promulgated forbidding the Indians to live in the White Highlands except in townships. In 1922 all the Indians moved to the site where the old Limuru was and about fifteen shops were built and opened for business. In these shops, the goods sold included sugar and salt, maize and maize flour, beans, millet, blankets, clothes, shuka (cloth sheets), beads, utensils and tools. Before the Indians opened shops, the Ag[ky] had markets (nd[ny]). Each settlement, about ten kilometres apart, had a weekly market day or two on different days from the others nearby where barter trading took place. By the time Indians opened shops at Limuru, Africans were using the Indian rupee until 1922 when it was replaced by the shilling. Goods came from Nairobi by train and then to the shops by ox-cart pulled by two oxen. The ox-carts would collect goods from the train and also fetch water from Mangu[swamp near-by. Otherwise, Limuru had no water and water brought by the Railway to Limuru cost fifty cents for a debe (tin). In an interview the late Dharamshi Kala's son Gordhan D. Kantaria recounted:

In time the government realised it had made a mistake and again allowed the European farmers to have Indian shops on their land so as to supply their labourers. In 1929 we rented a plot on Mr. W.E.D Knight's farm at Redhill and built a shop, another G.I sheet building with wooden floors. Ours was the only Indian shop on his farm. For several years we had the two shops. Then in 1932 our father retired and turned the business to me and my three brothers. We phased out of Limuru town and moved completely to Mr. Knight's farm.

Mr. Knight had a very big farm, all coffee. He was a very tall man, he must have been about seven feet tall. He was nicknamed "Ndegwa" by the Africans, their word for "bull." We didn't know him very well as there was no socializing between Indians and Europeans, but in our business dealings with him we found him to be a very nice man.

From that base on Mr. Knight's farm we expanded, building a posho mill and a sawmill as well. In 1948 I and my first brother and our parents moved to Nairobi, leaving the two younger brothers, one of whom died very recently, to develop the place as it is now. However, it was not until after our parents' deaths (our mother in 1952, our father in 1959), not until after Kenya became independent, that we were finally able to purchase our land.

Dharamshi Kala's grandson Rasik Kantaria is a prominent businessman in Nairobi and the owner of Prime Bank. The other grandson, Rajni Kantaria, besides being a prominent businessman takes

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a lot of interest in social work for the Asian community. In addition to being chairman of Lohana community, he has also served as chairman of the Hindu Council of Kenya.

Dr. Mary De Souza

She was born in May 1890 in India, a granddaughter of a Bombay doctor. She studied medicine at the Grant Medical College, Bombay where she met a young man who later became her husband. They both graduated in the same year, 1914.

While Dr. A.C.L. de Souza left for Kenya to work for the Government, Mary took employment in India. Dr. A.C.L. de Souza returned on leave to India and the two doctors married in Bombay in 1919 and came to Kenya. Dr. Mary de Souza was the first lady doctor to come to East Africa, and possibly to the continent from India. She worked at the maternity hospital at Ngara and she became the darling of the Indian women in Nairobi and outside Nairobi. From up-country, it took three or four days to come to Nairobi to see Mary which many women did. Synthia Salvadori on her has written:

Dr. Mary was a great friend and colleague of Mr. Manilal Ambalal Desai who came to Kenya in 1916 as a law clerk in a European firm and left the firm to fight for the political rights of the Asian community. Desai was born in India in the year 1879 and died on 15th July, 1926 in Bukoba, Tanganyika. This great Indian who had sacrificed his life and time for his fellow down trodden Indians for a long time unfortunately died a dismal and pathetic death. He died in an uninhabited hut, with no one near him to give him even a drop of water or to note his last words. Mary wept bitterly when she heard of his death.

Dr. Mary at once thought of a memorial to him which her husband and many others helped erect in Nairobi, the Desai Memorial Hall. The foundation stone was laid by Shrimati Sarojini Naidu on 5th December 1929 when she was invited to Kenya to preside over the 9th session of the E.A. Indian National Congress. The opening ceremony was performed by Seth Nanji Kalidas Mehta of Uganda on 23rd May, 1934. Every year on the anniversary of Desai's death, Dr. Mary organised a flag Day, until ill-health isolated her from social services to which she had dedicated her life. Desai called her the ambassador of India, and so she was! Highly educated and used to the western way of life, she nevertheless preserved until the last the Indian traditions of her family. She was a happy blend of both.

Manilal Ambalal Desai

M.A. Desai came to Kenya in 1915. A bold and selfless person, Desai founded the East African Indian Congress and brought all Asian associations under one banner. He began the battle for basic rights for Africans and Asians. He remained in touch with Harry Thuku and also a number of Asian leaders of the time. He launched the East African Chronicle to propagate his ideas and to create a forum for people to demand their rights and fight against injustice. He put more emphasis on Africans rights than those for Asians and Europeans.

Desai's fiery writings in the East African Chronicle, published in English, did not go well with the colonial authorities. He was jailed in 1924 for six months.

Desai was released from prison in early 1925 and immediately the government appointed him to the Legislative Council. While in Legco, Desai initiated several resolutions against colour bar but

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all were defeated as his resolutions could not muster majority support in a predominately white Legislative Council.

In 1926 Desai travelled with his friend Sita Ram to Bukoba in Tanganyika (now Tanzania). He died in Bukoba on 11 July the same year. The news of his death was received with horror and sorrow by the Kenyan population – both Asians and Africans. The Asian community decided to create a memorial for Desai and a fund raising was initiated for this purpose and soon the Desai Memorial Hall and library were established. On 31 May 1930, the world renowned poetess and Indian national leader Sarojini Naidu officially layed the foundation stone of the Desai Memorial Library.

Desai Memorial Hall and library building has now been demolished and shops and office building erected on the plot as private property in the land grabbing orgy of the recent past.

Premchand Popat Shah

Premchand was the eldest son of Popat Hira Chandaria. The Chandarias lived as an extended family and engaged in farming. The family split and Premchand at a young age had to work in a farm to look after his parents, brothers and sister. Premchand was too young to handle the work in the farm and wanted to go overseas and earn sufficient money, return to India and set up a shop so that he could look after his family. His parents allowed him to travel to Kenya in 1916.

He arrived at Mombasa where he was employed as a shop attendant and worked from morning to midnight for a salary of 20 rupees. He felt at that rate he would never be able to make sufficient money to return to India and set up a shop. He borrowed some money from his friends, got some from his parents and started (in partnership with Khimasia Family) a shop in Ngara area of Nairobi under the name of Premchand Popat & Company. By 1928, their business was rated among the big Asian businesses during that time with business like Alibhai & Co., Ahmed Bros. and Karman Mepa. The specialty of the business was to cater for provisions for the European community which were mainly imported. During 1928, the partnership with Khimasia split and the family set up Premchand Bros. Between 1916 and 1928, Premchand invited his family, his two younger brothers Maganlal and Chaganlal, and later on he invited a number of his cousins and relatives to Kenya. Initially all of them worked with him. Later on, he arranged businesses for them while keeping his own family together in business. In her book *Mercantile Adventures: The World of East African Asians*, Dana April Seidenberg has written thus:

In 1928 the group split up and the Chandarias became Premchand. Brothers; all Premchards were called to East Africa – brothers, cousins and uncles of the Chandaria family. In the same year Premchand Raichand set up an aluminum manufacturing plant in Mombasa and a milling factory in Thika and in 1930 he set up the Kenya Tanning Extract Company, also in Thika, where leather was tanned for export. Between 1941 and 1949 the family ventured into a number of areas of industry setting up all manner of food processing plants from peanuts to salt manufacture. The Chandarias also entered into the manufacture of paints and textiles on a very large scale. In 1949, moreover, they took control of Kenya Aluminum, making pots, pans, kettles and sufurias [cooking iron pots]. They added roofing sheets, hurricane lanterns, stoves, nails and barbed wire. Later, with the Khimasia, they set up the East African Match Company, providing most of the matches for the whole country. The Chandarias' most spectacular endeavour, however, was probably the Kenya United Steel Company, set up in Kenya in partnership with another family, to produce all sorts of steel used in building construction.

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Today (2005) the Chandaria group of companies has fourteen large companies in Kenya, directly employing more than 5,000 people. The family businesses are spread across more than 50 countries in the world stretching from Brazil to Papua New Guinea and from Toronto Canada to Singapore. In total, they employ more than 50,000 workers world-wide. Some of these companies are in Africa including Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Ghana and the Ivory Coast.

The reason behind this spectacular growth and expansion of the enterprises in reference is due to the joint family system and involvement at any one time of three generations of Chandaria family members. The principal personality in the family behind this expansion was Devchand son of Premchand who joined the business in 1935. He had gone half way through high school and could read and write English. (Premchand and his brothers only read and wrote in the Indian language Gujarati). Devchand had the vision to initiate the family business move from trading to industry. During 1938, the two groups, Premchand Brothers and Premchand Raichand, joined hands and became one of the largest Asian business houses in Kenya.

In 1945, Ratilal, the second son of Premchand joined the business. In 1947, the joint company split and the Chandarias took over the control of Premchand Brothers and Kenya Aluminium Industrial Works Ltd. (Kaluworks Ltd.). Premchand Bros. operated in Nairobi and Mombasa while Kenya Aluminium was in Mombasa. Kaluworks was a very small plant employing 40 people.

In 1950/51, four young Chandarias, namely, Kantilal, Kaporchand, sons of Maganlal, and Keshevlal and Manilal, sons of Premchand, joined the business after their university education. The first two studied engineering and commerce at Bombay University respectively and the other two studied for Science degrees in Bombay University and went to the United States to study food technology and engineering respectively.

Kaluworks expanded in a major way by setting up production lines for aluminium rolling, hurricane lanterns, kerosene stoves, nails and barbed and fencing wires. By 1958, it employed 800 people. During this period, a remarkable man by the name of Sir Ernest Vasey came in contact with the family. He became the principal advisor of the family. He used to be the Minister of Finance in the pre-independence Kenya government. After retiring, he became the first Minister of Finance of Independent Tanzania. He then was appointed the country representative of the World Bank in Parkistan. After his retirement from the World Bank, he joined the family business full time as its chairman. He worked with the family as a member of the Chandaria family until his death in 1981. As a chairman of the group he helped the family to diversify and establish itself in various countries and directed the collective effort of the family business in creating a multinational group. The expansion in various countries was through take overs of existing businesses and the establishment of new operations. All the businesses of the group are professionally managed and the family supervises the businesses with the assistance of professionals. The Chandarias have five family centres, namely London, Geneva, Nairobi, Singapore and Toronto.

The man behind the spectacular growth and expansion of the enterprises in reference is Dr. Manilal Premchand Chandaria, popularly known as Manu who started working for the company in 1951 upon his return from the United States of America where he acquired a master's degree in Engineering from Oklahoma University. The Chandaria Foundation in Kenya which Manu is the

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Chairman of the Board of Trustees, has given away hundreds of million of shillings in scholarships, construction of medical facilities, help to the disabled, among numerous other charities. The Chandaria Foundation pays school fees for 100 secondary school students including deaf children and 25 university students every year. Recently it donated Sh. 20,000,000 for the construction of the Chandaria Accident and Emergency Centre at the Nairobi Hospital and Shs. 6,000,000 for a similar project at Pandya Memorial Hospital in Mombasa.

For his philanthropic and business accomplishments, Dr. Manlal Premchand Chandaria was honoured by the University of Nairobi in 1997 with a doctorate of science degree (honoris Causa)

Awarding him the degree, University of Nairobi Vice Chancellor, professor Francis Gichaga, quoting Franklin Roosevelt, American president during the great depression said: "Do what you can with what you have, where you are." the professor went on to say:

In our midst is one person who did just that. Manu Chandaria did what he could, with what he had, where he was, and achieved what many will for ever only dream of. It is in recognition, in particular, of the outstanding contribution to industrialization and business growth in Kenya that the University of Nairobi is proud to bestow upon Mr. Manilal Premchand Chandaria the degree of Doctor of Science in Engineering.³⁸

In his acceptance speech, Chandaria told the graduating students to embrace hard work, honesty and integrity and to be prepared to get their hands dirty in the course of their employment. By accepting to take any job that comes their way, they would grow and mature with time.

Munshi Ram and Kala Singh

The two were friends and they came together to Kenya and established a joint business in River Road in the name of "Munshiram Kalasingh & Company" selling steel bars and hardware. They later opened a construction hardware business in Eldoret. They were also supplying ballast to the Railway from a quarry they had in Limuru where they employed a large African labour force and some Indians. Kala Singh was a brave man and travelled to far off places from the Railway where his turban and beard were strange. Later Kala Singh and Munshi Ram brought many Sikhs from India who settled in Kijabe area including Keha Singh Dillon. Kala Singh's name made an indelible mark on the African minds and henceforth Sikhs came to be known as Kalasings –

Kalasinga.

Building of Khoja Mosque in Nairobi

In a contribution by Hassanali H.S. Verjee of Mombasa in his book manuscript A Family History on building of the Kojas Mosque the following account has been given:

My father Hussein became president of the Ismailia provincial council in Nairobi. In 1920, he instructed the architect Naran Virji to prepare a plan for a new stone mosque to replace the old wood and corrugated iron one on Government Road [Moi Avenue]. The Ismaili community raised 150,000 rupees towards the cost of the building but this was insufficient, so Hussein and Madatali went to Bombay to meet the Aga Khan. He gave them his blessing and approved the plans but turned down their request for financial assistance, telling them that they must raise the rest of the money themselves. They returned to Nairobi and carried out his instructions. Hussein personally supervised the building operations from dawn until dusk until its completion in 1921.

Five Men Hanged for One Rupee

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One man owed another one rupee. When they met at a restaurant at Pigott place in Mombasa they fought and one man stabbed the other in the stomach and he died. Hassan Khan who saw the man stab the other grabbed the knife. By the time police arrived, the man who had done the stabbing had already run away and they arrested Hassan Khan because he had the knife in his hand and they charged him with murder. Although lawyers were brought from the United Kingdom by the defence, the judge found him guilty and he was condemned to be hanged.

One of his brothers said: "Why should he alone be hanged? We are five brothers [and cousin — brother] and he is no more guilty than we are. So we should all be hanged." So the judge heard them and made his final decision. All five brothers were to be hanged. And so they were hanged, at Fort Jesus in Mombasa and the story goes:

You can check the records at Fort Jesus, which used to be used as a prison. Then there was a big quarrel between the Muslims and the gaolers who did not want to give the bodies for burial. But finally the bodies were released and the Muslims collected them from Fort Jesus and cleaned and washed them ready for burial. They made a big procession to take them to the Cutchi Suru Muslim Cemetery, near the Railway station. While the procession was passing along Makadara Road, a Baluchi woman who was nine months pregnant saw them. She screamed and died on the spot. Her body was picked up and taken to the cemetery and buried there too. Their graves are all together in one line.

Indar Singh Gill

He came to Kenya in 1922 aged 20 years to join his maternal uncle Nahar Singh Pangli who had come to Kenya in 1915. He got him admitted to the Railway school where he was trained as a telegraphist after which he was employed by the Railway at Shs. 20 per month. After four years, he was promoted to become a station master grade one at a monthly salary of Shs. 250 and worked at Njoro, Muhoroni, Kibos, Kipikori and Kisumu before he was transferred to Uganda where he began doing other business on the side. He worked for the railway for over forty years. In an interview with Cynthia Salvadori he said the following:

I went into saw milling and had cotton ginneries. I settled in Jinja and built a fine house which I called 'Lakeview.' The rest is well known: I became one of the three multi-millionaires of Jinja, along with Mehta, Madhvani (both of whom made their money in sugar). And then I was one of the thousands of Asians thrown out by Idi Amin in 1972.

Fortunately I had kept ties in Kenya. I'd laid the foundation stones of both the old and the new Singh Sabha temples in Nairobi, and in 1948-50 I had built Gill House, the first 5 storey building in town — a skyscraper in those days which I rented to the colonial government for offices. Sawmills, too (see An Indian's gift to a South African) so in 1972 I came back to Kenya where I had started my career as Bauji. It was all because of my uncle Nahar Singh that I am what I am today. I still keep his portrait in my office. Yes. Although I am 90 years old I still go to the office every day.

In the Indian's Gift to a South African, Inder Singh Gill has the following to say:

I had started the Sikh sawmill in Jinja. One day I was driving from Jinja to Nairobi. As I passed the forest department near Timboroa area I saw the sign for the burnt forest saw mill. I stopped.

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The owner came up and said, very unfriendly, "what do you want here?" I explained I had sawmills in Uganda and wanted to have a look around his, just to compare notes. He was a South African, Bobby Ball by name, and was not willing to show me around. So I said I'd buy his saw mill, what did he want for it?

He thought a minute and then said, Shs. 400,000 for everything except his personal effects, assuming of course that I wouldn't possibly afford such a high price. I said, "Only I don't have my cheque book with me. Could you give me a leaf of yours? He looked startled. "Which bank," he asked. "Any," I said "Barclays, Standard, whatever you have. I have accounts in them all!" He gave me a leaf from his cheque book and I wrote him out a cheque for the sum he'd asked.

Now, he had several horses at the mill. I left him with a couple but as I used to like to ride (my father had horses on the farm in India), I took three or four for myself, took them to Jinja. We agreed that saddles were personal property so he charged me for the saddles. That was fair. Those people were very good to do business with, those hard-headed settlers.

Then Mr. Ball said he wanted some timber and some nails, to build himself a new house. He offered to pay. "You charge me," he said. No, I said. "This will be a gift from an Indian to a South African."

Sheth Alibhai Mulla Jevanjee

Since Sir William Mackinnon, the promoter of the Imperial British East Africa Company's shipping business was Bombay based, he had knowledge of and access to a vast pool of qualified Indian personnel and business people with whom to implement his Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEAC) business. This business included administration of all the East African territory (Kenya and Uganda) including the Sultan's ten miles Coastal strip leased for £1,000 per annum from Zanzibar. The IBEAC was based in Mombasa and brought over from Bombay its own guards and police, clerks and accountants. Many of the latter were Goans [ex-Portuguese] who had distinguished themselves in Bombay as its best bureaucrats. The British government took over the company including its personnel – and hence its Indian orientation. Currency continued to be counted in rupees and banked in Bombay. The legal system was an extension of Indian law. All of the lower echelons and a number of the higher posts in the protectorate administration were filled by Indians, still mainly Goans. The ranks of the British officered police and army were filled predominantly by Punjabi Muslims and Sikhs. For all practical purposes, the Protectorate was a province of British India, administered from Bombay.

Alibhai Mulla Jevanjee arrived in Mombasa in 1890 with a letter of introduction from B.T. Finch, superintendent of Eastern Telegraphs in Karachi, to Sir Francis de Winton, Administrator General of the IBEAC and a shareholder and director of the company. Jevanjee found in Mombasa about 550 Indians and a small number of Europeans. He stayed with a well-established Bohra family known as Namaji in Ndia Kuu. The Hindus (generally known as Banyan) controlled trade. Mombasa had close ties with the Indian Ocean and other outside traders and had access to credit through the merchant capital networks on the Indian Ocean. IBEAC had obtained permission from the Foreign Office and the Government of India to recruit some 300 men in the vicinity of Delhi on a three year contract. They were to be used to police the whole of the company's territory.

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Jevanjee was given that contract and was also called upon to supply rations and labour to the India contingent under the command of captain Rogers, which he did. In the following year. the company decided to build a narrow-gauge light railway to pass through the thorn bush and the tsetsefly belt. Jevanjee supplied the Indian labour, which proved to be highly competent in construction work but only seven miles of rail had been laid when the company ran short of funds. In 1891, Jevanjee opened a branch of his Karachi-based firm, A.M. Jevanjee & Co., and started the business of stevedoring and dubashing, the first in that line on the East African Coast. His company's efficient services proved to be of great value to Sir William Mackinnon's shipping line, the British Indian Steam Navigation Co. through its Mombasa agents, Smith Mackenzie & Co. However, in 1902 after the death of Mackenzie, Jevanjee had a misunderstanding with the management and he closed down his stevedoring business in Mombasa.

In the meantime Jevanjee was conducting satisfactory business with IBEAC and receiving commendations from the company. The earliest was made at Mombasa and dated 10th May, 1892 and signed by the superintendent and the Accountant:

This is to certify that Messrs A.M. Jevanjee & Co. of Karachi provisioned our Indian Military Forces here per contract for one year, at the end of which time their agent left for Karachi. The rations were delivered promptly and found to be satisfactory . . .

The Indian railway coolie labour which you supplied, have given every satisfaction and the rations for Indian and native workmen have always been of uniform quality and punctually and regularly supplied. . . . Messrs Jevanjee & Co. have discharged a cargo of general goods for the Uganda Railway containing a large number of heavy lifts from two to ten tons weight, and all work without the least accidents and very satisfactory indeed.

The construction of the Railway started in 1896 after the first batch of 350 workers arrived from India on 24 January 1896. The work force included surveyors, draughtsmen, masons, carpenters, blacksmiths and clerks. Following Jevanjee's earlier success in recruitment of Indian labour, he together with one Hussein Bux, was the major contractor for labour recruitment.

By 1900 the Uganda Railway construction authorities had brought in about 25,000 men from India and procuring their rations and other supplies from Karachi became a problem. The contract was finally awarded to Jevanjee who was able to supply the rations and boots for 25,000 men in the required manner and at 20 per cent less cost than the Railway's own agents in Karachi by taking advantage of the economics of scale. Jevanjee made a fortune from railway construction and afterwards built many of the stone buildings in Nairobi. At the time, there were three major firms in Mombasa, those of Allidina Visram, Shariff, Jaffer & Co. and A.M. Jevanjee.

The first Nairobi District Commissioner John Ainsworth's house was built by Jevanjee on the hill where the university lecture hall at the Nairobi National Museum is. His offices were later built on the site of the present Moi Primary School on Moi Avenue. Jevanjee Gardens was laid directly opposite the District Commissioner's office, and a small section of the Gardens was carved out to allow for a rickshaw stand. Jevanjee installed the statue of Queen Victoria in the Gardens, which

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he had built and donated to the Nairobi township authority in trust for the people of Nairobi and Kenya.

John Ainsworth measured the city limits to be within a radius of one and one half miles from his office, and the Nairobi City limits remained so until 1920. Zarina Patel writing on the establishment of the city has written thus:

A group of Indian merchants and Coastal traders erected a small market area in 1889, and what started as a large encampment of tents was developed, largely by the Indians into a township. By 1900, Nairobi had a flourishing Indian bazaar situated between the present Tom Mboya Street and River Road and was more of an Indian than a European township.

As we have seen, the protectorate was governed by Indian legislation, the judicial powers of officials were modelled on the Indian precedents and in May 1893, the Indian rupee coinage was introduced, replacing the German, English and Indo-Portuguese currency. Even the settlers chose to organise races under Calcutta Turf Club rules. In 1903, Ainsworth reported that "full 80 per cent of the capital and business energy of the country is Indian!"

Nairobi Township committee had been setup on 16 April, 1900 and municipal regulations were established. The first meeting was held on 24 July, 1900 and included Allidina Visram and Amir Singh. The committee had more Indians than Europeans, who served as "unofficials" on it, but in June 1901 the committee resigned and the District Commissioner took over. By December, a new committee was formed, and this time the Europeans were in the majority, ensuring that local legislation would be in their own interests. Nairobi Municipal Council was formed in 1919 but did not have African councillors in it until 1930s. Early colonisers depended on the Indians since not a single white owned company in the country was in a position to undertake contracts for building, earthwork, rationing or labour supply. Allidina Visram, who had a chain of shops in British East Africa, was requested not to close his shops in Uganda though they were not profitable to him.

Jevanje developed many properties which he rented to the government including the Nairobi Town Hall which was also used as a court house. Another major structure built was the conspicuous purple and yellow Jevanje Market, the only building not constructed of corrugated iron sheet in Nairobi in 1904 and built at a cost of Rs. 100,000 of his own money. Later, Jevanje Market was bought by the town and in 1932 the current city market was built 500 yards further south. A.M. Jevanje & Co. built many houses which the East Africa Protectorate Government rented, including the former survey department, now part of the Central Police Station next to the Nairobi University. In 1909 a group of amateur naturalists, including the governor Sir Frederick Jackson, formed the East African and Uganda Natural History Society. Zarina Patel has given the following account on the housing of the Natural History Society:

On 16 August of the following year the society occupied the small two-roomed stone building that would house the data and material its members had collected and would make them available to a wider public. The rent was Rs. 37.50 per month and the tenancy was yearly, terminable by six month's notice on either side. In 1913 an extension to the building was requested and a further Rs. 150 per annum was added to the rent. This first museum building was at the site of the present Windsor House at the junction of Muindi Mbingu Street and University Way and was used until 1920 when it was moved to Kirk Road (now Nyerere Road)

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near the Young Women's Christian Association Headquarters. In 1929 the Coryndon Museum was built on 15 acres of land on Ainsworth Hill; it is the present National Museum.

Jevanjee had his first foray in politics very early in 1902 after the European press published an insulting letter about Indians written by a settler woman leading him to establish his own newspaper The African Standard. When he sold the newspaper, he kept the printing press and this was later used by Manilal Desai, Harry Thuku and Sitaram Acharya for political purposes. Synithia Salvadori has written:

AMJ was instrumental in setting up the early Indian political organisation in East Africa, from the Mombasa Indian Association to the E.A. Indian National Congress. In 1909 he was the first and only non-white member nominated to the legislative council but "seeing the futility of a single person being able to achieve much in the teeth of the anti-Indian policy in force he soon resigned (by forfeiting his seat through non-attendance) and plunged himself into organising political movements outside the council. Through them he, with others, played a leading role in promoting Indian interests. He maintained close contact with the leaders of the Indian National congress in India and travelled to South Africa where he met with Mahatma Gandhi, General Smuts and others. He led and was part of several delegations to the colonial office in the U.K. where his speeches received wide press coverage and roused considerable concern about Indian rights.

Hussein of the Indian Congress

In A family history by Hassanali H.S. Verjee of Mombasa, it is recorded that in 1920, the Indians living in East Africa formed an Indian congress (inspired by the political organisation in India). His father Hussein was elected the first president. The first meeting was held in the Suleiman Verjee building on First Avenue and the Governor Northey was invited and attended. In his inaugural speech, he openly criticised the colonial regime for its policy of social injustice and racial segregation. Prophetically, Hussein concluded: "Sir, allow me to tell you, one day all Europeans and the colonial government will have to leave this country. But we Indians will continue to live and trade in the country." Hussein was arrested and taken to the high court. Hassanali H.S. Verjee has written:

Justice Sheriden, who tried the case, evidently admired Hussein and this is revealed in his words to captain Bristow, the superintendent of the prison: "Mr. Hussein has not committed any crime. He is under a charge of political activity, of causing unrest . . . Mr. Hussein is not your prisoner. You will have to treat him as the guest of the British government." consequently, Hussein was placed under house-arrest and treated with respect and courtesy. He was released a few days later.

Mr. Hussein soon after his release called an emergency meeting of the congress and moved a resolution to form a delegation to visit the British Parliament in London to present the Indian case for equal rights. The delegation consisted of M.A. Desai, A.M. Jevanjee, B.S. Varma, Mr. Shamsudeen and Abdul Wahid. They arrived in London in July, 1923 and stayed at the First Avenue Hotel in the Strand. They met a number of British M.Ps who gave a lunch in their honour. Hassanali H.S. Verjee who was a student in London was invited by his father to attend the meeting and has written thus:

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I sat there in the Hotel dining room amongst the members of the delegation, feeling very proud of my father. The meeting began cordially enough. Then the Indian leader began to criticise the government, demanding the abolition of racial segregation and advocating equal rights. Their demands were categorically rejected and an insulting offer proposed as an alternative. The response from the delegation was unanimous and echoed the sentiments of all campaigners for human rights: "We have come to you for justice and equal rights for our people." We have not come to you to sell our people. With this defiant rejoinder they all walked out. And I walked out with them.

Achroo Ram Kapila

Achroo's father Saling Ram, an advocate, followed his other three brothers who had come to Kenya starting from 1920 and set up a law practice in Nairobi in 1930 in a two roomed office in what is now Moi Avenue. They lived in Ngara and behind their home lived the Indian named Abdul Wahid who had a private zoo. Achroo Kapila attended Government Primary school which was near the railway station. When he finished secondary school education in 1942 at the height of the war, his father wanted him to travel to India for further education as there was no university in Kenya. Although he had applied for admission for a course in civil engineering at a university in India, it was not possible to travel by steamship or by air because of the war. The only way to reach India was by dhow. A close friend, Abdul Qayum, had travelled by dhow and on reaching Bombay, he sent an urgent telegram telling him not to dream of travelling by dhow. He said it had taken them over forty days to cross the ocean, that the hold was like a dungeon, that there was a great shortage of water and that he had not had a bath the whole voyage. Many passengers had been seriously sick because of exposure to the sun and rain. His description of the latrine was very graphic — it consisted of a 'long drop' where you crouched over the edge of the moving and heaving ship.

Just about that time the council of legal Education in England made it possible for overseas residents of the commonwealth to study law and sit their examination in absentia. Achroo Kapila passed his final law examination in October 1945 but had to wait for the war to end in Europe to sail to England and attend lectures before being called to the bar in 1947. He returned to Kenya in the same year and joined his father in his practice. In a contribution published in they came in Dhows, Achroo Kapila has recounted thus:

Almost immediately, I was involved in a number of "political" trials. There were many persecutions of courageous publishers and editors such as Vidyarthi, [father of the owners of colour print press], D.K. Sharda, Haroun Ahmed (see "Eunotos good for Business") and others, some of whom went to prison for speaking out against the injustices of the colonial system. I defended Makhan Singh (see Unadulterated idealist), Jesse Kariuki, Fred Kubai and others, and successfully prosecuted chiefs and headmen like Makimei who had a habit of "disciplining" their subjects, sometimes by administering brutal punishment to them while the government conveniently looked away. Many people defied the rampant colour bar which was enforced by law at the time and were charged and tried in court.

During this period, I formed a close friendship with Mzee Kenyatta and others who were actively involved in Kenya's struggle for freedom. In October 1952, a state of emergency was declared in Kenya and Mzee Kenyatta and his colleagues Kubai, Achieng Oneko, Paul Ngei, Bildad Kaggia and Kung'u Karumba were arrested and prosecuted at Kapenguria. I was part of their defence

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team. There were a great number of Mau Mau cases too that had to be defended all the way to the Privy Council in England.

I suppose my contribution to our history can be attributed to the fact that I decided not to travel by dhow. I am glad that I missed the boat.

Lila and Ambu Patel

In 1943, Lila married Ambu Patel at the age of 16 years. He was involved in the Indian independence movement for some years. He sent her to one of Gandhi's ashrams in Gujarati. That experience and marriage politicised Lila and made her determined to fight for justice for the poor and oppressed. They first came to Uganda but then shifted to Nairobi where they ran a printing press and book binding business. She and her husband named their three sons and one daughter after renowned Indian nationalists. They lived plainly but their generosity was unlimited.

When the struggle for Uhuru was gaining momentum, Ambu and Lila became part of it. During the Mau Mau war of liberation, Lila used to feed freedom fighters in her house, hide them in her charcoal shed and store their guns and ammunition. After the detention and imprisonment of Jomo Kenyatta in 1952, Lila looked after his daughter Margaret Wambũi for eight years, hiding her from the colonial authorities. She helped advance her education and Ambu taught her the craft of bookbinding. On the founding day of KANU (27 March 1960), Lila and Ambu in co-operation with several hundred Africans participated in a demonstration in K]ambu town for the release of Jomo Kenyatta and his colleagues. Lila and Ambu knowing that they faced possible arrest, bravely carried anti-colonial placards in solidarity with the others. In a contribution published in they came in Dhows, the following account is given:

Lila and the family made great sacrifices in furthering Kenya's struggle for liberation. Yet at the time of independence, she and Ambu refused to accept any favours or rewards, saying that they had struggled for the good of the country and not for personal enrichment. As they were so immersed in the Kenya nationalist struggle and gave everything they had to it, they could not afford to pay the school fees for their children. Lila returned to India for several years where she educated her children with money she earned from cooking food for other students. "I have always felt that money is just a means and not a motto in life," wrote Ambu. And to his son Subash he said: "I want you to have an education such as will make you the humblest of the humble and a real soldier in life". In 1973 when they moved to Parklands they had no furniture or crockery and barely enough food to eat. They slept not on beds but on sheets spread on their trunks. Lila spun yarn, sold food in tiffins and even sold her recipes written out in Gujarati.⁶⁵

Ambu died of heart attack in 1977. Margret Kenyatta offered Lila some financial assistance but Lila, after expressing her gratitude refused it and asked Margret to use it for a good cause. Lila also died of heart attack in 1979 and like her husband was cremated in Nairobi. Unfortunately the time had changed so radically that the passing of these two great Kenyans went almost unnoticed. The writer knew them personally and the couple was an epitome of devotion to Kenya and its people.

Makhan Singh

He was born in Kenya and went to school in India returning in 1943/44. While in India, he had openly joined the communist party and the colonial government did not intend to allow him

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back into Kenya, which he knew, but he managed to slip out of the ship and travelled up to Nairobi. He immediately started organising the trade union movement with Fred Kubai. In 1947 he was arrested and by 1952 he had been in detention for seven years when Dr. Fitz de Souza, an advocate, returned from his studies in England and took employment with the law firm of 'Madan & Shah'. (Madan later became Chief Justice of Kenya and Dr. Fitz de Souza Deputy speaker of the Kenya Parliament). Makhan Singh's father Sood Singh used to visit Madan in the office many times in his attempt to get his son released. As Madan was often very busy, he would send the old man to talk to de Souza. In an interview published in *We came in Dhows*, Dr. de Souza has stated:

In an effort to get Makhan Singh released, Madan and I had been to see the Governor about some documents, and had gotten his agreement to release Makhan Singh if he apologised for his more radical policies. This I thought Makhan would do, for basically he was a man of law and order, against the use of violence. So at the old man's request I drafted a petition addressed to the Governor in the father's name. In it we pleaded for leniency, saying: "Please have sympathy for my son who is very decent, though perhaps a little misguided, person."

I was very proud of the way I had worded the petition for the old man and I made the mistake of sending a copy to Makhan Singh. He immediately sent a telegram stating unequivocally; "Not misguided will not be released under those conditions."

I was sorry that my carefully worded petition had been so unappreciated but I had to admire Makhan Singh for sticking to his principles. Because he refused to compromise his stand, he was kept in detention (in Maralal) for several years more.

Dr. de Souza in the same interview has given another example of what a principled person Makhan Singh was. No concern for himself would sway him from his stand:

Jomo Kenyatta used to ask after him. One day I invited Makhan Singh to lunch with me at Parliament. I had been trying to persuade him to make an effort to get a job where he could contribute to the development of the country. While we were talking, Jomo (it was only later that we all began calling him Mzee) passed our table and stopped and embraced Makhan Singh before moving on to another table.

I was very friendly with Jomo — that time I used to write most of his speeches — so I thought this would be an opportune moment to get Makhan Singh back into action. I asked him what he would be willing to do. He said, "Anything worthwhile. But I don't want you to ask anyone on my behalf for a job. Never in my life have I asked for anything, begged for anything." I told him that you were never 'given' a job in this world, that you had to fight to get it, and I told him that I was going to ask Jomo on his behalf. I stood up to go over to Jomo and Makhan Singh grabbed me by the arm and pulled me down. He was really angry and said, "I'll never accept any job that's been asked for, any offer that is not spontaneous recognition of my usefulness."

I was quite staggered by his vehemence and of course made no further move towards Jomo, or to helping Makhan Singh get any job. It wasn't that he was arrogant, for he wasn't arrogant at all. He just felt that if people didn't appreciate what he had done, what he had to offer, he didn't want to work with them. He never did get a job. He died a few years later. He was a total, unadulterated idealist. He wouldn't compromise on anything.

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Pio Gama Pinto

Recently a lot has been written about Pinto through the Nations' newspaper serialisation of a story about his life and death at the hands of a political assassin. His dedication and suffering in the struggle for Kenya's freedom and thereafter is now well known in the public domain. In an article by his wife Emma Gama Pinto of Willowdale (Canada), dated June, 1972 and published in *We came in Dhows* she has said the following:

I met Pio about September 1953 and we married in January, 1954. Pio was honest in a funny way — he told me he did not make much to support me (he was then editor of the *Daily Chronicle* and secretary of the Indian congress in Nairobi) and I should therefore start thinking about getting a job myself! No frills — just a blunt statement with a wide smile. Since my first weeks as a bride were akin to being a grass-widow, I felt it might be best I did not stay home and twiddle my thumbs.

Home, to Pinto, was a one-room bed sitter with minimum furnishing. A small portable one burner stove was all the 4ft x 4ft kitchen could boast of. My parents who had flown in from India for the wedding were shocked. They presented us with a car, a washing machine, a sewing machine and a substantial cash cheque for the wedding.

Early in June, my husband was arrested under the Emergency regulations. He was the editor of the *Dairy Chronicle* and Secretary of the India Congress in Nairobi. As the situation in Kenya was getting from bad to worse, Pio sent information to friends abroad in England and the U.A.R [United Arab Republic — now Egypt] — Joseph Murumbi and Mbiu Koinange. They pleaded the cause from their vantage positions where there was freedom of press and speech. He smuggled releases to important people in many countries so that they could be appraised about the true conditions in Kenya.

In February 1958 Pio was released from detention but was put under restriction at Kabarnet town in Baringo. His wife was allowed to join him in the place of restriction where he had been given a two bedroomed house with sparse furniture and less than Shs. 50 to live on. They were not permitted to speak to anyone except the administration staff of the district, many of whom were not interested in the ex-detainee. Mrs. Emma Pinto has further recounted:

At the recommendation of my doctor, Pio was allowed to travel to Nairobi for the birth of our first child in case of the need for blood transfusion due to my Rh negative condition. Oh the joy of being with the people again! Pio visited me briefly at the Nursing Home and finding that all was well, kept intouch by phone for the rest of his short leave, and spent his time catching up on the true nature of the situation in the country. That was Pio! The leopard hadn't changed its spots or even blurred them.

Fortunately during the years of his detention, I had read avidly about the struggle in South Africa, and the aspirations of the Africans had given me an understanding of my husband's fervent desire to exert his utmost energies on their behalf. To the utter consternation of my friends, I refused to lift a finger to change him. His ideals were high and I admired his courage. I was happy to share him with the country that needed him. The assassin's bullet in February 1965 took away a husband and father, but more so — much more, a patriot of Kenya.

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This author who knew and worked closely with Pinto during the last years of the struggle for independence (uhuru) and after agrees with her entirely.

Shamsudin Raweno Otieno

Raweno Otieno was born in Kisumu and became the first African Ismaili Muslim. He first worked as a house boy for an Ismaili, Hassanali Rahimtulla, who lived near the Khoja Mosque. The head of the Ismailis, the Aga Khan Sultan Mohammed Shah, told his people that since they were living in Africa they should try to convert African people to their Ismaili religion. With Raweno Otieno's consent, the Hassanali family started to take him to their Jamatkhana to learn their religion for nine months. Because he was not an Ismaili, he studied outside the Jamatkhana. After some months the teacher took him to the Ismaili council to discuss his admission and the chairman said, "Right, the boy can be an Ismaili!" Shamsudin Raweno Otieno in an interview with C. Salvadori has given the following account:

I joined the Jamatkhana on December 16, 1954. That was a Friday. You know Fridays are the best days in our religion. It was a lovely occasion. I was twelve years old and they took me in like I was a president. They gave me a suit and tie to wear at the Jamatkhana (No, they didn't give me any money.) They had arranged the place very nicely. I was escorted in by four people, including my teacher and the chairman and other important people of the community. That's when I got the name Shamsudin. No, I don't have any photographs of the occasion.

I also became an Aga Khan scout. In Kisumu I was a junior scout. When I moved to Nairobi I was a Rover Scout for about five years. There was one other African Ismaili in the A.K. Scout troop. I moved here in 1959 to work for Hassanali's daughter Kulumbai. I came with my papers so I could attend the Jamatkhana here. No-one stopped me. Many wanted me to marry an Indian wife, but I married a Luo girl and took her to join the Jamatkhana. She was given the name Zenaz. Our nine children are all Ismailis. After me some other Luos, about five or six became Ismailis. Some Luhya became Ismailis too. I don't know about Nairobi or Mombasa, but I know that I was the first African to join Ismailism in Kisumu.

There are some other African Ismailis here, there used to be about 48 of us, more here than in Kisumu. No, there aren't any Kikuyu or Kamba Ismailis, the Kikuyu and Kamba don't want to understand Ismailism. The other African Ismailis here mostly are from western Kenya, Luo and Luhyias. We do not meet much because we go to different Jamatkhana's here.

Premchand Vrajpal Shah

Premchand had only had a basic, primary education but he was intelligent, innovative and visionary. He started working as an accounts clerk at a basic salary of rupees 30 per month which was considered good at that time. He came to be known as Mehta meaning Accounts Clerk. Being ambitious, honest and hard-working, in a few years, together with his brothers, he started his own business trading in local produce. His younger brother, Juthalal, joined the business later on. Although townships in Central Province were just starting to develop, including Fort Hall, transport links with Nairobi were poor. Roads were made either dusty or muddy by ox carts, mules and bicycles were often used and sometimes people walked for miles. Educational and medical facilities were non-existent and diseases such as plague and malaria were rampant. The local African people were stripped of their fertile land which became part of the White Highlands reserved exclusively for European farmers. Local Africans were left with small parcels of land

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only suitable for subsistence farming. They were not allowed to grow cash crops such as tea, coffee or wheat, all of which were reserved for white farmers only.

As his produce business prospered, he opened offices and depots in all places in the Province and became one of the biggest produce dealers. His advice in respect of crops and production figures was sought by the Government authorities and heeded. Later on, in the early twenties, he moved to Thika which he saw grow from a dusty town to the well-laid-out industrial town it is today. He established the first major industry of the town, the Kenya Tanning Extract Company, in 1933/34, together with his brothers, and partners — M P Shah and others. As a man of vision, he knew that the country could only be developed if the local people progressed. He visualised that to improve their economic prospects and thus their standards of living, farmers should be able to grow cash crops suitable to the area and easily marketed and processed locally. He moved around in local reserves with the chiefs to educate and encourage them to grow wattle trees; later on he did the same for cotton in the Sagana and M]r[areas. starting with a wattle-extracting factory in Thika, he moved on to cotton ginneries and maize-milling plants in Sagana and M]r[. These activities gave a great economic boost to farmers and he was nick-named by the Ag]k[y[Mehta Magoko (Mehta Wattle-Back), some of whom gave the name Mehta to their children. Together with his brothers and partners, he established trading companies and manufacturing plants including the following;

- Maize milling in Thika 1923;
- Kenya Aluminium Works in 1928 (now know as Kaluworks and owned by the Comcraft Group of Companies);
- Premchand Raichand & Co trading and later a holding company in partnership with M P Shah and others; this used to be the flagship of the Group;
- Wattle bark harvesting first in Thika in 1929 and then in Maragua in 1931;
- Kenya Tanning Extract Co in Thika in 1933;
- Purchase of Limuru Tanning Co in 1935;
- Founded cotton ginneries and maize milling plants in M]r[in 1935/37;
- Purchase of Muhoroni Sugar Mills in 1941.

He left for India in 1941 for a holiday during the Second World War and, being an entrepreneur, found plenty of scope there and became a big operator in precious metals and commodities markets. He also became established in textiles, oil milling and refining, shipping, etc. He retired from active business in 1955 and lived in Jamnagar where he died in 1961.

He was very much a family man and his descendants are spread throughout many countries in the world. Their main activities are in Kenya and include Mabati Rolling Mills Ltd, Insteel Ltd, Galsheet Kenya Ltd, Steel Africa Ltd in partnerships with the Comcraft Group of Companies. The

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family also has businesses in Uganda, Tanzania, Nigeria, South Africa, the United Kingdom, Papua New Guinea, Australia, Hong Kong and Canada.

To perpetuate the name of Premchand, the family has started a charitable foundation under the name of the Premchandbhai Foundation which does a lot of social work in Kenya.

Sardrar Singh Vohra

Sardrar Singh Vohra arrived in Kenya in 1914 from his village of Sayed in the district of Rawalpindi in the Punjab which is now in Pakistan after the 1947 partition of India and Pakistan. He was already married to his wife Amrit and they had a son Anaop who was already born in India. Other nine children were born in Kenya including Gurcharan — popularly known as Chani, Mohinder, Kughi and Satinder. All the children attended primary and secondary schools in Kenya.

Sardrar Singh Vohra's first business in Kenya was in transport using bullock drawn carts and wagons using unpaved foot-paths. A memorable occasion occurred at Limuru when both the carts and bullocks got bogged down in the mud which upset him so much that he decided to opt out of transport business.

Mr. Vohra's next initiative was more lasting and involved wheels too. He opened a bicycle selling shop in Nairobi River Road where his trading reputation attracted the business interest of the Raleigh Industries in the United Kingdom which gave sole agency for their 'Humber' bicycles which he imported directly from the company. Humbers were the first choice for the African market, superior to all others because they had a double fork, making them stronger than the other bikes of the Raleigh range. To own a Humber was every male African's ambition being the only affordable means of wheeled transport when cars were not only at unreachable premium, but after the First World War, also in short supply.

As a result of increased sales of Humbers in the Kenyan market, he started re-exporting them to Uganda and Tanganyika. The business developed to be large when Mohinder, the Vohra's third older son took over business from the father in 1958 and extended the imports to include bicycles manufactured in India and China.

The Vohra's first Nairobi home was in River Road close by their place of work. They later on moved to Park Road not very far away. Bicycles were not the Vohra family's only business. They owned Sevo Limited which developed housing for a long time. Sardrar Singh Vohra became well known and was appointed president of Nairobi's main Sikh Temple, the Siri Guru Singh Sabha and remained its president for many years. The Sarda Singh Vohra Charitable Trust was set up in his memory after his death in 1984. Trust funds and the Foundation have generously supported and continue to support deserving human causes covering a wide field including the education of orphaned children.

When an operating theater became an urgent need in the last years of the last century for Kenya's first and only National Spinal Injury Hospital, it was Chani, as an appointed member of the hospital management board since 1997 who solicited the financial help from his influential clients, business associates and friends to turn the need into a reality. Substantial funds contributed by the Vohra Foundation keep the much loved name of their patriarch alive. The hospital serves all the countries in East Africa.

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The five Vohra girls married and settled in the UK and India. Anaop travelled to the Middle East and India and ultimately settled in Dubai looking after the familys' various international interests. Chani studied law in England and qualified in 1955. He returned to Kenya and set up a legal practice in 1957 from which he retired in 1996. With Mohinder continuing to run the original business, Chani, Anaop and Mohinder jointly managed the family financing and acquisition of properties and spearheaded the foundation of Sarova Hotels as a company. The two youngest sons, Kughi and Salinder, settled in London in the 1960s after completing their education there and were responsible for managing and operating the family hotel business in the United Kingdom which started with the acquisition of the 22-room Kensington Lodge in South-West London, a bed and breakfast establishment.

Sarova Hotels commenced operation in 1974, formed by Chani, Mohinder, their nephew Khushant Mahindru (who later joined the group in Dubai to form an independent trading company) and John Ngata Kari[ki who was born in K[r]nyaga district on 3 April, 1937; his father an administrator at K[r]g[ya district Hospital and his mother a nurse. He was educated at Catholic Primary School, K[r]g[ya; Nyeri High School and Makerere University (Uganda) from where he obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree. Approached by Chani when Ambassador Hotel came up for sale, he joined the formation of Sarova as a new company and took on the role of the Executive Director in charge of day-to-day operations.

Over the years, Mr. Kari[ki has served for six years as Chairman of ASTA – the American Society of Travel Agents; Chairman of the Kenya Tourism Host Committee (hosting travel agents and travel writers visiting Kenya under the auspices of the Ministry of Tourism); Chairman for four years of the organising committee of the BTF (Brussels Travel Fair); Chairman of the Skal Club for two years in the 1980s; Vice-Chairman of Kenya Utali College (1982 - 1987) and Chairman of the Catering Levy; a director of Kenya Airways (1984-1987) and Chairman of the Kenya Post and Telecommunications Corporation (KP & T) (1987-1993).

Sarova Hotels in Kenya own the Five Star Stanley Hotel in the central business district of Nairobi. Four Star Pan-Afric Hotel also in the city; Five Star Whitesands Beach resort in Mombasa North; Sarova Mara Tented Camp; Lion Hill Camp at Lake Nakuru National Park and Sarova Shaba on the banks of the Uaso Nyiro River in the Samburu Wildlife Park. They also have hotel investments in Uganda.

By the end of 1999, Sarova Hotels and Sarova International were operating thirteen hotels in the UK and East Africa. A third Vohra generation has already joined Sarova management and a fourth generation – Sardar and Amrit great grandchildren have been born and are growing up. Mr. Kari[ki's son James born in 1967 joined Sarova Hotels in 1992.

Girdhari Lal Vidyarthi

G.L. Vidyarthi was born on the 30th August 1907 in Mombasa. He was the son of Shamdass Bootamal Hora who arrived in Kenya in 1889 from Pujab in India. He worked for the Railway in many stations in Kenya. Shamdass Hora later worked in Nairobi where his son Girdhari was enrolled at the Indian Primary school, then a makeshift temporary structure at the site where Kencom building on Moi Avenue (formally Government Road) stands. This was followed by a stint in India before returning to Nairobi where he enrolled at the Duke of Gloucester Secondary School (present day Jamhuri Secondary School). As he was an exceptionally gifted student, a

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special class was created at the Duke of Gloucester for Girdhari Lal and two other exceptional students to sit for the London Matriculation Examination which was the highest available education in Kenya at that time. He passed the examination with distinction, a remarkable achievement for an Asian during an era of racial segregation that pervaded Nairobi Society from the cinema halls to the classrooms.

On leaving school Girdhari Lal took employment with the Ministry of Transport. During his spare time, he started practising journalism under the pen name "Vidyarthi," a Hindi word meaning "student" or "scholar". He began producing a handwritten and trilingual (English, Hindi, Urdu) newspaper called Mitrom (Friendship). At the age of twenty two he was already displaying signs of nationalism against the injustices of the colonial rule and developing a philosophy of liberation. He channeled his exuberant fight against British colonial rule into militant journalism leading to the birth of The Colonial Times Printing Works and the Colonial Times Newspaper in 1933. In the meantime, Vidyarthi became his popular name.

Vidyarthi began his publications with a team of zealous Asian writers and editors that included Prandal Seth, D.K. Sharda, Haroun Ahamed, Chanan Singh who later on became Assistant Minister, office of the President under Kenyatta and a judge of the High Court, Fitz de Souza (who later on became Deputy Speaker of Parliament after independence), Nathoo Amlani and Pio Gama Pinto. The Colonial Times which consistently aired the grievances of both Asians and Africans became very popular and achieved a circulation of over ten thousand copies; a very high number at the time.

Vidyarthi established two other newspapers in African languages which followed the radical tradition of the Colonial Times. The publications were Habari za Dunia (News of the World) edited by F.M. Ruhinda, which was the first Swahili newspaper in East Africa to be printed by a private press. The other one was the Luo Weekly Paper Ramogi edited by Ramogi Achieng Oneko. Vidyarthi's Times Printing Works put him at the centre of anti-colonial journalism clearly producing a substantial impact upon the Kenyan society in providing a forum for Asians and Africans to form a united front and disseminate their criticism to the masses. As a result, the colonial authorities swiftly acted to quell the nationalist fervor that Vidyarthi's publications were steadily arousing. On colonial governments reaction, the Voice of EACA magazine— Awaaz has written thus:

In April of 1945, Vidyarthi was convicted for sedition on two separate occasions. His first sentence earned him a one hundred pound fine. The second sedition charge was earned after Vidyarthi published an article criticizing the British occupation of Burma and the subsequent conscription of African soldiers to fight British wars around the empire. Vidyarthi brought to light the injustice where wounded African soldiers returned penniless to Kenya whereas their white counterparts were rewarded with land and property throughout the country. The story resulted in his being sentenced to four months of hard labour in a Nairobi prison. Vidyarthi's unwavering devotion to nationalism and participation in Kenya's freedom struggle was such that only a few months after his release he was once again at the centre of a growing journalistic crusade.

In September of 1946, Girdhari Lal invited one Johnstone Kamau wa Ngengi, who was to become Kenya's first President as Jomo Kenyatta, to his home in Westlands. Over tea, Vidyarthi offered to reserve a section of the Colonial Times as a special forum for the Kenya African Union. This

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association with one of Kenya's most prominent African anti-colonial agitator made Vidyarthi's second arrest practically inevitable. He was arrested again in May of 1947 and sentenced to eighteen months in prison after an allegedly seditious letter was printed in Habari Za Dunia.

On his release from prison, Vidyarthi continued to publish the Colonial Times. He also escalated his interest to promote a variety of vernacular newspapers published by militant Africans. Between 1935 and 1958, these included Swahili and Gikuyu publications like Fred Kibai's Sauti ya Mwafrika (Africa Voice), Francis Khamisi's Mwalimu (The Teacher), Henry Mwanjiki Muoria's Mmenyereri (The Care Taker), and Henry Gathigira's Jicho (The Eye).

In concluding the article on Girdhari Lal Vidyarthi pioneering role to secure Kenyan Press Freedom, the EACA magazine in reference has written thus:

Unfortunately, some might argue that post-independence Kenya has treated the issue of press freedom in a reactionary fashion that is not remarkably different to experiences under colonial rule. Vidyarthi's sons and their printing press [Colour Print] have suffered in recent times under similar circumstances that had afflicted the Colonial Printing Works. In March of 1988, Beyond Magazine, a Christian publication, was banned and thousands of copies were found and destroyed. In January of 1994, the press was raided at night by two hundred armed policemen who confiscated 15,000 copies of an opposition publication. In April of 1995 the printing press was again raided, copies of Finance Magazine confiscated and several machines were disabled. Anil Vidyarthi, former Nation photo journalist and Girdhari Lal's second born son and last person to be charged for sedition was tried in a case that lasted two years in the High Court of Kenya. He was acquitted after the sedition law was repealed [IPPG – Inter Parties Parliamentary Group reforms in 1997] from the statutes and Kenyans looked forward to a future free from the laws of censorship. It proved to be a false dawn, however. In 1997, the Vidyarthis were the victim of an arson attack that almost crippled their entire press.

KRISHAN CHANDER GAUTAMA

The Late Honourable Gautama was born in Mombasa on 25th August 1932. In the 1979 General Elections he was elected Member of Parliament for Parklands (now Westlands). This was no accident. By then Krishan Gautama had been serving the people of Kenya for nearly 30 years. From the beginning, Krishan Gautama stood for freedom and democratic process. As a student he was secretary, and then the president of the East African Students Association. He wrote for The Tribune, till it was banned with the declaration of the state of Emergency in 1952.

Krishan went to London (Lincoln's Inn) to study law. There he was deeply involved in the Pan-African Movement for freedom in all the colonies and particularly in South Africa. In 1959 he returned home as a barrister. He joined the Kenya National Party, which supported immediate independence for the country. In the lead up to 1963, Krishan was in the thick of the KANU efforts as campaign manager for Joseph Murumbi in the Karen Langata Constituency.

After independence, he was busy with his legal practice, and worked for the Kenya Hockey Union as Chairman and the Law Society of Kenya as Chairman (1977 - 1979). Throughout his life Krishan Gautama represented the best of Kenya. He was someone to whom there were no boundaries between human beings. In forty years of public life, no one ever heard him describe either himself or any other Kenyan in tribal, racial, or any other type of compartment terms. The

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measure he preferred to use was the democratic well-being of our country and our continent, and one's contribution to these goals. Krishan Gautama died on 5th June, 1992.

Europeans (wazungu)

Other than the ancient Greek traders who visited the Kenyan coast in ancient times and the Portuguese who established themselves in Kenya coast towns in the 16th century, European contacts with Kenya by the ancestors of the present-day Kenyan Europeans may be said to go back to 1823 when the Arab rulers of Mombasa implored the captain of the passing British survey vessel, the Barracouta, to take the town under British protection. Mombasa was being threatened with a further attack by the Imam of Muscat who had already taken Pemba. As the captain was uncertain as to the correct procedure to adopt, he waited for a few days when captain Owen, his superior, arrived at Mombasa and agreed to the Arabs' request. He left Lieutenant Reitz, a young South African, in Mombasa as resident representative. When he reported the incident, the admiralty and the foreign office hastily repudiated his temporary treaty and rebuked him for his precipitate action. As Lieutenant Reitz had already died of malarial fever by then, the matter came to an end. Port Reitz at Kilindini is named after the young man who died aged twenty two years.

In the meantime, Rev. Johann Ludwig Krapf of the Church Missionary Society (present Anglican Church) settled in Mombasa in May 1844 and was joined there by Rev. Johannes Rebmann in 1846 and thereafter by Jacob Erhardt. All these missionaries were Germans. The Church Missionary Society had been founded in 1799 as a small association of evangelical clergymen and laymen formed in England "to promote Christian missions to Africa and the East". Rev. Krapf and Rev. Rebmann established the CMS mission at Rabai. Dr. Ludwig Krapf saw mount Kenya from a far distance in 1849 during his visit to the land of the Akamba people. From the local Akamba leader named Kivoi, Krapf learned that the mountain was called "K]nyaa" (K[r]nyaga in G[k]y[]). Later the country was to take its name Kenya from this mountain.

In 1873 Sir Bartle Frere, a British civil servant, came to Zanzibar to arrange with Sultan Bargash a treaty to outlaw the slave trade. He obtained permission to establish a freed slave settlement in Mombasa. The site on the mainland just opposite Mombasa Island (Kisauni) came to be called Frere town (after his name). In 1874 CMS sent out the Rev. W.S. Price who had worked among the freed slaves at Nasik in India and the settlement opened the following year with extra staff. Other missionaries arrived thereafter to serve in the "new" East African Mission.

Eleven years before Imperial British East Africa Company came into being, Sultan Bargash of Zanzibar had offered its founder, Sir William Mackinnon of the British India shipping line, a seventy years lease of Zanzibar, Pemba and the mainland colony stretching from Kismayu to the Ruvuma river. When Mackinnon tried to secure the Imperial backing necessary for him to accept the offer, the foreign office declined to consider the proposition, which consequently lapsed. Soon after the British Government rebuffed Sir William Mckinnon, the German Emperor in 1885 granted a charter to a colonisation society and Carl Peters, the society's agent, trekked indefatigably through the interior of East Africa making treaties with native chiefs. German action forced the British hand and in 1888, a royal charter was granted to the Imperial British East Africa Company to administer and trade in all the country between Uganda and the Coast. The IBEA made treaties with native chiefs and encouraged trade between its agents and African peoples all the way to Uganda. It overextended itself and the British Government agreed in 1895

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to cancel the IBEACs' charter and assumed responsibility for the territory on the basis of direct rule through the foreign office, thereby creating the British East Africa Protectorate which became Kenya colony and Protectorate in 1920.

The government took over the structures and individual administrators of the IBEAC in the protectorate. A game of hide-and-seek between the Germans and the company had already been ended by the Anglo-German agreement of 1890, which defined the "spheres of influence" and assigned Uganda to the British zone.

The Holy Ghost fathers, from Zanzibar who were also known as Spiritans, founded stations in Mombasa in 1891 and Bura in 1892. Just one year before the turn of the century, they founded St. Austin's (Simonisdale) station in Nairobi in 1899. They were joined by the Consolata Mission from Turin in Italy in 1902. Missionaries of the Church of Scotland Mission which had left London for British East Africa arrived in Mombasa on 6 July 1891. On 18 August 1891 they left for Kibwezi where they arrived on 16 October 1891 and the first temporary Church at Kibwezi was opened by Dr. James Steward on 10 March 1892. The first school, with two pupils, was opened at Kibwezi on 28 September 1894. On 11 September 1898 Mr. Wilson, the only representative in Africa of the East African Scottish Mission, arrived in GJK[y], having left Kibwezi for good. On 28 January 1900 the church missionary society Bishop conducted the first Anglican service in Nairobi, which was then little more than a maintenance camp for the railway. The foundation stone of the first St. Stephen's Church was laid in 1903.

His Majesty's government in 1900 appointed Sir Charles Eliot the East Africa protectorate's commissioner and the headquarters were simultaneously shifted from Zanzibar to Mombasa. With the transfer of the commissioner to Mombasa, a fresh orientation was given to Kenyan affairs and Eliot became the head of the government and the progenitor of white settlement in the country.

The British Government had built 580 expensive miles (933 kilometres) of railway line, and now every train that ran along it did so at a heavy loss. Somehow the railway had to be made to pay. The British taxpayer could not go on making good the deficit for ever. The only way the railway could be made to pay was development of the hinterland. Between the GJK[y] escarpment and the lake, the country seemed potentially rich and it was here where development had to be introduced. The pastoral tribes' economy was perceived as of little value, their only products being small, badly cured and almost valueless hides. The agricultural tribes grew no crop that the world wanted. The commissioner concluded that the only hope was to fill up the empty land along the line with settlers who would turn the fertile soil to useful account by growing crops for the railway to carry and who would buy machinery and other goods for it to carry in. Elspeth Huxley has written:

Settlers must somehow be found, attracted, encouraged, started off. There was no other alternative but economic stagnation and a perpetual bleeding of the British Treasury. East Africa could be transformed from a liability into an asset only if the Government could succeed in getting a thriving white population established to add to the wealth that the world still wanted and was prepared to pay for; to feed the railway; to buy goods from Britain's factories; to provide the outlet of employment for the surplus energies of idle young tribesmen whose only occupations of raiding and fighting were being barred to them by the spread of law and order; to start the wheels of trade by employing natives and so circulating among them money with which

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they could buy imported goods and pay hut-tax; to bring capital into the country; to pay taxes; to improve now useless land by watering, draining, grazing, cultivating; to give permanence and stability to British rule in East Africa — in short, to build by their efforts a self-supporting colony.

European Settlement in Kenya

The Kenyan European community originated from agricultural settler community, government administrators, railway workers, missionaries and their foreign support workers and business operators who remained in Kenya after independence and took up Kenya citizenship. As has been seen elsewhere in this book, children born in a country where parents are recognised residents or citizens are natives of the host country and therefore automatic citizens by birth. This is the law and practice all over the world.

In an introduction to the book *Pioneers' Scrapbook, Reminiscences of Kenya 1890 to 1968*, Elspeth Huxley has described the country and people found in occupation of the country at the close of the nineteenth century and the opening of the twentieth century thus: When a British protectorate was declared in 1895, the East African interior was occupied by peoples whose way of life had changed little for centuries. Some, nomads like the Maasai, herded their hump-backed cattle over enormous plains which they shared with the greatest concourse of wild animals the world has ever seen. Others cleared areas of bush, and burned clearings in forests in order to grow their plots of beans and millet, and herd their goats. There were neither roads, nor towns; no kingdoms or principalities such as existed in [some] other parts of Africa; no carts or wagons for transport, only the backs of women or donkeys; no ploughs, only digging sticks. Skins were these people's clothing; beads or shells were their currency; herbs and spells were their medicines; the art of writing was unknown.

It is against this background and perception that the colonial authorities, European farmers and traders commenced occupation of the country towards the end of the 19th century and thereafter. The first Commissioner (Governor) of Kenya Sir Charles Eliot, in his book *the East Africa Protectorate* wrote:

We have in East Africa the rare experience of dealing with a tabula rasa, an almost untouched and sparsely inhabited country, where we can do as we will, regulate immigration, and open or close the door as seems best . . . Whatever East Africa will be in ten years' time will be the result not of circumstances or of things beyond our control, but simply of what we do now.

If we administer the government with foresight and rectitude, if we avoid crazy projects and execute the dictates of common sense without muddling, few who know the country can doubt that it will shortly be a flourishing European colony. And it will be more than this. As a European colony in equatorial Africa it will have in virtue of its position a more than national importance: its development will mean the opening of a new world and its destinies will influence a whole continent.

Lord Delamere who became the foremost leader of the white settlers in the meantime was stressing the deference between the true settler and the planter. He always stressed that the planter comes to earn a living, to make fortune if he can, and to retire as soon as he is able to some remembered corner of the British isles. "He comes to a country to exploit it for his own benefit. His children belong to England; they are not colonials."

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Elspheth Huxley in her book *White Man's Country* has written thus about the settler:

But the settler who means to live and die there is thinking of the future. He has his children to consider. When he makes the colony his home he ceases to be a mere exploiter; he becomes, for good or ill, a builder. He transfers to the country of adoption many of those loyalties and emotions which bound him before to the country of his birth. The colony becomes his; he is making it, and his descendants will inherit it. Soon a generation grows up that knows no other home, whose earliest childish experiences have been drawn from the colony alone, whose bones are of that country's earth. This generation loves the country as its own.

Among the early Europeans who came to Kenya, some attained shocking racial arrogance and notoriety in their behaviour as others settled permanently and their descendants are or have been prominent Kenyans in farming, commerce and public affairs. These individuals include Hugh Cholmondeley Lord Delamere; Lord Galbraith Cole, the Earl of Enniskillen; Reverend Harry Leakey and the Leakeys and Sir Michael Blundell. Their histories are appropriate mirror images of the origin and history of the Kenya European ethnic community which has played a major part in moulding Kenya to what it is today.

Canon Harry Leakey and the Other Leakeys

Canon Harry Leakey of the church Missionary Society arrived in Kenya in 1900 and settled at Lower Kabete where he bought eighteen acres of land from Chege wa M[thimba], the late Chief Josiah Njonjo's wife's father and opened a mission. A record appearing in the book *Pioneers' Scrapbook – Reminiscence of Kenya, 1890 to 1968* states:

In 1904 Canon Leakey took 12 boys into a Mission hut to be educated. One of them was to become Chief Josiah Njonjo, the father of our present Attorney General. Another was Paul Likimani, the first Maasai to seek education after working for Lord Delamere at Gilgil. He was the father of Dr. Jason Likimani, former Director of Medical Services.⁵

His wife Mary and baby Gladys joined him after four months of his arrival. They settled in a small mud and wattle hut which had been built by Harry's predecessor, Rev. A.W. McGregor, and it and a couple of canvas tents constituted all that there was of Kabete mission. Mary and two of her sisters had previously worked among the Moslem women and children of freed slaves on Mombasa Island in 1892. She also started a boys' school there called the Buxton High School which is now defunct. She contracted malaria fever, which nearly killed her, and she was sent back to Europe. Her doctor advised her never to return to the steamy tropics, but serving as missionaries together had always been the dream of Harry and Mary Leakey. When she arrived, Harry Leakey was then thirty-four years old, a wiry, energetic man with dark sparkling eyes, and a bushy black beard that earned him the nickname "G]teru" or the bearded One, among the Ag]k[y]. When the European settlers arrived, all the land in Nairobi and other G]k[y] settled areas, even that lying uncultivated, was owned by individual G]k[y] families, although the early colonial officials did not realize or care to know. The G]k[y] used the virgin land for grazing and browsing their livestock and parcelled out sections of it to their children when they came of age. Virginia Morell writing on the dispossession of the G]k[y] people of their land has stated:

Of all the tribes in Kenya, the Kikuyu were the most affected by the arrival of the Europeans. The Kikuyu farmed the cool central highlands that extended from the outskirts of Nairobi north and

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west to the aberdare mountains, and east to the slopes of Mount Kenya. It was and is rich agricultural land, and its gentle, misty climate reminded many of the British settlers of home. Much of the region seemed to be unfarmed bush — "good land lying uncultivated," as one settler phrased it — and in 1904 a government surveyor simply drew a line through it, dividing the inhabited from the supposedly uninhabited land. Four thousand square miles were opened up to white settlers in this first survey. Those Kikuyu who lost their property had to find new homes, either as "squatters" on European farms or in one of the three Kikuyu reserves. By the time Louis and Mary returned to Kenya in February 1937, a total of twelve thousand square miles of Kikuyu land had been appropriated by the British and sold to white settlers.

Canon Leakey who was friendly and sympathetic to his Gikuyu neighbours helped as much as he could and on this Virginia Morell has written:

The Kikuyu Association was founded under the guidance of Canon Leakey, Louis' father, after he assisted one of his mission families in a land dispute with the Government. The family of Stephen Kinuthia had lost most of their land in 1908; subsequently, in 1919, the government marked off their remaining sixty seven acres. Kinuthia then "asked Canon Leakey to write a letter from us (the Kinuthia clan) to the government saying that 240 acres of our land had been taken in 1908 and now the government was taking some more and we had nowhere to go. The letter was written . . . and it was sent to the government. They listened and the land was not taken and we all thought the power of this letter a most wonderful thing". based on this success, Canon Leakey suggested that the chiefs band together to protest other land appropriations. In 1920 the Kikuyu association was born with Chief Koinange serving as Chairman.⁷

Their son, Louise Seymour Bazett Leakey was born at the Kabete Mission on August 7, 1903. His father, after suffering from insomnia, dizzy spells, and tinnitus (a severe ringing in the ears) and troubled about their wretched living quarters, took the family home to Reading, England one year short of their full four year missionary term. As Harry intended to return to Kabete and in order to keep his Gikuyu alive and to continue his work of translating the Bible, he took with him Stefano Kinuthia, one of the Gikuyu boys he had baptized. Just before Christmas, 1906, the Leakey family returned to Kenya.

The Leakeys were great friends of Chief Koinange, and he warmly welcomed Louis and Mary to his home in 1937. He provided them with a guest hut behind his house. He then called a meeting of nearly one hundred elders from the Kambuu reserve. They gathered in the shade of a sacred fig tree (Mgumo) and Louis presented his case. There were further discussions among the elders and after a week, the elders granted his request. They also appointed a panel of nine of their senior members to act as his advisers. A three volume book — The Southern Kikuyu before 1903 — was written and later published. of all the tribes in Kenya the Gikuyu people had lost most land to the settlers. More than a million Gikuyu were confined to three overcrowded reserves and another quarter million was either without land or living as squatters on European farms. Virginia Morell has written:

For Louis the plight of the Kikuyu presented a dilemma. He had grown up among them, spoke their language, was an initiated first-grade elder, and considered them his people. "I am in so many ways a Kikuyu myself," he often said. Like his father, who had helped senior Chief Koinange and others try to regain their property, Louis sympathized with the Kikuyus' land grievances. As early as 1929, he had served as their interpreter on a government committee inquiring into the Kikuyu system of land tenure, and had done his best to persuade the colonial

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government to grant Kikuyu property owners the title deeds to their land. In his 1936 book, *Kenya: Contrasts and Problems*, Louis had further aligned himself with the tribe by asserting that Kenya would never "really be a white man's country", and advising the Europeans "to work towards co-operation (with the Africans) instead of domination". These sentiments had not endeared him to the settlers. They considered him pronative which was tantamount to being a traitor in their eyes.

Dr. Louis Leakey in his writings appealed to the government and settlers to open the "white Highlands" to the Africans, abolish the squatter system, raise African wages, and work towards a multiracial government. He called for independent Christian churches that would accept the Kikuyu customs of polygamy and female circumcision, and for changes in policies on African education, housing and agriculture. He envisioned a time when Kenya would exist as "a state of inter-racial harmony and co-operation".

Louis Leakey was appointed honorary curator of the Kenya museum in January 1941 and although the position was unsalaried, it included the use of a furnished wooden bungalow on the museum grounds. For Louis and Mary, the rambling curator's cottage under the pepper trees on the Museum Hill was a godsend. At the time, the Leakeys were living in a tiny rented house, full of dogs and artifacts, on the outskirts of Nairobi. In 1945 Gordon College in England offered Louis a full time appointment worth £1,500 a year and free housing. At about the same time, the museum trustees offered him an appointment as full time curator at an annual salary of £750 — half the sum he would have received at Gordon College, to whom he wrote to state: "It is perhaps hard on my children not to accept much better pay but scientific work must come first in my opinion." Louis Leakey also wrote to the Museum trustees thus:

While I have agreed to accept the appointment . . . I have only done so for the reasons set out in this letter and not because I consider that the terms are satisfactory or that they are commensurate with my qualifications . . . I feel it is my duty to science to remain in Kenya for the present . . .

After assuming the curatorship, Louis opened the museum for the first time to all races which previously was only for Europeans and this caused considerable outcry from the whites. The museum was the first public institution to be opened to non-whites, and the Europeans disliked the idea of viewing the exhibits side by side with Africans, who they claimed were 'smelly' or Asians, who were 'overscented'

For a while the number of white patrons dropped off, but Louis ignored this, choosing instead to welcome the Asians and Africans whose visits "increased by leaps and bounds". Within a few months' time, Europeans accepted the change, and the museum soon became one of the few public places in Nairobi where everyone could mingle freely and equally.

Jomo Kenyatta's first wife Grace Wahu had been educated by Mary Leakey, Louis' mother. When Kenyatta was preparing to leave Kenya in 1929 for his first visit to England, Louis' father, Rev. Harry Leakey, tried to dissuade him from going. He disliked Kenyatta's political radicalism and considered him a troublemaker and Louis shared his opinion. Since he was in England at the same time, he kept an eye on Kenyatta there. One day when Kenyatta was addressing a seminar on the Gikuyu custom of female circumcision at the London School of economics, Louis made a point of attending. He had also written a paper on the subject and thought that Kenyatta was

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distorting the nature of the custom for political reasons. In the end, the two men shouted at each other in Gikuyu in a discussion lost on the rest of the class.

Dr. Louis Leakey ended-up becoming a government interpreter during Kenyatta's trial at Kapenguria where, according to David Throup, he was "upto his neck in government preparation of evidence for the trial. He was an integral part of the prosecution's team". Dr. Louis Seymour Bazette Leakey died in London on 1 October, 1972 and was buried at Limuru where his parents had been buried. As his son Richard put it at that time, "Louis was a Kikuyu and they greatly admired and loved him, and it seemed to me absolutely essential that his body be brought back and buried in Kikuyu land". In his lifetime, Louis, the great son of Kenya, a natural historian, anthropologist and archaeologist achieved for himself and Kenya highest possible fame all over the world through his archaeological discoveries. He left for the G[k[y[and posterity the unparalleled legacy of the three volume book, The Southern Kikuyu before 1903. His burial was attended by many including President Kenyatta's representative Peter Mbi[Koinange.

Richard Erskine Leakey

Richard Erskine Leakey, like his father became in his adult life interested in archaeology and on his own right became a world famous paleonthropologist who made many important discoveries. From childhood, Richard impressed his mother with his toughness as is recounted by Morell:

Mary was thirty three now, trim and pretty, with her hair combed smooth across the crown, then fluffed softly around her face. Though dressed in plain, unstylish tweeds, she retained the cool, confident air of her youth. She was also a concerned and attentive mother, and although years later she would say that "babies are boring", she had been almost bewitched by Richard. He was a particularly winsome baby, with full, round cheeks, large brown eyes, and an impish smile. "I don't wonder you have fallen for your baby," Mary's Aunt Kathleen wrote to her after receiving photographs of a four months old Richard. "(H)e is perfectly sweet . . . (and) most adorable." He was also fearless, unafraid of wrestling with his older brother, or taking flying leaps from his mother's arms. She called him her "tough guy" and watched his every move with school was run on a strict colonial regime. At that time in 1956, Richard's sympathy for the Africans made him an instant social outcast. On his very first day at the Duke of York, another boy pointed him out as a "Niger lover", prompting a gang of older students to grab him. "Before I knew what had happened," Richard wrote in his autobiography, "I had been placed inside a wire cage some three cubic feet in size . . . Then the hinged lid was closed and padlocked. I was crouched like a monkey in this tiny cage, with no way of escape". Delighted with their prize, several hundred boys took turns poking him with sticks, spitting and even urinating on him until they left for the morning assembly. Richard remained huddled in his cage, "very miserable and frightened," but was eventually spotted by one of the teachers, who had to use a hacksaw to cut through the lock. "He had no doubt I was to blame" Richard wrote, "and so wet through, filthy and stinking, I began my first day of school . . . The school's many rules were further aggravation. Richard found himself caned for letting his knee socks slip to his ankles, and for missing morning chapel [a punishment that led him to decide he would never be a Christian].

At that early age, Richard was taking more interest in his own business of small scale trapping and supplying wild animals to the photographer Des Bartlett for nature films. The money paid to Richard gave him a "marvelous degree of independence" from his parents. In 1960 he dropped out of Duke of York without finishing high school when he was sixteen years old and felt that his

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independent life could begin. He told his father he was not returning to school and asked to borrow pounds 500 in order to purchase an old Land Rover; the money was provided. He continued to trap animals for Bartlett's films as well as for overseas Zoos and then started to collect animals' skeletons for sale. Finally, Richard started a safari company.

In January, 1960 Britain's colonial office declared that the colony would become independent as soon as possible with black Africans running the country, thereby limiting the role and career opportunities of the whites. In Africa, Britain had granted Ghana independence in 1957; the French were preparing to grant independence to Algeria and the French West African colonies and the Belgians would do the same to the Congo. Britain had scheduled Tanganyika for independence in 1961, Uganda in 1962 and Kenya soon thereafter.

Dr. Louis Leakey feared some type of retribution from Kenyatta. Beside the role he had played as translator at Kenyatta trial, Louis' activities as a spy and an informer against G[k]y[] nationalists during the Mau Mau Emergency had poisoned relations between him and the G[k]y[]. This was not the case with his sons and in particular, Richard whose business activities were politically neutral. Virginia Morell has written:

The issue was less problematic for his sons, who never considered leaving. "Kenya was my home and I'd always thought of myself as Kenyan," said Richard, voicing a sentiment shared by Philip and Jonathan. "It never entered our heads to leave. It was absolutely inconceivable that I couldn't have a future here because of the colour of my skin." With the money he had made trapping animals and marketing skeletons, Richard formed a safari company, first guiding members of the National Geographic Society and then other wealthy clients who thought that because of the Leakey name, they might be meeting Louis. "They were appalled to find an eighteen year old in charge," Richard said, "but by then it was too late. I had their deposit and we were off.¹⁴

Finally Richard did leave for England to complete his high school education with the intention of attending university later, about which Virginia Morell has written:

At the same time, Richard was working frantically at his studies, determined to complete his last two years of high school in six months. "I had lots of catching up to do," Richard said about this period of his life. "I was fairly impulsive, fairly insensitive. I think I could perhaps be best described as an angry young man. I didn't believe that anybody but i knew what was going on in the world. I had lots to do in a hurry."

Jonathan Harry Leakey and Philip Leakey

Richard's elder brother Jonathan Harry Erskine was born on November 4, 1940 when the Leakeys lived in a tiny rented house full of dogs and artifacts, on the outskirts of Nairobi. When Louis was appointed honoray curator of the museum, they moved into the curator's cottage on the Museum Hill. Jonathan, who finished secondary school (and who Louis hoped would pursue a career in prehistory), decided instead to live in the bush, collecting the venom of poisonous snakes (which is used to make antivenin) for a living. Jonathan became one of the world's major suppliers of snake venom for the antivenin market, and an expert on African snakes. He lives a private life in the lake Baringo area.

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Philip Leakey, the third son was born on June 21, 1949. Like his elder brother Richard he was not keen on schooling. His parents had hoped that by sending him to a secondary school in England they might change his mind which was not to be. Virginia Morell has quoted Philip saying:

Because I was a Kenyan, the British wouldn't let me into their country without a return ticket," he said. "so at the end of the first term, I just got on the plane and came home. And that really upset everybody. It was like coming into winter in Nairobi; the chill had set in our relationship. And I was given an ultimatum by my parents: either I went back to school, or I got out of their house.²⁰

In 1964, Philip who was fifteen and a half years old at the time, took a tent and moved south of Nairobi on a plot of land along the Mbagathi River. There he staked a mining claim, built a hut where his closest neighbours were nomadic Masai cattle herders. From there he roamed the country prospecting, buying and selling gem stones, living with the local people and picking up their languages and culture. He lived a life of hit or miss on which Virginia Morell has quoted him thus:

"I rushed around, all over East Africa," said Philip, "and I made money, and I didn't make money, and I made money again. And when I made it, I spent it. And I lived some of the most invigorating years of my life." Where, at the same age, Richard had been serious, anxious to be seen as an adult and given adult responsibilities, Philip was wild and carefree. His dimpled, roguish smile seemed to charm everyone, and he had an uncanny ability for blending with whoever was at hand. "that one is like a chameleon: he can be anything he wants," said Teresia Ng'ang'a, Richard's secretary at the museum. "When he is with the Kikuyu, he is just like a Kikuyu. When he is with the Maasai, he is a Maasai. Whatever he needs to be, he can be; he can change just like that," she said, snapping her fingers.

Philip charmed voters in Lang'ata constituency in Nairobi and was elected a member of parliament in 1979, after which he also charmed president Moi to appoint him an assistant minister and full minister thereafter. He became the second European full cabinet minister in independent Kenya since Bruce Mackenzie in Kenyatta's government.

Lord Delamere

He was born Hugh Cholmondeley at Vale Royal, first son of the second Baron Delamere by his second wife, Augusta Seymour. He went to school at Eton which he left before he was seventeen with the idea of entering the army. In 1891 at the age of twenty-one he first visited Somalia on a hunting trip. In 1896 Delamere left England for his first visit to Kenya through Aden, Berbera and northern Kenya. Towards the end of the first half of 1897, Delamere entered the present North Eastern Province of Kenya and passing through the Boran country, he saw and took note of the Boran cattle. Delamere also for the first time witnessed cattle raiding warfare. A large column of Samburu warriors, on the way to raid the Boran, filed past the zariba (thorn bush fence) in which Delamere's camels were guarded. Elspeth Huxley has written thus on this incident:

About 1897 an army of Samburu moran marched north to raid the Boran, whom they had never attacked before. They reached the escarpment dividing the galbo [a Gabbra group] from the Boran grazing grounds and surrounding the stock herded on the lower slopes. But disaster overtook them. Boran horsemen galloped down from the top and fell upon the invaders. The Samburu had never before encountered mounted warriors. Panic seized them, and not a single man returned alive.

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In November 1897, Delamere's caravan reached Ravine where they were received by James Martin, his Majesty's Collector (District Commissioner) of Baringo district of Uganda (Uganda protectorate boundary at that time was at Naivasha). James Martin was probably the only administrative officer who has ever been in charge of a large district who could not read or write. He was a Maltese sail-maker whose real name was Antonio Martin. Elspeth Huxley has written thus on this D.C.:

When the British Government took over the company's territory as a Protectorate two years before Delamere's arrival at Ravine, James Martin — like many of the company's employees, including such well-known provincial commissioners as Ainsworth, Hobley and Bagge — became a civil servant, rising to the rank of collector. F.J. (later Sir Frederick) Jackson, taught him to sign his name but that was the limit of his literary skill. All his letters were written for him by da Silva, a Goanese cousin. He used to disguise his inability to read by pretending to have bad sight, though it was as keen, in reality, as his native wit.

Delamere trekked across Laikipia early in 1898 to the Uaso Nyiro. From the river, he went up to Marsabit by way of Laisamis. He camped by Marsabit crater lake which the local Samburu people he made friendship with named the Delamere Njoro. (Njoro is the Samburu/Maasai word for water). He continued south to M]r[on the northern slopes of Mount Kenya. Delamere camped below the borders of their cultivation and sent Somalis (in his caravan) to buy food. The M]r[refused to speak to the messengers and summoned their warriors. Delamere went unarmed with only two of his men to the elders' village and he eventually persuaded them to come out and talk and discussions continued for three days. In the meantime, the Somalis were growing more and more impatient and longing for a fight. Delamere alternatively argued with the Somalis, who urged him to attack the M]r[, and with the M]r[, who refused to sell food to him. In the end the M]r[brought him food and allowed him to pass through their country. Even then, troubles were not over. The Somalis refused to eat the local food. They would touch nothing but rice and durrha. They became surly and rebellious when they were told to make the best of bananas. Again, Delamere had to bring his persuasive powers into action. From M]r[he passed through the G]k[y[land. When Teleki had passed through G]k[y[country ten years before, they had been reluctant to trade and had been regarded as considerably more hostile and dangerous than the Maasai. Von Hohnel talked about "the shunned and dreaded Kikuyu country." The last stage of the long journey took the caravan through Machakos and they met the advancing railway at Tsavo, then the railhead. At Mombasa he embarked on a ship for England via Aden where he paid off the Somali helpers. He arrived back in England in 1898 with a thick black beard, and his mother, who had not heard from him at all for two years, failed to recognise him on the station platform.

In July 1899 he married lady Florence Cole, a daughter of the Earl of Enniskillen. He then made arrangements to collect birds for the British Museum from East Africa and took with him his wife and a qualified taxidermist and collector. On arrival at Mombasa in October, he employed sixty Swahili porters and went up country by train. It took Delamere and his party three days to journey from Mombasa to Athi River. They remained at Athi River for one month due to the smallpox outbreak which raged in 1899 and attacked the Swahili porters. They then moved up the Athi River collecting birds and spent a week in Nairobi before moving to the railhead at the escarpment from where they sent to Britain 386 birds of 178 varieties. They then moved to Kedong and Kinangop and were in Naivasha for Christmas. From Naivasha Delamere and his wife marched to Nakuru and thence along the Molo River to Baringo. With the first experience of

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malarial fever behind him, he returned to England with his wife in May 1900 to settle down at Vale Royal. Four months later, his first born and heir, Thomas, was born. In December 1902 Delamere and his wife sailed again for Mombasa, leaving their eighteen month old son behind. They arrived in January 1903 and he led the porters to his old camp on the edge of the thick cool forest on the far side of the Nairobi river. A few days after his arrival Delamere went to call on the commissioner in his wood and iron bungalow on the hill. Sir Charles Eliot told Delamere of the difficulties of getting anyone to take any interest in his little country. He had hoped that the new land ordinance would have attracted settlers; but it had not done so. Only very few applications for land had been received. Elspeth Huxley on this has written:

Before its publication there were less than a dozen Europeans cultivating land on the edge of Kikuyu.

Paterson was growing tobacco along a creek and had some healthy three-year-old coffee trees. Dr. Atkinson, who had taken up some land at Karura, five miles outside Nairobi, had imported a shorthorn bull — this was Delamere's present — and a Berkshire boar. Macalister was raising potatoes, but he lost the whole of his first crop from a bug. A blacksmith, McQueens, had taken up land at Ngong, and Caine had settled at Limuru. Stuart Watt was combining fruit farming with missionary work at Machakos. That was about the sum total of the settlers at the end of 1902.²⁴

The land ordinance of 1902 was followed, in November, by a set of regulations to govern the disposal of land issued by the acting commissioner, Mr. F. Jackson, while Sir Charles was in England on leave. Delamere remarked in a pamphlet he published that such rules as these "made the taking up of land by men of a free race almost an impossibility. Men in the country posted these regulations all over the world as a warning to people to stop away." He further wrote thus:

After all, what did the settler buy? Water rights, rights to make roads, timber, the right of grazing for caravans, common grazing for natives, were all reserved to the crown; and all this in an area not to exceed, if a freehold, 1,000 acres, or if a homestead, 640 acres. The key of the whole situation of the difficulty of obtaining settlers was the desire of the Foreign Office to treat the country as a private estate, and settlers as small tenant farmers kept under the thumb of the Government by conditions of tenure.

Sir Charles Eliot quickly on return withdrew Jackson's harsh regulations and replaced them with some less impracticable ones. The price of free hold land was fixed at two rupees (four shillings) an acre. These more lenient rules had an immediate effect and settlers began to arrive at the beginning of 1903. By the middle of 1903 there were over one hundred settlers in the country of various nationalities and types. Around Nairobi there were men from England, Scotland, America, South Africa, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Germany and Romania. Delamere, the settlers and the 'Jewish' Proposal

In the effort to obtain settlers into Kenya, the Foreign Office started having ideas. One of them was to establish a colony of Finns which did not take off. The other was to hand over a large part of the country to Russian and Polish Jews.

The idea originated in the first place not among the Jews but from Joseph Chamberlain who had always been sympathetic towards the Zionist movement and who was the colonial secretary. As

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the Sultan of Turkey was not ready to allow Jewish home rule in Palestine, a section of the Zionists, led by Dr. Herzl felt attracted to the alternative of finding temporary sanctuary while deferring the return to Zion rather than the Russian and Polish Jews continuing to endure indefinitely the squalor of ghetto life and periodic persecutions. In Dr. Herzl's words, there was a need to obtain an antechamber to the Holy land, a place of apprenticeship that would serve to fit the Russian Jews to enter later into their inheritance — for an equivalent to the wilderness in which the followers of Moses spent forty years preparatory to the settlement in the land of Canaan.

Joseph Chamberlain visited Kenya in 1902 and on his return to England, a definite offer was made, at his instigation, to the Zionist leader by the British Government. It comprised the free grant of about 5,000 square miles or 3,200,000 acres probably on the Mau Range, full-self government with a Jewish governor, and guarantee of complete freedom to establish and practise Jewish customs and religion under British Government protection. The offer was laid by Dr. Herzl before the Zionist Congress at Basle in August 1903 and was accepted by 595 to 177 votes of the delegates. As the following report shows, opposition was intense and bitter:

"This simple proposition," Mr. Zangwill, another Zionist leader, reported, "produced passionate speeches . . . after a tense hour of voting, in which each delegates' `yes' or `no' sounded like the hammer strokes of destiny forging the future of the Jewish people. The proposal was accepted by 595 to 177 and the minority, mostly Russians, left the congress . . . curiously imagining that they had been robbed of Palestine, which they had never possessed. Some of the Russians burst into hysterical tears, wrung their hands, and even rolled on the floor. Women fainted, wept and wailed that now was their Tisha-bear, and he [Mr. Zangwill] was surrounded by a sobbing crowd begging comfort".

In Nairobi the proposal was resolutely opposed. To settlers whose title deeds had been delayed a year or more, to others who were told that they must wait indefinitely even for an occupation licence while some doubt about native rights was being investigated, to all who had to pay for or to rent their farm, it seemed a little hard that the very land they were anxious but unable to occupy and a great deal more that had not even been opened up by Government but which was ideally suited to white settlement should be suddenly handed over, free and in toto, to Jews from the ghettos of Russian and Polish cities.

An angry public meeting of settlers was held in Nairobi and a committee under the chairmanship of Lord Delamere was elected to combat the proposal. A resolution of protest was passed and cabled to the foreign office. Delamere on his own also took immediate action by sending a cable to the Times newspapers written as follows:

August 28th, 1903

NAIROBI.

Feeling here very strong against introduction of alien Jews. Railway frontage fit for British colonization 260 miles. Foreign office proposes give 200 miles best to undesirable aliens. Is it for this expensive railway has been built and large sums spent on country? Flood of people of that class sure to lead to trouble with half-tamed natives jealous of their rights. Means extra staff to control them.

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Is British taxpayer, proprietor of East Africa, content that beautiful and valuable country be handed over to aliens? Have we no colonists of our own race? Country being settled slowly surely by desirable British colonial settlers. Englishmen here appeal public opinion, especially those who know this country, against this arbitrary proceeding and consequent swamping bright future of country.

Publication of Delamere's cable aroused strong public interest in the matter and heated controversy ensued as follows:

"A British Lord has cabled a protest and dogs are barking in the manger at Mombasa", Mr. Zangwill cried. But Lord Delamere should know that the Zionists are not going as undesirable aliens, but as the most desirable working population on the face of the earth.

Several Jews supported the colonists' protest as the matter continued to raise antagonism towards the project. The world Jewry split into two parties — the East Africans and the true Zionists. The chief of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews of England issued a manifesto denouncing the scheme. The Russian Zionists decided to ignore the commission which was to be sent to East Africa. The funds of the Zionist congress were not allowed to be drawn on, and the expenses of the commission were paid mainly by an American. Dr. Herzl died — largely, it was said, as a result of the stormy meeting at Basle and distress caused by the reception of the scheme he had sponsored. Sir Charles Eliot suggested the Uas Nkishu plateau, including Trans Nzoia, as a suitable location for the Jewish settlement. In a dispatch, he wrote the following:

It is [he wrote in a dispatch] practically uninhabited owing to tribal wars and not to any defect. The position is sufficiently isolated to protect the Jews from any hostile demonstrations of other races and to admit the free existence of whatever autonomy is given them . . .

A three men Jewish East African commission arrived in Kenya in November, 1904 to view the offered site and was escorted to the Uas Nkishu by an officer sent out with them by the Foreign Office and a couple of settlers. The commissioners, who were not used to walking, nevertheless trekked from Londiani railway station, climbing the escarpment on foot and suffered feet blisters. The next day they walked into a part of the New Zion where they encountered a column of Maasai. Elspeth Huxley has written:

They were dressed in full war kit, with tall ostrich-feather plumes waving in the wind above their curiously painted faces, barbaric anklets of black and white colobus monkey fur, bare limbs glistening with castor oil and red ochre, and naked-blades glittering in the sun. The moran surrounded the party with every demonstration of ferocity, brandishing their spears and long narrow shields painted with heathenish emblems, and shouting hideous war-cries.

The settlers reasoned with them and they drew off, but only to perform a war-dance. As the rhythm quickened their gestures grew fiercer and their faces became distorted with apparent rage. The commissioners gazed with distaste on this savage medley of red, fat smeared whirling limbs, demented ostrich plumes and flashing spears. Finally, the Maasai retreated, but a double guard was placed round the camp that evening and the settlers took it in turn to sit up all night with a rifle over their knees. There was little sleep in the camp that night either.

Although the Maasai did not attack at night, the lions were grunting outside the rings of fire around the tents, and next morning the commissioners were shown paw-marks approaching

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very close to the tents in which they had slept. The Jews were also told the story of the man-eaters of Tsavo for effect by the settlers. The commission remained there for about three days and returned to England and reported the district to be unsuitable for the settlement of fugitives from Russia and Poland. In August 1905 the Kenyan commission reported to the Zionist congress at Basle and the offer of the British Government was, "with sincere thanks," rejected. They preferred "to continue to risk massacre and mutilation rather than to endanger the attainment of their ideal by permitting the movement to be shunted into a siding. Zion, and Zion alone, was their goal.

Delamere's Leadership

It is now (in the year 2005) a hundred and one years since Delamere took up land in the highlands of Kenya and became one of the earliest settlers, and the most remarkable, both in the scale of his enterprise and the vigour of his personality. In recognition of his unique contribution, Elspeth Huxley has written:

This orientation of Delamere's ideas had a far reaching effect on East Africa's colonization [read Kenya]. It is difficult, probably impossible, to say how much the development of white settlement was influenced by Delamere. He did not originate the experiment — the Government did that; he was not even the first settler. But he was the first man to put into practice the conception of East Africa as a colony for genuine settlers instead of for planters cast in the mould of Australia instead of Ceylon — in short, again, a white man's country.

Only a man like Delamere with an exceptionally strong personality and magnetism of leadership could coerce a homogeneous settler front as he did for nearly thirty years. He stepped naturally into the position of leadership. His standing was such that he could meet Governors on equal terms and they could hardly refuse to listen to him. There was prestige attached to being a peer. He was autocratic, truculent and determined, and sure enough of himself to ignore other people's claims to deference. He believed in individualism, private enterprise and the survival of the fittest, tenets of the system into which he was born. In settlers' opinion, he was the man best suited to deal with the more autocratic among the Government officials. He had a quick intelligence and the brain of the debater, which seizes points in a flash and uses them to its own advantage. As a member of the House of Lords, he could gain access to the secretary of state. Delamere assumed the leadership of the settlers when he became the first president of the farmers' and planters' Association formed with twenty three members in January 1903. until the formation of the first legislative council in 1907, the colonist Association was the only voice for settlers' opinion. These related to land, stock thefts, railway policy and labour. After the Governor Sir Donald Steward, died in office suddenly from pneumonia aggravated by alcoholism, Colonel Hayes Sadler, the Governor of Uganda, was appointed to fill the vacancy. On taking the office he announced the formation of a legislative council with six official and two unofficial members nominated by the Governor. The opening meeting was held on August 16th, 1907. The council's first business was to pass a formal bill abolishing the legal status of slavery in the coastal strip leased from the Sultan of Zanzibar. The council had only been in existence for four months when Delamere submitted his resignation, the first of many. One of the reasons was to force the Government to bring down government expenditure commensurate with the revenue as well as to force the Native Affairs department to increase labour supply to settler farms among other issues. Lord Delamere said it was wrong for young men to "loaf about in red paint watching their women work" while coffee was literally blackening on the trees for lack of hands to pick it, and while farmers could not break new land because men could not be found to clear the bush.

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Delamere's Personality

One day Lord Delamere was travelling up country from Mombasa on the same train as a senior and important official. He woke up in the morning to find the train shunted on to a siding and deserted in the middle of the veld. He was told the senior official wanted to shoot a lion and together with the Indian driver had gone some distance away to look for one. Delamere lost his temper. He walked up and down the siding cursing all officials and their ways. As the morning dragged on and the heat became unbearable in the stuffy coach, he became more and more enraged at the arrogance of the official. In anger he asked whether any of the natives knew how to drive a locomotive. One of the firemen said that he had never actually done so, but had often watched from the foot plate and knew all about it. Elspeth Huxley has written:

"All right," Delamere said, "get up and drive the train to Nairobi." The native was doubtful about the propriety of this. But it was the very early days, when anything a white man said was looked upon as an order, regardless of who he was. The fireman eventually agreed and climbed on to the foot plate. Others were enlisted as stokes. The engine got up steam, backed on to the main line and pulled out for Nairobi. It arrived in safety, leaving the senior official stranded down the line until he was rescued by a special train on the following day.

In accordance with the thinking of his times, Delamere's views on the native question were far liberal. He believed in "absolute justice" in punishment of Europeans for offences against natives and treatment of the native population in a "just and liberal manner", but by 1905, what was known as native rights had been but little recognised. Delamere's opinions were even heretical. In his views on the native question he was in advance of his time. An extract from a letter he wrote to the president of the colonist association Mr. Frank Watkins reads:

Of course no two people agree as to the best method of settling the native question. I have always strongly held the belief that a strong hand on the Government's part combined with absolute justice for the native is the best method. When I say justice I mean in a case between black and black or between white and black. I cannot myself subscribe to the belief that it is bad for a white man to be punished if he breaks the law in this country any more than at home, nor do I believe that it is bad for the native.

I quite agree the Indian penal code was made for a conquered race and is unfitted for white men, but a country to do any good must help its Government to uphold the laws. No country can afford to uphold tampering with justice.

Lord Delamere and Sir Charles Eliot held that the inherent sense of justice of "our own people" meaning the tradition of justice among men and women of the British race was the greatest, and ultimately the only safeguard for the native peoples. After Eliot's resignation the policy of creating a Maasai reserve was accepted by Lord Lonsdowne and Eliot's policy of interspersion abandoned for ever. Elspeth Huxley has written:

The Maasai question was one important issue on which Delamere disagreed with the commissioner. As a rule he opposed the rigid segregation of natives and Europeans. He believed that close contact between the two races was ultimately the only way to civilise the African. He used to refer to the relegation of natives to reserves as the "zoological gardens policy". It was not good, he held, trying to shelter them from the force of progress and change that were sweeping

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over the world, keeping them away from the march of civilisation so that only the distant echo of hurrying footsteps reached their ears.

The third Baron Lord Delamere died in 1931. He had sold all his property in England and invested in Kenya where he ran into trouble with banks over huge loans which he was unable to repay. By the time he died, he had spent all his money and owed the National Bank of India (now Kenya Commercial Bank) sterling £ 500,000 or Kshs. 64,000,865 at the current rate of Kshs. 129.73 (2005). His estates remained under receivership until 1951 when the bank managed to recover the capital it had loaned Lord Delamere.

In 1951, the bank sent a telegram to his son Lord Thomas Pitt Hamilton Cholmondely Delamere (the fourth Baron) in London where he had long returned after differing with his father. The telegram read: "in view of your father's services to Kenya we have pleasure in remitting you the interest." The fourth Baron Lord Delamere returned to Kenya upon receiving the telegram and borrowed sterling £ 100,000 which he used to develop the Ol Pajeta ranch. He later sold Ol Pajeta and developed the 2,000-acre Manera farm in Naivasha and the Soysambu ranch in Elmenteita. Lord Delamere the Fourth Baron's son, Hugh George Cholmondeley Delamere, attended Magdalene College in Cambridge where he obtained a Master of Arts degree in agriculture in 1955. On returning to Kenya, he was employed at Ndabibi Farm in Naivasha as his father could not accept to let him work in their farm as he wanted him to gain experience elsewhere because he did not want him to become spoilt. He left Ndabibi Farm for Solio Ranch owned by Lord David Cole where he was employed as farm manager, looking after thousands of sheep and beef cattle, before finally joining his father's farm. When Kenya attained independence, Hugh was employed by the government as a settlement officer in charge of Kinangop area where more than 24,000 Kenya Africans were being settled. His duties included teaching modern farming. He has written:

I had a difficult time convincing the African farmers to plant potatoes using fertilizers. By then there was a myth that European farmers had few children as they fed on potatoes which were planted using fertilizers. However, the Kenyan farmers changed their mind after they saw a local British farmer who had eight children and yet he was using fertilizer to plant his potatoes.

Since Kenya law so far does not recognise dual citizenship, Hugh who was born in London renounced British citizenship in 1964 and became a Kenyan citizen, forfeiting the privilege of participating in debates in the prestigious House of Lords in London. When his father died in 1979, he inherited the Delamere Estates and lives in Soysambu. Hugh who is married to Lady Ann, a daughter of the late Sir Patrick Renison, the second last governor in Kenya. They married on April 11, 1964. She was born in 1938 in Sri Lanka where her father worked. They have a son, Tom Cholmondely Delamere who assists in running the family business. Tom's wife, Dr. Sally Chomondeley, heads a health unit that serves workers within the 50,000 acre Soysambu Ranch. The couple has two children — Hugh and Henry. Hugh and his son have developed Manera Farm where they have more than one thousand Holstein dairy cattle which produce 4,000 litres of milk a day which is processed at their plant in the farm. This milk together with its by-products is sold in Nairobi and other parts of the country. They have installed on the farm the Central Pivot Irrigation system, the latest technology which uses little water. They use power to irrigate about 800 acres from 12 boreholes and the cost of electricity is overwhelming. He blames corruption and bad governance in the past for the collapse of both the Kenya co-operative

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creameries (KCC), which his grandfather helped to establish in the 1920s, and the Kenya Farmers Association (KFA). He has lamented:

If you want to run a shop you must get a good shopkeeper to do it and if you want a good parliament you must get good politicians. Kenya had a wonderful economy but it took 10 years to pull down what had taken more than 20 years of hard work to build. It will now take us another 20 years to rebuild all the institutions that have been destroyed.

Seven years ago, Hugh and Lady Ann donated 20 hectares on Soysambu Farm for the establishment of the Lady Delamere Girls Secondary School at Mbaruk, Nakuru. The couple donated one dairy cow for teaching purposes to the school, built with British assistance through their patronage. The first batch of students sat the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination in year 2000.

Michael Blundell

Michael Blundell was born in England in 1907 and attended Wellington College from where he qualified for admission to Magdalene College at Oxford to study law. The headmaster of his college announced that he had an interesting opening for a boy in Kenya to work as an assistant to an old wellingtonian there and learn farming. About the same time he had attended the empire exhibition at Wembley and saw at the Kenya pavilion large photographs of the great rolling plains and mountains, the immense variety of wildlife, the pictures of the African people with their spears, drums and humped cattle which seized his imagination and he decided to go. One afternoon, walking up the village street with his father, he told him, he wanted to go to Africa. His father, who had planned a legal career for him, stopped, looked at him disappointingly and said, "Well, my son, you shall go."

Equipped with two tin trunks, a shot-gun and £ 100, in October 1925 he set out for Africa in the British India company's ship Matiana. Twenty-five days later he arrived at Kilindini port, Mombasa. The £ 100 he was given had to last him for one year as he was not to receive any salary for a full year. At Eldoret he was met by his future employer, captain Tim Brodhurst Hill also known as Bronco Bill. After what he calls a hurried meal, he was taken down a badly paved road to a hut "built of mud and wattle, hexagonal in shape with rough earth walls. A centre pole that held up the rafters and poked a hole in the poorly thatched loose grass roof through which the rain fell." Michael Blundell has described the house thus:

The two windows were square holes in the wall covered with large mesh chicken wire. The rough door made of tongued and grooved box timber had no hinges, only fencing wire wound it, top and bottom, and threaded through holes in the doorposts. The bed was a frame of four by three-inch cedar wood through which were laced rawhide ropes that supported a flimsy mattress. The floor was rough beaten earth, infested with jiggers and fleas. The only furniture was a rickety chair costing three shillings and made of withies, and four petrol boxes nailed together and covered with an old piece of curtain, the whole masquerading as a chest of drawers.

Blundell says the farm was more than 5,000 acres and he was told to ride around it to "drive off any poor Africans who were using a traditional footpath as a short cut." Bronco Bill never understood African ways and customs. He would shout at them when they failed to greet him on a walk or ride, oblivious of the fact that it is good manners for the older or senior person to make the first greetings. In the farm were four Maasai families who between them owned more than

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800 head of cattle. Bronco Bill did not like the Maasai and called them lazy and indolent, but could not understand that they had their own proud customs and traditions. The farm practised monoculture and maize was the only crop as coffee and wheat did not suit the area and dairy cattle were killed off by East Coast Fever and other diseases. At that time, the majority of the settlers had simple grass roofed huts often joined together with small connecting verandahs. Furnishing was simple and animal skins were used on the floor instead of rugs. Blundell has written:

No one walked in the house barefoot as jiggers and fleas were everywhere. The jigger was a horrible flea-like creature, which burrowed into and fed on one's toe or any other part of the human anatomy. I always knew when a jigger had gone for me because of the intense itching. The form then was to get a needle, sterilize it and an African who knew more about them than we did would pick out the little bag in which the jigger lurked and destroy it. It was quite a painful process. At that time young girls could be seen who had part of their budding breasts eaten away and it was quite common to see men with half a toe gone. This was largely because after initial itching the jigger flourished without much irritation, and as Africans did not wear boots or shoes, the skins of their feet was tough and thick and hygiene had not reached the standards of today.

Michael Blundell's Leadership

When war was declared, Kenya already had a registration system by which individuals were directed to the services or into non-military jobs according to the demands of the war at that particular time. At 32 years old, Blundell was rather old for the immediate military intakes and was ordered to continue farming and to manage several other farms in the district whose owners had been taken into the army. However, in January 1940 he was ordered to report immediately to the General Officer commanding East African Forces in Nairobi and he travelled to Nairobi the same day. Next day he saw GOC (General Officer Commanding) and was told that a battalion had mutinied in the Northern Frontier District, that the situation was still very unsettled and that he should assume command of this battalion. To give him some idea of what command of a battalion was like, he served four weeks with the 1st Battalion, King's African Rifles, before he was sent to go and command the mutinous battalion. This transformation of Blundell from a farmer to a soldier happened upon a recommendation made by Joss Errol (of the white Mischief fame) who had met him previously. At that time Errol was a personal assistant to Lord Francis Scott, the military secretary at command Headquarters. When the appointment of a new commanding officer for the battalion was discussed he is reported to have said: "There's a fellow called Blundell up at Solai near Nakuru who speaks their language, he'll probably be able to settle them." Blundell went to the 1st KAR with the rank of Major.

I found this sudden translation to high rank embarrassing especially when young farmer friends saluted me and when I had to shout out battalion orders. On one occasion when we were returning from a long training exercise and marching into Battalion H.Q., I was leading with the adjutant, a good friend of mine, Richard Miers of the South Wales Borderers. He had encouraged and helped me, and as the guard turned out, a group of my old farmer neighbours who were now in the army but in junior positions shouted out in great glee, "Look at old Mike, how are you Michael" and so on. The adjutant turned on them in fury and said, "Where are your salutes, gentlemen?" at which they rather sheepishly saluted. While I wished the ground would swallow me up.

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As soon as Major Blundell had taken over the command of the Battalion at Garba Tula, he realised why the men were so disgruntled. They had all been recruited in Luo Nyanza by the Provincial commissioner and had joined the forces as a would-be fighting force. Instead, they had been poorly equipped in a forward area, many had no rifles and their officers treated them as labourers and not as soldiers. Worst of all they were distinguished from combatant troops by a ridiculous-looking hat with a flap down the back. A major cause of discontent was the fact that all the men's family remittances to their homes had vanished. Blundell has written:

The reason for all this lay at the feet of the adjutant, an insouciant irresponsible figure with a wonderful trim "de rezke" military moustache and a fondness for parties. Often he failed to appear on parade on grounds of ill-health. When I visited him he would complain of having eaten a bad prawn (in semi-arid desert around us), but after the first two occasions of prawn poisoning, I realized the whisky bottle loomed too large in his life. Despite several courts of inquiry and much correspondence with H.Q. in Nairobi, I never got to the bottom of the loss of the men's money and mess funds. In the end I refunded it all from my own pocket and the adjutant left us.

As a result of the mutiny the vital link between officers and men had been broken and in the next six months Blundell managed to re-establish that. His new officers were a wonderful lot as they were elderly and keen to work. "Through regular 'square bashing', meticulous attention to drill, strict discipline and the adoption of an infantry atmosphere, the morale of the men was greatly improved," he has recounted. His first hit of luck came when his brigade commander visited the Battalion to see how it was getting on. Blundell told the brigade commander that his troops must have slouch Australian bush type hats like the KAR. There and then the Brigadier contacted the head of ordinance in Nairobi and instructed him to send immediately a thousand hats. They duly arrived together with more rifles which he had also pressed the Brigadier on. When all these had arrived, the men put on the hats, took the rifles and morale rose high. In the meantime, Blundell had come to the conclusion that real worthwhile discipline could not be imposed on men; it must grow out of them as a natural wish to serve and accept.

Uphill Climb

In 1938 Michael Blundell had been elected as one of the members representing the Western Kenya Coffee areas, to the coffee Board of Kenya, from which he resigned when he was called up for service in the Army. His support for the change from monoculture to mixed farming had brought him in contact with farms and settlers over a wider area than the Solai Valley. This and his unusual army career in a way propelled him into politics. The member of the legislative council in 1947 for the Rift Valley, was Walter Trench, a Molo farmer. He asked him to represent the constituency as a nominated member for six months while he was away on leave in Ireland. In 1948, Trench who didn't wish to stand again for election to the legislative council asked him to seek election instead of him. Blundell asked for advice from a neighbour, Major H.F. Ward, a successful businessman (known widely as Freddy Froud) as to what he should say in his election campaign. He replied, "All you need say is that you support the sanctity of the white highlands, the communal roll and separate education for each race and you will be elected." On polling day while visiting the polling stations near Elementeita, he has written:

I came upon a car broken down with a South African family of five in it. Their name was Death which seemed very appropriate in the light of what happened later.

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I asked them whether I could help and they requested a lift to the polling station as their car had packed in. In due course we reached the polling station and all five trooped in and voted. I heard afterwards from one of my organizers that they had all voted against me on the ground that I "drink tea with Africans."

The younger settlers who had fought in the war alongside Africans had an entirely different outlook on African political advance and on Africans generally from those who had remained behind and were still cocooned in the old colonial prejudices. Those who had been in the war saw the African as an individual with whom they had shared much hardship, and above all much comradeship. The colonial relationship between governors and a subject race had been eroded. The change in European attitudes, which at first was almost imperceptible, was matched by the changes taking place in the minds of the African people due to the impact of the war on the soldiers who had fought in Africa and overseas. Blundell has written:

This change is clearly shown in a letter which I censored from an askari [soldier] in south East Asia in which he wrote, "long hair has stolen my country away," and in a speech by President Julius Nyerere in his early political days when he indicated that "long thin nose" should not govern his country.

Apart from the changes which participation in the war by both Europeans and Africans brought about, Blundell says that Kenya experienced exceptional economic and agricultural development after the war. Industry expanded and farming production in European areas was intensified. He has written:

This in itself put intense pressure on the African people, particularly the Gikuyu, and precipitated the open conflict with the colonial Government known as the Mau Mau movement, which led to the declaration of an emergency in 1952. In 1956, with the arrival of the first African Elected Members representing the wishes of all the African people, the seeds of manhood which the war had sown in the minds of the askaris [soldier's] and which had been disseminated almost universally throughout Kenya, sprang into vigorous growth and begot the dynamic force of African Nationalism. Apart from the view of the British Government almost the first of these strands leading to independence was the outbreak of the Mau Mau movement.

Blundell in his book considers that after more than thirty years of independence, it is possible to look at the causes of the terrible events of the Mau Mau war much more dispassionately and unemotionally than in the early days of independence and has written thus:

The Gikuyu are an exceptionally gifted people, industrious and intelligent, with a great sense of fairness and a wonderful commercial and financial acumen. In the early days of the British administration the one security available to them was land, and the ability to own land or to have the use of it was a major factor in their lives. Originally they had met this need for security by advancing to Thika and then to Kiambu areas largely covered by forest which they cut out and in which they secured their small plantations.

With the coming of the British administration, Blundell has written, boundaries were circumscribed with reservations of forest and the water catchment areas and mountains for national needs. About 12,000 square mile of prime land were alienated to Europeans which rightly belonged to the Agikuyu. In the Rift Valley were carved large farms for the new European settlers whose farming, it was hoped, would make the recently built Uganda railway a paying

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proposition. 100,000 acres went to the 3rd Baron Delamere at Njoro, nearly 200,000 acres to Pawys Cobb at Molo and Mau Narok, 500 square miles to the E.A. syndicate at Gilgil including innumerable ten to twenty thousand acre blocks in the Rift Valley itself from Mount Margaret and on the Kinangop through Gilgil to Solai near Nakuru.

The Agikuyu who were hard-pressed for land in Central Province in exchange for part-time employment were allowed to cultivate or graze considerable acreages of land in the European farms. This symbiotic system continued to the onset of the second world war. All this suddenly changed after the war from 1916 onwards. The European farming community, alarmed by their isolation as an enclave amongst increasing numbers of Africans, sought safety in closer settlement. Farms were broken up, surveyed and new settlers poured in upon the land. To quote Blundell again:

The colonial Government in pursuit of what was known as the Dual Mandate encouraged the process and provided the finance for closer settlement schemes. In this process the old Gikuyu families were pinched and squeezed. Owing to the sub-divisions their extensive acres were not reduced to tiny holdings of one to one and a half acres, nor were their wages increased commensurately. With all this new development the dairy and animal industry made a major contribution to the incoming small-scale European farmers. The right of African resident workers to hold stock was first greatly reduced and then eliminated, on the grounds that badly tended livestock and illicit movement brought the danger of disease to well-managed high quality dairy herds and flocks of sheep. Without realizing it at the time, this widespread effort to increase the numbers of European farmers destroyed the very basis on which the lives of the Rift Valley Gikuyu settlers were based. The issue among European farmers became an intense, almost fiery one. I remember arguing fiercely with an extremist woman farmer near Nyahururu who wanted all the resident forest Gikuyu workers reduced in their acreages so that her workers would not be attracted to work elsewhere. I asked her why everyone should be reduced to the lowest economic common denominator, but she was obsessed with the ideas of reducing land cultivated by Gikuyu in what was considered an area of the White Highlands. The resentment and economic pressures which these events created among the Gikuyu farm workers sowed the seeds which led to Mau Mau.⁷⁸ Blundell has also written about repressed economic and social aspirations as contributing to the revolt by the Agikuyu:

Of all the African peoples of Kenya they were first to realise the benefit of education, sensing that what appeared to be the superiority of the white man in every sphere was largely a matter of education. As a result of 50 years of British administration, an elitist educated class had arisen who naturally wished to take part in the administration and commerce of their country.

For various reasons the administration in the provinces was enormously increased and new educated Africans were excluded and were often called agitators while the maladministration and exclusiveness of the colonial chiefs continued. Thus like in the Rift Valley, in Gikuyu reserves, the seeds of Mau Mau found fertile soil to grow. Blundell has further written:

The Gikuyu, as I have written, are an extremely able people and at that time had a head start in education and commercial expertise over many other areas in Kenya but here again their natural wish to advance tended to be stultified. In Nairobi and other towns many new small European businesses started up. The older long-established commercial concerns grew in size as the economy of Kenya developed and more Europeans and Asians were employed. Owing to the

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racial structure of the salary scales, top levels for Europeans, middle grades for Asians and the lowest for Africans, the new embryonic Gikuyu businessmen and degree-holders became convinced that the very economic heart of their country was denied to them. Thus the discontent of the Rift Valley and Central Province seeped into the shops, the shanty towns and the lower levels of Government service in Nairobi.

Sir Michael Blundel has written about the contrast between typical happy Agikuyu people at the opening of the 20th century, when colonial administrators and white settlers were arriving and settling in the country, and the harshness of the Mau Mau revolt as witnessed by one of the leading whitesettler, Colonel Ewart S. Grogan:

In 1902 Ewart S. Grogan, one of the great pioneers of East Africa, was camped in the forest and bush of what is now the elite residential estate of Nairobi, Muthaiga gossiping and laughing, often singing gaily, Gikuyu warriors and young women passed by his tent offering him vegetables, fruits and beans on their way to the markets closer to the new town of Nairobi. The men carried spears and shields, rough brown cloth thrown over their shoulders, and when the weather was cold and damp, the older ones wore robes made of sykes' monkey skins. Round their waists were beaded belts from which hung a small snuff box made of goat's horn and the traditional long-bladed simi or sword. their hair was intricately plaited and covered in clay of a red ochre colour and on the ankles of the young warriors were small bells which jingled as they walked. The women were clothed in folds of heavy goat or sheepskin leather. Massive earrings, made of small red and blue beads through which thin wire had been threaded, adorned their ears. At the height of the emergency rather more than 50 years later, Grogan in a speech in the Legislative council, the tears springing from his eyes, recalled those happy laughing scenes, the pleasantness and friendliness of the Gikuyu and contrasted this early memory with the ruthlessness and indiscriminate slaughter of the panga and the garrotting rope of the emergency period.

These were the same people who in response to economic and political oppression by unjust and unfeeling colonial rulers took up arms and resorted to violence to change and improve their lot and liberate their country. Blundell in full sympathy with them, albeit belatedly has written:

When a people who feel their whole security and the possibility of advance and fulfillment in a rapidly changing world is endangered, and who realize that change by evolution is almost impossible, take to the arbitrary action of the grenade and firearm, arson or explosives, or in the case of Mau Mau, the swift glint of the panga, they are castigated as terrorists. We should, however, ask ourselves how else, if political and economic advance is denied to them, can they demonstrate their feelings? The challenge of panga forced changes in the thinking people in Kenya. The extremists, both black and white, remained in entrenched opposition to each other but many others realized that co-operation between the races was essential and in many ways their interdependence was underlined.

The Wind of Change

The arrival of Macmillan as Prime Minister was a major factor which influenced the British Government in deciding to rid itself of colonial responsibilities, a significant change which took place in the thinking of the Tory Party. The old patrician rulers were largely replaced by members of the new egalitarian society of Britain with middle and lower class backgrounds and

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from humble families. These new leaders had no great affection for empire building and its worries.

Upto the time of the Lari Massacre, Michael Blundell says, the British people and world opinion on the whole were sympathetic to Agikuyu activities which were perceived as oppressed colonial subjects fighting for liberation. The massacre set in motion a resistance movement organised and armed by the Government of Home Guards and Loyalists. This group, also called "Christian Kikuyu", believed independence could be achieved by evolutionary and constitutional means rather than revolution and warfare. The Lari Maasacre brought the difference between Mau Mau and Loyalist positions into sharp focus as the colonial Government used the Massacre for anti-Mau Mau propaganda to maximum benefit. Basically the massacre was directed against the local chief who had, in the eyes of the Ag[k[y] supporters of Mau Mau, allied himself too closely with the colonial rulers and in the process created much wealth for himself, owning 1,000 acres of land and more than ten wives. In the course of the massacre, a whole village was razed to the ground, with more than 100 people killed and 26 severely cut and slashed with pangas, all in the space of one and a half hours. Chief Luka Kahangara, had been summoned before the local Mau Mau committee to answer charges of collaborations with whites against less fortunate African people but he refused to appear. East African Standard reported his fourth wife, Rachael Wanjir[and his sixth wife M[thoni as saying among other things what took place before the attack commenced thus:

Then in the afternoon 3000 freedom fighters met in the forest and recited the oath of unity. The crowd raised their faces towards Mount Kenya, saying:

Leader: Let us swear that . . .

Crowd: . . . Those who conducted the case of Jomo Kenyatta, those who stood up to be counted and bear witnesses against our beloved leader, those who abettend the white man put handcuffs on him . . . they shall be destroyed. (Raising swords to the air and making chopping gestures)

Leader: We swear that . . . We shall never slow down or sleep.

Crowd: . . . We shall never slow down or sleep or rest, day or night, from dawn to dusk until we catch them and until we tie their hands with sinews taken from their own ribs. Leader: Let us swear that . . .

Crowd . . . Those among us who have left our ways . . . Those who assist the whiteman hunt us down as we fight for our land . . . those who stand as obstacles to our fight for freedom . . . shall be destroyed.

Leader: We shall destroy them . . .!

Crowd: They shall be destroyed, they shall be destroyed . . . and they shall be destroyed . . . and they shall be put to death as they enjoy sleep in comfort of protection beside the bosom of the colonialist with their spouses and descendants of that bad blood.

Leader: Those who gave and sold our land . . .

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Crowd: Land that was ours from ago and ago [from long ago]. We shall castrate them, gouge their eyes out, hold them out for seven nights and days, cut them on the hands and legs with our own two hands . . . drink their blood . . . cut their hands off . . . and let us wait and see if the Whiteman will raise them from the dead.

Leader: We reject them . . .

Crowd: . . . and may this soil reject them like they rejected their own blood and sold it to the whites as slaves for money . . .

By 11.45 pm of the same day, Chief Luka Kahangara was under arrest of the Mau Mau freedom fighters and was executed by being cut into pieces one after the other, thereby fulfilling the oath undertaken earlier. By March 1954 there were about 16,000 freedom fighters in the forests of Kenya and by October 1955 there were about 3,000. At independence, achieved under the leadership of Jomo Kenyatta, there were only a few hundreds in the M]r[forest. Blundell has written as follows:

The forest fighters were courageous, tenacious and suffered immense hardships for the cause they believed in. the whole movement was at first well-organised, had the benefit of several years of secret planning and was divided into the active wing of the forests and the passive wing in the towns and villages which supplied information, recruits, supplies and firepower. On occasions great successes were achieved such as the attack on the Naivasha Police Station where the authorities were taken by surprise and guns and ammunitions captured by the attackers. It is, however, a mystery why the movement did not disrupt the activities of government on a much wider and more serious scale, through the use of arson and the destruction of the railway line and telecommunications at vital points. Never once were guerilla tactics of this order used, and though separate areas such as the aberdare Mountains and Mount Kenya had good local command structures, overall direction on a countrywide scale was weak and gradually faded away.

Sir Michael Blundel who was very active on the side of the colonial Government of Kenya in supressing Mau Mau says that field officers and those in the secretariat (housed in the present old Jogoo House) were almost unanimous in judging that Jomo Kenyatta was the main fount and inspiration of the Mau Mau movemement. He was in the years leading up to the declaration of a state of emergency a popular leader who had the charisma and oratorical force to cash in on the grievances and discontent of the G]k[y[people, especially on matters related to land. Immence crowds flocked to hear him at rallies and he was able to frustrate all Government measures conceived to improve land usage amongst the G]k[y[. Blundell has written thus:

Seen from the perspective of today the Government had only two courses of action open to them. Either to contain him, or to incorporate his energies and the political support which he enjoyed into the actual act of Government. This meant political advance for the African people at a pace which was not acceptable to the colonial Government of the day and the European opinion in Kenya at that time. Throughout his life he had never come out clearly on the side of extremism, for instance in such a crisis as that of female circumcision in 1923, when the Christian churches in Central Province launched a campaign against the custom which was then almost universally practised. We know now that the more extreme Mau Mau leaders were prepared to eliminate him if he had not gone along with them. He thus became identified with the movement but it is

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significant that the movement itself became more extreme, the oath more repellent, the murders and garrottings more dreadful and frequent after he was detained. When he became prime Minister, and then President of the Republic of Kenya, this was the background against which he had to repair not only the divisions among his own people, much as France had to overcome the wounds between the Vichyites and the Maquis, but also the fears of the other racial communities in the country.

Although Jomo Kenyatta had the support of the new younger African leaders, like James Gich[ur] and Tom Mboya, the extreme Mau Mau leaders who had survived the warfare in the forest were putting great pressure upon him to declare all European farms forfeited to the new Government without compensation and to accept the elimination of the local European interest in Kenya. The moderates and realists under Kenyatta prevailed and the extremists were forced into a minority position. However, this did not satisfy the hopes and expectations of the thousands of Agik[uy] who had suffered in the Emergency, or who had experienced hardships in their support of the Mau Mau movement, and who had in the rush to obtain land in the former white Highlands failed in their demand to be given it preferentially. Blundell concludes his remarks on the Mau Mau subject by stating thus:

Though sympathetic to the idea of independence for the African people, many of the Gikuyu and Kenya people in general were opposed to much of the militancy, and the horrors which were generated in the Emergency period. Nevertheless, the indication which the movement gave of the power which could be exerted by Africans generally who were not prepared to accept Colonial status, must have added weight to the general wish of the British electorate to be free of what was to some an Imperial burden, and to others troublesome peoples they no longer wished to rule.

Perhaps a fair analysis would be to record that the Emergency in Kenya, mainly initiated and sustained by the Gikuyu people, underlined or emphasized how necessary political changes were in Kenya, and how imperative it was to meet the wishes of the African people to be masters of their own destiny.

Epilogue — Lancaster House Conferences

Sir Michael Blundell says that unknown to the European or Indian representatives, Oliver Lyttelton, then secretary of state of the Colonies, had agreed with the African leaders' demand for direct elections for the African people in 1956.

As has already been seen, the decision to give the Africans a vote was the most important step on the road to Uhuru (independence). Equally important were the emotions of the conservative European electorate and the movement in Britain against the idea of continued colonial rule. In the Belgian Congo (now Democratic Republic of Congo) the Africans were denied the vote; no one knew what their real thoughts were until an explosion occurred and as a result, trainloads and cars full of distressed Belgian refugees passed through Kenya, many of them having lost all their possessions or seen their friends and relatives killed. Blundell has written:

At once, overnight from the highlands near Mount Elgon and the shores of Lake Victoria, through the great nomadic areas to the Coast, the real feelings of the African people could be expressed. They wanted a full say in the Government of their country, to be first-class citizens in their own right, and above all to be free to carve out their own destinies. Some of us were lucky

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to be able to hear and understand this enormous flood of political emotion and adjust our ideas accordingly.

In 1920s, a law had been passed which made it a capital offence for an African to have sexual intercourse, with a European under consent or through rape. The more conservative European leaders opposed the suggested repeal of this law, but Blundell was among those who thought that in the light of the social advance which had taken place in Kenya, the legislation was outdated. A conservative colleague of his, Lawrence Welwood, believed that individuals with blue eyes were better equipped to govern the empire than those with dark ones. During debates in the Legislative Council when he strongly disagreed with the Colonial Government's view, he would point out to Blundell that most of the senior officials had brown eyes. At last in the Cabinet discussion it was agreed that the offending clause, Section 25, should be deleted from the Penal Code as part of a block incorporating a considerable number of other sections. It was hoped that in that way the particular emotive issue of interracial sexual intercourse would not be noticed by fiery right wing voters.

However, racial feelings against the Africans were so strong that even the mere deletion of the racially offending clause from the Panel Code evoked very strong reaction from a white legislator and a colleague of Michael Blundell who has written thus:

Welwood and I, after the meeting, walked down the passage from the cabinet room and he gripped my arm with intense pressure as he said, "What have we done, God, what have we done? Don't you realize that now every African in the street of Nairobi will open his fly buttons and wave his doo-hickey at our women.

When the British Government announced a constitution which would be the basis of African majority rule and independence as soon as it could be organised, African leaders who had been united in the desire for political advance immediately split and two political parties were formed: the Kenya African National Union (KANU) representing in the main the Gikuyu and Luo people with large numbers of the Akamba and some Abaluyia, and the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) composed mainly of the smaller communities of Kenya who, encouraged by local Europeans feared domination by a potential Gikuyu-Luo axis. This division in African leadership caused a delay in the achievement of independence and in convening of the second Lancaster House Conference. On the European front, Blundell has written:

Arising from the pressures of the Emergency and the increasing thrust of African nationalist thinking from 1956 onwards, when the first African elected members came to the Legislative Council, the European electorate which, hitherto, had been dominant in Kenya politics and largely united on a pressure basis vis-a-vis the Colonial Government, became divided. Six of the fourteen European elected members formed a non-racial party which some Asian elected members joined and in which Africans played a part, and eight remained united on a policy based on the maintenance of racial entities and authoritative colonial rule.

The non-racial party, called the New Kenya Group, asked me to be their leader, and thus at the two Lancaster House Conference apart from the African groupings there were other influences; the one advocating advance on a one-nation and non-racial basis and the other seeking to maintain the status quo of colonial rule with a minimal advance for the African people.

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Sir Winston Churchill

Sir Michael thought that the earlier leaders of the European community in Kenya had not realized how deep the feeling in the British political parties was, that Britain was in a position of trustee for the African people. Pressure from the local European settlers sometimes appeared to weaken this sense of trusteeship but it was always there, and was a major factor in the colonial

Political scene at Westminster. In the early stages of the development of Kenya, the concept that a colonial country was there to provide raw materials for industry in the mother country was strong, but the basic idea of advance for the African people was always present. From an interview he had with Sir Winston Churchill, then Prime Minister of Britain, on 10th December, 1954, Blundell has recorded the following:

I sat on a horse chair rexine sofa and suddenly a small frail figure came round a screen and walked towards me saying, "Good afternoon, Mr. Blundell." This was the Prime Minister, who was smoking a cigar around which an inch from his mouth was a large fat sort of blotting paper absorbent band. I was struck by the frailty of the Prime Minister and he walked with a certain amount of unsteadiness. The hand which he gave me to shake was slightly stiffened for reasons which he told me at the end of our interview.

We entered the Cabinet room; he sat in the Prime Minister's seat and I on his right. He ordered two whisky and soda and we sat down to discuss the situation in Kenya. He had allotted 15 minutes and I was released after .

He began by mentioning that he had been in Kenya in 1907, and reflected that it was a beautiful country and the Gikuyu a happy, naked and charming people. He was astonished at the change which had come over their minds. I was immensely struck by the range of his mind and the imagination which he still showed in trying to deal with a problem such as ours.

He begun by saying he had been there ages ago and had been all over the place in a motor car and in Uganda on a bicycle. He thought it was a wonderful and beautiful country. He was amazed by the tenacity which the Gikuyu had shown. He did not believe that the troops which he had out there were not sufficient to deal with the trouble very quickly. He did not think that we needed more troops. The problem really was to get at their minds, because he felt if it was merely a military problem we had sufficient strength to deal with it. He was amazing over phrases. He said, "There you are — all our ideas, our modern thoughts, democracy and all that. I suppose that is seeping through your country." I said it was.

His eyes filled with tears and he said to me that he felt it was a terrible situation and was getting Great Britain into very bad odour in the world; that we, the home of culture, magnanimity of thought, with all the traditions of our country and democracy, should be in a situation of using power against these people . . . "It's the power of a modern nation being used to kill savages, savages? Not savages, they're savages armed with ideas — much more difficult to deal with."

He was most interested and kept returning time and time again to the necessity of negotiation, his argument being that the tenacity of the hold of Mau Mau on the Gikuyu showed one that the Gikuyu were not the primitive unintelligent, gutless people we had imagined. That they were persons of considerable fibre and ability and steel, who would be brought to our side by just and wise treatment. He kept returning again and again to devices to secure their co-operation and

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cease the slaughter. He agreed entirely with me that negotiation must be from strength, but he said, if you have the strength then you must eliminate bitterness and be magnanimous. At all cost you must not let bitterness ride deep into the people. He said you can negotiate from strength with ease, with the power of flexibility and with magnanimity. You can only negotiate from weakness with a basis of cowardice and appeasement. He kept returning again and again to this necessity to find a solution. He said, "I am sure that you need negotiation. Is there anyone you can negotiate with? What about that man who failed at your pow-wow." (That was General China leader of the forest fighters.) I said, "Well, he's in detention." He said, "Well, there must be somebody. You must find someone to negotiate with. I'd like to come and do it myself." He also emphasized the bad odour that the shootings, the brutalities and the detention camps gave to Britain in the world and in particular he asked about the conduct of the KAR (King's African Rifles). I told him that they had done very well and we had stamped out, I thought, any real trouble there such as that of the black and tans in Ireland, and I thought credit be given to Erskine (Major-General George Erskine, G.O.C. East Africa) for that.